

How the Media Fights For Our Attention



By [Lori Bizocco](#)

When it comes down to it, what really makes a story worth reading? At the very least, the content should inform the public of something important in an interesting, truthful matter. Unfortunately, today's media producers seem much more concerned about attention-grabbing methods and getting as many people as possible to click on their article. A good story hardly seems to matter when consumers will view ads and make the publishers happy.

The more media fights for our attention the harder it'll be to distinguish authenticity from clickbaited information

So how exactly do these media producers draw us in to begin with? Most use what is called an “inverted pyramid” model, which prioritizes information that is interesting and likely to grab our attention, filling in the details as the story goes on. However, the information that is at the end of the article is not any less important. In fact, these last paragraphs often provide the necessary details for fully understanding the event being elaborated on.

Once you learn that most people have very short attention spans and will only spend an average of 96 seconds reading an article, it's concerning to think about how easy it is for readers to walk away from an article with only half of the story. This issue becomes much more serious when you look at the headlines used for these clickbait articles. Rather than give an accurate picture of what the story will cover, these headlines often over-exaggerate insignificant details or misrepresent what happened to make it seem more interesting. This can lead to readers being seriously misinformed and can even ruin the reputation of the people being talked about in the article.

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An [unfortunate example](#) of this is a news story that recently was published has a headline that would make readers believe a certain male producer did a terrible act to a female writer working on his show, causing her to leave the company. However, the real story is far less interesting and has a

different line of events to tell.

First off, the inappropriate act was just a side hug. While the female writer claimed to feel uncomfortable, the situation was dealt with by HR. The producer went through sensitivity training and the writer was satisfied with the man's willingness to learn from his mistakes. So why did she leave? Well, her reason for leaving had nothing to do with the producer at all! Her actual reason for quitting was that she claims the network reduced her workload after the incident. Unhappy with how they were treating her, she decided to leave the show and take her talents elsewhere.

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If you're anything like me, you're probably confused as to why this story was ever published to begin with. This story doesn't have anything valuable to share, and it wasn't even entertaining to read. It's just another clickbait article released to make money as quickly and easily as possible. However, is completely tarnishing a person's name and making people believe he was to blame for the situation worth some clicks? The media would be much better off grabbing our attention with stories that are worth our time.