**Ethics and the evolving media**

As technology evolves, the way journalists share and report on stories continues to change as well. But do our ethical standards change along with it? Or does it simply require added attention and communication regarding how those ethical standards apply to the new media?

As Tom Kent [outlined](https://medium.com/@tjrkent/an-ethical-reality-check-for-virtual-reality-journalism-8e5230673507), journalists should be aware of the ethical issues associated with the use of virtual reality to help share stories. The music used or action that’s re-created could be cause for concern related to the ethics applied journalism.

But does that mean that our ethical guidelines change or shift? It could be argued that our ethical guidelines remain the same, including following guidelines related to not deceiving readers or viewers and remaining transparent in our reporting. This also means paying close attention to how a new medium could evoke an emotional response. How does the new medium change or represent the facts? Does everything stay the same or is there a different outcome?

Here are a list of ethical guidelines/standards (based on SPJ’s Code of Ethics) and how it would apply to virtual reality.

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| **Ethical Guidelines** | **Applying it to Virtual Reality** |
| Seek Truth and Report It. | * Do not mislead or represent facts. If telling a story through virtual reality, be sure provide context of when something happened and what the viewer is seeing. Represent facts clearly so the viewer is not mislead based on the timing of events or re-created items. |
| Minimize Harm | * Can the story that is shared through virtual reality cause harm to the viewers? * What type of emotions does it evoke? Is it sensitive material that evokes stronger emotions through visual and interactive storytelling? Is there an alternative story-telling technique? * Do the advantages outweigh the potential disadvantages of this method? |
| Be Accountable and Transparent | * Clarify and explain the purpose of the story told through virtual reality. * Cleary label any recreations as to not mislead your viewers. * Remain transparent over added material (example: music, re-created action) to virtual reality story-telling. Why was something added? |