**Interactive Digital Elements**

**Why does it matter?**

The way we consume news is changing. Just take a look at our current habits: Consumers are picking up their phones to discover the latest news traveling fast at our fingertips. But how do we engage our readers? How do we create a format that encourages thoughtful discussion and engages our readers to look past the headline? Interactive elements help to bring a story “to life” by incorporating a visual and detailed approach when using photographs, data and graphics.

**What does it look like when it’s implemented in an online publication?**

There isn’t a one-way approach to interactive elements. Interactive elements come in different shapes and sizes, but more specifically, it’s a visual/audio tool that creates added depth to stories. Below you’ll find several examples of interactive elements used to help tell a story.

[**What the 2017 eclipse looked like across the**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/national/health-science/eclipse-2017-instagram/?utm_term=.7bbc447b085e) **[country](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/national/health-science/eclipse-2017-instagram/?utm_term=.7bbc447b085e)**

**[Emmy Awards Live Chat](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/09/17/arts/television/2017-emmy-awards-live-chat.html?mtrref=medium.com&gwh=16EC0676FD0EBEB2F0EFD4D5F2AD39CC&gwt=pay)**

**[Voices of the Middle East](https://aswat.me/en/interactive/)**

**Proposal:**

Find what works for you. To pick an interactive element to incorporate into your story, really understand your story. What data do you have? What do you want to “show” or how do you want to “engage.” Here are several ideas that can be incorporated into a digital publication:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Mapping*** | - List of locations, details- Pictures taken across the country?- Tweets or comments posted on a map? |
| ***Timeline*** | - List of events over an extended period of time? Attach pictures/video? |
| ***Audio Story*** | - Do you have a collection of interviews with a number of people? Is it compelling audio that tells a story? |
| ***Interactive Graphics*** | - Are you trying to “show” the scale of something? How big or small is it? Can you use graphics to show the amount? |
| ***Photo Storytelling*** | - Do you have compelling photos that tell a story? How about creating a gallery that details the action and story within each photo? Can you create interactive elements to allow readers/viewers to seek out more information from each photo. |