

Unit 2 Lecture Notes

MAC Triad

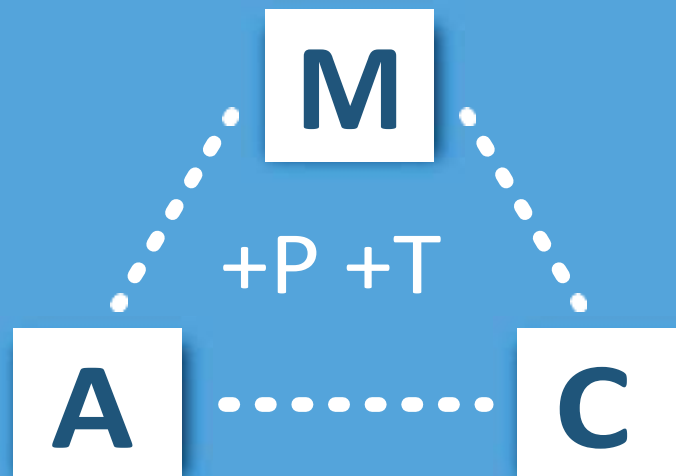
Message

Audience

Channel

Purpose

Timing



This unit focuses heavily on M-A-C, which is a concept that will be used to help plan and create almost everything you write. Always consider M-A-C prior to starting to write or create anything that is coming from a company and is intended to be read by anyone...ever.

M = Message

The message is the main point that needs to be clearly conveyed through the piece. This could be the selling point of a product, or the reason why you should donate to a specific cause. The message is the main point as to why you are writing something at all.

A = Audience

The audience is who will be reading the piece. Keep in mind that there may be various audiences for one piece, and you should break them down based on importance. Break your audience into at least three levels – primary, secondary, and tertiary.

The primary audience is the number one, most important audience who will be receiving the piece. This audience must receive the message and this should be the main focus of the copy, images, and anything else that may be included in the piece.

The secondary audience is not the main audience, but an audience that will show some interest in reading the piece, and they may want to take an action. The message will most likely resonate with the secondary audience, although it may not be as straight forward as it is for the primary audience.

The tertiary audience is an audience who may see the piece, may read, but doesn't have a vested interest in the message – or at least not directly. This audience should always be considered, but again, isn't the main focus when composing the piece.

An example would be if we created a document explaining safety on campus. If we created a brochure with the top ways to stay safe while walking through campus, who might our audiences be?

Our primary audience may be students. Students could directly benefit from this information and there is a good chance they are actually interested in being safe.

Our secondary audience is a group that may see the brochure and read it, and it may apply in some ways. For our brochure, we are going to identify the secondary audience as Philly U staff and faculty. They of course, need to be safe, but they may not be directly concerned because they are older, don't walk around during prime times as often as students, and may be less of a "target."

Our tertiary audience could be parents of students. While parents do not directly need this information, they are interested because their kids are on campus, and they want to ensure their kids are safe.

C = Channel

The channel is how the message is sent (through which channel?). The channel is the medium such as TV, print, radio, video, social networks, website, etc. Ask yourself, where will this information be placed so the audiences can consume? Sometimes the answer is more than one, so that must be a consideration when composing the piece.

The other two parts are P and T, which represent purpose and timing. Purpose somewhat coincides with the message, but it is more about taking an action. Should the reader be prompted to take some sort of action? That is the purpose.

The timing is when the piece will be distributed and/or posted via the channels.