

ISOJ 2023: Day 2

Keynote Session: *The future of storytelling on your face*

Chair: [Robert Hernandez](#), professor of professional practice, **University of Southern California**

- Keynote speakers: [Yusuf Omar](#), co-founder, **Seen.tv (Australia)**
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Robert Hernandez Hello! Hello! Hello! I feel like we should put that music on one more time just to wake up. Everyone get up. Merengue. [Singing] Ok, ok, ok, ok. Gracias. Un gusto estar con ustedes. Todos bienvenidos otra vez al ISOJ. Los que no saben esto es como mi quinta vez estando en un panel. Y siempre comienzo mi sesión en español. Para que se ponen nerviosos los que no hablen este lenguaje. Es una conferencia internacional. Gracias a Rosental y a todos por el apoyo para estar aquí. Hey everyone. It's a tradition that I start my panel for the international conference in Spanish. I do it every time just to throw you off and go like, Wait, I need a translation, you don't need a translation thing. My name is Robert Hernandez. I'm a digital journalism professor at USC Annenberg, where I focus on emerging technologies with my students. We produce innovative journalism, immersive stories under the name Jovrnalism. Let's see if I can put my slide up there. I know it starts with black. There you go. Jovrnalism. That's how it's pronounced. It's trademarked.

We work with media companies. We work with tech companies together, producing immersive pieces, award winning pieces. We've worked with *The New York Times*, *NPR*, *NBC*, and tech companies like SGO, Insta360. We win awards like the Webby Award. Speaking of which, I'm going to take advantage of my moderator status and ask you to take a moment to go to the short URL and vote for my students' work. They did an immersive series about the 30th anniversary of the L.A. Uprising/L.A. riots using AR/VR. It was published by the *L.A. Times* and *KCET*. Let's get that ISOJ push to help them get up there, please.

So I've been working in immersive for a while, and some of you may or may not know this picture here. In 2014, I took one for the team and wore these dorky glasses also known as Google Glass. I was not a glasshole, but I was looking at how could wearables change how we do reporting, storytelling, things like that? While I started back then, our keynote speaker today, Yusuf, has been killing it, doing amazing things — a pioneer with much cooler glasses than those were. COVID took a lot of media casualties. Right? Many journalism publications struggled to survive, and some went under. The publication you're about to meet did the complete opposite. At the start of the pandemic, *Seen.tv* had just two or three staffers publishing a handful of videos and a handful of stories a year, but by the end of the pandemic, they reached 105 editorial staffers publishing a thousand videos a year. At the center of that vision is augmented reality and wearable technology. Co-Founder Yusuf Omar is here to tell you why he thinks the future of storytelling is on your face. A round of applause for Yusuf.

Yusuf Omar Hi, everybody. How we doing? I'm actually from the future, I have traveled 26 hours to be here from Australia. Australia is 15 hours ahead. So I'm literally from the

future. I'm disappointed to tell you that in the future people dress ridiculously and this probably lose a little bit of credibility, but I hope to salvage it back through my presentation. It's been a rough start since I got to Austin. If you can just stop the screen share. Rosental, pulled me over yesterday and said, "What happened?" And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "I got a message from the hotel. You're in trouble." I said, "What do you mean I'm in trouble?" He said, "Apparently in the early hours of the morning, you were making a lot of noise." I'm in my hotel room on my own, so there's no real reason for a lot of noise to be made. But because I'm very jetlagged... You can just start the screen share on my thing... Because I'm very jetlagged, I'm working at like five in the morning and I get a knock on the door from security of this place. It was a very American kind of "Security!" They basically were like, if you don't shut up, we have to throw you out of the hotel. Do you have audio in there? [From video] I could literally get kicked out of this hotel. It's like just past six in the morning, I've got a lot of work to do tomorrow... [End video clip] So, yeah, but luckily we're still here, so it's a good start.

I was last at ISOJ in 2018. Rosental you invite me about every four years, so I'll see you guys next in 2027. This is the last time I was here. [Start video clip] Hey, guys. I'm at ISOJ. Say hello everybody. We are talking about lots of crazy stuff. [End video clip] So I was talking about lots of crazy stuff. I made lots of predictions, and the problem with predictions is you sometimes get them wrong. I said three key ideas and probably two out of the three were right. This is 2018... I said, Focus in on mobile vertical video in the stories format, the clickable stories format. No doubt that took off, right? Instagram, all these platforms, like TikTok. I said, focus on platforms like Snapchat, where you'll see positive revenue and CPMs that also happened. The third thing I said was people are going to do a lot of social VR. By a raise of hands, how many people have done social VR this week? Just Robert. So two out of three, I'm pretty happy with those numbers. Yeah, let's see how we go four years from now and how many of the things that I say today end up being accurate.

What you need to understand this presentation is the few core ideas you need to understand. The first one is augmented reality (AR). Everybody is talking about AI at this conference, everyone has gone ChatGPT crazy. Not AI, AR. We're talking about this kind of stuff. The ability to put filters... "Oh, my God. They're going to kick me out of this hotel." These kinds of filters, right? They look cute, they look gimmicky, but I believe they have incredibly powerful implications for the future of journalism. I believe every single organization in this room is going to be either publishing with AR in the next five years or you're not going to exist. It's going to be one of those two things. The second thing that you need to know to understand this presentation is that these are not just some like... I look like a blind pianist... But these are actually AR glasses. When I look at them, I have screens, I have information. When I go for a jog, I get chased by zombies. These two ideas are very important to understand. If you get that, about half the presentation will make sense. All right.

Let's start by kind of understanding this vision. So we publish 4,000 videos. We do about a billion views, seven million subscribers at Seen. We get about 20 million people using our AR filters. Despite publishing 4,000 videos, we have bought zero cameras — zero CapEx has been spent. So if you are trying to get into video and you're like, oh you are too small, we don't have the budget, there's no excuse. We've been able to do it by buying zero cameras and zero film crews. That's kind of where I'm going to start this story. Eighty percent of the internet today is video. There is a massive myth that video is expensive, right? You think it's expensive, so people kind of don't do it. But that's not true. For us the solution is AR. We are a next generation media company. We use AR to transform everyday people into journalists. In the not-so-distant future, I believe that the future of

storytelling is going to be on your face. What does that even mean? Am I talking about face like glasses? Am I talking about filters? Am I talking about all of it?

First, let's start by understanding the current media landscape. By the way, this presentation is brand new. I've never given it before. It's a new analogy, been brainstorming it for the last couple weeks. Imagine this mountain and on the y-axis you have cost and on the x-axis you have production values, right? Y-axis cost, x-axis production values. On the far left is low production values, low cost. You have creators. You have influencers. You have Logan Paul. You have all these kinds of characters. They are killing it. They're faster; they don't have to make the same editorial decision-making that we do. They can be a lot less ethical. They can be a lot more clickbait. They're killing it. They're making tons and tons of... These guys are becoming billionaires, but they're not scalable. If you're a creator, there's only so many videos you can do if you're one individual.

On the other side, this is high cost, high production value. You have OTTs. You have Netflix, Amazon, Hulu. I would even put *The New York Times*, our friends, and *The Washington Post* and those kinds of guys into this category. They rely on subscription models and paywalls and this kind of stuff. High cost, high production value. They're also struggling because they're really not sustainable. They're spending so much money on their journalism, on their content, and they struggle to get back that money in terms of the amount of memberships or people subscribing.

In the middle, you have publishers. They, I believe, are in the worst position. They're high cost, if you're like a *NBC* or a *CNN* or one of these organizations that send film crews out all over the world, but they're not high enough quality to be Netflix and they're not cheap enough to earn ad revenue and survive on that like the creators. They're in a really nasty place in the middle, like to be a high cost, medium production value. You don't want to be in that space. That's a really dangerous space to be in. It's hard to survive, hard to monetize. The opportunity is to be low cost, middle production value. That is a huge opportunity. If you can make a lot of content at really low cost, that's a pretty good quality, there's a really big opportunity. But this is in fact not a mountain, it's actually more like an iceberg; if you look out at the bigger picture, it's a big, big iceberg. In fact, right now this year is the 50th anniversary of the mobile phone. Fifty years it's been since the mobile phone was invented. Today, there are 6.8 billion phones around the world. There's an enormous amount of people with mobile phones. That is an enormous opportunity, especially in South America, especially in Asia, especially in Africa. There's a massive opportunity to tap into people with mobile phones that are telling awesome stories down the bottom there. There's just tons of them.

These people at the top, they were the ones that missed Brexit. They didn't think Brexit was going to happen. They missed Trump. They didn't think Trump was going to win the elections. They were so out of touch with real people and real stories. Down at the bottom are the real stories. These are the innovators, the changemakers, the unsung heroes, the communities, the middle America that *The New York Times* today told us that they're trying to tap into and they're saying we're trying to get correspondents there. You have people with mobile phones who can tell their own stories if you empower them to do so. So the opportunity is blindingly obvious.

What we're talking about is not a new idea. We're talking about citizen journalism, and there are various pros and there are various cons. The pros is everybody — a lot of people in this room and around the world — have mobile phones with a 4K camera in your pocket,

which is a really good quality camera. You have an editing app. You have platforms. You can send to Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat, all of these things. That's the pros. The cons: it's ad hoc, you might get a good video today, but you might not get a good video tomorrow. It's low quality for the most part. It's shaky. The editorial values are not too hot and often it's inaccurate. How do we know that that user generated content from citizens is even factually accurate? That's the major cons. Fundamentally at their core, this group of people don't know how to tell stories. Creators know how to tell stories. Media organizations know how to tell stories. Most people don't. If you go and ask your random cousin or auntie or uncle, go make a viral video... Even though they have a phone, even though they have iMovie, and even though they have Tik Tok or Snapchat, they cannot make a viral video. They don't know how. Most people don't know how, and that's why their voices are marginalized. They don't know how to be heard because they don't know how to package a story. It's a huge gap, in fact.

People have tried. *CNN* iReport said, "Hey, submit your videos here and if they're good, will make them go viral." But what did we end up with? I used to work at *CNN*. You end up with pretty low-quality videos that nobody really wanted to watch anyway, and there wasn't much of an incentive. Why should I upload to iReport if I could just upload a Facebook myself? You know what I mean? I don't need a place to distribute. We've seen platforms like Storyful based in Ireland, got bought by Murdoch for about 20 million. They take user-generated content of viral moments and they license it. They say, "Yo, this is definitely legitimate." It can be used by a bunch of syndication partners, but that's not very unique. What's your real opportunity there? You're curating the same viral stuff that's already gone viral anyway. So I'm not sure how big the opportunity is there, but you've got lots of people that have tried to play in the space. So they have editing apps, they have sharing apps, but what they don't have is they don't have storytelling apps. They don't have ways to actually help them tell stories. I believe Mojo is the solution. Mobile journalism, through creating professional quality videos with your mobile phone, it's super easy to do. In this room. we've got a handful of professors and educators that are already running mobile journalism courses at universities around the world, and unfortunately, the deans and stuff are often giving them pushback, but they're fighting. They're fighting the good fight trying to educate a group of young people how to do this.

We started doing this right back in 2010, started experimenting with mobile journalism and trying to understand how to tell stories. Basically, I wanted to be a foreign correspondent. I wanted to tell stories of wars and natural disasters, and most news organizations, some of which are represented here, they said, "You're too young. You don't have enough experience. We don't have budget." So I basically started traveling the world as [Video plays] a journalist and a war correspondent, I've seen the problems. Loud explosions now not far away from where we're staying. Nothing's changed in preventing, this situation is far worse than before. Now I'm looking for solutions, and can technology change the power dynamic. Sometimes it's really simple solutions to complex problems like this phone. The changemakers. Everyone deserves a home. Blockchain technology can help finance that. Innovators. Meet a guy who's got a technology that he thinks could bridge the gap. This is one tree species you're actually helping to protect. The unsung heroes. You guys are about to cross the border into an active warzone where thousands of people have lost their lives. There are so many more stories to tell. This is just the beginning. I'm Yusuf Omar. [Video ends]

So from a very young age, I say young like 18, 19, 20, or 21, I realized, "Oh my God, mobile phones can create really good quality footage. You can get access to amazing stories." Then basically this journey has been one of training. My co-founder and I saw a

man who is due to be here. We basically traveled around the world. We went to like over 100 countries, and we trained up thousands of people how to tell stories with mobile phones. We said, "Wow, we've discovered it mobile journalism is the shit. We're going to go and show a bunch of people how to do this." Some people thought it was a good idea. Some people thought it was a terrible idea. This was the political editor at the *BBC* when he heard this idea...

[Video Transcript] To train communities how to tell stories on phones, on drones, on wearable cameras, 20,000 people in 140 countries... But this isn't journalism. I would die rather than do it. I don't want to watch it either. Curating selfies isn't journalism. Right now the president of Ukraine is delivering us news with selfie videos. If this isn't journalism, I don't know what the fuck is.

Yusuf Omar You laugh but we all have a boss like that in our newsroom, don't we? We all have that old white man who just doesn't get it. Nonetheless, I got it. We pursued on and we basically trained a whole bunch of people. We were looking at human experiences, how you can take somebody's personal lived experience, something they had experienced, and share that with others to create positive change. That was kind of what we were looking at. But then we realized, holy shit, it's really hard. It is so hard to train citizens how to tell stories because they struggle. They struggle with everything from scripting, fact-checking, editing, sequencing, storyboards, like all of these different steps that we do, especially if you work in broadcast or digital video it's not intuitive. People don't think in terms of video sequences. It's not how they live. It was really, really, really hard. So we had to hire a shitload of people. At the start of the pandemic, as Robert mentioned, it was like three of us on the team. By the end of the pandemic, we had 105 full-time people on the team, so we had to have a mammoth amount of people that were helping to empower and train communities on a regular basis. As you can imagine, this is not a very scalable model. This is not something that investors are like, "Oh, this sounds like a good idea. Let's keep hiring huge amounts of staff to solve the problem." That's when I realized, oh my God, and this comes to the future of storytelling is on your face. Augmented reality is powerful. AR is a tool that you can use to empower communities to tell their own stories and it's so common. I mean, in this room, all of you have used AR potentially in the last week, unless you're maybe over the age of 60, which is like half of you. But you've all used AR on a regular basis. You use it to tell stories, to share the friends... Your kids certainly have. It's a part of our ecosystem. In 2016, I was working with a group of rape survivors in India and we were able to use face filters, give our phones to them, and they were able to hide their identities using face filters to tell their stories.

[Video Transcript] Now, take a look at these striking images behind me of people wearing virtual face masks on Snapchat not for fun, but for a much more serious purpose. Victims of sexual abuse in India are using them to remain anonymous so they can tell their harrowing stories without the fear of being recognized.

Yusuf Omar So you can find all that online, but it was the first time where we had an aha moment where we were like, "Wow. This actually empowered a young woman in India to tell a story that she otherwise wouldn't have been able to tell because she didn't know even how to hide her identity." In this case, she was able to hold the phone and use AR as a utility to hide her identity. That was in 2016. That's where we come to, we're like, OK, we use AR to transform citizens into journalists. It's a tool for us. So 2016, we start doing these tools. 2017, Snapchat invests in the company. 2018, we start thinking about head mounted questions. We say, OK, what if you open your camera up and you can ask a series of questions? So ask myself a question. I cry. When do I cry? I cry when I miss my

kid. I've got a 12-week old kid. I cry when I miss my kid. Like, you're a bad dad, what are you doing here? Head-mounted questions. 2020, we started saying, OK, what if we put shot-lists? What if we give people the ability to have various shots that they can shoot all baked into the camera? 2021, we said, OK, what about immersive effects? What if you could open the camera and if you were in Guantanamo Bay at some point in your life, you're now back in Guantanamo Bay. You have the environment so you can tell your story. So head-mounted displays, shot-lists, immersive storytelling, all of this stuff came together to create what we call the Seen camera, which is basically the idea of preloading journalism into the camera and publishing it within existing apps.

So basically, this is the model that you need to understand: the flywheel. That is going to really dictate a lot of journalism going forward. Create cool camera technology through AR, distribute it to marginalized communities, and those communities will create content. In the content, deliver more AR, and then your audience becomes the creators. You create a flywheel of user-generated content where your audience becomes creators. Here's an example. We are doing a show on climate change. Climate change is a really hard topic to do shows on, and you watch an episode and then you open up your camera. If it was about rhino poaching, you are a rhino. If it was about recycling, you are recycling.

[Video Transcript] How do you get people to care about our planet? Don't just watch, play. I think my bee died. Get the landmine.

Yusuf Omar I'm skipping through very fast because I got 75 slides and 25 minutes of racing. This technology enabled us to massively reduce the amount of headcount we had. We went from 105 staff to 55, and we went from like a handful of stories, maybe 200 stories a year, to a thousand stories a year. So giving people tools increased the amount of stories you could produce, decreased the amount of costs.

Now we are ready for liftoff. Is everyone with me so far? Okay, because the presentation starts to get a bit crazy from this point on. It wasn't crazy before. Revenue streams. You're probably wondering how the hell does this make any money? How do you sustain it? Right. You have shows which you published on social media platforms: YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook. These are all platforms where you can really effectively earn millions of dollars a year in terms of ad revenue. We have a studio where we do branded content work, where we have licensing — *NBC*, for example, take our content and put it on television — and we have training going around the world, working with newsrooms and brands and other organizations to get them trained up. All right.

So let me give you an example of what some of the shows look like. This is “Seen Money.” This is about entrepreneurship, how you can start a business to improve your life.

[Video Transcript] A lot of people were teasing me because they thought it was a silly idea. There was a real lack of swimwear for plus-size women. For a young child being in a predominantly white classroom, she didn't see herself out there.

Yusuf Omar This is our sex ed show. Go figure. It's our best-performing show.

[Video Transcript] I think the first time... I got my period... Watched porn... Had sex... I was super confused... I didn't know what was going on with my body... I could never use a tampon... What's going on?

Yusuf Omar This is “Most Asked” — the most asked questions about communities.

[Video Transcript] What is... What happens? What does it mean? Is it okay? What should you do? What in the world is alopecia?

Yusuf Omar This is the show that we do for India.

[Video Transcript] My parents came to know about my sexuality and my gender... I just remember passing through...

Yusuf Omar So we've got a bunch of different shows. We got 12 shows we put out and we've got about 7 million subscribers and we cover a whole host of topics. But what's really interesting is the audience — 13- to 24-year-olds, 70% women, 70% in the U.S. Really young, really native to these platforms, and much younger than your *Vice's* or *BuzzFeed's*, so this is a really young platform.

Now, there's been a lot of talk at this conference about data and AI, I'm not going to go into the details because this is the presentation focused on AR not AI. But when you have that much data from that many videos that are published in that many augmented reality filters that are created, you can help inform the scene camera. You can make it a lot smarter in terms of the kinds of stimulus that we provide people to tell stories. All right. The rocket continues to go up. 15? Phew. Hard cut at 15ish. So then you start to think ad revenue cannot be what you can sustain a media organization on. It's up and down. You're relying on the algorithms of Facebook and Snapchat and all these different platforms. That's why you have to really start thinking about your branded studio and using these tools to assist other brands to create content. We tend to only work with brands that are doing social good, that are positively impacting the world in various ways or that specific campaign is. So, for example, we did a campaign with World Vision for World Refugee Day. This is a really young refugee from one of the biggest refugee camps in the world.

[Video Transcript] I am a mobile journalist and South Sudanese refugee living Bidi Bidi refugee settlement. Did you know that COVID-19 increased teenage pregnancy in my community?

Yusuf Omar Right. We did another campaign with Reebok looking at life is not a spectator sport. People that, for whatever reason, disabilities or otherwise, are traditionally marginalized from various opportunities in society and overcoming those.

[Video Transcript] Life is not a spectator sport. Hi, my name is Melissa, also known as I @pilot_onthegram. I'm a 24-year-old commercial pilot and content creator. My biggest challenge so far with...

Yusuf Omar So lots of different kinds of partners. All right, cool. I'll take you on a journey to about 2030. As you get to 2025, AR commerce really picks up in a major significant way. That's why I say if news organizations are not investing in AR today, they're going to find it very difficult to sell branded opportunities in the next couple of years because the stats are quite incredible, When you look at the growth of AR. It's anticipated, according to SNAP, that by 2025, 75% of the world's population will use AR on a regular basis. This is trying on lipstick and makeup and shoes, informing consumer purchases. What's really exciting about this is if you take a market like India or many parts of the world, people that can't even read or write are going to be able to access the internet through their mobile camera. They're going to have to scan the soil to see the quality of it. They're going to be able to look up at the sky and see the weather. Right now, to access the internet, you

really have to access a keyboard. You have to read the type and interact with the internet in that way. This changes that.

When you look at the growth trajectory of AR, it's tracking with the growth trajectory that we saw of mobile devices back in the days. We're seeing the same level of growth. So while it might look like it's in its infancy today, it's actually growing at the same rate that mobile phones are growing over the last 50 years. It's really, really exciting. When I think about the utility that I have as a journalist... Really, when I think about video, I'm limited to likes, views, shares, comments... Robert, you know this in the VR and XR and AR space... You've just got so much more potential on what you can do as a storyteller. You've got so many more spaces that you can play stories in and ways that you can tell stories.

We've been able to use this to do really interesting journalism. For example, we did a project in South Africa. In South Africa, they have all these old colonial statues of these figures that often did really terrible things, and there's a big debate about whether these statues should be removed. You can go up to these statues and scan them and then the general comes to life and is like, "Yeah, I was a fantastic prime minister", and then the horse wakes up and fact-checks the general and is like, "Get off me, you're a racist." That's really an interesting way of thinking about spatial storytelling and where the future of content is going. Where it's not in here, it's overlaid onto our world. When my wife was pregnant, she was using these products... None of these images are my wife... But when my wife was pregnant, she was using these products to track the fetal development over the weeks. Oh, your baby's the size of a watermelon. It's the size of a mango. It's developed the ability to do this and that. We created this AR tool where she could see the baby's development overlaid onto her body. So as you start to think about AR, storytelling moves way beyond consumption as like a passive thing. It's way more active, and you're doing things along that journey.

Where is this all leading? 2027 to 2030, over that kind of few years, we're going to see a lot more of this kind of stuff. I would say by 2030, and hold me to this, at least half of this room... ISOJ 2030 half the room are wearing some form of wearable technology on their face. They are primarily not using their phones; they're primarily looking at information up here. That's an exciting future, but you've got to make really big investments to be ready for that. I hate mobile phones, but believe it or not, I find that you just are not present. You're just texting and swiping and looking down at the world. Even my 12-week-old child, I look at the child through the phone. I'm not looking out at the world. It's not very immersive. As I said, we're moving to one device. By 2030, we're going to have a huge amount of people, especially in wealthy markets like the U.S., that are going to primarily engage with their journalism and technology through a screen on their face. What's really exciting and really important to understand about this presentation is if you're a media company that is just building for this, you'd be in a very difficult situation because I'm the only person, well Robert and I only people in the room that use this. You have no market. But all of those face filters that you've been seeing throughout my presentation, or the ability to scan the statue and bring it to life. That also works in here. Do you understand? So you're building mobile audiences with technologies that can transition into wearables. You're building that along the way. I actually tried living in a VR headset for a week, like everything, eating, shitting, sleeping, looking after my kid. It sucked. No, honestly, Zuckerberg's vision of the metaverse, I don't blame people for not liking it. Who wants to live inside a computer? You might for one hour of the day, watch a film or game or whatever, but for the other 15 or 16 hours of the day surely I want to be out in the world, engaging with the real world. I don't need a virtual world. That's where AR is so exciting.

AR basically says that we're going to overlay the internet onto the real world. That's why for the last ten years, I've been experimenting with wearable technology because I actually hate my phone. I hate my laptop. I hate doing this. I hate doing this. I want to be out in the world. I want to be engaged in the world. I believe it makes you more present, not less present. Sometimes people think about wearables like a casino on your face, but I think it's dignified.

Hello. Hello. All right. So formal. All right. I feel like I'm giving a best-man speech. In Australia and many, many countries around the world. Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, in fact, the biggest Muslim countries in the world, believe it or not, do not speak Arabic. So you have huge amounts of people that are praying in a religion that they don't understand the language. We created an AR effect where you can see the Quran in English and Arabic using the glasses. We did another one in Boston, much closer to home, culturally and regionally, where you were taking historical images of the city of Boston, and we've overlaid them onto the city then we've had poets basically tell you what you're seeing. Bringing history to life in the city around us — really, really exciting. This is all the arts of storytelling, AR storytelling. It's moving so, so quickly. But unfortunately, if you don't make the right investments today, you're going to be so out of the loop by the time this thing takes off. Like it's a much bigger shift than broadcast to online, like from TV to YouTube is the same shit, it's just videos. This is a much bigger shift and you need to be ready for that by making investments.

There's three core things that we're doing to do that. One, you build a really big audience. You can build the best tech in the world, but if you don't have an audience, what's the point. Two, you need diverse revenue streams. To be able to survive over the long term, you need to create a bunch of revenue streams. Three, we need to make investments in AR. You need to trust the young people in the organization to try this stuff out, to learn. *USA Today* is doing some stuff... Is this working? *USA Today* is doing some stuff. *The New York Times* is doing some interesting stuff, but it's just the beginning. There are a lot more investments that need to happen. You end up with so many different products. You end up with, in our case, licensing, branded content, ad revenue on platforms — all these different revenue streams. You need specific teams to be able to do this. You need lends creators, developers, coders, writers, video editors. We have a huge team of people that are just editorial that are taking all this content and making sense of it, fact-checking, verifying, and adding production values to it. I blurred out the last column, but if you do all these things right, you should be really profitable.

[Video Transcript] We were doing nothing wrong... I've never seen so many dead bodies... I'm a journalist. Don't touch me... My story might seem sad... But maybe it will save someone else's life... Keep fighting, because people want you here... It's not your fault... This is me being an African woman... I just want to be a part of the next generation that's going to make a change... I want to be a journalist... We won't be silenced... What should you never say to an assault survivor?... Does wearing a niqab make you a terrorist? No... Have you seen this?... Honestly, it's game changing... It says here you're a statesman, it should say, "Racist"... Don't put plastic in water... My sense of expression is validated... I am seen... I feel seen... We are seen... You ain't seen nothing yet.

Yusuf Omar Thank you so much. Rock and roll. It's time to go.

Robert Hernandez I don't know what we're going to do in five minutes. But what you can do is line up if you have any questions. So go to the microphones if you want to ask any questions there.

You mentioned the room is half, probably half older than 60. I want to do a real quick test. How many of you are actively consuming TikToks? That proves your point because TikTok is dominated, and you may not even notice that this wi-fi blocks TikTok because it's part of the public institution... Yeah, the governor has blocked those. So if you're looking at him like, man, those pants are crazy, and what you're saying is crazy. You're probably the person in the newsroom that needs to self-reflect. There is a narrative. Folks, if you remember those who heard the internet thought, "Oh, it's a fad. It's never going to work." The same model for mobile — it's never going to work. Social — it's never going to work. AR, AI, all these things are happening, and you need to embrace them. First question. I'm going to give you guys the questions.

Audience Member Hello. I have a question that is simple, and I would love your creative answer. You had a fantastic, fantastic piece of data. You said your consumers are 80% women. I would love you to tell me about this and about the impact that being a content creator as a woman has in the digital space. Tell me about the aggression. Tell me about the harassment. Tell me about the violence. Because in your presentation, things are more varied.

Yusuf Omar For sure, I appreciate it. So I'll start by saying that the platforms that we are on are predominantly women as well. Platforms like Snapchat skew female more than male. Secondly, our newsroom is — I'm guessing here, but I can get the exact facts — probably about 80% women as well, including all of the senior editorial, without exception. So that really helps focus in on the kind of audience: the platforms that we are on are predominantly female, the newsroom is predominantly female. That's how we've ended up in that space.

In terms of the harassment and that kind of stuff, I think it's really important to provide informed consent to people that are creating content; to say, "Hey, you're making a story about menstruation or you're making a story about transition, that great. You're going to get a lot of love and support, but there is going to be a part of the internet that are going to be awful human beings." The real conversation for us is what do we do with those comments. Our newsroom is massively divided on this, but right now, as long as they do not violate the policies of the platform and they're not hate speech or incitement of violence, we don't delete these hateful comments because we don't want to find ourselves in a small corner of the internet where we're only talking to ourselves on, liberal, left-leaning values. We want to be able to engage people and hopefully change their minds over time.

Robert Hernandez Next question.

Audience Member I'm a Venezuelan journalist, and your presentation had a lot of impact, but it also was very worrisome.

My concern comes from the fact that there are Venezuelans all over the world right now, and most of us are journalists. To go to school here, at the University of Texas for one semester is \$8,000, one semester. Most of us can't come near that. People like me who graduated from the Central University or from any other university in Venezuela, we have degrees, but we can't work because we're not graduated from universities that are recognized here. So my concern is... As journalists, wherever we're graduated from, our flag, our faith is in the truth. So if I see someone that is talking to me that has, for example,

a rhinoceros mask on, I'm not going to trust them. I'm not going to trust them as much as I would trust someone who would just talk to me face-to-face as a person.

Yusuf Omar Just one line. Yeah, just one line. Don't be distracted by the gimmicks. I've been to Venezuela and Colombia; we've done some really great stories there — incredibly powerful journalism. Try not to be distracted by the gimmicky sides of it.

Audience Member My question is, I feel like there are two barriers, two important things. You have created a very interesting niche and I think yes, that is the future, but that people feel that they are there, which is why, it is augmented reality that is there. It will create more empathy. I like this. but let's also not leave aside the people who pay for one, for being at a university, for studying at a university for many semesters, and who can also contribute to this.

Robert Hernandez I'm going to give you a quick answer. The thing is that there is a young person on YouTube giving courses like developing these lenses for free, he doesn't have to pay \$8,000. You don't have to pay \$8,000 for tuition at this great school. You go to YouTube University and in every single language in the world there's someone creating this stuff. The software used for Snapchat is called Lens Studio, and it costs nothing. It's free.

Yusuf Omar I'm saying the complete opposite. I'm saying that degree has never been less relevant at all. Yeah.

Robert Hernandez We're going to have to wrap it up there. Thank you, sir.

Yusuf Omar Thanks so much.