

Yahoo News: Weight Loss

In 2010 over 35% of US adults were obese, that's 78 million people. (Park) When your body mass index, also known as BMI, is calculated there are four different categories you can be in. These categories are underweight, normal, overweight and obese. That means that not only are around 78 million obese that there are probably even more that are in the overweight category. Getting America to be healthy is one of the top priorities for this country. Obesity has brought a huge health risk to our country. In the news today there is a push for being healthy and being active. The news outlet I decided to follow is Yahoo news and directly focusing on the weight loss section. I also will compare it to the nutrition and fitness selection of the website. All three categories could possibly have a very similar audience but an audience of different weights which will be interesting to compare.

On the Yahoo News website there is a health tab with a drop down box with a subcategory of weight loss. On this page there is a list of a headline from each article. The headlines included a variety of things but almost always had major topics of obesity, diabetes or how a weight loss drug or surgery has gone wrong. This is a weakness of the news outlet. There weren't really any positive headlines. I think Yahoo is assuming that obese people are reading this page when really even people who aren't obese would like to learn about weight loss. If there is an obese person reading these articles there is no motivation here to lose weight or how to eat healthy. This page could be discouraging to them as a reader. Even though this is a weakness Yahoo does have the solution already. They have a separate Yahoo Health page which can be accessed from the Yahoo News page. This page has great information with everything relating to a healthy living. I focused on weight loss, nutrition and fitness because they are all directly correlated. One thing that Yahoo does to tie all three of these topics together is that they have a health expert section and each of these things always have the same topic.

In the weight loss section the headline was “4 ways to fool yourself into lasting weight loss”. The headline draws the viewer in immediately with its use of a number. By having the words fool, lasting and weight loss there is an immediate attention getter that makes someone want to read. It makes weight loss sound easy. They give the four tips, two which are pretty common and two that make the reader want to read more. The common tips that are heard over and over are get enough sleep and drink plenty of water. The other two tips are eating plenty of fats and laugh often. This is such a great thing to see because usually there is not the phrase “eat more fat” in an article about losing weight. “Try salmon once or twice a week or munch on walnuts for a daily snack” (Vaccariello) By providing an example this article people who are not as healthy start learning what things are healthy and may research further into this. This brings interest to the reader wanting them to read more and it’s one of the aspects that make this a great headline. I think a weakness for this headline article is that the article itself is too simple. I think something with a little more length would be more appropriate.

The headline for the nutrition section is “9 spices with super healing powers”. This title definitely has the interesting wow factor. The spices are listed and given what health benefits they give and different ways to try them when cooking. This article is a great headline article. It’s interesting and very informative. It’s a simple solution and the way it’s written is good enough for the general public to understand it. I don’t think there really is a weakness for this article because it relates to the topic directly and captures a vast amount of audience.

“12 Best Sneakers for Spring” was the headline title for the exercise and fitness section. This article has the best shoes for men and women based on what kind of walking or running that is done. Before the article is even opened there is a sub headline that reads “Our editors pounded the pavement so you don’t have to, and we found the absolute best shoes for both men and women”

(Bergen) This already gives credibility to the article. It makes the reader feel as though the editors and the people that put this article together care about writing the truth. The article includes a photograph of the shoe as well as the price and why that shoe is the best for the job. Spring is here and it's getting warm outside which means people will be running outside so this article is very timely. The description of each shoe is great. The author does a really great job describing why this shoe is perfect for that type of person. Also in her first paragraph there is an embedded article that is about how to determine if you need new shoes.

Each headline for each section of the Yahoo Health outlet is well picked because it pertains directly to the subject. This is so important because people don't like it when the headline really doesn't match the article. The articles bring a great factor because they are timely, interesting and are relatable to everyday people. The headlines are usually positive and uplifting which is what their weight loss articles usually promote; positive thinking. I think a weakness to these headlines is a lack of creativity. Every single headline usually has a number or a statistic. Yes, this is such a great way to draw an audience in but it's like that almost every time and was in the headline for all three sections. I think even though they get their articles from outside sources they should at least be more creative with the title.

Yahoo Health has great articles from places that are well known and people trust. Yahoo does a great job in giving all the information possible so that if someone would want to read the article directly off the website the link is accessible and user friendly. They also don't have a new headline story every day; I think that is a good thing. Yahoo Health isn't somewhere that someone will look every day to get their news. This gives others an opportunity to view the same article that someone else viewed the other day.

I think one of the biggest things this news outlet does right is that it keeps everything positive. The articles are always a variety of things. They really do a great job about reaching out to a multitude of people. Their articles are very well chosen and if the headline article doesn't fit one person there is probably one further down that could be of their interest. Yahoo News health section and Yahoo Health outlet really complement each other. Most of the news about weight loss is so negative; I can see why people get so discouraged about their weight loss struggles because the news stories are always negative. It's always about diabetes or how obesity could be linked to various cancers. There are always stories about how weight loss surgery sometimes does not work or how a weight loss pill almost killed someone. Yes, the news about these things must be delivered because it's someone's job to do that and people will still read it but I think there isn't enough positive. Obesity is very prevalent in the US and everyone is aware of it but how many people actually know help stop it. Most Americans don't know how to eat right. Yahoo Health recognizes this and they know American obesity is at an all-time high. By providing simple tips about eating healthy and exercising people are more likely to try some of it. The evidence is right on the Yahoo Health page under any of the sections, the news is at the bottom and the articles about doing the healthy things are at the top. Yahoo News provides the problem and brings it to everyone's attention while Yahoo Health gives solutions and suggestions to the problem.

In the weight loss section there was an article titled "Are you making these dieting mistakes?" The list included things like "you eat too early" and "you don't snack enough". I loved the way this article was laid out because telling dieters that they are allowed to still eat some of their favorite things is great news to them. They explain dieting to someone that hasn't ever tried to diet before but also gives great tips that might be new to someone who has been dieting a long time. One of the tips was "Just because a food is healthy doesn't mean you can eat a mountain of it. Switching from white bread to whole wheat bread, eating nuts instead of chips, using olive oil instead of butter —these are

all healthy changes. But they aren't low-calorie substitutions, so portion control is still key." (Fodor)

Putting articles like these in the weight loss section can help new dieters start dieting if they can make some changes in their life and build from there. Another great article titled "25 Diet-Busting Foods you Should Never Eat" shows pictures, calorie amounts and an alternative for the food or drink. This gives the reader a visual experience of seeing the food or drink and the calorie amount right next to it.

"Kellogg's Pop-Tarts Brown Sugar Cinnamon includes *Two pastries: 420 calories, 16g fat, 26g sugar, 66g carbs*. At least breakfast cereals have relatively easy-to-understand serving sizes. Pop-Tarts, on the other hand, report nutrition information for one serving, but each package contains two—and is impossible to reseal." (Klein) This list of foods is something that people eat every day and may not realize what they are actually eating. Yes, people do realize that pop-tarts are not healthy but I don't think they realize how unhealthy it really is. Parents everywhere give their children pop-tarts to eat for breakfast and they are starting their day with 16 grams of fat. This list is not a list to discriminate and target people to tell them how unhealthy their food is but it's more to bring awareness. Think about this if the grocery store was labeled and organized by calorie and fat information then would the high calorie items fly off the shelf? I think not because if people are aware of what is in their food and what they are buying they might think twice about giving their 5 year old pop-tarts for breakfast. I think that yahoo health isn't trying to discriminate the unhealthy foods and say people shouldn't eat them but they just want them to know exactly what they are putting in their mouth.

In the exercise and fitness section a healthcare professional offers diet and fitness tips a list entitled "11 Fitness Myths Holding You Back". The title of the article already draws the reader in. 11 is an odd number which already leads to an interesting question in the readers mind which is why is there just 11? "With so many people offering advice on weight loss, it can be hard to separate fact from fiction. All too often I've overheard a hardworking gym-goer sharing a well-meaning but ill-informed tip with another exerciser." (Bergen) This is a great opening statement because it's very true

and relatable to the everyday public. There are so many things that people tell you to do for diets and with so much information even experienced dieters don't know exactly what to believe. False information could lead a new dieter in the wrong direction. Jenna Bergen is the author of this article and she writes for prevention magazine which is a creditable resource. Her first myth is "MYTH #1: The best way to lose weight is to drastically cut calories". She goes on explaining that women need to eat 1200 calories a day and men need around 1800. This is one of the most common misconceptions about dieting because people think that if you are on a diet you have to starve yourself and this is very untrue. By making better food choices you can feel fuller. Another myth she uncovers is "Abs are made in the kitchen—not from doing crunches". (Bergen) I think that most people believe that they need to do a lot of crunches and abdominal workouts to get their six packs. This is very untrue because of the many different muscles in the abdomen that need to be worked in different ways so they can achieve their full six pack potential. At the bottom of the article I was looking for the 11th myth and it was not there at all. There were only 10 facts. This should be fixed by the people who edit and run yahoo health. This is just a small factor but for such a large company as yahoo things like this are just careless mistakes. Over all it was a good article but only having 10 facts when it originally said 11 kind of ruined the vibe at the end of the article.

Healthday is one of the external sites that are featured on Yahoo Health quite frequently. Under the fitness section they had a story posted under the news category. This story has a little information about kickboxing. "Kickboxing is a fun way to burn calories and tone muscles. But experts say participants, especially beginners, should take precautions to avoid injury." (HealthDay) Healthday seems to have the most current articles this particular article is part of their health tips that are posted quite frequently. This is such a great tip because it's a different way to work out then just going to the gym it can add some fun to an everyday workout routine. Yahoo Health does a great job of putting other fun workouts on below it and links to find out information about them. This article is geared

towards new dieters and gives tips on what to expect the first time you go for a class or to try it on your own.

Although I think that Yahoo Health is a great spinoff to filter the health news articles from Yahoo News I think that with the new and different customizable feeds today I don't think there are as many followers of this website as there were a few years ago. Sites like Google reader and yahoo who also have their own customizable news feed will possibly be taken over most of these spin off sites. Inevitably someone who likes the news sites that Yahoo Health had put up they could find the authors or magazines that are usually featured in Yahoo Health and add them to their feed. Yahoo has great content and they have trustworthy authors that contribute to their site. The articles all pertain to the certain subject and with the Yahoo health site overall there is a lot of sites.

The push for weight loss and a healthy lifestyle is in high demand. It's advertised in schools and even in the workplace. So why are there so many news stories that are so negative? One would think that the big push for improved weight loss and a healthy diet would make the news stories more positive. There should be some success stories from everyday people. When an everyday person can have a weight loss journey on their own they can then show everyone that it is possible to do no matter what you weigh. Cancer patients look for stories of empowerment and there should be more for struggling dieters. Yahoo news does a great job and picking articles that don't seem like a complex diet but more of a lifestyle change for them.

Something that Yahoo could do to better improve their articles and the experience for their readers is to have a section for experienced dieters so there may be some more advanced tips and exercises for them to do. They could also cut the negativity out of the paper. The news section needs to stay at Yahoo news and the health tips and articles should be the ones in Yahoo Health because the news has a lot of negativity and the Health section is supposed to be a positive environment for every

to come read and learn how to make their life a healthy life. I know that list are appealing to people but there is an overload on Yahoo Health so they could do some weight loss success stories to even out all the list of tips. Overall this is a great website for articles and news updates. I would recommend this site to someone if they were trying to get started losing weight or they were being a support system for someone who has just started their weight loss journey.

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