

**WFLA show critique by Jeanette Abrahamsen**  
**November 5, 2013 11 p.m.**

**11 p.m. tease following "The Voice"**

The promo starts off with well-written process language and sense of immediacy. The script is short and clear. The order of the stack is appropriate starting with the mayoral race.

Local "Voice" competitors was a smart second tease to grab the lead-in viewers who would be more inclined to stick around to watch more. The promise could be more specific than "what they had to say about the experience."

"Oprah's favorite thing" was a good choice for the third tease. Though, "Bay area" was said three times in less than 20-seconds (once in each tease). That may distract viewers from focusing on the content.

**Show open**

Starting with double box video off the top of the show is a good way to jump right to the lead story. However, it could have looked cleaner had the shots of the mayors been celebrating their wins instead of lip flap off the top.

Lower thirds for anchors are missing when they introduce themselves.

**Lead story**

The election results full screen has nice movement and depth but still clearly presents the information. The live stinger transition to the double box toss to Peter Bernard is good. Peter should have been standing in another area for the live toss to his pkg to give a better idea of where he is. The plant against the wall backdrop made for a passive stand up. If the crowds had already dispersed by the time his live shot hit, Peter could have been more active had he for example, shown viewers the decorations or mess left behind after the celebration.

**Personal information exposed**

B-roll of the DEO executive director appears in the VO before his SOT but there is no reference to him in the script so it looks like a mistake. The video following the SOT is distracting because it is not referenced in the script. Because there is text on the visa card sticker, viewers spend more time trying to read what it says to understand why the video is there. By the time the next shot comes up the viewer only hears the anchor read, "Those affected will be offered free credit monitoring for a year." This leaves viewers to assume the man in the shot had his personal information stolen, but that is also unclear.

**NFL bullying allegations**

The first line of the NFL bullying allegations VOSOT makes viewers think WFLA is behind on a story that's been a big talker for days. The script says, "We're learning this week that bullying doesn't only take place in the classroom, it may be happening in the locker room among professional athletes." If this had been used as a way to transition from a school bullying story, to the NFL story it would have made more sense. But since it was not, the first line should have included the new information on the story which most viewers were likely already following before they watched the show. The script would have seemed more fresh if it said something

like, “New developments in the NFL bullying investigation tonight. More former NFL players are revealing what really happens in the locker room after a Miami Dolphins guard was suspended.”

### **USAA expansion VOSOT**

There are many important numbers in this story. The information in lower thirds was more intriguing than the file aerials of the USAA building. Viewers would get more value from combining the video with a full screen or infographic. Repeating the same video after the SOT was not necessary. That would have been a great time to show the viewers how to navigate WFLA.com to find the specific information referenced in the script.

### **Miracle place VO**

The Miracle Place story offers a great opportunity to do a feel-good emotional feature on one of the people being affected. Viewers would have better understood the importance of the story had they realized how many children were being helped in the lead line of the script. A SOT with one of the new residents could have made this story stick in the minds of viewers after the show ends. Because the WFLA brand is less centered on crime, the demographics are already more likely to attract to an occasional feature like this. Because it was a planned event, it could have been a PKG that was shot in advance. If the interviews are emotional, the video is also more likely to be shared by viewers on social media.

A search for “Miracle Place” on WFLA.com produces one result. Several sentences of the correct Miracle Place story that aired at 11:00 p.m. can be seen under the title “Dr. Oz offers advice on fighting fat.” The link goes to the Dr. Oz video and has nothing to do with Miracle Place. This discourages viewers from interacting with the brand on other platforms.

### **Oprah favorite thing PKG**

The toss to the PKG is well written. The PKG is a fun local story and the woman being interviewed is very likable. The ad lib between Keith Cate and Gayle Sierens is a refreshingly genuine personality driven moment that is unfortunately rare in 11:00 p.m. A-blocks. One way to capitalize on that could have been to have Keith take a picture of Gayle with her toffee “behind the scenes” to show on air. This could be posted on Facebook, or tweeted out earlier to promote the story. It could also be posted to WFLA Instagram. Anchors could tell viewers to support the local business and hashtag their pictures with the store name @WFLA. Especially since this story is running in more than one newscast, anchors can call up the Instagram photos on air to give viewers a shout out and use it as an excuse to remind viewers to interact with WFLA social media.

### **The Voice PKG**

A NAT pop off the top of the B-block with a few seconds of the song would be a good bump-in to Gayle’s toss. The frequent NATS of the song made the PKG more touching and inspiring.

### **Sailboat rescue VOSOT**

It was not necessary to use the same still image of the sailboat both before and after the SOT. The anchors don’t always need to be covered by video or images unless it adds something to the story.

### **Weather**

The iPhone graphic for weather on the go is a great way to remind viewers of the WFLA app.

Anchors should also reference it verbally to get the attention of viewers who may be getting ready for bed at the end of the b-block.

The motion graphic weather bump-out looks nice but it's not clear if the information represents the current conditions or the forecast for the next day.

### **Sports**

Dan Lucas opens the block referring to Will Myers not using hair product last night. There is no video or explainer so viewers who are unfamiliar with what Dan is talking about will automatically tune out. Sports can be particularly alienating if reporters are too "inside baseball." Dan goes on to talk about Myers during the VO, but the extreme wide shots of plays make it difficult for new sports viewers to know what Myers looks like. A close up, or still image of Myers would have been better in the monitor behind Dan and at the beginning of the VO. Dan then talks about Chris Archer, but the video is now a medium shot of Myers. Referencing video improves chances of getting new viewers, and makes it less likely for viewers to change the channel.

### **Kicker**

The panda kicker was unique. Plus, cute animals are always TV gold. The funny topic created a great moment for the anchor/reporter team to bring out their personalities for the end of the show. The timing was perfect because it allowed enough breathing room to catch a few comments.