

## 15 Seconds Context and Cast

A group of teens decide to host a blog that will share videos, art, and blog entries to the net in the hopes that they will go viral. The cast has a wide range of interests – books, movies, fashion, photography, comedy, writing, community awareness, and technology. Every week they post something they think is important to share with the world - and make their 15 seconds in the spotlight last as long as it can.

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### **Carrie (Latina)**

It was Carrie's idea to host a blog. She's very high energy — a glass-half full type of person. Carrie is very involved in her town. She volunteers at the local community center working the front desk, and she also teaches dance to some of the younger kids at the center. Her job keeps her in tune with all goings on of T-Town, and provides a constant source of topics to write about, explore, and share with the world-at-large via the blog. Carrie has big ideas — she is the visionary of the group. She sometimes gets way ahead of herself - and relies on Brandi and Max to help ground her and bring her ideas to an attainable and accessible state for the blog.



### **Max - a - Mil (Caucasian)**

Carrie met Max at the computer lab in the community center. He has taught her a lot about blogs, the internet, and the blogosphere. He loves computers, technology and gadgets. His full name is Maximillian, but he seems to know about a million bits and bytes of information - which he loves to cite, so Carrie sometimes calls him Max-A-Mil. Though he may seem laid back, he's actually pretty driven when he sets about a task — it's just that his way of going about things tends not be as outwardly peppy as Carrie or as grounded and directed as Brandi. Max has a great sense of humor and enjoys cracking the girls up when he gets the chance - but uses his humor to help bring unity and harmony to the group's direction.



### **Brandi (African- American)**

Brandi is new in town and met Carrie at the community center library, where first came to find an interesting book, or maybe a movie, and to find out more about what was going on around town. Brandi loves the performing arts, movies, fashion, plays, literature, and reading. She used to be part of a theatre group back home, so she's got a real artistic flare for drama, poetry and a high interest in acting and actors in general. Carrie thought it would be great to add that type of thing to her blog, and asked Brandi to join. The two have been great friends ever since. Brandi balances Carrie's big ideas and translates them into a step-by-step plan of action. Although Brandi's focus on detail can get in her way, Carrie is always there to help her see the big picture.

# 15 Seconds Cast

## Sample Dialogue

*(Carrie sits on the corners of desk, and Brandi leans on the other side. Sitting between them at the desk is Max, who appears to be staring at his screen and not listening to either of them.)*

**Carrie:** *(with rising excitement)* Yessssss! *(with varying intonation)* That story is so right for us! We're definitely linking to it. People will love that story! They'll so totally love it. *(pause)* Won't they? They will. Don't you think so?

**Brandi:** *(attempting to ground Carrie a bit)* Probably. It has everything readers say they want—suspense, surprise, interesting characters. And people usually like to read about a mystery. But we'll need a summary to get our readers on the hook.

**Carrie:** Probably? It's always probably with you, Brandi. It's never definitely. It's never "Wow! Fantastic! Sure!"

**Brandi:** Just stating the facts. Everything has to be step by step.

**Carrie:** Step by step! Step by step *(playfully mimicking)*. Flying is more my style – all the way to the finish!

**Max:** *(not turning)* We're **all** about the finish Carrie. But it's gotta follow a process – like a good piece of code, created one line at a time *(dreamily, in bliss)* Step by step until... *(remembering himself)* Hey, Brandi. *(mischievously)* Is it present time?

**Carrie:** A present? For me?

**Brandi:** *(sounding not impatient but amused)* Present? *(pause)* What present was that, Max? I've forgotten.

**Max:** Youuuu know, that pair of wings we bought her yesterday. So she can always fly ahead of the facts. *(pretending to look in his bag)*

**Carrie:** Oh, you guys.....

**Max:** *(pulls out a pedometer instead)* Sorry. We got you a pedometer instead. This'll count your steps. Each and every one.

*(All laugh)*

**Carrie:** *(playfully, in admission)* Ok, ok, I get it!

**Max:** And for you, sweet Brandi *(Max pulls out a map of T-Town that unfolds like an accordion)* – the big picture matters too.

**Brandi:** *(reluctantly gives a giggle)* Point taken. Thanks a Mil, Max.

**Carrie:** *(laughing with Brandi. Max continues to type, more focused on the screen)* Okay. So we need a summary. Let's get to work. How do we summarize this story?

## Zoo-HQ Context and Cast

A group of teens volunteer at a zoo for wild and exotic animals. They help feed and care for the animals and also go on rescue missions, which take them to some pretty exciting places. One day an injured animal is brought to the zoo by the rescue team. With the help of the staff, the teens work towards getting the animal back to health – and one day, they will travel to its original habitat and release it back into the wild. The majority of this context will indeed take place in the Zoo HQ, references to missions and adventures can be made with actual photography and still of animals rescued or interacted with (to limit animation expenses, etc.).

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### **Ray (Caucasian)**

Ray lives with his uncle who happens to work at the Zoo. Ray loves basketball and most everything to do with sports, but after spending a few weeks helping his uncle out at the Zoo-HQ, his big, tender heart went out to the animals there. He also became passionate about learning the different species of the world and their threatened environments. Now he splits his time between his two passions. Ray is a bit older than Alex and Daryl, and has learned a lot from his uncle, so he's got a fair amount of information to share. As the team goes about tasks, it's Ray who doles out the work (based on items passed down from his uncle, who we need never see). Ray draws upon his sports-taught team attitude to manage activities and gets things done.



### **Alex (Asian)**

Alex found a wounded crow in her backyard, but since no pet store or shelter would offer to help bring it back to health, she took the crow (who she named Poe) to the zoo as a last resort. Daryl could not bring himself turn the pair away. Daryl offered to team up with Alex and to help nurse Poe back to health—providing she'd stick around and help out at the Zoo-HQ. Alex has a love for all animals and is a whiz on the net; where she pulls up important facts and other data that helps the team get their jobs done very efficiently. Alex is very close to Poe, and seems to communicate with him almost like a real person. Daryl is very fond of Alex, and treats her like a little sister, so the Zoo-HQ has become her home away from home.



### **Daryl (the Big "D") (African American)**

Daryl wants to go to college someday and study animals—especially those found in exotic places. The Zoo-HQ seemed like the perfect place for him to volunteer. Daryl is a naturally outgoing, exuberant, and funny guy. He loves telling jokes, being the center of attention and clowning around, but he clearly cares about the animals and the environment. Daryl writes a column for the for the Zoo-HQ Review about animals and their lives at the zoo as well as in the wild, and with Ray and Alex helping him, he's able to put some really great work into his assignments (also doled out by Ray's uncle). Daryl seems to be friends with just about everyone and has the ability to sell a problem, and gain support to solve it.

# Zoo-HQ Cast

## Sample Dialogue

*(Daryl and Ray are standing in front of a bunch of parts, spread out on table. Alex sits on table upon folded knees. A large box, with the top open, stands empty next to the table. The crow Edgar is standing on one corner of the table, head cocked, examining all the parts and pieces.)*

**Ray:** I see what you mean. It does look complicated. But, hey, we can do this thing—if we work it out together.

**Daryl:** Uh...yeah dude *(slowing as he reads directions)*...'course we can...no doubt.

**Alex:** *(smiling and looking down)* You kind of sound like you're doubting, Daryl.

**Edgar:** *(makes a sound that mimics Alex's concerns)*

**Daryl:** No. Well, not really. Okay, maybe a little. I mean, look at that one bag. It's filled with about fifty different nuts and bolts. And every one of them looks like it's a different size! I'm much better at following directions.

**Alex:** No biggie. I can organize all the parts in less than five minutes *(proudly)*. I can solve any problem if there is someone to talk to...you know, bounce my ideas off? Right Edgar?

**Edgar:** *(squawks in agreement)*

**Ray:** Thanks for taking that part of the job on, Alex. How about you Daryl?

**Daryl:** *(looking at the directions)* The directions seem pretty clear. My friends and I put a desk together once, using directions just like this. I kind of got the hang of how to read things like this.

**Ray:** All right, Daryl, then you'll figure out these directions. Which look almost as complicated as that bag of bolts and all the parts.

**Daryl:** Nah, it's okay. It's got a rhyme and a reason and a rhythm. I'll show you.

**Ray:** Alex, make sure Edgar doesn't fly away with any of those bolts!

**Alex:** It's more the string he's going to want.

**Edgar:** *(squawks excitedly for "string")*

**Daryl:** Hah! It's everything he wants. That crow takes whatever isn't nailed down. Including the nails! There's enough stuff up there in his perch to build four of these things! Every pencil I've ever lost is up there.... all my missing socks...a few bucks worth of change....my lunch from last week...

*(All laugh)*

**Ray:** ok, ok, guys - So, the plan has emerged. Alex - you're organizing parts and keeping Egdar in control. Daryl - show us how to read those directions. And I'll grab the tool kit. Then we'll all push up our sleeves and build this thing together.

**Daryl:** It's like you said. We can do this thing.

**Edgar:** *(squawks in agreement)*

## Cast: Swing character



### **Zak (formerly Dylan) (Latino)**

Ray coaches Zak in basketball at the community center, and invited him to help out at the Zoo-HQ. Zak is the only other person outside of Alex who understands and communicates with Edgar the crow. He is tender and gentle with the animals, and his sense of freedom around them is evident.

Zak is a very active online gamer and computer guy—and is good friends with Max, who he met while playing an online game. From time to time, Max asks Zak to appear in some of the videos and to help write articles for the blog. Zak tends to focus on human issues and other things that are close to his heart, like fairness and equality. His outlook helps to bring some balance to the sometimes lighter topics that Carrie pursues.

Zak should not be portrayed as “a token” character who fights for the rights of the handicapped with a “always positive can-do attitude”. Rather, he only wishes to connect with the world around him and find balance, between his time in sports, his work at the ZOO-HQ and with the 15 Seconds Crew. He’s a normal teen with varied interests.

His positive outlook and friendly nature make his handicap irrelevant; he enjoys working with others and doing his fair share of the work at hand. The kids in both casts turn to him when they need help, and his role is often “to save the day. In his circle of friends, he is well known for his “Zak-Attack” - his no-nonsense approach to aggressively and efficiently solving problems.

## Context: Swing

### **Zak**

#### **Sample Dialogue**

**Max:** I don’t know how to analyze this data.

**Brandi:** I’ve got no idea.

**Carrie:** And I’m completely clueless.

**Max:** I know. Zak attack!

**Brandi:** Yes! Call Zak. He is the one guy who can do this.

**Max:** (*calling Zak on something like Skype*) Hey, Zak, we’re totally stuck on how to analyze data. Can you save us?

**Zak:** I know how to do that. Tell me what problem you are trying to solve.

**Max:** We’re looking at the number of hits we get a day right now. And we’re trying to project how many hits we’ll get once we add some more features to our site.

**Zak:** You know more than you think you do, Max. Let me show you how this works. You can do this by using a lot of other skills you already have. If we talk about it for a few minutes, I am sure you’ll get the idea.