



**Special
Edition of
Innovation
in News
Media World
Report**

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*Re
imagining
the*

**INNOVATION
NEWS**

Editors

**Juan Señor,
Emma Goodman**

An annual survey by INNOVATION International Media
Consulting Group for the World Association of Newspapers
and News Publishers — WAN-IFRA



*Re
imagining
the*
News

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INNOVATION

From Media Companies to Information Engines

What a year. 2020 has defied all expectations, turning the world as we knew it upside down. It will take some time for the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the news industry to be felt, but we can already see significant changes taking place.

The pandemic and consequent lockdowns are accelerating trends in all areas of life, including news consumption and production. Trends that might have taken five years to become the norm are now becoming the norm in five months. These include the migration of the audience to digital platforms, the failure of digital advertising to provide sufficient funding for quality journalism, and the collapse of trust in social media platforms.

As well as being the hardest story that many journalists will have ever had to cover, lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic have created huge challenges for news organisations. Reporters and presenters have done impressive work to recreate studios in their bedrooms and living rooms with duvets on their heads to improve audio quality, fending off children and pets who wander in and out as they please, but it is far from an ideal situation. The creativity of a newsroom can't be reproduced on Zoom calls. It is far harder to hold politicians to account during virtual press conferences

and no opportunities for face-to-face chance encounters. Foreign reporting is suffering as journalists reduce travel to avoid spreading or catching the virus.

Advertising markets have of course been hit hard, and as a result, many news organisations are suffering. Publishers have been cutting jobs, cutting office space and cutting print days. And as in all industries, there will be victims of this crisis.

But there is a critical need for reliable information, particularly when online misinformation is a credible threat, as the World Health Organisation's warning of an 'infodemic' in early February made clear. Although some titles' print operations have suffered due to lockdowns, many publications have seen their digital readership soar during the pandemic as the public seeks to understand the crisis and make decisions directly relating to their own lives.

In the UK for example, newspaper brands added 6.6 million daily digital readers in the year ending 31 March 2020, reaching record audiences, according to data from The Publishers Audience Measurement Company, PAMCo.

Ten of the biggest newspaper groups in the US and UK collectively gained more than one million new digital subscriptions amid the first

few months of the COVID-19 crisis, research by Press Gazette found in June.

There is finally a global recognition that independent journalism is valuable and must be paid for: publishers must seize this moment. As the Local News Initiative at Northwestern University suggests, this is "a make-or-break time for local news" in the US, with the pressure on smaller publishers to keep the new readers and subscribers that they have garnered during the health crisis.

Publishers and journalists around the world are stepping up. Three-quarters of publishers surveyed by BRAND United and Publishing Executive created new content products in response to COVID-19. News organisations have held a plethora of virtual events, they have started new dedicated email briefings on the progress of the virus and its implications, they have launched podcasts, and more.

As we show in our visual journalism chapter in this report, news outlets have taken data visualisations to new levels as they seek to explain unfathomable numbers, unpredictable scenarios and unprecedented political decisions.

As ever, revenue is top of mind for most publishers, and the current crisis means that it is more crucial than ever to diversify, and fast.

Editors

**Juan Señor,
Emma Goodman**

There is finally a global recognition that independent journalism is valuable and must be paid for: publishers must seize this moment.

We give an overview of 14 different business models that news organisations can try. We also take a closer look at the different types of paywall that outlets around the world are using. Whichever you choose, do find a way to make your readers pay. For too long we have been in the wrong business: selling ads, when we need to be selling our journalism.

We open this year's report with essays from leading publishers and editors on the subject of Reimagining the news. We started this effort at the beginning of the year before extent of the health crisis was clear: we had no idea how much more pertinent this topic would become. We hope that these insights into thinking at news companies around the globe will inspire and motivate as we move through this turbulent start to a new decade, with hopefully more peaceful times ahead. ●

The New York Times

Newsworks

Arab News

The Washington Post

Rappler

Demník N

Le Monde

Upsala Nya Tidning

ESSS

NEWS

The Straits Times

BBC

La Vanguardia

Toronto Star

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La Nacion

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**THE FUTURE
BELONGS TO
THOSE WHO
CAN DO GREAT
WORK IN THE
BOUNDARY
BETWEEN
CONTENT
CREATIVITY
AND TECH
INNOVATION**

MARK THOMPSON

**OUTGOING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
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society which loses its shared culture loses much of its sense of distinctive identity. A society in which different communities and groups can no longer listen to and come to understand each other's pasts and presents shouldn't be surprised if mutual incomprehension and division are the result. If you doubt that any of this connects to big politics and national well-being, you're not paying attention.

Our culture comprises much more than media. Language, literature, education, theatre, music, dance, the visual arts, much else besides. But I doubt anyone would dispute the centrality of media – digital media, regular TV and radio, movies, newspapers and magazines, local and national – in British life.

But to state the obvious, many of these categories – and therefore much of our cultural sovereignty – are now under economic and audience threat from a process of digital disintegration and reinvention that is still accelerating, in many areas just getting going, and particularly from its globalising effects, which are driven not just by the borderless character of digital distribution, but by its intrinsic scale economics.

It's hard for anyone other than the US or China to produce global digital platforms. The UK hasn't produced one. Nor has any other European country, with the arguable exception of Sweden and Spotify. British creators make first-class programmes for Netflix, Amazon and

the other American streamers, but there's a crucial difference between producing great content to fit someone else's creative agenda, and commissioning and controlling it yourself. It's the commissioners who decide what gets made – and reap most of the economic upside. If real scale is what it takes in digital content distribution, we don't have a horse in that race either.

*

The idea that Netflix and others are changing the game in broadcasting is hardly news of course. It was a big theme of last week's Royal Television Society's Cambridge convention. As for digital disruption of newspapers, that's been with us for years.

What I hope to bring to the party is my experience of leading a large-scale and generally encouraging response to the digital tsunami. I hope that this experience – with real audiences, a real creative organisation, real technology and real dollars – will help convince you that successful transformation is possible, at least for legacy players who accept the daunting investment and drastic change required. It's also, I believe, a useful perspective from which to view and propose changes to current policy.

I'm going to proceed as follows. First I'll talk about the perilous and seemingly intractable set of threats that faced *The New York Times* when I walked into the lobby as chief executive in late 2012. I'll tell you how we responded, draw some general lessons from that – lessons which in my view are just relevant for TV, movies, radio and music as they are for the news business – and apply them to today's UK media landscape. Finally, I'll turn to the question of public policy.

So let's start with *The New York Times*. In 2012, it was still a profitable, cash-generative

company. Its journalism was as strong as ever. It had been an early investor in digital and its website was still recognised as a market leader.

But pretty much every economic indicator was trending down. Print advertising, which had collapsed during 2008/9 was still falling like a stone. The number of print subscribers was also falling, albeit more gradually. Newsstand sales were plummeting. To everyone's consternation, after years of growth, digital advertising was going into reverse. Even the digital subscription model – launched the previous year, and the company's great hope – seemed to be running out of steam at around the 600,000 subscriber mark. Innovation had stalled. Strategy was at a stand. It remained a largely analogue company not just in revenue but in spirit and expertise.

Terrifyingly, it was nonetheless one of the highest performers in the entire US industry. Since 2004, more than one in five US newspapers have closed. Employment in the industry fell from over 400,000 in 2000 to 140,000 last year – a nearly two-thirds attrition. It's not just the closures – even the survivors have been savaging headcount. More journalists have lost their jobs in recent years in America than coal miners.

The economic object of any legacy media digital strategy is to develop digital products and services which can grow revenue and profitability aggressively enough to offset the inevitable declines in print. Most American newspapers were finding it impossible to meet this brutally clear benchmark. They still are.

The New York Times did have important advantages. Its brand heritage and the obstinate determination of the board and controlling Ochs-Sulzberger family interest not to savage the newsroom, no matter how bleak the



The economic object of any legacy media digital strategy is to develop digital products and services which can grow revenue and profitability aggressively enough to offset the inevitable declines in print.

forward economics looked. That digital headstart. Its untapped global potential.

All strengths to build on, though quite how was as yet unclear. Wall Street, not known for its sentimentality, had reached its verdict – which was that *The Times* was the best of a bad lot. The stock price which had touched \$50 a share at its peak was now stuck at around \$8.

So what did we do? Over the next few years, we devised and executed a strategy which had the following elements:

First, we believe in journalism. It's what we stand for. It's the only thing we have to sell. So – unlike almost everyone else – we've invested in journalism.

We now have around 1,750 journalists working for *The New York Times*. That's three hundred more than in 2012 and the greatest number in the company's 170 year history.

Heavy investment in content is Netflix's strategy. It's Disney's strategy. They know that distinctiveness – providing something clearly different, more valuable, more trustworthy than what's available for nothing on the web – is essential. Distinctiveness is a no-brainer if you want to succeed as a provider of high quality digital content of any kind.

A good slice of our investment has gone into building classic journalistic breadth and strength. Take investigations. You'll be familiar with some of *Times*'s work in investigative journalism – Harvey Weinstein and Bill O'Reilly,



Trump's taxes and so on – but what I want to stress is the sheer number of original stories *The New York Times* delivers every week, a drum-beat of high impact headlines previously unknown anywhere in digital, print or broadcasting.

We've also invested in new specialists in critical areas like tech and climate – on which we delivered more than 800 stories last year – as well as video, audio and other new forms of story-telling.

By contrast, instead of investing, most of the world's news organisations have either chosen or been forced to try to cut themselves to a digital future.

That may drive higher short-term profitability, but it's a strategy that leads off a cliff. You can't degrade your journalism and keep

your audience, let alone sell them subscriptions.

This is unavoidably a capital-intensive period in media. You have to invest not just in content, but data science, digital product, engineering. We now have around 900 specialists – in addition to that big newsroom – working on our digital machine. Most are new to the company.

There is a difference – one we had to learn – between “trying digital”, meaning letting a handful of people play around the edges of the business, and trying as if the company's life depended on it. Which it does. You have to throw everything and almost everyone into the fight.

This level of commitment is hard for publicly-listed companies who find themselves competing for creative and engineering talent

“**Yes, Google and Facebook should do more to help news publishers and other providers of civically and culturally valuable content.**”

– and for the best intellectual property assets – with tech players who typically have vast cash reserves or access to seemingly unlimited venture capital.

But building an ark doesn't come cheap. Not if you want it to float.

Next, we believe in developing close, long-term relationships with the most engaged consumers of our journalism with a current hypothesis that the single best way to turn these relationships into revenue is by converting these loyal users into paying customers.

Until fairly recently, very few people in news publishing believed that either. People just wouldn't pay for news on digital devices, we were told. Many were amazed when *The New York Times* reached even half a million subscribers. Now most print and many digital players are trying to follow us.

Meanwhile in ad-funded TV or radio almost no one on either side of the Atlantic is contemplating more than a marginal shift towards direct end-user subscriptions. Some have instead been licensing their libraries to Netflix and the other streamers – in other words, taking cash in return for helping to build the very platforms that wish to replace them. It's only recently that legacy players have spotted the strategic danger of that tactic.

A relationship strategy depends less on raw page-views and click-rates than it does on engagement and frequency – in other words, how deeply and how often a given reader uses you. So we poured people and money into the task of improving the digital experience of *The New York Times* and optimising the pay model and our subscription tactics.

From 2014, we focused most of our efforts on the mobile phone experience, because that was where the users were. Peak time for news use on mobile phones is 7am, so the whole cir-

cadian rhythm of the newsroom had to change.

We invented new regular experiences – morning and evening briefings, a mini-crossword every morning, for instance – to encourage return visits. One way to think about our breakthrough podcast *The Daily* is as a habituation tool – it now reaches two million listeners on a typical day, ten a month, and it's still growing.

We've experimented everywhere and with everything. At any given moment we now have multiple simultaneous separate experiments running in the field.

We've launched successful new products – our digital crossword and cooking products are in their own right two of the news industry's largest subscription products – and unsuccessful ones.

We started taking international digital sub growth seriously – they've grown ten-fold since 2012. Audio arrived – *The Daily* is only one of our podcasts – as did VR, AR and, this year, TV with *The Weekly*.

We changed everything that needed to change. A generation of new leaders came in. We massively expanded training. As the business changed, so too did large parts of the employee base. In some departments, the need for different skills and expertise mean as much as an 85% change in the workforce.

Today growth in digital revenue comfortably outstrips print losses. Company revenue is now growing quarter after quarter. At the end of our most recently disclosed quarter, we had around 5 million total subscriptions, triple the highest number ever achieved in the print era. We plan to double that again to ten million by 2025. Far from plateauing as the model enters its ninth year, in recent quarters the rate at which we're adding net new subs has accelerated again.



A relationship strategy depends less on raw page-views and click-rates than it does on engagement and frequency .

Our projections suggest the ultimate size of our global subscription base could be far larger even than that ten million.

In 2015, we set ourselves the challenge of doubling digital revenue from \$400 million a year – the figure then – to \$800 million by 2020. We expect to hit that target well ahead of time. The stock price has more than tripled.

We’re not there yet – no one in digital is there yet, perhaps never will be there, if there means a secure and stable end-state – but we’re on our way again.

*

But how applicable is this experience to media more broadly? In my view and despite the unique features of *The Times*, very applicable. First, it helps us dispel some persistent myths.

Digital advertising can support quality journalism on its own. No it can’t. It was never going to. Most of the spoils of advertising go to those who control distribution. Once that was newspapers and magazines. Now it’s the major Silicon Valley platforms. The distribution advantage we once enjoyed with our presses and our trucks has already shrunk. In due course it will disappear entirely.

We’re building a different kind of distinctive digital advertising at *The Times* based around strategic partnerships with the world’s biggest brands. It’s showing real promise.

But that’s an option only available to a handful of publishers. Unless the others can pivot away from dependence on advertising, to subscription or other revenue streams, the future looks bleak. And that includes not just legacy firms, but former digital darlings like the *Huff Post*, *Buzzfeed* and the rest – players who today have begun to resemble legacy publish-

ers but without the actual legacy.

The fact that TV advertising has not yet gone through the same scale of disruption is only a timing issue. It’s inevitable, as audiences switch from privileged tradition distribution channels to digital. The same economic logic applies. Linear broadcasters everywhere are also undergoing the same ominous early stage audience-loss that hit the west’s newspapers years ago – particularly the differential flight of the young.

Effective counter-measures are possible. The Daily is by many measures the most popular news podcast in the world, but it’s also reaching and deeply engaging a substantially new audience for *The New York Times*. Three-quarters of its audience is 40 or under. 45% are 30 or under.

I grew up in broadcasting being told that very few young people would ever listen to serious speech audio. It’s rubbish and probably always was.

Bucking the trend requires not only investment but creativity and lateral thinking. Yet the reality is that any media company which fails to crack this problem, and can no longer replenish its audience, doesn’t have a long-term future. The effects won’t be immediate – older audiences are typically very loyal – but it’s ultimately non-survivable. It’s as simple as that.

Myth number two: it’s all Google and Facebook’s fault. They stole our business and something must be done about it.

Now, it’s convenient to have someone to blame for your woes – and it’s true that policy-makers and regulators across the western world have any number of searching questions to put to these two giants about their business practices.

Yes, Google and Facebook should do more to help news publishers and other providers

of civically and culturally valuable content. Google has taken some modest but promising steps, Facebook is talking seriously about doing the same.

But let’s be realistic. The true source of legacy media’s tribulations is not these two companies – and wouldn’t be solved if they were regulated more tightly, or even replaced by other search and social providers. The true culprit is the internet itself.

It was the internet which allowed hundreds of millions of users to switch from old media distribution channels to digital. It was the internet which robbed newspapers – and is now robbing linear TV – of the advertising pricing-power that went with the old privileged distribution.

And the politician or regulator has yet been born who can uninvent that magnificent and scarifying Pandora’s box. We’re stuck with it and therefore might as well make the most of it.

So for those brave souls – whether in news or entertainment – who opt to truly take the plunge, what are the fundamental conditions for success?

Scale. You need scale of audience, scale of engagement, scale of subscriptions. The goal is to reach the point at which operating leverage begins to rise – in other words, that moment in a company’s arc of digital growth beyond which investment and other costs no longer need to rise at the same pace as revenue, and the fundamental profitability of the business starts to increase.

Say we spend x hundreds of millions of dollars on journalism at *The New York Times* to serve five million subscribers. We won’t have to spend 2x to serve ten million. Nor 2x on product and technology or many of the company’s other expenses.

Some costs will no doubt continue to rise but, going forward, margin – meaning the gap between total revenue and total cost – will grow wider and wider. We see not just a viable fully digital news business in prospect, but an increasingly profitable one. But it’s impossible without scale and without that high initial investment.

The next condition is a super-clear value proposition for your customers, one that meets real-world demand and reflects real-world media consumption.

At *The New York Times*, we know what our mission is: to seek the truth and help people to understand the world. Our research suggests enormous and growing global demand for serious news. I’ve already talked about how we hope to satisfy that demand and about the critical role of quality and originality in our offering.

We’re not alone. It’s no coincidence that all the really successfully digital subscription models come from titles at the very top of the market. The future looks much tougher in the middle and bottom of the market. If your journalism isn’t special enough to sell to consumers, and you’re losing out in the ad market to the major digital platforms, I don’t see how you keep your head above water.

Some of the same dynamics are playing out in the unfolding global battle for the future of TV.

The streamers may drive much of their current consumption with reruns from conventional broadcast, but they’re putting their commissioning dollars into the kind of distinctive, ambitious programming which used to be reserved for premium cable and satellite – HBO or Showtime, say – or indeed the BBC and Channel Four. So it’s not reality shows and soaps, but *Fleabag* and *The Crown*. The best US linear players are fighting back with the same: *The Terror*, *Chernobyl*, even *Game of Thrones*.

For now it makes sense for the streamers to co-produce and share rights in the country of product. Don't expect that to last. Soon they'll want it all. Given the struggle that is now gaining momentum – they'll probably need it all too.

Conventional broadcasters – and I include conventional cable and satellite players – who do not have a compelling pure-play digital strategy of their own risk being priced out of the best talent and best content. Even in their hey-day, they'd have struggled to compete with these giants. Now with ad revenue – and in the case of the BBC, licence fee – squeezed, their financial firepower is waning.

Note also the impact of all this on some of the traditional arguments for public service intervention.

The great programmes I mentioned come out of a British creative culture and talent base which the UK Public Service Broadcasters have nurtured and sustained and conditioned audiences to expect. But will that role still be as critical in the future as the global players ramp up their investment in exceptional, high-risk work?

One could ask a similar question about purely financial support for the UK production sector. Reed Hastings announced that Netflix is spending half a billion dollars this year on British film and TV. Does that mean that the BBC's and Channel Four's investment is becoming less vital?

Finally, there's trust. According to data Ed Williams of Edelman presented at the RTS last week, Netflix's net trust score in the UK is now on a par with the BBC's and a point ahead of Channel Four's. If the PSBs ever enjoyed a special status with British audiences when it came to trust, that too seems to be in question.

Now, as you'll hear, I believe the case for public intervention in media is stronger than

ever – and indeed that, in many categories, aggregate market failure risk actually growing. Nonetheless the case for it needs not just to be restated but refined and sharpened.

The third lesson and condition for success is the how of building an effective digital media operation. It requires what is in many regards a new organisation.

Much of your existing tech and data architecture should go in the skip. Everything needs to be rebuilt. So too those traditional functional departments with their hierarchies and territories.

At *The New York Times*, we organise now around specific digital missions – engagement, subscription growth, for instance – with multi-disciplinary teams drawn from many fields working under unified leadership to achieve specific strategic goals. They test, they learn, they make most of the decisions usually without needing sign-off either from department heads or senior leadership.

Most legacy media structures are still shaped around the old, rather than the new business. They still operate with traditional pyramidal command-and-control. This is one of the main reasons why many are seeing such desultory results from their digital businesses.

You can't invent the future if you're spending 80% of your time on legacy operations. Hivve them off even if they drive most current revenue and profitability. Everyone knows them backwards. Get a handful of trusted colleagues to look after them so that everyone else can concentrate on the harder task.

And, if you're a leader, get retrained yourself. You can't wing this stuff on instinct and vague memories of business school when the world was young. At *The New York Times*, we leaders are literally back in the classroom doing graduate-level classes in statistics and

data science so that we can understand our own business better.

Of all the ills afflicting the world's legacy media companies, ignorant, risk-averse, outwardly arrogant, inwardly defeatist leadership is probably the most lethal. No one can bluster or lobby their way out of this one. God knows, enough still try.

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So how does Britain's media industry look when we consider it through this rather stark lens?

The good news is that the future of the UK's pool of talent, its writers, actors, directors, producers, designers and crafts, even the very best of its journalistic talent, looks better than ever.

The independent production sector posted a record £3 billion in revenues last year. There's no reason why, given the growing global appetite for it, this inward investment shouldn't grow much further.

Unfortunately, that's where the good news largely runs out.

The media world is dividing into potential global winners, probable survivors, and the rest. The UK certainly has possible survivors – among national newspapers, the *Daily Mail* and *Guardian* for instance. But with due respect – and notwithstanding the sizeable international audiences which several UK newspapers have built up – none looks like a potential global winner.

None has achieved the digital transformation of a *Schibsted*, or the digital diversification of a *Naspers* or *Springer*. Their heritage is domestic, and most have yet to change that or even their print-centric ways of working.

I don't see how all the current national



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titles survive. At regional and local level, it looks like something close to a wipe-out without dramatic intervention.

The UK's established broadcasters still have deep roots in the national consciousness. They still command big audiences. Their current schedules – and extensive libraries – still speak to many of those aspects of collective identity and national self-expression I mentioned at the start.

But none looks strong enough to be a true contender in the coming global contest. All are seeing adverse trends which are familiar from other digital disruptions – trends that can quickly turn from disquieting to terminal.

We've talked about the loss of the best talent and projects to the digital insurgents, and the inevitable loss of linear advertising revenue. Both are already realities in UK broadcasting, as is the arterial – and, as I said, ultimately insupportable – loss of young audiences.

BBCI's average age is 61. It's the youngest of the BBC's television channels. The average of the audience for the main Channel Four – the youthful, edgy alternative to the BBC – is 55.

Effectively reaching younger audiences is creatively hard and culturally difficult even for relatively recent legacy arrivals. For the BBC,

it's also harder to justify to an Establishment which tends to assume that if it's aimed at the young, it must be nakedly commercial.

The BBC as a whole should be a shoe-in as a probable global winner. It's the only British media brand with truly global recognition and potential. Its international audience runs in the hundreds of millions. Its indispensable presence in the lives of most British households is a testament, not just to its heritage, but to the talent it still attracts, and the creativity and excellence it still fosters.

But – at a moment when Britain contemplates setting out on a brave new voyage in search of new friends and new global markets – we can't put Britain's media flag-carrier on the list.

That's because of an essentially hostile public policy stance on the BBC, which began to coalesce more than a decade ago but has hardened notably in recent years. One of its fruits was the 2015 settlement which included the disastrous withdrawal of Government funding of free licence fees for the over-75s.

In 2007, just before we launched the BBC iPlayer, I had a conversation in Silicon Valley with Reed Hastings, who was then about to unveil Netflix's own streaming service. A important moment for him, just as the iPlayer was for us.

"I don't know why you're bothering, Mark," he said to me in a rather Reed-like way: "you'll never beat my algorithm. Why not just give us all your content instead?"

Reed is one of the most impressive business leaders I've met. Particularly since I've been at *The New York Times*, he's given me regular doses of candid and incredibly useful advice.

However, I came back to the UK from this and other meetings on the West Coast with the clear conviction that streaming would change consumption of TV out of all recognition;

that we absolutely must double-down on the iPlayer; and that we should also urgently find a global streaming solution not just for the BBC but the whole of British television.

This idea – which we named Project Kangaroo – quickly gained the support of the other UK PSBs, but was blocked in early 2009 by the UK Competition Commission which cited domestic market competition concerns. In the breakneck rush of digital transformation, eight years is an eternity.

If we're serious about opening up new international market opportunities, why wouldn't we unleash our only truly global media brand and exploit it, not just to bring a British perspective to audiences everywhere, but to introduce and project the work of the rest of the British creative sector as well?

All these controls and obstacles have a similar effect: which is to discourage and punish innovation and, as far as possible, to keep the BBC locked up in its traditional broadcasting box. This despite, or perhaps because of the fact that everyone knows that linear broadcasting is time-limited and will one day come to a full stop.

Radio will probably fare better. It's sticky and relatively cheap to make. It's readily relocatable to digital devices and environments. In some countries, including this one, it may be the last life-line for those without the money to pay for high quality news, music, documentary, entertainment.

But even here talent may become a problem. In the US, we're already seeing a brain-drain of some of the brightest creative talent into the flourishing, and increasingly lucrative world of podcasting.

And for ITV, Channel Four and other broadcasters who today depend disproportionately on advertising for their revenue, I don't

see much alternative to the kind of root-and-branch transformation we've undertaken at *The Times*.

I don't know what the new revenue mix should be, between subscription, free, sponsorship, e-commerce, retrans and other rights fees, and digital diversification. But they still have time to find the answer – although, as in the earlier cases of music and newspapers, it may be less time than they think.

For all the reasons I've suggested this evening, the UK needs a liberated, properly-funded BBC. By no means in all but in many categories of media, market failure – the economic justification for public intervention – is already growing and will worsen in the years ahead. At present, public policy seems to hold that the correct response to a failure of private provision – say, of regional and local news – is to restrict public provision of it as well.

The BBC has proven itself more adept at digital innovation and broad transformation than most private media companies – the iPlayer is only one example. Give the Corporation greater freedom to accelerate its own pivot to digital, but look to it to build digital products and platforms which can be used by the rest of the industry too.

Rethink the BBC's global role. At present government funding for the BBC's international services is heavily concentrated on the world's geopolitical hotspots. Our interests – both diplomatic and trade interests – are much wider than that. Leverage the BBC and use it as a calling card for the whole of the UK creative sector in the world's markets, and indeed for the UK itself.

Channel Four remains an essential creative alternative to the BBC and an enduringly valuable creative catalyst of the entire industry. No brand is better placed to begin to turn the tide when it comes to younger audiences. But



The economic object of any legacy media digital strategy is to develop digital products and services which can grow revenue and profitability aggressively enough to offset the inevitable declines in print.

Channel Four needs a serious digital strategy and the wherewithal to deliver it.

In media, the future belongs to those who can do great work in the boundary between content creativity and tech innovation. The UK's great success in gaming and CGI suggests we have a competitive edge here that we should exploit.

The other broadcasters must find their own commercial path to the future, much as we're having to do at *The New York Times*. But let's learn the lesson of Project Kangaroo and let them collaborate more freely with each other – and with the BBC when it can help with innovation and scale.

Mixed private and public provision, scalable tech solutions, community involvement, higher education, philanthropy, the support of the BBC – the solution will probably have many elements and certainly shouldn't solely consist of a large public cheque. But without a policy impetus and careful coordination, the present downward spin will continue. Here more than anywhere time is running out.

Instead of the policy of no – no, you can't – no, that's too dangerous – no, one of our political backers wouldn't like it – it needs to turn to a policy of yes. Yes to the power of British creativity. Yes to the future. ●

This is an abridged version of the 2019 Steve Hewlett Memorial Lecture, established by Britain's Royal Television Society and the Media Society.

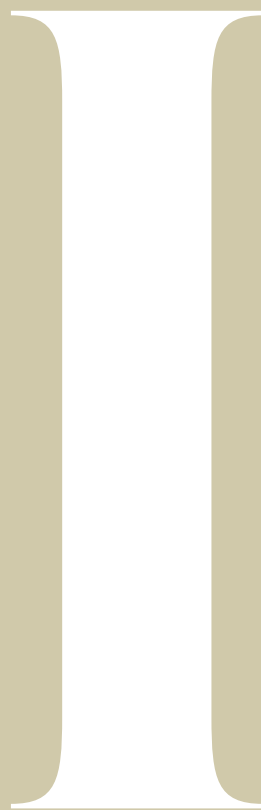


THE MISSING BILLION

TRACY DE GROOSE

OUTGOING EXECUTIVE CHAIR OF NEWSWORKS,
THE MARKETING BODY FOR UK NEWSPAPERS





'm going to dive straight in and start with the C-word and talk about commercial.

Why?

Because we need to talk about the money. We have been selling the wrong thing and for too long. We need to change that, fast. And, I can only do that with your help and support.

So, why have we have we been selling the wrong thing?

Because as an industry we've been selling our advertising space and not our journalism. It has lost us about one billion pounds of ad revenue over the last decade. One billion pounds less at a time when we really need it. But now we have a perfect window to change that. A perfect window to start getting the investment back into journalism.

Why?

Because we are at a critical crossroads for the news industry. News readership is at record levels. Forty-four million people read news journalism across newspapers and digital devices every week. This is about four to five million more readers than a decade ago. That's 10% growth. And more importantly, 44 million is the same weekly reach as Google. That surprises many people.

Why?

Because no one in our industry ever talks about total readership. The story that has domi-

nated over the last 10 years has been the one about declining newspaper circulations.

Newspapers are important. Eleven million people in the UK read a national newspaper every day. But 19 million people are reading our journalism online. That's around two-thirds of our audience. It's where our growth in readership is coming from. And that's where it will continue to come from. Two million more people every day are reading news journalism online compared to a year ago.

So, record numbers are reading the news. And readers are following us and our journalism as we transition online.

In any other sector that kind of growth would be celebrated, packaged up and sold, and told repeatedly, to advertisers who play a huge part in funding our industry.

Why do we have a window of opportunity right now?

Because public trust in news brands and demand for trusted sources of news and information is soaring.

The perception of the news industry is changing - trust is on the rise. According to our research, 69% of people say they trust their chosen news brand.

Edelman's Trust Barometer shows that people's trust in established news brands grew from 48% in 2017 to 60% in 2019. Compare that to social media where trust languishes at 29%.

Six out of 10 people say they rely more heavily on established news brands since the rise of fake news. This is hardly surprising when you consider the alleged meddling by Russia into our democratic processes, the proliferation of fake news and the spread of misinformation.

And let's not forget Google's dodgy track record on brand safety and the ad revenue

mistakenly generated from jihadi videos.

With the recent General Election in the UK, Facebook's stance on political ads has brought all these problems back into stark focus. Recently I heard three senior journalists explain why it's both a great time to be a journalist and a critical time for journalism.

Why?

Because people are looking for depth. They are demanding more analysis, news and information from the experts they can trust.

Journalism matters. Now more than ever. **So, where does that leave us?**

On all the metrics that matter to advertisers - growth, trust and demand - we are in great shape. But - and it's that big one billion pound but - for all this growth the money still isn't coming our way.

According to the forecasts, online ad revenue was set to rise by 5.1% in 2019. Mildly encouraging, but far from enough.

Why isn't the money coming faster?

The simple answer: digital advertising is broken.

It is dominated by an open marketplace in which content has been sold as one amorphous mass. There is little attention to the quality of the content. Or the attention of the audience.

In fact, the word "content" has been hijacked by the bullshitters, the propogandists, the fakers, and the like. This means quality journalism is being lumped together with this "content" and sold to advertisers.

Those advertisers now find themselves in this bonkers situation where they are no longer sure where their advertising is being shown. Nor are they sure if it is being seen by a human.

Unsurprisingly, trust in advertising has slumped to an all-time low: from 50% to 25%, according to the UK Advertising Association.



People are looking for depth. They are demanding more analysis, news and information from the experts they can trust.

So, why aren't things changing?

They are. Thankfully the advertisers, the regulators and the politicians are beginning to wake up to all of this. But it is slow. And the stranglehold the tech platforms have on the advertising market is tight.

However, the digital world is shifting on its axis and the next phase of digital advertising is looking significantly brighter for publishers.

Every piece of evidence shows that concentrating digital spend into quality journalistic environments delivers. And more and more advertisers are ready to listen.

Why do I need your help?

Because we have to take advantage of this shift. We can't sit here and expect everything to fall into our laps. We can't let the opportunity pass us by.

We are the greatest storytellers. But we haven't always been great at telling our own story. We need to change this and fast. We must learn to tell one unified industry story, more powerfully, more consistently and more frequently.

I am committing to be a figurehead for this. I have been to the United Nations to talk about the digital ad market and the many challenges that I have outlined here. I am making more noise in more places to help turn the tide in our direction.

So, if I could ask one thing, it would be for all those in the news business to give our industry the oxygen of publicity it deserves, to get our side of the story out there.

Why?

Because journalism matters. And we want that billion back. ●

The following article was adapted from a speech delivered at the UK's Society of Editors 20th annual conference in 2019.



WHY MEDIA DOOM AND GLOOM MAY BE MISPLACED

FAISAL J. ABBAS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF ARAB NEWS, SAUDI ARABIA

It is a cliché and a truism of journalism that bad news is good news: there's nothing like a full-scale disaster to drive traffic to our websites and send print copies flying off the newsstands. But when the disaster is one that afflicts the very business of news, it's another story.

The decline in sales of traditional media, particularly in the past 20 years, has been well documented: newspapers in North America lose up to 10 percent of their readers every year, those in Western Europe up to 3 percent. And speaking of newsstands, in the 1950s there were more than 1,500 in New York. There are now fewer than 300. Go figure, as they say in ... well, New York.

Nevertheless, these trends are a Western phenomenon only. Newspaper sales in China,

India and Japan are on the rise. As media analyst Christoph Riess once observed: "Circulation is like the sun. It rises in the East and declines in the West."

Moreover, the decline in print readership has been largely offset by an increase in digital news consumption. For example, The Times of London has just reported an increase in digital-only paid subscribers to 304,000, passing 300,000 for the first time since the service was launched in 2010, and now accounting for 56 percent of all subscriptions. In the last three months of 2019, The New York Times passed \$800 million in annual digital revenue for the first time, more than half of it from news subscribers.

So everything is rosy? Well, hardly. While many readers have remained loyal to their news outlets of choice, online if not in print, the same cannot be said for advertisers. Print advertising revenue in the US fell from \$25 billion in 2012 to \$10 billion in 2020, and is expected to decline to \$5 billion by 2024. Online, the digital behemoths Google, Facebook and Alibaba hoovered up \$200 billion in revenue in 2019, more than 60 percent of the total – leaving crumbs for the rest of us.

And there are challenges other than that of monetizing our content. The spread of "fake news" by unscrupulous propagandists has

tarred all of us with the same brush, diluting trust in honest journalism. Those of us who believe in the power of the truth must work harder to regain control of the news agenda.

In general, over the past 20 years the media landscape has fragmented beyond recognition, and business models with which we were all comfortable – perhaps too comfortable – have collapsed, sending the weakest to the wall.

That in itself, of course, means that those who remain are the strong ones. It is in how they operate that we should look for a roadmap to a successful news media future. For example, those two digital success stories, The Times of London and The New York Times – what do they have in common? They know that good journalism is expensive, so they invest in it, often in defiance of the bean counters in their own organizations who constantly want to slash costs. They also have enough pride in their work to tell readers: "What we produce costs money. You're going to have to pay for it."

This confidence recognizes the psychological truth that anything offered free of charge will almost certainly not be valued by the recipient, and both these publications have techniques to encourage subscribers. The Times has a clever token system that allows subscribers to share content with non-subscribers, in



People are looking for depth. They are demanding more analysis, news and information from the experts they can trust.

the expectation that they will like what they see; The New York Times allows non-subscribers to read a limited number of articles each month, with the same expectation. Clearly, these techniques work.

News media can also learn lessons from TV and radio, masters of adapting to change. Thanks to streaming, downloading and podcasts, they deliver content to consumers how and when the consumers want it, not at the whim of the broadcast schedulers. So let's deliver news to our readers in a way that suits them, not us.

Finally, we could perhaps lose a little less sleep over fake news. Think about it: if these lies were effective, we wouldn't know about them. The very fact that we recognize fake news is evidence that it doesn't work. Young people in particular – digital natives brought up in the online Wild West – are perfectly capable of distinguishing fact from fiction.

Despite the relentless march of technology, the essence of our job – to inform, to educate and to entertain – has not changed in centuries. There will always be a market for what we do, always readers, viewers and listeners to consume what we produce. Our task is to construct a new media landscape where these consumers feel at ease. If we build it (and I believe we can), they will come. ●



WE WILL MEET OUR OBLIGATIONS

MARTY BARON
EXECUTIVE EDITOR, THE WASHINGTON POST, USA



First there was an effort to marginalize the press and then to delegitimize us. Then there was a campaign to dehumanize us [...]. Ultimately, we were depicted as “fake news,” “enemies of the people,” a “stain” on the country, traitors.

Let me describe a moment in the aftermath of the Boston Globe’s investigation into sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, and the movie *Spotlight* that portrayed it. It is a moment I shall not forget: a moment for me that maintains a vivid resonance in the present.

It happened a few years ago, during a screening of *Spotlight* at my alma mater, Lehigh University. During the Q&A session, a man rose to the microphone to speak.

“It was a very hard movie for me to watch,” he said. “I tried to see it a couple of times. I only got to the parking lot and turned around. I’m 80-plus years old. I was sexually abused by a priest in 1947. I was 11. I live with it every day. I was fatherless. I didn’t know if anybody would believe me. I never spoke about it. My wife passed away many years ago. She never knew about it. It was in ’47 he molested me. And he was ordained in 1947.

“Not a day goes by,” he said, “that I don’t have to live with this. I never spoke about it like I said – thank you – till it broke in Boston and

then I started talking about it...”

“I do go to therapy,” he continued, “I took my children with me. So, they do understand. And they fully support me. And I thank you very much.”

I think about that gentleman when I hear President Trump say the press is the “enemy of the American people.”

He did not see us as his enemy. He saw us as an ally. Finally, he had one. Other survivors of abuse – and their families and friends – feel the same. And so do many others who have had journalists listen to them when no one else would – giving power to those who had none, in the cause of fair treatment.

They were grateful for journalists who sought to get at the truth when people in authority had trampled on it or concealed it.

Today, we face another threat, perhaps even more subversive. This one is to the very idea of truth itself.

In the United States, it began as a calculated assault on our profession, though it hasn’t

ended there. It has gone on for more than four years now: during presidential primaries, a general election, and past the half-way mark of a presidency.

First there was an effort to marginalize the press and then to delegitimize us. Then there was a campaign to dehumanize us as disgusting and scum and garbage and the lowest form of life. Ultimately, we were depicted as “fake news,” “enemies of the people,” a “stain” on the country, traitors.

There is no mystery as to why this is happening. It is a cynical strategy to disqualify the press as an independent arbiter of fact.

But we in the press are not the only targets. The aim is to disqualify other institutions and professions as arbiters of fact, too: the courts, law enforcement, intelligence agencies, historians, even scientists.

Under assault are all the elements that help us determine what is factual: evidence, expertise, experience. They are devalued or dismissed or denied.

The goal is evident: to obliterate the idea of objective truth.

Before the 2016 election, Lesley Stahl of CBS News went to Trump Tower to meet with candidate Donald Trump. At one point, after he started into his familiar harangue about the media, she asked him why he persisted in leveling such attacks. As she tells it, he said, “You know why I do it? I do it to discredit you all and demean you all, so when you write negative stories about me no one will believe you.”

It was a moment of startling but revealing honesty. That is, in fact, the president’s goal: no one should believe the media if we contradict him. The public should believe only one person – him: him alone, 100% of the time.

Bret Stephens, the conservative columnist, put it perfectly in a speech in early 2017 when he was at *The Wall Street Journal*, before he joined *The New York Times* op-ed page. The president, he said, “is trying to substitute propaganda for news, boosterism for information.”

“His objection,” he continued, “is to objec-

tivity itself. He's perfectly happy for the media to be disgusting and corrupt – so long as it's on his side."

Stephens spoke of our obligation "not to look around, or beyond, or away from the facts, but to look straight at them, to recognize and call them for what they are, nothing more or less. To see things as they are before we re-interpret them into what we'd like them to be... To speak the truth irrespective of what it means for our popularity or influence."

That is good counsel for journalists. For all citizens, too. If we come to feel the truth is unknowable, mission accomplished: people just believe what they would like to believe.

If we conclude that everyone is lying for selfish reasons, mission accomplished as well. Then it doesn't matter if our leaders are being untruthful, as long as they serve our individual interests.

If in the United States we now believe truth can only come from the head of state, then we have surrendered the very idea that inspired the founding of our nation.

The president apparently has not been content to vilify the press with malicious and menacing language. Nor has he been content to cynically undermine the idea that there are facts and truth independent of what he would

like them to be – or declares them to be.

Last year, his administration – through the US Department of Justice – sought to effectively criminalize common practices in journalism that have long served the public interest. The latest 18-count indictment of Julian Assange under the Espionage Act of 1917 presents a grave threat to customary day-to-day reporting on national security matters. The indictment accuses Assange of seeking, receiving, and then publishing classified material.

As Carrie DeCell, an attorney with the Knight First Amendment Institute, put it: "That's exactly what good national security and investigative journalists do every day."

"These charges," she said, "could be brought against national security and investigative journalists simply for doing their jobs, and doing them well."

Dating as far back as the Pentagon Papers in 1971 – when Daniel Ellsberg provided The New York Times and then The Washington Post highly secret documents that revealed a history of government deceit about the Vietnam War – journalists have been receiving and reporting on classified information. More recently, The Washington Post and The Guardian published classified information obtained by Edward Snowden to disclose a global surveillance pro-

gram that represented a breath-taking intrusion, with scant oversight, into the privacy of US citizens and individuals worldwide.

When this expansive new indictment against Assange was announced, an official for the Department of Justice said it "takes seriously the role of journalists in our democracy" and that "it has not and never has been the department's policy to target them for reporting."

But the legal theory levelled against Assange could easily be weaponized against journalists. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the administration's intent is to intimidate the entirety of the American press: first we get Assange, next we might come after you.

All of this is made worse by government officials' continuing pattern of overclassifying information, often for no reason other than to shield themselves from scrutiny. And it could be made still worse by the Trump administration's fondness for invoking national security and declaring national emergencies.

If steel and car imports from our allies can be labelled threats to US national security, it doesn't require much imagination to envision this government classifying vast categories of information as national-security secrets.

For the press, already subjected to incessant attack, this poses a new and sobering

James Madison, principal author of the First Amendment, wrote of "the right of freely examining public characters and measures." That right is still ours, thankfully, but it will mean nothing if we do not exercise it with vigour and tenacity.

challenge. But we cannot be intimidated. If we fail to do our jobs for fear of retribution, we will betray the spirit of the First Amendment.

James Madison, principal author of the First Amendment, wrote of "the right of freely examining public characters and measures." That right is still ours, thankfully, but it will mean nothing if we do not exercise it with vigour and tenacity.

Anthony Lewis, the late New York Times columnist and First Amendment scholar, once wrote words we should live by today: "The American press has been given extraordinary freedom by the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First Amendment. In return, it owes society courage."

We at The Washington Post understand our role in a democracy, and I can say this with confidence: we will meet our obligations. ●

This is a lightly edited version of a speech given by Marty Baron in June 2019 after receiving the Canadian Journalism Foundation's Special Citation "in recognition of his extraordinary contribution and fearless approach to journalism."



AN ATTACK
ON ONE IS
AN ATTACK
ON ALL

MARIA RESSA

CEO AND EXECUTIVE EDITOR, RAPPLER, THE PHILIPPINES



n attack on one is an attack on all.

The first time I heard that was more than two decades ago, looking at the virulent ideology that powered al-Qaeda. That was what the terrorists used to justify their attacks. Then at a pivotal moment, when I was still just learning to deal with the new weapon against journalists, media researcher Julie Posetti convinced me that I should be speaking about the attacks that I was experiencing on social media, and she interviewed me for an article in a UNESCO publication: *An Attack on One is an Attack on All*.

We are at an existential moment in time – where, if we don’t take the right steps forward, democracy as we know it is dead. When journalists are under attack, democracy is under attack. Social media platforms are now the world’s largest distributor of news, but, while they’ve taken the revenues, they’ve ignored the gatekeeping powers that news groups have traditionally had.

It takes courage to fight back against the insidious manipulation these platforms have enabled. They’re now used as a weapon against journalists, in a place where lies laced with anger and hate spread faster than facts. (Facts are kinda boring.)

This really hit me in December 2018 when

Time Magazine named me one of the guardians of truth. At that point in time, I realized that – among the Capital Gazette (the journalists who were killed there), the Reuters journalists still in prison in Myanmar at the time and Jamal Khashoggi – I was the only one who was both alive and free. It made me think that never before has our profession – protecting our democracies – demanded so much from us.

The battle for truth is the battle of our generation. With technology as the accelerant, a lie told a million times becomes a fact. Without facts, we don’t have truth. Without truth, there is no trust. Without all three, you can’t have democracy. This is why democracy is broken around the world.

In our country, the bottom up exponential attacks on social media – astroturfing and creating a bandwagon effect – soften the ground before the same lies came top down from our top government officials.

I know this first-hand: in 14 months, the Philippine government filed at least 11 cases and investigations against me and Rappler. I was arrested twice in a 5-week period, and I’ve posted bail 8 times in about 3 months. I have committed no crime except to be a journalist and to hold power to account.

I’ve seen social media and our legal system

weaponized against those who ask questions, who stand up for values, who demand the rights guaranteed under our Constitution, which is patterned after the US Constitution.

When I was first arrested early last year, the officer said, “Ma’am, trabaho lang po.” (Ma’am, I’m only doing my job). Then he lowered his voice to almost a whisper as he read me my Miranda rights. He was clearly uncomfortable, and I almost felt sorry for him. Except he was arresting me – the last act in a chain of events meant to intimidate and harass me – because I’m a journalist.

This officer was a tool of power – and an example of how a good man can turn evil – and how great atrocities happen. Hannah Arendt wrote about the banality of evil when describing men who carried out the orders of Hitler in Nazi Germany, how career-oriented bureaucrats can act without conscience because they justify that they’re only following orders.

This is how a nation loses its soul. So you have to know what values you are fighting for, and you have to draw the lines now: where this side you’re good, and this side you’re evil. Help us #HoldTheLine.

So what about American social media platforms? I am both a partner and a critic of Facebook. Rappler is one of Facebook’s two



Power – and bullies – will never stop if you give in to them. We at Rappler live this every day.

Filipino fact-checking partners.

Facebook is essentially the internet in the Philippines. We are the canary in the coal mine because globally, Filipinos spend the most time online (more than 10 hours a day) and on social media (we have been the top users around the world for four years in a row). But we are also democracy’s dystopian future.

Last year I was with Cambridge Analytica whistleblower Christopher Wylie, and he told me that the Philippines “creates an ideal petri dish where you can experiment on tactics and techniques that you wouldn’t be able to as easily in the West...and if it doesn’t work, it doesn’t matter, you won’t get caught. And if it does work, then you can then figure out how to port that to the West.”

I asked him if the Philippines paved the way for Brexit and Donald Trump. You know what he said? He sidestepped a little, but I’ll read his entire quote so stay with me:

Filipino politics kinda looks a lot like the United States. You’ve got a president who was Trump before Trump was Trump, and you have relationships with people close to him with SCL and Cambridge Analytica. And you had a lot of data being collected – the 2nd largest amount of data after the United States collected in the Philippines.

This young man behind the psychological operations web of Steve Bannon backed by Robert and Rebekah Mercer added that “colonialism never died, it just moved online.”

This nightmare began for me more than 3 years ago. Rappler wrote the first pieces about it globally in 2016. I wrote 2 of the 3 parts of our first series and was rewarded with an average of 90 hate messages per hour.

If nothing changes, what’s happened to us is going to happen to you. It’s already happening now. Underlying it all is greed and fear, in our case the violence a brutal drug war that the UN says has killed at least 27,000 people, far more than the official number of 5,500.

People are afraid to stand up for what is right because there are costs: Rappler in the Philippines is a cautionary tale – and one of my arresting officers said it best when he was trying to silence our young reporter who was livestreaming. He said: “Be quiet, or you’re next.”

This micro-targeting online ad-driven business model structurally undermines human will. Our personal experiences are sucked into a database, organized by AI, then sold to the highest bidder. It is – as it has always been – about power and money. That has also

siphoned money away from news groups, and if nothing is done, this represents a foundational threat to markets, election integrity, and democracy itself.

These social media platforms are behavioral modification systems we voluntarily enter. We are Pavlov’s dogs, and to quote Wylie as well as Blackberry co-founder Jim Balsillie: data at this micropersonal level is NOT the new oil: it is plutonium. And we need to treat it with all the care that plutonium requires. An atom bomb has already exploded, and we all don’t know about it. Until we accept that, we can’t solve the problem.

So what can we do?

First, journalists need to collaborate. Throw out your old definitions: this is a new world. Collaborating isn’t easy because we were born to compete against each other. In the Philippines, our data tells us that news groups have been pushed to the periphery of our information ecosystem, and in the centre are disinformation networks, some linked to Russia, some to China. They are all actively sharing amongst each other, while we are not. This is how alternative realities bloom.

We have to stop taking the bait of emotions, and seek what we have in common over

what drives us apart, because that’s the way the bad guys are working: they take a fracture line in our societies and pound it open to separate us into us vs them.

And it’s not just the journalists: let’s bring in academia, tech, and civil society, to unite the truth-tellers and join forces to protect the facts. We have to fight now while we’re strong, because, as we have learned, you only get weaker over time as this virus of lies saps civic engagement. If you have no facts, civil society becomes apathetic, and the voice with the loudest megaphone wins.

Second, we need to demand enlightened self-interest from tech companies because, in the long term, yes, the solution is education; medium term: media literacy. But in the here and now? It’s only the tech platforms that can do something meaningful.

Third, we need to create a global database of disinformation networks, and a global interpol that stops the impunity that nations and companies are getting away with today. Remember after the Holocaust and WWII, the world came together to try to stop the worst of human behaviors. That was when we got Bretton Woods, NATO, the UN Declaration of Human Rights. What are the values that govern



I want to thank all the news organisations around the world who help us shine the light. Please, let us do the same for every journalist under attack in every part of the world. Remember: an attack on one is an attack on all.

the internet? How do we punish offenders?

We need to seriously come together and fight, because an attack on one is an attack on all.

Power – and bullies – will never stop if you give in to them. We at Rappler live this every day. Political bullies who threaten and abuse journalists are never happy until they get complete capitulation. Our battle is your battle.

We can protect the rights guaranteed by our democracies, or watch them slowly erode in plain sight. This is the challenge for all of us today: what can we put in place today to protect our tomorrows?

I want to thank all the news organisations around the world who help us shine the light. Please, let us do the same for every journalist under attack in every part of the world. Remember: an attack on one is an attack on all. ●

This piece is based on Maria Ressa's keynote speech at the 11th Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Hamburg, Germany, September 2019.



INDEPENDENT
JOURNALISM
CAN NOT ONLY
SURVIVE, BUT
MAKE MONEY

LUKÁŠ FÍLA

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF DENNÍK N, SLOVAKIA



taying close to the readers in terms of our activities, financing, and ownership - that was our core vision when more than forty of us left Slovakia's leading quality newspaper SME (after a group of local oligarchs acquired a fifty-percent stake) and started Denník N.

Five years later, that vision is clearly working. We currently have more than 52,000 digital subscribers, a staff of 80 people, and our EBITDA in 2019 reached €830,000. Our website attracts over a million monthly users in a country of five million. We publish a print daily, a monthly magazine, and books.

Our open-source subscription software (remp2020.com) is used by several publishers around the world. In 2018 we helped launch Deník N in the Czech Republic. And we just received the European Digital Platform of the Year Award.

So what do I mean by being close to the readers? When it comes to our publishing activities, it means mainly a strong focus on content that's relevant to them - that's why each morning, every journalist in our newsroom gets an overview of the previous day's subscription sales, article by article.

Not that conversions are our sole criterion for success. The editorial team still feels a strong responsibility to cover issues of

public interest that do not translate into new subscriptions. But it gives all authors and editors a clear understanding of what our readers appreciate.

We also place a strong emphasis on direct contact - we organize public debates, often several a week. We have a closed Facebook group where subscribers can ask about anything from news stories to corporate policies. We organise educational activities for high schools. Each quarter, our tens of thousands registered users receive an e-mail with a detailed account of our business results and activities, and I personally respond to all replies, questions, and comments.

So why do the numbers in those quarterly reports keep improving? It is mainly thanks to income direct from the readers, with over 50 percent of total 2019 earnings coming from subscriptions. This model puts us in a perfect position to face the future: it is immune from any negative trends or crises on the advertising market; it provides a very steady source of revenue; and it is likely to grow further, as more and more people discover our content, and services such as Netflix or Spotify teach them that it's normal to pay for online content. As long as our unique relationship with the readers is preserved, so will be our business success.



The media markets in Central Europe offer a tragic picture: whereas a decade ago, most major newspapers and broadcasters were owned by large Western media houses, currently they are mostly controlled by local oligarchs or governments.

And Slovakia does not seem to be an exception. After a little more than a year of operation, the Czech Deník N has over 16,000 subscribers, which echoes the results of the Slovakian version at a similar point.

Subscriptions are not the only way we get money directly from readers. We also run several crowdfunding campaigns a year: when they subscribe, readers are encouraged to give an additional donation for our non-profit activities (everyone who contributes over 50 euro gets a personal message from me). Furthermore, our online store offers a range of products, from books to cartoons.

Finally, we get to the point of ownership. The media markets in Central Europe offer a tragic picture: whereas a decade ago, most major newspapers and broadcasters were owned by large Western media houses, currently they are mostly controlled by local oligarchs or governments. While there are a range of reasons for this, and while it is true that the damage is being done by local businessmen and politicians, there is no escaping the fact that most foreign owners showed a considerable lack of responsibility when it came to selling their assets in the region. While it is understandable that their primary loyalty is to their domestic

shareholders and audiences, many publishers who publicly advocate freedom of speech, plurality and democracy, displayed a surprising disregard for these values when they had to make actual real-life decisions.

The lesson seems obvious - in order to thrive in the long run, independent media need owners who have a stake in the future of the societies where they operate. At Denník N, members of staff have a 49 per cent stake, the remaining 51 per cent held by six co-owners of Eset, one of the world leaders in antivirus-protection, which is also based in Slovakia, despite its global success. The Czech Deník N is co-owned by a group of eight Czech investors, and members of staff are expected to get a share later this year.

Overall, I have every reason to be optimistic about the future of the media. Our story proves that even in small markets with a short tradition of free press, there are journalists determined to do quality independent journalism, investors prepared to support them, and above all, readers ready to reward them for their work. ●



Le Monde

**INVEST
IN TALENT,
THINK
GLOBAL,
TARGET NEW
GENERATIONS**

LOUIS DREYFUS
CEO OF GROUPE LE MONDE

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pon facing the momentous task of writing this piece, most media executives have probably, like me, wondered if our strategies still deserved to be highlighted at a time when most of our targets have been hindered by the ongoing global health crisis. Surprisingly enough, I would say YES! Odd though it may seem, the current crisis reinforces some essential convictions that I would like to share with you, as well as a few statistics related to *Le Monde*:

- Over the years, and more than ever in this period of exceptional crisis, readers have shown a tremendous appetite for rigorous, unique, quality news. This strong appetite isn't going anywhere. Between June 2015 and June 2020, paid circulation for *Le Monde* has surged by 51 percent. And during the lockdown period, *Le Monde* broke a historic record with a 30 percent increase in our digital audience, while tripling the growth of our digital subscription portfolio, and even our newsstand sales went up.

- What is "rigorous and quality news"? Along with our shareholders Xavier Niel and Matthieu Pigasse, we strongly believe that quality news can be defined by the independence of the journalists producing content, as well as by the strength of the relationship between the reader and the media outlet. Without trust, we will not keep our readers, and they will not pay for content. That's a timeless principle that we all must keep in mind. As Sylvie Kauffmann, our previous executive editor, put it: "A newspaper that can't be independent is not a good newspaper." Finding *Le Monde* once again at the top of the ranks among French media in this area in the 2019

Reuters Institute report is a source of pride and reassurance for our entire team.

- Over the last few years, and thanks to the growing success of the likes of Amazon Prime, Netflix and Spotify, people have shown a surprising capacity to subscribe to content providers, as long as they can be guaranteed exclusive and quality content. In this context, and for the first time in the last twenty years, targeting higher circulation revenues from our readers has become a possibility, even as a legacy media company. In 2020, *Le Monde's* digital subscription revenues will be higher than our advertising revenues for the very first time. This will strengthen our business model and gives us more reasons to invest in satisfying the demands of our readership.

- As strong as this growth might be, it would be pointless to try to recruit a significant volume of digital subscribers without a major investment in talent. In the past decade, *Le Monde* has increased its number of on-staff journalists by more than 50%. We strongly believe that this investment is at the heart of *Le Monde's* current momentum. And thanks to this major investment financed by its shareholders, *Le Monde* Group has been profitable over the last five years, after a decade of losses.

- To invest in talent doesn't just mean increasing the payroll but also building a better working environment for our staff. In that respect, I must emphasize the necessity of absolute coherence between the values promoted by top management and the issues raised by editorial staff. For us at *Le Monde*, closing the salary and career gaps between women and men within our staff was one of our top priorities. Our next priority is to seek greater ethnic diversity among the journalists we recruit. We believe that these efforts should not only be a matter for human resources but are, above all,

a way to build a better working environment, and retain our top talent. Our new headquarters, recently built in central Paris, is another example of our efforts to provide the best possible environment for our staff.

- Investing in talent gives you the resources necessary for your editorial staff to spend more time on their stories and to produce excellent journalism, including high-quality long-form pieces. Such formats help you build your identity and are highly valued by the audience. For example, last year twelve *Le Monde* staff journalists worked full time on investigating what we called in French "les femicides" that occurred in France: the murders of women by their spouses or exes. This inquiry, focused on the 120 murders that took place during 2018, was made into a documentary and provided many stories in print and digital during that year. Access to additional talent also gives publishers the capacity to develop specific areas of expertise and, if need be, content verticals that can be monetised among niche audiences.

- When we imagine the future of our industry, we must keep our attention and focus on the formats and new platforms that attract the daughters and sons - or the granddaughters and grandsons - of our traditional audience. *Le Monde's* efforts with Snapchat Discover over the past two years significantly contributed to building a younger audience with more than 1.4 million subscribers (most of them teenagers) to our daily Discover edition. We hope that our current experience with TikTok will do the same, as well as our initiatives with podcasts. And for each of these projects with new media formats attracting new generations, we will make sure to respect *Le Monde's* high editorial standards.

If at *Le Monde* we have promoted an ambitious strategy of investment, I will conclude by



Investing in talent gives you the resources necessary for your editorial staff to spend more time on their stories and to produce excellent journalism, including high-quality long-form pieces.

underlining some warnings:

- This growth in fixed editorial costs will not have a positive impact on our business model if we can't expand our international audience. At *Le Monde*, we have invested heavily over the last five years in our coverage of Africa, through *Le Monde Afrique*, to become the first independent French-language media outlet on the African continent. Growing our audience beyond our traditional boundaries is key,

- We must invest in talent; we must invest in technology; we must get to know our audiences better. But we must also learn, over time, to be more frugal with regards to the rest of our cost structure. If the reader cannot benefit directly from an investment, that investment is not worth it

- Lastly, I strongly believe that part of our future success lies in our will and our capacity to form international alliances with significant resources to cover topics that are relevant in each of our territories at a global level. I see most of our media counterparts abroad more as potential partners than as competitors.

Those are the convictions we are using to prepare our group for the coming decades. A few years ago, our executive editor Jerome Fenoglio and I set a goal of reaching one million subscribers by 2025. This goal to be one of a handful of trusted independent sources of news in the world is reachable. It demands ambition, rigour, talent and investments, but under those conditions I don't see any reason not to be optimistic for *Le Monde*, and for our industry. Let's rock! ●



**WE WILL
BE SEEING
MORE
BESPOKE
JOURNALISM**

LISA MACLEOD

**VICE-PRESIDENT WAN-IFRA, DIGITAL CONSULTANT. FORMER
HEAD OF DIGITAL AT ARENA HOLDINGS, SOUTH AFRICA**

It is almost painful to stop and assess where news is at this point in time. To look back over the past few decades is to see a series of blows to an industry under siege: from technological upheaval, to advertising declines (off a cliff), circulation decreases (off another cliff), downward pressure on revenue, to assaults on press freedom from the highest offices in the world, to the slow erosion of “truth” as we know it.

Added to this is the conundrum faced by publishers regarding the value of their content and work: for so long the notion that “all information online should be free” has resulted in a fatal paralysis for many publishers – attempting to survive or pivot to becoming digital advertising players, while not charging for the expensive journalism produced in newsrooms. Add to that the increased competition from smaller operators, as the barriers to entry have become so negligible. And this all before COVID-19 struck, heaping the pressure on an already beleaguered industry.

While we have as an industry moved along to some degree, with the bigger news organisations like the New York Times reintroducing online what I prefer to call their “cover price” – rather than a paywall – many years ago, there have nevertheless been multiple casualties along the way.

Very quick to grow, but hugely dependant on social media for traffic and audience growth, digital pure players like Mic, Vox, BuzzFeed,

Vice and Mashable have sparked, faded and suffered as the digital advertising ecosystem has crushed margins and destroyed value for advertisers and publishers alike.

As a former Mic employee, Esther Bergdahl, said: “Journalistic institutions need to be institutions. They need to be able to grow in a healthy and steady way. When I think about things that grow that wildly and that successfully, I don’t think of a media company I think of cancer.” Quite.

So what will emerge from this evolving space over the next ten years? What makes it difficult to predict is the next unknown black swan event coming down the track. The smartphone was something nobody had predicted or factored into news distribution – and neither was the overwhelming influence of Facebook and Google.

My suspicion is that the COVID-19 pandemic has been the black swan for print, and has already resulted in the closure of multiple titles that were teetering on the abyss, and got their final push as both advertising and circulation went to the wall in just a few short months.

For digital, especially those organisations that have invested in technology, have paywalls and established programmatic desks, the impact of COVID-19 has been something of a blessing: online audiences are at record highs, hungry for news and information.

News in print in future will certainly increasingly become a super-premium product, and the sudden success of custom, paid-for newsletters provides some clues.

Whereas newspapers are a broad church for readers, providing everything from sport to arts, book reviews, TV listings and yes, news, the intelligence provided by online browsing trackers has led to a proliferation of deep verticals for which readers are prepared to pay. New sites like The Athletic, an online sports hub that is already heading for more than 600k subscribers, and the big business verticals like the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal, have already proved the case for charging (in print and online) for high quality journalism.

I am quite sure that we will be seeing more bespoke journalism – delivered in print, newsletters, online or via podcasts. Teams of journalists could conceivably be funded by readers to cover interest areas that are falling by the wayside in traditional newsrooms. This notion has been proven by purveyors of deep interest newsletters – as evidenced by the success of (and VC interest in) newsletter service Substack – and I could see this translating into newsrooms in a similar way.

The rise of machine learning technology and AI is well documented and there are many predictions outlining the threat of “robo-journalism”. However, this technology also represents a great opportunity for newsrooms to cut costs and dedicate resources to doing more “deep” work. The prospect of efficient production of “commoditised news” in volume is interesting, as it frees up valuable humans to do in depth news rather than formulaic reporting.

For AI to have a discernible effect though, three things are necessary for most newsrooms:



For AI to have a discernible effect though, three things are necessary for most newsrooms: firstly: a good technology partner, secondly: internal buy-in, and thirdly: access to reliable data.

firstly: a good technology partner, secondly: internal buy-in, and thirdly: access to reliable data. In my admittedly limited experience of AI projects to date, and in speaking with many colleagues internationally, it seems that at this point in time, one or more of these factors is usually missing.

The will is there, but the resources are not. I am convinced, however, that these tools will become a vital force in the future. As with everything, there is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and the challenges in developing nations – from technology costs, to data costs, to freedom of information, to journalists’ safety – are seldom comparable to those of developed nations.

However, one factor that journalists the world over are dealing with is the increasing difficulty in dealing with matters of trust and veracity. It is the sole job of journalists to remain neutral and hold authority to account, but at a time in history when the demand for partisan news is at a peak, and the attacks on journalistic integrity are at an all-time high, this is a global crisis for us. The question is whether this trend will escalate further, or whether it has peaked.

It becomes challenging to reimagine the news and the job of journalists in the future when they are so consumed by crisis in the present. It is more critical than ever that the international news industry remains committed to the associations – like WAN-IFRA – that represent it at governmental level, in the boardrooms of the tech giants like Facebook and Google, and crucially, defend the right to freedom of the press. ●



THE CORONAVIRUS BUMP: DOES CHARGING FOR COVID-19 COVERAGE MEAN YOU'RE GREEDY?

JENS PETTERSSON

CHIEF READER REVENUE OFFICER, NTM/UPSALA
NYA TIDNING, SWEDEN



his is a story about greed, strategies, and, most of all, survival.

It's a story that began four years ago. By now, the "Trump bump" is a well-known expression in the fast-developing business known as economics of journalism. Back in 2016, U.S. newspapers like The Washington Post and The New York Times saw a huge increase in subscription numbers soon after President Trump was sworn in. That is now part of modern newspaper history and well known to readers like yourself.

Fast-forward to March 2020 and a new chapter in the history book. (Not that I would think of comparing an American president with a deadly virus.) But nevertheless, 6,590 kilometres from Washington, here in Uppsala, Sweden, the "coronavirus bump" is, at the moment, obvious and making a big impact on our numbers, comparable to those in the U.S. in 2016.

In a situation like this, strategies can be totally different from company to company — and sometimes even different within the same company. It depends on the market position, competition, etc. For instance, the large Swedish daily, Dagens Nyheter, is opening up its news site for free (or at least for the transaction cost of your personal e-mail so they can catch

your cash later on), while the tabloid Expressen is doing the opposite and putting more and more articles behind the premium wall.

Although both companies are owned by Bonnier, they send quite different signals on the value of quality journalism. The difference between them is that Dagens Nyheter is in a mature phase, with an excellent track record of gaining new subscribers, having the window of opportunity to be kind to the public.

Expressen, on the other hand, is in an early stage of paid journalism and in need of fast growth.

For a regional Swedish newspaper to survive the prevailing situation with drastically declining advertising revenue, a "coronavirus bump" of greater magnitude is needed.

Which is the right approach?

What's the best choice, then? Open or closed? Free or paid? Cashing in now or gaining brand awareness and traction on later prospects?

At Upsala Nya Tidning, which has 289,000 readers on weekly reach, we began charging for digital journalism in 2017, so we're newbies compared to many. We have experimented with all the ways: Initially a metered model and low-priced introduction offers, then a hybrid model locking the most unique material and the most-read articles, but leaving some content with a looser meter to attract the right kind of engaged customers.

We saw the initial race upward, the flattening of the growth curve, and the bitter phase of actually seeing a weekly net loss. Last November, we implemented a super-tight paywall strategy, and our readers responded great: the curves went up at a fast pace. We have chosen to stick to that on corona journalism. All articles are locked and require a subscription to read. No trials, no super cheap campaigns.

For us, the key question is this: Who is primarily responsible for bringing information to the public?

The answer for us is the government. Sweden has public service media in the form of Swedish television and Swedish radio, which

provide excellent coverage of the coronavirus situation for "free." (Of course, people pay for them as well, but through the tax bill.)

Our responsibility is to our paying customers. They are the ones making sure our journalists get their monthly paycheck. Their contribution is even more important for us when we see advertising revenue fast decreasing.

Addressing the need for revenue

Information might want to be free. And the grumpy old man yelling at me in the comments on our Facebook page might want that, too. But is that realistic when our business model is under such extreme pressure?

A fresh survey from the Swedish Media Publishers' Association (TU) just clarified that several Swedish media companies are about to risk 50% of their advertising revenue in April.

At Upsala Nya Tidning, we also have had discussions on whether to open up more for free on coronavirus reporting. But we decided to stick to our path.

"Local journalism has a value" has been our strategy since May 2017 when we began charging for digital subscriptions. We only publish free articles if the society is affected by an imminent deadly threat, like a dangerous poisonous gas or a bomb situation where people are at risk of getting hurt if they come nearby. We stick to that and, at the moment, the spread of coronavirus — no matter how frightening it might be for some people — is not that kind of situation at the moment in Sweden.

Public service has the mission to inform the people of Sweden as a whole. We serve our paying subscribers. It might sound harsh, but it's about survival at a moment when advertising revenue is declining at such high speed.

Has it been a good strategy for us? Luckily, we are seeing a high and steady influx of new digital subscribers. And it strengthens us in the work of creating unique local journalism for our paying readers day after day. The outcome so far:

- 35% increase in subscriber page views on a weekly basis (comparing the average of



We keep charging for local unique journalism. We have seen a big bump when it comes to conversions after the situation on corona got more intense.

the last four weeks (march) with this year's first four). And the reading is not only based upon corona news; we see a higher interest on other news as well.

- Huge increase in conversions: 80% weekly increase if we compare the average of the last four weeks (march) with the first four.

To conclude, we keep charging for local unique journalism. We have seen a big bump when it comes to conversions after the situation on corona got more intense, and, overall, a much-needed high net growth.

Are we being greedy? No.

Have we chosen the right strategy? Yes.

For our situation in our market, a tight paywall is, at the moment, the right strategy for fast growth. And it's a clear signal of the value of journalism. In the upcoming weeks and months we will, of course, have to keep fighting hard to keep our newcomers, showing them the value of our broad offer on local journalism. But it will be easier than if we had brought them onboard for free. (Of course, this does not mean that other strategies suck when it comes to results, Dagens Nyheter has an excellent outcome on their take with free trials.)

Will we survive? I have good hope. We are a true legacy company, existing since 1890, and the road toward hanging on for another 130 years is definitely by making sure that people realise that local journalism has a great value — and by having the nerve to charge for it. ●

A version of this piece was originally published on the INMA blog in March 2020.



**THE
STRAITS
TIMES**

REAL NEWS MATTERS

WARREN FERNANDEZ
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE STRAITS TIMES



ay by day, our fast-changing world grows more complex, confusing and challenging.

The United States is at odds with China. The planet is getting warmer faster. Technology is disrupting just about every industry, from banks and money changers, to airlines, travel agents and the media.

Little wonder then that we all need some help keeping up to speed with these changes, making sense of them all, and trying to figure out where things are heading.

Pressed for time in dealing with information overload, people are also finding it harder to sift out what is real from fake, with more and more dubious content swirling around, spread rapidly over new communications technologies.

So, ironically, while the world is more connected today and more people have much more information readily available at their fingertips, societies are not necessarily better informed or equipped to make the tough choices needed if we are to address the many challenges we face.

Instead, the credibility of and trust in major institutions seem to be insidiously chipped away amid the welter of information and disinformation, facts and alternative facts, thereby

undermining our ability to have sensible democratic discussions on the way forward.

This is where journalists and professional newsrooms come in. Our job is to seek out information, cross-check and verify it, understand the history, background and context, strive to be balanced and objective, analyse and interpret developments, and seek to put out as fair and unvarnished an account of events as we can, to help our audiences make up their minds on what it all means for them.

This matters. Because in the absence of credible and reliable information, we cannot have rational and reasonable debates. Instead, discussions turn into shouting matches, which tend to be dominated, and won, by those with the loudest, most nasty or persistent - or often, the best financed - voices.

Every one of us ends up the loser - it is your views, your society, your future that is degraded in the process.

Real news matters. Facts Matter. Accuracy matters. Objectivity matters. Balance matters. Accountability matters. Equality matters. History matters. News matters.

It is commonplace today to say, rather glibly, that news is available for free, everyone is a journalist, and there is no future for journalism. That, to me, is an example of fake news.

News you receive is never free. Content costs money to produce, especially quality, credible, in-depth, reliable content. If you are getting it for free, it usually means someone is paying for it, and getting it to you for a reason.



Real news matters. Facts Matter. Accuracy matters. Objectivity matters. Balance matters. Accountability matters. Equality matters. History matters. News matters.

Perhaps it is to sell you some marketing message or propaganda. It could be to influence your views or spending preferences. It could be to sway your vote, or shape your society. In other words, you, and the data about you, is the product being traded and sold.

Media leaders have long lamented the triple challenges facing the industry: growing threats to media freedom, the existential question of media viability and the pressing need for innovation in newsrooms. All three issues are now inextricably linked, equal sides of a trilemma that have to be tackled together.

Without a viable plan to sustain their newsrooms into the future, fervent debates on media freedoms will be academic discussions. And clearly, any plan to ensure the survival and continued growth of the media entails a need for innovation and transformation, both on the editorial and business fronts.

These challenges have been summed up starkly by Juan Senior, president of INNOVATION Media Consulting, who points to the phenomenon of newsrooms repenting for the folly of their “original sin” of giving away costly-to-produce content for free, in the vain hope that doing so would draw audiences – and advertisers would follow. New digital revenues might then make up for the decline in print readerships and revenues.

It did not happen – or rather, did not happen fast and far enough. While some news groups – including *The Straits Times* – have seen significant growth in both digital readership and revenues, these increases have come

off a low base and so are not quite enough to make up for the print shortfall.

Besides, the bulk of digital advertising has been hoovered up by the likes of Facebook and Google, riding on the backs of media groups that produce the content they amalgamate to draw audiences, while insisting they bear no responsibility for the content on their platforms.

Today, just about every media group is dabbling with paywalls and digital subscriptions, moving from “advertising revenue to reader revenue”, notes Mr Senior. “If you are not producing content you can charge for, you should get out of this business”, he declares, adding “if you have no digital business, you have no future” and “money is made where content is viewed”.

Despite the stark warnings, he insists he is optimistic about the future of journalism. Fake news, he contends, “will save journalism”. Declines in trust amid the welter of fake content will drive audiences to seek out credible voices for reliable content and they will pay for quality content they can count on.

“Newsrooms will have to move from the idea of being print or digital first, to journalism first,” he concludes, arguing that paying audiences will gravitate to those news organisations that are able to offer engaging, quality and insightful content, as well as value-added services, such as events, business intelligence or investment tips, memberships, customised newsletters, books and even customer references and retail services. ●



**WE WANT
TO CREATE
A NEWSROOM
BUILT FOR OUR
AUDIENCES**

FRAN UNSWORTH

DIRECTOR, NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS AT THE BBC, UK



he past decade has been a disruptive – and challenging – one for those of us in the news industry.

A growing distrust of authority has led to wariness of the ‘mainstream media’ – a phrase which is now often used as a term of abuse.

Societies around the world are feeling fragmented and divided, and people are increasingly seeking news sources, sometimes very niche, which reflect their own world views, rather than challenging them.

Journalists are finding themselves the victims of trolling and online threats – simply for reporting on the opinions of others.

And, even more disturbingly, they are also facing threats of physical violence too, simply for doing their jobs.

There is a growing temptation for politicians and those in power to use social media channels to reach the public – avoiding journalistic scrutiny.

And the threat of ‘fake news’ becomes ever more disturbing with the development of so-called ‘deepfake’ technology, which almost literally puts words into people’s mouths.

All this has serious consequences, both for our democracies and our societies. And too

often traditional media is seen as part of the problem instead of part of the solution.

Here in the UK, the BBC – an impartial and independent public service broadcaster – finds itself in challenging times. The recent UK general election saw our news coverage accused of bias by people on all sides of the political arena – although independent research showed that the general public thought we had done a good job.

The government has raised questions about the sustainability of our funding model.

And the behaviour of our audiences is changing rapidly. There is a growing shift away from traditional linear broadcasting, especially among younger people.

So what should we in the mainstream media be doing to address these challenges and ‘reimagine the news’?

First, I believe our role is now more vital than ever. Surveys consistently find the BBC to be the world’s most trusted international news broadcaster – and in a world where it is increasingly difficult to separate fact from fiction, trusted sources are at a premium. Our value come sharply into focus at times of crisis like the current coronavirus outbreak, when there is a vital need for accurate, reliable and timely information.



Journalists are finding themselves the victims of trolling and online threats – simply for reporting on the opinions of others.

To answer this need, we must put our audiences first. In the UK, the BBC’s mandate is to provide a universal service. So we aren’t doing our job if we don’t respond to the changing ways in which our audiences consume the news.

That’s why we are reshaping the BBC’s news operations to respond to reflect the realities of the digital landscape. We want to create a newsroom which is built for our audiences – especially for those we are not currently reaching.

I recently announced our move towards a ‘story-led’ approach. The goal is to focus more on stories than on programmes or platforms, and create more impact with our audiences.

This also means a refocused news agenda, with subjects that matter most to those we serve.

We are investing further in digital news, with a new version of the BBC News app, which will be more intuitive, more visual and more personalised to each user.

Given the nature of the problems I’ve outlined, increasing media literacy is vital. The BBC’s Young Reporter project offers media and journalism learning resources to thousands of young people in the UK. Schools can access free online materials including the BBC’s iRe-

porter computer game, which puts the player at the heart of the BBC newsroom on the day of a breaking news story.

We’re building on this successful scheme by rolling it out to other markets including Kenya, India, Brazil, and most recently Nigeria.

We’ve recently launched My World, a global TV programme for young audiences, explaining how the news is made. My World, a co-production with Microsoft Education, draws on the reporting of the BBC World Service and gives its viewers the tools to tell fact from fiction.

And we know the challenges posed by disinformation can’t be tackled by any one organisation alone. We need to work together as an industry, and with the partners who are shaping the new media landscape. These are global problems which need a global approach.

That’s why the BBC has convened an international partnership with media organisations and social media and technology platforms to protect audiences from dangerous misinformation. The Trusted News Initiative has developed a shared early-warning system to alert partners about potentially viral disinformation which could threaten the integrity of elections, as well as flagging imposter or manipulated content misusing our brands. ●



SunSentinel

**REMOVING
PAYWALLS ON
CORONAVIRUS
COVERAGE IS
NOBLE.
IT ALSO
MAKES
NO SENSE**

HOWARD SALTZ

**KNIGHT INNOVATOR-IN-RESIDENCE IN THE JOURNALISM
FACULTY AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN MIAMI,
AND FORMER PUBLISHER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL IN FORT LAUDERDALE.**

ing stories affecting health and safety will still be available, free to all.

It's a step in the right direction, but McClatchy — and the rest of the industry — should go all the way. Put the paywalls back up. We never should have taken them down.

The newspaper industry seems to think that public service can't coexist with revenue. That's a mistake — at a time when the beleaguered industry can't afford to make one. We do provide an important public service, but why can't a public service business be, well, in business?

Food is essential, but grocery stores aren't giving it away.

Clothing? Not free. Not even at Goodwill.

Police are being paid during the crisis. So are garbage collectors. There are no freebies at the pharmacy.

These are all essential to the community at a time of crisis, yet no one expects these goods and services to be free. What are newspapers afraid of? Our products have value. People pay for things of value.

Sure, health care providers aren't turning away the needy. But that was a thriving industry before the pandemic hit, and it'll have the opportunity to recoup losses by raising rates when the crisis subsides. The newspaper industry, already damaged before the crisis, has far fewer options to raise revenue later.

There's a belief among some industry leaders that the good feelings generated by a caring newspaper during times of crisis will yield paid subscriptions in the future. But there's no research to support that. In fact, experiences during recent Florida hurricanes — when many newspapers made their online coverage free to all — suggests there's little loyalty once the paywall goes back up.

Unlike a loss-leader in retailing — in which a store takes a loss on one product to lure customers, knowing from experience and research that enough customers will buy other things to make the venture profitable — there's no data to support the free-content-now-and-they'll-subscribe-later strategy. It's just an idea.

In fact, it may even be harmful: We hope

the community will develop a journalism habit that'll continue when we start charging for access again, but we may be instead reinforcing the habit that news should be free.

There's no doubt that newspapers need the revenue online subscriptions can bring. Newspapers have collectively lost more than 70% of their ad dollars since 2006, according to Ken Doctor of Nieman Lab. Some estimates are that half of the remaining revenue dried up during the brief period since the coronavirus hit. As a result, Gannett, publisher of USA Today and the nation's largest newspaper chain, is effecting furloughs and pay cuts. So is Lee Enterprises, the fourth-largest chain. Alternative weeklies, reliant for their ad dollars on now-shuttered restaurants and entertainment venues — are devastated.

The Gannett and Lee cutbacks were announced in a single week at the end of March, while the coronavirus crisis was still young. Where will the industry be at the end of April?

The federal government, already planning to aid industries damaged by the pandemic, could be a source of help. But why would that require our products to be free when there's no similar requirement for other goods and services? No one expects a free cruise if the government saves that industry.

And whom are we really helping? Anyone who can afford an internet connection and a device with which to access content can also afford a newspaper's digital subscription. It's not expensive. What is it about a newspaper that suggests it must be free while the internet service provider necessary to read it is not?

Indigent people who don't have either Internet access or devices? A paywall would thwart them if they use free internet access at libraries and other public places. Guess what? The libraries are closed.

Yes, that's harsh. Reality sometimes is.

And what's this about our public service obligation, anyway? Information about a dire pandemic is vital. But so is news of a major storm that's brewing. So, come to think of it, are details about a serial killer menacing the

neighborhood. So, too, is that item buried deep in the site about a health code violation at a restaurant you're thinking of trying. And so on. The pandemic may be more meaningful, but it's only a matter of degree. If newspapers, tasked with serving the public, shouldn't charge now, the logical extrapolation is that we should never charge.

Where would that leave journalism?

Before the internet, a typical newspaper got 75 to 80% of its revenue from advertising. In the digital era, the Facebooks and Googles have siphoned the lion's share of that. The future is in subscriber revenue. Except that we shouldn't charge for subscriptions because we're a public servant with content too important to be walled off.

Something in that equation has to give.

Journalists have always disliked paywalls. I experienced that as The Denver Post's online editor in the early 2000s and later as vice president for digital content at its parent company, MediaNews Group. We journalists create powerful, useful content and we want it to reach as many people as possible. That's what drives us. It's noble. Paywalls, however, stand in the way. So they don't feel right.

But they are right. Coverage of the coronavirus crisis has been exceptional, from large news organizations to small. If we want to continue to do that — if we want to ensure the public can get credible information and isn't reliant on government press conferences and social-media crackpots — we have to behave like grocery stores, pharmacies and the rest. We're a business.

Yes, we're also a public service. We have obligations to the communities we cover. But we can't fulfill those obligations if we don't exist. ●

Imagine you operate a once-profitable business that has recently fallen on hard times. Revenue is down. Way down. Then, suddenly, there's a newfound interest in your product. Demand is up. You have an opportunity to bring back some of that lost revenue. So you look at your prices and decide ... to give away your product for free.

How's that for a business strategy?

And yet that's what most U.S. newspapers are doing during the coronavirus crisis. When the pandemic hit, we adjusted or eliminated paywalls to make our coronavirus coverage free. You can read it online, whether you're a paid subscriber or not.

It's a noble thing to do. News organizations have a unique public service role in the communities they cover.

It also makes no sense.

Newspapers throughout the country knee-jerked when the virus hit. With only a few exceptions — the Los Angeles Times and The Boston Globe, most notably — the paywalls that allowed only subscribers to access content were dropped. That changed a little this week when McClatchy, publisher of The Miami Herald and The Kansas City Star and the nation's second-largest newspaper group, decided to wall off only certain coronavirus stories. Break-



THE PERIOD OF CONFUSION IS BEHIND US

JORDI JUAN
DIRECTOR, LA VANGUARDIA, SPAIN



Journalism has passed through a long period marked by confusion and the business model crisis of the companies that sustain it. The world was once at the feet of the leading newspapers whose owners had gotten used to a comfortable, worry-free existence thanks to advertising, which meant they could afford huge print runs.

From one day to the next, readers stopped buying newspapers en masse and began to get their news from other media. The boom in smart phones and the emergence of social networks caught journalism off guard. The field reacted late and badly. Some companies tried to reduce costs by getting smaller and smaller, while others tried to convert themselves into online media in search of easy click bait, sacrificing the brand quality that had characterized them.

Today, it seems that the period of confusion is behind us. But the crisis is certainly not: newspaper companies have not yet recouped the number of readers they had in previous years. However, that first point is important; you have to start a recovery somewhere. It is obvious that, if they want to stay in the game, the media must offer high quality standards. The age of winning over a mass audience willy-nilly is well over. Today, it is clear that the only way forward is to build a loyal community of readers who are willing to pay for the content on offer in our online editions. Less content, but far greater quality.

The media have confirmed that news items that generate a rush of readers do not generate subscriptions. So our efforts should focus on giving our information particular value. If we only give readers the same as the rest of the press, nobody will want to pay for what we are offering. Quality here implies well-written, well-presented, contextualized news, where all the questions raised by the article are resolved. In this context, a combination of text, videos, graphics and data is a wonderful cocktail, if you know how to apply it well. Presentation of the news is key.

Another element that has hurt the reputation of journalism in recent years has been the

notion that speed is of the essence, this is another model that was generally endorsed. Without doubt, being first to reveal a story is important, but it is far more important to tell it well.

Images will become increasingly important in the presentation of our content. The quality of texts and the choice of subject matter are already key factors in the success of information initiatives, but the visuals accompanying them will surely grow in importance. Programmers, designers, data experts, photographers, camera operators, video editors, screenwriters and journalists will have to learn to live together in a new cosmos, like never before. The old newspaper managers are going to have to become more like orchestra conductors, where good news items must be as accessible as the best orchestral scores.

While this is all important, it is even more vital that we build up our readership through our reliability. For some years now, many readers have abandoned us because they thought that their idyllic world of social networks was good enough to keep them informed. However, the phenomena of fake news and political manipulation have opened the eyes of the wider readership. People have realized that they feel the need to be well-informed, above all via a medium they can rely on. That is why it is so



Every piece of evidence shows that concentrating digital spend into quality journalistic environments delivers. And more and more advertisers are ready to listen.

important to build up a community of readers and to know how to give them what they need. Interaction with our readership will be one of the pillars of the new journalism that we must build. We must regain our readers' trust. If journalists want their readership to seek them out, then journalists will have to listen to what they are being asked for and what their audience demands.

Print has also suffered a great loss of prestige during the years of confusion. It has gone from being the star of the communication world to becoming a dying man surrounded by great gurus arguing about what year the funeral will be. Nothing could be further from the truth. Print will live! And not only that, the media who neglect and turn their backs on it will be out of the race. Print is our brand image. And if our hard copies are a joke, then our web products will lose some of its prestige. The two feed off each other.

The years ahead of us will be fascinating and will require us to come up with our very best. The good news is that talent is more important and necessary than ever. Well-told, well-presented stories, dealing in concepts that interest a cohesive and broad audience, will triumph. The road is free to be travelled on. Let's go! ●



WE MUST EXAMINE JOURNALISM'S FOUNDATIONS

IRENE GENTLE
EDITOR OF THE TORONTO STAR, CANADA

we raced about last decade looking to rebuild a broken business model, and emerged seeing the success of large nationals, the increasing struggles of local news outlets, and the value and limitations of digital native and niche start-ups to fill the gaps.

We now take it as given that editorial, data, product and marketing need to exist and work together, and that newsrooms of 2 to 200 people are unable to easily replicate the successes of newsrooms of 800 to 1,700. We know that business models of subscription, philanthropy, membership, aggregation, advertising or billionaire owners have benefits and disadvantages. There is no one answer.

We found that broad, authoritative national journalism does not fill the democracy void created by the extinguishing of local news. Job losses at digital native outlets bruised the notion that digital adaptability was the main key to success. Alarming news deserts left by withered or extinguished local news sites indicate that brilliant, relevant niche sites are, so far, a great addition to the media landscape, not a replacement of it.

For virtually all, the problem of financial sustainability persists. Is it reasonable to expect a typical resident to pay even a small fee for 5-15 different publications for a breadth of watchdog

and local information? If aggregated, would it pay for the reporting? Journalism is expensive. Not having journalism is far more expensive, but people notice the hit on their time and credit card faster than the hit on democracy and accountability of systems they depend on.

That external reality has taken much of our time and focus. Which brings me to the need to pay attention to the internal reality.

It is doubtful to me that any news outlet will survive the next two decades without a clear sense of its own identity, policies, ethics, standards and guidelines as well as a fairly open conduit between readers, reporters and top editors. Readers have a zillion things they can do besides pay attention to us, and as many as one third of people have simply given up news altogether. If we are not clear on who we are, and accountable to our own readers, ethics and standards, we'll be unhelpful, irrelevant or both.

But the traditions and legacies which helped build those ethics and standards must not be locked in a frozen past. Societies, laws, healthcare and language all evolve - why believe that the basic tenants of journalism cannot and should not alter? That TV show you loved 15 years ago feels anachronistic today because it is pinned in time, while journalism moves in lockstep with it.



We are seeing a newsroom mix of generations, cultures and genders that do not all agree on what effective public service journalism is or should be. Some hold tightly to the proud traditional ways, while others believe those ways can harm the afflicted who we so often say we are there to comfort.

The evolution of journalism can't simply be in the business models or platforms we use, or whether that story is in text, video, graphics or audio. It isn't simply storytelling methods. This decade, journalism's foundations have to be examined. What may have been the hill to die on journalistically 30 years ago may well be the hill your outlet actually dies on if it does not examine if that premise holds in the current world.

Listening to and learning from your own newsroom is another movement I expect to see more of this decade. Newsrooms are increasingly challenging their leadership or ownership on issues of race, gender, bias, objectivity, independence and more. They are a microcosm of the communities we cover. Our journalists are on frontlines of ground level reporting, and also where readers turn to express their frustration, anger, or gratitude.

We are seeing a newsroom mix of generations, cultures and genders that do not all agree on what effective public service journalism is or should be. Some hold tightly to the proud traditional ways, while others believe those ways can harm the afflicted who we so often say we are there to comfort. This mix of responsibility and relevance, of the definition of harm and help, is

uncomfortable and unresolved. But an organization that dismisses either without thought and care limits its future, and its ability to uphold its mission and relevance. We question for a living. Why be incurious about ourselves?

Another thread of the new decade may be attracting and retaining journalists. The industry has been in decline for years. Reporters - especially the young, female and racialised - face trolling for doing their job. Many aren't interested in working the 15-hour days their predecessors felt they had to, and the news cycle is draining and relentless. They deal with traumatic incidents and people in trauma. They are too often vilified - or worse - by political leaders. Their reported stories can be drowned in misinformation, through algorithm or orchestration. They don't see the world through the lens of the '60s and '70s and can't understand why so much of journalism seems to. They want to bring all they are to work - their rich tapestry of experience. If they can't do that, what is there to keep them?

The last 10 years were all about business model, and that won't change soon. The new decade will include the need for journalism to fact-check its assumptions, its internal code, and how its practice lives up to its purpose. ●



SAVING NEWS, NOT THE NEWSPAPER.

DAMIAN EALES
GLOBAL HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION, NEWS CORP

It is easy to characterise, as some have, that the impending closure of the print editions of many of News Corp Australia's regional and community mastheads is a disaster for journalism in Australia.

But doing so, to borrow an editorial term, buries the lead. It was a difficult decision, yes. But disastrous, by no means.

Certainly, it was difficult in the sense of the human cost. As with so much in the digital world, the stark reality is that fewer and different roles are required to produce the digital equivalent. It was therefore extraordinarily difficult for many of our people who are now without a job.

Difficult too for those readers who love the ritual of print, the record of the day, the daily connection with their newsagent. Difficult for those contrarian clients who saw the old-fashioned effectiveness of a single advertisement that could reach half of a town's population in one go. And difficult for the businesses that rely on newspapers to fill their trucks or fill their stores, day in and day out.

There is no doubt that this was difficult on many fronts. But here's a thought. As hard as it was, I'll also argue that 2020 marks a turning point that demonstrates a new, sustainable,

profitable model for journalism in Australia.

Looking back, let's face it, this industry has been in the fight of its life. What started with the great-online-migration of classified advertising has culminated into the unchecked exploitation of journalism and other original content by the digital duopoly of Google and Facebook.

Print as a format has been on the front line and has taken many casualties. Afternoon editions fell first, book sizes followed. Dailies became weeklies. There has been a procession of Purple Hearts from the profession.

Our company responded with the usual tactics and some of the not so usual too. We cut our share of costs, but we also achieved scale through acquisition. Through the aggregation of like-minded businesses we delivered scale efficiencies, as well as the scale of a larger digital subscription base. All of this extended the runway.

These actions bought us time to build an 80,000 strong base of digital subscribers in regional Queensland and a critical mass of over 640,000 subscribers nationwide. Time to build a growth engine from hyperlocal digital journalism in the suburbs of our metros like the Daily Telegraph and Herald Sun. Time to prove a financial model which supports hiring journalists across 16 new geographies in Australia, with more to come. Time to understand how valuable stories about local sports competitions, local crime syndicates, local development applications or local elections are to local residents.

We also had time to understand that these hyperlocal subscribers would stay subscribers

because of the breadth and depth of our state, national and global journalism. We learnt that the synergy of hyperlocal digital journalism, supported by our network of state and national journalism was uniquely capable of sustaining a business of digital journalism.

In a very utilitarian sense but also in a very human sense, it enabled us to retain 375 journalists last week who are proud professionals, who will continue to live in these communities, and who will continue to serve these communities. A point missed in some of the commentary.

In contrast to this approach, there are a litany of examples, locally and globally, where regional and community newspapers have gone broke (and no doubt will go broke) trying to save the paper instead of saving journalism. In doing so, they have (and will) extinguish the light that is local journalism, leaving these communities in darkness. We should never forget that the essential value of a newspaper is in the news, not the paper it's printed on.

In saying all of this though, it is fair to say that we had not predicted the actions of last week would occur so soon. As with many industries, COVID-19 forced our hand through a step-change towards digital consumption.

It has also shown how delicate the economics of journalism are today, and to this extent we are not out of the woods yet.

Although we have found a model that well might sustain local journalism for now, it will not be secured until society tames those tech titans who exert such extraordinary market



Although we have found a model that well might sustain local journalism for now, it will not be secured until society tames those tech titans who exert such extraordinary market power.

power, and yet pay nothing for the privilege.

In this market, Apple, through Apple News+ is the only digital platform who has recognised that premium journalism should be paid for, and for that they should be singled out and applauded. Google and Facebook on the other hand have not, and it seems will not, until the government and their regulator force their hand through the impending deadline of a mandatory code of conduct.

If that code is properly executed then perhaps we are at the end of a pivotal chapter, but not nearly near the end of the book. No doubt upcoming chapters will address what we already know: first, that journalism will increasingly be funded by a user-pay model and digital subscriptions will rapidly become the primary revenue source of publishers; and second, that the biggest corporate (ab)users of journalism will be required to pay like everyone else. Both factors, both necessary and sufficient.

Ironically, those commentators that have been most critical of our strategy to sustain journalism in recent days are themselves largely digital media businesses, and beyond advocating that the First estate ought to subsume the Fourth estate, or insisting that journalism should be a philanthropic enterprise, they have no solution. In contrast, on July 1, we will have just under 100 regional and community titles through Australia which will be immediately profitable, wholly digital, and growth businesses.

They didn't just bury the lead, they missed it altogether. ●



LA NACION

**THE
TRANSFOR-
MATION WE
ARE LIVING
THROUGH
TODAY IS
AS DIZZYING
AS IT IS
EXCITING**

JOSE DEL RIO
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF LA NACION, ARGENTINA

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very day, 24 hours a day, a screen lights up the nerve centre of the newsroom. It is where quick decisions and detailed planning take place, to produce both the stories that generate real-time shockwaves, and those that delight readers with their originality and style. It is an infinite pool of ideas that includes the talent of 356 journalists, the programmed agenda of our daily drone and visualisations that make the complex appear simple. That screen shows what our 330,000 digital subscribers are doing, minute by minute.

On other screens we can track the trends of the moment, and compare the activity of our content and our competitors' content, along with what's happening on TV in real time. We even calculate a specific score based on how much time readers engage with our content, how greatly a story interests them and what feelings it elicits. It is not a question of big data, but of smart data.

Our direction is clear: quality journalism on every platform, now and going forward. And this isn't just an advertising slogan: it means striving for constant improvement, embracing successes and errors, following clues in the search for new formulas, learning to try and fail and start over. This requires important and necessary changes in the way

we search for stories, and, above all, how we tell them. It also means evolving according to our readers' habits: habits that combine time frames, trends, and inputs from the most diverse sources. Silos were destroyed long ago. Vertical divisions have been replaced by horizontal work cells in multidisciplinary teams built around projects and themes.

Data flows through different arteries and reaches a heart that remains constant: the newsroom. Maybe that is why it beats with a consistent and increasingly loud rhythm. By the time the COVID-19 pandemic is just a memory, definitive changes will have taken place. Teams will be strengthened, fewer meetings will be in-person and coordination will no longer require a large nerve centre. Innovation is cooked up in two phases: making the everyday distinctive, and making what is distinctive every day. This is about building a solid foundation that will make a difference to our journalistic DNA.

The transformation we are living through today is as dizzying as it is exciting, and will be even more so in the coming decade. Digital media needs to reach readers promptly with disruptive formulas: it needs to be faster and higher quality, with more verification and without indulging in the growing phenomenon of disinformation or 'fake news.' We are forced to follow the changing habits of our audiences, who are increasingly sophisticated and demanding of what they consume on specific platforms at different times of day. That is, no doubt, a fundamental part of our reinvention.

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Although we have found a model that well might sustain local journalism for now, it will not be secured until society tames those tech titans who exert such extraordinary market power.

From a podcast that wishes its listeners a “good morning” and teaches them to optimize their time, to delve into history or to envision the future, to a newsletter summarizing the ten main stories you need to know before you get to the office. From a TV channel that does not sensationalise in its analysis, to a documentary several months in production released on YouTube. From showing what poverty looks like through the eyes of children, to making change by publishing official data previously kept under lock and key. All of this produced in ways that trigger emotions, that share states of mind, but that above all expand horizons. New readers will also have other interests and habits: you have to be there to satisfy them, wherever they may be.

Today LA NACION has some 40 million monthly individual users and creates between 250 and 270 digital stories every day. But it is not only that. It is no longer a one-way relationship between a broadcaster and a recipient, but a constant back-and-forth that allows us to ascertain the interests of each customer with a high level of precision. Now 45% of our followers on social networks are under 35, we have more than a million followers on Instagram, 4.1 million between our Facebook accounts and 4 million on Twitter. Content is presented differently according to platform and target age group, and that trend will only intensify. Readers are not all motivated by the same concerns and it is not the same variables that allowed us 150% growth on YouTube in 2019, some 500,000

subscribers to our channel, and more than 2 million plays of our podcast programming.

Technology has made definitive changes to the way people connect, but the fundamentals remain the same. Between past, present, and future there is a common bridge that joins 150 years of history of LA NACION: our values, trustworthy information, and the preponderance of facts over opinions. Also, the diversity of analysis and the belief that understanding reality betters us as a society. We continue to be motivated by our belief in an Argentina with a division of powers, with a stable legal framework, and in which education and culture play fundamental roles. That has not changed throughout our history, and will not change in the future.

Journalism's mission remains the same: in its essence it is the value of questioning, provoking, and ultimately denouncing situations that are contrary to democratic values. There are countless brave people that carry out this solitary, complex and dangerous task, in which duty towards society overrides personal interests. The future is based on precisely this essence: in fact, it is the cornerstone for constructing it. ●

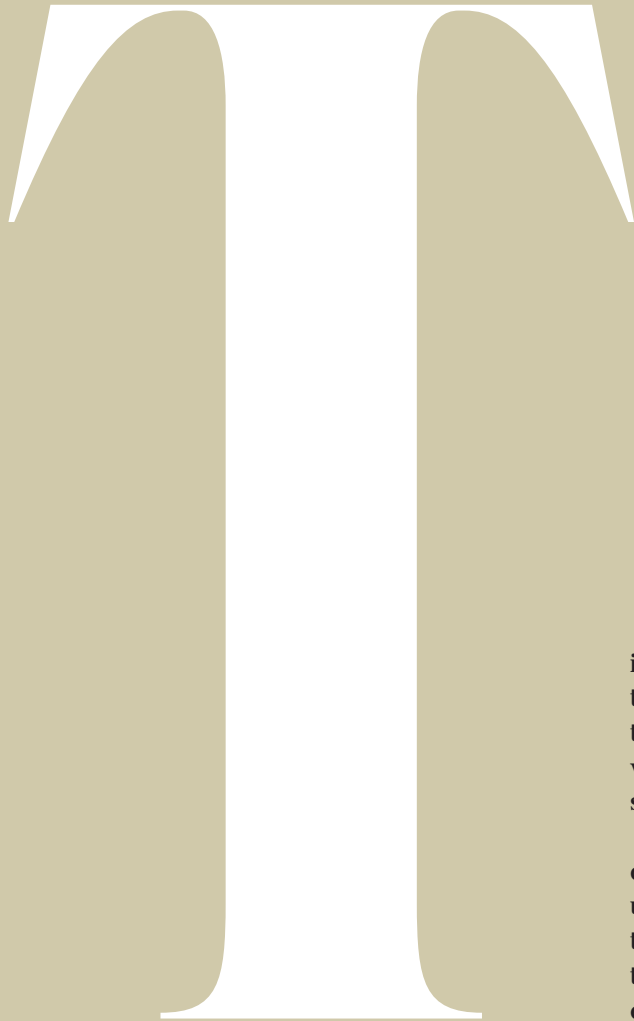


중앙그룹

DIGITAL TRANSFOR- MATION, THE KOREAN WAY

JEONGDO HONG

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF JOONGANG GROUP, SOUTH KOREA



The main elements of the newspaper business are similar throughout the world. Strategies for survival, however, cannot be the same. The right remedies are context-sensitive. Strategies that lack the understanding of those contexts, are risky and costly.

Like the rest of the world, the Korean newspaper industry is in a deep slump. Subscription rates - once above 70% - had already plummeted to 29.4% by 2010 and dropped to 7.9% in 2019.

Yet, some anomalies are noticeable. According to the Korea Press Foundation, the number of news businesses (both paper and online) have almost doubled over the last decade. And among these, no news outlet focuses on a digital subscription strategy.

These anomalies can be attributed to the same cause: the flourishing of a domestic online portal called Naver. Virtually all newspaper companies in the nation provide their content to Naver. The majority of the population consumes news on it, leading to

its immense influence. All news entities, even those without branding or history, hope that they can take advantage of this influence, which might explain the abrupt emergence of so many new brands.

Naver pays news entities according to criteria it created. Although it seems like an unfair amount in the minds of news entities, the risk of not generating enough revenue via their own paywall is too great for many news entities to take the leap away from Naver. This reluctance has turned into a collective habit, and now, they feel complacent receiving their steady paycheck.

The other anomaly relates to advertising spending in national newspapers. Surprisingly, newspaper ad spending seems to remain at a relatively high level. In 2010, it totalled \$1.4 billion and in 2018, it was about \$1.2 billion, a relatively small drop of 14 percent compared to the approximately 73 percent decrease in subscriptions. Yet, what backed up the ad spending was more than newspapers' marketing effectiveness. Rather, advertisers regard the fees as investments to solidify their relationships with newspapers.

The issue with Naver is not a matter of whether it's right or wrong. Naver is a given condition: how to cope with this is the real issue. Also, what lies behind businesses' needs to maintain good relationships with major newspapers is what needs to be addressed. Money is still in the paper and its brand. Even if that budget is eventually redistributed, what we need is an 'organized retreat strategy.'



Only our core competency can help us. In fact, what can make us flourish remains the same: quality content and our marketing capability.

Taking these anomalies into consideration, the JoongAng has pioneered the digital transformation journey, with Innovation's Juan Senor as our valuable adviser in the first stage. The first goal was to change the content production process. Old habits are never easy to change, but without this paradigm shift, JoongAng wouldn't have been able to go any further. JoongAng tenaciously adopted the principle of 'digital first,' embracing this not just as a slogan but as a complete way of working.

Working with data was the second mantra. The importance of data is unquestionable. However, what matters is making people feel like data is the air they breathe. An appropriate system was crucial. We invested a substantial amount of money and finally developed JA (JoongAng Analytics). This has successfully inspired reporters with regards to what, when and how to write in the digital age.

How has JoongAng performed?

Within Naver, JoongAng's position is unbeatable. Among all the news entities in Korea, JoongAng maintains the most subscribers (more than 4 million) and the highest page view rate, and thus receives the biggest paycheck from Naver.

How to manage the legacy of the paper is also important. Investment into the paper should be controlled. However, the paper has substantial potential on its own. JoongAng noticed the rules of the game have been chang-

ing. Influence became more important than volume. What mattered was not the number of eyeballs but whose eyeballs they were. JoongAng didn't hesitate to reduce the total number of pages per day but increased the number of the quality opinion pages instead. 'Columnists on the ground,' a series of one-page articles written by our well-known opinion and editorial writers as they make a return to on-the-ground reporting, has been a big hit. Readers love seeing the veteran writers' legwork, and JoongAng's efforts attracted an enthusiastic response from opinion leaders, which became an asset.

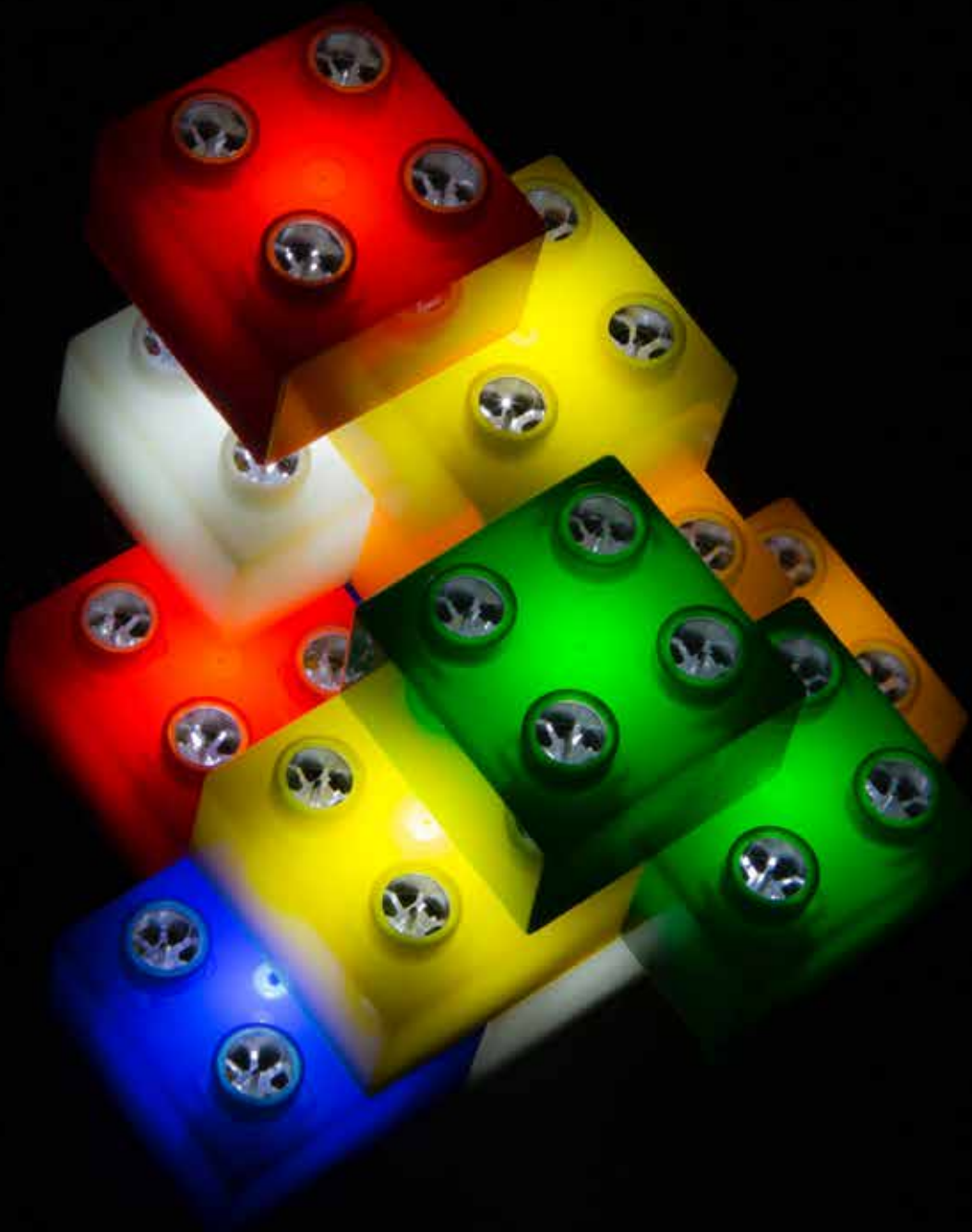
Even with these achievements, the road ahead is long and rough, and survival is not guaranteed. We need to stick to the basics. We should not let the superficial deceive us. Renovation for renovation's sake is a risk that the JoongAng wants to avoid. Time and cash are what we need to sustain us on the long road ahead. Only our core competency can help us. In fact, what can make us flourish remains the same: quality content and our marketing capability. Companies that have the power to make readers open their wallets will not die. Whether it is content marketing, event marketing or platform marketing, a newspaper company that provides advertisers with satisfactory marketing tools can survive. In a market with less barriers to entry and fiercer competition, what can differentiate us from other competitors is our brand. This is the prerequisite for success that can save us. ●

As advertising becomes less reliable as a revenue stream, the question of how to bring in income becomes more important than ever. At INNOVATION we believe that diversification is vital, and we urge publishers to try three or four of the following models. They won't all work for everyone, and a degree of experimentation might be necessary. The key premise for all of these is high-quality, unique journalism that will build a loyal, dedicated, paying audience and solidify your brand's reputation, in turn unlocking further monetisation opportunities.



4 MONETISATION

**BUSINESS
MODELS
FOR NEWS
PUBLISHERS**



	CLIENT FOCUS	INCOME POTENTIAL	TRANSACTION COSTS	PROFIT POTENTIAL	REQUIREMENTS	RISKS
PAID CONTENT	B2C				Relevant, unique content	Lack of willingness to pay; high churn rate
EMOTIONAL ADVERTISER	B2B				Advanced data science capabilities	Difficult to prove that it works at scale, risk of alienating your audience
DATA BROKER	B2B				Sophisticated data and analytics. Trusted relationship with advertisers	Poor marketing and sales efforts, lack of bespoke analytics won't deliver results
CLUB	B2C				Trusting relationship with your audience. Partnerships for product/service portfolio. Geographical reach aligned with media coverage	Insufficient offerings and lack of engagement with audience will reduce the impression of value
RETAILER	B2C				Deep understanding of audiences. Excellent platform. Unique and exclusive product portfolio	Being let down by logistics and customer service
EVENT ORGANISER	B2C				Expertise in programming and logistics, or appropriate partnerships	Strong competition from specialised event producers
NON-PROFIT	B2C				Clearly-defined mission that appeals to donors	Lack of sustainability; loss of editorial independence
AGENCY	B2B				Creative teams within the organisation. Marketing intelligence competencies.	Increasing competition from both traditional and upcoming advertising and branding agencies
PURVEYOR OF TIME	B2B				High quality, premium content and highly-engaged audiences who are valuable to advertisers	Difficult to break out of the massive digital ad marketplace built on selling impressions
BRAND LICENSER	B2B				Strong, well-known, valued brand	Core brand deterioration due to unwise licensing decisions
IT PROVIDER	B2B				Unique software and an IT team with consulting and business development skills	High level of investment required to hire IT talent and maintain software
INVESTOR	B2B				Capital. Investment and sector expertise (internal or partnerships)	Losing your investments
EDUCATOR	B2C				Internal expertise or access to external expertise, logistical capabilities	Lack of interest as a result of courses that miss target audience's interests, poor execution
ARCHIVIST	B2C				Substantial, accessible archives and facilities to reproduce images etc	Cost of handling exceeds profits due to inefficiencies or insufficient demand

The paid content publisher

READER REVENUE

We go in depth into the different types of paywall models available in the following chapter, so the focus here is not on examples but on stressing that

in 2020 and beyond, your primary business should be selling journalism rather than selling ads, particularly in these challenging times for advertising markets worldwide.

Charging for content is essential for survival for most news organisations. There are of course exceptions that will build successful models in other ways, but these exceptions are rare.

This year's Digital News Report from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford University found significant increases in the percentage of people who pay for online news in a number of countries including the US at 20 per cent (+4) and Norway at 42 per cent (+8). This was before the Coronavirus-related 'bump' that many publishers have reported since March.

A significant minority in these two countries are also registering for multiple subscriptions, which is good news for publishers in a 'winner-takes-most' environment where big brands tend to dominate.

Of course, the primary impetus remains to ensure that you have journalism worth paying for. Then you have to look for ways to build deeper connections with your audience so that they are more willing to open their wallets, and to continue paying.

Among those who do pay for online news, this year's Reuters Institute report found that the most important motivating factor in the UK and the US is the "distinctiveness and quality" of the content. Interestingly, the report also found that over a third of subscribers "cite a close affinity with a particular journalist as a reason to subscribe," suggesting that allowing individual journalists the chance to shine and connect with their audience - via podcasts or newsletters, for example - is of particular importance.

As Nieman Lab's Joshua Benton has written, subscriber retention is "critical to making reader revenue the bedrock of the

new business model," and reminds us that "once you get all those subscribers signed up, you've got to prove yourself worthy of their money, over and over again."

Who is it for?

Everyone.

Focusing on reader revenue isn't just about bringing in more money, but it also enables a publisher to create a higher-quality, better-performing product. Research from Harvard's Shorenstein Center and the Lenfest Institute suggests that a shift from advertising-based models to digital subscriptions enables news organizations to:

- Deliver more reader-relevant content;
- Validate operational models that offer more stable business performance;
- Free up resources to plan for longer-term investments in content and news quality.

As former editor and publisher Jim



Charging for content is essential for survival for most news organisations. There are of course exceptions that will build successful models in other ways, but these exceptions are rare.

Brady writes for the Reynolds Journalism Institute, reader revenue also has the advantage of focusing the business and editorial sides "around a common goal: serving the consumer."

Challenges

The Reuters Institute report authors stress that across all the markets they surveyed, the majority of people are still not paying for online news. And many of those say that nothing could ever persuade them to pay. However, publishers are encouraged to see this as a challenge to rise to rather than as discouragement. ●

The publisher as an emotional advertiser

While we encourage all publishers to pursue reader revenue streams, we realise that advertising is likely to remain part of most publishers' business model, even if it is unlikely to bring in the big money that it used to, particularly after the collapse in ad markets triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the more creative and potentially lucrative ways in which news organisations can sell ads is by targeting readers based on emotions rather than simple demographics.

Examples:

USA TODAY

In 2016, the USA Today Network started categorising content by topic and tone, scoring it based on the emotions it is believed most likely to evoke. In 2017 it started to sell

advertising based on that knowledge with a product called Lens Targeting.

"Advertisers aren't asking for audience by demographic but psychographic," Kelly Andresen, SVP of Gannett's GET Creative branded content studio told Digiday in 2018.

An ad campaign for a nonprofit that was targeted to people reading inspirational stories resulted in a 25 per cent higher donation rate than ads that weren't targeted, Andresen told Digiday.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

The New York Times' "Perspective Targeting" offers brands the ability to target ads to specific articles that it predicts will evoke particular emotions in its readers. The 18 emotions available include optimistic, inspired, self-confident, adventurous and competitive. It also offers "Motivation Targeting" allowing brands to target their advertising alongside articles that it predicts will motivate readers to take a particular action, such as take control of their finances, or make a healthy change. Seven motivations are available.

The brand's media kit says that "by

identifying connections between content and emotion, we've successfully driven ad engagement 6X more effectively than IAB benchmarks." Some emotionally-targeted ads have generated as much as 80 per cent more impressions than standard behavioural targeting, Rick Edmonds reported for the Poynter Institute, with an average lift of 40 per cent.

"Project Feels" was originally launched in 2017 by the paper's Data Science team to understand and predict the emotional impact of Times articles. It then piloted ad placements based on the emotions evoked by certain articles. A post from the Data Science team in 2018 stressed that the project's findings "will never impact our news report or other editorial decisions." This point was reiterated by Allison Murphy, the Times' Senior Vice President of Advertising Innovation, in an interview with Rick Edmonds in 2019.

Who is it for?

The key requirement for being able to

PSYCHOGRAPHICS OVER DEMOGRAPHICS



Charging for content is essential for survival for most news organisations. There are of course exceptions that will build successful models in other ways, but these exceptions are rare.

offer this kind of targeting to advertisers is an extensive data science team. This may well make it out of reach for smaller publications.

Challenges

The biggest challenge is proving that mood-based targeting works, and at scale, according to Digiday.

Selling your audience via emotions and motivation requires serious consideration of your relationship with your audience. If not done responsibly, this could lead to a loss of trust. Marketing to negative emotions could be particularly controversial. ●

The publisher as a club

If a straightforward subscription offering doesn't appeal, publishers can seek to strengthen ties of loyalty with their readers while still bringing in revenue, by creating a membership programme. These tend to be subscription packages which offer not only access to editorial products, but also access to events or additional insight, or discounts across various products and services. In some cases, the cost of the annual subscription could be recouped through accessing such discounts.

It is important to generate a robust list of 'added value' benefits so that subscribers have preferential access to relevant events, premieres and/or discounts across a wide range of services. It requires a proactive marketing strategy to ensure that club members are not only satisfied, but willing to renew their memberships.

Examples:

THE GUARDIAN, UK

The Guardian's content is freely available

online, as part of the paper's commitment to making its reporting open to everyone. But readers can choose to pay; as well as print subscriptions, the Guardian offers digital only subscriptions which allow premium access to its apps, and an ad-free web experience. Supporters can also make a contribution of any amount, or become a 'Patron' if they donate more than £100 a month, which gives them opportunities to attend exclusive events and more access to newsroom operations. "Guardian Patrons help keep our journalism free of a paywall, so it remains open and accessible to everyone. With their support we can give a voice to the voiceless, pursue the most complex or time-consuming stories and hold the powerful to account," the site says, stressing that membership is a good cause.

In March 2020 the Guardian reported 821,000 recurring monthly supporters, which included 446,000 recurring contributors, patrons and members (as opposed to digital or print subscribers), a 20 per cent increase compared to March 2019. In the 12 months to the end of March 2020, the Guardian received a further 342,000 one-off contributions from readers.

MEMBERSHIP



You need to be prepared for a lot of engagement with your audience.

LA NACION, ARGENTINA

In addition to a subscription offering, La Nacion has a loyalty card program called Club La Nacion, which gives its members discounts and special offers that can be personalised and targeted to their location. Discount categories include food, entertainment, travel, fashion, beauty and home.

QUARTZ, US

Quartz announced at the end of June 2020 that it had nearly 21,000 paying members globally. Membership gets you weekly 'field guides,' member-only newsletters, early access to digital events, topic-based slide presentations, as well as access to all journalism.

Who's it for?

You need a brand that your audience believes in, trusts and feels a connection with. You need to be prepared to offer them something more than straightforward journalism, whether that is extra content, events, or discounts.

Emily Roseman, doing research for the Membership Puzzle Project, concluded that

any membership program should focus on building repeat activity and member retention above all. Repeat activity, or regularity, has been shown to correlate with readers' willingness to subscribe.

Targeted contact based on audience segmentation can help to keep users engaged. It is also important, as with any reader revenue strategy, to track how and when people are subscribing, so that you can use that information to "design future acquisition efforts and to decide which strategies to abandon because they're underperforming," wrote Federica Cherubini, also for the Membership Puzzle Project.

Challenges

You need to be prepared for a lot of engagement with your audience, but also be aware of striking a balance. "You might consider periodic surveys to get a better picture of what your audiences value most from your offerings. Be careful to not overwhelm them with long, detailed surveys," advises Cherubini. ●

The publisher as a retailer

There has been a dramatic increase in e-commerce as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic which has significantly accelerated the decline of brick and mortar stores. Even though physical shops have reopened in many countries, that doesn't mean that people are going to give up their new online shopping habits.

Amazon reported a 40 per cent increase in net sales in the second quarter of 2020, compared to 2019 (\$88.9 billion compared with \$63.4 billion). The Drum noted a particular rise is social shopping during periods of lockdown, as people spend more time browsing their social feeds. Hearst's lifestyle magazine sites saw a 358% year-on-year increase in product sales through site content in April 2020, according to Media Post.

Damian Radcliffe wrote in *What's New In Publishing* that the percentage of revenue that most content creators derive from e-commerce remains small. Even before the

pandemic, he suggested that "the presence of shoppable ads across Google Image search, social networks and elsewhere on the web, are all helping to make eCommerce more viable and appealing, helping to usher in the next era of online shopping."

Could this be the right time to finally embrace e-commerce? To succeed, it is important to have a clear focus on the audience you are targeting, both in terms of content and in terms of purchasing offers. A deep understanding of your audience is imperative to survive with this model.

Examples:

NEW YORK MAGAZINE'S 'THE STRATEGIST'

New York Media's shopping site, The Strategist, saw an 85% year-over-year increase in revenue during the second quarter of 2020, Digiday reported. Billing itself as "the best deals, gift guides and product reviews from around the web. Brought to you by the editors of New

York Magazine," The Strategist links directly to the cheapest or most convenient places to buy the products that it recommends.

According to e-commerce solution Skimlinks, The Strategist's success is due partly to its rigorous data collection and analysis on which price ranges, product categories and merchants are most successful, and its efficient collaboration with the wider New York Media team. It is of course also crucial to maintain trust by only recommending products that the reviewers actually believe in.

The site also publishes entertaining recommendations and reviews from celebrities and experts.

BUZZFEED SHOPPING

BuzzFeed launched a standalone website called BuzzFeed Shopping in June 2020 that lets visitors complete purchases onsite. It already publishes affiliate links on its main site (which led to \$300 million in product sales last year, according to the Wall Street Journal), and saw 'commerce' accounting for 21% of its revenue in 2019.

This move was partly enabled by the spread of checkout functionality beyond traditional e-commerce platforms, Nilla Ali, senior vice president of commerce at BuzzFeed, told the Wall Street Journal. For example, Instagram's checkout feature, launched in March 2019, has enabled shopping directly in the app from a limited number of partners (and as of August 2020 from all eligible businesses in the US) and consumer behaviour is gradually starting to shift.

RECOMMENDATION/ CONSUMER JOURNALISM

BuzzFeed earns an average commission of 25% on direct sales, the online publisher told the WSJ in July 2020. It will collect consumer data on this new shopping site with an eye toward eventually personalizing recommendations.

Will shopping directly on media sites become more common as consumer habits change?

Who's it for?

Any publisher can dabble in e-commerce, you don't have to purchase a whole site, as the New York Times did with Wirecutter in 2016: you could earn affiliate revenue by providing links from product mentions to retailers whenever you do product reviews. You need journalists who are committed to and passionate about the beats and content areas that they cover.

Challenges

There is a clear risk of losing reader trust when you are making money out of recommending products. Some publishers, such as the Financial Times, don't utilise affiliate linking for this very reason. Your audience needs to believe your assertions that your reviews are independent, and you have to be prepared to stand behind your recommendations. It is crucial to always clearly state when and where you may potentially receive affiliate revenue from links, and whether your journalists have received products as gifts from brands. ●

The publisher as an event organiser

Increasing numbers of news publishers have started to organise events as an additional revenue stream over the last few years, often taking advantage of their journalists' expertise and their brand's convening power to host topical discussions.

Some companies have consolidated the development of their branded events into a single area or even created independent business units. In addition, events can also generate new content, gather new data that feeds databases and play a meaningful role in building brand and establishing influence.

This model could represent 20 per cent of total revenues with good brand partnerships and the right management team. Events can also be offered as a subscriber benefit, or subscribers could be given premium/prior access to tickets.

The shift to virtual

When in-person events were cancelled

across the world in spring 2020, publishers were quick to jump on the virtual events bandwagon. As even the most tech-phobic individuals become experienced with video conferencing software such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Google Meet, remote events have been booming, from one-off webinars, to weekly calls with key correspondents, to full-scale conferences.

You can't charge at the same pricing level, but your audience can be global. This is particularly pertinent for publishers seeking to garner a more international audience. Your audience can also be much larger than that of an in-person event, for only a marginal increase in cost. For example, Zoom webinars allow for up to 100 interactive video participants, and up to 10,000 view-only attendees. The Atlantic is hoping to attract 1 million digital visitors to its high-profile Atlantic Festival this year, compared with the event's usual 2,000 attendees.

Given the much lower organising costs of online events, some publishers have been able to offer them to all viewers, or free to subscribers, or at a very low cost. Sponsorship is a significant option

for recouping revenue, particularly when audiences are far larger than they could be at a physical event. For example, the Guardian is currently charging £5 per talk, whereas the New York Times is offering many events for free, while thinking about how the attendees might be persuaded to become subscribers.

Examples:

FT LIVE

The FT Live global events arm, FT Live, organises conferences, awards and other events across the world. It usually organises 150 events globally per year, according to Digiday, and it has swiftly adapted to the virtual world. FT Live has several full-scale conferences taking place in 2020, as well as many hour-long virtual events, starting on April 1 with its Digital Dialogues series.

Sponsorship is a key revenue driver, and according to Orson Francescone, managing director of FT Live, sponsorship revenue is holding up. He told Digiday that a brand's alignment with speaking at events and appearing next to the publisher's journalists doesn't go away in a digital environment. In terms of ticket revenue, publishers on average are likely able to charge 30 per cent to 50 per cent of a normal event, Francescone said. Some webinars offered by the FT are free, while sector-specific conferences start at about £299.

LA TIMES FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

Founded in 1996, the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, Stories and Ideas usually attracts approximately 150,000 people each year of all ages from Southern California and even other parts of the country. It will be held virtually this October, with 25 individual virtual events including author panels and readings.

EVENTS GO ONLINE

TORTOISE

Events are a key part of Tortoise's membership offering, with its regular 'Thinkins,' which usually take place at its office in London or at other venues around the UK, described on its website as 'the engine of open journalism.' During the pandemic, Tortoise has been offering daily virtual Thinkins, arguing that "it's more important than ever that we get together – albeit virtually – to make sense of what's happening." These are all free for members and their guests to book. Any guests will receive a free month of membership, during which they will be encouraged to join as members.

Who is it for?

There is a low barrier to entry for online events, so it could be a good time to test out interest and your journalists' capacity as moderators or hosts.

Challenges

You need to understand the technology to choose the appropriate tech vendor. Will Zoom suffice for your intended capacity, or do you need a dedicated online conference provider? Will you be able to easily upgrade your plan if your numbers of attendees exceed expectations?

"Zoom fatigue" – the exhaustion participants experience taking part in virtual meetings and events – is real. It is therefore crucial to carefully consider the timing of events. For example, The Wall Street Journal's Future of Everything Festival has been split up and rescheduled over several months online.

The lack of networking, for many a key justification for attending in-person events, is problematic, but it is possible to experiment with digital breakout rooms, or arrange to share contact details, etc. ●

The publisher as a recipient of philanthropy

As news outlets struggle to make money, some might be tempted to look for donations to support their journalism. There is of course a good case to be made for journalism as a public service. However, it is not for everyone.

Examples:

THE CONVERSATION

The Conversation is a network of non-profit news sites that publish stories by researchers and academics. Each country's edition is an independent not-for-profit organisation or charity funded by its university members, government and other grant awarding bodies, corporate partners and reader donations.

Chris Waitling, CEO of The Conversation UK, wrote for Journalism.co.uk that during a massive surge in readership during the COVID-19 pandemic, the charity is currently focused on "converting these new first-time

visitors into repeat readers who will, over time, support us." Early on in the UK's lockdown period, the site started a campaign to encourage new readers to sign up for its newsletter. The rate of new subscriptions trebled, Waitling said, "and so when we did eventually go back to ask them to support us, donations increased dramatically as we were able to target our most loyal readers directly through our newsletter."

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

In late 2019, a Utah daily print title, The Salt Lake Tribune, successfully changed its status to 'nonprofit' with the US Internal Revenue Service, by presenting itself as a charity set up to educate, advance, and inform public discourse through local, independent journalism in the state of Utah.

The paper still seeks subscribers and advertisers, but the new status allows its supporters to make tax deductible donations. It has had to give up its right to endorse political candidates, and the paper's owner has given up control to a new board which will run the nonprofit.

The move was described at the time by media commentators as a huge (and positive)

shift. The expectation is that other struggling local US newspapers that can make a clear case for serving a community will also be able to apply for a similar status.

In the last 15 years, more than a quarter of US newspapers have closed, and half of local journalists have lost their jobs, according to the University of North Carolina report *The Expanding News Deserts*, so other local print titles are likely to be watching Salt Lake's non-profit progress with keen interest.

MOTHER JONES

Mother Jones, which focuses on investigative reporting and explanatory journalism on social issues, is funded by a mix of big donors and readers. In total, nearly 48,000 people made a contribution to Mother Jones in the past year, according to the magazine. It is the oldest investigative nonprofit news organisation in the US, and boasts the largest audience (on its own platform) among such organizations, according to Harvard's Shorenstein Center. Part of its success is due to the "growing emphasis on journalism—as a public service for the benefit of readers—created a symbiotic relationship between the editorial and business sides of the organization, elevating the pitch that the stronger the business, the stronger the journalism, and vice versa," the Shorenstein Center found.

Who's it for?

In general, operating as a non-profit is only an option for niche, highly mission-driven publications. For example, The 19th, a digital publication which recently launched in the US, is

NON-PROFIT NEWS

a key candidate for nonprofit success, as its mission is clear and appealing to donors.: It aims to empower women, particularly women of colour and those traditionally underserved by American media, "with the information, resources and community they need to be equal participants in our democracy."

For general interest news companies, seeking philanthropic funding for a specific type of coverage might be more feasible, and more appropriate. For example, the Guardian's international development coverage is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Associated Press receives funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education for its science and health news. The Seattle Times receives funding for its education coverage from the Gates Foundation, Amazon and the City University of Seattle.

This approach allows a news outlet to benefit from occasions when their goals align with those of a philanthropist, but it doesn't risk putting the fate of the whole publication in the benefactor's hands.

Challenges

Remaining reliant on others, particularly a small number of big donors, means you run the risk of losing your independence. There is also the risk that funding isn't necessarily consistent or long-term, meaning that there can be a looming, constant pressure to search for more funders. Also, philanthropic funding for news is far more likely in the US than elsewhere in the world, given the US tradition of philanthropy. ●

The publisher as a data broker

DATABASE MARKETING



With the emergence of programmatic advertising, it becomes increasingly important to have your own data to use internally, but of course these data sets can also be offered to third parties.

As advertising becomes more sophisticated, the value of consumer data increases. Publishers have a direct relationship with their audiences and the ‘first-party data’ that they collect directly from their readers, listeners and viewers is valuable for advertisers who want to increase the effectiveness of their ad campaigns.

With the emergence of programmatic advertising, it becomes increasingly important to have your own data to use internally, but of course these data sets can also be offered to third parties. Classified ads and verticals are also excellent vehicles to augment databases with even more relevant audience information.

Example:

THE NEW YORK TIMES’ READERSCOPE

Targeted audience segments are of course one of the most interesting uses of data for advertising. The New York Times launched its Readerscope tool for advertising use in 2018. Readerscope is an AI-driven data insights tool that summarizes what content The Times’ audience is consuming, by using anonymized data to visualize who is interested in which topics and where they are, according to a press release at the time. Topics are algorithmically learned from The New York Times article archive using natural language processing, and all of the reader segments are targetable with media on NYTimes.com, the Times said.

Readerscope can be used:

- As a content strategy tool to develop creative ideas for branded content or campaigns by searching a brand’s target audience segment (e.g., millennial women) to understand what they’re reading, either as content topics or as representative articles exemplifying those topics.
- To help brands find the right audience or geography for a certain message by searching a topic (e.g., human rights, philanthropy or travel) and seeing which audience segments over-index for interest about that subject.

The press release said that Readerscope would also soon be able to take in other brands’ own first-party data to create custom

segments of these same insights for a brand’s specific audience or customer set.

Who is it for?

Anyone who collects data on their readers. Of course, the more you know about your customers, the more effective such tools will be. This is why many publishers encourage readers to register for a limited number of free articles per month.

Challenges

Privacy regulations, and the growing awareness of these regulations among consumers, means that you have to be strategic and transparent about what you do with customer data. ●

The publisher as a purveyor of time

**FROM CLICKS
TO CLOCKS**

As previously mentioned, we expect that advertising will remain part of most publishers' business models for the time being. But advertising success doesn't have to always be based simply on page views. Measuring time spent, for example, rewards quality content that audiences actually engage with, and punishes clickbait that sees many views but very little focused time. It might be a better match for publishers who are increasingly valuing loyalty in their customers, and looking at engagement metrics like frequency of visits, and number of articles read. A test carried out in 2017 by ADITION, a marketing technology company, and Spiegel Online found a "distinctly positive

correlation" between view time and advertising impact.

FINANCIAL TIMES

In 2015, The Financial Times today launched a new digital advertising metric, 'cost per hour' (CPH), in conjunction with metrics specialist Chartbeat. The FT claimed that CPH allows it to "increase marketing effectiveness by measuring not just whether an ad is seen or not, but for how long." This allows advertisers to reach the FT's "highly influential global audience" with greater brand impact. Tests showed that brand recognition and association among readers increased significantly the longer an ad was in view. Ads seen for five seconds or more showed up to 50% higher brand recall and familiarity than those visible for a shorter time.

The model was developed in house, and the FT has since called for its wider uptake.

Who is it for?

Time-spent metrics work best for premium publishers with highly engaged audiences who are desirable targets for advertisers, according to a paper detailing research conducted in 2017 by Brent Merritt of George Washington University. Ads will ideally be placed alongside high quality, long-form pieces.

Challenges

The same paper from Brent Merritt found that the top challenge of metrics based on attention rather than volume is the inertia of a massive digital ad marketplace built on selling impressions, along with technological challenges, a lack of demand from ad agencies and difficulties

“

A test carried out in 2017 by ADITION, a marketing technology company, and Spiegel Online found a “distinctly positive correlation” between view time and advertising impact.

standardising the value of attention sales. The first steps toward overcoming these barriers are better education and providing more empirical evidence of the value of attention currencies. ●

The publisher as an IT provider

SELLING SOFTWARE

When they develop particularly successful in house tools, media companies can offer consulting and IT licensing services to their industry peers.

Examples:

THE WASHINGTON POST

The Washington Post's Arc is a digital platform and suite of tools that is "engineered to meet the demands of modern publishers, brands and broadcasters around the world," handling "complex multi-site publishing and audience needs across video, web, apps, subscriptions and ad monetization, providing a competitive advantage enhanced by a set of sophisticated machine learning and AI-powered tools," according to the Post. The publisher has monetised

Arc in the form of software-as-a-service, running on Amazon Web Services, to more than 600 sites at both large and small media companies. In February 2020 the company said Arc was serving more than 750 million unique visitors per month.

Arc signed a client outside the media industry for the first time in October 2019, when BP signed on to use Arc's workflow and content management tools for its communications team to engage its worldwide workforce, which includes 70,000 employees in 70 countries across 250 internal sites.

Arc has about 250 employees, with many engineers working from an office in Chicago, Bloomberg reported at the time of the deal with BP. Shailesh Prakash, Chief Information Officer and Vice President of Product at the Washington Post, told Bloomberg that Arc expects to generate \$100 million in annual revenue within the next three years. Although Arc isn't profitable yet, Prakash said, he sees it becoming the Post's third major revenue stream, comparable to subscriptions and advertising.

VOX CHORUS

Vox Media has been selling its Chorus platform since 2018, and the technology is now used on more than 350 sites. Vox describes Chorus as "the only all-in-one publishing, audience, and revenue platform built for modern media companies operating at scale."

The team that supports Chorus, including its ad network, Concert, and its community tool Coral, was reported to be 150 people-strong in mid-2019.

Who is it for?

This model requires sophisticated technology and not many media companies will have the capability to offer this type of service. This requires developing a business-oriented consultative selling and consulting culture within the IT team to provide these services to internal and external customers. The Washington Post's close connection with Amazon (both are owned by Jeff Bezos, the world's richest person) gives it a clear advantage in this area.



The Washington Post monetises Arc in the form of software-as-a-service, running on Amazon Web Services, to more than 600 sites at both large and small media companies.

Challenges

In addition to the technological limitations, selling products such as these is not always going to be easy. The costs per year for both Arc and Chorus are in the six or seven figure range, according to Digiday. As the Wall Street Journal reported, "Lining up customers who are willing to pay six- and seven-figure sums for publishing technology may be a tall order in a digital media industry where many players are struggling to meet their financial targets." ●

The publisher as a brand licenser

When a publisher's brand has high intangible value, it can be worth taking advantage of this to license the brand in other related products or services to bring in income. This would involve partnering with a manufacturer or service provider who is keen to benefit from the prestige that the publishing brand name brings. Essentially, it involves the leasing of media assets or intellectual property to a third party.

Examples:

BUZZFEED AND TASTY

Digiday reported at the end of 2019 that BuzzFeed expected to drive \$260 million in sales that year of BuzzFeed-branded products through retail stores, including using its Tasty brand to sell food, kitchenware and cookbooks. The

kitchenware line, sold exclusively through Walmart in the US, had sold four million items since launch, and for Walmart, aims to attract younger consumers who might not normally buy household goods from Walmart stores. A Tasty kitchenware line was also launched in Australia in early 2020. According to the announcement published by Licensing.biz, "BuzzFeed research shows that two out of three Tasty fans have made a Tasty recipe, using its bank of videos as guidance. The kitchen line is the same range as is used in Tasty's library of videos and was designed and developed with the Tasty fan in mind." This includes using bright colours to make the tools 'insta-friendly'.

FORBES

Forbes monetises its brand by offering individuals and companies the possibility of buying a "premium profile page" on Forbes.com. Individuals and businesses recognized on a Forbes Ranking, Cover story, or other feature can also license the Forbes logo and their accolade for use on their own platforms.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITIONS

Launched in 1999, National Geographic Expeditions partners with cruise and tour companies, operating hundreds of trips each year that span all seven continents and more than 80 destinations. A National Geographic expert or expert team accompanies most expeditions.

Who is it for?

Brands whose recognition factor and credibility are high enough to constitute a seal of quality can licence their brand name to develop new products and services. In many countries, media companies have a sufficient brand awareness and cultural relevance to achieve this. Before embarking on any brand extension projects, Steve Harvey of Fabrik, a specialist creative design agency, recommends asking:

- Is there a desire for the new product? Can you find a unique selling point for your extension?

MONETISING YOUR INTANGIBLE ASSETS



Brands whose recognition factor and credibility are high enough [...] can license their brand name to develop new products and services.

- Is the extension "natural" for your brand, or does it seem forced? If it is organic, is the new product so close to an existing offering that it could cannibalise your portfolio?
- Is your existing brand reputation strong enough to support a new product, service, or marketplace?
- Do your customers trust you enough to see the value in your new offering?

Challenges

Creating branded products can isolate a publisher's ad partners that operate in those areas, as Business Insider pointed out in a 2017 article. It is also crucial to choose your products and partners wisely: there is no guarantee of success. ●

The publisher as an agency

**BRANDED
CONTENT**

Producing advertising content for brands can be a way for news publishers to make some extra revenue with their significant expertise in storytelling and content creation. Publishers also have the advantages of having an audience that they know very well, and an existing relationship of trust with that audience. According to research done by Digiday, cited at the beginning of 2020, 88 per cent of publishers are making at least some of their revenue from branded content, meaning it is the second most popular source of income after display advertising.

Branded content should be more than a straightforward ad. It must tell a story that piques the audience's interest, or evokes a specific emotion or way of thinking.

Examples:

CONDE NAST CNX/ CREATIVE STUDIO

Condé Nast launched CNX in the US in

2018, which it described at the time as “a new full-service creative agency which leverages the unparalleled influence and editorial expertise of Condé Nast through advertising, brand strategy, casting and experiential capabilities.” (It incorporated the company's creative studio formerly known as 23 Stories.) The US arm works in partnership with Condé Nast International, which aligned its own creative services teams in 11 markets under one umbrella, Condé Nast Creative Studio. In 2019 Condé Nast announced that it was adding consultancy services to CNX.

Many of Condé Nast's editorial staff, including journalists, designers, art directors and video producers, are involved in the creative campaigns, What's New in Publishing reported in 2018.

CNBC CATALYST

CNBC launched Catalyst in 2016, which it describes as a full-service agency that offers a menu of services articulated through the shorthand ABCDE – Audience, Brand Consultancy, Content, Data and Events & Experiences.

REMEZCLA

Remezcla, a US news outlet focused on Latin music, culture, and events, offers an agency service “to help Fortune 500 companies speak to US Latinos in a way that's relevant to them,” it claims.

GUARDIAN LABS

The Guardian launched its branded content studio, Guardian Labs in 2014. At the time, its managing director Anna Watkins wrote that “it is the trinity of collaborative content, a progressive community and live data that enables us to connect so powerfully. By knowing our readers we can ensure that brands connect in a deeper, more meaningful way.”

Clients include big names such as Airbnb, Waitrose, Cisco, Ebay. The Guardian told Digiday in 2018 that on average, an individual spends 2.3 minutes with Guardian Labs content per campaign, and in some cases, this figure was as high as six minutes.

Who is it for?

You need a strong creative arm and



Branded content should be more than a straightforward ad. It must tell a story that piques the audience's interest, or evokes a specific emotion.

marketing team to be able to compete against traditional agencies with cost-effective strategies and excellent service level agreements. You need to have conviction regarding why brands should choose you: what is your particular expertise or your USP? What sort of market can you offer to advertisers?

Challenges

Once you have won clients, the biggest challenge is likely to be where and how to draw the line between your editorial and branded content. Do some of your storytellers do both? How can you be sure that your audience can distinguish between journalism and advertising? ●

The publisher as an investor

Several publishers have created specialised venture funds to invest in emerging media and technology businesses, in the hope that these will both provide a source of revenue and become a valuable stream of knowledge.

Examples:

GMG VENTURES

GMG Ventures is owned by the Scott Trust, which also owns the Guardian. It was launched in October 2017 with £42 million and invests in early stage companies (seed or series A) at the intersection of media and technology, that are “seeking to

fundamentally re-shape their rapidly evolving industry and adjacent sectors.” It looks for companies whose values align with those of the Scott Trust and the Guardian Media Group, in the areas of content creation, distribution/discovery, consumption/interaction and monetisation/purchase. Up until 31 March 2020, GMG Ventures had made 23 direct investments, and run a global incubator and accelerator programme. The hope is that a strong connection with these startups can generate strategic insights for the Guardian, as well as hopefully providing returns to support journalism.

SPH VENTURES

Singapore Press Holdings set up SPH Ventures, a S\$100 million venture capital fund, which invests in early-growth technology companies globally, most at Series A or later. It has invested in more than 40

companies so far and has seen four exits.

SCHIBSTED GROWTH

Schibsted Growth invests in “disruptive, scalable and innovative business models that create unique value.” It has invested in more than 30 companies so far.

ASAHI MEDIA LAB VENTURES

Asahi Media Lab Ventures, founded in July 2017 with 2.33 billion yen, manages funds on behalf of The Asahi Shimbun and its TV stations. It invests in technology and services that improve efficiency in digital media, social media, digital marketing, or lifestyle technology. It lists 38 companies that it has invested in thus far.

Who is it for?

An investment fund clearly requires capital,

VENTURE FUNDS



An investment fund clearly requires capital, which means it will only be possible for well-funded publishers. It is possible to lose this capital, so this must be a key consideration.

which means it will only be possible for well-funded publishers. It is of course very possible to lose this capital, so this must be a key consideration.

Challenges

A key challenge is knowing what to invest in: it is advisable to have a well-developed private equity fund partner to help assess

The publisher as an educator

CLASSES AND COURSES

Some publishers are building on their reputation of expertise to offer various classes and courses to their audiences. These are distinct from events, with more limited numbers and more specific topics for longer durations, accompanied by much higher prices, but might be able to make use of some similar organisational capacity.

Examples:

THE SCHOOL OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

The New York Times offers programmes for pre-university students - both online or in person - and online programmes for

professionals, relying very much on the strength of its brand to sell these, which it advertises as employing a 'Timesian method to exploring ideas and the topical issues of our time,' and offering students the chance to 'develop a Timesian way of thinking.' Two-week online courses for students are priced at \$2,825, whereas tuition for a two-week in person course in New York costs \$5,225. Pre-recorded online courses for professionals are available in content marketing in conjunction with T Brand Studio, or virtual reality with the Times' VR team.

LEARN FRENCH WITH LE MONDE

Le Monde has partnered with language learning service Gymglish to offer its 'Frantastique' French language programme. Costing £18-36 per month depending on your level of subscription - 'pro' subscriptions can

offer content catered to your industry - it provides short online lessons five days/week.

GUARDIAN MASTERCLASSES

In addition to its events programme, the Guardian runs about 250 masterclasses per year which offer training in specific areas. Currently operating online, many are focused on writing and other journalistic skills, but other lifestyle and business areas also. Partners and Patrons are offered discounts, and all are assured that "Purchasing tickets to our online classes is a powerful way to fund The Guardian; thank you for your support."

Who is it for?

As the examples above show, there are very different types of education you could offer.



You need a strong brand, ideally with some intellectual flair, and offerings that fit with your values and content.

You need a strong brand, ideally with some intellectual flair, and offerings that fit with your values and content. Any educational programmes could well involve some participation and input from journalists and/or other teams, but it is possible to book external trainers and rely on your brand and reputation.

Challenges

It is important to find an area where you stand out, whether that is because of expertise in a specific area, or loyalty from a particular market or demographic. ●

The publisher as an archivist

SELLING NOSTALGIA

This model sees newspapers as an archive of modern history. Longstanding publishers are likely to have huge archives: in addition to their value to journalists, how can these be used to generate additional income or subscriber benefits?

Examples:

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Canada's Globe and Mail offers subscribers access to its news photo archive, which contains photos used in the paper from the entire 20th century. It even offers a degree of personalised nostalgia: readers can enter their year of birth and the site will create a timeline for them based around this.

LA VANGUARDIA

La Vanguardia's Grandes Temas are historically focused publications available in La Vanguardia's shop, looking at Spanish artists such as Dali or Gaudi, or gathering Obama's speeches, or the life of the author of the well-known TinTin books.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

The New York Times is in the process of digitising its archive of six million images, gathered and stored since 1896, and as well as being used for a project called Past Tense, which uses old photos as story inspiration, many iconic prints are available to purchase in the Times' store. Themes include historical, politics, space, animals, New York and more. The Times even offers custom photo reprints of any photo from its print or online editions, starting at \$75 (up to \$410 depending on size and frame).

REUTERS

Reuters recently announced that it has used AI to "enhance" its video archive of nearly one million clips dating back to 1896, introducing time-code accurate speech-to-text transcripts in 11 different languages, and identification of public figures highlighted in videos, allowing users to easily navigate to those sections of the video, hence "enabling better and faster access to pictures of some of the most historic events, speeches and moments in history."

Who is it for?

It is for publishers with a long history and the capacity to digitise archives. Professor and media commentator Damian Radcliffe suggested that it could be a relatively low-risk way for traditional publishers to harness

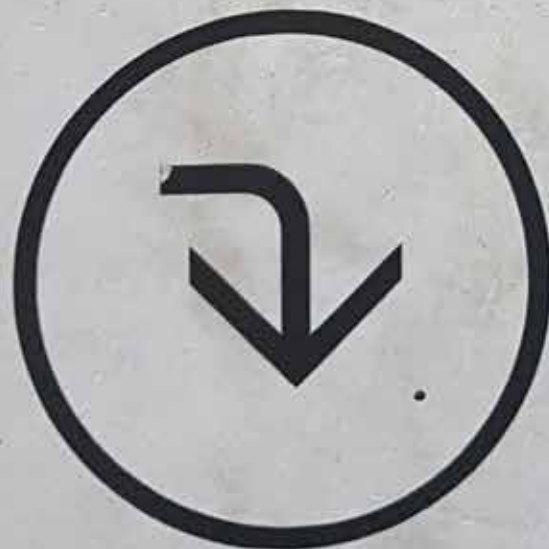
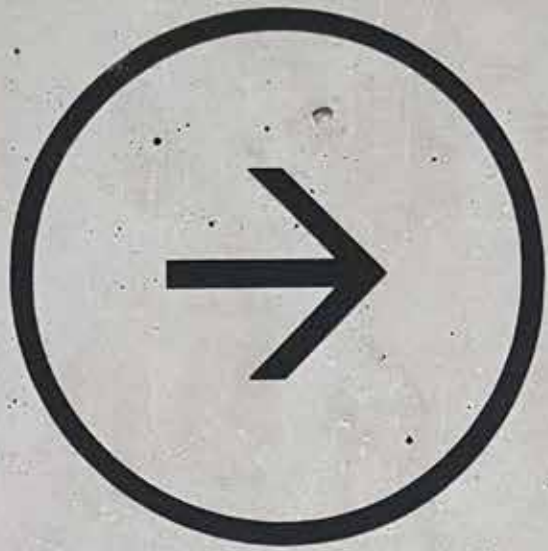


Both the New York Times and Reuters received funding from Google for the digitisation of their archives.

the power of their archive and dip their toe in the e-commerce waters.

Challenges

It is no small job for a large publication to digitise archives: each person in the NYT's archive team scans about 1,000 images per day, the news outlet said in 2019, shortly after the team had scanned their one millionth photo. Both the New York Times and Reuters received funding from Google for the digitisation of their archives. But if it can be useful to reporters, plus bring in some revenue, it could be well worth considering. ●



AN-
OTHER
'CLICK'
IN THE
WALL: ●
A PRIMER
IN PAY-
WALL
MODELS

1 • THE HARD PAYWALL

This strategy is most realistic for established titles with heavy brand recognition and brand loyalty, as well as niche publications and those with specialised, highly engaged specialised audiences. Since every user has to be logged-in, hard paywalls are the most difficult to bypass using browser tricks or incognito mode. But in keeping their content private, publishers can risk keeping things too private, which is why this model has become notably rare in the paywall landscape.

If potential subscribers are unable to sample content for free, the challenge of conversion becomes greater, and web traffic is significantly reduced. Hard paywalls also limit the potential for distribution channels like going viral on social media or word-of-mouth sharing, but for publishers who can afford the initial hit, the benefits often outweigh the risks.

THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

The Times of London, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News UK, was one of the first national brands to launch a paywall, more than ten years ago.

STRATEGY At first, all digital content on the brand's site was limited to paid subscribers, full-stop, with no workarounds or two-paragraph story limits. However, in 2016 the site began offering two free articles per week to readers who created an account. At present, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* currently offer a one-month free trial of 'Times+', followed by a tiered monthly subscription of £15 for smartphone-only access or £26 for full digital access. The titles continue to work hard to keep subscribers, for example by experimenting with an AI-powered personalised newsletter service that helps to reduce subscriber churn.

RESULTS Brace yourselves: The Times lost an initial 90 per cent of its online readership after implementing its hard paywall in 2010. But the revenue generated from the ten per cent of

converted readers was significant enough to keep the paywall in place. The brand went from a £70 million combined loss before the paywall, to a £1.7 million profit in less than five years. For the 2019 financial year, Times Newspapers reported pre-tax profits of £3.75m, and passed 300,000 digital-only subscribers.

SEE ALSO *Financial Times*, *The Economist*



It amazes me that people give away everything digitally and still expect people to pay for the newspaper.”

— Alan Hunter, Head of Digital at *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, via *What's New in Publishing*

The first half of 2020 tested the sustainability of every aspect of publishing, and as we have already established, revenue streams are at the top of that list. At a time when digital ad revenue continues to dwindle, and high-quality editorial content is more crucial to readers than ever, news and magazine publishers are reprioritising their digital subscription models.

Recent research from INMA shows that, globally, only 39 per cent of national media outlets charge for their digital content. What more opportune time than now for publishers to launch a revamped paywall strategy? Paywalls not only serve to monetise a site's existing digital audience, but increased revenue and conversion rates from a well-planned model can offset the financial losses still permeating the entire industry post-COVID-19.

We urge all publishers to consider how best to charge for their journalism. For those considering a paywall for the first time, we are here to help: here we cover ten different paywall models across the spectrum, highlighting the strategies and results of recent industry examples for each one.

But first things first: There is no boilerplate plan for paywall success. A paywall is only as successful as the customer data and analytics on which it is built.

2 • METRED

Metered paywalls allow readers to access a capped number of articles per month, before being asked to subscribe. Only frequent visitors who ‘bump the gate’ will be prompted, making these less disruptive to the user experience of many compared with stricter paywalls.

A popular model for publishers with high-volume content or a large online archive, metered paywalls can deftly monetise active users without alienating infrequent readers or deterring page views and their resulting ad revenue.

Research from Harvard’s Shorenstein Center and Lenfest Institute found that most publishers are too generous in the number of articles they offer free, and need to stop many more readers to force conversion.



No stranger to the paid online content game, *The Atlantic* launched its original paywall way back in 2008. That effort was eventually called off, after Goldman Sachs signed on to sponsor the site’s free content. Fast-forward to last year when the magazine decided to capitalise on its formidable 20 per cent annual digital growth rate over the past five years.

STRATEGY In September of 2019, the publisher announced a site-wide



subscription plan that allows readers free access to five articles a month. Once they hit their limit, readers are prompted to purchase an annual subscription, starting at \$49.99 for digital-only.

RESULTS Six months after launching the paywall, *The Atlantic*, like hundreds of online publishers worldwide, dropped its paywall for all coronavirus-related content, while also refocusing the majority of its editorial staff on pandemic coverage. Since then, readers can read as much coronavirus-related content as they please, without hitting the five-article threshold. Despite this paywall relaxation, *The Atlantic* experienced its best week of subscriber growth in March of this year.

SEE ALSO *Slate, Wired, New York*

3 • POROUS

Porous paywalls (sometimes called ‘leaky’ paywalls) allow exceptions to the number of free articles that they offer. Such exceptions like these can be intentional (allowing readers to access free digital content via social media channels), or unintentional (allowing paywalled articles to be viewed freely with browser tricks like ‘incognito mode.’)

According to Chartbeat research published in February 2020, an advantage of porous paywalls is that they “allow certain segments of users to access content, so that the publication can collect data about their reading habits to hone various consumer marketing, product, and editorial strategies.”



STRATEGY The paywall launched in May of this year and allows readers access to 10 articles per month, before being prompted to pay €10 per month for unlimited access. The key distinction between *El País’s* model and a tougher metered paywall is that readers can still access articles through social media click-throughs and newsletter links, even if they’ve hit their ten-article monthly limit. Over time, the paywall is expected to tighten, lowering the number of free articles per month and the open referral access, but the group is currently prioritising subscription growth in subscriber numbers over optimising revenue per reader.

RESULTS Within the first six weeks of the model’s implementation, the newspaper gained 52,000 exclusively digital subscriptions, despite also relaxing the paywall for all coronavirus-related content. While the paywall’s launch was initially delayed from March, the group generated over a million new registered



customers in April alone during the paywall’s promotional campaign.

Following the boom in growth and conversion, *El País* now has the second-highest number of digital subscribers in Spain. The newspaper is soon expected to surpass industry leader *Eldiario.es* at 56,000 subscriptions and is halfway to its goal of 5 million new registered users by the end of 2020.

SEE ALSO *The New York Times, The Irish Times*



**According to Piano,
a company that serves
payment propensity technology,
registered users are up
to 10 times more likely
to subscribe than
anonymous users.**



FREEMIUM MODELS

The freemium model has become one of the most popular paywall strategies, allowing free access to much of a brand's content, while placing a smaller crop of articles behind a premium paywall, for paying customers only.

A May 2020 report from INMA revealed that, while only 39 per cent of national media outlets charge for digital content at all, roughly half (47 per cent) of outlets that do charge use freemium paywall models. Within this freemium paywall category, a few different strategies are worth highlighting in greater depth.

4 • DYNAMIC FREEMIUM



Legacy liberal newspaper *Expressen* launched its digital subscription service, Premium, in December 2018, choosing to only enter the paywall game after hitting their benchmark of 5 million unique digital users (in a nation of 10.3 million).

STRATEGY *Expressen's* model allows free access to 95 per cent of its articles, with 5 per cent of its most-unique content behind a paywall.

The dynamic aspect exists in the site's ability to put each article behind its own unique paywall, determining which content should be subscriber-only on

a responsive, audience-centric basis. The paywall was developed in-house, eliminating the need for third-party management.

RESULTS "In addition to going from 0 to 70,000 subscribers in only one year, *Expressen* also met its revenue target and exceeded its goals for churn and retention; all this while increasing its digital reach," said Helena Sund, Senior editor at *Expressen Premium*, at a WAN-IFRA webinar in May 2020.

SEE ALSO *L'edition du Soir* (France), *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (Switzerland)

5 • TIMEWALL FREEMIUM

As the name would suggest, timewall models allow publishers to make content free to readers for a limited time before restricting access behind a paywall, or limiting an article to its first few paragraphs. When implemented correctly, and with enough testing, this strategy can increase the frequency of visitors who are not yet subscribers, therefore increasing the site's retention, while incentivising the audience to keep checking back for new news.



STRATEGY German regional legacy news publisher, *Madsack+*, launched a timewall across all of its websites in July of 2019. In this model, all content (including premium) is freely accessible for the first hour after its publication. Once that hour passes, readers are prompted to register for a free 30-day trial. The timewall motivates readers to frequently check *Madsack+*'s sites for new articles, which not only incentivises user experience but drives retention through increased frequency.

RESULTS By December of 2019, six months after the timewall's launch, the group was nearly halfway to meeting its goal of 30,000 subscribers, with 12,500+ subscriptions. The strategy also boasts impressive conversion rates: as of February 2020, 52 per cent of all trial subscriptions had been converted into paid memberships at the end of their first month.

SEE ALSO *MittMedia* (Sweden), *BoiseDev* (US)



6 • HYBRID METRED -PREMIUM

Hybrid models such as these use a metered paywall, allowing several free articles per month, while restricting valuable content to subscription-only access. Hybrid models are cropping up across digital media, and tend to benefit media companies with high-value content that can be easily commoditised, like mass-market news brands or luxury magazines.

Aftenposten

The largest subscription newspaper in Norway, *Aftenposten* currently generates over 70 per cent of web sales from its paywall.

“That makes it really important for us to understand what kind of content converts and how long people stay on different types of content,” explained Sidney Glasdat, Acquisition Manager for Aftenposten’s publisher, Schibsted, at a WAN-IFRA webinar in January. “That basically means that the way we work today has evolved around that content.”

STRATEGY In 2015, the brand pivoted from prioritising ad revenue, going “all-in on user-payment and user-revenue”, according to Glasdat. They launched a hybrid model that combined a generous metered paywall, at eight free articles per week, with some content sections restricted to premium subscribers.

Since mid-2018, the site has operated under a primarily freemium model, with a much smaller meter than the first one used in 2015. Currently, digital subscriptions to Aftenposten are € 25 per month, with frequent campaigns offering



discounts, and A/B testing to boost conversion.

RESULTS *Aftenposten* had over 238,000 subscribers at the start of 2020. Of these, roughly 120,000 are digital-only. The change in strategy has allowed the company to completely modernise its revenue streams. “Back in 2009, almost 60 per cent of our revenues came from ad revenues, but now,” says Glasdat, “almost 80 per cent of our revenue comes from circulation and user subscriptions.”

SEE ALSO *Kauppalehti* (Finland), *The Washington Post* (US)

7 • ADAPTATIVE AND INDIVIDUALISED

The biggest trend in recent years has been the pivot to a data-informed strategy, one that allows publishers to refocus their content offerings according to reader preferences.

In an ‘adaptive model, paywalls or meter limits are determined through data-based personalisation for each user. With increased attention on AI for customer engagement purposes, the data strategies being employed to leverage engagement through methods like automated audience segmentation and behaviour mapping allow publishers to tailor more relevant subscription offers to their users.

Using this type of machine learning to construct paywalls “takes away guesswork around how many stories, or what kinds of stories, to let readers read for free, and whether readers will respond to hitting paywall by paying for access or simply leaving,” according to a report published by Nieman Lab in 2018.

WSJ

The Wall Street Journal historically kept all of its content behind a hard paywall since the dial-up days of 1997. However, the brand relaxed its paywall in 2018, after four years of development and consumer testing to hone their current hybrid model, focused on an AI-driven personalised paywall.

STRATEGY WSJ’s personalised paywall essentially decides when users are ready to reach a paywall and a prompt to subscribe. Reader activity dictates how much content each reader can access. The paywall system uses machine learning algorithms to generate a unique propensity score for each customer’s habits, based on more than sixty criteria.

“The content you see is the output of the paywall, rather than an input,” Karl Wells, WSJ’s General Manager for

membership, told Nieman Lab in 2018. “Now we’ve got a model that’s learned to a point where, if I get a person’s score, I pretty much know how likely they will be to subscribe.”

RESULTS In May 2020, News Corp announced that WSJ had 2.2 million digital-only subscribers, representing 20% growth year-on-year. Unique visitors were also up 74 per cent year-on-year, which the company attributed to its reporting on the coronavirus. FIPP’s Global Digital Subscriptions Snapshot from 2019 shows that WSJ is second only to *The New York Times* in terms of digital subscriptions and paywall performance among digital news publishers worldwide.

SEE ALSO *Svenska Dagbladet* (Norway)

8 • PREMIUM-ONLY

Premium-only platforms deliberately limit all content to their paying members, offering just enough free articles to convince readers of what they're paying for. By usually forgoing all digital ad revenue, the sustainability of the business depends on subscription revenue alone, which is why these models are few and far between, and often billed as luxuries. But, as we'll learn below, when premium models are done correctly, they can have unlimited potential for success.

THE ATHLETIC

A recent hallmark example of a members-only, online-only, ad-free network, *The Athletic* has differentiated itself in a saturated digital sports news market that offers readers no shortage of free content. Billing itself as “the new standard for sports journalism”, *The Athletic* offers long-form, in-depth coverage and specialised commentary on national and local athletic leagues in the US, UK and Canada.

Despite only launching in 2016, *The Athletic* currently has the fourth-highest number of digital subscriptions among all news sites, following legacy print behemoths *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post* and *Financial Times*.

STRATEGY *The Athletic* has hired top sportswriters with their own existing fan-bases from (often) struggling newspapers, and offers its members “in-depth breakdowns of athlete deals, playoff projections, and unique ideas,” as well as behind-the-scenes access to readers’ favourite teams and athletes, all free of distractions like ads.

As noted by GQ, “The site often goes to extraordinary lengths – and expense – to produce stories that readers can’t find at rival publications.” Fans will always know what has happened in a match; what *The Athletic* offers is the smart analysis that isn’t available elsewhere.

Non-members can read the first two paragraphs of each article before being prompted to sign up for a free seven-day trial for all-access membership. Following the trial, monthly access is \$10 per month or \$60 annually (in the US), with the site offering routine promotional campaigns.

Memberships are further leveraged with cross-platform extensions such as an exclusive podcast platform, launched in 2019. As of February 2020, the platform was home to 152 daily and weekly podcasts, with enough programming in the pipeline to reach 200 total podcasts by the end of the year, according to Nick Adler, *The Athletic*’s General Manager of Audio Strategy. Adler found that readers who engage with one of its podcasts during the free seven-day trial period are much more likely to buy an annual subscription to the site.

RESULTS *The Athletic* was valued at \$500 million in early 2020, and in late March 2020, the FT reported that the sports site had attracted close to 1 million members. (The cancellation of sports fixtures in the target markets as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant blow, and it remains to be seen how a sports-focused site will recover, however.)

SEE ALSO *The Information* (US)

9 • MICRO-MEMBERSHIPS

In 2018, the legacy publisher Hearst launched an “aggressive, digital-first subscription strategy.” By monetising specific content areas that generated consistently high engagement, Hearst was able to boost membership numbers by the thousand, while restricting a very small percentage of its digital content.

HEARST magazines



Charles R. Pierce

STRATEGY Hearst brand, *Esquire*, offers a micro-membership specifically for content by their popular columnist, Charles Pierce. Instead of hitting *Esquire*’s paywall after three articles, members gain unlimited access to Pierce’s entire article archive dating back to 1997, for USD 1.99 per month, or USD 17.99 annually (with a bonus three months free).

RESULTS Before the membership

programme was introduced, roughly 60,000 readers were reading Pierce’s online content daily. After a year, the brand had managed to retain over 10,000 new subscribers, prompting Hearst to develop new micro-verticals for paid content.

SEE ALSO *BAZAAR Bridal* (also from Hearst), *NYTCooking* and *Crosswords* verticals from *The New York Times*.

10 • DONATION-BASED MEMBERSHIPS

More and more digital publishers have been adopting models that allow access to readers who donate a sum of their choice. While content remains free across the site, non-members are usually prompted to donate on each page. Donation-based models are often used in the non-profit news sector, or for high-quality publications seeking to extend access to readers that would otherwise be financially prohibited from accessing content.



This digital-only progressive publisher that has remained completely member-funded since its founding in 2013. The site doesn't use advertising and only generates revenue through membership, fostering a completely audience-focused editorial strategy, one founded on unique commentary and analysis.

"We try to tell precisely those stories that aren't news, but news-worthy nevertheless," wrote media critic and de Correspondent advisor, Jay Rosen, in a series of articles outlining the principles of the brand's English-language platform (The Correspondent). "Or, as we often say, [stories] that reveal not the weather but the climate."

STRATEGY While the Dutch site has a set price of €7 per month (€70 per year),

prospective members of the English-language version are asked to pay what they can afford to be part of a "global community committed to collaborative, adfree journalism." The news brand ran a long, intensive (and not uncontroversial) marketing campaign during 2018 ahead of the launch of the English-language version.

RESULTS The Correspondent generated \$2.5 million during its initial crowdfunding campaign alone. By the platform's launch in September of 2019, The Correspondent had over 50,000 members in 130+ countries. The site is expected to generate over \$500,000 from new memberships by the end of 2020.

SEE ALSO *Mother Jones* (US), *El Diario* (Spain), *The Guardian* (UK)

Now that we've charted the paywall spectrum and learned how leading publishers are experimenting with models of their own, we can expect the strategies outlined above to further blur and hybridize in the years to come.

The success of each strategy inevitably depends not just on audience behaviour, but on the publisher's ability to nimbly interpret those behaviours and pivot accordingly. A robust reader database is only as valuable as a publisher's abil-

ity to leverage that data into increased conversion rates and sustained engagement.

And we to reiterate one of our key messages in recent years: before getting caught up in how to charge, it is first essential to ensure that you have a unique, quality product that is worth paying for.

Bottom line? When building a paywall, don't skimp on learning about who you're building it for. ●

STATE OF PAYWALLS

47%	Freemium / premium model	E.g., <i>Bild</i> , Germany
18%	Paid access to e-replica	E.g., <i>Daily Mail</i> , UK
12%	Membership / donations	E.g., <i>Guardian</i> , UK
12%	Metered model	E.g., <i>New York Times</i> , US
6%	Hard paywall	E.g., <i>Times</i> and <i>Sunday Times</i> , UK
5%	Hybrid model	E.g., <i>Aftenposten</i> , Norway

Source: IMNA

NEWS MEDIA SUBSCRIBER NUMBERS

New York Times, US	3.3 m*	\$2 per week
Wall Street Journal, US	1.5 m	\$19.50 per week
Washington Post, US	1.2 m	\$6 for four weeks
Financial Times, UK	740,000	\$3,99 per week
Guardian, UK	570,000	Donations-based membership model
Nikkei, Japan	559,000	¥= 4200 per month
BildPlus, Germany	423,000	€7.99 per month
Sunday Times, UK	260,000	£26 per month
Aftonbladet, Sweden	250,000	69 Swedish Krona per month
Intuim, Hong Kong	230,000	HK\$49 per month
Caixin, China	200,000	\$2999 per month
Folha de São Paulo, Brazil	192,000	R1990 per month
Le Monde, France	180,000	€9.99 per month
Gazeta Wyborza, Poland	170,000	Z19,90 per month

Source: FIPP Global

* The New York Times reports more than 4 million digital subscriptions, as of Q4 2019

MAGAZINE PAYWALL PERFORMANCE

Economist, UK	430,000	55 GBP / quarter
The New Yorker, US	167,000	\$100 per year
National Geographic, US	123,000	\$12 per year
The Athletic, US	100,000	\$9.99 per month
Der Spiegel, Germany	67,000	€19.99 per month

Source: FIPP



VISUAL JOURNALISM COMES OF AGE DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

2020 saw news media companies around the world take visual journalism narratives to a new level as each came to grips with how to cover one of the biggest and most complex stories of our lifetimes.

As a story, the COVID-19 pandemic has involved both rapidly changing, unfathomable numbers on a global scale as well as very tangible, personal impacts on individual lives and communities, challenging the capacities and capabilities of the best global health systems as it spread across the world. Journalists are being challenged to explain complicated scientific concepts and analyse unprecedented political actions, while remaining acutely aware that this is at its heart a very human crisis.

The following extraordinary examples of how best to harness the power of data visualisation attempt to tackle different aspects of the pandemic, from explaining its origins and path around the world, to the more local, such as precise details of hospital beds, ventilators and health care capacity in specific cities and localities. The pieces employ a variety of narrative formats as well as visual tools -- from detailed charts and interactive graphs, to complex choropleth maps and simple illustrations -- to offer engaging data-driven interpretations that provide both context and clarity, proving, in turn, to be powerful vehicles of public understanding.



Financial Times UK

A record-breaking piece of journalism, FT's most-read story of all time uses a variety of constantly updated interactive graphics to explain the trajectory of the epidemic. The tracker page charts the country-wise fatality numbers daily, helping readers make sense of numbers in a global context. Its wide audience reflects the increasing interest in data-driven visual narratives, and FT does its part in providing credible public service journalism by making the tracker free to access beyond a paywall during an unprecedented public health crisis. Apart from charting the trajectory of the epidemic itself – users can choose up to six countries to compare cases across time on a graph – the piece also tracks various governments' evolving responses to the pandemic. A choropleth (a type of thematic map used to represent statistical data) of the world is shaded according to where the countries are ranked on the Oxford COVID-19 response



stringency index, and the piece also offers diagrams of how measures have changed over time in different parts of the globe.

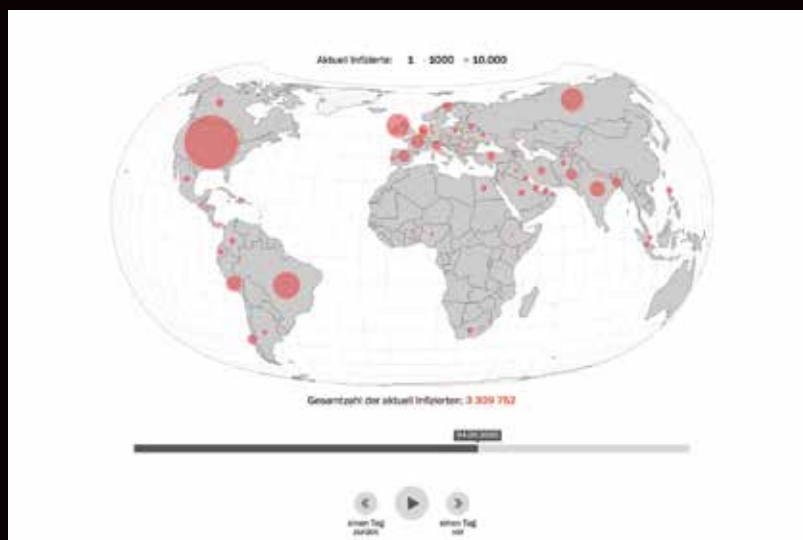
<https://www.ft.com/content/a26fb7e-48f8-11ea-aeb3-955839e06441>



Tagesspiegel Germany

This highly interactive, visually attractive series of graphics reconstructs the origin and rapid spread of the coronavirus from China. From satellite pictures of the Huanan seafood marketplace, to maps that display Wuhan's significance as a prominent hub of rail and air connectivity with other local and international locations, the article titled *So hat sich das Coronavirus ausgebreitet* presents an overview of the pandemic's journey since January, while also providing a day-by-day tally of those infected worldwide alongside a world map that displays the number in each country.

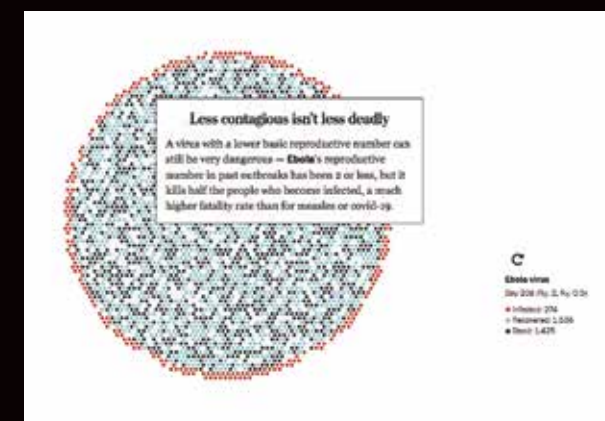
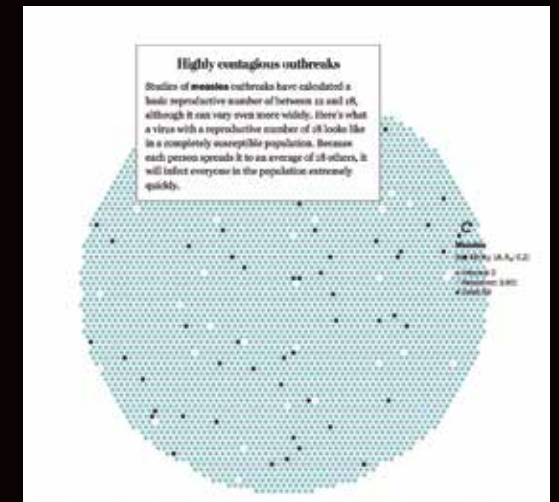
<https://interaktiv.tagesspiegel.de/lab/karten-so-hat-sich-das-coronavirus-ausgebreitet/>



Washington Post USA

In its most-read online piece ever, the Washington Post used a made-up disease called “simulitis” to simplify the complex concept of virus transmission and demonstrate the benefits of social distancing. With the help of graphics of bouncing balls, the article showed how quickly and how far a disease could spread through a network in four different scenarios – one in which no quarantine was enforced, partial quarantine, moderate social distancing, and extensive social distancing. Made available outside its paywall and in eighteen languages, the article helped reinforce the importance of individual action by showing how, “like a ball bouncing across the screen, a single person’s behavior can cause ripple effects that touch faraway people.”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/corona-simulator/>



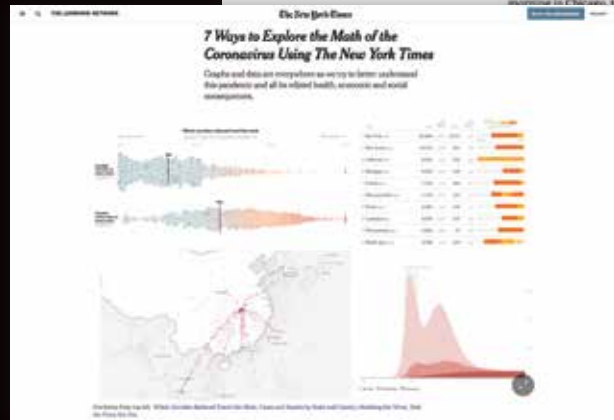
The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Health

How epidemics like covid-19 end (and how to end them faster)

A coronavirus causing a disease called covid-19 has infected more than 200,000 people since it was first reported in late 2019. To predict how big the epidemic could get, researchers are working to determine how contagious the virus is.

By Joe Fox, Youjin Shin and Armand Emamdjomeh Feb. 19, 2020



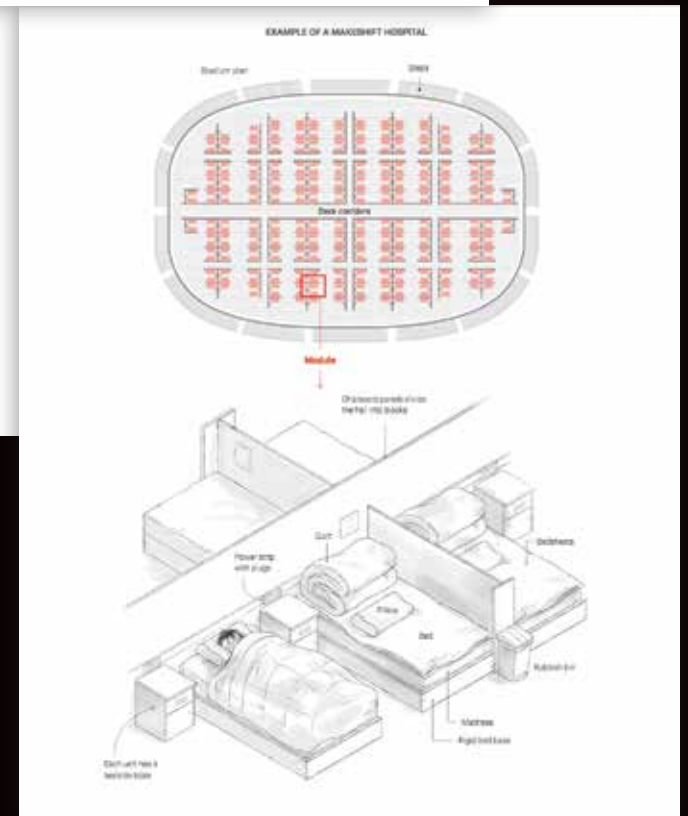
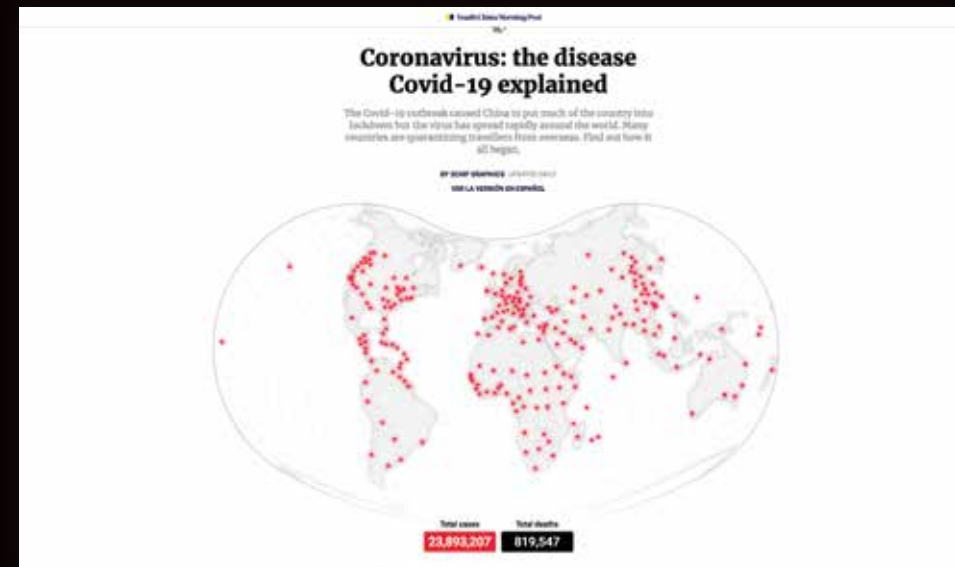
The New York Times US

1. In what is arguably one of the most powerful visualizations of COVID-19 data, the New York Times piece *How the Virus Won* traced the hidden spread of the pandemic by analysing people's movements, hidden infections and genetic data in order to uncover how the epidemic spread in the United States and why the nation was unsuccessful in containing the virus. Lone red dots representing positive cases slowly double and then multiply as the story unfolds chronologically. The dots travel into the US from Asia, Europe and the rest of the world, and then clusters of cases form across the country, representing outbreaks. The graphics also illustrate different strains of the virus and how they travelled, how hotspots emerged and how restriction of movement led to the outbreak slowing.

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-spread.html>

2. The chasm between the wealthy and poor is further deepened in the present scenario, as this article with its scrolling graphics provides real-time evidence for – according to an analysis of cellphone location data, people in the wealthiest 10 per cent have been able to limit their movements more than those in the poorest 10 per cent, pointing to the possible connection between socioeconomic position and the possibility of contracting the infection.

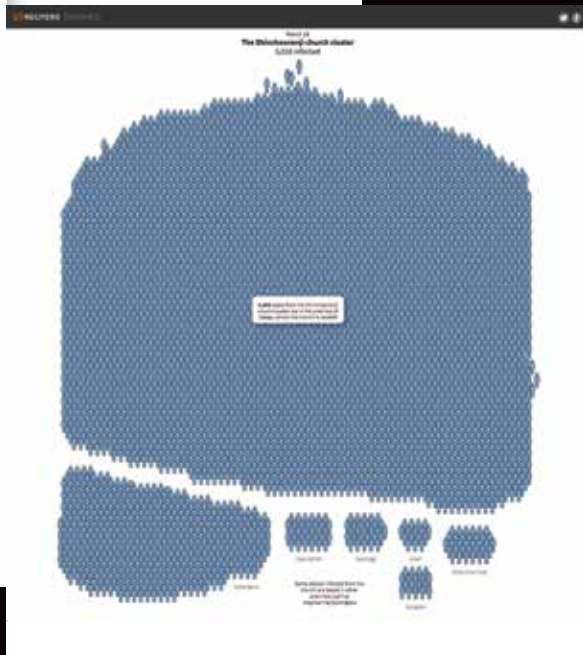
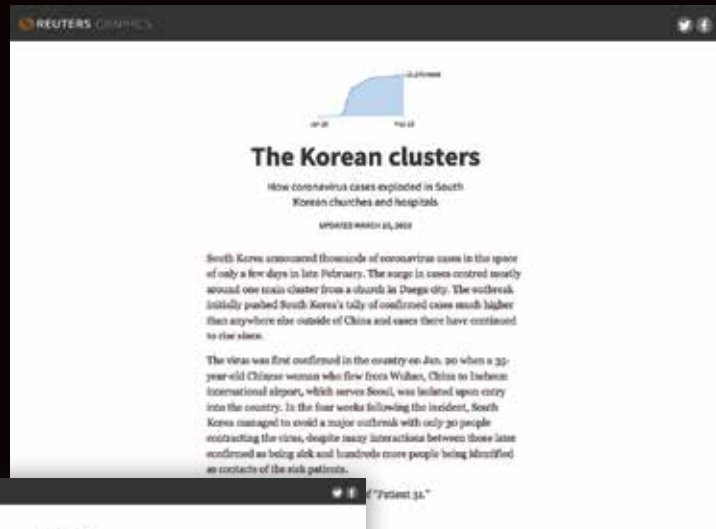
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/03/us/coronavirus-stay-home-rich-poor.html>



South China Morning Post China

First published in January, well before most of the world had woken up to the global implications of COVID-19, this detailed piece employs graphics and illustrations to explain the outbreak of the disease in China and how the country's neighbours restricted travel in the following months. It explains where the new coronavirus originated in Wuhan as well as the region's preparedness and response with respect to ambulance shortage, temporary hospitals, and imported medical staff. Updated daily since its publication, the article presents the number of virus cases and deaths across the world in a tabular format, country-wise graphics that chart the number recovered from among those infected, and a week-by-week comparison of cases in mainland China versus the rest of the world. Illustrations and embedded videos also explain protective equipment, correct mask wearing, common symptoms, hand hygiene and incubation periods.

<https://multimedia.scmp.com/infographics/news/china/article/3047038/wuhan-virus/index.html>



Reuters

In this article, through a series of data visualizations and illustrated timelines, Reuters Graphics explores the explosion of the coronavirus between individuals across South Korea. It demonstrates how the country managed to contain the virus at first by tracing those who had been infected locally as well as the carriers from Wuhan, China. The 31st patient, however, who had visited several crowded areas, was responsible for the exponential rise in the number of cases, among which churches, hospitals and care homes accounted for the majority of groups of infections. The infographic shows how over 5,000 positive cases can be attributed to Patient 31, more than half of which are located in South Korea.

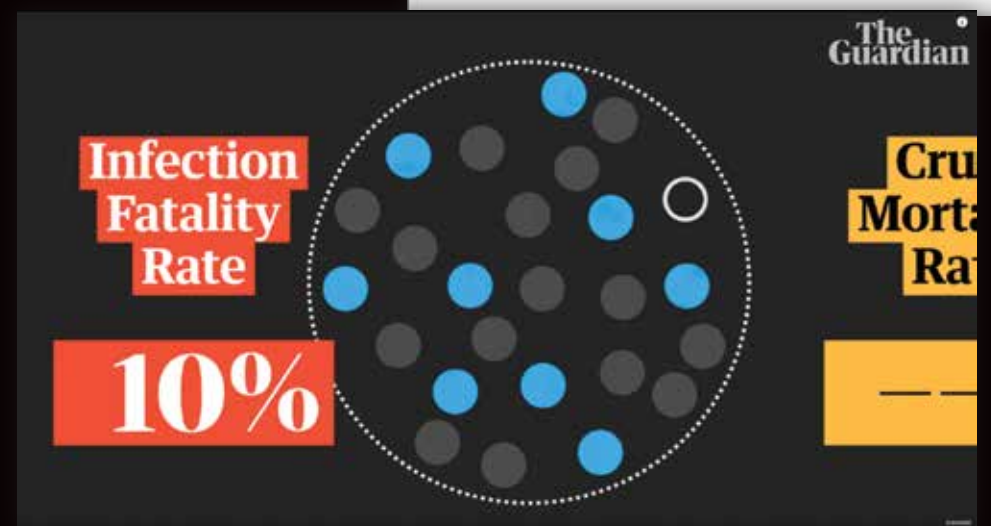
https://graphics.reuters.com/CHINA-HEALTH-SOUTHKOREA-CLUSTERS/0100B5G33SB/index.html?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=Social

The Guardian UK

In a video titled “Why coronavirus death rates are so different” The Guardian uses visuals to demystify the many numbers readers are often inundated with. Employing clear, simple graphics never more complex than differently coloured circles, the video explains the difference between three different numbers -- Case Fatality Rate (CFR), Infection Fatality Rate (IFR), and Crude Mortality Rate (CMR), and shows how they are calculated and what they mean. The accompanying voice-over is crisp and to-the-point, proving that complicated concepts sometimes require both “showing” and “telling” for readers to fully grasp.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMtzWVTPmLI>

Why are Covid-19 fatality rates so varied?



PROPUBLICA ILLINOIS | CORONAVIRUS

Coronavirus in Illinois: Are There Enough Ventilators and Hospital Beds Near Me?

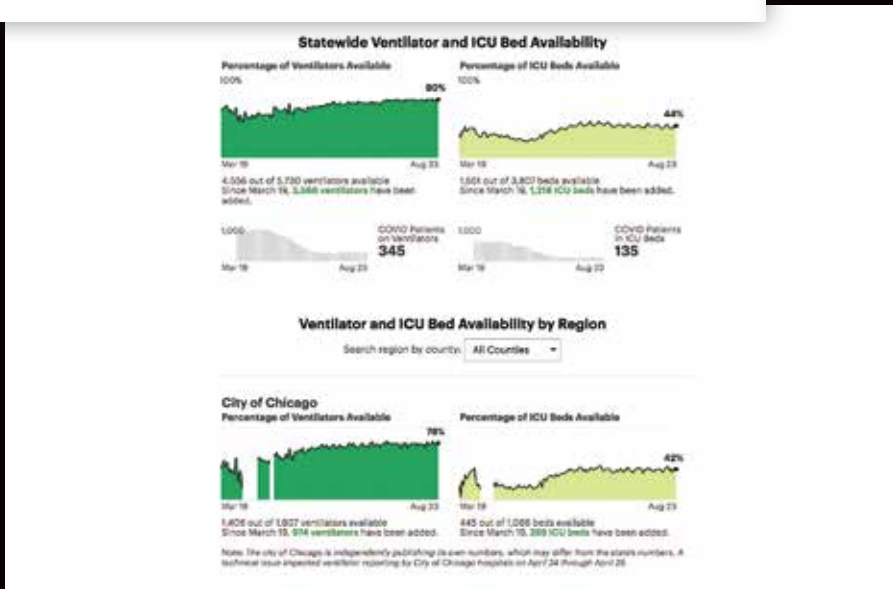
by Ash Ngai, April 16, 2020
UPDATED AUGUST 23, 2020

ProPublica Illinois is a nonprofit newsroom that investigates abuses of power. Sign up to get weekly updates about our work.

Update, August 23, 2020: We have stopped updating this tracker. For the latest data, please try IDPH's hospital utilization page.

As Illinois tackles the coronavirus pandemic, the state Department of Public Health is tracking the use and availability of ventilators and ICU beds across 11 regions in the state. See what the situation looks like at hospitals in your area. This tracker will be updated as new data is released, usually daily.

IDPH has not released regional data for April 4 through April 13.



ProPublica Illinois, US

A nonprofit news organization that seeks to specifically investigate abuses of power, ProPublica Illinois' coverage of the pandemic is an example of how regional newsrooms are taking to data visualization to engage their readers and help them make better sense of the barrage of information they are faced with. Using State Department of Public Health data, this article presents an updated tracker of the use and availability of hospital facilities across 11 regions in the state. The easy-to-use graphic allows the reader to place their cursor on a region of a map to learn of the percentage of availability of beds and zoom in to see hospital locations. Furthermore, a drop-down menu allows the reader to check for ventilator and ICU bed availability in a particular county. It also mentions how many new facilities have been added since the outbreak.

<https://projects.propublica.org/il-hospital-resources/>

Reichen die Intensivbetten in der Corona-Krise?

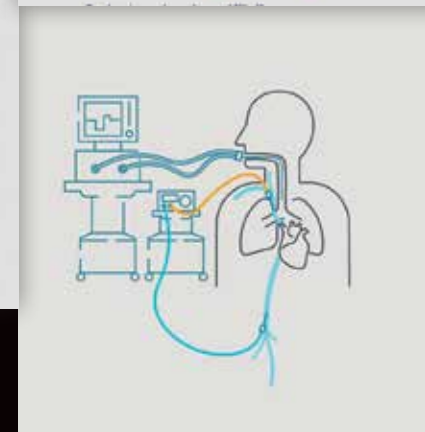
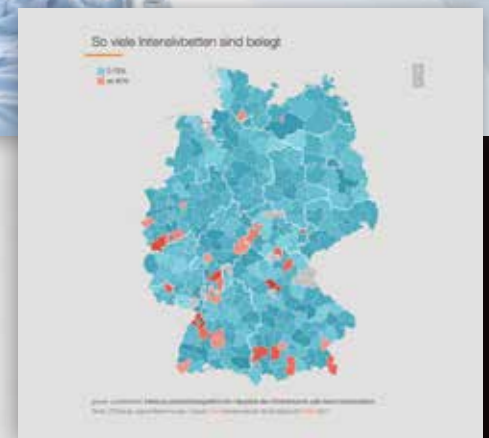
Wie es in Ihrem Ort aussieht:

zdf heute

Intensivbetten sind sozusagen „Last Resort“, die letzte Option, für schwerkranke Corona-Patienten.

Gabriele Müller-Stutzer, Präsidentin der Schwesternschaft des Roten Kreuzes

Seit Beginn der Krise lautet das Motto: #flattenthecurve – bloß nicht zu viele Corona-Fälle, um das Gesundheitssystem nicht zu überlasten.



ZDF Heute, Germany

ZDF Heute's piece on the number of intensive care beds and their occupancy by district and city uses simple and striking visuals. Illustrations explain the different kinds of ventilation and number of healthcare workers per patient, and throw light on the shortage of trained and skilled specialists in hospitals. Scattered blue dots allow the reader an understanding of availability of beds per thousand residents and map the decline in beds in hospitals since the mid-nineties. The multimedia piece also carries embedded video comprising testimonials from hospital staff.

<https://zdfheute-stories-scroll.zdf.de/intensivbetten/corona/krankenhaeuser/index.html>

BEYOND THE VIRUS

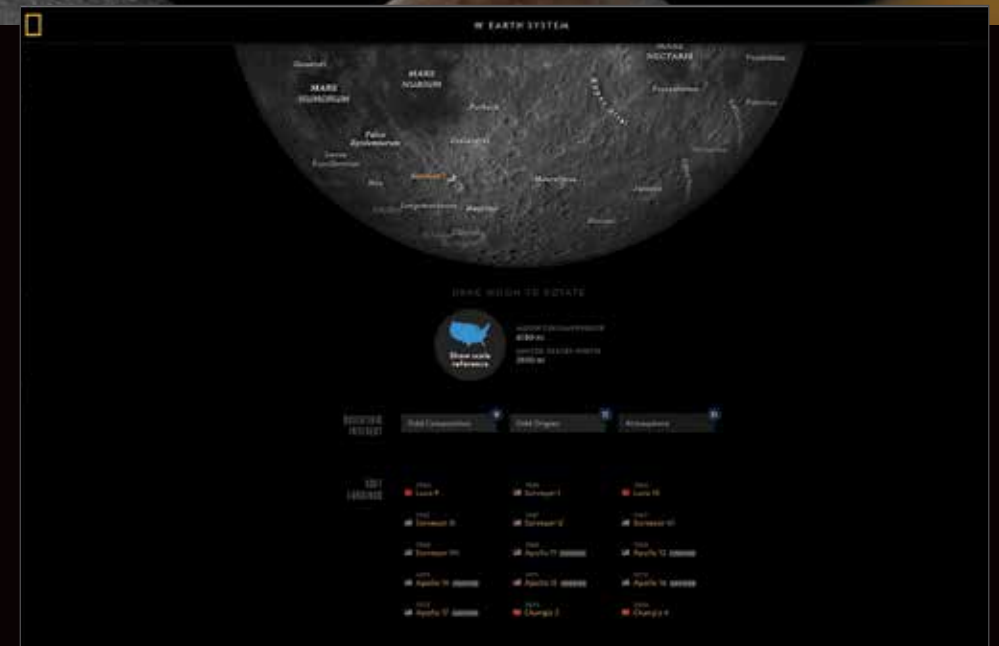
Although the COVID-19 pandemic has been the focus of much coverage throughout 2020 so far, there have of course been many excellent visual pieces on other topics too.



Insider US

In a special 15000-word piece on The Mueller Report, Insider used text and illustration to transform a dense, inaccessible 449-page report released by the US Department of Justice to the public into a dramatic narrative so that, as the global editor-in-chief Nicholas Carlson tweeted, his audience would "actually read it". Also translated into German by Welt, the piece tells a gripping story punctuated by compelling imagery and is based entirely on the official report of the findings and conclusions of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into possible Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election.

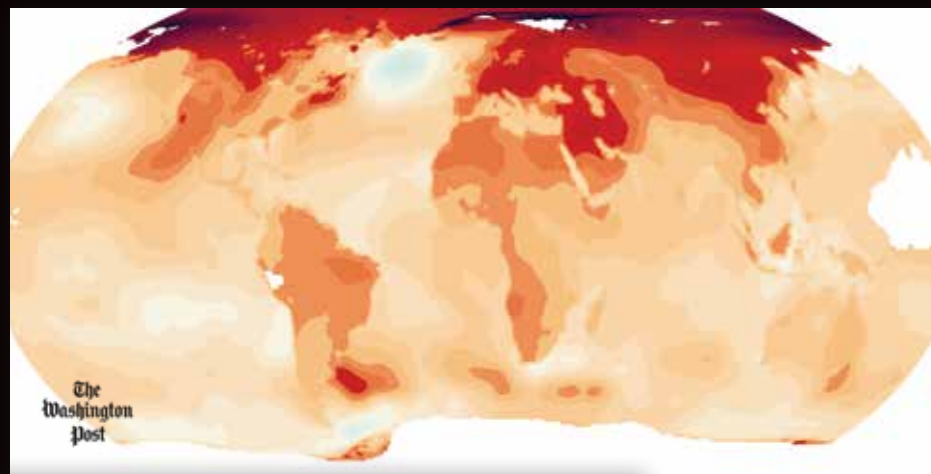
<https://www.insider.com/mueller-report-rewritten-trump-russia-mark-bowden-archer-2019-7>



National Geographic US

The Atlas of Moons is a digital visualisation of the many moons in the solar system. It is deeply immersive, due in part to stunning photographic images and a simple navigation system that requires scrolling without the use of a menu. At the same time, the page can be navigated selectively by readers who wish to explore a particular moon directly. The clear, striking images contain little text, though additional information unfolds when tags are clicked on and allow one to delve deeper into the subject if desired.

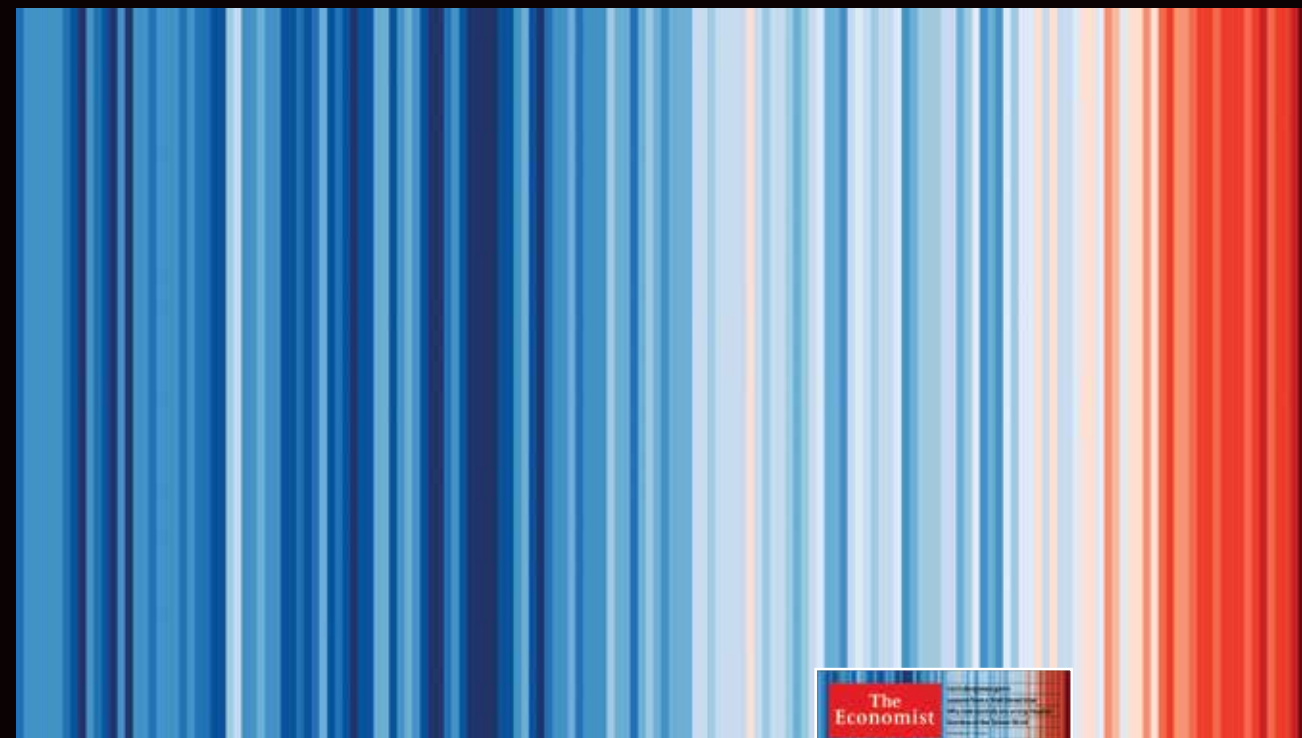
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/07/the-atlas-of-moons/>



Washington Post US

By analyzing global datasets tracking nearly two centuries of temperature records, the Washington Post, in its its “2°C: Beyond the Limit” series, mapped regions which have already seen a temperature rise of 2 degrees, the threshold believed to be the tipping point for global warming. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for explanatory reporting, the novel series’ graphics and animations demonstrate the severity of climate change across the world. With a combination of interactive visual presentation of a treasure trove of data and deep, painstaking analysis, the series succeeds in making obscure scientific facts real and accessible, in conveying the urgency of the public crisis of climate change and in making clear the implications of temperature rises and changing ocean currents on communities across the world.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/national/climate-environment/climate-change-world/?itid=lk_inline_manual_1

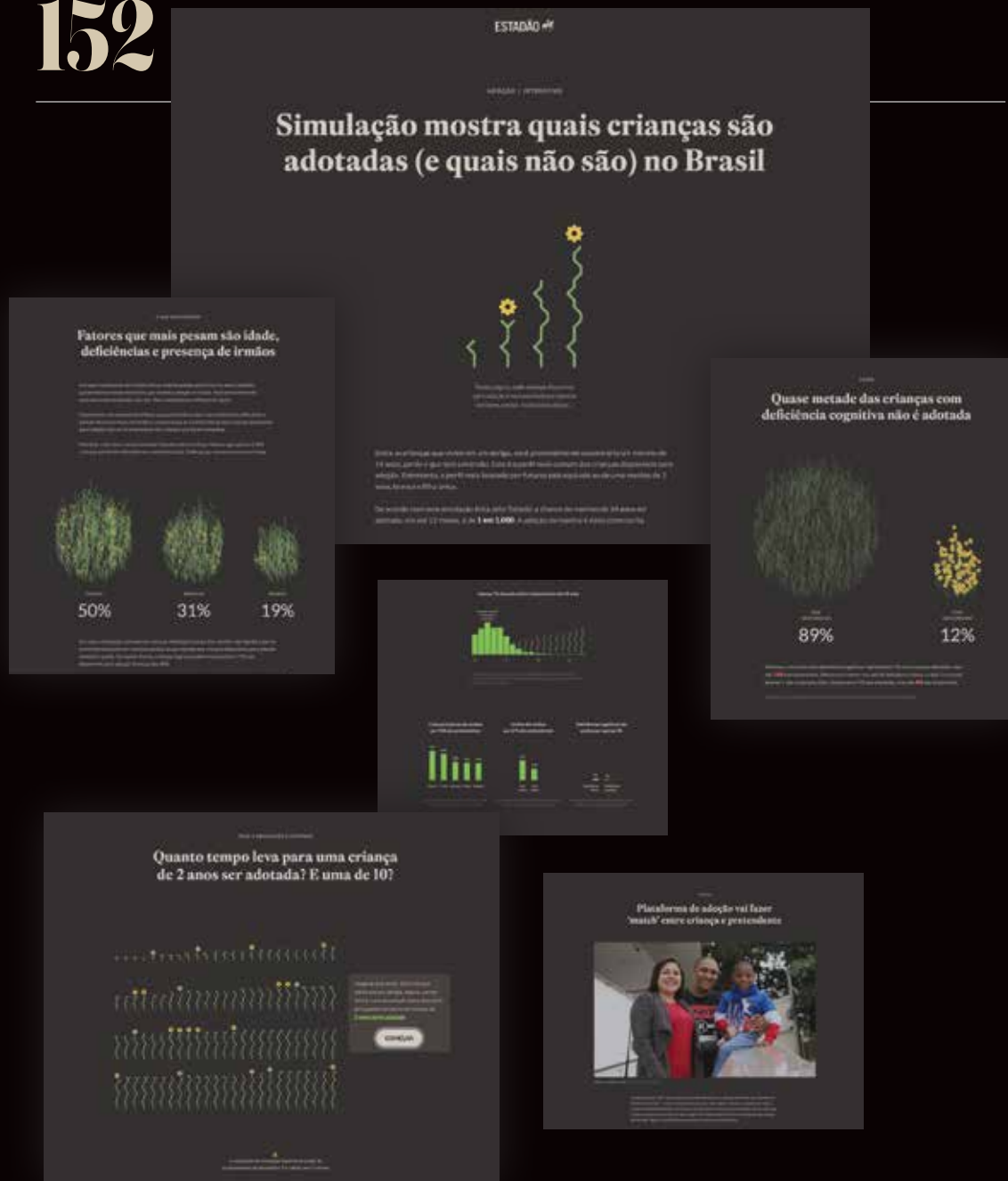


The Economist THE CLIMATE ISSUE

WHEN DESIGN IS CONTENT “This week’s issue is devoted to climate change. The stripes on our cover, developed by Ed Hawkins of the University of Reading, represent the period from 1850 to 2018. The colour marks each year’s temperature, compared with the average in 1971-2000. We have found that, whether it is in Democratic politics or Russian dreams of opening an Arctic sea passage, climate now touches on everything we write about. To illustrate this, we decided to weave articles on the climate crisis and what can be done about it into all parts of this week’s coverage.”

– Zanny Minton Beddoes, Editor-in-Chief

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/07/the-atlas-of-moons/>



Estadão BRAZIL

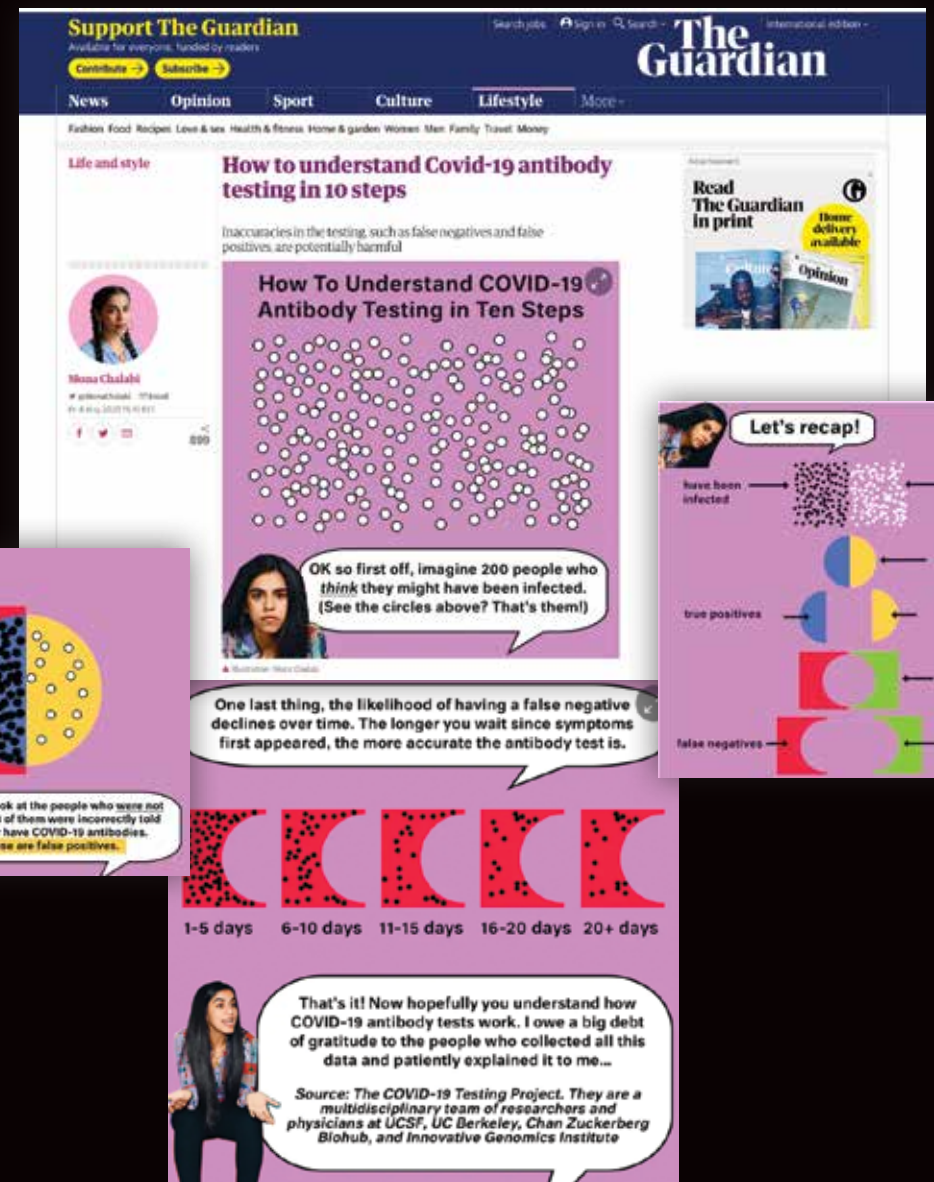
Estadão's simulation to show which children in foster homes are likely to be adopted and which aren't, based on the preferences of potential adoptive parents, won the Best Non-English-Language award at Kantar's 2019 Information is Beautiful Awards. The story effectively and sensitively demonstrates the stark contrast in the fates of children based on their age, race, disability status and whether or not they have siblings. For example, 2-year-old white girl will be adopted almost immediately, whereas the chances of a 14-year-old black boy with a sibling being adopted within a year are 1 in 1,000. In the simulation, children are represented as plants that grow as time passes. The journalists explained to Kantar: "Well, it began like almost all data visualizations: every person was a dot. But that is usually too cold – and we wanted readers to feel connected to the story. So we asked ourselves what could symbolize nurture and care."

<https://arte.estadao.com.br/brasil/adocao/criancas/>

The Guardian UK

Mona Chalabi, Data Editor at *Guardian US*, hand draws impressive data visualisations including this one explaining COVID-19 antibody testing and the potentially harmful implications of inaccuracies. Her illustrations – are simple, brightly coloured and highly accessible. Hand drawing communicates a sense of intimacy, authenticity and honesty, according to academics Jill Simpson and Helen Kennedy, and evokes emotions. Plenty more visualisations are available on Chalabi's Instagram feed, often focusing on societal inequalities. (<https://www.instagram.com/monachalabi/>)

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/may/08/antibody-tests-coronavirus-how-do-they-work-10-steps>



WAN-IFRA SHARING GLOBAL BEST- PRACTICE

One of WAN-IFRA's core missions is to share global best-practice and insights with its membership and the wider news industry. Here are a few outcomes of that crucial relationship.

Research reports

Research has been a hallmark of WAN-IFRA's work since its inception. Most critically, the topics that we research reflect the burning issues and trends facing today's publishers. Here are some of the reports published in the last 12 months:

The Building Blocks of a Reader Revenue Tech Stack: In an ongoing series of reports about reader revenue strategies, this report summarises the basics of building a foundational tech and data infrastructure to drive digital subscriptions.

Publishers' Response to 9 Strategic Challenges Post-Pandemic: This report features the crucial takeaways from WAN-IFRA's World Media Leaders eSummit, all focused around how publishers are responding to 9 strategic challenges posed by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Global Survey – How Newsrooms are Coping with the Coronavirus: As part of a World Editors Forum survey, more than 100 newsroom executives shared how the Coronavirus has impacted their newsroom organisation.

Trends in Newsrooms: AI in the Newsroom: This report, from the World Editors Forum, features case studies of artificial intelligence in practice in newsrooms around the world, plus discussion of risks, challenges, and ethics.

To download reports, visit: www.wan-ifra.org/reports

Global Media Trends Panel

WAN-IFRA is working with data specialist Syno International to help conduct community-based surveys and research reports. We have invited some of the most innovative thought leaders, experts and publishing executives to join our media panel communities. They share their opinions, insights and data through expert surveys and our team of editors and analysts produce quick, digestible reports to share with our members.

If you are interested in joining the panel, email: dean.roper@wan-ifra.org

Media Management Accelerator

Our video e-learning was created to support publishers in reaching digital revenue goals. They can be used to kick-start discussions in internal workshops – or for new starters looking to get up to speed with digital strategy. There is even a Certification process with a project to be completed at the end. We keep the courses up-to-date and add content on a regular basis in multiple languages! ●

For more information, visit: mma.wan-ifra.org

INNOVATION

Media Consulting Group
GROWTH STRATEGIES · DIGITAL · NEWSROOMS · DESIGN

“From Media Companies To Information Engines”

INNOVATION is a leading global media consulting company based in London (UK), founded 35 years ago, working with more than 100 media and management consultants fluent in 27 languages in almost 60 countries, which:

- Develops and implements strategic plans for diversification, convergence and full multimedia integration.
- Plans, directs and implements high quality editorial projects for the modernisation of newsroom management, graphic presentation, tablet applications, mobile media, and editorial content to drive greater advertising revenues and increased circulation.
- Produces detailed and unique editorial multimedia integration models and news operations manuals, including news workflows for INNOVATION's state-of-the-art open-space newsrooms.
- Organises tailored in-house training programs for journalists and publishing executives.
- Works with family-owned media companies to successfully navigate generational changes.
- Publishes reports and newsletters on global media trends, including a quarterly Confidential Newsletter in English and Spanish.
- Produces an annual report on Innovations in News Media for the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA). Published since 1999, the report appears in English and several other languages including Russian, Arabic and Chinese.
- Publishes (since 2010) an annual report on trends in the magazine industry for the London-based International Federation of the Periodical Press (FIPP). The report is published in English and Chinese.

OUR VISION

INNOVATION believes that old style media companies must become “multimedia information engines™”. We firmly believe that good journalism is good business, and we believe that an information company's first responsibility is to be profitable because without profitability there is no independence, and without independence there is no credibility. Without credibility there is no audience, and without an audience there is no advertising. These new “Multiplatform Information and Marketing Solutions Engines™” must lead from Readers to Audiences, and from Audiences to Communities.

HOW WE OPERATE

We believe that change should not be imposed but negotiated and based on consensus. We do not believe in magic formulas. Every project is unique. Every market is different. Every company has its own characteristics. Every newsroom has its own culture and personality. We are not a general management consulting company. Journalism is in our DNA. We come from the industry and speak its language. Although all our projects are tailored to the client's specific requirements, they always include three key steps: analysis, implementation and follow-up. All three are critical elements in any consulting project.

THE CHANGE PROCESS

Analysis, implementation and follow-up are the three main phases of INNOVATION's editorial, graphic, technical, management, and business change processes. We do not believe in cosmetic changes or miracles. Every serious project requires time and reflection. Improvisation only leads to failure. We work closely with our clients' executives and professional staffs. INNOVATION projects build on close creative interaction between our clients and our consultants. Success is heavily dependent on follow-up, training and implementation.