

21st edition



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



innovation in
news media
world report
2019

INNOVATION

Media Consulting Group

LONDON, UK

GROWTH STRATEGIES • DIGITAL • NEWSROOMS • DESIGN

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INNOVATION IN NEWS MEDIA 2019



content

6 FOREWORD

A note from the editors

8 TOO BIG TO FAIL

FT editor Lionel Barber on the future of financial journalism

20 NEW REVENUE STREAMS

Emerging new business models

28 READER REVENUE

Becoming the norm

38 METRICS

Measuring what matters

46 TRUST

In news we (must) trust

54 BACK TO BASICS

How low-tech journalism engages in a high-tech world

62 NEW DIGITAL NARRATIVES

Reinventing the journalism storytelling toolbox

74 THE NEW PRINT

The role of print in a digital world

80 CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Steps to success

86 NEW TECHNOLOGY

What you need to know

94 QUOTE, UNQUOTE

A selection of quotes from leading journalists and executives

100 About WAN-IFRA

102 About Innovation Media Consulting Group

INNOVATION IN NEWS MEDIA 2019



Innovation is not imitation

2019 is a handover year from the 2010s to the 20s. Unfortunately, many a publisher spent the past decade imitating digital pure media players – another misguided strategy we cautioned against in this book in 2011, 2014, 2017 and 2018.

Innovation is not imitation

The digital pure players many imitated are not that ‘pure’ any more. Vice and Mic are laying people off, BuzzFeed is issuing profit warnings, the Huffington Post’s valuation is risible. All are a testament to the dangers of relying too heavily on social media-fueled ad revenue.

As we enter the 2020s, news media publishers must embrace innovation in earnest, once and for all. As Socrates put it, “The secret to change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old but on building the new.”

As we have argued for some time, a reader revenue strategy is a crucial part of any innovative strategy to change for good. The most popular of these is emerging as a metered model, which asks readers to pay after they have read a certain number of articles, although membership schemes based on donations also show potential for specific types of brand. More advanced publishers are now dedicating in-

creasing resources into retention rather than acquisition, focusing on creating the kind of engaging content that readers are happy to pay for.

Increasingly, news publishers are using online analytics to make their reader revenue strategies work most effectively, both in garnering new subscribers and in reducing churn. Metrics are helping publishers decide at what point each reader should hit the paywall, for example, or what content is most important to subscribers.

Readers’ trust is crucial for a successful

subscription strategy, and we propose seven actions and seven structural changes that newsrooms should adopt to become more trustworthy and more transparent.

The role of print is changing, and we suggest a smaller, more considered weekday paper that reflects the increasing consumption of news through digital platforms, with a larger role for the weekend print offering.

“The secret to change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old but on building the new.”

SOCRATES

Some top media organisations are investing in cutting edge technologies such as robot journalism or voice briefings for smart speakers, and it is important that publishers understand the potential of these investments. Even more organisations are focused on less ‘high tech’ products, such as newsletters and podcasts. These are products that publishers own, which can rather be used to deepen engagement, strengthen connections, attract new audiences and drive subscriptions.

Adapting to all these technological advances and developing business models means that many news organisations are finding themselves in a continual state of change, and leaders in the news industry need to improve their transformation skills to manage this effectively.

The one thing that remains constant, however, is the need to produce original, high-quality journalism. This includes solid reporting and insightful analysis presented in an appealing way - we offer a selection of highly compelling, interactive digital narratives to provide some inspiration - that will persuade readers to make your product a part of their routine and support it financially.

“Innovation marks the difference between a leader and a follower,” said Steve Jobs.

Let’s spend the 20s leading the change and not following. Innovation is not imitation.



**Emma Goodman
& Juan Señor**
Editors

too big to fail

FT editor
Lionel Barber
on the future
of financial
journalism

This is the transcript of a speech given by [Lionel Barber](#), editor of the Financial Times, for the annual James Cameron Memorial Lecture on November 22, 2018 at City University, in London, published here with permission and thanks. The lecture is given in memory of the prominent British journalist.

INNOVATION IN NEWS MEDIA 2019



Tonight, my point of departure is the future: the future of financial journalism.

First, the good news: the opportunities have never been greater.

The internet and the giant

aggregators are blamed for many sins — coarsening civic discourse, creating echo chambers, monopolising advertising revenues, influencing elections —

but the digital revolution has also led to an explosion of creativity and new forms of rich storytelling.

And what stories they are: the rise and fall of corporate

James Cameron was a master wordsmith, one of the finest foreign correspondents of his generation. It's an honour to be invited to deliver this lecture in his name. I am only sorry my father is not here to enjoy the occasion.

Frank Barber worked with James Cameron at the *News Chronicle*, a thinly paged, principled newspaper of liberal persuasion, owned by the Cadbury family. Frank was a fellow Africa hand. He knew and admired Cameron's work in the field. *Point of Departure* occupied a place on a bookshelf in his bedroom.

titans such as Sir Philip Green, the artificial intelligence revolution, peak globalisation and, lest we forget, Brexit.

Today's business and financial journalist has never been so versatile, never so tested. On multiple platforms: print, audio, camera. They code, they compose, they collaborate in ways unimaginable a decade ago.

And that's a very good thing because quality business and financial journalism has never been more important. Too big to fail, if you like — not only in terms of the stories but also because of their contribution to an informed shareholding democracy.

The bad news is that the threats to serious financial journalism are hiding in plain sight:

- The army of public relations advisers employed by individuals and companies with thin skins and deep pockets

- 'Black PR' — sometimes pushed by ex-spooks — that uses social media platforms to attack and undermine reputations and independent journalism

- The rising power of private markets versus public markets, making it far harder for journalists to access information

- The encroachment of the law via gagging injunctions, non-disclosure agreements and the chilling new notion of confidentiality

- And yes, the spectre of state-sponsored regulation of the press

These are the themes, good and bad, I want to explore tonight.

First, some context and a touch of personal history. I can still remember the day I decided I wanted to be a business and financial journalist. It was the summer of 1980. Margaret Thatcher had just come to office and I was a cub reporter on the Scotsman in Edinburgh.

Keith Joseph, Mrs Thatcher's political guru, was visiting in Glasgow and the main news desk dispatched me to cover his speech. The man dubbed by Private Eye as the Mad Monk spoke about wealth creation and the importance of business.

Here was a great human drama of immense importance. Why was the British public and the press not interested? From that day on, I had found my calling. Sir Keith's comments remain valid today. The creation of wealth is critical for jobs, tax revenues and a decent standard of living.

The problem in the UK is that capitalism has acquired a bad name. We are a world away from the days when Peter Mandelson could declare, with a rare straight face, that he was intensely relaxed about people becoming filthy rich, as long as they paid their taxes.

The legacy of the great crash of 2008, — economic, financial and political, — hangs heavy in the air: banks bailed out to the tune of £500 billion; the bankers responsible punished only in the court of public opinion; the imbalance between risk and sky-high rewards barely addressed by boards and shareholders.

What are we to make of the workings of modern finance and advanced economies? How should journalists respond? Well, to quote George Santayana, the Spanish philosopher and essayist, "To understand your future, you have to understand your past."

When I joined the FT in March 1985, three institutions dominated the City of London: the Bank of England, the London Stock Exchange, and Lloyd's of London. The pinstriped establishment exercised power in a very different way to today.

Regulation was far more informal. A gentleman's word — and by and large they were gentlemen or, at least, men — was his bond. The Bank of England's sanction consisted of a private audience with the governor, eyebrows raised appropriately according to the scale of the misdemeanour.

The City operated like a club. Stockbrokers and merchant banks consisted of partnerships or family controlled advisory firms without a lot of capital. Risk-taking was tempered by the knowledge that personal fortunes were at stake.

Of course, no one is suggesting this was a foolproof system. The secondary banking crisis of 1973-1975, for example, was a monument to hubris and misjudgment of the property market.

Financial journalism was also clubby — sometimes a little too clubby for my taste. When I was a business journalist on the *Sunday Times*, a senior executive once gave me a piece of advice: the best way to get a good story was to wine and dine businessmen and preferably go on holiday with them too.

City editors were famously well informed about companies' performance, often before their results went public. Some, such as Sir Patrick Sergeant of the *Daily Mail*, he of the *matinée* looks who founded Euromoney, went on to distinguished careers in business. Others, such as Patrick Huther and Ivan Fallon of the *Sunday Telegraph*, were immensely influential in their time.

Everything changed with the Big Bang, which abolished fixed commissions and ending the separation of principal and agent, between the brokers and the so-called jobbers, allowing brokers to take positions which in turn led to the U.S. model of the full-service investment bank. A new age of competition followed, including foreign ownership of merchant banks and brokers.

All this amounted to a cultural revolution as much as a transformation of the financial landscape. Ruthless professionalism replaced trust as the basis of transaction. In the old days, if someone misread or misquoted a price through genuine mishap, a deal would be unwound on the basis of that trust — something inconceivable today.

Upheaval in the business of the City coincided with a revolution in the business of journalism. Technology was the driving force. It met a wall of opposition in the shape of the print trade unions, each with Orwellian acronyms like SOGAT and NATSOPA.

Two men, Eddy Shah and Rupert Murdoch, finally had the courage and the nous to take on the print unions' monopoly on power. It ended in brutal confrontation at Wapping but ultimately a fundamental change in working practices.

The age of hot metal was over; from now on, journalists could feed their stories via computer directly to publication. The news and information technology revolution had begun — a new lease of life for newspapers and hundreds of new jobs in journalism.

There were other less noticeable changes. Pre-Big Bang, legend has it, Geoffrey Owen, then FT editor, went on his customary afternoon stroll through the newsroom. He alighted upon a markets reporter slumped across his desk.

Geoff — brow furrowed — asked if the man needed medical attention. "No sir," came the reply, "just a long lunch gathering information."

"Ah, that's OK then," said Geoffrey, "I thought he might be ill."

London in the late 1990s and the Blairite Noughties epitomised Cool Britannia. Bigger salaries, better cuisine, cosmopolitan chic. The City ranked alongside New York as the world's financial centre, temporarily eclipsing it after the dotcom crash.

The Thatcher-Reagan era of deregulation and globalisation — the free movement of goods, capital, labour and services — unleashed the global corporation. Along with the internet, globalisation also increased the profile and reach of business journalism.

The FT was a beneficiary, though one thing changed. The fight for scoops and talent was waged on a global stage with the *Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times* and *Bloomberg* rather than within the narrow confines of Fleet Street.

Business and financial journalism expanded, and so did the market power of business journalists.

Robert Thomson, Robert Peston, James Harding and Will Lewis — all FT alumni — took top jobs in the US and the BBC. Others, such as Andrew Ross Sorkin, a former *New York Times* reporter and now co-anchor of Squawk Box, became brands in their own right.

In the internet age, business journalism turned out to have a more robust business model than general news. Readers are wealthier and will pay for information. That's why the FT is closing in on one million paying readers, more than three quarters of whom are subscribers.

But with this increased power and reach come four challenges:

First, stock markets have become a spectator sport, especially on cable news. Real-time commentary has supplanted in-depth sectoral coverage. The stampede for clicks has flattened reporting and dumbed down headlines. The present and future risk for publications is that they increasingly become 'commoditised' at speed.

These days, the half-life of a hot scoop is between five seconds and two hours. The days when the world would wake up to a world-beating financial exclusive on the front page of a newspaper are long gone.

(This is a source of acute personal regret. My all-time favourite FT scoop was a 1998 Thanksgiving story revealing the merger of oil companies Exxon and Mobil. Will Lewis's story ruined our U.S. rivals' turkey lunch.)

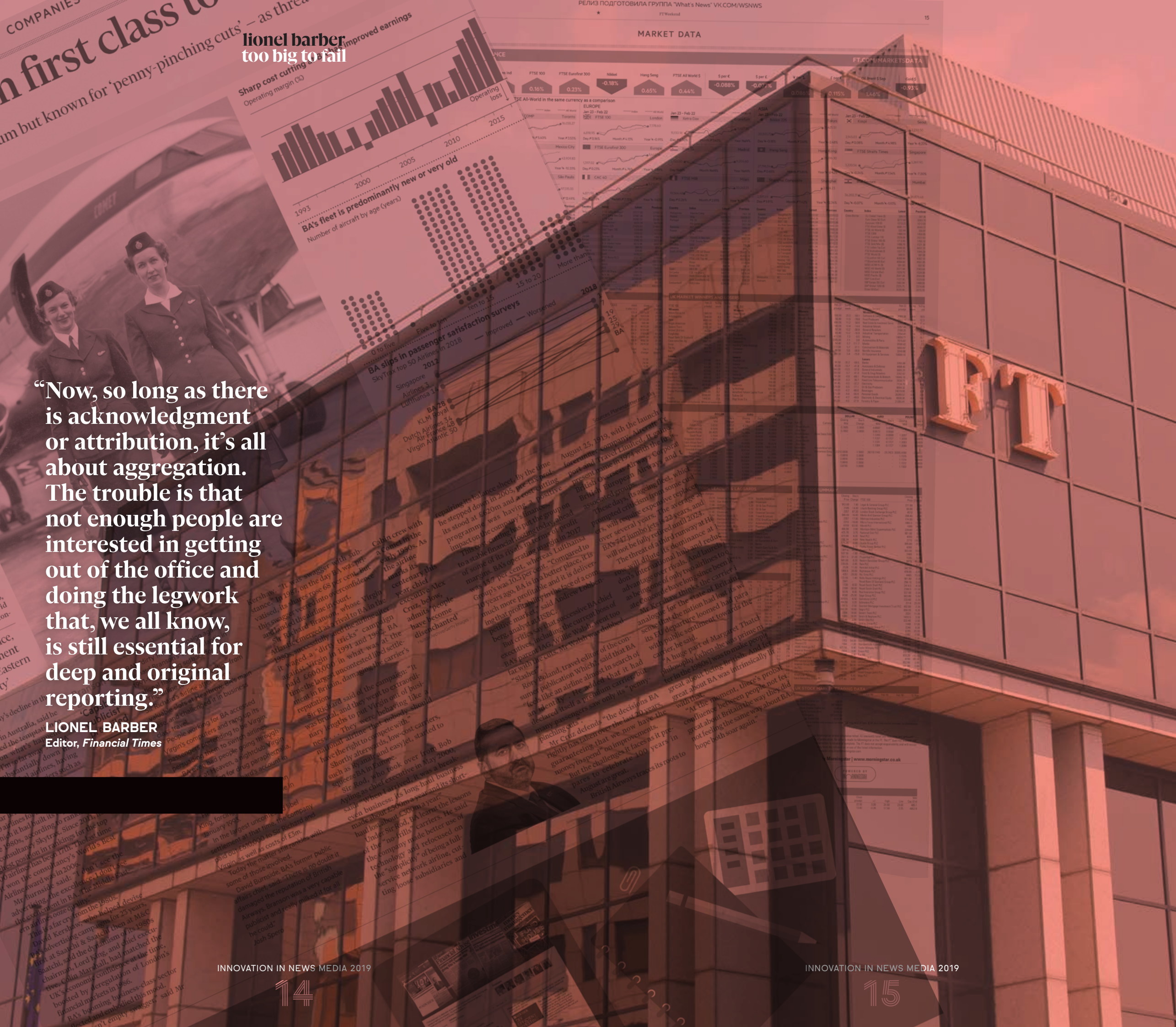
Today, news wires will follow up a scoop in a matter of seconds and then everyone will match it. Attribution appears in paragraph 11. Copyright is for pussycats.

Why?

Because in the age of Google, with its immensely powerful search algorithms, journalists can Hoover up the essence of a story in seconds.

Once upon a time we would have called this plagiarism. Now, so long as there is acknowledgment or attribution, it's all about aggregation. The trouble is that not enough people are interested in getting out of the office and doing the legwork that, we all know, is still essential for deep and original reporting.

These days, the half-life of a hot scoop is between five seconds and two hours.



COMPANIES
in first class to
but known for 'penny-pinching cuts' – as the

lional barber too big to fail



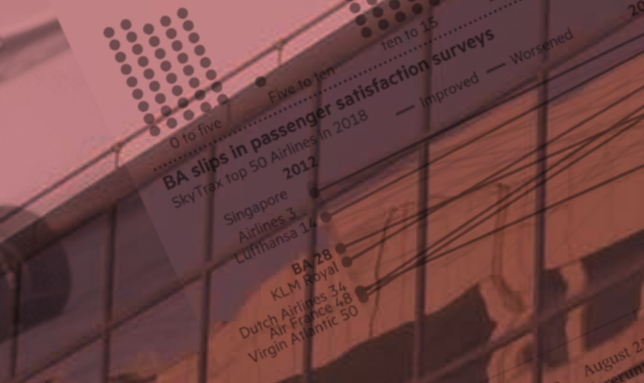
Operating margin (%)
Operating loss
2000 2005 2010 2015
BA's fleet is predominantly new or very old
Number of aircraft by age (years)

MARKET DATA

Index	Change
FTSE 100	+0.16%
FTSE Eurofirst 300	+0.23%
Nikkei	-0.18%
Hong Kong	+0.65%
FTSE All World \$	+0.44%
S per €	-0.088%
S per £	-0.077%
DAX	+0.086%
FTSE 250	+0.115%
FTSE MIB	+0.46%
S&P 500	-0.93%

“Now, so long as there is acknowledgment or attribution, it’s all about aggregation. The trouble is that not enough people are interested in getting out of the office and doing the legwork that, we all know, is still essential for deep and original reporting.”

LIONEL BARBER
Editor, Financial Times



BA slips in passenger satisfaction surveys
SkyTrax top 50 Airlines in 2018
Singapore Airlines 1
Lufthansa 2
BA 28
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines 34
Air France 48
Virgin Atlantic 50



August 25, 2019, with the launch of a new company, Aer Lingus, the present name in 1974 with the British Overseas Airways Corporation and the European Airways and the associated groups.

These days, its ageing fleet, which prompts criticism from some cost-conscious airlines, will require expensive replacement over several years. The average age of BA's 747 jumbo jets is 22 years, and will not be fully retired until 2024. The threat of a third runway at Heathrow will dilute its dominance at London's international hub and reduce its advantage over rivals. And laurels as being one of only two airlines to have a long-haul Concorde have long since been replaced by public sentiment towards the carrier.

A huge part of Margaret Thatcher's philosophy (when she was prime minister in the 1980s) was to make people great about being British. And let's hope both soar again.

The second challenge is how much more powerful the private markets have become over the past decade relative to the public markets. Just think of venture capital, private equity and sovereign wealth funds and the shrinkage of public markets. Up to \$1 trillion of stock buybacks a year in the U.S. alone.

Those lucky enough to have had access to these alternative investment vehicles have made huge amounts of money out of the Silicon Valley technology boom compared with retail investors. The SoftBank Vision Fund is the ultimate expression of this, as it tries to arbitrage the value between the two markets. How successfully, we shall see.

The broader point is that private companies and markets are, by definition, much more opaque and therefore difficult to report on. Holding these private companies and markets to account will be very hard. That's why *Bad Blood*, John Carreyrou's exposé on Theranos and the FT-McKinsey business book of the year, is so impressive. (It's also worth noting that Rupert Murdoch, as a Theranos shareholder and proprietor, refused to intervene to stop or water down the story at the *Wall Street Journal*.)

The third challenge is the growing power of the public relations industry.

At one level, this is a roaring British success story. Sir Martin Sorrell, who — full disclosure — has featured prominently in the FT this year, built WPP into the world's largest brand marketing and PR business.

Brunswick and Finsbury are global businesses, a tribute to the ambition and drive of their founders Sir Alan Parker and Roland Rudd.

These firms see and sell themselves as much more than PR agents. They are in the 'strategic advice' business, almost on the same footing as the investment banker or management consultant. They crave and often win a seat at the high table, next to the CEO.

Now, gatekeepers come in all shape and sizes, from Dmitry Peskov in the Kremlin to Sarah Huckabee Sanders in the White House. They are a fact of life. My worry is the way PR is moving.

Take 'black PR'. This year, Bell Pottinger — founded by Sir Tim Bell, one of Mrs Thatcher's top advisers — collapsed after revelations about its ties to the corrupt Gupta business empire in South Africa.

Bell Pottinger created a bot army to target certain individuals on Twitter and other social media. Between 2016 and 2017, more than 20,000 tweets and retweets about Peter Bruce, a former colleague and distinguished national newspaper editor, were dispatched in order to discredit and humiliate. Peter's photo

appears in dozens of "lists" of enemies of the people in South Africa.

In the end, the Guptas' attempt at state capture failed. Journalism won out. But it was a close-run thing. The same holds true of the fearless reporting of Clare Rewcastle Brown in her exposure of the multibillion-dollar 1MDB scandal in Malaysia.

Clare faced massive intimidation early on with the story before,

among others, the *Wall Street Journal* entered the fray, and blew open a story that eventually brought down the Malaysian, government led by Najib Razak.

A parallel trend is the growth of native content, often produced by PR teams, either external or in-house, often produced for advertisers or companies by the media organisations themselves. Full disclosure, that includes the FT.

Companies are "taking back control" by setting up in-house PR / social media / "content" operations. From there, they can distribute their own "stories" on YouTube and Facebook. Similarly, Goldman Sachs hosts its own news sessions with senior executives interviewing experts in their field.

This makes it much harder to secure quality time with the CEO. Why engage with real journalists when someone browsing the web is just as likely to find your "story" when they Google your company's name?

And finally let's look at the growth of PR compared to the decline of newsrooms.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2000 there were 65,900 news reporters and 128,600 public relations people.

In 2015: 45,800 news reporters, and 218,000 public relations people.

So, 15 years ago, there were two PR people for every reporter in the country. Now there are 4.8 PR people for every reporter.

David Simon, former *Baltimore Sun* staffer and creator of the HBO series *The Wire* offered his own perspective on the stats.

"This is how a republic dies. Not with a bang, but a reprinted press release."

Let me turn now to a fourth and final threat: The evolution of the law as it pertains to the practice of journalism, specifically the area covering privacy, data protection and confidentiality.

Without doubt, the internet has exacerbated privacy and data questions.

Prior to October 2000, when the Human Rights Act of 1998 came into force under Tony Blair's government, English law did not recognise a right to privacy.

In one notorious case, a Sunday tabloid photographer snapped Gordon Kaye — the 'Allo 'Allo TV actor — in his hospital bed while recovering from brain surgery. He had no privacy protection under the law.

However, over the past 15 years or so, this area of law has developed apace. Initially, the courts stretched the equitable principles of "breach of confidence" to create something akin to a privacy right.

So, unlike Kay, the supermodel Naomi Campbell ultimately won her case against Mirror Group Newspapers in the House of Lords after she was photographed coming out of a Narcotics Anonymous meeting.

Subsequently and almost seamlessly, we have witnessed a new privacy tort of "misuse of private information" (or 'MPI', as lawyers refer to it.)

Editors have become used to having to weigh up competing interests of freedom of expression versus any reasonable expectation of privacy — as per articles 10 and eight respectively of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Now, the latter is not an absolute right, and it would not be so troublesome were it not for the mushrooming of data protection law, which has added to the privacy hazards facing the press. What concerns me most

15 years ago,
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Now there are 4.8.

is the way it is being used to cover digital/online journalism, specifically via “personal data.”

Complainants are increasingly resorting to data protection law to attack or fetter journalism, with so-called ‘subject access’ requests and ‘rectification’ or ‘deletion requests.’

This position has been updated in the new UK Data Protection Act 2018, while the E.U. has passed the all-embracing General Data Protection Regulation, known as ‘GDPR’. This is already having an impact on press reporting.

In a recent case in Germany, a German banker who held a managerial position in London wished to delete his name and job title from an FT news report of a published ruling of the Central London Employment Tribunal.

The tribunal’s ruling was highly critical of his conduct in the workplace. He applied to a German court and won a temporary privacy injunction based on provisions in German law.

We are appealing against the court’s decision, as is Bloomberg. This attempt to rewrite or erase history must not be allowed to stand.

I also urge all press to argue robustly in favour of the legal exemption that is applicable to the processing of data for the “special purposes of journalism.” This is vital if we are to prevent disproportionate encroachment on journalistic freedoms through aggressive data protection claims.

Let me turn now to the “law of confidence.” As previously discussed, this law played the role of midwife in the birth of privacy law here in England.

A High Court ruling last year in the case of *Brevan Howard v Reuters*, which was upheld by the Court of Appeal, has reminded us all — not least in the field of business journalism — that the courts have restrictively held there is a positive public interest in maintaining obligations of confidentiality.

In order to override that, one has to show there is a pretty strong countervailing public interest in publishing the relevant “confidential” information, in order to defeat an injunction application and court claim.

We had a recent experience in the case of *Guggenheim*, a powerful Chicago-based investment bank that sought a temporary court injunction in the U.K. to prevent us publishing certain internal information we considered to be of considerable public interest.

Fighting the case would have entailed hundreds of thousands of pounds of legal fees. In the end both sides agreed to terms that allowed publication of a long story on *Guggenheim’s* business model but without some key financial details. It was an unsatisfactory score draw.

The rise of privacy-type restrictions in the law has naturally coincided with the proliferation of online publications and digital processing. And I would remind you that the Leveson report into the newspaper industry devoted a mere 14 pages out of the 2,000 to the internet.

Today, we need to look forward — not backward — when it comes to the media, the law and potential regulation. The internet juggernauts are not merely platforms. They are publishers and should be held to the same standards.

In short, we should level the playing field.

The independence of the press — in the words of former Lord Chief Justice Igor Judge — is not a right of one section of the community. It is the

right of the community as a whole. It is not only a constitutional necessity; it is a constitutional principle.

This means of course that, from time to time, the press will write terrible things and terrible headlines, like describing the judiciary as the enemies of the people.

But as Paul Dacre rightly said the other day: the press should have the freedom to get it right and the freedom to get it wrong.

As an editor, I know that the freedom to make mistakes carries a heavy price. As a financial editor, that is doubly true.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have touched on the past, and much of the present, so let me offer a sneak peek into the future. Here are three predictions.

First, the news business is on the cusp of a second technology revolution. We are rapidly approaching the moment where all text can be understood by machines — a revolution as big as the launch of the internet. Routine tasks such as writing company earnings and stock market reports will disappear. The next AI phase will be even more profound, with speech-to-text, the processing of images and, yes, language.

Second, the algorithms are not going to take over. To the contrary. The bankers, investors and spooks who need trustworthy information will be even more prepared to pay plenty for reliable news. That’s why we have seen a Brexit bounce and *The New York Times* has witnessed a ‘Trump bump.’ And it’s why low barriers to entry will allow niche news start-ups with no legacy costs to spring up, a little like the hedge funds offering specialist knowledge after Big Bang.

Indeed, we could go back further in time to 130 years ago, when the FT was founded in the old City of London and dozens of dodgy freesheets were ramping stocks in non-existent Bolivian tin mines. Truth, so to speak, is being ‘remonetised.’

Third, and most counter-intuitively, I still believe in the value and future of print. The smart, edited snapshot of the news, with intelligent analysis and authoritative commentary. In the age of information overload, there has to be a place in the market for print, especially at the weekend.

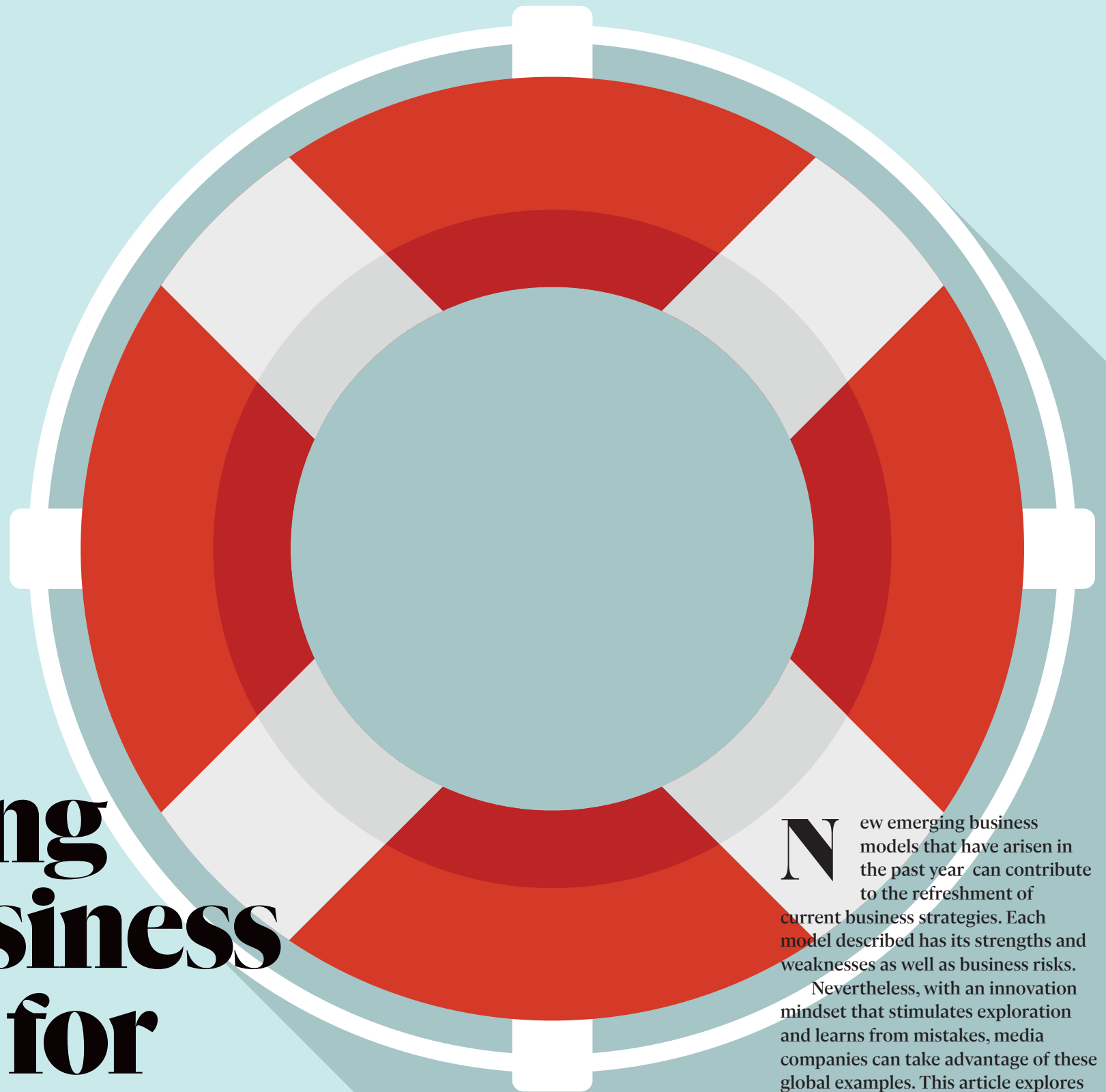
So let’s celebrate the opportunities as well as the challenges for business and financial journalism, which is so much more than a tool for making or losing money.

It contributes to an understanding of how a modern, interconnected global economy works. It is vital for an informed citizenry.

In short: too big to fail.

The algorithms are not going to take over. To the contrary. The bankers, investors and spooks who need trustworthy information will be even more prepared to pay plenty for reliable news.

The media industry is still struggling for survival and sustainability, constantly exploring new business models that can achieve this goal. Many industry analysts predict that 2019 will mean less money and more cuts. INNOVATION believes that with a solid revenue diversification strategy, this risk can be mitigated. (However, diversification is not deviation; journalism should remain at the core of any media business.)



emerging new business models for news media

New emerging business models that have arisen in the past year can contribute to the refreshment of current business strategies. Each model described has its strengths and weaknesses as well as business risks. Nevertheless, with an innovation mindset that stimulates exploration and learns from mistakes, media companies can take advantage of these global examples. This article explores these new business models that, according to INNOVATION, offer the most potential for success in the media industry.

recap:

Last year we identified 11 business models that news organisations should consider in order to diversify their revenue streams, in light of the fall in advertising income.

b2b

The ad-dependent publisher

Native advertising, branded content, programmatic

Targeting interested advertisers to build and distribute relevant messages associated with their brands and the needs of their audiences.

The publisher as an agency

Selling branded content

Aimed at advertisers who lack the capacity to contract creative agencies to create advertising pieces for their audiences.

The publisher as data broker

Database marketing

Aimed at advertisers who seek to increase their effectiveness in advertising campaigns, with databases generated from the media companies' audiences.

b2c

The paid content publisher

Subscriptions or micropayments

Aimed at a loyal, demanding consumer who values the objective and relevant content that top news outlets produce.

The publisher as a club

Membership

Aimed at consumers who, through subscription packages, not only gain access to editorial products, but to attractive discounts in a broad portfolio of products and services. The annual subscription could be recovered through accessing these discounts.

The publisher as retailer

E-commerce verticals

Aimed at consumers who are highly segmented due to their needs and profiles, and who are willing to satisfy their purchase needs with the portfolio of products or services offered.



The publisher as event organiser

Branded events

Aimed at consumers attracted by the quality and credibility of the brand and their resulting events.

The publisher as philanthropist

Crowdfunding

Aimed at a consumer who is willing to fund media companies with negative balances, supporting their clear independence and high-quality, credible content.

leveraging your assets

The publisher as brand licensor

Developing new products and services

When the intangible value of the brand is high, this can be worth taking advantage of by licensing the brand in other related products or services, thereby obtaining other related sources of income.

The publisher as IT provider

Selling software

When internal IT development has proved to be effective, media companies can offer consulting and IT licensing services to their industry peers to increase their operational efficiency.

oriented to business diversification

The publisher as investor

Launch a fund

When you want to invest in other promising and emerging businesses in exchange for advertising.

what's new?

Earn after reading

Media companies can adopt this model to maintain or acquire their audiences, and to maintain a stable flow of advertising revenue. Through different strategies, such as playing games or referrals, readers earn digital coins that are later translated into real money.

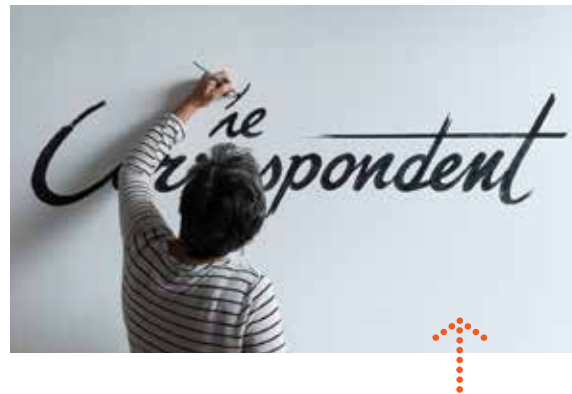
In China, a news app called Qutoutiao Inc. has drawn in 20 million daily readers, Reuters reported in late 2018. A leaderboard shows the top-earning user has raked in more than the equivalent of \$50,000 USD.



“It’s the eyeball economy. Previously, people had to spend money to see content, but with the changing internet they no longer have to pay ... Not only are they not paying - users now need to earn something as well,” Chief Financial Officer Wang Jingbo told Reuters in an interview, but said the cash giveaways were a key hook and a long-term strategy.

In India, Times Internet Limited rewards the reader with Timepoints for reading articles, watching videos, commenting and sharing posts, that can later be redeemed in attractive options such as travel, food, fashion and lifestyle.

The huge risk of this business model is that content loses its value to make way for money. Media companies should also be vigilant about the fact that increasing amounts of internet activity are linked to nefarious bots and not human users.



Pay what you can

Media companies that trust their audiences and want to ensure reader loyalty have launched a business model where anyone interested in reading their content can contribute according to their purchasing power.

Rob Wijnberg, founding editor of news website The Correspondent told Press Gazette that he prefers this model because allowing people to decide what their fee should be shows trust in the readers, fulfilling the site’s mission that everything it does is “optimizing our journalism for trust.” The company raised \$2.6 million in advance of its English-language launch (it already has a Dutch website,) planned for September 2019. The public were invited to pay whatever they thought reasonable for a one-year subscription, which will start at the time of launch.



Blockchain-based technology platforms

A global community of participants has become responsible for maintaining these new platforms. Using tokens, they can engage in different transactions across the economies of these platforms, such as community governance, supporting journalists or sponsoring the launch of newsrooms. The community controls the distribution model.

The most well-known example of a journalism initiative based on blockchain is Civil. “Civil is built to be an active, participatory network. If you’re simply looking for the 'next Bitcoin,' you should look else-

where. This is about rethinking the incentive structure that drives journalism and creating a model that rewards quality, not quantity. We’re able to create such a system for journalism by applying blockchain and crypto-economics so that producing ethical journalism based on a clear, transparent rule set is the primary incentive—and is what will propel the network’s growth,” according to Matt Coolidge, Civil co-founder, speaking to online magazine Street Fight.

Since these platforms will not benefit from how quality journalism is funded, they are building an 'app store model' where they will retain transactional cuts of apps/tools/services that are sold/run on their platforms.

New B2B models



Media alliances

Along the media value chain, media companies can have stable or opportunistic alliances, joining forces to generate better content, increase their bargaining power with technology vendors, strategic suppliers and announcers, etc. The benefit to the advertiser in these alliances is that they offer brand-safe environments in combination with well-established audiences.

The challenge is that these alliances live or die based on the level of cooperation between the partnering companies. They work well in theory but can fall victim to misaligned objectives and under-investment.

Where this gets interesting is when the publishers represent very different audiences, such as The Ozone Project between News UK, Guardian News and Media, and Telegraph Media Group in the U.K. The potential to reach such a diverse audience would be exciting to any media planner, however, the initiative has been beset with challenges; even choosing a name for the initiative has been problematic with three

already used to date. Coupled with the withdrawal of TMG, Google and Facebook will hardly be quaking in their boots.



Media cooperatives

Truly independent media companies can involve their audiences, writers and supporters as shareholders to fund objective and high-quality journalism.

New governance models must be put in place to share decisions with thousands of owners, without compromising the publication’s editorial independence.

The U.K.’s independent publishing cooperative New Internationalist launched a share offer in March 2017. “We have 15 directors and 23 staff, and now we have 3,467 owners,” co-editor Hazel Healy told the *Colombia Journalism Review*. The reader-owner role demands greater responsibility than being a subscriber, CJR comments, though it may not be as financially lucrative as being an ordinary shareholder.

According to Healy, “While people are getting news for free, persuading people to pay for it by investing in the publication is an untapped resource... How else are you going to keep a diverse media landscape? For smaller, mission-driven outfits, this could be a really interesting way forward.”

Use of influencers

As part of a multiplatform strategy to package their content for their audiences in different ways, some media companies have been using ‘influencers,’ social media stars whose following and clout is seen as so sufficiently large that they are used by companies



REFINERY29

to promote their brands or service on platforms that otherwise might be hard to reach.

Digital-first publishers often embed influencer talent among their own staffs, reported the *Columbia Journalism Review*. For example, BuzzFeed video creators have developed their own social media followings robust enough to guarantee huge view numbers, while Refinery29 staffers create sponsored posts for advertisers on their personal accounts. Identify the most attractive and viable influencers who can develop their own content for other platforms while working side by side with the marketing department to develop a monetisation strategy for B2B and B2C. Influencers offer a media organization immediate scale in terms of reach, plus an influencer can provide a fresh face to a campaign or initiative.

In addition, using influencers can build more personal relationships with audiences. According to CJR, these influencers have credibility and authenticity among their followers, and even those with a relatively small number of followers can make a difference as their ads can seem more like “friendly suggestions.”

The challenge for the marketing intelligence department is to put in place the right technology to measure influence in favour of their media brands and content, therefore reinforcing a virtuous cycle.

Emotional advertising

With all this drive for diversification, sometimes publishers can be forgiven for forgetting that what used to make money still can. The death of the display ad has long been predicted, but when it comes to increasing brand awareness among audiences, there's still little better. Plus, with programmatic platforms driving down CPMs, display ads still represent great value for money in the eyes of advertisers.

Publishers are also finding more original and effective ways to target ads and charge higher rates. *The New York Times* has been piloting ads based on the emotions that articles evoke. ‘Project Feels’ has generated 50 campaigns, more than 30 million impressions and strong revenue results, according to Poynter in April 2019.

The Times's Data Science team surveyed over 1,200 readers who participated voluntarily to create the initial dataset, data scientist Alexander Spangher explained, asking respondents how they felt while reading a series of articles by choosing from a number of different emotion categories. Based on analysis of the dataset, the team came up with a set of models that predicted the emotions that articles would evoke in readers. The team also showed that ads performed “significantly” better on articles that were top in emotional categories such as love, sadness and fear, compared to those that were not.



What it means is that advertisers can choose which emotions they want their ads to be identified with. As Poynter reported, some ads have generated as much as 80% more impressions than regular behavioural targeting, and the average lift is 4%. *The Times* can therefore charge a premium rate.

The *USA Today* Network has also been experimenting with selling ads targeted to specific emotions with a product called Lens Targeting, and ESPN has been pitching a tool to target sports fans on its digital properties “based on their changing emotional state during a game,” Digiday reported in September 2018.

Conclusion

Through this tour of the different business models INNOVATION can conclude the following:

1 To achieve and maintain sustainability, every media company must have an innovation mindset, where publishers are continuously exploring what attractive new revenue streams can be incorporated into their diversification strategy.

2 Collaboration strategies such as alliances and cooperatives are a must to reduce operational expenses and gain more value among audiences, advertisers and suppliers.

3 Boards must challenge management to present innovative strategies, based on their market possibilities, that can bring new revenue streams.

4 Technology investments are a huge enabler when it comes to launching successful new reader revenue strategies. However, these investments, and their impact, can be reduced if media consortiums are established for this purpose.

Of course it's not possible, or even desirable, to try to activate all these revenue streams, but we believe that publishers should be pursuing at least three different business models to have a chance of success.

ad fraud: what it is and why publishers should worry about it

Advertising-supported business models have been in the eye of the storm for some time. First, it was the tech giants - Facebook and Google - taking ever-greater shares of the advertising revenue. Then it was a crisis of conscience among the advertising community; “surely those pesky banner adverts that everyone hates should be dead and buried by now?” they mused. Then it was pressure from the advertisers to prove, using viewability metrics, that the ads were actually being seen. One would have thought that the lowly online banner advert had weathered enough storms. Yet the biggest is about to hit the media sector, in the form of advertising fraud.

The online advertising model is relatively simple and that's why it is vulnerable. At its most basic, an advertiser pays for their ad to be served on a webpage, and the number of times that happens is tracked until the advertiser reaches the limit of what their payment will buy. In addition, the number of times the ad is clicked on is also tracked.

The fraud occurs when the ad is served by not seen by the user either because the ads are “stacked” on top of each other, or they are “stuffed” into a tiny space on the screen, just one pixel by one pixel. Other forms include “misrepresentation,” where illegitimate sites are used to serve the ad, and “ad injections” where a browser inserts ads onto a publisher's site without permission.

For fraudsters this offers rich pickings and there are relatively low barriers to entry - no need to set up distribution networks like narcotics trafficking. The fraud is relatively easy to execute and easy to scale. The rise of programmatic advertising has aided the fraudster as campaigns are now placed with sites, both legitimate and nefarious but the engine making these decisions cannot always tell the difference.

And this is a huge and increasingly organised criminal activity which is hurting both advertisers and publishers alike. Juniper research showed that brands were “losing” \$51m every day, translating to a staggering \$19bn each year and set to more than double to \$44bn by 2022. Publishers might think they have dodged this bullet, but they are also being hurt by the growth in “counterfeit inventory”. A recent study by PR Newswire, of 16 premium publishers across 26 domains, found that display callouts were overstated by 4 times and video callouts by 57 times, representing billions of counterfeit callouts every day.

Advertisers are beginning to demand that their campaigns run only on authorised inventory. In addition, the Interactive Advertising Bureau has released an ads.txt standard which gives publishers and distributors the ability to securely share the companies they authorise to sell their digital inventory. This in turn will raise the levels of transparency.

It feels as though the topic of ad fraud is the exclusive domain of the technophile, but if unchecked, its effect will impact the entire advertising ecosystem.

reader revenue becomes the norm

78%

According to the American Press Institute, of U.S. newspapers with at least 50,000 circulation now have some form of paid model online (most often a metered model that allows limited free access to content before the 'paywall' is activated) and numerous publications across Europe and elsewhere are also turning to on digital reader revenue after realising that advertising is unsustainable.

focus

on digital reader revenue after realising that advertising is unsustainable.

As we stressed in last year's report, there is no point in thinking about how to charge for your digital product unless you are confident that you can offer both content and an experience that readers will find worth paying for. You must have something unique to offer, that is a pleasure to read, or watch or listen to.

Aiming high

Among participants at an Axel Springer summit on paid online content in early 2019, more than half were aiming to make subscriptions their largest digital source of income during this year. 79% of those responding to the survey believed that the public in their country were becoming more willing to pay for digital content.

This is positive, but the Digital News Report survey published by Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism in summer 2018 found significant disparities between countries in terms of how many people were paying for online content. Nordic countries are making the most progress, with 30% of those surveyed in Norway paying for online news in the past year (+4% compared to the previous year.) A reported 26% of respondents paid for news in Sweden (+6%), and 18% in Finland (+4%). However, the rate drops to 7% in the U.K., 8% in Germany and 9% in Canada.

The U.S. 'Trump Bump' seems to have been maintained, with 16% of Americans paying for online news, compared to 9% in 2016. The increase has mainly benefitted liberal-leaning newspapers like *The New*

York Times and *The Washington Post*. Out of respondents identifying as left-leaning, 29% have paid for online news, compared to 8% of those identifying as right-leaning.

Reducing churn, focusing on engagement

We are seeing an increased focus among publishers on reducing churn – meaning subscribers who do not renew – rather than on attracting new subscribers. This reflects the ways that paid content market is maturing, as publishers' confidence in their subscriber acquisition strategies continues to grow. According to the Axel Springer survey on paid content strategies in early 2019, 'churn prevention' was ranked second on the list of priorities for the success of paid content, whereas it was ranked fourth the previous year.

The key word that comes up here again and again is engagement. This is seen in

both the 2018 WAN-IFRA report by Cecilia Campbell, 'Engaged Readers Don't Churn,' and in the recent assertion from *Financial Times*' CEO John Ridding that, "A lot of attention is on retention; that is why engagement is crucial." FT now spends three times more on engagement than acquisition. This means a shift in focus from expanding reach to engaging loyal readers.

Focusing on retention is a common sense strategy. An INMA report from late 2018 by Grzegorz Piechota found that acquiring a new customer is up to 25% more expensive than retaining an existing one. The keys to success, Piechota stresses, include to closely following audience data and remaining willing and able to react to changing subscriber behaviours. Piechota also claims that convenience is more important than content in the subscription economy, and in order to improve convenience, personalisation is crucial.

The WAN-IFRA report emphasized the importance of working across an organization to achieve customer retention, from the newsroom to customer services. As Damon Kiesow wrote for the American Press Institute, "Launching a paywall is easy. Pivoting a whole business from an advertising-centric mindset to one focused on reader revenue is not."

Reducing churn starts from the point of acquisition. According to the same WAN-IFRA report, the method of subscriber conversion is important in predicting churn. For example, *The Boston Globe* has found that retention is improved when users come in through a specific process: subscribing to a newsletter. Customers who converted through special promotions, or through Facebook are likely to have higher churn rates.

A study of local news outlets from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, released in February 2019, found that frequency of local news consumption was the single biggest predictor of retaining subscribers - more than the number of stories read or the time spent reading them. Habit-forming is therefore essential.



Content to meet readers' needs

Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet*, which offers premium content specifically for subscribers, sought to establish which content was so relevant that readers could be persuaded to pay for it. Anna Careborg, the news brand's Head of Premium Content, wrote on INMA's site in late 2018 that staff members looked for patterns across thousands of articles that had converted readers to subscribers, eventually finding that the common denominator was not specific topics, but content that met each reader's specific needs.

These were:

- 1.** Content that helps the reader understand the latest news stories, providing the essential analysis for top stories.
→ **Low conversion rate but many readers.**
- 2.** Content that is directly useful to readers in their daily lives: 'Need to know' content such as financial or property advice, or new health findings.
→ **High conversion rate, many readers**
- 3.** Content that allows readers to better understand the world in which we live: Unique insight and perspectives into societal challenges and changes.
→ **High conversion rate, lower number of readers**
- 4.** Content close to readers' interests and identities: 'Nice to know' content focused on lifestyle and culture.
→ **Not useful for conversion, but many subscribers read it, making it useful for preventing churn**

The types of content that help to acquire subscribers are not the same as those which retain them. "We can't just focus on producing articles that convert. We've analysed this, and there is definitely content that's anti-churn," Careborg wrote. As reported by Digiday, the paper has hired two cross-departmental editors who are each responsible for one type of content: content that converts, and content that retains.

THE SHIFT FROM ADS TO READER REVENUE

In the third quarter of 2018, subscription revenues accounted for nearly two-thirds of The New York Times Company's revenues, the paper announced.

At the *Seattle Times*, 62% of revenue now comes from circulation, Frederic Filloux reported.

Fifteen years since launching its first paywall, Nordic publishing giant Schibsted Media Group has more than million print and digital subscribers, Digiday reported in November 2018, with reader revenue accounting for 40% of revenue for its media division.



Propensity modelling at Tribune Publishing

Propensity models are being used more frequently to target marketing more effectively to both gain new subscribers and to reduce churn. Gerard Brancato, Vice President of Digital Subscription Marketing at Tribune Publishing (formerly tronc) explained that in order to decide where to allocate its marketing material, a team analysed subscription data to establish the following:

1. Which website behaviours suggest a higher likelihood for a user to convert?
2. What content typically attracts users that are more likely to subscribe?
3. Are there any attributes, demographic or otherwise, common to users who subscribe?

The team determined that:

- The conversion of site users into paid subscribers spiked for visitors who used the site's search function or consumed local news content.
- There was an inflexion point in engagement metrics, whereby once a certain threshold was exceeded, the tendency to convert greatly increased. For instance, during a certain period at the *Chicago Tribune*, users who had visited the site five or more times in the previous 30 days were twice as likely to subscribe, compared to users who had visited the site three times or less.
- Audiences within the 'designated marketing area' for a title were seven times more likely to become subscribers, compared to those outside the area. This difference was even higher than expected.

The team also completed a 'churn risk-regression analysis,' and found that 81% of voluntary stops came from subscribers who made fewer than three payments. The risk of cancellation for subscribers who hadn't visited the site within the previous 22 days was 133% higher than those who had visited.

The study also identified consumption of unique local content as a key factor in subscriber retention.

At both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, the overall pattern is that subscribers who consume content across multiple sections and topics are more likely to become loyal customers, the WAN-IFRA report found. It is therefore important to surface content to subscribers that they might not otherwise encounter.

It also helps to take action to prevent churn. Canada's *Globe and Mail* found that emailing subscribers with the highest propensity to churn reduced churn by 140%, while emailing subscribers who haven't logged in for 30 days helps to reduce churn by 27%, according to Twipe. Schibsted Media has managed to retain between 10 and 15% of subscribers who start a cancellation process by sending them "positive nudges," such as discounted offers to extend their subscription, Digiday reported.

Dynamic paywalls

The journey from engaged non-subscriber status to conversion can hit various bumps along the way, and news organisations are making use of increasingly complex data to ensure that they make the road as smooth as possible.

Propensity modelling, which predicts how likely a user is to subscribe, allows news outlets to implement 'dynamic' paywalls. These models utilise existing subscriber and conversion data to adapt the paywall for different users, offering different access levels, so as to offer a conversion prompt at the perfect time.

For example, Swiss daily *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (NZZ) has used a dynamic 'paygate' to up its conversion rate by nearly five times within a year. This comes from the group's Head of Digital Product, Rouven Leuener, during March 2019's Newsrewired Conference in London.

Every user that visits NZZ's site is given a score based on a variety of metrics from their usage history. Users with low levels of engagement are given 11 free articles a month, while the highly engaged (the top 20%,) are A/B tested between a set of standard and special-



Niche verticals converting subscribers

Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* has 250,000 subscribers in a country with only 5.2 million people, and this figure includes 108,000 digital-only subscribers. The paper has a hybrid paid content strategy online, according to a webinar that was held with Facebook's Journalism Project, with 70% of its coverage available to readers as part of a metered model that allows users to read six stories per device per week, and 30% only available to subscribers. The metered offering includes breaking news and standard news stories, while feature and investigative stories are behind the paywall.

Aftenposten has a dedicated Editorial Development team who sit within the newsroom at the intersection of editorial, business and product strategy, developing new editorial products for the purpose of converting subscribers.

For example, the paper saw that readers were interested in articles about jobs, and started to experiment by producing more careers-related coverage. Even though the new vertical wasn't specifically marketed, 4,000 new subscribers were attributed to careers coverage during the experiment's first nine months.

ized rules with individual user prompts. The AI-powered paygate is constantly calculating new scores for each user.

Find what readers will pay for

The New York Times now has 4.3 million subscribers, of which 3.4 million pay for just the company's digital products. It's not just news that they are interested in, however. Of the 265,000 subscribers added in the last quarter of 2018, 93,000 started paying for alternative digital products like the cooking or crossword apps, rather than for the core news product.

These apps have a lower price point than the core news product, but are also likely to be significantly less expensive to produce. And unexpectedly for *The New York Times*, the paper found that many of the subscribers to its cooking app came from rural America, an audience that the brand has traditionally struggled to reach, *Bloomberg* reported in February 2019. At present, the app has more than 120,000 subscribers.

Growth in donation and crowd-funding models

According to the 2018 Digital News Report survey from the Reuters Institute, only 1% of people in the U.K. and Germany currently donate to a news organization, with a 2% donation rate in Spain and 3% in the U.S. However, the report found that the scale of the opportunity looks to be much greater, with an average of 22% of respondents across countries reporting that they could potentially donate to a news organisation in the future, if they felt the organisation could not cover its costs in other ways.

Another encouraging finding from the Digital News Report is the fact that donations tend to come from the younger half of the population, as millennials are both more confident in paying for online services, and more enthusiastic about keeping journalism open.

Donations can be often politically motivated. Respondents talked about giving money because they wanted to identify with a cause, or set of values. This presents the opportunity for a deeper relationship between readers and publications. Those who understand how the news industry works,



More than a million people from 180 countries contributed to *The*

Guardian during the full calendar years of 2016-2018, with 500,000 paying to support the publication on an ongoing basis, according to Editor-in-Chief Katharine Viner.

Many contributors donated specifically because they wanted *The Guardian* to stay free and outside of a paywall, Viner said, thereby ensuring that "progressive journalism can have the widest possible impact." The Guardian has now set a goal of attracting two million paying supporters in the next three years. The paper's combined digital revenues outstripped print for the first time in July 2018. It currently has 10 million regular online readers.

The Guardian has previously come under heavy criticism for an unsustainable business model that relied too heavily on its Scott Trust funding, which allowed it to run despite major operating losses. The company claims it is now on track to break even in the 2018-19 financial year. As well as pushing for reader donations, *The Guardian* has also reduced operational costs by 20%, including staff reduction.

reader revenue the new norm



FINANCIAL
TIMES

Reaching 1 million

The *Financial Times* might be in a league of its own with its status a crucial source of financial information, but there are lessons to be learnt from its experience. The

brand announced that it had passed one million paying subscribers in April 2019, which is exceptional for a U.K.-based paper. Even as its ad revenue fell, its operating profit rose last year by £500,000. Fifty-five per cent of the paper's combined revenue now comes from content rather than from advertising.

"By pioneering a subscription model and investing in digital transformation, we have proved that quality journalism can be a quality, growth business," said CEO John Ridding in the announcement.

Digital subscriptions now account for more than three-quarters of the FT's circulation. The paper went online with a paywall in 2002, started using a metered model in 2007, and in 2015 switched to a month-long trial that offered unfettered access to the paper for £1/\$1.

"We really want to achieve the habit in digital that people used to have in print. A metered model kind of goes against that because you're, by definition, rationing. ...Ideally, you spend a month with the FT, you get to appreciate it, you become a subscriber," said Ridding on a Recode podcast in 2018.

Seventy per cent of FT readers are now outside the U.K. In an attempt to drive growth in the U.S., which is where executives see the greatest opportunity, the FT is pursuing a 'first click free' strategy for U.S.-based users. This dynamic paywall shows prospective American subscribers a personalised range of the FT's content, matched to the subject of the original piece on which they alighted. It increased conversions by 17% in its first month, according to the Drum. Ridding told Digiday, "Our expertise and machinery around process, engagement and subscriptions have accelerated," adding that "it's a virtuous circle: the bigger the subscriber base, the more expertise you gain."

The brand also offers school subscriptions as part of its efforts to attract younger readers. These subscription packages have been taken up by 2,000 schools, the *Guardian* reported in April 2019.

along with the financial challenges that it faces, are much more likely to consider donating or paying for online news in the future, the Digital News Report found.

It is likely that these politically-motivated millennials are precisely who BuzzFeed News is targeting with its recent membership programme, launched in late 2018. (The 'News' part of BuzzFeed became its own site with its own branding in summer 2018.) It is essentially a donation strategy, offering readers the chance to pay \$5/month to support BuzzFeed News, in exchange for member-only emails highlighting top stories. (And if you are U.S.-based and willing to pay \$100 for a year, you also get a tote bag.) The site is clear that it will not start charging to read content, stressing, "We were born of the open web, and reporting to the widest possible audience is in our DNA," and that paywalls "mean only those who can afford to pay get access to quality news." It is seen as an unusual strategy for a venture capital-funded company, but BuzzFeed says it is only one of many revenue streams being pursued.

Focus on compelling content

We would argue, as we have for some years, that pursuing digital reader revenue is essential. It is not going to be easy for everyone, however, and it is important to keep in mind that the majority of online news consumption happens on free websites; there remain many people who do not pay for digital news and likely never will.

It is also worth remembering that, as Rasmus Kleis Nielsen of the Reuters Institute wrote in his 2019 Nieman Lab prediction, "Much of the news currently published online is simply not worth paying for. Some of it is hardly worth our fleeting attention, let alone hard-earned cash."

The crucial first step in building reader revenue online is to offer a compelling content proposition with elements of uniqueness. The next step is discovering how to get readers to pay and to keep paying. This will likely involve experimentation, a lot of data, and many different sectors of your organisation, but it mustn't come at the expense of focussing on the distinctive journalism that your readers value.

There is a fear, even in academic literature, that newsrooms around the world are becoming more concerned about metrics and engagement rates, at the expense of the broader 'public interest' dimension of journalism. But metrics can offer invaluable insight and, if used wisely, they shouldn't have a negative impact on a news outlet's journalistic production.

metrics: measuring what matters

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here are clear risks associated with slavishly following metrics. In addition to the risk of de-prioritising content of civic importance, it's not necessarily good for business.

BuzzFeed and other digital-only startups that built businesses based on online sharing "yoked themselves so tightly to Facebook's wagon," argued *Columbia Journalism Review's* Mathew Ingram, that when Facebook changed its algorithm, they lost unsustainable amounts of traffic.

A report by Kim Christian Schröder, published by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, argues that regardless of what the metrics say, it is relevance that matters most to news consumers, and journalists should "trust their instincts rather than relying on the unreliable seismograph offered by 'Most Read' lists." Although people frequently click on entertaining stories with no obvious civic focus, "they maintain a clear sense of what is trivial and what matters," he writes.

While it is true that journalists should not abandon public interest news in favour of trivial content that might get more clicks, it is also true that, as *The Guardian's* Chris Moran wrote, "Metrics, at their core, are simply measurements," and, "... As journalists, we should never argue that ignorance is bliss."

Analytical tools are being used in ever more complex ways, both in measuring the performance of stories, and the levels of reader engagement. Increasingly, it is the latter that is more important to publishers as they hone their subscription models. Many are developing engagement or loyalty scores that offer single figures that incorporate many different measurements.

For example, the *Financial Times's* RFV metric - which stands for 'recency, frequency and volume' - looks at the previous 90 days to see how recently a reader visited the brand's site or social platforms, how many times they visited, and how much they read over that period.

Here are some examples of the metrics that top news organisations are focusing on.

Primed for subscription

Publications seeking subscribers should use data to assess which website visitors are most likely to subscribe. "*The New York Times*, for instance, has a model where we look for people visiting at least twice a week and looking at three different topics," Charles Duhigg, *New York Times* columnist and senior editor, told the International News Media Association in December 2018.

This knowledge can be used to increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, and to increase overall subscription numbers.

Building a habit to reduce churn

A February 2019 study from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism found that "one of the biggest challenges in digital news is replicating a print-newspaper level of customer loyalty by getting more visitors to adopt a daily digital habit."

Encouraging a daily consumption habit is the goal of *The Wall Street Journal's* analytics strategy. Its "engagement north star" is average active days (the number of days a reader engages with content,) according to WSJ's Associate Director of Member Engagement, Anne Powell. "Once we were able to rally around a single metric, we developed a strategy that effectively drives

Analytical tools are being used in ever more complex ways, both in measuring the performance of stories, and the levels of reader engagement.



It is important that the metric is objectively measurable, actionable in a positive way and reliable over time.

What to remember when using metrics:

- Focus on one singular metric that is the most important to your organisation and its goals. As Matt Skibinski, advisor for The Lenfest Institute for Journalism said, “Don’t look at 25 metrics. Figure out where you need to focus

and highlight that metric everywhere. Put it in emails, talk about it in meetings. In many news organisations, there are so many numbers floating around, nobody knows how to make decisions based on them.”

- It is important that this metric is objectively measurable, actionable in a positive way and reliable over time, as *The Guardian’s* Chris Moran explained.
- Metrics can be used to make decisions - such as whether or not a particular product is worth keeping or killing - or they can be used to inform staff on the way to reaching a goal, as Melody Kramer explained in a March 2019 report from the American Press Institute.
- Make sure everybody is on the same page. Researcher Nicole Blanchett Neheli found that, “the use of metrics and analytics has to be supported by everyone in management in order to change the culture of a newsroom.”
- Journalists don’t have much time to reflect on how analytics are affecting their work, so metrics should not only be thoroughly contextualised, but also presented in a very clear way that leaves no room for misinterpretation.

There is widespread agreement that clicks aren’t the best way to measure success, but what is? The best metrics to use depend on what you are aiming to do.

- Are you trying to increase your reach, either for ad revenue or impact?
- Are you seeking to increase readership and boost your subscribers?
- Are you focused on reducing churn among your subscriber base?
- Or are you a non-profit with impact as your primary goal?

habit and, in turn, increases average active days,” Powell wrote on INMA’s site.

Paying users need to be active every day to not churn, Swedish local media group Mittmedia has found. According to a 2018 WAN-IFRA report, the publisher has developed a real-time user activity map that shows where users are active and where they are not. This affords editors the chance to respond to low activity levels by making sure there is sufficient content in that area, or by increasing the volume of push alerts sent to users in those areas. Active users increased from 55% to 60-70% shortly after Mittmedia’s user activity map was launched.

Story performance beyond the simple page view

In an example of metrics being used to more accurately assess story performance, Digiday explained in early 2019 that the *Financial Times* was using a new metric called ‘Quality Reads,’ which shows the percentage of page views where the reader has read at least half of the article. This is estimated by time spent on the page, scroll depth, and what it knows about the subscriber’s interactions with similar content. *FT*’s news desks are fed this information about their stories on a weekly basis.

According to TechWorld, *The Times of London* has created a metric called ‘Dwell Time Index,’ which includes measurements like dwell time and unique users visiting its articles. The Dwell Time Index also accounts for things like article length and positioning on the page. The new metric scores each ar-

ticle out of 200, with 100 being an average performance. Anything scoring above 180 is considered exceptional compared to similar articles of its length and positioning.

Stop doing what readers don’t want

The *USA Today* Network built a tool called ‘Pressbox’ to show its journalists how their stories are doing, based not just on pageviews but on “volume, engage time, and loyalty (return frequency),” Nieman Journalism Lab reported. In using this tool, they were able to determine that the lower scoring half of their content was read by only six percent of their audience.

This allowed staff to develop a strategy to replace this lower scoring content with the kind of journalism that readers would want to read. As a result of these insights, the network is now publishing less digital content, but garnering more page views.

Real-world impact

Real-world impact measurement has traditionally been the arena of non-profit news organisations, as showing that their journalism makes a difference is particularly important when they seek donations. As more and more news organisations seek to become subscriber-supported businesses, this need to prove value might become more widespread.

A tool called ‘Impacto,’ developed by International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) Knight Fellow Pedro Burgos, was recently used by six publishers in Brazil to identify when they have helped to shape policy changes and opinions. The platform searches sessions from municipal, state and federal legislative chambers for mentions of the news outlet, as well as combing social networks, blogs, news sites and academic research for the same information.

According to ICFJ, one of the newspapers using Impacto, for example, maps every instance of impact so that if a reader calls to cancel a subscription, staffers can check the map and tell the caller how the paper has improved the quality of life in that person’s neighbourhood.

“One way to regain the trust of our audiences — and potential audiences — is to show them that journalism plays a vital role in making their lives better,” wrote ICFJ Vice President Patrick Butler in his 2019 Nieman Lab prediction.

Metrics can make better journalism

Chris Moran, editor for strategic projects at *The Guardian*, noted in a piece for *Columbia Journalism Review* that metrics, particularly reach metrics, “have been the subject of profound suspicion within the

news industry.” But he stresses, “the fact that audience metrics don’t reflect the quality of a piece, or necessarily capture its full impact, isn’t a weakness,” and that, “Data can be an incredible tool in navigating great writing through the sprawling, chaotic, constantly evolving landscape of the internet.”



He explains how, by looking at page views within *The Guardian*’s analytics system, a member of the brand’s audience team noticed in March 2019 that an old story from 2013 about a church bombing in Pakistan had seen a spike in views to 51,000, coming almost entirely from Facebook. Looking more closely, the analyst saw that readers were spending just seconds with the story, and sharing it as if it was recent news, seemingly intending to spread outrage. The data indicated that just by skimming over the date, people can use old reporting to fit their current agenda. In order to tackle this, the paper has started adding the year to the images that appear when readers share an older news story on social media, “which will make it much harder to spin an old story as a new outrage,” Moran wrote.

“One way to regain the trust of our audiences is to show them that journalism plays a vital role in making their lives better.”

Trust in news organisations has eroded over recent decades but better, bolder and more transparent journalism can reverse this trend.

INNOVATION MEDIA proposes seven actions and seven areas of expertise needed to build trust in your content and your brand.



**in
news
we
(must)
trust**

Best Practices *What are the news outlet's standards? Who funds it? What is the outlet's mission? Plus commitments to ethics, diverse voices, accuracy, making corrections and other standards.*

Author/Reporter Expertise *Who made this? Details about the journalist, including their expertise and other stories they have worked on.*

Type of Work *What is this? Labels to distinguish opinion, analysis and advertiser (or sponsored) content from news reports.*

Citations and References *What's the source? For investigative or in-depth stories, access to the sources behind the facts and assertions.*

Methods *How was it built? Also for in-depth stories, information about why reporters chose to pursue a story, and transparency about how they went about the process.*

Locally Sourced? *Was the reporting done on the scene, with deep knowledge about the local situation or community? Informs if and when the story has local origin or expertise.*

Diverse Voices *What are the newsroom's efforts and commitments to incorporate diverse perspectives? Readers noticed when certain voices, ethnicities, or political persuasions were missing.*

Actionable Feedback *Can we participate? A newsroom's efforts to engage the public's help in setting coverage priorities, contributing to the reporting process, ensuring accuracy and other areas. Readers want to participate and provide feedback that might alter or expand a story.*



Questions over the trustworthiness of news and media companies are not new: they date back to when news reporting began. But there is no question that factors including the ubiquity of information online and the power of social media, the polarisation of politics and political views in many countries, and tighter newsroom budgets due to the collapse of the industry's traditional commercial model, have together had an impact on the public's perception of news organisations and their content.

According to the 2018 Digital News Report from Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, which tracked consumer behaviours in nearly 40 countries, users in most countries display a low level of trust in news providers, with about half of them worrying about 'fake news.' Levels of trust in social media are far lower, but this doesn't seem to stop people from using these platforms.

Own goals by the most respected players in the industry don't help, like the discovery that in Germany, one of *Der Spiegel's* star journalists, Claas Relotius, had been inventing facts, sources and quotations for years.

However, there are reasons to be optimistic. Even in the very politically polarised U.S. market, and despite President Trump's regular attacks on traditional media outlets as 'fake news' a 2018 Gallup poll showed the number of Americans who trust mass media to report news 'fully, accurately and fairly' has gone up again, to 45%, steadily increasing from an all-



The Trust Project's Trust Indicators

Source The Trust Project

time low of 32% in 2016. It is still a long way off from the 72% all-time high in 1976, just before trust in mass media in the U.S. began a slow but continual decline. But a healthy level of scepticism can encourage news media to work harder to earn the respect of the public.

All is not lost, and the time is right for responsible news organisations to regain trust and help tackle disinformation or fake news. And that fight back has started.

The Washington Post won the prestigious Pulitzer journalism award in 2018 for its investigation of Senate candidate, Roy Moore of Alabama. *The Post* won not only for the quality and precision of *what* it reported but also because of its decision to publish the details of *how* it gathered the information for transparency and to pre-empt false claims against its newsgathering process. It paid off, including its exposé of an attempted sting operation against one of its reporters.

The Post was also following the principles of the 'Trust Indicators' developed by the Trust Project, an international consortium of news organisations created to build transparency standards. As well as *The Post*, other founding media companies include *The Economist*, Canada's *The Globe and Mail*, Italy's *La Repubblica* and *La Stampa*, as well as Hearst Television and Haymarket Media.

The solution to any lack of trust in news lies within the news organisations and their newsrooms. And news consumers want them to act now. We propose seven actions and seven structural changes needed for newsrooms to become more trustworthy and more transparent:



Crowdsource your audience as your best fact-checkers and insight providers.

They commit their time (and often their money) to your product, and they want it to be perfect. Ensure that time and resources are available to monitor and act on postings on comment pages, social media, telephone calls and letters. Whenever possible, acknowledge their contributions.



Check and double-check your information before publication, even if in a hurry.

Speed is no excuse for mistakes and longer, investigative pieces must be checked thoroughly. However, mistakes will happen. When they do, or if clarifications are needed, make the corrections as soon as possible, keep a visible track of your versions and explain when and why the story was modified. This is now a regular feature in stories published by major news organisations like *The New York Times*.



Open the ‘black box’ of your stories.

Increasingly, audiences want to know *how* you reached your conclusions, especially when the story involves the gathering and analysis of complex data sets. If appropriate, publish transcripts, notes and any other relevant content generated during the gathering of the story. When using data tools, explain how they were used. The audience must trust your algorithms as well as your story, especially with the growing use of artificial intelligence in news production.

Show the plumbing.

Remember that most people do not know how newsrooms work, and many *do* think that journalists gather in their morning editorial meetings to plot against something or someone. The more transparent you are about how you work and create stories, the better. For example, U.K. slow-news start-up Tortoise Media has created ‘ThinkIn’ sessions, designed to engage its members with its editorial discussions.



Partner with others for additional expertise and editorial rigour.

In a world of increased scrutiny, boost your credentials by partnering with respected, specialist organisations. In Brazil, G1, the digital news platform owned by media giant *O Globo*, partnered with São Paulo University’s Violence Studies Centre and the Brazilian Forum for Public Safety, to gather data and develop analytical tools to monitor violent crime in Brazil generating original stories, interactive maps and debates that are published on a monthly basis.



Build a diverse newsroom that understands your audience.

A news operation that doesn’t reflect the diverse mix of its market will struggle to understand the perspectives of its audience. This doesn’t just mean giving consumers the news they want, but understanding what matters to audiences when consuming the news you create. Engage your newsroom to understand the target audience and, crucially, seek to have a newsroom that better represents the audience.



Tackle fake news head-on.

Ignoring fake news does nothing to better inform your audience. Be careful not to unintentionally help to disseminate every bogus story, but be robust in debunking fake news. Many newsrooms now have fact-checking teams to uncover fake stories circulating on social media and to analyse speeches or comments. Consider creating a fact-checking service or partnering with an independent one already in your market. According to Duke University Reporters’ Lab, there are now 160 active fact-checking services around the world.



more

structure + skills

Your newsroom must also have the right structure and the right skills to achieve the right results and build trust with your audience. Here are seven areas of expertise needed to make your content stronger and more trustworthy:

1 A dedicated team to monitor digital platforms.

Follow key websites and social media accounts for news stories, angles, comments and trends that may lead to original stories or the spotting of fake news. Team members must also use search engine analytics to track what information people are seeking.

2 A dedicated team to monitor your own output.

They should track and act on reactions and comments posted on your social media platforms and comment pages to fix errors, develop new angles and help provide better context to the stories. If relevant, they can also ask the audience for ideas and feedback.



3 Data specialists to mine and analyse datasets.

Data journalism can transform a newsroom's investigative effort, but it requires the right skills to avoid errors when interpreting data. Increasingly, newsrooms are also expected to publish the data sets used and the methodology adopted as part of the development of the story.

4 Fact checkers to identify fake news or misleading information.

They must act as the newsroom's checkpoint for fake news, clarifying misleading statements and adding context to complex stories. As an alternative to an in-house team, consider partnering with an independent and trustworthy local fact-checking organisation.



5 Journalism-savvy IT specialists to develop algorithms and newsroom tools.

Especially as AI technology and ever more complex algorithms reach newsrooms, it is essential to have access to IT specialists who also understand editorial best practice.



6 Designers to transform complex data into compelling visual content.

As more data-based content is generated, and transparency requirements demand more sidebar information, graphic designers are crucial in bringing the content to life with compelling visual concepts.



7 Champions to promote trust and accuracy.

Every newsroom must dedicate time and effort to handle complaints, provide feedback to journalists, promote an honest and open newsroom environment, and to make sure newcomers understand and abide by its editorial standards.



Above all, increasing trust in the news does not equal avoiding contentious, complex or difficult stories. Quite the opposite: with the confidence of having the right culture and the right expertise in place, news organisations will be better positioned to deal with any story, however controversial it might be, supported by robust editorial principles and transparent newsgathering processes.

how low-tech
journalism
engages in a
high-tech world

low-tech to basics



INNOVATION IN NEWS MEDIA 2019

54



INNOVATION IN NEWS MEDIA 2019

55

The pull back from platforms and the rise of the product manager

Social has stopped being the gift that keeps on giving. Publishers are seeking to bring consumers back to their own platforms, with an increased focus on 'product,' as news outlets seek to hire product managers for an array of digital offerings.

After changes to Facebook's algorithm in early 2018 led to significant drops in traffic for many news sites, publishers became more conscious of the risks of relying too heavily on third parties for whom news is not a priority, and began to work even harder at engaging audiences on platforms where they already control the experience. The 2018 Digital News Report survey from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism found that the use of social media for news started to fall in a number of markets for the first time, including in the U.S., U.K. and France. According to the report, "Almost all of this is due to a specific decline in the discovery, posting, and sharing of news in Facebook."

According to Digiday, which describes the role of product manager as the new 'pivotal role' at a publisher, many U.S. papers have significantly upped the number of product managers attached to their newsrooms. For example, "*The Washington Post* has tripled the number of product managers it employs, attaching one to every single internal and external project it operates." Con-

versations with news executives in the U.K. suggest that numbers of product managers are also on the rise

But what sort of products are they launching? Here we take a look at two key options in which top publishers are investing, that seem to be effective at engaging audiences: newsletters and podcasts. The focus on relatively 'low-tech' products seems to be heeding the warning of a recent Reuters Institute report that predicts, "relentless, high-speed pursuit of technology-driven innovation could be almost as dangerous as stagnation."

A 2019 report from the Future Today Institute described both content streams as effective methods for leveraging niche networks, as they often concentrate on verticals, and stressed that, "there is an opportunity here for media companies of all sizes to earn revenue at scale from a series of small audiences."

podcasts

THE REVIVAL OF RADIO-STYLE AUDIO content repackaged for the digital, on-demand, mobile-focused age in the form of podcasts offers new opportunities for news organisations. Podcasts are time-consuming and require expertise to produce, but audio content can offer a more intimate and personal experience, as they allow the audience to hear journalists' voices and become part of a conversation, thus increasing their connection to a brand and its stories.

Podcasts from news organisations often seek to offer a behind-the-scenes look at stories, or to share deeper insight with listeners. This isn't always going to be a straightforward process. As explained in the Hot Pod newsletter, a publisher might find themselves won-

dering what is the most appropriate way for the podcast to stand in relation to the news outlet, and what its position should be when the organisation itself is a source of news.

There is a small but growing market of podcast listeners. Ofcom announced in September 2018 that the number of weekly podcast listeners in the U.K. had almost doubled in five years – from 3.2 million (7% of adults aged 15+) in 2013 to 5.9 million (11%) in 2018. Among young adults aged 15-24 this went up to almost one in five (18.7%). The most popular genres were comedy, music, TV and film.

In the U.S., a study from Edison Research and Triton Digital reported in March 2019 that 32% of Americans reported having listened to a podcast within the past month, with reported growth in monthly listening across all studied age groups. Again, the jump was particularly pronounced among young people, from 30% to 40% of 12-24 year-olds. An Edison Research SVP, Tom Webster, described the findings as a "watershed moment for podcasting – a true milestone."

There seems to be some recognition of the potential for podcasts within the tech industry. Music-streaming giant Spotify has been getting into podcasts by commissioning original shows and acquiring Gimlet Media, a well-established podcast producer, and Anchor, a podcasting app, in early 2019.

Their popularity has shown that many media consumers actually do have long attention spans, even at a time when it is all too easy to get distracted by social media notifications and the abundance of information available at our fingertips.

'The Daily'

Many major publishers have started daily podcasts offering a briefing on the news of the moment. 'The Daily' from *The New York Times* is an exceptional example of how to do this well, featuring interviews with Times' journalists to provide background and insight on some of the Times' biggest stories. Each episode is about 20 minutes long and usually focuses on one particular news story or event. It launched in January 2017, and was described by Recode as the "forefather" of this new genre of show.

Host Michael Barbaro told Recode that

the team wanted the show to have a narrative arc and tension, creating suspense rather than giving all of the story upfront and then talking about it. Featuring discussions with the journalists who produce the stories is also a way of offering the Times' audience greater transparency and accountability on how stories are being reported.

With a team of 13 people, it is a production on a scale that most news organisations can only dream of. It is key to the Times' strategy for reaching new audiences, with 8 million monthly unique visitors, which is nearly twice as much as a year ago, according to Jordan Cohen, a Communications Director at *The New York Times Company*.

CEO Mark Thompson told a conference in Oxford in March 2019 that the biggest challenge he sees for news organisations is the loss of younger audiences, and crucially, nearly 75% of Daily listeners are 40 and under. Through a partnership with American Public Media, the show is now also available on 150 radio stations across the US, opening up the potential to reach listeners who don't actually consume podcasts.

Beyond the daily news show

Daily news podcasts are not the only option, of course. For example:

- 'Reveal,' from the Center for Investigative Reporting, is a long-standing audio show made in partnership with American public radio operator PRX, the Public Radio Exchange. Its weekly episodes are an hour long and focus on "important and often surprising stories that aim to inform and inspire, "...arming our listeners with information to right injustices, hold the powerful accountable and improve lives."

- 'The Tip Off,' hosted and produced by Maeve McClenaghan of the Bureau for Investigative Journalism, releases episodes about every two weeks, telling the stories behind compelling investigative journalism, both from the Bureau and from other news organisations.

- 'The Secret History of the Future' was a 2018 collaboration between the *Economist*

and Slate, aiming to produce more 'evergreen' content in addition to the *Economist's* daily and weekly podcasts, co-host Tom Standage told FIPP. The ten episodes "examine the historical precedents that can transform our understanding of modern technology, predicting how it might evolve and highlighting pitfalls to avoid."

newsletters

THE EMAIL NEWSLETTER HAS SEEN a distinct resurgence in popularity. Newsletters are habit-forming, relatively easy to put together from a tech standpoint, and provide an opportunity to "expand the subscription funnel and subvert social media algorithms," as Nieman Journalism Lab's Christiane Schmidt puts it.

As with podcasts, newsletters can provide a feeling of intimacy between the audience and the journalist or brand – the reader has chosen to have this insight arrive directly in their inbox, creating a direct relationship with the news organisation. Unlike a website, they can offer the ever-elusive sense of 'finishability' – although of course they often contain multiple external links out. Newsletters lend themselves well to focusing on different verticals, with a smaller, niche audience for each.

Indeed, the audience's inbox is already becoming a competitive space: *Washingtonian* writer Andrew Beaujon ponders whether Washington D.C. has reached "peak newsletters" as he contemplates the number of unread newsletters from media outlets in his inbox.

Responsibility for newsletters could lie either with editorial or with business. They are often the task of an audience or engagement editor, whose role often spans both editorial and business responsibilities. A small survey of non-profit, digital-only newsrooms

conducted by Harvard's Shorenstein Center for Media, Politics and Public Policy found that the surveyed organisations spent between four and 58 hours a week on newsletters, depending on the size of the operation.

How publishers are using newsletters

Politico has been a pioneer of the email newsletter, and now offers a dazzling array of free options to sign up to – 20 U.S.-focused briefings plus several European, as well as multiple editions of its signature Playbook newsletter which provides a daily overview of political developments in specific cities – while its Pro service offers many more, focused on specific areas that subscribers are tracking.

In February 2019, the author of *Politico's* London Playbook marked the 375th edition of the newsletter, saying that it had hit 35,000 subscribers that week, "which seems a decent effort given this email didn't even exist 18 months ago." The newsletter is authoritative but conversational in tone, encouraging its readers to trust the insights and analysis of its author, who is always listed prominently at the top of the email.

The New York Times offers more than 50 newsletters on topics ranging from parenting to the U.S.-Mexico border, from sports to personal tech, and dispatches from its top opinion writers. Many are weekly, some twice weekly or daily. In November 2018, the paper reported that it had 1.7million subscribers to its Morning Briefing newsletter.

Following a redesign in late 2018, this newsletter is currently divided into three sections:

1. The top stories of the day.
2. Stories to connect the reader to what's going on in the rest of the world, and across the internet.
3. Rewards: recommendations for nice things to cook, listen to and watch.

The newsletter offers 'friendly guidance' (with different fonts to distinguish this from the story headlines and text), such as, "If you have X minutes, this is worth it."

According to Digiday, Swiss publisher *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* sees email newsletters as one of the most effective ways to drive reg-

Top tips for launching a new newsletter

from Harvard's Shorenstein Center and the Lenfest Institute for Journalism

1 Define your value proposition, goals and measures of success, and resource constraints before you start. You must be able to answer questions such as 'Who's your audience?' 'Why do you care about that audience?' and 'How and

when will you decide whether you are succeeding?'

2 Decide whether you want to create a stand-alone editorial product or a link digest. Do you want something that is regular and habit-forming, ephemerally responding to current affairs, or semi-permanent but not necessarily regular?

3 What will your workflow be like? Who will be responsible for creating the content? If you don't have staff dedicated to newsletters, it can be hard to fit the work into the schedules of others. There is a tendency to underestimate the amount of time it takes to produce a well-curated newsletter.

4 How are you going to gather subscribers? How will you embed email acquisition into your page design? How will you remove as much friction as possible? Will you use referral processes? It is crucial to follow the email and data privacy laws of the countries where your subscribers reside. And remember, the point of growing your list is NOT to amass as many email addresses as possible.

5 How are you going to monetise? Are you aiming to convert readers to subscribers, members or donors? Could you charge for newsletter subscriptions? Do you have a sufficient audience that is large enough to justify banner ads, or will native ads better serve your purpose? How do you feel about sponsorship of an entire email?

6 How will you measure and track the newsletter's success? What exactly are you going to evaluate? How will you track subscriber referrals and sign ups? What kind of A/B testing should you do? What are you going to do with the data that you gather through your newsletters?

To help come up with answers to these questions, see: <https://newsletterguide.org/>

istrations and subscriptions. It has 21 email newsletters, some weekly and some daily, and its most popular has almost 250,000 readers. This daily briefing email accounts for around 8% of morning traffic to its site. The publisher's data science team found that registered users who had signed up to two or more newsletters had the highest rates of subscription conversion, and that section newsletters such as 'Economics' or 'Digital' were most effective at converting readers into subscribers, while lifestyle newsletters have the lowest conversion rates.

The *Financial Times* has used a newsletter to try to increase its readership among women, who only comprise a quarter of the paper's audience. It launched its Long Story Short newsletter in early 2018, which offers a round-up of "the biggest stories and best reads" every Friday, curated by different female journalists each week. According to the Drum, it has a 35% female readership (compared to 24% across all FT newsletters,) a 50% open rate (compared to 31% among other FT newsletters,) and a 9.92% click-through rate (compared to around 3% for other FT newsletters.)

where's the money

The options for monetising newsletters are similar to those for on-site content: premium newsletters that readers pay for either directly or as a subscription bonus, sponsorship (which would often involve native advertising) or banner ads.

Inside, a company led by investor Jason Calacanis, that now focuses exclusively on newsletters that comprise curated content, earned \$1.1 million in revenue, reached 750,000 active subscriptions, and circled a 40 percent

**Direct monetisation
is not always the goal
of such products.**

open rate in 2018 alone, according to Nieman Journalism Lab. Advertising is definitely more valuable to the company than reader revenue, Austin Smith, Inside's President and General Manager, told Nieman Lab. With a "sophisticated audience that has tuned out programmatic and social ads," native ads work well, he said, if they appear in a trusted newsletter.

Turning now to podcasts: they are an important way to connect to newer, younger audiences, but can they bring in sufficient revenue to justify their production costs? Advertising via sponsorship deals is currently the key way that podcasts are staying afloat - the Mailchimp ad on the pioneering podcast 'Serial' became almost as well-known as the podcast itself - and as the ads are 'native' they are generally viewed as not particularly intrusive.

Paid-for audio shows are on the way, however. Luminary, launched in April 2019, charges a subscription fee for a bundle of exclusive shows, making it an interesting project to follow. Jacob Weisberg, former Editor-in-Chief of the Slate Group, who left to start a podcasting company called Pushkin Industries with Malcolm Gladwell, told Recode in March 2019 that he hopes the company will not be completely dependent on advertising, and will also bring in revenue from listeners.

Podcasts still lack sophisticated analytics, with download statistics as the current key metric for selling advertising campaigns, rather than whether an episode has actually been listened to. Spotify's foray into podcasts has the potential to change things. As the BBC reported after Spotify's recent podcast-related acquisition, the music-streaming brand will be able to use its technology to help people find more podcasts they will like, while inserting highly-targeted ads, which could significantly raise the earning potential for podcasts.

Of course, direct monetisation is not always the goal of such products. As in the case of NZZ explained above, newsletters might not be used to make money themselves, but they are part of the 'subscription funnel.' And podcasts can be key for engaging new audiences, particularly younger ones, as in the case of *The New York Times*. These new formats are about going beyond delivering information and creating new, habit-forming connections with audiences.



**reinventing
the journalism
storytelling
toolbox**

**new digital
narratives
that show the
way forward**

new digital narrative
storytelling



a woman, a baby enters
Katie's treatment
Katie meets with the Cleveland
Clinic's first face transplant
recipient, Steven Faldut and
Cristina Culp. They discuss the
condition as well as humor. "It's
OK to be scared," Faldut said.
"It's going to get better. It just
takes a while." Culp replied:
"Don't worry. Just don't
get anything!"



National Geographic U.S.

Face Transplant

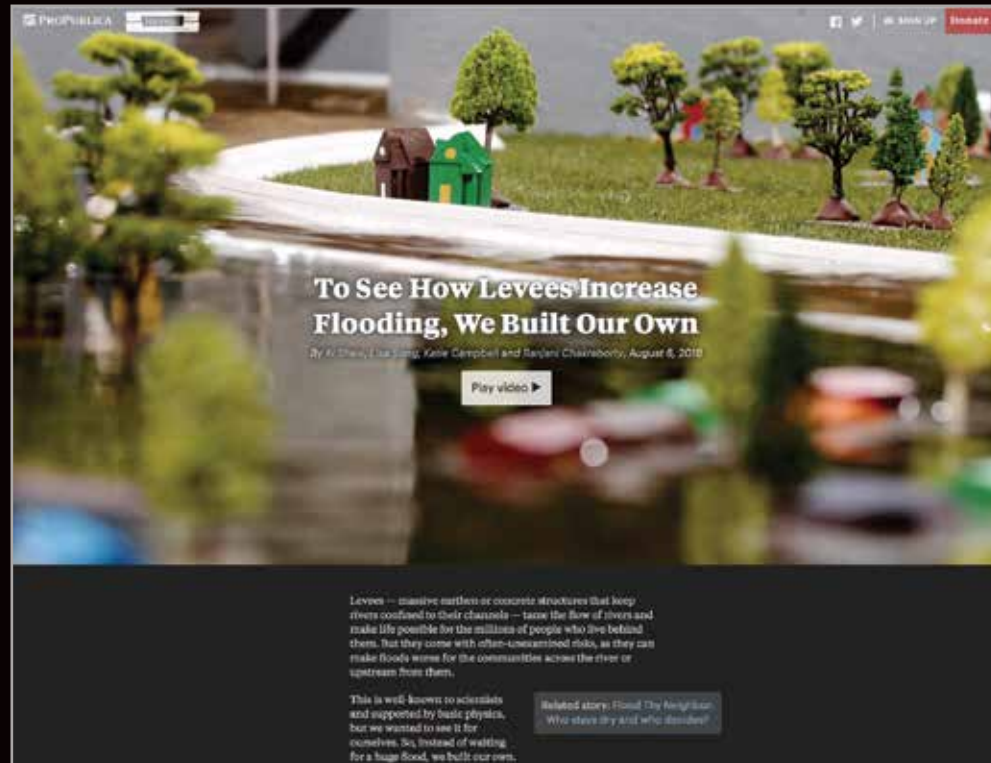
"This story is difficult to look at," the piece begins, the text appearing after an image of a young woman's sewn up face. It tells the story of Katie, the youngest person in the U.S. to undergo a face transplant. The full screen still images are shocking, the text is simple, offering the readers glimpses into Katie's life after her injury, as well as before and after her surgery. Videos offer more insight into the lives of Katie and those around her. It is a gripping, sobering sequence of impressions. A writer and two photographers spent hundreds of hours over the course of two and a half years with Katie, her family and her medical team. The main interactive feature is supplemented with further stories about the procedure and interviews with the photographers, as well as a 22-minute short film about the family's journey.



The Pudding U.S.

The Structure of Stand-up

The Pudding presents itself as "a digital publication that explains ideas debated in culture with visual essays." In this piece, the publication pushes creativity both visually and technically. Each piece is unique and feels crafted specifically for the story. One essay dissects and analyses a stand-up show by comedian Ali Wong, explaining how she plans her performance, and why she gets the biggest laugh from the audience when she does. The effortless weaving of audio, graphics and narrative storytelling into the piece is this year's example of multimedia storytelling at its best, and a creative approach in applying science to examine art.



ProPublica U.S.

To See How Levees Increase Flooding, We Built Our Own

A multimedia package from ProPublica and Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting provides the curious reader with a thorough understanding of a technically complex phenomenon: how flood levees can endanger some areas while protecting others. The reporting team hired engineers to build a physical model of four levee scenarios, “to see how levee height and placement choices can put surrounding communities on the floodplain... at greater risk of flooding.” As well as featuring video, diagrams and graphs, An interactive graphic allows users to adjust the volumes of water flowing through channels in the four scenarios and see the effect on the surrounding land. “I think the biggest challenge was, how do you make something that on the surface is as boring as levees and concrete embankments, how do you make that interesting to the general audience?” reporter Lisa Song told FIPP. “It’s a fun challenge to think about: can you make people want to learn about something like this?”



The Economist U.K.

Data Detectives

The Economist’s graphic novel Data Detectives was created for its Technology Quarterly in June 2018 which focused on the theme of justice. It appeared in print and online, with images interspersed among the articles of the section. It was then transferred to Instagram by digital and social media picture editor Ria Jones. The platform made it ideal for a graphic story, she told FIPP: “The multiple-picture function on Instagram offers great opportunities for visual storytelling. The ability to swipe between images seamlessly means you can really build a narrative, allowing people to engage with our content in a different way.” The way that the images are stitched together creates a smooth swiping experience.



Reporters Without Borders

Germany

Uncensored playlist

“Making free information available where press freedom is not.” Reporters Without Borders Germany worked with five journalists from five different countries (China, Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Thailand and Egypt) whose work was being censored, to turn their work into songs which could then be listened to in their countries of origin. The playlist of ten songs is now available on streaming platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music and Deezer.



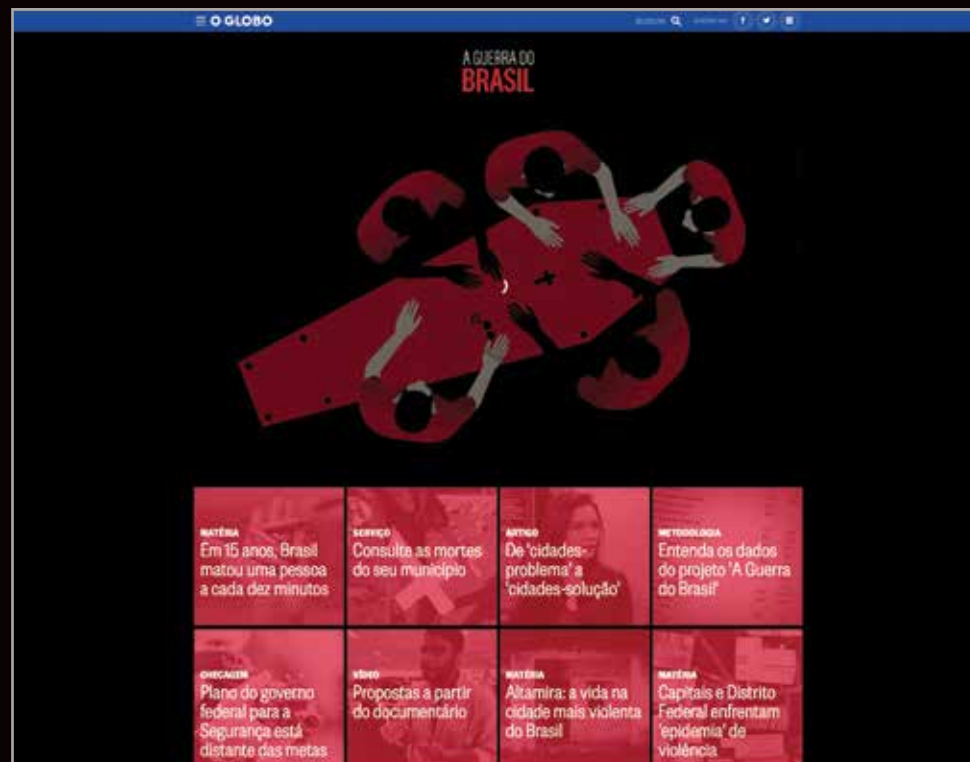
National Film Board (NFB) of Canada

Canada

Bear 71

Bear 71 is a 20-minute interactive documentary from the National Film Board (NFB) of Canada, originally built using Adobe Flash in 2012, then upgraded later using Google's WebVR API. It allows the user to explore the world of a female grizzly bear in Banff National Park who was tagged and tracked by surveillance cameras for several years. It features narrative from the bear's perspective, and video clips of her and other animals, and allows the user to navigate the park. It can be used with a Daydream View headset for a true VR experience or explored via a browser.

new digital narratives storytelling



O Globo Brazil

The Brazilian War / La Guerra de Brasil

In the last 15 years, one person has been killed every ten minutes in Brazil, amounting to 786,000, more than the number killed in the wars in Syria or Iraq. O Globo's investigation into these shocking statistics explains and analyses the data using graphs, interviews and videos. The paper has also built a database which allows readers to search by district to see the number of murders in specific areas.

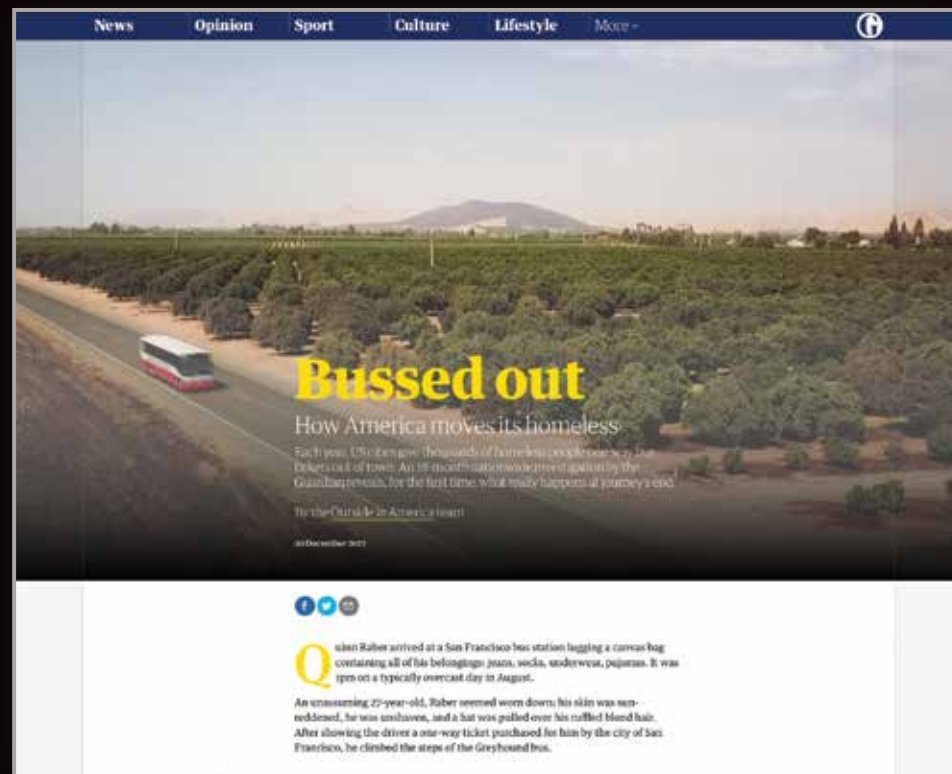


El Tiempo Colombia

On The Run / Venezuela a la Fuga

This multimedia package tells the stories of Venezuelans migrating to other Latin American countries, inspired by the fact that between 2015 and 2017 the number of Venezuelans leaving for other parts of the continent increased by 895%. Through videos, text, photographs and moving maps focusing on individual journeys, El Tiempo investigates the reasons they are leaving, how their journeys progress and what awaits them.

new digital narratives
storytelling



Guardian US U.S.A.

Bussed Out: How America moves its homeless

This Guardian investigation focuses on the increasingly common U.S. practice of offering homeless people free one-way bus tickets to other cities to encourage them to move elsewhere. Over the course of 18 months, the Guardian compiled a database of around 34,240 journeys and analysed their effect on cities and people. It uses animated maps and diagrams to demonstrate the journeys being undertaken by homeless people, where they ended up and the numbers of people involved, as well as including video interviews with those involved. The paper also explains the methodology and the data preparation undertaken for the story, and how the data visualisations were put together.



BBC U.K.

Huawei: The story of a controversial company

The BBC has created an impressive piece on Chinese tech firm Huawei and its involvement in the development of western 5G services using Shorthand, a storytelling platform used by media brands and others to produce visually compelling content. Large images and parallax scrolling are used to give the impression of a vibrant, multi-layered news experience. According to its site, Shorthand has “best-in-the-business time on page metrics, as measured by Chartbeat and our own customers.”

the role
of **print** in
a digital
world

Digital innovation, digital revenue, new digital products: many news organisations are focused on their digital businesses. But few are planning to drop their paper editions, and in some countries such as India (discussed below), newspapers are thriving: print isn't going anywhere for the time being. So the challenge now is how it can adapt to make it work with the digital offering.

A hundred million copies

It is a strange time for the print news industry in India. Everyone is fully aware of the fact that the media industry around the world has gone through a period of unprecedented change around the world for over a decade, and that wondering about the future of print is hardly a novel idea. Yet there is probably no other context where there is a sharper contrast between the bare economics of the industry, often presented in hugely positive numbers, and the caution expressed by those who work in the industry, with regard to its future. Newspapers continue to sell in large numbers - India is after all the world's largest newspaper market - but some of the most important conversations in newsrooms are, rightly, about when this will end. And about and when and how more resources can be devoted to digital.

In many ways, although the debate around the future of print is now new, India is very much ground zero for putting many of those theories to the test. Can print really ever die if over 100 million copies of newspapers, in all the country's major languages, hit the streets every day? Where is the potential breaking point, especially since the past decade has seen unprecedented growth in internet and mobile phone penetration, and consequently, a slow but sure shift away from print to digital advertising? Are young people still reading the printed product? And what value does the average reader see in a glut of newspapers all offering a digest of news that is generally known a day in advance?

This transitory moment — in a market situation where there seems to be a lasting value for the printed word and the physical newspaper, in a society that is rapidly embracing internet access and the range of

In thinking about its print product, the *Financial Times* built on an idea of slow and fast news pioneered by the Scandinavian daily *Svenska Dagbladet*.

transactions it facilitates – begs the question, what is the role of a printed newspaper in a digital news world?

One medium doesn't kill another

'Print is dead' has been a common refrain of several news articles since the early 2000s, each one attempting to foretell a date by which the newspaper as we know it may cease to exist. Nearly two decades into the 21st century, it is worth asking whether those predictions were reductive, or simply not mindful of the history of communication. Instead, if one were to ask 'Has one medium of communication ever killed another?' then the problem is presented in a somewhat different light.

Film, of course, did not kill theatre, just as television didn't kill radio. In fact, when new mediums emerge, there is a period of adjustment in which the genres of the old are created in the new. The first films, for instance, were recordings of Shakespearean plays. When television news broadcasts first started, they were images, as if it were a visual

representation of radio. It's the same with print and the internet, taking a successful text-based content model and transposing it online. Like all of those other mediums,



print adapt & thrive

digital will eventually find a language of its own. When it does, print will discover a new role for itself in which to complement that language.

Part of identifying this new role for print is to understand its strengths as a medium in comparison to others. We may now live in a world where all the information you may ever need is available on a mobile phone, but reading on the web simply can't compare to the tactile and sensory experience that reading a newspaper provides. There's more to it. From around the 1980s onward, researchers in fields ranging from psychology and education, to information science and engineering have investigated the question of how technology changes the way we read. The conclusions, whether the studies are conducted among students or other readers, are largely unanimous, information obtained through reading printed words helps to build a better understanding of the subject at hand and allows the reader to retain more information about the article.

The editorial model

When thinking about the editorial model for the future of print, the word that should come to mind is displacement rather than replacement. The web has moved into the traditional newspaper space, providing breaking news updates and instant analysis. The paper, in response, should move into the magazine space. You already see this happening, for instance, with the International Edition of *The New York Times*, whose print edition features large pictures, space for the articles to breathe (often just two articles per page) and some interesting tweaks like putting an opinion column on the front page. This has also been done, to some extent, with newspapers like the *Financial Times* that have successfully moved to a digital subscription business.

In thinking about its print product, the FT built on an idea of slow and fast news pioneered by the Scandinavian daily *Svenska Dagbladet*. SD presents an extreme version of this strategy, with up to 40% of its print news pages, including its front page, planned in advance. The FT took aspects of this approach, cutting down the size of its print edition on weekdays, moving to a standard

edition instead of multiple editions updated through the night to fit in more and more news. Crucially, it cut down numbers on its print desk and moved to a system of templated pages that made forward planning easier. The more immediate news is now carried on the web, while the print edition is presented the following day as a more considered read, with longer articles, opinion pieces and infographics. *The South China Morning Post* has also followed the system of templated pages for the print product, while simultaneously working on innovative storytelling formats for mobile.

The newspapers of the future will, and must, increasingly take this shape, playing up the strengths of print reading for opinion, analysis, long form narratives and infographics. Where possible, as several companies have shown, moving toward a forward planning schedule that's more akin to a magazine can also significantly free up resources that can be used to develop ways to find new audiences digitally, while still maintaining and even enhancing the appeal of the print. The newspaper might well become the new magazine, in small doses on weekdays and in a more defined way on the weekend.

The right time to read

In monetary terms, the future of print, as a profitable part of the ecosystem, hinges on the targeting of readers at certain key times. We have already discussed a strategy for a more compact, streamlined version of the newspaper on weekdays that can act as a complement to readers who get the bulk of their commodity news information online.



However, if we are to project to a time when there is a more fundamental shift in reading habits - that is, the death of the weekday newspaper, which has already a reality for many

newspaper houses throughout Europe in particular, then real opportunity in print may lie in the weekend paper.

The abundance of online news and information consumed through the week will mean that people will want to disconnect on the weekend. Newspaper houses recognise this, creating a weekend papers that will provide 'lean back' experiences, consuming news and information without alerts and push notifications, or the temptation to go to social media or email. More paper, less often can be a good strategy, but of course only if the product is able to live up to that promise. Again, the FT Weekend is an excellent example, a premium product that arrives on a Saturday and can be read throughout the weekend. It is a burst of paper, almost a luxury after the austerity of the weekday offering.

The FT Weekend was redesigned in 2017 and an announcement at the time of relaunch specified that it was seeking "a growing readership who favour the immersive experience of print on the weekend while remaining highly engaged with digital journalism during the week."

Of course, moving toward a profitable weekend publishing model involves a fine balance. Think of it like a supermarket: the bulk of the money and paying customers might come on weekends, but the shops have to be kept open on weekdays too. It's a bit like that with the future of print.

A new role for print

Finally, some findings and recommendations for the future of print. A first and foremost

The FT Weekend is an excellent example, a premium product that arrives on a Saturday and can be read throughout the weekend.

priority is to move beyond the American style multi-section format approach, where page after page contains news that can either easily be sourced from elsewhere, or which is already widely known to readers ahead of publication.

For the printed paper on Monday to Thursday or Monday to Friday, the print edition should be handled by a smaller, specialised team, incorporating a mix of intentionally 'slow' news stories that are planned or commissioned in advance, and refining and expanding on fast news stories derived from what has already been published online.

The result should be a newspaper that allows stories the space to breathe, with larger treatments: a newspaper that is proud of its role as a selector and curator of news for its readers. The physical product after all, remains the best platform to showcase the newspaper's editorial judgment and values. The mix of a smaller, more considered weekly paper, and the consumption of news through digital platforms, should lead to a larger role for the print offering on the weekend.

Secondly, underpinning all of this and as a more general philosophy, print has to be reinvented as a premium offering. And that means pricing it higher: we recommend looking at up to a multiple of five times what it costs now, depending on your given market. Increasing the price of print products may lead to a fall in circulation in the short term, but we believe it will stabilise at a lucrative level and lead to a healthier newspaper and digital offering.

change management steps to success

Shifting market needs and continuing technological innovation will bring more and constant changes to how media businesses must operate. To succeed, **INNOVATION MEDIA** believes that leaders in the news industry will need to improve their transformation skills, implementing a constant loop of change management best practices.

The media industry was one of the first to be hit by the digital revolution. Media companies had to adapt and change fast in order to survive. The fact that the industry was hit first does not mean that the disruptive phase is over. Quite the contrary. The survival of your business will depend on your leadership's ability to make both small adjustments and radical changes to your editorial, operational and commercial models, time and time again.

However, change remains one of the biggest leadership challenges faced by any organisation, with most failing to achieve the expected outcomes. In 1996, Harvard's John Kotter published *Leading Change*, now considered a landmark book in change management theory. In his research, Kotter found out that only around a third of all change programmes succeeded. In 2008, a survey of executives from around the world by consultancy firm McKinsey reached the same conclusion: Businesses remain more likely to fail than to succeed with their change programmes.

Change at media organisations can be particularly challenging, often involving complex stakeholder relationships and very public adverse publicity. Local legislation restrictions, industrial relations issues and political pressure can add to the many hurdles that change leaders must overcome in order to ensure their success.

INNOVATION MEDIA has analysed successful (and unsuccessful) change programmes implemented by media organisations over the years. To succeed, these are the steps change leaders must follow:



Clearly identify and define the reasons for change

If you can't explain why change is required, your teams certainly won't get it either.

Ideally, involve your teams, not just executives, in discussing and agreeing on the threats and opportunities for the business, what is happening already and future scenarios. The more you involve your teams, the more they will buy into your change plans.



Tell a compelling story: the why and how of change

It may be surprising to see how so often businesses built on the art of storytelling aren't capable of telling a compelling story for change to their own teams. Tell the story of change as powerfully and as beautifully as you can, and without patronising your internal audience.



Define and share what success looks like

Your compelling story must also have compelling outcomes. If you have a vision for change, you must have a vision for success. Focus on the 'fewer, bigger, better' principle to articulate your vision, with as little as just one set of powerful quantitative, qualitative and reputational goals that everyone can remember and track throughout the change process and beyond.



Engage as many and as early as possible

The earlier you engage your teams, the more likely you are to get their support for change.

Consult, brainstorm and engage before a change plan is developed, and continue the dialogue throughout the whole process.

Naturally, respect local laws or labour agreements and make sure that those who may be adversely affected hear about their situation first and privately, not last and in a group.



Build a coherent and comprehensive change plan

Especially when implementing major transformational plans, make sure there is a detailed plan and a roadmap to which your team can refer. Your change manual must include not only the concepts for change but also detailed information covering topics like workflows, job/role descriptions and floor layouts. This can reduce anxiety over the changes and become a handy resource in the early stages of the implementation phase.



Train your team

Train those affected by the changes. And then train them a bit more. Training makes people feel more in control and helps them understand their role within the new structure. If extensive training plans are not feasible, make sure there is additional support during the 'go live' phase.



Communicate often and well

Keep your teams informed of what is and, just as importantly, what isn't happening, or why something is delayed. Especially during times of change, leadership silence can easily be filled with the noise of rumours and negativity. Newsletters, ad hoc messages, staff meetings or simply walkabouts for informal conversations can go a long way to dispel fears and tackle misinformation. Do not be afraid of repeating messages - they take time to sink in.

8

Don't forget the silent ones

Lack of reaction by teams or individuals does not equal buy-in or understanding of the need for change. Always remember some staff members will avoid speaking in public whilst others will always dominate team briefings. Do not dismiss either. Consider more one-on-ones and informal conversations with all, especially the quiet ones. They can lead to new insights and ideas.

9

Be honest, warts and all

Leaders are more believable when they are consistently open about their plans, including both positives and negatives (such as job losses.) Also acknowledge what information is not yet known or still to be decided. Never duck a question because you do not know its answer. Acknowledge what needs further work, and make sure you come back to the team once you know the answer.

10

Reach out to all stakeholders

Your change plan may be focused on only one or a few specific areas – editorial, operational or commercial – but do engage the whole organisation. They will bring useful insights and help share your compelling story across the company. Make sure your staff understands the role of each department in relation to the changes planned, and explain if or how they will be impacted by those changes. Whenever

possible, engage external stakeholders such as suppliers, advertising agencies and major clients in this process as well.

11

Manage the process efficiently

Efficient project management is vital. Make sure you have a strong project management team to map all timelines required, to identify and tackle single points of failure and to make sure all requirements are being dealt with, including HR, IT, facilities management and procurement needs.

12

Don't let technology hijack your plans

Technology and IT must work for the success of a transformation plan, not the other way around. Make sure the transformation plan includes all the necessary hardware, software and infrastructure tools required for its success.

13

Get your 'Go Live' plans right

There's never an ideal day to go live. Make sure all key 'no go' issues are under control and fix the Go Live date. Only abort if absolutely necessary. Make sure your plans for the day are ready: communications and contingency plans in place, standby teams present in key support areas, additional staffing allocated, etc. Make sure all senior

leaders are present and supporting their teams during Go Live.

14

Celebrate the outcomes

As the change plan is rolled out, make sure achievements and milestones are celebrated and great work is praised. But also acknowledge pains: Detail what may have not worked well and what can be done to improve things. Have a party or a grand opening to celebrate the moment.

15

Be adaptable

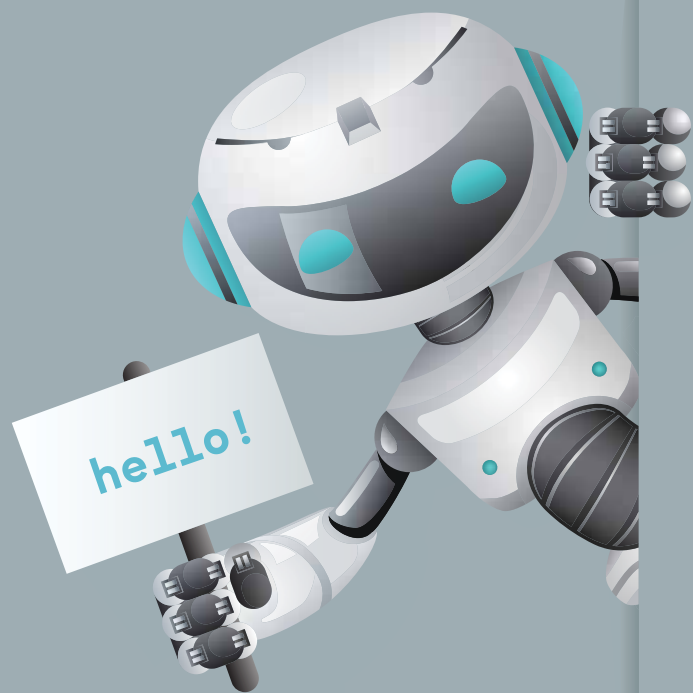
Plans of change must also change. The principles – and the reason for change – must remain consistent but be ready to make post-implementation improvements. You will increase the chances of your success, while demonstrating that you remain open to suggestions.

*Mission accomplished?
Not quite. Change is never completed in one move and it always requires time to become the new norm. In the meantime, more changes will be required, some more radical than others. Time to go back to step one...*

16

Don't stop communicating

It is easy to think that communication is no longer required after the change is implemented. That's a mistake. Make sure you continue to engage staff by celebrating milestones and achievements, reminding them of the success indicators, sharing the latest news on improvements or what is still on your 'to do' list. Always remain visible and approachable to your team.



New technology: what you need to know

We are living in a time where foldable smartphones and tablets are a reality, where people regularly speak to their devices, where someone can appear by hologram for an interview, and where automated decision making by machines is so complex that even their creators struggle to understand the processes.

Publishers have to strike a balance between not being left behind by technology, and not being continually distracted by the latest “bright, shiny things,” as stressed in a recent report from the Reuters Institute. Here we take a look at the tech developments that news publishers should be watching and experimenting with.

Robot journalism

'Robot journalism' refers to a method of journalism where at least part of the work of writing an article is done by a machine. It has been around for the last decade, but it is now becoming more widely embraced, no longer attracting the level of horror that it once did about journalists' jobs being stolen by algorithms. (Although the authors of a WAN-IFRA report on automated journalism believe that AI and 'robot journalism' still have a hype problem and that we should see the automation process as a logical extension of the Industrial Revolution.)

The classic use of AI in journalism production is algorithms rewriting structured data into a narrative using natural language generation (NLG). The Associated Press for example, has been using Automated Insights' NLG tool, Wordsmith, since 2014, to produce articles on companies' quarterly earnings reports. Automated writing remains primarily in the creation of business news and sports.

RADAR was launched in September 2017 as a joint venture of the U.K.'s Press Association and startup Urbs Media. As Politico explains, RADAR reporters root around public data sets until they find something interesting, then they might do some extra research and conduct interviews to obtain quotes. They then write a template, which includes some analysis, and based on this, their NLG software can produce hundreds of localized articles based on data from the chosen set.

The classic use of AI in journalism production is algorithms rewriting structured data into a narrative using natural language generation.

For example, stories could cover how often ambulances in different parts of the U.K. are delayed, and how these levels compare to the national average. RADAR's five reporters and two founders produce roughly 8,000 stories per month.

Forbes, for example, which has a large network of contributors, is rolling out a new content management system that will suggest topics for contributors to write about, based on other content they have produced, providing links, images and headline suggestions. The company is also testing an AI writing tool that aims to produce pieces that journalists or contributors will just be able to polish and add final touches. According to Digiday, these new tools are not designed to produce something that a contributor or reporter would feel comfortable publishing as it is, but to act as a thought-starter. Digiday also reported that the site had doubled the number of loyal visitors it attracts every month since rolling out the new CMS in July 2018, and that traffic has increased as well.

Whenever such 'robo-journalism' initiatives are described, their advocates go to great lengths to stress that they are not trying to replace journalists, and that robots aren't the journalists of the future. As Politico noted, "Computers are still far from being able to develop sources, provide high-level analysis or infuse a narrative with character and colour." AI will "augment, never replace the work of the world's journalists," said the AP's business editor Lisa Gibbs at a Google News Initiative Innovation Forum in December 2018, calling for a common set of standards and best practices for AI in news.

The journalist's assistant

AI and automation can also help journalists with several tasks aside from writing, from the reporting phase to distribution. For example:

- The Quartz AI Studio, established in November 2018 with funding from the Knight Foundation, aims to help journalists use machine-learning methods to publish stories that would otherwise be impossible to cover, because they may involve identifying patterns in thousands of documents, or searching through



The risks associated with AI: What you should be aware of

Bias in AI is a huge area of concern for researchers. AI systems tend to be trained using data sets built by humans, and as the AP's Lisa Gibbs said, biases inherent in data sets - racial or gender bias, for example - can create new kinds of mistakes and magnify them a thousand-fold.

The opacity of algorithms used in AI systems, often referred

to as 'black boxes,' as well as their complexity, can make it difficult to build for trust and accountability. As machine learning becomes more advanced, it becomes increasingly harder for even those involved in the building of algorithms to explain how they work, and to hold them accountable for their decisions.

There is potential for the mass production of fake content. OpenAI, a U.S. non-profit conducting research into AI, has chosen not to release their new language generation system publicly. Their reasoning? Essentially because it's too good at writing prose in a matter of seconds that looks like it has been written by a human. Creators are worried that it could be used to pump out fake news or things like spoof Amazon reviews, according to a report in Vox.

millions of images. The idea, according to Journalism.co.uk, is that the machine-learning tools available via the platform will be able to help journalists analyse data even if they have no coding or maths skills. As the 2019 Journalism, Media and Tech Trends Report from Amy Webb's Future Today Institute (FTI) notes, computational journalism techniques are taking computer-assisted reporting, which has been used in investigative journalism for some time, to the next level, with algorithms able to detect connections in data sets that a human would never have been able to find.

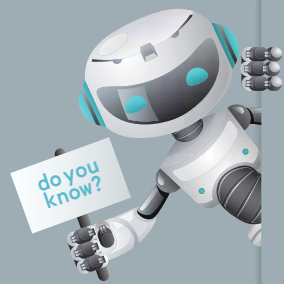
- The AP is experimenting with automation and AI, "to eliminate routine work like video transcription, so that our journalists can focus on doing the creative and curious work," business editor Lisa Gibbs explained. It is also building a tool called Verify which will allow journalists to more quickly vet images and video on social media, by analysing metadata to check out the source, breaking down videos into separate frames and searching to see if they have been posted before in different contexts.
- Getty Images

launched 'Panels' in August 2018, a tool that uses AI to analyse the text and content of a story before suggesting pictures to go with it. According to Journalism.co.uk, it was developed by working with newsrooms, and uses a "self-improving algorithm" that learns how an editor selects an image and optimises its performance over time. Speaking to Adweek, Andrew Hamilton, Senior Vice President of Data and Insights at Getty Images, was keen to stress that the tool wasn't trying to replace a photo editor, but rather to make their job easier. "We're leaving the editor to tell that story," he said.

- Tools such as Wochit or Wibbitz can automate much of the process of creating a video based on an article or script from a journalist. Using Wochit, for example, the journalist retains creative control, but its 'predictive' platform aims to make putting videos together straightforward and intuitive, as its website explains.

Voice-activated smart speakers

We are in the stage of 'over-hype' for voice-activated devices or smart speakers, says Nic



What publishers should be doing now, according to Newman's report:

- Develop a strategy for voice – why does it matter? How does it overlap with audio?
- Think about propositions that are valuable to audiences and take advantage of the unique capabilities of voice platforms.
- Think about how your content will be 'discovered' from the start.
- Experiment and iterate – opportunities and expectations are changing all the time.
- Work with other publishers to get platforms to provide better data that helps make informed decisions

Source: The Future of Voice and the Implications for News, Nic Newman for RISJ

Chat-based journalism

Developments such as Zuckerberg's announcement in early 2019 that he intended for Facebook to become a more 'private' platform, with a greater focus on messaging rather than the news feed, should have news publishers thinking hard about the journalism they offer that suits chat-based interfaces, and how to monetise this.

Chinese messaging and social media app WeChat is developing functionality that allows new monetisation schemes for journalists, including the ability to tip content creators and pay to read functionality, according to the FTI report. Will other messaging networks follow suit?

Newman, who wrote a report on the implications of voice for news for the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford. .

But rates of ownership of voice-activated speakers are growing, Newman's report found: faster than smartphones at a similar stage of adoption. This trend doesn't just include 'home' devices, such as the market leader Amazon Echo, but also smart headphones or in-car assistants. The 2019 Journalism, Media and Tech Trends Report from Amy Webb's Future Today Institute (FTI) predicts that 'digital assistants' such as Amazon's Alexa or Google Assistant will only become more ubiquitous.

Furthermore, of those who do use them many seem to love them, both because of their speed and usefulness, and because they are seen as fun and providing the thrill of feeling futuristic, Newman found while conducting research. Voice technology can allow users to get away from looking at screens, and to 'de-clutter' in a world where they might feel surrounded by devices and remote controls.

However, they are not as widely used or valued for news as publishers and broadcasters might hope, Newman's report found. Playing music was the most used and valued activity among the smart speaker owners surveyed. While 21% of owners did access news updates daily, news was not widely valued by users.

The main reasons respondents gave for their lack of news consumption were that the content, tone and length of updates weren't right, that is was difficult to discover content, and that they just didn't need to use it as there were so many other ways they could find news.

The BBC dominates consumption on U.K. smart speakers: as the default news provider on many devices, it is at a huge advantage, as many people don't bother changing this. And this is related to an aspect of this kind of audio news consumption that worries some news organisations - it isn't anywhere near as easy to find information from a range of sources via smart speakers as it is when using screen-based devices.



Voice technology can allow users to get away from looking at screens, and to 'de-clutter' in a world where they might feel surrounded by devices and remote controls.

Interestingly, passive radio listening is far more popular than podcasts on smart speakers, likely a reflection of the fact that smart speakers tend to be used in the home for background listening, and that they are currently disproportionately owned by older people, whereas more younger people listen to podcasts.

Google News launched a new experiment in December 2018 meant to deliver more personalized audio news feeds through Google Assistant, “bringing the artificial intelligence of Google News to the voice context of the Assistant,” according to a blog post from the company. Each story is an individual chunk, rather than part of a longer briefing, so that when a user wants news, they can be offered a selection of stories from different news providers. When a user asks for news, Google Assistant provides a personalised audio news playlist “assembled in that moment.” It focuses on topics that it believes the user cares about, it won’t repeat stories that have already been heard, and the user can ask to skip a story or go back.

It is important to consider, as the Future Today Institute report suggests, “if Amazon and Google control the means of our future conversations, how will news and media brands be included and prioritized?”

Blockchain

Blockchain, which first entered into public consciousness in connection to cryptocurrency Bitcoin, broke into the mainstream in 2017 as, “a revolutionary way to share and store information,” according to the Future Today Institute’s report.

The implications of blockchain for journalism are still far from clear, however. A report on media startups using blockchain, from Mattias Erkkilä at LSE’s journalism and society think tank, Polis,, found that the most common journalism-related uses of blockchain were:

- **Saving content metadata on the blockchain** Creating an open and immutable record of content origin, publishing time and editing history that can be used to counter content that falsely claims to originate from a certain source and building trustworthiness among consumers

- **Enabling user participation** Blockchain can be used for identity management, event logging and contractual management.

- **Enabling an easier funding model** for the company through cryptocurrencies.

“A strive for decentralization is a recognized characteristic of the blockchain movement and it might well be more important than the technology itself,” Erkkilä wrote.

Civil is the key example of a journalism blockchain startup, but its progress hasn’t been straightforward. It is based on the idea of creating a community-run platform for independent journalism, using “decentralization and network effects to offer an alternative model that can support trustworthy journalism and help fulfil the information needs of citizens,” according to founder Matthew Iles.

Both newsrooms/journalists and members of the public can buy tokens to become a member of Civil. The tokens represent a member’s voting power within the Civil Registry and elsewhere on Civil. Members can use their tokens to vote and challenge unethical newsrooms on the Civil Registry, and their tokens can’t be taken away by any company.

Newsrooms that join Civil will have the ability to index and permanently archive their content to the blockchain using the Civil Publisher, and be able to accept direct, peer-to-peer payments from members who wish to support them. An editor of one of the newsrooms involved wrote that the blockchain technology, “provides the strongest protection that technology can give speech rights and press freedom.”

As John Keefe, technical architect for bots and machine learning at Quartz, wrote for a piece published by Nieman Journalism Lab in 2019, it is very complicated and time-consuming to get involved by buying tokens, unless you happen to be an experienced cryptocurrency trader.

Going forward, a distribution channel leveraging blockchain technology could be used to prevent censorship and to ensure access to information, while guaranteeing that content doesn’t get altered, according to the FTI report.



Must we choose between movie theaters and our rights as citizens to speak out, whether in support of or critical of our government's actions?"

JAMAL KHASHOGGI

Freelance journalist and *Washington Post* columnist, Saudi Arabia
Murdered in the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul, Turkey in October 2018

Run quote quote

A
selection
of quotes
from leading
journalists
and
executives

...on the importance of defending a free press



For us, no matter what, we won't retreat, give up or be shaken by this. I would like to say that injustice will never defeat us."

WA LONE Reuters, joint Pulitzer Prize winner for international reporting, Myanmar
Currently in prison, accused of illegal possession of government documents under Myanmar's official secrets act

"When journalists come under attack, it usually means that the societies within which they operate are so corrupt that their principal law-enforcement institutions and democratic checks have already been fundamentally compromised. This makes investigative reporters the last people left standing between the rule of law and those who seek to violate it, and it makes their work both more dangerous and less effective."

MATTHEW CARUANA GALIZIA Freelance journalist, Malta
Son of murdered Maltese journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia

I feel the government is not taking any steps to make journalism in India safer. Therefore, it is up to us journalists to make the space safer for each other, to become each others' voice, to strengthen each others' voice and to try to tell more stories. The most important thing is to keep doing journalism and not back down."

RANA AYYUB Independent investigative journalist, India
Also the author of 'Gujarat Files: Anatomy of a Cover Up'. She has been subjected to extreme online harassment.

Technology has no morals and values, and the group that actually figured out how to use it and weaponize it, are the authoritarian style leaders."

MARIA RESSA CEO, Rappler, Philippines

...on the relationship with tech platforms

We're deceiving ourselves if we think this is a negotiable relationship. This is a relationship we can't break up from... We have to treat this as a negotiation. Platforms do not need media."

RENÉE KAPLAN
Head of Audience and New Content Strategies, Financial Times, U.K.

quote
unquote



Pomposity doesn't work in the business [of good journalism]. Stick to the business. Facts: They win the day if you find the way to stick to them."

BOB WOODWARD Author, former investigative journalist, *The Washington Post*, U.S.

The promise of AI will be realized once non-technical reporters and editors benefit from AI in their existing jobs — whether they know AI helped or not.

JEREMY GILBERT
Director of strategic initiatives, *The Washington Post*, US

The issue I see is that far too many media companies, lured by hopes of a steady, reliable revenue source from subscriptions, are pivoting to "community" — creating chatty email newsletters, opening Slack channels or "members-only" webinars, and offering free t-shirts or tote bags. These are more branding than community; the value proposition is weak.

ELIZABETH BRAMSON-BOUDREAU
CEO and publisher, *MIT Technology Review*, US

Yes, product managers do all of these things... Upset power dynamics, and force publishers to reckon with how willing they are to act like owners of digital products, rather than content producers."

PENNY RIORDAN
Director of Digital Audience Engagement, *Gatehouse Media*, US

Media has an urgent opportunity as trust becomes a paramount issue in advertising... Sellers have nothing to lose, and everything to gain, by seizing the mantle of trust in simple, straightforward ways."

SARAH BOLTON
Executive Vice President, Business Intelligence, *Advertiser Perceptions*, U.S.

Many readers didn't understand the challenging commercial reality facing all news organisations, but once we told them more, they expressed real interest in wanting to support *The Guardian*."

KATHARINE VINER Editor-in-Chief, *Guardian*, U.K.

Metrics of impact will be our golden data points; We need to understand if what we're creating has any effect on the world we live in. Pageviews and time spent will give way to how many people you've impacted, how many laws you've helped change, how diverse your leaders are and how inclusive you are of your communities."

MARIANA SANTOS
Executive Director of *Chicas Poderosas*, Portugal

I believe our digital subscription business is helping us to develop a superior, differentiated digital ad experience. And because of the quality of the content and the quality of the product, it's produced a relative exclusiveness. We are more attractive to the world's leading brands than we would be if we didn't have a digital subscription business."

MARK THOMPSON CEO, *The New York Times*, U.S.

...on developing
your business

INNOVATION IN NEWS MEDIA 2019



Cobalt is ready – are you?

If you're delivering news products across a full spectrum of digital destinations, you're ready for Cobalt.

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Cobalt - ready when you are.

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Have a look at www.cobalt-cmf.com



gliko & sul

This book uses the serif font Gliko and the sans serif Sul, designed by Rui Abreu and Catarina Vaz (Sul) of r-typography. R-Typography is a type foundry run by Rui Abreu, since 2008.

Rui Abreu is a type designer living in Lisbon. He graduated in 2003 from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Porto, where he studied Communication Design. Rui became interested in type during his student years. His professional experience includes working in advertising agencies and publishing fonts, both independently and with other foundries. Currently, Rui is dedicated to R-Typography's retail Library and provides custom typefaces for corporate clients.

The retail typefaces they offer are a curated set of designs, some of which have gained international visibility and recognition. In 2009 Rui's Orbe won a certificate of excellence from the Type Directors Club, and since then more awards followed, including two winning entries at Letter2 by Atypi in 2011, a second TDC certificate in 2015 and a Granshan 1st prize in "arabic typefaces" in 2016.

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helping to accelerate publishers transformation

A little over a year ago the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) launched the first online learning platform for digital revenue and transformation, called the Media Management Accelerator (MMA).

Since then hundreds of news media professionals from all over the world have signed up for ongoing courses and more than 70 have completed their work and received diplomas from WAN-IFRA. Some of the largest publishers in the world to mid-sized to small local publishers have taken part.

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"I would highly recommend the courses to my editorial team leads, and I think the business would benefit from us being exposed to more of the theory behind the commercial and sales aspects," said Adele Hamilton, Managing Editor, Lifestyle, 24.com, South Africa.

"The MMA has a lot of info on digital advertising which I found very helpful in filling in my new role at Mediahuis," said Katrien Berte, Product Manager Digital Advertising, Mediahuis, Belgium.

As traditional print revenues continue to decline in most parts of the world, the transition to digital and

more diversified revenue streams is accelerating. Such a rapidly changing environment presents news organisations with numerous challenges.

That is why MMA was created: to support publishers in their transition and transformation journey. MMA provides news professionals with an open, engaging platform where they can glean insight from industry experts, share their newsroom experiences with fellow publishers, and achieve certification in the industry's only complete digital revenue programme.

Our e-learning platform empowers news publishers to make the digital leap by providing pragmatic advice, the necessary tools and best practices in the industry.

The programme features six modules, clearly some of the pressing issues facing publishers today, for news media managers to pursue: Digital Revenue Strategy & Diversification; Paid Content & Reader Revenue; three on Digital Advertising (formats & marketplaces, sales & execution, and data & analytics); and Innovation & Integrating Startup Culture.

We have invited industry experts, senior editors, and our panel of consultants to share their wisdom. We have also included real-life case studies from the likes of The Economist, Die Welt, Verdens Gang and Amedia.

For more information, visit:
www.wan-ifra.org

The industry's first and only digital revenue certification programme, from WAN-IFRA



Join the largest publishers from the UK, Canada, South Korea, South Africa, Belgium and more on the MMA journey

Course 1: Digital Revenue Strategy and Diversification

Course 2: Paid Content and Reader Revenue

Course 3: Digital Ads: Formats and Marketplaces

Course 4: Digital Ads: Sales and Execution

Course 5: Digital Ads: Data and Analytics

Course 6: Innovation and Integrating Startup Culture

For a free trial go to 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.

CUE DELIVERS A NEW FOUNDATION TO REINVENT YOUR NEWS BUSINESS

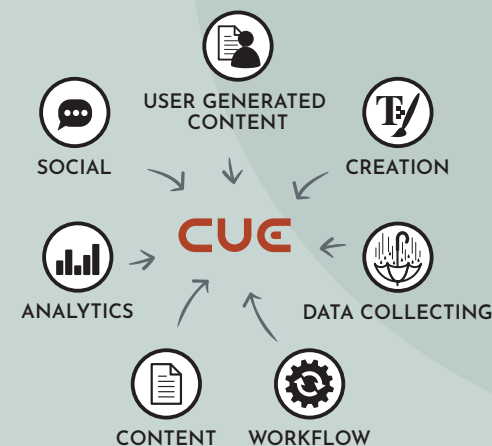
How do you re-energize your news brand in today's competitive media landscape? CUE offers news publishers a completely new way of innovating content creation.

CUE is developed by CCI Europe and Escenic in close collaboration with leading media corporations, such as WeltN24, McClatchy, Rossel, and JP/Politikens Hus. The new platform builds on deep insights into the current and future needs of today's newsrooms.

INNOVATE AND STREAMLINE YOUR CONTENT CREATION

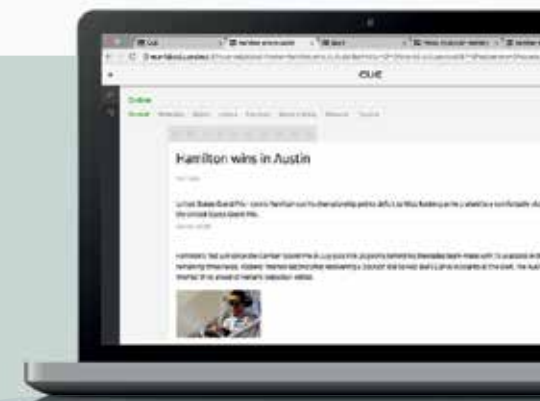
CUE offers lots of ways to innovate content creation and streamline workflows:

- Work seamlessly across channels, from print to SoMe.
- Bundle all must-have tools in a tidy browser-based interface.
- Create, edit, and share content for multiple channels from one and the same interface.
- Create content from any device, from anywhere in the world.



BUILD THE PLATFORM YOU NEED

CUE is built on the solid foundation of the NewsGate and Escenic platforms and is designed to integrate seamlessly with legacy systems and 3rd party tools, all within the same user interface. This means that publishers can build a unified publishing platform which is just right for their business, using an out-of-the-box solution as the foundation.



DEVELOP YOUR BUSINESS WITH CUE

CUE enables news publishers to beat new paths forward, quickly, cost-effectively, and with minimum risk:

- Build a digital-first news organization.
- Integrate newsrooms and break down organizational silos.
- Experiment with new channels and media forms, quickly and cost-effectively.
- Monetize content effectively.

NEWS PUBLISHERS WORKING WITH CUE

CUE is already in use with a number of large news publishers across the world, such as RTL in Germany, YLE in Finland, Amedia in Norway, and McClatchy in the United States.

CCI & ESCENIC provide IT platforms that support the evolving needs of multi-channel publishing as well as print and digital distribution.

Our scalable solutions help media brands all over the world create engaging content, reach new audiences, and optimize their business strategies.

For more information about CUE and CCI & Escenic, please contact Jacob Gjørtz, Vice President Marketing, +45 30 84 40 30 or jgj@ccieurope.com



INNOVATIONS IN NEWSPAPERS

THE 1999 WORLD REPORT

AN ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE INNOVATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NEWS MEDIA



INNOVATIONS IN NEWSPAPERS

THE 2000 WORLD REPORT

AN ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE INNOVATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NEWS MEDIA



INNOVATIONS IN NEWSPAPERS

2001 WORLD REPORT

AN ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE INNOVATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NEWS MEDIA



INNOVATIONS IN NEWSPAPERS

2002 WORLD REPORT

AN ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE INNOVATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NEWS MEDIA

