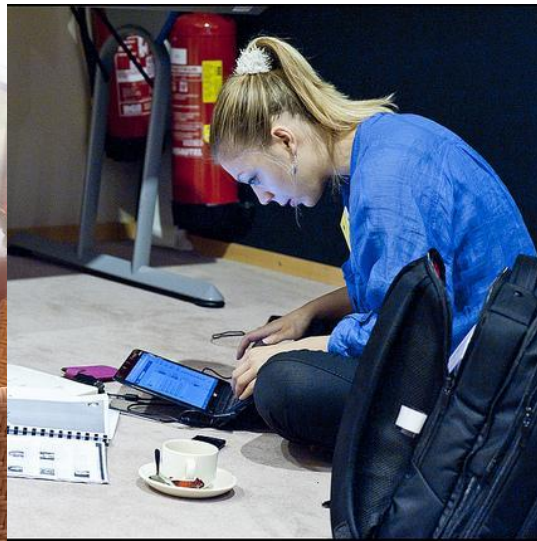# Can you answer these questions?

- Is it worth writing long stories?

- Do you need photographers?

- How should you cover government differently than business, or sports?

The audience is in charge.

# The web rewards specialization

Online...

...a **better source** on any topic is potentially always **a click away**

Topic is the biggest factor determining where people turn for news... **not demographics**.

Millennials are pointing the way

(not abandoning news)

What will they pay for?

Millennials who personally pay for entertainment are three times more likely to also pay for news

Percent Millennials personally paying for news

Pay for entertainment subscription	Do not pay for entertainment subscription
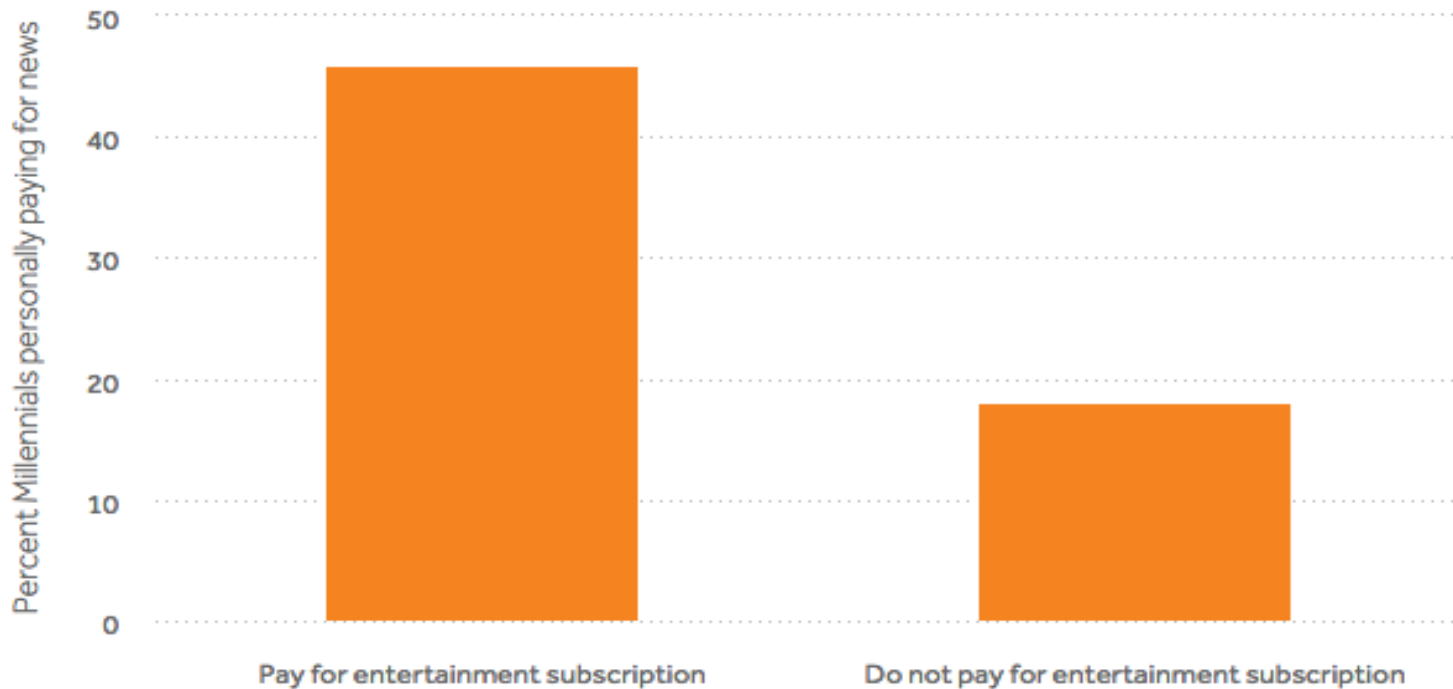
They tend to use:

   Social for some topics

   Search for others

   News sites for others

They look directly to **news gatherers** for **"hard news"** topics:

- Government, economy, environment

- Public safety, weather and traffic

- Town and neighborhood news
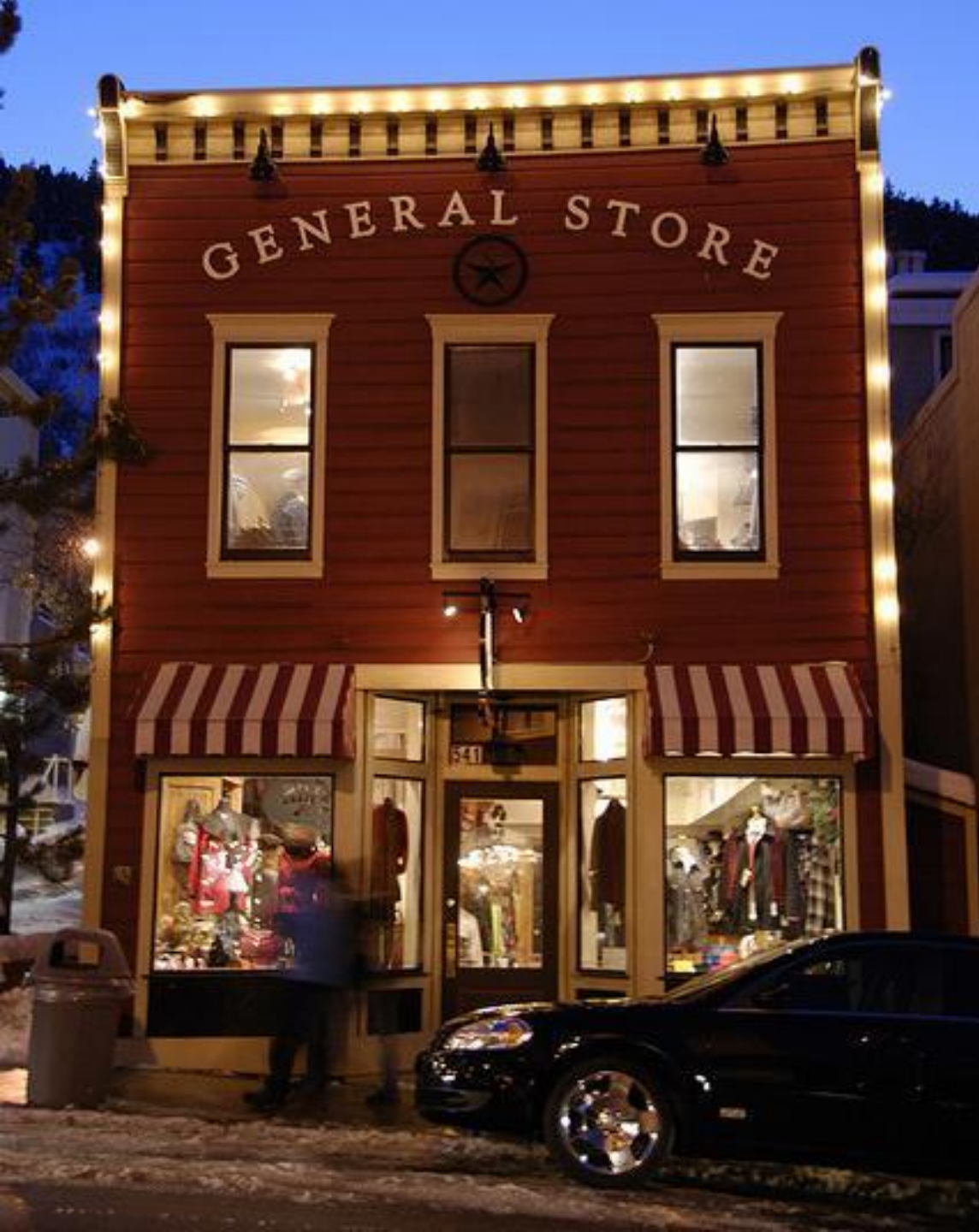
- Sports

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Social networks for lifestyle topics

- Celebrities / pop culture / fashion

- Food / cooking / restaurants

- Music / TV / Movies

Search and aggregators for news you can use

- How-to advice

- Product Information

- Career information

- Hobbies

What topics will you be great at?

The old model for newspapers was the general store

We had it all…
calico, nails, beans,
salt peter

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Having it all made us **convenient**

…but not particularly excellent at any one thing.

Today you need to build on
pillars of excellence

But **how do you choose?**

Data about your audience behavior can guide you

But you need **the right data**

API's **Metrics for News** program:

Helps publishers grow audiences, through journalism analytics that enable data-driven editorial decisions

1. Better measure your content

Why people
read content

What topics
we cover

How much enterprise
reporting we do

Why people
share content

2. Clarify the Number Clutter

Entrances
Readership
Likes
Pageviews Minutes
Comments
Shares Reach Attention
Exits Local
Social Visits Mobile
Engagement
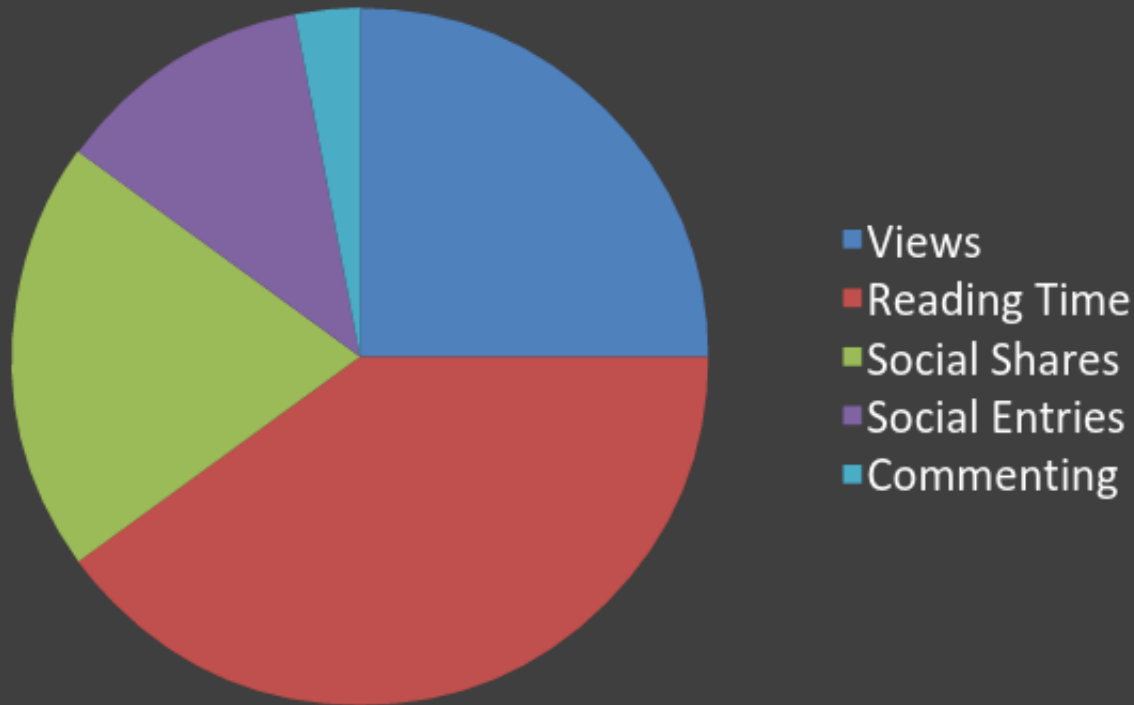
3. Analyze Editorial Strategy

- Look at deep patterns across many stories

- See what's working, what's not and why

- Make data-informed content decisions

4. Create a New Strategy

- What are you not covering but should?

- What coverage should work better and why isn't it?

- What can you do less of?

Tools for improvement

Overview

All content ⬆
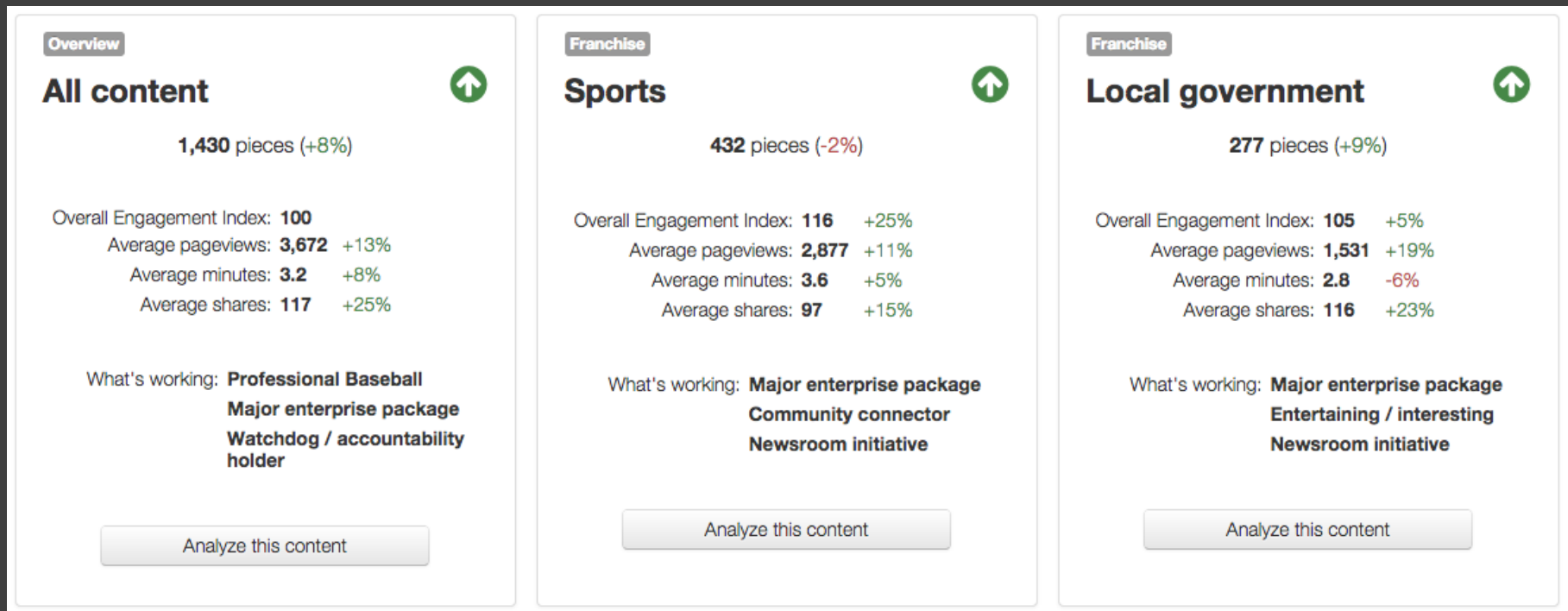
1,430 pieces (+8%)

Overall Engagement Index: **100**
Average pageviews: **3,672** +13%
Average minutes: **3.2** +8%
Average shares: **117** +25%

What's working: **Professional Baseball**
Major enterprise package
Watchdog / accountability holder

Analyze this content

Franchise

Sports ⬆

432 pieces (-2%)

Overall Engagement Index: **116** +25%
Average pageviews: **2,877** +11%
Average minutes: **3.6** +5%
Average shares: **97** +15%

What's working: **Major enterprise package**
Community connector
Newsroom initiative

Analyze this content

Franchise

Local government ⬆

277 pieces (+9%)

Overall Engagement Index: **105** +5%
Average pageviews: **1,531** +19%
Average minutes: **2.8** -6%
Average shares: **116** +23%

What's working: **Major enterprise package**
Entertaining / interesting
Newsroom initiative

Analyze this content

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Universal Findings:

Major enterprise is the biggest driver of engagement

Major enterprise stories earn nearly 50% more engagement

(That's 83% more page views, 39% more time spent and 103% more shares)

But there aren't **enough** of them
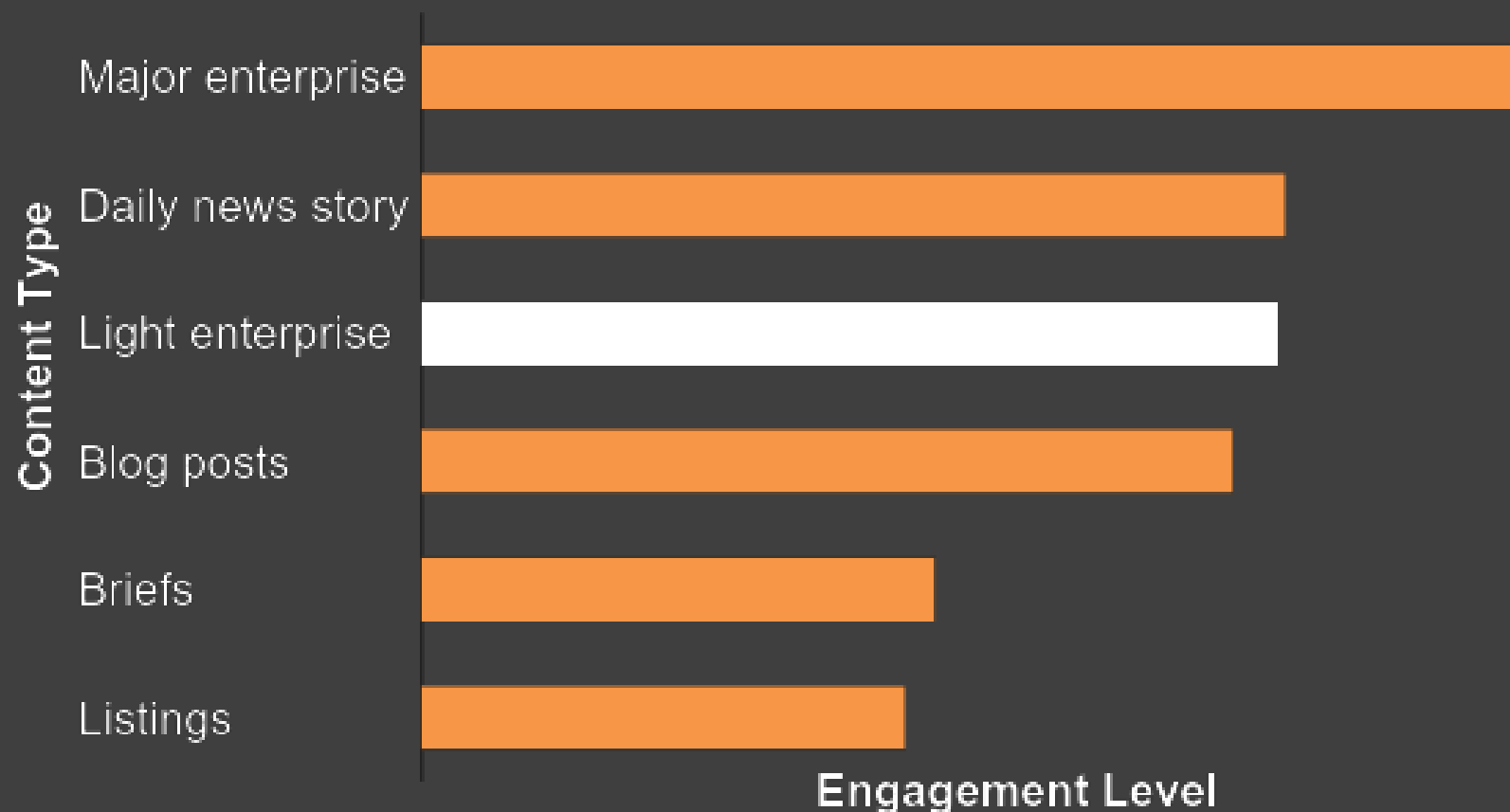
Just 1% of all content

Initiative matters

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Initiative
boosts engagement by 30%

(That's 62% more page views, 11% more time spent and 101% more shares)

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How is **initiative** different from **enterprise?**

Long-form stories:

- Drive 23% more engagement
  - (11% more views, 36% more read time and 45% more shares)

- An average 1,246 words

Writing it **straight** still works

But readers value analysis for some topics more than others

Analysis works better with cultural topics

- Food/Dining
- Sports

Use more **photos**, **audio** and **video**

Add **one** photo: +19%
Add **multiple** photos: +43%

Audio and video add 36% more engagement

81% more views
84% more shares

The reasons readers engage with content **varies by topic**

The analysis **differs by paper**

This program is designed to work with one paper's data and the results are often unique.

Results: Building your Brand

Franchise topics across one partner company have grown audience and engagement

- 24% more overall engagement

- 47% more page views

- 57% more shares

Results: Growth in Biz Coverage

One partner redesigned their coverage to focus more on living in the local economy.

Since October 2014:

- **+ 51% page views**
- **+ 115% shares**

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Results:
High Interest = High Engagement

Another partner took the lead in a key environmental issue, which the community now recognizes them for.

- **+ 121%** page views
- **+118%** time spent
- **+ 221%** shares

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Results: Franchises Lift All Content

One partner paper slowly rolled out franchise topics and is now seeing benefits across all content.

- At least 150% increase in views for each franchise and more than 50% increase in shares.

- A 287% increase in views to **ALL** content and 51% increase in shares.

What works inside beat coverage?

- Government
- Business
- Crime
- Food/Dining
- Sports

What works inside **Government** coverage?

- Initiative stories

- Major enterprise

- Blog posts

Government coverage

- Initiative + 52% engagement

- Major enterprise and blog posts +46% engagement

- Too much for the record (48%)

Government coverage

- Explanatory +33% engagement

- Watchdog +25% engagement

- Readers love to comment on this (more than any other topic)

Government coverage

- Photos alone make a big difference

- They double views and shares

- 75% of all government stories don't have photos

What works inside Biz/Economy coverage?

Make coverage about living in the economy, not just local business

Biz/Economy coverage

- Initiative stories: +33% engagement

- Conversation starters: +20% engagement

- Watchdog: +15% engagement

Biz/Economy coverage

- Short stories about places to go or things to do are powerful (20% more engagement)

  - Business openings, reviews, job fairs, etc.

- Too much coverage (60%) is "for the record"

What works inside Crime/Public Safety coverage?

- It's a popular topic (tied for first with food/dining, scoring 33% better than average)

- Light enterprise helps (+23%), but briefs do not

- Explanatory (+30% overall) and initiative stories (+54%) do best

What works inside
Food and Dining coverage?

- Most popular topic tied with crime (33% greater than average)

- Not just a lifestyle beat

- Twice as likely to be viewed a week after publication

What works inside Sports coverage?

Uniqueness and opinion matter here

Sports coverage

- "Analytical voice" helps (+34% engagement)

- Initiative stories +23% engagement

- Major enterprise more than doubles engagement

Sports coverage

- Sports gets more traffic from Twitter than any other topic

- Adding one photo: +20% engagement

- Adding multiple photos: +42% engagement

What can you do now to grow audience engagement?

- Tell unique stories no one else has

- Put more effort into major enterprise

- Stick to straight stories but write analytically with culture news

- Add photos, audio and video

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Questions?

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