

A comprehensive portrait of the modern news consumer

Mega Conference 2019

AMERICANPRESS
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The old API

1946 - 2012

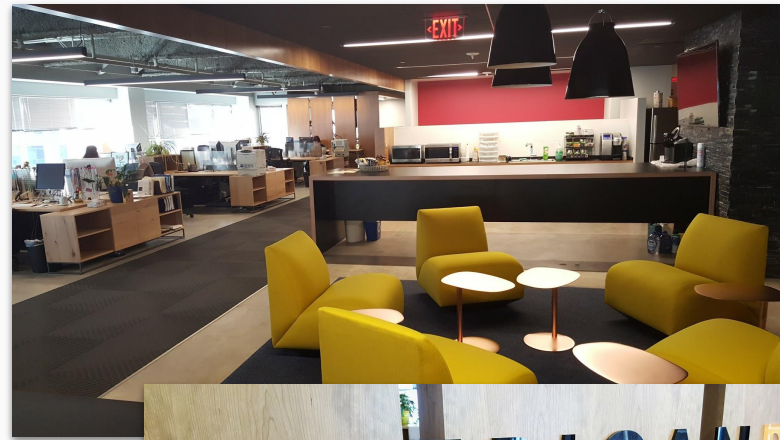
Destination for seminars



The new API

2013 - present

Think tank for research,
transformation, events,
and shared services

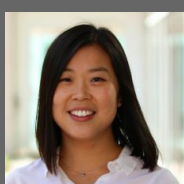


**The news industry's
biggest opportunities
are about the audience**

**API transforms news
organizations for an
audience-first future**

AMERICANPRESS

institute



The American Press Institute advances an innovative and sustainable news industry by helping publishers understand and engage audiences, grow revenue, improve public-service journalism, and succeed at organizational change.

**In 5 years of studying
news consumers,
what have we learned?**

**The landscape
is not so bad as
you may think**

An optimistic

~~A comprehensive~~ portrait of the modern news consumer

Mega Conference 2019

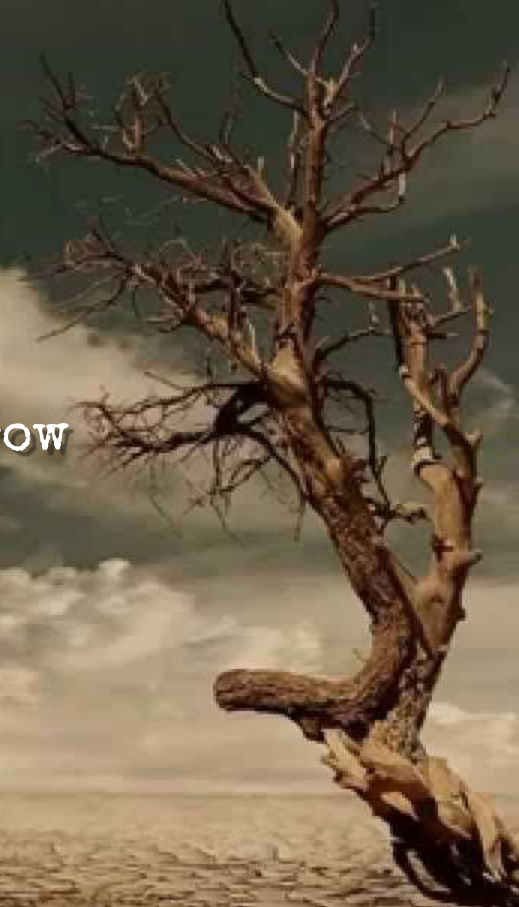
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APRIL is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.

...

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish?

— T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (1922)



The Waste Land view of news

- Young people are newsless
- All news has moved to Facebook
- Nobody will pay
- A race to the bottom for clicks
- It will all be over soon



**The reality of news audiences
is more like a fertile meadow**

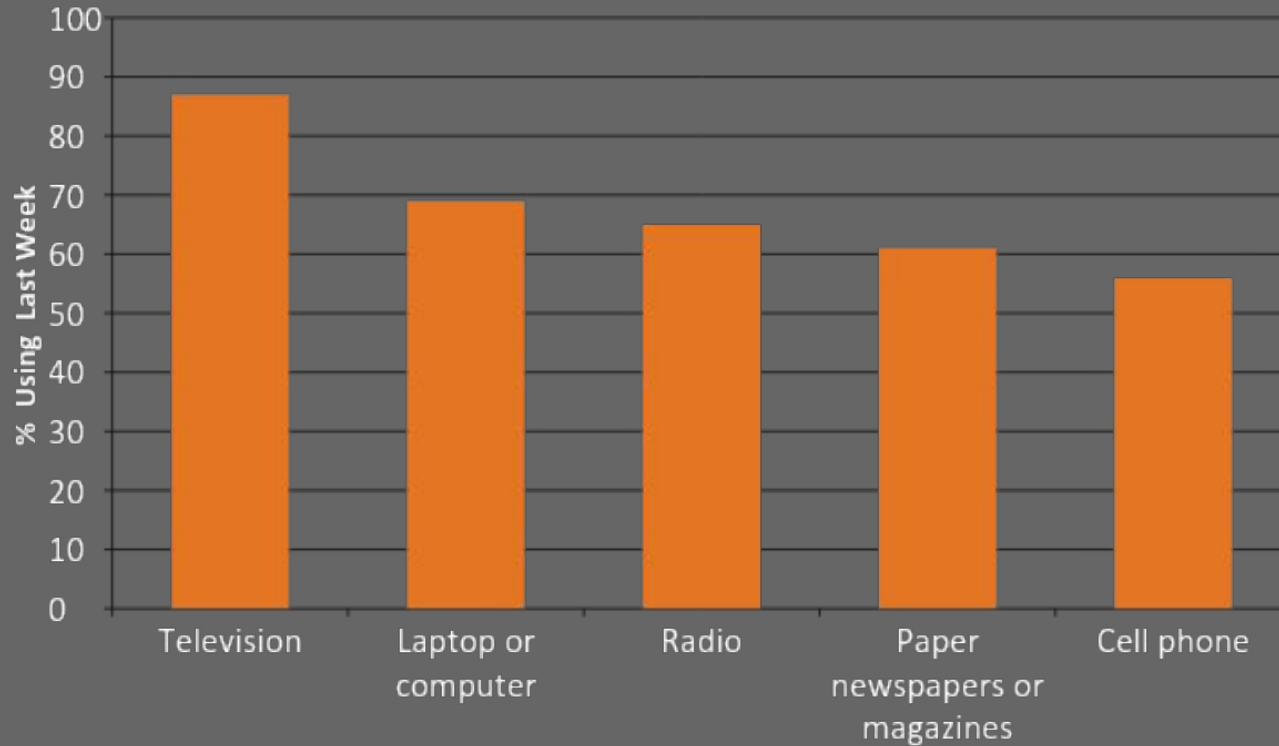


**1. New technologies have
not replaced older ones**



A majority of Americans use “five devices or technologies...to get news in a given week. The average American adult uses four....”

5 news technologies majorities use



Source: "The Personal News Cycle" 2014

“Not only do people consume news from many different devices, nearly half say they have **no one preferred means of doing so.**”

Technologies
are user behaviors
... not distinct
audiences

Digital attention
is sometimes
not zero-sum

Has it gotten easier or harder to keep up with news?

60%

of Americans say “easier”

12%

of Americans say “harder”

“OK... but people just want
passive entertainment now,
they don't look for news.”



2. Many people still seek out news



“

If the news is that
important, it will find me.

— Unnamed college student,
quoted to Brian Stelter
in the New York Times
(2008)



“If the news is that important, it’ll find me.” But what determines if it’s important?

LINK: WWW.ONTHEMEDIA.ORG | POSTED BY: JOSHUA BENTON | FEBRUARY 20, 2014

What’s the best way to follow how the news is changing?

Our daily email, with all the freshest future-of-journalism news.

your email address here

THE BLOG 12/01/2009 05:12 am ET | Updated May 25, 2011

“If News is That Important, It Will Find Me.”

By Josh Young

There’s one really powerful idea shaping the future of news. It’s powerful, sure, and has wide-ranging implications for how citizens inform themselves about the world around them. Powerful and yet perfectly simple.

“If news is that important, it will find me.”

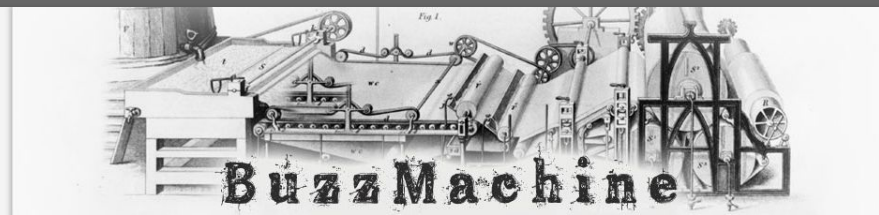
The reporter responsible for [surfacing this gem](#) is Brian Stelter, whom [we’ve written about before](#) at the Huffington Post. While in college, he wrote the hit blog TVNewser before the New York Times hired him as a media reporter.

Stelter deserves credit for picking up on the unassuming thought — shared by a researcher conducting a focus group that included one surprisingly wise college student.

But how could it be that news will find us? Isn’t that just lazy — the stuff an MTV-obsessed college student might say? Doesn’t it take a supremely self-important culture of



TRENDING



The news will find us

March 27, 2008 by Jeff Jarvis

Politics, prezvid, youtube

 Tweet

 Like 0



7 Comments »

Brian Stelter has an [excellent piece](#) in today’s New York Times about young people and their different relationship with media in this campaign. As Pew has pointed out, young people especially (and people of all ages) act as conduits as much as consumers. And they expect to watch video themselves. This is also a clear example of how the peer replaces the editor. My favorite line:

Ms. Buckingham recalled conducting a focus group where one of her subjects, a college student, said “If the news is that important, it will find me.”



by Jeff Jarvis



About Me

Email Me

Q: Choose the statement that best describes you...

“I actively seek out news and information”

“I mostly bump into news and information as I do other things or hear about it from others”

36%

of Americans bump into news

63%

of Americans actively seek out news

75%

of news subscribers actively seek out news

“OK...

but not young people, right?”



3. Millennials are not newsless



A little more 'bumping' than 'seeking'

- 39% of Millennials seek out news
- 60% of Millennials bump into news

but...

85%

of Millennials value keeping up with the news

69%

of Millennials get news at least once a day

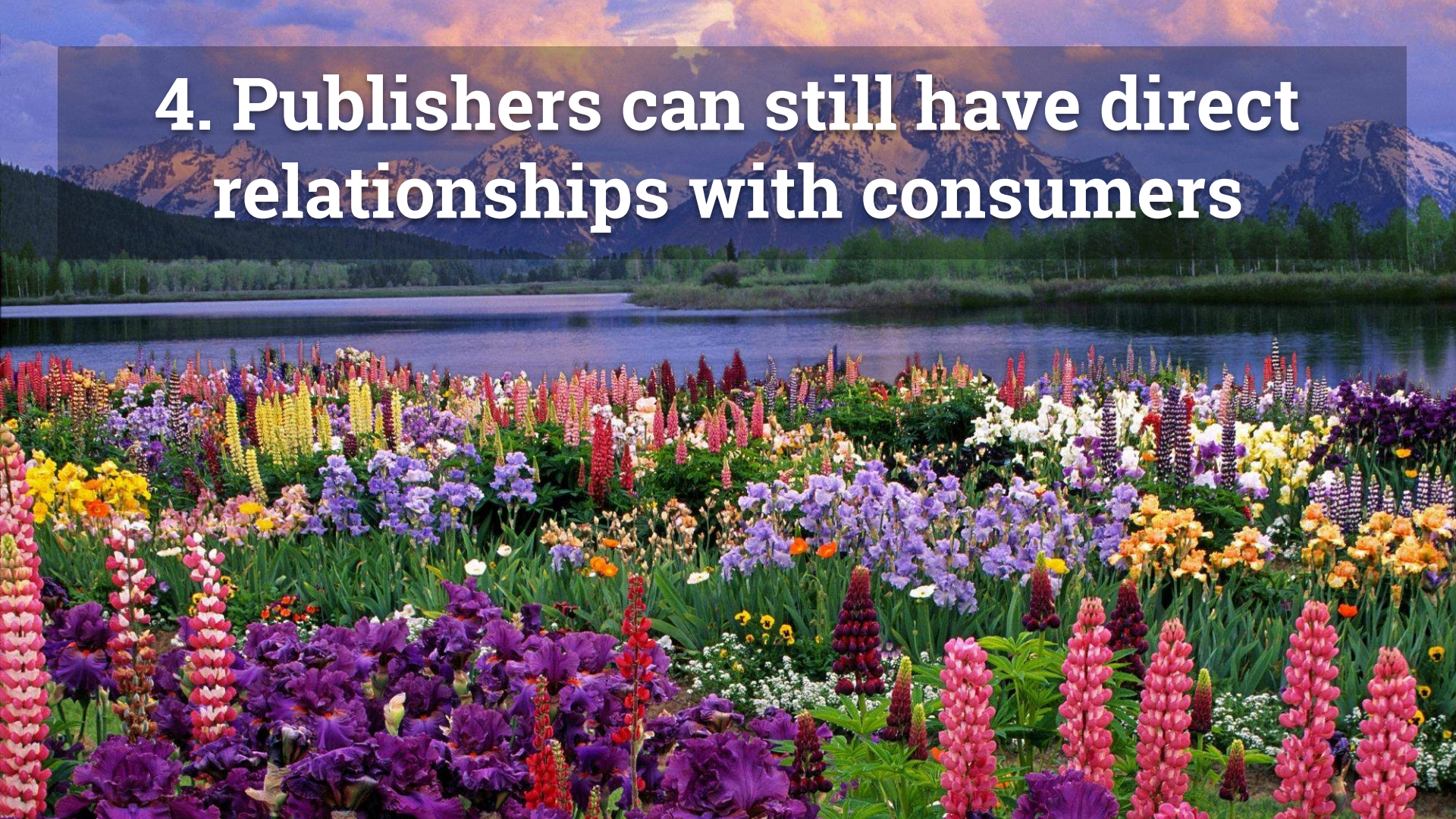
45%

of Millennials follow 5 or more
'hard news' subjects

“Facebook is where people
get all their news now,
what’s a publisher to do?”

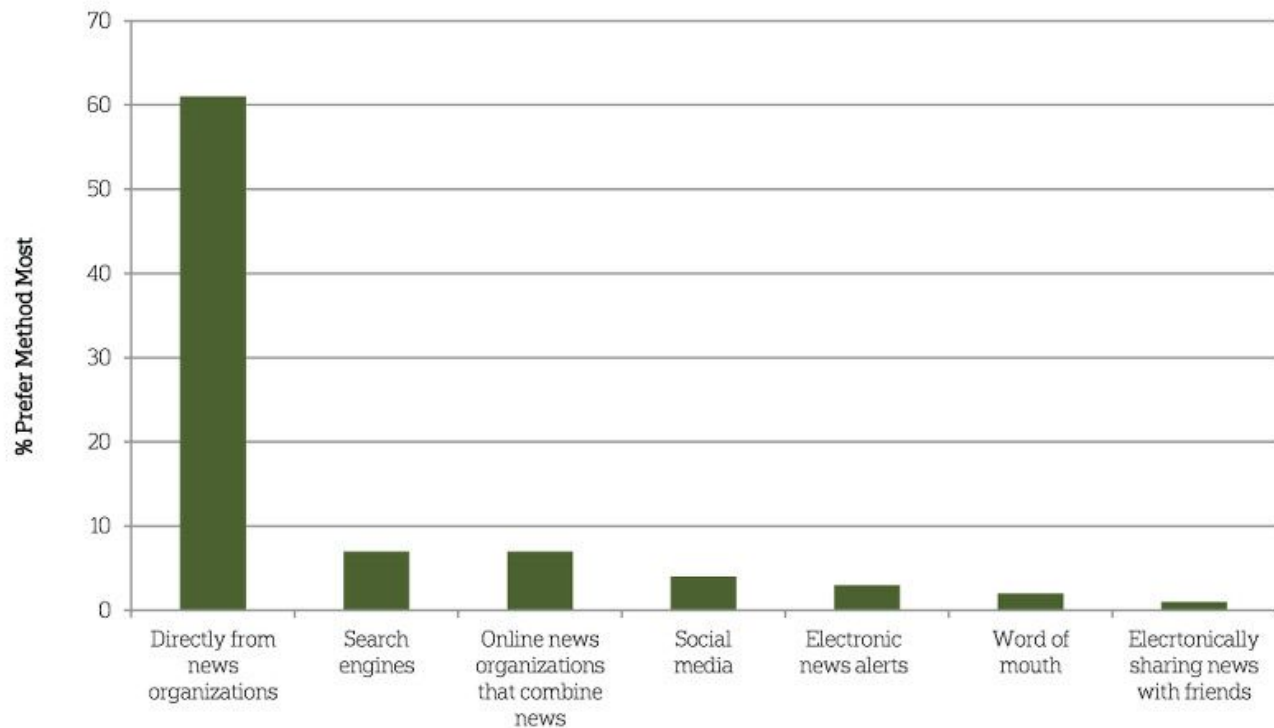


4. Publishers can still have direct relationships with consumers



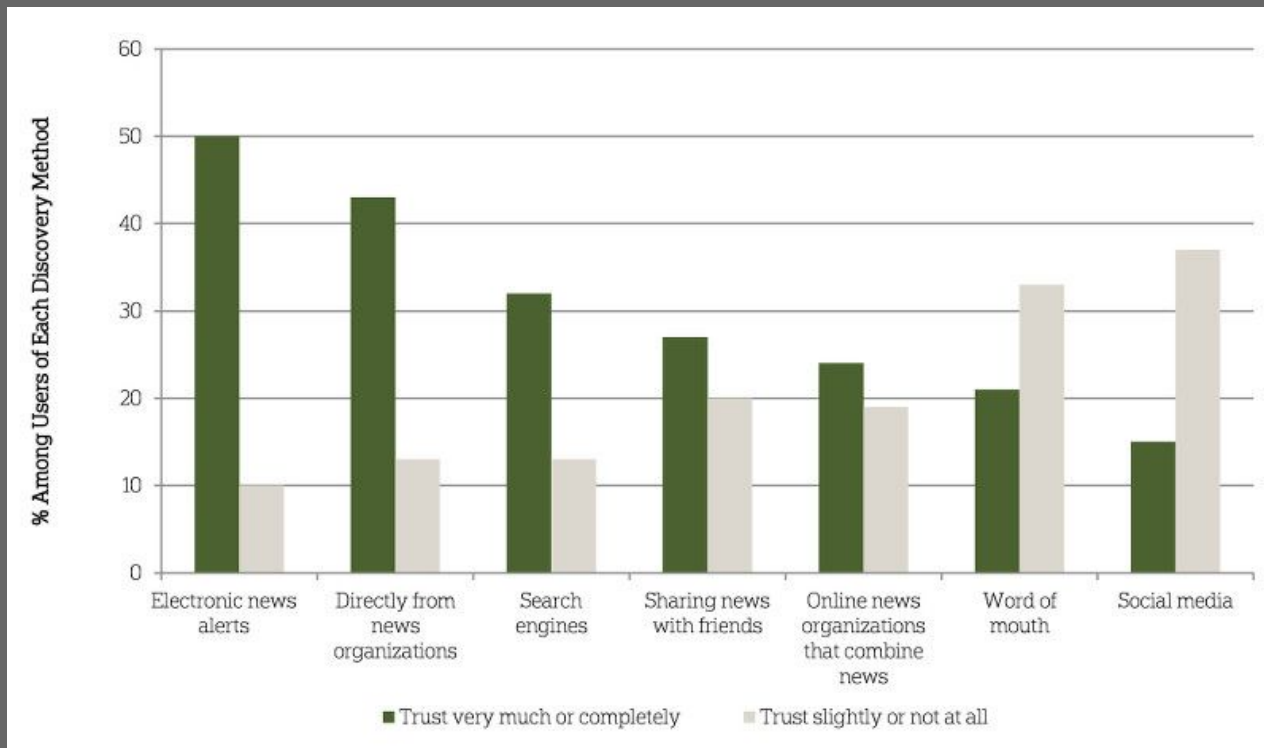
**Despite disruption
from social and
search, people trust
professional news
sources the most**

How people prefer to find news



61% — Directly from news organizations

Discovery methods people trust



43% — Highly trust directly from news organizations

15% — Highly trust news from social media

After discovering news on social...

When Millennials want to learn more, they turn to

- Search (57%)
- News sites (23%)
- Facebook (7%)

After discovering news on social...

When Millennials want to learn more, what are they looking for?

- A news source **they already know well** (57%)
- A news source **transparent with references and links** (52%)

“OK, so people care about news
and still find publishers
relevant, but they won’t pay.”



5. People do pay for news



53%

of all adults pay for news

Young people do pay for news

Contrary to myth...

- 37% of adults under 35 subscribe to news
- 46% of those get newspapers

**Streaming services
opened a new door**

NETFLIX

55%

of Millennials pay for Netflix (or similar)



48%

of Millennials pay for Spotify (or similar)

90%

of Millennials pay for who pay for news
also pay for entertainment subscriptions

Paying for digital
stuff is now
mainstream

**It just has to be
the right stuff...**

Why people subscribe to local news

Most subscribers
walk a long path

73%

of those who used the product before subscribing
did so for at least a few months...

49%

did so for **over a year** before paying

Different Subscribers

```
graph TD; A[Digital Paywall Converters] -.-> C(( )); B[Topic Hunters] -.-> C; C1[The Locally Engaged] -.-> C; C2[Social-Mobile Discoverers] -.-> C; C3[Journalism Advocates] -.-> C; C4[Life Changers] -.-> C; C5[Print Fans] -.-> C; C6[Coupon Clippers] -.-> C; C7[Friends and Family Motivated] -.-> C; C --> D[Different Subscribers];
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Digital
Paywall
Converters

Friends and
Family
Motivated

Topic
Hunters

Print Fans

The Locally
Engaged

Social-Mobile
Discoverers

Journalism
Advocates

Life Changers

Coupon
Clippers

**Do you have
nine subscription
strategies?**

Subscribers read different things



Analytics aligned with
your **editorial values**
and **business models**

- API's custom solution
- Engagement Scores = simple + comprehensive
- What content drives subscriptions
- Personalized dashboards empower everyone to act
- Flexible integration with any data source or CMS

Subscribers read different topics

Topic	Subscribers rank	Casuals rank
State Government	#1	#1
State Workers	#2	#6
Local Government	#3	#5
Business	#4	#8
Disasters / accidents	#5	#2
Nearest NFL team	#26	#3
Local NBA team	#7	#11



METRICS FOR NEWS

data from a major newspaper in a state capital

Subscribers read different story forms

Story form	Subscribers Score	Casuals Score
Major enterprise reports	177	217
Daily news stories	153	205
Op-Eds	125	116
Columns	116	62
Editorial cartoons	99	79
Letter to the editor	57	47



METRICS FOR NEWS

data from a major newspaper in a state capital

Subscribers like local not viral

Topic	Subscribers rank	Casuals rank
Local government	#1	#8
Consumer / shopping news	#2	#5
Dining / restaurants	#3	#9
Shipping industry	#4	#12
Social issues	#20	#1
State government	#11	#2



Subscribers read opinion deeply

Story form	Subscribers Score	Casuals Score
Major enterprise reports	133	165
Daily news stories	158	198
Columns	145	93
Blogs	154	92
Editorials	114	88
Letter to the editor	139	46



It's easy to make
bad decisions by
looking at **bad data**

“OK, I get it.

We can roll with the new technologies, people still care about news and publishers, and they can be persuaded to pay...

So, why does it feel so hard?”



**While beautiful, this is also a
competitive, wild landscape**

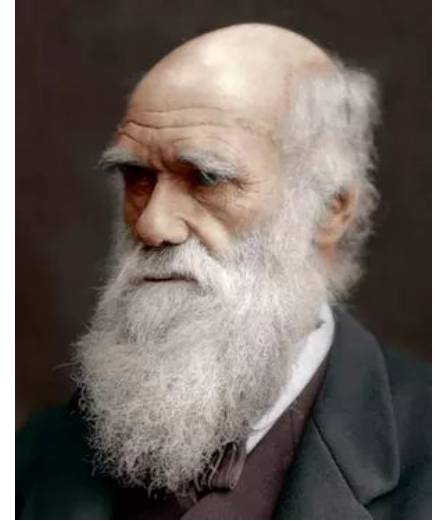


**And our business model landscape
has been massively disrupted**



**Audience trends give
each publisher
an opportunity to
survive, not a right**

Competitive landscapes demand evolution



**The business models
will be new, based on
understanding and
serving audiences**

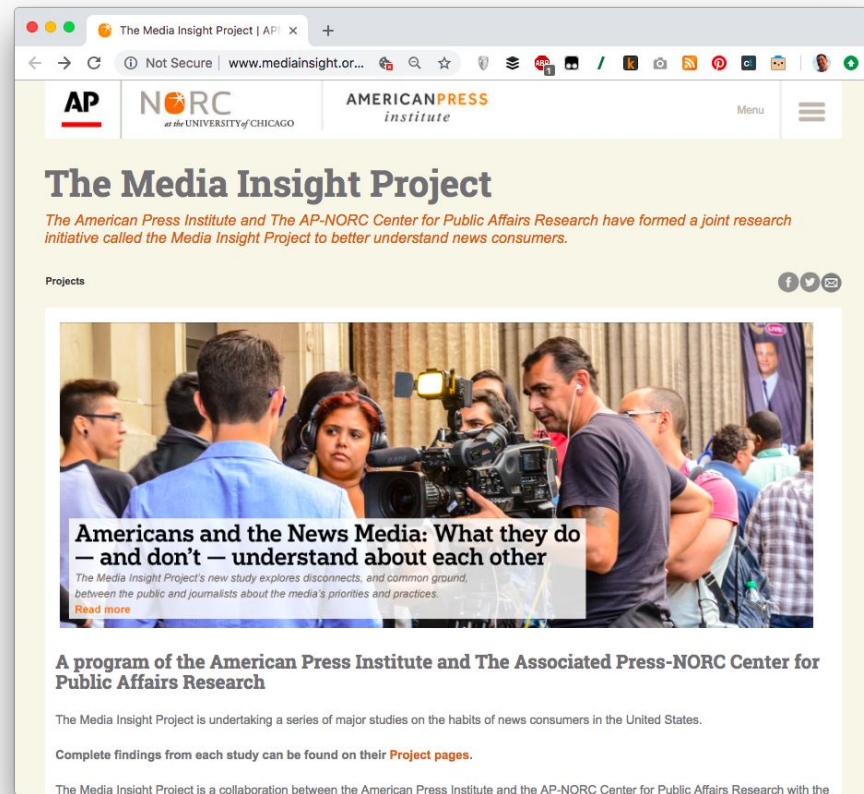
How we can help

AMERICANPRESS
institute

Dive deeper on audiences

Media Insight Project studies
are all free and online

mediainsight.org



The screenshot shows the homepage of The Media Insight Project website. The browser address bar displays "The Media Insight Project | AP" and "www.mediainsight.org...". The header features logos for AP, NORC at the University of Chicago, and the American Press Institute. The main heading is "The Media Insight Project", followed by a subtext: "The American Press Institute and The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research have formed a joint research initiative called the Media Insight Project to better understand news consumers." Below this, a "Projects" section is visible, featuring a video thumbnail with the title "Americans and the News Media: What they do — and don't — understand about each other". The video description states: "The Media Insight Project's new study explores disconnects, and common ground, between the public and journalists about the media's priorities and practices." A "Read more" link is provided. Further down, a section titled "A program of the American Press Institute and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research" is shown, followed by a paragraph: "The Media Insight Project is undertaking a series of major studies on the habits of news consumers in the United States." A link to "Complete findings from each study can be found on their Project pages." is included. At the bottom, a note states: "The Media Insight Project is a collaboration between the American Press Institute and the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with the".

The Media Insight Project | AP

www.mediainsight.org...

AP NORC at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO AMERICAN PRESS institute

Menu

The Media Insight Project

The American Press Institute and The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research have formed a joint research initiative called the Media Insight Project to better understand news consumers.

Projects

Americans and the News Media: What they do — and don't — understand about each other

The Media Insight Project's new study explores disconnects, and common ground, between the public and journalists about the media's priorities and practices.

[Read more](#)

A program of the American Press Institute and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

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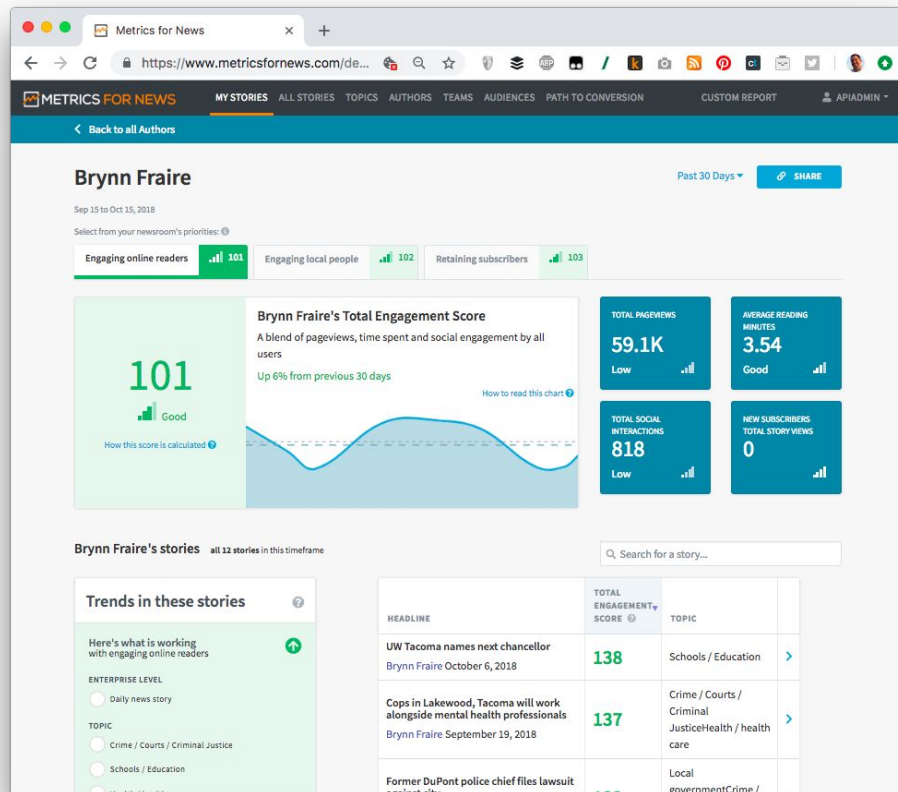
Complete findings from each study can be found on their [Project pages](#).

The Media Insight Project is a collaboration between the American Press Institute and the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with the

Study your own audience

Metrics for News analytics
for your editorial values
and business models

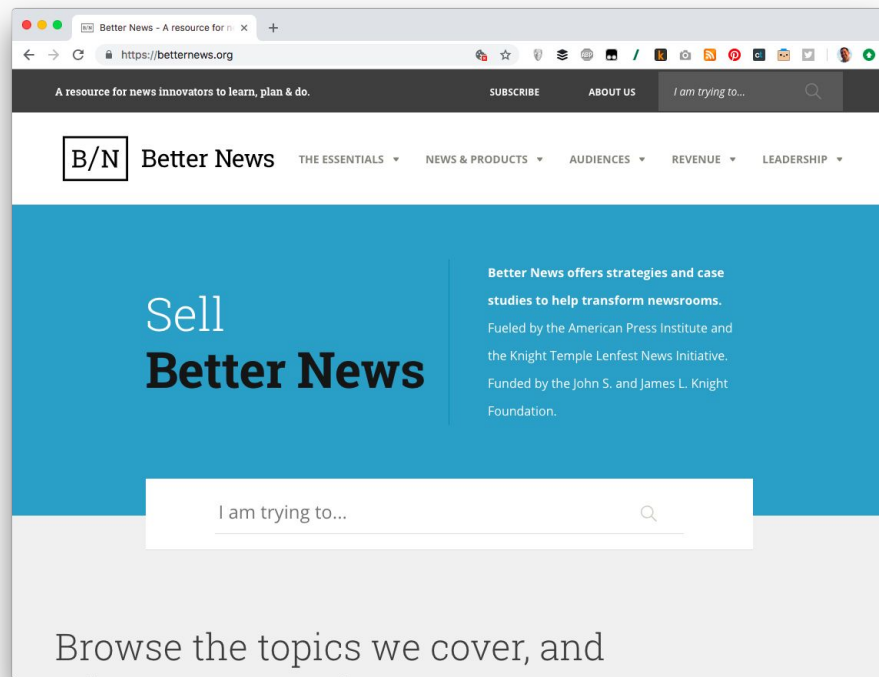
metricsfornews.com



Empower staff with best practices

Better News gathers the best
resources and guides from
all over the internet

betternews.org



Reader Revenue Toolkit

Loaded with solutions, examples,
case studies and resources on
key challenges

americanpressinstitute.org/category/reader-revenue/



Major subject areas:

- Acquisition
- Retention
- Audience subgroups
- Data-driven marketing
- Organizational alignment

Thanks! Stay in touch with us:

API's Need to Know newsletter: bit.ly/getapi

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Twitter:
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Facebook: facebook.com/AmericanPressInstitute

Jeff:
jeff.sonderman@pressinstitute.org
[@jeffsonderman](https://twitter.com/jeffsonderman)

These slides:
bit.ly/mega19audience

