

THE STATE OF **DIGITAL NEWS Q2 - 2020**

— Raw News, Real Insight —

The top news publishers, stories, topics, and more that were covered from April through June 2020.

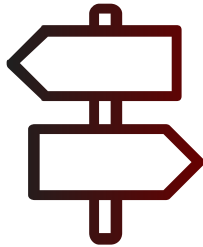


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Introduction

— The top news publishers, stories, topics, and more that were covered from April through June 2020. —

Konsume has compiled a report on the state of digital journalism in 2020, so far. We aim to provide insight into the 24-hour news cycle and showcase the most influential news publishers and the context of American news consumption.

To provide these insights, we have analyzed nearly 10 million news articles across 1,400+ major news publishers, written by tens of thousands of journalists worldwide, and all focused on a 90-day timespan.

Also provided in this report are insights into the business of news publishing, how audiences engage with news, and why news publishers cater to an audience.

Enjoy,

Team Konsume

90 Day Period: Apr 1 thru June 30, 2020



1,400 Major
Publications



10,000+
Journalists



10 Million
Articles



Global News: Biggest Influencers

Top news publishers, stories and topics

When it comes to the news's biggest influencers, two things appear to have the most impact on news consumers. The first is the volume/frequency/consistency in which a news outlet is publishing fresh, unique content – simply put, how often are they breaking news stories. The other is how well they can effectively reach and engage with news consumers on the internet via social media.

We can see from the Biggest Influencers data a clear difference in approach for many of the listed news publications. Some, such as foxnews.com, rely on volume and frequency of news content published and push that out on their social media channels – yet, their average social reach is in the bottom third of listed outlets.

Other news outlets don't break nearly as many news stories but appear to have a much larger social reach and an audience that is far more likely to act as evangelicals of their news content and engage with it and share it online. NBC News is an excellent example of an outlet that relies more heavily on an advanced social media strategy to gain influence and share of audience in the news industry instead of merely acting as a news content farm.

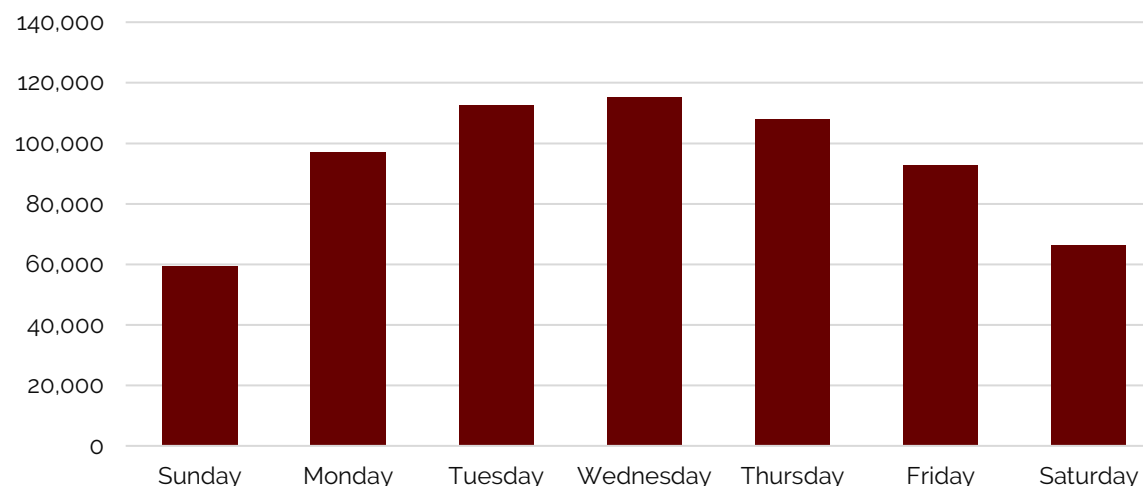
The Dailymail is an example of a news outlet that has broken the most news stories between April and June, yet has practically no social media reach. Therefore they are not able to as effectively grow their online publication or audience.

A View of the 24-Hour News Cycle

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —

Hour	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0:00	2,145	2,439	3,138	3,752	3,737	3,483	3,355
1:00	2,398	2,896	4,492	4,476	4,855	3,836	3,800
2:00	2,191	3,000	4,062	3,511	3,927	3,899	3,227
3:00	2,243	3,382	4,656	4,153	4,523	4,603	3,333
4:00	2,076		4,617	4,074	4,371	3,736	3,051
5:00	2,184	3,817	4,979	4,669	5,006	3,764	3,000
6:00	2,172	3,619	4,400	5,029	5,075	3,413	2,485
7:00	3,005	3,652	4,999	5,015	5,364	4,379	2,343
8:00	2,625	3,990	5,146	4,577	5,467	4,225	
9:00	2,509	3,973	4,547	5,395	4,353	4,077	2,185
10:00	2,315	3,852	4,798	4,772	4,941	3,896	2,663
11:00	3,000	4,619	4,395	4,828	4,698	3,919	2,470
12:00	2,483	4,092	4,984	4,189	3,266	3,686	2,723
13:00	2,415	4,201	4,952	4,948	4,387	4,572	3,035
14:00	2,418	4,089	4,423	5,333	3,983	3,795	3,087
15:00	2,738	4,421	4,822	5,093	4,409	3,879	2,600
16:00	2,486	5,196	5,059	5,261	5,028	4,532	2,671
17:00	2,054	5,009	5,514	5,632	4,772	4,157	2,500
18:00	2,381	4,785	4,257	5,474	4,646	3,842	2,571
19:00	2,692	5,423	5,217	5,296	4,487	3,879	2,464
20:00	2,761	4,750	5,083	5,516	4,660	3,449	2,387
21:00	2,640	4,823	5,093	5,124	4,205	3,671	2,333
22:00	2,418	4,193	4,321	4,267	3,544	3,132	2,339
23:00	2,192	4,381	4,683	4,778	4,189	3,009	2,043

Media Consumption & Amplification
by Day of Week



When does breaking news get consumed and shared?

Based on the data compiled by the Konsume news engine across thousands of news publishers and millions of news articles, most news coverage is consumed from Tuesday to Thursday, with Wednesday being the peak.

Social reach, engagement, and amplification of news on Tuesday is pretty consistent throughout the entire day, but doesn't experience nearly as many 'peaks' in terms of consumption and reach as on Wednesday. The majority of news consumed on Thursdays occurs in the early morning hours before picking up again near the end of the day.

Global News: Top 25 Influencers

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —

TOP PUBLISHERS	Breaking Stories	Avg. Social Reach	Influence Score*
foxnews.com	1,011	9,740	9,847,472
nbcnews.com	276	30,666	8,463,820
huffpost.com	517	15,294	7,906,953
cbsnews.com	291	17,974	5,230,426
nytimes.com	120	36,369	4,364,277
bbc.com	156	21,210	3,308,722
tmz.com	373	8,496	3,168,984
theguardian.com	426	6,458	2,751,214
rollingstone.com	160	16,960	2,713,618
nypost.com	650	4,160	2,703,730
npr.org	100	23,354	2,335,379
washingtonpost.com	113	14,638	1,654,128
businessinsider.com	279	5,335	1,488,589
cnn.com	66	21,905	1,445,753
variety.com	282	4,775	1,346,574
dailymail.co.uk	1,235	918	1,134,255
breitbart.com	663	1,621	1,074,635
cbssports.com	834	1,268	1,057,558
people.com	943	970	915,111
newsweek.com	274	3,311	907,217
msnbc.com	85	9,600	816,035
ew.com	227	3,440	780,883
apnews.com	603	1,233	743,393
dailycaller.com	522	1,418	740,033
thehill.com	140	4,994	699,217

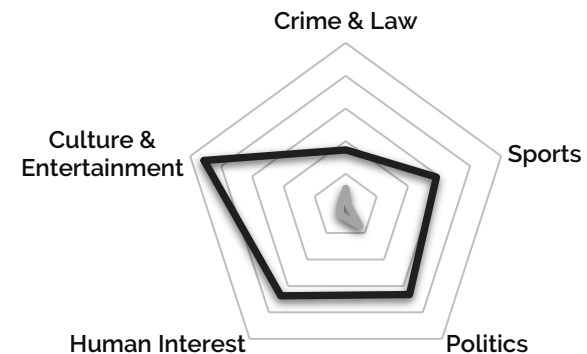
Focus on Media Landscape

Top news publishers, stories and topics

It's no surprise that Culture & Entertainment was the most heavily covered category of news in the second quarter of 2020. It has the broadest appeal and widest interested audience of any other news category. Stories published in this category are typically 'feel good' in nature. Readers can jump in and out of the coverage during pockets of free time without being burdened with the harsh reality of politics, crime, and tragedy.

Human Interest had the second most news coverage for the given period, followed closely by politics, then we see sports and crime & law round out the top five.

If not for the global pandemic (COVID-19) currently raging through the world and shutting down borders, economies, and professional sports leagues, it's safe to bet sports would have cracked the top three instead of lagging in overall coverage.



From Apr 1 – Jun 30: More than Three Million Articles were analyzed and classified

We then measured social media reach across a sample of ~50k trending news articles

Global Focus of Media Coverage

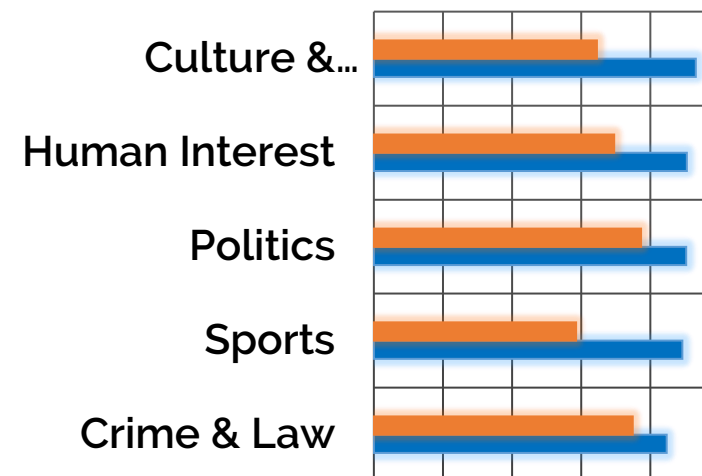
Top news publishers, stories and topics

What's interesting when comparing volume and frequency of coverage to actual social reach is the fact that the category that generated the most news coverage overall (Culture & Entertainment) isn't the leader in social engagement or reach. Politics and Crime & Law take the gold star for dominating on social media during this period.

The reason behind Politics and Crime & Law leading on social engagement and reach is a bit nuanced. The current political climate in the U.S. is one of divisiveness, and pockets of voters within each political party behave with a vicious 'us' versus 'them' mentality. That can help drive reader engagement on social media because news stories in these categories tend to bring out emotional responses in many people. Hence, the stories are more likely to be shared over and over.

Coupled with the Black Lives Matter movement and the protests on systemic social injustices carried out towards people of color in the U.S., and it becomes another major issue for most Americans.

Global Focus: The Big 5 Categories (Apr - Jul 2020)



Total Value of Trend Power in Blue.
Social media reach measured across a sample of ~50K trending news articles.



Category – Entertainment & Culture

—— Top news publishers, stories and topics ——

Category Leader – Entertainment & Culture

Top news publishers, stories and topics

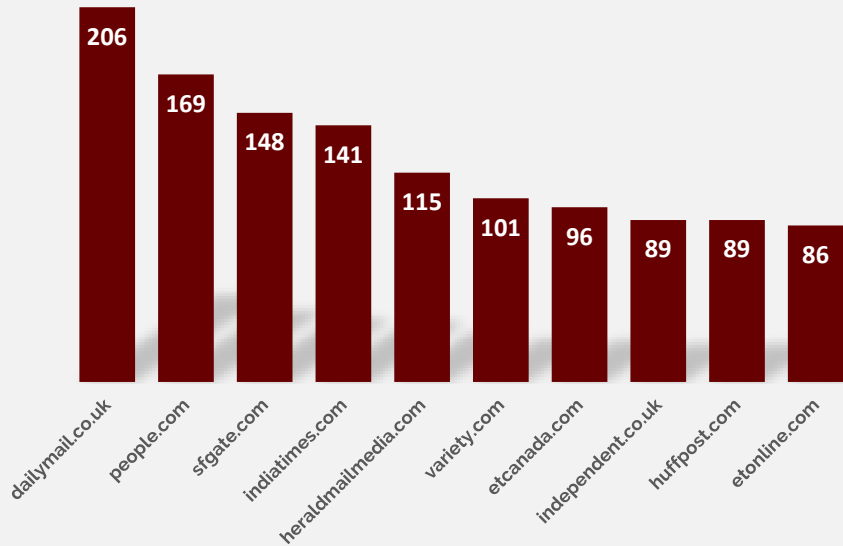
Variety was the one publication with a balanced mix of frequency and volume of entertainment & culture stories published and a solid social media engagement strategy.

Other publishers who covered the category either published a large volume of stories or had an extensive social reach, but not both.

Without a more balanced approach, it can be challenging not only to engage with as many of their readers as possible for every story published but also to attract brand new readers.

NEWS PUBLISHER	TOTAL SOCIAL REACH	STORIES PUBLISHED
variety.com	1,567,087	493
nbcnews.com	759,424	228
foxnews.com	521,795	964
theguardian.com	521,666	462
time.com	459,907	97
bbc.com	455,885	104
npr.org	416,866	253
huffpost.com	415,627	656
ew.com	252,461	384
indiatimes.com	211,417	2981

Breaking News Coverage: Entertainment & Culture 2020 - Q2



Entertainment & Culture

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Breaking News Coverage Top 10

For publications that covered entertainment and culture most often, these are the ones who broke news stories the most. Looking at the data, you can see Variety, the overall category leader, is in the middle of the pack in the number of stories broken.

While there is more to being a news leader or authority on a specific topic of coverage than how many stories you publish, cultivating a reputation for breaking news coverage does hold value with newsreaders.

Consider that the DailyMail has broken the most entertainment & culture related news stories from April through June. Even though this digital publication isn't necessarily a "category leader," their readers know if they want the latest news in entertainment, the DailyMail is where they should probably check first.

Digital news publications that show they are adequately 'tuned in' to the industry they are reporting on highlight their commitment of resources (both human and technological) to report on entertainment & culture news topics.

If you are interested in staying up-to-date on happenings within entertainment and culture, these are the publications you should be frequenting.

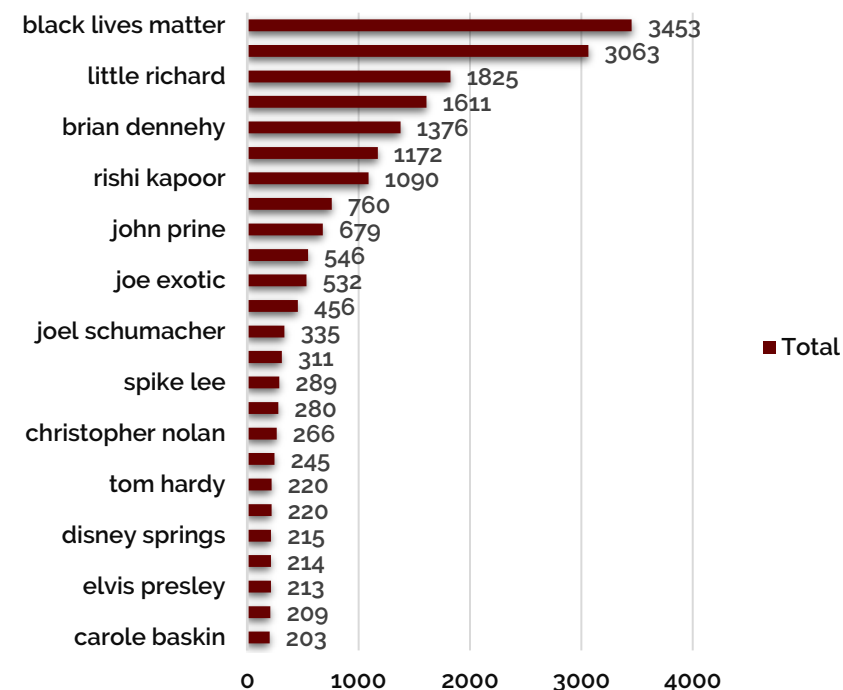
Entertainment & Culture

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Black Lives Matter, and the coverage of black lives in general, dominated the news cycle from the end of May through June. The rest of the top trending topics include celebrities, politicians, and entertainers who maintained a certain degree of newsworthiness for various reasons.

The majority of this list reads as a six-degrees-of-separation from Black Lives Matter or the COVID-19 global pandemic. Nearly every topic or person here can somehow find its way back to one or both.

The 25 Most Covered Topics in Entertainment



#1 Topic: Black Lives Matter

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —

The Largest Movement in U.S. History:

Mentions of Black Lives Matter dominated the news, which began on May 26 with the murder of George Floyd at the hands of a white police officer.

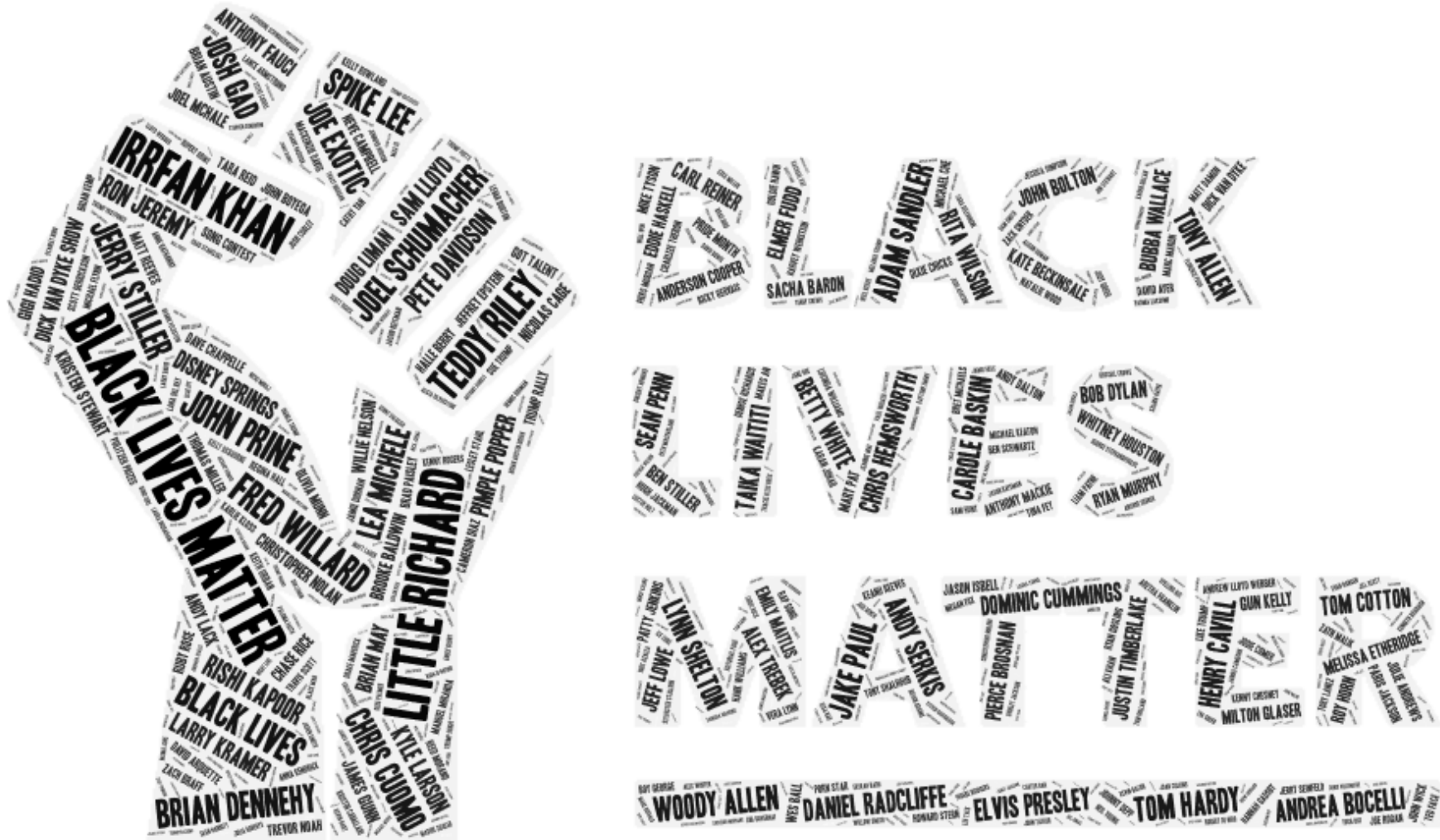
Between the responses from local law enforcement, politicians, and the president, tensions were only further inflamed, and millions of people marched and protested throughout all of June.

Reports indicate that between 15 and 26 million people joined the marches and protests during this time.



Visualization of Most Covered Topics

Top news publishers, stories and topics





Category – Politics

—— Top news publishers, stories and topics ——

Category Leader - Politics

Top news publishers, stories and topics

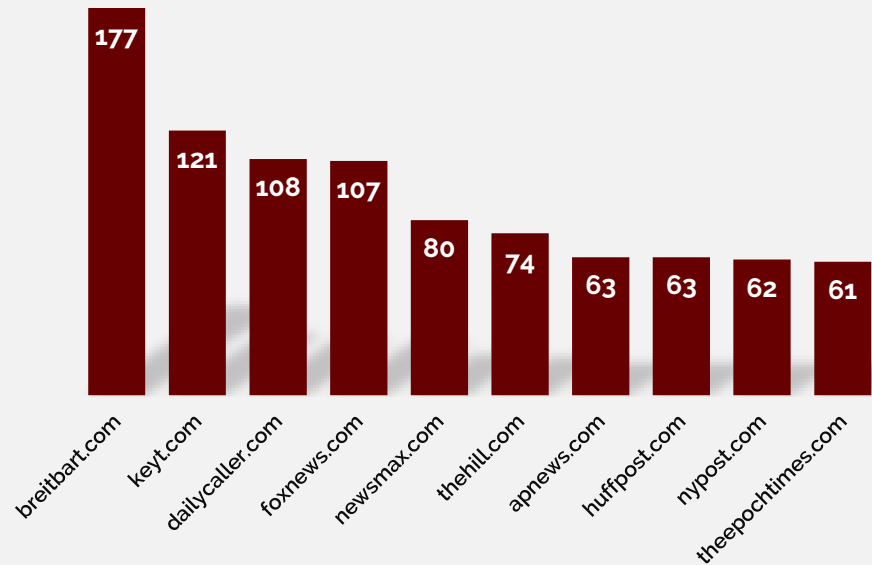
Fox News appears near the top for political coverage. They publish news stories within politics more often than anyone else – it's not even close. Their digital publication relies on that volume and frequency of publishing within the category to reach as many people on social media as possible.

On the other hand, NBC News focuses far more on the quality and depth of the stories they publish online and leans heavily on their social media to serve their political coverage to more people via social media.

Of these ten publications, two of them orient their coverage to conservative political views. Six showed a lean in coverage towards liberal politics, and the other two played it as close to the middle of the road as possible (The Hill and BBC).

NEWS PUBLISHER	TOTAL SOCIAL REACH	STORIES PUBLISHED
nbcnews.com	7,863,845	165
foxnews.com	2,646,457	717
huffpost.com	1,790,798	484
cnn.com	1,723,318	9
nytimes.com	1,520,900	227
cnbc.com	1,415,028	153
nypost.com	1,177,650	518
thehill.com	846,555	424
bbc.com	808,275	75
businessinsider.com	776,010	217

Breaking News Coverage: Politics Q2 - 2020



Politics

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Breaking News Coverage Top 10

Which news publisher covering politics should you go to if you want up-to-the-minute news updates on political stories that interest you?

That depends on your political leanings.

Hard- to moderate-right leaning news publications broke original political news stories more often than in-the-middle or left-leaning publications did.

Politics

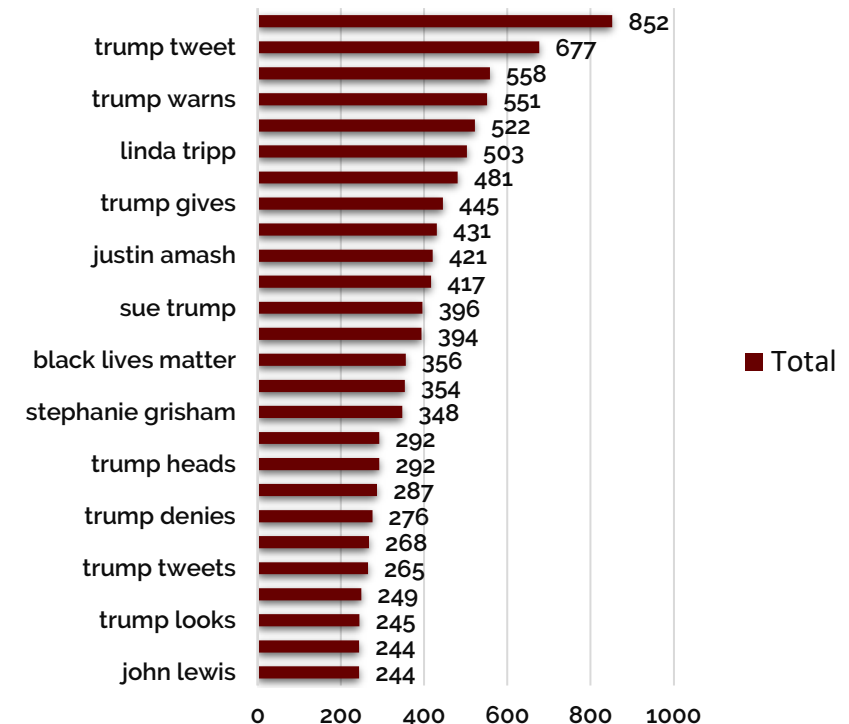
Top news publishers, stories and topics

It shouldn't be much of a surprise that the most covered person in politics would be the President of the United States.

Between the frequent and adversarial tweets, the blatant attempts at spreading misinformation to the general public, and the chaos surrounding his administration – all roads lead to President Donald J. Trump in some way.

Former National Security Advisor to President Trump John Bolton released a tell-all book about his time serving the President, which included serious allegations of gross negligence and misconduct.

The 25 Most Covered Topics in Politics



#1 Topic: John Bolton

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —



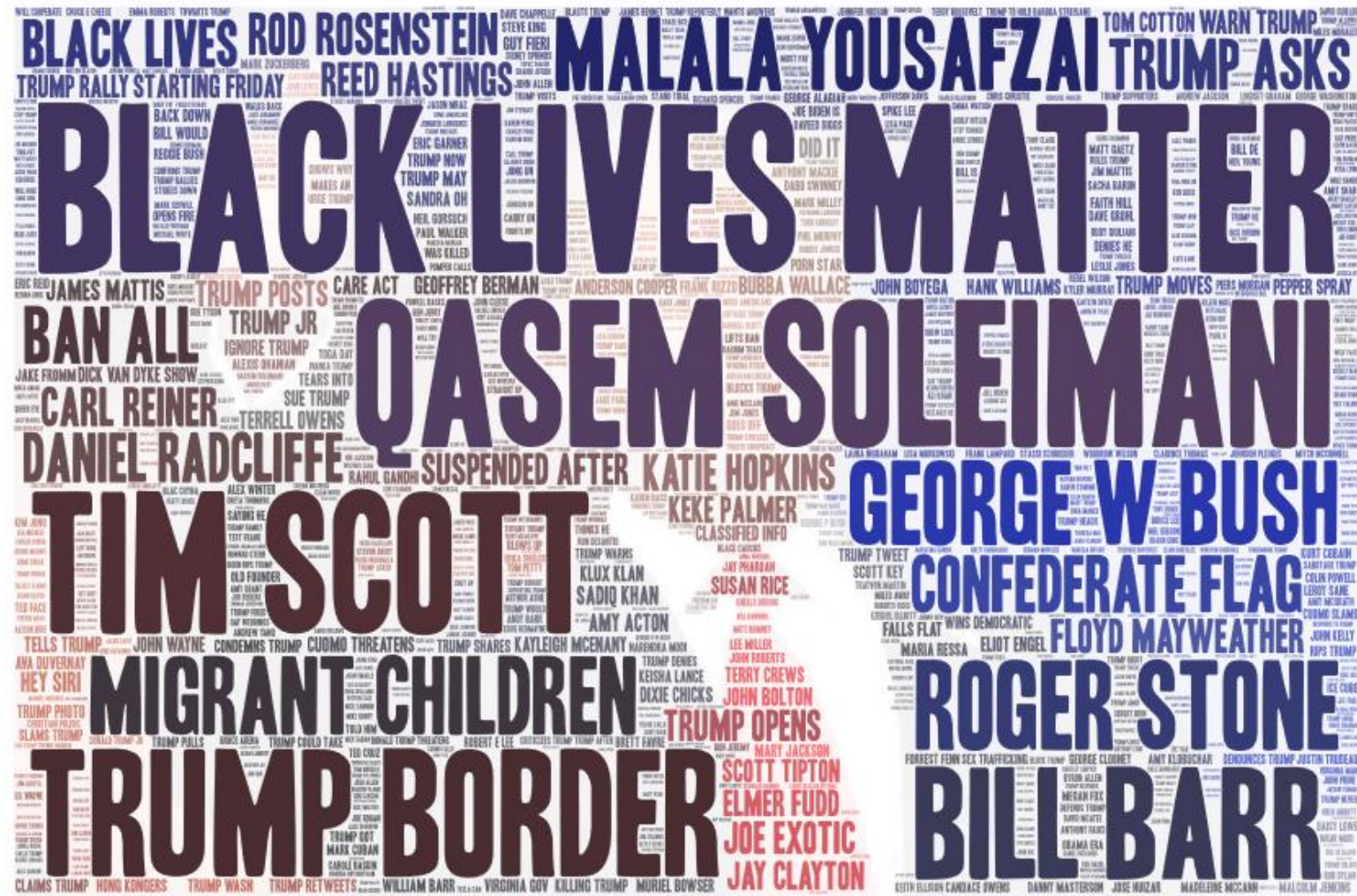
'The Room Where it Happened'

Former National Security Advisor to President Donald Trump, John Bolton made waves by publishing a tell-all book about what it was like working with Trump.

Bolton alleged Trump requested help from China to win re-election, that Trump routinely complained he felt they were too tough on Russia, and even wanted to have CNN reporters 'serve time in jail'.

Visualization of Most Covered Topics

Top news publishers, stories and topics



Category – Human Interest

—— Top news publishers, stories and topics ——

Category Leader – Human Interest

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Huff Post tackles human interest stories with a dedicated passion. Combined with the volume of news stories they publish and regularly update, the digital publication is also active on social media to promote their published work with a decent social reach.

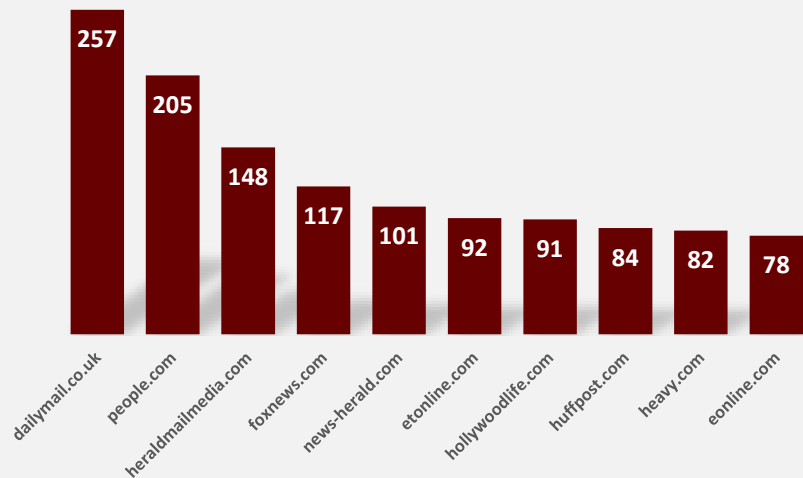
Fox News is another outlet that focuses on the volume of stories published versus a more dedicated and creative social engagement and promotion strategy.

Rolling Stone focuses more on long-form, high-quality storytelling journalism than publishing multiple hundreds of short-form articles to cater to their audience.

Overall, the top news publishers on this list would be go-to sources for many news readers who care about news focused on the more emotional and more in-depth meaning topics and people.

News Publisher	Total Social Reach	Stories Published
huffpost.com	2,536,792	784
rollingstone.com	1,747,054	129
foxnews.com	1,190,477	881
tmz.com	1,055,713	227
nbcnews.com	1,055,533	147
nytimes.com	518,372	192
variety.com	421,261	152
businessinsider.com	365,693	58
theguardian.com	304,307	510
businessinsider.my	294,979	11

Breaking News Coverage: Human Interest Q2 - 2020



Human Interest

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Breaking News Coverage Top 10

For the timeliest updates on breaking news coverage within Human Interest, the DailMail and People are a cut above the rest covering the category.

These two publications averaged two or more breaking news stories per day, and they did it consistently throughout the quarter.

Human Interest

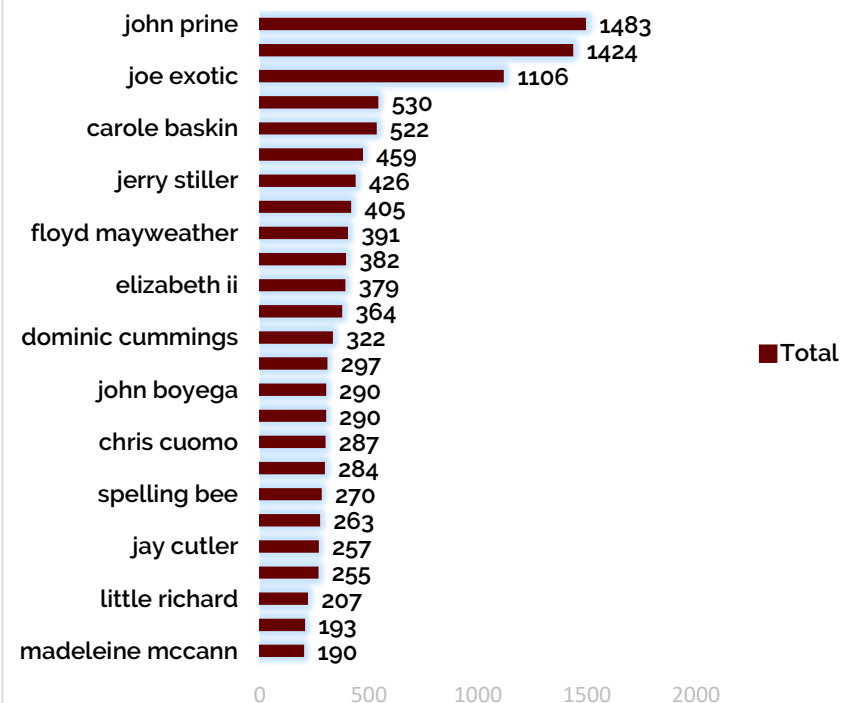
Top news publishers, stories and topics

Every one of the topics within the Top 25 has a real story behind it. Written with such depth, engaged interest, and sometimes even a passion for learning what makes something or someone genuinely interesting.

Many of the stories written about these topics intimately convey the loss of a revered individual, a tragedy in the form of a helicopter crash, or even the spark and intent of an entire movement.

These are the topics that were covered and cared about the most within Human Interest.

The 25 Most Covered Topics in Human Interest



#1 Topic: John Prine

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —

One of America's Greatest Songwriters

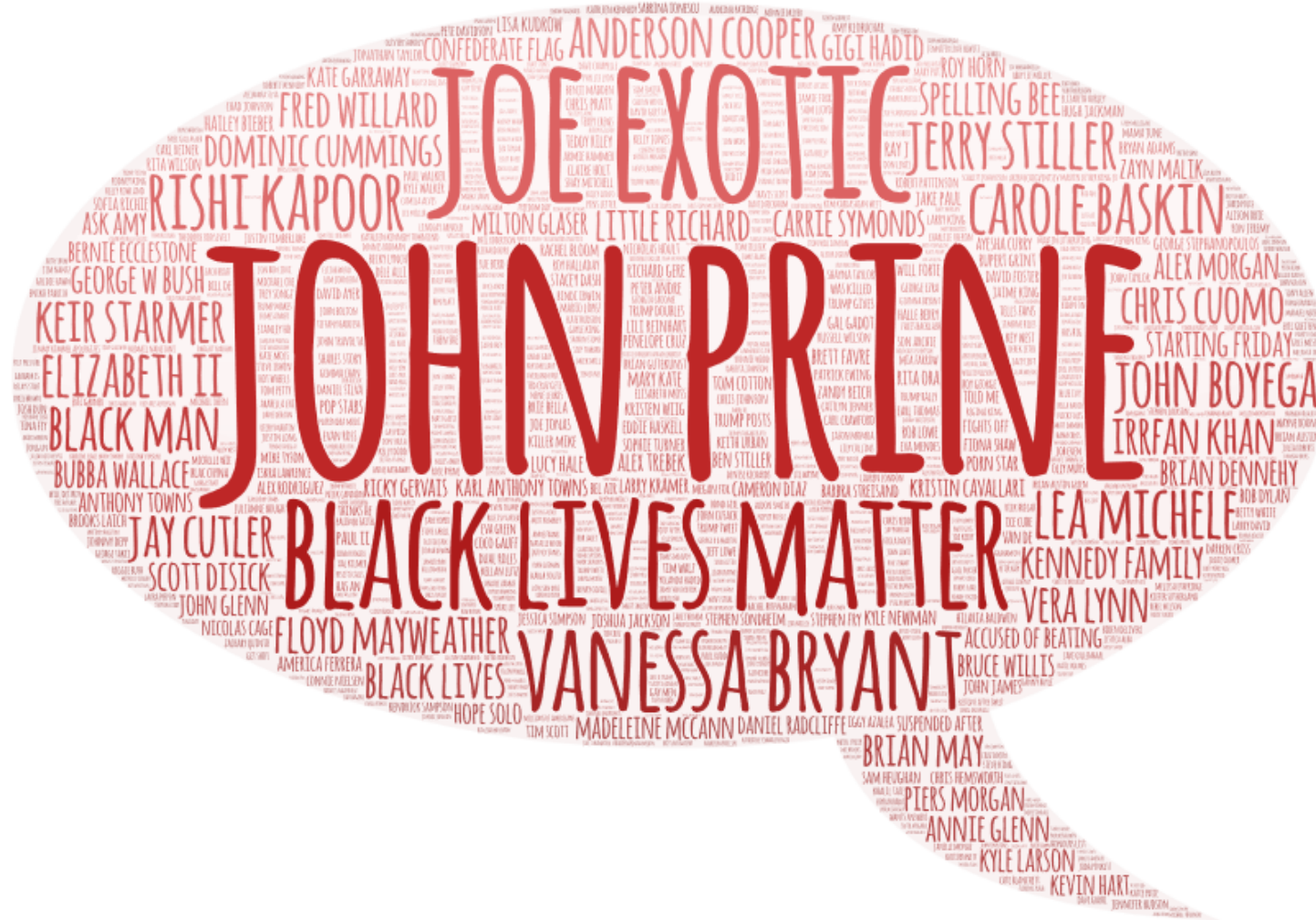
John Prine died on April 7, 2020, after contracting the coronavirus. He may not have been the most well-known or easily recognized industry legend by folk-country fans, but he was one of the most respected and revered songwriters nevertheless.

In life, Prine was admired by Bob Dylan, Kris Kristofferson, and many others. In death, he will be remembered by an entire industry.



Visualization of Most Covered Topics

Top news publishers, stories and topics





Category – Sports

—— Top news publishers, stories and topics ——

Category Leader - Sports

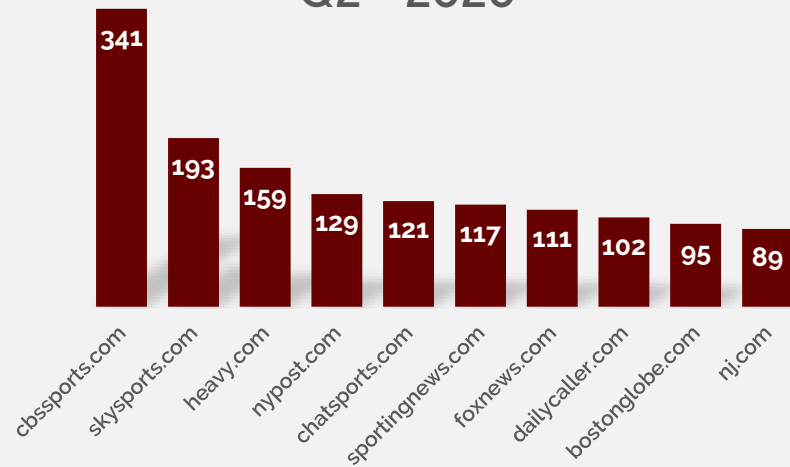
Top news publishers, stories and topics

CBS Sports was by far the most reliable sports news publisher from April to May. What's impressive about the consistent sports news coverage from CBS Sports is that sports had been practically shut down due to the coronavirus.

No other publisher with a specific focus in sports came close to CBS Sports in volume or social reach.

NEWS PUBLISHERS	TOTAL SOCIAL REACH	STORIES PUBLISHED
nytimes.com	760,757	16
cbssports.com	651,394	2206
tmz.com	337,705	169
skysports.com	270,999	792
latimes.com	206,545	375
nbcnews.com	179,537	81
nypost.com	132,119	685
dailycaller.com	88,628	610
huffpost.com	77,884	164
foxnews.com	71,129	825

Breaking News Coverage: Sports Q2 - 2020



Sports

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Breaking News Coverage Top 10

No other news publisher audited dominated an entire news category quite the way CBS has with sports.

More often than not, they were breaking stories within the industry, proving they are a go-to source for up-to-the-minute sports reporting and updates. That's in addition to publishing most news stories among all news publishers within the sports media industry.

They break and publish the most news stories, but they also have a strong social media presence to deliver their unique content.

Sports

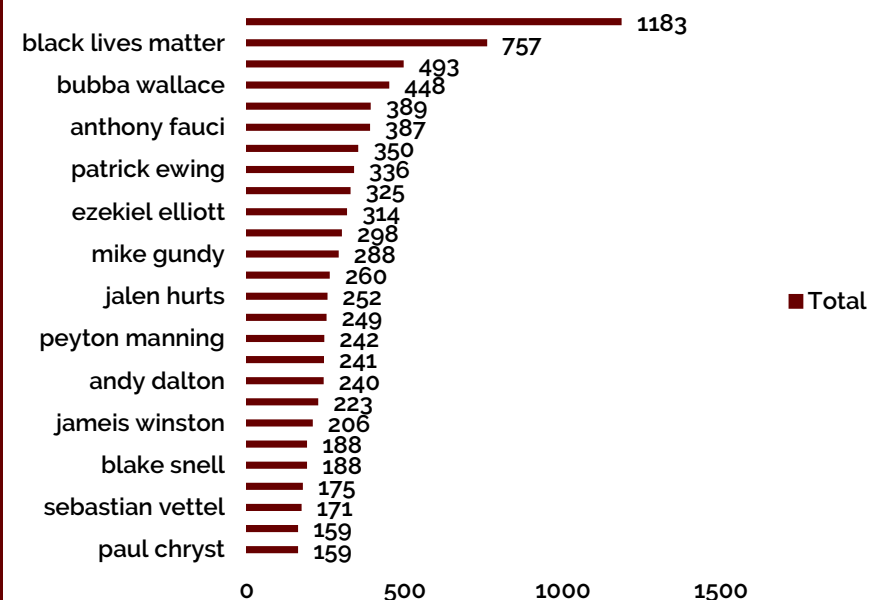
Top news publishers, stories and topics

Legendary Miami Dolphins head coach Don Shula was the most covered topic in sports for Q2. He passed away at the age of 90, and an abundance of stories was published reporting his death and highlighting his accomplishments within professional football.

Black Lives Matter also took center stage within the sports world thanks to the NBA and other athletes cross all sports who stand against racial injustice.

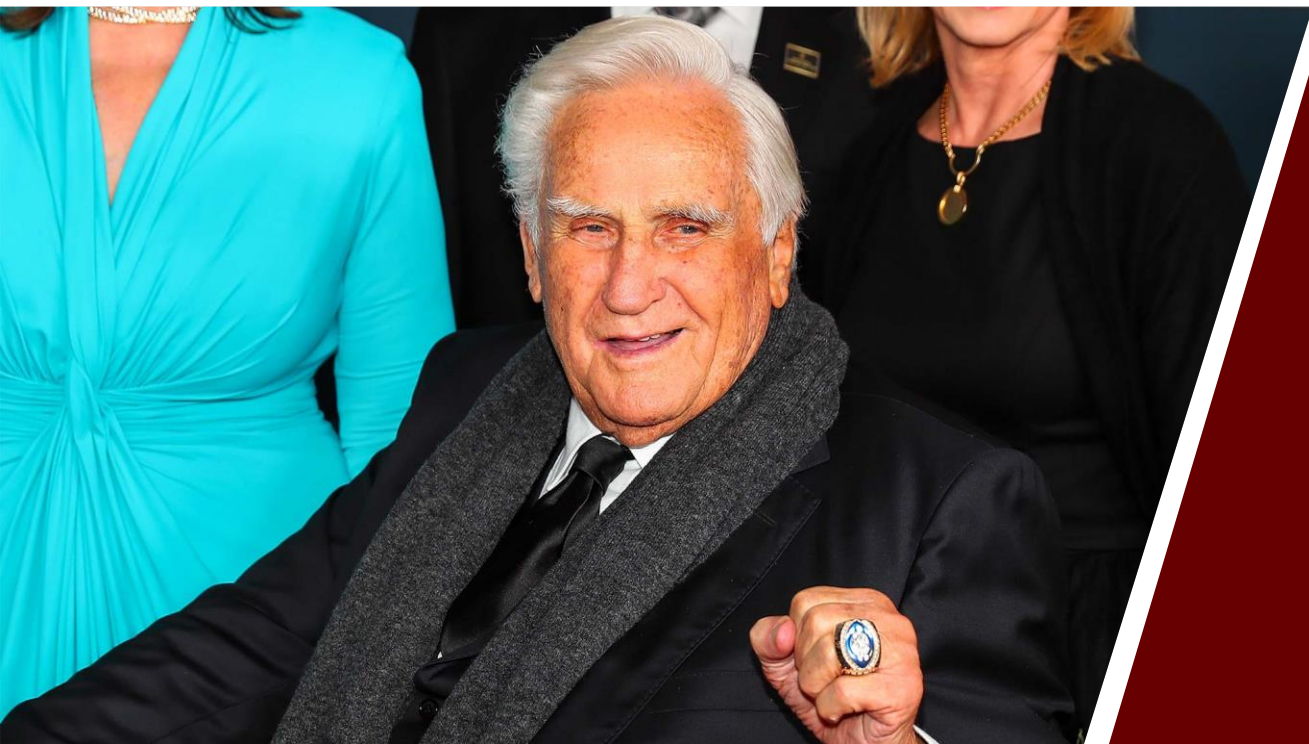
NASCAR banned the confederate flag at their racing events, and MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred has continuously had his leadership questioned while trying to restart Major League Baseball.

The 25 Most Covered Topics in Sports



#1 Topic: Don Shula

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —



Legendary NFL Coach Dead at 90

The winningest coach in NFL history, Don Shula was an NFL head coach for 33 years. He spent 26 years as the head coach for the Miami Dolphins, winning multiple Super Bowl titles. His 1972 Dolphins remain the only perfect team in NFL history with a 14-0 regular season record and a Super Bowl title.

Visualization of Most Covered Topics

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —



Category – Law & Crime

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —

Category Leader – Law & Crime

Top news publishers, stories and topics

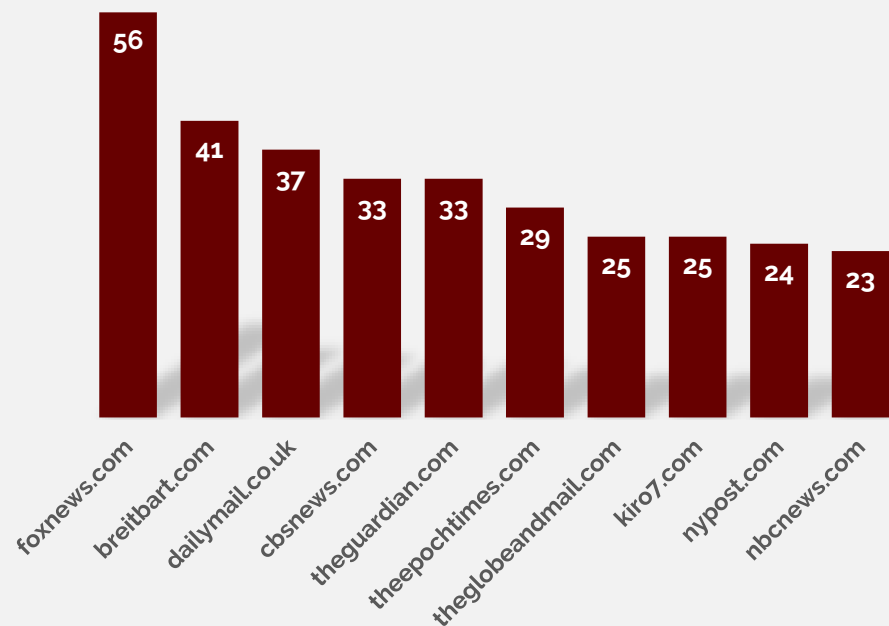
The coverage of law and crime was pretty steady throughout the second quarter of 2020.

The Black Lives Matter movement has fueled a lot of the news stories during this period, but the anniversary of Daniel Pearl's kidnapping and brutal murder as well updates on those guilty of the crime received a large amount of coverage. The cases of Joe Exotic, Michael Flynn, Roger Stone, and many others with direct ties to President Trump also were in the news often.

Fox News was on top of providing the most frequent and consistent coverage to their readers, followed by Breitbart, The Guardian, CBS News, and MSNBC.

NEWS PUBLISHER	TOTAL SOCIAL REACH	STORIES PUBLISHED
foxnews.com	2,280,041	655
nbcnews.com	1,690,757	143
nytimes.com	1,424,848	115
cbsnews.com	1,384,345	462
msnbc.com	624,853	276
npr.org	422,091	132
tmz.com	333,588	115
theguardian.com	261,920	471
breitbart.com	249,356	556
bbc.com	233,116	20

Breaking News Coverage: Law & Crime Q2 - 2020



Law & Crime

Top news publishers, stories and topics

Breaking News Coverage Top 10

The news publications who broke the most law and crime focused news stories read like a who's who of moderate-right to hard-right leaning news publishers.

Fox News dominates the category with Breitbart and DailyMail making every effort to maintain strong showings in the category given their reader demographic.

Aside from Daniel Pearl and the Black Lives Matter movement, another topic covered most frequently revolved around Michael Flynn, the disgraced former National Security Advisor who served in that position the first 22 days of President Trump's presidency.

Law & Crime

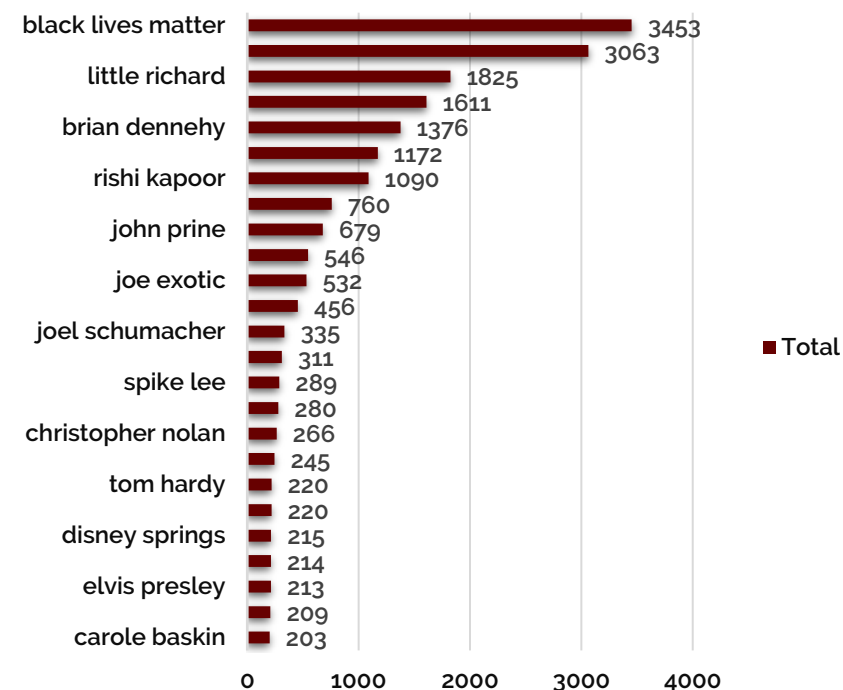
Top news publishers, stories and topics

The anniversary of Daniel Pearl's kidnapping and murder dominated news coverage, as did coverage of the Madeleine McCann case.

People took an interest in updates and remembrance pieces on those cases and the circumstances surrounding the crimes committed.

More broadly, though, are the list of people with close personal and business ties to President Trump that found themselves involved in an assortment of criminal accusations and court cases.

The 25 Most Covered Topics in Entertainment



#1 Topic: Daniel Pearl

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —

U.S. Demands Justice for Daniel Pearl

Daniel Pearl was an American journalist who was kidnapped and beheaded on video by terrorists in Pakistan in 2002. The Pakistani court system is hearing whether Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, one of the four men convicted of kidnapping and murdering Pearl, should be released from prison after serving 18 years already.

Pearl's family and the U.S. government have demanded that his killers continue to face justice for the crimes committed.



Visualization of Most Covered Topics

— Top news publishers, stories and topics —



News Consumers: Demographics, Attitudes and Insight

Top news publishers, stories and topics



We know from available data and insights that the average age of the digital news audience – those more likely to get their news online- predominantly is in their 30s and 40s. According to our polling, we also know that 37% of people who consume the news online will also share news stories they find interesting or important enough to 'spread the word' about.



A whopping 53% of those polled also expressed a deep distrust in online news.



What drives this distrust in online news?



According to a Pew Research Center report, 55% of U.S. adults get their news from social media platforms "often" or "sometimes." Over half, 28% said they get their news from social media "often."



While the source where a reader chooses to get their news information from can undoubtedly play a role in how much they trust or distrust what they're reading, nearly 9-in-ten (88%) stated social media companies have control over the mix of news they see each day. Because of the algorithms in place on some social platforms to serve users content, they are more likely to like, 62% of those surveyed believe forcing readers into a news 'bubble' where they only see what they'll agree with is a significant problem.



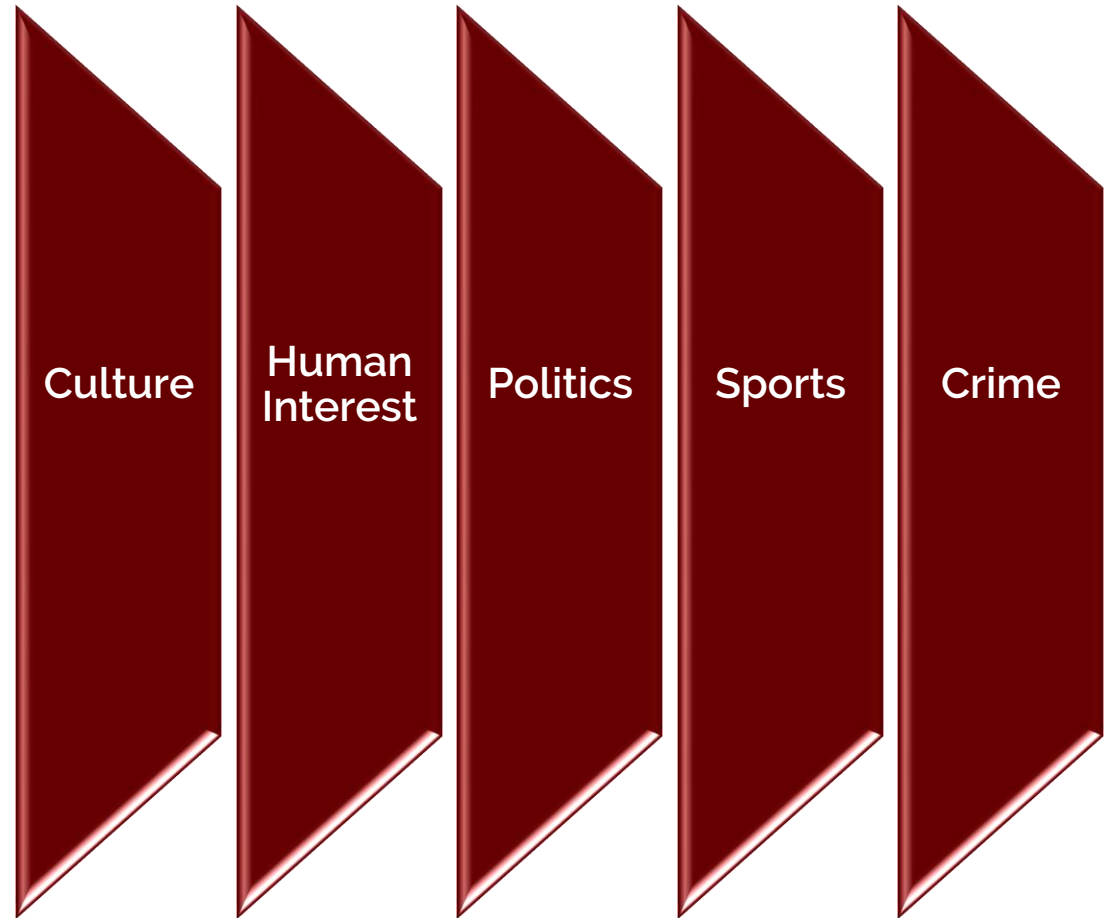
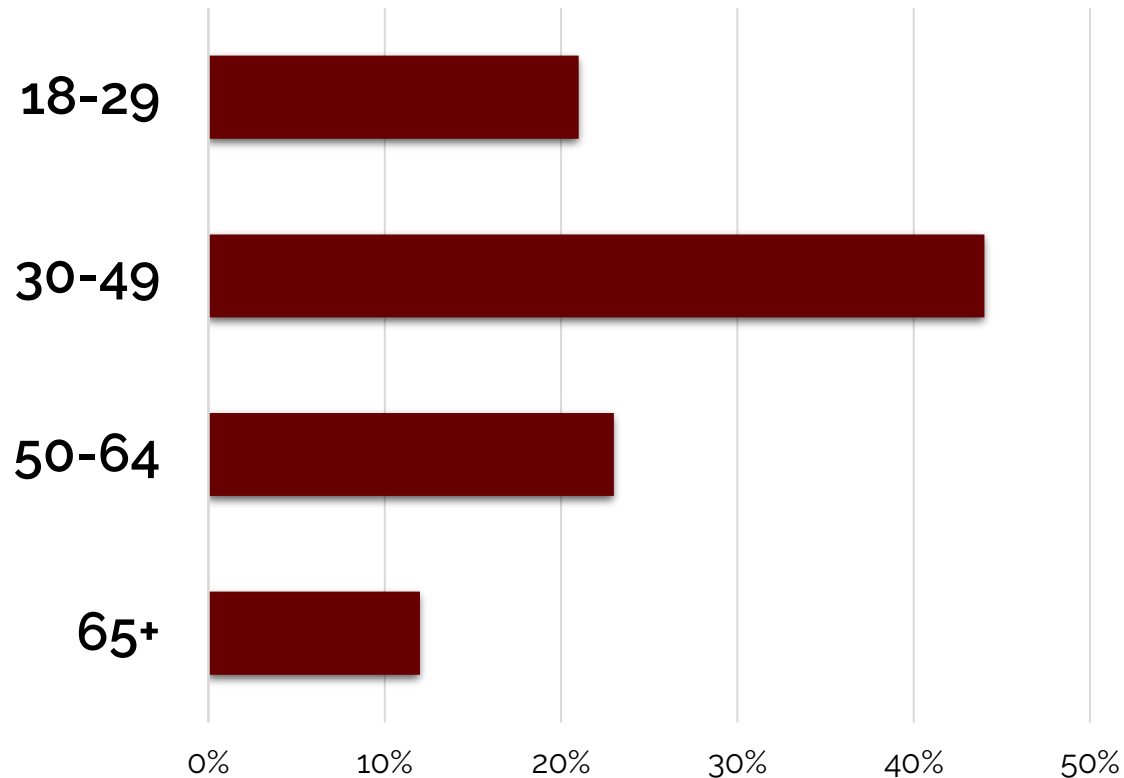
More than half of those who get their news from social media rely on Facebook the most (52%), followed by YouTube (28%), Twitter (17%), and Instagram (14%). LinkedIn and Reddit each have an 8% share of those users who rely on them for news, and Snapchat came in at the bottom with 6%.



Facebook, Twitter, and Reddit combined to account for 73% of users seeking out news information on their platforms specifically.

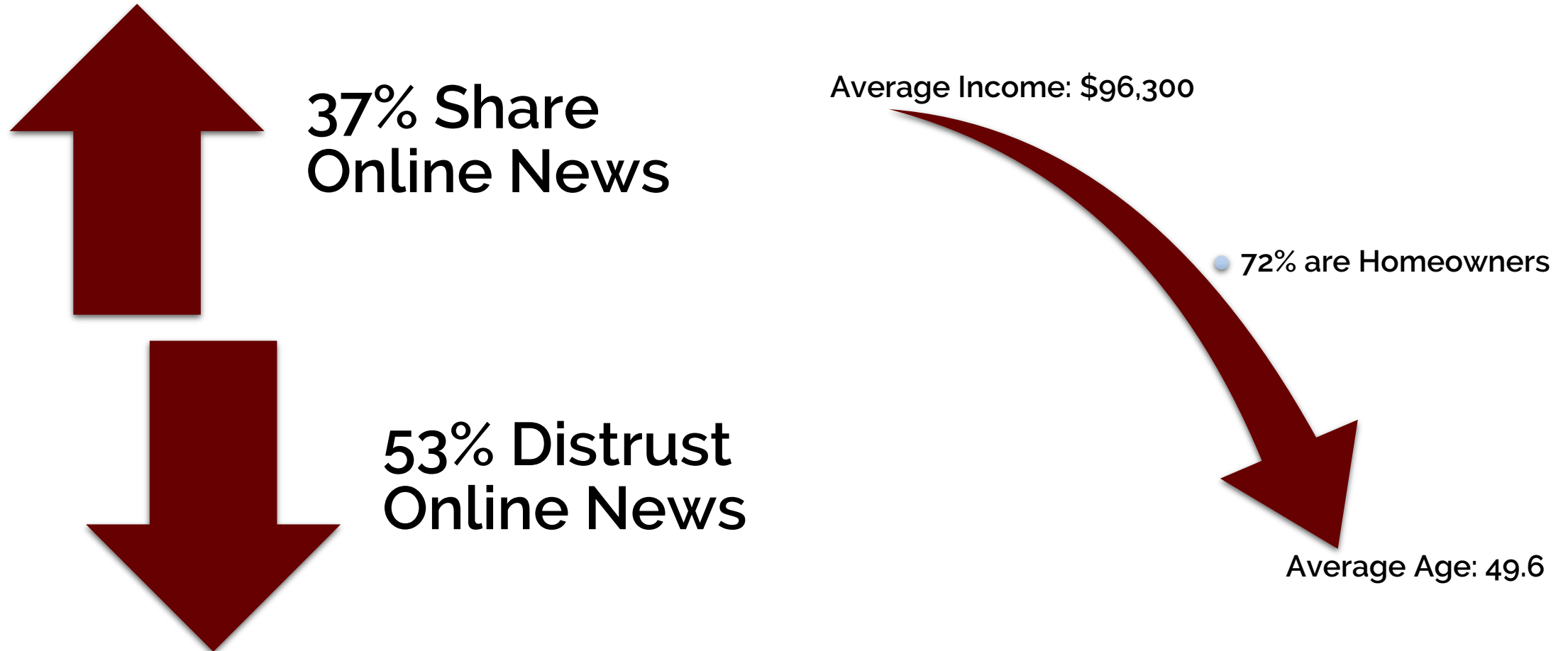
News Audience & Content Consumption

Age of Digital News Audience



Type of Stories Most Consumed and Shared

News Audience Insights



Source: Konsume News Poll: Oct 2019

Source: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR_2019_FINAL.pdf (Page: 119)

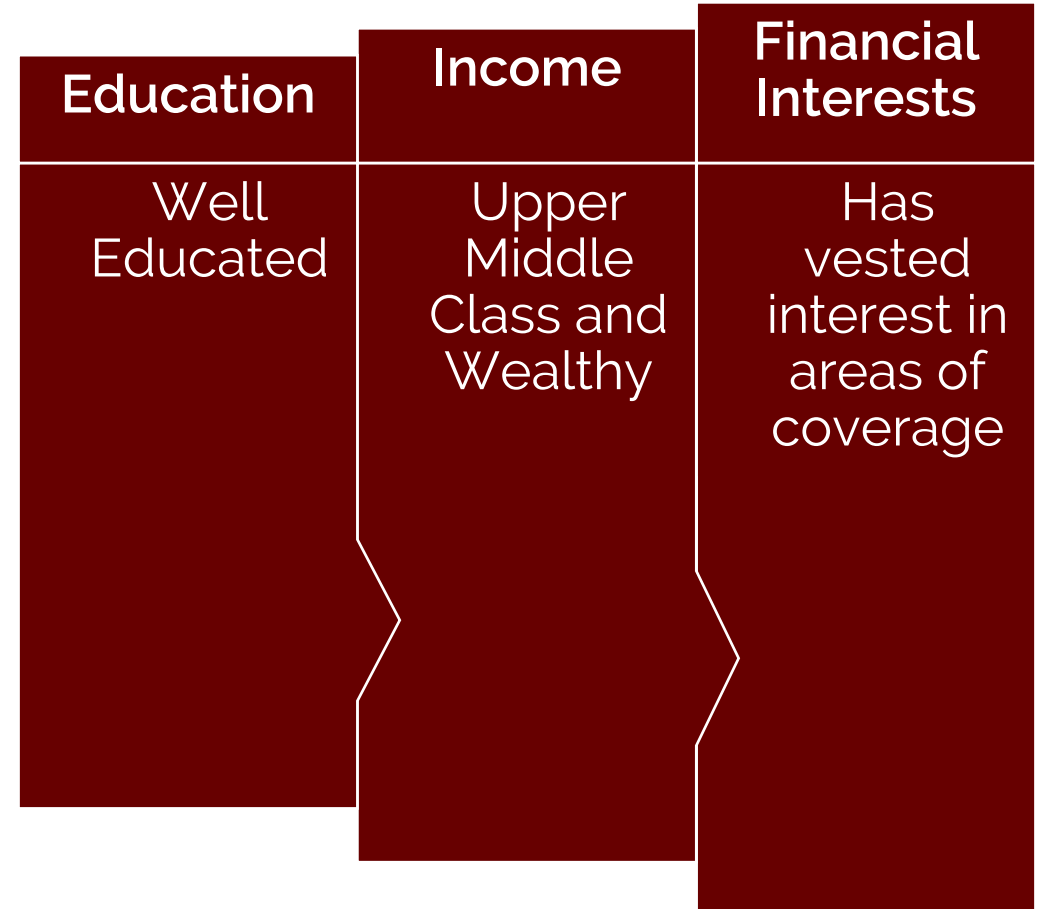
Who Pays for the News?



Why do 16% pay for News?

The consumers most willing to pay for a subscription or digital news service have a vested interest in the news being reported.

Subscription based news tends to be more in depth, and specific to a topic that audiences care about. e.g. Investors, executives, subject matter experts, etc.



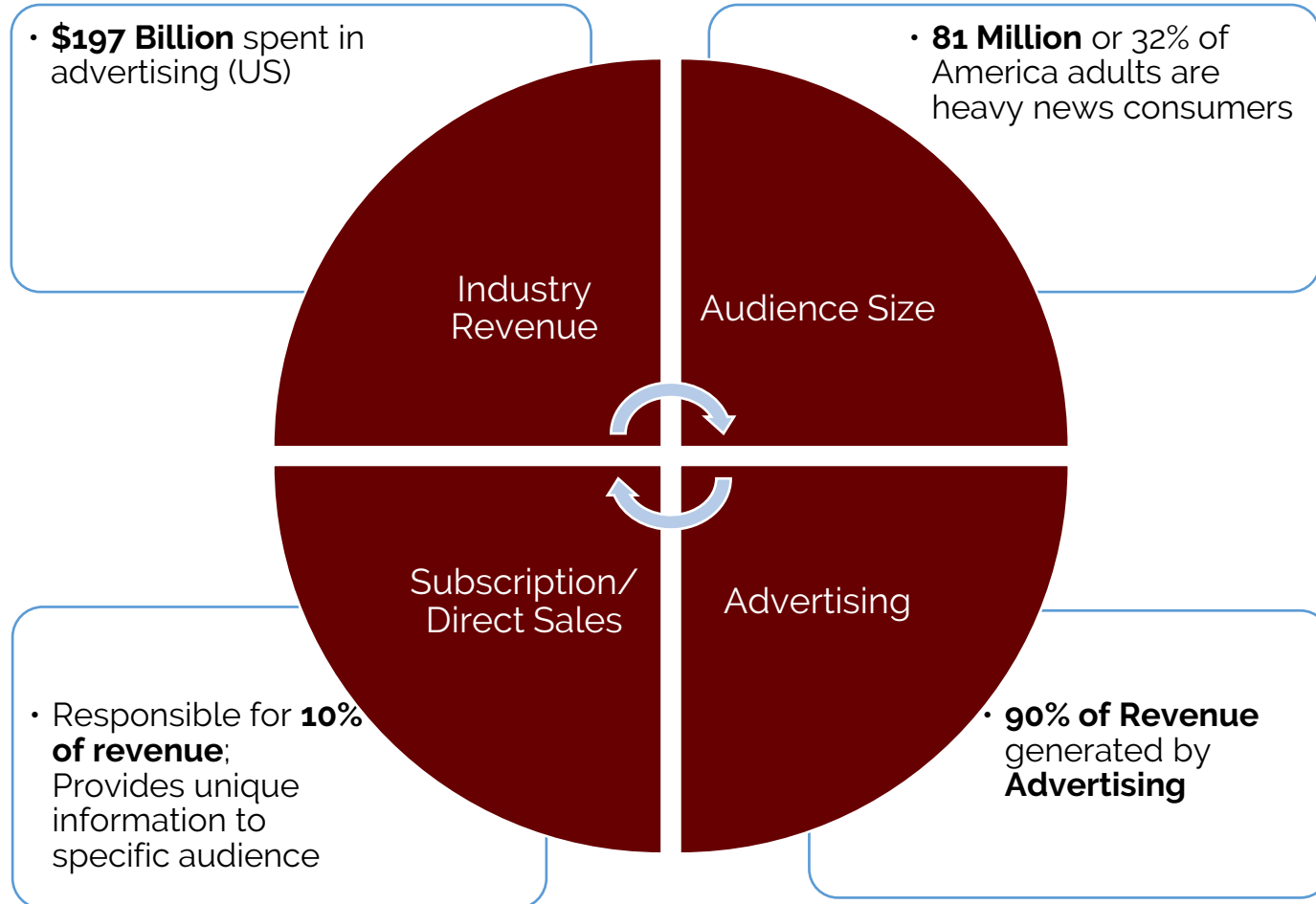
Source: Konsume News Poll: Oct 2019;
Pew Research Survey of US Adults (Conducted Oct 29-Nov 11, 2019);

Advertising's Role in News Publishing

Advertising dollars finance the industry of news media. News publishers are beholden to marketing campaigns for survival.

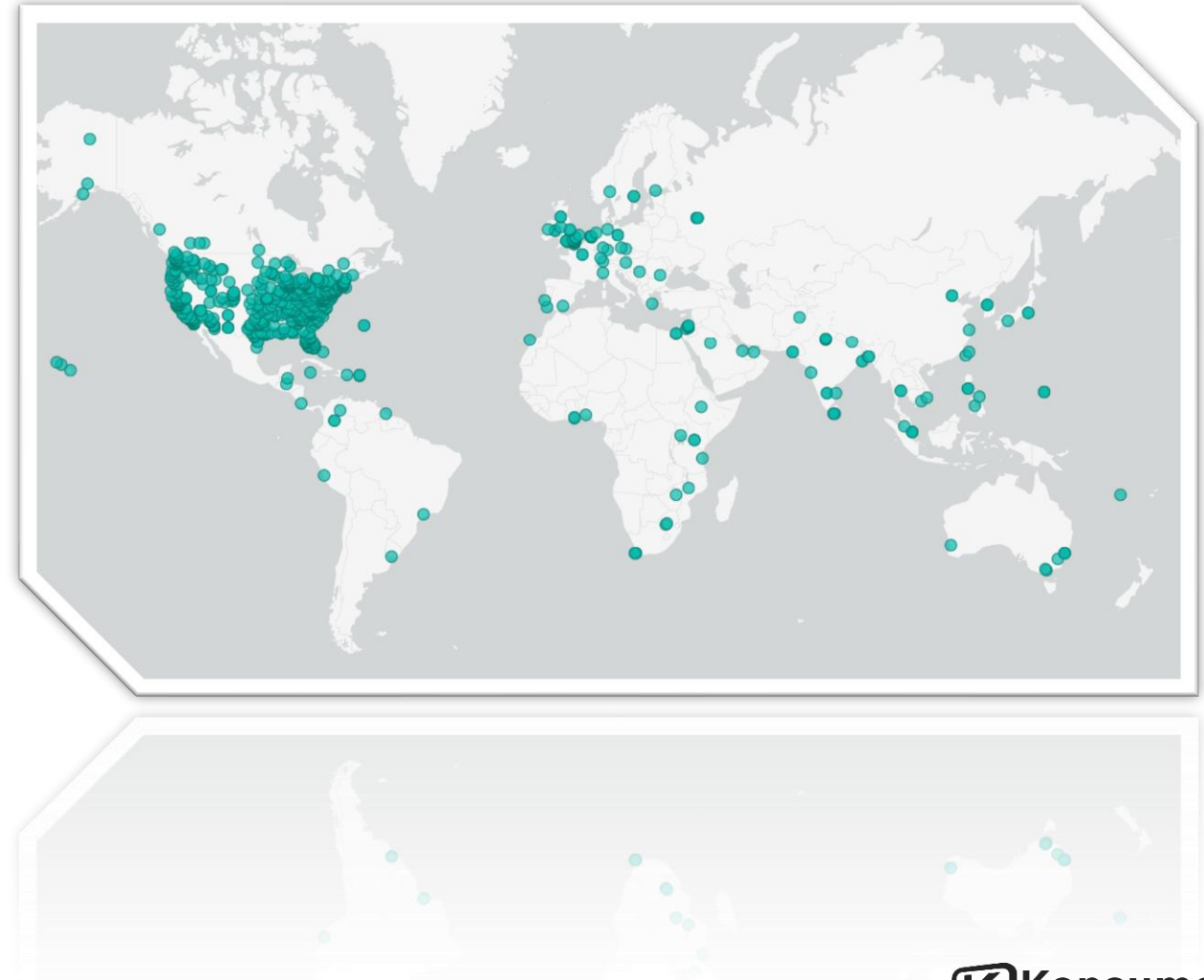
The news consuming public provide publishers, and advertisers, with clicks and purchase intent.

In exchange for cheap, convenient, and professional news insights, the public receives advertising messaging, where personal data points are collected and sold.



Sources

- News Publications
 - 1,400+ major news publishers worldwide
- News Consumers
 - US audience; sourced from US Census; comScore, Quantcast, AWS and MRI Simmons publicly shared reports; Konsume News polling;
- Marketing & Advertising
 - Pew Research
 - Statista
 - Reuters
 - Hootsuite



CONTACT US

—— Easily gain insights, uncover media bias and stay up to the minute with things you care about. ——

Contact us @KonsumeHQ