


What does 2024 hold for the national news publishing industry?

Five key trends and what this means for advertisers

2024 is going to be a big year for news. With major elections in the UK and the US, we are sure to see huge engagement in credible and authentic news provision. In the wake of a stream of political cover ups and misinformation, the potential for audience growth as we near these milestone events could benefit all news brands. Let's also not forget the Paris 2024 summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as UEFA Euro 2024, which will both attract an engaged and attentive audience. It's no surprise then that online news brand revenue is forecast to increase by +2.1 % year on year this year according to the latest AA/WARC ad expenditure report (Q3 2023).

But what will be the key areas of focus for national news publishers across 2024? And what impact will these have for advertisers? Here are five key trends from the industry which will hopefully shine a light on this.

Trend 1: The death of the cookie and first-party data



Trend: The long-awaited death of the cookie will be a pivotal point because it means that knowing your audience will become increasingly valuable. With significant first-party data, comprising of millions of registered users and billions of consented monthly data points, news publishers are in the unique position of having incredible expertise, information and understanding of their readers at an intimate level.

Benefit to advertisers: Publishers will continue to offer advertisers a wealth of targeting opportunities in trusted, brand-safe environments, as well as providing contextual relevance through advanced targeting tools. This will ensure optimum engagement and performance for brands. Many publishers across 2024 will look at subscriptions, paywalls, registrations and community to drive more loyal usage and access even more consumer data, which means even more sophisticated targeting and insights capabilities for advertisers.

Trend 2: The rise of AI and continued development of proprietary ad-tech

Trend: The amount of AI-generated content, misinformation and fake news continues to rise and people can no longer always trust the video and imagery that they see. Regulated, 'human-made', trusted journalism that adheres to strict editorial guidelines and fact-checking will become even more important for sense checking what's going on in the world,

News Publishers will use AI for efficiencies. When it comes to content creation, we can be certain that AI will never replace editorial prowess. Finding a balance between new technologies and human touch will be key. The news industry will continue to source information with rigour, be accountable for what is published, and strive to unearth the truth.

Benefit to advertisers: It's more likely that AI will be most useful in the ad space, opening up more commercial opportunities for publishers in 2024. AI-powered tools will deliver a suite of products and services for advertisers and publishers, enabling increased personalisation of content, contextual targeting, brand safety and content recommendation. News publishers will continue to invest in AI across 2024, broadening their suite of AI-powered tools, as well as expanding solutions to help agencies in the programmatic space.



Trend 3: The power of cross-platform storytelling

Trend: News publishers are expert real-time story tellers. Across 2024 they will continue to develop and evolve their content, with a doubling down on political journalism, as well as sport, showbiz, culture, lifestyle and travel, to provide contrast. There will also be further investment from publishers into their platforms, with a strong focus on social, video and podcasts to satisfy the ever-growing demand for original, compelling quality audio visual content. As such, they are actively hiring new talent across the newsroom to harness these platforms at scale so that traditional publishing voices exist wherever new audiences are engaging. Publishers will also continue focusing on short-form video to combat challenges such as news avoidance and to ensure they remain relevant to younger audiences.



Benefit to advertisers: This creates powerful commercial opportunities for advertisers to tell their own brand stories through 360 content partnerships across print, digital, video, social, audio and podcasts. This offers advertisers a unique opportunity to tap into the credibility of established media outlets, connect with targeted audiences, and create engaging and informative narratives. Harnessing all the platforms at their disposal in this way allows brands to build trust, authority and long-term relationships with an audience that the publishers know and understand.

Trend 4: A continued focus on sustainability

Trend: News publishers have set themselves significant goals in the area of sustainability, with a strong focus on addressing the environmental effects of their own operations, including reducing the carbon created from advertising. Across 2024 we will see more awareness, initiatives and guidelines for better business practices that drive sustainability. News publishers will also create a positive impact by promoting awareness of environmental issues at scale due to the significant audience reach that the industry can deliver.

Benefit to advertisers: This means that news brands will increasingly provide an opportunity for advertisers and agencies who are looking to partner with eco-friendly platforms to maintain B Corp status and deliver on their ESG targets.



Trend 5: The rise of e-commerce

Trend: The cost-of-living crisis has created a population of savvy shoppers who want to research and de-risk purchases based on reviews and research. While user-generated content and social are big drivers of this, any credible publisher that builds a review, content and e-commerce user experience has the opportunity to benefit. With this in mind, news publishers will focus attention on emerging revenue streams and ways of unlocking their brands as a sales channel, with the ability to test, learn and optimise their digital inventory.

Benefit to advertisers: 2024 will see focus on even more successful commercial partnerships and delivering significant e-commerce growth for brands through their ability to put the right products in front of audiences, with a direct click to the shopping basket.



So what does all of this mean for advertisers?

It means that news brands continue to provide an opportunity for advertisers to tell their brand stories at scale, across a vast array of platforms, in a trusted, contextually relevant and accountable environment that will benefit consumers, brands and media owners alike. News brand publishers will deliver all of the above with brand safety protections, sustainability ambitions, fraud protection and data ethics in place.

Sounds like a pretty attractive proposition to me!

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