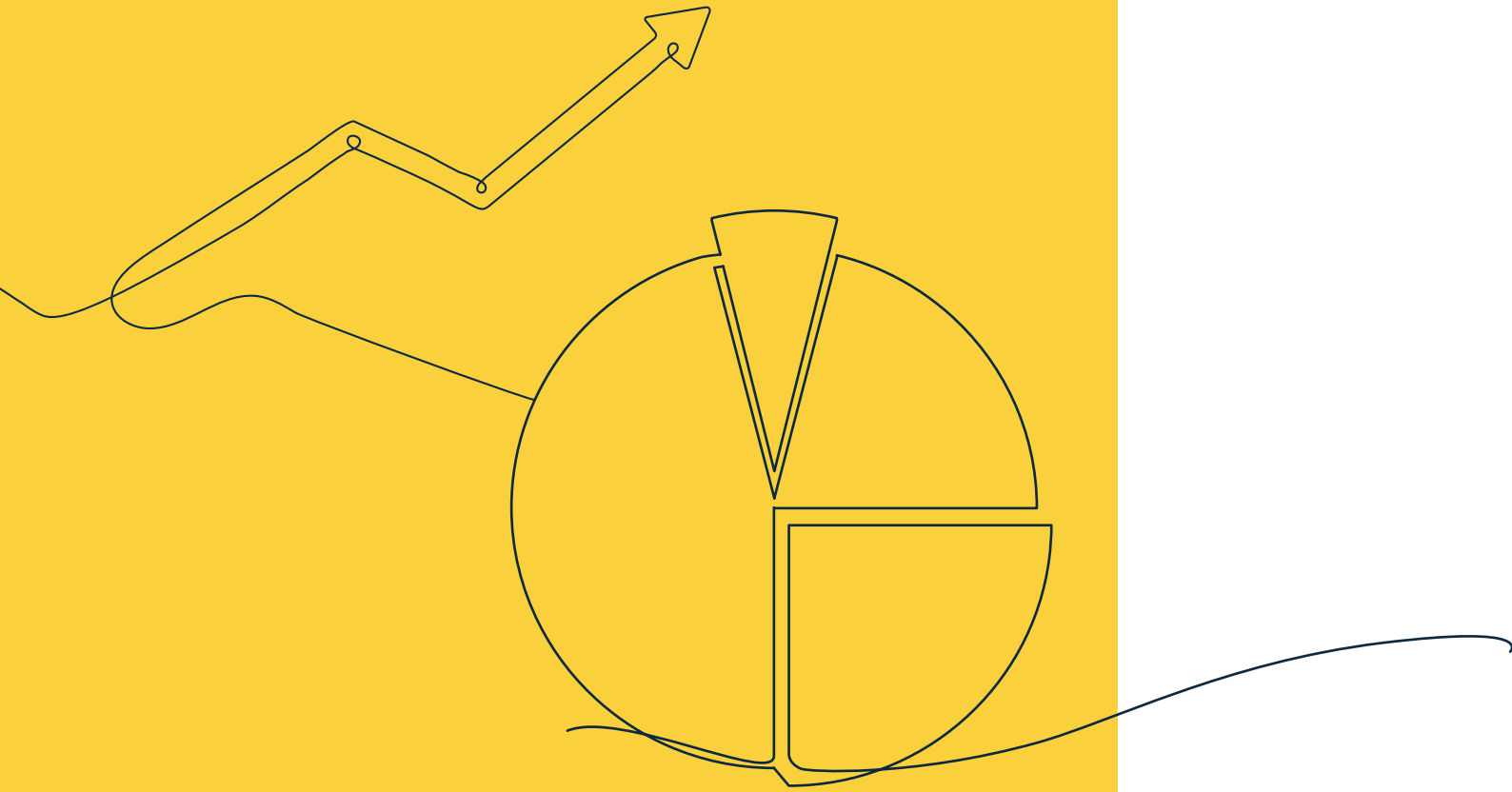
attention®

A Newsworks study

Contents

Introduction by Newsworks' Jo Allan	3
Foreword: Consultant Peter Field and Lumen's Mike Follett	4
Five golden nuggets	5
Attention drives effectiveness	6
Not all digital display is equal	8
Attention in news brands drives brand uplifts	10
News brands drive business growth by building brands	12
Increasing investment in news brands increases effectiveness	16
Conclusion	19
Methodology	20





Introduction by Jo Allan

Attention matters. Especially in the context of advertising effectiveness. This report highlights how important online attention is to brands in terms of delivering powerful business outcomes, like profit, market share and long-term growth.

There is still no industry definition for attention. For the purposes of this study into online advertising, Newsworks aligns with Lumen's definition as the amount of time people spend looking at an ad, specifically measured in 'attention seconds per 1000 impressions' (APM).

This complex project set out to prove the link between trusted media, the high attention it attracts and the effectiveness this delivers for advertisers.

To understand how attention impacts advertising effectiveness, Newsworks joined forces with Lumen and effectiveness expert Peter Field, uniting invaluable datasets to ask:

- How does attention impact campaign and business outcomes?
- How does the high attention that news brands deliver impact advertising effectiveness, including driving market share, pricing power and profit?

Combining Lumen's attention data with 10 years' worth of IPA Databank case studies, plus Brand Metrics' brand uplift data, was no simple task, but the results speak for themselves.

Digital news brands are read and trusted by millions of people. Quality trusted journalism attracts focussed, deliberate attention every single day, which is hugely beneficial for advertisers.



Jo Allan
chief executive, Newsworks

Foreword: Peter Field and Mike Follett

News brands have been hugely powerful in achieving attention for advertisers for decades. We know this from the hundreds of studies we have undertaken into the attentive and effective power of news brands and established media more broadly.

Why do news brands command such attention? Well, attention to advertising is always a by-product of the attention to the surrounding content. Ultimately it boils down to the quality of news brand journalism and the time people spend with it.

Throughout this project we have uncovered an astonishing absurdity —the scale of advertising's shift from high- to low-attention media over the past decade.

Simply put, this doesn't make commercial sense and it needs to be fixed. Fast.

We therefore set out to produce tangible proof that high-attention media, such as news brands, delivers huge benefits in terms of advertising effectiveness.

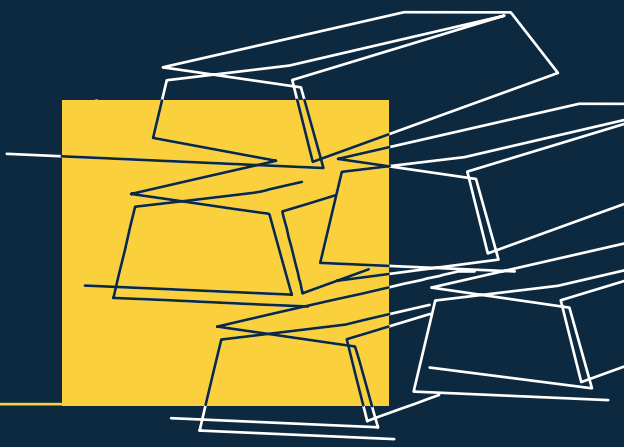
In this report we clearly set out the evidence and a compelling case for increasing investment in digital news brands.



Peter Field
independent consultant



Mike Follett
CEO, Lumen



Five golden nuggets

1. Attention drives business effectiveness

Pound for pound, high-attention media plans boost market share growth by 12% vs. low attention plans.

2. Not all digital display is equal

News brand display ads get 40% more attention than other general advertising display.

3. News brand attention drives brand uplift

Campaigns that include news brands enjoy brand uplifts for all measures, including 32% in action intent.

4. News brands drive business growth by building brands

News brands impact on campaign effectiveness has almost doubled since before 2018.

5. Increasing investment increases effectiveness

To deliver significant effectiveness growth, news brands' share of the digital plan should be at least 10% of media investment.

Attention drives effectiveness

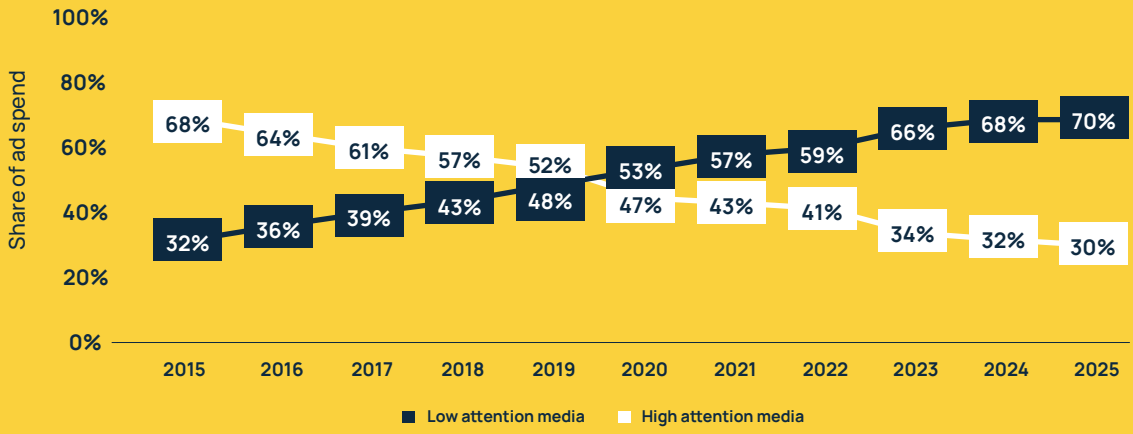
Yet ad spend has shifted from high-attention media over the last decade

The past 10 years has witnessed huge cultural and technological changes. In an ever-competitive and complex media landscape, understanding what constitutes a truly effective marketing mix today is more important than ever.

Ad investment data, collected by AA/WARC, reveals a dramatic shift in the media landscape over the past decade. Ad spend in TV, cinema, radio, magazines and news brands has decreased. Ad spend in social media and online (excluding the digital inventory from publishers, TV and radio) has increased.

The irony is that channels which are seeing a decline in ad spend deliver higher levels of attention to the advertising. These are the ads that get seen and hold attention for longer.

Ad investment has shifted away from high-attention media over the last decade



Source: AA/WARC total ad spend for each media excluding search and direct mail
High- and low-attention media defined by Lumen Attention data. High-attention media = TV, cinema, radio, magazines, news brands; low-attention media = OOH, social and internet pure play excluding search and direct mail

Conversely, non-news digital channels and social media provide low levels of attention. Ads get shorter viewing time and are often ignored.

The trend is crystal clear. A decade ago, over 70% of spend was in high-attention channels; today that investment is 30%.

On the other hand, the investment in low-attention media in 2015 was 32%. Today that figure is 70%.

Why does this matter? Because attention is crucial for advertising effectiveness.

Attention matters to effectiveness

The IPA Databank is a gold mine of case studies, providing an invaluable and uniquely detailed source of what works in marketing.

A decade's worth of campaigns was 'attention power rated' to indicate how much attention was bought for each pound spent (see methodology on page 23, point five, for more detail).

High-attention media campaigns deliver better business outcomes compared with low-attention media campaigns including:

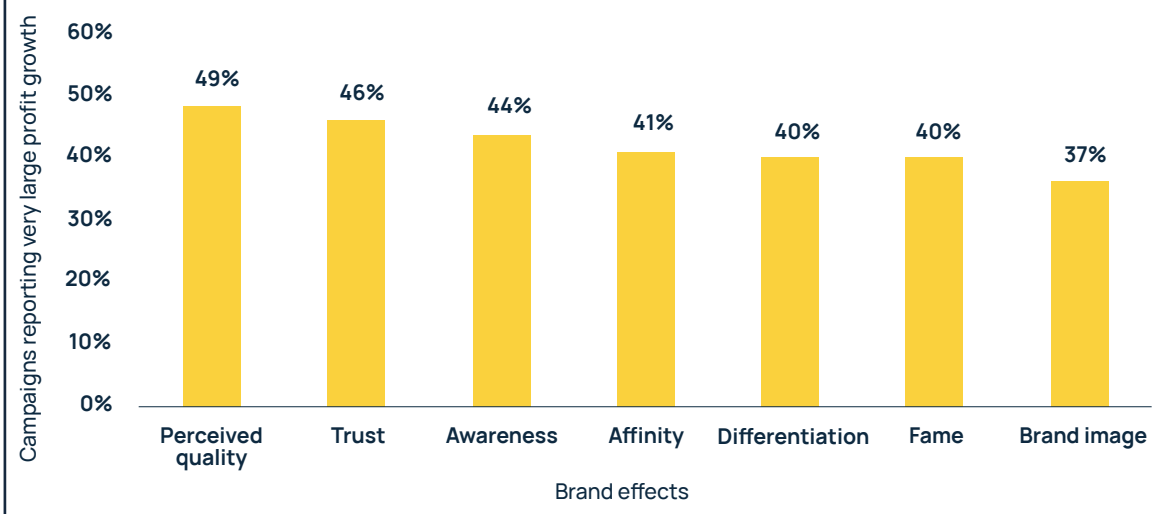
- **58% more** attentive seconds for every pound spent
- **17% uplift** in brand effects
- **12% uplift** in market share growth

Why does some media get more attention than others?

Attention to advertising happens when attention is fixed to the surrounding content. Unsurprisingly quality, trusted content increases the time people spend with the media and the surrounding ads.

These metrics — quality, trust and awareness — are the most important metrics in driving advertiser profit. For example, 49% of campaigns that saw a very large 'perceived quality' effect also saw a large increase in profit growth.

Quality, trust and awareness are key to profit growth



Source: IPA Databank UK for profit case studies 2016-2024, 209 case studies

Media that is high quality, trusted and delivers high attention is essential to grow a business' bottom line.

Not all digital display is equal

Ads in high-quality, trusted journalism get attention

Digital news brands get high attention because of the trust, reach and quality of their journalism.

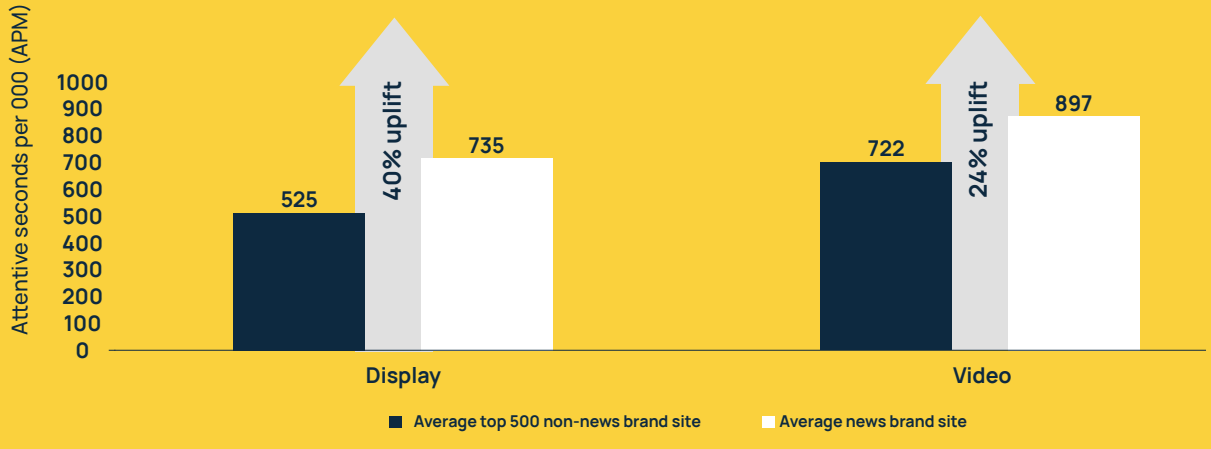
The levels of attention generated by ads on 12 news brand sites were compared to the top 500 sites by volume of impressions in Lumen's dataset across 2023 and 2024.

Ads on news brand sites dramatically outperformed other sites with **40% more attention.** Video ads on news brands generated **24% more attention** than the other sites measured.

It is worth highlighting that the top 500 non-news related sites by impressions represents only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the long tail of the programmatic mix, which can receive often very low (and non-human) attention. That means the 40% uplift in news brand display is a hugely conservative figure.

Advertisers would benefit hugely by focussing greater spend on high-attention media, like news brands.

Attention to advertising on news brands sites is higher than the top 500 sites by impressions



Source: Lumen Attention Measurement Platform data comparing news brand sites to the top 500 sites in the UK by impressions

News brand sites achieve longer viewing time across video and display

Both video ads and display ads on news brand sites are viewed for longer than other online sites.

The average dwell time for non-news brand sites is below two seconds: 1.97 seconds for video and 1.63 seconds for display.

News brand averages are higher.

Video ads generate 2.36 seconds on average **(a 20% uplift compared with non-news video)** and display ads achieve 2.13 seconds **(a 31% uplift compared with non-news display)**.

The average ad dwell time achieved on news brand sites is significantly longer than the time spent with ads elsewhere online

	Non-news brands	News brands	% uplift news vs. non-news
Video	1.97s	2.36s	20%
Display	1.63s	2.13s	31%

The above table proves that ads on digital news brands will achieve stronger levels of attention.

This means that advertisers who replace less attentive digital formats with news brands are likely to boost their attention and hence brand effects and business outcomes.

High-attention media's digital inventory shouldn't be measured and classed alongside the long tail of digital.

Attention in news brands drives brand uplifts

Attention's importance lies in how it drives brand and business outcomes

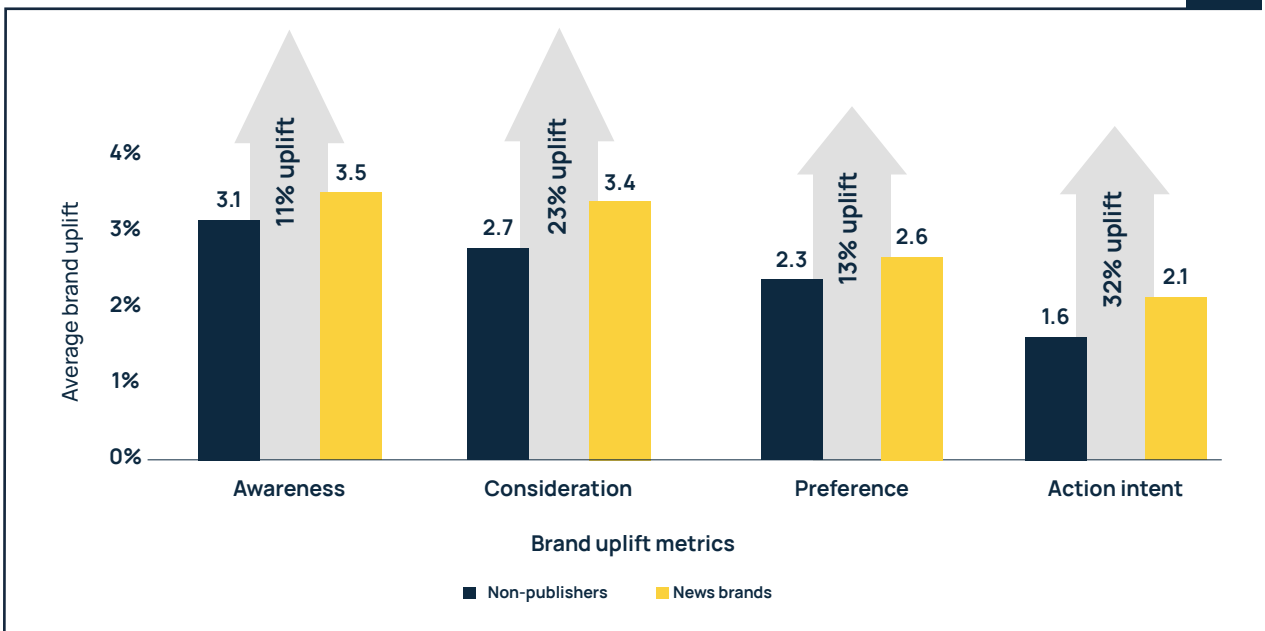
To examine the relationship between attention and four brand lift outcomes (recall, consideration, preference and action intention), campaign measurement company Brand Metrics collected campaign data on how many people view an ad, how many times they view each ad and for how long they view it.

Brand Metrics integrated Lumen's attentive norms against hundreds of news brand campaigns and a base including thousands of non-publisher campaigns. This demonstrated how much attention was given to each ad as well as the aggregated attention for the whole digital campaign. Uplifts were then compared between different publishing environments.

The high attention to ads on digital news brands translated directly into higher brand uplifts across all stages of the purchase funnel compared to non-news sites:

- **11% uplift** in awareness
- **23% uplift** in consideration
- **13% uplift** in preference
- **32% uplift** in action intent

News brands boost brand metrics



Source: Brand Metrics. Uplifts compared to non-publisher sites; 647 campaigns on news brand publishers, 2,734 on non-publishers

News brand attention positively impacts business outcomes

To understand the relationship between news brand attention and business outcomes, the study divided 184 IPA Databank case studies into two groups based on their media mix: high-attention campaigns and low-attention campaigns.

The inclusion of news brands in both scenarios boosted business outcomes. In high-attention campaigns the inclusion of news brands contributes significantly, with a **22% uplift to business effects**. Yet unsurprisingly, low-attention campaigns receive a far more impressive uplift of **50% in low-attention campaigns**. Low-attention campaigns achieve even greater uplifts to profit (+89%) and brand effects (+64%). This is exactly the pattern expected when adding a platform that has superior attentive power like news brands.

Including news brands in a campaign boosts business effects

	Uplift to business effects	Uplift to profit	Uplift to brand effects
High-attention campaign	22%	35%	12%
Low-attention campaign	50%	89%	64%

Source: Lumen APM data, period 2016-2024, and IPA Databank, period 2016-2024, 184 case studies. Analysis compares the difference between users and non-users of news brands when online news brands are included to low- or high-attention campaigns.

This analysis suggests several things:

1. The attention news brand sites deliver benefits all media mix scenarios.
2. For advertisers who are investing in low attention media (for example in a social or non-news digital heavy campaign) including digital news brands into the mix will provide a much-needed boost to effectiveness.
3. This analysis proves that digital news brands are high-attention media and shouldn't be grouped with the long tail of display advertising. News brand sites work harder for advertisers in delivering key business outcomes.

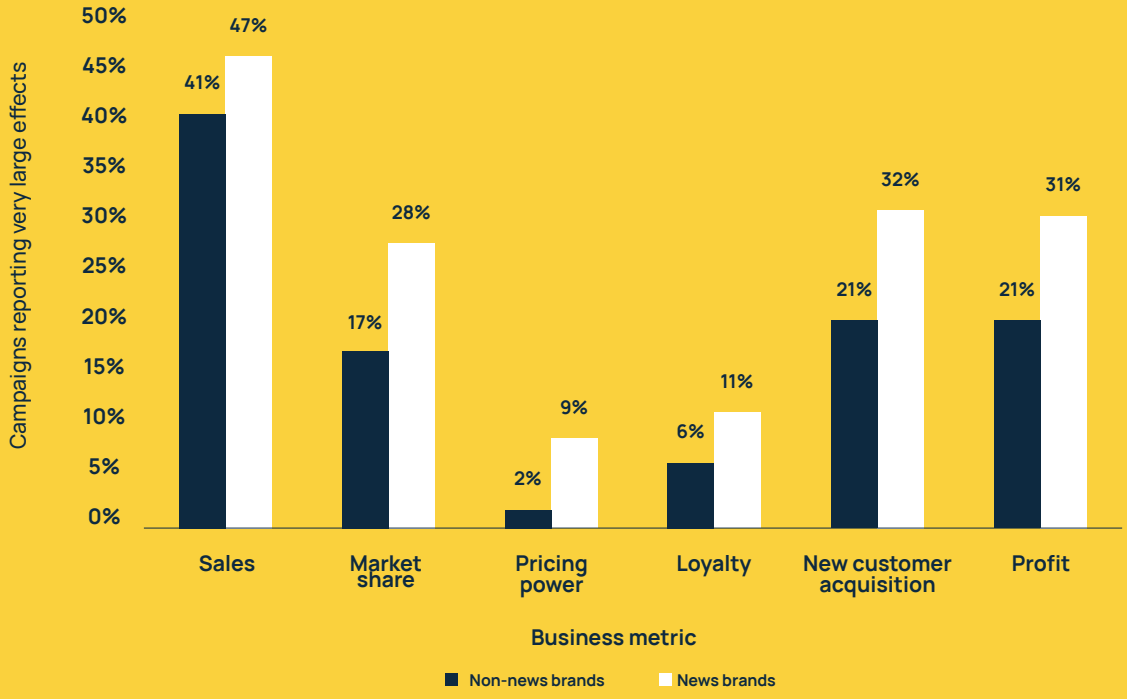
Attention on news brand sites boosts brand metrics and business outcomes significantly.

News brands drive business growth by building brands

More campaigns specifically use news brands to build their brands

The IPA Databank reveals that campaigns which include news brands report stronger results across all key business metrics including sales, market share and profit.

Business metrics including market share and profit are higher when news brands are included in a campaign

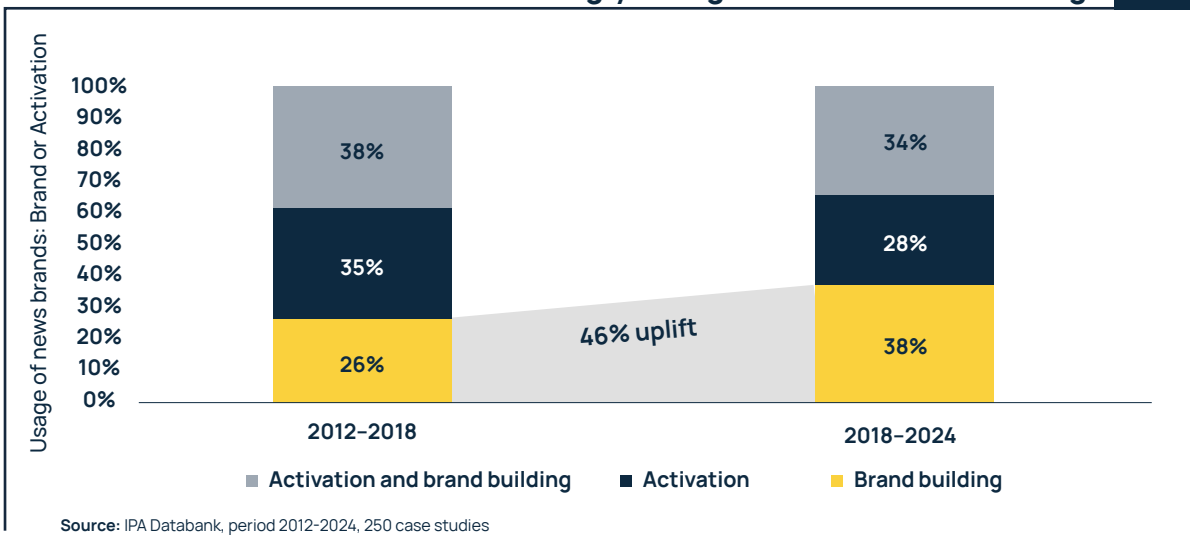


Source: IPA Databank, period 2012-2024, 250 case studies



News brands are key to business outcomes due to their strength in building brands and long-term growth. There is a **46% increase in campaigns** specifically using news brands to build their brands than before 2018.

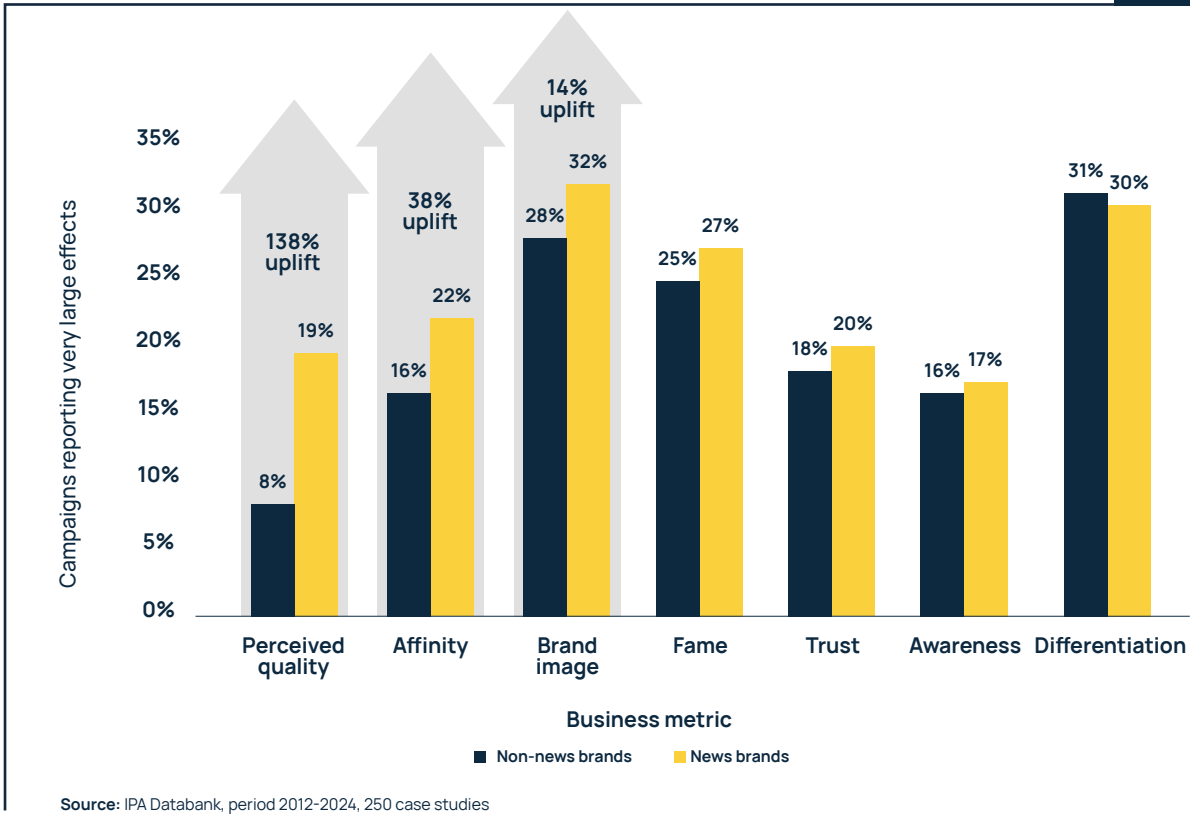
News brand are increasingly being used for brand building



Source: IPA Databank, period 2012-2024, 250 case studies

Ads in news brands benefit from the halo effect of trusted, quality journalism. Campaigns including news brands find uplifts to perceived quality **(+138%)**, affinity **(+38%)** and brand image **(+14%)**.

Campaigns including news brands report stronger results in quality, affinity and brand image



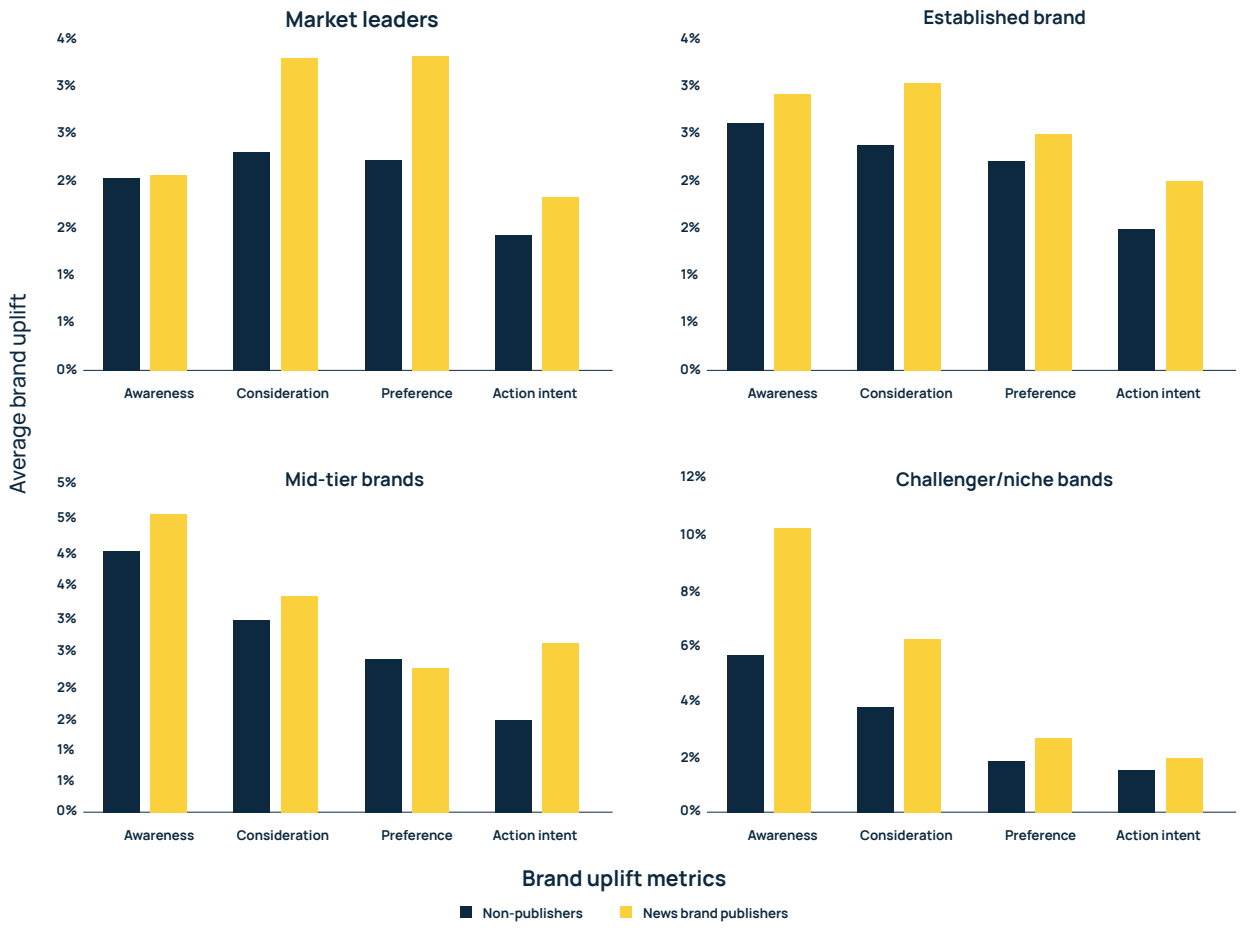
Source: IPA Databank, period 2012-2024, 250 case studies

News brands support different brands with different challenges

Brand Metrics' data reveals that the attention news brands deliver to advertisers supports different brands in different ways:

- Market leaders benefit from news brand attention in building **preference**
- Established brands and challenger brands benefit from news brand attention in building **awareness**
- Mid-tier brands benefit from news brand attention in delivering **action intent**

News brands' superior attention benefit all brand challenges



Source: Brand Metrics. Uplifts compared to non-publisher sites, 647 campaigns on news brand publishers, 2,734 on non-publishers

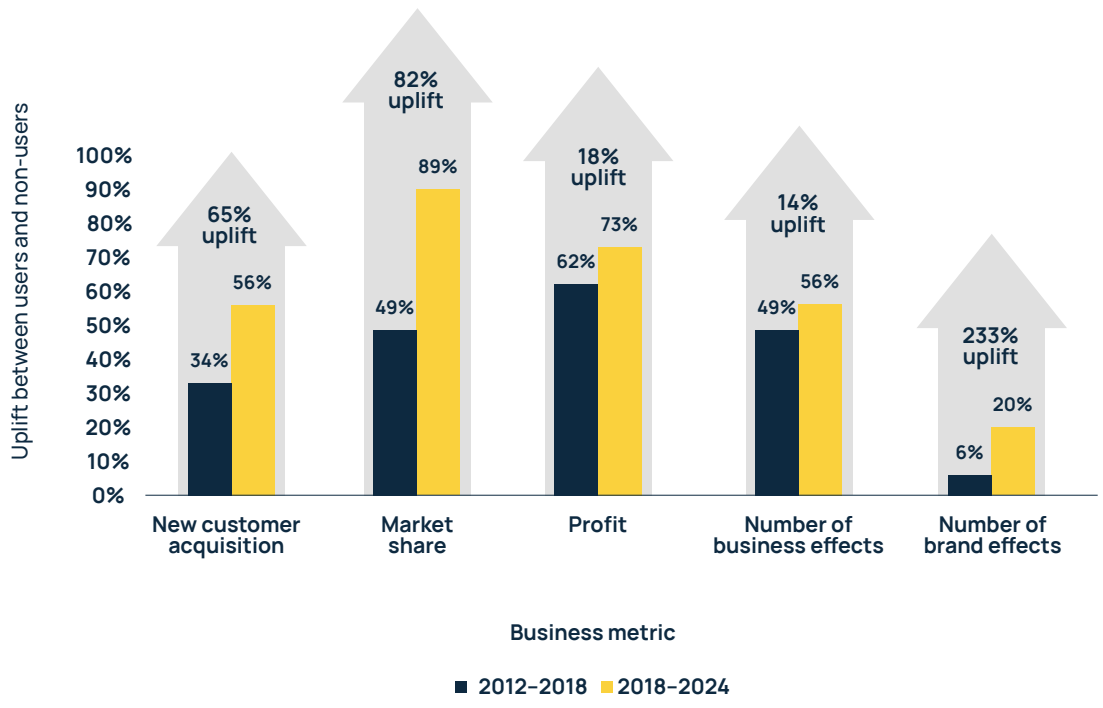
From market leaders to challenger brands, the considerable benefits in adding online news to the marketing mix support all advertisers.

News brands are increasingly effective for advertisers

Looking at the impact on effectiveness in the six years before and after 2018, news brands are now nearly twice as powerful for advertisers in boosting growth and brand strength.

Since 2018, news brands' impact on market share growth has nearly **doubled (+82%)** and brand impacts have more than **trebled (+233%)**.

News brands effectiveness has increased across all business metrics since 2018



Source: IPA Databank, period 2012-2024, 250 case studies

News brands' contribution to effectiveness has grown over time. They are nearly twice as effective as they were in 2018.

Increasing investment in news brands increases effectiveness

Digital campaigns benefit by increasing share into news brands

The amount of investment into news brands matters. This chapter explores:

- **Conversion rates** when the share of news brand impressions are increased
- **Reach and frequency** when the share of news brand impressions are increased
- **Business outcomes** when the share of news brand campaign investment is increased

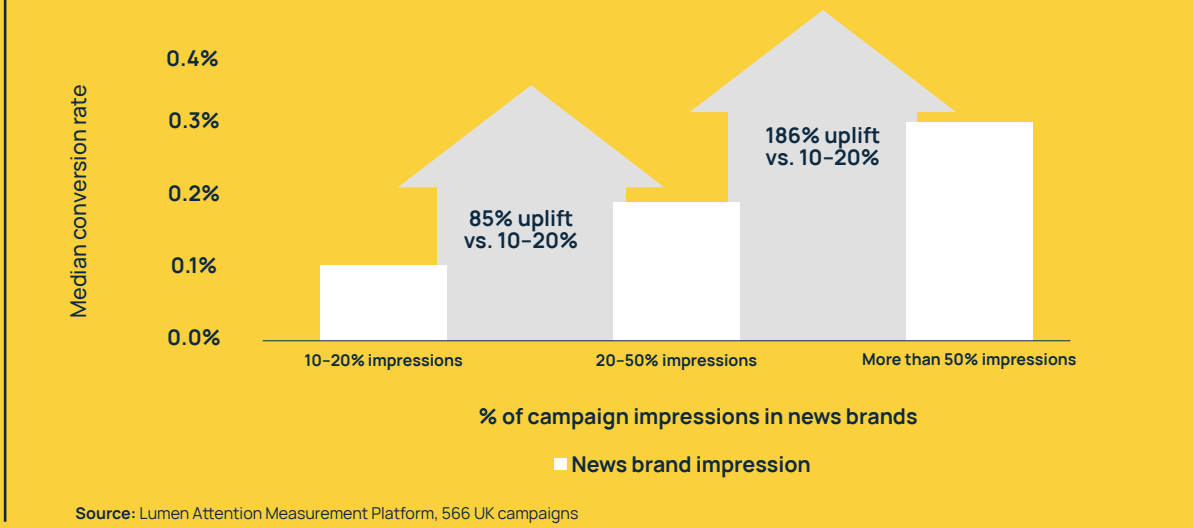
To gain the maximum benefit from news brands' attention, the majority of advertisers should increase their use of digital news brands.

Lumen's dataset reveals that short-term **conversion rates** soar when news brands receive a higher share of impressions:

- Campaigns that include 20–50% of impressions in news brands find the median **conversion rate almost doubles (+82%)** compared to those with a 10–20% share.
- Impressively, when more than 50% of impressions appear within news content, median **conversion rates reach their peak, almost triple (+186%)** versus those campaigns with 10–20% impressions.

Yet not enough campaigns are benefiting from the uplifts news brands can deliver. Only 18% of campaigns in Lumen's dataset include 20–50% share of news brands and even fewer campaigns (9%) include more than 50% of impressions.

Campaigns making greater use of online news brands achieve stronger conversion rates

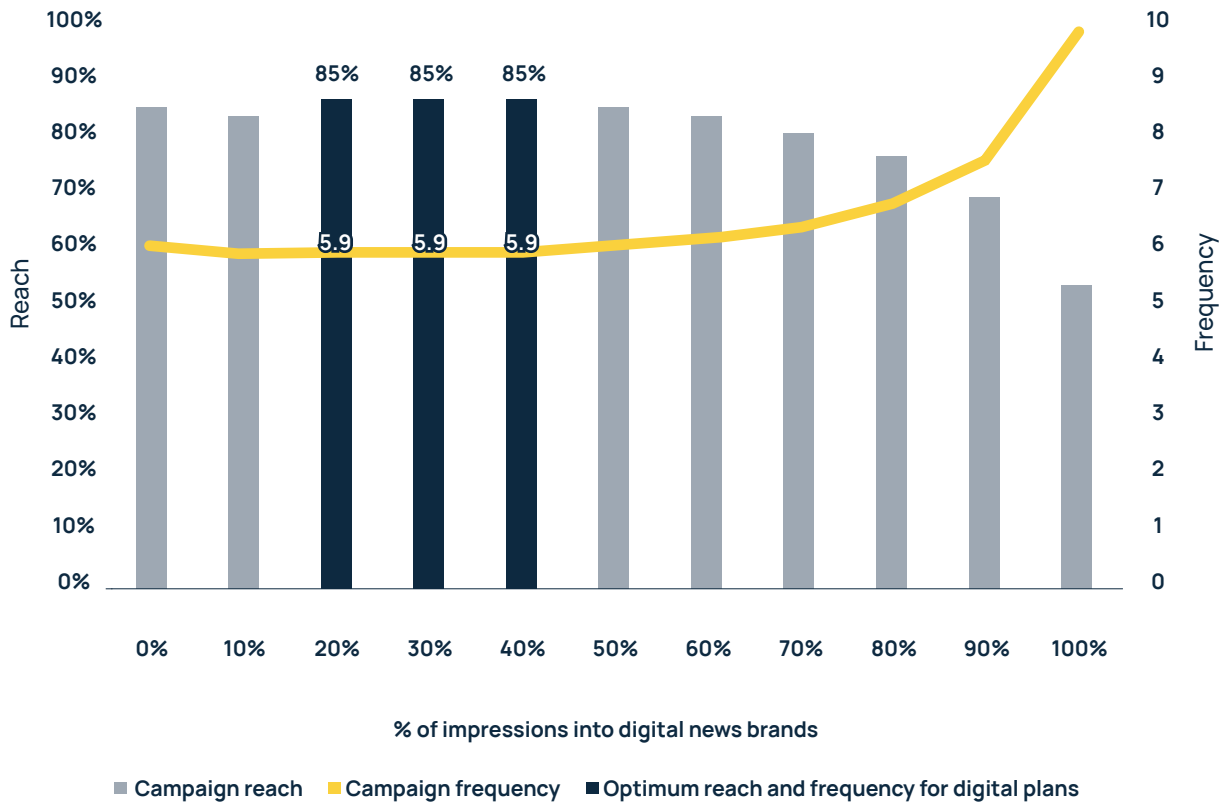


Source: Lumen Attention Measurement Platform, 566 UK campaigns

Quality inventory costs more, but it is worth it

Ensuring at least 20% of impressions are in news brands is the optimum digital mix from a **reach and frequency** perspective.

The optimum reach and frequency for a digital plan includes 20–40% of impressions in digital news brands



Source: TouchPoints 2024 Channel Planner comparing 500 GRPs against UKOM internet sites including news brand sites at 10% intervals

Of course, quality costs more. When considering that not all inventory bought by advertisers is actually seen (by humans), and that some digital inventory works harder than others, it is important to consider the value that high-attention media, like digital news brands, delivers.

Lumen's data suggests that the cost of news brand display is **24% higher** than general display (acknowledging variation in campaign costs).

However, when the value is focussed on the cost of media that gets seen (an Attentive Cost Per 1000), digital news brands offer better value than general display. In fact, that value is **11% better** for advertisers.

Increase investment in news brands to achieve long-term impacts

The short-term impact to conversion rates, reach and frequency make a difference when considering the long-term benefit to **business outcomes** of increasing investment into digital news brands.

Turning again to analysis of case studies in the IPA Databank, campaigns with a higher-than-average investment (in this case 10%) into digital news brands reported **a 23% uplift in business terms.** They also delivered **a 20% uplift in brand strength terms** (this is when compared to campaigns with lower than average investment).

This means that for advertisers to see significant effectiveness growth, news brands' share of the digital plan should be at least 10% of media investment.

The reality is that the majority of campaigns aren't even investing 10% into digital news brands. In fact, according to Lumen's dataset, the average campaign is estimated to only attribute 4% of total spend into news brands.

Advertisers are underinvesting in news brands, but if they were to increase investment by minimum of six percentage points, it would deliver huge benefits to their businesses.

Increasing investment into digital news brands to gain stronger effectiveness growth.



Conclusion

This in-depth study proves a fundamental truth. Attention delivers power and profit.

Commercially-driven advertisers should prioritise high-attention media that makes ads visible and memorable and ultimately delivers on business effects including profit.

Currently, industry investment is moving away from high-attention media (TV, radio, cinema and news brands) to low-attention media, and the implication on effectiveness is concerning to those who believe advertising should be commercially effective.

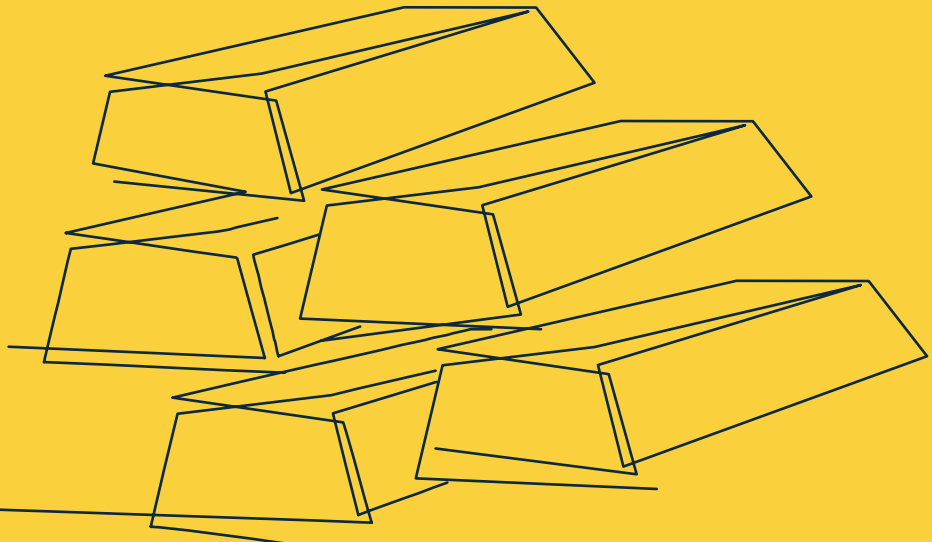
Highly attentive environments are key to building long-term, healthy, profitable brands and businesses.

The additional benefit in investing into news brands is that trusted journalism continues to hold the powerful to account on behalf of millions of people every single day. It focusses attention on the issues that matter most to society.

And that attention matters to advertisers too.

Advertisers who believe in high-attention, high-quality, trusted journalism should ask for news brands and check they feature in digital plans.

Thank you for your **attention**.



Methodology

To understand the attention that news brands attract and how attention impacts marketing effectiveness, this ground-breaking study brought together valuable industry datasets, including Lumen's attention data, Brand Metrics' data and the IPA Databank case studies, for the first time.

The experts and the data

Peter Field spent 15 years as a strategic planner in advertising and since then has been a marketing consultant for over 25 years. His pioneering work on effectiveness and recent initiatives such as 'The Extraordinary Cost of Dull' with Adam Morgan, as well as numerous publications (such as 'The Long and the Short of It' with Les Binet), have earned Peter a global reputation as the 'Godfather of Effectiveness'.

The **IPA Effectiveness Databank** is a comprehensive repository of evidence on the impact of marketing and advertising campaigns submitted to the UK's Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) Awards. The awards, established in the 1980s, contain detailed case studies that showcase how advertising contributes to business success. Effectiveness is based on the average number of 'very large improvements' reported across key business metrics: sales, market share, customer acquisition, customer loyalty, pricing power and profit. Additional brand metrics analysed include quality, trust and fame. In this study, Peter Field analysed 250 case studies in the IPA Databank over the period 2012–2024.

Founded in 2013, **Lumen Research** is a pioneering attention technology company. They utilise AI-powered, webcam-based eyetracking to monitor real-world visual attention across devices, capturing what users actually see rather than what is merely "viewable". With the largest eyetracking dataset in the world — over 650,000 sessions and billions of impressions across 30+ countries — they provide scalable, impression level attention measurement.

LAMP, **Lumen Attention Measurement and Planning suite,** is Lumen's flagship toolset for live-campaign attention measurement and optimisation. A lightweight JavaScript tag collects real-time data on factors like scroll speed, viewable percentage and time in view. Lumen's predictive models use this data to estimate "attentive seconds" per 1000 impressions (an APM). Lumen's AI-trained models accurately predict attention circa 70% of the time, aligning better with human gaze than standard viewability metrics.

Brand Metrics is a digital campaign measurement company founded in 2018. Unlike traditional, panel-based or cookie-based brand uplift studies, Brand Metrics collects data directly from publisher sites to determine frequency and dwell time exposure. Brand Metrics then uses a custom algorithm to retarget users who have been exposed to creatives that are tagged for measurement. Respondents receive a single brand lift question capturing four metrics per campaign — either awareness, consideration, preference or intent — thereby providing consistent and scalable data.

The approach for this study

To understand the impact of attention on effectiveness and the role news brands play in the marketing mix, the following approach set out to answer several key questions.

1. **What trends can we see in media attention over time?**
   Total advertising spend over a decade as collected by AA/WARC were classified by each media. Lumen defined each media as either high or low attention based on their attention norms. This was used to understand the shift of investment away from high to low attention across the last decade.

2. **How much more attention do news brand sites achieve compared to other general display?**
   Lumen compared the unweighted average APM scores in its LAMP database between the top 500 domains by impression volume and news brand sites across 2023 and 2024. The difference in attentive dwell time in seconds between both video and display ads on news brand sites were compared to the top 500 domains by impression volume.

3. **Does the strong attention achieved by news brands cost the advertiser?**
   Analysis of 566 UK campaigns measured in the LAMP database estimated a relative increase in cost of 24% between news brand display inventory and general display. Applying this difference to UK media costs for 2025 from AA/WARC suggested an average CPM cost for general display at £1 and news brand display at £1.24. Costs were recalculated using Lumen's attentive seconds per 1000 impressions (APM) to create an attentive cost per 1000 impressions (ACPM) for general display at £1.90 and news brand display at 11% better value at £1.69.

4. **How does the attention achieved by news brands impact brand uplifts?**
   Brand Metrics collected campaign data on publisher sites including frequency and dwell time. Lumen analysed the same metrics from an attentive point of view. Brand Metrics integrated Lumen's viewability data to 647 digital news brand campaigns against a base including 2,734 non-publisher sites. This demonstrated how much attention was given to each ad as well as the aggregated attention for the whole digital campaign. Attention was then modelled to the impressions from the respondents who had responded to the Brand Metrics brand lift survey.

5. **How does the attention achieved by news brands impact business outcomes?**
   Lumen's APM data was applied to 184 IPA Databank campaign case studies from 2016 onwards to understand how much attention was delivered for each pound spent. Campaigns were divided by the median line into high- and low-attention campaigns. The impact of attention to business and brand effects could then be seen across all case studies available and when digital news brands were included in the media mix.

6. **Does the amount of investment into digital news brands make a difference to outcomes?**
   Campaigns from the IPA Databank were divided by whether the news brand share of digital spend was higher or lower than the median average. The average for highly effective campaigns was 10% news brand share. This is notably higher than the 4% average share seen in Lumen's database. Campaigns with a higher news brand share of digital spend saw both stronger business and brand effects.

7. **How effective are news brands to advertisers?**
   Further analysis of the 250 IPA Databank campaign cases provided insight into the impact news brands have on commercial success including market share, profit and brand metrics. Comparing results over time from 2012–2024 revealed that news brands saw dramatically stronger effectiveness results comparing periods before and after 2018.





Newsworks

newsworks.org.uk

info@newsworks.org.uk



Newsworks