

INMA APAC NEWS MEDIA SUMMIT 2021

Five principles for an effective partnership between product and editorial

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Ben Haywood

Director, Product — Nine

Many newsrooms. Hundreds of journalists.

The Sydney Morning Herald

Australia's most-read masthead across print and digital based in Sydney since 1831.

Metered subscription model.
Mon-Sun paper, web and apps.

THE AGE

Victoria's most-read masthead across print and digital based in Melbourne since 1854.

Metered subscription model.
Mon-Sun paper, web and apps.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Australia's premier destination for business and finance news since 1951.

Hard digital paywall.
Mon-Sat paper, web and apps.

Five principles for
an effective partnership between
product and editorial.

1

Choose conversations
over presentations.

Product and Editorial
speak different languages.

PRODUCT



Weeks and months



Data and research



Presentations

EDITORIAL

Hours and days



Instinct and intuition



Conversations



Product and Editorial speak different languages.

Learning to speak each other's language was transformative.

IN PRACTICE

We start with conversations.

We treat editorial intuition as insight.

We talk often, and keep it scrappy.

And, we hired a translator...

At *The Sydney Morning Herald*, our audience development team are an intermediary fluent in both product and editorial speak.

2

Don't argue about facts.

In 2017, we launched a new homepage.



Product thought it was a **success**.
Editorial thought it was a **failure**.

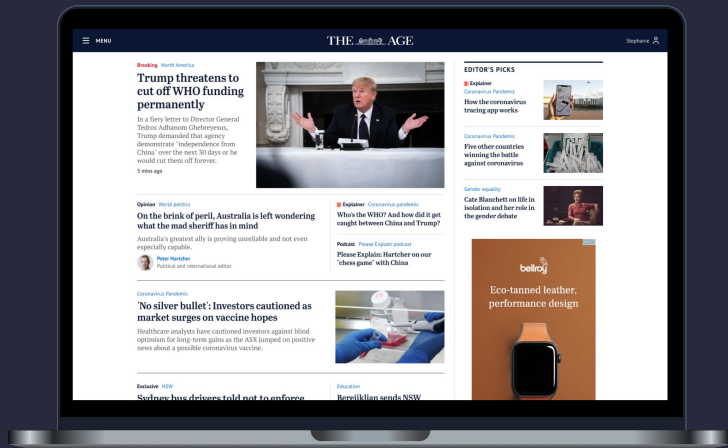
Chartbeat

EDITORIAL

Google Analytics

PRODUCT

In 2020, we launched another new homepage.



Product and Editorial had a shared view of performance.

Single
source of
truth

EDITORIAL

PRODUCT

3

Focus on outcomes
not ownership.

**Our newsrooms owned product
for more than a century.**

**Product's assertiveness made
some newsrooms defensive.**

Product has emerged as its own
discipline much more recently.

As the value of digital grew,
product became more assertive.

**It put product and editorial on a
collision course, with each team
competing with the other.**

**We had to find a way
to break the cycle.**

At Nine, that meant taking the time to get aligned around a shared goal.

How will we know when we have been successful?

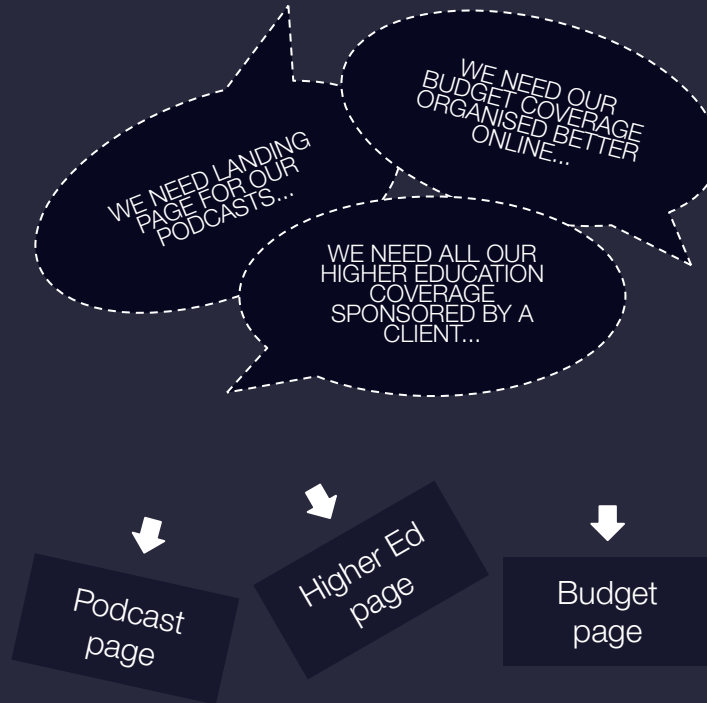
What are the outcomes are we trying to achieve?

What are the problems we want to solve?

4

Start with why
and seek shared understanding.

When you're in a hurry,
it's natural to rush to a solution.



But starting with why helps us identify
the true problem to be solved.

PROBLEM

It is hard for readers to see the depth and breadth of coverage, reducing their propensity to subscribe — and we're missing an opportunity to sell sponsorships around key topics.



How might we allow the newsroom to present related content in context to showcase our breadth and depth while creating new commercial opportunities.



"Collections"

5

Know when to
just get it done.

**When product turn everything
into a major project, editorial will
find another way around.**

We reserve capacity in every sprint for
small requests that just make sense.

PROJECT 1A

PROJECT 1B

PROJECT 2

PROJECT 2

PROJECT 3

FAST LANE

**When product turn everything
into a major project, editorial will
find another way around.**

And when the moment calls, we're
empowered to drop everything.

FAST LANE

PROJECT 1B

FAST LANE

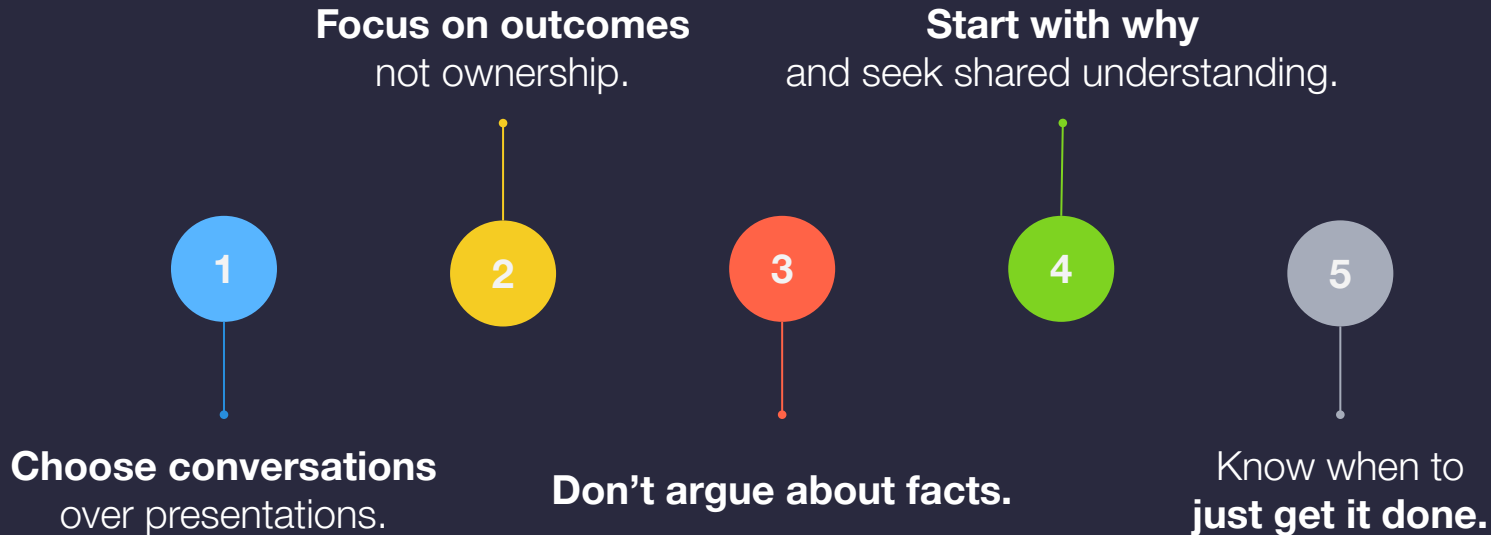
PROJECT 2

FAST LANE

PROJECT 3

FAST LANE

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Thank you

Ben Haywood

Director, Product — Nine

bhaywood@nine.com.au

[linkedin.com/in/ben-haywood](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ben-haywood)