

How to build it: Identifying consumer needs and wants

Product and Data for Media summit, INMA

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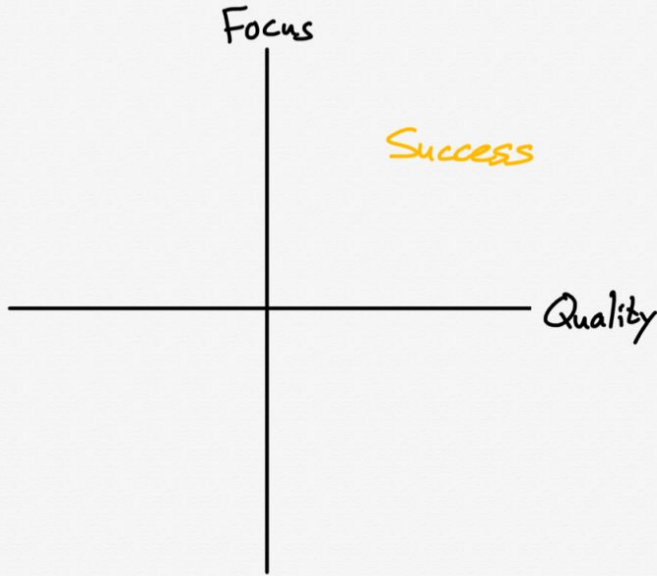
Content, Transformation, Innovation

How is my experience relevant to this talk?

- 20+ years as a journalist and editor: radio, online, video, social - BBC News Russian, BBC News and BBC World Service
- ex -Chief Content Officer, Culture Trip
- Currently: an independent digital consultant, working with publishers, content creators, tech companies
- ***Collector, evangelist and enforcer of news user needs-centric models in digital publishing***
- Board Member, World Editors' Forum, WAN-IFRA
- Leader in Residence, University of Central Lancashire, UK



Success is about delivering superior quality in your niche



..."What is important to note, though, is that while quality is relatively binary, **the number of ways to be focused — that is, the number of niches in the world — are effectively infinite**; success, in other words, is about delivering superior quality in your niche — the former is defined by the latter"...

Will every team member answer these, if stopped in a corridor?

1. Why do you exist as an entity?
What are your Mission and Vision?
2. What business are you in*?
3. What are your audiences user needs?
4. What is your (content) product market fit?
5. ***In other words, does everyone pull in the same direction?***



“The most underappreciated resource in the media sector is not money. It’s focus.”*

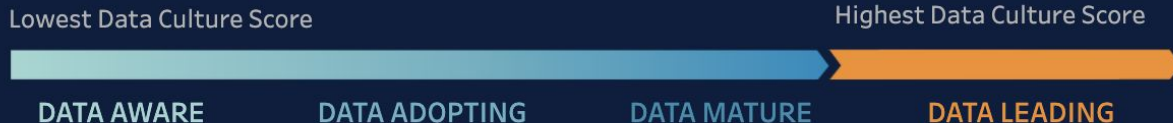
From data aware to data leading

83% of CEOs want their organization to be more data driven.

Organizations with data leading cultures are...



But only 25% of organizations are data leading.



Audience-centric approach to doing news based on user needs*

1. **'Hard' news is not enough** to attract people regularly or with sufficient engagement.
2. Commodity, 'agenda' news are everywhere, **relevancy, unique takes** and **engagement become the differentiator**.
3. There is misalignment between what audience wants in digital - information, yes, but also **understanding, inspiration, utility, fun** - and what it currently gets from media outlets.

Newsroom mission is directly linked to its audience user needs

1. **Failing** to satisfy your audience user needs means **loss** and/or **lack** of engagement.
2. **Growth**, on the other hand, comes when different user needs are addressed **consistently, creatively and strategically**.
3. Newsrooms operating with no appreciation to user needs - and by proxy its own place and role in the market - are drifting.

It's all about user needs, it's a real trend in the sector

“My job, and the job of any community manager, is to facilitate the creation of content that *solves* a problem our readers have, not just reports on it.”

What Do News Readers Really Want to Read About? How Relevance Works for News Audiences

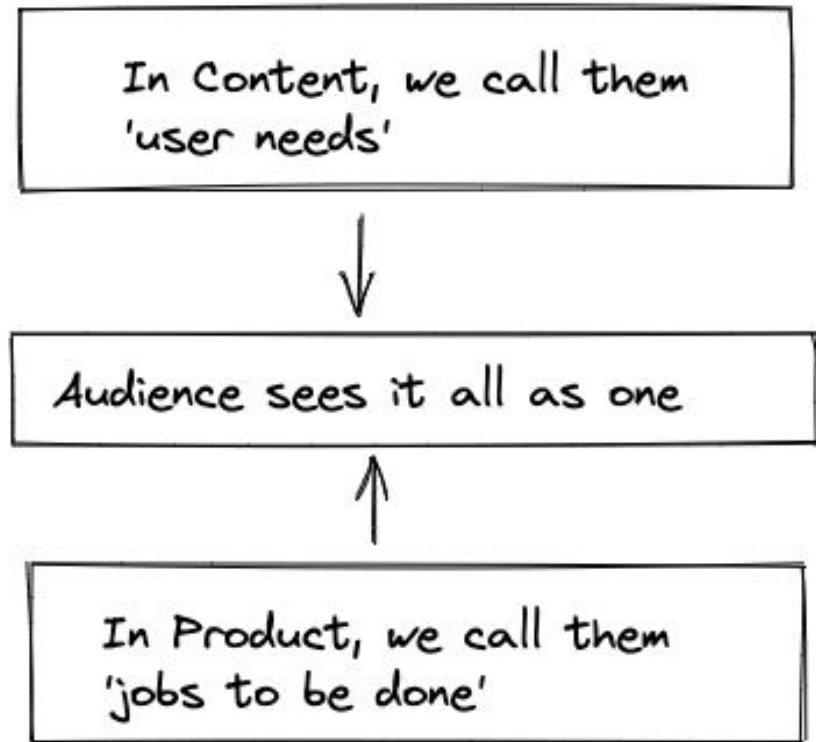
10 Takeaways for the Next 10 Years in News from Digital Growth Summit 2021

2. Back to basics in building deeper understandings of user needs

**5 questions
about the
user needs,**

“That new franchise you’re building, that podcast, the video series: Who is it for? What need is it serving? What will the audience do with it? Do they really want it, need it? Or are we just trying to keep the attention long enough for the ad to serve?”

User needs connect Content, Product, Data and Audience



...The beauty of a user need model is simple - it comes from users, the model itself is external, not internal - it challenges newsrooms by reminding them not to preach but to listen, before starting on. And having worked with various newsrooms in my life, I can see a direct correlation between strong performance, finding your audience and satisfying its needs properly...

Simplified process of implementing a user needs model

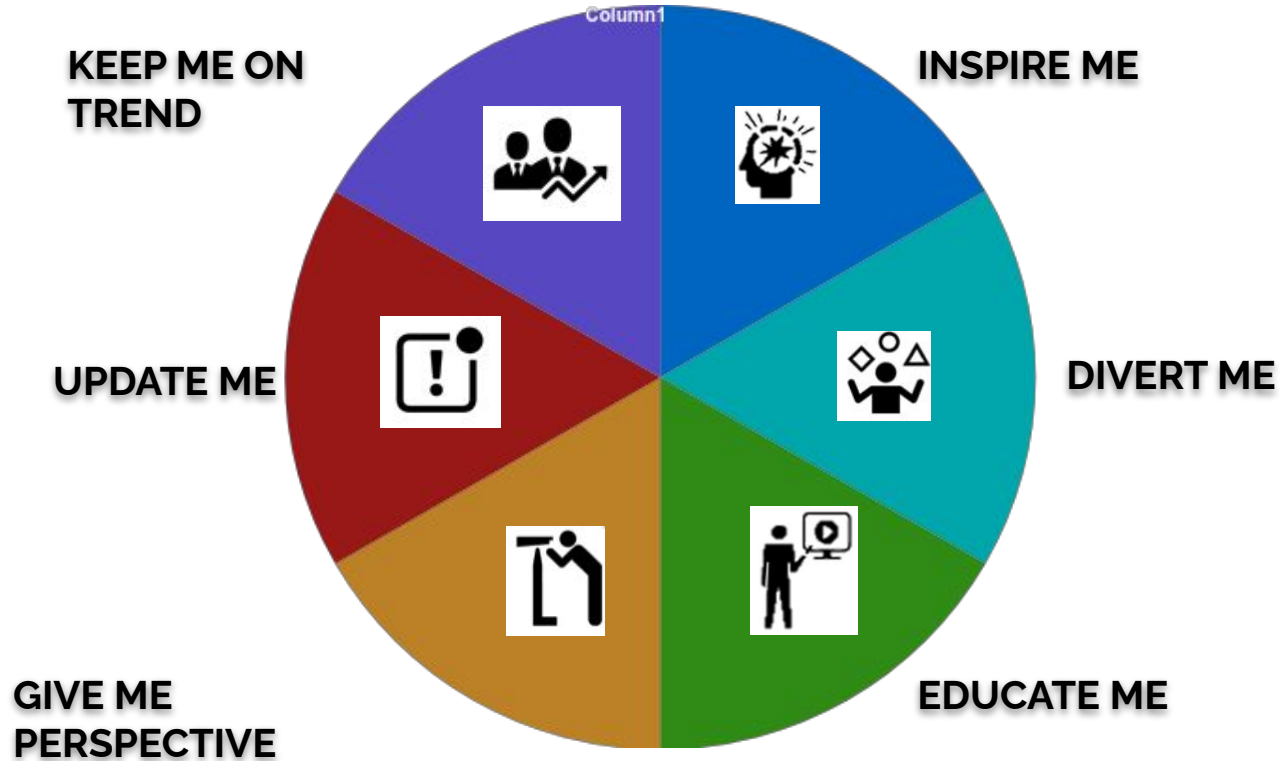


User needs models always come from the audience, they must not be created from within by the editors

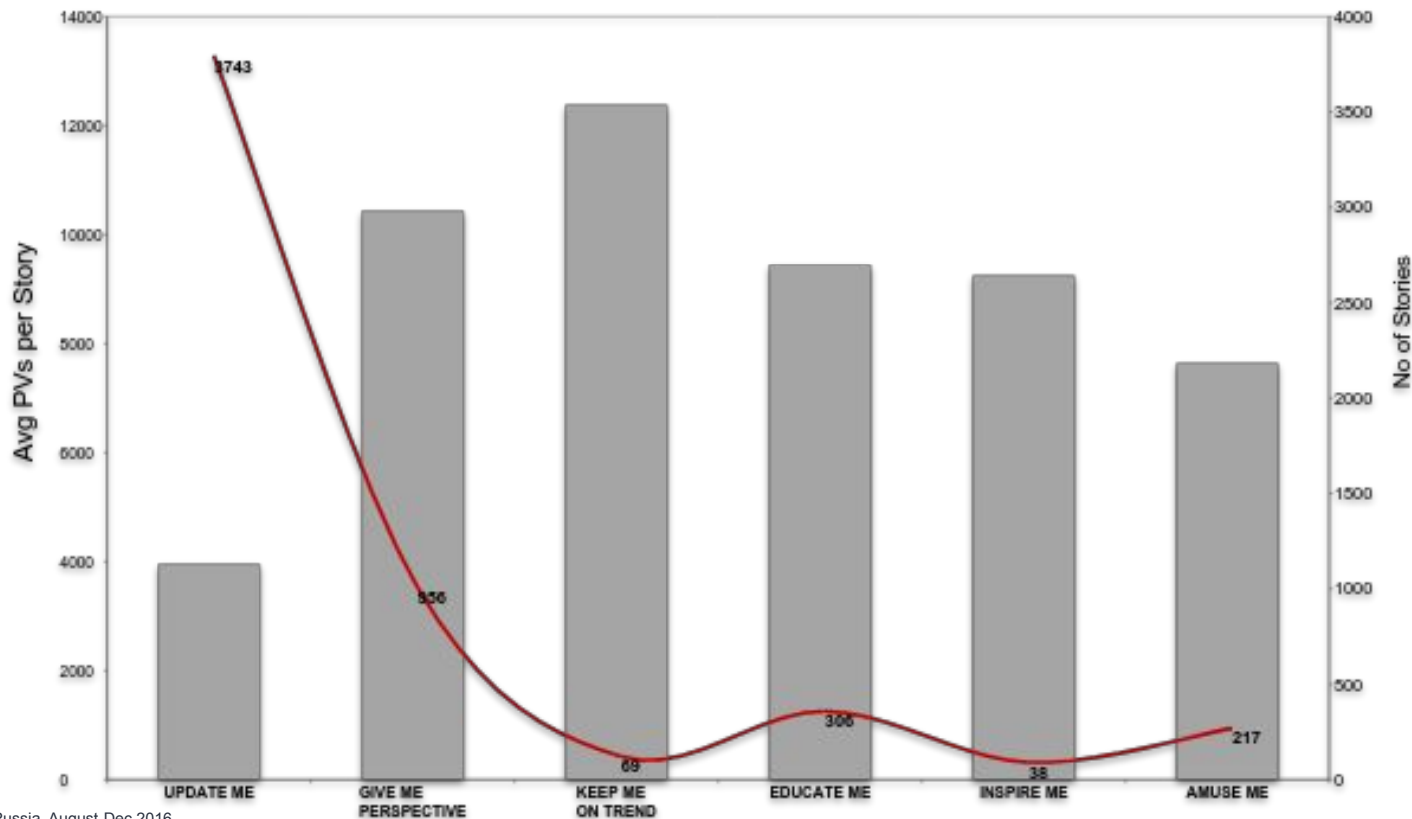
Once agreed, the output must reflect the new approach, normally it takes time and a lot of comms to bed down

Internal and external analytics systems must reflect the new approach. The user needs will change with time, too

User needs approach to doing news - a BBC model



User needs approach to doing news - a classic BBC case study

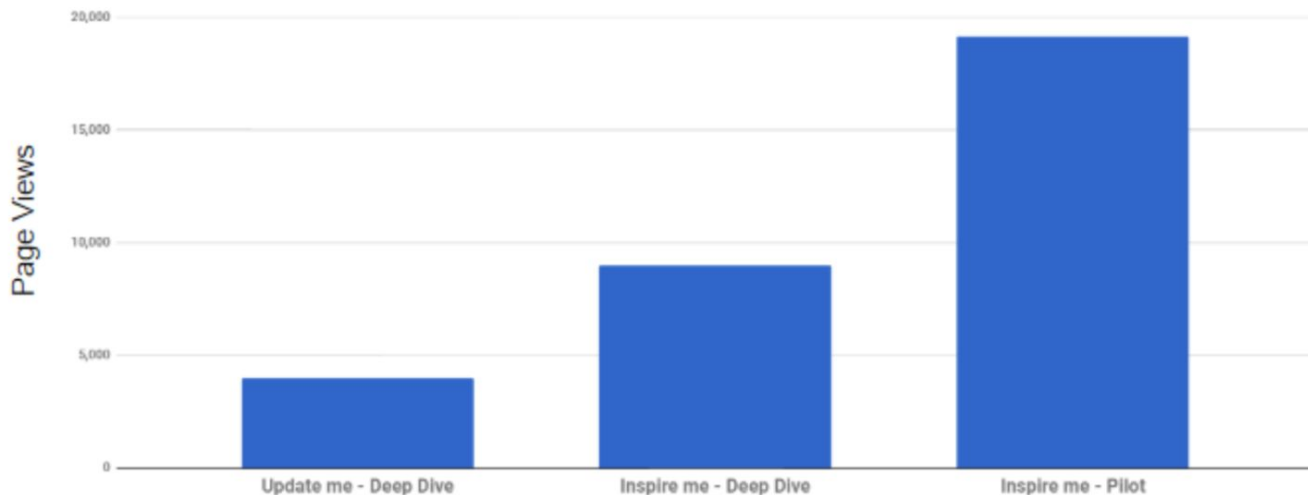


70% of stories are 'Update Me' but bring only 7% of page views

Newsroom was producing content the audience did not need (in these volumes)

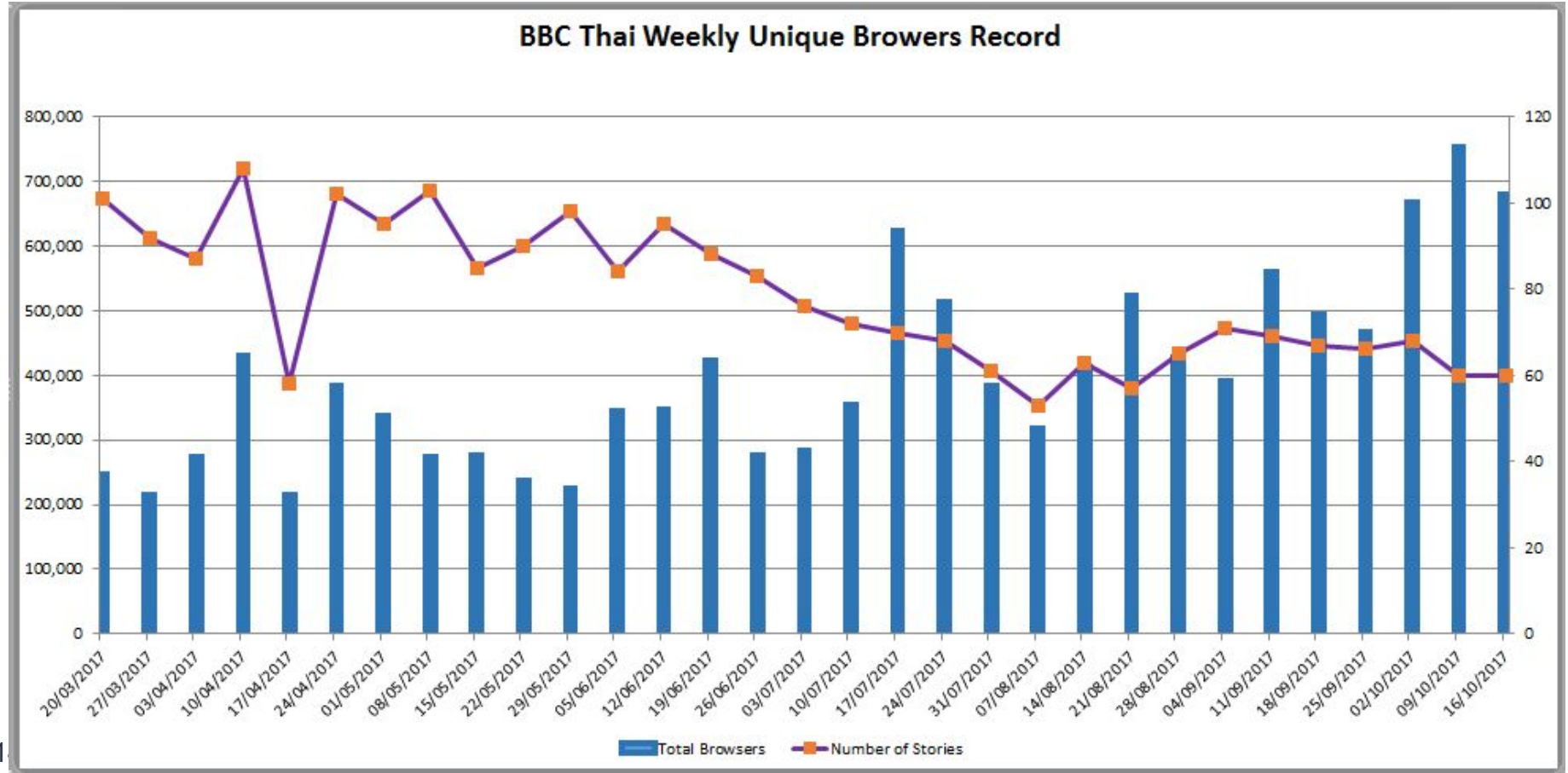
'Inspire me' user need growth hack delivered great results

BBC Russian example: inspire me!

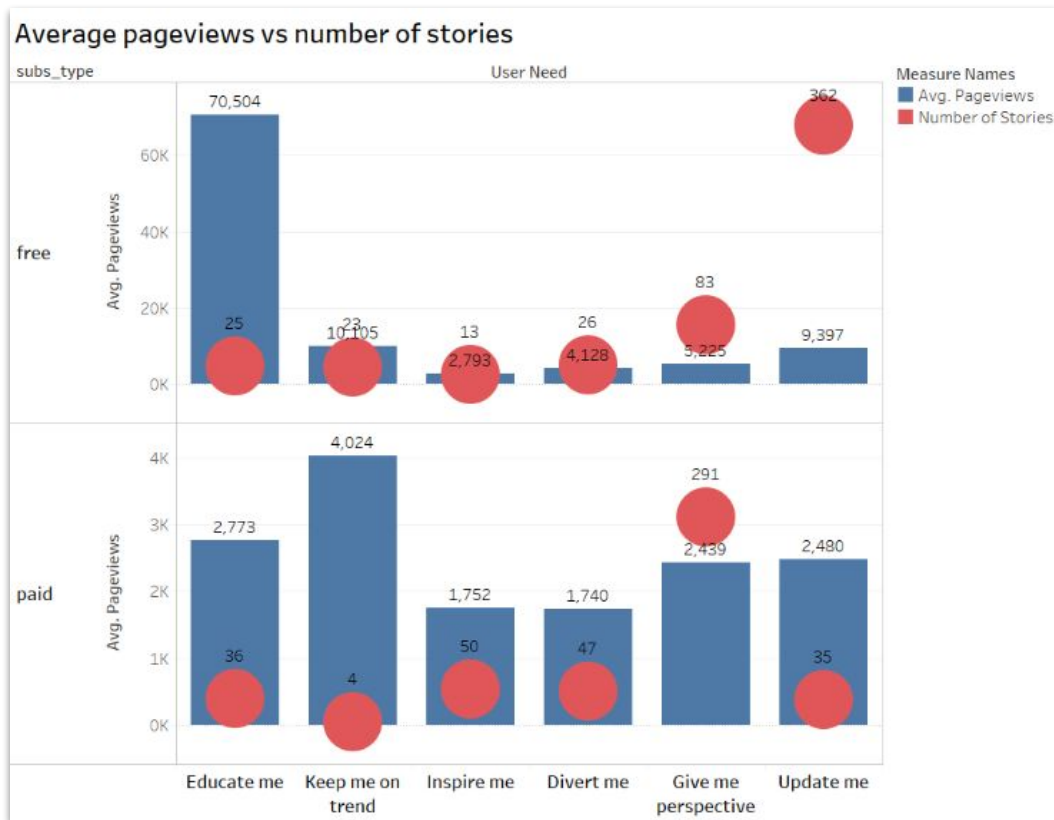


Ilona Vinogradova, Growth Editor, EuropeHub

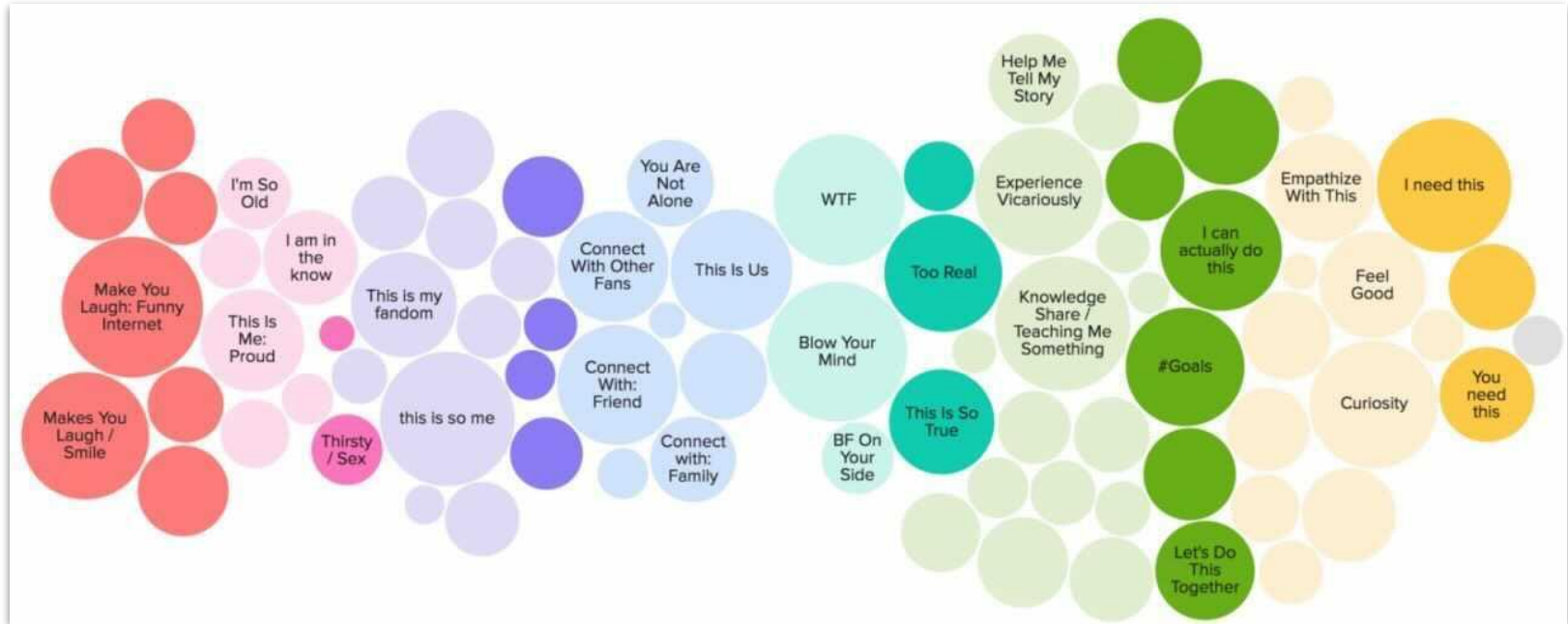
BBC Thai example: do less – better!



User needs approach to doing news - a national publisher



Other 'user needs wheels' out there - a BuzzFeed model



Other 'user needs wheels' out there - a TRT model

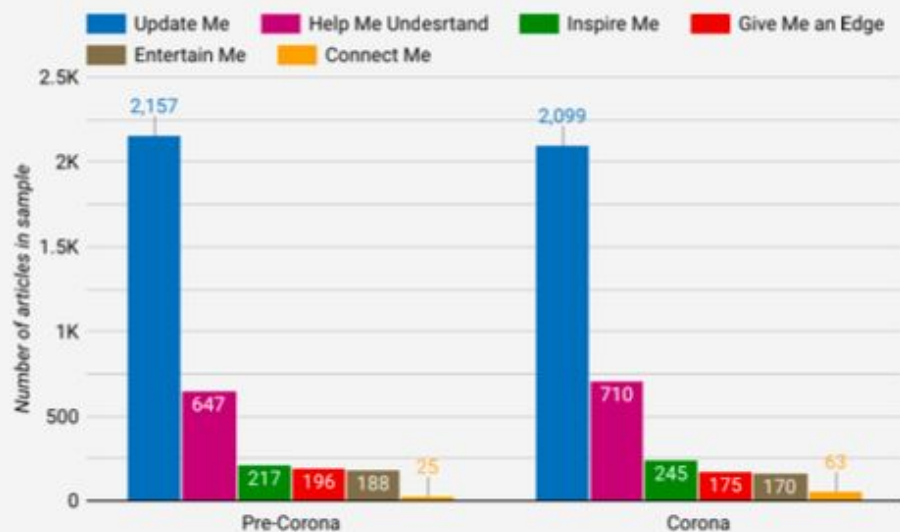


Other 'user needs wheels' out there - a Vogue Int model



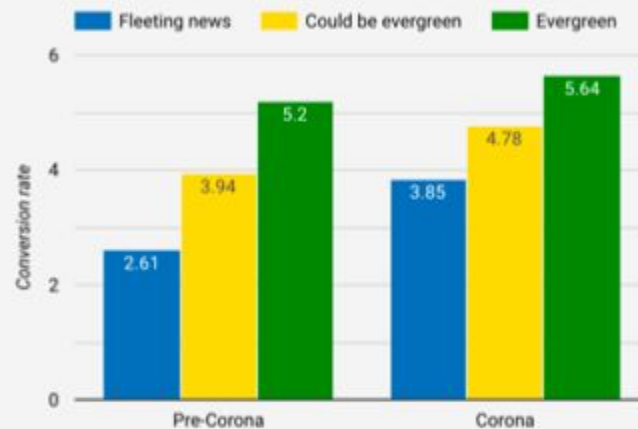
WSJ content review and user needs

What Are We Publishing?



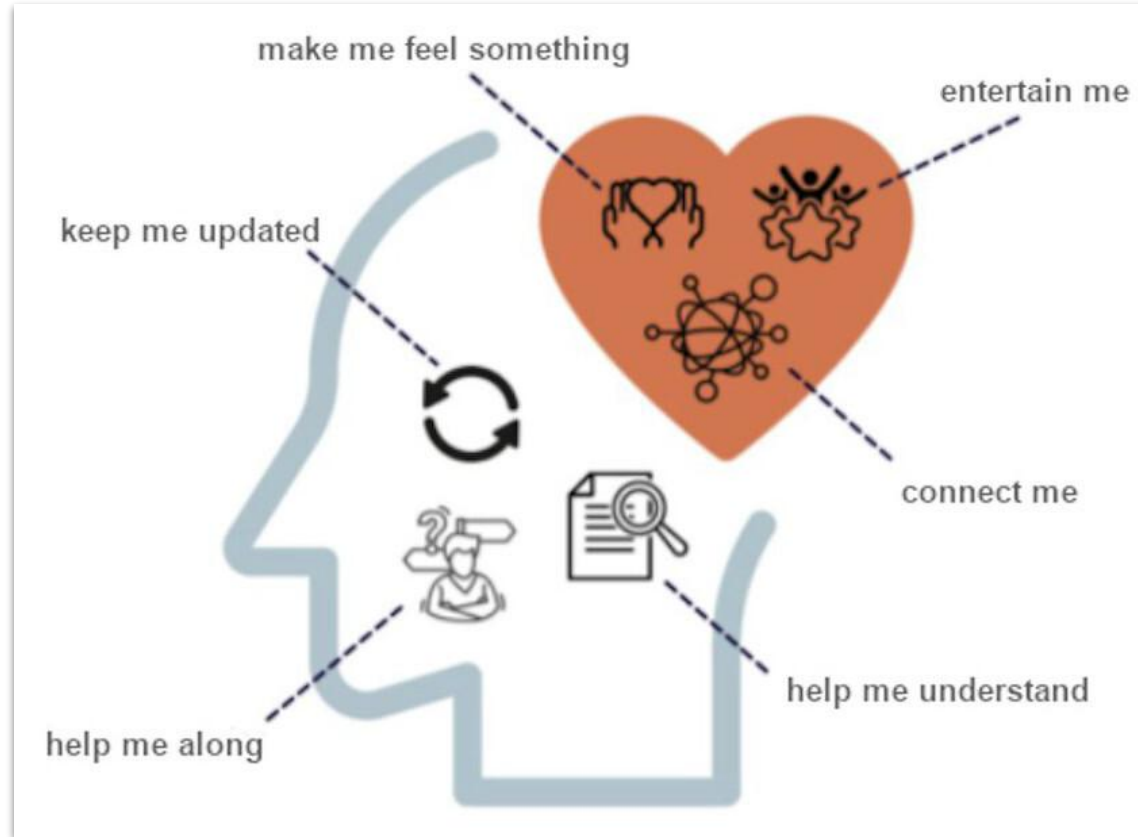
Source: Random sample of articles, October 2019 to May 2020

Which Stories Have High Conversion Rates?



Source: Random sample of articles, October 2019 to May 2020

Other 'user needs wheels' out there - a DPG model



Other 'user needs wheels' out there - a Google Search model

Surprise Me

Search is fun and entertaining. It is extensive with many unique iterations.

Thrill Me

Search is a quick adventure to find new things. It is brief, with just a few words and minimal back-button use.

Impress Me

Search is about influencing and winning. It is laser focused, using specific phrases.

Educate Me

Search is about competence and control. It is thorough: reviews, ratings, comparisons, etc.

Reassure Me

Search is about simplicity, comfort, and trust. It is uncomplicated and more likely to include questions.

Help Me

Search is about connecting and practicality. It is to-the-point, and more likely to mention family or location.

Other 'user needs wheels' out there - a Culture Trip model



User needs = your own list or priorities

... 75% of output brings only 12% of pageviews ...

... 'Educate me' is the least used user needs, but it has the highest % of loyal readers ...

... 'Give me perspective' pieces generate the highest engagement off-site ...

... Logged in users love 'Inspire me' articles, and read depth of these articles is the highest across the site ...

... Certain sections could do with not producing 'Update me articles' at all - the value is in other user needs ...

The evolution of content analytics*

Pre-2000:
Verbal or
written
feedback



2000-2010:
Channel-
based daily,
weekly and
monthly
reports



2010-2020:
Articles-based,
value-based
reports, A/B
testing,
dashboards



2020+:
A predictive
AI/ML-based
scalable model,
with automation,
personalisation

Crowded market with similar-ish missions

smart^oct
make every
story count



Google Analytics

The new Google Analytics will give you the essential insights you need to be ready for what's next.



PARSE.LY

Content analytics
made easy



comscore

Measure what matters to
make cross-platform
audiences and advertising
more valuable.

Chartbeat

Made to
measure.



We help companies
to drive revenue and audience
growth by optimizing content
and user engagement

Publishers want a single version of truth



Telescope

BBC



culture trip

Book Good • Travel Good • Feel Good



**The
Guardian**
Ophan Dashboard

What's going on right now?

FT

FINANCIAL
TIMES

THE  TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES



Inca



Lantern

THE
GLOBE
AND
MAIL



Sophi

Actionable user needs - the white paper is out!

triple n:
news need
notifications

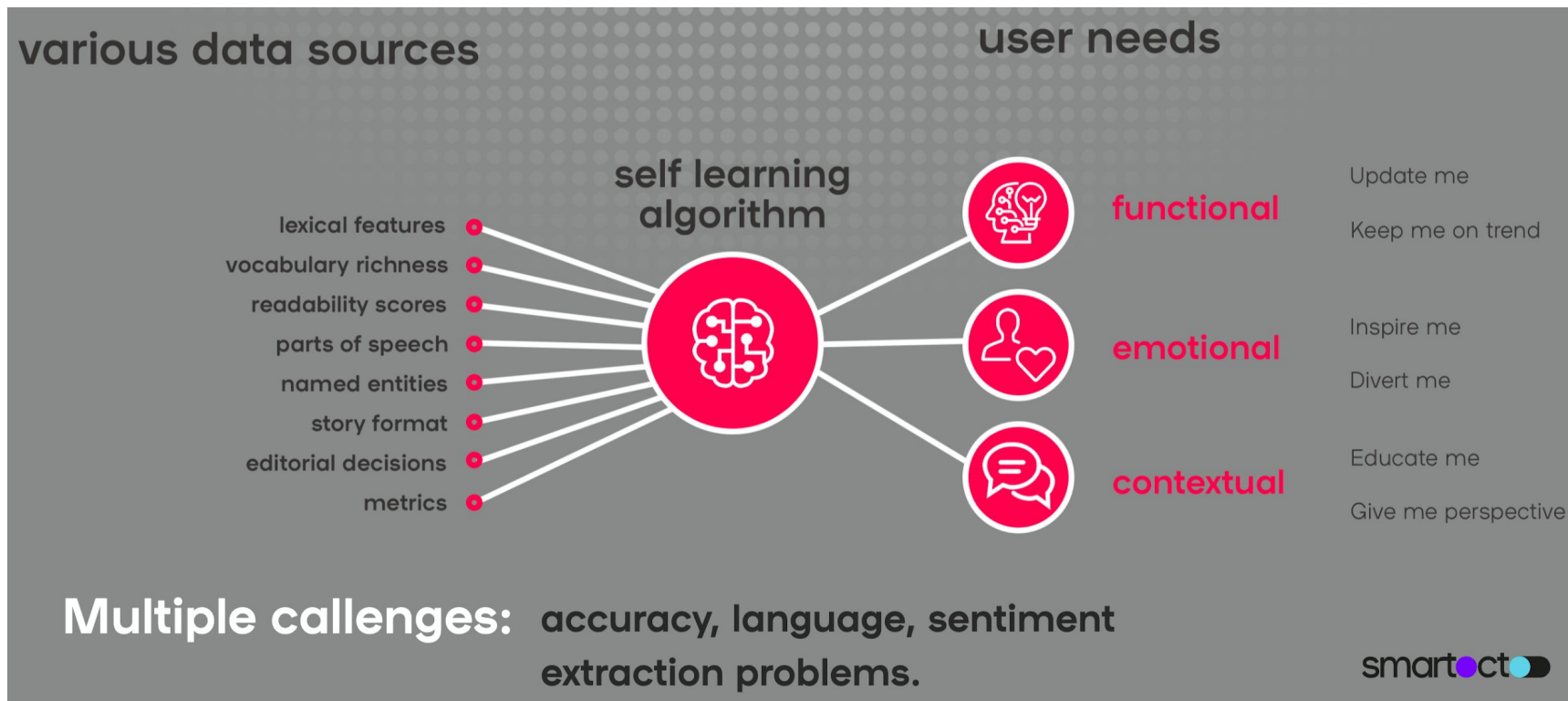
Triple N: we've build an algo that recognises user needs in realtime and is able to send out notifications to newsrooms in order to help them write better, more engaging news stories for their audiences

actionable
user needs

**[https://smartocto.com/
triple-n/#whitepaper](https://smartocto.com/triple-n/#whitepaper)**

smartocto

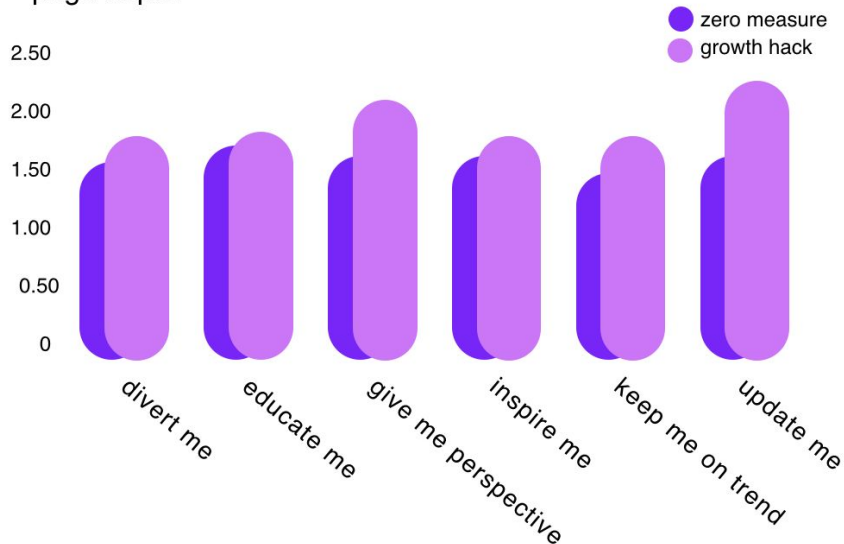
Algorithms can identify user needs and help newsrooms



[More on News Needs Notifications project](#)

Actionable user needs - the white paper is out!

page depth

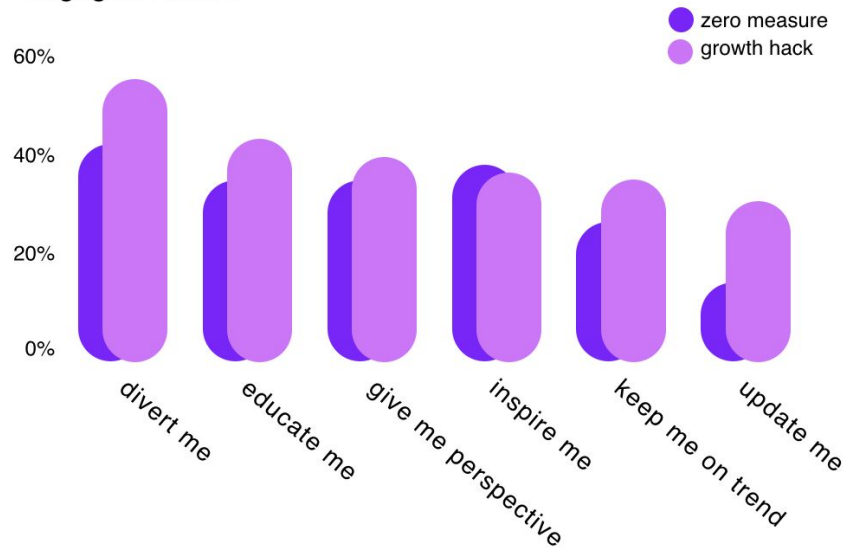


B OMROEP
BRABANT

DeMorgen.

IDNtimes
.com

engaged visitors



B OMROEP
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DeMorgen.

IDNtimes
.com

Notifications sent directly to the editorial team

Accept or Ignore
(at your peril)



Accept or Ignore
(at your peril)

conversion 25.9k loyalty 1.2k reach 11.5M

smart oct summary
play now
date 17 02 2021

Hi Roy,
here's your list of opportunities

The key take aways of yesterday's output are as follows:

- high conversions
- average pageloads on all stories
- overperformance in the section politics

reach opportunities
There are 4 stories this morning that can get improvements in order to increase the amount of reach. You still have some time to pick it up!

+65k
estimated gain

Opportunity	Estimated Gain
Student who took selfie with Google Maps ...	+50%
Homeschooling survey- how are you coping ...	+20%
Holly Willoughby in tears at Phillip Schofield's ...	+15%
Kidnapped Shannon Matthews' chilling first ...	+6%

conversion opportunities
The ratio conversions and reach is up by 8% which indicates that quality content is appreciated by your audience. Write some more of these!

+12k
estimated gain

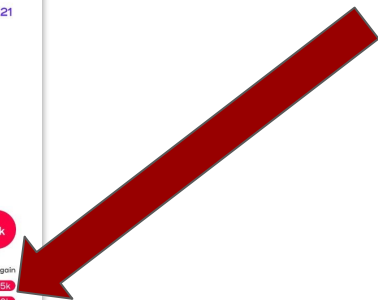
Opportunity	Estimated Gain
Melania and Donald Trump 'face eviction' ...	+8%
Senator who buried son hours before Capital ...	+4%

remarkable
Author William Walker scored his 25th consecutive great value story. That's something to celebrate!
The amount of push notifications went down by 23% this month. Why?

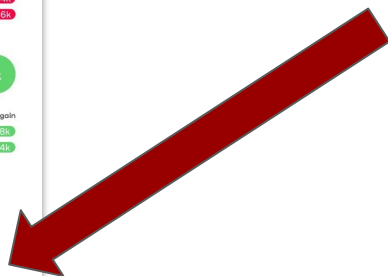
missed opportunity
Take a look at yesterday's opportunities. There are still 2 notifications that you can benefit from today!

have fun
optimising !
make every story count

Accept or Ignore
(at your peril)



Accept or Ignore
(at your peril)



**Thank you for your attention,
time for discussion**

**12 Sep 2021
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Independent digital consultant
Content, Transformation, Innovation**