

Who is Ready to Pay for Information?

INMA, 2nd November

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Who is Ready to Pay for Information?

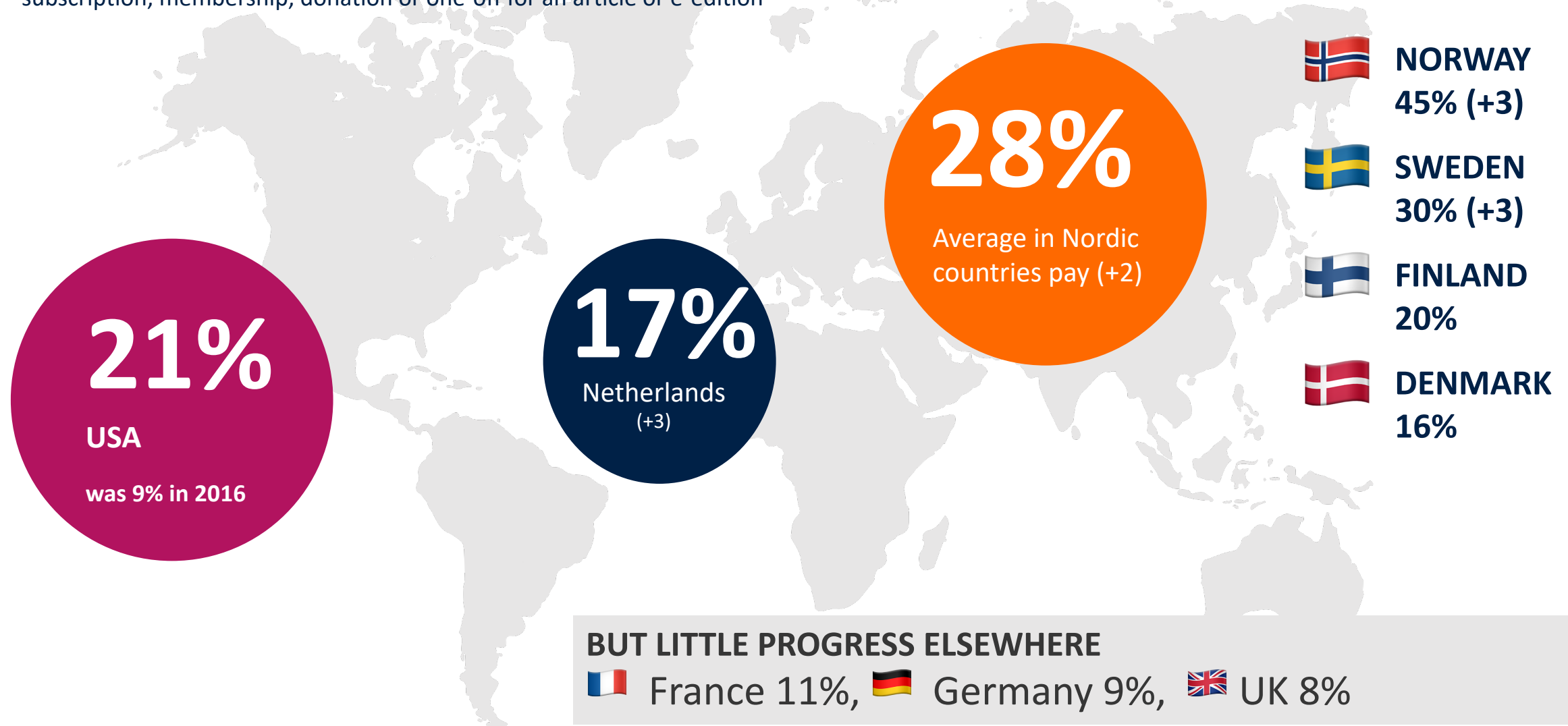
- Who is currently paying and why?
- How can we get new people to pay?
- How might the future pan out?

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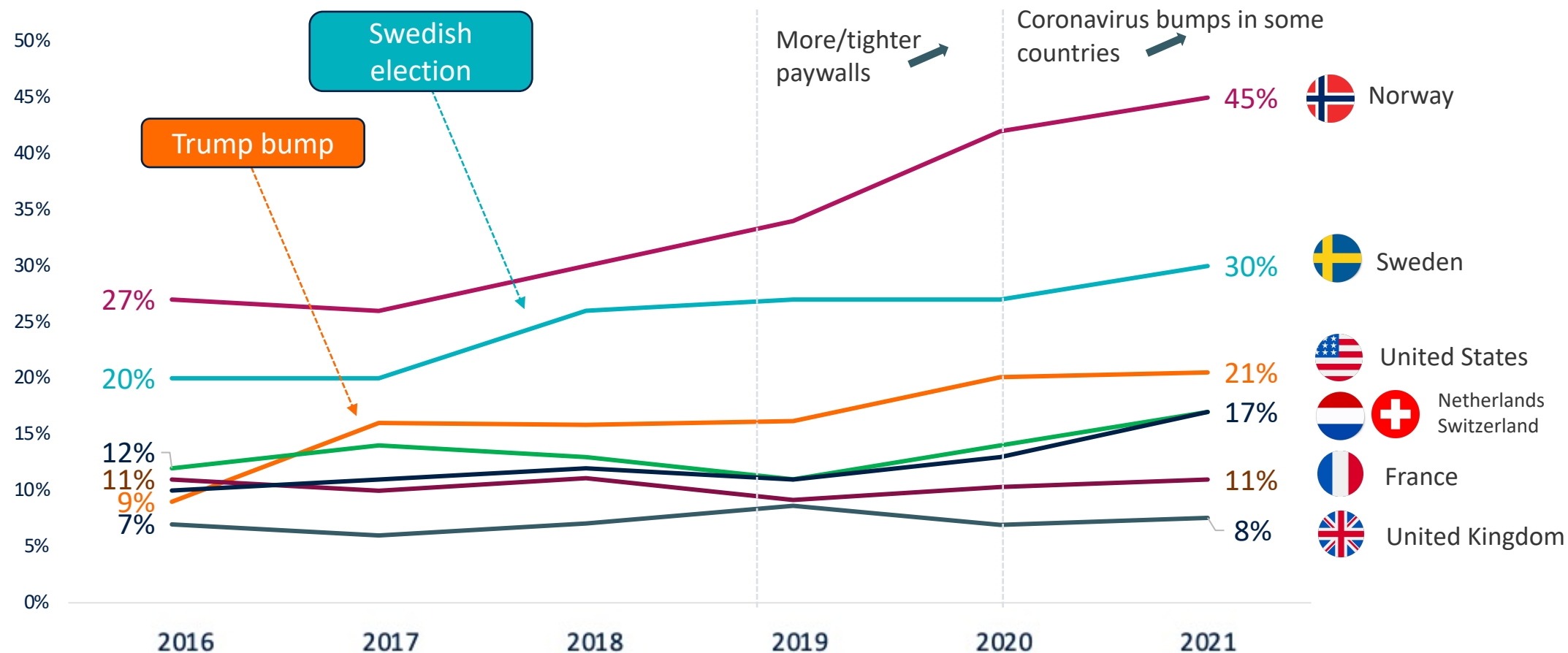
Proportion paying for any online news in the last year

subscription, membership, donation or one-off for an article or e-edition



Proportion paying for any online news (2016-2021)

Subscription, membership, donation or one-off for an article or e-edition

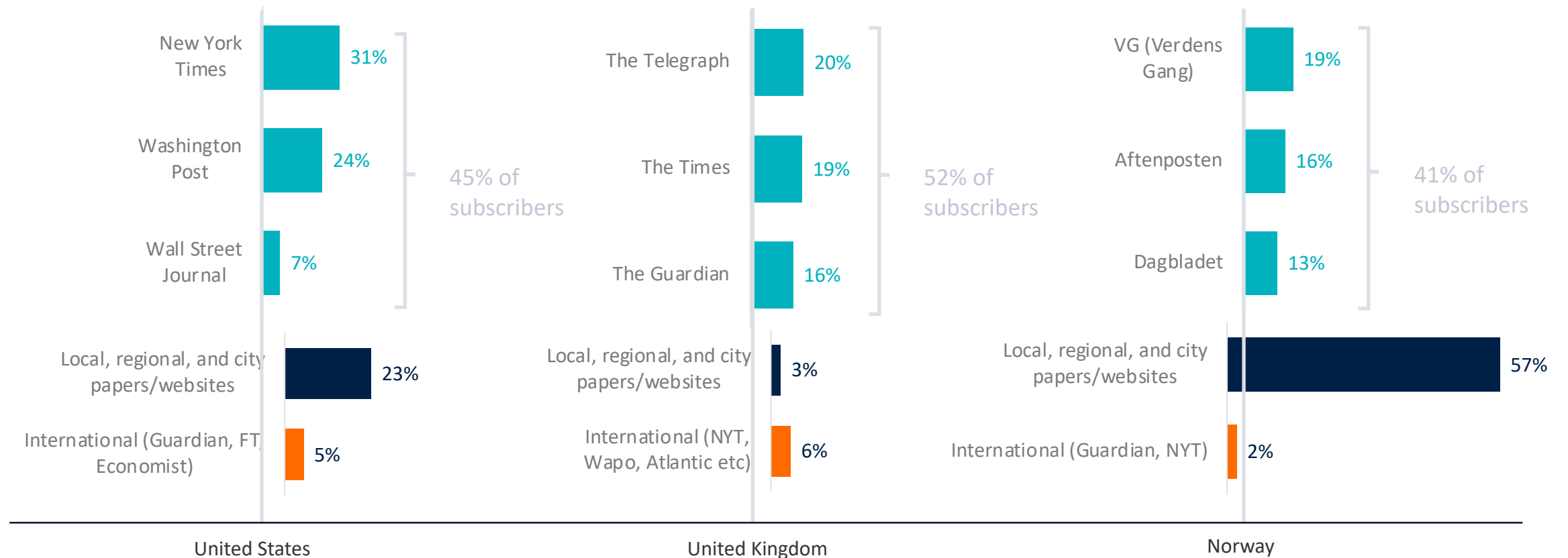


Q7a. Have you paid for ONLINE news content, or accessed a paid for ONLINE news service in the last year ? (This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription or one off payment for an article or app or e-edition)
Base: All markets 2021– USA: 2,021; UK: 2,031; Germany: 2,011; France: 2,012; Spain: 2,019; Japan: 2,004

Winner takes most dynamics persisting

A few big national brands account for around half of all subscribers

Top paid brands – US, UK and Norway



Q7_subs_name. You said you have paid a subscription/membership to one or more digital news services in the last year... Please enter the name of the news subscription you value most, followed by your supplementary subscriptions?

Base: All that paid for a subscription/membership to a digital news service in the last year: Norway = 656; USA = 336; UK = 125.

Average number of subscriptions is ONE

	Example of national titles	Median number of subscriptions	Ave age subscriber (ongoing payment)	% of subscribers paying for local titles
Australia	Sydney Morning Herald, Herald Sun	1	50-55	30%
Austria	Kronen Zeitung, Der Standard	1	45-50	13%
Canada	Globe & Mail, Toronto Star	1	50-55	9%
Denmark	Berlingske, Politiken	1	55-60	25%
France	Le Monde, Mediapart	1	45-50	15%
Finland	Helsingin Sanomat, Aamulehti	1	45-50	31%
Germany	Bild, Der Spiegel	1	45-50	31%
Ireland	Irish Times, Irish Independent	1	40-45	1%
Italy	Corriere della Serra, La Repubblica	1	50-55	14%
Netherlands	De Telegraaf, AD, Volkskrant	1	45-50	16%
Norway	VG, Aftenposten, Dagbladet	1	50-55	57%
Sweden	Aftonbladet, Dagens Nyheter	1	50-55	37%
Spain	El Pais, El Mundo, elDiario.es	1	40-45	15%
United States	New York Times, Washington Post	2	50-55	23%
United Kingdom	Times, Telegraph, Guardian	1	50-55	3%

Q7_subs_name. You said you have paid a subscription/membership to one or more digital news services in the last year... Please enter the name of the news subscription you value most, followed by your supplementary subscriptions?
 Base: All that paid for a subscription/membership to a digital news service in the last year: Range: Germany = 143 to Sweden = 431.

Why are people taking out more than one subscription?



VALUES BASED

“I believe strongly and profoundly in the value of fact-based, investigative journalism.

If I want to live in a free and democratic society, I believe it is my duty as a citizen to support a free, independent, and fact-based press and media”

*Subscribes to **nine** publications including New York Times, W Post, Indy Star, Economist, Wall Street Journal, ProPublica, NY review of Books, New Yorker and Guardian (R-W)*

M, 54, USA



SPECIAL OFFERS

“I got an offer for Aftonbladet + for SEK 1 – I took it (on top of local paper)

F, 45 Sweden



DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

“Each provides a different perspective about different topics and fills different needs.

They tend to provide accurate or alternative viewpoints”

Wall Street Journal, The Athletic (Sport), National Review (conservative opinion magazine/website)

M, 52, USA



BREADTH AND DEPTH

“Apple News+ provides the greatest breadth of information.

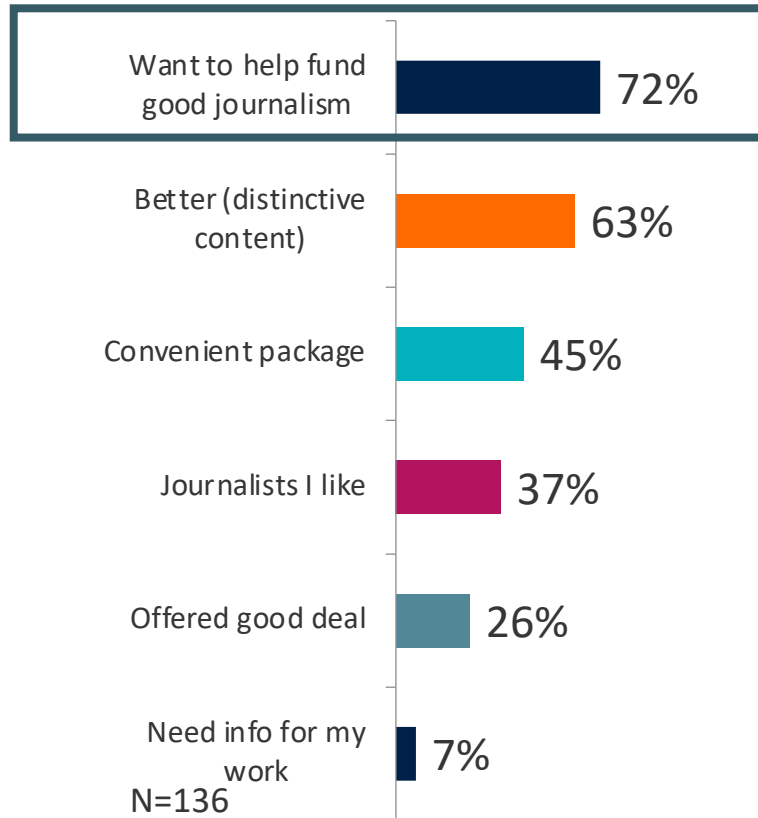
New York Times and Washington Post offer the most in-depth information”

M, 62, USA

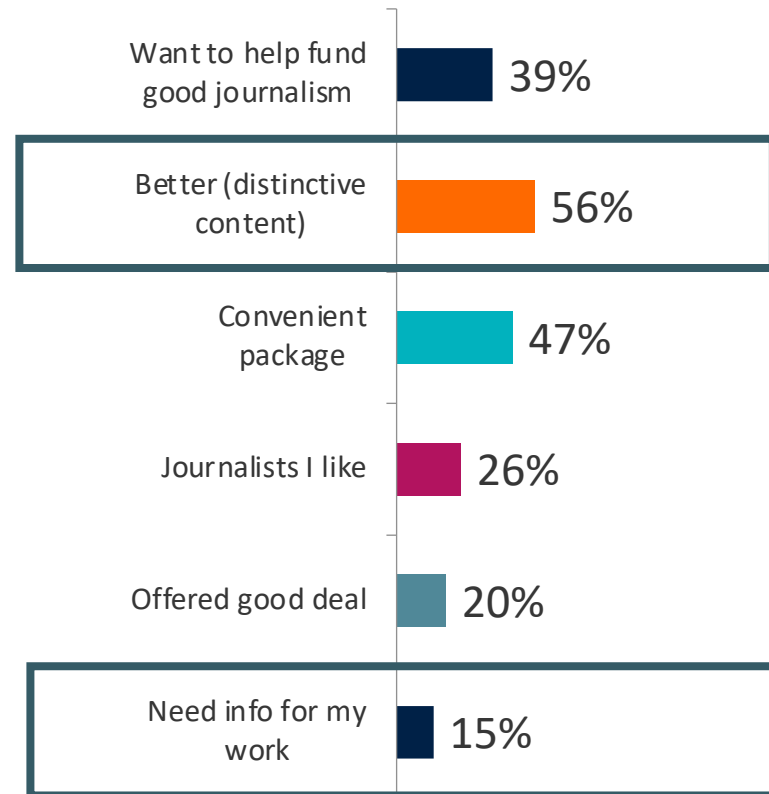
Why do people subscribe?

The Washington Post

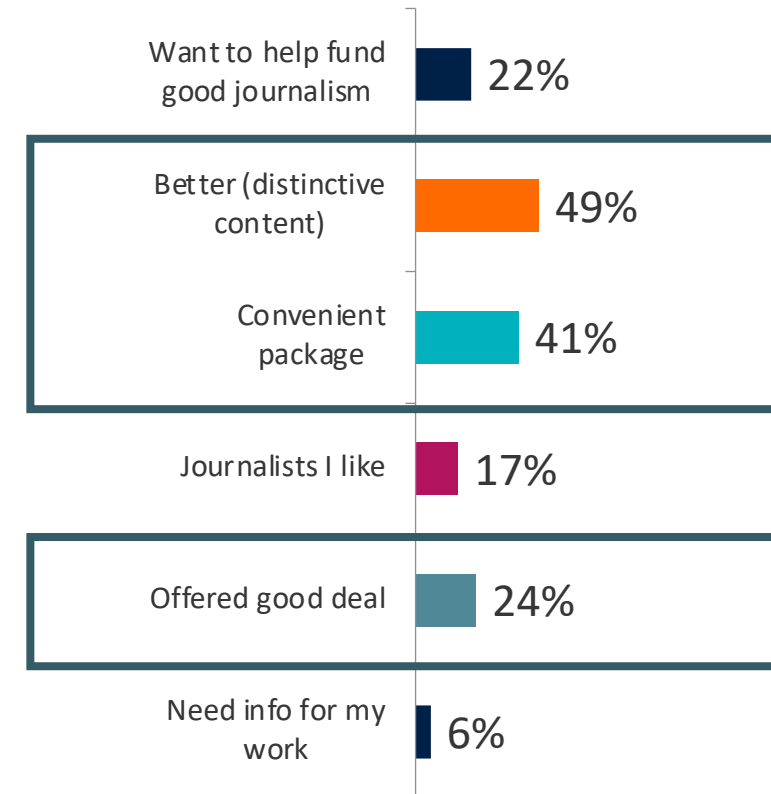
Democracy Dies in Darkness



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



Aftenposten



Why do people subscribe?

Churn generally low compared to entertainment services

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Aftenposten

Washington Post 87%

Wall St Journal 84%

Aftenposten 73%

Netflix etc 78%

Spotify etc 79%

Alignment to values really helps with churn – not purely transactional

N=136

Why do people subscribe?

DISTINCTIVE CONTENT

"I believe support of quality journalism is important and I think the Atlantic is quality journalism" - **M,38, The Atlantic subscriber**

65% USA

64% UK

44% Norway

CONVENIENCE/PRICE

"I have an excellent discount with my Prime subscription and with the excellent reporting ...there's no reason not to continue it" - **F,64 Washington Post**

57% USA

58% UK

51% Norway

SUPPORT JOURNALISM (MISSION)

"It's never been a more important time to fund great, vetted journalism like the Times and the Post" - **F,59, New York Times subscriber**

52% USA

39% UK

21% Norway

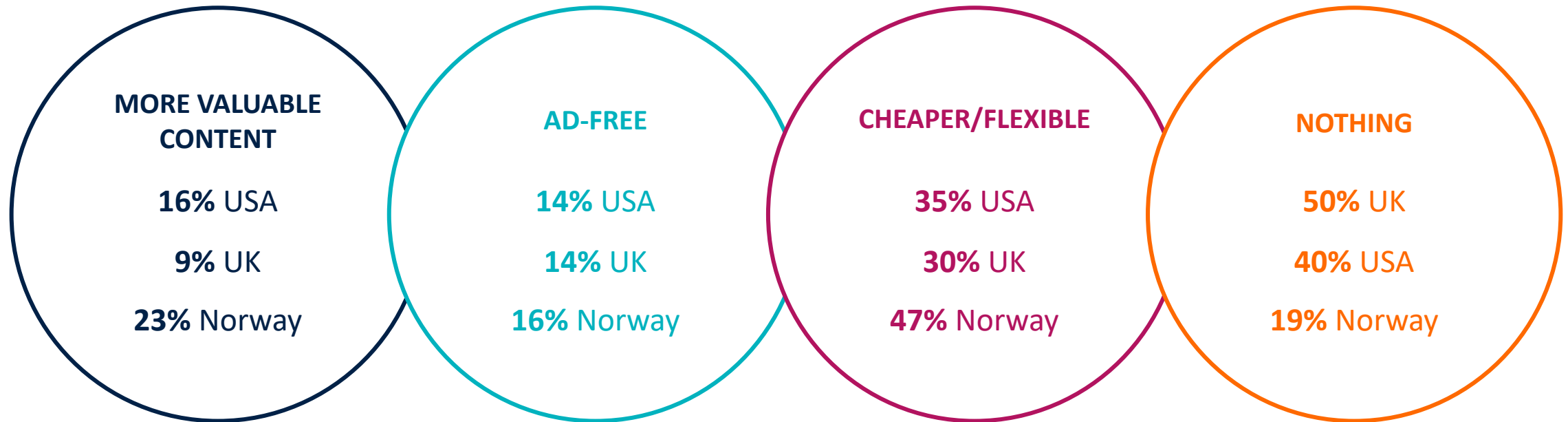
Can we encourage more people to pay?

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What might persuade non payers to pay for online news?

Lower price and greater convenience look the most likely options but **nothing would persuade many...**



Majority reluctant to pay for online news

Lower price and greater convenience look the most likely options but nothing would persuade many...

“It’s literally everywhere
so the need to pay for it,
I don’t really see it.”

Female, 25, UK focus group

AD-FREE

14% USA

14% UK

16% Norway

“I can get all the information that I need
with the aggregator App that I use.
I don’t see the need for any subscriptions.”

Male, 54, Germany focus group

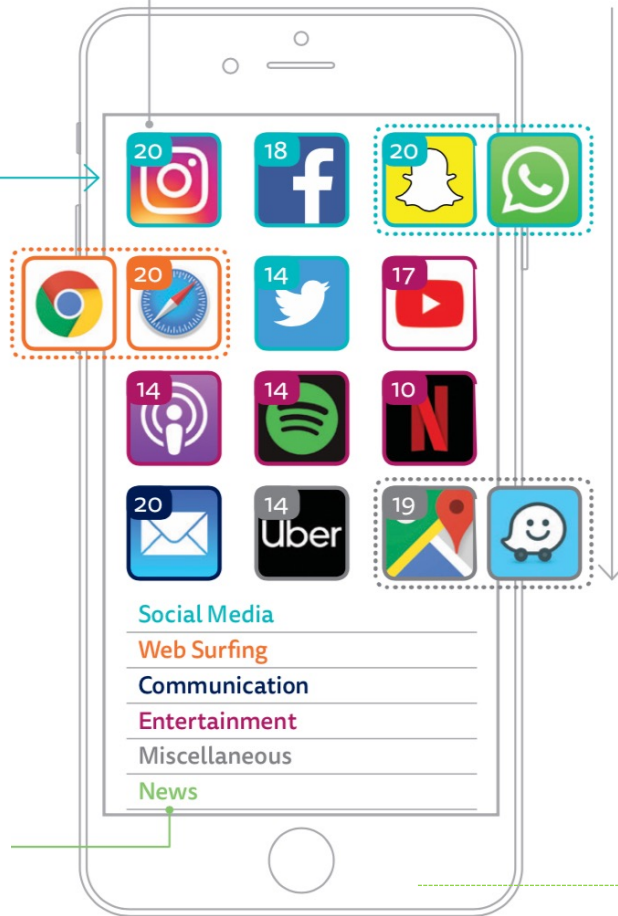
Young people may be hardest to convince

Number of separate phones we found this app in:

Ordered by, when present on a user's phone, the average amount of minutes per day spent on app



Instagram is **THE PRIMARY** app found on almost ALL phones and when found commanded the most daily minutes!



No news app (with the exception of Reddit) was within the top 25 apps used by respondents. When present, they made a comparatively small amount of daily usage.



Some news devotees still have routines

A Daily Mail App [ROUTINE]
Twitter
Instagram



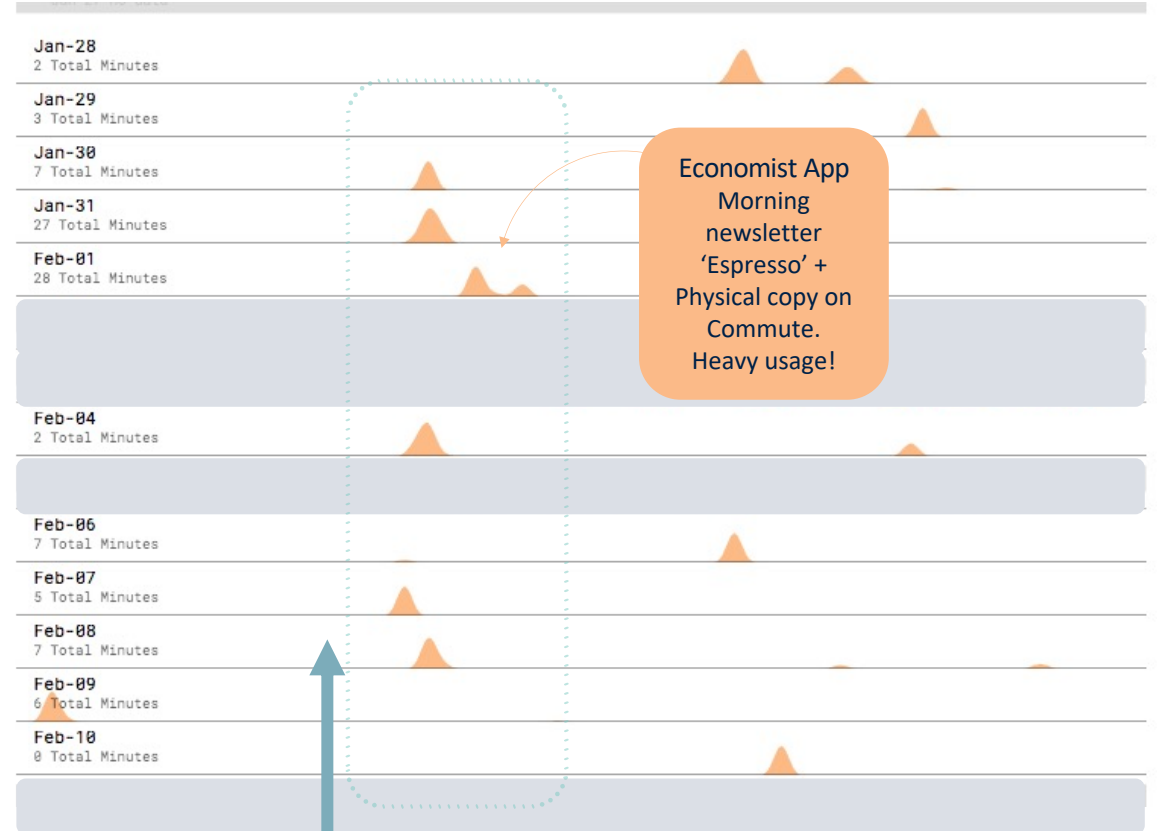
Daily Mail App
Morning and Evening
patterns. Routine and
Appointment.
Also regularly read The
Guardian for sport
Twitter for time filler.

VERBATIM

My main two, *Mail* and *The Guardian*. *Mail* we used to get at home, so used to get as a newspaper and obviously moving out of home was a bit about, like, still trying to follow that kind of news and obviously you can, via the app, you can get on a more frequent basis

(Male, 25-30, UK)

D Economist App [ROUTINE]
NYT, Jezebel, WP Web
Instagram + Twitter



Economist App
Morning
newsletter
'Espresso' +
Physical copy on
Commute.
Heavy usage!

VERBATIM

I gravitate towards *The Economist* a lot, that's kind of my main for anything business and geopolitics... My Mum bought me a physical subscription, as a birthday present. I read the first one and I was like, 'Oh shit, this is really good writing and it aligns, for the most part, with a lot of the way I view the world.' Also I learned quite a bit

(Male, 24-30, US)

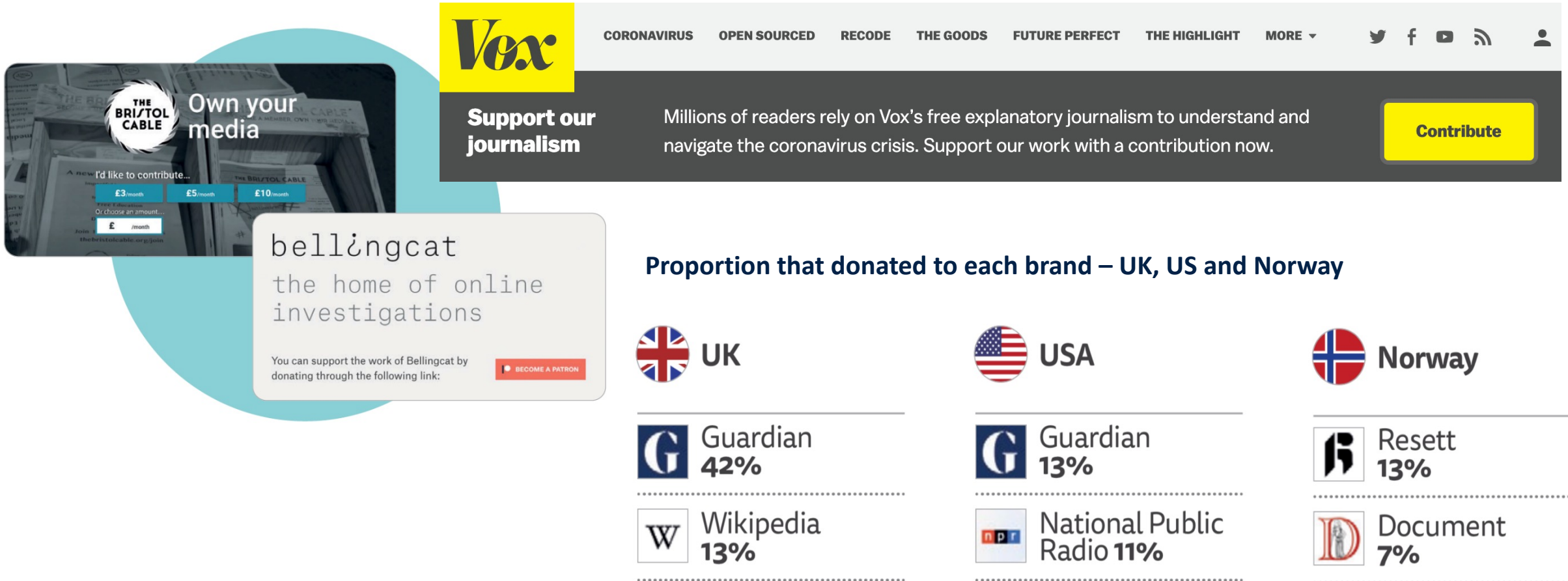
Membership and donations

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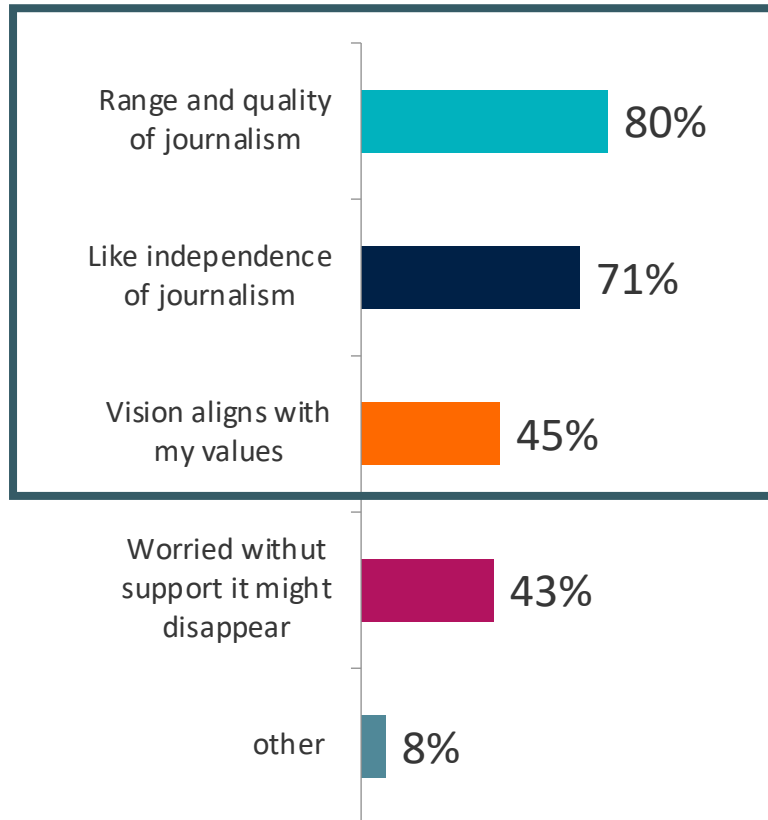
Donation and memberships on the rise

Around 4% donate to a news organisations in the United States, 3% in Spain and 1% in the UK

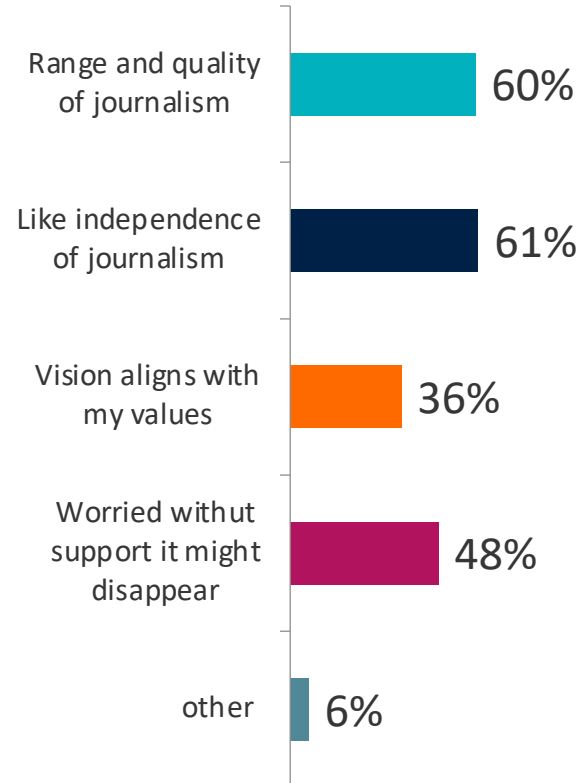


Reason for donation

UK



US



Reasons for donations

1. SUPPORT INDEPENDENT MEDIA

“It is the only way to maintain free media that is independent of political power.”

(M, 45, Spain)

2. GUILT

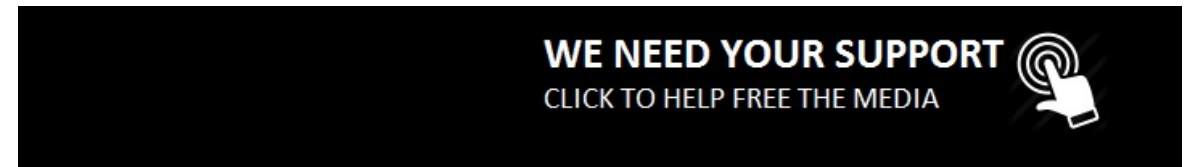
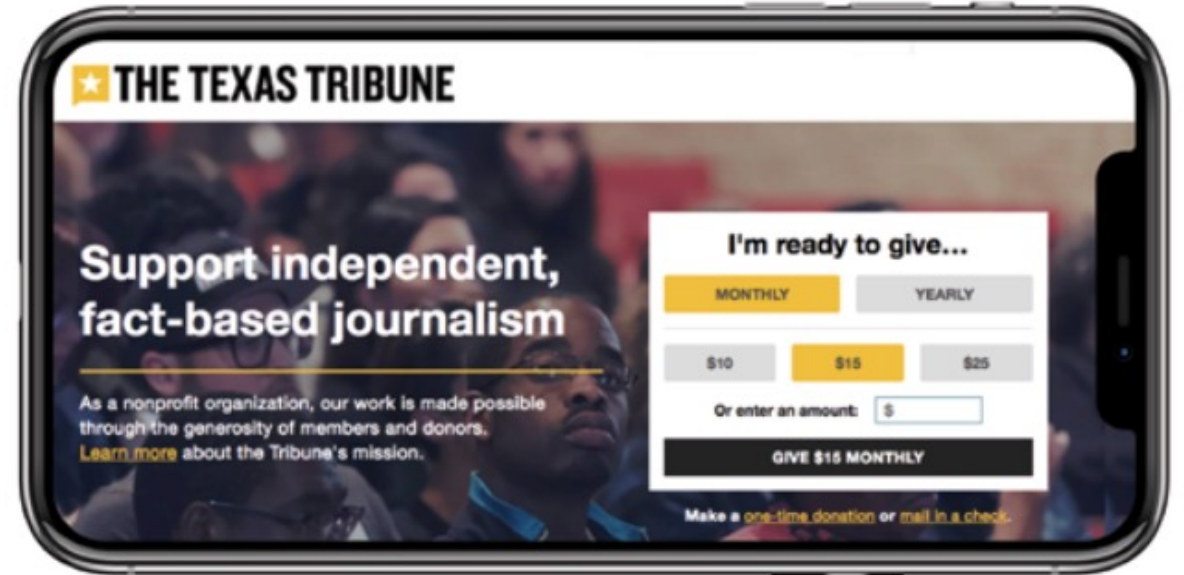
“I paid for *The Guardian* because I read its work and it doesn’t have a paywall.’

(F,60,US)

3. PART OF A CAUSE

“I want to make sure those news outlets stay open.”

(F,64,US)



How aware is the public about funding crisis?

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Low awareness about the problems of the news industry, little support for government help

In 33 markets:



31%

are aware that news
is less profitable
these days



53%

are not concerned
about financial state
of commercial news media



27%

would support
government stepping
in to help

Q. Financing1_2021. How concerned are you, if at all, about the financial state of commercial news organisations in your country? Financing2_2021. To the best of your knowledge, which of the following best describes the financial state of commercial news organisations in your country? Q. Financing3_2021. Should the government step in to help commercial news organisations that can't make enough money on their own?
Base: Total sample in 33 markets: 66,120. Note: We did not ask questions on commercial news media financing in Malaysia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, South Africa, Kenya, Philippines, Colombia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Peru and Thailand

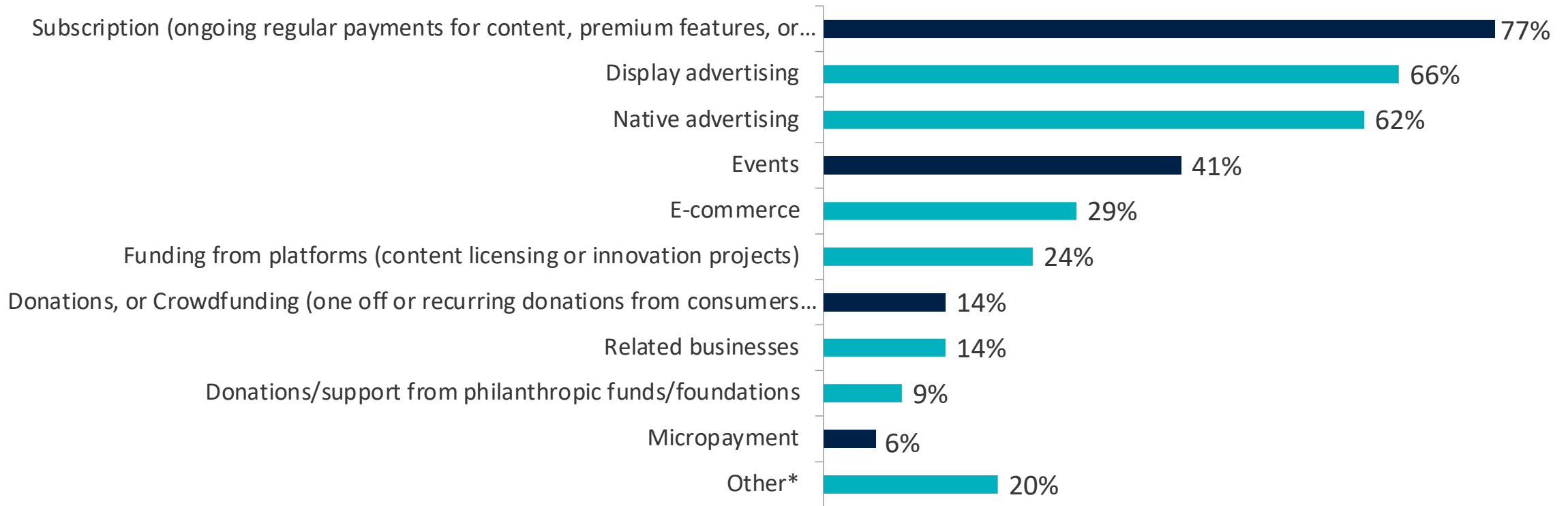
Publisher view

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The future is about diversification and resilience

Different kinds of reader payment not at the heart of strategies



*Other = selling technology, content syndication, government support

Q6. Which of the following digital revenue streams are likely to be important or very important for your company in 2021? - choose all that apply. N=217

Recap – Who is ready to pay for news?

- **Increasing attempts to charge for content**, won't work for all publishers or all consumers
- **Distinctive content, convenience and aligned values** are the key drivers of most subscriptions
- **Aligned values are good for retention** but also potentially undermine impartiality, limit the size of audience – but there are other options (bundling more value/convenience)
- **Biggest challenge is getting new people to pay** - will be especially tough with the young because they want to access multiple brands
- **Donations/micropayments** may help but won't bring in enough income on their own

.

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