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Residence
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**As a new creator
and AI economy
emerges, what can
the world learn
from Africa, and Africa
from the world?**

Africa Audience Development Summit
December 4, 2025

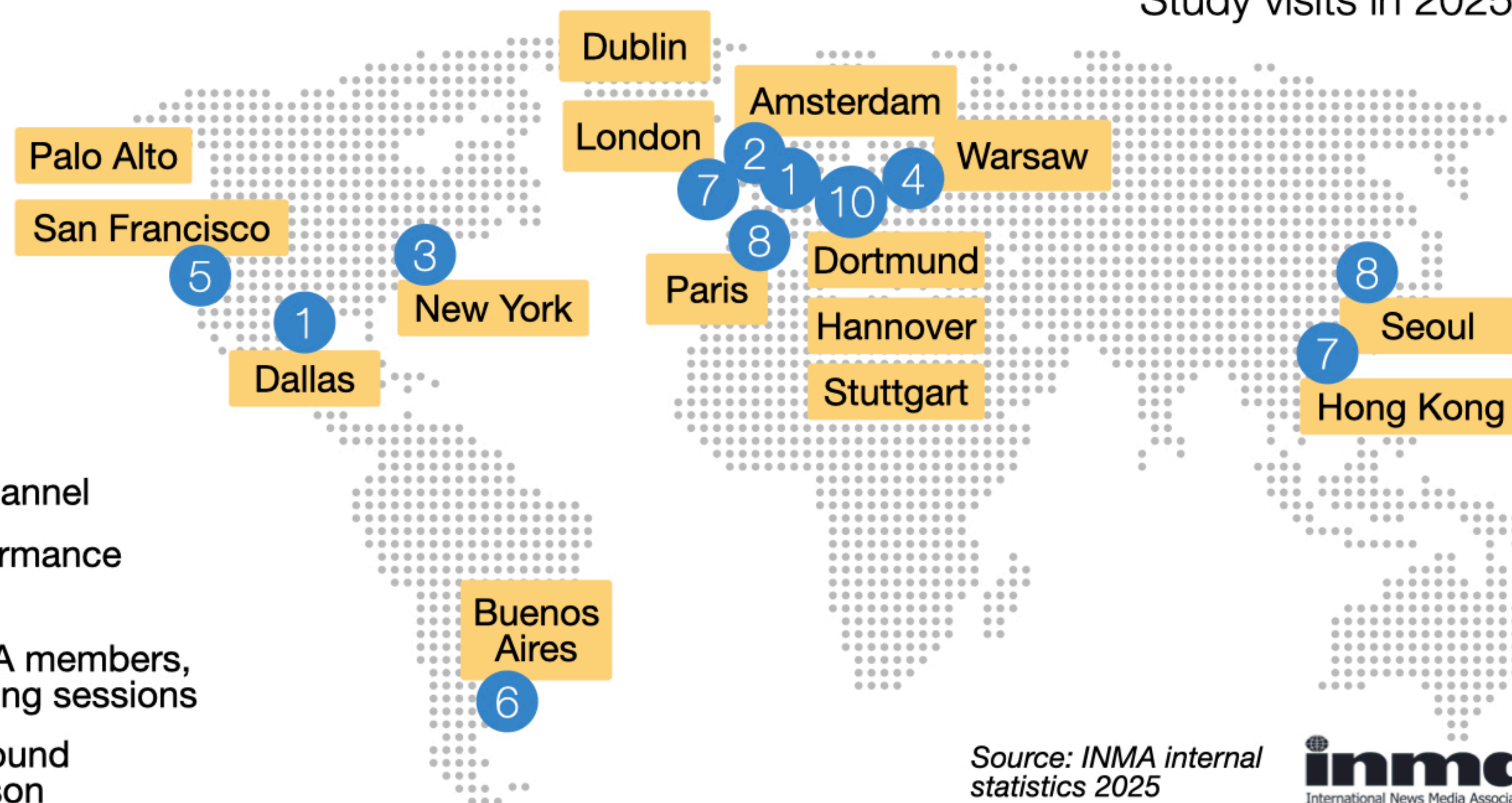
INMA Readers First Initiative in 2025

Roadmap toward **next gen of media revenue**

One mission:
surfacing global best
practices in the art
and science behind
content monetization

Study visits in 2025

- 1,187** execs subscribe to my newsletter and Slack channel
- 289** news brands feed performance data to our research
- 190** Engagements with INMA members, incl. 120 Ask-Me-Anything sessions
- 50** member newsrooms around the world visited in-person



Source: INMA internal
statistics 2025

inma
International News Media Association



Source: Evening Standard
2024. Photo: Alamy 2024

inma
Sharing ideas. Inspiring change.

**9m people in London and
no local daily newspaper anymore**

Est. 1827

Free from 2009

Weekly from 2024

Case study of the Minute

What blooms in a news desert

Startups like the London Minute try to fill the void in local journalism

7am Time of the daily delivery of the Minute to email boxes

~500 News and social feeds skimmed between 5am-7am

50% Story recommendations come from readers

25k+ Free subscribers in Edinburgh (20k+) and London (5k+)

58% Avg. email open rate for the Edinburgh Minute

Paid subscriptions make it a sustainable source of income for 1

2.7k Paid subscribers to the Edinburgh Minute alone

13% Avg. conversion rate (paid subs/ total subs)

£5 Monthly paid subscription. £45 per year

13% Fees paid to Substack (email platform), Stripe (payments)

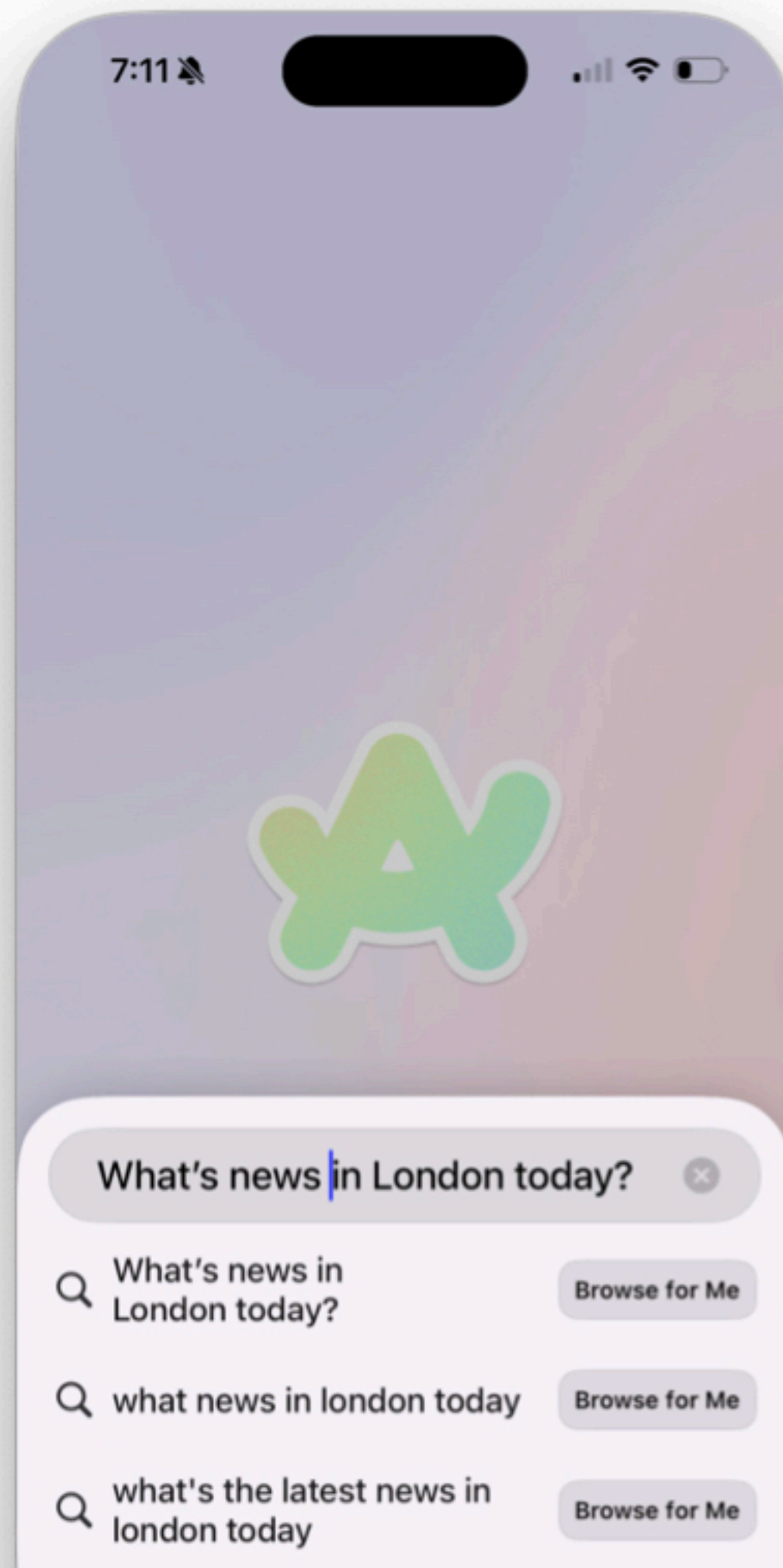
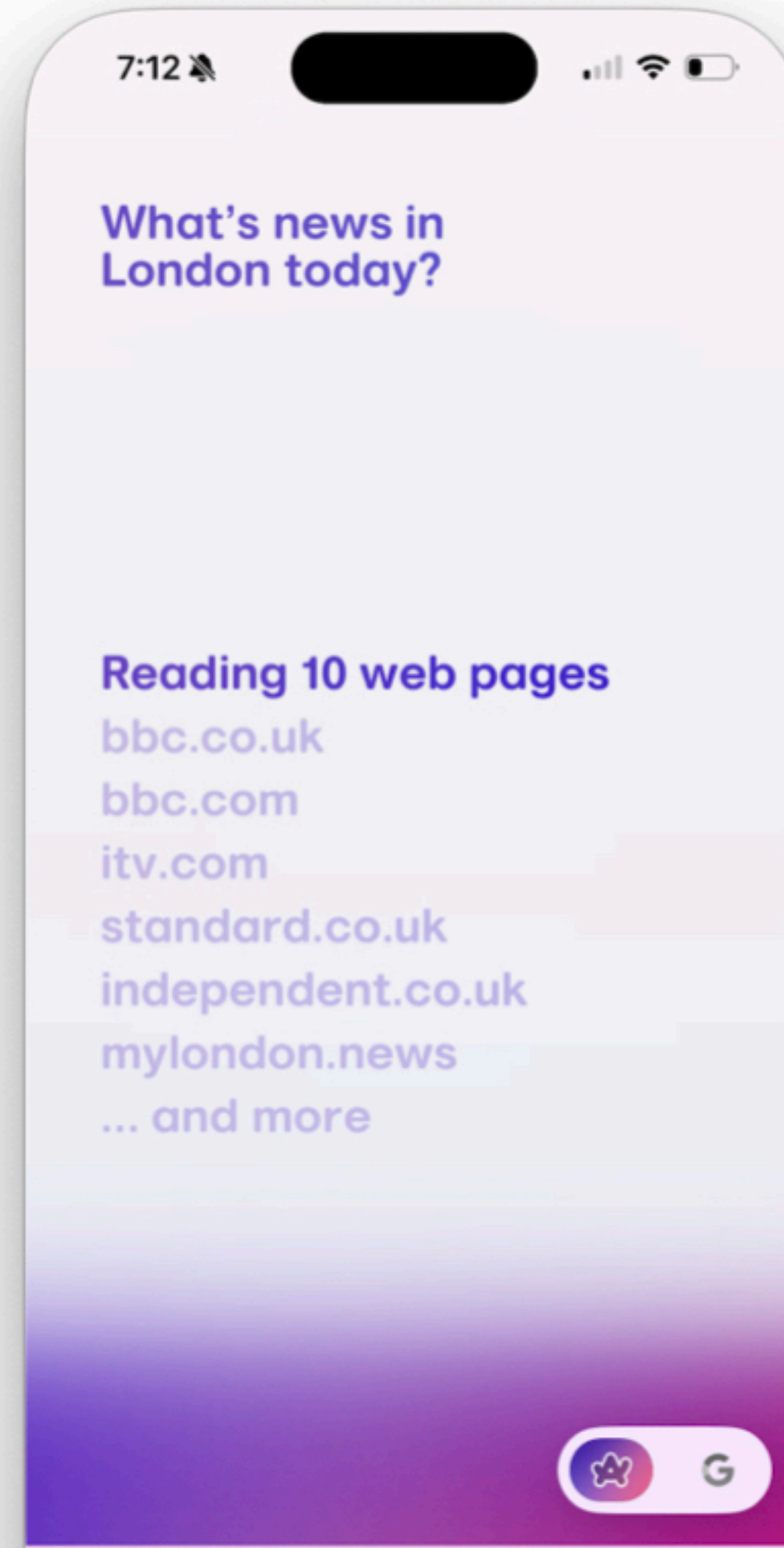
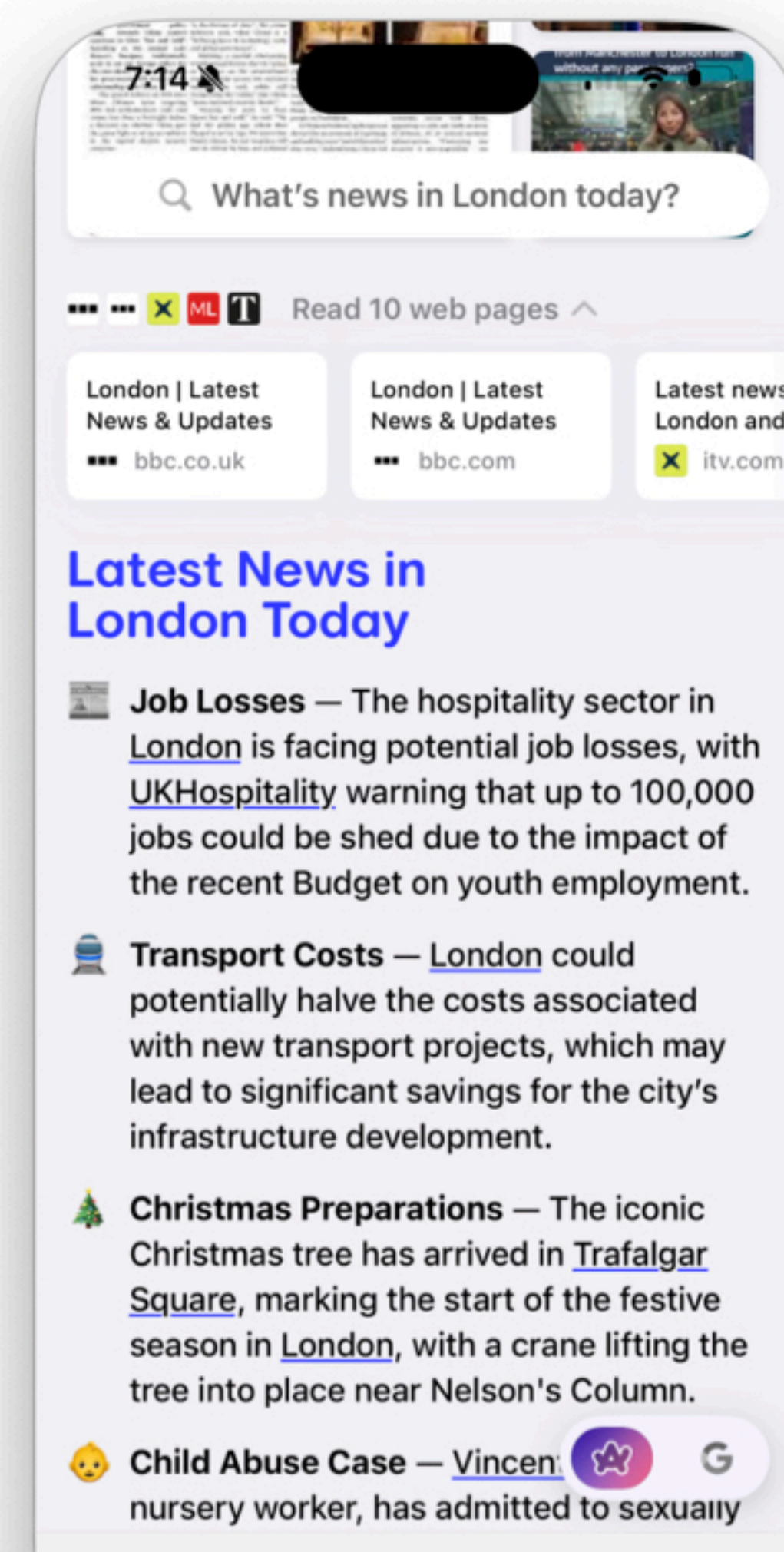
£148k Gross annual revenue from subs to The Edinburgh Minute



Founder Michael MacLeod is ex-Guardian reporter, Meta community lead

Case study of the Arc browser

AI apps browse for you, generate websites



New AI-first browsers
redefine the web
experience



Source: Arc
search, Dec. 2025





MEDIA

Squeezed between creators and AI

54%

Americans get news from social & video platforms (vs. 48% from news sites or apps)

67m

creators globally compete with 50m employees of professional media firms

2,089

Undisclosed AI-generated news websites identified worldwide

400bn

Web pages or other docs indexed by Google for search of trillions of URLs

60%

of all Google searches end without clicking on a link in the U.S. (77% on mobile)

Media environments

Sub-Saharan markets Mobile, social, AI-ready

Despite infrastructure and affordability gaps vs. rest of the world, there's already 196m mobile video-ready users in Sub-Saharan Africa



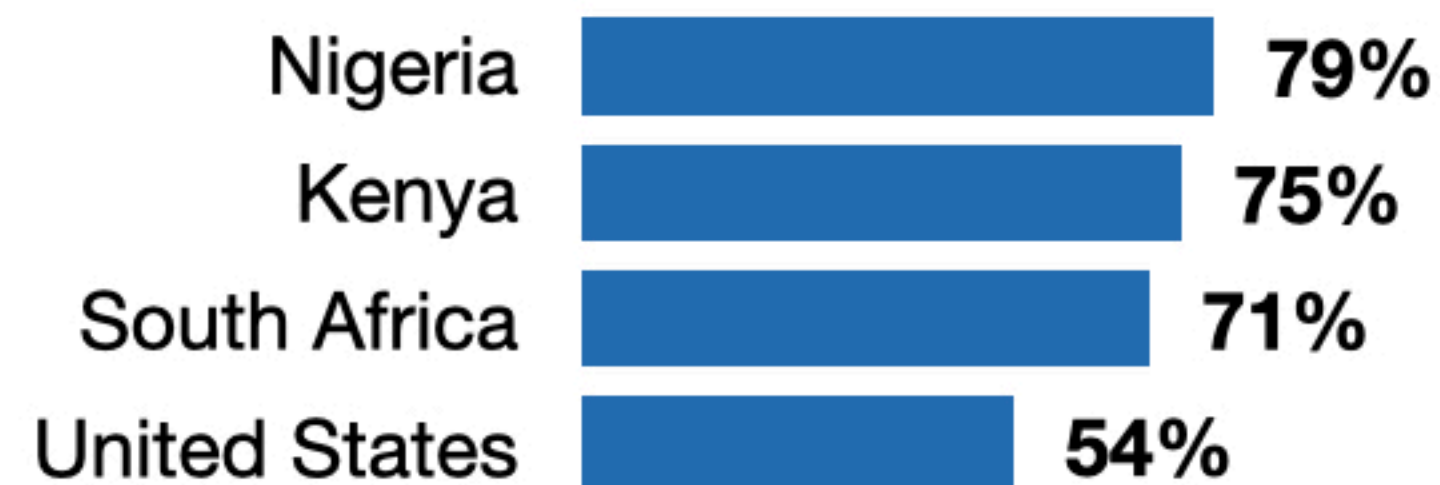
% people using mobile internet



Incl. % fast internet (4G or 5G)



% consumers* using social media as a source of news



South African consumers already know, use and like AI

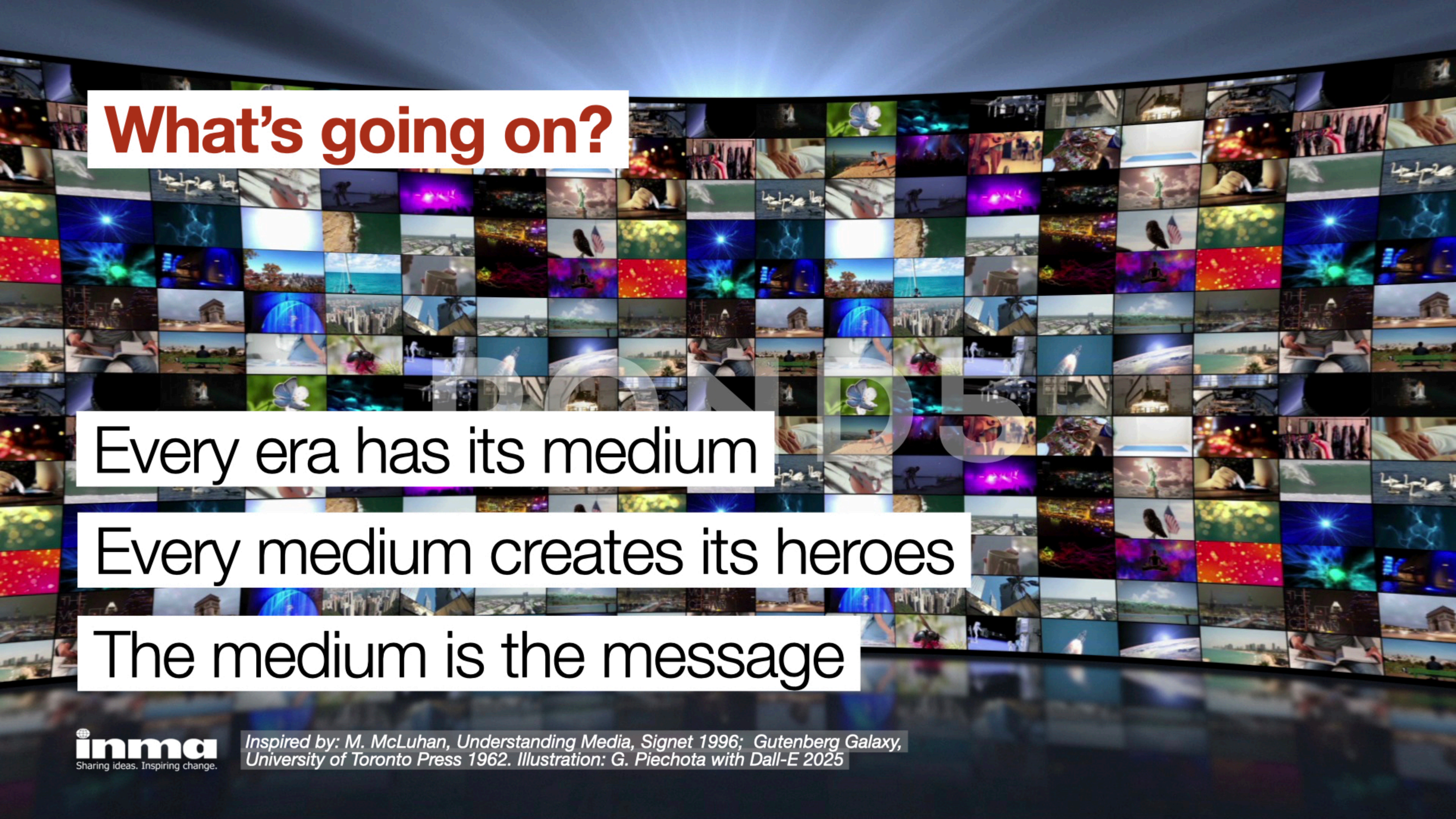
% consumers using ChatGPT



% consumers excited about AI



Sources: *The Mobile Economy Africa 2025*, GSMA; *Digital News Report 2025*, Reuters Institute/ Uni. of Oxford; N. Balaji et al., *Consumers know more about AI than business leaders think*, BCG 2024. * Surveys in African countries skewed toward English-speaking populations



What's going on?

Every era has its medium

Every medium creates its heroes

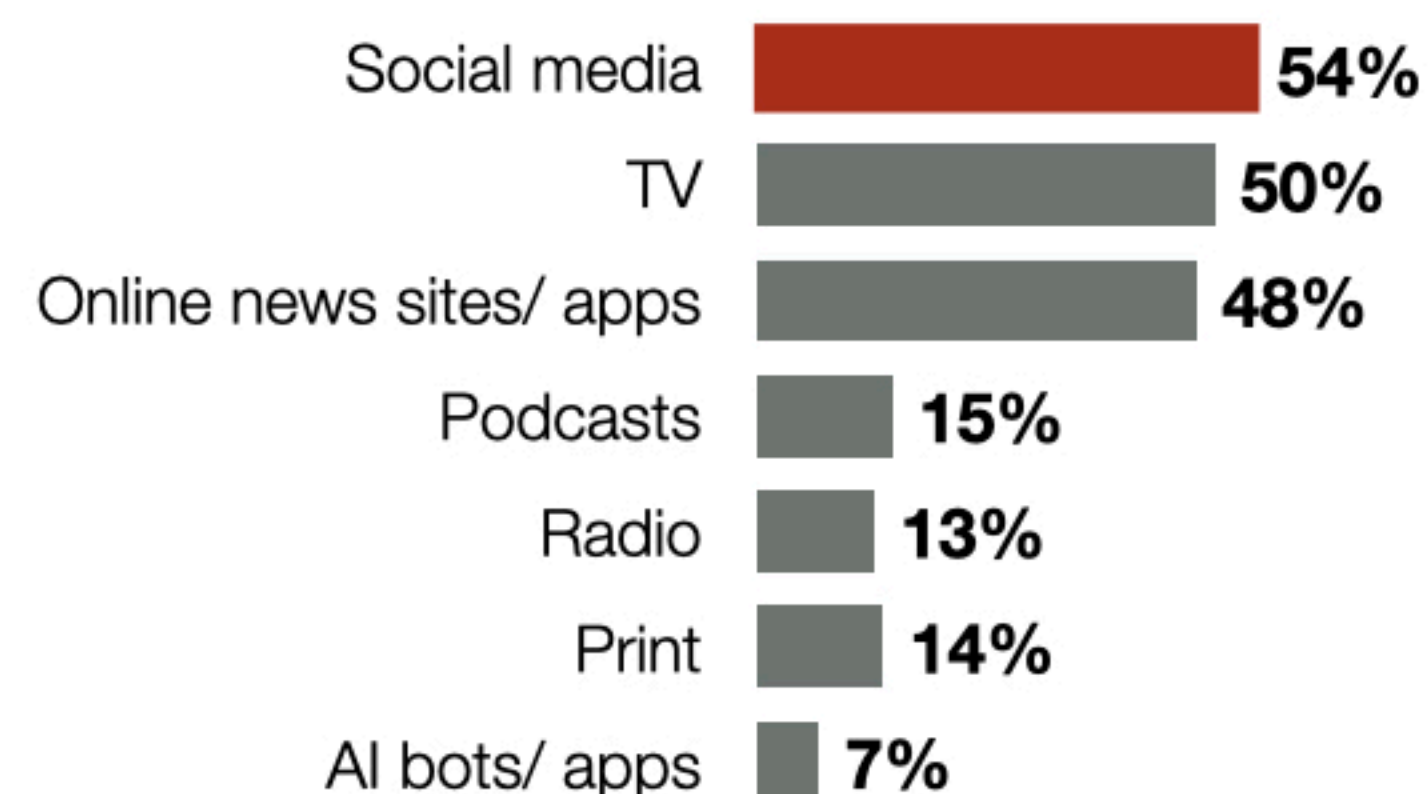
The medium is the message

New creator economy in news

Every era has its medium. This one has social

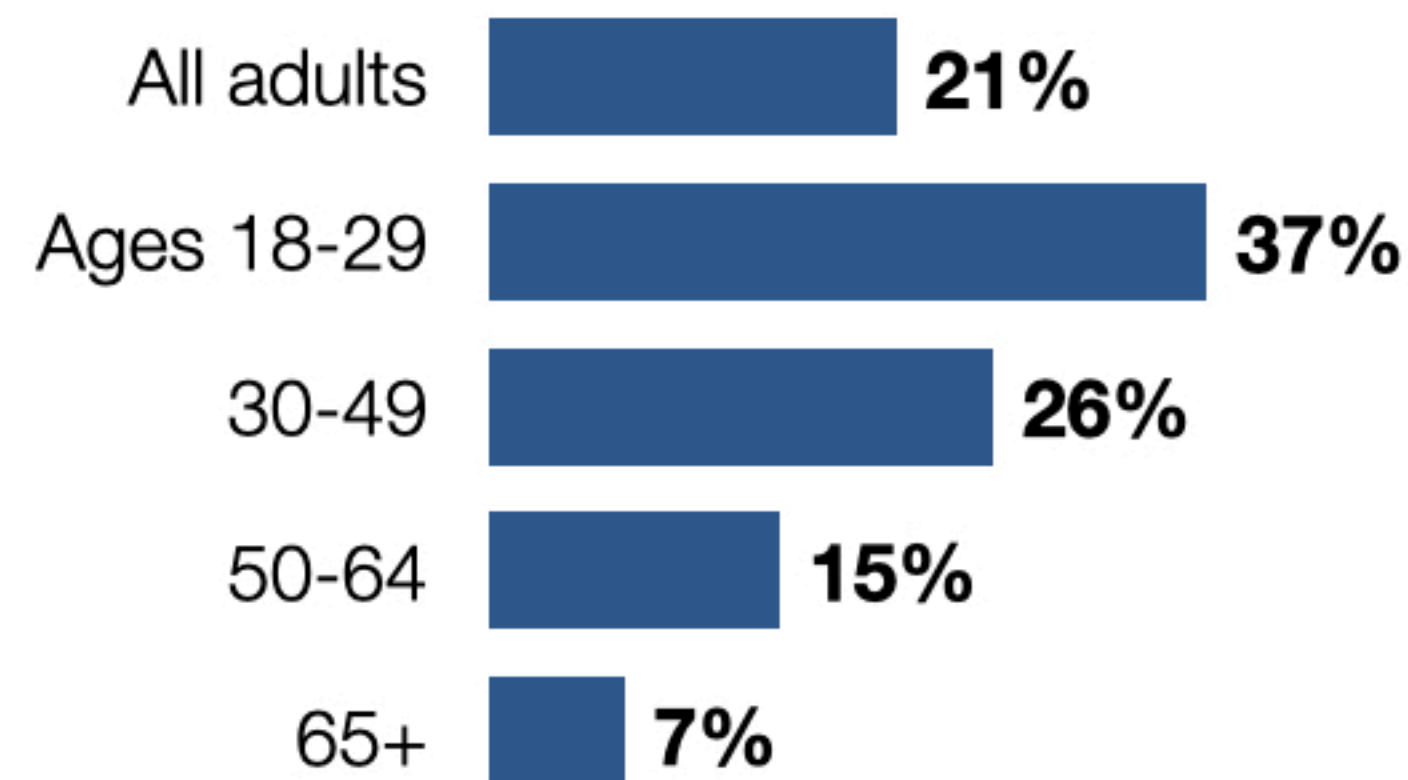
More people get news from social media than from news websites

Gateways to news in the United States in 2025, ranked by reach



Fifth of Americans get news from influencers, and more of the young

% of U.S. adults who regularly get news from news influencers on social media, by age



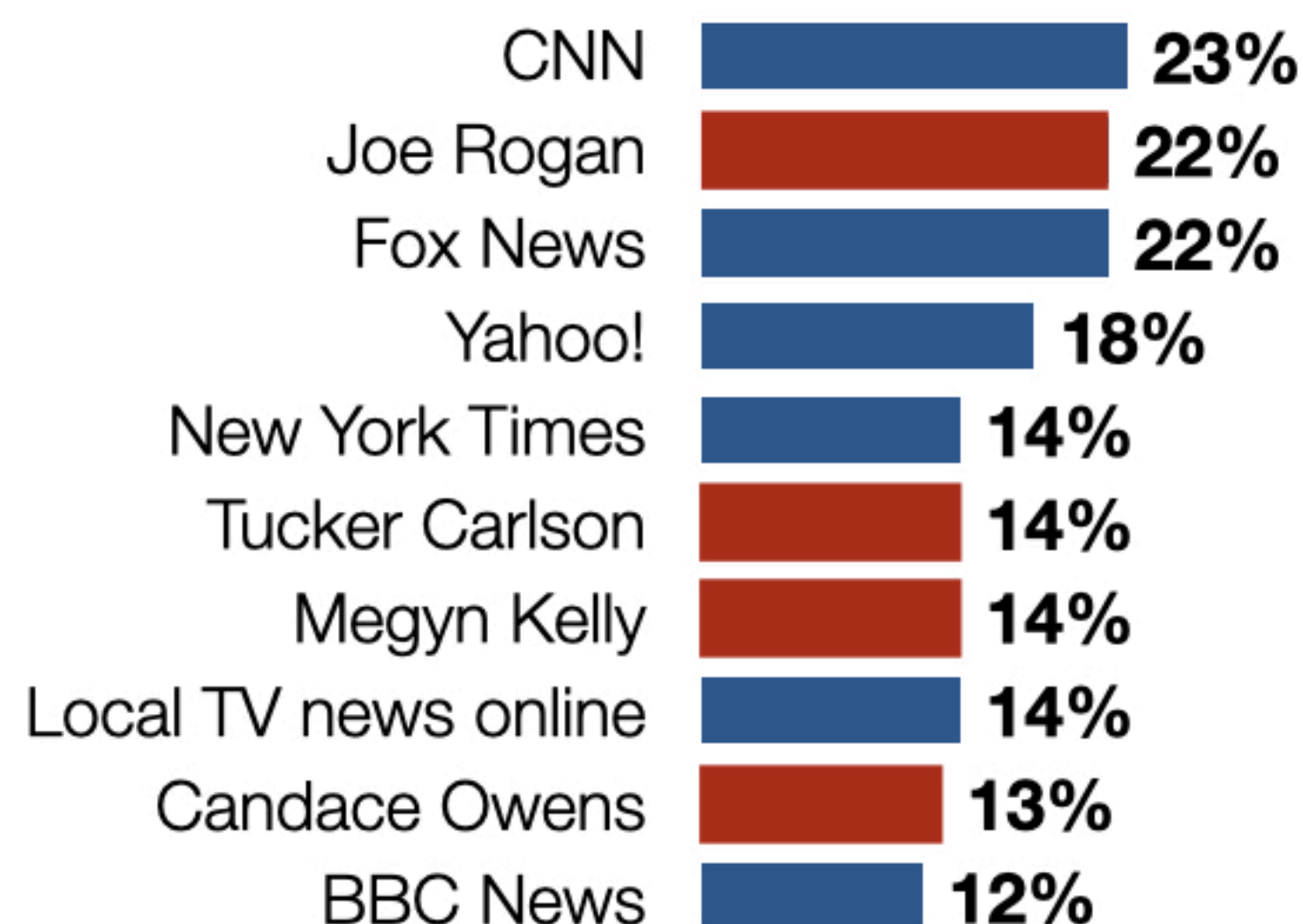
Sources: survey of 2,000 U.S. consumers, Digital News Report 2025, Reuters Institute/ University of Oxford; America's News Influencers, Pew Research Center 2024; @elonmusk on X.com 2024. Photo: X 2024

New creator economy in news

Every medium has its heroes. Creators rise

News influencers get as popular as established news brands

Weekly online reach of professional news brands vs. influencers in the U.S. in 2025



No. 1 podcast in the world is The Joe Rogan Experience

~52m Avg. monthly downloads and plays (2025)

45m Followers across YouTube, Instagram, X

71% Joe Rogan’s podcast listeners are male

\$250m Value of a new multi-year deal with Spotify

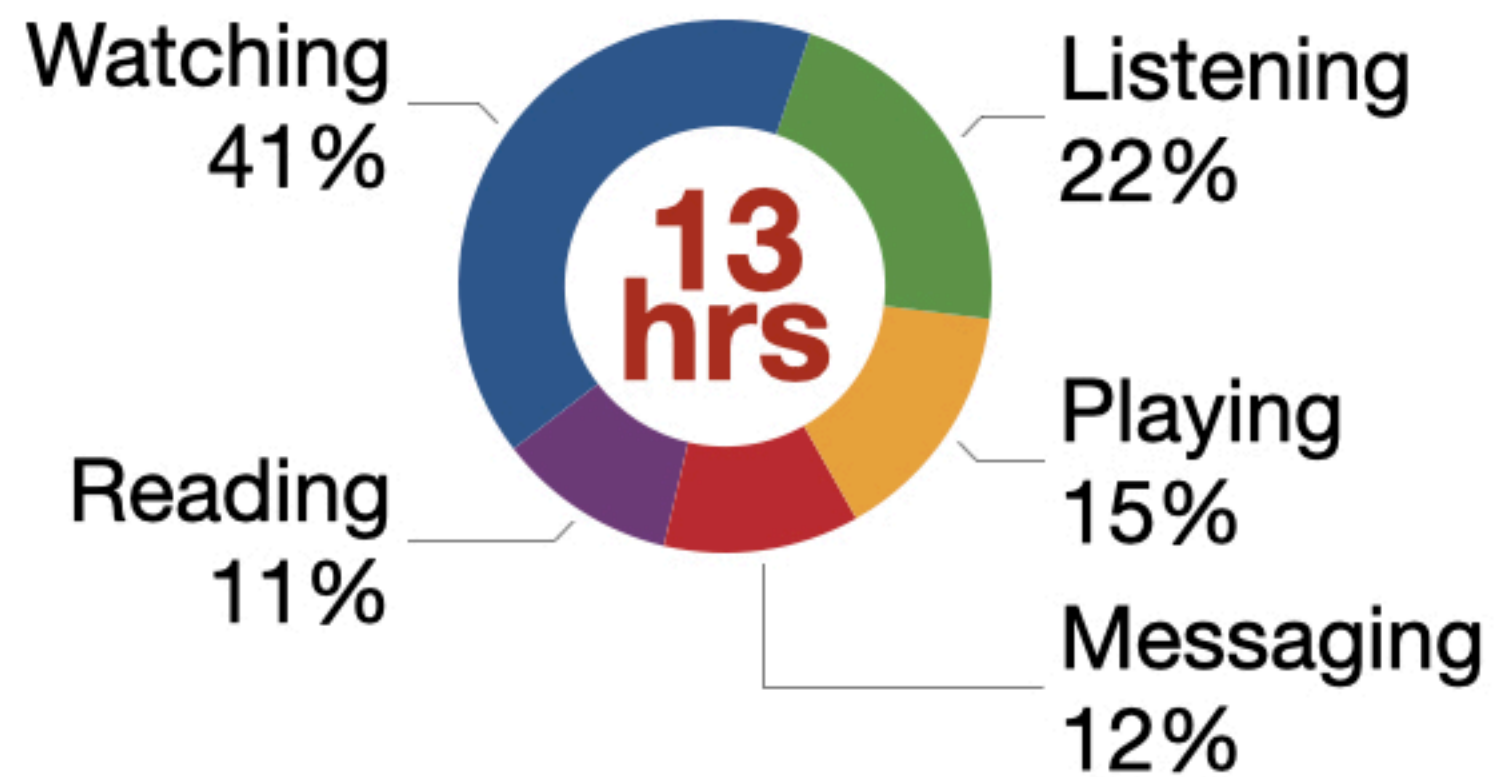
Sources: survey of 2,000 U.S. consumers, Digital News Report 2025, Reuters Institute/University of Oxford;; Why JR doesn’t think there will be Joe Rogan of the Left, Times of India 2025; JR signs new \$250 million deal with Spotify, AP 2024

New creator economy in news

Medium is the message. Back to oral culture

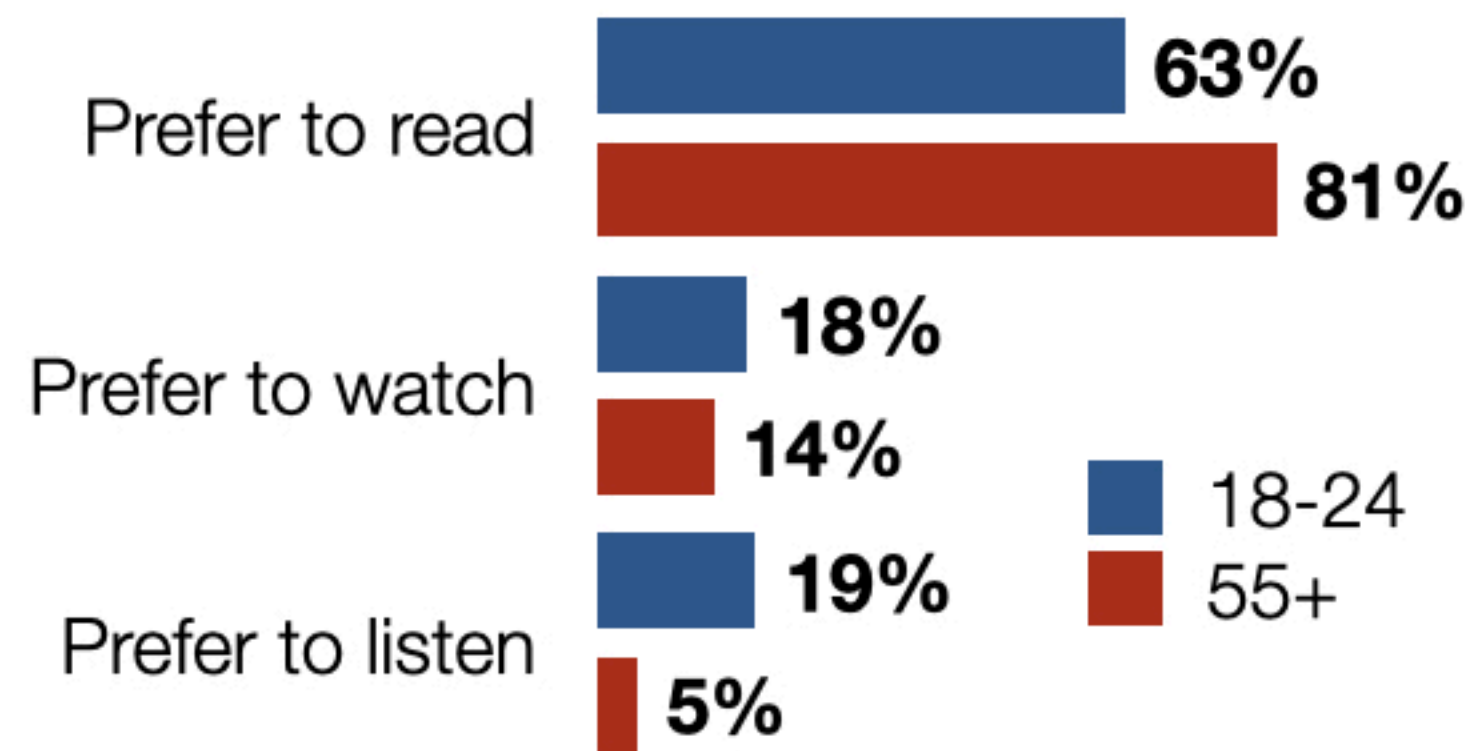
People spend more time watching or listening than reading

Media activities during an average day per U.S. adult, in %



But most audiences still are preferring text for online news

News formats preferences in U.K., by age and in %



All types of media shift to digital, accelerating convergence

It's a messy media world. Media consumption keeps diversifying like there's no tomorrow.

We are in an era of liquid content where we watch audio, listen to text, and read video.

Mika Rahkonen

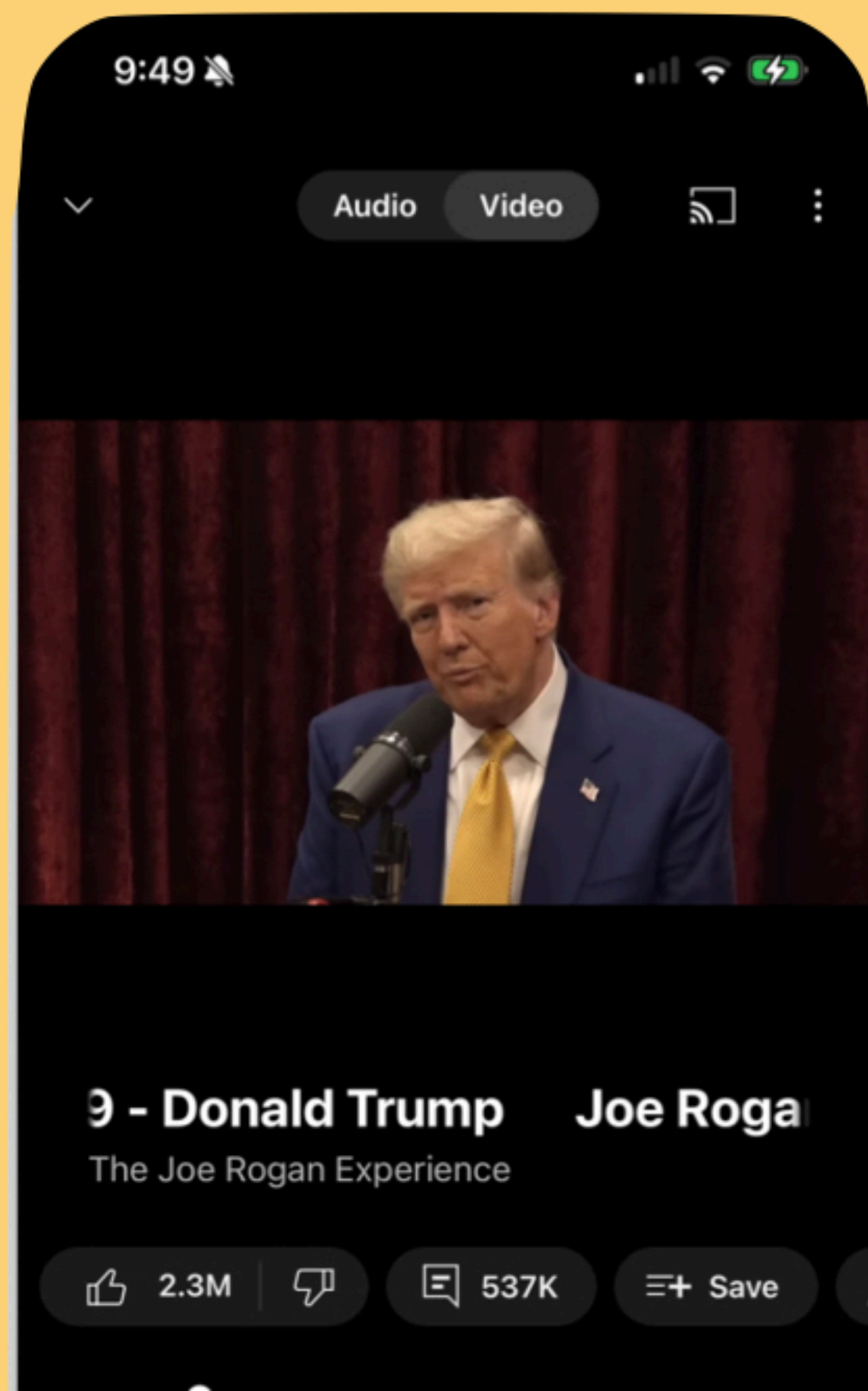
Head of strategy,
YLE, Finland



New creator economy in news

Welcome to **the era of liquid content**

We watch audio



We listen to text



We read the video



Sources: Youtube,
NY Times app,
Tik Tok 2025

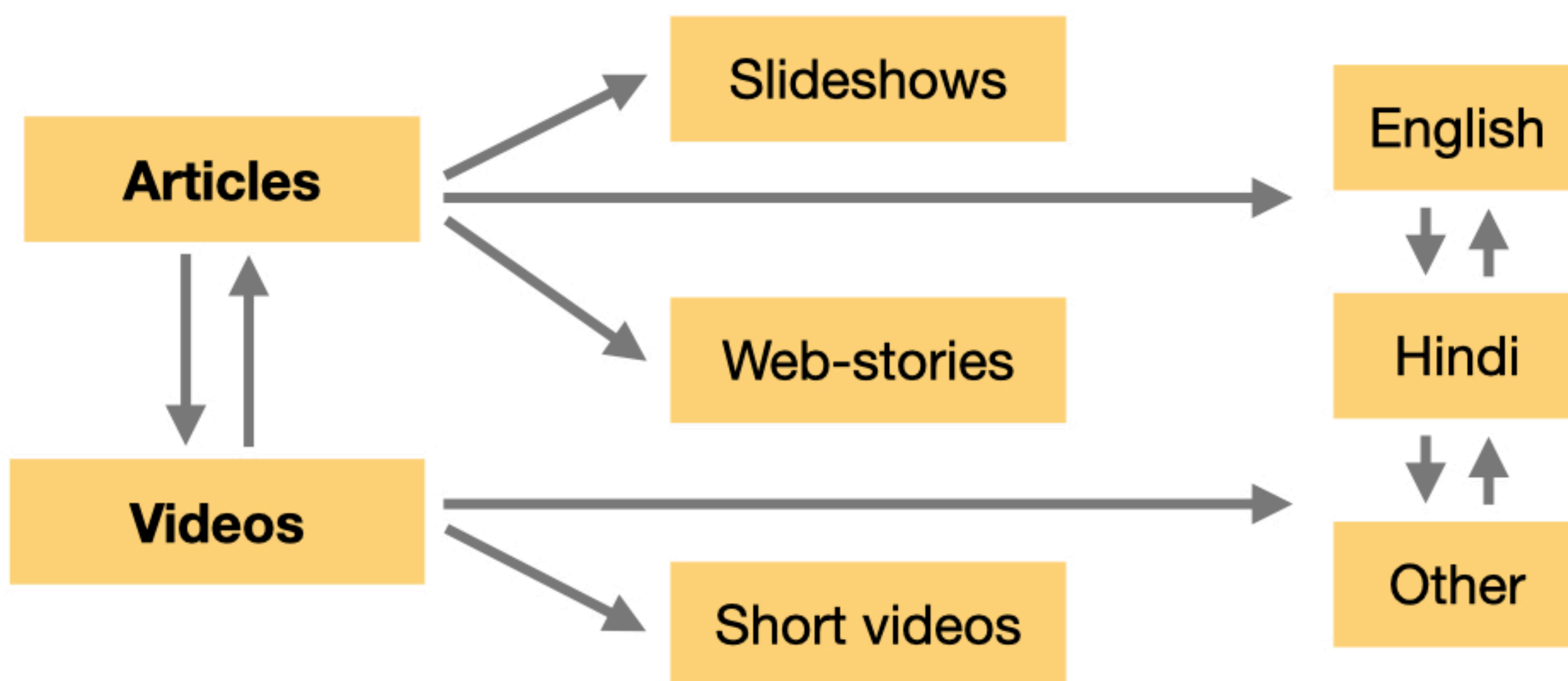
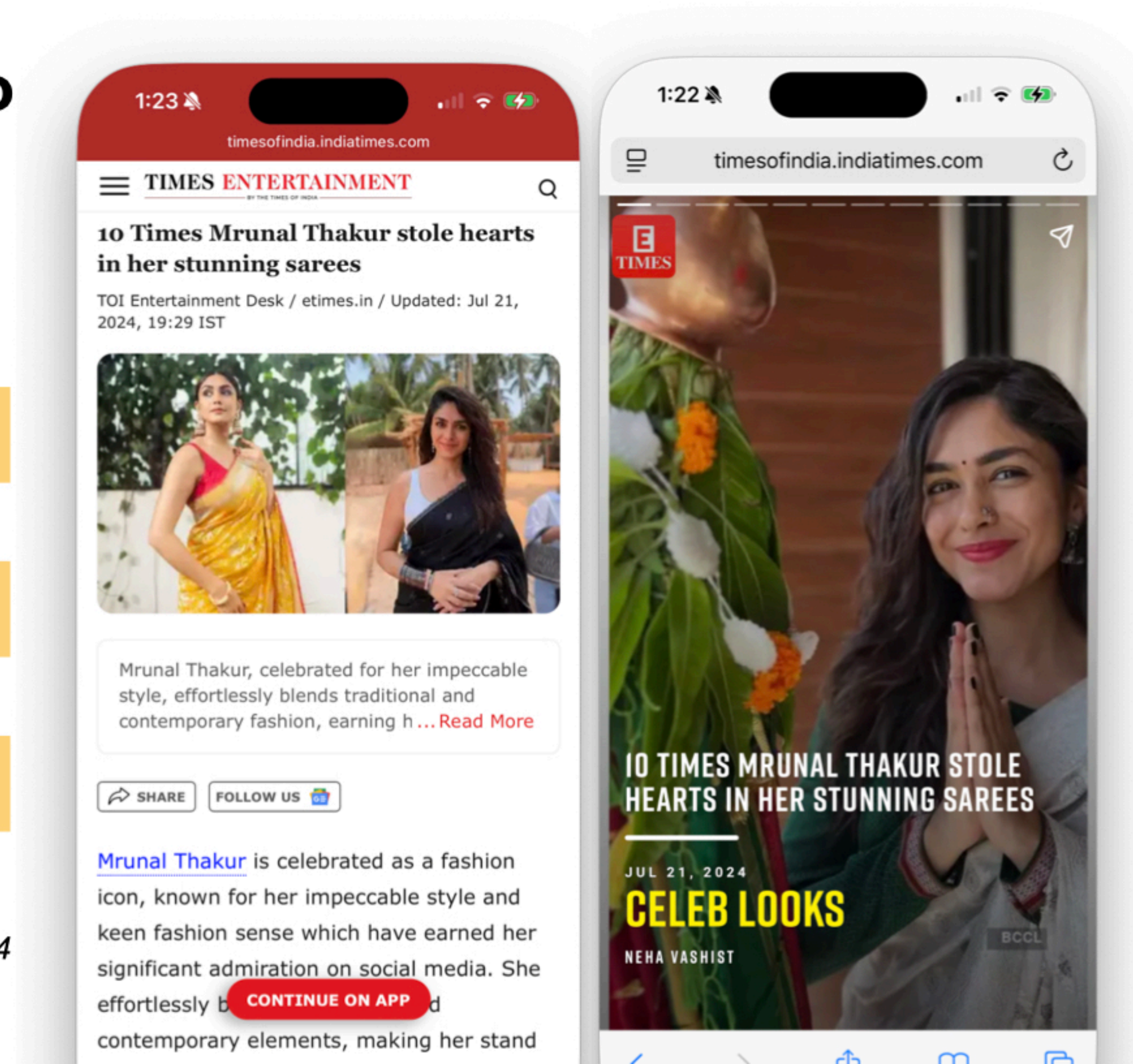
inma
International News Media Association

Case study of Times Internet in India

Liquid content & AI Versioning at 90% lower cost

Times of India converts articles to video to benefit from 2 times higher eCPMs

Content versioning at Times Internet using Generative AI



New creator economy in news

When in Rome, do as the Romans do?

There is no single recipe for success on TikTok.

A number of publishers use a strategy based on young creators who are native to the platform and its unique language.

Others prefer to showcase the talents of the entire newsroom, making minimal changes to existing tone or content.

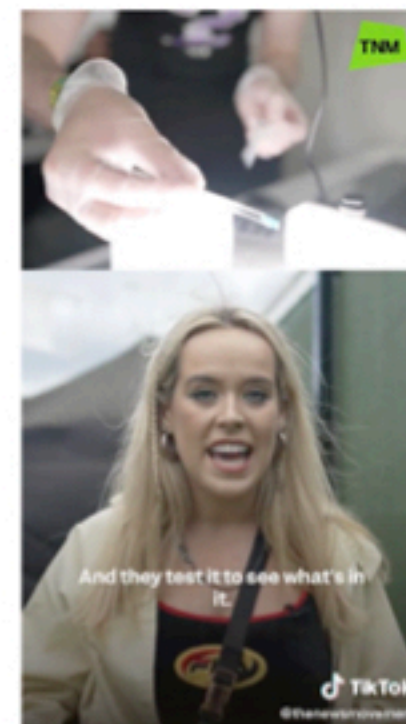


Nic Newman

Senior Research Fellow,
Reuters Institute,
University of Oxford

Creators-first approach

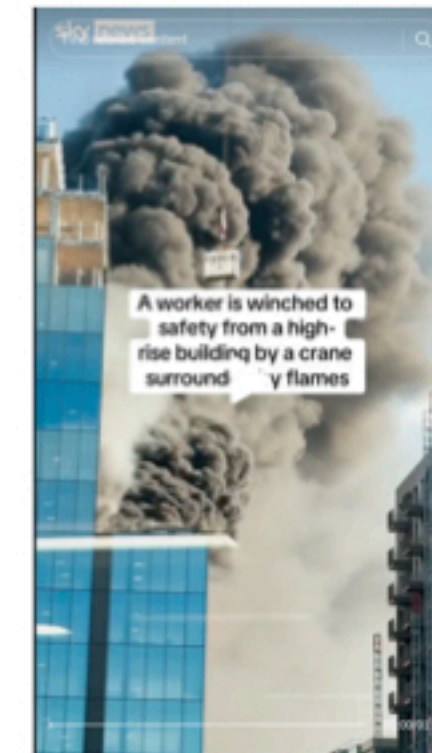
For example, News Movement in the U.S. has a team of young hosts who offer first-person witness accounts and explainers



Source: N. Nieman: How publishers are learning to create and distribute news on TikTok, Reuters Institute/ University of Oxford 2022

News brand-first approach

For example, for Sky News in the U.K. TikTok is just another screen for its content, with focus on breaking, live, access, explainers

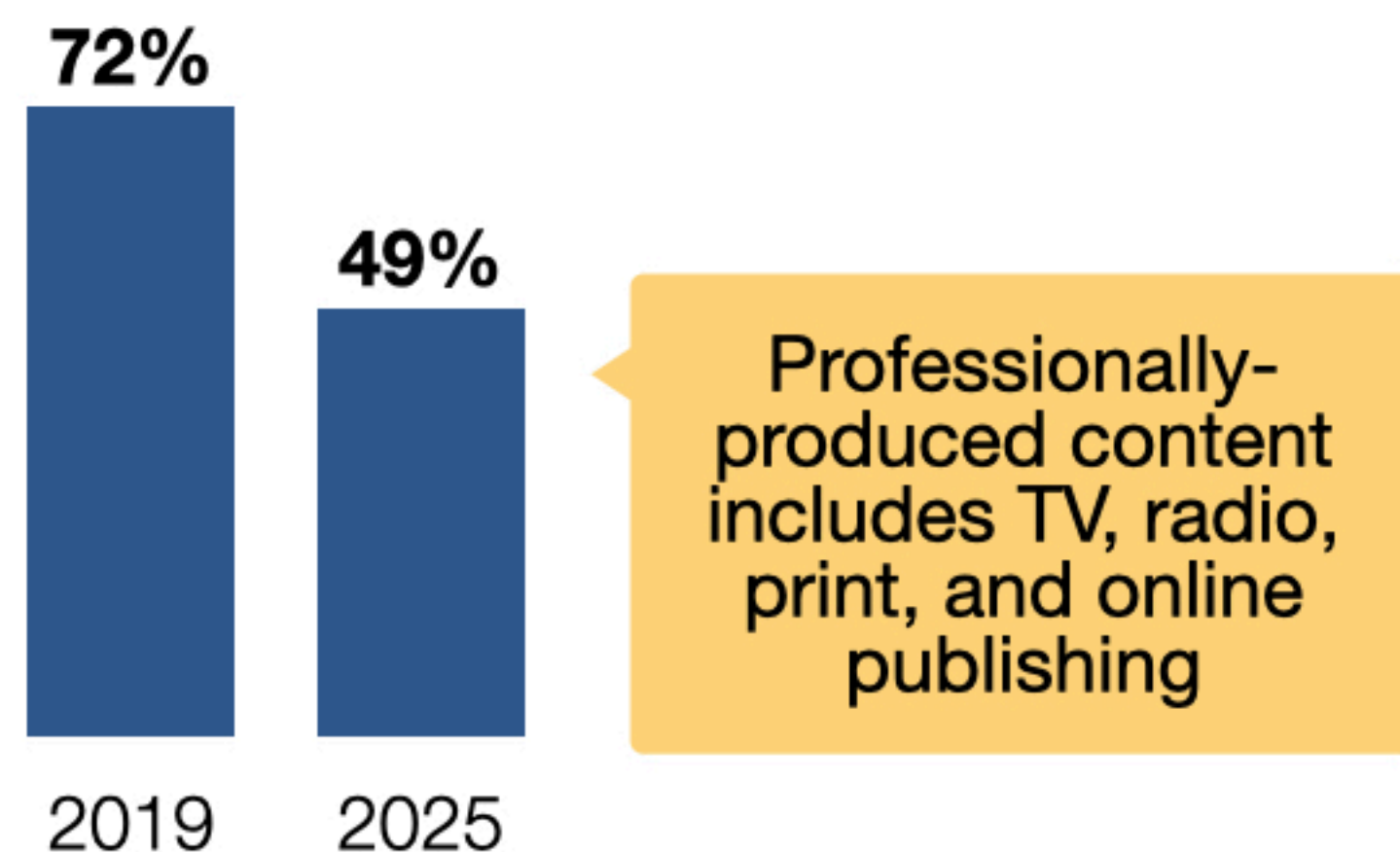


New creator economy

Brutal facts about creator economics

Ad spend is following attention, and flowing to creator platforms

Proportion of ad spend going to professionally-produced content

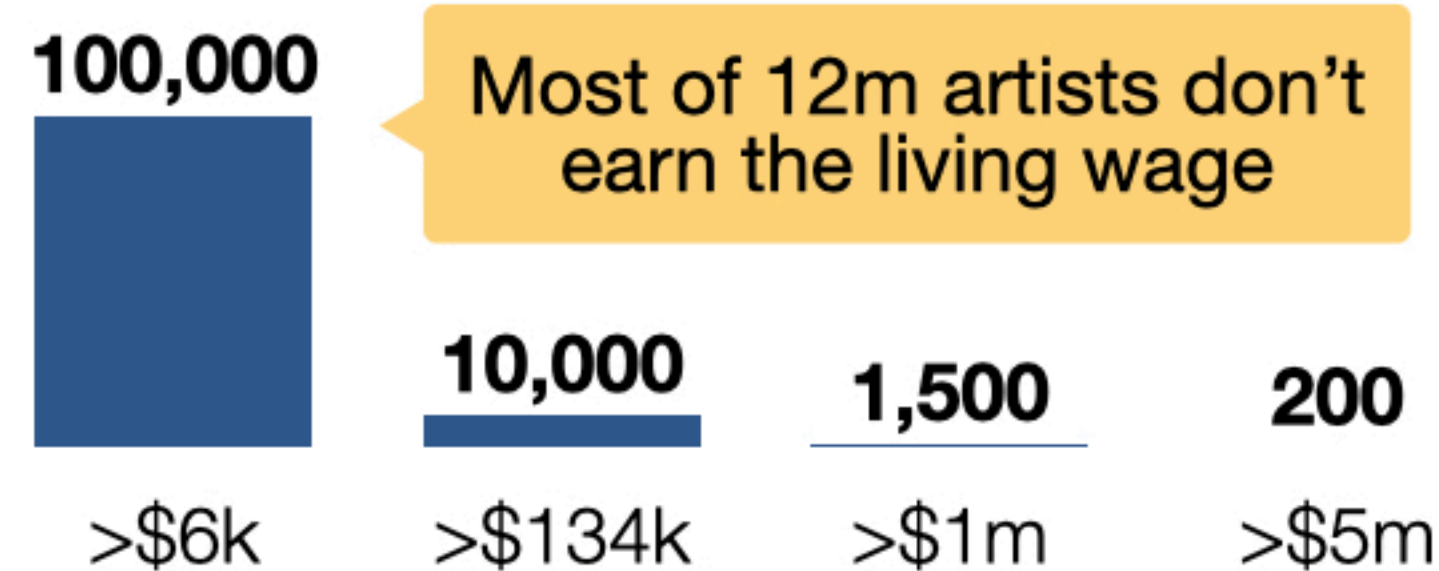


But pay-outs are so low, most artists don't earn their living wage

\$10bn Paid out Spotify in 2024 to artists/ creators

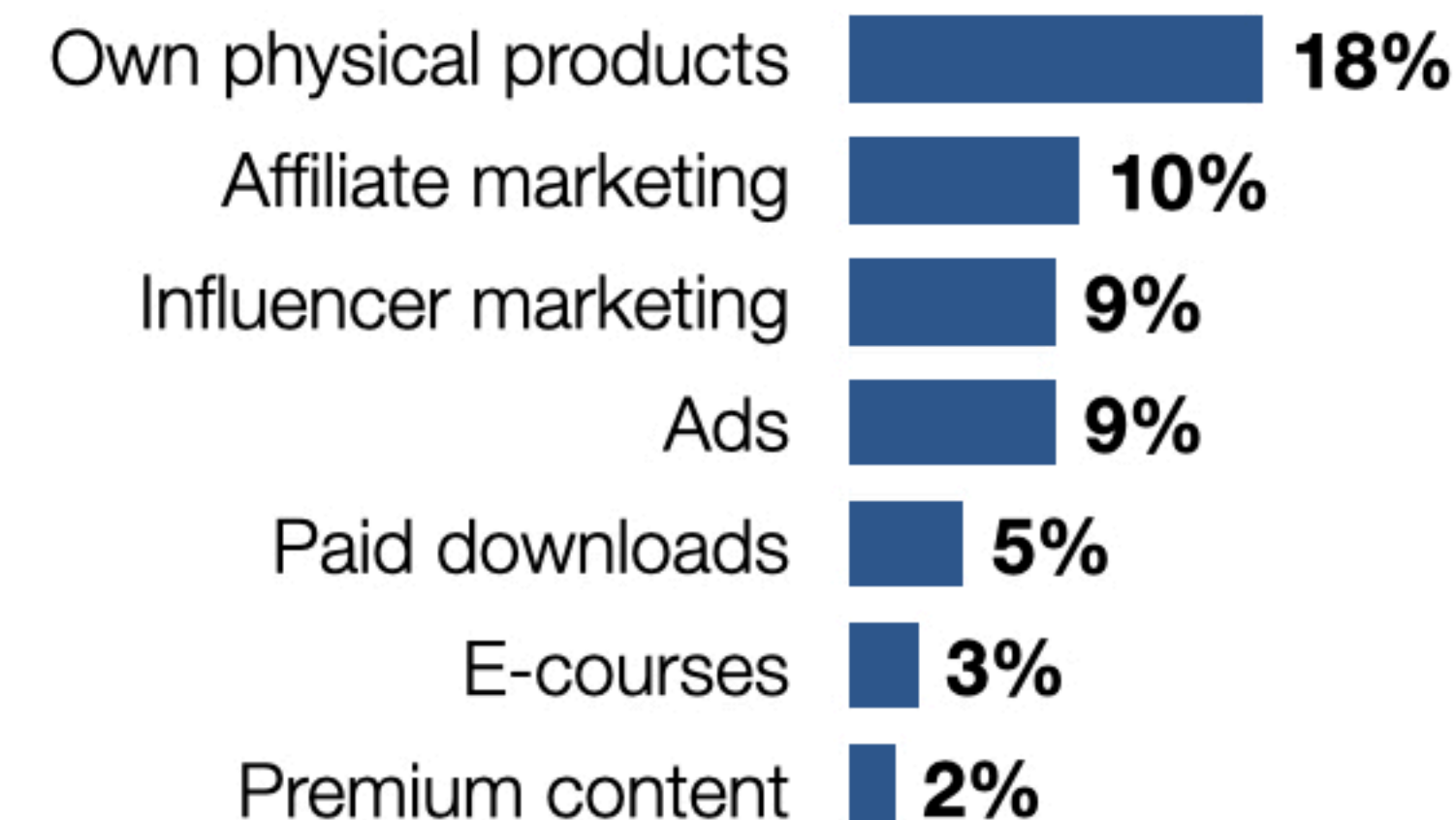
12m Total number of artists/ uploaders

Spotify artists in 2024, by royalties



Creators use networks as marketing channels for own products

Creators' revenue sources, by importance



New creator economy in news

Future newsrooms like record labels

“My role model for the publisher of the future is more like a record label.

You attract the best talent, you attract the best creators, you create the best artists, and you create an environment where they feel well treated, where they see opportunities that they don't have on a standalone basis.”



Mathias Döpfner

Chief Executive Officer
Axel Springer

How could it look like?

Story-focused teams
and networks

Audience & product-
focused teams

Expert desks
+ general
assignment
reporters

Live
news
desk

Freelancers
& creators

Editors

Talent
managers

Analysts

Producers

Other
services

Case study of Dennik N in Slovakia

From Instagram fan to a staff “news explainer”

When Slovakia’s most successful Instagram influencer did a story about Dennik N’s birthday, we sold 360 subscriptions.

We invited her to shoot another story about “a day at the newsroom.”

It went viral, so we hired her.



Tomas Bella

Chief Digital Officer,
Dennik N, Slovakia

32-years-old history teacher with thousands of students on Instagram

106k Follows her video history explainers on Instagram

€36 Example cost of her merchandise (“Seneca” hoodie)



Sources: interview with T. Bella, Dennik N 2025;
Instagram, merch.sk/dejepis-inak 2025



Sandra Sviteková

Videoproducentka

New AI economy in news

How does **AI content** fit the creator economy?

Generative AI changes the economics of content.

In order to survive the next disruption, publishers need to balance content value and production costs.

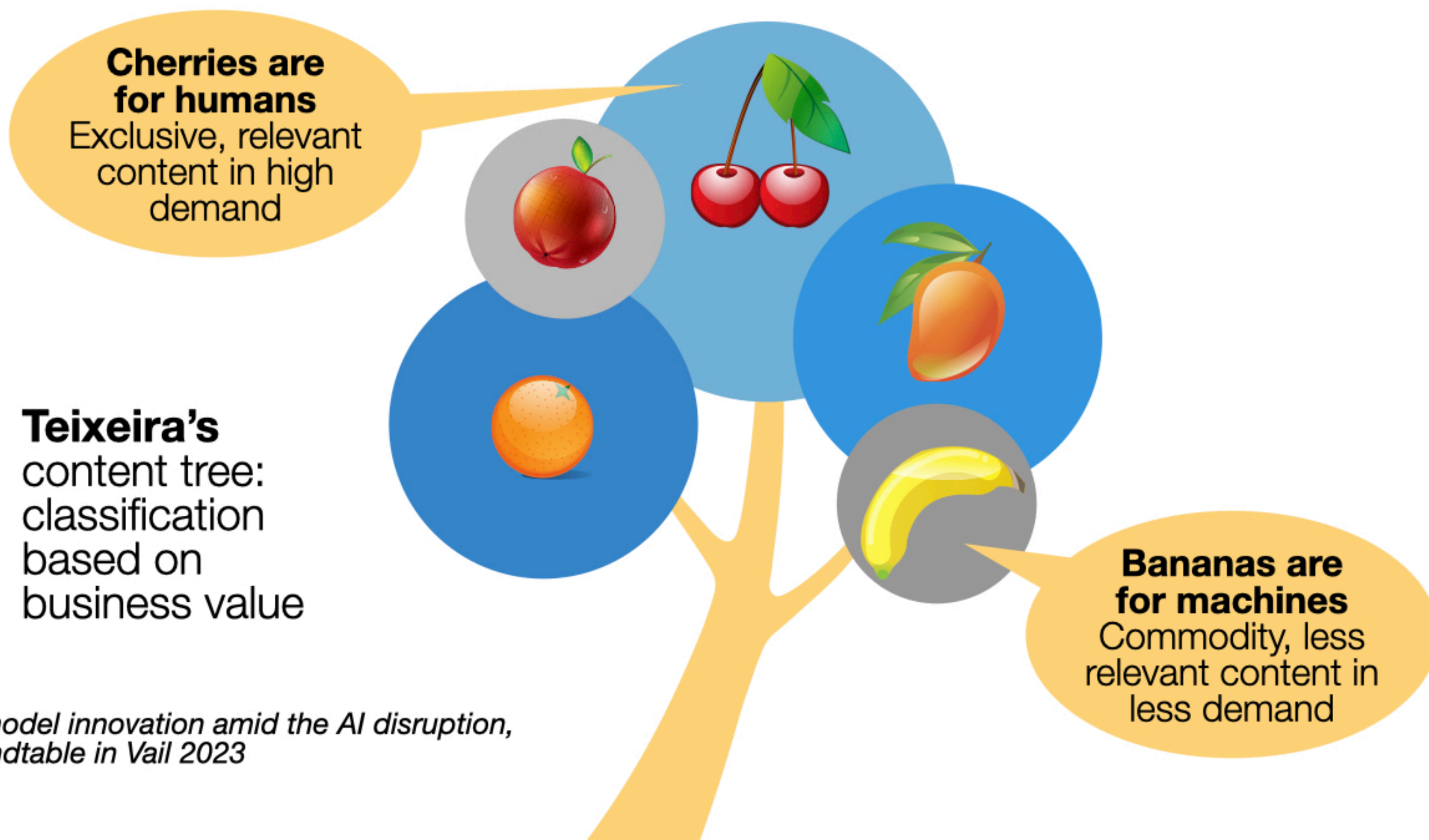
High value content justifies high costs, but the low value one justifies only the low cost.



Thales Teixeira

Author, "Unlocking the Customer Value Chain"

Match content cost to business value (e.g., demand, differentiation) but keep supplying all thanks to AI



Teixeira's
content tree:
classification
based on
business value

New AI economy in news

AI agents automate, redefine jobs

At Germany's Ippen Media, AI agents get ready to take over jobs

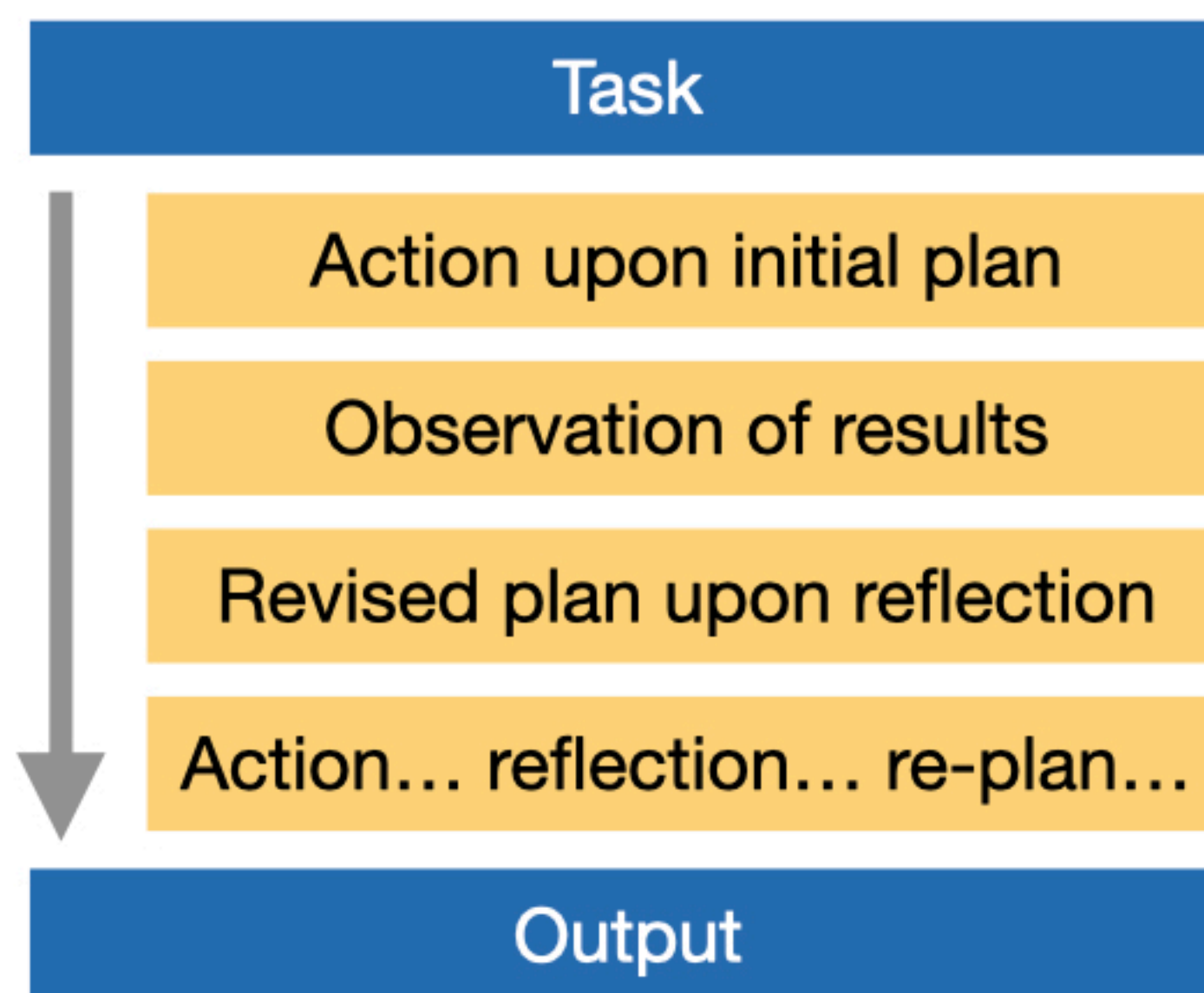
AI agents are not only changing our workflows. **They are questioning our job descriptions.**



Markus Franz

Chief Technology Officer
Ippen Media
Germany

The logic of an agentic workflow used in a prototype of AI agent covering popular culture beat



How could a future human+machine newsroom look like?

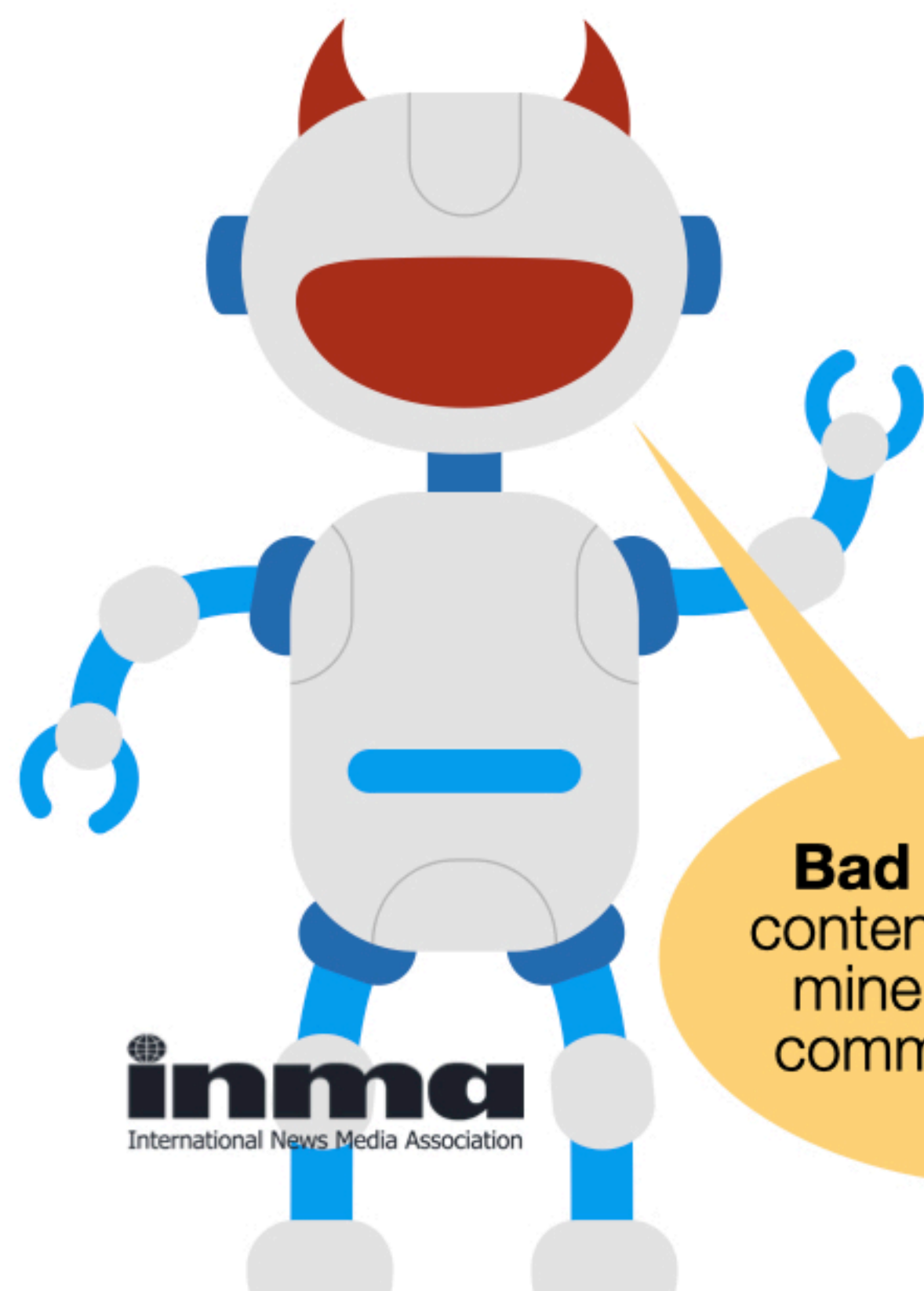


Sources: T. Teixeira, *Business model innovation amid AI disruption*, INMA Media CEOs Roundtable 2023; F. Markus, *Ippen Media*, Akademie der Bayer. Presse 2025

New AI economy in news

Future vision: **AI funnels and monetization**

Half of all internet traffic is no longer human already. 64% bots are “bad actors”



Bad bots scrape content, harvest and mine data, spam, commit ad fraud...

AI agents browse content but soon will be able also to transact

Your audience has changed. **AI broke the economics of the internet.** We need to monetize humans and machines. Frictionless micropayments are a solution.



Cosmin Ene

Chief Executive Officer
Supertab
Switzerland

Sources: Bad Bot Report, Imperva 2024; C. Ene, Supertab for INMA Subscriptions Town Hall 2025

Monetization layer for bots and agents automates sales of access using open standards called Really Simple Licensing

AI agent task: Find news for a brief

AI scans the web for content

RSL server gets a request

RSL server sends terms

If OK, smart contract signed

AI gets access, uses content

AI output: Generate a news brief

Kings of the new AI and creator economy

Big Tech leads in AI, takes most rev, sets rules

Will our societies, lawmakers, regulators act?

Questions?



greg.piechota@inma.org

- Researcher-In-Residence, INMA
- Fmr Researcher, University of Oxford, Harvard Business School
- Co-Author with Thales Teixeira, “Unlocking the Customer Value Chain”, Currency 2019



The world media is becoming more like Africa than the other way around

Rise of AI and creators levels the playing field and increases competition

In that squeeze, the fittest, and not the fattest, are likely to survive

**Every era has its medium.
Every medium creates its heroes.
The medium is the message**

Like record labels future newsrooms may manage both humans and AI

**Creator economy = content marketing.
AI economy = big theft. We need change**