



Google News Initiative

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Building a stronger future for journalism

There are two universal truths about the state of the news industry today — demand for quality journalism has never been higher, and the need for news businesses to embrace the transition to digital has never been more critical. When we launched the Google News Initiative in 2018, news businesses might have presumed they had time to make this shift in a methodical and considered way. COVID-19 changed that timetable drastically.

The unanticipated upheaval of this year has affected how we continue to enable innovation in news. In planning the future it's helpful to know what we've learned from the past. The impact report we have assembled looks at what we have done in collaboration with the news industry over the last couple of years to see what worked and where there are opportunities for growth.

Over the last two years, the Google News Initiative has supported more than **6,250** news partners in **118** countries through **\$189 million** in global funding, programs, tools and resources.

We remain committed to focusing on three key areas:

- Elevating Quality Journalism
- Evolving Sustainable Business Models
- Empowering Newsrooms Through Innovation

We don't have all the answers yet, but we'll continue to test new ideas with partners and publishers around the

world. Sometimes these experiments fail—but that's how we learn more so we can have the most impact in the coming years.

What's next? The simple answer is “more.” More focus on building sustainable growth for local, through programs like the [Local News Experiments Project](#). More tools like [Pinpoint](#) that save on newsroom costs and help journalists focus on creating quality journalism. More efforts like the [Digital Growth Program](#) to help publishers adapt and grow their businesses. And more collaboration, which is at the heart of everything we do at the GNI.

The Internet has changed our world. It has changed societal behavior in ways we expected and ways we did not. The news industry and Google must continue to understand the impact of these changes and explore how we might innovate our way to solutions. We have both the need and the opportunity to rethink the role news plays in people's lives and rethink how we can enable the citizens of our societies to have the tools and information they need to be informed citizens. We remain committed to working closely with the journalism community to build the constructive and sustainable news ecosystem that's necessary for our open societies to thrive.

Richard Gingras
Vice President of News, Google



About this Report

The financials in the Impact Report reflect total spending for GNI programs, as well as commitments for the Journalism Emergency Relief Fund and Google.org’s global media literacy programs, in USD from March 2018 to June 2020. Amounts in other currencies are converted to USD when the work is performed. This report excludes Marketing, PR, and Travel overhead as well as payroll, benefit, and compensation to Google full-time and temporary employees who are involved in programming. Spend is assigned by key focus area based on the primary objective of each project.

The tally of news partners supported reflects the number of news organizations, industry associations, academic institutions and nonprofits that have been funded by or participated in GNI programs from March 2018–June 2020, including the Journalism Emergency Relief Fund. The total does not combine news organizations and their parent companies in cases where each has participated in separate GNI programs. The count does not include operational partners and vendors, or news organizations reached through trainings. The number of “news partners” supported globally includes news partners involved in projects of global scope that are not reflected in regional totals. Partners involved in multiple projects in different regions may not be reflected in each of the individual regional and global totals.

Regional Impact

To date, the Google News Initiative has supported 6,250+ news partners in 118 countries through \$189 million in global funding.

6,250+

News Partners

118

Countries

\$189m

Global Funding

Since 2018, we've committed \$61 million to support 2,000+ news partners in 2 countries in North America.

Since 2018, we've committed \$54 million to support 1,870+ news partners in 36 countries in Europe.

Since 2018, we've committed \$4 million to support 160+ news partners in 30 countries in Middle East and Africa.

Since 2018, we've committed \$26 million to support 1,190+ news partners in 18 countries in Latin America.

Since 2018, we've committed \$33 million to support 1,000+ news partners in 32 countries in Asia Pacific.

Additionally, we spent \$11 million on global initiatives, including programs and partnerships spanning multiple regions, product innovations, research and GNI global events.

All figures in \$USD; reflects spend from March 2018 to June 2020.

Impact Across Key Focus Areas

\$45M

Empowering Newsrooms Through Innovation

Building innovation culture in the news ecosystem by enabling news organizations around the world to demonstrate and test new ideas, and partnering with news organizations to expand their journalism to new formats.

\$81M

Elevating Quality Journalism

Helping news organizations make quality journalism available to users through newsroom tools and trainings, combating misinformation, investing in media literacy and initiatives to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive future for news.

\$49M

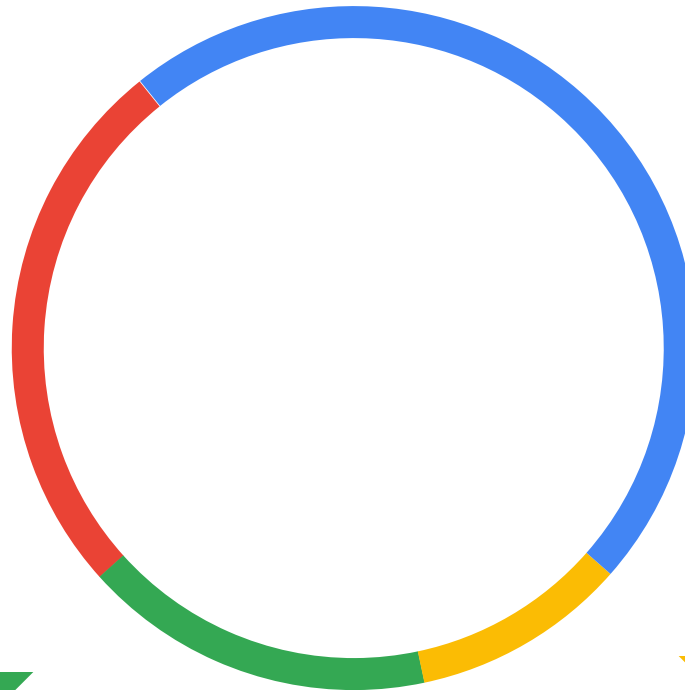
Evolving Business Models

Programs, products and partnerships focused on critical needs to improve financial sustainability of news organizations in a digital future, including reader revenue, advertising, data and emerging models for local news.

\$14M

Engaging with the Global News Community

All of our work can only be accomplished through broad collaboration, through building connections among publishers, journalists, academics, and associations through events, working groups, research, and program support.





Elevating Quality Journalism

Enabling diverse sources of impactful journalism is critical for our societies and core to Google's mission. To this end, we've delivered global training programs focused on digital skills for journalism, partnered with industry organizations to combat misinformation, contributed to global media literacy programs, and implemented programs to support a more diverse and inclusive news ecosystem.



Journalist Trainings

Through both in-person sessions and an online Training Center, we help journalists develop knowledge and skills in digital journalism across a range of topics – from harnessing large datasets to enhance storytelling, to verification of videos and images, to an introduction to machine learning.

This far-reaching program has equipped journalists in the Middle East to bring more and better digital news to their audiences.

Joyce Barnathan

President, International Center for Journalists (ICFJ)

2 million

Journalists Trained
through in-person and online trainings

447

Universities

1,440

News Organizations
trained in 60 countries



Combating Misinformation

Tackling misinformation is a complex challenge that requires coordinated action with a broad range of experts and organizations. We've worked together with newsrooms, fact-checkers, civil society organizations, and academic researchers in support of initiatives that help curb disinformation and elevate quality journalism.

Fighting COVID-19 Misinformation

Amid the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, we committed \$6.5M to support the ecosystem [fighting COVID-19 misinformation](#). This support was aimed at:

- Supporting fact-checking and verification efforts

SPAIN

Maldita

[Maldita](#) in Spain was able to add server capacity that enabled them to serve over 10,000 users at once, amid a surge in traffic

\$6.5 million

to fight COVID-19
misinformation

- Increasing access to data, scientific expertise and fact checks

AUSTRALIA

The Australian Science Media Centre

[The Australian Science Media Centre](#) worked with more than 85 COVID-19 experts and organized 60 expert reactions, explainers, briefings and myth busters on COVID-19, all of which informed more than 30,000 news stories in Australia and overseas. GNI funds allowed the centre to hire an additional media officer for six months.

[SciLine](#), a free service based at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, scaled its COVID-19 work to meet the increase in requests for help from journalists — which in the first seven months of 2020 already exceeded the total for 2019.

- Providing insights to fact-checkers, reporters and health authorities

NIGERIA AND INDIA

Question Hub

We onboarded [Africa Check](#), [BOOM](#) and [DataLeads](#) to [Question Hub](#), a tool that surfaces unanswered user questions to content creators. This allowed them to see questions that users had about COVID-19 and where there might be a gap in the availability of good information online. The organizations also trained 1,000 journalists in India and Nigeria on fact-checking health misinformation.

Online search trends are a vital way to monitor the mass behavior and response to any event. As mental health professionals, it helped us to further explore these symptoms in the individuals and also train the general physicians and grass-root health workers to do the same. This in fact helped in prompt detection and treatment of anxiety disorders.

[Dr. Debanjan Banerjee](#),

Data Leads task force member and Geriatric Psychiatrist at India's leading mental health institute in Bengaluru



FIGHTING COVID-19 MISINFORMATION

I'm a single person newsroom in an underserved rural area turning daily content about COVID-19 with no support (at all) and everything SciLine's been sending has been immensely helpful and so, so, very appreciated...

I would actually be drowning here without the help SciLine has given so far. From fact sheets to your regular emails, to this [matching service referral] option, it's been invaluable right now as I just don't have the capacity to track everything down myself.

SHADY GROVE OLIVER,
INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST, ARCTIC SOUNDER

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First Draft

We continue to provide core support to [First Draft](#), a global nonprofit focused on empowering journalists with the skills and tools to combat misinformation. With this support, First Draft has expanded its work in 2020 to:

- Train over 13,300 journalists covering coronavirus and members of the public across 7 languages, and train over 100,000 readers how to tell fact from fiction online.
- Train over 1,800 people to navigate online information through a text-message based learning program
- Provide original insights used in 2,200 news reports in 83 countries around the world ([including a dedicated dashboard for the U.S. 2020 election](#)), building a community of over 500 journalists as well as a secure online collaboration and publishing platform, including a mobile app.

International Fact-Checking Network

\$1 million to support innovation in fact-checking in partnership with [International Fact-Checking Network](#). Through this program, 22 projects in 12 countries will focus on developing new tools to improve fact-checking workflows, new formats to reach new audiences, and video to disseminate accurate information.

Engaging with the Global News community:

All of our work can only be accomplished through broad collaboration, through building connections among publishers, journalists, academics, and associations through events, working groups, research, and program support.

22
projects in
12 countries



Engaging with the Global News Community

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ASIA PACIFIC

Trusted Media Summit

With [First Draft](#) and the [International Fact-Checking Network](#) at Poynter, we've co-hosted the annual Trusted Media Summit for three years, which brings together industry experts involved in fact-checking and fighting misinformation from across the Asia-Pacific. In 2020, 750 participants from 28 countries gathered (virtually) to discuss new fact-checking technologies, ways of connecting trustworthy media to readers, and strategies to improve media literacy.

I was very lucky that I have had the opportunity to participate in the Trusted Media Summit over the past three years. These events have given me many tools on how to debunk fake news that spread on social media platforms. After the 2019 Summit, I launched the first fact-checking organization in Timor-Leste and have been training other journalists across the Pacific Islands on fighting misinformation and verification.

Raimundos Oki,
Editor in-chief, [The Oekusi Post](#)

750
participants



Media Literacy

Misinformation is not new, but with the rise of technology, misleading online content can spread rapidly and deceive even savvy users. To help combat this, in March 2018 Google.org (Google's philanthropic arm) funded a \$10 million global initiative fund to support media literacy around the world and help readers discern fact from fiction online through programs such as:

UNITED KINGDOM

NewsWise

We've supported The Guardian Foundation's [NewsWise](#) initiative through a Google.org grant, which aims to empower nine- to 11-year-olds across the U.K. to understand, critically navigate and report real news. Through workshops in primary schools, accompanying resources, teacher training and curriculum-based lesson plans, and opportunities to speak to real journalists, NewsWise has reached 6,500 pupils in 117 primary schools.

In 2020 we've seen just how important it is for young people to be able to navigate the news: to recognize disinformation and find trustworthy sources of information; to manage their own emotions and wellbeing when it comes to overwhelming news stories; and to share their own voices in a fair and responsible way. Thanks to the support from Google.org we have been able to empower thousands of primary-aged children in some of the most disadvantaged UK communities with these crucial skills.

[Angie Pitt](#),
Director, NewsWise

BRAZIL

EducaMídia

We contributed \$1 million to [Palavra Aberta](#) Institute to create [EducaMídia](#), a media literacy program to help Brazilian teachers and students develop skills to distinguish online misinformation.



Media Literacy

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UNITED STATES

MediaWise

We've contributed \$3 million to support [MediaWise](#) to help teach students how to discern fact from fiction online in the U.S. The program is made possible through a partnership with the [Poynter Institute](#), [Stanford University Education Group](#), and the [Local Media Association](#).

Since 2018, MediaWise has reached nearly 9 million people online thanks to social media, trainings at schools, and programs like the [Teen Fact Check Network](#).

\$3 million

to support mediawise

\$10 million
to support media literacy
programs around the world

We've augmented these original Google.org grants with additional funding to support media literacy programs across the globe.

INDIA

The Indian journalists fighting fake news

\$1 million to support [FactShala, a first-of-its-kind news literacy program](#) focused on first-time internet users in non-metro cities in India. 250 journalists, fact checkers, academics and NGO workers are rolling out a media literacy curriculum in 7 Indian languages to help internet users assess online information.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diverse media is critical for creating a thriving and representative media for everyone, filling gaps for stories that don't rise to mainstream media, and providing a positive and authentic representation of their communities. We have worked to champion diversity, equity and inclusion in journalism through a combination of efforts: research, pipeline development, talent support, and digital transformation of diverse news organizations.

Understanding Newsroom Diversity

Growing the pipeline of diverse newsroom talent

Industry Research

Through research in countries like [Australia](#), [the U.S.](#), [Argentina](#), and [Germany](#), we've gained more insight into how the news industry reflects—or struggles to reflect—the populations it serves.

GNI Fellowship

Collaborating with various regional partners, we've provided 69 journalism students across [Asia Pacific](#), [Europe](#) and [North America](#) with an opportunity to gain practical experience over the last two years.



The GNI Fellowship is particularly relevant at a time when media organizations need to innovate and become more diverse in order to navigate the pandemic and reflect the society they wish to inform. This programme has made it possible for a new generation of young professionals to enter the journalism industry and for newsrooms to onboard talent with technical, digital, or business knowledge.

[Vera Penêda](#),
Team Lead, Events & Training, European Journalism
Centre

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Growing the pipeline of diverse newsroom talent

FRANCE

Supporting French journalism students

Through a partnership with French non-profit [La Chance](#), we supported 85 journalism students from disadvantaged backgrounds to help prepare them for highly competitive journalism school entrance exams. Additionally, we partnered with [Street Press](#) to [support 5 citizen journalists](#) from disadvantaged neighborhoods to cover the French Municipal Election locally.



UNITED STATES

Maynard 200 Fellowship through the Maynard Institute

Maynard's [goal over the next five years](#) is to train, mentor, support and seed the next generation of journalism entrepreneurs, leaders and storytellers of color. They seek to create a movement within journalism that will be felt through the impact of the people we invest in.



UNITED KINGDOM

Broadening access to industry training

Broadening access to industry training is a key pillar of the [Journalism Diversity Fund](#) from the National Council for the Training of Journalists, which seeks to provide bursaries to people from diverse backgrounds who need help funding their journalism studies. Our partnership has helped hundreds of students across the country achieve industry qualifications.



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Providing news leaders with the support they need to thrive

ASIA PACIFIC

Google News Initiative Newsroom Leadership Program

The Google News Initiative Newsroom Leadership Program, created in collaboration with the Columbia School of Journalism, was established to enhance the leadership skills of emerging newsroom leaders in Asia Pacific. Each Fellow worked on a specific project that was relevant to their newsroom within the main fellowship topics: technology, monetization and data.

At a time when generating revenue for journalism has been tough, the fellowship has helped us to be certain that our ideas are viable without wasting time or money, find resources that provide the most important data, and best prepare for raising funds.

[Mariam Chaudhry](#),
Founder, The Current, Pakistan

LATIN AMERICA

Mentoring women founders

[Metis](#), created in partnership with [SembraMedia](#), is providing specialized business mentoring for women founders of independent digital media in Latin America.



KOREA

We partnered with the [Journalists Association of Korea](#) and [HeyJoyce](#), Korea's largest community for women, to [create a leadership program that supports reporters' career development](#) while on parental leave in a country where women occupy 10% of senior level newsroom positions.

I worked for 20 years as a journalist and experienced serious difficulties keeping up with work and caring for my children at the same time; I considered quitting every day. I was also anxious about falling behind my colleagues in such an intensely competitive environment. Programs like these will help build concrete skills, so the participants won't have to go through what I did.

[Naree Lee](#),
CEO, HeyJoyce



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Enabling digital transformation for diverse media organizations

NORTH AMERICA

[We're awarding millions of dollars in GNI Innovation Challenge funding](#) to local media projects focused on elevating underrepresented audiences and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within their journalism.

UNITED STATES

We're serving as an anchor funder for the [Racial Equity in Journalism Fund](#), providing grants to news organizations who serve audiences who have been historically underserved by mainstream media: Black, Native, and Latinx people, immigrants, refugees, rural communities, and low-income people.



Journalism Emergency Relief Fund

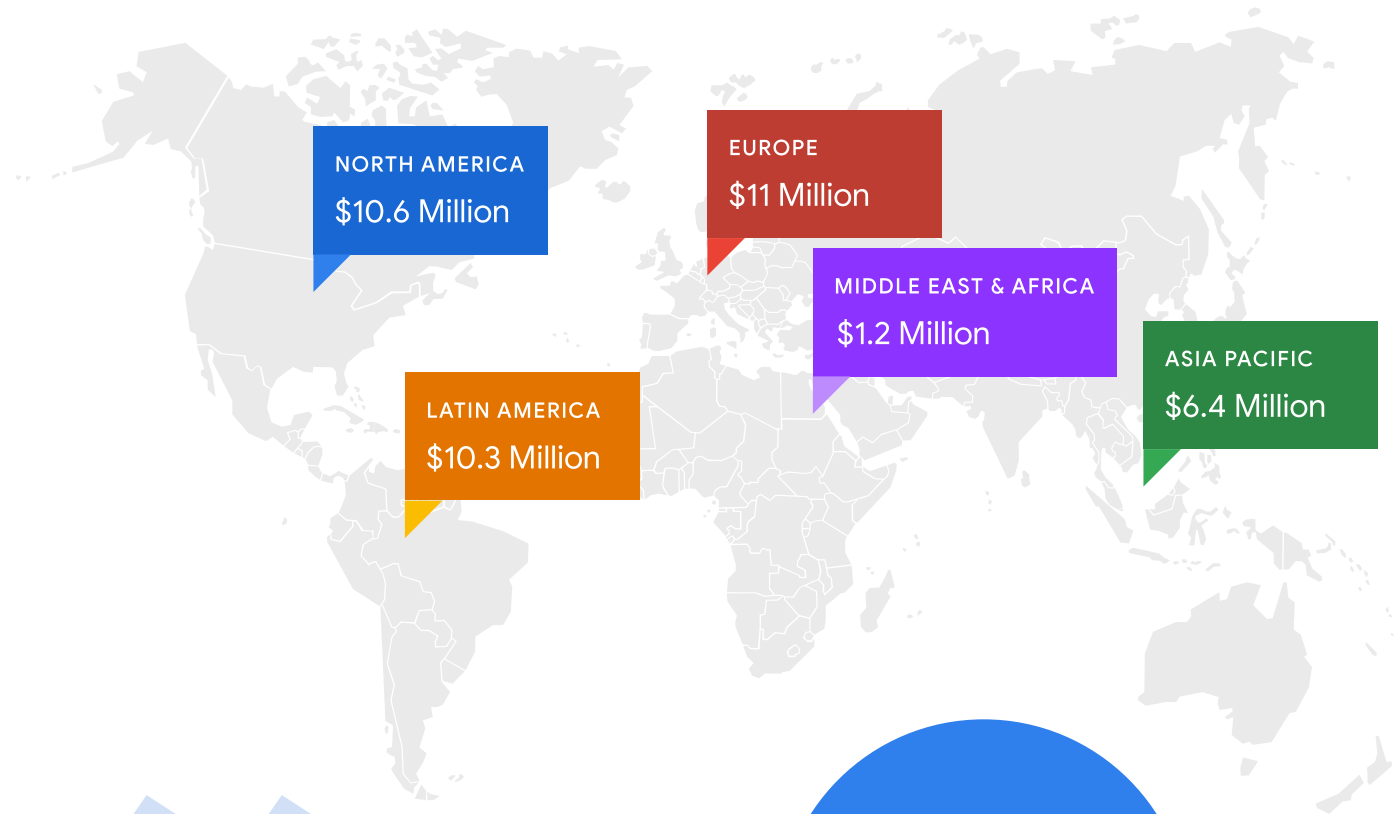
In early 2020, the news industry dealt with job cuts, furloughs and cutbacks as a result of the economic downturn prompted by COVID-19. [The Journalism Emergency Relief Fund](#) was created to sustain essential reporting around the world by delivering emergency funding to local newsrooms in a time of need.

Since our media promotes interactivity with civil society, seeking public solutions, and building democracy, this partnership has also allowed us to take a deep breath in difficult times.

Eddy Prastyo,
Production Manager, [Suara Surabaya Media](#),
Indonesia

Cornwall Reports carries no advertising on news pages. The Journalism Emergency Relief Fund therefore allowed us to develop and transmit a brand new, free-to-view current affairs programme, Behind The Headlines, offering the sort of analysis and exclusive key decision-maker interviews which were simply not available elsewhere.

Graham Smith,
Editor, [Cornwall Reports](#),
United Kingdom

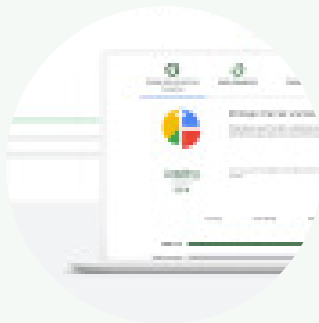


At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, our journalists have answered a record number of questions sent by readers on our Veracités platform. Producing fact-checking and community-driven journalism was the best thing we could do at this time to serve local citizens.

Jacques Trentesaux,
CEO, [Mediacités](#), France

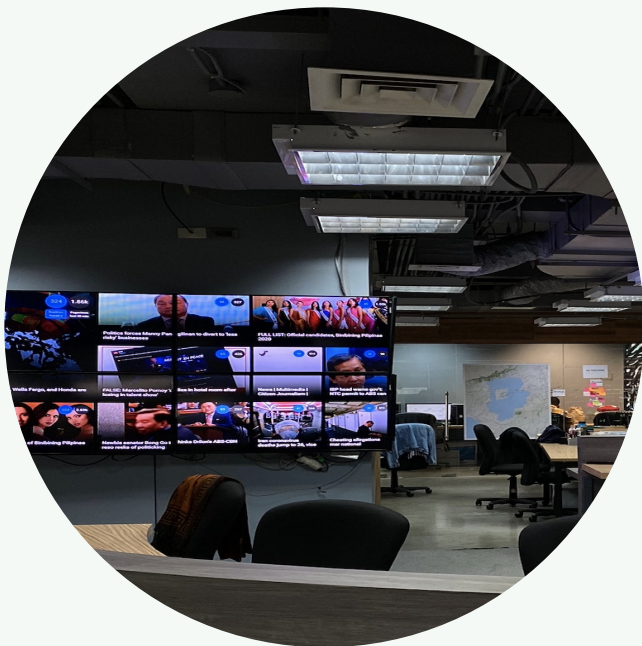
\$39.5 million

offered to 5600+ local newsrooms
across 115 countries



Evolving Business Models

As the business of news continues to fundamentally evolve, we've designed programs and resources to address the business challenges at the core of that evolution. We've enabled publishers grow advertising and reader revenue, increase readership and engagement, and find new models and technology to support local news. Most recently, we worked with industry experts to combine many of these efforts under the [GNI Digital Growth Program](#) to help news organizations across the world grow their digital businesses.



Reader Revenue

We're working with news organizations to build and grow reader revenue models, as well as develop technology that can support them along the way.

Subscription Labs

Our GNI Subscriptions Labs bring together publishers, subscriptions experts and industry associations over several months to build roadmaps for long-term success, implement tactics to improve performance across the funnel, and identify short-term experiments.

The US Subscriptions Lab cohort of 10 publishers saw double-digit percentage increases in key metrics, including:

59%

average increase in new monthly digital subscribers

19%

average decrease in digital subscriber churn

The Post and Courier

The Post and Courier

45%

increase in digital subscribers year on year

56%

increase in average monthly reader revenue

Prior to the lab we were swimming in a sea of data. The learnings from the Subscription Lab have given us clear direction and more importantly, have provided key benchmarks and given us insight into what should be measured. This lab has been amazing and has allowed us to share with our cohorts and grow together.

P.J. Browning,
President and Publisher
The Post and Courier

SOUTHEAST MISSOURIAN

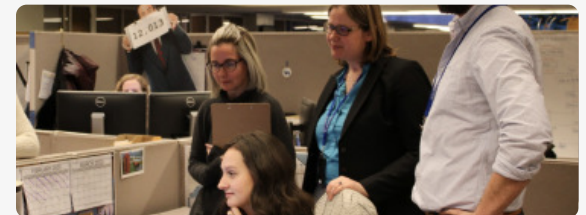
Southeast Missourian

40%

increase in average
monthly reader revenue

37%

decrease in average
monthly churn



The Buffalo News

2.7x

increase in
monthly net starts

82%

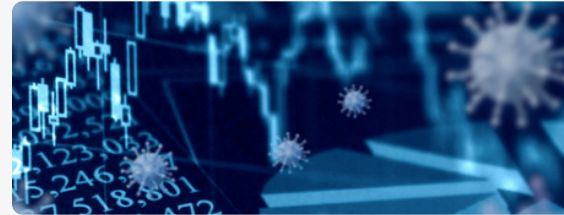
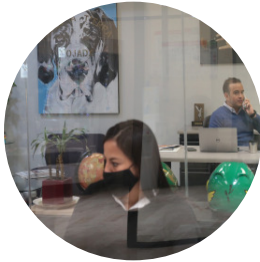
increase in digital
subscribers year-over-year

Reader Revenue

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Subscriptions Labs Globally

Following our work with the [North America Lab](#), we launched Subscriptions Labs in [Latin America](#), [Europe](#) and [Asia Pacific](#).



Latin America Subscriptions Lab

8 publishers participated in the [Latin America Subscriptions Lab](#), led by [Mather Economics](#). The Lab provided each of the publishers with personalized audits, benchmarking reports, customized recommendations, and a paywall and retention test. Participating publishers saw:

\$29 million

year-over-year growth in subscriber revenue

\$10 million

Projected Lifetime Value of \$10 million as a result of the experiments run through the Lab

Contributions Lab

Through the GNI Contributions Lab, we worked with 12 publishers in Latin America and Canada to help build and grow contributions revenue. The Lab provided publishers with personalized audits covering strategy and tactics and implementation support.

After just four months in the program, one participant, digital publisher [Brasil 247](#), saw:

23%

growth in contributors (17% growth in total contributions revenue)

50%

operating cost covered by contributions revenue



CONTRIBUTIONS LAB

I believe we've found La Prensa Grafica's value proposition through the process.

I'm very enthusiastic about the whole process and expect excellent results through the duration of the program.

ALVARO SAGRERA
CTO, LA PRENSA GRAFICA

Reader Revenue

We're working with news organizations to build and grow reader revenue models, as well as develop technology that can support them along the way.

Subscribe with Google

As part of the original GNI launch, we announced [Subscribe with Google](#), which makes it easy for readers to subscribe, stay logged in and get the most out of their news subscription.

110 publishers from 27 countries have adopted Subscribe with Google

We've seen a 25% increase in subscriber clicks to publishers' sites when the "From your subscription" module appears.

107
publishers from
28 countries

Engaging with the Global News Community

GNI EMEA Summit

Right before the COVID crisis hit in March 2020, we hosted 180 news industry leaders from 29 countries at the first ever GNI EMEA (Europe, the Middle East, & Africa) summit in Amsterdam to discuss the market landscape, success stories and opportunities for growth.

The event was also an opportunity to share four announcements:

- The expansion of [GNI Subscriptions Lab to Europe](#), in partnership with FT Strategies and INMA
- The launch of [Project Neon](#) - our Local Experiment in the UK with Archant
- The [renewal of Google's support](#) for the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, including their Digital News Report
- The [Middle East, Turkey & Africa](#) Innovation Challenge



Advertising

The digital ad ecosystem continues to rapidly evolve, which can present challenges for news publishers - particularly small, local organizations - to ensure they are set up to optimize monetization of their digital traffic across platforms. Our efforts aim to help publishers grow their digital ad revenue, from training and consulting support, to projects that test and scale new, innovative advertising solutions.

Advertising Labs

Our GNI Ad Labs across the world have focused on helping groups of publishers grow their digital advertising revenue – by optimizing their programmatic monetization, improving site performance, and using competitive benchmarks. These programs complement the range of [advertising products and solutions](#) we develop to help news publishers manage and grow their digital advertising businesses.



LATIN AMERICA

GNI Ad Lab in Latin America

Through the [GNI Ad Lab in Latin America](#), we've worked with a range of publishers to provide business recommendations for programmatic ads, publishers training and technical audits and page performance. Results from the first wave include:

+32%

in revenue
year-over-year

+11%

in ad viewability

+30%

increase in ad fill rate



ASIA PACIFIC

GNI Ad Lab in Asia Pacific

The GNI Ad Lab in Asia Pacific, called “Local Foundry,” focused on website optimization and monetization strategy for more than 45 publishers across the region.

Participating in this program benefited our traffic. We've had more visitors to our site, and that's led to incremental revenue. Not only that, our employees have gained digital skills that we can continue to apply.

Rahim Asyik,
CCO, Ayo Media Network
(which publishes [ayobandung.com](#))



UNITED STATES

GNI Ad Lab in the U.S.

[The GNI Ad Lab in the U.S.](#) worked with 5 hyperlocal news organizations to audit and grow their ad revenue. As one example, Long Beach Post started [monetizing their journalism programmatically](#), which generated an average \$2,000 incremental revenue per month.

Advertising

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UNITED STATES

Vox Media

We partnered with [Vox Media](#) to develop and launch [Concert Local](#) – an ad marketplace that brings together trusted local news publishers for marketers. The product is an extension of Vox Media’s national advertising marketplace, Concert, and offers dozens of local publishers a new revenue stream to help fund high-quality local journalism. Concert Local launched in March 2020, and has seen demand from national advertisers and agencies looking to reach highly engaged local news audiences.



It’s more important than ever to support trusted local news and that’s why we partnered with the Google News Initiative on Concert Local, offering dozens of local publishers incremental revenue by tapping into national advertising campaigns. We’ve seen swift adoption of Concert Local from national advertisers drawn to the opportunity to reach local audiences at scale, in brand safe environments.

AJ Frucci,
VP of Programmatic, Head of Concert
Vox Media



UNITED STATES

Local Research

We [partnered](#) with the [Local Media Consortium](#) and [Magid](#) on a research initiative that analyzed advertiser perceptions of local media to identify ways for these news organizations to strengthen their digital ad sales strategies. Magid interviewed national and local advertisers and agencies in the US, and based on the findings, [developed recommendations](#) to help local news companies better meet advertiser needs and fuel digital revenue growth.



Data

More data is available to news organizations today than ever before. This abundance of data can help publishers better understand their readers and identify opportunities for growth in key business areas. But it can also be challenging to harness the potential of this data effectively – to know what metrics to focus on, and how to use those

figures to inform stories, products and business strategies. We aim to help news organizations elevate data-driven thinking, and use insights to develop product offerings and grow digital revenue.

GNI Data Tools

We developed [News Consumer Insights and Realtime Content Insights](#) to help publishers make data-driven business and editorial decisions. These tools have helped thousands of news organizations in nearly 130 countries achieve digital business growth, including reaching new readers, driving engagement, boosting newsletter signups, and improving subscription performance.

Building on this foundation, we launched new capabilities this year, including more personalized business recommendations for growing audience and revenue, and features to help journalists make more informed content creation and distribution decisions. We also introduced [News Tagging Guide](#) – a free tool to help news organizations identify and measure the engagement metrics that matter most for their audience and revenue growth.

“The collaboration with GNI prompted us to observe the dynamics of our user engagement funnel more closely and use this knowledge to calibrate and measure strategies towards developing a more meaningful relationship with our audience. These strategies helped Rappler balance growing reach and sources of revenue with its mission to communicate important issues that the public need to know.

Gemma Bagayua-Mendoza,
Head of Research, Partnerships, and Strategy, Rappler

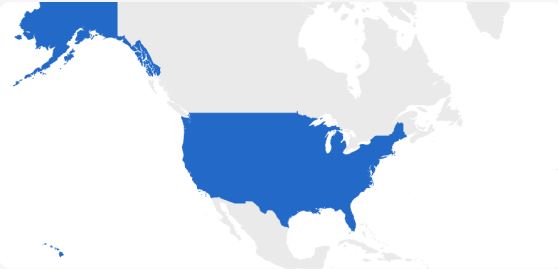
Learn more about how this work has impacted publishers in case studies published [here](#).



Data

More data is available to news organizations today than ever before. This abundance of data can help publishers better understand their readers and identify opportunities for growth in key business areas. But it can also be challenging to harness the potential of this data effectively – to know what metrics to focus on, and how to use those

figures to inform stories, products and business strategies. We aim to help news organizations elevate data-driven thinking, and use insights to develop product offerings and grow digital revenue.



UNITED STATES

Business Insider

[Business Insider](#) was able to grow their consumer subscriptions business successfully:

>150%

subscription revenue in one quarter

>40%

higher share of long-term subscribers in 2 months

[Case Study](#)



PHILIPPINES

Rappler

[Rappler](#), leveraging these data tools, saw:

20%

increase in average monthly readers year-over-year

8%

increase in the number of articles read per visit year-over-year

5%

increase in ad revenue year-over-year

[Case Study](#)



BOSNIA & HERZ.

Klix

[Klix](#) saw in 30 days:

18%

increase in users

37%

lift in page views

72%

growth in programmatic revenue

31%

Decrease in average page load time month over month

[Case Study](#)

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Data Maturity Research

We worked with [Deloitte Consulting](#) to conduct a [comprehensive study](#) of how news organizations across the world leverage data to grow their digital businesses. The published report found that more than 90 percent of surveyed news and media companies are lagging in data maturity. In addition, nearly 3 in 4 publishers have defined objectives for using audience data, but more than half are unable to realize the benefits. The report was accompanied by a [diagnostic tool](#) and [playbook](#) to help publishers develop a customized path to data maturity. The findings also laid the groundwork for GNI Data Labs in North America, Asia Pacific and Latin America.



Data Labs

We launched GNI Data Labs in [North America](#), Asia Pacific and Latin America to help participating news publishers grow through their improved use of data. In Asia Pacific, the five-month long GNI Data Lab dove deep into the people, workplace culture and technology changes required to enable data-driven practices and enable long term business sustainability. Outcomes among participating publishers included:

- 40% increase in 'brand lovers' – users that visit the site most frequently
- 20% lift in yield
- Up to 50% improvements in ad viewability
- The New Zealand Herald alone saw 400% performance improvement in content recommendations
- Changed behaviors across editorial, data and advertising teams, embedded data first strategies, and new KPIs

In collaboration with our partners, we published the [Google News Initiative Data Lab Playbook](#).

The New Zealand Herald is focused on keeping Kiwis in the know and now delivering the 'next best' article recommendations with our purpose-built engine, has resulted in a more relevant and engaging experience for our audiences than the previous off-the-shelf product

[Andy Wylie](#),
Head of Data and Analytics,
New Zealand Media and Entertainment



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figures to inform stories, products and business strategies. We aim to help news organizations elevate data-driven thinking, and use insights to develop product offerings and grow digital revenue.

GNI Cloud Program

We launched the [GNI Cloud Program](#) in September 2018 to support local, small and medium-sized news organizations globally and help them unlock their own imaginative solutions to business and storytelling, through the power of Cloud. Over 200 publishers have used their free G Suite licenses and Google Cloud Program credits to improve:

COST-SAVINGS

Since we implemented Google Cloud, we could redirect our savings into new investments. Now we can drive strategies that were on hold because of lack of funds. We are now developing a video platform for our website. With more content, we expect to increase traffic and revenue by about 20% next year. Additionally, our pagespeed has improved by 40% thanks to Cloud.

Brajesh Gupta,
Head of Operations, [News Track Infomedia](#)

PRODUCTIVITY

We added an additional work shift for content creation thanks to being more efficient using G-Suite. There used to be a lot of mistakes in page design, and because of the tracking capabilities and ownership from G-Suite, now we have less mistakes. A reporter that worked 8 hours on an article, now saves 65% time and has more time to develop content.

Magali Suarez,
Editor, [El Litoral](#)



SECURITY

I have been able to move my emails off from my previous local host to the Gmail server, and there is no doubt that these documents are now more secure. My credibility is safe now, and Google has allowed me to feel safe.

Joey Coleman,
Founder, [The Public Record](#)

PRODUCT LAUNCHES

[Source](#), powered by [Storyful](#) uses [Google's AI technology](#) to give instant access to an image's public history, allowing you to sort, analyze and understand its provenance, including any manipulation. That's already useful but it goes a step further. Source helps detect and translate text in images too, which is especially useful for journalists cataloguing or analyzing memes online.

Eamonn Kennedy,
Chief Product Officer, [Storyful](#)



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GNI Audience Lab

The [GNI Audience Lab](#) in North America helped 15 digital native news publishers in the US grow their loyal audiences over 10 months, in partnership with [News Revenue Hub](#). Below are some aggregate improvements experienced by Lab participants (vs. pre-Lab levels):

- +121% average increase in monthly active users
- +30% average increase in newsletter subscribers
- +152% increase in monthly organic search referrals

[Best in class](#) results were obtained by [Bridge Michigan](#), which saw:

- Over 10x growth in monthly active users (vs. previous record)
- Over +870% increase in monthly organic search referrals (vs. previous record)
- Over 4x YoY growth in monthly sustaining members

The Lab team worked with us to make our site and our newsletter more engaging. As tens of thousands of new loyalists return to us, a large portion are choosing to become paying members.

Bill Emkow,
Head of Audience Development, [Bridge Michigan](#)

+152%

increase in monthly
organic search referrals

+30%

average increase in
newsletter
subscribers

+121%

increase in monthly
active users

New Models for Local

Enabling a strong future for local news is of vital importance to every one of us, and has been a particular focus for us in the last few years. Our strategy has been to support new models for local news by identifying where we see success, then support the creation of platforms and playbooks that others could leverage.

Our work has spanned launching new local digital sites, conducting in-depth research and benchmarking into the local digital native market, and enabling technology solutions for small, local newsrooms.

Local News Experiments

The Local News Experiments Project aims to create sustainable, all-digital news organizations in communities currently underserved by local news. To date, we have partnered with local publishers in the US and UK to launch four new sites: Peterborough Matters in the UK with Archant, Mahoning Matters and The Longmont Leader with McClatchy, and The Oaklandside with Cityside (formerly Berkeleyside). In each of those ventures, we test techniques around product thinking, audience acquisition and monetization, in order to share the findings with the industry at large.



This is simultaneously a terrible and inspiring time to be working in local news. We've all learned so much, and also have realized how much we still don't know and can't know until the future gets here. In our first six months, our reporters have uncovered stories that made a big impact, especially for our small size. Looking ahead, there isn't a lot we can plan just yet, so we will keep on adapting.

Mandy Jenkins
General Manager, The Compass Project



Newsroom Technology

We've partnered with Automattic and Wordpress to develop Newspack, a fast, secure, low-cost CMS tailor-made to the needs of small newsrooms. The publishing platform, launched in 2019 along with the Lenfest Institute for Journalism, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Civil Media, currently has 37 launched publishers. We've contributed \$3 million towards the project since launch.

Maybe the most interesting thing for us was that the Newspack team and other news sites from the pilot program proposed things that we didn't consider for our site, such as an ultra-flexible donation system or workflow systems. We see a lot of power in that collaborative way to develop a product.

Ana Arriagada,
Executive Director, El Soberano

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Project Oasis

We've partnered with the [UNC Hussman School of Journalism](#) and [LION Publishers](#) on [Project Oasis](#), a research initiative focused on helping local news organizations navigate the complex choices they face in establishing and growing their digital business. The work will result in a database that maps the current landscape of digital native local news publishers in the U.S. and Canada. Then, through in-depth interviews with these local news site founders at key stages of growth, we will develop resources to help others grow, including a "Starter Pack" for aspiring entrepreneurs.

I believe local news is an essential element of a strong democracy. These information outlets build trust, inspire civic engagement and bring communities together. Through new research and resources, we believe this project has the potential to help shape a bright future for local news.

Susan Leath,

Director, Center for Innovation and Sustainability in Local Media, UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media

Table Stakes Europe

Since 2019, we have partnered with WAN-IFRA on [Table Stakes Europe](#), a program designed to help local and regional newspapers find new ways to build local audiences, prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in society.

In the first round of Table Stakes Europe, [14 publishers](#) from the U.K., Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany participated in the yearlong program. In 2020, the program will expand to welcome 24 European news enterprises and to accommodate Spanish in addition to German, French and English. They join hundreds of publishers who have participated in the Table Stakes program in the United States since its launch in 2015.

Table Stakes Europe has accelerated our development and given us a toolbox to increase our digital transformation. We've seen during the programme development of the Digital Subscriptions and the NL's performance (opening rate, CTR).

Mélanie Monsaingeon,

Publisher, Le Parisien

GNI Startups Lab

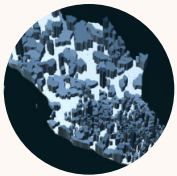
In 2020 we launched the [GNI Startups Lab](#) in both North America and Brazil, which is supporting diverse groups of aspiring journalism entrepreneurs in designing, launching and accelerating sustainable news products and businesses.

The GNI Startups Lab provides critically needed opportunities for passionate news entrepreneurs who care deeply about serving their communities.

Anika Anand,

Deputy Director, LION (Local Independent Online) Publishers





Empowering Newsrooms Through Innovation

As we work with publishers to navigate challenges for elevating quality journalism and evolving business models, it's clear that innovative thinking and approaches will be vital in developing and scaling solutions for the digital future. We've enabled news organizations around the world to demonstrate and test new ideas by investing in efforts to accelerate innovation in the news ecosystem, and partnering with news organizations to expand their journalism to new formats.

Innovation Challenge

The GNI Innovation Challenge is an application-based program open to organizations of all sizes that produce original journalism. Each Challenge is designed around a theme that meets that region's unique requirements, enabling diverse approaches that publishers have emphasized are needed to address specific needs in each region.

\$17m

committed to support
126 funded projects

Since 2018, we've received over 1,700 applications, and in 40 countries, totaling \$17 million through six regional Challenges.

Empowering Sustainable Business Models

Challenges focused on generating revenue and exploring new business models.

Myanmar: Frontier Myanmar built the first membership program in Myanmar, where press freedom is at risk, and new reader revenue streams represent 10% of their total revenue in less than 6 months.

Australia: Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) built a fundraising platform for Australia's community broadcasting sector, increasing the revenues of 30 of the association's member radio stations. They attracted follow up funding of \$2.1 million over 4 years via the government to further develop services into an app for on-demand listening.

United States: California News Partnership (Media News Group) created a premium subscription, ad-free tier, available on 13 local websites, resulting in over 3,000 subscribers in less than a year and higher engagement among subscribers



Our focus on improving station websites, upskilling personnel and improving online fundraising streams has accelerated the sector's digital transformation at a time when it has never been more important to do so.

Jon Bisset,
CEO, Community Broadcasting
Association of Australia.

While the funding was important, having public acknowledgement that this project was worth pursuing unblocked internal processes and hurdles that existed. It has helped provide a valuable new revenue stream that can be scaled and aligns with goals of improving the overall user experience for customers.

Ryan Nakashima ,
Product manager, digital subscriptions
Bay Area News Group.



FRONTIER MYANMAR:

Building a membership program is one of the most important decisions that we've made in our company's five year journey.

This model suits our newsroom, audiences and the media landscape here in Myanmar

SONNY SWE,
CEO, FRONTIER MYANMAR

Innovation Challenge

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Building Audience Engagement

Malaysia: [Malaysiakini](#) introduced a points and awards-based subscription loyalty program, leading to a 140% rise in subscriptions in the first month after launch.

Brazil: [Aos Fatos](#) built a tool to monitor social media platforms and spot COVID-19 misinformation, receiving [540 new subscribers](#) one month after launch.

540
subscribers one
month after launch

This community portal is built for Malaysiakini subscribers to immerse in. Not just a collective discourse, but to generate solutions, seek out expert opinion, for the public to speak to one another to increase understanding, to grow in hope and passion, to have our voices heard so we can eventually make a significant difference to our country,

[Lynn D'Cruz](#),
Chief Membership Officer, Malaysiakini

Radar Aos Fatos aims to create a unique dataset, that is capable of telling how a misleading narrative is built in different social networks and to know who amplifies this narrative. It's a difficult and ambitious project, but extremely necessary,

[Carol Cavaleiro](#),
Head of Innovation, Aos Fatos



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Innovation through technology

Japan: [Iwate Nippo](#) developed [Iwapon](#), an app created specifically for their [older subscribers to stay informed](#). The project helped to double their number of new online newspaper subscribers.

Monthly new subscribers for the online newspaper increased by more than 50 percent, and local businesses have approached us to become sponsors. Most importantly, the atmosphere within the company has changed. The app has helped increase cooperation within the editorial, advertising and sales departments. It's also had a huge positive impact on the motivation of younger employees.

[Takuya Watanabe](#),
Digital Media Manager



The Innovation Challenge builds on learnings from the [DNI Fund in Europe](#), which ran from 2015 to 2019, awarding over €140.5 million to 662 digital news projects in 30 countries.

New Formats for News

Audiences today have more choice than ever before of where to read, watch and listen to news. To help news organizations around the world experiment with new formats, we launched a \$25 million program with YouTube, including funding to help newsrooms develop sustainable video operations, and we've given more than \$5 million in audio innovation grants.

YouTube Innovation Funding

Through [YouTube Innovation Funding](#), we supported 87 publishers across 23 countries on projects to strengthen their online video capabilities, try out new formats for video journalism, and experiment with new business models.



The long-term impact of Innovation Funding for MyNews is that it has cultivated a culture on our team that helped us to break barriers of production. It has also stimulated our team to try to understand our audience better and how to talk to them, and to test new ways of storytelling. The results show our team that we reached our goals, and gives us the strength to continuously try new formats.

Beatriz Prates,
Director, [MyNews](#), Brazil



Our improved capacities helped extend our reach to an underserved demographic and push us forward in our fight for high-quality news to combat misinformation online.

[Channels](#), Nigeria



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Audio news innovation

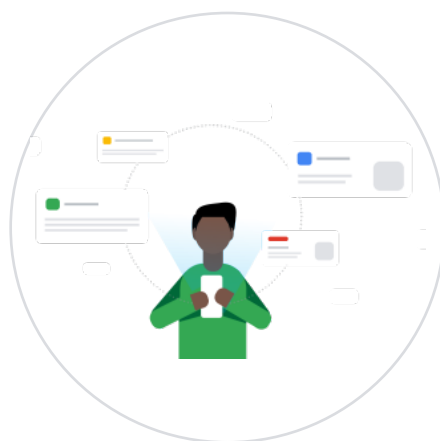
Audio journalism provides new storytelling and business opportunities for print publishers, broadcasters, and digital natives. Growing audio news audiences requires new capabilities and workflows, whether it's adding a sound booth or segmenting larger broadcasts into shorter stories. To help accelerate this innovation, we provided [funding to more than 40 news organizations](#) globally to support building out more audio capabilities for the industry as a whole.

Engaging with the Global News Community

Product Working Groups, focused on YouTube and Google, have provided frequent opportunities for news organizations from around the world to collaborate and engage directly with the product and engineering teams who are building new technology to support journalism, and offer meaningful feedback as Google teams build out their product roadmaps.

The GNI EMEA Product Working Group has been a stimulating forum for discussion to address common challenges from diverse perspectives aiming at building up collective solutions which affect the news ecosystem as a whole. Our ability to directly engage with Google product teams has had a positive impact and is a good model for working collaboratively.

Noemi Ramirez, Chief Product and Customer Officer, PRISA News

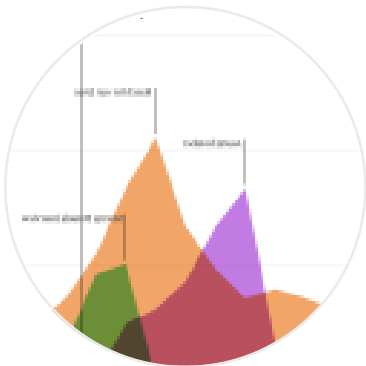
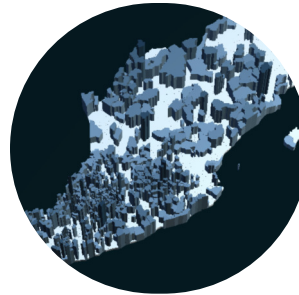


Emerging Technologies

New technology presents new opportunities. We help partners respond to changing news consumption habits by experimenting with new approaches to gathering information and storytelling.

Data journalism resources

Through our [data visualization project](#), we've worked with designers around the world to tell stories with data – and make the results open source so they can be reused by journalists and data visualization experts everywhere.



Helping journalists understand the power of machine learning

Journalism AI

- [JournalismAI](#) is a global initiative that aims to inform media organizations about the potential offered by artificial intelligence (AI)-powered technologies. It's managed in partnership with Polis, the journalism think-tank at the [London School of Economics and Political Science](#).
- Through JournalismAI, we surveyed **71** news organizations in **32** countries to [develop a report](#) to help journalists apply artificial intelligence (AI) to their work and organizations
- Created an [Introduction to Machine Learning](#) course for journalists, available in 17 different languages on the GNI Training Center



How Google Supports the News Industry

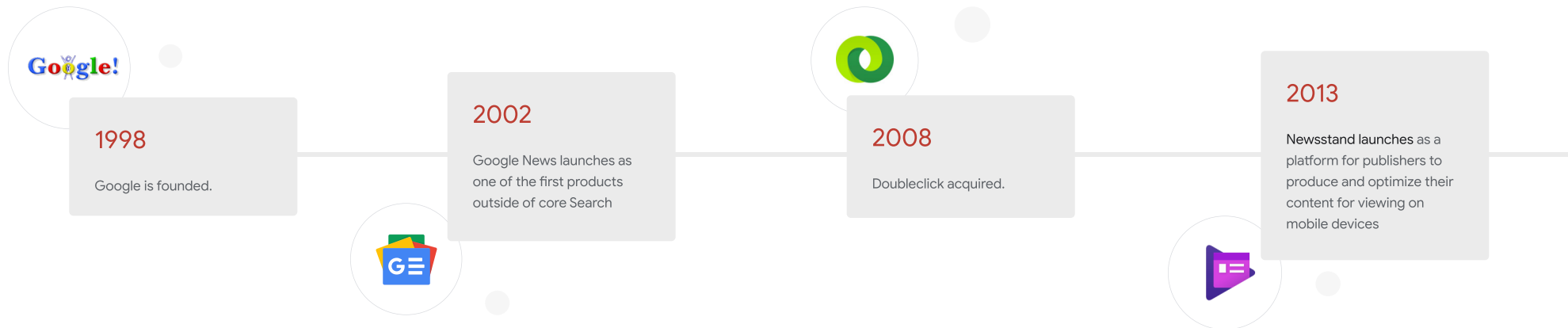
Google's products help news organizations large and small globally grow their businesses online. We invest in technology that supports publishers in increasing readers, advertising revenue and digital subscribers. Alongside our product enhancements, our dedicated news team partners with publishers to uncover new ways to evolve their businesses.



What else do we do beyond GNI?

The Google News Initiative builds upon Google's nearly 20 year commitment toward supporting the news industry.

Google's products help news organizations large and small globally grow their businesses online. We invest in technology that supports publishers in increasing readers, advertising revenue and digital subscribers.



Alongside our product enhancements, our dedicated news team partners with publishers to uncover new ways to evolve their businesses.



2015

Google News Lab launches to empower journalists with new technology.

Digital News Initiative forms to collaborate with the European news ecosystem around Product, Training & Research and Innovation.

2016

Launched **Accelerated Mobile Pages**, an open source form of HTML, optimized for mobile browsing to help web pages load faster.

Added Fact Check labels to help readers find fact checking in large news stories



2017

Flexible Sampling introduced to help publishers grow subscriptions revenue by controlling whether and how many articles they want to let searchers access before showing a paywall or subscription prompt.

Funding Choices introduced to help publishers recover lost revenue due to ad blockers, inviting users to enable ads or choose another way to fund the content.

2018

Google News Initiative launched to help centralize and scale our efforts across the company to help build a stronger future for news.

Announced **Subscribe with Google** to support publishers in their reader revenue businesses by making it easy for readers to subscribe, stay logged in and get the most out of their news subscription.

Google News applies real-time AI and machine learning to organize the news.

2020

Google News Showcase launches with \$1 billion commitment to support creation of quality content.



Traffic Through Our Products

Google products send traffic directly to publisher sites, enabling them to access and monetize a worldwide audience while helping consumers access information from diverse voices and perspectives.

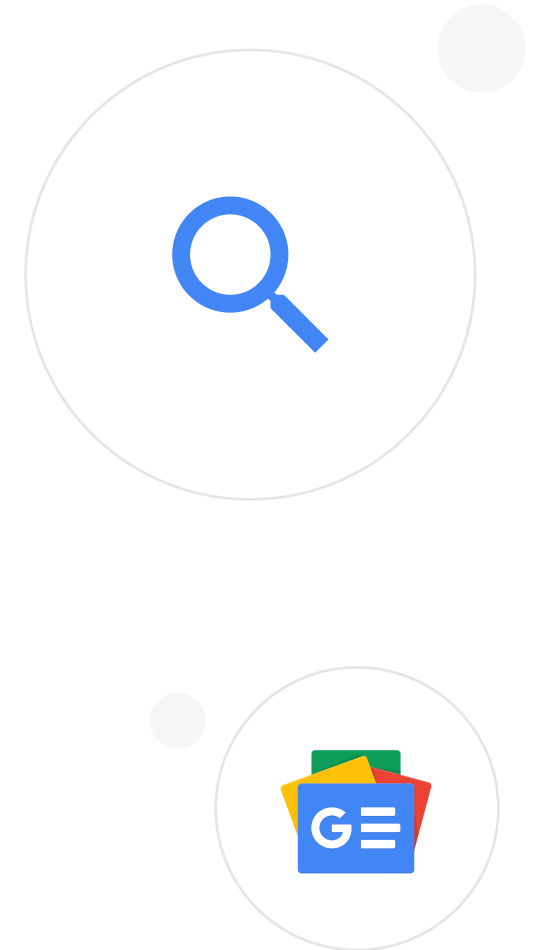


Enhancing Search and News

We continue to develop our Search and News features to better serve users globally.

- We've made changes to our products globally to highlight news articles that we identify as significant original reporting. Such articles may stay in a highly visible position longer. To tune and [validate our algorithms](#) and help our systems understand the authoritativeness of individual pages, we have more than 10,000 [raters](#) around the world evaluating our work.

- Our [Full Coverage](#) News feature provides a complete picture of how a story is reported from a variety of sources. In Search, features like knowledge panels that display information from the [Google Knowledge Graph](#) help readers get quick access to the facts from sources across the web.
- Over the past few years, we've improved our systems to automatically recognize breaking news around crisis moments and improved our detection time from up to 40 minutes just a few years ago, to now within just a few minutes of news breaking. To understand how our systems are performing when news breaks, we've developed an [Intelligence Desk](#), which actively monitors and identifies potential information threats.
- We make it easy to spot fact checks in Search, News, and, most recently, YouTube by showing information panels at the top of relevant search queries and [Google Images](#) by displaying fact check labels. These fact checks, labels, and information panels come from publishers that use [ClaimReview schema](#) to mark up fact checks they have created. In 2020 through the month of September, people have seen fact checks on Search and News more than [4 billion times](#).
- Since 2017, we've done more than [1 million search quality tests](#), and we now average more than 1,000 tests per day, to ensure that Search is as helpful as it can be—from the quality of information we deliver, to the overall experience.



Traffic Through Our Products

Google products send traffic directly to publisher sites, enabling them to access and monetize a worldwide audience while helping consumers access information from diverse voices and perspectives.

Growing audiences for news on YouTube

- YouTube helps news organizations build viewership at scale by **increasing distribution and reach** through a suite of news products that elevate diverse and authoritative news publishers.
- For example, when a major news event occurs, YouTube shows relevant videos from authoritative news sources in the **Breaking News** shelf on the homepage for all users in the relevant countries. In 2019, 2300 stories were featured on the Breaking News shelf on the YouTube homepage.
- Similarly, YouTube **prioritizes authoritative** news and information queries in our search results and recommendations.

Growing audiences for audio news

- **Collaborations with publishers from around the world** over nearly three years have helped us imagine the future of audio news, and have reinforced the importance of building a healthy ecosystem for both listeners and publishers.
- We're helping to connect users with audio news through our smart playlist **Your News Update**, available on Google Podcasts and Google Assistant. By analyzing what's being said within a given audio file, we can apply our understanding around what text articles are about, how news stories evolve, how topics link together and what might be most relevant to a particular user's interests.

2,300

stories were featured on the Breaking News shelf on the YouTube homepage in 2019.



Revenue Through Our Products

News publishers of all sizes around the world use Google products and services to grow their revenue and manage their digital businesses.



YouTube

Publishers can [monetize content through advertising](#), receiving a majority of the revenue from ads shown on their YouTube videos. YouTube also provides features for direct viewer contributions, including [channel memberships](#).



Google Ad Manager

Thousands of news companies use [Ad Manager](#) to run their digital advertising businesses. Publishers tell us they choose our platform for its performance, controls and ability to integrate with hundreds of third party ad technologies. On average, [the top 100 news publishers globally using Ad Manager keep over 95% of the digital advertising revenue](#) they generate when using the product.

Ad Manager Fee Waiver

In order to provide direct and immediate financial aid to news organizations producing original journalism during the coronavirus pandemic, we [waived ad serving fees on Ad Manager](#) for five months. Our ad serving fee waiver has benefited over 500 news publishers globally during a particularly challenging time period.



YouTube Player for Publishers

[Player for Publishers](#), used by over 100 publishers in 25 countries, enables news organizations to use YouTube's delivery platform to serve video and advertisements across their own websites and mobile apps – all free of charge.



Google AdSense

Google [AdSense](#) helps over two million small and medium publishers worldwide earn revenue through ads on their websites. Many publishers choose AdSense for its simplicity, automation, controls and easy revenue generation. It also helps remove complexity in the digital advertising ecosystem, allowing publishers to focus on what they do best – producing great content.



Funding Choices

Like its name implies, [Funding Choices](#) is all about enabling user choice. News publishers of all sizes around the world are using our free messaging platform to communicate with their readers in order to recover lost revenue due to ad blockers and seek user consent for privacy regulations.



Google Analytics

Google [Analytics](#) gives news publishers free tools to better understand how their users are engaging with content across their sites and apps. News publishers can use insights to take action, such as improving their website performance, optimizing their content, or informing their advertising strategies.

Product Partnerships

\$1 billion

committed to support
quality content

We recently announced a Google News Showcase — a new news experience — with a \$1 billion global investment towards paying for quality content



Google News Showcase

We recently announced we will pay publishers to create and curate high-quality content for a different kind of online news experience. Google News Showcase is a new product that will benefit both publishers and readers: It features the editorial curation of award-winning newsrooms to give readers more insight on the stories that matter, and in the process, helps publishers develop deeper relationships with their audiences. And it will give readers more context and perspective on important stories in the news and drive high-value traffic to a publisher's site. News Showcase builds on our existing news licensing program, which is already paying publishers for quality journalism, and other news-related efforts like Subscribe with Google, Web Stories and audio news.



Our Marketing Commitments

Google has long spent its marketing dollars with news organizations. Not only do news publishers provide an effective platform for advertisers to engage audiences, but we also believe it's important to support journalism financially with our marketing.

**\$100
million**
committed



\$100M Commitment

In the wake of the coronavirus, we set out to think about how we could do even more to help the news industry with our own campaigns. One of the [commitments](#) our marketing team made was to invest more with news organizations. For the first time, we're holding ourselves to a marketing spend goal with the news category. Back in March, we committed to invest over \$100 million with news organizations around the world by the end of the year.



“Support Local News” Campaign

In partnership with the Local Media Association and Local Media Consortium, we launched a \$15M marketing campaign in June to [“Support Local News.”](#) This program delivered funding to thousands of local news outlets in the U.S. and Canada, including Black- and Latino-owned publishers, and reached tens of millions of people with our call to action to subscribe, donate and advertise.



What's Next

As we continue to learn, we're consolidating insights from the work we've done, and finding ways to scale those learnings to publishers globally through efforts like the [Digital Growth Program](#) and [The Local News Experiments Project](#).

The news industry is still in the midst of a difficult transition. But this period of evolution presents opportunities to rethink the role news plays in people's lives and how it should evolve to meet our changing information needs.

We'll continue to collaborate with organizations around the world working to create a healthy, diverse and sustainable news ecosystem, and we're excited to share more in the coming year.

