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The Indian News Consumer: Willingness to Pay and Key Drivers

—
August 2024

The traditional reliance on online advertising is evolving as publishers encounter factors such as ad fatigue and heightened reader expectations.

According to the [Indian Languages – Understanding India’s Digital News Consumer](#) study, launched in 2023, 1 in every 7 news users is ready to pay for News online. The figure is 1.5 times among users who access publisher website / app(s). Overall, the reader revenue potential for online News in India is promising, but careful consideration of challenges and strategic implementation are crucial for success.

In this context, the goal of the research was to decode:

Current Subscribers’ Journey: From initial triggers to engagement-boosting retention strategies.

Free Users’ Inclinations: From assessing potential for different user centric revenue models at a stated level to pinpointing the key determinants of user willingness to pay for online news.

TARGET GROUP

Demographics: **Reflecting Online Access + Payment Trends*

- › Gender: M:F (60:40)
- › Aged 25-55
- › From NCCS AB *with skew to A*

Segments: **Double Click On Publisher News Website / App Users*

Subscribers Of Publisher News Website/App:

- › Paid for website /app subscription in the last 2 years & visit it at least once in 2 weeks

Free Users Of Publisher News

Website/App (visit at least once a week) – mix of:

- › **Paid user of other online content:** Paid for OTT/ online games in the last 6 months | Qualitative only: Willing to pay for subscription in next 6 months (add-on criterion)
- › **Free user of other online content:** Not paid for any OTT/online games in the last 1 year | Qualitative only: Not willing to pay for subscription (add-on criterion)

Mix of English and local language users

METHODOLOGY

Multiple methods deployed:

Qualitative (The exploration):

- › **30 DIs** in people’s homes
- › **20 FGDs** at a central location
- › Across **10 markets**

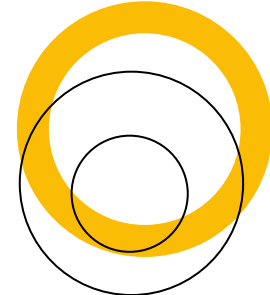
Quantitative (The validation):

Subscribers Of News Website/App:

- › **Online** data collection
- › Interviewed **300 subscribers** across **4 zones** and **12 markets** (*mix of metro and non-metro*)

Free Users Of News Website/App: Interviewed a **total of 2091 users** via face-to-face offline interviewer led surveys.

- › **Paid user of other online content: 1383 interviews** across 9 languages of interest (including English) from 11 states across 24 urban cities – mix of metro, non-metro
- › **Free user of other online content: 708 interviews** across 5 languages (including English) of interest from 6 states across 12 urban cities – mix of metro, non-metro



Agenda

What you'll find in this report

What Role Does News Play In Subscribers' Lives And What Made Them Pay For It Online?

- [User Psyche](#)
- [Top Reasons](#)
- [Intrinsic Drivers](#)

How Did Subscribers Discover The Existence Of 'Subscription'?

- [Touchpoints Enabling Discovery \(Overall\)](#)
- [Touchpoints On Publisher Web/App](#)

What Does The Research Journey Look Like?

- [Consideration Set: One Vs. Many](#)
- [Information Needs](#)
- [Touchpoints Used For Research](#)
- [Frictions In Research](#)

And What Factors Are More Influential In Conversion?

- [Brand Drivers](#)
- [Price Drivers](#)
- [Content Drivers](#)
- [Feature Drivers](#)

Having Subscribed, How Do Users Interact With News?

- [Other Sources Visited For News](#)
- [Text Formats - Interacted With](#)
- [Non-text Formats - Interacted With](#)
- [Ladder Of Participation: Actions Taken](#)

And What Optimisation Opportunities Exist?

- [Content Led Engagement Levers](#)
- [Columns Interested In](#)
- [Feature Led Engagement Levers](#)
- [Gamification For User Appeal](#)
- [Marketing Activations For Renewal](#)

Agenda

What you'll find in this report

What Role Does News Play In Free Users' Lives?

- [User Psyche](#)

Why Won't Users Pay?

- [Reasons For Not Paying](#)
- [Unclear Value Proposition](#)
- [Lack Of Call To Action](#)

What Monetisation Opportunities Do We Have?

- [Claimed User Acceptance Of Different Revenue Models](#)
- [Language-wise Break Up \(Summary\)](#)

Who's More Likely To Subscribe?

- [User Profile](#)

What Could Drive Users To Pay For News Online?

- [Motivations For Paying](#)

What Kind Of Content Resonates?

- [News Categories Willing To Pay For](#)
- [Short Form, Fast Journalism Vs. Long Form, Slow Journalism](#)

What Does A Compelling Proposition Look Like?

- [Content Related Elements](#)
- [Feature Related Elements](#)
- [Leveraging Promotional Tools](#)

Which Specific Brand Attributes Are Most Influential?

- [Brand Drivers](#)

What Might Make For A User-centric Payment Strategy?

- [Unveiling Payment Preferences](#)
- [Payment Cycle Preference](#)

What Do Free Users' Experience With Paywalls Look Like? (Agree-disagree Scale)

- [Make It Difficult To Stay Informed](#)
- [Unclear Whether I Will Be Able To Read A Full Article Or Hit A Paywall Before Clicking On It](#)

With That, Let's Look At What Triggered Them To Look At Paywalled Content?

- [Triggers For Clicking On Paywalled Content](#)

See Ads Or Pay-up: How Do Users Make The Trade-off?

- [Amount Of Ad\(s\) Vs The Amount Of Fee](#)

Motivating Factors

1 **Reliable** (67%), **in-depth** (58%), and **specialised content** (51%) are primary factors that drew subscribers in

2 Nearly **two-fifths** were prompted by **life events**. Events such as starting first job and elections create opportune moments for targeted promotions

Subscription Discovery

3 Subscribers primarily discover subscription offerings through **search engines**, **social media platforms**, and **the news organisation's website/app** (collective reach of 90%)

4 **Proactive, highly visible** subscription prompts, including notifications (62%), homepage buttons (56%) **outperform passive discovery methods** in raising subscription awareness **on news platforms**

Paint Points During Research

5 **Excessive personal data** requests (52%), **scarce user reviews** (49%), limited **content previews** (45%) and **complex subscription tiers** (45%) are major obstacles during research phase

Decision-making Factors

6 When it comes to brands, subscribers prioritise a **reputed brand**, with a **clear and compelling value proposition**. **Free trials and tiered options** are valued cost & pricing related elements

Engagement Levers

7 **Subscribers** increasingly **seek content that simplifies** complex issues. **Explainers** and **infographics** are **popular** formats, with over 1 in 2 engaging with them

8 The significant participation in comments (63%) and polls (56%) demonstrates a **clear desire for interactive features** that foster a sense of community within the news platform

Retention Levers

9 Subscribers prefer marketing promotions that offer lasting benefits. To optimise subscriber retention, consider **bundles**, **customisable plan**, and a **budget-friendly essential tier**

Factors That **Hinder**

1 Key obstacles to paid news include **choice overload** in terms of **plans and pricing, budget constraints, rigid payment and cancellation processes** as well as **inadequate trial periods**

Monetisation **Opportunity**

2 Users indicate higher willingness to engage with models like sharing **first-party data** or **watching ads in exchange for content**. **1 in 5** are also **willing to subscribe**. Moreover, a small subscription fee and ad-lite experience might be more appealing to a wider set

3 **Users who already pay for other online content** demonstrate a **greater openness to various revenue models** compared to those who exclusively consume free content. This makes them prime target for subscriptions as well as other monetisation experiments

Topical Lens

4 While users are **most willing to pay for news on politics, local affairs, sports, and national events**, demographic and language-led differences exist. Topic-specific subscriptions could be worth experimenting with!

Compelling **Value Proposition**

5 Content in **preferred language** (63%), **priority access** (48%), streamlined content delivery through **daily/weekly summaries** (44%) and **diverse formats** (42%) increase the perceived value of a news platform

6 Users also crave control over their news experience and therefore features such as **'save for later', 'filter out content not interested in'** could strengthen the offer further

7 Promotional offers that provide immediate value, such as **free trials** (53%), **discounted introductory periods** (51%), and **free gifts** (49%), can effectively encourage users to try paid options

Brand Choice Driver

8 **A clear value proposition, strong reputation drive brand choice** when exploring paid options. This means news platforms must effectively market their unique offerings

Payment Strategy

9 Ability to **choose payment periodicity** is valuable to users. **Short term payment cycles** are especially preferred as they ensure users don't feel locked in

A dark, atmospheric landscape featuring a long, straight road that stretches from the foreground into the distance. The road is flanked by sparse, low-lying vegetation. In the background, a range of mountains is visible, with several peaks covered in snow. The sky is filled with heavy, dark clouds, creating a moody and somber atmosphere. The overall color palette is monochromatic, dominated by dark greys and blacks, with the white of the snow providing a stark contrast.

Mapping The Subscriber Journey

What Role Does News Play In Subscribers' Lives And What Made Them Pay For It Online?

News is a part of everyday routine

Subscribers Are Serious News Hunters, Interested In WIDTH + DEPTH



Subscriber



ROLE IN THEIR LIVES

Makes them feel **self-sufficient, and forward thinking** (*users of English language publications*)

Demonstrates **intellectual curiosity**



REASONS FOR CONSUMING NEWS

Enables them to form their opinions, be the first to share them | **Brings them closer to their aspirational selves** – enhanced reputation and confidence | Shapes their worldview and relationships



REASONS TO GRADUATE TO DIGITAL NEWS

Concerned about **sensationalism** | **Access to newspapers and uninterrupted reading** hours becoming a challenge | Online empowers me to **curate my own feed** and **explore multiple perspectives** and get **instantaneous updates**



"When I started investing, my husband and I relied heavily on apps as it makes reading news a lot simpler, plus we get all updates as well. Makes it easy to make independent and informed choices" *Female, 40, Bangalore, Kannada*

Go to [index](#)

WHY: Reasons for subscribing

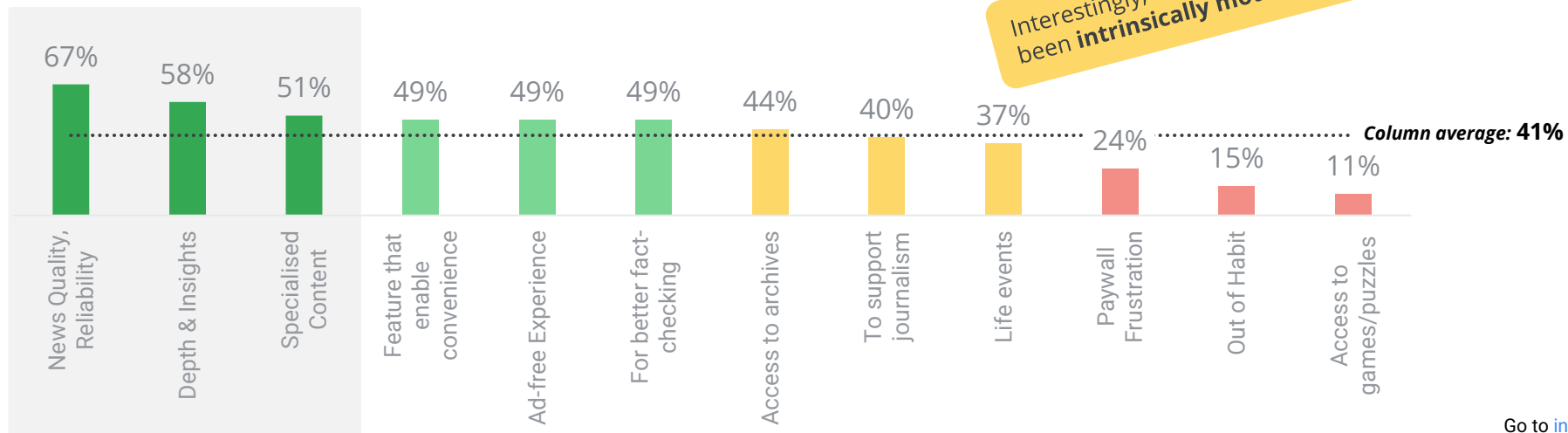
And So, It's Content – Reliability, Depth, Specialised Coverage – That Converts

For many, convenience, an ad-free experience, and fact-checking add to the appeal

Reasons For Paying For Online News Subscriptions (All %)

4.9

Avg. no of reasons coded



Go to [index](#)

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Giving Them The Ability To Respond And Not Just React

Subscribers feel better equipped to make important decisions



QUALITY

Insightful, unbiased, **well-researched** articles | **Surety** that they will **not** get **fake** news anymore



DEPTH

Access to **detailed, exclusive** stories unpacking 'whys' and 'hows'



SPECIALISED CONTENT

Information about **niche** interest areas | Avenue of **personal and professional growth**

“I think writing that goes beyond just facts is a good reason to subscribe. You need facts but you also need someone to help you understand what they mean for you.”

Male, 26, Kolkata

“A lot of the interesting and detailed articles are paywalled. I wanted to subscribe so I could read the ones that fascinated me.”

Male, 45, Chennai

“The specialist news website I use, gives me information about markets, different hiring processes in different industries etc. It gives me a competitive advantage in my field.”

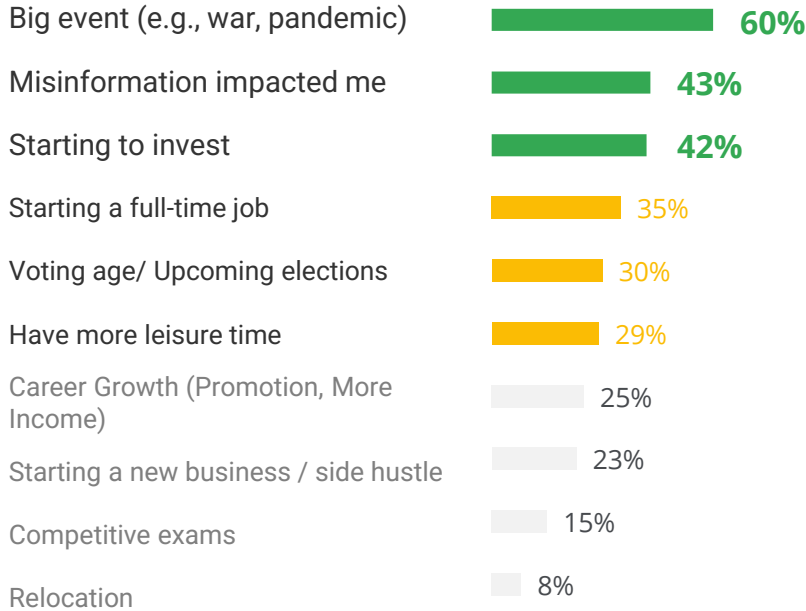
Male, 30, Mumbai

WHY: Intrinsic drivers of subscription

Big Events, Personal Brushes With Misinformation, And Wanting To Invest Serve As Internal Catalysts

Start of full-time jobs, elections – additional opportunities for push marketing!

Intrinsic Triggers To Online News Subscriptions (All%)



Among **37%** who were triggered by life events



*"During the lockdown, we needed to get news updates immediately. I subscribed then to get access to all medical and health news. I ended up liking the convenience and kept the subscription."
Female, 30, Delhi*

*"I trust the news I get through known news publishers. I find a lot of fake news on Facebook, so I check on my go to news app to see if there really is something newsworthy going on."
Male, 45, Bareilly*

*"News has been very empowering. I've wanted to learn to invest for many years, especially real estate. News tells you where to put your money and is helping me find financial freedom."
Female, 35-45, Kolkata*

Go to [index](#)

Q. Please specify the life-changing event, if any, that motivated you to consider paying for news online (Multi Answer) | Base: Those coded 'life event' in 'Reasons for paying for online news subscriptions' (n=110)
'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

How Did Subscribers Discover The Existence Of 'Subscription'?

Discovery Touchpoints

Touchpoints that enable discovery of subscription overall

Search, Social Media, And The News Website/App Itself – Key Getaways

Subscription Discovery Touchpoints – Across Channels (All%)

	NET: Top 4	90%
#1	While searching online (e.g., Bing, Google)	49%
#2	Via news pages / groups on social media/ chat apps	44%
#3	While using the website/app itself	42%
#4	Via friends / family on social media / chat apps	40%
#5	In a video (not an ad) I was watching	39%
#6	People I know talked about it or shared a news link with me	35%
#7	Via journalists on social media/ chat apps	33%
#8	Via online ads on search engines, Q&A sites, video sites	33%
#9	Via ads in app store	28%
#10	Through free newsletters delivered by the website/app itself	24%
#11	Via other articles/blogs	23%
#12	In-app ads	20%
#13	Via recommendations from a teacher/coaching center	19%
#14	Via offline advertising (e.g., TV, radio, print)	13%
	Column Average	32%
	Average no. of touchpoints coded	4.4

NETS

Via social media

73%



"I used to miss important news, so I got the app. While browsing the app, I saw the option to subscribe for more in-depth stories."

Female, 31, Delhi

Via online ads

60%

Via website/apps own campaign

56%

Via Word of Mouth

46%

Qualitative nuance: **Dominant** among **subscribers** of **Indic language publications**

"My friend got some updates when we were out. I got the same updates the next afternoon. He was a subscriber, and I was not, and that's how I discovered paid option!"

Male, 30, Delhi

Go to [index](#)

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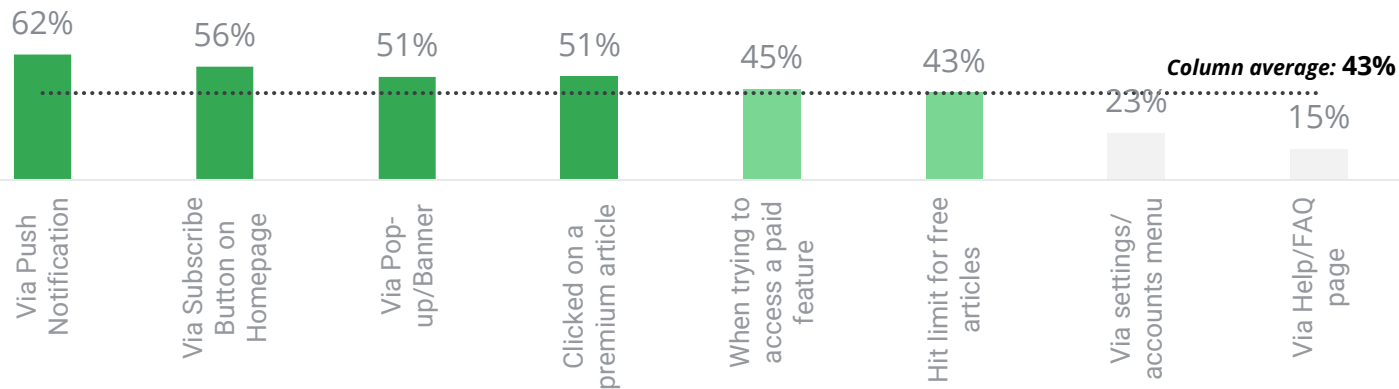
Touchpoints that enable discovery of subscription on the website/app itself

Proactive Subscription Prompts Outperform Passive Discovery On News Platforms

Subscription Discovery Touchpoints On Website/App Itself (All %)

3.5

Avg. no of touchpoints coded



"I saw the option to subscribe on finance news app. There was some blocked material that you could only read after subscribing, and a prominent banner. So, I clicked on that, and it took me to the subscription page."
 Male, 30, Mumbai,



Qualitative nuance: While subscribers of English publications have an easier time finding about subscriptions on the website or app, for subscribers of Indian language publications, the process can feel like a scavenger hunt!

Go to [index](#)

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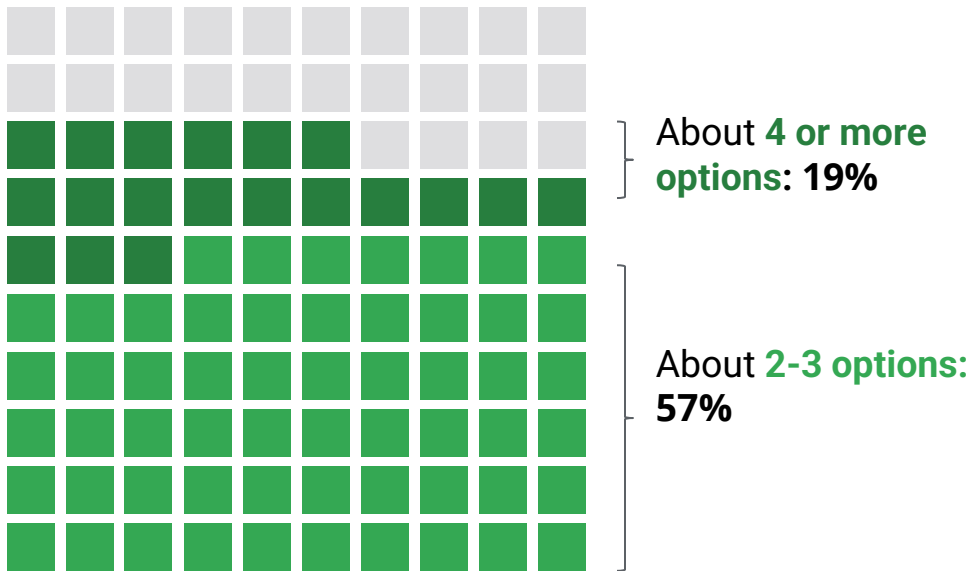
Q. You said you learnt about the option to subscribe on the website / app itself. Here are some ways news apps/websites make their readers / visitors aware of their subscription offers. Choose the ones that apply to you. (Multi Answer) | Base: All those coded: While using the website/app itself (n=126)

Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

What Does The Research Journey Look Like?

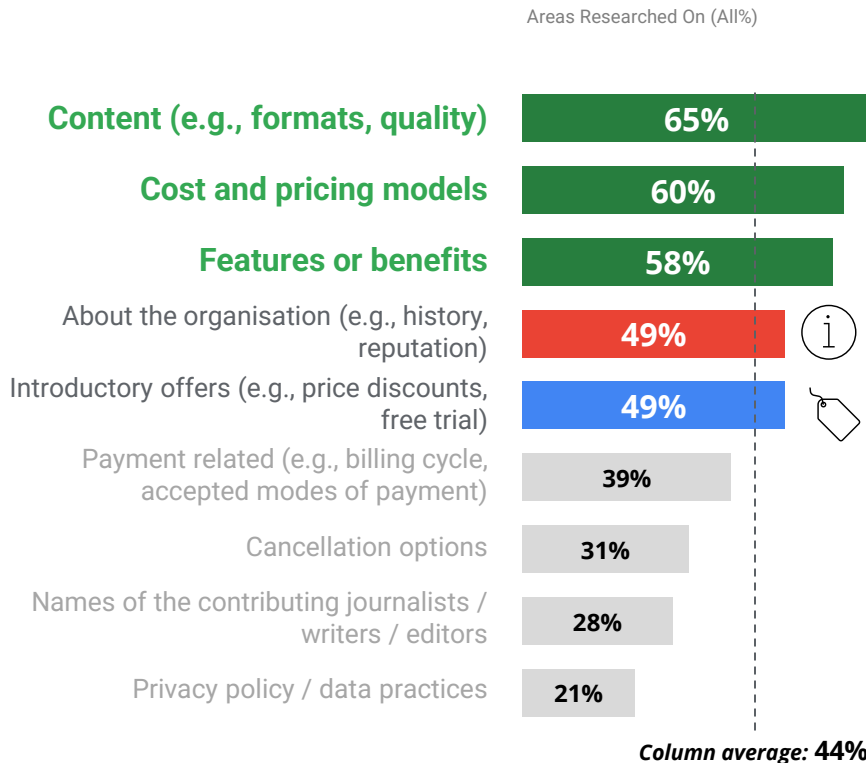
Information Areas And Touchpoints

76% Of current subscribers had **weighed multiple news website/app options** during their subscription journey



Qualitative nuance: **Comparison** usually happens **among publishers** that are already **part of their repertoire**

Most Search For Information On Content, Price-value, And Features



4.0

Avg. no of research areas coded

Interestingly though, **1 in 2** also research about the **organisation** and **introductory offers** - making them supplemental to conversion

And Rely On A Blend Of Online Information Sources With Google, Social Media, And YouTube Being The Top Ones

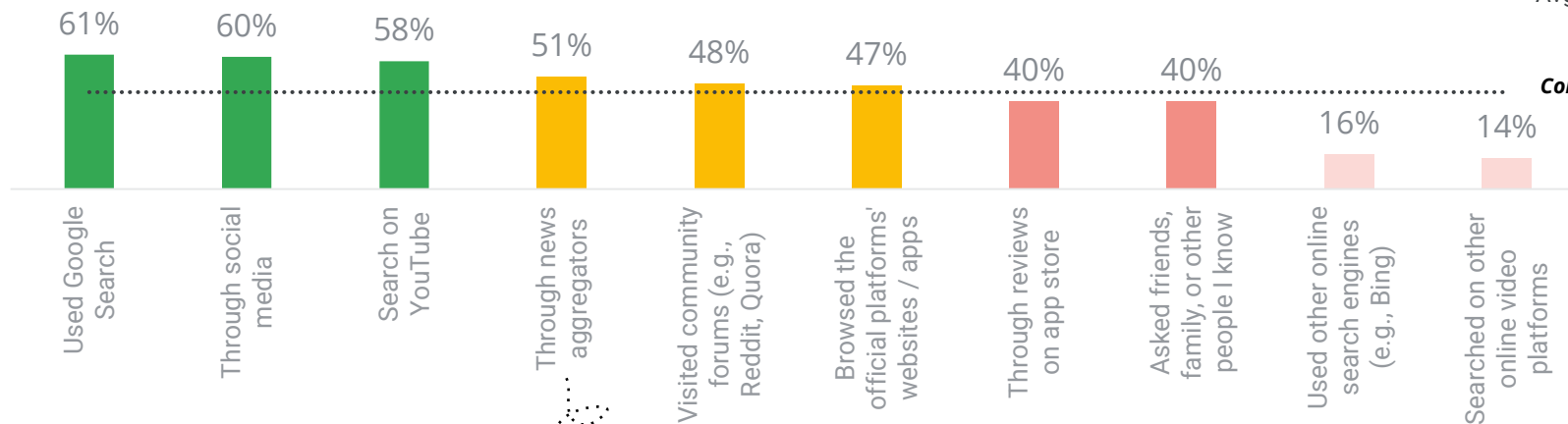
...emphasizing the need for strong, well-optimised presence across these platforms

Specific Information Sources Used When Researching Subscriptions In General (All %)

4.4

Avg. no of touchpoints coded

Column average: 44%



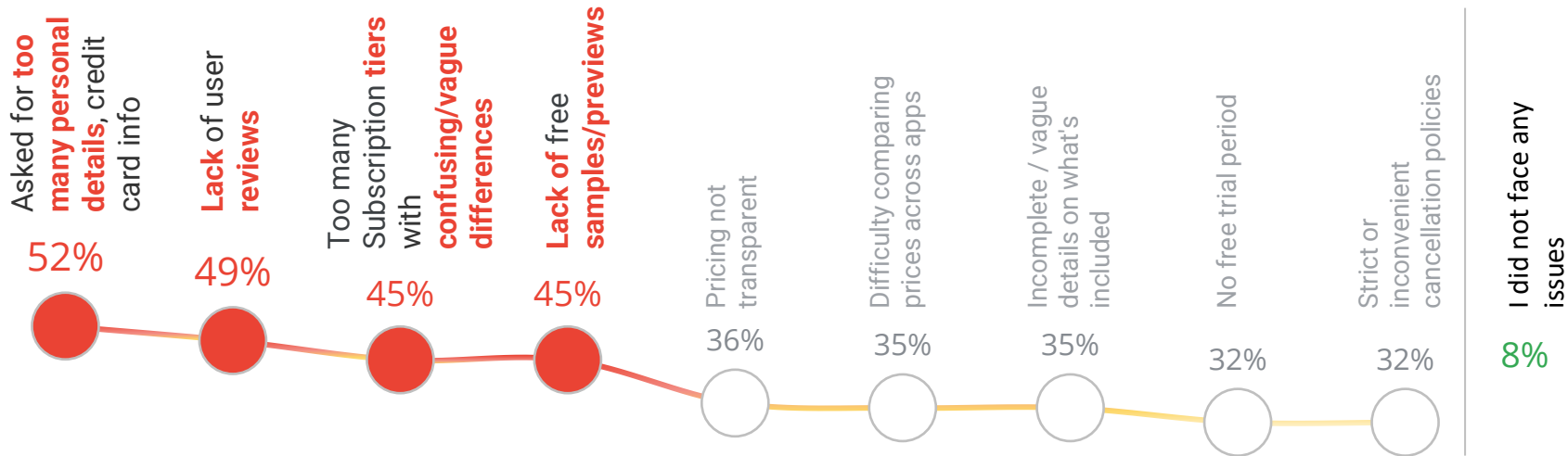
Hypothesis

Possibly a brand's presence on aggregator apps serves as an indicator of popularity and/or credibility. Alternatively, this could be a way for users to sample content

But Many Struggle With Having To Share Excessive Personal Data, Few Reviews, Lack Of Content Samples, And Confusing Subscription Tiers

...calling for a simpler, clearer process to bridge the information gap

Pain Points When Doing Research (All%)



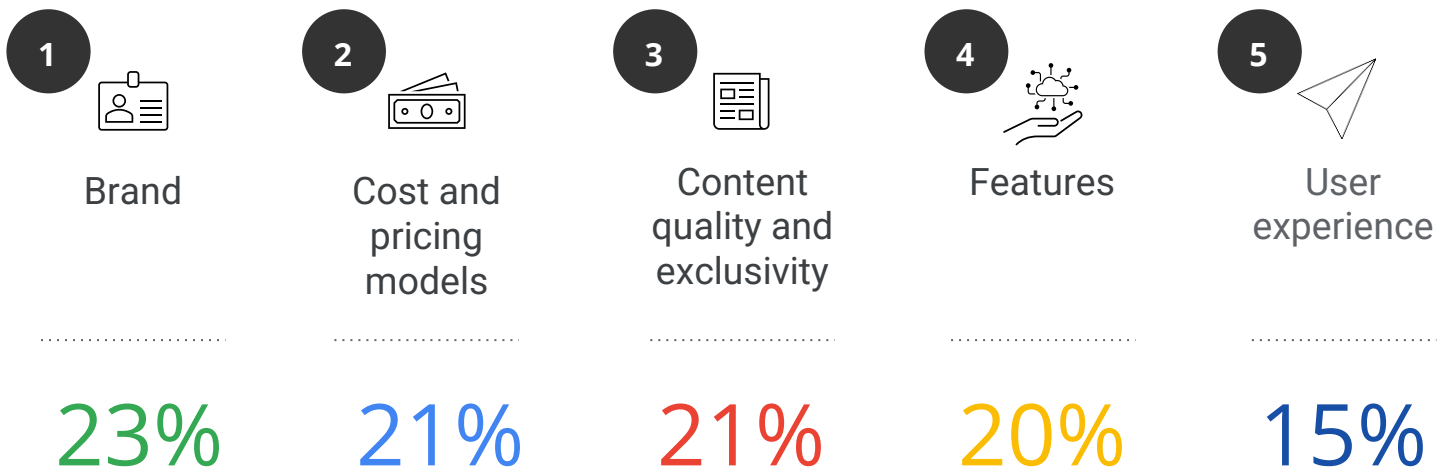
Go to [index](#)

And What Factors Are More Influential In Conversion?

News Subscription Decisions Are A Balancing Act

While brand has a slight edge, cost, content & features all matter almost equally

Aspects Influencing Subscription Decision: Top Rank (All %)



Top 3 Stated Purchase Drivers Across Key Aspects

1



2



3



4



	Brand related	Cost & pricing related	Content related	Feature related
#1	Clear Value Proposition	Tiered Plans	Clear, Substantive Headline & Bylines	Personalised Recommendations / News Feed
#2	Exclusive High-quality Content	Free Trial Available	Original Reporting	Ease/Accuracy Of Search
#3	Known Brand	Flexible Payment Options (E.G., Credit Cards, UPI)	Variety Of Non-news Content (E.G., Lifestyle)	Option To Save Articles For Later Reading

Value Proposition, Quality, And Reputation Drew Subscribers To The Brand

Over 2 in 5 were attracted by writing style and diverse points of view – inclusivity is a selling point

Stated Brand Related Drivers (All%)

#1	Clear value proposition (benefits were made super clear and relevant to me)	60%
#2	Exclusive high-quality content	52%
#3	Known Brand	50%
#4	Writes in my preferred writing style	45%
#5	Offers diverse viewpoints	44%
#6	Is independent	40%
#7	Does objective reporting	37%
#8	Has trusted journalists	35%
#9	Has robust fact-checking process	33%
#10	Aligns with my views	31%
#11	Community led approach	30%
#12	Ads highlight brands' strengths	29%
	Column Average	41%
	Average no. of reasons coded	4.9



"I chose this specialist news app because the benefits were super clear to me. I found the layout to be more readable. It also provides expert opinions, and insightful articles on business, finance and start-ups.

Male, 30, Mumbai,

"With big publisher brands, you know the quality will be good because they have been around for years. Our parents read these. To have such a big audience for so long, the paper has to be one of the best."

Female, 45, Kolkata,

"I particularly enjoy their long-form articles. The content flows well and is easy to follow. Additionally, their clear and engaging writing style, often incorporating storytelling elements, makes complex topics understandable."

Female, 30, Delhi,

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

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Tiered Plans And Free Trials Were Key From A Pricing Perspective

Payment options, family plans, and introductory deals add to the appeal

Stated Price Related Drivers (All%)

#1	Tiered Plans	56%
#2	Free Trial Available	53%
#3	Flexible Payment Options (e.g., credit cards, UPIs)	48%
#4	Family Plans Available	46%
#5	Easy Cancellation	45%
#6	Introductory / renewal price discounts	44%
#7	Flexible Billing Cycles	43%
#8	Value Bundles	38%
#9	Shopping vouchers / free merchandise	27%
#10	Option to gift subscriptions to others	18%
#11	Flat Rate Pricing	13%
	Column Average	39%
	Average no. of reasons coded	4.3



Qualitative nuance: Benefits within each tier are compared for an app and the **shortest time length** (often monthly plan) is preferred

Qualitative nuance: Only autopay, **no manual payment mode** creates distrust



"It was offering me access for 3 months or 6 months. But I choose monthly because I don't have to pay a lot in one go. even though the 6 months option was more economical in the long run. Plus, it gave me option to pay through PhonePe, and to try for Rupee 1 as opposed to paying the monthly fee of Rs. 69. It also let me redeem vouchers"
Male, 44, Bareilly

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

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Substantive Headlines, Originality, Non-core-news Variety Attracted Majority Of Subscribers In

This reinforces the focus on fresh and variety of perspectives

Stated Content Related Drivers (All%)

#1	Clear, substantive headline & bylines	67%
#2	Original reporting	64%
#3	Variety of non-news content (e.g., lifestyle)	59%
#4	Deep dives & explainers	56%
#5	Engaging formats (short videos, infographics etc.)	56%
#6	Specialised Coverage (e.g., local news, business news)	51%
#7	Investigative reporting	41%
#8	Covers positive stories	32%
	Column Average	53%
	Average no. of reasons coded	4.3



Qualitative nuance: Use of **everyday words** instead of complex terms, **brevity** adds to attractiveness



"Good content is very important. I want all the facts in clear, lucid language. I want headlines and pictures that are clearly related to the article. I was comparing two apps and while the one I ended up choosing was a little more expensive than another well-known publisher app, I preferred their writing style and coverage.

Male, 45, Bangalore, Kannada

"Today we don't just get national news, but also international news, and stories related to sports, health and lifestyle."

Male, 30, Kolkata, Bengali

"I want something regular people on the website or app don't get. On top of regular news topics, I also get articles about entertainment, food, culture."

Male, 26, Kolkata, English

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Most Were Swayed In By Personalisation, Better Searchability, Save For Later Reading, And Access To Archives

Stated Feature Related Drivers (All%)

#1	Personalised recommendations / news feed	62%
#2	Ease/accuracy of search	58%
#3	Option to save articles for later reading	55%
#4	Access to archives / past issues / e-papers	52%
#5	Offline reading	45%
#6	Interactive features (e.g., quizzes, polls)	45%
#7	Easy navigation through buttons and menus	41%
#8	Community features (e.g., comment sections, forums)	40%
#9	Enable / disable personalised push notification	39%
#10	Access to e-papers	28%
	Column Average	47%
	Average no. of reasons coded	4.7



"I was looking for features like ad free, ability to select news categories, responsive update, genuine news, quick update etc. I found all of these on this popular Hindi news publisher app. Everything was very flexible, so I stuck with it."

Male, 35, Delhi,

Having Subscribed, How Do Users Interact With News?

Current engagement: While news app/website subscribed to is the mainstay...

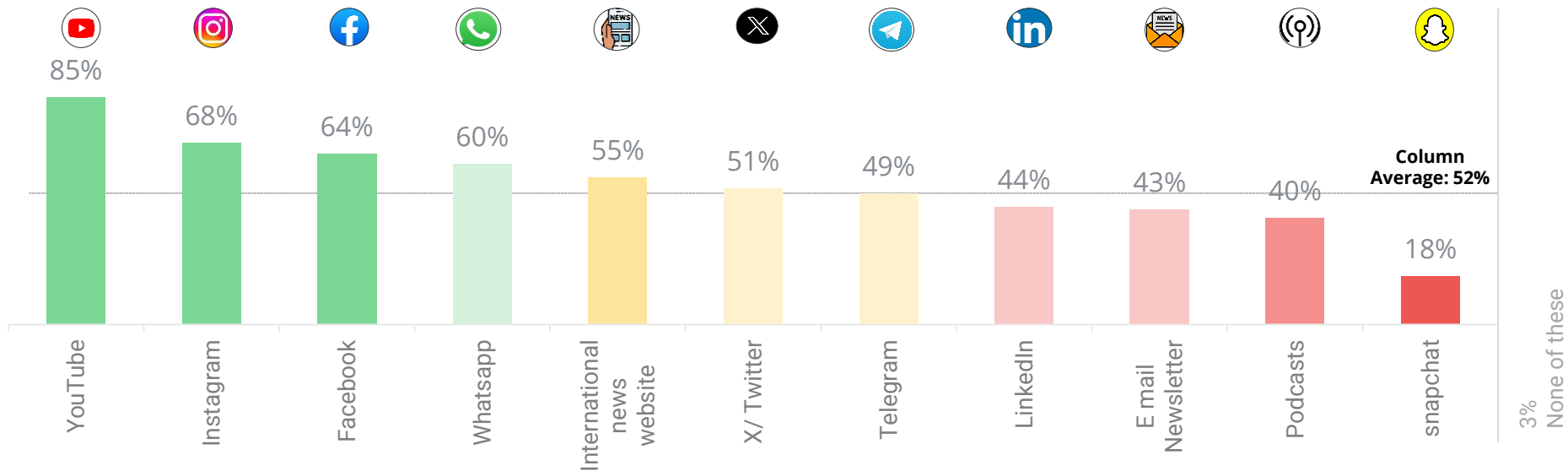
Subscribers Still See Value In Additional Sources

Interestingly, over half claimed to have visited international news websites /apps too

Qualitative nuance: These sources provide supplementary content and a wider range of perspectives, while also shaping user perceptions of what the subscribed news platform should deliver

“I started using the local Indian language version of a well-known International News Publisher because I thought the writing style would be like its English version. While it provides more variety than other Hindi news apps, the quality is not like its International English version”
Male, 35, Delhi, Hindi

Other Sources Visited In Last 3 Months For News (All%)



Go to [index](#)

Q. Other than the news website/app you're subscribed to which, if any, of the following have you used to get news in the last 3 months? (multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=300)
'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Current engagement: Text formats interacted with

On The Platform, Most Engage With Headlines, In-depth Analysis, And Explainers

It's best to offer a variety of content formats catering to diverse needs and attention spans

Text Based Content Formats Currently Engaging With (All %)

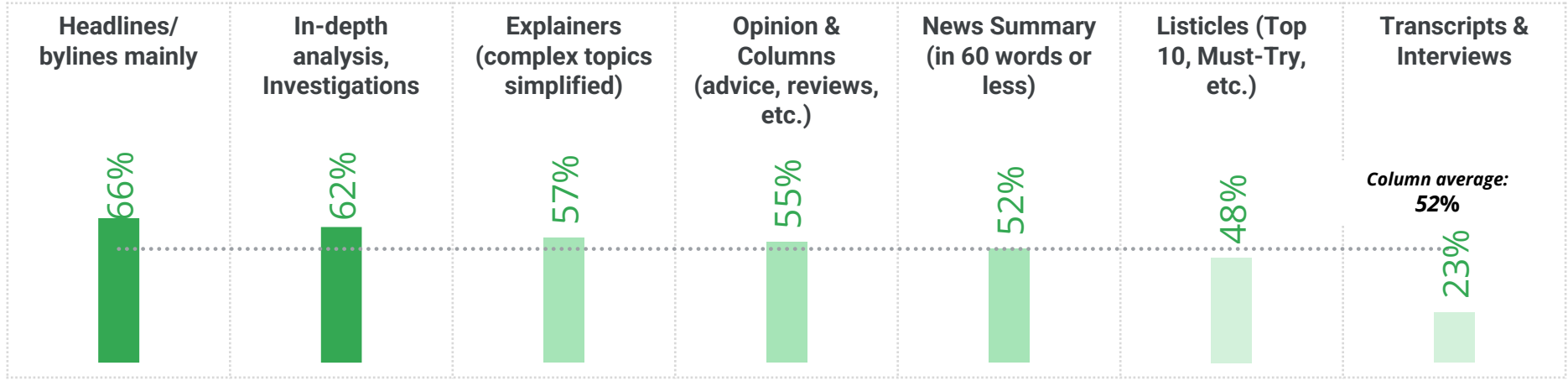
3.6

Avg. no of formats engaged with



"Give me a headline that covers everything and a picture or short video that gives me the basics. For news I care about, I want to have the option to read more detailed investigations."

Male, 45, Hyderabad



Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering what's available, which formats of text-based news content do you typically engage with the most on the website/app you're subscribed to? (multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=300)

'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Current engagement: Non text formats interacted with

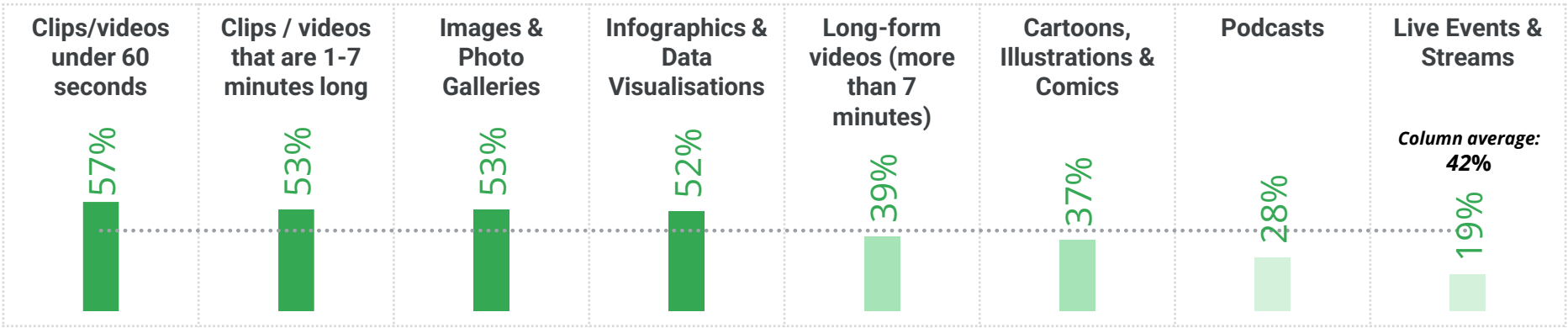
Visually, Short To Mid-form Videos, Photo Galleries Garner Most Attention

Non-text-based Content Formats Currently Engaging With (All %)

← Net: Bite Sized Videos -78% →

So what?
This combined with explainers indicates an **appetite for content that provides clarity over complexity!**

3.4
Avg. no of formats engaged with



Thought Starter:
Perhaps long-form videos can also be chaptered, with clear timestamps to jump through content?

Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering what's available, which formats of audio/visual news content do you typically engage with the most on the website/app you're subscribed to? (Multi Answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=300)
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Current engagement: How do subscribers connect with content on news app/websites?

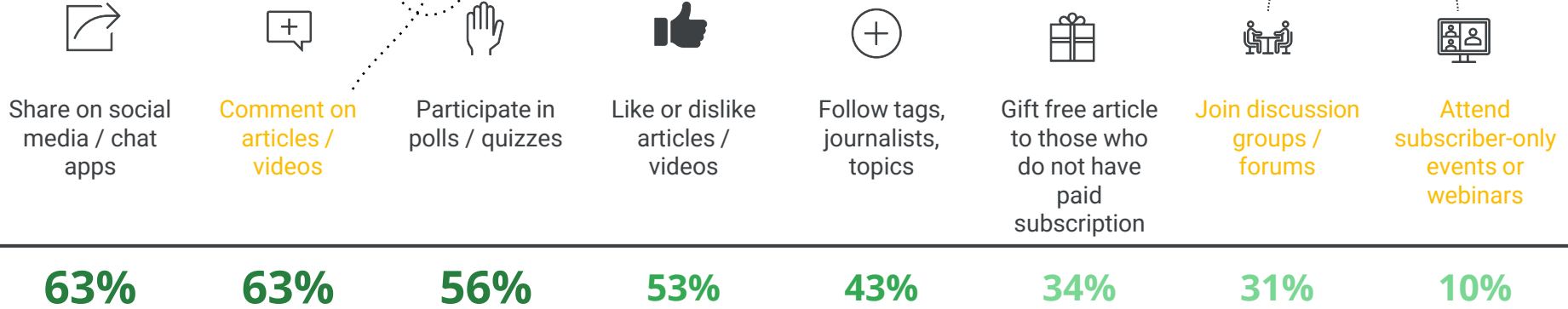
Subscribers Go Beyond Sharing And Liking, Participating Actively Through Comments And Polls

Ladder Of Participation: Actions Taken (All%)

3.5

Avg. no of actions taken

NET: Voice of Users → 79%
News apps can leverage this desire by fostering a more interactive platform



Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering what's available, which of the following actions have you taken on this website/app you're subscribed to? (Multi Answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=300)
'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

And What Optimisation Opportunities Exist?

To Up Their Engagement And Get Renewals

Offering Variety In Content Types, Formats, And Simplification Is Likely To Boost Engagement

Top 5 Content Related 'Engagement Drivers' (All%)

50%

Premium **opinion pieces and columns**

49%

Exclusive **Explainers, Analysis**

45%

News in **various formats**: text, video, audio, and interactive graphics

44%

Dedicated sections for niche /specialised content, **links in one place**

44%

Understand complex data through **interactive charts, graphs, and maps**



So what?

It seems that apart from a desire for simplification, visual appeal of the content is also important. Using high-quality thought through visuals that are informative, engaging, and accessible can enhance engagement!

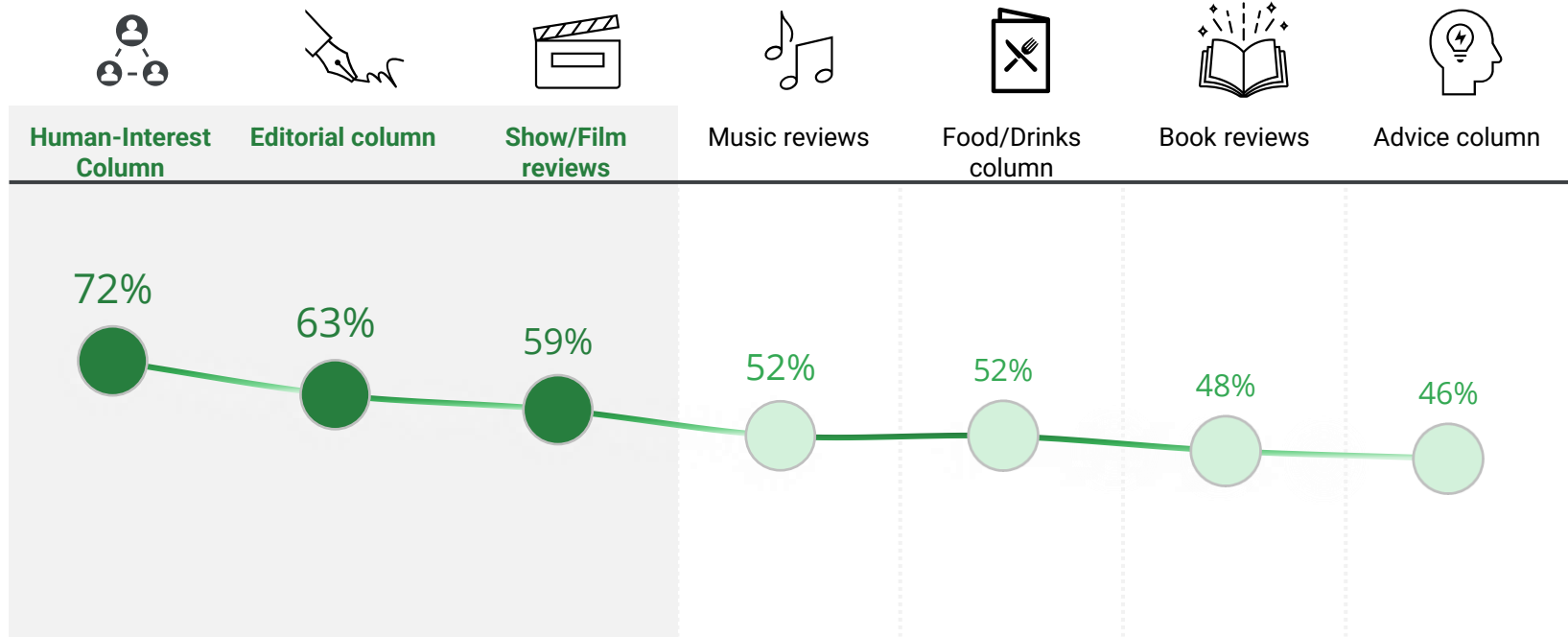
Go to [index](#)

What kind of columns have more appeal?

Don't Just Report, Connect!

Close to a third of a quarter show interest in human-interest columns, followed by editorials and film reviews

Columns Interested In (All %)



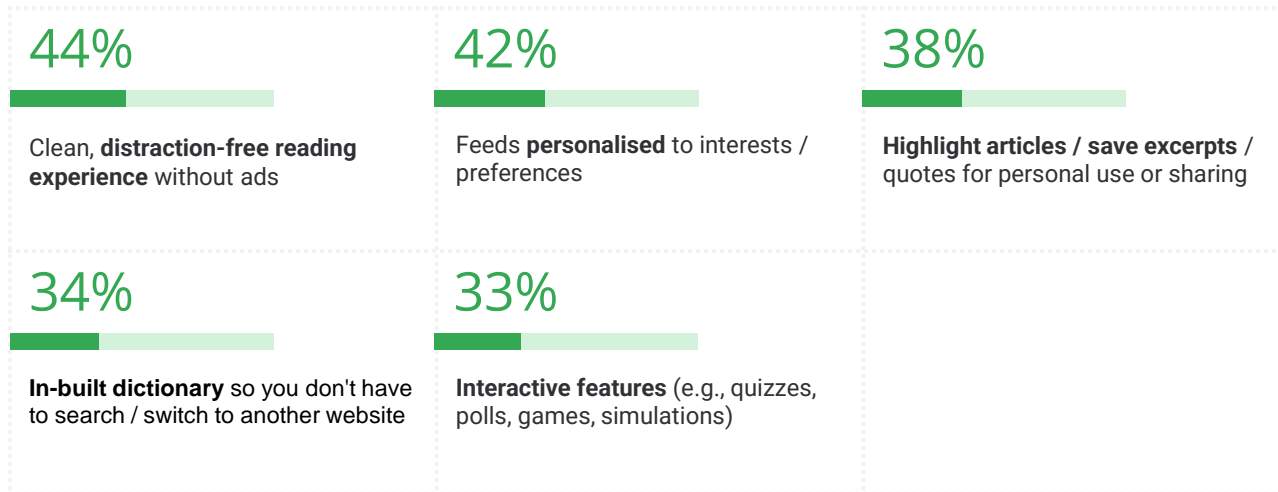
Go to [index](#)

Q. Which of the following types of opinion pieces (or thematic columns), if present, would make the news website / app more engaging for you. (Multi Answer) | Base: Respondents who subscribe to general news websites/apps (n=207)
'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

How can we boost engagement? Feature led drivers

Features Enabling A More Relevant And Immersive Experience Are Likely To Drive Up Engagement

Top 5 Features/Benefit Related 'Engagement Drivers' (All%)



So what?

It appears that users desire a more engaging experience that goes beyond simply reading articles – they're looking for ways to make content consumption their 'own' as well as crave more interactive features that can help break the monotony!



"The ads are disruptive. They don't block content, but I need to scroll a lot, even on short articles, just to get the facts. I want news that caters to my interests. I like the fact that I can save articles for later."

Female, 35, Kolkata,

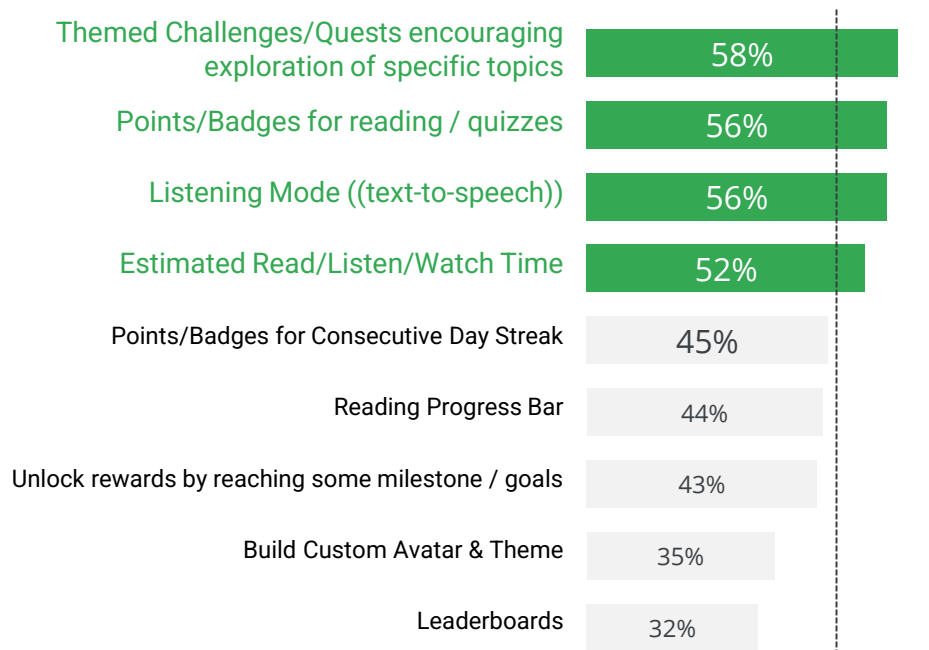
Go to [index](#)

Google | KANTAR 36

What kind of gamification elements have more appeal?

Themed Challenges, Points & Badges, Listening Mode, And Estimated Reading Or Listening Times Have High Appeal

Gamification Elements – User Appeal (All%)



Column average: 47%











"Sometimes I work from home, and I have to drop my kids off at school. I listen to the news through the 'read aloud' feature then. Otherwise, I would miss news on those days."
Male, 45, Bangalore

Go to [index](#)

In terms of promotion, subscribers seek lasting solutions, not fleeting fixes

Bundles, Build-Your-Own Plans, or Just Essentials - top promotional levers for retention

Subscription Retention Marketing Motivators -Top 2 (All%)

<p>41%</p> <p>Bundles (e.g., access to music, video, news & more in a single subscription)</p> 	<p>34%</p> <p>Build your own plan with a low base fee and add-ons for desired content / feature</p> 	<p>33%</p> <p>Budget friendly Plans: Plans with essential features, lower price</p> 	<p>23%</p> <p>Price discount for renewal</p> 
<p>21%</p> <p>Free gifts / merchandise with purchase</p> 	<p>17%</p> <p>Extended free trial periods</p> 	<p>16%</p> <p>Ability to pause subscription</p> 	<p>16%</p> <p>Shared account / family plan</p> 

“Give me access to video or music streaming platforms as well. I want more than just this. Even shops give you vouchers for loyalty!”
Female, 45, Mumbai

Summary Of Insights

Subscription Journey

- Subscribers are primarily motivated by content. But life events also play significant role (e.g., personal brushes with misinformation, finances, career start and progression)
- Users discover subscriptions through searches, social media, and via the platform itself (notifications, buttons, pop-ups)
- One noteworthy finding is that 1 in 2 subscribers claimed to have researched introductory offers
- Privacy worries, limited previews, and confusing tiers makes choice-making difficult
- Clear value propositions beyond brand name are crucial
- Subscriptions are driven by different pricing (tiered plans, free trials) content (meaty headlines, originality and variety) and feature (personalisation, improved search functionality, offline reading capabilities) requirements

So What?

- Develop targeted marketing campaigns around key life events
- Make subscriptions easy to find on search, social and on the platform (via prominent homepage buttons, strategically timed notifications)
- Clearly explain the benefits and limitations of each subscription tier. Use simple language and avoid technical jargon
- Offer free content samples that showcase your strengths / short duration trials to give users a taste of what they'd get with a subscription
- Varied introductory options such as different trial durations (e.g., weekly, monthly), price discounts can attract diverse users. During the introductory period, deliver targeted messages highlighting the ongoing value of subscribing past the initial offer
- A well organised, search bar enabled website / app is important. Allowing users to reference past searches, making archives searchable by date and topic may also be worth looking into!

Summary Of Insights

Engagement Levers

- Variety is the name of the game! Subscribers interact with text headlines, analysis & explainers, but also enjoy short videos, photo galleries, and data visualisations
- They're not just passive readers - many actively engage through comments and polls
- Features enabling a more interactive experience are likely to drive up engagement (e.g., dictionary, ability to highlight content)
- Subscribers also love the idea of themed challenges, points & badges, and estimated reading/listening times
- In terms of renewal promotions, promotions that offer lasting benefits resonate more strongly (Bundles, Build-Your-Own Plans, or Just Essentials)

So What?

- Develop explainers as a key content pillar. This could involve dedicated explainer sections, explainer video series, or explainer pop-ups that accompany complex topics
- For brands that can leverage it – visual storytelling, infographics that effectively represent complex information can be a differentiating factor!
- Develop content formats that encourage active participation, such as live polls, reader Q&A sessions. Inviting comments yields double benefits: gauging audience sentiment to inform content and generating reader-driven spin-off content
- Depending on brand size and capabilities, experiment with bundles (across properties or partner with other brands relevant to users)
- Allow subscribers to customise their subscription by selecting the specific features or content they want access to

A glass filled with coins and a small plant growing out of it, symbolizing growth and revenue.

Unlocking Revenue Opportunities Among Current Free Users

What Role Does News Play In Free Users' Lives?

Although news is a part of everyday routine,

Free Users Have A 'Less Is More' Approach To News Consumption



Paid users of other online content

seeks *width of perspectives*



ROLE IN THEIR LIVES

Come across as **well-informed** | Meet **diverse information needs**



REASONS FOR CONSUMING NEWS

Be in the know - Stay updated, and **relevant** |
Be part of conversations, make **informed decisions**



REASONS TO GRADUATE TO DIGITAL NEWS

Prize convenience, accessibility |
Ability to filter news basis **genres and interest**



*"News enhances our quality of life. It gives me a standpoint in society. People know that I will be able to talk about things happening in the world or my country. If I'm unable to participate in discussions, others will feel negatively about me."
Female, 46, Kolkata, Bengali*



Free users of other online content

are on the lookout for *breaking news*

Keep up with **major headlines** | Avoid feeling left out

Helps avoid **uncertainty** - Gives them **simple binaries** of right and wrong | Tells them **how to feel** about current affairs

Prize convenience, accessibility |
Ability to **select or deselect news** based on **importance**



*"If something important happens, I want to know. That could be politics, or business, or entertainment, or anything about the military. I want to at least know that something has happened. I don't want to wait till the next day."
Male, 38, Coimbatore, Tamil*

Go to [index](#)



Why Won't Users Pay?

Understanding The Barriers To Paid Online News

Hurdles To Paying For News Online, Roughly Fall Into 4 Broad Categories:



Price & Value



Need & offering mismatch



Frictions during sign up / trial



Content need & trust

Limited budget

Unaware of paid options

No free trial / Free trial too short

Don't trust any news source

Unsure if worth the price

Local news apps I'm in to do not offer subscriptions

Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices

Unsure of most reliable news apps

News pricier than other subscriptions

Cannot pick and pay for what I want

Complicated signup process

Free content is enough to meet my needs

Complexity of managing multiple subscriptions

Lack of flexible payment / cancellation options

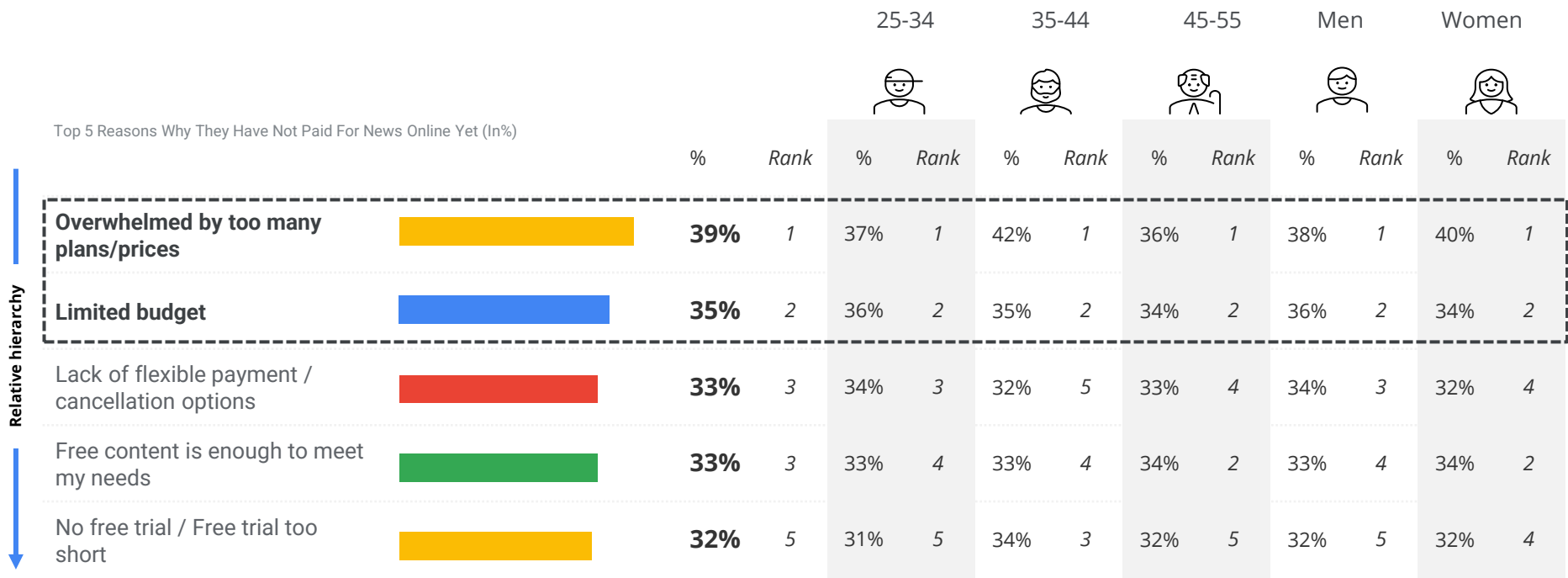
Inadequate access to premium content samples

Subscription limits exploration

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Choice Overload And Tight Budgets Are Top Deterrents Across Gender And Age Cohorts



Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

WHY NOT: Reasons for not paying for news online yet

...Broadly True For English, Hindi, Bengali, And Gujarati Users As Well

Free trial gap and inflexible payment / cancellation hassles add to hesitancy. Contentment with freely available news – a challenge among Marathi users

Top 5 Reasons Why They Have Not Paid For News Online Yet (In%)

	Welcome English	स्वागत Hindi	স্বাগত Bengali	स्वागत आहे Marathi	સ્વાગત છે Gujarati
Relative hierarchy ↓	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices 35%	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices 49%	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices 48%	Free content is enough to meet my needs 58%	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices 42%
	Lack of flexible payment / cancellation options 33%	Limited budget 46%	Limited budget 40%	Lack of flexible payment / cancellation options 38%	Limited budget 38%
	Limited budget 32%	Lack of flexible payment / cancellation options 42%	Complexity of managing multiple subscriptions 33%	No free trial / Free trial too short 34%	No free trial / Free trial too short 35%
	No free trial / Free trial too short 29%	No free trial / Free trial too short 39%	Free content is enough to meet my needs 29%	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices 33%	Local news apps I'm in to do not offer subscriptions 32%
	Complexity of managing multiple subscriptions 28%	Complexity of managing multiple subscriptions 39%	No free trial / Free trial too short 29%	Limited budget 31%	Don't trust any news source 31%
	Unsure if worth the price 28%	Free content is enough to meet my needs 39%			

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. What are the reasons you do not currently pay for news online? (Multi-answer) | Base by language users (between 150-300)
 Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

However, There Are Also Distinctions To Be Made...

Kannada users are more likely to be discouraged by trial related frictions, Tamil user by mismatch between need vs. offer, and Malayalam users are held back by media skepticism

Top 5 Reasons Why They Have Not Paid For News Online Yet (In%)

	ಕನ್ನಡ Kannada	ತೆಲುಗು Telugu	ವರದೇವರು Tamil	ಮಲಯಾಳಂ Malayalam			
Unsure if worth the price	41%	Limited budget	40%	Lack of flexible payment / cancellation options	49%	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices	51%
Complexity of managing multiple subscriptions	36%	No free trial / Free trial too short	37%	Unsure of most reliable news apps	40%	Don't trust any news source	48%
No free trial / Free trial too short	35%	Free content is enough to meet my needs	35%	Local news apps I'm in to do not offer subscriptions	34%	Unsure of most reliable news apps	35%
Subscription limits exploration	33%	Unsure if worth the price	29%	Overwhelmed by too many plans/prices	33%	Limited budget	28%
Complicated signup process	31%	Lack of flexible payment / cancellation options	26%	Limited budget	32%	Local news apps I'm in to do not offer subscriptions	26%
Inadequate access to premium content samples							

Relative hierarchy ↓

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Q. What are the reasons you do not currently pay for news online? (Multi-answer) | Base by language users (between 150-300) | Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Overall, Sitting Underneath The Inertia Is An Unclear Value Proposition



Unaware of value-added benefits – feature led, or content led



Inadequate understanding of how their experience will change post-payment

No exposure to the 'higher quality' or 'exclusive' coverage they are being asked to pay for



Unclear billing cycles, most local language website / app users believe they have to pay for longer durations

Cancellation conditions not stated upfront



Lack of clarity around the benefits makes it come across as a frivolous expense rather than a necessity



"There should be a free trial so we could learn about the plan benefits."

Male, 35, Hyderabad, Telegu

"I don't have a subscription is because I wasn't aware of it. Now that I have got this information, I will share it with my friends and my relatives too about the benefits we get. They will also consider it. OTT platforms are always being marketed, but news platforms don't market themselves like that."

Male, 27, Mumbai, Hindi

"Remembering to subscribe to news is an additional task for me. I have to remember every time on the payment that I have to do."

Female, 25-34, Mumbai, English,

"We feel why should I pay money for the same content. I am not sure what exclusivity I will get, didn't understand the benefit of it."

Male, 29, Bangalore, English,

Further, Worsened By Lack Of Call To Action And Roundabout Process

...cited even more strongly by users of Indic language publications

01 The call to subscribe is often faint: many cited having a hard time spotting **Subscribe Buttons** on the website/app

02 Some spoke about having to subscribe by way of English subscription, forcing consumers to pay more to access Indic language publications, leaving them frustrated

03 UX/UI is difficult to navigate for the Indic language publications which results in loss of interest to subscribe



"I wanted to subscribe to the local language version of this well-known publisher, however, I could take subscription only as an add-on to their primary English publication. To me this was an additional expense as I am more inclined to read news in Marathi. I didn't need the English version."

Male, 45, Nagpur, Marathi

"When I entered the app, they asked for my detailed information, but nothing about subscriptions or payments, so I thought maybe they do not have any process for subscription."

Male, 53, Delhi, Hindi

What Monetisation Opportunities Do We Have?

Exploring User Acceptance Across Various Revenue Models

How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Reference: List Of Reader Revenue Models

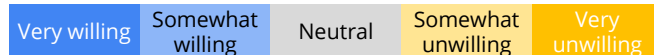
1	2	3	4
<p>Pay per content</p> <p>Pay a one-time fee to unlock just the article/podcast/ explainer you want to see right now (micro transaction)</p>	<p>Mini Pass</p> <p>Get a temporary pass (daily or weekly) for a fixed price to access the content you're interested in (micro transaction)</p>	<p>Subscription</p> <p>Pay a fixed, regular fee for unlimited access to all premium articles, podcasts, explainers, and features</p>	<p>Watch ad to unlock content</p> <p>Watch a few seconds ad to unlock a single article / a podcast episode / video explainer you want to see right now (ad supported model)</p>
4	6	7	
<p>Register</p> <p>Register with your name, phone number, and email to access some premium content (First party data - ad supported model)</p>	<p>Newsletter sign-up</p> <p>Sign up to receive free newsletters in your inbox (First party data - ad supported model)</p>	<p>Take a survey</p> <p>Take a survey about your interests, preferences, hobbies to unlock premium content (First party data - ad supported model)</p>	

Go to [index](#)

Relatively Higher Acceptance To Sharing First Party Data, Ad-based Content Unlocking And Subscription

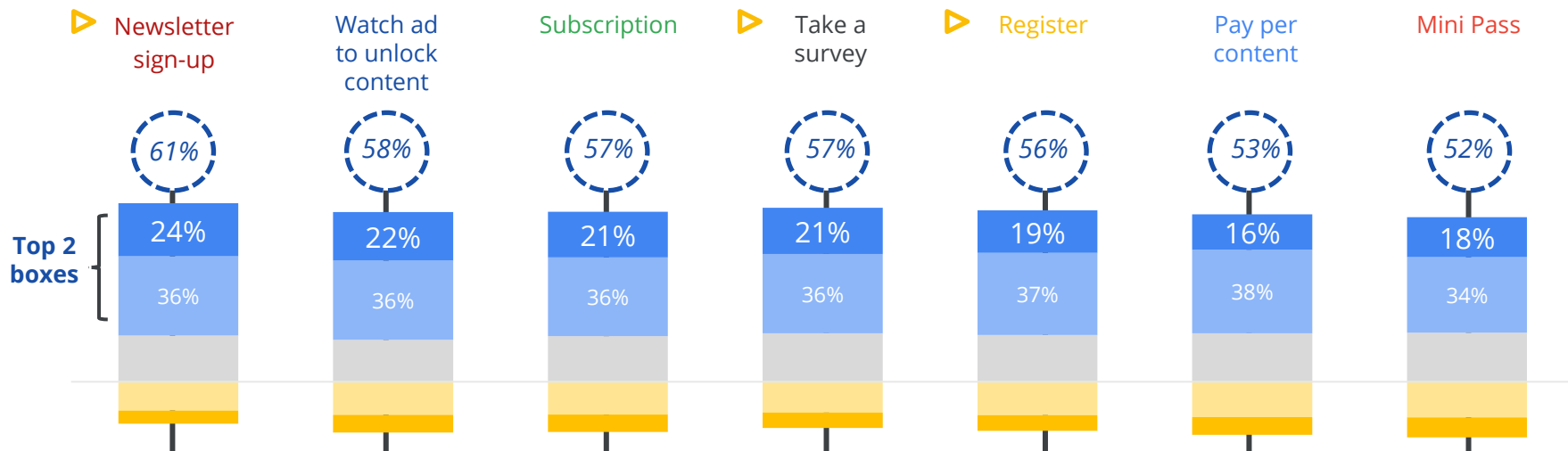
▶ NET: First Party Data

- › Top box: 42%
- › Top 2 boxes: 79%



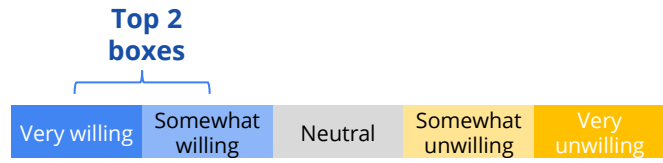
All India aggregate

Relative hierarchy based on top 2 boxes →



How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Predictably, Those Who Already Pay For Online Content Show A More Positive Intent Towards All Models, On Average



Column average of:

Very willing % across models

Very willing + Somewhat willing (Top 2 Boxes) % across models

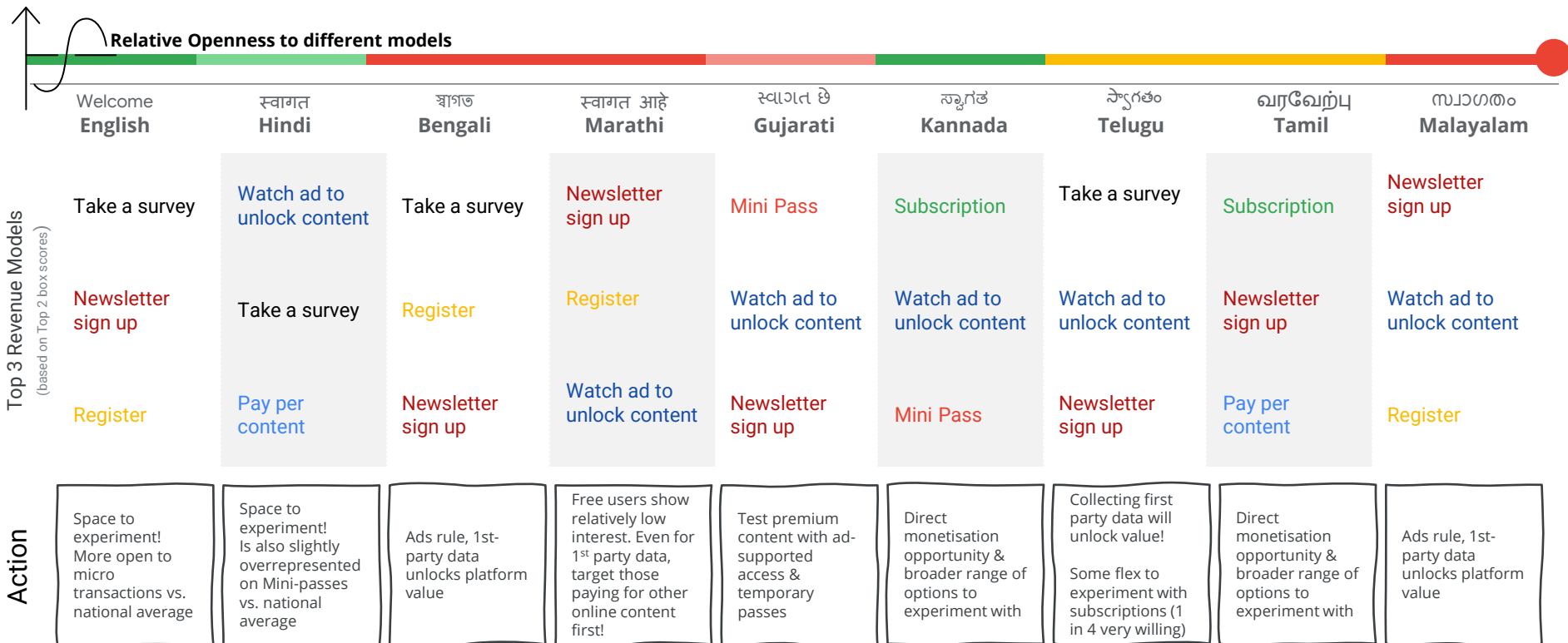
	Welcome English		स्वागत Hindi		স্বাগত Bengali		स्वागत आहे Marathi		வரவேற்பு Tamil	
	Free user of other online content	Paid user of other online content	Free user of other online content	Paid user of other online content	Free user of other online content	Paid user of other online content	Free user of other online content	Paid user of other online content	Free user of other online content	Paid user of other online content
Very willing % across models	22%	29%	17%	24%	15%	22%	11%	18%	14%	21%
Very willing + Somewhat willing (Top 2 Boxes) % across models	57%	70%	56%	62%	46%	53%	50%	57%	46%	60%

Go to [index](#)

Q. How willing are you to? (5-pt. scale, single answer per model) | Base for Free users is between 140-145 and for Paid users is between 150-155
 'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Even So, There Are Some Clear Regional (Or Language-Led) Distinctions



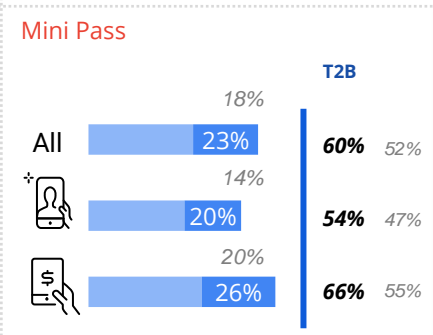
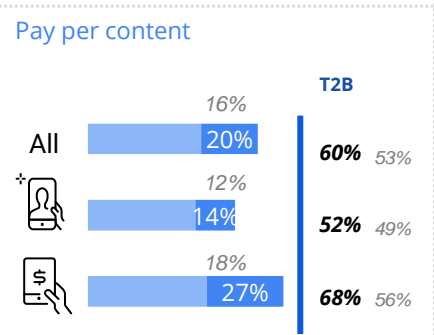
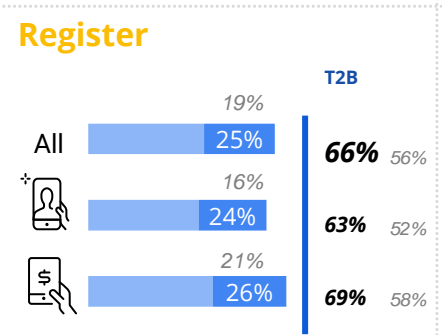
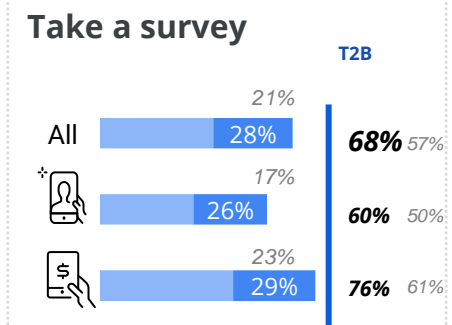
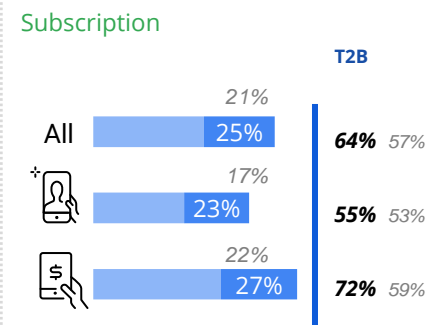
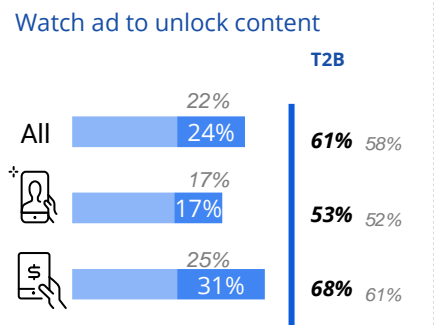
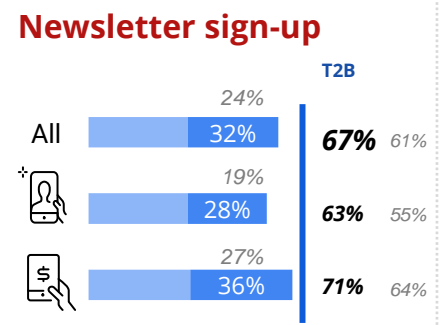
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How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

English Users Prefer Surveys, Newsletter Sign-ups, And Registration

All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed

Top 2 boxes (T2B)
 ■ Somewhat willing ■ Very willing



Overall, the data indicates that English users are relatively more amenable across all models.

With ~6 in 10 open to mini-pass & paying per content national average of ~5 in 10, there is **opportunity for small scale experiments on micro-transactions as well!**

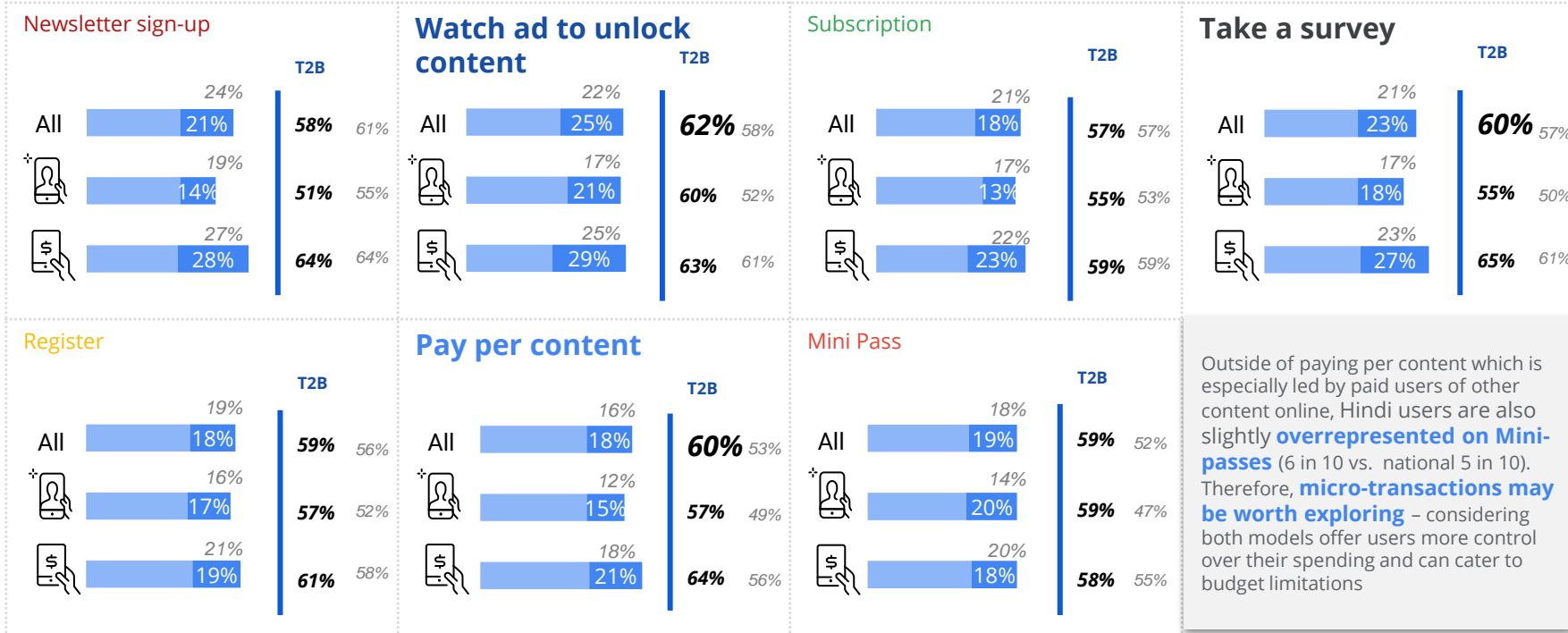
Go to [index](#)

Q. How willing are you to? (5-pt. scale, single answer per model) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base per language for Free users is between 140-145 and for Paid users is between 150-155. 'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Hindi Users Find Watching Ads For Instant Access, Taking A Survey, And Paying Per Content Most Acceptable

Top 2 boxes (T2B)
 ■ Somewhat willing ■ Very willing

All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed



Outside of paying per content which is especially led by paid users of other content online, Hindi users are also slightly **overrepresented on Mini-passes** (6 in 10 vs. national 5 in 10). Therefore, **micro-transactions may be worth exploring** – considering both models offer users more control over their spending and can cater to budget limitations

Go to [index](#)

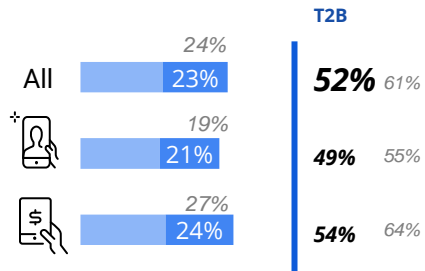
How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Bengali Users Biased To Surveys, Registration, And Newsletter Sign-ups

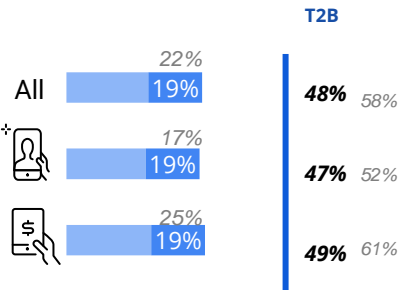
Top 2 boxes (T2B)
 ■ Somewhat willing ■ Very willing

All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed

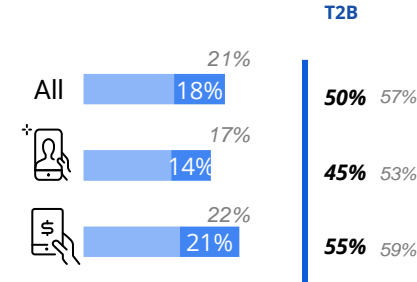
Newsletter sign-up



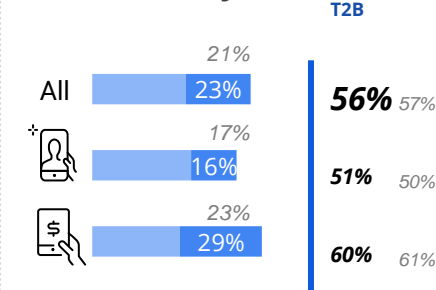
Watch ad to unlock content



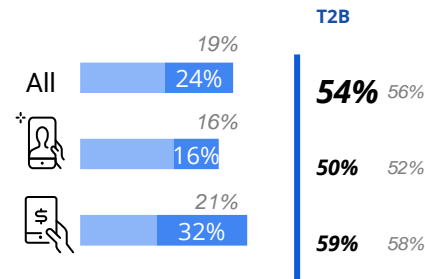
Subscription



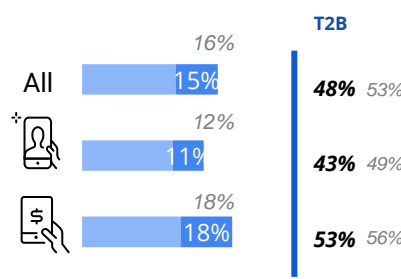
Take a survey



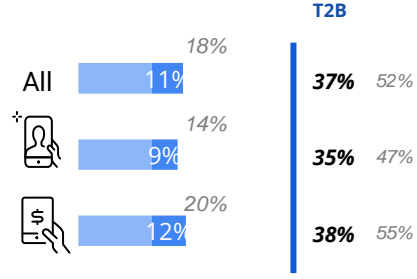
Register



Pay per content



Mini Pass



Overall, the data indicates that **Bengali users are relatively underrepresented** across most models.

While they show **lower receptivity to paid models**, their openness to opt-in marketing offers opportunities for targeted ads.

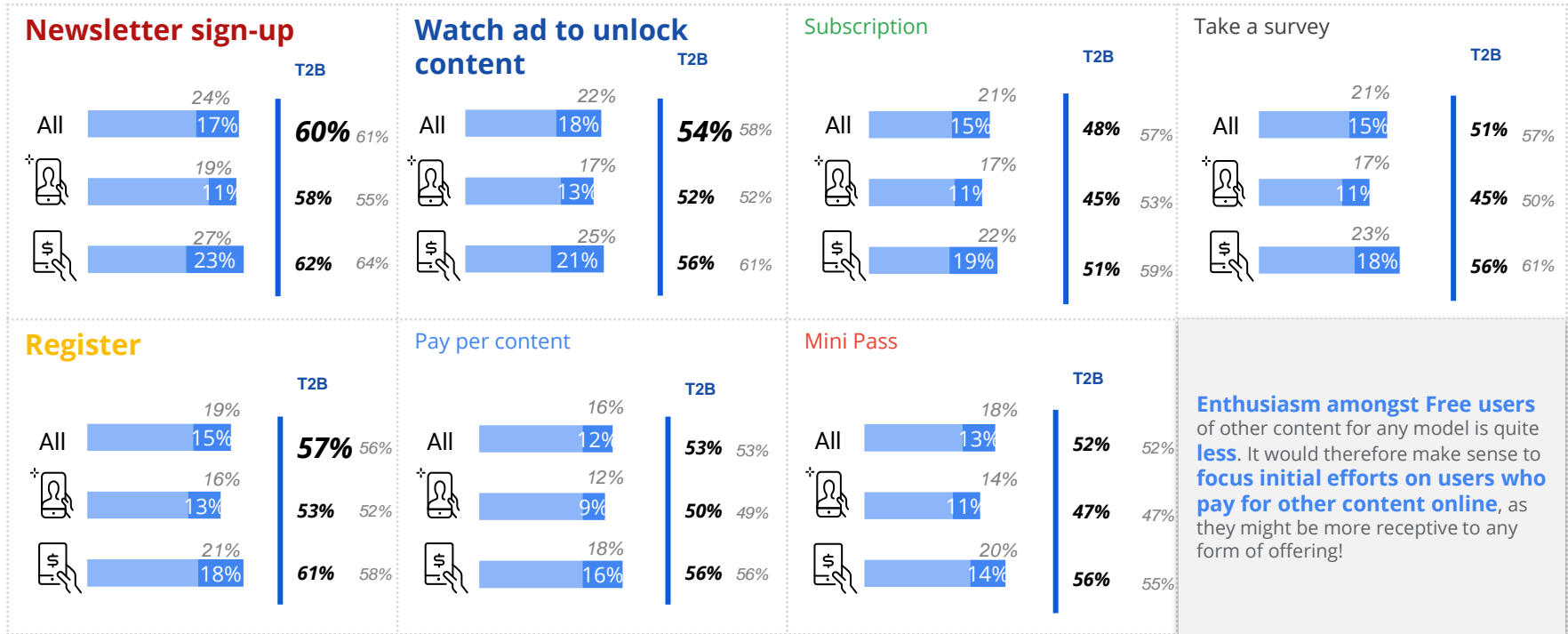
Go to [index](#)

How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Marathi Users More Open To Newsletters, Registration, And Watching An Ad For Instant Access

All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed

Top 2 boxes (T2B)
 ■ Somewhat willing ■ Very willing



Enthusiasm amongst Free users of other content for any model is quite **less**. It would therefore make sense to **focus initial efforts on users who pay for other content online**, as they might be more receptive to any form of offering!

Go to [index](#)

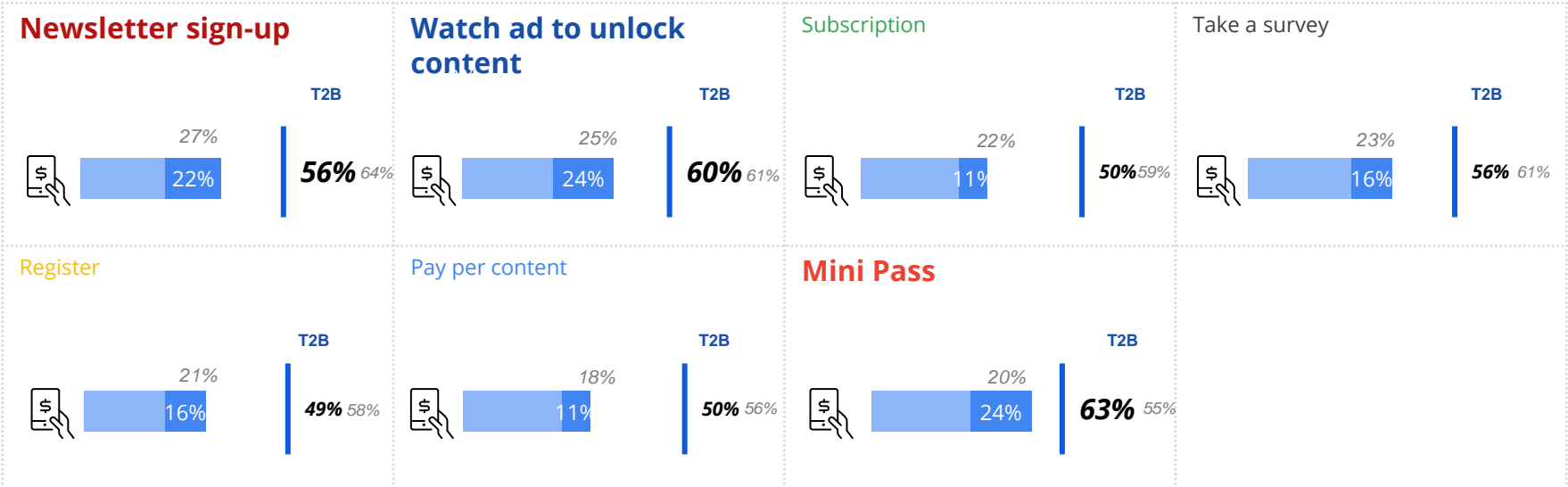
How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Gujarati Users Prefer Mini-pass, Ad Led Access, And Newsletters

Ads and temporary passes can be a low-risk approach to gauge user interest in freemium models



All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed

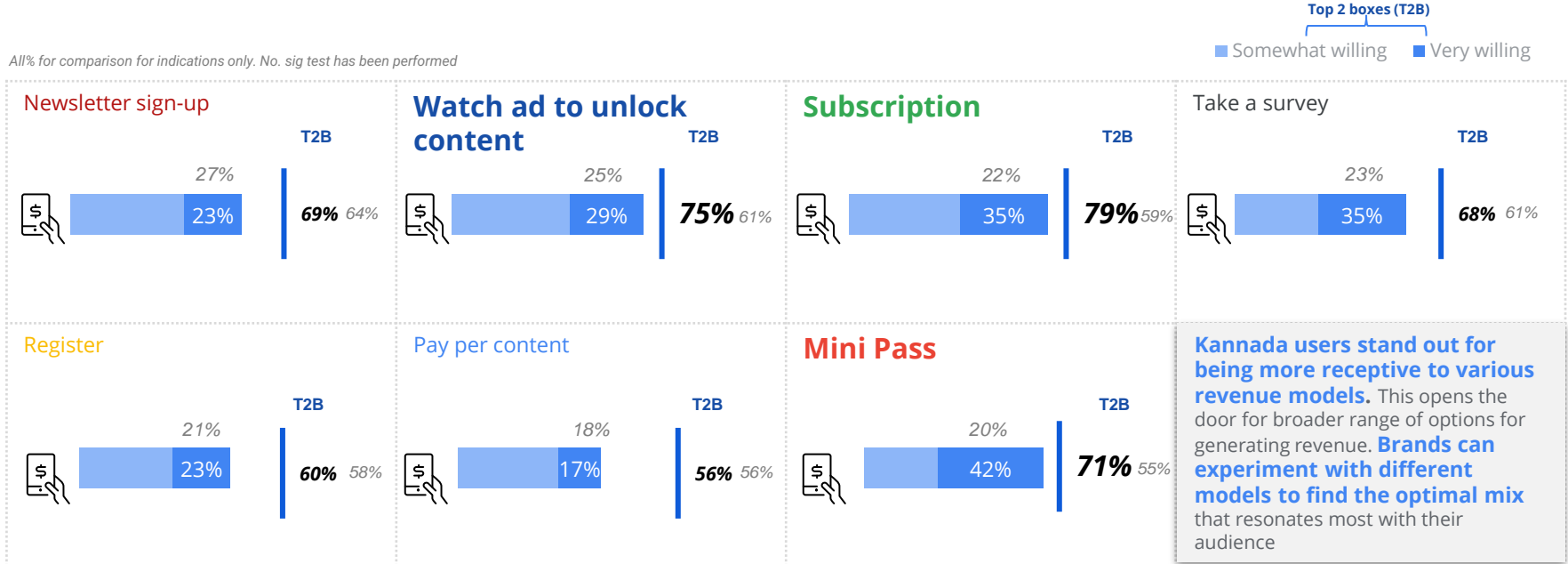


Go to [index](#)

Q. How willing are you to? (5-pt. scale, single answer per model) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base for Paid users per language is between 150-155
 *Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Kannada Users Inclined To Subscription, Watching Ads To Unlock Content, And Mini-pass – Providing Direct Monetisation Opportunities



Go to [index](#)

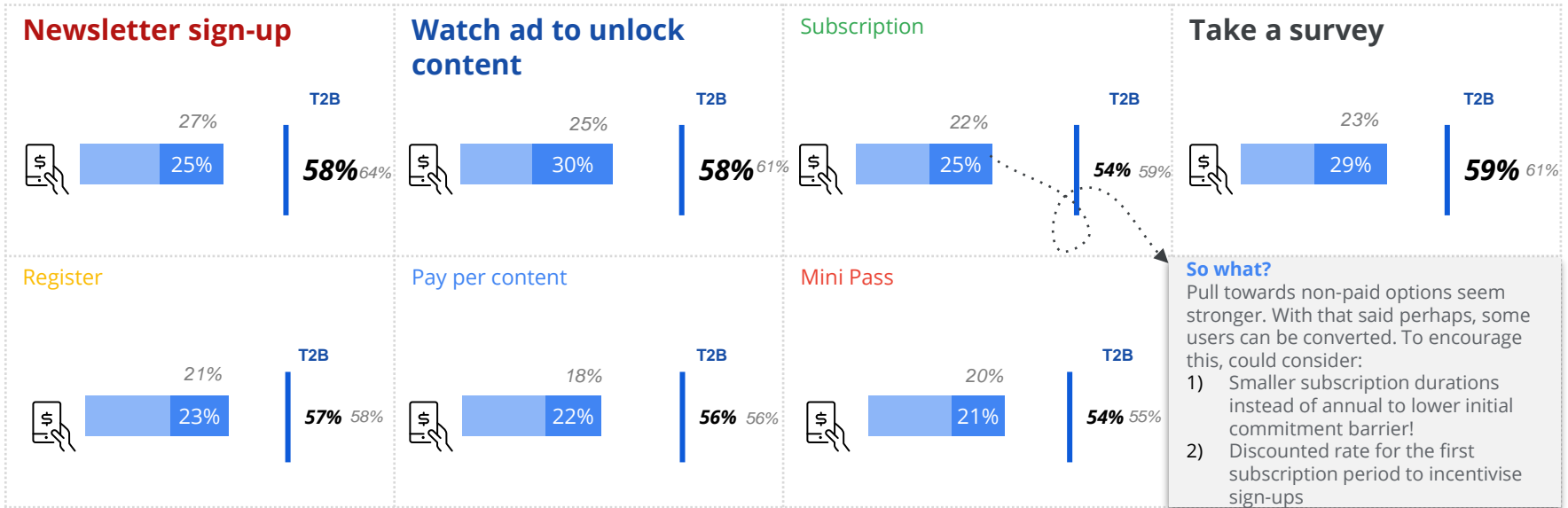
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How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

While Telugu Users' Preferences Are Evenly Split Across Options, They Show A Stronger Inclination To Surveys, Ad-led Access, And Newsletters



All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed



Go to [index](#)

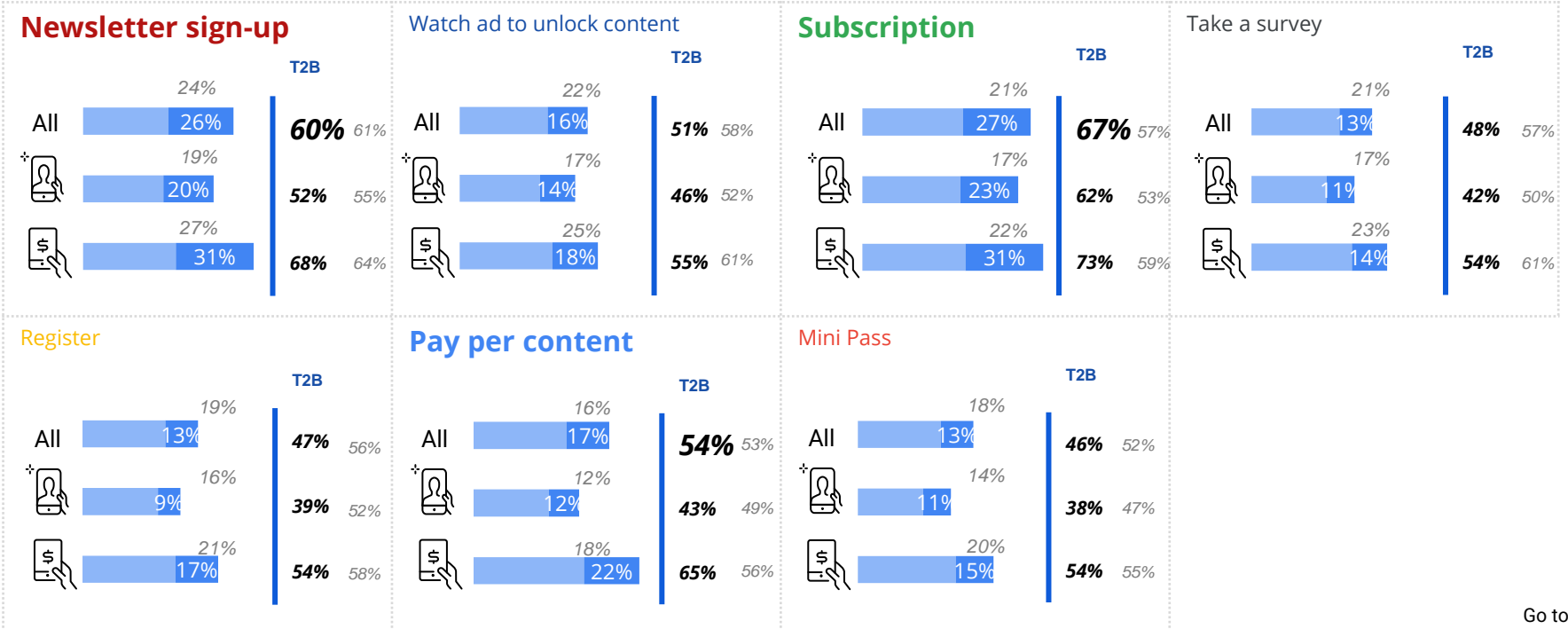
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How do different revenue models compare in terms of user acceptance?

Tamil Users Show Interest In Subscriptions, Newsletter, And Pay-per-content, Indicating Greater Potential For Monetisation

All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed

Top 2 boxes (T2B)
 ■ Somewhat willing ■ Very willing



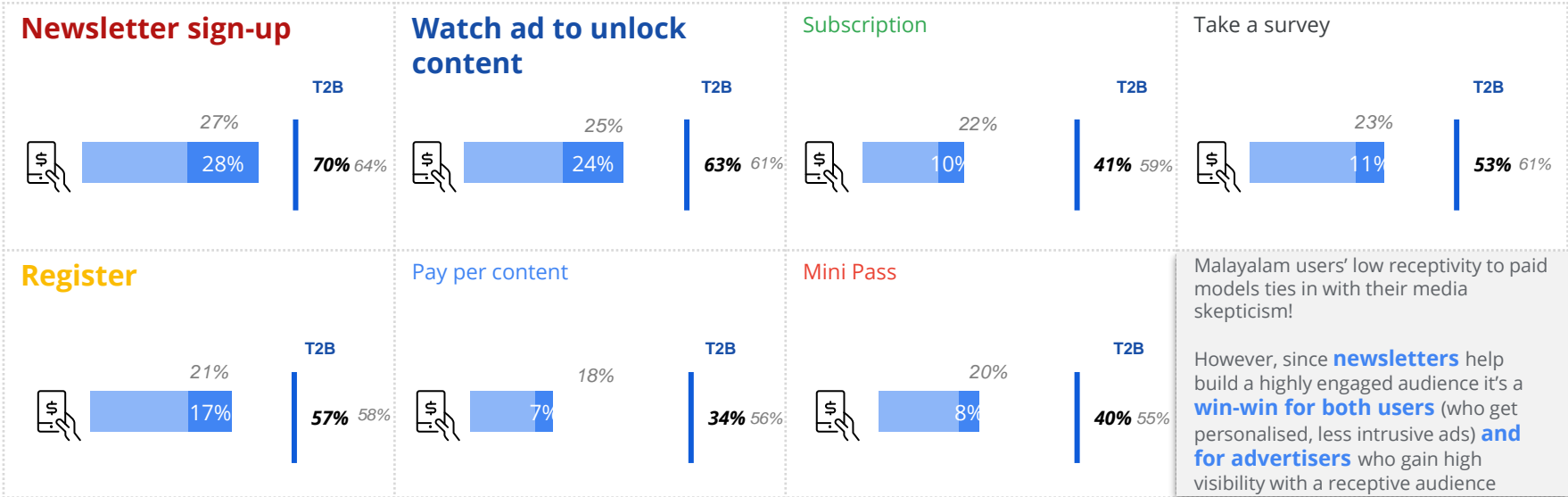
Go to [index](#)

Q. How willing are you to? (5-pt. scale, single answer per model) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base per language for Free users is between 140-145 and for Paid users is between 150-155. 'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Newsletters Are The Clear Preference For Malayalam Users, Followed By Ads For Instant Access And Then Registration

Top 2 boxes (T2B)
 ■ Somewhat willing ■ Very willing

All% for comparison for indications only. No. sig test has been performed



Malayalam users' low receptivity to paid models ties in with their media skepticism!

However, since **newsletters** help build a highly engaged audience it's a **win-win for both users** (who get personalised, less intrusive ads) **and for advertisers** who gain high visibility with a receptive audience

Who's More Likely To Subscribe?

Decoding User Profile

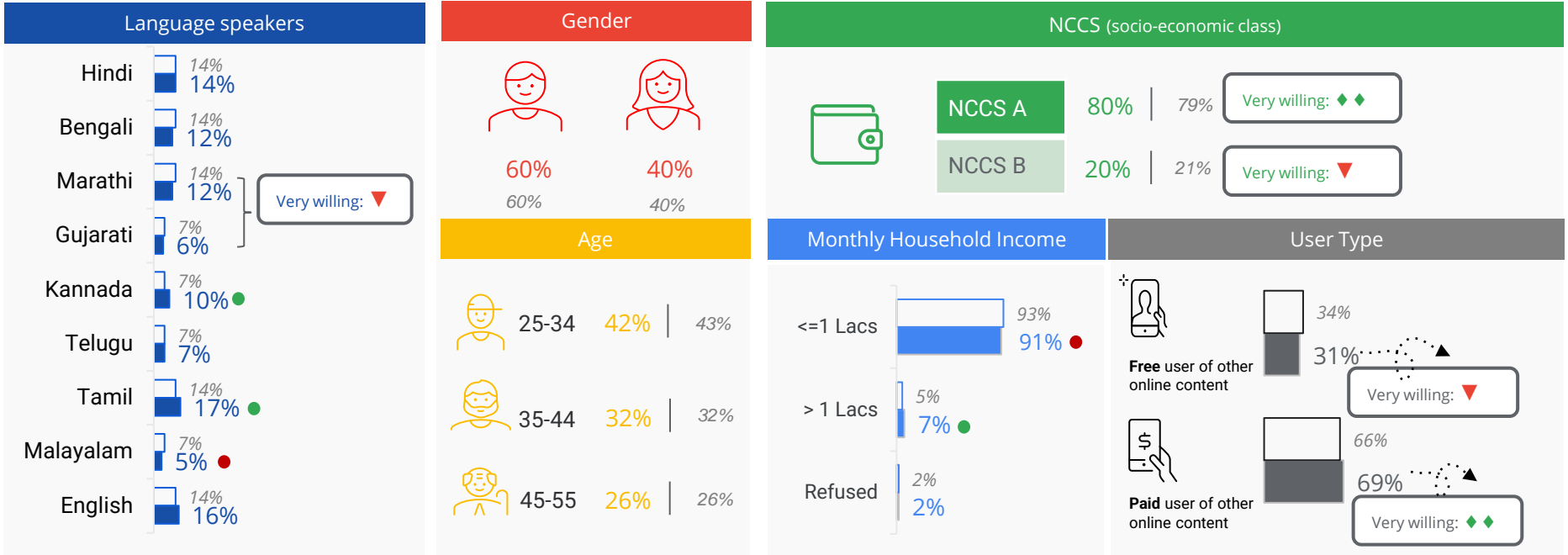
Kannada And Tamil Users Are More Likely To Subscribe

Preference is stronger amongst higher income users and those already paying for content online

Those somewhat OR very willing to pay for **Subscription**

Demographics (vs. All India)

Top 2 Box **Subscription**
All India %



Top 2 Box- Very Willing & Somewhat willing to pay for Subscription Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

● Significantly > vs. all (95% confidence level)
● Significantly < vs. all (95% confidence level)






What Could Drive Users To Pay For News Online?

Understanding Their Primary Motivations

Solutions That Offer Convenience, Eliminate Ads, Save Time – Possible User Magnets

Encouragingly, over half also value supporting quality journalism

Reasons That Would Motivate Them To Pay For News Online (In%)

		Convenience <i>(e.g., Breaking news alerts, offline access, device sync)</i>	Ad-free environment	Saves time / money <i>(e.g., reliable, up-to-date news in one place)</i>	Fund good journalism	Discover interesting things <i>(e.g., non-news content, interactive quizzes)</i>	Flexible payment & cancellation conditions	Have more control over my use <i>(e.g., adjust interface)</i>	Access to exclusive or distinct content	Introductory or loyalty offers	Curation <i>(e.g., personalised content, filter unwanted content)</i>
All		59%	59%	58%	48%	47%	46%	34%	33%	33%	32%
25-34		57%	58%	58%	47%	46%	46%	35%	32%	33%	31%
35-44		61%	63%	58%	51%	48%	45%	33%	33%	34%	33%
45-55		58%	55%	57%	48%	48%	46%	35%	34%	33%	34%
Men		60%	59%	57%	49%	47%	46%	35%	35%	34%	32%
Women		56%	59%	58%	48%	47%	45%	32%	31%	33%	33%

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Solutions That Offer Convenience, Eliminate Ads, Save Time – Possible User Magnets



Convenience



Ad-free environment



Saves time



"I always have my phone on me, which means the apps are there whenever I need them. I get small news updates and video clips throughout the day – no matter where I am. I don't need to wait till the next day to get major headlines. Notifications about breaking news keep me up-to-date!"
Male, 48, Asansol, Bengali

"If I'm paying for a service, there should not be ads in it. Honestly, ads break my concentration when I'm trying to read something. Right now, the app does not have too many ads, but I would happily pay a nominal fee to remove the few I get."
Male, 46, Bareilly, Hindi

"I do think that while news is abundant and free, it is sometimes overwhelming given there is so much clickbait, and sensational headlines. If paying for a news app means, I can rest assured that it's quality content and get all that I need in one place including diverse perspectives, I'd probably be okay to pay a small fee."
Male, 46, Bareilly, Hindi

..And This Holds Across English, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati Users

Marathi users, in contrast, seem more motivated by discovering interesting things, funding quality journalism

Reasons That Would Motivate Them To Pay For News Online (In%)

	Welcome English		स्वागत Hindi		স্বাগত Bengali		स्वागत आहे Marathi		સ્વાગત છે Gujarati	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Convenience	56%	2	66%	2	50%	2	61%	1	56%	3
Ad-free environment	55%	3	63%	3	67%	1	38%	6	71%	1
Saves time / money	58%	1	70%	1	50%	2	55%	4	63%	2
Fund good journalism	47%	5	49%	5	49%	4	56%	3	35%	8
Discover interesting things	44%	6	49%	5	35%	7	58%	2	47%	4
Flexible payment & cancellation conditions	50%	4	55%	4	45%	5	36%	7	42%	5
Have more control over my use	40%	7	39%	8	35%	7	27%	8	36%	7
Access to exclusive or distinct content	35%	8	31%	10	23%	10	40%	5	27%	10
Introductory or loyalty offers	35%	8	34%	9	34%	9	21%	10	39%	6
Curation	34%	10	41%	7	36%	6	26%	9	31%	9

Go to [index](#)

Statements have been shortened for reporting

WHY: Motivations for paying for news online

Kannada, Tamil, And Malayalam Users Seem Broadly In Sync With National Trend

However, Telugu users stand out for valuing unique and interesting content

Reasons That Would Motivate Them To Pay For News Online (In%)

	ಸ್ವಾಗತ Kannada		స్వాగతం Telugu		வரவேற்பு Tamil		സ്വാഗതം Malayalam	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Convenience	58%	3	65%	1	55%	3	62%	1
Ad-free environment	63%	1	42%	7	77%	1	52%	3
Saves time / money	62%	2	47%	5	61%	2	47%	4
Fund good journalism	50%	5	48%	4	51%	5	42%	5
Discover interesting things	47%	6	56%	3	41%	6	54%	2
Flexible payment & cancellation conditions	44%	7	41%	8	52%	4	40%	6
Have more control over my use	44%	7	38%	9	30%	8	18%	10
Access to exclusive or distinct content	52%	4	57%	2	23%	10	21%	8
Introductory or loyalty offers	43%	9	44%	6	37%	7	19%	9
Curation	34%	10	31%	10	28%	9	32%	7

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Q. You are familiar with and use free news websites/apps. I am curious, what would motivate you to pay for news online? (multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300) | Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Go to [index](#)

What Kind Of Content Resonates?

Topics They Would Be Willing To Pay For

WHAT: Topics they would be willing to pay for

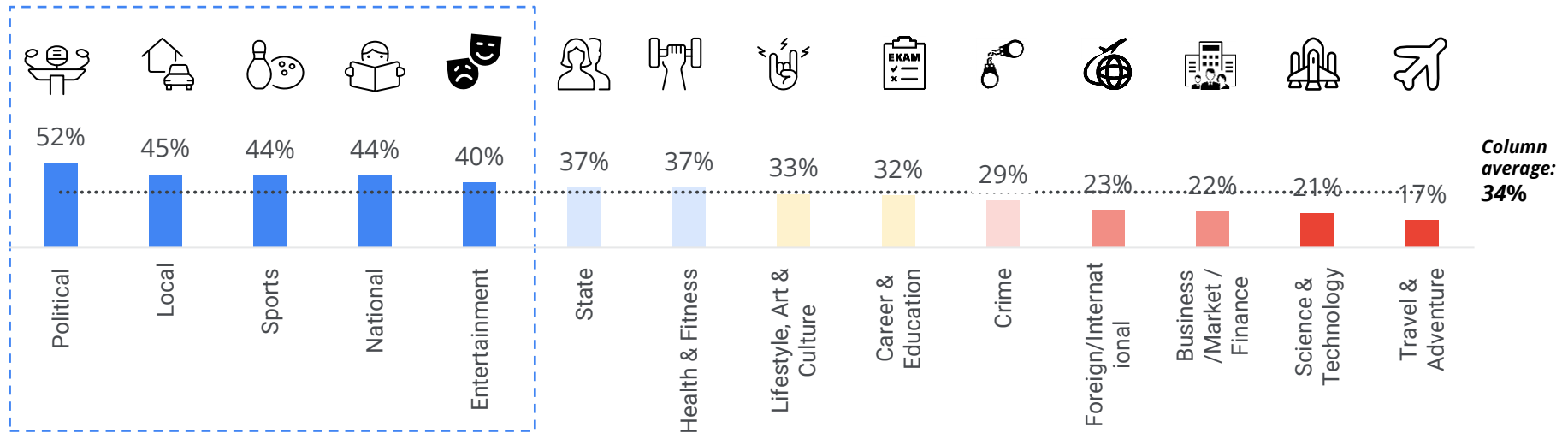
Political, Local, Sports, National, And Entertainment News Top The List

Top 5 News Categories Willing To Pay For (All%)



"The majority of the news I consume is about politics or entertainment. I've been keeping up with the IPL and the World Cup as well. If I get more in-depth, all-important updates about my city, like road blockages, and important national news, then that is okay. I don't want to pay for things I'm not going to read."

Male, 45, Hyderabad, Telugu



Local News = city, town, community level updates




Go to [index](#)

WHAT: Topics they would be willing to pay for



And While There Are Commonalities, There Are Also Differences

Younger group is more interested in education & health. Women prioritise health, lifestyle & culture

Top 5 News Categories Willing To Pay For (%)

	25-34	35-44	45-55
#1	 Political News: 48%	 Political News: 52%	 Political News: 59%
#2	Local News: 47% Sports News:	National News: 46%	National News: 48%
#3	Entertainment News: 41% National News:	Local News: 44%	Local News: 42%
#4	Health & Fitness: 37%	Sports News: 43%	Sports News: 41% State News:
#5	Career & Education: 36%	Entertainment News: 41%	Entertainment News: 38%

In top 5 at an overall level

	Men	Women
#1	 Political News: 56%	 Local News: 48%
#2	Sports News: 54%	Political News: 45% Health & Fitness:
#3	National News: 47%	Entertainment News: 44%
#4	Local News: 42%	Lifestyle, Arts & Culture: 42%
#5	Entertainment News: 37% State News:	National News: 40%



"I got more serious about reading news when I got into college. My friends were preparing for competitive exams, and I thought I should also improve myself. Instead of spending time on social media apps I thought I should use news to learn about more things."
 Male, 26, Delhi, Hindi

"I find out about new movies and shows through news apps and websites. I don't follow reviews religiously, but I get some idea of what's good. Same with restaurants and poetry sessions, the good ones are usually in the news."
 Female, 37, Kolkata, English

Go to [index](#)

WHAT: Topics they would be willing to pay for

And While There Are Commonalities, There Are Also Differences

Crime news finds favour with Hindi users; international news features in the top 5 for Gujarati users

Top 5 News Categories Willing To Pay For (%)

In top 5 at an overall level

	Welcome English	स्वागत Hindi	স্বাগত Bengali	स्वागत आहे Marathi	સ્વાગત છે Gujarati
Relative hierarchy ↓	Political News: 49%	Political News: 62%	Sports News: 56%	Local News: 57%	Local News: 60%
	Local News: 43%	Crime News: 47%	Political News: 47%	Political News: 52%	National News: 55%
	Sports News: 43%	National News: 45%	Health & Fitness: 46%	National News: 43%	Sports News: 49%
	Health & Fitness: 39%	Sports News: 44%	Career & Education: 42%	Sports News: 43%	State News: 44%
	National News: 38%	Health & Fitness: 42%	National News: 40%	Entertainment News: 36%	Lifestyle, Arts & Culture: 38%
	State News: 38%				International News

“Foreign exchange is a very important topic for me. You have to know about international markets to predict gold rates here. All my market decisions are influenced by what is happening around the world, so I can't afford to miss headlines about other countries”
 Male, 35, Vadodara, Gujrati

Go to [index](#)

And While There Are Commonalities, There Are Also Differences

Kannada users value crime news. More Tamil users prefer to pay for content related to lifestyle & culture

Top 5 News Categories Willing To Pay For (%)

In top 5 at an overall level

	ಸ್ವಾಗತ Kannada	సామ్రాజం Telugu	வரவேற்பு Tamil	സ്വാഗതം Malayalam
Political News:	53%	Political News: 76%	Local News: 59%	Political News: 48%
Entertainment News:	52%	National News: 71%	Lifestyle, Arts & Culture: 49%	Entertainment News: 42%
National News:	48%	State News: 67%	Political News: 48%	Sports News: 41%
Sports News:	44%	Entertainment News: 58%	Health & Fitness: 43%	National News: 41%
Crime News:	41%	Local News: 58%	Entertainment News: 42%	State News: 39%

Relative hierarchy



"I enjoy the New York Times articles on wellness and self-improvement. They have a lot of writing about mental health and lifestyle guides. I'd love access to similar content in Tamil and would be willing to pay for it if it's as good."

Male, 47, Chennai, Tamil

Go to [index](#)

Q. What are the TOP news categories you would be willing to pay for? (Up to 5) | Base by language users (between 150-300)
 'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

What Kind Of Content Resonates?

Value Of Short Form, Fast Journalism Vs. Long Form, Slow Journalism

User preference: Value of Short form, fast journalism vs. long form, slow journalism

Taken As Whole, Short Form Content And Immediacy Have A Slight Edge

Yet, the value of in-depth reporting and slower journalism remains clear

Most of my time is spent on...

My time is split equally between the two

29%

Catching up with in-depth reporting & investigative pieces

31%

Skimming headlines, breaking news, and summaries

40%

All

I'd like my news sources to put more emphasis on...

A balance between in-depth content and frequent updates

25%

More emphasis on in-depth content with less frequent updates

35%

Frequent updates with shorter, summarised content

40%

All



"I need a mix of things. I check for news updates every morning and evening. For that, I want quick summaries of the important facts. Just giving me a headline, a picture, and some bullet points is good enough, I don't want to spend a lot of time on all updates. But if I find something that interests me, there should be a way for me to read it in more detail. These more in-depth articles don't have to come to me instantly, I will anyway only have time to read it at night. The updates and summaries need to be instant."
Male, 37, Bareilly, Hindi

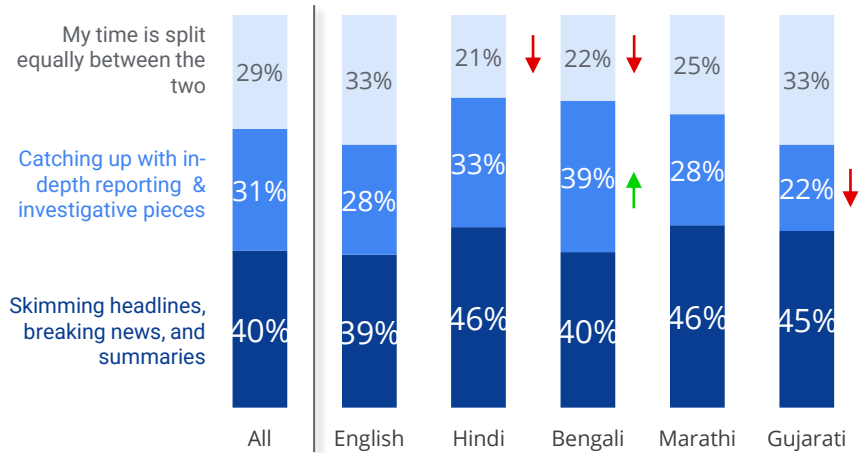
Q. Considering all formats of news you consume, including text, audio, and video, which of these options best describes you? (single answer) /Q. Ideally, how would you like your news sources to balance in-depth content with frequent updates? (single answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091)

User preference: Value of Short form, fast journalism vs. long form, slow journalism

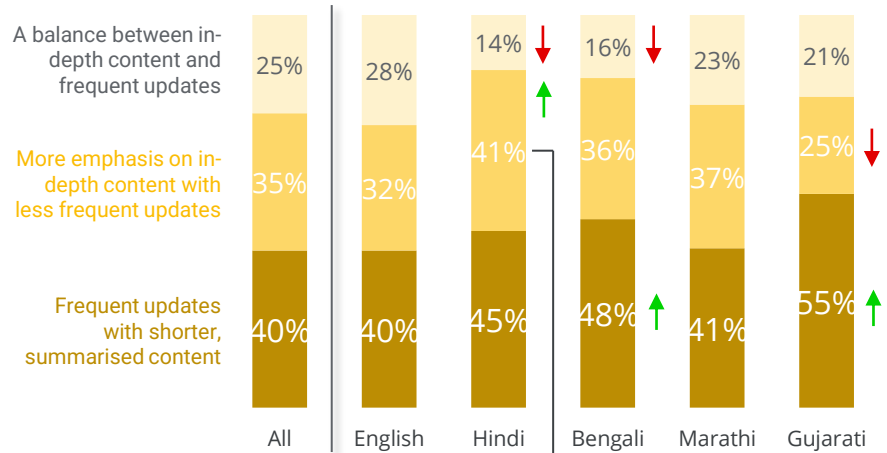
News Consumption Habits Reflect Preferred Publishing Frequency

Gujarati users favour fast news. 2 in 5 Hindi users desire slow journalism

Most of my time is spent on...



I'd like my news sources to put more emphasis on...



↑ Significantly > vs. all (95% confidence level)
 ↓ Significantly < vs. all (95% confidence level)

Pref. > amongst 35-44 yrs. old

Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering all formats of news you consume, including text, audio, and video, which of these options best describes you? (single answer) / Q. Ideally, how would you like your news sources to balance in-depth content with frequent updates? (single answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)

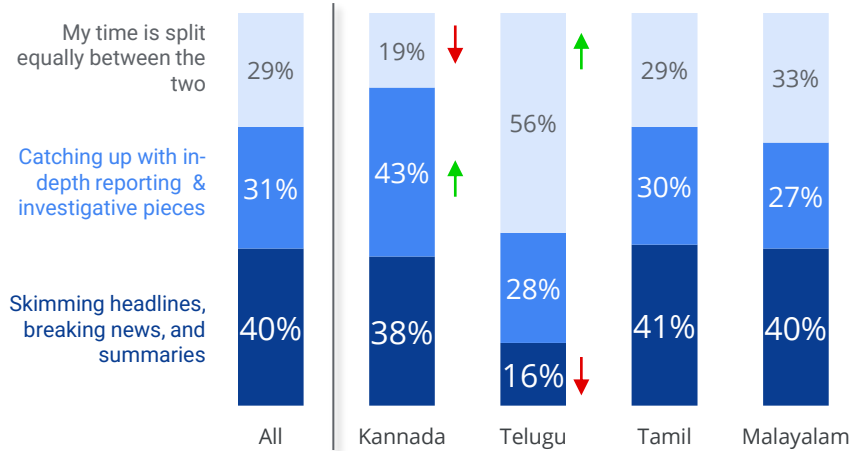
'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

User preference: Value of Short form, fast journalism vs. long form, slow journalism

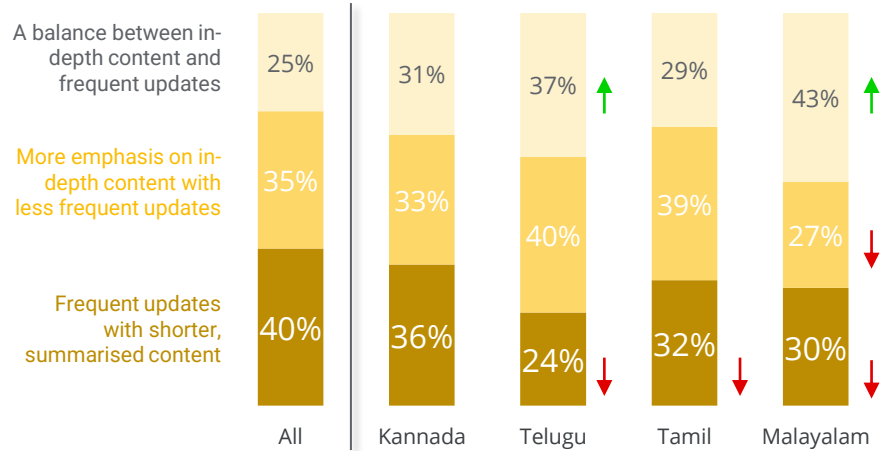
However, Southern Language Users' Desire Depth Over Constant Updates

Even if most skim news barring Telugu users who strive for balance

Most of my time is spent on...



I'd like my news sources to put more emphasis on...



↑ Significantly > vs. all (95% confidence level)
 ↓ Significantly < vs. all (95% confidence level)

Q. Considering all formats of news you consume, including text, audio, and video, which of these options best describes you? (single answer) / Q. Ideally, how would you like your news sources to balance in-depth content with frequent updates? (single answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)

'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

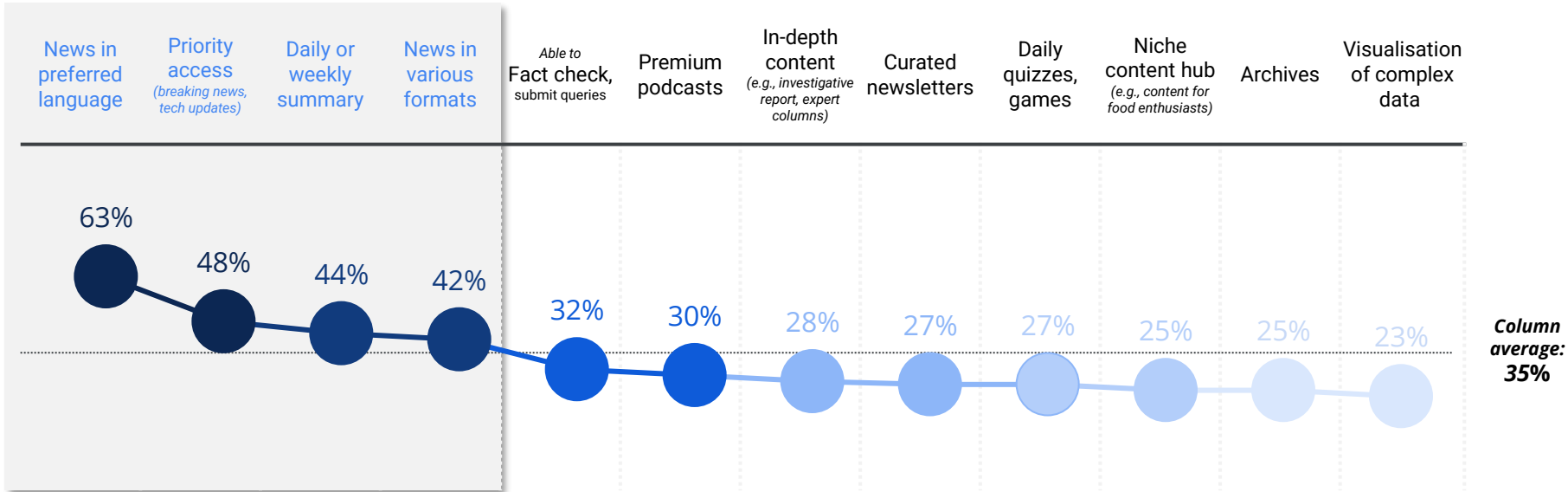
What Does A Compelling Proposition Look Like?

Content Specific Solutions That Justifies Payment

Content related elements that make a news website/app worth paying for

Users Want A More Relevant, Efficient, And Streamlined Content Delivery

Content-Related Elements Worth Paying For (In%)



"News shouldn't have a language barrier. Offering regional languages, so we can read the news in any language of our choice is a good option."
 Male, 31, Delhi, Hindi

"I open my go to app twice a day to get all the news. I also use CNN to catch up on international news. A collated summary of all major headlines of the day, national and international, in one place would be good."
 Female, 36, Bangalore, English

"I like video content, but I can't usually watch them in public places without disturbing other people. So, a mix of text and video works best."
 Male, 37, Bareilly, Hindi

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Q. Considering that content is high quality and from your favourite online news website /app(s), which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website /app worth paying for? (Multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091)
 Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

Content related elements that make a news website/app worth paying for

And That's Consistent Across Age And Gender

"I would have a different expectation from paid news. I would want news in Gujarati."
 Male, 53, Vadodara, Gujarati

"I would want quick news and live updates, and it would be best if I am also the first one to know. Like news about famous people, or other things I'm interested in."
 Male, 36, Hyderabad, Telugu

Relative hierarchy

Top 5 Content-Related Elements Worth Paying For (In%)

	%	Rank	25-34		35-44		45-55		Men		Women	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
News in preferred language	63%	1	63%	1	61%	1	64%	1	63%	1	63%	1
Priority access	48%	2	48%	2	49%	2	46%	3	49%	2	46%	2
Daily or weekly summary	44%	3	43%	3	42%	4	48%	2	45%	3	43%	3
News in various formats	42%	4	43%	3	43%	3	37%	4	42%	4	40%	4
Fact check	32%	5	30%	5	33%	5	33%	5	32%	5	31%	5

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering that content is high quality and from your favourite online news website /app(s), which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website /app worth paying for? (Multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base per demographic cohort (=> 500)
 Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024¹

Content related elements that make a news website/app worth paying for

With Some Subtle Language-Led Distinctions

Fact-checking resonates with Gujarati and English users, while Bengali users distinctly prefer deep dives, and Hindi users see curated newsletters as a value-add

Top 5 Content-Related Elements Worth Paying For (In%)

	Welcome	स्वागत	স্বাগত	स्वागत आहे	સ્વાગત છે
	English	Hindi	Bengali	Marathi	Gujarati
News in preferred language	62%	News in preferred language 67%	News in preferred language 75%	Priority access 45%	News in preferred language 79%
Priority access	49%	Daily or weekly summary 44%	News in various formats 51%	News in various formats 42%	Priority access 66%
Daily or weekly summary	43%	Priority access 39%	Daily or weekly summary 46%	News in preferred language 41%	News in various formats 43%
News in various formats	38%	News in various formats 38%	Priority access 46%	Daily or weekly summary 38%	Daily or weekly summary 43%
Fact check	36%	Curated newsletters 37%	In-depth content 32%	Premium podcasts 28%	Fact check 42%

Relative hierarchy



Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering that content is high quality and from your favourite online news website /app(s), which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website /app worth paying for? (Multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)
 Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

Content related elements that make a news website/app worth paying for

With Some Subtle Language Led Distinctions

Kannada users seek visualisation of complex data, quizzes/games. Telugu users have a niche content appetite, while Malayalam users are enticed by curated newsletters

Top 5 Content-Related Elements Worth Paying For (In%)

	ಸ್ವಾಗತ	స్వాగతం	வரவேற்பு	സ്വാഗതം
	Kannada	Telugu	Tamil	Malayalam
Priority access	51%	News in preferred language 73%	News in preferred language 63%	News in preferred language 66%
News in preferred language	48%	Daily or weekly summary 59%	News in various formats 54%	Priority access 46%
Daily or weekly summary	47%	Priority access 52%	Priority access 48%	Daily or weekly summary 40%
Visualisation of complex data	45%	Niche content hub 42%	Fact check 46%	Fact check 35%
Daily quizzes, games	44%	Fact check 35%	Daily or weekly summary 42%	Curated newsletters 33%

Relative hierarchy ↓

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. Considering that content is high quality and from your favourite online news website /app(s), which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website /app worth paying for? (Multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)
 Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024¹

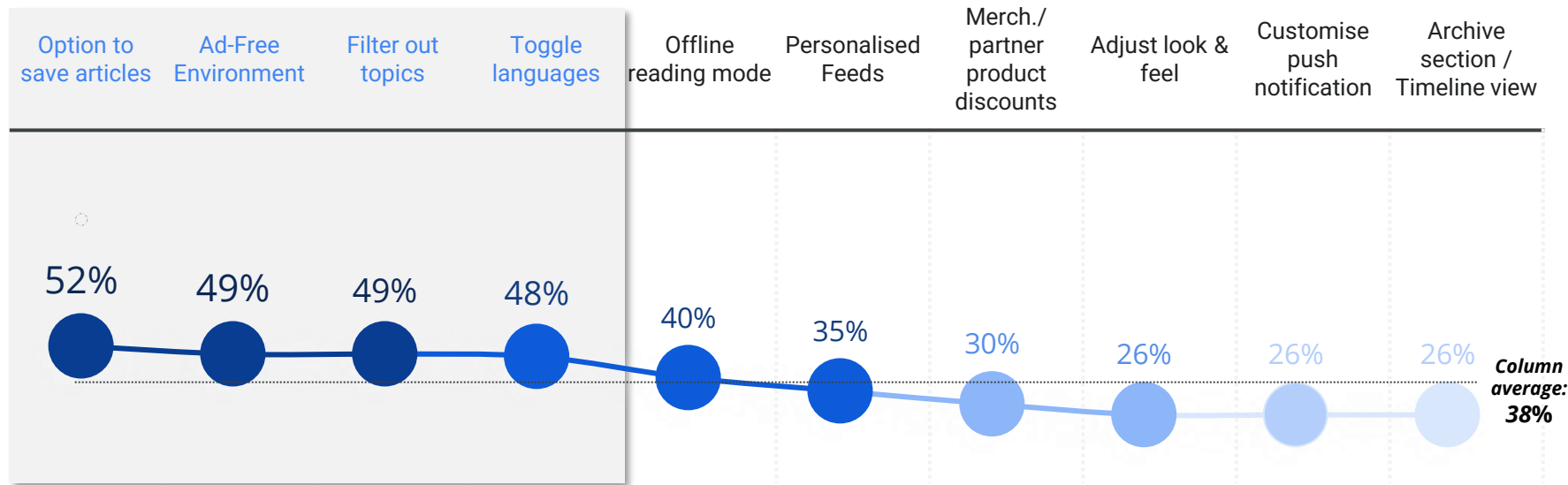
What Does A Compelling Proposition Look Like?

Features / Functionalities Users Find Worth Paying For

Apart From Ad-free Experience, Users Seek Empowerment

With ability to save / filter out content, switch languages

Features Worth Paying For (In%)



"Offline access is good. When we have saved articles, we can download and read them. When we are on a journey, we can read too."
 Male, 36, Hyderabad, Telegu

"Sometimes I want to avoid news like about murder and accidents and all of that, I want to stop those updates." I'd love to be able to filter out stories about topics I'm not interested in"
 Male, 40, Chennai, Tamil

"Language switch option should be there; I would want to read news in Kannada."
 Male, 34, Bangalore, Kannada

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

...No Matter The Age Or Gender



"I expect I'll be able to save news in the premium version. If we like a particular news, we can save it and view it later."
Male, 26, Coimbatore, Tamil

"I would definitely want ad-free news if I subscribe."
Male, 36, Bangalore, Kannada

Top 5 Features Worth Paying For (In%)

Relative hierarchy

	%	Rank	25-34		35-44		45-55		Men		Women	
			%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Option to save articles	52%	1	53%	1	53%	1	49%	3	52%	1	52%	1
Ad-Free Environment	49%	2	49%	2	46%	4	50%	2	49%	3	49%	2
Filter out topics	49%	3	48%	3	49%	2	51%	1	50%	2	47%	3
Toggle languages	48%	4	46%	4	48%	3	49%	3	49%	3	46%	4
Offline reading mode	40%	5	41%	5	41%	5	37%	5	38%	5	42%	5

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. Now in terms of features and functionalities, which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website / app worth paying for? | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base per demographic cohort (=> 500)

Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

And While There Is Broad Consensus, Subtle Language-Led Variations Exist

Marathi users show a stronger preference for personalised feeds

Top 5 Features Worth Paying For (In%)

	Welcome	स्वागत	স্বাগত	स्वागत आहे	स्વાગત છે
	English	Hindi	Bengali	Marathi	Gujarati
Option to save articles	52%	Option to save articles 57%	Option to save articles 60%	Ad-free environment 42%	Filter out topics 64%
Ad-Free Environment	48%	Toggle languages 52%	Ad-Free Environment 60%	Option to save articles 41%	Toggle languages 63%
Toggle languages	47%	Ad-Free Environment 50%	Filter out topics 57%	Personalised Feeds 40%	Ad-Free Environment 54%
Filter out topics	45%	Filter out topics 45%	Personalised Feeds 39%	Filter out topics 34%	Option to save articles 53%
Offline reading mode	39%	Offline reading mode 42%	Toggle languages 39%	Toggle languages 34%	Offline reading mode 53%

Relative hierarchy



Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. Now in terms of features and functionalities, which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website /app worth paying for? | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)

And While There Is Broad Consensus, Subtle Language Led Variations Exist

Kannada users exhibit a similar preference for personalised feeds

Top 5 Features Worth Paying For (In%)

	ಸ್ವಾಗತ	స్వాగతం	வரவேற்பு	സ്വാഗതം			
	Kannada	Telugu	Tamil	Malayalam			
Option to save articles	55%	Offline reading mode	61%	Toggle languages	52%	Toggle languages	61%
Ad-Free Environment	49%	Filter out topics	59%	Ad-Free Environment	52%	Option to save articles	55%
Toggle languages	46%	Option to save articles	58%	Filter out topics	51%	Filter out topics	54%
Personalised Feeds	46%	Toggle languages	45%	Option to save articles	45%	Offline reading mode	51%
Filter out topics	44%	Ad-Free Environment	39%	Offline reading mode	41%	Ad-Free Environment	36%

Relative hierarchy

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

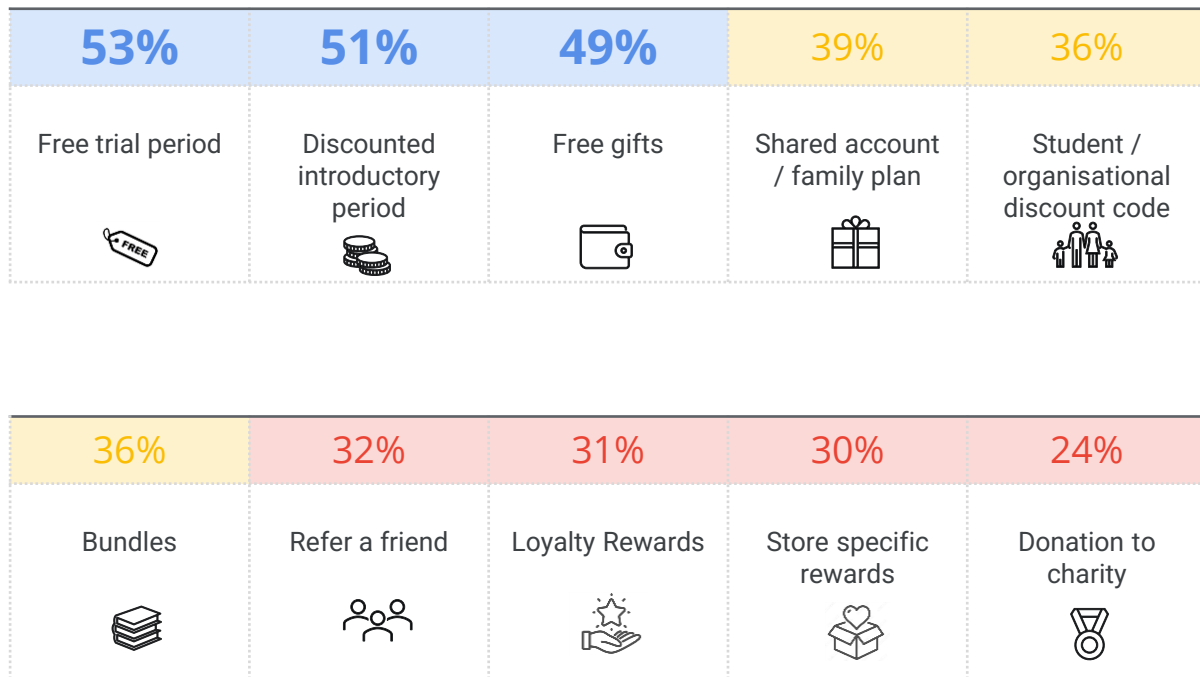
Q. Now in terms of features and functionalities, which of these aspects would make your news consumption experience more valuable and would make the news website /app worth paying for? | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)

What Does A Compelling Proposition Look Like?

Promotional Tools That Can Be Leveraged

Promotions That Offer Immediate Value Resonate More Strongly

Appeal Of Different Promotions (In%)



"I was thinking about purchasing a subscription to my preferred online publication and I saw it was priced at Rs.199/- for 3 months. I believe they should offer a trial service before that. I'm always hesitant to commit to a subscription without knowing if it's worth it."

Male, 34, Delhi, Hindi

"I believe if the annual subscription is available at a discounted rate I will definitely subscribe to it."

Male, 33, Mumbai, Marathi

"If one goes for a quarterly plan be there could be small offers, it could be free deliveries; offers for spas, etc. It will keep people coming back for more."

Female, 36, Bangalore, Kannada

"A news app that also gives free access to entertainment apps will be wonderful. It saves money and meets multiple needs."

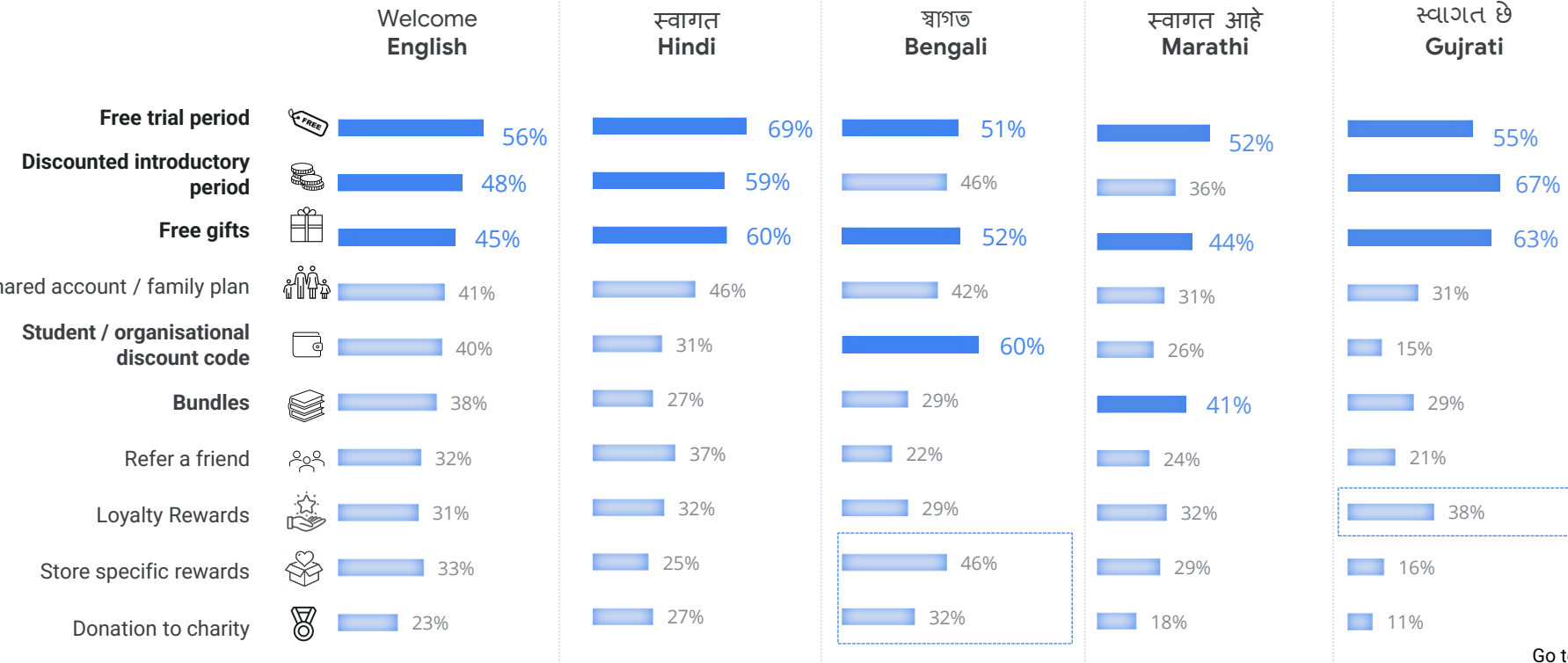
Female, 45, Mumbai, English

Go to [index](#)

...Top Choices Largely Same Barring A Few Distinctions

Student/organisational discounts appeal to Bengali users, whereas Marathi users lean towards bundles

Appeal Of Different Promotions (In%)



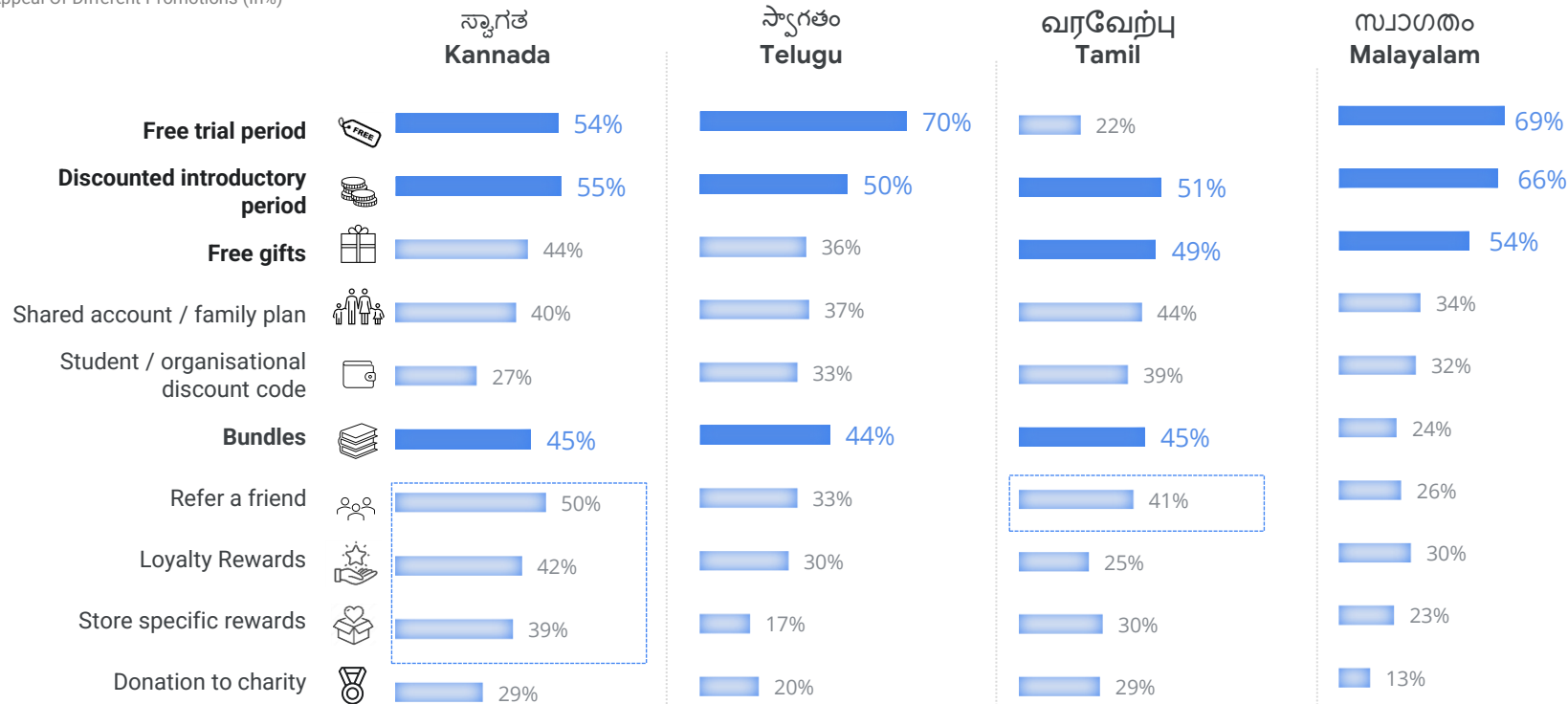
Go to [index](#)

Differentiated vs. All

...Top Choices Largely Same Barring A Few Distinctions

And this gravitation to bundled offerings is also evident amongst Kannada, Telugu, and Tamil users

Appeal Of Different Promotions (In%)

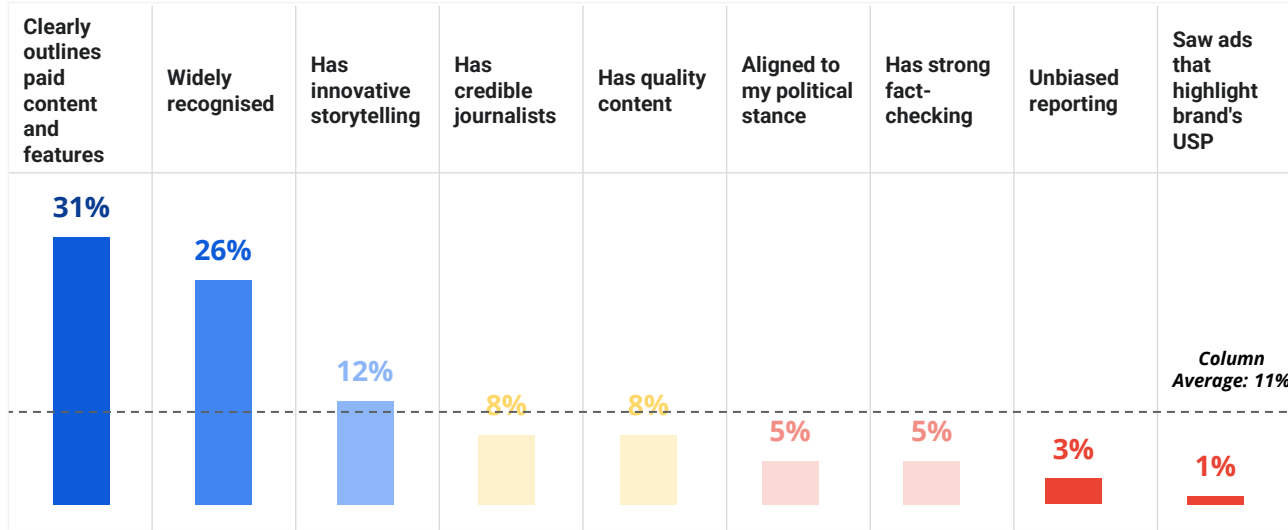


Which Specific Brand Attributes Are Most Influential?

Clear Value Proposition, Reputation, And Innovative Storytelling Drive Brand Choice

While established brands have an advantage in recognition, smaller brands too need to drive awareness of their differentiated offerings

Brand Drivers – Why Free Users Would Pick One Over The Other? (In%)- Top Rank



Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding



"I'm interested in subscribing, but I'd like a clearer understanding of the benefits before I commit. What value would a subscription offer me? I'd go for an app that's not only known but also states the kind of content and features I'll get clearly over one that's known but doesn't make things clear."
 Male, 45-55, Bangalore, English

"I chose this website because it has a wide readership. It is one of the biggest papers in the country. When something has an audience this big, they have to be responsible. They have professional journalists who are good at what they do."
 Male, 45, Bangalore, English

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Go to [index](#)

Q. Imagine you're trying to decide which news website /app to subscribe to. You've shortlisted a few options that meet all your needs and fit your budget. What are the TOP 3 aspects about the BRAND ITSELF that would MOST influence your decision to subscribe to one news website/app over the others? (Ranking) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091)

Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024

...Regardless Of Language

Hindi & Southern languages' users: Leading the charge for innovative storytelling

Brand Drivers – Why Free Users Would Pick One Over The Other? (In%) - Top Rank	Welcome English	स्वागत Hindi	স্বাগত Bengali	स्वागत आहे Marathi	સ્વાગત છે Gujarati	ಸ್ವಾಗತೆ Kannada	స్వాగతం Telugu	வரவேற்பு Tamil	സ്വാഗതം Malayalam
Clearly outlines paid contents and features	32%	21%	30%	40%	18%	45%	19%	35%	37%
Widely recognised	25%	22%	32%	21%	42%	23%	29%	17%	34%
Has innovative storytelling	11%	14%	8%	8%	10%	15%	21%	15%	10%
Has credible journalists	7%	13%	8%	9%	5%	4%	3%	11%	7%
Has quality content	8%	9%	7%	8%	10%	3%	7%	12%	5%
Has strong fact-checking	8%	9%	4%	5%	4%	4%	7%	3%	2%
Aligned to my political stance	6%	9%	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%	6%	3%
Unbiased reporting	3%	2%	8%	2%	4%	3%	5%	1%	2%
Saw ads that highlight brand's USP	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%	5%	0%	1%

Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Q. Imagine you're trying to decide which news website /app to subscribe to. You've shortlisted a few options that meet all your needs and fit your budget. What are the TOP 3 aspects about the BRAND ITSELF that would MOST influence your decision to subscribe to one news website/app over the others? (Ranking) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)

'Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

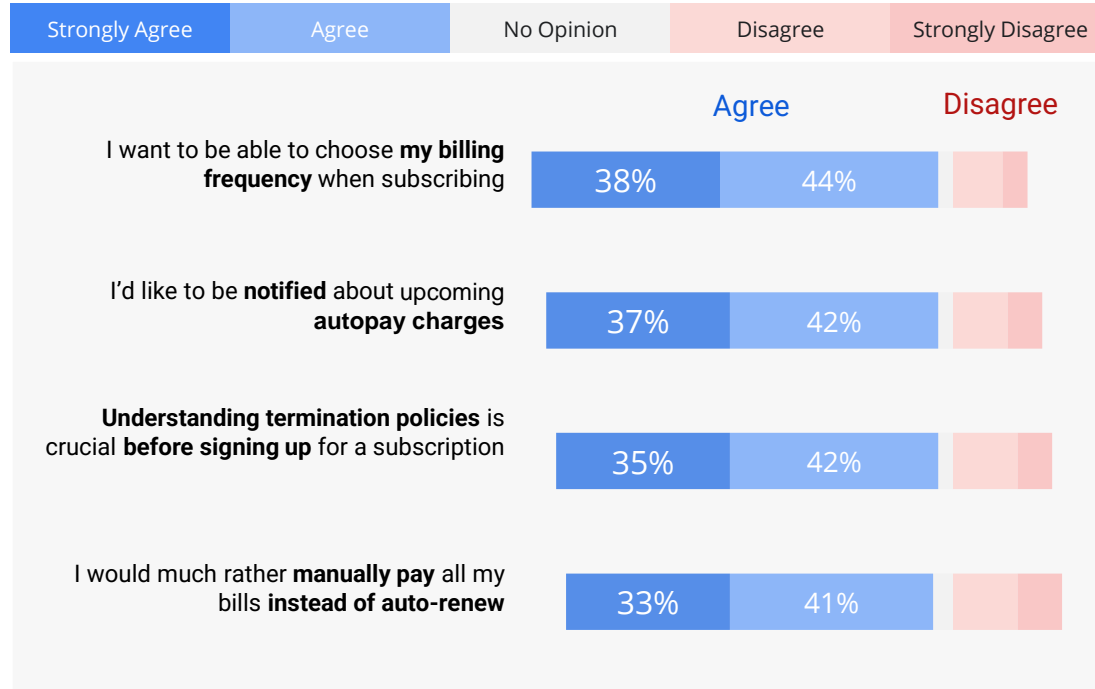
Go to [index](#)

What Might Make For A User-centric Payment Strategy?

Being Able To Choose Payment Periodicity Would Bring Value To Many

And advance notifications can ease wariness around auto-payments

For Subscription: Payment related Needs (In%)



Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding



"I want options other than just annual. It's a very big commitment. I might not have time for news on some days, I might want to switch publishers. I anyway use more than one news app. Right now, my choices are very limited."
Male, 45, Chennai, Tamil

"The problem with autopay is that we don't get to know anything. It's convenient, otherwise, I'd have to remember to renew my subscription every month. But sometimes they change the prices and charge the new price without telling us anything. I get no notifications that the renewal date is coming, I just got a message from my bank saying this much money has been taken from your bank. There is no way to get refunds also."
Male, 28, Delhi, Hindi

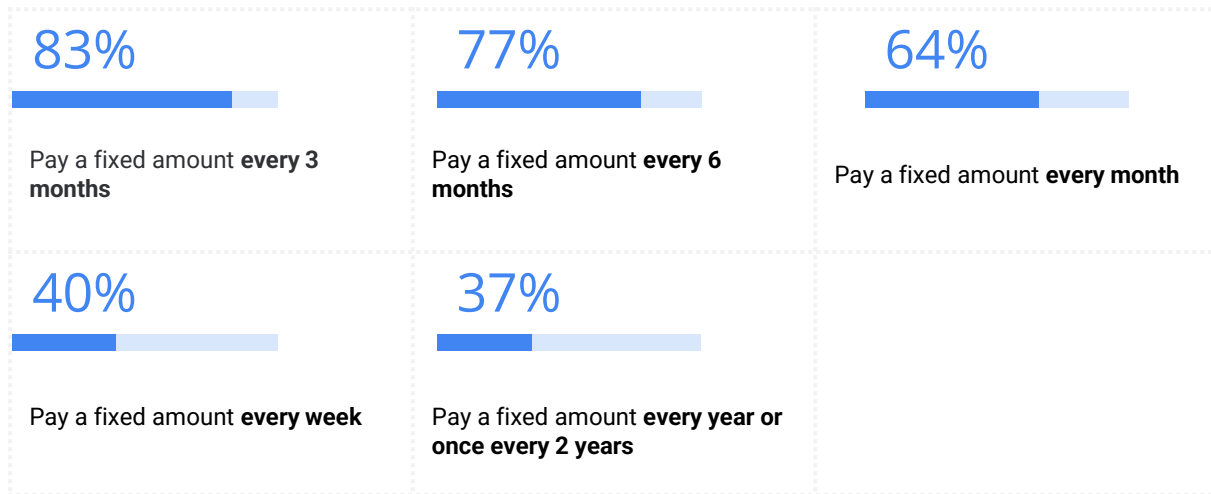
"Once auto debit is initiated it becomes difficult to stop it. Every month the money will be deducted from the account. I would want to be notified before they deduct it."
Male, 44, Vadodara, Gujarati

Relative Hierarchy

Overall, Shorter Durations Plans Are Preferred More

As they allow users more wiggle room

Payment Cycle Preference: Aggregate Rank 1+2+3 (In%)



"I don't want to start with annual packs. I might move later. I want to have the option to get something smaller, like a month or 3 months."
 Male, 25, Vadodara, Gujarati



Qualitative nuance:

Budget-Friendly: Shorter duration plans: spread the cost (even if slightly higher in longer run) easier on your wallet compared to a larger upfront payment

Flexibility Matters:

Allows for cancellation / brand switching as per needs

Monthly plans – allow for testing the waters! See if the service truly delivers value before committing to a longer period

Go to [index](#)

What Do Free Users' Experiences With Paywalls Look Like?

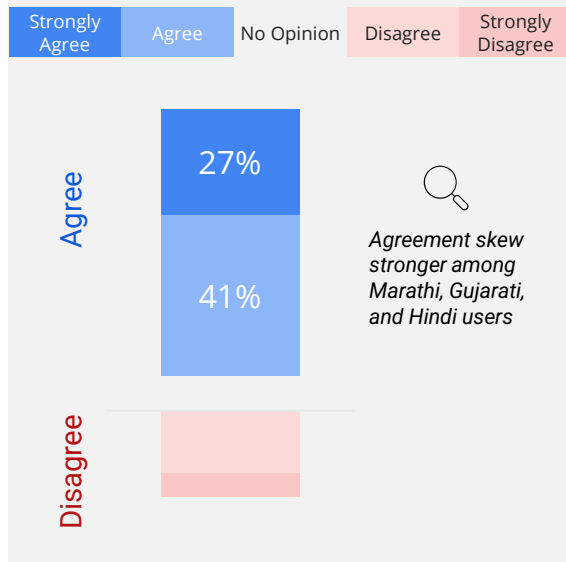
Users Recognise That Paywalls Limit Their Access

...Leading to a knowledge gap



Qualitative nuance:

Make it difficult **to stay informed**



Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Interrupted access

- Noticing paywalls more so now than before
- Recurrent sentiment that paywall frequency has increased for various interesting topics that they care for

Perceived information gap

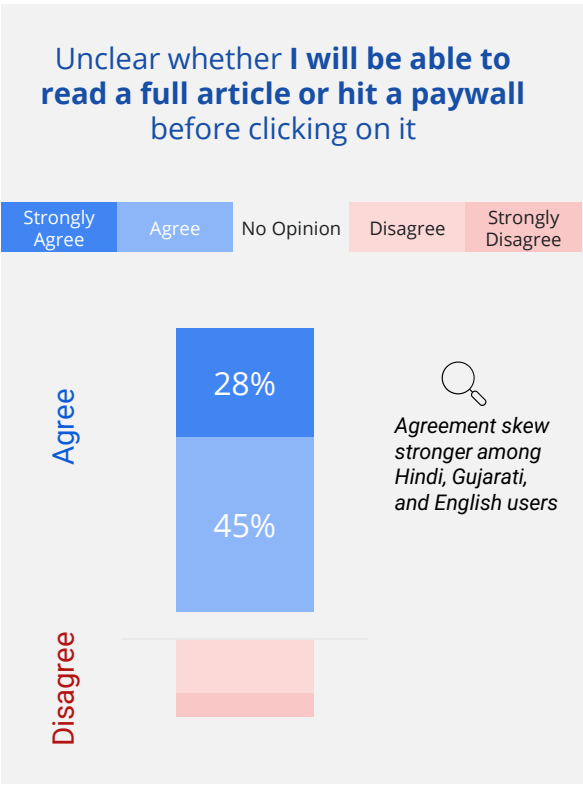
- Access to niche topics such as job information, education and startup content is not typically covered in free versions
- Exclusive stories, about topics one is interested in, do evoke curiosity. Seeds a feeling of “paid users get more than I do”



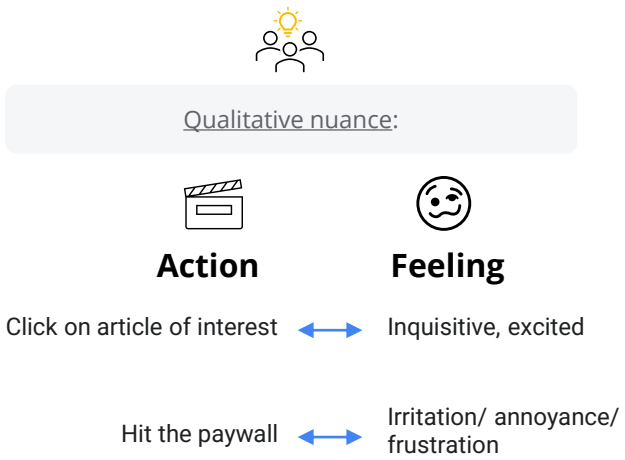
“They blocked those news which are different types like health topics. When I click on “read more”, the news gets hidden.”
Male, 32, Asansol, Bengali

“This Delhi school news was not written fully so sometimes I wonder if I didn’t get the complete news because I did not take the subscription? There should be communication from the company so that I know the difference I’ll get.”
Male, 46, Delhi, Hindi

And Are Often Not Able To Distinguish Between Paid And Free Content



Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding



“Sometimes, with longer videos, I can't watch the full thing unless I pay for subscription. It'll play up to a point, then I'll get a screen that says subscribe to unlock the rest of this video. I wish they had just made it clear at the outset”
 Male, 32, Mumbai, Marathi

“We feel why should we pay money for the same content. We are not sure what is exclusive about this, didn't understand the benefit of it.”
 Male, 29, Bangalore, English

Am I missing anything at all by not accessing this?

Some feel unfazed by paywalls, assuming locked content isn't crucial, thinking had it been vital, it would have been free for everyone...

What am I missing on?

Quite a few struggle to understand the difference between free and paid articles. What exactly are you paying extra for – better quality, in-depth reporting?

With That, Let's Look At What Triggered Them To Look At Paywalled Content?

What triggered users to click on a paid article?

Innate Interest In Topic, Headlines And Image/Video Previews Hook Users

Crafting compelling headlines, use of high-quality captivating visuals is therefore key

"Headlines and visuals are my go-to for quick news updates. In past, I have clicked on something that captured my attention on social media but found the article is not available for people like me who haven't paid"

Male, 40, Coimbatore, Tamil

Triggers That Led To Clicking On Paywalled Content (In%)

56%



Had interesting headline(s)

49%



Self-interest in topic, wanted to learn more

45%



Intriguing image/video preview

44%



While fact-checking information

43%



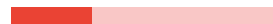
Trusted site, hence, interested in their take on topic

40%



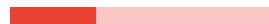
Had details, data points, or expert opinions I was looking for

40%



It was trending on social media

40%



Because of author's name or reputation

39%



It promised to break down / simplify a complex news story

Statements have been shortened for reporting

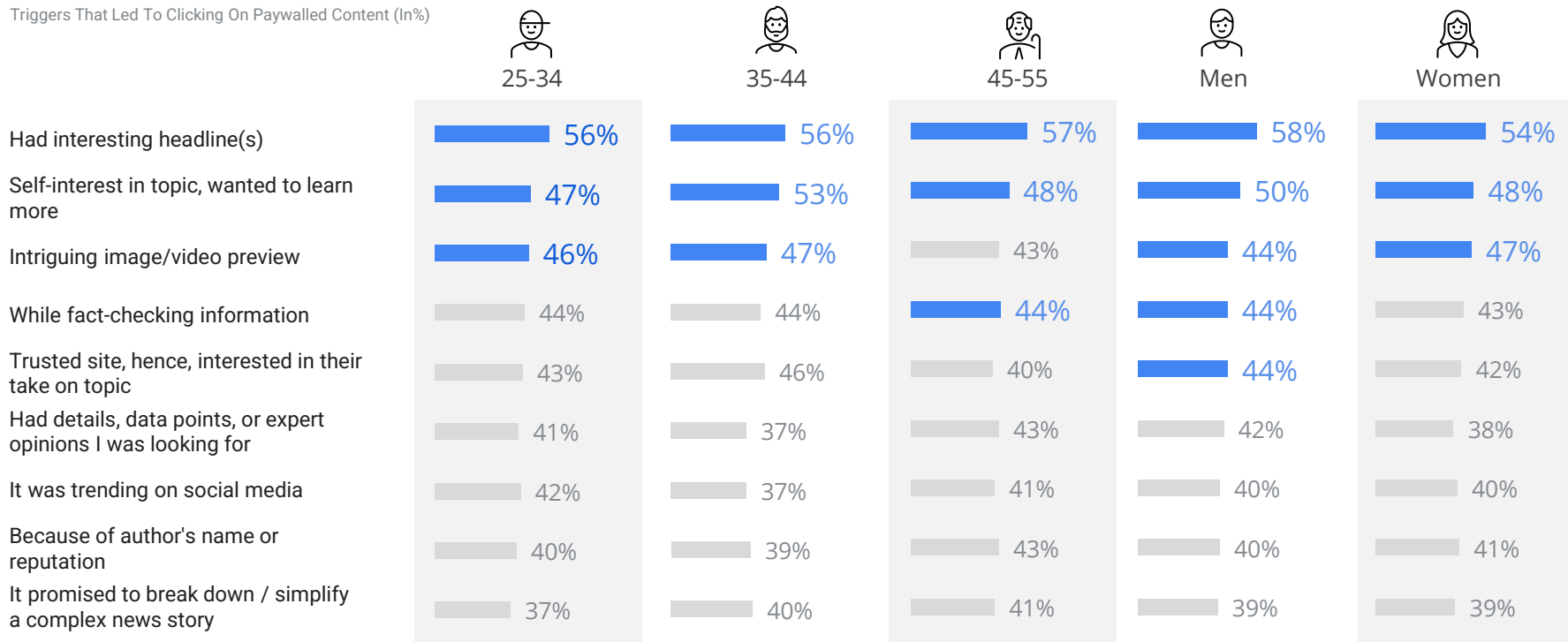
Q. What elements of a paid article, even without full access, make you curious enough to click on it? (multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091)
Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

Go to [index](#)

...No Matter The Age Or Gender

Crafting compelling headlines, use of high-quality captivating visuals is therefore key

Triggers That Led To Clicking On Paywalled Content (In%)



Statements have been shortened for reporting

Q. What elements of a paid article, even without full access, make you curious enough to click on it? (multi-answer) Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base per demographic cohort (=> 500)

Kantar's qualitative and quantitative analysis with primary research on publisher news website / app users, 2024'

What triggered users to click on a paid article?

And While There Is Broad Uniformity Language Wise As Well

Some interesting variations do exist

Triggers That Led To Clicking On Paywalled Content (In%)

	Welcome English	स्वागत Hindi	স্বাগত Bengali	स्वागत आहे Marathi	સ્વાગત છે Gujarati	ಸ್ವಾಗತೆ Kannada	స్వాగతం Telugu	வரவேற்பு Tamil	സ്വാഗതം Malayalam
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Had interesting headline(s)	59%	56%	59%	59%	68%	53%	63%	45%	49%
Self-interest in topic, wanted to learn more	49%	49%	48%	45%	53%	45%	58%	45%	55%
Intriguing image/video preview	45%	45%	53%	58%	40%	44%	49%	35%	30%
While fact-checking information	47%	49%	43%	46%	42%	47%	33%	40%	39%
Trusted site, hence, interested in their take on topic	39%	50%	42%	45%	47%	52%	32%	41%	37%
Had details, data points, or expert opinions I was looking for	47%	39%	44%	39%	47%	46%	41%	34%	25%
It was trending on social media	43%	47%	33%	49%	31%	51%	38%	35%	26%
Because of author's name or reputation	41%	38%	46%	56%	28%	51%	33%	34%	26%
It promised to break down / simplify a complex news story	37%	45%	39%	44%	37%	39%	50%	32%	23%

Go to [index](#)

Statements have been shortened for reporting

Q. What elements of a paid article, even without full access, make you curious enough to click on it? (multi-answer) | Base: All Respondents (n=2091) | Base by language users (between 150-300)

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See Ads Or Pay-up: How Do Users Make The Trade-off?

What's more important- being ad-free or the amount of fee?

Given Limited Budget, Small Fee With Ad-lite Experience Works

A high fee amount does not work even when it means not seeing any ads

Preferred Option – Ad Vs. Fee Trade-off (In %)



Go to [index](#)

Summary of Insights

Barriers & Opportunity

- Too many plans & pricing options and budget constraints are the primary barriers to subscriptions. Inadequate free trials and inflexible payment processes further discourage sign-ups
- While one in five show readiness to subscribe, users are more open to sharing personal data and watching ads to unlock premium content
- Those accustomed to paying for online content are more receptive to various revenue models, making them ideal candidates for subscriptions and other monetisation efforts
- The primary motivations for users to pay for online news are convenience, an ad-free experience, and time-saving features. Interestingly, while an ad-free experience is valued, affordability is a higher priority. A model combining a small fee with limited ads is most preferred
- A clear value proposition, strong reputation drive brand choice when exploring paid options

So What?

- Data sharing and ad-based models can complement subscriptions - publishers should embrace diversified monetisation strategies

Simplify and make salient:

- Make the consumers aware of “WHAT” the value proposition is
- Convey how the experience will change post subscription and why it is worth their money
- Explicitly convey the new features/ content they will get access to
- Consolidate plans: Reduce the number of subscription tiers to avoid overwhelming users. Present pricing clearly and transparently
- Market your brand!

First-hand experience is critical:

- Let the user compare, contrast and conclude for themselves via free trials

Summary of Insights

Compelling value proposition

- Coverage related to politics, local news, sports, and national events are topics users are willing to pay for. Even so, user preferences vary by demographics and language.
- While there's a growing demand for fast-paced news, in-depth, slow journalism remains valuable. Users from South particularly value depth over constant updates. Thus, offering a mix of the two is key to attract a broad set of audience
- Users place more value on news platforms that offer content in their preferred language, priority access to tech / stock news, and more engaging delivery via daily/weekly summaries and varied content formats
- From a feature standpoint, users appreciate the ability to toggle languages, bookmark/save content. Ability to filter or selectively mute/ disengage from certain kinds of news, formats etc. is also important
- The ability to select payment frequency is crucial for user retention. Short-term payment plans are particularly popular!
- Free trials, discounts, and giveaways are the top promotional offers that appeal to users

So What?

- A topical lens to subscription where users pay only for their preferred content areas might be worth exploring!
- Standalone tiers that focus on either fast or slow journalism could also be tested. Additionally, offering subscribers the flexibility to customise update frequency within a paid plan can enhance its perceived value
- Multi-lingual support is important and so is talking to consumers in language they feel comfortable in
- Provide options to filter news by topic, source, or format. Also, allow users to temporarily or permanently suppress unwanted topics
- Consider offering smaller subscription durations to lower initial commitment barrier. These are likely to provide users with greater control and flexibility
- Consider providing discounted rates or free gifts alongside free trials to incentivise sign-ups

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