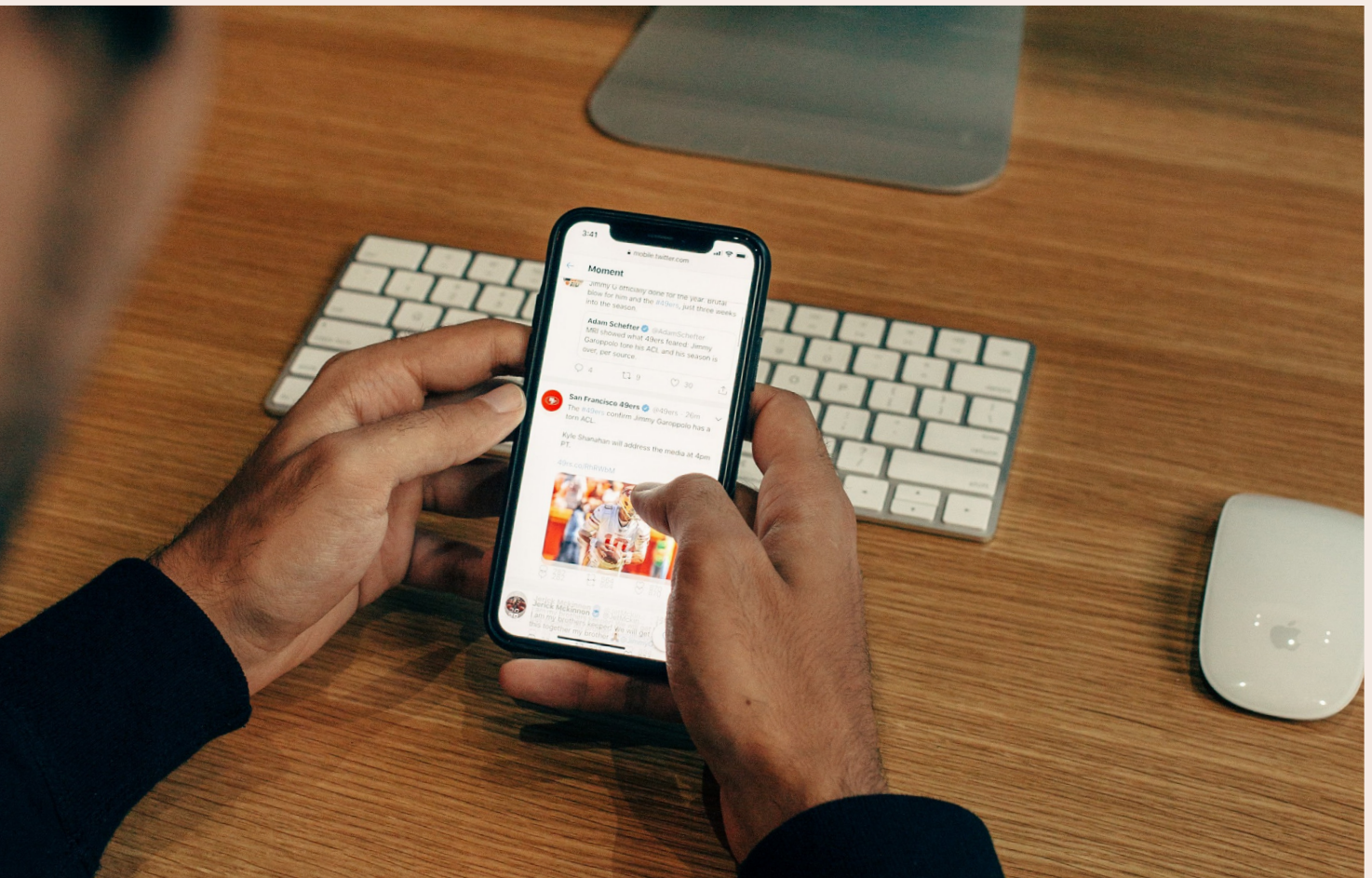


## Newsroom Spotlight

### Edition 2



# The power of legacy media

## The story in brief

- 1 Digital media has changed the way news ecosystems operate forever.
- 2 The Times, Telegraph & Daily Mail have seen significant increases in digital subscribers, showcasing the importance of credibility and trust.
- 3 Covid-19 accelerated the demand for acquiring news online, with readers turning to news channels they know and trust like The Guardian and BBC.
- 4 Vice & BuzzFeed were some of the digital news outlets that faced financial struggles due to unsustainable business models and going up against the established legacy media brands.
- 5 The continued success in legacy media comes down to audience-appropriate content, quality journalism and the integrity of trusted brands.

The full scoop →

## Newsroom Spotlight Edition 2

# Digital media has shifted the power dynamics for traditional press and changed the news ecosystem forever.

Print outlets have set up shop online and in the platform sphere. The phenomenal success they have subsequently enjoyed with readership and subscriptions is testament to the positive power of their legacy – and the loyalty that ensues.

It's a powerful reminder for brands and organisations that targeting legacy media is a strategy no ambitious business can ignore.

Subscriptions and audiences for these established news brands have grown year-on-year. The latest data reveals The Times, Sunday Times and Times Literary Supplement had nearly 500,000 digital subscribers between them in December 2022.

The Telegraph has also seen rapid growth in its digital subscriptions business having grown to 586,867 paying readers in December 2022, up 75% on the 335,000 digital-only subscriptions it had two years ago in October 2020.

Daily Mail print has also seen a growth in its enhanced digital offering with 152,494 Mail+ readers.

The impressive figures reinforce how important these outlets are for earned media and brands and organisations given exposure by these media giants are often deemed to have greater credibility and trust.

What this data also tells us is that readers have adapted to acquiring their news online and like turning to news brands they know and trust.



From left: Gavin McInnes and Shane Smith with early issues of the magazine. Photo: Peter Martin  
Source: NewYorkmag.com

It's a pattern of behaviour which was highlighted during the Covid-19 pandemic when readers found themselves reliant on the internet for news.

Recent Ofcom data also revealed the internet has become the go-to choice for accessing 'news, information and civic processes' and readers gravitate towards legacy news brands such as the BBC and Guardian.

A loyal readership provides legacy media with the strength and fortitude to weather all kinds of bumps. Nowhere is this more evident than in the demise of digital media companies Vice and BuzzFeed.



# Once hailed as the future of news, the media vista for the pair is no longer as picturesque.

Vice, valued at nearly \$6bn soon after media mogul Rupert Murdoch and Disney invested, has declared bankruptcy. It is now expected to be bought for around \$225m by its remaining lenders.



Despite its Pulitzer-winning newsroom, BuzzFeed has shut down its news division and made redundancies in an attempt to turn the struggling media group around having lost 90% of its value since it listed in 2021.

Without reader loyalty, BuzzFeed News was left exposed to the mercy of social media algorithms. This combined with a downturn in digital advertising - which has impacted publishers across the board - ultimately exposed the flaws in BuzzFeed's business model: It struggled to make enough money.

The same is being blamed for the woes experienced by Vice. The media darling burned through all the money investors lavished on it and still had so much outstanding debt - \$834m - that rising interest rates made its future untenable.

It's clear that the long-standing and established publishers are not dependant on the big tech platforms to deliver their audiences. They pushed through the tumultuous digital news era and came out as powerful as ever. They understand the importance of cultivating, and 'owning' their audiences, all while delivering news in a way that they enjoy. The publishers realise placing an importance on reader loyalty and their eyeballs is vital for longevity.

Jim Bilton, Managing Director at media management consultants Wessenden, concludes: "The bottom line is that the better legacy media organisations are actually much more agile, smarter and multi-dimensional. "Trusted brands, audience-appropriate content, quality independent journalism, tight management and common-sense should/must win in the long-term!"