Playbook

News for Generation Z

#use the news

use
the news

Playbook

News

for

Generation

Z

English

dpa •••

BDZV Bundesverband
Digitalpublisher und
Zeitungsverleger

HAW
HAMBURG

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Open News Education: Collaboration with schools and educational institutions

"TRUST ME, WE DO NOT WANT A WORLD WITHOUT NEWS"

Alan Rusbridger

Introduction

In a modern democracy, scientific evidence and verified news facts are the basis for opinion making and debate. While this seemed to be a matter of course for a long time, these days it is no longer universally accepted.

Since the internet opened up the traditional floodgates of information, since people have unprecedented direct real time access to news from all over the world, and may broadcast and publish them at will, the institution "news" faces critical questions. At the same time, there are increasing signs of erosion. Almost every Western democracy has to deal with new phenomena such as *news fatigue, news avoidance, news illiteracy and even news deserts,* a term denoting the steadily growing geographic areas devoid of any local journalistic offer.

Studies suggest that the younger, the more digitized and the poorer educated media users are, the further they are alienated from journalistic media and verified news. When a major part of the next generation wonders what news have to do with their lives – and where the value of journalism lies for them personally – there is much more at stake than just the future of subscriptions and advertising markets.

As a national news agency and cooperative of the German information media, dpa, together with the Hamburg Senate, has decided to get to the bottom of the matter. Our project #UseTheNews, started in 2020, combines scientific findings, editorial practice and education policy initiative. We are pleased to have won renowned partners from all segments of the news and information system for this new network-approach. With #UseTheNews, we want to pool knowledge, ideas and resources to keep news at the heart of public discourse and opinion making.

The #UseTheNews Playbook is targeted at editorial practitioners. It provides basic knowledge about changed attitudes and habits of usage, as well as insights into the state of contemporary news literacy teaching in schools. But above all, it wants to give inspiration and whet appetites for the successful development of contemporary journalistic offers with many best practice examples and recommendations. There are quite a few paths to explore to win youth back for news, including a simplified message language, a different choice of topics, testing new formats and channels or the active dialogical involvement of users.

We especially wish to thank the German Newspaper Publishers and Digitalpublishers Association (Bundesverband Digitalpublisher und Zeitungsverleger, BDZV), which has enabled us to publish the playbook. And above all, we thank the authors who were willing to contribute their knowledge to this so far unique overview.

by Meinolf Ellers

Meinolf Ellers (59) is the Head of Strategic Business Development at the German Press Agency (dpa) and coordinator of the #UseTheNews project. He joined dpa in 1985 and got many digital and innovative projects off the ground for the agency, including the development of web subsidiary dpa-infocom.

#UseTheNews

Three columns for better news literacy

by Jens Petersen

Unfiltered, independent and reliable news is one of the foundations of our society. Just as they require electricity and water, human beings require information they can rely on. Many of their decisions are taken on the basis of what they learn from the news media. News is a commodity in the truest sense of the word. This is the spirit behind the #UseTheNews project. In a digitized world, it is a prerequisite for a functioning democratic public sphere to impart and promote news literacy.

The initial impulse for the project was sparked by the presentation given by Alan Rusbridger, former Editor-in-Chief of the Guardian and Pulitzer Prize winner, during the 2019 edition of the scoopcamp in Hamburg. In the course of the annual innovation conference for the media sector, Rusbridger pointed out the fundamental significance of facts for a healthy media system. Under the impression of the Trump presidency and the lack of trust that many people, the young in particular, showed towards journalistic brands, he asked the question: *"How can we win back trust and build healthier democracies?"*

Aware of the fact that finding the answer to Rusbridger's question required a long-term process, the project #UseTheNews took shape under the auspices of scoopcamp's organisers – dpa and the Hamburg Ministry of Culture and Media (Hamburger Behörde für Kultur und Medien). In May of 2020, the partners addressed the public for the first time to announce the launch of the initiative as a three-column model, supported by partners from media outlets, civic society and media research institutions. The plan: A representative baseline study, a news literacy lab by and with media professionals from the field and a news curriculum to be developed for school students all build upon each other to contribute to the promotion of news literacy.

1. The study

In April 2021, the Hamburg-based Leibniz Institute for Media Research | Bredow-Institut (Leibniz-Institut für Medienforschung | Bredow-Institut)

and main scientific project partner, published the representative study "News usage and news literacy in the digital age" (Nachrichtennutzung und Nachrichtenkompetenz im digitalen Zeitalter). Face-to-face interviews with 1,500 people were conducted for the study. The core results show a deep information gap affecting the younger generation. Many young people recorded that they often felt there was a lack of reference of journalistic news to the reality of their own lives. Data and findings from the study are the basis for further work on #UseThe News and directly flow into the other columns of the project.

2. The news literacy lab

As opposed to many other initiatives, #UseTheNews does not end with the presentation of the study's results. On the contrary: As soon as the first findings from group discussions with adolescents and young adults started to come in, the news literacy lab went live in September of 2020. More than 30 media professionals, developmental editors and innovation drivers work on new ideas. They create and test prototypes that may incite young people to partake of journalistic information offers to a greater extend. There are a total of seven tracks that experiment with new approaches across publishing houses and broadcasters, working under headings such as "language", "video" or "collaboration". Scientific support for the news literacy lab is provided by the journalism experts of the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW Hamburg).

3. Collaboration with schools and educational institutions

Under the heading Open News Education (ONE), educational programmes, teaching materials and trainings for teachers are developed, targeted at promoting the mediation of news literacy in schools. This is the project's third column. Young people are faced with a gigantic flood of information via smartphones, internet and social media. Skills in dealing with news, posts, videos, messages and comments are essential for students as well as teachers to navigate safely in this ocean of oversupply. They require the ability to recognise and use reputable sources, basic knowledge about journalistic operating principles and an understanding of the role of journalism in a democracy. The HAW Hamburg and the Hamburg Ministry of Culture and Media jointly control the process, supported by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung) as their main project partner.

Media outlets from different segments – publishing houses, public and private broadcasters – have realised the need for a strong commitment to #UseTheNews. Under the common label, they promote an issue of outstanding significance for the industry and society as a whole. The further orientation of the project is flanked by a board of trustees composed of editors-in-chief and media experts, headed by a steering group consisting of Hamburg's Minister of Culture and Media Dr. Carsten Brosda, Julia Becker,

publisher at FUNKE Media Group, Prof. Dr. Kai Gniffke, Director General SWR and dpa's CEO Peter Kropsch.

> *#UseTheNews is not a sprint, #UseTheNews is a marathon that will extend over the coming years.*

The project is multi-layered and complex – all partners and supporters will need stamina along the way. Based on the study and the playbook, #UseTheNews is intended to develop into a national competence centre bundling valid data, knowledge and concepts. The project has already received the first requests from abroad, asking how #UseTheNews might be launched in other media markets as well.

The year 2024 will be an important milestone for #UseTheNews. It will be a "year of the news", celebrating the 175th anniversary of the founding of Wolffs Telegraphisches Bureau (the first ever news agency in Germany) and the 75th anniversary of the founding of dpa. Plans for a nationwide exhibition on the topic are underway.

The board of trustees

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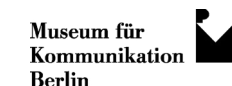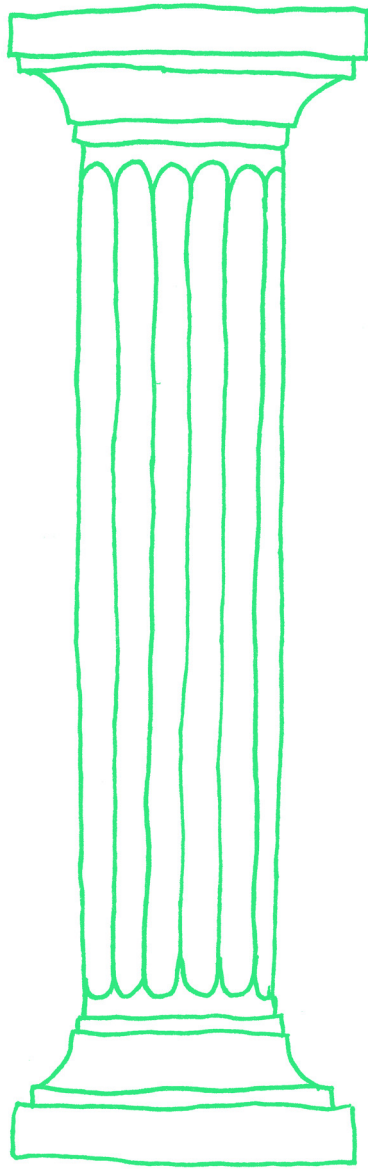
#UseTheNews partners

WHO WILL BRING US THE NEWS IN THE FUTURE?

Certainly not him.

Studies
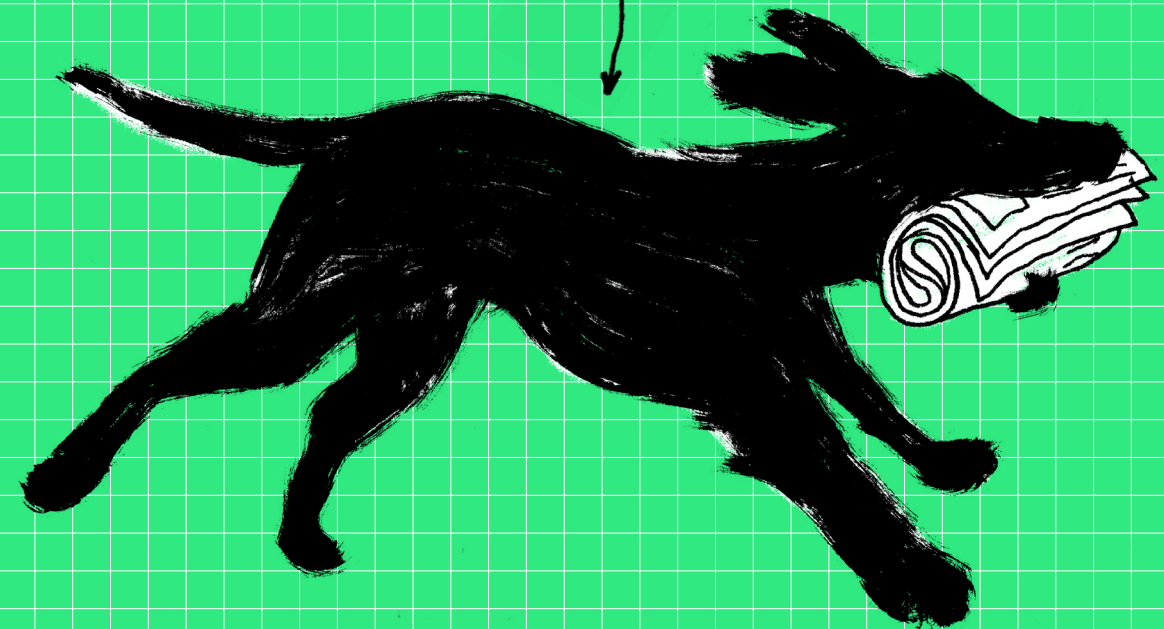
#UseTheNews study

In detail, the following four types of news orientation could be identified:

Journalistically information-oriented
high degree of interest in news, extensive use and great relevance of journalistic sources, low relevance of non-journalistic offers; well informed

Little information-oriented
low degree of interest in news, no use or relevance of journalistic sources as well as low use and relevance of non-journalistic offers; not well informed

Extensively information-oriented
high degree of interest in news, extensive use and high relevance of both journalistic and non-journalistic offers; well informed

Non-journalistically information-oriented
medium degree of interest in news, no use and relevance of journalistic sources, but high relevance of non-journalistic offers; not well informed

Five things the #UseTheNews study tells us about *adolescents* and *young adults*

In today's information landscape, news usage entails quite a few changes, especially for the younger generations: more content, more actors, more opportunities for consumption. What characterises the multifaceted use practices of adolescents and young adults, and where is the role of journalism in this? The #UseTheNews study shows how varied young peoples' attitudes towards news content are, how diverse the relevance of sources can be, and what is the most important motivation for all young users to seek information in the first place. There are five key findings we can take away from the study about adolescents and young adults.

1. There is no such thing as THE young target audience. There are major differences in news orientation between and within age groups.

Adolescents and young adults have different usage habits, interests, demands and needs with regard to news content. Very different types of news orientation are apparent within the same age and education groups. To put it precisely: While some almost exclusively use journalistic sources to satisfy their great thirst for information – and also regard this as relevant to forming their own opinions – other users prefer the contents of private players, such as actors and influencers. Still others are oriented towards both or neither, because they are not interested in news content at all.

The entire #UseTheNews study can be downloaded here:

dpaq.de/m5AUn
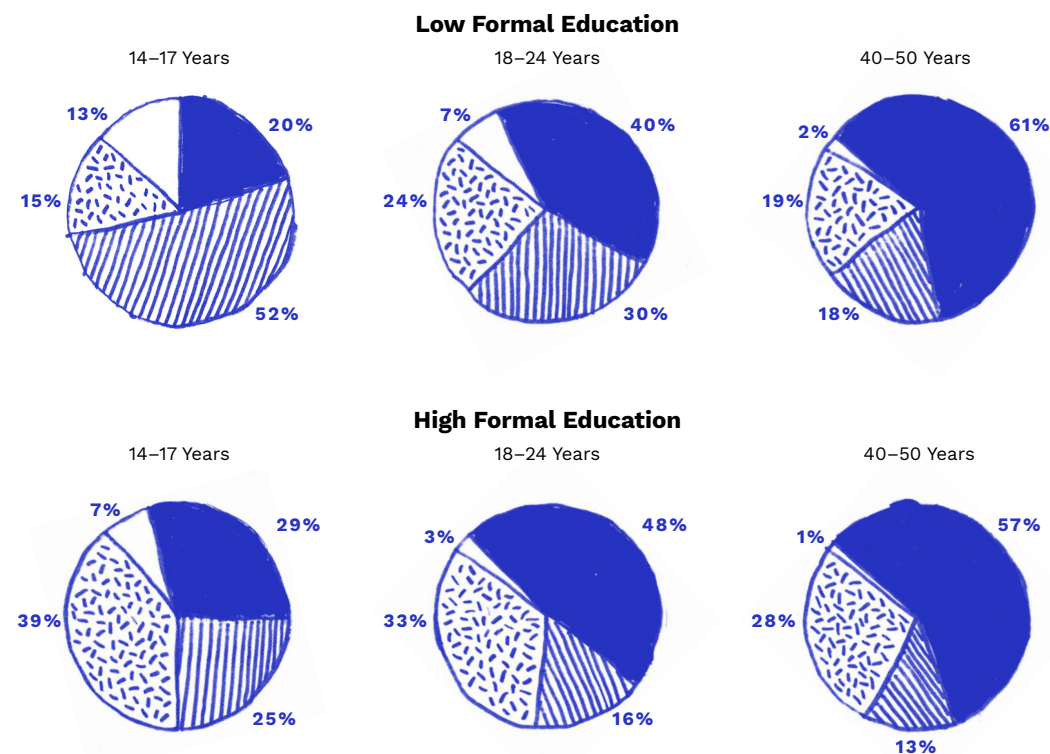
Figure 1: Types of general news orientation by age and education levels (in percent)

2. Journalism is relevant for most adolescents and young adults – for information purposes and for forming their own opinion.

Journalistic content is relevant for the majority of adolescents and young adults. However, they tend to consume this content not so much via social network platforms, but rather through the specific offers of well-known news brands on the internet, but also via radio, TV or print media. Nevertheless, social media are a part of everyday life and thus also a source of information. As far as the relevant players are concerned, they are mostly of the non-journalistic type – notably friends and family, as well as influencers and stars – to the same extent as journalists for some, exclusively for a small minority. All in all, it makes a difference where adolescents and young adults get their information: Those who mainly use journalistic sources are better informed with regard to society and politics, the media and journalism as well as current contemporary topics, independent of their age or degree of formal education.

"I keep up to date via TV a lot. For instance, different stations broadcast breakfast television in the morning (...) and therefore I always get the latest news in the morning already. (...) And through my parents, because they are quite active as far as reading the papers or watching the news is concerned, and they also talk to each other a lot while they are doing it, so I also get a lot that way. (...) On TikTok (...) you sometimes also get things that are happening around the world."
Susan, 15 years, high formal education

3. Adolescents and young adults are interested in news, but they sense a lack of personal relation to and relevance of topics covered by reporting.

While adolescents and young people are generally interested in news content, this only partially applies to political topics and classic "hard news". Most are united by a great interest in news about funny or bizarre events. In addition, some subgroups are particularly keen on information about stars, lifestyle, music and films, while others can also get enthusiastic about politics, international and local news as well as topics surrounding nature and the environment. Interest in reports about their own region or place of residence, the environment and nature as well as international events is much greater among young adults between 18 and 24 than among adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age.

"I'd say fashion, music, art, and also the environment, animals and things that are happening on the surface of things throughout the world. Like this Corona issue or war."
Lara, 20 years, high formal education

In general, young people expect journalism to convey information and facts rather than personal opinions. The majority of adolescents and young people criticise that there is often a lack of information on the background of events in journalistic reporting. At the same time, many users fail to see any relation to their own daily lives and miss arguments explaining why the reported topics are important. In addition, many young people share the view that there is too much coverage of certain issues. However, this weariness should not be confused with a general lack of interest in news. It just indicates that there are situations in which you no longer want to see or hear any more about topics that have already been dominating the news over a long period of time.

4. The ability to integrate with their social environment is the most important reason for young people to get informed.

Despite all differences concerning attitudes towards and usage of certain sources and platforms, adolescents and young adults are all united in their chief motivation for getting informed about topics and events: Young people want to participate – in conversations with their friends, acquaintances and family. In addition, adolescents keep up to date because they want to be able to join the debate in lessons at school. The motivation for getting informed of those who have a particularly broad range of interests

Susan, 15 years, high formal education:
"For me, it's extremely important that I can talk about things with other people, because that way you always have a topic of conversation. I think that if you can't participate in the discussion, you cannot really get integrated into the group."

"I like for emotional reasons, and I always like everything of my friends, just because they are my friends."
Lara, 20 years, high formal education

On the other hand, Ramona (16 years, high formal education) says:
"I do like. But especially on Instagram, it actually means nothing at all to me."

and comprehensive knowledge is also based on democratic theory. As opposed to the adolescents, most of the young adults cite wanting to live up to their role as a good citizen and contributing to democratic society as important motives for getting informed.

5. Not all young people are active online – and they assign diverse meanings to various practices such as liking, sharing or commenting.

Not all young people are active online. The majority of them have no interest in discussions and interaction on social network platforms. Adolescents in particular rather discuss current news content in personal conversations instead. Users who are either very comprehensively informed or predominantly not oriented to journalistic sources are those most likely to join the debate on social media, and it's them who shape the image outsiders may observe. In addition, young users attribute diverse meanings to the various interaction practices such as liking, sharing or commenting of contents. For instance, distributing "likes" to any number of contents has no meaning at all for most young users, while some regard it as an expression of real appreciation and emotion.

What *journalism* can take away from the #UseTheNews study

The findings from the #UseTheNews study suggest: Journalistic providers should develop and test ways of highlighting the everyday relevance of their offerings to adolescents and young adults. At the same time, they should demonstrate that their competencies and working methods make them better at delivering relevant information than other providers. Only

by solid craftsmanship as well as reliable and profound content, illuminated from different perspectives, can journalists successfully differentiate themselves from non-journalistic and opinionated players and convincingly create added value for which people are willing to pay money.

Thematic interests

In general, many adolescents report a great interest in news about funny or bizarre events. However, from a journalistic perspective, mainly focusing on such topics in the future would be thinking too short. Notably those parts of the target audience with a journalistic or extensive information orientation also have, among other things, a great interest in local reports, nature and the environment as well as international and political events. More in-depth analysis suggests that those who are interested in international events and politics are also attracted by health and education, nature and the environment, science and technology as well as local reports. The same is true for the thematic combination of science, technology and sports events, as well as reporting on stars combined with lifestyle, music & film and quirky news items. Naturally, these thematic groups don't mean that reporting should exclusively focus on these combinations. Nevertheless, they give an indication of how the various aspects can be weighted in the overall view. The fact that most adolescents are interested in funny or bizarre events suggests that entertaining contents are quite suitable to address the target audiences. However, their relative proportions should differ in the context of other contents, depending on the specific orientation type.

Disenchantment with topics

The majority of adolescents and young adults agree that there is too much coverage of certain topics. This is equally true for those with a low and those with a great degree of interest. However, it is important not to interpret the occasional expression of frustration as a general rejection of news or certain specific contents. Rather, there are situations in which users no longer want to see or hear any more about a certain topic, especially if they have already received plenty of information and feel sufficiently well-informed for the time being. Consequently, it is not advisable to completely remove important topics in order to avoid disenchantment with them. It seems a more commendable option to allow the users to hide certain contents themselves in specific use cases and if they feel the need to do so. This gives them the opportunity to shift their focus to something else for a change.

Previous knowledge

There is a wide range of interests and knowledge within the young user group. Therefore, it makes sense to pick the users up where they are with regard to existing prior knowledge, as this might render access to journalistic offers smoother for them. At the same time, it is important to not give the impression of being too trivial. It is a good solution to offer directions

within a news item on where users can access further information about history, background, explanations of terms, etc.

Online participation

The internet is part of everyday life for adolescents and they also use it to get information. However, this does not mean that they incessantly participate interactively. The majority neither participates via likes, nor through sharing or commenting of contents. The most active among young people are the extensively and non-journalistically information-oriented. But on the whole, it is a minority that shapes the publicly visible image of social media. Therefore, journalistic offers should not be tempted to focus too much on topics and opinions visible on social media. From two perspectives, one being that journalism should contribute to democratic opinion-making, the other that it needs users who are prepared to pay for contents they regard as valuable, it is important that journalism addresses different types of information orientation and also takes the demands of those adolescents into consideration who are not visible on social media.

Social media

Even though journalistic news content plays a comparatively small role on social media from a user point of view, those platforms, owing to their widespread use, often connect the young age group to journalistic offers by chance. Thus it is important that the added value journalism can provide becomes clear to young users through these chance contacts, particularly to those with little previous relation to journalistic offers. While emotional or dramatic contents corresponding to the functional logics of social media generate a lot of interaction, they are also interchangeable and not suitable to convince young users of the journalism concept.

Facts, analysis, opinion

The most important thing in reporting for all young people is the provision of information and facts, as well as more in-depth classifications and analyses of current events. As opposed to this, their interest in the personal opinions of journalists is significantly less pronounced. While this does not automatically imply that commentary and opinion pieces should not be offered at all, it is a clear hint that there should be a greater emphasis on the unbiased conveying of information, facts and classification of events. The majority of young people use social media, where they are faced with countless opinions of diverse actors. And precisely therein lies the opportunity for journalism to set itself apart and offer added value in terms of content.

"I comment, like or share news about current topics on a weekly basis."

LIKING

14 – 17 year olds		18 – 24 year olds	
35%		28%	
27%		32%	
73%		64%	
49%		73%	

COMMENTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

14 – 17 year olds		18 – 24 year olds	
30%		26%	
21%		19%	
56%		54%	
28%		46%	

SHARING

14 – 17 year olds		18 – 24 year olds	
14%		14%	
8%		10%	
39%		37%	
25%		32%	

Journalistically information-oriented

Little information-oriented

Extensively information-oriented

Non-journalistically information-oriented
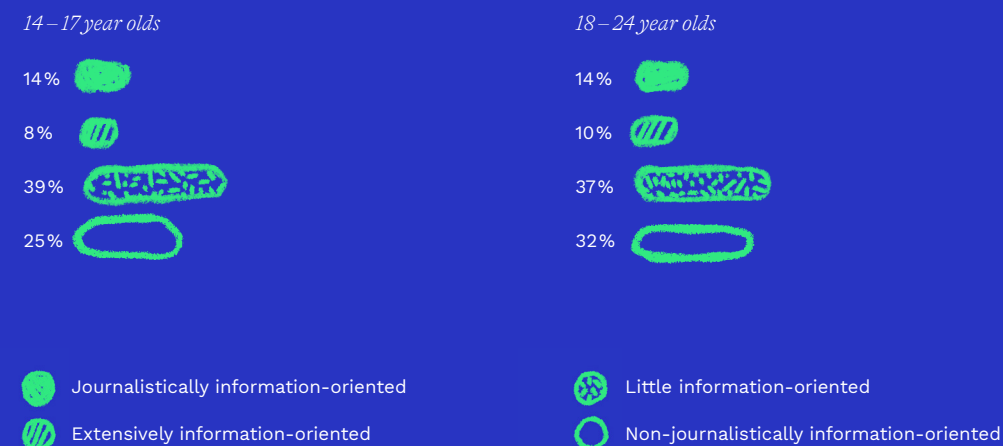
Question: How about you – do you like or comment or self-create news on current topics from your city, Germany or the world? Please specify all types of participation which you exercise during an average week. (Basis 14–17 year olds: n=494, basis 18–24 year olds: n = 500). #UseTheNews study, April 2021.
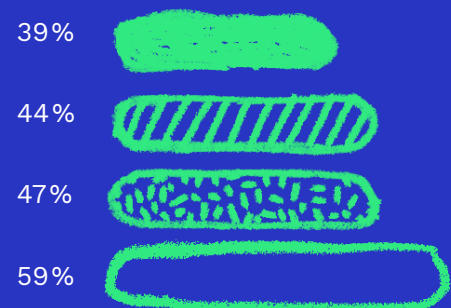
"Sometimes I miss the reference why the reported events are important for me."

I agree or tend to agree.

14 – 17 year olds

38%

59%

47%

67%

18 – 24 year olds

39%

44%

47%

59%

Journalistically information-oriented

Extensively information-oriented

Little information-oriented

Non-journalistically information-oriented

Question: To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements about journalistic media coverage?
(agree; tend to agree; neither agree nor disagree; tend to disagree; disagree) (Basis 14–17 year olds: n=494, basis 18–24 year olds: n=500).
#UseTheNews study, April 2021.

What *education policy* can take away from the #UseTheNews study

Adolescents and young adults grow up in a digital media environment, where they encounter a great variety of actors. While this may be advantageous in the context of entertainment-oriented media usage, because it means a large gain in diversity, this diversity also entails some risks with a view to information search and opinion formation. In the eyes of many adolescents and young adults, journalism is just one of many actors they encounter on the internet, and the claim to validity they attribute to journalistic content often does not differ from their estimation of individual statements. One reason for this is a lack of knowledge about journalistic working methods and structures. Apart from having the necessary skills for the classification of individual information items found on the internet, it is mandatory to know and understand the German media system and the role of journalism in a democracy, and to establish a connection of relevance for one's own everyday life.

The #UseTheNews study demonstrates how differently young people inform themselves, which sources they regard as relevant and how they evaluate journalistic coverage. In addition, knowledge about functions and working methods of journalism is limited. Therefore, it appears advisable to pay more attention to media education in schools. The goal should be a better understanding of basic functions of journalism within a democracy and the structure of the media system, including the role of public service broadcasting, the attention mechanisms of (social) media and the specific working methods of professional journalism. It seems appropriate to focus on a better understanding of two aspects: Firstly, the potential relevance of news for one's own everyday life and, secondly, why journalistic suppliers – owing to their skills and working methods – are better suited to provide relevant information than other players in the field. The following three starting points might be helpful: the relevancy of informative news for everyday life, functions and working methods of journalism and structures and attention logics of the media.

## Relevancy of informative news for everyday life

While journalistic offers play a certain role for many adolescents and young adults, a lot of them often don't recognise the significance of journalistic news for their own daily lives. In addition, the majority of young people

"How important are friends, family and acquaintances for opinion making, relative to news media and influencers?"
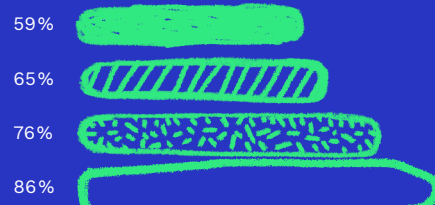
They are extremely important or very important.

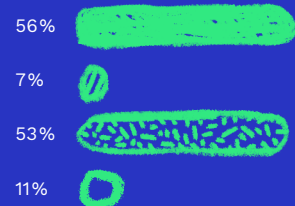### FRIENDS, FAMILY, ACQUAINTANCES

14 – 17 year olds

75%
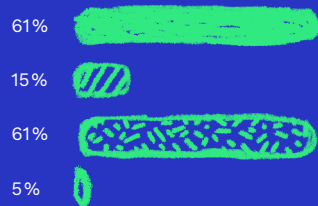71%
82%
75%

18 – 24 year olds

59%
65%
76%
86%
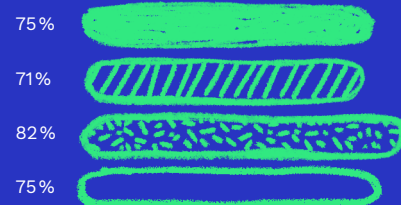
JOURNALISTIC NEWS MEDIA

14 – 17 year olds

56%
7%
53%
11%

18 – 24 year olds

61%
15%
61%
5%

INFLUENCERS

14 – 17 year olds
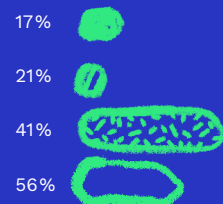
17%
21%
41%
56%
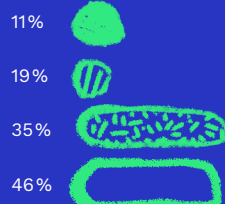
18 – 24 year olds

11%
19%
35%
46%

- Journalistically information-oriented
- Little information-oriented
- Extensively information-oriented
- Non-journalistically information-oriented

Question: In general, if you want to form an opinion on a topic that is important to you, how important are the following sources or people? (Basis 14–17 year olds: n=494, basis 18–24 year olds: n=500). #UseTheNews study, April 2021.

are also oriented towards non-journalistic players. On the one hand, this is due to the specific interests of this particular phase in life, on the other hand there's also a lack of meaning attributed to typical news topic. In this respect, two aspects are central: The most important reason for keeping up to date is being able to participate in conversations and discussions with friends and family. Young people integrate into their social environment that way. At the same time, young users sense a lack of relation of journalistic reporting to their personal daily lives and fail to see the relevance of covered topics.

The #UseTheNews study also indicates that those who feel they can move something politically have a much greater interest in keeping informed. If young people are aware of their participation opportunities in a democracy, it makes more sense to them to keep on top of things. Therefore, it seems expedient to further clarify the existing opportunities for participation in society. In conveying the relevance and meaning of news use, pedagogical concepts should generally aim to tie in with the respective types of information orientation and take into account their individual motivations to inform themselves.

Functions and working methods of journalism

In the course of imparting journalism-related knowledge, the function and working methods of journalism should be explained and the differences between journalistic and other providers of information should be clarified. The focus here is on the central working techniques of independent journalism: *What is part of the "craft" of journalism?* Here, guidelines can be explained, such as the two source principle, the claim to objective and reliable research, the existence and sequence of editorial conferences, the tasks of on-site correspondents, various journalistic formats and many more. The sum of these guidelines, including independence from business and politics, is what distinguishes journalism from non-professional actors. Apart from informing about journalistic working methods, it seems advisable to impart knowledge about the basic functions of journalism in a democracy. These include, among many others that should be discussed, critical and control functions, the creation of publicity and the provision of information for free opinion making to enable informed decisions.

Persons interested in journalism and news who use journalistic sources are better informed with regard to society & politics, media & journalism as well as contemporary and current topics, independent of their age and formal education. However, four out of five 14–17 year olds do not know who is responsible for monitoring compliance with the statutory broadcasting mandate of public service broadcasters (the figure goes up to 60 percent for the 18–24 year olds). If there is a basic interest in information, it becomes situationally important to decide which sources can be used to satisfy the demand for information. Consequently, fundamental knowledge about the media and journalism should already be imparted in schools.

Structures and logics of the media

Media-related education should aim to impart knowledge about the structures and fundamental logics of media (platforms) and explain Germany's media system. For example, the attention mechanisms and the algorithmically controlled selection of content on (social) media could be subjects of the debate, as could be a reflection on the informative value of the image of social media observable on the basis of likes, shares and comments. In addition, it is mandatory to impart knowledge about private and public service offers within the media system, including their respective particularities, forms of organisation, financing and regulation.

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Tie in to types of information orientation and consideration of the individual motivation to get informed

Relevance of information for everyday life

Information-oriented sense-making
Communicate the relevance of news information for one's own everyday life (everyday reference)

Participation-oriented sense-making
Communicate the relevance of journalism as the fourth pillar within a democracy

Motivation-oriented sense-making
Communicate possibilities to shape things (self-efficacy)

Structures and attention logics of the media

Explain basic media logics
Attention mechanisms of (social) media; algorithmically controlled selection of contents

Explain media system
Organisation and financing of public service and private media news providers

Working methods of journalism

Explain function of journalism
Enabling reliable information for balanced and free opinion making

Explain working methods of journalism
"Craft" – two source principle; objective and reliable research; editorial conferences; on-site correspondents

Clarify the differentiation of journalism from other actors
Independence from business, politics and ideology, reliable information which users don't have to check themselves

Figure 2: Three pillars of action potential for educational institutions

Studies on media and news usage

Domestic studies

ARD / ZDF
Onlinestudie

The ARD/ZDF-Onlinestudie (online study) collects data on internet use in Germany, which is updated annually. It focuses on the duration and activities of online usage.

Study design: quantitative telephone survey (CATI; dual frame sample; 60 % landline, 40 % mobile phone)
Frequency: annual
Sample: persons from age 14 in Germany
Publisher: ARD/ZDF-Forschungskommission

ARD / ZDF
Massenkommunikation Langzeitstudie

The ARD/ZDF-Massenkommunikation Langzeitstudie (long-term study mass communication) has been examining media usage in Germany for over 50 years now. It is the only representative intermedia study in the world that has been observing the media usage habits of the population over such a long period of time. Apart from media usage, it also collects data on daily routines such as sleeping, eating, personal care, gainful employment and domestic work. Activities and media use can be distinguished according to whether they took place at or away from home. Other central aspects of the study are the motives behind media use as well as the images and evaluation of the media from the population's perspective.

Study design: time budget study (CATI; dual frame sample; 60 % landline, 40 % mobile phone)
Frequency: annual
Sample: persons from age 14 in Germany
Publisher: ARD/ZDF-Forschungskommission

JIM-Studie
Jugend, Information, Medien

The JIM-study (Jugend Information, Medien – youth, information, media) has been performed since 1998 as a basic study on the media habits of 12–19 year olds. On the one hand, it maps general developments and media usage trends of the 12–19 year olds in Germany. On the other hand, individual examinations also take up current issues such as the handling of social media offers or problematic aspects of use. Among other things, the data is being used to develop new strategies and approaches for concepts in the fields of education, culture and work.

Study design: mixed mode design: 70 % computer assisted telephone interviews
Frequency: annual since 1998
Sample: 1200 respondents, representative sample for the 12–19 year olds in Germany
Publisher: Medienpädagogischer Forschungsverbund Südwest (mpfs) (composed of LFK, the state media authority for Baden-Württemberg and the state media authority for Rhineland-Palatinate) in cooperation with public service broadcaster Südwestrundfunk (SWR)

SINUS-Jugendstudie

The SINUS-Jugendstudie "Wie ticken Jugendliche?" (SINUS youth study – "What makes adolescents tick?") examines the living environments of 14–17 year olds every four years. The study is performed by the SINUS Institute and gives insights into the socio-cultural condition of the young generation, collecting data on various aspects of the adolescents' daily lives and realities (school, career choices, health, sports, politics, etc.).

Study design: qualitative interviews (combined with images such as drawings, photos and collages as well as original sound bites of the adolescents questioned)
Frequency: every four years
Sample: 14–17 year olds in Germany
Publisher: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb; Federal Agency for Civic Education) and various associations and foundations

Mediengewichtungsstudie

The Mediengewichtungsstudie (media weighting study) of the state media authorities has been performed biannually since 2015. On the basis of a population representative survey, it determines the daily reach and subjective importance of individual media genres (TV, radio, daily newspapers, magazines, internet) as a source of information on current events. Thus the study provides important trend data on the development of (informative) media use. In addition, the following aspects are also considered in a differentiated manner: the informative usage of the internet, the use of media intermediaries and opinion making on local topics. So, on the one hand, the study serves to ascertain the weighting of opinion formation for the media diversity monitor of the media authorities. On the other hand, its results provide a solid empirical basis for decisions taken by the state media authorities.

Study design: quantitative telephone and online interviews (70 % CATI/30 % CAWI)
Frequency: biannual
Sample: persons from age 14 in Germany
Publisher: state media authorities

Aktuelle Informationsportfolios

Where and how do digital natives get their information? To find out more about information usage of adolescents and young adults, the state media authorities have commissioned the study "Aktuelle Informationsportfolios" (current information portfolios). The results show that the young target groups mainly get their information about the Corona pandemic – but also on political and social issues – online. Online portals and social media offerings are ahead with a good 60 percent each. However, one in two young people also regularly uses classic media – meaning TV, radio or newspapers – for information purposes. 62 percent of respondents stated that they came across information by chance online. In addition, 39 percent of the 14–29 year olds did no longer remember with certainty where they had read or heard individual information items. These figures underline that digital platforms are increasingly regarded as sources of information. And this affects journalistic business models as well as news literacy.

Study design: quantitative survey via online access panel (n=3010 respondents)
Frequency: one time survey
Sample: German-speaking population between 14 and 29 years of age with internet access
Publisher: state media authorities

Intermediäre und Meinungsbildung

Since 2016, the population representative study Intermediäre und Meinungsbildung (intermediaries and opinion forming) has been collecting biannual data on the (informative) use and the subjective significance of social networks, video portals, search engines and instant messengers at genre and offer level. Furthermore, the study examines the role of media intermediaries as gatekeepers for journalistic-editorial and other information offers. Study results are published in the form of a biannual chart report and an introductory presentation as part of the annual diversity report of the media authorities. The study supplies the state media authorities with continuous current empirical data on the development of intermediary use and contributes to evidence-based decision making.

Study design: quantitative telephone and online interviews (70 % CATI/30 % CAWI)
Frequency: biannual
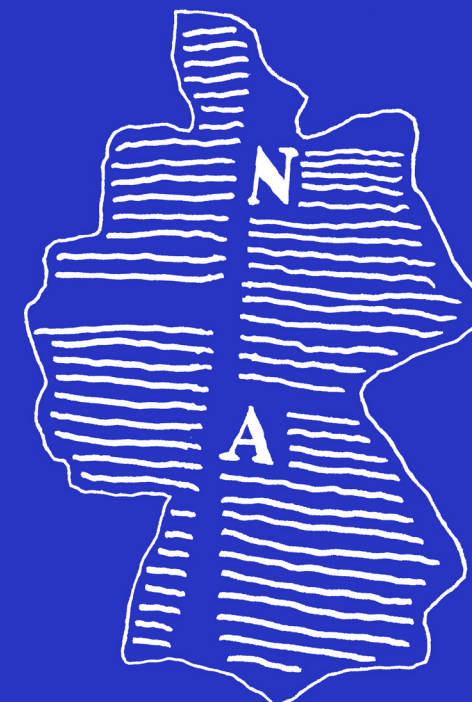**Sample:** persons from age 14 in Germany
Publisher: state media authorities

International studies

Reuters Institute
Digital News Report

Since 2012, the Reuters Institute Digital News Report has been compiled annually under the auspices of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism based in Oxford, UK. By now, the study providing insights into general trends and national particularities of news usage is performed in more than 40 countries. The study's emphasis is on the offers and platforms used as well as individual news-related attitudes. Since 2013, the Leibniz-Institut für Medienforschung | Hans-Bredow-Institut has been the cooperation partner responsible for the German part of the study. In 2020, the survey was supported by the German state media authorities and public service broadcaster Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF).

Study design: quantitative online survey
Frequency: annual
Sample: internet users from age 18 in the respective countries
Publisher: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Reuters x Flamingo Report

The study "How Young People Consume News and the Implications for Mainstream Media" is an addition to the annual findings of the Reuters Institute Digital News Report and supplies insights on trends in young peoples' news usage. The study was centred on the two main questions "How do young people consume news?" and "How can news channels attract young readers, listeners and spectators?" The insights gathered were used as a basis for action potentials of traditional mass media.

Study design: combination of a two-week digital tracking study (smartphone, n=20), digital diaries via app for three days (n=16), qualitative guided 90-minute interviews (n=16) as well as joint interviews with friends of the respondents
Frequency: one time survey
Sample: 18–35 year olds in the US and the UK
Publisher: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and Flamingo

Pew Research studies

The Pew Research Center performs opinion polls, content analysis and other data-driven social science surveys of the US population, including surveys on media and news usage. For instance, the study "News Use Across Social Media Platforms in 2020" examined how US citizens receive their news in the digital age. The study focused on platforms used, especially social media, and devices employed to receive news.

Study design: quantitative online survey (Open Access Panel OAP, American Trends Panel (ATP))
Frequency: one time survey
Sample: US population from age 18.

Common Sense Media

In January 2020 – before the onset of the pandemic – Common Sense Media performed the study "Teens and News: The Influencers, Celebrities, and Platforms They Say Matter Most". The survey examined the kind of news sources used by adolescents, the frequency with which they used these sources and their sentiments towards news. The study is a follow-up to the report "News and America's Kids: How Young People Perceive and Are Impacted by the News" published in 2017. It documents the changes in news consumption habits and attitudes of adolescents in the US between 2017 and 2020.
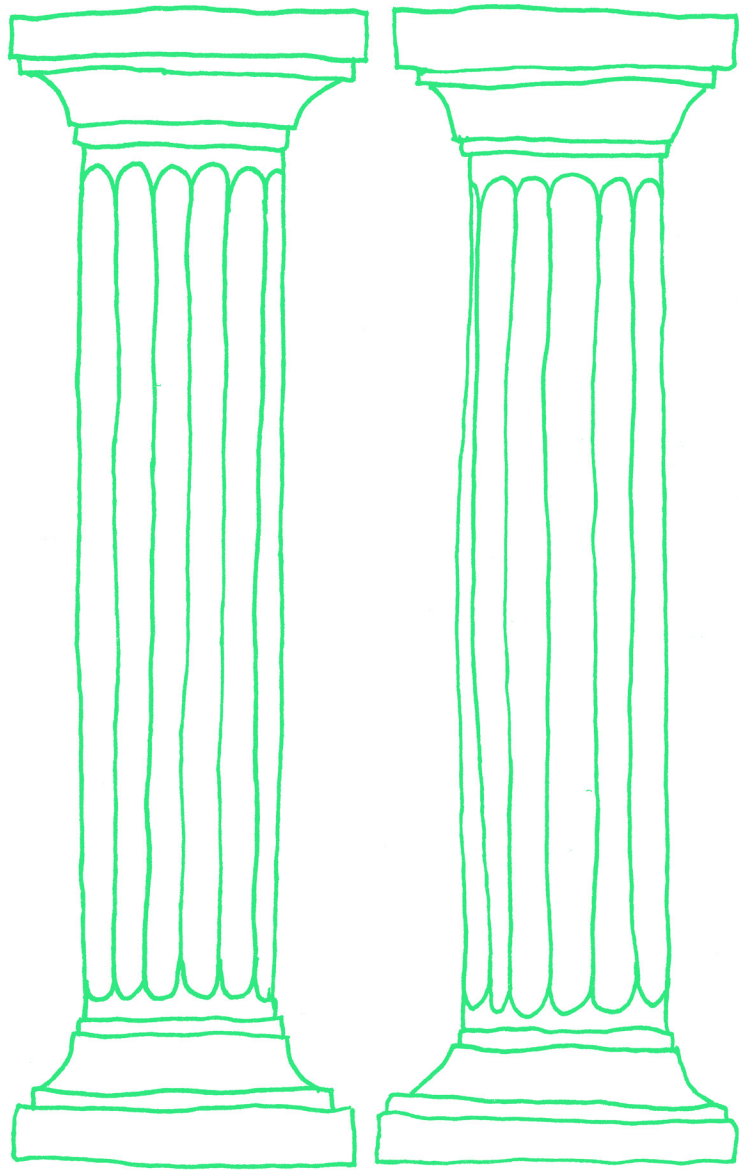
Study design: online survey with 804 adolescents, 603 using the SSRS Probability Panel and 201 an opt-in web panel
Frequency: performed twice (update 2017 report)
Sample: 13–18 year olds in the US
Principal: Common Sense Media

News Literacy Lab

HOW DO WE (DIS)SOLVE THIS?

Methods · Best Practices · Tracks

News Literacy Lab

for collaborative innovation

News Literacy Lab – value proposition

"The News Literacy Lab is a place for product and innovation managers from media outlets, who want to develop contemporary news offers for adolescents and young adults and create innovation collaboratively. Based on news usage studies, tracks and teams create and optimise target group oriented products, which they could not have realised on their own. A continuous transfer of knowledge is ensured by the interlinking of science and media practice, through conferences, workshops, webinars and joint communication platforms."

The News Literacy Lab started operations in parallel to the #UseTheNews study in September of 2020, and the first findings from the group discussions with adolescents and young adults have flown into the work. More than 30 editors, product managers and innovators from media outlets of different origins work together in interdisciplinary teams to develop new ideas for contemporary news offers. Based on additional insights from the study on news usage, the News Literacy Lab optimises existing news formats and develops innovative concepts, tailored to the preferences of the young audience. The close interlinking of science and media practice ensures a permanent transfer of know how. Experts for communication and media at the University of Applied Sciences (HAW) Hamburg, led by Prof. Dr. Christian Stöcker, accompany and moderate the News Literacy Lab.

Digitization has changed the media outlets in quite a number of ways. Today's newsrooms focus on the product and its users. Teams from diverse disciplines collaborate to jointly create target group oriented products. Ideally, they practice collaborative product thinking. To do justice to this concept, the Product Field method is used for product development in the lab. This method for collaborative product thinking is not only used to develop innovative news offers in the News Literacy Lab – the lab itself was regarded as a product for media outlets and the value proposition to the #UseTheNews members was elaborated by the team with the help of The Product Field. In workshops, the #UseTheNews partners presented their existing or emerging "young" news products and shared their experiences during product development, in order to learn from one another and find further joint innovative approaches. The diverse wealth of experience of the partners makes #UseTheNews project and work in the lab unique.

by Petra Petruccio,
Fiete Stegers and
Prof. Dr. Christian Stöcker

In the Best Practices section, the partners present their successful digital media products for young people. They give insights into the challenges and their idea, share tips and / or findings from their work and give information on the upcoming steps of development.

Furthermore, the News Literacy Lab took a look at International Best Practices and media products for young people. A selection is presented in this playbook. This includes well-established media such as the TikTok product of The Washington Post or the Instagram channel of The New York Times, but it also showcases smaller, less well-known, but nevertheless promising "young" news products. The young media makers from start-ups like ReachTeens Consulting or RocaNews give insights into their success factors and their ideas on changes established media outlets should make.

In parallel to the stocktaking of Best Practices, the teams in the #UseTheNews tracks started to operate. Methodically accompanied and moderated by Klaus-Peter Frahm (The Product Field), the partners jointly identified relevant and urgent issues, which they intend to continuously address in the future. Thus the first tracks Formats, Collaboration, Product / Brand, Language, Topics, Video and Audio / Podcast emerged. The #UseTheNews partners bundled their competencies in teams to collaboratively embark on innovative product developments and the realisation of initial pilot projects. There was a wide variety of approaches. For instance, the Formats track produced and tested a news comic and the track Collaboration developed a join-in action across media. While the team of track Product / Brand developed ideas on how to expand or optimise an existing payment model, the track Language experimentally tested language variants of news, independent of editorial brands. The track Topics evaluated scientific studies and interviewed young media makers, to identify relevant topics for the young target audience. The track Video created a joint prototype for a TikTok format and the track Audio / Podcast brought podcast producers together for an exchange of ideas and the collaborative development of new product ideas. Some tracks and media outlets used the

expertise and the network of the innovation hub Media Lab Bayern or co-operated with start-ups also from Hamburg-based next media accelerator.

The teams working in the tracks took the current findings of the #UseTheNews study and other relevant studies into account (see overview of studies in section 1). Products and prototypes are developed in close exchange with young audiences, in part they are directly produced by the young generation. Work in the tracks is accompanied by regular webinars, in order to ensure the flow of new impulses from outside, but also to stay in touch with the entire #UseTheNews network, and to profit from synergies across tracks. Apart from result reports from the tracks, the webinars so far also gave regular updates from the study, lectures on product management and product thinking as well as a workshop discussion with Wolgang Blau about "Climate change and journalism", to explore further joint project and product ideas.

Productify the newsroom

The word *"product"* is new in newsroom jargon. Why it absolutely belongs there, how it got to this point and how newsrooms develop new products for the young target audience.

by Lina Timm

Petra Petruccio is a research assistant in the Information Department at the Faculty Design, Media and Information of HAW Hamburg since 2017, and has been a postgraduate student in the area of journalism and communication studies, notably digital communication, at the University of Hamburg since 2020. She coordinates and moderates the News Literacy Lab.

Prof. Dr. Christian Stöcker is a cognitive psychologist and has been a professor in the Information Department at HAW Hamburg since 2016. He is responsible for the master programme Digital Communication, where students produce the online magazine FINK.HAMBURG in the HAW's own newsroom. Prior to this, Christian Stöcker was in charge of the Net World Department at SPIEGEL ONLINE.

Fiete Stegers is a research assistant in the Information Department at HAW Hamburg. In this capacity, he was in charge of the project Klickwinkel for the promotion of media literacy among adolescents and teachers from 2018 to 2021. At present, he coordinates the area Open News Education of #UseTheNews. Prior to this, he was a net world editor for public service broadcaster NDR. Fiete Stegers also works as a trainer for research and verification in the education of journalists.

Until recently, editors in newsrooms had little relation to the word "product". Then the word "product owner" started to appear in the e-mail signatures of media outlets. By now, product thinking is one of the central pillars for innovation teams and should be part of every journalist's repertoire. B*ut why is product thinking so important*?

For a long time, there was only one journalistic product per media outlet: Publishing houses printed newspapers and magazines, TV stations produced broadcasts and radio stations made radio programmes. With the advent of the internet, all of them got their own website, giving everyone an additional distribution channel through which they could transmit content. And with the smartphone came the apps, followed by social networks and, finally, newsletters and podcasts.

With the diversification of distribution channels, it became more important to adapt contents to the channels. And because of the brisk competition on the internet market, it became crucial to tailor the contents to the users as well. *Why?* The longer a product is on the market, the higher the quality expectations of users. In the beginning, they are delighted that there is anything at all. When there is competition, users start to compare and choose the offer they regard as the best for them. And a "good" product is always determined by three parameters: (1) price, (2) convenience of use and (3) precise fit to the users' demands. Users have different prior-

ities with regard to these parameters and they are quite prepared to make concessions, when at least two of the parameters apply. If something is convenient and fits perfectly, it may cost more. If something is cheap and convenient to use, it does not have to be an exact fit.

Many social media platforms are textbook examples for this principle: Their usage costs nothing *(price)*, all platforms boast a sophisticatedly smooth user experience *(convenience)* and their algorithms aim to hit their target audiences' interests more and more accurately *(tie in to the demands of users)*.

This is the environment in which news has to compete – and many providers still do too little. Classical product development is not going to get you there. Nowadays, if you have to adapt your contents to the channel AND the users, lots of unknown variables emerge. In the past, if a publisher had a new magazine, they could take the business plan of an existing magazine, change a few numbers, and it was a good enough fit. But then, both magazines ended up side by side at the newsagent's, while today a podcast, for example, has totally different parameters from content for TikTok when it comes to cost of production, effort, marketing, target audience and use scenario.

Thus, in the digital world, we need to find new ways. Innovation methods like Lean Startup or Design Thinking try to figure out the many unknowns and minimise risks. To achieve this, these methods do not blindly follow their user's own assumptions, but give them thorough and timely test runs.

Media Lab Bayern has been teaching these methods to start-ups and entrepreneurs since 2015. For the latter, a two-month part-time programme has proven itself, which teaches methods and immediately applies. The main tool is interviews with users, to get to know their problems and identify market niches, in which ideas can be developed and strategically tested. Within the scope of #UseTheNews, Media Lab Bayern has, among others, methodically accompanied the following media companies in developing new products for young, digital target audiences:

100 second news for East Frisia

The Zeitungsgruppe Ostfriesland (ZGO, East Frisian newspaper group) has been dealing with access to young target groups for some time now. In the course of consulting Media Lab Bayern, they looked at local formats in particular. During their interviews with users, they heard a lot of praise for Tagesschau in 100 Sekunden (daily news in 100 seconds). The demands behind this: The format does not take up too much of one's time and supplies all the information required to participate in a conversation. As a result, ZGO produced a short, simple test video with local news and played this to young East Frisians. Outcome: The format works, but ZGO does not have sufficient production resources yet to meet the target group's quality expectations. If ZGO had set up this project without a test run, lots of resources would have gone into videos that would not have worked (yet).

How to turn young users into subscribers?

NOZ Medien took the topic "business model" to the Media Lab with them. The question: *Do young users pay for news?* Interviews revealed that many regard the subscription ordering processes as too much of an effort and see no added value in a lot of the contents. Subsequently, NOZ developed ideas for new distribution channels and tested a Digital-Young-Abo (digital subscription for the young).

The subscription was supposed to cost 10 cents per article and a maximum of EUR 4.90 per month. The outcome: While the young target audience was quite willing to pay, conversions did not increase significantly. If NOZ had rolled out the Digital-Young-Abo without test runs, a lot of time would have been dedicated to a development that would not have yielded the desired results.

Both examples demonstrate: Product thinking should not be limited to the innovations department, but should be practiced every day by each employee.

How do you get there as a newsroom? With a tool called methodological competency. Just as they learn to research and write, journalists should also study innovation methods, in order to know how to observe user behaviour and test ideas in such a way that maximum results are achieved with a minimum of expenditure.

As CEO of Medien.Bayern GmbH, Lina Timm fosters the digital transformation of the media sector. After her studies at Deutsche Journalistenschule, she worked for FAS, ZEIT and ProSieben. In 2015, she founded Media Lab Bayern, a company that today supports entrepreneurs and start-ups in the development of media innovations at two locations in Munich and Ansbach.

Hands-on product thinking with The Product Field

by Klaus-Peter Frahm

When it comes to shaping the future of journalism, the term product thinking comes up at some point. And rightly so, because only by thinking of editorial deliverables as a product can we ensure they are valuable for everyone involved. That goes for the people who consume them as well as those who produce, distribute and monetise them.

Therefore, product thinking in journalism means not only focusing on the usefulness and desirability of a content or format, but also focusing on its marketability, its feasibility (internal framework) and viability (strategic quality). It is important to look at the interplay of these factors together with everyone who is involved across all departments, and to focus on the product as the element that aligns perspectives and interests.

This is where the Product Field helps

The Product Field is the established and practical method for collaborative product thinking. It helps teams and entire organisations to develop a common view of all product-related aspects and gain a shared understanding of the interrelation and value contributions of all stakeholders.

This provides orientation and sheds light on any deficiencies and stumbling blocks standing in the way of successful product development. And it helps with choosing the methods to address the challenges that have been identified. The work is done in four steps, which are briefly described below – and which should be repeated regularly alongside the agile and strategic routines of the organisation (such as release planning, road mapping, setting of quarterly targets, etc.).

How does this work in practice?

The Product Field is primarily used as a workshop method. A product manager invites a group of participants to a workshop space to illuminate a product or product idea from all perspectives, identify where action must be taken and define specific measures.

A detailed description of the Product Field as a methodical framework for product thinking in complex environments and its practical application can be found in the Product Field Reference Guide, freely available at:

read.productfield.com
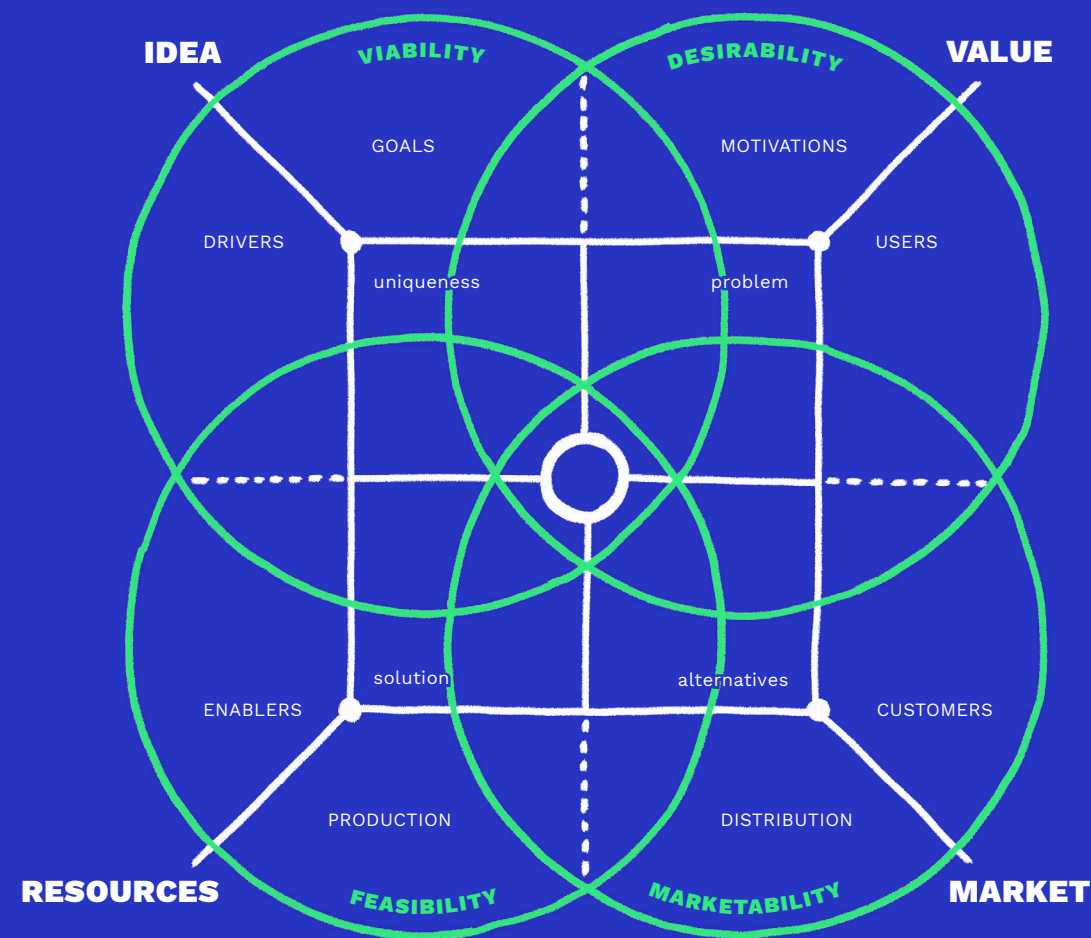
01 FRAME
Establishing a common frame of reference

A common frame of reference is a prerequisite for the development of a common point of view. The Product Field creates this frame. It does so through its visual manifestation in the form of a workshop canvas and through creating a shared vocabulary for product-related, cross-functional communication.

02 MAP
Mapping insights from all perspectives

The more incomplete and unbalanced a product development effort, the less likely it is to be successful. The Product Field makes it immediately apparent if important aspects are missing from the analysis or when certain perspectives are given too much weight and thus jeopardise sustainable product success.

03 CHECK
Checking interrelations and conceptual quality

The fate of any product development is decided by the interplay of all the factors at work. The Product Field helps to systematically examine the relationships between all mapped information and perspectives and thus the conceptual quality of the product development.

04 FIND
Identifying success-critical weak points in context

The more obvious the risks of a product development are, the clearer the need for action becomes for all involved. The Product Field helps to identify weaknesses and opportunities in a strategic, organisational and operative context, and to derive specific measures.

It is crucial for the circle of participants to be sufficiently diverse, meaning that it should not only include editors or developers, but staff from sales, marketing, management, customer services and – if it makes sense with regard to the product – legal, human resources and finance as well. After all, each of their perspectives is valuable and often decisive for success.

It is advisable to have the workshop moderated professionally, so it runs in a structured and open-ended manner. This applies to classic on-site workshops on as well as virtual events on platforms such as Miro.com or Mural.co. The typical duration of a workshop is three to five hours, depending on the complexity of the product and the participants' level of commitment.

Product Field Software

The fastest and easiest way to apply The Product Field is to use the software tool developed by the authors of the method. It is called Field and helps product managers to systematically operationalise their product thinking. Specifically, the software helps to

- fully describe products, services, features, projects and ideas in a guided process and a product logical manner;

- obtain diverse stakeholder perspectives without having to organise a workshop;

- create a coherent overall picture and constantly keep it up to date;

- recognise the need for action and select suitable methods and

- communicate findings, decisions and upcoming steps comprehensibly to different groups of stakeholders.

Media organisations using the Product Field include ARD, ZDF, dpa and Pressedruck.

Field is available for free at field.so.

Klaus-Peter Frahm is co-founder and CEO of Field.so and co-creator of The Product Field. Since 1995, he has been developing digital products for start-ups and established companies. Most recently, he was in charge of innovation management at Deutsche Presse-Agentur. Klaus-Peter Frahm is co-author of The Product Field Reference Guide, an SXSW bestseller about the nature and practical value of product thinking.

Best Practices

DELIVERING GOOD CONTENT

Young news offers in Germany

tagesschau (ARD-AKTUELL)
on TikTok

About *915.000* followers at the end of July 2021, 22 million likes

Challenge

tagesschau has the claim to be the 24/7 news provider in Germany that succeeds in reaching all population groups, regardless of their age, income and place of residence, and takes up the realities of their lives. For quite some time, this feat can no longer be achieved by merely playing the traditional channels – and that is why tagesschau has been present on third-party platforms for years. TikTok is getting increasingly popular in Germany, especially among (predominately female) adolescents between 13 and 19 years of age. This is a target audience which tagesschau has difficulty reaching, even on other social media channels.

The question is, though: *How do you present a reputable news brand on a platform that is usually filled with creative content such as dance, music and comedy?* The answer to this is a twofold strategy, a mix of journalistic content and an entertaining peek behind the scenes of Germany's most popular news programme on TV. The main objective was to sound out the platform's potential for conveying serious news and, at the same time, render the brand more present and approachable with younger target audiences via short videos in typical TikTok style.

From the onset, this step was greeted with a mixed response. On the one hand, there was lots of criticism and headwind, since some doubted the platform's seriousness. But on the other hand, we also received a lot of praise for the courageous step of being the first major media brand present on TikTok.

Idea

The TikTok videos are produced by tagesschau's social media team. Apart from well-known TV personalities, they also showcase new faces. The team orients its production

Project type
TikTok channel for conveying news to a very young target audience, aiming to render the brand more present and approachable with the target group.

Target group
13–19 year olds

Project start
November 2019

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
ARD-aktuell, Department of Strategy and Innovation
Editor in Chief: Marcus Bornheim
Department Head:
Andreas Lützkendorf
Project Lead: Timo Spieß

towards current challenges and trends on the platform (when appropriate), but – in close exchange with the community – also sets its own topics, which particularly concern the young users' living environments. It is our objective to interpret tagesschau for TikTok: self-deprecating, entertaining, but also – naturally – reliable as usual. And, extremely important: no cringing, no breaking with the role of the speakers.

When identifying topics, the team is guided by the following principles: The news topic is suitable for tagesschau *(high relevancy)*, it has conversation value in the target audience, the narrative approach is close to the target audience *(what is it all about?)* and, as a rule, the topic is condensed to a question the target audience is asking itself. At the same time, the team pays attention that the videos are visually attractive and fast-paced.

Outlook

Owing to the great success, tagesschau has turned the TikTok project into a regular operation by now.

Positive:

News and politics can work on TikTok, especially when explanatory videos are involved and when reference is made to daily life. Talking heads and brevity help with reach. The very young community knows tagesschau and its faces and is pleased when they produce exclusive TikTok content. Humorous content in particular gets shared.

@tagesschau

Provinz Xinjiang

tagesschau could neva 02-03   421

thekenuwe
Doch safe 02-04   16

@tagesschau könnt ihr dass auch ? 😂 1133
02-03

@tagesschau OMG BITTE BITTE   39
02-04

Zwangsarbeit

TikTok
@tagesschau

Not so positive

Reach is extremely varied and non-transparent. In addition, we could not dispel accusations of censorship so far – but we also did not corroborate them (so why not have more political content on TikTok?). Furthermore, there are still open questions regarding data protection.

TikTok
@tagesschau

tagesschau (ARD-AKTUELL)
App 3.0

by Christian Radler

Challenge & Idea

How do we develop a product further, if its last major change in design was met with a rather mixed response from its regular users? In 2016, a major part of our users was taken aback when we switched to the new version 2.0 of the tagesschau app virtually overnight. This included a radical departure from a generic box surface to an app where full-surface upright clips were now telling the most important news. At the time, something like this simply did not exist in the world of news. Many users opened the updated app and did not recognise a thing.

However, over the ensuing months, our audience got used to the new clip format, and usage figures as well as the quality of reviews on AppStore and PlayStore trended up again. One reason behind this certainly was that we systematically analysed tens of thousands of e-mails and reviews concerning the new app and implemented many suggestions for improvement. We kept the clip format, though, since it had definitely found its audience by then.

But, starting in 2018, we became restless again, because more and more story formats – where users decide for themselves at which speed they want to consume the contents – turned up on social media. Our app did not offer this feature yet, and even though it had won heaps of awards in the meantime, it started to seem a little outdated.

So we came up with new concepts for the videos on the apps' homepage yet again, and we took this opportunity to give the app an almost complete overhaul. We wanted it to provide an even bigger stage for videos. The switch from the clip to the story format brought a change in navigation: scrolling (vertical swipe gesture)

Project type
Optimisation of the vertical video app in response to the story trend on social media

Target group
People owning a smartphone/tablet, especially if they are consuming news in the story format

Project start
Summer 2019, launch in March 2020

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
ARD-aktuell, Department of Strategy and Innovation
Department Head: Andreas Lützkendorf
Product Owner: Christian Radler

And their attitude towards our product was not the only thing that changed about our audience, but their composition as well. Our own surveys through the app have yielded that the share of young women among the users of the tagessschau app is rising significantly now. This is not typical for news apps and may be due to our adaption of the story format. Another fact that deserves to be mentioned is that another significant user group alongside the Generation Z is people around 50.

Incidentally, the cropping tool still helps us select the appropriate image section for the vertical videos. It automatically analyses every single image and then gives the editor a suggestion on the thematic focus. Thus the videos always display the relevant image section, even in the vertical format. And if you turn your cell phone around, you can watch the same film in a horizontal format.

Significant increase in the share of users under 25.

Constant store reviews of between 4.5 and 4.7 stars.

Usage more than doubled due to Corona.

Outlook

At the moment, we are working on automatically generated text elements in the app.

was replaced by swiping (horizontal swipe gesture). This had profound consequences for the architecture and operating logic of the new app.

As opposed to 2016, we let tens of thousands of users beta-test the future tagesschau app before the big update. And afterwards, we analysed thousands of direct feedbacks and in many cases immediately implemented the suggestions for improvement in the app. As a result, the release of the tagesschau app 3.0 in March 2020 was greeted with a lot more approval from users than the launch of 2.0 several years before.

What was your most important finding?

"A three months beta test with tens of thousands of users was the key to success for an optimisation of the tagesschau app 3.0 prior to the official launch."
Christian Radler, Head R&D, tagesschau

tagesschau.de/app

The cropping tool of the tagesschau app

funk
the content network of ARD and ZDF

Background

Over the past years, a lot has changed in the media usage of adolescents and young people – it is shifting more and more to the internet. The use of third-party platforms plays a great part here. While new and innovative media products on third-party platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Snapchat spring up from the ground, classic linear TV is losing more and more of its significance for the young target audience. ARD and ZDF respond to this change with funk. In October of 2014, the Ministers President officially voted in favour of going down this road, and on October 1st, 2016, the joint content network of ARD and ZDF was launched with 40 formats. funk has a special mandate for an online-only offer, bearing in mind that this is requirement for the orientation of public service content towards a young target audience (§ 33 MStV – Jugendangebot, previously § 11g RStV).For the first time in the history of public service broadcasting, content is produced for funk that has explicitly been designed for social networks such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and TikTok.

by Sonja Ternes

Challenge

Since funk is moving in a rapidly changing environment, the content network wants and must evolve continuously, to reach users between ages 14 and 29 even better. Consequently, funk has to remain agile, albeit with an unchanged budget. As a result, funk keeps on questioning itself and its projects and adapting the portfolio.

Idea

Life realities in the age range from 14 to 29 differ too greatly for there being only ONE offer for all. Therefore, funk already considers the future target audiences during format development and gets their feedback. *Should a format entertain, inform or give orientation? Which platform is suited to the content and where does it find the target audience it is designed for?* The core target audience of a format is basically determined by their demands (entertainment, ori-

Four years after the launch of funk, *82%* of the 14–29 year olds know funk or at least one of its formats; 70 % of the target audience have already used funk's contents (awareness study, online survey, 1st wave).

entation, information), their age cluster (14–16, 17–19, 20–24 and 25–29), their gender (male, female, diverse) and their interests. This has created a present network of more than 60 different formats that refer to each other when there are intersections among the users. So there is no ONE channel, where everything can be found, but a network of contents.

Project type
Content network of ARD and ZDF with more than 60 formats, for example on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and TikTok

Target group
14–29 year olds

Project start
October 2016

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
ARD and ZDF

Funding
As a joint offer of public service broadcasters ARD and ZDF, funk is financed by the broadcasting fee. In the current business year 2021, funk's budget amounts to EUR 44.7 million.

funk.net

What was your most important finding?

"For a network like funk it is important, to develop content FOR and WITH the target audiences and to sound out the potential of the platforms. It is not a problem to make mistakes here, as long as the experiences and learnings from them flow into further development."
Sonja Ternes, Deputy Head of Communication, funk

jule
young readers initiative

Stadtkind Stuttgart

Von 0711 bis fünf Uhr morgens, von Musik und Kunst bis hin zu Mode: Stadtkind Stuttgart ist deine digitale Homebase für spannende Geschichten aus der Stadt.
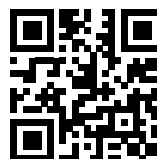
Best Cases from the Newspaper Knowledge Network

The goal: to reach young target groups with journalism. Several beacons of the newspaper industry are presented individually here in the Playbook. At jule : young readers initiative, the newspapers' network for addressing young target groups, we know of even more exciting offers from local media:

The Rheinische Post (RP, Düsseldorf), for example, is demonstrating how local journalism works on Instagram with its #rheinstories: Local stories are produced "Instagram first" and then adapted for online, print and podcasts. The radical reversal of publishing and production logic brings thousands of new followers as well as the realisation that journalism on Instagram is worthwhile and time-consuming. The RP is currently also making the same experience on TikTok, where conspiracy myths are clarified for young target groups under #Humbug.

"Stadtkind" is the digital home base for young people between 18 and 35 in Stuttgart. The young section of the Stuttgarter Zeitung is managing to turn digital natives into digital subscribers with urban, local stories. The challenge: to prepare the topics suitably for the target group and to play them out on the relevant channels. The fact that this is working in Stuttgart is a promising signal for the industry and also for the NOZ publishing group (Osnabrück), which is striving to do the same with #neo.
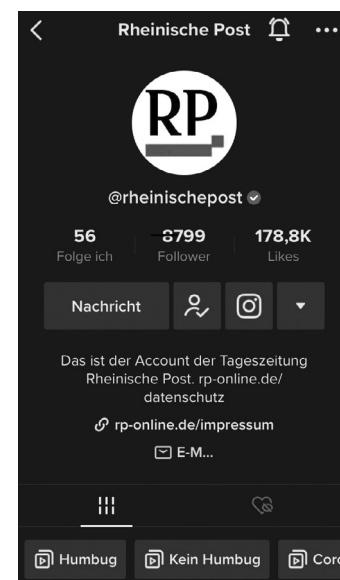
by Thorsten Merkle

Project type
Newspaper knowledge network addressing young readers' issues

Target group
Editorial and other staff at local publishing houses

Project start
January 2011

Country I Region
Germany

Responsible
jule : initiative junge Leser GmbH, CEO: Thorsten Merkle

All the cases mentioned have been discussed and presented in the jule knowledge network in recent months – in blog posts, in video and web conferences. For those who want to join in:

junge-leser.info

jule podcast: julecast
dpaq.de/H7Rb2

Some digital natives are already parents – this realisation must lead to new products and offers especially for young families. A dozen newspaper publishers, including the Stuttgarter Zeitung, the Süddeutsche Zeitung (Munich) and some titles from the Madsack Group (Hanover), produce family newsletters. They create a touchpoint with young people in the process of settling down. The family newsletters show this target group the topics that are relevant to them on a regular basis and lead them to the digital (paid) offers of the daily newspapers.

Many publishers are aware that in an increasingly digital world, parents are more than happy for their children to read printed material. The children's subscription newspapers of VRM in Mainz, Stuttgarter Zeitung and FUNKE (Essen) as well as other publishers cater to this need and are reaching young readers with news tailored to the target group. Needless to say, "Kruschel" (Mainz), the "Stuttgarter Kinderzeitung" and "Checky" (Essen) can also be found on the Internet. By the way: A quarter of the children's subscription products reach new customers.

The newspaper companies' school projects have experienced a digital shift as a result of the Corona pandemic: The disruption of print delivery through homeschooling has led to greater acceptance of digital newspaper content on the part of teachers. Many publishers are drawing conclusions from this and are abandoning the delivery of printed newspapers in favour of digital access in the school year 2021/2022. The Mittelbayerische Zeitung (Regensburg) and the Main-Post (Würzburg) are pioneers; the latter also offers an extensive digital training program with regular virtual workshops and lectures. This not only pleases the digital natives on the school benches, but also the digitally socialised teachers.

Die Nachrichten

from Deutschlandfunk Nova

Knowing what is important each day from Monday to Friday – the podcast Kurz und Heute contains the best current news reports from Deutschlandfunk Nova.

Challenge

by Francisca Zecher

How can young target audiences be reached today and in the future, on a media market that is increasingly fragmented and dominated by offers beyond traditional media? Like many established media brands in Germany and throughout the world, Deutschlandradio has also been dealing with this question for some time. One answer was the launch of Deutschlandfunk Nova in 2010, a broadcaster with a newsroom that is not only dealing with classic topics, but also with news from underrepresented world regions, science, popular culture and media. In the world news, you learn, for example, why the conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia is more than just Shiites versus Sunnis, or that the Indian government intends to hold an educational quiz about cows, in order to better protect the sacred animals. In the science news, you can hear that the oceans have become increasingly quiet over the last few decades – and that video conferencing can reduce collective intelligence.

The challenge lies in our self-image as a member of the Deutschlandradio family: Alongside interesting and bizarre news items, we also want to cover complex debates and topics that not always tie in with the daily lives of listeners – but in ways that make them accessible and comprehensible for a target audience without extensive prior knowledge.

Idea

"Japan is running out of French fries." With this entry into a news report, we aroused great interest among our listeners a couple of years ago – and then we explained the interconnections of the global economy in just ten lines. Naturally, not every serious issue offers such a gripping approach – and clickbaiting should definitely not be a maxim. The secret is the right mix of topics: If every once in a while you manage to present your audience with complex topics in a quirky and entertaining manner, but still rich in content, you also reach them with difficult topics such as cum-ex deals or German pension policies. The latter are of particularly great significance for the young target audience, a fact that is often overlooked.

Another important aspect in the mix of topics: Always provide enough challenge and don't underestimate your audience. It is nice if you find approaches to tie in with the target audiences' daily lives. But the world has more interesting and important things to offer and it is our task as a public service broadcaster to lead our users to them. One example: The fact that no country in the world has more surveillance cameras installed than China and that the communist leadership is establishing a social credit system there hardly affects young people in Germany – but it can foster their understanding of democracy.

Topics that have no direct reference to the reality of the listeners' lives usually have to be explained in more detail. Since the target audience of young adults is quite heterogeneous, particular attention should be paid to giving explanations at eye level and casually (sometimes a short subclause is sufficient). After all: Who likes to be lectured?

Project type
Information offer from
Deutschlandradio for young adults

Target group
Young adults Ø 30 years

Project start
2010

Country | Region
German-speaking region

Responsible
Deutschlandradio –
Deutschlandfunk Nova
News Director: Francisca Zecher

deutschlandfunknova.de/
nachrichten

What was your most important finding?

"Always provide enough challenge and don't underestimate your audience."
Francisca Zecher, News Director, Deutschlandfunk Nova

dpa–Kindernachrichten

News for kids

Exploring topics in a playful manner: dpa's interactive graphics for kids demonstrate, for example, how a Corona vaccination works.

Challenge

Almost 1900 mentions of Corona. That's how often the term came up in texts of dpa's news for kids since the beginning of 2020. The virus has turned the life of many children in Germany and throughout the world upside down. Terms such as lockdown, home schooling, compulsory masks and distancing rules dominate our daily life. This gives rise to many questions, not just from children. *How does a virus spread? What are aerosols? How do vaccines work?* But also: *How do I get along with my siblings during lockdown? And which benefits do families get that are not so well off?*

by David Kluthe

Idea

Six days a week, the dpa news for kids tries to answer these and many other questions in a child-friendly and multimedia manner. At the same time, the kids' lives and thus the kids' news should consist of more than just crisis. The secret is creating a good mix of topics for a heterogeneous target audience of kids between ages 6 and 12. Every weekday, we feature a major story from one of several subject areas: sports & leisure, animals & nature, everyday life & history, media & culture, technology & science.

Project type
Daily news and timeless stories for kids about topics such as school, animals and sports, but also politics, economy and science

Target group
6–12 year olds

Project start
April 2007

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
dpa Deutsche Presse-Agentur GmbH
Editor in Chief: David Kluthe

dpaq.de/D3Bjl

The authors research the stories on site, take photographs, interview scientific experts and talk with the responsible colleagues at dpa. And, naturally, the kids themselves also have their say. In the series Schulalltag in der Corona-Zeit (school life in times of Corona), kids from different federal states tell how they fill their time during the crisis, what they miss and what they look forward to. And there are regular impressions from other countries as well. For instance, Bernardo from Portugal told about his Corona infection and said that he does not want to have another birthday celebration without his friends.

"When I get my pocket money, I usually go straight to the newsagent's and buy football pictures or a mixed bag." This is what 10 year old Paul said in a story about pocket money, combined with expert tips on how to best manage one's money. In addition, there are interviews with exiting protagonists, such as 15 year old Fifa professional Andres Vejrgang.

The permanent team of dpa's news for kids consists of five editors, including the Editor in Chief. For printed or interactive graphics, the editors closely collaborate with dpa's infographic department. Podcasts for kids are available from the dpa shop. Customers include daily newspapers that feature news for kids, websites for kids as well as radio and TV broadcasters in the German-speaking area.

What was your most important finding?

"There are no taboo topics. Kids also come across and have to deal with difficult issues such as terror and sexual abuse, and they leave them with many questions."
David Kluthe, Editor in Chief, dpa-Kindernachrichten
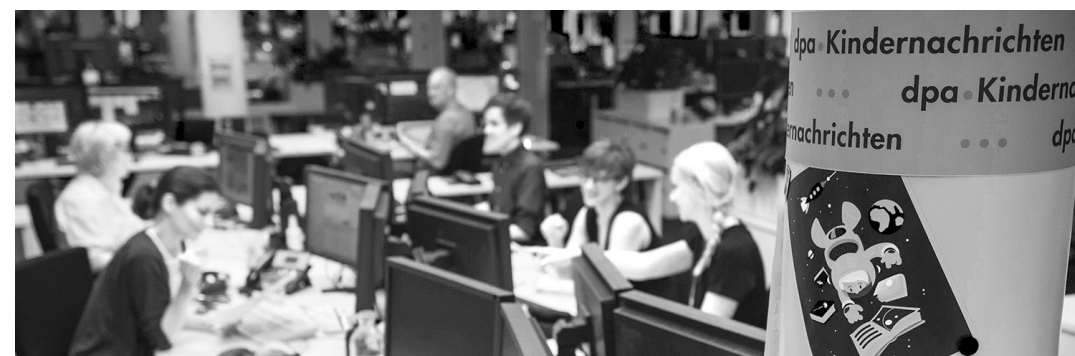
The team of dpa-Kindernachrichten consists of five editors.

dpa–Easy News

News in easy to understand language

Impfen gegen Corona: Stimmen die Gerüchte über die Corona-Impfung?

IMPFEN GEGEN CORONA

RTL · stern · n-tv · bundbook germany

26.05.2021, 11:15 Uhr

Informationen in leicht verständlicher Sprache.

Inhaltsverzeichnis

↓ Gerücht: Die Corona-Impfung schützt nicht so gut. Man kann trotzdem krank werden.
↓ Gerücht: Man muss sich impfen lassen.
↓ Gerücht: Wenn sich Frauen impfen lassen, können sie keine Babys mehr bekommen.
↓ Gerücht: Bestimmte Impf-Stoffe verändern die Gene der Menschen.
↓ Gerücht: Von der Corona-Impfung kann man Krebs bekommen.
↓ Gerücht: Die Impf-Stoffe wurden zu schnell entwickelt und erlaubt.

Information on the Corona vaccination in easy to understand language – with Easy News, dpa's customers reach new target audiences.

With the help of the news in easy to understand language, media outlets that traditionally address the public at large now also reach functional illiterates, non-native speakers and people who simply want to grasp complex content quickly. Thus Easy News contributes significantly to accessibility, inclusion and integration.

Outlook

For the German federal elections (Bundestagswahl) on September 26, dpa offers an Easy News special with current and background information in easy to understand language. Among other things, the most important question surrounding the elections will be answered: *"How do I vote?"*, *"Who are the top candidates?"* and *"Which parties can I vote for?"*

Challenge

Millions of people in Germany don't know how to read and write German properly – and this is a rising trend. Thus journalistic reporting in Germany is leaving many people with linguistic limitations behind. This group also includes many adolescents and young adults who, in the course of their lives, had and have difficult access to education. Then there are people whose native language is not German and those with learning disabilities or physical impairments. Most of the time, these target audiences are neither addressed systematically, nor in a compatible manner. However, the current Corona pandemic demonstrates yet again, how important it is to inform the public at large. Demand for reliable, independent and comprehensible news is immense.

by Stefanie Backs

Idea

dpa-Custom Content – the on-demand unit of Deutsche Presse-Agentur – created Easy News for these population groups, news in easy to understand language: the latest news regarding politics, business and panorama or classic advice pieces, all at language level A2. For the articles themselves, this means a chronological rather than a scenic narrative style, shorter sentences, technical terms have to be explained and no prior knowledge must be assumed. The articles are produced by certified dpa editors who have been trained in writing texts in easy to understand language.

Project type
Production of daily news at language level A2

Target group
People with linguistic limitations

Project start
June 2020

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
dpa Deutsche Presse-Agentur GmbH
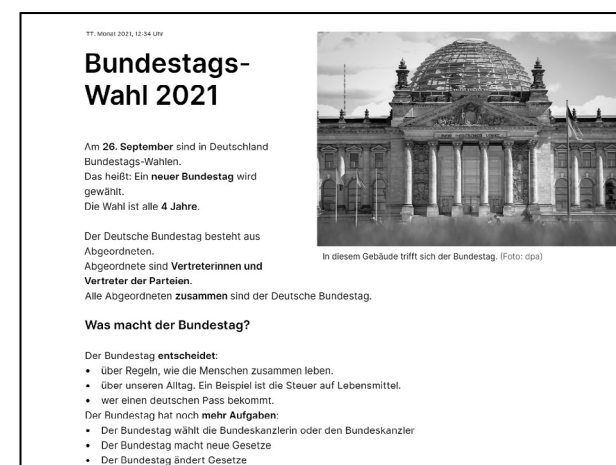Director & Product Manager dpa-Custom Content: Stefanie Backs

dpaq.de/LwVmQ

TT. Monat 2021, 12:34 Uhr

Bundestags-Wahl 2021

Am **26. September** sind in Deutschland Bundestags-Wahlen.
Das heißt: Ein **neuer Bundestag** wird gewählt.
Die Wahl ist alle **4 Jahre**.

Der Deutsche Bundestag besteht aus Abgeordneten.
Abgeordnete sind **Vertreterinnen und Vertreter der Parteien.**
Alle Abgeordneten **zusammen** sind der Deutsche Bundestag.

In diesem Gebäude trifft sich der Bundestag. (Foto: dpa)

Was macht der Bundestag?

Der Bundestag **entscheidet:**
• über Regeln, wie die Menschen zusammen leben.
• über unseren Alltag. Ein Beispiel ist die Steuer auf Lebensmittel.
• wer einen deutschen Pass bekommt.
Der Bundestag hat noch **mehr Aufgaben:**
• Der Bundestag wählt die Bundeskanzlerin oder den Bundeskanzler
• Der Bundestag macht neue Gesetze
• Der Bundestag ändert Gesetze

The dpa-Easy News special on the German federal government elections provides informative articles in easy to understand language.

funky (FUNKE)

The newsroom by young people for young people

From commentary to interview – at funky, the young reporters learn to find the suitable format for their topic.

What was your most important finding?

"It is nice to see how young people we have accompanied for years in the newsroom get more and more confident at writing and find their own way in the media world. You get the feeling that you can really give them something, and at the same time also learn from them through surprising ideas for topics and creative approaches."

Janna Kühne, Editor, funky

Background

by Janna Kühne

There are quite a few information and entertainment formats for adolescents and young adults in the German-speaking area. However, funky offers articles written by young people for young people. They write, blog, photograph, podcast, film and comment what is happening just around the corner – or in the great wide world – for interested audiences in their own age group.

Idea

The young writers are supported by funky's editors, who intend to foster their journalistic talents and skills and-strengthen their research and writing competencies. The up-and-coming authors are accompanied from their topic idea until the finished article. They learn to research thoroughly and find the suitable format for their topic idea: interview, commentary, podcast or listicle. Regular feedback, newsroom conferences and suggestions for topics help them to expand their practical knowledge with each article and learn the journalistic craft.

funky is published online and as a weekly print edition in the daily newspapers of Funke Mediengruppe, Berliner Morgenpost, WAZ, Thüringer Allgemeine, Hamburger Abendblatt and Braunschweiger Zeitung, and thus boasts a wide reach. funky's participants get great insights into the "real" routines of a newsroom in a relaxed environment.

Project type
Youth newsroom as part of the media education project MEDIACAMPUS of Funke Mediengruppe

Target group
Adolescents and young adults

Project start
2017

Country | Region
Germany | Berlin, Hamburg, Braunschweig, Thuringia, North Rhine-Westphalia

Responsible
Funke Mediengruppe, Raufeld Medien, Editor: Janna Kühne

Funding
Participation in funky is free for the young people. The project, which is part of the media education project MEDIACAMPUS of Funke Mediengruppe, is funded by the daily newspapers and alternating sponsors from local or national business enterprises and foundations.

Roughly 45,000 school students per annum participate in the nationwide project Mediacampus. Around 70 of them join funky's youth newsroom, which is part of the project. Every year, they fill more than 250 printed pages of the local newspapers with their topics and – since the launch in 2017 – have published thousands of articles on funky.de and social channels.

funky.de

funky.de covers nationwide and local topics and is open to all kinds of contributions from young authors.

Du hast die Wahl (FUNKE)

TikTok channel

About 7,000 followers and 50,000 likes in less than four months. Individual videos were viewed more than *200,000* times.

Presenter Amelie Marie Weber takes young people behind the scenes of political Berlin.

Background

The platform TikTok is booming. More than two billion people throughout the world currently use the app on a daily basis, 100 million in Europe alone. Especially young people between 14 and 25 years of age have fallen for the TikTok hype.

"It is exciting for us to figure out how we can present our content in a way that reaches very young people, who have not used our classic media offers so far," says Carsten Erdmann, Digital Editor in Chief of FUNKE's central newsroom.

by Amelie Marie Weber

Idea

FUNKE's central newsroom makes TikTok users fit for Germany's super election year 2021, especially for the federal government elections in September. Many of them are first-time voters to whom presenter Amelie Marie Weber is providing orientation. They learn the basics of democracy from her: *"What are first and second votes", "What is the significance of the five percent hurdle?", "What does the party SPD stand for?"*

With entertaining explanatory videos and interesting interviews with the parties' top candidates, "Du hast die Wahl" (your vote counts) brings the backgrounds of political Berlin closer to the viewers and fosters interest in and understanding of politics. The channel is an official partner of the initiative #LernenMitTikTok (learning with TikTok).

Outlook

We intend to continue the channel after the federal elections, since the political education of young people is always a relevant topic.

Project type
Imparting of knowledge on the topics politics and democracy on TikTok

Target group
Adolescents, first-time voters

Project start
February 2021

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
Central Newsroom of FUNKE Mediengruppe
Editor: Amelie Marie Weber

TikTok
@duhastdiewahl

What was your most important finding?

"We can either be irritated about young people consuming nothing but dance and comedy videos, or we can choose to make sure that political information finds a place alongside these videos. Who, if not us, the quality media, should ensure the presence of serious news and high-quality content on the net?"
Amelie Marie Weber, Head of Social Media, FUNKE Central Newsroom

Clip & Clear ^(NDR)

Eva and Torben make dry news topics understandable

Challenge

How do we reach a younger audience with current information? The typical challenge for many public service media outlets is that news brands such as NDR Info must not limit their coverage to individual age groups. This is because the public as a whole jointly finances public service broadcasting. And this means that NDR has to consider the entire public in its coverage (choice of topics) and has to publish its reports through various channels in a way that ensures as far as possible that the entire public can have access (product, distribution).

In the course of a major transformation process, NDR is currently adapting its workflows with the objective of publishing current information through a greater number of channels and thus develop new target audiences.

Idea

Presenters Eva & Torben provide solid orientation for complex issues in the world of news and explain their backgrounds in an entertaining, intelligent and heartfelt manner. The focus is always on the topic and not the presenters.

Clip & Clear explains the unwieldy and often rather dry backgrounds of current topics. To achieve this, the program uses formats such as comprehensible explanations (presentation), entertaining enactments and modern graphics (moving graphics, memes, GIFs). Clip & Clear also dares to use unexpected stylistic devices and even make people cringe, as long as it serves the purpose of rendering current information comprehensible and fresh. This allows the target audience to apply dull topics to their own lives, to participate in discussions and to recover their taste for news.

Every edition focuses on a single topic with origins in current reporting (always with an eye on NDR Info). The background has to be easy to narrate, definable and relevant to the target audiences' real lives. We are currently testing the format in collaboration across newsrooms. One core element of development was the participation of colleagues

by Björn Staschen

Housing shortage, observation by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution or copyright issue on social media: Clip & Clear explains topics from the reality of the target audiences' lives.

from all parts of NDR and beyond. In addition, the foundation stone for the format was laid in an open space, in which about 100 participants developed approaches. Then we deliberately asked trainees to develop prototypes on the basis of these approaches. In a further workshop, we piloted two formats. In April, the initial public test run for Clip & Clear went live on YouTube – yet another experiment. We use this test run to further develop the format and actively involve the users' perspective through a panel (media research) and dialogue on social media platforms.

Project type
YouTube channel from NDR Info, aiming to provide better orientation for complex issues from the world of news

Target group
Millennials, 25–35 year olds

Project start
April 2021

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
NDR Info
Eva Schulze-Gabrechten, Torben Steenbuck, Björn Staschen, Philipp Goewe, Nicole Boelhoff

Funding
Fee-funded

dpaq.de/cqCkp

What was your most important finding?

"Formats for young target audiences can only be developed if young people are involved, just as diverse formats can only be developed in diverse newsrooms. This perspective is crucial to product development, even if that means having to go beyond existing structures."

Philipp Goewe, Director WebVideoUnit, NDR & Björn Staschen, Project Lead Crossmedia News, NDR Info

She Likes Tech (NDR)

the podcast about technology

She Likes Tech promotes gender equality and diversity. We show role models for the objectives and dreams of young users.

Challenge

Why do we see so many male computer scientists in public and so few female ones? What does the cliché image of the computer nerd tell us about our view of society? These questions stood at the beginning of the tech-podcast She Likes Tech. The fact is that gender often hardly plays a role in industries like IT and security or among hackers, nerds, big data researchers and AI-experts. But still the diversity of experts is not really reflected in public. This is why, on She Likes Tech, only women talk about technology. These are women who monitor Germany's digital infrastructure, find security gaps in iPhones, program apps or evaluate and analyse apps that are supposed to help fight the Corona pandemic.

She Likes Tech wants to make role models more visible for men and women in the IT industry and help reduce prejudices about people working in the IT-world – or even about the industry itself.

It is our objective to get men and women excited about technology, to educate, to eliminate fears regarding the complexity of technology or computer science and to impart knowledge in a low-threshold way.

by Svea Eckert and Eva Köhler

Project type
Technology podcast that aims to impart knowledge about relevant tech-issues, reduce barriers and make female experts more visible.

Target group
18–49 year olds

Project start
September 2020

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
NDR Info
Svea Eckert, Eva Köhler, Nils Kinkel, Björn Staschen

She Likes Tech appears every fortnight and is also takes place on other NDR channels in the shape of postings, talks and reports.

Idea

The idea for the podcast was guided by the thought of creating a tech-podcast that would address men as well as women and give users the opportunity to really immerse themselves in a topic, with or without prior knowledge. A second basic idea was to inspire young people to reduce their fear of technological topics.

But what should such a podcast look like? Our answer: On She Likes Tech, the two tech-journalists Svea Eckert and Eva Köhler discuss their area of expertise with female specialists.

During the first part of each podcast, the two hosts exchange views with their guest about her experience as a woman in a male dominated working environment and grant the listeners a look behind the scenes. How do I grab a job as a programmer at Netflix? What's it like for a woman to work in IT-security research at a university – and what do I need to get there? This part is meant to be inspiring.

In the second part, the hosts and their guests jointly immerse themselves in a tech-topic that is relevant for society. This may be the functionality artificial intelligence, or a discussion about how to identify a security gap in an iPhone. The objective here is to give listeners a secure feeling and equip them with technological knowledge that helps them to better understand even complex contexts in everyday life.

The team developed the podcast in an agile way. The user perspective was considered at an early stage through supported questionnaires and a user panel. The team worked to improve the format, and even now She Likes Tech is still experimenting on the open heart to further develop the podcast, for example through a live episode on Clubhouse.

ndr.de/nachrichten/info/podcast4808.html

What was your most important finding?

"It's not just about hard facts, but also about feelings. When our listeners write us, they often talk about getting a positive feeling through our podcast and that they are drawn into a new world with us. At the end of an episode, they often feel that all is well with the world, everything will be fine."
Svea Eckert & Eva Köhler

#neo (NOZ)

New contents for young target audiences

What was your most important finding?

"The next generation of readers is very valuable to us. When we turn them into customers, we can give them even more – and if we don't, we should work even harder to win them."

Tobias Zitzke, Management Consultant, NOZ MEDIEN

The contents are consciously branded with #neo. The content brand should have a positive impact on the image of the young target audiences and convince them that publishing houses do in fact have lots of regularly updated content specifically for them.

Challenge

by Tobias Zitzke

A news product consists of a bundle of technology, a price tag, a whole barrage of communication channels, an enthusiastic team and the actual core, the journalistic contents. If the contents fail to hit the readers' nerves, all is nothing. In order to specifically gain market share among the young target audiences, NOZ publishing group and mh:n MEDIEN are adapting their contents for the next generation of readers. In February of 2021, we started producing content explicitly targeted at digital natives. Thus far, they have explained their reticence to subscribe by stating: *"Your contents are not relevant for me often enough."*

Idea & implementation

Necessary preparation: A journalistic gap analysis. *How do readers from comprehensively digitized living environments tick?* What are their thematic interests, and which of those are already well covered by editors in the channels owned by the publisher? We quickly identified six thematic fields and put them in concrete terms with catchy, exemplary article headlines, so those of us who are not part of the target audience themselves could accomplish the necessary change in perspective for a target group-centred, weekly topic planning

Our first target: An editor, together with two trainees, produces two location-independent pieces per day in the thematic fields food, money, fashion, life, future & tech and travel. The sustainability issue resonates automatically with most of these topics.

Publication: The articles are received by dedicated neo spaces on the news portals, as well as specially created categories within the news apps, naturally including speech output through a neo playlist.

Project type
Target group-specific content for digital natives

Target group
News savvy 18–39 year olds who already follow the group's publishing houses on social media, but are not paying yet
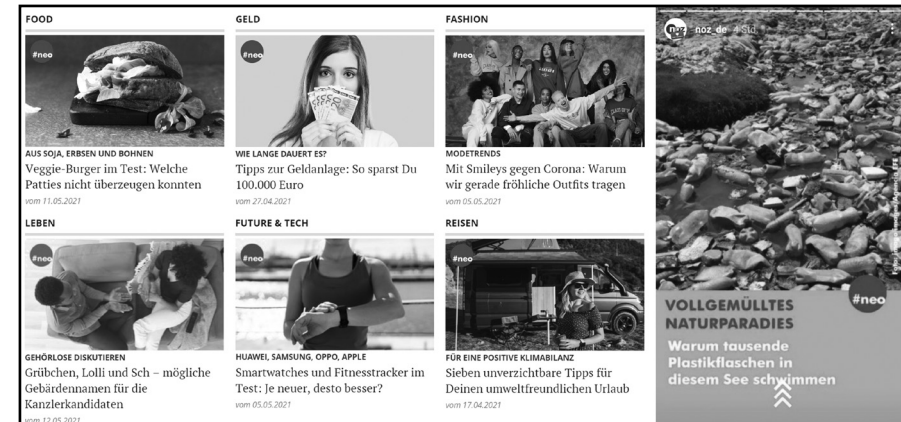
Project start
February 2021

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
NOZ and mh:n MEDIEN
Alexander Krug (Editor in Chief),
Michael Pille (Digital Sales),
Christian Ströhl (Central Newsroom),
Martina Grothe (Local Newsrooms),
Tobias Fligge (Social Media),
Tobias Zitzke (Project Lead)

noz.de/neo

The most important way to reach the target audiences with the contents: daily posts, especially in the stories of the publisher's channels on Instagram and Facebook.

Learning: Sponsored posts did not yield any added value with regard to traffic and conversions. We are also still scratching our heads over the question which posting factors determine the success of an article (time, design, wording, news environment, etc.). Some articles just fly, while others don't really get off the ground, even though we had high hopes for them.

Outcomes & performance measures

In April 2021 alone, we already reached 400,000 users with neo articles on noz.de. A single article is responsible for a volume of 200,000 views. *Is this due to fantastic SEO work or sheer good-naturedness of Facebook's algorithm?* We already get regular hits, but we still have work to do on targeted reproducibility. We are fast approaching our set target: neo articles (even several of them) lead the ranking of articles that attract new users, and the users are younger than for local articles.

Outlook

The core newsroom team will be increased by two editors and a social media service, not least to enable us to produce more video content. In addition, the young target audience is going to win 14 sponsors from the existing local newsroom teams. They will produce local contents specifically for digital natives and thus focus on the USP of the regional publishing offers. An advertising campaign is not planned until the summer of 2021. First, we need to have a sizeable stock of young evergreen contents available, to demonstrate the publishing group's commitment for every young newcomer: *"We regularly have relevant contents for you."*

Willkommen zuhause (RTL)

We raise awareness about racism

The video on "Why the question about origin is problematic" got *184,700* views.

The video about Ramadan got *201,800* views in Germany.

Kémi Fátoba on the issue of colourism

Kémi Fátoba on the issue of good news

Challenge

Racism in Germany is a topic that has been getting increased attention, at least since the Black Lives Matter peak in the summer of 2020. In our eyes, that's not enough. We (finally) want to talk about everyday racism – at eye level. The TikTok channel of RTL Media Group offers a safe space for black people and people of colour. At the same time, it is a port of call for read as white users who want to challenge their way of thinking.

by Saskia Meister und Laura Waßermann

Idea

Our motto: Let's urgently change the narrative from *"Where do you come from"* to *"Welcome home!"* Therefore, directly upon the launch of the channel, our presenter Kémi Fátoba explained in a video why the question about origin is so problematic. In addition, we talk about topics such as blackfishing, colonialism and Ramadan. For the latter, journalist and Muslim Malika Fachrou joined the TikTok livestream as a guest. More than 50,000 users were online and asked her questions about the month of fasting and the faith behind it. Open and warm exchange is the channel's USP. As editor Regah Tajalli puts it: *"For me, Willkommen zuhause (welcome home) is about raising awareness about everyday and structural issues, and about discussing them with an empathic community."*

Project type
TikTok channel of RTL Media Group dedicated to raising awareness about everyday racism

Target group
13–30 year olds

Project start
February 2021

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
RTL Media Group
Responsible: Saskia Meister,
Laura Waßermann, Irena Bauer;
Editor: Pegah Tajalli

Funding
Financed, among others, by the TikTok sponsorship programme #LernenMit-Tiktok

What was your most important finding?

"We mostly reach the Gen Z on TikTok – a generation that is already highly politicised. Below many videos, we read comments like 'Thank you for raising awareness', 'Thank you for this video' or 'I wasn't aware of that yet, learned something new'. This draws the picture of a constructive debate, and this really pleases us from the bottom of our hearts."
Laura Waßermann, Social Media Editor, RTL Media Group

TikTok
@willkommen_zuhause

Täglich TOGGO (SUPER RTL)
Your news

SUPER RTL

Challenge

Täglich TOGGO is a news product for the entire family, which edits and presents social and political topics as well as news about trends and current events in a child-friendly manner. With topics that are discussed in the school yard, at the breakfast table or in the home office, Täglich TOGGO is in close touch with reality of life for families. Avoiding specialist terms and providing examples, topics are explained in a short and comprehensible manner – this also applies to difficult or hard issues. Our challenge is to always find a positive approach and to offer the kids potential solutions and perspectives (constructive news). Our news aims to provide both kids and their parents with added value.

by Florian Federiconi

Idea

Our news is not adult news in children's language. The topics are chosen for their relevancy to kids and the reality of their lives. Täglich TOGGO offers a mix of current information and background knowledge. The target audience can learn something new with each news item. This works through more in-depth explanatory pieces / voice overs with comments on a specific aspect of the topic. An example for this is the report on the George Floyd case, which consisted of comprehensible information on the current event and an explanatory piece on the question *"What is racism?"* In addition, our category on the half hour "Täglich TOGGO – Eure guten Nachrichten" consciously provides a space exclusively dedicated to good news, since – especially in times of Corona – we want to give families a good feeling and create perspectives beyond disaster reports.

Project type
Täglich TOGGO news for kids and families, a news product of 24/7 radio station TOGGO Radio

Target group
6–13 year olds

Project start
June 2020 via streaming, October 2020 nationwide via DAB+ and satellite

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
RTL Disney Fernsehen Gmbh & Co. KG – Super RTL
Thorsten Braun (Chief Content & Revenue Officer)
Florian Federiconi (Editor in Chief Trends, Current Affairs & Development)
Robert Förster (Chief of Staff Broadcasting)
Martin Haberbosch (Chief of Staff Planning)
News presenters: Stephan Wagner, Tobias Killwing, Saskia Gaebel, Peter Benkoff

Funding
Ad-financed

Outlook

Our next objectives are to continue at raising awareness for gender-sensitive and anti-discriminatory language in our news, and to deliver the Täglich TOGGO news to established radio stations (e. g. Antenne Niedersachsen, Radio Hamburg).

What was your most important finding?

"We take the time to really explain complex topics. We do not focus on the latest breaking news so much as on perceived topicality with explanations and classifications for the kids and families. In our news, we use gender-sensitive language to address all kids and raise awareness for a diverse and open society."
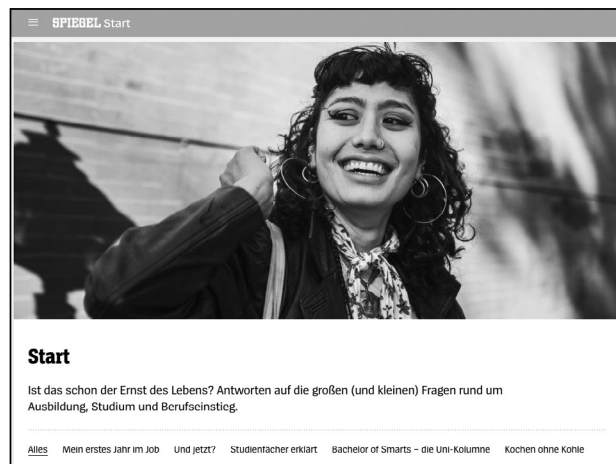Florian Federiconi, Editor in Chief Trends, Current Affairs and Development, Super RTL

toggo.de/radio

SPIEGEL Start

answers questions about training, studying and starting a career

SPIEGEL Start focuses on the start into a new life phase and provides young people with orientation on their way from leaving school until they have started their first job.

Outlook

We are planning a print edition of SPIEGEL Start which we mean to distribute, among other channels, in universities and via the student unions. The target audience are readers about to graduate from university or about to complete their vocational training, or which have already embarked on their professional career. Alongside the classic SPIEGEL Start topics of training, studying and career entry, the print edition will mainly focus on social issues such as gender equality, sustainability, political participation or the right model of society.

Challenge

We would like to anchor the topics of training, studying and career entry as well as the perspective of users under 30 more firmly in SPIEGEL's journalistic offering. With SPIEGEL Start, we thus offer topics relevant to the age group between 18 and 30, answer questions about the future and support our users with information for important life decisions. In addition, we tell stories that emerge from their life world and give them a voice in the overall SPIEGEL offer.

by Sophia Schirmer

Idea

SPIEGEL Start is a supplementary offer that provides orientation for young people in a phase of their lives in which they are in search of the right professional path or employer, the right relationship model or new friends in an unknown city. We treat topics that are on young people's minds and we let them have a say themselves. One example for this is our successful series "Mein erstes Jahr im Job" (my first year on the job), where career starters tell about their experiences in their first job, their way there, their starting salary, the challenges they met and how they mastered them.

Project type
Journalistic product that answers questions surrounding the topics of training, studying and starting a career, which accompanies young people from the time they leave school until they have started their first job

Target group
18–30 year olds

Project start
September 2020

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
Der SPIEGEL, Team Lead SPIEGEL Start: Sophia Schirmer

What was your most important finding?

"We have realised that our target audience really appreciates an understanding of community as a triangle. It's not just about distributing our contents, but also about giving our users opportunities for feedback and – in a best case scenario – for mutual debate. This is why we are still looking after our own social media channels, but we also forge the triangle through specific content and attach calls to individual articles to encourage our users to tell us their own stories."

Sophia Schirmer, Team Lead, SPIEGEL Start

spiegel.de/start

DASDING(SWR)

Always in touch with the target group

What was your most important finding?

"There really is no such thing as THE young target audience. Young people, especially the Generation Z, are used to being fed only what exactly suits them and their personal preferences through algorithms. Our answer is offering pointed, platform-compatible products for sub-target groups and interest-bubbles, which add up to a full portfolio."
Stefan Köhler, Online Director, DASDING

Challenge

The challenge we face with our young product DASDING is one of the greatest challenges for SWR, the second largest public service broadcaster within the ARD network: To entertain and inform young people between ages 14 and 29 with public service content, while their media usage habits are changing faster and faster and they diversify more and more. To offer a linear radio programme, accompanied by a web and social media presence, has long since ceased to be sufficient. The Generation Z consumes media on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat, listens to music and podcasts on Spotify and watches films and TV series on Netflix and Amazon Prime. And the young users get information and news from a great variety of sources, from Twitch influencers to WhatsApp groups. Traditional media offers are only a small part of the relevant set these days. *How do we manage to be relevant to young people with public service content in this scenario?*

by Stefan Köhler

dasding.de

Idea

The ONE answer to this question does not exist, so we need MANY. Using the radio programme, which still reaches more than 400,000 listeners per day, as a broad base, we are therefore building a digital portfolio which covers as many topics, bubbles, age groups and milieus as possible.

We have already created video formats like the interview series Song-Tindern, which hosts the most important young pop culture artists, social media offers such as DASDING Meme-Team, which entertains and informs Instagram users in a platform-compatible manner, the regional product DASDING vor Ort, consisting of ten different Instagram accounts from @wirsindmainz to @unserfreiburg, or the podcast Pancake-Politik, which explains to young people how politics relates to their lives. We keep launching new formats and terminate others if they don't work.

Evolving into a content network feels quite natural to us, since being in touch with the target group has always been part of our DNA. DASDING was originally founded as a multimedia project to play new channels such as DAB and the internet. We were never fully equipped with FM

Project type
Radio brand and content network of SWR for the Generation Z

Target group
14–29 year olds in Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate

Project start
1997

Country | Region
Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate

Responsible
Südwestrundfunk – SWR DASDING
Programme Director: Alina Schröder
Online Director: Stefan Köhler

Funding
As an offer of public service broadcaster SWR, DASDING is financed by the broadcasting fee

DASDING reaches more than *400,000* radio listeners per day and again about as many users through online, video, podcast and social media platforms.

frequencies and we are forced to keep adapting and evolving. The latest example was the major update of the DASDING App in 2020. With the app, we aim to make radio listening future-proof with innovative functions like song-swapping, individual playlists and time shift.

To avoid being off target all the time, it is matter of course to us that our team is always largely composed of people who are members of the target audience themselves. We are convinced that this is the only possible way to turn out authentic offers at eye level, which are accepted by young people.

News for the generation meme: Social media posting by the DASDING Meme-Team about the storming of the Capitol in Washington in January 2021. The meme catches the users in an entertaining and platform-compatible manner, the information is conveyed in the text accompanying the posting.

molo.news
The news app for Bremen and surroundings

Many current regional news items and events are published every day through the molo.news-feed.

Challenge

molo is short for "moving local" and thus molo.news are moving local news. molo.news is the new app for Bremen and surroundings. News and events in the region, the molos, are published here on a daily basis. molo.news is intended to give access to the most important reports from local media, official institutions and a great variety of collectives located in Bremen and surroundings. Users can adapt the molo.newsfeed and the app's event calendar to their own interests.

molo.news is part of the project Tinder die Stadt (Tinder the city – software-based scenarios for overcoming the crisis of mediatised public sphere in the city and its surroundings), which is sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The starting point of this project is the gradual loss of relevance of traditional local media and the lack in compensation through digital offers. Existing offers are not sufficiently utilised, especially by younger people.

Idea

molo.news does not only want to display the most important messages of the local media, but also improve the visibility of smaller collectives like local associations, social movements, citizens' initiatives and many others. molo. news is co-created with interested users. The idea behind this is to offer new opportunities for social participation and contribute to the improvement of the urban public sphere.

Outlook

Our next objectives are: further co-creation workshops with users | testing the platform in further cities | support for freelance journalists | automation of tagging and the creation of contributions | testing of forms of participation to deal with the "participation paradox" | forming of a cooperative

by Prof. Dr. Andreas Hepp and Prof. Dr. Wiebke Loosen

2,000 users at present

Project type
Local news app

Target group
Everyone who is interested in local news; focus on addressing younger people

Project start
October 2017

Country | Region
Germany | Bremen and surroundings

Responsible
Universität Bremen, ZeMKI, Prof. Dr. Andreas Hepp, Prof. Dr. Andreas Breiter Leibniz-Institut für Medienforschung |Hans-Bredow-Institut Hamburg (HBI), Prof. Dr. Wiebke Loosen

Funding
Sponsored by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research from 2018–2021, conversion into a cooperative targeted long term

What was your most important finding?

"Our research indicates that there is a 'paradox of the urban public sphere'. While there is great interest in local topics, there is also an increasing shift away from traditional local journalism, especially on the part of younger people. People demand a 'relational platform' for local news that is low-data, but comprises the offers from a variety of media, official institutions and collectives (associations, etc.) and also contains information about events."

Prof. Dr. Andreas Hepp, Spokesman ZeMKI, Universität Bremen & Prof. Dr. Wiebke Loosen, Senior Researcher, Leibniz-Institut für Medienforschung | Hans-Bredow-Institut

molo.news

With the molo.news app, users can personalise their newsfeed in a few steps and choose, for instance, from which sources they want to receive contents.

Klickwinkel

Broaden your digital horizon

Challenge

Social media platforms have become an important hub for social and political discussions and – notably for young people – a means of receiving news. At the same time, fake news of any kind is spread via these platforms, facilitated by easy access and algorithmic information sorting. Young people report that they are frequently confronted by potential "fake news", are often left alone dealing with the issue, and would like to see it addressed more frequently at school. By now, Germany's Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz) has issued guidelines, but their implementation in schools is left to the individual teachers.

Klickwinkel seeks to impart basic knowledge about information dissemination in social networks to young people (13 to 19 years old) and teachers, and to provide methods to examine potential fake news. At the same time, young people are encouraged to become conscious media producers themselves and train the fact-based handling of information, using their own topics as examples. The objective is to turn young people into opinionated digital media designers.

On the website Klickwinkel.de, video tutorials, infographics and texts provide background knowledge and offer concrete instructions and tips for media production and research. The materials for young people are supplemented by ready-to-use lesson designs for secondary level schools. Based on a concept developed in the course of a project at HAW Hamburg, teachers receive further training through free seminars.

Idea

A media competition is used as an attractive vehicle for a critical examination of information dissemination and media production. Since the competition focuses on the production of smartphone videos and other digital formats (podcast, story), young people are accustomed to working with the required tools. However, the content-related exam-

by Fiete Stegers

klickwinkel.de

Project type
Imparting news competency via lesson materials and a video / podcast competition in schools

Target group
13–19 year olds

Project start
March 2018

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
Vodafone Stiftung Deutschland GmbH in cooperation with HAW Hamburg (Christian Stöcker, Fiete Stegers) Further partners: Teach First Deutschland, ZEIT für die Schule

Funding
Financed by Vodafone Stiftung Deutschland gGmbH

More than 250 teachers and other interested parties attended training seminars in different formats. The videos on Klickwinkel's YouTube channel were retrieved more than 100,000 times.

In 2018, *215* students from 26 schools in nine federal states participated in Klickwinkel's competition.

In 2019, *337* students from 39 schools in eleven federal states entered.

In 2020/21, *239* students from 28 schools in eleven federal states competed.

ination of the topic is more important than production or design.

The modular concept allows for the use of building blocks as needed. Teachers might choose to hold several readily designed double lessons on the topic of "Algorithms & Fake News" in a classroom series centred on practical media project work, or just use individual infographics during their lessons – or the video tutorials for young people freely available on YouTube.

Outlook

In the future, Klickwinkel will focus on raising awareness about topics like disinformation and news competency through a social media campaign with influencers as well as low-threshold tasks, quizzes and challenges, mainly targeted at school students who have had little contact with the issue so far. Germany's Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier is Klickwinkel's patron.

What was your most important finding?

"Many teachers attending our trainings are really thankful for easy tips on fact-checking. All the young people invited to the award ceremony for their entries in the competition felt extremely appreciated, even if they did not win themselves. Feedback like this is mostly given personally, though, and not so much via social media. For the growth of the project, it is crucial to meet the target group face to face and build a network."
Fiete Stegers, Research Assistant, HAW Hamburg

dasbewegt!(VRM)

The video column about people with an extraordinary fate

What was your most important finding?

"One important finding is that other concerned parties or their relatives are not necessarily present on our social media platforms. Thus a target audience-oriented marketing is immensely important for a greater reach. Facebook self-help groups, for example, are a sure guarantee for an increase in reach. Through them, I have also already found some protagonists."

Adriana La Marca, Digital Reporter, VRM

Reporter Adriana La Marca interviews a nurse from Darmstadt in times of Corona.

Challenge

dasbewegt! wants to get rid of taboos, educate about taboo topics and raise awareness in society about illnesses, addictions and issues regarding perceived marginalised groups. The protagonists are at the centre of coverage. They share their experience to show others concerned that they are not alone with their fate. They help to make relatives and friends aware of how to deal with those affected and break taboos by sharing their experiences with a broad audience.

by Adriana La Marca

Idea

The format dasbewegt! gives people the opportunity to share their special stories or extraordinary fate. The basic question of the format is: *"How do you live with …?"* and the idea is for two people (the presenter and the protagonist) to meet in one place and have unlimited time to talk. The format gives centre stage to the protagonist and grants them the space to share experiences. So far, 35 episodes have appeared, letting people with very diverse experiences have their say. Among them were drop-outs from sects, people addicted to alcohol or drugs, sufferers from illnesses like breast cancer, cluster headaches and borderline personality disorder, as well as protagonists who experienced racism or sexualised violence.

The format started as a one-woman-show. Adriana La Marca developed the concept, sets the topics, looks for

Project type
Portraits of people with a special story or extraordinary fate

Target group
Young adults from age 16

Project start
December 2019

Country | Region
Germany | Rhine-Main area

Responsible
VRM, Content Development, Adriana La Marca

dpaq.de/IN873

The strongest episode of dasbewegt! generated more than 400,000 views on Facebook alone.

In sum, all 31 episodes of dasbewegt! generated a total of *13* million views on Facebook.

On average, an episode of dasbewegt! reaches about 40,000 people on Facebook.

protagonists, presents the format and films and post-edits the episodes herself. The first episodes were filmed with a smartphone in selfie mode. The Corona pandemic changed the parameters of production. For the presenter and the protagonist to keep sufficient distance, two professional cameras and clip-on microphones are used now.

What makes dasbewegt! so special is that it had the courage – contrary to all the usual advice to keep web videos short – to test the long format on social media. The column is powerful because of its emphatic way of conversation and the proximity to the protagonists, which is based on intensive research.

The conversation format is played out in the media library and the social media channels of VRM. To reach the appropriate target audience, the column is also posted in the corresponding Facebook support groups. On Instagram, we work out prior to marketing which hashtags can increase the reach of the post. The target audience-oriented marketing is very successful. Upon publication of a new video, there are always lots private messages from other people concerned, who have found the courage through the format to also want to share their fate.

Outlook

The format is also to be played out on TikTok in the future. In short teaser videos, protagonists will be able to share their experiences on thematic series.

NewsUp (VRM)

The news update from the Rhine-Main area

Digital reporters Adriana La Marca and Julia Kleiner of VRM produce the video format NewsUp.

Challenge

Local journalism holds a special position in media usage. According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report, local newspapers, at 67 percent of votes, hold the third rank on the list of trustworthy sources after TV-news formats ARD tagesschau and ZDF heute. In addition, 51 percent of the respondents stated that they would miss the local media if they ceased to exist. At the same time, it is particularly tough for local news on social media platforms. However, these get more and more important for young people searching for information. And this is precisely where the news format NewsUp comes in.

by Julia Kleiner

Around *176,700* views on TikTok (status June 2021) | 48.9 percent of viewers on YouTube are between 18 and 24 years old

Idea

Between daily reports and news in abundance, the format NewsUp aims to provide overview for the Generation Z, adolescents and young adults between ages 14 and 24, in the Rhine-Main area. Once a week, news is deliberately summarised with a regional reference and explained briefly. According to Reuters, YouTube is the platform of choice in Germany when it comes to watching news videos. This is why NewsUp mainly takes place on YouTube. In addition, there has been a TikTok channel for the format since January 2021. The format differs, since it is adapted to user behaviour on the respective platforms. While on TikTok, breaking news is taken up in short videos several times a week, the backgrounds of issues are explained in longer videos on YouTube.

The format takes a constructive approach in selecting and wording the news, to provide orientation for the viewers and fit into the realities of life of adolescents and young adults. The graphic design is specifically aimed at a young audience.

Project type
News video format on YouTube for adolescents and young adults from the Rhine-Main area

Target group
Gen Z, 14–24 year olds

Project start
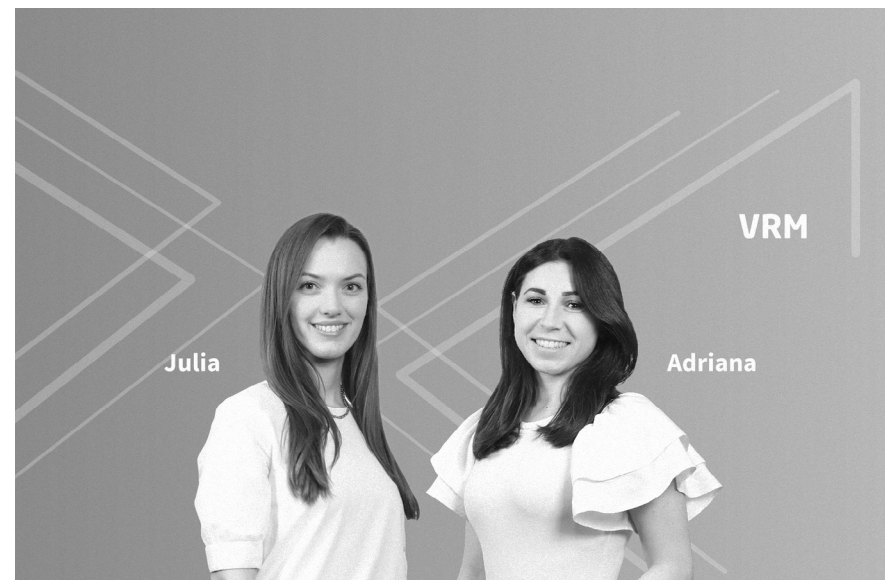November 2020

Country | Region
Germany | Rhine-Main area

Responsible
VRM, Content Development, Julia Kleiner and Adriana La Marca

Funding
YouTube monetisation and jumping to the VRM news portals

dpaq.de/J3tUQ

Outlook

The format NewsUp will continue to improve and grow. In this, the selection of topics and the mode of address play a crucial part. It is our aspiration to get even closer to the reality of viewers' lives. To get there, we implement findings from the #UseTheNews study as well as analytical data and feedback from users. If suitable, we also transfer the findings to other formats and contents. A first example for this approach is the format development for the German federal government elections in September.

What was your most important finding?

"With our NewsUp format on TikTok and our use of gender-sensitive language, we are doing pioneer work. In addition, we took a great step from print design to video animation with our graphic presentation."
Julia Kleiner, Digital Reporter, VRM

logo! (ZDF)
Children's news

Idea
Basically, all news topics are topics for logo! as well, regardless of how complex they are. We formulate as clearly and simply as possible and either avoid technical terms or explain them. When we choose images, we take care not to show brutal or disturbing pictures. One specialty are the explanatory graphics on logo!, which narrate complex issues in an easy-to-understand manner.

TV spectators 2020: 0.17 million 3–13 year olds on average / *18.3%* child market share

logo.de: just about *4* million page impressions / month on average in 2020
Instagram: roughly *43,800* subscribers
(status July 2021)

YouTube: just about *24,800* subscribers
(status July 2021)

Challenge
Children and adolescents have a right to information. logo! provides them with age-appropriate explanations, backgrounds and classifications on adult news and special topics from their living environment.

by Petra Röhr

Over 30 years of experience with logo! prove that child-compatible news make kids more secure emotionally. Children sense when the truth about events is anxiously hidden from them and respond with insecurity. The more children get to know about their environment, the better they are able to classify what they hear and see in their everyday life. This fact was made very clear, for instance, by hundreds of e-mails, letters and phone calls that reached logo! after the terrorist attacks in Paris or Berlin. Children and adolescents can ask their questions and get answers from logo! And they can form their own opinions.

In times of populism, conspiracy theories and social bots, this approach is more important than ever. That is why logo! aims – across all platforms – to strengthen discussion culture and make it plain to children and adolescents that they may discuss controversially without offending or hating each other. The offer wants to contribute to their ability to discuss with their peers and adults at eye level.

Project type
logo! children's news on TV, online, on Instagram and YouTube

Target group
TV and online: children aged 8–12
YouTube and Instagram: adolescents from age 13

Project start
TV 1989
online 1998
Instagram 2018
YouTube 2021

Country | Region
Germany

Responsible
ZDF, logo! Newsroom, Constanze Knöchel
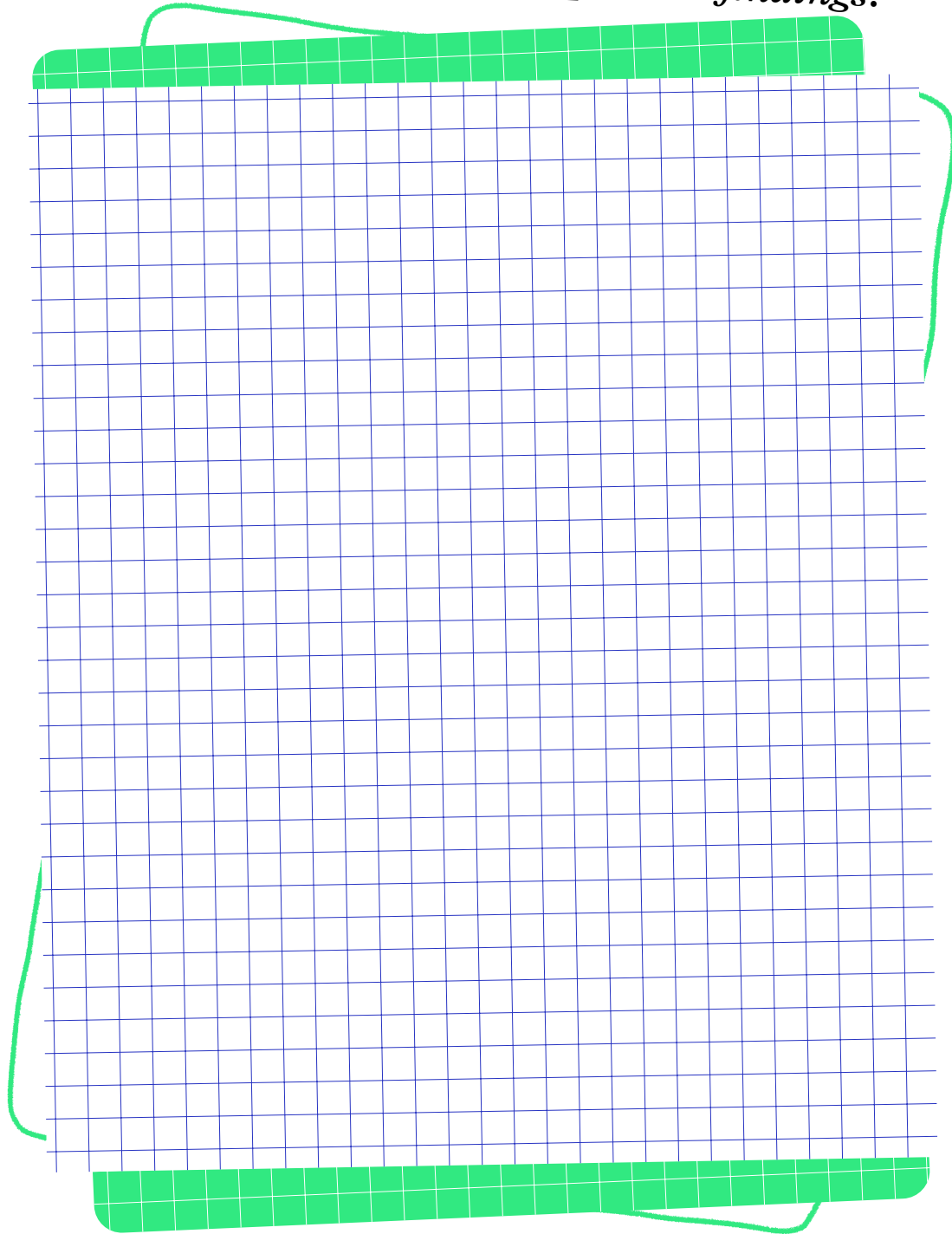
What was your most important finding?
"The most important questions are: What are children and adolescents interested in? What would they like to know? – or: What should they know to be well informed and able to form an opinion? We have to be quick to try out new things again and again – such as new features on Instagram – keep them, when they work well and terminate them if they don't."
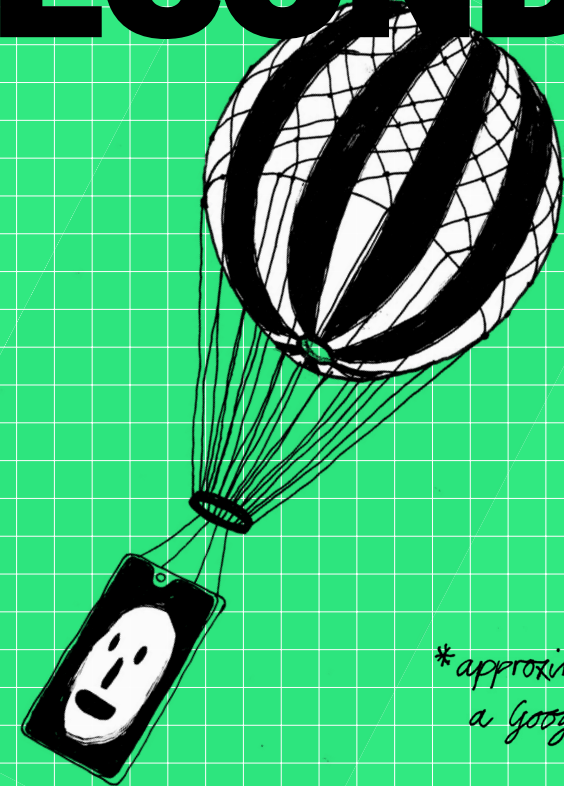Petra Röhr, logo!-Kindernachrichten

zdf.de/kinder/logo

Space for your own important findings:

AROUND THE WORLD IN ROUGHLY 0.56* SECONDS

*approximate duration of a google search

Young news offers and start-ups worldwide

RocaNews
Instagram news account and newsletter

What is your product about?
Max Frost: We deliver unbiased, interesting news to audiences on social media and through our newsletter. Roca covers convenient news that lowers the blood pressure. We give nothing but the facts, because we believe our users are smart enough to make their own opinions.

What motivated you to start this product?
Max Frost: News outlets cover topics people don't care about. They profit by raising people's blood pressures and pushing political narratives. We found that many of our friends had stopped reading the news because they found it irrelevant and biased.

What distinguishes your product and what makes it unique?
Max Frost: We deliver convenient, unbiased, bullet-point news on topics of interest to young people. Existing news outlets are often too biased, politicized, or cover topics young people don't care about.

What are the challenges and opportunities to reach young people with news products?
Max Frost: It can be difficult to cover political issues without seeming to prefer one side over another. People also tend to have short attention spans, so content has to be shortened for social media. It can be difficult to convey as much information via social media as outlets do through 800-word articles.

What can traditional news brands improve to reach young people?
Max Frost: Established news outlets should deliver news with less bias and cover less negative news. Instead, they should produce more relatable content that young people can identify with.

Max Frost is co-founder and executive president of RocaNews, a social media-first news company with a mission to deliver convenient, interesting, and unbiased news. He formerly worked as a travel writer and policy researcher. He has written in Foreign Policy and the Wall Street Journal, and holds a BSc from the University of Virginia and MSc from Johns Hopkins University.

Instagram
@ridethenews

Responsible
Billy Carney, Max Frost, Max Towey

Country | Language
USA | English

Target group
Young people on Instagram

Project start
January 2021

Follower
750k Follower on Instagram (July 2021)

Washington Post [01]
on TikTok

Target group: 13+
Start: 2019
Follower: +960k followers
Language: English

(01) (02) (03) (04)

Tiktok
@washingtonpost

NBC Stay Tuned [02]
on Snapchat

(05)

Target group: 12+
Start: 2017
Follower: +16k followers
Language: English

Snapchat
NBC Stay Tuned

New York Times Kids [03]
on Instagram

Target group: 8–13 year olds
Start: 2020
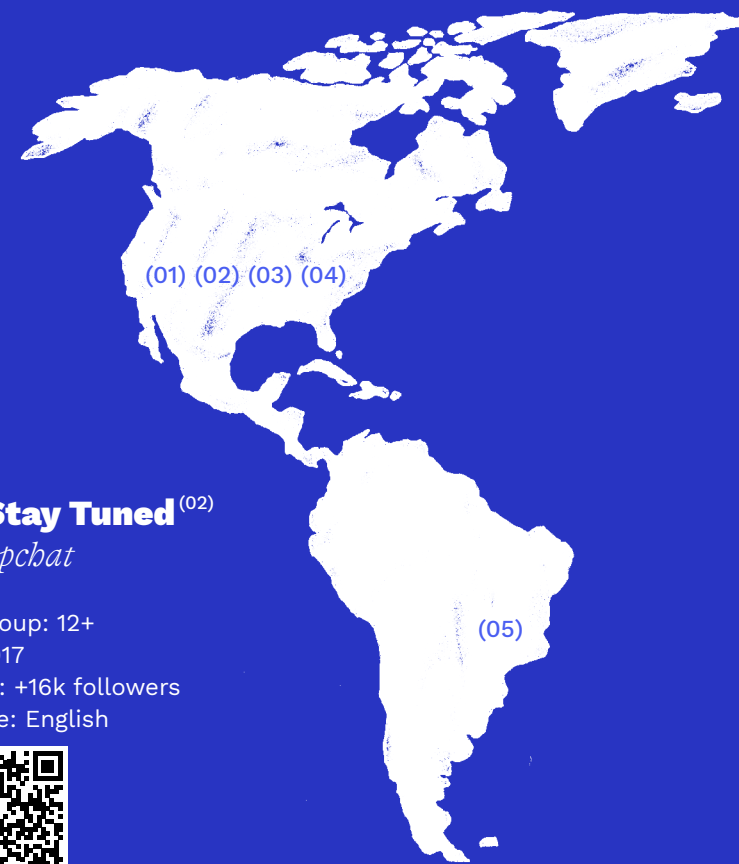Follower: +31k followers
Language: English
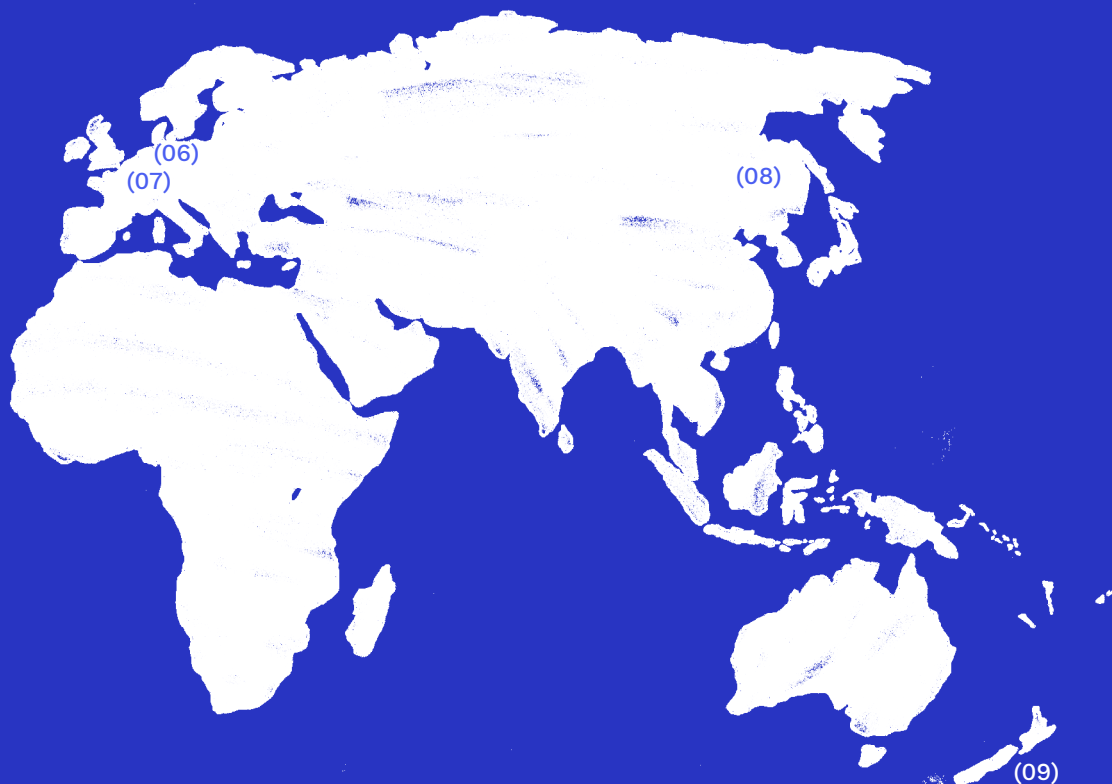
Instagram
@nytkids

The Cramm [04]
Daily newsletter by teenagers for teenagers

Target group: Gen Z
Start: 2017
Follower: +2.5 million readers/months throughout all platforms
Language: English

thecramm.com

(06)
(07)
(08)
(09)

NOS Stories (07)

on Instagram

Target group: 13–18 year olds
Start: 2015
Follower: +885k followers
Language: Dutch

Instagram
@nosstories

Young Post (08)

Young platform of the South China Morning Post

Target group: young people and students from Hong Kong
Start: 2013
Follower: +9.3k followers on Instagram
Language: English

scmp.com/yp

Reload (05)

Joint news video format by 10 media outlets

Target group: teenagers
Start: 2020
Follower: +10.5 million followers on TikTok
Language: Portuguese

reload.news

UltraNyt (06)

News program and quiz app from DR Ultra

Target group: 9–14 year olds
Start: 2020
Follower: +70k followers on Instagram
Language: Danish

dr.dk/ultra/ultra-nyt-nyheder-til-boern

Shit You Should Care About (09)

Instagram channel and podcast

Target group: young people
Start: 2018
Follower: +2.3 million followers on Instagram
Language: English

shityoushouldcareabout.com

The Conversation (WORLDWIDE)

Platform for scientific conversation

Target group: among others, offer "Curious Kids" for children
Start: 2010
Languages: English, French, Spanish, Indonesian

theconversation.com

Compilation: Kim Staudt (HAW Hamburg)

My Country Talks

International platform for political dialogue

What is your product about?

Hanna Israel: My Country Talks is an international platform for political dialogue that matches participants with their political opposites for a one-on-one discussion.

What motivated you to start this product?

Hanna Israel: In 2017, the ZEIT ONLINE newsroom was searching to answer one central question: *"how can we restart the conversation across political divides?"* The answer was My Country Talks, a dating platform for politics. Today, My Country Talks is an independent nonprofit that conducts events around the world, together with newsrooms and civil society organizations. Over 170 thousand participants have registered for an event, across more than 30 countries.

What distinguishes your product and what makes it unique?

Hanna Israel: My Country Talks is the only dialogue program developed by media and for media. The My Country Talks registration embed was made specifically for online news articles and our unique matching algorithm makes it easy for media to collaborate.

How can it help newsrooms to create contemporary news services for adolescents and young adults?

Hanna Israel: Community building, human interest stories, and audience-driven reporting are key for engaging the next generation of digital news readers. My Country Talks not only brings people together for one-on-one conversations across media outlets, it also brings journalists closer to their audience and enables them to feature stories from readers on their site. When specifically targeted, our dialogue format shows the highest engagement among young participants, and is a great way to foster intergenerational dialogue.

Hanna Israel is project lead for ZEIT ONLINE's international platform My Country Talks. She worked as an editor for Anne Will before, and founded the online magazine InPerspective.
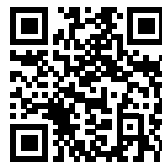
mycountrytalks.org

Responsible
Hanna Israel,
Project Lead

**Country | Region |
Language**
Germany | Berlin |
English / German

Project start
2017

ReachTeens Consulting

What is your service about?

Pierre Caulliez: We help media companies to understand, target and effectively attract the attention of the Gen-Z. We have discovered a huge audience gap that most traditional media face – young people are not consuming news. Our partner Mittelbayerische only has about 2 % of readers who are 19 and younger.

The idea of ReachTeens Consulting was born out of a personal frustration – we as members of the youth have always felt that the news is not represented well to us, it's not attractive, not interesting and we are almost not looking at news at all. We've decided that as the representatives of the Gen-Z, we can influence the way the media sees and addresses its young audience and help them to take all the right steps towards becoming news providers for the young generation.

What makes your service unique?

Pierre Caulliez: We are the Gen-Z. We can talk to Gen-Z like friends, not market research subjects. Therefore our feedback and suggestions are much more personal and insightful. Our youthful attitude and knowledge of the generation allows us to generate innovative ideas and to show the media what youth wants. At the moment, we offer a unique consulting service, providing support and insights to help traditional media companies tackle this strategic issue, which we feel will become even more crucial in the near future.

What are the challenges and opportunities to reach young people with news products?

Pierre Caulliez: Young people have entirely different expectations for news. They enjoy a laconic, minimalistic and clear overview of the topics. Podcasts, Instagram posts etc. are places where young people go to see news. Our research has brought to light some unexpected findings that show trends and ideas of how we can turn traditional news into a product for youth. It is a challenge for media

reachteens.com

Responsible
Pierre Caulliez

Country | Language
Hamburg based company, with a diverse team from France, Germany and Lithuania.

Target group
Local and national media companies failing to attract the Gen-Z

Project start
February 2020

corporations to work out the constantly changing trends, but at the same time it's a massive opportunity to attract the attention of the Gen-Z, which today accounts for around 30 % of the global population.

What can traditional news brands improve to reach young people?

Pierre Caulliez: News is only as good as its presentation. In today's world, most trends are heavily related to the format and design. Social media are key for the news today. Understanding the format young people want to see the news companies in will be a large step towards becoming relevant and interesting. Established media has to be innovative and embrace change to find a different approach to deliver news.

Pierre Caulliez is co-founder of ReachTeens. Being a teen himself, he did not understand why the media did not retain the attention of his generation (the Gen-Z). With ReachTeens, he helps the media reach young people through adapted content and format.

Tracks

AND NOW... WHAT?
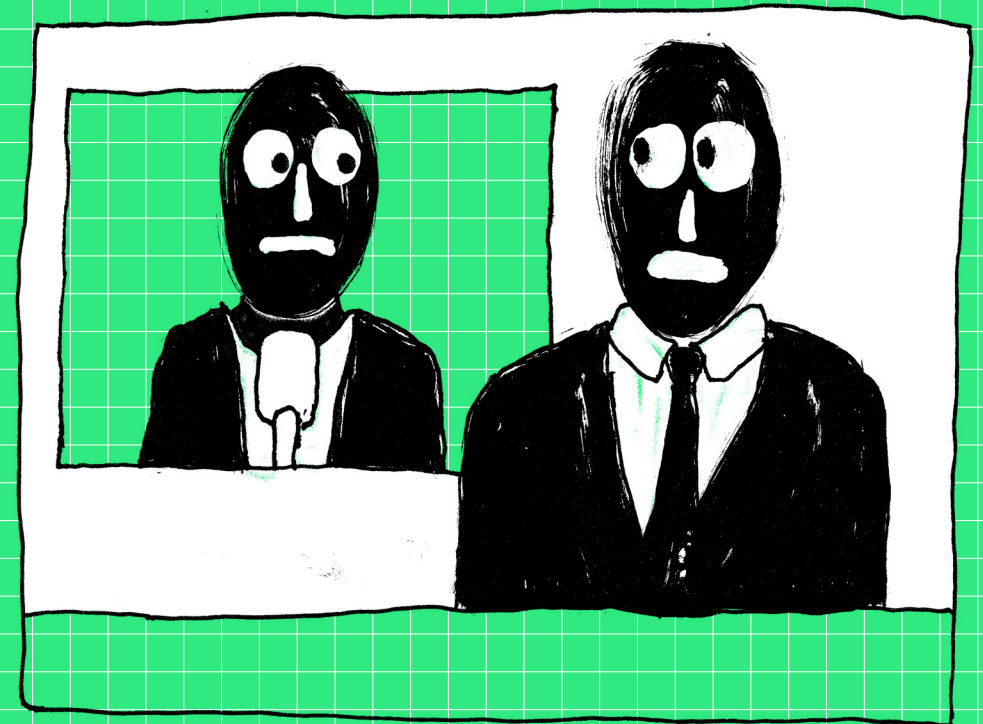
The #UseTheNews thematic groups and their projects

Track Audio / Podcast

Podcast experts give insights

Initial situation

"Just about one fourth of the adult online population in Germany (24 %) listened to at least one podcast per month in the year 2020." This is an increase of about three percent on the year 2019. Notably, the majority of the 18–24 year olds – a target audience particularly coveted by newspaper publishers and other media outlets – listens to podcasts more and more frequently: 54 percent of this group stated that they had listened to a podcast in 2020. What the classic newspaper often no longer succeeds in doing is partly made up for by podcasts. Accordingly, about half of the podcast-listeners surveyed said *"[…] that podcasts give them a better understanding of certain topics than other offers, are a more practical way to absorb information, offer a greater variety of topics and perspectives and present news in a more entertaining manner."*

Another feature that probably makes podcasts so popular is that they give listeners the opportunity to pick the right offer for their areas of interest from the ever more diverse podcast supply on demand whenever they want.

So let's get down to the nitty gritty and the experiences gained with podcasts in the publishing world in recent years by Patrick Körting (Head of Audio NOZ Digital), Berndt Röttger (Deputy Editor in Chief Hamburger Abendblatt) and Theresa Langwald (Podcast Editor Funke Medien NRW):

by Patrick Körting, Theresa Langwald and Berndt Röttger

see study overwiew on page 34: Reuters Institute Digital News Report

A good podcast takes time

To develop a solid reach, a podcast needs time. The more timeless a format, the greater its potential to reach listeners over a period of months or even years. The children's podcast Ole schaut hin from Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung (NOZ) had little reach in the first six to eight months.

However, since this podcast for children is dealing with topics that are absolutely timeless – such as *"How do soap bubbles work?"* – the episodes still find their listeners even one year after publication. Therefore, NOZ added

Question
What should I keep in mind when producing a podcast?

Responsible
Patrick Körting (NOZ Digital),
Theresa Langwald (Funke Medien NRW),
Berndt Röttger (Hamburger Abendblatt)

Target group
Adolescents and young adults

Project start
May 2021

a new performance measure to its reporting, which compares the plays of an episode during the first week after publication with the cumulative plays at the time of measuring. The result: The more timeless a format, the higher its re-listening rate.

A podcast should not be done just in passing

The conception, research and production as well as the ensuing distribution and marketing of a podcast take time. NOZ presently calculates a workload of 16 hours for a 45-minute episode (not including research and conception). This means that for an exemplary format with 12 episodes, 400 working hours accumulate quickly.

At the beginning, it should therefore be considered very carefully whether the effort is in proportion to the possible return. Consequently, NOZ established a tried and tested review process to evaluate whether a format should be realised:

☐ Product Field & competitor analysis
☐ Target alignment
☐ Market and sales potential
☐ Dummy production
☐ Cover design
☐ Sound design
☐ Campaign planning (editorial and advertising)

Find a niche

A daily newspaper does not have to touch on every subject and neither should they. It is important to determine clearly what customers expect from the brand and which topics can be transported credibly. For NOZ, Hamburger Abendblatt and the regional media of Funke Medien NRW (WAZ, NRZ, WP, etc.) a strong regional reference is elemental.

Reports involving crime, sports or celebrities are conducive as well. But in the end, every media outlet has to find the right niche for itself. Congruence between brand / image and podcast topics is relevant as long as the podcast gets its reach primarily through the provider's own media channels.

Nobody has been waiting for your podcast – it takes time to chance usage habits

Nobody has been waiting for your podcast. You have to make an effort to get people to discover your podcast, listen to it and like it, even if these people are readers of your newspaper already. It is not enough to just upload the podcast on the usual platforms and then wait around.

Often, producers are so busy developing, planning and implementing that they totally forget to think of the distribution and editorial advertising for the podcast. However, these are essential. The central question is: How do we get our podcast to where our target audience is? For the podcasts of FUNKE Medien NRW, the answer to this question was: We have to get them onto social media including YouTube, because *"among the users of podcasts, YouTube (39 %) and Spotify (34 %) are the most frequently used sources. While Spotify has the greatest reach in the target audience below 35 years of age, YouTube reaches a larger number of older podcast listeners."*

Audiograms (an audio track containing an excerpt from the podcast is superimposed on a photo – for instance the podcast cover – and visually animated) are particularly well suited to social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The social media platforms read audiograms as videos, thus they are given preference by the algorithms.

The following phenomenon could be observed even with long-standing customers of a newspaper: Just because we suddenly presented them with audio content, they did not necessarily adopt it. Customers have to be reminded over and over again that they can also listen to podcasts of their favourite newspaper now. This takes time, because breaking down usage patterns is a protracted process. It's worth the effort, though. Frequently, the establishment of new routines related to audio content leads to even closer customer ties with high retention times. In three subsequent tests conducted by NOZ, retention times of listeners compared to readers were increased by almost 100 percent. In addition, having the podcast host's voice in your ears all the time holds enormous potential for habituation.

Editorial integration is many times more effective in the acquisition of listeners than self-advertising. While self-advertising in print or web has an effect on image, it does not build up listeners in the short term.

Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to focus on the optimisation of all editorial processes initially and only consider accompanying measures such as self or third-party advertising afterwards. By the way: QR codes, already presumed dead, are an established means (again) to lead users to digital audio products through a double media break (print to online and reading to listening). It's no longer a rarity to win 5,000–10,000 listeners with a single QR code. Yet again, it is important here to habituate users to the integration of this technical tool over a long period of time and explain it sufficiently.

Which potential stumbling blocks are there?

Expectation management
Do not just keep an eye on short-term reporting and reach. In contrast to websites, it is not expedient here to just keep track of reach during the first week or first month after publication. Instead, you always have to keep the total reach achieved since the start of the podcast in view. This might lead to discussions with the marketing department, so it is important to reach a common understanding of performance assessment parameters.

Don't underestimate the manual effort
Your podcast isn't done after having recorded a pleasant talk. It needs to be cut, uploaded and supported editorially. Before recording, a cover has to be designed and a teaser spoken. And afterwards, everything has to be published on the respective platforms. For all this, staff capacity is required.

Involve colleagues in marketing
Involve colleagues in marketing right from the start. It's the experience of Hamburger Abendblatt, for example, that it works best to already involve them at the stage of podcast conception and develop ideas together. Half of Hamburger Abendblatt's podcasts are marketed like this.

(If possible), do nothing exclusively for a podcast
As far as contents are concerned, we try to do nothing exclusively for a podcast, whenever possible. We always keep a realisation in print or online in mind, sometimes social media as well. Thus the recording for the podcast becomes an interview at the same time – or a research appointment for further reports.

Agree on a joint understanding of success
Which of the standard performance indicators and statistics are the right ones for us? How do we interpret them correctly? Which conclusions can we draw from them for our podcast? These are important questions that should be clarified with the decision makers, if a certain mass of data is generated automatically.

Audio outlook

It seems like the great Clubhouse hype is over and personalities like Thomas Gottschalk and Bodo Ramelow make themselves a little scarcer in the app's discussion rooms. However, this phenomenon, which saw its heyday at the beginning of the year 2021 during the second lockdown, shows that communities or user groups can be easily, well and actively integrated into formats.

Powerful platforms like Facebook or Twitter have long since followed suit and took over the mode of operation from the Clubhouse app. It remains to be seen which way this trend will go. It is clear, however, that media outlets increasingly need, want and look for a direct line to their audience. Exchange and interaction at audio level – the podcast in real time, more or less.

Track Formats (01)

News comic on the US presidential elections

"The most important prerequisites are early planning, a concrete storyboard, close coordination with the illustrators and replacement graphics."

Lars Reckermann

by Lars Reckermann

Initial situation

Can a rather dull event such as the inauguration of a US president be translated into a comic format? We were curious to see if there would be reactions from the readers to this rather striking, full page newspaper format, and how the story would be received on Instagram and by young newspaper readers.

Approach

In collaboration with Spanish start-up Tebeo, we produced innovative visualisations about the political event with some tabloid elements and current references (e. g. atomic bomb code, climate protection). The news comic was published in full page format in the print products and on the Instagram channel of ZGO Zeitungsgruppe Ostfriesland GmbH. Besides YouTube, Instagram is the most widespread source of news for the group of 18–24 year olds. This is confirmed by the results of the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2020.

Question
How do I present complex contents to young newspaper readers in an attractive and easy to understand manner?

Responsible
ZGO Zeitungsgruppe Ostfriesland GmbH (Lars Reckermann) in collaboration with Spanish start-up Tebeo (Milegny Castro)

Target group
Instagram users and young newspaper readers

Project duration
December 2020 to January 2021

Outcome

Reactions on Instagram were a great success. The first comic was the story with the greatest reach on Instagram. However, reach declined with each further comic image.

Track Formats (02)

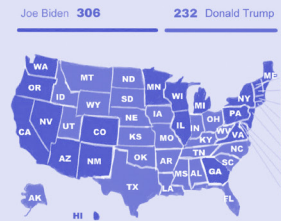*Immersive storytelling on the topic of climate change in the north of Germany*

by Jannik Golek and
Jonas Ziock

Initial situation

Climate change has long since arrived in the north of Germany. Hotter summers, less rain and forest dieback are only part of the problem. Entire islands are in danger of sinking in the Pacific, and sea levels in the north of Germany are rising rapidly as well. Some regions are already affected by the impact. For instance, the North Sea island Pellworm would already have been flooded if it wasn't for the dykes. In the surrounding mudflats, archaeologists have discovered traces of settlements that have already sunk, which proves that rising sea levels and climate change are highly relevant topics for coastal dwellers, notably in the face of increasing extreme weather events. Since the advent of Fridays for Future at the latest, it's no secret that predominately young people take a strong interest in climate change.

The Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2020 illustrates how important a local perspective on problematic climate development is, especially in the high income countries. Of the 18–24 year olds surveyed in Germany, 63 percent stated that they regard climate change as a serious threat.

But how can we convey complex scientific topics on the issue of climate change in a manner compatible to the target audience? One answer to this is immersive and interactive formats.

Idea

"Local perspectives on climate change" is an interactive and immersive storytelling project developed for the young target audience. In the first episode, readers immerse themselves in an animated 3D-model of the island Pellworm. Through a 360° virtual reality recording of

the island, climate chance can be experienced up close. Students of the Master's degree programmes Digital Communication and Sound Vision at HAW Hamburg produce the project in close collaboration with scientists and media partners.

Approach

Interactive long reads are complex. However, the storytelling software StoryMesh, developed at HAW Hamburg, enables editors to combine texts and images as well as 3D and virtual reality (VR) content in an intuitive interface to design animated multimedia stories for the web. The software follows the object-based media approach and is thus particularly suitable for complex and multi-layered narrative structures. The students use the software to design interactive content about German coastal regions that are already affected by climate change today. 3D and 360° contents make the issue of rising sea levels tangible. For the project, HAW Hamburg cooperates with renowned scientists of Kiel University (among them Dr. Bente Majchczack from the Cluster of Excellence ROOTS – Social, Environmental, and Cultural Connectivity in Past Societies) and IPN – Leibniz Institute for Science and Mathematics Education (Dr. Katrin Knickmeier and Dr. Katrin Schöps). To get direct feedback from the core target audience, the results are presented, sometimes using VR glasses, to school students in the Research Workshop Kiel.

Conclusion

Immersive formats are a great opportunity for journalism. However, while new technologies increasingly facilitate design, expenditure is still high, especially at conceptual level. But owing to the visual presentation options, these formats are particularly suitable for scientific communication.

Outlook

There are plans to realise further episodes, for instance on the impact of climate change on agriculture and forestry.

With the software StoryMesh, editors can create interactive stories without programming skills.

Jonas Ziock and Jannik Golek present a professional 360° camera.

Track Collaboration

A join-in action across media on the topic Corona

"I was really pleased when I saw your call trying to give us young people a voice. Because when I read the news – and I do that several times a day – I get the feeling that I very rarely see any treatment of the topic 'young people in times of Corona'."
Barbara, school student

Initial situation

If newsrooms want to reach a younger target audience, they need to listen more closely. Firstly, this would give them a better sense of which topics are particularly interesting to adolescents and young adults, and which they miss in a news coverage targeted at a wider and inevitably older audience. Secondly, adolescents and young adults have their own ideas on many topics and feel that they are not sufficiently represented by reporting.

The #UseTheNews study shows that many adolescents and young adults hardly see any connection between journalistic news and their own life realities. They make use of opportunities for commenting on news content to bring in their own perspectives, but the extent to which they do so is very varied. While only about one fifth of the little information-oriented group participates in this way, more than half of the extensively information-oriented audience does.

Idea

Trainees, graduates from school, students and other young adults had a particularly tough time during the Corona pandemic. The restrictions hit them in a very formative phase of their lives. However, their situation seemed of marginal significance to politics and the media, and they were partly held responsible for offences against Corona measures. We countered with the explicit call for

by Fiete Stegers

Question
Listen to them and give them a voice – how do we get closer to the young audience, not only in a pandemic?

Responsible
Hamburger Abendblatt, NDR, Der Spiegel, Zeitungsgruppe Ostfriesland, HAW Hamburg

Target group
Young adults

Project start
March 2021

action *"Lass mal reden!"* (let's talk) and asked the young people for (video) statements that were to form the basis for further reporting.

The participating media outlets agreed on a joint campaign to reach as many young adults and adolescents as possible.

We consciously opted not to have an anonymous survey, because we wanted to be able to enter into discussions with the participants. However, submitting personal data (e. g. name, place of residence) was optional, in order to reduce the participation threshold for people that are reticent to state their opinion and appear in public.

Approach

With identical texts, young adults (and adolescents with parental consent) were called to submit their opinion. The call appeared on the websites and social media channels of the partners, in the programme of NDR and the participating newspapers. In the first wave, we exclusively asked for video statements, which could be recorded and uploaded directly via smartphone through the video platform Klipworks. In the second wave, we also offered the submission of text and voice messages through all common messengers and via e-mail. In both waves, we asked key questions *("What will be the first thing you do once Corona is over?"; "Do you feel fairly treated?")*.

The submissions were used as a basis for further reporting and, if necessary, also for further contact. The contributions were viewed by a virtual desk and all participating partners could use and process them.

One challenge was apparent from the beginning: Calls through our own channels would primarily address young people whom we had already reached in one form or another – they would hardly give us access to completely new target audiences.

1 year of Corona – let's talk!
This is what our participants had to say

"I was really pleased when I read about your 'project', because ever since the onset of the pandemic, I had the feeling that we are placed in the rear. When you have only just started to run your own life and, as a young person, are full of plans to be alive, loud and together, than you are completely thwarted by the pandemic with a bang." Chiara, student

"Dear #UseThe News team, first of all, I would like to thank you that you want to give us a voice. I can fully subscribe to the idea that we are missing out. Having said that, I am lucky to be in a rather privileged position myself, but while I live with my parents, have a Corona-proof job in social services and functioning friendships, many of my fellow students are faced with a completely different scenario: Some have lost their jobs and can no longer pay their rent, other have been waiting for almost six months for their student loans to be paid out by the responsible office." Neele, student

"First of all: Thank you for asking the question at all. As a student who has written her Bachelor's thesis last year during the Corona summer and is now continuing with a Master's degree programme, I feel I am heard very little. At first, the focus was on the older generation and now it's increasingly on children. While this is totally understandable, we students, trainees or first time professionals are simply overlooked." Betty, student

Voices in a Spiegel article on the action

Readjustments from the first to the second wave:

- short-term definition of the key question for orientation to the current news situation
- low-threshold offer of submission via messenger as an established platform
- trailer from the first wave is used in the call to illustrate what submissions can look like
- extended explanations on the use of submissions and treatment of personal data

Conclusion

With regard to the quality of content, the submissions were very good and included many differentiated presentations. In the second wave, there were hardly any video submissions, but the texts we received had an average length of 2,500 characters.

Many of the respondents explicitly thanked us for the action or said they would be available for further questions from the editors.

Quantitatively, there was a lot of room for improvement (we received a total of 23 video submissions and about 50 texts and audio messages) – especially when you consider the collective reach of the partners involved. By comparison, the popular YouTuber MrWissen-2go reached roughly 38,000 likes and 480 comments on Instagram with a post on the same topic distributed by funk.

Outlook

A part of the young audience is definitely interested in participation. However, to activate this interest and win trust is not a sure thing for newsrooms that are habitually not regarded as dialogue partners by the target audience. Well-known success factors from the realm of community management and of influencers / content creators (long-term commitment, personalised presentation) need to be taken into consideration. Collaborations with players who have already established their credibility and accumulated followers could provide leverage to create attention and trust.

Track Product / Brand
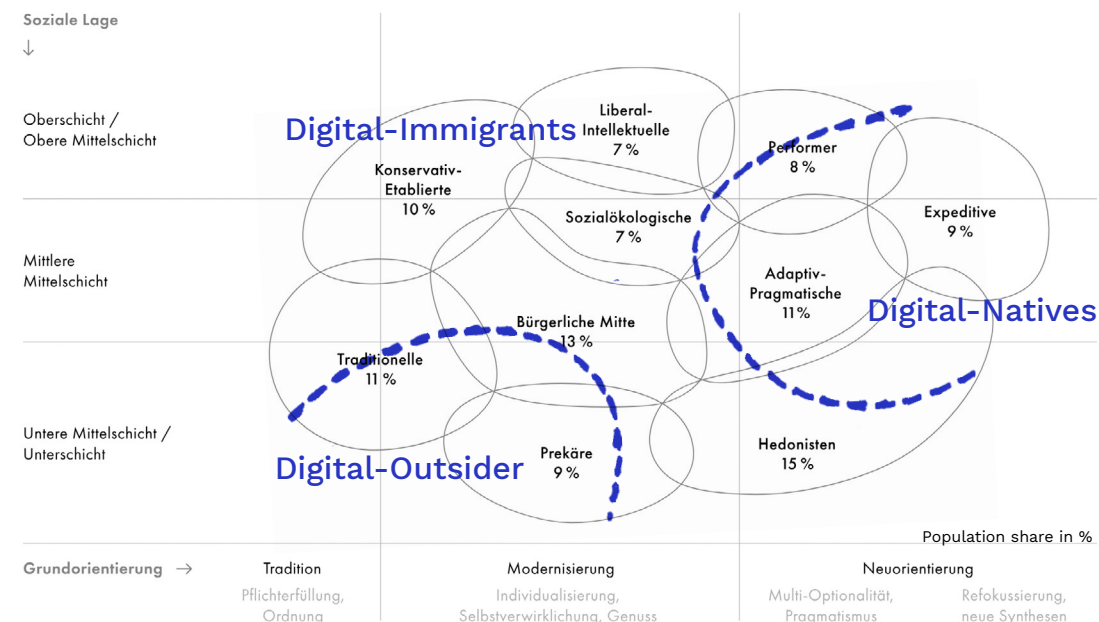
Willingness to pay and a new subscription model

Figure 03: The SINUS Milieus© represent society in ten living environments. Newspapers achieve the best market penetration rates in the milieus counting among the digital outsiders and digital immigrants.

What kind of product do we need to offer to convince young people about news?

"It's hard. You publish mass media, you reach hundreds of thousands of people, your figures look splendid and circulation is increasing for the first time since 2002. And then you analyse this with regard to your target audience and you realise that you are not reaching the digital natives (Figure 03) – despite having digital channels and contemporary products, and despite all your efforts on social media." Is a regional newspaper publisher whining at a high level here? Why not simply enjoy the financial success of the publishing house, in this case NOZ and mh:n Medien?

The answer is obvious: Nothing less is at stake than reaching the next generation with independent journalism. We talk about fishing in new ponds that will still be there once the pond of print newspaper-loving pensioners slowly begins to dry out.

by Tobias Zitzke

Who are our users?

When you look at the sales figures of newspaper publishers, you do actually find digital natives there. But compared to the other milieus, their share is much smaller. So who buys the digital products and is responsible for the strongly increasing circulation figures in this area? Thus far, it's mostly the "older" milieus, since they also appreciate the benefits of digital news products – and they are used to paying for journalism.

Question
Which subscription model is attractive for the young target audience? What must an attractive product look like to elicit willingness to pay?

Responsible
Representatives of NOZ, DER SPIEGEL, Media Lab Bayern

Target group
Adolescents and young adults

Project start
December 2020

The accusations of the young target audiences

The partners participating in the #UseTheNews track Product / Brand jointly went to the bottom of the problem. Basic studies, partly supplied by the Hans-Bredow-Institut (HBI) and, upon suggestion of Media Lab Bayern, self-conducted in-depth interviews with representatives of the young target audiences by NOZ, quickly revealed three essential problems the digital natives have with newspapers:

1. *"Your contents are not relevant for me often enough"*

The perceived insufficient frequency of news relevant for their own living environment is the explanation for the barely existing willingness to pay for a newspaper subscription among the digitally socialised milieus. They have much less difficulty with a Spotify or Netflix subscription – these are used intensively, almost absorbed.

2. *"Your subscription model does not fit me"*

A steady stream of exclusive news with reference to one's own life seems to be a prerequisite for paying a flat rate subscription price (see #neo as a best practice example for young contents). In the context of prototyping, again

moderated by Media Lab Bayern, an alternative was developed: a pay as you read best price billing offer (Figure 04, right, "Digital Young").

NOZ tested the following paywall variants: The monthly pass for EUR 0.99 is the clear winner, achieving conversion rates more than 50 % higher than with best price billing or the standard offer of a free month that transitions to a paid subscription. The readers preferred to make a one-off payment of EUR 0.99 over entering into a binding agreement, even if this was basically free.

The next steps

In the next step, the conversion rates and retention after using the monthly pass were monitored to find out more about customer behaviour. To prevent cancellations, the Digital Young offer was targeted at digital costumers with low usage intensities in a test run.

Almost half of the 18–24 year olds do not pay for journalism for price reasons and thus knowingly miss out on contents that they regard as important themselves (Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2020, result for Germany). We need to improve news usage and political opinion forming in the young target audience. Adapted payment models are required, so the willingness to pay, the payment process or price comparisons with social media contents do not interfere with getting informed.

3. *"The right contents have to find me"*

The third reproach reflects the media usage habits of the young target audiences. Digital natives do not come to the publisher's digital library every morning and systematically search for suitable contents. If a suitable article does not find its way in front of the potential readership's eyes on its own, this is just as fatal as if it had never existed in the first place.

What can we do?

This is why a personalised playout and editorial recommendations are so important. Thus a media producer's roadmap, besides established best practices, should also include tools that automatically keyword articles and use AI to cluster digital usage behaviour according to reading interests in order to offer readers relevant articles in a targeted manner – without creating information bubbles, of course.

In the search for the best product framework around the journalistic content, the question of the right technical container could be answered quickly. If you already have state-of-the-art technical news products, use exactly those for the young target audiences as well.

In surveys, NOZ found that the news products did not lack any essential features, but that readers were unaware that those features already existed. Therefore, the publisher works on customer enabling now: During the onboarding phase, customers receive product explanations in e-mails, and speech bubbles provide tooltips during product use.

Further key questions and findings

Which functions should the digital products offer? • Do we need a separate brand because the "old" one is rejected? • Do we need separate target

Figure 04: A/B/C paywall test: free test month / monthly pass for EUR 0.99 / DigitalYoung

audience-specific products? At the same time, the experiences of SPIEGEL's young offer Bento show that it makes more sense to focus all efforts on the core brand. Separate products not only require a lot of technical expenditure, but they are unnecessary as well. Interviews conducted by this track's team and jule network (a young reader's initiative) revealed that "old" media brands have explicit value for "young" target audiences.

Not only was there no reactance from young readers when traditional newspaper titles were mentioned, but they even boasted within their peer group when they could refer to a "decent source" in a discussion.

Track Language
How do I write for the young target audience?

Initial situation

Traditional news follows a style that is regarded as highly formalised and not always easily understandable by a portion of adolescents and young adults. But established children's news formats are often already too simplistic for them. Consequently, this target audience should be picked up on a different language level that is oriented more towards spoken language without being intrusive.

by Sandra Jütte
and Francisca Zecher

Idea

The track's team approached the question about the right language level from two directions. The first were interviews with experts and the target audience, the second a non-representative survey. In the latter, adolescents and young adults were presented with messages in different language levels. The objective was to find out whether any of the different language levels led to a better understanding of the texts and if there were any preferences. Based on the findings, conclusions could be drawn with regard to the language level journalists should use to address individual target audiences.

Approach

First, linguists and communication scientists, editors of young media and the young target audience (aged 15 to 24) were asked to complete different questionnaires to find out which degree of linguistic knowledge can be expected from adolescents and young adults.

This was followed by a two-week test phase, during which two news topics (from the areas of politics and science) per weekday were prepared in each of three respective language variants: a simple (for adolescents), a moderately difficult (comparable to Deutschlandfunk Nova) and a traditional news variant (dpa).

Through a survey tool, the news reports were distributed to target audiences (14–17, 18–21, 22–24 and older) in the private sphere. The participants in each target group were asked anonymously which version appealed most to them, whether the texts were understood in each case – or which terms should have been explained better.

Question
How should news for the young target audience be written (language level, contents, explanations)? Can adolescents (aged 14 to 17) and young adults (aged 18 to 24) be addressed by a joint news offer?

Responsible
Francisca Zecher (Deutschlandfunk)
Petra Röhr (ZDF)
Daniela Wiegmann (dpa)
Sandra Jütte (HAW Hamburg)

Target group
Adolescents (aged 14 to 17) and young adults (aged 18 to 24)

Project start
January 2021

The participants of our survey thought that the following terms needed an explanation:

Bundesverbraucherministerin

Union

Ernährungspartner

Huthi-Rebellen

Verquickungen

juristisch

US-Sanktionen

Ionisierung

Großajatollah

Meningitis

sunnitisch

biofluoreszierende

Patrioten

paradoxerweise

peking-freundlich

Medienmarken

Geheimdienst-Allianz

Politbarometer

Biolumineszenz

nachrichtendienstlich

Pay Gap

V-Leute

Affäre

Polio

Vattenfall

Meiler

Cholera

Rezession

lumineszierend

Geberkonferenz

Nationaler Volkskongress

schiitisch

Filibustern

Einzelhandel des täglichen Bedarfs

Uni-Smartcard

Migrationshintergrund

Proband

Studien-Macherinnen und Macher

Bundestagsmandat

Radiokarbonanalyse

Finanznöte

Polarwirbel

rechtsextremistisch

Mandatsträger

mesopelagische Zone

Kronkolonie

RWE

Bundesverfassungsschutz

Provision

Autonomie

(The survey only included German-language terms.)

Findings

These were our findings from 17 completed questionnaires and 186 data sets from our survey:

- A target audience-oriented approach works and makes sense, particularly for the younger age groups.

- The younger the readers, the more terms and contexts should be explained. However, adolescents already had a good understanding of the texts as well.

- Some of the terms that we had assumed to be common were unclear and / or needed to be explained better, e. g. "Union", "Meiler" (nuclear reactor) or "paradoxerweise" (paradoxically).

- The topic is relevant, too. It appears that readers expect a greater degree of complexity when it comes to scientific news, so they are more easily prepared to read difficult texts here. In the case of political topics, terms and contexts were assumed, some of which were unclear or unknown. Those would have required more explanations on our part.

- Overall, reporting is understood and rated positively by the majority. Even younger readers already deal rather critically with journalistic texts. (However, the test group also came from an academic environment)

Das passiert, wenn der Nord- zum Südpol wird - Variante 3

Forscher in Neuseeland haben herausgefunden, dass eine Schwächung und schließlich Umkehr des Erdmagnetfeldes vor rund 41.000 Jahren die Erdatmosphäre und das Klima damals erheblich verändert hat. Die Wissenschaftler untersuchten die Überreste von jahrtausendealten Kauri-Bäumen, die in Sümpfen erhalten geblieben waren. Mittels Radiokarbonmethode bestimmten sie die Menge des radioaktiven Kohlenstoff-Isotops C-14 in den Baumringen und konnten so die Zusammensetzung der damaligen Erdatmosphäre bestimmen. Sie stellten unter anderem fest, dass die Schwächung des Erdmagnetfeldes zu einem Rückgang des Ozons durch ungefilterte Weltraumstrahlung geführt hatte. Das veränderte die Atmosphäre der Erde.

Die Folgen waren ihrer Meinung nach gravierend: Das Ereignis könnte nicht für die Austrocknung großer Seen in Australien und für die Vereisung weiter Teile Nordamerikas verantwortlich sein, sondern auch das Aussterben zahlreicher Tiere und des Neandertalers begünstigt haben. Einige Fachkollegen halten die Schlussfolgerungen jedoch für zu spekulativ.

Das Erdmagnetfeld umgibt die Erde und seine Stärke kann erheblich schwanken. Auch die magnetischen Pole wandern, sie können sich sogar komplett umkehren. Manche Forscher befürchten, dass eine erneute Polumkehr bald passieren könnte, denn seit der ersten direkten Messung rund 175 Jahren ist das Erdmagnetfeld um etwa neun Prozent schwächer geworden. Diese These ist jedoch ebenfalls umstritten. Fest steht, dass magnetische Turbulenzen sich auf unsere in weiten Teilen auf Elektronik basierende Gesellschaft wohl gravierend auswirken dürften.

»Was die Sprache angeht: Wie leicht ist es dir gefallen, den Text zu lesen?

»Wie verständlich fandest du das Thema erklärt?

Survey tool for questioning young target audiences

How do I write for the young target audience? 7 tips:

Following the news is important to classify and assess daily events correctly. Therefore, news should be written in such a way that everybody understands and enjoys reading them. To address the younger target audience (aged 14 to 24), we recommend:

Formulate more simply
Texts for a young target audience should be oriented towards spoken language and use shorter sentences and a simpler sentence structure. But please refrain from using teenage slang.

Reconsider terms
Which terms could be unknown to the target audience, which could be known? Even supposed common terms can be unclear. Paraphrase or explain foreign words.

Observe perspective
Which facts and context can the respective target audience know and classify correctly, given their age and life situation?

Break with traditional message structure
To promote understanding, reduce complex topics and leave out unnecessary additional information that could be confusing or distracting.

Enable learning effects
Could the readers learn something new from the text, for instance, if unknown context or technical terms were explained?

Provide a summary
or an overarching lead sentence that guides readers to the topic. This can improve understanding of the text if it is long or deals with a difficult topic. Many young readers explicitly wish for this.

Stick to journalistic standards, even if you simplify
Young readers are critical as well – and they are tomorrow's audience.

Track Topics

Which topics is the Gen Z interested in?

Initial situation

Young people have a great interest in news, but these do not necessarily have anything to do with the traditional understanding of the news term. While this target audience does care about news from the areas of politics, business, sports, etc., a reference must be made to the lifeworld of young people, for example through their role models on social networks.

According to the outcomes from studies (see study overview from page 30), the topics climate change and environmental protection, social justice, their near world (regional and local events), health or own future (e. g. training, career) are particularly important for young people.

Young people also attach great significance to social values such as family and friendships, tolerance, loyalty, but also self-determination and performance. Their most important tool to consume media is the smartphone, with WhatsApp, YouTube and Instagram being the dominant channels.

Approach

Apart from analysing the studies, we also asked the providers of "young" news for their experiences and tried to integrate the findings into the typical daily routine of a newsroom. The Track Topics tried to find the suitable topics for young users of established media brands, the right platform for them and the best mode of implementation. Since WhatsApp is virtually no longer usable to the media and YouTube requires special video production capacities, we have tried to realise our objective on Instagram, the third most frequently used platform by the young target audience. Several accounts shared their experiences with us and we extend a big thank you to @dasding, @die_chefredaktion, @maedelsabende, @news_wg and Maria Plotnikova (@hitchon.de).

by the team from Track Topics

Question
Which (news) topics arouse young people's interest – and how do we have to realise them?

Responsible
Pascal Affelder (VRM)
Claudia Bruns (NDR)
David Kluthe (dpa)
Stefan Köhler (SWR)
Jost Langheinrich (SWR)
Louisa Riepe (NOZ)

Target group
Users of young Instagram offers from the areas current topics/news

Project period
December 2020–April 2021

6 key points to keep in mind for an Instagram account

1. Target audience

Which topics and formats are particularly important to the target audience?

Instagram is a social media, where journalistic accounts compete for the users' attention with influencers, travel, food or wellness providers and the users' best friends. So, for a successful account, it is indispensable to know your target audience well and take their needs seriously.

It is not enough to send out information and hope that users will interact with it. Young people in particular often desire a close and reliable contact person on social media, they want to be involved in editorial processes and give feedback. We need a paradigm shift. Journalists need to explain more and actively clarify what their contents have to do with the target audience's everyday lives.

There's no panacea for this. Apart from the users' age, their education level and gender are also decisive for their media usage behaviour. To find out how your target audience ticks, you can use the tools provided by Instagram itself. The use of targeted surveys and the analysis and documentation of results can be helpful in getting to know the users better (or at least the active ones).

"You get the most important info from us, packaged in such a way that you are entertained by it."
Yannick from DASDING

2. Image/Strategy

How should the account be aligned?

Ideally, once you have found out who is your target audience, you'll also directly be able to answer the question on the right strategy. Do the users want to have a say in the selection of topics, do they demand diversity and do they actively indicate errors? Or do they prefer easily digestible, "shareable content"? It is crucial to give the users a clear product proposition. They have to know precisely what to expect from an account before they follow it. It is often promising to look for success in a niche with regard to topics or formats. Here are some examples: @maedelsabende focuses on topics related to the body or relationships, @news_wg explains political issues in a way that is understandable to everyone and @dasding supplies users with memes that are entertaining and informative at the same time. The experience of these successful accounts demonstrates that it is not very promising to be a "jack of all trades".

The strategy runs through all aspects from the formation of the team (diverse?) to the question when and how often to post (in the evening? on weekends?) to communication with the target audience.

"This target group looks for diversity."
Melisa Erkurt, @die_chefredaktion

"We recently started doing two posts a day and spending more attention to the story."
Johanna Walter, @zdflogo

"It has to be a little shaky, a little authentic."
Melissa Erkurt from @die_chefredaktion

3. Visuals

What should the account and posts look like visually?

When designing the visuals of an Instagram account, journalists should free themselves from the notion of having to produce a glossy product. Instagram is not glossy. The closer contents resemble the postings the target audiences see, like or share in their spare time, the more familiar they will appear. That's why it is also commendable to use the design options that the platform provides for Instagram stories. After all, the users are familiar with these typefaces, filters and effects. The camera work may be shaky, the typeface large and the image colourful. Authenticity is the decisive factor. At the same time, it makes sense for the postings of an account to have recognition value.

4. Team

Who is going to present the contents? Who works behind the scenes?

An established means to promote interaction is the use of hosts. They give a face to the brand and present the contents. They are personal translators who communicate with the users at eye level. Hosts are identification figures, so they should not be much older than the people the format is targeted at. If several hosts are used, a diverse selection is commendable. The young target audience in particular greatly appreciates this. Some of the successful Instagram accounts also plan in an editor per host in the day-to-day business. This person sets topics, researches and plans the contributions together with the host. However, hosts are not a prerequisite for success. If you consider conveying contents through clear graphics or funny images instead, it makes sense to have a graphic designer at hand for day-to-day business. And, as a rule, one person is required to take care of community management.

5. Frequency

How many stories and posts a day are necessary and reasonable?

An account without a steady supply of content is unlikely to attract regular users. Thus you should aim to post contents on a daily basis, such as one feed post and one story per day. You might also want to consider adding reels. Use the trial and error method to figure out the appropriate frequency for your own target audience. Monitor, for example, how many posts in a story get views.

6. Community

How should we deal with comments and direct messages?

The community wants to communicate at eye level and be more than just passive recipients. This means that users should get an answer to each message or question. Sometimes, it will be necessary to do further research to answer questions correctly. All this requires time, but the target audience gets the feeling that it is being taken seriously.

However, at the same time, newsrooms should not be driven by their community, but deal with suggestions and ideas in a transparent and professional manner. And what is the added value for newsrooms? They receive lots of ideas for topics from the community, which might improve the product and increase customer loyalty. Sometimes, they might even find interview partners for exciting stories.

"It is totally important that the target group can identify with the presenters. The cool journalist in front of the camera: That's not someone I want to pour my heart out."
Carolin Köhler, @maedelsabende

"Interactions are consciously forced: Demanding reactions, asking for opinions. Suggestions for topics then come almost on their own."
Helene Reiner, @news_wg

"The exchange with our followers is time-consuming: we try to respond to all comments and research questions."
Tobias Schießl, @news_wg

Track Video
TikTok prototype @Newsnerd

Idea

Value proposition: The TikTok account @Newsnerd contains short explanatory videos for young people who want to understand the world, but don't find existing news formats attractive. Contrary to other video creators on TikTok, the team behind @Newsnerd is credible and prepares topics professionally.

by the team from
Track Video

Approach

After a knowledge acquisition phase in which we spend a lot of time on TikTok and talked to the German TikTok representative, we searched for an established creator / presenter for our up and coming news format. Eventually, we picked Karriereguru (career guru) Tobias Jost from a choice of three potential presenters.

Format development

In talks with Karriereguru, we developed our key question, USP, added value, value proposition to the users, etc. Our key question: In which category do we want to appear on TikTok ("news")? The answer to this one leads us to the next question: What should the format in this category look like? And, finally, which product and which content fit the format? It is advantageous when the framework, the format, is clearly defined, because this makes the search for content easier.
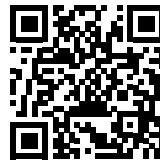
TikTok
@newsnerd

Content development

We want to give orientation in times of fake news and convey reliable information. The target audience often perceives traditional journalistic products to be one-sided. That's why we take different perspectives on the initial question in our project. Initially, we planned to realise this through four separate videos and then link them somehow. But eventually, we decided to fit all perspectives into one video with a duration of less than 59 seconds (the strict limitations on duration were then still in place on TikTok).

Question
What could a news video product for the Gen Z look like?

Responsible
Perlita Braquet, Tobias Jost, Julia Kleiner, Andreas Lützkendorf, Christian Radler, Anna-Maria Schuck, Fiete Stegers and Row Weber

Target group
Gen Z

Project start
September 17, 2020

Outlook

For the channel @Newsnerd to be successful, we would need to produce more content, have a clear sender and promote the channel through a campaign. In addition, we would further develop the video format with the target audience.

Learnings

1.
Answer questions the target audience asks itself or us

2.
Ask the expert
TikTok creator

3.
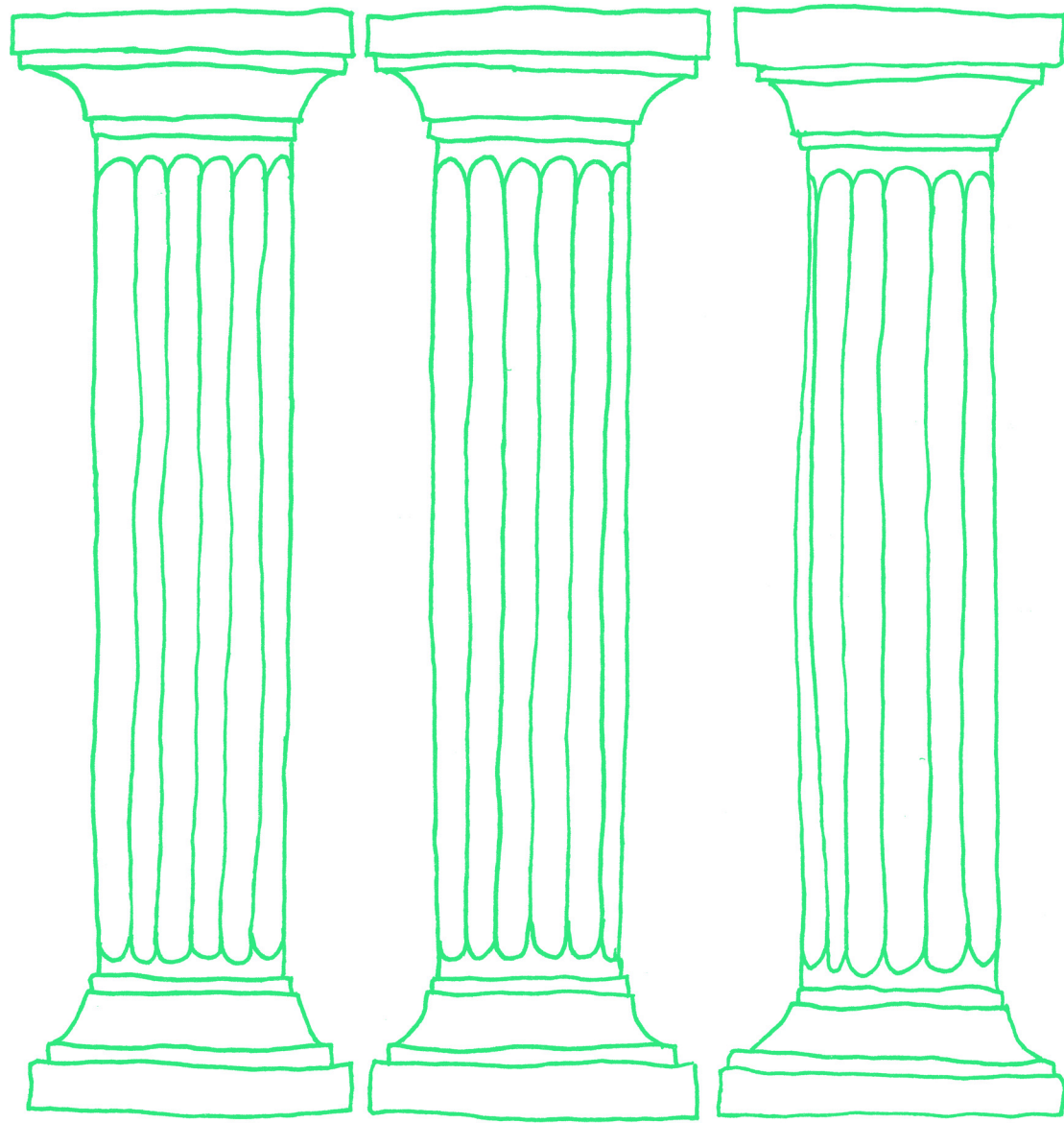*TikTok has its own laws for the distribution of videos*
Algorithm + curation; even older content might get pushed again by TikTok

4.
Kill your darlings
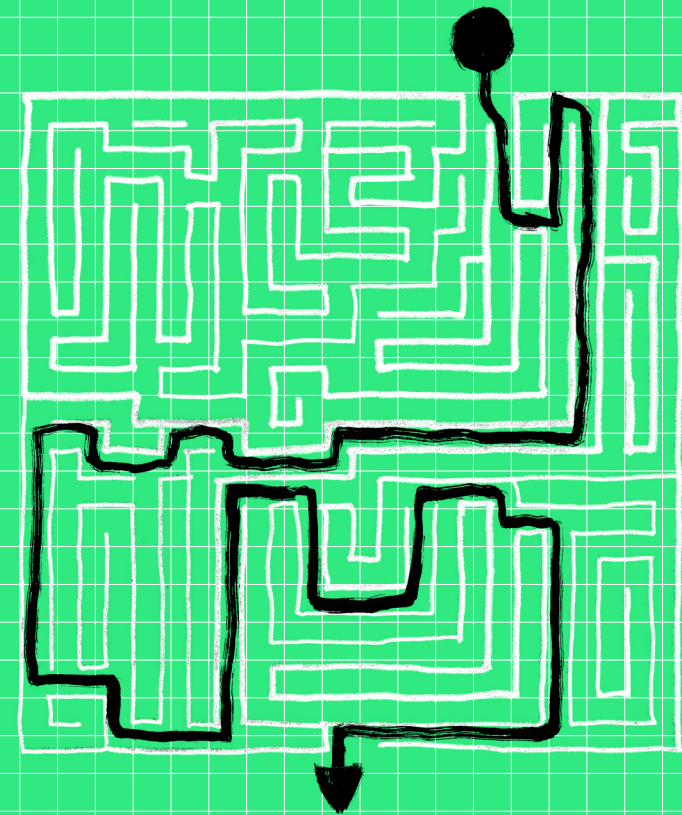Turn four separate contributions into one

HOW CAN OTHERS LEARN FROM THIS?

*Open News
Education*

Collaboration with schools and educational institutions

Open News Education

More news literacy for all

Contemporary news formats only work if they arouse the interest of young target audiences and if they are understood. Actually, both – indifference as well as overload – is widespread among part of the young generation, as the current PISA study as well as the #UseTheNews study impressively document. With its Open News Education (ONE) approach, #UseThe-News makes a targeted contribution to dealing with both phenomena. It is crucial here to address the causes. The title ONE indicates that all materials created are freely available to everybody.

by Dr. Dirk Burmester

oecd.org/pisa

Arouse interest

What is the cause behind the indifference of some adolescents? The #UseTheNews study shows that in some cases, there is disinterest in events as such. Often, a lack of understanding of the value of journalistic work plays a part as well. According to the study, the first phenomenon is due to the fact that the relevancy of global political news for one's own life is barely or not at all apparent. In cases such as these, news journalism can and has to adapt to render relevancy more visible. And the value of journalistic work can only be recognized by those who know how journalism works. With regard to this, newsroom visits or self-made media productions can be very valuable.

Let them do it themselves

The young media audience expects to be more than just an audience. They want to make their own contributions, be heard and taken seriously. That's why ONE utilises educational concepts that promote media production skills, are fun and at the same time supplement the personal experience gathered with.

Impart knowledge

News literacy is a lot more than just the ability to recognize disinformation and use serious sources. In particular, it also includes knowledge about

- editorial working methods and logics,

- the role of journalism in a democracy, also in distinction to other players such as influencers,

- the algorithmically mediated public sphere and its functional logics,

- the journalistic craft: relevance criteria, research techniques, two source principle, dual control editing, verification of sources and many more,

- the media system: What is public service broadcasting?, Which rules apply for tele-media?, Which journalistic offers are there?, etc.

With the help of unconventional learning methods and a sense of achievement through DIY *(the buzzword here is self-efficacy)*, relatively quick progress concerning news literacy is attainable. However, the pedagogical handling of overload tends to be much more protracted. As the seventh PISA study showed, reading skills in Germany have declined significantly. This is an immense challenge for teaching German at school, but also for journalism. While new formats such as podcasts, news comics and video clips can help overcome reading hurdles, they naturally cannot achieve the information density of substantial texts. Especially when it comes to complex issues, we quickly reach the point where journalistic simplification is more likely to mislead than to enlighten.

Objectives of ONE

From a cultural point of view, the fact that people are less inclined to read may be unfortunate. But for a democratic public, the widespread reading of news content is crucial. Consequently, the promotion of news literacy needs to be given much higher priority than before. Educational professionals require the curricular space and modern learning methods to counteract a sense of overload in dealing with news. ONE is meant to make a contribution on all levels here, also in collaboration with others:

ONE advocates the nationwide obligatory mediation of news and information literacy in teacher training and further education as well as in school classes. The special need for this is also underlined by the findings of BDZV (German Newspaper Publishers and Digitalpublishers Association) on deficiencies in media education at German schools.

ONE supplies lesson materials for this, is involved in teacher training and collaborates with partners such as Journalismus macht Schule (journalism makes school) and Reporterfabrik (reporter factory) to reach as many schools as possible with educational content. Teachers who want to treat the topic in lessons receive offers adapted to their needs: customised ma-

terials, opportunities for newsroom visits, lessons with journalistic guests and in-depth units within the framework of digital teaching.

ONE collaborates with the Federal Agency for Civic Education to reach older target audiences with educational offers as well.

ONE emphasises the significance of news literacy in the discourse on educational policy and promotes networking with regard to the issue. Special events and formats are planned for this. Networking – also with international initiatives – helps with learning from the experiences of similar offers, developing quality standards and taking over methodical innovation.

ONE already benefits from the collaboration with the News Literacy Project from the US.

Dr. Dirk Burmester is an advisor in the media office of the Hamburg Ministry of Culture and Media. Prior to this, he worked, among other things, as a news editor and Chief of Staff at Financial Times Deutschland.

Strengthening news literacy

What questions we need to ask with ONE

by Fiete Stegers

For more than half of adolescents and young adults, traditional journalistic news are just one of many sources in their individual bouquet of information – they also use non-journalistic offers to find out about current events. Based on this an many other findings of the #UseTheNews study, Open News Education (ONE) is meant to supplement and link existing offers for the promotion of news and media literacy.

Those already involved range from individual teachers and schools over small and mid-sized providers of media education measures to a whole number of initiatives and institutions targeting a wider impact. The latter group includes information offers from the public service broadcasters (So geht Medien), programmes of newspaper publishers that have been around for quite some time, school visits which arose from the partly voluntary initiative of individual journalists (Journalismus macht Schule) and foundation-funded offers such as Lie Detectors or Klickwinkel. A survey in the context of #UseTheNews found that there are many similarities in content between the individual actors, but sometimes focus and educational concepts differ significantly.

Many offers were launched over the last few years in the context of the debate about fake news on the internet and put the emphasis here. Others also explain the function of journalism and its working methods. Some encourage young people to get to know the media by actively producing and testing them. Available teaching materials include videos, explanatory texts, lesson designs and worksheets. Journalists can be invited to visit a class, and there are also free educational games like SWR Fake Finder or Fake it to make it which may be used to impart and train media knowledge.

These offers fall on fertile ground when it comes to young people who are keenly interested in news already and, for example, also follow international events and regard it as important for society to inform themselves. However, this population, summarised by the #UseTheNews study as "journalistically information-oriented" and "extensively information-oriented" types, only represents a part of the 14–24 year olds.

On closer examination, many of the offers primarily target older adolescents with a higher formal education.

Roughly half of all young people don't regard it as important to get informed about current events. When it comes to journalistic news, they often feel that there's a lack of reference to the reality of their own lives. Especially the group of "little information-oriented" adolescents and young adults hardly sees any relevancy of journalistic news for themselves. While basic interest in current news is higher in the group of the "non-journalistically information-oriented", their actual use of journalistic sources is low. As a result, they turn out to be significantly less well-informed when it comes to answering questions from the fields of politics or current events.

The share of "little information-oriented" and "non-journalistically information-oriented" persons is particularly high among those with a low formal education. Both types are more strongly represented among the adolescents (aged 14–17) than among the young adults (aged 18–24).

So not only does the News Literacy Lab need to develop new journalistic formats targeted at these groups and meant to demonstrate the relevancy of journalistic offers to them, but these kids explicitly need to be taught basic knowledge as well: What is the function of journalism in a democracy? In how far do the working methods of journalists differ from those of other information providers, such as influencers? What role do the social media platforms and their attention logics play? The question hovering over everything is "What has that got to do with me?" In other words: What relevance does news have in the everyday life of young people, beyond the strong motivation, across all groups, of wanting to participate in conversations with friends, the family and at school? Which knowledge and competencies do young people have to acquire to be able to identify sources that are relevant to them and – if needed – to decipher traditional news and transfer them to their own living environment?

The results from the survey on existing educational offers will be updated continuously and made available as an online guide on the project page of #UseTheNews. Initial concepts for training and further education of teachers will be tested in collaboration with LI Hamburg, and findings from the #UseTheNews study will be aligned with the needs identified by teachers and the wishes expressed by students. We plan to supplement existing offers by our own lesson and training materials. And, naturally, ONE is also open to long-term or project-related collaboration with all interested parties.

For both groups, influencers play a more important role for opinion-forming than journalistic sources.

The project area Open News Education will be responsible for the mediation of these competencies. One focus will be addressing the "little information-oriented" and "non-journalistically information-oriented" adolescents and young adults. We see the need for new, differentiated offers here.

Fiete Stegers is a research assistant in the Information department at HAW Hamburg. In this capacity, he was in charge of the project Klickwinkel for the promotion of media literacy among adolescents and teachers from 2018 to 2021. At present, he coordinates the area Open News Education of #UseTheNews. Prior to this, he was a net world editor for public service broadcaster NDR. Fiete Stegers also works as a trainer for research and verification in the education of journalists.

Teaching and learning

News literacy in school education

by Anja Pasquay

Study
dpaq.de/kMHEj

More than 500 teachers participated. They were teachers from all types of German secondary schools, teaching kids in class levels 7–10 (ages 12–16) in either German or a social science–related subject. The study was conducted because scientific examinations had found that news literacy was neglected by the curricula, textbooks as well as study and examination regulations of teacher training courses.

Be it social commitment to democratic education or a well-understood self-interest in the audience of tomorrow: The promotion of reading has been one of the tasks of newspapers in Germany since the early 1980s. Initially, educational projects such as Zeitung in der Schule (newspapers at school) focused on deepening the cultural competence of (newspaper) reading itself. However, at the latest with the spread of digital offerings, this was followed by teaching media literacy and, even more specifically, news literacy.

In this context, schools of all types are the natural allies of newspaper companies. Especially in times of Corona and distance learning, digital editions / e-papers, newsletters and other online offerings can supplement and expand teaching materials on a daily basis.

The importance of schools and teachers in supporting competent engagement with news and news media – alongside parents and the peer group – cannot be overestimated. So there are good reasons for the industry to take a closer look at how teachers themselves are dealing with the news:

It is a fact that teachers at German schools attach great importance to teaching news literacy. This is documented by a study conducted in spring 2020 by the Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (IfD) on behalf of the Stiftervereinigung der Presse, of which the German Newspaper Publishers and Digitalpublishers Association (BDZV) is a member. The study also showed, though, that some of the over 500 teachers surveyed had significant deficits in media knowledge themselves – and that there are clearly discernible differences between West and East Germany.

This finding is a cause for concern. After all, in view of the alarming spread of so-called fake news and conspiracy theories, it is becoming increasingly important to enable children and young people to deal competently with news and its sources. Especially in times of Corona, well-trained teaching staff is needed that can react flexibly to information needs. As a result, news literacy is increasingly turning into a key competency for teachers and learners in a democratically constituted society.

These are the key findings from the study:

- 55 percent of teachers consider the teaching of news literacy at school to be "particularly important". The clear focus here is on conveying the ability to get one's bearings in the information on offer.

- Printed newspapers are by far the most frequently used illustrative materials in the classroom. The study participants regard educational projects such as Zeitung in der Schule as useful offers.

- Although the curriculum generally provides some space for the topic of news literacy, only a minority of teachers believe that the time allocated is sufficient to give students at least a basic understanding of the subject.

- Nevertheless, the majority of the teachers surveyed are convinced that they succeed in imparting basic knowledge about the subject matter to students.

- Uncertainties arise with regard to the teachers' own knowledge of the German media system. For example, 40 percent of the teachers believe that it is the task of the media to mobilise the population for certain causes. 28 percent believe that reports about a federal minister may only be published after approval by the corresponding ministry.

- In East Germany, about half of the teachers do not have much confidence in the media, compared to 22 percent in West Germany. Overall, 19 percent of teachers believe that a lot of important news is concealed and can only be found on social networks.

- Only about a quarter of teachers below 40 have a fixed timely routine when it comes to finding out about current events.

Teaching news literacy at schools is …

...not that important (5%)

...important as well (40%)

...particularly important (55%)
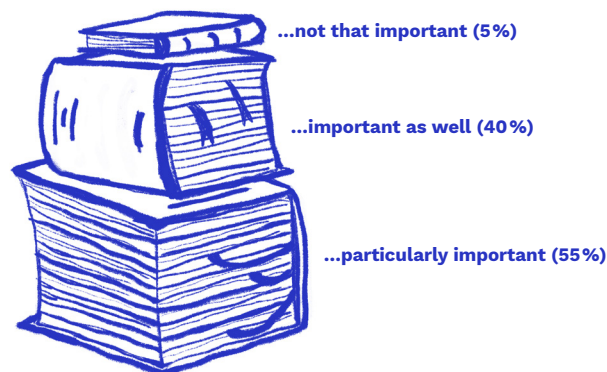
Anja Pasquay started her professional career as a theatre critic in Munich. For the last couple of years, she has been Press Officer of the German Newspaper Publishers and Digitalpublishers Association in Berlin and Director of the Board of Trustees for the Theodor-Wolff Award.

The journalistic craft in schools

Journalismus macht Schule and Reporterfabrik

by Jörg Sadrozinski

Nowadays, the subject of media literacy – especially news and information literacy – is just as important as math or biology. For many readers, teachers and those responsible in the education sector, this thesis may sound provocative. However, this statement is not meant to downplay the significance of natural sciences in school education, but to draw attention to the fact that there are still deficits in an area that already is important to forming opinions in our democratic society and will become even more so in the future.

Not just since the Corona crisis have we known how difficult it is to distinguish serious information from half-truths and fake news. This competency should be taught in schools. Five years ago, the German Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) specified demanding requirements for teaching media skills in schools in its strategy paper Education in the Digital World and the Kompetenzorientiertes Konzept für die schulische Medienbildung (competence-oriented concept for media education in schools). In these documents, KMK recommended that teachers and schools should use "extracurricular cooperation partners", in particular media providers and educational institutions, to convey media literacy.

Although all federal states, state media authorities, teacher training and school development institutes and many other public and private initiatives and organisations are now offering „media driving licenses" or „media competence passes" and provide teaching materials, curricula, learning platforms, games and more, the need for specific measures to convey media literacy is still great.

This is where Reporterfabrik (reporter factory) ties in. Since 2019, this so called "web academy of journalism" has been organising school visits by journalists across Germany and designed teaching units to accompany them. This is because many of the requirements for the training and further education of teachers as specified by KMK's strategy are part

reporterfabrik.org

and parcel of a journalist's basic knowledge and daily practice: researching and selecting information, producing media, understanding and recognizing data security and data misuse and evaluating media representations of violence. In other words: Journalists are experts at understanding media society.

Reporterfabrik teaches the basics of the journalistic craft, makes the professional work of the media transparent, counteracts disinformation and trains journalists. Bürgerakademie (citizens' academy) wants to help qualify the public. It makes the work of traditional and social media transparent for lay people and teaches communication skills to interested citizens.

Naturally, competent media usage is one of the chief interests of media producers. Thus national daily newspapers such as ZEIT, Süddeutsche Zeitung and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, regional and local media outlets, public service broadcasters, private broadcasting companies and organisations like Lie Detectors have all been offering teaching materials and support in the shape of school visits, workshops and workshop discussions for years.

With this background, it made sense to tackle the common goal of supporting teachers who convey news and information literacy together. Thus a new alliance was forged by journalists from numerous media outlets, state media authorities, state agencies for civic education as well as other institutions and organisations. This nationwide network, Journalismus macht Schule, wants to help students get reliable information to form an independent opinion.

The network consists of journalists from major media outlets such as Süddeutsche Zeitung, ZEIT and NDR, but also from others like Reporterfabrik. The network is organised by 15 of them, over 600 are involved and all of them work on a voluntary basis.

Studies have repeatedly demonstrated the poor state of news and information literacy of school students – and on occasion also their teachers. The restrictions in the context of the Corona pandemic have made the deficits – which also extent to competencies in the handling of digital media – even more obvious. However, the participants in the network have no intention to demonstrate how digital teaching works in a know-it-all way, or to show that journalists are the better teachers.

What do the visits in schools look like?

School visits can come in a great variety of shapes. One example is workshop discussions as offered by Süddeutsche Zeitung, where journalists visit a class and talk about their job. Journalists also teach individual lessons on topics such as research, fake news or what a journalist's work is all about.

Before the onset of Corona, regional newspaper Mannheimer Morgen organised a journalism day together with Reporterfabrik, in which several schools and classes took part.

Reporterfabrik and its sister portal Bürgerakademie (buergerakademie.info) are platforms run by the non-profit research centre CORRECTIV and Reporter-Forum e. V. The web academies for journalists and citizens have been online since 2019 and are funded by charitable foundations.

journalismus-macht-schule.org

Prior to school visits, representatives of Reporterfabik get in touch with the teachers to find out which topics the students are interested in and to agree on the timeframe. The journalists bring the illustrative material along (e. g. on fake news), but they also respond to examples mentioned by the students. Using materials supplied by Reporter4you, the journalists explain how to identify fake news and recognise the features of a reliable source. Next, the students are asked to do research themselves. Most of them use a variety of sources and apply the hints and tips they learned.

Learnings will also be useful in the context of further school projects, since news and information literacy are ongoing topics, just like math and biology have been for decades.

Jörg Sadrozinski is responsible for the media literacy projects of Reporterfabrik. He works as a journalist and lecturer in Germany and Switzerland. From 2011 to 2017 he was Director of Deutsche Journalistenschule in Munich, and, prior to that, Editor in Chief of tagesschau.de.

Age is no protection against fake news

The challenge of catching up in media education

The 5G mobile network causes COVID-19 *(false!)*; holding your breath for ten seconds will let you know whether you have COVID-19 *(false!)*; drinking bleach is a good way of treating the Corona virus *(false!)*; and the internet offers "an ample supply of 'in-depth information' to support every conspiracy theory, however crude that theory may be" *(unfortunately true!)*. This is how netzpolitik.org, in a commentary that is almost cynical, once summed up the state of the enlightened knowledge and information society. And it seems that the more abstruse the idea, the greater its appeal. Simplistic explanations suggest order in times of crisis, and simplistic answers create a semblance of clarity in a world full of dilemmas and paradoxes. It has become evident during the pandemic, which is also an infodemic, that such black-and-white thinking can also pose a threat to democratic processes.

Given these conditions, the competence to participate in social and political processes as a responsible citizen and to find one's way through the diverse information landscape nowadays requires a new level of orientation skills – not least because communication and agreement on issues that affect us all in a democratic society can only be achieved via an exchange of information in the public sphere.

A target group that tends to be overlooked in this context are adults. In debates on media education, adults are often addressed only in their capacity as educators or as guardians responsible for bringing up the young generation and helping children and young people to deal competently and critically with the media. Media education programmes that specifically address adults barely exist. *But, after all, it is mainly adults who have been socialised with traditional news media – print, radio and TV – and who are nevertheless quite active on social media now.*

by Eda Sayan

The Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb) supports all citizens who have an interest in politics. Its role is to promote an understanding of political issues, to reinforce democratic awareness and to strengthen the motivation to participate in politics: www.bpb.de

Hence the children of this generation rather frequently have to try and convince their parents that they are falling prey to nonsense in believing in conspiracy theories, in following "good" sources of information on Telegram, and in combating the alleged evil. Conspiracy theories, populist narratives and hoaxes fall on fertile ground, because many people lack the competence to assess news, to classify information, and to check its veracity.

The German Federal Agency for Civic Education intends to address this need with a specific offer for people aged 40 years and above. Since November 2020, the agency has participated in the project #UseTheNews, and the research on the state of news literacy in Germany conducted in this project provides a valuable basis and important insights for developing education programmes for specific target audiences.

In contrast to young target audiences, study findings on people aged 40 to 50 indicate personal interest and the aspiration to keep themselves informed, including through digital media. But these people have never learned to differentiate between news and opinion, facts and fakes, nor are they aware of the criteria according to which search engine results are displayed. Yet these are precisely the abilities they need in order to assess the reliability of sources, to participate in public debates, and to develop informed opinions on political issues. In addition, the sheer mass of digital news media can often lead to a feeling of loss of control and a sense of overload – and a lack of competencies can exacerbate distrust of politics, science, and journalism.

The main challenge in developing suitable programmes is access to the target group. In this regard, it is important to take note of the practical requirements regarding time constraints, family obligations and the needs and interests of this heterogeneous target group. So if we want to convey news literacy, we should address the target group via forms of reception it is familiar with, and through topics that are relevant to them. The topics to be addressed are precisely those in which the transfer of orientation knowledge contributes to strengthening the addressees' judgement, action competence and self-efficacy experience. After all, people who regard themselves as empowered in their handling of media are more likely to perceive themselves as politically effective in the digital media society. Tailored programmes can contribute to political and social participation and thus help counteract the increasing polarisation of society.

Eda Sayan studied social and media sciences in Siegen, Bonn and Bursa (Turkey). She is an advisor for media education in the field of target group-specific offers at the Federal Agency for Civic Education. Her area of focus is disinformation.

The News Literacy Project

a future founded on facts

by Damaso Reyes

dpaq.de/kQa9l

dpaq.de/cYv8D

Today's information landscape is the most complex in human history, and the need for news literacy has never been greater. In 2019, a Stanford History Education Group study – a follow-up to 2016 research – concluded that nearly all American high school students surveyed did not consider the validity of a source, and over half could not correctly rate the strength of evidence when judging the credibility of information. A 2019 Pew Research Center study found that only a minority of adults could correctly differentiate between fact and opinion.

This lack of news literacy is a threat to democracy. A free society cannot function without a well-informed public and a vigorous and independent free press.

The News Literacy Project (NLP), a nonpartisan national education nonprofit, provides programs. It also includes lesson plans and resources for educators and the public to teach, learn and share the abilities needed to be smart, active consumers of news and information and equal and engaged participants in a democracy.

By 2022, NLP will build a community of 20,000 educators who, using our programs and resources, will teach news literacy skills to 3 million middle and high school students each year in the United States. We will also lead efforts to increase public awareness of news literacy and to equip people of all ages with the ability to discern fact from fiction.
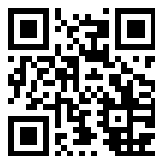
newslit.org

The Solution

Education is the most effective approach to combat the spread of misinformation. NLP is the leading American provider of news literacy education, and our efforts to fight misinformation reach a global audience. We connect with young people as they are developing their information consumption and creation habits, giving today's students (who are tomorrow's voters and decision-makers) the tools to recognize false information and discern fact-based, credible information.

What is News Literacy?

The ability to determine the credibility of news and other content, to identify different types of information, and to use the standards of authoritative, fact-based journalism to determine what to trust, share and act on. Being news-literate also means recognizing the critical role of a free press in a democracy and interacting with news and other information in ways that promote engaged participation in civic life.

↓ For Educators ↓

The Sift®

Our free newsletter – delivered weekly during the school year – explores timely examples of misinformation, addresses media and press freedom topics and discusses social media trends and issues. It includes discussion prompts and activities for the classroom.

newslit.org/subscribe

Checkology® virtual classroom

Our free e-learning platform empowers educators to teach middle and high school students how to identify credible information, seek out reliable sources, and know what to trust, what to dismiss and what to debunk. It also gives them an appreciation of the importance of a free press. This browser-based e-learning platform is ideal for classroom, distance learning or homeschool settings.

get.checkology.org

Get Smart About News

This free weekly newsletter, modeled on The Sift, explores timely examples of misinformation, addresses media and press freedom topics and discusses social media trends and issues.

newslit.org/get-smart-newsletters

↑ For Everyone →

Checkology® virtual classroom

In 2020 we created a free, customized version of Checkology for the general public, to bring news literacy education to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Glossary and Authors

Global Education

We recognize that the demand for news literacy education is global. While we are primarily committed to meeting this challenge in the United States, we are also working to confront the issue internationally. Since its launch educators in more than 115 countries have registered to use Checkology. During the 2020/2021 school year more than 90 international educators teaching more than 2,300 students have used the platform. Our targeted efforts include:

- Sharing free resources, such as Give Facts a Fighting Chance: A Global Playbook for Teaching News Literacy, a comprehensive guide available to organizations around the world to develop and expand news literacy programs and lesson plans and other materials which can be translated.

- Speaking at gatherings seeking solutions to the misinformation crisis.

- Consulting or partnering with like-minded organizations combating the misinformation challenge in their countries.

- Licensing and assisting in the adaptation of digital assets in local markets.

Damaso Reyes is a media and information literacy expert as well as an independent journalist. He trains educators and journalists around the world to empower their students and audiences with the skills they need to be engaged digital citizens.

Glossary

Amazon Prime
Amazon Prime is a subscription-based streaming and video rental service of the American corporation Amazon Inc.

Blackfishing
Blackfishing describes the optical alteration of white people in order to present themselves as non-white.

Clickbaiting
Clickbaiting is a technique in which social media posts, messages or videos are edited with exaggerated design elements in order to lure users to click on them.

Clubhouse
Clubhouse is an audio-chat based, invitation-only, social networking app owned by Alpha Exploration Co.

Digital Natives
Digital natives is the term used to describe the generations of people who grew up with the Internet and other forms of digital media.

Evergreen Content
Evergreen content is content that does not loose relevance over time.

Fake News
Fake news are deliberate false reports that are presented as factual news.

Feed
A feed is the start page of a social media account where all posts of the users you subscribed to are displayed.

Generation Z / GenZ
Generation Z or GenZ describes the generation of people born between 1997 and 2012.

GIF
A GIF is a short animation or video, typically used to express emotions in a comedic way.

Hard News
Hard news is defined as professionally researched and unbiased news about current events in politics and business.

Influencer
Influencers are social media personalities who have a great influence on their followers due to their strong presence and reach on social media.

Instagram
Instagram is an ad-supported social network owned by Facebook Inc., which is based on the creation and sharing of photo and video content to a group of followers.

Instant Messenger
Instant Messenger is a technology for online chatrooms in real-time transmission.

Memes
Memes are typically photos or videos with a short and humorous caption that are shared on social media platforms.

Millennials
Millennials are the generation of people born between 1981 and 1996.

Netflix
Netflix is a paid subscription-based streaming service for films and television series.

Playlist
A playlist is a collection of audio or video content that can be playedeither chronologically or in a random order by a software application.

Podcast
Podcasts are audio- or video files that can be subscribed to and downloaded by listeners.

Podcast host
A podcast host is the presenter of a podcast.

Safe space
A safe space is a retreat for people who feel threatened in any way, where any kind of discrimination is prohibited and an open exchange of personal experiences can take place.

Sharing
Sharing on social media is a form of digital social interaction that allows users to forward any given social media post to selected contacts.

Snapchat
Snapchat is an instant messenger owned by Microsoft that allows users to take photos or videos and send them to contacts. The recordings delete themselves a few seconds after they are opened and cannot be revoked.

Social bots
Social bots are software robots that pretend to be human users on social media platforms. They are typically used to convey advertising political opinions.

Social media engagement
The term social media engagement describes interactions (likes, followers, comments, sharing) on a social media account.

Social media story
A social media story is a feature that allows users to share photos and videos on their profile for a limited amount of time.

Sponsored post
allows users to take photos and videos and send them to contacts. The recordings delete themselves a few seconds after they are opened and cannot be revoked.

Spotify
Spotify is an audio streaming service.

Tagging
Tagging allows social media users to link people, products or businesses that are mentioned in their posts.

TikTok

TikTok is a video based social network owned by the Chinese company ByteDance.

Tinder

Tinder is a mobile dating app that helps users to get to know people in their area.

Twitch

Twitch is a web portal for the live streaming of video games owned by Amazon Inc.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a instant messaging platform owned by Facebook Inc., which allows users to exchange messages, as well as place phone and video calls.

YouTube

YouTube is an online video portal owned by Google Inc., whichallows users to share their own videos or view, like, comment and share the videos of other creators.

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