



The Better Journalism Project

How Better Journalism Propelled Digital Subscription Growth

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Executive Vice President
@nedregotten



Who



amedia

Founded in 2012: A new company from merger of A-pressen and Edda Media

Owned by **Amediastiftelsen** (Amedia Trust), a self-governing foundation, since 2016

No dividend requirements – all profits channeled back into the business

2,4 million daily readers – **507,000** subscribers

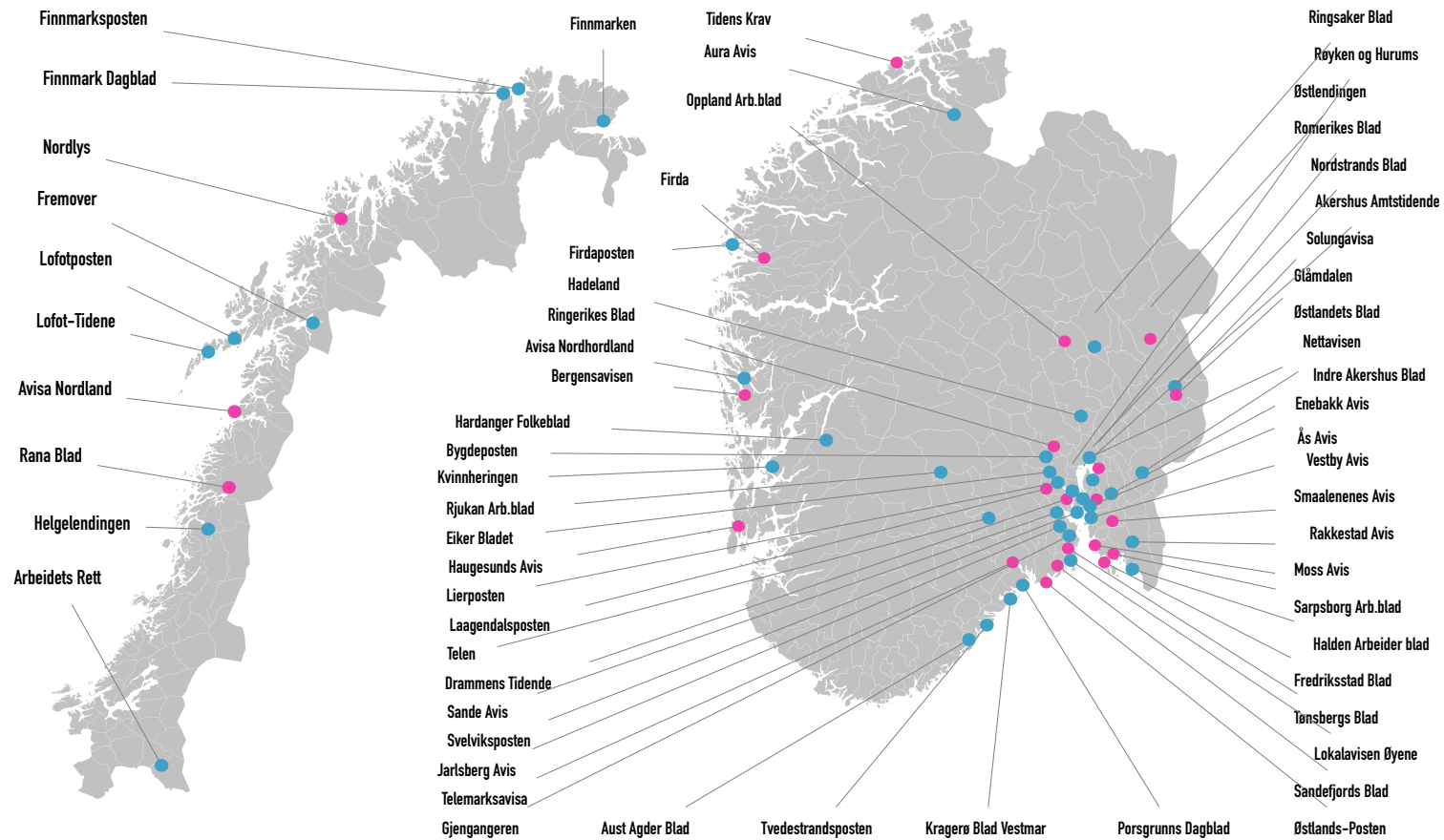
64 newspapers; **63 local titles** and **1 national**

5 printing plants,

11 distribution companies

Number of employees: **1,600**

Norway's largest local media company



What

EOY, 2017

506,906

Record high number of subscribers

2016

2017



EOY 2017

5,6%

Subscription growth YoY

Top 5: customer growth

	Growth	# of subscribers
Bergensavisen	4,149	18,058
Fredriksstad Blad	2,066	20,200
Telemarksavisa	1,622	19,028
Romerikes Blad	1,590	28,091
Nordlys	1,376	21,772

Top 5: growth in per cent

	Growth (%)	# of subscribers
Bergensavisen	29.9%	18,058
Vestby Avis	15.7%	2,995
Fredriksstad Blad	11.4%	20,200
Telemarksavisa	9.3%	19,028
Finnmark Dagblad	9%	5,966

...turning into real money

145,000,000

140,000,000

135,000,000

130,000,000

125,000,000

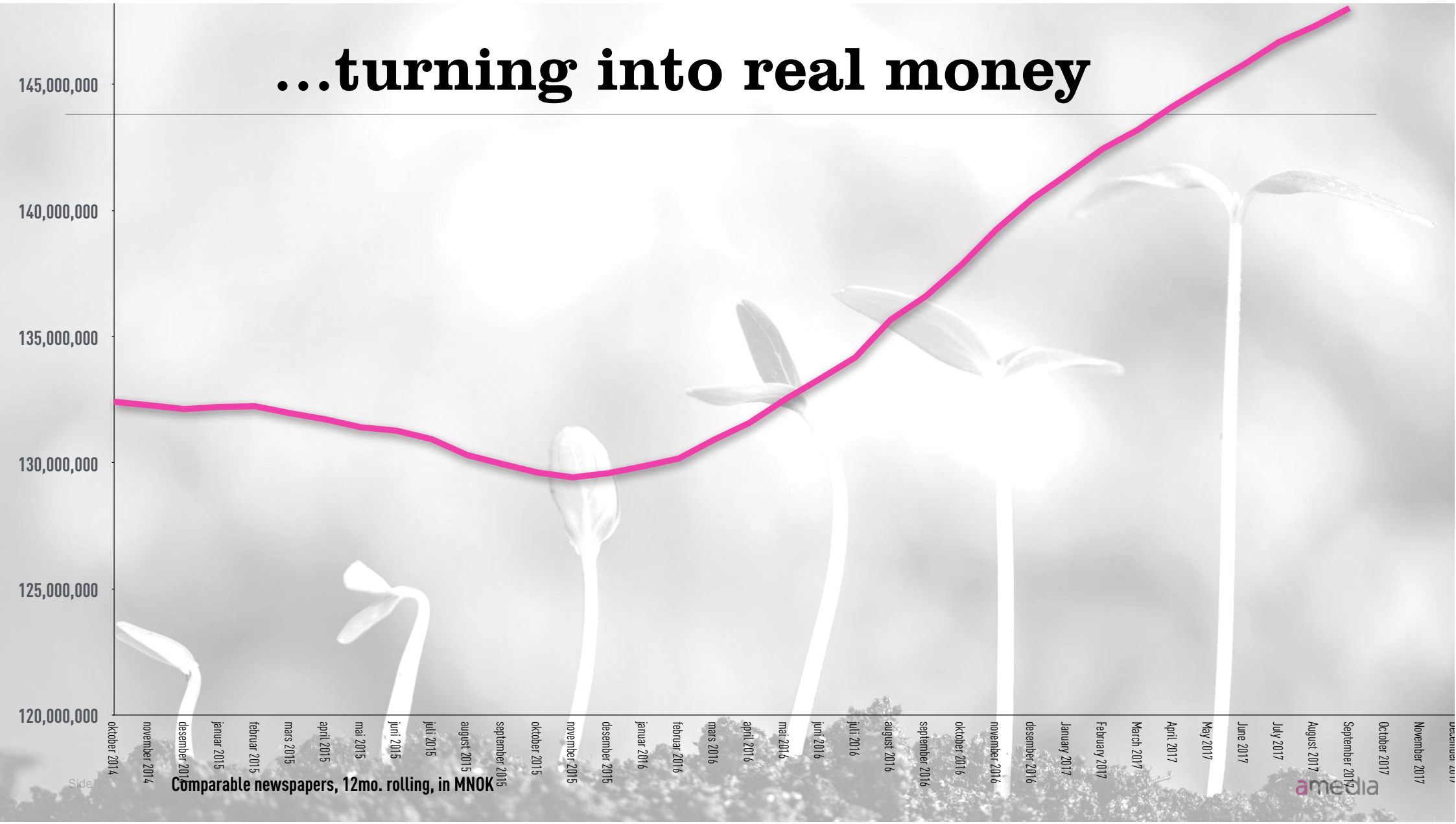
120,000,000

oktober 2014 november 2014 december 2014 januar 2015 februar 2015 mars 2015 april 2015 mai 2015 juni 2015 juli 2015 august 2015 september 2015 oktober 2015 november 2015 desember 2015 januar 2016 februar 2016 mars 2016 april 2016 mai 2016 juni 2016 juli 2016 august 2016 september 2016 oktober 2016 november 2016 desember 2016 januar 2017 februar 2017 mars 2017 april 2017 May 2017 June 2017 July 2017 August 2017 September 2017 oktober 2017 november 2017 desember 2017

Side

Comparable newspapers, 12mo. rolling, in MNOK

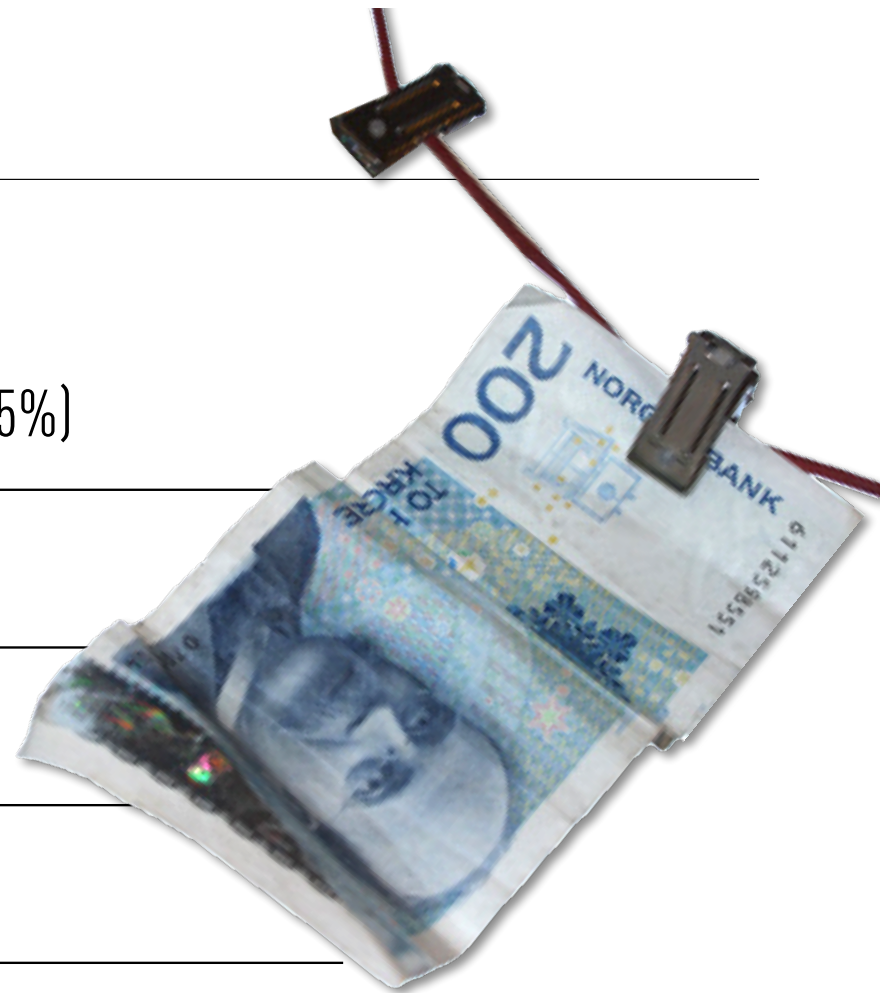
ameia



Solid financial position, driven by subscriptions

2017/per 31.12.2017

EBITDA	€51 mill (13.5%)
Cashflow	€46 mill
Debt	€0 mill
Cash	€55 mill
Equity ratio	56 %

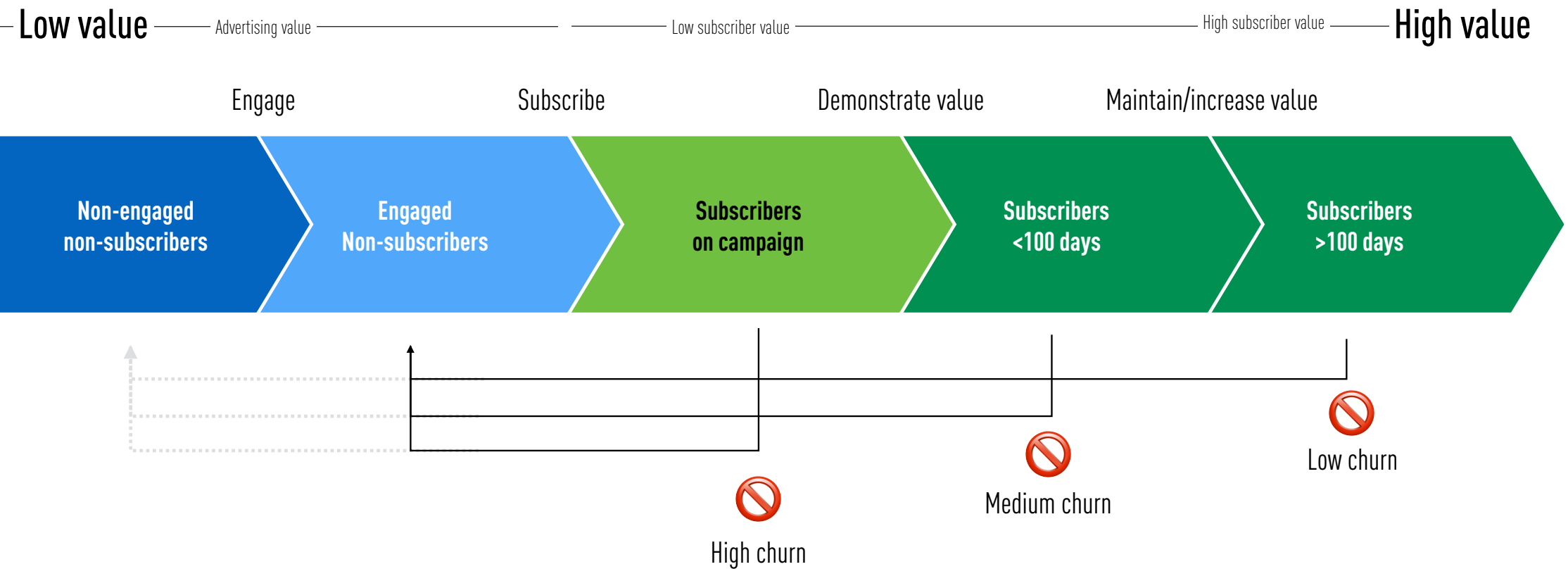


How

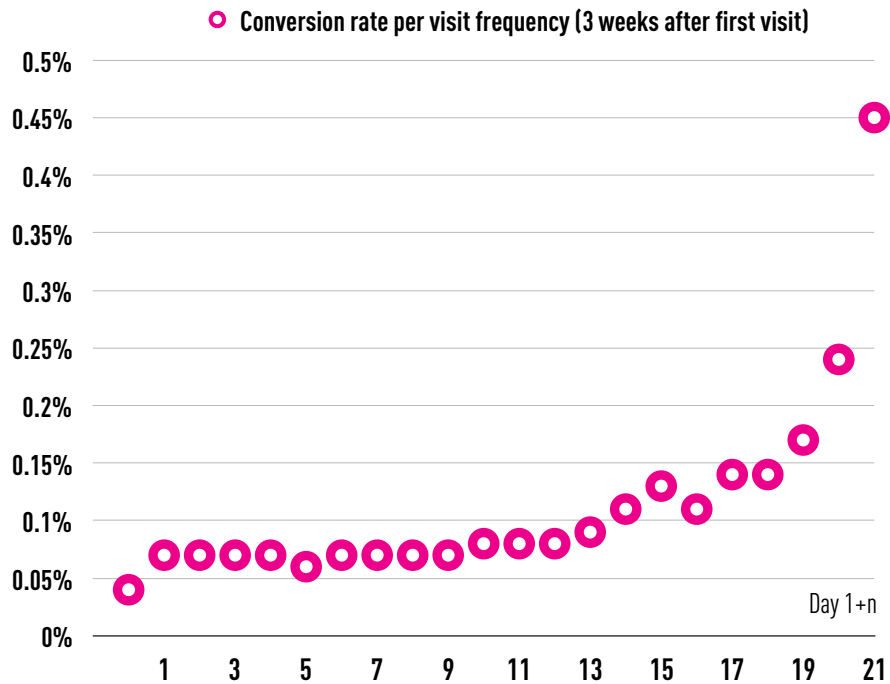
Norway's local “public service broadcasters”



Customer journey and critical transitions in customer relationship



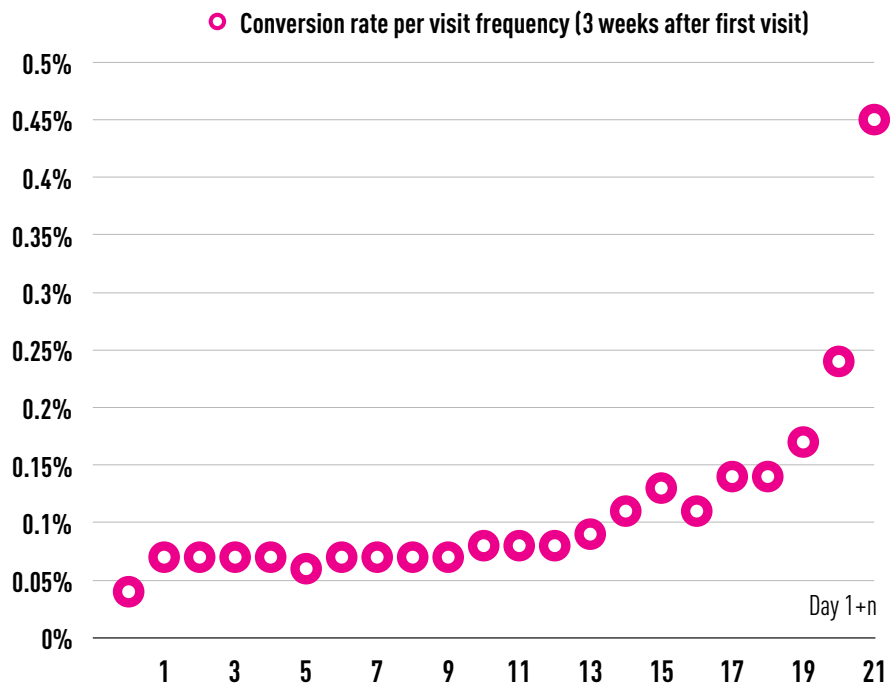
If readers visit, they buy



Clear correlation between visit frequency and subscription purchase:

the more often we get non-logged in users to visit us, the higher the likelihood of them becoming subscribers.

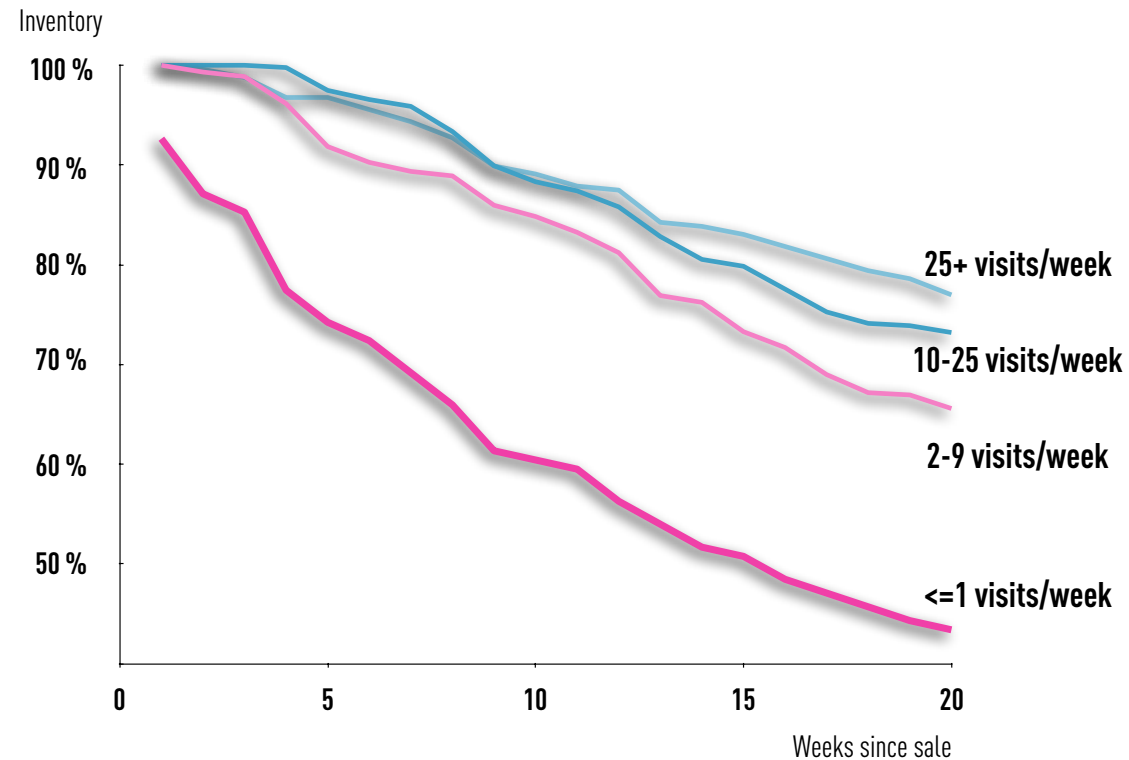
If readers visit, they buy



Clear correlation between visit frequency and subscription purchase:

the more often we get non-logged in users to visit us, the higher the likelihood of them becoming subscribers.

And once bought: if they visit, they stay



Clear correlation between visit frequency of subscribers and retention:

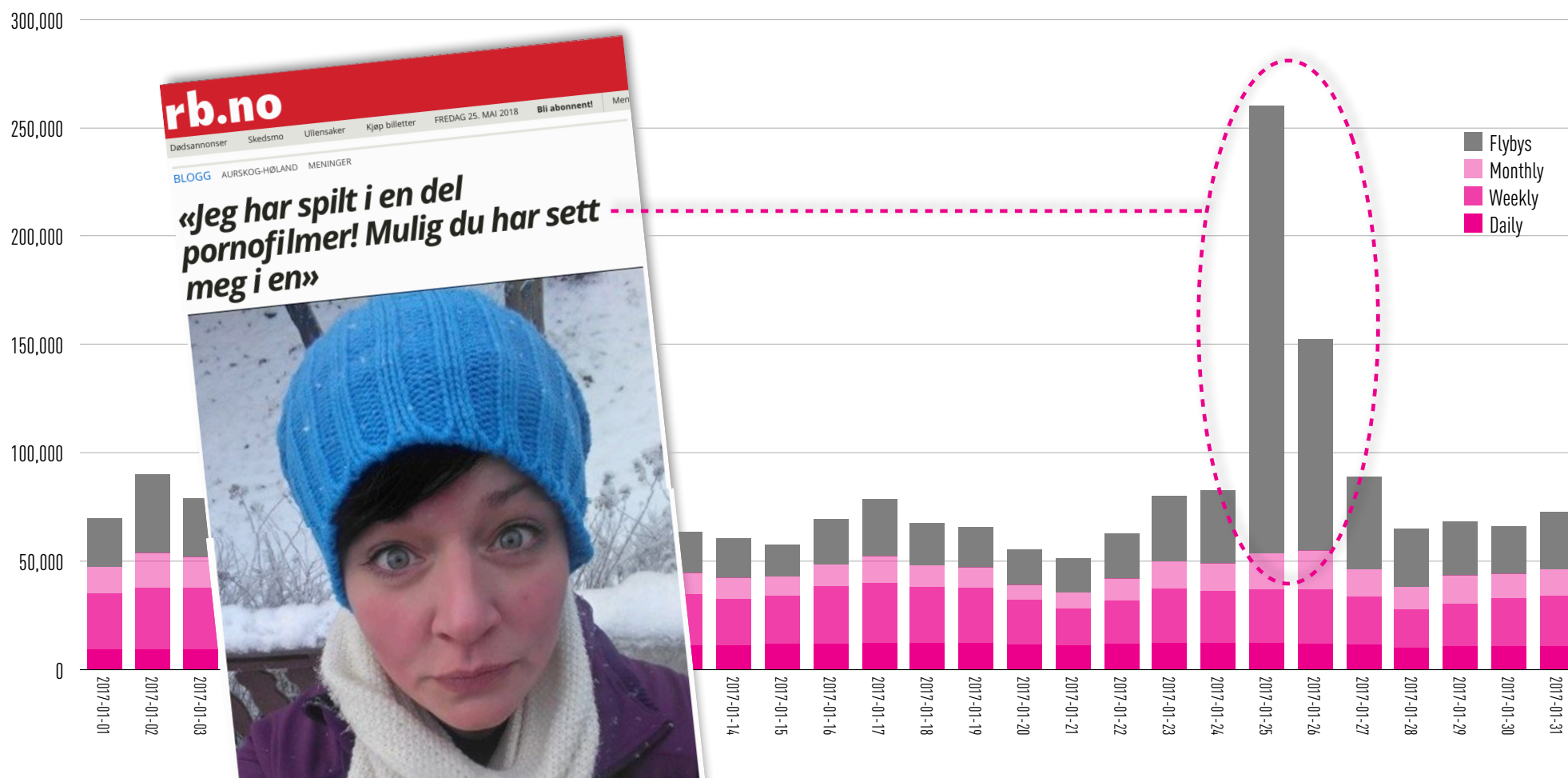
the more often we get subscribers to visit, the higher the likelihood of them remaining subscribers.

**Writing the journalism
our subscribers
wanted to read**

In five easy steps

Step 1: Chase the reach that converts

Reach among non-subscribers, fly-bys excluded



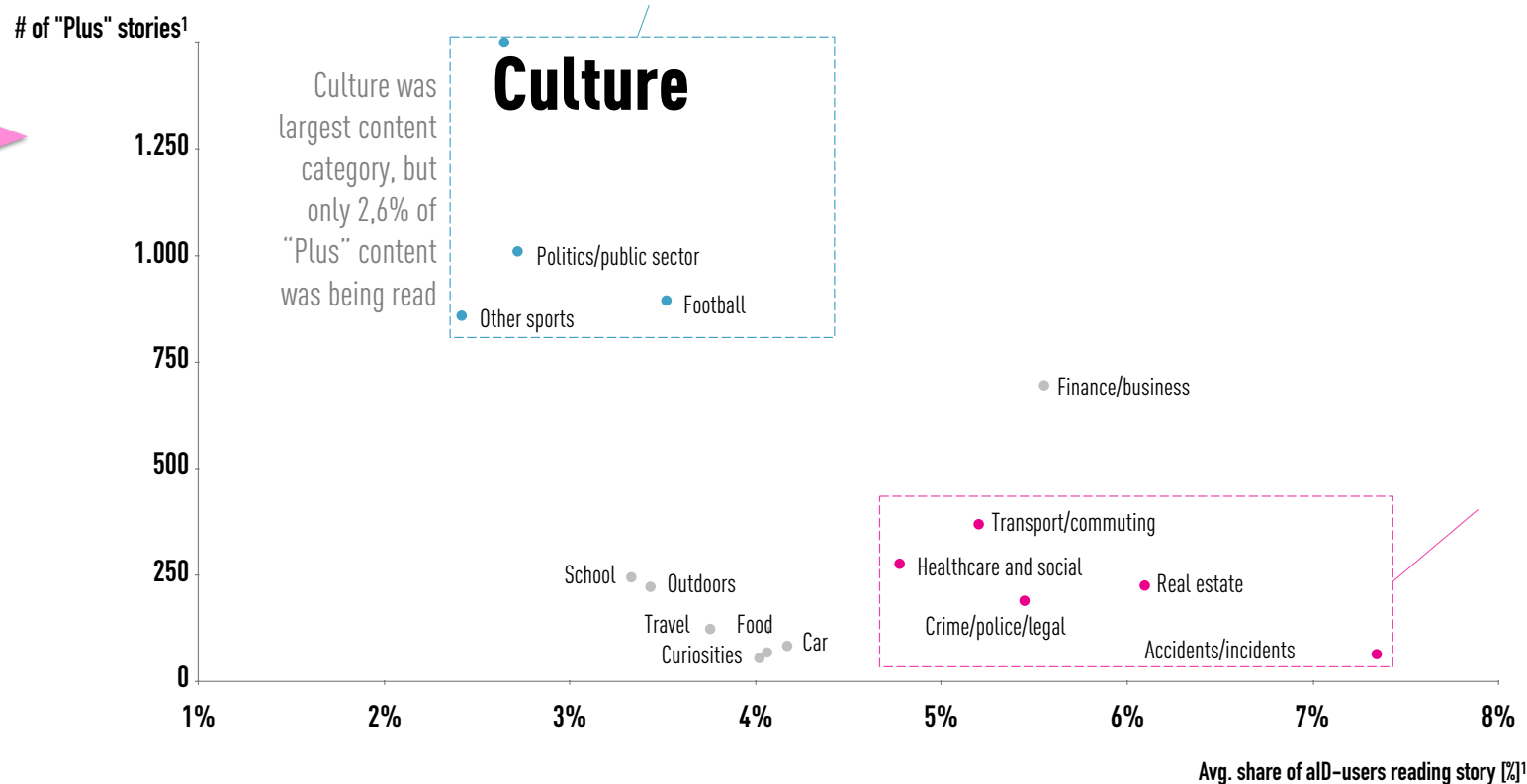


- 1. Remove fly-bys from reporters' dashboards/analytics**

Step 2: Editorial/readership analysis

What we produced most of, turned out to be the least read

Analysis in subscriber base



1. Do your readers agree with your judgment of what's valuable journalism?
2. Do six pages of culture every Thursday equal six pages of excellent and interesting culture journalism?

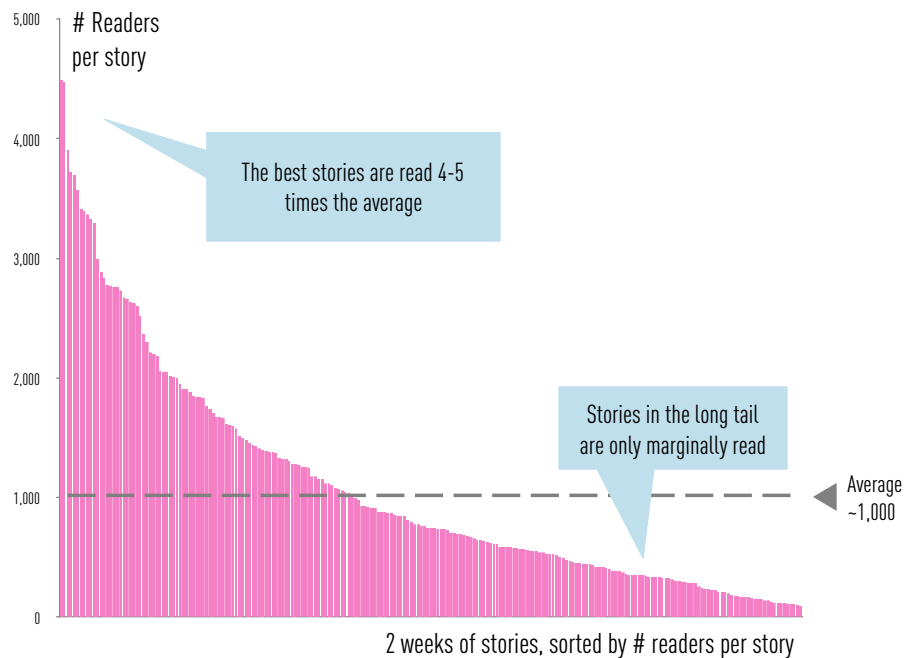
Our findings were not that e.g. Culture was the wrong subject to cover

We were doing it wrong

So how to do it right?

The need to “fill pages” and sources’ demands/anticipation of coverage turned out to be important criteria for our newsrooms

We were producing a large number of stories that were hardly read



Our tests showed several reasons why de-prioritization was challenging

- › Specific sections in the print newspaper, geographic or topical, creates a **push to “fill the newspaper”** – and to produce stories without strong reader interest
- › **Local anticipation of launch event coverage** – especially in sports, culture and politics
- › **The need to be seen as “on the ball” locally** – especially during large sports- or culture arrangements

Recommendations for covering culture

Write more about

- › Critical journalism that fills **traditional news criteria**
- › **Strong and surprising stories about personalities** in the culture field
- › **Successes and failures**
- › Arrangements as they happen: Image galleries documenting **people attending**
- › Running coverage of arrangements that are of clear interest to the community

Write less about

- › **Pre-event and launch stories**
- › Coverage of arrangements targeting a niche segment of your audience
- › Stories merely summing up what happened, how many attended and what happened on stage

Other success criteria

- › **Fresh images of people**
- › Good photo journalism documenting special situations from culture arrangements
- › Reviews:
 - › Strong headlines
 - › Strong opinions: A solid reviewer are bold in both ends of the scale
 - › Relevance: The bigger the arrangement, the more interested readers



Plutselig forsvant dette kunstverket fra flyplassen i Tromsø

Av SUSANNE NORENG

- De løsnet fra gulvflaten og kunne velte over passasjerene.

DEL Da "nye" Tromsø lufthavn ble åpnet 31. oktober i 1997 fikk de overrakt en kunststallasjon av KORO (kunst i offentlige rom).

Kunstverkene var laget av kunstner Irene Rasmussen og var formet som syv kofferter. Noen laget av granitt og noen i akrylplast, og de var plassert på flere steder både utvendig og innvendig på flyplassen.

Nå har imidlertid KORO oppdaget at kunstverkene er borte fra flyplassen. I et brev til flyplassen sier KORO at de



Gjengitt bagasjeferrene i kunstverket Gjengitt bagasje

Tar opp arven etter pappa

Av ANDREAS TRYGSTAD

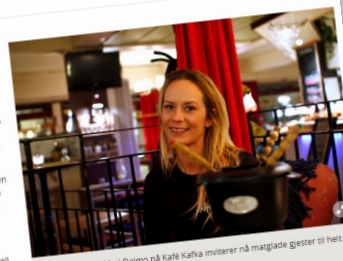
29. februar 2016, kl. 21:34

Pappaen til Ida drev osterrestaurant i Bodo. Nå tar hun opp arven

DEL - Jeg har vokst opp med ostermaten. Hver gang mamma inviterer over på middag, fiser hun med osteretter, forreier Ida Mari Dalmo som driver kafe Kafka i Bodo.

Hun overtok i høst driften av kafeen fra søsteren Camilla Stokland som hadde vært synonym med Kafka i åtte år.

Satser på ost



Faren til Jørn Hoel hadde et ønske på dødsleiet

Av MARTE HOTVEDT

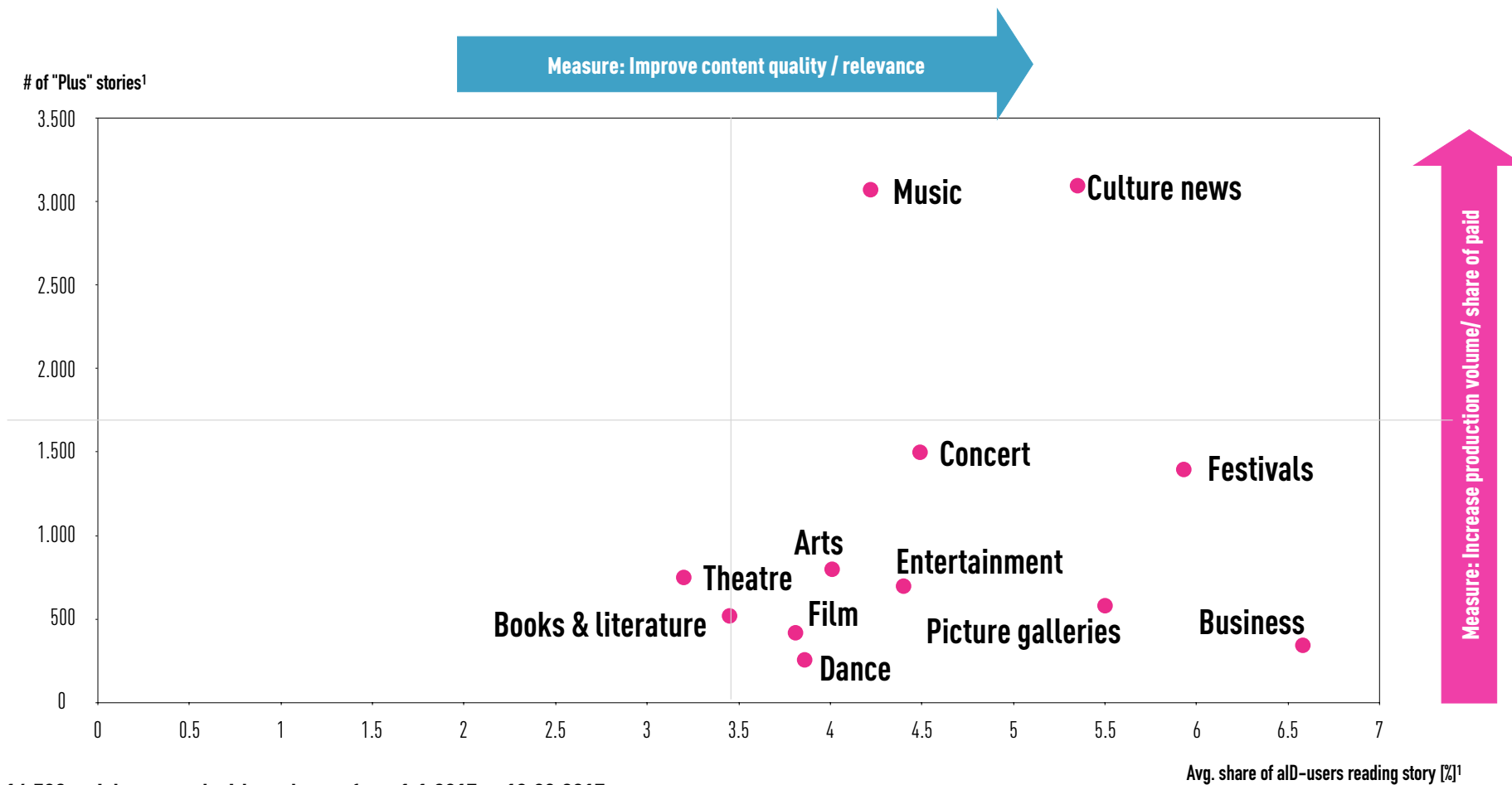
18. februar 2016, kl. 19:11

Åpner opp om barndommen i "Hver Gang Vi Møtes".

DEL - På dødsleiet ønsket faren min å snakke med meg. Alene. Han sa at han ikke ville at jeg skulle bli



Readership of culture **doubled** in two years



“The biggest change
in the last year:
**Nobody in
management
talks about the
printed paper
anymore”**”

Rene Svendsen,
Editor-in-chief,
Fredriksstad Blad





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2. **Prioritize stories because they are good - not because you need to fill print templates**



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3. **Use traditional journalistic criteria: report the real story**

Step 3: Combating clickbait

“The newspaper is **at its worst when tabloid headlines give the wrong impression of the story.** Especially when accompanied by pictures that misrepresent what the story is actually about. I think it speaks for the integrity of the newspaper when you chose to not do that. **I think you should be better than that.**”

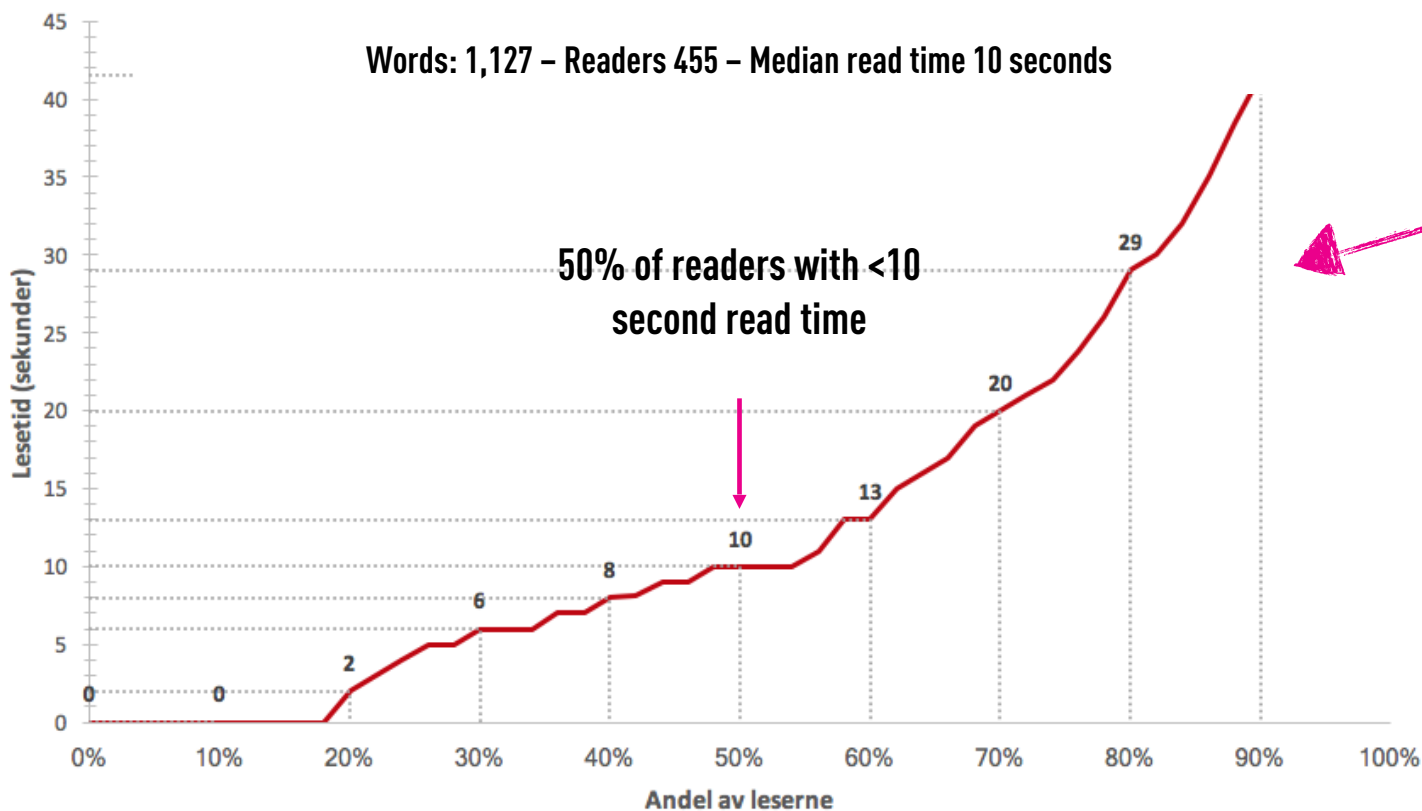
– 24 year old female reader, from a focus group in one of our newspapers



Combating clickbait: Some stories read by less than half of those who click

Founders move to new facilities, extend services

Words: 1,127 – Readers 455 – Median read time 10 seconds



Gründerne flytter til nye lokaler og utvider tilbudet

Les mer på [vestviken.no](#)





lebransjen
i kan
en
gen



Skjebnehøst for Stian (27)

Combating clickbait: Some stories read by less than half of those who click

The stories with highest bounce rate, are the ones where the title actively hides **who** or **what** the story is about – or **where** the story is from

	Tittel (med lenke)	Avis	aID-brukere med abonnement	aID-brukere med abonnement som har lest plussak	Snitt lesetid per plussleser	Alder (snitt)	Andel som faller av 
1	Nå pusser hotellet opp for flere millioner 	ta	2 243	981	44	53.2	56.3%
2	Vil skape mer aktivitet – legger til rette for nytt handelsområde i Fauske 	an	2 972	1 530	62	55.6	48.5%
3	Får over en halv million kroner i tilskudd: – Ja har du sett, vi får mer enn i fjor! 	fremover	683	375	43	56.9	45.1%
4	Misfornøyd med tilbudet 	havis	1 117	664	61	54.4	40.6%
5	Brannalarm utløst 	tvedestrandsposten	707	442	24	52.5	37.5%
6	Folketallet og elevtallet går ned i kommunen. Men antall barn i barnehage bare øker 	an	707	444	54	52.6	37.2%
7	Populær turhytte gjenåpnet 	indre	584	390	60	54.0	33.2%



Hotell pusser opp for flere millioner

56% of readers gone <10 secs



Legger til rette for nytt handelsområde

48% of readers gone <10 secs



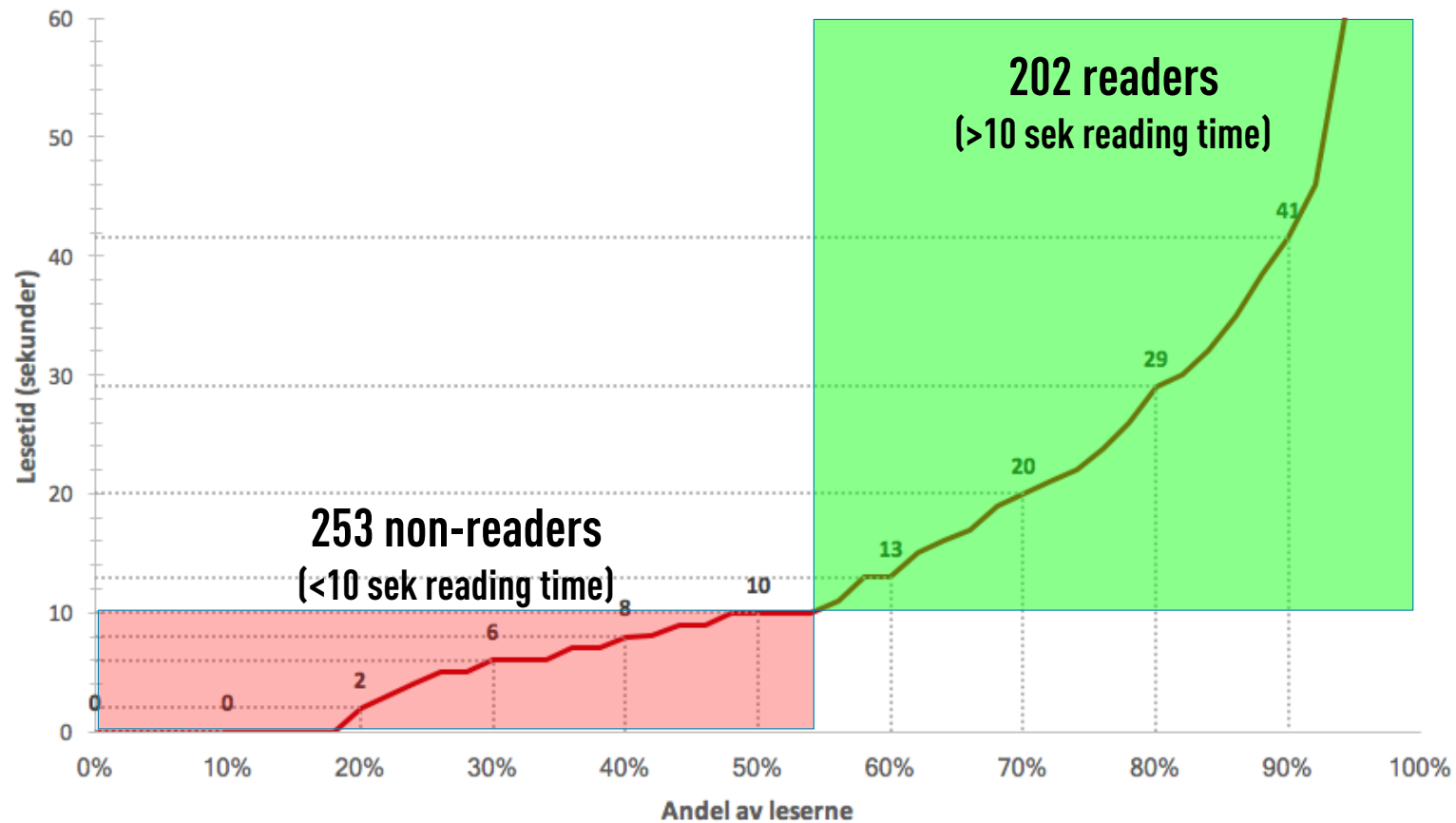
Får over en halv million kroner i tilskudd: - Ja har du sett, vi får mer enn i fjor!

45% of readers gone <10 secs

Combating clickbait: On January 1 we changed the definition of “read”

Founders move to new facilities, extend services

Words: 1,127 – Readers 455 – Media read time 10 seconds





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Step 4: Target important age brackets

It's not the **topic** that matters when writing for younger audiences, but whether the stories are **relevant**

KULTUR JUL KONSERTER UNION SCENE

Familiestemming med barn som synger «Øl, øl, øl på afterski»



Julekonsert med Freddy Kalas på Union Scene Foto: Lars Johnsen

Culture: relevant for younger audiences

Av Lars Johnsen 16. desember 2017, kl. 19:42
Jov da

Readers <45: 967
Readers >45: 2,169
Share <45: 30.8 %

KULTUR DRAMMEN KONSERTER MUSIKK

Paus inviterer til en pause fra julas stress og mas



ALENE: Det blir en ettertenksom stund med Ole Paus i Åssiden kirke fredag. Foto: Karlisen, Anette

Culture: not relevant for younger audiences

Av Thore Alnes 20. desember 2017, kl. 21:38
Synes du juletiden kan bli litt stressende og masete? Kanskje en litt annen som t Paus,

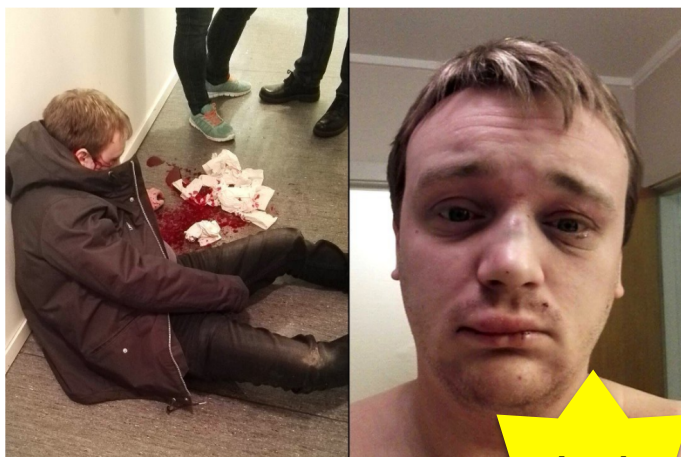
Readers <45: 103
Readers >45: 1,028
Share <45: 9.1%

> Real estate, politics, culture, sport and business may be well read by younger audiences, depending on the story's relevance to the demographic

Age of interviewee tends to correlate with readers' age bracket

KRIMINALITET OG RETTSVESEN VOLD RETTSSAKER NORD-TROMS TINGRETT TROMSØ

Nichlas (25) slått til blods på byen i Tromsø. Mann dømt til fengsel i 120 dager



Local crime

Av Jørn Normann Pedersen

Byturen til Nichlas Ferdinand Nielsen endte i en blodpøl på gaten i Tromsø sentrum. Voldsepisoden resulterte blant annet i brudd i nesen. Bildet til høyre er tatt dagen etter hendelsen.

LSK CUPFINALE FOTBALL SPORT CUPFINALEN2017

- Vi skal klare å bevare husfreden



Local sports/celebs

Kjærligheten lever: Simen Kind Mikalsen senket kjærestens favorittlag i cupfinalen. Men skal vi tro Kari, så ødelegge husfreden. Alle foto: Andreas Lekang

Av Veronika Sletta

Etter cupfinalen ble LSK-spillerne gjenforent med sine kjære på en fest i Tromsø. Men ikke alle ved LSK-hordet var like fornøyd.

NÆRINGSLIV TROMSØ FINANS BOLIG BØRS

André (37) fra Tromsø har tjent enormt på nettspill og investeringer - slik forklarer han suksessen



Local business

Av Rune Endresen

På BESØK André Lavold på julebesøk i Tromsø, før kursen går til Klippsjarvi, så Dubai og til slutt til det nye nettspillet. Foto: Rune Endresen

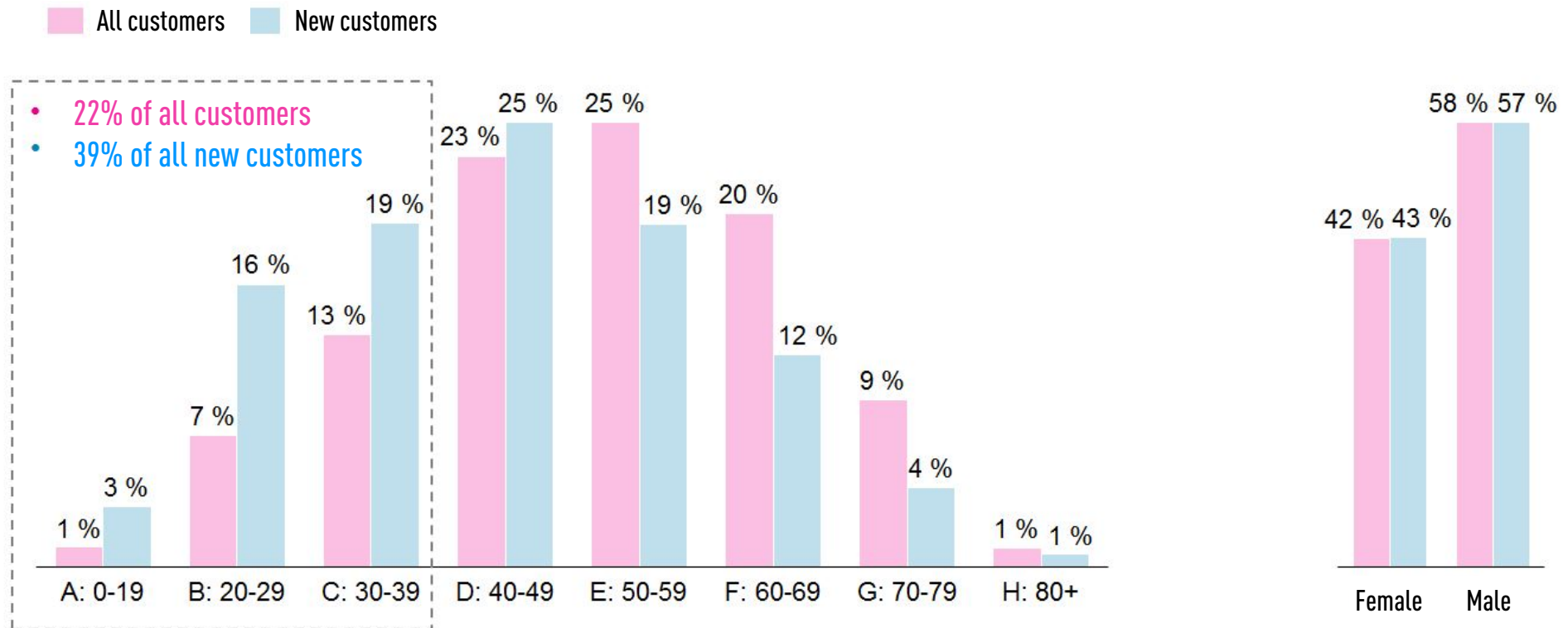
Som 12-åring begynte han med tipping, og ble frelst. I dag er han en av Tromsøs ukjente milliardærer, men han pruter fortsatt på alt. Samtidig har han nå store penger på verdens fattigste.

Well-read in segment 25-34

Well-read in segment 35-44

Step 4: Target important age brackets

Demographic distribution, DT.no – digital, week 45, 2017



Dashboard



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Step 5: Tie it all together

Subscriber reading v loyal non-subscribers

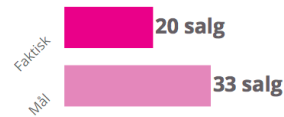
15 470

Abo så langt i dag ▼ 244

11 808

Lest plussak ▼ 917

Salg mot mål



27 093

Lojale ikke-abo i dag

17 350

Lest sak

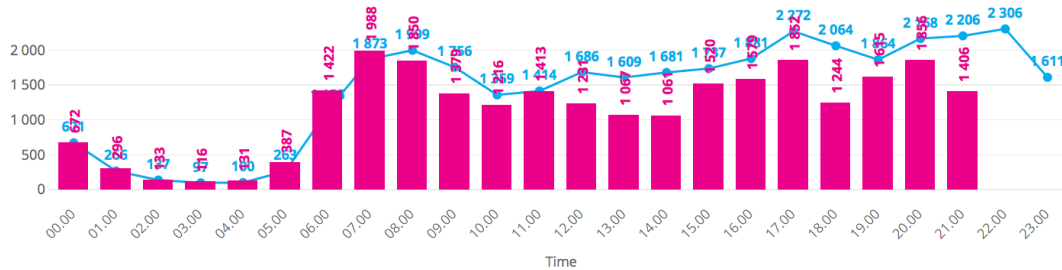
76.3%

Andel abo som har lest plussak

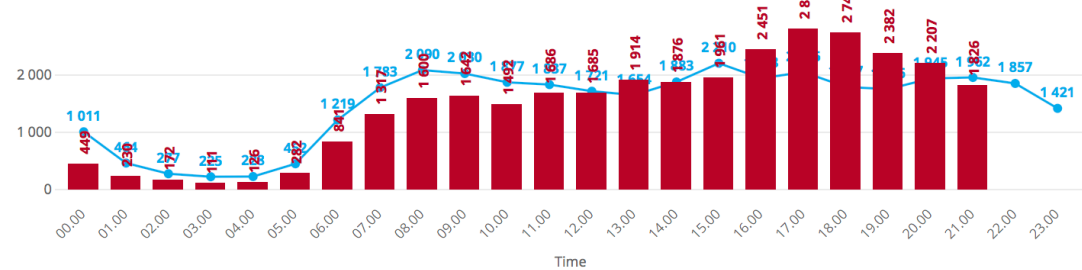
64.0%

Andel lojale ikke-abo som har lest sak

Abo som har lest plussak - time for time



Lojale ikke-abo som har lest sak - time for time



Toppliste plussaker

Tittel (med lenke)	aID-brukere med abonnement som har lest plussak	Snitt lesetid per plussleser	Alder (snitt)	Andel som faller av
1 Kulda har skapt dette uvanlige fenomenet i Tromsø: - Vi får ikke gjort noe med det	4 341	71	52.3	11.5%
2 Fredrik på Jekta har en viktig beskjed til kundene: - Nei, vi har ikke gått konkurs	2 642	76	52.5	16.4%
3 Tromsø kommune får kritikk: Dagen etter at kommunetoppen gikk av, skrev kommunen under på kontrakt med det nye selskapet hans	2 376	101	54.5	7.7%
4 Lokale eksperters dom over TIL: «Må forsterke». «Sånn som TIL spiller, så ser det dumt ut når det ikke går bra». «Overrasket at ikke Glimt-kampen ble en vekker»	1 708	135	51.7	3.8%
5 Her finnes ikke blomster, så Tove kom på bedriftsidéen: Si det med sjokolade!	1 579	108	53.9	15.9%
6 Bygdefolket fikk medhold: Skal sprengte bort flaskehal på fylkesveien	1 536	71	55.6	18.1%

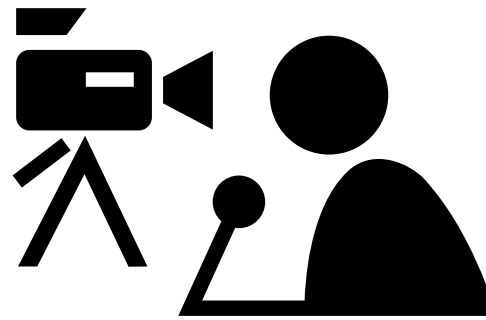
Toppliste åpne saker

Tittel (med lenke)	Lojale ikke-abonnenter	aID-brukere med abonnement	Nettlesere	Snitt visningstid per nettleser
1 Lavtrykk på vei mot Nord-Norge: Store mengder nedbør på vei	4 131	4 784	12 181	63
2 Boreal mister kontrakten - Norled overtar hurtigbåtrutene	2 711	4 062	9 375	129
3 Aily (5) funnet i live. Leter fortsatt etter Leina	2 577	3 336	7 921	79
4 Trafikkulykke på E10: To biler og vogntog involvert	1 566	1 758	3 965	17
5 16 fartsbøter i 60-sone på E6	1 113	1 743	3 308	14
6 Johaug utsetter landslagsretur	1 112	1 601	3 218	54
7 Kjøretøyhelseministeren: Hvordan skal jeg bilens min med hurtigbilen?	1 004	0	2 737	233
8 Trailer fast i Langnesbakken	906	1 553	2 814	32



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6. **Offer your newsroom the right analytics tool to act**

Bonus step:
Live video



Show it, don't tell it – **literally**

The role of live video




1:55:53 / 3:41:35



And do it
everywhere





Exclusive rights
to stream live video from
Norwegian 2nd division football,
(local teams, third level)

In 2016 we were
Norway's largest producer
of live football

347

**local matches
streamed live**

Cheap productions: 1 camera, voice

In 2017, we went
all in

With
more than

1,500

matches
produced





2018

122 matches
Women's
premier
league

2018 Ice hockey

1st division

National youth team
matches

1st and 2nd division
qualifiers/playoffs

Highlights premier league

Total approx
300
matches



2018

Youth tournaments



Does it work? Boy, does it!

Stories with most subscription sales, 2017 – 73% of top 25 story sales are live football

	Newspaper	Title		Sales
1	(20+)	Norway Cup (all purchases)	Youth football	1,743
2	ta	Kampstart 19.00: Her ser du Vaduz-Odd direkte (Europa Cup Qualifier)	Men's football	216
3	ba	Se Dana Cup live her	Youth football	161
4	oa	Adidas Cup: Se kampene fra Vardal her fra kl. 9	Youth football	286
5	ba	Direkte: Ove Helgesen Trophy	Youth football	144
6	ba	Anklagene hagler mot nettverk som lokker med store penger		128
7	ba	Se lokaloppgjøret mellom Vaksdal og Dale her	Men's football	105
8	ba	Slår tilbake etter fiasko		96
9	rb	Direkte fra Dana Cup	Youth football	90
10	ba	Bileiere trodde de eide bilene. Så kom sjokkbeskjeden fra banken		84
11	ba	Fant narkotika på ett av tre utesteder: «Alt som kan tas opp i nesen gir status»		84
12	ba	– Jeg kunne tjene mellom 150.000 og 200.000 kroner per måned		79
13	ba	Fra smuler til millioner		78
14	ba	14-åring brutalt banket opp av ungdomsgjeng		77
15	ba	Blogger seg til millioner		75
16	nordlys	De to Tromsø-parene selger omstridt helsekost for 16 mill. i året. Ekspertene mener markedsføringen er «uetisk og kynisk»		73
17	havis	Her ser du Avaldsnes - Barcelona live fra 17.45 (Champion's league qualifier)	Women's football	72
18	an	Bodø Cup: Se fotballfesten direkte	Youth football	72
19	ba	Subway-ansatte sier opp i protest etter lønnsrot		70
20	rb	DIREKTE NÅ: LSK Kvinner tar i mot Manchester City på Åråsen – se kampen her! (Champion's league qualifier)	Women's football	69
21	ba	Hadde ikke hatt tilsyn på syv år. Ble stengt på dagen.		68
22	havis	Regy Cup Live søndag:	Youth football	67
23	ba	Gutt (14) har fått nye trusler om juling etter BA-sak		66
24	ba	Mandag strupes sentrum fullstendig		65
25	ba	Foreldreraseri mot Paw Patrol-show		65



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6. Offer your newsroom the right analytics tool to navigate
7. **Local, live sports is a great differentiator**



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- ✓ Growth in digital subscribers from **110,000 to 160,000 (45,5% growth)** from January 1 to December 31
- ✓ Amedia is in better financial shape than ever. **2017 EBITDA at €51m (13,5%)** is at record-breaking levels with strong cash-flow – and the company is **debt-free**.

The punchline

Better journalism leads to better results

- ✓ Growth in subscriber base from **480,000 to 507,000 (5,6% growth)** from January 1 to December 31
- ✓ Subscription sales increased from **2,000 per week** at start of the year to an average around **5,000** by the end of the year (**250% growth**, week 1-2 compared w average q4)
- ✓ Growth in digital subscribers from **110,000 to 160,000 (45,5% growth)** from January 1 to December 31
- ✓ Amedia is in better financial shape than ever. **2017 EBITDA at €51m (13,5%)** is at record-breaking levels with strong cash-flow – and the company is **debt-free**.