Innovation in Media World Report

2024-25

Editors
Juan Señor
Jayant Sriram

A handbook on media innovation for **FIPP** by Innovation Media Consulting Group

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Publishing's gold rush era

Welcome to the 2024 edition of the Innovation Media World Report. Having long been an avid reader of the report, I am honoured, this year, to have had an early view and to be writing this introduction. This 2024 is already shaping up to be another momentous year in media. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has moved well and truly into the mainstream and is dominating the media news agenda as larger publishers cut deals with the tech platforms and find innovative ways to improve their workflows and processes, as well as reach and engage their audiences with AI. As the year progresses, I believe we will see further deals struck and, I hope, a coalition of smaller and independent publishers coming together to ensure they also can have a seat at the table with dominant platforms.

Meanwhile, the move from quantity (scale) to quality (direct revenues) continues to be the number one focus for publishers the world over. This year's report features some incredible case studies on ways in which publishers are adapting to the imminent demise of third-party cookies and finding more sustainable, ethical, and rewarding ways of connecting with their users and monetising them. Even if the long-awaited 'cookiepocalypse' never actually comes or gets kicked down the line again, I believe the wake-up call this has given the industry and the innovative new approaches we are now seeing rolled out will make 2024 a landmark year.

In the days of scale, mass audience, and single-platform media, B2C was king and delivered huge audiences and requisite revenues ... in 2024 we see specialist and B2B media often leading the way for B2C to follow. Knowing your audience, finding the niche, and delivering high-value, quality content for them to consume, alongside data and information that can help drive business and/or purchase decisions, is publishing gold dust. You mustn't miss the chapter on ProSubscription models on page 28.

One of the key facets of this report is that Juan Señor and Jayant Sriram do such a great job of highlighting examples from all over the world. For us at FIPP, that is what we are all about. Whether it is the incredible work being done in Brazil to combat fake news, the Italian campaign to promote reading by placing books into supermarket food aisles, or The FT and The Economist becoming online educators, this report shines a light on it all.

Read on, there is so much to be inspired by and many reasons to be optimistic about the road ahead. I look forward to reading about your innovation in the 2025 report next year.

ALASTAIR LEWIS
FIPP INTERIM MANAGING DIRECTOR
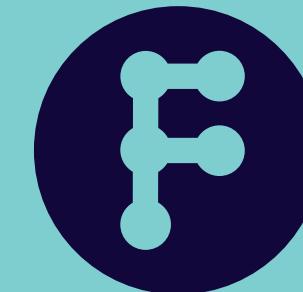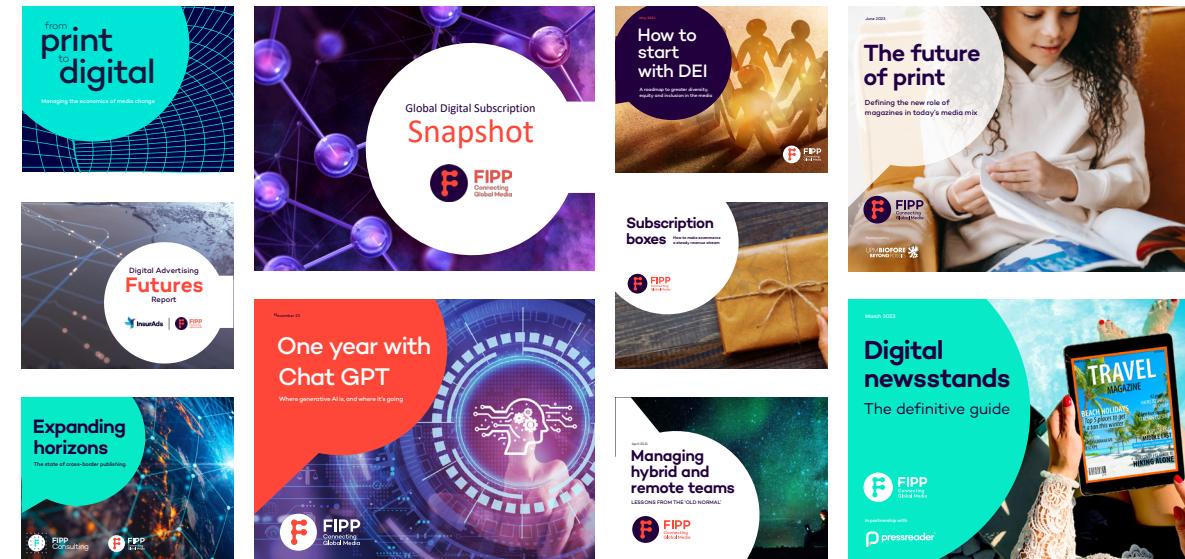
AI-Powered Media

A Guide on How to Get Started

It's been just two years since the public launch of ChatGPT, a moment in time when it seemed like years of preparation and predictions for how artificial intelligence (AI) technologies might change the news industry were rendered moot, as the future arrived almost overnight. →

It's been quite the rollercoaster since. We argued then, and continue to argue now, that generative AI technology is here to stay, and there is no point in taking Luddite positions, wishing that its development could be "paused" or somehow made to disappear. Of course, there are deep concerns that the news industry must navigate together– issues of trust, the protection of intellectual property, and the inherent threats this technology poses to our business models. However, it is undeniable that generative AI has entered newsrooms significantly, offering publishers clear advantages in making their operations more efficient and their content more appealing to audiences.

I n our many years tracking media innovation, no topic has generated as much research, surveys, best practices, and case studies in such a short period as the use of generative AI in newsrooms. The elephant in the room continues to be the prospect of this technology replacing journalism jobs cheaply. However, with a variety of surveys now emerging from across industries stating that generative AI is being used by a majority of employers without any organisational guidelines, something has to give. Publishers must unite to maintain firmly that AI will never substitute for reporting stories, a task that requires the conscience and intelligence machines simply cannot possess. Yet, for the multitude of other ways in which this technology can make the work of newsrooms more efficient and effective, there is already an abundance of information that can serve as a guide to getting started.
Let's dive into it.

GAUGING THE MOOD WITH GEN AI

We know AI is already shaping workflows and newsroom roles. According to a recent study by The Associated Press, based on a survey of nearly 70 percent of newsroom staffers, shows that the technology is being widely used for various tasks such as crafting social media posts, newsletters, headlines, translation, transcribing interviews, story drafts, and multimedia production including social graphics and videos.

"News people have stayed on top of this conversation, which is good because this technology is already presenting significant disruptions to how journalists and newsrooms approach their work and we need everyone to help us figure this technology out for the industry," said Aimee Rinehart, co-author and senior product manager of AI strategy at the AP, in a Poynter report.

The survey, which included representatives from legacy media, public broadcasters, and magazines, reveals a growing familiarity with generative AI among newsroom employees. While some organisations have been experimenting with AI for a decade, others are just beginning to explore its potential. However, despite the comfort with using generative AI, there is a clear recognition of the need for more experimentation and understanding of the technology. The study emphasises the importance of news organisations staying relevant by embracing AI and experimenting responsibly with its integration into their workflows.

However, there are ethical considerations surrounding the use of generative AI, with fewer than half of the respondents having guidelines in their newsrooms. This tension between ethics and innovation has led to initiatives like Poynter's AI ethics starter kit and the AP's own guidelines for AI usage.

Some other highlights from the study:

● **54 percent** said they'd "maybe" let AI companies train their models using their content.

● **49 percent** said their workflows have already changed because of generative AI.

● **56 percent** said the AI generation of entire pieces of content should be banned.

● **Only 7 percent** of those who responded were worried about AI displacing jobs.

● **18 percent** said lack of training was a big challenge for ethical use of AI.

"It's an exciting moment for journalism and technology, maybe a little too exciting, which makes it difficult to plan for the next year let alone what may transpire in the next 10 years," said Rinehart. "One thing is clear from this research: more research is needed on AI and newsrooms, especially on workflow efficiency claims."

Practical Applications

Further insights into how newsroom leaders perceive the applications of generative AI come to us in the "Journalism, Media, and Technology Trends and Predictions 2024" report by Nic Newman for the Reuters Institute. The report is based on an industry survey of a strategic sample of more than 300 digital leaders from over 50 countries and territories.

In the survey, news executives prioritise back-end automation tasks, such as transcription and copyediting (56 percent), followed by recommender systems (37 percent), content creation with human oversight (28 percent), and commercial applications (27 percent). Other notable applications include coding (25 percent), where some publishers report significant productivity gains, and newsgathering (22 percent), where AI can support investigative reporting, fact-checking, and verification.

Newman notes, "Back-end automation has gained increasing importance over time. Only 29 percent considered these AI applications very important when we posed this question in our survey two years ago. This heightened focus is partly due to the advent of large language models (LLMs) that have since emerged, offering numerous opportunities to accelerate and refine routine tasks in the newsroom."

Importantly, amongst several prominent digital leaders surveyed, AI is not seen as a substitute for reporters or journalism itself. "The most compelling use case for AI in newsrooms is in the automation of routine tasks performed by editors, such as adding tags of SEO metadata," says Ed Roussel, Head of Digital at The Times and The Sunday Times. "We do not believe that AI is a substitute for reporting stories, which will continue to be done by journalists."

Finally, we'll also refer heavily in this chapter to the work of POLIS, the journalism think tank at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Their report, "Generating Change: A global survey of what news organisations are doing with artificial intelligence," gathers insights from over 120 editors, journalists, technologists, and media makers from 105 newsrooms across 46 countries. Among the key findings are that a vast majority of newsrooms – 90 percent – are already incorporating AI in news production, with 80 percent using it in news distribution and 75 percent in news gathering. These applications range from automated transcription and translation, extracting text from images, and web scraping for news gathering, to translating articles, proofreading, writing headlines, or even composing entire articles for news production. Distribution efforts are enhanced by AI-driven search engine optimisation and content personalisation for specific audiences.

Despite the widespread adoption of AI tools, the report highlights a significant gap in strategic planning; only about one-third of surveyed newsrooms have an AI strategy in place or are in the process of developing one. This indicates a cautious approach towards integrating AI, reflecting concerns about its implications. Moreover, the intersection of AI applications across news gathering, production, and distribution underscores the shift towards more interconnected, "networked" or "hybrid" forms of journalism, marking a significant evolution in how news is created and shared in the digital age.

GETTING STARTED

You've heard what newsroom leaders and journalists feel about bringing in AI, what its uses are so far and just how quickly it seems to have made a mark on the industry across several geographies and contexts. Now the challenge is this: if you haven't already started experimenting

how do you do so? And if you have and want to learn about the best use cases from others, what can you pick up and imitate or be inspired from? That's what we'll be diving into headlong here, listing out first some of the domains AI has been put to use in and enumerating the tools used in each. We have to note here, just to avoid confusion, that this list is a combination of generative AI and some 'older' automation or analytical tools, some of whose capabilities have been supercharged with generative AI.

Newsgathering

AI applications can assist newsrooms in gathering material from various sources and helping the editorial team gauge an audience's interests as part of a data-driven production cycle. The responses to the POLIS survey revealed that a large majority, almost three quarters of organisations, use AI tools in newsgathering, in two main areas:

1) **Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Speech-to-Text, and Text Extraction:** AI facilitates the automation of transcription, extraction of text from images, and data structuring. Tools like Colibri.ai, SpeechText.ai, Otter.ai, and Whisper are streamlining speech-to-text transcription and automated translation, enhancing content accessibility across languages.

2) **Trend Detection and News Discovery:** AI can analyse vast data sets to identify patterns and trends. Using tools such as Google Trends, web scraping, and data mining services like Dataminr and Rapidminer, journalists can pinpoint trending topics and uncover stories. CrowdTangle aids in spotting viral social media posts, while speech-to-text algorithms monitor public discourse. The POLIS survey also highlights how AI technologies are simplifying routine tasks like data classification and content organisation, with applications ranging from tag generation to automated chatbot responses.

Some initiatives involve collaboration with other organisations to develop specialised tools. One notable project involved partnering with the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCR) to adapt its engine for Arabic content, showcasing the versatile applications of AI in journalism.

News Production

Nearly 90 percent of respondents in the POLIS survey reported using AI for tasks such as fact-checking, proofreading, trend analysis, and generating summaries. Tools like Grammarly are commonplace for enhancing the quality of content through spell checking and grammar corrections. Some innovative applications mentioned include:

● **Summarization:** Publications like Aftonbladet in Sweden and Helsingin Sanomat in Finland are adding summary bullet points to articles, increasing engagement, particularly among younger readers.

● **Headline Testing:** Experimentation with AI to craft search-optimized headlines is under way, with human editors providing final approval.

● **Copyediting and Transcription:** The adoption of AI for these tasks is growing, though not without impacting jobs. Axel Springer's CEO mentioned that roles susceptible to automation, such as proofreading, are evolving.

● **Translation:** Le Monde, for example, uses AI to translate articles into English, increasing output significantly with human oversight for quality assurance.

● **Image Generation and Article Creation:** Tools like Midjourney are used for creating illustrations, while the German tabloid Express.de has introduced a virtual journalist, Klara Indernach (KI), responsible for composing stories across various topics, with human editors overseeing the final content.

News Distribution

Approximately 80 percent of respondents in the POLIS survey have integrated AI technologies into their news distribution strategies. Though this figure is slightly lower than that for production, the variety of applications in distribution is notably broad. The primary goal behind leveraging AI for news distribution is to extend audience reach and enhance engagement. In fact, news distribution emerged as the sector most influenced by AI, with 20 percent of participants acknowledging its significant impact.

Targeting Specific Audiences

One trend underscored by Newman is the use of AI tools to adapt news content for specific audiences, enhancing relevance and comprehension. For example, Artifact, a social news reading app, showcases the potential of AI by summarising news in different styles, such as simplifying an article from The Guardian for a five-year-old, tailoring it to the preferences of Gen Z, or converting it into a series of emojis. The proliferation of bots, apps, and browser extensions with similar functionalities is anticipated to accelerate in 2024.

Speech-to-text technology represents another facet of AI in distribution, optimising content across different mediums by converting text to audio, for instance.

Social media distribution also benefits from AI-powered tools like Echobox and SocialFlow, which streamline the scheduling of content across social platforms.

Additionally, the use of chatbots was highlighted for offering more personalised user experiences and improving response times.

SEO and Visibility

A critical aspect of digital content, especially for newsrooms, is enhancing visibility in search results. AI-driven SEO tools play a crucial role in this context by aiding newsrooms in identifying highly searched keywords and understanding audience interests. Ubersuggest provides insights into popular search terms, while Google Discover and CrowdTangle track trending stories and over performing social media posts, respectively. This intelligence enables the creation of news stories that resonate with public curiosity, leveraging frequently searched keywords to maximise story visibility and audience reach.

AI in Broadcasting

The demand for audio content has led newspapers to offer news summaries and reports in audio format, acknowledging the preferences of younger audiences. Aftenposten in Norway leads this trend, providing most articles in audio to accommodate children and visually impaired readers. This shift is supported by advancements in mobile technology and a rise in podcast listenership.

Radio Expres in Slovakia and two stations in the west of England are experimenting with synthetic voices for night shift coverage and hourly bulletins, highlighting the cost-effectiveness and realism of these AI-generated voices.

Nearly 90% of respondents in the POLIS survey reported using AI for tasks such as fact-checking, proofreading, trend analysis, and generating summaries.

TV channel generation

Going one stage further is NewsGPT, an experimental 24-hour television service where all the stories and all the presenters are generated by AI, without any human intervention. A small disclaimer says content may contain inaccuracies or unexpected outputs. NewsGPT, which can be watched via YouTube, bills itself as delivering news 'without human biases'.

In addition, NLP applications also assist with factual claim-checking. They identify claims and match them with previously fact-checked ones. Reverse-image search is also used in verification.

AI in action: Case Studies for Publishers

There's no easy way to categorise this but the experiments across publishers with Gen AI have been vast, covering almost all aspects of news production and other functions like advertising. Here we detail just some of the interesting examples that have emerged recently, hoping you find some inspiration from all of them.

Amedia's AI Sandbox: Empowering Local Journalism through AI

In late February, Amedia, Norway's second-largest media conglomerate, unveiled its pioneering project: an AI sandbox. This initiative provides a secure space for journalists within the Norwegian local media group to explore and utilise generative AI for various efficiency-enhancing tasks. The primary goal of this sandbox is to foster superior journalism by empowering reporters to use AI as an assistant. This approach allows journalists to dedicate more time to engaging with the community and covering vital, local stories, thereby enhancing the depth and breadth of local journalism.

Safeguarding Trust

The establishment of the AI sandbox by Amedia introduces a critical trust dimension to the use of AI in journalism. By creating this platform, Amedia positions itself as a protector of ethical AI utilisation for local journalism's advancement. Markus Rask Jensen, the Director at Amedia, emphasises that trust is the cornerstone of journalism, and the responsible application of AI is essential for maintaining this trust. To guide local editors, who bear the ultimate responsibility for AI's application in their newsrooms, Amedia has crafted a set of generative AI guidelines. These guidelines, embodied by the sandbox, offer journalists a secure environment to experiment with and harness AI without compromising ethical standards.

A Controlled Approach to Content Protection

"We aim to explore the editorial use of AI within a protected setting. The overarching concern here is content security; our revenue is primarily subscription-driven. We've been intentionally cautious about integrating our paywalled content into large language models (LLMs). By managing our AI system, we maintain control over both the input and output," Markus explains.

Highlighting the feasibility of creating such a sandbox, Jensen notes, "Establishing a basic sandbox is not an enormous technical challenge. The core development of our project required one to two people approximately a month to complete, not even on a full-time basis. It's feasible for a newsroom to engage developers for about 10–15 hours to establish a secure generative AI environment akin to ours."

Semafor and Microsoft: Integrating ChatGPT into News Reporting

As of February 2024, Microsoft has teamed up with the media outlet Semafor, co-founded by Ben Smith, former editor-in-chief of Buzzfeed, on a new venture. This project introduces "Signals," a feed sponsored by Microsoft with an investment described as "substantial" by The Financial Times. The initiative aims to produce a series of posts daily, focusing on breaking news and analysis.

Utilising AI for Research in Journalism

The essence of this collaboration is the use of ChatGPT as a research tool in the journalistic process. Semafor plans to employ AI to quickly gather reports on breaking events from various international news sources, overcoming language barriers with translation tools. This approach allows for the inclusion of diverse perspectives from around the world, with journalists adding their own context and summaries to create a more nuanced story.

Noreen Gillespie, now associated with Microsoft and a former journalist with AP, emphasised the importance of adopting AI tools for journalism's future, as reported by The Financial Times. This initiative by Semafor and Microsoft demonstrates an attempt to balance the capabilities of AI with the irreplaceable value of human judgment in news reporting, aiming to provide a more enriched and globally aware news product.

"It's an exciting moment for journalism and technology, maybe a little too exciting, which makes it difficult to plan for the next year let alone what may transpire in the next 10 years. One thing is clear from this research: more research is needed on AI and newsrooms, especially on workflow efficiency claims."

— **Aimee Rinehart,** senior product manager of AI strategy at the Associated Press

Mediacorp – Integration of AI in Weather Forecasting

Mediacorp has introduced "AI Weather," a software capable of analysing data to generate weather forecast clips, marking a significant step in its effort to integrate AI into its operations. At the recent WAN-IFRA Digital Media Asia conference, Wang Yin, Assistant Lead of the AI Strategy and Solutions team at Mediacorp News, Singapore, highlighted the organisation's vision. "We see AI as a tool to boost efficiency and effectiveness while also fostering new capabilities, positioning it as an assistant rather than a replacement," Wang explained.

Before this technological advancement, the production of 11 daily forecast clips, in various languages, required the effort of three production teams. The adoption of AI has simplified these operations considerably. AI bots now handle tasks such as data analysis, along with audio and video editing, and ensuring quality control. This evolution in workflow has freed Mediacorp journalists to focus more on creating innovative content.

Schibsted's Strategic AI Integration

Schibsted, the Nordic region's largest media conglomerate, is embracing AI to enhance its newsroom operations, including the creation of short-form article summaries, developing synthetic voice clones for text-to-speech functionality, and improving transcription processes. This initiative reflects the company's commitment to leveraging AI for more efficient and engaging journalism.

Cultivating AI Expertise through Schibsted AI Academy

In 2019, Schibsted took a significant step forward by establishing the Schibsted AI Academy, attracting over 600 staff members to its training programmemes. The organisation also developed the FAST (Fairness, Accountability, Sustainability, and Transparency) framework to navigate the unique challenges posed by AI, ensuring responsible development and implementation of AI technologies across its operations.

Engagement and Inclusion in AI Development

Schibsted's approach extends beyond the newsroom to include its audiences in the dialogue about AI's role in the news ecosystem. Agnes Stenbom, head of IN/LAB at Schibsted Sweden, highlights the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives into the development process, emphasising the value of interdisciplinary collaboration to foster innovation and cultural ownership of AI within the company. Schibsted engages a broad range of stakeholders through hackathons and internal events to spark enthusiasm and broaden AI knowledge, serving as a foundation for successful product ideation.

Personalisation and Audience Adaptation

Anders Grimstad, head of foresight and emerging interfaces at Schibsted, advocates for AI-driven personalisation to tailor content more closely to individual audience needs. Speaking at the INMA World Congress in May 2023, Grimstad envisioned a future where content adapts to specific audience segments, such as immigrants or elderly readers, enhancing accessibility and relevance.

Engaging GenZ with Innovative Formats

At the intersection of journalism, technology, and democracy, Schibsted's IN/LAB, in partnership with the Tinius Trust, explores new ways to connect with GenZ audiences. One such initiative, discussed by Stenbom at the World News Media Congress 2023 in Taipei, is the News Changemaker programme. This innovative project transforms written news stories into AI-generated music, particularly rap songs, demonstrating an inventive method to engage young consumers. Tested on Aftonbladet, Sweden's leading news platform, this approach received positive feedback, showcasing the potential of creative AI applications to attract and retain younger audiences.

Newsquest – Automated drafting for efficiency

Newsquest has built an in-house tool that drafts stories based on trusted information. A dashboard that Newsquest's seven AI-assisted journalists use features a "Notes" input field on the left into which reporters feed the information they have gathered. Typical inputs might include a press release or quotes from a source. The generative AI then creates a story, displayed in the right-hand panel, for the reporter to review.

According to head of editorial AI Jody Doherty-Cove, this alleviates the burden of the mundane, but very important, tasks that are on reporters, freeing them up to do that human touch journalism that really resonates with the communities.

> ## "We see AI as a tool to boost efficiency and effectiveness while also fostering new capabilities, positioning it as an assistant rather than a replacement."
>
> — **Wang Yin,** Mediacorp News, Singapore

At the Artificial Intelligence in Journalism event held by NCTJ, he described the set-up as a "human in the loop system" – meaning, one that ensures a journalist checks AI-generated copy so reporters "have first and last word when it comes to anything that's produced".

Doherty-Cove calls it "a hyper-efficient copywriter" that drafts the story on certain instructions. It then goes back to the reporter who reviews the draft before publishing it. The journalists ensure the copy is accurate, exercise editorial judgement, and protect data and copyright and watch for any bias.

San Francisco Chronicle's Chowbot: Blending AI with Culinary Journalism

The San Francisco Chronicle is experimenting with an AI-powered chatbot to help readers find recommended restaurants and specific dishes throughout the Bay area. The Chowbot is the news org's "first real foray into audience-facing AI," editor of emerging product Sarah Feldberg said to Nieman Lab. The Chronicle assures readers the Chowbot is trustworthy because of the source material: the paper's own "constantly updated" guides and reviews. While the recommendations are AI-generated, every restaurant that the bot suggests has been vetted and

The GenAI Toolbox

Based on the POLIS' survey, here is a list of tools that can propel a newsroom into the AI generation.

1. BloombergGPT: A large-scale language model trained on financial data to support various NLP tasks such as summarising financial documents, generating reports, and providing insights on market trends.

2. The Washington Post's Heliograf: Automates the process of generating short news articles from structured data, such as sports scores and earnings reports, to allow journalists to focus on more in-depth reporting.

3. The Times of London's JAMES: An AI-powered content management system that uses ML algorithms to analyse user behaviour and interests to deliver personalised news content.

4. Czech Radio's Digital Writer: An AI-powered tool that generates news articles from structured data, helping automate news production by converting data into human-readable news stories.

5. Reuters's Lynx Insight: This platform utilises AI algorithms to analyse massive data sets and provides journalists with valuable results and background information to support investigative reporting.

6. Washington Post's Arc XP: A suite of tools for content management, publishing, and audience engagement that enables enterprise companies, retail brands, and media and entertainment organisations to create and distribute content, drive digital commerce, and deliver powerful multi-channel experiences.

7. Newtral's Claim Hunter: The platform listens to and transcribes audio content, detecting statements that need fact-checking and automates the process of identifying claims made in speeches, interviews, or other audio sources, enabling efficient fact-checking.

8. The Reuters News Tracer: It utilises machine learning algorithms to rapidly identify breaking news stories and verify their credibility. It helps journalists by sifting through massive amounts of data, social media posts, and eyewitness reports to deliver reliable and real-time news updates.

9. Newtral's automated fact-checking tool: The platform uses NLP and machine learning techniques to identify potentially false or misleading information. This tool aims to improve the efficiency and accuracy of fact-checking processes.

10. Duke Reporter's Lab's FactStream: FactStream is an automated fact-checking system developed by Duke Reporter's Lab that identifies false claims in live speeches, debates, and public events by comparing them to previously fact- checked claims to provide instant feedback on their accuracy.

visited by a real human on the Chronicle staff. Feldberg said early reader queries have included gluten-free options, vegetarian dim sum, fried chicken, and restaurants for a celebration.

The paper's food and wine editor, Janelle Bitker, views the chatbot as a "a reader-friendly tool" that "accentuates" the work of the food and wine team rather than replacing it.

However, Chowbot can also get it wrong. "Despite Chowbot's answers being grounded in the work of the Chronicle's Food + Wine team, Chowbot is not immune to the hallucinations that plague all software that is powered by large language models, including OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Gemini," Bitker writes. "Those two companies have thousands of employees working on this technology. If they encounter these issues, we likely will, too."

Reach - AI Assistant for Fast-Paced Newsrooms

Reach, the publisher of Mirror, Express, and Liverpool Echo, has introduced an AI tool called Gutenbot to assist journalists in quickly rewriting stories from other sites within its network. Gutenbot helps in generating new versions of articles by making changes like using synonyms or rephrasing passages while preserving the original meaning. It has also been used to rewrite police press releases and agency copy. Despite concerns about potential negative effects on audience trust due to lack of disclosure, Reach claims that Gutenbot has increased page views and article volume.

How it works

Guten users are presented with an input panel, into which they paste the text they want to rewrite, and an output panel showing the new version. Any changes made by Guten are highlighted, and any errors in those changes are to be reported back to the company by the user. Error

categories to be reported back to Reach include missed entities or quotes – things that were mentioned or said in the original story but omitted from Guten's version – and hallucinated, i.e. fabricated, entities or quotes. After making any necessary amendments, Reach asks all journalists publishing a story written with Guten to add the URL to a spreadsheet so the company can keep a database of all its AI-involved articles. Guten also registers the differences between the story it suggested and the version that was published in order to inform its future edits.

Aiding, not Replacing, Journalistic Work

Reach maintains that Gutenbot is meant to assist journalists rather than replace them. As they said to Press Gazette, "editorial review will always be required to verify the accuracy of that text... It's best to think of Gutenbot as a junior reporter whose draft copy tends to require some checks and tweaks by an experienced editor." Editorial must review AI, "especially when it comes to quotes, given the possible legal risks and ramifications involved."

KSTA Media (Germany) - Integrating AI Across Publishing

Thomas Schultz-Homberg, CEO of KSTA Media, which publishes the likes of the daily newspaper Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, has said that the publisher is now using AI for topic pages, taxonomy, contextual advertising, and personalisation.

KSTA's news websites are now rolling out a process by which AI curates 80 percent of the site, to make sure people stay as long as possible because they see things that interest them and perhaps surprise them, and human editors curate the remaining 20 percent – the top and most important stories of the day. Schultz-Homberg credited this work with a 6 percent increase in overall page views.

Schultz-Homberg also told INMA World Congress they have used generative AI to write horoscopes, published alongside a disclaimer. "We said if a man can invent them, a machine can do as well."

TIME

The recent removal of TIME's digital paywall has opened up a century of journalism for everyone. TIME's archive contains 200 million words, a treasure trove of knowledge about a variety of historical figures. Mining it is a job that's a good fit for the new generation of AI technology. TIME trained the technology behind ChatGPT to produce quizzes based on stories hand-picked from the TIME archives. The user simply has to click on the article headline, next to the original issue date, to jump to the story on which each quiz is based.

Innovative Gen AI Applications in Advertising by The New York Times and Times Internet

The New York Times is venturing into the realm of Generative AI (GenAI) to revolutionise advertising with real-time ad targeting and optimisation. This groundbreaking initiative aims to harness GenAI to predict the most effective placement for ad campaigns based on their content, tailoring the ad's message to fit seamlessly with the editorial environment. This method allows The Times to target niche audiences with unprecedented precision.

According to a spokesperson from The Times, this experimental product leverages GenAI to dynamically align a brand's campaign message with relevant editorial content. It identifies the optimal contextual environments

Mining it is a task well-suited for the new generation of AI technology. TIME trained the technology behind ChatGPT to produce quizzes based on stories hand-picked from its archives.

within The Times, broadening the scope beyond traditional contextual targeting. "Our new product will pinpoint readers most engaged with specific articles and target them throughout The Times, thus extending the campaign's reach and refining its audience targeting strategy," the spokesperson explained. This innovation means advertisers can set targeting criteria in real time, ensuring ads are always placed in suitable contexts.

The New York Times is currently inviting advertisers to beta test this technology in the upcoming quarter, with pricing details to be announced later. This project represents nine months of dedicated development work by The Times, aiming to offer a more nuanced and effective advertising solution.

Times Internet's Interactive Advertising Chat Product

On the other side of the globe, Times Internet, India's leading digital products conglomerate and publisher of The Times of India – the world's largest-selling English daily – is experimenting with a novel advertising chat product. This product seeks to engage users more deeply by allowing interactive conversations within an ad. Imagine clicking on a banner ad for an electric vehicle and having a chat box

open up where you can inquire about the car's range, seat options, and more. This interactive approach not only keeps users engaged longer but also presents an opportunity for Times Internet to command premium advertising rates, thereby creating lasting value for advertisers.

This advertising chat product, still under development, represents a significant innovation in digital advertising. By integrating conversational AI into ads, Times Internet is setting a new standard for user engagement and advertiser value.

HT Media - Personalised News Consumption with AI

In a move towards ultra-personalised content consumption, India's Hindustan Times Media has launched a chatbot on its financial news site, Mint. This chatbot allows readers to delve into business and economic news through an interactive query system. Yudhveer Mor, Chief Product and Technology Officer at HT Media in New Delhi, emphasises the importance of data source integrity, a common challenge with abstract language models. To ensure reliability, the chatbot is trained exclusively on articles from HT**'s** repertoire, focusing on content pertinent to Mint's financial news specialisation.

Elevating User Engagement

Mor notes the strategic limitation of chatbot inquiries to topics relevant to Mint, such as excluding weather-related queries. Users are prompted with a selection of sample questions reflecting current major news stories, encouraging engagement with the content. The chatbot has shown impressive results, with high click-through rates and user interaction, marking a significant shift in content consumption dynamics.

Beyond mere consumption, HT Media is exploring AI to enhance both reader and content team experiences. Mor discusses the dual potential of recommendation engines: guiding readers to their next article of interest and advising the content team on future writing directions. This tailored approach acknowledges the diverse needs and preferences of their audience. A notable challenge for HT Media, given that nearly 90 percent of site visitors are newcomers, is personalising content without prior user data. Mor shares how ChatGPT has been instrumental in predicting new readers' interests, significantly boosting engagement. "We would put an article in ChatGPT and ask what they will read next. That started driving a lot of engagement for us."

Semafor - GenAI for classifying information

An example detailed INMA's excellent Generative AI Intiative Blog run by Sonali Verma, again featuring Semafor. The digital outlet found it was hard to collect hate-crime statistics because they are defined and tracked in different ways by local U.S. police departments. So, Executive Editor Gina Chua plugged a definition of hate crimes into a bot and was surprised by how well it could discover unwritten rules and relationships in articles. Chua suggests this capability could be used for "content moderation or finding violations of a given policy in a sea of complaints." "Machine learning – where a computer 'discovers' unspoken rules and relationships – can be an incredibly valuable method for sorting this sort of information," she writes.
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Towards a Successful
AI Strategy

The media industry is witnessing rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), prompting media leaders to think carefully about their approach to harnessing these developments. Here are seven key considerations for media leaders, according to Damian Radcliffe, Carolyn S. Chambers Professor in Journalism – University of Oregon:

1. **Avoid impulsive decisions:** Despite the hype around AI, media leaders should not rush to adopt new technologies without a clear strategy.

2. **Plan strategically:** Take time to define how AI can contribute to long-term goals and success metrics.

3. **Establish a task force:** Create internal teams to evaluate AI risks and benefits and learn from past mistakes of rapid adoption. CNET, Gannett and MSN are some of those who have recently had embarrassing public experiences as a result of publishing (unchecked) AI-written content.

4. **Engage the entire company:** AI impacts various aspects of a media organisation, so involve diverse teams in AI strategy to explore new revenue streams and audience reach. Tools like Newsroom AI and Jasper can help to increase the volume, speed and breadth of content being offered, while AI-produced newsletters like ARLnow and news apps like Artifact demonstrate how AI can deliver content in fresh ways. Developing internal training programmes and encouraging take-up of industry wide opportunities to gain more knowledge about how AI works and its possibilities will help with buy-in and culture change.

5. **Develop clear guidelines:** Create transparent guidelines for AI usage within the company to address concerns about job losses.
As Radcliffe says, audience trust is also cultivable in the process: "There are also opportunities to engage your audience in this process too. Ask them for input on your guidelines, as well as being clear (e.g., through effective labelling) about when AI has, or has not, been used. This matters at a time when trust in the media remains near record lows. AI missteps only risk exacerbating some of these trust issues, emphasising why elements of this technology need to be used with an element of caution."

6. **Protect intellectual property:** Implement measures to safeguard content from unauthorised AI use and explore monetisation opportunities through licensing agreements.

7. **Diversify revenue streams:** Given the potential impact of AI on traffic and ad revenue, media companies should explore alternative revenue models and prioritize original, human-driven content.

"Creating quality content comes at a cost," Radcliffe says. "Having seen revenues eroded and journalism undercut previously, publishers are rightfully wary about how this will pan out. So, it will be critical to weigh any payment schemes and financial relationships against the larger industry-wide impact these tools will have on content creators." Navigating the AI-driven future requires strategic planning, clear guidelines, and a focus on maintaining quality and differentiation in content delivery.

Baltimore Times – GenAI for Diversity

The Baltimore Times has created a set of inclusive avatars and voices that allow its audiences to select from multiple diverse "personas" that reflect and represent the audiences they seek to serve.

The move addresses a critical concern in artificial intelligence: the tendency of AI to replicate existing biases based on the data it's trained on. By intentionally creating avatars and voices that celebrate diversity, The Baltimore Times is pioneering a more inclusive approach to AI in media.

Utilising its Zing AI audio content extensions, The Baltimore Times has crafted a collection of avatars and voices designed to offer choices that resonate with different segments of its audience. "You can pick whoever you want to read the story to you," explains Paris Brown, associate editor of The Baltimore Times, highlighting the initiative's aim to create a more authentic and engaging experience for the Black community and other underrepresented groups.

GenAI for Investigative Journalism – Custom GPT

Not an example by a major publisher, but we're detailing here the work of Filipino journalist Jaemark Tordecilla, who created a custom GPT called COA Beat Assistant to advance watchdog journalism. Journalists in the Philippines rely on reports from the government's Commission on Audit (COA). The audit reports usually provide leads that reporters could explore further to see if there are anomalies involving how public funds are spent.

Tordecilla showcased the new tool during a workshop for journalists organised by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), attended by Sheila Coronel from Columbia J-School and the PCIJ's founding executive director.

Coronel tried the tool out on the audit reports for provinces in Mindanao in the southern Philippines, some of which are among the poorest areas in the country. Immediately, she noticed an item about the millions of pesos being spent by one area on Gender and Development and flagged it as a potential investigative story.

Custom GPTs offer newsrooms the ability to automate the extraction of relevant information and generate summaries, by-passing the need for extensive machine learning training previously required for similar tasks. Tordecilla writes that he took 16 hours to build this particular tool that he expects will save reporters 80 percent of the time they spend on audit reports, combing through data.

For news organisations wondering how to enter the fray, the POLIS report offers six steps towards an AI strategy:

1. **Get informed.** See the LSE JournalismAI website for online introductory training, the AI Starter Pack, a Case Study hub and a series of reports on innovation case studies. Other sources are available.

2. **Broaden AI literacy.** Everyone needs to understand the components of AI that are impacting journalism the most, because it will impact on everyone's job – not just editorial, and not just the 'tech' people.

3. **Assign responsibility.** Someone in your organisation should be given the responsibility of monitoring developments both in your workplace but also more widely, such as assigning AI innovation and R&D leads and keep a conversation going within your organisation about AI.

4. **Test, iterate, repeat.** Experiment and scale but always with human oversight and management. Don't rush to use AI until you are comfortable with the process. Always review the impact.

5. **Draw up guidelines.** They can be general or specific. This is a useful learning process when done inclusively to engage all stakeholders. And be prepared to review and change them over time.

6. **Collaborate and network.** There are many institutions such as universities or intermediaries like start-ups who are working in this field. Talk to other news organisations about what they have done. Generative AI technologies may present new opportunities for newsroom collaboration given the high enthusiasm about and accessibility of genAI tools.

AI Frameworks and Guidelines: what industry experts are doing

As freely available generative AI tools flood the media landscape, many publishers are putting into place guidelines and codes of practice for its use in their newsrooms, as well as ideas about how it can be implemented to create efficiencies, save time, and aid journalists in their tasks rather than replace them entirely.

The Washington Post

Writing in a statement that AI "presents a significant opportunity to support the work of our journalists and enable us to better serve our readers," Fred Ryan, Washington Post CEO, said The Washington Post has established an AI task force made up of many of the title's senior leaders who will be "charged with establishing the company's strategic direction and priorities for advancing our AI capabilities".

> **"Our newsroom too must remain a hub for innovation. It is important and necessary for the FT to have a team in the newsroom that can experiment responsibly with AI tools."**
>
> — **Roula Khalaf,** Editor, Finatial Times

The Post has simultaneously created a small full-time team in an AI hub to "expedite our AI initiatives and foster cross-functional cooperation". The hub will also spearhead its experimentation and proof-of-concept initiatives across the company and ensure everything stays within the strategies and guardrails set by the AI taskforce.

"This is only the first step in establishing AI as a priority opportunity for The Washington Post," Ryan said. "As we learn more, we will adjust team structures and allocate resources that will deliver value and results."

Mediahuis

Acknowledging the potential of AI to "make or break the newsroom", Gert Ysebaert, Mediahuis CEO (Belgium), told the International News Media Association World Congress in New York that it was essential that newsrooms adapt to the drastically changing landscape. "We have to think how can we implement this very fast and do this right, preferably to also mitigate the risks that are coming and the huge challenges," he said. It was also imperative, he said, that media companies tested AI in a "controlled way".

Mediahuis has created an AI framework of seven principles about how to use the tech in the newsroom in an "ethical and responsible way" and "augment journalism, not replace journalism". For example, the editor-in-chief is still "responsible for everything that's published" with a human always "in the loop" and readers must be informed if AI has been used for anything whether it is a section of an article or a summary.

Reuters US

Reuters has laid out four principles for its journalists when using AI to ensure they use the tech effectively while remaining the "world's most trusted news organisation".

Alessandra Galloni, editor-in-chief (US), noted that Reuters has always "embraced new technologies" including using automation for extracting economic and corporate data: "The idea of autonomous news content may be new for some media companies, but it is a longstanding and essential practice at Reuters News.

Second, Reuters reporters and editors will be fully involved in – and responsible for – greenlighting any content we may produce that relies on AI," Galloni wrote.

She also promised "robust disclosures" to the audience and said journalists must "remain vigilant that our sources of content are real. Our mantra: Be sceptical and verify."

The Financial Times

The Financial Times, while using AI for summarising and visual creation (infographics, photos and diagrams) – with human oversight, acknowledges that generative AI models can produce false facts, references, links, images and even articles. In an op-ed, Roula Khalaf, editor, promised that the FT's journalism will continue to be "reported, written and edited" by humans, saying that trust matters above all else. "The FT is

also a pioneer in the business of digital journalism and our business colleagues will embrace AI to provide services for readers and clients and sustain our record of effective innovation," Khalaf said.

"Our newsroom too must remain a hub for innovation. It is important and necessary for the FT to have a team in the newsroom that can experiment responsibly with AI tools to assist journalists in tasks such as mining data, analysing text and images and translation. We won't publish photorealistic images generated by AI but we will explore the use of AI-augmented visuals (infographics, diagrams, photos) and when we do we will make that clear to the reader. This will not affect artists' illustrations for the FT."

USA Today

USA Today, like other organisations, has created guidelines on generative AI, seen as "guideposts" rather than mandates. Nicole Carroll, who stepped down as editor-in-chief of USA Today in May 2023, recommended that other publishers assign someone to play with the new generative AI tools as soon as possible, while it is free to do so with many of them.

"See what it does, see what it doesn't do, because we don't know where this is going but we need to be ready," she told the World Congress.

"And so to be ready, you have to have some experience in there. So that's one thing we can all do is go assign somebody to go in there and just play and create and see what they see – and then also get your own internal standards out today before something happens you're not happy with."

A Critical Evaluation

We can do no better than to present to you some important takeaways from a recent TOW report, "Artificial Intelligence in the News: How AI Retools, Rationalizes, and Reshapes Journalism and the Public Arena",

which illuminate the way forward for AI and the media and bring home the major issues in a wonderfully succinct way.

● Productivity gains from AI in the news will not be straightforward. The benefits of AI to the news will be staggered. They will incur costs in the early stages and necessitate changes at the organisational and strategic level.

● The adoption of AI in news organisations will not be frictionless. Regulation, resistance from news workers, audience preferences, and incompatible technological infrastructure are just some of the variables that will shape the speed at which news organisations adopt AI, and, by extension, the rate at which tangible effects on the news come into focus.

● AI will not be a panacea for the many deep-seated problems and challenges facing journalism and the public arena. Technology alone cannot fix intractable political, social, and economic ills. News organisations will continue to be forced to make a case for why they still matter in the modern news environment – and why they deserve audiences' attention and money.

● The concentration of control over AI by a small handful of major technology companies must – and will – remain a key area of scrutiny. Control over infrastructure confers power.

● Developing frameworks to balance innovation – which is bound to continue – through AI in the news with concerns around issues like copyright and various forms of harm will remain a difficult and imperfect but necessary task.

More concretely, certain AI technologies will gain traction:

● The Reuters trends and predictions report foresees experimental interfaces to the internet such as AR and VR glasses, lapel pins, and other wearable devices as being a feature of the year ahead. Additionally, existing voice activated

The State of Play with Publishers and Gen AI

Toolkits has put together this incredibly useful snapshot of publishers' relationships with generative AI companies

Publisher/ Company	Status
Le Monde	Licensing
Prisa Media	Licensing
Reuters	Licensing and Suing
The Intercept	Suing
Raw Story and Alternet	Suing
News Corp	In Talks
NYT	Suing
Axel Springer	Licensing
Daily Mail	Considering Legal Action
Associated Press	Licensing
Getty Images	Suing

Note Information taken from Toolkits website on April 28, 2024.

devices such as headphones and smart speakers, as they get upgraded with AI technologies, will likely displace – or at least supplement – the smartphone in the medium term.

● The survey also indicates that AI bots and personal assistants will gain more traction in 2024 with up-to-date news. Important legal and ethical questions will be raised, however, as many of these bots will be personality- or journalist-driven as cloning technologies improve. Finally, author Nic Newman predicts that

the battles between the AI Doomers and the AI Accelerationists will continue, although accelerationists will remain in the driving seat this year as governments struggle to understand and control the technology. Overall however, the story is clear – if 2023 was about coming to terms with generative AI, this year is all about the various ways in which it is making its way into newsrooms across the world. Stay tuned for more, because this wave has only just started.

Publisher's Negotiations with AI: The Current Stakes

When we put together this book last year, just a few months after ChatGPT had burst into public consciousness, we came out with a strong message that the news industry had to get this right - to evolve the right strategy to deal with this new iteration of Big Tech rather than falling back on familiar mistakes – of giving everything away for free and then trying to seek a partnership from a defensive position.

One year on, how has that worked out with AI companies? Publishers across the world have reacted strongly, employing a mix of offensive and defensive strategies. Some of the bigger names have grabbed more attention than others – like The New York Times' ongoing lawsuit against ChatGPT for copyright infringement or Axel Springer's content partnership deal with OpenAI. But going beyond, this is a fast-evolving landscape where new moves are being reported this week. We feel confident, however, that our snapshot of the state-of-play this year should stand you in good stead while trying to understand where publishers stand with the negotiations with AI companies globally.

Publishers' relationships with AI Publishers' relationships with AI companies fall under four categories. One, of course, we know that news outlets have filed lawsuits in court, accusing tech companies of plagiarising copyright-protected articles to develop ChatGPT without respecting copyrights or proper attribution. Two, publishers have blocked web crawlers. Remember: before The New York Times filed what is now the flagship lawsuit against Gen AI, it was also one of the first high-profile news publishers to block OpenAI's crawler. Three, some fairly high-profile publishers have decided to use special-purpose LLM's to create chatbots of their own – think Bloomberg's BloombergGPT, built specifically for the world of finance, or Financial Times' Ask FT that can answer questions its subscribers ask using FT content published over the last two decades. Finally, publishers like Axel Springer, AP, FT, Le Monde and Prisa Media have struck deals with OpenAI to license content. Although it is still early days, this has the potential to turn into a fairly significant revenue stream for publishers if the partnership is pitched right. Is it an offensive or defensive strategy? Only time will tell, but with the pace at which things are moving we're sure to find out soon enough.

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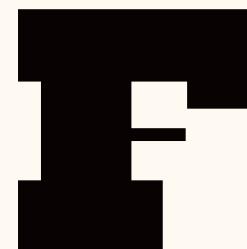
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How we work

We believe that change is not imposed but is negotiated and agreed upon. We take into consideration all scenarios and opinions — and only after thorough analysis, evaluation, and testing we present our final recommendations and action plans.

One way to visualise our process is to think of it as a three-step effort: audit, diagnostic and implementation. We lead in-house teams to be at the heart of innovation in their firms and deliver on a new product, content or strategy. Although all projects are made-to-measure, the phases of any change process are always similar.

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Our clients call us when they face pressing issues ranging from editorial re-organisation to a need for re-invention of their products, or the development and execution of new editorial or commercial strategies. They approach us for objective, honest, analytical, smart and experienced advice.

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We believe that media companies should become new Information Engines™, and transform by shifting from readers to audiences and from audiences to communities.

Our clients talk to us when they need to make decisions that will have lasting consequences for their teams, operations, revenues and brands. They approach us when they need fresh global and experienced thinking.

Magazines

We believe the genre must be re-invented to survive and thrive. We have developed ground-breaking new concepts, and formats with demonstrable success. We re-organise news operations to adapt a matrix based on audiences rather than products.

1ST PHASE
The Problem
1 Audit
2 Diagnosis
3 Action plan

2ND PHASE
The Solution
4 Brainstorming
5 Market research
6 Content model
7 Design model
8 Business model
9 Multimedia model
10 Prototypes
11 Editorial & graphic style books
12 Newsroom management model
13 Working space redesign
14 Training & implementation
15 New product launch

3RD PHASE
The Implementation
16 Evaluation
17 Audience research
18 Corrections
19 Training
20 Results: increased audience, increased advertising

Innova
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Media
World
Report
2024-25