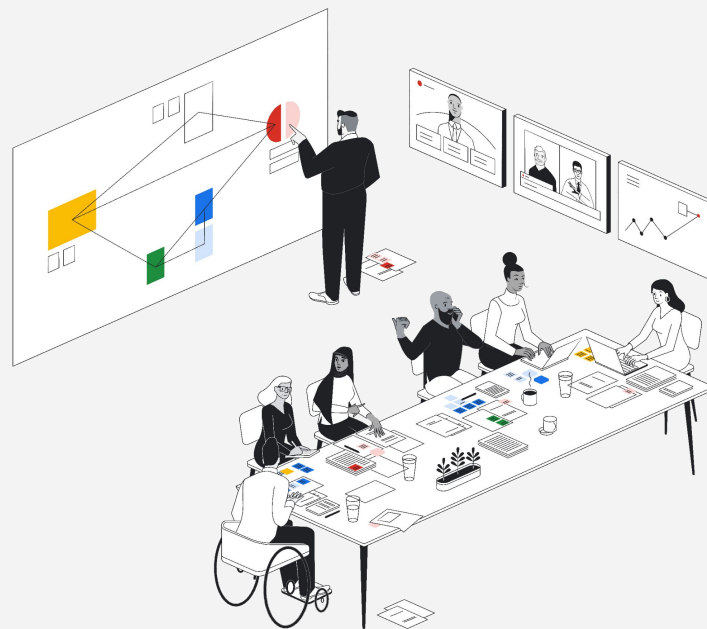


Next Generation News Formats Lab

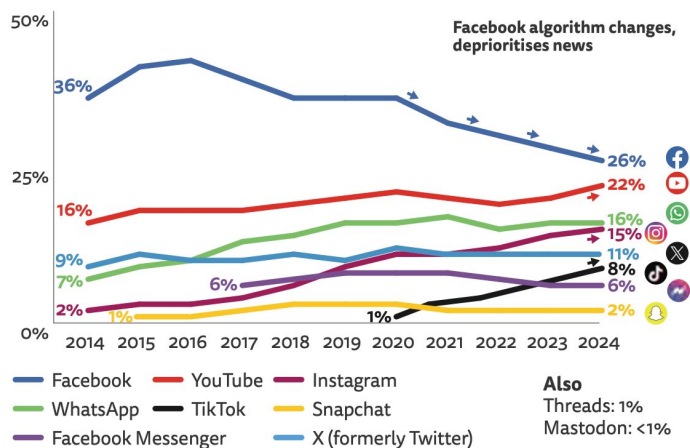
May 2025

The Next Generation of News Formats Academy helps news publishers **accelerate their transition to new types of formats – and new audiences such as Gen Z** – by assessing their current performance, understanding their capabilities, and building the engine that will take them to their goal through experimentation.



News consumption is increasingly moving to new formats and channels, signalling a need for legacy players to adapt

Over half of the Reuters sample watch videos for news¹



Q12b. Which, if any, of the following have you used for news in the last week? Base: Total sample in each country-year in UK, USA, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Australia (2014-24), Brazil, and Ireland (2015-24) = 2000.

Sources: ¹Digital News Report 2024, Reuters.

²America's News Influencers 2024, Pew.

³Next Gen News: Understanding the audiences of 2030, 2024, FT Strategies & Knight Lab



The Pew Research Centre² found that about one-in-five Americans – including a significant share of adults under 30 (37%) – say they regularly get news from influencers on social media



News consumption behaviors and preferences are shifting drastically, particularly for younger consumers and those in emerging markets



FT Strategies' work with legacy publishers in Malaysia highlighted the importance of format-specific storytelling, **encouraging experimentation with short-form video, interactive polls, and community-driven engagement**

Programme phases



Capability & business review

Assess your readiness to engage audiences across the next generation of **channels** and **formats**

Duration: 2 weeks

The programme begins with inspiration sessions to prepare publishers for the in-person workshop.

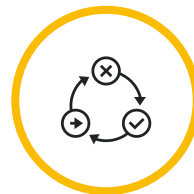


Design an experiment

Explore **strategies** and **tactics** for successfully leveraging novel news formats and **choose an experiment** to deploy

Duration: 3 days

Masterclasses and workshops guide publishers in designing and launching experiments to explore new formats.



Implementation of an experiment

Launch an experiment to run for one month with tailored **support from FT Strategies consultants**

Duration: 1 month

FT Strategies consultants provide weekly one-to-one support for up to a month to implement the chosen experiment.



Capability & business review

Evaluate business performance and audience engagement capabilities to guide adoption of new formats and channels

Core elements

News Sustainability Consultation

Evaluate your overall business performance across key pillars: Foundations, Product & Audience, Monetisation, and Financial Performance.

Current Capabilities Assessment

Assess your current capabilities for engaging audiences across emerging formats and new audience segments.

Existing novel format footprint analysis

Review your existing presence and past initiatives across audio and video platforms.



Outputs

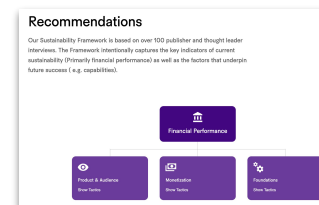
Next Gen Format Assessment

Evaluate the pre-programme status quo by analysing the business and key verticals for news format and channel experimentation



News Sustainability Consultation

Receive tailored recommendations on overall business performance to provide context for future experiments





Design phase

Inspire participants on best practice for embracing audio and video formats. Choose from a set menu to deploy an experiment and create an implementation roadmap.

Core elements

Masterclasses

Presentations on best practices, tactics and case studies from the independent content creators and leading legacy players.

Choose an experiment

Explore an curated experiment menu covering topics such as: audience analysis, content production, formats and distribution or value proposition.

Experiment set-up

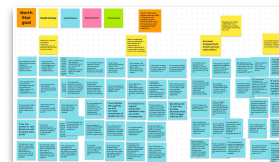
Design your experiment of choice and create a detailed action plan for launching it.



Outputs

Prioritised list of initiatives

For long term experimentation with audio and video formats on emerging platforms



Action plan

For prioritising, planning, and mapping the roll-out of your experiment



Publishers will have to design 1 experiment among a wide array of topics

Focus	Experiment
Audience Analysis	1. Track and understand your target audience's behaviour on new formats by developing specific KPIs or dashboards
	2. Conduct surveys to gain deeper insights into your target audience's preferences, or conduct focus groups to explore qualitative insights from the survey in more detail
Content Production	3. Track and understand trending topics relevant to your target audience or develop a signal tracker
	4. Create more content on topics that resonate with your target audience - launching a dedicated content vertical or adapting story formats
	5. Reach new audiences through influencer partnerships
Formats and Distribution	6. Strengthen connections with select journalists who already appeal to your target audience
	7. Engage your target audience through video channels (short-form videos)
	8. Engage your target audience through audio channels
	9. Engage your target audience through interactive channels
	10. Engage your target audience through explainers and previews on social media
	11. Boost engagement and time on site on direct channels (add multimedia elements to text-based stories e.g. data visualization)
Monetisation	12. Start building a young subscriber base (discount subs)
	13. Generate revenue from target audiences directly via social media platforms (e.g. follower contributions)



Implementation phase

Help publishers deploy an internal or audience facing experiment to accelerate learnings and adoption of novel news formats

Core elements

**Bespoke
end-to-end
experimentation**

Support participants to develop, implement and analyse experiments that validate areas of opportunity.

**Measuring
Success**

Help publishers measure return on investment and gather lessons learned to enable future scaling.

Sharing results

Enable results sharing with the rest of the cohort at the end of the experimentation month.

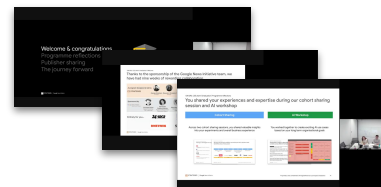


Outputs

High-impact experiments
Deploy high impact experiments



Knowledge sharing
With the rest of the cohort to encourage learning and collaboration



The programme offers a choice of internal and external activities, with a focus on commercial outcomes

Theme	Audience Analysis	Content Production	Formats and Distribution	Monetisation
Example Experiment	<p>Track and understand Gen Z audiences / behaviours by developing specific KPIs or dashboards to track Gen Z audience behaviour:</p> <p>i.e. Develop a proprietary tool or implement third party solution</p>	<p>Produce more content on topics that resonate with the next generation:</p> <p>i.e. Change story structure/format to clearly indicate Facts, Analysis, Counter-Arguments, Actionable Steps</p>	<p>Test interactive journalism by testing interactive formats for channels such as Reddit, Discord or Whatsapp:</p> <p>i.e. Develop a following on Discord to encourage content sampling and brand discovery</p>	<p>Monetise audiences directly on social media platforms:</p> <p>i.e. Launch follower contributions on YouTube</p>
Example OKRs	<p># Tools/Dashboards deployed</p> <hr/> <p># Gen Z visitors/subscribers/readers/followers</p> <p># Gen Z topics of interest identified</p>	<p># New formats deployed</p> <hr/> <p># Viewers, comments, shares, responses</p> <p>% Change in audience mix as a result of the experiment</p>	<p># Posts on chosen channels</p> <hr/> <p># Gen Z visitors/subscribers/readers/followers</p> <p>% Traffic driven from new channel</p>	<p># Revenue models tested</p> <hr/> <p>\$ Amount generated in revenue</p> <p># Contributors via new channels</p>

Required commitments

✓	Exploring new formats and channels is a strategic priority	Experimenting with novel formats and channels for news must be a strategic priority. Successful applicants should have an existing footprint of experiments across audio and video channels (i.e. YouTube, TikTok)
✓	A team is in charge for the programme	A team is put together to collaborate on this programme and commits to make the time to attend cohort session and publisher-specific progress checks. Ideally the team is composed of a mix of commercial, editorial, social media and multimedia staff.
✓	Senior management is bought in	CEO or similar C-Level stakeholder agrees to support programme initiatives by committing resources and helping clear blockers
✓	Commitment to launch an experiment soon after the programme	Applicants must commit to launching an internal or external experiment during the programme and aim to gather initial insights within a month of the in-person workshop
✓	Willingness to share knowledge with ecosystem	Be a full participant in an ongoing 'community of success' Share subscription performance data for (anonymised) cohort benchmarking purposes

About us



The Google News Initiative represents **Google's largest-ever effort to help journalism thrive in the digital age.** In collaboration with editors and journalists worldwide, the Google News Initiative (GNI) strives to foster a more **sustainable, diverse, and innovative** news landscape. Through a comprehensive suite of **programs, digital tools, training, and resources**, the GNI empowers journalistic endeavors, enabling journalists to effectively discover, verify, and narrate compelling stories while upholding the highest standards of quality journalism.



FT Strategies is the **growth consultancy from the Financial Times. Staffed by the experts who successfully transformed the FT's business model** in the face of disruption, we work with organisations worldwide, helping them increase recurring revenue, create a customer-centric culture and transform organisations. Our deep expertise enables our clients to **future-proof their business, empower their teams, and fulfil their goals.**

To apply for the programme,
please fill in the [application
form](#)

Thank you