


SUBSCRIPTIONS ACADEMY EMEA 2023

Programme explainer





The Subscriptions Academy EMEA helps news publishers accelerate their reader revenue streams by assessing their **current performance**, defining an **ambitious vision** for their digital subscription business and **building the engine** that will take them to their goal.

Subscriptions Academy EMEA programme helps publishers build and achieve ambitious goals

Objective

The Subscriptions Academy programme is designed to engage a selected group of publishers of varying sizes, countries, and audiences, drawn from the incredibly diverse print and digital news organisations across the continent. The programme will help them define an ambitious vision for their digital subscription business and build the engine that will take them to their goal.

Expert delivery

The Academy is an ambitious, intensive five-month experience that addresses each step of digital subscriptions, from traffic acquisition to subscriber retention, and the organisational skills publishers need to succeed. Google News Initiative and FT Strategies work in partnership during the programme to help participating publishers reach their goal, each providing expert advice to publishers.

Participants will receive dedicated 1:1 support and learn from the shared experiences of other cohort members. Delivery will be mostly digital, with 2-3 in person visits from FT Strategies consultants at various stages of the programme.

Strong historic results

We have now worked with 24 publishers across three previous editions. The programme has received consistently excellent quantitative and qualitative feedback from previous participants, and publishers have seen strong improvement in key subscriptions business metrics.

GNI and FT Strategies are excited about welcoming the next cohort of eight publishers to the 2023 edition of the Subscriptions Academy EMEA, and look forward to receiving your application to be one of them.

2020



2021

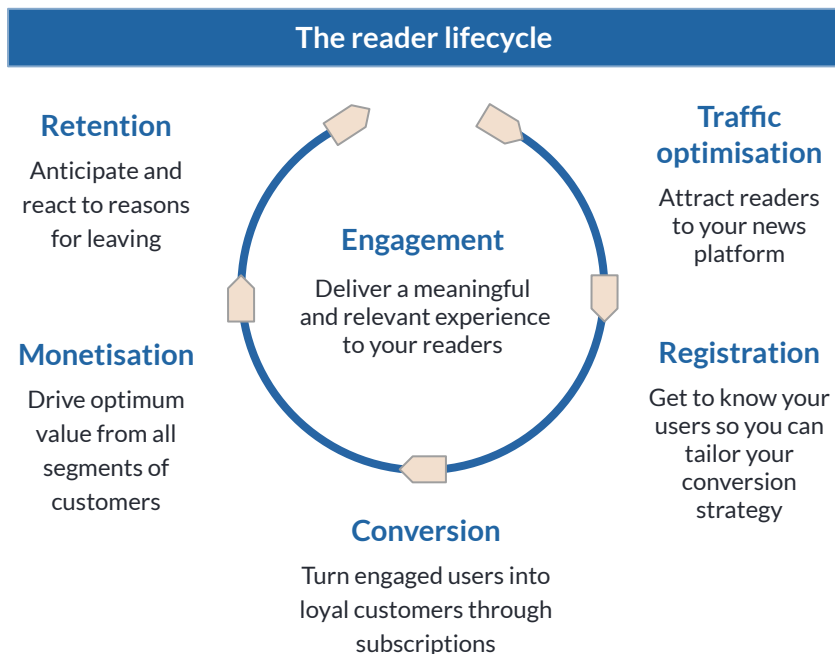


2022

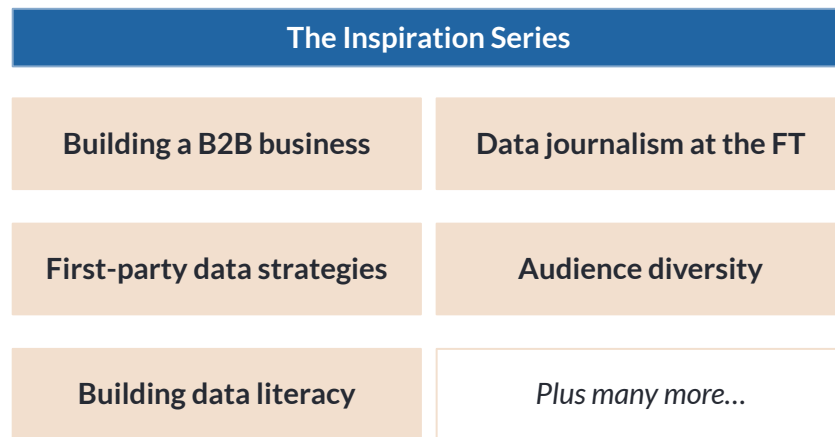


The programme assesses performance and guides future strategy across a range of core and adjacent topics

At the heart of the programme are the key stages of the journey your readers take towards being long-term subscribers



The programme also includes a series of seminars open to all participants - below are some topics from previous editions



Seminars are delivered by experts from the wider Financial Times organisation and Google.

The programme comprises three phases over a five month period



Discovery

Understanding your business in depth through in-person interviews and data analysis. **Performance benchmarking** versus the cohort and the wider industry across the subscriptions funnel, leading to quick-win and longer term **strategic recommendations** for improvement.

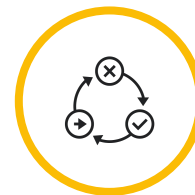
~10 weeks, March - May



North Star

Workshops to develop your **new strategic approach**: setting an ambitious target and identifying the key outcomes necessary to achieve your goal, and hypotheses on how to do so. You will also **design your first experiments** and will develop an initial **12-month action plan**.

~4 weeks, May - June



Test & Learn

Implementing and analysing a set of selected **experiments** to embed the North Star methodology and deliver immediate results. Building a **capabilities roadmap** and **organisational structure** that will set you up for success beyond the end of the programme.

~9 weeks, June - August

Throughout: the Inspiration Series, a series of seminars open to all participant colleagues, delivered by Google and FT Strategies experts on core programme areas and adjacent topics of interest

Discovery Phase: we will work with you to understand your strengths and development opportunities

Discovery Phase core elements

Quantitative and qualitative analysis

Analysis of your Google Analytics (or equivalent), in-person visits to interview key stakeholders

Cohort masterclasses

Presentations on the fundamental principles of each stage of the reader lifecycle, including FT and industry best practice

Publisher workshops

Sessions with each publisher to discuss data analysis and identify areas for improvement

Output

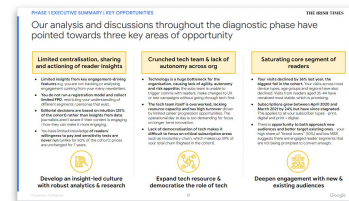
Diagnostic workshops

Covering cohort & publisher analyses, FT & industry best practices across the lifecycle



Executive summary

Covering key strengths, opportunities and proposed solutions



North Star Phase: we will co-create a 3-5 year strategy for your subscriptions revenue growth

North Star Phase core elements

North Star strategy

Intensive workshops to develop a fully-fledged North Star framework to drive you towards your ambition

12 month action plan

Prioritising your hypotheses for growth and placing them in a roadmap for your first year of North Star

Initial experiments

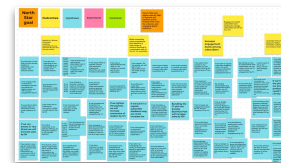
Choosing from some template experiments to address your high-impact, low-risk opportunities



Output

A North Star framework

Defining your North Star goal, outcomes, sub-outcomes and hypotheses



Action plan

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



Test & Learn Phase: we will build a roadmap for your future development to ensure that you have the skills required to continue your journey

Test & Learn Phase core elements

Bespoke experimentation

Developing, implementing and analysing experiments that address your greatest long-term areas of opportunity

Subscriptions business foundations

Analysing your technology, digital skills and organisational capabilities to create a development roadmap

Organising for subscriptions growth

Building a strong governance structure to manage the North Star framework and realise its full impact within your business

Output

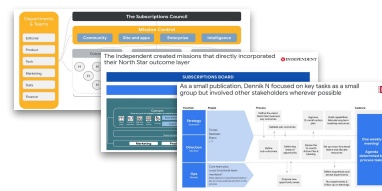
High-impact experiments

Identifying, selecting, designing, and running extensive organisational tests



Capabilities roadmapping

A concrete plan for development over the next 3-5 years to support North Star



Application criteria



>1 year of subscriptions

You must have operated a subscriptions model for at least 12 months.

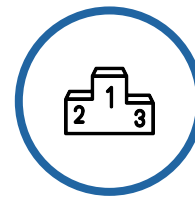
There is no minimum or maximum number of subscribers you have currently - previous programmes have accepted participants with anywhere from 1k to 250k subscribers.



Historic investment

You must have invested in growing your subscriptions revenue stream and demonstrated some progress.

You should also be able to demonstrate that you need help to get to the next level - the programme is designed to make a difference to your business that would not be achieved otherwise.

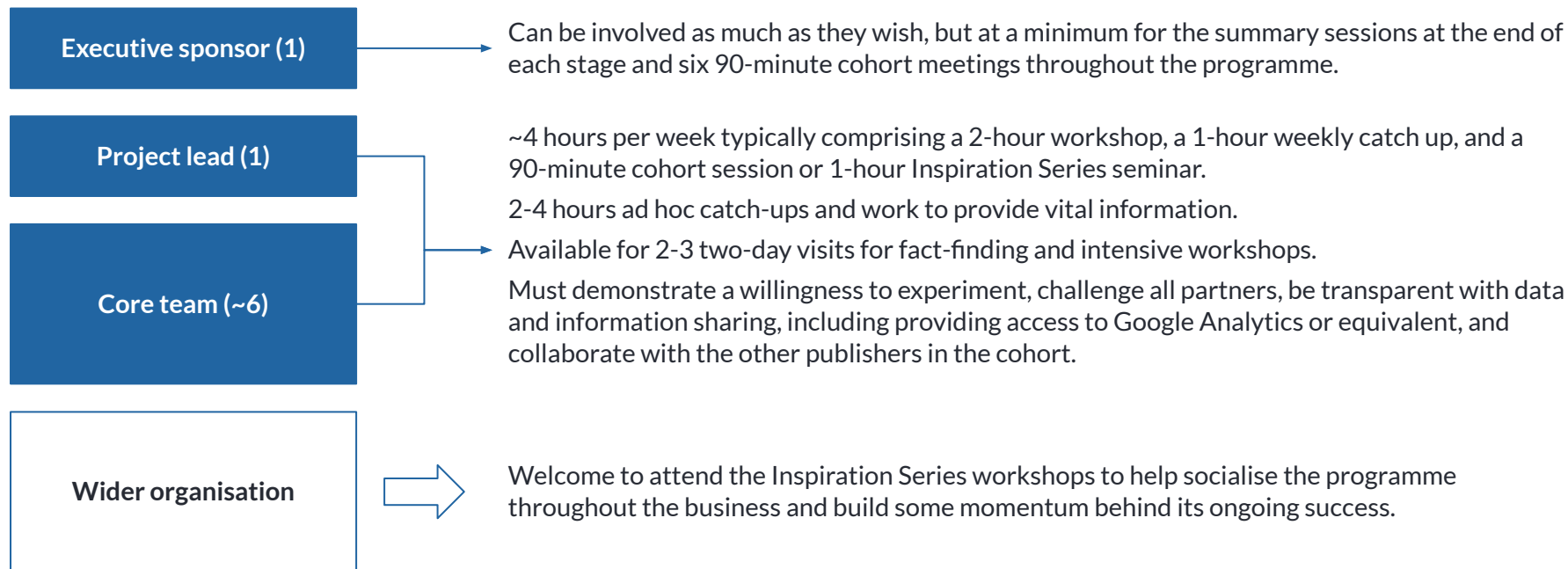


A top strategic priority

Building a sustainable and profitable subscriptions revenue stream must be a top strategic priority.

It does not have to be your only revenue stream, but you should consider subscriptions as an indispensable strategy that can work hand in hand with existing models.

Your time and energy are the only investments required - from 6 to 8 hours per week for the most involved team members



*The programme is fully funded by **Google News Initiative** - the only cost to participants is the time and effort necessary to realise its full impact*

Previous editions of the programme have received consistently high ratings and strong feedback



"The joint expertise and background of the partner teams are outstanding. The FT's unique North Star methodology enables organizations to thrive in the reader revenue business.

The programme is a unique crash-course in setting ambitious goals, empowering people, and bringing innovations that ensure the sustainable development of quality media."

Danuta Bregula
Head of Subscriptions
Gazeta Wyborcza



"This is a new form of consulting! You're coming with the brains and FT experience.

First time in my entire career I've worked with consultants that already know the business before they come into the situation and work in this impactful way.

You're changing consulting for the better!"

Philippe Colombet
Chief Technology Officer
Groupe Bayard



"In an awful long time of working, I have never been involved in anything quite as rigorous as this.

It is like a 10,000 piece jigsaw made of Heinz baked beans that is now all coming together.

I think what you are doing with us is really quite brilliant."

Mark Ody
Chief Marketing Officer
Irish Independent

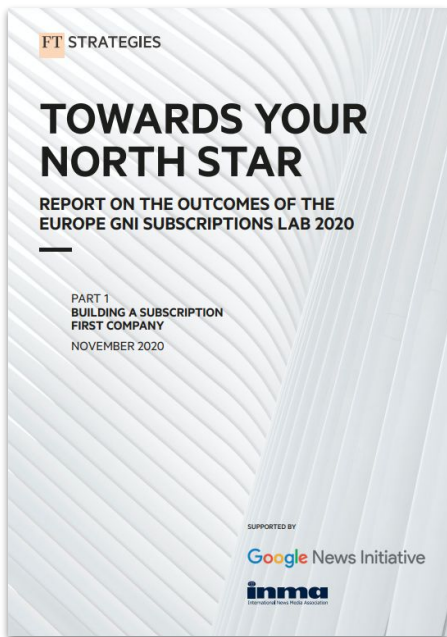


"The project had from the beginning very clear goals and processes. All the steps which we have taken led to the final goal.

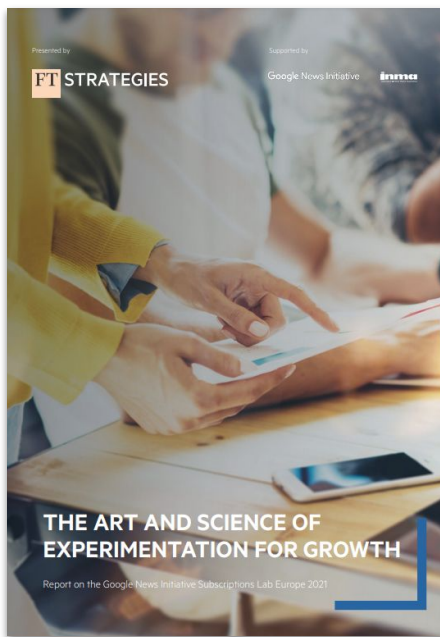
This programme changed the mindset in the company as well. Our paywall project got a much higher importance in our company because of the knowledge we developed during this programme."

Lenka Gallo
Head of Subscription Marketing
Vltava Labe Media

The reports from previous editions summarise many of the topics covered



[Subscriptions Lab Europe](#)
[2020](#)



[Subscriptions Lab Europe](#)
[2021](#)



[Subscriptions Academy Europe](#)
[2022](#)



About the Subscriptions Academy partners

Google News Initiative Digital Growth Programme

The [Digital Growth Programme](#) is an initiative within GNI (Google News Initiative), to help publishers grow their digital business online. Subscriptions Academy is just one of the many programmes it offers, along with other workshops and tools.

Google teams will:

- ★ Manage the success of the overall programme, providing advice and expertise as needed
- ★ Provide access to the News Consumer Insights tool
- ★ Make senior staff available to speak at the Inspiration Series seminars to develop a wider understanding of the market

FT STRATEGIES

FT Strategies is the the subscriptions consultancy from the Financial Times. FTS' deep expertise enables its clients to build valuable recurring revenue relationships with their audiences and future-proof their businesses.

FT Strategies teams will:

- ★ Lead execution of programme including managing all modules and project phases / deliverables
- ★ Lead participants in the development of a North Star framework, experiments and other capabilities
- ★ Introduce FT subject matter experts to the programme

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

Thank you