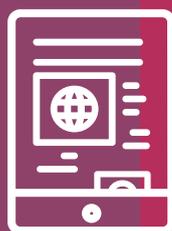


Public Interest News Foundation

Index

of Independent News Publishing in the UK

2022



**The PINF Index of Independent News
Publishing in the UK, 2022**

June 2022

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Foreword

If there was no public interest news, how would you know what was going on? You might hear rumours from your friends and neighbours, or see announcements from the government – but could you trust them? What if you had a burning question to ask? How would you have a voice in public debate? Who could tell you about the different points of view on a controversial topic?

Public interest news publishers can do all of these things and more. By providing us with reliable and relevant information, year in and year out, they build thriving communities and a democratic society. Public interest news doesn't exist to promote political parties; it exists to promote democracy.

But public interest news doesn't come for free. It costs money to research and report on complex topics, deal with legal risks and run sustainable organisations.

In the twentieth century, most newspapers in the UK were owned by private companies, many of them with deep roots in their communities. Over time, big publishers bought up little publishers, until now just three companies control almost 70% of the UK local newspaper market.¹



Jonathan Heawood,
Executive Director,
Public Interest News Foundation

This process of consolidation can have negative consequences for communities, and for democracy as a whole. It can increase the amount of clickbait, whilst reducing the amount of public interest news. And that can lead to a vicious spiral, where audiences start turning away from news outlets that become ever more desperate to reach them – by pushing out ever more provocative content.

At the Public Interest News Foundation (PINF), we want to see a different future. We believe that everyone in the UK should benefit from news that speaks to them, for them and with them. That's why we provide public interest news providers with grants, coaching and networking opportunities.

Last year, we launched the PINF Index of Independent News Publishing in the UK, to find out more about the independent news sector – publishers with turnover below £2m, who are bucking the trend towards consolidation. This is the second annual Index, and it provides a fascinating snapshot of the state of this dynamic but fragile sector.

This year's Index confirms how hard it is to make a living out of local news. The median annual revenue for independent publishers of national news now stands at £163,000, but for local news publishers it is only £36,000. We are deeply alarmed by this contrast, which shows the depth of the challenge facing local news.

At the same time, we are encouraged and inspired by independent publishers' determination to have a positive impact on the communities they serve. When we asked publishers how they are changing society, enhanced democratic engagement and improved public debate were among the top answers.

Thanks to our partnership with the Institute for Nonprofit News, we can now see how the UK sector compares to the equivalent sector in the United States. The annual INN Index has tracked the growth of independent news in the US since 2018,

and has shown how philanthropic funding has helped news providers to unlock other revenue streams.

Independent publishers in the US have been able to generate sustainable income from their readers and local communities because philanthropic funders have given them the time and space to experiment and innovate. Philanthropy has not been a sticking plaster for the challenges facing public interest news; it has been a cure, helping to reinvigorate and reinvent journalism for the twenty-first century.

We urgently need a similarly long-term approach to public interest news in the UK. Some philanthropists are already funding journalism in this country, but this year's Index shows that we urgently need more funding, particularly for local news, if we are going to put the sector on the path to sustainability.

We are incredibly grateful, as ever, to our lead researchers on the Index: Dr Clare Cook of the University of Central Lancashire and Dr Coral Milburn-Curtis of the University of Oxford. They bring a unique combination of skills to this project, and they are a pleasure to work with.

Most of all, we are grateful to all the independent publishers who completed this year's survey. We hugely appreciate the work that you are doing to serve communities the length and breadth of the UK. By sharing your data with us, you are deepening our knowledge and understanding of your sector. And in turn, that is helping us to raise new sources of funding. Please keep up the good work.

Summary

The PINF Index 2022 is based on the responses of 72 UK-based news publishers with turnover of less than £2m to an online survey open between January and March 2022.

The report suggests nine headline findings, which are summarised below and expanded upon throughout the report.

1. The 72 publishers in our sample have a combined revenue of £7m; the typical revenue is £31,000.

- PINF estimates the total annual revenue of small (sub-£2m) independent news publishers across the UK at between £20m and £40m.
- Staffing is publishers' greatest expense. The typical publisher employs the equivalent of two full-time staff.
- Surpluses or profits are small in the sector, typically around £3,000.

2. Advertising is still the foundation of revenue for independent news publishers.

- Advertising represents 43% of revenue for publishers, followed by philanthropic grants (24%) and reader revenues (22%).
- The biggest source of advertising revenue is from direct sales to advertisers, followed by programmatic advertising, sponsored content, classifieds and public notices.

- Different types of news publishers mobilise different sources of revenue. General news publishers bring in mostly advertising revenue, while investigative news publishers receive most revenue from their readers and those publishing explanatory content and analysis receive most revenue from grants.

3. Publishers in our sample reach 39m people per year via their websites alone.

- Just over half of publishers also produce a print newspaper. The total circulation of our sample's newspapers is nearly 300,000.
- The typical publisher also has 1,200 newsletter subscribers and over 12,000 followers on social media.

4. Most independent news publishers cover a broad range of news topics within a tightly defined local place.

- The smaller the geographic area a publisher covers, the less revenue they make.
- The typical publisher produces 400 pieces of original content per year - a mix of all kinds of news from business to science to culture and politics.
- The majority of publishers are making video content and nearly a third are producing podcasts.

5. The staff at independent publishers are not yet representative of the UK population.

- On average, just under a third of staff identify as women, and 4% identify as being from an ethnic minority.
- There is a positive correlation between the revenue of a publisher and the percentage of its staff who identify as being from an ethnic minority.
- More than half of publishers say they are making efforts to serve diverse audiences. As well as English, publishers produce content in Kurdish, Polish, Scots, Bangla/Sylheti, Romanian, Czech, Slovak, Latvian, Urdu, Farsi, Arabic and Welsh.

6. Independent publishers make a big difference to the communities they serve – and to democracy.

- Six out of ten publishers perceive themselves to contribute 'quite a lot' or 'very much' to change in society.
- The top areas of self-identified impact are: increased civic engagement, increased public debate and inspiring more people to be involved in public life.
- Publishers are particularly proud of examples of their work on Covid-19, on local planning and land use, on the local environment, on inclusive societies, and on boosting local events, shops and artists.

7. Publishers face significant challenges around revenue, staffing, costs and the social media giants.

- Publishers report a lack of marketing, sales and business development skills and capacity.
- They feel that social media platforms and government favour the larger corporate conglomerates over independents.

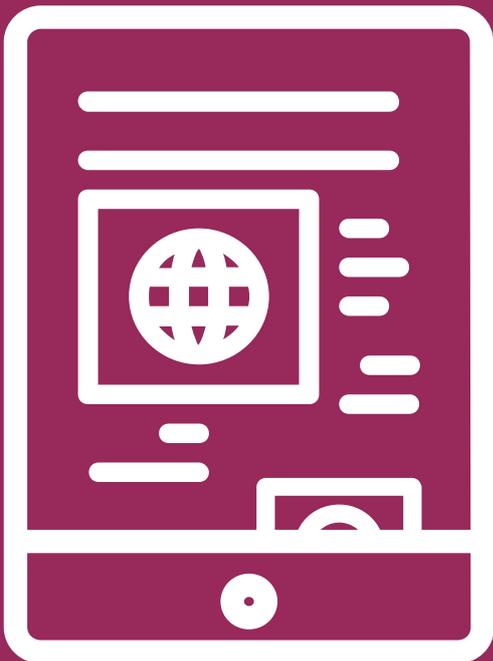
8. Amid rising demand for high-quality local news, publishers have high hopes for the future.

- Publishers report that where they have met the rising demand for local news they have earned more local respect.
- They see opportunities for independent publishers to build trust with communities that feel far from economic or political power.
- They call for access to government advertising and public notices, as well as innovation grants to pilot new, riskier projects, and collaboration across the space.

The report also takes a deeper look at the difference between non-profit and for-profit publishers, finding among other things that:

- a) For-profits mostly have higher revenues and reach than non-profits, with similar staffing levels.
- b) There are strong positive correlations between digital publishing and revenues in both non-profit and for-profits – but for different digital channels.

As always, correlation does not imply causation and none of the results throughout the report should be perceived as predictive. These correlations do, however, suggest interesting links and potential ideas for future research.



Findings

1. The 72 publishers in our sample have a combined revenue of £7m; the typical revenue is £31,000.

Our sample has a combined revenue of £7m. This gives a mean average revenue of just under £100,000, but this number is skewed by a small number of higher revenues. The median average revenue, which gives a more accurate impression of the typical publisher, is £31,000.

We extrapolate from our sample to estimate that total annual revenue of the

UK's independent news publishing sector is between £20m and £40m. The lower bound is an estimate based on the list of some 200 organisations that were invited to complete this survey, using lists from The Independent Monitor for the Press, the Independent Community News Network and the Independent Media Association. The upper bound is an estimate based on Press Gazette's suggestion that there 'at least 400' local independent titles.²

We plan to work with partners to develop a tighter estimate of the total size of the sector in coming years.

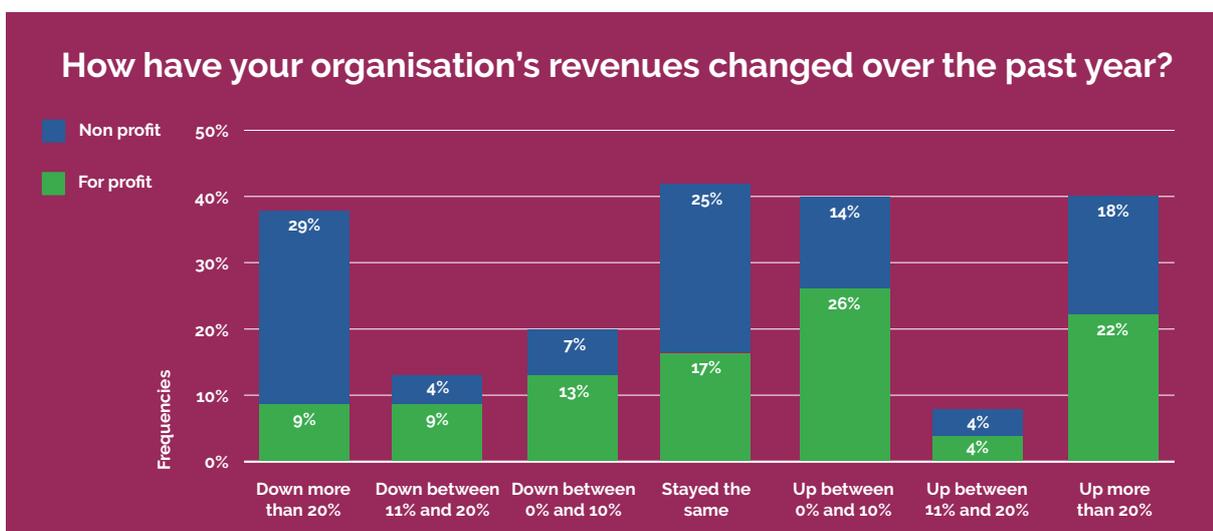


Figure 1: Revenue changes

This year, respondents were asked how their revenue had changed over the last year. The responses are mixed, with for-profits performing better than non-profits. Just over half of for-profits report that revenues are up, versus one-third of non-profits. Nearly three-in-ten non-profits, versus only one-in-ten for-profits, report that their revenue is down more than 20% over the year.

Publishers in our sample typically spend almost all their revenue to cover their costs. Publishers' greatest expense is staffing (45%), followed by technology (28%), general administration (14%) and the costs of renting an office (12%).

In terms of staffing, the typical independent news publisher employs the equivalent of two or three full-time staff³, usually made up of about eight different individuals. Nearly six in ten publishers report no changes to the number of staff employed over the last year; a quarter report that their staff has increased, while 18% say that it has decreased.

Nearly a quarter of staff in the sector have salaried editorial roles; 14% are salaried sales roles; 16% are editorial freelancers or contractors; and 11% are freelance or contactor grantwriters.

We calculate that the mean average surplus or profit across the sample was £8,000. The median average was £3,300. We looked for correlations across the data that might link surpluses with other factors. The only correlation we found with surplus was with micropayments, where the data suggests a positive correlation: the more an organisation collected reader revenue via micropayments, the more surplus or profit they made.

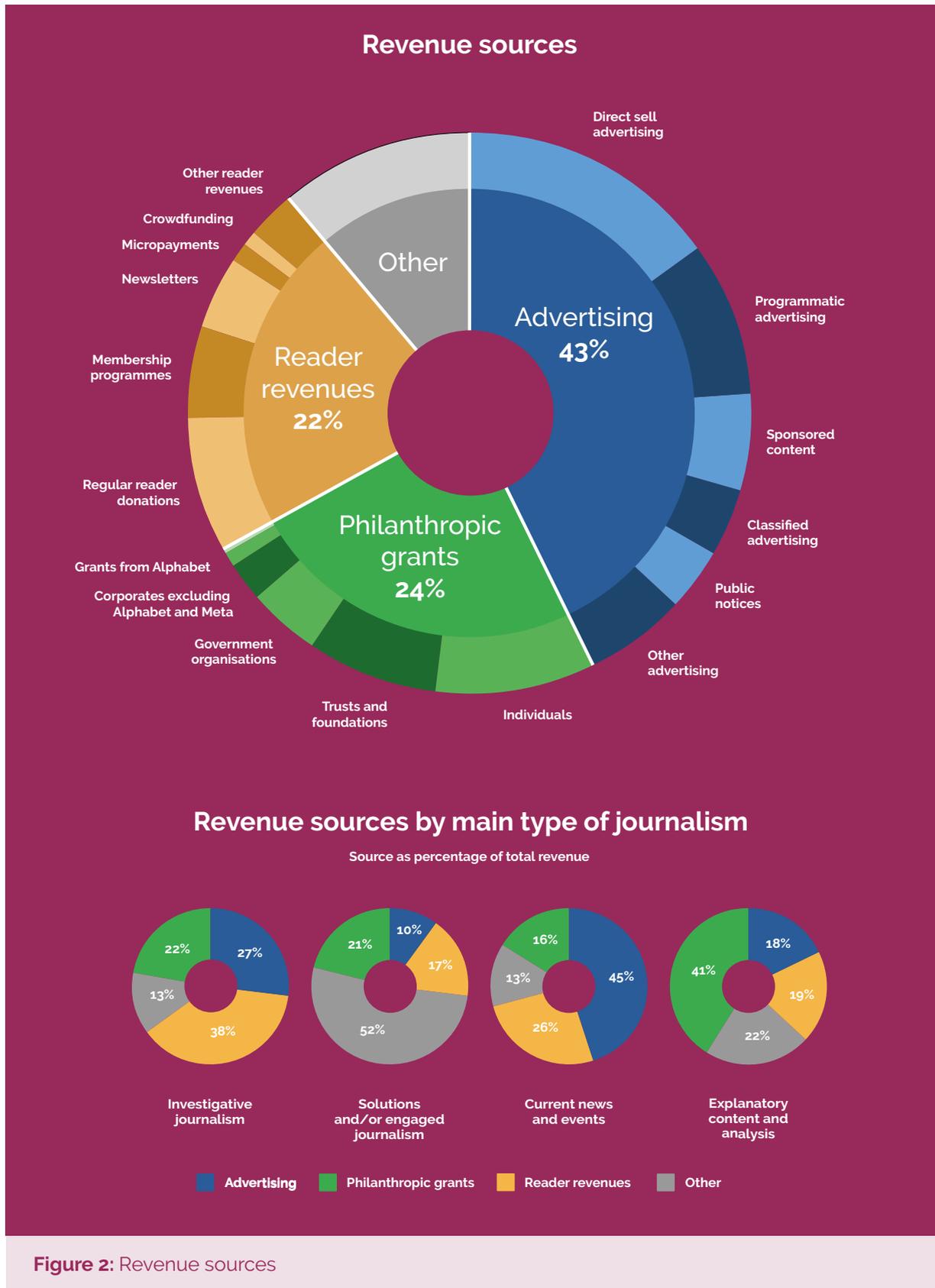
2. Advertising is still the foundation of revenue for independent news publishers.

The largest source of revenue for independent news publishers in our survey is advertising (43%), before philanthropic grants (24%), and then reader revenues (22%).

Within advertising, publishers earn most revenue from direct sell advertising – where agreements are made directly between the publisher and the advertiser (35%). This is followed by: programmatic advertising – where a publisher offers up space to a broker such as Google Ads (21%); sponsored content (13%); classified advertising (9%); and public notices – where local government has a statutory duty to provide public notice of, for example, a road closure or planning application (8%).

Within philanthropic grants, the greatest source of revenue is from individuals (not including small reader donations, which are categorised as 'audience revenue', see below) at 38% of grant income. This is followed by: trusts and foundations (31%), government organisations (18%); corporates excluding Alphabet/Google and Meta/Facebook (9%), and lastly, grants from Alphabet/Google (3%). No publisher in our sample received a grant from Meta/Facebook.

Regular small donations from readers were the greatest source of audience revenue (36%), followed by membership programmes (24%), subscriptions to newsletters (19%), micropayments (5%) and crowdfunding (4%).



The type of journalism a publisher pursues makes a difference to their sources of revenue. One in four publishers say they primarily focus on either investigative, solutions or explanatory journalism (13%, 7% and 7% respectively) – the rest can be classed as 'current news and events'. As the chart on p.13 shows: investigative journalism publishers make the largest share of their revenue from their readers; explanatory journalism publishers receive a large majority of their revenue from grants; while those who mainly publish current news and events make the majority of their revenue from advertising.

Finally, while these average figures are true across the whole sample, there are significant differences between for- and non-profits (see Special Focus on p.21).

3. Publishers in our sample reach 39m people per year via their websites alone.

Over the course of 2021, the 72 publishers in our sample had a total of 39.2m website users, 89.1m website sessions and some 170m webpage views. The most popular publisher by this measure received 6.1m unique users over the year, while the second most popular publisher received 3.4m, and the third 3.1m.

Just over half of the publishers in our sample also produce a print publication. The total circulation of these newspapers is 292,600, with a mean average of 7,700 copies and a median average of 2,300 copies per publisher.

Independent news publishers achieve further reach via email newsletters and social media. The median average publisher has 1,200 newsletter subscribers; 7,800 Facebook followers; 4,400 Twitter followers; and 1,300 Instagram followers.

4. Most independent news publishers cover a broad range of news topics within a tightly defined local place.

The vast majority of independent news publishers in our sample (80%) focus on 'sub-national' news. This presents a problem for the sector, because the data suggests that the tighter a publisher's geographic focus, the smaller their revenue. The chart below shows that the two independent publishers that take a global focus bring in six times more revenue than those three publishers with a national focus, who in turn bring in more revenue than the nine publishers with a county focus or the 37 publishers with a local focus.

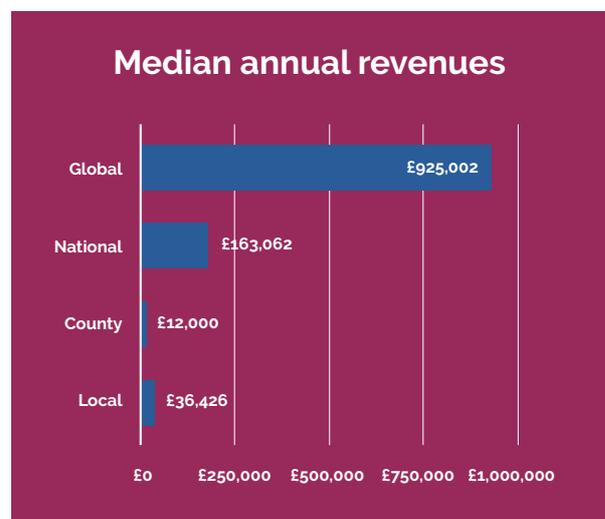


Figure 3: Revenues

In terms of subject matter, the majority of publishers are generalists. Only six per cent of our sample focus primarily on a single topic such as the environment, education or criminal justice. The typical publisher produces around 400 pieces of original content per year. When asked how their original content breaks down by topic, the average result was a broad mix of themes at roughly equal levels, as shown in Figure 4.

Publishers use a range of channels to publish their original content. Over half of their content is published via digital copy, a quarter is via a print newspaper, 15% is via a print magazine, 7% is video and 4% is audio.

A majority of independent news publishers are producing video content (63% of publishers produce YouTube videos, 56% produce Facebook videos, and 36% produce Twitter videos) and nearly a third of news publishers produce podcasts.

We found a positive correlation between membership of IMPRESS (63% of our sample were members) and coverage of social justice and inequality themes and, especially, business themes.

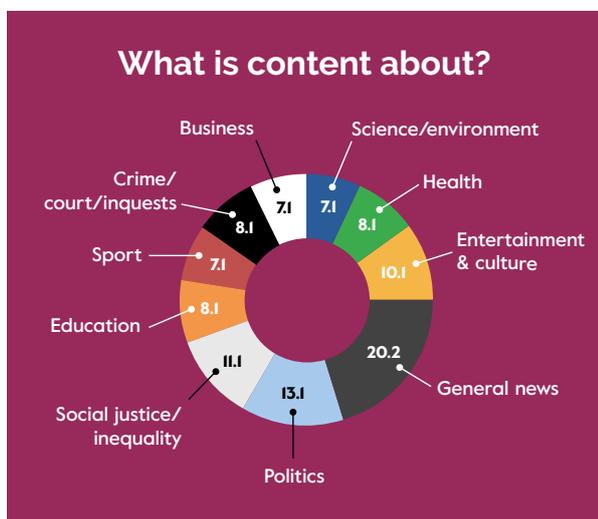


Figure 4: Original content theme

5. The staff at independent publishers are not yet representative of the UK population.

An average of 29% of staff of independent publishers identify as women (compared to 51% of the UK population) and 4% identify as being from an ethnic minority, including white ethnic minorities (compared to 20% of the UK population⁴).

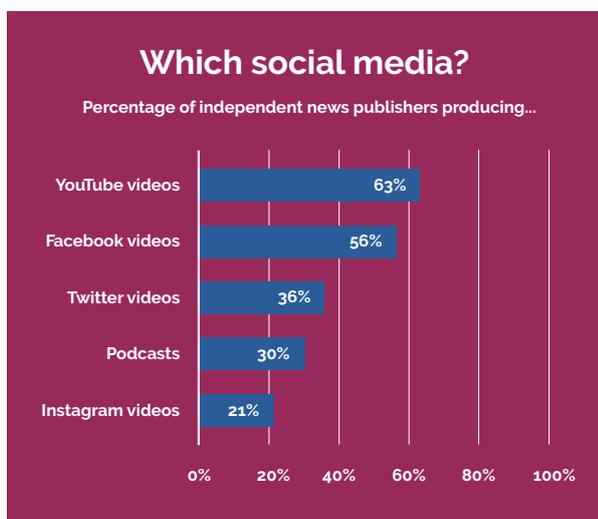
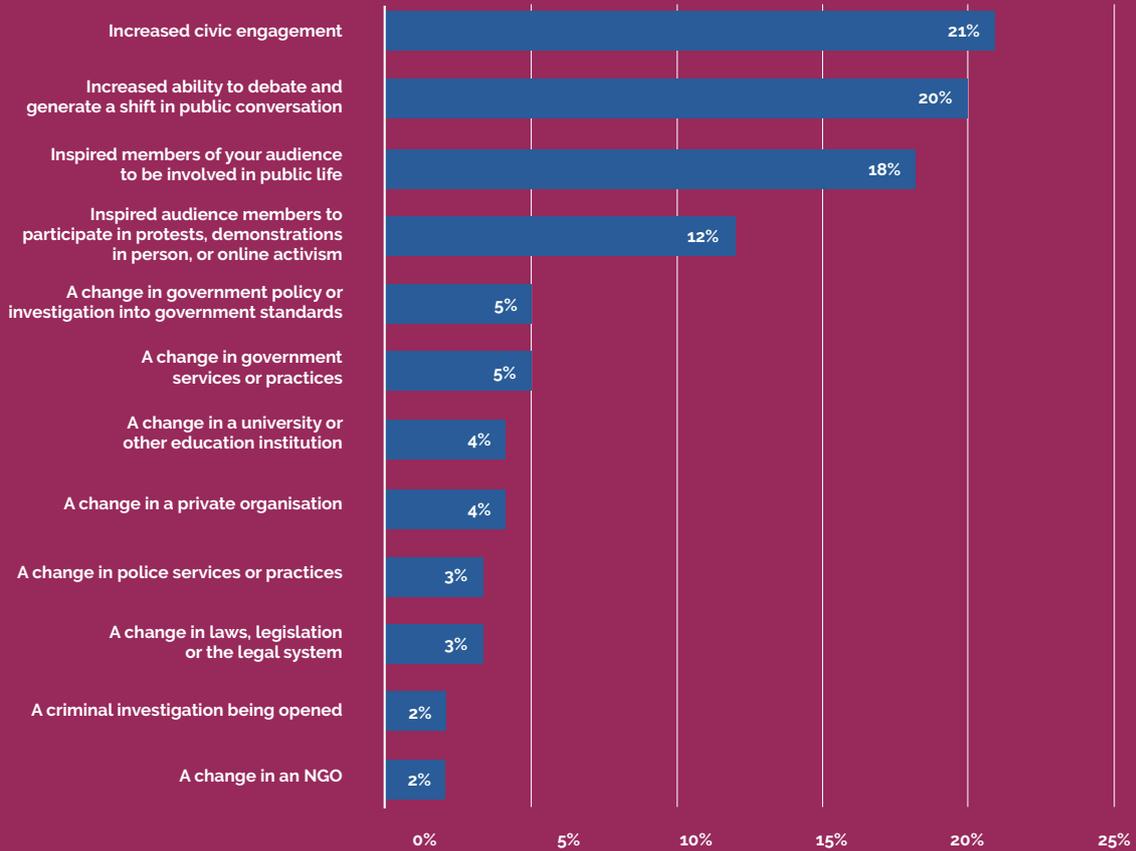


Figure 5: Social media

In terms of leadership staff, 28% identify as women and 2% identify as from an ethnic minority. The data shows that the greater the percentage of ethnic minority staff, the greater the revenue, especially at for-profits.⁵

In terms of their reach, most independent publishers believe they are making efforts to serve diverse audiences, a finding that is

What contribution best describes the social change you are having?



“We provided news and information on Covid including huge numbers of click-throughs to information about local testing and vaccine services.”

“We encouraged social action initiatives from churches and charity groups to tackle problems rising from the Covid pandemic.”

“We inspired local debate and discourse over the local council’s decision to allow local airport expansion by highlighting a thinktank’s report into the dodgy data used by developers.”

“We published two opinion pieces by two local feminists who were divided on the issue of gender identity: one attended a radical feminist conference inside the local Guildhall; the other attended a protest of the same conference outside the Guildhall. We were particularly proud of this coverage as the issue is not well understood locally, and has become incredibly divisive.”

“We forced the publication of a plan to sell £200m of publicly owned property assets to the private sector for development.”

“Our reporting led to the growth of cross-borough campaigning against the new incinerator being built in one of the boroughs.”

Figure 6: Social impact

public debate, and inspiring more people to be involved in public life.

Also for the first time this year, we asked publishers for their favourite story of their impact in 2021. To analyse and report these examples of impact, we coded and grouped them into categories.

Over a third of the stories relate to raising awareness of an important local issue. One in five responses relate to informing the public about Covid-19 and countermeasures. We also found groups of responses around enhancing local democracy (16%) and championing minority causes (11%).

We also grouped their examples by subject matter. Popular subjects included:

- planning and land use (such as the sale of football stadia, the loss of cricket grounds, HS2 and buildings that local councils were unaware that they owned);
- the local environment (inspiring litter picks or high street clean ups or highlighting pollution outside a school);
- the inclusion of marginalised audiences and coverage of complex identity and economic issues; and,
- boosting local events, shops and artists.

7. Publishers face challenges around revenue, staffing, costs and the social media giants.

We asked open-ended questions of publishers regarding the challenges and opportunities they have faced and will face in future. The text was analysed and coded into categories. The challenges mentioned below, and the opportunities mentioned in the next section, are those that came through most strongly across a range of replies.

The most significant challenges relate to revenue and capacity. In terms of revenue, publishers are struggling to convert readers to paying subscribers, while also dealing with a fall in ad sales. Revenue is related to a lack of capacity: publishers have a lack of marketing, sales and business development skills and staff. Even where there is the resource to hire people, several publishers face challenges with recruitment and retention of both business staff and editorial staff. Other staffing issues included a lack of volunteers and a recognition among several publishers of a need for greater diversity in their staffing.

Exacerbating the impact of revenue struggles, rising and potentially unsustainable print costs were mentioned by several publishers who produce a printed newspaper.

A third key theme was the general dominance and unavoidability of the social media platforms. Publishers feel that both platforms and government favour the larger legacy corporate media. One publisher said

that their challenge was: *'operating in a world designed for doom-scrolling... not getting sucked into producing content solely for US media giants.'*

8. Amid rising demand for high-quality local news, publishers have high hopes for the future.

The most significant opportunities according to independent publishers concern a rise in demand for news, particularly where it is place-based or has a closeness to audiences. They report that interest in local news has increased and that independent publishers have earned local respect, particularly through the challenges presented by the pandemic.

Publishers also see an opportunity in a new appreciation for independent news publishers, resulting from a decline in trust in legacy corporate media and a public looking for alternatives. They see opportunities to build trust with communities that feel far from economic power or political power. They also report a growing appetite for quality content as digital audiences continue to grow.

We heard that publishers are excited about opportunities around new product ideas, particularly around video and audio. Some publishers talk of a strong future for *'local digital-first publications'* that can *'deliver better products than the existing local newspaper'*, while some older independents also recognise that the digital transition has not been easy.

Some publishers are optimistic about revenue, saying there are *'significant untapped revenue streams'* out there. Many mentioned reader revenue as one source of untapped revenue. Publishers mentioned the need for *'access to government advertising and to public notices'*, which might require *'a change in the definition of newspaper to include online news services'*. Others saw potential in innovation grants that would allow the piloting of new, riskier projects.

Others mentioned opportunities for more collaborative working among their peers, one calling for a *'national association of hyperlocals'*, others calling for collective approaches to ad sales or grant applications.



Special focus

What's the difference between independent for-profit and non-profit publishers?

Our annual Index of Independent News Publishing is partly inspired by the US-based Institute for Non-Profit News' Index. As the name would suggest, their annual report only surveys non-profit publishers. By contrast, our sample is balanced between non-profits (55%) and for-profits (45%). We wanted to understand more about the differences (if any) between these two parts of the independent news sector. So, in this section, we dig into the data.

For-profits mostly have higher revenues and reach than non-profits, with similar staffing levels.

The median revenue of our sample of 72 publishers is £31,000, but this disguises a significant difference between the average for-profit and non-profit revenue: £66,000 and £23,000 respectively.

For-profits have double the audience reach in terms of unique users of their websites. They also have over four times the page views and fifty times the YouTube video views of non-profits. For-profits also produce more pieces of

content – around three times as many, though our survey does not measure the quality or length of that content. For-profits that print a newspaper have a mean average circulation of 12,000: three times higher than non-profit print newspapers.

On the other hand, non-profits produce five times as many podcast episodes, and have over three times as many email newsletter subscribers. Those non-profits that do print a newspaper produce three times as many issues per year.

Non-profits have a more diverse business model: they gain revenue from a wider range of sources across advertising, grants, consultancy and reader revenue. The typical for-profit publisher makes 90% of its revenue from advertising. Advertising revenue is less critical for the typical non-profit, at 40% of revenue – the typical non-profit makes up most of the difference from grants (30%) and reader revenue (15%).

The two groups have similar staffing, at roughly three full-time equivalents, but non-profits are more likely than for-profits to have staff who

are women (and more likely to have leadership staff who are women) and to have staff from ethnic minorities. Non-profits are much more likely to rely on volunteers (57% 'very much so' or 'quite a lot'), though 34% of for-profits 'sometimes rely on volunteers'.

Non-profits are more likely to think of themselves as making 'quite a lot' or 'very much' effort to serve diverse audiences (72% vs 56%).

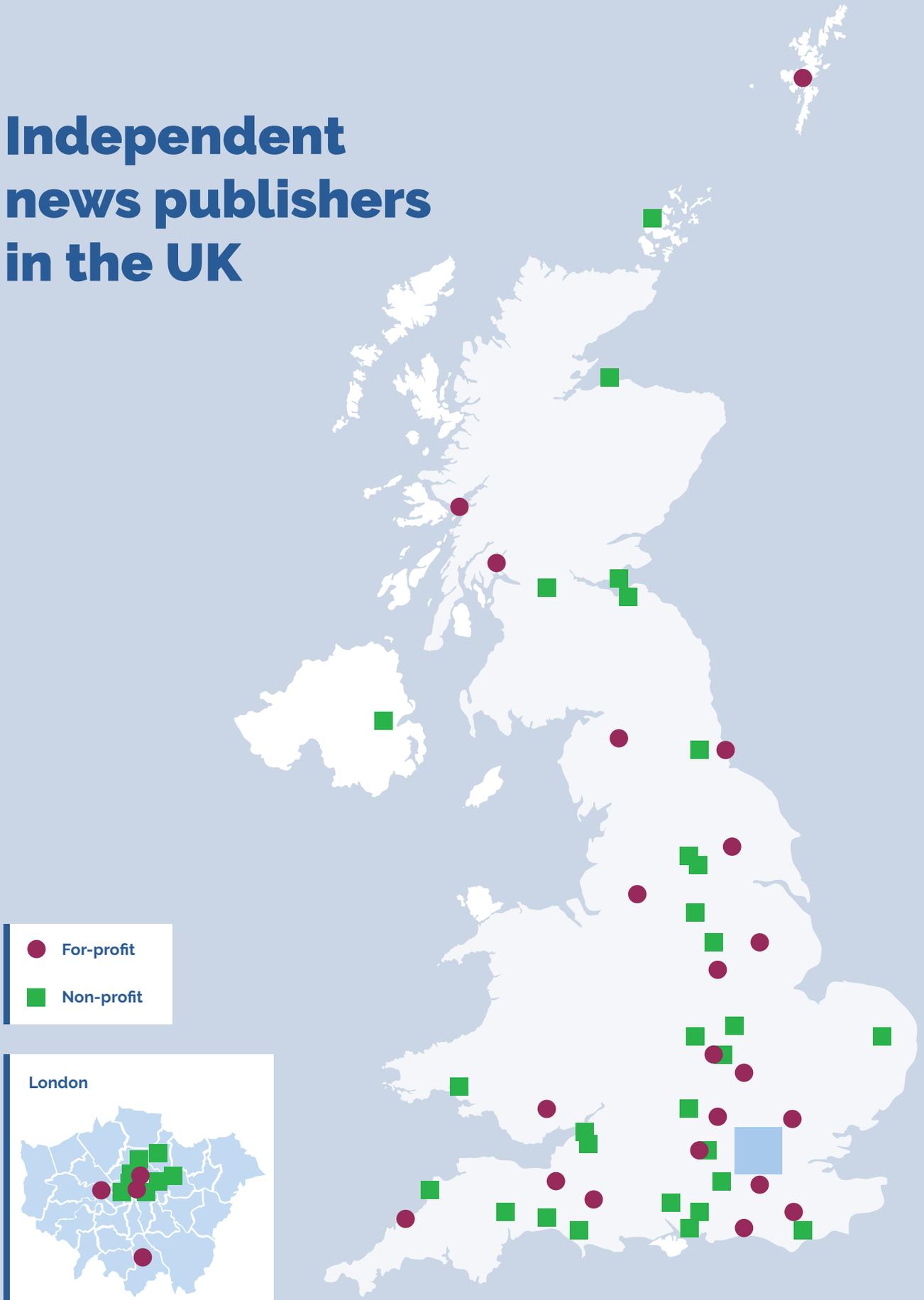
Finally, there was a difference between the perceived impact among non-profit and for-profit publishers. Some 64% of non-profit publishers believe they contribute 'quite a lot' or 'very much' to change in society, versus 55% of for-profits.

There are strong positive correlations between digital publishing and revenues in both non-profit and for-profits – but for different digital channels.

For for-profits, website use – unique users, sessions, page views - strongly positively correlates with revenues⁷. This is not true for non-profits. For-profits – and only for-profits- also see strong positive correlations between revenues and both Facebook video views⁸ and Instagram followers⁹.

For non-profits, there are very strong positive correlations between revenue and Facebook followers¹⁰, revenue and Twitter followers¹¹, and revenue and Instagram video views¹². The data also suggest a positive correlation between revenue and email subscribers for non-profits¹³. These correlations do not exist, or are not significant, in the case of for-profits.

Independent news publishers in the UK





About

About this survey

The PINF Index is based on an online survey of news publishers in the UK with turnover below £2m. The survey was open from 21 January 2022 to 1 March 2022.

Using a purposive sampling strategy, the survey was promoted via social media, email newsletters, direct mailing and a webinar. With 72 respondents, the survey represented around 36% of approximately 200 targeted organisations, an increase of 8% participation compared with the previous year.

Limited IDs were captured, so that we can return to the same participants for longitudinal studies at a later date, if required.

Confidentiality was assured to participants in the consent document, and personal details, if they were supplied, were separated from the survey results before analysis. Data were stored securely and GDPR guidelines followed.

Forty-three of our respondents were members of ICNN (the Independent Community News

Network); 39 were regulated by IMPRESS (the Independent Monitor for the Press); with 10 being regulated by IPSO and a further 13 being unregulated.

Respondents were operating in a range of media, including print, digital, audio and video. The survey was not open to licensed broadcasters (including community radio stations) as these organisations operate in a distinct economic and regulatory environment.

We employed a quantitative cross-sectional design, using a survey which included 67 items. This enabled us to conduct descriptive analysis and to explore patterns of association. We asked quantitative questions in nine areas: demographics; organisation, mission & scope; content; distribution; audience engagement; revenue; costs; staffing & diversity; and impact. For these questions, we asked publishers to provide data from the last financial year for which they had complete accounts.

We also asked qualitative questions about respondents' societal impact and the obstacles, challenges and opportunities

affecting them. Qualitative answers were coded to facilitate analysis.

All questions were optional; therefore there were some missing data. However, missing data analysis using Little's test revealed negligible levels of item 'missingness'¹⁴.

For continuous variables, participants were asked to respond to a range of statements on a scale of 1 to 10, or in percentages where appropriate. We asked for staffing indicators based on full time equivalents (FTEs). That is, if a member of staff worked one day a week they were classed as 0.2 FTE. Inferential analyses reported both significance levels (p values) and effect sizes (r values, t statistics and odds ratios).

Significance was indicated as a p value, such that p is the probability that this result could have been achieved by chance. Here, it is desirable to register a p value as small as possible. For example, $p < .05$ means that for a particular analysis, there is a less-than-5% probability that this result could have been achieved by chance. All reported significances met the minimum cut-off of $p < .05$.

Effect size, on the other hand, measured the magnitude of the result. Here, it is desirable to have an effect size as large as possible. For effect sizes which measure correlation, the standard cut-off criteria were $r = .1$ (weak effect); $r = .3$ (moderate effect); $r > .5$ (strong effect). For effect sizes which measure the relationship between two groups (t statistics), the difference between the two should be seen as significant if the p value is less than 0.05. Odds ratios measured the strength of association between two categorical variables.

This was a cross-sectional study, so we should not confuse correlation with causation. None of our results should be perceived as predictive. For correlational analyses, two outliers were removed from both the revenue and expenditure variables. These outliers represented organisations with revenue of more than £1m. For descriptive analyses however, outliers were not removed - and medians, rather than means, were reported as standard.

For time series analyses, we explored relationships between whole cohorts of respondents from one year to the next (N = 72). For longitudinal analyses, we estimated increases/decreases over time comparing only those respondents who contributed to the survey in both years (N = 20). Reports of percentage increases/decreases of revenues and costs over time were self-reported.

About the authors

Dr Clare Cook is co-founder of the Media Innovation Studio at the University of Central Lancashire.

For seven years, she has analysed and worked on independent journalism business models in Europe and politically pressured environments. She is passionate about new methodological approaches that are capable of stimulating innovation in journalism business models. She regularly provides evidence to policymakers and media development programmes and speaks on international platforms. She heads up research for a new platform called Value My News, which aims to unlock new revenue streams for hyperlocal journalism sites in the UK.

Dr Coral Milburn-Curtis is an Associate Fellow of Green Templeton College, University of Oxford. She specialises in quantitative research methods and teaches statistics to graduate students there and at other universities around the world. She is the professorial lead for the Doctor of Business Administration programme at Pôle Paris Alternance (PPA), and Professeure Visitée at the GReMOG Laboratoire, in Paris.

Dr Jonathan Heawood is Executive Director of the Public Interest News Foundation. After completing his doctorate at Cambridge University, Jonathan became a journalist at The Observer and went on to spend seven years as Director of the free speech charity, English PEN. In 2013, Jonathan founded IMPRESS, the Independent Monitor for the Press, which he led as CEO until March 2020. Jonathan is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Stirling, a Leadership Fellow at St George's House, Windsor, and Chair of the Stephen Spender Trust. His first book, 'The Press

Freedom Myth', was published by Biteback in 2019.

Joe Mitchell is Head of Impact at the Public Interest News Foundation. He previously co-founded a citizen journalism project to inform voters: Democracy Club. He gained experience in communications and advocacy with Purpose PBC, the UK Civil Service and Commonwealth Secretariat, and has also worked with NGOs such as Transparency International and Global Witness. He holds degrees from the University of Waterloo, SOAS and the University of Oxford.

About the Public Interest News Foundation

The Public Interest News Foundation (PINF) is the first charity in the UK that exists to promote public interest news.

We define public interest news as news which is produced and disseminated according to high standards of ethical conduct and best practice in journalism, and which enables members of the public to engage in their communities and their democracy.

We believe that everyone should be able to benefit from public interest news that speaks to and for them, whoever and wherever they are. We provide grants and leadership development opportunities for public interest news leaders and future leaders across the UK.

Our trustees are Jo Adetunji, Polly Curtis, Lord Inglewood, Isabelle Roughol, Patrick Swaffer and Julius Weinberg.

Acknowledgements

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We would also like to thank IMPRESS, ICNN and IMA for supporting this project by promoting the survey to their members. We are very glad to work in partnership with organisations that are so dedicated to public interest news in the UK.

We are also grateful for the support and co-operation of INN (the Institute for Nonprofit News), one of the leading journalism support organisations in the world. Their ground-breaking Index of non-profit news inspired us to launch the PINF Index, and we look forward to continuing our partnership over the years ahead.

We are particularly grateful to the publishers who completed this year's Index. We know that completing surveys takes time and energy away from your core purpose of providing public interest news to communities up and down the UK. We are grateful to you for sharing so much data, and we hope that we can repay you by using this to design our own programmes, and to advise policymakers, philanthropists and social media platforms on how they can best support independent public interest news.

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| <p>1 See https://www.mediareform.org.uk/blog/newsquests-acquisition-of-archant-more-bad-news-for-local-journalism.</p> | <p>www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest#by-ethnicity [accessed 5 May 2022].</p> | <p>8 $r = .757$; $p < .01$.</p> |
| <p>2 https://pressgazette.co.uk/uk-independent-community-news-sector/</p> | <p>5 For-profits: $r = .879$; $p < .001$.
Non-profits: $r = .675^{**}$; $p < .01$.</p> | <p>9 $r = .656$; $p < .01$.</p> |
| <p>3 The mean average staff per publisher is three full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, while the median publisher has two FTE staff.</p> | <p>6 https://data2021.sembramedia.org/</p> | <p>10 $r = .912$; $p < .001$.</p> |
| <p>4 "Population Of England And Wales", Ethnicity-Facts-Figures.Service.Gov.Uk, 2022 <https://</p> | <p>7 Users: $r = .766$; $p < .001$;
sessions: $r = .668$; $p < .05$; page views: $r = .660$; $p < .01$.</p> | <p>11 $r = .841$; $p < .001$.</p> |
| | | <p>12 $r = .806^{**}$; $p < .01$.</p> |
| | | <p>13 $r = .614^{*}$; $p < .05$.</p> |
| | | <p>14 Chi square (1784) = 1595.39; $p = .9$. See Roderick J. A. Little and Donald B. Rubin, <i>Statistical Analysis with Missing Data</i> (New York: Wiley, 1987).</p> |

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