



GRAYLING MEDIA
THE NEW
MEDIA AGE,
2024

GRAYLING
MEDIA

01 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Grayling Media's first trends report: The new media age, 2024.

The media landscape is evolving at breakneck speed – from the rise of media influencers and digital technology to the arrival of AI in newsrooms, the avenues by which we produce, consume and share content is undergoing profound transformation.

The pace of change has, arguably, never been faster - and the need for PR and media professionals to maintain their edge with intelligent, meaningful and integrated media relations, never so crucial.

That is why we have set up 'Grayling Media', our new media relations and intelligence unit that aims to equip our teams and clients with the tools and knowledge to: generate world class media coverage; keep pace and create advantage.

This, our inaugural trends report, provides a detailed analysis of the media landscape in 2024 with insights designed to furnish comms professionals with a deeper understanding – enabling them to adapt to this new reality and stay ahead of the curve.

It reveals new research - conducted across all demographics and regions in the UK – that signals a clear and seismic shift towards a new media age; one in which individuality and personal connections are valued over mass media content driven by news organisations.

We hope that you find the results a stimulating and informative read.

And, of course, if you would like to discuss the findings in full or explore how your organisation can adapt and improve agility in this new media landscape, please do not hesitate to get in touch and book a Grayling Media Workshop with our team.

Thank you,



Heather Blundell,
CEO, Grayling UK

02 KEY FINDINGS

Our research asked how the UK population is consuming news and content - here are the most compelling insights.

Broadcast remains omnipotent.

Almost two in three (64%) of consumers tune into programming by broadcasters such as the BBC, ITV and Sky for their news, compared to 58% who use online news websites and 34% who use social media platforms like TikTok and X, and content creators.

Impartiality plagues social media platforms.

Despite the rise of social media as a primary source of news content, only 40% of UK respondents reported it to be the most impartial news platform compared to 63% and 61% respectively for TV and newspapers.

'Media influencers' are on the rise.

One in five (21%) consumers follow and actively seek their news from specific journalists; viewing their content as more trustworthy, engaging and aligned with their world view.

Concerns about the role of AI in news.

42% report being quite to very concerned about the impact of generative AI and its potential to spread misinformation in news stories.



It's a time of huge flux in the media which brings opportunity as well as challenges. At a time when audiences are seeking trusted voices and brands, I like to try and have as direct a relationship with my viewers as possible – and use the same voice across all platforms – in a more informal and personalised way.

I'm optimistic about the future of impartial news – but impartial doesn't have to mean lacking personality."

Sophy Ridge,
Lead Politics Presenter,
Sky News

Top 3 consumer topics



53%
Politics



45%
Finance



44%
Health-related

SPOTLIGHT:

THE GENERATION GAP



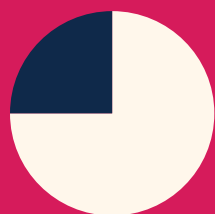
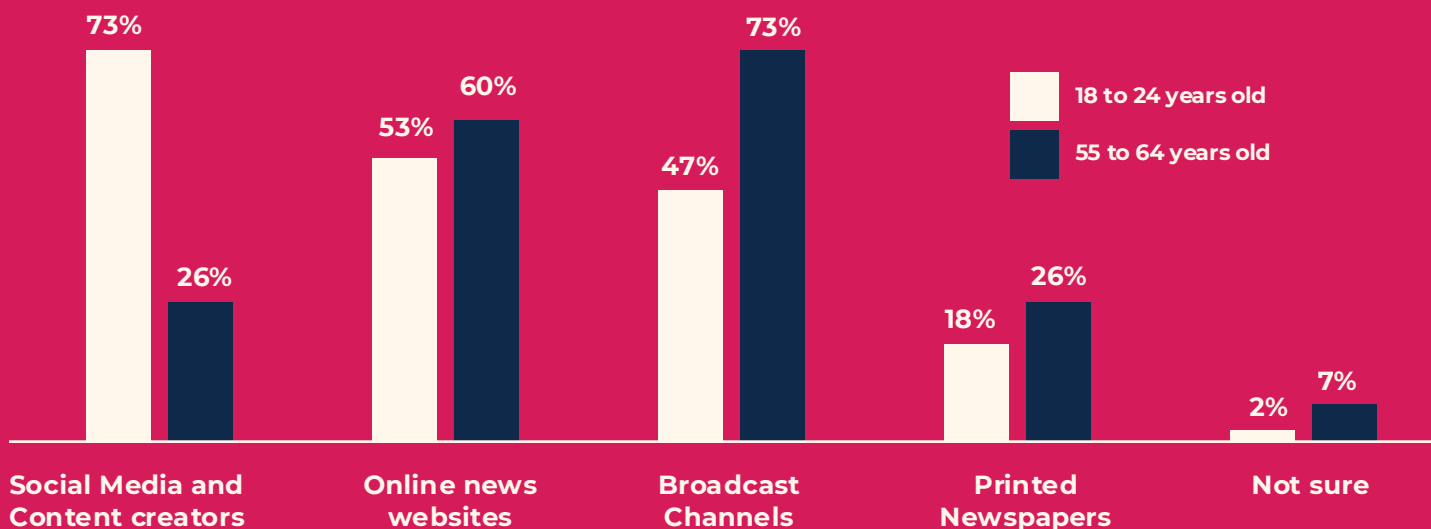
“ Social is our news cycle. Alternative voices, viewpoints and personalities are becoming the new vanguard of truth. My personal view is that TikTok has democratised the news cycle to a huge degree, as individuals sharing compelling viewpoints come to the foreground of the algorithm.

People have to feel something, to like it, and verify it through engagement for a video to go viral, which places a subconscious “green tick” on content as being worthy. That’s a major shift from centralised news sources or Public Service Broadcasters towards a two way relationship with audiences.

Creators like Dylan Page (News Daddy on TikTok with 12m followers) are *the* sources of news for Gen Z and Alpha. This is momentous and will, in my mind, continue at pace.”

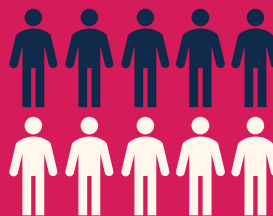
Jordan Schwarzenberger
New Media expert and Manager, Sidemen

How do you typically consume news?



73%

of **18-24-year-olds** consume their news and current affairs through social media platforms.



50%

of **18-35-year-olds** report that a journalist has changed their opinion on a topic.



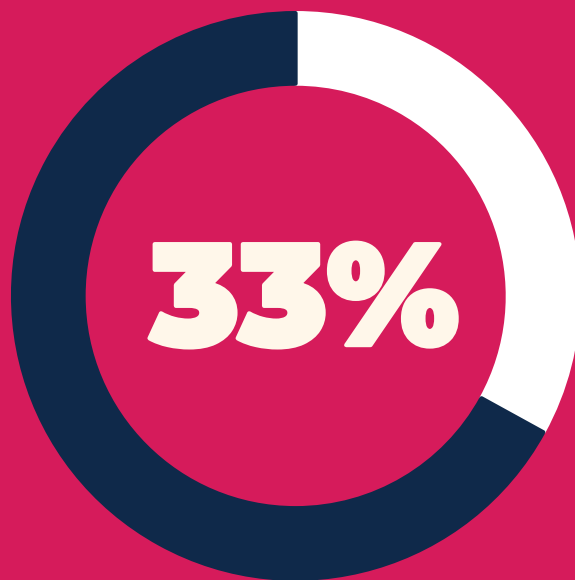
40%

of **18-34-year-olds** actively follow the work of specific journalists, have a favourite journalist and believe that they are much more important than the news organisation they work for.



13%

of **45-year-olds** engage in similar behaviour with **61% not having a favourite journalist or broadcast presenter.**



33%

of **18-24-year-olds** cite trust as a reason for following a journalist's work, preferring the influence of their work and shared social and political views.

03 CHALLENGING PERCEPTIONS

Our research highlighted several key trends which challenge commonly held perceptions about the media in 2024.



Broadcast media holds the crown for delivering news and current affairs despite the rise of social media.

TV news still holds an edge when it comes to delivering in-depth analysis; broadcast channels are the preferred source for current affairs across all generations, followed by online news websites.

This sits alongside the much-reported decline in the consumption of printed newspapers, especially among younger audiences (18% for 18-24 and 27% for 25-34). In contrast, older age groups (65+) still show a relatively higher engagement (34%) with printed media.



There is a generational shift towards personalised, platform-driven news consumption.

Whilst less than half of 18–34-year-olds consume news through traditional media channels such as broadcast, online, or printed news - compared to 87% over 45s - interest in current affairs is still high (51%).

This younger demographic prefer the personalised and individual approach of social media platforms, with the vast majority (63%) reporting social media and content creators as their typical news source.



As is highlighted in this excellent report, one of the most important media trends is the rise of people power, the move towards the hyper engaged consumer and their need for personal connection with the media.

Truly understanding and tapping into this shift is fundamental for those who work in the media and PR. The future belongs to those that can genuinely connect with their audience and be uniquely human."

Lucie Cave
Chief Creative Officer, Bauer Media,
Entertainment Editor, ITV Lorraine.



Younger generations are forging strong connections with journalists who are shaping their views and opinions.

The personalised nature of social media has not only shifted consumption patterns but also deepened the connection between younger audiences and specific journalists.

Half of 18-to- 34-year-olds believe that a journalist is more influential than the publication they work for vs only 12% of over 55-year-olds. Almost half of 18–34-year-olds (47%) say that a journalist has changed their opinion on a topic, compared to 13% of those over 55.

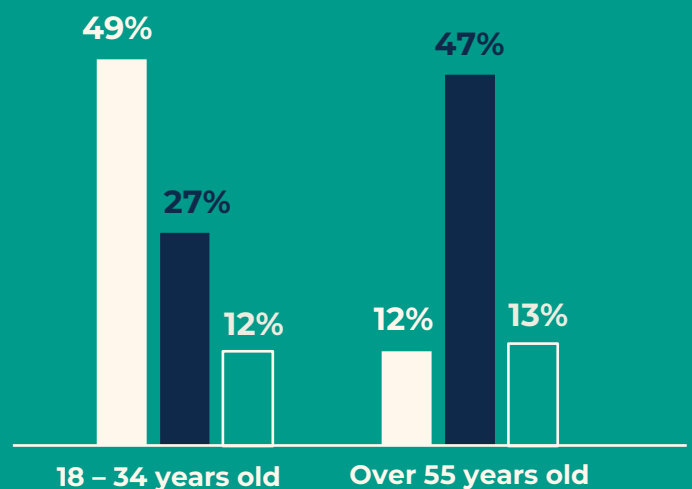


Londoners are fiercely loyal to their favourite journalists, more so than any other region.

Londoners exhibit higher levels of loyalty to their favourite journalists and broadcasters; 54% of respondents from London would choose to continue reading the work of their followed journalist if they moved to another publication, compared to only 31% average in other regions.

This may suggest that London-based journalists and broadcasters might have a more significant influence on public opinion within their audience compared to their counterparts in other regions.

Is a journalist more influential than the publication they work for?



04 IN JOURNALISTS WE TRUST

Trust levels in journalists and broadcast presenters are high across all age groups, with two thirds (65%) trusting journalists, rising to 68% for broadcast presenters.

Below is a list of the most commonly followed journalists that UK consumers say they trust:



Martin Lewis



Marina Hyde



Piers Morgan



Richard Littlejohn



Mishal Husain



Caitlin Moran



Jeremy Clarkson



Emily Maitlis



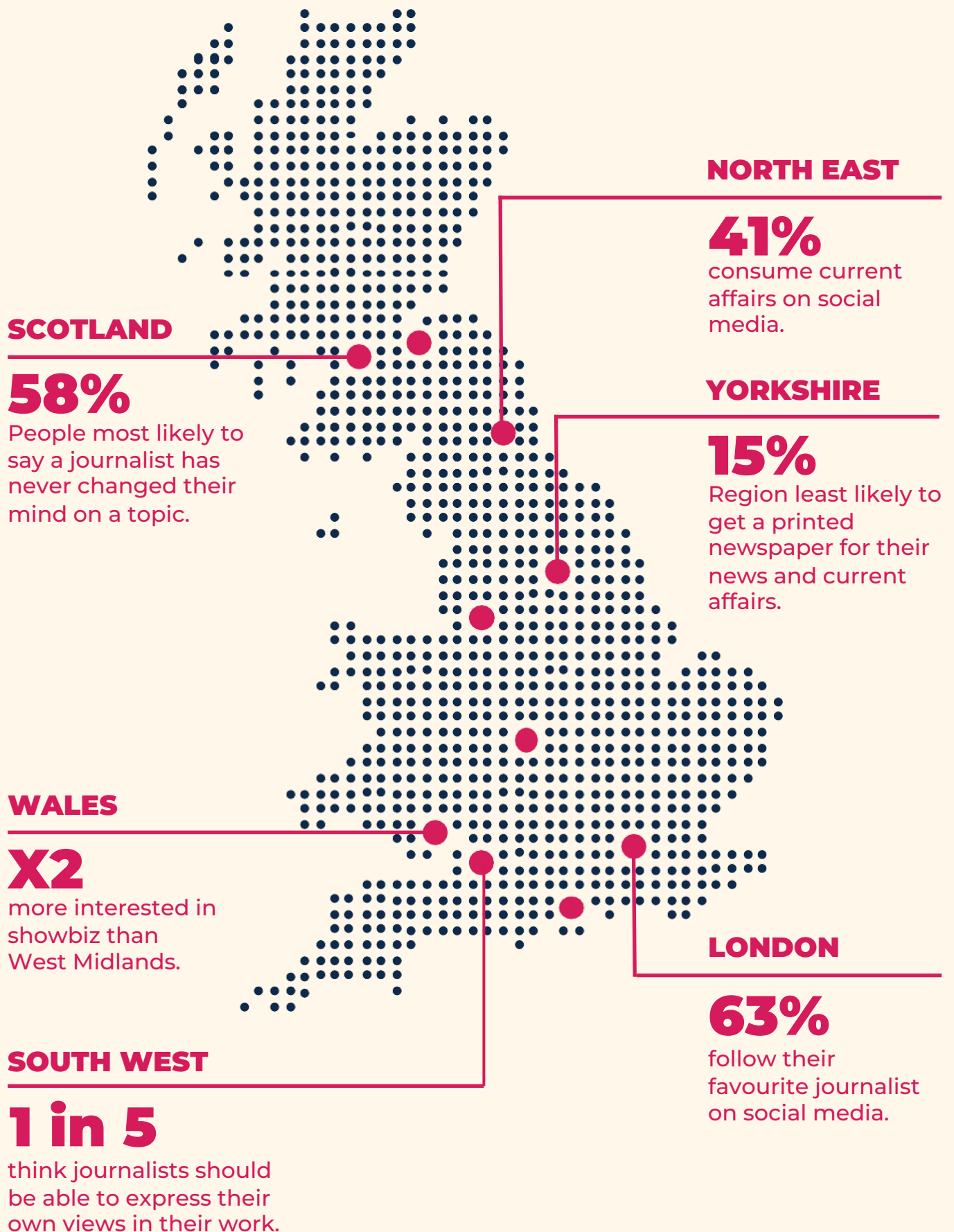
Laura Kuenssberg



David Ornstein

For 65+ audiences, loyalty to a journalist is all about trust. 76% say they follow specific journalists for their reliable and accurate reporting, whereas younger generations value ideological alignment and personal connections with journalists. More than half (56%) of 18-24-year-olds say they follow the work of journalists because they identify with their social and political views.

SPOTLIGHT: REGIONAL TRENDS



05 LOOKING AHEAD

What does this all mean? We have three predictions for the year ahead and how it impacts PR and comms professionals across the industry.



Broadcasters will seek new ways to retain their crown.

To remain at the forefront of people's media consumption habits, and more trusted than other journalists, broadcast channels will integrate with other media platforms to stay ahead.

We expect broadcasters to continue investing in podcast production to capture on-the-go listeners, offering bite-sized, in-depth content; integration with social media platforms to enable real-time interactions, making the news more accessible; and the use of gamification through polls, quizzes and rewards, to make news consumption more engaging and interactive.



There will be a continued rise of individualism among journalists as they build their own identity and brand beyond the publication they represent.

Only 4% of adults aged 18-24 believe journalism will not undergo much change in the next few years - a stark contrast to 19% of those aged 55 and above.

The trend in following and identifying individual journalists is set to rise, in tandem with the need to communicate and engage with audiences online. As younger generations seek out journalists who share similar beliefs and opinions, there will also be a greater emphasis on representing diverse voices and perspectives in journalism.



Journalists will be held more accountable for fake news and misinformation.

In an era of divisiveness and fake news, people are intentionally curating their news feeds and digital spaces. Due to their higher digital literacy, younger generations are more aware of the presence of fake news and misinformation, both online and in print.

With over a third of people (36%) expecting journalists to be held more accountable for fake news and misinformation over the next year, fact-checking and verifying sources will continue to be a priority for media outlets as they strive to cultivate and maintain trust among their audiences.

About Grayling Media

GRAYLING MEDIA

Grayling Media is a new UK-wide media relations and intelligence unit sitting at the heart of Grayling's business with experts active across all nine UK offices. The 360° service is focused on integrated media counsel, media relations, content creation, campaigns, and media training.

The service is guided by three core pillars:

- **Intelligence**
helping clients get ahead
- **Storytelling**
telling our clients' stories in new and exciting ways
- **Connections**
leveraging our USP to deliver impact.

This ensures an unmatched level of counsel, insights and media relationships, ensuring that clients are equipped to generate earned media cut-through across traditional and new media - local, national and international.

About One Poll

onepoll.

One Poll carried out this UK-wide research between 27th August to 30th August 2024, polling 2,000 adults. The data is nationally representative based on age, gender and religion.





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