

ICC622: CAPSTONE

SECTION TWO: The Research

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Appendix I: Innovation Situation Summary

My research focuses on the media habits of Gen Z — born between 1997-2012 — who began aging into adulthood at a time when misinformation, disinformation and fake news became a dominant narrative around news and journalism. Then, an already confusing news and media landscape for them was further compounded by the effects of COVID-19 on media and public information. As a group with already strong digital media habits and skillsets, finding a new way to reengage Gen Z in an area of news they may have lost trust in, have distrust for, etc. is key.

Throughout the course of my research, I've uncovered valuable insights about the preferences of Generation Z (aka Gen Z) including that this group is mobile-focused, gravitating towards compact, bite-sized content that seamlessly adapts to their on-the-go lifestyle. Visual aesthetics also hold a paramount role in both capturing and holding their attention. They learn best through informal, interactive means, where experiences take precedence over traditional methods. Gen Z thrives when engaged through immersive encounters that transcend the boundaries of conventional learning. Their media consumption is like a journey, where they traverse various media surfaces as if navigating through different transit points, highlighting their inherent curiosity and openness to exploring diverse content landscapes.

Opportunity exists within the big media companies, not in beating them. Giving them a tool to better engage with Gen Z and build trust is much more likely to work than creating a new media company/platform to cut through the noise and rise to the top.

By offering a platform dedicated to verified news, Gen Z can begin to rebuild trust in media and journalism, which have been eroded by the spread of misinformation. This trust is essential for a society that relies on accurate information to function effectively.

Guiding principles:

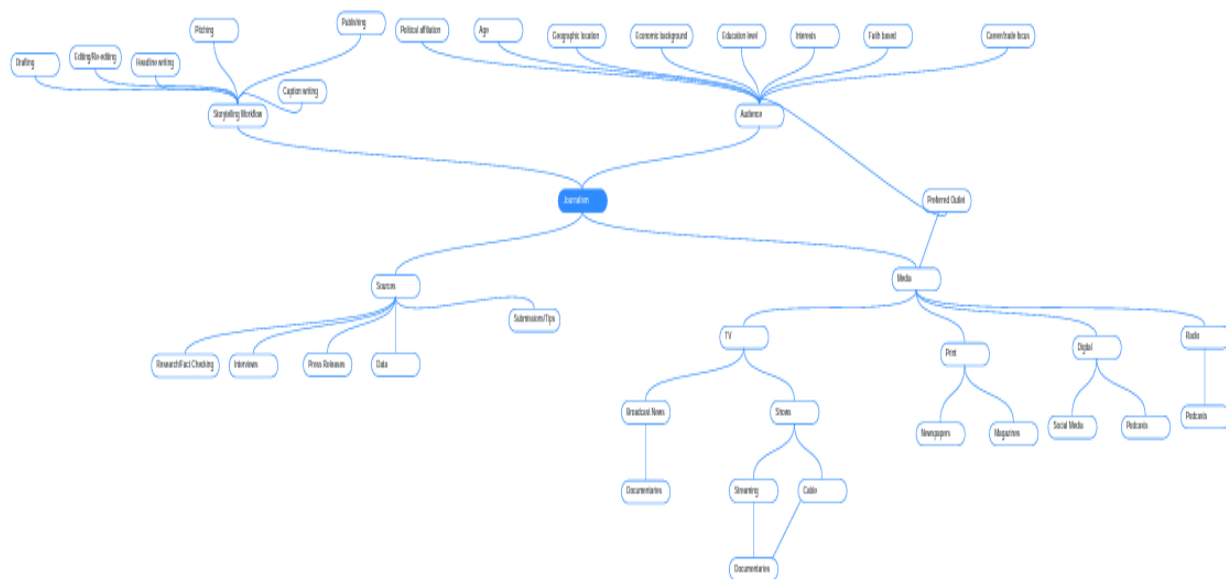
- Repair and rebuild lost trust Gen Z may have in media growing up in the age of fake news/disinformation
- Provide news organizations the benefit of gaining back trust from audience and buy-in from emerging audience (GenZ) that represents \$143B in spending money.
- Independently support efficient fact-checking of all content submissions from the news orgs that participate on this platform via partnerships with trusted industry orgs.
- Keep the interface and content packaged in a simple, mobile-focused way.
- Provide Gen Z with news content they care about in formats they are likely to pay attention to and engage with.
- Provide Gen Z with an easy-to-use platform that gives visibility into facts from news stories that have been overtly verified or debunked.
- Serve as an independent way to restore trust and integrity in journalism in a digital-age.

Appendix II: Sense Intent - Mode 1

Introduction

My research focuses on the media habits of Gen Z — born between 1997-2012 — who began aging into adulthood at a time when misinformation, disinformation and fake news became a dominant narrative around news and journalism (Helfand, 2016). Then, an already confusing news and media landscape for them was further compounded by the effects of COVID-19 on media and public information (Yang & Tian, 2021). As a group with already strong digital media habits and skillsets, finding a new way to reengage Gen Z in an area of news they may have lost trust in, have distrust for, etc. is key.

Journalism Innovation Mind Map



The journalism innovation mind map was useful to see just how inextricably linked journalist intent and audience value is.

Trends + Supporting Research + Observations

- Gen Z has shorter attention spans than past generations and prefers shorter content “bites” that are visually attractive (Bilonozhko, N., & Syzenko, A. 2020)
- Gen Z prefers to view content on their mobile device (Kahraman, A. 2020)
- Twitter was a huge social media platform for disseminating news but that has changed since becoming X, what is next? Room for some new format for news rooms to use to

better engage Gen Z

- Gen Z cares about staying informed about the following topics: healthcare, higher ed, finance/economy, environment/climate change, racial equity, civic engagement (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021)
- [@SoInformed](#) is an IG account that gained a lot of millennial and Gen Z following during the pandemic, uses bite sized content & shares its citations + resource links
- [TeenVogue](#) pivoted from the content I grew up with as a kid that was mainly fashion-focused and celebrity heavy into a real, hard news site geared toward issues teens care about - teens are more than “fashion” they are the future & TeenVogue is trying to equip them with the news they need to be prepared.

Innovation Sourcebook

Platforms most used by Gen Z in 2023 for media consumption

Category	Name	Description	Strategic Advantages
Social Media / Video Sharing	TikTok	A short-form, video-sharing app that allows users to create and share 15-second videos on any topic	TikTok's algorithm and user-friendly interface allows for highly personalized content delivery, which contributes to its stickiness and high engagement rate.
Social Media / Instant Messaging	Snapchat	A multimedia messaging app where messages and stories are typically available for a short time before they become inaccessible.	Snapchat's ephemeral content and its popularity for its AR lenses and filters give it an edge among younger audiences looking for more private, creative, and spontaneous ways to share their life.
Social Media / Photo & Video Sharing	Instagram	A photo and video sharing social networking service where users can post content and add effects and filters to their images and videos.	Instagram's broad feature set, including Stories, IGTV, Reels, and Shopping, along with its integration with Facebook's ad platform, makes it a

			versatile platform for both social interaction and online commerce.
Video Sharing Platform	YouTube	A video sharing platform where users can upload, view, rate, share, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users	YouTube's dominant position in the online video market, its advanced algorithm for video recommendations, and the ability for creators to monetize their content, make it an indispensable platform for video content consumption.
Social Media / Communication Platform	Discord	A communication platform designed to create communities, offering voice, video, and text communication channels along with a robust set of moderation tools.	Discord's focus on community building, real-time communication, and its customization options make it a go-to platform for various online communities, from gaming to education.
Live Streaming Platform	Twitch	A live streaming platform primarily used by video game streamers who broadcast their gameplay or eSports competitions.	Twitch's focus on gaming, interactive features allowing viewers to interact with streamers in real-time, and its tight-knit community make it the leading platform in the live-stream gaming industry.

Appendix III: Know Context - Mode 2

Narrative of topic context

Throughout course of my research, I've uncovered valuable insights about the preferences of Generation Z. This dynamic cohort is unequivocally mobile-focused, gravitating towards compact, bite-sized content that seamlessly adapts to their on-the-go lifestyle. Visual aesthetics hold a paramount role in capturing their attention, with a clear penchant for content that is not only visually appealing but also thoughtfully curated. What's particularly intriguing is their affinity for learning through informal, interactive means, where experiences take precedence over traditional methods. Gen Z thrives when engaged through immersive encounters that transcend the boundaries of conventional learning. Their media consumption is like a journey, where they traverse various media surfaces as if navigating through different transit points, highlighting their inherent curiosity and openness to exploring diverse content landscapes.

Secondary research w/ citations

- “Teens in the Gen Z cohort (those aged 14–19) consume more news than their Gen Z adult counterparts (those aged 20–25)” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- “Roughly 8 in 10 (78%) Gen Z teens get news or current events daily from at least one source, compared with 69% of Gen Z adults and 84% of consumers across all generations.” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- “Gen Z teens favor social and digital news formats, with about half of this group saying they get news daily from social media feeds or messaging services and 40% getting news daily from search engines” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- “66% of Gen Z teens who follow news or current events say most of the news they consume is from alerts and notifications on their mobile devices, compared with a slightly smaller share of Gen Z adults. More than half of the Gen Z news consumers (teens and adults) say they consume news on their smartphones exclusively.” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- “5 key factors explain why parties trust their mediator: degree of mastery over the process, explanation of the process, warmth and consideration, chemistry with the parties, and lack of bias toward either party.” (Poitras, J. 2009)
- “Gen Zers have higher preferences towards the assimilating learning style (combining abstract conceptualization and reflective observation), while Baby Boomers and Gen X prefer the accommodating style (combining active experimentation and concrete experience). These results conflict with the common stereotypes—mainly based on qualitative evidence—about the youngest generation, which see them as a generation that needs to engage in a highly informal, interactive and experience-based learning.” (Manzoni, Caporarello, Cirulli & Magni, 2020).
- “This generation is also known as the mobile generation. They are interested in more technology than their predecessors (Generation X and Y), and they are actualizing their

social lives more and more through smart devices such as mobile phone, tablets. This situation has also changed the perception of time and space in consumption habits.” (Özkan 2017).

- “The results of our investigation made it possible to draw a clearer picture about the communication practices and scenes of the so-called Generation Z including the peculiarities of their media habits. We can capture the generation-specific characteristics appearing in the media usage of this age-group through the significance of motion. Regarding the use of media, motion may be interpreted as a movement in physical space but also as a transit through various media surfaces.” (Guld, Ádám Maksa, Gyula 2014)

Primary research w/ citations

- Think Wikipedia is a good lesson to look at to compare AI and public trust to in someways. It came as a tool many didn't trust at first, more used it and controlled the content of it and reeled it in and now it is trusted. (Interview w/ Sharon Goldman, Venturebeat July 2023)
- Maybe what we need to get GenZ to trust news is fact-checking in the open, maybe fact-checkers will become needed again (Interview w/ Sharon Goldman, VentureBeat July 2023)
- Pubs talk about wanting to reach younger audiences, no one asks them how (Interview w/ Jonathan Schwartz, MarketWatch, July 2023)
- Opportunity, gap to fill (Interview w/ Jonathan Schwartz, MarketWatch, July 2023)
- Opportunity could be for a new player in the industry somewhere, but where? Hard to break through traditional outlets that dominate news currently: NYTimes, CNN, NPR, etc. (Interview w/ Jonathan Schwartz, MarketWatch, July 2023)
- Works with some GenZ individuals currently, but still feel unsure about how they may even want to receive news (Interview w/ Dan Muse, SDXCenral July 2023)
- Think they definitely care about news because has heard some express a desire to be more informed accurately (Interview w/ Dan Muse, SDXCenral July 2023)
- How will AI factor into some of this? Could some kind of AI tool help ease the process of delivering news and information to them? (Interview w/ Dan Muse, SDXCenral July 2023)
- Also good to think about trust, something we talk about as a team all the time - trust is shifting and social media made that harder on us in journalism (Interview w/ Dan Muse, SDXCenral July 2023)
- Not worried about it in the future because hopeful that GenZ's desire to be informed will help them create a world that is better at that (Interview w/ Dan Muse, SDXCenral July 2023)

Research represented using methods from journalism specialization

- Emerging media platforms:
 - Put information where Gen Z is looking for it, and they're looking for it on Twitter? TikTok and Snapchat etc maybe something new, "Gen Z news consumers turn to social media sites for news significantly more than the prior generation of millennials."
 - "The future of AI-enabled journalism will still have plenty of people around. However, the jobs, roles and tasks of those people will evolve and look a bit different." - <https://ai.northwestern.edu/research-applications/study-impact-and-implications-of-ai/the-impact-of-ai-on-journalism-and-media-content-generation.html>

Publications research

Topics of Interest: GenZ interests, media habits, trust concepts, news

Title	Category	Source	Summary
What Makes Parties Trust Mediators?	Trust	https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.2009.00228.x	NOTE: The title of this source interested me - rather than look at how/why people trust one another as individuals - I think it could be valuable to also look at how and why people trust a mediator -- thinking: essentially news/journalism plays that role regarding expectations to be fair to both sides, convincing, an authority, etc. SUMMARY: "5 key factors explaining why parties trust their mediator: degree of mastery over the process, explanation of the process, warmth and consideration, chemistry with the parties, and lack of bias toward either party."
Promises and lies: Restoring violated trust	Trust	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.05.005	NOTE: Journalists/ news orgs being vulnerable and showing the "messy" parts of news could build trust, restore broken trust - potentially SUMMARY: " in this work we define trust as the "willingness to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations about another's behavior"

<p>The Preferred Learning Styles of Generation Z: Do They Differ from the Ones of Previous Generations</p>	<p>Gen Z</p>	<p>https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-47539-0_5</p>	<p>NOTE: News is meant to inform so understanding how Gen Z learns best is one key of the puzzle SUMMARY: " Gen Zers have higher preferences towards the assimilating learning style (combining abstract conceptualization and reflective observation), while Baby Boomers and Gen X prefer the accommodating style (combining active experimentation and concrete experience). There results conflict with the common stereotypes—mainly based on qualitative evidence—about the youngest generation, which see them as a generation that needs to engage in a highly informal, interactive and experience-based learning. "</p>
<p>Generation Z - The Global Market's New Consumers- And Their Consumption Habits: Generation Z Consumption Scale</p>	<p>Gen Z</p>	<p>https://doi.org/10.26417/ejms.v5i1.p150-157</p>	<p>NOTE: In addition to learning, news is also an act of "consumption" with the volumes that are put in front of audiences - though it is not the same type of consumption as shopping habits that may be referenced- it still will shed light on consumption in theory and practice and that can be applied to news SUMMARY: "This generation is also known as the mobile generation. They are interested in more technology than their predecessors (Generation X and Y), and they are actualizing their social lives more and more through smart devices such as mobile phone, tablets. This situation has also changed the perception of time and space in consumption habits. The shopping mall culture that emerged with globalization is now taking its place to Internet shopping. Ads made via social media and shopping made by these ads are among the preferences of Generation Z. In this study, we focus on changing the general consumption habits and the role of the Generation Z's profile in these habits"</p>

<p>On The Move: "Shadow Research" on the Media Habits of Generation Z</p>	<p>Media Habits/Gen Z</p>	<p>https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=835646</p>	<p>NOTE: It is already pretty common knowledge that GenZ is very active with media and technology, but what are their specific habits around it? SUMMARY: "The results of our investigation made it possible to draw a clearer picture about the communication practices and scenes of the so-called Generation Z including the peculiarities of their media habits. We can capture the generation-specific characteristics appearing in the media usage of this age-group through the significance of motion. Regarding the use of media, motion may be interpreted as a movement in physical space but also as a transit through various media surfaces. "</p>
<p>Digital Media Use and Adolescents' Mental Health During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis</p>	<p>Media Habits</p>	<p>https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.793868</p>	<p>NOTE: Media habits also took a huge impact during COVID-19 - so that's important to account for - SUMMARY: "adolescents augmented their social media use, including general screen time. Also, higher levels of digital media addiction were reported during the pandemic. In general, higher social media use and media addiction were related to higher ill-being. Hence, adolescents are particularly at risk of experiencing mental health problems due to the augmented exposure to screen time and social media during the pandemic. However, not all types of digital media use had a negative consequence. In particular, one-to-one communication, mutual online friendship, and positive and funny online experiences mitigated feelings of loneliness and stress during Covid-19. These positive aspects of online activities should be promoted."</p>

<p>Open-Source Repositories as Trust-Building Journalism Infrastructure: Examining the Use of GitHub by News Outlets to Promote Transparency, Innovation, and Collaboration</p>	<p>News Innovation</p>	<p>https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2023.2202873</p>	<p>NOTE: Ties in with what Sharon Goldman said during SME interview about 'fact checking out in the open' - interesting concepts can be utilized from this toward some type of solution</p> <p>SUMMARY: "an examination of the use of GitHub by 124 prominent news outlets over more than a decade. It finds that (a) their use of GitHub is not widespread but several outlets do actively use it; (b) they use GitHub to open-source a mixture of technologies and journalistic materials; (c) their introductory project documentation routinely includes at least partial amounts of both ambient and disclosure forms of transparency, but rarely exhibits participatory transparency; (d) collaboration is almost non-existent in the vast majority of their repositories; and (e) there has been a decline in their use of GitHub and the collaboration affordances within their repositories in recent years. The study extends the transparency literature by adapting key concepts to journalism-adjacent infrastructure and offers empirical evidence about the innovativeness of open-source technologies originating from prominent news organizations and the amount of collaboration that occurs around them. This builds to an intervention that raises some questions about the direct impact of open-source repositories as trust-building infrastructure while drawing attention to less-considered but nevertheless useful performative functions that such infrastructure enables."</p>
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<p>Exploring the drivers of Gen Z tourists' boycott behaviour: a lifestyle politics perspective</p>	<p>Gen Z</p>	<p>https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2023.2166517</p>	<p>NOTE: Understanding why they 'protest' companies will help explain what not to do as a solution SUMMARY: "qualitative findings demonstrate that Gen Z' boycott behaviour has two categories of drivers: individual (fulfilment, constructing self-identity and frugality) and prosocial (altruism, trust and the pursuit of social justice). Exposure to social media information, peer persuasion and past experience are also key influencers in Gen Z' boycott participation. Overall, the research extends the understanding of tourist sustainable consumption in terms of generational behaviours, notably Gen Z's boycott behaviour."</p>
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ERAS Map

Eras Map of Journalism and Media Distribution Tools and Events (since the '80s)

Title	Time Period	Events	Overview	Attributes
Cable News Era	1983-1996	Launch of CNN in 1980 and its further growth throughout this period marked the rise of 24-hour cable news.	This era saw the emergence of round-the-clock news coverage, transforming the way information was disseminated. Cable news channels became vital sources for immediate news, breaking away from the traditional nightly news broadcasts.	Increased immediacy and constant coverage of news, rise in influence of television as a news medium, and the growth of punditry and opinion-based journalism.
Internet News Era	1997-2005	The advent of the internet and the consequent growth of online news	This era marked the migration of news to the online space, with traditional print and broadcast outlets setting up websites to	Democratization of news, rise of citizen journalism, speedier dissemination of news, and the start of the decline in print

		portals.	disseminate news. It led to the advent of online-only news portals and blogs that changed the dynamics of journalism.	media.
Social Media and User-Generated Content Era	2006-2014	The rise of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter and the increasing use of these platforms for news dissemination .	This era marked the increasing influence of social media in shaping public discourse and the rise of user-generated content in news reporting. It blurred the lines between journalists and audience as anyone could break news and share information.	Greater interactivity, rise of viral news, personalized news feeds, and the proliferation of fake news and misinformation.
Mobile and On-Demand News Era	2015-2022	The proliferation of smartphones and mobile apps for news, the rise of personalized news feeds, and on-demand news.	This era is marked by the dominance of mobile devices for accessing news, leading to the rise of mobile-first strategies by news organizations. It is characterized by a shift towards personalized, on-demand news that is accessible anywhere, anytime.	On-demand news consumption, the prevalence of video content, further decline of print media, rise of artificial intelligence and automated news, and the fight against fake news.
Generative AI	2023-?	Rise of tools like ChatGPT, DALL-E2 for text and image generation.	Unclear what the future holds.... harder to spot fake news? but more autonomy for creating?	TBD...

PESTLE

Political:

Government Policies and Political Groups:

Beneficial: Policies that promote freedom of the press, protect journalists' safety, and ensure access to information can be beneficial to the success of journalism. Additionally, a political environment that values transparency and accountability can create a conducive atmosphere for responsible journalism.

Detrimental: Policies that restrict press freedom, censor information, or target journalists for reporting critical or uncomfortable truths can be detrimental to the success of journalism. Political groups or leaders who use misinformation, propaganda, or disinformation to manipulate public perception and undermine the credibility of journalism can also pose challenges.

Political Environment Stability:

The stability of the political environment can significantly impact journalism. A stable political environment, where there is respect for democratic norms, the rule of law, and freedom of expression, tends to support a robust and independent press. On the other hand, in politically unstable or authoritarian environments, journalism may face greater risks, including censorship, harassment, or even violence.

Global Reach and Political Concerns:

Organizations with global reach or stakeholders in multiple regions will likely have to navigate a complex landscape of diverse political concerns. Different countries have unique media landscapes and varying levels of press freedom. An organization operating in multiple regions may encounter challenges related to local regulations, political pressures, cultural differences, and varying levels of government support for journalism.

Economic:

Economic Factors Impacting Journalism:

Advertising Revenue: One of the primary sources of revenue for traditional media outlets is advertising. Economic fluctuations can impact advertising spending. During economic downturns, businesses may reduce their advertising budgets, leading to decreased revenues for media organizations.

Subscription and Digital Revenue: With the shift towards digital media, subscriptions and online advertising have become more critical revenue streams. Economic conditions can influence consumers' willingness to pay for digital content, affecting subscription numbers and revenues.

Cost of Operations: Economic factors can affect the overall cost of running a media organization. For example, inflation may increase expenses related to equipment, salaries, or distribution.

Technological Disruptions: Advancements in technology can create new opportunities for journalism but also require investments in infrastructure and skills. Economic factors may influence a media organization's ability to adopt new technologies.

Competition: Economic performance can impact the media landscape, leading to changes in ownership, consolidation, or the entry/exit of media players. This can affect pricing strategies and market competition.

Impact of Current Economic Performance:

The current economic performance of a region or country can have both direct and indirect effects on journalism:

Direct Effects: Economic downturns can lead to reduced advertising revenues and lower consumer spending on subscriptions, affecting a media organization's immediate cash flow.

Indirect Effects: Economic conditions can influence public sentiment and interest in certain news topics. For example, during economic crises, people may be more concerned about financial news and job-related issues, shaping media content and potentially affecting audience engagement.

Impact on Pricing, Revenues, Costs, Possibilities, and Potential:

Pricing: Economic conditions can influence pricing strategies for media products and services. Media organizations may adjust subscription fees, advertising rates, or digital content pricing based on consumer demand and market conditions.

Revenues: Changes in advertising spending, subscriptions, and consumer behavior can impact a media organization's overall revenues.

Costs: Economic factors, such as inflation or changes in the cost of resources, can affect a media organization's operating costs.

Possibilities and Potential: Economic stability can create an environment that fosters innovation and investment in new journalistic ventures. Conversely, economic uncertainty may limit funding for new initiatives or expansion.

Opportunities and Challenges: Depending on the economic landscape, there may be opportunities to explore new revenue streams or collaborations. However, economic downturns can also present challenges and require cost-cutting measures.

Social:

Primary Stakeholders' Values and Beliefs:

Journalists: Journalists' values and beliefs influence the way they approach their work. Those who prioritize journalistic integrity, accuracy, and objectivity are likely to maintain strong ethical standards in their reporting. Conversely, those with biased or partisan beliefs may struggle to

maintain objectivity, potentially impacting the credibility of their work and the organization they represent.

Media Organizations: The values and beliefs of media organizations' leadership and management teams influence their editorial policies and the type of content they produce. Organizations that prioritize unbiased reporting and public service are likely to foster trust with their audiences. On the other hand, those driven primarily by commercial interests or political agendas may face challenges in maintaining credibility.

Audiences: Audiences' values and beliefs play a crucial role in shaping their preferences for news sources and content. People with diverse beliefs may seek out media that aligns with their views, leading to the proliferation of echo chambers and filter bubbles. This can create challenges for journalism in providing a comprehensive and balanced view of events.

Society at Large: Societal values and beliefs impact the overall perception of journalism and its role in democracy. In societies that value freedom of the press and independent journalism, there is typically more support for a vibrant and diverse media landscape. Conversely, in societies where media is heavily controlled or suppressed, journalism may face significant challenges in fulfilling its watchdog role.

Human Behavior and Cultural Trends:

Sensationalism and Clickbait: Human behavior tends to gravitate towards sensational or emotionally charged content. In the quest for higher viewership or readership, some media outlets may resort to sensationalism or clickbait headlines. This can erode trust in journalism by prioritizing engagement over accuracy and context.

Social Media and Virality: The rise of social media has transformed the way news is disseminated and consumed. Viral trends and algorithms can lead to the rapid spread of misinformation, impacting the reputation of journalists and media organizations. Additionally, social media echo chambers can reinforce divisive beliefs and polarize society.

Digital Media Consumption Habits: Cultural trends in media consumption, such as the shift to online and mobile platforms, impact the business models of media organizations. Adapting to changing consumption habits and new technologies is essential for sustainable journalism.

Diversity and Inclusion: Cultural trends towards promoting diversity and inclusion have also influenced journalism. There is an increasing focus on representing diverse voices and perspectives in newsrooms and media content.

Technological:

Innovations and Technological Advancements:

Digital Journalism: The shift to digital platforms has revolutionized the way news is disseminated and consumed. Online news websites, social media, and mobile apps have become essential platforms for news delivery.

Data Journalism: Journalists are increasingly using data analysis and visualization tools to tell data-driven stories. This approach allows for in-depth reporting and offers readers a better understanding of complex issues.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI-powered tools are being used to streamline news production, assist in fact-checking, and personalize content delivery for users.

Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR): VR and AR technologies have the potential to provide immersive storytelling experiences, especially in fields like investigative journalism and documentary reporting.

Automation and News Bots: Automated algorithms and news bots are being employed to generate news stories, particularly for routine or data-heavy topics.

Technological Changes with Negative Impact:

Misinformation and Disinformation: The proliferation of social media and online platforms has facilitated the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation, leading to challenges in verifying and countering false narratives.

Deepfakes: Advances in deepfake technology have made it easier to create realistic but false audio and video content, raising concerns about the spread of manipulated information.

Decline in Trust: The prevalence of misleading information and biased reporting on some digital platforms has contributed to a decline in public trust in journalism.

Revenue Challenges: The transition to digital media has disrupted traditional revenue models, leading to financial challenges for many media organizations and potential threats to journalistic independence.

Technological Changes and Mishaps Journalism is Recovering From:

Legacy Media Transition: Traditional media outlets have faced difficulties in transitioning from print to digital formats, and many have had to adapt their business models to remain relevant in the digital age.

Privacy and Security Concerns: Journalists and media organizations have faced security risks due to digital threats, hacking attempts, and online harassment, which can hinder their ability to report freely.

Online Comment Sections: Many news websites have struggled to manage toxic comment sections that promote hate speech, harassment, or the spread of misinformation.

Digital Monetization Challenges: Media organizations are still exploring effective ways to monetize digital content and find sustainable revenue streams in an era of declining print advertising

Legal:

Some primary regulations and laws that commonly apply to journalism include:

Freedom of the Press: Many countries have constitutional or legal protections for freedom of the press, ensuring that journalists can report on matters of public interest without undue government interference or censorship.

Defamation Laws: Defamation laws exist to protect individuals or organizations from false and damaging statements that harm their reputation. Journalists must be cautious about ensuring the accuracy and verifiability of their reporting to avoid defamation claims.

Privacy Laws: Privacy laws vary, but they often limit the extent to which journalists can intrude on individuals' private lives or publish private information without consent.

Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws: Journalists must adhere to copyright laws, obtaining proper permissions when using copyrighted material and respecting the intellectual property of others.

Shield Laws: Some jurisdictions have shield laws that protect journalists from being compelled to reveal their sources, safeguarding the confidentiality of sensitive information.

National Security Laws: In the interest of national security, some countries have laws that limit certain types of reporting or impose restrictions on the disclosure of classified information.

Hate Speech and Incitement Laws: Laws against hate speech and incitement aim to prevent the dissemination of content that promotes discrimination, violence, or hostility based on race, religion, or other protected characteristics.

The Impact of Regulations on Journalism:

Positive: Appropriate regulations can safeguard journalistic integrity, protect sources, and ensure responsible reporting. Freedom of the press laws, shield laws, and protections against censorship contribute to a vibrant and independent media landscape.

Negative: Overly restrictive or ambiguous regulations can lead to self-censorship, hinder investigative journalism, and curtail press freedom. Vague defamation or national security laws can be misused to target journalists reporting on sensitive topics.

Understanding Laws Across Markets:

Understanding and complying with legal regulations across different markets can be challenging for journalists and news companies. Media organizations that operate globally must navigate a

complex landscape of diverse legal systems and cultural norms. They may need to seek legal counsel and establish robust compliance mechanisms to ensure adherence to various laws.

Journalists working internationally also face challenges in staying informed about the specific legal requirements in each jurisdiction they report from or on. Failure to understand and comply with local laws can lead to legal consequences and risks compromising the safety and credibility of journalists and news organizations.

To mitigate these challenges, journalists and media companies often collaborate with local partners or employ correspondents who possess expertise in the legal landscape of specific regions.

Environmental:

Physical Environment and Journalism:

Access to Information: The physical environment can impact journalists' ability to access information and report on certain events or locations. In remote or inaccessible areas, gathering news may be more challenging.

Natural Disasters and Emergencies: Journalists often play a crucial role in reporting on natural disasters and emergencies. However, covering such events can also be dangerous and require adequate training and safety measures.

Infrastructure and Technology: The physical environment influences the availability and reliability of communication infrastructure, such as internet connectivity, which can affect journalists' ability to report in real-time.

Environmental Journalism: The physical environment shapes the focus and relevance of environmental journalism. Journalists may cover topics such as climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and sustainability, depending on the environmental challenges specific to their location.

Effects on Journalists:

Safety and Health: Journalists working in extreme weather conditions or environmental hazards face risks to their safety and health. This includes reporting on wildfires, hurricanes, floods, or other environmental disasters.

Emotional Impact: Covering traumatic environmental events can have emotional and psychological impacts on journalists, especially when witnessing the consequences of climate change or ecological crises.

Access and Mobility: Journalists reporting from remote or environmentally sensitive areas may face challenges in accessing these locations and moving around safely.

Preparedness for Future Environmental Targets:

Climate Change Reporting: News organizations and journalists are increasingly recognizing the importance of climate change reporting. Many media outlets have dedicated environmental desks or reporters focused on covering climate-related issues.

Adaptation and Resilience: As environmental challenges continue to evolve, news organizations are adapting their reporting strategies to provide in-depth coverage of climate change and its impacts.

Collaboration and Expertise: To better cover environmental issues, journalists often collaborate with scientists, experts, and environmental organizations to provide accurate and comprehensive reporting.

Sustainability Initiatives: Some news organizations are implementing sustainability initiatives, such as reducing carbon emissions or adopting eco-friendly practices, to align with their environmental reporting.

It's essential to acknowledge that journalism is not immune to the environmental challenges it reports on.

Subject Matter Expert Interviews:

Subject Matter Expert: Jonathan Swartz, Senior Reporter at Marketwatch, prev: Forbes, USA Today

Interview Date: July 13

Duration: 49 mins

Key Takeaways:

- Pubs talk about wanting to reach younger audiences, no one asks them how
- Opportunity, gap to fill
- Opportunity could be for a new player in the industry somewhere, but where? Hard to break through traditional outlets that dominate news currently: NYTimes, CNN, NPR, etc.
- Do they even care about news? What type?

Subject Matter Expert: Dan Muse, editor in chief, SDxCentral prev: editor in chief CIO.com,

Interview Date: July 19

Duration: 41 mins

Key Takeaways:

- Works with some GenZ individuals currently, but still feel unsure about how they may even want to receive news
- Think they definitely care about news because has heard some express a desire to be more informed accurately

- How will AI factor into some of this? Could some kind of AI tool help ease the process of delivering news and information to them?
- Also good to think about trust, something we talk about as a team all the time - trust is shifting and social media made that harder on us in journalism
- Not worried about it in the future because hopeful that GenZ's desire to be informed will help them create a world that is better at that

Subject Matter Expert: Sharon Goldman, senior reporter VentureBeat

Interview Date: July 19

Duration: 29 mins

Key Takeaways:

- Think Wikipedia is a good lesson to look at to compare AI and public trust to in someways. It came as a tool many didn't trust at first, more used it and controlled the content of it and reeled it in and now it is trusted.

Maybe what we need to get GenZ to trust news is fact-checking in the open, maybe fact-checkers will become needed again

Primary Research:

Survey conducted on: Aug. 23, 2023

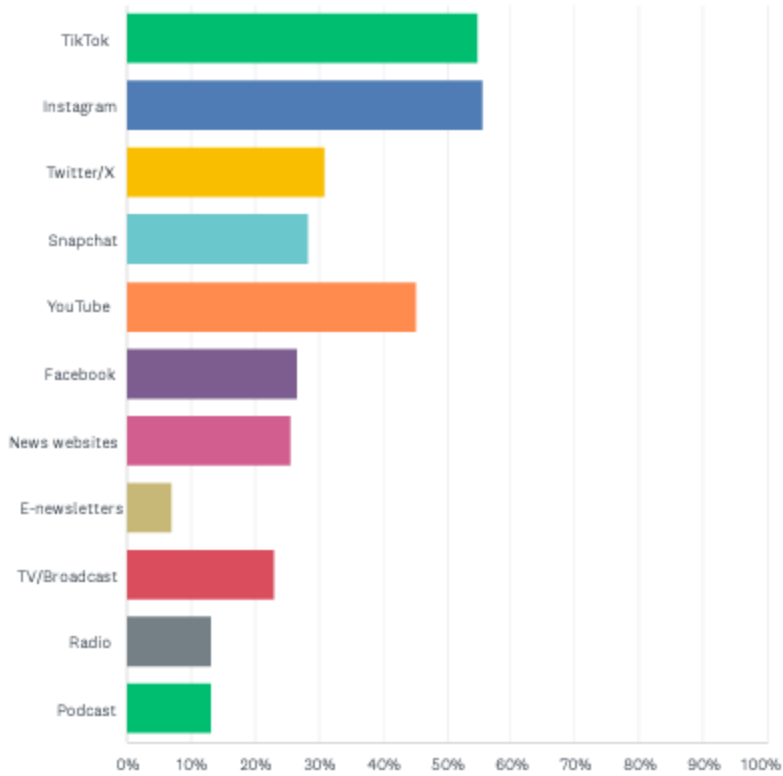
Via platform: SurveyMonkey

Targeted to: Gen Z

Results: https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-hot_2FL3DLOBXTN04xFb66Fw_3D_3D/

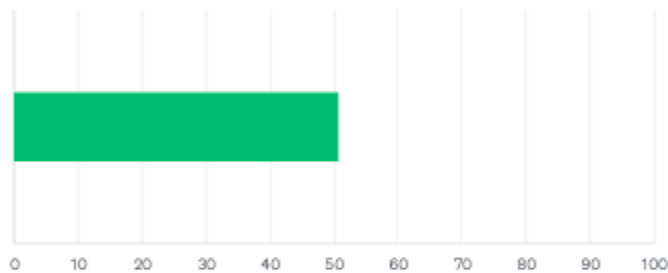
Q2 How do you currently consume news the most?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



Q3 How much do you trust the news sources you read/watch/ listen to?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



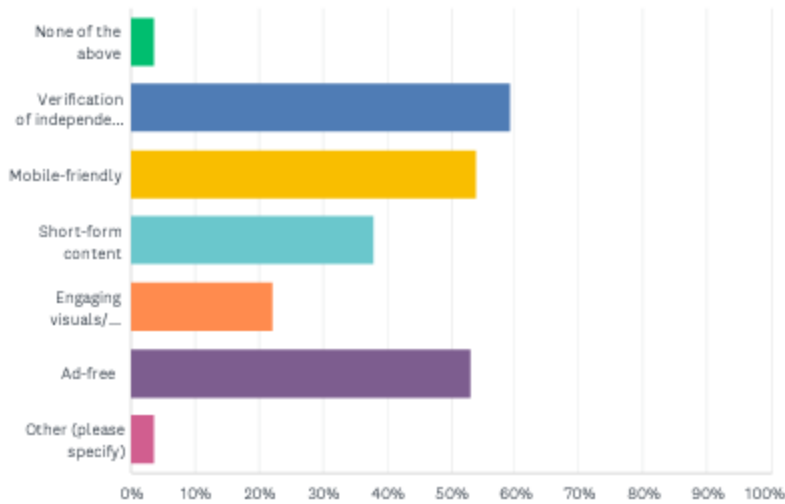
ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	51	5,725	113
Total Respondents: 113			

Q4 If a new social media platform emerged for fact-checking, sharing and distributing news content which elements would be most important for it to have?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0

2 / 11

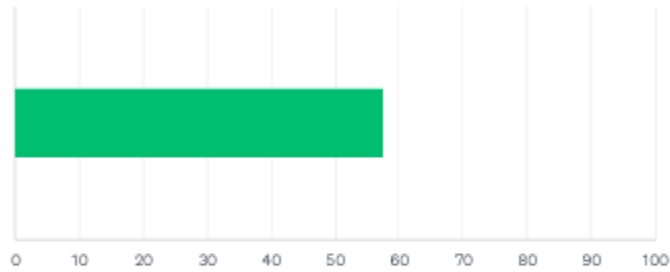
Gen Z : News, Media and Trust



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	3.54%	4
Verification of independent fact-checking	59.29%	67
Mobile-friendly	53.98%	61
Short-form content	38.05%	43
Engaging visuals/ animations or video	22.12%	25
Ad-free	53.10%	60
Other (please specify)	3.54%	4
Total Respondents: 113		

Q5 How much would you trust news if you knew submitted articles to a platform were independently fact-checked?

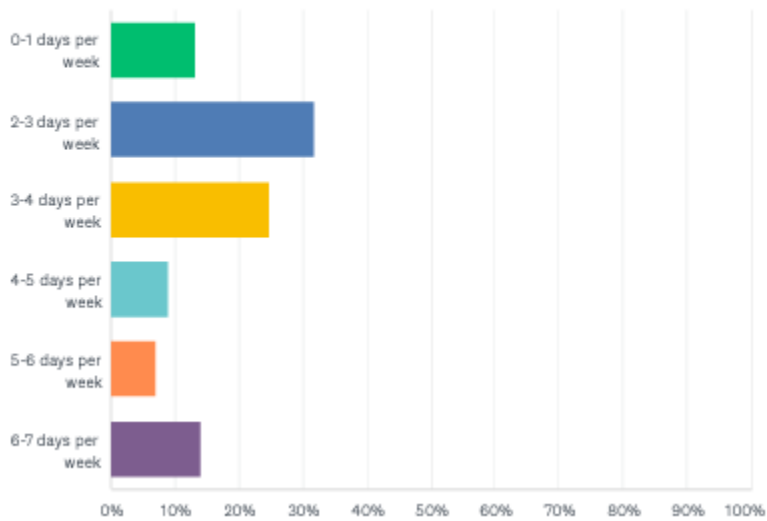
Answered: 111 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	58	6,394	111
Total Respondents: 111			

Q6 How often do you currently consume news content in any format?

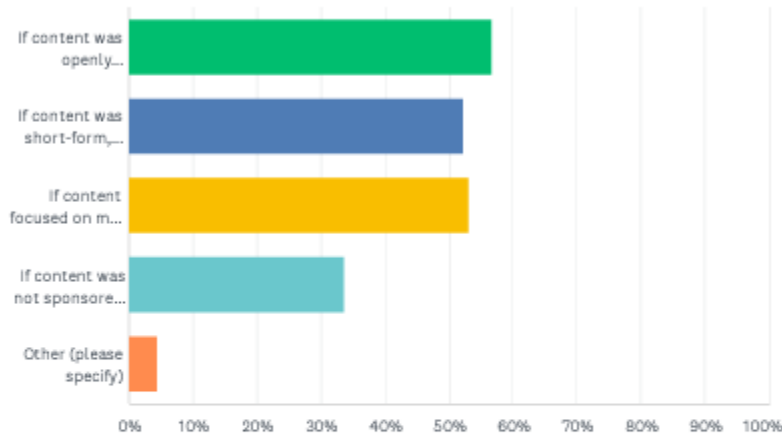
Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-1 days per week	13.27%	15
2-3 days per week	31.86%	36
3-4 days per week	24.78%	28
4-5 days per week	8.85%	10
5-6 days per week	7.08%	8
6-7 days per week	14.16%	16
TOTAL		113

Q7 What would lead you to consume more news? (check all that apply)

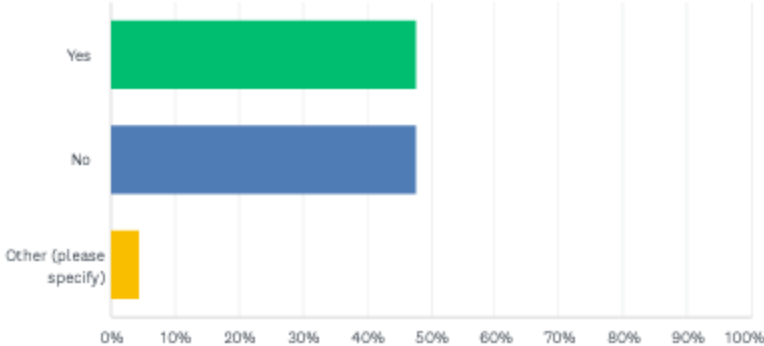
Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
If content was openly fact-checked and verified	56.64%	64
If content was short-form, digestible and visual	52.21%	59
If content focused on more topics I care about	53.10%	60
If content was not sponsored by ads	33.63%	38
Other (please specify)	4.42%	5
Total Respondents: 113		

Q9 Does it bother you how news/media refers to Gen Z in news coverage presently?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	47.79% 54
No	47.79% 54
Other (please specify)	4.42% 5
TOTAL	113

*Questions 1 and 8 were open-ended so graphs were not available to include.

Appendix IV: Know People - Mode 3

Stakeholder overview

At the core, the primary stakeholders are the members of Generation Z. Media outlets and news organizations play a pivotal role in shaping the narrative, as they strive to deliver content that resonates with Gen Z's distinct preferences. Social media platforms serve as prominent conduits, facilitating the dissemination of content and enabling Gen Z to engage with news in real-time while fostering community interaction. Brands and marketers, recognizing the immense buying power of this demographic, strategically tailor their messages to align with Gen Z's values and interests.

Findings and instruments for primary research about people / stakeholders in the topic area

- So many creators on social, lots of mixed messages, finding trusted ones is hard, regular news feels boring (Interview w/ Shree July 2023)
- News also has lots of messages about GenZ being lazy at times, too many ads (Interview w/ Bennett July 2023)

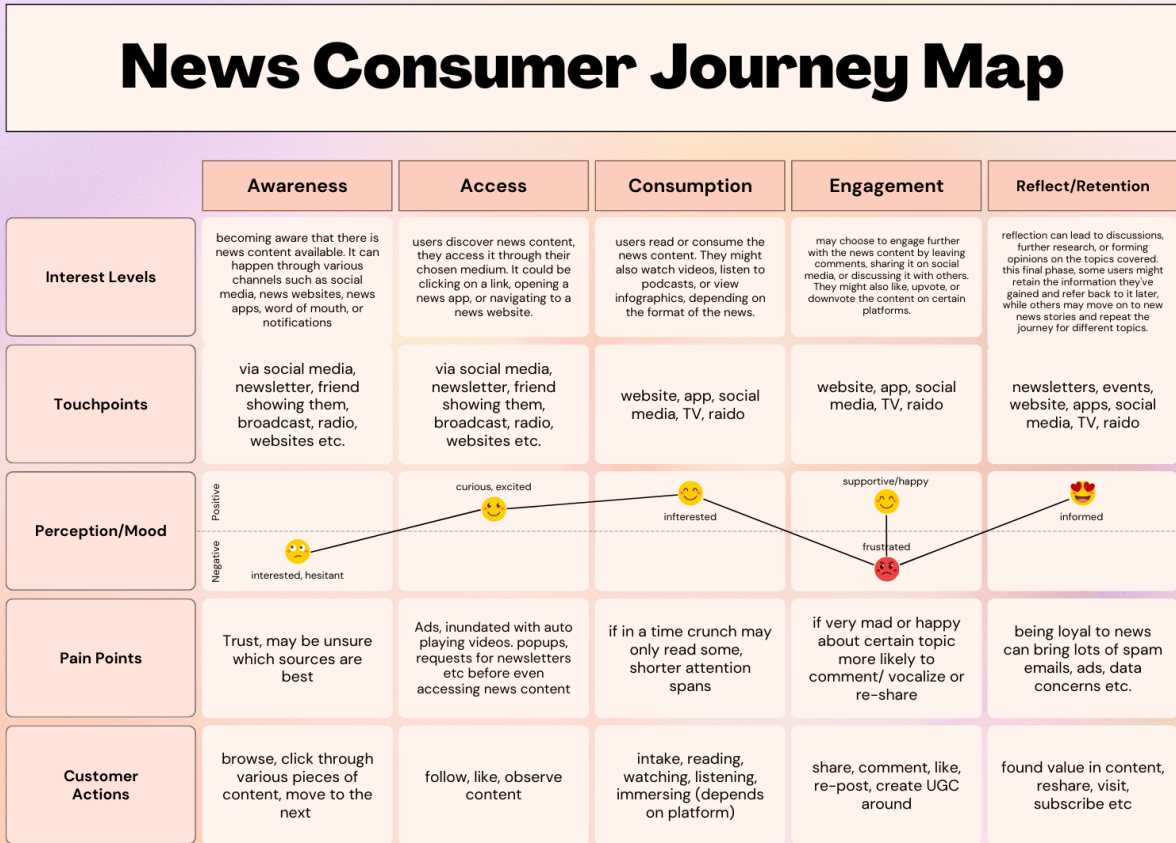
Findings for secondary research about people / stakeholders in the topic area.

- “News organizations should do more to involve and engage younger audiences in news processes, especially on interactive platforms like social media sites, news websites, and digital aggregators. Building loyalty with this cohort now is likely to have a positive impact in the future.” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- “Social media platforms should engage Gen Z news consumers in their ongoing fact-checking efforts. Young people are already highly engaged on these sites and a majority of Gen Zs consider ‘fake news’ to be a big problem, signaling they may be motivated to get involved.” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- “Investments in solutions journalism and purpose-driven reporting can pay off with the younger generation, as many are deeply concerned about issues like climate change, racial injustice, and health care.” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)
- GenZ teens differ from GenZ adults in some ways but both view news content exclusively on their phones, not as much on TV, tend to consult multiple sources and : “It’s fair to say that they are interested in news; it’s just that they’re moving away from traditional formats, and that shift has been going on for a long time, and across the board.” (Holmes, Victoria, Peck Gretchen A. 2023)

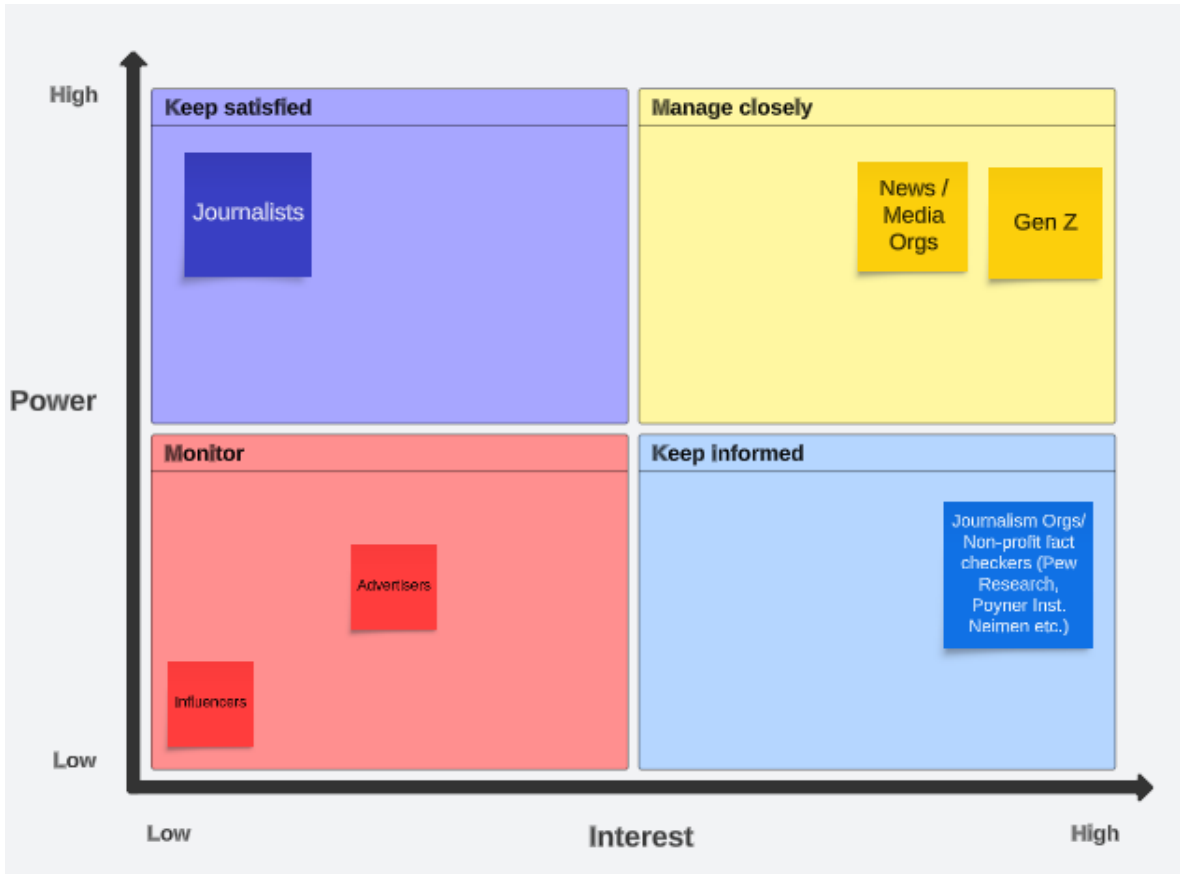
POEMS

People	Objects	Environments	Messages	Services
18 y/o female new HS grad (Shree)	uses phone/ipad to access	in the car as passenger, between classes, bus/transportation , before bed	So many creators on social, lots of mixed messages, finding trusted ones is hard, regular news feels boring, likes Solnformed IG acct	Information/ news
22 y/o transgender man working multiple jobs (Bennett)	uses phone to access, occasionally laptop	in the morning, at lunch, before bed, weekends	similar to the above - news also has lots of messages about GenZ being lazy at times, too many ads	Information/ news
21 y/o female working multiple jobs (Eva)	only uses phone to access	before bed	too many ads, too many distractions on web, uses social to choose what to see vs. not, likes slide format of Solnformed as well and short audio to not have to stare at a screen more	Information/ news
25 y/o male works full-time (Gavin)	uses phone to access, occasionally laptop	after work sometimes during since related to job working for MLB team the Oakland As	only cares about sports news, reads full articles, big on video	Information/ news/ entertainment

User Journey Map



Innovation Stakeholder Matrix:



Appendix V: Frame Insights - Mode 4

Analysis of the various systems that are part of your topic or situation

Gen Z's digital native behavior, activism, skepticism of traditional sources, and reliance on social media platforms shape how they access, engage with, and interpret news and information.

Political factors:

Distrust in Traditional Institutions: Gen Z has grown up in an era marked by political polarization, fake news, and misinformation. This has led to a general skepticism and distrust in traditional institutions, including mainstream media and government. Many Gen Z individuals turn to alternative sources and platforms to verify information independently.

Activism and Social Issues: Gen Z is known for its active engagement in social and political issues, such as climate change, racial justice, LGBTQ+ rights, and more as previously cited. This inclination towards activism influences their news consumption habits, as they seek out information that aligns with their values and supports their causes.

Social factors:

Digital Native Behavior: Gen Z is the first generation to have grown up with the internet and social media as integral parts of their lives. Their news consumption habits are heavily influenced by these platforms, with social media serving as a primary source of information dissemination. They often rely on curated feeds, personalized algorithms, and user-generated content to stay informed.

Short Attention Spans: Due to the constant barrage of information online, Gen Z is often associated with shorter attention spans. This impacts how they consume news, leading to a preference for concise and visually appealing formats, such as infographics, short videos, and bite-sized news updates.

Economic factors:

Access to Technology: Gen Z's easy access to smartphones and other devices has enabled them to stay connected to news sources at all times. Constant connectivity has shaped their expectation for real-time updates.

Financial Constraints: Many Gen Z individuals are entering adulthood with significant student loan debt and economic uncertainty. This could impact their willingness to pay for premium news content. Free or low-cost news sources are likely more appealing.

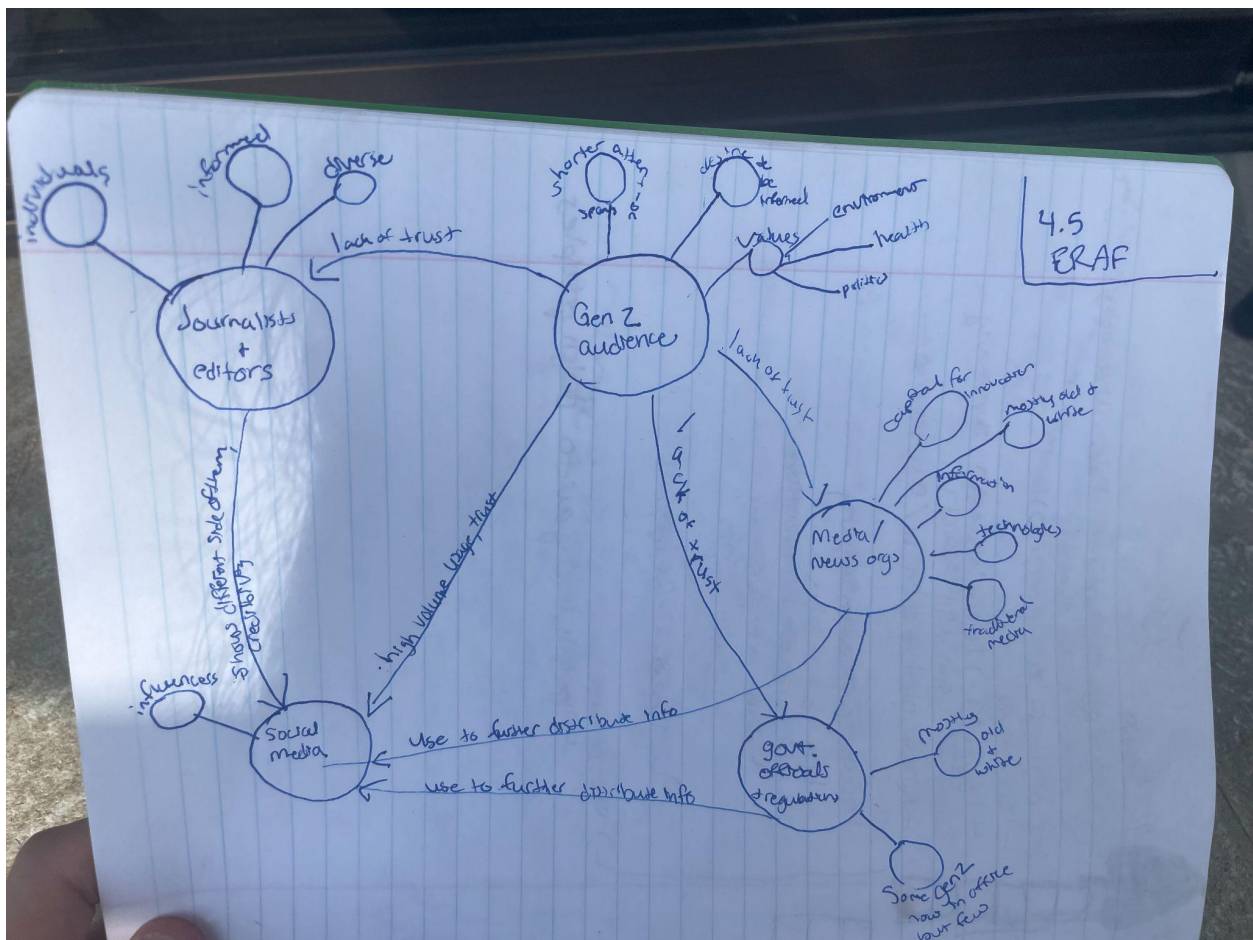
Psychological factors:

Trust: Special considerations should be taken when working to rebuild trust and gain trust from this group because of previously cited growth of fake news, disinformation and misinformation.

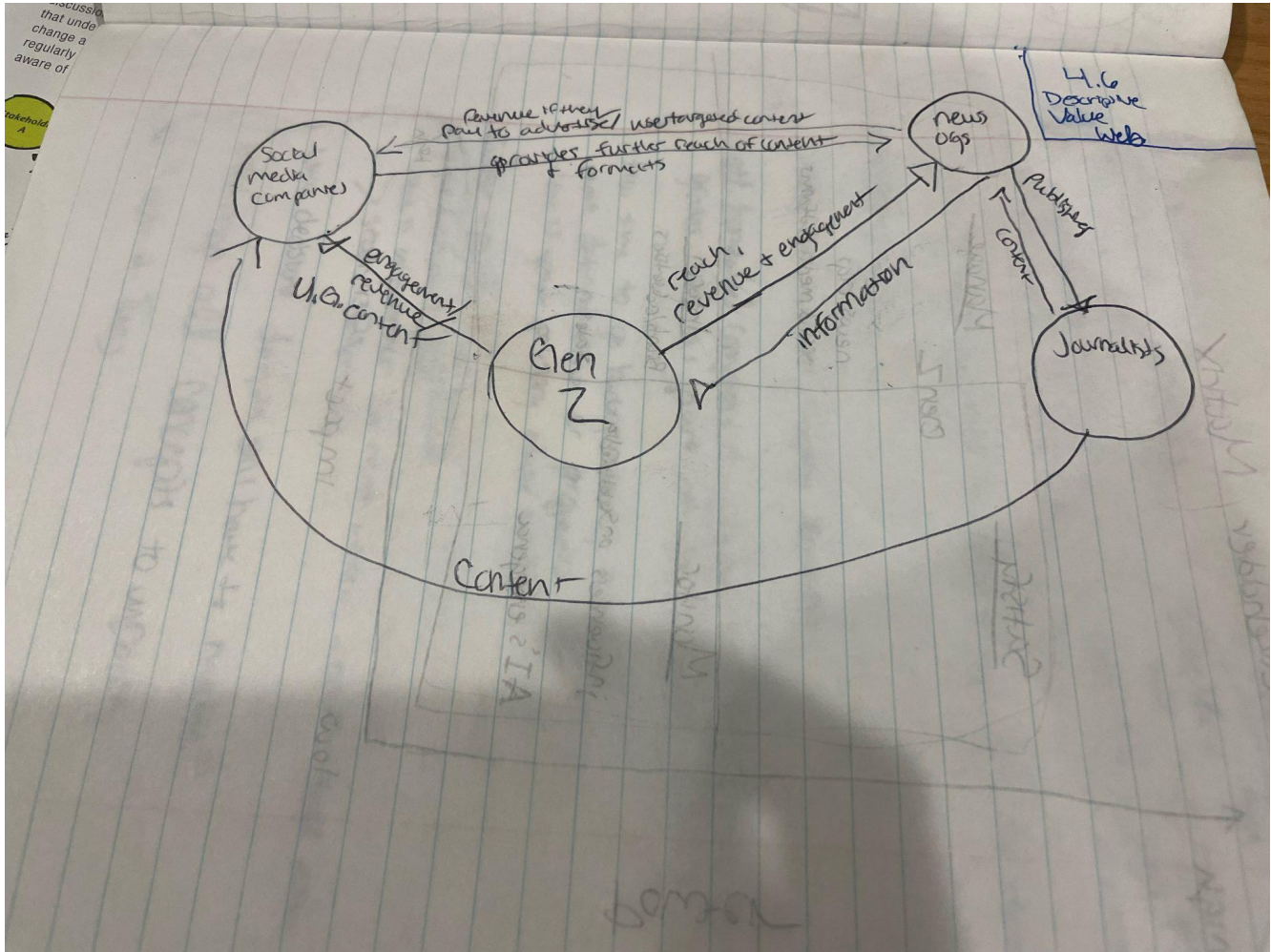
General areas of opportunity for innovation

- Twitter's erosion as a form of instant news updates and information sharing is changing with Elon Musk at the helm currently – maybe room for a new format of social media to emerge that is tailored to a news experience for GenZ
- Opportunities are within the big media companies, not beating them. Giving them a tool or multiple tools to better engage with GenZ and build trust is much more likely to work than creating a new media company/platform to cut through the noise and rise to the top.

ERAF Systems Diagram



Descriptive Value Web:



Summary Framework

Summary Statement: GenZ teens and adults care about news, some topics like healthcare, the environment, civic engagement and racial equity more than others, but they have distrust for traditional media formats, are concerned about misinformation, fake news and disinformation, they almost exclusively seek out news on their phones. They also are more likely to use to navigate social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram as search engines than traditional search engines themselves. They engage more with content they relate to, which has given rise to social media influencers. They're unlikely to want to pay for premium content since this generation, like millennials, is also burdened by debt.

Methods	Findings	Insights	Design Principles
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Innovation Sourcebook (mode 1)	Gen Z uses TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, Twitch, Discord for social media	Platforms all have a way for them to have their own presence & engage with brands + other content	Visual, short form, fast, instant, 2-way communication
ERAS Map (mode 2)	Since the 80s there have been several different iterations of media consumption	Changes in the media landscape occur often, staying	Take AI into account
Publications Research (mode 2)	Looked at trust psychology, GenZ media habits and gen info about the generation	Trust as a mediator = warmth and consideration, chemistry with the parties, and lack of bias toward either party. GenZ is drawn to short content and very visual that they can interact with	Visual, short form, fast, instant, 2-way communication
Subject Matter Experts Interview (mode 2)	No news companies from the ones I spoke to are thinking about GenZ in content consideration at all	Said there is definitely a disconnection between news + this gen, a gap to fill	Gen Z's preferences: Visual, short form, fast, instant, 2-way communication + focused content
PESTLE (mode 2)	Economic factors and social factors affecting journalism stood out	Economic: GenZ debt burden, recession, loans, etc. as well as operating costs for news orgs, etc. influence how business is conducted + can stifle innovation somewhat due to limited \$ Socially: political divides, misinformation/lack of trust	Must be free and have built in trust mechanisms
POEMS (mode 3)	Use phones almost exclusively for news consumption	Don't like how genZ always referenced by news orgs, too many ads, too many distractions	Must be mobile-focused, visually appealing and user friendly, limit ads or find less cluttered ways to

			display them as needed
User Journey Map (mode 3)	Several pain points exist along the journey and it takes a lot to keep this Gen loyal	Pain points: information overload, too many ads, pop-ups, email signup requests before even getting to the content	Avoid overloading the user experience with touchpoints, let them engage and find more natural ways to offer other things
ERAF Systems Diagram (mode 4)	Not much connection from journalists to Gen Z - lots of back and forth everywhere else	A lot of control in these systems still by older, whiter male individuals - GenZ not really in the industries it is being influenced by	Find a way to incorporate authenticity, influencer strategies w/ younger diverse news personalities
Descriptive Value Web (mode 4)	Not much connection from journalists to Gen Z - lots of back and forth everywhere else	GenZ willing to engage across platforms, could utilize UGC some	Find a way to incorporate authenticity, influencer strategies w/ younger diverse news personalities

Appendix VI: Explore Concepts, Frame Solutions, and Realize Offerings - Modes 5, 6, 7

Mode 5: Explore Concepts:

Through my research, I've come to realize that the real opportunity lies within the big media companies rather than trying to compete with them. Providing them with a tool to enhance their engagement with Gen Z and establish trust appears to be a more promising approach than attempting to create a new media company or platform to stand out in the crowded landscape.

My findings suggest that by introducing a dedicated platform for verified news, BOTH Gen Z and news organizations can take significant steps towards rebuilding trust in media and journalism. The erosion of trust caused by the proliferation of misinformation can be countered through this method, and such trust is paramount for a society that relies on accurate information to operate efficiently.

Value Hypothesis:

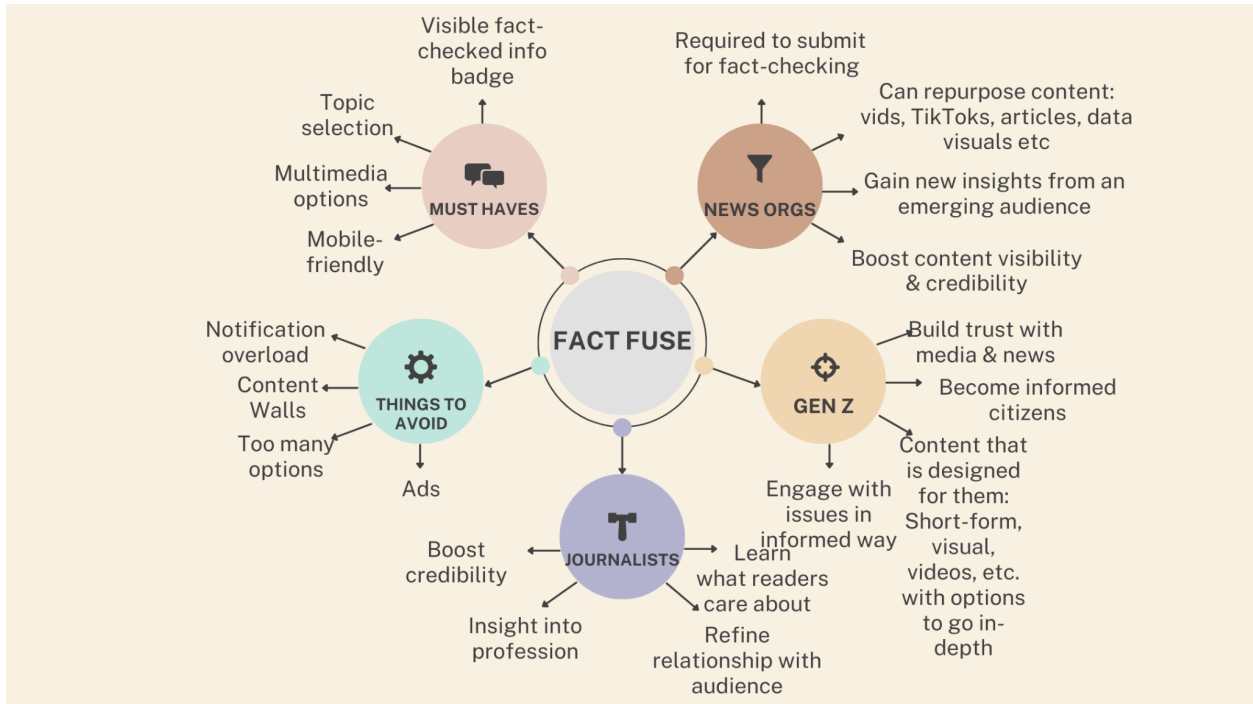
Users	Needs	FactFuse Offerings	Benefits
News Orgs	boost credibility, engage up& coming audience stakeholder, further disseminate content	fact-checking services, no need to create new content - can be repurposed, expand audience engagement,	exposure, audience building, information reach, credibility boost
Gen Z	access to trustworthy, informative content as they age into workforce + voting & decision making	verified way to trust news via fact checking, news content in formats they want it in/more accessible,	informed, trust news, educated decision making
Journalism Fact Checking Orgs (SPJ, Poynter, etc.)	preserve and boost trust in journalism profession and media industry, uphold ethics, support member journalists and media orgs	a tangible way to partner and further the values these orgs uphold for the journalism industry in a new digital-focused medial world	education of journalism to broader public, rebuild trust in news, teach younger generation
<p>Value Hypothesis: FactFuse brings value to Gen Z users, news organizations, and journalism nonprofits like the Poynter Institute and Society of Professional Journalists by providing them with a platform that openly fact-checks content submissions from news organizations and offers that content to users in a way that transparently confirms facts that could / could not be verified by the independent nonprofit fact-checkers.</p>			

Mode 6:Frame Solutions

News and media organizations can submit existing articles, briefs, or even videos to FactFuse and within minutes it will receive a fact-check seal through a partnership with independent fact-checkers from esteemed journalism nonprofits like the Society of Professional Journalists, the Poynter Institute, the Nieman Foundation for Journalism, Pew Research Center and the Knight Foundation.

By offering a platform dedicated to verified news, Gen Z can begin to rebuild trust in media and journalism, which have been eroded by the spread of misinformation. This trust is essential for a society that relies on accurate information to function effectively.

Prescriptive Value Web:



Mode7: Realize Offerings

Gen Z wants to be informed, is continuing to age further into adulthood and participation in the economy, workforce and voting system, but has a lot of distrust in news currently.

It is in Gen Z’s benefit to engage with a new platform focused on news that is presented with their preferences and behaviors in mind while transparently viewing fact-checked content and building trust in news media organizations.

News organizations historically aim to evolve with changing technologies and generations to remain relevant as an industry that’s purpose is to inform.

It is in news company’s benefit to join a platform that requires transparent fact-checking from trusted organizations and then packages content in a way that is visual and Gen Z friendly. Independent and open/visible fact checking on the platform will also raise the profile of the news company positively.

Matters because:

- Gen Z (anyone born between 1997-2012) are becoming adults, eligible to work, vote and participate meaningfully in the economy.
- Gen Z has a spending power of \$143 billion. (Davis, 2020)

- Gen Z cares about staying informed about the following topics: healthcare, higher ed, finance/economy, environment/climate change, racial equity, civic engagement (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021)
- “Roughly 8 in 10 (78%) Gen Z teens get news or current events daily from at least one source, compared with 69% of Gen Z adults and 84% of consumers across all generations.” (Auxier & Arbanas, 2022)

Vision Statement:

At FactFuse, our vision is to empower the next generation, Gen Z, with a digital space where truth prevails. We envision a world where information is not just readily accessible but is also transparent, credible, and independently verified.

Our commitment is to foster a community where young minds can engage, explore, and share news content that has been rigorously fact-checked, offering them a platform where the power of verified information guides conversations and decisions. We aspire to be the trusted bridge between the digital realm and responsible journalism, enabling Gen Z to shape a better, more informed future.

FactFuse is more than a social media platform; it's a catalyst for critical thinking, civic engagement, and global awareness. With our dedication to integrity, accuracy, and the pursuit of truth, we aim to equip Gen Z with the knowledge and tools they need in a format they want to navigate the complex world of information, ultimately creating a more informed and enlightened society.

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