



Media Leaders Summit

MIDDLE EAST | DUBAI, 3-4 MAY 2023

Programme: Day 1 - Wednesday 3 May

09:00 - 10:00 **Registration and welcome coffee**

10:00 - 10:30 **Opening of the conference**

Welcome address from our host

Majed Al Suwaidi, Managing Director, Dubai Media City (DMC), Dubai Studio City (DSC) and Dubai Production City (DPC), UAE

Welcome address from the region

Mohamed AlHammadi, Chairman of the Board of Directors at UAE Journalists Association & Editor-in-Chief of Jusoorpost website, UAE

Welcome address from WAN-IFRA

Mechthild Schimpf, Director Middle East, WAN-IFRA

10:30 - 11:15 **Keynote: Thrive or Dive?**

Five Innovations and One Single Strategy to Pursue in the Age of AI and Web3 – Discover the Latest Innovations in News Media from Our Comprehensive 2023/4 Report. The annual Innovation in News Media World Report on behalf of WAN-IFRA by INNOVATION Media Consulting is always a prescient trend indicator for the news industry. We have invited the INNOVATION team to join us to unpack all its findings in what is always a thought-provoking session.

Juan Señor, President, Innovation Media Consulting Group, UK

11:15 - 11:45 **Coffee break**

11:45 - 13:15 **Engaging with your audience**

Targeting specific audiences and producing content that serves their needs can be an effective strategy for media companies looking to grow their readership and adapt to the digital age.

Moderator: Alan Hunter, Co-founder, HBM Advisory, UK

Social is king

Want to know how important it is to engage your audience if you want to succeed as a digital news platform? What does your audience want and what can set you apart? If you've managed to grow your audience, how can you keep them hooked? Marium Chaudhry will discuss how a digital news startup can make a big mark in an already saturated industry but trying something new.

Marium Chaudhry, Founder, The Current, Pakistan

How Indian Express, one of the oldest news brands in India, doubled its key audience

Indian Express started premium sections in their portal that resulted in dramatic increase in its digital subscription numbers. What are the success secrets to add new subscribers, and importantly retain existing subscribers?

Nandagopal Rajan, Editor New Media & Business Head, Indianexpress.com, India

Conversational Content

How & why content needs to engage audiences and turn them from passive readers to active participants.

Ravi Raman, Publisher, Fast Company Middle East, UAE

13:15 - 14:45 **Networking lunch**

14:45 - 16:00 **A Data-driven Customer Journey**

A data-driven approach helps news media companies identifying new opportunities for growth and revenue generation. Overall, a data-driven customer journey is a powerful tool for businesses looking to optimize the customer experience and drive growth. By leveraging customer data and insights, businesses can make more informed decisions and deliver a more personalized and effective customer experience, which can ultimately lead to increased customer loyalty and revenue growth.

Moderator: Steffen Damborg, Digital Transformation Specialist, Denmark

A Data-driven Customer Journey

With news organizations increasingly focusing on their digital subscription business, finding ways to improve acquisition and retention of subscribers has become key.

News publishers are seeking to achieve this in a personalized and efficient manner with the aim to implement a fully data-driven customer journey.

Steffen Damborg, Digital Transformation Specialist, Denmark

Aligning Data Strategy with Business Goals

Media companies building their data strategy are facing challenging times, not only due to evolving regulations – though this is a key aspect this year. We will hear how the Financial Times Group has successfully managed to align itself with common goals, data ownership and platform relationships.

McKinley Hyden, Director of Analytics Business Impact, Financial Times, UK



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Programme: Day 2 - Thursday 4 May

09:30 - 10:00 **Welcome coffee**

10:00 - 11:00 **Trust in journalism in the age of news avoidance? – Applying constructive journalism in the Middle East**

Recent research shows that news avoidance is a challenge that publishers worldwide are increasingly worried about. The Founder and CEO of the Bonn Institute for journalism and constructive dialogue, Ellen Heinrichs, will talk about the reasons why people actively avoid the news, how constructive journalism can help to counter this trend and why latest experiments show that a constructive strategy can even help newsrooms with the monetization of their journalism.

Ellen Heinrichs, CEO, Bonn Institute, Germany

Fireside chat

Ellen Heinrichs in conversation with Hamoud Almamoud, Editor in Chief, Fortune Arabia; Chief Content Officer, Majarra.

Hamoud Almahmoud, Chief Content Officer, Majarra, UAE

11:00 - 11:30 **Coffee break**

11:30 - 13:00 **Embracing a digital-first approach – reaching wider audiences and engaging with customers in a more meaningful way**

Embracing a digital-first approach means prioritizing digital channels, platforms, and technologies in all aspects of your business strategy and operations. This involves understanding the evolving needs and preferences of your target audience, and leveraging digital tools to create a more effective and engaging customer experience.

A digital-first approach also involves creating a culture of innovation and collaboration. This means fostering an environment in which employees are encouraged to experiment and share ideas, and where cross-functional teams can work together to develop new digital solutions and strategies.

Moderator: Alan Hunter, Co-founder, HBM Advisory, UK

Embracing a digital-first mindset

Alan will share the lessons he has learnt in transforming newsrooms to succeed digitally. What are the first things to address? What are the key skills you need in your business? What are the pitfalls to avoid? At its heart is a focus on audiences and their varying and ever-changing needs.

Alan Hunter, Co-founder, HBM Advisory, UK

Moving to a Digital First Newsroom

It all starts in the newsroom – to make better news products and create more functional new organizations we need to rethink how we do things – What roles, structures and management style do you need to think about how to thrive in an increasingly visual and audio-driven news ecosystem.

Kathrine Hammerstad, Executive Editor for Live News and Digital Development, NRK, Norway

The transformation of the Economist – how a 180-year old, global, weekly publication is making the transition to a digital-first one

Adam Roberts, Digital Editor at the Economist will talk about the challenges when transforming a 180 year old, global, weekly publication to a digital first one, while maintaining all the same high standards as before.

Adam Roberts, Digital Editor, The Economist, UK

13:00 - 14:30 **Networking lunch**

14:30 - 16:00 **Future and tech media strategies**

Strategising AI and Journalism

How should your newsroom approach artificial intelligence technologies, including the recent dramatic developments in generative AI such as ChatGPT? Based on five years of LSE research and collaboration with newsrooms around the world through the JournalismAI Project, this talk will highlight the practical and ethical opportunities and risks.

Charlie Beckett, Director of Polis and Journalism AI Project, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), UK

AI – The big game changer? 10 years of using Artificial Intelligence in the Newsroom

Norway's Adresseavisen is both a traditional publisher and a thoroughly modern one. First published in 1767, and based in Trondheim, it is the country's oldest daily and part of Schibsted and Polaris Media.

It is also one of the very few newspapers in the world that has already been working with both AI and robots in their newsroom for several years. Christer S. Johnsen, Editor and Head of Editorial Development, will share what they've done right, what's gone wrong and what's coming up next.

Christer S Johnsen, Editor and Head of Editorial Development, Adresseavisen, Norway