𝕿𝖗𝖚𝖘𝖙 in News

Insights

Contents

Introduction

In the era of 'fake news', news audiences are increasingly aware of their susceptibility to misinformation, disinformation, and/or mal-information. In response, many Canadians turn to more sources for news to offset their mistrust of certain media outlets. To better understand this behaviour in news audiences, Vividata and Kantar partnered to complete Canada's first Trust in News study.

The study examines how Canadians feel about their news sources in the era of 'fake news', their preferred and trusted sources, and the importance of quality journalism. The study also tried to uncover areas of strength and opportunity for news organizations in Canada.

Methodology

Using a representative subset of 2,000 respondents from Vividata's highly regarded Survey of the Canadian Consumer, the Trust in News survey was conducted in April 2018. These respondents completed a specially designed 15-minute survey that was statistically linked to the Survey of the Canadian Consumer providing the full suite of variables for extended analysis.

Canada's Interest in News

69%
of Canadian adults have a **'strong interest'** in news.

Question: How interested would you say you are in the news on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means that you have a very strong interest in it and 1 means that you have no interest in it? Percentage shown refers to the net of '5' and '4'.

Canadians have an appetite for news. 69% of Canadian adults identify as having a 'strong interest' in news. This interest varies positively with age, not surprisingly, but even a majority of 18-24 year old's have a strong interest in news, contrary to popular belief. The strong interest in news across age categories shows that news content continues to command consumer engagement.

'Strong Interest' in News by Age:

■ Strong interest   ■ Some interest   ■ Little to no interest

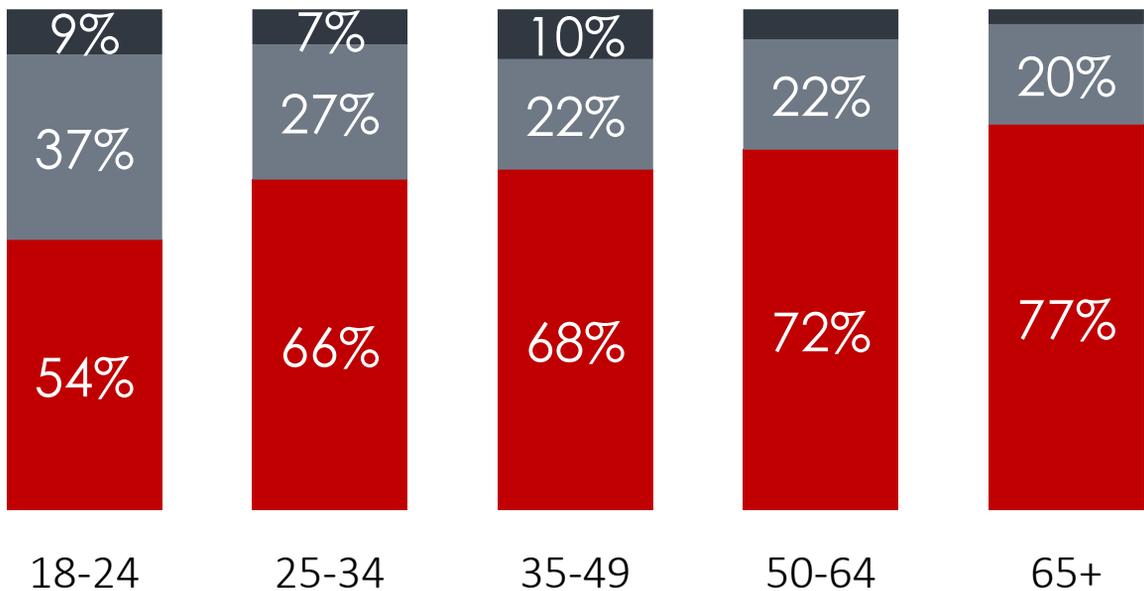| Age	Little to no	Some	Strong
18-24	9%	37%	54%
25-34	7%	27%	66%
35-49	10%	22%	68%
50-64		22%	72%
65+		20%	77%

Question: How interested would you say you are in the news on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means that you have a very strong interest in it and 1 means that you have no interest in it? Strong interest refers to the net of '5' and '4', Some interest refers to '3', Little to no interest refers to the net of '2' and '1'.

Number of News Sources Used:

On average, news audiences use 3 different types of media for news throughout the week (e.g. TV, radio, printed magazines, online, etc.). For printed national daily newspaper brand audiences, this figure jumps to 5 sources, an indicator of a strong appetite for news among audiences of national newspaper brands.

Interest in the news is also on the rise among news audiences in general; 1 in 4 use a greater number of news sources in 2018 than they were in 2017. This trend is greater among younger audiences with 31% of 18-24 year-olds recording an increase in sources used, illustrating that younger audiences are engaged by news content.

Not displayed in the chart below, 1 in 3 national daily newspaper brand readers use more sources now than in 2017, identifying a deep engagement and commitment to news among audiences of national newspaper brands.

3
Average number of news sources used by news audiences

5
Average number of news sources used by **printed newspaper brand** audiences

Age			
18-24	31%	52%	9%
25-34	26%	60%	7%
35-49	25%	61%	8%
50-64	25%	65%	7%
65+	25%	65%	7%
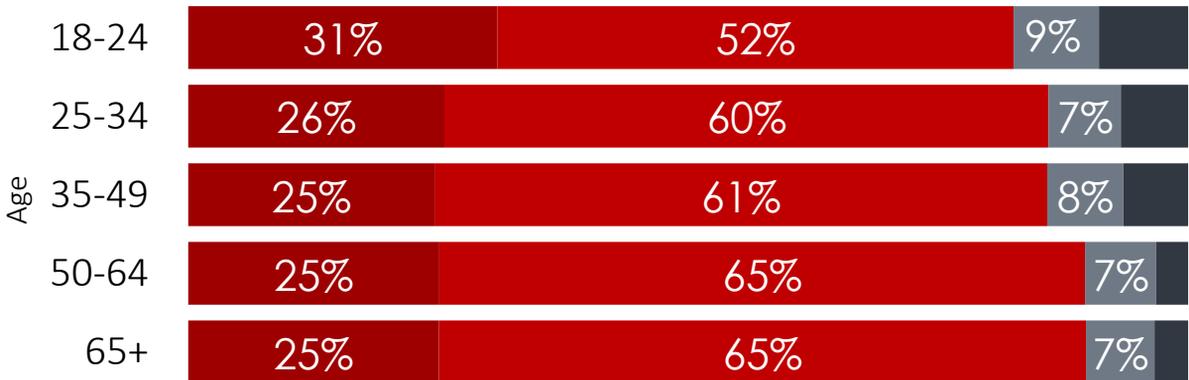
■ I use a greater number of news sources now than 12 months ago
■ I use more or less the same number of news sources now as 12 months ago
■ I use fewer news sources now than 12 months ago
■ Dont know

Question 1 (to obtain average number of news sources used): Which of the following have you used in the past week as a source of news?
Question 2: Thinking about all the different ways in which you access the news, which one of the following is true for you?

Frequency of Catching-Up on News:

- ■ Several times a day
- ■ At least once every day
- ■ Several times a week
- ■ About once a week

48%

37%

10%

5%
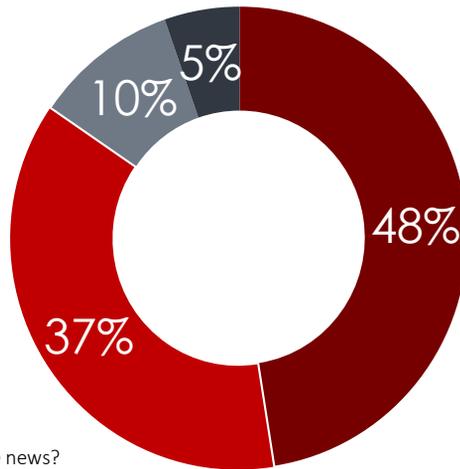
Question: Typically, how often do you catch up on the news?

Canadians frequent news outlets daily. 48% of Canadian news audiences catch-up on news several times a day using various sources. Another 37% do so at least once a day. Essentially, every day, 85% of news audiences are actively consuming news content from various news media.

The top types of news Canadians are looking to catch-up on are news about their region, city or town, international news, and Canadian political news. For these top types of news, the depth of commentary and analysis provided by newspaper brands is unprecedented (see page 10).

Audience Interest in Types of News:

Type of News	Percentage
News about my region, city or town	84%
International news	76%
Canadian political news	66%
Health news	56%
News about crime, justice & security	54%
Science & technology news	53%
Business & economic news	45%
Sports news	37%
Education news	34%
Entertainment & celebrity news	33%
Arts & culture news	30%
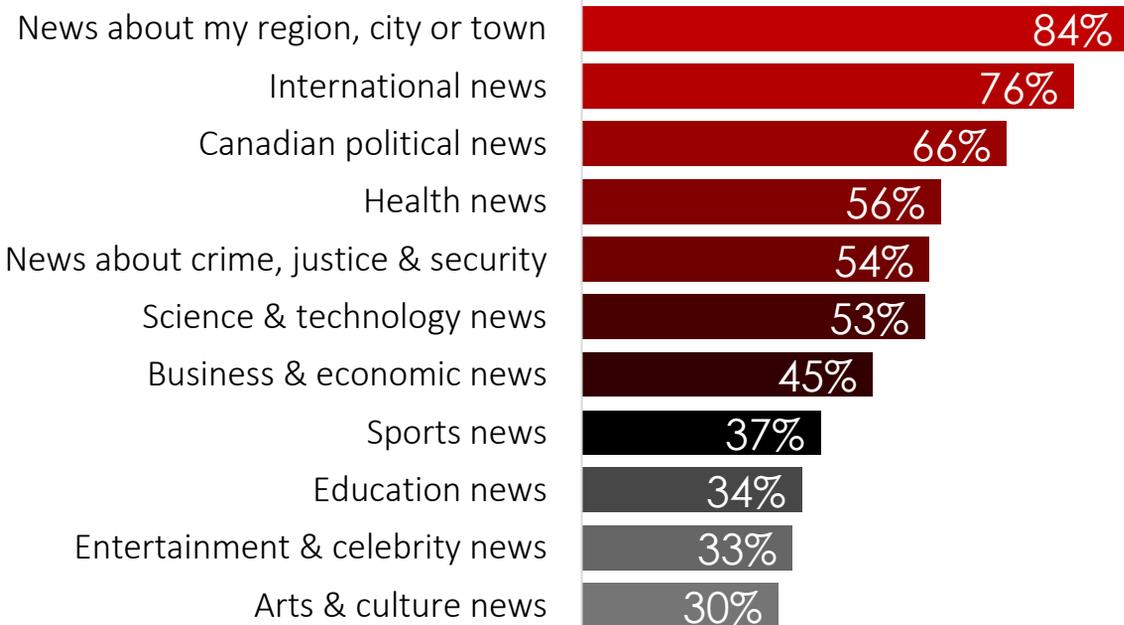
Question: Which of the following types of news are you interested in?

News Media of Choice:

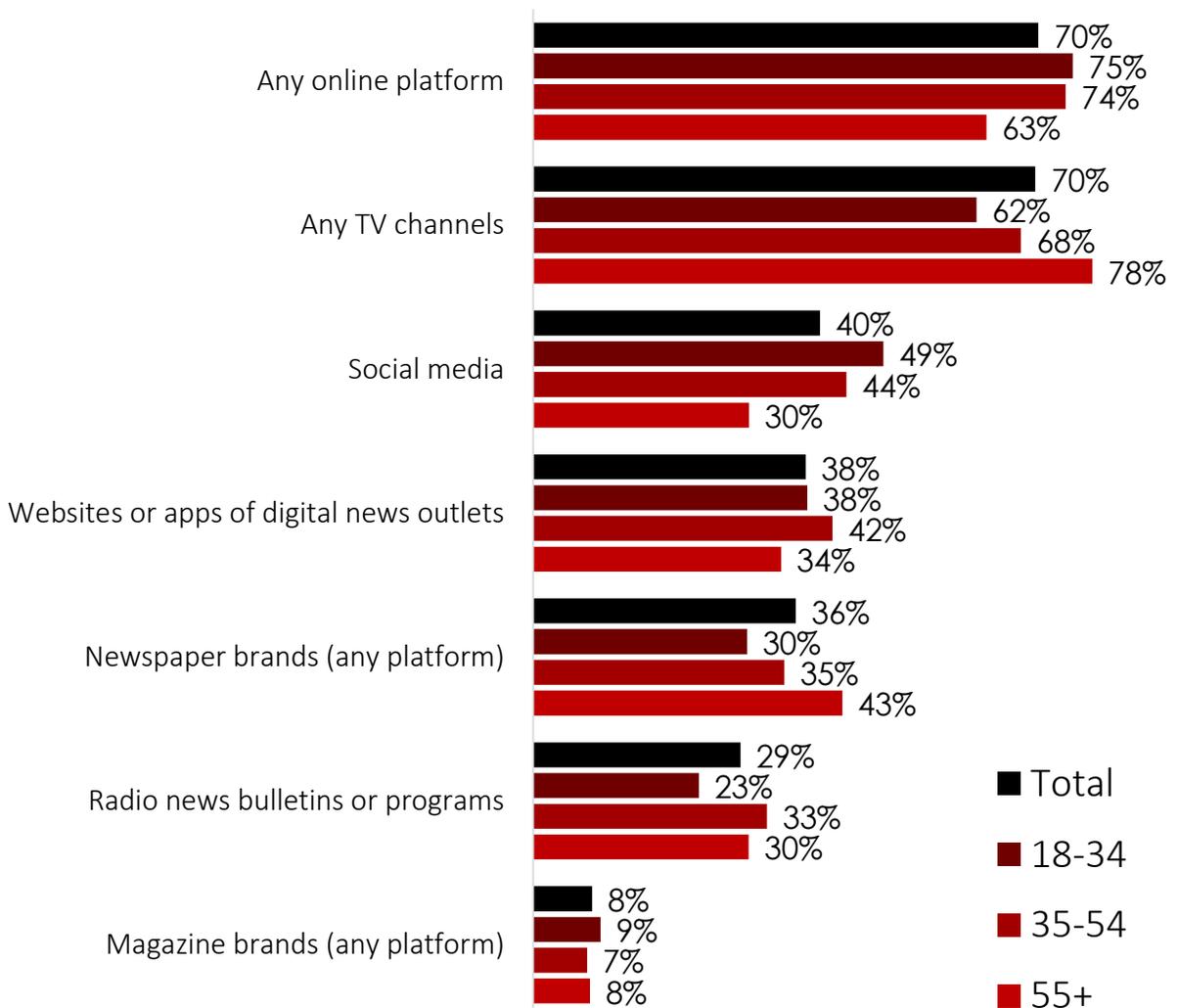Online news is the leading medium for news audiences. Each week, 70% of Canadians access news from any online platform, including digital only news outlets, social media, or newspaper, magazine, radio or TV websites or applications. The rise of digital platforms continues to be driven by 18-34 year old's, with three quarters of them accessing news online.

Aside from online platforms, the dominant media for news is TV (either news programs or 24 hour news channels), at a reach of 70% among news audiences ("total"). Following TV is social media at 40%. Newspaper brands, while behind social media and digital news outlets at 36%, hold an important position in the news media landscape. As we'll see later in the report, newspaper brands, and other traditional media, hold a high amount of trust among news audiences. Trust that is currently unreachable by digital only sources.

Any online platform
- 70%
- 75%
- 74%
- 63%

Any TV channels
- 70%
- 62%
- 68%
- 78%

Social media
- 40%
- 49%
- 44%
- 30%

Websites or apps of digital news outlets
- 38%
- 38%
- 42%
- 34%

Newspaper brands (any platform)
- 36%
- 30%
- 35%
- 43%

Radio news bulletins or programs
- 29%
- 23%
- 33%
- 30%

Magazine brands (any platform)
- 8%
- 9%
- 7%
- 8%

- ■ Total
- ■ 18-34
- ■ 35-54
- ■ 55+

Question: Which of the following have you used in the past week as a source of news?

Devices Used to Access News Online:

68%
Laptop or Desktop

64%
Smartphone

29%
Tablet
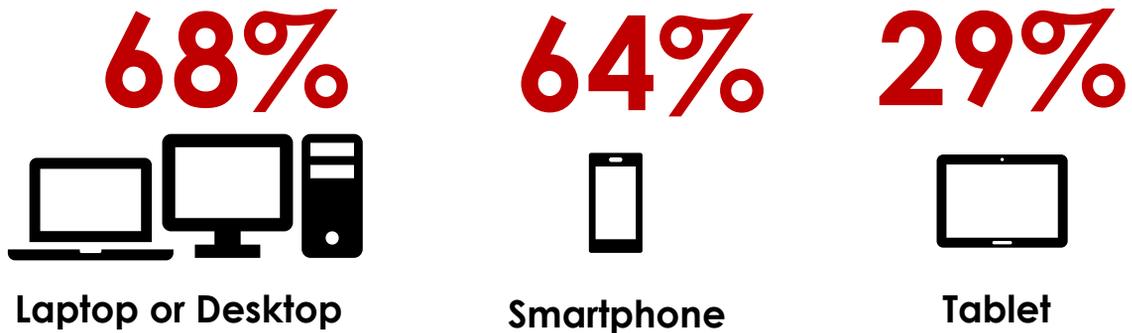
Question: Typically, how often do you catch up on the news? (Results presented for those who used digital sources in the past week)

With regard to accessing online news, it is no surprise that smartphones are the mobile device of choice. While a greater percentage of news audiences use a laptop or desktop to access the news, smartphones provide an unparalleled digital experience. They provide a quicker, more integrated portal into accessing news through social media; currently the most popular way to access news online. And for those that access news through social media, it is a lot about convenience. Its users, as indicated below, can read the news on the go and easily access a wide variety of sources, while also seeing what friends and other relations care about. But, where social media gains in convenience, it lacks in trust.

Why Audiences Use Social Media for News:

49% *"I can read the news on the go."*

45% *"I can easily access a wide variety of news sources."*

40% *"I can see what news my friends care about."*

37% *"I can access the most relevant news to me (as it learns about my preferences)."*

34% *"I can comment and share news with others."*

Question: Why do you use social media to access, share or participate in news coverage? (Results presented for those who used social media sources in the past week)
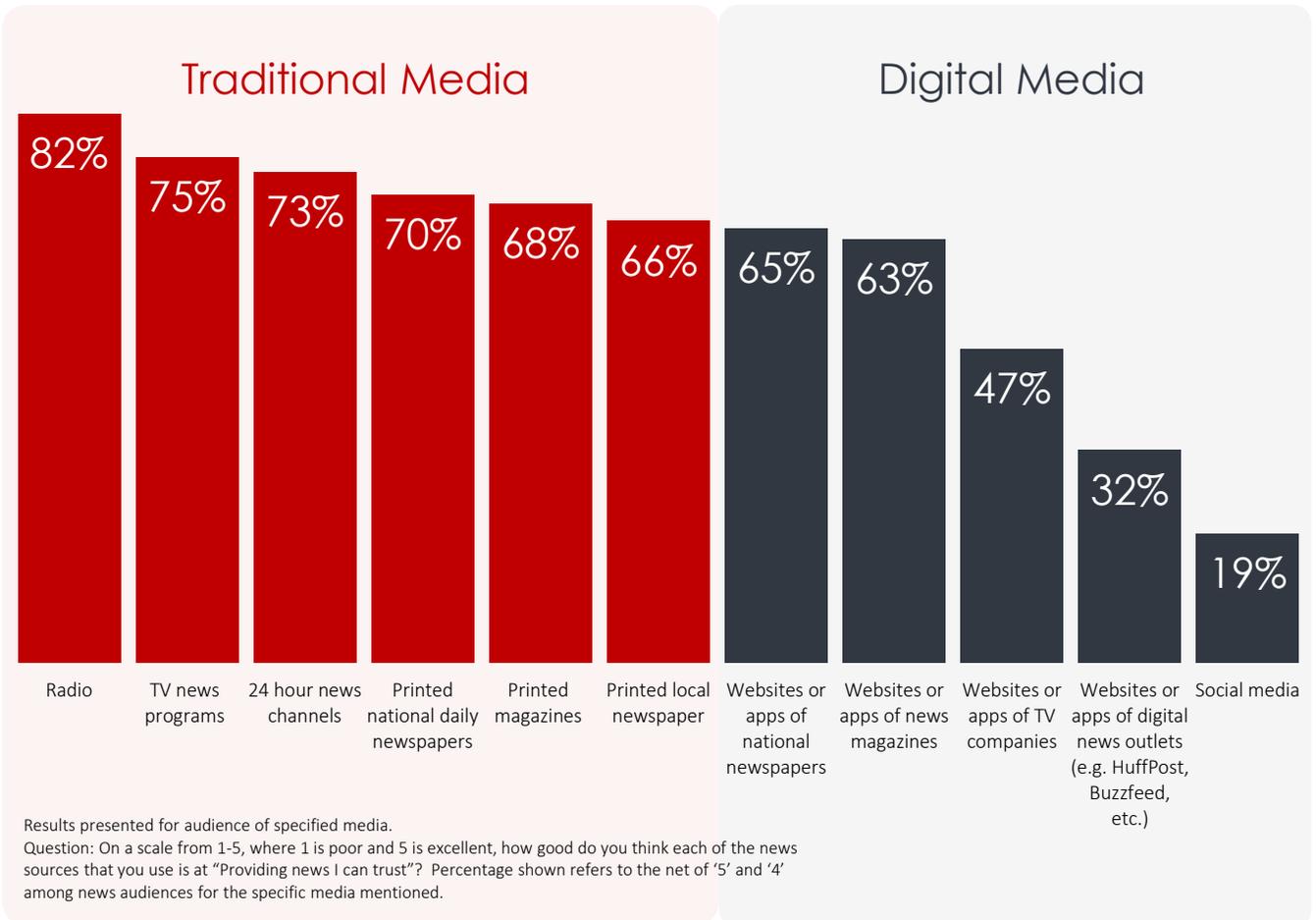
Trust in News

Trust in News Sources Used:

News audiences rate their highest trust in radio, TV news programs, 24 hour news channels, printed national daily newspapers, and printed magazines; websites or apps of digital news outlets and social media sit at the other end of the spectrum, having the least amount of news audience trust.

There is a distinct traditional and digital media dynamic at play here. Traditional media clearly garners much more trust from news audiences than digital media. Also, perhaps unsurprisingly, trust in digital offerings by newspaper and magazine brands are double that of exclusively digital news outlets. This is an important indicator for advertisers looking to leverage audience trust for a media outlet and cross-platform effectiveness simultaneously.

Traditional Media

Source	Trust
Radio	82%
TV news programs	75%
24 hour news channels	73%
Printed national daily newspapers	70%
Printed magazines	68%
Printed local newspaper	66%

Digital Media

Source	Trust
Websites or apps of national newspapers	65%
Websites or apps of news magazines	63%
Websites or apps of TV companies	47%
Websites or apps of digital news outlets (e.g. HuffPost, Buzzfeed, etc.)	32%
Social media	19%

Results presented for audience of specified media.
Question: On a scale from 1-5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how good do you think each of the news sources that you use is at "Providing news I can trust"? Percentage shown refers to the net of '5' and '4' among news audiences for the specific media mentioned.
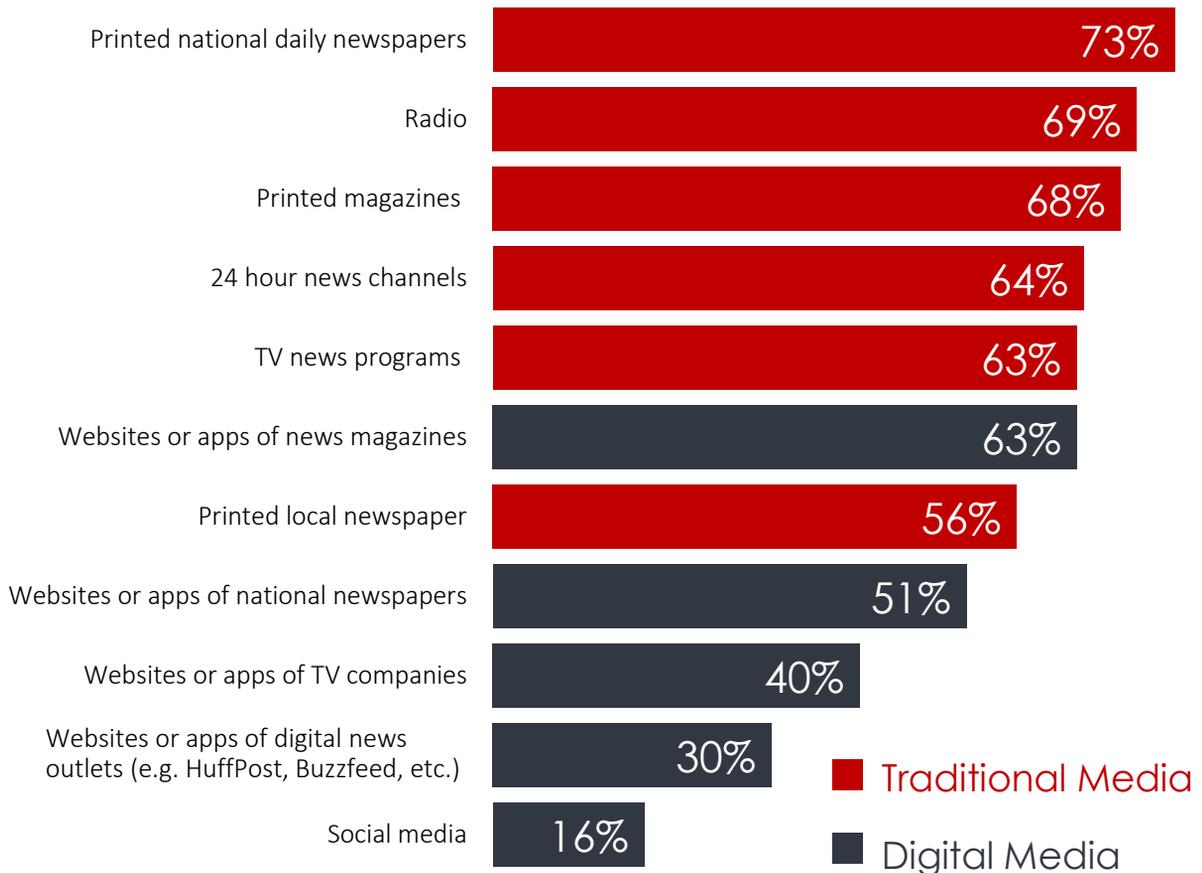
Rating of News Sources Used for Providing In-Depth Commentary and Analysis:

News audiences have a range of wants and expectations for news content. For some, convenience based on the time of day is paramount, while for others it may be about entertainment, or having their views or perceptions challenged. In any case, trust in the media audiences are consuming is a key factor throughout.

"Providing in depth commentary and analysis" is a core metric of trust in news. Among Canadians, printed national daily newspapers, radio, and printed magazines are rated highest for providing in depth commentary and analysis.

Established news brands have the ability to position themselves as the trusted medium of choice, since they are. This positioning can enable news brands to break free of the now much contested practice of ad spend being firmly aligned with time spent with media. Trust transcends basic attention metrics, and is a key differentiator for news brands.

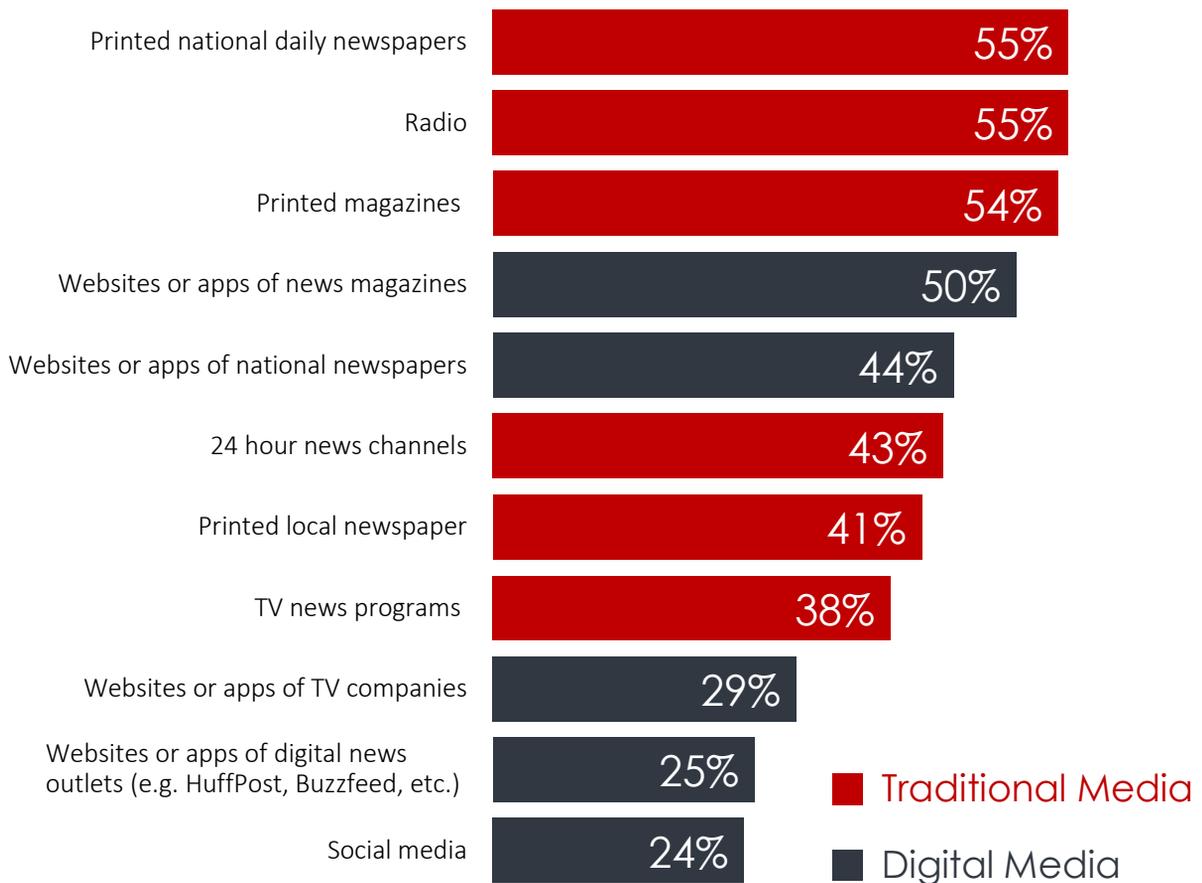| News Source	Rating
Printed national daily newspapers	73%
Radio	69%
Printed magazines	68%
24 hour news channels	64%
TV news programs	63%
Websites or apps of news magazines	63%
Printed local newspaper	56%
Websites or apps of national newspapers	51%
Websites or apps of TV companies	40%
Websites or apps of digital news outlets (e.g. HuffPost, Buzzfeed, etc.)	30%
Social media	16%

■ Traditional Media
■ Digital Media

Question: On a scale from 1-5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how good do you think each of the news sources that you use is at providing in-depth commentary & analysis? Percentages shown refer to the net of '5' and '4' among news audiences for the specific media mentioned.

Ranking of News Sources Used to Challenge Personal Views and Opinions:

A secondary driver of trust is media that challenges the audience's personal views and opinions. Here as well printed national daily newspapers come out on top, followed by radio, and printed magazines.

The digital offerings of newspaper and magazine brands also beat out digital only news outlets on this metric, indicating that audience trust in newspaper and magazine brands goes beyond the printed page.

News Source	Percentage
Printed national daily newspapers	55%
Radio	55%
Printed magazines	54%
Websites or apps of news magazines	50%
Websites or apps of national newspapers	44%
24 hour news channels	43%
Printed local newspaper	41%
TV news programs	38%
Websites or apps of TV companies	29%
Websites or apps of digital news outlets (e.g. HuffPost, Buzzfeed, etc.)	25%
Social media	24%

■ Traditional Media
■ Digital Media

Question: On a scale from 1-5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how good do you think each of the news sources that you use is at challenging my views and opinions? Percentages shown refer to the net of '5' and '4' among news audiences for the specific media mentioned.

Additional Secondary Drivers of Trust	TV	Radio	Newspaper brands	Magazine brands	Digital only news outlets	Social media
Being easy to understand	89%	86%	80%	71%	71%	60%
Being first with breaking news	66%	57%	45%	29%	52%	50%
Being entertaining or amusing	44%	52%	40%	47%	56%	64%
Giving me things to talk about or share	66%	70%	63%	56%	55%	59%

Question: On a scale from 1-5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how good do you think each of the news sources that you use is at...? Percentages shown refer to the net of '5' and '4' among news audiences for the specific media mentioned.
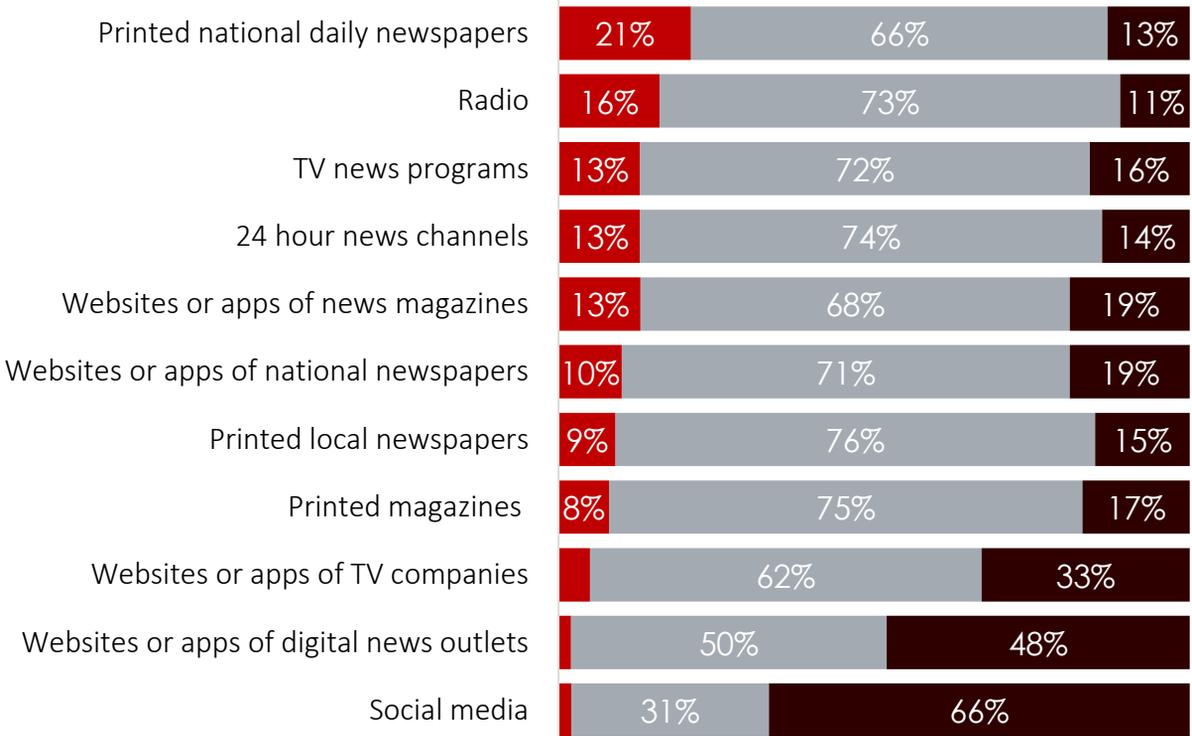
Trust in News Coverage of Politics and Elections

As far as trust in news coverage of politics and elections, digital media is clearly losing out in terms of the impact of 'fake news' on trust. 66% of news audiences claim to trust social media less as a result of 'fake news'. Also losing audience sentiment with regard to trust are websites or apps of digital only news outlets. It is not surprising that digital only channels are losing audience trust, as the creators of 'fake news' rely on these channels to spread their content.

Traditional, offline news sources have fared much better. In fact, printed national daily newspapers have gained the most trust since the proliferation of 'fake news', followed by radio then TV. Printed local newspapers have the highest retainment of trust, at 76%, followed by printed magazines.

The trusted status of traditional news media, highlighted in the earlier pages of this report, clearly impact this dynamic of traditional news organizations having a much greater reserve of audience trust.

Platform	More	The Same	Less
Printed national daily newspapers	21%	66%	13%
Radio	16%	73%	11%
TV news programs	13%	72%	16%
24 hour news channels	13%	74%	14%
Websites or apps of news magazines	13%	68%	19%
Websites or apps of national newspapers	10%	71%	19%
Printed local newspapers	9%	76%	15%
Printed magazines	8%	75%	17%
Websites or apps of TV companies		62%	33%
Websites or apps of digital news outlets		50%	48%
Social media		31%	66%

■ More   ■ The Same   ■ Less

Question: As a result of hearing about 'fake news', will you trust news coverage of politics and elections on the following platforms more, less or the same?

'Fake News'

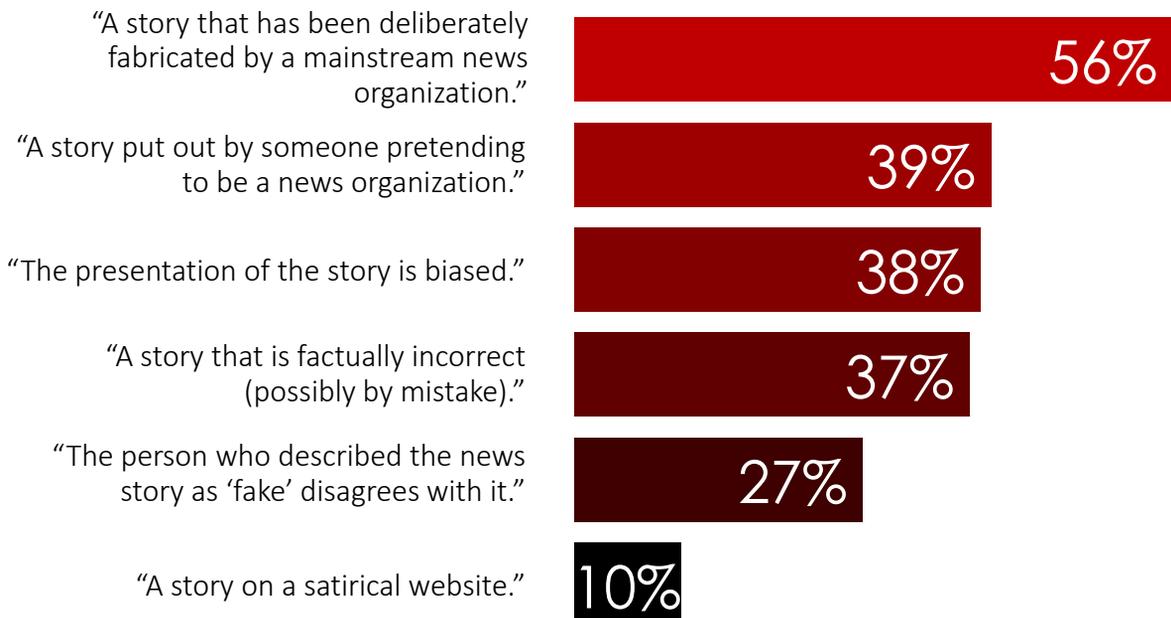# 91% of Canadian adults are aware of the term **'Fake News'**.

Question: **Have you heard of the term 'fake news'?**

There is indeed a scarcity in trust with the proliferation of 'fake news' online. While 'fake news' is not a new phenomenon, present occurrences spread rapidly via social media platforms. As of late, the worldwide impact that such 'fake news' has had on elections and referendums has demonstrated cause for concern.

9 out of 10 Canadian adults are aware of the term 'fake news', but the term seems to mean several things to Canadians. The top perceived meaning of 'fake news' is "a story that has been deliberately fabricated by a mainstream news organization", followed by, "a story put out by someone pretending to be a news organization". Whatever 'fake news' may mean to Canadians, a vast majority do believe that credible news sources matter.

What is 'Fake News'?

"A story that has been deliberately fabricated by a mainstream news organization." **56%**

"A story put out by someone pretending to be a news organization." **39%**

"The presentation of the story is biased." **38%**

"A story that is factually incorrect (possibly by mistake)." **37%**

"The person who described the news story as 'fake' disagrees with it." **27%**

"A story on a satirical website." **10%**

Question: When you hear a news item or story described as "fake news", what does that mean to you?

Attitudes Towards News

81% of news audiences believe that accuracy in journalism is key to a healthy democracy. However, a lesser 62% trust that what they read is true and not 'fake news' most of the time.

News is under more scrutiny than ever. External, partisan influence on the news is a concern for most. A majority of news audiences are worried that news media is failing to hold politicians and business leaders accountable for certain actions, and

a minority believe that Canadian news media is truly unbiased and free from political influence most of the time.

For news organizations that stress accurate, quality journalism, editorial integrity, and free themselves from government or corporate pressures, strategies that leverage these attributes to encourage audience growth and engagement are increasingly important.

81% *"The health of our democracy depends on journalists reporting the facts accurately."*

62% *"Most of the time, I trust that the news I'm seeing is true and not 'fake news'."*

60% *"I worry that the news media is failing to hold politicians and business figures accountable for their actions."*
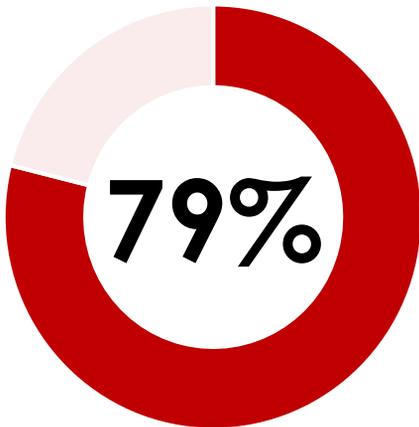
41% *"The news media in my country is free from undue political or government influence most of the time."*

Question: Thinking about news in general, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Percentages shown refer to the net of 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree'.

Sensitivity to 'Fake News':

### Question and verify facts in news story with another source

79%

Question: Have you ever questioned the facts in a news story you have seen and looked to check or verify these facts elsewhere?

With its effect on trust, 'fake news' has created a propensity among news audiences to verify facts in one media source with another. 79% of news audiences agree that they question and verify, elsewhere, facts in a news story they have seen. This verification of facts is likely what has led many to use multiple sources for news, and (as covered on page 4) to 1 in 4 using a greater number of news sources now in comparison to 12 months ago.

News audiences are personally empowered to combat 'fake news', because they have to be. Only 6% of news audiences have noticed Google or Facebook (the largest digital media companies) taking steps to help identify 'fake news'. This has led a majority of news audiences, 66%, to think twice about sharing news stories online after just reading a headline and not the complete content.

Have noticed Facebook or Google taking steps to help identify 'fake news'

6%
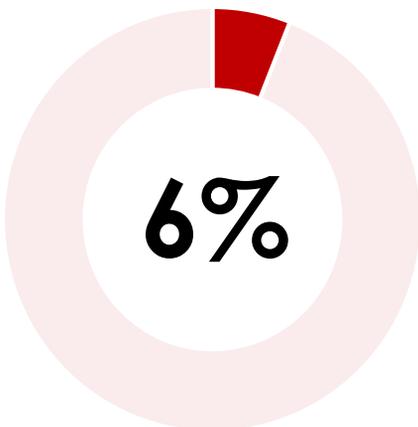
Question: Have you noticed Facebook or Google taking any steps to help you identify 'fake news' when you are online?

Think twice about sharing news stories online without reading them since hearing of 'fake news'

66%
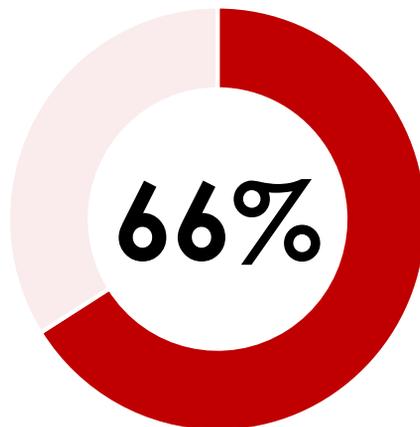
Question: Do you think twice about sharing news stories online without reading them first since you heard of 'fake news'?

Effective Ways to Tackle 'Fake News':

Half of Canada's news audience believes it is the responsibility of individuals to tackle 'fake news' through choosing credible news sources. 45% call for tougher regulations.

News audiences also see the potential for technology to help them make the right choice for news to trust. Nearly a third believe that alerts next to 'fake news' stories are an effective way to tackle 'fake news'. They also believe that as equally effective as alerts are fact checking bots or teams of human moderators. Pragmatically, bots and/or human moderators could generate such alerts.

What's clear here is that audiences realize that they play a part in stemming the spread of 'fake news'. This further presents an opportunity for traditional, established news brands to assert the quality and credibility of their journalism, and their deep history and commitment to reporting the news accurately.

■ **50%** People choosing to use more credible news sources

■ 45% Tougher regulations

■ 32% Clear alerts next to 'fake news' stories

■ 32% Fact checking 'bots' that automatically verify whether a story is true or not

■ 31% Teams/communities of human moderators on sites such as Facebook

■ 19% The use of Artificial Intelligence to detect whether a story is true or not

Question: Which of the following do you believe are effective ways to tackle 'fake news'?

Conclusion

'Fake news' has been more detrimental to trust in news on digital only news outlets and social media than on traditional or mainstream news media. Traditional news organizations must continue to leverage their reputation for producing quality content and build on the legacy of trusted journalism they have with their audiences.

With regard to trust, there is a distinct traditional and digital media dynamic at play. Traditional media clearly garners much more trust from news audiences than digital media.

While newspaper brands may fall slightly behind other media for overall trust, when it comes to providing audiences with in-depth commentary and analysis, and challenging a reader's personal views and opinions, printed national daily newspapers come out on top.

While leveraging a heritage of trust and a reputation for credible journalism is crucial for news brands to retain and grow an audience, it is also crucial for advertisers. It is well known that ad effectiveness increases in trusted environments. Established news brands provide such an environment for audiences and advertisers to develop their own relationship.

About Vividata

Vividata provides essential consumer intelligence to a wide range of companies including media agencies, media companies and advertisers in Canada and around the world. Offering the largest syndicated study in Canada, Vividata is the go to source for demographics, attitudes, life events, media, purchasing, and brand preferences.

Vividata leverages its industry expertise and experience to determine the subject and scope for various syndicated studies throughout the year, such as its Trust in News Study and Cannabis Study. We determine the best questions to ask Canadians, the population of Canadians to target, and offer these results as a standalone study, or integrated to our Survey of the Canadian Consumer for additional intelligence.

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