

State of Australian Media Report

Our recap of the industry trends and talking points from all things media throughout 2024 in Australia.



December 2024

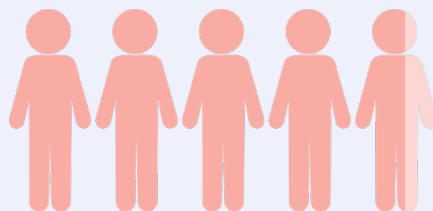


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Media Consumption



In 2024, readership figures from [Roy Morgan](#) show that news content now reaches **21.7 million Australians aged 14 and above** each month, accounting for **97%** of the population. This marks a 1% increase from 2023. While more of us are reading news, less of us are willing to pay for access to premium content, with the proportion of Australians paying for news stagnating, dropping by 1% in 2024 to 21% of news consumers.

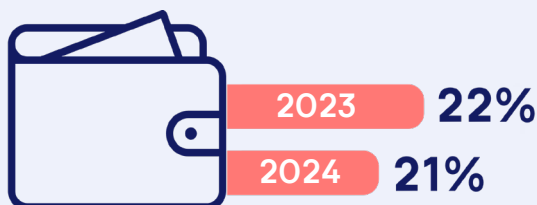


97%
Australians
Aged 14+

engage with news content each month in 2024

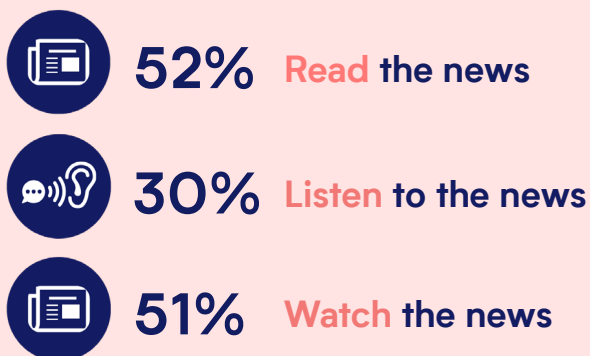
Source: Data – [Roy Morgan](#)

Australians paying for news



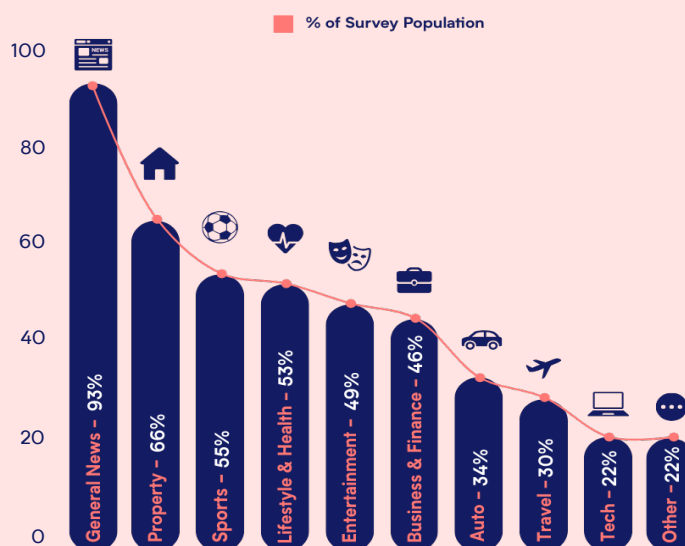
This follows a period of unprecedented growth in 2022–2023, as highlighted by the [University of Canberra Digital News Report](#). This is likely due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis in Australia – mentioned on average over **86,000** times per month across Australian online, print, radio and television.

How Australians are Consuming News in 2024



Source: [Think News Brands FactPack August 2024](#)

Monthly Average News Readership by Category – FY23/24



Source: Data – [Roy Morgan](#)



+8% increase in heavy news consumption
44% are heavy news consumers

One of the most striking trends is the rising engagement in news content from Gen Z (usually defined as those born between 1998 and 2012), with the University of Canberra Digital News Report finding an **8% increase** in heavy news consumption amongst Gen Z, with **44%** now classified as ‘heavy’ news consumers.

This increase is likely a response to 2024’s news cycle, dominated by international unrest and conflict – the Middle East Regional Conflict was in the **top 5 most covered news stories for every week this year**. The US Presidential Election and Russia-Ukraine conflict were also among the most covered news stories of the year. International events that have significant implications for global stability have heightened the urgency for younger audiences to stay informed. The media and the general public are progressively holding brands and companies accountable for their positions and financial connections, relating to complex geopolitical issues. There is a growing expectation for these brands to take a clear stance, and this expectation is notably evident in the context of the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas. This heightened scrutiny is reflected in the frequent appearance of keywords like “Israel”, “Palestine”, and “Boycott” being mentioned together in online coverage on an everyday basis throughout 2024.

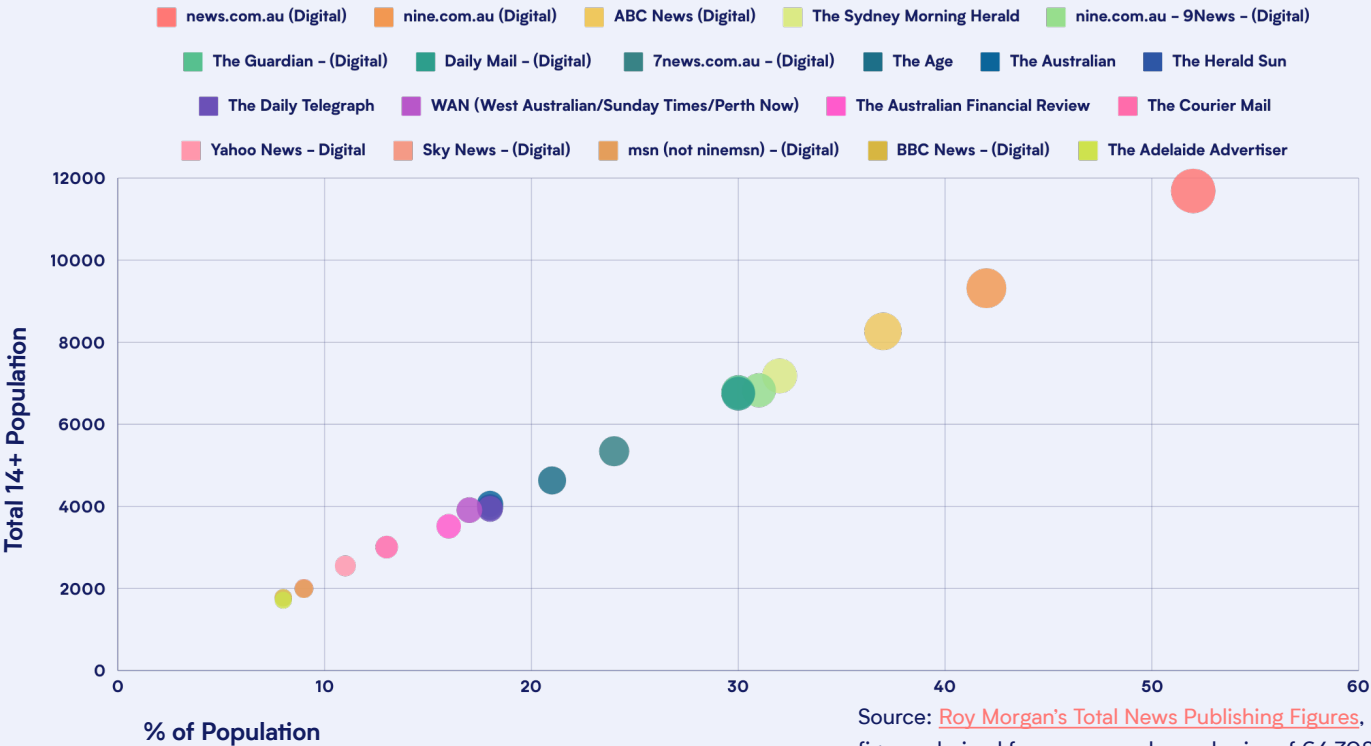
Top 5 Most Covered Stories of 2024



Total volume of mentions across Australian Print, Radio, TV & Online. 1 Jan – 15 Nov 2024.

Consequently, public relations professionals face the incredibly daunting task of crafting messages amidst persistent public interest and intense media scrutiny from all sides on an enormous range of issues. However, it's nearly impossible to navigate these situations without some form of backlash, making the maintenance of public profiles more difficult than ever before, as any perceived misstep could significantly impact a brand's reputation, and its relationships with customers and stakeholders.

News Cross-Platform – Monthly Average Audience



Source: [Roy Morgan's Total News Publishing Figures](#), figures derived from an annual sample size of 64,708

Media Landscape

Relationship between media organisations and tech companies



Decline in regional journalism and layoffs



Broader financial pressures



Reports indicate that Australia's local news sector is facing a crisis, which is a significant concern given the crucial role local news plays in informing rural communities across Australia. In 2024 the Australian Community Media (publisher of about 160 newspapers in regional and rural areas) cut dozens of editorial jobs from its newspapers, including The Canberra Times and Illawarra Mercury, closing most of its non-daily papers. The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) has criticised these cuts, highlighting the challenges in maintaining quality local journalism.

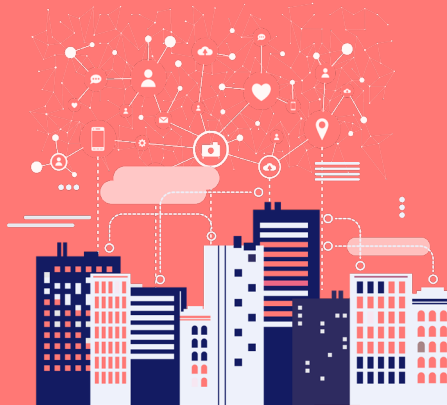
This pressure wasn't limited to regional media with layoffs felt across several media organisations including Nine Entertainment, News Corp Australia and Seven West Media. These layoffs reflect the broader financial pressures facing the industry, and highlight the vulnerability of traditional media in the face of digital disruption and economic challenges, raising concerns about the future of journalism in Australia.

In response to challenges regional media outlets are facing, The Australian Research Council Linkage project, led by Deakin University in partnership with Griffith University and the ABC, "is examining how local news producers can work together with the ABC to support vulnerable areas of the news ecology." This initiative aims to develop a model similar to the BBC's Local Democracy Reporting Service, which has been successful in supporting local journalism in the UK.

Meta's decision to end its commercial deals with Australian news media in 2024 has further complicated matters. In March, Meta (the parent company of Facebook and Instagram) decided to end its commercial deals with Australian news media, declining to renew agreements that had been in place since the introduction of the News Media Bargaining Code. This move has sparked significant tension between Meta and Australian publishers.

The News Media Bargaining Code, introduced in 2021, required tech giants like Meta and Google to pay for displaying news content on their platforms. While these deals were initially seen as a win for the media industry, Meta's decision in March 2024 not to renew the agreement has been met with strong criticism from publishers and the government. They argue that this decision undermines the value of journalism and could lead to less news content being available on Meta's platforms. This situation has raised concerns about the future of news distribution on social media and the financial sustainability of news organisations that rely on these platforms for traffic and revenue. Government intervention is still being considered to address the financial concerns, like a "digital platform levy" recommended by a parliamentary committee in late October, to generate funding for public interest journalism by introducing new taxes for social media companies.

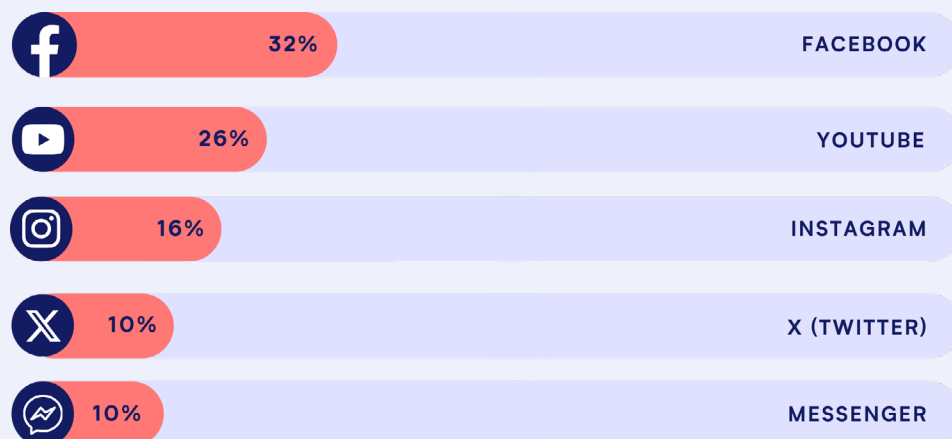
State of Social Media



In 2024, social media continues to play a significant role in how Australians connect, share information, and stay updated with news. [ACMA research](#) released in February found that **46% people aged between 18–24** consider social media their main source of news.

This trend further complicates the conflict between social platforms and traditional news outlets, particularly given the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation. Stream data shows that news coverage of misinformation on social media spiked in April following a wave of fake news spread on X in the aftermath of the Bondi Junction and Wakeley attacks, leading to increased calls for new legislation to combat false information.

Top Social Networks For News

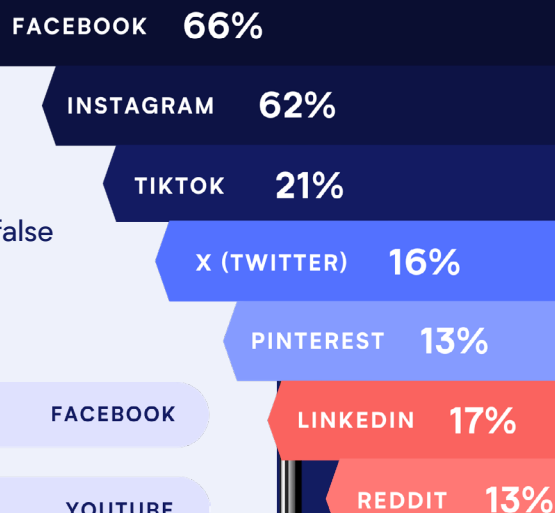


Source: [Digital News Report: Australia 2024](#)

To address the spread of harmful misinformation and disinformation, the proposed [Communications Legislation Amendment](#) (Combating Misinformation and Disinformation) Bill 2024 aims to reduce the availability of misinformation content on social media. It grants the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) new powers to regulate digital platforms, requiring them to manage risks, report on misinformation, and develop media literacy plans. The Coalition have [opposed the Misinformation Bill](#), citing free speech concerns.

On September 10th, the Labor Government, led by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, announced [new legislation](#) aimed at limiting social media access for children. This proposed law will enforce a minimum age of 16 for accessing social media platforms and other relevant digital services, and comes into effect in late 2025. The goal is to better protect Australian children from online harms and support parents and carers in managing their children's online activities.

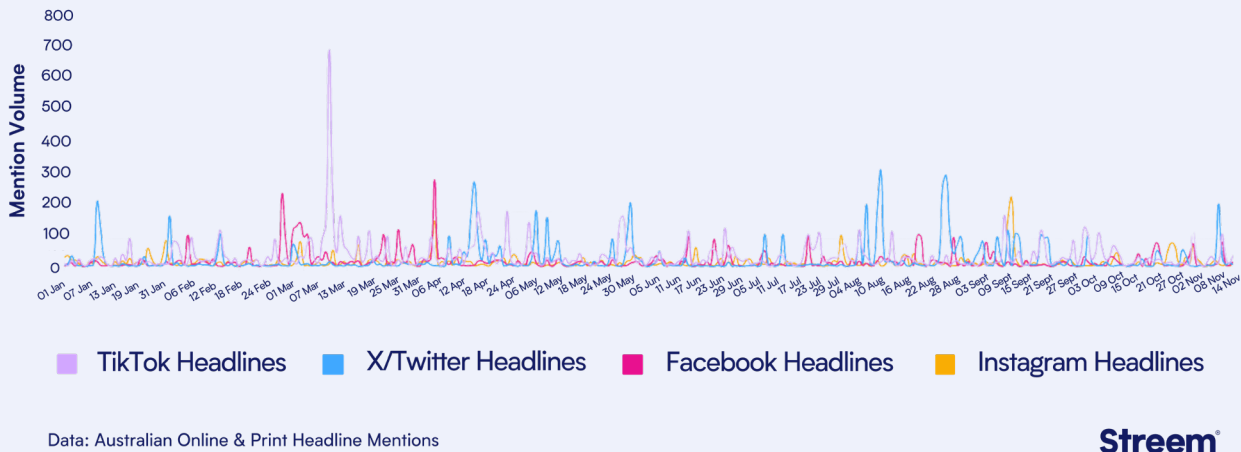
Top Social Networks For General Use



(% of respondents)

Data: [Digital news report: Australia 2024](#).

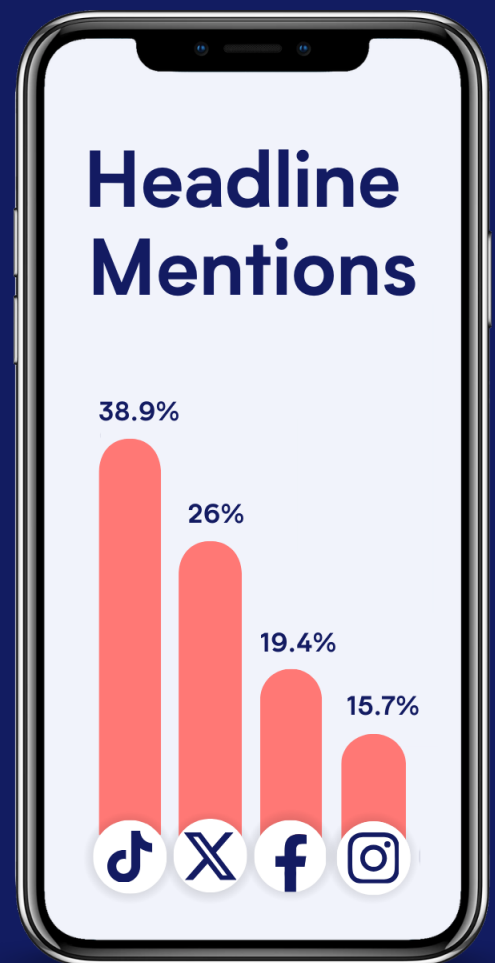
Biggest Social Media News Stories by Headline Volume



Perhaps in reaction to the proposed legislation, in September 2024, [Instagram introduced "Teen Accounts" to enhance safety](#) and privacy for users under 18. These accounts come with built-in protections that limit who can contact teens and the content they see. The changes aim to ensure that teens have safer experiences on the platform and give parents peace of mind. This move is part of Instagram's broader effort to address concerns about the impact of social media on young users. The launch of Teen Accounts resulted in Instagram receiving its highest volume of headline mentions in 2024.

TikTok news spiked in mid-March when US Congress voted in favour of [new legislation that would see a ban on TikTok](#), forcing ByteDance (TikTok's parent company) to divest any ties to the Chinese Communist Party. Comparatively, after this TikTok didn't receive any peak headline mentions larger than the other social media platforms.

In mid-August, X (formerly Twitter) received its yearly peak in headlines after platform owner Elon Musk claimed X's interview with presidential candidate Donald Trump was [affected by a Denial of Service \(DDoS\) cyber attack](#) that caused a 43-minute delay to the start of the interview. Following the US presidential election, social media platform [Bluesky gained over one million new users](#), primarily from the US and UK, as many left X due to dissatisfaction with its direction under Elon Musk and his alliance with Donald Trump. The Guardian also announced it would no longer post content on X, citing the platform's increase in disturbing content.



Finally, we'd like to thank you for taking the time to read this years State of the Australian Media Report. This marks our fourth edition of the report, where we use our platforms capabilities and comprehensive data to provide industry professionals with the information needed to navigate a constantly changing media environment.

At Stroom, our mission with this annual report is to deliver detailed analysis of the media industry's shifts and challenges, helping you to make informed, strategic decisions. Should you have any questions about our report or about Stroom, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at team@stroom.com.au.

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