



PRESENTED BY  
GABBY O'KEEFE  
TODD HANDY

# THE RISE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

WHERE YOUR FEED DECIDES WHAT MATTERS, AND WHO YOU TRUST

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hand holding a smartphone. The phone's screen displays a news feed with a green field visible. The background is a solid blue color.

**YOUR FEED ISN'T  
JUST SHOWING  
YOU THE NEWS.**

**IT'S DECIDING WHAT  
NEWS EXISTS TO  
YOU.**



#localnews I-75 northbound shut for an extended period...  
11Alive 2d ago 7913



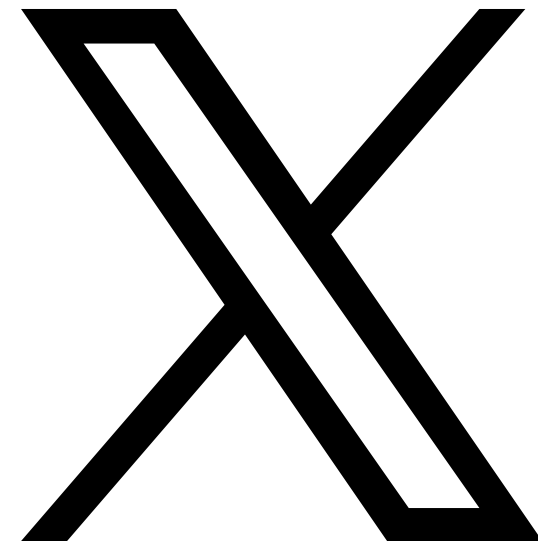
A plane made an emergency landing on a highway in Kutz...  
abc7chicago 19h ago 273



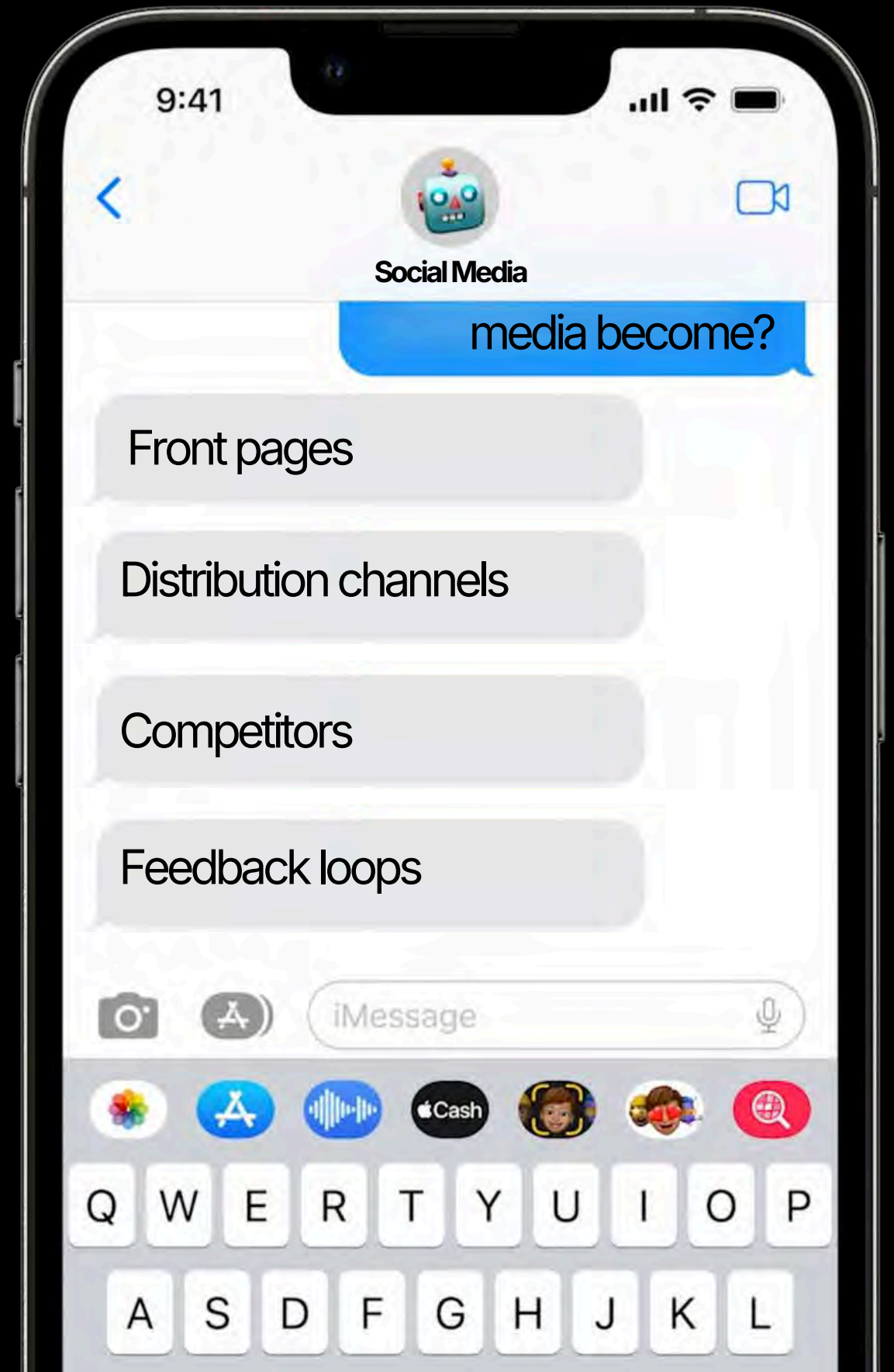
- ### Today's News
- Kamala Harris Celebrates Easter with Family Church and Soul Food Brunch**  
23 hours ago · Other · 22K posts
  - Pope Leo XIV Carries Cross Through Colosseum Stations on Good Friday**  
2 days ago · Other · 186K posts
  - US-Israeli Airstrike Destroys Iranian Red Crescent Rescue Vehicle**  
23 hours ago · News · 47K posts
  - Happy Easter**  
Entertainment industry · Trending
  - Ben Brown**  
Trending in United States
  - Gabriela Jaquez**  
Trending in United States
  - He is Risen**  
Entertainment industry · Trending

WHERE DID YOU LAST SEE BREAKING NEWS?

**WHAT PLATFORM DRIVES THE MOST TRAFFIC OR  
ENGAGEMENT FOR YOU RIGHT NOW?**



# WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA HAS BECOME



**DO YOU THINK  
YOUR FEED LOOKS  
THE SAME AS THE  
PERSON NEXT TO  
YOU?**



**THE MAIN SHIFT**



# THEN

**"HOW DO WE GET PEOPLE TO OUR SITE?"**

- **SOCIAL = TRAFFIC DRIVER**
- **"POST THE LINK, GET CLICKS"**
- **PLATFORMS WORKED FOR PUBLISHERS**



# NOW

**"HOW DO WE MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE?"**

- **SOCIAL = STORYTELLING**
- **PLATFORM CONTROLS REACH**
- **ALGORITHM > HOMEPAGE**
- **JOURNALISTS = BRAND**

# RENTED

(social platforms)

- Algorithm decides reach
- Rules change overnight
- Weak identity & retention

FB / IG / X / TIKTOK

# OWNED

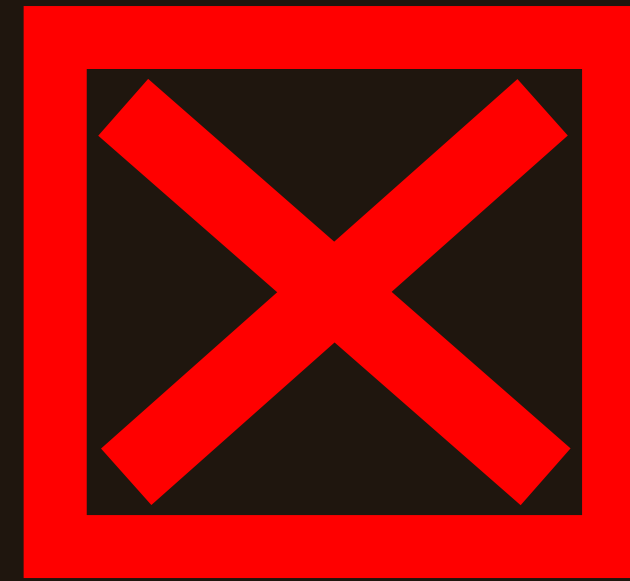
(channels you control)

- Direct relationship
- Lower distribution risk
- Personalization & monetization

EMAIL / SMS / WEB / APP

*Social is reach you rent. Owned is relationships you keep.*

**YOU DON'T OWN  
YOUR AUDIENCE ON  
SOCIALS...**



**YOU'RE RENTING IT.**

**YOU DO OWN**

✓ **EMAIL LISTS**

✓ **SMS**

✓ **WEBSITE**

# SOCIAL → OWNED FUNNEL

*Four steps. Run them every week.*



## EXAMPLES

County breaking alerts | Friday Night Lights roundup | Weekend things to do

**27east** 27east is with The Sag Harbor Express.  
April 15 at 10:19 AM · 🌐

Sag Harbor Mayor Tom Gardella refuses to resign after fellow board members call for his resignation.

Read more at [27east.com](https://www.27east.com).


#sagharbor



**“GOOD”**





Action News 5  · Follow

4h · 



**BREAKING: Memphis police arrest 17-year-old in prom-night killing of teen**

***"BAD"***

# ENGAGEMENT LOOPS

*Pick 1*

01

## **POLL/BALLOT**

*Weekly opinion or local voting*

02

## **NOMINATIONS**

*Best of town, heroes, coaches*

03

## **Q&A/TIP LINE**

*"What are you seeing?" + follow-ups*

04

## **QUIZ/TRIVIA**

*Fast, repeatable, sponsorable*

05

## **SERVICE CALENDAR**

*Events, sports, school closings*

06

## **BEHIND THE STORY**

*"How we reported this" transparency*

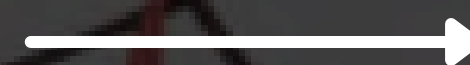
# ASK. THEN PERSONALIZE.

*Stop being generic. Relevance is earned.*

01



02



03

ASK

TAG

DELIVER

*"What do you want more of?"*

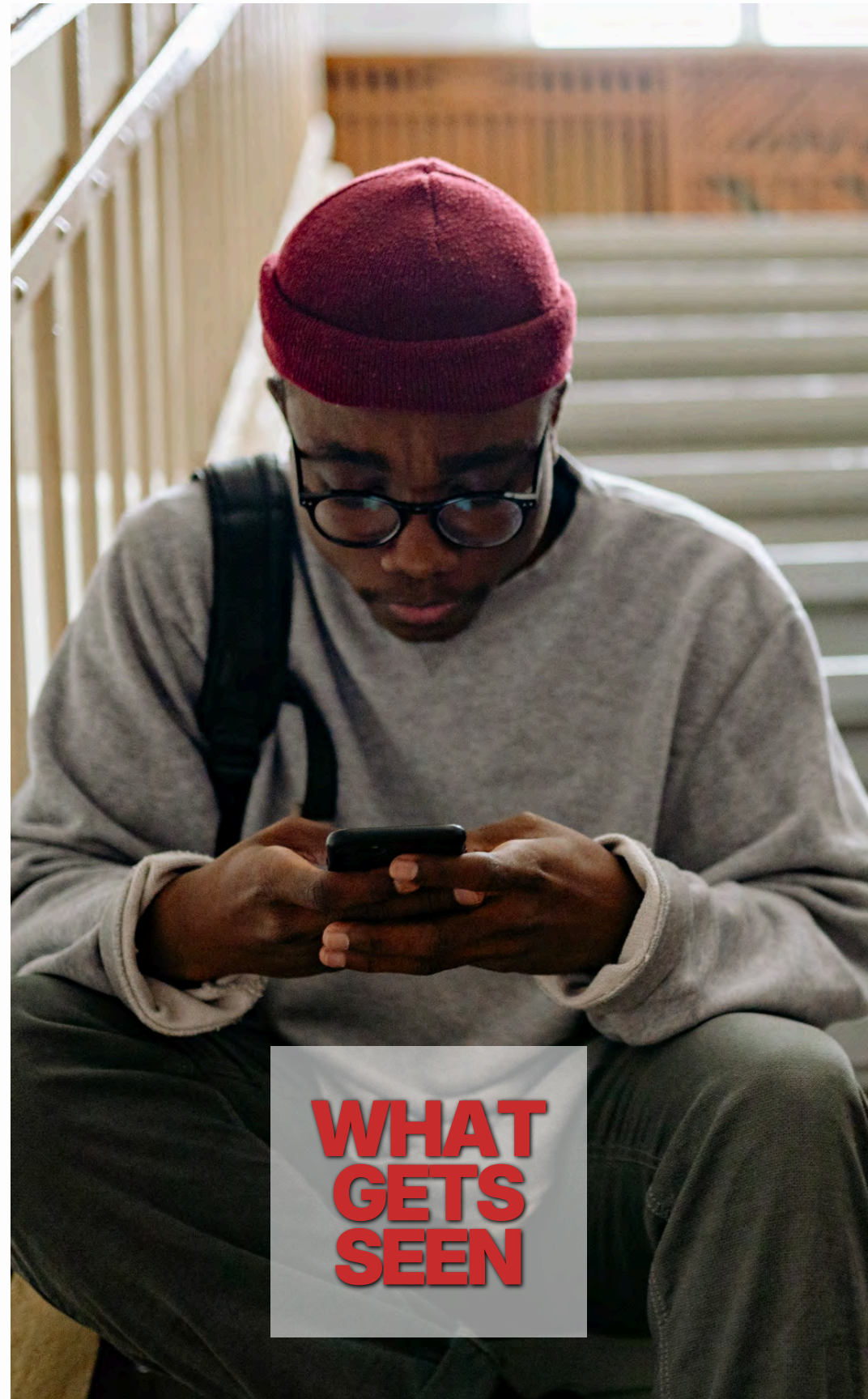
*sports / schools / crime / business*

*one newsletter per segment*



**IF TRUST LIVES WITH  
INDIVIDUALS, SHOULD  
JOURNALISTS BUILD  
PERSONAL BRANDS?**

# ALGORITHM REALITY



**WHAT  
GETS  
SEEN**



**WHAT  
SPREADS**



**WHAT  
SURVIVES**

# ALGORITHM-PROOF YOUR AUDIENCE

*Algorithms are a tax. Owned channels are the hedge.*

## **01 ASSUME REACH WILL DROP**


*Plan for volatility*

## **02 CAPTURE OPT-INS DAILY**

*Email, SMS, registration*

## **03 MEASURE WHAT YOU CONTROL**

*Opt-ins, returns, conversions*



**ONLY 14% OF 18-24S SAY THEIR MAIN WAY OF ACCESSING NEWS IS GOING DIRECT TO A PUBLISHER SITE/APP (VS 40% VIA SOCIAL AND 26% VIA SEARCH).\***



**SOCIAL MEDIA  
DIDN'T BREAK  
JOURNALISM  
ETHICS...**

**BUT IT  
DEFINITELY  
STRESS-TESTED  
THEM.**

# THE WEEKLY SCOREBOARD

*Keep it simple. Measure what matters.*

## OWNED

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- 01 New opt-ins (email/SMS)
- 02 Open rate + click rate
- 03 Returning visits (7-day)

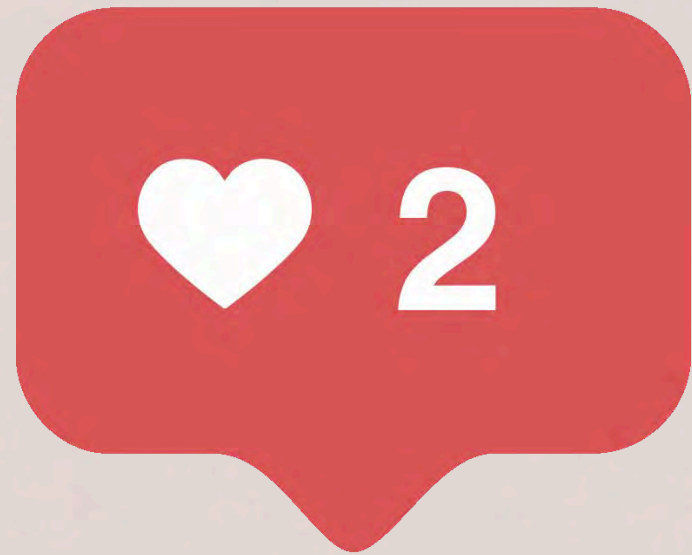
## ENGAGEMENT

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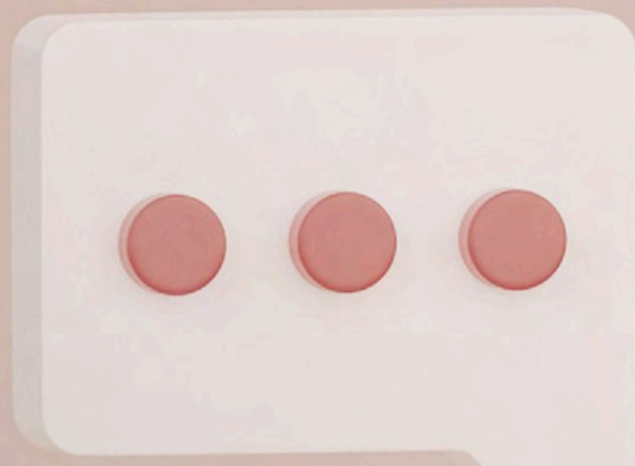
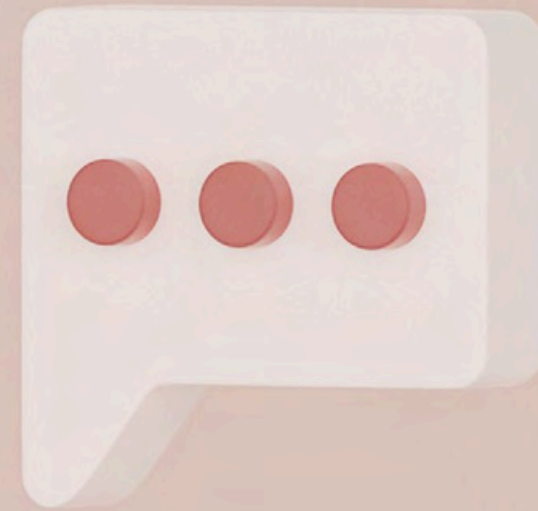
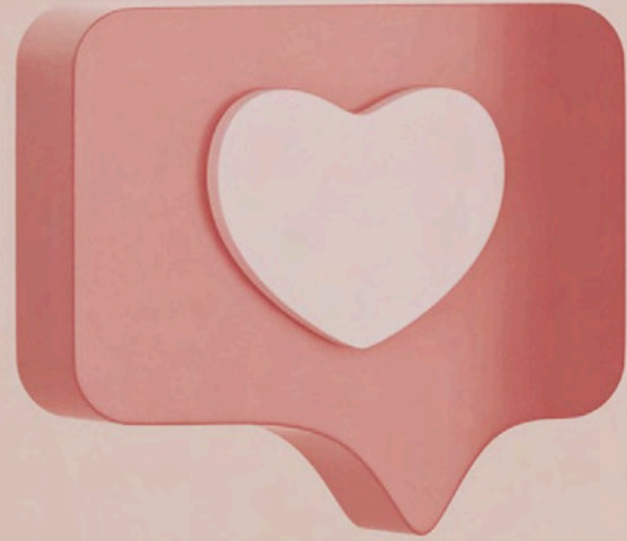
- 01 Shares/saves/comments per post
- 02 Clicks to owned offer

### BOTTOM LINE

**1 experiment per week. Review. Keep or kill.**



**SO IF THIS IS  
OUR  
REALITY,  
WHAT DO  
WE DO  
ABOUT IT?**



# UNRAVELING THE UNKNOWN

1

**AUDIENCES  
FOLLOW  
PEOPLE**

**NOT  
JUST  
OUTLETS**

2

**AUDIENCES  
RESONATE  
WITH WORK  
THROUGH  
SOCIAL  
PLATFORMS**

3

**BRAND  
DILUTION**

**VS.**

**HUMAN  
CONNECTION**



VIDEO CREATED BY HB  
STEADHAM, EDITOR OF  
TIMES-JOURNAL

A graphic consisting of a rainbow with seven curved bands of varying shades of gray. Below the rainbow are several vertical gray lines of varying heights, creating a stylized background for the text.

**THE FORMAT IS THE  
STORY**




THIS NYPS  
POST GOT 3  
LIKES...

DID YOU


KNOW?

Newspapers across New York, from small community publications to major statewide papers, reach millions of engaged readers every month.



New York Press Service 9+   

All Photos Reels Events Mentions

New York Press Service  
Posted by Gabby O'Keefe  
Nov 12, 2025 · 

When that Hump Day sale goes through! 🐾 #dancebreak #NYPS



[See insights and ads](#) [Boost reel](#)

 98  3  3   

**THIS NYPS  
POST GOT 98  
LIKES, 3  
COMMENTS,  
AND 3  
SHARES...**



A group of young people are gathered at a night event, possibly a concert or festival. In the foreground, a young man with red hair is smiling and holding a smartphone to take a selfie. Behind him, a young woman in a pink shirt is also smiling. To the right, a young woman in a white dress is posing. In the background, several other young men are visible, some making hand gestures. The scene is lit with colorful stage lights, creating a vibrant atmosphere. The text "WHY DO YOUNGER AUDIENCES TUNE OUT NEWS?" is overlaid in large, white, bold letters across the center of the image.

**WHY DO YOUNGER  
AUDIENCES TUNE OUT  
NEWS?**

**IT NEGATIVELY  
IMPACTS THEIR  
MOOD**

**21% SAY IT'S  
NOT RELEVANT  
TO THEM**

**15% SAY IT'S  
HARD TO  
UNDERSTAND**



**MAKE IT EASY  
TO DIGEST**

**MAKE IT  
RELEVANT TO  
ALL**



**MAKE IT EASY  
TO ENGAGE  
WITH**





**IF YOU DON'T DEFINE  
YOUR PRESENCE**

**THE ALGORITHM WILL  
DO IT FOR YOU.**

# #IGNYTE2026

**FOLLOW**

**FACEBOOK**



**LINKEDIN**



**TODD HANDY  
LINKEDIN**



**GABBY O'KEEFE  
LINKEDIN**

