
Which metrics inform strategy in the most successful newsrooms?

Jill Nicholson, Chartbeat
Senior Dir. of Customer Education

Ariane Turley, SimilarWeb
Lead Publisher & Media Industry
Consultant

Meet our speakers.



Ariane Turley

Lead Publishers & Media Industry
Consultant, SimilarWeb



Jill Nicholson

Senior Director of Customer
Education, Chartbeat

AGENDA

Introduction

What are the core metrics for a holistic growth strategy?

How can global trends inform individual publisher KPIs?

How did behaviors change during the US Election?

Q&A

Introduction

ABOUT CHARTBEAT

Chartbeat enables meaningful stories to thrive — wherever they live

700 enterprise publishers

65 billion pageviews tracked per month

70 Countries

6 Continents

The Washington Post

CNN

Clarín

BBC

Le Monde

The Telegraph

UOL

The New York Times

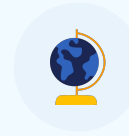
SimilarWeb Research Intelligence provides decision makers with a complete view of the fast-changing digital world, so they can set the digital strategy and grow their business.



100M websites, **4.7M** apps



Comparable company & market data



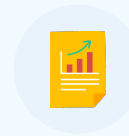
190+ country markets



Live data updated daily

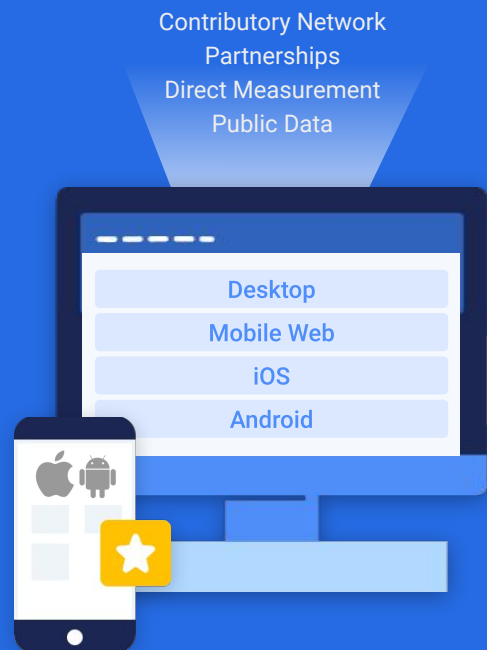


Intuitive, **cutting-edge** interface or API



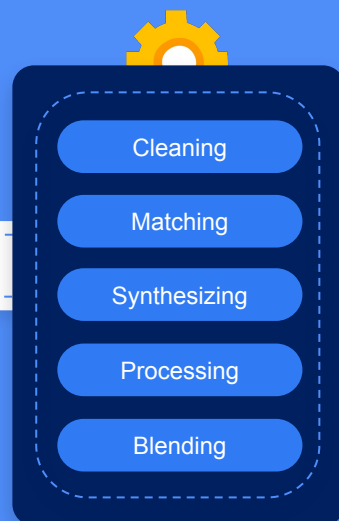
Actionable tools and **custom reports**

1 Data Collection



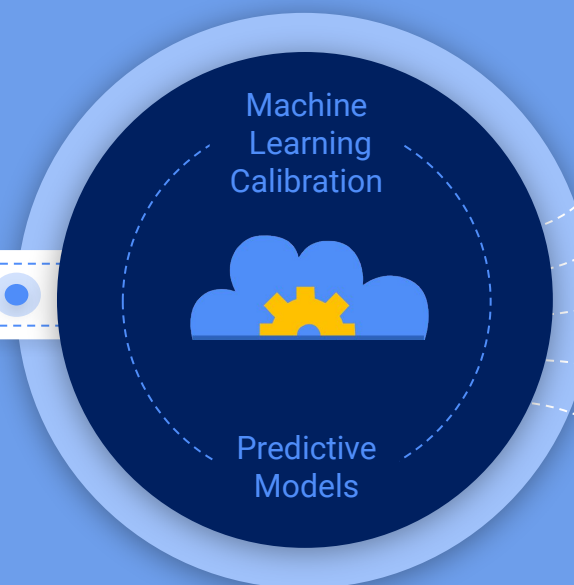
We created the industry's most diversified data universe of digital signals, constructed of statistically representative datasets that preserve variety across countries, industries, user groups and devices

2 Data Synthesis



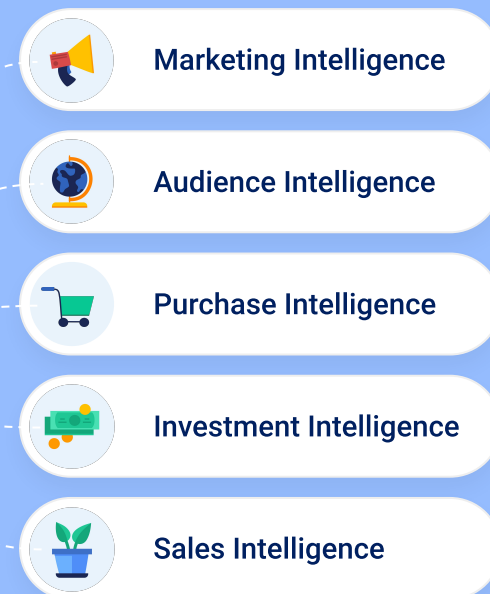
After the data is collected, we run a sophisticated algorithmic process to clean, match, synthesize, process and blend inputs for data modeling

3 Data Modeling



Normalized data is then run through advanced machine learning calibration and predictive models to provide an accurate and consistent view of the digital world over time

4 Data Delivery



The intelligence engine generates powerful, ready-to-use insights delivered through our actionable platform or API to help you make better decisions and grow intelligently

**What are the core
metrics for a holistic
growth strategy?**

Internal

Competitive

INTERNAL METRICS: ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

1. Engagement

Are my customers actually reading what they click on?

2. Depth

How can we drive readers deeper into our site and show more value?

3. Loyalty

How can we optimize the reader journey to encourage users to come back more often?

Key metrics to monitor:

- Engaged Time
- Scroll Depth
- Homepage CTR
- Recirculation
- Visitor Frequency

COMPETITIVE METRICS: ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

1. Category

How is my publication performing against the news & media industry as a whole? What are the market dynamics?

2. Competitors

What are my competitors doing?

3. Customers

What does my audience look like?

Key metrics to monitor:

- Traffic trends
- Digital market share
- Traffic acquisition
- Brand awareness
- Audience interests
- Audience reach & behavior
- Depth of visit
- Bounce rate

How can global trends inform individual publisher KPIs?

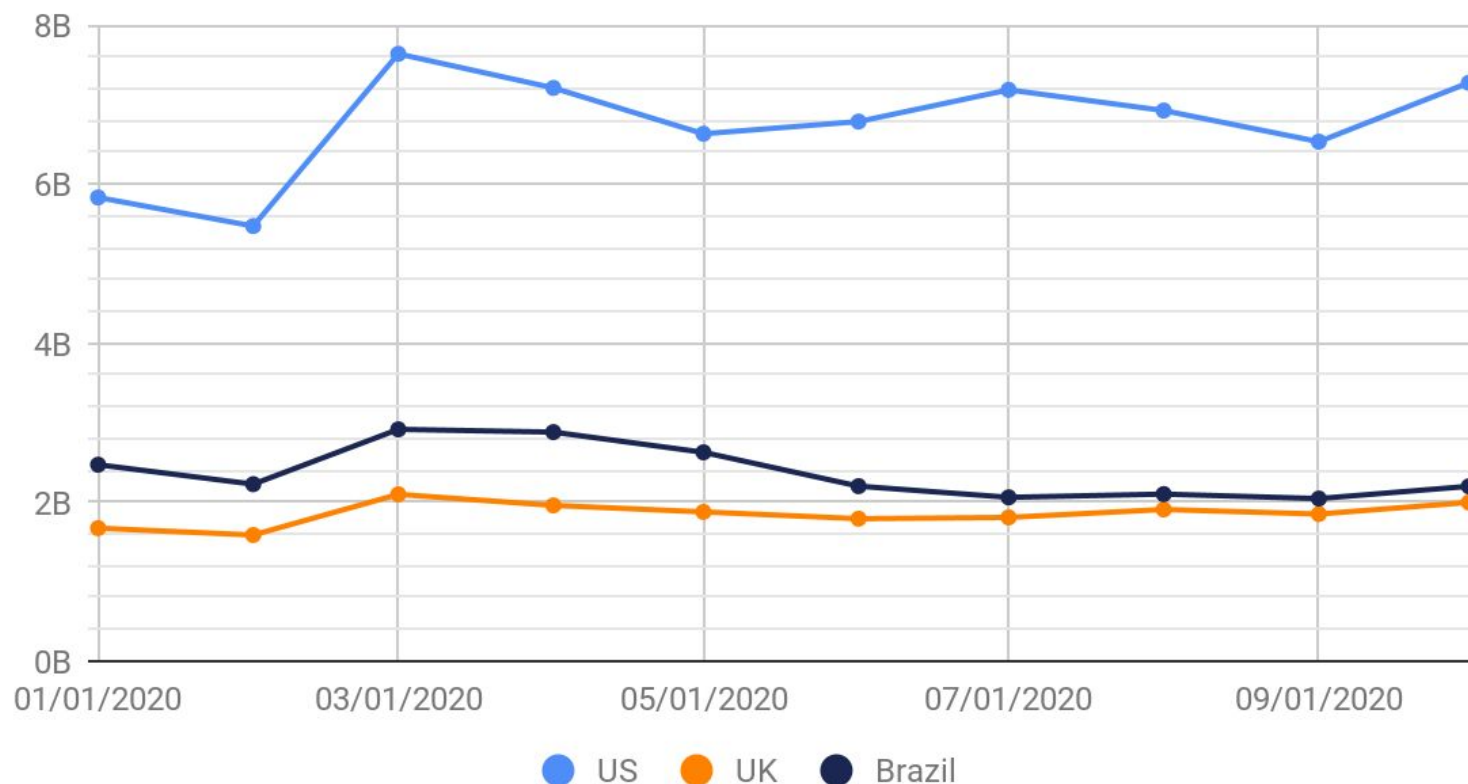
Acquisition

ACQUISITION: TRENDS IN THE NEWS & MEDIA SPACE

In the US & UK, publishers have sustained traffic post-COVID traffic levels, with traffic up 25% and 19%, respectively, since the beginning of the year.

However traffic levels have not been sustained in Brazil— traffic is down 11% since January 2020.

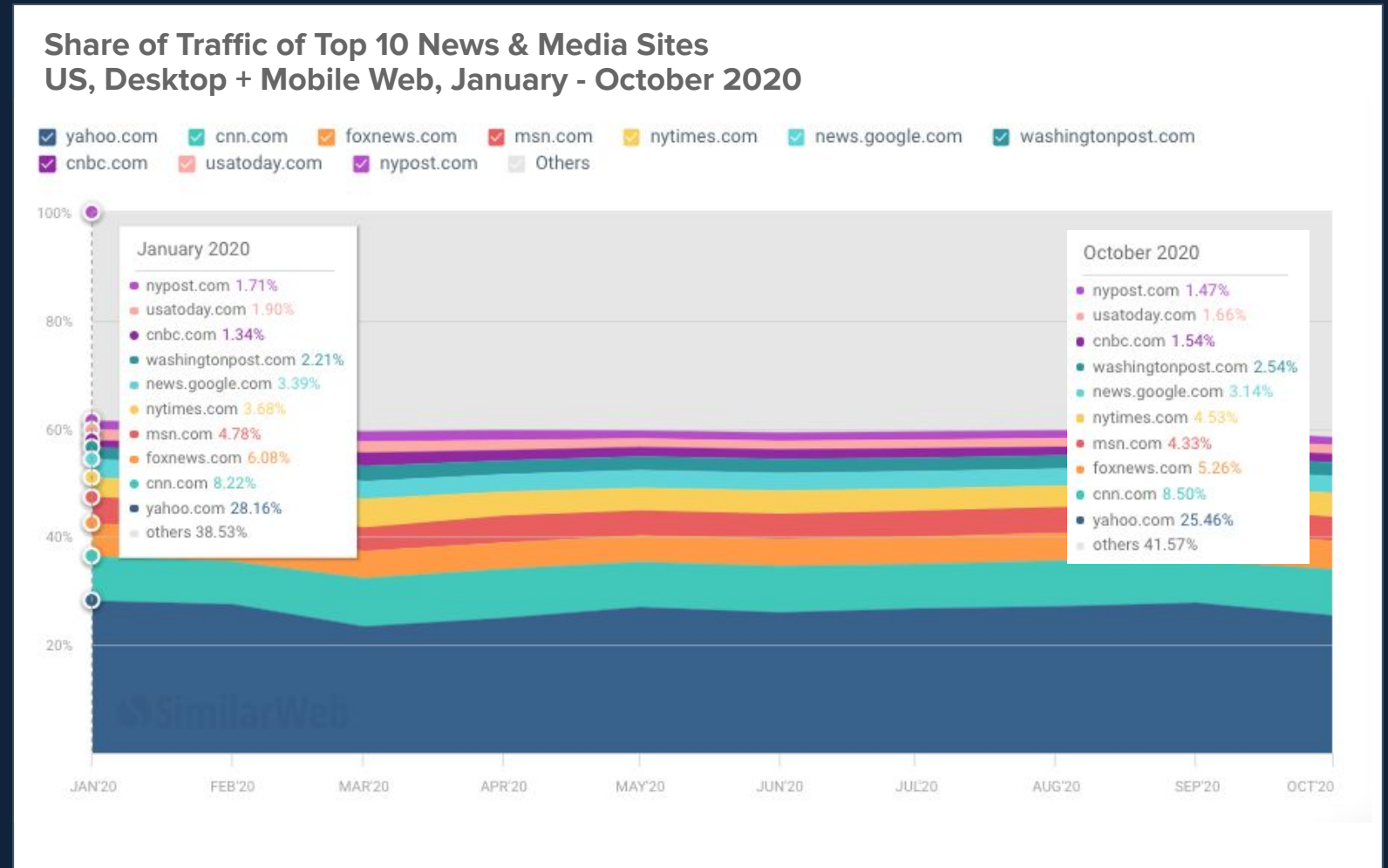
Monthly Traffic to News & Media Sites



ACQUISITION: TRENDS IN THE NEWS & MEDIA SPACE

Understand your digital market share and shifts in the media landscape by monitoring your competitors' traffic.

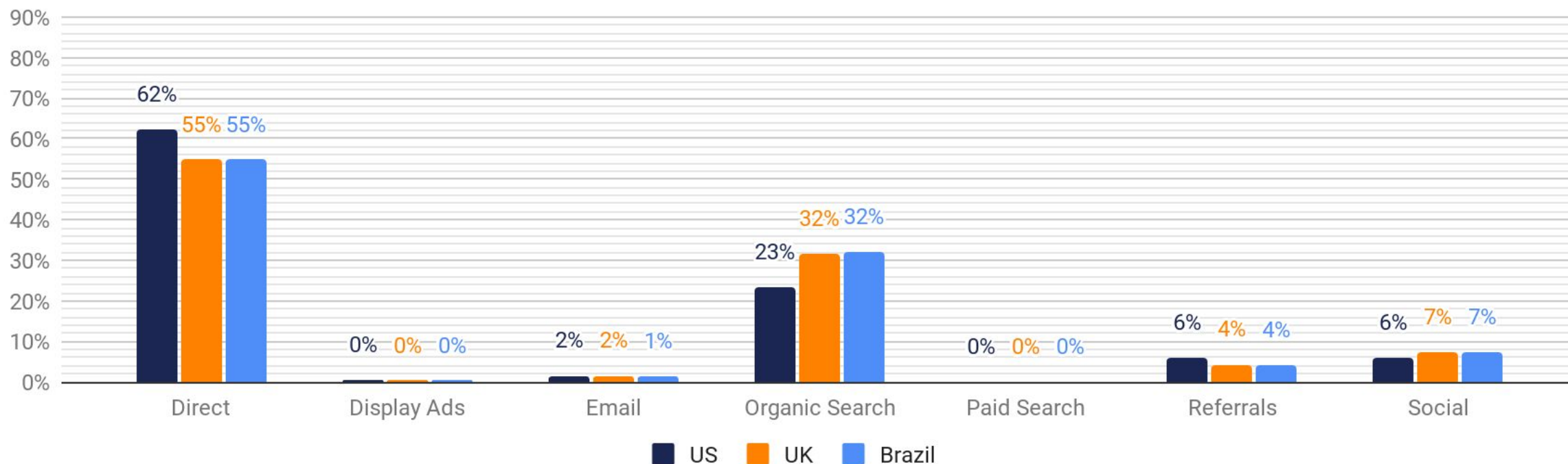
The New York Times has seen the largest increase in traffic share over 2020; it's share of traffic increased by nearly 1% in October 2020.



ACQUISITION: WHERE IS TRAFFIC COMING FROM?

News & media sites in the U.S. have the highest audience loyalty, with majority (62%) of traffic coming from direct sources.

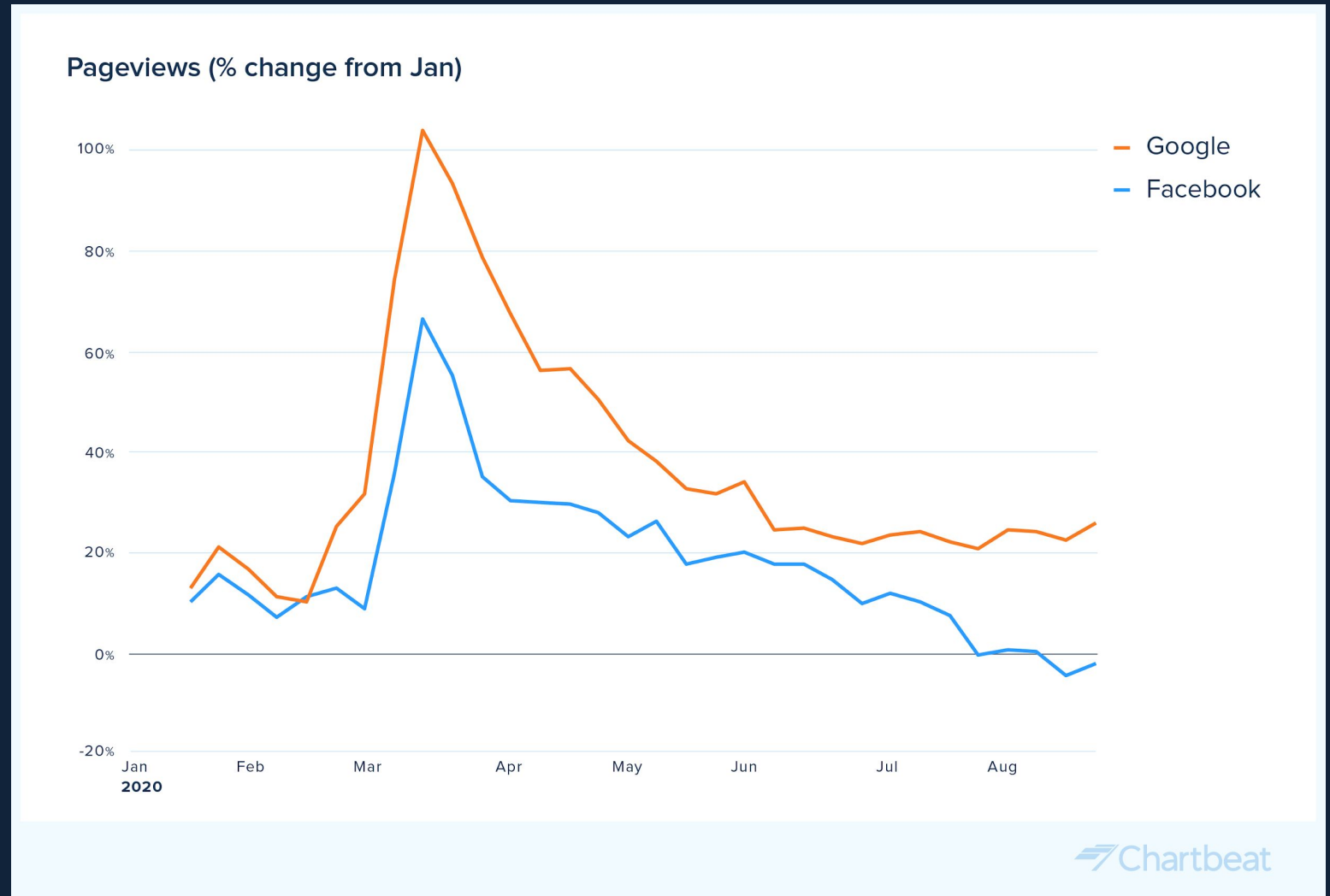
Marketing Mix for Top News & Media Sites, January - October 2020



ACQUISITION: WHERE IS TRAFFIC COMING FROM?

Global traffic from Google and Facebook has fallen after significant spikes in March and April.

Google remains about 20% up from the beginning of the year.



ACQUISITION: WHERE IS THIS TRAFFIC COMING FROM?

Not all traffic is created equal.

Referred visitors are notably less likely to return than readers that come directly to your platforms, especially on mobile.

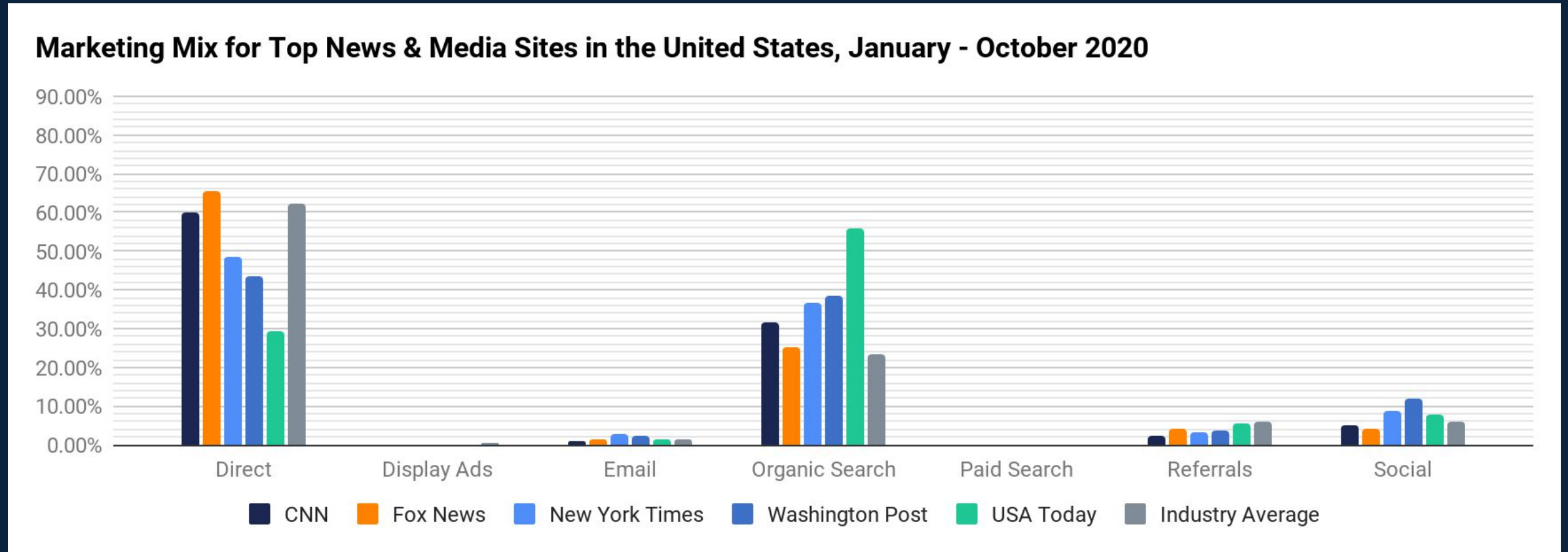
Traffic Source	Mobile Weekly Visits	Desktop Weekly Visits
Direct, app	9.2	N/A
Deep link & push, app	6.6	N/A
Direct, web	6.1	5.4
Facebook	1.9	1.4
Google Search	1.6	1.6
Chrome Suggestions	1.6	N/A
Twitter	1.6	1.4

© 2020. How Distribution Channels Drive Loyalty and Subscriptions.

 Chartbeat

ACQUISITION: WHERE IS THIS TRAFFIC COMING FROM?

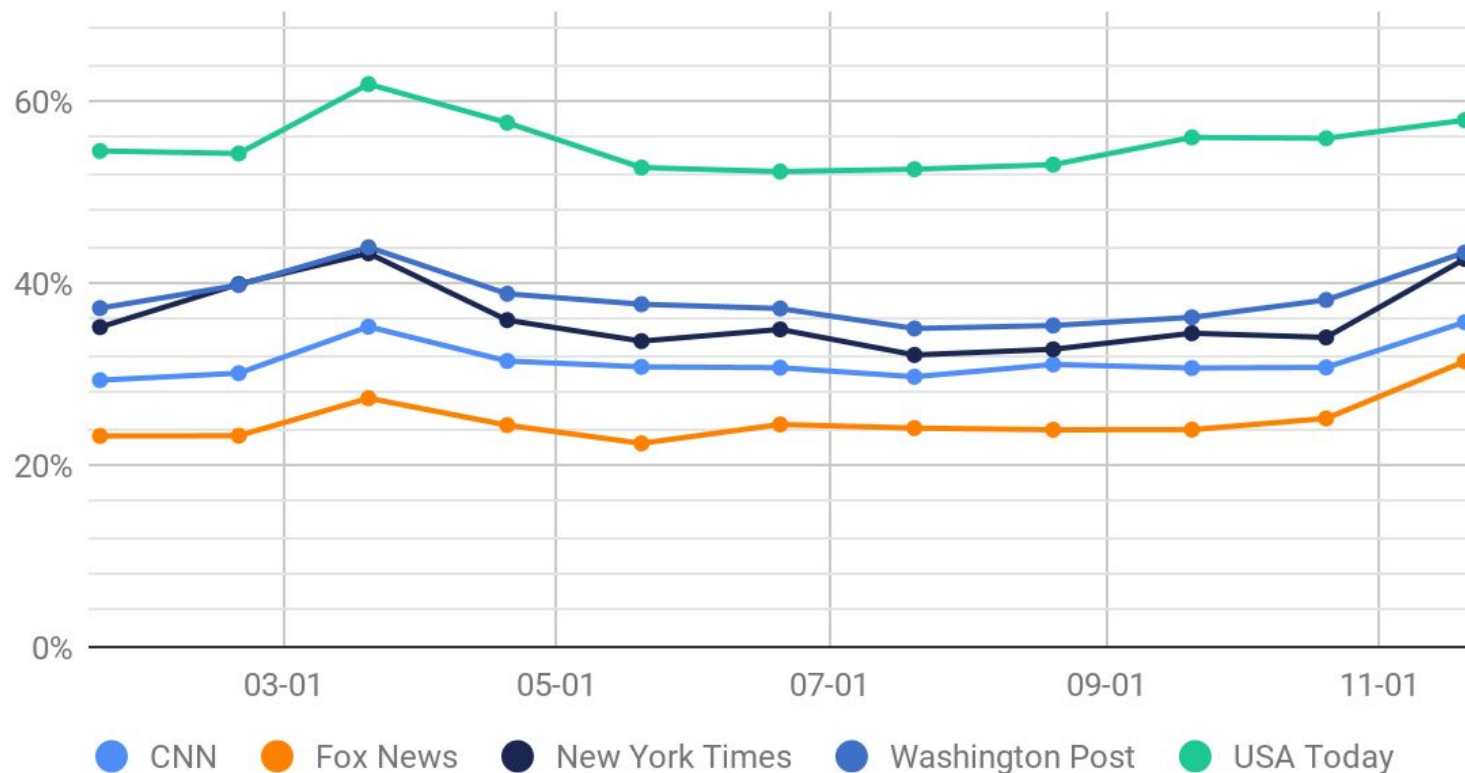
Of the top five news sites in the U.S., Fox News has the highest percent of traffic coming from direct sources — indicating high levels of brand awareness and loyalty.



ACQUISITION: WHERE IS THIS TRAFFIC COMING FROM?

Organic search traffic peaks during key events — in the case of 2020, the Coronavirus Pandemic and the U.S. election.

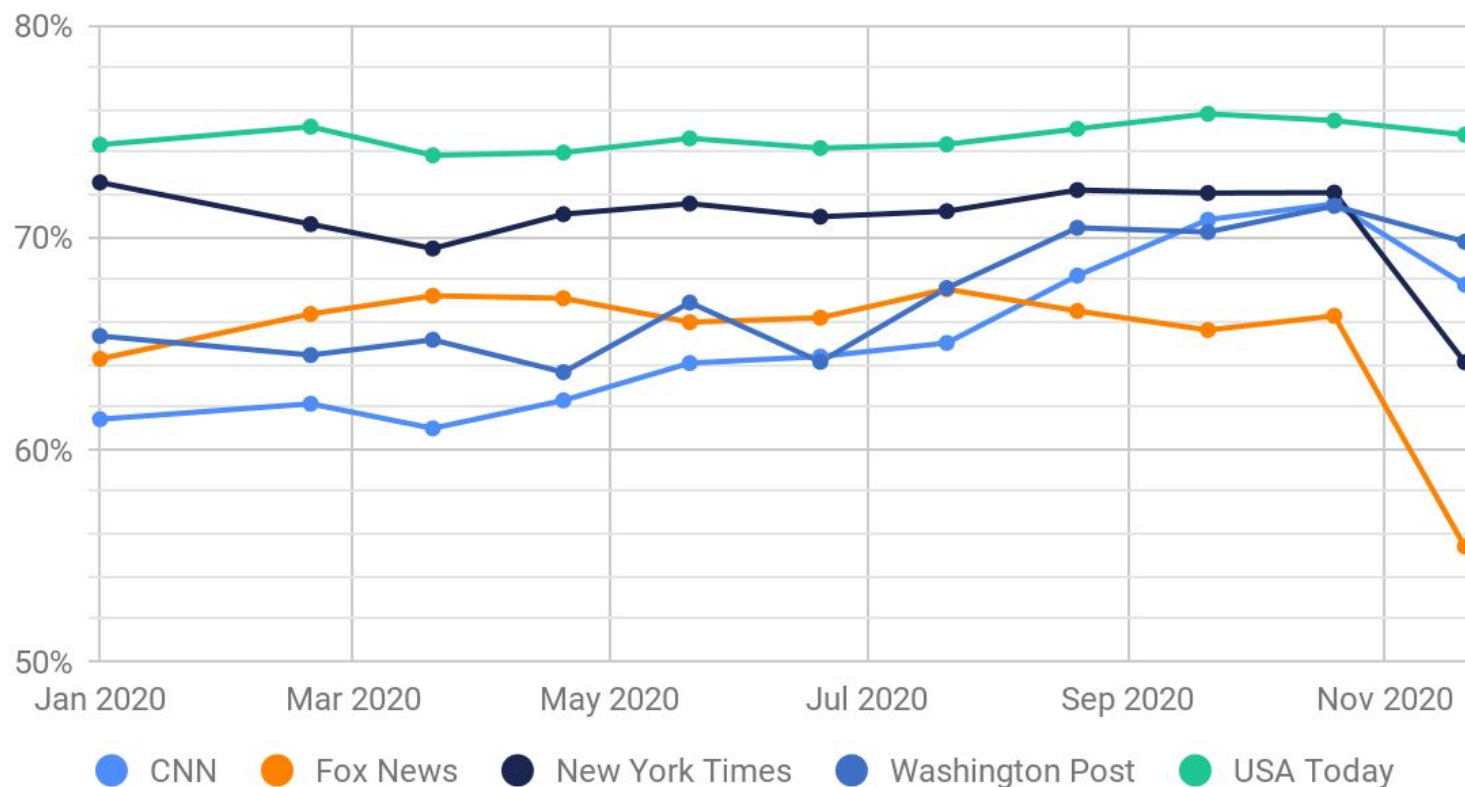
Share of Organic Search Traffic Over Time, Desktop



ACQUISITION: WHERE IS THIS TRAFFIC COMING FROM?

Bounce rates for organic search traffic dropped for all publications in November 2020 — likely due to coverage of the US election.

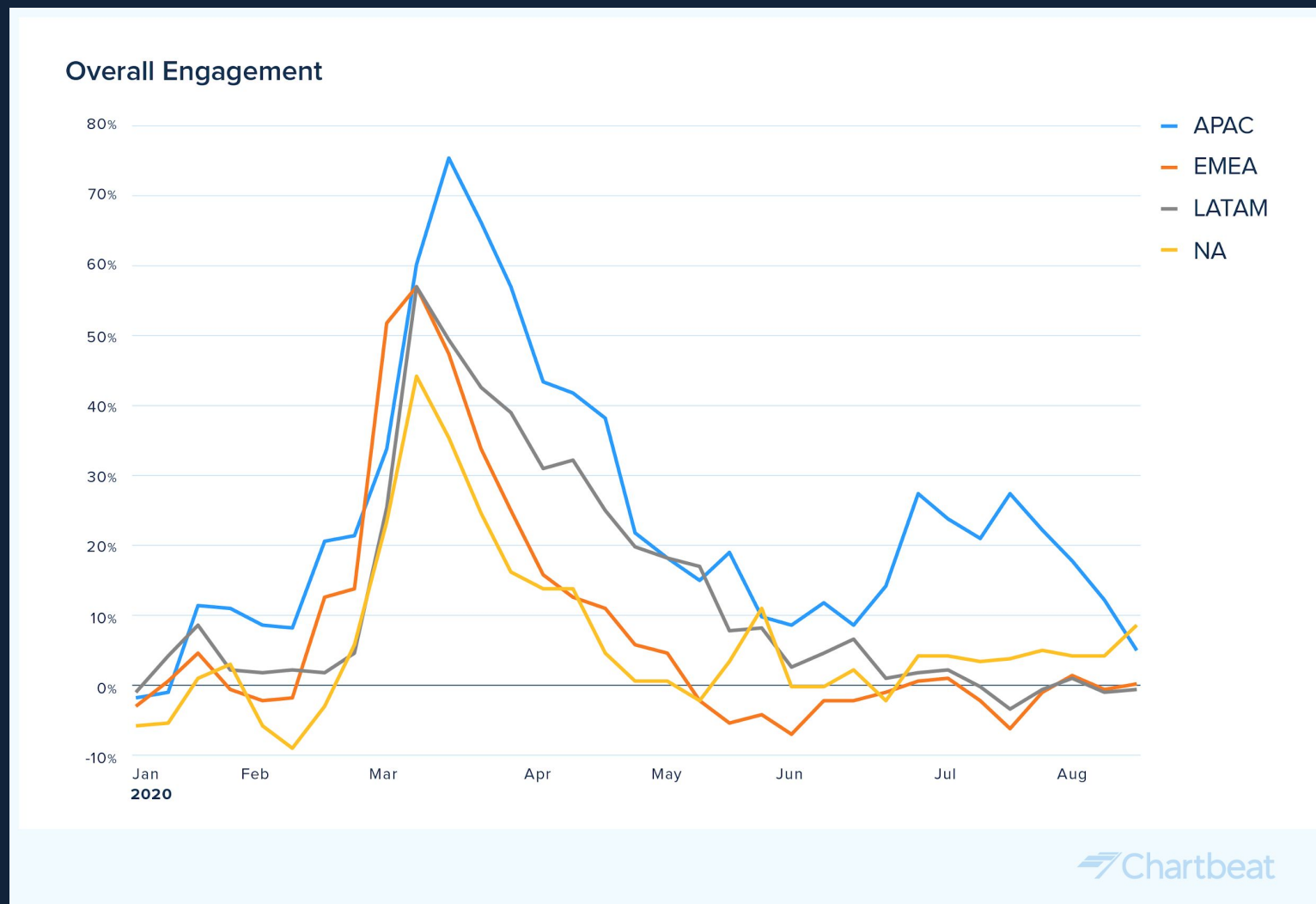
Bounce Rate for Organic Search Traffic, Desktop



Engagement

ENGAGEMENT: HOW MUCH ARE PEOPLE READING?

Total Engaged Time across all publishers rose steeply at the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, but global engagement levels have roughly returned to normal.

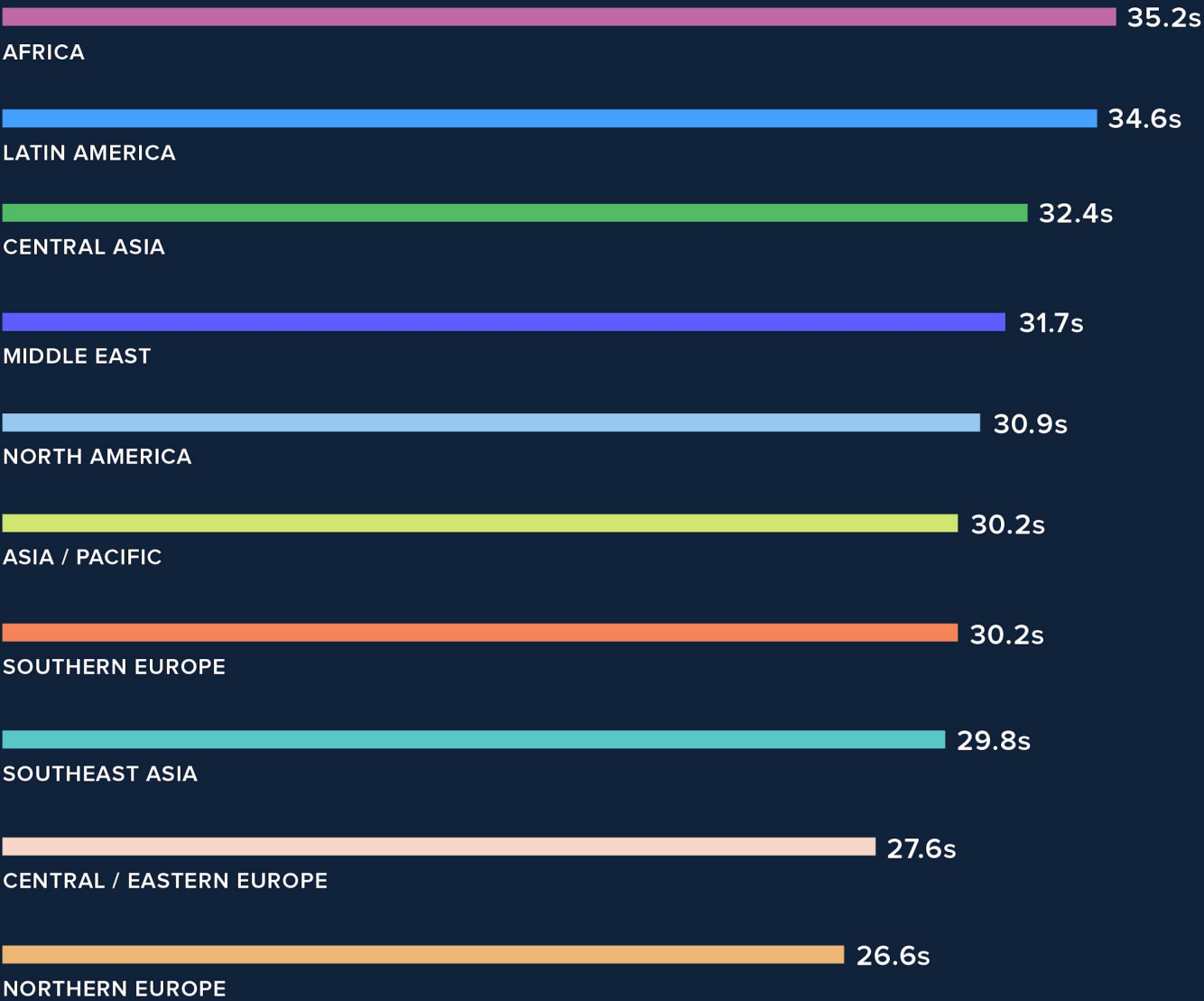


ENGAGEMENT: HOW MUCH ARE PEOPLE READING?

Engaged Time among audiences across Africa surpassed Latin America for the first time in several quarters.

Engagement among some European regions continued its decline quarter over quarter.

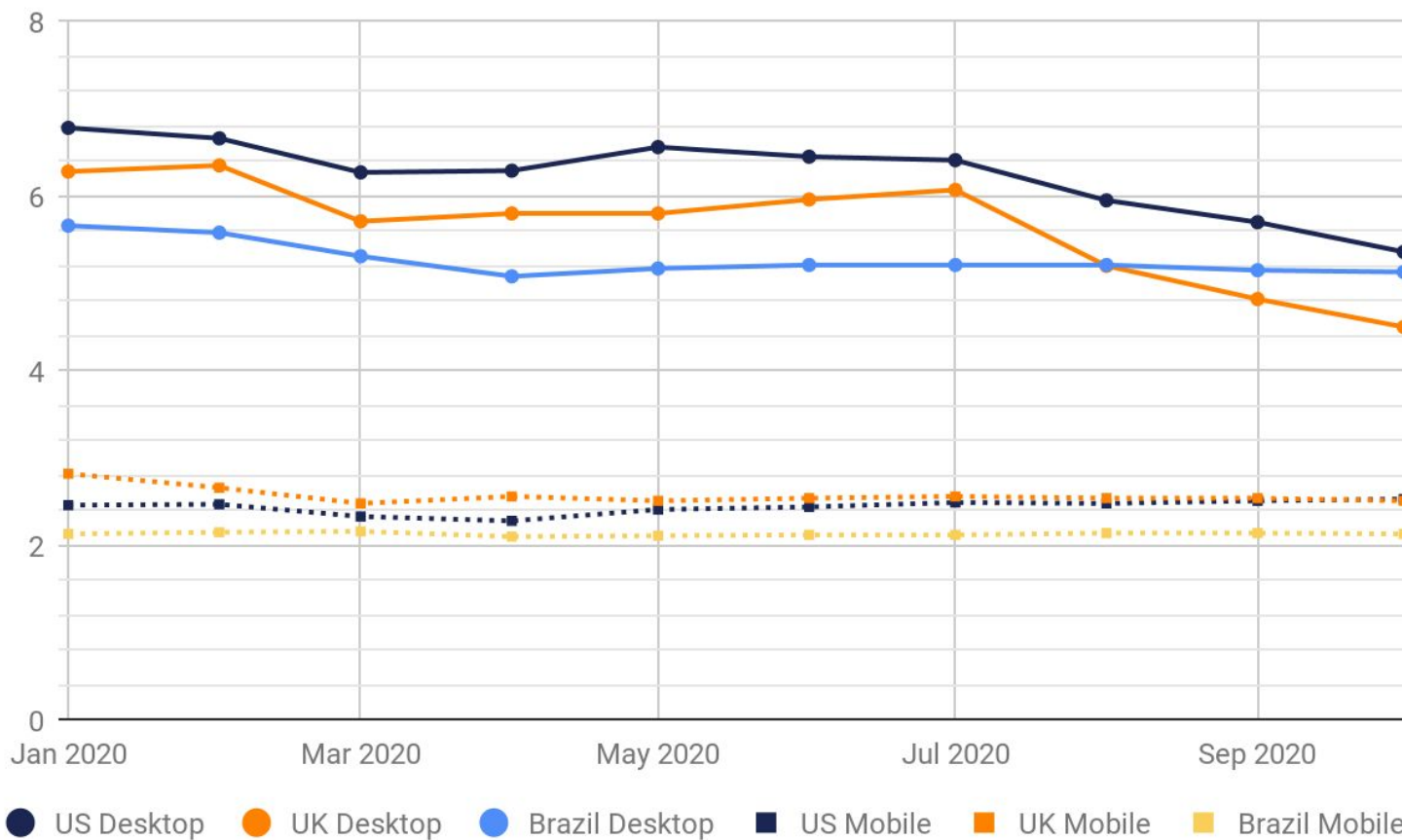
Average Engaged Time in seconds



ENGAGEMENT: DO PEOPLE READ MORE THAN ONE PAGE?

While average pages per visit have remained steady for mobile visitors, both the UK and the US have seen declines in pages per visits, indicating a less engaged audience.

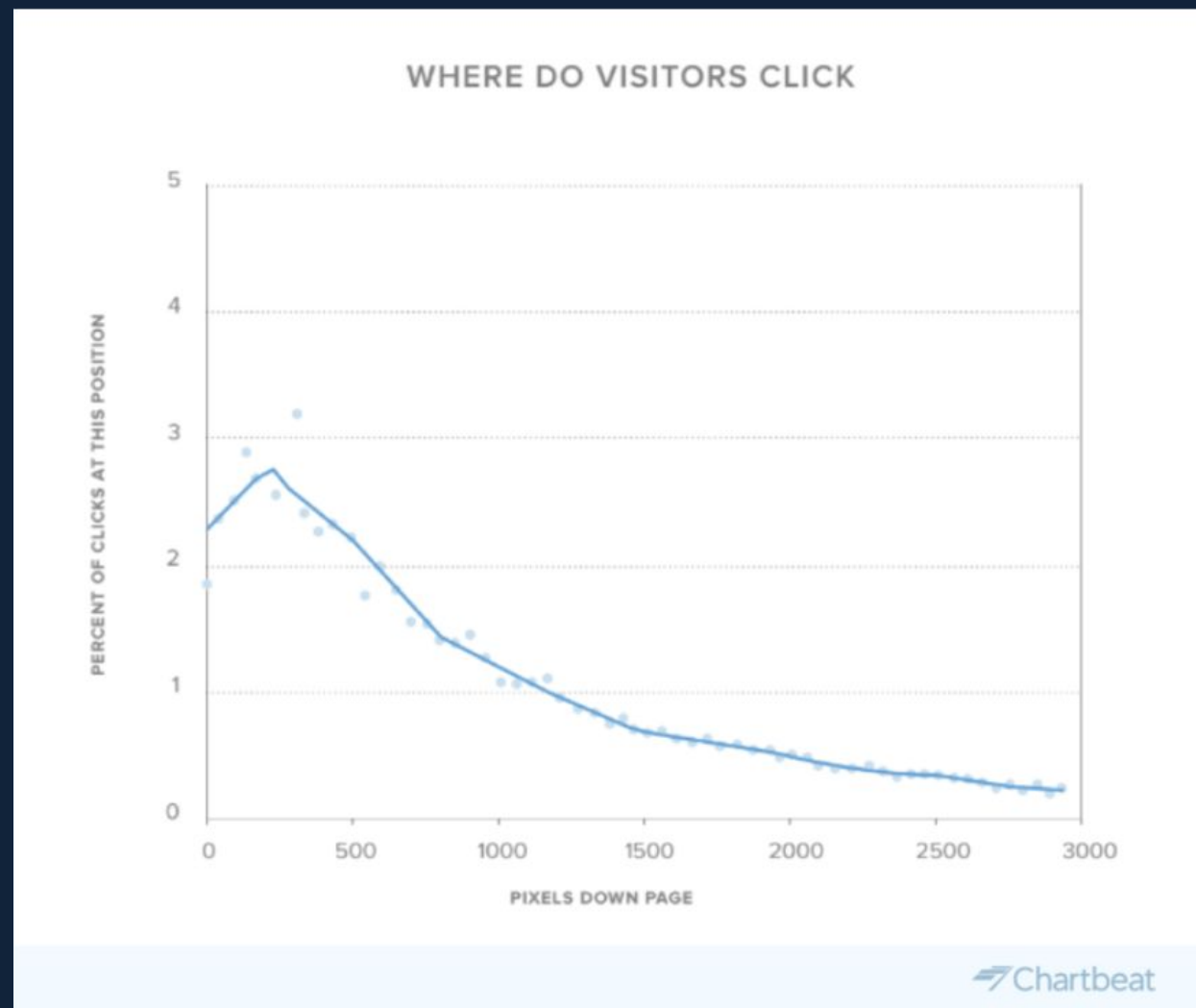
Average Pages per Visit



ENGAGEMENT: DO PEOPLE READ MORE THAN ONE PAGE?

To encourage readers to recirculate, publishers should think about where they place related links on article pages.

While most clicks happen in the first 1,000 pixels of a page, there is a long tail opportunity to recirculate readers that engage more deeply with content.



ENGAGEMENT: HOW DO BEHAVIORS DIFFER BY DEVICE?

Mobile homepage visitors scroll to view 25% of the page, compared to 34% for desktop

... but, they engage for 40% longer and are 20% more likely to click.

	Desktop	Mobile
Average scroll depth	34%	25%
Average Engaged Time	16s	22s
Average CTR	56%	67%

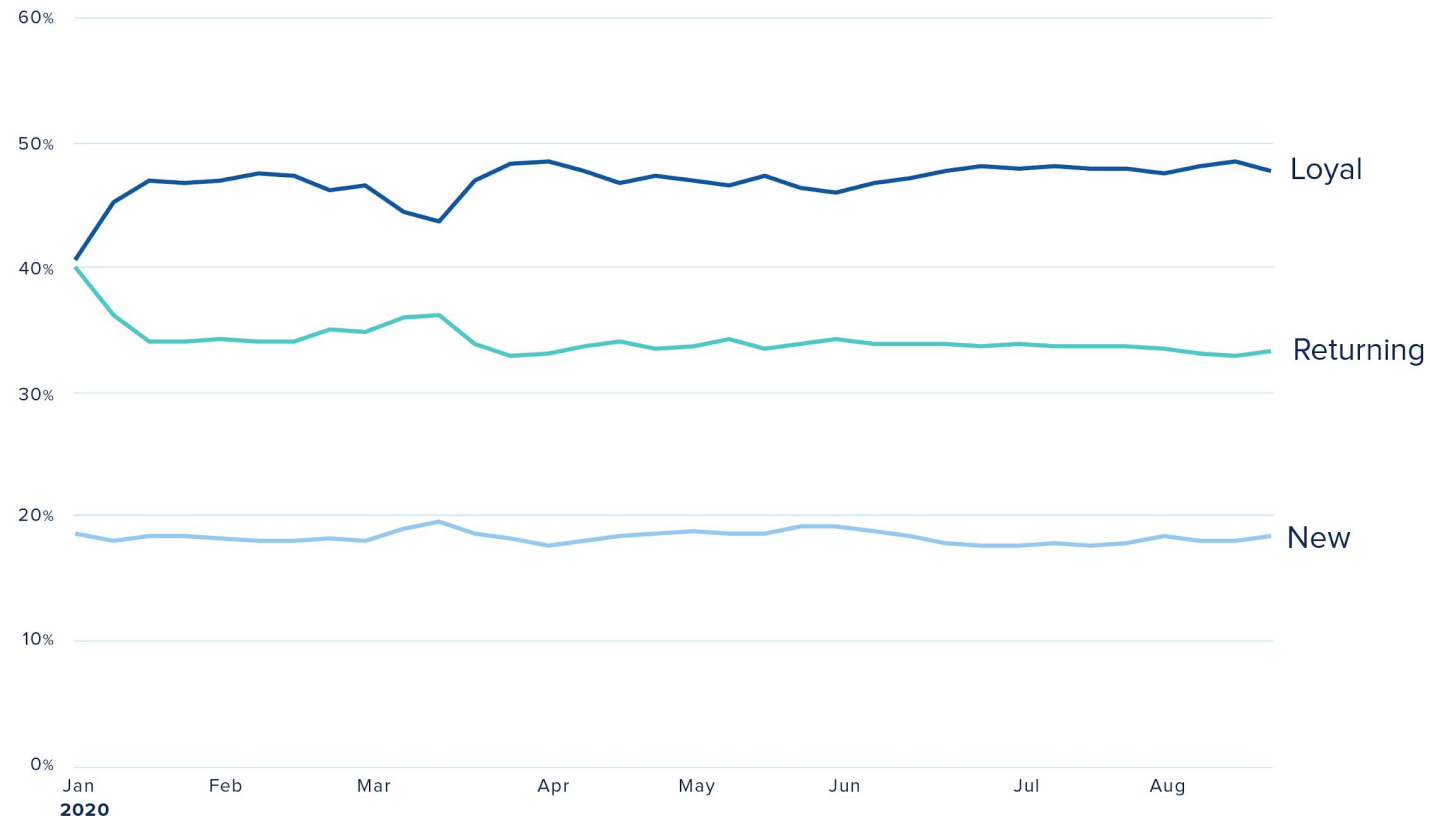
ENGAGEMENT: ARE READERS BECOMING MORE LOYAL?

The percentage of pageviews from New and Returning visitors increased slightly in the initial period of COVID-19.

Traffic from Loyal* readers continued to grow as a proportion of traffic throughout the year.

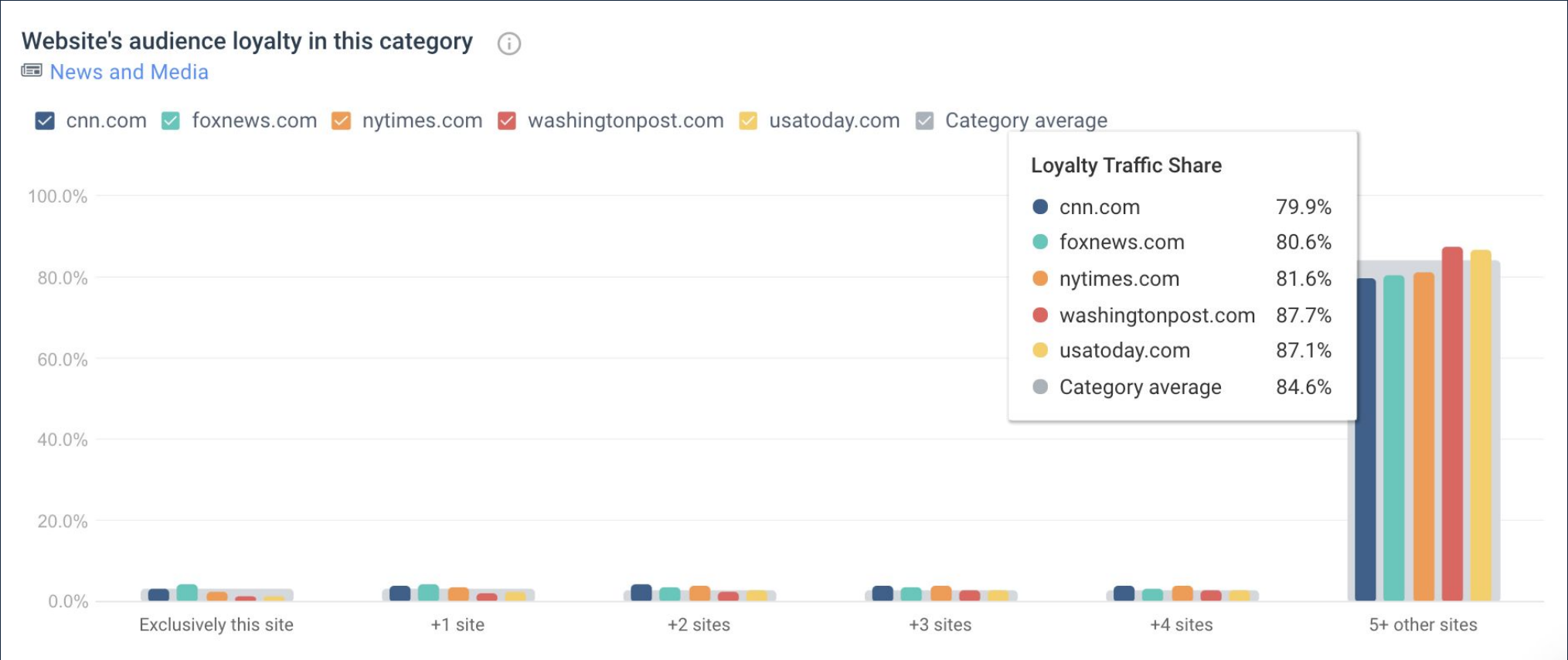
* A loyal readers is someone who visits your site at least every other day

Pageviews by Visitor (% of Total)



ENGAGEMENT: WHICH OTHER SITES ARE YOUR READERS LOYAL TO?

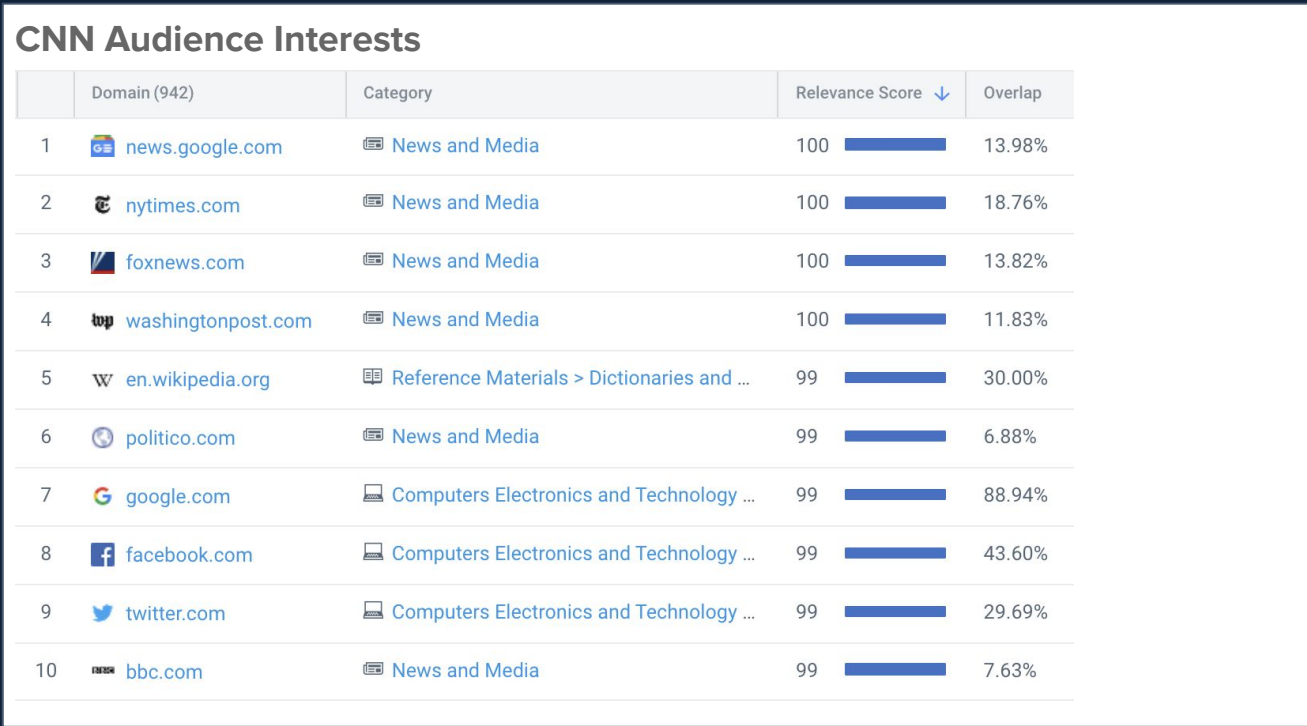
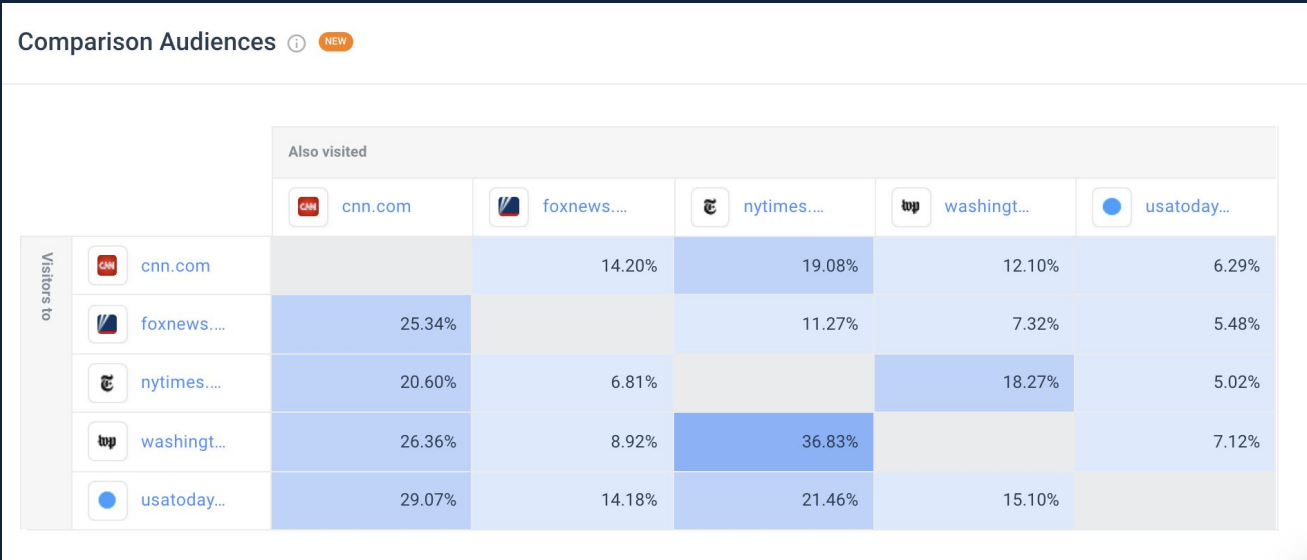
U.S. news consumers are not loyal to one source — they are visiting many different sites to get their news.



ENGAGEMENT

Understanding which other sites your audience is visiting can help inform whom your top competitors really are.

Among the top five news sites, CNN has the highest audience overlap with the other sites, with the exception of The New York Times and The Washington Post.

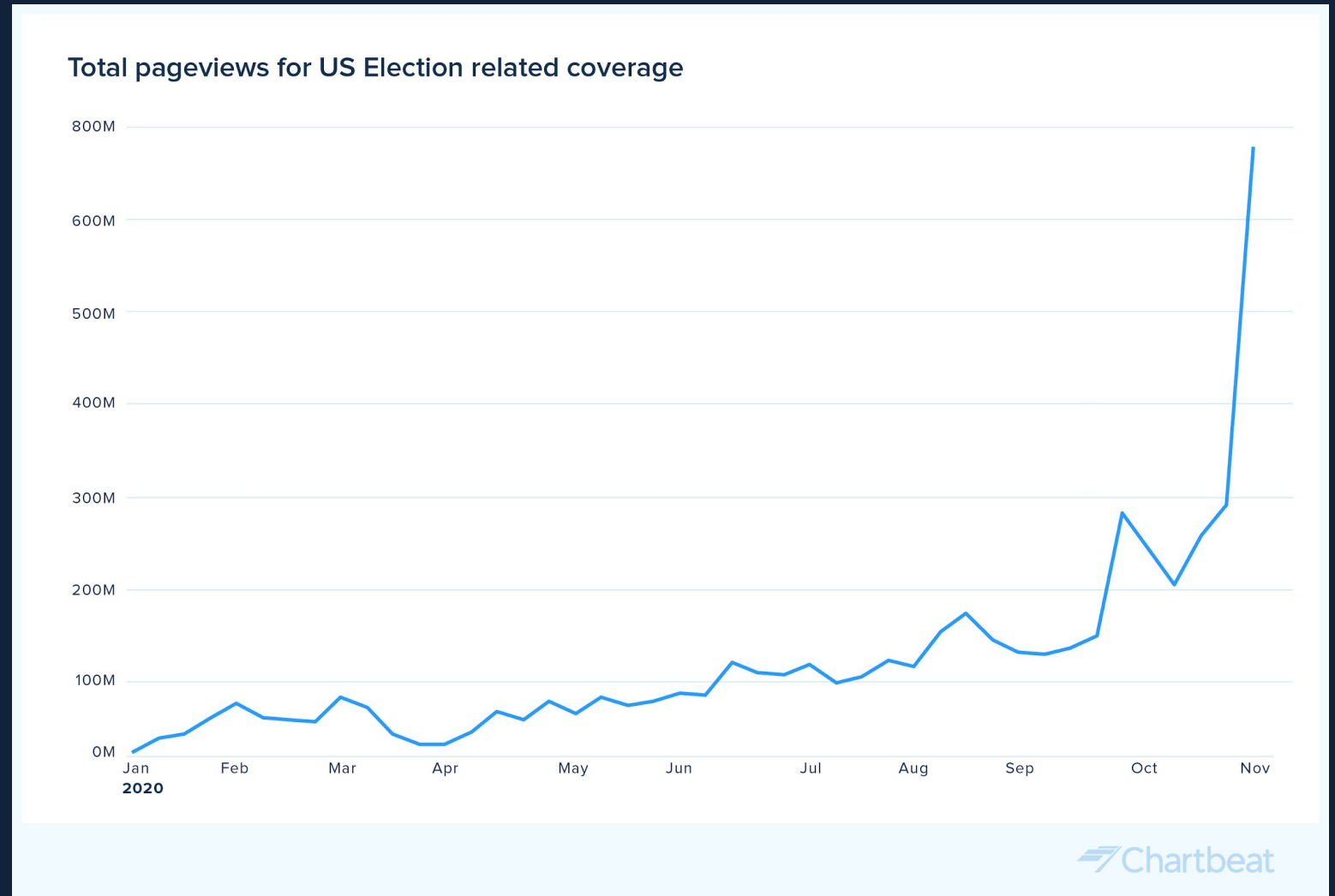


DATA DEEP DIVE

How did behaviors change during the US Election?

US ELECTION: HOW MUCH TRAFFIC WAS GENERATED?

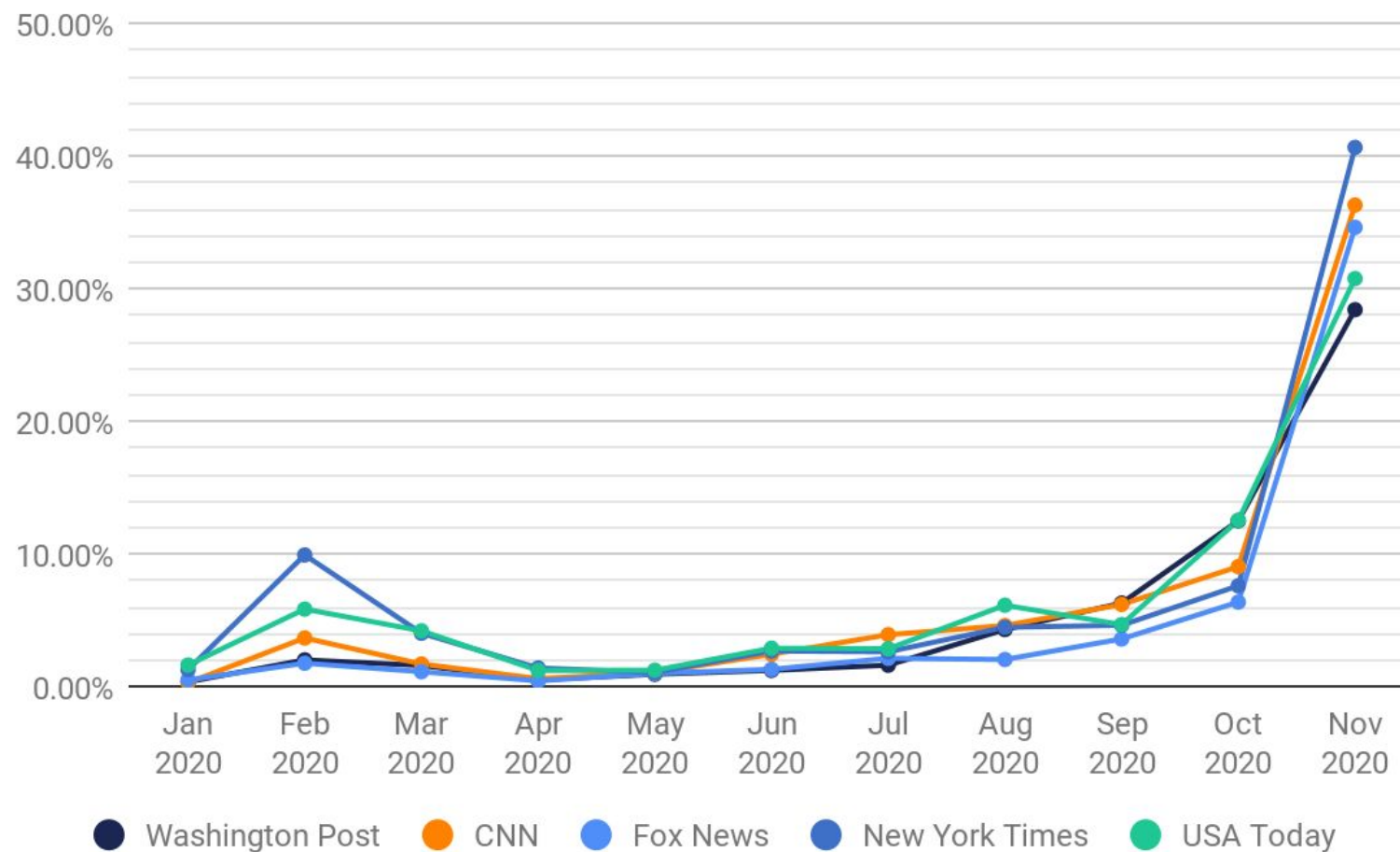
Interest in election-related stories declined in mid-March, but rose steadily in the months leading up to the election.



US ELECTION: HOW MUCH TRAFFIC WAS GENERATED?

The election dominated coverage in November, accounting for an average of 35% of all traffic to the top new sites in the US.

Percent of Traffic to Election Related Coverage, Desktop



US ELECTION: HOW DO THE CANDIDATES DRIVE ENGAGEMENT?

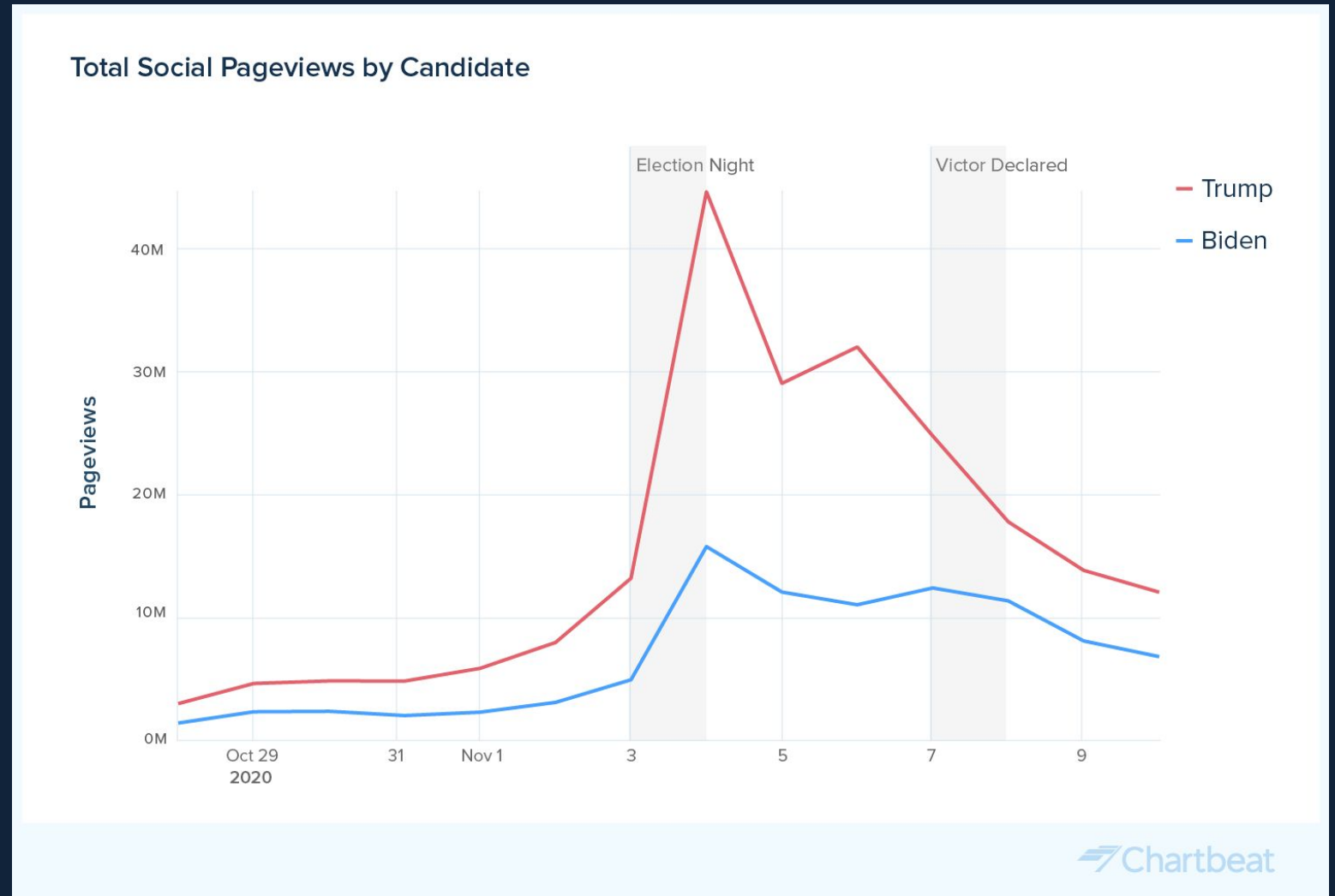
Trump, as the incumbent, is covered much more widely than Biden and appears in a wider variety of articles.



US ELECTION: WHICH SOURCES DROVE THE MOST TRAFFIC?

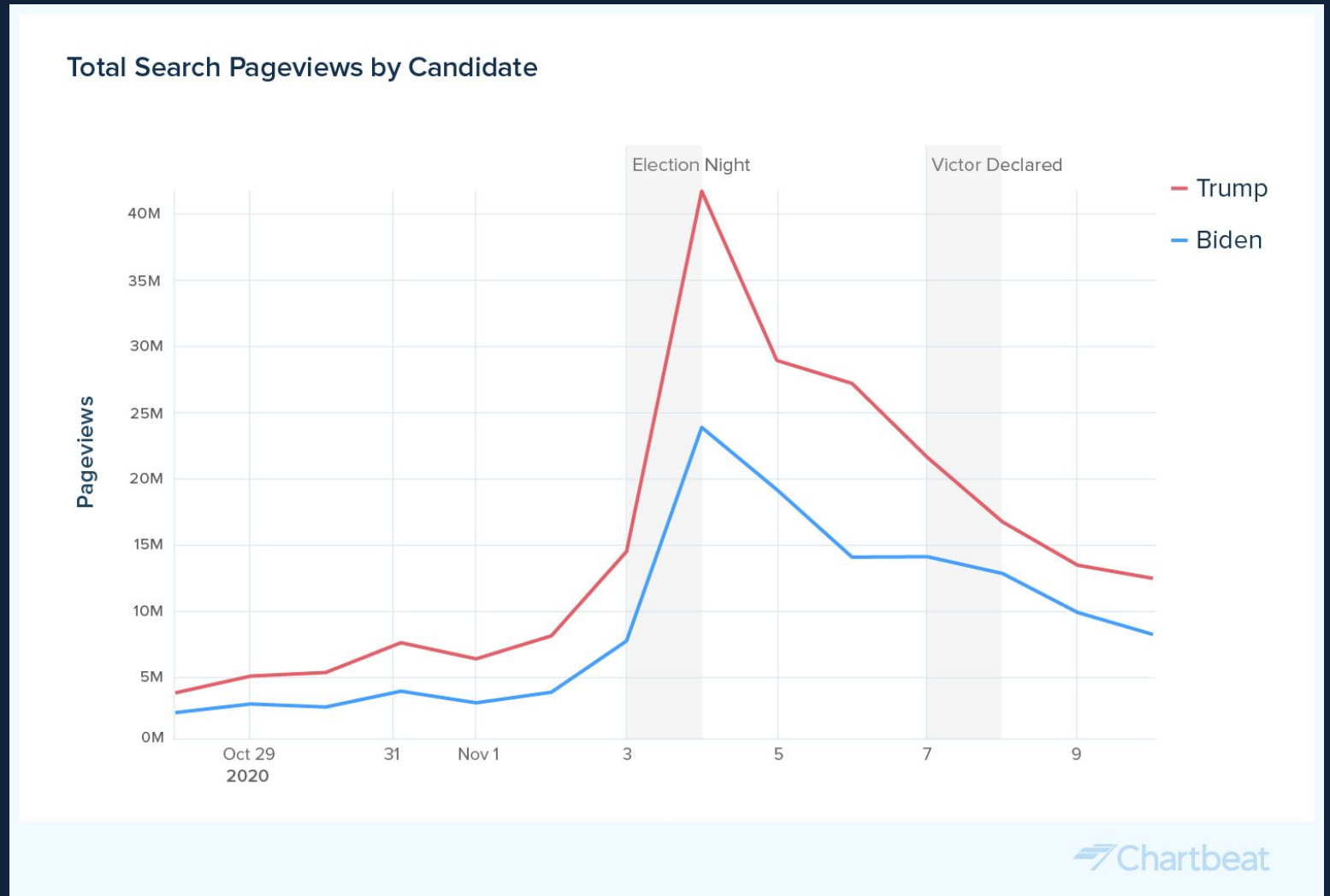
Social and Search traffic mirrored patterns we observed in many previous election cycles, though this year those patterns were spread over a longer time period.

Social traffic began to spike on Election Day, and stayed high for the next several days as readers waiting for a result.



US ELECTION: WHICH SOURCES DROVE THE MOST TRAFFIC?

Search traffic increased as the election neared, but began dropping rapidly as soon as the polls closed.



US ELECTION: WHAT KEYWORDS ARE DRIVING SEARCH TRAFFIC

Top keywords driving traffic to top news sites in November were almost all election-related.

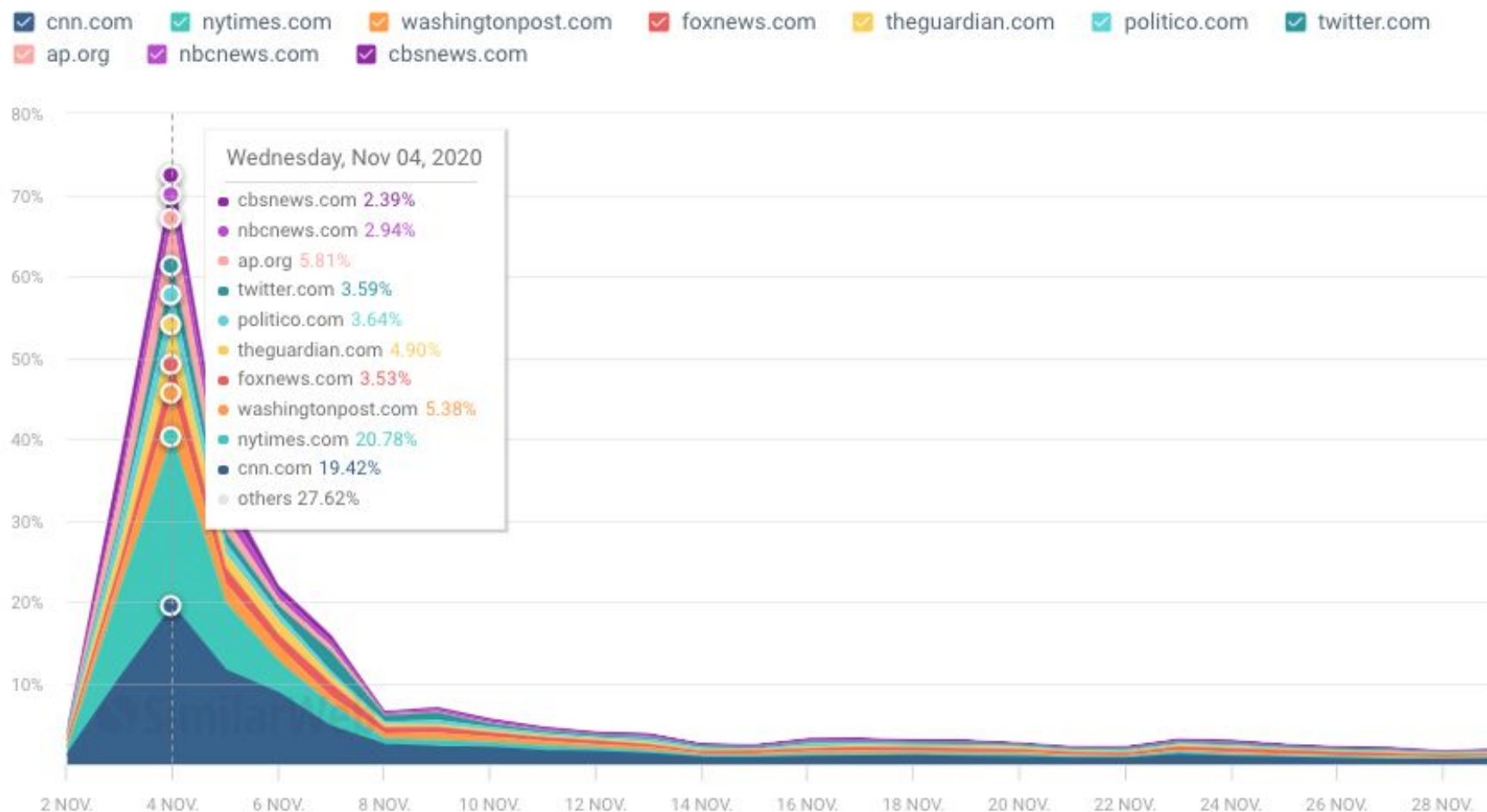
	Search Term (42,564)	Traffic ↓	
1	election results	27.8M	9.17%
2	election	18.3M	6.04%
3	trump	15.4M	5.10%
4	news	10.1M	3.35%
5	election results 2020	6.6M	2.19%
6	election 2020	4.6M	1.52%
7	donald trump	3.5M	1.14%
8	2020 election results	3.2M	1.06%
9	biden	3.2M	1.06%
10	2020 election	3.2M	1.05%
11	presidential election	2.3M	0.75%
12	joe biden	2.1M	0.69%
13	us election results	2M	0.65%
14	live election results	1.9M	0.64%
15	election news	1.9M	0.61%

	Search Term (42,564)	Traffic ↓	
16	trump news	1.8M	0.60%
17	election polls	1.8M	0.59%
18	georgia	1.6M	0.54%
19	coronavirus	1.6M	0.53%
20	polls	1.5M	0.50%
21	nevada	1.4M	0.47%
22	pennsylvania	1.4M	0.45%
23	nevada election results	1.4M	0.45%
24	us election	1.3M	0.44%
25	arizona	1.3M	0.44%
26	vaccine	1.2M	0.38%
27	2016 election results	1.1M	0.37%
28	arizona election results 2020	1.1M	0.37%
29	georgia election results 2020	1.1M	0.36%
30	elections	1.1M	0.36%

US ELECTION: WHO WON ON SEARCH?

The New York Times captured the largest share of Search traffic during the election.

Share of Organic Search Traffic
United States, Desktop, November 2020



US ELECTION: WHO WON ON SEARCH?

The New York Times beats competitors on state-specific search terms.

Share of Organic Search Traffic by Keyword
United States, Desktop, November 2020



How do we turn these insights into action?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Combine internal and competitive metrics to set impactful — and attainable— KPIs for your organization.
2. Trends can change quickly. Evolve your tactics through experimentation.
3. Reader behaviors can vary based on dimensions like channel and device type. Make sure your strategy is adapted to these unique audiences.
4. Use data to make more informed decisions — understand your competition to find your best untapped opportunities.
5. Acquisition is only half the battle. Prioritize metrics that measure the experience and loyalty of your readers.

Questions?

Jill Nicholson

jill@chartbeat.com

Ariane Turley

ariane.turley@similarweb.com