Reuters Institute Digital News Report (Hong Kong) 2025

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Preface

Based on its Digital News Project, the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) at the University of Oxford publishes the Digital News Report annually in June, offering insights into trends and patterns in digital news consumption across more than 40 countries and territories worldwide. Hong Kong has been included in the Digital News Project since 2017.

The 2025 global report can be accessed at: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report. While it contains a brief section on Hong Kong written by the present authors, only a very small portion of the Hong Kong data is covered. With support from the Research Impact Fund at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, this report provides a more thorough description of the Hong Kong data. The authors welcome media organizations, academic organizations, private research institutions, non-governmental organizations, and public institutions to contact them for further information and dialogue.

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Regards,

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Executive Summary

- **The majority of Hong Kong respondents were regular news users who consumed news every day or two to five times a day, with younger people showing less interest in news content. Social media constituted the main source of news for Hong Kong respondents, followed by television. Younger respondents were more reliant on social media and less so on television as their main source of news. Nonetheless, as to specific brands, the broadcaster TVB remained the most frequently consulted news brand both online and offline.**

- **To access online news, more than half of respondents reported "using social media and coming across news that way." This was the most widely used method to access online news, with younger respondents particularly likely to do so. However, when asked to select only one option as their main way to access online news, respondents most often chose "going directly to a news website or app." Google News was the most commonly visited news aggregator, while Facebook and YouTube were the most widely used platforms for accessing online news.**

- **Slightly more than half (55.0%) of respondents trusted most news most of the time, with people aged 25–34 showing the lowest level of trust in the news. General trust in the news declined slightly between 2024 and 2025, but trust in a full range of specific news brands increased. Respondents trusted mainstream media organizations more than small-scale online outlets, but the gap between trust in the former and the latter was much narrower among the most frequent news consumers.**

- **The percentage of online news payers increased from 17.5% in 2024 to 22.2% in 2025. People who trusted the news in general and most strongly distrusted the news in general were both more likely to have paid for online news. The most common way to pay for online news was an ongoing payment for a digital news service (i.e., subscription or membership). About 20.0% of non-online news payers might consider paying for online news if it allowed them to gain access to more than one news site for a reasonable price.**

- **About half of respondents agreed that they were concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet; concern over online misinformation declined in the past year, though it remained at a level comparable to or higher than 2021 to 2023. Respondents saw official sources and trusted news sources as places to go to for verifying information. People who had received some news literacy training were more likely to see social media or video networks, user comments, and artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots as places to go to for verifying information, whereas people who did not have news literacy training were more likely to rely on trusted news sources.**

- **Sharing and discussing news were the most common ways for people to engage with news. The youngest group (18–24) was particularly active in discussing news both in person and online, while middle-aged respondents (35–54) were more likely to share news via social media or instant messenger. Respondents were generally comfortable with personalized content, especially in non-news contexts. About 44.7% of respondents believed that the amount of content removed by social media and video network was appropriate. Frequent news consumers reported higher rates of news avoidance than regular or infrequent consumers. News avoidance remained stable from 2022 to 2025.**

- **Almost three-fifths (59.3%) of respondents agreed that podcasts helped understand issues at a deeper level than other media. Younger people and females held particularly positive views of podcasts. Nearly half of respondents agreed that they would pay a reasonable price for podcasts. While frequent news consumers were the most willing to pay for podcasts (59.8%), regular consumers were the least likely to do so (even less than infrequent consumers). Platform use varied by age, with younger users (18–24) preferring Instagram and X and older groups favoring YouTube and Facebook. Frequent news consumers engaged with video news on all platforms more than other groups.**

- **Respondents were much more comfortable with news produced by human journalists with the help of AI (52.5%) compared with AI-produced news with some human oversight (28.3%). Of the top three AI-assisted features, respondents were most interested in receiving summarized versions of news articles (40.1%), followed by translated versions of news to their native language (34.0%), and story recommendations and news alerts based on respondents' interests (28.7%).**

Part I.
News consumption

Frequency of news consumption

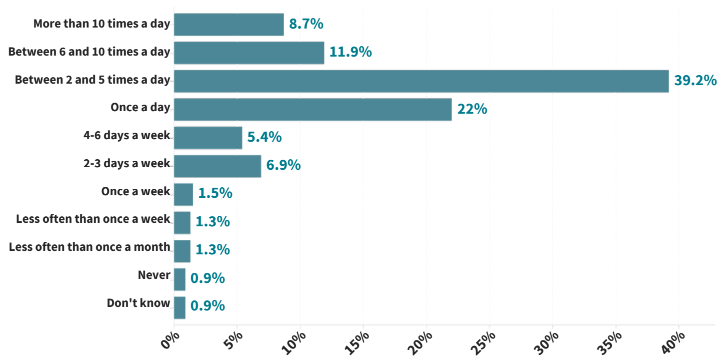
The 2025 Digital News Consumption Survey measured the overall frequency of news consumption using a 10-point scale ranging from "never" to "more than 10 times a day." As Figure 1.1 shows, over four-fifths (81.8%) of respondents consumed news at least once a day, with 8.7% doing so more than 10 times a day. By contrast, fewer than 5% of respondents engaged with news only once a week or less. The findings indicate that news consumption constituted an integral part of daily life for online news users in Hong Kong.

Interest in news

The survey asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they were interested in the news using a five-point scale ranging from "not at all interested" to "extremely interested." The majority of online news users in Hong Kong reported a positive attitude toward news consumption: 82.6% of respondents were at least "somewhat interested" in the news, while 34.1% reported that they were either "very interested" or "extremely interested" (Figure 1.2).

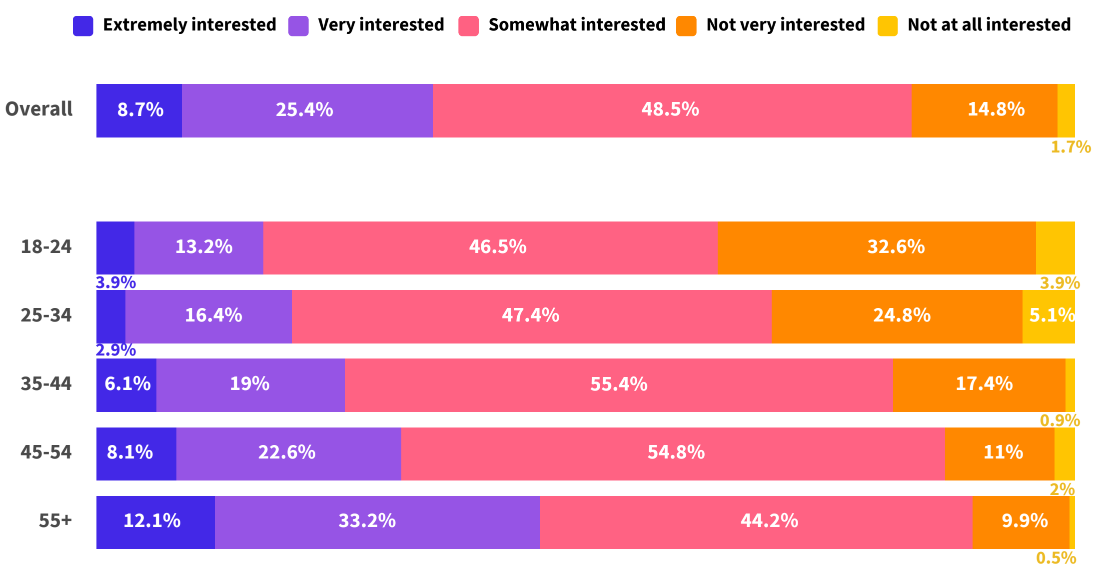
Male respondents exhibited a slightly higher degree of interest in the news than female respondents (86.8% vs 76.3%), and starker differences were observed between respondents of different age groups. Overall, interest in news increased with age. The youngest group of respondents (aged 18 to 24) stood out as the least interested in the news, with only 63.6% reporting being at least somewhat interested. They were followed by the 25–34 group, of which 66.7% reported being at least somewhat interested. These proportions are notably lower than that for all other age groups. The oldest respondents (aged 55 or above) displayed the greatest appetite for news, with a striking 89.5% of the group indicating that they were at least somewhat interested in the news. The middle-aged groups also demonstrated robust news interest: nearly and more than 80.0% of those aged 35–44 and 45–54, respectively, described themselves as being at least somewhat interested in the news.

Figure 1.1



Question: Typically, how often do you access news? By news we mean national, international, regional or local news, and other topical events accessed via any platform (radio, TV, newspaper or online)? *N* = 2,004

Figure 1.2

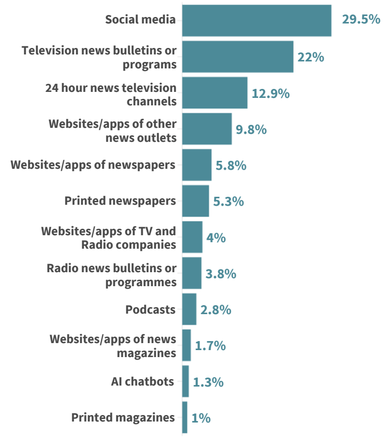


Question: How interested, if at all, would you say you are in news? *N* = 2,004.

Main source of news

Overall, social media and traditional broadcast media constitute the primary sources of news for Hong Kong citizens. As Figure 1.3a shows, 29.5% of respondents chose social media as their main channel for news consumption, followed by television news bulletins or programs (22.0%) and 24-hour news television channels (12.9%).

Figure 1.3a



Question: You say you've used these sources of news in the last week; which would you say is your main source of news? *N* = 1,959.

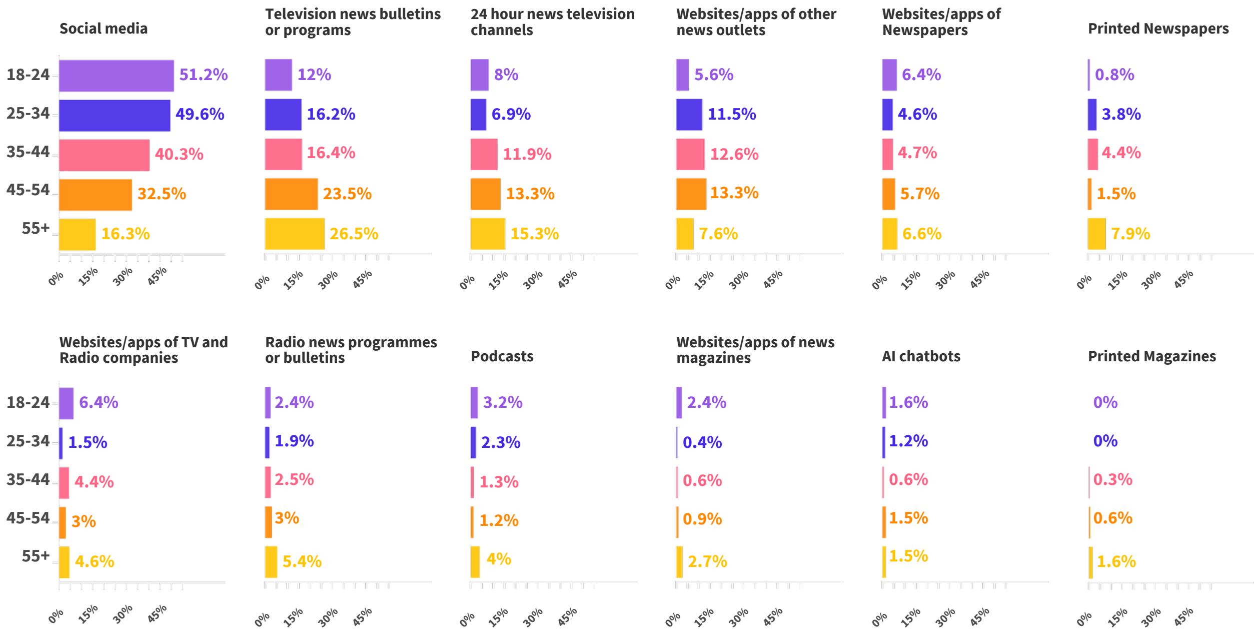
Despite the predominance of social media, traditional broadcast media continued to exert considerable influence. By contrast, only 5.3% of respondents chose printed newspapers, and 1% of the respondents chose printed magazines as their main news source. The use of emerging digital channels was limited, with only 1.3% of respondents saying that they used AI chatbots as a main source of news.

There were only slight differences between males and females in terms of the channels through which news was accessed. Female respondents were more likely to use social media (30.5% for females vs. 28.3% for males) and television news bulletins or programs (24.5% for females vs. 18.9% for males) to obtain news, whereas males were more likely to use 24-hour news television channels (15.3% for males vs. 11.0% for females) and the websites or apps of various news outlets (11.9% for males vs. 8.1% for females).

Main source of news by age groups

There were substantial differences in the main source of news of different age groups (Figure 1.3b). Among respondents aged 18 to 24 and 25 to 34, more than and nearly half, respectively, chose social media as their main source of news, with only 12.0% to 15.0% choosing television as the main source of news. Respondents aged 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 were also most likely to use social media as their main source of news, though the percentages of those using television were also substantial. For people between 45 and 54, if television news bulletins and 24-hour television news channels were combined, the percentage (36.8%) was slightly higher than the percentage using social media as the main source of news. People aged 55 or above were most likely to use television news bulletins as their main source of news, and 7.9% of them still relied on newspapers as their main source.

Figure 1.3b



Question: You say you've used these sources of news in the last week; which would you say is your MAIN source of news? *N* = 1,959

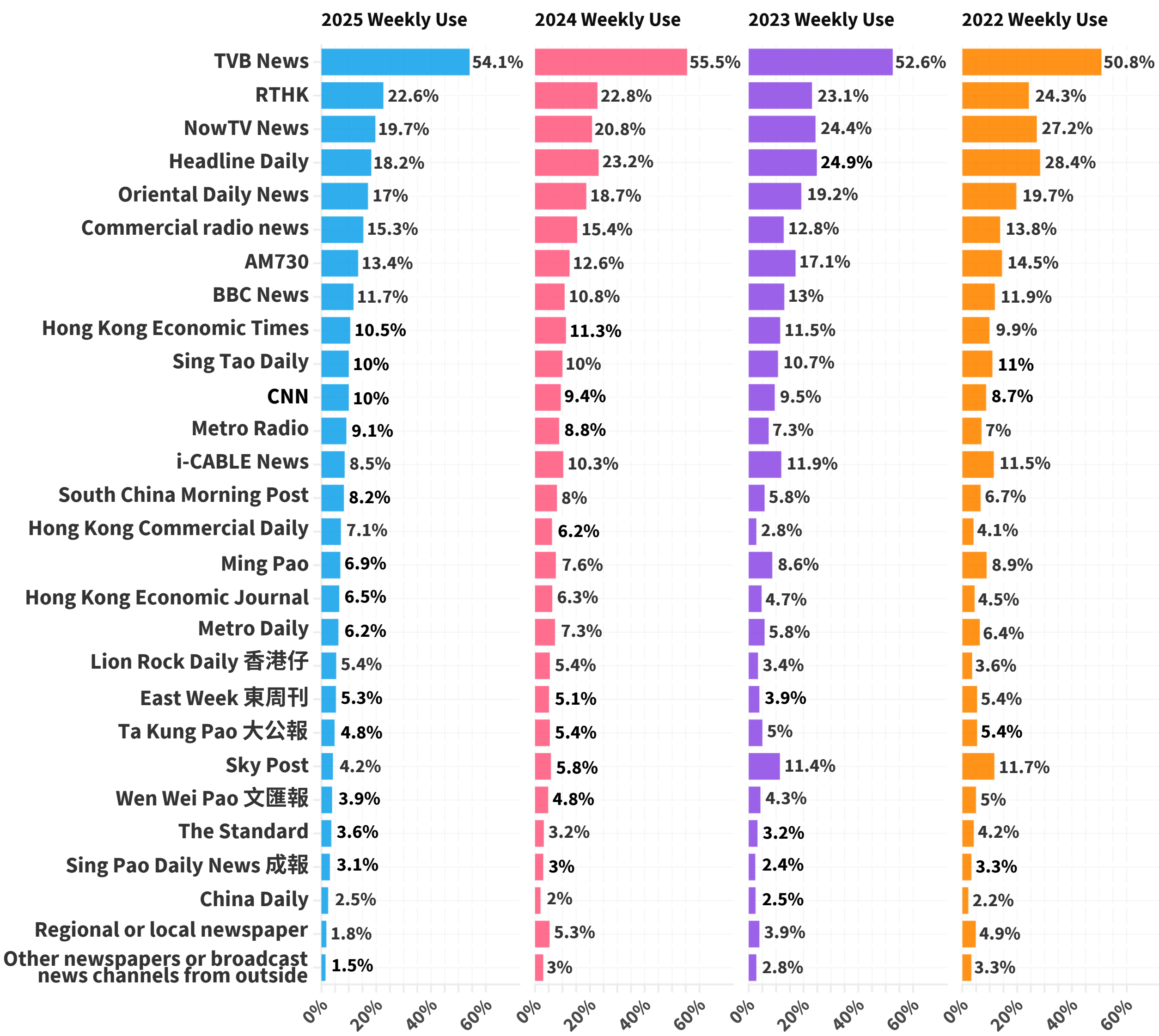
Use of offline brands in the previous week, 2022–2025

The survey also asked respondents about the specific news brands they consumed (see Figure 1.4a). Because of the length constraints in the questionnaire, the survey could not include every single brand, but the 2025 questionnaire still featured 28 offline brands and 43 online brands. Respondents were asked if they had used each of the brands in the previous week and whether they had used each brand on more than three days in that week.

Figure 1.4a compares the data between 2022 and 2025. TVB News remained the most prominent offline news source in Hong Kong over the period. In 2022, 50.8% of respondents reported using TVB in the week prior to the survey. The percentage grew to 55.5% in 2024 and then dropped a little to 54.1% in 2025. RTHK, NowTV, Headline Daily, and Oriental Daily ranked second through fifth, respectively, in the 2025 survey. However, while the percentage of respondents who reported consuming RTHK remained steady over the years, the percentage of respondents who reported consuming NowTV declined; the percentage dropped every year between 2022 and 2025, with an overall decline of 7.5% over the full period. Headline Daily also experienced a steady decline in usage, dropping from 28.4% in 2022 to 18.2% in 2025.

Although usage of newspaper brands was typically low, the results were not entirely negative for a few specific brands such as South China Morning Post, the usage level of which had remained steady and even rose slightly at 8.2% in 2025 (compared to 5.8% in 2023). The percentage who reported consuming the Hong Kong Economic Journal also grew slightly from 4.5% in 2022 to 6.5% in 2025.

Figure 1.4a



Question: Which of the following brands have you used to access news offline in the last week (i.e., via TV, radio, print, or other traditional media)? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

Use of offline brands at least three days in the previous week, 2022–2025

Figure 1.4b shows the results of the question about whether respondents had used each of the brands for at least three days in the week prior to the survey, and the ranking among outlets is largely the same. TVB was by far the most frequently used news brand, with about 45.0% of the respondents having consumed TVB news three times in the week prior to the survey. TVB was again followed by RTHK, NowTV News, Headline Daily, and Oriental Daily. Similar to the results presented in Figure 1.4a, the percentages using NowTV and Headline Daily at least three times in a week had been declining between 2022 and 2025; the 2025 figures were 7.1% and 5.7% lower, respectively, than the 2022 figures for those two brands.

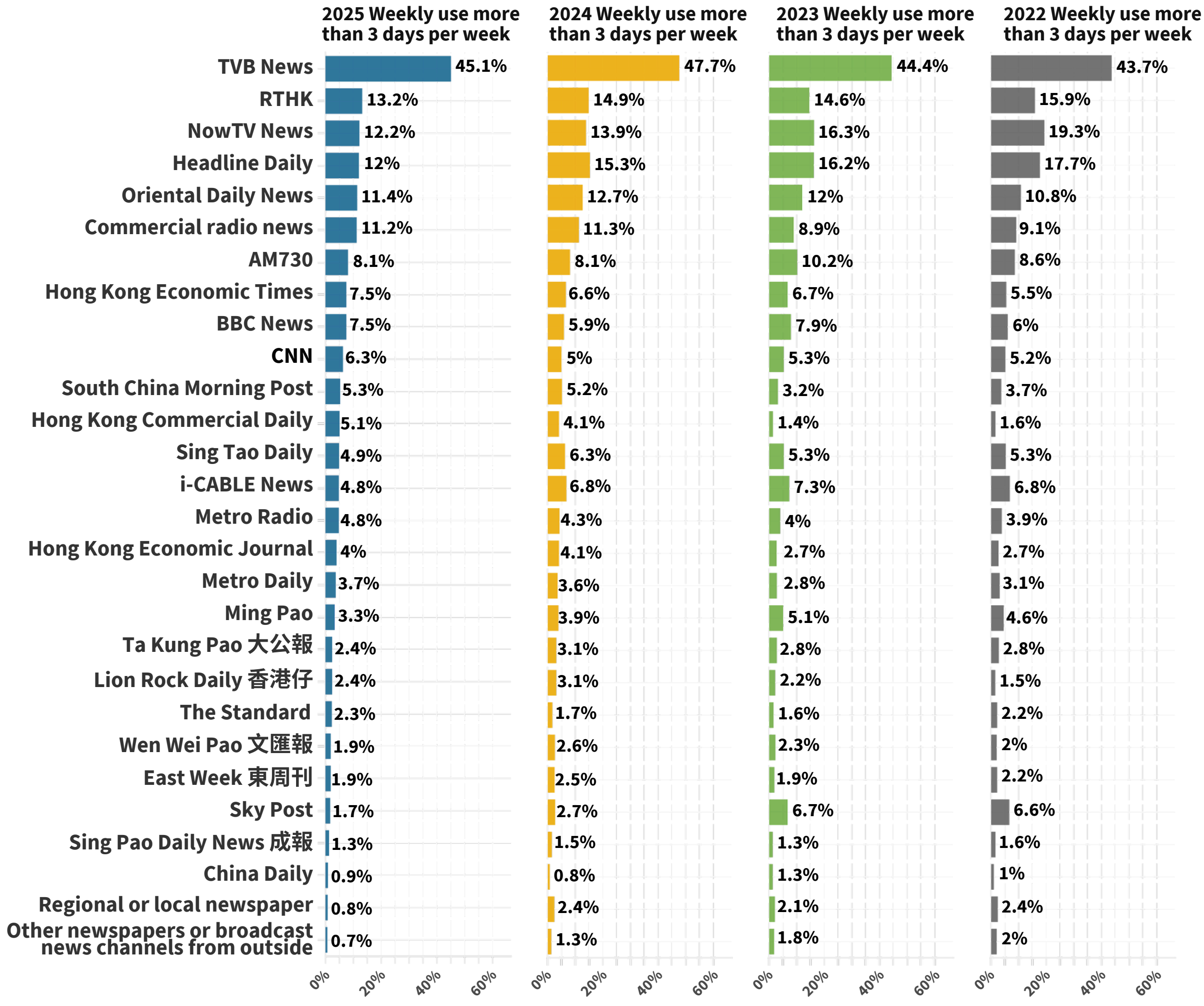
Outlets that registered small gains in usage (at least 2%) between 2022 and 2025 included Commercial Radio (from 9.1% to 11.2%), Hong Kong Economic Times (from 5.5% to 7.5%), and Hong Kong Commercial Daily (from 1.6% to 5.1%).

Use of online brands in the previous week, 2022–2025

Figure 1.5a turns to respondents' use of online news brands. TVB news online also ranked first on the list, but hk01.com registered a very close second. Yahoo! News ranked third. Similar to offline news usage, percentages consuming NowTV online and Headline News online also registered substantial declines over the past few years. For NowTV online, the percentage of respondents using the outlet dropped from 23.6% in 2022 to 15.1% in 2025, while Headline News online decreased from 21.6% to 14.6%.

The Hong Kong online media field boasted a number of small-scale, liberal-oriented news outlets and several other pro-government operations. On the liberal end of the spectrum, Inmedia registered a slight increase in usage from 8.5% in 2024 to 9.0% in 2025, but this was actually its level of usage in 2022. Initium was steady at 4.8% in 2025. The Collectives, which was included in the survey for the first time in 2024, registered a slight increase in usage from 3.6% to 4.2%. The English language Hong Kong Free Press

Figure 1.4b



Question: You said you have used the following brands to access news offline in the last week. Which of these, if any, did you use on three or more days? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

also had a steady usage level at 4.7%. On the pro-government side, Bastillepost's usage declined from 9% in 2022 to 6.6% in 2025, whereas the usage of HKG Pao, Dot Dot News, and Speak Out HK were all at around 6%, which was steady or increasing slightly.

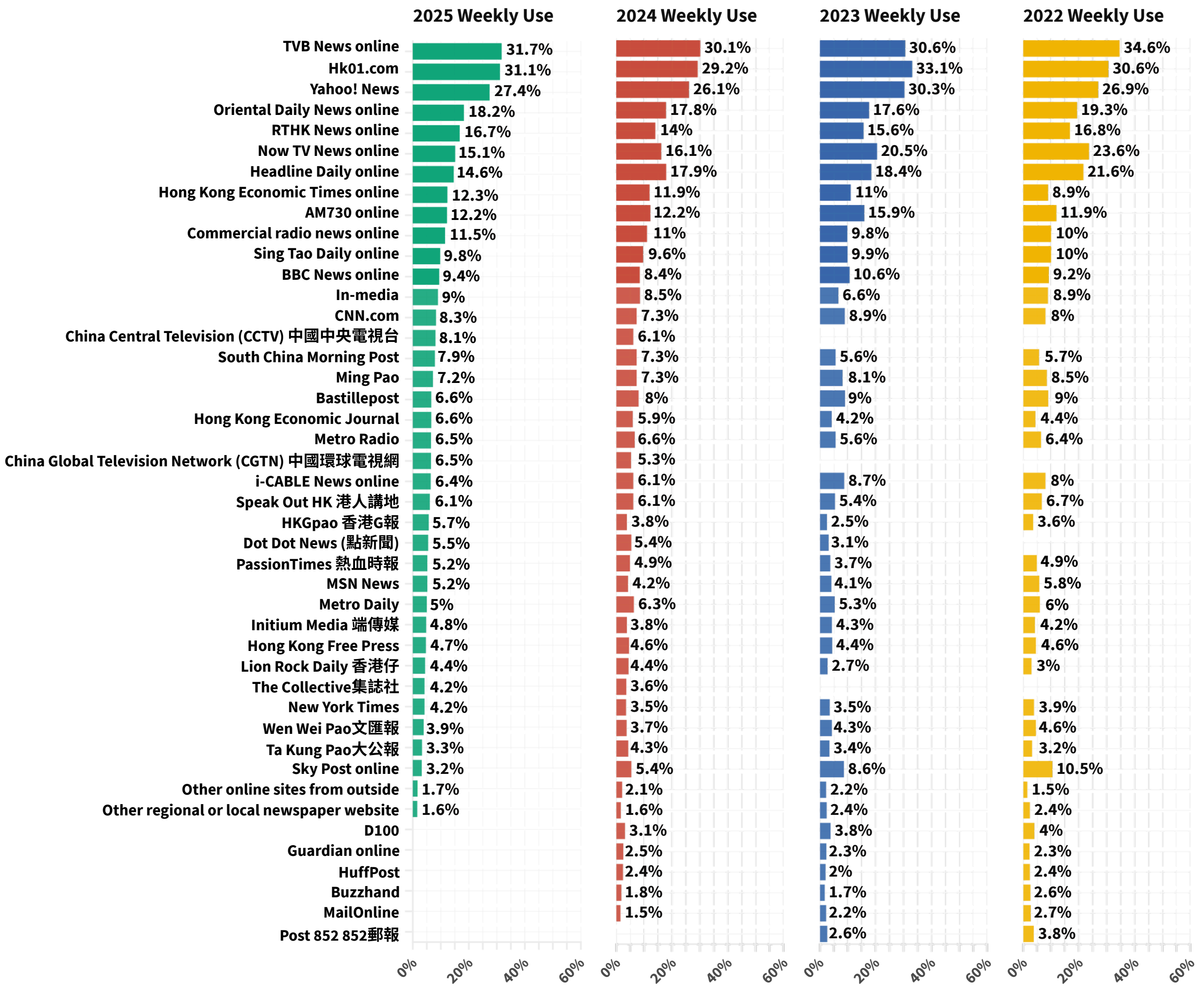
BBC online (9.4%) and CNN.com (8.3%) remain the two most frequently consumed international news outlets in the online environment, with the New York Times online registering lower levels of usage (4.2%). Meanwhile, two official media outlets from mainland China—Chinese Central Television (CCTV) and its internationally oriented China Global Television Network—also experienced small increases in usage between 2024 and 2025. Notably, usage of CCTV online reached 8.1% in 2025, coming very close to CNN and BBC.

Use of online brands at least three days in the previous week, 2022–2025

Figure 1.5b summarizes the results of respondents' use of each of the online brands for three days or more in the previous week. The ranking remains largely the same. TVB news online is the most frequently consumed, followed by hk01.com and Yahoo! News. Other major platforms, such as the Oriental Daily and RTHK also maintained stable usage rates.

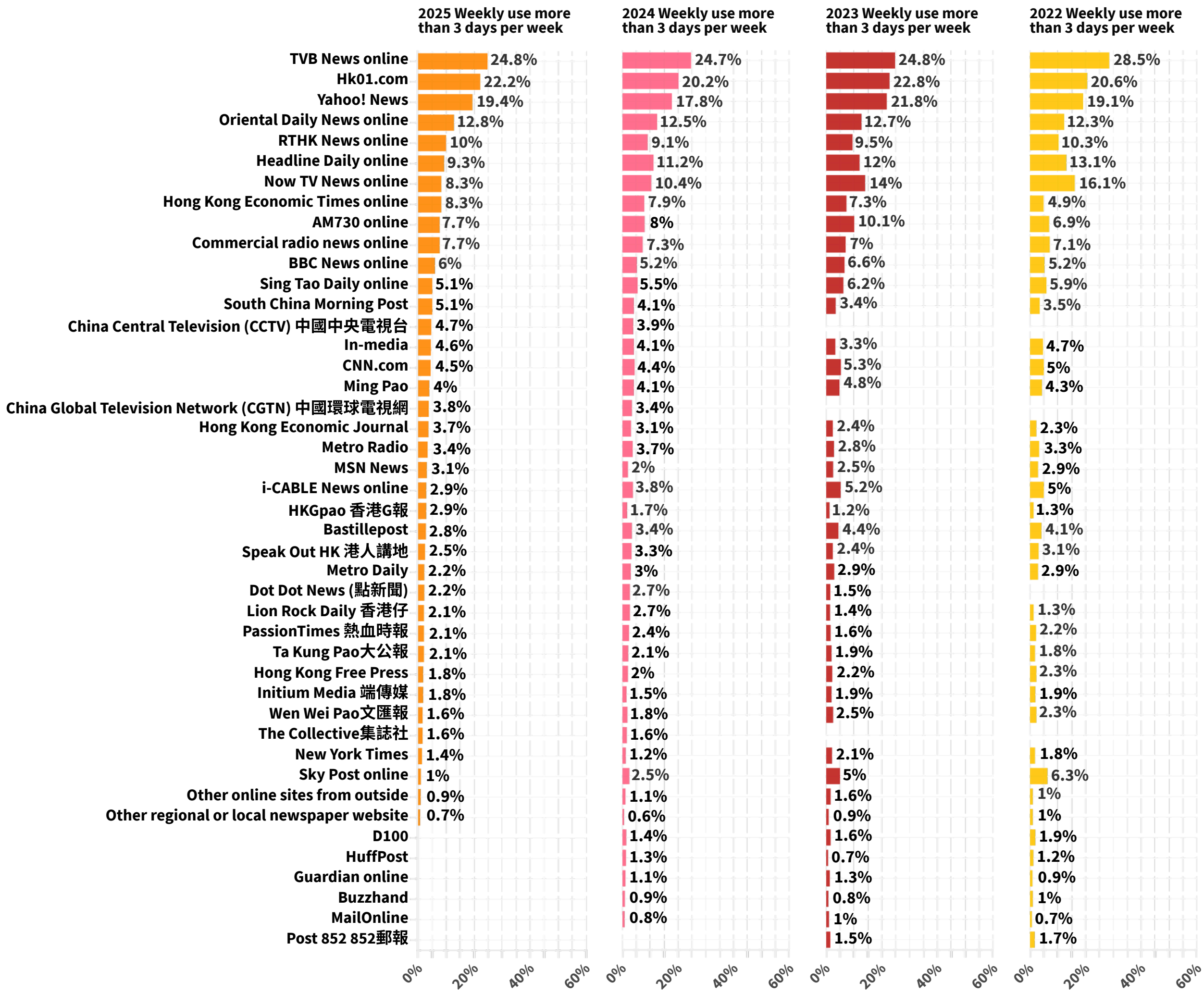
Notably, comparing the numbers in Figure 1.5a and Figure 1.5b shows that some of the more mainstream platforms had percentages dropping only by about one-fifth to one-third (e.g., the percentage using TVB online at least once was 31.7% and the percentage using it three times or more was 24.8%, constituting a drop of around 22.0%), but the drop for small-scale online news outlets such as Inmedia, Speak Out HK, and similar outlets often reached 50.0% or more. This suggests the possibility that many online news users often encountered content from the small-scale outlets accidentally via social media. Hence, the drop in usage would be more substantial in proportional terms when one moves from seeing content from the outlet at least once in the previous week to seeing content from that outlet three times or more in that same week.

Figure 1.5a



Question: Which of the following brands have you used to access news online in the last week (i.e., via websites, apps, social media, and other forms of internet content)? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

Figure 1.5b



Question: Question: You said you have used the following brands to access news online in the last week. Which of these, if any, did you use on three or more days? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively.

Part II.
Ways to obtain online news

Ways to come across online news

Similar to previous years, the 2025 survey asked respondents how they came across news stories. The various ways to obtain news encompass both passive reception and active retrieval. As Figure 2.1a shows, the three most commonly used methods for obtaining online news were “using social media and coming across news that way” (53.3%), “going directly to news websites or apps” (44.5%), and “using a search engine to go to a specific website” (41.0%). About one third of respondents “used a search engine and typed in a keyword about particular news stories” and received a news alert via mobile phone.

Gender differences were not large, as males and females were equally likely to come across online news (53.5% for female vs. 53.0% for male). Beyond that, males were slightly more likely to come across online news in all other ways (e.g., 45.4% of males vs. 43.8% of females went directly to a news website or app, and 42.3% of males and 39.9% of females used a search engage to look for a particular website).

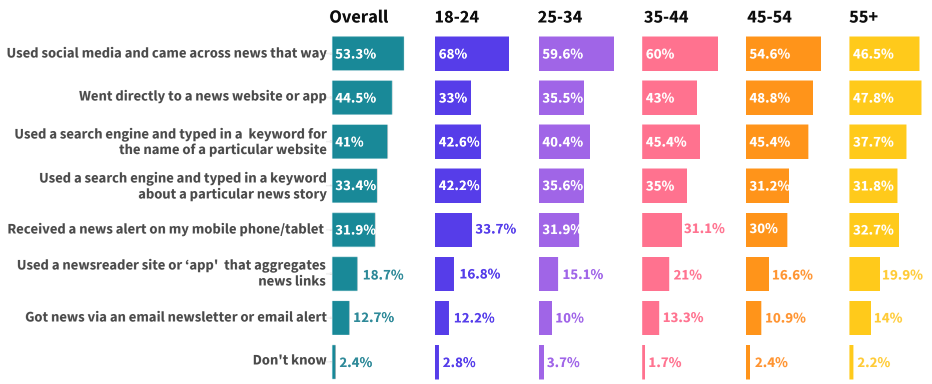
However, there were substantial differences across age groups. The youngest group (those aged 18 to 24) were notably less likely to go directly to a news website or app than other age groups. In fact, for the 18–24 group, going directly to a news website or app was only the fifth most frequently adopted way to come across online news, coming behind social media, using search engines, and even receiving news alerts on mobile devices. The youngest group was particularly likely to come across news via social media incidentally, however, as 68.0% of the respondents in this group chose that option.

One way to understand these results is to see the youngest respondents as least likely to have developed brand loyalty in news consumption. Even when they employed search engines, they were equally likely to type in the names of news outlets and enter keywords for specific stories. By comparison, when the other age groups used search engines to access news, they were more likely to type in the names of news outlets rather than keywords for specific news stories.

Ways to come across online news, 2021–2025

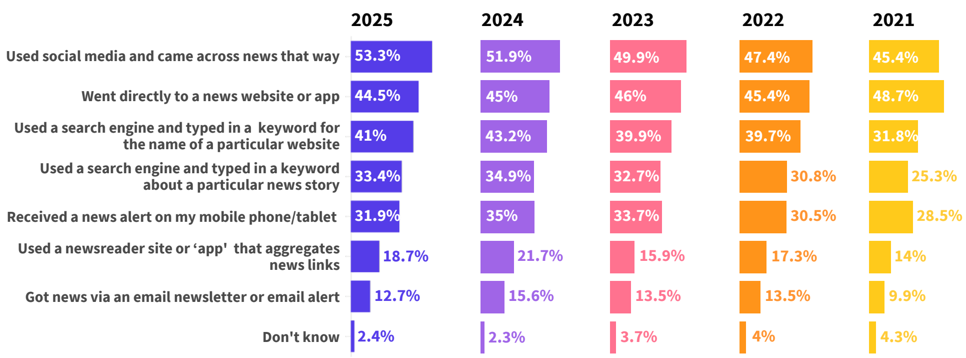
Figure 2.1b compares the results from 2021 to 2025. Coming across the news via social media has remained the leading way to access online news among respondents since 2022, and the gap between “coming across news via social media” and going directly to a news website or app has been increasing; it gap was merely 2% in 2022 but has since increased gradually to 3.9% in 2023, 6.9% in 2024, and 8.8% in 2025.

Figure 2.1a



Question: Thinking about how you obtained news online (via computer, mobile, or any device) in the last week, which were the ways in which you came across news stories? Please select all that apply; *N* = 2,004.

Figure 2.1b



Question: Thinking about how you obtained news online (via computer, mobile, or any device) in the last week, which were the ways in which you came across news stories? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1,501 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Another notable trend is closing the gap between people who used a search engine to obtain news and people who went directly to a news website or app; while the percentage of people going directly to a news website or app declined from 48.7% to 44.5% between 2021 and 2025, the percentage of people using a search engine to find a website rose from 31.8% to 41.0% over the period, and the percentage of people using a search engine to look for a specific news story also went up from 25.3% to 33.4%.

The percentages of people using other ways to access news have not shown a consistent trend. The percentages of respondents receiving a news alert on mobile devices had increased from 28.5% in 2021 to 35.0% in 2024, but that figure dropped to 31.9% in the 2025 survey.

Main way to obtain online news

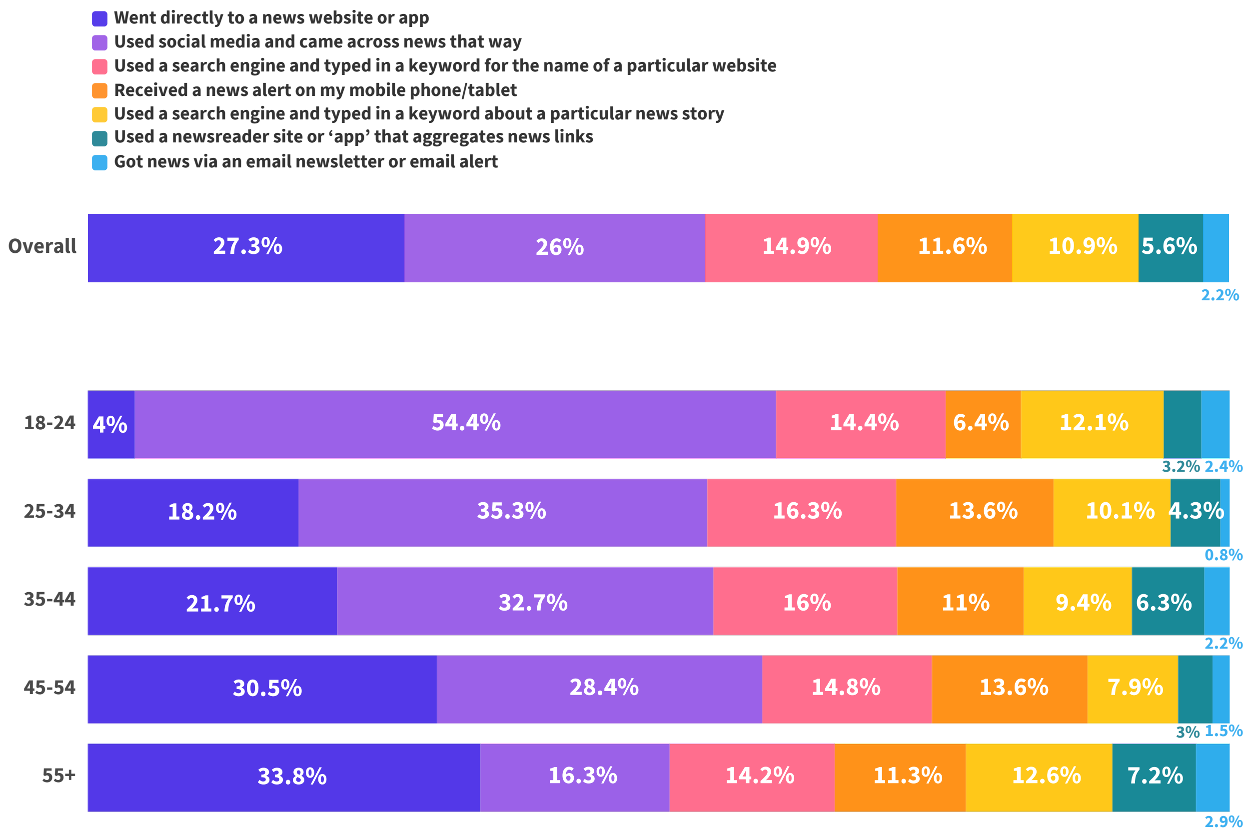
In addition to asking respondents about the various ways through which they obtained online news, the survey further asked them to identify their primary way of accessing online news from the same set of options. Interestingly, as Figure 2.2a shows, going directly to a news website or app became the most frequently chosen option, edging out accessing news incidentally via social media (27.3% vs. 26.0%). Using a search engine to look for a particular news site placed a distant third, with 15.1% of the respondents treating it as the primary way they accessed online news.

There were very substantial differences across age groups. More than half (54.4%) of the youngest group (aged 18 to 24) mainly accessed news through social media, and only 4% primarily went directly to a news website or app. At the other end of the age spectrum, 33.8% of respondents aged 55 or above mainly went directly to a news website or app, with only 16.3% of that cohort relying primarily on social media as their main gateway for news. The contrast is extreme. Nevertheless, it can be noted that the different age groups differed from each other only slightly in the extent to which they treated receiving news alerts, using a search engine to look for a particular news story, and using a search engine to go to a particular news website as their main way to obtain online news. The differences among the age groups center on the contrast between going directly to a news site or app and coming across news on social media.

Main ways to obtain online news, 2021–2025

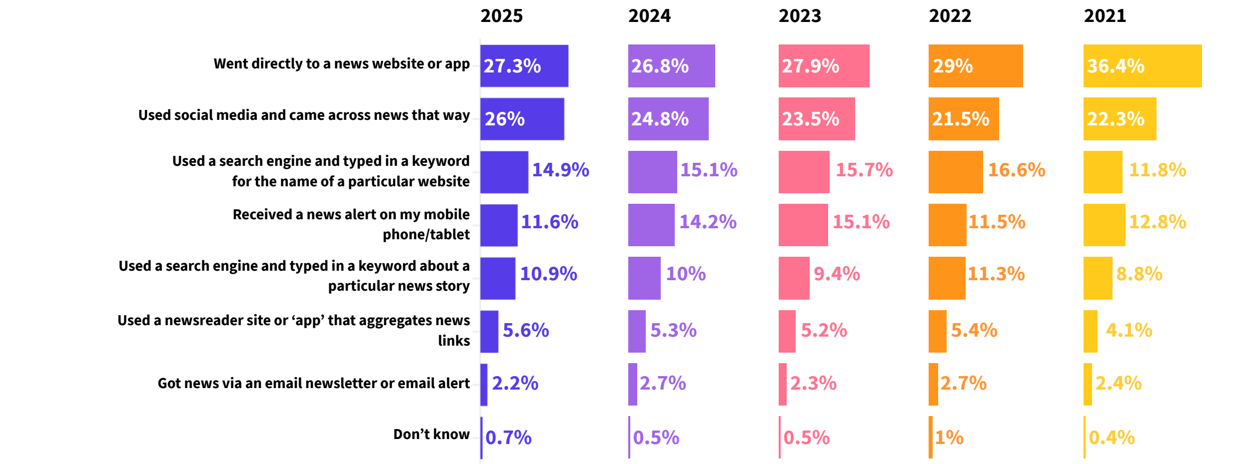
Figure 2.2b presents the main ways that respondents obtained online news from 2021 to 2025. Although going directly to a news website or app had been the most frequently adopted main way to access online news, the gap between going directly to a news website or app and using social media and coming across news has narrowed. The gap between the two was 14.1% in 2021, was down to 7.5% in 2022, and only 2.0% in 2024. The gap was further reduced to 1.3% in 2025.

Figure 2.2a



Question: Which of these was the main way in which you obtained online news in the last week? N = 1,937.

Figure 2.2b



Question: Which of these was the main way in which you came across news in the last week? Ns = 1,937, 1,939, 1,919, 1,911, and 1,415 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

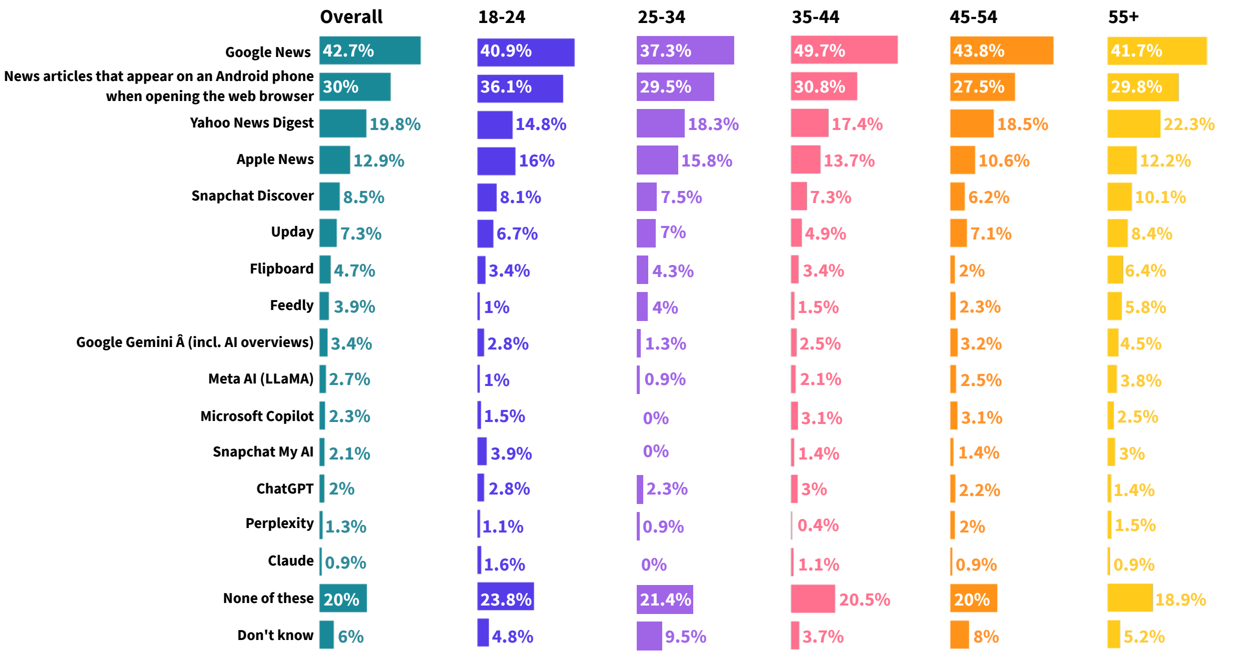
Apps and aggregators

The 2025 survey asked respondents about the news apps or aggregators that they had used and included AI-based aggregation tools for the first time. Google News emerged as the most frequently used news aggregator (42.7%); notably, the survey question explicitly asked respondents not to choose this option if they merely encountered news stories via Google search results.

Exposure to news via mobile browser feeds was the second most frequently encountered news aggregating app (30.0%) followed by Yahoo! News Digest (19.8%) and Apple News (12.9%). Notably, one-fifth of the respondents reported not using any news apps or aggregators.

The youngest group was more likely to have encountered news appearing on an Android phone when opening a browser. There is no linear relationship between age and use of Google News: the 35–44 age group stood out as most likely to have used Google News. Notably, the various AI tools were not widely used by the respondents. Among all respondents, only 3.4% used Google Gemini A and 2% used ChatGPT for the purpose of accessing news.

Figure 2.3a



Question: When using the internet for news, have you used any of the following sites or mobile apps that aggregate different news links in the last week? Please select all that apply; N = 2,004.

Apps and aggregators, 2021–2025

Figure 2.3b reveals trends in the use of news apps that aggregate news links by online news users in Hong Kong from 2021 to 2025. The 2025 survey included AI-based aggregation tools that were not available in previous years. For the sake of consistency and comparability, Figure 2.3b presents only the apps and aggregators that appeared in earlier surveys.

Since 2023, Google News has maintained its position as the leading news aggregation platform. The percentage of respondents accessing news via Google News increased between 2021 and 2024, though there was a slight drop from 44.0% to 42.7% between 2024 and 2025. Yahoo! News Digest experienced a major drop between 2022 and 2023, while the percentage of those accessing news via Yahoo's news aggregation service remained stable between 2023 and 2025.

Meanwhile, the percentages of respondents who reported accessing news via platforms such as Apple News, Snapchat Discover, and Upday had all increased slightly from 2021 to 2024, but those percentages went down slightly in 2025. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that only 20.0% of respondents reported not accessing news via any of the aggregators.

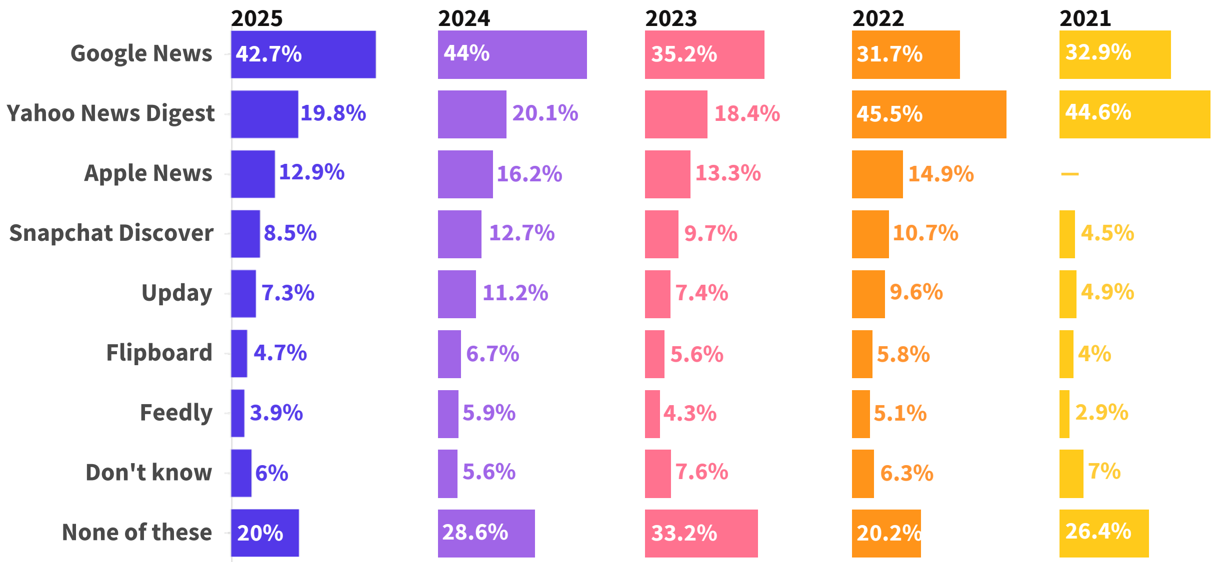
Social media as sources of news

Figure 2.4a shows the percentages of respondents accessing news via different social media platforms. Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp were the most commonly used social media news sources among Hong Kong respondents. Facebook led with 45.9%, followed closely by YouTube at 43.8%. Nearly a quarter (24.6%) of the respondents reported accessing news via WhatsApp, whereas 19.6% and 14.0% used Instagram and WeChat, respectively. Finally, 11.2% of Hong Kong respondents used X (formerly Twitter).

Males significantly outnumbered females in their use of social media platforms for news (YouTube: 47.5% for males vs. 40.7% for females; Wechat: 16.4% for males vs. 12.0% for females; X: 13.0% for males vs. 9.7% for females). When age groups are considered, the 45–54-year-olds were most likely to have used Facebook to access news (58.5%). Facebook was also quite widely used to access news by people between 25 and 44 years old, but only 22.6% of respondents aged 18 to 24 had used Facebook to access news.

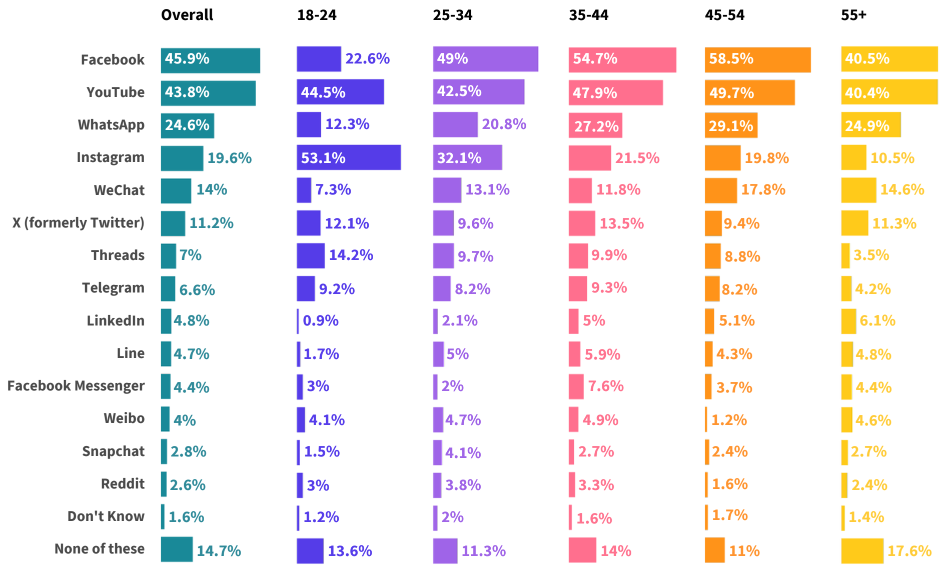
The youngest age group was especially likely to have used Instagram to access news—53.1% of respondents in that group reported doing so, whereas only 32.1% of respondents between 25 and 34 did the same, and the percentage dropped to only between 10.5% and 21.5% for the other age groups. The youngest age group was also particularly less likely to have used WhatsApp to access news—only 12.3% of respondents between 18 and 24 did that, whereas the corresponding percentages for the other age groups ranged from 20.8% to 29.1%. Meanwhile, the different age groups were more or less equally likely to have used YouTube as a source of news – the percentages range from 40.4% for those 55 years old or above to 49.7% for respondents between 45 and 54.

Figure 2.3b



Question: When using the internet for news, have you used any of the following sites or mobile apps that aggregate different news links in the last week? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1,501 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Figure 2.4a



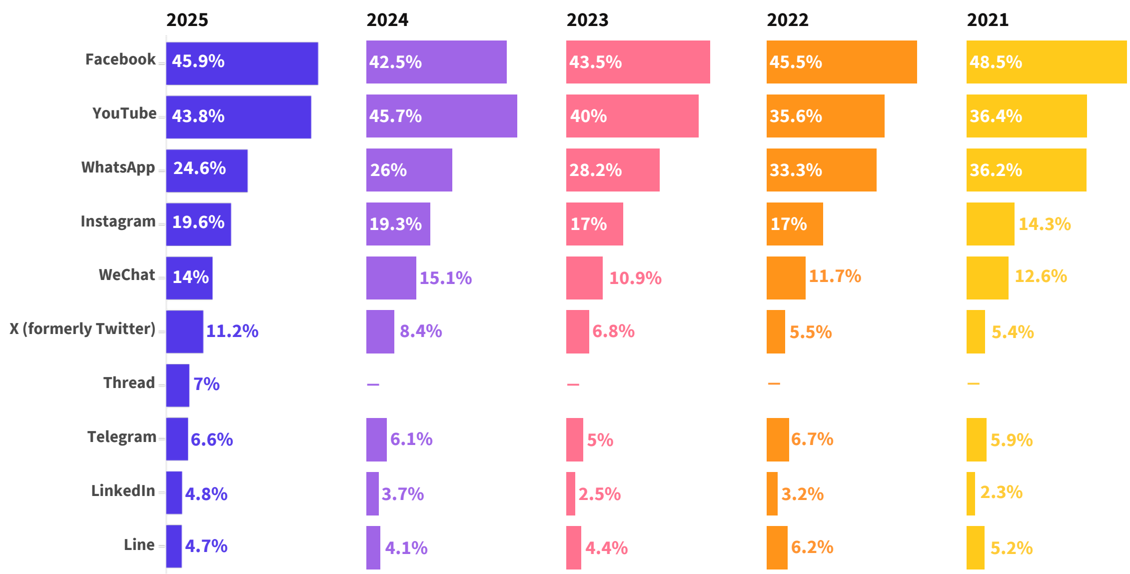
Question: Which, if any, of the following have you used for finding, reading, watching, sharing, or discussing news in the last week? Please select all that apply; *N* = 2,004.

Top social media platforms as sources of news, 2021–2025

Figure 2.4b indicates the use of various social media platforms as sources of news from 2021 to 2025. Facebook and YouTube remained the most commonly used social platforms over all five years. Facebook led YouTube by about 10.0% in usage in 2021 and 2022, but YouTube surpassed Facebook as the most commonly used social media platform for news in the 2024 survey. However, that ranking was reversed again this year. Meanwhile, the percentage of respondents using WhatsApp as a news source declined continually from 2021 to 2025, from 36.2% in 2021 to only 24.6% in 2025. This hints at a persistent trend among Hong Kong to avoid sharing news stories via that messaging app.

The percentage of respondents using Instagram to access news had increased, if slightly, over the years. Interestingly, there was an increase in the proportion of respondents accessing news via X from 5.4% to 11.2%.

Figure 2.4b



Question: Which, if any, of the following have you used for finding, reading, watching, sharing, or discussing news in the last week? Please select all that apply; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1501 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Devices for obtaining news

Figure 2.5a shows the percentages of respondents accessing news via different types of devices. Smartphones remained the most commonly used device for accessing news, with an overall usage rate of 83.3%. Meanwhile, 67.6% of respondents used laptop or desktop computers, and 45.3% used tablets.

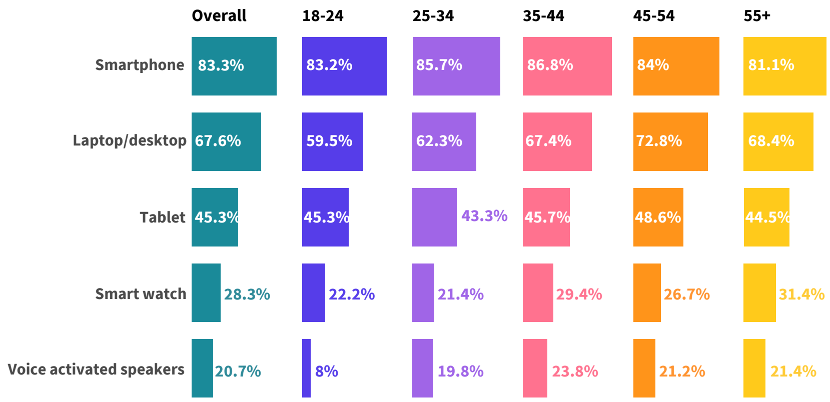
Women were more likely than men to use smartphone devices to access news, whereas men were more likely to use other devices than women to access news. Smartphones constituted the dominant device for all age groups, and between-groups differences in using smartphones to access news were not substantial. People aged 45 to 54 were the most likely to have used laptop or desktop computers to access news. Interestingly, the oldest age group was the most likely to use smartwatches to access news, which may be related to the use of that device by people of the age group for health-related reasons.

Devices for obtaining news, 2021–2025

Figure 2.5b reveals the trends in the choice of devices by Hong Kong online news users from 2021 to 2025. It should be noted that there was a slight change in question design beginning with the 2024 survey: before asking people to select the devices through which they accessed news in the previous week, the questionnaire included the prompt, “We are now going to ask you whether you have used each of these devices to access any form of NEWS in the past week” (emphasis added). The explicit indication that “any form of news” counted might have reminded people about specific occasions when they did access some form of news from a specific type of device. This might explain the striking jumps in the percentages of users who reported accessing news via laptop or desktop, tablets, smartwatch, and even voice-activated speakers between 2023 and 2024.

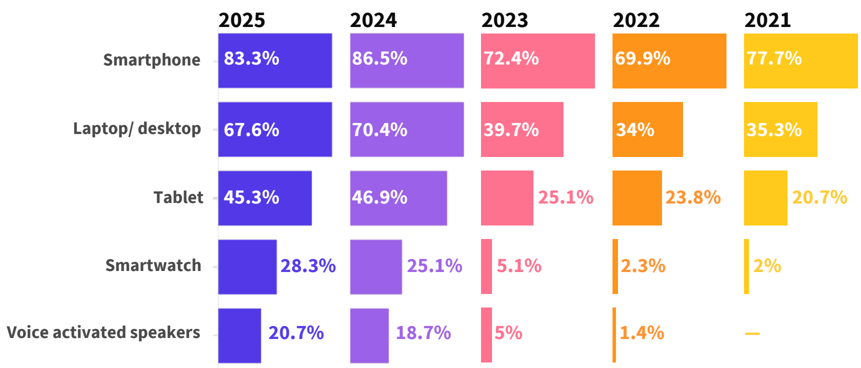
Between 2024 and 2025, the percentages of respondents who reported using smartphones, laptop or desktop computers, and tablets declined slightly, whereas the proportion of respondents reporting using a smartwatch showed a modest increase. The overall pattern remains largely similar.

Figure 2.5a



Question: Have you used the following devices to access news in the last week? *N* = 2,004.

Figure 2.5b



Question: Have you used the following devices to access news in the last week? Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1,501 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Part III.
Trust in the news

General news trust

The Digital News Survey examines respondents' trust in the news in general by asking if they would agree with two statements: whether the respondents felt they could 1) trust most news most of the time, and 2) trust most of the news they consumed most of the time. Figures 3.1a and 3.1b summarize the responses to the two statements.

Overall, a majority of respondents had a positive or neutral attitude toward the news in general. Although only 2.3% of respondents strongly agreed that they could trust most news most of the time, about half (50.2%) agreed with the statement. Slightly more than one-third (37.1%) chose the middle option of "neither agree nor disagree," and only 10.4% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

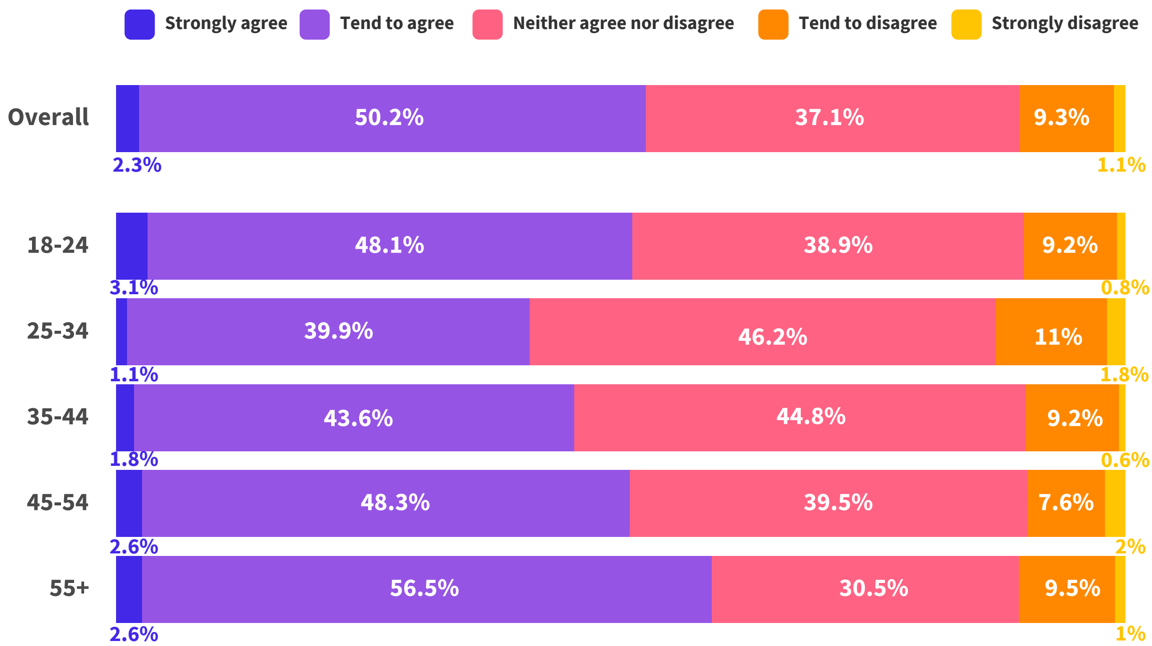
The distribution of answers on the second statement, which pertains to the news that respondents actually consumed, was similar. Not surprisingly, people tended to find the news that they consumed more trustworthy than news in general, with 5.9% strongly agreeing and 51.9% agreeing with the statement that they could trust the news they consumed. Just under a third (33.2%) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, and only 8.9% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

General trust in the news did not vary substantially between men and women. For both statements, women were more likely to agree and slightly less likely to disagree, while men were more likely to choose the middle option (neither agree nor disagree).

More substantial differences existed among age groups. Interestingly, there is no linear relationship between age and general news trust. Trust in the news in general tended to increase with age. Among people 55 or above, 58.1% agreed or strongly agreed that one can trust most of the news most of the time, and 65.2% of the group agreed or strongly agreed that they found the news they consumed trustworthy. But among people aged 25–34, only 41.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust most of the news most of the time, and 46.9% agreed or strongly agreed that they can trust the news they consumed most of the time. However, among people aged 18 to 24, 51.2% found that they could trust most of the news most of the time, and 55.8% found that they could trust the news they consumed most of the time.

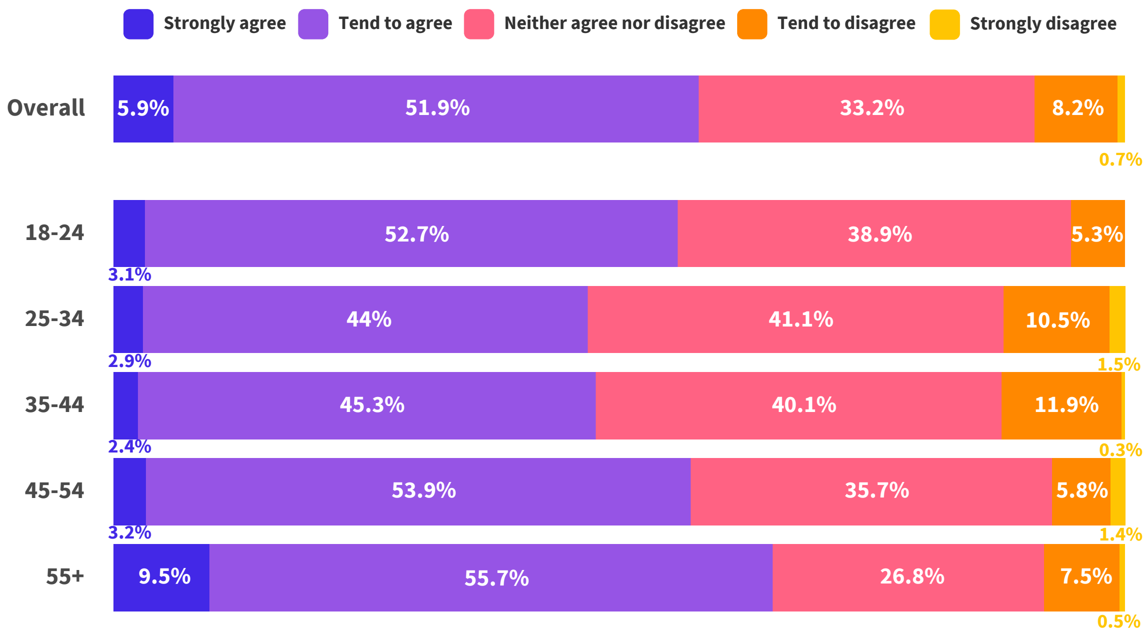
To put it another way, the level of trust in the news in general among those 18 to 24 years old is comparable to the level of trust in the news in general among people aged 45 to 54. Nevertheless, as Part 1 shows, these two groups of respondents had very different levels of interests in the news. It seems that for older respondents, trust or distrust in the news was based on their news consumption experiences, whereas for the lack of interest in or consumption of the news among the youngest respondents might, paradoxically, offer them fewer reasons to distrust the news.

Figure 3.1a



Question: How much do you trust the news as a whole within your country? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think you can trust most news most of the time. *N* = 2,004.

Figure 3.1b



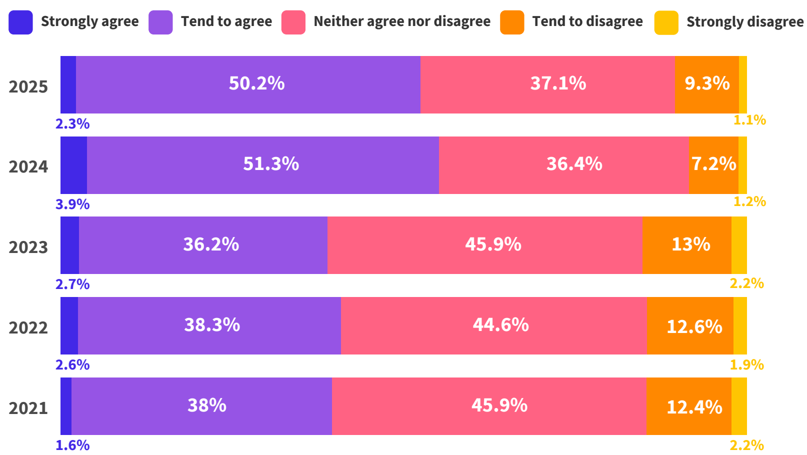
Question: How much do you trust the news that you choose to consume? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think I can trust most of the news I consume most of the time. *N* = 2,004.

General news trust, 2021–2025

Figures 3.2a and 3.2b compare the results between 2021 and 2025. General trust in the news had remained steady between 2021 and 2023; in 2021, 39.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust most news most of the time, and 45.1% agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust the news they consumed most of the time. The corresponding figures were 40.9% and 46.8%, respectively, in 2022, which were slightly lower than the 2023 figures. However, news trust jumped substantially in 2024; 55.2% agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust most news most of the time, while 60.0% agreed or strongly agreed that they could trust the news they consumed most of the time. We noted in last year's report that the 2024 survey was the first post-pandemic digital news survey in Hong Kong. We ventured a plausible interpretation of the jump in news trust between 2023 and 2024: the general absence of political controversies in the post-National Security Law era and the end of the pandemic might have created a situation in which controversies surrounding media coverage were more subdued, leading to a decline in reasons for people to distrust the news.

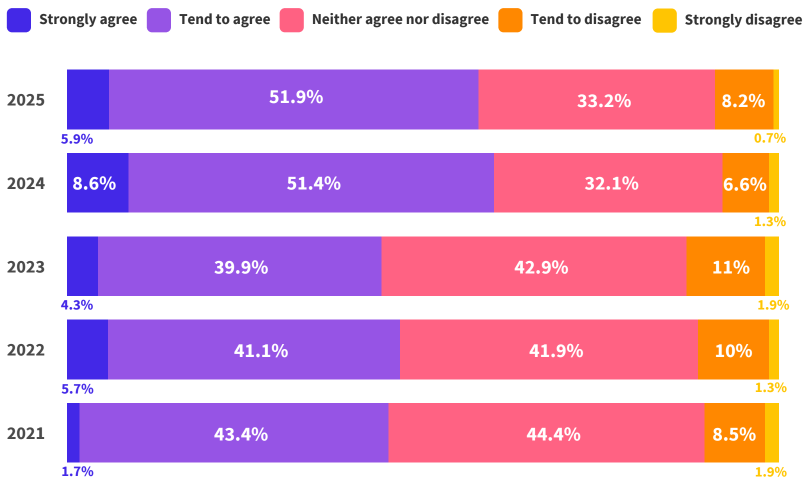
Regardless of whether that interpretation is valid, the 2025 results show that trust in news remained at a level much higher than general news trust between 2021 and 2023, although it was slightly lower in 2025 than in 2024.

Figure 3.2a



Question: How much do you trust the news as a whole in your country? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think you can trust most news most of the time. Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1501 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Figure 3.2b



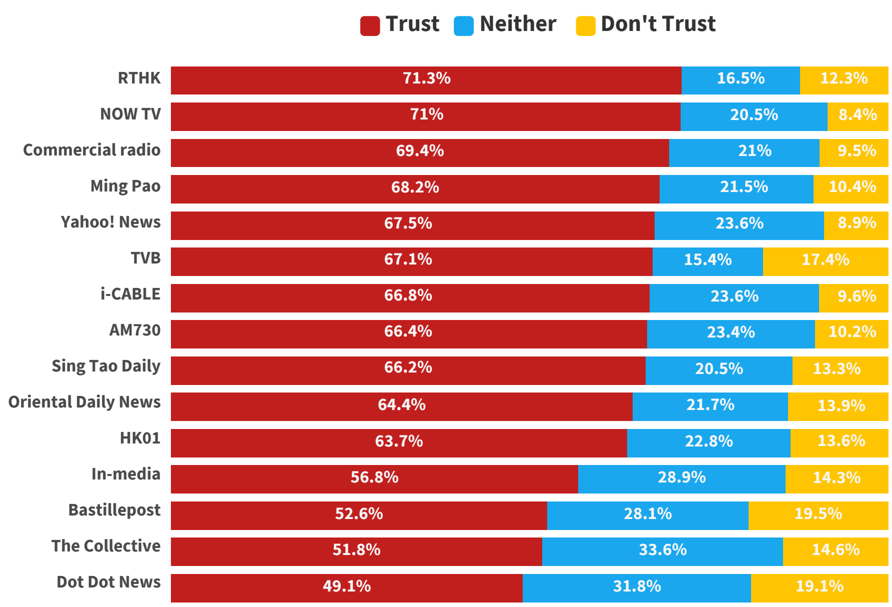
Question: How much do you trust the news that you choose to consume? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: I think I can trust most of the news I consume most of the time. Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, and 1501 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021, respectively.

Brand trust

The survey also asked respondents to rate the trustworthiness of specific news brands on an 11-point scale. For presentational clarity, we treated scores from 0 to 4 as "not trusting," 5 as neither, and 6 to 10 as "trusting." Figure 3.3 summarizes the results from the 2025 survey. RTHK registered the highest percentage of respondents giving trusting scores (71.3%), followed by NowTV and Commercial Radio, which had 71.0% and 69.4% of respondents, respectively, giving the outlet trusting scores.

Several other traditional news organizations also had significant proportions of respondents giving them trusting scores: these included Ming Pao (68.2%), Yahoo! News (67.5%), TVB (67.1%), i-Cable (66.8%), AM730 (66.4%), Sing Tao Daily (66.2%), and Oriental Daily News (64.4%). Digital-only news outlets tended to be trusted by smaller proportions of respondents, with the two small-scale online outlets The Collective and Dot Dot News having the smallest percentages of respondents giving them trusting scores, although this might also suggest that the lack of trust is partly due to a lack of familiarity.

Figure 3.3



Question: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brands is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is not at all trustworthy and 10 is completely trustworthy (6–10 coded as trusting, 5 coded as neither, 0–4 coded as not trusting). Those who hadn't heard of a given brand were excluded from the calculation for that brand. Whether respondents consider a brand trustworthy is their subjective judgement, and the scores are aggregates of those views rather than an objective assessment of underlying trustworthiness.

Notably, the media outlets receiving the largest proportions of trusting respondents did not necessarily receive the smallest percentages of distrusting respondents. Although RTHK was trusted by 71.3% of respondents, 12.3% distrusted it. If we calculate a net trust score by subtracting the distrusting proportion from the trusting proportion, RTHK's net trust was at 59.0%. By comparison, NowTV was trusted by 71.0% of respondents and distrusted by 8.4% of the respondents, leading to a net trust score of 62.6%, a few points higher than that of RTHK.

The news outlets that received the largest percentages of distrusting respondents were Bastillepost (19.5%), Dot Dot News (19.1%), and TVB (17.4%). TVB, in particular, had a net trust score of only 49.7%. As Table 3.4 shows, TVB would rank among the bottom five on the list if the net trust score, rather than the proportion of trusting respondents, were used. The TVB case also shows that there is no linear relationship between news use and news trust. As shown in Part 1, TVB remained the most frequently consumed news outlet in both online and offline environments, but it was far from the most trusted news source. Consumption of TVB was largely driven by the structure of the media system in Hong Kong; it remained the overwhelmingly dominant player in the free TV market in the city.

Brand net trust, 2021–2025

Figure 3.4 also shows that brand trust has been increasing over the years. For some brands, the jump in brand trust was particularly substantial between 2023 and 2024. When compared to each other, although NowTV ranked highest in terms of net trust, its increase in net trust between 2022 and 2025 was the smallest – its increase was 8.7% in the period, whereas the increase was 27.5% for TVB and 26.7% for RTHK.

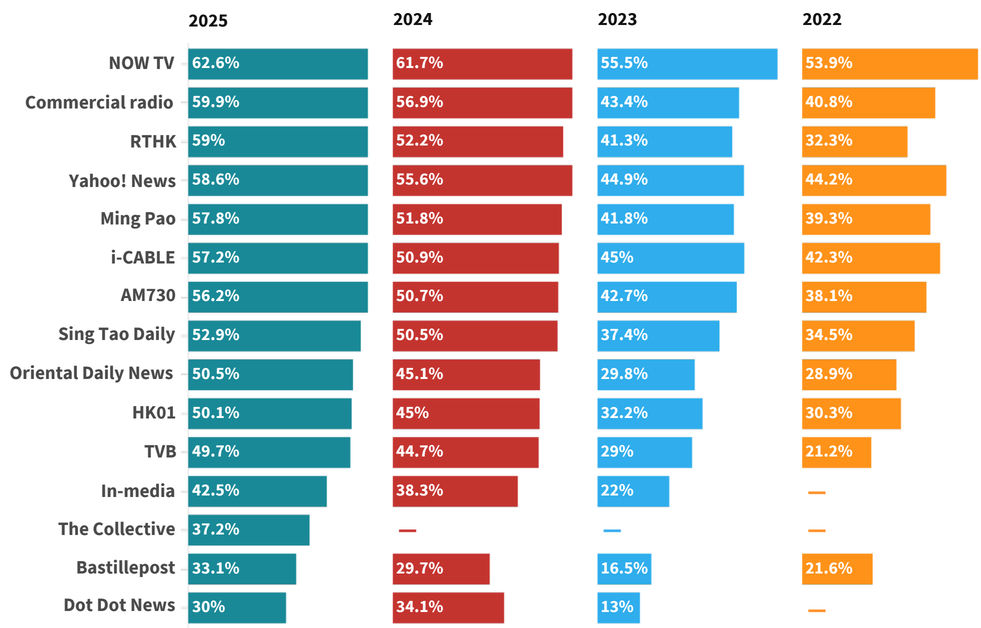
Brand trust among frequent and infrequent news consumers

On the whole, there have been complex and sometimes confusing relationships among news trust, changes in news trust from previous years, news consumption, and changes in news consumption from previous years. Thus, we further compared brand trust among frequent news consumers and less frequent news consumers. More specifically, we separated respondents into three groups based on how frequently they consumed news: frequent news consumers consumed the news six times per day or more; regular news consumers consumed the news every day or two to five times per day; and infrequent news consumers consumed the news less frequently than once per day.

Overall, as Figure 3.5 shows that trust in most news brands among frequent news consumers tended to be significantly higher than regular and infrequent news consumers. However, interesting exceptions were observed for RTHK, i-Cable, and several independent or niche media outlets. RTHK and i-Cable showed a slightly higher trust percentage among regular news consumers than frequent consumers. A plausible reason for this is that regular news consumers, despite not consuming news as intensively as frequent consumers, tended to form stable trust perceptions grounded in brand familiarity and habitual engagement about mainstream media organizations.

Interestingly, for platforms such as The Collective, In-Media, Bastillepost, and Dot Dot News, trust percentages among infrequent news consumers tended to be much higher than trust percentages among regular news consumers, though frequent news consumers remained the ones most likely to trust these online outlets. Among frequent news consumers,

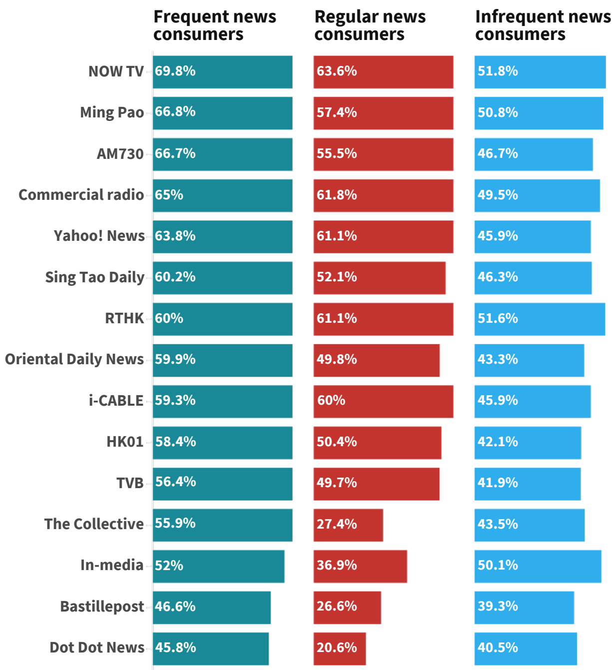
Figure 3.4



Question: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brands is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is not at all trustworthy and 10 is completely trustworthy (6–10 coded as trusting, 5 coded as neither, 0–4 coded as not trusting). Those who hadn't heard of a given brand were excluded from the calculation for that brand. The net trust score refers to the percentage trusting the brand minus the percentage not trusting the brand.

levels of trust enjoyed by some small-scale online media came very close to levels of trust enjoyed by mainstream media outlets. The net trust score of The Collective, for example, stood at 55.9% among frequent news consumers, which was only slightly lower than the net trust scores of TVB and HK01.

Figure 3.5



Question: How trustworthy would you say news from the following brands is? Please use the scale below, where 0 is not at all trustworthy and 10 is completely trustworthy (6–10 coded as trusting, 5 coded as neither, 0–4 coded as not trusting). Those who hadn't heard of a given brand were excluded from the calculation for that brand. The calculation of net trust scores is the same as that for Figure 3.4.

Part IV.
Paying for online news

Percentage of people paying for online news, 2020-2025

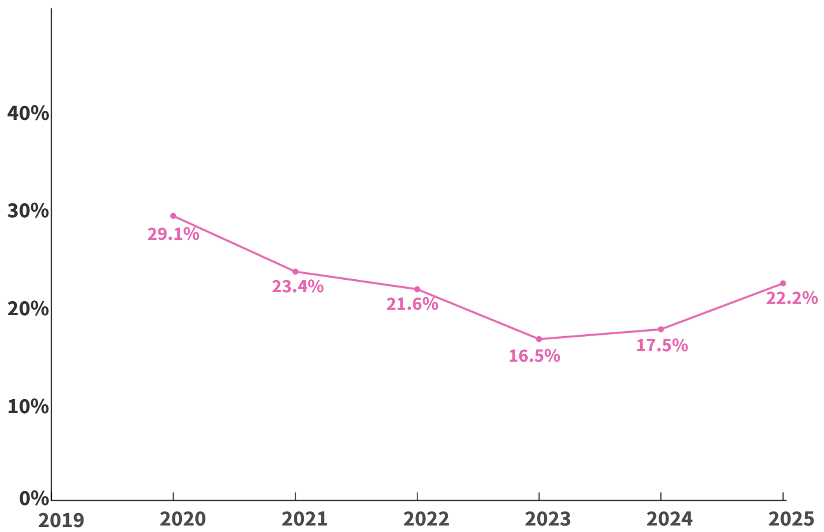
Many online news publishers are adopting reader payment as a key revenue source in addition to digital advertising. Several questions regarding paying for news have consistently been included in the annual Digital News Survey. Figure 4.1 compares the prevalence of paying behavior in Hong Kong between 2020 and 2025. Overall, the percentage of survey respondents who had been paying for online news declined notably between 2020 and 2023, from 29.1% to 16.5%. One plausible explanation is that the 2019 protest movement had contributed to people's incentives to support their preferred online news outlets as a way to express solidarity with organizations standing by their side of the political divide. The end of the protest movement and subsequent disappearance of critical news outlets such as Apple Daily and Stand News led to declines in the percentage of people paying for online news.

However, the city has also witnessed the emergence of a new group of online news outlets since 2022, and several major mainstream media outlets, such as TVB and ViuTV, have started to adopt a variety of subscription models for generating revenues, such as paid subscriptions through over-the-top streaming services. The percentage of respondents who paid for online news rebounded to 17.5% in 2024 and grew further to 22.2% in 2025.

Paying for online news by age and gender

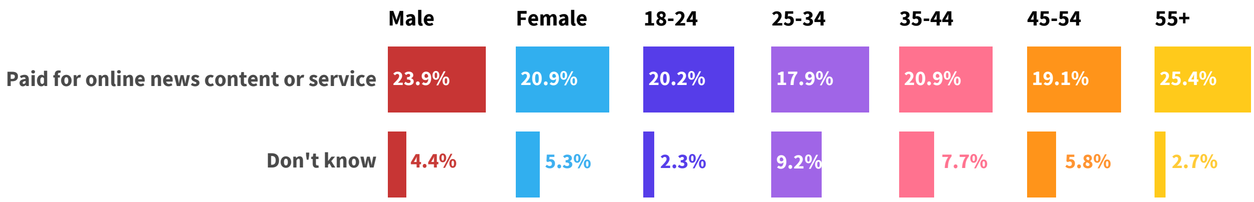
As Figure 4.2a shows, males were significantly more likely than females to have paid for online news (23.9% vs. 20.9%). There were also differences among age groups. The oldest group (55 or above) were the most likely to have paid for online news, which may be related to their relatively greater financial capacity and higher levels of interests in the news. By contrast, respondents aged 25 to 34 were the least likely to have paid for online news. Meanwhile, the percentages of respondents who had paid for online news were comparable for people between 18 and 24, between 35 and 44, and between 45 and 54.

Figure 4.1



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, or e-edition; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2,010, 1,501, and 2,023 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020, respectively.

Figure 4.2a



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, e-edition; N = 2,004.

Paying for online news by educational level

Figure 4.2b further illustrates the differences between online news payers and non-payers by educational level. Specifically, 22.0% of respondents holding a bachelor's degree or above reported having paid for online news. Interestingly, the highest percentage of paying for news (27.0%) was observed among those with non-degree tertiary education. By contrast, only 20.6% of the respondents without tertiary education reported having paid for online news.

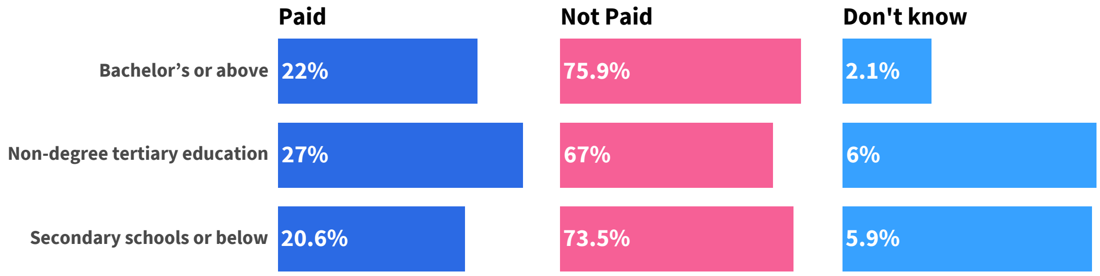
Paying for online news by household income

We then compared the differences between online news payers and non-payers by income. We separated respondents into three groups based on their self-reported annual household income: the high-income group included those with an annual household income of HK$700,000 or above; the medium-income group comprised those with an annual household income between HK$150,000 to HK$699,999; and the low-income group included those with an annual household income of HK$149,999 or below. As shown in Figure 4.2c, there is a clear positive relationship between income level and paying for news. Only 16.3% of people in the low-income group had paid for online news in some way. That percentage increased slightly to 20.8% among respondents in the medium-income group and even more substantially to 36.3% in the high-income group. This finding, of course, makes intuitive sense because people with more spending power would be more likely to pay.

Paying for online news and trust in most news

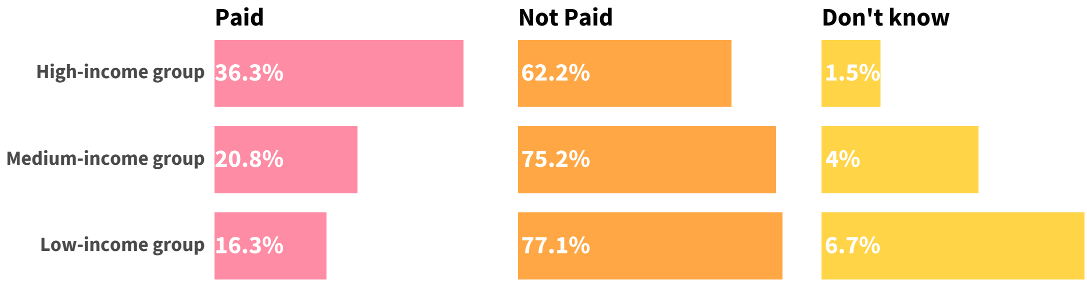
Beyond demographics, we further investigated the relationship between general trust in news and paying for news. The questions related to people's trust in the news are presented in Figures 3.1a and 3.1b in Part 3. Figure 4.3a shows the relationship between paying for news and whether people found most news to be trustworthy most of the time. The relationship is non-linear. More than one-third (34.0%) of the respondents who strongly agreed that they could trust most news most of the time reported having paid for online news, and 27.6% of those who agreed with the statement did so. People who were neutral toward the trustworthiness of most news were the least likely to have paid. The percentage of people paying for online news rises again when one moves from neutral to disagreeing with the statement, and 27.3% of those who strongly disagreed that most news was trustworthy most of the time reported paying for online news.

Figure 4.2b



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, e-edition; N = 2,004.

Figure 4.2c



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, e-edition; N = 2,004.

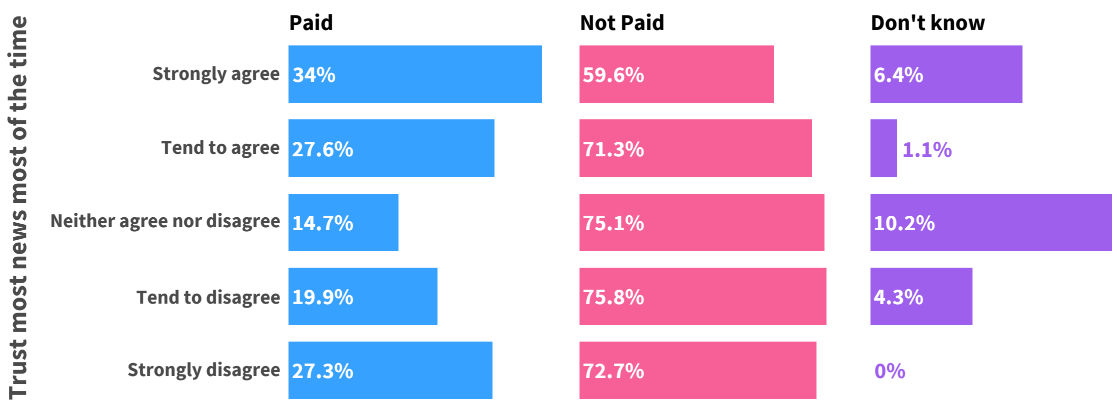
This result likely reflects the fact that people pay for news either because they found most news trustworthy or because they felt a need to support specific news outlets when they found the news landscape as a whole less than fully trustworthy. In either case, people would probably be more likely to pay for online news if they are able to find at least some media outlets that they feel deserve their support. Therefore, we should expect a more directly linear relationship between paying for news and trust in the news that people consumed most of the time. Figure 4.3b shows that this is indeed largely the case. Of the people who were neutral or disagreed or strongly disagreed that the news they consumed most of the time was trustworthy, only 12.7% to 18.8% paid for online news. The percentage jumped to 27.6% among people agreeing with the statement, while 56.3% of those who trusted the news they consumed most of the time were paying for online news in some way.

Ways of paying for online news

Digital media outlets asked for payments in different ways., some put up a paywall, and others asked for donations, and others offer the option of paying on a per-article basis. The survey thus asked respondents about how they paid for online news. As Table 4.4a shows, the primary way for Hong Kong respondents to pay for online news was “ongoing payment on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis” (49.3%), followed by receiving free digital news access as part of a subscription to something else (39.5%). Additionally, 29.9% reported that they paid for digital news access as part of a print-digital bundle or received online news for free as part of a print subscription. Just under a quarter (24.2%) made a one-off payment to access an article or edition, whereas 20.8% made a donation to support a digital news service.

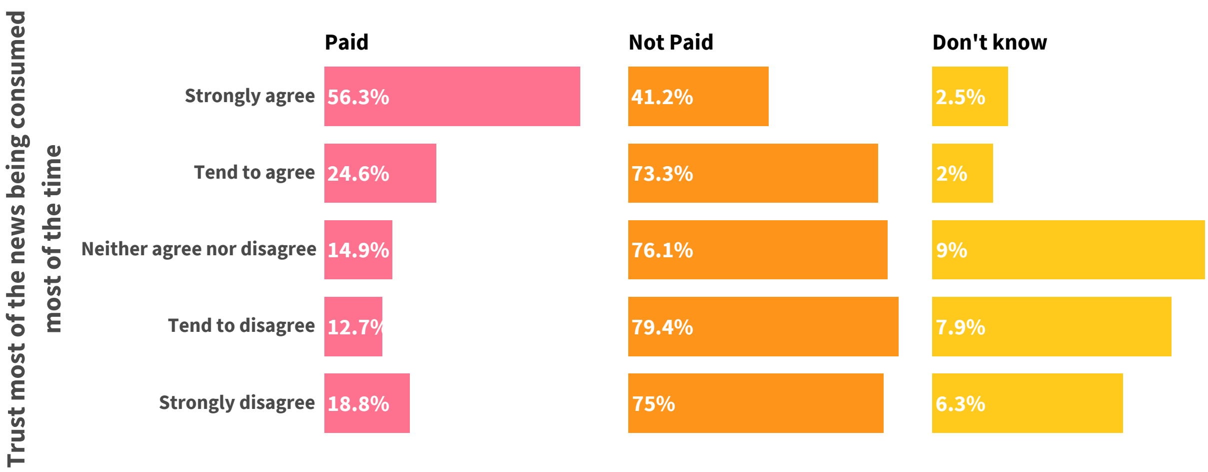
Females were slightly more likely than males to make payments on a regular basis (51.6% for females vs. 48.4% for males) and to be paid by others for subscribing to or

Figure 4.3a



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, or e-edition; N = 2,004.

Figure 4.3b



Question: Have you paid for online news content or accessed a paid online news service in the last year? This could be a digital subscription, combined digital/print subscription, a donation, or a one-off payment for an article, app, or e-edition; N = 2,004.

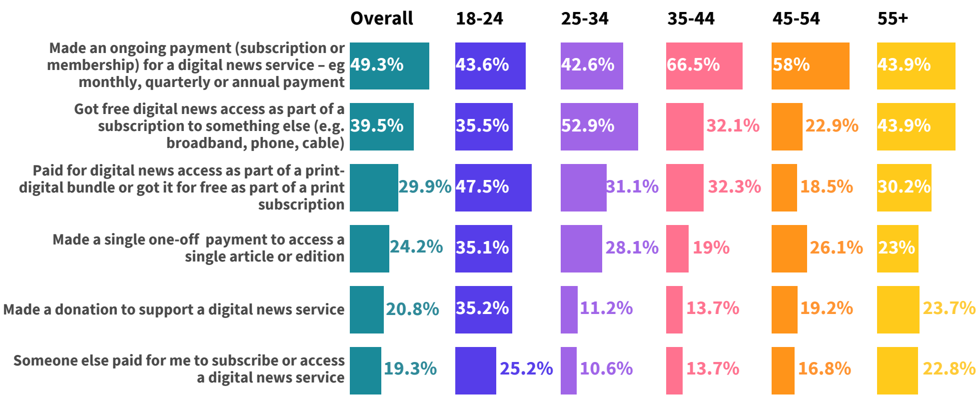
accessing digital news service (21.6% for females vs. 16.8% for males). Males were more likely than females to obtain free digital news access as part of a subscription to something else (40.2% for males vs. 38.8% for females), to pay for digital news access as part of a print-digital bundle or to receive online news for free as part of a print subscription (31.6% for males vs. 28.3% for females), and to make a donation to support a digital news service (22.6% for males vs. 19.1% for females)

Figure 4.4a shows the differences among age groups. Among news payers between 35 and 44 years old and news payers between 45 and 54 years old, 66.5% and 58.0%, respectively, made ongoing payments for digital news services. This was by far the most popular way to pay for online news among payers in those two age groups. Among news payers between 25 and 35, the most common way to pay for online news was obtaining free digital news access as part of a subscription to something else, while payers between 18 and 24 most often accessed digital news access as part of a print-digital bundle.

Ways to pay for online news, 2021–2025

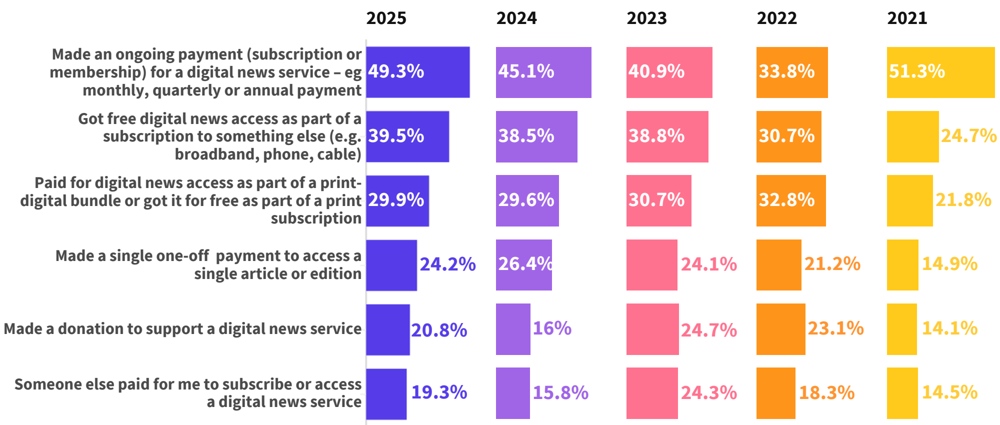
Figure 4.4b shows the trends in paying for online news between 2021 and 2025. The percentage of people making an ongoing payment for a digital news service dropped substantially from 2021 to 2022, probably due to the end of the anti-extradition protests and the closure of Apple Daily and Stand News. Indeed, the percentage of people making an ongoing payment for a digital news service has increased since 2022, with growth from 45.1% in 2024 to 49.3% in 2025. That percentage is still slightly lower than the level registered in 2021. The percentages of people gaining free digital access as part of a subscription to something else increased substantially between 2021 and 2023, but the percentage has remained highly stable since then. The percentage of people making a donation to support a digital news service has increased somewhat from 16.0% in 2024 to 20.6% in 2025, though the percentage was still lower than the percentages registered in 2022 and 2023.

Figure 4.4a



Question: You said you have accessed paid online news content in the last year. Which, if any, of the following ways have you used to pay for online news content in the last year? Please select all that apply. This question was asked only of respondents who reported paying for online news; N = 446.

Figure 4.4b



Question: You said you have accessed paid online news content in the last year. Which, if any, of the following ways have you used to pay for online news content in the last year? Please select all that apply. This question was asked only of respondents who reported paying for online news; Ns = 446, 351, 333, 433 and 351 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2020, respectively.

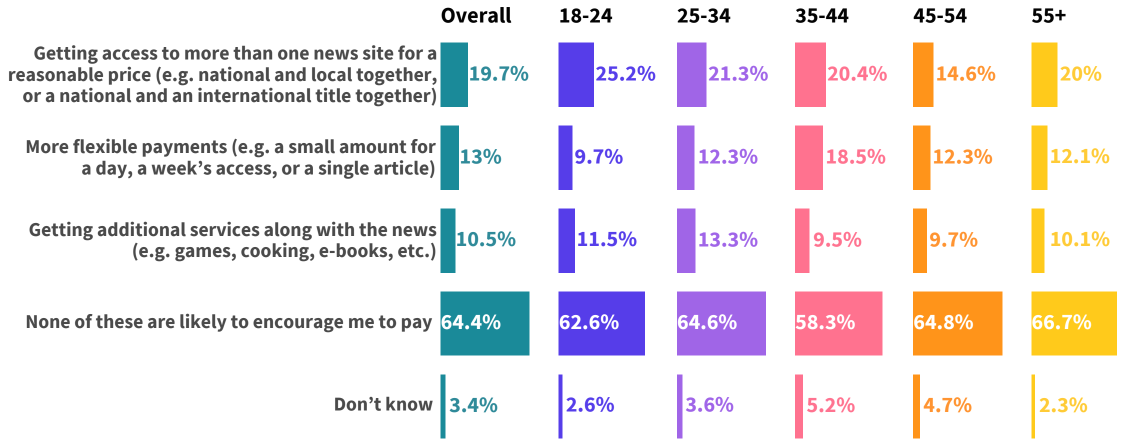
Possible motivations to pay for online news among non-payers

In addition to asking respondents whether and how they paid for online news, the 2025 survey also included questions exploring potential motivators to pay for online news among respondents who were not paying for online news.

As Figure 4.5 shows, among all respondents who had not been paying for online news, 64.4% indicated that none of the given options would make them consider paying for online news. This is not very surprising, since people should have a relatively clear idea about the economic value of online news after years of the development of digital journalism. Nonetheless, 19.7% of the non-payers indicated that accessing multiple news sites for a reasonable price could be a motivation for them to pay, while 13.0% indicated that flexible payment options might lead them to consider paying.

When differentiated into age groups, the results remain largely similar. Among all age groups, obtaining access to more than one news site for a reasonable price was the most frequently chosen option (other than saying that none of the options was likely to encourage them to pay). Nevertheless, relatively speaking, people aged 35 to 44 were least likely to say that nothing could encourage them to pay for online news, and 18.5% of non-payers between 35 and 44 noted flexible payment as a possible factor encouraging them to pay, a percentage that is particularly high when compared to the other age groups.

Figure 4.5



Question: You say you have not paid for online news in the last year... which of the following, if any, would encourage you to pay for online news?; N = 1461.

Part V.
Fake news concerns

Concerns over fake news

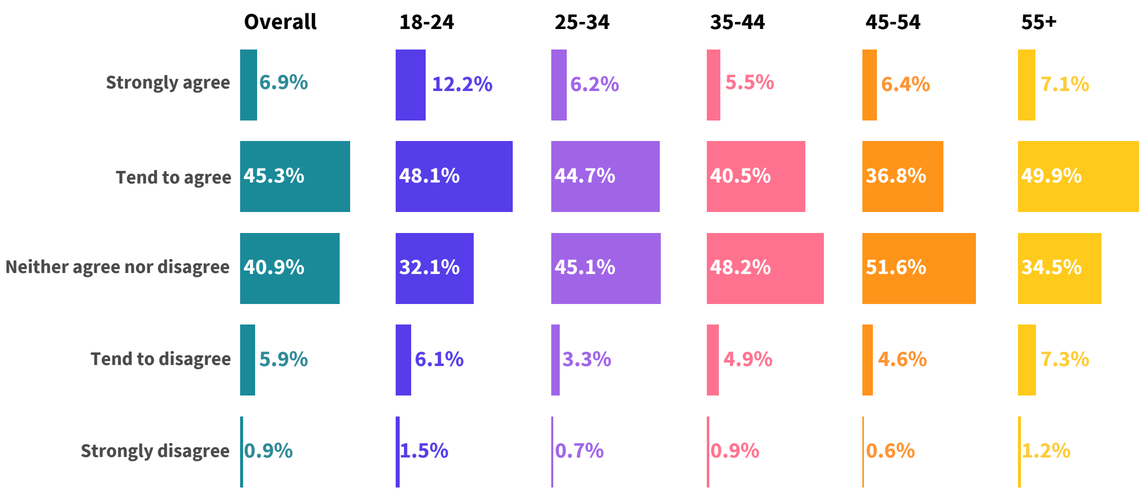
The proliferation of false and misleading information has become perhaps the defining challenge in today's digital media landscape. The 2025 Digital News Survey continued to include questions related to the issue of misinformation. The first question asked respondents if they were concerned about "what is real and what is fake on the internet." As Figure 5.1a shows, 52.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were concerned, whereas only 6.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Males were somewhat more likely to be concerned about what is real and what is fake (48.2% for males vs. 43.0% for females). Among age groups, the youngest respondents between 18 and 24 were most likely to be concerned about the problem of misinformation, as 60.3% of respondents in this group agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Interestingly, when compared to respondents between 25 and 34, the youngest respondents were also slightly more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that they were concerned about misinformation. The youngest respondents were least likely to neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Meanwhile, respondents between 45 and 54 years old were the least likely to be concerned about what is real and what is fake, with only 43.2% of people in that group agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement.

Concern about fake news, 2021–2025

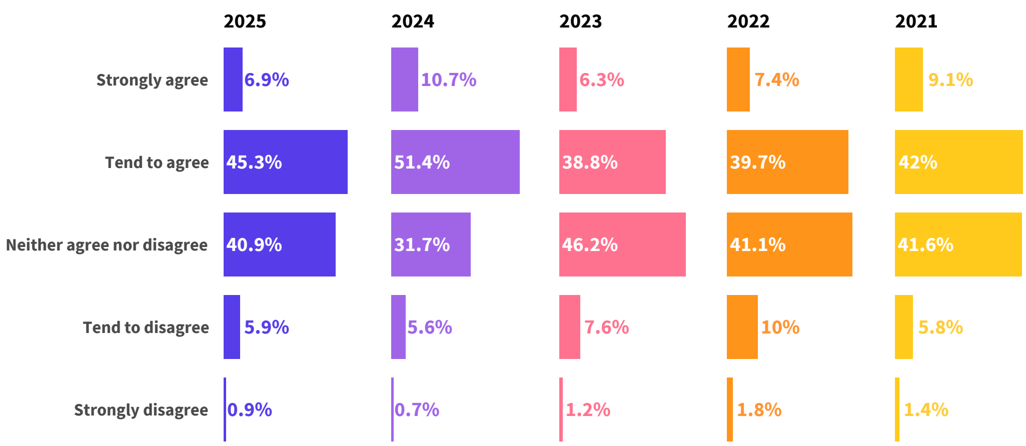
Figure 5.1b compares the results from 2021 to 2025. The proportion of Hong Kong respondents concerned about misinformation has fluctuated over the years. Just over half (51.1%) of respondents in 2021 agreed or strongly agreed that they were concerned about what is real and what is fake. That percentage declined to 45.1% in 2023 but then jumped to 62.1% in 2024. The figure of 52.2% in the 2025 survey thus represented a drop of nearly 10.0%, though the level of concern remained higher than that in 2023.

Figure 5.1a



Question: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet"; N = 2,004.

Figure 5.1b

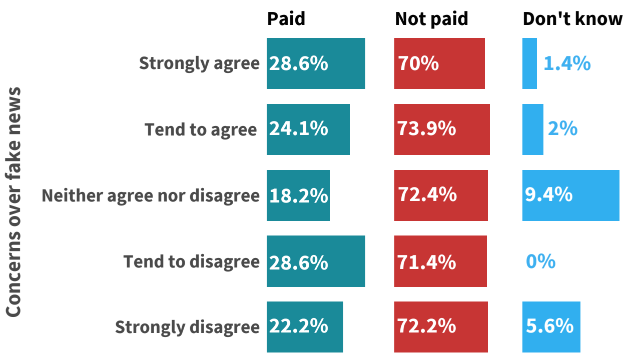


Question: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet"; Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, 2010, 1,501, and 2,023 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022 and 2021, respectively.

Concern about fake news and paying for online news

Part 4 discusses the willingness of Hong Kong respondents to pay for online news. We are thus interested in examining whether concern about misinformation is related to paying for online news. Figure 5.1c shows that there is no significant linear relationship between concern with misinformation and paying for online news. Among those who strongly agreed that they were concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet, 28.6% were online news payers. Interestingly, among those who disagreed with the statement, 28.6% were online news payers. The percentage of news payers was particularly low among people who neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, but this group of respondents were also particularly likely to choose the “don’t know” response on the question of paying for online news.

Figure 5.1c



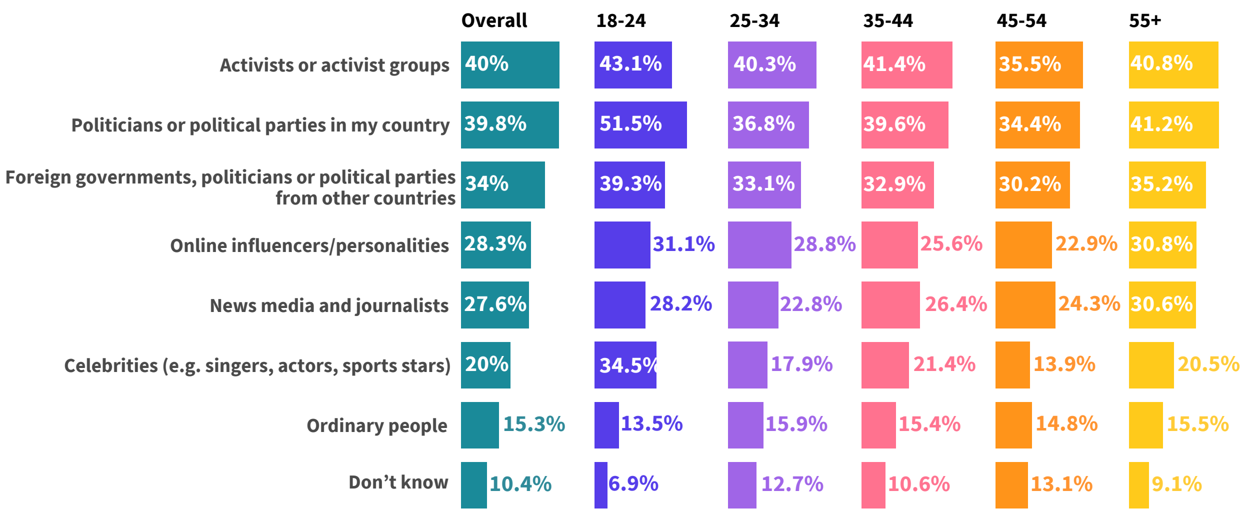
Question: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: “Thinking about online news, I am concerned about what is real and what is fake on the internet”; N = 2,004.

Perceived source of online misinformation

The respondents were then asked whether a range of actors posed a major threat when it comes to false and misinformation online. As Figure 5.2a shows, the respondents most frequently identified “activists or activist groups” (40.0%) and “domestic politicians or political parties” (39.8%) as major threats for false or misleading information online. These were followed by foreign political actors (34.0%) and online influencers (28.3%). By contrast, traditional news media and journalists were less likely to be seen as major sources of misinformation, with only 27.6% of respondents considering them to be a major threat. Only 20.0% of respondents saw celebrities as a major threat.

The gender difference on this point was not large. Males were more likely to identify activists or activist groups (42.0% for males vs. 38.5% for females), foreign political actors (36.7% for males vs. 31.7% for females), and online influencers or personalities (30.4% for males vs. 26.6% for females) as a major threat, while females were slightly more likely to identify news media and journalists (28.4% for females vs. 26.7 for males). Regarding age, the youngest group (aged 18 to 24) was slightly more likely than the other age groups to see activists as a major threat, but they also stood out as the group especially likely to see domestic politicians as a major threat in terms of online misinformation (51.5%). In addition, the youngest respondents were particularly more likely to see foreign political actors (39.3%) and celebrities (34.5%) as a major threat.

Figure 5.2a



Question: When it comes to false and misleading information online these days, in general, which of the following would you say poses a major threat? N = 2,004.

Perceived channel of online false information threats

Another question asked the respondents whether they saw a range of channels and platforms as a major threat in terms of false and misleading information online. As Figure 5.2b shows, 41.9% saw Facebook as a major threat, and 36.6% saw YouTube that way. These two platforms were followed by search engines (28.5%), news sites (25.0%), and WhatsApp (24.1%). Instagram was mainly a platform for sharing photos and visual images, and only 23.0% of respondents saw it as posing a major threat. X (formerly Twitter) is not widely used by Hong Kong citizens, so only 21.3% of Hong Kong respondents saw it as posing a major threat regarding online misinformation.

Gender differences on this question were modest. Females were slightly more likely to identify news websites (26.7% for females vs. 23.0% for males) and search engines (31.7% for females vs. 24.6% for males) as threats regarding online misinformation, whereas males were slightly more likely to identify YouTube (38.3% for males vs. 35.2% for females) and Telegram (19.1% for males vs. 16.8% for females). Meanwhile, there were notable differences across age groups. Respondents between 35 and 44 and between 45 and 54 were more likely to perceive Facebook as a major threat (46.7% and 45.9%, respectively). This likely reflects the fact that people belonging to those two age groups are more likely to be active users of that social media platform. By contrast, the youngest respondents between 18 and 24 were particularly likely to see Instagram as a major threat regarding online misinformation (39.7%).

The youngest respondents were also more likely to see YouTube and news websites as major threats for misinformation. Interestingly, that same cohort was more likely than respondents of other age groups to see face-to-face discussion as a source of misinformation: 17.9% saw it as a major threat, whereas only roughly 10.0% or less than that of respondents in the other age groups saw face-to-face discussion as a major threat. Meanwhile, people aged 55 or above were relatively more likely to see messaging apps as a source of misinformation, with 27.6% of respondents in that group viewing WhatsApp as a major threat and 21.6% seeing Telegram the same way.

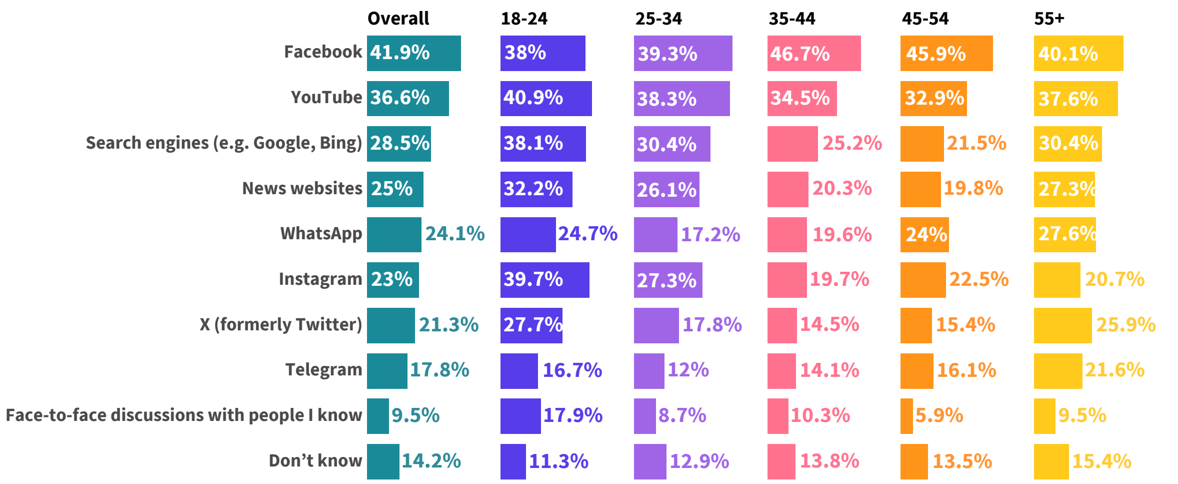
Places to go for verifying information

The 2025 survey then asked respondents where they would go to if they wanted to verify information that might be false or misleading. Among the options given, the largest percentage of respondents chose to go to official sources such as government websites (41.0%), a news source they trusted (37.2%), and search engines (34.0%). The other options were chosen by significantly smaller percentages of respondents: 22.3% chose to go to trusted interpersonal sources, and 21.3% preferred a fact-checking website. AI Chatbot was listed as an option, but only 11.4% of respondents saw it as a place to go to for verifying information.

Clear differences in preferred places to go to for verification were observed across age groups. There is a more or less linear relationship between age and choosing official sources and search engines. More than a third (38.7%) of people aged 55 or above chose official sources as a place to go. The percentage rose to 43.4% for people aged 35 to 44 and to 48.9% for people aged between 18 and 24. Similarly, 31.0% of people aged 55 or above chose search engines as a place to go to. The percentage rose to 35.9% and 44.1%, respectively, for those aged between 35 and 44 and between 18 and 24.

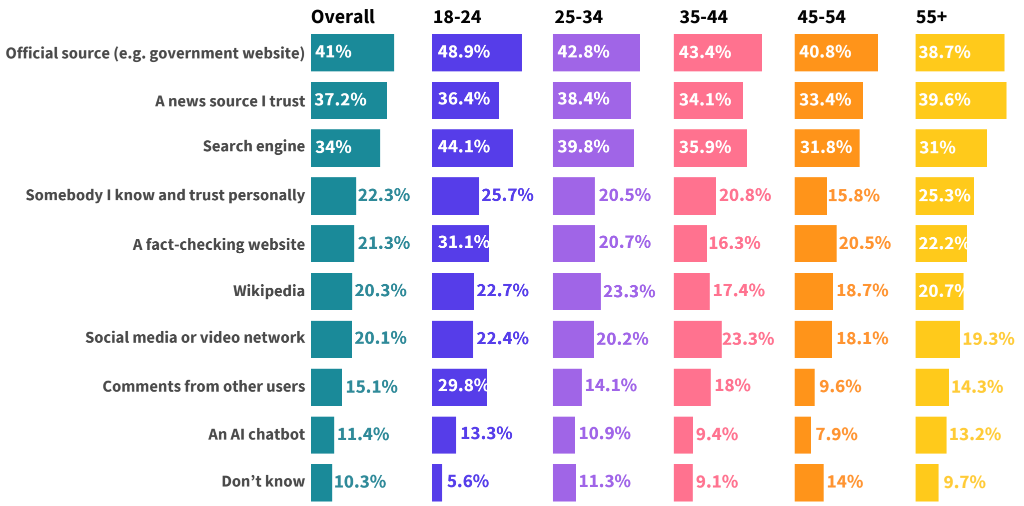
The youngest respondents were particularly likely to go to fact-checking websites (31.1%) to verify information. Interestingly, that cohort was also particularly likely to go to comments from other users when they wanted to verify information (29.8%). Both the youngest and the oldest respondents were more likely to go to interpersonal sources for verifying information, with people aged between 45 and 54 particularly less likely to do so. Notably, people from all age groups were more or less equally likely to go to a news source they trusted for verifying information.

Figure 5.2b



Question: Which of the following do you think poses a major threat in terms of false and misleading information? N = 2,004.

Figure 5.3



Question: Imagine you came across something important in online news that you suspect may be false, misleading, or fake. If you decided you wanted to check it, where would you usually go? N = 2,004.

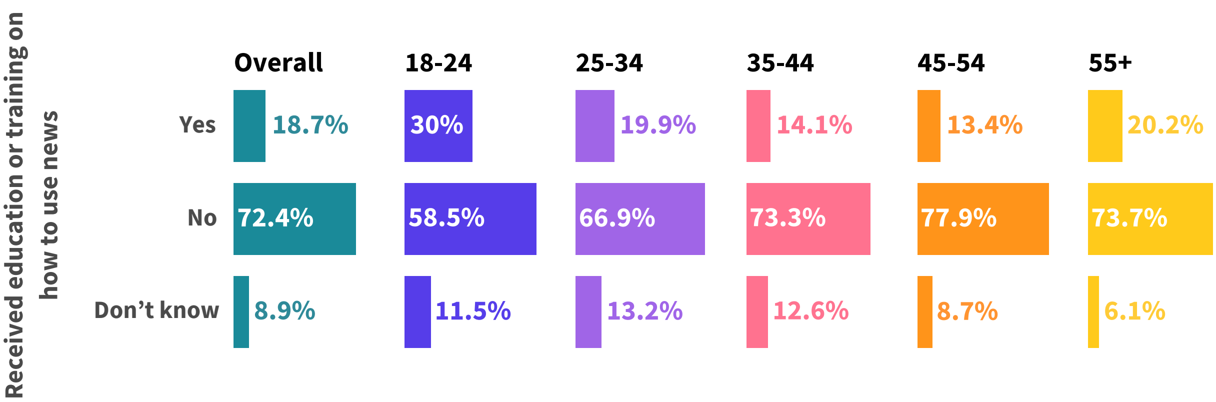
News literacy education

The 2025 survey contained a question asking respondents if they had received education or training on how to use news. As Figure 5.4a shows, only 18.7% of the respondents reported having received news literacy education or training. News literacy programs, especially those targeting young people, have been promoted by various institutions in Hong Kong. Unsurprisingly, the youngest respondents stood out as the group most likely to have received some news literacy education: 30.0% replied affirmatively, whereas the corresponding percentages range from 13.4% to 20.2% for the other age groups. However, it is worth noting that 8.9% of respondents replied “don’t know,” indicating a level of uncertainty among the respondents regarding what constitutes news literacy training or education.

Places to go for verifying information by news literacy education

We then compared whether people with and without news literacy training went to different places to verify information. Figure 5.4b presents the results, which show that the two groups of respondents did not differ much in this regard. Official sources remained the most frequently chosen option for both groups. The two groups also did not differ in whether they would go to search engines. However, people without news literacy training were somewhat more likely than those with it to go to a trusted news source (39.0% vs. 35.5%), whereas people with news literacy training were more likely than those without it to go to social media or video networks (29.1% vs. 18.2%), AI chatbots (22.5% vs. 8.6%), and user comments (22.9% vs. 13.0%).

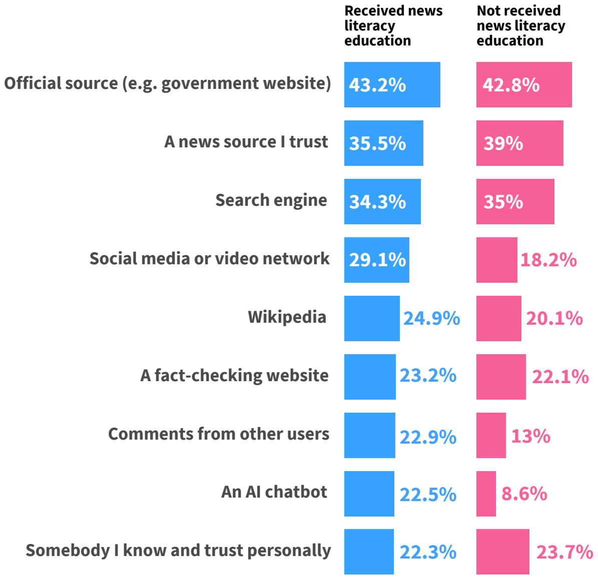
Figure 5.4a



Question: Have you ever received any education or training on how to use news (e.g., critical media understanding, analyzing sources, news literacy, etc.)? This could have been at school, college or university, online or offline, or in a formal or informal setting; N = 2,004.

One could well argue that user comments, AI Chatbots, and social media platforms are not necessarily more trustworthy than conventional news sources, but this is probably the reason why people with news literacy training were more likely to go to these places—not because those options are always trustworthy, but because deriving accurate information from such platforms and tools require a level of information and news literacy. That is, news literacy education fosters familiarity with digital tools and crowdsourced knowledge. For people without news literacy training, going to a trusted conventional news outlet would be the simpler option. It is also worth noting that people without news literacy training were more likely to choose the "don't know" answer; these respondents were more likely to have no concrete idea of where they might go for verifying information.

Figure 5.4a



Question: Have you ever received any education or training on how to use news (e.g., critical media understanding, analyzing sources, news literacy etc.)? This could have been at school, college or university, online or offline, or in a formal or informal setting. N = 2,004.

Part VI.
News personalization and news avoidance

Different modes of online news consumption

Despite the increasing variety of digital news formats, reading remains the most popular mode of online news consumption. As Figure 6.1 shows, 44.1% of respondents indicated a preference for reading news online, followed by 36.5% who prefer watching news videos. Listening to news was considerably less common and was reported by only 14.3% of the respondents.

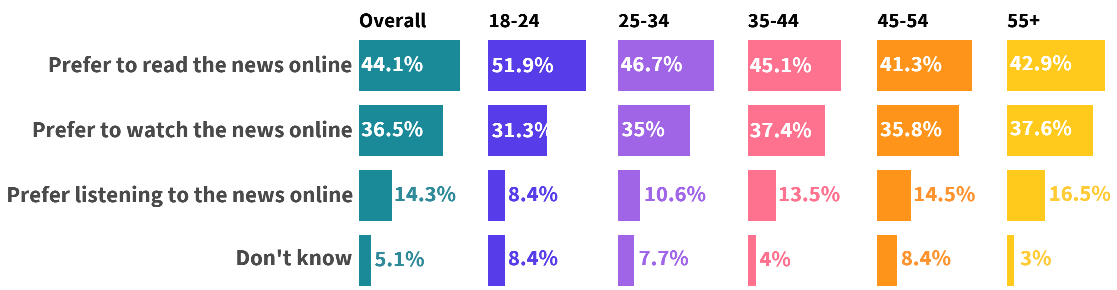
Gender differences in these preferences were relatively small, with males more likely to watch the news (39.1% for males vs. 34.5% for females) and females more likely to listen to the news (15.4% for females vs. 13.0% for males). Generational differences were more pronounced. Specifically, contrary to the intuitive idea that younger people are geared toward audio-visual materials, a strong preference for text-based news consumption was evident among the youngest group (aged between 18 and 24), who were particularly likely to read news (51.9%) and least likely to watch it (31.3%) or listen to it (8.4%). By contrast, the oldest group (aged 55 or above) demonstrated more diverse preferences and a willingness to engage with multiple media formats for news consumption. They favored reading (42.9%) and watching news (37.6%) nearly equally and were also the most likely to listen to news (16.5%) across all age groups.

Ways of participating in news

Respondents were then asked how they engaged with news. As Figure 6.2a shows, the most common types of behaviors were interpersonal and digital sharing, including discussing news face-to-face (23.7%), sharing news stories via social networks (23.1%), and sharing news stories through instant messaging apps (21.7%). Observational news engagement, such as reading the comments on social media posts or news websites, was reported by slightly smaller proportions of respondents (20.3% and 16.9%, respectively). Interactive news engagement had similar levels. Specifically, 17.4% of respondents reported commenting on a news story on a social network, 13.0% reported rating, liking, or favoriting a news story, and 9.5% reported leaving comments directly on news websites. Other forms of participation, such as sharing news via email (8%) and taking part in online polls (8.9%), remained relatively low across all age groups: that is, these more traditional or low-interactivity formats appear to have limited appeal in the current news engagement landscape.

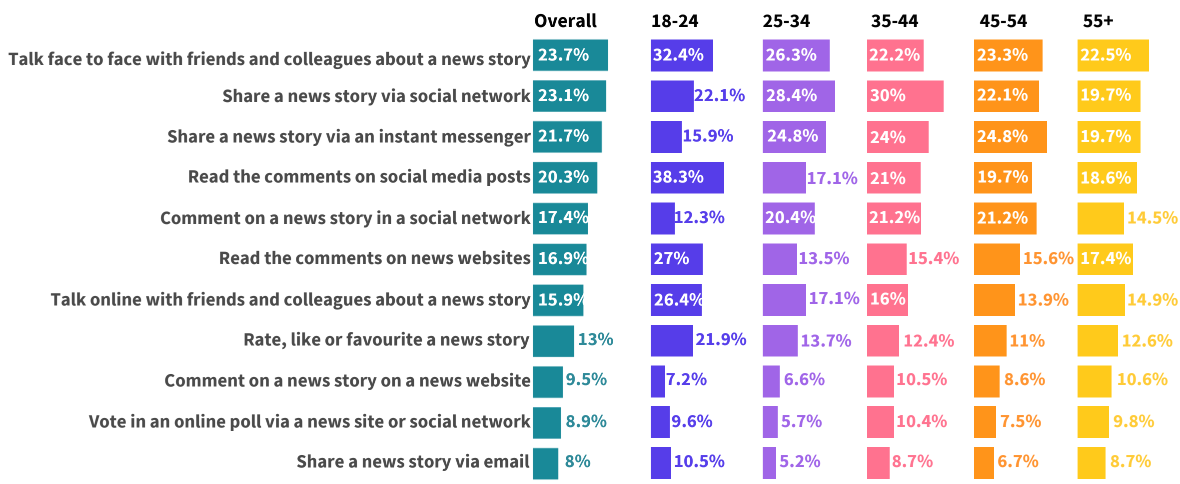
In terms of gender differences, males were more likely than females to leave a comment on a news story on both social networks (10.6% vs. 8.5%) and news websites (10.8% vs. 7.4%). They were also more likely than females to read the comments on social media posts (22.5% vs. 18.5%) and news websites (18.9% vs. 15.2%).

Figure 6.1



Question: In thinking about your online habits around news and current affairs, which of the following statements applies best to you? N = 2,004.

Figure 6.2a



Question: During an average week in which, if any, of the following ways do you share or participate in news coverage?; N = 2,004.

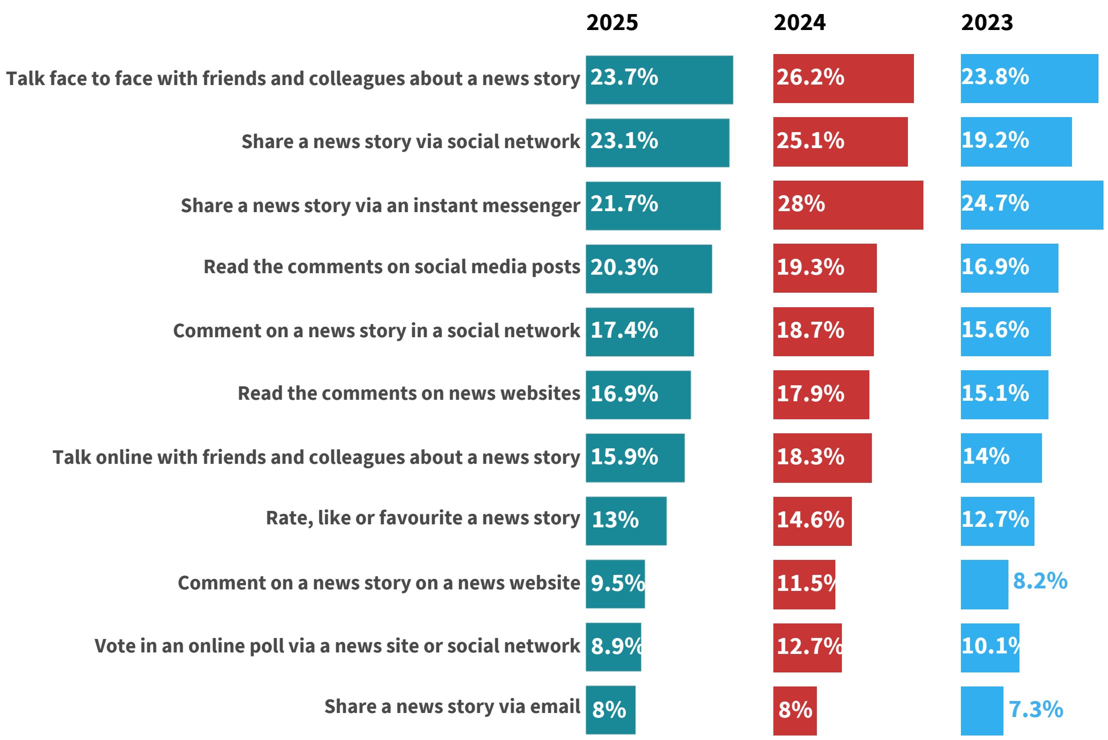
Age differences were also evident. Compared to other age groups, the youngest group (those aged 18 and 24) were more likely to participate in news through interpersonal discussion, both face-to-face (32.4%) and online (26.4%), and to interact with news by rating, liking, or favoriting a news story (21.9%). By contrast, they were less likely to leave comments on a news story on both social networks (12.3%) and news websites (7.2%). However, they did read comments on social media (38.3%) and news website (27.0%). The middle-aged groups (those between 35 and 44 and between 45 and 54) demonstrated a stronger preference for digital sharing, with 30.0% of respondents in former group sharing a news story via social networks, and 24.8% of respondents in the latter group sharing a news story through instant messenger. They were also the most likely to leave comments on social network posts, with 21.2% of respondents in both age brackets reporting this form of engagement.

Ways of participating in news, 2023–2025

A series of questions regarding new participation behaviors have consistently been included in the annual survey. Figure 6.2b presents a comparison of the behaviors from 2023 to 2025. Discussing news face-to-face was one of the most common types of news participation. In 2023, 23.8% of respondents reported engaging in such discussions. This figure increased to 26.2% in 2024 and declined slightly to 23.7% in 2025. Despite these fluctuations, face-to-face discussion was still the most prevalent type of news participation in 2025.

Sharing news via instant messenger was the most prevalent form of news participation in both 2023 and 2024 and was reported by 24.7% and 28.0% of respondents, respectively. However, this percentage experienced a decline to 21.7% in 2025. A similar trend was observed for sharing news via social networks; 23.1% of respondents reported engaging with the news in this way in 2025. This represents a slight decline from 25.1% in 2024 but is notably higher than the 19.2% figure in 2023. Meanwhile, observational news engagement showed a steady upward trend; reading comments on social media increased from 16.9% in 2023 to 20.3% in 2025, while reading comments on news websites rose slightly from 15.1% to 16.9% over the same period. Interactive forms of news engagement, including commenting on news stories on social networks or news websites and rating, liking, or favoriting a news story, followed a similar trajectory of increasing in 2024 and declining in 2025; however, the 2025 levels were still higher than those recorded in 2023.

Figure 6.2b



Question: During an average week, which, if any, of the following ways do you share or participate in news coverage? Ns = 2,004, 2,005 and 2,023 for the years 2025, 2024 and 2023, respectively.

Comfort with personalized content

The 2025 survey asked respondents about their acceptance of algorithmically personalized content across different types of content. As Figure 6.3 shows, among the six content categories assessed, weather information elicited the highest level of comfort, with 66.0% of respondents reporting that they felt either somewhat or very comfortable when they encountered personalized weather information. This was followed by news, with 54.3% of respondents indicating feeling somewhat or very comfortable with personalized recommendations for news. Similarly, algorithmically personalized content on social media video feeds and online TV shows and movies was generally well accepted, with 52.0% and 50.9% of respondents, respectively, reporting that they felt either somewhat or very comfortable in that regard.

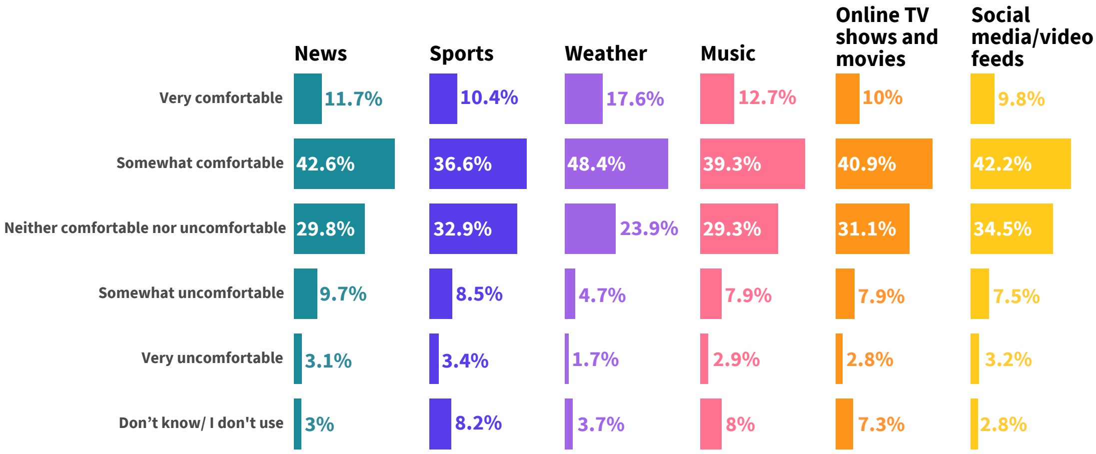
Perception of content moderation

In an age of algorithmic information flows and user-generated content, content moderation has become a central concern in the governance of digital platforms. Figure 6.4 depicts how the respondents perceived content moderation on social media and video networks. Overall, 44.7% of respondents believed that the amount of content removed by social media and video network was appropriate, suggesting a general public acceptance of platform moderation practices. By contrast, smaller proportions believed that too much (19.3%) or too little (14.5%) content was being removed.

Males were more likely than females to believe that the amount of content removed was appropriate (48.6% for males vs. 41.5% for females) or too little (16.1% for males vs. 13.2% for females). Females were more likely to believe that too much content was removed (20.6% for females vs. 17.8% for males).

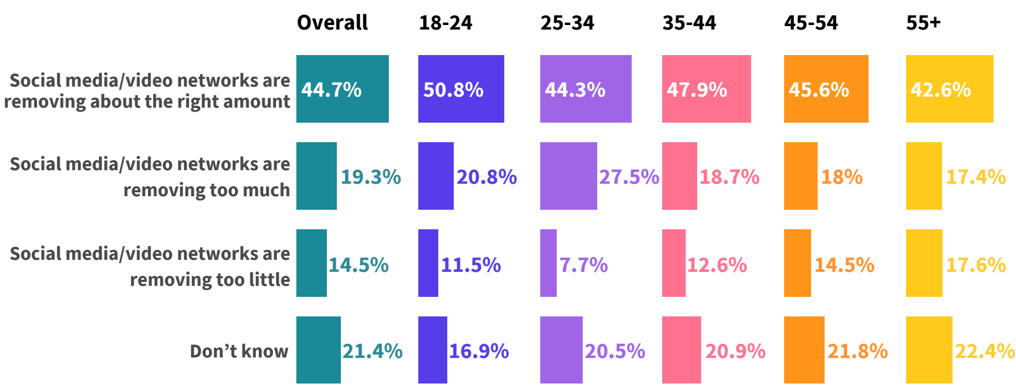
Perceptions of content removal varied significantly across age groups. The youngest respondents (18–24) were the most likely to believe that the amount of content removal was appropriate, with 50.8% indicating that view. Those aged 25–34 were more likely to believe that too much content was being removed (27.5%), while the oldest respondents (aged 55 or above) were more likely to say that too little content was being removed (17.6%).

Figure 6.3



Question: How comfortable or uncomfortable do you feel with using websites and apps where content has been automatically selected for you based on your previous preferences (i.e., highly personalized) when it comes to each of the following? N = 2,004.

Figure 6.4



Question: Thinking about how social media and online video networks sometimes remove content that is deemed harmful or offensive (in addition to content that is illegal), which comes closest to your view? N = 2,004.

Active news avoidance

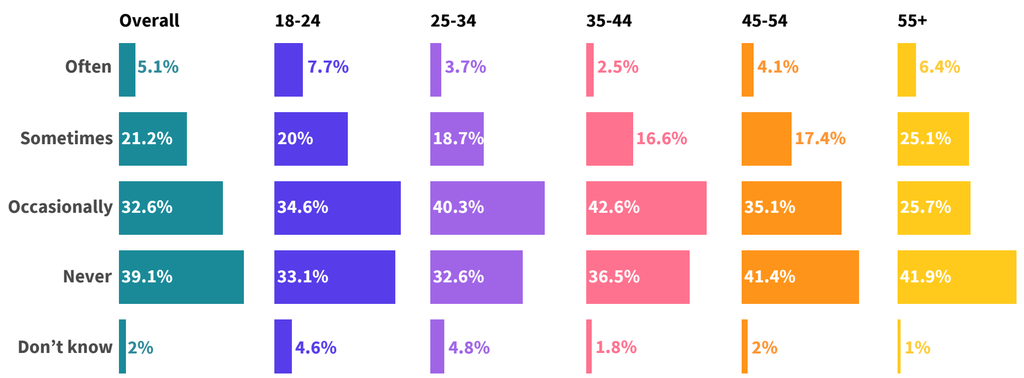
News avoidance is the practice of intentionally opting out of certain news or unintentionally withdrawing from news consumption in general. Scholars have paid attention to news avoidance because it creates barriers to news engagement and knowledge formation that are detrimental to the formation and maintenance of an informed citizenry. In the 2025 survey, a several questions about intentional news avoidance were administered. Respondents were asked to assess the degree to which they proactively avoided the news. Figure 6.5a summarizes the results. Overall, 5.1% of respondents reported avoiding the news often, while 21.2% reported that they avoided it sometimes; 32.6% avoided it occasionally, and 39.1% never avoided the news.

Gender differences in active news avoidance were modest. Females were more likely to occasionally avoid the news than males (34.5% for females vs. 30.2% for males). Conversely, among those who never avoided the news, the proportion of male respondents was higher (41.4% vs. 37.3%). News avoidance was much more varied with age. Almost one-third (31.5%) of respondents aged 55 or above reported that they avoided the news often or sometimes, while 27.7% of respondents aged 18–24 reported avoiding the news often or sometimes; only 19.1% of respondents aged 35–44 and 21.5% of respondents aged 45–54 chose one of those two answers. In other words, the oldest and youngest age groups were more likely to report avoiding the news often or sometimes, whereas middle-aged respondents were less likely to say that they did so. Furthermore, the oldest group were also the least likely to avoid the news, with 41.9% of respondents aged 55 or above reporting that they never avoided it. This suggests that news avoidance behavior among older adults was more "polarized" when compared to other age groups—some avoided it frequently, while others never did.

Active news avoidance, 2022–2025

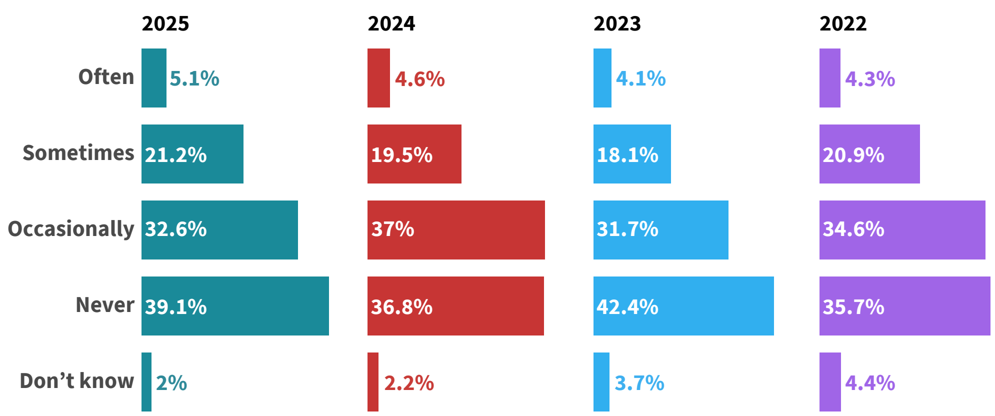
Figure 6.5b compares the overall degree of news avoidance from 2022 to 2025. The percentages remained very stable, with the proportions of respondents saying that they avoided the news sometimes or often at 25.2%, 22.2%, 24.1%, and 26.3% for 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, respectively. There is no obvious increasing or decreasing trend of degrees of active news avoidance.

Figure 6.5a



Question: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? N = 2,004.

Figure 6.5b

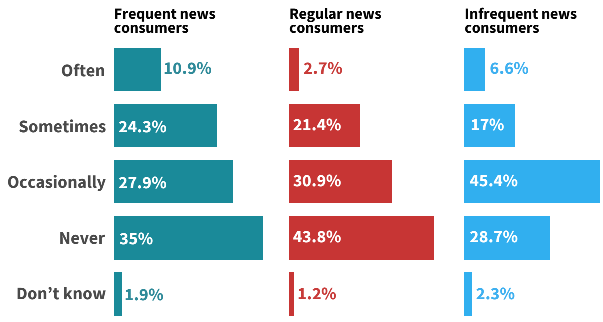


Question: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? Ns = 2,004, 2,005, 2,023, and 2,010 for the years 2025, 2024, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

News avoidance by level of news consumption

The relationship between news avoidance and news consumption is not strictly linear. Figure 6.5c compares degrees of news avoidance across different news consumption frequencies. Respondents were classified into three groups based on how often they consumed the news: frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day. Frequent news consumers were more likely to report avoiding the news: 35.2% of those respondents said that they often or sometimes avoided the news, whereas regular news consumers and infrequent news consumers reported similar degrees of news avoidance, with 24.1% and 23.6%, respectively. In other words, the degree of news avoidance observed among frequent news consumers was substantially higher than that of regular news consumers and infrequent news consumers. However, 43.8% of respondents among regular news consumers reported never avoiding news, while only 28.7% of infrequent news consumers did so; that is, regular news consumers were more likely to never avoid the news, while infrequent news consumers were more likely to avoid the news occasionally.

Figure 6.5c



Question: Do you find yourself actively trying to avoid news these days? Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 1,985.

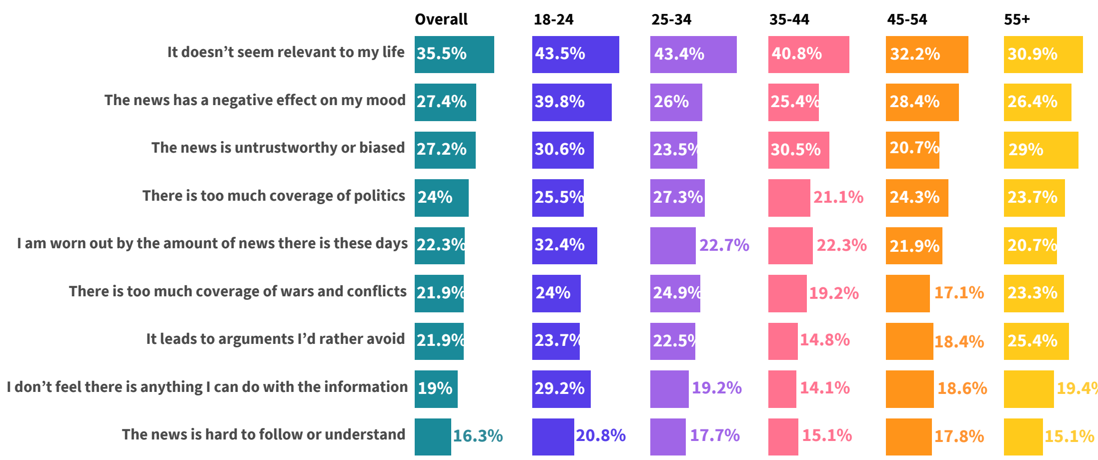
Reasons for news avoidance

In addition to asking respondents whether and to what extent they avoided the news, the 2025 survey inquired for the first time about the specific reasons behind news avoidance among those who reported engaging in that behavior. As Figure 6.6 shows, the most frequently reported reason was a perceived lack of personal relevance, which was cited by 35.5% of the respondents. This was followed by concerns related to negative emotional reactions to consuming news (27.4%) and concern regarding the credibility or impartiality of news sources (27.2%). These results indicate that the three core drivers of news avoidance were perceived irrelevance, negative emotional reactions, and lack of trust or perceived bias.

News overload was also a key reason for news avoidance behavior. More specifically, 22.3% of respondents felt worn out by the sheer amount of news; approximately one-quarter (24.0%) indicated that excessive coverage of political stories contributed to their active news avoidance, and 21.9% reported that the overwhelming coverage of war-related topics was part of the reason for their news avoidance behavior. Interestingly, the perception that the news is difficult to follow or understand appears to be less likely to lead to news avoidance.

Males were significantly more likely than females to avoid the news due to perceived bias or lack of trust in the content (32.8% for males vs. 22.8% for females). They were also more

Figure 6.6



Question: Why do you find yourself actively trying to avoid the news?; N = 1,179.

likely to avoid the news due to the feeling that they could do nothing with the information (21.2% for males vs. 17.3% for females). Females were more likely to avoid news due to negative emotional responses (28.8% for female vs. 25.7% for male).

From an age-based perspective, the picture is more complex. Respondents aged 18 to 24 and between 25 to 34 were more likely to avoid news due to a perceived lack of personal relevance, with 43.5% and 43.4% citing this as their main reason, respectively. Meanwhile, the youngest group (those between 18 and 24) were more likely than other age groups to avoid the news due to negative emotional concern (39.8%), perceived bias or lack of trust in news content (30.6%), feeling worn out (32.4%), and feeling that nothing can be done with the news (29.2%). The oldest group (aged 55 or above) were more likely than other age groups to avoid the news due to concerns that discussing the news might lead to arguments (25.4%).

Part VII.
Podcasts and video News

Perceived news value of podcasts

In an era of information fragmentation, podcasts are an influential medium for news and information consumption. With their greater flexibility and user control, they are increasingly complementing traditional broadcast media. In the 2025 survey, as Figure 7.1a shows, the respondents were first asked whether they agreed that listening to podcasts help them understand issues at a deeper level compared to other forms of media. Overall, 59.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that podcasts did provide deeper insight, while nearly a third (30.9%) neither agreed nor disagreed. Only 7.5% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Females were more likely than males to agree that podcasts provide deeper insight; 63.0% of females tended to agree or strongly agreed with the statement, compared to 54.5% of males. By contrast, males were more likely than females to disagree; 10.4% tended to disagree or strongly disagreed, compared to 5.1% for females.

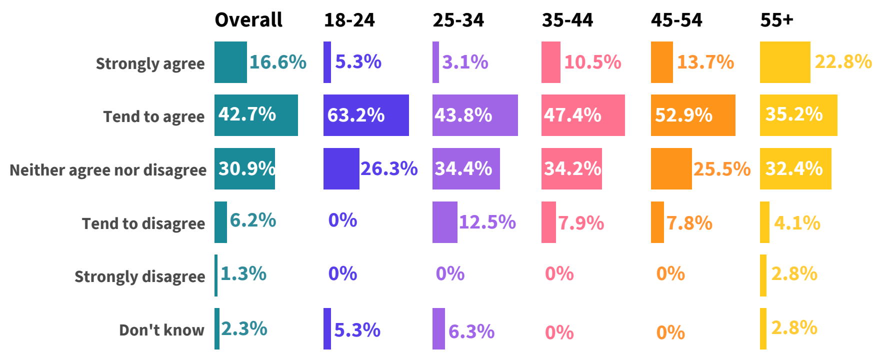
The youngest group (18–24) was the most likely to agree with the statement, with 68.5% of those respondents tending to agree or strongly agreeing. Only 5.3% of respondents in the group strongly agreed that podcasts provide deeper insight. By contrast, the oldest group (aged 55 or above) were the most likely to express recognition of the value of podcasts, with 22.8% of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement. That is, although the youngest respondents were the most likely to agree with the statement, older respondents were more likely to strongly agree with the statement. Meanwhile, those aged 25 to 34 were the least likely to agree with the statement, with only 46.9% tending to agree or strongly agreeing.

Perceived value of podcasts by news consumption

Beyond general comparisons of respondents' perceptions of podcasts, how does news consumption frequency relate to evaluation of podcasts? Figure 7.1b shows the results. Overall, there was no clear linear relationship between news consumption frequency and respondents' perceptions of the value of podcasts. For example, 61.0% of frequent news consumers tended to agree or strongly agree with the statement, compared to 57.6% of regular news consumers.

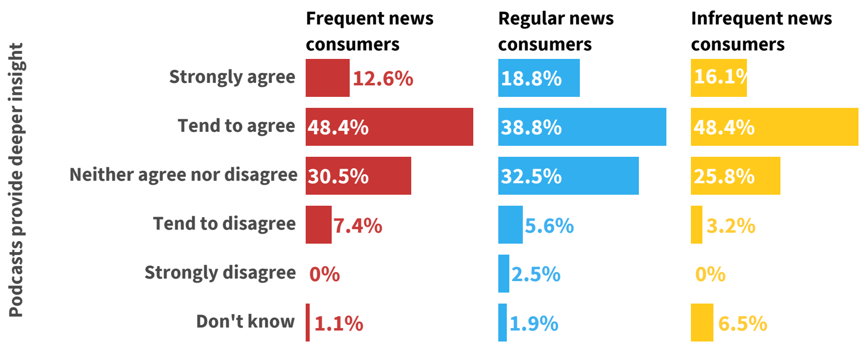
Interestingly, infrequent news consumers were the most likely to express recognition of the value of podcasts, with 64.5% of that group tending to agree or strongly agreeing with the statement. A plausible explanation for this unexpected finding is that infrequent news consumers may not engage with large volumes of fragmented news content daily; alternatively, they might be very selective about the types of podcasts news they would like to consume. The efficient and flexible format of podcasts aligns well with these consumers' more selective and purposeful patterns of news consumption.

Figure 7.1a



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Listening to podcasts helps me understand issues at a deeper level than other types of media; N = 287.

Figure 7.1b



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Listening to podcasts helps me understand issues at a deeper level than other types of media. Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 287.

Willingness to pay for podcasts

Another statement asked respondents whether they would be willing to pay a reasonable price for the news-related podcasts they like. Figure 7.2a depicts the results. Nearly half (46.9%) of respondents tended to agree or strongly agreed that they were willing to pay a reasonable price for news podcasts, while 28.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. Approximately one-quarter of the respondents (24.0%) indicated an unwillingness to pay by tending to disagree or strongly disagreeing with the statement. In sum, despite the substantial potential for a paid market for news podcasts, a significant portion of the audience remained either hesitant or resistant.

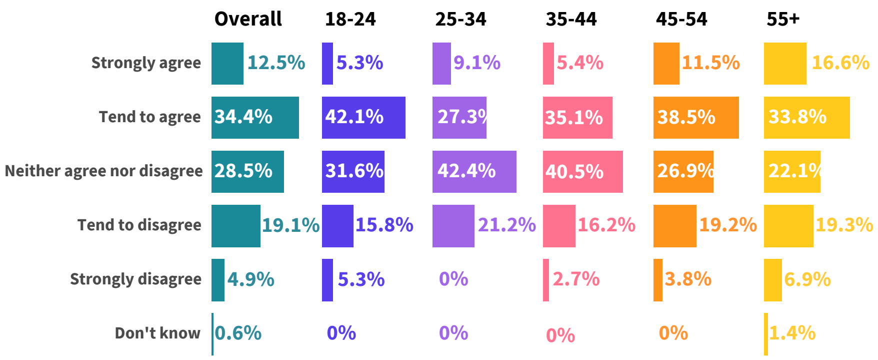
Gender differences were minimal, with male and female respondents exhibiting nearly identical levels of willingness to pay. In terms of age differences, the oldest group (aged 55 or above) were the most likely to pay for podcasts, with 16.6% strongly agreeing and 33.8% tending to agree with the statement. Among the youngest group (18–24), 42.1% tended to agree, but only 5.3% strongly agreed, suggesting some interest but comparatively weaker commitment to paying. By contrast, among respondents aged between 25 and 34, attitudes toward paying for news-related podcasts were notably cautious, with 42.4% of respondents choosing the middle option of neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Willingness to pay for podcasts by news consumption

Figure 7.2b presents the results regarding the relationship between news consumption frequency and respondents' willingness to pay for news podcasts. As in Figure 7.2a, respondents' willingness to pay for news podcasts did not exhibit a linear relationship with the frequency of news consumption. Frequent news consumers showed the highest willingness to pay for podcasts, with 59.8% of the respondents in that category tending to agree or strongly agreeing with the statement. By contrast, regular news consumers were the least likely to pay for podcasts, with only 38.1% of those respondents tending to agree or strongly agreeing with the statement, while nearly one-third (31.9%) of respondents tended to disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. Given that regular news consumers might not engage with podcasts frequently and tend to be less selective about the content they consume, it is understandable that their willingness to pay for news podcasts was relatively low.

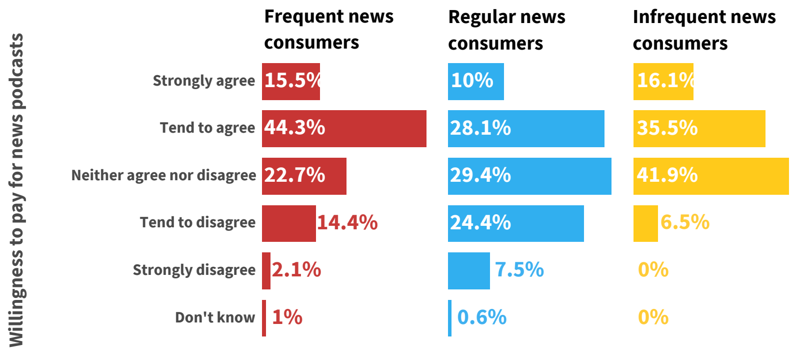
By contrast, among infrequent news consumers, a majority (51.6%) tended to agree or strongly agreed with the statement. This pattern echoes the findings on their perceptions of the value of podcasts. That is, infrequent news consumers may be selective and purposive in their consumption habits and could thus be more willing to pay to access niche channels that align with their specific interests.

Figure 7.2a



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I would be prepared to pay a reasonable price for news-related podcasts that I like; N = 287.

Figure 7.2b



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Listening to podcasts helps me understand issues at a deeper level than other types of media. Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 287.

Platform for consuming video news

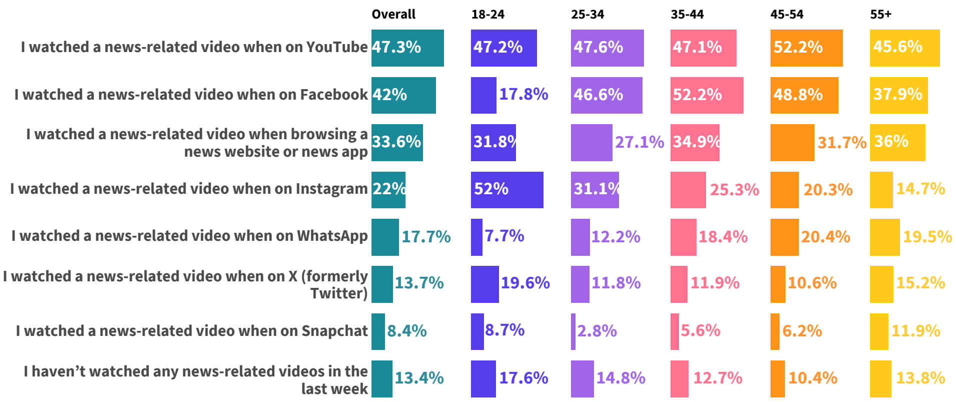
In addition to podcasts, the 2025 survey included a series of questions about video news. Figure 7.3a summarizes respondents' answers about their platform preferences for consuming video news content. Overall, 47.3% of respondents reported consuming video news on YouTube, making it the most widely used platform for such consumption among Hong Kong respondents. It was closely followed by Facebook, with 42.0% of respondents reporting consuming video news there, while 33.6% reported consuming video news through news websites or apps. Other platforms such as Instagram (22.0%), WhatsApp (17.7%), and X (13.7%) also served as sources of video news, though to a lesser extent.

Gender differences were not large, but males were more likely than females to consume video news on YouTube (52.1% for males vs. 43.5% for females). Middle-aged respondents (35–54) demonstrated the highest levels of news video consumption on both YouTube and Facebook: 52.5% of those aged between 45 and 54 reported consuming video news on YouTube, while 52.2% of that cohort reported doing so on Facebook. By contrast, the youngest group (18–24) was the least likely to consume news videos on Facebook (17.8%) and WhatsApp (7.7%). However, they were the most likely to consume video news on Instagram (52.0%) and X (19.6%).

Platform for consuming video news by news consumption frequency

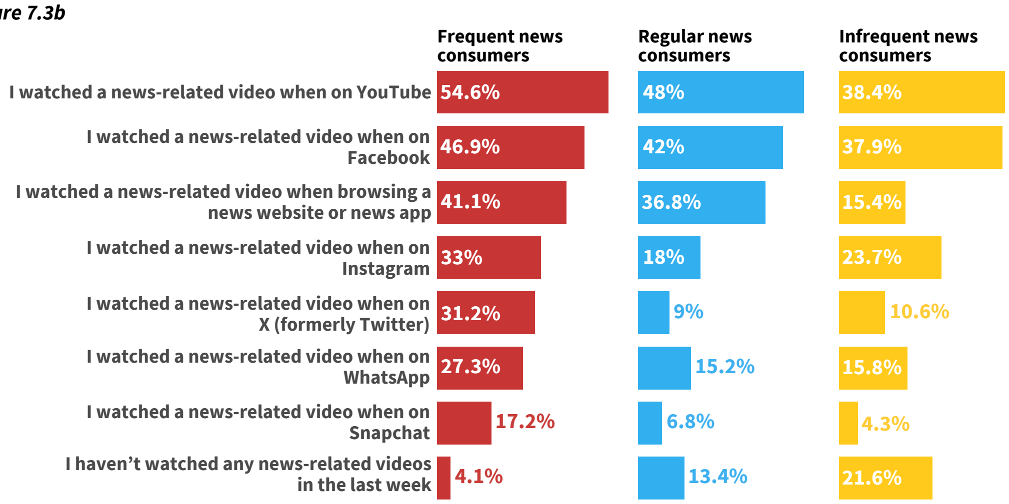
As Figure 7.3b shows, there are notable differences in news consumption frequency by platform for consuming video news. Frequent news consumers were significantly more likely to have watched news-related videos across all platforms. Gaps between frequent and less frequent news consumers were particularly evident on X (31.2%) and Snapchat (17.2%). Infrequent news consumers reported much lower engagement levels, with 38.4% watching news videos on YouTube and only 15.4% using news websites or apps. Infrequent news consumers were slightly more likely than regular consumers to watch news videos on Instagram (23.7%). Additionally, the proportion of infrequent news consumers who had not watched any video news in the past week (21.6%) was substantially higher than that of frequent consumers (4.1%).

Figure 7.3a



Question: Thinking about when you used online news-related video (a short clip, a live stream, or a full episode) over the last week, which of the following did you do? N = 2,004.

Figure 7.3b

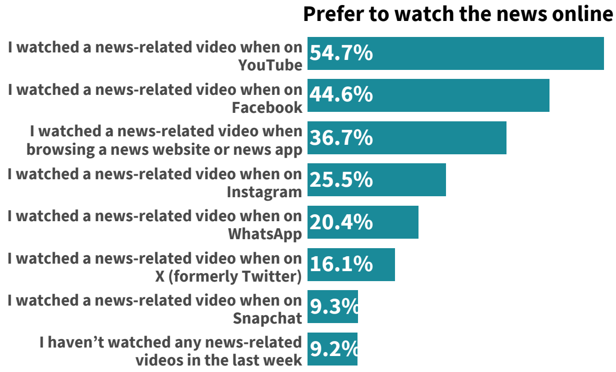


Question: Thinking about when you used online news-related video (a short clip, a live stream, or a full episode) over the last week, which of the following did you do? Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 1,985.

Preferred platforms for online news watchers

In the 2025 survey, we also investigated whether respondents who prefer to watch news online exhibited distinctive tendencies in their choice of video platforms. Figure 7.4 shows the results. Among respondents who preferred watching news online, YouTube was the most popular platform: 54.7% of respondents reported consuming video news on YouTube. Facebook followed closely at 44.6%, and 36.7% watched video news while browsing a news website or app. In contrast, other platforms, such as Instagram (25.5%), WhatsApp (20.4%) and X (16.1%) were relatively less commonly used. Snapchat had notably lower engagement rates at 9.3%.

Figure 7.4



Question: Thinking about when you used online news-related videos (a short clip, a live stream, or a full episode) over the last week, which of the following did you do? Note: Calculated only for those who prefer to watch the news online; N = 731.

Part VIII.
Artificial intelligence and journalism

As AI technologies become increasingly integrated into various aspects of journalism, news organizations around the world have increasingly adopted AI technologies for automated tasks, such as content generation, recommendation algorithms, and audience engagement to better serve audiences. The 2025 survey included a series of questions seeking to understand public attitudes toward the use of AI in news production, perceived comfort with AI-produced news, and the characteristics of AI.

Comfort with news produced mostly by AI with human oversight

The first related question in the survey asked whether respondents felt comfortable with news produced with the help of AI. The survey distinguished between news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight and news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from AI.

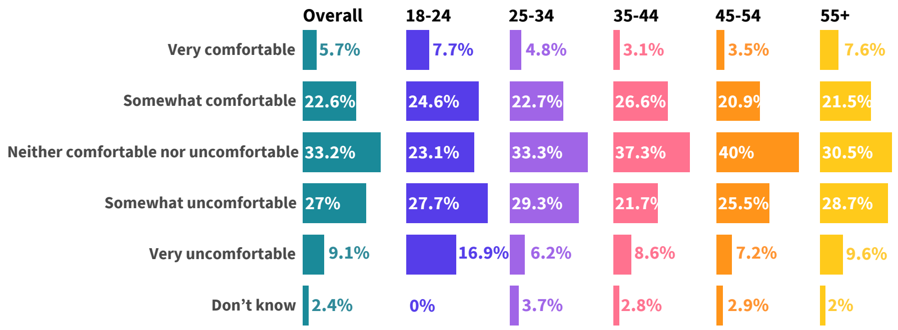
As shown in Figure 8.1a, when considering news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight, 28.3% of respondents reported that they were somewhat or very comfortable, whereas more than a third (36.1%) of respondents reported that they were somewhat or very uncomfortable. That is, the percentage reporting discomfort was larger than the percentage reporting being comfortable. Notably, 33.2% of respondents indicated that they were neither comfortable nor uncomfortable with news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight.

Gender differences were very minor, as male and female respondents reported similar levels of comfort with news produced mostly by AI. However, there were substantial differences across age groups. The youngest respondents (aged between 18 and 24) were the most likely to report feeling comfortable with news mostly produced by AI, with nearly one-third (32.3%) indicating that they were somewhat or very comfortable with it. Interestingly, they were also the most likely to report feeling discomfort toward AI, with 44.6% of respondents in this group saying that they were somewhat or very uncomfortable about news produced mostly by AI. In other words, attitudes toward AI in the youngest group were more unevenly distributed. By contrast, respondents aged between 45 and 54 were the least likely to report feeling comfortable with news produced mostly by AI, with only 24.4% reporting being somewhat or very comfortable.

Comfort with news produced mostly by a journalist with AI assistance

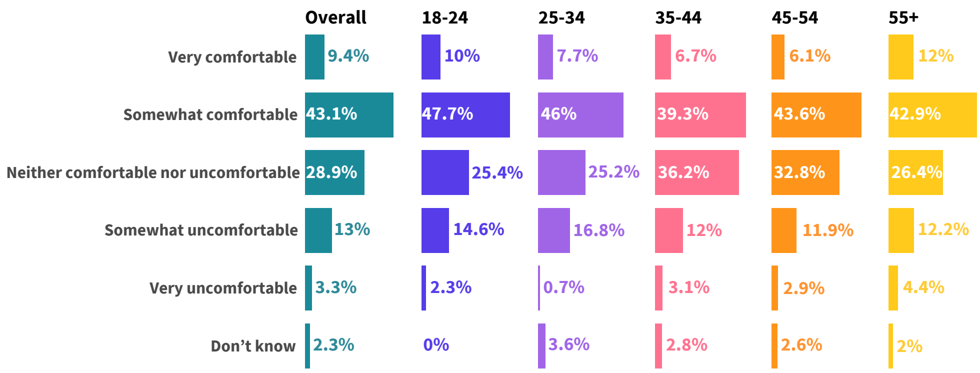
Figure 8.1b summarizes the results regarding whether people were comfortable with news produced mostly by a human journalist with some assistance from AI. When AI plays a supplementary role rather than taking center stage, the majority of respondents were much more likely to feel comfortable. Overall, more than half (52.5%) of respondents were somewhat or very comfortable with such news, whereas only 16.3% said that they were somewhat or very uncomfortable.

Figure 8.1a



Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight? N = 2,004.

Figure 8.1b



Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from artificial intelligence (AI)? N = 2,004.

Again, gender differences were very minor. Male and female respondents reported similar levels of comfort with news produced with some help from AI. The youngest respondents were most likely to be comfortable with news produced with some help from AI: 57.7% of respondents between 18 and 24 said that they were somewhat or very comfortable, whereas 54.9% of respondents aged 55 or above and 53.7% of respondents between 25 and 34 gave one of those answers. By contrast, only 46.0% of respondents between 35 and 44 said they were somewhat or very comfortable with news produced with some help from AI.

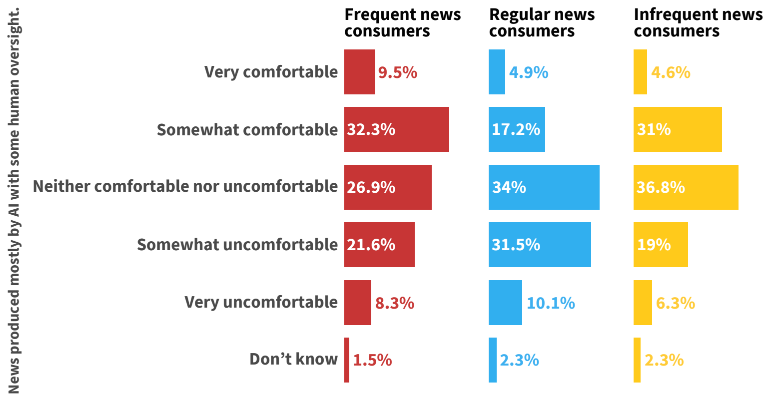
Comfort with news produced by AI by news consumption frequency

Do levels of comfort with news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight and news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from AI vary across news consumers? Using the same three news consumption groups described in Part 3, we compared how the three groups responded to the two distinct types of AI-assisted news. As shown in Figure 8.2a, frequent news consumers were more likely to report comfort with news produced mostly by AI: 41.8% of those respondents said that they were somewhat or very comfortable. By contrast, regular news consumers reported the lowest level of comfort, with only 22.1% giving one of those answers; a significantly higher proportion of discomfort was also observed in this group, with 41.6% reporting feeling somewhat or very uncomfortable. Notably, infrequent news consumers also expressed a considerable level of comfort with news produced mostly by AI, with 35.6% of infrequent news consumers reporting feeling somewhat or very comfortable with such content, a level only slightly lower than that of frequent news consumers.

Comfort with AI-assisted news by news consumption frequency

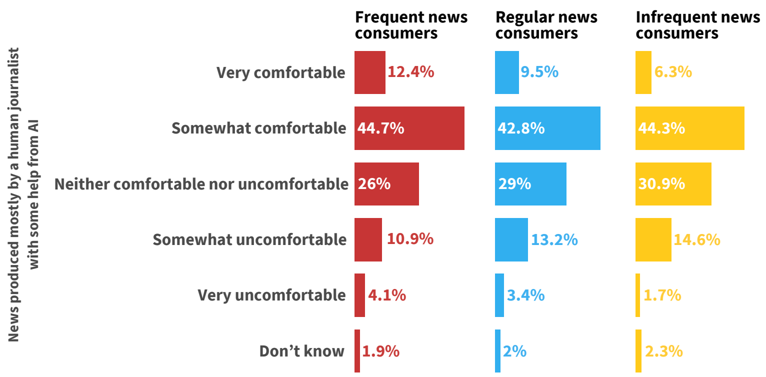
Figure 8.2b compares results when considering news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from AI. Overall, consistent with the findings shown in Figure 8.1b, when AI serves in a supplementary role, all types of news consumers exhibited a relatively high degree of acceptance: 57.1% of frequent news consumers reported somewhat or very comfortable with news produced with some help from AI, while 52.3% of regular news consumers and 50.6% of infrequent news consumers reported being somewhat or very comfortable.

Figure 8.2a



Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced mostly by artificial intelligence (AI) with some human oversight? Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 1,985.

Figure 8.2b



Question: In general, how comfortable or uncomfortable are you with using news produced mostly by a human journalist with some help from artificial intelligence (AI)? Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 1,985.

Perceived qualities of AI-generated vs. journalist-produced news

Attitudes toward the incorporation of AI into news production relative to attitudes to news produced by journalists may vary based on different quality dimensions of news. The 2025 survey asked respondents to evaluate whether news produced mostly by AI with some human oversight would be more or less different from news produced by journalists across a range of quality dimensions. Figure 8.3a summarizes the results.

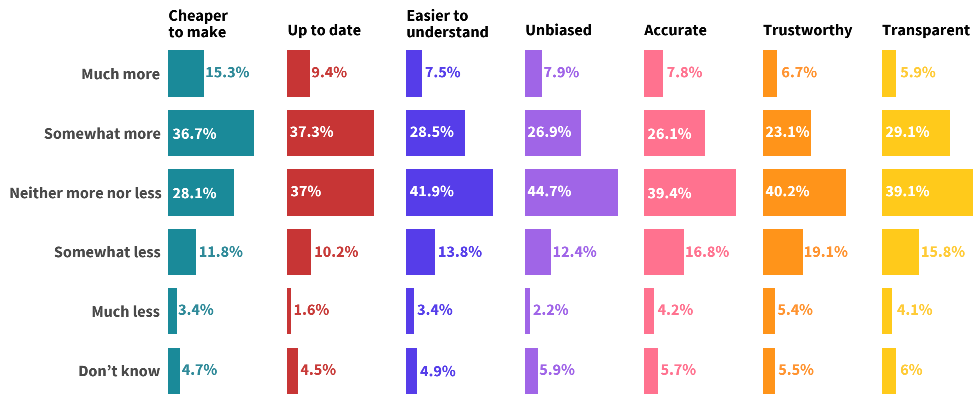
Overall, most respondents perceived news produced mostly by artificial intelligence with some human oversight as superior to news produced entirely by a human journalist in terms of production efficiency and timeliness. Specifically, over half of respondents (52.0%) believed that news produced mostly by AI is somewhat or much more cost-effective, while 46.7% noted its ability to provide more up-to-date information. However, respondents' attitudes became more cautious when it comes to clarity, fairness, accuracy, credibility and transparency. Specifically, 29.8% of respondents viewed news produced mostly by AI as somewhat or much more trustworthy than news produced entirely by a human journalist, whereas 36.0% viewed news produced mostly by AI as somewhat or much easier to understand than news produced entirely by a human journalist. However, the percentages of respondents believing that AI-generated news is more accurate, trustworthy, transparent, understandable, and unbiased were higher than the percentages believing that AI-generated news is less accurate, trustworthy, transparent, understandable, and unbiased.

Perceived quality of AI-generated news by age-groups

Figure 8.3b shows the results regarding how people across different demographic groups perceived qualities of news produced by AI with some human oversight compared to those produced by human journalists. For simplicity, the figure shows only the percentages of respondents who reported somewhat or very much regarding a given news quality. On the whole, males were more likely than females to agree that AI-generated news is more timely compared to news produced by human journalists (49.4% for female vs. 43.4% for male).

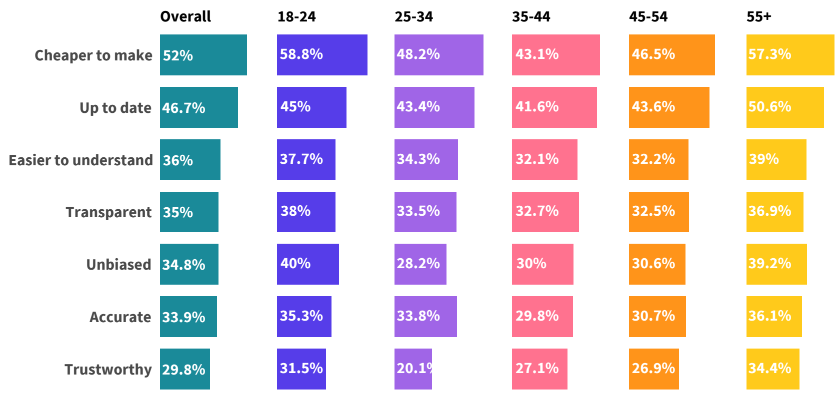
Regarding age differences, the youngest respondents were the most likely to agree that AI- generated news was more cost-efficient (58.8%), transparent (38.0%), and fair (40.0%). In contrast, the oldest group (aged 55 or above) was more inclined to view AI- generated news as superior in several quality dimensions, including timeliness (50.6%), easier to understand (39.0%), accuracy (36.1%), and trustworthy (34.4%), compared to other age cohorts. Interestingly, respondents aged 25 to 34 were the most skeptical, with only 20.1% and 28.2% perceiving AI-generated news as more trustworthy and fairer, respectively, compared to news produced by human journalists.

Figure 8.3a



Question: In general, do you think that news produced mostly by artificial intelligence, albeit with some human oversight, is likely to be more or less of each of the following, compared to news produced entirely by a human journalist? N = 2,004.

Figure 8.3b



Question: In general, do you think that news produced mostly by artificial intelligence, albeit with some human oversight, is likely to be more or less of each of the following when compared to news produced entirely by a human journalist? The figures indicate the percentage of respondents who felt somewhat or much more with each news quality; N = 2,004.

Interest in AI-driven personalized news features

The 2025 survey also asked respondents about their interest in AI-driven personalized news features. Figure 8.4a shows the results. Overall, the most favored features were AI-generated news summaries, with 40.1% of respondents expressing interest. This was followed by translation of news content into the user's native language (34.0%) and news recommendations or alerts based on personal interests (28.7%). Additionally, 25.3% of respondents expressed interests in AI chatbot explanations of news, while audio and video format conversion garnered interest from 25.2% and 24.3% of respondents, respectively. By contrast, features such as simplified language for different reading levels (23.6%) and customized news homepages (23.8%) attracted less interest.

Males were more likely than females to express interest in both audio (27.6% for males vs. 23.3% for females) and video (26.8% for males vs. 22.2% for females) format conversion, along with simplified language for different reading levels (25.9% for males vs. 21.7% for females) and news recommendations or alerts based on personal interests (32.1% for males vs. 25.9% for females).

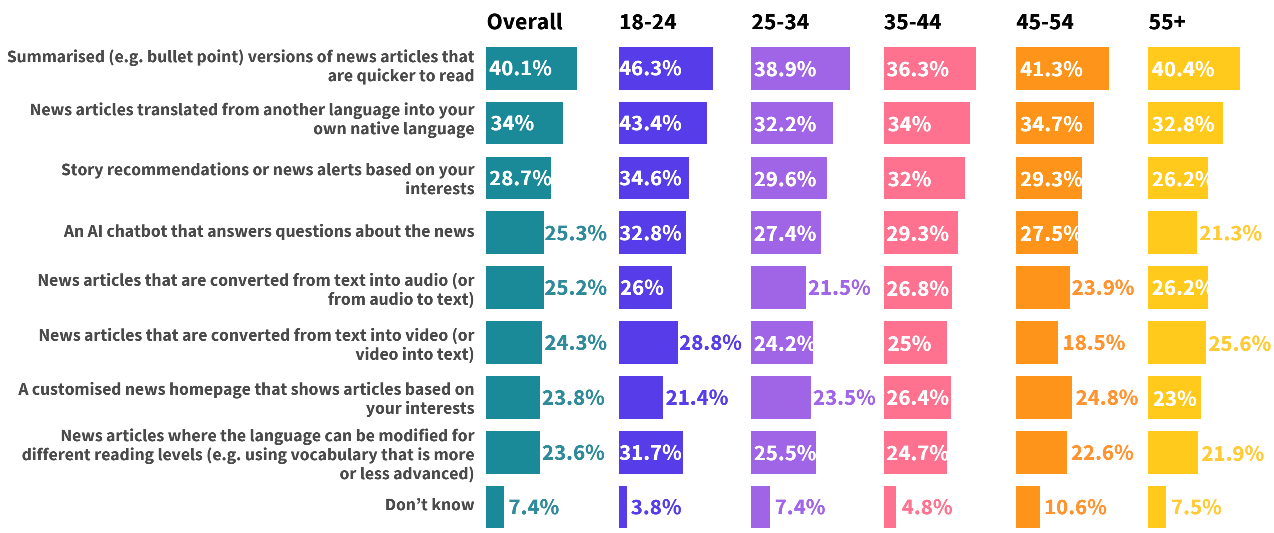
In terms of age groups, the youngest respondents (aged 18 and 24) demonstrated greater interest in most AI news features than other age cohorts. Their interest was particularly high in AI-generated news summaries (46.3%), news translation (43.4%), news recommendations or alerts based on personal interests (34.6%), AI chatbot explanations of news (32.8%), language simplification (31.7%), and video format conversion (28.8%). By contrast, while older respondents (aged 55 and above) showed relatively high levels of interest in AI-generated news summaries (40.4%) and audio (26.2%) and video (25.6%) format conversion, their overall enthusiasm for AI-driven news personalization was generally lower across other features.

Interests in AI-driven news personalization by news consumption frequency

Finally, Figure 8.4b highlights notable differences in preferences for AI-driven news personalization features across groups with varying news consumption frequencies. Overall, AI-generated news summaries were the most welcomed feature across all three groups, particularly among frequent news consumers and regular news consumers, where interest levels reached 42.0% and 41.5%, respectively. Frequent news consumers also demonstrated significantly higher levels of interest in several other features, including AI chatbot explanations of news (34.7%), news recommendations or alerts based on personal interests (34.4%), and customized news homepages (33.7%), compared to regular or infrequent consumers.

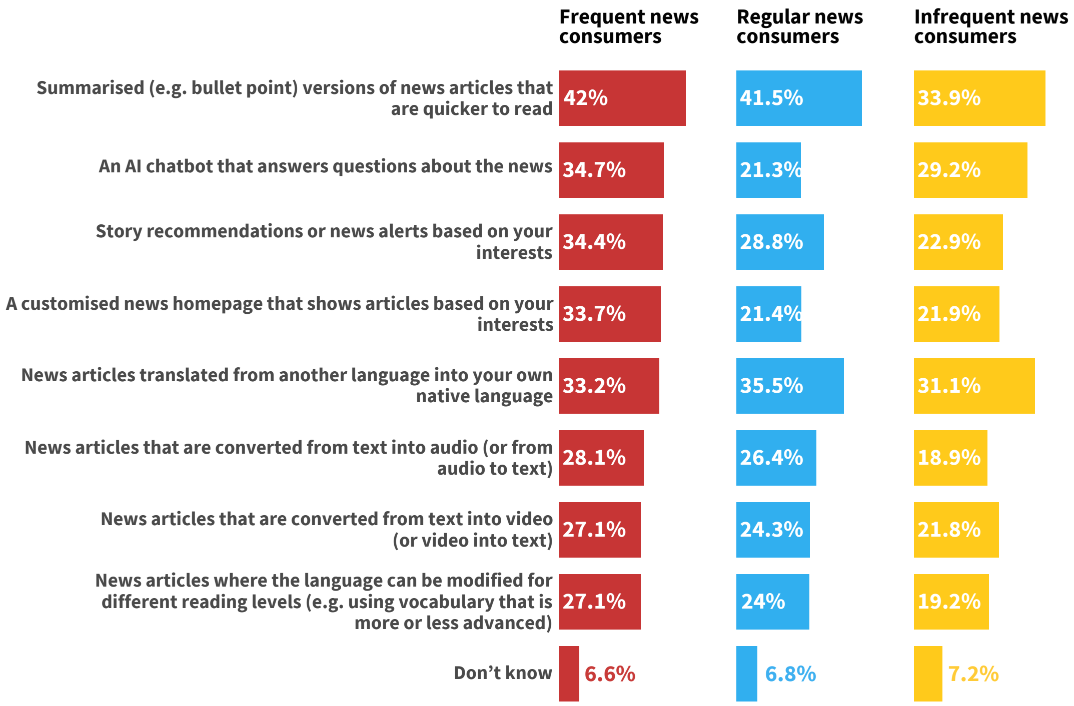
By contrast, infrequent news consumers generally expressed lower levels of interest across most AI functionalities. Their preferences were concentrated in more utilitarian features, with higher interest in AI-generated news summaries (33.9%) and news translation (31.1%). In other words, infrequent consumers may prioritize accessibility and language support over more interactive or tailored experiences when engaging with AI- driven news content.

Figure 8.4a



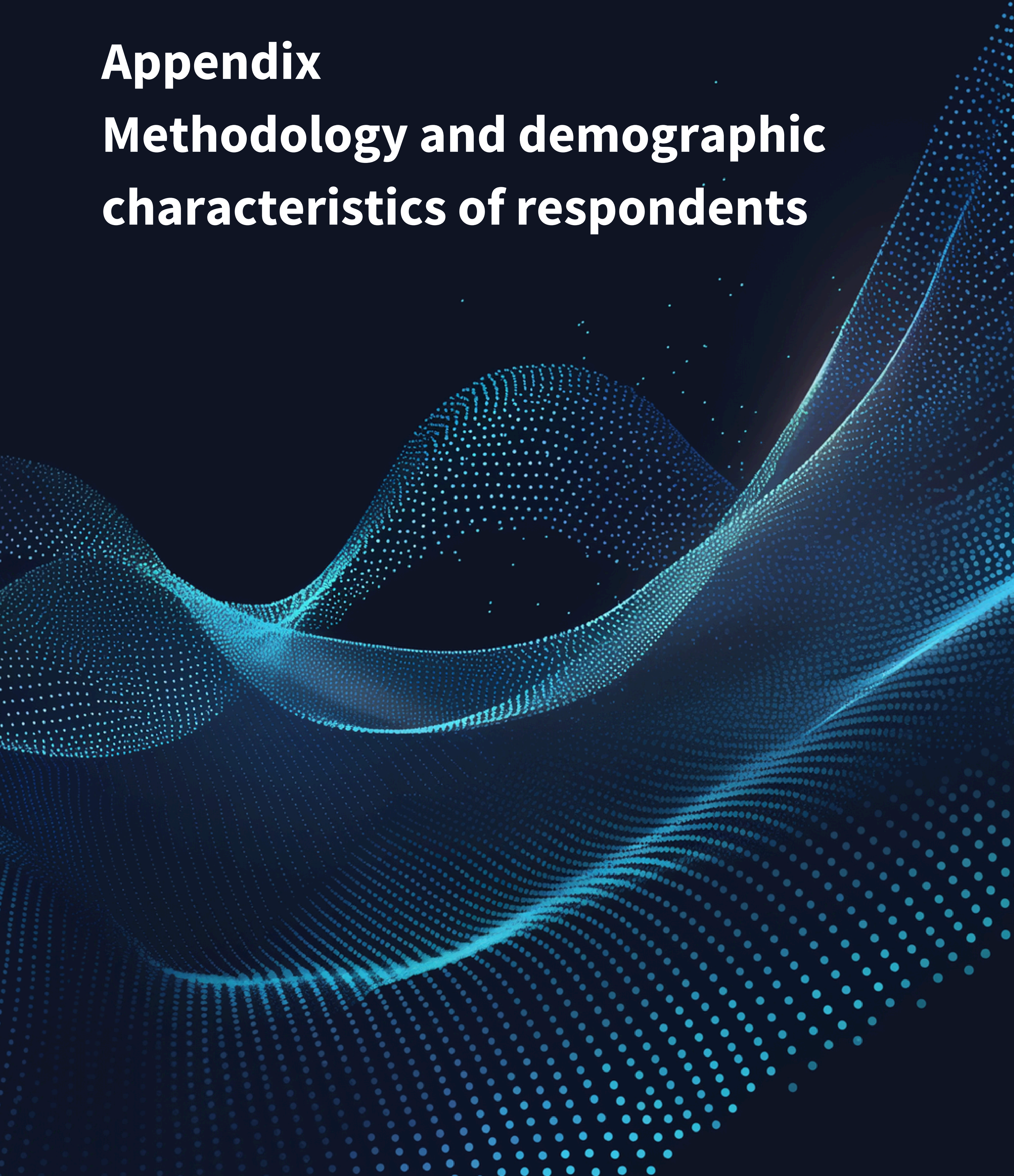
Question: The news industry is considering using AI to better adapt news content to people's individual needs. Which of the following options, if any, would you be interested in using? N = 2,004.

Figure 8.4b



Question: The news industry is considering using AI to better adapt news content to people's individual needs. Which of the following options, if any, would you be interested in using? Frequent news consumers were those who consumed news six times per day or more, regular news consumers were those who consumed news every day or two to five times per day, and infrequent news consumers were those who consumed news less frequently than once per day; N = 1,985.

Appendix
Methodology and demographic characteristics of respondents



The surveys covered in this report were part of an annual cross-national survey project on online news use conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) at the University of Oxford. The actual survey fieldwork was conducted by the online survey company YouGov in various countries and cities, including Hong Kong. The 2025 survey used an online questionnaire that was distributed in late January and early February. The questionnaire was drafted by the RISJ in English and then translated into Chinese. The Hong Kong team helped confirm the appropriateness of the translation and provided input regarding issues such as the list of news brands to be included in the survey.

According to the RISJ, samples in various markets were assembled using representative quotas for age, gender, and region in each market. Although this report focuses mainly on the 2025 survey data, data from previous years are sometimes used to illustrate continuities and changes over time. The following table summarizes the sample sizes and demographic profiles of the respondents in terms of gender, age, educational level, and household income from 2021 to 2025.

Table A1 Demographic profiles of Hong Kong respondents in different years

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Gender					
Male	45.2%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
Female	54.8%	55.0%	55.0%	55.0%	55.0%
Age					
18–24	7.5%	7.1%	6.8%	6.6%	6.5%
25–34	14.8%	14.6%	14.4%	14.0%	13.6%
35–44	17.1%	17.0%	16.7%	16.5%	16.3%
45–54	17.6%	17.3%	17.3%	17.2%	17.2%
55 or above	43.0%	44.0%	44.9%	45.7%	46.4%
Education					
Up to lower secondary	10.5%	13.5%	9.1%	13.4%	10.9%
Upper secondary	42.5%	41.6%	46.2%	40.5%	43.5%
Non-degree tertiary	20.6%	19.6%	19.0%	20.0%	19.3%
Bachelor's degree	19.7%	19.2%	19.5%	18.5%	21.1%
Graduate school	6.7%	6.1%	6.2%	7.6%	5.2%
Household income (HKD)					
Below 10,000	3.5%	2.4%	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%
10,000 to 24,999	7.9%	8.5%	9.4%	7.9%	7.8%
25,000 to 49,999	10.6%	10.1%	15.7%	15.9%	12.0%
50,000 or above	69.8%	73.6%	68.3%	70.8%	73.8%
Sample size	1501	2010	2023	2005	2004

Note. Percentages for household income do not add up to 100% because respondents were allowed to answer *don't know*. For age and education, percentages may not add up to exactly 100.0% due to rounding.