Building audience engagement across editorial and commercial

Mi Li
The Financial Times
My journey to Audience Engagement
Defining ‘engagement’ – the FT way

- Better engagement = greater editorial and commercial success
- **Editorial:** Grow the reach and impact of our journalism
- **Subscription:** Higher acquisition and retention rates; increased customer LTV
- **Advertising:** Grow revenues based on engagement rather than impressions
- **Product:** Improve site speed, user experience; develop premium products
- A galvanising objective for the entire organisation
Audience-first data from newsroom
Lead audience-first strategy and newsroom growth

- Head of Audience Engagement
  - Digital Innovation Editor
  - Engagement Editor
  - Data Analyst
  - SEO Lead
  - Engagement Strategist
  - Marketing Manager

- Head of Social Media
  - Social Media Editor
  - Social Media Editor NYC

- Social Media Producer
  - Social Media Producer NYC

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Six strategies for engaging audiences

People: cross-functional team

Philosophy: leverage content as our best marketing tool

Culture: getting the newsroom and marketing to think audience-first

Process: create vectors of communication

Method – innovating all the time

Mantra – measure everything
Content marketing strategy with cross-functional teams

Shared knowledge:
- Key themes, content series & special projects
- Editorial features & products
- Content marketing guide
- Best practices and benchmark
Financial Times
B2C customer engagement cycle

Registered User
- Trialist
- Standard subscriber
- Premium subscriber

Welcome & Introduction
- Welcome Email Programme
- Automated Headlines Programme

Engaged, frequent, free

Borderline engaged
Half engaged

Occasional skimmer
Disengaged
Long tail

Continued Engagement

Retained

Re-Engagement
- Paywall

Conversion
- Search paywall

Acquisition
- FT database
- Digital, print & trial offers

Engagement
- FT Super Fans
- FT Fans

Retention Journey
Example 1: Content sampling campaign - reach & return

- Big collaborated among editorial, marketing, brand, design and product teams
- Use news stories to build marketing creatives and landing pages
- Content sampling to attract prospect readers and create a user habit for return
TECH DISRUPTION

Will artificial intelligence have an ethical impact?

Without humans, robots will have to build their own “ethical elasticity.” Whose ethics are informing artificial intelligence?

Go beyond cause and effect

US POLITICS & ECONOMY

America’s shrinking middle class fuels populist politics

Is growing populist anger toward “the 1%” and a shrinking middle class laying the foundation for Trump’s White House?

Go beyond cause and effect

CHINA SLOWDOWN

China’s slowdown puts a hole in Africa’s fortunes

As President Xi tackles the challenges China’s economic slowdown, how is it affecting Africa’s growth prospects?

Go beyond cause and effect
Example 2: Integrated content promo - FT Features

End of the Migrant Miracle

Integrated Promo Plan:
- Blogger outreach
- Organic and paid social
- Newsletter featuring
- Customer engagement (B2B & B2C)
- PR and media outreach
- Partnership and event

Results:
- 180K views after one week launch
- Extend shelf life of archived stories

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New formats and new audience

The goal: Creating value, loyalty and habit, but also delight

**The Day in 4 Charts**
- 45 seconds
- 4 timely facts
- 4 animated charts

**Tech Meets Money**
Changing audience perception about our content and targeting a younger more diverse audience
Editorially curated emails Vs. Content led emails

**News by email**

**Brussels briefing**

*Your daily insight on Europe*

**Energy Source**

*Your weekly briefing*

**Promo email**

**Financial Times**

*Your free daily briefing*

**Content led emails**

*Financial Times*

**Energy Source**

*Your weekly energy briefing*

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**What goes down**

**Bitcoin forks out, goes for broke**

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**Quotes of the week**

*Flag as Important*
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Make the right connections

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