



PART 1

Read the text below and answer questions 1–13.

THE EVOLUTION OF NEWS CONSUMPTION: FROM PRINT TO DIGITAL

A

For most of the twentieth century, news moved through linear transmission: the morning paper, the evening bulletin, the scheduled radio update. In that ecosystem, editorial prerogative functioned as a form of civic choreography. Editors selected which events counted as “news,” ranked them by prominence, and—through omission as much as inclusion—defined the boundaries of public attention. The physical newspaper itself reinforced this authority: it arrived as a bundled package in which foreign affairs, local politics, sport, and advertising sat side by side, encouraging a shared agenda even among readers with different interests. Yet the model also imposed constraints. Minority voices struggled to enter the gate, correction cycles were slow, and geographic distribution limited how quickly information could travel. When print advertising began to erode and networked connectivity became ubiquitous, the stability of this routine—economic as well as cultural—was exposed as contingent rather than inevitable.

B

The first digital phase did not immediately dissolve old habits; instead, it imitated them. News organisations launched websites that mirrored print editions, transferring articles online with minimal rethinking of format or revenue. The strategic gamble was scale: much early online news was offered free in order to build an audience quickly, on the assumption that advertising would migrate and compensate. What followed was an asymmetric market outcome. Digital ad inventory proved abundant and cheap, and platforms that aggregated content captured disproportionate value by controlling user attention and targeting. Publishers found themselves trading “analog dollars for digital pennies,” while still carrying the fixed costs of reporting. As newsroom budgets tightened, paywalls and membership schemes proliferated. The rise of *subscriptions* was not simply a business tactic; it signalled a retreat from the assumption that reach alone could sustain journalism.

C

The next disruption was not the web itself but the new intermediaries that organised it. Search engines and social platforms decoupled stories from their original homes, turning individual articles into portable units circulating through feeds, results pages, and group chats. Discovery shifted from intentional visits to a single outlet toward incidental encounters driven by links, trending lists, and *algorithmic recommendations*. This created



a paradox. On one hand, readers could access a wider plurality of sources than any single newspaper could provide. On the other hand, loyalty to particular institutions weakened, and publishers were incentivised to craft headlines and angles that performed well within platform metrics. Editorial judgment did not disappear; it was reweighted by analytics, engagement rates, and the logic of virality, subtly reshaping which topics were pursued, how quickly they were published, and how conflict was framed.

D

Mobile phones accelerated these patterns by turning news into a continuous, interruptive companion. Push notifications, short-form alerts, and vertical video formats encouraged consumption in brief *moments*—on trains, in queues, between meetings—rather than in long, uninterrupted sittings. The result was heightened convenience and a lower barrier to keeping up with breaking events. Yet the same architecture increased fragmentation: users experienced news as a rapid sequence of partial updates, often stripped of context, and the boundary between “checking the news” and merely glancing at a screen blurred. Mobile also expanded the definition of news content. Live streams, eyewitness clips, and influencer commentary could compete with professional reporting in the same feed, placing a premium on immediacy and visual drama over explanatory depth.

E

As distribution became frictionless, trust dynamics changed. When sharing requires only a tap, misinformation and rumour can travel at the speed of attention, especially during crises when uncertainty is high and audiences are primed for dramatic claims. In such conditions, speed can reward unverified assertions, because the first version of an event—however shaky—often becomes the reference point that later corrections struggle to dislodge. Verification therefore remains essential, but the incentives surrounding verification have become contested. Some publishers have invested in fact-checking teams, visible corrections policies, and transparency initiatives that explain sourcing and editorial decisions. Platforms, meanwhile, have experimented with labels, downranking, and moderation policies. Yet each intervention raises dilemmas about authority: who decides what is true, how errors are handled, and whether enforcement is consistent across politically sensitive topics.

F

Economic consequences followed the shift in attention. As advertising money migrated to digital platforms, many local newsrooms shrank or disappeared, producing *news deserts* in which communities lack regular, independent reporting. The civic costs are not merely sentimental. Without routine coverage of local councils, courts, schools, and procurement, accountability weakens, and corruption or mismanagement can flourish in



low-visibility environments. At the same time, the competitive field widened. Global outlets, niche newsletters, and independent creators can now reach audiences directly, competing on the same platforms where local papers once held near-monopolies on community information. Experiments with philanthropy, membership, and public funding have attempted to fill the gap, but each model carries trade-offs regarding independence, sustainability, and scale.

G

Policy debates have intensified as governments confront the mismatch between global platforms and nationally bounded media law. Some jurisdictions consider bargaining codes, competition policy, or subsidies designed to support public-interest journalism; others focus on platform responsibility for misinformation and harmful content. Critics warn that regulation can be weaponised against press freedom or used to pressure outlets through licensing and compliance burdens, while supporters argue that markets alone cannot reliably sustain diverse, high-quality reporting. In practice, the future of news consumption is likely to be hybrid: a mixture of platforms and direct relationships, paid access and free distribution, professional reporting and user-generated material. The central question is not whether digital tools will dominate—they already do—but whether governance, business models, and civic norms can stabilise an information environment that rewards speed, attention, and scale more than deliberation.

Questions 1–5

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph.

List of Headings

- i** Traditional gatekeeping and the disruption of print routines
- ii** Early online strategies and the search for sustainable revenue
- iii** How platforms reshaped news discovery and editorial incentives
- iv** Mobile news: convenience alongside fragmentation
- v** Trust challenges in an era of fast sharing
- vi** The civic consequences of declining local news coverage
- vii** Policy responses to the power of global platforms
- viii** The growing role of subscriptions in digital publishing

1 Paragraph B



2 Paragraph D

3 Paragraph A

4 Paragraph E

5 Paragraph C

Questions 6–9

Choose **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information given in the text, choose **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the information, or choose **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

6 The passage suggests that early online news was frequently made available free of charge in order to build an audience.

7 The passage states that online advertising was typically more expensive than print advertising.

8 The passage suggests that mobile news consumption has increased trust in journalism among younger readers.

9 The passage indicates that speed in digital distribution can incentivise the spread of claims that have not been verified.

Questions 10–13

Complete the table below. Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Changes in news production and consumption

Area	Digital development	Effect / Comment
Production and distribution	Individual articles circulate separately from their original publications	Editorial decisions are increasingly influenced by platform metrics
	Paywalls, membership schemes and 10	Developed after cheap digital advertising failed to cover reporting costs



Area	Digital development	Effect / Comment
	Trending lists and 11	News discovery becomes more incidental and loyalty to individual outlets weakens
Audience experience	Push notifications and short-form alerts	News is consumed in brief 12, increasing fragmentation
	Rapid, low-friction sharing	Unverified claims may spread before corrections or contextual information
Local journalism	Advertising revenue shifts to digital platforms	Newsroom closures can produce 13 and weaken local accountability

Answer Key

1. ii
2. iv
3. i
4. v
5. iii
6. TRUE
7. FALSE
8. NOT GIVEN
9. TRUE
10. subscriptions
11. algorithmic recommendations
12. moments
13. news deserts