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State of Australian Media REPORT

Our summary of the media industry trends and talking points to know for 2026.

Executive Summary

The Australian media landscape has experienced a surge of innovation and challenges that will define 2026.

Regulation, transformative AI capabilities, shrinking newsrooms, and the evolving power balance between traditional and social media occurred alongside new audience behaviours. This edition of Streem's State of Australian Media Report explores five focus areas that will have run-on effects in 2026, not just for publishers, broadcasters, and audiences, but for PR and Communications teams looking ahead at how to future-proof their strategies.

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Rising & Diversifying News Consumption

In 2025, Roy Morgan figures found that 22.4 million Australians aged 14+ engaged with news content in any given month. This is a 1% increase on 2024's readership numbers and a 2% increase on those in 2023. The average Australian spends 4.78 hours per day consuming news online (Ipsos iris, 2025). 2 years ago, according to ACMA (2024), Australians were spending just 3.5 hours per day on all online activity, including news.

Australians' preferred sources of information have also changed. TV continues to reign, but for the first time, social media has surpassed major online mastheads. According to the University of Canberra's 2025 Digital News Report, the number of people reporting online news consumption dropped five percentage points from 28% in 2024 to 23% in 2025. Social media was cited 26% of the time. Two new sources also came into play. 10% of surveyed Australians got their news from podcasts, and 6% from AI sources. Although online sources continue to be preferred over offline ones, print consumption rose 3%.
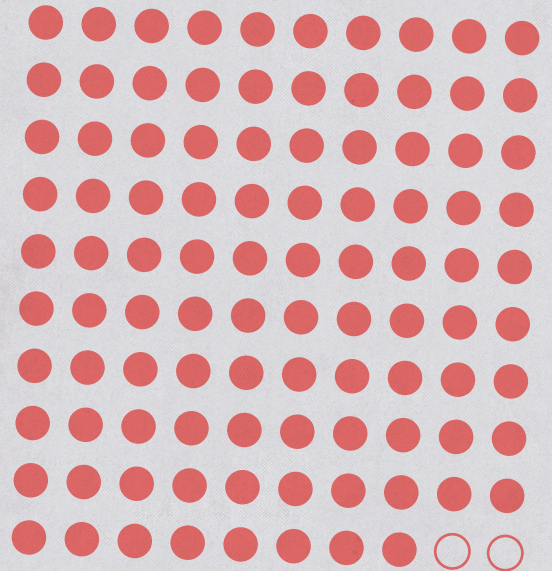
98% of Australians aged 14+ engaged with news content each month in 2025.

Source: Data – Roy Morgan

This trend can be attributed to Australia's growing demand for local news and high trust in news publishing brands. It also points to two opposing ends on the spectrum of news sources: on one end, AI, and on the other, Print. With both experiencing some growth in readership, it is clear that in 2025, Australians faced a widening gap between old and new ways to find information. In the face of this change, a percentage of the country preferred to return to the familiarity of reputable publishers. The diversification of sources and the growing ease of access to news are likely contributing factors towards the overall levels of rising consumption. They've also contributed to new trends in the media cycle. The Federal Election in 2025, for example, saw politicians turn to podcasts to reach younger audiences (i.e. Anthony Albanese on internet celebrity Abbie Chatfield's *It's a Lot* podcast during his campaign trail, Cheek Media CEO Hannah Ferguson with former Greens leader, Adam Bandt, on her podcast, *Big Small Talk*.

AI Sources 6%
Podcasts 10%
Other 35%
Online 23%
Social 26%

Preferred News Consumption 2025
Source: University of Canberra, Digital News Report 2025

It's also not just occasional consumption that's increased. Long-term stories about geopolitical conflict abroad, elections, trade affairs, and natural disasters have driven up the number of heavy news consumers in Australia (University of Canberra, 2025).

↑ 5%

Heavy news consumption, which counts Australians who read, watch, or listen to the news more than once per day, is up 5% on 2023 numbers.

2023 — 48%

2025 — 53%

Source: University of Canberra, Digital News Report 2025

The number of Australians willing to pay for news has also recovered to the 22% result seen in 2023 after a dip in 2024 due to cost-of-living pressures, lying well above the international average of 18% (University of Canberra, 2025).

This willingness to pay for verified content can be associated with rising concerns about misinformation.

"Misinformation"

received an average of almost

8,000 mentions every month

across Online, Print, Radio, TV, Magazine and Podcast.
Source: Streem Data

According to Roy Morgan, the top monthly news readership categories were General News (96%), Property (79%), and Sport (59%). The latter half of the year saw a spike in sports consumption

in particular, with major events such as the AFL Grand Final and the NRL Grand Final. As more Australians turned to news content last year, fresh challenges for the sector have come into focus. The overarching conversation in 2025, which has continued into 2026, was the balance between access and trust. As platforms multiply and grow their user bases, and as AI overviews shorten the time between questions and answers, access to news information has never been more open. However, trust is a rarer and more important currency now than it was just a few years ago due to shrinking newsrooms and AI influences.

In October of last year, the Ipsos Issues Monitor (2025) found that Australians are most likely to rank cost of living, housing, healthcare, crime, and the economy as their top five concerns for the country. In an environment where trust in political institutions is low, news media will continue to hold a pivotal role in shaping public discourse on pressing socio-economic matters (McKinnon, 2025). Tracking its consumption will continue to become more complex and more valuable.

When looking at the top ten headlines of each week in 2025 based on quantity of media items across Online, Print, TV and Radio,
Source: Roy Morgan

96%
General News

79%
Property

59%
Sport

02

Run–On Effects of a Shrinking Media Landscape

Despite rising consumption, Australian newsrooms continued to contract in 2025 as a result of economic strain. Job cuts, mergers, regional closures, and the reduction in new journalism graduates (Lee, 2025) have led to a reality where the attention competition between major news sites has heightened, journalists are time poor, and earned media is harder to secure than ever before.
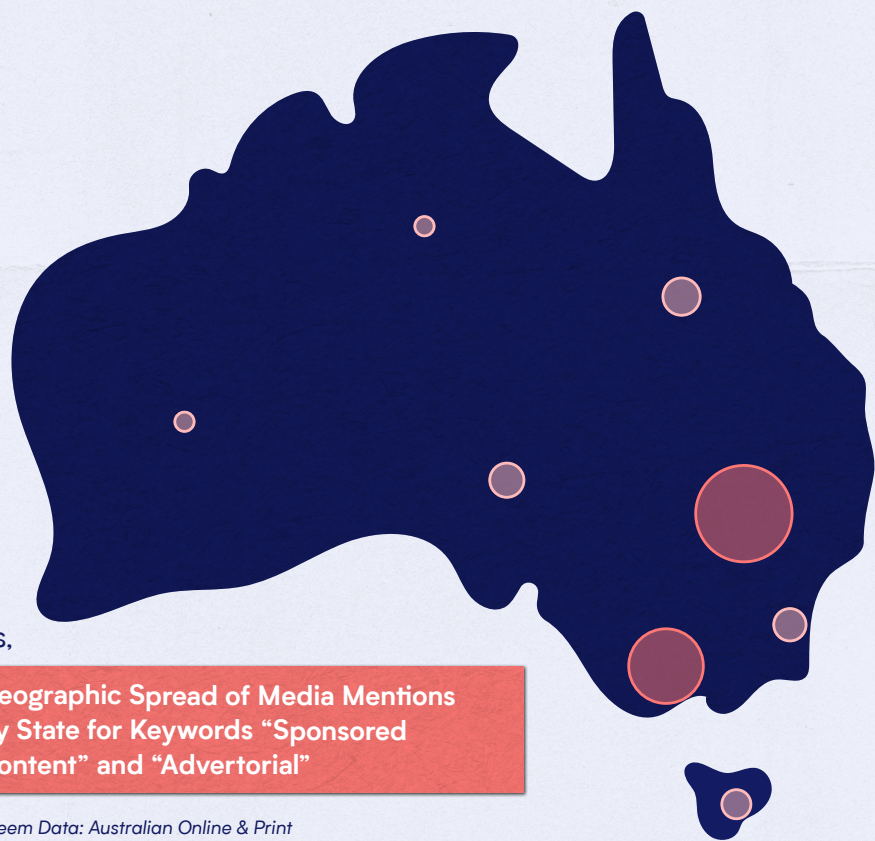
Geographic Spread of Media Mentions By State for Keywords "Sponsored Content" and "Advertorial"

Streem Data: Australian Online & Print Mentions, Jan 1 to Dec 4 2025

According to Stream data, mentions of "sponsored content" or "advertorial" within Online and Print media items totalled 16,744 last year, with peaks in Q1 and Q2. When we look at where these mentions occurred in the map above, most are within major metropolitan areas where press releases are more likely to outnumber journalists, and pitches with a budget behind them are more likely to cut through. According to estimates collected by Stream

through Similarweb, a digital intelligence company, website traffic to the country's top five most visited news sites was heavily skewed towards the ABC (35.49%) and news.com.au (33%). Both earned over 50 million monthly visits. The latter achieved the longest average visit duration and most pages per visit, inferring that visitors to the site are highly engaged.

Engagement					
Metric	abc.net.au	news.com.au	9news.com.au	7news.com.au	theguardian.com
Monthly visits	**57.64M** 🏆	53.60M	18.99M	11.14M	21.03M
Monthly unique visitors	**9.942M** 🏆	6.811M	3.995M	3.825M	5.063M
Visits/Unique visitors	6.24	**7.87** 🏆	4.75	2.91	4.15
Deduplicated audience	**6.676M** 🏆	5.472M	3.254M	3.469M	3.800M
Visit duration	00:04:28	**00:05:34** 🏆	00:02:36	00:02:40	00:03:45
Pages per visit	2.89	**3.76** 🏆	2.30	2.09	2.64
Bounce rate	43.71%	**41.06%** 🏆	58.38%	59.57%	49.75%
Page views	166.7M	**201.6M** 🏆	43.74M	23.27M	55.59M

Source: Data – Similarweb, Jan to Nov 2025

To capture public opinion and compete in this landscape, news publishers leaned into **sensational language** and made tough decisions over what content to prioritise versus what to cut. Long-form programs like Q+A and The Project were let go. At the same time, our national broadcaster announced ABC Loop, a dedicated social media program and team to meet the demand for short-form news.

According to Streem data, mentions of the phrase "breaking news" in Online, Print, TV, and Radio media items were up 233% in 2025 on 2024.
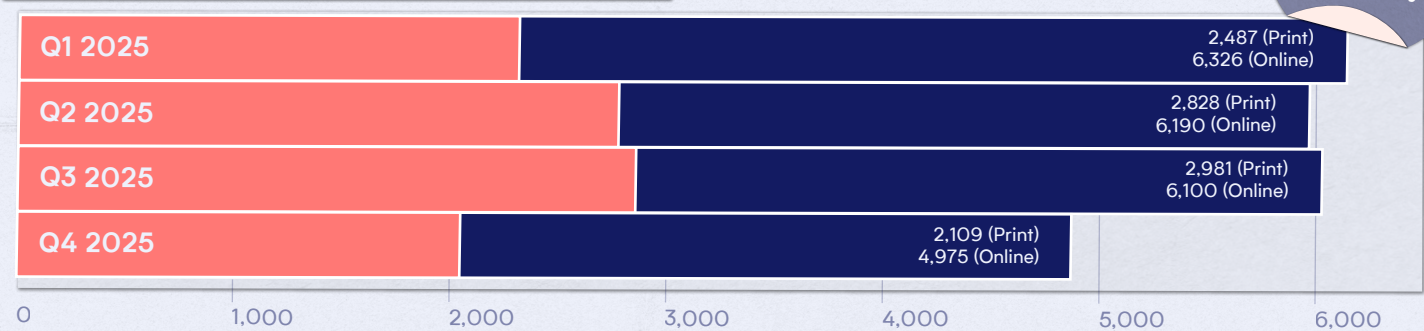
↑ **233%**
from 2024 to 2025
"BREAKING NEWS"

Several initiatives aimed at providing relief for news publishers are underway. The government's News Bargaining Incentive, although delayed, hopes to create a sustainable relationship between large digital platforms and Australian news publishers, so that content continues to be compensated as consumption rises on social media (Jolly, 2025). The News Media Assistance Program will provide $180 million in grants to the news sector with a focus on regional outlets. LINA's (Local & Independent News Association) 'Our News, Your Voice' campaign successfully raised $90,000 for 50 newsrooms in an annual Australia-wide pledge drive to support grassroots journalism.
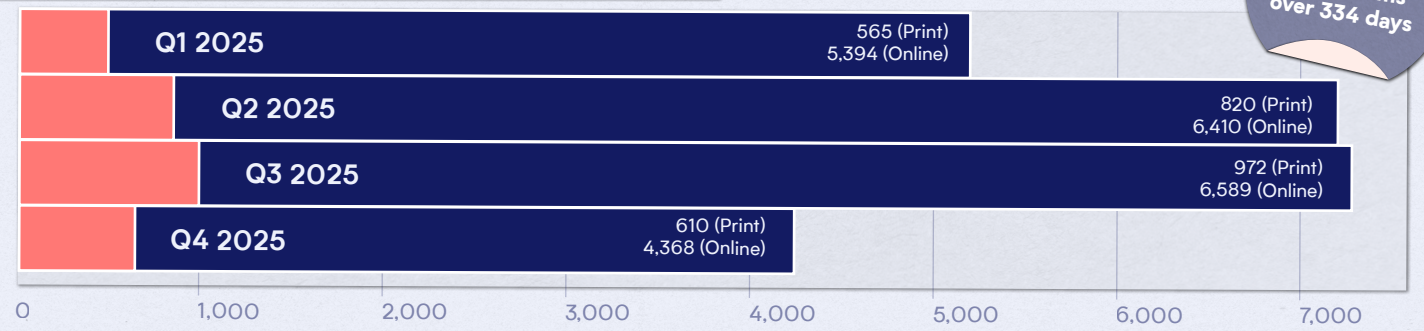
These efforts come at a time when more than a quarter of Australian local government areas (LGAs) currently have no independent local news (Campbell et al., 2025). All of these LGAs are regional. However, interest in local news rose to 51% last year, 6 percentage points above 2020 numbers. Not only this, in 2025, mentions of the keyword "local" within headlines outperformed mentions of the keyword "national" by 34%.

Mentions of 'Local' in Headlines

34,096 Media items over 334 days

Q1 2025	2,487 (Print) / 6,326 (Online)
Q2 2025	2,828 (Print) / 6,190 (Online)
Q3 2025	2,981 (Print) / 6,100 (Online)
Q4 2025	2,109 (Print) / 4,975 (Online)

0   1,000   2,000   3,000   4,000   5,000   6,000

Mentions of 'National' in Headlines

25,728 Media items over 334 days

Q1 2025	565 (Print) / 5,394 (Online)
Q2 2025	820 (Print) / 6,410 (Online)
Q3 2025	972 (Print) / 6,589 (Online)
Q4 2025	610 (Print) / 4,368 (Online)

0   1,000   2,000   3,000   4,000   5,000   6,000   7,000

Streem Data: Australian Print and Online Mentions of Keywords "local" and "national," Jan 1 to Dec 1 2025

■ **Print**   ■ **Online**

03

Social Media as a News Engine

Phrase	Total
✕ "Posted on/to X (Twitter)"	12,343 🏆
📷 "Posted on/to Instagram"	5,903
f "Posted on/to Facebook"	3,086
👽 "Posted on/to Reddit"	1,741
♪ "Posted on/to TikTok"	1,333
▶ "Posted on/to YouTube"	509
in "Posted on/to LinkedIn"	416
🦋 "Posted on/to Bluesky"	76

Streem Data: Australian Print, Online, TV & Radio Mentions, Jan 1 to Nov 28 2025

In 2025, more Australians reported social media as their source of news than online mastheads for the very first time, second to TV broadcasts (University of Canberra, 2025). On social media, users are not just consuming news; it's where the news is happening. Mentions of each major platform across the entire year on traditional Print, Online, TV, and Radio media items were pervasive. X (Twitter) led the way with 12,343 mentions of the phrases "posted on X" or "posted to X" between January and November.

When it comes to mentions within just headlines, the story is different. Driven largely by the social media ban discussion in Australia, as well as the evolving TikTok ban in the United States (Katanasho, 2025), TikTok overwhelmed Australian news headlines last year. While X was used as a source of content, it did not define many headlines. Contrasting this, almost every mention of Bluesky was contained within a headline as the platform itself gained more traction and users. YouTube is another interesting case study, with far fewer
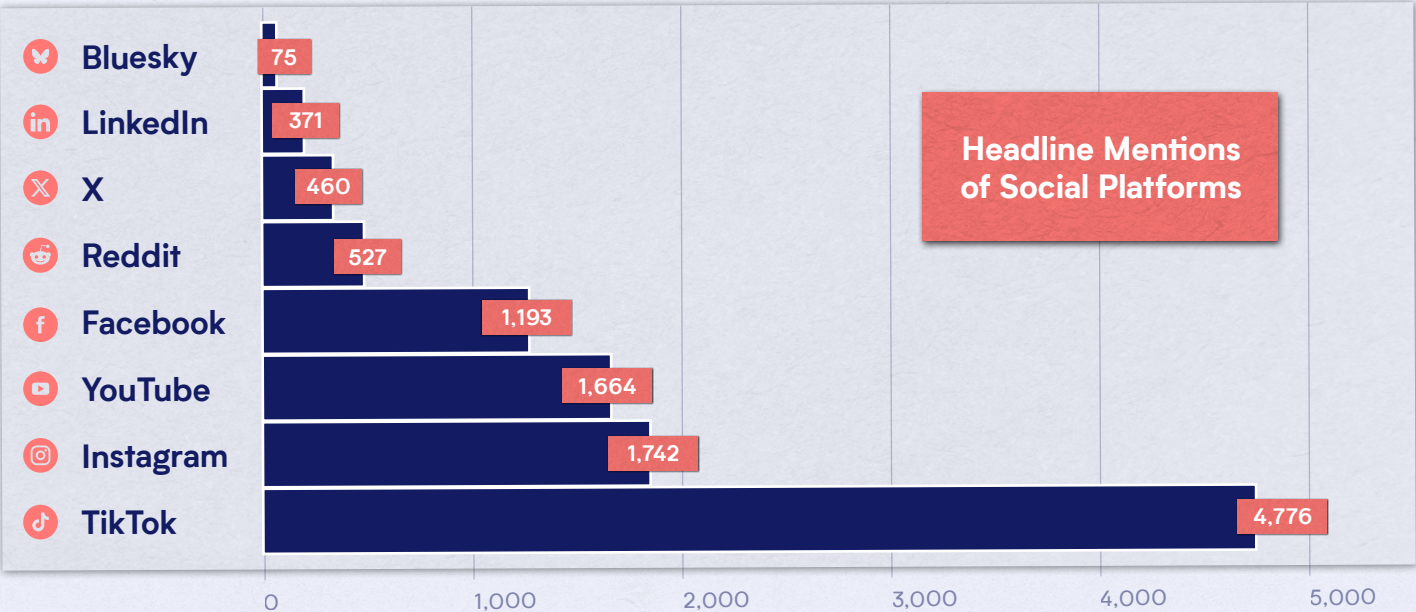
mentions of actual posted content on YouTube compared to mentions of the platform in headlines.

Reddit, compared to its network of 17 million monthly active users in Australia (Ipsos iris, 2024), had a ratio of 1 user for every 32,258 headline mentions, but a ratio of 1:9764 when considering media items that included the phrase "posted on Reddit" and variations of this phrase. What this demonstrates is an increase in coverage of Reddit content from traditional outlets, even if the central focus of a story is not the platform itself.

Headline Mentions of Social Platforms

🦋 Bluesky — 75
in LinkedIn — 371
✕ X — 460
👽 Reddit — 527
f Facebook — 1,193
▶ YouTube — 1,664
📷 Instagram — 1,742
♪ TikTok — 4,776

(x-axis: 0, 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000)

Streem Data: Australian Print & Online Headline Mentions, Jan 1 to Nov 28 2025

Journalists are both sourcing primary information from social media and uploading articles on that information to social media. Users can see a story, navigate to the original post that instigated said story, then move across the platform to find reporting from major outlets as well as commentary from the broader community. The ability to not just access but actually engage with news content is a major draw. Those using social media for news are also not just on one platform. More often than not,

it's multiple, and the funnel often ends on a news website.

Facebook and Reddit topped the list of platforms driving the most traffic to our most popular news sites in Australia, according to data obtained by Streem using Similarweb. 7News earned the most social traffic, with a large presence on Facebook. The Guardian earned the most social traffic through Reddit.

Social Traffic Jan – October 2025

Legend: abc.net.au, news.com.au, 9news.com.au, 7news.com.au, theguardian.com
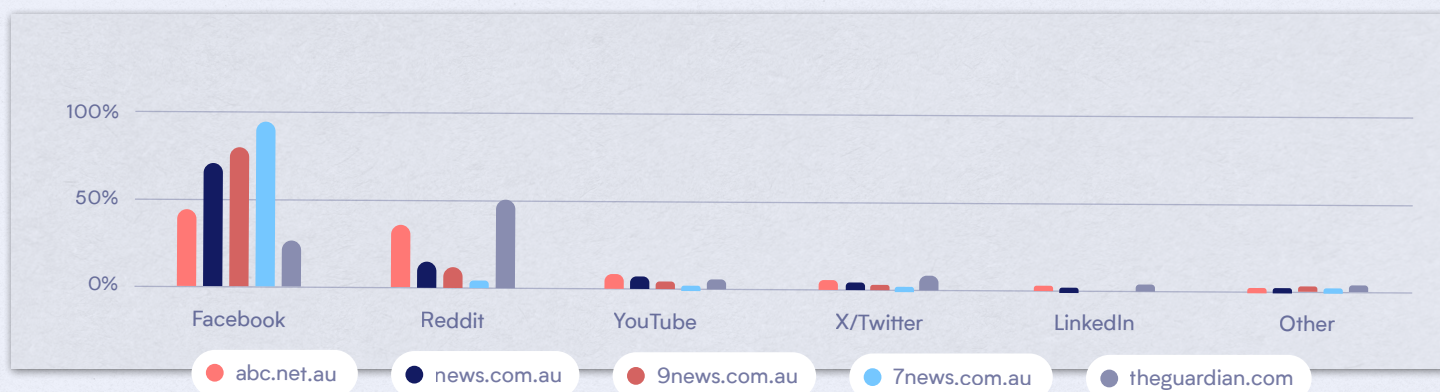
Source: Data – Similarweb, Jan to Oct 2025

Beyond these observations, there were six trends that helped define a year of change for the social media landscape. They will be essential to follow as 2026 begins:

1. The Explosion of AI Content, Tools, and Moderation

Almost all major social media platforms introduced AI integrations and generative tools last year, as well as content moderation capabilities. X took steps to integrate AI usage throughout all engagement. Despite issues with Grok, which led to the resignation of the company's former CEO (Allison & Morgan, 2025), the AI chatbot is now almost intrinsic to regular usage of the platform.

On the other end of the spectrum, TikTok users can now reduce the amount of AI-generated content they see after the company revealed that the platform had surpassed 1 billion AI-produced videos (Placido, 2025).

Use of Grok AI on X in 2025

In 2025, mentions of the following phrases averaged 3,859 mentions per week on X, from the week of March 3 to November 24:

"@grok is this true"

"@grok is this real"

"@grok is this fake news"

"@grok is this fake"

"@grok is this AI"

2. Community Fact-Checking

In early January, Facebook and Instagram announced they would abandon third-party fact-checkers and follow the example of X's "community notes" program, which relies on users to comment on the accuracy of content (McMahon et al., 2025). In the context of rising concerns about misinformation, AI tools like Grok are being used to manually confirm facts in the absence of overhead systems. Across all social media platforms, traditional news media and journalists were also the most visited and trusted sources of news, despite the rise of 'newsfluencers' (University of Canberra, 2025). Platforms like Bluesky also added verified accounts to lift reputable voices.

3. News Interests Fragmented Based on Platform

Each social media platform lifted different genres of news last year. Looking back at mentions of X, Facebook, and YouTube content in traditional media, top stories were related to serious events involving missing persons and incidents. When considering audience insights from 2025, this trend is no surprise. X users were most likely to be using the platform to seek news content (74%) when compared to users on other major platforms in Australia, and Facebook continues to be the most used social media platform for news consumption (University of Canberra, 2025). TikTok saw a massive spike in issue-related content last year, hosting two highly controversial videos that prompted national conversations. On Reddit and Bluesky, product failure and product reviews dominated coverage. And finally, LinkedIn was the microphone for crisis communications in response to executive misconduct.

4. Gen Z and "Newsfluencers"

In 2025, Gen Z preferred to receive their news from "influencers, creators and ordinary people" (University of Canberra, 2025). Our political landscape has changed because of this developing trend. In March, the Labor Government invited 13 news content creators with specialisations ranging from personal finance to youth-focused news to cover the budget in Canberra (Butler, 2025). Although trust in major news brands is high in Australia compared to other countries, the main catalysts of its degradation are perceptions of bias

and conflicts of interest (QUT, 2020). In light of this, the independent news influencer, unaffiliated with corporate media, has gained a louder voice and political impact, similarly seen in last year's Federal Election coverage.

5. The Rise of Reddit

According to Semrush data, Reddit was the 4th most visited platform in Australia in October 2025, with +155m visits (only -17% less than Facebook). The platform also dominated organic search results last year as the most cited source by Google's AI overviews (Edmonds, 2025).

Social Media Content That Generated the Most Traditional Media Mentions in 2025 by Platform

Platform	Content
X	The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, tweeted his condolences after the crash of Air India Flight 171
Instagram	Cricketer Marnus Labuschagne announced the arrival of his second child
Facebook	Pheobe Bishop's mother posts a plea for help
TikTok	Antisemitic video from a Sydney nurse & Reece Walsh punch footage
Reddit	Supermarket meat product issue
YouTube	Video posted of Oscar Jenkins alive
LinkedIn	CEO resigns after Coldplay affair scandal
Bluesky	Commentary on the new Nintendo Switch

Streem Data: Australian Print, Online, TV & Radio Mentions, 1 Jan to 28 Nov 2025

6. Social Media Ban

The most significant change to the Australian social media landscape in 2025 was the banning of social media for children under 16. In November 2024, a bill requiring social media platforms to take 'reasonable steps' to ban users under 16 passed the House of Representatives (Prime Minister of Australia, 2024). Where the initial reasoning behind the ban was founded in calls for moderation due to harmful content and cyberbullying, the conversation among policymakers shifted to the addictive design of the platforms. In the lead-up to the December 10 deadline, platforms were prompted to introduce new age restriction features or face heavy fines. Additional platforms like Twitch and LinkedIn, which young Australians might have used as alternatives, were added to the ban as late as the week before it came into effect (Sahyoun, 2025).

Top Days for Media Mentions of the Social Media Ban in 2025 Before Its Start Date

Legend: ■ Print ■ Online ■ TV ■ Radio

Chart annotations: July 30, Oct 14, Nov 4, Nov 20, Dec 3, Dec 4, Dec 8, Dec 9, Dec 10

01 DECEMBER 10 — 4,632 media items
The social media ban comes into effect, with first-day challenges including loopholes in age verification technology.

02 OCTOBER 14 — 1,907 media items
The Federal Government rolls out a national awareness campaign, "For the good of our kids," 60 days out from the ban coming into effect.

03 DECEMBER 9 — 1,478 media items
'D-day' for the social media ban. Anthony Albanese releases a video with a message to kids explaining why the ban is necessary.

04 JULY 30 — 1,443 media items
YouTube is officially included within the ban, with its previous exemption removed.

05 DECEMBER 8 — 1,414 media items
With 2 days until the ban, state governments announced they would back the social media ban in the face of a High Court challenge from two Australian teenagers as part of the "Digital Freedom Project."

06 DECEMBER 4 — 1,411 media items
Meta removes under-16 accounts a week ahead of the ban.

07 DECEMBER 3 — 1,166 media items
YouTube starts notifying under-16 users that they will be kicked off the platform in one week.

08 NOVEMBER 20 — 1,118 media items
Meta announces that U16s will be kicked off the platform from December 4, a week before the ban starts.

09 NOVEMBER 4 — 1,084 media items
Reddit and Kik are added to the ban.

Streem Data: Australian Print, Online, TV & Radio Mentions, Jul 1 to Dec 10 2025

During this time, online conversations about alternative social media sites increased as users began to consider migration. As of November 2025, there were still twelve platforms not included in the ban (Bowles, 2025). This number continues to evolve.

The top three alternative social media sites mentioned in 2025, according to Stream data, were:
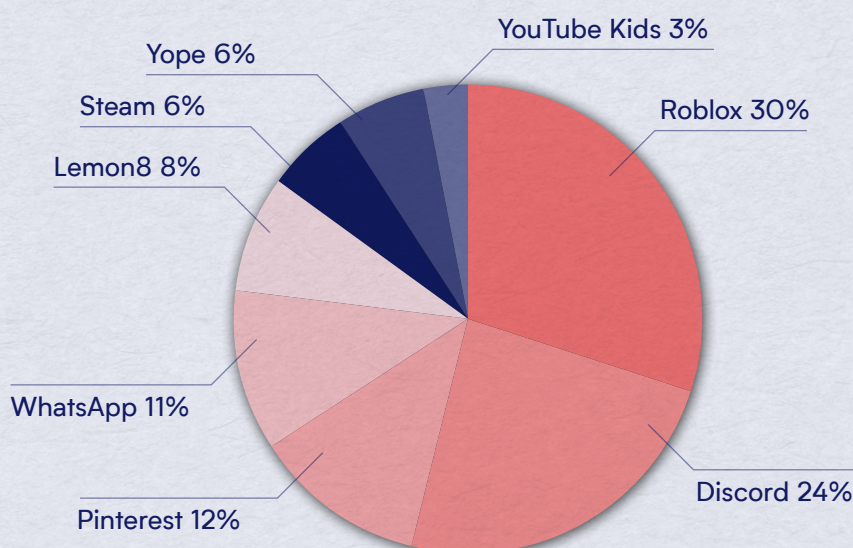
Discord   **Pinterest**   **Roblox**

These are spaces to keep an eye on as younger audiences are displaced.

Most Mentioned Alternative Social Media Platforms

"Social Media Ban" mentions

- Yope 6%
- Steam 6%
- Lemon8 8%
- WhatsApp 11%
- Pinterest 12%
- YouTube Kids 3%
- Roblox 30%
- Discord 24%

Stream Social Data: Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, Reddit, Bluesky, Blogs and Forum Mentions, Nov 10 to Dec 10 2025

Although this legislation targets children under 16, age verification requirements will affect all users. Questions are being raised on the topic of anonymity and the possibility of its erasure across platforms like Reddit, where detailed profiles are more arbitrary than necessary (Johnson, 2025). Developments like these and the rising use of alternative platforms will reshape the landscape as well as every communications strategy aiming to reach a specific audience.

Although all platforms included in the ban have complied with its requirements, both Reddit and Google have discussed legal action against the Australian Government. Google threatened legal action in July during a discussion around the removal of YouTube's exemption (Bennett, 2025). In December, Reddit announced it would move ahead and bring its case to court. The platform claims to be a source of information, where "interaction between end-users is simply an incidental step to enabling this primary purpose" (Buckingham-Jones, 2025).
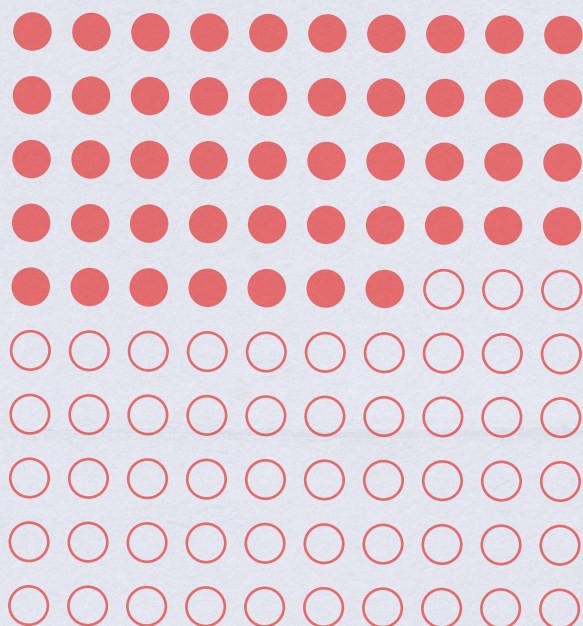
04

Podcasts: The Fastest–Growing News Channel

↑ 7% year–on–year

47% of Australians now listen to podcasts monthly, with nearly a third tuning in daily.

According to the latest PodPoll research.

News and current affairs remains one of the most popular genres, tied with comedy.

Of the top 50 podcasts in Triton's ranker for October 2025, 19 were news bulletins or commentary. *ABC News Top Stories* was the second most listened to program, with 783,353 listeners for the month. For the rest of the year, ABC ranked either second or third each month, ranking first in June after the Federal Election. While the media sector ranked as the least ethical sector in Australian society last year (Governance Institute of Australia, 2025), podcasters have been able to recover a portion of this degradation.

'trust in journalists'

was one of the top reasons behind podcast consumption.

(47%: ACMA, 2025)

This shift in reputation has been met with an increase in guest features, which drove the top three days of Australian podcast coverage in traditional media. 'CEO' mentions within podcasts in particular increased 114% between Q2 and Q3. This reflects the growing prominence of executives in podcast conversations and the medium's expanding role in corporate communications.

**"CEO" mentions on Podcasts**

31 MAR – 01 JUL '25
2,238 mentions

01 JUL – 30 SEP '25
4,778 mentions

Streem Data: Australian Podcast Mentions, Mar 31 to Jul 1 2025 vs. Jul 1 to Sep 30 2025

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Q+A with Claire Kimball, Founder and MD of Squiz Media

Claire Kimball, Managing Director of Squiz Media, is keenly aware of how impactful the podcast format has been for the news sector. Squiz Media launched in 2017 with weekly newsletters and later podcasts, providing "agenda-free news for busy people." Claire hosts 'Weekly Wrap Up' and 'What's Coming Up' episodes with co-host Jodie Speers, which aim to summarise key headlines in episodes short enough to listen to during your commute. These were her thoughts on what role podcasts have begun to play in the broader media landscape.

TheSquiz

Squiz Today

Your shortcut to being informed
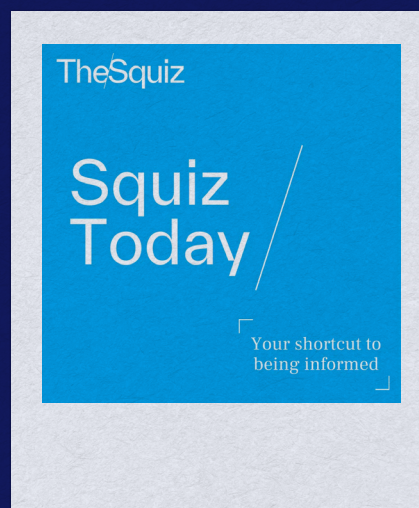
New data from Acast has suggested that podcasters are trusted more than journalists. Why do you think this is the case?

"The erosion of trust in mainstream media was a driving force behind starting *The Squiz* in 2017, so it's not new. Our audience rates our trustworthiness at 99%, and they come to us to make sense of all the news coming at them. **It's a relationship built on consistency, respecting our audience's intelligence and views, and simply being very helpful.** Podcasting is an intimate format, and it's a privilege to help inform 375,000 Aussies each month as the biggest commercial news podcast in the country."

How do you think the rise of AI is impacting Australians' reception of podcasts?

"We're not seeing any impact from our audience yet, but **our promise is that the news they get from us is handcrafted by people they trust.** Because of our direct relationship with our audience, we're preciously guarding that bond. It's also a promise to our commercial partners that there are people ensuring their messages land in the best possible way. We are peddling hard though to integrate AI into our non-editorial business processes."

What do you think comms teams need to know about using podcasts as part of their PR strategies?

"I'm a former communications director from Woolworths Group sitting across the retail brands' PR, media relations and corporate comms, so I've seen both sides. At The Squiz, success looks like understanding it's not just a spots-and-dots media buy — that we know how to speak to our audience and engage them on your behalf. **If you understand and respect the format and our audience's intelligence,** the results are powerful."

How do you see the relationship between podcasts and traditional media? What role(s) do podcasts play in the current media landscape?

"When PM Anthony Albanese chose *The Squiz* for his first podcast interview of this election year, he said traditional newspapers have become "so predictable" — less news, more opinion. That's part of why we started. In our 2025 audience survey, 94% said *The Squiz* **is crucial for filling the legacy media gaps, particularly when it comes to avoiding assumed knowledge on complex issues.** So what we've seen this year is that podcasts were once a curiosity; now politicians and brands recognise they're essential for reaching a broad cross-section of Australians."

05
The Year of AI

2025 was a transformative year for Artificial Intelligence, with incredible impacts for both news production and consumption. AI models benefited from improved reasoning, image and video generation, integrations within internet browsers, search engines, and social platforms. Several news publishers entered into financial agreements with AI developers, agreeing to provide their content for the training of Large Language Models (LLMs), which need large quantities of original text data to learn and carry out natural language processing tasks like writing emails or summarising headlines (McGuinness, 2025). In exchange, publishers were compensated with a new stream of revenue. But, as these models improve, so too does their ability to act as a stand-in for traditional sources of news.

Although outgoing traffic from AI chatbots often guides users to news websites, lost traffic from organic search has outweighed this net positive. Over a third of Google searches in Australia now result in an AI-generated summary (Purtill, 2025), removing the need to click into articles. Even if a website was previously ranking first on a search results page, it's been estimated that 79% of traffic to that website has been lost if it appears below an AI overview (Savage, 2025). From data obtained by Streem using Similarweb, year-on-year decreases can be seen in traffic to Australia's top two news websites. The ABC saw a 6.69% year-on-year decline between August and October 2025, and news.com.au was also sitting at an 8.96% decline.
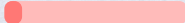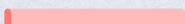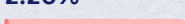
While Australians ranked AI as the second-most difficult future issue to navigate ethically last year (Governance Institute of Australia, 2025) and 78% cited concerns about negative outcomes (KPMG, 2025), the usage is still there. 50% use AI tools regularly (KPMG, 2025).

Familiarity with personal usage has bled into our expectations for institutions, with a quarter of the country now comfortable consuming

Timeline of Major AI Updates in 2025

20 January
DeepSeek releases DeepSeek-R1, a large language model based on DeepSeek-V3, stating it achieves performance comparable to OpenAI-o1 across math, code, and reasoning tasks. DeepSeek-R1 is open-source.

27 January
NVIDIA's stock falls 17-18% after the release of DeepSeek-R1.

3 February
OpenAI releases ChatGPT Deep Research, an artificial intelligence system integrated into ChatGPT which generates cited reports on a user-specified topic by autonomously browsing the web for 5 to 30 minutes.

4 February
Australia bans the use of DeepSeek on all government devices, citing national security risks.

27 February
OpenAI introduces ChatGPT-4.5.

25 March
OpenAI releases 4o image generation.

30 April
OpenAI retires GPT-4.

20 May
Google's AI Mode for search is released, using the Gemini model. Google DeepMind releases as a new video generation model.

22 May
Anthropic releases Claude 4.

18 June
Midjourney introduces the V1 video model.

9 July
Perplexity launch the Comet browser.

7 August
ChatGPT-5 released.

19 August
Google signs a landmark commercial deal with the Australian Associated Press to provide content for its Gemini artificial intelligence platform, the first deal with a local media company.

25 September
OpenAI releases ChatGPT Pulse.

21 October
OpenAI's Atlas internet browser launches.

28 October
Adobe releases Firefly Image 5.

Top 10 News Sites in Australia

	Traffic Share	Monthly Visits	Yearly Change
abc.net.au	9.67%	53.74M	● 6.69% ↘
news.com.au	9.16%	50.91M	● 8.96% ↘
yahoo.com	6.95%	38.65M	● 0.73% ↗
nytimes.com	4.00%	22.23M	● 16.31% ↘
theguardian.com	3.59%	19.96M	● 13.12% ↘
smh.com.au	3.26%	18.11M	● 15.55% ↘
bbc.com	3.06%	17.03M	● 13.79% ↗
9news.com.au	2.85%	15.82M	● 14.73% ↘
theage.com.au	2.65%	14.71M	● 5.20% ↗
msn.com	2.26%	12.56M	● 2.14% ↘

Source: Data – Similarweb, October 2025

news produced with the help of AI (University of Canberra, 2025). Trending overreliance can be tracked to social media, where mentions of the phrase "ChatGPT said" rose 134% from Q1 to Q3 in 2025 on X, YouTube, Reddit, and Bluesky.

Currently, however, AI assistants misrepresent news content 45% of the time (EBU & BBC, 2025). Macquarie Dictionary's Word of the Year was 'AI Slop,' used to describe "low-quality content created by generative AI which often contains errors and is not requested by the user" (Li, 2025). As of December 2025, there were also 60 active lawsuits in the United States alone between creatives and AI companies over copyright infringement (Bosher, 2025). Back in Australia, the Labor Government announced it would not allow developers to freely use and "mine" the work of content creators to train their models (Jervis-Bardy, 2025). With the upcoming federal investment in Australian data centre development (Goldenfein et al., 2025), these issues can be expected to scale. The government has already announced the introduction of an Australian

Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute (AISI). As AI redefined search functions and habits last year, it has brought new SEO requirements for all indexed pages on the web, including news media. While in a traditional sense, SEO is assigning all priority to ranking highly on search results pages (SERPs), AEO and GEO are new concepts that have disrupted this status quo (Meyer, 2025). AEO, or 'Answer Engine Optimisation,' focuses on optimising for specific sections within the SERP, including featured snippets, FAQs, and "People Also Ask" accordions. While AEO aims for clarity, GEO, or Generative Engine Optimisation, aims to make content trustworthy and discoverable for all AI-generated summaries on both the SERP and within citations on chatbots.

Nothing is more related to this development than the classic press release. Visibility is no longer generated by media outreach alone, which would then transfer across platforms in a top-down fashion. In 2025, visibility meant going beyond keywords and into the realm of KPIs like AI mentions and citation frequency.

Finally, we'd like to thank you for taking the time to read this year's State of the Australian Media Report. This marks our fifth edition of the report, where we use our platform's capabilities and comprehensive data to provide industry professionals with the information needed to navigate a constantly changing media environment.

At Streem, our mission with this annual report is to deliver detailed analysis of the media industry's shifts and challenges, helping you to make informed, strategic decisions. Should you have any questions about our report or about Streem, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at **team@streem.com.au.**

Get in touch now

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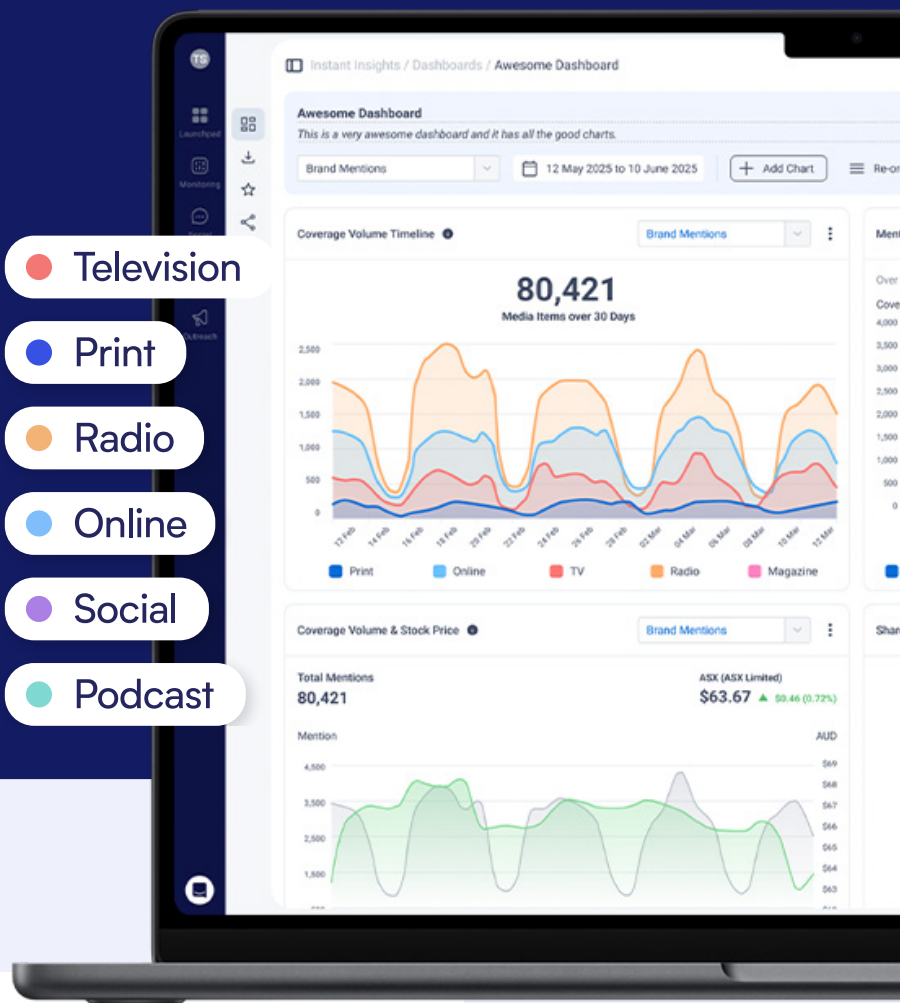
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