

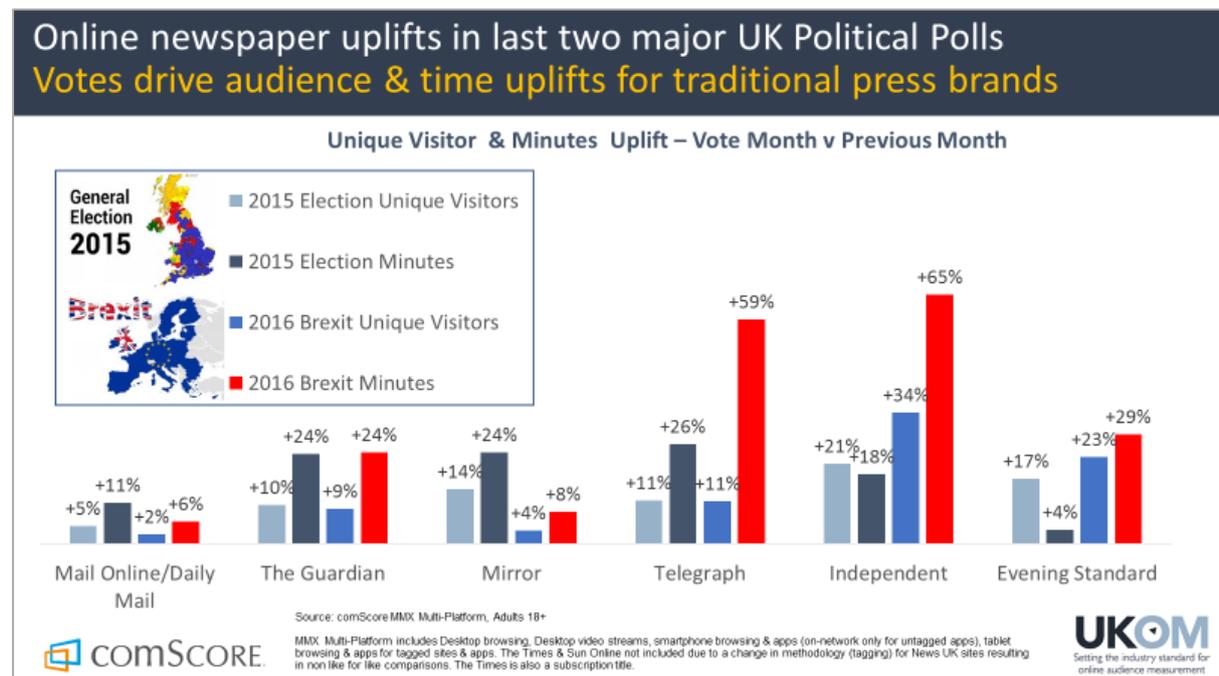
UKOM Insights

Online Newspapers – what happened in the last two major UK votes?

This time last year, much of the UK population were still deciding which way to vote in the Brexit Referendum. This time 2 years ago, the country had just cast their vote on which party they wanted to lead the country. For the third successive year, the UK is about to take to the polls. It's unusual to have three major political votes in quick succession but that's good news for UKOM as it means we can look at what happened in previous years to try and understand what may happen next month in terms of where people are seeking their information.

If data from the last 2 years is anything to go by, the traditional newspaper titles could be set for some big audience uplifts online. Although many people now use social media to keep them up to date on news, visits to the major press brands all increased during the month of the last two major votes. It seems that when there is a prominent news event, people also turn to traditional news providers online.

The chart below shows how unique visitors and time spent increased between April and May in 2015 (the 2015 General Election was held on 7th May) and between May and June in 2016 (Brexit was on 23rd June).



During the 2015 General Election month audience uplifts varied from 5% for the Mail Online, the biggest online newspaper to over 20% for the Independent. The Guardian and The Telegraph both increased their audience by around 10%. The time spent percentage growth was even higher with The Guardian, Mirror and The Telegraph all increasing engagement by around 25%. During Brexit, there

were also significant uplifts. The Guardian and Telegraph once again increased their audience by over 10% but were outshone by the Independent (+34%) and The Evening Standard (+23%). Time spent grew even more dramatically by over 50% for both The Telegraph and The Independent online.

Only time will tell if this trend will continue for the forthcoming election, but with fake news and brand safety dominating headlines, the traditional premium press brands could present a good opportunity for any last minute advertising campaigns in the coming weeks.

Notes on Data:

All data is based on UKOM industry standard and development level approved comScore MMX Multi-Platform data based on adults 18+ for 2015 and 2016. comScore MMX Multi-Platform includes desktop browsing, desktop video streams, smartphone browsing & apps, tablet browsing & apps.

The Times & Sun Online are not included due to a change in methodology (tagging) for News UK sites resulting in non like for like comparisons. The Times is also a subscription title.