

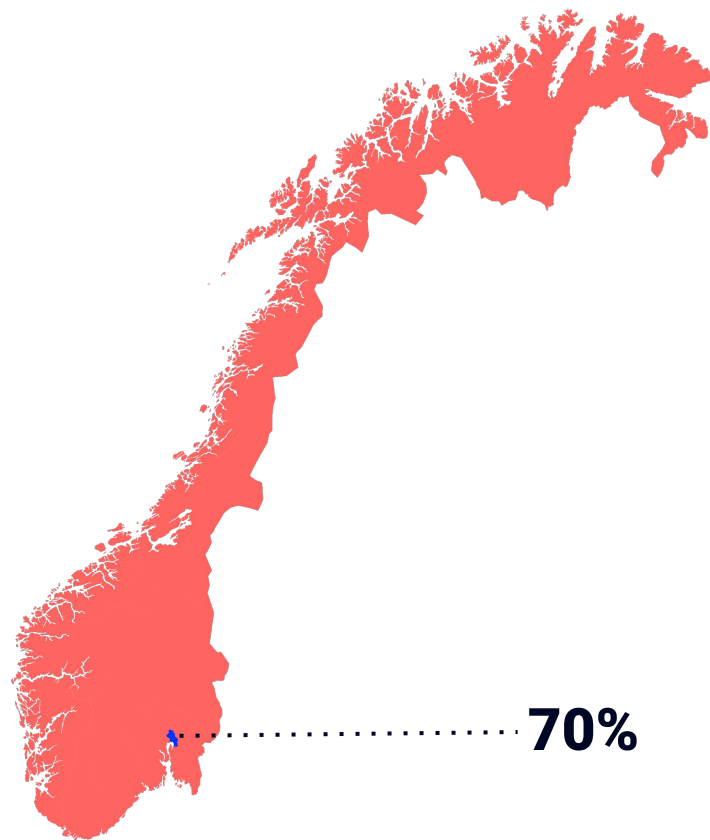


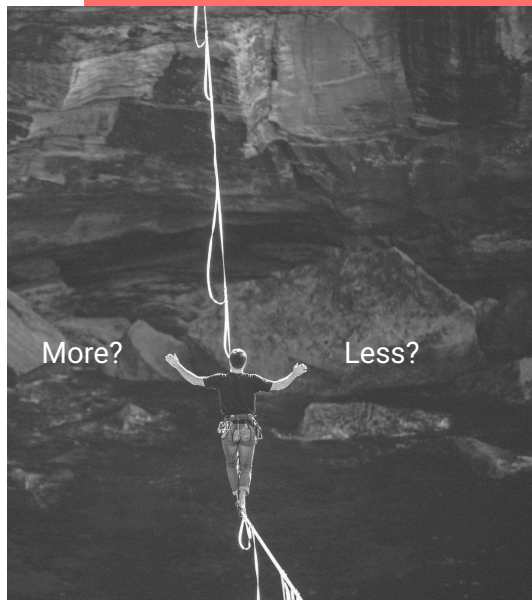
How Aftenposten used active personalization to
skyrocket local, regional & national engagement!

INMA Global Media Awards 2025: **Best Initiative to engage and retain subscribers**

One **BIG** challenge

Aftenposten aims for national reach, but 70% of our 250.000 subscribers live in Oslo, where we are based. However, extensive research shows our growth potential lies in the rest of the country, with a **potential market of 250.000-500.000 new subscribers.**





We face contradictory user problems...

Some readers outside Oslo feel they get too much Oslo content on Aftenposten, while some Oslo-based readers want even more. And a large group of Norwegians do not perceive us as national news brand. This is **a balancing act we need to solve.**

...and passive personalization can't solve this by itself.

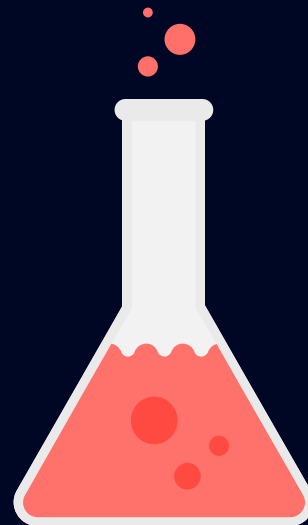
Most of the content on Aftenposten's front page is automatically ranked with a powerful AI driven personalization algorithm. However, due to the majority of our users being based in Oslo, this creates a slight bias, making it difficult to perfectly balance content for all readers through algorithms alone.

Signals

Collaborative filtering

ML Rankers

Multi armed bandits

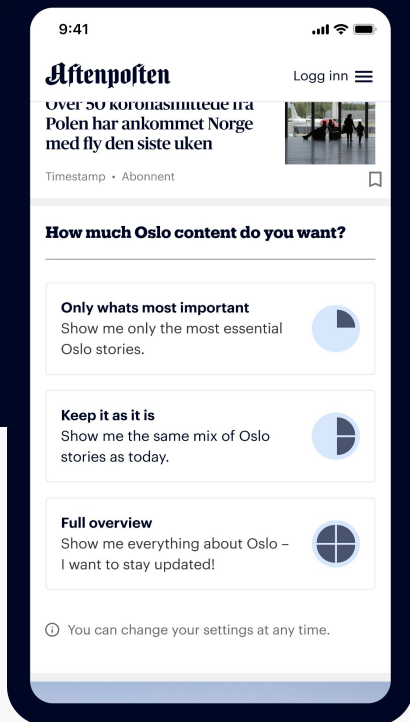


THE SOLUTION?

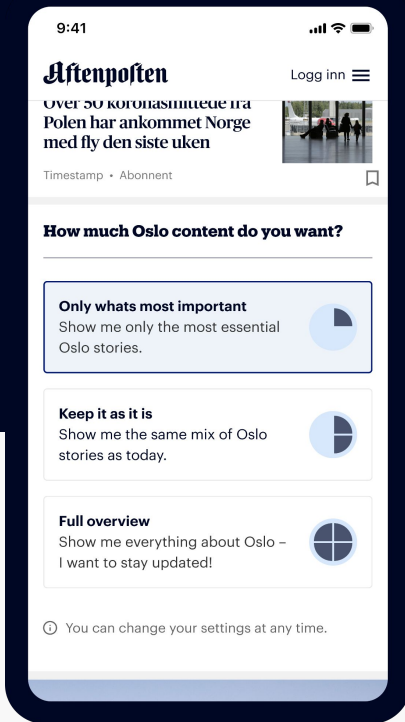
A combination of **three front pages** with different **level of Oslo focus**, where users actively choose their preference, and our **automagic front page**, securing that the right content is served to the right user.



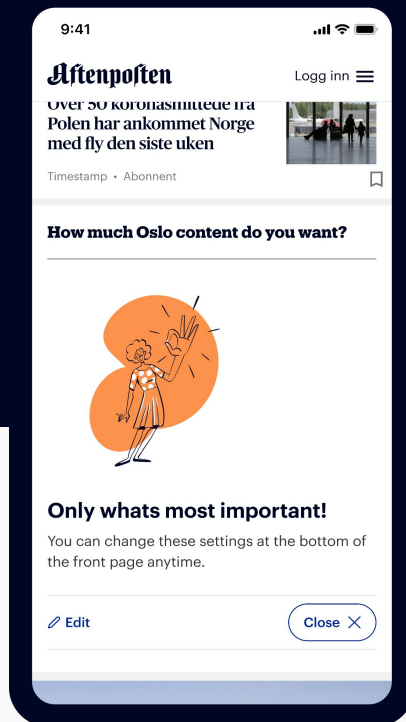
And just like that ...



Users are presented with a widget on the front page.



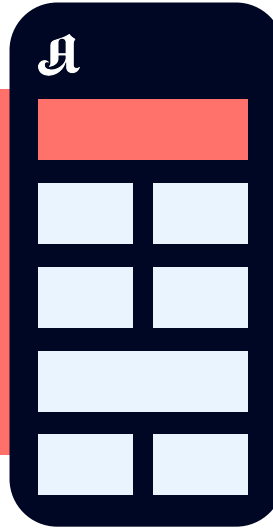
They can choose “Less”, “As is”, or “More” Oslo content.



They receive a confirmation note and a more tailored front page.

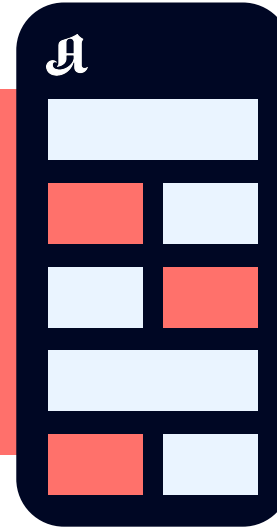
...we can offer three different front pages

A



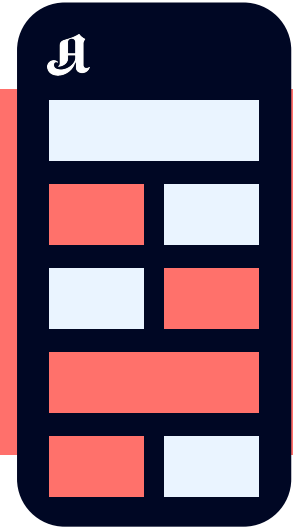
Most important

B



As is

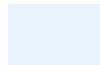
C



Full overview



* Oslo content



* Manual/algo

Did it work?

"MOST IMPORTANT" GROUP

56%

ENGAGEMENT UPLIFT



The front page CTR for users that live outside Oslo and only wanted to see the most important Oslo news was 18.75% = 56% (!) uplift!

"FULL OVERVIEW" GROUP

24%

ENGAGEMENT UPLIFT



The front page CTR for users that live in Oslo and chose more Oslo content was 14.87% = 24% (!) uplift!

Yes, we did our research – and the results are clear!

Analysis of ten qualitative user interviews and over a thousand survey responses confirms that striking the right balance with this content area is highly valued by users and helps resolve a key friction point between local, regional and national user needs.

“– I would appreciate it if Aftenposten continued to offer this. It gives me the feeling of being a valued customer and being seen as important, even though I don't live in Oslo.

This has a significant impact on my relationship with Aftenposten. They should try to appeal more to those outside their traditional target audience.”

Non-Oslo subscriber

From qualitative interviews

To conclude...

- 1 Users are willing to customize news products when it **solves big problems** for them.
- 2 Where you live doesn't always determine how much Oslo content you want, which is why giving users an **active choice is essential**.
- 3 Active personalization + AI-driven passive personalization = **boosts engagement**. And engagement is key to keep users paying for our product.



Aftenposten

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