



# Ignoring the Majority:

## How neglecting 90 percent of our readers led to more young subscribers

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Photo: Stine Holberg Dahl/Amedia

# This is Amedia

Norways largest publisher with **110 newspapers** and **20 partner newspapers**

- Different **geographies**
- **2 million** readers daily
- **580.000** digital only subscribers
- Newsrooms ranging between **2** and **70** employees
- Recognized as one of Europe's most **innovative** media groups

## Nettavisen

Nettavisen

## Storbyavisene

Åsane Tidende  
Avisa Oslo  
Akersposten  
Bergensavisen  
Budstikka  
Nidaros  
Nordstrands Blad  
Nordre Aker Budstikke  
Sagene Avis  
Sydvesten  
Fanaposten  
KRS Avisen Kristiansand  
RA Stavanger

## Vest

Aura Avis  
Avisa Gaula  
Hordaland  
Avisa Nordhordland  
Firda  
Firdaposten  
Sogn Avis  
Tidens Krav  
Vakdalsposten

## Sørvest

Hordanger Folkeblad  
Haugesunds Avis  
Kvinnheringen  
Bygdebladet  
Dalane Tidende  
Gjesdalsbuen  
Solabladet  
Sandnesposten  
Jærbladet  
Strandebuen  
Karmøyrytt  
Avisen Agder  
Lyngdals Avis  
Radio 102

## Nord-Norge

Avisa Nordland  
Bode By  
Finnmark Dagblad  
Finnmarken  
Finnmarksposten  
Fremover  
Hammerfestingen  
Hjelgelendingen  
Ifinnmark.no  
iHarstad  
iSandnesajeen  
Kirkenes By  
Lofot-Tidende  
Lofotposten  
MittHammerfest  
Nordlys  
Rana Blad  
Sar-Varanger Avis  
Serjia247  
Bode Nu  
Rana No  
Kronstadposten

## VeTeBu

Bygdeposten  
Drammens Tidende  
Eikerbladet  
Gjengangeren  
Jarlsberg Avis  
Laagendalsposten  
Lierposten  
Rande Avis  
Sandefjords Blad  
Sveivikposten  
Tønsbergs Blad  
Østlands-Posten  
Øyene  
Røyken og Hurums Avis  
Aust Agder Blad  
Kragere Blad Vestmar  
Porsgrunns Dagblad  
Rjukan Arbeiderblad  
Telemarksavisa  
Telen  
Tvedestrandsposten

## Tun Media

Traktor  
Bondebladet  
Min energi  
Nasjonen  
Norsk Landbruk

## Romerike/Innlandet

Arbeidets Rett  
Glåmdalen  
Hadeland  
Indre Akershus Blad  
Oppland Arbeiderblad  
Ringerikes Blad  
Ringsaker Blad  
Romerikes Blad  
Sølungavisa  
Varingen  
Østlendingen  
MittLeshelm  
MittLillestrøm  
Toten Idag  
MittLørenskog

## Follo/Østfold

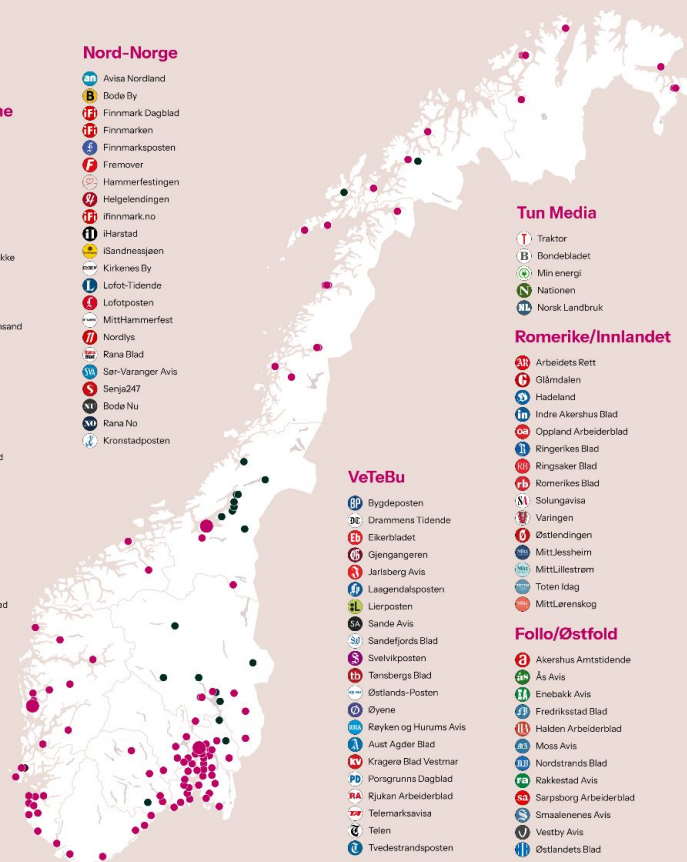
Akershus Amts Tidende  
Ås Avis  
Enebakk Avis  
Fredrikstad Blad  
Halden Arbeiderblad  
Moss Avis  
Nordstrands Blad  
Rakkestad Avis  
Sarpsborg Arbeiderblad  
Smaalenes Avis  
Vestby Avis  
Østlandets Blad

## Partnerregion Trøndelag

iLevanger  
Inderyvingen  
iVerdal  
Namdalsavisa  
Meråkerposten  
Snarøingen  
Steinkjer Avis  
Trender-Avisa

## Andre partneraviser

Bladet Vesterålen  
Eidsvoll Ullensaker Blad  
Gudbrandsdalen Dagningen  
Hamar Arbeiderblad  
Lokalavisa Trysil-Engerdal  
Norddalen  
Raumnes  
Stangeavisa  
Valdres  
Nye Troms  
Drangdalsposten  
Frostingen



# This is Amedia

**Norway's Largest Publisher:** Amedia is the largest publisher of editorial media in Norway, owning 107 newspaper titles and reaching over two million readers daily.

**Digital Transformation Leader:** Recognized as one of Europe's most innovative media groups, Amedia has successfully increased demand for digital journalism, with nearly 90% of subscribers reading news digitally.

**Digital Subscription Growth:** By the end of 2023, Amedia's owned newspapers had 684,000 subscribers, with over 68% being fully digital—a testament to the company's successful digital transformation efforts.

**Editorial Employee Base:** Amedia employs over 1,300 editorial staff who are dedicated to delivering news, debates, and entertainment to readers across Norway.

**Centralized Expertise:** Amedia's centralized teams in Oslo handle IT, product development, technology, and editorial support, developing and maintaining tools, solutions, and services for readers, subscribers, advertisers, and newsrooms across its newspapers.



# The problem:

Like many traditional news organizations, Amedia faces a fundamental industry challenge: we have more subscribers **over 80** than **under 40**, threatening quality journalism in an increasingly digital world.

**623 000**

between 40 and 80



**96 000**  
under 40



**97 000**  
over 80



# The problem:

For years, Amedia had tried cracking the code on how to attract and retain more subscribers and readers under 40 with various analyses and projects.

The age of the people we interview correlates with who are interested in reading our stories

Nichlas (25) slått til blods på byen i Tromsø. Mann dømt til fengsel i 120 dager

Når Tine (27) ankommer en ulykke må hun ta på seg det alvorlige ansiktet

André (37) fra Tromsø har tjent enormt på nettspill og investeringer - slik forklarer han suksessen

Read by many aged 25-34

Read by many aged 35-44

2018

What we did - in 2021

- Focus groups with 72 subscribers from six newspapers, with answers from the below-40 thoroughly analysed.
- Initial data analysis of approximately 1,000 articles, gauging propensity to engage below-40 readers.
- Initial communication of findings to all newsrooms.
- Launching v1 of a live dashboard, enabling editors and journalists to understand how their journalism engages younger cohorts.
- A second, more thorough analysis of a much larger article data set, with improved data, splitting engagement on gender as well as age cohort.
- In-depth testing of concrete hypotheses with select, particularly motivated newspapers.
- Formulating a playbook on how to write journalism engaging the 30-39 age bracket.
- New analysis and updated playbook after a year, focusing on the «gold standard» stories for a younger audience.

2021

What we did - in 2024

- Amedia ordered a survey from Norway's largest agency within social and market analysis, Opinion: People in the age 20-45 about their view on local newspapers
- We did our own analysis
- What characterizes the subscribers under 40? And what are they reading?
- What is the best KPI to reach more young readers under the age of 40?
- Four newspapers with good results on young subscribers and readers
- tips

2024



But despite our efforts:

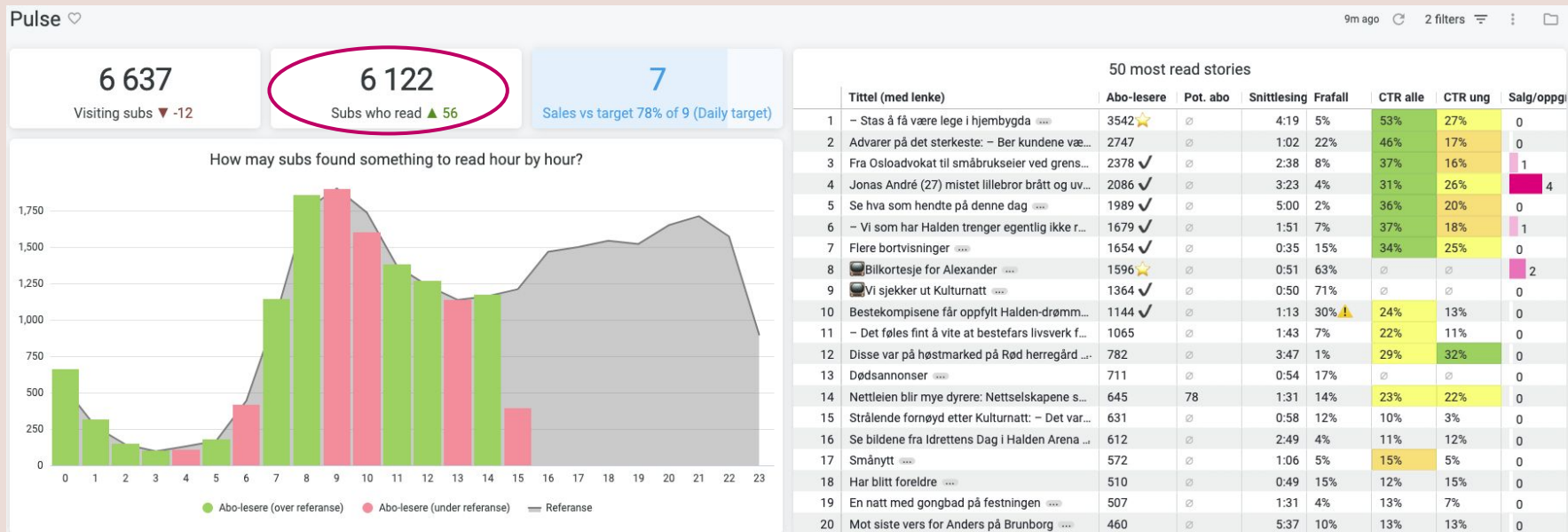
We still had more  
subscribers **over 80**  
than **under 40**



We realized that  
you **become** what  
you **measure** –  
and that we had  
become experts at  
pleasing this group



They were dominating our dashboards, given that they represent the majority of our subscribers, and are the ones deciding what content is king 🤴



## We had a radical idea:

What if we ignore  
«the old folks» and  
let our subscribers  
under 40 decide?



# Our objective:

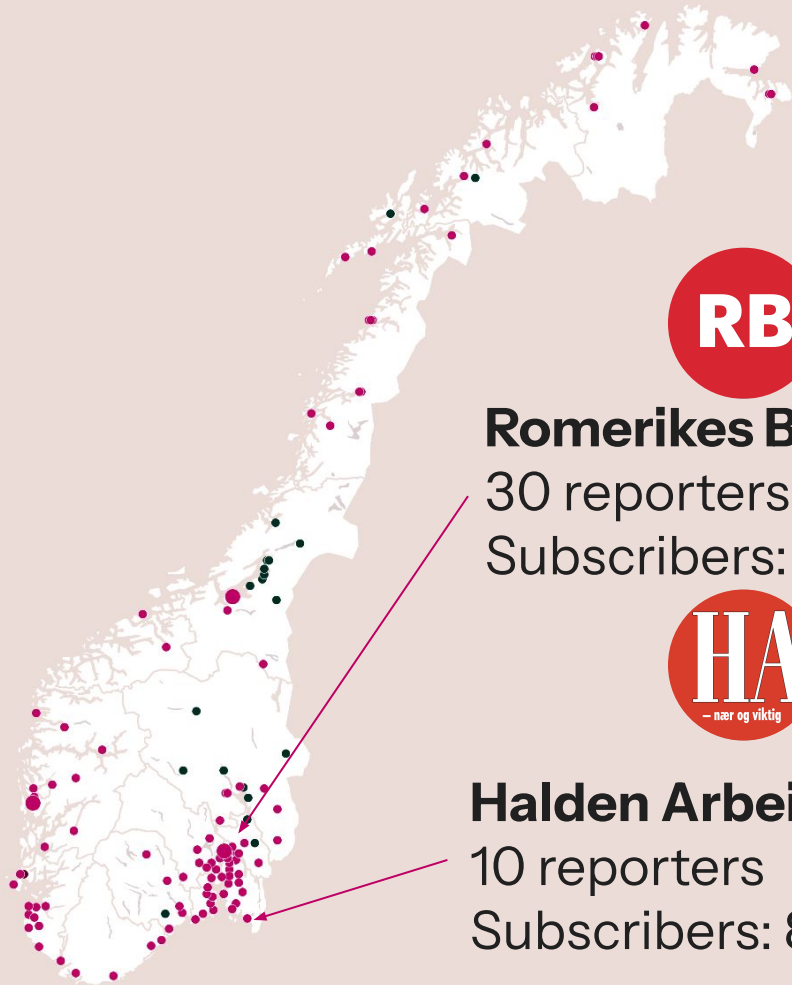
We isolated metrics to exclusively focus on readers under 40, effectively making 90 percent of our subscribers invisible in our dashboards.

This data-driven approach aimed to:

- **Understand younger reader preferences:** By removing the influence of older subscribers, the experiment aimed to gain clearer insights into what content resonated with the younger demographic.
- **Optimize content creation:** This understanding would then be used to guide the newsrooms in tailoring their content to better cater to the interests of younger readers.
- **Increase engagement and subscriptions:** The ultimate goal was to drive growth in both traffic and subscriptions, particularly among the younger demographic, thus securing the long-term sustainability of Amedia's publications.



The experiment, conducted at two newspapers, aimed to demonstrate that by focusing on the needs of younger readers, we could succeed in attracting and retaining them, ensuring a future for quality journalism in a changing media landscape.



**Romerikes Blad:**  
30 reporters  
Subscribers: 30 000



**Halden Arbeiderblad:**  
10 reporters  
Subscribers: 8 000



# Three key findings



1) The entire editorial team focuses on the young subscribers



# Romerikes Blad completely changed **the way** they work and the **topics** they focus on

Kindergarten/school/  
upbringing/family life

Health/lifestyle/  
relationships

Local business/  
work life/ career

Wallet stories/  
consumer/ groceries

Housing/ real estate

Mobility/ traffic /  
commuting

Our municipalities

Crime



This involved a change in perspective, focusing on younger entrepreneurs and professionals rather than established middle-aged figures.

This strategic shift led to significant improvements in content quality and relevance.

The newsrooms adjusted their editorial processes to prioritize topics and narratives that resonated with younger readers.

Romerikes Blad 

NYHETER

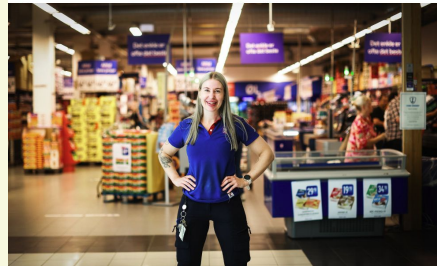
**Fantastic results for local firm: -  
Never sold more**



Romerikes Blad 

JESSHEIM

**Kine worked her way up - now  
she runs her own store: - I have  
worked really hard for this**



Before:

**8 200 readers**

Only **6%** under 40



After:

**10 300 readers**

**13%** under 40



“

I have had to leave old habits behind – and have to say «no» to stories that don't target young people's lives!

Thor Fremmerlid (59), journalist in Romerikes Blad



“

I need to be more direct in asking «**who cares?**» – and say «no» to making content that doesn't matter

Jon Theodor Hauger-Dalsgard,  
News Editor, Romerikes Blad



2) Our subscribers over 40 do **not** abandon us – they love the new content we give them



Luckily, the shift in focus did not alienate our older audience. We saw an increase in overall readership, demonstrating that the content resonated with a broader demographic.

This suggests that the content we created for younger readers also appealed to older readers, who continued to engage with our publications.

**Romerikes Blad** 

**Rita (79) fights to keep a gift she was given 53 years ago: - I'm fed up and tired of fighting**



Before:

**10 000 readers**

Only **7%** under 40



**Romerikes Blad**



Foto: Petter Stensås

**The wedding invitations were ordered. Then Kristian started feeling tired: - He went to see his doctor in February, and died in May**

After:

**14 200 readers**

**12%** under 40



3) While ignoring the majority, the minority grew



The results were notable. We saw an increase in overall readership and a significant boost in subscriptions, particularly driven by content targeting younger audiences.

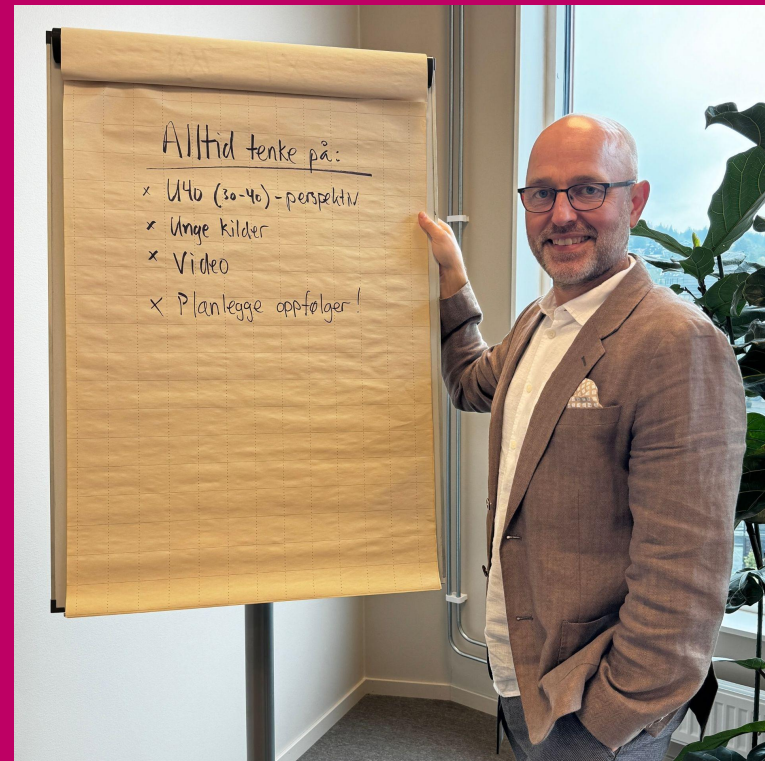
Romerikes Blad, one of the participating in the experiment, experienced a remarkable 30% growth in its under-40 demographic since the project's started nine months ago.



“

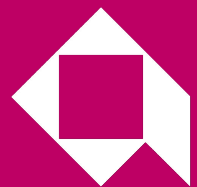
Focusing exclusively on young subscribers has made our product better.

It's not a question of «daring» to try - but a question of daring not to!



Mads Storvik, Editor in Chief,  
Romerikes Blad'





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