

An aerial photograph of Seattle, Washington, showing the city skyline and waterfront. The sun is setting on the left, creating a bright reflection on the water. The city buildings are silhouetted against the sky, and the Space Needle is visible in the distance. The image is split into two vertical panels: the left panel shows the sun and water, while the right panel shows the city buildings.

# Mather Symposium

Alan Fisco

# Our Roadmap to Cultural Change

- Strategy – Phase 1
    - Commitment to audience revenue trend
    - Working smarter with less
    - Learn, iterate, improve
  - Tools and technology – Phase 2 (Tech Stack), Phase 3 (Data Overhaul)
    - Investing in a technical overhaul and truly shifting from a print-oriented manufacturing mindset to a news media company fueled by ecommerce
    - Legacy, purpose-built solutions to a modern, scalable technology stack
  - Skills, roles and champions – Phase 4
    - Unified, small teams bringing energy, celebrating successes visibly that aligned with a consumer-centric focus
-

# Culture Change Timeline— Resetting Our Strategy

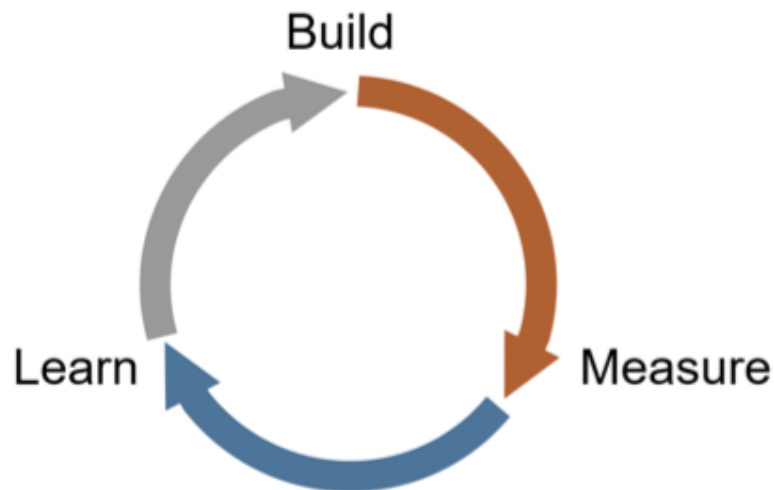
PHASE 1 – SHIFTING FROM A NEWSPAPER THAT HAS A DIGITAL HOBBY, TO A MULTIMEDIA COMPANY



# Learn, Iterate, Improve - A Key Cultural Change

CHANGING OUR CULTURE WAS OVERCOMING PARALYZING COLLABORATION, RISK AVERSION AND THE NEED FOR PERFECTION

- Designated Executive owner
- Cross-functional “quick-hit” team
- Imperfect technical solutions, but building momentum



# Paywall Launch in 2013

WE WERE OPTIMIZED FOR PRINT, NOT EQUIPPED FOR DIGITAL AND ECOMMERCE

The screenshot shows the Seattle Times website with a central paywall overlay. The overlay text reads: "We hope you have enjoyed your complimentary access. Subscribe today to read as many articles as you want, whenever you want, on all your digital devices - starting at the introductory offer of just 99¢ a week." It lists benefits: "Unlimited access to seattletimes.com", "Seattle Times smartphone and tablet apps", and "Print replica, an exact digital copy of the printed newspaper with the same news, features, ads, art and layout." Below this is a "SUBSCRIPTION OPTIONS" button. Further down, it says "Current Seattle Times subscribers: Digital access is already part of your subscription!" and provides links for "SUBSCRIBER LOGIN" and "REGISTER SUBSCRIPTION". At the bottom of the overlay are links for "Help", "Privacy statement", and "Terms of service". The background shows a news article about Caroline Kennedy and a "Local News" header.

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# Culture Change Timeline—Tools and Technology

## PHASE 2

- Website CMS: WordPress
- Subscription CRM: Salesforce
- Payment process: Zuora
- Paywall: custom built internally
- Registration authentication: custom built internally
- Email platform: Salesforce Marketing Cloud
- Commenting: LiveFyre
- Audience analytics: Google Analytics, Mather Listener



**zuora**

**mather:**



**livefyre** 

# Data

FLYING BLIND



# Analytics Hub

PHASE 3: RESPONDING TO URGENT NEEDS TO BUILD TRUST AND DRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY



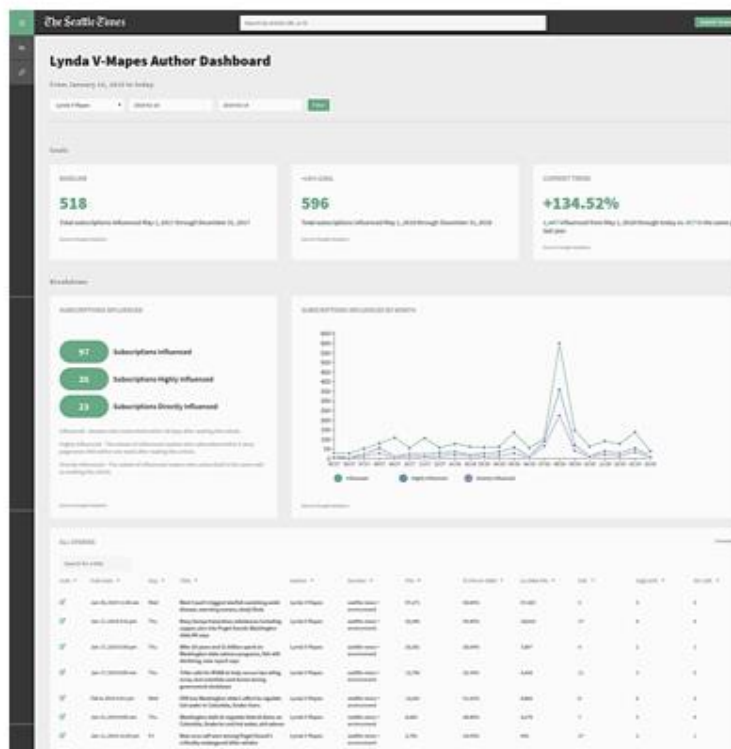


# Content That Resonates— by Section



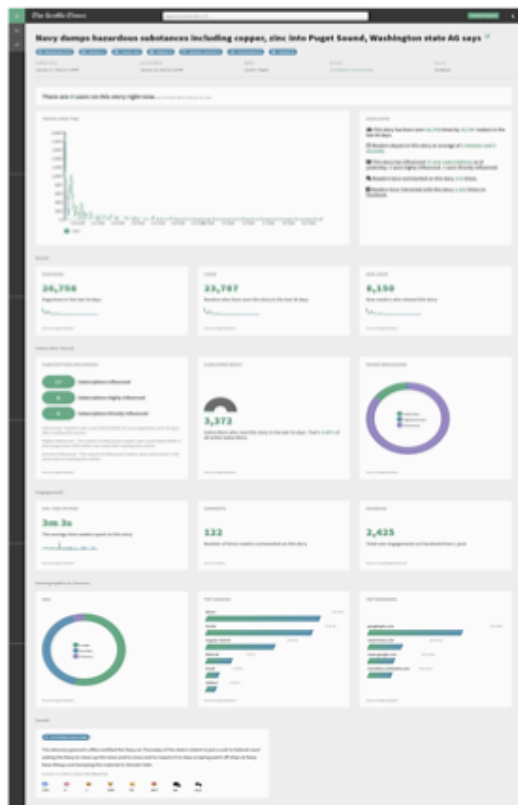
- Highlight key metrics in terms of quantity, engagement and influence scores
- Discover insights by comparing when articles are published to when they are read
- Mine articles viewed for insights into topics/stories that resonate with readers
- The end result is that we now have visibility into content that moves the needle and content that does not

# Content That Resonates— by Author



- Give authors the ability to track their individual performance
- Highlight the authors who resonate with your visitors and influence them to subscribe
- Help authors optimize their time by highlighting which articles show a good return for their effort and which do not

# Content That Resonates— by Article



- Look at the characteristics of visitors who read particular articles so you can serve them better by asking:
  - Where are they geographically?
  - What source brought them to this article?
  - How long do they invest reading the article?
  - Did it bring new visitors to the site?
  - Was it promoted via social media?
  - To what degree was it read by existing subscribers?
  - Most important, did the article influence people to subscribe?

# Skills, Roles and Champions

## PHASE 4

Staff structures

Meeting structures

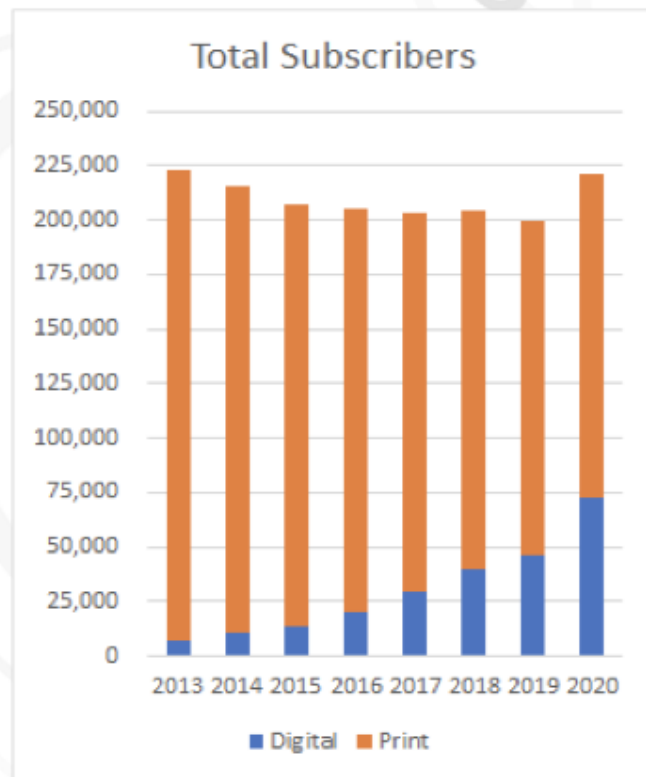
Building trust and celebrating wins—  
which includes some challenging “real  
talk” at all levels of the organization  
from the Board of Directors to the  
reporters and web producers in news



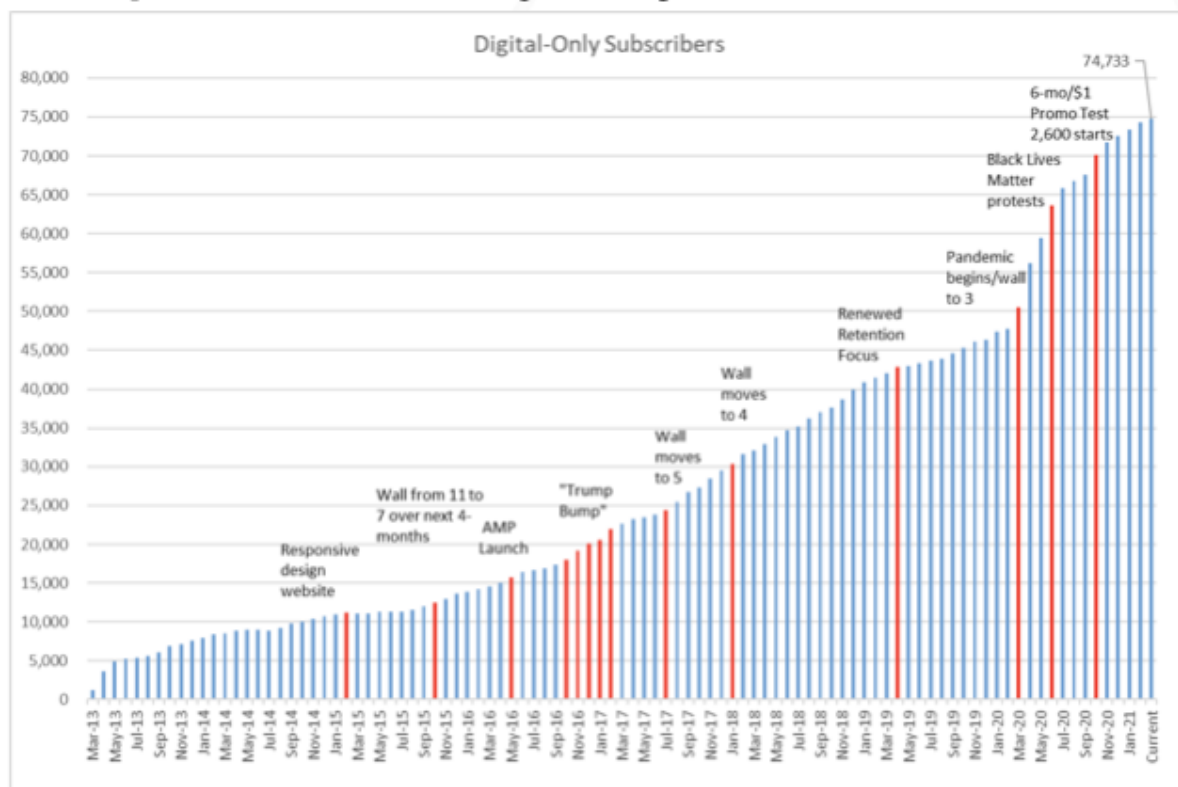
# 2020 Audience Revenue Results

## 2020 MARKS AN ACCELERATION OF OUR AUDIENCE-FIRST STRATEGY

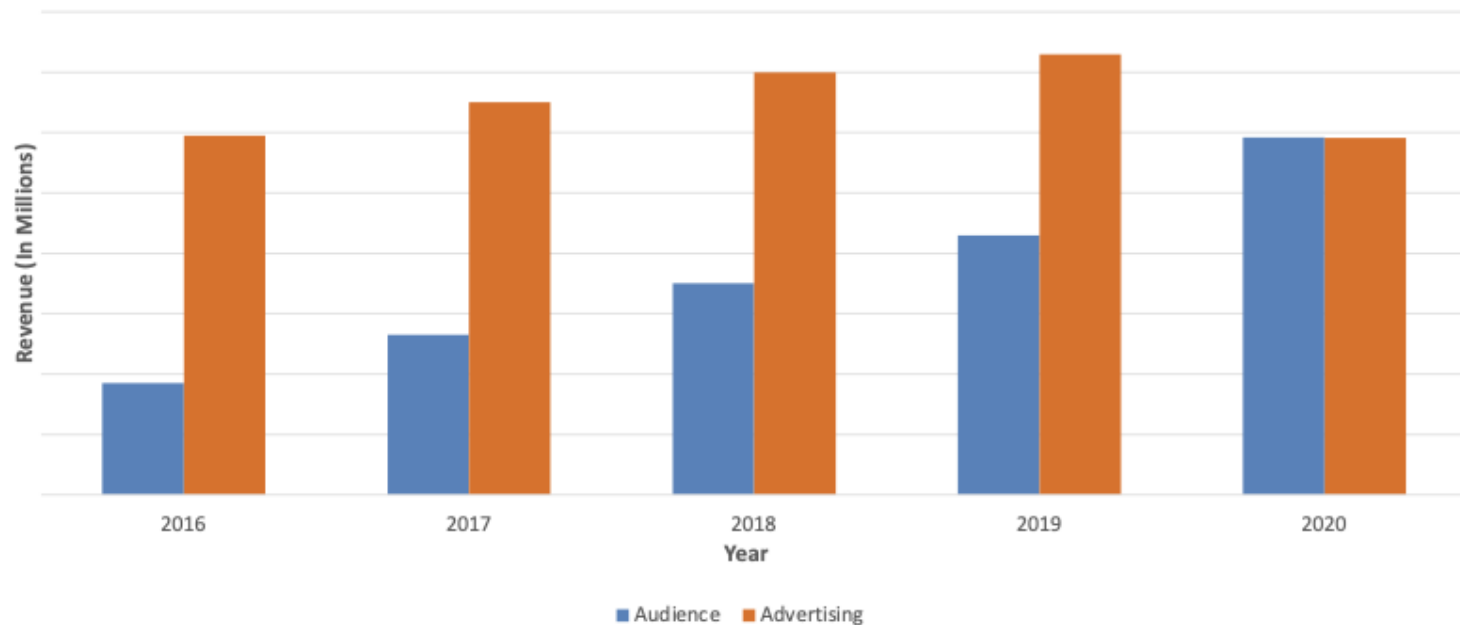
- 73,000 digital only subscribers
- Grew total subscriber base by 10.8%
- Digital subscriber revenue up 41%
- Print subscriber revenue continues to grow
- Dramatic growth in registered users
- Launch and better-than-projected growth in desktop notifications
- Record-breaking subscription starts



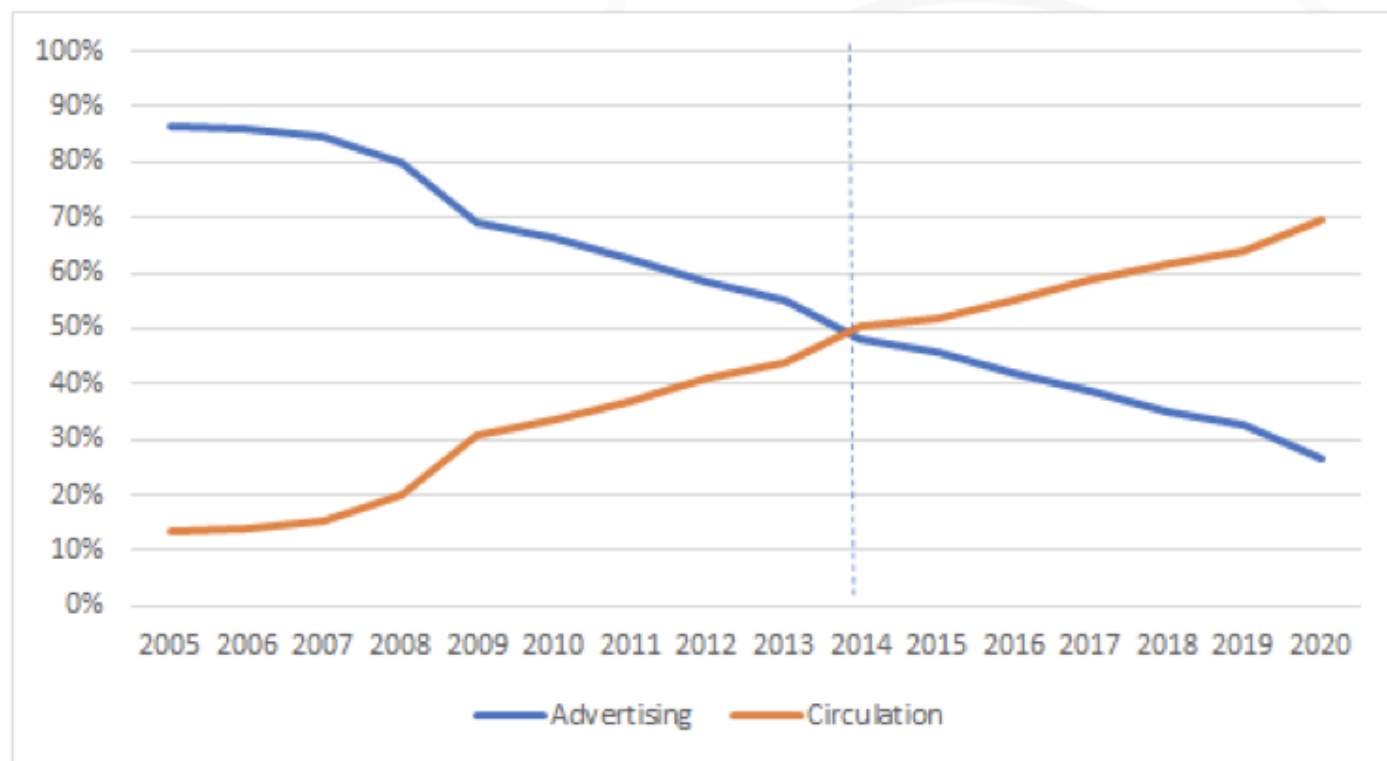
# Digital Subscription Growth Trajectory



# Digital Revenue History



## Audience Revenue Over Time





# What's Next?

CONTINUED COLLABORATION WITH THE NEWSROOM AND THE BUSINESS SIDE IN KEY COVERAGE AREAS.  
THIS INCLUDES THE LAUNCH OF THE MIDDAY INITIATIVE.

- Midday initiative
- Homepage experimentation
- Recirculation
- Website curation
- Enhanced newsroom tools
- Less focus on volume gains, more focus on driving rate

**LIVE** Coronavirus daily news updates, January 5:  
What to know today about COVID-19 in the Seattle area, Washington state and the world



The Seattle Times website interface includes a navigation bar with sections like CORONAVIRUS, LOCAL, BIZ, SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT, LIFE, HOMES, OPINION, JOBS, AUTOS, EXPLORE, and All Sections. A prominent red banner reads "BREAKING Seattle Public Schools to close for at least two weeks in light of construction concerns".

Key content areas include:
 

- Today's Refinance Rates:** A widget showing rates for 30-year (3.03%), 15-year (2.13%), and ARM (2.27%) mortgages.
- Headlines:** "In 'Cobra Kai,' Seattle restaurateur reprises a role — and a life — he thought he'd left behind", "First coronavirus vaccines arrive at UW Medical Center in Seattle", and "Trump says Barr resigning, will leave before Christmas".
- More Top Stories:** "Answering the Seahawks' most pressing questions ahead of the playoffs", "Seattle's biggest challenge to state of emergency", and "A Team of Experts".

# Culture Is Hard, and We Still Have Work to Do

- Broaden analytics adoption and use
- Leverage analytics insights to optimize resources, including content creation in news
- Site improvements, consumer expectations are higher than ever
- Relentlessly focus on improving our digital performance, but not at the expense of print
- Prepare for the eventual reduction in print frequency. Focus on doing everything we can to grow digital engagement of print readers