

How to boost subscription sales and website traffic

Analysis for a German publisher (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung)

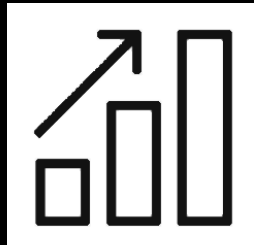
Fabian Paul



Objectives



Which article and publication features can increase website traffic and subscriptions?



Analysis of article content of publishers F.A.Z. and Süddeutsche to identify levers that may support increase in readership

Methodology



Data

- News publisher websites: Web scraped visit data of 119 days
- News publisher websites: Web scraped data of 37k articles

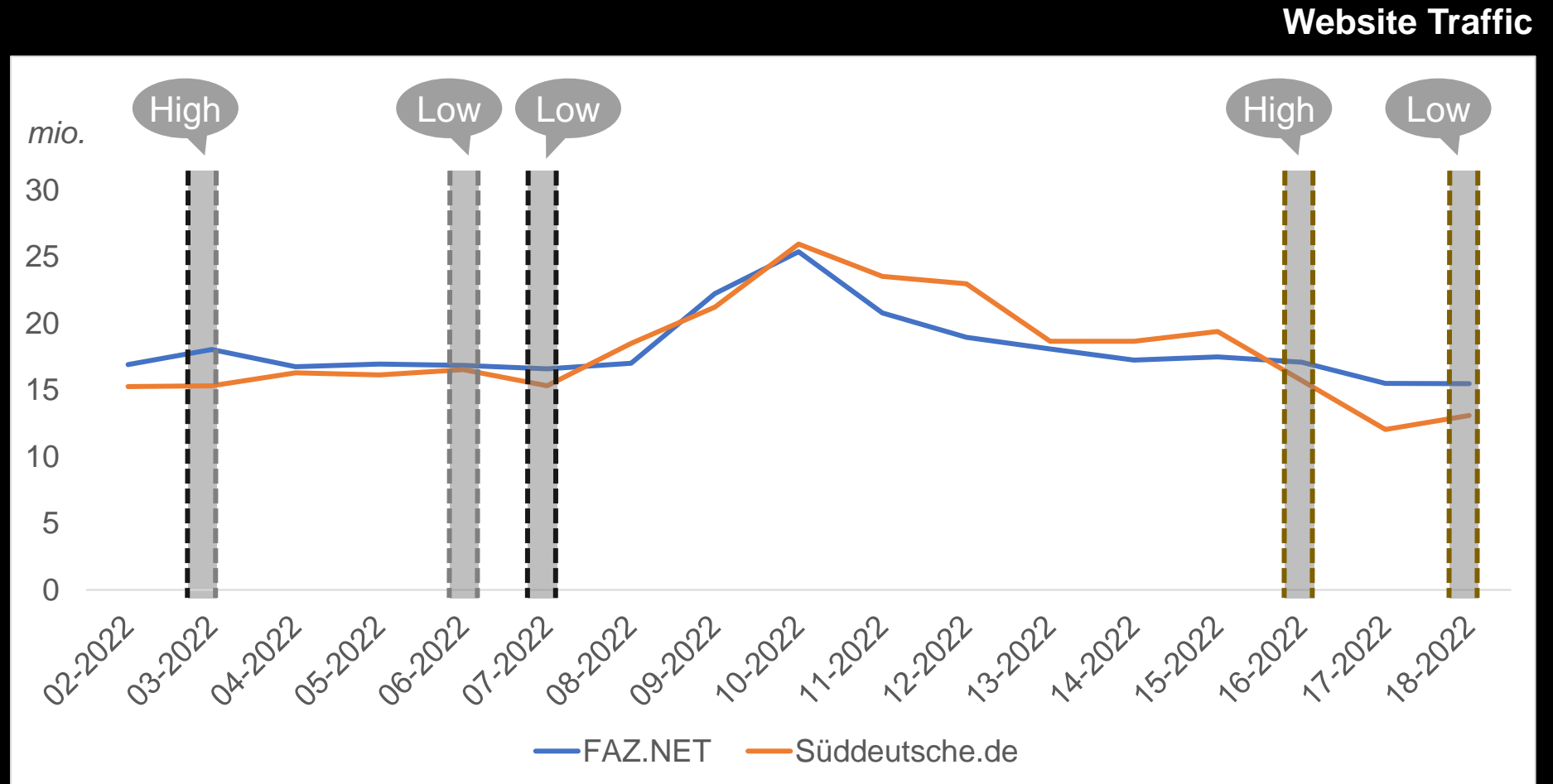


Tools

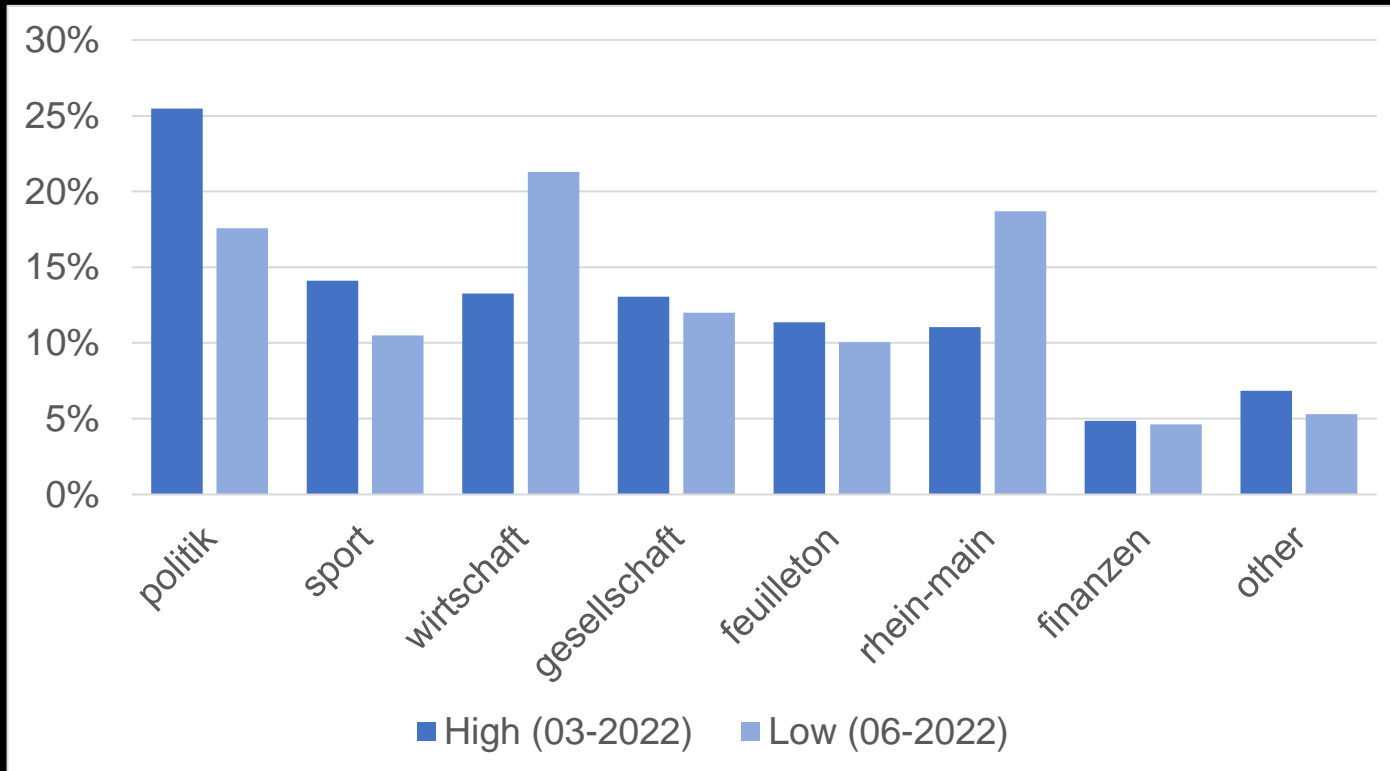
- Data cleaning, analysis & modeling: Excel, statsmodels, scikit-learn
- Visualizations: Excel, Tableau

Which dates should we compare?

- ➡ Before Ukraine war
- ➡ During Ukraine war
- ➡ Difference in Differences
- ➡ Regression



Which departments should we focus on?



High traffic:

Higher %-share of articles in **politics** and **sports**, fewer in economy and local news

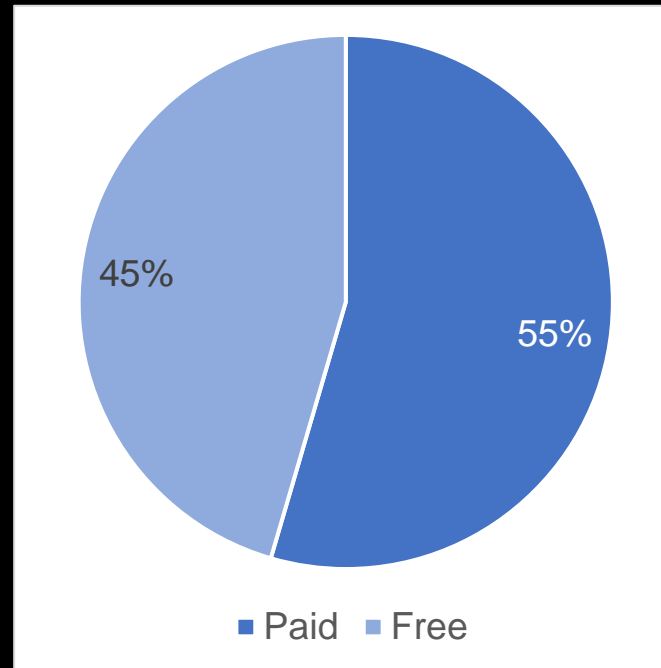
Should we place articles behind a paywall?

High traffic:

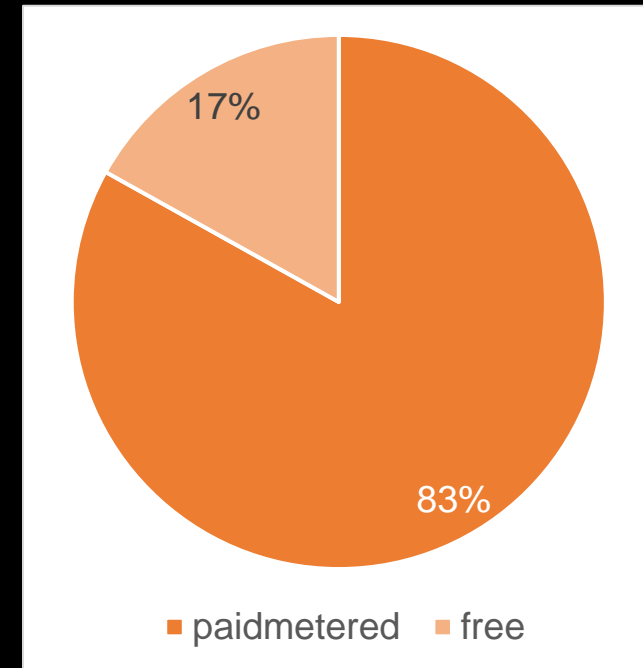
**Higher %-share
of free articles,**

however lower %-share
connected to higher
subscription growth

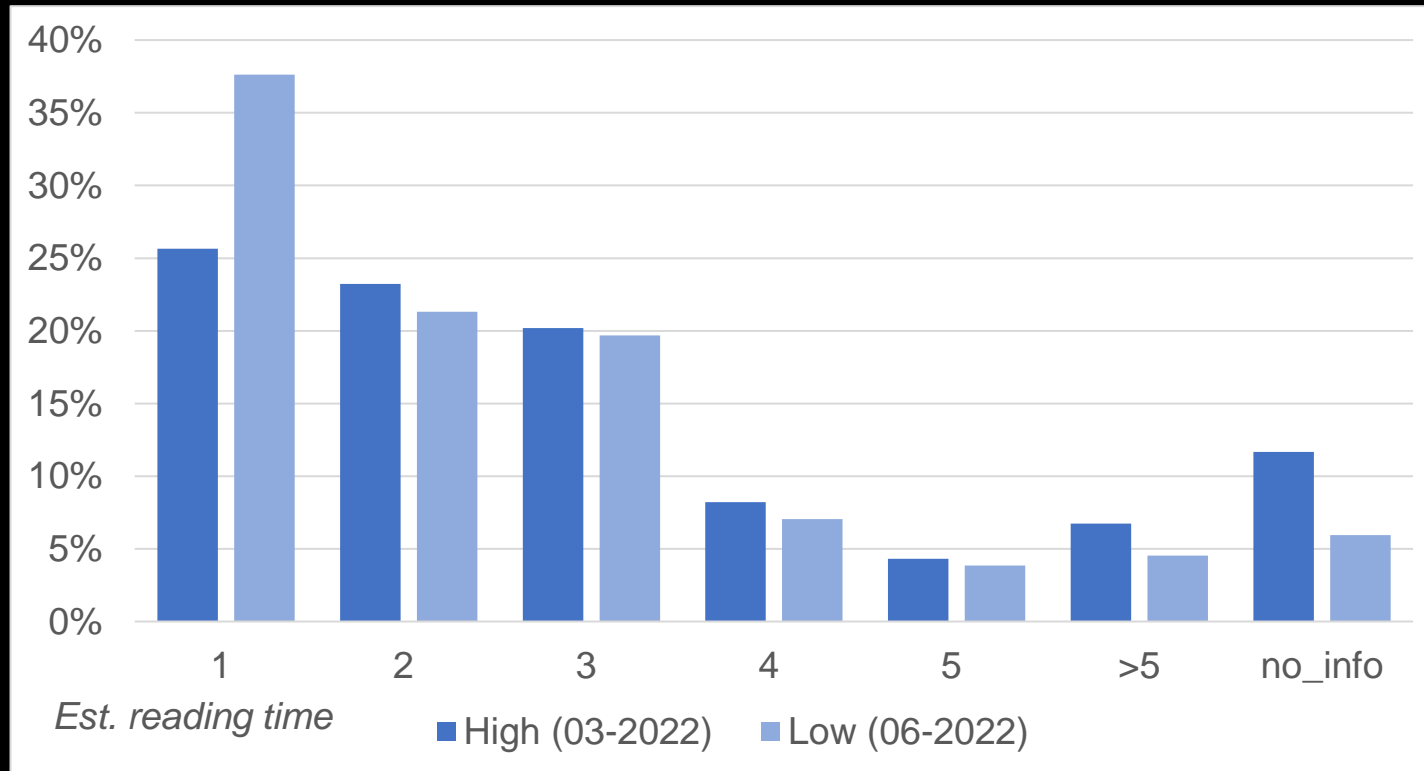
F.A.Z.



Süddeutsche



How long should articles be?



High traffic:

Higher %-share of **longer articles** with higher estimated reading times

Which topics should we focus on?

F.A.Z.

Polizei 960	CDU 344	Deutsche Presse Agentur 339	Ukraine 330	Auto 257
	Staatsanwaltschaft 234	no_info 210	Berlin 202	Bundes- kanzler 194
SPD 647	Europäische Union 222	OlafScholz 183	FDP 159	Sachsen 146
	Deutschland 216	WladimirPutin 163	FC Bayern München 144	
Coronavirus 522	Bundesregierung 210	RKI 162	Frankfurt 141	

Süddeutsche

Deutschland 5.726	Bayern 1.616	Panorama 1.575	Politik 1.254
	Coronavirus 978	Kriminalität 974	Fußball 888
			Gesundheit 872
Sport 2.831	Krieg 798	Berlin 677	München 669
			Baden- Württem- berg 648
	Ukraine 796	Politicker 617	Bundes- liga 579
Wirtschaft 2.029	Nordrhein- Westfalen 750	Verkehr 592	Katas- trophe 568

Takeaways

	Before war	During war	Difference-in-difference	Regression
Departments	politics, sports, fewer local	feuilleton, fewer local	politics, society, fewer local	<i>No significance</i>
Article Source	more news agency, fewer proprietary	more proprietary	more news agency	<i>No significance</i>
Weekday	fewer on Saturday	more on Tuesday, Sunday	more on Tuesday, Saturday	<i>No significance</i>
Time	6am – 4pm	6am – 4pm	6am – 4pm	<i>No significance</i>
%-Paid	more free	more paid	more free	Significant
%-comments	no difference	more opinion articles	no difference	<i>No significance</i>
Length	longer	longer	longer	<i>No significance</i>
Author density	higher	lower	no difference	<i>No significance</i>
Keywords	n.a.	n.a.	more generic	Significant

Future Work

- ① Include more days of IVW traffic beyond 119 for more robust regression model
- ② Use company internal data to understand and analyze customer journeys that lead to subscriptions
- ③ Analyze duration of articles on website and its positioning on the website
- ④ Collect data of Süddeutsche over next months to train regression model on F.A.Z.'s competitor

Thank you!