juxtapose

Competitive Advantage Report
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Market Research
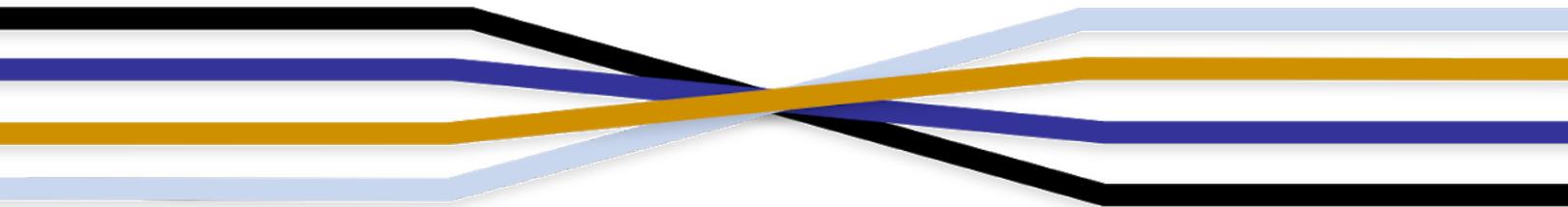
Newsrooms

Category	Demographic
Gender	More likely to be **male** than U.S. workers overall*
Race	More likely to be **white** than U.S. workers overall*
Age	Over 63,000 of 88,000 employees are between **18 and 54 years old**; 33,700 are **18-34***
Education	Newsroom employees are more than **twice as likely to have a college degree** than other U.S. Over 75% are in arts or humanities*
Income	Earn less than college-educated U.S. workers overall; **$52,051** average with at least a college degree, **$49,727** with any education*
Location	More likely to live in **New York, Los Angeles, D.C.** or the **Northeast***
Interests	News production, social media, verification tools, content distribution, promoting work/content**
Wants	Digital news training (38%), web design and development training (28%); graphics (21%)**
Needs	An easy-to-use, intuitive publishing platform that attracts readers and digital advertising that is feasible to operate and maintain

Readers

Younger adults dominate digital news use in the U.S. According to the Pew Research Center, 52% of both of the 18-29 and 30-49 age groups often get news online. However, more older adults are now using websites to access news -- the 65+ group jumped points between 2016 and 2017. In terms of their needs, users are generally looking for a news website that has clear navigation, unobtrusive ads (or no ads) and no autoplaying videos. The majority of readers are most interested in or find most important these topics to cover: weather, traffic, changing prices, government and politics, and crime, according to Pew.

Product Comparison

Themes

There are some companies that provide websites specifically for newspapers, and both Websites for Newspapers and TownNews/BLOX Content Management appear to do so for small and/or local newsrooms. However, both these companies' products use many features that deter readers or do not use all the basic UX principles, such as not having an intuitive layout, lacking a clear hierarchy and excessively using pop-up ads. Going straight to Wordpress for a newspaper website theme can also be done, but there are a wide range of themes of varying quality and many suffer from similar issues. Due to this, it is clear why there are so many newspapers with not ideal websites.

In terms of what features are expected to be provided on news templates and websites, an analysis of newspaper websites by the Center for Media Engagement found that 95% of news websites allow users to share articles; over 90% have a comment section; and over 70% have links to the most popular content. Interactive polls appeared on 57% of local newspapers, the study found.

UX Guides or Strategy Help

A step-by-step guide to UX for small media organizations provided free alongside turnkey, but customizable, templates would be a unique offering in the local newsroom industry. While there are a few industry organizations, such as LION Publishers, that provide digital strategy help, a

comprehensive guide could not be found and no organizations could be found that provide templates to newsrooms. Others focus on building [newsletter strategy](#) or [digital strategy for underrepresented groups](#).

Similarly, there are many hundreds of UX courses online, such as on tutorial websites like [LinkedIn Learning](#), there is not a clear starting point for beginners and there is an overwhelming amount of information provided that may deter people with little awareness. Some of the courses are relatively affordable, but none could be found that are specifically tailored to news, outside of standalone courses during conferences. Additionally, none of these options are free. One free option does exist specifically in Georgia and is tailored to local news organizations: the Digital Natives program out of the University of Georgia Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication. This program pairs students with local media organizations and helps them reach a digital media goal, such as launching a newsletter, using website or social media analytics, or creating digital interactives. However, this initiative is seen as a potential partner rather than competitor due to its obvious connections to the jUXtapose product and the fact that the training is not ongoing.
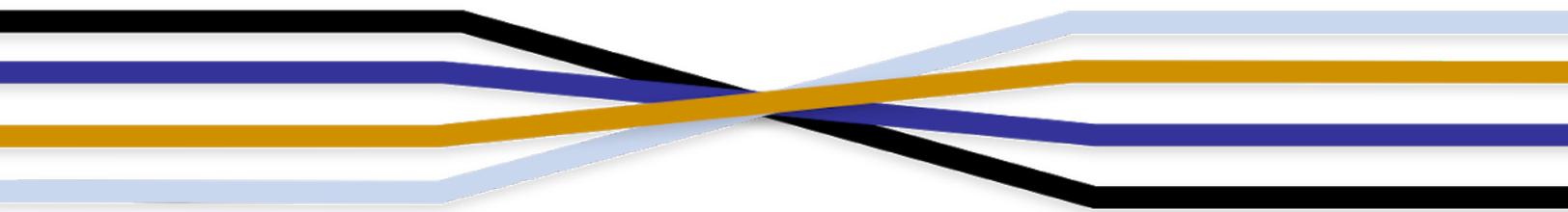
Competitor Research

TownNews/BLOX Content Management

[TownNews](#) both produces website templates for small and local media organizations as well as provides a content management system specifically designed for newsrooms.

However, many websites that use TownNews templates have many of the usability problems jUXtapose hopes to solve in its template. While clearly TownNews's product is able to help newsrooms become or remain profitable and provide digital solutions that keep the doors open, which is to obviously to be admired, jUXtapose hopes to provide a template and digital strategy assistance to both provide a more comfortable reader experience and is able to reach newsrooms that cannot afford services like TownNews. Additionally, while some templates use most UX principles, others struggle, hindering the user experience. The example belows shows some of those issues, such as not having enough space for text, poor hierarchy and an odd organization. The Wordpress CMS also appears to be more user friendly than BLOX.
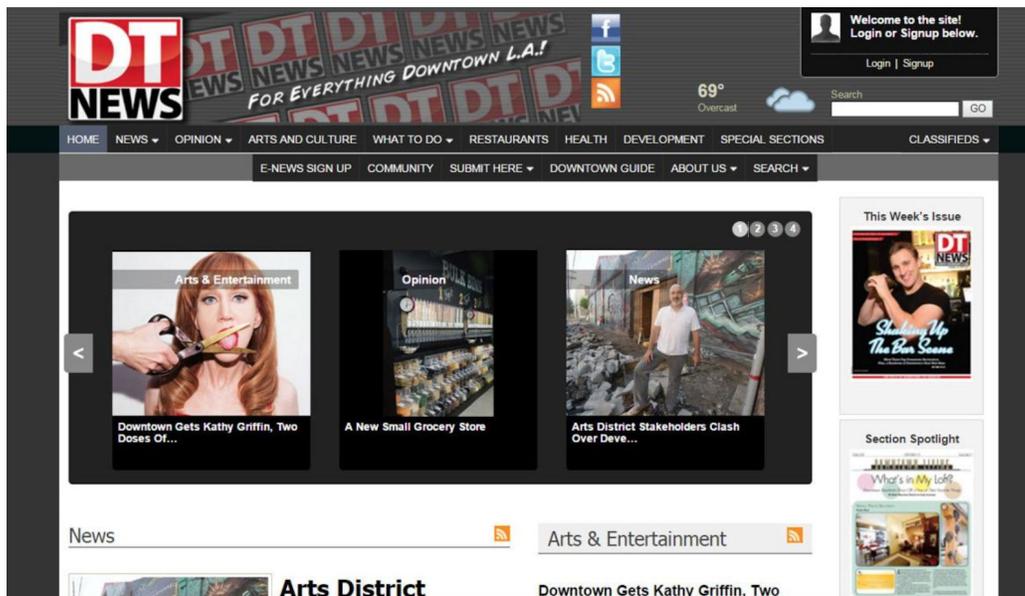
TownNews offers a visual editor for its templates, which allows customers without coding experience to easily edit the appearance of the site. According to the website, further changes can be done using CSS. jUXtapose's use of Wordpress is targeted at providing the same experience, allowing users at all levels to change the website. Additionally, simple tutorials on how to customize and use Wordpress will be provided along with the template. Like TownNews, jUXtapose will also be responsive to mobile screens.

TownNews also provides more advanced advertising tools and subscription options than jUXtapose will provide built in to the template, such as the ability to do full paywalls or metered access. However, options on how the user could implement these functions will be explored and explained in the tutorial.

TownNews's target market is small-to-midsize news organizations, as well as the college media. The company, founded in 1989, advertises to both of those groups, mainly with the angle that it will increase revenue. This is communicated through "case studies," testimonials and other material on the website. The website was returned through searches with CMS included, like "local newspaper website cms."

It dominates a lot of the market with over 52% of U.S. news websites using its services, a 2015 analysis found, but the price can be steep for fledgling or struggling outlets, with monthly costs ranging from $150 to $5,000. The price depends on the size of the outlet and the features used, according to a 2010 report. There were no recent reviews able to be found.

Local News Lab

On the strategy side, the Local News Lab, an initiative out of the Democracy Fund, provides several digital guides for free for newsrooms, including on how to build newsletters, host events and crowdfund. However, these guides focus more on the business aspect of the media organization and

less on the customer-facing website. Other topics include how to host focus groups with local residents and guides for start-ups.

The design of the guides is very well done, providing a clear overview of what subjects are covered within the guide and the ability to jump straight to a certain subject. An interesting feature of the guides is the appendix, or reading list, provided at the end, which provides more resources to the reader on the topic.

The Local News Lab relaunched under the Democracy Fund in 2016. The fund is a large operation that has given over $150 million in grants to support fair elections, and supports the Local News Lab due to local news' importance in informing the public. That group provides key financial support but other groups are supporters as well, including the Knight Foundation.

The guides have always been a key function of communicating research in news to local newsrooms, the lab's goal. The target market is local news organizations that aspire to advance their digital strategy or new organizations that are launching. Since the guides are provided free, they are simply distributed on the website and through social media, and they are also active in the journalism industry discourse. The site is returned in searches for "local news fund" and "local news guides," but not "local news strategy."