



Distribution platforms crash course

Thursday, October 6, 2016



Today's agenda: Distributed platforms

- Market forces driving creation of distributed platforms
- Overview of the top four distributed platforms
- Strategies media organizations can adopt to address distributed platforms

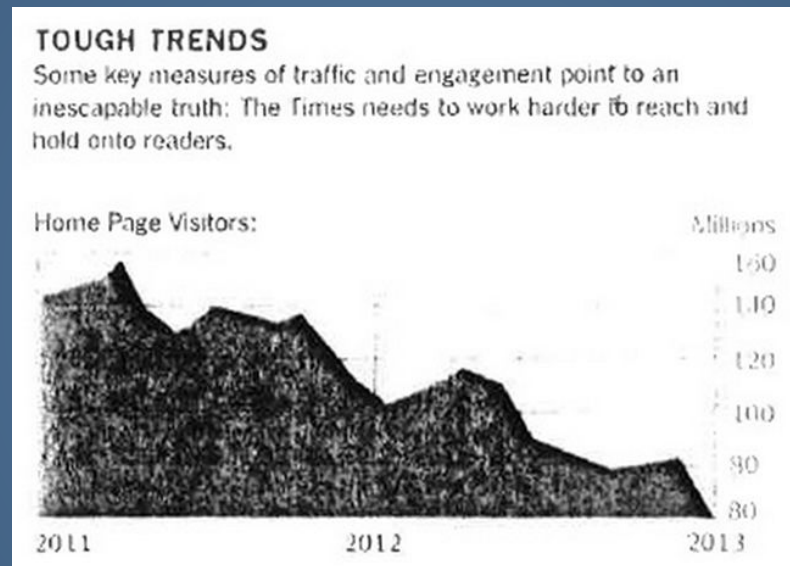


Market Forces



Content discovery

- Audience discovers content on search, social or an app; not through homepage



“Be where the audience is”

The rise of mobile

- More than 50% of all TownNews.com traffic is from a mobile phone*
- Mobile users have different expectations than other users

**TownNews.com analytics*



The need for speed

- Users want speed and consistency
- A **one-second delay** in page-load time leads to an 11% drop in pageviews*

**Aberdeen Group*

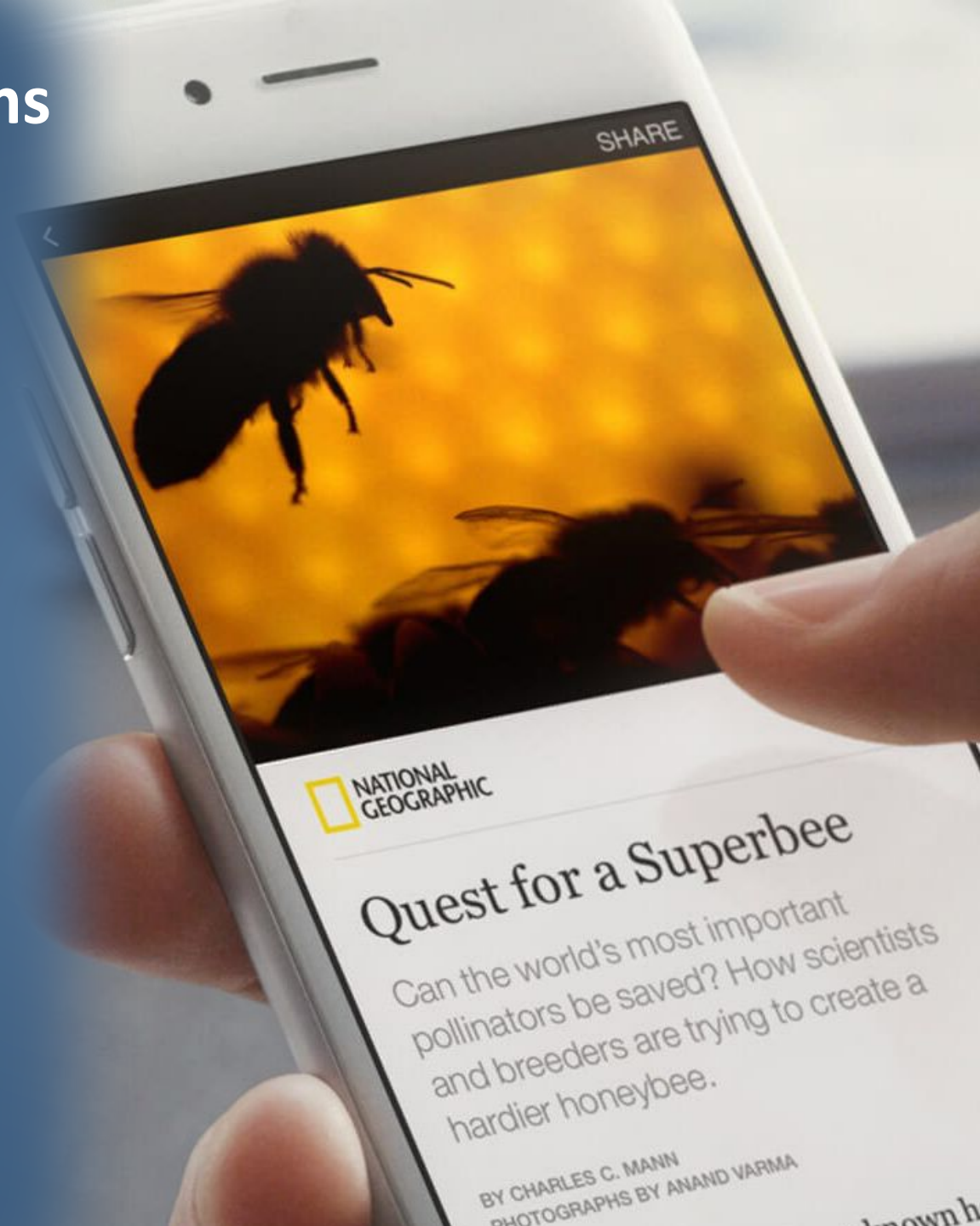


What is a Distributed Platform?



Distributed platforms

- Google AMP
- Google Newsstand
- Facebook Instant Articles
- Apple News
- Snapchat Discover
- Twitter
- Twitter Moments
- Etc.



Publisher participation

- Many publishers are participating, but most don't really have a strategy
- Some platforms are more publisher friendly
- Publishers want more data to make decisions
- How to allocate resources?
- Who “owns” the user?

TOW Center for Journalism

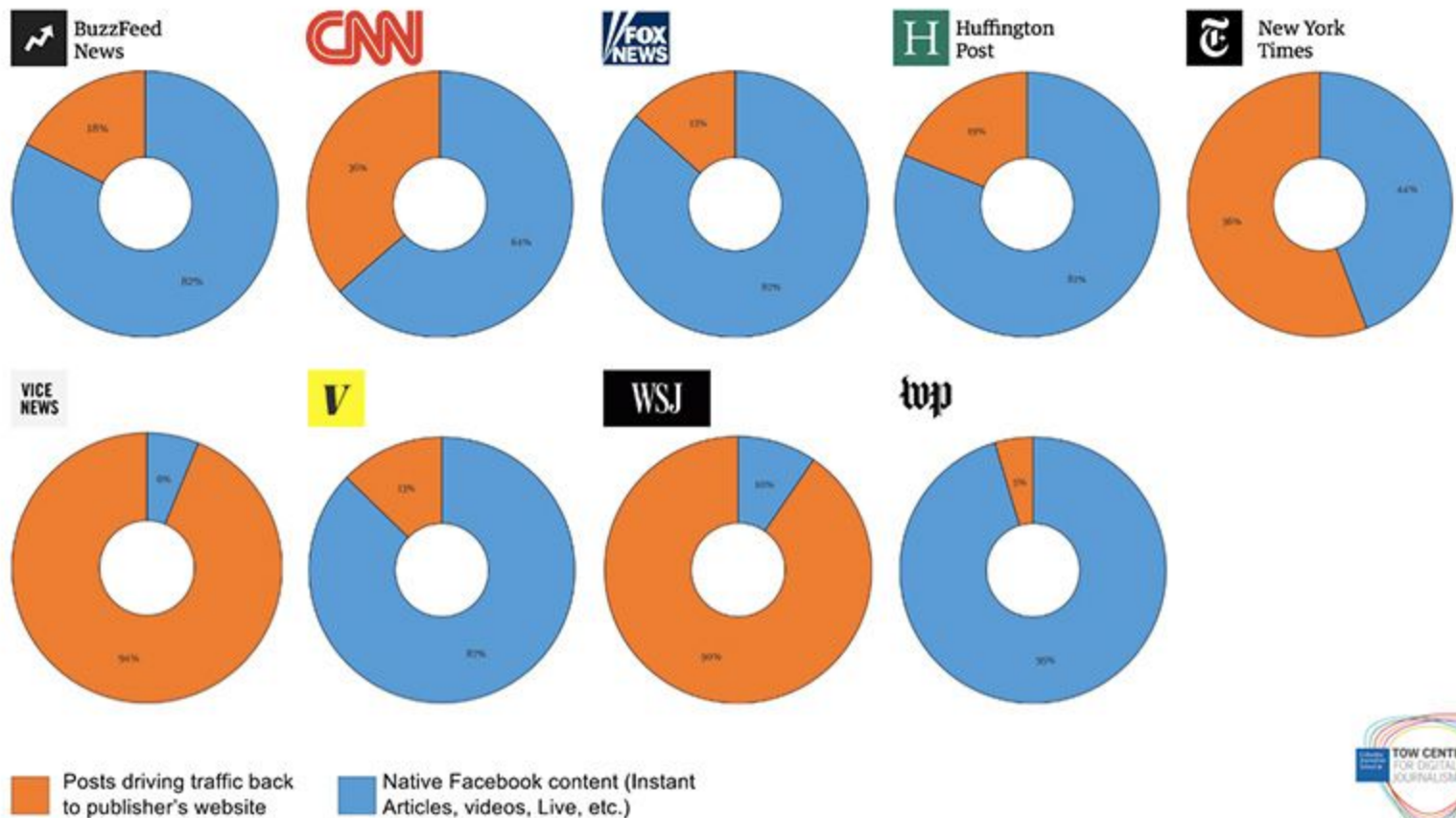


Distributed platforms

																						Platforms used by publisher
	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	19/21
	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	19/21
	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●		●		●	●		●	16/21
	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	19/21
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	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	18/21
Publishers on platforms	9/9	6/9	9/9	8/9	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/9	9/9	4/9	6/9	4/9	8/9	7/9	5/9	7/9	7/9	9/9	9/9	3/9	9/9	

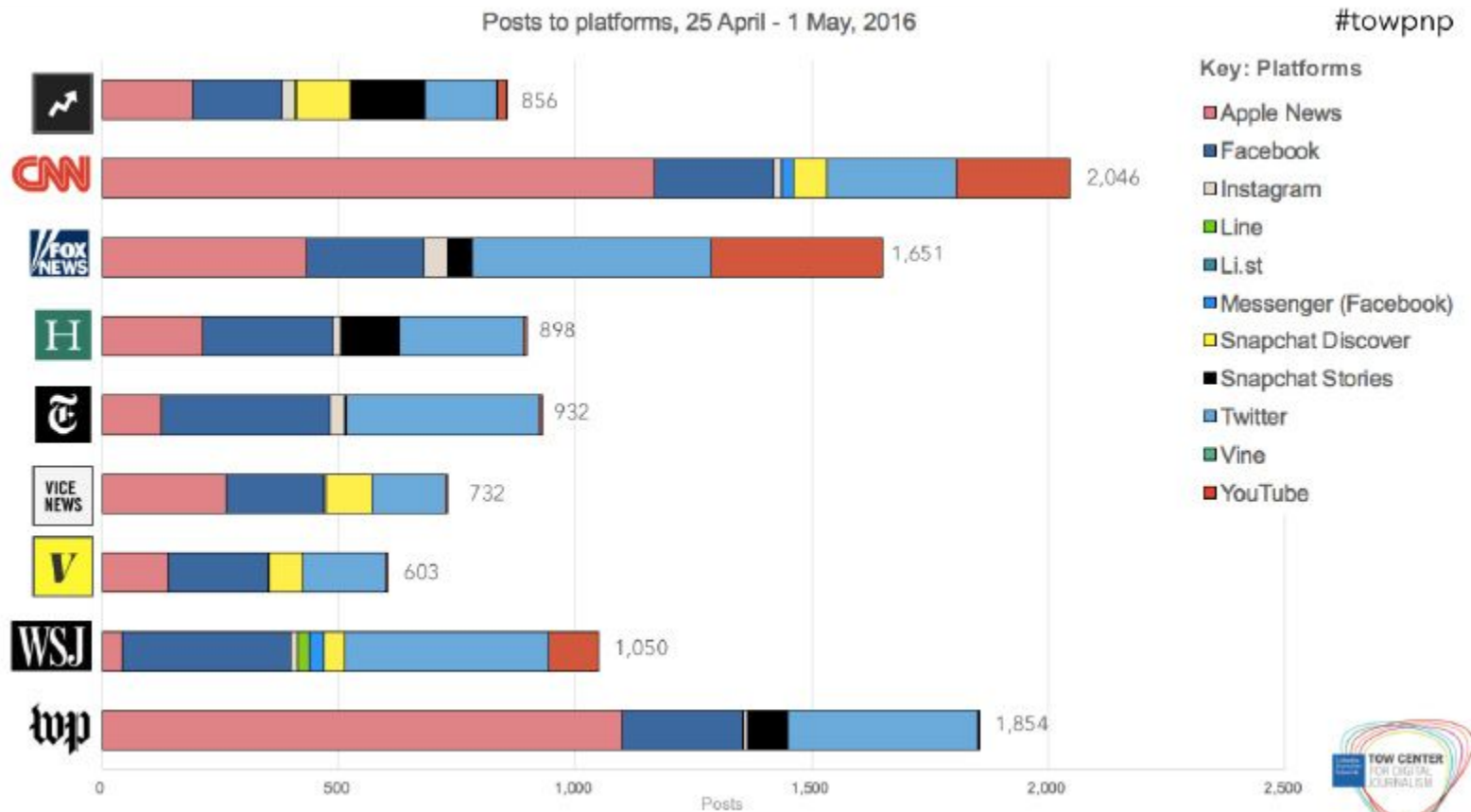
TOW Center for Journalism

Distributed platforms



TOW Center for Journalism

Distributed platforms



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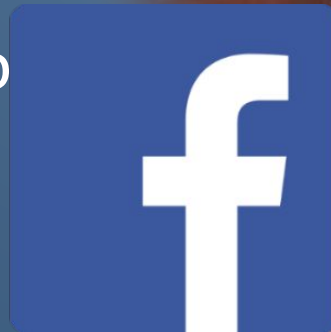
Platform overview



Facebook Instant Articles

What is it?

A Facebook feature that makes items in the Facebook news feed (on Facebook app on smartphones - for now) load nearly instantly. All items are hosted and served from Facebook servers.



Facebook Instant Articles

Benefit to users?

“Instant” news items in the Facebook news feed load almost instantly, so the user doesn’t have to wait to read the article on which they’ve clicked. Improved user experience = more user clicks.



Facebook Instant Articles

Benefit to publishers?

More user clicks and higher user engagement means more exposure, more click throughs (in theory) and more ad impressions for publishers.

Also, conversions to other services.



Facebook Instant Articles

How to monetize?

Facebook allows publishers to frame in their own ads and keep 100% of the revenue. Or, use Facebook's Audience Network ads and get 70% (maybe higher CPMs?).



Facebook Instant Articles

How to track?

Facebook allows publishers to include some of their own analytics - such as Google Analytics. Also, you'll get Facebook Insights reports.



Facebook Instant Articles

How to set it up?

BLOX CMS has a specialized Facebook Instant Articles feed. Create a front-end search, and trigger FIA mode. Note that you can use any search options (like site tag search) when creating the feed.



Facebook Instant Articles

Other insights?

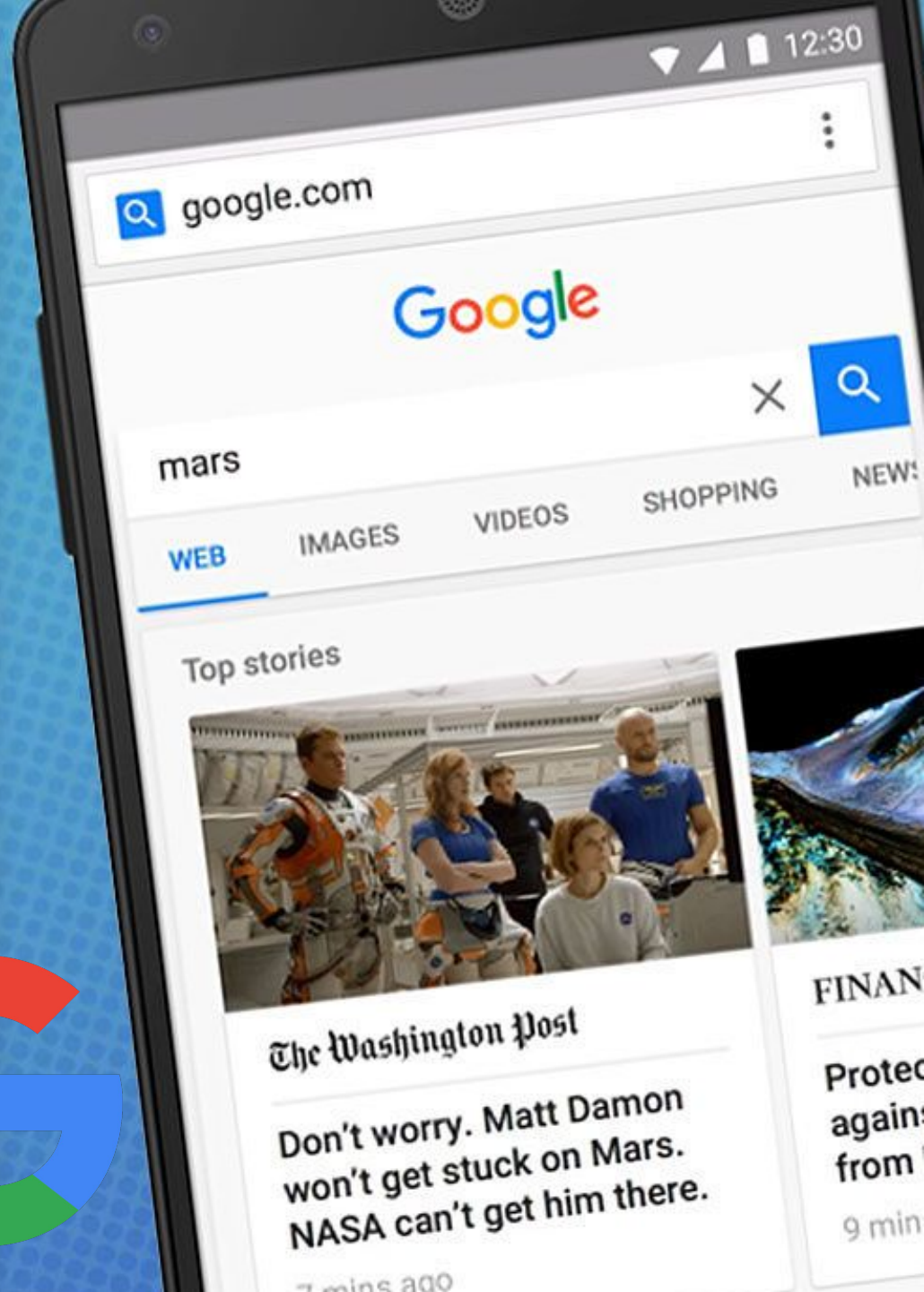
- Difficult to get approved
- No unapproved HTML in your articles
- Look at your current Facebook referral traffic on mobile and determine the impact



Google AMP

What is it?

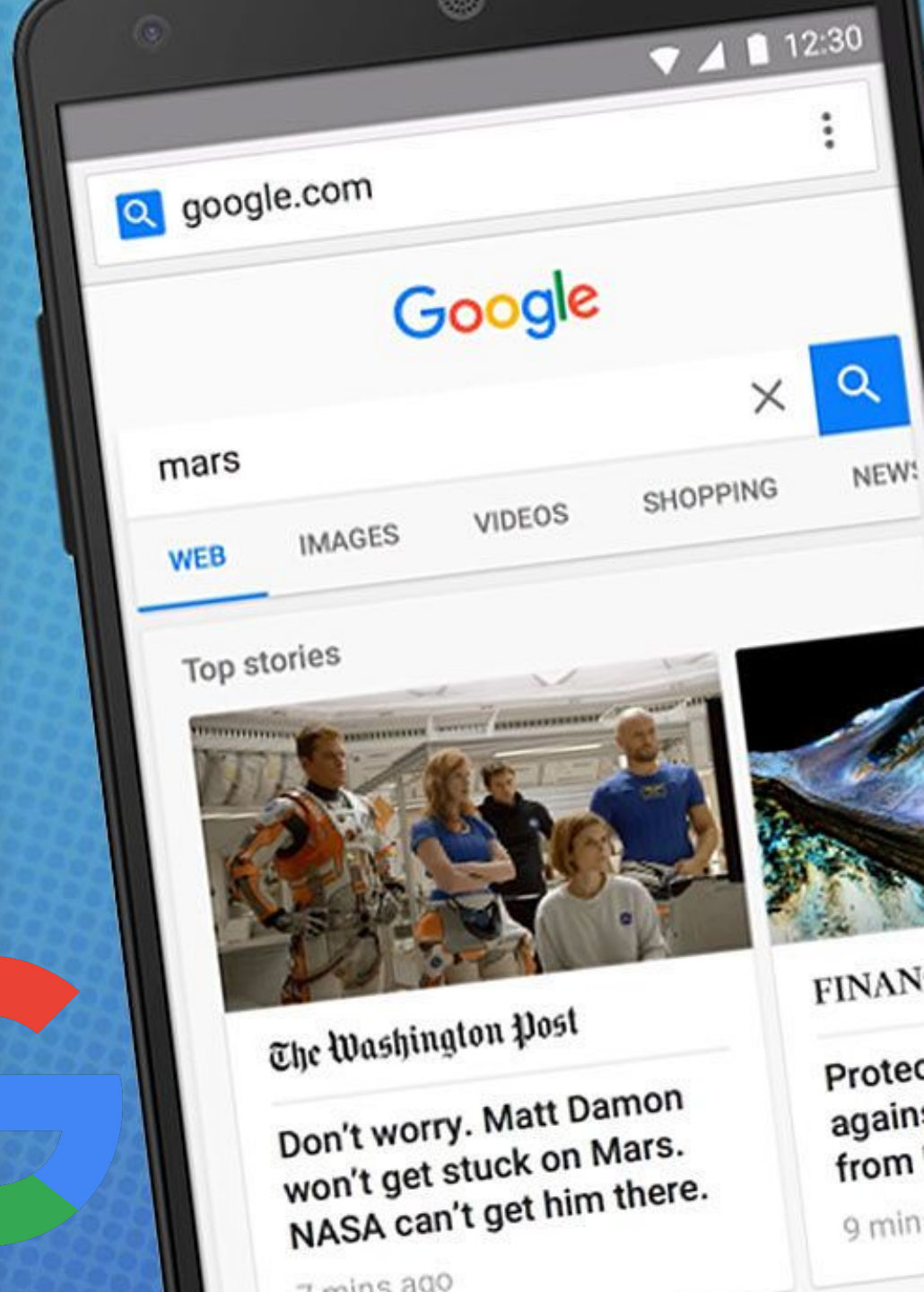
A specially-formatted HTML page that is hosted and served from Google's servers. Users click on the stories in Google's news feed and are given the "amp" article nearly instantly.



Google AMP

Benefits to user?

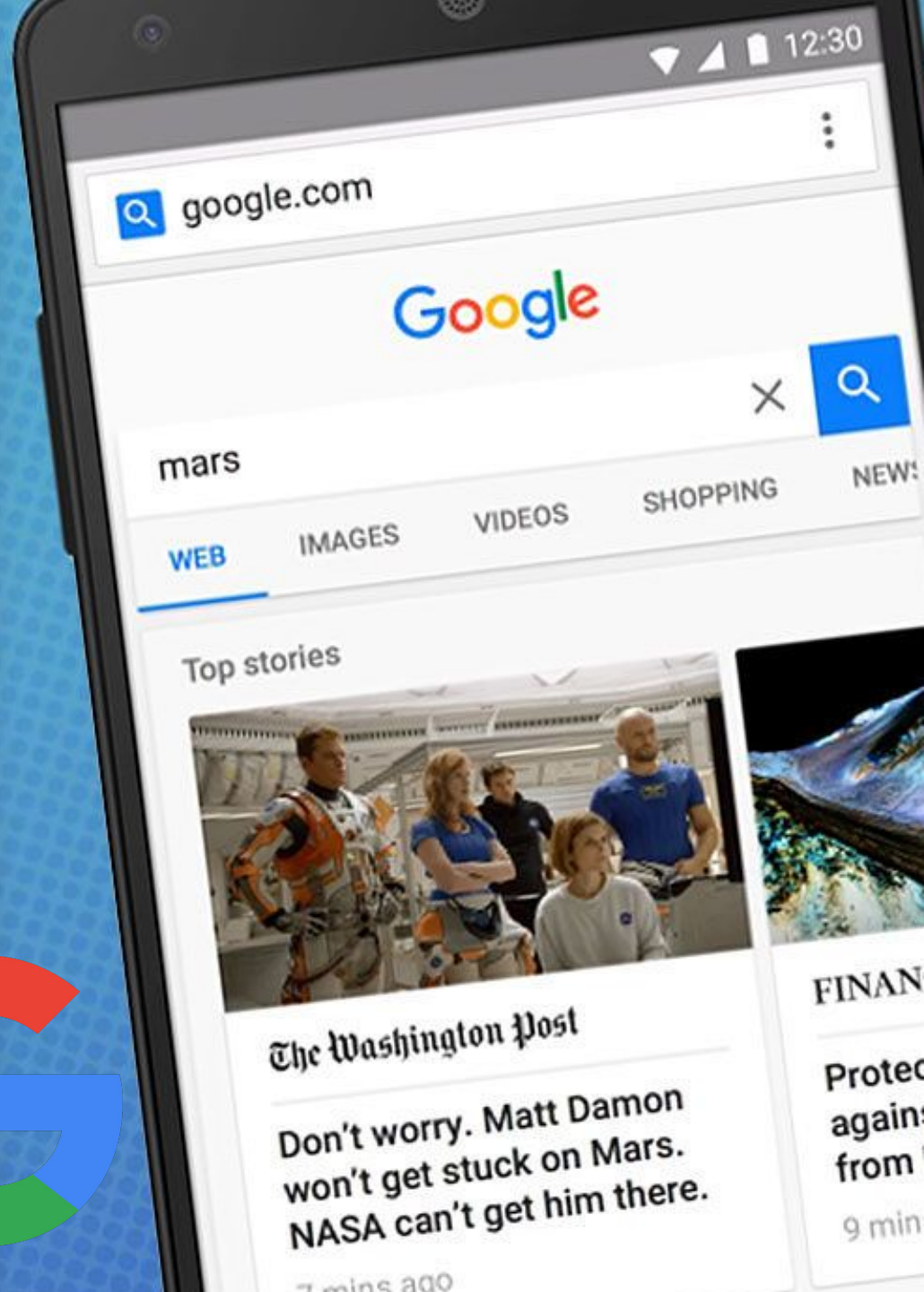
The page loads nearly instantly on mobile devices. Also, only “friendly” ads and tracking scripts are supported. Users can swipe quickly between multiple AMP articles from different publishers.



Google AMP

Benefits to publishers?

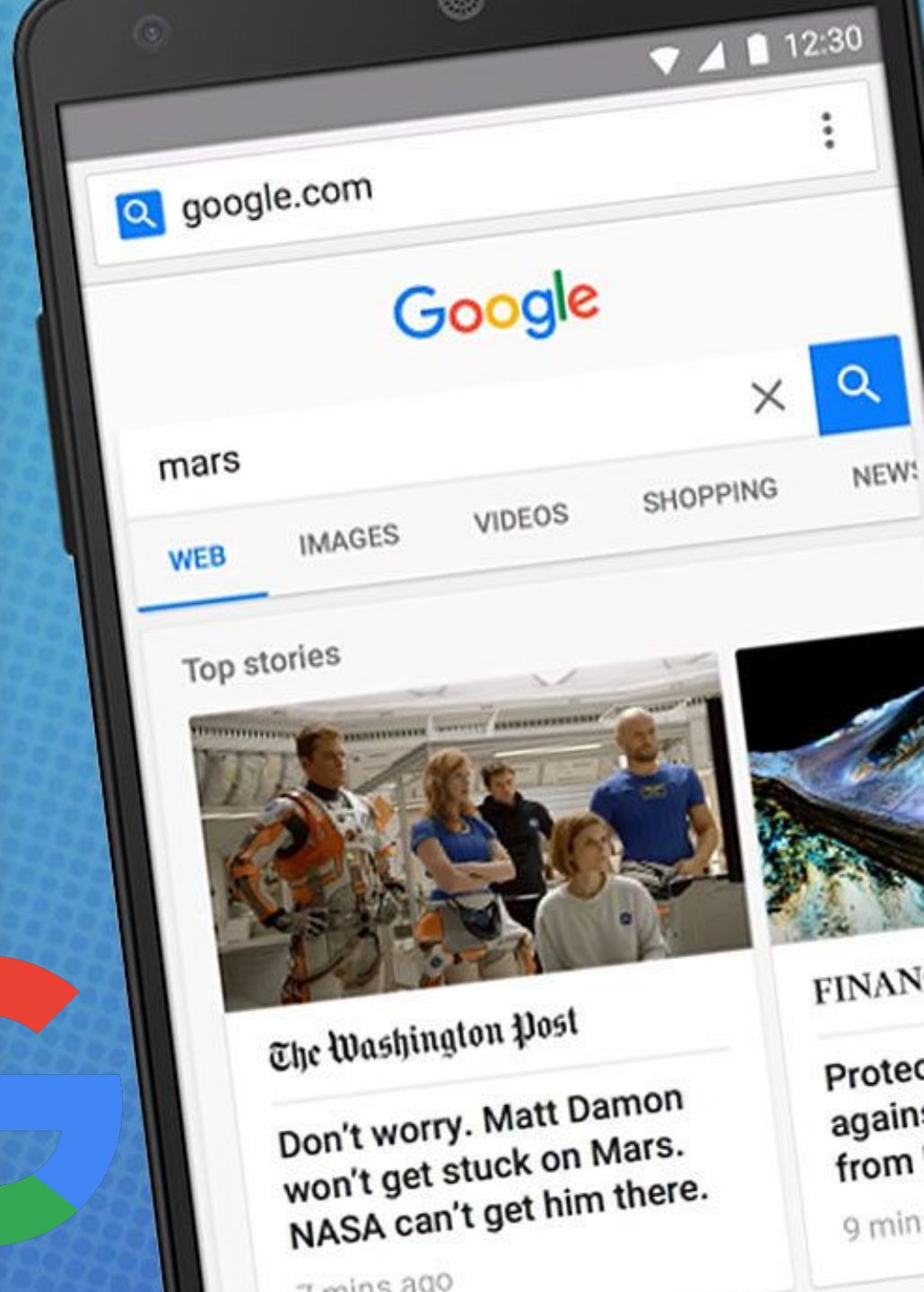
Google AMP pages get a special carousel on mobile news search results pages (there may be other exposure in the future). Increased user engagement could mean more pageviews and ad impressions.



Google AMP

How to monetize?

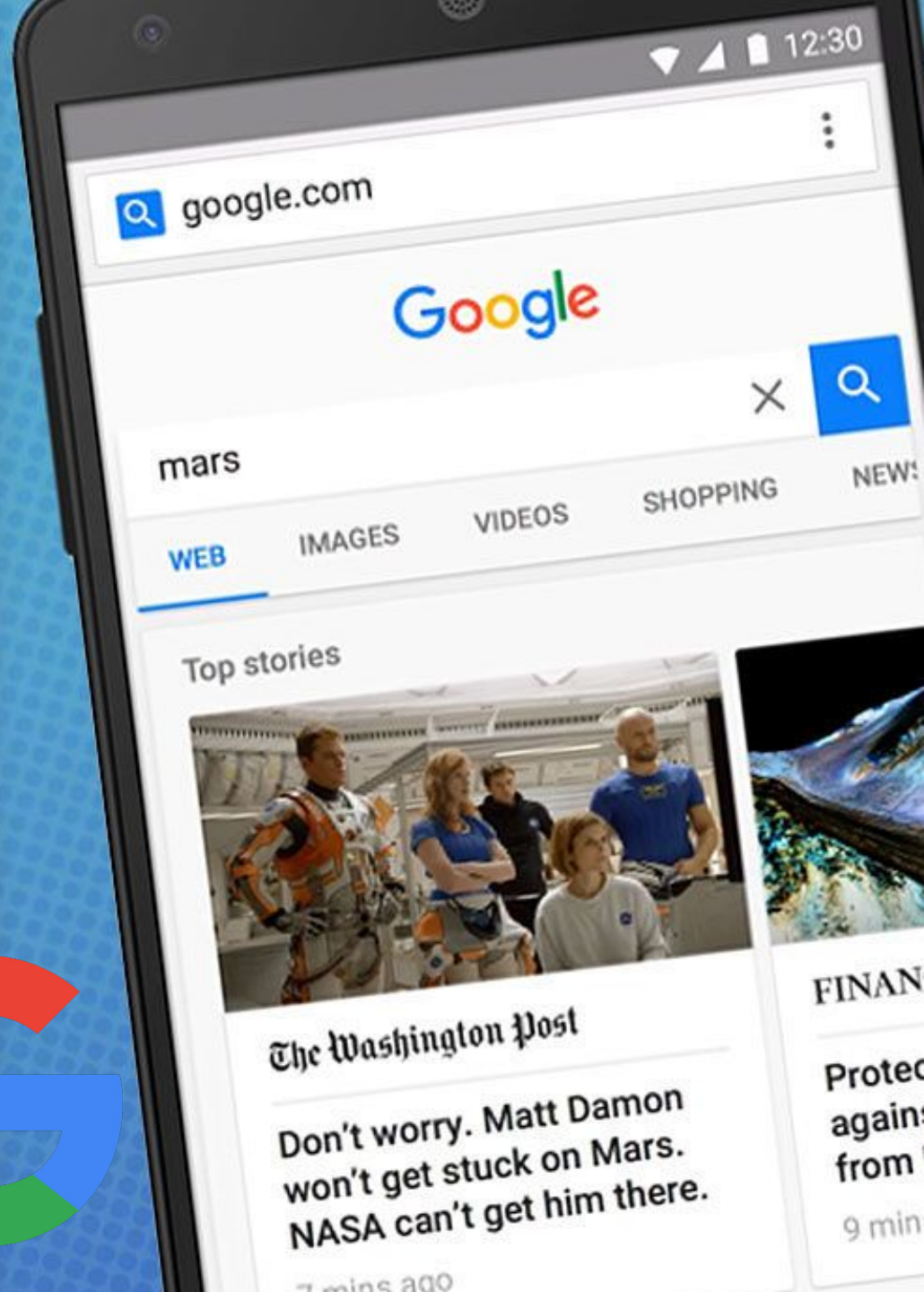
Google AMP allows DFP ad spots, and publishers get 100% of the revenue. Also, Outbrain and some other revenue-generating services may be allowed. Ad Manager ads are not supported at this time.



Google AMP

How to track?

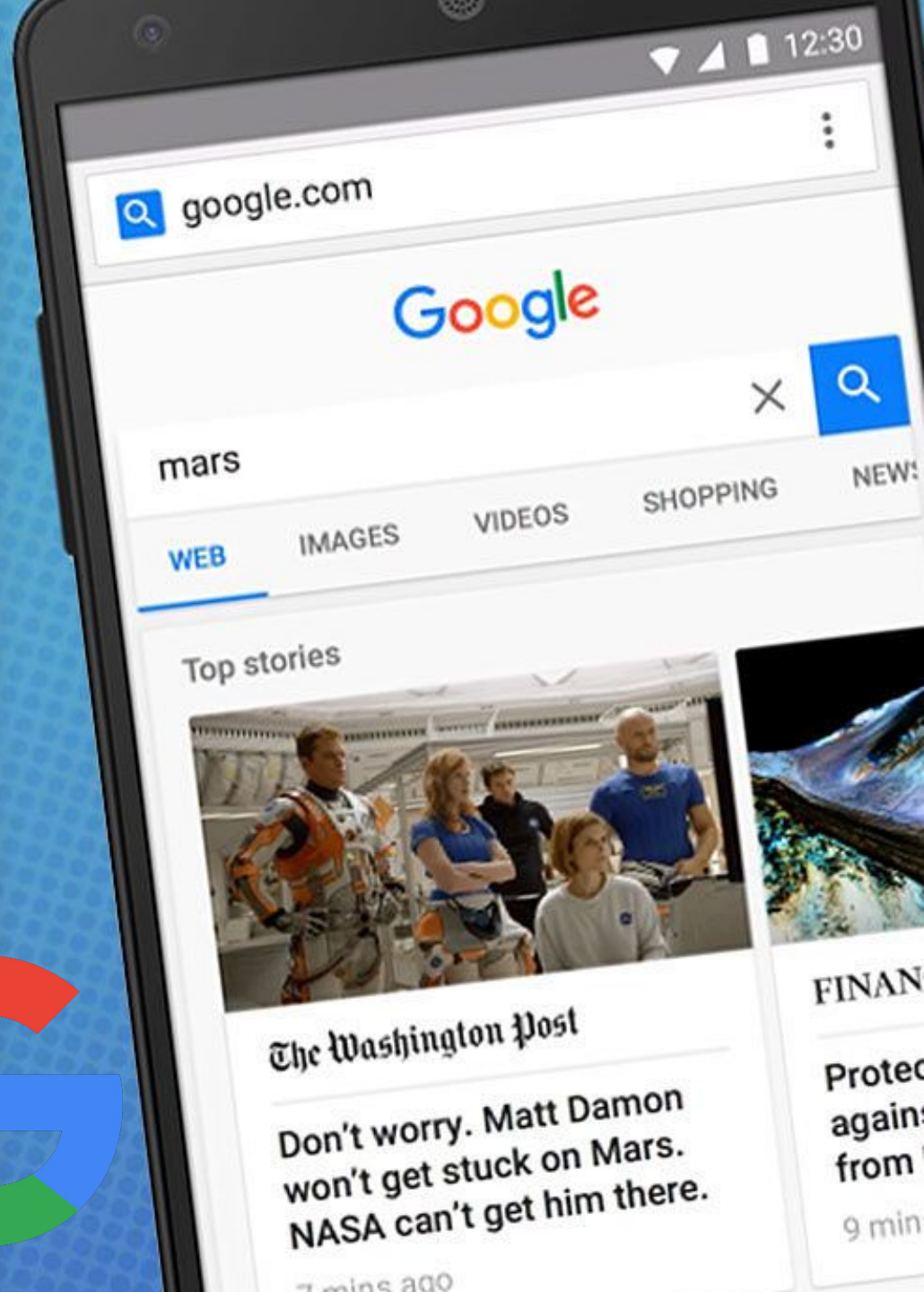
Google AMP allows Google Analytics tracking code, as well as code from other approved tracking services (such as Chartbeat). But, special Google-approved code must be used.



Google AMP

How to set up?

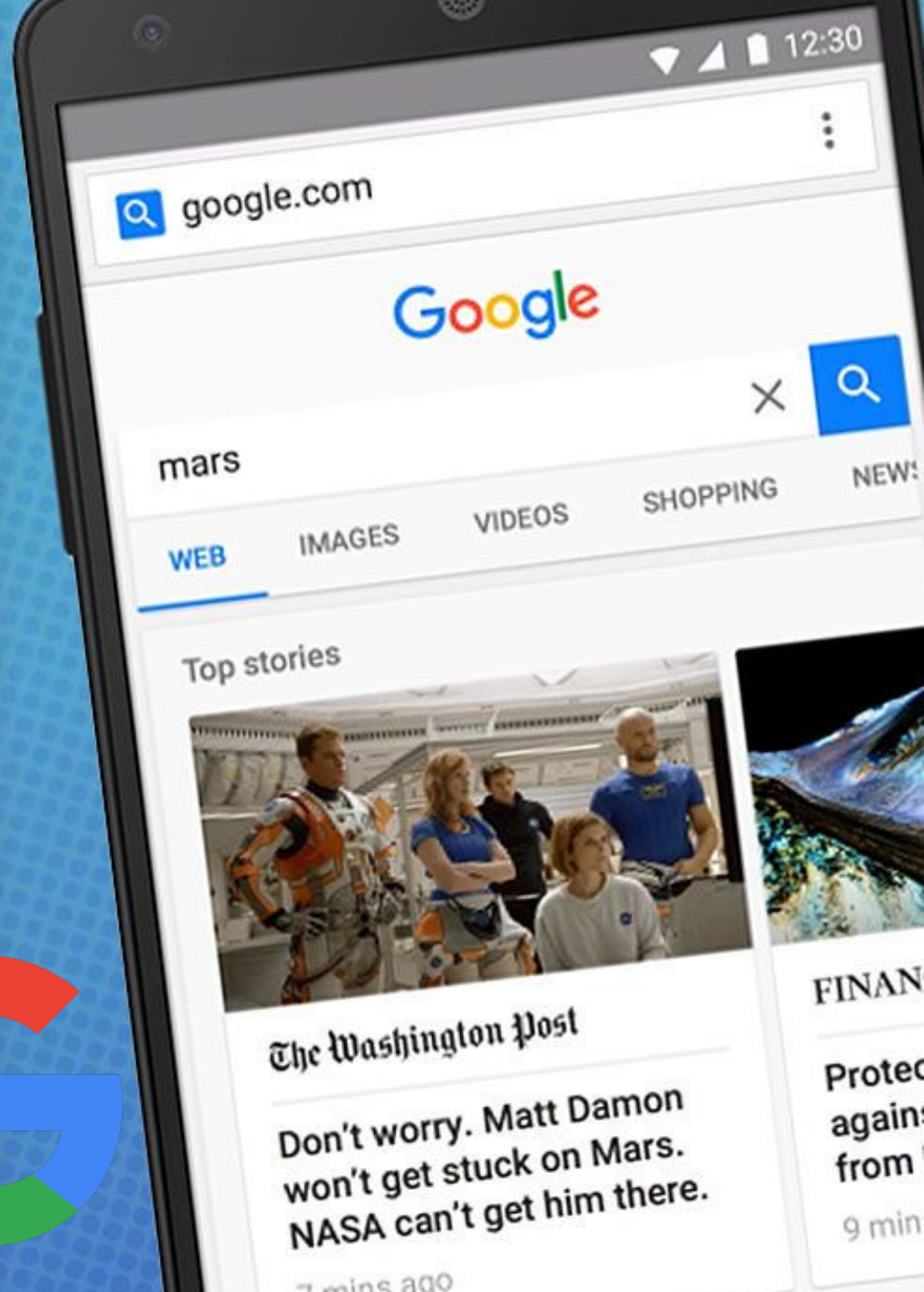
Google AMP can be enabled with a URL property on your whole site, or on a per-URL basis. Tie site to Google Webmaster Tools to see special reports specifically for Google AMP pages.



Google AMP

Other insights?

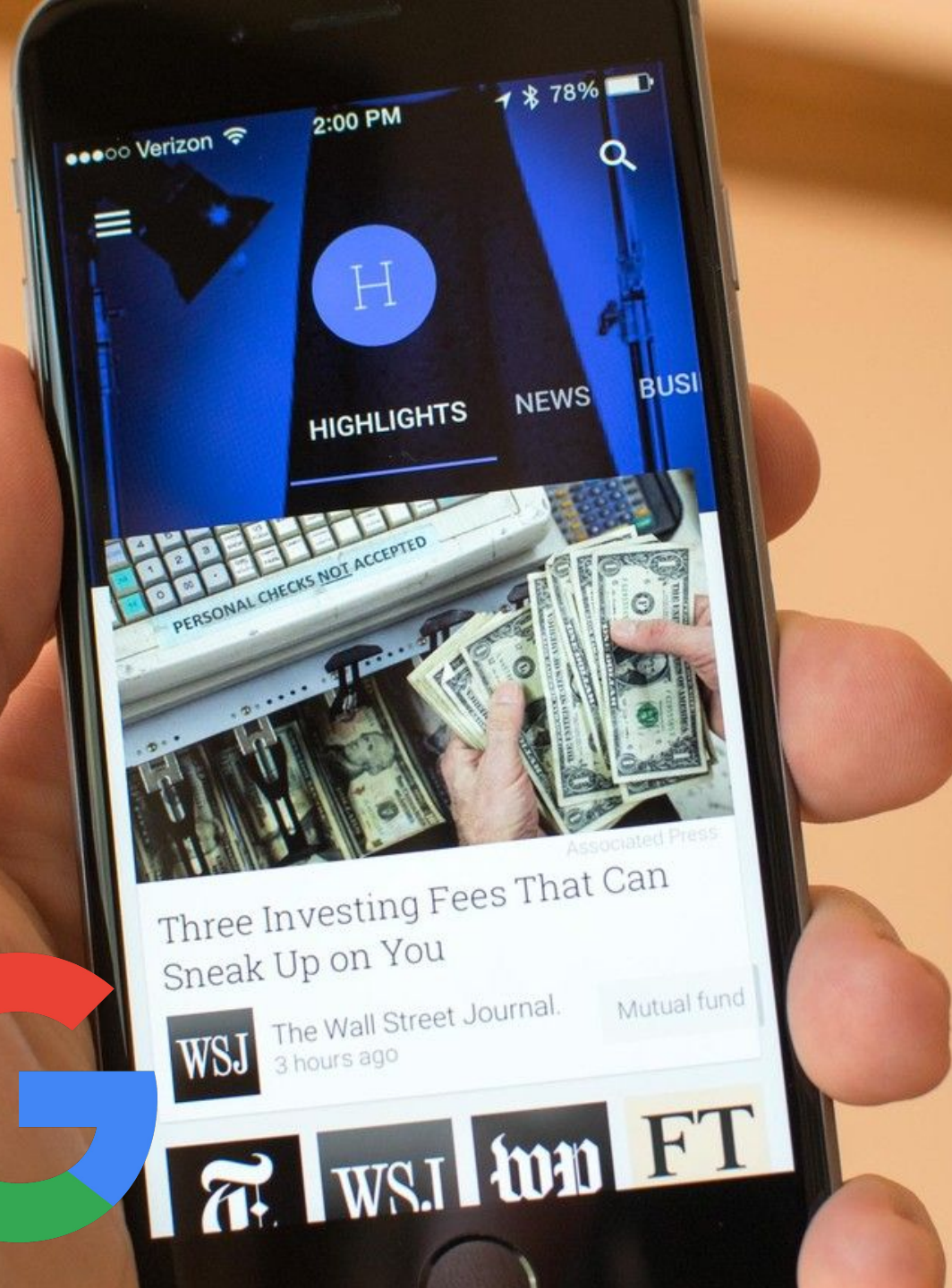
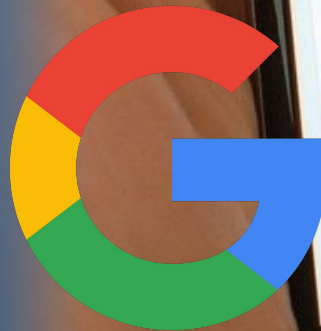
- HTML, CSS or JavaScript that is not specifically approved by Google will cause an error and the page will not be “AMP”ed.
- See these errors in your Google Webmaster Tools.



Google Newsstand

What is it?

Personalized news app for smartphones and tablets. Includes magazines, newspapers and online-only news websites.



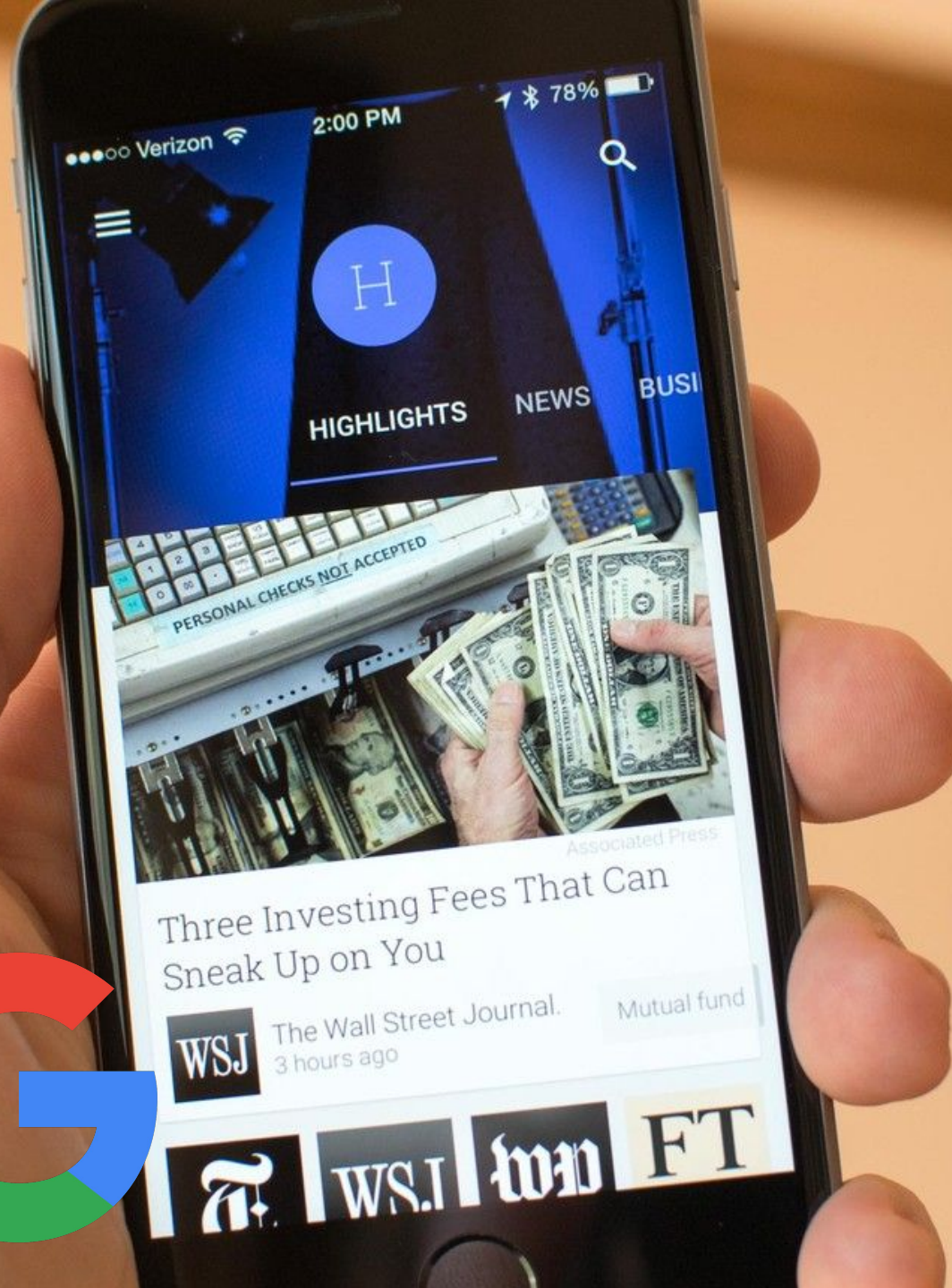
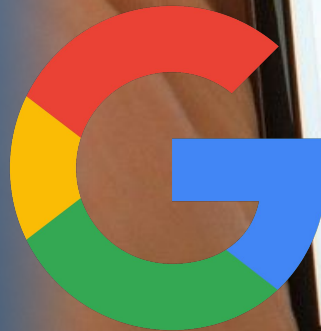
Google Newsstand

Benefits to user?

Personalized news by topic or publication.

Also, can recommend news based on reading habits.

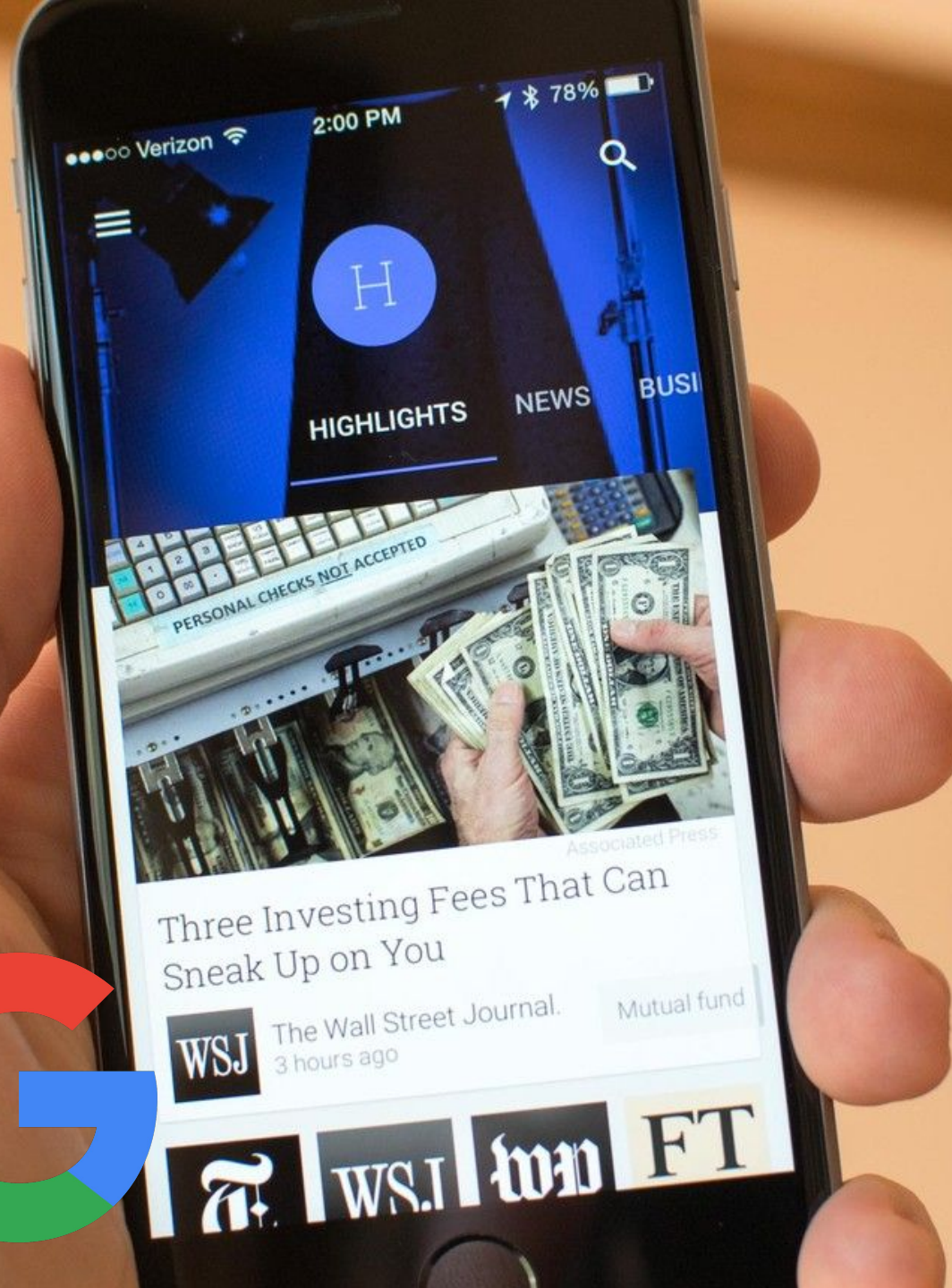
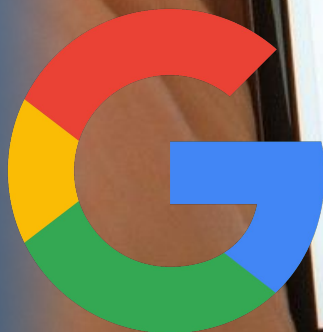
Subscription in-app is very user friendly, and all pages are served nearly instantly.



Google Newsstand

Benefits to publishers?

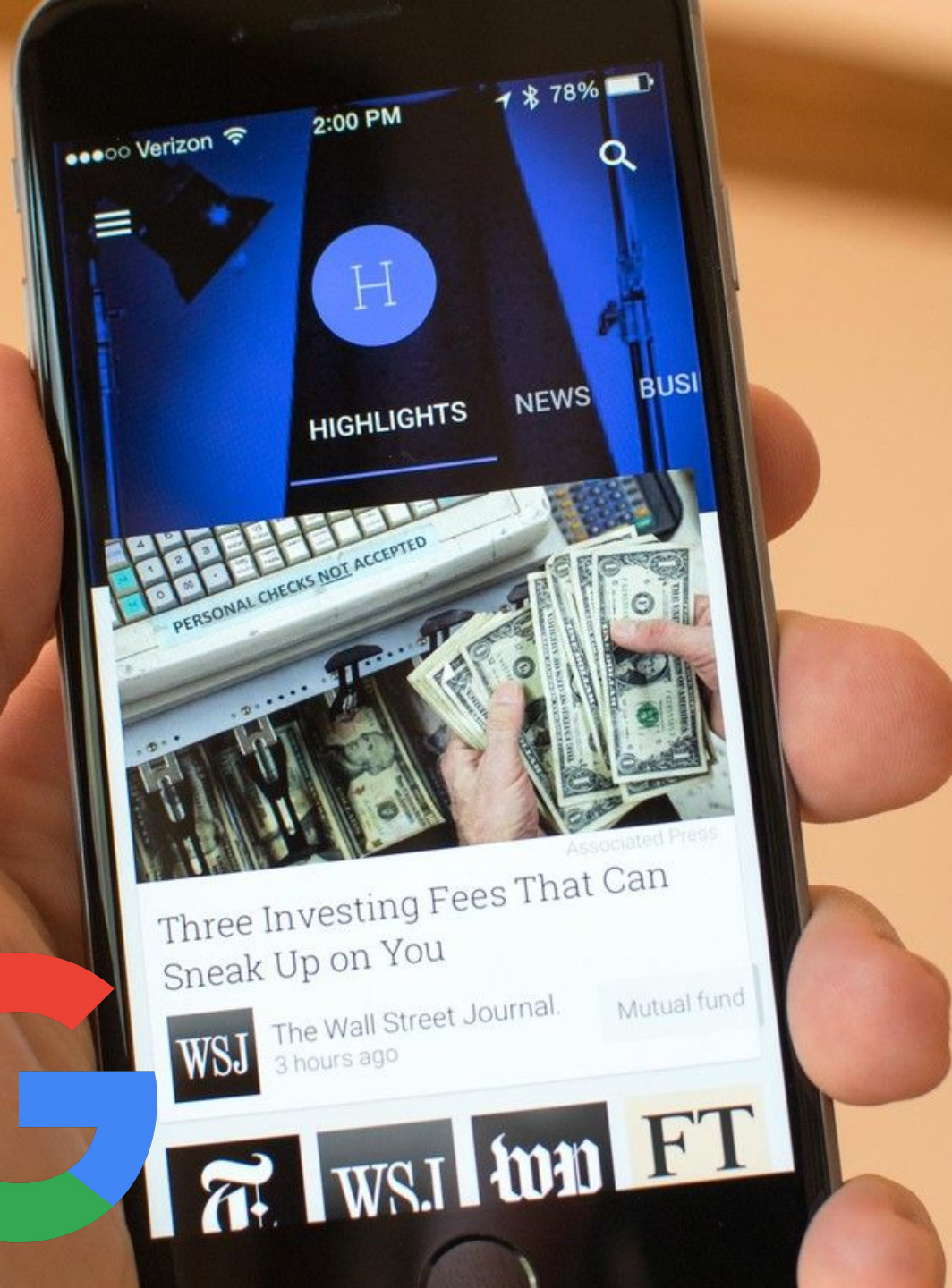
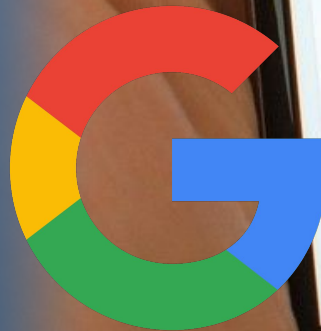
News may be exposed to unduplicated user base of heavy news readers. Subscription model plus ads helps bring in revenue. These readers have very high user engagement and long user sessions (with multiple sources).



Google Newsstand

How to monetize?

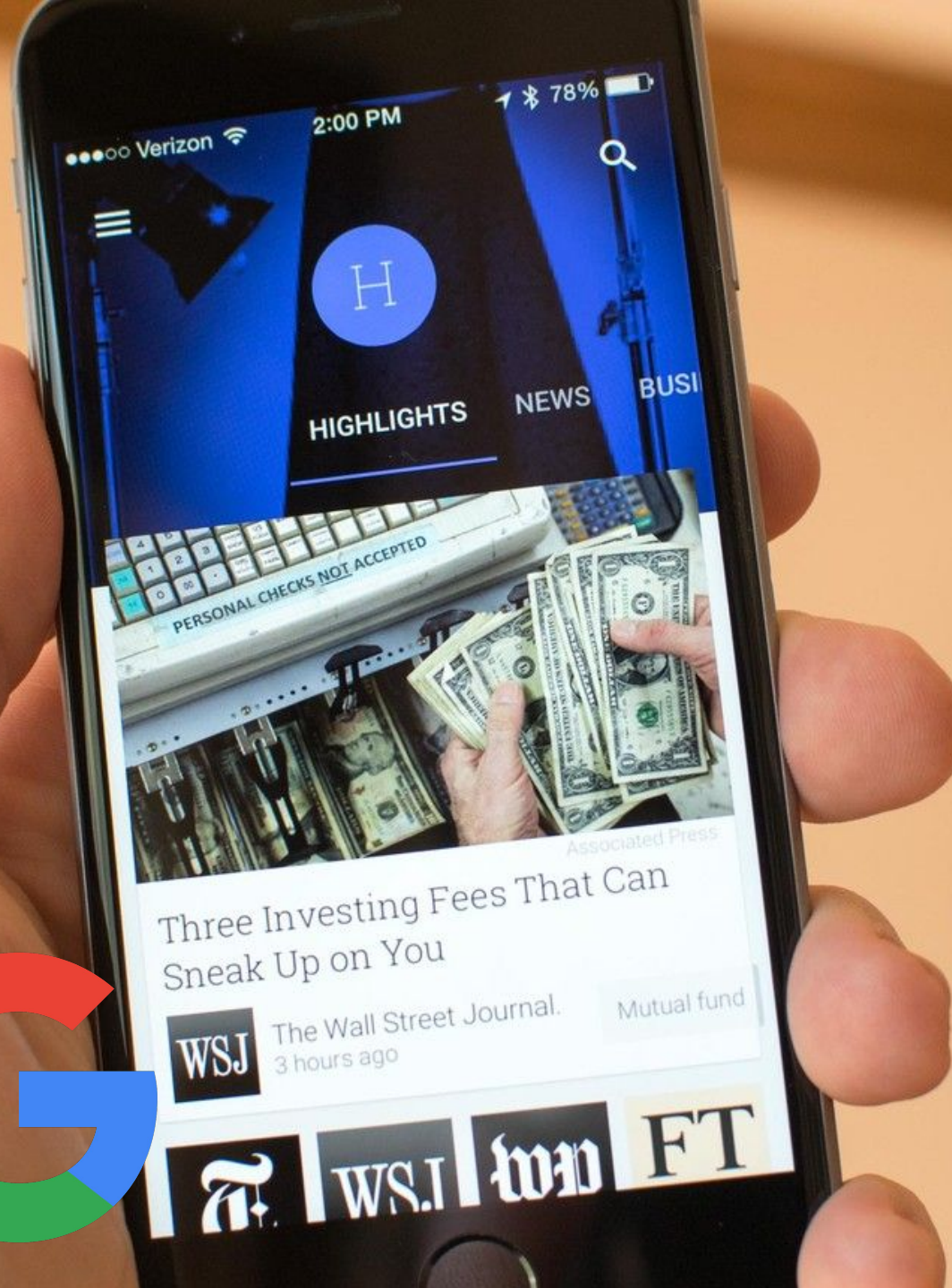
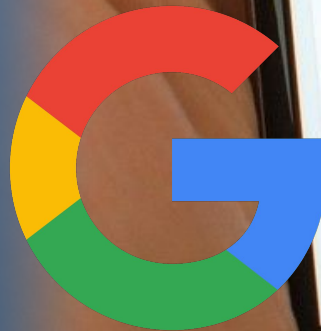
Google Newsstand supports Google DFP ad spots. Also, publishers can get revenue from the subscription model.



Google Newsstand

How to track?

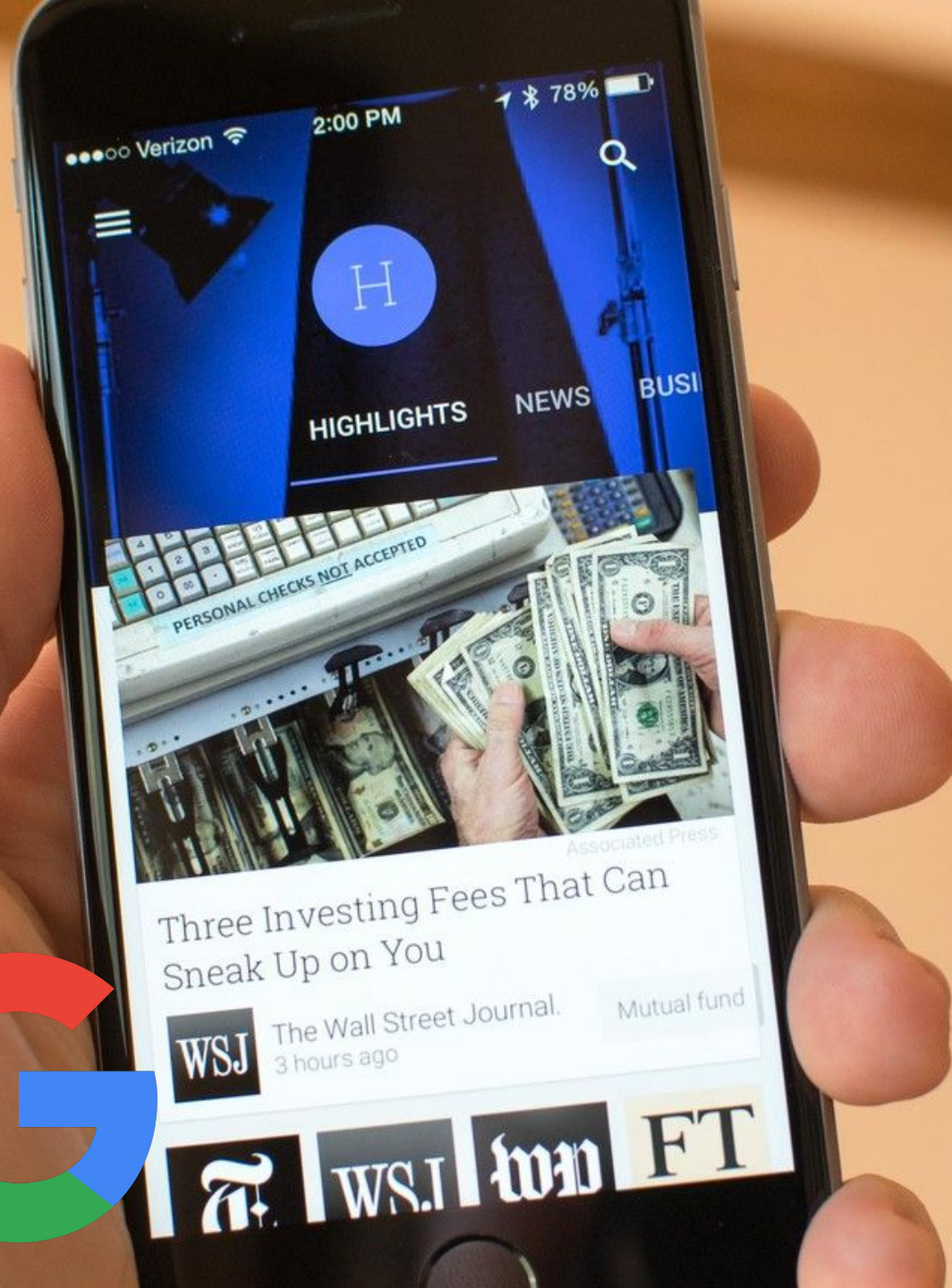
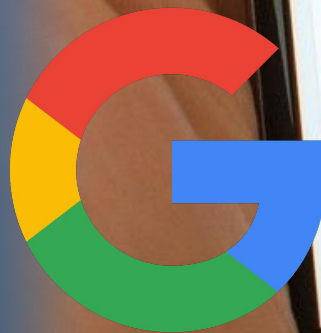
Google Newsstand supports Google Analytics, under a path with that always starts with “magazines.”



Google Newsstand

How to set it up?

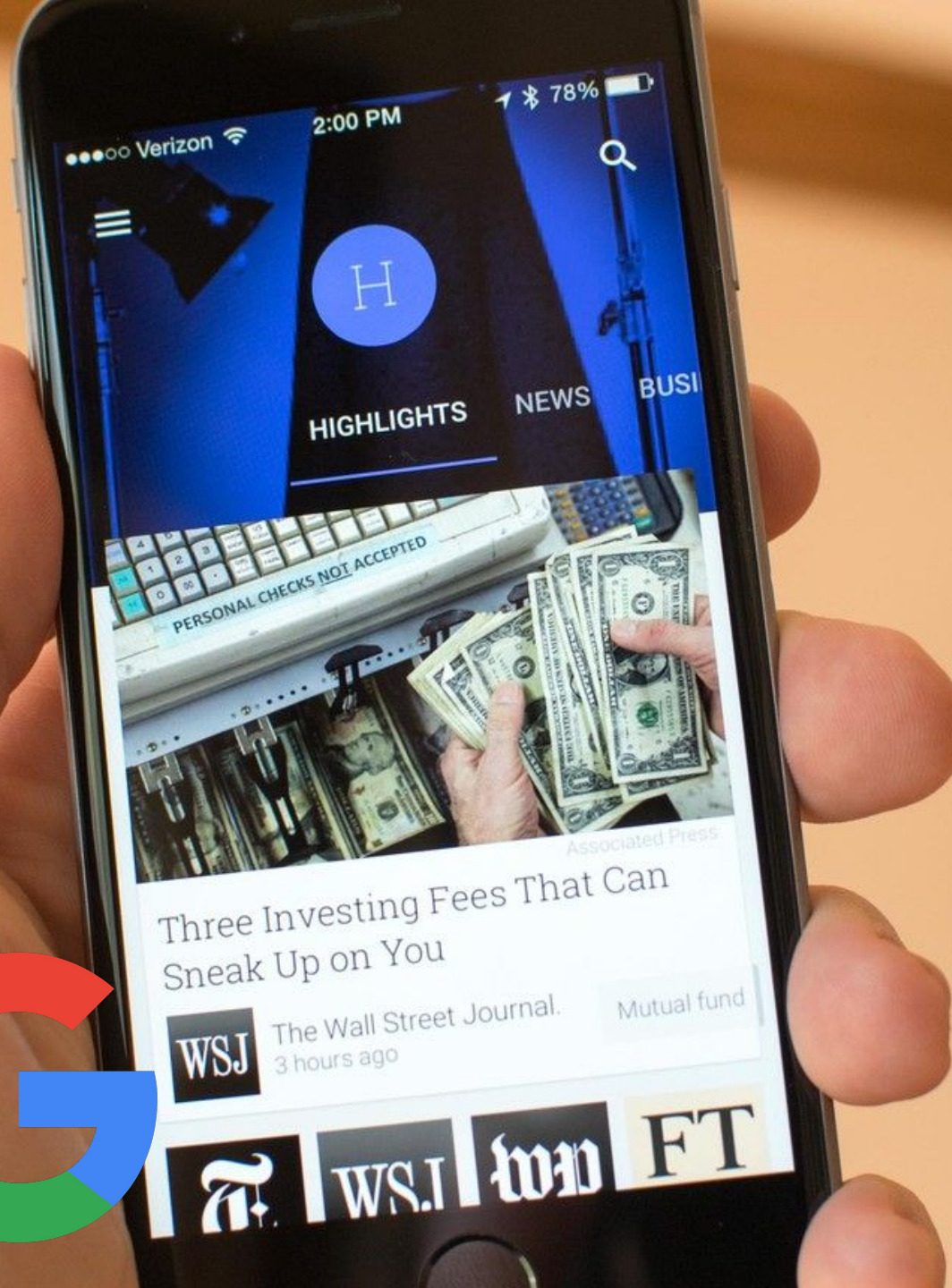
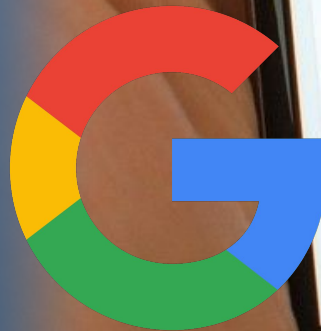
BLOX CMS has a specialized feed specific to Google Newsstand. Simply create a search on the front-end and configure it for Google Newsstand.



Google Newsstand

Other insights?

- Audience mostly unduplicated between web and other native apps.
- High pageviews per session.
- May get additional traffic when a specific story is picked up and promoted.



Apple News

What is it?

Like Google Newsstand, it is a special native app but for iOS devices only. Allows personalization based on topic or publication, breaking news notification and a user-friendly iTunes subscription model.



Apple News

Benefits to user?

Apple news has a great user interface with notifications, bookmarks, photo galleries, video, animation, etc. Digital subscriptions handled with existing iTunes account.



Apple News

Benefits to publishers?

Mostly unduplicated new audience exposed to your content. News can be surfaced to new users automatically based on their browsing habits. Special graphics and animations can enhance your news.



Apple News

How to monetize?

Ads can be included if using the Apple News Format feed. Publishers keep 100% of the revenue from ads you sell, or 70% when Apple sells them for you.



Apple News

How to track?

Analytics are only available when using Apple News Format, and can be found in the Apple News Publisher administration.



Apple News

Hot to set up?

Currently, BLOX CMS does not support Apple News Format (though it is currently in development). You can use a standard RSS feed and sent it to Apple News, but will not get ads or analytics at this time.

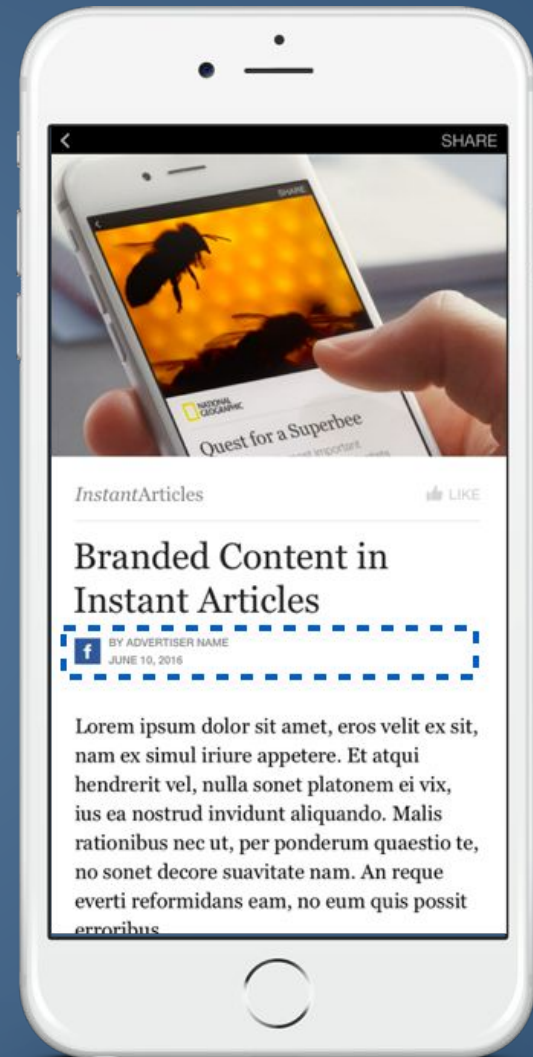


Distributed content strategies



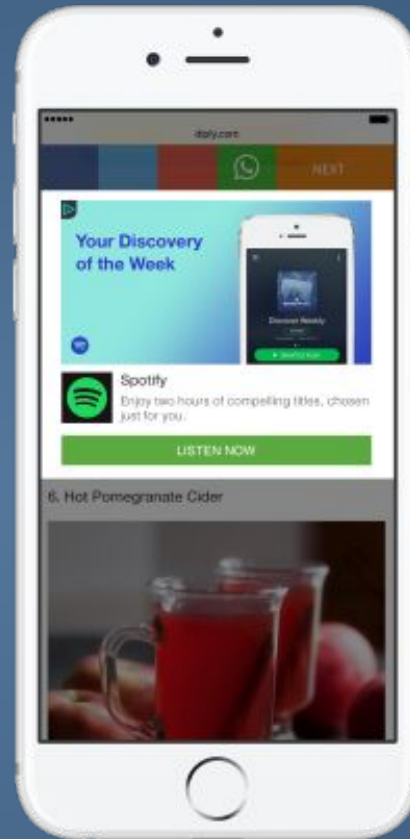
Distributed content business models

- Articles without ad monetization are no-brainers
 - Business press releases
 - Industry blogs
 - User content
 - Sponsored articles
- Provide as a service to businesses



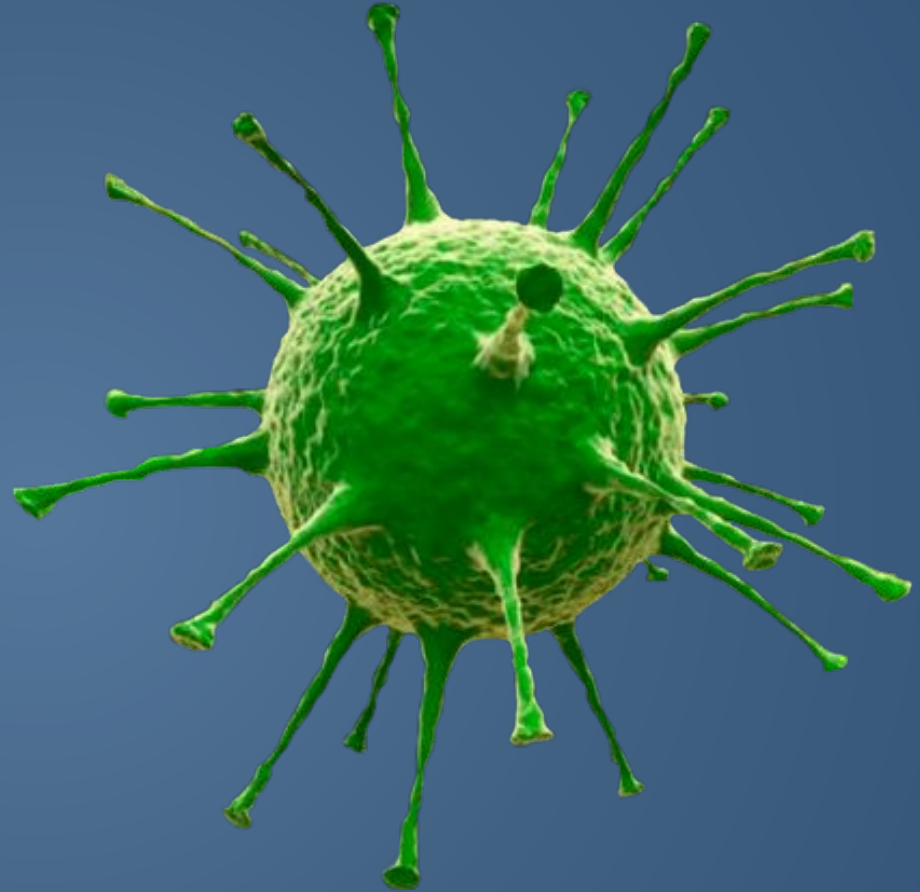
Distributed content business models

- What is your RPM (revenue per thousand pages) vs distributed platform revenue?
 - In theory, user engagement and pageviews per session can be higher, no evidence yet
- What are CPMs for Facebook Audience Network?



Distributed content business models

- Viral content versus local content?
 - Users have less patience with viral, transient content
 - Local, non-commodity content is worth waiting for and possibly seeing more ads



Distributed content business models

- Convert users from a distributed pageview to other models
 - Additional pageviews
 - Sign up for email newsletter
 - Sign up for print subscription
 - Provide email address
- Distributed content can be considered “marketing” or promoting your brand



Distributed content business models

- Create an article navigation strategy to drive users to more pages
- Users enter through social or search, and no longer go to the homepage
- Content discovery helps convert one pageview into more



Takeaways

- Distributed platforms are being built to improve user experience, and to help software companies control the user
- There are several distributed platforms for media organizations to discover
- Your company should consider its goals and business model when making a decision about distributed platforms



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