

# Mark Barilla

Selected Google Projects

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Staff Interaction Designer  
User Experience Design Manager

Boston, MA

[mbarilla.com](http://mbarilla.com)

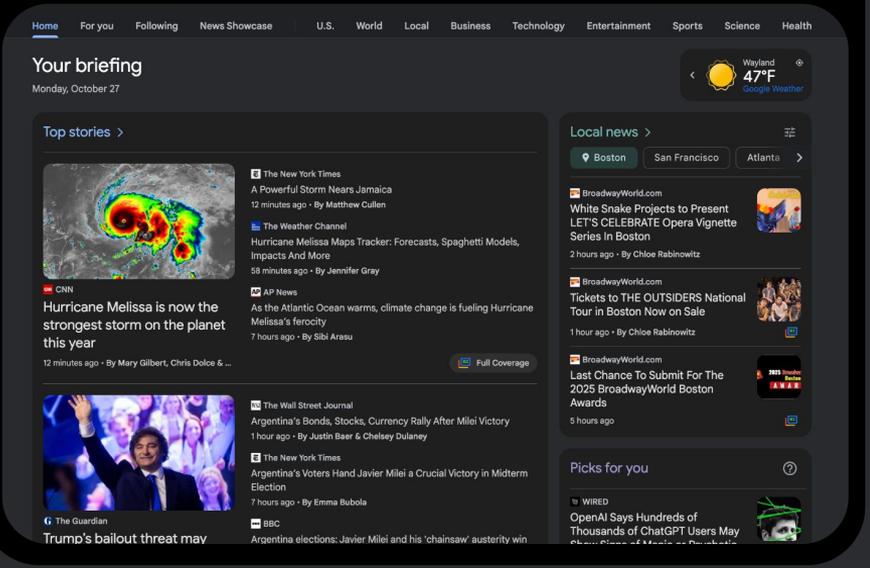
[mbarilla@gmail.com](mailto:mbarilla@gmail.com)

# Google News

## Desktop Redesign →

2022

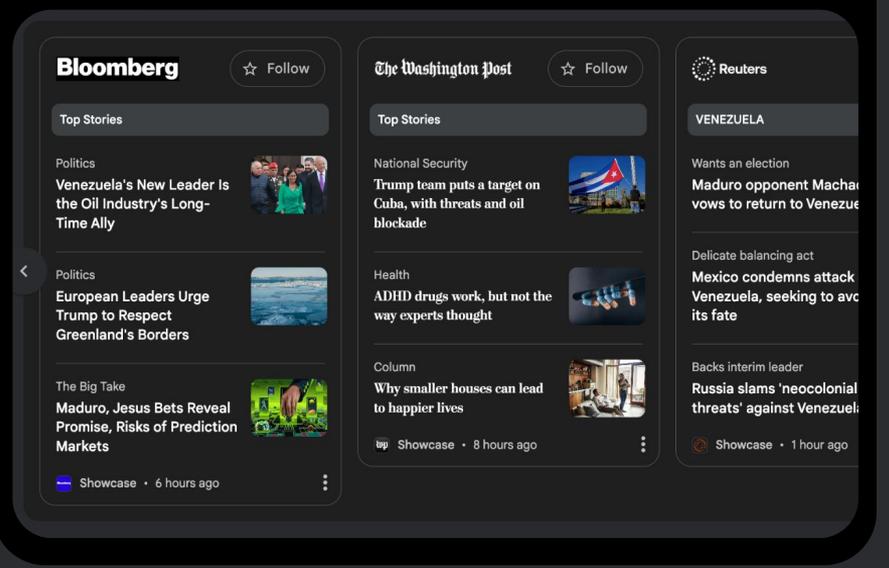
Click for full case study



## Google News Showcase →

2020

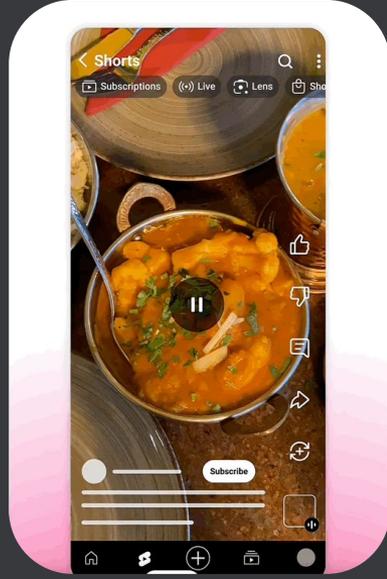
Click for full case study



# Google Lens Integrations

## Lens on Youtube Shorts

2025

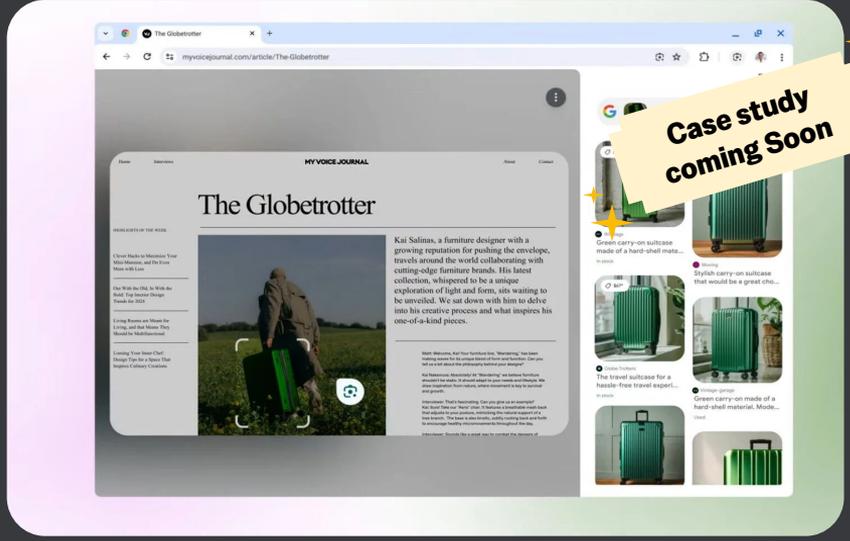


Case study coming Soon

[Watch: How to use Lens on Youtube Shorts →](#)

## Lens on Chrome

2024



Case study coming Soon

[Read: How to Use Google Lens in a Chrome Browser →](#)

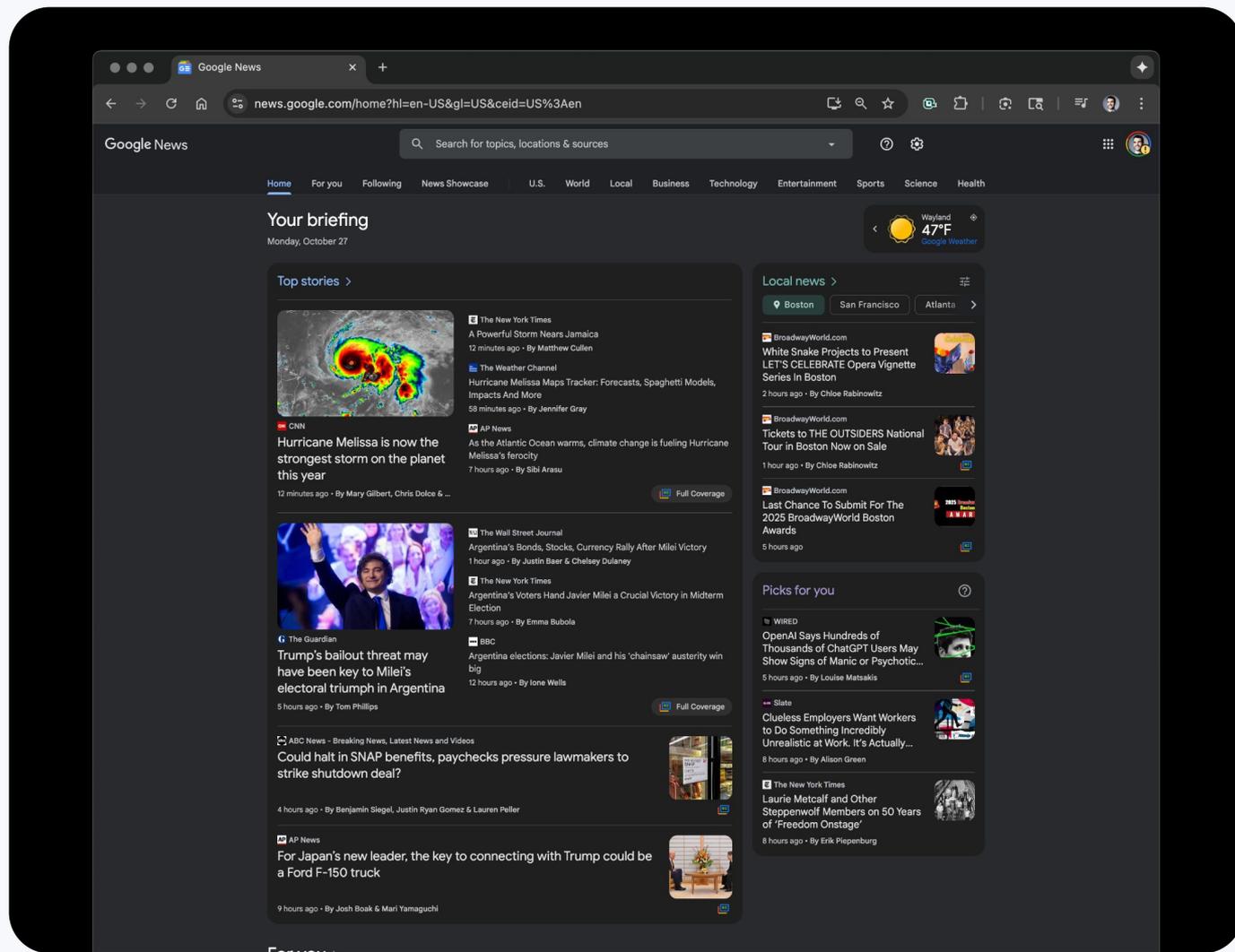
2022

# Google News Desktop Redesign

Transforming a dated aggregator into a comprehensive and structured news experience for millions of users across 120+ global content editions.



Mark Barilla



## Project Snapshot

# Google News Desktop



Link: [news.google.com](https://news.google.com)

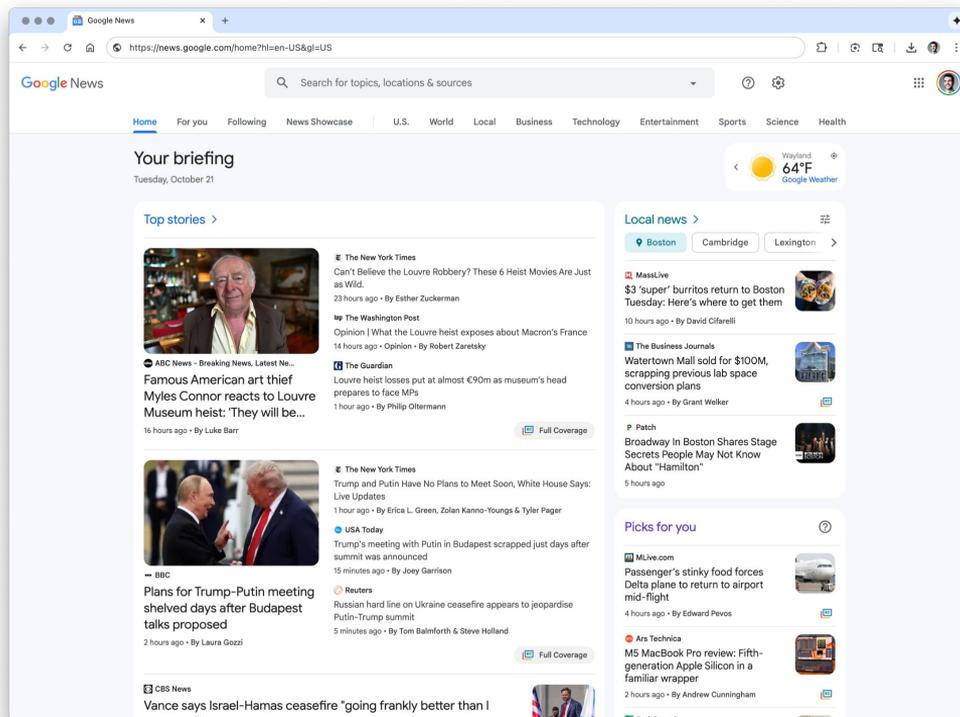
Role: UX Design Lead, Google News Apps

### Project responsibilities:

- Led end-to-end experience, visual and interaction design for desktop platform
- Directed team of 5 multidisciplinary interaction designers, researchers, writers, and visual designers
- Represented design strategy to executive stakeholders and cross-functional partners
- Partnered with Material Design and Search teams on visual language evolution

### Outcome:

- **Achieved 10%+ lift in desktop web DAUs**



# Reimagining news discovery for desktop

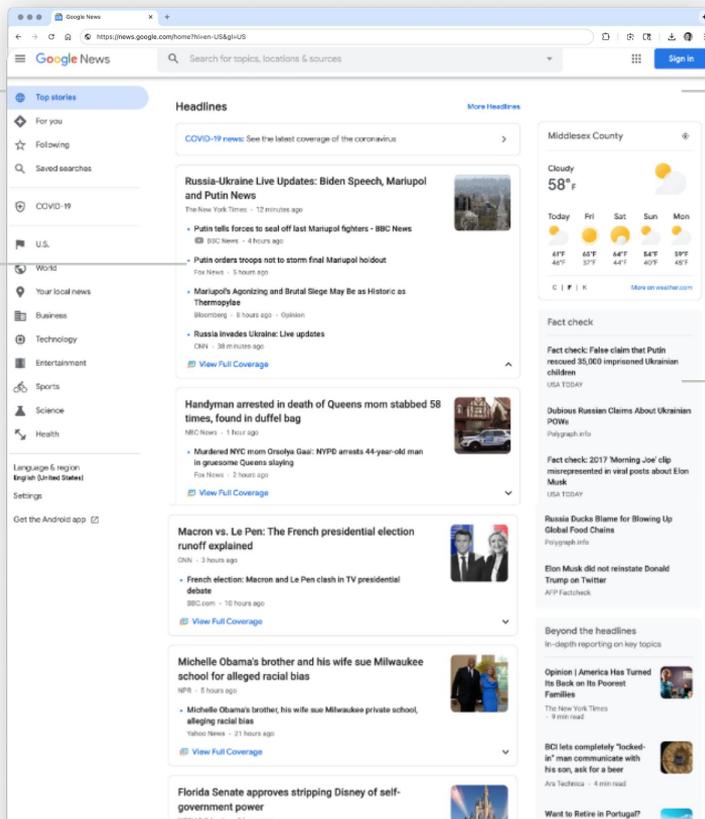
The legacy Google News struggled with information overload and a cluttered, outdated interface.

Sidebar navigation not common on news sites

Content strategy did not utilize larger screen space and deemphasized local news

## Key considerations

- 140+ international content editions
- Millions of daily active users
- First consumer-facing Google web product to implement Google Material 3 (GM3)
- Pioneering visual language for news content at Google scale



Product requirements mandated adoption of specific Material Design 3 features and principles, but many were undefined on web

Requires clear distinction from Google Search while maintaining coherence with Google products more broadly



# Understanding desktop user needs

UXR uncovered new user behaviors and preferences specific to desktop which informed user goals and product features.

## 1. Ability to multitask

People turn to news while working, and expect to open new tabs, check work, compare stories, and research more in-depth, which are all easier on desktop

### User needs



### User goals

**Keep me caught up with what's going on in the world.**

Quick briefing of top stories

Clear hierarchy and scannable layout

## 2. Seeing more stories and context

Users appreciate the ability to dive deep into stories, and expect richer content and clearer hierarchy given larger screen space



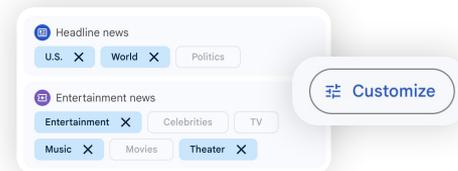
**Help me better understand a complex story.**

Full Coverage for multiple perspectives

Context and background information

## 3. Desire for more control

Users have strong preferences about topics they see and generally want more controls available, like tri-dot menus and shortcuts



**Show me news that is relevant to my interests.**

Personalized topic following

User control over feed customization

# Design principles

Principles emerged from research and informed our design decisions.

1

## Clarity over density

Use larger desktop space to prioritize information hierarchy and user understanding



2

## Control over algorithm

Pair algorithmically suggested content with clear customization controls



3

## Increase scannability of content

Use clear labels, content packaging and visual containment for structure and order



4

## Context beyond headlines

Surface the "why" and "who else is reporting" in addition to headlines



### For you >

Recommended based on your interests

**The Guardian**  
Hurricane Melissa: a visual guide to Jamaica's strongest storm since 1851  
1 hour ago • By Oliver Holmes

**The Spruce**  
This is the Color Trend You'll Soon See Everywhere—And It'll Make Your Space Look Much Bigger  
2 days ago • By Cori Sears

**Yahoo Finance**  
Analyst Explains Why Alphabet (GOOGL) is 'Incredibly Inexpensive' AI Stock  
6 hours ago • By Fahad Saleem

### Local news >

**Boston** San Francisco Atlanta >

**The Business Journals**  
These office leases are the biggest in Greater Boston this year  
10 hours ago • By Grant Welser

**Worcester Magazine**  
Not throwing away her shot: Worcester's Taylor Broadard in national tour of 'Hamilton'  
10 hours ago • By Richard Duckett

**Boston Real Estate Times**  
PAE Engineers Expands to Boston Amid Rising Demand for Sustainable Design  
4 hours ago

### Top stories >

**CNN**  
Hurricane Melissa is now the strongest storm on the planet this year  
10 minutes ago • By Mary Gilbert, Chris Dolce & Zoe Sottile

**WBAL-TV**  
Weather Talk: Take a closer look at Hurricane Melissa  
53 minutes ago • By Tony Pann

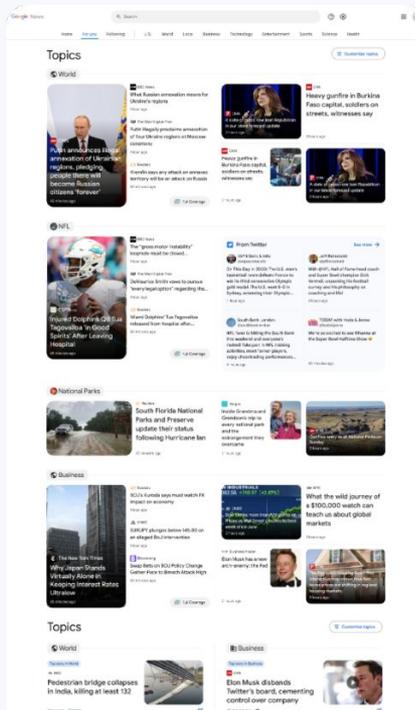
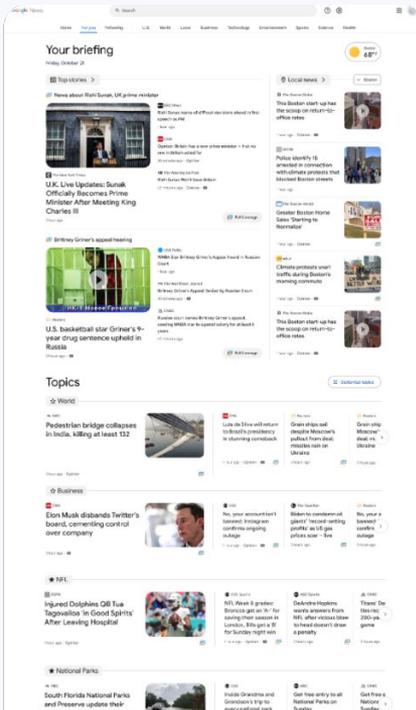
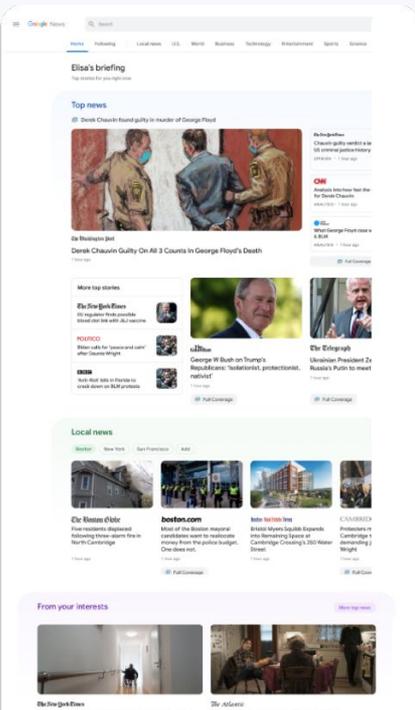
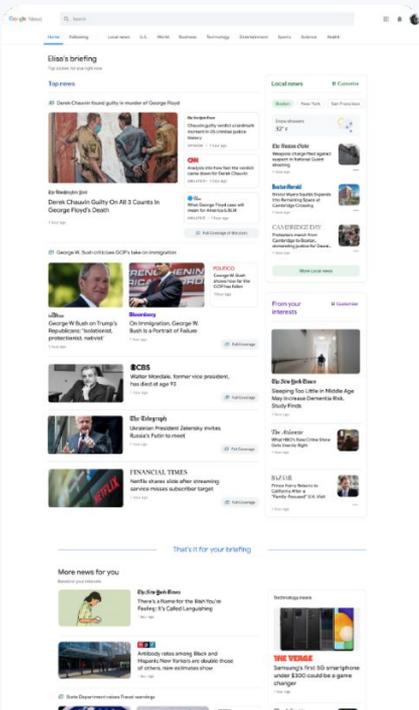
**The Guardian**  
Hurricane Melissa live: life-threatening category 5 storm to bring 175mph winds as it...  
43 minutes ago • By Yohannes Lowe, Richard Lu...

**Yahoo**  
Hurricane Melissa live updates: Jamaica braces for Category 5 storm to make landfall with 'catastrophic and life-threatening' winds and flooding  
2 hours ago • By Dylan Stableford

[Full Coverage](#)

# Early concepts and iterations

Tested with users of 6+ rounds of qualitative UXR



# Design decisions validated through qualitative and quantitative UXR

Principles emerged from research and informed our design decisions.

## Concept research: Is it usable?

6 rounds / 12 months, small-scale

t

Many users struggled with unorganized feed of personalized news, while clear topic sections and labeling resonated strongly

## Diary study: Is it preferable?

14 days, 60+ participants

79%

Preferred or strongly preferred the new experience as **better than** or **as good as** the old site across key news journeys

## Eye-tracking study: Is it scannable?

Internal eye-tracking platform, 100+ participants

Showed clear scan pattern and confirmed scroll depth through entire page

## Opt-in qualitative survey: Is it preferable at scale?

1 month pre launch, 2 weeks post-launch

# Homepage structure

## Briefing

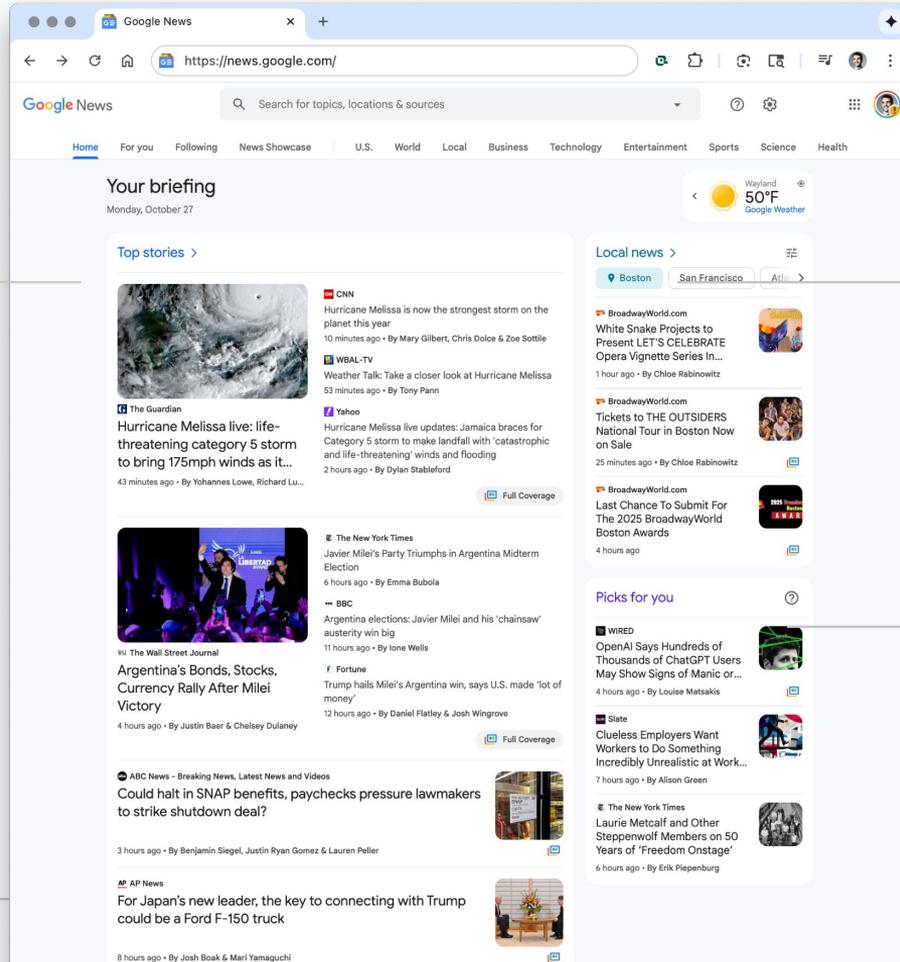
### Top stories

"Get up to speed"

Top national /international stories

Quick scan, visual hierarchy

Curated for importance, not just popularity



### Local News

"What's happening near me"

Community coverage prominence

Often overlooked, now discoverable

### Picks for You / Topics

"What's important to me"

Most timely personalized news based on users' implicit and explicit interests

# Homepage structure

## For You and Topics

### For You & Topics

“Go deep on my interests”

Most relevant news based on interests

Personalized topic sections

User-controlled customization

Mark Barilla

For you >

Recommended based on your interests

The 'For you' section displays a grid of personalized news cards. Each card includes a source logo, a headline, a timestamp, and a small image. The cards are: Forbes (Google Stock To \$300?), TipRanks (Tesla Could Lose Musk if \$1T Pay Package Is Struck Down, Warns Board Chair), Yahoo (I Tried the Top 4 Pizza Chain's Thin-Crust Pizzas—and There Was One Clear Winner), OpenAI (Strengthening ChatGPT's responses in sensitive conversations), Fortune (Meet all 37 White House ballroom donors funding the \$300 million build), and Android Authority (I used to hate the Pixel Tablet, but now I kind of love it).

Your topics

Customize

The 'Your topics' section is organized into columns and rows of news cards, each with a category heading and a chevron icon. The categories and their respective news items are: Personal finance (Social Security's 2026 COLA is Official -- It Comes With Bad News About President Trump...), Mental health (First league table of antidepressant side effects), Geography (2 earthquakes in Atlantic Ocean felt in eastern Caribbean islands), U.S. (States are fighting to gerrymander US House districts), World (Trump visits Japan as a US-China trade deal draws closer), Business (Amazon targets as many as 30,000 corporate job cuts, sources say), Technology (I Tried the Top 4 Pizza Chain's Thin-Crust Pizzas—and There Was One Clear Winner), and Entertainment (Meet all 37 White House ballroom donors funding the \$300 million build). A 'Customize' button is located at the top right of the section.

### Topic Customization

Partnered with ranking engineers to tune quality across dozens of new topics

Easy add, remove and reorder content sections

#### Customize your topics

Choose & manage up to 12 topics for your homepage. They'll also appear under topics you follow.

The 'Customize your topics' interface features a grid of topic categories on the left and a list of selected topics on the right. The categories include: Headline news (U.S., World, Politics), Entertainment news (Entertainment, Celebrities, TV), Music (Music, Movies, Theater), Sports news (Sports, Soccer, Cycling, Motor sports, Tennis, Combat sports, Basketball, Baseball, Football, Sports betting, Water sports, Hockey), and Business news (Business, Economy). The selected topics on the right are: Personal finance, Mental health, Geography, U.S., World, Business, Technology, Entertainment, Vehicles, Outdoor recreation, Theater, and Music. A 'Re-order your topics' header is at the top right of the list. At the bottom, there are 'Reset to default', 'Cancel', and 'Save & close' buttons.

# Homepage structure

## Sources & Page End

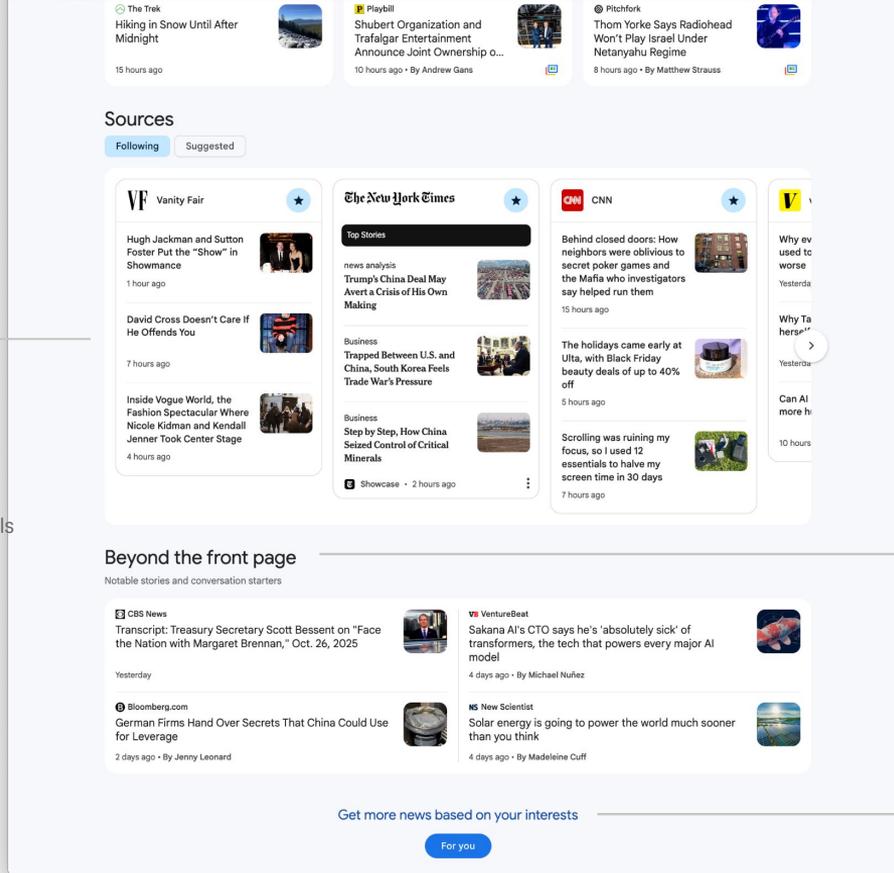
### Sources

“News from preferred sources”

News from publishers

Followed and suggested sources

Features News Showcase curated panels



### Beyond the front page

Interesting and relevant stories that users might have missed

### Clear page end

UXR showed strong preference for page end rather than infinite scroll, which was more expected after clicking

# Clear wayfinding and sections for personalized content

## UXR Finding: Users overwhelmingly preferred clearly labeled, scannable topic sections over endless algorithmic feeds.

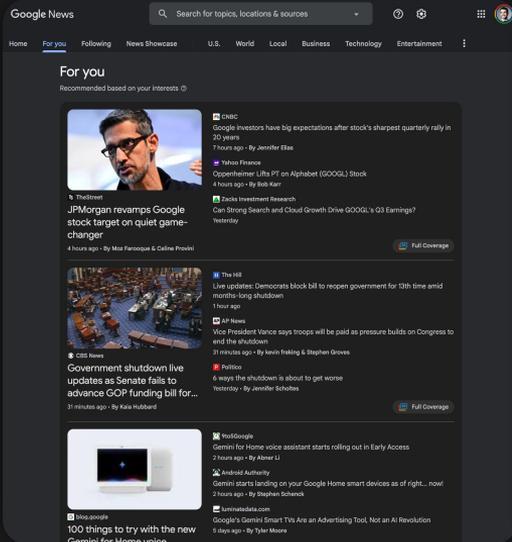
- Early explorations tested more varied and visual layouts
- Eye-tracking studies revealed users struggled to scan random visual grids
- Clearly labeled topic sections tested significantly better

## Engineering emphasis on high-quality, highly-relevant topic sections

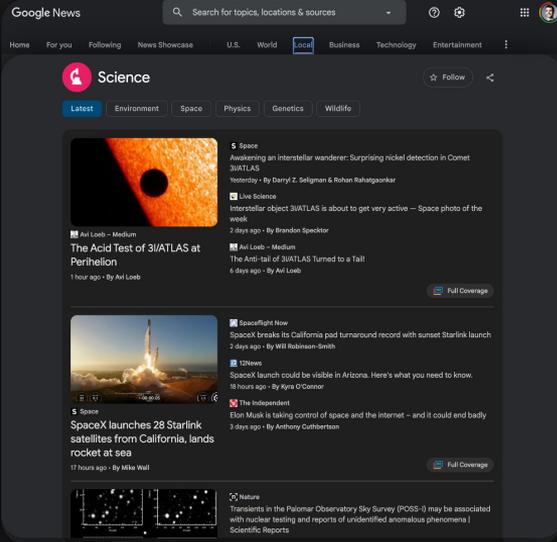
- Partnered with ranking engineers to tune quality across dozens of new topics
- Built tools giving users control: follow new suggested topics, customize feed



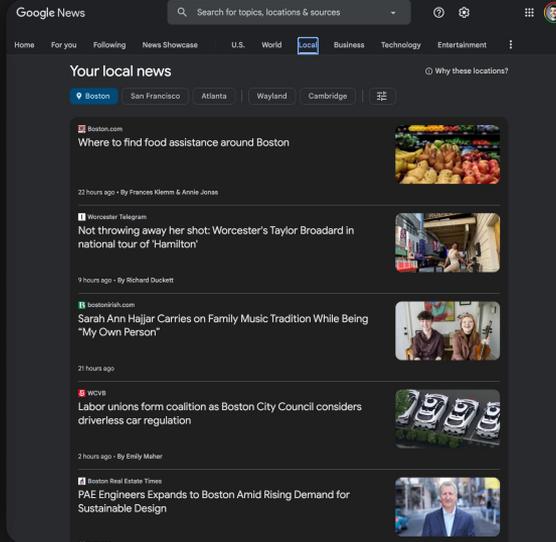
# Visually rich For You, Topic and Local feeds for deeper exploration



**Consistent, reusable components** simplified the launch and established coherence for users



**Increased traffic to topic pages** via linked section headers and horizontal navigation



**Local news customization** allowed multiple locales, as users want to keep up with more than one primary location

# Design systems at scale

**Challenge:** Google News sits between competing design systems: Google Material 3 (GM3) for Android-first app styling, tokens and behaviors, Search Design System (SDS) for Search web results and surfaces.

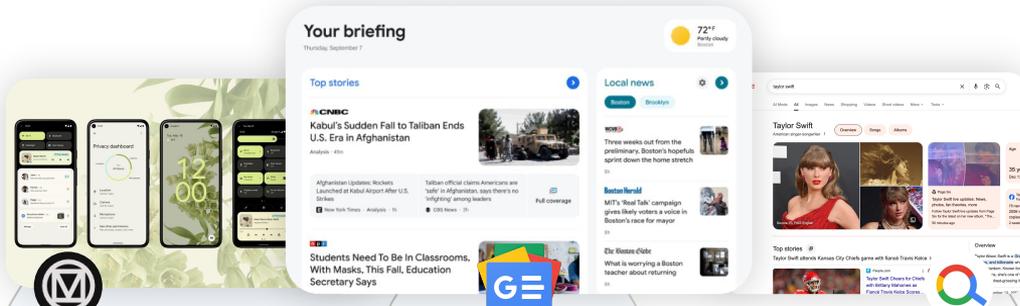
**Goal: Define a distinctive, yet coherent visual language for Google News that marries Google Material and SDS styles, tokens and guidelines.**

## Key UXR:

Users preferred updated modern, visual containment to help understand the page, but background color shifts confused news tonality (i.e. red indicates breaking news).

## Cross-product Alignment:

- **GM3 for core UI, no dynamic color**
- **SDS headline and content styling for coherence**



## Google Material 3

Mandated application across all Google products

Baseline foundational tokens

Advanced features (Dynamic color extraction)

## Google News

Distinctively Google

→ **GM3 baseline for core app UI elements**

**SDS for content patterns** ←

## Search Design System

Google Search styles for content

Alignment across surfaces for results, attribution

# Takeaways and learnings

## **Platform conventions inform user needs.**

Desktop doesn't mean simply scaling up mobile. Different contexts require different approaches.

**Respect how people use the platform in addition to building cross-surface coherence.**

## **Design systems require constant refinement and iteration.**

Adapting Material Design 3 for news content required extensive iteration and partnership, and being first to implement GM3 on web meant solving problems no one had solved.

**The visual language challenge can be as important and complex as the user challenge.**

## **Transparency builds user trust.**

Full Coverage addressed real user concerns about filter bubbles, and labels and controls help users understand what was personalized and what wasn't.

**Simple, clear customization controls show how the system works which helps user understanding.**

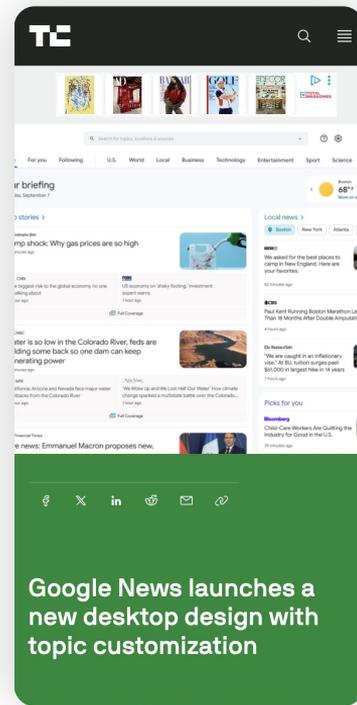
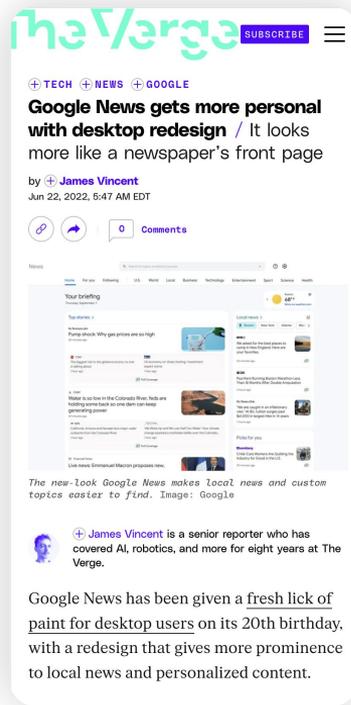
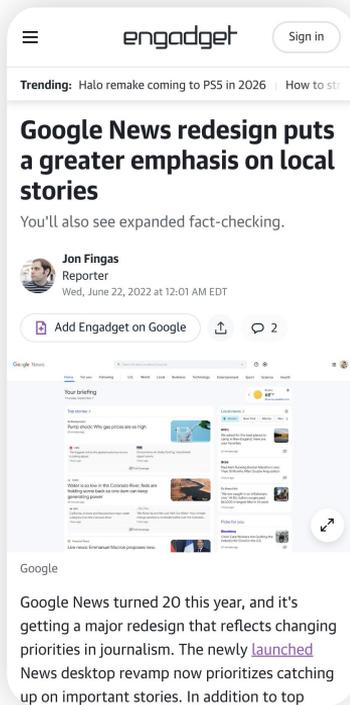
# Launch Impact & Outcomes

## Quantitative Impacts:

- **Achieved 10%+ DAU gain.** More repeat usage of briefing, more use of horizontal topic navigation.
- Increased engagement with personalization features
- Higher dwell time on Full Coverage (users exploring multiple perspectives)

## Qualitative Outcomes:

- Positive press coverage at launch ([Engadget](#), [The Verge](#), [TechCrunch](#)) →
- User feedback praised cleaner UI and transparency features
- Design system continues to support rapid iteration and new features
- Design patterns remain in production, supporting ongoing product evolution





Google News

Search for topics, locations & sources

Home For you Following News Showcase U.S. World Local Business Technology Entertainment Sports Science Health

Your briefing  
Monday, October 27

Weekend 50°F  
Google Weather

Top stories >

**CNN**  
Hurricane Melissa is now the strongest storm on the planet this year  
10 minutes ago • By Mary Gilbert, Chris Dolce & Zoe Sottile

**WBAL-TV**  
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**Yahoo**  
Hurricane Melissa live updates: Jamaica braces for Category 5 storm to make landfall with 'catastrophic and life-threatening' winds and flooding  
2 hours ago • By Dylan Stableford

Full Coverage

**The New York Times**  
Javier Milei's Party Triumphs in Argentina Midterm Election  
6 hours ago • By Emma Bubola

**BBC**  
Argentina elections: Javier Milei and his 'chainsaw' austerity win big  
11 hours ago • By Ione Wells

**The Wall Street Journal**  
Argentina's Bonds, Stocks, Currency Rally After Milei Victory  
4 hours ago • By Justin Baer & Chelsey Dulaney

**Fortune**  
Trump hails Milei's Argentina win, says U.S. made 'lot of money'  
12 hours ago • By Daniel Flatley & Josh Wingrove

Full Coverage

**ABC News - Breaking News, Latest News and Videos**  
Could halt in SNAP benefits, paychecks pressure lawmakers to strike shutdown deal?  
3 hours ago • By Benjamin Siegel, Justin Ryan Gomez & Lauren Peller

**AP News**  
For Japan's new leader, the key to connecting with Trump could be a Ford F-150 truck  
8 hours ago • By Josh Boak & Mari Yamaguchi

Local news >

Boston San Francisco Atl... >

**BroadwayWorld.com**  
White Snake Projects to Present LET'S CELEBRATE Opera Vignette Series In...  
1 hour ago • By Chloe Rabinowitz

**BroadwayWorld.com**  
Tickets to THE OUTSIDERS National Tour in Boston Now on Sale  
25 minutes ago • By Chloe Rabinowitz

**BroadwayWorld.com**  
Last Chance To Submit For The 2025 BroadwayWorld Boston Awards  
4 hours ago

Picks for you

**WIRED**  
OpenAI Says Hundreds of Thousands of ChatGPT Users May Show Signs of Manic or...  
4 hours ago • By Louise Matakis

**Slate**  
Clueless Employers Want Workers to Do Something Incredibly Unrealistic at Work...  
7 hours ago • By Allison Green

**The New York Times**  
Laurie Metcalf and Other Steppenwolf Members on 50 Years of 'Freedom Onstage'  
6 hours ago • By Erik Piepenburg

For you >  
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**Special thanks to the whole team:**

**Product:** Stephanie Saade

**UX Design:** Amy Szatkowski

**UX research:** Giulia Mazza, Ran Tao

**UX writing:** Cheryl Lurie

**Visual Design:** Earvin Fanfair

**Engineering:** Regis Gaughan, Adina Karantza, Rick Nagy, Francesca Cox

**Data Science:** Diane Thibault

2020

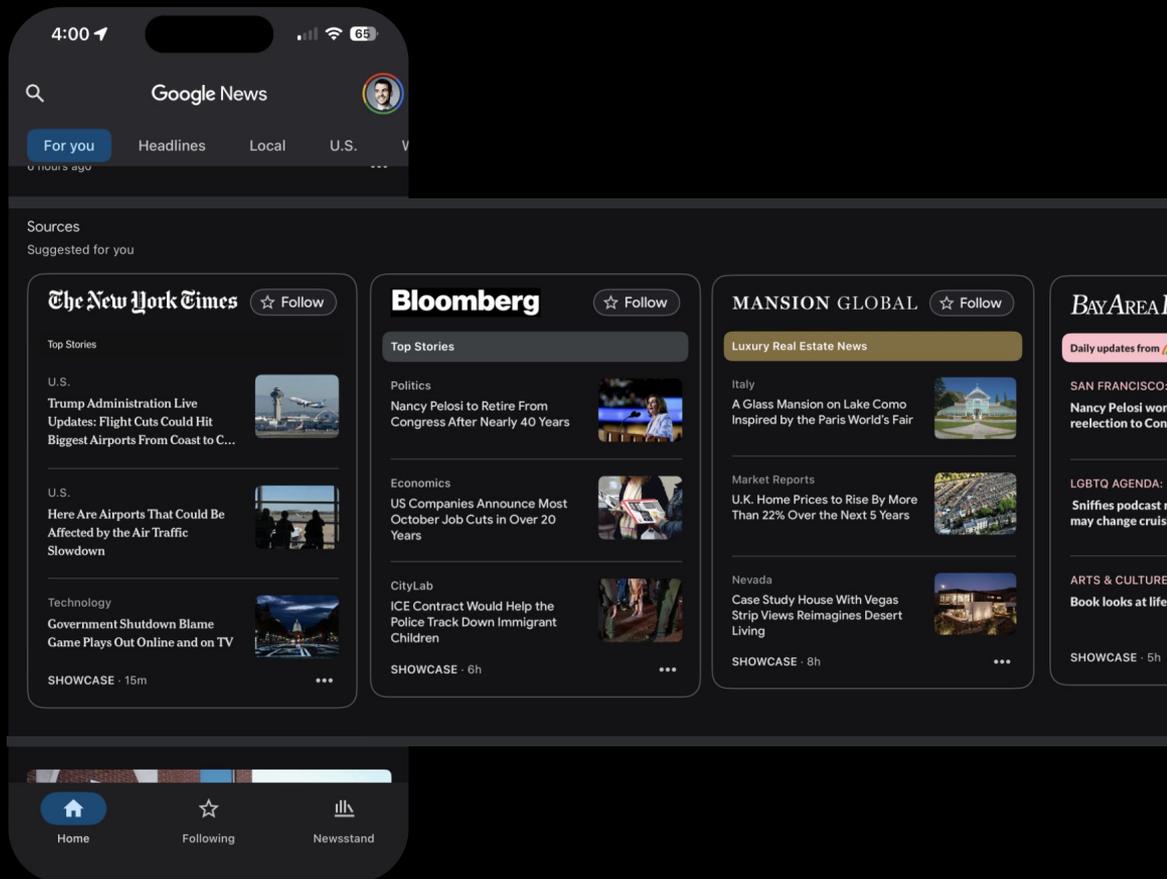
# Google News News Showcase

Led product design for News Showcase, a new product and licensing program developed to support news publishers and provide readers with access to high-quality, curated journalism.

Drove UX for end-to-end consumer user experience and the publisher-facing content management system to power the experience and used by journalists in newsrooms around the world.



Mark Barilla



## Project Snapshot



# Google News Showcase



**Link:** [Google News Showcase](#)

**Role:** UX Design Lead and Senior Interaction Designer

### Responsibilities:

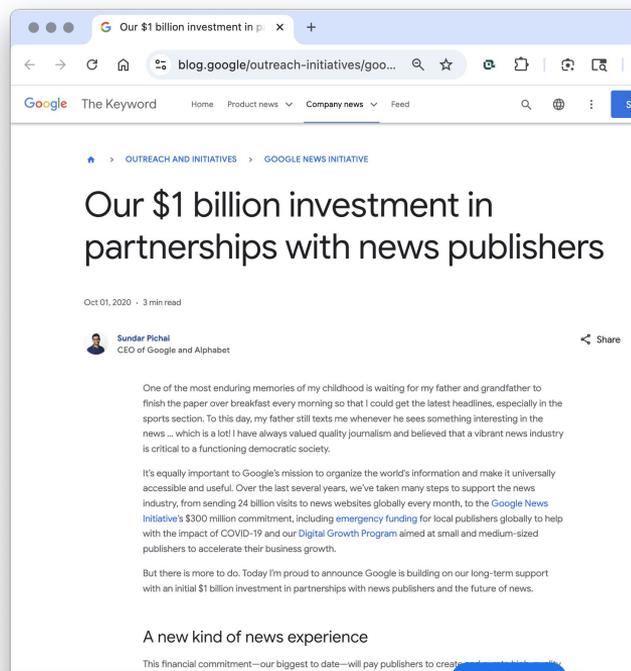
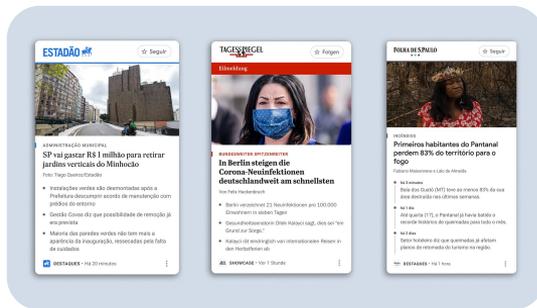
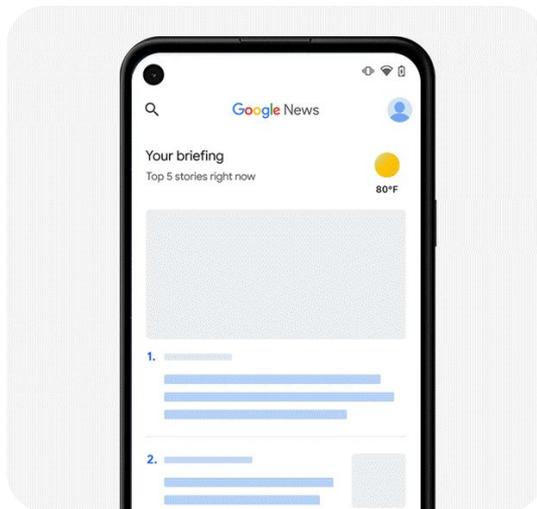
- Led the design of both the publisher-facing CMS and consumer-facing news panels
- Represented UX at all cross functional and leadership meetings.
- Designed visual language and interaction patterns across iOS, Android, and web platforms
- Collaborated with legal, partnerships, and business development teams across international markets

### Outcomes:

- Supported product serving hundreds of international publishers and millions of users
- Established design patterns that remain in production 4+ years post-launch

# Google's \$1B investment in journalism

- Launched in 2020 with 200 publishers in Germany and Brazil
- **Has since expanded to 31 countries and 2,800+ participating publications as of 2024.**



**AXIOS**  
Google will spend \$1 billion to pay publishers for news showcase

[Link →](#)



## An end-to-end publishing, licensing and user-facing news experience with 3 distinct stakeholder groups:

### Users

**Need quality journalism** and relevant, contextual content from sources they can trust.

### Publishers

**Require editorial control and business sustainability** along with a steady stream of new users

### Google

**Must adapt to complex legal and regulatory requirements** unique to each country to reduce impact on core surfaces like Search

# How it works

For each country onboarded to News Showcase, publishers curate content that is shown to users, driving exposure, building engagement and providing a crucial source of revenue.

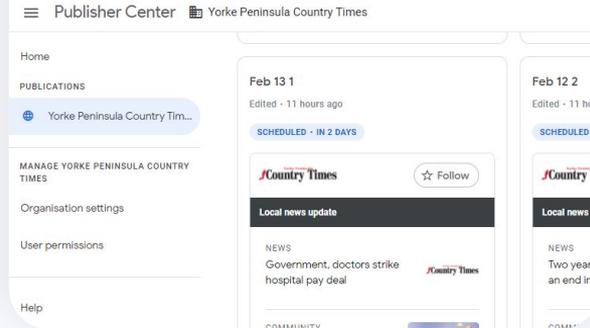
## Google

**1 Google licenses content** from a broad range of sources in that country, from major to small local newsrooms.



## Publishers

**2 Editors provide their expertise** by selecting which stories to feature and adding additional story context via Google News Publisher Center (CMS).



## Users

**3 Users see larger story panels with context directly in their feeds**, featured Showcase sections in Google News, and access to paywalled content and stories.



# Content Panels

## Product goal + Editorial Workflows

Publishers

### A flexible, easy-to-update framework for publishers, from large to small

Two workflow options:

→ **Manually curated in a new editorial tool, integrated into Google News Publisher Center** (smaller newsrooms)

→ **API-driven to create panels automatically with minimal impact to existing journalist workflows** (larger newsrooms)

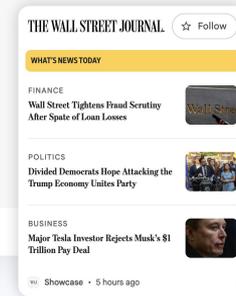
## User goal + Panel Type

Users

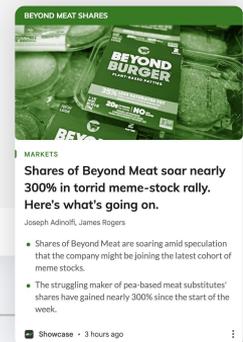
### Get caught up, get context, deepen relationship with new publishers

Two panel types

**Rundown** - Get caught up with in a new dedicated section of Google News



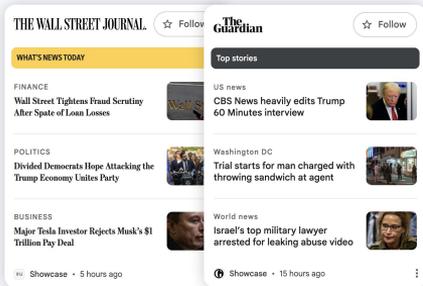
**Single story** - Rich context, ability to follow publisher



# Timely, relevant updates from a broad range of authoritative sources

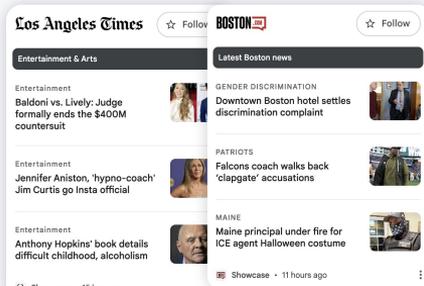
## National news

Major publications



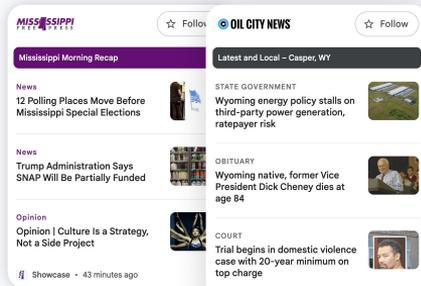
## Regional news

Major metro areas



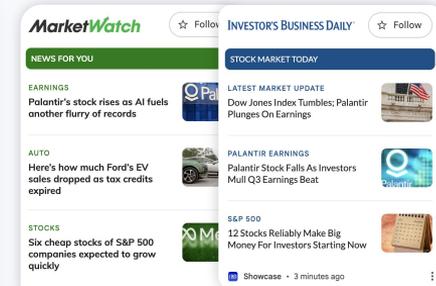
## Hyper-local news

Smaller local newsrooms

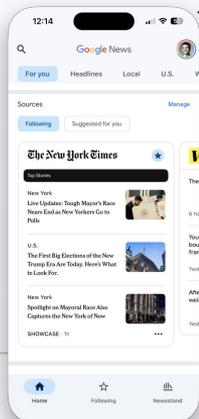


## Topical news

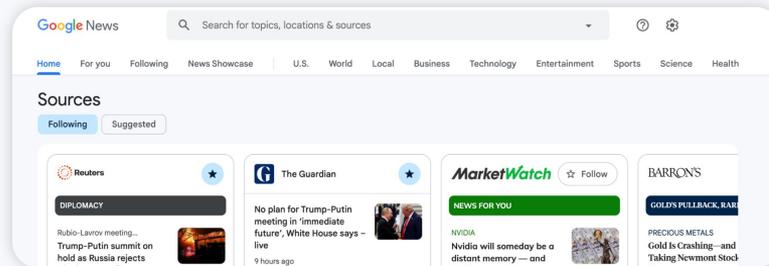
Subject-based news sources



## Delivered across Google surfaces



## Google News Mobile app



## Google News Desktop

# Publishing

**The publisher CMS had to support hundreds of international publishers with diverse workflows and content types.**

- **Editorial control over licensed content**
- **Complex legal and partnership requirements**
- **International publisher workflows**
- **Design patterns still in production 4+ years later**

**What distinguishes News Showcase from previous Google news products is publisher control over editorial presentation and branding,”**

Brian Myles, Editor of Quebec's Le Devoir, highlighted. **“Google's assistance and tools are critical in Le Devoir's strategy to build a digital audience. This partnership will bring us a step forward in our digital transformation, while delivering our trusted and fact-based brand of independent journalism to a wider audience.”**

Sources:

[Google News Showcase, 1 Year In](#)  
[Google News Showcase | Features](#)

# Key stats and publisher reviews

## Financial impact

### **\$1 billion+ commitment**

Monthly licensing payments regardless of clicks

**"It gives us money to employ journalists... that team wouldn't be there if the product wasn't there." — Daniel Russell, Reach (UK)**

## Scale and Reach

### **2,800+ publishers participating in 31 countries**

Switzerland most recent in Dec 2024

### **750M+ editorial panels** created by publishers

### **700K+ users actively following publishers**

## Local News focus

### **90% of participating publishers** Representing local, regional, or community news organizations

**"Local newspapers create essential reporting for their communities. However, in the digital era, we need to build more touch points for us to be discovered by those readers. Google News Showcase provides us a new way for readers to find the articles they need, and enables us to strengthen our relationships with them." — Japanese local paper Kobe Shimbun**

## Traffic Impact

**10M+ visits/month** from News Showcase specifically

**129K → 145M referrals in 18 months** for Reach, UK publisher of Mirror, Express, Daily Star

**"We rely heavily on referral traffic for audience...if Google and Facebook are going to have a big slice of the advertising pie, they need to support us for the content that we produce for their platforms."**

— Mark Thompson from UK's National World

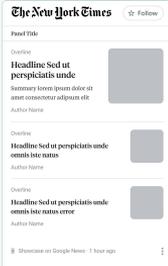
Sources:

[Google News Showcase. 1 Year In](#)  
[Google News Showcase | Features](#)

# Product goal for content panels: A flexible and simple framework for publishers, Quick catch up and context for users

## Rundown: Catch up with sources

**Rundown**  
Get briefed by publishers on the most important stories of the day



## Get additional context

**Key points**  
Get more context on a story with a bulleted list of key points



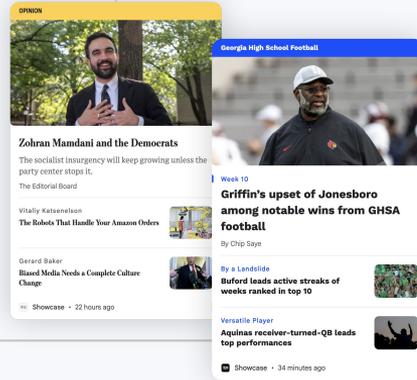
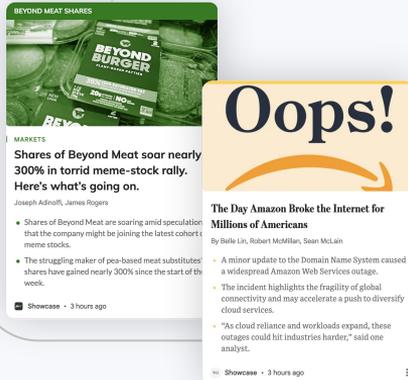
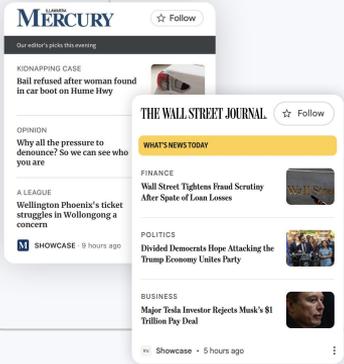
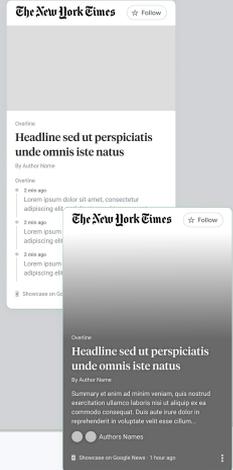
**Packaged content**  
Explore related articles to gain more perspectives



**Other concepts**  
Dive deeper into a story

**Timeline of events**

**Magazine cover**



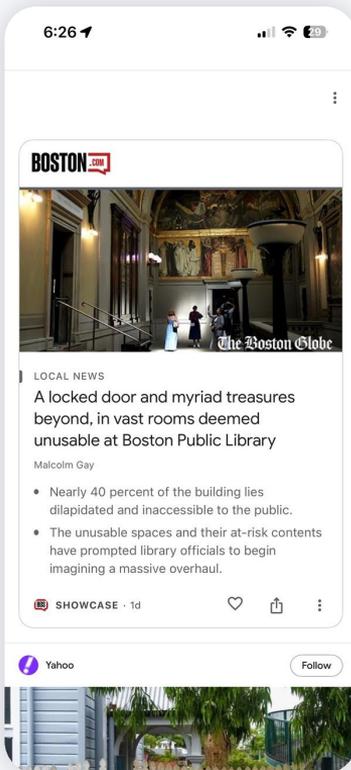
# Refining for Discover's scale

In addition to Google News app, real scale is reached on Discover, which surfaces content to millions more users than Google News, on Android, Chrome, and the Google app.

## Every pixel matters.

We tightened panel density, refined content hierarchy, and ensured full alignment with Discover's design system while maintaining News Showcase's editorial identity and consistent data presentation between platforms.

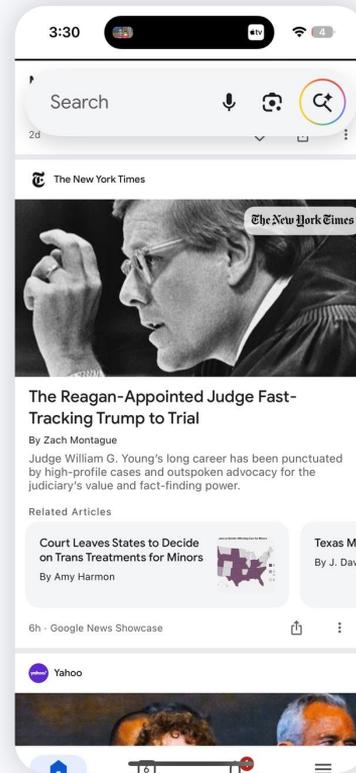
Unmodified panel



Inset Header



Horizontal Carousel

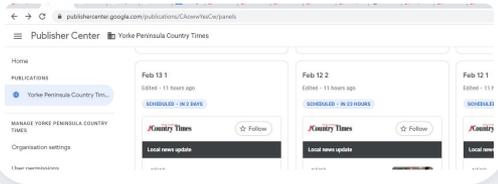


# Experience Map

## Content management

### Publisher Center

create and manage panels



or

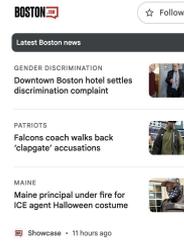
### API

Automatically generate panels by integrating CMS via News Showcase API

## Panel Layouts

### Rundown

3 articles, updated twice a day primarily seen on Google News



and

### Single story

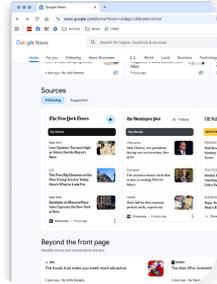
Optional for publishers, primarily seen on Discover



## Surfaces

### Google News

Smaller user base, less impressions  
More likely to engage (lean in)



and

### Discover

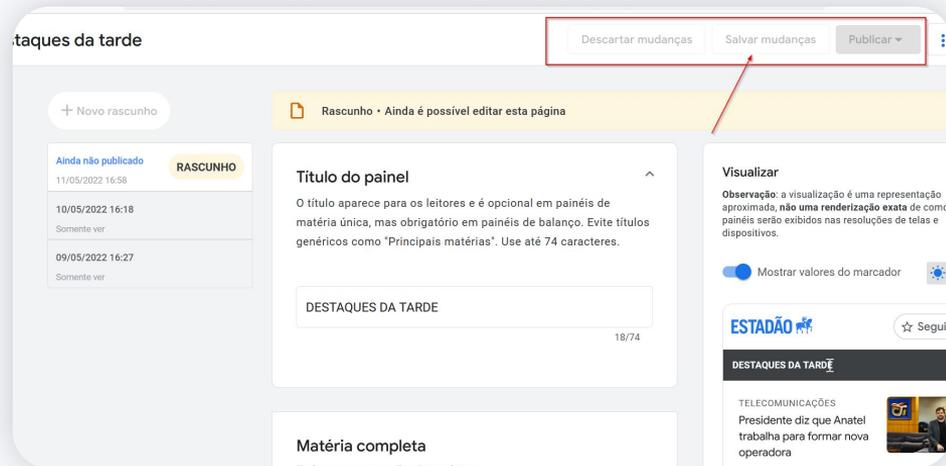
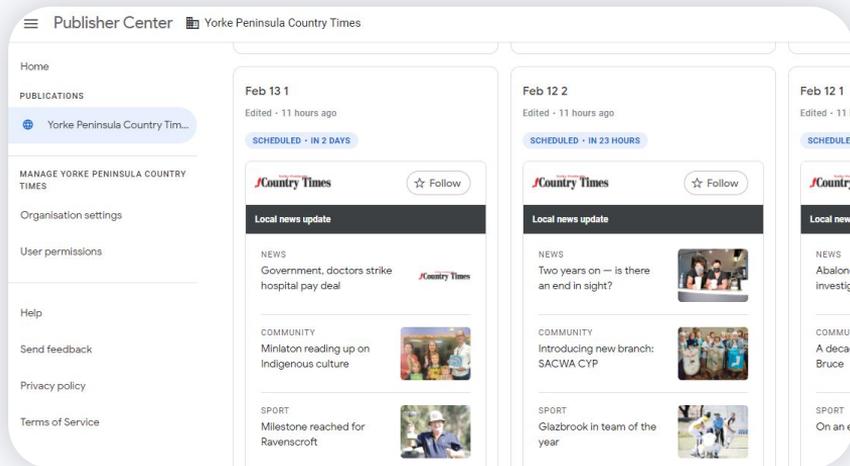
Larger user base, more impressions  
less likely to click thru and follow (lean back)



Publishers

Users

# Publisher experience



## Panel management

- Panel creation
- Panel publishing
- Panel scheduling

## Panel editing

- Manual content editor
- Content validation
- Version control and history
- WYSIWG panel preview