



Commonwealth Journalists Association

NEWSLETTER

September/October 2025

President's Report

CJA President Chris Cobb writes:

Two important documents have been released in recent weeks: the Commonwealth Secretariat's strategic five-year plan and the long awaited '*Who Controls the Narrative: Legal restrictions on Freedom of Expression in the Commonwealth.*'

Who Controls the Narrative is the work of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), our own Commonwealth Journalists Association (CJA) and the Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA).

For some context, keep in mind that many prominent Bangladeshi journalists have been languishing in custody, without trial, for more than a year on trumped up murder charges.

The Secretariat's Strategic Plan is full of important, laudable goals—greater involvement of women and marginalized groups in leadership roles; focus on small states etc.

It also promises to help countries build stronger democracies, offering a 'Proactive early warning system designed to anticipate democratic setbacks.'

It doesn't say what action will follow an early warning or how often an early warning will have to sound before the Secretariat is moved to 'action'.

The plan acknowledges that some democracies are 'under pressure.' True but 'under pressure' is an understatement in some of those cases.

In her introduction to the plan, Secretary General Shirley Botchwey writes:

"This is the moment for the Commonwealth to show both its relevance and strength. . .we must move forward with purpose, with courage and with an unshakable commitment to a Commonwealth that truly thrives.

"Let's get to work," the SG exhorts in bold typeface.

The *Who Controls the Narrative* report urges member states to enshrine protection for journalists—protection against intimidation and access to justice.

It also urges member states to promote and adhere to the Commonwealth Media Principles developed over several years mostly through the tireless efforts the CJA's William Horsley and the late David Page to whom the report is dedicated.

The Media Principles seek to make independent reporting safe and an accepted pillar of democracy. They were accepted by Commonwealth leaders at their summit in Samoa—a major achievement.

Can you be a legitimate Commonwealth country if you agree to something and then do the opposite?

And a lot of the opposite continues to be done while the Commonwealth Secretariat is ineffective in its responses, even if it responds at all. Think again of those incarcerated Bangladeshi journalists.

Botchwey has been in the job for barely six months, so she deserves more time to show how determined and able she is to implement those fighting words in her strategic plan. In her call for the Commonwealth to show its 'relevance and strength' she is spot on.

The Commonwealth has been underperforming for so long its relevance and strength are rapidly shrinking.

Botchwey has five years to put the errant Commonwealth family members into some semblance of democratic order and make the family believe in itself again—and, more important, re-establish itself as a serious entity with an international profile, heft and purpose.

Chris Cobb is CJA President



Tribute to Richard Bourne by Rita Payne

Richard Bourne, a truly passionate believer in the Commonwealth, is stepping down from the Executive Committee of the CJA's UK branch after three years' service. I and other UK colleagues will greatly miss Richards' wise counsel, but he assures us he will remain active and supportive of the CJA's activities while also pursuing other interests.

Richard joined CJA Exco specifically to help recruit young journalists and was instrumental in organising a very successful conference in Birmingham in 2022. This generated several ideas and initiatives, including setting up mentoring and networking opportunities for students planning a career in journalism, or who were already setting out on their career.

Richard's knowledge of the media, the history of the Commonwealth and international developments have enriched the CJA. Colleagues have appreciated his calm and measured advice at challenging periods.

Not many may be aware of the full extent of Richard's expertise and achievements. He has held influential positions in several Commonwealth organisations including the Round Table and Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

He began his career as an education journalist on The Guardian, in 1968-72. He campaigned to end selection and the 11 plus at that time so that Margaret Thatcher, as Education Minister, approved more comprehensive schools than before or since. As assistant editor at New Society, the weekly, Richard was responsible for publishing an article by a young PhD student, "Dear David Ennals" which led the then social services minister to commission the Black Report, on health inequality around the UK. As Deputy Editor on the London Evening Standard, he instigated campaigns against rip-offs of visitors to London, and for use of the city's "wasted acres" — empty land which could be used for housing or recreation.

Richard's move to the Commonwealth came via work for the UK's Channel Four before it went on air — specifically a campaign for the new channel to devote time to development issues and what was then called the "Third World" — the Fourth Channel Development Education Group, for which he was one of two consultants. Subsequently he saw that the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, an educational and cultural institution supported by all member governments and largely financed by the FCO, had a vacancy for a Deputy Director and he was appointed.

In an interview about his career Richard listed his interests as the politics of the Commonwealth as a whole, in human rights, and in development. He has visited over two thirds of member states and has written books about Zimbabwe and Nigeria but does not regard himself as an exclusively African specialist. He has also authored books about Latin America and general issues such as education and human rights.

In his view, the drivers of interest in the Commonwealth in the 1980s and 1990s, were the energy of Shridath Ramphal and Emeka Anyaoku, and the support they generated, which led to several initiatives and long-running campaigns (eg on apartheid, debt write-off, democratisation, and climate change).

CJA members share fond memories of their association with Richard. CJA President, Chris Cobb, recalls: 'I joined the CJA almost 30 years ago and first met Richard quite early in my membership. Distance meant that our meetings were few but I always appreciated his guidance and admired his enthusiasm for the CJA--an enthusiasm that never appeared to wane. I wish him well for the future and thank him for all he has contributed to our association. Richard went above and beyond. "CJA newsletter editor and executive member Debbie Ransome remembers Richard's welcoming and informative welcome to the association as she joined in 2011. "He was always such a gentleman and knew all things Commonwealth", says Debbie.

Another colleague, Syed Nahas Pasha, believes Richard's tireless efforts contributed to the success of the CJA conference in Dhaka in 2003.

When I joined the CJA in 2008 and later became President I relied on Derek Ingram and Richard for guidance on our activities and campaigns. Richard always gave insightful and hard-headed advice. It has been a privilege to work with him and I join colleagues in expressing our thanks and wishing him well.



Richard Bourne attends his last CJA-UK executive meeting

Media Freedom

William Horsley writes: Global support for Freedom of Expression

International media platforms have welcomed the Freedom of Expression report compiled jointly by three Commonwealth organisations – the Commonwealth Journalists Association, the Human Rights Initiative and the Lawyers Association.

The 175-page report [Who Controls the Narrative? Legal Restrictions on Freedom of Expression in the Commonwealth](#) was published on 9 September. Its findings should shake the Commonwealth to its core: a pervasive “culture of impunity” allows hundreds of targeted killings of journalists and other violent assaults to go unpunished; and punitive national laws make legitimate journalism and public expressions of dissent a potential crime in a majority of the 56 member states, contrary to international human rights standards.

Commonwealth political leaders and policymakers must act swiftly to improve the shameful scorecard revealed by this report. Member states’ law-enforcement and judicial authorities, as well as media and other stakeholders, will find a wealth of first-hand testimonies and helpful analysis about the legal frameworks and working conditions for journalists in all Commonwealth regions. Nearly a year has passed since Commonwealth leaders publicly pledged “concrete and meaningful measures” to implement the 11-point Media Principles at the 2024 CHOGM in Samoa. Yet the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan announced by Secretary-General Shirley Botchwey fails to spell out how the Commonwealth will act collectively to remedy these serious violations of the organisation’s fundamental political principles.

Undaunted, the CJA and other civil society organisations offer the Secretariat and member states our constructive partnership, expertise and access to capable networks to achieve the reforms foreseen in the Media Principles. Our key recommendations include building action plans to repeal criminal legislation for speech and anti-state offences, and collaborating with UNESCO and the global Media Freedom Coalition to address attacks against journalists and combat the scourge of impunity. We stand ready and await a signal from Marlborough that an action-oriented dialogue can begin.

Global reactions to the report:

<https://www.commonwealthjournalists.org/foe-reaction/>

Read more and download the full report [here](#)

* NEW PUBLICATION *

WHO CONTROLS THE NARRATIVE?

LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE COMMONWEALTH

The Report will be released on 9 September 2025 at 00.01 BST



***The Atlantic* writes: America Surrenders in the Global Information Wars**

The U.S. is reorienting its foreign policy to protect governments that manipulate and suppress information.

Every day, some 2 billion people around the world use privacy-protection tools supported by the Open Technology Fund. When people in China escape their government's firewalls and censorship software - now so dense that the system has been called the "locknet" - or when users in Cuba or Myanmar evade cruder internet blocks, they can access material written in their own languages and read stories they would otherwise never see. Both the access and some of the information are available because the U.S. government has for decades backed a constellation of programs - the technology fund, independent foreign-language broadcasters, counterpropaganda campaigns - designed to give people in repressive countries access to evidence-based news.

More at [The Atlantic](#)



UPDATES FROM CJA BRANCHES



United
Kingdom

CJA-UK Chair Raymond Whitaker writes:

The most important recent development concerning the UK was the much-delayed publication of a joint research report with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and the Commonwealth Lawyers Association. This is reported on in this newsletter, but its findings are based on years of work by two CJA UK Executive members, William Horsley and the late David Page.

Their tireless efforts culminated in the adoption by Commonwealth leaders at last year's Samoa CHOGM of a set of principles on freedom of expression and the media's role in good governance. Sadly, the report this September by the CJA, CHRI and CLA emphasises how far most of the Commonwealth's members fall short of the principles they signed up to, often using outdated laws from the colonial era as they seek to restrict, harass and even murder journalists with little fear of being held to account.

The campaign to get the freedom of expression charter through ended in success; the next battle is to get Commonwealth members to live up to its provisions.

When the UK Executive meets, it will be saying farewell to one of its stalwarts, Richard Bourne. Again, his long association with the CJA and the wider Commonwealth is described in more detail elsewhere in this publication, but I want to thank Richard personally for his support while I have been UK Chair.

Richard and I worked closely on the 2022 Birmingham conference for student journalists, which he was principally responsible for organising, in parallel with the Commonwealth Games. With Lucy Skoulding, we collaborated on the student mentoring scheme that grew out of the conference. The programme has expanded each year and has helped to launch several graduates into journalistic careers.

Richard, you will be missed!



Africa

Uganda

Alice Drito writes: Positioning Freedom of Expression and Media (FoE&M) in Uganda's election is a strategic move to protect safety of journalists, the right to access public information, promote vibrant civic space, transparency, holding power bearers to account and to have informed choices.

It should act as a mirror to assess what political figures pledged to do, better or differently on matters of FoE&M. The commitments would further be a reference to fast-track achievements, compliance and demand accountability for FoE&M when leaders are in office. A critical analysis of political party action plans through the FoE&M lens shows that some political parties are not prioritizing media freedom for the 2026 general elections agenda.

Out of Uganda's eight presidential candidates in the race, by 25th September, only two displayed FoE&M at the top of their political party agenda. They are Nandala Mafabi James Nathan of Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) and the Alliance for National Transformation (ANT), led by Mugisha Gregory Muntu Oyera. Journalists in Uganda are awaiting other manifestos.

There have been a mix of responses to the low level of commitment attached to FoE&M by political actors. Commentators have argued that FoE&M is a governance issue which should be embraced by all, taking into account the country's history of a declining record on freedom of expression.

A report of Media Ambassadors International, a media rights entity operating in Uganda, noted that the systematic and deliberate failure to fully embrace FoE&M by some parties is a dangerous pathway.

Rights based activists fear the yawning gap in fully accommodating FoE&M may lead to growing tensions, undermine future cooperation, and become the start of a trend from the next regime.

Most of the campaign agenda talk has been based around economic growth, rural development, commercial agriculture, infrastructure development, oil and gas, mineral led industrialization, science, technology and innovation, health service delivery, education and clean water.

Uganda committed itself to adopting the Commonwealth Principles on Freedom of Expression and the Role of the Media in Good Governance at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (2024) in Samoa and Ugandan journalists hope that their country will be seen to promote FoE&M.



Africa

The Conversation writes: African media are threatened by governments and big tech – book tracks the latest trends

Media capture happens when media outlets lose their independence and fall under the influence of political or financial interests. This often leads to news content that favours power instead of public accountability.

[Media Capture in Africa and Latin America: Power and Resistance](#) is a new book edited by news media scholars [Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara](#) and [Bethia Pearson](#). It explores how this dynamic plays out in the global south and how journalists and citizens are resisting it.

More on Media Capture and this article at <https://theconversation.com/african-media-are-threatened-by-governments-and-big-tech-book-tracks-the-latest-trends-258017>

More at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx24ggj6e8eo>
<https://t.co/eGELdREv3q>

<https://x.com/BBCAfrica/status/1934653512505258189?t=bU1WoSSy0GMulysy2RwaxA&s=03>



Togo

Global Voices writes: Togo suspends two French news outlets over alleged threat to the country's stability

Threats to journalists' safety are resurfacing within Togo's media environment, posing new challenges to press freedom in the country. On June 6, 2025, amid demonstrations, the Togolese police arrested [Flore Monteau](#), a French journalist and [TV5 Monde](#) foreign correspondent. [Togo Scoop](#) reports she was accused of filming officers dismantling barricades — footage she was ordered to delete.

In April 2025, Albert Agbéko, journalist and publishing director at Togo Scoop, [met the same fate](#) while reporting at a school in [Tsévié](#), 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of Lomé.

Banning Radio France Internationale and France 24

On June 16, 2025, ten days after the [Flore Monteau](#) incident, the [Media and Communications Regulatory Authority](#) (HAAC), the body monitoring Togo's media, made another move against the press with little warning. It [silenced Radio France Internationale \(RFI\) and France 24](#), two French media outlets that broadcast in Togo through their correspondents, for three months. Home to [more than 9 million people](#), Togo is predominantly French-speaking, and these French media outlets enjoy widespread listenership across the country.

More at <https://globalvoices.org/2025/07/11/togo-suspends-two-french-news-outlets-over-alleged-threat-to-the-countrys-stability/>

Americas

The Press Gazette writes: EU and Canada publishers issue joint plea to halt AI 'strip mining' of news

Publisher trade bodies see Canada-EU trade deal as chance to curb big tech power.

As Canada and the European Union near a Digital Trade Agreement — News Media Canada CEO Paul Deegan and News Media Europe executive director Wout van Wijk together issue a warning about the threat posed to journalism by unfettered big tech.

More at <https://pressgazette.co.uk/comment-analysis/eu-and-canada-publishers-issue-joint-plea-to-halt-ai-strip-mining-of-news/>

Asia

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Yunus defiant over purge of media freedoms

From the CJA website: In June, London provided an international stage for the Chief Advisor to the Bangladesh government and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Professor Muhammad Yunus, to present a positive account of his efforts to unite the nation and restore democratic rule during the ten months since the harshly authoritarian government of Sheikh Hasina was overthrown in a student-led uprising.

Questioned about persistent reports about a clampdown on the media at home, Dr Yunus flatly dismissed the suggestion.

More [here](#)

A year after new Bangladesh leader vows reform, journalists still behind bars

The Committee to Protect Journalists writes:

On [March 5, 2025](#), in a crowded Dhaka courtroom, journalist [Farzana Rupa](#) stood without a lawyer as a judge moved to register yet another murder case against her. Already in jail, she quietly asked for bail. The judge said the hearing was only procedural.

“There are already a dozen cases piling up against me,” she [said](#). “I’m a journalist. One murder case is enough to frame me.”

Rupa, a former chief correspondent at privately owned broadcaster Ekattor TV, now faces nine murder cases. Her husband, [Shakil Ahmed](#), the channel’s former head of news, is named in eight.

A year ago, Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus [took charge](#) of Bangladesh’s interim government after Sheikh Hasina [resigned](#) and fled the country following weeks of [student-led protests](#), during which [two journalists](#) were killed.

Yunus promised [media reform](#) and repealed the [Cyber Security Act](#), a law [used to target](#) journalists under Hasina. But in a [November 2024 interview](#) with newspaper The Daily Star, Yunus said that murder accusations against journalists were being made hastily. He said the government had since halted such actions and that a committee had been formed to review the cases.

Still, nearly a year later, Rupa, Ahmed, [Shyamal Dutta](#) and [Mozammel Haque Babu](#), arrested on accusations of instigating murders in separate cases, remain behind bars. The repeated use of such charges against journalists who are widely seen as sympathetic to the former regime appear to be politically motivated censorship.

More at <https://cpj.org/2025/08/a-year-after-new-bangladesh-leader-vows-reform-journalists-still-behind-bars/>

India

Al Jazeera writes: India expands censorship powers, lets lower officials demand takedowns

A new censorship mechanism allows even district-level officers to demand social media firms pull down posts. Experts say this allows the government to circumvent Supreme Court rulings.

The ministry used a government platform known as Sahyog to issue notices to a range of social media companies, including Meta and Google, which owns YouTube, demanding they pull down posts that the Indian government deemed detrimental to law and order. Most platforms complied: the government has threatened that those who do not, risk losing what is known as their “intermediary immunity” status, which shields them from legal liability for the content posted on their sites.

Until late last year, such takedown notices were issued solely by two federal ministries: the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (IT), and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B).

But in October 2024, the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Sahyog platform, extending the power to issue takedown demands to all federal and state government agencies, and even district-level officials and the police.

More at <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/9/8/india-expands-censorship-powers-lets-lower-officials-demand-takedowns?s=03>

Nepal

***Al Jazeera writes:* India expands censorship powers, lets lower officials demand takedowns**

The Nepali Times wrote on 11 September: By Tuesday afternoon, Kathmandu was being firebombed. The three pillars of state: the legislative, executive, and judiciary were reduced to ashes. Even the fourth estate was not spared, and became the target of unnamed arsonists.

The damage was not just to physical buildings, but [to the national psyche](#).

But just like Hami Nepal emerged from the rubble of the 2015 earthquake, the GenZ movement now has to take the lead in rebuilding from the cinders of 2025. Nepal needs to rise from the ashes, and be reconstructed from the ground up by a new generation with accountable government, equitable and inclusive growth, and an open society.

What this week's upheaval showed, aside from the tragedy of the lives lost and physical destruction, is that Nepalis value freedom of expression and can use it to stand against injustice and keep fighting for reform and progress.

Read more at <https://nepalitimes.com/editorial/trial-by-fire>

Maldives

***Al Jazeera writes:* 'War on free speech': Outcry after Maldives passes controversial media bill**

Critics say new media regulatory bill will stifle press freedom and free speech, a claim the government denies.

A bill that critics say could muzzle the media and free speech has sparked an outcry in the Maldives after the government of President Mohamed Muizzu pushed it through parliament, where it enjoys a supermajority.

A prominent union of journalists pledged on Wednesday to defy the bill, while the main opposition party called for protests and a global press freedom group urged Muizzu to veto the legislation.

“The Maldivian parliament has passed a draconian bill that seeks to muzzle dissent online and offline, both on traditional media and social media,” said Ahmed Naaif, the secretary-general of the Maldives Journalists Association (MJA), the country’s biggest union of media workers.

“We journalists will stand together in defiance against this takeover of the media by the executive branch.”

More at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/9/17/war-on-free-speech-outcry-after-maldives-passes-controversial-media-bill>

Also **Reuters writes**: Maldives journalists to seek repeal of new media law

More at <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/maldives-journalists-seek-repeal-new-media-law-2025-09-18/>

The Wire writes: <https://thewire.in/south-asia/maldives-parliament-passes-contentious-media-bill-amid-protests>



Australia

***The Conversation writes*: Trump accuses ABC journalist of ‘hurting Australia’ and says he’ll report him to Albanese**

It doesn’t take much for a journalist to get under Donald Trump’s skin. When the ABC’s United States correspondent John Lyons

started questioning the president during a Washington “doorstop” about his business dealings while in office, the response was both full-on and petty.

Lyons was trying to get answers for a coming ABC Four Corners program.

He asked how much wealthier Trump was now than when he re-entered office and “Is it appropriate, President Trump, that a president in office should be engaged in so much business activity?”

Trump said that “my kids are running the business”, and mostly the deals were done before he took office.

Turning on Lyons, he asked where he was from.

When Lyons replied he was from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation – Four Corners, the president let loose.

“In my opinion, you are hurting Australia very much right now. And they want to get along with me.

"You know, your leader is coming over to see me very soon. I'm going to tell him about you. You set a very bad tone”.

More at <https://theconversation.com/trump-accuses-abc-journalist-of-hurting-australia-and-says-hell-report-him-to-albanese-265378>



Europe

Malta

The Times of Malta writes: Editorial: How social media is hollowing out politics

Although digital media opens doors to participation, transparency, and immediacy, it also fosters polarisation, declining trust in institutions, and the spread of misinformation.

In today's Malta, political success is increasingly measured not by ideas and political statements but by the number of likes on Facebook and Instagram.

Politicians and aspiring MPs are posting, pouting, and posing at a dizzying pace, packing their social media feeds as though governance has been replaced by a never-ending beauty contest, locked in a competition for likes, hearts, and thumbs-up emojis.

Welcome to 2025, where politics has morphed into a popularity contest on social media. The trend is not exclusive to Malta, but we have taken it to absurd levels.

More at <https://timesofmalta.com/article/editorial-how-social-media-hollowing-politics.1116576>



UK

The Press Gazette writes: Royal cleaner stories removed by Times and Sun after authenticity questions

Dozens of stories published based on questionable press releases. Stories featuring a ‘royal cleaner’ who claimed to have worked for the Royal Family for more than a decade have been withdrawn after questions were raised by Press Gazette about their authenticity.

Interviews with ‘Anne Simmons’ featured in dozens of stories from major newspaper publishers this year, including the [Daily Mail](#), [Daily Express](#), [The Sun](#), [New York Post](#) and [Daily Mirror](#) as well as many regional titles and blogs.

The pieces offered insights into everything from the items Prince Charles would not permit in Palace bathrooms to Kate Middleton’s morning routine.

More at <https://pressgazette.co.uk/news/royal-cleaner-stories-removed-by-times-and-sun-after-authenticity-questions/>.

UK vigil

Following the killing of five Al Jazeera staff and a freelance photojournalist by Israeli forces in Gaza, journalists held an August vigil outside 10 Downing Street in London. The gathering on Wednesday was part of vigils and protests being staged by members of the National Union of Journalists across the UK and Ireland.

More at <https://www.commonwealthjournalists.org/london-journalists-in-solidarity-with-murdered-colleagues-in-gaza/>

The UK media and the Reform party:

Even though an election is not on the horizon in the UK for another three years, the surge of the Reform Party led by Nigel Farage [to the top of political polls](#) has grabbed British and global headlines. The party has surged on the political points table and its leader had at one point been promoted as close to President Trump. On that basis, there has been much British press attention on how journalists are being treated by Reform, both in the UK and in the US.

The National Union of Journalists: NUI responds to Reform refusing to speak to local journalists in Nottinghamshire

<https://www.nuj.org.uk/resource/nuj-responds-to-reform-refusing-to-speak-to-local-journalists-in-nottinghamshire.html>

BBC: Farage to speak to council leader over press ban

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgknyjkvmzlo>

Press Gazette: GB News to broadcast nightly from US in ‘huge moment’ for channel

GB News says it marks "huge moment" with US expansion.

More at <https://pressgazette.co.uk/news/gb-news-to-target-us-audience-with-bureau-and-political-editor-america/>



Pacific

The Samoa Times writes: Just hours after being sworn in on Tuesday morning, new Samoan Prime Minister La‘aulialemalietoa Leuatea Schmidt met with the media for his first official press conference at his office, reaffirming his government’s commitment to transparency and press freedom.

More at <https://www.samoaoobserver.ws/category/samoa/116153>



Reuters writes: LinkedIn is expanding its video advertising program, adding new publishers and creator-led shows to draw marketing dollars.

The Microsoft-owned ([MSFT.O](#)), [opens new tab](#) platform for professionals said on Monday that AT&T Business ([T.N](#)), [opens new tab](#), IBM ([IBM.N](#)), [opens new tab](#), SAP and ServiceNow ([NOW.N](#)), [opens new tab](#) will sponsor the debut season of four video programs as part of an expansion of its BrandLink program.

Launched last year as a publisher-focused Wire Program, LinkedIn rebranded it in May to include creators. It lets select publishers and creators place pre-roll ads before their video content and earn a share of the revenue.

Since the program's launch, LinkedIn has added more than 70 publishers and creators. The number of creators on LinkedIn has nearly doubled since 2021, the company told Reuters. Social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram rely on short-form video and creators for engagement, virality and monetization. Research firm eMarketer has said that consumers trust influencers more than traditional ads.

More at <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/linkedin-deepens-video-ad-push-taps-more-publishers-creators-spur-growth-2025-08-25/>

News platform [Semafor](#) writes:

New York Times teams up with Economist in play for worldwide readers

The New York Times has begun bundling its digital subscription with The Economist, a demonstration of the paper's increasing willingness to partner with other organizations to reach its 15 million-subscriber goal within the next two years.

The paper quietly rolled out the bundled subscription with the UK-based finance and business-focused publication earlier this year but hasn't publicized the deal. The bundle, which only appears to be available for a limited number of readers in the UK for now, offers annual subscribers to The Economist an extra annual subscription to The New York Times for £167 a year,

increasing automatically to £239 in the second year. The bundled subscription is currently less than an annual digital subscription to The Economist alone.

The offer is part of the Times' broader push towards bundling. Crucially, many of those bundles have focused on content outside the Times' core news offerings.

More at <https://www.semafor.com/article/09/01/2025/new-york-times-teams-up-with-economist-in-play-for-worldwide-readers>

From The Economist: We have partnered with The New York Times (NYT) to offer a bundled digital subscription package. It includes an annual The Economist Digital subscription and one year of access to The New York Times <https://myaccount.economist.com/s/article/I-need-help-with-The-Economist-The-New-York-Times-subscription>

More at <https://pressgazette.co.uk/publishers/digital-journalism/mobile-news-alerts-push-notifications-digital-news-report-2025/>



AND FINALLY...

Former UK Observer newspaper big-hitters launch a new title with their redundancy payouts

[The Press Gazette writes](#): The Nerve promises "hard-hitting investigations" blended with "fun".

Five senior Observer journalists including [Carole Cadwalladr](#) have launched their own culture-led publication partly funded with their redundancy money.

The Nerve, which is promising culture journalism that connects the dots with tech, politics and art, is launching as a twice-weekly newsletter through [Substack rival Beehiiv](#), with a beta website. The aim is to expand it to a full website and twice-yearly print publication in 2026 around the launch of its first major investigation.

Cadwalladr is a [two-time winner of the Technology Journalism prize at the British Journalism Awards as well as Investigation of the Year in 2018](#) for her work with The Observer exposing the harvesting of millions of Facebook users' data by the now-defunct Cambridge Analytica.

She was employed as a freelance writer for The Observer on a long-standing contract arrangement but [was dropped by new owner of the title](#), Tortoise Media. [Around half The Observer's 70-odd staff took redundancy rather than transfer over to Tortoise Media when the ownership of the title changed in March this year.](#) The Nerve's founding team is being led by Sarah Donaldson, former deputy editor of Observer New Review and digital editor of The Observer, who was Cadwalladr's editor on the Cambridge Analytica investigation.

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