

# UNITED FOR NEWS<sup>SM</sup>

Internews in collaboration with the World Economic Forum

## Sustaining Media through Socially Responsible Advertising

United for News is building a premium global advertising system that directs revenue to a vetted index of reputable publishers while equipping media with the skills to effectively capture this revenue.

### The Challenge

Media around the world is crippled by the transition to digital environments. People are losing the news and information they need to make good choices for their families, to participate in their communities and hold their governments to account. Most at risk, in every country, is local and community media, the connective tissue of healthy media environments. As media struggles, bad actors and information have rushed to fill the gap. There is a global proliferation of misinformation, disinformation, propaganda and hate speech. Trust in media and other institutions is plummeting. This is a shared, global crisis that will only grow in magnitude as the next 3 billion people come online.

While the flow of digital advertising revenue is steadily increasing, little is making its way to media organizations. Google and Facebook consume 61% of all global digital advertising (a \$237B market) and 90% of all new growth. In addition, the vast majority of media organizations do not have the skills or technical knowledge to participate in these fast-moving markets, dominated by increasingly consolidated digital platforms.



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## United for News: Generating Sustainable Revenue for Media

The core intention of our socially responsible approach to digital advertising is to enable brands to use their ad dollars to support robust democracies and healthy societies without sacrificing performance. The system builds a trusted network of reputable media that delivers brand safe inventory to advertisers around the world. We leverage significant market level knowledge to enable advertisers to reach audiences in complex local markets while eradicating spend that gets diverted to extremism, propaganda, hate speech and other undesirable destinations.

United for News will identify, index, score and audit reputable digital media through a combination of multi stakeholder engagement, purpose-built technology, market-specific human vetting and consulting operations. We will include publishers at all levels of the market to help support robust and pluralistic media landscapes.



**Demand for this program is substantial and urgent.** Many brands are seeking safe alternatives within automated digital advertising systems, which are plagued with fraud, lack of transparency and reputational risk. Media, eager to tap digital revenue streams, is incited to undertake the work of accessing these systems. The time is now to implement a sustained effort to build a more inclusive and socially responsible digital advertising system.

**A multi-stakeholder coalition delivers unique value.** Working with our diverse stakeholders, we will stand up a turnkey system that many brands can access, delivering on our social goals while meeting the business needs of key stakeholders in the system. Our deep experience on the ground will enable us to curate a custom index that respects local culture, builds trust and has significant first mover advantage. Our status as a non-profit coalition ensures that all revenue will be directed to furthering our mission.

**Our approach is sustainable.** While investment funds are needed to bootstrap the program to tap into the global digital advertising market (\$237 B), the United for News system will ultimately generate revenue to support growth and scaling to additional markets as demand emerges. This revenue will be re-invested in expanding to additional, underserved markets, with a focus on on-boarding new media.

## System Overview

The heart of our solution is the United for News Index and Publisher Network. The Index is a dynamically scored database of digital media, organized by market and optimized to ensure that editorially independent, high quality and reputable media rise to the top of the rankings. Building on the Index, the Publisher Network is composed of reputable media who have a data sharing agreement with United for News that enables us to serve ads on their sites.

The United for News Index and Publisher Network includes three primary elements.

1. **Criteria for Indexing:** A transparent, collaborative, multi-stakeholder process for indexing reputable media for a premium, programmatic advertising system;
2. **Core System:** Enable publishers at all tiers of the market to be identified, vetted (against the Index), on-boarded, and served ads from reputable brands;
3. **Media Development:** Works to enable qualifying media in need of digital transformation to become “programmatic-ready” so that they can participate in global online advertising markets.

The system will deliver the associated brand safety, view-ability and other guarantees required by premium brands. Funds generated will be used to sustain and grow the indexing and media development efforts to enable United for News publishers to develop stronger digital business practices.

### ***Value Proposition for Social Impact***

United for News has the potential to redirect global ad spending away from poor journalism, propaganda, misinformation and hate speech and towards reputable local and national media that strengthens support for communities, societies and economies.

### ***Value Proposition for Brands***

Access to reputable digital publishers, systematically indexed and scored, that enables advertisers to buy media in the best social interests of the markets they sell into without sacrificing performance. Provides an opportunity for brands to invest in the long-term health of key consumer markets.

### ***Value Proposition for Publishers***

Unbiased evaluation against known criteria valued by global brands that can increase direct access to premium programmatic ad placements, generating digital revenue growth.





## About United for News

United for News is a non-profit, mission-driven initiative founded by Internews in partnership with the World Economic Forum. We are a diverse coalition of stakeholders from across the media and advertising industries with a shared vision of a world where everyone, everywhere has access to the trusted information they need to make good decisions for themselves, hold their governments to account, and achieve their human potential. The charter partners selected to join the coalition bring the wide-ranging resources and capabilities required to help achieve this ambitious program.

The successful development of the United for News advertising system requires a range of resources that very few initiatives or projects can claim. First are the varied resources of the coalition itself, from deep knowledge of markets and publisher networks to rich relationships with global advertisers and brand leaders. Second is the development of the Index criteria, generated through a transparent, collaborative multi stakeholder process. Third are the trusted working relationships that will allow our system to evolve nimbly and adapt to conditions at the market level. Finally, our system is focused on support for media, ensuring that all revenues are reinvested in strengthening media and its role in healthy societies.