

A photograph of a harbor at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden-orange color, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. In the foreground, the water is calm, reflecting the buildings and the sky. On the left, there are several tall, modern buildings with unique architectural features. In the center, there are several large, cylindrical structures, possibly part of a pier or a dock. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

# Hamburger Abendblatt

2024

Hamburger Abendblatt

A harbor scene at sunrise or sunset. The water is calm, reflecting the sky and the buildings along the waterfront. A large ship is docked in the middle ground, and a crane is visible in the background. The sky is a mix of light blue and orange. The word "Moin." is written in large, bold, black letters across the center of the image.

**Moin.**

# HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT

How new ways of thinking about arts audiences have boosted subscription sales at Hamburger Abendblatt

This is the story of how the culture desk at Hamburger Abendblatt successfully tried to reach greater arts audiences, turned interested culture audiences into new subscribers - and also helped to overcome some newsroom-prejudices concerning the culture desk. The success of the culture desk is now inspiring change in the wider newsroom, and we hope it will inspire you too – this is about how local journalism can benefit from a focus on readers' needs.

Presented by **Maike Schiller, Head of the Editorial Culture Team**



# HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT

## Who we are

- **The people of Hamburg are totally into Hamburg**
- What moves Hamburg is a topic in the **Hamburger Abendblatt** – in the printed edition as well as on **abendblatt.de**, also in various newsletters and podcasts
- With a strong local focus, it reports on all parts **of the city, the people and their stories**

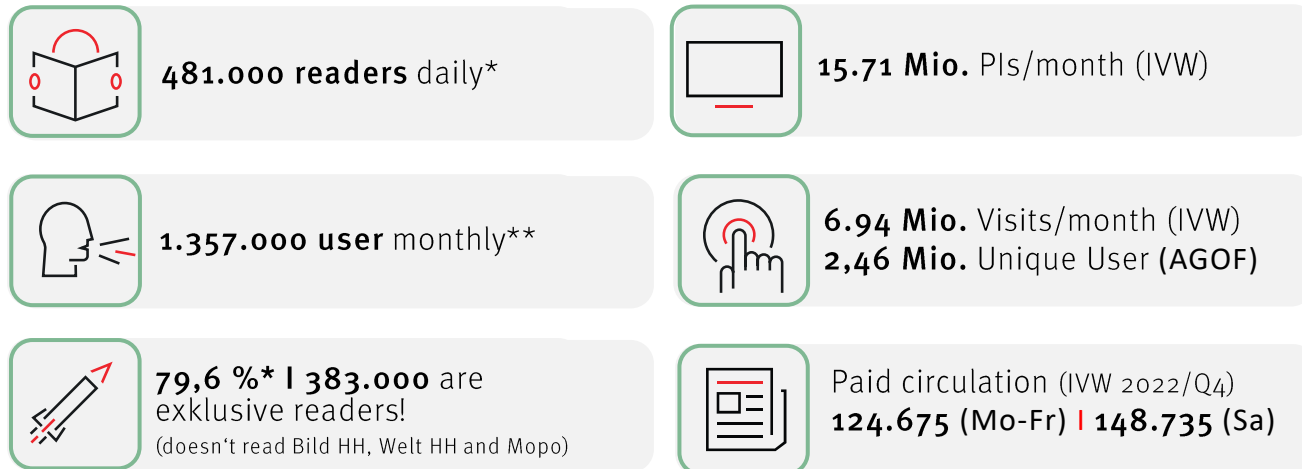


Hamburger Abendblatt

# HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT

## The number one in the north of Germany

Regional competence and well-founded reporting on national and international incidents make the HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT and abendblatt.de a leading information medium and the leading advertising marketplace in the north.



QUELLE: \*MA TZ 2022; \*\*B4P 2021 III, IVW MÄRZ 2022; AGOF NOVEMBER 2021. VERBREITUNGSGEBIET HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT GESAMTAUSGABE

Hamburger Abendblatt

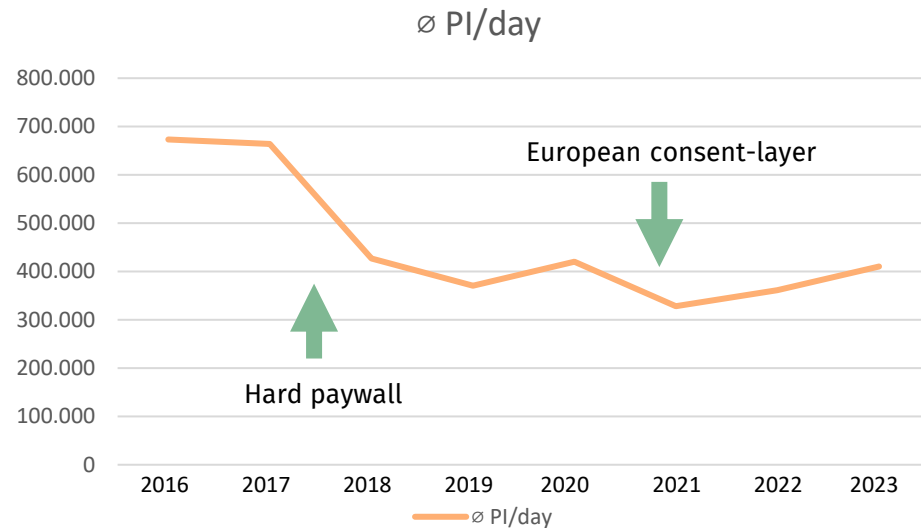
# ONLINE AT HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT

From start to now

- Start abendblatt.de
- First paid article
- PI since 2016

1996

2009 (first in Germany)



Year	∅ PI/day
2016	672.733
2017	663.883
2018	426.669
2019	370.596
2020	420.402
2021	328.177
2022	361.093
2023	410.384

- First podcast was a culture podcast („Elphidelyty“)



# PODCASTS AT HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT



4 podcasts from the culture desk

# HAMBURG

## City of culture

- 40 museums
- 60 theatres
- at least 100 clubs

### Most popular

- Elbphilharmonie
- Kunsthalle (Caspar David Friedrich, etc.)
- Musicals (The Lion King, Hamilton...)
- Deutsches Schauspielhaus (largest theatre stage in Germany)
- The Beatles started their career at St.Pauli
- Reeperbahn Festival (80 locations, 700 events, Europe's biggest show case festival)







# WHERE WE STARTED

The culture team changed in 2023

# FROM "ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL" TO LOCAL MARKETS, LOCAL AUDIENCES

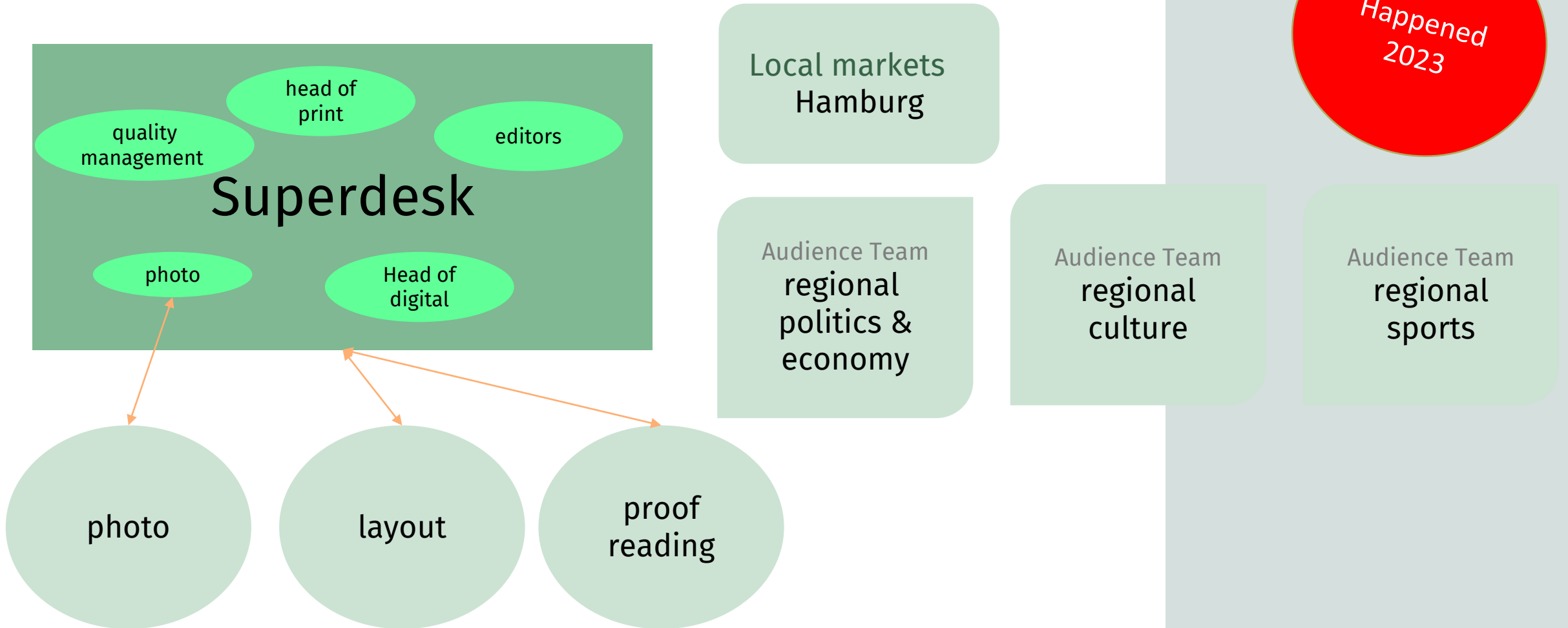
## From:

- **Print to online** - classic structure in departments: Articles are written and made fit to print for the newspaper
- An online-Team is preparing the content to be published online.

## To:

- **Online First** - distinction between role of writer/editor and producer/channel manager
- Superdesk - distribution, quality and breaking news desk
- Team Hamburg – focus on local districts with small teams, goal is a rise in digital market penetration
- Culture, sports, business, politics – focus on certain sub-audiences

# NEW STRUCTURE OF THE NEWSROOM



A photograph of a harbor at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden-orange color, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong reflection on the water. In the background, there are several buildings, including a prominent one with a curved facade. The water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the buildings and the sky. A few birds are visible in flight. The overall mood is serene and atmospheric.

# WHAT WE DID (AND HOW)

Hamburger Abendblatt

TABLE STAKES HA // PAGE

# OUR CHALLENGE

## What we did

- Focused on serving **specific culture audiences**, ensuring that some of these are 'younger' (twenties through 40s). For each audience, identify as many ways as possible to enhance the quality of their cultural experiences and cultural lives
- Used data (dashboard open to everybody)
- Practiced a core editorial workflow in culture that is **audience-and-digital first, print later** and (sometimes) better.
- Established a **workflow** that guarantees that reviews with a **high demand** in our readership (music, theatre) **always have priority** and should be online as soon as possible.

# OUR CHALLENGE

## What we did

- Turned the **culture desk into a minipublishing team** that also included key people from marketing, tech and data (need to do better in social media)
- **Went beyond content:** our miniP culture team created Abendblatt brand value through events, sponsorships and more (i.e. selling tickets)
- Identified audiences we **did not reach enough** and target them (e.g. age group from 20 to 40 -> club culture, young families -> exhibitions suitable for children)
- Modify the approach on stories/sections that are not successful yet (usually do not lead to subscriptions, do not find more than 1000 readers)
- If possible - do more follow-ups on stories that are a success

# WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

"ZUGABE": every thursday, 5000 subscribers, 30+% opening rate, advertisement sold for every issue

- Developing the already existing newsletter
- Developed a special discounted subscription offer for newsletter subscribers and advertise exclusively via the newsletter (Just for a short term) -> still to be done
- Questionnaire to our newsletter readers combined with a prize competition to understand what they want to read about -> will do this year



# WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

## at the culture desk

- We have a sharper perspective on what we do
- We work more closely with the marketing department
  
- We have more people at the culture desk who are with us on the same page
- We have a better appreciation in the newsroom
  
- **Because of the numbers**



# NUMBERS

## culture desk subscribers

	April – Sept. 2022	April – Sept. 2023	
published articles	943	864	-8%
subs	508	696	+37%
subs per article	0,54	0,81	+49%
Articles with more than one sub	27%	35%	+32%

# NUMBERS

## culture desk reach

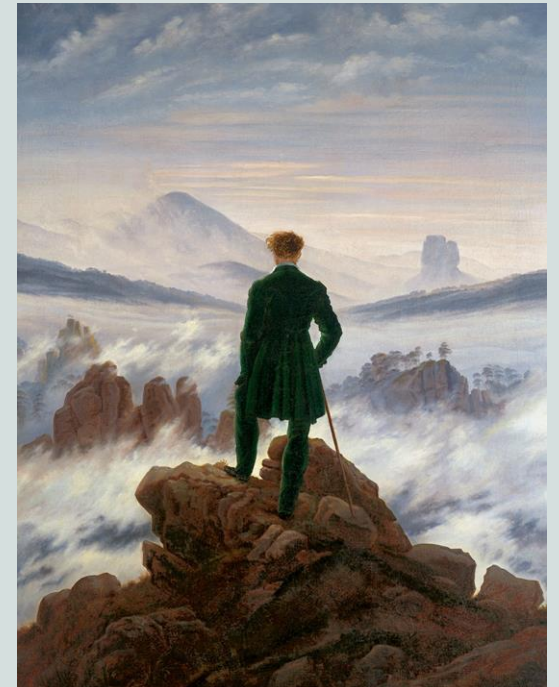
	April – Sept. 2022	April – Sept. 2023	
Published articles	943	864	-8%
Page views	2.210.000	3.950.000	+79%
Page views per article	2.344	4.575	+95%

# HOW WE GOT THERE

Make life easier for **specific culture audiences**

- **Example I**  
Advice for concert audiences on a regular basis ("What you need to know")
- **Example II**  
More than just a concert review for artists with large audiences  
(**Bruce Springsteen concert**) -> In total: more than 60 subscriptions + reach of 116.000
- **Example III**  
**Caspar David Friedrich**, huge exhibition at the Kunsthalle (art museum)

article	user
<a href="#">Caspar David Friedrich: Lohnt sich die große Ausstellung? - Hamburger Abendblatt</a>	30.110
<a href="#">Kurator: „Bestimmte Ausstellungen müssen teils übertoll sein“ - Hamburger Abendblatt</a>	23.712
<a href="#">Nachfrage zu groß: Caspar David Friedrich sorgt für Ernüchterung - Hamburger Abendblatt</a>	24.553
<a href="#">Caspar David Friedrich: Wie wäre es mit „Wanderer“-Socken? - Hamburger Abendblatt</a>	3.427

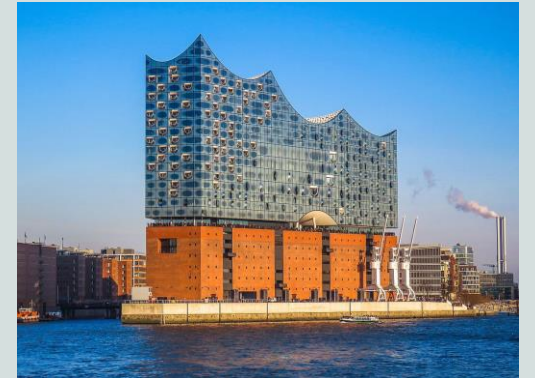


Hamburger Abendblatt

# HOW WE GOT THERE

- Pop-up sub-audiences (Harry Potter)
- Practice a core editorial workflow in culture that is **audience-and-digital first, print later** or not at all
- You **love** reviews of **classical concerts** and **theater**? You got it!
- **We don't allow ourselves to be restricted by the capacity of the print edition**

J.K. ROWLING'S  
**Harry Potter**  
AND THE  
**CURSED CHILD**



Hamburger Abendblatt

A harbor scene at sunset. The sky is a warm, golden-orange color. In the foreground, there's a body of water reflecting the sky and the structures. On the left, there are modern buildings, including one with a distinctive curved facade. In the center, a large white ship is docked. To the right, there are several tall, cylindrical structures. The overall atmosphere is calm and serene.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

Hamburger Abendblatt

TABLE STAKES HA // PAGE

# PLANS FOR THIS YEAR

2024

- More “online first thinking” inside and outside the culture desk
- Online commitment in the bonus agreements of other editors
- Intensify working closely with departments as sales, marketing and distribution
- Get people on board (numbers & fun)
- Get a proper social media team
- Stop doing
- Target more specific audiences (e.g. Reeperbahnfestival, choir singers,...)

# PROJECT CHOIR

2024

- Around 40.000 people singing in choirs in Hamburg
- More than 100 choirs are organized in Chorverband Hamburg
- Different angles:
  - Manual that answers beginner's questions like "Which of the many choirs is right for me and why?", "Do I have to be able to read sheet music to sing in a choir?", "Am I too old to start singing in a choir?"
  - Portraits of choirs and their leaders, from professional to strictly amateur
  - Interview with a psychologist/therapist: The healing force of singing
  - Listing: Most interesting choir concerts of the month
- Idea 1                      concert at Elbphilharmonie (2100 seats): "The Long Choir Night, presented by Hamburger Abendblatt" (ticket presale for subscribers)
- Idea 2                      foundation of Hamburger Abendblatt Reader's Choir



Hamburger Abendblatt

# THANKS AND TSCHÜSS

Questions? [maike.schiller@funkemedien.de](mailto:maike.schiller@funkemedien.de)



Hamburger Abendblatt