

Building a future on a
younger and paying
audience at VK Media

VK Media

”Swedens loneliest publisher”.

- Anders Malmsten

- Located in **Västerbotten**, in the north of Sweden.
- **Locally owned** by a liberal non profit foundation.
- Covering an **area larger than Switzerland**, but only 270 000 people live here.
- Main newspaper, Västerbottens-Kuriren (VK) **founded in 1900**.
- Early **online presence** and success – vk.se launched in 1997.
- Early focus on **digital reader revenue** – premium paywall since 2013.
- Editorial staff of 40 people at VK.



VK

FOLKBLADET

Odyr surf
FRÅN
VK
MEDIA

DAILY.

Västerbottningen

Västerbottens
Mellanbygd

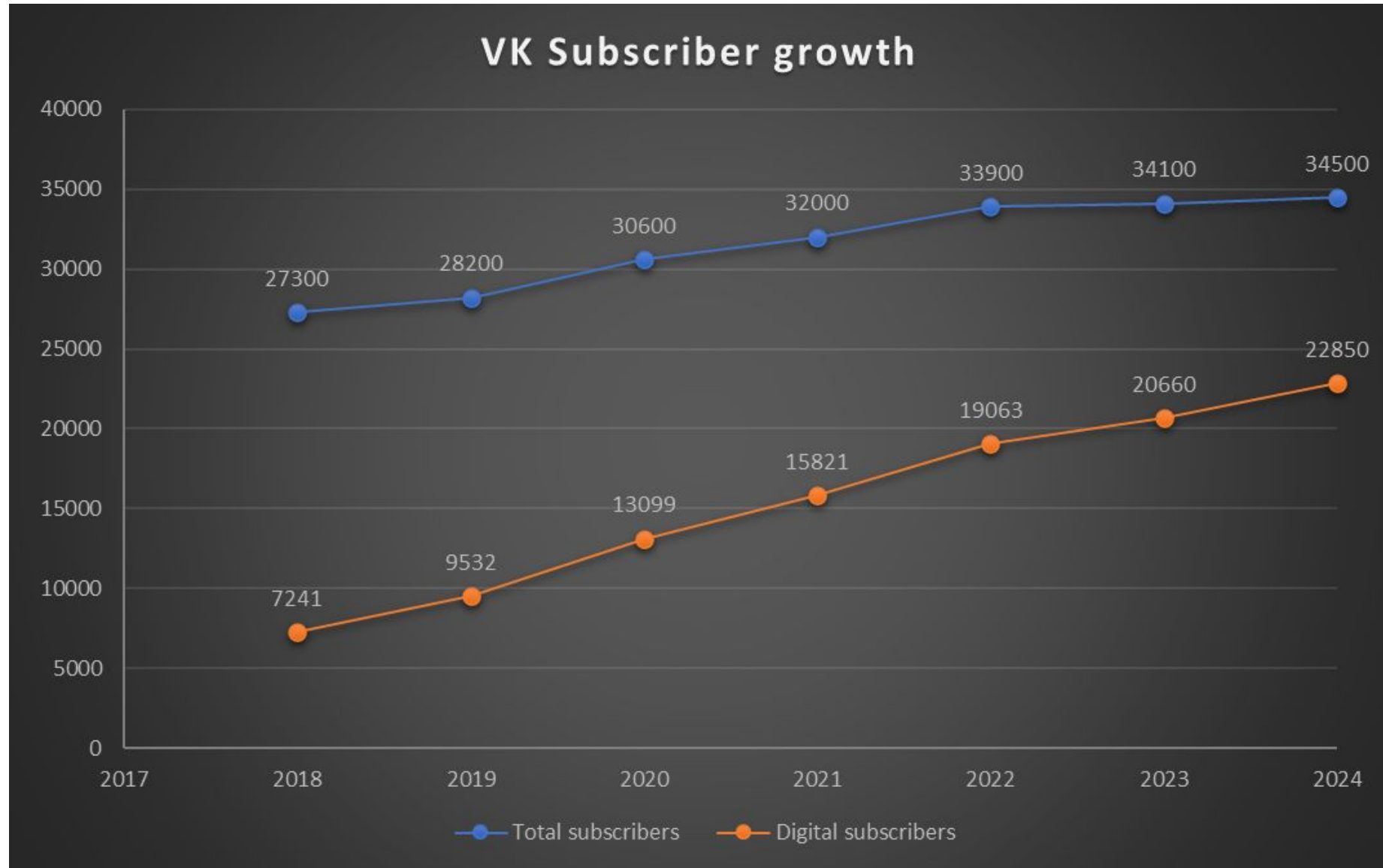
LOKAL
-tidningen

NORDSVERIGE

GRIT.

Lonely - but strong

- VK keeps growing. 2018-2024: +26%
- Only swedish local newspaper to grow every year during the period.
- Most digital subscribers in Sweden outside of the three big cities



Keys to our growth

A Taking and defending a strong local digital presence with large direct traffic

B Early focus on subscribers and loyalty

C Supportive owner

D Using our weakness (small) as a strength (collaboration)

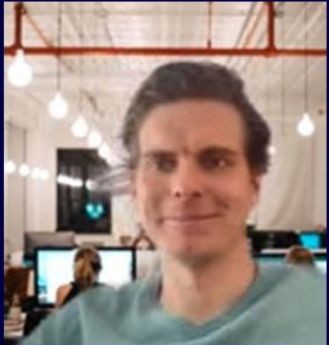
E A great will to improve, try new things and working fast

Project Young audiences

How it started – 2021

“An editorial project based on data and analysis, primarily aimed at providing insights and developing guidelines for editorial content development with the purpose of converting and retaining customers in the 18–45 age group.”

VK

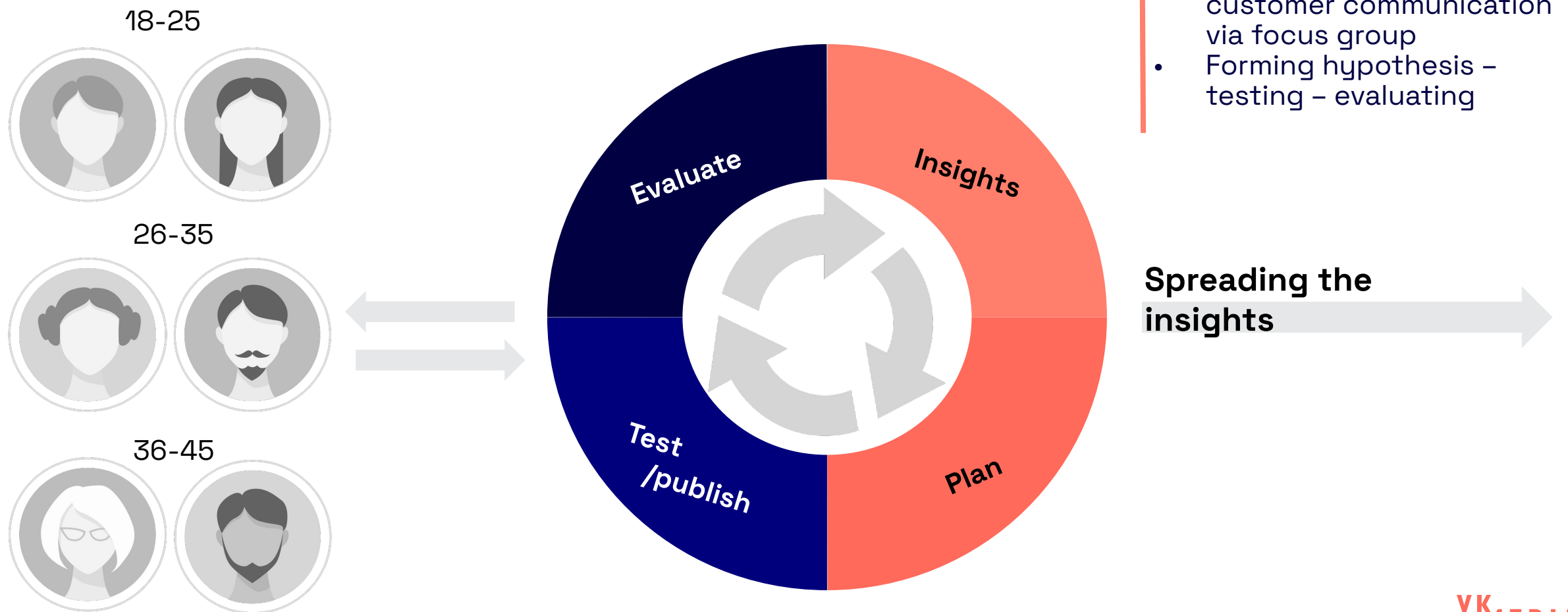


A new way of working

- Content development in project form.
- Team with representatives from editorial, data, marketing, and business development working together.
- Data driven approach.
- Creative freedom
- Hypothesis – test – evaluate

Analytical process

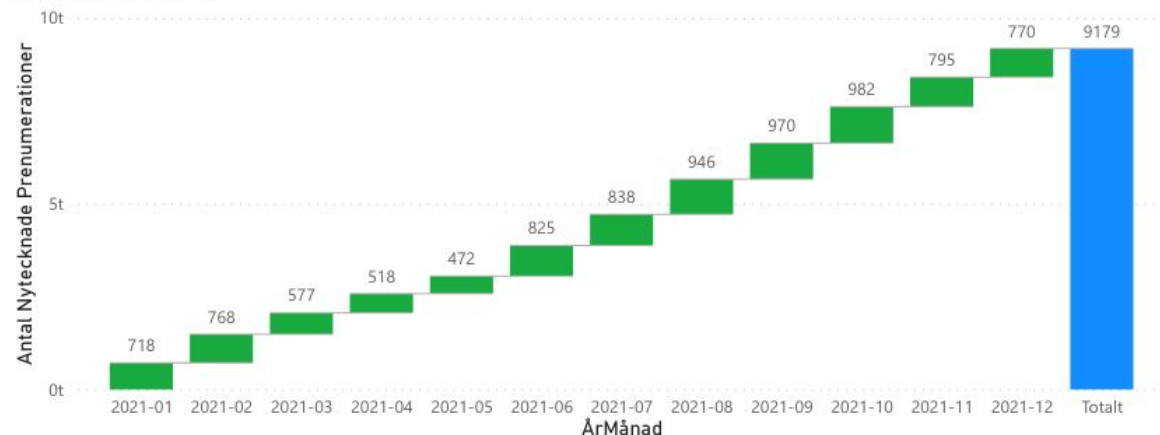
testing, learning and testing again



It went well!

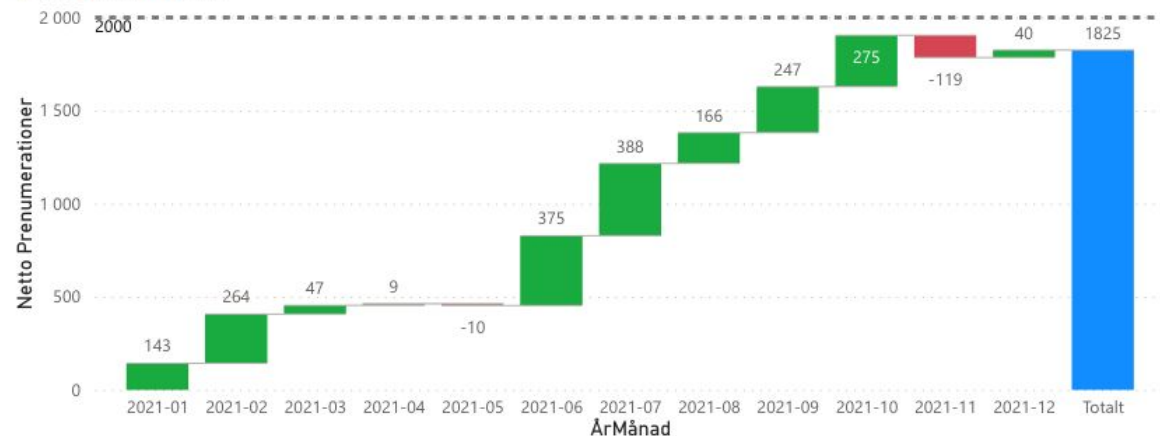
Antal Nytecknade Prenumerationer upp till 45

Öka Minska Totalt



Netto Prenumerationer upp till 45

Öka Minska Totalt



Over **9 000** conversions of subs 45 years or younger.



Net growth of **1 825** subscribers under 45.



First price at Inma Global Media Awards



VK MEDIA

10 learnings in reaching younger readers

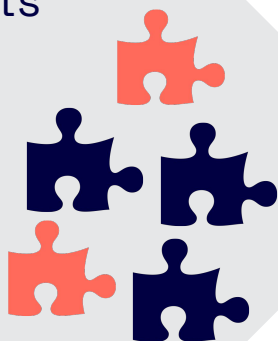
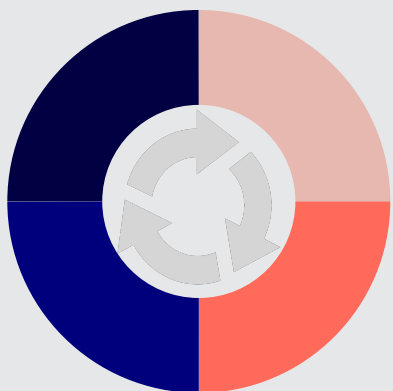
1. **Angle toward life stage**
What in the story could be interesting for, for example, new families or young adults?
2. **Attract through identification**
Can we highlight younger people and experts?
3. **Sharpen the headline and evoke emotions**
Be concrete. Is there a surprising angle, a detail that elevates the story?
4. **Authentic, genuine, and personal**
Portray reality as it is, without filters. Are there authentic photos, a story about something that went wrong, something unsaid?
5. **Expose injustices**
Is there an abuse of power? Dig deeper.
6. **Explain and investigate**
Just writing who says what isn't enough—find out what actually happened, and explain!
7. **Language and tone at eye level**
How could you phrase it in a natural way? Use the same language as your audience
8. **Stand out visually**
Be creative – would a collage or animation/ movement of image make it pop?
9. **Reach out – give the content a chance**
How should the content be launched? Plan design, timing of publication, and social media posts together with the news editor/social media editor.
10. **Choose different article concepts**
Would a guide, a listing, a documentary, investigation or other special format do? They work!

Phases of the project

2021

2022->

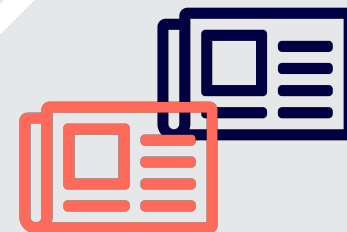
Phase 1 - Learn to know the customers!
Analysis - tests - insights



Phase 2 - All onboard!
Creating the culture,
spreading the insights and
way of working



Phase 3 - Spin
off new products!



Editorial: Analysis, testing and content development.
Marketing: Analysis of conversion / check-out behaviour, tests.

Work with all news departments; focus weeks, setting goals, content analysis.

Investing in certain content / packaging / new products, projects and services.

2023-2025: Loads of projects



Our principles on content development project

A The project manager has great freedom but is guided by directives and a steering group

B Using target audiences is key

C User needs-focus

D The plan moving forward must be sustainable

E Data analysis in every step

F Be brave! Failures are totally ok, as long as you learn from them.

Example: Family life

- Our family content was very much a print product.
- We saw potential in the topic – especially for readers aged 30–45.
- Clearly defined target groups - based on life phases.
- A project where we set up hypotheses – tested content and evaluated.
- Reader surveys provided insights.
- The project ran for about 9 months before we arrived at a plan for our new content. ----->

	Hemmet och planering	Hälsa och välbefinnande	Lärande och teknologi	Aktiviteter och engagemang	Kommunikation och relationer	Inspiration, profiler och livsöden
Ämnen	Boendeplanering, säkerhet i hemmet, livspusslet, ekonomiska frågor	Sjukdomar, återhämtning, minska stress, fertilitet, kost	Skolfrågor, pedagogiker, teknik för äldre, teknik för barn, digital säkerhet etc	Guide till aktiviteter för både barn, unga och äldre. Föreningar, evenemang	Familjesamvaro, uppfostningsfrågor, konflikthantering, relationsfrågor, sex o samlevnad, familjedynamik och konstellationer	Resor, engagemang, inspiration
Tänkbara intervjupersoner	ekonomisk rådgivare, mäklare, familj som just flyttat/köpt hus, familjerådgivare, Säkerhetsexpert, offer för inbrott eller olyckor, brandman, konsumentvägledare, någon som startat eget, någon som just pensionerats, etc	Läkare, forskare inom medicin, vanliga personer som lever med sjukdomar, eller blivit frisk, fysioterapeuter, stresshanteringsexpert, yogalärare, expert på fertilitetsfrågor, någon som just fått barn, par som kämpat för att bli gravida, kock, dietist, etc	Rektorer, lärare, elever, föräldrar, barnpsykolog, utbildningsforskare, specialist inom e-lärande, cybersäkerhetsexpert, it-tränare för äldre, app- och spelutvecklare, dataintegritetsaktivister, vanliga personer som drabbats av säkerhetsincidenter online, etc	Personer som är aktuella i samband med olika aktiviteter som anordnas, arrangörer till evenemang, föreningsavkta, etc. Kan även vara tips/guider vi gör själva	Familjeterapeut, barnpsykolog, föräldrabloggare, författare, personer i olika familjekonstellationer, sexolog, relationsexpert, par som varit tillsammans länge, par i relationsterapi, sociolog,	Personer som varit på häftiga resor/äventyr, entreprenörer, samhällsaktivister, vardagsprofiler, konstnärer/kreatörer, personer med intressanta livsöden.

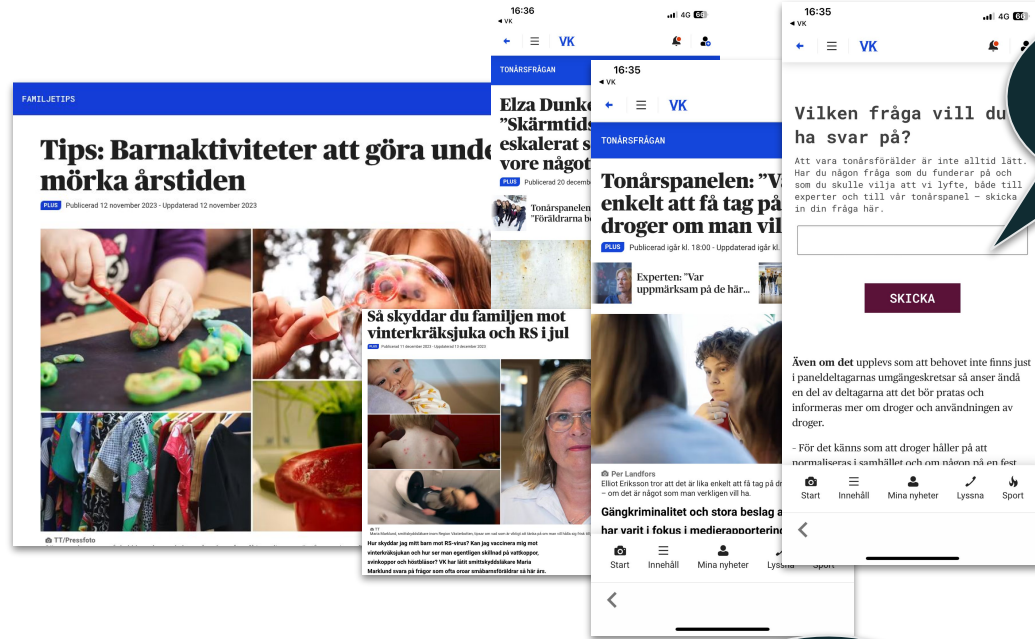
Måndag	Tisdag	Onsdag	Torsdag	Fredag	Lördag	Söndag
Lärande och teknologi		Hälsa och välbefinnande	Aktiviteter och engagemang	Inspiration, profiler och livsöden	Kommunikation och Relationer	
Hemmet och planering	Vardagshjälten	Krönika	fråga psykologen/dietisten/sexologen			Fördjupning

Family life

A site for the whole family

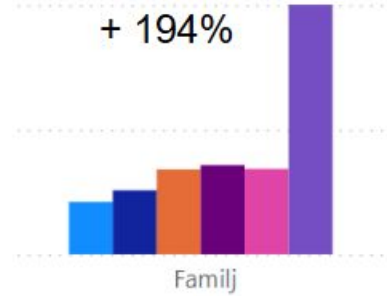
We developed a new content strategy for VK's family content, targeting different life stages and themes.

- Very focused on user needs - help, inspire, involve, give context.
- Relationships and sex is relevant.
- Give space to many faces.
- Highlight everyday heroes

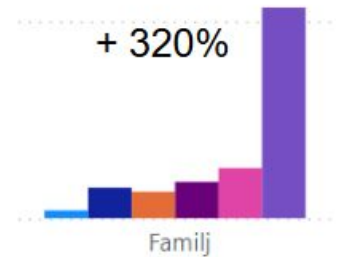


Interaction with our users

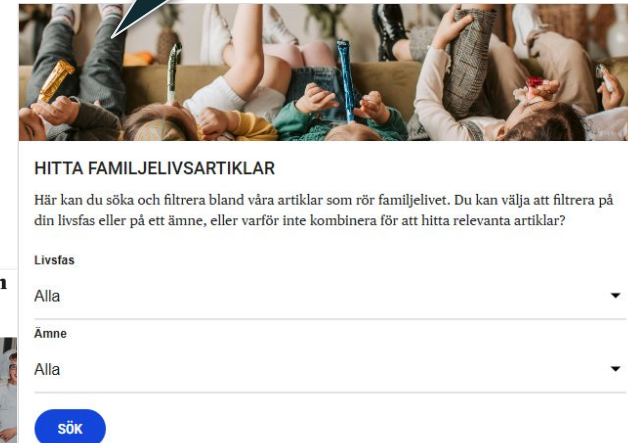
Pageviews



Conversions



Make use of evergreen content



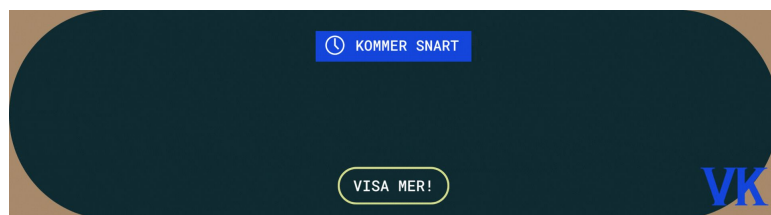
VK MEDIA

Marketing  Editorial

Giving the journalism wings to fly

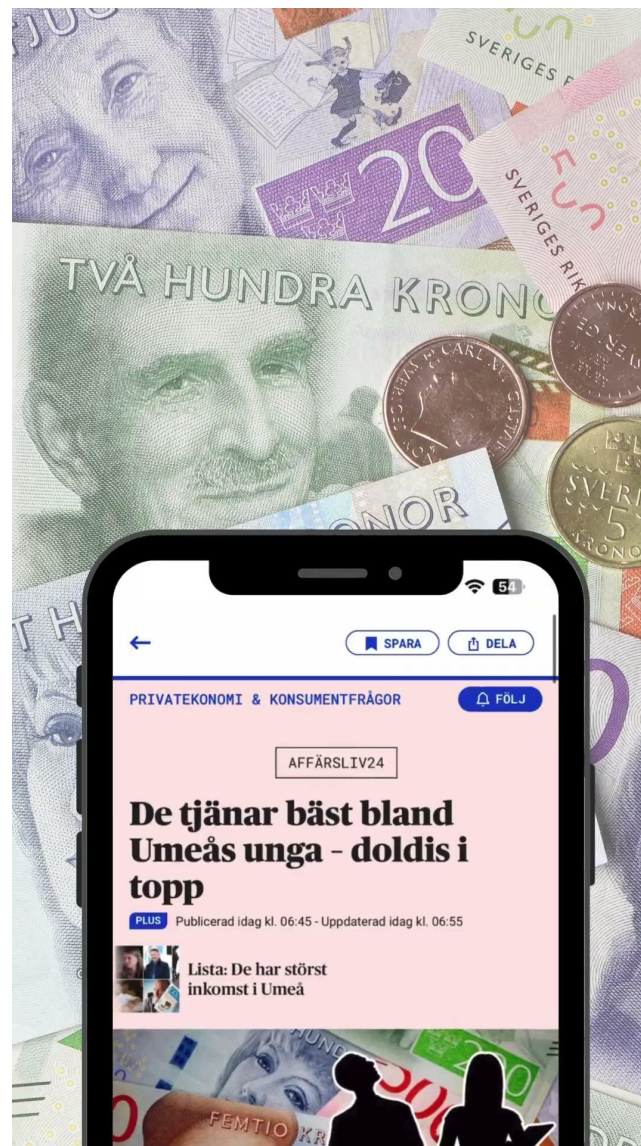
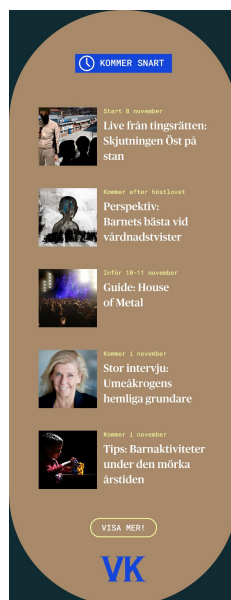
We have developed a close way of working between the editorial team and the marketing department to reach the right target audiences and amplify our content.

The goal is also to become more coordinated across all channels, and to align our channel strategies and our brand.



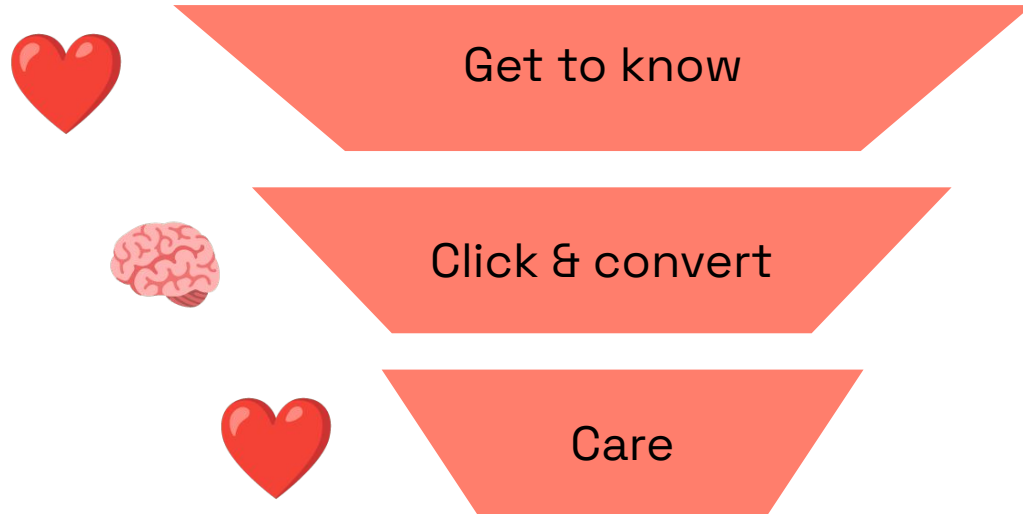
Coming soon feature

Gives target audiences tips via email and on the site about upcoming relevant content.



A social media strategy based on three key themes

Everything VK publishes on social media is connected to one of these themes:



Type of content

To 'give away' content. Inspiring, thought-provoking, educational, shareable. Sparks curiosity and emotion! Keeps VK top of mind.

Teasing content to generate traffic to our site and app, or marketing content

More personal, behind the scenes, show ourselves and our values.

KPI:s

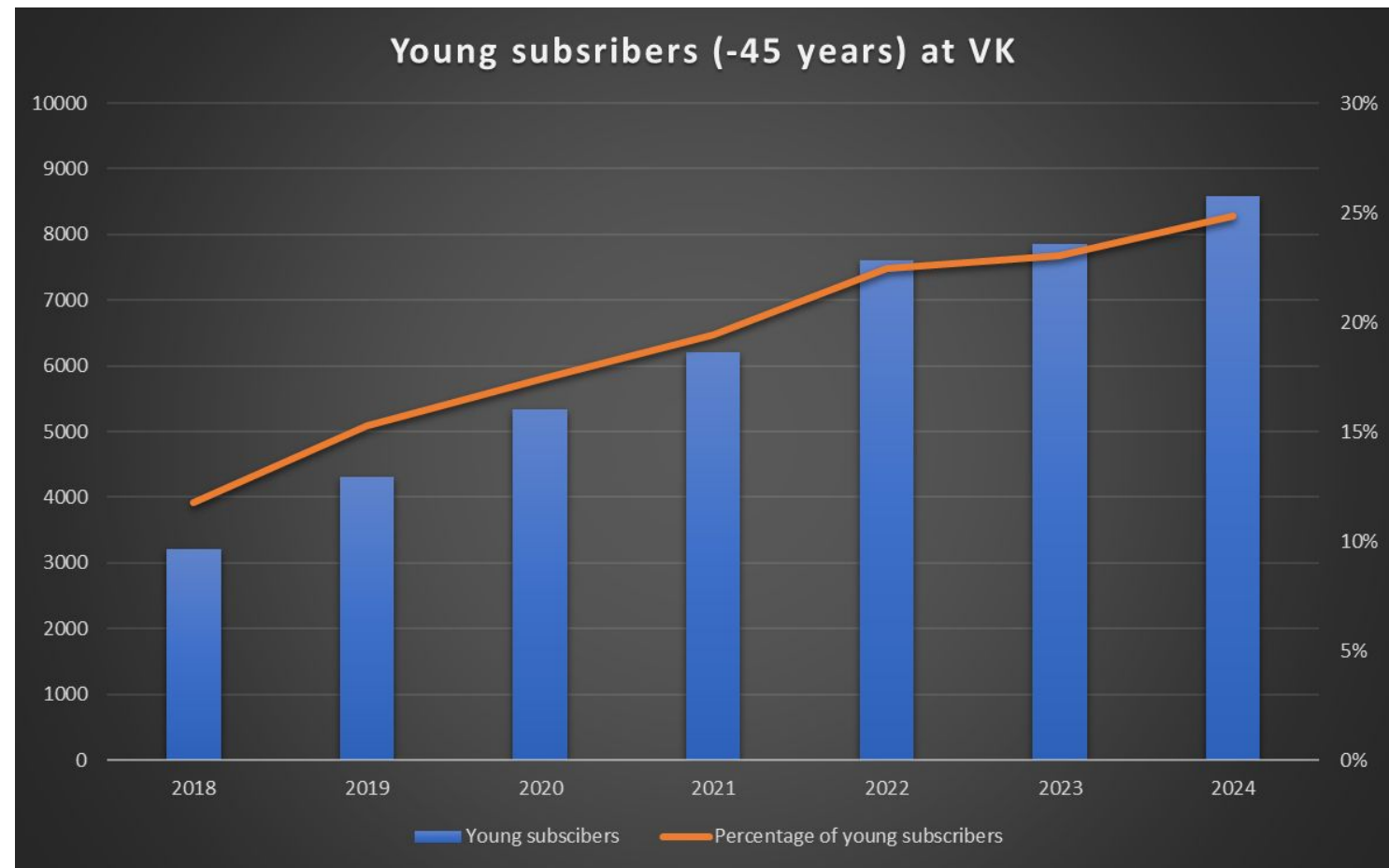
- Interactions
- Reach
- Follower growth

- Pageviews
- Conversions

- Bookmarking och content
- Sharing content

What have we learned?

- Work in projects – good, efficient, and fun!
- Work in cross-functional teams is a key.
- Project management competence – a challenge.
- Structure helps – steering group – project templates – directives.
- Endurance – challenging to integrate the projects into operations.
- We can achieve results: Steady growth of young subscribers



Thanks!