

McClatchy

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- **Cynthia DuBose**, Senior VP of Product & Experience,
The McClatchy Company

25%

Homepage
CTR Uplift

15%

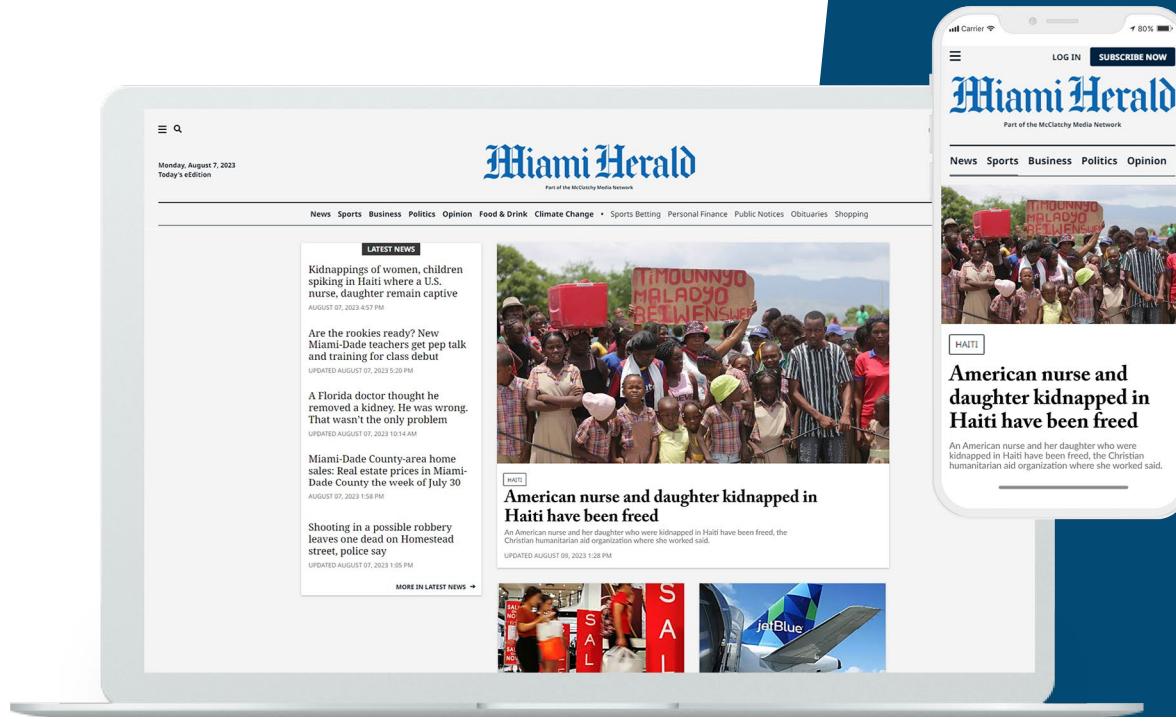
Page View per
Session Uplift

9%

Increase in New
Subscriptions



**The McClatchy Company Drives 25%
Homepage CTR Uplift with Taboola’s
Homepage For You Tool**



COMPANY

McClatchy features a powerhouse of vibrant news brands that have earned awards and national recognition, including the Miami Herald, The Kansas City Star and The Sacramento Bee. The McClatchy digital platform hosts over 30 news sites and a robust digital content offering from syndication partners.

CHALLENGE

Increase engagement on homepages across their portfolio, driving clickthrough rates and return visits.

SOLUTION

Use **Taboola's** Homepage For You tool, powered by AI, to automatically personalize homepage content and experiences for each visitor in real time, especially during major news events.

RESULTS

With **Taboola**, **McClatchy** achieved a **25% uplift in homepage CTR**, a **15% uplift in page views per session**, and **new subscriptions went up 9%**.

McClatchy Increases Return Website Visits and Revenue with **Taboola** Homepage For You

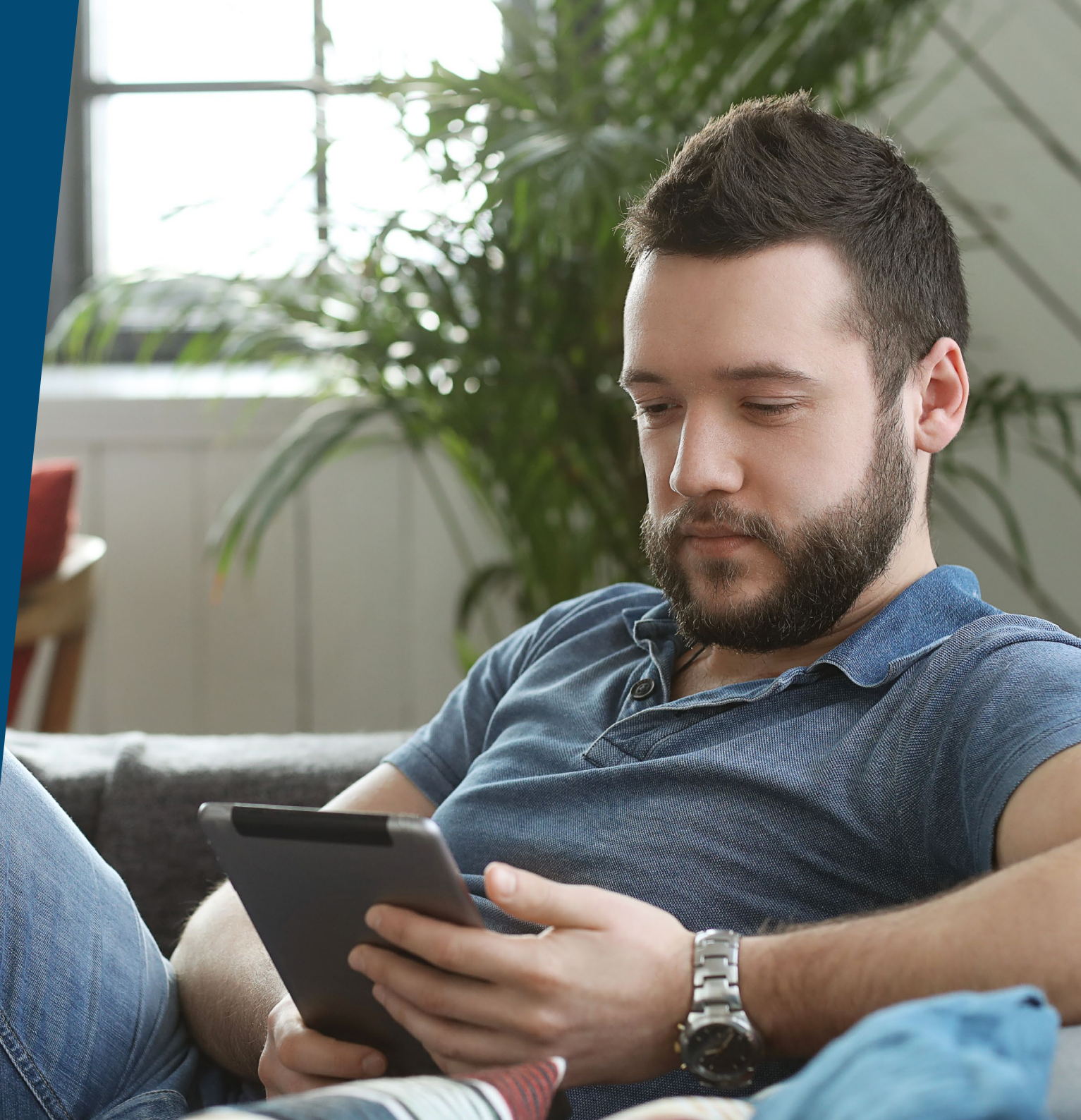
Introduction

McClatchy features a powerhouse of vibrant news brands that have earned awards and national recognition, including the Miami Herald, The Kansas City Star and The Sacramento Bee. The McClatchy digital platform hosts over 30 news sites and a robust digital content offering from syndication partners.

McClatchy's platform is a catalyst for informed engagement, greater understanding, and deeper community connections. Through state-of-the-art technology, McClatchy reaches more than 95 million unique visitors per month by providing essential news and information to the communities it serves.

McClatchy is in the midst of a digital transformation, leveraging its platform to deliver mission-based journalism, independent reporting and innovative customer solutions in order to serve its audience at the highest level.

Connect with **McClatchy** on social media @mcclatchy or at mcclatchy.com.



McClatchy Delivers Personalized, AI-Powered Homepage Experiences with Taboola Homepage For You

McClatchy was looking for an innovative way to increase engagement on homepages across their publisher sites. The publisher wanted to make sure that when visitors landed on a homepage, they engaged with stories and stayed on site instead of bouncing.

Traffic from the big platforms, like Google and Facebook, had high bounce rates and low rates of return visits, and expected traffic drops from these sources put publishers at risk of slowing growth or even declines. By growing and nurturing direct traffic to their site, on the other hand, **McClatchy** could build its own audience of loyal readers and subscribers and drive high-quality leads.

They just needed the right tools to make it happen.

“We were using AI to distribute on social channels, but we didn’t have an algorithm to personalize the homepage and change the homepage experience for our users,” said Cynthia DuBose, Senior VP of Product & Experience at **McClatchy**.

That’s where **Taboola**’s Homepage For You (HP4U) tool was able to help. Homepage For You leverages **Taboola**’s advanced AI and massive dataset to surface relevant and personalized homepage content that matches each visitor’s interests. It’s designed to supplement editors’ own expert curation and help them maximize their most critical piece of real estate: the homepage.

McClatchy was one of a few leading publishers to beta test the new capability for increased homepage engagement.

“None of our other partners at the time offered that personalization option — not the way **Taboola** did with the AI and training the algorithm,” said DuBose. “**Taboola** is the first partner that we found that could do that.”

Built With Editors for Editors, Homepage For You Empowers Journalists in the Newsroom

Homepage For You is designed to empower journalists to focus on the most important aspects of their jobs, not replace them or their work. In fact, **Taboola** collaborated with senior editors at some of the world’s biggest news sites to design the tool’s algorithms and UX, taking their feedback into account every step of the way.

Taboola took the same approach to help **McClatchy** customize and activate Homepage For You across their newsrooms. As a trusted design partner, **Taboola** collaborated hand-in-hand with **McClatchy**’s experienced editors and journalists to build a model that was tailored to their portfolio of publications.

“**Taboola** really worked with us and listened to what we were saying,” DuBose said. “They got us to a place where we could implement Homepage For You across our network quickly.” McClatchy Ramps Up Homepage Engagement on Election Night with Taboola Homepage For You

McClatchy’s teams retained full editorial control with Homepage For You’s self-service setup. For instance, Homepage For You includes tools for editors to review algorithmic decisions and “teach” the algorithm based on their knowledge and experience. Editors can also choose to enable or disable AI-based personalization on different parts of the homepage, effectively displaying a tailored combination of human-curated and AI-curated content.

As such, each newsroom could use AI to customize their homepages for different audiences and adopt Homepage For You at its own pace.

On election night, for example, one publication wanted to manually control its homepage slots while another was willing to test the Homepage For You algorithm. They were each able to carry out their own approaches to personalization without affecting the other. The result? Powered by AI, Homepage For You delivered more personalization and higher clickthrough rates (CTRs).

“Our editors and reporters were able to say, ‘Hey, we used the algorithm on the homepage and it worked better in terms of CTR and it exposed more of our content to our readers,’” DuBose said. “And the editorial team that didn’t personalize knew to use Homepage For You next time.”

Homepage For You Helps McClatchy Work Smarter, Not Harder

With **Taboola** Homepage For You, **McClatchy** was able to achieve a **25% uplift in homepage CTR** and **15% uplift in page views per session**, as well as an **increase in return visitors**. Early indications also show that Homepage For You is having a positive impact on subscriptions and **new subscriptions went up 9%**.

In fact, the AI-driven tool was so successful that it helped **McClatchy** reevaluate its understanding of engagement.

“How we defined engagement has now changed,” DuBose said. “We’re not just looking at clickthrough rates but also return visitors. Are they coming back to that homepage experience and how much time are they spending on site?”

Instead of just chasing one-off clicks, **McClatchy** also realized the importance of building an owned audience of readers who aren’t funneled in by social and search channels.

“Going forward, we’re going to start to understand what our subscribers are reading and tap into that,” DuBose said. “So we can figure out the drive behind that propensity to subscribe and keep subscribing. We’re working towards that.”

Homepage For You even inspired **McClatchy**’s teams to find new and innovative ways to personalize experiences on other channels.

“Homepage For You has had a great impact on the business and how we think about the future of our platform,” DuBose said. “Can we personalize newsletters? What are other channels that we take time to manually update? Is there now an algorithm to help with that? Or is there a way to do it smarter?”

As an early adopter of Homepage For You, **McClatchy** has achieved great success with the AI-based tool and has implemented it across their entire network. With Homepage For You, they can continue their mission of helping people and communities thrive with access to high-quality, local journalism.

“For us, this is a way of working smarter,” DuBose said. “Because it allows us to now spend our time doing more of the engagement- and community-specific work that we know helps us increase our local market penetration.”