



Publishers Are Losing Their Readers to AI. The Washington Post's Tech Arm Built a Solution

Descrizione

COMUNICATO STAMPA - CONTENUTO PROMOZIONALE

Arc XP launches Ask The News, giving news publishers a way to answer reader questions with their own journalism and keep the audience data, conversions, and revenue that AI platforms are quietly capturing.

WASHINGTON, July 13, 2026 /PRNewswire/ Every day, millions of readers who once visited a news site now get their answers from ChatGPT, Perplexity, or Google's AI Overviews without the publisher seeing a single pageview, collecting a data point, or earning a cent. Arc XP, the media operating system built by The Washington Post, is launching a product designed to stop that.

New data underscore the urgency. According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026 (published June 2026), only 4% of AI chatbot users say they always or often click through to original news sources compared to 19% from search. As readers migrate their questions to AI, publishers are watching referral traffic go with them.

Ask The News is an AI-powered answer layer that publishers embed directly on their own digital properties. When a reader has a question, Ask The News answers it using the publisher's own reporting with attribution, editorial guardrails, and guards against the open-web hallucination risk that defines generic AI tools. The publisher owns the interaction, the intent data it generates, and every business opportunity that flows from it.

The industry has spent years worrying about Google and social platforms. The next threat is quieter and faster: readers learning to ask AI instead of visiting a news site. Ask The News puts publishers back in that conversation, said Joey Marburger, Vice President of Content Intelligence, Arc XP. The question is whether publishers own that moment of reader curiosity, or whether someone else does.

For decades, the article has been the primary unit of digital news engagement. Ask The News introduces a new layer built around the reader's question. Rather than requiring audiences to scan headlines or leave a publisher's site to understand a story, Ask The News surfaces relevant questions, allows readers to ask follow-ups, and synthesizes answers from the publisher's own journalism. The product automatically declines to answer when there is insufficient source reporting to do so confidently — a guardrail that sharply distinguishes it from general-purpose AI tools.

"Ask The News has the potential to change how audiences experience our journalism," said Martin Kautz, Head of Media Technologies at RND — RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland. "It gives readers a more intuitive way to explore our reporting while helping us preserve control of the reader relationship and better understand what people want to know."

The product launches with three core capabilities. Conversational Embeds allow publishers to deploy Ask The News across articles, homepages, and apps, with auto-generated suggested questions and a natural-language interface grounded in the publisher's reporting. A Subscription Gateway meters answers rather than articles, presenting a conversion prompt after a reader has already received value — a higher-intent moment than a traditional paywall. And Contextual Advertising with IAB Topic Intelligence classifies reader questions and answers in real time, generating intent-level signals that route through a publisher's existing ad stack without surrendering audience data to a third party.

"Search shows links. Generic AI gives answers from the open web. Ask The News answers with a publisher's journalism, rules, and business model," Marburger added. "This is about building a durable reader habit: when you have a question, you go to your trusted news organization first."

Ask The News is now available to Arc XP publisher partners, with a standalone deployment for non-Arc XP publishers via a JavaScript embed. Arc XP plans to expand the product into a broader intelligence platform, with future capabilities including personalized briefings, saved conversations, topic tracking, editorial intelligence dashboards, and proactive reader experiences.

Link to 1-minute video demonstrating Ask The News functionality: <https://hubs.la/Q04p95kY0>

About Arc XP

Arc XP is the content platform and operating system built to power growth for ambitious media companies. Developed by The Washington Post, Arc XP is used by leading media organizations worldwide, including The Irish Times, Libération, L'Express, Madsack, Graham Media Group, and Sky News. Arc XP's platform helps media companies innovate rapidly, own audience relationships, and grow independent revenue. Arc XP supports more than 3,000 sites globally and delivers billions of pageviews each month. Learn more at www.arcxp.com.

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