

# MOBILE CONTENT ENGAGEMENT STUDY

*March 2014*



**(( Rumble ))**

[www.rumble.me](http://www.rumble.me)

## INTRODUCTION

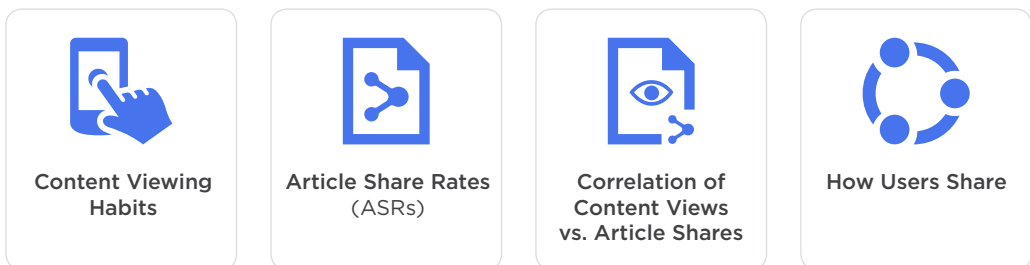
As publishers see their mobile traffic overtake desktop traffic, understanding what drives user engagement is going to be critical to maintaining and growing their audience.

Rumble issues quarterly studies based on data it collects across multiple publishers to uncover helpful tips and trends as publishers carry out their mobile strategies.

Following our recent Q4 2013 User Engagement Study, this quarter's study will address how users interact with content and how this affects their views and likelihood to share articles. Our previous study showed that people have unique engagement habits when it comes to mobile content apps.

This quarter, we wanted to delve deeper into understanding the type of content that drives user engagement and article sharing, and whether or not there is a direct correlation between content popularity and article sharing. We looked at over 100,000 users across multiple publisher clients on our platform from Oct 1, 2013-Dec 31, 2013.

Our findings include insights around the following basic content concepts:



**Content Viewing Habits**

**Article Share Rates (ASRs)**

**Correlation of Content Views vs. Article Shares**

**How Users Share**



**Article Views:**

The number of times articles are opened and viewed



**Article Share Rate (ASR):**

For any given section, the total number of articles shared divided by the total number of article views



**Propensity to share:**

The likelihood of sharing in a given section

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

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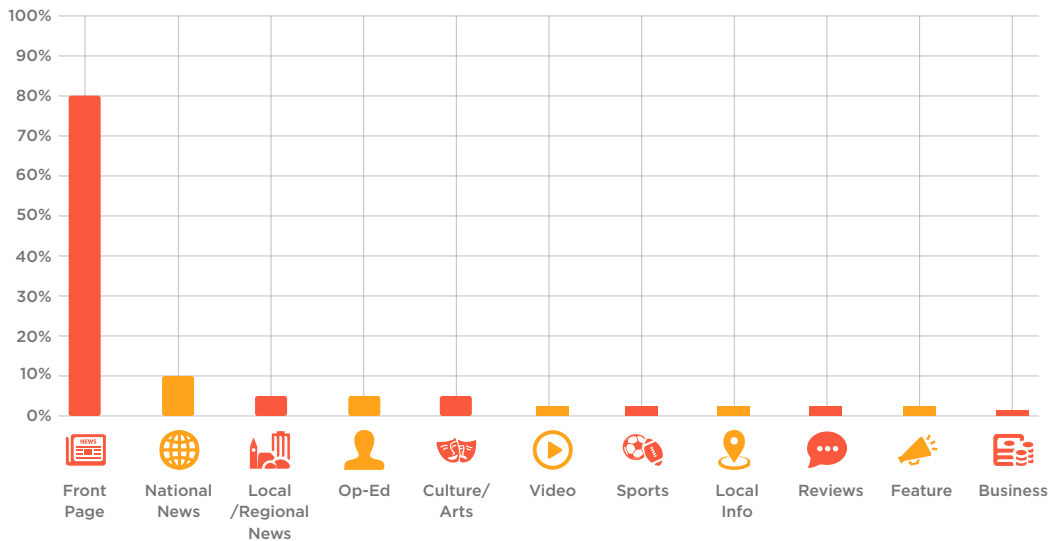
# 1

## CONTENT VIEWING HABITS

### FINDINGS

We reviewed our platform data for Q4 to see what sections were trending across a publisher’s mobile app. Roughly 80% of the viewing impressions came from a publisher’s “Front Page” or the default channel that the app opens up to. This heavy skew shows that mobile users are not avid channel browsers, making the stakes extremely high for publishers to engage users on the first screen shown in their mobile apps. Beyond the Front Page, users were then most engaged with National News, followed by Local/Regional News and Op-Ed.

### CONTENT VIEWING HABITS



## TAKEAWAYS

Knowing that the Front Page drove the highest number of content views is nothing new for content publishers. However knowing in mobile the Front Page makes up 80% of the traffic is eye opening. Especially on smartphones where the screen real estate is quite limited, editorial curation and any data driven personalization will be critical in maintaining an audience and acquiring new customers.

In other words, 80% of a publishers' mobile traffic could hinge on the very first impression of a mobile app from the design layout, the headlines chosen, the ad unit placement and how long it took for everything to load on the screen. Solely relying on instinct on what is going to engage users in those first few seconds will become a high risk content strategy. In mobile, editors need to be armed with more precise data on content engagement and have the ability to do rapid A/B testing in order to curate the best user experience before users turn to competing content sources that may not necessarily have better content, but better targeting.

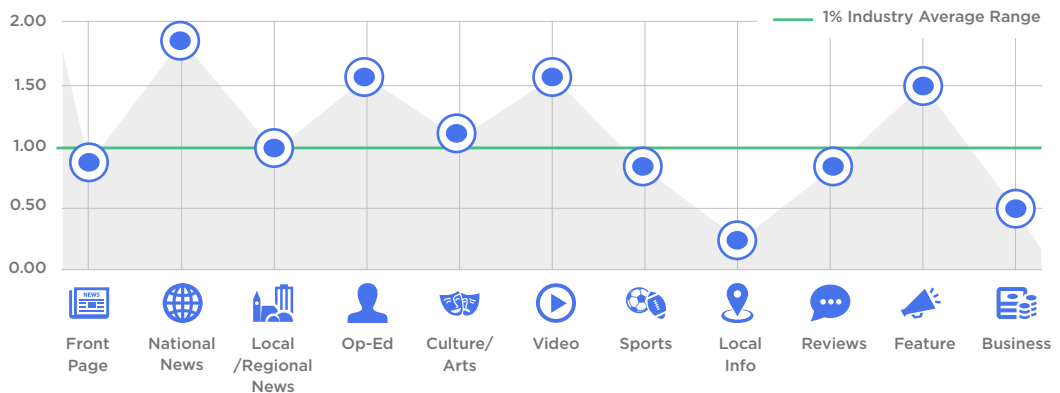
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### ARTICLE SHARE RATES (ASR)

#### FINDINGS

We then wanted to identify which sections of content resulted in the greatest interaction and would make users more likely to share. The results showed an average Article Share Rate (ASR) of 1-2% with National News, Op-Ed and Video content garnering the highest ASRs.

#### CONTENT VIEWING HABITS



#### TAKEAWAYS

Knowing that 1% is the ASR across all content categories and that the industry range is between 1-2% can be a rule of thumb for publishers and content creators to gauge user interests in the content they generate. Journalists covering National News, Op-Ed and Video will likely see more success with their articles which often include a strong human interest angle that is appealing to a broad cross-section of readers. Most importantly, publishers can use the ASR metric to evaluate their mobile strategy and make the necessary adjustments to improve their user engagement efforts.

### 3

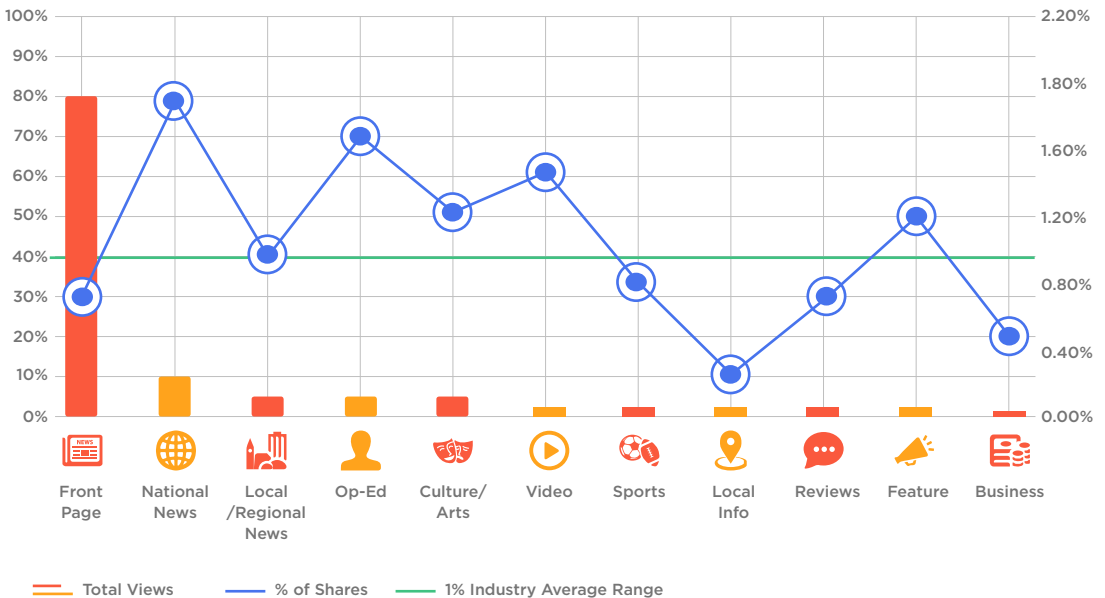
## CORRELATION OF CONTENT VIEWS VS. ARTICLE SHARES

### FINDINGS

The next step was to see what the correlation was between content popularity and a reader’s propensity to share. When combining the two data sets, we are able to categorize articles/channels as either being heavy hitters (having both high viewing scores and high ASR), traffic drivers (high viewing score, low ASR) and sleeper hits (having relatively low viewing scores but high ASRs).

Although the Front Page holds the most appeal and is the main tool used to attract traffic, it is a laggard when it comes to ASR and in its ability to grow the audience base beyond regular viewers.

CONTENT VIEWS VS ARTICLE SHARES



## TAKEAWAYS

As publishers define their mobile content strategy, it may be tempting to invest heavily on Front Page content, however niche content may be an even more effective way to boost ASR and grow their audience base. Those categories over-indexing the normal ASR of 1% will be the ones to boost user engagement and build loyalty among your readers.

The data findings are a clear indication that content popularity does not have a strong correlation to the ASR. Rumble can help publishers identify those sections that have the strongest ASR potential, and ensure their content strategy includes this to improve their user engagement metrics.

Across our publisher landscape, ASR metrics can vary greatly depending on the individual publisher and their section topics. As sharing is a leading indicator of user engagement, it reinforces the argument that low-traffic content sections can still offer great value to publishers serving double duty in driving higher engagement and enhancing brand value by sharing to a non-regular user base.



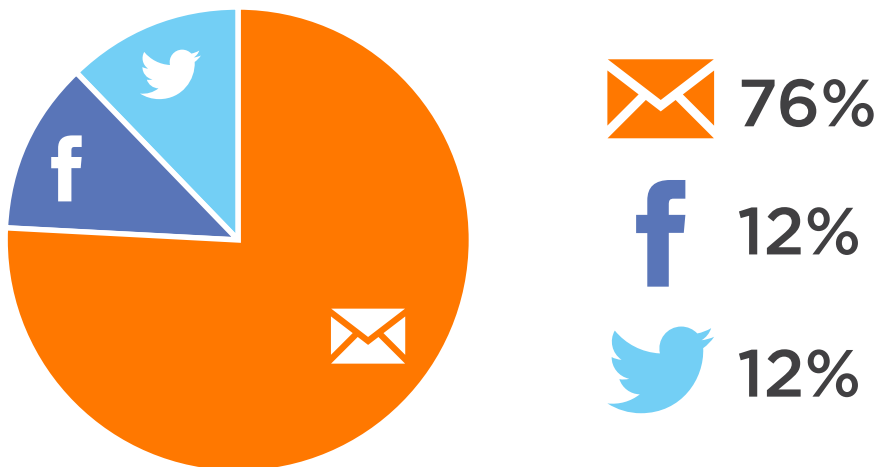
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### HOW USERS SHARE

#### FINDINGS

The Rumble platform offers mobile users the option to share articles within the mobile app via e-mail, Facebook, or Twitter. When given an option, mobile users strongly prefer to share content articles via e-mail. It was found that 76% of all articles shared were e-mail, with the remaining article shares split evenly across Twitter (12%) and Facebook (12%).

#### ARTICLE SHARES BY MEDIUM %



#### TAKEAWAYS

From these observations, it is recommended that publishers support e-mail sharing in their mobile apps as a versatile owned touch-point. A suggestion to publishers is to also use the e-mail sharing feature to drive stronger acquisition of mobile users. By including “Download our mobile app” in the e-mail template for e-mail shares, a publisher can create an effective touch-point for a potential user to download their app.

## 5

### IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLISHERS

With the ability to evaluate mobile content performance, Rumble enables their publishing clients to optimize their mobile strategy and make decisions on content and relevant revenue strategies.

By using a centralized publishing platform, publishers have access to vast amounts of user information which can form the basis for their personalization and monetization strategies. This data ultimately holds the key to achieving a publisher's growth objectives and identifying new revenue streams.

#### OUR FINDINGS IDENTIFIED THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS:



Publishers need access to section-specific data to truly understand and engage their readership more effectively. With Rumble, they can gather insights on a section-by-section basis and use this to determine how to drive specific behaviors from their users (e.g. to drive user acquisition, they may need to redirect an article to a more relevant section which historically drives high shares).

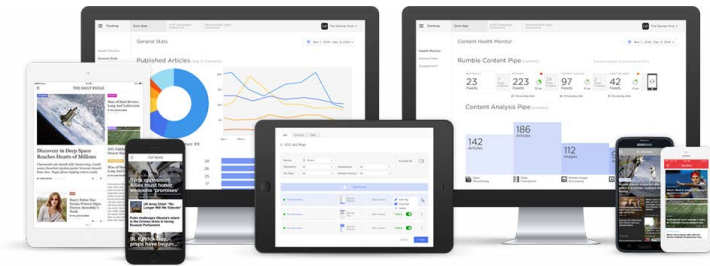


Publishers should care about their ASR (article share rate), because sharing is a key component of building a publisher's brand beyond their current readership base and a way to measure the engagement that readers have on content being created.



Based on our study, publishers can benchmark their content at a 1-2% ASR as an industry average. Our data confirms that there does not appear to be a direct correlation between the popularity of content viewed in proportion to the number of articles shared.

## The Rumble Mobile Content Engagement Study



Rumble gives publishers the data and control they need to drive greater return on their mobile business. Rumble's Smart Mobile Management System™ eliminates the complexity of building, managing and optimizing mobile apps and websites, empowering publishers to make real-time business decisions that deepen engagement and drive revenue growth. Rumble's new Content Business Insights Suite offers unprecedented insight into content performance, demographic targeting and revenue—enabling real-time optimization, while the Rumble Personalization Suite allows publishers to create and target higher-value content experiences to custom audience segments. More than 150 premium mobile properties are powered by Rumble, including leading publishers like Digital Media First, The Denver Post and Fox Sports. To learn more, visit [www.rumble.me](http://www.rumble.me) and follow [@rumble\\_inc](https://twitter.com/rumble_inc).

