ENVISIONING **DESIRED FUTURES** FOR SINGAPORE AND FOR THE LOCAL MEDIA

IPS-NATHAN LECTURES BY MR PATRICK DANIEL
11th S R NATHAN FELLOW

Stewardship of the Singapore Media: Staying the Course

Lecture I
The Singapore Media's Long and Winding Road:
1824 to 2022

Lecture II
Grappling with the Darker Side of the Internet:
A Global Challenge

Part I: Introduction
- Looking Two Decades into the Future
- A Different Approach: "Backcasting"
  - Backcasting vs Forecasting

Part II: Desired Futures for Singapore in 2045
- The Singapore Pledge
  - "A United People"
  - "Equality" and Inclusivity
    Minimum Wages, Wealth Taxes and Philanthropy
  - "Happiness"
- Other New Areas
  - The Climate Crisis and Sustainability
  - Technology: Artificial Intelligence
  - Internet and the Metaverse

Part III: The Singapore Media's Desired Futures
- Envisioning 2045
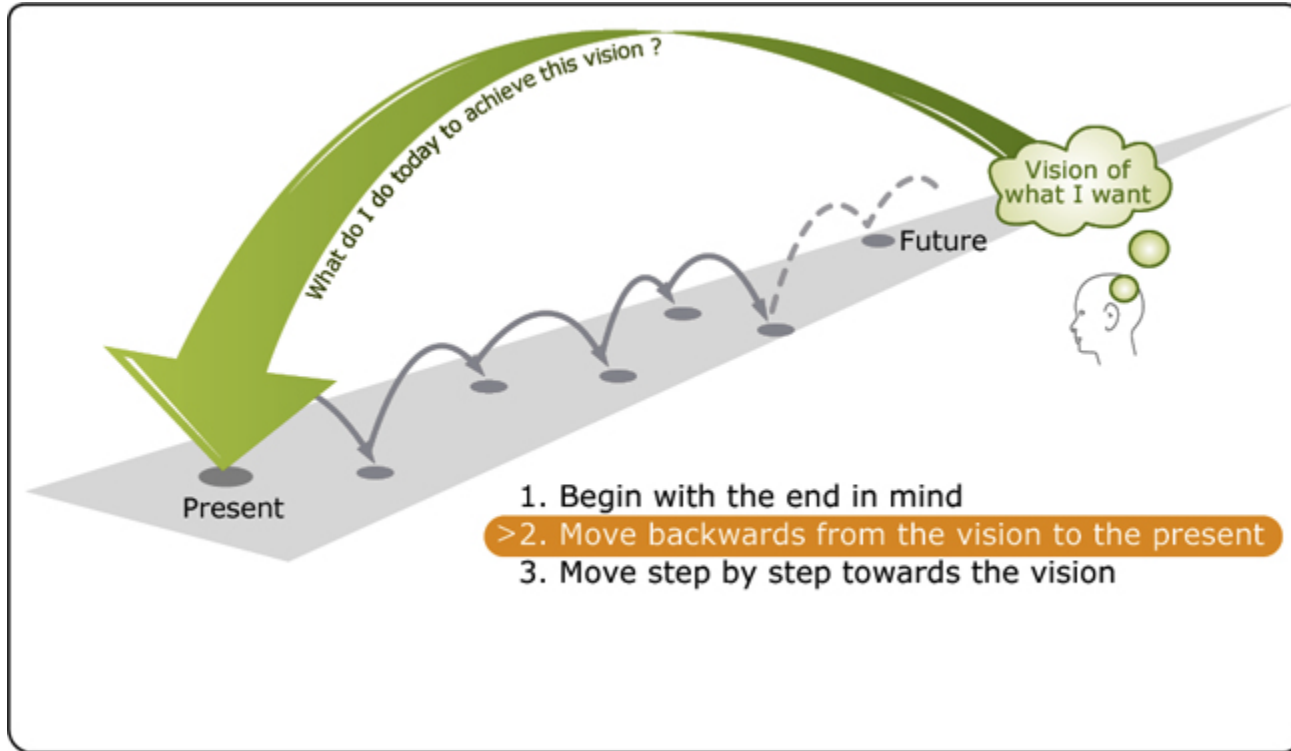- What it will Take to Get There
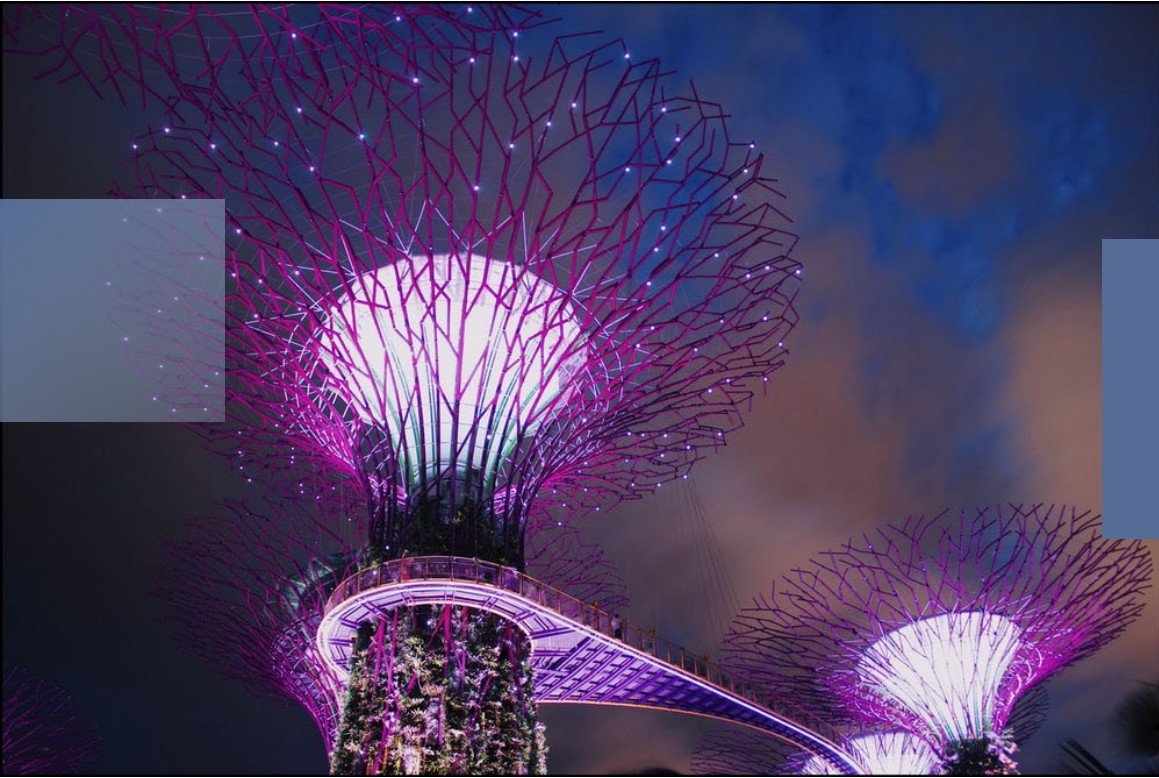
PART I: Introduction

Definition of Backcasting

- Opposite of Forecasting

- Envision a feasible desired future

- From there, look backwards to the present

- Plot the steps from the present to the desired future

Illustration of Backcasting
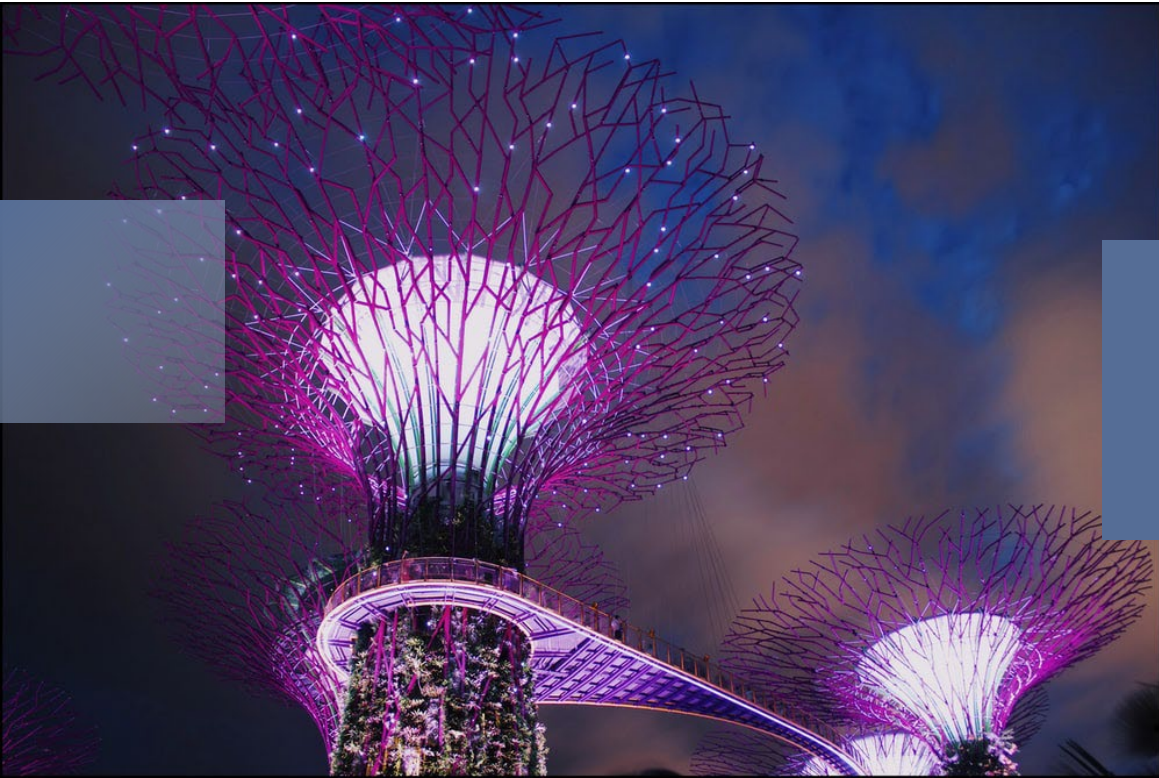

Source: The Natural Step

Unlearning and backcasting: Rethinking some of the questions we ask about the future

John B. Robinson *

PART II: Desired Futures for Singapore

Decisive net-zero shift will establish Singapore's economic chops: Teo Chee Hean

SINGAPORE now has more options that will let it reach a more ambitious target for net-zero carbon emissions, Senior Minister Teo Chee Hean told Parliament on Tuesday (Mar 8), after the goal was moved from the second half of the century to "by or around mid-century" last month.

The Singapore Pledge

Final version of the pledge[20]

We, the citizens of Singapore, pledge ourselves as one united people, regardless of race, language or religion, to build a democratic society, based on justice and equality, so as to achieve happiness, prosperity and progress for our nation.

Other Differences
Other than Race, Language and Religion

"One United People"

1. Political Differences

- Singapore becoming increasingly politically diverse

- Must remain united in spite of political diversity

Other Differences
Other than Race, Language and Religion

"One United People"

2. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

- Changes in attitudes and acceptance

- Differences between liberals and conservatives

- All must be part of one united people

"Equality"

- Inclusivity

- Minimum Wages

- Wealth Taxes

- Philanthropy

Minimum Wages

- **Would minimum wage work in Singapore?**
  - Large proportion of migrant workers
  - Surrounded by countries with excess labour

- **Breakdown of workers in Singapore**
  <u>2.4 million local workers</u>
  - 654,000 have secondary education or lower
  <u>1.2 million foreign workers</u>
  - 834,000 work permit holders

- **Must pay minimum wage to migrant workers too**

- **Other approaches to help low-wage workers**
  - Workfare Income Supplement (WIS)
  (Benefits 500,000 workers, S$850 million a year)
  - Progressive Wage Model

Wealth Taxes

- **Budget 2022**
  - Still studying effective wealth taxes
  - Meantime, increases in property taxes

- **Policy of encouraging wealth creation should remain**

Philanthropy

- Make philanthropy key part of Singapore's desired future

- Promote and celebrate philanthropy on a wider scale

- More effective than wealth taxes to equalise society?

- Total donations in FY2019: S$3.25 billion
    - Aim for S$15-20 billion by 2045?

- Be a society where everyone who can, helps others in need
    - Elevate NVPC's role, bolder targets for giving.sg?

- Also make kindness part of our desired future

ST Singaporean of the Year nominee: Couple offer groceries to the needy at their door

Syarafana Shafeeq

f   ☏   🐦   ...

SINGAPORE - After their school canteen stall was closed during the circuit breaker last year, Mr Asanul Fariq Sani and his wife Norhasyimah Awaludin decided to spend their time hand-delivering groceries to a few homes when they heard about some families that were struggling to put food on the table.

Source: The Straits Times © SPH Media Limited. Permission required for reproduction

Gross National Happiness Index

Nine Domains

1. Psychological wellbeing
2. Health
3. Education
4. Time use
5. Cultural diversity and resilience
6. Good governance
7. Community vitality
8. Ecological diversity and resilience
9. Living standards

Summary on the Pledge

- Use Singapore pledge as basis for updated desired future

- Goal of "one united people" should include other differences apart from race, language and religion

- Add social mobility and inclusivity, in addition to "equality"

- Leaven inequality of outcomes through philanthropy and kindness

- Define "happiness" in desired future

New Areas in Desired Futures

1. The Climate Crisis and Sustainability

2. Technology: Artificial Intelligence

3. Internet and the Metaverse

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Artificial Intelligence

- Machines which perform tasks that typically require human intelligence

- Harness massive amounts of data, able to make super fast decisions

- Will impact and transform almost every industry

- AI's pervasive use will take off exponentially

Desired Future: An AI-driven economy and society, where we enjoy the full productivity dividends.

Challenges

- Many jobs will be at risk, including high-end jobs

- Need more AI skills to drive an AI economy

Wunderman Thompson
The Future 100: 2022

01

Building the metaverse

The race is on as brands rush to stake their claim on the metaverse.

Wunderman Thompson
The Future 100: 2022
Trends which include the Metaverse

1. Building the Metaverse

2. Virtual Teleportation

3. NFT Marketplaces

4. Direct-to-Avatar

5. Liminal Spaces

6. Augmented Ads

7. Branded Virtual Worlds

Young girl returned after kidnapping by man she met on Roblox

A 13-year-old girl has been safely returned home after she was allegedly kidnapped by a man she met through the children's gaming app Roblox.

Police said they arrested Howard Graham after discovering he had convinced the young girl to leave her home in Kansas - after just two days of speaking on the app.

Source: BBC News

Summary of Actions Needed

- Act on the Climate Crisis

- Adopt the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals

- Embrace AI: Seize productivity gains but prepare for job displacements

- Work towards a secure, trustworthy, inclusive and open Internet

- Be closely engaged with the Metaverse

Overall Desired Future for Singapore

A well-governed, peaceful, safe, thriving and sustainable city-state,

where people are united, inclusive, socially mobile, kind and happy*.

*in the full sense of the word

PART III:
The Singapore Media's Desired Futures for 2045

Desired Future for Local Journalism

- Good audiences for high-quality, trusted news content in English and Mandarin

- Niche but loyal audience for Malay and Tamil

- Content is delivered largely on digital formats

- More players in local journalism than before, mostly in niche spaces

- A myriad of other news sources online

Feasible Desired Future for SPH Media Trust (SMT)

1. SMT distinguishes itself through quality of its content, but differentiator is trust

2. Strong SMT newsrooms
   - Well-supported by technology and AI
   - Produces compelling content

3. Strong regional and international *paid* reach

4. ZaoBao has wide reach in Singapore, China and diaspora outside China.

5. Malay and Tamil papers alive and well, supported partly by benefactors

Summary of Desired Future of SMT

A financially independent, thriving media group

whose products in four languages are trusted

by both their Singapore audience

and regional and international audiences,

all of whom pay for their premium content.

What it will take

1. Forward-looking people policies
   - Talent acquisition and retention, high employee engagement

2. Investment in technology stack to support journalists and operations

3. Scaled-up capabilities in subscription sales
   - Especially corporate and international sales

4. Turnaround in advertising revenues
   - New strategies that capitalise on its multi-platform reach
   - Supported by use of technology

5. Broader community funding support

6. Targeted investments in media-related businesses

Technology sector

Australia's media industry thrives after forcing Google and Facebook to pay

Some companies struggle to navigate 'opaque' Big Tech bargaining code

Source: Financial Times

Digital Life During a Pandemic (2022)
Results from a Panel Study
Centre for Information Integrity and the Internet, NTU

Reasons for Internet Use (%)

	December 2020	July 2021	December 2021
Monetary transactions	61.4	63.9	62.1
Stay informed of latest news	76.3	78.0	81.3
Conduct search using search engines	77.8	80.6	78.0
Find information on directions or for transport	62.1	66.3	61.1
For work or school	70.0	68.9	74.5
Access cloud storage	44.0	42.6	42.4
For entertainment	65.1	68.9	72.6
Access government services	51.8	50.6	49.4
Connect with friends and loves ones	67.9	67.2	67.4

NEWS ACROSS DIFFERENT MEDIA

NTU 2022 Study

	December 2020 (%)	July 2021 (%)	December 2021 (%)
Read local newspaper websites (e.g., straitstimes.com)	38.9	45.9	43.3
Read local TV news websites (e.g., channelnew24.8sasia.com)	39.8	44.5	41.7
Read mainstream online-only local news websites (e.g., Today.com)	32.6	36.8	33.5
Read alternative online-only local news websites (e.g., theonlinecitizen.com)	25.1	27.6	21.8
Read foreign news websites (e.g., nytimes.com, theguardian.com)	24.8	27.4	24.8
Read print copies of local newspapers (e.g., Straits Times)	31.1	27.4	28.1
Watch news on local TV (e.g., Channel 8, CNA)	41.2	42.4	39.8
Watch news on foreign TV channels (e.g., CNN, BBC)	25.8	30.0	24.4
Listen to local radio news	30.2	33.3	29.5
Read news on Facebook	35.8	36.3	32.3
Read news on WhatsApp	29.7	28.1	26.7
Watch news on YouTube	26.5	27.4	27.2

2021 Digital News Report

Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Weekly reach - offline

TV, RADIO, PRINT

Singapore

Weekly use

Outlet	%
CNA	39%
The Straits Times	38%
MediaCorp Channel 5 News	27%
MediaCorp Channel 8 News	25%
CNN	16%
The New Paper	13%
MediaCorp Radio News	11%
BBC News	9%
Lianhe Zaobao	8%
Lianhe Wanbao	6%
The Business Times	6%
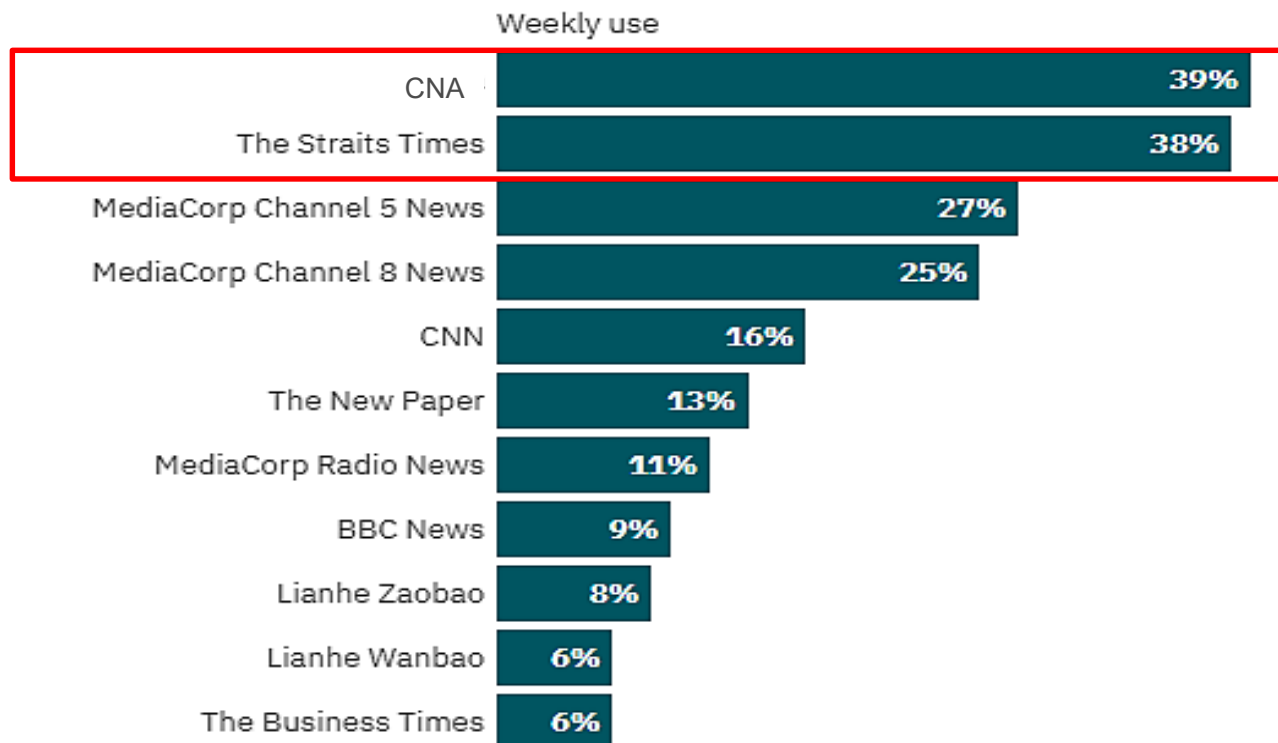
2021 Digital News Report
Reuters Institute
for the Study of Journalism

Weekly reach - online

ONLINE

Singapore

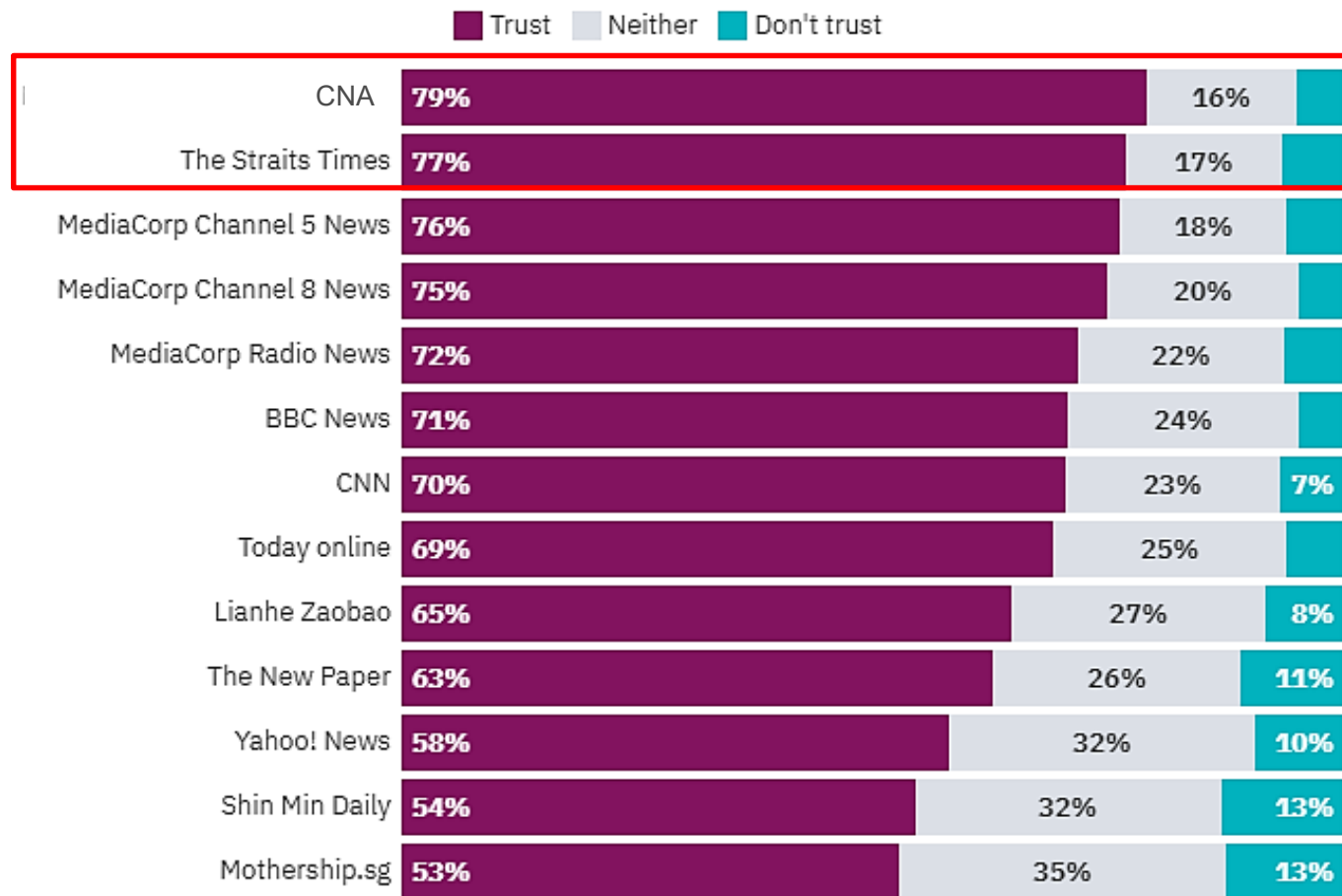|	Weekly use	At least 3 days per week
CNA	48%	33%
Mothership.sg	42%	25%
Straits Times online	40%	26%
Yahoo! News	25%	16%
Today online	20%	10%
STOMP	16%	8%
CNN.com	15%	9%
AsiaOne.com	15%	7%
BBC News online	13%	7%
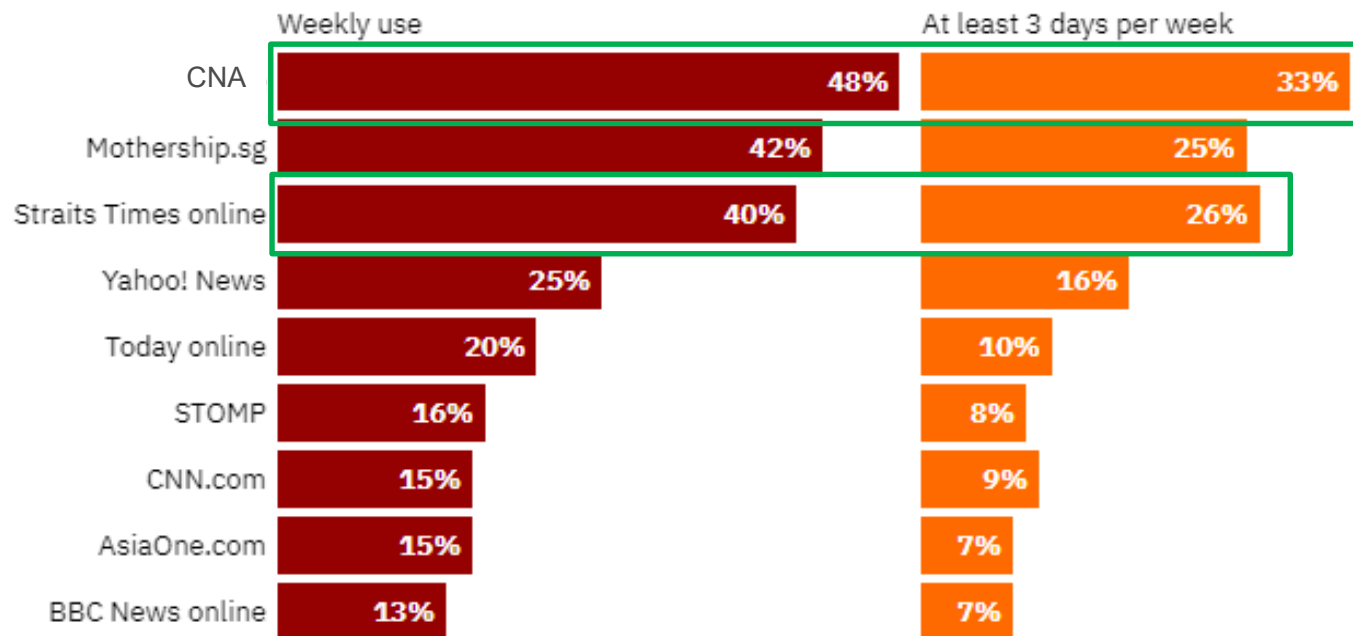
Brand trust scores

Singapore

2021 Digital News Report

Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

	Trust	Neither	Don't trust

Brand	Trust	Neither	Don't trust
CNA	79%	16%	
The Straits Times	77%	17%	
MediaCorp Channel 5 News	76%	18%	
MediaCorp Channel 8 News	75%	20%	
MediaCorp Radio News	72%	22%	
BBC News	71%	24%	
CNN	70%	23%	7%
Today online	69%	25%	
Lianhe Zaobao	65%	27%	8%
The New Paper	63%	26%	11%
Yahoo! News	58%	32%	10%
Shin Min Daily	54%	32%	13%
Mothership.sg	53%	35%	13%