



## **A Business-Model Approach to Practicing Ethical Journalism:**

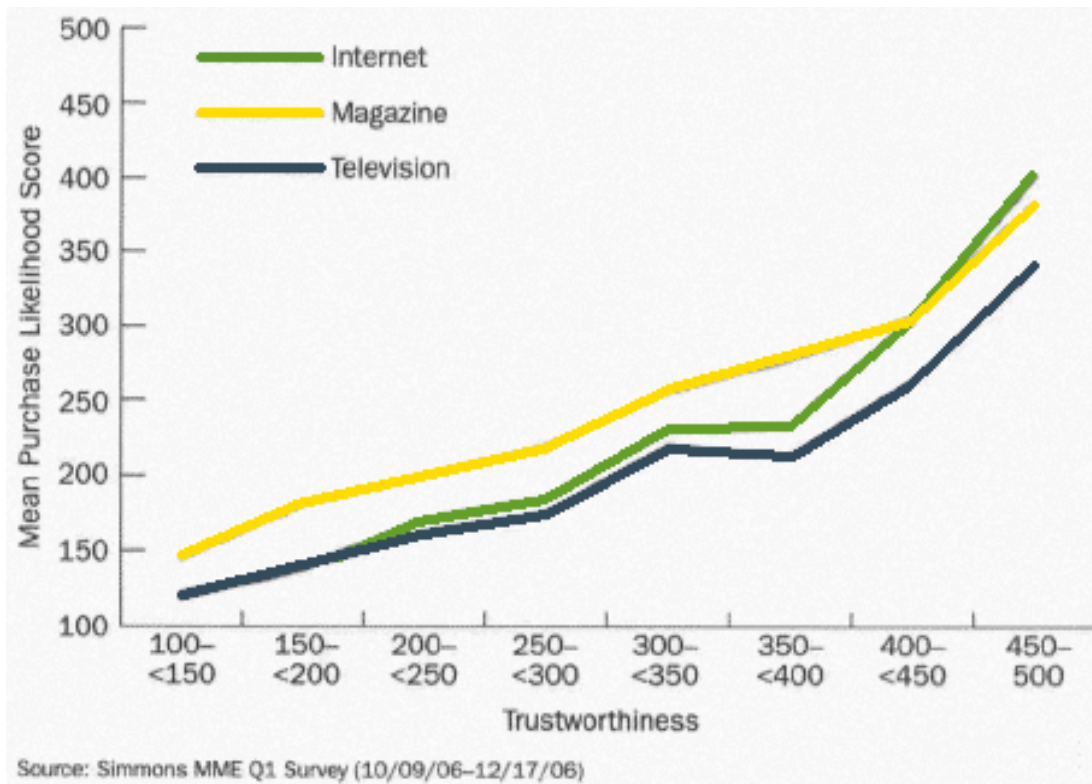
### **Economic incentives for media to build trust**

In the effort to bridge the seemingly opposing aims in the media of upholding ethics and supporting economic success, it has to be considered that the two goals can actually mutually support one another. This is the idea that underlies EthicsforMedia's mission: that the practice of responsible journalism, that which generates trust, can support a news organization's ability to thrive economically.

Previous research on the relationship between journalism and business has mostly focused on the challenges - specifically, how the need to produce continual revenue can compromise the independent spirit of journalism. However, there is a substantial body of research which demonstrates that the practice of good journalism, one built upon the values of trust and credibility, can actually prove to be beneficial to the economic viability of the news organization.

A number of studies relating to media consumption and marketing have found that there is a positive correlation between trust and the development of long-lasting consumer relationships with news sources (see Fletcher & Peters, 1997; Meyer, 2004; Kilger & Romer, 2007; and Vanacker & Belmas, 2009). Fletcher & Peters (1997), in particular find that there is a "significant positive correlation", a factor of 0.84, between the Ability dimension of trust and a willingness to develop a long-term relationship orientation and demonstrate loyalty and Consumer Commitment with that firm" (p. 534).

Meanwhile, the work of Kilger & Romer (2007) demonstrates direct evidence to show that a higher amount of trust among consumers will lead to a greater likelihood to purchase, as demonstrate:



For practice within journalism, the next consideration is how news organizations can build trust among their audiences. While trust can involve a multitude of factors, it is clear that news organizations and journalists can promote trust by demonstrating their legitimacy and independence, and adhering to ethical practices in reporting, including accuracy, objectivity and avoidance of conflicts of interests, among other values. These are exactly the topics that EthicsforMedia aims to train journalists in through its courses. EthicsforMedia understands that with the establishment of trust, news organizations will be better positioned to carve out a stronger role within the marketplace.

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