



Partnership

Project Kookaburra is an independent research program designed and run by Megan Brownlow and Simon Crerar, with participation from Mediality (formerly AAP Studio), in partnership with the Google News Initiative. Megan Brownlow is a strategy consultant and non-executive director, and Simon Crerar is a journalism startup founder who was the founding editor and general manager of BuzzFeed Australia.

Project Kookaburra worked with five independent regional publishers across Australia to try five new business models over a six month period, from April to September 2020. The results were shared with publishers and journalists in a series of free 'lunch and learn' webinars in November 2020, hosted by the [Walkley Foundation](#), Australia's leading organisation for celebrating and supporting Australian journalism.

Publisher Background

The *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* (YPCT) masthead has operated since 1865, serving a largely agricultural community of 25,000 in South Australia's Yorke Peninsula. The print edition has a circulation of 7,000 and readership of about 21,000.

The YPCT publishes weekly, with a focus on local issues, and the paper plays an important role in the area. YPCT's business model blends paid subscriptions and advertising, including sponsored content. Advertising accounted for 68% of income in 2019, with tourism, farming and real estate the top earners. The YPCT has been awarded government [funding](#) to build a new website slated to launch in 2021.

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Yorke Peninsula Country Times sharpens its audience focus

How to segment and target a valuable niche

The Project

The YPCT collaborated with Project Kookaburra on creating a microsite for farmers and agribusinesses, called *Farming Extra*.

The core goal was to offer a digital destination for this valuable niche audience segment. The secondary goal was to make this audience more appealing to advertisers using reader and subscription data from the microsite.

Kookaburra used the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) framework to design the pilot project with the *Forty South* team.

Specific

- Create and promote a microsite for farmers and agribusinesses called *Farming Extra*. (The site takes its name from the farming-focused supplement that occasionally appears in printed newspaper.) Develop a new look and feel for the *Farming Extra* brand to be used on the microsite and in the print paper.

Measurable

- Establish and meet weekly milestones in the planning, creating and promoting of the microsite for farmers, agribusinesses and the advertisers seeking to access this valuable niche audience.
- Analyse progress on a weekly call with the Kookaburra team.

Achievable

- Do we have the resources we need, and if not, how will we get them?
- Do we need any specific tools or training?

Realistic

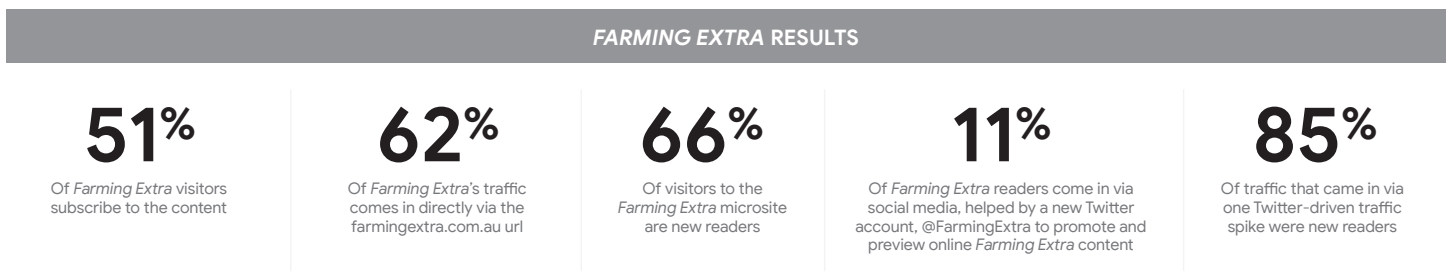
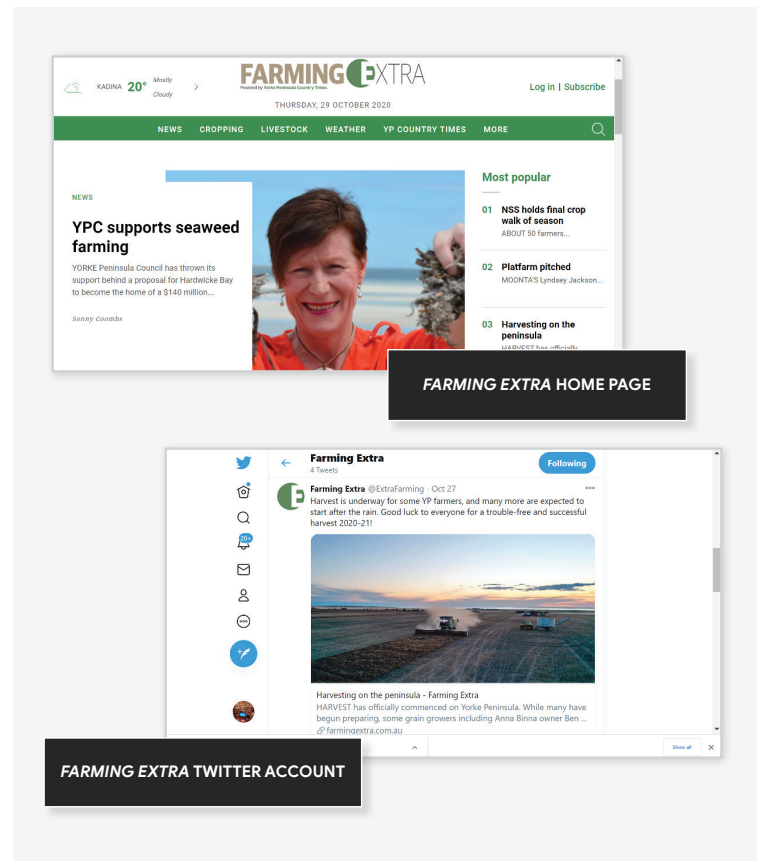
- Does the plan fit with key goals?
- Will insights help drive business forward?
- Is it a worthwhile use of team time?

Timely

- What's the deadline for each task? For example, when will the content plan, cross-platform pricing and new logo be completed by?
- How do we ensure farmers and agribusinesses are aware of *Farming Extra*?
- What is the timing and cadence of uploading content to the new microsite?

The Results

- A fresh, modern-looking *Farming Extra* microsite with targeted content for farmers and agribusinesses on the Yorke Peninsula, uploaded weekly.
- **51%** of *Farming Extra* visitors subscribe to the content.
- **62%** of *Farming Extra*'s traffic comes in directly via the farmingextra.com.au url
- **66%** of visitors to the *Farming Extra* microsite are new readers
- **11%** of *Farming Extra* readers come in via social media, helped by a new Twitter account, @FarmingExtra to promote and preview online *Farming Extra* content.
- **85%** of traffic that came in via one Twitter-driven traffic spike were new readers.
- Reader engagement data, via access to Google Analytics and Mailchimp newsletters, is helping shape coverage plans.
- Creating a cross-platform media kit and pricing plan to bundle farmingextra.com.au ad inventory with YPCT print paper advertisements.
- Developed a 2021 content roadmap for the *Farming Extra* microsite, including profiles of Agricultural Bureaus and new weather tools.



“ Project Kookaburra has given the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* the confidence to transition content online and build a digital audience. With support and advice from the Kookaburra team, we have developed and are now running a modern website specifically for our farming content, *Farming Extra*. This has been our first foray into posting content online throughout the week—rather than only after the hard copy newspaper is out — and our first attempt to grow a digital subscriber base. We plan to use the site to run campaigns, including helping local agricultural bureaus attract new members... ”

MICHAEL ELLIS, MANAGING DIRECTOR, YORKE PENINSULA COUNTRY TIMES

Learn more at www.farmingextra.com.au