Case study

Livecenter

Archant Media & Live Center

Archant Media increases traffic and engagement around elections with Live Center

Overview

Elections, particularly major ones, capture the attention of global audiences, even in local and regional publications. For publishers that want to cover elections and capture local flavor and analysis as election results roll in, it is not enough to summarize events on a national level. Content aggregation and distillation squeezes local stories out of the picture.

Archant Media, focused on local publishing and stories, wanted to focus on the communities they serve. Having already adopted live blogging to cover everything from Premier League and local sports, to debates, weather reports, and other breaking news, Archant wanted to expand this to more time-sensitive and locally relevant coverage of elections.

Covering elections from a local perspective, Archant Media needed greater immediacy in connecting, and could use the live-blogging platform, Live Center, for this purpose as well.

Background

- Archant Media is a newspaper and magazine publishing company headquartered in Norwich, England.
- The group publishes four daily newspapers, around 50 weekly newspapers, and 80 consumer and contract magazines.
- Live Center, live blogging solution

Live blogging for elections: A vote for instant updates and insight

In 2019, Archant Media's election coverage was an important event for readers keeping up with the up-to-the-minute vote count. Live Center was deployed to provide coverage of the election count, events surrounding the count, and real-time reactions as results were presented.

Archant created 20 live election feeds across their news sites to cover a specific election. In addition to one generic election live blog that could be used on multiple sites, each live blog focused on a specific geographic area.

A few examples of these include:

- Islington
- Hackney
- Cambridgeshire
- Norfolk

Peter Raven, Invention & Data Manager at Archant commented that previous election coverage using another tool gave many journalists cause for concern, but Live Center performed seamlessly. "Live coverage of previous elections using a different platform had proven unstable on the night, prompting reporters to express concern ahead of December 12," Peter explained. "But with Live Center there were no such issues. All live blogs remained stable and ran smoothly throughout the night and into the morning with no issues despite the high volumes of traffic."

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>
> *- Peter Raven, Invention & Data Manager at Archant*

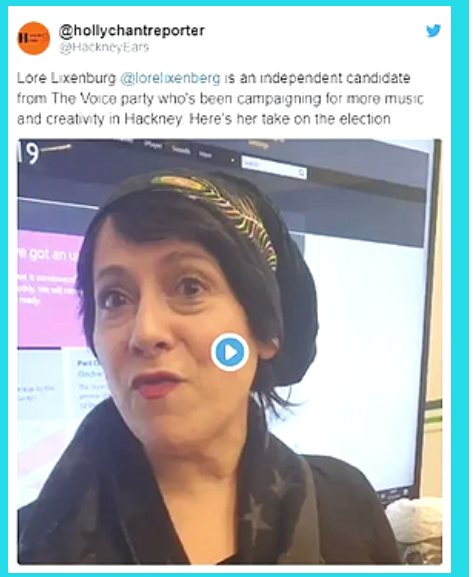
Engagement on the ballot: Visualizing the outcome

Live Center opened up possibilities for more visual, engaging content. Each election live blog contained a mix of different types of content: text and visual media, automated and curated by journalists.

Text content included breaking news posts about breaking news and results, commentary from politicians, or links to predictions made before the election.

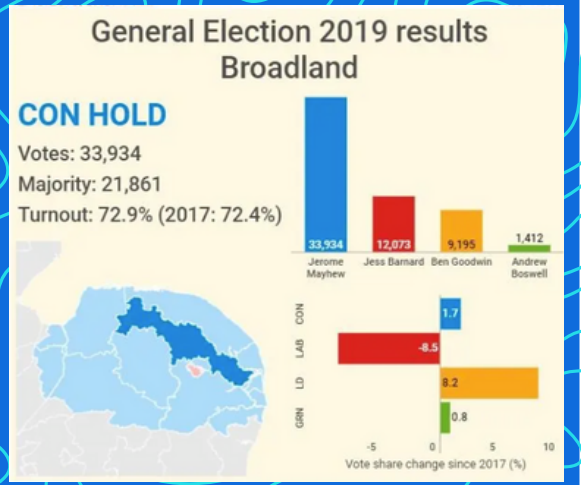
Video clips - which can be uploaded directly from mobile or from the source - enriched some of the live blogs.

Live Center's automatic Twitter feature was widely utilized to instantly and automatically find Tweets based on #hashtags, @handles, and combinations to add enriching comments from outside sources and directly form parties.



Infograms provided visual updates on the election results and summaries of completed counts.

This allowed users to interact with the results and get instant updates when new count results were published.



Increases in traffic and new ways of engaging with readers

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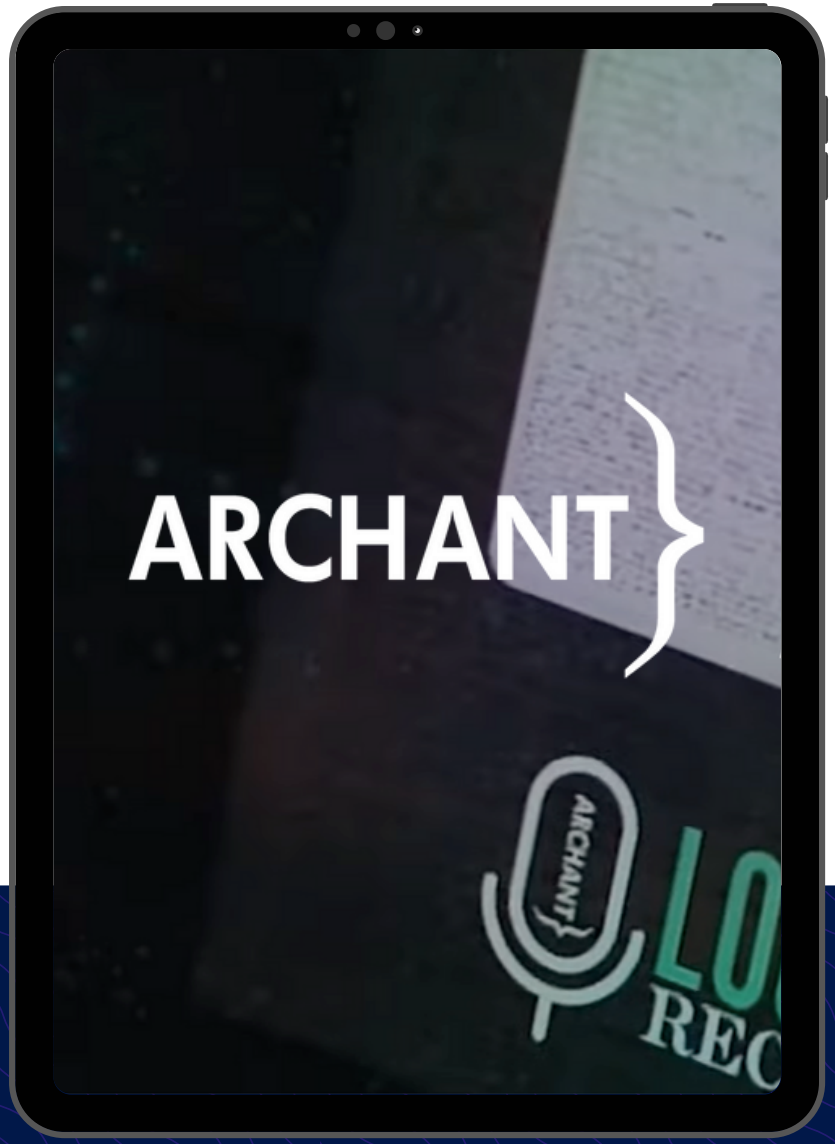
"Our live coverage of the 2019 General Election was miles ahead of any other regional publisher (and even some national titles)," explained Peter. "We had 20 live blogs running throughout the night which pulled in 168% more page views than the 2017 General Election coverage with EDP, Ham & High – Finchley (... their fifth most-read article of 2019) and The Comet (12,000) making up the top three. On top of that, we had both national graphics updating live in the small hours and 22 local graphics embedded across all blogs."

Real-time, step-by-step views on elections

The 2019 UK General Election was a key decision point for UK Brexit politics that has shared how and when the departure from the European Union would occur. Critical not just for the UK but the entire world, and Archant was able to deliver incisive local and national-level coverage to rival that of journalism's stalwarts.



www.livecenter.com