

Reading THE NATION

A YEAR IN REVIEW

In a year when the currency of attention has dominated our industry's headlines, Reading the Nation has been providing a weekly snapshot bulletin of what's been capturing the eyeballs of consumers up and down the country. Whether its sport or sustainability, showbiz or special occasions, this review is a topical reminder of what captured the nation's attention in 2021.



325million
CONTENT PAGES
READ EVERY WEEK



Goodbye 2021

Well that was quite the year, wasn't it? A year that started with a new President in the White House and finished with (another) new baby in 10 Downing Street.



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Across the past twelve months we have all been paying attention to the headlines and the highlights of a world still coming to terms with living through a pandemic; starting the year in Covid lockdown, celebrating the speedy roll-out of the UK's vaccination programme, and now ending 2021 in a booster-race against Omicron.

Despite its best efforts, coronavirus didn't stop the world moving this year as the world came together virtually for the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, Adele released her long-anticipated new album, and Daniel Craig belatedly made it to the big screen again as 007 in No Time To Die.

The nation joined the Queen to mourn the passing of Prince Philip and held its collective breath as Harry and Meghan spilled the beans with Oprah. We watched the fall of Kabul to the

Taliban, while closer to home Piers Morgan stormed out and quit Good Morning Britain. We witnessed flash floods as world leaders arrived on our shores for the G7 Summit in Cornwall and the COP26 in Glasgow, all while Prince William addressed the growing challenge of 'climate anxiety' in younger generations.

We were continually bemused by the ongoings in government as Matt Hancock got handsy, 'cheese and wines' became the new illegal raves, and Boris – well, Boris was just even more Boris.

For the team at Ozone we are privileged to watch first-hand – thanks to premium publisher first-party data – the impact these stories have on what the nation is paying attention to. Yet quite often behind the major headlines are significant seasonal changes in the interests and passions of readers that in themselves provide powerfully potent and highly relevant opportunities for brands' advertising campaigns. The aim of this review is to capture all of this in one place, to give you guidance, inspiration and knowledge as you plan your future 2022 campaigns.

Enjoy!

Understanding consumers with unrivalled first party data



As the year draws to an end we look back at the content and topics that captured the attention of our nationwide audience of millions of consumers in 2021 – all while keeping an eye on what's coming up for them next year. If you've caught sight of one of our weekly updates over the past few months, you'll certainly know that what's hot and what's not can change almost overnight.

In the past year, an average of 325m article pages have been consumed across the Ozone platform every week – ranging from sport and special occasions to showbiz and sustainability. For this year-end issue we have placed our focus on the most notable content engagement highlights that we believe will help your future planning. And while news, politics and of course coronavirus have been constants in the 2021 headlines, they've been deliberately kept low-key in this round-up to shine a light on the other most significant trends and patterns across categories.

All of this analysis comes directly from the Ozone platform that captures the reading behaviours of 99% of the UK's adult online population and provides a unique and unrivalled single view of what's capturing the nation's attention. This 360° view of real-world consumer behaviour comes from a first-party contextual and behavioural dataset derived from more than 250 premium publisher domains.

Throughout this review we will often refer to these page views as PVs, a shorthand for the total number of pages viewed in any particular content category, across the specified period of time. Needless to say we have millions and millions of different data points, so if there's any specific trend you'd like further detail on, then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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CONTENT

TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE:

AUTOMOTIVE FEBRUARY & SEPTEMBER

BARS & RESTAURANTS IN EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS APRIL

BUYING & SELLING CARS IN AUTOMOTIVE FEBRUARY

CAREERS AUGUST

CHRISTMAS DECEMBER

EDUCATION MARCH & AUGUST

EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS APRIL, MAY, DECEMBER

FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS APRIL & JUNE

FLOWER SHOPPING IN GIFTING FEBRUARY

FOOD & DRINK JANUARY & MAY

GIFTING FEBRUARY & MARCH

GIFTS & GREETINGS CARDS IN GIFTING FEBRUARY

HEALTHY LIVING JANUARY

MEDICAL HEALTH DECEMBER

MOVIES APRIL & SEPTEMBER

MUSIC & AUDIO APRIL

PARENTING IN FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS JUNE

PERSONAL FINANCE MARCH

REALITY TV IN TELEVISION JUNE

SHOPPING NOVEMBER

SPORT OCTOBER & SPECIAL FOCUS

STYLE & FASHION JULY & SEPTEMBER

SUSTAINABILITY AUGUST

TECH & COMPUTING OCTOBER

TELEVISION JUNE & NOVEMBER

THEME PARKS IN EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS MAY

TRAVEL MAY & SPECIAL FOCUS

VEGAN DIETS IN FOOD & DRINK JANUARY

WOMEN'S FASHION IN STYLE & FASHION JULY

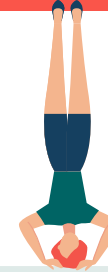
STUCK-AT-HOME (BUT STAYING FIT)

The year began in lockdown; the UK's third of the Covid-19 pandemic. Stuck-at-home, millions of Brits turned to Ozone publishers and their trusted editorial to keep them up-to-date with the latest news, sport and comment, as well as, in-the-know about the hottest lifestyle trends that fuel their passions.

One of those passions is for **HEALTHY LIVING**; both an annual January occurrence and a key pandemic trend. 2021's first month saw category engagement grow by a lycra busting **+94%** compared to December, with that growth largely driven by page views more than doubling for **DIET** and **EXERCISE** related content.

At the same time, and boosted by Veganuary and growing consumer interest in plant-based eating, engagement with the **VEGAN DIETS** topic from our **FOOD & DRINK** category shot up by a rather healthy **+118%**. January's not the only time we've seen an engagement spike for **HEALTHY LIVING** – October's London Marathon saw **+26%** growth in page views in the week the rearranged event took place.

116% growth in Vegan Diets Page Views (PVs)



Healthy Living engagement up **+94%**



How to lose your love handles — exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and eat more yoghurt and nuts



TAKE ACTION

Pigging out on choccies and cheese is the festive season, but **HEALTHY LIVING** engagement grows as the new year approaches. Category page views grew **+98%** in the final week of 2020 with growth continuing throughout January 2021.

LOVE IN LOCKDOWN BOOSTS GIFTING

From loving healthy living to a love of all things, well, love actually. February, the most romantic of all the months, if you buy into the annual obsession with Valentine's Day, put relationships back in the spotlight once again.

Unlike 2020's loving leap year month, this one kept Cupid locked down indoors, yet luckily he had an army of delivery drivers out to help engagement blossom with two timely topics. We saw **GIFTS & GREETINGS CARDS** content increase by **+92%** in the week of the 14th and **FLOWER SHOPPING** up **+43%** in the same period. Overall, engagement with content based on Flower Shopping was up **+150%** in February versus the month prior.

Also receiving a loving cuddle of engagement growth this month, we saw the **AUTOMOTIVE** category enjoy a pre-March boost. Typically at a time when consumers eye up the spring's new car launches, engagement with content related to **RESEARCHING & BUYING CARS** grew by **+14%** in February versus January despite continued uncertainty and low consumer confidence in big ticket purchases.



TAKE ACTION

Engagement growth for **GIFTING** or content related to celebrations, such as **FOOD & DRINK**, is closely bunched around special occasions, like Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day, quite often with a peak a few days before the actual day itself.

RELIEF FOR PARENTS AS SCHOOLS REOPEN

Early March saw step one in the Government's lockdown easing plan begin, and working parents across the country collectively cheered as schools finally reopened. Such was the height of anticipation for this that February's final week saw engagement with **EDUCATION** grow by **+97%**.

Elsewhere, with the Bank of England estimating consumers had accumulated a massive £125bn in lockdown savings,

March brought the build up to the annual April 5th ISA contribution deadline. For those consumers looking to maximise on their tax-free savings we saw a significant **+29%** growth in **PERSONAL FINANCE** page views in the first week of March. Almost a third of that reader engagement was with savings and investment related content. This directly followed a huge **+120%** growth in **PERSONAL FINANCE** page views in January compared to December, with

consumers seeking to organise their finances post-Christmas or complete their tax self assessments.

And, if there was ever any doubt that nothing says Mother's Day like a big bunch of flowers, engagement with **FLOWER SHOPPING** content in March more than doubled compared to the levels seen in February, as sons and daughters nationwide sought out the best bouquets to spoil their dear old mums.



TAKE ACTION As well as the self assessment and ISA deadlines in the first quarter, engagement with **PERSONAL FINANCE** content grows around other key events, such as this year's autumn budget when our publishers' editorial explained what the budget meant for consumers personally.

EASTER EGGSTRAS AND A REGAL FAREWELL

Springing forth like a certain seasonal bunny, April's early Easter led to a doubling of weekly engagement for **FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS** as the returning rule of six meant two households were finally allowed to meet outside, including in private gardens (meaning that choccy egg hunts were back on!).

Adding to this Easter excitement was the reopening of outdoor hospitality, shops, gyms and hairdressers. Engagement with **BARS & RESTAURANTS** content increased by **+47%** in the first two weeks of April

compared to the last fortnight in March as pints were finally pressed to lips, albeit alfresco fashion, in beer gardens across the country.

April also saw growth for **SPORT**, which was largely driven by our passionate football audience's reaction to the planned, and then quickly shelved, European Super League. Sport page views grew by a net busting **+29%** week on week. And our **MOVIES** content enjoyed a blockbuster April as the big winners at this year's Oscars, including Nomadland's

best film triumph and best director award for Chloe Zhao, were revealed. Page views topped the bill with a **+78%** week on week increase.

Finally, the nation mourned the death of Prince Philip in April, with weekly page views for related content growing by **+182%** the week his passing was announced. Photographs of the Queen sitting alone in the chapel at Windsor Castle during the Prince's funeral, stoically observing social distancing rules, are some of the most evocative of the year.



Bars & Restaurants PVs up **+47%** in first two weeks

Queen alone with her thoughts as duke is laid to rest at Windsor



The Queen sits alone in St George's Chapel, Windsor, for the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh. Photograph: Reuters
Prince Philip's funeral was an unusual affair watched by the monarch from her familiar seat in the family chapel



Grief-related engagement increases nearly **3x**

TAKE ACTION

In the build up to and during Easter, engagement with key categories – including TRAVEL, STAYCATIONS and FOOD & DRINK peaks – as families and those without kids seek fun activities or short trips away to celebrate the extended break.

HUGS, HOLIDAYS AND HOSPITALITY

May heralded another significant lifting of lockdown restrictions as hugging, holidays and hospitality all returned. Early in the month, the Government's long anticipated traffic light list for international **TRAVEL** was revealed, propelling weekly engagement with this content category upwards by **+53%**.

FOOD & DRINK and **EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS** became a mid-month focal point as most indoor hospitality settings opened their doors for the first time since the end of 2020. Of **11.2m** Events & Attractions page views, over half were for **BARS & RESTAURANTS**, with articles about restaurant openings – ranging from family-focused eateries to fast food outlets – among the most popular topics gobbled up by consumers.

Bringing the feel-good factor to millions of music and pop culture fans after the 2020 edition was Covid-cancelled, was the Eurovision Song Contest, which along with Glastonbury's Live at Worthy Farm, amped up Ozone's **MUSIC & AUDIO** page views by a whopping **+56%** week on week. And a timely turnaround to the UK's weather outlook lifted the nation's mood as a mostly damp May was transformed

into a Bank Holiday heatwave, as Brits enjoyed the sunshine and prepped for half term. Engagement with **UK TRAVEL** and **THEME PARKS** both notably increased by almost **30%** in half term week versus the week before.



TAKE ACTION

Bank Holidays grow engagement for key content including **HOME & GARDEN** (for DIY lovers), **FOOD & DRINK** (for BBQs whatever the weather) and **SHORT BREAKS** – we can look forward to an extra long Bank Holiday to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

LOVE ISLAND REACHES TAN-TASTIC HEIGHTS

With June's warmer weather and the UK's ongoing unlocking enough to keep pent-up Brits outdoors, there were still plenty of reasons for them to remain indoors, including TV big hitters and the promise of a summer-long barrage of **SPORT** action to keep them on their couches (but more on sport later).

Firstly, **TELEVISION** turned up the engagement dial significantly as two ITV programmes – including the long-awaited return of a reality TV behemoth – got going. Early in the month, the surprising success of The Masked Dancer drove engagement with **REALITY TV** content by a quarter in the week the programme was broadcast versus the week before. And then – love it or loathe it – Love Island returned to our screens and rocketed engagement with the same topic by a spray tan-tastic **+103%** in its first week. And as the contestants continued to “do bits” with each other throughout the show's 2021 summer run, interest with the series remained high with **13.7m REALITY TV** page views in the week of the final (Monday 31st August) a whopping **+45%** higher than week one.

June brought another event for special occasions as Father's Day boosted **FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS** content with **PARENTING** editorial specifically driving this engagement. Preparations to celebrate Dads everywhere increased weekly category page views by **+26%**, with engagement on Father's Day itself the highest in that week as content specific to the day, including celebrity celebrations, was published.

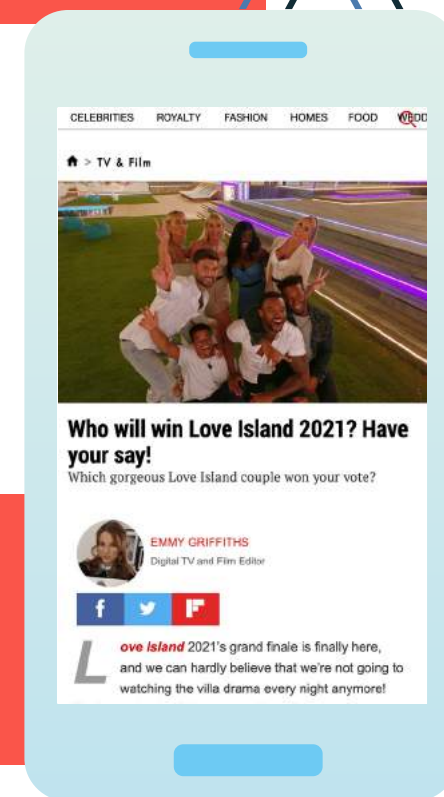
13.7m
PVs for final week
of Love Island



+26%
more Parenting
PVs for
Father's Day



Reality TV
PVs up
2x
in final week
of June



TAKE ACTION

Throughout the year the big **TELEVISION** events, including Love Island, The Great British Bake Off, I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here! and Strictly Come Dancing boost engagement with TV and other related content areas (**GROCCERS, FOOD & DRINK** and **FINE ART** – who knew?!)

A SCORCHING SUMMER OF SPORT

It was an epic summer of sporting success in 2021, with record medal hauls, a (sigh) footballing final defeat and the ascension of a new tennis superstar making it even more memorable. And by golly did our sporting heroes deliver the goods to make the nation proud.

From the start of Euro 2020 to the conclusion of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, an absolutely massive **752m** pages of **SPORT** content were consumed. This was **30%** higher than the previous three months, a period which included the conclusion of the English Premier League, the FA Cup Final and the Europa and Champions League finals – both of which featured English clubs.

Our average Sport audience over the five-week UEFA Euro 2020 tournament grew significantly; with users up **+28%** and page views up **+22%** versus the prior five weeks. And now to the unavoidable – from top of the pups to dog gone – as England’s historic journey to the final – and defeat at the hands of Italy – drove Sport category engagement to a huge **65.1m** weekly page views in the last week of the tournament; the highest of 2021.

Total **TENNIS** page views across the Wimbledon fortnight were **+414%** higher than the two weeks before the championship – a period that included the Queen’s Club Championships. Acing this, however, was Emma Raducanu’s sensational victory at the US Open later in the year, which saw the final two weeks of the tournament generate **+21%** more engagement than Wimbledon fortnight as a new sporting superstar was born.

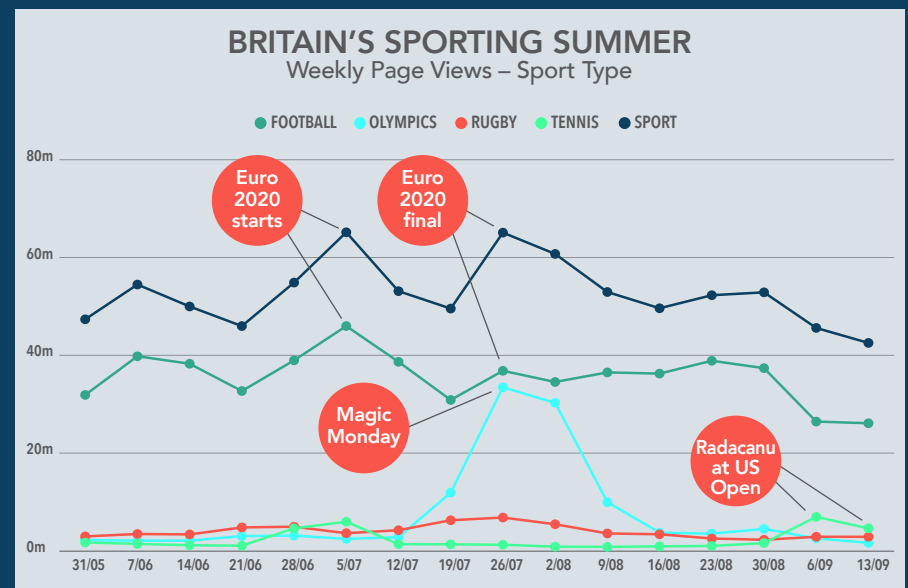
Team GB’s ‘Magic Monday’ at the Tokyo Olympics boosted daily Sport page views and unique users growth by an impressive **+33%** and **+35%** respectively, as our readers toasted the nation’s medal winners. In fact, Team GB’s successes at the Olympics propelled sport page views to **65m** in the last week of the Games, with only the final week of UEFA Euro 2020 having generating more engagement this year.

RUGBY scored attention highs during the Lions versus South Africa test match weeks when we saw average weekly page views and unique users

rise **+26%** and **21%** compared to the warm up period. Sadly Britain and Ireland’s best couldn’t quite bring home the bacon as South Africa won the test series.

Elsewhere, packing a punch in **BOXING**, Tyson Fury’s brilliant heavyweight title defence against Deontay Wilder on Sunday 10th October increased daily Sport page views by **+61%**. This appointment-to-view spectacle delivered a week-long boost to **BOXING** topics with total page views up **+149%** on the week prior.

And finally, motor sport content and **FORMULA 1** enjoyed an explosive engagement finale as Lewis Hamilton was pipped to the 2021 championship title by Max Verstappen. Across the final four weeks of the season, total page views were **+162%** higher than the previous month as Sir Lewis took it to the wire.



FASHION RUNS AWAY WITH 'FREEDOM DAY'

Monday 19th July, was 'Freedom Day' and Brits had lots of reasons to be cheerful and to make a personal statement. Our **STYLE & FASHION** editorial received a boost as consumers were finally given the ideal opportunity to publicly show off their most on-trend garms – and we saw engagement with the category catapult as a result.

With it being such a highly anticipated date in the diary, it was no surprise to see weekly Style & Fashion page views grow by **+39%**. The **WOMEN'S FASHION** topic drew the highest amount of reader attention that week too.

July brought further freedom as the build up to the school summer break saw families across the nation look forward to a proper holiday. With many travel restrictions disappearing, **TRAVEL** content engagement increased significantly, with category page views increasing **+71%** in July compared to June. Notably, engagement with **UK** and **EUROPE** related content across the same period grew **+65%** and **+61%** respectively, as consumers researched last-minute staycations and short-haul escapes.

Travelling from the catwalk to the red carpet, the 2021 Cannes Film Festival prompted a burst in interest in **MOVIES** editorial as the stars came out to celebrate the return of one of the biggest festivals of film. The July release of Marvel's Black Widow, which was warmly received by critics and film fans alike, also strengthened Movies engagement, with page views in release week **+9%** higher than the prior four-week average.

Travel PVs up
+71%
this month

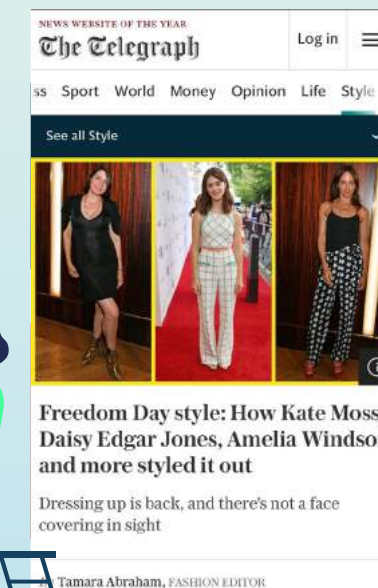


+65%
monthly increase
in UK Travel PVs

Movies PVs
+9%
versus June



Style & Fashion
PVs in Freedom
Day week up
+39%



TAKE ACTION

Harness the cross-over between **STYLE & FASHION** and **MOVIES**, as engagement with the former category grows around major film premieres and annual festivals.

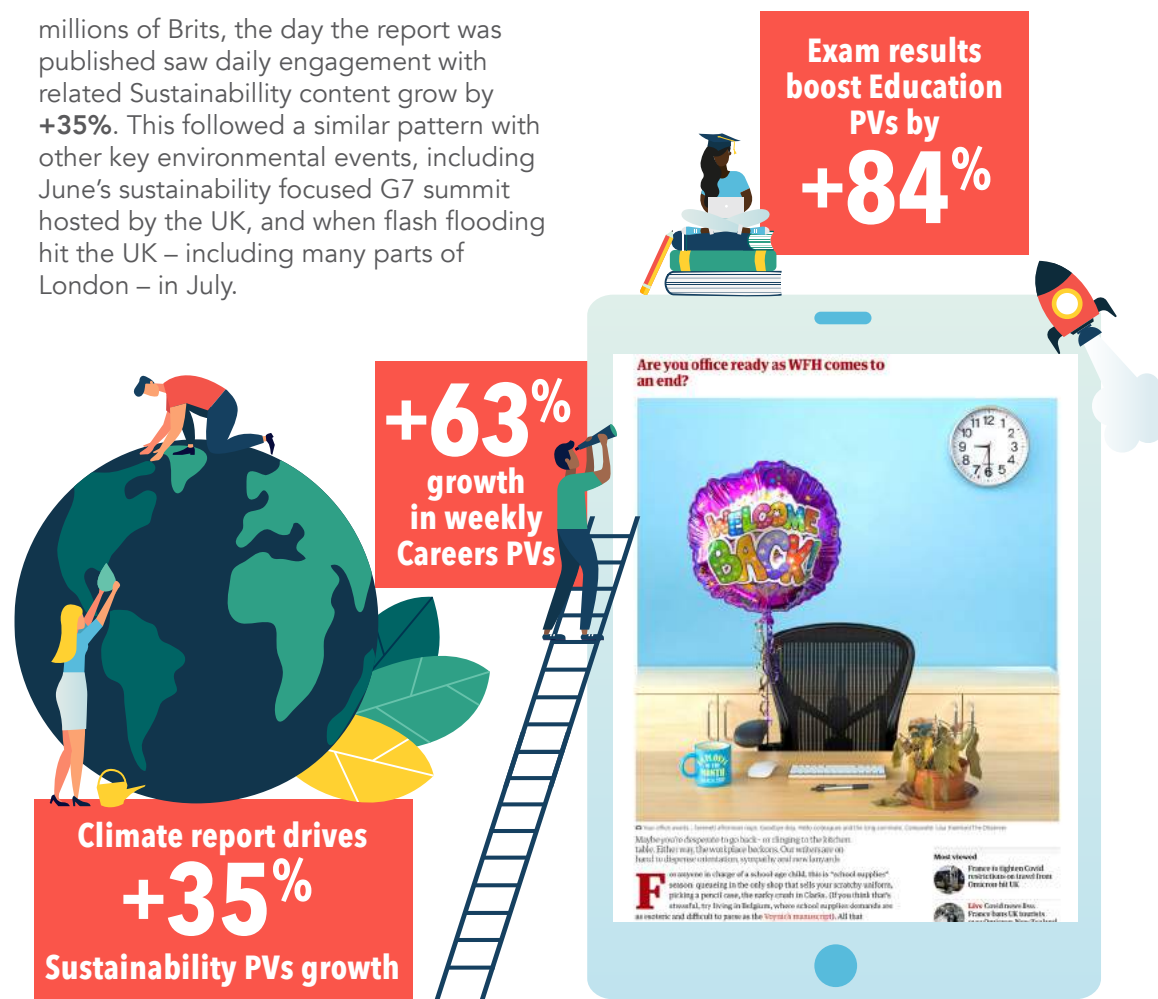
JOB VACANCIES AND SALARIES GROW

With jobs from across many sectors adversely affected by the pandemic, August provided a welcome reprieve for employees as return of office working began and – according to KPMG – wages started to grow at the fastest rate for two decades. And with more positivity about the jobs market, engagement with **CAREERS** content grew significantly, with page views in the first week of August up **+63%**.

Complementing that rapid engagement growth, **EDUCATION** page views also increased significantly with the record-breaking A-level and GCSE results achieved by the nation's students. This propelled consumption of related content to the top of the class, with studios eyeballs driving **+84%** growth in weekly page views.

August was also a key month for **SUSTAINABILITY** as the United Nations issued a 'code red for humanity' in its Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. Rightly receiving universal coverage from our publishers and putting the findings firmly in the spotlight for

millions of Brits, the day the report was published saw daily engagement with related Sustainability content grow by **+35%**. This followed a similar pattern with other key environmental events, including June's sustainability focused G7 summit hosted by the UK, and when flash flooding hit the UK – including many parts of London – in July.



TAKE ACTION

August is a peak time for school, college and university students as those all important exam results are announced. Relevant advertisers seeking to connect with them – or their parents – should activate campaigns now.



ARE YOU EXPECTING A NEW CAR MR BOND?

A busy schedule of new car launches – including a swathe of new electric vehicles from leading brands – drove engagement with **AUTOMOTIVE** editorial. Interest in September’s new car launches PLUS the launch of E10 fuel grew consistently over the prior four weeks – engagement was **+20%** higher versus August as consumers checked out the latest models available via our trusted car content.

The week commencing Monday 16th August – a fortnight prior to Autumn’s new car launches – saw our biggest autos

audience of the year, with **2.6m** readers. Reinforcing the impact of the pandemic on consumer confidence, the four week build-up to September plate launches saw Automotive pages views **+46%** higher than than spring release when we were still in lockdown.

Fashionistas nationwide delighted in September’s style double header as ‘who wore what’ at New York’s Met Gala Ball and the triumphant live return of London Fashion Week drove our **STYLE & FASHION** audience to a record 2021 high. Audience

engagement with related content followed suit, with **14.5m** weekly Style & Fashion page views up **+18%** on the previous week.

And leaving cinema audiences shakened and (emotionally) stirred at the end of September was the release of the twice delayed 25th instalment in the James Bond franchise, No Time To Die. Interest in the film – Daniel Craig’s final as the debonair British secret agent – drove **MOVIES** engagement to a record weekly high for 2021, with **7.2m** page views, up **+38%** week on week.



TAKE ACTION

With a delayed festival season kicking off across the Bank Holiday weekend into September, weekly **MUSIC & AUDIO** content engagement almost doubled. The live return of Glastonbury in 2022 should prove pivotal in next year’s festival calendar.

FACEBOOK'S OUT, BUT THE PLANET'S IN VOGUE

Early October's global outage to Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp and Instagram, saw millions of digital users turn to Ozone's trusted news and entertainment content even more than normal.

On 4th October, the day of the outage, we saw a **+26%** growth in daily page views versus the day before. Hourly page views across the Ozone platform during the 6-hour outage, from 4pm to 10pm UK-time was **+53%** higher than during the same time period on the previous Monday. Unsurprisingly, the outage led to our **TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTING** content

receiving a related boost, with weekly engagement growing by **+61%**.

The anticipated launch of COP26 on 31 October's got us all talking about **SUSTAINABILITY**. In mid-October it became a royal affair as Prince William said that the world's greatest minds should focus on sustainability and not space travel – a response to Jeff Bezos firing William 'Captain Kirk' Shatner into orbit on his Blue Origin rocket and we saw 1.6m daily page views for related content.

With the conference taking place in Glasgow and a huge amount at stake

for the global leaders and delegates attending, engagement with COP26 and sustainability content across the Ozone platform grew significantly across the two weeks of the event, with **26.7m** total page views. This was **+25%** higher than the previous two weeks, during which lots of coverage and analysis was building.

Elsewhere, sustainability policies, including grants for households switching to sustainable home heating alternatives such as heat pumps, announced by the Government increased interest in the **HOME & GARDEN** category with page views up **+16%** week on week.

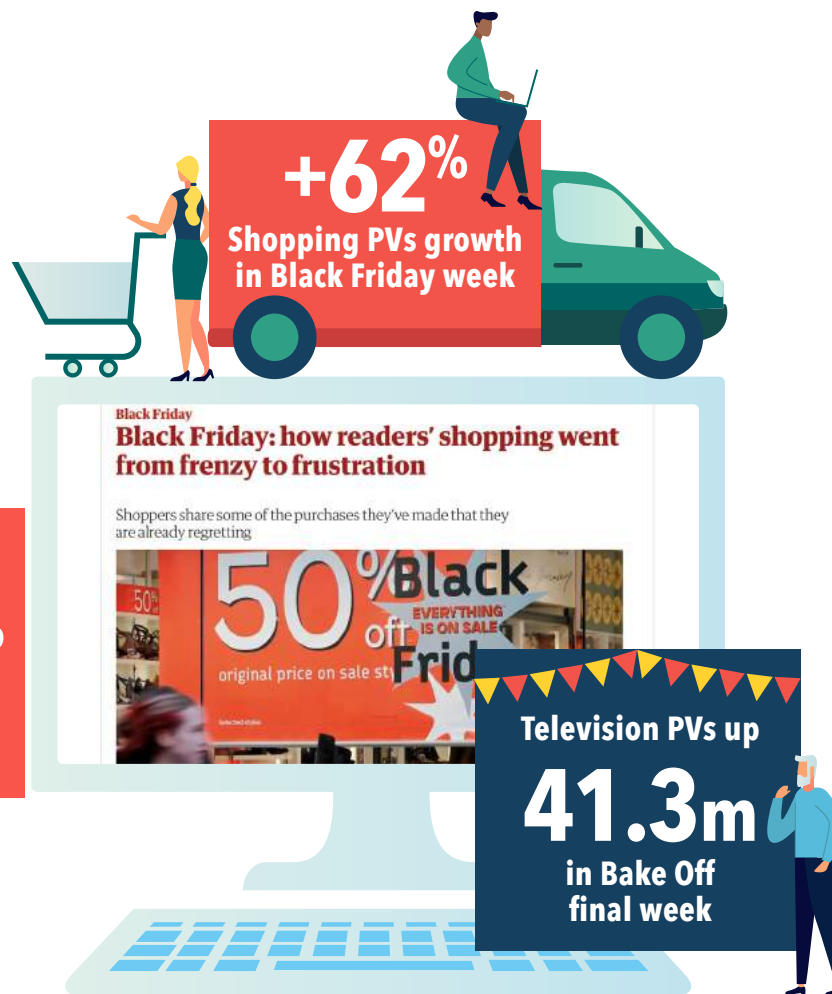


SHOPPING TRIPLE WHAMMY FIRES FESTIVITIES

November is a **SHOPPING** triple threat. We see Shopping engagement pop as consumers seek to treat themselves or their loved ones to the dreamiest deals and discounts on Singles' Day, Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Weekly page views for the category grew **+13%** in Singles' Day week, with engagement **+62%** higher in Black Friday week compared to the month's first week.

These events also fire up festive reader growth across Ozone, with our **CHRISTMAS** audience **+129%** bigger on Black Friday compared to November 1st 2021.

Proving that November is a showstopper of a month for **TELEVISION**, three of the biggest TV shows of the year – I'm A Celeb, Bake Off and Strictly – ensure the category always rises to the occasion. In the week that I'm A Celeb series 21 began and Bake Off reached its grand finale, Television engagement grew **+20%** to record a whopping **41.3m** weekly page views – 2021's highest tally. In the same week, TV's cross-over into **POP CULTURE** boosted the category, with **67.3m** page views – the second highest of the year – and up **+22%** week on week.



TAKE ACTION

There's a huge acceleration in engagement with key shopping categories between the first week of November and Black Friday/Cyber Monday weeks. This growth continues in the build up to Christmas and well into the winter sales season, so plenty of scope for message and creative tailoring.

OMICRON PUTS CHRISTMAS PARTIES ON ICE

December – the peak of the golden quarter and the start of the festive season – normally provides a huge engagement boost for key categories. And this year – to an extent – it has. But then the Omicron variant hit and new Covid-19 measures, including the Government’s ‘Plan B’ restrictions and an accelerated booster vaccination programme, were implemented.

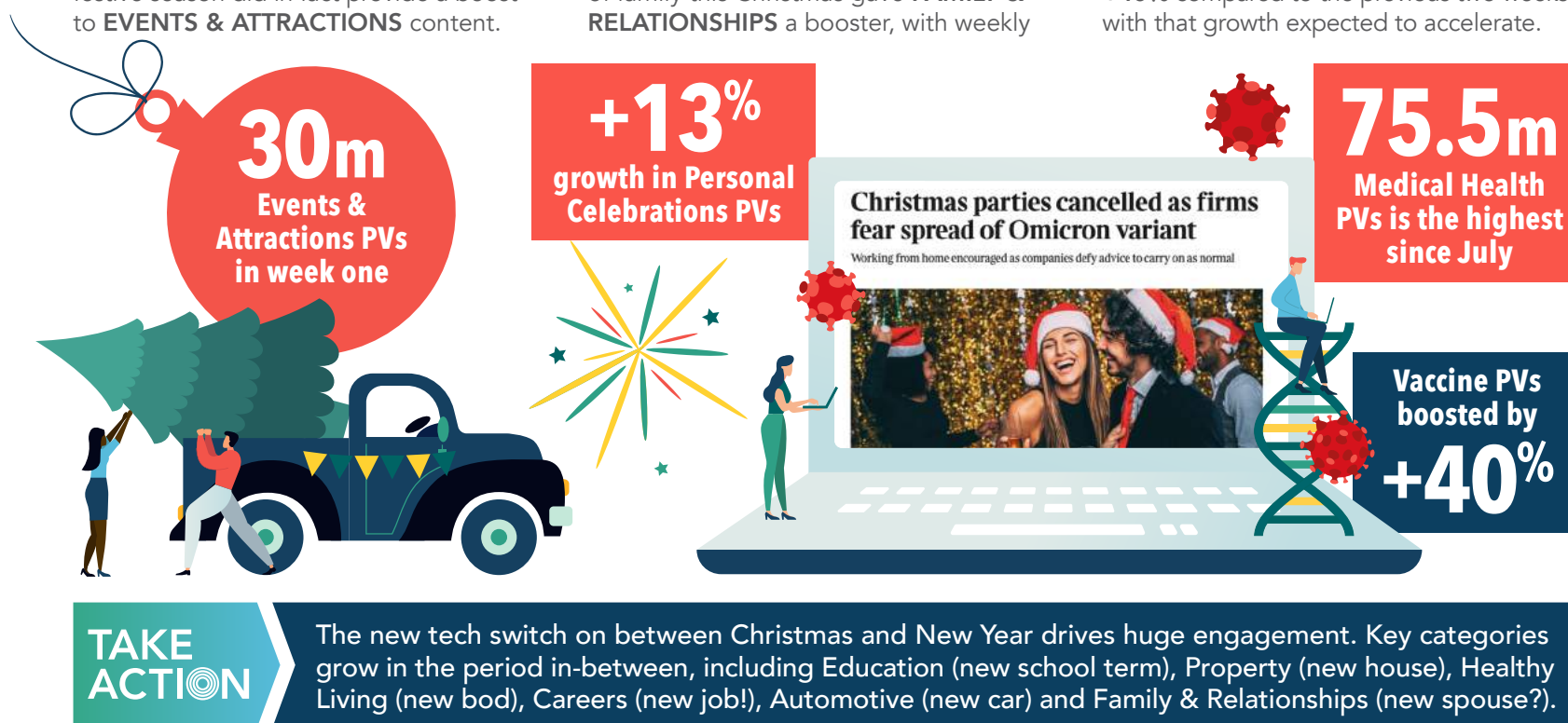
Before Omicron, the beginning of the festive season did in fact provide a boost to **EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS** content.

Of **30m** page views in the first week of December, **41%** were for Christmas-related content as the silly season got underway. Articles related to **PERSONAL CELEBRATIONS**, including **PARTY SUPPLIES & DECORATIONS**, were among the top-performing drivers, with page views growing by **+13%** over the same period.

With Covid restrictions keeping so many loved ones apart last year, the importance of family this Christmas gave **FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS** a booster, with weekly

page views in the second week of December growing by **+14%** on the week before.

Also in December’s second week, **75.5m MEDICAL HEALTH** page views, up **+9%** week on week, was the highest since ‘Freedom Day’ week in June when almost all Covid-19 restrictions were lifted across the country. With the NHS speeding up the vaccine booster roll out in the last fortnight, **VACCINE** content engagement has grown by **+40%** compared to the previous two weeks, with that growth expected to accelerate.



TRAVEL RECOVERY CONTINUED IN 2021

It's been a bruising 18 months for **TRAVEL** with the industry largely shut down in 2020 by the pandemic and consumer choices heavily influenced by Government restrictions. But there have been a number of positives. Last year's UK **STAYCATIONS** trend has continued in 2021 and international travel has returned (though recent Omicron restrictions have impacted the latter). Over the last 12 months, content related to **TRAVEL RESEARCH** accounts for almost half of all Travel category engagement.

Throughout the first half of the year, increases in Travel engagement were mostly driven by changes to Government restrictions, with holiday-hungry Brits seeking clarity and advice about where they could travel to and when. In early May, the week the Government announced its traffic light system for international travel, Travel page views grew by **+53%**. And in the week that Portugal was taken off the green list a fortnight after going on it, engagement grew by **+23%** week on week.

And while our premium editorial content relating to **SHORT-HAUL TRAVEL** has attracted **20%** of total page views over the last year, with **STAYCATIONS** just behind on **15%**, more recently there's been growing interest in travelling further afield. Up until Omicron struck in late November, engagement with content about **LONG-HAUL DESTINATIONS** was growing and page views for **ADVENTURE TRAVEL** had increased by **+91%** in the last three months compared to the previous quarter.

While it's still too early to tell what impact Omicron will have on holiday bookings next year, what's clear is that Travel engagement is – again – growing around travel restrictions. In the week the variant was identified and countries in the south of Africa were placed on the red list, there was a **+20%** increase in page views.

