

# Understanding your Audience

Digital Growth Program - Audience Development

## Introduction

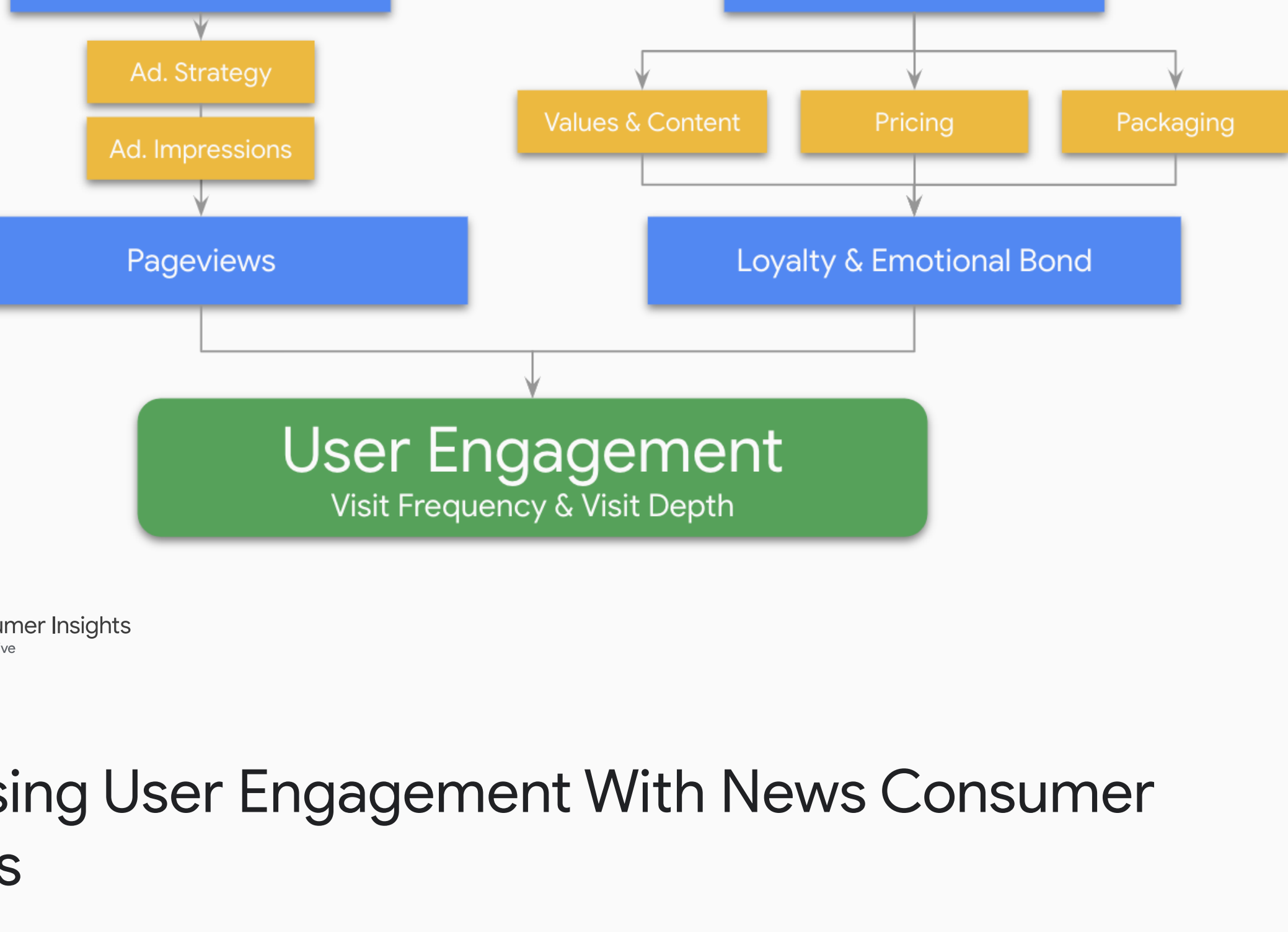
Welcome to the [GNI Digital Growth Program](#) 'Understanding Your Audience' Guide. This guide is part of a series of resources that aim to help news organizations – particularly small and midsize publishers:

- Gain a deep understanding of their readers' behaviors and information needs with [News Consumer Insights](#) (this guide)
- Become stronger with data analytics tools and capabilities through the News Consumer Insights tool ([Growing Reach and Deepening Engagement Guide](#))
- Set clear audience goals and objectives ([Setting an Audience Centric Culture Guide](#))

## Audience Foundations

Regardless of whether you're focused on advertising revenue or reader revenue – or both – long-term success is dependent on strong audience development and strong reader engagement.

Your audience development objectives should be set with your revenue goals and business performance in mind. Whether you have a reader revenue model (Subscriptions, Contributions) or an advertising model, success means focusing on user engagement. Specifically, focusing on increasing visit frequency and visit depth can help you achieve both your advertising revenue goals (i.e., by boosting pageviews) and your reader revenue goals (increasing loyalty and emotional bond).

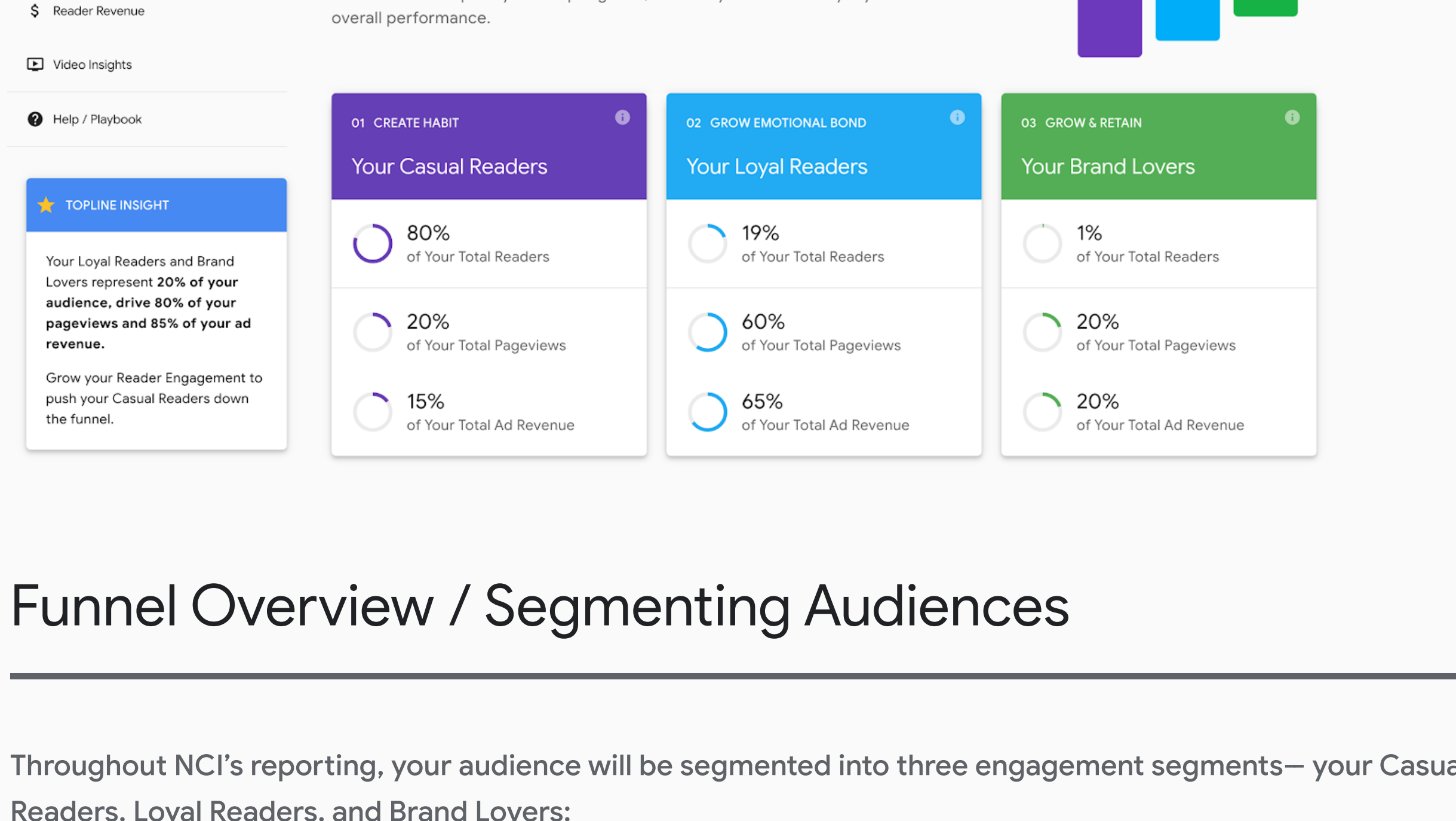


## Increasing User Engagement With News Consumer Insights

[News Consumer Insights](#) (NCI) is a tool built atop Google Analytics to help publishers deepen user engagement, addressing your advertising revenue and reader revenue goals.

NCI has been designed with simplicity in mind. It's completely free to use – all you need is an email address associated with your Google Analytics account. The tool will work with either the free or paid version of Google Analytics.

Once you have connected your account, a report will populate based on your analytics data. You will see four tabs on the left-hand side – Actionable Recommendations, Reader Engagement, Reader Revenue, and Video Insights. These tabs contain insights and information about your audience.

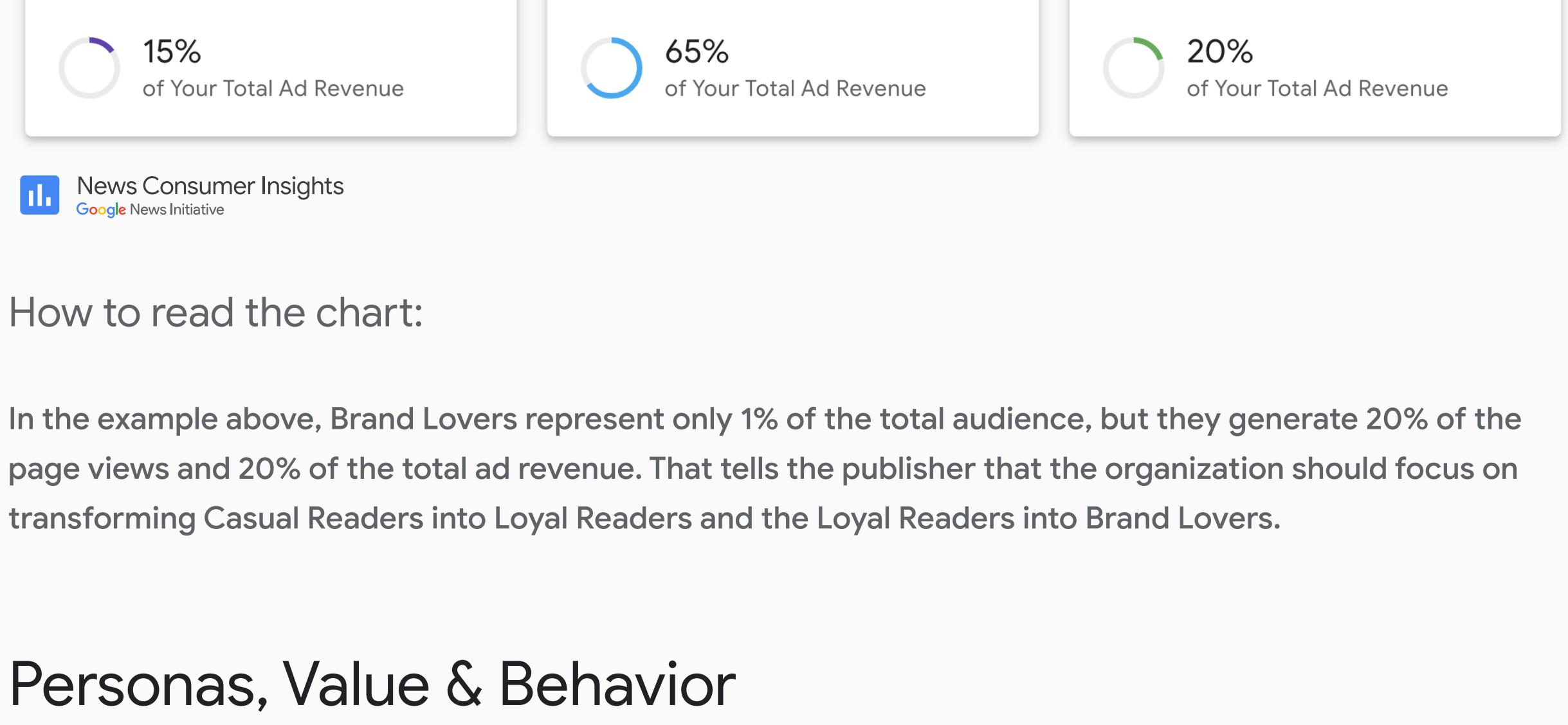


## Funnel Overview / Segmenting Audiences

Throughout NCI's reporting, your audience will be segmented into three engagement segments– your Casual Readers, Loyal Readers, and Brand Lovers:

- Casual Reader:** Someone who has visited the site once over the last 30 days
- Loyal Reader:** Someone who has visited the site between two and 14 times over the last 30 days
- Brand Lover:** Someone who has visited the site more than 15 times over the last 30 days

The goal is to grow reader engagement and push Casual Readers down the funnel and gradually convert them to Brand Lovers.

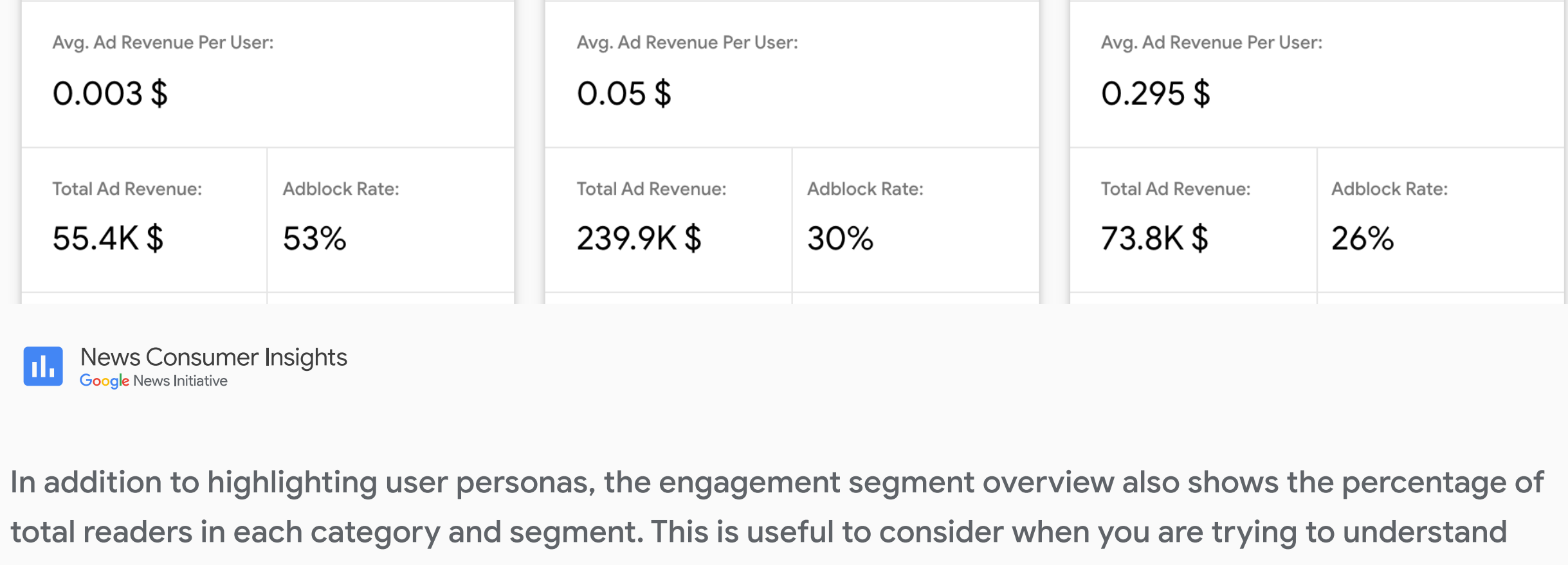


How to read the chart:

In the example above, Brand Lovers represent only 1% of the total audience, but they generate 20% of the page views and 20% of the total ad revenue. That tells the publisher that the organization should focus on transforming Casual Readers into Loyal Readers and the Loyal Readers into Brand Lovers.

## Personas, Value & Behavior

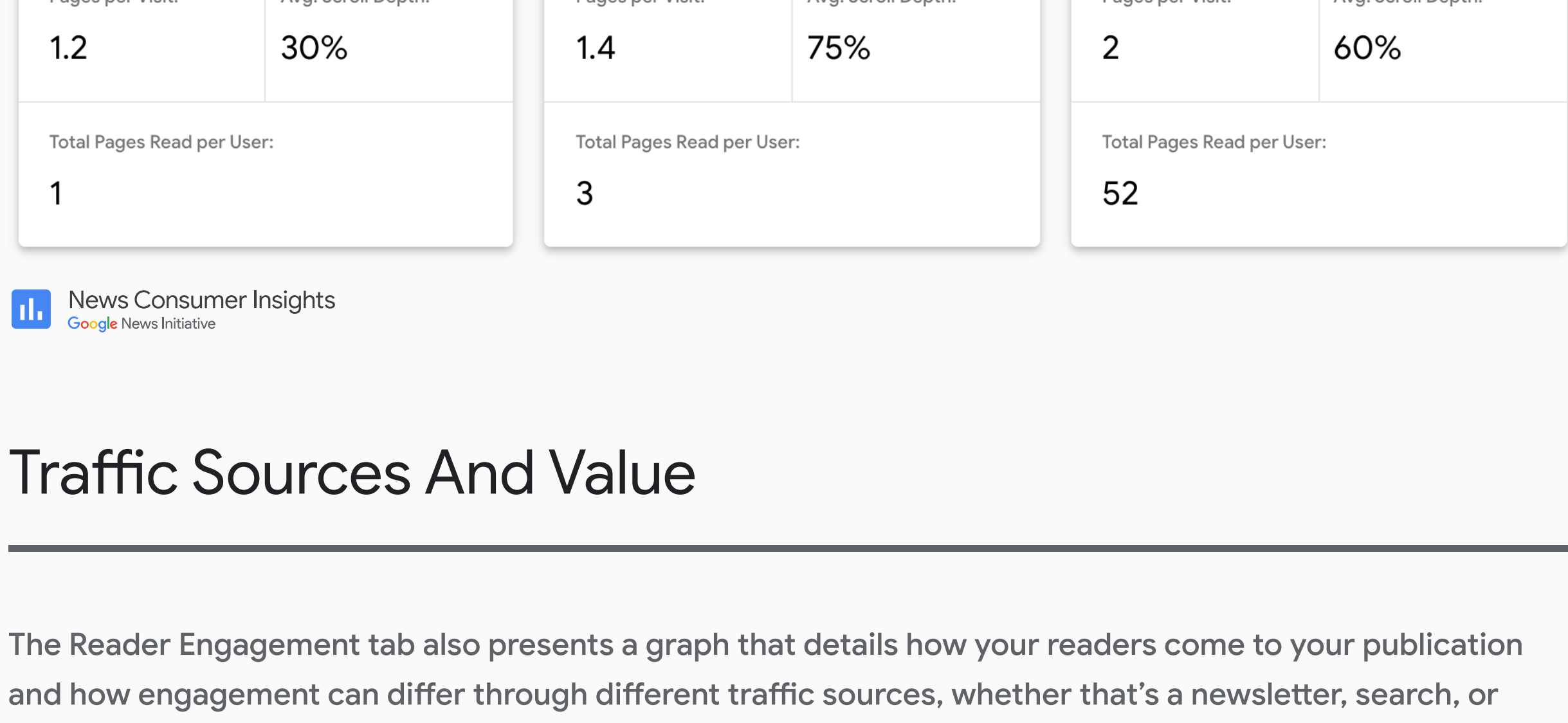
The Reader Engagement tab further details the demographics of your casual readers, loyal readers and brand lovers. It outlines how engagement can differ based on where your readers are coming from, and why you should analyze both the quality and volume of those traffic sources.



In addition to highlighting user personas, the engagement segment overview also shows the percentage of total readers in each category and segment. This is useful to consider when you are trying to understand different audience segments visiting your website and where you want to strengthen your strategy, either around recirculation or creating new content. The red arrows indicate the comparison of your data from the previous month.

The funnel also calculates average ad revenue per user (ARPU). You can connect through Google Analytics 360 or you can input your average CPM manually. This will allow you to see the total ad revenue and the adblock rate percentage as well.

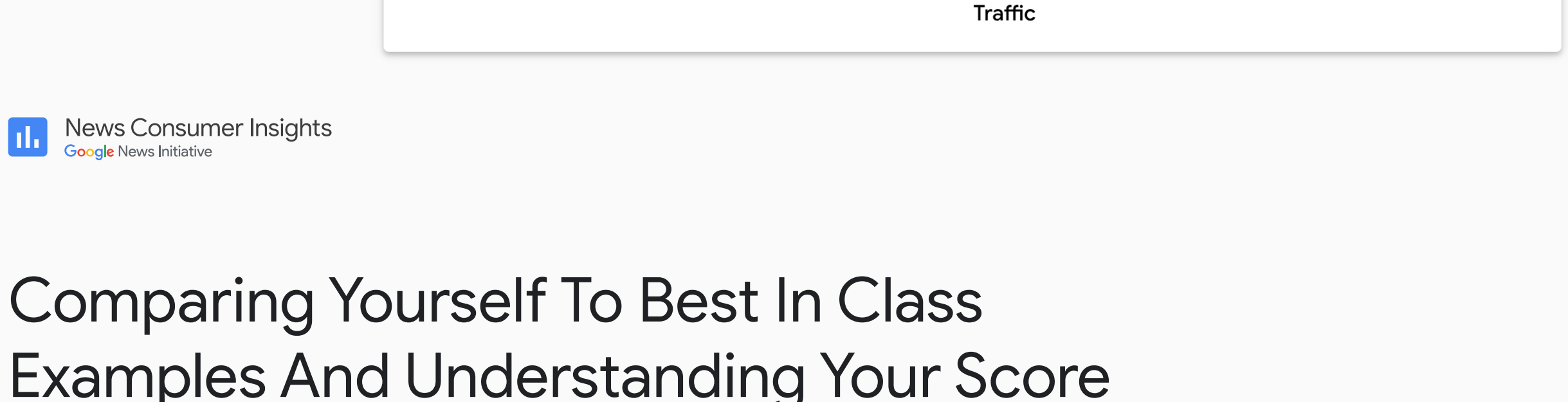
Additionally, the funnel displays other key metrics: visits per reader, visit length, scroll depth, and total pages per user. These are important to consider when targeting actions for specific segments of your audience, particularly any gaps in visit frequency and scroll depth.



## Traffic Sources And Value

The Reader Engagement tab also presents a graph that details how your readers come to your publication and how engagement can differ through different traffic sources, whether that's a newsletter, search, or social media link. This graph shows a custom grouping that identifies any gaps in engagement and which categories perform best, and also displays traffic percentage and ad revenue per user, for each of your traffic sources.

Below, newsletters are shown to be the most valuable traffic source for this publication in terms of average ad revenue per user (ARPU), and most of the traffic comes from Google Search.



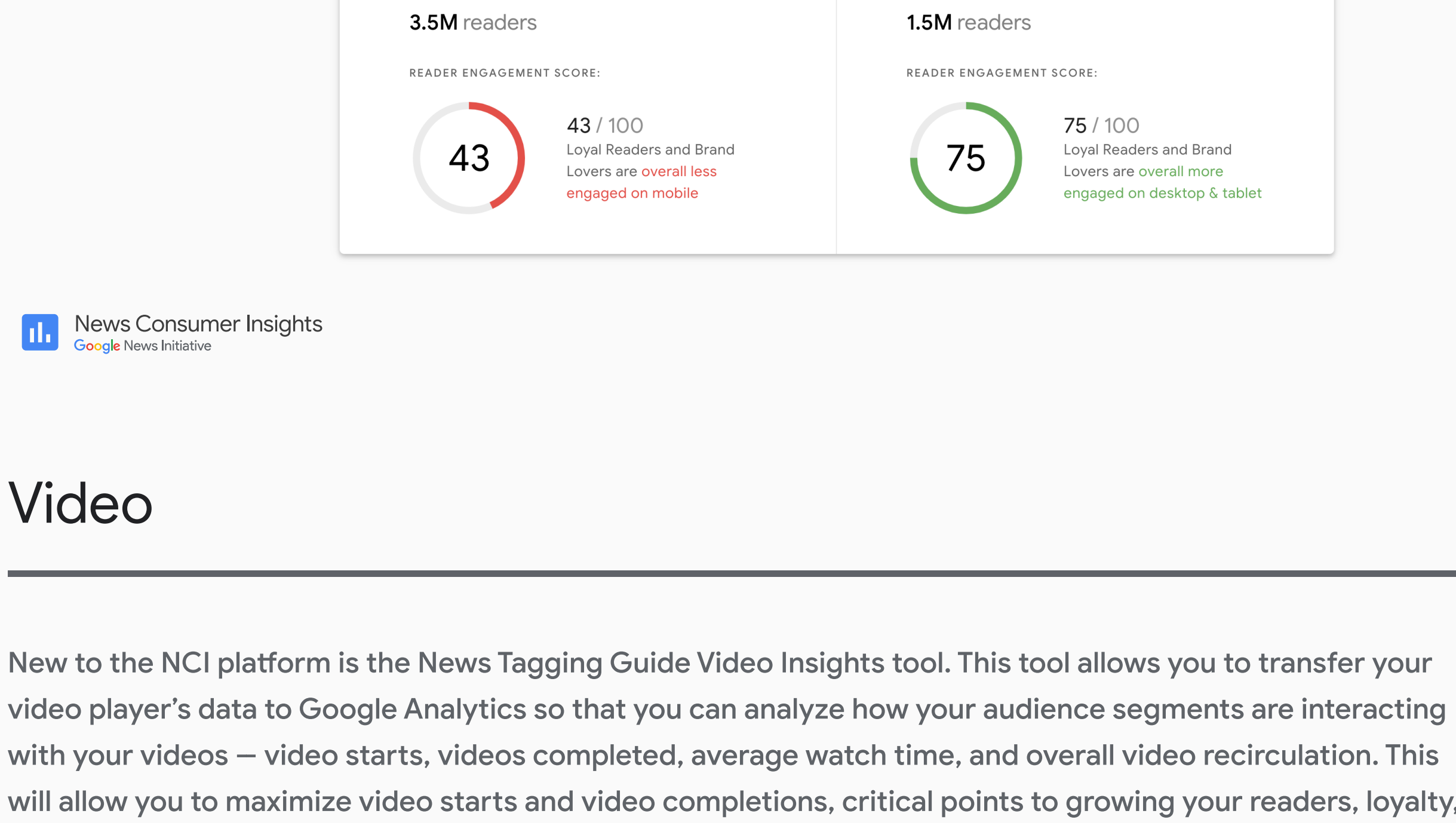
## Comparing Yourself To Best In Class Examples And Understanding Your Score

The Reader Revenue Engagement tab contains a reader engagement score that assesses the overall engagement of your audience. This industry benchmark metric is derived from Google Analytics data from thousands of news organizations that have been using the tool and focuses on a subset of audience engagement metrics. This section also highlights where your publication compares in relation to both average performance and best-in-class performance to allow you to identify and prioritize areas of improvement for yourself.

Loyal Readers and Brand Lovers are categorized together in one section and casual readers are in another. Both are broken down into mobile and desktop/tablet, with toplines insights alongside.

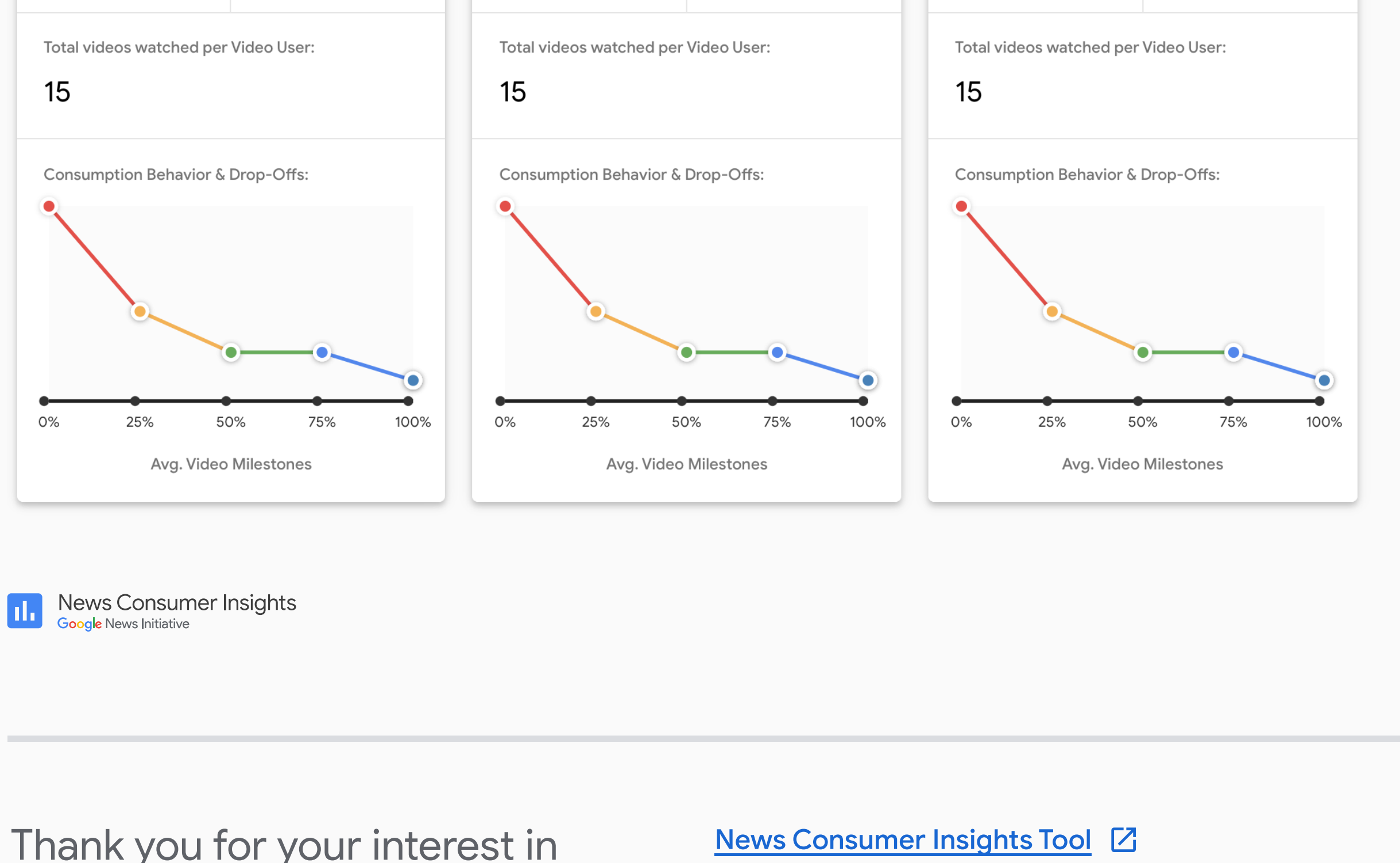
To calculate the reader engagement score, we measure visits per reader, pages read per visit, visit length, and total pages read per user.

The most valuable traffic sources for your readers are shown on the Reader Engagement tab. It is important to ensure that you are engaging with your readers in an impactful and loyalty-building way across the platforms that bring in the majority of your readers.



## Video

New to the NCI platform is the News Tagging Guide Video Insights tool. This tool allows you to transfer your video player's data to Google Analytics so that you can analyze how your audience segments are interacting with your videos – video starts, videos completed, average watch time, and overall video recirculation. This will allow you to maximize video starts and video completions, critical points to growing your readers, loyalty, and ad revenue.



Thank you for your interest in the Google News Initiative Digital Growth Program. For more information and resources, please visit the links to the right.

- [News Consumer Insights Tool](#)
- [News Consumer Insights Playback](#)
- [Growing Reach and Deepening Engagement Guide](#)
- [Setting an Audience Centric Culture Guide](#)
- [Digital Growth Program Website](#)
- [Digital Growth Program Workshops](#)
- [Realtime Content Insights](#)
- [News Tagging Guide](#)