US adults' trust in mass media further erodes

Article

The news: Just 36% of US adults said they trust mass media like newspapers, TV, and radio, the second-lowest year on record since **Gallup** began tracking this metric annually in 1997.

- The year with the lowest trust was 2016, at 32%.

Dig deeper: Trust in media is closely tied to the political party one leans toward.

- Per Gallup, just over two-thirds (68%) of Democrats say they trust the media "a great deal" or "a fair amount," compared with 31% of independents and a mere 11% of Republicans.

- Republicans' trust hasn't risen over 52% since hitting a high in 1998, while Democrats' trust hasn't fallen below the 2016 reading of 51%.

  What this means: The erosion of trust in mass media has opened the floodgates for social platforms to become alternative distributors of news across party lines.

- Just under half (48%) of US adults said they get news from social media "sometimes" or "often" in 2021, according to **Pew Research**.

- And the party split is relatively equal. Of the 31% who said they regularly consume news on **Facebook,** 44% were Republicans or Republican-leaning and 52% were Democrats or Democrat-leaning.

  What's next: While the popularity of news on social media can be a boon for smaller publishers that see high engagement on these platforms, the highly politicized nature can be a detriment.

- It's gotten to the point that some platforms like **Facebook** have tried to stem the spread of political content due to allegations of radicalization and misinformation.

- Recent reporting from **The Information** detailed **Google**'s recent attempts to curate and contextualize information about breaking news events in its search engine with a product called **Big Moments**.

As social platforms exert more control over the spread of news content, trust in them to act as impartial sources and distributors is also likely to erode—something we've already begun to see inklings of with the launch of right-wing social platforms like **Parler**.