

Public Media Innovators Webinar
Aug 2026

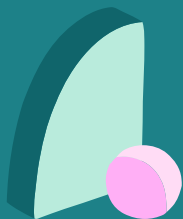
After the Feed

AI and the Future of Community



**Angelica
Quicksey**

Managing Director,
New_Public



In 2011, Eli gave a talk introducing the idea of the **Filter Bubble**.

His thesis: If left unchecked, personalized algorithms will have negative consequences for people and democracy



15 years later, we're at another **inflection point** in the social technology landscape.

Our central question:

What trends will most significantly shape **how humans connect to one another, build relationships, and have shared experiences** in online spaces in the **next 2 years**? And how might these trends support human thriving and connection?

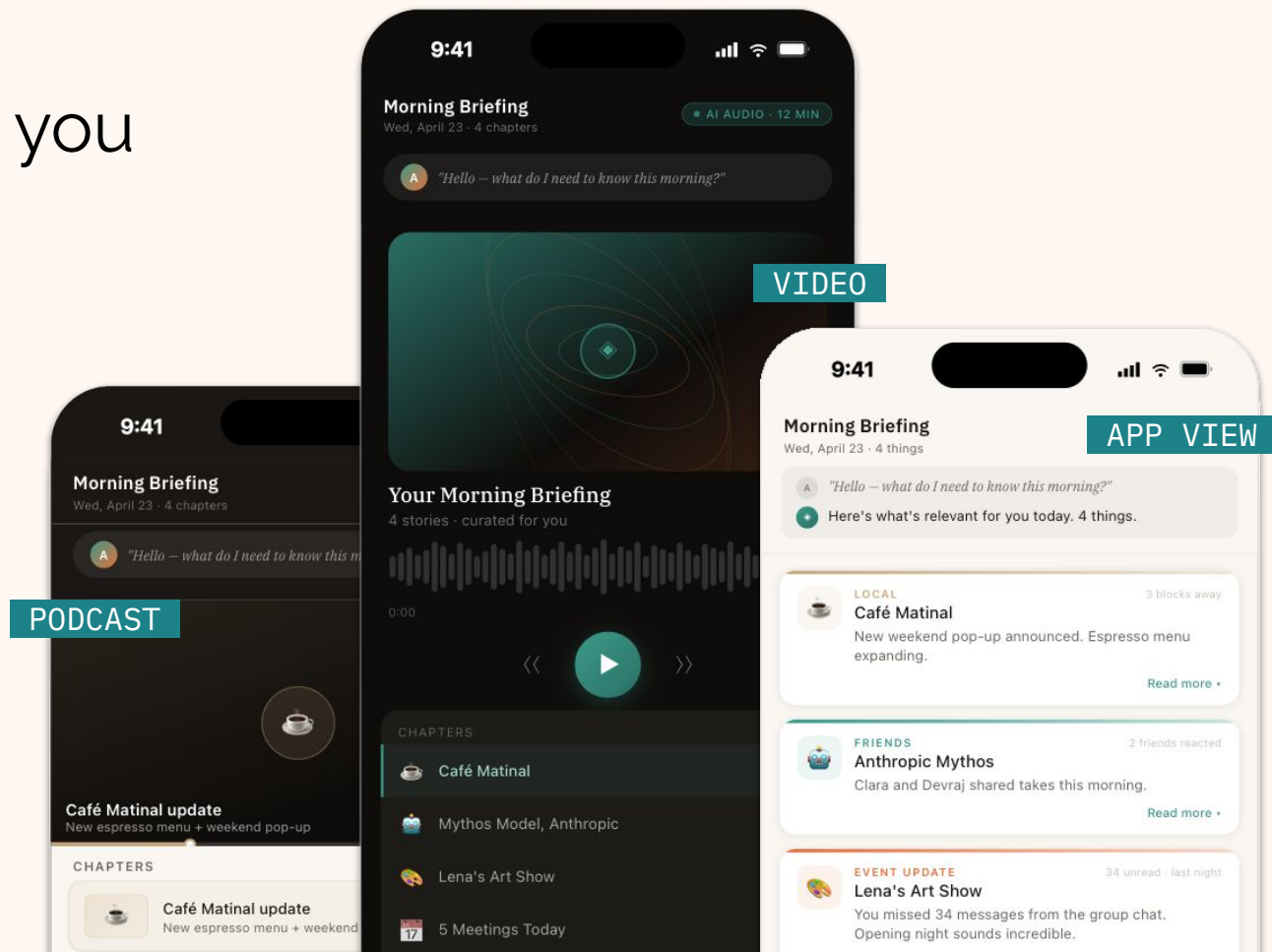
This new form of technology is more **personal and persuasive** than any that came before it.

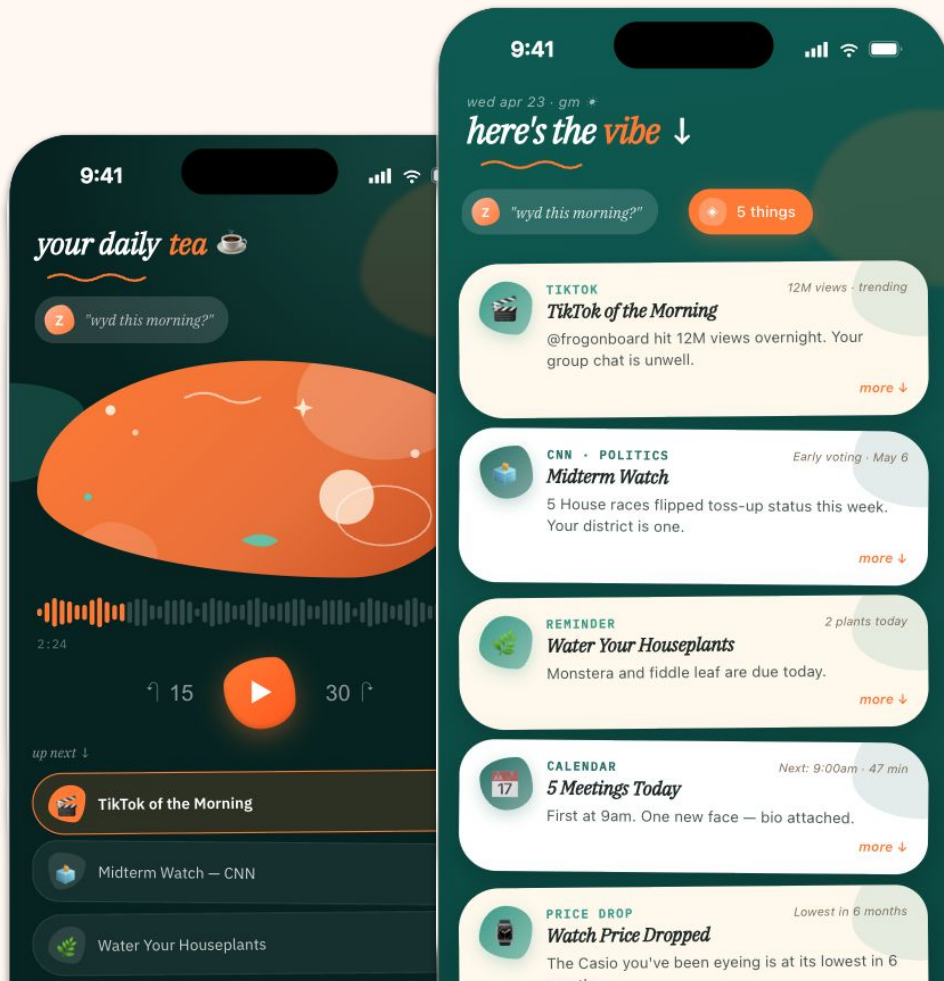
So what does it look like? 🙌

You wake up, pull out your phone
and greet your AI agent:

*Hello, what do I need to know this
morning?*

They respond
with everything you
need to know,
curated for you,
in the format
you prefer.





For your
very online
friend, the
morning update
might look
and feel a
little different.

Meanwhile, the
busy parent's
update comes
while they're
on the move.



Many sources, synthesized and curated *for you*.





You have entered the
agentic interface era.

In this new era,
the social feed is
no longer the
default interface
for digital life.

Agentic interfaces are the
new intermediaries for
information about the world
around you — whether a chat
with Claude or a briefing from
your personal AI agent.

It's an interface built for an
audience of one.

Trends driving the agentic interface era

01

Agentic interfaces are the
new new gatekeepers

02

AI is destabilizing the big
social platforms

03

The emerging trust economy

04

Entering a world of
software abundance

05

In an agentic world,
human connection survives

01

The *New New* Gatekeepers

We're experiencing a changing of the guard:
A set of *new new gatekeepers* controls what the public sees

01

Old Gatekeepers

Institutions: Newspaper editors, TV network anchors

1850–2010

This was the
Filter Bubble era

New Gatekeepers

Platforms & Algorithms: Facebook, Google, Twitter feeds

2010–2025

03

New New Gatekeepers

Agentic interfaces: LLM-powered interfaces tuned to you

2025–Present

Generative AI is not only the new gatekeeper, it is fracturing the incumbents.

Because of AI, the big social platforms are now...

Less safe

Harassment at scale is possible

Less social

Reciprocity is being eroded

Full of slop

Low-quality, AI-generated content abounds

Full of bots

Automated accounts outnumber human voices online

The attention economy is being supplanted by **the trust economy.**

42/100 trust score for social media, the lowest among the measured information sources

For over a decade, the internet has rewarded whoever could capture the most attention. Likes, views, and follower counts were the currency.

Today, trust — in the content and the creator — are becoming more important to users and user attention.

If trust is the new economy, thick reputation is the new currency.

Thick reputation is contextual and slow. It's built over time through sustained contribution in a specific community. For a creator or a company, thick reputation reads as "your brand." And it accrues to any entity, human or agent, that contributes consistently and reliably to a specific community.

Whether human or agent, what matters is no longer "10K followers" but "contributed thoughtfully to this community for two years." Not "verified" but "vouched for by people I trust."

People are already choosing trust over reach.

As the open internet fills with synthetic engagement, people are migrating their real social lives to smaller, more private spaces. Group chats, Discord servers, WhatsApp groups, private channels.

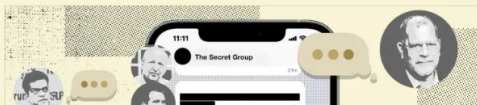
This is happening at every scale, from neighborhood WhatsApp groups to elite group chats where political and business decisions get made.

The group chats that changed America



Ben Smith
Co-Founder and Editor-in-Chief, Semafor

Apr 27, 2025, 6:23pm PDT MEDIA



We are moving into a world of software abundance.

Which yields new opportunities. And a lot of bad software.

Vibe-coding entered the lexicon in Feb 2025, the same month Claude Code was released as a research preview. **Today, many product builders never write code at all.**

This means more non-technical folks can build things for themselves and their communities.

But, as reported by The New York Times, new app submissions to Apple's App Store have surged dramatically due to artificial intelligence, but the number of user downloads has not budged. This shows a widening gap between the number of new apps flooding the market and actual user value.

In the agentic interface era, people will use AI if it's better than the **best available human**.^{*}
But humans still retain some advantages.

The products, services, and institutions that embrace connection will survive in this era.

^{*} via Ethan Mollick

How does this relate
to public media?

AI will drive massive
changes to how we
communicate online.

Right now, most agentic interfaces are designed for human-to-agent interaction: to provide information or take action on a human's behalf.

That means media organizations should be planning for a B2A2C world.

Shuwei's thesis: We need to understand how AI consumes information (B2A), and how it translates that for humans (A2C).

AI is your newest audience: The B2A(2C) design challenge

2 Jul, 2025 • By Shuwei Fang



“

While AI excels at pattern recognition, human communities still need local relevance and cultural nuance. The defensible moat lies in understanding specific communities' realities and facilitating shared understanding.

– **Shuwei Fang**

But also a world of
human-to-human
relationships.

For public media, that means the **direct relationship** with the audience is more important than ever.

Here's what we've
learned about
human-to-human
connection online

01. People often make sense of information in relationship with others



Relationships with **institutions** are in decline



Relationships with individual **journalists** are holding steady



Relationships with **trusted people** are essential
– conversations with friends, neighbors, and coworkers help folks make sense of the world

02. How people engage online varies more by age than by language or nationality.

From our research into motivations for participating in public conversation across four public media audiences.



CBC  Radio-Canada

CBC / Radio-Canada

Canada (English & Quebecois French)



rtbf 

Radio-télévision belge de la Communauté française

Belgium (French)



SRG SSR

Schweizerische Radio- und Fernsehgesellschaft;
Société suisse de radiodiffusion et télévision

Switzerland (French & Swiss German)





Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen

Germany (High German)

Though there was a lot of
room for error across
language and culture 🙄

AK

██████████ (Radio-Canada) (Unverified)

It's different for computer, uh, ballet, Tucson, Somaly arrival.

AK

██████████ (Radio-Canada) (Unverified)

I hate you.



10:49 AM

Allô! Just to let you know that there are wrong traduction for the archetype (wallflower = fille facile 😳😂 (mean "slut"))



Meghan Welsch 4:06 PM

oh no! what!?

The translations these days...



██████████ (RTS) (Unverified)

May I just point out the the the Sprint actual settled build that ohh
your daughter has good kisser.



██████████ (RTS) (Unverified)

We say use the more easily monkey song.

03. And people are hungry for locally-rooted information

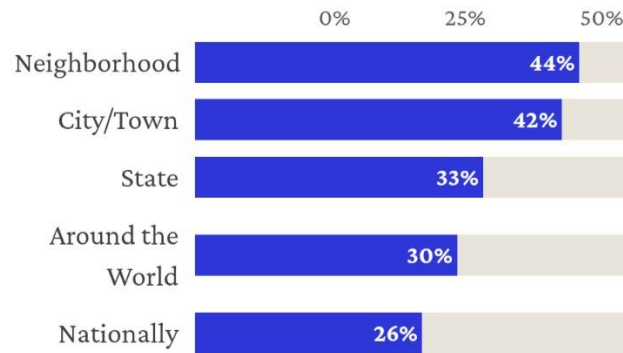
It's now easier to find out what's going on in another country than about what's happening down the block, according to the Civic Information Needs Census.

And so far, that's something AI can't provide.

The Proximity Paradox: it's harder to stay informed about your neighborhood than about another country



How difficult is it for you to get information about each of the following in your day-to-day life?



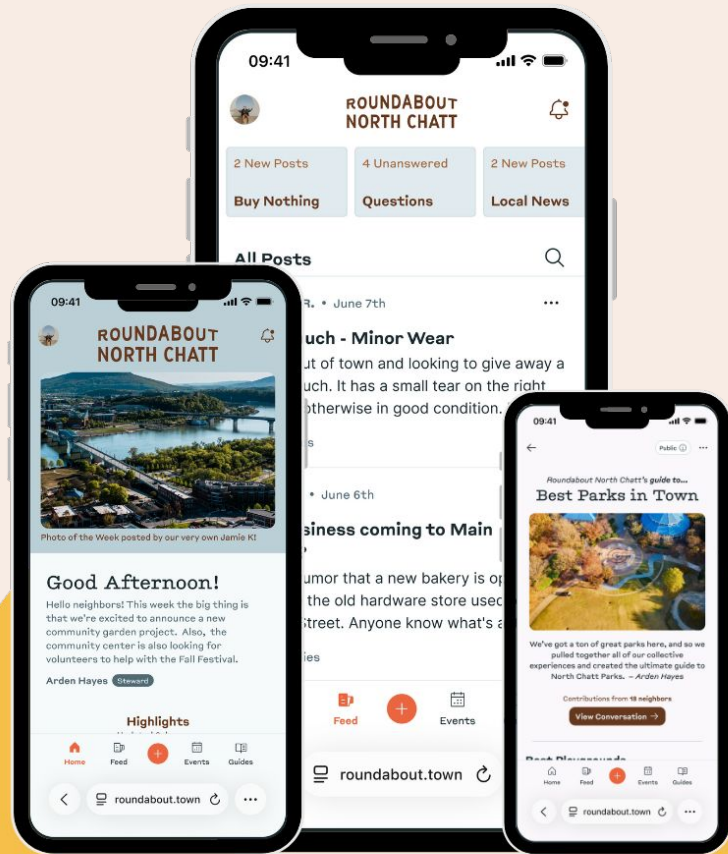
% who say it is somewhat or very difficult to get information

CINC National Survey (Wave 2), Feb 2026 |
infocensus.org

CINC

ROUNABOUT

That's
actually why
we launched
Roundabout



And are now
partnering
with CPM to
bring it to
Chicago



Can public media build its own social network? Chicago Public Media teams up with New_Public to try

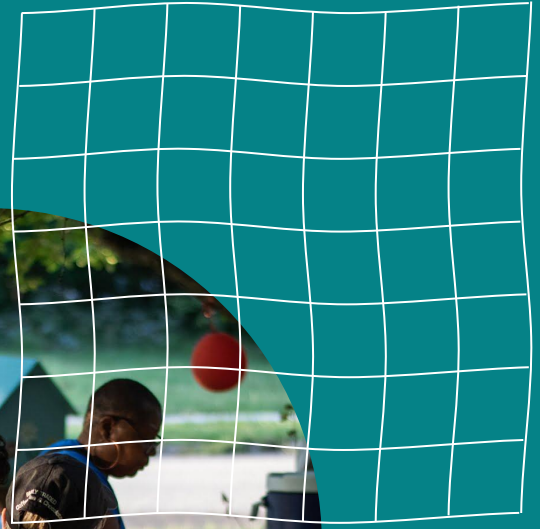
“This is a community platform, not a news site — it’s very much not a news site.”

By **SOPHIE CULPEPPER** @speppered Aug. 13, 2026, 2:43 p.m.

Thank you!
Ask me
anything.
And stay in
touch.

✉ angelica@newpublic.org

👉 @angelquicksey on Bluesky, Instagram, and
wherever else you get your posts



RECOMMENDED READING & REFERENCES

The full After the Feed report -
<https://newpublic.org/afterthefeed>

Can public media build its own social network? Chicago Public Media teams up with New_ Public to try
https://www.niemanlab.org/2026/08/can-public-media-build-its-own-social-media-chicago-public-media-teams-up-with-new_public-to-try/

New_ Public Commenting Research: Motivation & Archetypes for Public Conversation in North America and Europe
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1iPoQPGBfuLrFQ7g8CWzKbCYWiav5F5ToIW04sEt8sGc/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1>

AI is your newest audience: The B2A(2C) design challenge
<https://splicemedia.com/stories/ai-is-your-newest-audience-the-b2a2c-design-challenge>

