

TORSTAR ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH GOOGLE NEWS SHOWCASE

JOSH RUBIN
josh@thestar.ca

Torstar, the company that publishes more than 70 Metroland community newspapers and the Toronto Star, has signed on to a news partnership with global search giant Google.

Google News Showcase, which launched Oct. 27 in Canada, is a new service designed to give news from trusted publishers a higher profile and help drive traffic back to the publishers' websites. News Showcase will include select stories from

partner publishers each day, including some that are only available to subscribers on the publishers' own websites. The stories are chosen and packaged by publishers, ensuring editorial control remains with the publications.

"Quality, fact-checked journalism is a vital way to connect and inform people, and a crucial tool against misinformation. News Showcase will bring more of our award-winning local and national reporting to Canadians, and the world," said Jordan Bitove, Toron-

to Star publisher and Torstar co-owner. "It's an investment into the future of our newsrooms, our top-quality journalism and the future of news."

In addition to Torstar, two other publishers — Le Devoir and Les Coops de l'information — are joining forces with Google on Wednesday. Previously announced partners include Black Press Media, Glacier Media, The Globe and Mail, Métro Média, Narcity Media, SaltWire Network, Village Media and Winnipeg Free Press.

The move comes at a crucial time for both the media and tech industries. The media has seen its traditional business model collapsing, with advertising revenue plunging for the last two decades, and subscription revenue not making up the shortfall.

Tech giants such as Google, Facebook and Amazon, meanwhile, have faced increasing calls for regulation amidst their market domination.

Torstar publishes six daily newspapers, more than 70 weekly publications, as well as several specialty websites including TheKit.ca and Wheelers.ca. Les Coop de l'information publishes six daily French-language newspapers in Quebec and eastern Ontario.

Publishers receive a set monthly fee for use of their articles, which are given more prominence than a



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Google News Showcase, which launched Oct. 27 in Canada, is a project designed to give news from top quality publishers such as Torstar a higher profile, and to help drive traffic to publishers' websites.

simple link to a headline. Neither the amount of the monthly fee nor length of the agreement signed by Torstar was disclosed.

The hope, said Google executive Brad Bender, is to help drive more readers to publishers' own websites, where they can then become subscribers.

"That is a big driver of the program," said Bender, Google's vice-president of

product management for news. Bender said Google News Showcase was developed in collaboration with publishers themselves.

Unlike Apple News+, which charges a subscription fee for access to its service, Bender said Google News Showcase will be free to users. That's something Google has no intention of changing, Bender added.

Google News Showcase is available in more than a dozen countries around the world, and includes partnerships with more than 1,000 publications. It's part of a \$1 billion (U.S.) investment in the global journalism industry by Google.

As part of that investment, Google will be training 5,000 Canadian journalists over the next three years on strengthening their digital news skills. That is on top of the 1,000 the company says it has already trained.

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Todd C. Hein
Partner
Family/Divorce Lawyer

Q

I am in court due to the breakdown in my marriage. Can I still try mediation?

A

Absolutely! Just because you are in court, does not mean that you cannot still try to resolve your differences by way of an alternative dispute resolution process, such as mediation. In fact, that is a very good idea. Mediation can be used to resolve some or all issues, whether on a temporary or final basis. Mediation has a really high success rate, from my experience 85% - 90%. Parties are committed to resolving matters, and understand that they must compromise to get a deal done. You will want to select a mediator experienced in family law matters. It can be a very cost-effective way of resolving matters. An entire case can be settled in one or two days of mediation, versus months or years through the court system and many days at trial. And parties are said to respect more a decision they arrive at together. We do a lot of family/divorce law, including representing clients at mediation. In light of COVID-19, we are still doing most everything virtually. So we are happy to have an initial Zoom meeting or a telephone call without charge to you to see if we can assist you. Have a great weekend.

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905 452 7400

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