

There is a better way to do hometown news.

One where local journalists are free to focus on issues most important to their communities.

Where fair and equitable pay allows journalists to build careers and lives in smaller markets.

Where organizations get best-in-class benefits, tools, and research and development provided by the nation's largest and most-innovative university.

Where local newsrooms become bridgebuilders and budgets become sustainable.

Some call this impossible.

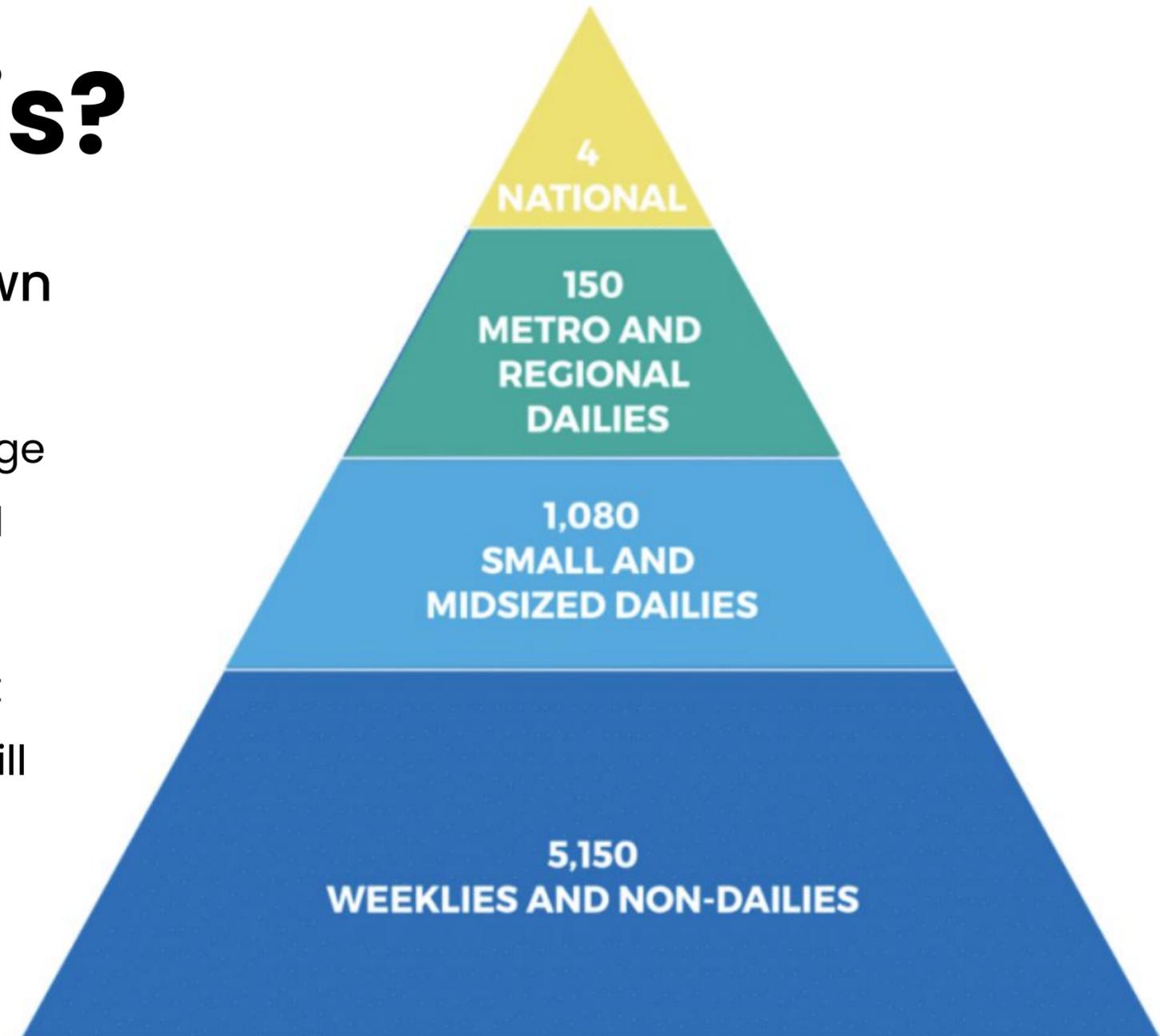
We call it NEWSWELL.

How can we do this?

Here's a surprising fact: Many small town newspapers and sites are profitable.

They just aren't profitable enough to be part of large companies that need certain returns for overhead and shareholders.

In the next few years, scores of these sites will shut down. Ghost papers will expand. Misinformation will spread. Community groups may not be willing or able to take over. We are the solution.



Source: The Northwestern | Medill [State of Local News](#)

We need nonprofit startups. But we need a legacy solution as well.

“There are about 300 nonprofit local newsrooms — and 7,000 local commercial newspapers, websites, TV stations, and radio news shows. Unless we want 95 percent of American communities to become news deserts, we need to help some existing publications better serve their communities as we also build up the nonprofit sector.”

– Steven Waldman, Rebuild Local News

How exactly does this work?

Local sites are run by local people, aided by local advisory boards.

We work with the community to rebuild and reimagine local news in service of both the community and democracy. We reinvest in local reporters and editors.

We will be nonpartisan and community-minded. We view news and information as a service to a community and its people, helping both to thrive.

We will build on an existing audience – and decades of trust.

Why transform a legacy property rather than start something new? As good as start-ups are, many find it hard to build audience. We will build on a strong base. With AI and pink slime sites, many readers don't know who or what to trust. Despite their depleted states, established sites are trusted by their communities – and have been for generations.

This works for small, independent news organizations as well.

Many are struggling but don't have a buyer or path to sustainability. NEWSWELL can take on smaller sites and make sure founders' hard work and legacies live on.



Why ASU? The university judges its success based on whom it includes, not excludes. It wants to use its scale to help solve society's biggest problems. ASU has been named the country's most-innovative university nine years in a row.

Why would a company donate?

Tax benefits

When properties no longer maintain profitability standards, some companies may find tax deductions they may get from donation are equal to or greater than value from a sale, or certainly more than from closing.

Gain mindshare + focus

As companies transform, their smaller properties may take time and attention away from growth markets or strategic priorities. There is addition through subtraction.

Dedicated R&D resources

NEWSWELL is part of the most innovative university in the country. Donors have access to the NEWSWELL Transformation Lab to offer prototyping, design and development services. We facilitate research or testing through our acclaimed journalism, engineering, business and design schools. ASU leads the way on the future of AI, immersive media and extended reality arts (XRts).

Goodwill

Positive national, community and industry attention.

 **This year, 144,800 undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled at ASU, with nearly 80,000 joining on one of ASU's campuses, and more than 65,400 enrolled online. We have students from all 50 states and 157 countries.**

The passion of local.

The efficiencies of scale.

It doesn't have to be one or the other.

Nonprofit doesn't mean no profit

We want to grow revenue to invest back into local newsrooms.

A **for-profit company** makes money and distributes any income exceeding expenses to individuals or shareholders.

A **nonprofit company** also makes money, but income is used to further a cause and provide a public benefit.

A nonprofit is not a free ride. Our properties will have operating plans, performance expectations and measurements.

But our nonprofits are also MISSION focused and will measure success based on how well we:

- Better individual lives
- Center ALL voices in the community
- Help solve community problems
- Make meaningful connections
- Show community leadership
- Celebrate success
- Hold leaders accountable
- Have staff that represent the community

Going from subscribers to members

As organizations turn nonprofit, they'll also change business models from subscription to membership.

Subscribers:

- You pay a monthly or annual fee and in exchange you gain access to content that – generally – you can't find anywhere else.
- There may also be subscriber benefits, like early content and enhanced services, but historically customers based their support on the volume and quality of the content.
- If you don't live in a certain area, you may not want to subscribe to that area's news.

Members:

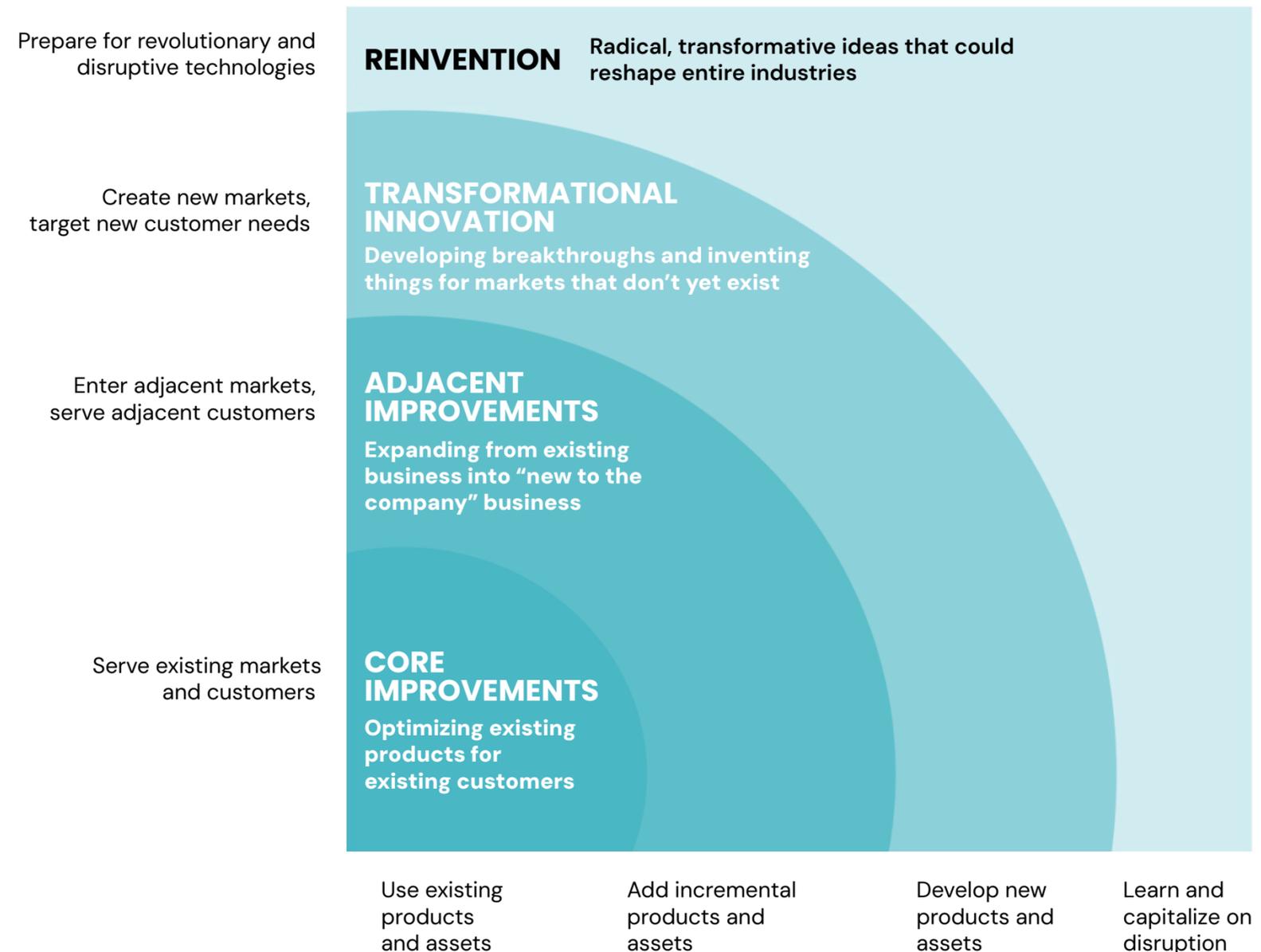
- The membership model is based on belonging, community, and relationships. A membership organization actively involves and includes its members.
- Members of a news and information organization want to support its efforts to help local people and communities thrive.
- Members get invitations to events, discounts, meet-ups, chances to give feedback and ongoing educational benefits.
- Most importantly, the membership organization is talking to them and making them feel included and valued.
- Even if you don't live in a specific local area, you may want to support an organization dedicated to quality local news and information, because you know it will help the community.
- Your relationship isn't based on the news you personally receive, but the outcomes and values you wish to support.

We can't just save, must transform

As sites turn nonprofit, they have the opportunity to test and research new models.

The word "innovation" is overused – describing everything from product improvements to adjacent services. We look at innovation as **transformation**.

As an industry, we spend most of our time on core and adjacent improvements. The NEWSWELL Transformation Lab offers the space and expertise for game-changing ideas and industry reinvention.



“The future does not fit in the containers of the past”

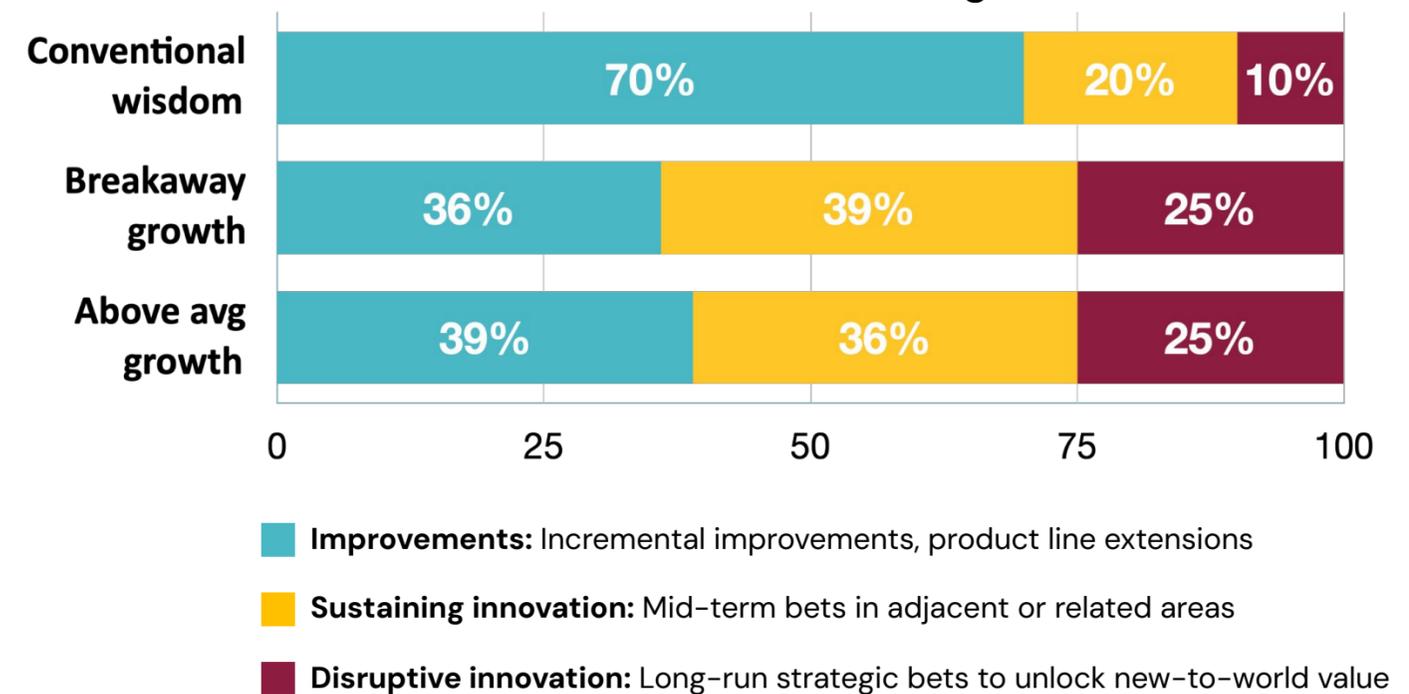


This quote from Rishad Tobaccowala is one of our favorites. We must be bold enough to move on from the past and create the future.

The NEWSWELL Transformation Lab will:

- Collaborate with newsrooms and partners that have ideas and business plans but no R&D. We provide design, development, prototyping and testing, services traditionally available only to large for-profit media companies.
- Build tools that can be shared at no or low cost with the industry. Use NEWSWELL properties as a live lab. Share research findings with the nonprofit journalism industry.
- Take on journalism’s biggest problems with the greatest minds at the university and the industry. Brainstorm, create, test, produce, launch and share solutions through ASU’s Luminosity Lab and journalism, engineering and business partners.

What percentage of industry innovation efforts should be devoted to each strategic focus?



The better way to do hometown news.

We can have local passion **AND** efficiencies of scale.

We can provide news and information **AND** be mission driven to help a community thrive – the entire community.

We can collaborate with partners optimizing for today **AND** reinvent for the future.

It doesn't have to be one or the other.