

# THE AUTHORITY REPORT



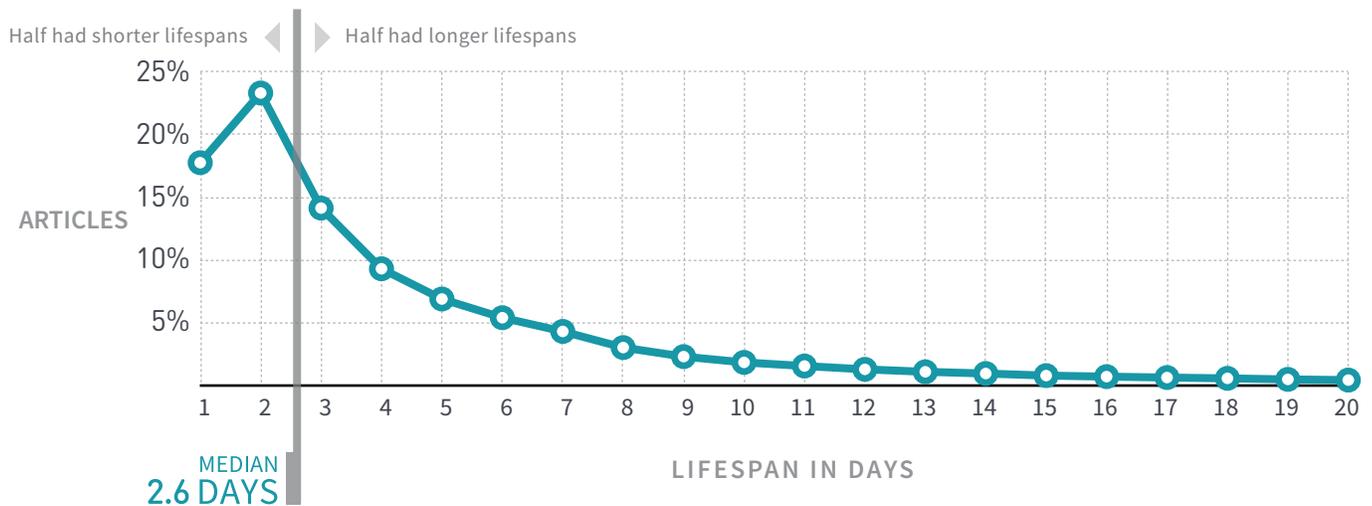
LIFESPAN ANALYSIS  
REPORT PERIOD  
**SEP - NOV 2014**

## What is the Lifespan of an Article?

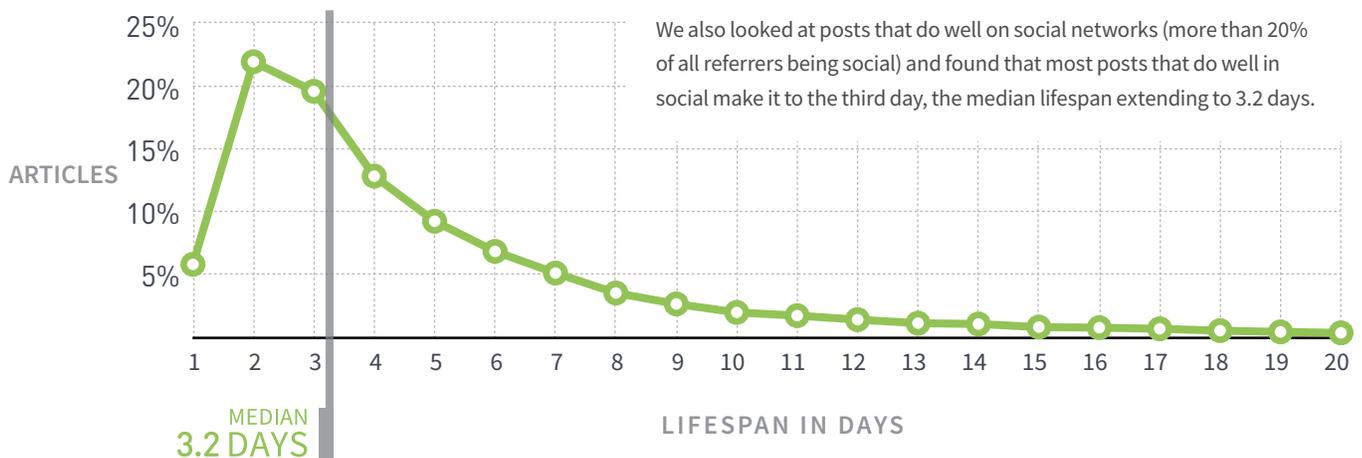
Media producers work hard to create stories that audiences will want to read and share online. To do that well, you have to not only produce interesting and unique articles, you also have to work against the clock. The pace of digital publishing means that readers' attention moves on quickly to the next and newest piece. In short? Your articles have a shelf life.

How long can you reasonably expect people to keep finding an article? Understanding baseline standards for a post can help you determine when one does better than expected. We looked into our network of hundreds of media sites to see if we could find out what makes a story last. We found that most posts have a shelf life of 48 hours or 2 days, with the median stretching out to about 2.5 days.

### THE AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF A POST



### ARTICLES DOING WELL ON SOCIAL MEDIA



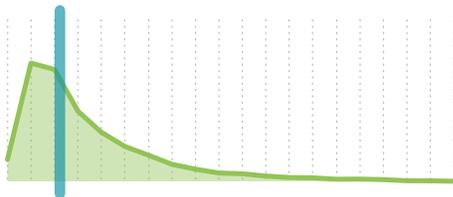
Our Methodology: We selected the top 5,000 articles from each publisher in our network based on traffic and calculated how long it takes for each article to receive 90% of its total page views within a 30-day limit.

## COMPARING SOCIAL NETWORKS

### ARTICLES DOING WELL ON

**facebook**

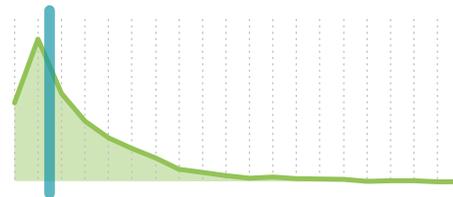
**3.2**  
DAYS  
MEDIAN LIFESPAN  
OF ARTICLES



### ARTICLES DOING WELL ON



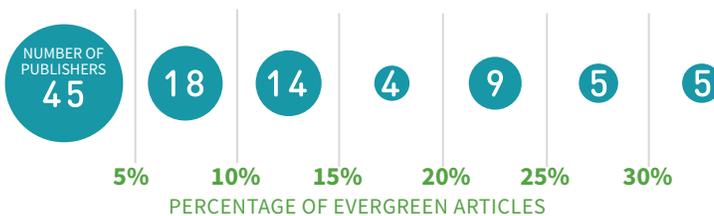
**2.5**  
DAYS  
MEDIAN LIFESPAN  
OF ARTICLES



★ Twitter's reputation as a platform for breaking news and quick attention spans is supported by our analysis.

## THE LONGEST LIFESPAN: EVERGREEN ARTICLES

### TOP 100 PUBLISHERS ON THE PARSE.LY NETWORK



There are certain articles that defy this lifecycle completely, lasting much longer than would typically be expected—we classify these as “Evergreen” articles. Given the ability of evergreen articles to generate meaningful traffic well beyond their publish dates, we encourage publishers to be aware of which articles fall into this category.

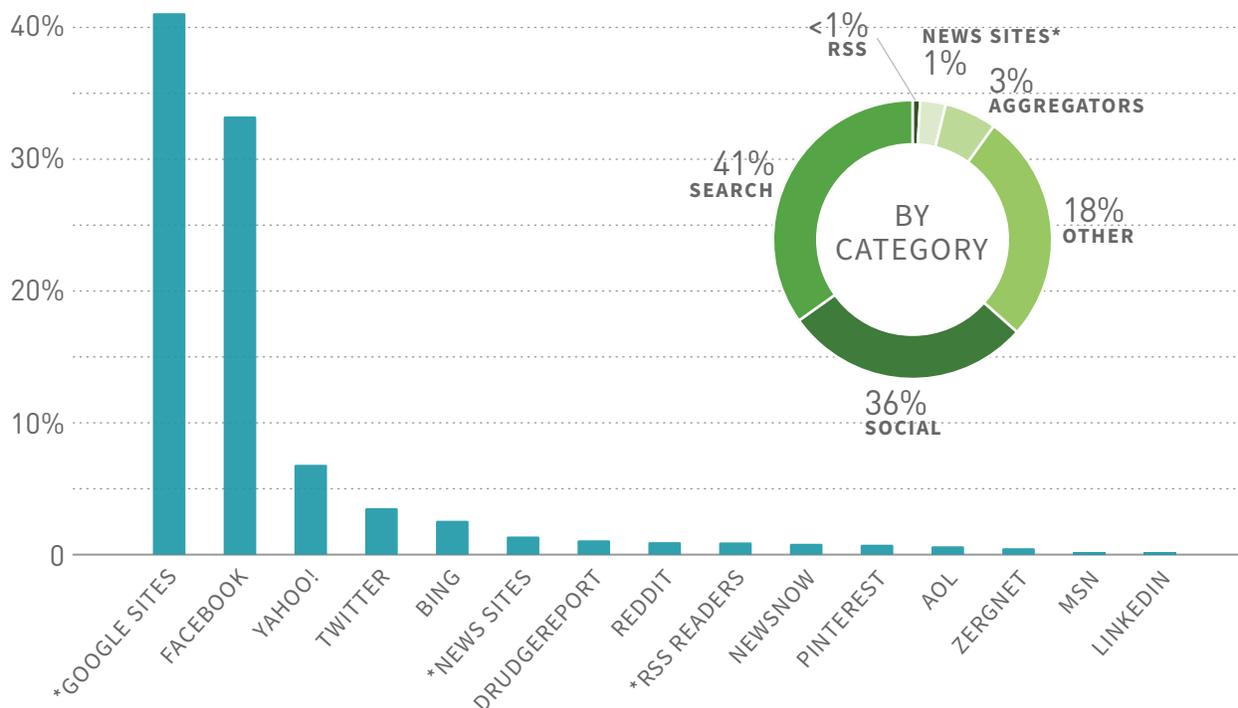
How many Evergreen articles exist on a site? In a July 2014 study, we found that the largest proportion of our top 100 sites in the Parse.ly network had less than 5% of their posts classified as Evergreen.

### Individual Sites: Individual Data

While we look for network-wide trends to give the industry a sense of the 10,000 foot view when it comes to averages, one of the recurring themes in all of our data studies is how much each individual publication can vary from the trend. As publishers continue to find ways to provide unique value for their audiences, what will be the role of aggregate data in the future? Having unique site data will be crucial for good decisions.

In each **Authority Report**, we show the top referral sources to our network. Each of these shows a snapshot of the traffic to our network in time and reflects both industry trends and shifts in our publishing clients. With the addition of one of the world's largest search-based site to Parse.ly, we saw our Google numbers climb again, but we also saw Facebook continue to increase as a dominant source.

**TOP TRAFFIC REFERRAL SOURCES**



\*GOOGLE SITES: aggregate all of Google-owned properties, e.g. Google.com, Google.ca, and Google News.

\*NEWS SITES: We calculate News Sites using 100 of the top news websites ranked by Comscore, Alexa rankings, and other social media data sources, like Newswhip.

\*RSS READERS: all external traffic from RSS reader services such as Feedly.com

**FACEBOOK APP UPDATES**



Though Facebook appears to have taken another jump (our final 2014 **Authority Report** showed 22% referral traffic from the commanding social media platform), some of the increase may be due to a correction Facebook made to their app traffic. We will continue investigating the impact of these changes on traffic in a future blog post.