



TV Show Readership Trends

May 2023



Image sources: Netflix, Max



Overview

TV shows are a pinnacle of popular culture. Fans love keeping up with and talking about their favorite shows. But what role does the media play?

We were curious about readership trends surrounding some of this year’s biggest shows.

Memo analyzed just over 13.9K articles between November 14, 2022 - May 14, 2023 across major national publications and entertainment outlets to identify readership trends.

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TV SHOW BREAKDOWN

Memo analyzed coverage across 12 shows streaming across Netflix, HBO Max, Disney+, Apple TV, and airing on live TV.

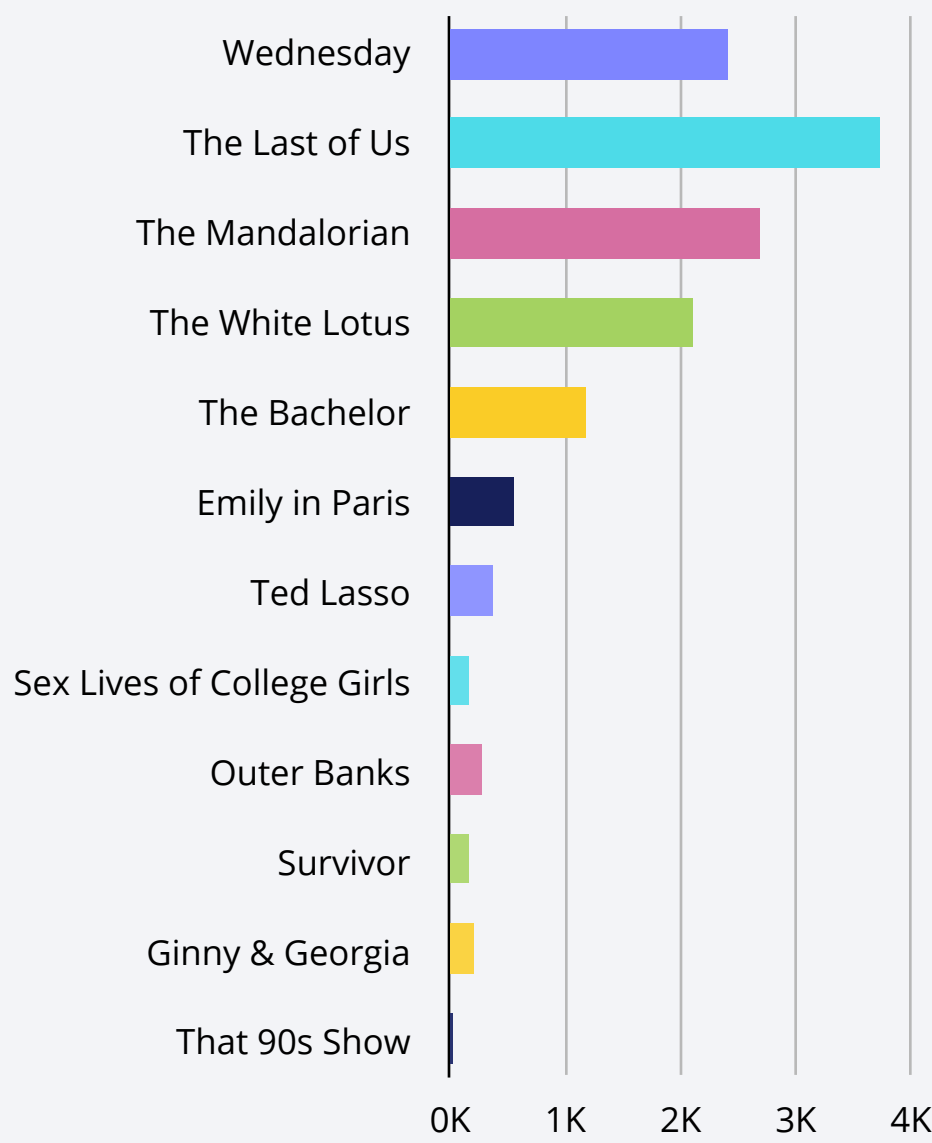
<u>TV Show</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Release Type</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Where to Watch</u>
Emily in Paris	Season 3	1 drop	12/21/22	Netflix
Ginny and Georgia	Season 2	1 drop	1/5/23	Netflix
The Mandalorian	Season 3	1x per week	3/1/23- 4/19/23	Disney+
Outer Banks	Season 3	1 drop	2/23/23	Netflix
Sex Lives of College Girls	Season 2	1x per week	11/17/22-12/15/22	Max
Survivor	Season 44	1x per week	3/1/23-5/25/23	CBS
Ted Lasso	Season 3	1x per week	3/15/23-5/31/23	Apple TV
That 90's Show	Season 1	1 drop	1/19/23	Netflix
The Bachelor	Season 27	1x per week	1/23/23-3/27/23	ABC
The Last of Us	Season 1	1x per week	1/15/23-3/12/23	Max
Wednesday	Season 1	1 drop	11/23/22	Netflix
The White Lotus	Season 2	1x per week	10/30/22-12/11/22	Max



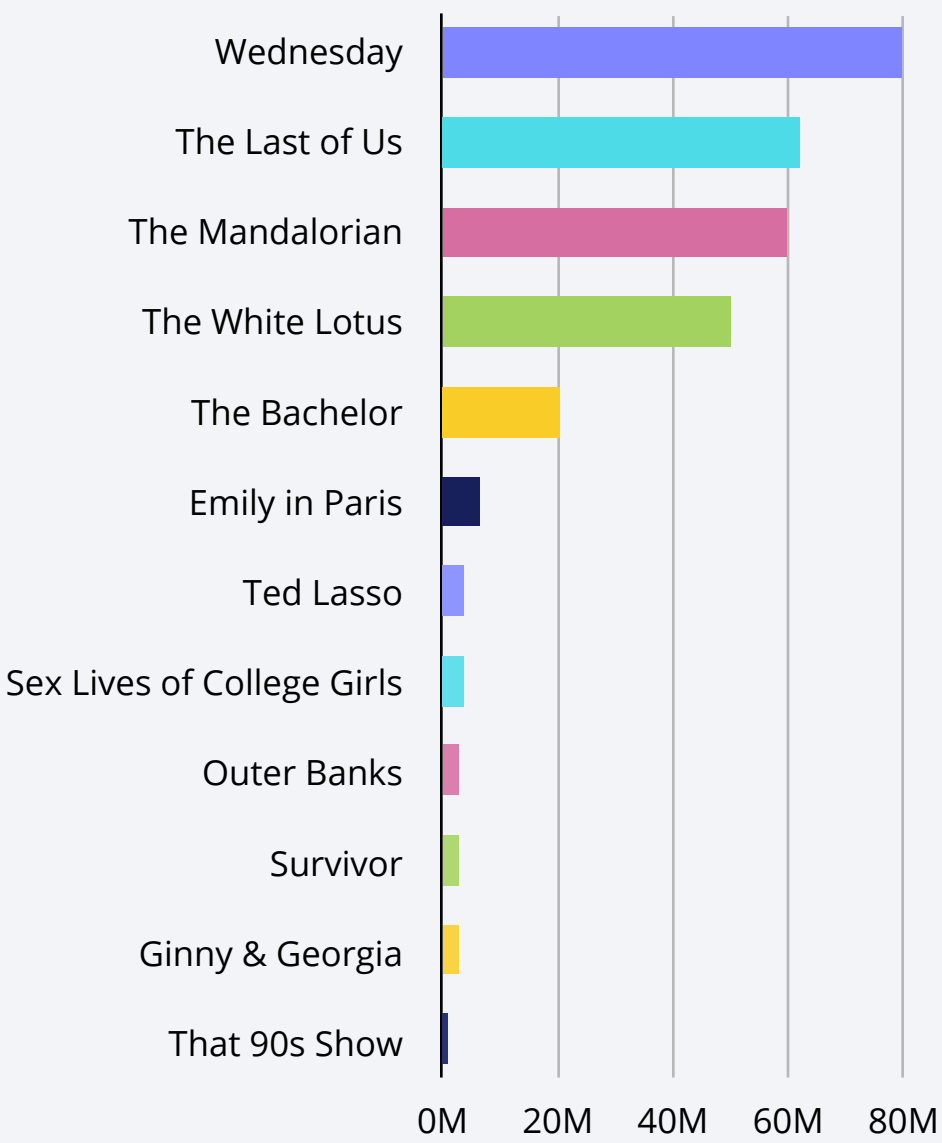
TV SHOWS

2022-2023 was filled with several fan captivating shows. The Last of Us dominated the media, while Wednesday saw the highest readership of the shows analyzed.

of Articles by Show



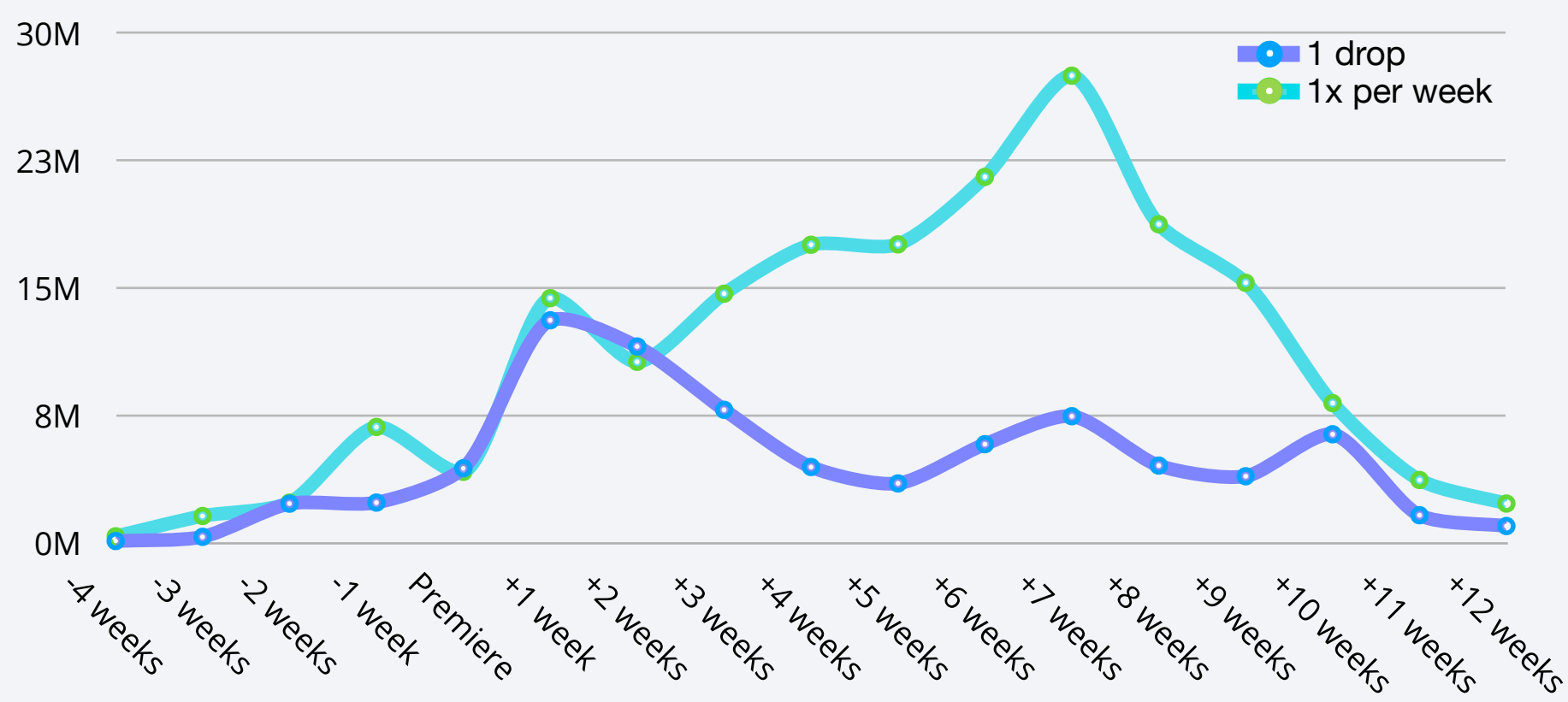
Total Readership by Show



- ▶ Wednesday drove an outstanding 80MM readers from two weeks leading up to the premiere to over 3 months after the season dropped on Netflix. Readership was largely fueled by celebrity news and the virality of Jenna Ortega’s famous “Wednesday Dance.”
- ▶ The Last of Us was another fan favorite show, driving 62MM readers overall, with readership peaking the week following the season finale.

SEASON DROP VS. 1x PER WEEK

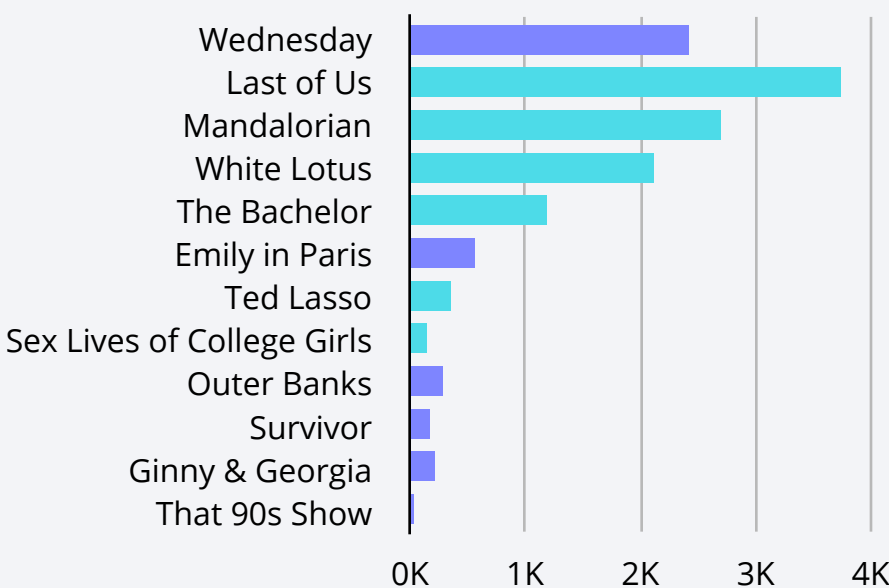
Readership Over Time by Release Type



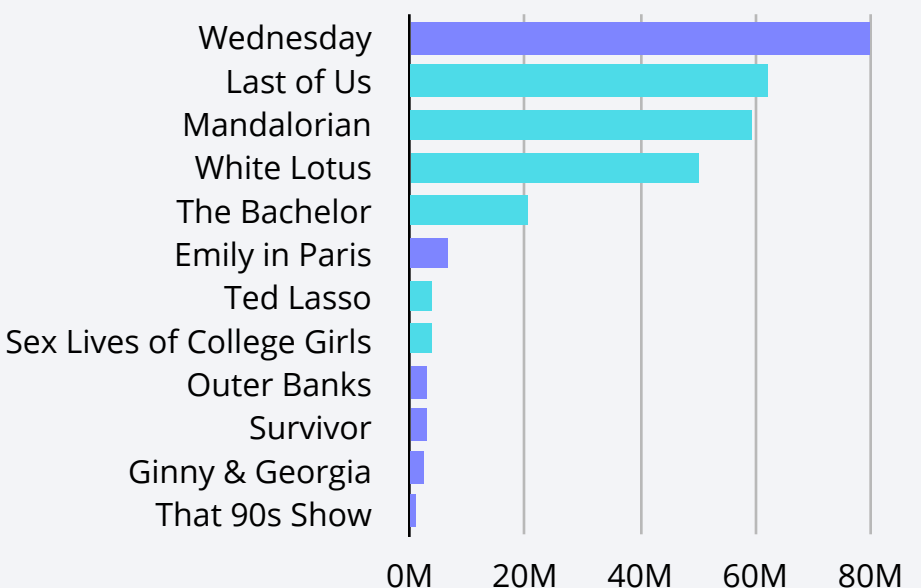
Wednesday was a huge driver of readership for full season drops. However, overall, The Last of Us, The Mandalorian, and The White Lotus, all of which released one episode per week, saw higher coverage and readership.

Shows released **1x per week** tend to see greater longevity of reader interest and conversation around the show through episode recaps, previews, predictions, fan response, and more. Full season drops on the other hand, receive high media attention following the release which fades in the following weeks.

of Articles by Show



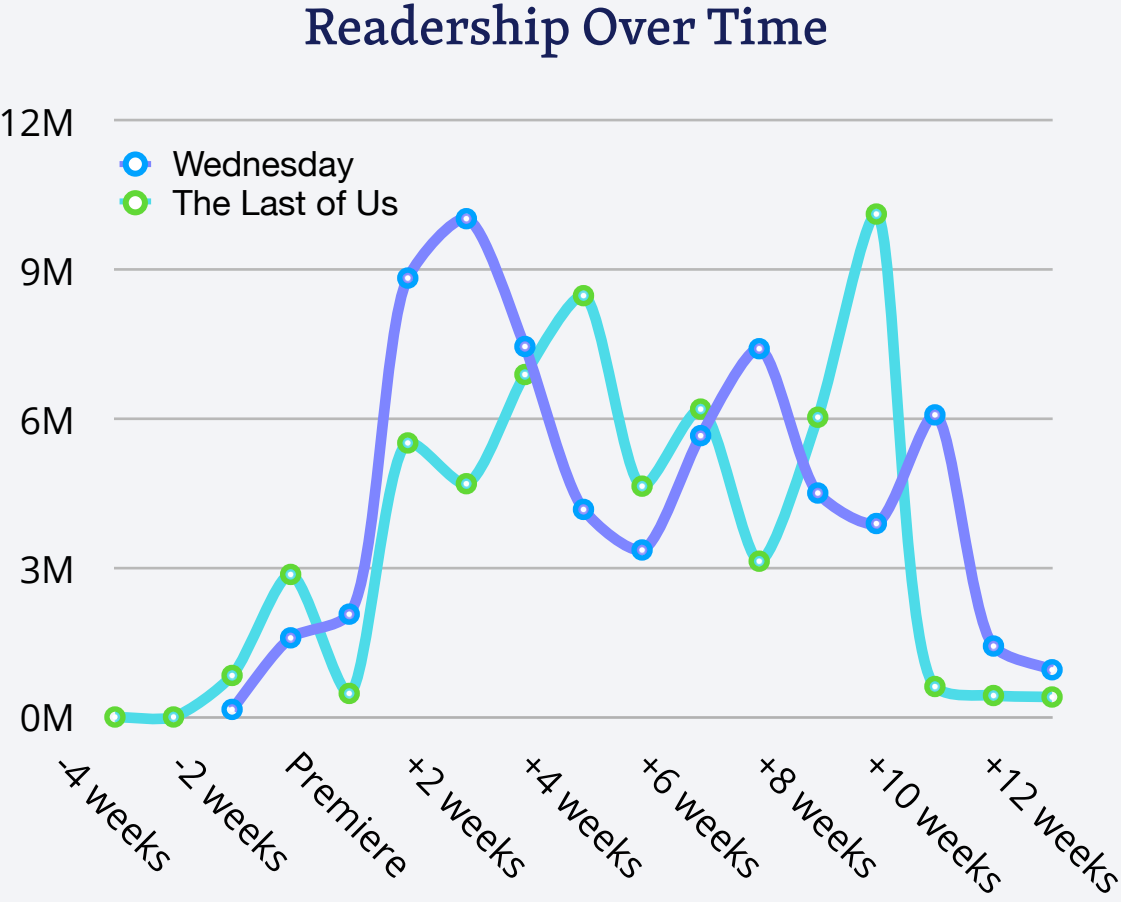
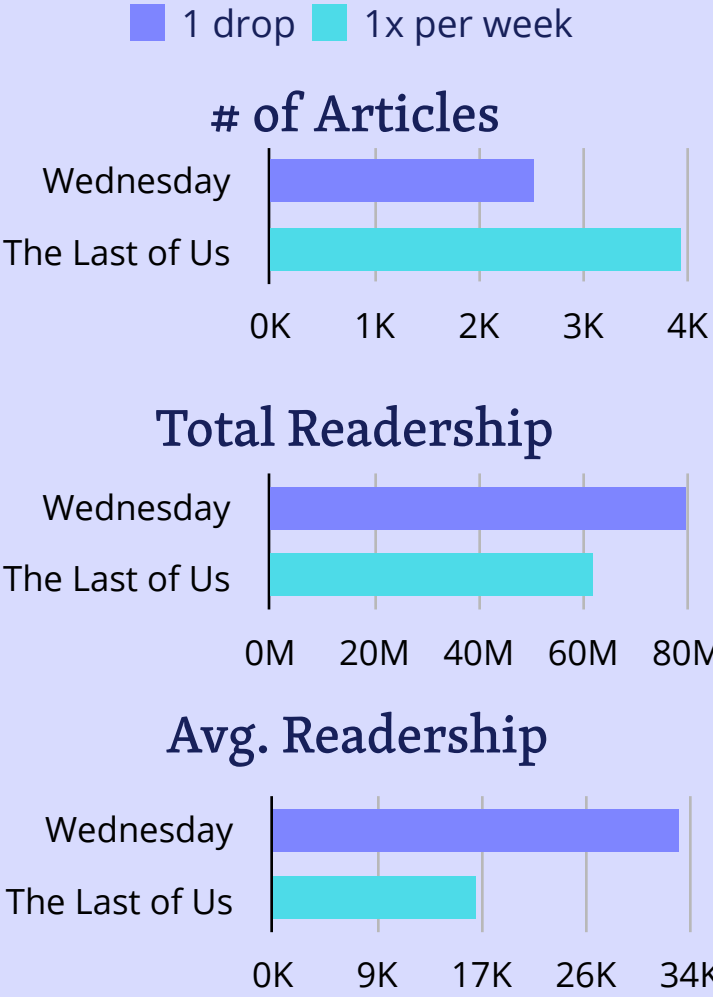
Total Readership by Show



1 drop 1x per week

SHOW COMPARISON: WEDNESDAY VS. THE LAST OF US

Overall, Wednesday saw greater success in the media fueled by Jenna Ortega's stardom and the virality of the iconic "Wednesday Dance".



The Last of Us saw success with **high media coverage**, capturing 55% more articles than Wednesday.

The two shows saw similar peaks in readership, Wednesday with 10MM **two weeks after** the season dropped on Netflix and The Last of Us with 10.1MM readers the week following the **season finale**.

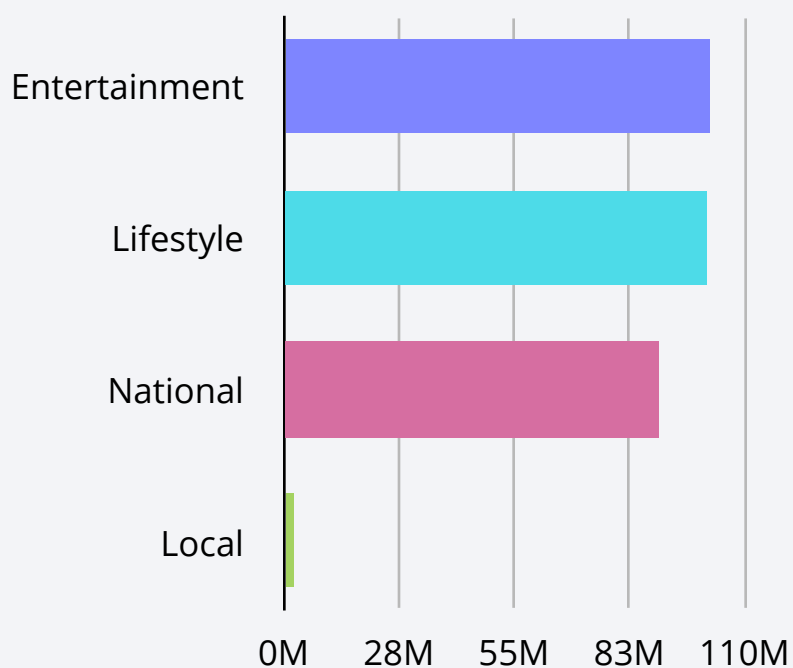
With the season drop release style, Wednesday saw readership slowly **decline** after the initial release. From the debut of The Last of Us, readership slowly **built up** over the weeks leading up to the finale.



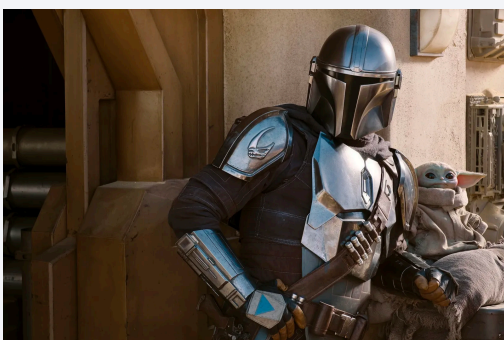
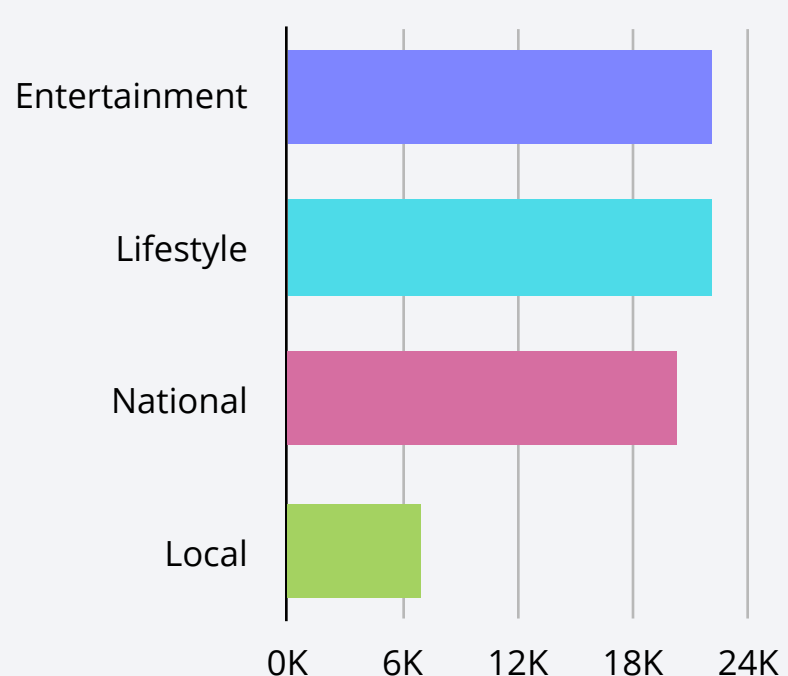
WHERE ARE PEOPLE READING ABOUT TV SHOWS?

Entertainment publications saw the highest readership surrounding TV shows. It's important not to discount lifestyle outlets when promoting TV shows as these drove higher total and average readership compared to larger national publications.

Total Readership by Outlet Type



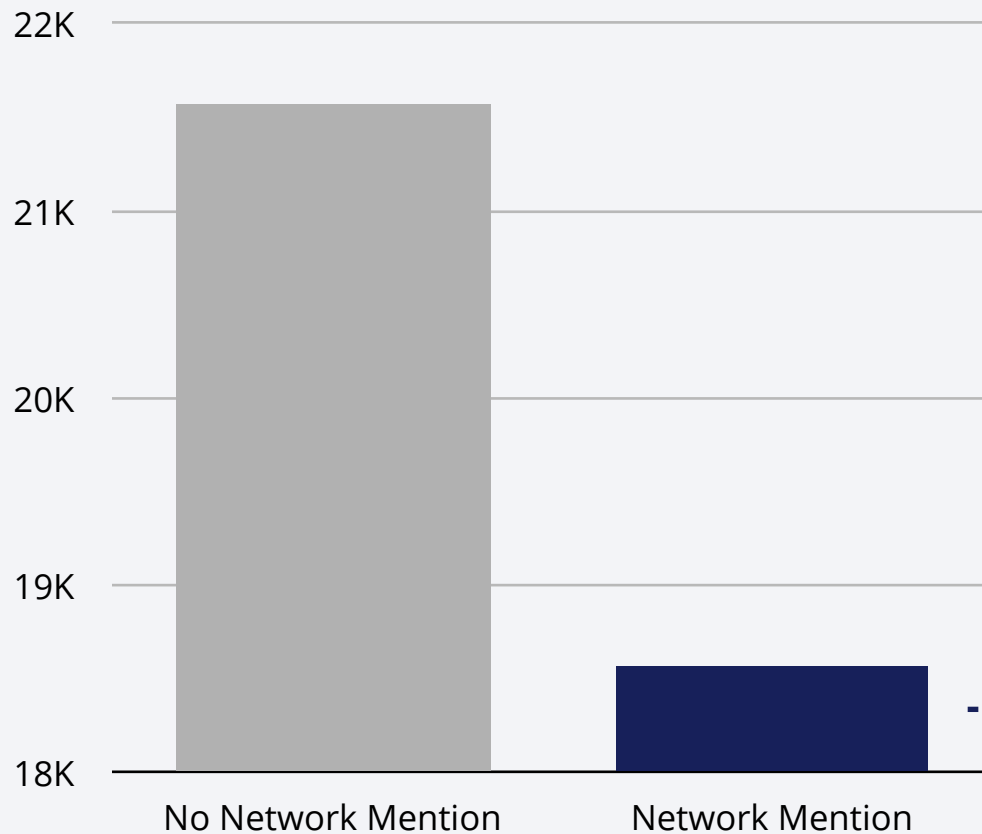
Average Readership by Outlet Type



- ▶ 41% of Entertainment readership came from **Screen Rant**, largely around commentary/details. 55% of the readership on the outlet came from The Mandalorian.
- ▶ **Yahoo! Lifestyle** accounted for 40% of lifestyle readership, with high readership around celebrities associated with The White Lotus and Sex Lives of College Girls.
- ▶ While national publications have the largest potential reach, targeting entertainment and lifestyle outlets for TV Shows will drive higher readership.

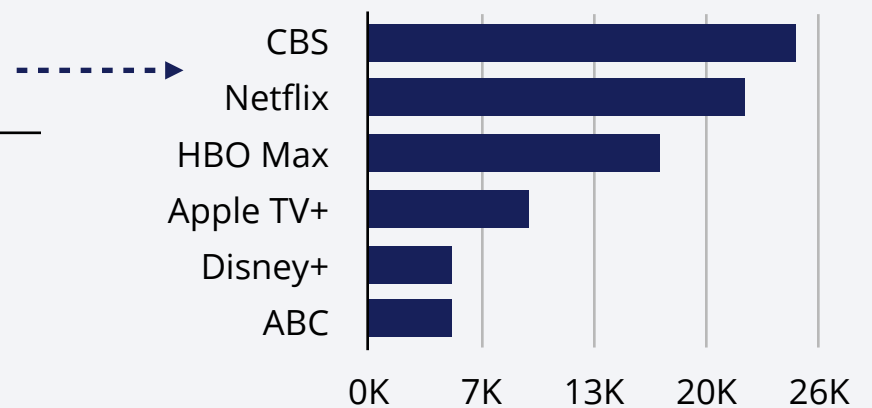
NETWORK MENTIONS

Average Readership: Headline Mentions



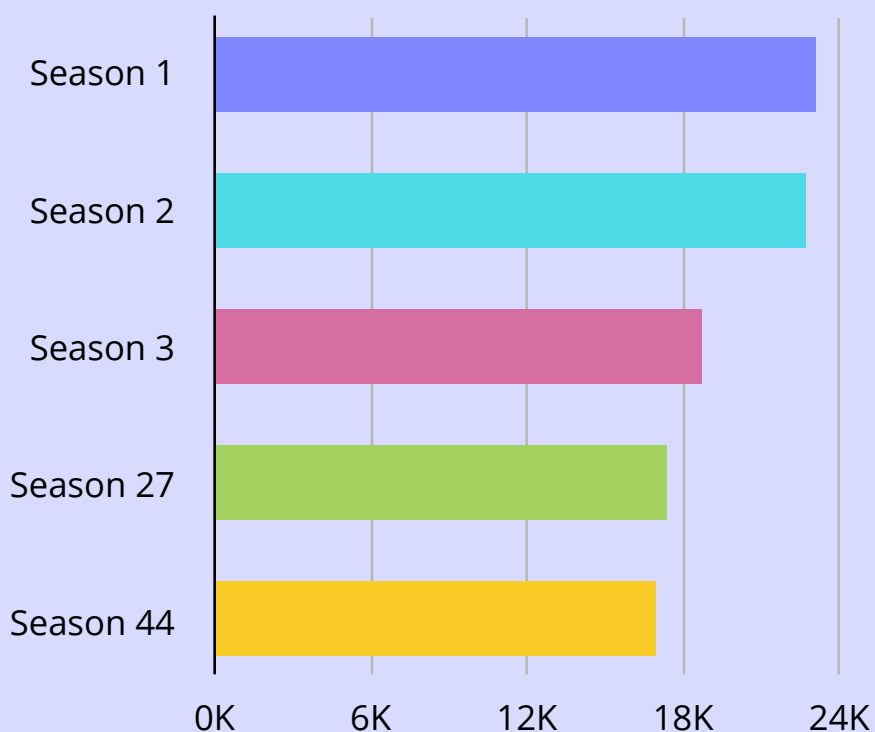
Articles that **focused specifically on the show** saw higher readership on average compared to those that mentioned respective networks in the headline such as Netflix and HBO Max.

Of network mentions, CBS drove high readership on average when mentioned with Survivor.



SEASON COMPARISON

Average Readership by Show Season



Shows in their **first season** saw higher readership on average. The shows being new, with record-breaking premieres were a huge angle of the media coverage, as well as speculation if the show will come back for second season.

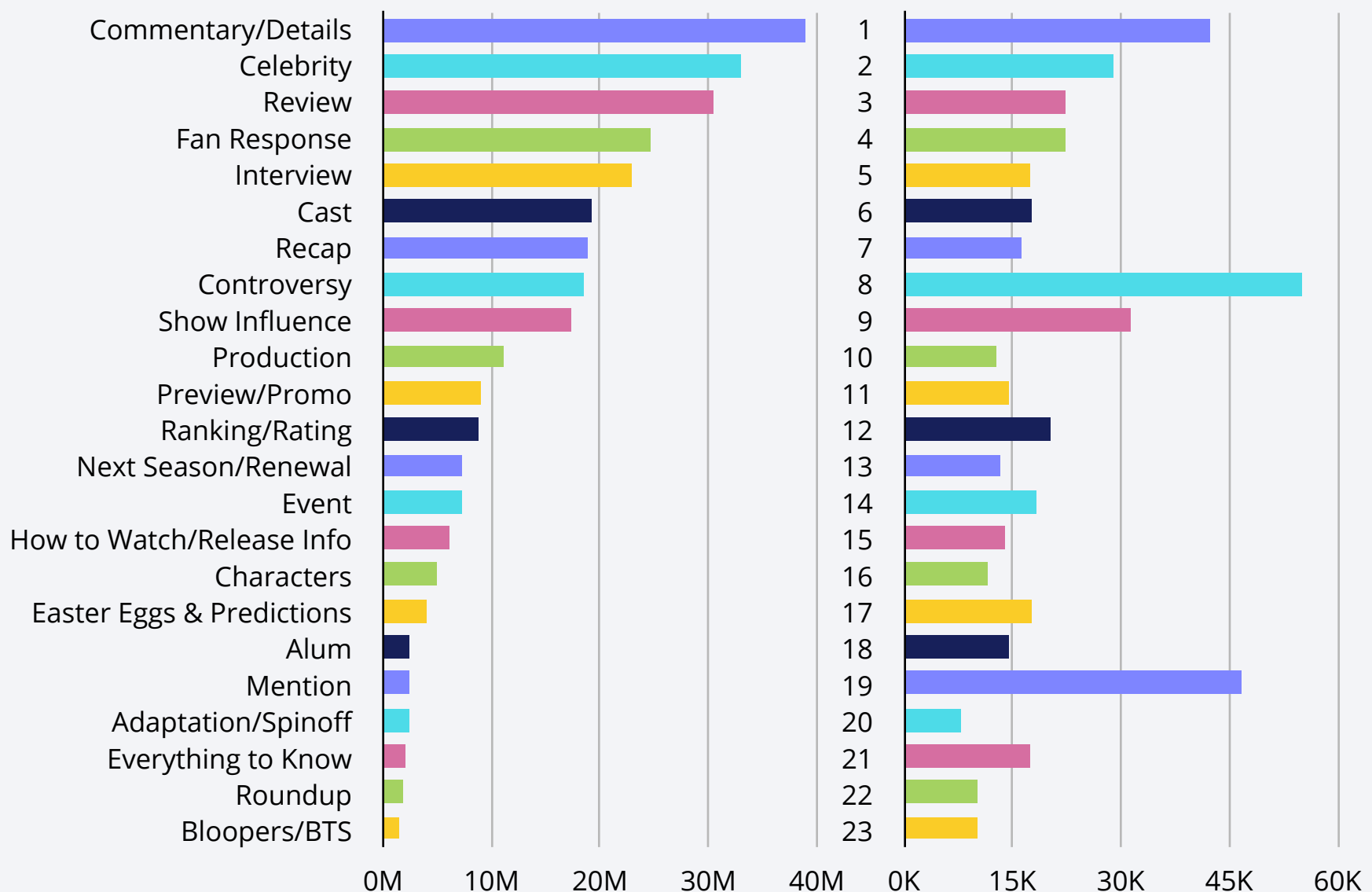
Once shows are in their later seasons, they see a decline in readership.

It's important to consider the shows itself, with Wednesday and The Last of Us receiving high praise and attention, while also just releasing the first season.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE MOST INTERESTED IN?

Total Readership by Topic

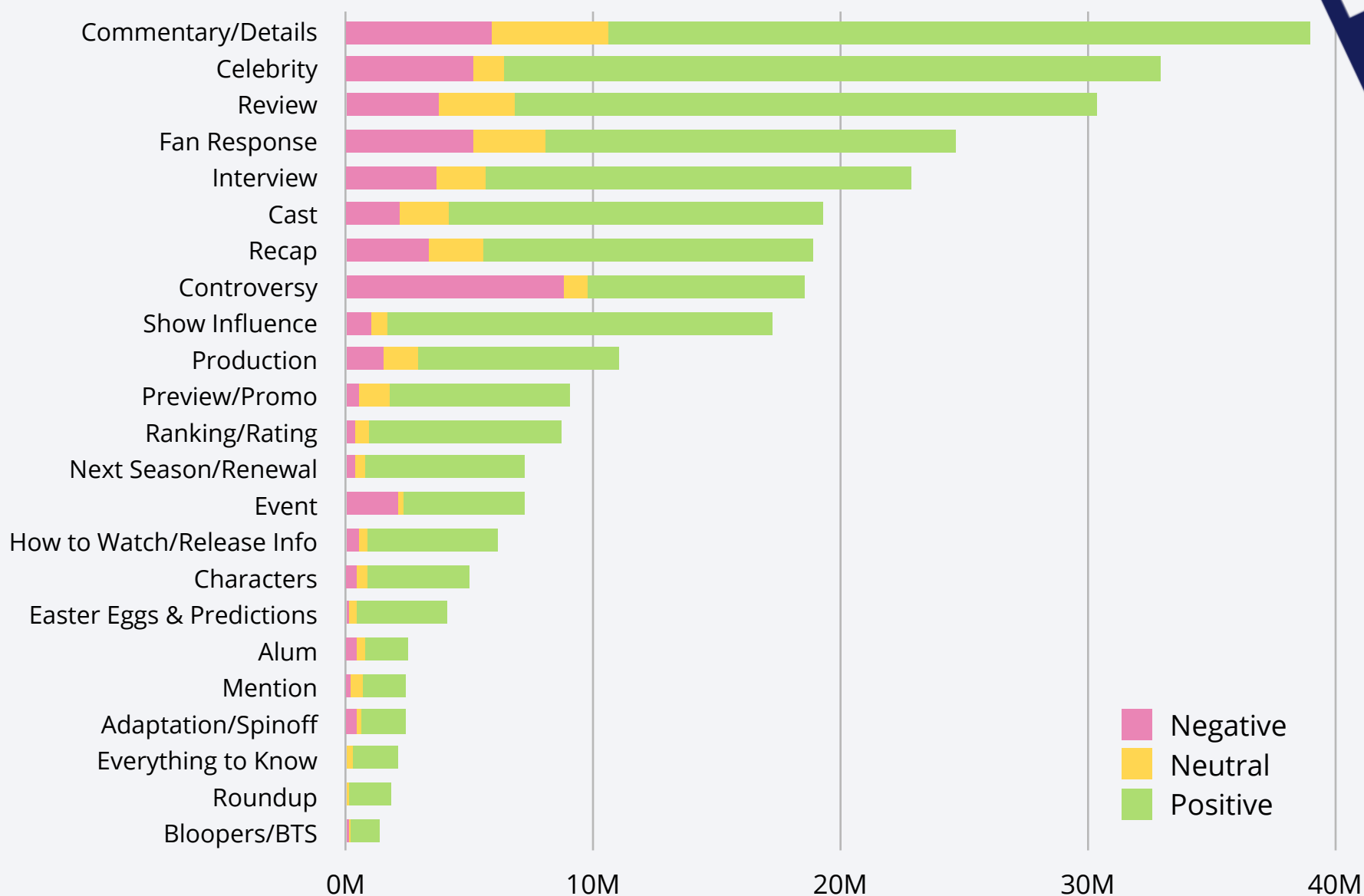
Avg. Readership by Topic



- ▶ **Commentary/Details** drove the highest readership, with 40MM. These articles included general commentary on the shows that did not clearly fall in the other buckets.
- ▶ **Celebrity** drove a high readership of 33MM. These articles more focused on the celebrity rather than the show itself for example, “Wednesday’s Jenna Ortega” or “Aubrey Plaza from The White Lotus.”
- ▶ **Fan Response** included any praise/criticism as well fan reactions to episodes, plots, and characters, driving 25MM readers.
- ▶ **Controversy** drove high readership on average with 51K. These articles surrounded Jenna Ortega filming the iconic Wednesday dance with COVID as well as the actress changing lines in the Wednesday script, Chris Harrison’s exit from The Bachelor franchise, and more.
- ▶ **Show Influence** drove 17MM readers, largely surrounding the famous “Wednesday Dance” taking over the internet, with celebrities like Lady Gaga, Madonna, and Camila Cabello recreating the dance. Several articles highlighted how The White Lotus is influencing people’s travels, Emily in Paris’ impact on people’s fashion, and more.

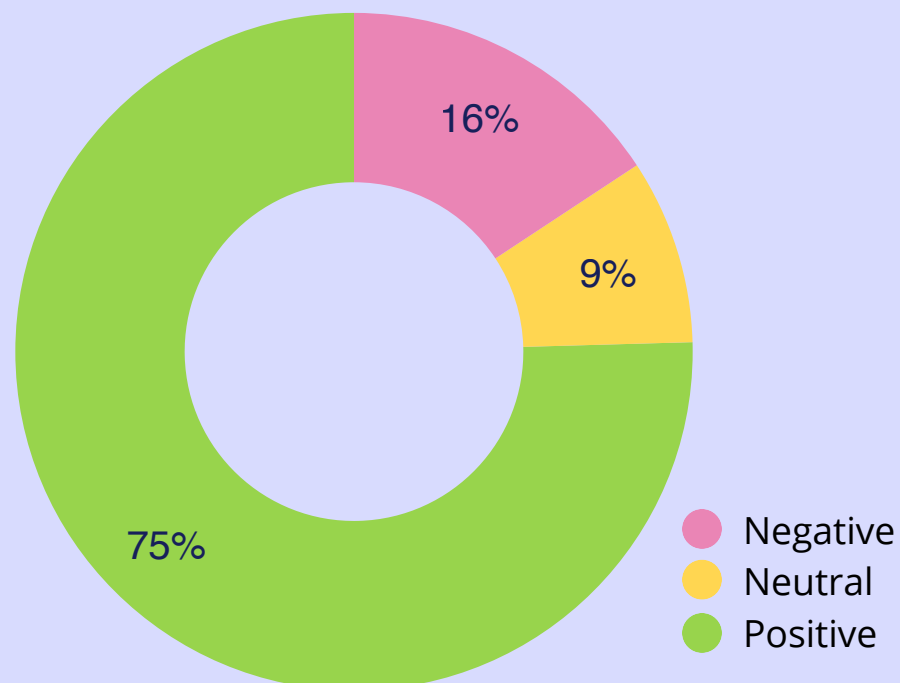
TV SHOW SENTIMENT

Total Readership by Topic and Sentiment



Overall TV Show Sentiment

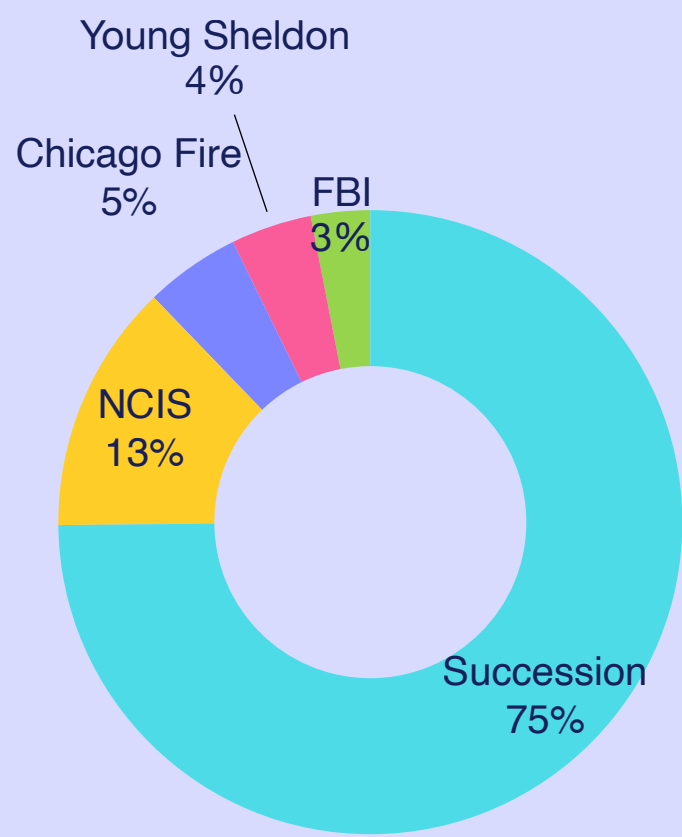
- TV shows largely garnered **positive** sentiment throughout. Commentary/details, celebrity, and reviews drove the highest positive readership.
- Negativity** mostly came from controversy (20%) and commentary/details (13%).



SUCCESSION OBSESSION

Succession is widely discussed and frequently covered, but its reported viewership is much lower than other top television shows. We wanted to determine if Succession’s media coverage was disproportionate to its actual viewers.

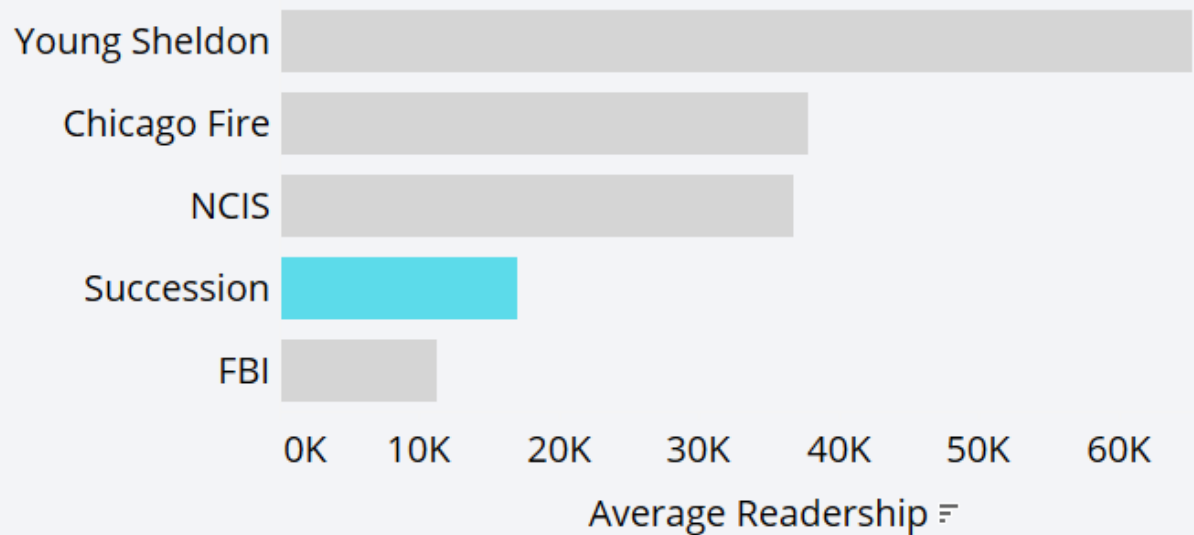
Memo analyzed just over 1.3K articles on the Succession, Chicago Fire, FBI, NCIS, and Young Sheldon finales published between May 7, 2023 – June 5, 2023. Coverage analyzed came from major national publications and entertainment outlets.



Share of Coverage by Season Finale

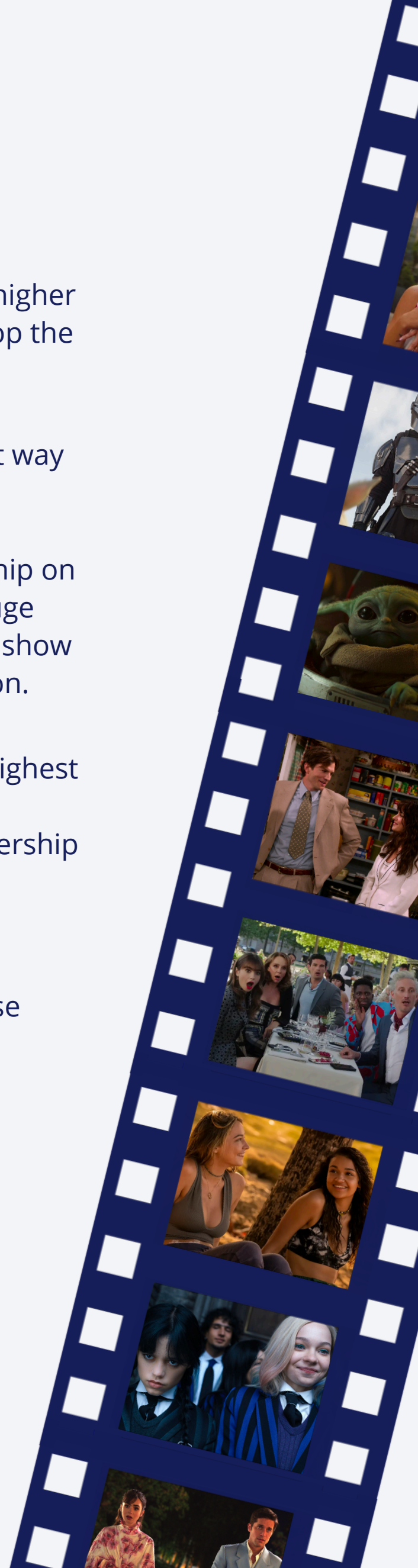
Succession’s finale generated a disproportionate amount of media coverage relative to its readership. Succession was covered 6x more often than any other show analyzed in this report but saw the second lowest average readership on that coverage.

Average Readership by Season Finale



Takeaways

- ❑ 1x per week episodes see more longevity and higher readership overall compared to shows that drop the entire season at once.
- ❑ Entertainment and lifestyle outlets are the best way to drive readership around TV Shows.
- ❑ Shows in their first season saw higher readership on average. Record-breaking premieres were a huge angle of the media coverage, as well as overall show performance and if there will be another season.
- ❑ Commentary/Details and Celebrity drove the highest readership around shows overall. Controversy surrounding the shows drove the highest readership on average.
- ❑ TV Show sentiment was largely positive surrounding positive commentary and response to the shows. Negativity was mostly fueled by controversy around the shows.
- ❑ Large volumes of show coverage doesn't necessarily mean high volumes of watchers or readers.



Accurate data leads to better decisions.

Only Memo reports readership direct from publications.



Find new media strategies
before anyone else



Show the ROI on PR with a
tangible metric



Improve efficiency across all
comms groups



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