



# Understanding Brand Perception



## Better data shows where your brand sits and how to move it forward.

Building a brand's reputation takes years, decades, even centuries. Yet, it can all come crashing down in a matter of minutes. Whether you're protecting your brand or aiming to shift perception, your journey begins with data. This is your four-step guide to understanding brand perception through data and how readership can guide your path forward.

### Step 1

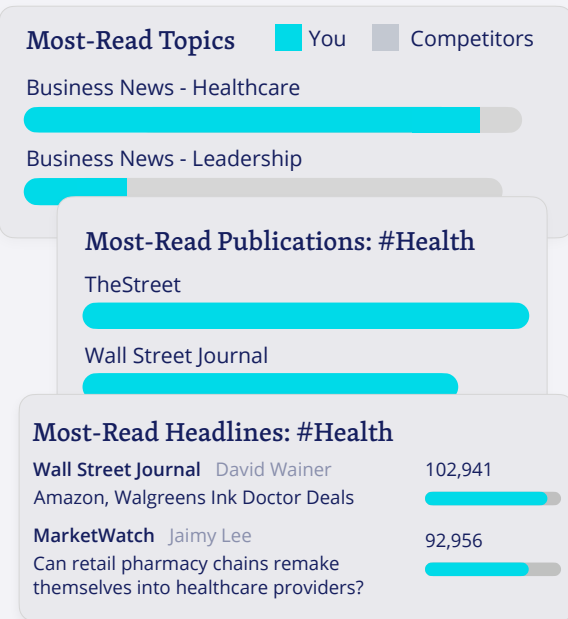
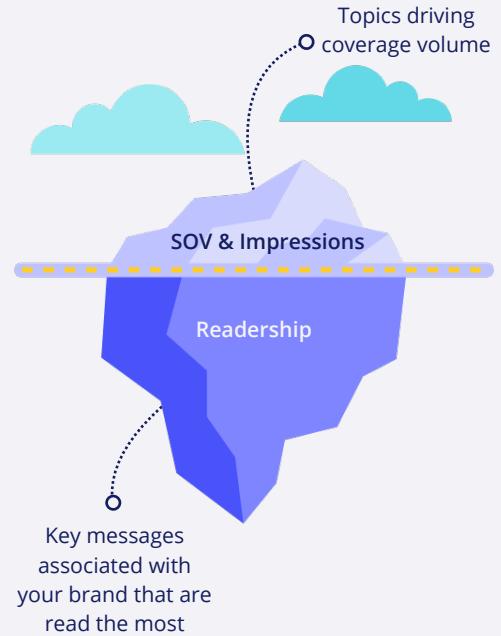
## Find the coverage that's *actually* impacting brand perception with readership

Readership adds a new layer of intelligence, revealing the publications and specific beat reporters who actually get the most eyeballs on coverage about your brand.

If you look at all your coverage by topic, you can easily see what topics and key messages garnered the most pickup. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. What's actually garnering the most readers and awareness?

### Filter by Topic

Filtering readership by topics helps you spot what drives readership on a theme, such as headline angles, publications, and reporters – all intel that can inform content planning for the year ahead. (For more on this, see ["All about article topics, Memo's secret weapon for readership insights."](#))



*Not actual readership data*

### Filter by Publication and/or Reporter

Leveraging readership to better understand what outlets and reporters attract the highest number of readers for your brand and for the topics you care about can help you make better decisions when it comes to media relations:

- ▶ Are you offering exclusives to the right outlets?
- ▶ What topics are driving the most readers for you?
- ▶ Are the reporters driving the highest readership around certain topics writing about you?
- ▶ Is your messaging making its way from interview to print?

Answers to all these questions can help you better understand what's resonating and ensure that you are optimizing for impact moving forward.

**For example**, let's say that a major drugstore wants to be known as a healthcare company, not just a drugstore and/or pharmacy. The comms team can look at top topics, key terms, reporters, and outlets covering their own brand. If they are going to change their perception, they should start testing messaging with the reporters and outlets that draw the highest readership numbers. The reporters that always call them a drugstore or pharmacy.

## Step 2

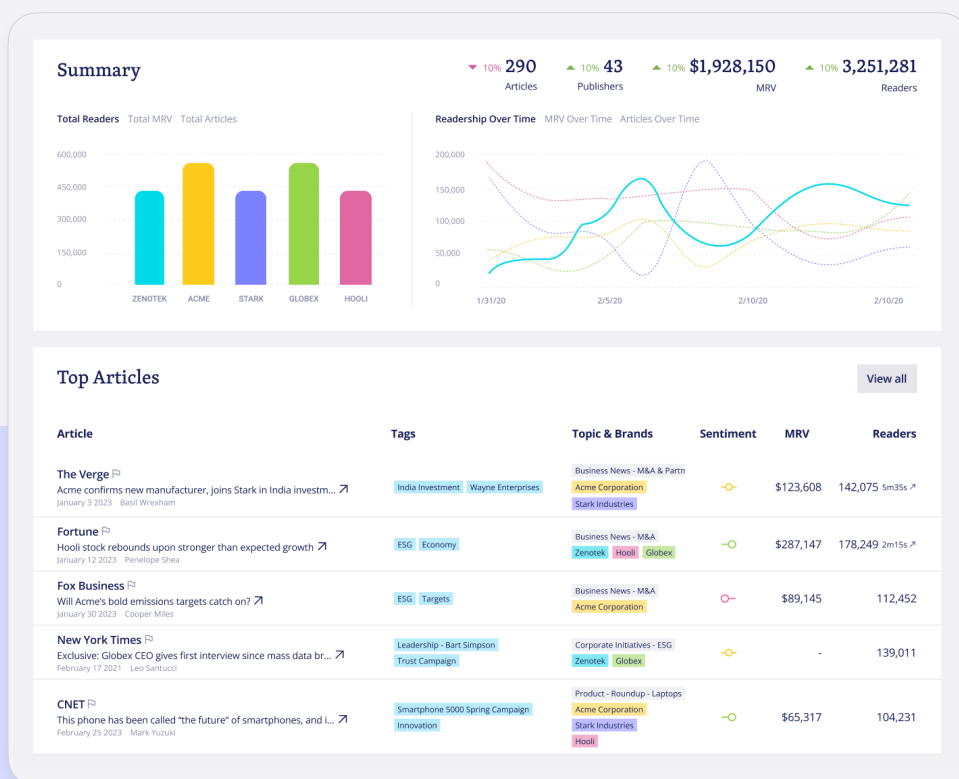
### Look beyond the headline to gauge perception with brand sentiment

Article sentiment can be detected by the topic or theme of an article. Brand sentiment is much trickier to detect across large amounts of coverage, but it can reveal the tone of what people are reading about your brand at micro and macro levels.

**For instance**, say an article publishes talking about the rise of diabetes. The tone of the article is likely negative. Let's say your hypothetical healthcare brand is described as a resource for accessible care. That's overall a pretty positive description for the brand.

#### Here's what you can do with sentiment:

- ▶ See brand sentiment across the board
- ▶ Uncover what topics, publications, and reporters drive high readership of positive and negative sentiment



## Step 3

### See where you're winning and what you're missing

In addition to looking at your own historical coverage, analyze coverage from industry peers and better understand where readership sits relative to others, including:

1. What topics and key terms get picked up in competitor brand coverage
2. Publications and reporters attracting readers for your competition that you're under-indexed on
3. Reporters *just* covering the competition or picking up their narratives and ignoring yours

**Reporters and publications that attract the most readers, will likely influence other coverage.**

With a clearer view of competitor or industry readership by topic, you can gain direction for who to target and how to tailor future activities.

**Let's go back to the pharmacy example.** If they want to tackle shifting perception to a healthcare company, it might make sense to examine coverage for the healthcare industry in addition to their competition. Gaining clarity around what reporters and publications attract the most readers for healthcare companies can surface targets for sharing new stories and new messaging.

## Step 4

### Create a media strategy backed by data

Understanding what narratives drove readership in the past provides valuable signals of what, where, and who to focus on moving forward.

Is your brand described the way it should be? Is your messaging resonating with media? Readership will help you gain visibility into what's working, what's not, and where there's still work to do.

Readership uncovers what reporters and publications are most influential for your brand, so that you can adjust your media strategy and concentrate your efforts there.

Whether you're rebranding, trying to shift your corporate narratives, or preparing to enter a new market, readership gives you a clear path forward.

#### TO DO

- Review readership by topic and see what key messages are read most for your brand.
- Analyze topic readership for your competition or industry to uncover new opportunities.
- Create a plan aimed at maximizing readership for the topics and narratives you want to own.

**Accurate data leads to better decisions.  
Only Memo reports readership direct from publications.**

To learn more about how accurate readership can uncover real impact and help you make smarter comms decisions, check out [Memo's approach to comms measurement](#).