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NEWSARCADE - Seriously, Play the News!

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D3.4 Piloting Report

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REPORT AUTHORS
This report has been written by DIAS MEDIA PRODUCTIONS

CO-AUTHORS
Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision
Southern University of Denmark
SAPESO
IN2
Portaplay

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European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), European Commission

1. Introduction

The NewsArcade-Seriously Play the News! (no. 101060250), Creative Europe, project represents an innovative initiative aimed at exploring the intersection of news media, education, and interactive storytelling/gamification. Through the development of an innovative Authoring tool and Content Management System (CMS), the project endeavours to empower journalists, educators, and museum professionals to engage young audiences in immersive and informative news experiences. Central to the project's success is the iterative process of evaluation and refinement, ensuring that the tools meet the diverse needs and expectations of its users.

This report serves as a comprehensive evaluation of the piloting workshops and scale-up experiments conducted within the framework of the NewsArcade-Seriously Play the News project (part of the second iteration of the tool which was launched in November 2023). By gathering feedback and recommendations from various stakeholder groups, including journalists, educators, and museum professionals, this evaluation aims to provide valuable insights into the efficacy of the Authoring tool and CMS, as well as to identify areas for improvement and further development.

The report's purpose is multifaceted. Firstly, it aims to provide a record of the experiments outcomes, ensuring that valuable insights and perspectives are not overlooked. It consolidates the diverse range of feedback received from stakeholders, allowing for a holistic understanding of their opinions and concerns to improve and finalize the NewsArcade Authoring tool. Secondly, the report serves as a tool for evaluation. It assesses the extent to which the pilot objectives were achieved and examines the impact of the experiments on stakeholder understanding, collaboration, and possible adoption of the tool. The evaluation helps identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project's results, enabling improvements for future activities.

Additionally, the report facilitates communication and knowledge sharing. It provides a summary of the pilot's outcomes, which can be shared with stakeholders who were unable to participate directly. It also serves as a reference for the NewsArcade partnership, allowing the consortium to review and consider the stakeholders' input when making decisions or designing future project outputs.

2. Methodological Approach

The methodological approach employed in this evaluation sought to capture a comprehensive understanding of the usability, effectiveness, and potential of the NewsArcade-Seriously Play the News Authoring tool and CMS from both publishing companies and educational settings. To achieve this goal, a series of pilot workshops and scale-up experiments were conducted between January and March 2024, both physically and virtually, engaging 51 stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and sectors. In particular, we implemented the following 7 workshops:

1. Workshop for Museum Professionals, 30th of January 2024 with 12 participants.
2. Workshop for Library Professionals, 8th of February 2024 with 9 participants
3. Workshop for Higher Education Professionals, 24th of January 2024, with 9 participants
4. Workshop with journalism students, the 5th of March 2024, with 11 participants.
5. Workshop with WANIFRA's journalists, 6th of March 2024, with 4 participants
6. Workshop with SAPESO's journalists, 6th of March 2024, with 2 participants
7. Workshop with DIAS journalists, 11th of January and 12th of March 2024, with 4 participants.

The stakeholder engagement strategy employed in this process was pivotal in collecting feedback and recommendations to improve the tool's effectiveness. In particular, the workshops engaged various stakeholders and target groups, each of them bringing unique perspectives and expertise needed at this stage of the project:

● Publishers and journalists as the main target group of the project who will adopt the tool into their everyday journalistic practices.
● Educators (secondary and higher education, youth workers, non-formal education experts, museum experts) as the secondary target group of the project to explore the tool's scale-up potential in this sector.
● Young people (aged 18-35) as the end users of NewsArcade - who in this case were the journalism students workshop of SDU and any public's interaction with the published stories.
● Scale-up stakeholders from other domains, mores specifically museums and libraries, engaged in digital literacy

Collaborating with partners such as DIAS, SAPESO, NISV, and SDU, the workshops were tailored to the specific needs and objectives of the aforementioned participant groups. Each workshop was tailored to the unique context and goals of its respective sector, employing distinct approaches to maximize engagement and gather meaningful feedback.

Objectives and Approach for Media Professionals[1]:
The primary objective of workshops targeting media professionals, such as journalists from WANIFRA, SAPESO, and DIAS, was to assess the usability and effectiveness of the Authoring tool and CMS for news content creation.

The approach for these workshops was designed by DIAS and SAPESO, focusing on practical application and hands-on experience with the Authoring tool. Participants were guided through the process of gamifying news stories, utilizing the CMS functionalities to enhance storytelling and audience engagement. Feedback was solicited regarding the tool's user interface, ease of use, and relevance to their professional workflow. Following the initial training, journalists were given some weeks to experiment with creating gamified stories as well as the CMS itself and offering us their feedback.

Objectives and Approach for the Educational Sector
[2]Workshops targeting educators and students aimed to evaluate the educational potential of the tool, assessing its alignment with learning outcomes and curriculum objectives on media literacy education.

The approach for these workshops was designed by NISV and SDU, prioritizing the educational aspects of the tool. Participants engaged in discussions surrounding the incorporation of interactive storytelling into educational settings, exploring the tool's capacity to facilitate student engagement and critical thinking. Feedback was sought regarding the tool's suitability for diverse educational contexts, as well as its potential to enhance learning outcomes and student comprehension of news. For the workshops with journalism students, a similar approach to the pilotings with journalists was followed as this target group has the unique characteristics of both being studying journalism and are young people. Thus, they were given time to experiment with story creation and our CMS and offer us their feedback from their perspective as the future generation of journalists.

The methodology employed for conducting the workshops was designed to create an inclusive and participatory environment that encouraged active engagement and collaboration among stakeholders. By employing a mix of interactive activities, skilled facilitation, and thoughtful

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[1] To ensure cohesion, DIAS Media Group who leads task T2.3 drafted guidelines and templates for partners to use (see Annexes).

[2] Similarly, NISV as the leaders of T3.3 drafted guidelines and templates for partners to use in their respective workshops (see Annexes).

data collection, the workshops effectively gathered valuable input from the participants. The following elements were incorporated into the methodology:

- Workshop Design: The workshops were carefully designed to include a mix of interactive activities, group discussions, and individual interaction with the tool. The structure of the workshops allowed for both large group sessions and smaller breakout groups to facilitate focused discussions and idea generation.
- Facilitation Approach: Partners were facilitating the workshops as they have expertise in journalism and education. They employed facilitation techniques to ensure equal participation and create a safe space for open dialogue. The facilitators encouraged stakeholders to share their perspectives, actively listen to others, and fostered an atmosphere of respect and inclusivity.
- Data Collection: Multiple methods were used to collect data during the workshops. Team members assumed the role of observers and took detailed notes on participant reactions, discussions, and key insights. Additionally, a post-workshop evaluation survey was administered to gather more detailed feedback and recommendations from participants. The collected feedback was then analyzed thematically, identifying common trends, challenges, and areas for improvement across workshops.
- Participant Engagement: Participants were actively involved throughout the workshops, with opportunities provided for them to share their insights, ask questions, and contribute to group discussions. Interactive activities, such as group exercises and brainstorming sessions, were incorporated to foster engagement and collaboration.
- Flexibility and Adaptability: The methodology allowed for flexibility and adaptability to accommodate the unique needs and dynamics of the stakeholders in different companies/countries. Facilitators were responsive to the changing dynamics during the workshops and adjusted the agenda or activities as needed to ensure maximum engagement and participation (e.g., online workshops, one-to-one sessions, follow-up sessions, etc.).
- Inclusive Communication: Clear and transparent communication channels were established to ensure that all participants had access to information and understood the purpose and goals of the workshops. Instructions, materials, and presentations were provided in a language and format accessible to all stakeholders.

3. Key Findings

In this section, we provide a comprehensive overview of each workshop conducted as part of the NewsArcade. Each workshop summary encapsulates the key insights, feedback, and recommendations gathered from participants. By delving into the unique perspectives and experiences shared during these workshops, we gain valuable insights into the usability, effectiveness, and potential impact of the Authoring tool and CMS across different stakeholder groups.

3.1 Workshop Summaries from the Educational Sector

3.1.1 Main feedback received from the workshop with Higher Education Professionals

The workshop, held at the University of Southern Denmark on January 24, 2024, aimed to explore the potential uses of NewsArcade as a teaching tool in higher education. Led by Ralf Andersson, Director of the Media Research & Innovation Center, and supported by an observer Aslak Gottlieb, a journalism lecturer, the workshop adopted a semi-structured qualitative focus group interview method. The participants included 6 lecturers, 1 high school coordinator, 1 vice-dean, and 1 audiovisual assistant, all working at the University of Southern Denmark. The testing formed the basis for an initial discussion about the journalistic format itself, concerning both content and user experience at a general level. This conversation informed the subsequent semi-structured interview about the usefulness of NewsArcade as a teaching tool in higher education.

The workshop yielded several key findings and recommendations:
- Observation of Workshop: Participants engaged in paired testing of Danish-language NewsArcade experiences on both mobile phones and laptops, leading to discussions about the journalistic format's content and user experience. While there was consensus on NewsArcade's potential as a learning tool, respondents emphasized the need for significant adjustments to improve the user experience for educational purposes.
- Application in Higher Education: Participants explored integrating NewsArcade into university teaching. Respondents, primarily involved in journalism education, agreed on NewsArcade's potential to illustrate basic journalistic concepts for first-year students, such as angles and sources. While the format could engage students with academic content, its integration into higher education would need careful consideration and pedagogical scaffolding.

- Potential in Upper Secondary Education: There was spontaneous consensus among participants about NewsArcade's usefulness as an introduction to journalism and a formative media literacy exercise in secondary education, if there will be clear didactic purposes and contextual relevance to maximize its educational effectiveness.
- Improved User Experience: Participants provided valuable feedback on improving NewsArcade's user experience for students, including enhancing game mechanics, UX design, and content. Recommendations included incorporating video, fact boxes, and clearer progression indicators, as well as addressing issues like readability and interactivity.

"Using the game in a higher education context requires it to be integrated into a context. It would require creating dilemma games, discussions, and various other activities that foster the learning that may not be sufficiently deep within the game."

"It's quite normal for such a tool not to stand alone. It's quite normal to create a lot of supplementary materials."

"It can be used in the first year to work on angles" and *"illustrate journalistic roles."*

3.1.2 Main feedback received from the workshop with first-year journalism students

The workshop, held at the University of Southern Denmark on March 5th, 2024, lasted for 120 minutes and aimed to explore the attitudes of first-year journalism students towards NewsArcade as an authoring and learning tool. Led by Ralf Andersson, Director of the Media Research & Innovation Center, supported by journalism lecturer Aslak Gottlieb, the workshop employed a hands-on qualitative focus group methodology. Eleven students attending their second semester participated in pairs, engaging in various activities to assess their perceptions of NewsArcade.

Ralf Andersson introduced NewsArcade's purpose, scope, and status, prompting pairs of students to test the tool and provide immediate feedback on user experience. This exercise led to brainstorming sessions on suitable news story topics and categories for the NewsArcade format. Subsequently, participants were asked to sign up for the CMS and begin creating stories. Finally, a focus group interview explored students' attitudes towards working as journalists in a future newsroom designated to publish NewsArcade stories.

The workshop revealed several key observations regarding the usability and potential of NewsArcade as both an authoring and learning tool for journalism students:

- Engagement and Playfulness: Students showed enthusiastic engagement with NewsArcade, interacting playfully with news content. They appreciated the gamified storytelling format and found it stimulating to interact with news stories in this manner.
- Learning Potential: There was unanimous consensus among respondents regarding NewsArcade's potential as a learning tool for introducing novices to the principles of journalism. The tool was perceived as an effective way to engage students and facilitate understanding of core journalistic concepts. Feedback highlighted areas for improvement in the user experience, including clearer instructions, integration of the rely-o-meter, and emphasis on the news value concept.
- Concerns about Context and Reliability: However, concerns were raised regarding the potential risk of NewsArcade painting journalism as an unserious information genre if published out of context. Students expressed skepticism about the reliability of journalism in an interactive, user-generated format, highlighting the need to balance playfulness with journalistic integrity.

Based on the feedback gathered from journalism students, the following recommendations were proposed:
- Further exploration of NewsArcade's potential as a learning tool for first-year journalism students through parallel investigations at other universities.
- Careful consideration of the balance between playfulness and journalistic integrity in the final design of NewsArcade to ensure it maintains credibility as a news storytelling platform.
- Recruitment of journalists with a young profile to test and deploy the final version of NewsArcade, leveraging their perspective to maximize the tool's playful potential while upholding journalistic standards.

3.1.3 Main feedback received from the workshop with museum professionals

The workshop for Museum Professionals convened various departments within NISV, including education, exhibitions, research, conservation, and curatorial departments, with a focus on media literacy and news. The goal was to introduce the NewsArcade tool and engage in a conversation to explore its potential applications within the Museum & Media Literacy context. Twelve respondents working for Sound & Vision participated in this 2-hour workshop.

The feedback gathered from the workshop participants covered several key aspects:
- Structure and Flow of the Tool (Gamification and Interactivity): Users expressed a sense that the tool lacked gamification elements, suggesting the need for clearer objectives and explanations to enhance engagement. Participants found the introduction to be misleading

and felt that hyperlinks led away from the game experience. Recommendations included simplifying the user interface, clarifying purposes, and incorporating features to showcase media pluralism.

- Media Literacy Learning Objectives: Participants identified opportunities for refinement in clarifying the educational objectives and purpose of the tool to enhance decision-making effectiveness. Suggestions included expanding capabilities to include critical thinking elements, incorporating open-ended questions for deeper reflection, and enhancing feedback mechanisms to provide valuable insights for users. Additionally, incorporating features to showcase media pluralism and explaining the rationale behind tags were recommended to improve user understanding and engagement.
- Connection to the Target Audience (Young Adults, 18-35): Recommendations were made to streamline content, simplify language, and enhance visual appeal to better connect with the target audience. Participants suggested tailoring features and content to specific age groups within the 18-35 range to make the tool more focused and effective in engaging younger users.
- Usability in Own Field of Work (Education, Museums, Heritage Institutions): Enhancements in reflection, attractiveness, and structure were proposed to increase usability within the museum and education fields. Participants emphasized the importance of meeting the specific needs of users and suggested incorporating deeper insights into journalistic decision-making processes to advance media literacy.

Based on the feedback received, four key recommendations were outlined to guide the improvement of the NewsArcade tool:

- Structure and Flow of the Tool (Gamification and Interactivity): Provide clearer objectives and explanations, implement features to show progress, and remove non-essential elements to improve engagement.
- Media Literacy Learning Objectives: Clarify educational objectives, incorporate critical thinking elements, and enhance feedback mechanisms to enrich the learning experience.
- Connection to the Target Audience (Young Adults, 18-35): Streamline content, simplify language, and enhance visual appeal to better engage the target audience.
- Usability in Own Field of Work (Education, Museums, Heritage Institutions): Research user needs, incorporate deeper insights into journalistic decision-making processes, and provide additional context through manuals or explanations to enhance usability and facilitate media literacy.

3.1.4 Main feedback received from the workshop with library professionals

Following a similar format to the workshop with Museum Professionals, the workshop with Library Professionals aimed to explore the potential applications of the NewsArcade tool within library settings. The workshop, with a duration of 120 minutes, welcomed nine respondents representing various libraries and organizations associated with libraries, including program-makers, project managers, advisors, and team leaders.

The feedback gathered from the workshop participants encompassed several key areas:
- Structure and Flow of the Tool (Gamification and Interactivity): Participants expressed a desire for the incorporation of visual elements and gamification to enhance user engagement and transform the experience into a more interactive and enjoyable one. They emphasized the importance of providing users with the ability to contribute their own content and suggested simplifying the user interface for better clarity. Additionally, improvements in design to establish a clear hierarchy and address issues with the mobile version were recommended to ensure a seamless experience across devices.
- Media Literacy Learning Objectives: While participants valued the concept of learning news by actively engaging in its creation, they highlighted the need for improvements in areas related to critical thinking skills and media literacy. Suggestions included refining the tag system, providing background information on journalism, and clarifying the purpose and connection to the target audience to enhance the educational value of the tool.
- Connection to the Target Audience (Young Adults, 18-35): Insights from the focus group indicated an opportunity to make the tool more appealing to young adults by aligning it more closely with their news consumption habits. Recommendations included incorporating more gamification elements, vibrant visuals, and reducing text-heavy content to increase appeal. Tailoring the experience to address the diverse preferences and interests within the young adult demographic was also suggested to enhance relevance and engagement.
- Usability in Own Field of Work (Libraries): Participants emphasized the need for further development of the tool to meet the requirements of the library field, particularly in areas related to media literacy. Recommendations included providing more types of articles and current topics to choose from, offering educational insights about journalistic principles, and clarifying the purpose and target audience of the tool within library settings.

Based on the feedback received, the following recommendations were proposed for improving the NewsArcade tool:

- Simplify the user interface and incorporate more visual elements to enhance engagement.
- Provide clear instructions and background information on journalism to enhance the educational value of the tool.
- Seek feedback from the target audience and young journalists to ensure alignment with their preferences and habits.
- Narrow down the target audience and offer a more diverse range of articles and topics to choose from within the tool.

3.2 Workshop Summaries from the media sector

3.2.1 Main feedback received from Sud Ouest & WANIFRA pilotings with journalists

The pilot implementation of the NewsArcade tool involved two distinct groups of journalists: those from Sud Ouest and those associated with WAN-IFRA. The sessions occurred in early March, with WAN-IFRA participating online and Sud Ouest conducting the workshop in-house. While Sud Ouest initially planned to provide more participants, unforeseen circumstances, including impending layoffs, hindered their ability to engage fully. Despite this, valuable feedback was collected from both groups, totalling 8 responses.

Positive feedback was received about the following aspects:
- Engagement Potential: Journalists expressed genuine enthusiasm for the potential of the NewsArcade tool to engage both young people and broader audiences. The interactive nature of the tool was seen as a promising avenue for increasing reader involvement and interaction with news content, which is crucial in an era where audience engagement is paramount.
- Visual Introduction to Story Development: The step-by-step process of building an article within the NewsArcade was highly praised for its visual approach to story development. By breaking down the article creation process into manageable steps, the tool provided users with a clear framework for crafting compelling narratives. This visual introduction was seen as an effective way to guide users through the complexities of storytelling, encouraging thoughtful consideration of all elements involved.
- Ease of Use: Once users became familiar with the Content Management System (CMS), they found the NewsArcade tool to be relatively straightforward and easy to navigate. This ease of use was essential in facilitating creativity and experimentation, as journalists felt empowered to explore different article formats and storytelling techniques without significant technical barriers and/or assistance.
- Creative Thinking: Participants highlighted the NewsArcade's capacity to stimulate creative thinking about article formats. By offering a platform for experimentation and

innovation, the tool encouraged journalists to think outside the box and explore new ways of presenting information to readers. This creative freedom was seen as instrumental in fostering a culture of innovation within newsrooms and driving forward-thinking approaches to storytelling.

Some areas for improvement were also highlighted, particularly:
- Language Considerations: Participants noted discrepancies in language within the CMS and suggested revising wording for clarity.
- Incorporating Story Introduction: Journalists emphasized the importance of incorporating story introductions within the player-created experiences to provide context, as currently, all stories start with a quote and lack context.
- Name Revisions: Some participants suggested renaming certain elements within the tool, such as "experiences" and section headers, to improve clarity and usability.
- Bugs: Shortcomings of the CMS and the lengthy process of creating an article were highlighted as areas needing improvement.
- Creation time: Quality news articles were deemed essential for the tool's success, but the time and effort required to achieve this were recognized as significant challenges.
- Scope Limitations: Participants expressed concerns about the scope limitations of the tool, particularly regarding the selection and juxtaposition of statements. They suggested revisiting this aspect to determine if improvements can be made.
- Visual Enhancement: Feedback emphasized the need to enhance the visuals of the tool to make it more attractive, as the current design was deemed bland.
- Intuitive Tools: Participants recommended incorporating more intuitive tools, such as simplifying text entry and adjusting button placement for ease of use.

3.2.2 Main feedback received from DIAS' piloting with journalists

DIAS organized two workshops with four media professionals to explore the implementation of NewsArcade. The first workshop took place on January 11, 2024, where journalists were introduced to the project and the gamified flow of the NewsArcade tool, along with necessary templates and manuals. They were then given four weeks to develop their stories and interact with the CMS. A follow-up session was held on March 12 to gather feedback. In total 10 stories were created. DIAS engaged journalists from its different mediums to experiment with what kind of stories can be supported by Newsarcade, such as lifestyle, fashion, economics and political news.

During the workshops, almost all participants expressed positive sentiments regarding the experience of gamifying a story, highlighting its constructive nature. They found the process to be engaging and believed it could enhance critical thinking and media literacy skills, especially

for young people. The automated feedback provided by the tool, particularly the tags, was appreciated by journalists. They found it useful in refining their storytelling and desired a wider range of options for feedback to further improve their narratives. Participants recognized the potential of NewsArcade for certain types of stories, such as analytical or opinion-based pieces with catchy subjects. They believed that with more best practice examples and practical tips, they could effectively integrate gamification into their news stories.

The CMS was relatively easy to navigate for journalists after they experimented with it. They appreciated its linear approach, which mimicked the user's experience, making it easier to understand the flow of the story and how it would appear to the audience. Overall, journalists commended the project's innovative concept and vision, seeing it as a valuable tool for enhancing storytelling and engaging audiences.

Despite recognizing the constructive potential of gamifying news stories, journalists expressed concerns about the complexity of integrating the concept into their news outlets and the time-consuming nature of the process. They suggested simplifying the flow for gamifying a story as well as editing processes in the CMS to reduce the number of clicks required as well as incorporating more color and clearer instructions to streamline the process.

Participants emphasized the importance of enhancing the educational component and the design of the tool to make it more interactive and engaging, resembling a game rather than a school test. They recommended providing pre-determined feedback, tips, and tags that can be easily customized, along with a simple step-by-step guide and audiovisual supportive material to facilitate content creation.

Without these enhancements, journalists believed that integrating NewsArcade into their everyday practices would be challenging. Therefore, aligning the tool with publishers' workflows and priorities is essential for its successful adoption in newsrooms.

4. Cross-Workshop Analysis & Future Recommendations for Improvement

From the feedback provided by various stakeholders across different workshops, several common themes and areas for improvement emerge, indicating key considerations for enhancing the NewsArcade tool and CMS.

1. **Gamified potential:**
   ➢ Education Professionals: Identified NewsArcade as potentially engaging, particularly for first-year journalism students. It was seen as beneficial for understanding the functioning of news media journalism, albeit with some adjustments needed for optimal user experience.
   ➢ Media Professionals: Acknowledged the potential of gamifying news stories as a constructive experience. They highlighted the importance of aligning the tool with publishers' workflows and priorities, suggesting that its success depends on the quality and relevance of the gamified experiences.

2. **Professional integration:**
   ➢ Education Professionals: Explored NewsArcade's potential as a teaching tool in higher education, particularly in introductory journalism courses. They emphasized the need for contextual integration, supplementary materials, and clearer educational objectives.
   ➢ Media Professionals: Expressed interest in incorporating gamified news stories into their workflows but found the concept complicated and time-consuming. They suggested the need for practical examples, customization options, and a simplified, streamlined and less time-consuming content creation process.

3. **User experience:**
   ➢ Education Professionals: Highlighted the need for improvements in the overall user experience of NewsArcade for its end users, particularly in terms of interface design, engagement features, and enhanced educational content.
   ➢ Media Professionals: Identified areas for improvement in the CMS, including simplifying editing processes, enhancing educational components with automated feedback, and providing clearer instructions and customization options.

4. **Content Creation Process:**
   ➢ Education Professionals: Recommended the inclusion of more interactive and engaging educational content within NewsArcade to enhance media literacy skills.
   ➢ Media Professionals: Emphasized the need for streamlining the content creation process within the CMS, reducing complexity, and increasing customization options to align with publishers' needs and priorities.

The below table offers a structured analysis of the recommendations provided in a table format, categorized by feedback received and corresponding action plan or recommendations:

Category	Action Plan/Recommendations
Simplify CMS and increase customization options	- Streamline editing tasks within the CMS by reducing the number of clicks required and providing clearer instructions for editing content within the CMS. - Expand customization options within the CMS, allowing users to edit and customize feedback and tag options. - Provide flexibility for users to tailor feedback and tags to their specific requirements.
Improve user experience	- Enhance the tool interface by adding more color and clearer instructions for end users. - Add more gamifying elements for more interactivity and engagement for a game-like feeling, such as quizzes, rewards, pop-ups, audiovisual, etc., to increase user engagement and enjoyment. - Enhance the visual design of the tool to make it more appealing and visually engaging for young users. - Condense the choices into shorter, bite-sized sections to cater to the attention span and consumption patterns of young users. - Allow users to personalize their experience by integrating social features to enable users to share their achievements, compare their choices with friends, offer their feedback and participate in discussions.
Support the content creation of journalists	- Include pre-determined feedback, tips, and tags that are easily customizable. - Provide a simple step-by-step guide and audiovisual supportive material to facilitate content creation. - Offer practical examples, best practices, and tips relevant to different news genres.
Enhance Educational Component for end users	- Increase the amount of educational content within the tool, providing more in-depth information and resources for users on news creation. - Enhance the constructive capabilities of the game by adding more constructive feedback such as tags/tips for users. - Focus more on journalistic values and provide a clear explanation of the newsroom process, realities and challenges for modern journalism. Develop a clear and engaging scenario that explains the process that occurs in the newsroom. This will provide users with a better understanding of the pre-writing stages and the work done by journalists before creating an article.

	- Provide clear feedback criteria: Communicate the criteria against which users' choices and articles are evaluated clearly in the game. Specify whether the evaluation is based on feedback received or a comparison with the original article. This will help users understand the purpose and outcome of their participation in the tool. - Clearly explain the role of the user as a news website writer and the task of selecting the right elements and deciding on the angle of the story. Provide a concise and engaging introduction that sets the context and purpose of the tool.

5. Deviations, Current Status and Way Forward

The consortium will continuously iterate and refine by implementing an iterative development approach, regularly evaluating and refining the tool based on user feedback and emerging trends from publishers, educators and young people. We will encourage ongoing collaboration with stakeholders, including educators, publishers, and young people, to ensure the tool remains relevant, effective and engaging for the target groups.

Deviations
Throughout the project implementation, we encountered some minor deviations that influenced the timely implementation of this deliverable and some of our key performance indicators as established in the proposal. Some of these challenges included the unexpected circumstances faced by Sud Ouest, which affected their participation in thepiloting, as well as the busy timelines of publishers. Additionally, shortcomings in the CMS were identified, requiring adjustments to improve the user experience of the NewsArcade tool and CMS before the continuation of the pilotings, especially for publishers.

News publishers have very strict guidelines for publication on their digital platforms and are especially careful with how something that is made available on their platform can influence their brand. Thus, it was necessary for publishers to have more testing and improvements of NewsArcade stories before these can be incorporated onto their online platform. It has been decided by the publishers that the 3rd version of the tool will be integrated into their websites when the tool will be almost at its final stage, for a more tailored and targeted communication campaign to reach to end users and stakeholders for sustainability.

Current status

As for current stats and impact, the project has seen promising engagement from participants, with positive feedback regarding the potential of NewsArcade as a learning and storytelling tool. However, there is still room for improvement in terms of user adoption and integration into educational and journalistic practices. Key performance indicators such as user engagement, tool usage metrics, and user satisfaction scores are being tracked to measure the project's impact and identify areas for further enhancement. We currently have 20 stories created and some initial changes were already implemented in the CMS system to support streamlining the piloting process (highlighted in our D3.2 NewsCraft v3 due in April 2024). The feedback was evaluated by the partners and a meeting was conducted in March with Portaplay proposing some new changes in the flow to accommodate the needs of our target group. These changes are currently being implemented for the 3rd version of the NewsArcade too and will be tested for its finalisation in the next round of testing.

Way forward

Moving forward, the project team plans to implement the recommendations gathered from the workshops, focusing on improving the user experience for both media professionals and end users, providing comprehensive support training materials for journalists through the D3.6 Postgraduate Course, and increasing educational content for end users. Continued collaboration with stakeholders, including educators, journalists, and technology experts, will be crucial in driving the project forward and maximizing its impact in promoting media literacy and critical thinking skills. Regular updates and evaluations will be conducted to assess progress and adjust strategies accordingly, ensuring the project remains on track to achieve its goals. A targeted approach is currently being defined by partners for the final round of pilotings with publishers and scale up experiments with the educational sector to explore new avenues for the tool and create more compelling stories with the updated flow. A communication campaign will be launched from mid-May onwards until the end of the project as per our D3.7 Business plan, where we will target both early adopters through webinars and targeted communication and young people to interact with our stories.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible Party	Timeline	Status
Conduct a workshop to go through the feedback and decide on the tool's changes based on the identified gaps.	Consortium partners	19th of March 2024	Done
Improvement of content and approach	Content team	March-April 2024	In progress
Improvements in the flow and CMS	Development team	March-April 2024	In progress
Visual design of the game	Development team/Design team	March-April 2024	In progress
Releasing the 3rd version of the game	Development team	30 April 2024	In progress
Developing the course for professionals	Educational team	April-June 2024	In progress
3rd round of pilotings and experiments (T3.3&T3.4) with publishers and educators	Research team	May to prepare and June 2024 to implement	Not started yet
Final version of NewsArcade & manual	Development team	August 2024	Not started yet

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the workshops conducted with both higher education professionals and media professionals provided valuable insights into the potential of NewsArcade as a tool for enhancing media literacy and storytelling, giving them time to interact with our CMS and gamified flow by creating NewsArcade experiences. While higher education professionals emphasized its role in introductory journalism courses to improve students' understanding of news media journalism, media professionals expressed interest in incorporating gamified news stories into their workflows, albeit with reservations about complexity and integration challenges. Despite these differences, common themes emerged, highlighting the need for improved user experience, clearer instructions, customization options, and comprehensive training and support materials.

The recommendations derived from these workshops offer actionable steps to address these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of NewsArcade. By implementing these recommendations, NewsArcade can evolve into a more user-friendly, customizable, and widely adopted tool, contributing to improved media literacy and storytelling skills among students and professionals. As technology continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the media landscape, tools like NewsArcade have the potential to revolutionize journalism education and practice, fostering a new generation of critical thinkers and storytellers equipped to navigate the complexities of the digital age.

8. Appendices

Annex 1: Methodological Guidelines and templates for scale-up experiments
Annex 2: Methodological Guidelines and templates for pilotings with journalists

NEWSARCADE - Seriously, Play the News!

Project Number: 101060250

[Draft] - **Template Walkthrough for the Pilotings with Publishers**

Workshops Scenarios
- Create a draft workshop scenario/walkthrough for creators (publishers, journalists, possibly broadcasters)

WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW:
How those target groups can use this tool? Is it relevant?
What would be the use scenarios for this target group? How can they incorporate it in their work?
What should we improve to ensure its usability?

Who	Goal workshop
Media professionals	**Focus:** content/technical Testing if the tool could be used within their own sector, if it is relevant and it has value for them as professionals. How can we improve the technical design to be usable for them? **How** (suggestion): Worksheets

Walkthrough CREATORS- JOURNALISTS

WHAT	1st introductory workshop				
WHO	Media Professionals				
Participants	Journalists from SAPESO & DIAS				
WHEN	*Early January 2024*				

Time [2h]	Min.	Fase	Title	Description	Who
35	5	Context and knowledge before we start testing	Welcome	Explain the goals and purpose of the meeting: • Testing News arcade for development • News arcade as a tool for journalists and content creators - how to use it and why	
	20		News literacy: challenges and goals and the role of journalism	Creating context about media- and news literacy for young people and discussing the role of journalists	
	10		Presentation of the project	Presenting News Arcade's purpose and challenges • Media consumption of young adults • Goals of the tool (for journalists and medialiteracy professionals) • Current state of the project	
60	15	Testing	Presentation of the stories - changing mentalities on how to create a gamified news stories from different anges	Look at specific aspects (list): • News literacy/learning objectives • Themes • Scenarios • Preparation	

Time	Min.	Fase	Title	Description	Who
				Creating learning scenarios (how to incorporate it in their work)	
	35		Presentation of the CMS and template / guide (Instructions)	Showing how the tool can be used step by step	
	10		**CREATING SCENARIOS**	● Printed document ● Advantages tool ● Disadvantages tool ● Create a scenario for using the tool	
	10		Q&A discussion		
5	5	Closure	Next steps	give them deadline to prepare stories (2-3 weeks)	

WHAT	Follow up Evaluation meeting
WHO	**Media Professionals**
Participants	Journalists from SAPESO & DIAS - same participants
WHEN	*End of January 2024 - mid February 2024*

Time [35 mins]	Min.	Fase	Title	Description	Who
	25	Evaluation	Debate	The groups present their thoughts, questions, and suggestions for improvement: **Content/context** ● What kind of stories? ● Structure of gamifying news ● Flow of the content ● Design ● Relevance to their work	

| | | | | **Usage - experience /technical**
● Usability and user friendliness of CMS
● Interactivity
● Functionality (tag)
● Time effectiveness - preparation | |
| | 10 | | Assessment | All the participants will fill in the small survey with questions | |

[Draft] - Template Walkthrough for the Workshops

Workshops Scenarios

- Create a draft workshop scenario/walkthrough for facilitators (Librarians, Media Literacy Professionals, Museum Professionals, and Higher Education Professionals)
- Create a draft workshop scenario/walkthrough for creators (Journalists Students, Broadcasters)

WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW:

How those target groups can use this tool? Is it relevant?

What would be the use scenarios for each target group?

Who	Goal workshop
Libraries	**Focus:** Concept/content Testing if the tool could be used within their own sector, improving media literacy of young adults.
Media literacy professionals	**Focus:** Concept/content Testing if the tool could be used within their own sector, improving media literacy of young adults.
Journalism Students	**Focus:** Concept/content Testing if the tool has a (innovative) value for them as future journalists in order to serve and engage (younger) audiences.

Walkthrough FACILITATORS

WHO	Librarians working with media- and news literacy			
GOAL	Testing if the tool could be used within their own sector, improving media literacy of young adults.			
WHEN	**8 February, [14:00 - 16:00]** (Anne/Patricia/Fionnuala) Museum visit from 13:00-14:00 (Karen/Bart)			

Time 2h	Min.	Fase	Title	Description
1	5	Context and knowledge before we start testing	Welcome	Explain the purpose of the meeting: ● Testing News arcade for development ● Creating a manual based on the feedback ● Share knowledge and ideas with professionals ● Ways in which we possibly can collaborate on news literacy in the Netherlands - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Ask for expectations (use of the tool)
	25		News literacy: challenges and goals	Creating context about media- and news literacy in The Netherlands and presenting NISV's vision
	20		Exchange knowledge about news literacy	Dialogue: How do librarians talk about the news or teach news literacy to their target audience?
	15		Presentation of the project	Presenting News Arcade's purpose, challenges and learning objectives
[!]	5	Testing	Presentation of the tool (Instructions)	Showing how the tool can be used step by step
				● Printed document

	30		**CREATING SCENARIOS**	- Advantages tool - Disadvantages tool - Create a scenario for using the tool
			Using the tool in small groups with existing stories and evaluation with a criteria-list	Look at specific aspects (list): - News literacy/learning objectives - Themes - Scenarios - Preparation *Creating learning scenarios (how to incorporate it in their work)*
[!]	30	Evaluation	Debate	The groups present their thoughts, questions, and suggestions for improvement
	10		Assessment	All the participants will fill in the small survey with questions.
	5		Closure	-

NISV Internal Team	Fionnuala, Camille, Anne				
WHO	**Museum & cultural heritage professionals working with news literacy, journalism and education.**				
GOAL	Testing if the tool could be used within their own sector, improving media literacy of young adults.				
WHEN	**30 January, during the 'Nieuwswijsheid Overleg'** @ Sound & Vision, Hilversum				
Time 2h	**Min.**	**Fase**	**Title**	**Description**	**Who?**
45	5	Context and knowledge before we start testing	Welcome	Explain the purpose of the meeting: - Testing News arcade for development - News arcade as a valuable tool within NISV - Discuss the way we work on news literacy	Anne
	25		News literacy: challenges and goals	Creating context about media- and news literacy in The Netherlands and presenting NISV's vision	Patricia
	15		Presentation of the project	Presenting News Arcade's purpose and challenges - Media consumption of young adults - Goals of the tool (for journalists and medialiteracy professionals) - Current state of the project	Anne
45	15	Testing	Presentation of the tool (Instructions)	Showing how the tool can be used step by step	Anne
	20			• Printed document	

			CREATING SCENARIOS	• Advantages tool • Disadvantages tool • Create a scenario for using the tool	
			Using the tool in small groups with existing stories and evaluation with a criteria-list.	Look at specific aspects (list): • News literacy/learning objectives • Themes • Scenarios • Preparation	Anne
45	30	Evaluation	Debate	The groups present their thoughts, questions, and suggestions for improvement. *Could the tool be used to discuss the importance of journalism and to deal with mistrust/conspiracy, etc?*	Anne/ Patricia
	10		Assessment	All the participants will fill in the small survey with questions	Anne
	5		Closure	-	Anne

Walkthrough CREATORS

WHO	Broadcasters				
WHEN	*Wednesday 31 januari (13:00 - 15:00)* *Woensdag 7 februari (13:00 - 15:00)*				
Time [2h]	**Min.**	**Fase**	**Title**	**Description**	**Who?**
45	5	Context and knowledge before we start testing	Welcome	Explain the purpose of the meeting: ● Testing News arcade for development ● News arcade as a tool for journalists and content creators ● Discuss the way media professionals could contribute to news literacy	Anne
	25		News literacy: challenges and goals	Creating context about media- and news literacy in The Netherlands and presenting NISV's vision	Patricia
	15		Presentation of the project	Presenting News Arcade's purpose and challenges ● Media consumption of young adults ● Goals of the tool (for journalists and medialiteracy professionals) ● Current state of the project	Anne
45	15	Testing	Presentation of the tool (Instructions)	Showing how the tool can be used step by step	Anne
	30		Using the tool in small groups and creating own stories	[...]	Anne

45	30	Evaluation	Debate	The groups present their thoughts, questions, and suggestions for improvement: **Content** ● Themes ● Scenarios ● Design **Usage** ● Preparation ● Technique ● Interactivity ● Functionality (tag) ● Usability CMS ● Time effectiveness *Could the tool be used to discuss the importance of journalism and to deal with mistrust/conspiracy, etc?*	Anne/ Patricia
	10		Assessment	All the participants will fill in the small survey with questions	Anne
	5		Closure	-	Anne

WHO	Higher education: journalism students (SDU)				
GOAL	Testing response from future news journalists on the principles behind producing news as a NewsArcade experience.				
WHEN	27-02-2024, 12-14				

Time 2h	Min.	Fase	Title	Description	Who?
45	5	Context and knowledge before we start testing	Welcome	Explain the purpose of the meeting: • *Testing News arcade for development* • *News arcade as a tool for journalists and content creators* • *Discuss the way media professionals could contribute to news literacy*	
	15		Presentation of the project	Presenting News Arcade's purpose and challenges • *Media consumption of young adults* • *Discuss the role journalists have* • *Goals of the tool (for journalists and medialiteracy professionals)* • *Current state of the project*	
45	15	Testing	Presentation of the tool (Instructions)	Showing how the tool can be used step by step	
	30		Using the principles behind the tool in small groups to create draft NewsArcade experiences - give them examples of articles	- Open questions: relevance for you as future journalists - What news themes - Interest of young generations	
45	30	Evaluation	Debate	The groups present their thoughts, questions, and	

				suggestions for improvement: **Content** ● Themes ● Scenarios ● Design **Usage** ● Preparation ● Technique ● Interactivity ● Functionality (tag) ● Usability CMS ● Time effectiveness *Discussion about News Values - who is shaping the truth? Implications, core issues of journalism.*	
	10		Assessment	All the participants will fill in the small survey with questions	
	5		Closure	-	