The ROI of a National Reference

Delivering Value Amid Information Overlap

Contents

Introduction

Over the past decade, Saudi Arabia has embarked on an ambitious economic and social transformation journey driven by Vision 2030, which aims to reduce reliance on oil and foster growth across sectors such as tourism, infrastructure, media, and technology. To support this, the Kingdom has made significant investments in major development projects and attracted foreign investments to empower its national economy and achieve long-term sustainable growth.

With the growing global interest in Saudi Arabia and the evolution of the digital information landscape, challenges and risks related to the spread of misinformation have emerged. It is in this context that this report is titled:

Reliability as a Sustainable National Asset

Transforming Truth into Awareness

This report aims to shed light on **Saudipedia** as a reliable national source of information about Saudi Arabia, and the platform's role in supporting national efforts to achieve the economic, social, and strategic goals of Vision 2030.
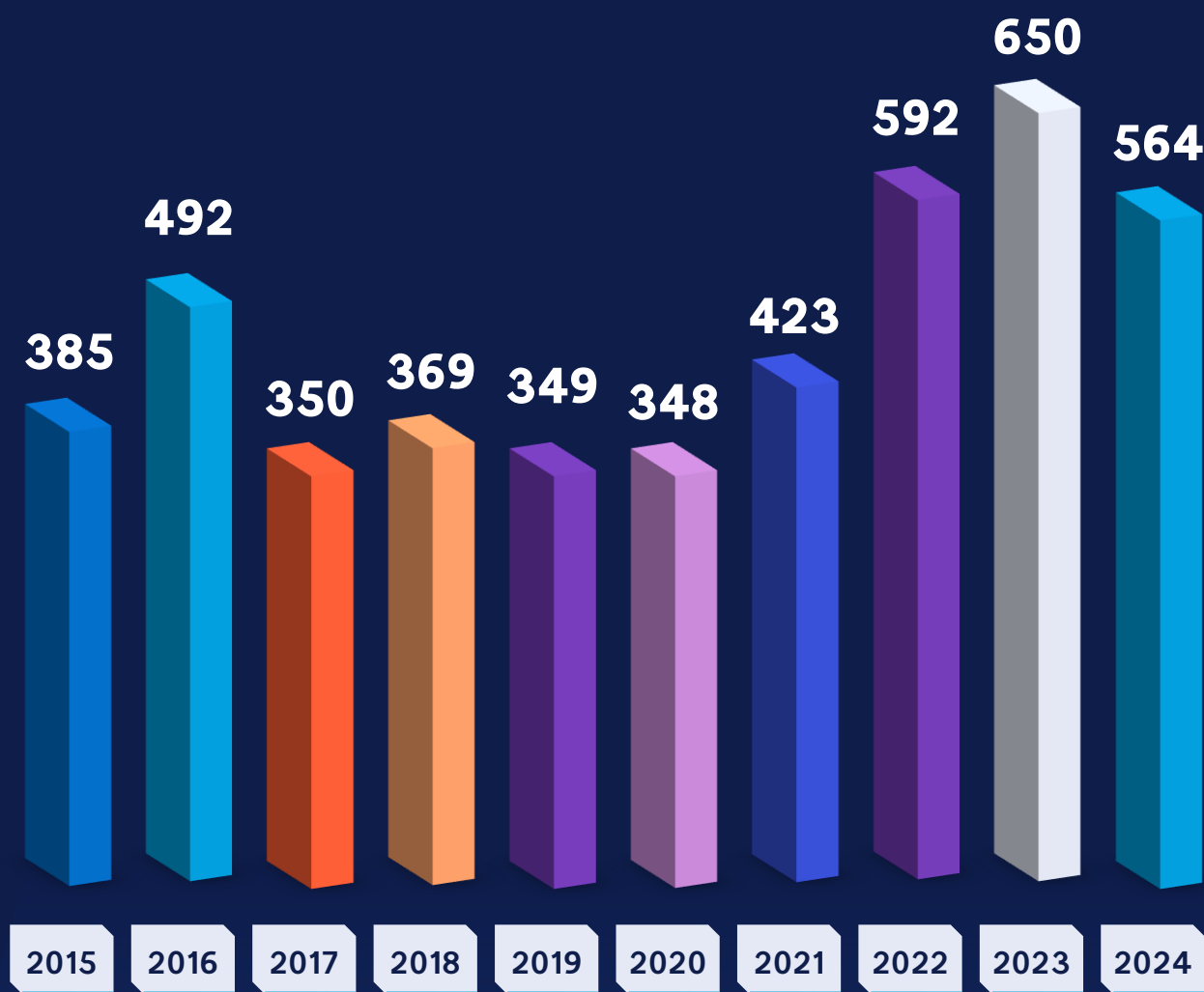
1

Risks of Misinformation

Rising Number of Google Searches on Saudi Arabia

The rising number of global searches about Saudi Arabia reflects growing international interest in the Kingdom. This interest underscores the critical need for reliable, accessible national sources to counter misinformation and provide an authentic portrayal of the Kingdom.

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
385	492	350	369	349	348	423	592	650	564

Rising Number of Google Searches on Saudi Arabia (Global), 2015-2024

Sources of News about Saudi Arabia

At the local level

/ Local searches about the Kingdom have surged.

/ Residents are increasingly seeking information about the Kingdom's history, heritage, government programs, and the achievements and impacts of the broader transformation initiatives led by the government.

/ Digital channels, such as social media and online news outlets, are the leading sources of news and information for the audience.
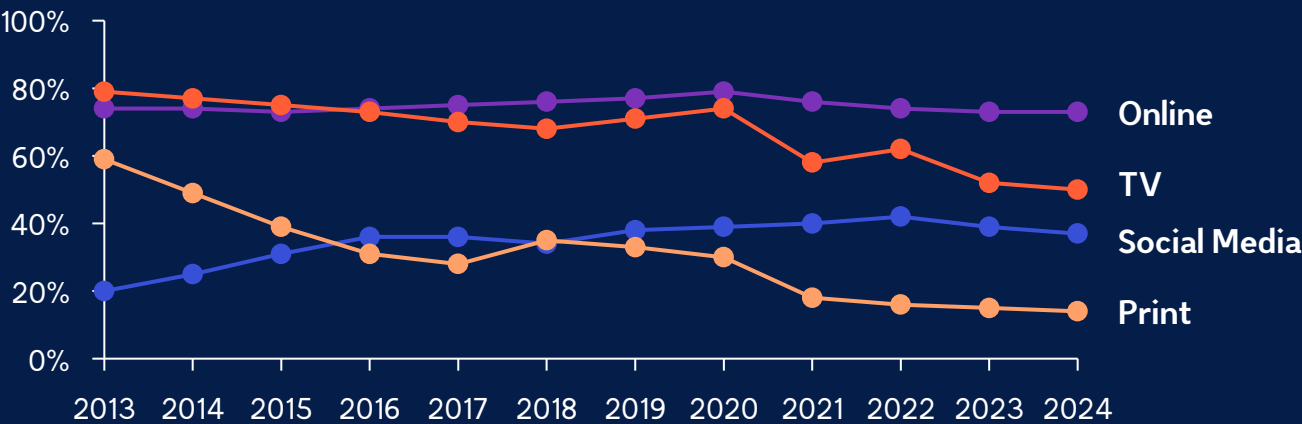
Preferred News Sources (top 3 preferences)

%61	%63	%37
Social Media	TV	Websites

Preferred media channels for news and information in Saudi Arabia

At the global level

Online platforms have become the primary source of information about the Kingdom, while the influence of traditional media such as television and print has declined.

Preferred sources of news globally (2013-2024)

Implications of Relying on Digital Sources

The varying credibility of digital platforms has made them a fertile ground for the spread of misinformation. The ease of publishing and sharing content online makes it challenging for users to distinguish between accurate and false information, particularly regarding the Kingdom's economic and social transformations. This gives rise to several risks, including:

Decline of Public Confidence

Misinformation erodes public confidence in official institutions and reputable media outlets, fostering an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty around circulating information.

Saturation of the Media Landscape

The spread of conflicting information clutters the media space, hindering the clear and effective dissemination of official and educational messages to the public.

Negatively Influencing Public Opinion

The amplification of misleading news distorts the public's understanding of events and policies, which influences public opinion and undermines the development and progress efforts.

The rapid growth of internet access and social media has made it easier for false information and rumors to spread. As the figure shows, most people (84%) think this has a big impact on how exposed people are to misinformation

Significant Impact
84%

Moderate Impact
10%

Low Impact
5%

Percentage of people who believe that access to the internet and social media increases susceptibility to false information and rumors

2

A Global Look at Creating National References

International Platforms for Disseminating Reliable Information

Amid the growing spread of misinformation, it became increasingly important to establish national platforms that provide accurate and reliable content. These platforms and initiatives have proven their cultural and social value, offering models that could inform the development of a comparable national data source. Among the most notable examples are:

Canada

A government platform with a collection of over **25,000** articles and **26,000** images and videos. It attracts **14.5** million visitors annually and serves as a trusted source of information, covering intellectual, cultural, tourism, and historical topics.

Finland

A platform created by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and published by the Finland Promotion Board. It offers a comprehensive portrayal of the country, its culture, and its people and receives over **2.5** million visitors annually.

Estonia

An official platform managed by Enterprise Estonia. It features information about the political system, economy, education, and digital services, with an average of **300,000** visitors annually.

Colombia

Colombia is the official website of Marca País Colombia and is jointly managed by the government and the private sector. It offers content across **12** themes to counter stereotypes and promote national identity and receives over **1.2** million visits annually.
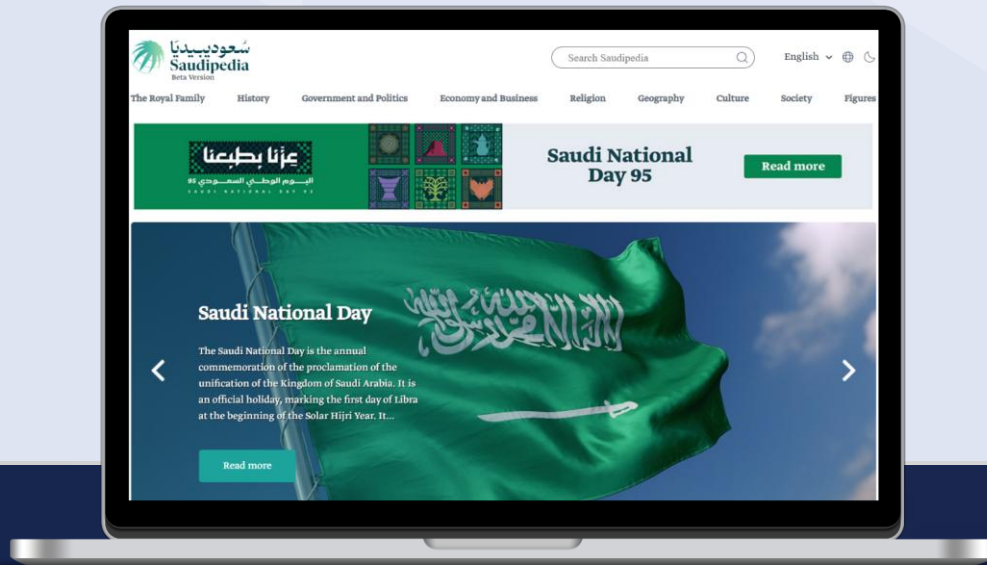
New Zealand

Attracting over **6** million visitors annually, this platform is dedicated to highlighting national history, dispelling cultural and historical misconceptions between communities, and fostering positive social interaction.

South Korea

The Encyclopedia of Korean Culture is managed by the Academy of Korean Studies. It offers expert-authored articles and is continuously updated to reflect new developments. It receives over **16.4** million visitors annually.

Key Advantages of Establishing a Trusted National Data Source

Combatting Misinformation

National data platforms combat misinformation by consolidating verified content into a single, accessible source, thereby curbing the spread of false claims.

Raising Public Awareness

These platforms help raise public awareness by highlighting the country's achievements, heritage, and prominent figures, thereby fostering a sense of national pride and belonging.

Building a More Informed and Engaged Society

These platforms contribute to building a more informed society by providing reliable educational and research resources for students, researchers, and the public. This fosters a deeper understanding of national issues and enhances community engagement.

Supporting Cultural Preservation

These platforms help preserve national heritage by documenting cultural and historical traditions for both present and future generations, while ensuring broad access to this information.

3

Saudipedia as a Reliable National Reference

In February 2024, the Ministry of Media launched Saudipedia, an advanced digital platform serving as a unified national data source, with the aim of

Providing reliable and comprehensive information about the Kingdom.

Verified National Statistics

Official biographies of leaders

Authoritative timelines

Offering continuously updated content across multiple domains, including

Royal family

History

Government and politics

Economy and business

Geography

Culture

Society

Key figures

Supporting the strategic goals of the Ministry of Media, such as

Preserving national heritage

Highlighting significant historical events

Enhancing Saudi Arabia's global image

Contributing to the Kingdom's cultural and economic development.

Festivals

Heritage assets

Arts

Tourism

Key industries/sectors, Saudi companies, Economic affairs

Providing diverse content, including images and videos, in five languages:

Arabic

English

French

Chinese

Russian

Bridging vital information gaps to strengthen the country's global presence.

Standardizing content for global use

Authoritative, citable reference curated by the Ministry of Media

Q&A and quizzes for easier understanding

Continuous content refresh

Saudipedia addresses critical information challenges by unifying knowledge, countering misinformation, and presenting an authentic cultural narrative
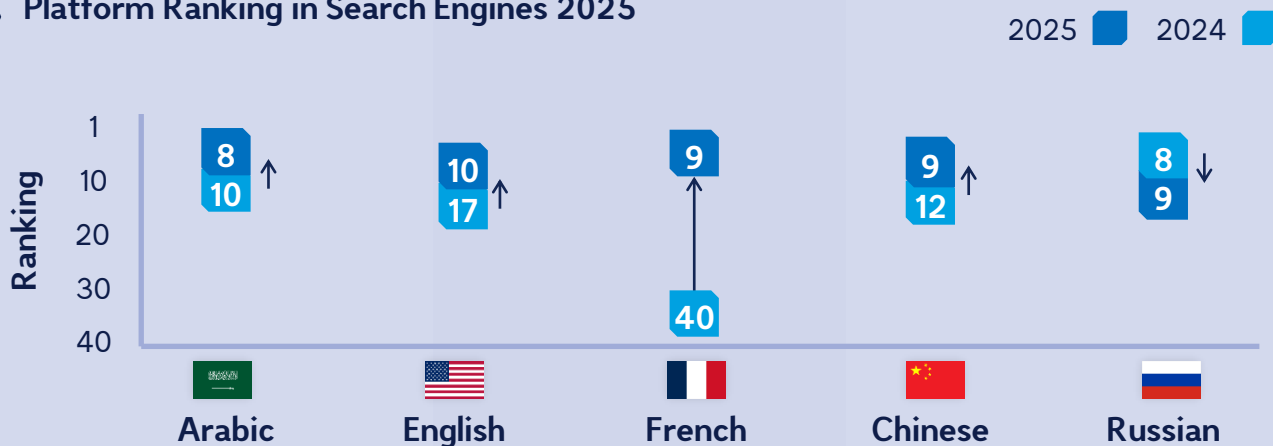
Challenges

How the platform addresses these challenges

Fragmented Information Landscape

Unifying scattered information and consolidating diverse sources into a single knowledge hub, ensuring that audiences access consistent and reliable content.

The Spread of Misinformation

Providing regularly updated, fact-checked content as a reliable alternative, to enhance public trust and reduce the spread of unverified news.

Cultural Misrepresentation in Foreign Media

Addressing the distorted portrayals in foreign media by offering an authentic, culturally grounded view of Saudi Arabia's history, traditions, and values.

During 2025, Saudipedia saw increased traffic across all language versions.

Arabic and English recorded the highest number of visits while French, Chinese, and Russian showed remarkable growth — demonstrating the platform's wide reach and the audience's ongoing engagement.

2025 ⬛ 2024 ⬛

	Arabic		English		French		Chinese		Russian
	80,509	192,056	4,094	85,828	842	6,301	264	7,201	103	2,195
	Apr 24	Jun 25	Aug 24	Jun 25	Dec 24	Jun 25	Nov 24	Jun 25	May 24	Jun 25

Number of visits in different languages (In 2024 and 2025)
Note: Each language was measured after its first month of launch

Platform Ranking in Search Engines 2025

2025 ⬛ 2024 ⬛

Ranking: 1, 10, 20, 30, 40

Arabic	English	French	Chinese	Russian
8 / 10 ↑	10 / 17 ↑	9 ... 40 ↑	9 / 12 ↑	8 / 9 ↓

Search Engine Rankings in different languages (In 2024 and 2025)
Note: Each language was measured after its first month of launch.

Saudipedia saw a 50% rise in AI-driven referrals within just six months of 2025, underscoring how new discovery channels are expanding its user base.

+50.44% →

6,580 — Feb-25
9,899 — Jul-25

Number of AI referrals of Saudipedia during a 6-month period (Feb 25 to Jul 25)
1. AI referrals: visits to the Saudipedia that arrive by users clicking links on generated by AI tools

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia's economic and social transformation initiatives have drawn widespread attention, a trend set to intensify with the completion of mega projects, upcoming large-scale sporting events and expositions, and the Kingdom's evolving economic and social landscape. This underscores the importance of ensuring that both domestic and international audiences have access to accurate and reliable information, especially in an era of widespread misinformation.

Saudipedia, launched by the Ministry of Media, has been expanding its reach to a broader audience by consistently providing reliable information across domains such as culture, education, media, tourism, and business. The platform is undertaking strategic initiatives to improve its discoverability across search engines and AI-powered tools through targeted optimization in two key areas:

AI-Friendly Content Architecture

Through strategic SEO initiatives, Saudipedia has enhanced its visibility across major search engines like Google and Bing.

This has helped to establish the platform's credibility, aiming to position it as a primary source of information about Saudi Arabia.

These efforts focus on optimizing for keywords, building high-quality backlinks, and refining site architecture to enhance visibility and search engine rankings.

SEO Optimization

The platform aims to enhance its presence and visibility to AI tools like (ChatGPT) and (Gemini) by organizing its data and facilitating its seamless flow.

A core priority for the platform is to facilitate the automated processing of its content.

The platform ensures that these AI tools consistently refer to Saudipedia's accurate and credible information when answering questions about the Kingdom.

As Saudi Arabia's media sector continues to grow, Saudipedia is solidifying its position as a national leading source of data on the Kingdom's history, current developments and future aspirations.

References

1. Google Trends – Searches Data
   Google Trends

2. Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2024
   Reuters

3. Digital Cooperation Organization Report
   Digital Cooperation Organization

4. Pew Research Center – Social Media Impacts
   Pew Research Center

5. Egyptian Journal of Media Research – Unifying Govt. Media Efforts
   The Egyptian journal of media research

6. This is FINLAND – Overview
   ThisisFINLAND

7. The Canadian Encyclopaedia – Overview
   The Canadian Encyclopaedia

8. Te Ara – Overview
   Te Ara – Encyclopaedia of New Zealand

9. Encylopeadia of Korean Culture – Overview
   Encyclopedia of Korean Culture

10. Estonia.ee – Overview
    Estonia.ee

11. Colombia.co – Overview
    Colombia.co

12. Saudipedia – Overview
    Saudipedia

13. Gov.sa – Overview
    Gov.sa

14. ASU KEEP – Fake News in Saudi Arabia
    Arizona State University KEEP

15. Internet Policy Review – Combating misinformation online
    Internet Policy Review

16. UNAOC – Opportunities for Media and Information Literacy in the MENA
    United National Alliance of Civilizations

17. ASU KEEP – Fake News in Saudi Arabia
    Arizona State University KEEP

18. Similarweb – Website Analytics
    Similarweb

Other Sources Used:

1. General Authority of Media Regulation Report
   General Authority of Media Regulation

2. Kearney – Thought Leadership Article
   Kearney

3. Misinformation Review – Misinformation in action
   Misinformation Review

Contact Us

Website

www.elm.sa

Address

Al Thaghr, Al Nakheel Dis., Digital City 6614, Unit No: 2, Riyadh
12382 – 4182, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Social Media Channels