

## [Culture](#)

by NCR Staff

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The National Catholic Reporter has been selected as one of 10 news organizations to participate in Google News Initiative's Audience Lab this spring and summer. This intensive three-month project will allow NCR staff to work one-on-one with Google executives, external consultants and other media organizations to create a blueprint for online success.

"Growing audience reach and loyalty are essential to helping news organizations maximize their journalistic impact and build sustainable and thriving businesses," said Ben Monnie, director of global partnerships solutions at Google. "This program ... aims to equip participating publishers with the skills, confidence, and user-first mindset to accomplish this."

NCR will work with other small- to mid-sized news organizations to share best practices and key learnings. Our cohort includes: Cold Tea Collective, The Current GA, The Discourse, The Journal Gazette, Retro Report, Le Soleil, The Trace, Univision Sacramento and WBUR.

"It's a tremendous opportunity to continue the incredible digital growth we've experienced over the last year," said Tony Hernandez, NCR's director of audience engagement. "This field is constantly changing, and to have one-to-one access to a company like Google to understand industry best practices is incredibly valuable."

As part of the lab, NCR will conduct an audit of all of our digital properties (website, newsletters and social media) and optimize them in terms of discoverability and user experience. As such, there will likely be a broader survey of NCR's readers. [You can sign up for email updates here.](#)

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