

THE INFORMATION DIET

Feeling overwhelmed? It might be time to change the way you eat the internet.

THERE'S SUCH A THING AS TOO MUCH.

We hear from **ANGUS HERVEY**, POLITICAL ECONOMIST AND JOURNALIST, AND CO-FOUNDER OF **FUTURECRUNCH** as he explores his Information Diet in an era of overload.

Humans behave strangely when we have too much money, power, choice or free time. When a resource becomes abundant, things get weird. That's especially true if the resource used to be scarce. Our relationship to it changes, and we don't navigate that change very well.

Take food for example. For most of human history, food was a scarce resource. Today though, in most parts of the world, food is abundant. Across Europe, North America and Oceania spending on food is now only a small part of the average household budget, which means most people can afford to eat whenever they like

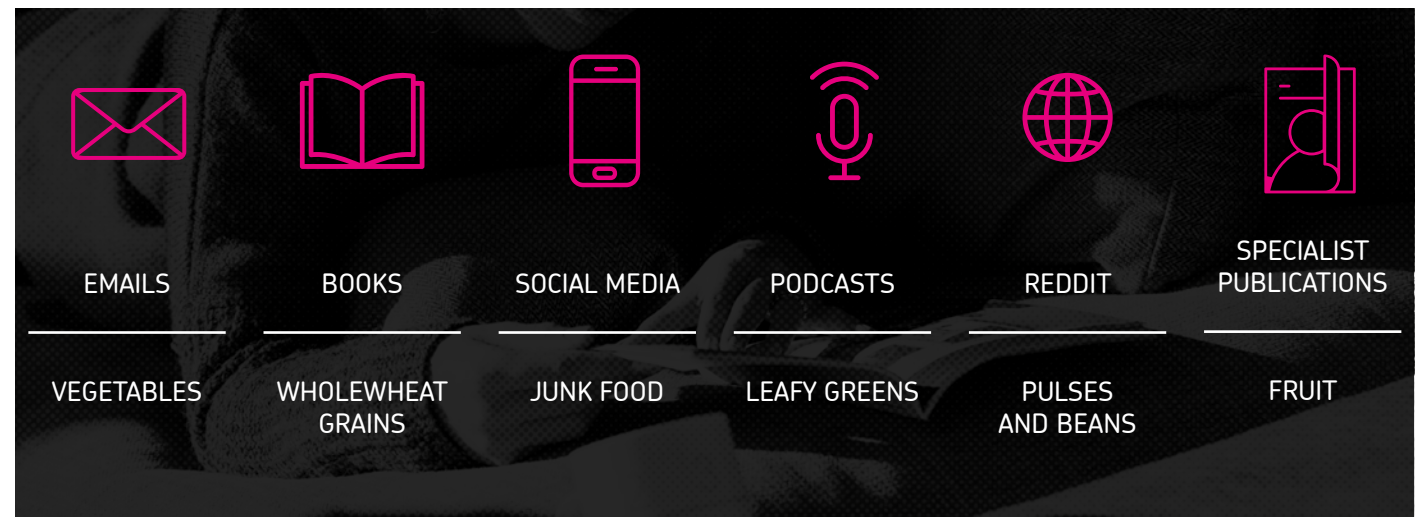
Unfortunately though, while it's become relatively less expensive, most of it is low quality. The results are well known. Sugar now kills more people than all forms of violence combined, there are more people on the planet who are obese than starving.

Information has gone through a similar change. It used to be a scarce resource, but now it's abundant. There's so much content, so much information available, on so many different devices and channels, that the idea of running out seems ridiculous. So how as a marketer – a profession that requires you to consistently stay up to date on the latest news, trends and research – can you navigate all of this content without experiencing fatigue?

For me, the biggest change happened when I started thinking about information as a diet, and decided to make it healthier and more diverse. The effect has been transformative. For the last few years I've felt less stressed, less anxious, more motivated, and I'm still confident I know what's happening in the world.

If you're interested in creating your own information diet, head to the full article on Future Crunch for more insight and content inspiration.

For the full version of this article, head to <https://futurecrunch.com/charity> and subscribe to their newsletter. You can become a supporter donating a set amount for every newsletter edition with all proceeds going to small charities, non-profits and individuals working below the radar, using science and technology to make a real difference.



THE INFORMATION DIET



SO HERE'S ANGUS HERVEY'S INFORMATION DIET...

EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

VEGETABLES

The most important element in my diet is email newsletters. I honestly cannot imagine a world without them. They're different to traditional news outlets or social media, because their continued readership relies on the quality of curation. Their other key advantage is that you can diversify, choosing from a combination of generalist and specialist topics.

BOOKS

WHOLEWHEAT GRAINS

Everyone needs a good dietary base. Books are the best place to start. They're also good for you. A University of Sussex study found that reading a book reduces stress levels by up to 68%. The distraction of being taken into a literary world eases the tensions in muscles and the heart, working better and faster than other stress management methods such as listening to music (61% reduction), having a cup of tea (54%) and taking a walk (42%).

SOCIAL MEDIA

JUNK FOOD

Let's start with LinkedIn. Fortunately, it's not too addictive, and it's useful as a place to maintain business contacts and post our own content.

Facebook. I treat it like McDonalds or Burger King — basically, there's no way of eating it that's safe or healthy. So if you can't get off Facebook, your next best bet is to cut out the most toxic element — the newsfeed.

Twitter is just as toxic but for different reasons. There are still a few people I'll check in on from time to time, but I figure my favourite thinkers these days have newsletters or podcasts so I'm not missing anything.

And Instagram... well that's pretty much like heroin for me. It's so addictive I don't touch it. I wish I could. I know I can't. So I don't even bother.

PODCASTS

LEAFY GREENS

For many people, podcasts are the best thing about the internet. Like newsletters, the time and effort required to produce a podcast usually means the information you're getting is high quality. And like newsletters, a large chunk of the world's most interesting thinkers are doing their finest work in this space.

Your balance between newsletters and podcasts will really depend on what kind of learner you are — auditory or visual. For me, they either tend to slot in and around other forms of information consumption, or else I listen to specific episodes when someone recommends one to me.

REDDIT

BEANS AND PULSES

I know what you're thinking. Seriously? If I was going to name one secret ingredient that makes my information diet really work, I'd choose this. Reddit is your friend. It's the biggest newsboard on the internet. Everyone's there. It has more diversity, more content and better quality debate than any news site.

SPECIALIST PUBLICATIONS

FRUIT

This is the sweet stuff you get to sink your teeth into. If you can look past the current hysteria around social media and the news, you'll discover that the digital revolution has led to an explosion of new, high quality online publications in every imaginable area. If I need to click on something while I'm procrastinating, I'll usually navigate to one of these.

