
Artificial Poets | EQUUS
CASE STUDY
Equus Magazine Tripled the Sessions That Reach Five Articles

Most publishers measure whether a reader gets to a second article. This is about what happens after that. On Equus Magazine, **sessions reaching three articles nearly doubled and sessions reaching five tripled**, while four comparable titles in the same network went backwards at every depth.



In brief

- Equus Magazine enabled the Artificial Poets Platform on **18 December 2025**.
- **221% more sessions reached five or more articles**, and 91% more reached three or more. In share terms: three-deep went from 1.94% to 3.71%, five-deep from 0.32% to 1.04%.
- **The effect gets larger the deeper you look**: +62% at two articles, +221% at five, +443% at ten.
- Four sister titles in the same portfolio never switched it on. All four went **backwards at every depth** over the same nine months, **down 13% to 22%** — so this is not something the whole category was getting anyway.
- Serving was **switched off for four weeks** in April. Depth fell straight back to its pre-launch level, then recovered when serving resumed — the result reproduced itself on the same site.

The pressure

Every publisher in this market is trying to build a direct audience, because the search referrals that used to do that job are going away: **down roughly a third in the year to December 2025**, [1] with **another 43% expected within three years**.[2]

The problem is where a direct audience actually comes from. Newsletter signups, registrations and subscriptions are **not drawn evenly from your traffic**. They come from **the small population of readers who were already going deep**: the ones who read three, five, ten articles in a sitting. That group is the top of every loyalty funnel a publisher has.

On most sites it is vanishingly small, and **almost nobody measures it**. The industry benchmark stops at the second pageview: Chartbeat's data shows a reader who views one more page is **2.75× more likely to return within the week**.[3] That is a real and useful finding, and it is also where the measurement ends. **Nobody reports what share of their sessions reach five articles**, which means nobody knows whether it is growing or shrinking.

On the four comparison titles here, **it was shrinking — by 13% to 22%, at every depth** — over nine months with nothing changed on any of them.

What was enabled

On 18 December 2025, Equus Magazine switched on the Artificial Poets Platform: as a reader moves down an article, the Artificial Poets Platform's AI selects and loads related articles beneath it, chosen against what that reader is actually reading rather than a fixed "most popular" list.

No redesign, no migration, no change to how the site is authored. The reader does not click anything. They keep scrolling, and there is something else there.

Equus runs the Artificial Poets Platform's recirculation feature on its own, without the AI recommendation feature its sister title also uses, which makes it a clean read on what recirculation does by itself.

What moved

The headline is not that more readers reached a second article. **It is the shape of what happened after that.**

The lift compounds with depth. A 62% gain at two articles becomes 221% at five and 443% at ten. That is the signature of a platform that keeps working: a reader who accepts the second article is being offered a third, and a fourth, and the effect accumulates rather than fading after the first hand-off.

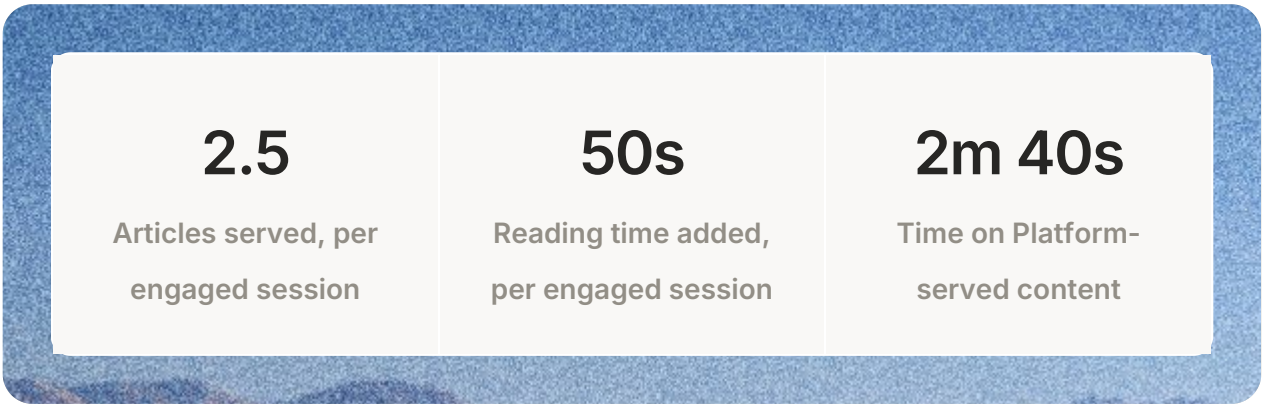
The comparison titles fell at every single depth, in a tight band between 13% and 22%. Whatever is eroding session depth across this category did not stop at the second pageview either.

Be clear about the base. Even after tripling, fewer than 2% of Equus sessions reach five articles. This is a small population getting substantially larger, not a majority behaviour. The three-article measure, 1.94% to 3.71%, is the one to plan against, because it sits on a base big enough to move revenue on its own.

Traffic did not grow. Sessions and users were flat to slightly down. **This is entirely a composition change in how deep the existing audience goes.**

How long they spend there

Reaching more articles only matters if readers actually read them, so the Artificial Poets Platform measures attention on each article it surfaces directly rather than inferring it.



The mean is 76 seconds, and each served article holds a reader for around **30 seconds**. **Not a glance, and not a bounce.**

Why it compounds

The same telemetry shows what happens at each step of a scroll sequence, and it explains the shape of the depth result.



Served article	Readers who go on to it	Time it holds them
1st	—	44s
2nd	32%	26s
3rd	50%	21s
4th	59%	19s
5th	70%	19s
6th	78%	18s
8th	82%	19s

The hard part is the second article. Only about **a third** of readers who get one served article accept another. But the readers who reach a fourth go on to a fifth **70% of the time**, and past that it runs **between 75% and 82%** at every step. **Persuading someone to start is difficult; persuading someone already reading their fifth article is close to automatic.**

Attention does not decay to zero. It settles. Time per article drops sharply from the first to the third, then flattens at **around 18 to 19 seconds** and stays there. **The eighth served article holds a reader almost exactly as long as the fourth does.**

Together those two patterns are why the lift compounds with depth. The Artificial Poets Platform's work is front-loaded, and everything after it is a reader who has already decided to keep going.

How we know

The comparison titles. The Artificial Poets Platform was enabled on two Equine Network titles and not on the others, leaving four comparable properties serving an overlapping audience, in the same category, over identical weeks. All four declined at every depth measured. They are the entire eligible set: every Equine Network property that reports continuously across the window and was never enabled. Not a selected subset.

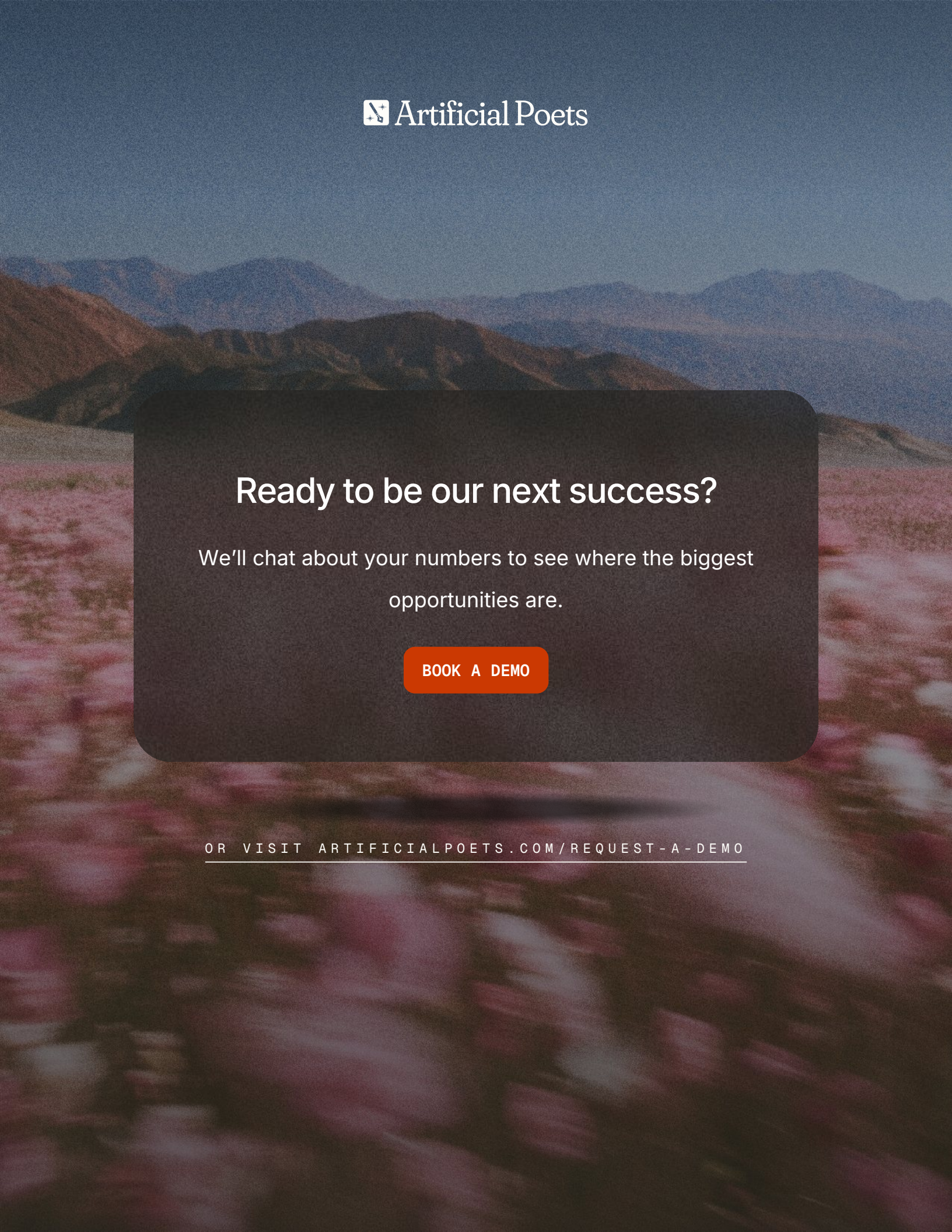
A pause in serving. For four weeks from 13 April, the Artificial Poets Platform did not serve on Equus. **Over exactly those weeks, session depth returned to its pre-enablement baseline.** Serving resumed on 11 May and depth recovered within a fortnight. Two independent signals date the pause identically: the share of sessions the Artificial Poets Platform served in, which ran at **14.7% before, 0.0% for four consecutive weeks, and 8.4% after**; and a behavioural fingerprint in pageview timing that collapsed and returned over the same weeks.

That combination, a control group *and* a within-site pause, is not evidence most vendors can put in front of you.

One thing we did not expect

Over the same period, mobile page experience on Equus improved: largest contentful paint at the 75th percentile **fell 24%**, against a 10% improvement on the largest comparison title.

We are not claiming the Artificial Poets Platform caused that, and we would not want it read that way. The site may have had separate performance work in flight. What we will say is that **the common objection to infinite-scroll products, that they cost you page speed and your search rankings with it, did not happen here**. Desktop was flat.


Artificial Poets
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References

1. Chartbeat data reported in Press Gazette, "Global publisher Google traffic dropped by a third in 2025." pressgazette.co.uk
2. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, "Journalism, Media and Technology Trends and Predictions 2026." reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk
3. Chartbeat, "Encourage multiple page visits, use social video for successful 2026 publishing strategy." chartbeat.com

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Method: PostHog, all devices, bot-filtered. Pre-period 4 Aug – 17 Dec 2025; post-period 22 Dec 2025 – 10 May 2026. Depth is counted as distinct article paths within a session. Comparison figures are pooled across four Equine Network titles without the Artificial Poets Platform enabled, session-weighted. Serving pause 13 Apr – 10 May 2026. Web vitals are 75th-percentile values from the same windows.