# Boon, bane or BOTH?

THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NEWSPAPERS NEARLY rivals the effort to cure cancer in terms of resources devoted to the cause. Yet in all that effort, it's unlikely that any expert ever foresaw the value of electing a head of state who loudly condemns the mainstream outlets. • The media-bashing US President has accidentally engineered what newspaper analysts are calling "the Trump bump." People wanting to make a statement against Donald Trump or to support the newspapers most aggressively covering his presidency have fueled dramatic increases in subscriptions to *The New York Times, The Washington Post* and *The New Yorker* magazine. Another big winner has been the nonprofit investigative journalism agency, ProPublica. • "Trump, of course, has become the greatest source of lead generation the American press has ever seen, his campaign and then election inspiring hundreds of thousands of Americans to rush to buy digital news subscriptions and memberships," Ken Doctor, media analyst, wrote this year at TheStreet.com. • This bump comes at the perfect time for newspapers. After years of striving to replace disappearing print-advertising revenue with digital-ad revenue – to little effect – many newspapers are pinning their hopes on digital subscriptions, the very thing Trump is driving. • But hold the champagne. "What's declining is still declining faster than what's growing," says Rick Edmonds, media business analyst at the Poynter Institute, a media think tank. • Among the challenges facing the mainstream media is a low barrier to entry. Little more than a smartphone is needed to launch a new medium, no journalism degree required. Nor is this the exclusive province of hipsters. Read below how a 60-something private equity titan became a TV star. • Purveyors of fake news may be an even bigger threat. Not only do they draw eyeballs away from legitimate journalism, they also force news outlets to waste precious resources trying to set the record straight. Bad news: fact-checking alone won't work. Good news: there may be another way.