

NewsBeat

Published by the New York Press Association
on behalf of New York's Community Newspapers

October/November 2016

NYFA



Reading a newspaper takes time
to slow down and experience it.

It's all about the user experience...



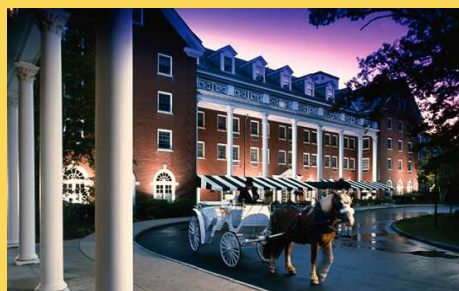
Playing records (which is
making a comeback) is a
hands-on experience;
so is reading a newspaper.

CLIP & SAVE**Mark your calendar****Friday, November 11, 2016**

NYPA/NYPS Board of Directors Meetings
 NYPA Foundation Board of Directors Meeting
 Straus News, 333 Seventh Ave. (6th flr.), NYC

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

NYPA Better Newspaper Contest Deadline

**Thursday, April 6, 2017**

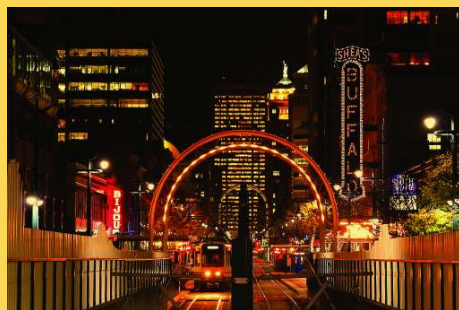
NYPA/NYPS Boards of Directors Meetings
 NYPA Foundation Board of Directors Meeting
 Gideon Putnam Hotel, Saratoga Springs, NY

**Friday & Saturday,
April 7 & 8, 2017**

NYPA Spring Convention and Tradeshow
 Gideon Putnam Hotel, Saratoga Springs, NY

Friday, June 9, 2017

NYPA/NYPS Board of Directors Meetings
 NYC

**Thursday, September 14, 2017**

NYPA/NYPS Boards of Directors Meetings
 NYPA Foundation Board of Directors Meeting
 Buffalo, NY

**Friday & Saturday,
September 15 & 16, 2017**

NYPA Fall Conference
 Buffalo, NY

NYPABy MICHELLE REA — *Executive Director, NYPA*

NYPA Fall Publishers' and Editors' Conference

Editor's Note: NYPA's 163rd Fall Publishers' Conference and Annual Meeting was held at the Omni Parker House, Boston, Massachusetts, September 15th and 16th. The Parker House is a legendary landmark in Boston, famous for inventing the Parker House Roll, Boston Crème Pie, and the Toll House Cookie. Other notable trivia: Malcolm X worked there as a busboy; Ho Chi Minh worked there as a baker, and John Fitzgerald Kennedy announced his candidacy for US Senate and President of the United States there.

The Red Sox swept the NY Yankees in a four game series the weekend of the conference, and many of us were at Fenway Park for the Friday night game.

On the two inside back pages of this newsletter you will find pictures and contact information for the new officers and directors of the boards of directors for NYPA, NYPS and the Foundation, who were elected in their districts, or at the annual meeting.

Following, is the executive director's address to attendees at the Annual Meeting and Election of Officers.

Good afternoon.

On behalf of the board of directors and the staff at NYPA, thank you for joining us this weekend. We know how precious your time is, and we're grateful that you decided to spend the weekend with us.

I'd like to share some of the highlights of the last year and then some thoughts on the state of our industry.

Last year NYPS generated \$16.5M in ad sales. We paid \$13.5 million to the newspapers for running displays ads placed by NYPS and distributed more than \$200,000 to those newspapers participating in NYPS' statewide classified advertising network.

Through the end of August this year, NYPS has generated \$9.1M in ad sales - we're approximately \$1M ahead of where we were at the same time last year, so with the four largest months of the year ahead of us, NYPS is tracking well.

NYPA accepted five new members in the past year.

NYPA currently represents 731 newspapers — 404 paid; 327 free; 72 dailies; 531 weekly newspapers; 143 ethnic newspapers; and 370 news websites in New York.

In June, 2015 NYPS partnered with Adforce, a digital advertising placement firm based in Dublin, Ireland, to help NYPS develop our own digital advertising placement service.

Last year, NYPS placed \$12K in digital advertising. To date this year, NYPS has placed \$164K in digital advertising, so we're hoping we're onto something.

NYPA is working with Adforce to develop digital advertising placement services in state press associations throughout North America. The goal is to create the only ubiquitous, single point of contact, premium news network in North America. We have

signed agreements with several states, but most importantly for NYPS, New England, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are in the process of ramping up, which gives the NYPS sales team a huge digital footprint in the Northeast.

NYPA and Adforce have entered into a free trial agreement with Lemonwhale, a video player platform based in Sweden. We hope to sign up 50 publishers to test the platform free for six months. If the trial is successful and publishers like the platform — which also includes a video content sharing component — NYPA will enter into a universal licensing agreement with Lemonwhale and then relicense the software to newspapers at a deeply discounted rate.

The goal is not only to provide newspapers with a high quality video player at a low price, but also, to improve the user experience for those viewing videos on our news sites.

Lemonwhale will present a demonstration of the platform during the Adforce workshop this afternoon.

NYPA is continuing its work with RPI, and Bryan Boyhan, Joe Shaw, Garry Pierre Pierre and I plan to write a Community 360 Playbook this fall, to provide a blueprint for publishers to help you implement the recommendations from the Community 360 study.

Our recurring problem with news racks reared its ugly head again this summer, but with the tremendous support of almost a dozen NYC-based publishers, and the testimony they delivered before the NYC Council's Transportation Committee, we've held our critics in check again, for the time being.

NYPA is developing a business plan for a new member service to be called the National Institute for Audience and Circulation Development. The goal is to provide a broad range of services to help news organizations to attract and keep new readers and

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(Continued from previous page)

visitors and to improve the total customer experience, increase engagement and reduce churn.

The Institute will also create a postal council in NYS, to facilitate an ongoing dialogue with postal officials in an effort to improve newspaper delivery service throughout the state.

Most newspapers are good at creating content, and most focus heavily on ad sales, but very few dedicate similar resources to growing audience and circulation. The mission of the Institute is to create and implement sustainable audience development strategies for print and digital news organizations.

Last, but not least, the NYPA Foundation just concluded the 20th year of its very successful paid summer internship for college students. 20 interns worked for NYPA member publishers this summer, and once again, the benefits to the newspapers, the students, and the industry overall, are immeasurable.

So that's the state of our state!

Now I would like to share a few thoughts about our industry — When I was collecting my thoughts to draft these remarks, I was reminded of a quote from a Dickens novel:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom it was the age of foolishness; it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...”

So the question for me is, where do we go from here?

Most newspaper publishers know it is their job to create a strong, cohesive company culture and that it is their responsibility to keep their teams connected to that culture.

I believe that it is NYPA's job to create a strong, cohesive culture for New York's newspaper industry — and it is NYPA's job to keep publishers and their teams connected to that culture.

NYPA needs to do everything in its power to help people feel good about their jobs. We know that your employees are working long, hard hours, so we need to find ways to help them feel connected to a larger mission. We all need EVERY newspaper employee to understand that they are responsible for promoting the newspaper industry culture.

We ALL need to stop listening to false prophets and to stop republishing the crystal ball predictions they espouse.

If NYPA can foster a shared sense of purpose, we can increase collaboration — which is one of the goals of our new content sharing platform. A shared sense of purpose will increase innovation and help us build sharper, healthier businesses.

State press associations are uniquely positioned to create strategic partnerships and to experiment. For all of us to reach our potential we have to maximize resources by partnering. Together we can create operating systems that ensure profitability.

We are running businesses — for profit businesses. NYPA needs to lead experiments where we re-examine procedures and processes and take a close look at how we invest our resources to insure we're getting the ROI we need to be sustainable.

We're all manufacturing a product — is it good enough? Is it competitive? Is it too good?

NYPA needs to establish a consortium of our best and brightest publishers to help build a new business plan. We need to remain flexible and be willing to change the plan when it doesn't work the first time. And most importantly, we can't be stymied by the hurdles.

Many industries are facing digital threats to their future — banking, real estate, retail giants, television, radio, and many more. In these industries, and in the healthcare, energy and transportation industries, companies are utilizing software to analyze data to influence their decision making. Why do we think newspapers can continue to rely on outdated planning tools?

It's NYPA's job to help publishers to identify vendors who can supply high quality, easy-to-use tools at an affordable cost.

Publishers need to get more involved in quality assurance — closely monitoring and always improving the user experience for readers, digital users and advertisers. Elevating the user experience for all users must be a top priority.

NYPA needs to provide the tools to help publishers produce the best possible product for our current audience and the new audience we want to attract. But remember the time-worn cliché about the definition of insanity — doing the same things and expecting different results? NYPA needs to help publishers get their arms around digital wizardry to help make good content decisions. Toward that end, Aisling Keogh is going to show you a tool called Visually during the Adforce session later this afternoon. Several other vendors offer similar analytics tool that NYPA members can experiment with in the coming months.

Facebook, Google and YouTube continue to encroach — but newspapers have assets they don't have and can't create. These assets — called reporters and editors — are something they can't duplicate.

No one disputes that the stakes are high, and there are no illusions that this will be easy, but working together, we can write a new playbook.

My comments here are nothing more than a new take on what you've no doubt heard before. We need to move faster, in small steps. NYPA will help. We need to experiment more. NYPA will help. We need to be willing to fail a little and try again. We need to constantly remind staff that our work has a big impact — it is a measure of pride.

In the long run, this will amount to a sea change if we do it together.

I am going to close by distributing an article published in Politico, that talks about the amazing power of print, and then I want to remind you about some of the things comedian John Oliver talked about in his 19-minute riff on the sad state of the newspaper industry. If you haven't seen Oliver's talk, email me and I will send you a link.

Oliver said, “The fact is, newspapers have a wonderful story to tell, but it's not being told well, if at all. First, newspapers have the best audience any medium could ever ask for — the wealthiest, the best educated and the people who have the biggest stake in their communities. Second, newspapers are very effective advertising vehicles. They get people off their couches and into stores, spending money. The problem is, newspapers do a terrible job of selling themselves to media buyers and advertisers. They always have. Too many newspapers do a poor job of showing advertisers they can deliver results. That has opened a door for everyone else to take business away from newspapers.”

Oliver ended his rant by throwing down a challenge to the former Newspaper Association of America. Oliver said, “Go out and show newspapers that they can compete with digital and show them how. Teach them the value of what they have to sell and show them how to sell it. Explain that their world has changed and they're going to have to change with it. Where you find a newspaper that is doing things right, and there are a number of them, encourage other newspapers to follow their lead. That is going to be a big job. We are talking about changing the culture of an industry.”

I don't know about the Newspaper Association of America — recently renamed the News Media Association, but I can assure you that NYPA will adopt this challenge as our marching orders. We are eager to work with the amazing members of the NYPA board, and dozens of other committed, talented publishers throughout the state, to rewrite the newspaper playbook in the coming year.

Thank you.

By KEN DOCTOR

Newsonomics: After John Oliver, the you-get-what-you-pay-for imperative has never been clearer

“It’s not experimentation that is most needed. It’s *execution*, and execution based on the value of smarter, rather than dumbed-down, local journalism.”



Photo by Eric Liebowitz — HBO

Can John Oliver’s 19 minutes rivet attention as all the bolts and screws continue to come undone in the local news business?

That seems a hope against hope — and yet 3.7 million YouTube views of his Sunday evening HBO program say something. Oliver offered no new revelations, but he connected the dots as he has so expertly done week after week on Last Week Tonight since its April 2014 debut. It seems to be Tronc — the ridiculous renaming of a once meaningful Tribune brand and the company’s unintentionally self-parodying promotional videos — that sent Oliver and his merry band of writers into action. They depicted the local press landscape as an increasingly barren one.

Michael Ferro’s Tronc (X or M), of course, is only a logical progression in a local news(paper) business that has long lost its way. There are of course numerous remaining (if awfully quiet) credible publishers, but they’ve been joined in the trade by so many crude cost-cutters, charlatans, and cowardly executives. They damage the search for a real turnaround strategy.

The wider public shouldn’t need the anti-bullshit brigades parented by Jon Stewart to connect the dots of press decline, but apparently it does. John Oliver and Samantha Bee have not only emerged as leading voices in the culture — I believe they’ve emboldened journalists, from The New York Times’ Trump-checking teams to CNN’s Brian Stelter, whose incisive work is

now getting the wider recognition it deserves (and whose “Fox-sent-me-on-a-date-with-a-spy” tale is now opening eyes to the resemblance between the Roger Ailes scandal and Hackgate, the major U.K. newspaper scandal Rupert Murdoch has almost buried amid concerns about his outdated management style).

As Oliver tours the ravaged newspaper landscape — from Portland’s Oregonian to the Sheldon Adelson-seized Las Vegas Review-Journal to the easy pickings of Tronc to how much TV still rips and reads local newspaper news — those of us too close to the business can newly see how far the business has fallen just this year.

Amid it all, let’s for the moment just focus on Oliver’s simple conclusion:

A big part of the blame for this industry’s decline is on us and our unwillingness to pay for the work journalists produce. We’ve just grown accustomed to getting our news for free. And the longer that we get something for free, the less willing we are to pay for it. And I’m talking to you, watching this segment on YouTube, using the Wi-Fi from the coffee shop under your apartment. You’re killing us. Sooner than later, we’re going to have pay for journalism, or we are all going to pay for it. Because if we don’t, not only will malfeasance will run amok, but the journalism movies of the future are going to look a lot more like this.

At that point, Oliver introduces *Stoplight*, a hilarious four-minute *Spotlight* parody, one that may still not seem funny enough to those in increasingly tronckified newsrooms.

That's simple, but it's not simplistic.

In fact, it may take a comedian to emphasize the point that is right in front of us: The decades-long subsidy of high-priced print advertising is all but over. It is now readers who must pay to keep informed. This isn't a new notion at all — it's one that has most eagerly seized by national and global newspaper companies, like The New York Times and the Financial Times.

All have crossed over — they receive more than half of their revenue from us, the readers. Reader revenue is helping each of them build a sustainable digital future. None is there yet, but they're far closer to getting there than the local press, where readers pay only about 30 percent of the expenses.

Oliver focused, properly, on local newspapers. That's all but four of the U.S.'s 1,350 or so dailies. Across an expanse of 3,000 miles, that's where most of us used to get our news, and that's where we've seen half of the newsroom workforce sent packing, including many of the most experienced journalists. Why haven't America's local newspapers crossed over like the Times?

That's the logical question that pops out of Oliver's rant.

"There is going to be a lot of experimentation and evaluation of new business models," wrote Newspaper Association of America CEO David Chavern, in his criticism of Oliver. In fact, the newspaper industry has been saying this now for almost two decades, with Chavern, new to the industry as of a year ago, to be excused for his take. It's not experimentation that is most needed. It's execution, and execution based on the value of smarter, rather than dumbed-down, local journalism.

In fact, most regional publishers — the few independent publishers I've highlighted over the years offer the primary exceptions — have failed to apply what the Times and FT have learned. It's true that the Times is

national, and now global. Consequently, it can draw upon a large universe of potential digital subscribers. That scale, though, isn't the only answer of why reader revenue works so well for some companies but not for the vast majority. In fact, my research shows that the Times and FT convert their audiences to paying customers at a rate of about five times better than do regional papers. So it's not just size of audience — it's also what you do for the audience.

Chalk up two reasons for the Times and FT success. Both provide more value to their readers — and both are smarter about how they charge. They haven't simply erected a paywall and put most of their content behind it. Most essentially, both still publish enough daily original reporting to maintain daily habits for subscribers. That's the journalism that should be at the root of the journalism business. Both publications have seen cutbacks, but both maintain robust, experienced, and increasingly innovative newsrooms.

Compare that to the ungodly decline in numbers, knowledge, and know-how in so many regional newsrooms across the country. For most daily publishers, the business logic is counterintuitive — cut the news staff in half and charge twice as much for the remaining output — and consumers have responded understandably by walking away.

Further, both the Times and FT think about product. The newspaper was the "product," though we never thought of it as one because it was so singular and so long-lasting. Our digital world, though, both offers the opportunity (and the demand) to think "product" when screen sizes, video storytelling, and social sharing open new horizons.

In March, I highlighted the Times' smartphone product — I believed it finally offered a copyable future for the press. My almost-eternal optimism has been dinged a bit since; I've seen practically no borrowing of the

many good ideas the Times presents every day. How could that be? In a world so desperate for new funding — for reader revenue — how can an industry shrug its shoulders at such a compelling model of mobile engagement and proven subscription payoff?

It's not just content and its presentation that form the building blocks of the majority-reader-revenue era we need to enter. Paywall technology providers tell me they are puzzled by how slow publishers have been to test new niche payment schemes, potential new products, and personalization. It is an industry focused on milking short-term profits at the expense of long-term business success — and civic service.

At home and in my travels, I talk with so many former local daily newspaper readers. They have lost a habit, as their print products became shadows of themselves, and as digital products just seem to offer a bunch of headlines, not a new news experience. We can count on a few hands the number of news publishers both seeing the potential of and investing in their news products. John Oliver may exhort his viewers to become paying local news(paper) readers, but unless we see new investment and new vision, his plea will have little chance of succeeding.

The truth is too many Americans now suffer — after years of local news diminution — a loss in local news muscle memory. That's not going to be easy to rebuild. In fact, I think it requires a new bargain. Publishers willing to invest in their communities and news companies need to provide more and ask readers to pay more. I believe they will, if the bargain is fair, real, and well executed. In truth, that may be too many ifs, but I think it's possible. Maybe even John Oliver could lend his face and his name to such a new news deal.

— *Reprinted from Nieman Journalism Lab*

By JACK SHAFER

Why Print News Still Rules

I've been an online journalist for 20 years — and still, you'll have to pry my newspaper from my cold dying hands.

Times-Picayune readers learn about the newspaper moving to a 'beefed up' online presence and a reduction to a three day a week paper in Louisiana.

Each time my newspaper delivery runs late, as it did last Saturday morning, and I'm forced to the Web for my early dose of news, I'm reminded how reading the news online pales compared to reading it in newsprint.

Don't get me wrong: I'm not some aging dead-end who wishes it was 1995 and not 2016 and this Web thing would go away. I've been an online journalist for 20 years. I get most of my news from the Web as it flows to my desktop, my tablet, my phone, and now my watch. Is the cabbie playing news radio? I listen. Walking through the POLITICO newsroom I inhale the news from the TV screens that cover the walls. When it comes to news, I'm an ocean that refuses no river.

But when it comes to immersion — when I really want the four winds of news to blow me deeper comprehension — my devotion to newsprint is almost cultistic. My eyes feel about news the way my ears feel about music driven from a broken pair of speakers—distorted, grating, and insufferable. Reading online, I comprehend less and I finish fewer articles than I do when I have a newspaper in hand. Online, I often forget why I clicked a page in the first place and start clicking on outside links until I'm tumbling through cyberspace like a marooned astronaut.

As a more rudimentary form of media, newsprint has the power to focus me. It blocks distractions. Give me 20 minutes with the newsprint version of the Times and I'm convinced I could clobber anybody in a news quiz who used the same time reading from the Times website. (Make no mistake, I like the Times website!)

What accounts for print's superiority? Print—particularly the newspaper — is an amazingly sophisticated technology for showing you what's important, and showing you a lot of it. The newspaper has refined its user interface for more than two centuries. Incorporated into your daily newspaper's architecture



are the findings from field research conducted in thousands of newspapers over hundreds of millions of editions. Newspaper designers have created a universal grammar of headline size, typeface, place, letter spacing, white space, sections, photography, and illustration that gives readers subtle clues on what and how to read to satisfy their news needs.

Web pages can't convey this metadata because there's not enough room on the screen to display it all. Even if you have two monitors on your desk, you still don't have as much reading real estate that an open broadsheet newspaper offers. Computer fonts still lag behind their high-resolution newsprint cousins, and reading them drains mental energy. I'd argue that even the serendipity of reading in newsprint surpasses the serendipity of reading online, which was supposed to be one of the virtues of the digital world. Veteran tech journalist Ed Bott talks about newsprint's ability to routinely surprise you with a gem of a story buried in the back pages, placed there not because it's big news but because it's interesting. "The print edition consistently leads me to unexpected stories I might have otherwise missed," agrees Inc. Executive Editor Jon Fine. "I find digital editions and websites don't have the same kind of serendipity — they're set up to point you to more of the same thing."

Reading a newspaper, you explore for the news like a hunter in a forest, making discoveries all the way. The Web offers news treasures, too, but they often feel

unconnected to one another, failing to form a daily news gestalt.

Reading a newspaper is a contemplative exercise that can't be matched by a screen. Is it because you hold it in your hand? Probably not. Scholars agree that reading retention suffers on a Kindle compared to a book, and that it doesn't allow for the deep immersion of its paper cousin. Likewise, the literal physicality of a newspaper signals useful information to readers. Picking up a daily newspaper, you can gauge by the feel how much news there is today, something a Website can't do. Just as the dimensions of a dinner plate communicates how much one should eat, the dry weight of a daily newspaper gives the reader signals about how much they need to read to reach news satiation. Not so on the Web, where no matter how much you read, you feel like you missed something important.

Newsprint's superiority became obvious to me this summer when circumstances prevented early morning delivery of three dailies — the New York Times, the Washington Post, and the Wall Street Journal. I did my best to keep informed by spending about a half hour on each newspaper's website, scrolling and clicking. Later in the morning when the newsprint versions were delivered I was astonished to find how many worthy stories I had skipped or bailed on when reading online. To make the audiophile analogy again, the news presented in newsprint regained its full fidelity. The stories made sense in relation to one another. I felt like I was reading something whole, not something slivered.

I tested my online-newsprint thesis earlier this year by switching my Financial Times subscription from the newsprint edition to the Web product. The Financial Times is one of the world's most beautiful newspapers. The Web edition has recently been redesigned. The experiment exonerated my prejudice for newsprint, as you may suspect. I can't find what I want to read on FT.com,. I can't keep track of my favorite columnists the way I could in the newsprint edition, and the paper's weekend edition, a bouquet of news, reviews, opinions, lifestyle and arts coverage and essays, seems like a scattered mess online. At renewal time, I will return to the Financial Times' newsprint version.

Raju Narisetti, a longtime newsman now working as an executive at News Corp., expresses my prejudices when he speaks of the mentally decadent pleasures of enjoying newsprint. "There still is nothing like the laid-back, Saturday morning on the couch, with the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal newspapers on hand, coffee nearby, WNYC playing NPR on Amazon Alexa, and iPhone6 ready to tweet out interesting print stories, for me." But Narisetti isn't doctrinaire about it. When the weekday comes, he turns digital only, reading from his phone during his commute.

Communications scholar Pablo J. Boczkowski doesn't dispute most of my overview, but he suspects that my newsprint preference may be generational. "Young audiences have the opposite experience that you conveyed in your message: even when they have a newsprint newspaper available, they privilege digital news because of their superior 'usability' — this is a very consistent finding across interviews," he says, all but predicting that when I die I'll take newspapers to hell with me. C.W. Anderson, a CUNY media professor, thinks "the routines you create for yourself around the technology" determine how consumption is internalized, and that may help explain my newsprint fixation. Pablo and C.W. might be right, but I would argue the newsprint routines I can create for myself are consistently superior any I can create for my online routines.

I will concede that online exceeds newsprint in several major arenas. Print is expensive. Online is cheap or free. Online is easy to search, its archives are quickly obtainable, and its stories can be shared and copied with ease. Online stories contain valuable links. Print? Uh-uh. Online is constantly updated while newsprint rests there in a pile, slowly decomposing and begging to be recycled.

I may be romantic about newspapers, but I'm not a sap. Typically, I keep my laptop or phone nearby when I read the newsprint editions so I can share or copy an interesting piece. The irony that my pro-print, anti-Web manifesto is

appearing online and not on paper is not lost on me. As I've already said, I love the immediacy of the Web, the way it generates immediate feedback in email and on Twitter, and its general superiority as a distribution technology. But when it comes to really taking something in, the difference between reading online and newsprint is like the difference between driving to the neighborhood grocery store and walking. Reading online speeds things, usually to the point that they begin to blur. But reading newsprint slows you down, giving your news absorption a "human scale" feel, and lends clarity to the experience. News is best sipped like whiskey, not chugged like beer.

As bad as they are, news Websites are getting worse and have been getting worse since the commercial Web took off in late 1995 and mid-1996, and sites like Salon, Slate, Feed, and others started experimenting with the form. At first these sites pulled the reader in with designs that encourage an immersive experience. Gander awhile at these Slate classic pages, which the brilliant Bill Flora stirred up out of pixel dust. In the beginning, Slate published about seven or eight stories a week, and like the print magazine we were trying to ape, published just once a week. The layouts didn't scream at you to visit other pages. There were no interstitials. White space filled the pages like summer clouds. The ad-load didn't overwhelm. The illustrations were as good as the copy. The site used page numbers to give you a sense of how big the "issue" is, so you didn't get lost in a sea of copy. It whispered, it didn't scream. It said, here's the best we've got with the stories it published.

Today, it seems like Slate and most of its competition use every available square inch of screen real estate to place ads and those annoying (paid) Outbrain refers to stories on the Web. (Instead of destroying Gawker, Peter Thiel should have gone after Outbrain.) A sense of "Where You Are in Slate" doesn't exist, just a never-ending cascade of stories, much like every other site on the Web. I count more than 100 stories screaming for my attention on the cover today (8/24), with only about a dozen pieces emphasized with art or a type treatment. (Disclosure: I worked at Slate for its first 15 years on the Web before I was laid off. They treated me like a prince while I was there. Slate isn't the worst offender on this score; I merely pick on it because I love it — and because it provides a great contrast to how far all of the Web has fallen in the past two decades.)

What is to be done? As long as news sites measure their success on clicks and feed their metrics by publishing a swelter of copy and hoping that something will catch fire, I can't imagine anything changing. The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, which don't depend on raw click numbers, both mirror the print version's layout (NYT publishes 150 in print on weekdays and 300 on Sunday; the

WSJ about 240) with online apps. Here you can glean what the editors thought to be important and what they thought was optional or supplemental. While the apps aren't beautiful like Slate classic, they both preserve the context found in the original. Software like Microsoft's Photosynth allows images (print, too) to be placed in mouse-drive spatial context with other images and text, and if used smartly could give shape to the news. (Spend a few minutes fooling around with Photosynth and you'll see what I'm talking about.)

I'm not lost stumbling in the past, mind you. I understand that today's home page is nowhere near as important as the home page of 1996. For some time, readers have entered sites sideways, depending on referrals from social media, aggregation, or RSS feeds to guide them to articles. So I'm not saying, "Let's go back," but to say that maybe picking your news site by leaping haphazardly from one poorly designed article to another because somebody shared it with you might not be the best way to soak up the news. Hierarchy can be a good thing.

I know print is doomed to be erased by the Web, so let me offer a few a modest requests for site designers, editors, and publishers. Don't completely forsake the design language that made newspapers great and informed readers for generations. Bring back design hierarchy! Abandon the "throw it on the Web and see what happens" ethos! Don't try to trap me on your site like a rat in a maze, forever clicking. Do what newspaper design has long done — direct the reader to that which is vital, tease him with that which is entertaining and frivolous, and give him a sense of a journey completed by the time he hits the last pages.

"Putting journalism first" is another way of saying it. I fear that unless somebody speaks up for good design we'll lose this precious inheritance, making the digestion of news a cruel, click-crazy experience for newshounds like me. If only publishers can be persuaded to care more about who reads their content and less on how much they read.

The newspaper end is near. I hope something approximating its glory will replace it. Until then, I will wake at 5 a.m. waiting for the sweet sound of my dailies making their triple-thump on my doorstep.

You know what I really miss? Those double-truck J&R Music and Computer World ads that ran frequently in the New York Times until 2014, when the retailer went under. Such reading fun! Send your bent ideas on print vs. online to Shafer.Politico@gmail.com. My emails alerts, Twitter feed, and RSS feed have no analog world analogies!

Jack Shafer is Politico's senior media writer.

By SHARON KNOLLE

How putting the newspaper customer first can turn your business around

Earlier this year, the *Boston Globe* was plagued with an array of home delivery problems after switching to a new vendor. Thousands of subscribers didn't receive their papers, and *Globe* reporters even had to go out and help deliver Sunday papers.

"We apologize for our inconsistent delivery," Peter Doucette, the *Globe's* vice president of consumer sales and marketing, said at the time. "Our expectation is that every subscriber gets their paper on time every day and we're not going to rest until we get it fixed."

Although the delivery issues did get resolved, valuable customer service lessons were learned, but how much damage had already been done to their subscriber base?

As newspapers shift their focuses on finding new sources of revenue while operating with fewer resources, perhaps they have lost sight of what should be their number one priority: their customers. Newspaper customers are running around in circles trying to get someone to return a simple phone call or email, or they're being transferred to call centers three states away. That frustration and poor communication can lead to customer service woes, and as a result, readers are cancelling their subscriptions.

Whether it's not getting their newspaper on time, not being able to reach the appropriate person for a certain question, poor website user experience, or not being able to renew a subscription, these issues should still need to be addressed. It's going to take a new set of skills and goals, but newspapers can make customer service a priority again.

Illustration by Tony O. Champagne



The Art of Customer Service

Kevin Slimp, director of The Institute of Newspaper Technology who consults with hundreds of papers a year, notes, "When it comes to newspapers, we are no different than any other business. Customer service should be number one on our radar. When I've worked with companies like Delta Airlines, AT&T, I constantly remind them

that it is much easier to retain customers than to gain new customers." According to B2B International, new customers can be up to 20 times more expensive to land than keeping existing customers.

Slimp said making customer service a priority can turn any business around. "Delta Airlines went from one of the lowest rated airlines in customer service just a few years ago to the highest rated after

making customer service the number one priority of the company. It's the best way to keep customers."

Joy Mayer, a consultant and Poynter Institute teacher who focuses on audience engagement, puts it very succinctly. "When it's done well, customer service is about respect for and reliance on keeping customers happy. A respect for the need to keep customers happy and the realization that if they're not happy, you don't have a job."

But what about customer service in the digital age?

Keith Schwartz is president and CMO of Minnesota-based Skybridge Americas, which provides customer service to newspaper clients including Sun Times Media in Chicago, the *Miami Herald*, and the *Star Tribune* of Minneapolis. He explains that working with an older clientele that's not used to managing their account online can be difficult. On the opposite end of the customer service spectrum are those people who want as little human interaction as possible. "Clientele that is extremely tech-savvy generally do not like to talk to customer service individuals," he said.

But getting on the phone or emailing is often their only choice since, as Schwartz points out, many newspapers do not offer chat or texting customer service options to their subscribers. He sees the demand for those options only growing, as well as the need for seamless integration across different communication channels. Whether a client emails, calls or sends a text — or does all three — the experience needs to be positive and the response time quick.

One thing everyone also hates is navigating an automated phone system to in order reach a real person.

"What does your message sound like? What are the prompts? Are they friendly or is it very robotic?" said Elnian Gilbert, lead service

trainer at ZingTrain, a spin-off of the highly successful Zingerman's restaurant, that has long been noted for its exceptional customer service.

Gilbert continued, "If you call your own phone system and listen to it — I've seen people do this — the CEO of an organization starts listening to it and they're like 'Oh my gosh, is that what this sounds like?' They're embarrassed. All these different touch points should be viewed through your customer's eyes."

And don't forget to clearly guide the user through your message system: While working on this story, I called the customer service number of an Indiana newspaper and wound up talking to someone in Michigan who thought I was calling about a completely different paper. I was transferred to a voicemail box, left a message and never heard back.

Among the other trends Schwartz sees: A stronger push for self service and the growing popularity of the call-back feature, where you don't have to wait on hold. Your local cable provider probably does this, but if your newspaper does not, there's an app for that: Fastcustomer.com offers the call-back service for papers including *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and *San Diego Union-Tribune*.

Slimp, who's well-known for his industry surveys, suggests newspapers host focus groups, made up of readers and non-readers, at least twice a year. "I do this for clients and the value can't be overstated. We learn what readers and non-readers like and don't like."

Mayer also recommends frequently surveying your readership: "I'm a big fan of surveys and Google surveys are free and easy to ask people what they want. You offer a \$25 pizza gift card and it's amazing how much information people will give you about what they like."

Social Media Should be a Two-Way Street

"We use social media as a distribution platform instead of a place to host and invite conversation," said Mayer. "We have no business being on a two-way platform and not listening to what's coming back."

She added that a golden opportunity to connect with customers is going overlooked when newspapers simply hit "share" on Facebook and never engage with readers.

"It's 2016 and I can't believe how often I see comment threads or Facebook threads where people are asking journalist questions and nobody's answering," she said. "People are talking to you and we are doing the equivalent of turning around and walking away. If somebody tweeted at us in the middle of the night that their name was spelled wrong in the middle of a story and 12 hours later, no one's fixed it, that's irresponsible and it's really poor customer service."

Mayer shared the example of the *Standard-Examiner* in Ogden, Utah, who recently posted a call to action on their Facebook page for circulation complaints. She praised the idea for not only directly engaging readers, but for the cross-departmental involvement where news editors passed the complaints off to circulation.

Ann Elise Taylor, the paper's news editor, said it wasn't uncommon for the paper to solicit feedback on Facebook. "Two weeks ago, we asked, 'Do you have a story for us? Is there a way we could be serving the community better? Let us know, here are the ways to contact us.' We try and do something like that maybe once every two weeks."

She said that not only is the feedback extremely informative, it helps serve as an FAQ for other customers. "If you have three

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or four people who comment with a complaint or a way we might do our jobs better, it gives us a chance to respond. It has the added benefit that if other people who might have that same complaint, it can act as a response to them as well. I think the community really appreciates it. We also try to share a phone number and an email address and a couple of other ways they can get in touch with us.”

Training Your Staff to Track the Problems

The *Standard-Examiner* recently underwent companywide customer service training by bringing in ZingTrain.

“It ended up being very valuable,” said Taylor. “It gave us a way to focus on different problems we were experiencing and put us all in a room together so we could find solutions. For example, anyone in the building can give a free two-week subscription to someone. Often you’re taking a complaint from a customer and it’s incredibly beneficial to go that extra mile and put something out there that’s an act of goodwill.”

Taylor also said accountability is uppermost at the *Standard-Examiner*. The newspaper encourages the person who initially gets a complaint to remain the point person until the issue is resolved.

“There are few things more obnoxious than calling a business and being transferred 10 times before your complaint can be taken by the correct person,” she said. “So whoever the original complaint is made to, that person needs to do everything they can to try and carry that process through to completion. By having a single person own that until the end of it, it gives the customer a point of contact and there’s a relationship there and you avoid that obnoxious process of being transferred constantly and put on hold.”

The *Standard-Examiner* has adopted ZingTrain’s five-step approach to handling complaints, which is, according to Gilbert:

“Acknowledge the complaint and apologize, take action to make things right, thank the customer for complaining, and then document the complaint.”

Tracking complaints was one of the key takeaways from the training, Taylor said. “We worked out a system for documenting complaints or praise. We have Google forms that are shared with everyone in the company. That’s been really valuable because it can give us a way to track where problem areas might be. For example, if we’re seeing a lot of people saying, ‘My newspaper didn’t end up on my porch, it was in the gutter,’ that gives us a way to identify, ‘Hey, there’s a problem here, we need to do something about it.’ And that’s something that came out of that customer service training. Prior to that, I think everyone could anecdotally identify trends and where we could be doing a better job, but that gave us an actual way to document that.”

ZingTrain offers its popular “Code Red” form (used to document customer complaints and/or requests) free on zingtrain.com as a way for businesses to start their own tracking process.

Personalizing the Experience

Gilbert challenges businesses to think of different ways to “go the extra mile” with customers. “That’s where we have to get creative and think, ‘What are the things we can do?’ she says. “Maybe if we find out a subscriber is going on vacation, so they put their delivery on hold, a nice extra mile would be to send them a postcard that’s there when they get home. ‘Welcome back, we’re ready to restart delivery when you are. We hope you had a great trip.’ It doesn’t cost any money, really.”

Consultants also suggest revisiting those generic email forms: Does it say “valued reader” when it could be personalized? Are all emails “do not reply” or do they give the consumer contact options if they have a problem?

Nick Woodcraft, a London-based solutions analyst, posted to Quora, “This always feels like a failure in customer service. ‘do not reply’ just says ‘we don’t care’ Where the company doesn’t have the resources to reply to and manage mail like this, a simple auto-reply containing appropriate support information and FAQs will do a lot to improve people’s impression. Nothing beats a fast personal response, but demonstrating you’ve given the problem some thought means a lot.”

One option that might not be immediately obvious is that different pricing tiers might be the secret to keeping customers. Slimp shared a story about how a colleague’s elderly mother was told she could only subscribe to her local paper in six- or 12-month intervals, meaning she would need to pay more than \$100 each time her subscription fee was due. “Her mother, like many, couldn’t afford to cough up \$100 plus when the bill came in, so she canceled her subscription.” Paying in smaller installments might have been the difference for this particular client.

Whose Job Should Customer Service Be?

While many companies have a dedicated customer service department, Gilbert said ZingTrain believes “every single person — even those who never see a paying customer — is expected to give great service to every other person that they interact with.”

Skybridge’s Schwartz added: “We define customer service as much more than an isolated department or a set of rules to follow. Customer service should be an extension of a company’s mission and philosophies. Every interaction with a customer — whether through a phone call, an email or on a FAQ page on a website — is an opportunity to have the outcome be positive to the customer.”

— Reprinted from Editor & Publisher

By ROY GREENSLADE — *The Guardian*

Why Facebook is Public Enemy Number One for Newspapers and Journalism

By luring away readers and advertisers, the social media site is both narrowing the news agenda and, ultimately, jeopardising journalism as we know it



Facebook's "like button" as displayed at its California headquarters. Photograph: Kimihiro Hoshino/AFP/Getty Images

Facebook has emerged as newspapers' public enemy number one. Hardly a day passes in which there is no negative article about the social media website that is luring away "our" readers and advertisers.

In the past couple of weeks, there has been something of an overload of criticism on a range of topics.

There was the blocking of the image of a girl fleeing a napalm attack in Vietnam. It generated outrage from, among others, Norway's prime minister Erna Solberg in the *Guardian*, Jane Fae in the *Daily Telegraph* and Dominic Lawson in the *Sunday Times* (an excellent piece).

Facebook's tax affairs have come under the microscope. Questions were raised about Facebook's attack on ad-blocking software (as if that isn't in the interest of every news outlet). And there have been plenty of critical articles about Facebook's news feeds, notably its "trending topics" feature.

It is argued that this narrows users' news agenda by advising (or "telling") them what to read. Evidently, people are bound to follow the herd. According to a Pew Research Center study released in May, 66% of Facebook users get news through the site.

These choices are made by algorithms, which can monitor users' interests and then "feed" them what it believes they wish to read while filtering out material they are supposed not to want. This system therefore creates an "echo chamber" or "filter bubble" effect.

So, noted a *Times* writer in an article on Saturday, "the news on Facebook is what Facebook says it is."

Although I nodded in agreement I couldn't help but remind myself that it conveniently overlooked the fact that before the arrival of the internet news in newspapers was what newspapers said it was.

It has always been the case from the dawn of media that the controllers of news outlets - newspapers, TV and radio, online - make choices about what to publish and, more significantly, what not to publish. So is there a real need to be especially concerned about Facebook?

Yes, writes the *Guardian's* Jemima Kiss in the latest issue of the *British Journalism Review*. In her article, "A giant that may eat us", she contends that the world's leading social media site is exerting both an "increasing domination of internet advertising revenue and control of a significant part of a critical distribution platform."

Users "willingly pour endless personal information about themselves into Facebook" and that enables the site "to sell targeted advertising around them."

By contrast, even the most advanced and successful of newspaper websites are unable to do the same. They can't compete, she writes, with such sophisticated targeting. Hence the difficulty all are facing in trying to secure enough digital ad revenue to fund their journalism.

Kiss doesn't develop this single point explicitly. But I will. Facebook's increasing dominance over advertising is causing the laying off of journalists, the people who produce the news that it transmits to its users.

The logical conclusion to that process is not only the destruction of old media, legacy media, mainstream media, whatever you want to call it, but the end of journalism as we know it.

Before cynics shout about that not being a bad thing (while digital optimists assert that independent, and therefore better, journalism will arise in its place), think of the perils we face without a collective of organised, skilled journalists working for organisations large enough to hold power to account.

The Facebookisation of news has the potential to destabilise democracy by, first, controlling what we read and, second, by destroying the outlets that provide that material.

Kiss cites a Pew Research Center study which found that Facebook is far and away the most popular site for sharing news in the United States.

Turning to the controversy over the control exercised over news choices, she points out that although human editors have been replaced by algorithms, those "robots" are, of course, designed by humans. So decisions on what appears and doesn't appear is neither neutral nor impartial.

Similarly, by creating news feeds that give people what they are supposed to want, those people rarely, if ever, see material offering a different perspective. (Again, I concede that that may well have been the case in the newsprint world. If you read, say, the *Daily Mail* or the *Daily Mirror* every day, are you not locked out from alternative views?)

Kiss argues that Facebook's newsfeed also encourages "superficial engagement — a like or a share that endorses only the idea of the headline, because the newsfeed offers no incentive to wait, click through and actually read a news story to the end."

And she is surely on strong ground in questioning the lack of transparency involved in the decisions Facebook makes in creating, and continually tweaking, its algorithms.

She writes: "It is likely that protecting journalism is not a priority for Facebook, where engineers hold the power and the solution is nearly always sought through technology."

Her conclusion casts the matter in a stark light. Facebook is an undoubted commercial success and it has achieved it fairly "in a competitive open market."

But, she writes, "journalism is more than just a business — it has a crucial and under-acknowledged social purpose that in this era of instability, isolationist politics and barely scrutinised power and wealth is more important than ever."

I could not agree more. That's the mission imperilled by Facebook.

By LIZ SPAYD — The Public Editor, New York Times

A 'New York' Paper Takes a Look in the Mirror



Two toddlers were burned to death in a Bronx fire that ravaged their third-floor apartment while their mother was folding clothes at a laundromat across the street. Officials believe the fire was started by incense that the mother left burning when she left the house. A neighbor said the mother, 26, heard the fire trucks and started running back home, screaming and in tears. "My babies, my babies," she yelled. The mother buckled to her knees as she watched firefighters rush from the building cradling her daughters, 18 months and 2 years. The girls later died at a nearby hospital.

The New York Times gave readers a somewhat longer version of the report above last April. A reporter was sent to the scene. An editor was moved into place. And the Metro pages of the newspaper were torn up to make room for a late-breaking story.

The question is, was that the right call? Should resources have been directed to one small fire by a paper trying to cover a city of eight million? More immediately, why should a newsroom that just announced lofty international spend resources covering news of no interest to readers in Beijing or London?

The Bronx fire has become a flash point for The Times. As the top editor overseeing local news saw how his staff got to work on it that night, he started wondering whether he was using his reporters to cover the right stories, not just in the case of the fire, but with all sorts of routine news. The editor, Wendell Jamieson, recalls asking himself, "Is this really justified by what our audience wants from us, or is Metro out of step?"

He decided stories on small fires aren't what readers want, and began a wholesale re-engineering of his staff. Soon, many of his reporters will be assigned to new subject areas, or "beats" in newsroom parlance. The types of stories they do will be different, as will the way they write those stories. Top editors are also looking at how much space local news should take up in the daily newspaper. (The answer: less.) The modernized Metro section that emerges, he believes, will be one more suitable for the age in which The Times now finds itself.

What exactly does this mean for readers? Fewer stories about individual murders, assaults or routine crimes. Fewer stories about lawsuits and criminal cases, or about legislation wending through Albany. And it will mean fewer stories about fires in the Bronx.

But the revamped desk will offer readers some riches. The incremental news of the past will

be replaced by stories with larger, more consequential themes; they'll include investigations of individuals and institutions that wield outsize power; and they'll include deeply reported narratives about the subjects that animate New York. Already, stories like this are being fanned into local coverage at a greater speed than before.

Ask someone on Metro for an example of what the new journalism looks like and you'll probably be directed to a series Metro is running called "Murdero," riveting and revealing stories on every murder that has occurred this year in the 40th Precinct in the South Bronx, a place chosen for its tapestry of housing projects, meth clinics and street gangs. Staffers might also mention by way of illustration a piece Metro did on at least two dozen people left homeless by a fire, a weeklong effort that produced the kind of insights impossible to provide in a quick news story.

The broader subject of policing and race is in. Cop coverage by jurisdiction is out. Subjects like demographics, gender and ethnicity are in. Community coverage is out. Politics used to be in, and it still is, because it's viewed as essential to the fabric of New York. But like everything else, it won't be done in small bites.

"We're looking for stories with real impact, that will resonate beyond the city," said Jamieson. "Covering all the small stories is just a way to pretend you're in the neighborhood."

I suspect most readers think The Times has already retreated from neighborhoods, and they're right. The new plan simply lets the paper pump the accelerator on its way out.

But I agree with Jamieson. This idea needs to go forward. You can't have your reporters parked in courthouses and police stations all day — or chasing fires — and still deliver memorable, ambitious stories that take time to produce.

Beyond that, when 90 percent of your audience lives outside New York, it makes sense

to skip the small stuff and write stories with the kind of wattage that attracts attention from a farther distance. Something akin to the way The New Yorker approaches news: Its writers don't land on any particular subject often, but when they do you remember it. The thing is, it's not easy to be The New Yorker. It's easy to stake that out as an ambition but not so easy to execute.

And the new approach carries some risks. When reporters aren't tied to hard beats, they don't develop the kinds of sources and expertise that help them break big stories — like the Eliot Spitzer prostitution scandal or the twists and turns in the prosecution of Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the former I.M.F. chief accused of assaulting a hotel maid.

What's more, some of the best stories aren't long narratives or multipart series. They erupt spontaneously on city streets or are found by monitoring the actions of corrupt city officials. I worry that real news could get lost in a meadow of soft features.

Jim Dwyer, a Metro columnist, says he embraces the ambition of Times editors but thinks, when the plan is in place, reality will get a vote as difficult decisions arise. "When the L train is temporarily shut down, no one cares outside New York, but it means everything to New Yorkers," he says.

My vote is for a slow, careful rollout of the plan, beginning with one subject area and only moving to another once the first effort is a proven success: a journalistic beta. I hope reporters will leave the newsroom with clear guidelines for how to determine what is a story and what isn't — and with the flexibility to let their gut trump all. And if readers revolt, they should be heard.

Jamieson said the Metro revamp is not designed to reduce his staff's size or save money, though I suspect strategic and financial imperatives across the newsroom could make that inevitable. On its merits, this plan is both shrewd and necessary and deserves a chance to work. But I also fear that faulty execution could be the tripwire that brings it down.

By MATT DERIENZO

Industry insight: To connect with readers, write them (news)letters



Photo credit: shutterstock

A single newsroom tool has the potential to boost engagement and user experience, drive page views, gather valuable customer data, enable higher advertising rates, promote transparency and trust, and enhance readers' willingness to pay for content.

Email newsletters have been around forever, but as an afterthought — an automated RSS feed scrape of website headlines pushed out once a day.

In the past few years, national and niche news organizations such as the New York Times, Vox, Mic and The Skimm have recognized the potential of newsletters that are crafted as a separate editorial product rather than an automated promotion of headlines.

Politico's "Playbook," launched by Mike Allen and recently passed off to a team of reporters, helped pioneer the email newsletter as a more personal, engaging experience, where news was broken, names were dropped, and writing was conversational.

The Boston Globe's "Ground Game," authored by longtime New Hampshire primary expert James Pindell, has become an excellent guide to the 2016 presidential race. It includes quick bits of analysis found only in the newsletter, along with story links not just to the Globe's campaign coverage, but to any news outlet providing useful news about that day's topics.

The potential for local newsrooms to adopt and improve upon this kind of model for email newsletters is great.

They can take an "everything about something" approach to a niche topic — arts and entertainment, for example, health care, or state politics (Politico has launched its own state version of Playbook in Massachusetts, Florida, New Jersey and New York). And provide your news organization with a list of people you know are highly engaged with and interested in that niche — valuable data for connecting the right kind of content to people most likely to click and drive traffic, and for efforts to sell targeted advertising at higher CPM rates. It might also be the best opportunity — either individually or as part of an "all-access" perk — to get readers to pay directly for content.

Newsletters are also one of the best vehicles for native advertising, or sponsored content, especially the more niche the audience.

If the mindset is to rally and serve a community of readers who are passionate about a particular topic, newsletters can be a great vehicle for building relationships with and the loyalty of readers, and serving them advertising that is actually useful and welcomed.

Even a general interest — all the local news that's fit to print — newsletter makes sense for newsrooms who care about reader engagement.

An email newsletter that goes beyond an automated list of headlines can provide context and perspective that maybe a static print front page or an ever-changing website homepage cannot. Also, consider that fewer people than ever are even seeing that print front page or that website homepage.

A strong argument for why every newsroom should develop email newsletters is that search has replaced homepage visits, social has displaced search, and Facebook and other social media platform algorithms have made it more difficult than ever to connect your content to an audience on social without paying for it.

Consider the email newsletter an opportunity to write a personal note to your readers every day (or whatever frequency makes sense given the size and scope of your operation). Pull the curtain back and explain what went into making the news that day and why certain decisions were made. Listen to your audience on social media and in story comments, and address criticism and questions.

Talking about what goes into the work of local journalism and viewing the audience as partners in that work has proven successful for news organizations who have developed strong voluntary paid membership programs — from local NPR stations to the online news site *Berkeleyside* in California. It's also been essential to newsrooms who have crowdfunded special reporting projects.

Email newsletters done right can offer a blueprint for overall newsroom management done right. This kind of transparency, engagement, and user experience is key to survival.



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organization that represents local independent online news publishers.

— Reprinted from Editor & Publisher

By CAROLE OLDROYD

Print is the new vinyl? An unlikely audience development strategy for newspaper publishers



Playing records is a hands-on experience; so is reading a newspaper.

Think a digital format is the way to grab and hold the attention of a younger, tech-savvy audience? Maybe not. The same crowd who loves vintage styles and pores over racks of vinyl records might just yearn for the tactile experience of reading a newspaper the old-fashioned way.

This doesn't mean that you need to scrap your digital strategy. In fact, it opens up new possibilities that you might have considered dead. Tech junkies will still likely go to mobile devices for their everyday news fix, but print gives them something more.

Technology Has to Mean Something

New technology can sometimes render the old ways obsolete. But that's not always what happens. Sure, you're not likely to run out and sort through boxes of Betamax or audio cassette tapes any time soon, but what about those vinyl records? Record shops are enjoying the attention of a younger, hip, niche crowd. Interestingly, so might newspaper stands.

According to Michael Skapinker for Financial Times, ASCI record sales are predicted to double in the UK, topping 700,000 copies. The trend is worldwide, with record sales at an all-time high, higher than at any time since the late 1990s.

This is happening in a world where music is available a la carte on almost any digital device, including smartphones, for much less than the cost of a record.

But What Does Vinyl Have to Do with Newspapers?

More often than not, a tech advance that introduces a major change doesn't oust an old standard just by virtue of the fact that it's new. There has to be something in it for the user. Digital offered convenience, better clarity, and a cheaper price point, and users responded enthusiastically; but there's nothing wrong with vinyl. And that might be the key.

Lovers of vinyl think there's something to be said for the sound of a record, even if slightly imperfect compared to digital, which explains why record collections are still prized, even by a generation who never had to buy one to hear the latest music. There's also nothing wrong with the news as it's presented on the paper page. It's a different experience, but digital didn't make reading it any better. For some, digital is more challenging to read.

It's true that a digital recording might sound more perfect than the music produced by a turntable and altar to stereo. It's also true that a digital page won't tear or fade out like a hard copy. But that doesn't mean digital repaired a flaw, it just offered an improvement in one or two areas. When it comes down to it, you can't destroy an album by spilling your drink, and a newspaper won't shatter and cost hundreds to replace, unlike an e-reader, if you drop it on the sidewalk.



Reading a newspaper takes time to slow down and experience it.

It's All About the Experience

What's in it for the user is the overall experience. Putting a record on a turntable, and turning the pages of a newspaper — they both offer a different experience than tapping a screen. You can sit in your living room, pull a record from its sleeve, and admire the artwork while you listen to music as it was heard at the time when it was created. You can also do this while turning the pages of a newspaper spread out on the floor.

The bigger experience, or sense of occasion, as Skapinker calls it, might mean there's room for both — digital and print — in your newspaper's future. Reading a newspaper over coffee takes time and space, neither of which your audience may have on a daily basis.

But when there is time, even a younger generation can appreciate the joys of experiencing media sans digital. It might seem like a step back to a different era, but not all vintage ideas are bad ones. And tech advances aren't always better, just different.

— Reprinted from *Recruitment Advisor*

By CHRIS SUTCLIFFE

Dennis Publishing's James Tye on culture change in consumer publishing



Some day very soon, there'll be universal understanding that the print/digital divide was a distraction for publishers. Operating a brand with a strict gulf between print and digital divisions, both in terms of revenue generation and culture within the newsroom, will go the way of the dodo - and there'll be much rejoicing.

At best the distinction between print and digital was born out of a recognition that audiences on one platform aren't necessarily the same audiences on the other, but too often the split is absolute, and the publisher can essentially be running two different businesses linked only by a shared name for the sake of it.

James Tye is CEO of Dennis Publishing. He believes that, for publishers generally and for Dennis specifically, the time when there was a print/digital split is past:

"This whole debate, print, digital, it just feels like ancient history. We just don't talk about it any more. [Instead] I think there's a celebration of skills. If you haven't moved on from that you really do need to now, because your consumers don't think like that, do they?"

Instead, Dennis (like all successful publishers) uses the consumer as its guide for which products it should be focusing on. Last year saw the launch of Alphr following the closure of the digital side of its flagship print product PC Pro as a direct response to the changes in consumption among its audience.

Tye says that consideration - and reappraisal of the purpose of platforms for individual brands — is at the heart of all Dennis' decisions:

"We launched Cyclist and we purposefully — at launch, not now — we focused on the print magazine. Then when we launched Car Buyer, it's a pureplay brand, we just felt there was no more need for a consumer magazine when it comes to choosing the car you buy.

"That's where Dennis often starts. You ask 'can we come up with a brand that satisfies how and where they want to consume the content'."

Internet experimentation

In order to foster that culture of putting the consumer first, Dennis' brands are given tremendous amounts of freedom to best consider how to grow within their niche. Across the publishers' four key publishing areas of cycling, automotive, current affairs and lifestyle, Tye explains that employees are encouraged to find ways to expand even at the expense of disrupting their own brands or when it seems counterintuitive.

"Each of those business pillars has their own objective and key results. At Dennis we let people have ownership of that and get on and find the best way to do it, and those individual business units have come up with what they think the best way is to achieve their OKR.

"The Week thought it was best to expand the readership downwards with a junior product [The Week Junior] which has just hit 19,000 subscribers, actually. We were told two things definitively about the children's market. The first was that children don't read print... and the second thing we were told is that parents would never ever subscribe to childrens' magazines in that way."

Naturally, having that freedom to experiment opens up scores of new revenue generating opportunities.

Aside from digital display, which Tye says still works for premium products like cars as part of a sales narrative, Dennis is seeing a lot of success in the ecommerce space, particularly with regards to the big ticket items like automobiles:

"When we bought Buyacar we always had in mind that it was a lead-gen market-driven product, but we quickly worked out that this going to be a transactional product. If you transact cars that generates a lot of revenue, because they're big ticket items.

"We did a lot of soul-searching in how best to get involved in e-commerce and felt that selling t-shirts, small-ticket items, you need a lot of it and a big infrastructure."

Dennis has the advantage of having a portfolio of technology focused titles, the audiences for which provide insight into changing consumer habits that will eventually be adopted de rigueur by the majority of the population. As a result Dennis is able to get a fix on which habits can be monetised most effectively. Tye explains:

"Certainly ten year ago I don't think anyone would have bought a car on line, spent £15,000 and expected it to turn up delivered to your door. I think people are OK with that now, it's learned behaviour.

"For us it is really helpful to be in the technology space... those consumers are a little bit more cutting-edge therefore they're early adopters of almost all technologies before they become mainstream. A lot of consumers don't think about technology as a subject, they think about it as a facilitator of their life. It's a good space and advertisers are moving into that space [as well]."

So while Dennis still sees the lion's share of its revenue coming from its print focused brands (though the balance is shifting as a result of that growth in e-commerce), why shouldn't it? Dennis' strength is in its culture that puts consumer desires first, and if those desires include print as a part of the revenue mix then so much the better. What's important is that at Dennis and other successful publishers, there are no hard and fast rules for the platforms on which its brands need to exist. Gradually, that culture of a print/digital divide is disappearing.

— Reprinted from the MediaBriefing

By ROB TORNOE

Digital publishing: How newsrooms are speeding up their digital transformation



If there ever was a time to double down and get serious about the pace of your newspaper's digital transformation, now may be it.

Recently, Pew released its annual State of the News Media report, and if you were hoping to see a bottoming out of declining print revenues, prepare to be disappointed.

According to Pew, newspapers in 2015 had perhaps their worst year since the Great Recession. Daily circulation fell by 7 percent, the most since 2010, while print ad revenues declined another 8

percent. As *New York Times* CEO Mark Thompson recently summed up, "Winter really is coming for many of the world's news publishers."

The fact that print advertising revenue continues decline is nothing new, of course. For years, the end game for the nation's top newspapers has been to grow digital revenue enough to offset declining print revenues in order to maintain their depleted news gathering operations.

Most people in today's newsrooms seem to understand this. Tribune Publishing recently rebranded itself as tronc, Inc., a clunky abbreviation of "Tribune online content." The *Journal Register* and MediaNews became Digital First Media all the way back in 2011. Yet both these companies are still largely emblematic of the newspaper industry as a whole, which continues to be run by a print first, digital second mentality.

Despite all the doom and gloom, newspapers benefit from one recent finding — newspaper

brands matter. According to a recent report about digital news by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, traditional news brands act like anchors, with 69 percent of people accessing a newspaper brand online every week. Only 45 percent of people in the study accessed a digital-only outlet every week.

“Traditional brands have the advantage of credibility and heritage but new brands have a vibrancy and responsiveness that is often leading the way in innovation and new formats,” wrote Nic Newman, the report’s lead author.

So how can newsrooms, still dependent on the revenue from their print products, quicken their digital transformation and remain as vibrant as new outlets?

If you’re the *Dallas Morning News*, you start from scratch.

When editor Mike Wilson came to the Morning News from ESPN’s FiveThirtyEight in 2015, he found the traditional news beats associated with most newspapers and a content schedule that included a 10:30 a.m. morning news meeting dominated by column inches, sections and print deadlines.

Changes were made, and they were dramatic. Everyone on staff was forced to apply for a new job, and many of the longtime positions associated with the newsroom (and the print edition) were eliminated. The Morning News ended its traditional beat coverage in favor of reorganizing into verticals currently of interest to readers, like justice and high school sports.

“We just basically wiped the slate clean,” Wilson told Poynter. As the Morning News itself stated in a 159-page report to its employees, “Getting something ‘on the record’ is not a justification for writing boring stories that no one reads.”

Now, as a popular YouTube video created by Poynter’s Kristen Hare bragged, their morning meeting is a headline rodeo that editors vote on. They discuss web analytics and go over what worked well on social media the day before and

what didn’t. Meanwhile, the print product is put out by a small team of editors that curates from the best content produced throughout the day by the individual verticals.

El País, the highest-circulation daily newspaper in Spain, has also completely revamped its newsroom structure and placed digital distribution at its core, literally. Editors have created a digital distribution desk focused on audience measurement, social engagement and SEO and placed it in the physical center of its newsroom, surrounded by the company’s other verticals and departments.

“It will be a newsroom without desks, one that is open to collaboration and the exchange of ideas, in which teams will mingle in order to create new stories,” Antonio Caño, the editor-in-chief of *El País*, explained to his employees.

Like the Morning News, the print edition at *El País* has taken a back seat, allowing them to push forward with more publishing experiments, such as digital distribution and live video.

During the 2015 elections, *El País* hosted an election debate between the top three candidates for prime minister and broadcast the video live on their own website. It was a hit, garnering more than 2 million simultaneous live viewers, which chief experience officer Alberto Barreiro said placed it among the country’s major broadcasters during prime time.

“The media is now all over the place. We are not a .com anymore and who knows, maybe we are in the process of disappearing as a destination,” Barreiro said at a recent Digital Media Europe event in Vienna.

Barreiro noted that different distribution projects, such as Google’s Accelerated Mobile Pages and Facebook Instant Articles, were exciting and worth experimenting with. But he also said it was equally important for newspapers to remember these platforms also compete for their readers’ attention.

“The interface is where all the value and profit are, so whoever controls that interface

controls the business,” Barreiro said, noting that the millions that watched the election debate on *El País*’ own website helps the newspaper build “brand affinity.”

At Independent News and Media, the publisher of Ireland’s top four newspapers, the previously separate newsrooms have been combined into one staff working on the same floor. As Journalism.co.uk recently reported, content in the Independent’s newsroom is now conceived in a “central hub” and publishes like a wire service, which its newspapers then pull from later in the day to fill their individual editions.

This consolidation has allowed the company to focus on technology invocations, such as customizing the homepage of independent.ie based on data provided by its readers.

“We have a very engaged rugby audience, so during the World Cup, we split the homepage into three formats which changed to suit the readers,” Stephen Rae, group editor-in-chief, explained to delegates of the 2016 World Editors Forum.

“From our data, we knew which sport they consumed and sent out different types of push notifications based on this,” Rae said. “It led to a huge increase in engagement and the open rates of our targeted push alerts increased by 300 percent.”

These organizations shouldn’t be outliers for an industry that has been criticized for transforming at glacial speed. It’s long past time for newsrooms to strip themselves from the shackles of how they’ve produced content for the last 50 years and re-imagine how best to deploy their newsrooms in ways to better serve readers today. Print is still important, but it’s 2016. It can no longer be first.

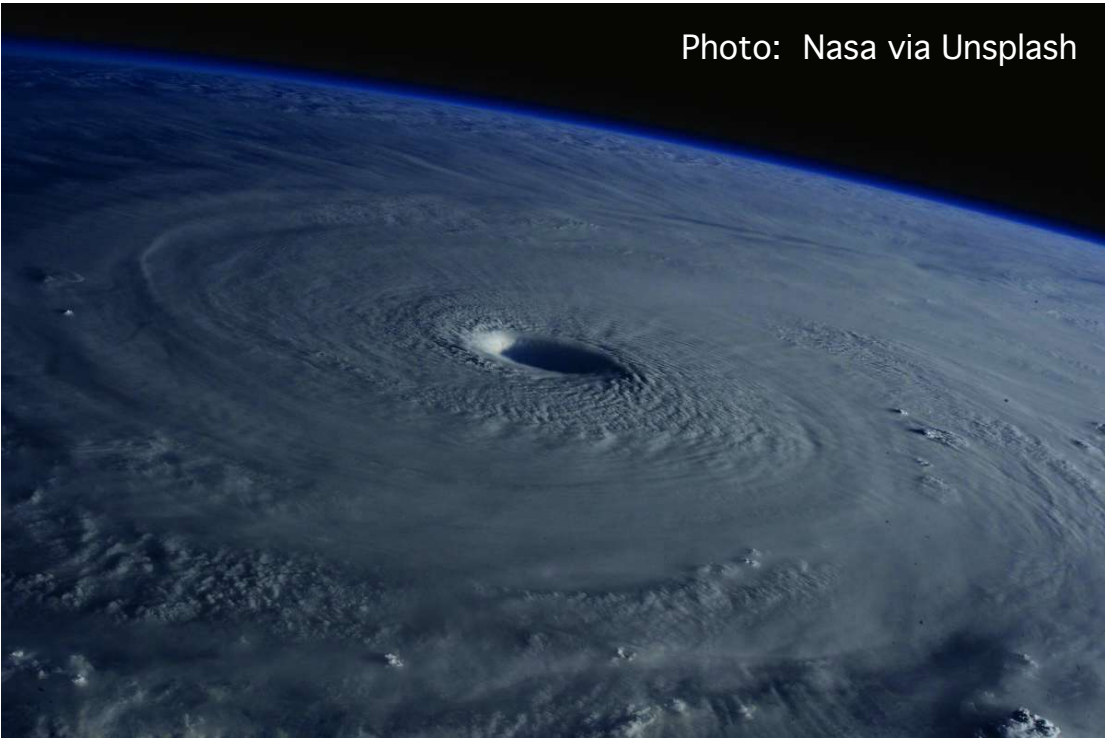


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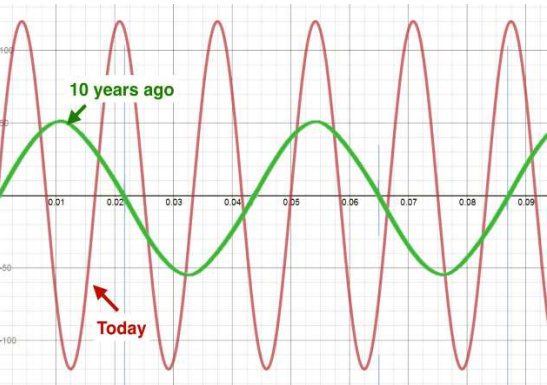
By FREDERIC FILLOUX

News is afflicted by its own climate change: It’s called social



Exactly like climate change keeps bringing more droughts and floods, the way news is consumed on social will lead to greater instability and accidents. And collateral damage to Democracy.

For news, this is the perfect storm. It combines the triumph of superficiality over depth and substance, the acceleration of the news cycle, the decline of media that used to provide necessary checks and balance and, for good measure, the spectacular economic imbalance between new and old media players.



If the evolution of the news cycle could be summed up in one graph, it would look like the sinusoid below. The amplitude reflects intensity (how we champion or we trash people, cause or actions...), and the wavelength is the news cycle’s timespan or density:

The green line shows a relatively slow cycle. For news, ten or fifteen years ago, the main accelerator was live television. That was it. The rest of the journalistic crowd was free to dig deeper, to take the time to put things in perspective and provide informed analysis. Legacy media enjoyed a large audience in print and online. Even digital newcomers such as Salon (1995), Slate (1996) or, later, Politico (2007) practiced a fairly classic kind journalism that unfolded in a longish cycle. Investigation still meant something, whether to cover public interest issues, feed the democratic debate or make elected officials accountable. It was not unusual to see a news organization spend \$50,000 or \$150,000 to fund an “enterprise journalism” project. For the good, rather than the worse, media were in control of the news cycle’s sinusoid, both amplitude and wavelength.

The red curve tells a different story. Combining mobile access with the social tsunami, news

consumption habits are now very different. The news cycle has become faster, denser, with a greater amplitude. Today, we love and hate at a much faster pace than ever before, and more intensely. As the timespan is compressed, the wavelength is shorter, with a greater amplitude. More pinnacles and more pillories on a much shorter time span.

The Brexit accident and the rise of Donald Trump provide the perfect illustration of this fundamental alteration of the news cycle.

Media that once could take their time to do their job suddenly had to deal with a new breed of competitors. Score of new media outlets, lighter, more agile, many profusely funded, were changing the game by operating under their own rules — the obsessive search for more clicks. That quest resulted in pernicious side effects: the drive to produce large quantities of shallow, superficial pieces. News was aimed at being snacked, not read.

Two factors made things even worse. The first one was the reaction of legacy media, too slow to take the full measure of the situation. They failed in multiple ways: they didn’t invest sufficiently and quickly enough in critical technologies; they didn’t listen to their young readers; they couldn’t create new products; and were unable to reduce their costs in order to fight competitors who had the advantage of starting from a blank slate.

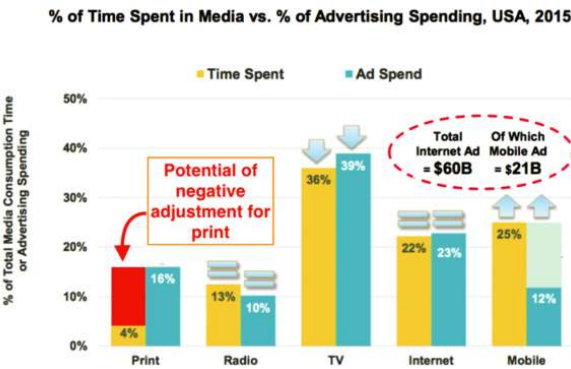
More importantly, they failed at reforming their internal culture (see this previous Monday Note):

Fossilized culture, not lack of funding, put news media on deathwatch



That being said, no drastic measure could have prevented shifts in the fundamentals of the news consumption. As an example, see how losses threaten the print sector when its ad spending gradually adjusts to the

actual time spent by readers (unfortunately, not the other way around, more money poured on ads doesn't result in readers spending more time):



Print still captures about 16% of ad spending while getting only 4% of time spent by readers. A severe correction seems unavoidable. Source: Internet Trends 2016, Mary Meeker KPCB

As new digital players joined the fray, loaded with venture capital money and a licence to incur whatever losses were necessary to capture market share and achieve dominance, legacy media found themselves on their heels. Economically unable to preserve the integrity of their key assets — the ones that used to make the difference between commodity and value added news — they lost their ability to fortify their element of differentiation, their editorial quality.

Over the last ten years, newsrooms in the United States have lost about 40% of their workforce. (Incidentally, this unprecedented depletion came to benefit the whole communication sphere: corporations becoming content producers, media in need for professionally made branded content, all of them hiring en masse former writers and editors...)

Then we had three converging factors: a growing audience gap (users, time spent) between old and new players; a shift in the news format that favors short, commoditized, click-bait oriented pieces of information powered by Social; and the rise of mobile that further accelerated the format shift.

In conclusion:

Legacy media lost on both ends: they no longer have the resources to provide effective checks and balances and they lost the audience battle anyway.

Truth and lies about video. Today, the upcoming dominance of video is the talk of the town. Allow me a grain of skepticism.

First, glowing promises for video consumption come from actors with a strong economic agenda: Facebook; internet providers and network suppliers such as Verizon, or Cisco; producers of video-oriented

apps like Periscope, Facebook (again), or YouTube. Each of these players has a vested interest in inflating numbers, either because they can charge more, or because they will sell more gear or bandwidth.

Second, there are two kinds of videos: the ones designed for social use such as NowThis (2bn video views per month on Facebook) or AJ+ (4bn), and longer formats seen on YouTube or on legacy media.

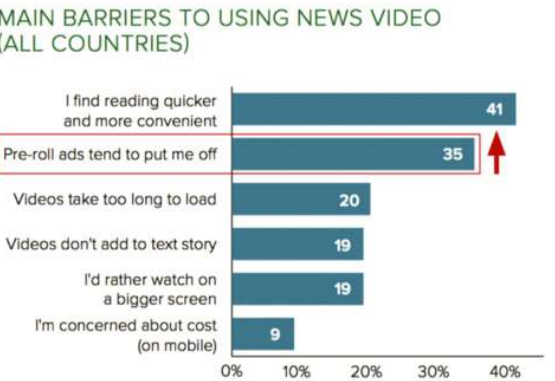
As for Facebook, the stunning “video-streamed” numbers must be taken with great caution: Facebook tends to vastly overcount videos that, in fact, play automatically, meaning not requested by users. In addition, the social network acts as a copyright terminator with more than 70% of its most popular segments that are in fact stolen. Therefore, while YouTube might be a true enabler for video producers, Facebook is more into the recycling business of stolen items. (For more on Facebook practices, read this compelling piece by YouTube producer Hank Green.)

When it comes to news, the death of text has been greatly exaggerated.

The recent Digital New Report published by the Reuters Institute highlights an interesting view (emphasis mine):

Across our entire sample [from 26 countries], the vast majority (78%) say they only read news in text or occasionally watch news video that looks interesting. Just one in twenty (5%) say they mostly watch rather than read news online. When pressed, the main reason people give for not using more video is that they find text quicker and more convenient (41%). Around a fifth (19%) say that videos often don't add anything to what is already in the text story.

When asked in the survey: “You said that you don't usually watch news videos online. Why not?”, respondents give the following reasons:



Source: Digital Media Report 2016, Reuters Institute

It is therefore fair to say that the rise of the video will: (a) mostly be driven by, and benefit social media and, (b) mostly promote very short formats, more 30 sec. than one minute.

Not very good news for what we knew as information...

As a consequence, media that used to provide quality-oriented information are losing the race for digital advertising dollars.

As recent earnings showed, we see great established media outlets such as the New York Times or the Guardian reporting actual declines in their digital advertising revenue while, at the same time:

- Digital ad spending is expected to grow by 12% this year (PwC)
- Facebook and Google are raking 85 cents for every dollar spent in digital advertising on the US market, with Q2–16 worldwide year-on-year growth of respectively

Let's now consider two other metrics: the respective ARPUs (Average Revenue per User) and the VaPU (Valuation per user): (Original Google Sheet is here)

ARPU for media companies vs internet giants			
.....			
Google worldwide average:	\$70.09	per year and per user (MAUs)	
Facebook worldwide average:	\$13.84	"	
Facebook for US users :	\$50.96	"	
NYT all revenue counted:	\$20.51	per year and per Monthly UVs	
NYT digital ads only:	\$ 2.54	"	
Guardian all revenue:	\$ 7.87	"	
Guardian digital ads only:	\$ 3.08	"	
Buzzfeed Low Rev estimate:	\$ 1.00	"	
Buzzfeed High Rev estimate:	\$ 2.50	"	

To put in another way, when it come to digital ads revenue, Google makes 27x more than the NYT or BuzzFeed under its best 2016 revenue hypothesis of \$500m. As for the Guardian, Google makes 22x more. Note that the New York Times gets its real ARPU from its 1.4 m digital subscribers who bring individually about \$160 each year —that's the virtue of paying-for users in case of someone doubts it...

When looking at the Valuation of each company's users (again, based on MAUs and UVs — Monthly Active Users and Monthly Unique Visitors):

Valuation per User based on market cap or latest funding round		
Google:	\$465		
Facebook:	\$211		
Snapchat:	\$ 90		
NYT:	\$ 26		
Buzzfeed:	\$ 7.50		



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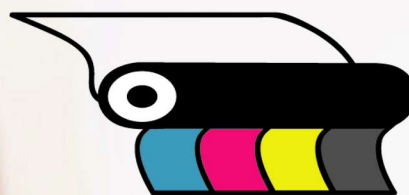
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By DAVID AMBRO — (edited by NYPA)

Suzanne Paley, wife of Smithtown News publisher, Bernard Paley, died July 18th

A Suzanne Paley, 86, of Smithtown, the wife of **The Smithtown News** publisher Bernard Paley and mother of **The NEWS** associate publisher Jennifer Paley Ambro, passed away Monday, July 18 after a year-long battle with cancer.



Suzanne Paley

Mrs. Paley was the daughter of Italian immigrants, Annette and Giuseppe Piazza. Her mother, one of nine children raised in an orphanage in Piedmont, Italy and her father, who was from Sicily, met in Manhattan. The youngest of three children, Mrs. Paley was predeceased by her brother Frank and sister Josephine. Born in a Manhattan tenement, they were raised in the Bronx. The first member of her family to attend college, Mrs. Paley received a bachelor of arts degree cum laude from Brooklyn College in 1950. She then went to work as a teacher in the New York City public schools where she taught for five years, and during that time received a masters degree from City College of New York (CCNY).

She left the Kings Park School District in 1960 to have her two daughters, Jennifer and Elizabeth. It was at that time that the Paleys moved from Kings Park to Smithtown. Mrs. Paley then returned to work as a teacher for Western Suffolk BOCES. She retired from teaching in 1985. She also helped out at "The NEWS" as a proofreader and doing rewrite work.

"She and my father moved out to the suburbs with virtually nothing but my mom's teaching job and together built a life filled with world travel, including month-long trips to Italy, France, Germany, Russia, Portugal, and Ireland and throughout the United States," Jennifer Ambro said. "She loved spending her winters in Vermont, where she skied daily into her eighties, and her summers in Saltaire on Fire Island. And, she always looked forward to her summer trips to Tanglewood Music Festival in the Berkshires and additional skiing trips to Canada and out west."

Mrs. Paley is survived by her husband Bernard, to whom she was married for 65 years, daughter

Jennifer Ambro and her husband David, and their two children, Brady and Sophie, and daughter Elizabeth and her two daughters, Lily and Anna. "Nothing was more important to her than her grandchildren and her children," Mr. Paley said.

Mrs. Paley had many interests. Among her many passions were liberal causes as evidenced by the many bumper stickers plastered to her car, completing The New York Times Sunday crossword puzzle each week, and playing bridge. She was an avid theatergoer, was a subscriber to the New York Philharmonic, a season ticket holder at the Metropolitan Opera, a member of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and other museums, in addition to supporting many smaller theater companies throughout Manhattan. She was also an active member of the Smithtown Bridge Club.

Donations in memory of Suzanne Paley can be made to the New York Philharmonic Education Fund, 10 Lincoln Center, New York, New York, 10023, Attention: Amy Grossman or by calling 212-875-5684; or to the Smithtown Historical Society, 239 East Main Street, Smithtown, 11787.

Community Papers of Western NY ceases publication; Grant Hamilton rescues Springville Journal

Community Papers of Western New York, which owned the weekly Hamburg Sun, the Springville Journal, the Sun papers, several Pennysavers and other publications and businesses, filed for bankruptcy last December. In mid July, the bankruptcy court removed Community Papers' protection from creditors, which led to the closing. The company closed July 25th.

The Community Papers chain, originally known as the Metro Community Newspapers, changed hands in 2014.

Publisher James C. Austin notified employees about the closing in an email. At the time of the filing, an attorney for the company said it had 200 employees, most of them part time, though the number was believed to be less than half that when the company closed. Billed as "New York State's largest publisher of free weekly community newspapers," the chain, at one time, delivered newspapers to more than 258,000 homes and more than 300 other locations each week. The papers it published included the Amherst Getzville Sun and Hamburg Sun with separate editions in Clarence, the city and town of Tonawanda, Kenmore, Lockport, Lancaster, North Tonawanda, Orchard Park, Cheektowaga, Springville, Cuba, West Seneca

and several other communities. One of the weeklies, the Hamburg Sun, can trace its pedigree to 1875, with the founding of the Erie County Independent. The Hamburg Sun was founded in 1945 by Dick Allen, who used to work for the Independent. In 1947 he bought the Independent for \$500 after the death of its publisher, and added its name to the masthead, according to a history published in the paper.

The Springville Journal was celebrating its 150 anniversary when the company closed.

Grant Hamilton's Neighbor-to-Neighbor News, Inc. purchased the name and the right to publish the paper in early August. Neighbor to Neighbor publishes six other weekly community newspapers in suburban Buffalo.

"We are pleased that we were able to obtain the Springville Journal trade name following bankruptcy of the former publishing company," Hamilton noted. "We believe in the importance of tradition and continuity in newspapers. We are aware that the Journal suffered during the decline of the fortunes of two former owners,

and we are committed to rebuilding the newspaper as a traditional, paid circulation publication," Hamilton said.

According to Sandra Cunningham, vice president and general manager, the newspaper name was acquired from the Buffalo News, Inc., which was the secured creditor in the bankruptcy of Community Papers of Western New York. "We appreciate the community spirit of the Buffalo News in making the Springville Journal name available. We expect our presence in the community to continue to grow as we continue to re-establish the Journal as the Springville news source and the best place for local businesses to reach readers. While we have no connection to the bankrupt company through the purchase of the trade name, we will honor current paid subscriptions to the Springville Journal that were purchased from that company," Cunningham said.

Neighbor to Neighbor News' mission statement follows: To enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve by bringing people together to celebrate their achievements, share in their sorrows, effectively self-govern, collectively solve problems, and create a shared sense of community to leave the place better than they found it.

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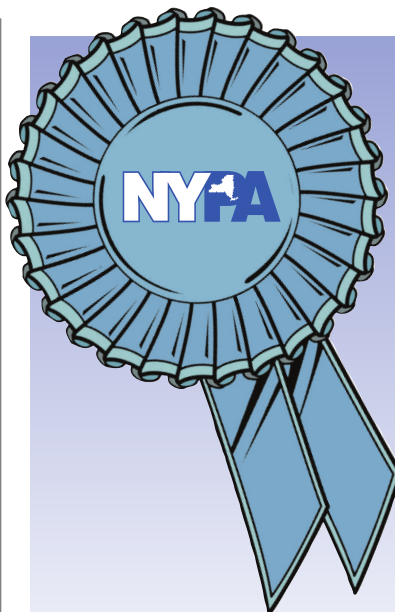
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