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ENSURE THE PRESS HAS A SECURE ROUTE TO MARKET

The main route to market for newspapers and magazines is through a complex supply chain ensuring the widest achievable availability of the greatest possible diversity of news, opinion, ideas and entertainment.

As multiple retailers take an ever-greater share of sales of newspapers and magazines the fear grows that they will want to control the Press supply chain as they do most others. In the case of the newspaper and magazine supply chain they would gain the power of decision over which publications reach the market. In short, to assume the power of censorship.

While publishers strongly support moves to update the supply chain, bringing improved service levels and reduced waste, they also believe such essential changes are best achieved in a consensual way by the industry itself.

Government should:

Accept that a free and diverse Press needs a secure route to market and that absolute territorial protection for supplies is the only way to achieve this.

Encourage a consensual outcome.

Discourage super-retailers from seeking a position where they could jeopardise freedom of expression and a free Press.

Source: UK Publishing Media

SURVEY REPORTS ON TRENDS IN READERS GOING TO NEWSPAPERS, ONLINE AND ELSEWHERE

Some solace for traditional news outlets worried about how to compete with the Internet: A survey finds a slowdown in the growth of the number of people who regularly go online for the news.

Almost three in 10 adults, or 31 percent, regularly log on for news, a rate roughly the same as two years ago, according to the survey released July 30 by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. People in their 40s were more likely to go online for news than younger adults.

"The online news audience is maturing and at this point is wider than it is deep," said Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center.

"We have as many as 31 percent who say they read news online regularly," he said. "But they don't spend as much time doing it as they spend with more traditional media like newspapers, TV and radio."

The steady decline in newspaper readership over the past decade has leveled off because of readership of newspapers online, the survey found.

"The online editions of newspapers are providing a bit of a life raft for newspapers," Kohut said. "But it's a pretty small life raft."

Just over four in 10 adults said they had read a newspaper, in print or online, the previous day, compared with 58 percent in 1994. The number of people who read a newspaper online only was relatively small, though it has kept the total from slipping further.

The overall level of newspaper readership has kept fairly steady over the past four years, the survey found.

The availability of newspapers online has helped keep young adults interested in papers, and the rate of their newspaper readership in print or online, while low, has not declined over the past decade.

But young adults also are more likely to not follow the news at all — an ominous reminder of the challenge still facing the industry.

The survey also found that:

- Newspaper reading among people 30 and over has dropped over the past decade.
- Local and community news is the big attraction for newspapers.
- TV remains the most popular source of news, but viewership has dropped.

The number of people who regularly watch nightly network news is down to 28 percent, half the level in 1993. But the big drop-off of the 1990s has leveled off in the past six years with less dramatic declines for broadcast news — both network and local.

However, thanks to the variety of news sources available, "The net amount of time people are spending on news is about the same," said Kohut.

For example, 7 percent of those polled get news from new technologies such as cell phones, personal digital assistants and podcasts. Among those ages 18-29, the number is 13 percent, according to the poll of 3,204 adults conducted from April 27 to May 22. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2 percentage points.

With all these new options, people spend about the same time keeping up on the news — just over an hour in a given day — as they did a decade ago.

People who go online for news cite the convenience and speed — a factor in their preference for Web sites like Yahoo, CNN and MSNBC to get news. Google, AOL and Fox News were also among the more popular sites.

One advantage still held by the newspaper over fast-paced outlets such as radio, TV and the Internet is that a majority of people find it relaxing to read the newspaper.

Source: Associated Press

