

# 2.3

# The Role of the Newspaper

What is the place of the newspaper in society?

What sets it apart from, and above, its rivals?

Are newspapers succumbing too easily to the temptation to become more populist?

How do they increase readership and broaden their influence?

Twelve distinguished editors from around the world offer their views



A WORLD ASSOCIATION OF NEWSPAPERS PROJECT,  
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# 1 Introduction

**Timothy Balding**, Director-General, World Association of Newspapers

At a meeting during the 2003 World Newspaper Congress, Henri Pigeat, former president of the Agence France-Presse news agency, urged WAN to pay new attention to the quality of news and information and to the role of the newspaper in our societies.

He made his case on several grounds: the growing doubt of public opinion about the reliability of all media; a gradual weakening of the absolute priority formerly accorded in democratic societies to freedom of expression; last, but certainly not least, the constant loss of market share to the profit of television and new media.

Mr Pigeat struck a chord in many minds. As newspapers grapple with the poor economy and a range of new and old competitive and technological challenges, are we indeed paying enough attention to the quality of our content, without which we are, after all, nothing?

How is it, asked Mr Pigeat, that the quality of the news is so rarely an issue in professional meetings, while any service provider in any other field endeavours constantly to improve the quality of whatever it is he is supplying? Does the press

always defend vigorously enough its own values, including the strict search for truth and fair debates and the revelation of hidden issues? Is the service of readers still an absolute priority even over commercial and financial objectives and constraints?

Armed with these and many other similar questions, Henri Pigeat subsequently had little trouble convincing the WAN board that here was a cause in which it was worth investing time and thought. And so, without underestimating (as Mr Pigeat indeed does not) the complexities, the cultural and political diversity and the difficulty of the issues, WAN has decided to embark on a long-term project to examine the role of the newspaper in modern society. This project will endeavour to:

- Open a debate within our industry on the concept of news and information quality.
- Identify and explain case studies where newspapers have dealt with these issues.
- Suggest pilot actions and debates and offer newspapers stimulating examples and ideas.
- Reaffirm publicly not a dogmatic truth but a continuous endeavour and, perhaps, a

methodology aimed at permanently improving quality to better serve readers.

This SFN report is the first result of the project. It presents the views of a number of leading figures in newspapers from around the globe. Each was asked to describe how they see the role of their newspaper in the society in which it is published; to explain how this varies from other, competing news media; to assess the main assets of newspapers compared with other information distributors; to respond to the assertion that newspapers are getting too populist and frivolous in their search for circulation; and to state what they believe newspapers should be doing to increase their sales and their influence.

Contributions were received from:

**Seok-Hyun Hong**, Chairman, *JoongAng Ilbo*, South Korea

**Marcelo Rech**, Editor, *Zero Hora*, Brazil

**Bachi Karkaria**, Associate Editor, *The Times of India*

**Felipe T Edwards**, Editor, *El Mercurio*, Chile

**Edmund Curran**, Editor, *The Belfast Telegraph*, UK

**Michael Getler**, Ombudsman, *The Washington Post*, US

**Hanoch Marmari**, Editor, *Haaretz*, Israel

**Ahmed Al-Yusuf**, Editor-in-Chief, *Saudi Gazette*, Saudi Arabia

**Kavi Chongkittavorn**, Managing Editor, *The Nation*, Thailand

**Francis Mdlongwa**, Editor-in-Chief, *The Daily News*, Zimbabwe

**Jan Wifstrand**, Editor-in-Chief, *Dagens Nyheter*, Sweden

**François Régis Hutin**, President-Directeur-Général, *Ouest France*

The report is introduced with an essay by Henri Pigeat. It is concluded by Jim Chisholm, Director of the SFN project and WAN Strategy Advisor, who examines what facts and data are available about these issues.

I very much welcome your own views, experience or knowledge as we take the Role of the Newspaper project forward. You can contact me at [tbalding@wan.asso.fr](mailto:tbalding@wan.asso.fr)

**Timothy Balding**

Director-General

World Association of Newspapers

## Respondents were asked to answer six questions:

### 1. Role in society

What do you believe is the role of your newspaper in the society in which you publish?

### 2. How other media compare

How does this vary from other news media with which you compete?

### 3. The newspaper's strong points

What do you believe are the main assets of newspapers, relative to other media – television, radio, internet etc – in providing news and other services to their audience?

### 4. The trend to populism

Some people in our industry are arguing that newspapers, in an attempt to increase circulation, have become more populist in their content, and rather than concentrating on more serious issues in society, are carrying more stories on television personalities or sport, at the expense of more serious material. What are your views about this?

### 5. Increasing readership

What do you believe newspapers should be doing to increase their readership?

### 6. Widening influence

What do you think newspapers should be doing to increase their influence in the societies that they serve?

## 2 The challenges

**Henri Pigeat**, Chairman of Editions de l'Ilissos, France

As the medium has been around for nearly 200 years, it might seem a bit strange to question the role of the newspaper. As an outgrowth of the printing press, the telegraph and the industrial revolution in the 19th century, it also grew out of the Age of Enlightenment. Since its birth, it has reported on current events, enabling citizens to be informed, understand, form opinions and take action. By fulfilling this mission, it has accompanied the march to democracy in England, France and the United States since the close of the 18th century. In this way, it has stood forth as a leading symbol of liberty.

If we question the role newspapers play in today's world, it is because they have grown into just one of many media that make up our "information society." The newspaper is not the most powerful of them. Radio, TV and the internet are faster, more diverse, and often more appealing. Moreover, and more importantly, it no longer controls how news is circulated, nor does it set the tone for our collective information. In a way, the newspaper, and particularly the daily newspaper, serves as nothing more than a counterpoint to electronic media.

Viewing the decline of the daily press forces us to question how it is adapting to today's information market, its capacity to meet the needs of its public, and in essence, its role in society. In other words, we must ask whether the quality of information it provides and the services it renders live up to its historical legitimacy and the ambitions it continues to hold dear.

The slow, but real, decline of dailies cannot be attributed solely to technical and economic causes.

The daily newspaper's decline has been materialising for some time in many countries. Since 1985, newspaper circulation in the US has fallen by about 10 per cent, and the number of newspapers has dropped 15 per cent. Except for Norway, the same trend has been witnessed in all countries of Europe. Only Japan and a few emerging nations, such as Brazil, have been able to beat this trend. At the same time, the average age of the readership is going up. Whatever distinctions there are between one part of the world and another, or among newspaper genres, people under the age of 30 read dailies far less than their elders. With the scant interest shown

today, they are unlikely to become devotees tomorrow.

The newspaper's reputation has itself gone through changes. Despite the criticism it has long withstood, it has always been accorded superiority over radio and television for its greater reliability and the quality of its information. Yet numerous polls taken throughout the world, including the annual survey by the newspaper *La Croix* in France, show that this perception is changing. Newspapers are no longer perceived as the most trustworthy form of media. The public's confidence in the medium is gradually diminishing.

A more recent threat, in the form of free papers, is affecting the very nature of the daily. The free papers' information, culled largely from the wires, plus the services they offer, do not differ fundamentally from those that a traditional newspaper prints and circulates. The difference lies in the radical new relationship these papers have established with their public. Received rather than purchased, they are no longer responding to a genuine thirst for information. Their primary customers are advertisers, given precedence over the reader, who, in turn, has become a means, as opposed to an end. Good information is measured not by its quality, but by its capacity to entice.

These changes have left the daily newspaper in an ever weakening position with respect to other media. Economically on the defensive, it is no longer the absolute benchmark for quality information, nor even for freedom of expression.

Societal changes and methods of communication have clearly played a role in the print media's decline.

In many countries, the vast majority of people now live in cities, or in urban developments no longer built around neighbourhoods. The daily paper that originally grew out of clearly identified urban centres is finding it ever harder to be the expression of a local community. An outlying suburb or a new residential district will always have less of a personality than a traditional city. Often, a collective outlook is lacking.

A newspaper's distribution becomes more difficult with the distance often separating people's residence from their workplace. In France, for example, residents in many regions have only a single point of sale per 800

inhabitants, on average. Paris has only one for every 2,500 inhabitants, and one per 3,500 in its suburbs.

Yet the most obvious threat clearly lies in the competition from radio and TV. When buying a newspaper, readers have already heard the news. The paper is no longer needed to bring us the news, but rather to explain the facts and expand on them – at least, as long as people remain interested. As MacLuhan and other social commentators have shown, the newspaper is in an even tougher position because it is “cold” when compared with the warm and inviting face of television, which, unlike the newspaper, requires little in the way of effort. These competitors provide instant information, and distance is not an obstacle.

A third reason for the decline in print media is less evident, but no less real, and involves the growth in what are referred to as communication practices. Information distributors, the people with political, economic, social and cultural influence, have learned to “communicate,” that is, to present their activities not just “artistically”, according to their interests, but also in the form of news, ready for consumption. Investigation and critical analysis seem to have become less important as economic constraints make them more challenging. Such practices are perfectly adapted for radio and TV, however, which have to react instantaneously. The time newspapers take to study and analyse information seems to have become superfluous.

The technical and commercial responses newspapers have used to defend themselves seem to be approaching their limits. The print media's efforts at productivity over the last thirty years have improved the presentation of news, increased the ease and enjoyment in reading it and reduced the time to production. In countries that have been able to withstand the pressures from organised trade unions, these efforts have also led to considerable cost reductions, letting newspapers keep prices at mass-market levels.

Intense use has also been made of marketing mechanisms to increase newspaper sales, and more importantly, to build stronger ties with the readership. Daily newspapers in the United States, as well as in Northern Europe, Germany and Switzerland, have gathered extensive information on their readers, so that they can diversify their



services and offer advertisers a targeted market in which to sell their products.

Yet instead of countering the decline, these productivity gains have sometimes led to a new threat that would transform the paper into a consumer product. In stark contrast to the founding principle of journalism, money has seemed to become an end, whereas information has become merely a means.

The continued decline in newspaper circulation has caused some in the industry to wonder whether this does not portend the death of printed information. At a time when the internet is re-establishing a certain form of printed information, and when an increasing number of books are being published, the newspaper's passing would seem paradoxical, unless there are other reasons for its decline.

Is the newspaper still completely fulfilling its role?

"Information society" advocates believe that new communications technologies will give a greater number of people access to knowledge and world awareness. The reality may not be quite so simple. Electronic media have profoundly changed both the nature and the public's perception of information. The dominance of pictures, as we have witnessed with the recent events in Iraq, does more to emphasise the appearance of things than their underlying causes. Live reporting breeds emotion more than reflection. So-called "continuing coverage" may be a response more to the need to hold on to an audience than to having something new to say.

In good conscience, our newspapers regularly lay claim not only to their democratic legitimacy, but also to their capacity to explain current events. Of course, depending on readership and the choices made, not all papers have reacted in the same way, but have they really been able to avoid contagion from television? Are they really giving the public what it expects from them? Are they still even necessary?

A newspaper can legitimately claim to serve the consumers that are its customers in the best possible way. It provides the news. It prioritises and more or less explains the news. It illustrates the news with photographs and charts. It diverts readers with information pertaining to their interests in sports, the arts and entertainment. It also performs a practical service, providing

solutions for multiple small problems we encounter in everyday life.

It responds equally well to the selective needs of advertisers, solidifying its relationship with its readership. American newspapers have given proof of this, when, despite declining circulation, advertising revenues have grown thanks to an extremely aggressive business policy. Some of the regional dailies in France have not expanded their news coverage in thirty years, yet they are all excellent platforms for advertising.

In the end, by controlling its economic destiny, the daily newspaper is still managing to serve its stakeholders, while ensuring the conditions for its continued independence. This multitude of services may, however, prove not to be enough.

The public and, moreover, democracy, have other needs.

The first action of a democracy has always been the establishment of a free press. Thomas Jefferson said it better than anyone. History has always shown the close ties that exist between the growth of a free press and the realisation of democracy, or else between the decline of the former and the disintegration of the latter. Participation in government by the greatest numbers is found through the expression of a general will that is based on public opinion. This will originates from multiple sources: electoral campaigns, parliamentary life, associations, political parties, but first and foremost from the media. And no form of media is better able to help citizens form opinions than the daily press, by going beyond the mere presentation of facts and uncovering their true meaning. The role of the press is therefore to explain, to place in context, to question and to analyse. It is also the most effective tool for exacting transparency from authorities and forcing them to respond to public opinion. Such work takes time, objectivity, space, and also money. To the extent that no one can lay claim to the truth, only through a pluralism of newspapers and opinions can it be approached.

Clearly, daily information will only partially meet these ideals.

However much it tries, a newspaper cannot expect to reach perfection. It has always been subject to limitations and weaknesses. Competition from radio and TV has served to create new ones. In an attempt to beat them on their own ground, a daily paper may strive to be as

fast, as loose and facile, to the detriment of in-depth analysis and interpretation. Economic constraints lead some papers to cut down on their investigations. The professionalisation of journalism has paradoxically resulted in fewer calls to respected intellectuals, scholars and researchers, hampering a greater exchange of ideas. A critical mindset is increasingly incompatible with local monopoly positions and the need to avoid offending a part of the readership, even though we can only arrive at the truth through pluralism.

By way of example, the sometimes noticeable differences that marked the headlines in French regional dailies some 30 years ago have tended to disappear, to be replaced by a generalised consensus that is as dull for the reader, as it is for the reporter who has been forced into apathy. In times of crisis, the emotion, if not the passion portrayed on TV, imposes its uniformity and destroys all critical mindsets, as recently seen so disturbingly in the dual consensus seen during the war on Iraq – on the one hand, lyrical patriotism and on the other, disoriented pacifism.

Through a curious process, the more accentuated the competition from radio and TV, the more the newspapers seem to want to join them on their own turf, rather than focusing on their own strong points, which provide consumers with more room and more time in which to digest the news.

Ultimately, we have to ask whether competition from the images and speed that are present in the so-called “information society” has not led newspapers to serve consumers rather than citizens, thereby compromising their own future.

In the contest with other media, one advantage stands out that has yet to be used to its fullest, namely, the quality of the information.

The criteria for quality information are not always easy to define, less still to put into practice. However, for a newspaper, a simple principle can be relied on, and that is to serve the citizen at least as much as the consumer.

The general criteria for quality information emerge from the very nature of the newspaper.

The first duty of journalism is to describe the facts. Over and above speed, information must be as reliable as possible and comprehensive enough to allow for a full understanding of the events. On their surface, facts or their image not only have

limited meaning, but also invite all kinds of bias.

The understanding of news requires context, an explanation of the underlying causes and an examination of their results. On these points, newspapers are not subject to the same constraints as live reporting. They have time for reflection and a relatively large amount of space in which to follow developments. If the information fails to be sufficiently reliable, in spite of this advantage, it will be found less excusable than in the case of radio or TV.

The newspaper public, which is generally more clearly defined than conventional television audiences, calls for information that is better adapted to the readers’ needs and expectations, and that answers their questions in greater detail. The tragedy of 11 September, 2001, like the war on Iraq, briefly increased the television audience, and also newspaper circulation, underscoring the public’s desire for more detailed information.

The quality of information is also a matter of ethics. Sometimes referred to as a code of practice, it regularly gives rise to controversy for reasons often having to do with differences in style. For newspaper professionals, the ethics of information are not the moral issue debated by philosophers. They are a very specific and practical issue that can be summarised from two angles, the first being the meticulousness and intellectual honesty applied in uncovering the truth, and the second being respect for others, for the reader and the subjects in the news. For the journalist, such ethics are nothing more than the concern for a job well done and the awareness of a responsibility to society. Here too, the newspaper, which is less pressed for time, more open to reflection, more open-minded to nuances and perhaps also more directly liable to its public, is in a better position than other media to convey the ethics of information within the facts.

It may seem harder to apply these principles of quality today than in the past. The public is no longer what it was in the 19th century, when citizens were just discovering education, were anxious to learn, and looked up to an established and less beleaguered elite. For multiple reasons having as much to do with the evolution of ideas as with the upheaval of society, today this is no longer the case. With the overwhelming influence of television, public opinion is immediate, responsive, sometimes superficial, sometimes

passionate, and often resourceful. It is built more on emotion than on reason. A newspaper that does not take this socio-psychological reality into account clearly risks losing its readership by publishing information that is meaningless to them. In contrast, if the newspaper adopts a tone that overly resembles television, it is unlikely to do as good a job as that medium, and will lose the very advantages to which it lays claim. At a minimum, it will wind up targeting a select group, while losing the rest of its audience, particularly young readers who were raised on TV. Given this contradiction, the daily newspaper has no choice but to come up with an original language and style adapted to the times and the public. It is a difficult task, but the current success of some of the world's papers proves that it is not impossible, even in the so-called popular press.

A second, older, but no less uncommon risk lies in the newspaper's role as a disseminator of ideas. To reflect society and help it to know itself, to allow each citizen to form his or her own opinions, and by that, to aid in the formation of public opinion, newspapers have invariably kept the tradition of expressing ideas alive. An effort has been made to relay the thinking of scholars, business leaders, scientists and cultural luminaries. The newspaper can continue to play this unique role better than other media, as long as it avoids the natural temptation to restrict the ideas it publishes to those it supports, melding the role of an opinion piece defending one position with a source of information that serves pluralism by contrasting all views. Clearly, it can be hard to determine the fine line that lets information dominate over the expression of a political or philosophical preference. Yet it is always better to risk making a mistake than to say nothing, which makes the paper dull and alienates readers.

In a similar vein, the newspaper is continually called on to take a stand against the authorities in power, who have earned their legitimacy through public election. Some time back, the Watergate affair solidified this role in the United States. A Parisian newspaper recently found itself in the midst of a similar controversy, having been accused of undermining the elected authorities, rather than remaining impartial, as it claimed to be. Without delving further into the matter, it is clear that such risks are inherent whenever investigation is taken to its logical extreme, and in

cases of in-depth critical analysis. The fact that it is difficult to remain a strict observer without becoming involved in the political chase cannot, however, justify indifference. Quality information presupposes a type of engagement with public service and the people.

Only time can provide the means needed to convey facts using such principles.

Clearly, quality information comes first and foremost from an awareness of its necessity and a strong sense of commitment. To believe that the information in our own papers is always the best and is recognised as such is a dangerous illusion, as the public does not share that opinion. This striving for quality must also take place throughout the entire chain of information.

Reporters' skills might be the first subject for consideration. The ways in which reporters are recruited and trained have never been looked at in as much depth as those used for doctors or engineers, even though their social responsibilities are at least as great. Techniques and conditions for circulating information have changed strategically, but are we capable of redefining just how far a journalist's overall training should go, or specifying how to ensure his professional education from the outset and throughout his career?

The traditional principle, by which a journalist writes using the freedom of expression held by each individual, cannot justify the fallacy that editorial skill comes naturally and that there is no need for proven experience and specialised training.

The structure of responsibilities at the newspaper is another key point for quality information. The chain of responsibilities is inevitably complex when a newspaper releases multiple editions or when the editorial staff includes hundreds of reporters. Everyone knows that the editorial meeting is necessarily aimed at putting together the next issue, rather than analysing information that has already been published to identify its strengths and weaknesses. Some practices, such as "quality circles," have been successful in other industries. Why do we persist in ignoring them?

The primary responsibility for quality information falls squarely on the editor-in-chief. Yet can we be sure that the separation of responsibilities, often overly rigid, between the

editor-in-chief and the publisher of the newspaper is warranted, when the newspaper's very future relies on the quality of its information? Try to imagine the head of an automobile manufacturer not having input or responsibility over the quality of the products it sells.

Lastly, and without expounding further, we cannot neglect the ways in which newspapers must be held accountable to their public. There is extensive literature, often highly theoretical, on diverse entities known as "press councils," "mediators" and other "ombudsmen". These are generally accused, often logically, of threatening censorship, reducing effectiveness and often having arguable legitimacy. Without entering the debate on the contradictions between these grievances, and without trying to argue over which method is best, can we possibly deny that this is a real problem? Newspapers must be accountable to their public and to society. This is in their best interest, as they have no legitimacy outside their readership. As in any human enterprise, they may make mistakes. It would be a fallacy to think that they are not accountable to anyone or that they can only be judged by their peers. Ethics boards are meaningful only insofar as they fulfil this public responsibility. As long as they are careful to avoid becoming judges, they can be useful organs for accountability. The difficulty in setting them up and defining their scope should not be a deterrent.

Existing solutions, particularly in Northern Europe and the United Kingdom, clearly are not perfect. All are adapted to a certain type of society and cannot be transposed elsewhere in their current form. They nonetheless show that such

action is possible. At a time when the reliability of information is being questioned more than ever, are newspapers not, more than any other media, best suited to play a unique role in this difficult matter?

The preceding remarks are of primary interest to the industry. They inevitably pose more questions than they provide answers. The changes in society, the media and information have heightened these issues, which actually have prevailed as long as newspapers have existed. Too often, they have been relegated to the realm of the individual journalist, or at best, they have become the collective responsibility of the editorial staff. The reality is that they represent a major challenge for the profession involving the industry as a whole.

This challenge is a matter of economics and is vital for the newspaper's future. Otherwise, we must be willing to accept our continued and irreversible decline among the different forms of media and see the daily newspaper one day reduced to the ranks of a trade publication.

Apart from the newspaper's own best interest, the challenge is ultimately a matter of freedom of expression, which has been fully upheld only through the written word. This fact alone guarantees our legitimacy. And more than anything else, this fact is a guarantee of democracy which, lest we forget, is neither permanent nor universal, and which remains essentially fragile.

This threefold challenge may seem a heavy burden for a newspaper. Yet, clearly, it is also its best chance for revival.

# 3 A unifier for society

Seok-Hyun Hong, Chairman, *JoongAng Ilbo*. South Korea

## 1. Role in society

Among Korea's dozen national newspapers, the *JoongAng Ilbo* assumes a unique role. With the introduction of Western culture into Korea 100 years ago, Korean newspapers assumed a role as society's teachers. During the periods of the country's struggle for independence, modernisation and democratisation that followed, they continued to show the masses the way forward. This has been a tradition for Korean newspapers. Intended to be a paper for the elite, the *JoongAng Ilbo* has been concerned with promoting society's advancement. Standing one step ahead of the people, it creates an agenda, presenting the issues that engage society and finding their resolutions. This agenda-setting is one of the most important goals of this newspaper.

In the half-century of conflict between communism and anti-communism, Korean newspapers largely followed a conservative course. Anti-communism and conservatism were virtually synonymous. Only in the late 1980s did some smaller newspapers come into being that departed from the traditional conservatism of Korean papers. The *JoongAng Ilbo* has been

counted as conservative in outlook, but it has distanced itself from traditional, unconditional conservatism and has accommodated itself to the new environment and new challenges of Korean society. Our newspaper seeks to be unbiased and open. The opinion pages are open to all views and persuasions, frequently conflicting. Because the *JoongAng Ilbo* maintains this unique position, it is recognised for political and ideological neutrality and for independence in reporting, commentary and editorials. In particular, given the current North-South Korean tensions, the *JoongAng Ilbo* is recognised as progressive in its untiring efforts to promote North-South Korean reconciliation and co-operation. In fact, we take it as our obligation to lead the public forward.

The *JoongAng Ilbo* aspires to play the role of a unifier for a society divided along ideological, generational, regional and class faultlines. The division of the society has never been so serious. Among news media, too, there is division and conflict between print and electronic media, and between large, conservative papers and small, progressive ones. Political parties, too, are

estranged from each other and split internally. Now more than ever, Korea needs a unifier.

The *JoongAng Ilbo* is the one newspaper qualified for this role by virtue of its ideological openness. Moreover, its readers are evenly spread across the country and are solidly middle-class.

## 2. How other media compare

In Korea, the major competitors to newspapers are the broadband media [internet and radio/TV], especially television. In the Korean advertising market, TV has surpassed print media in total volume. However, in comparison with broadband, newspapers maintain a unique role and have not seen any lessening of influence.

Broadband in Korea does not enjoy political independence, due to its ownership structure and legal regulations. People, therefore, seek objective and fair reporting in newspapers. In addition, the limitations of the broadband media prevent them from delivering in-depth reporting and analysis. Nor can their instantaneous images hold viewers' attention for long. The superficial and emotion-grabbing coverage of broadband cannot create influence and change viewers' hearts. In a word, broadband cannot beat newspapers in credibility; print media will maintain their function as agenda-setter. In one respect, however – the entertainment value of sports, music and pop culture programmes – newspapers cannot compete with television and radio, which engage the public readily. Newspapers, therefore, face the challenge of securing more thoughtful readers who appreciate insight and in-depth analysis.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

Credibility is the newspaper's real asset. The internet, which pours out loads of information, cannot efficiently distinguish fact from fiction.

Broadcasting is speedy in delivering breaking news, but viewers cannot fully judge the credibility of images on a screen. In contrast, newspapers provide readers with opportunities to think logically and rationally.

Newspapers also have merit as historical records and references. In comparison with news delivered by other media, newspapers are more powerful and more vividly penetrate the minds of the readers. Also, we cannot ignore the fact that print is familiar to the public as a traditional medium. For 500 years since Gutenberg, paper

and the printed word have dominated and they continue to sustain their value.

## 4. The trend to populism

Three major Korean newspapers have circulations of more than 2m s. This is unique, compared with the numbers of the European and US media industries. Korean newspapers blend elements of popular and quality papers. That is, they have a populist factor but do not ignore their responsibilities as quality papers. How to successfully combine these two elements is a major challenge. We have two options: Shall we seek an arithmetical midpoint between tabloid and quality paper? Or shall we seek content whose quality wins the respect of experts, and at the same time run popular stories including sports, gossip and entertainment? Currently, we are trying to do the former. But our goal is the latter. We plan to revamp the content of the paper by making our sports and entertainment sections more enjoyable, while maintaining high standards in our coverage and analysis of political, economic, scientific, cultural and social affairs.

Given the nature of Korean society, with its high and relatively even level of education and ethnic homogeneity, the concept of a European-style quality paper does not seem to fit us. This is why we have opted to combine elements of tabloid and quality papers. We assume that the ideal proportion of popular to quality stories may be 70-30 or 60-40 – the larger share for our readers who are high school graduates, and the smaller for those educated to college and beyond.

## 5. Increasing readership

Now, let me venture into the most serious business of how to increase the readers. There is no shortcut except by providing well-written news stories.

Readers crave good news coverage. Good reporting and relevant news should be consistently available throughout the paper. High-quality news analysis can attract lifelong subscribers. But a newspaper's format is no less important. Readers prefer a paper that is easy to read. Therefore, research on layout and design is necessary. Considering the interactive nature of the internet, print media also must open lines of communication with readers. An ombudsman section and feedback from readers through

reporters' e-mail addresses, online pro-con debates on important issues, and customer service campaigns are all indispensable.

#### **6. Widening influence**

Credibility is the key factor. Needless to say, influence comes from reliability. To maintain credibility, we must keep our news coverage and

our editorial line free from pressure from political and business powers. Timeliness of news stories is also important. Good judgment, based on rational and practical editorials, also brings influence to newspapers. Continuity and consistency allow the newspaper's judgment, as expressed in editorials and commentaries, to accumulate into the stuff of history.





# 4 Information tool

**Marcello Rech**, Editor, *Zero Hora*, Brazil

## 1. Role in society

It is to be the tool that unifies the tribe. In other words, people from different places, from different social and economic levels and who had never seen each other find in the paper a common ground to express their concerns, to know who was born and who has died, to understand the world outside the tribe through a piece of paper that interprets the complexity of life.

## 2. How other media compare

By gathering the tribe when the individuals share probably the only daily ritual that binds the culture and knowledge of so many people that live in the same territory.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

It still is the most scannable tool of information. In a very quick and handy way, people can pick and choose news, opinions and entertainment.

## 4. The trend to populism

In media, nothing can be relevant unless people

are aware of it. So, the first mission of a newspaper and of a story is to be read.

Sometimes a story about a celebrity can be a bait for people who otherwise would not have noticed the story about a new tax law a few pages away.

Papers cannot be boring. They have to lure the readers even when they run hard news. So, the best papers know how to transform the relevant into the interesting.

## 5. Increasing readership

First of all, they should understand which are the questions that their community would like to have answered when they open the paper. That means, the newspaper should provide responses to issues even before they come out and should not disappoint readers when they look for answers to their particular doubts and concerns.

They also have to be edited in a manner that addresses not “the reader”, but readers with an infinite number of ways of reading the paper.

Therefore, in their editing, papers should

provide different “reading speeds”, in order to satisfy both the reader who has five minutes in the morning and the reader who is stuck in the airport in the evening.

**6. Widening influence**

Becoming more credible, more precise, more unbiased and more open to the multiple voices of the tribe.

# 5 Empowering readers

**Bachi Karkaria**, Associate Editor, *Times of India*

## 1. Role in society

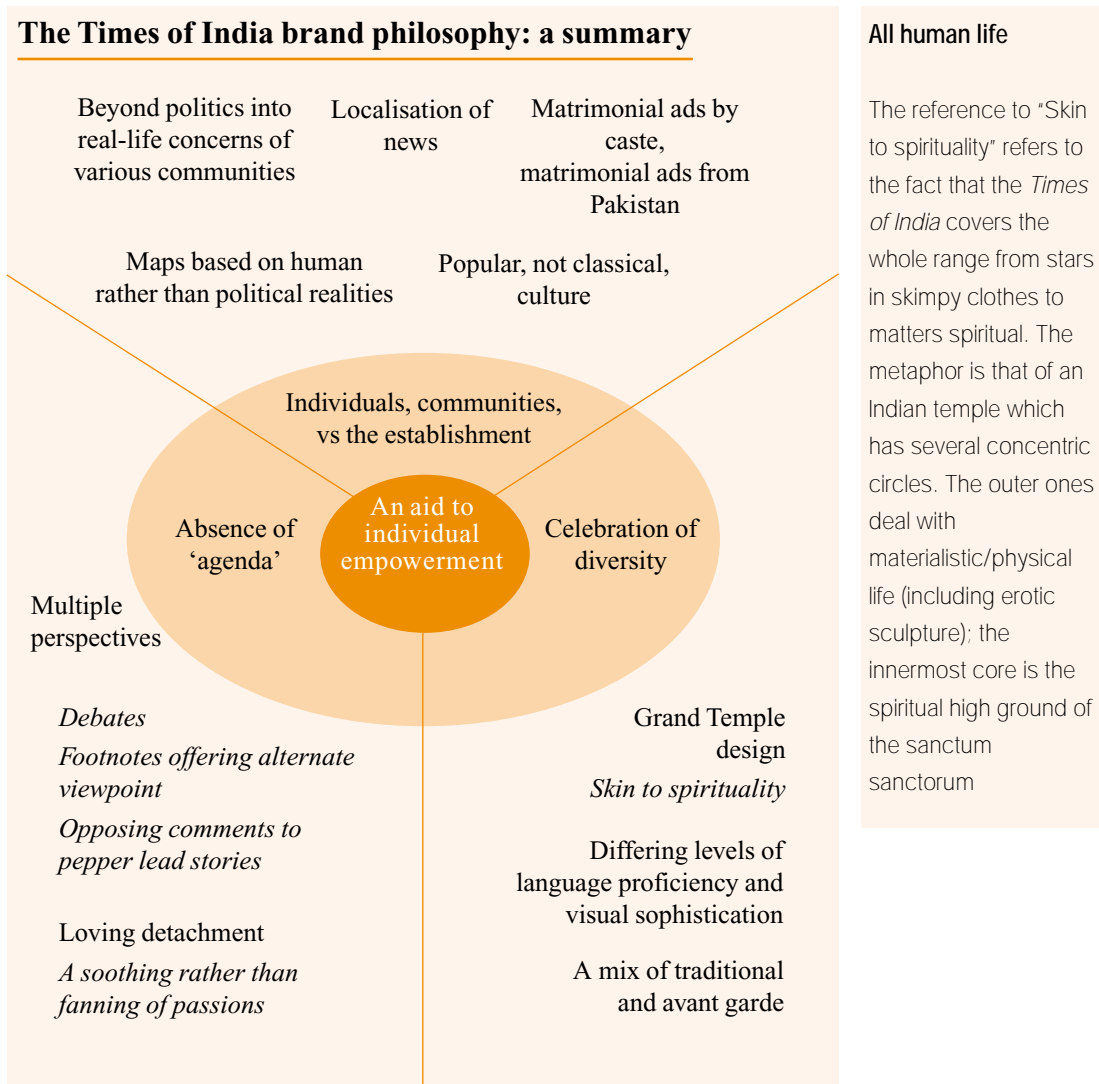
The *Times of India* is a 165-year-old paper spread over ten editions, and with a 6 million-plus readership. It could be forgiven for grandstanding. However, it has taken a contrarian approach, chosen society above the state, drawn inspiration from modest community papers, and gone way beyond the staples of parliament and city hall. Instead of seeing itself as being the font of power, it has set out to empower the reader. Instead of the traditional role of moulding public opinion, it tries to give readers the choices to enable them to arrive at their own conclusions. Going beyond that, it even helps them to be in touch with their inner consciousness as well as their conscience.

Believing that patriotism and nationhood are upstart, artificial concepts, that people relate more strongly to the primeval bonding of community, the paper reinforces these ties. It seeks to appeal to a diverse set of groupings, not just ethnic or geographic but communities of the mind. The reader is not a one-size-fits-all Indian, but a Punjabi, a South Delhiite, a lawyer, a boy from Doon, the elite public school, a member of the local laughter, jogging or cigar club.

As a result, the hierarchy of the front page has been ruthlessly dismantled. The monopolistic Brahmin, interested in politics, has been cut to size if not unceremoniously evicted. He has to share space with a carnival of new neighbours, each demanding, in their own way, an enhancement of the quality of life.

The primacy of the individual over the establishment is a conscious driver of the way we manage and present news. At an elementary level, this is encapsulated in the mantra that we write our stories from the perspective of the user of the service, not from that of the provider of the service. Then, we offer the diversity that is inherent in every individual. The basic concerns of the citizen as taxpayer, commuter, parent, share-investor, entertainment-seeker, right up to his or her need to levitate into a higher domain. In yet another way of servicing the individual, we consciously provide context and perspective in a way that goes beyond the journalistic imperatives of balance and objectivity. And we nail up a big, rude Keep Out sign for agendas.

This results in a robust, relevant and real paper. ▶



**2. How other media compare**

Many of these ideas are radical. They do not fit into the usual slots of newspaper of record, newspaper of influence, newspaper as crusader.

Our formula, which added "News that's useful to know" and even "News that's fun to know" to the conventional "News that's important to know" first met with disparaging disdain, until success turned the critics into imitators.

Indian newspapers, to varying degrees, have all begun paying obeisance to local issues and to entertainment. The latter is a decision prompted as much by giving the reader what he wants as by giving the finance manager what he wants.

Television proffers much of this mix too, creating slots for these different products. News is off-limits for private radio in India, as a matter of government policy.

**3. The newspaper's strong points**

After the flirtation with television, "newsers" (an omnibus word we coined to refer to the consumers of news via different media) still fall back on the broad, comforting, tactile world of print. Television has a huge advantage in transporting the viewer to the spot, but the newspaper is better able to keep her there, get a deeper sense of the situation, allow her the time and space to think out the facts and implications for herself.

Print technology enables us to replicate much of the visual, graphic excitement of TV. Radio content is largely dominated by headline news and music. It has a deeper penetration, and is the only news source in remote areas. But whereas in the developed world, readership is in decline, India's growing literacy base is a huge catchment area for new readers. The Indian language press has circulations way above those of its English-

language counterparts. But aspiration ensures that the latter's graph keeps up its northward climb.

#### **4. The trend to populism**

"Populist", "dumbing down" are bogeys raised by diehards who simply do not want to change with the times. If information is made more accessible with the use of infographs instead of vast swathes of grey, if editors listen to what their readers want instead of barricading themselves in an ivory tower, it is a commendable development instead of a regressive move.

What the rather sexist advertising agency chief, David Ogilvy said in the context of advertising – "The consumer is not a moron, she's your wife" – is relevant to this debate. Why should we assume that reader-friendly means catering to the lowest common denominator? Readers are more serious than we give them credit for; the difference is that their down-to-earth concerns may not dovetail with the lofty notions that newspaper editors have of their own role.

Customising news to make it more relevant to the reader expands the information base, it does not just pump up the bottom line. It empowers the reader. Dare we say it? Conventional journalists do not want to relinquish the old oligarchies.

#### **5. Increasing readership**

Newspapers should become more relevant and accessible in content. They should not be seen as talking down to readers. Instead, they should be seen as stakeholders of the community's future, as members of the same society.

#### **6. Widening influence**

In today's egalitarian market, newspapers should climb down from the high ground, stop wanting to influence society and instead aim at enabling and empowering readers. Newspapers will never play any salutary role unless they themselves are perceived as being impeccably honest, even agenda-free.



# 6 Order and perspective

Felipe T Edwards del Rio, Editor, *El Mercurio*, Chile,

## 1. Role in society

In a world with an ever increasing number of sources of news and information available to our community, we attempt to bring order and perspective to that growing mass of raw data. Our most important service is not to publish news, which is available earlier and faster through many electronic outlets (including our own web site), but rather to provide analysis and explanation of what the events of the past day may mean to our readers as individuals and to our society as a whole. That service is complemented with our own investigations and information that is useful for leading fuller, more contented lives.

## 2. How other media compare

Television has the immediacy and impact of moving images. Radio has the advantage of a captive audience commuting to and from work. We have the time and space to try to give meaning to those pictures and the few facts that can be transmitted by the airwaves. They provide the news; we give it the context. But like our electronic brethren, we can also move our readers, entertain, challenge and surprise them.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

Our main advantage is time. With a 24-hour cycle, we have the opportunity to find the background, generate expert opinions, produce illuminating graphics, the combination of which give depth and meaning to our content.

Our other ace in the hole is paper. Much maligned though it may be, this dinosaur of interfaces has the not inconsiderable benefits of space, ease of navigation, portability and low cost which our competitors cannot match. They are dependent on a sequential format, a stream of information given in a certain order, while our readers can jump to the section or page that is of interest or importance to them whenever they want to and can read our product in any order they chose.

That said, we have to know how to fill those blank sheets properly, which leads to the next question.

## 4. The trend to populism

Quality papers must not allow the need to increase readership to alter their fundamental mission, which is to give thoughtful and

significant insight to events that can affect or enhance their lives. The raw material for that type of content is more likely to be found in stories dealing with the spread of SARS or in investigations aimed at improving education than it is in those dealing with the paternity of Elizabeth Hurley's baby or on speculation as to why Hugh Grant has not yet married. Television and sport personalities can sell papers, but those sales are of little use to a quality daily if they go to readers who are uninterested in and cannot be attracted to the national, political and social issues in which the paper invests the vast majority of its reporting and editing resources.

That does not mean that we should ignore the entertainment and sport industries. These should be covered with the same thought, depth and dedication that we devote to political debates or the war in Iraq. But celebrities should not be used to tease and entice readers when the coverage of their highly publicised lives is not our main concern or reason for being.

#### **5. Increasing readership**

Be relevant and be accessible. The coverage of political and social issues need not be dry and must not be allowed to become boring or pedantic.

To maintain our current readers and attract new ones, we must constantly improve the quality of our journalism. We risk our futures and our very existence if we do not have valuable analysis and opinions to add to the news our readers have already seen on television or heard on the radio.

The key to this content lies in the ability and talent of our staffs. If we are to attract new readers, if we are to have something of use and importance to say to them, we must have the right people in our newsrooms. We should demand that reporters coming into our papers have a better and broader level of education than their predecessors did, and should encourage and invest in retraining our current staff. Only with outstanding human capital can we be assured of producing a paper that brings order and finds significance and meaning in the confusing jumble of a day's events.

All that talent, the thoughtful and penetrating analysis, the brilliant and incisive opinion carefully culled from years of experience and painstakingly edited, the whole sum of our efforts will be a waste of time without the proper presentation. If it ends up as a mass of grey and uninviting type, it might well be passed over. Placement, design and graphics must be given the same importance and invested with the same amount of time and thought as the content of the articles themselves. Every resource must be used to make a story or package of stories attractive and accessible. This is critical in a world increasingly dominated by visual images, and is particularly necessary to attract younger readers.

#### **6. Widening influence**

The same answer as the above question. We must be read in order to have influence and we must have something to say in order to be read.



# 7 Non-partisan role

Edmund Curran, Editor, *Belfast Telegraph*

## 1. Role in society

The *Belfast Telegraph* has a unique cross-community readership in Northern Ireland's divided society. That places it in an independent, non-partisan role with a particular emphasis on objectivity and balance. In the context of Northern Ireland's sometimes difficult political situation, the *Telegraph* has a crucial role as the largest circulation newspaper addressing issues in both unionist and nationalist, Protestant and Catholic communities, and reaching all sides. Credibility and reliability are essential in such an environment and I believe the *Telegraph* has a reputation amongst its readership for both.

Aside from editorial content, another major selling point of the paper is the fact that it is the biggest advertising platform in Northern Ireland with very comprehensive classified and display advertising.

## 2. How other media compare

Northern Ireland has two morning newspapers as well as national papers published in the Irish Republic and Britain which circulate widely. The two mornings are seen as partisan, one catering

for unionists and Protestants mainly and the other for nationalists and Catholics. Their readership profile bears this out. We do not have an evening competitor other than the local BBC and commercial television and radio channels, which challenge us strongly because of their immediacy and, in the case of the BBC, editorial investment and strength.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

Detail and comprehensiveness. One-stop shop or all-in-one package of news, features, sport and advertising. Range of opinion and comment. Community information/advertising which is easier to take in from newspapers than from TV or radio. Localness.

## 4. The trend to populism

In general, newspapers have dumbed down: both regional and even broadsheet quality nationals in Britain. I agree that there is more personality news but I feel that this is determined by the dominance and influence of TV in daily life and also by the almost obsessive attitude to sports such as soccer. For example, coverage of

parliament and politics has diminished greatly as has coverage of courts and local government. The expanding sections of today's papers are not the news pages but sport and features and this is a very questionable strategy for the future.

#### **5. Increasing readership**

Investing in editorial content and making newspapers easier to navigate. Making it easier for potential readers to purchase newspapers or have them delivered. Better targeting of

readership groups such as young and older readers or in terms of geographic editions. Internet access.

#### **6. Widening influence**

Investing in the best reporters, writers and commentators for their societies. Providing more editorial insight and investigative journalism for their societies. Being part of the society with more campaigns and direct involvement in major issues. More civic journalism.

# 8 Community tool

**Michael Getler**, Ombudsman at the *Washington Post*, US

## 1. Role in society

To inform citizens about all the news they need to live their lives and carry out their role as citizens in a democracy. To probe and challenge, and to seek accountability with respect to the actions and policies of institutions such as government, business, academia and the media. To explain and analyse the impact of those actions.

## 2. How other media compare

It is, I believe, the job of major daily newspapers, in particular, to be the driving engines of journalism, to be the most comprehensive and durable record of who we are, what we do and how we do it as a society, and of what goes on in other societies as well.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

Newspapers, I believe, convey and are conducive to a society. They tie families and communities together. They can be carried around, read several times, clipped, separated by section within families. They provoke community discussion. People talk about what they read in a newspaper. The large newspapers, in particular, are designed

to drive coverage, to uncover what is going on in every segment of our public lives, from politics to sport. The vast number of stories that are covered by other media start somewhere as newspaper accounts. Newspapers have the capacity to be far more comprehensive than other news media. They should be the repository of high standards of taste, language, privacy and journalistic guidelines. The strongest newspapers have the best chance, and the most resources, to resist legal challenges and advertising pressure; another form of setting standards.

## 4. The trend to populism

I think this is true but it does not worry me as much as it seems to worry some others. Large papers have room for lots of material. I do think there is too much personality and celebrity journalism. But on the other hand, I am not one who is critical of coverage – that is, serious coverage – of things like the OJ Simpson case, or the death of Princess Diana, or the battle over the young Cuban boy who was saved at sea and brought to the US, or the recent case of Chandra Levy, whose body was found in a park in

Washington DC a year after she went missing. I think these stories, and others like them, often have powerful human interest connections to the public and to larger issues of race, power, politics, class and other basic yardsticks that we all are sensitive to.

#### **5. Increasing readership**

Maintain their high standards. Find ways to attract younger readers through aggressive school marketing programs of the newspaper. Use the web edition to capture the reading habits of the

younger generation and bring them to the paper electronically, if not to the printed page. Focus circulation and promotion on young families so that children grow up in a home with a newspaper. Seek the right formula in the paper to attract younger readers without alienating the core older readers.

Do not give up on the concept of printed newspapers. They have met all previous challenges and have a basic human quality that still may bring today's young people to them at some point later in their lives.

# 9 National debate

**Hanoch Marmari**, Editor-in-Chief, *Haaretz*, Tel Aviv

## 1. Role in society

To provide our readers with information, analysis, commentaries and op-eds on all the issues of which an educated and aware person should be informed. To play a leading role in the national debate and to influence people involved in these key issues.

To report stories with relevance to the alert and intelligent reader.

To support democracy, freedom of speech and the right freely to access information.

## 2. How other media compare

Unlike in the past, today there is only one independent, for-profit broadsheet newspaper in Israel, and that is *Haaretz*. We currently sell to some 10 per cent of the newspaper-reading market in Hebrew. Our reader profile is broadly consistent with a highbrow, up-market consumer.

The rest of the market in Israel is served by two mass-circulation tabloid newspapers. These closely resemble each other, and offer an experiential, emotive style of journalism, domestically focused, selective in their variety of subjects, with relatively little coverage of

foreign affairs or public administration, and concentrating on human interest stories and celebrity gossip.

While most *Haaretz* readers are home subscribers, most of the circulation of our competitors comes from news-stands and supermarkets. They must appeal to the occasional reader and sometimes take risks in their reporting, while *Haaretz* is interested in establishing a long-term relationship with its readers, based on solid, credibly written journalism that cannot be rebutted the next day.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

At a time when the internet is filled with junk-information, a newspaper must offer coverage of a broad variety of issues, and that coverage must be justifiable. Emphasising content and insight, the newspapers' editors and reporters must be knowledgeable and experienced in every field. Indeed, they must lead the field, in areas as diverse as sport, theatre and cinema, alongside political analysis and trenchant caricature.

#### **4. The trend to populism**

Please see answer to Q2.

#### **5. Increasing readership**

The newspaper market in Israel is in direct competition with, but also complements, the television market. Television is dominant (one public channel, two commercial channels and dozens of cable ones) and is a major force in setting the public agenda. Mostly, the prime-time newscasts lead the way and the newspapers have to follow.

It is hard for newspapers, including *Haaretz*, to offer a completely different agenda, lest readers feel it is out of touch or irrelevant to the issues highlighted on television.

At the same time, if society in Israel is gathered around the television “tribal bonfire”, as

it is called, our duty is to offer an alternative bonfire, which radiates an attractive, although different, light and warmth. As a metaphor, a newspaper must never be sited in the dark or left holding a single candle.

#### **6. Widening influence**

In order to increase its influence over society, a newspaper must improve all the time, be sensitive to changes in the market, be sensitive to the expectations of the readers, carve out for itself a position of influence and significance, voice the concerns and opinions of the public.

It must be one step ahead of its readers, give them more than they expect and sometimes, if necessary, anger and provoke them. It must be innovative and conduct a critical dialogue with its readers.

# 10 Sensitive issues

**Ahmad Al-Yusuf**, Editor-in-Chief, *Saudi Gazette*, Saudi Arabia

## 1. Role in society

As a private and independent English language daily, we are a source of information and news on local issues for expatriates. We also deliver their most important home news. As an English-language publication, we also enjoy a wider margin of freedom and, as such, tackle issues of great importance to Saudi readers.

## 2. How other media compare

Sensitive issues covered by the *Saudi Gazette* would not be tackled by the official and Arabic language press, television or radio, which shy away from what is considered controversial for fear of a hard reaction.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

Newspapers allow the reader the time to probe into information that television and radio does not. Television and radio are fast media. A reader can read at the time they choose and if certain content is of importance, then it can be clipped and saved. Also, a "good read" is a source of pleasure to intellectuals and people who enjoy reading more than watching and listening to

content. Newspapers offer in-depth information and analysis in addition to well written features that are considered more educational and informative than what is available on the airwaves.

## 4. The trend to populism

It is vital for any publication to serve the needs of readers and offer them the content they want. Having said this, newspapers are always in search of "new needs" that are created through new types of content and services. A daily newspaper has to be comprehensive in its content in order to attract as many readers as possible, especially in small markets where niche and specialised market segment interests are very low. By satisfying as many readers as possible, the newspaper can be a viable and profitable business, a very important factor for independence as well as continuity.

## 5. Increasing readership

Newspapers must work hard to come up with original content that is unavailable elsewhere. With the hard competition coming from new media, television and radio, newspapers find themselves in need of scoops and breaking news ▶

more than ever before. In order to achieve better original content, newspapers find it necessary to probe deeper when writing features, opinion and analysis, in order to compete with documentaries, debates and live shows.

Through tackling a wider range of subjects, newspapers increase their readership. A newspaper-magazine marriage brings information of interest to readers. Magazine type content is already invading newspapers but more of that

content could widen the reader base even further.

#### **6. Widening influence**

Newspapers should become catalysts for change by tackling issues that are ignored by other media, including an ever more active monitoring role that allows people insight into the truth, and detailed probing of issues of importance to society, be these political, economical, social or moral.



# 11 Independent analysis

**Kavi Chongkittavorn**, Executive Editor, *The Nation*, Thailand

## **1. Role in society**

To disseminate information and provide independent analysis that will help readers to understand issues affecting their society better.

## **2. How other media compare**

We do not toe the government's line.

## **3. The newspaper's strong points**

It provides an easy-to-read format that readers can take around anywhere.

## **4. The trend to populism**

Yes, it is true. Newspaper can make serious issues interesting to read with good presentation. How can one read about sport, TV, movie personalities every day?

## **5. Increasing readership**

Give additional comprehensive articles that are related to them and their communities.

## **6. Widening influence**

They should provide solutions, or ways out, to the problems they write about.



# 12 Freedom struggle

**Francis Mdlongwa**, Editor-in-Chief, *Daily News*, Zimbabwe

## 1. Role in society

As well as reporting on a wide range of economic, political and social events in Zimbabwe, the *Daily News* sees itself as the flag-bearer for a gathering campaign by many Zimbabweans and their friends across the globe seeking real democracy and freedom after 23 years of virtual dictatorship in the country.

We see our duty as not only reporting news, but interpreting it through analytical news pieces and features to bring out its significance and context within the broader struggle for freedom – the freedom of the media and of speech, the freedom of assembly and association and the freedom of being allowed to do whatever is deemed lawful by a democratic constitution in an independent Zimbabwe.

## 2. How other media compare

Our role and duty is the exact opposite of the government media, which see themselves as key instruments of buttressing the present status quo and, in many ways, are part and parcel of the repression of Zimbabweans.

Our newspaper, being the only daily in

Zimbabwe which has a small but vibrant independent press, sees other independent newspapers as allies.

## 3. The newspaper's strong points

For all the technological advances that are re-shaping the news media landscape in the digital information age, newspapers still have a major role to play which other new and competing media such as the internet cannot easily fulfil.

Newspapers will continue to be permanent records of society's multi-faceted developments, notwithstanding the fact that information and data can now be stored electronically, simply because ordinary people in far-flung areas of most Third World countries do not yet have access to computers, electricity and telephones which make it possible to access news and information through the new information media.

The fact that newspapers are relatively cheaper than, say, radios and televisions – not to mention computers – means that they are still a crucial source of news for most people in the developing world. ►

#### 4. The trend to populism

The content of newspapers cannot lag behind ever-changing societal needs and tastes and therefore must carry some news on important television and sport personalities. After all, these personalities are news themselves, more so when they are involved in a scandal.

However, newspapers must seek to balance populist news with the more serious, if at times boring, news about key societal developments which readers need to be informed about.

#### 5. Increasing readership

Newspapers need to be innovative in the packaging and presentation of their news in the face of increasing competition from radio, television, the internet and info-mobile phones.

For example, newspapers need to cultivate the interests of their young audiences by involving them. This can be done through the launch of news and letters pages exclusively catering for the interests of the young, who themselves must tell their own life stories and

experiences in a manner that makes sense to their generation.

Newspapers need to carry out regular reader surveys to sample changing reader interests and tastes and see how these can be accommodated in their news pages. For example, a weekend newspaper might find it worthwhile to carry a pullout which contains details of most entertainment and places where this can be found, the entry fees etc. This would be an entertainment guide to what's on and where every weekend. This can be spiced with entertainment or lifestyle stories which can draw readers to that newspaper.

Needless to say, readers would probably find it easier to carry the guide around and refer to it whenever they wish rather than carry a bulky newspaper.

#### 6. Widening influence

Newspapers need to do more investigative reporting to expose corruption and other societal vices, thus increasing their influence on society and governments

### Francis Mdlongwa added the following comment:

The biggest challenge faced by the *Daily News* and other independent newspapers in Zimbabwe is to raise the freedom flag in the midst of draconian media laws enacted by the government last year specifically to try to deny Zimbabweans crucial news and information necessary for them to make informed judgments about a deepening economic and political crisis in the country.

The so-called Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), enacted after President Robert Mugabe's controversial re-election in 2002, has sought to control what journalists can write about by compelling them to register with a government-appointed media commission.

Those who write what the government views as negative news risk being de-registered and thus unable to practise their profession, denying them the means of a livelihood.

The act also criminalises what it brands as falsehoods – inaccurate or untrue news stories written or broadcast by journalists. This clause of

the law was, however, recently struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, and yet there remain many other undemocratic clauses in an act which must be repealed altogether because its sole aim is to stifle media freedom and that of free speech.

Taken together with another undemocratic law, the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), which prohibits public gatherings without police clearance and which was also enacted in 2002, AIPPA is one of the most repressive laws ever made by the government in its desperate attempt to hang on to power against mounting public anger triggered by the crisis.

Under POSA and AIPPA, several journalists and human rights activists have been detained by police over a range of allegations as the government cracks down any pro-democracy voices in the country.

Obviously, the Supreme Court ruling striking down the clause on so-called falsehoods is a glimmer of hope, but the entire AIPPA and POSA need to go.

# 13 Relevant news

**Jan Wifstrand**, Editor-in-Chief, *Dagens Nyheter*, Sweden

## **1. Role in society**

To be a dominant player in the market for unique and relevant news and features, which sets the agenda in the Swedish society.

## **2. How other media compare**

We have bigger resources than anybody else in Sweden and are able to keep the standards required by the readers and advertisers.

## **3. The newspaper's strong points**

See above. A strong and big staff of news producers, absolutely not only background and analysis. Please do not forget that newspapers are continuously breaking news (which is unique) and are increasing their news impact, due to the web.

## **4. The trend to populism**

This is not the case at *Dagens Nyheter*. Our readers want a high quality product.

## **5. Increasing readership**

Look at news in a broader perspective. Not focus too much on traditional heavy news such as politics or business, but also deliver good, qualified journalism about arts, literature, leisure and so on. A full scale newspaper with an active website and close communication with readers.

## **6. Widening influence**

Several things. Give attention to opinions, give space to readers, arrange serious events about society and so on.



# 14 Social service

François Régis Hutin, President-Directeur-Général, *Ouest-France*

## 1. Role in society

The role of our newspaper is to build ties within the community. In contrast to the temptations of communitarians, a paper must be a conduit between social groups and generations, a bridge between the varied sympathies of its readers, a tool for understanding different lifestyles and ways of thinking, a link between the members of society.

Our intention of imparting the founding values of humanism and democracy is premised on pluralism and respect for opinions and for people. By doing this, *Ouest-France* helps to maintain the delicate balance between individual and group interests, between each specific group and society as a whole, between the parts that serve the whole and the whole that must never oppress the parts. Only by serving democracy can we preserve this balance that allows people to freely fulfil their potential within a society in which justice rules.

We believe that the publication of reliable information, covering all facets of the community or neighborhood, as well as the world, is a part of this mission. It makes people aware of the subtle ties between faraway events and local life,

bringing them closer by playing on the full range of the laws of proximity. In point of fact, news of Europe and further afield allows the reader to discover the world; local information aids in forging an irreplaceable link between people, making society more consistent. *Ouest-France* sees itself as a builder of community.

Every day, *Ouest-France* is modestly helping people live together. With the plethora of photos published in our local pages, *Ouest-France* lets people in western France get to know and recognise each other. It guides them in their everyday lifestyles (useful information, calendars of events, etc).

Through published articles and reports, it connects people by placing value on their shared achievements, as well as by witnessing their hardships, their joys and their pain, their fears and their hopes. In this way, it helps them to grow in their mutual relationships, to become a part of society. It makes them want to take part in collective life. It allows the reader to discover that he is a citizen, a participant in his city, and this is an essential role of the newspaper.

It reports on events of importance and events ►

that affect the lives of people, groups and communities.

*Ouest-France* provides reference points and explanations for understanding events and problems, because the role of a regional newspaper, and specifically *Ouest-France*, is also to allow the greatest number of people to gain a better understanding of our increasingly complex society through well written analysis that is within their reach. It also serves as a font of learning and knowledge through the information published on places near and far. Its role is to offer the reader keys for understanding subjects of all kinds. By relating facts objectively, by placing them in perspective and by reporting on different viewpoints, allowing for more in-depth discussion, it helps people reflect and form their own views.

*Ouest-France* does not hesitate to report and denounce abuses. When fundamental values are being challenged, *Ouest-France* takes clear sides in the debate to defend such values.

In a society where everything is changing, accelerating, and becoming virtualised, a newspaper is an established and recognised entity, a source of trust and confidence for its readers because it is close to the community and known for its history, its values and its scrupulousness.

## 2. How other media compare

As with all printed newspapers, an effort is demanded on the part of the reader. Unlike a listener, who gleans snippets of information from the radio, or the television viewer, who absorbs images without expending any effort, a reader chooses to seek information in the newspaper, after selecting what he wants to read. The connection created with the paper becomes that much stronger as a result. A healthy engagement is produced between the newspaper and its readers, built on expectations and demands. In the case of *Ouest-France*, this connection with the reader is so strong that it is referred to as a contract.

The French press was greatly marked by the conditions that surrounded the resumption of daily newspaper publication after the Second World War. This is particularly true for *Ouest-France*, which became steeped in the spirit

handed down by its founders, a spirit that it has deliberately perpetuated ever since.

*Ouest-France*'s role also differs from the role played by specialised or targeted media that address a select public or the general public in a specialised field. It is a general circulation, mass appeal newspaper, with both local and international coverage. No other medium covers the same spectrum. On TV, France 3 is the network that most closely matches these criteria, therefore playing a similar role, but only to the extent allowed by that medium, as it would have to air thousands of hours of programming each day to cover the same content, not to

## Neither TV nor radio can match the local role played by the newspaper

mention the constraints of a government owned network.

Neither TV nor radio can match the local role played by the newspaper; they are unable to maintain such ties with the people. *Ouest-France* stands out for its presence in the 5,000 districts that make up its radius of influence, for the regularity and density of its community chronicles, and for the announcement and accounts of meetings and demonstrations of all types. More than 4,000 meetings are announced every day in the editions of *Ouest-France*. It has the ability to gather and redistribute useful information of a local nature in real time.

The way it reports on events lends the paper a unique role, particularly in deflecting tensions, which it helps to regulate. By its very nature, it is the most suitable medium for promoting society's self-governance, whereas broadcast media are more apt to play to emotions and spontaneity.

Broadcast media are devoted first and foremost to entertainment; the internet serves mainly for personal development, for individuals or corporations. The mission of *Ouest-France* is to encourage dialogue between people – between individuals and their representatives within the institutions in which they freely take part. It serves the ties that bind society. What makes us unique is the respect we show our competitors, the respect for our readers and the respect for the people we write about in the paper.



### 3. The newspaper's strong points

Speech fades, while text remains. Televised images are ephemeral, as are spoken words heard on the radio. The newspaper provides information that remains with us. It encourages greater reflection, whereas broadcast news plays on emotions to capture and hold our interest.

Newspapers make it possible to refer back to information that may have been heard on the radio or seen on TV. *Ouest-France* adds elements of analysis that let the reader gain a better understanding of the world in which he lives.

Newspapers still enjoy a great credibility founded on strong brands or recognised titles. They allow readers to scan the surface or to probe deeper, affording the detachment needed for analysis. They offer readers reflection and analysis, perspective and distance.

Moreover, newspapers are practical. They can be saved, cut up, mailed, archived, read and re-read. Because they are so easy to consult, they encourage sharing of information with others. Their availability and permanence allow them to be read and reread by the family and within other social circles. Since the information is not fleeting, it is less likely to be misunderstood or misconstrued.

These qualities make print media the best – if not the only – means available to the public for analysis and critical thinking.

The newspaper is a tool of freedom. It is the only means of information that, at any given time or place, freely provides an opportunity to check facts, uncover their explanations, examine commentary and positions taken, and especially,

### Newspapers print contrasting points of view, unlike TV's verbal sparring

to jump from one to the other as many times as needed, without comprehension suffering as a result. It is the medium that most respects the reader's freedom, since it is the reader who chooses the time(s) of day and the time spent on reading the paper. The reader chooses what he wants to read. He can see and thumb through the news and information the paper provides exactly

as he pleases. He is also met with advertising, rather than having it imposed on him. The result is that the reader is not passive, but becomes an active participant.

The internet is a form of print medium and although it has its own set of advantages, it does not offer the empowerment of something held in

### Papers can be saved, cut up, mailed, archived, read and re-read

your hand, the total view of things you get with a paper document. Newspapers provide a panoply of the day's events, of the information that most affects people, and the major milestones in current national and international events. Whether for technical or cost reasons, it is unusual that a medium, apart from the newspaper, can offer a course of reading that spans the distance from "my" neighbourhood to the world. The daily paper offers a selection of news whose very format gives an indication of the relative importance the information holds within the calendar of current events. The information is readily and easily accessible. Only the regional newspaper makes it simple for readers to quickly choose from such a large array of information.

Newspapers are able to provide much more information than other media; they provide the largest number of both general and local news items.

While radio or TV may air 25 or at most 30 stories during a nightly newscast or a morning report, a newspaper reader can choose 30 items from more than 300 printed articles. These articles are categorised, making them quickly accessible, along with various "unique" ads, such as classifieds.

Newspapers make it possible to provide much more complete information. Only newspapers are systematically able to print contrasting points of view, opinions and arguments, unlike the verbal sparring matches on TV.

Newspapers offer more diverse content. Only newspapers are able to provide such good opportunities to discover and explore subjects in which the reader may not initially have had any interest. Zapping through articles does not

systematically interrupt reading, but rather becomes an integral part of it.

Newspapers offer richer content. Only newspapers give voice to all components of society, because of the space they have available compared with the limited formats in broadcast media.

Newspapers have the best combination of information, speed of access and purchase price among all the media.

#### 4. The trend to populism

Although that may be true for some papers, it is not the case for *Ouest-France*, which has always maintained a high level of quality and integrity. Our greatest protection is our readership, who would never accept such a shift in reporting.

Nonetheless, some publishers have been worried by the drop in penetration and the erosion of ad revenues. These concerns have led some to forget that newspapers must respond to their

will not increase if the newspaper is not credible.

Each and every article contributes to this credibility and therefore strengthens the trust between the reader and the newspaper.

Furthermore, there is no reliable evidence that newspapers that become more popularised have met the multifaceted expectations of the press-reading public. The solid performance of *Ouest-France*, the success of *Courrier International* and the growing audience of *La Croix*, which run counter to that trend, give proof of this. The ample demand for meaningful information expressed by readers in their letters to the editor is another proof.

Topics of importance interest everyone. There is no need to tone down the subject matter; what can be done to make the paper more accessible to the mass audience is to freshen the style, the layout. Newspapers need to become more accessible in all senses of the word.

First, in terms of style, which should be quick,

light and to the point. Only words that everyone can understand should be used; convoluted formats should be avoided, and so on.

Distribution also needs improvement, to make the newspaper available to readers as early as possible, in their homes, before they leave for work. That is critical if people are going to discuss and share information.

Distribution networks need to be improved and prices lowered.

#### Memory, change, commitment: a newspaper's tasks

**A duty to remember:** Regaining our memory is certainly one way to knit society back together. With social ties becoming ever weaker, our memory has most definitely begun to fail.

**And an aid for change:** Newspapers have the responsibility to encourage and facilitate needed changes that bring with them human solidarity and progress. Memory and change: the dual mission of a newspaper's influence should be to offer its readers both roots and wings.

**Commitment:** Not to be opinion makers, but to help the reader to find his place within the hubbub of the world. Newspapers need to remain or return to being engaged observers, attentive to the human aspirations that are sometimes stronger than one would expect, and which are capable of mobilizing around the newspaper for a unifying cause. As the French management expert Hervé Sérieyx wrote: "In a world of ever decreasing certainty, we need to hold on to some of our convictions and not give them short shrift."

readers' essential need for information. Those who think they can ward off these symptoms by changing their mission, by entertaining instead of informing, will speed up their own demise, since they will wind up losing the public's trust.

In fact, newspapers that give in to the temptation to become more popularised in the hope of increasing sales are doing so to the detriment of the bonds they have spent so much time establishing with their readers. Circulation

The problem with the daily press in some countries may be that it is overly limited to so-called serious subjects, while neglecting enjoyment, leisure, humour and emotional issues. It is criticised for being boring and difficult. Publishing information on people, television or sports, as long as it is credible and shows respect for people and journalistic ethics, cannot possibly harm circulation. It enlarges the editorial offering, as long as it supplements more serious articles,

rather than replacing them. However a daily can never rival the entertainment press. It is therefore essential that a newspaper be cognisant of the goal it is striving to achieve and how it plans to get there. Are serious matters condemned to be treated in a boring manner? Is that not where we need to focus our efforts?

Widely accepted, not popularised, *Ouest-France* is open to all currents of thought, is pluralist in its expression, and as attentive to the poor and needy as it is to the movers and shakers in the political arena.

It is a place of information and reflection covering society, the economy, philosophy and religion. It banks on the ample demand for meaningful information expressed by its readers in their letters.

### 5. Increasing readership

We need to turn to the readers, listen to them, continually conduct research to understand their expectations and their concerns so that we can be meaningful, useful and focus on their centres of interest, particularly those of women and young people. We need to create a bond of trust with our readers by establishing long-term policies and not falling prey to easy opportunities (catchy news briefs, attacks on the presumption of innocence or breaches of the right to privacy).

Newspapers also need to:

- Dare to distance themselves from other media, particularly TV, by presenting information in new and different ways.
- Learn to be brief while still catching readers' interest: develop a perspective on the

## To ensure credibility, there can be no mistakes in local information

news and tell a story, choose vivid subjects, that are more rooted in people's lives (more features, personal accounts, human interest).

- Select and arrange content better: more quality, less quantity, more news in brief.
- Expand the areas of news covered, since readers' centres of interest are increasingly vast.
- Continue to be innovative: the content must teach, yet also surprise, amuse and entertain,

by finding more information and presenting the unusual, yet without becoming facile.

- Expand the number of services and come up with new ways of targeting readers. The

## We need long-term policies to create a bond of trust with our readers

personalisation of industry products has won over many sectors of the economy, at the price of organisational overhauls, yet without ultimately increasing costs. We may hope this will apply to newspapers as well one day.

- Work on the layout of information. Readers have little time to spare. As a result, they need information that is clear, and as far as possible, pleasant to read.
- Make the presentation much more appealing, adapting content and artwork to the needs of a public that has to handle large amounts of information and whose lifestyles are changing. Layout should be carefully arranged: color, typography, photos, computer graphics.
- Become more readable through writing that is simple yet effective, through the choice of words and the editorial style used. Article formats (headlines, illustrations, length) should encompass different styles of reading and improve readability.
- Train the reporting staff. Teach them to focus their efforts on perfect readability, vivid points of view, on differentiating between genres of reporting and on illustration (photos and computer graphics). To maintain or restore

credibility, there can be no mistakes in local information. Mistakes carry an immediate and long-lasting punishment. Increase reporters' educational skills and capabilities,

since subject matter has become increasingly complex. Develop the art of reaching out to the public, through efforts at presentation, visualisation and straightforward writing.

- Lower the price of sale. We need to seek out the highest quality and combine that with the lowest prices, because newspapers cost too much. Reducing their cost will require efforts at greater productivity, or cease using a constant structure (by extending into other

media, for example), make substantial use of cross-media convergence and emphasise specific targets, services or editions.

- Distribution efforts: Develop the number of points of sale and home delivery. Increase accessibility to accommodate impulse buying, arranging for means of distribution, anywhere and anytime (vending machines in cities, as in the Nordic countries).
- Come up with still newer methods of distribution that will allow readers to access and receive the newspaper more conveniently.

## Recognise and value the 'honest person', wherever he may be

Increase distribution through such means as home delivery, delivery to apartments at any floor, by making special editions available, free or paid-for, aimed at markets like those of free papers.

- Marketing efforts. Spread the word, make people want the daily paper, by making use of other media (internet, radio, TV) both for their marketing and editorial publicity when they form part of the group. Increase marketing and publicity, something in which only the British dailies seem to invest meaningful sums. Newspapers do not spend enough on their own publicity. Readers and customers: set up a personalised relationship with each reader and a customer knowledge base to gain a better understanding of their needs, to serve them better and to retain subscribers.

The convergence of different forms of media around a shared brand guarantees credibility and quality.

### 5. Widening influence

To increase their influence, newspapers need to

earn the trust of their readers. To do so, they need to be credible and provide thorough information. The keyword for being credible and recognised: thoroughness. Newspapers must uphold the highest possible standards of quality. The more newspapers demand of themselves, the more they will increase their influence.

They must:

- Allow the greatest number of people to have access to at least the minimum amount of intelligible information that they have the right to expect. Understand and aid in analysing society.
  - Play a direct role in the city's life. Become involved in community outreach activities.
  - Become more involved in political, societal and ethical issues.
- Take an interest in emerging topics as if they were new continents awaiting discovery, without hesitation or demagoguery.
- Offer a more positive and optimistic view of life.
- Recognise and value "the honest person" wherever he may be hiding.
- Leave the reader wanting more; never leave him satiated. The newspaper should be just one part of the universe of different media; it is no longer the readers' only source of information.
- Make it easy for readers to move between different media by developing a multimedia strategy in which each medium is related to the brand (the title) – its strength and its credibility – thereby building a supplementary audience. The value of the brand remains the same, yet the tone and the format vary according to the public and the media.
- Newspapers need to join forces to share costs (production, sales) and to speak out to public authorities and institutions with a united front.

# 14 Fighting back

**Jim Chisholm**, Strategy Advisor to the World Association of Newspapers

Given that most of us accept that the newspaper has an important role to play in society, be it as a reporter of facts, an analyser of issues or a campaigner, it is worth examining the extent to which these roles are effective and how the role of the newspaper, however defined, is changing.

In mature, more prosperous markets, newspapers are still far more popular, both in terms of reach and reading intensity, among the wealthier and more educated elements of society. Poorer people are reading less and they are reading less often.

Given the inability of poorer groups to pay for newspapers and the disproportionate lack of interest among advertisers in reaching them, the rationale for providing these groups with a serious read is economically challenging.

Newspapers are not losing influence. But their franchise among the masses is shrinking. Newspapers are in danger of becoming the medium of the elite. In both subscription and single-copy markets, there are increasing difficulties in attracting younger, less prosperous readers. In markets where newspapers are segmented by income group, there is a gradual

drift toward the more up-market titles, while papers that appeal to the mass market are in decline. In markets with lower levels of income, there are whole strata of society for whom newspaper readership is a rare event. This has serious implications for social inclusion. One study in the US<sup>1</sup> found that while 90 per cent of the most knowledgeable members of the population voted, only 20 per cent of the least knowledgeable group did. Without a newspaper for guidance, more and more of our society will become excluded.

While the newspaper continues to be effective because it is read and respected by those with power and influence, we must face the challenge of being read and enjoyed by the less well off.

The SFN report on young readers clearly demonstrates that unless newspapers invest heavily in reaching younger readers, they can look forward to their current circulation declines only getting worse.

It is not simply a matter of protecting industry's future. Newspapers are good for young people.

The Newspaper Association of America

undertook a study of the impact of Newspapers in Education (NIE) programmes in 22 schools in nine states<sup>2</sup>. This study found that overall, in schools with at least some NIE programs, students were about 10 per cent more likely to pass a reading test than in those that had no NIE program. Interestingly, the largest differences were found among pupils who were expected to fail the test and in schools with large minority populations. Significant differences in performance were more likely to occur among children aged 11 to 13. There have been similar findings in studies of the value of the newspaper in the classroom across the world.

Not only does investment in appealing to young readers encourage their interest in and valuation of newspapers, but research has shown that regular reading by young people makes them better citizens, with a wider awareness of major issues and greater levels of educational ability.

The Belgian and Dutch governments are sufficiently impressed by these facts to fund the distribution of newspapers to schools, providing publishers with a healthy income and useful long-term promotion.

But for publishers who believe that young people cannot be persuaded to read newspapers consider the following analysis.

In Spain, not only has readership among 15-24s trebled over the past 30 years, but examination of how interest in newspapers has changed as readers get older shows that between the critical ages of 15-24 and 25-34, readers increase their levels of readership. While a third

traditionally been lower than those in other countries, and the country has experienced the emergence of multiple TV providers and the internet. The evidence would suggest, however, that publishers are better in Spain at appealing to younger people.

Publishers who believe that appealing to younger readers is not profitable should turn to France where the Play Bac group sells more than 200,000 copies a day of its four newspapers appealing to age groups from five to 14-plus, and enjoys a good financial return for its efforts.

Among many in our industry, profit is an emotive word. They wonder whether the objectives of social betterment, upholding our democratic processes and scrutinising big business on behalf of the little man are compatible with the notion of making money. To what extent is there a danger that newspapers either lose sight of their social commitments, or downgrade the quality of their service in order to maximise profits for their owners?

Certainly private profitable ownership is better than state ownership.

According to an analysis by the World Bank<sup>3</sup>, higher state ownership of the media leads to weaker security of property, and lower qualities of commercial regulation. It is also a feature of countries with poorer health and education provision. The authors note that, in terms of economic factors, the media, in particular the press, are very important. They conclude: "Private ownership of the media can advance a variety of political and economic goals, and especially the social needs of the poor." Today, 29 per cent of the world's newspapers and 60 per cent of the world's television stations are state owned.

The influence of state ownership is not confined to developing nations. The state-owned BBC may be regarded as relatively independent, but its internet activities, where it has been allowed to create a plethora of free news and information services

unencumbered by the commercial constraints faced by other media, have enabled it to dominate online news provision in the UK and completely distort any paid-for content models for its competitors.

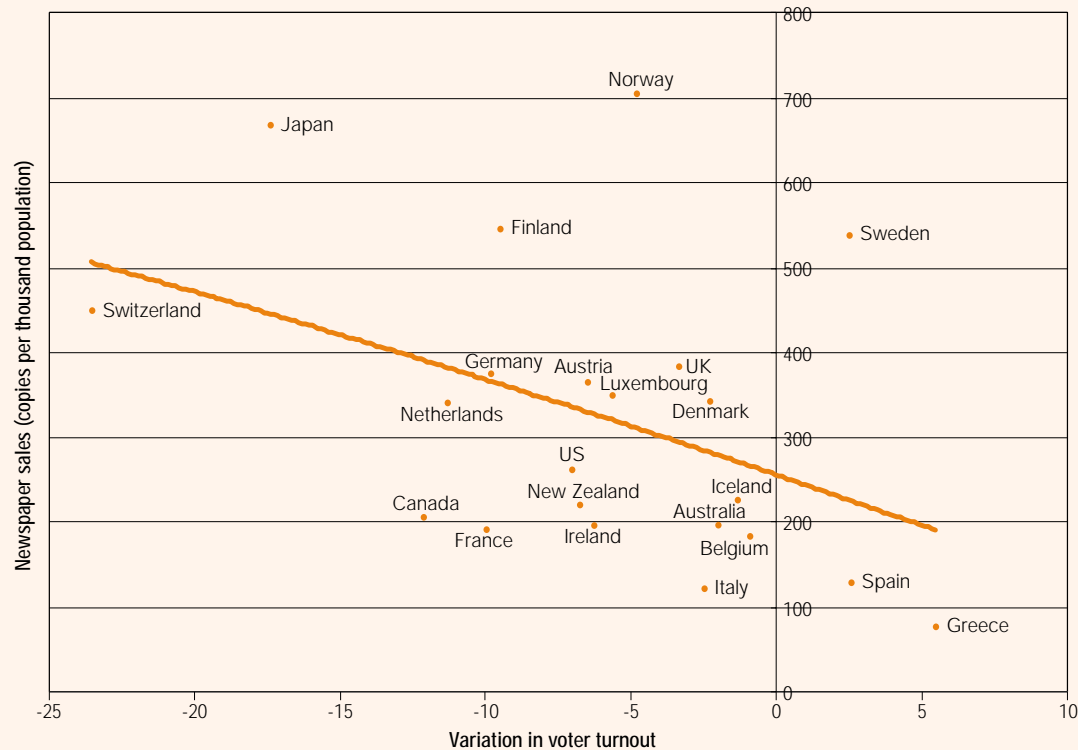
Table 1  
Percentage of each age group reading newspapers in Spain

	1972	1982	1992	2002
15-24	11.1	31.4	33.1	35.2
25-34	14.8	38.5	43.6	43.4
35-44	18.3	31.7	42.1	43.4
45-54	17.6	27.3	33.1	43.0
55-64	13.8	27.6	24.5	35.5
65+	13.5	23.5	22.8	25.4

of people who were 15-24 in 1992 read a newspaper, 43 per cent of the same group did so in 2002.

Levels of newspaper readership in Spain have

Relationship between newspaper readership and voter turnout



It can also be demonstrated that newspapers that seek short-term profit before everything else are in danger of losing their franchise in the longer term. An examination of the circulation performance of the UK's national press<sup>4</sup> relative to the profits of their ultimate owning companies shows that the companies making the highest profits own newspapers that are losing sales fastest. Superficially, one might argue that the search for profit goes against the idea that newspapers should have a social mission.

A study in the US by Philip Meyer at the University of North Carolina<sup>5</sup> examined the relationship between how credible people felt their local newspaper was and how well the circulation of that newspaper had performed in terms of market penetration over the previous five years. The study was undertaken across 21 distinct communities. The results showed a clear correlation between the two factors. The newspapers with high credibility had performed significantly better than those with lower credibility.

The study showed that for every 1 per cent increase in the newspapers' credibility score, circulation robustness (defined as the penetration

in 2000 divided by that in 1995) improved by 0.8 per cent.

Professor Meyer subsequently returned to the study and examined what had happened in terms of staffing in the newspapers that were included. He found that those where staff numbers remained stable or were reduced had shown circulation performance scores 3.5 per cent worse than those where staff numbers had increased.

All the available evidence suggests that investment in journalistic quality drives up sales, which in turn generates more advertising. The additional costs required to produce newspapers that sell well are far less than the ultimate losses incurred from falling sales.

Is it fair to conclude that elements of our industry, as they strive to attract and entertain an increasingly consumerist audience, are not only driving down the value their readers put on their societies, but ultimately are accelerating the decline of those societies themselves?

At a macro level, the newspaper in mature, industrialised democracies, appears to have little or even a negative effect on political engagement. Research consistently shows that readers are not interested in political matters and are certainly not

interested in politicians. And any analysis of the impact newspapers have on electoral participation suggests only a negative relationship. When fewer and fewer people are going to the polls worldwide, those countries where newspapers are most popular tend to be the ones with the highest declines in voter turnout – with the notable exception of the Scandinavians.

So what are the lessons to be drawn from this scattering of analyses?

There is a danger that newspapers are losing touch with key elements of their franchise.

Newspapers are becoming increasingly elitist

in their appeal. While this continues to ensure that they play a questioning role in their societies, they are in danger of losing readership over time.

Newspapers can and must appeal not only to a younger generation but also to those people who are less able to afford a newspaper, and gather their knowledge and attitudes from television or other sources.

The key message is that profitability is completely compatible with social responsibility, and that newspapers that invest in good journalism can look forward to better sales performance over time than those that do not.

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5 *Anatomy of a Death Spiral: Newspapers and Their Credibility*. Philip Meyer Knight, Professor of Journalism, University of North Carolina. philip\_meyer@unc.edu







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Shaping  
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