


FREE DAILY NEWSPAPERS


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Launches: Hungary, UK, Canada, Italy

Metro Hungary expands

 Metro expanded their Hungarian national edition on March 31 to five more cities. Metro is now distributed in 24 cities in Hungary. Total circulation is raised with 50,000 to 380,000 copies per day. Metro expects this will lead to a readership of 800,000. (Metro International)

Metro Italy goes national


 Metro launched five editions in Bologna, Florence, Genoa, Turin, and Verona/Padua on March 21. Total circulation in Italy now is 850,000, making Metro the daily with the highest circulation. In January Metro extended the Milan edition to Brescia, Bergamo, Pavia, Lecco, Monza, Lodi and Varese. Metro was launched in 2000 in Rome and Milan.

Italy has two other free papers. Leggo was launched in March 2001 by Caltagirone (*Il Messaggero*) with editions in Rome, Naples, Florence, Bologna, Turin, Milan, Venice, Padua and Verona. In September 2001 the RCS Media Group (*Corriere della Serra*) launched City in Milan, Bari, Bologna, Florence, Rome and Naples.

Free dailies in Italy (circulation * 1000)

	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05
Metro	400	414	450	450	450	850
Leggo		715	720	765	810	810
City		400	650	650	650	650
Stampa Sera		200	200			
total	400	1729	2020	1865	1910	2310

MEN Lite

 Standard Lite is the example for the new free (Lite) edition of the *Manchester Evening News*. Launched on March 21, the paper is handed out after 4:30 pm, which is after the last paid edition. Standard Lite is handed out before the first paid ones hit the street.


In 1999, MEN's publisher, the Guardian Media Group, launched the free *Manchester Metro* to protect their advertising market against Associated Newspapers' Metro, called *News*

North-West in Manchester. It was in fact a daily edition of their weekly free paper. In 2000 the operation was sold to Associated Newspapers who merged it with their Manchester edition, which was relaunched as *Metro*.




Manchester Evening News wants to attract new readers and does not expect that the paid edition will suffer because of the new free edition. Circulation is expected to be 10,000. The *Manchester Evening News* itself has a circulation of 140,000 but has seen a steady decline the last years (7% from 2003). (*Brand Republic / HoldTheFrontPage / Media Week*)


3rd 24 Hours in Vancouver

 *24 Hours* launched in Vancouver on March 29 by Quebecor and private investor Jim Pattison who is also in retail and owns a radio station. This is the third edition after Montreal (*24 Heures*) and Toronto. Both editions are still losing money; there is no news on circulation data yet. *24 Hours* boxes, however, were removed by the local authorities because the company 'forgot' to ask for permission and pay Can\$25,- per box. CanWest publishes the *Ottawa Citizen* in Ottawa, Quebecor (Sun Media) publishes the *Ottawa Sun*. (*CanadaCom, Globe and Mail*)

Metro Vancouver & Ottawa


 The new Vancouver free paper, launched on March 14, is a *Metro*. CanWest (*the National Post, the Vancouver Sun and The Province*) formed a joint venture with Metro and Torstar, Metro's partner in Toronto. Each company has 33.3% of the operation. Initial circulation will be 145,000 in the greater Vancouver area. Plans are to increase that to 160,000. Distribution is through boxes in business districts, universities and transit stops.

On March 30, Metro launched an Ottawa edition (circulation 60,000), also published together with Torstar and CanWest. Metro's total circulation in Canada is now 540,000.

 CanWest executive Michael Williams told Reuters 'the new joint venture will not interfere with the April 4 launch of *Dose*, a free daily paper targeting 18- to 34-year-old readers in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Vancouver. *Dose* is a very different product. It's a multiplatform brand, so you have the newspaper, the Web site and the wireless portal ... it's content and advertising driven specifically for the demographic.' Check out: www.dose.ca.

Still, it is remarkable that CanWest will launch a *Metro*-competitor. *Metro* is also aimed at the 18-34 group – not a different demographic. Initially CanWest wants a circulation for *Dose* of 80,000. How these 80,000 together with the 145,000 (later 160,000) will be distributed in a city with only a basic public transport system is a question. Total *Dose* circulation will be 320,000.

Black Press Strikes again

 Black Press Ltd. launched seven free daily editions on March 14, 2005 in Kamloops and the Vancouver Island communities (British Columbia). In February the company already launched two editions in that area. In all the communities Black Press publishes (non daily) paid newspapers. The dailies are filled with wire copy stories, some local news and local advertising. The new titles will have a circulation of 35,000. (*Globe and Mail*)


Free dailies circulation (*1000) in Canada

	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05
<i>Metro</i>	133	285	286	286	335	480
<i>Qubecor</i>	50	100	60	295	345	345
<i>Torstar</i>	175	155				
<i>Black Press</i>						44
total	408	540	346	581	680	869

In Toronto *Metro* is operated with Torstar, in Montreal with Transcontinental and in Vancouver with Torstar/CanWest. *Metro* Vancouver is printed by Black Press (20% owned by Torstar)

Circulation & Readership: France, US, UK

France 2004 Circulation Data

 Most general newspapers saw their circulation drop in 2004. Sports paper *L'Equipe*, business paper *L'Echo* and free papers *20 Minutes*, *Metro* and the *Plus*-productions in Bordeaux, Lyon, Lille, Toulon

and Marseille saw their circulation rise. The free papers have a combined circulation of 1,382,000 in 2004 against 989,000 in 2003; in 2005 their circulation rose to 1,432,000 because of *Metro* launches, while it will rise again when *20 Minutes* enters more markets.

After legal action against French readership audit association EuroPQN, *20 Minutes*, *Metro* and the *Plus*-editions will be included in the next newspaper readership survey. A new branche PQUG (Presse Quotidienne Urbaine Gratuite) will be founded. (Alain Neuville's Newsletter, *Voila.fr*)

Examiner opt-out & unwanted



The new door-to-door free daily *Washington Examiner* has raised circulation from 260,000 to 268,000 in March 2005. The opt-out rate is less than 3%. According to *Editor & Publisher* it is not that easy to get yourself opted out, complaints about unwanted delivery have raised.

Lite rises & awaits competitor



London lunchtime free daily *Standard Lite* (Associated Newspapers) increased circulation by 20,000 to 72,000. The paper was launched in December 2004. (*Media Bulletin*)

London mayor Ken Livingstone, who compared a *Evening Standard* Jewish reporter with a 'concentration camp guard' is not making many new friends at Associated Newspapers. On March 22 he asked for bids for a free paper afternoon distribution contract with the London tube. Likely candidates are Rupert Murdoch's News International (*the Sun*, *the Times*) and Richard Desmond's Northern & Shell (*Daily Express*). The investigation by the Office on Fair Trading on the exclusive contract by Associated Newspapers is (after two years) still underway. (*Reuters*)


Publishers & Titles

2004 results for Tamedia




New owner of *20 Minuten* Switzerland, Tamedia, reported a profit for 2004 after losses in 2003; for 2005 the purchase of *20 Minuten* will have a positive effect on the results according to the publisher. (SFDRS)

LyonPlus about to be sold


 Socpress, (Dassault) wants to sell the Rhône-Alpes group, including *Le Progrès*, owner of free daily *LyonPlus*. Investment firm Candover is the possible buyer according to Alain Neuville's newsletter. *La Voix du Nord* with its free paper *LillePlus* is still for sale.

Recoletos welcomes 2nd partner


 The Godó Group has bought a 30% share in Recoletos' free newspaper project *Que!* The paper was founded in January 2005 and has a circulation of one million in 13 Spanish cities. Less than 150 journalists work for *Que!* which uses one of the most technical advanced printing and editorial systems for newspapers. Publisher of local dailies Editorial Prensa Iberica (owned by Javier Moll) has already a 26% share in the business.

Recoletos is still owned by UK publisher Pearson (*Financial Times*) and also publishes sports paper *Marca* and business paper *Expansión*. The Godó group publishes *La Vanguardia* and *Avui* (Barcelona) and the sports paper *Mundo Deportivo*.


NTY-Metro deal completed

 On March 11, 2005 The New York Times Company and Metro International have completed the joint venture between the two companies that will operate *Metro Boston*. The NYT Company will get a 49% share in the company for \$16.5 million. *The Boston Globe* (owned by the NYT Company) and *Metro* will together operate job advertisements. The US Department of Justice completed their inquiries into the deal and apparently found no anti-trust violations.


Metro HK subway contract

 Metro International and Hong Kong subway operator MTR extended their contract to 2010. *Metro Hong Kong* has now a circulation of more than 300,000.

Smelly Metro

 *Metro Holland* introduced a rub & smell back page on March 22, 2005 with a 'Fête des Fleurs' ad. Such ads earlier appeared in magazines but not in newspapers.


Metro prizes: editions & options

 On their own publishers conference on February 26 & 27 in Warsaw, Metro International choose New York as the best edition. The Lisbon and French editions came in second. Important criteria were local coverage and use of graphics.

On March 23, also leading executives got a little bonus. Because of good results of the company (that still is making no profit as a whole) the executive management received options for more than 1.6 million stocks now and the same amount in the future. (Metro International)

Plans & Rumors: Germany, Canada

Metro: WAZ oder Axel?

 *Metro* plans a German launch in the fall of 2005. Talks with potential partners have already started. Germany is one of the few European markets without free dailies. One of the possible partners is Alex Springer Verlag, a letter of intent is rumored to be already signed. Also the publisher of Germany's biggest regional paper *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Essen) is talking with *Metro*. Talks between *WAZ* and *Metro* three years ago lead to nothing. *Persoenlich.com* (Switzerland) tips Springer as the winner. (*Welt am Sonntag*, *Der Spiegel*, *Kress.de*)

In 1998-2000 *15 Uhr Aktuell* was published in Berlin, Hamburg and Munich. In 1999-2001 Schibsted started *20 Minuten* Cologne but was forced out by Alex Springer (*Extra*) and DuMont Schauberg (*Kölner Morgen*). DuMont Schauberg asked the court to forbid free newspapers altogether, a claim that was denied in 2003. The company announced that they again would counter another publisher.

Questions & Suggestions:
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