


FREE DAILY NEWSPAPERS

FDN NEWSLETTER NO. 7 – APRIL / MAY 2005 – WEBSITE: users.fmg.uva.nl/pbakker/freedailies


Launches: Spain, UK, the Netherlands, Canada, US

Ahora 4th Madrid free paper


 Madrid free afternoon paper *Ahora* (circulation 200,000) launched April 18. Valencia and other cities in Andalusia will be next. *Ahora* wants to grow to one million. 50 People are working for the new paper that will be distributed by hawkers, in restaurants, hotels, universities, drug stores and office buildings. Ideologically the paper will lean to the right.

Ahora is 4th Madrid free daily after *20 Minutos*, *Metro* and *Que!* Industrialist Jose Enrique Rosendo financially backs *Ahora*. Joaquin Vila, former chief editor of *La Razon* is editor of *Ahora*. Fabripress, owned by Unedisa, that also publishes *El Mundo*, will print the paper. Free daily newspaper circulation in Spain is 2.8 million, paid papers have a circulation of 4.2 million, meaning that 40% of the circulation consists of free dailies. (*El Mundo*, *Periodistas 21*)

20 Minutos 8th / Metro's 10th

 The Elche *Metro* is the 10th Spanish edition, it is published in cooperation with local publisher Ediciones Primera Plana on April 15. On 31 March *20 Minutos* launched an edition in Granada & Murcia.

Amsterdam Metro edition

 April 18, Metro launched Amsterdam edition, the second regional after Rotterdam. The edition has a circulation of 125,000, 90,000 more than the 35,000 copies that were already distributed in Amsterdam. The national edition was established in 1999. Metro says it is the biggest newspaper in Amsterdam, but according to the Dutch newspaper marketing organization Cebuco this is based 'on speculation' and not supported by facts.

Free Dailies in the Netherlands (circ. * 1000)


	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05
<i>Metro</i>	270	300	370	345	303	395	485
<i>Spits</i>	245	294	325	325	352	384	384
<i>News.nl</i>		100	100				
Total	515	694	795	670	655	779	869

Total Dutch paid newspaper circulation in 2004 was just under 4 million, meaning that 18% of the total circulation consists of free papers.

Financial Freebie

 *Financial Times* launched a 2-page free afternoon 'slimmed down' FT-edition *FTpm* in A4 format. The paper is distributed to corporate clients, hotels, offices and airlines and can also be downloaded. (*Newratings/MarketWatch*)

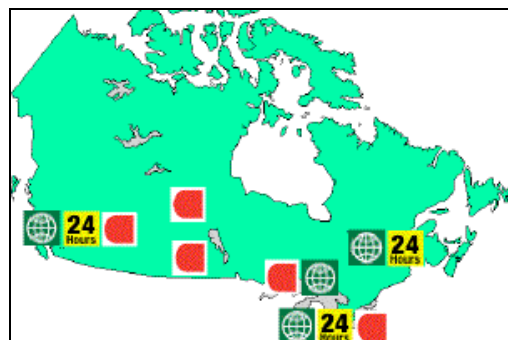
Canada: free goes west

 *Dose* launched on April 4 in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa and Toronto. A 24 page square-sized magazine-like paper with 'young' written all over it. *Dose* is aimed at young (18-34) readers with celebrities, music, games and sex; but also with news, sports, opinion and culture. Initial circulation is 320,000. Members can write online movie, club and music reviews, use message boards, and make blogs. Music downloads, horoscopes, ring tones, movie and TV listings are also online.



In Ottawa, *Metro* (CanWest, Torstar, Metro International) launched on March 30, and *Dose* (CanWest) on April 4. *The Citizen* (CanWest) refrained from launching their own free *Rush Hour*. To counter the competition *The Sun* (Quebecor) lowered the cover price to 25c. "It's not done out of panic or fear of new competition" according to *The Sun*'s publisher Rick Gibbons. Total cost of launching *Dose* and *Metro* for CanWest is Can\$10 million.

In Vancouver, *24 Hours* (Quebecor/Jim Pattison Group) debut was spoiled by the authorities who confiscated the paper's boxes. Also *Metro* (CanWest, Torstar, Metro International) and *Dose* (CanWest) are published. The Pattison Group owns 20 radio stations, three TV stations, retail food operations and a magazine distribution company.



In Toronto and Montreal *Metro* and Quebecor compete since 2000 and 2001 respectively. In Toronto *Dose* is the third free paper although they have a monopoly in Edmonton and Calgary. (*National Post*, *Ottawa Sun*, *Globe and Mail*)

In British Columbia Black Press launched 10 free dailies in February, March and April (and will launch 7 editions in May). Torstar owns 20% of Black Press, which publishes 95 dailies and weeklies and has 13 printing plants in Western Canada, Washington State and Hawaii. Total circulation of the free dailies is less than 40,000.

Bluffton Today



Launched on April 4 in Bluffton S.C.: *Bluffton Today* (Morris Publishing Group), circulation 16,500. Replacing the paid *Carolina Morning News*.

Circulation & Readership

Spain: new audit organization



Paid papers in Spain saw a small rise in circulation in 2004, mainly caused by business papers. The division for auditing free dailies is PGD (Publicaciones Gratuitas Ejemplares Distribuibles).

Metro 3rd, Destak 4th in Lisbon



Readership figures for March 2005 by Gfk Metris for Lisbon reveal that *Correio da Manhã* and *Diario de Noticias* are the best-read papers in the capital but that *Metro* (33% reach) and *Destak* (30%) are closing in. *Destak* circulation for 2004 was 78,000 (*Metro* was not audited in 2004). The biggest paper in Portugal, however, is still *Jornal de Noticias* (Porto). (*Diario de Noticias* / clubedejornalistas.pt)

Canada: freebies rise



In Toronto *Metro* saw its readership go up with 6% to 403,800 – *24 Hours* (not in the 2003 study) had 307,800 readers. *The National Post* and the *Toronto Sun* lost 12 and 6%; *The Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* won 3 and 2% respectively. In Montreal, *Metro's* readership rose 27% to 260,500, *24 Heures* almost tripled its readership to 152,500. *Le Journal de Montréal* dropped 7% to 642,000. (*Globe and Mail*, NADbank)

Publishers & Titles

Grupo Zeta: 20% Minutos



Schibsted sells 20% of Spanish *20 Minutos* to Grupo Zeta for €15 million. Grupo Zeta publishes newspapers (*El Periodico del Catalunya* and *Sport*, 7th and 10th paper in Spain) and magazines. The deal will be completed in June.

Metro 2005 Q1 results



Metro reported a 28% increase in sales in 2005. USA operations made a \$7.5 million profit (including \$16 of the 49% share sales of *Metro* Boston). USA and Portugal editions are losing money. Daily circulation is 6.9 million at the end of March 2005. The conference call is still on the Metro website. Pelle Törnberg talked about "the most intensive quarter ever" in the Metro history with 11 launches with a combined circulation of 670,000 copies in five countries."

The negative PR (the nigger jokes) had some effects on the results in the USA. In Sweden circulation and readership rose but *Hus & Hem* (real estate) suffered. In Helsinki a weekly Finnish edition of *Hus & Hem* (*Talo & Koti*) will be launched from May 6 on. (Metro International)

SF Examiner trial November



Former owner of the *SF Examiner*, the Fang family, will have to wait until November 7 for the trial against their former employee P. Scott McKibben. The Fangs accuse McKibben, who moved after the sale to new owner Anschutz, that he turned other offers down to get a lucrative job after the sale. McKibben, in turn, is suing the Fangs because they still owe him \$1.2 million commission. (SFGate.com)

WAZ sued over U-Express



Free paper *U-Express* (Vienna) was closed in March 2004. It was owned by German publisher WAZ, Hans Dichand and the Raiffeissen Bank. WAZ and Raiffeissen wanted to close the paper down, Dichand wanted it continued. Dichand and WAZ both own 50% of Austrian market leader *Kronen Zeitung*. Shareholders only speak to each other thru their attorneys and have taken each other to court in the past. Dichand now sues WAZ because he suffered financially because of the closure of *U-Express*. In September 2004 a new free daily *Heute – aktuell in der Tag*, entered the Vienna market. (*Der Standard*)

MMM



Metro International launched Internet service Metro Modern Media on April 13. Metro Market www.metromarknad.se, a classified ads portal has been launched in Sweden first with 900,000 adds - other countries will follow. A dating and music download site will start in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands; here also other countries will follow. The move is in line with what other publishers do with their websites, *Qué!* and *20 Minutos* in Spain and *Dose* (Canada) may have been examples for the company that usually is first. (*Dagens Media*)



Other portals Blocket (Schibsted), Koll (Bonnier) und Eniro found their advertisements in Metro Marknad, linked to the advertisements in these portals. A Bonnier-spokesperson said Metro hijacked advertisements. Detail: Metro is suing Bonnier in Sweden because of alleged price dumping activities. (*Faz.net*)

On the 25th of April Metro Modern Media launched the online travel agency Metro Travel in Sweden: "a simplified, inexpensive means of seeking and booking into popular hotels in Europe". Denmark will follow in May. (Metro International)

London tube opens




UK Office of Fair Trading (OFT) declared the exclusive deal between Associated Newspapers Ltd. and the London Underground (TfL) anti-competitive after a two years investigation. The afternoon slot is now officially open – the morning distribution is still reserved for *Metro*. London mayor Ken Livingstone, however, still wants this exclusivity removed.


Stan Myerson, Express Newspapers joint managing director, said the company would "most definitely" be entering the bidding process for the London afternoon slot for free newspapers. "We are going to bid and we are going to get it. We are dead serious about getting this." (*BBC, MediaWeek*)

Also the Guardian registered for the bidding procedure, although this doesn't automatically mean the paper will bid. Metro CEO Pelle Törnberg said at the conference call on the Q1 2005 results that Metro also is considering a bid.

MetroXpress no Metro


 Copenhagen's leading newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* registered the name *Metro* in 1995 and launched their own free paper *Urban* in September 2001; the same month Metro International launched their own free paper, called *MetroXpress*. A court in Denmark decided that the name *MetroXpress* is so different from *Metro* (which is not used by any paper in Denmark) that they can keep the name.

20 Minuten new Blick?


 Under the new owner Tamedia *20 Minuten* underwent a redesign in the beginning of April. A broader typeface, more boxes and different headings have led some people on the *20 Minuten* online forum to call it *Blick*-like after the leading boulevard tabloid in Switzerland. (*Werbewoche*)

Plans & Rumors


5th 20 Minuten in St. Gallen

 *20 Minuten* Switzerland (Tamedia) will launch a St. Gallen edition in the summer. Circulation will be 45,000. The Zürich edition started in 1999, Basle and Bern in 2000 and Luzern in 2004. (*Werbewoche*)

Black Press marches on


 Black Press (Canada, BC) will launch 7 new editions in Vancouver suburbs on May 7. On the 25th of April the 10th edition (*Western News Daily*) was launched in Penticton, before that 9 editions were launched in March and April. Total circulation will be 80,000 after the new launch. (*Globe and Mail*)

WAZ dumps Metro

 Essen publisher WAZ won't start *Metro* edition in Germany together with Metro International. Only if someone else starts a free daily, WAZ will launch one to defend their own market. The only candidate left is *Bild*-publisher Alex Springer. (*Handelsblat*)


German trade firm Metro (www.metrogroup.de) warned Metro International that they cannot use the Metro name for a newspaper. (*Faz.net*)

McDonald leaves Examiner

 *Washington Examiner* publisher James McDonald wants a free paper of his own. McDonald worked for the *Metro* editions in Philadelphia and New York before joining The Journal newspapers. When these papers were bought by Philip Anschutz' Clarity Media Group they were turned into *Washington Examiner*. "I believe newspapers should

be free," McDonald said. "That model is the model of the future." (*Editor & Publisher*, April 5)


Site update

 Discovered at Aarhus airport: *JPÅrhus+*, by leading greater Aarhus newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*. The free paper has a daily circulation of 50,000 – once a week even 100,000. Four free titles are published in Denmark: *MetroXpress*, *Urban*, *10 Minuter* and *JPÅrhus+*, total circulation is 450,000.



 *Vivir Pamplona* editor David Torres send in information on several 'new' Spanish free dailies like the *Diario de Almería*, *El Universal de Madrid*, *Diario del Mediterraneo* and *Express Valencia*. In an article in *La Economía* (Murcia) it was made clear that this city also has three free papers: *20 Minutos*, *Diario de Murcia* and *Nueva Línea*. There are at least 16 different titles published in Spain.




 Site traffic is over 50 visits a day, a thousand each month, 24% US, 12% UK, 11% Canada, 10% the Netherlands, 7% France, 6% Germany and 3% Sweden and Spain. There are 80 newsletter subscribers. News is gathered also by helpful scholars and devoted newspaper people. There will be no May issue, because I will go on a two months sabbatical biking tour – next issue will be June/July.

I will be speaking, however, on Unisys "Transforming the Media Industry Executive Conference" in Nice on the 11th of June.

Research

Reading Reds

 John K. Hartman, professor of journalism in Central Michigan University's College of Communications and Fine Arts presented a paper at a March meeting of the Southeast Colloquium of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. He concluded that Chicago's (almost) free papers *Red Eye* and *Red Streak* were quite well read and valued by a sample of Chicago students. *Red Eye* was read by 26% of the 188 students in the sample, *Red Streak* by 16%. Circulation of *Red Streak* is 80,000, between 14,000 and 15,000 is paid. When the reading habits reflect the circulation, *Red Streak*, which doesn't reveal its circulation must have a circulation of less than 50,000. (*Editor & Publisher*, April 13).

Questions & Suggestions:
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