

Free Daily Newspapers

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Launches	Plans	Readership	Titles	Update
New titles and editions in 10 countries in six weeks – circulation +3,000,000 (p. 1-3)	More expansion for 20 Minutes in Switzerland (p. 3)	Canadian free papers gain readers (p. 3)	Oldest free daily (Zurich) becomes weekly (p. 4)	First commuter free daily (1974) in Brazil (p. 4)

3, 2, 1 - A DUTCH FREEBIE SOAP

3 Ton aan de Stegge, new CEO of PCM, publisher of four Dutch national dailies, declared war on his competitors at his first public appearance: PCM would launch "at least one new free daily in 2007". The paper would compete with free dailies *Metro* and *Spits*, with *De Telegraaf* and *AD*, a joint operation of PCM and Wegener, the third Dutch publisher. Aan de Stegge said he was against joint ventures and wanted to control his papers alone. Meanwhile millionaire Marcel Boekhoorn was planning a free paper himself.

2 Soon it was clear that only one title would be launched by *de Volkskrant*, leading daily of PCM. A plan for a popular free daily was shelved. Pieter Broertjes, chief editor of *de Volkskrant*, told 'cowboys' to stay out of this business - referring to the Boekhoorn plans. Both titles aimed at a circulation of 500,000.

1 In October there was only one new free daily left. PCM killed their plan for a *Volkskrant*-operated 'quality' free paper. Instead PCM would enter into a joint venture with Boekhoorn – Aan de Stegge was now in favor of joint ventures and teams up with a 'cowboy'. Boekhoorn will have 51% of the shares. PCM will print and distribute the paper for at least three years. *Volkskrant* chief-editor Pieter Broertjes was "disappointed" with the decision.

The paper would launch in the first quarter of 2007 with a circulation of 500,000 to 600,000 and 30 journalists. The paper will use hand distribution in public places (transport, universities) first and maybe door-to-door distribution later. Also a Saturday edition, a paid edition or other free specialized papers (sports) are planned for the future. The paper expected to break even in three years.

0? On November 15 PCM backed off. The costs and risks would be too high. These costs could grow to €15m a year. PCM could buy the paper after four years for something like €100m - this also was considered as too much. After these curious PCM can think again about launching their own title, dummies were made, business plan completed and staff hired. The position of Aan de Stegge, however, is being threatened by all these moves. PCM-owner APAX seems not too eager to invest in new plans and is making moves to break up and sell PCM.

Some problems arise for Boekhoorn. Printing 500,000 copies will be difficult. Offers of 200,000 copies were made by others, but printing at night could be a problem. Also chief editor Ben Rogmans was sued by his former employer, publisher Wegener, for breaking his contract and cannot work for the paper the first year. Having a good distribution manager, however, is more important.

Dutch Dailies 2000 - 2006 (circ. * 1000)

	2000	2002	2004	2006
Free dailies (Metro, Spits)	594	670	771	974
Paid dailies	4323	4311	4061	3767

2006 paid data estimate

FDN - BAROMETER

The FDN barometer measures free dailies and circulation, including from now on 24 US local titles (circ. 500,000).

Free Dailies November 2006 (circ. * 1000)

	Countries	Titles	Circulation
Europe	26	109	24,279
America's (incl. local US papers)	7	97	5,840
Asia/Pacific	8	15	4,145
<i>Total</i>	41	221	34,264

LAUNCHES

Ottawa: 3 launches in 1 week

RushHour, by CanWest (*Ottawa Citizen*), hit the streets November 13 in Ottawa. The 12-pager is available Monday to Thursday after 4 PM at 120 distribution points. *RushHour* is expected to have a readership of 60,000 - circulation will be between 20,000 and 30,000. Content is directed to lifestyle and entertainment, copying the ill-fated *Dose*-model. Afternoon distribution, low circulation and non-news focus points to a defensive strategy, fear of cannibalizing the *Ottawa Citizen* is probably bigger than the urge to launch a free paper. *RushHour* can also be downloaded as a PDF-paper (five days a week).

Two days after the launch of *RushHour*, Quebecor, publisher of the *Ottawa Sun* launched a French and an English version of their *24 Hours/Heures* concept. Both editions have a print run of 40,000 and are published Monday to Friday. *24 Hours/Heures* is already published in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. There are 24 journalists working for the new paper. Also a *Metro* edition is published in Ottawa, a joint operation of Metro International, TorStar and CanWest. (*CBC, Canada.com, NewsWire, Ottawa Business Journal*)

Another German Sneak Launch

Germany is the white spot on the free dailies map. Except for 1999-2001 when a free paper war was fought in Cologne. Since then, nobody dared to enter the most attractive market in Europe although many were tempted. Springer-angst ruled. In August 2006 the white spot was colored grayish when Holtzbrinck launched *Business News*, with a modest circulation (70,000), a specific target group and only available in office buildings. October 6, Deutsche Sportverlag (DSV) with airline Lufthansa launched *Die Sportzeitung*, a free daily devoted to sports and available every day from 5:30 on in 12 German airports (circulation 65,000). (*Horizont, FAZ-newsletter*)

In 2007 business class Lufthansa travelers will get the *Süddeutsche Zeitung Primetime* from 16:00 on. The A4-paper has a circulation 13,000 and will have 12 to 16 pages. *Handelsblatt News am Abend (Handelsblatt)* has moved to competitor Air Berlin. Circulation is 20,000, half of it is distributed in first class ICE trains. *Financial Times Deutschland Kompakt* (circulation 8,000) is available as a morning free paper in first class ICE trains. (*Lufthansa, Werben & Verkaufen*)

Liverpool follows Manchester

The *Liverpool Daily Post* (Trinity Mirror) will distribute 6,000 free copies in the centre but keeping its cover price for the rest of the edition (circulation 18,000). Office buildings will get 4,000 copies while 2,000 copies will be handed out on the street. Leading paper is the evening *Liverpool Echo*, also by Trinity Mirror. In May 2006 the *Manchester Evening News* introduced this model when it axed their *Lite* edition and begun handing out 60,000 copies of the paid paper in the city centre. Trinity Mirror and Associated Newspapers together operate *Metro* in Liverpool (circulation 25,000). (*Guardian*)

Free Virginian Link

On October 6, *Link*, free daily by the *Virginian-Pilot*, was launched in South Hampton Road, in southeastern Virginia (USA) with a circulation of 30,000. The paper is targeted at the 18-34 year non-reader of the *Virginian-Pilot*. The new publication is distributed in coffee shops, restaurants, campuses and apartment buildings and is hoped to attract weekend readers for the *Virginian-Pilot* (circulation 198,000). (*Medialife, What's Next*)

Corriere della Sera strikes first

Corriere della Sera launched afternoon freebie *Anteprima il Giornale di Domani* in Milan on October 12. The new daily, with a circulation of 100,000 is available from 16:00 on and counts 4 pages with updates of the news of the day and a preview of tomorrow's news. Five journalists from *Corriere della Sera* are working for *Anteprima* that was modeled after the 2-page preview edition of the *Financial Times: FTpm* (no longer available). *Corriere della Sera* is part of the RSC group that also publishes free daily *City*. Other publishers like *Il Sole 24 ore*, *Repubblica*, *l'Asca*, *Class Editori* and *AdnKronos* are also thinking about free papers. (*VareseNews, EditorsWeblog, Affari Italiani*)

Denmark: the Fifth

On October 6, the fifth national free Danish newspaper was launched: *Nyhedsavisen*, by 365 Media (Icelandic Dagsbrun Group). The paper has editions for Copenhagen, Odense and Aarhus and is published six days a week. The design of the tabloid is more 'classic' - in contrast to 'traditional' free dailies. In August *Dato* (Orkla) and *24timer* (JP/Politiken) were launched. The papers distribute the majority of their circulation door-to-door and compete also with *MetroXpres* and *Urban* (Orkla). In Aarhus, Aalborg and Odense local free dailies are published, in Copenhagen *MetroXpres* published an afternoon edition until November 17. Total circulation of free papers in Denmark is around two million, against 1.3 million for paid papers. (*Medialife, Nyhedsavisen*)

At the Nyborg Fagfestival the distribution of free dailies was often discussed. Some people complained that they did not get a free title because delivery is not up to the three times 500,000 copies publishers promised. *Dato* seems to stay behind while *24timer* performs somewhat better. *Nyhedsavisen* also has problems, it is difficult (impossible) to get access to keys to deliver to apartment buildings. Others were complaining that they could not stop getting them or that free papers were polluting the environment. I heard no complaints on the content that is generally seen as pretty good.

Punkt (.) SE launched in Sweden

Schibsted, publisher of leading Swedish paid daily *Aftonbladet*, launched free daily *.SE* October 2. The paper counts 48 pages, has a micro size (half Berliner) and a print run of 150,000 copies in Stockholm, 93,000 in Göteborg and 50,000 in Malmö/Lund. The paper has an

editorial staff of 30 people, with 7 in Göteborg and Malmö each. In all three cities *.SE* competes with free dailies *Metro* and *City*. The logo of *.SE* (*Punkt SE*) is very similar to that of *Aftonbladet*. A dispute broke out about the dot (punkt) in *.SE* because the domain *www.punkt.se* is owned by Internet provider Spray who threatened to sue Schibsted. In response Schibsted removed the dot in the logo. Another lawsuit might be pending. Bonnier, publisher of *Dagens Nyheter* and free daily *City* still owns the right to the title *SE*, they published a magazine with that name in the seventies. (*Dagens Media, Kulin*)

Third edition 15min Lithuania

Lithuanian free daily *15min* (Schibsted) launched a Klaipeda edition in September. With the new edition total circulation of *15min* reaches 105,000 copies. *15min* started in September 2005 in Vilnius, in February 2006 an edition for Kaunas was launched.

E Polis Milano and E Polis Roma

In September *E Polis Milano* (210,000) and *E Polis Roma* (250,000) started, 12th and 13th edition of Niki Crauso's *E Polis* free paper chain. *E Polis Napoli* and *E Polis Bologna* will follow soon and will increase the circulation of the free paper chain to almost a million a day. The new editions have 64 pages like other *E Polis* papers; at least 32 are devoted to editorial content with an emphasis on local news and comment. Distribution is mostly free through retail shops, restaurants, bars and other busy places. Less than 10% is sold (for 50 cents) on newsstands.

The *E Polis* concept started in 2004 with *Il Cagliari*. In March Grauso began publishing in North-east Italy: *Il Venezia*, *Il Mestre*, *Il Padova*, *Il Treviso*, *Il Verona*, *Il Vicenza*, *Il Bergamo*, and *Il Brescia*, with 35 to 40,000 copies for each edition. In June 2006 *Il Firenze* (60,000) followed. In contrast to most free dailies, *E Polis* papers also publish on Saturdays. Total circulation of Italian free papers is 3.7 million, paid circulation is less than 6 million.

Two new editions for ADN

Spanish free daily *ADN*, published by a consortium of local papers, launched new editions in La Rioja (Logrono area) and Lleida (Catalonia). Editions for Huesca and Teruel were dropped. Circulation of *ADN* (before the new launches) was 913,000.

Austria: 2nd free daily in Linz

A week after the launch of *Oberosterreichs Neue*, Upper-Austria (Linz, Wels, Steyer) greeted the 4th edition of *Heute*. The edition will have 4 to 6 pages local news, written by four journalists in Linz and has a daily circulation of 80,000. Total circulation of *Heute* is 500,000.

Free weeklies in London

The crowded London market (*Metro*, *City AM*, *London Lite*, *thelondonpaper*) now also has *Sports UK*, published every Friday by Paris-based Sport Media & Strategy. The 48-page magazine is the UK version of a French model that is published in the Paris area with a circulation of 500,000. *Sports UK* is handed out at selected underground stations, gyms, company buildings, airlines and train stations. The concept will be rolled out in other markets too. (*Pressgazette, RFI*)

A free Arabic weekly *Local Arabia*, (circulation 30.000) is available in London from October 16 on. Distribution is through shops, restaurants, mosques and schools. *Local Arabia* has articles in both English and Arabic. In London there are also free publications for Polish, Russian, South-African, New Zealand and Australian immigrants, and publications for travel, holiday, jobs and business.

Free Sports semi-weekly in US

The Hearst Corporation and Mexican publisher Grupo Reforma, launched the twice-weekly Spanish-language newspaper *Cancha* (soccer field) in San Antonio (Texas) in June. About 60% of the content is devoted to sports. Reforma's newspapers in Mexico provide content for *Cancha* that will have a circulation of 25,000. The *San Antonio Express-News* will sell advertising, print and distribute the paper.

PLANS

Third Swiss 20 Minutes in 2007

Tamedia, publisher of *20 Minuten* in the German speaking part of Switzerland, and of *20 Minutes* in the French part, will launch a third French edition on January 3, 2007 with a circulation of 90,000 in the Neuenburg and Jura cantons, and in the French speaking part of cantons of Bern, Wallis and Freiburg. Joint circulation of *20 Minuten/Minutes* will increase to more than 650,000 - more than twice the circulation of *Blick*, the best-selling paid paper in Switzerland. (*Persoenlich*)

20 Minutes competes with *Le Matin Bleu* (Edipresse) with a circulation of 120,000. Edipresse is likely to react and launch a competing edition. In that case total free circulation in Switzerland could grow to 1.4 million, meaning that more than a third of the total Swiss circulation will consist of free papers.

Paris NonPlus

No Paris launch in November of a free paper by *Le Monde* and Vincent Bolloré. The new date is now set for December 6. There were problems about the shares in the company. Instead of the initial 50/50 option, Bolloré got a 70% share because he invests €15m a year, *Le Monde* will hold a minority share (total investment is €20m a year). Break-even is not expected in the first five years. Because of the strong position of Bolloré, François Bonnet, former deputy chief of *Le Monde*, who was in charge of the new paper, stepped down.

Both parties also don't agree on the editorial line. Bolloré is responsible for distribution and sales, *Le Monde* for printing and editorial content. *ParisPlus* also expects to use editorial resources from *Directsoir* (Bolloré's afternoon free daily). *Directsoir* is operated in cooperation with Direct 8, Bolloré's commercial TV channel. The paper will employ 30 journalists and will be printed in micro (half-Berliner) format, circulation will be 350,000. There are *Plus*-papers in Bordeaux, Lille, Lyon, Marseille and Montpellier; the last is operated by *Le Monde/Midi Libre*. (*imédias, Nouvel Observateur, Liberation*)

2nd free daily for Israel

Yedioth Ahronoth, best-read Israeli daily, is making plans for free paper *Ynet*, to counter the competition by *Ysraeli*, the free daily owned by Shalom Ben-Zvi and Sheldon Adelson. *Ysraeli* is distributed in 200,000 copies in public transport and has a morning and an evening edition. A special edition is distributed through Delek gas stations. *Yedioth Ahronoth* already tried to sell the paper for discount prices. (*Haarezt, EditorsWeblog*)

Dutch free business paper

Business newspaper *Het Financieele Dagblad* (FD Media Group) is thinking about a free paper. The company also owns BNR (*Business News Radio*), so a business oriented paper is the obvious choice. In London (*City AM*), Germany (*Business News*) and Switzerland (*CASHdaily*) free business dailies were introduced.

France: Metro Sport and RNG

Metro will launch a free sports daily in 2007. During the world championship soccer in Germany *Metro* already published a sports edition. European commercial broadcaster Eurosport (controlled by 34%-*Metro* owner TF1) will contribute to the new publication. *Metro* claims a circulation of 880,000 against 870,00 for *20 Minutes* although this last title is better read with 1,998,000 readers against 1,482,000 for *Metro*.

20 Minutes (Schibsted / Ouest-France) planned the weekly *RNG* (Rien n'est gratuit - Nothing Is Free) on October 20 in Paris, Lyon, Marseille and Lille. The weekly would compete with a new business oriented free paper by Philippe Micouleau and *Économie Matin*. But one month later *RNG* is still not there.

CIRCULATION & READERSHIP

Hoy Fin de Semana expands

Spanish language free daily *Hoy* with editions in Chicago, LA and New York expands circulation of weekend edition *Hoy Fin de Semana*. The edition will replace the weekend edition in New York (circulation 60,000); in LA the edition recently increased circulation to 300,000 while in Chicago the circulation is 217,000. The average weekday circulation of *Hoy* is 185,000. (*Pnewswire*)

Spain: 20 Minutos leads

20 Minutos (Schibsted, minority share Zeta Group) hands out 997,000 copies daily. *Qué!* by Recoletos distributes 970,000 copies while *ADN* (regional publishers) and *Metro* follow with 914,000 and 766,000 copies. Also 20 smaller local free dailies exist in Spain and two free sports dailies. Total circulation of free papers in Spain is almost five million. (*Pnoticias, PGD/OJD research*)

Canadian readership

NADbank research revealed that free dailies *Metro* and *24 Hours/Heures* in Montreal and Toronto are gaining readers. In Toronto daily readership grew from 10% in 2001 to 14% in 2005. In Montreal 12% reads a free paper on a daily basis in 2005 (up from 8% in 2002).

Urban increases circulation

Urban by Berlingske Officin (*Berlingske Tidende, B.T.*) has increased circulation in Denmark. Four local editions (Henning, Aalborg, Odense, Jutland) have been replaced by one national edition. The editions for Copenhagen and Aarhus will stay. Total circulation will rise from 230,000 to 330,000. The company owned by David Montgomery's Mecom also publishes free national daily *Dato*.

Urban is also offering subscription for 349 Dkr. a year (€50). The paper is then delivered by mail. In September *Urban* introduced a new design, with prominent display of blogs, games, and movies. Interactive features are more integrated in the printed version too.

PUBLISHERS & TITLES

First casualty of Danish freebie war



The afternoon edition of *MetroXpress* Copenhagen, launched on August 21 in the middle of the newspaper war will be closed down. The issue of Friday 17 November was the last. The 'after' edition, with a circulation of 100,000 is therefore the first casualty of the Danish newspaper war. (Metro International)

Oldest free daily (1730) goes weekly

The *Tagblatt der Stadt Zürich*, one of the oldest free dailies in Europe and the only broadsheet, was converted to a weekly tabloid on November 29. The *Tagblatt* was founded in 1730 and was converted to a free daily broadsheet in 1996. In 1999 it became *Zurich Express* when both *Metro* and *20 Minuten* were about to launch in Switzerland. In 2003 it went back to the old name when owner Tamedia bought into Schibsted's *20 Minuten*. Circulation of the *Tagblatt* was 137.000. (*Persoelich*)

thelondonlitebattle

One month after the flood of free afternoon papers in London, Daily Mail and General Trust (*London Lite*) said that *Lite* would not hurt sales of the *Evening Standard* - the investment of £15m was regarded as "being not enormously expensive". First circulation data showed that the *Evening Standard* lost almost 8% compared to the month before and now has a circulation of 289,000 - for the first time below 300,000. *London Lite* distributed 359,000 copies *Metro* 50,000 (13% up), *thelondonpaper* 327,000 and *City AM* 91,000. Tube Lines Limited, the company that has to clean up the underground, is not that happy, litter increased with 48%.

thelondonpaper will distribute at 10 network rail stations in London, including Paddington, Victoria and Waterloo. A million daily passengers use these stations were the paper will be distributed from 3 PM on. *Metro* (Associated Newspapers) will hold the morning slot. The tender for the subway contract is still undecided. (*Mediabulletin*, BBC, *Brand Republic*, *Editorsweblog*)

The Examiner sued for delivery

Lawyer Joel L. Levin asked the County Circuit Court to stop the *Baltimore Examiner* from being delivered to his home. *The Baltimore Sun* reports that also other residents can't keep the paper from being delivered and that there are similar complaints in San Francisco and Washington. *The Sun* saw circulation drop 4.5% but denies that the *Examiner* had any impact. The drop is according to *the Sun* the result of reducing bulk circulation.

RCS interested in Recoletos (Qué!)

Italian RCS Mediagroup, publisher of *Corriere della Serra*, *La Gazzetta della Sport* and free paper *City*, is interested in Spanish media group Recoletos. Apart from free daily *Qué!* Recoletos publishes sports paper *Marca* and financial daily *Expansión*. In 2004 Recoletos was sold by Pearson to a financial consortium. RCS already owns 95% of Spanish daily *El Mundo*. When the deal succeeds *El Mundo* will no longer be without a free paper. In January *El Mundo* launched the free real estate weekly / website *SV* to explore the free market. (*La Gaceta*)

New design for Metro France

Metro introduced a new design with easier navigation, more color, more pictures, a new front page and more topic-oriented pages. Internet links are more prominent in the new concept. The upcoming competition from *Le Monde/Bolloré* is probably one of the reasons for the change. In France *Metro* competes already with *20 Minutes*, (both papers increased circulation to almost 900,000), Plus-papers in five markets and with the afternoon paper *Direct Soir* (Bolloré). (*Challenges.fr*)

Göteborgs-Posten joins Metro

The Göteborg edition of *Metro* Sweden will offer joint advertising with leading newspaper *Göteborgs-Posten*. Stampen, the publisher of the paid daily has the right to

buy a stake of 10% in the Göteborg edition of *Metro* in 2008 if certain targets are met. (*Metro*)

Another sudden change at Metro

Two weeks after executive vice-president Silvio de Groot stepped down, another top position at Metro International became vacant. Peter Castenfelt, Chairman of Metro International announced his immediate resignation from the Board due to personal reasons. He will be succeeded by Dennis Malamatinas who has been a director of the Board since May 2004 and was formerly CEO of Burger King Corporation worldwide and former Director of the Boards of Reuters Group PLC and Diegeo PLC.

Mark Moore, Editor-in-Chief of *Metro* USA (editions in New York, Boston and Philadelphia) left the company after only 13 months. (*New York Post*)

Metro International results

Metro International reported a profit for the first nine months of 2006 - not including the revenues from the sale of *Metro* Finland. With these results Metro seems to be on track, according to CEO Pelle Törnberg: "to deliver a net profit this year". (Metro International)

UPDATE

1st free commuter daily discovered

An attentive reader pointed at three free papers from Brazil not on the website. *Jornal de Londrina* by Rede Paranaense de Comunicação, and *Jornal do Ônibus* (Curitiba) by Correio Paranaense - were both launched in May 2006. *Jornal de Londrina* has a Berliner format and was a paid paper before, it is distributed door-to-door. The interesting one is *MetroNews*, launched in 1974 (!) in São Paulo as a commuter paper, so way before *Metro* Stockholm. It has a circulation of 120,000 in 2006.

CORRECTION

Schibsted's free dailies

In the last newsletter Norwegian publisher Schibsted was said to operate free dailies in Spain, Italy and Lithuania. It should have been France instead of Italy. Schibsted won the tender for the distribution contract in Milan in 2000 but was not allowed to operate a free daily because foreign (non-EU) companies could not own Italian media - as a result *Metro* launched in Milan. Schibsted also owns half of the *Linnaleht* free paper in Estonia and since the beginning of October launched *.SE* in Sweden. In Russia they operate the weekly free *Moj Rajon* in St. Petersburg and Moscow.

RESEARCH

German research on free dailies

The October edition of the German magazine *Media Perspektiven* contains three articles on free daily newspapers. Marcus Haas describes the European situation, Horst Röper researches the possible consequences of free dailies on incumbent publishers while Bernd Holzngel uses a legal approach and also discusses press freedom. All articles and a summary (all in German) can be downloaded as PDFs from the website.

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