

Free Daily Newspapers

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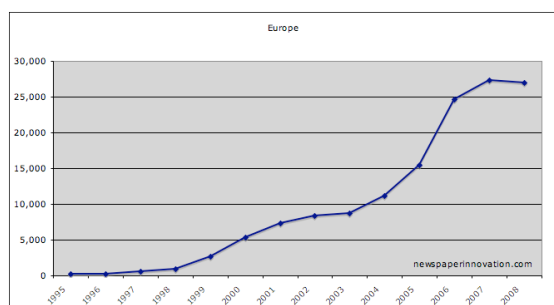
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European free circulation down

After the Czech Republic (Metropolitni Expres), Sweden (Punkt SE, City), Denmark (Nyhedsavisen), Finland (Utislethi 100) and Croatia (Metroexpress), the Netherlands (DAG) is the 6th European country where a national distributed free daily closes down.

Also some titles in Denmark, Ireland, Slovenia and Spain reported lower circulation in 2008 than in 2007. In other countries circulation was stable or increased.

In Europe circulation of free newspapers is going down for the first time in history. At the end of 2007 it was 27.3 million - now it is 27 million. A tiny drop, but still a drop.



World circulation is still 2% up, mainly because of launches in South America and Asia.

FDN BAROMETER

The FDN barometer measures free dailies and circulation, comparing end 2005 with September 2008.

Free Dailies 2005 / September 2008 (circ. * 1000)

	Countries		Titles		Circulation	
	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008
Europe	24	32	83	127	15,404	26,991
America's	9	10	47	79	4,792	7,134
Asia/Pac/Afr	10	16	20	37	4,409	8,567
total	43	58	160	243	24,605	42,692

LAUNCHES

ADN Colombia

Colombian Media group Casa Ed. El Tiempo (CEET) launched free daily ADN in the four major Colombian markets Bogotá, Medellín, Barranquilla and Cali on 15 September. The paper has a joint circulation of 300,000 - making it the paper with the highest circulation in Colombia. Paid paper El Tiempo was the paper with the highest circulation so far: 240,000 daily copies. Total circulation in Colombia is 1.6 million.

With the new free daily, CEEP will increase its grip on the Colombian market, as it also publishes dailies El Tiempo, Hoy, Portafolio (business) and regional papers. The group has stakes in television and magazines. Since 2007 CEEP is for 55% owned by Spanish publisher Planeta. In Spain the group publishes free daily ADN. The new paper

will be the second free daily in Colombia. In 2006 Diario Occidente (Cali) was converted to a free daily.

Design is similar to the Spanish ADN free daily by Planeta (launched in 2006). Distribution is in more than 600 places, mainly in public transport. All editions have a different front page with a different (local) picture.

Siglo21 from weekly to daily

Spanish language free weekly Siglo21, published in New England, went daily circulation 15 September. The paper will be published six days a week. Siglo21 is based in Lawrence, Massachusetts (north of Boston) where most of the distribution will take place.

On Thursdays, the paper will distribute in more places in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire with a substantial Spanish speaking population. In 2000 the paper was launched as a bi-weekly and changed to a weekly with a circulation of 25,000 later. Circulation will be 5,000 (10,000 on Thursdays). (Boston.com)

Springer kicks the no-free habit

Germany publisher Axel Springer, one of the most outspoken adversaries of free newspapers, is reversing its strategy and launched the free weekly Berliner Morgenpost Wochenend-Extra on 20 September. Deutsche Post, long regarded by Springer as a mortal enemy because of its own plans to launch free papers, will distribute the paper in the Berlin area.

Berliner Morgenpost Wochenend-Extra will have a circulation of one million and will contain articles from last week's Berliner Morgenpost, Springer's paid Berlin paper. Springer is losing young readers with their paid papers - also with flagship Bild Zeitung - which is probably the cause of the paradigm shift, or "tabubruch" according to Financial Times Deutschland.

Springer's director Mathias Döpfner wants to interest readers in the paid Morgenpost by giving them something for free as an 'appetizer'. This strategy, however, never worked anywhere in the world (why would you buy something you can get for free as well?).

Second German publisher WAZ CEO Christian Nienhaus, formerly employed by Springer, doesn't see anything in Springer's strategy. He doesn't believe that the new paper will attract too much readers. The main reason for the launch would be to distribute special sections.

To use Deutsche Post as distributor is also a mistake according to Nienhaus. After the unlucky PIN-adventure and the plan of the German Post to launch a free daily of their own, publishers should not support the Post. Free dailies should be prepared:

"When free daily like Metro or 20 Minutes will come to Germany, we will react with aggression. We have detailed plans ready." (Süddeutsche Zeitung)

New free weekly for Rotterdam

After local newspapers and national daily AD merged in the western part of the Netherlands, voices in the largest

cities Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht asked for new independent papers to serve the communities.

In Rotterdam free weekly "Vandaag & Morgen" will start 25 September. In The Hague a paid weekly Den Haag Centraal started in 2007. There are also plans for a weekly in Utrecht.

OBITUARIES

DAG closed down

The 4th Dutch free daily, DAG by PCM and KPN telecom, closed down after less than one and a half year. DAG had a circulation of 380,000. High competition and a problematic economy caused the move. The online version will be continued.

The paper started in May 2007 by PCM. Together with TMG (De Telegraaf) PCM dominates the Dutch paid newspaper market. But as De Telegraaf owned free daily Spits, PCM had no title in this market.

Both Spits and Metro started in 1999 and reached substantial audiences, with around 45% of that audience being under 35 years. In January 2007, a third free paper, De Pers, was launched by an independent publisher, owned by multi-millionaire Marcel Boekhoorn.

After the launch of Metro PCM tried to buy a share in that company, but the asked price was prohibitive at that time. Later PCM had several plans to start a free daily, one of these plans involved joining forces with Boekhoorn on De Pers. The plan still lingers on - a lawsuit is still pending.

At the end of 2006 the situation in the economy still was good for advertising. In 2007 and 2008 this was no longer the case. Competition is very high and discounts of 80% or more are no exceptions. A few months ago DAG relaunched with a new design and more articles from mother paper De Volkskrant.

Quick goes weekly

Dallas free daily Quick, launched November 2003, will convert to a weekly on October 30. It will be distributed on Thursdays with a circulation of 100,000. Quick will focus "exclusively on entertainment and nightlife rather than its current offering of news summaries and entertainment-related stories." (Dallas Morning News)

The move is related to the launch of free daily Briefing in August, also by Dallas Morning News publisher Belo.

Finnish merger

Finnish free dailies Metro and Uutislehti 100, both owned by Sanoma, merged on September 15. In fact Uutislehti 100 will close down while the circulation of Metro will increase by 50% to make up for the missing readers.

Metro Croatia closed

The curtain fell for free daily Metro Express in Croatia on September 12. In the summer it was converted to a weekly, published on Fridays. The paper was a Metro International franchise, owned by Europa Press Holding (EPH), the biggest newspaper publisher in Croatia (paid paper Jutarnji list) in which German publisher WAZ had a 50% stake. Metro International had a 1% share in the franchise and the option to increase that to 50%.

Metroxpress was launched in May 2006 in four editions: Zagreb, Dalmatia, Istria and Sjeverozapadna Hrvatska (North-West). In 2007 editions for Slavonija and Rijeka were added. Some editions closed down already in March. The last daily in Zagreb was published on July 4.

Metro was with a circulation of 220,000 the second paper in the country after paid/free paper 24Sata (Austrian publisher Styria). In readership Metro also followed 24Sata. It had 411,00 daily readers in 2007. According to a Metro International press release:

"the newspaper's results during the past six months have fallen below expectation (...) Due to the circumstances, a decision has been made to close down Metro Croatia and consequently terminate the Franchise Agreement. The net EBIT effect of the close down of Metro Croatia in 2008 will be close to nil for Metro International."

New York Sun down

The New York Sun, launched in 2002, closed down at the end of September. The paper needed extra financial support as it has been losing money since launch. The 110 staff members will receive their pay until November. The paper had a right-wing editorial policy, with strong pro-Israel reporting. (New York Times)

Although it shared the name and masthead of the 'old' New York Sun (closed down in 1950) there was no connection between the two papers. Officially The Sun was a paid paper, but after it withdraw from the official circulation audit, its 'paid' circulation was very much disputed. The paper claimed a circulation of 70,000 - but probably only 20% was actually paid.

The Nyhedsavisen saga

Icelandic Investment group Baugur, which controlled Dagsbrún, owner of 365 Media (free daily Fréttablaðið in Iceland), launched Nyhedsavisen in October 2006. The paper had editions for Copenhagen, Odense and Aarhus and was published six days a week. A major part would be delivered door-to-door.

Nyhedsavisen would have been the 3rd national free daily in Denmark, after MetroXpress and Urban, both launched in 2001. Before the launch, however, Danish publishers launched their own free dailies in August 2006. In Aalborg local free daily Centrum launched while Metro started an evening edition in Copenhagen. JP/Politiken started 24timer and Berlingske (Mecom) launched Dato. All except the Metro evening edition were home-delivered.

Dato closed in April 2007, the Metro evening edition was already shut down after three months. Centrum, like local free dailies in Aarhus and Odense 'merged' with 24timer. This paper itself was transferred to Metro International after its publisher JP/Politiken bought a share in Metro.

The design of Nyhedsavisen was more 'classic' - in contrast to 'traditional' free dailies. After some weeks the paper became more 'popular' and soon also shifted part of their distribution to public transport.

Investor Morten Lund took control over Nyhedsavisen after buying 51% of the shares in January 2008. Lund was one of the early investors in Skype. Dagsbrun also closed down their American paper BostonNow in April 2008. The economic situation in Iceland resulted in severe problems for the owner.

Although readership was rising - in 2008 more than 500,000 daily - Nyhedsavisen was still losing money, 420m Danish crowns (€56m) in 2007 according to some sources. Both Lund and Dagsbrun promised to invest in the paper and expected break-even in November 2008. The price of the 51% was said to be only 1 crown.

After the sale Nyhedsavisen closed the Odense edition and stopped home delivery in that area. Editor in chief David Trads stepped down after the take-over. In order to

reach break-even the company dismissed half of the staff. Trads always was a defender of the 'quality' model with a substantial staff - which might explain his leave.

End July 2008 American venture capital Draper Fisher Jurvetson (DFJ) was said to finance Morten Lund's company ML Medie ApS with enough money to increase the stake in Nyhedsavisen from 51 to 85%.

Apparently 'investor' Draper Fischer Jurvetson (DFJ) lived not up to their promise, which resulted in many employees (from journalists to distributors) not being paid in August. In Copenhagen the police had to restrain Polish delivery men when they demanded the August pay.

Total free circulation in Denmark dropped from almost 2 million in 2006 to 900,000 now. In October 2006 11 different titles with 26 different editions were published. Now three titles with 11 editions remain.

The closure is far from finished. Owner Morten Lund accused Mecom CEO David Montgomery of having a hand in the shutting down of the free quality paper. According to Nyhedsavisen's editor in chief Simon Andersen, Montgomery offered Dkr 200 million (€27m) to Morten Lund to shut down Nyhedsavisen. Business.dk - the financial website of Berlingske - reported the news was confirmed by Nyhedsavisen director Morten Nissen. David Montgomery called the accusation "total rubbish". Mecom could not afford such secret dealings according to the CEO: "we only do legal things".

In the interview Montgomery denied all accusations. Business.dk has seen an (unsigned) document where Mecom promised to pay Comet Media Limited, a company associated with Morten Lund, £15m (Dkr 140 million, €19m) for a consultancy report on digital media, the deal is only effective if Nyhedsavisen closes. Business.dk argues that the money could not be transferred to Lund directly, so it could stay outside the Nyhedsavisen debts.

Montgomery denies this Comet Media deal, but actually not all deals, in the interview:

"Mecom will never enter into an agreement in which we pay to close Nyhedsavisen. We have never negotiated to pay to close Nyhedsavisen. We were obviously ready to consider different ways to work with Morten Lund and his company. But it should have given industrial sense. It should have been to both parties' advantage. We would never pay money to close Nyhedsavisen. It is not something that we have ever been ready to do."

"We discussed quite simply if we could cooperate in media. And both parties understood that the existing free paper market would not be sustainable for all the titles that existed. We agreed and we looked for solutions that would improve the sector and in which we could work together. We did not come to an agreement. The document is not something we have created."

The 'Comet-contract' was made by Lund's lawyers, "to get some money back".

Mecom owns paid papers Berlingske Tidende and B.T in Denmark as well as the free daily Urban. Shutting down Nyhedsavisen would mean less competition for Urban, and as a result less pressure on advertising rates.

Lund explained the Nyhedsavisen drama on his blog: "First of all I'm really really sorry to say that my Newspaper project did not survive - not sorry for me (I take all responsibilities) - I just hate myself for

bringing other people (employees and partners) and service providers into trouble - it feels unfair and coward-like... The recession and my stupid communications over summer (we delivered the yearly report 2 months too late) killed us. The simple explanation is that sales did not meet budgets and therefore since Thursday I have been talking to the people backing me and to myself (I have personally put DKK 105 million into this project - money that I have been borrowing - VERY BAD CHOICE) - and over that weekend I had to make a hard decision."

"DKK 75 million was suddenly not enough - since the price to break-even suddenly doubled - and after working 9 months 24/7 (having learned more then the previous 10 years) with an increasingly dried up (dead) financial market - I simply could not see a way to continue..."

Lower sales, recession, his own inexperience, fierce competition and his own ego killed the paper in the end according to Lund, who, however, also points to a possible joint venture with another publisher. He claims he had 15 to 20 conversations with Montgomery:

"This Irishman with 35 years in the industry has been playing me like a piano - always suggesting collaboration - potentially buying - but always just cool and impossible to get a firm agreement with."

Lund ends in style: "I'll be back". But the Nyhedsavisen saga got uglier when Simon Andersen posted an online message that directors Morten Nissen and Sven Damm both were guaranteed one year salary after a possible closure. Andersen, however, deleted the posting later.

PLANS

City AM to Manchester & Edinburgh

Free business paper City AM will launch in Manchester and Edinburgh in the spring of 2009. Total circulation outside London will be around 50,000. In London circulation will be increased to 150,000. In 2010/2011 the paper will therefore double its circulation from 104,000 now to 200,000 managing director Lawson Munchaster said at the 1st Free Paper Conference in Madrid.

City AM celebrated its 3rd birthday on 5 September. In three years the paper reached break-even and saw its readership increase to 233,000 in Q2 2008, moving up from 100,000 at launch and 170,000 in 2007.

City AM targets a niche market of affluent readers, a major part working in the very limited area of the London City. One of the problems was the low reading time because the paper was handed out at the entrances of the subway station in the London City center, so readers could not read it on their journey. City AM adopted therefore a new distribution method whereby also readers in specific areas in London could pick up their copy before they entered the subway.

Since then, average reading time went up from 11 to 18 minutes. The new distribution method is 'self selective' according to Munchaster: "people who are not interested in business simply don't pick up the paper."

City AM saw advertising go up with 38% from January to August 2008, although the UK advertising market in total saw a drop of more than 10%, growth is mostly in 'local businesses' according to Munchaster, although these consist of international brands as well, as these are all 'local' in the London city square mile.

Metro to Moscow?

Metro CEO Per Mikael Jensen was expected at the World Congress of Free Press in Madrid, but was replaced by the director of Metro Spain to explain the Metro strategy. Jensen was said to be in Russia for a meeting.

Other sources in Russia emailed me that Metro is talking in Moscow with other publishers about launching Metro. This could be done by buying the Moscow Metro paper, which is published by an independent company. The alternative would be to launch independently. In St. Petersburg, Metro is already published as a franchise.

Meanwhile Komsomolskaya Pravda (one of the largest paid newspapers in Russia) made their Monday issue free of charge and is now distributing the Monday paper in public transport like the 'free paper' model.

Politico from 3 to 4 days

Washington-based website/free daily Politico, launched in 2007, will expand the print edition from 3 to 4 days a week in 2009. The paper is distributed to offices on Capitol Hill when Congress is in session from Tuesday to Thursday with a circulation of 26,000. Circulation will rise to 32,000.

Always good to read the - often hostile - comments on Politico.com. Nice job this blogging.

There also will be a redesign of the Politico website. More staff members will be hired, which will increase total staff to more than a 100. The website is attracting more than 3 million unique visitors per month but according to the New York Times, most revenues are still coming from the paper edition - which might be a lesson for the true believers in online-only. (E&P, Politico)

Bolloré wants paid paper

French media tycoon Vincent Bolloré wants to launch a cheap paid daily with a cover price of between 0,50 and €1. The model is the Italian Il Foglio launched in 1996. Bolloré now publishes free papers Direct Soir, Direct Matin and Bretagne Plus in France. (AFP, Betapolitique)

CIRCULATION

Swiss free circulation still rising

In contrast to what is happening in most European countries, free dailies in Switzerland have seen their circulation gone up according to the last WEMF audit on Juli 2007 - June 2008.

20 Minuten saw circulation increase from 436,000 to 526,000 copies. The French 20 Minutes edition went from 210,000 to 222,00 copies. In the French language market, however, Le Matin Bleu beat 20 minutes, because it increased from 183,000 to 231,000 copies. New entry Blick am Abend has a circulation of 211.000. For the other new entries News and .ch no data are available.

Of the paid papers only Südostschweiz saw its circulation increase slightly. Leading tabloid Blick dropped from 240,000 to 231,000; the Tages-Anzeiger went from 216,000 to 214,000 copies. Free business paper Cash Daily distributed 112,000 copies. (Persoenlich)

Spanish frees tweak circulation

Advertising in Spain is developing negatively for most media. Also free dailies have seen their income drop in the last months. Circulation of most frees was more or less stable in the July 2007 - June 2008 period compared to the full year 2007. 20 Minutos has the highest circulation with 1,030,000 copies, Qué! follows with

990,000 copies. ADN distributes 961,000 papers while Metro has a circulation of 828,000. (PGD)

Spanish free newspapers usually cut down circulation in the Summer months. August is skipped altogether. PRNoticias calculated that Spanish papers cut down circulation more than usual. Compared to July 2007, July 2008 showed a circulation 9% lower (2,921,000 against 2,662,000 for the four national free dailies).

Metro printed 17% less papers, ADN went down 13% while Qué! dropped with 8%. 20 Minutes, however printed 1% more copies than last year. In February 2008 the four papers distributed 4,235,000 copies.

Metro Toronto increases circulation

Metro Toronto has increased circulation from 300,000 to 320,000 from September 2 on. The additional copies will be distributed in newspaper boxes and throughout the TTC and GO stations via Gateway Newsstand locations.

Metro appointed Dianne Rinehart as new editor-in-chief for the English language editions. She published before in the Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, Montreal Gazette, Winnipeg Free Press, Calgary Herald and Vancouver Sun. Rinehart's plan is:

"To find creative ways to out-report, out-design, out-delight, out-service and out-deliver the competition in the paper - and on the web."

The new editorial strategy includes repositioning Metro as a "hybrid newspaper" - with an increased focus on magazine-style sections such as health, food, style and homes, in addition to exceptional news coverage.

Also some high-profile columnists will be added, including political analyst Lawrence Martin, environmentalist David Suzuki, humor writer Anne Hines, health expert Celia Milne, The Smart Cookies TV team's financial advice, food writer Barb Holland, relationship expert Josey Vogels, and Alan Cross, host of The Ongoing History of New Music. (Media in Canada)

Austrian bulk and free circulation

Austrian free/paid daily Österreich has a free circulation of 175,000 - 40,000 of that is 'official' bulk sales according to the Austrian auditing organization OAK. 'Sales' in bulk is in most cases rather misleading as it is mostly 'free'. Circulation of 'all-free' papers in Austria (Heute, Die Neue and TT Kompakt) is not audited.

In Austria the OAK-audit distinguishes between two sorts of papers, those with max. 17.5% 'bulk sales' and those with max. 35% (Österreich is one of those). Other paid Austrian papers also have substantial bulk sales; Kurier, Die Presse, Der Standard all distribute more than 10% in bulk. As all Austrian papers are also 'sold' on a voluntary basis in bags on the street, the percentage unpaid is probably even higher. Total free circulation in Austria - excluding free circulation of paid papers - is 700,000.

Danish frees cut back circulation

Free Danish paper MetroXpress and Urban cut down their circulation in the first six months of 2008 compared to the year 2007. Metro had an average circulation of 228,000 (236,000 in 2007) while Urban distributed 208,000 copies against 217,000 in 2007.

The circulation of 24timer is not audited by Dansk Oplagskontrol. Total circulation of 24timer (majority owned by Metro International) and Metro is 430,000 according to Metro International, which would mean a circulation of no more than 200,000 for 24timer. Last year the reported circulation was more than twice as much.

Total circulation in Denmark has now dropped to 640,000 - from almost 2 million at the end of 2006. The last official number for Nyhedavisen was 457,000.

Global Noticias leads in Portugal

Free daily Global Noticias had a circulation in the first six months of 2008 of 204,000 - which makes it the Portuguese newspaper with the highest circulation. Free dailies Metro (177,000) and Destak (171,000) follow on positions 2 and 3 according to the APCT audit.

Paid daily Correio da Manha is the 4th paper with a circulation of 115,000 while Jornal de Noticias follows on the 5th place with 106,000 daily copies. Free daily Meia Hora has a circulation of 73,000. (Publicitas)

READERSHIP

Frees 2nd and 3rd in the Netherlands

After paid paper De Telegraaf (2.2 million), Metro is 2nd in the latest Dutch readership research (2007/2008) with 1.8 million. Spits is 3rd with 1.7 million readers. Paid paper AD has 1.5 million daily readers. Free papers De Pers (900,000 readers) and DAG - last issue published October 1 - (700,000 readers), follow on 5th and 6th place.

Both Metro and Spits, however, lost readers compared to the previous period (2007). The new titles De Pers and DAG gained some readers but as the last title is closed down, readership of the remaining three is likely to go up in the next period. Paid papers are read 30 minutes, free papers take up 15 minutes of their readers' time.

No frees in Irish readership survey

Almost 2 million Irish (56% of the 15+ population) read a paid newspaper daily, 1.8 million (51%) read a paid morning paper in the last surveyed period (July 2007-June 2008) according to the Joint National Readership Survey. In the same period of 2006/2007 this was slightly less, meaning total weekday readership is rising.

Over a longer time span, the picture looks rather different. In general, tabloids like The Star, The Mirror, The Daily Mail and the Sun seem to be gaining readers - although the last title lost somewhat compared to the previous period. The Irish Independent is losing readers. The Times is stable compared to 2006/2007 but lost compared to 2005/2006.

Missing are free dailies Metro and Herald AM. Metro asked to be surveyed in 2006, but the JNRS, whose mission is "to measure average issue readership of Newspapers and Periodicals in the Republic of Ireland" denied the request, it concluded:

"that Metro did not satisfy the requirements for admission to the survey. The JNRS measures the readership of nationally available paid-for titles and is open to paid-for titles which are specifically produced for the Irish market and receptive to advertising placed by advertisers for that market, so that it is enabled to be, or become, an advertising platform for the Republic of Ireland market."

Metro filed a complaint with the Irish Competition Authority, to make the JNRS change the policy on free papers. In July 2007 the JNRS opened the discussion on "the possible inclusion of free publications". In September 2007 it "has adopted amended admission criteria which allow for the inclusion of certain free publications."

In January the Competition Authority decided it would be "closing its inquiry into a complaint made by the publisher of Metro. The inquiry resulted from a

complaint made about the refusal of the Joint National Readership Survey (JNRS) to include Metro in its readership survey. Metro is a free newspaper distributed daily on weekdays in the Greater Dublin Area. In response to the preliminary findings of the Competition Authority investigation, JNRS has agreed to permit free newspapers such as Metro to be included in the survey without admitting any liability. Metro has recently entered into an agreement with JNRS to be included in its readership survey for 2008."

The full 2008 survey therefore will include Metro (and hopefully) Herald AM as well.

Metro third in Czech Republic

After the closure of free daily Metropolitni Expres, free daily Metro is now the 3rd best-read paper in the Czech Republic with 435,000 readers (413,000 six months ago) after Blesk (1,507,000) and MF Dnes (1,058,000).

Paid paper Pravo is 4th with 413,000 daily readers. Free daily 24 hodin (8th position) has 208,000 daily readers and profited only slightly from the closure of Metropolitni Expres. Three years ago Metro had 160,000 readers.

Metro moves up in Canada

Free daily Metro has almost 1.1 million readers in the six largest Canadian markets. Competitor 24 hours/heures has 876,000 daily readers. Only in Vancouver 24 hours has more readers than Metro. Only in Toronto one of the free dailies is one of the two best-read papers.

Metro surpassed the Toronto Sun (462,000 readers) and is now the second best-read paper (471,000 readers) in Toronto after the Toronto Star (930,000 readers). Free daily 24 hours had 319,000 daily readers according to the latest NADbank survey (2007/2008) and is 5th after the Globe and Mail (396,000). All papers except Metro and the Sun lost readers compared to the 2007 survey.

In Montreal Metro is 3rd (325,000) after Le Journal de Montréal and La Presse. 24 heures is 5th (210,000) after The Gazette. The Gazette and Metro gained readers.

In Ottawa-Gatineau the French language 24 heures stopped publication, its English counterpart 24 hours had 34,000 readers (like in the previous period), which makes it the 6th paper, Metro had 68,000 readers (down from 71,000) and is 4th. The Ottawa Citizen, The Ottawa Sun and Le Droit are the best-read papers.

In Vancouver 24 hours is 3rd (234,000 readers) after The Vancouver Sun and The Province but before Metro (144,000). All papers but The Sun gained readers.

Paid papers Calgary Herald and Calgary Sun are the best-read papers in Calgary. Metro is 3rd (44,000), 24 hours is 6th after Globe and Mail and the National Post.

In Edmonton the Edmonton Journal and Edmonton Sun lead before Metro (40,000) and 24 hours (35,000). The Metro Halifax data are not in the press release.

Metro Belgium loses readers

Both French and Dutch versions of free Belgium Metro (Concentra) lost readers in 2007/2007 compared to 2006/2007. The papers have a joint readership of 764,000 which makes it the 3rd newspaper in the country.

Het Laatste Nieuws and De Nieuwe Gazet have more than a million readers while Het Nieuwsblad, De Gentenaar and Het Volk have 950,000 readers. The Dutch language Metro went down from 318,000 to 307,000 while the French version saw a drop from

516,000 to 478,000. Most Dutch language paid papers saw an increase in readership. French paid papers - except Le Soir - lost readers. (CIM)

French frees increase readership

Readership in France increased with 4.4% when 2007 (Jan.-Dec.) and 2007/2008 (July-June) are compared. 24 million people read a daily on an average day. Free papers gained most with 12.5%. The increase is caused by new entries Direct Soir and Direct Matin. Without new titles free dailies increased readership with 4.2%.

Total readership of free dailies in France is now 4.2 million, against 3.7 million in the previous period. 20 Minutes is the best-read paper with 2.6 million readers (+4%), reaching more than 5% of the French population. In Ile-de-France (greater Paris area) it has a readership of 1.5 million and reaches 17% of the population.

Readership of Metro is 2.4 million (+4%) while Direct Soir has a readership of 846,000. The joint Plus-editions (Marseille, Lille, Lyon, Montpellier, Paris, Bretagne) reach 1.3 million readers.

UK readership 2005-2008

The UK NRS Readership survey over the last three years shows that only free dailies have seen their readership grow on a regular basis. Most dailies - The Sun, Daily Mail, The Daily Telegraph, Daily Record, The Guardian and The Independent - have a rather stable readership, losing less than 5% of their readers over the last years.

The Daily Mirror and The Times both lost 7%. The Daily Express and the Daily Star went down with more than 10%, while the Evening Standard recorded a 20% loss.

Metro went up from 1.9 million readers to 3.1 million (+66%) while also the London paper and London Lite showed an increased readership - although both were only surveyed since the beginning of 2007.

Frees win in Swiss readership

Free Swiss newspaper 20 Minuten is again the best-read Swiss newspaper according to the MACH Basic readership survey. With almost 1.3 million daily readers it reaches now twice as many readers as the former leading paid paper Blick. Four years ago both papers had both around 750,000 readers.

Free daily Heute increased its readership to almost 300,000. Heute's successor Blick am Abend is not yet audited, as are the free dailies News and .CH. Free business paper Cash daily had 85,000 daily readers, up from 73,000 half a year ago. All other (paid) papers lost readers compared to the MACH Basic 2007-2 survey.

In the French speaking part both free dailies 20 Minutes and Le Matin bleu increased their readership, while all paid papers (except Le Temps) lost readers.

ADVERTISING

UK economy threatens newspapers

A World Advertising Research Center (WARC) report on the state of the UK economy and the possible consequences for different media contains some depressing news for newspapers in particular.

Consumer confidence in the UK is low, with low acceptance rates for mortgages. Chances for a recession are substantial. Print is expected to lose most in ad share, internet could gain something. In earlier recessions also

print in the UK lost more market share than other media. How free papers would respond is not yet clear.

Double broadsheet tad ad in Spits

Dutch free daily Spits debuted (probably) with the biggest ad ever in a free newspaper. On 20 August the paper had a double broadsheet poster ad for the Hellboy movie folded inside the tabloid.

PUBLISHERS

The Metro strategy

Carlos Salas, director of Metro Spain explained the Metro consolidation strategy employed by the company in the last year at the 1st World Congress of Free Press.

In the Czech Republic Metro sold 60% to competitor Mafra, which closed down their own free daily Metropolitni Express. As a result Metro saw readership and revenues to up and expects to reach break-even in 2009. Synergies were realized in the editorial departments - meaning paid papers and Metro share resources - and in distribution.

In Sweden Schibsted acquired a 35% stake in Metro Sweden. Schibsted shut down Punkt SE and made an alliance between Metro and paid paper Aftonbladet. Readership of Metro increased almost overnight in Sweden, while distribution costs went down. Because of the lower competition, net ad prices increased. The new combination offers ad packages to advertisers.

In Denmark Metro saw readership go down because of high competition, ad prices going down. After the closure of Nyhedsavisen and the takeover of 24timer after 24time-owner JP/Politiken bought a share in Metro Denmark, also in Denmark the future looks more bright for Metro.

Salas predicted that in the new recession some players will pull out while consolidation will be visible in more countries. The recession, actually, is an opportunity to close the CPT gap with paid papers according to Metro.

Several publishers from all over Europe said that Metro was indeed talking with other publishers in order to discuss cooperation.

Metro-Schibsted deal completed

The deal between Metro International and Schibsted Sweden whereby Schibsted acquired 35 percent of Metro Sweden's shares for 350 million SEK, is now official. The deal has been reviewed by The Swedish Competition Authority (Konkurrensverket) and was approved on September 18.

A number of advertising collaborations between the two companies will be possible. Metro and Aftonbladet will launch a advertising package with a daily reach of 4.2 million readers. The parties have also created a combination between Metro, Aftonbladet and Svenska Dagbladet for retail advertisers in Stockholm.

Metro Sweden's new board consists of Per-Mikael Jensen (CEO, Metro International), Martin Alsander (Executive Vice President, Metro International), Sakari Pitkänen (Global Editor in Chief, Metro International), Gunnar Strömblad (CEO, Schibsted Sweden) and Carl Gyllfors (CEO, Aftonbladet).

'Divesting' plans for US Metro's

Metro International has been trying to sell US operations since almost a year, so far without too much success. Clarity Media (The Examiner) declined the offer while

rumors about the NY Times being interested in the Boston and the NY titles never were more than just rumors.

The problematic US advertising market, however, requires a fast decision from Metro. CEO Per Mikael Jensen was quoted in the Sunday Times: "What we have been doing in the US is to look at all options. That means going into partnership with others or divesting." This last option certainly is new. (Greenslade)

Metro Chile expands

Free Chilean daily Publimetro (Metro International) acquired stakes in B2B internet business Diario Pyme and magazine publisher Editorial Previa.

Diario Pyme, in which Metro now has a 40% stake with an option to buy the remaining 60%, offers internet strategy consultancy; a weekly business news bulletin; advising on website content development and preparation of tailored databases for direct mail businesses.

Editorial Previa publishes sports magazines El Gráfico and Golf Digest. Publimetro also acquired 40% in this company with the option to buy the rest in the future. (Metro International)

TMG does not want *De Pers*

Dutch publisher TMG (paid paper De Telegraaf, free daily Spits) does not want to buy De Pers according to 925.nl. De Pers is owned by Dutch millionaire Marcel Boekhoorn, who is a 5% shareholder in TMG.

The share price of TMG has gone up - which is remarkable for a print media company in a recession time. 925.nl suggests that someone (Boekhoorn?) is buying shares to increase his hold on the company.

TMG CFO Fred Arp admits there have been talks about joint advertising strategies and printing, but that he has no interest in the loss-making paper. Although the paper is not making any money, Boekhoorn is not planning to pull the plug according to 925.nl.

Joint newsroom for all *Blick* titles

In 2010 all Swiss 'Blick' papers will share the same central newsroom. The operation includes paid paper Blick, Sunday paper SonntagsBlick, free daily Blick am Abend and Blick Online. Every journalist is expected to work for two titles at least. (Persoenlich)

Free papers lower Tamedia's profits

Swiss publisher Tamedia saw turnover increase but profits drop in the first six months of 2008. The company publishes paid paper Tages Anzeiger (Zurich) and Berner Zeitung, free dailies 20 Minuten/Minutes and News in Switzerland and free daily L'Essentiel in Luxembourg.

Start-up cost of free dailies News (launched in December 2007) and L'Essentiel (October 2007) resulted in higher costs. Also the expansion of the web portal of 20 Minuten and disappointing results of the Espace Group (Berne) led to a lower profitability. (Persoenlich)

Irish Metro lost €2.7m in 2007

Free Irish daily Metro lost €2.7m last year, which brings its accumulated losses to more than €11m since it was launched in October 2005. Owner Fortunegreen is a joint venture between Irish Times and Associated Newspapers (Metro UK), each owns 45% of the business, and Metro International, which has a 10% stake.

In 2007, Fortunegreen received non-interest bearing loans of €2.3m from its shareholders. That was on top of

€7.27m in loans advanced to the company in the previous financial year. The shareholders had originally committed €2m to the venture. (Irish Independent)

Sing Tao sees revenues grow

Hong Kong based Sing Tao News Corporation, publisher of free dailies Headline Daily and The Standard and paid daily Sing Tao Daily, saw first half-year revenue increase with 13.6 percent to HK\$1.21 billion (€110m), thanks to growth in advertising.

Headline Daily "outperformed the market average" according to a company statement. Profits, however dropped from almost €10m to €2m because of less return on investments and changes in stock-exchange regulations. Companies were no longer obliged to publish notices in the financial paper - it resulted in €4m less revenues.

As a reaction the Standard went to a free model, but "progress under the new model has been encouraging" according to the publisher. (The Standard)

In 2007 Headline Daily, launched in 2005, already "became an important contributor to the Group's turnover and profit in its second full year of operations" according to the annual report. It has a circulation of 700,000 and reports a readership of 1.7 million. The Standard now has a circulation of more than 200,000.

LEGISLATION

Metro sues Metro

German wholesale retailer Metro is thinking about suing free paper publisher Metro International after the successful lawsuit in Hungary. In August the Hungarian Metro was forced to change its name to Metropol after the retailer argued successfully that the use of the 'Metro' brand was an infringement to its own rights. According to website B2B Köln first options would be Italy and France.

Other contested markets could be Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Russia. Also Belgium, the UK and Poland where other publishers operate Metro papers could be affected.

The Metro brand, however, is not used in all markets. In France, Italy, Russia, the Czech Republic, Denmark and Poland the company does use that specific brand name. In the Netherlands, Greece, Portugal, Spain and the UK the supermarkets are called Makro. In Belgium and Greece both names are used. In Denmark the Metro paper is called MetroXpress. In Spain it is officially called Metro Directo although Metro is the brand used.

Metro Group brands are Metro, Makro, Media Markt, Saturn, Galeria Kaufhaus and Real.

The Metro Cash & Carry group was founded 40 years ago and is active in 28 markets. In Germany the retailer already asked the court in Hamburg for a ruling which resulted in Metro International not being allowed to publish a free daily with that name in Germany.

Daily Post man steals *Examiners*

In San Mateo (California, US) an employee of the San Francisco Examiner spotted a Daily Post delivery man removing copies of every publication except his employers from newspaper boxes.

The man had in his car hundreds of copies of the Examiner, Daily News and Daily Journal. The theft of 25

copies or more of free papers is prohibited in California and punishable by a fine of up to \$250 for a first offense.

"We obviously fired the guy when we heard about it. It is absolutely not our policy to do this," said Daily Post publisher Dave Price to the San Mateo Daily Journal. Price denied that the man was instructed by his Daily Post circulation manager to take competitor's newspapers although the delivery man claimed he was directed to do so by his superior.

TITLES

Examiners' endorse McCain

Almost no European free daily would ever publish a political editorial, let alone endorse a political candidate. For US-papers this has always been different, although free dailies in general keep away from too much political affiliation, as they are targeting a general public.

But not the free Examiner, owned by right-wing Denver billionaire Philip Anschutz. On the SF frontpage (25 September) the paper had McCain and Palin, with a headline declaring: "Honest budgets, lower taxes, strength abroad."

The editorial speaks of "enriching America's place in a dangerous world" which could be trusted in the hands of McCain. Also the Washington Examiner endorsed McCain (E&P). In Baltimore they still have to make up their mind. Of course... the US economy moving towards a total meltdown... and then promising "lower taxes" and "enriching America's place" ...

Gaste after nine months

Ahmet Pandir, chief revenue officer of free daily Gaste, launched in February 2008, talked on the Madrid free paper conference last week about what led to the launch of the first free Turkish paper and also about its future.

In Turkey the Dogan group is controlling 40% of the newspaper circulation and 60% of the ad revenues. Most newspapers in Turkey look similar, with a rather cluttered design and with a very political, mostly right-wing content. Only Zaman differs from most papers.

In February 2008, Gaste started at street junctions, distributing at traffic lights and in boxes. Gaste looks different from most other Turkish papers, with different fonts, different colors and a different format. It wanted a high visibility on streets, also in racks and in shops. Therefore Gaste is also sponsoring events and festivals. By distributing on bikes, sampling, and selling ad space on racks the paper wants to increase visibility even more.

The Dogan group reacted with 20DK - 20 minutes - which looked more like the other papers from the group. Although mr. Pandir said the quality of the competitor was less than that of his own paper, he also said that the move indeed confused the public and media agencies.

Gaste now distributes around 300,000 copies, competitor 20DK distributes 100,000 copies less according to mr. Pandir. Both papers started with 500,000 copies. There are, however, no audited data available yet.

Gaste wants to expand distribution by using 300 more racks in shops. In the next years Gaste wants to expand to 5 new markets, Ankara and Izmir are first on the list.

TexMex free daily *Al Día*

Alfredo Carbajal, Editor-in-chief of Dallas free daily *Al Día* talked at the Madrid free press conference about the

move from paid to free his paper went through. More than 5 million people live in the the Dallas area, 1.2 million of those belong to the Spanish speaking population.

In September 2003 *Al Día* was launched as a paid paper with 60% home delivered. The cover price was 25c. In 2005 hybrid model was introduced, with free distribution in racks, but in 2007 the paper went all-free. The move meant less marketing costs, no costs for subscription and less promotion costs.

In 2008 *Al Día* increased distribution to 40,000 – and to 120,000 on Wednesdays and Saturdays - on these days most advertising campaigns of retailers begin. The paper contains on these days also shopping coupons.

Distribution is controlled by equipping vans with a GPS-system, so drivers and routes can be checked. The distribution costs of *Al Día* are now around 15c per copy.

Cofina: Destak & Meia Hora

At the free press conference in Madrid, Cofina's Francisco Pinto Barbosa talked about the '2nd generation free dailies'. Cofina launched commuter free paper Destak as weekly in September 2001 and converted it to a daily in November 2004. In July 2006 they launched Destak in Sao Paulo Brasil, Rio followed in 2008.

Meia Hora was Portugal's first 2nd generation free daily. The paper targetted an up-market audience, and had a focus on politics, economics, and international news. It also contained more opinions. But just as 'general' free dailies, Meia Hora contains mostly short articles.

Destak is for 80% distributed in public transport, 15% is handed out at traffic lights. Also Meia Hora uses this distribution method: 30% is distributed at traffic lights. The rest is mostly distributed at drop-offs at institutions and businesses. Distribution is 70,000 - readership 208,000.

DNews, the fifth Italian free daily

Edoardo Lucheschi, Strategy Director of the 5th general Italian free daily Dnews, explained the 1st World Congress of Free Press, why anyone with a sane mind would publish a free daily in an already saturated market: "am I a genius or completely loco?" he asked the audience.

Italy has already four general free newspapers: Metro, Leggo, City and E Polis, while there is also a free business paper: 24Minuti, and some local models. Mr. Lucheschi said his newspaper wanted to do something very different, not only in content but also in distribution.

DNews prints more pages than most other papers: 48 pages in full color. The paper tries to be complete with national and international news, but mainly focussing on local news. At least 12 pages are devoted to local news for every edition in Milan, Rome, Verona and Bergamo.

The local model is better according to Mr. Lucheschi because local advertising is more stable and reliable than national advertising. Local sales is done by the paper itself, national advertising is handled by the PRS group. Distribution is not only in public transport but also in bars, coffee shops, bakeries and pastry shops.

Metro breast cancer day

All Metros in the world were printed on pink paper on October 1, in order to give attention to the international breast cancer day. In the paper there are also articles on the subject. On the Madrid frontpage rock star Anastacia speaks about the battle against 'el cáncer de mama'.

Diario Libre – Dominican leader

At the 1st World Congress of Free Press in Madrid Adriano Miguel Tejada, director of Dominican Republic free daily Diario Libre talked about his paper, one of most interesting models in Latin America. Diario Libre launched 10 May 2001 in a country where paid papers were very political and expensive. It started with a circulation of 75,000 - distributing Monday to Saturday.

Circulation is now 112,000, while the paper counts at least 32 pages, 16 of them with ads. Often the page count is more, especially on Mondays (the Monday edition I got had 92 pages, including a 32 page classified section). Saturday a special magazine 'Estilos' is inserted while there are also commercial full color inserts.

The paper owns its own printing plant. It is mostly home delivered and available in public places like cafeterias, hotels, doctors' offices, banks and shops.

Diario Libre is now the best read paper in the country, reaching 36% of the total readership, competitor Al Dia (also free) has a 9.5% share. It increased total readership in the country as well. In 2001 26% of the Dominicans read newspapers, against 47% now.

The paper employs 50 journalists, and is available at 800 distribution points. Local advertisers can opt for targetted distribution with inserts in areas in capital Santa Domingo. The paper has a e-paper, an English language service, and even its own online daily TV program.

The paper reached break-even in the 3rd year, and made profits after that. In 2002 two other free dailies were launched: El Expreso and Ultima Hora. Both stopped publication in 2003.

New design for *Negocio*

Spanish free business daily *Negocio & Estilo de Vida* got a new design. *Negocio* was launched in April 2006 as the first free subscription newspaper in Spain, with delivery to subscribers' workplace.

Daily circulation was 63,000 while a new audit is likely to show an increase of more than 20,000 copies. Designer Miguel Buckenmeyer, said about the new look:

"the paper wanted both to modernize its image and blur the distinction between 'paid' and 'free' content. In Spain there is a great bias against 'free' papers by many people who regularly read newspapers. Therefore, it was important for the redesign to depict *Negocio* as a 'quality paper'."

MEN mixed model spreads

The free/paid distribution model, developed by the Manchester Evening News, will now be applied by the weekly Richmond & Twickenham Times. The paper will be for sale in the Richmond and Twickenham area while it will distribute 54,500 copies to homesle. (Newsquest)

The paper distributes now 11,000 copies per, this will increase 61,000 copies per week. Two free weeklies will be closed down at the same time and replaced by the new title. New reporting rules introduced by the Audit Bureau of Circulations now allow newspaper publishers to combine free and paid-for distribution. (Guardian)

New design for 24 hours

Canadian free daily 24 hours / 24 heures introduced a new design. The orange (yellow for the French version) 24 hours block is now separated from the masthead. More stories on the front page make navigation easier. (Media in Canada)

Belgian Metro Fashion Magazine

Racks of free Belgian paper Metro were filled with Metro's Fashion Magazine on 12 September from 15.00 on. Total circulation was 150,000 - the company expects the racks empty by Monday morning when the daily is published. According to Metro, covering fashion is relevant for the readers, who have an average of "15 pair of shoes".

Metro Hungary 10 years

Metro Hungary celebrated its 10th anniversary. The paper was launched on 7 September 1998. Initial circulation was 190,000 at the start, and increased after a national edition was launched in 2001 to more than 300,000.

Current circulation is 320,000, with a readership of 656,000. The national edition is distributed in 24 cities. Hungary is one of the few free newspaper monopolies in Europe. In March 2007 a competitor, Busz, was launched. After a few weeks the paper closed down again.

After Metro Sweden, Hungary was the 2nd foreign edition of Metro after the Czech edition (now majority owned by German publisher Rheinische Post).

€100 for *Österreich* subscribers

Free/paid Austria daily *Österreich* always was famous for its gifts to new subscribers: iPods, coffee machines, free highway vouchers. The latest offer involves a cash refund. New subscribers who sign up for at least a yearly subscription receive €100,- in cash on their bank account.

As a subscription costs just over €170,- this lowers the price to €70,- meaning that subscribers get a paper home delivered six days a week for 23 cents a day. According to *Österreich* total circulation is 304,000. The latest OAK audit, however, includes only paid circulation (130,000) and 'paid' circulation including bulk-sales (167,000). As bulk indicates free in this case, total free circulation must be around 175,000.

De Pers back to five days a week

The Saturday edition of Dutch free daily *De Pers* did not survive the summer holiday. The last issue was published 12 July. The first Saturday paper was published 15 September, 2007 in a Berliner-format and was distributed mainly in shopping areas. Part of it was home delivered.

Circulation was around 200,000 - half of the circulation of the weekday free paper. In the last issue the reason for the closure of "the first free quality Saturday paper" was explained as a "slight change in formula of the paper". The real reason was that the paper lost money. Although the number of ad-pages was not bad at all, the rates probably were.

De Pers introduced a new formula on Monday 1 September. It devotes more space to sports and business news. The new "In Business" section counts 5 pages. *De Pers* is targeting educated readers between 20 and 45, a somewhat older group than 'regular' free dailies.

Distribution through offices will be expanded in the next months. *De Pers* is now distributed in 2000 offices. In the second half of 2009 the paper expects to reach break-even according to editor and publisher Ben Rogmans.

The paper was launched in January 2007 and lost €20m in the first year and expected a loss of €10m in 2008. Publisher Cornelis van den Berg had to go in April, followed by eight journalists in July. The paper employs 43 journalists now.

New look for oldest Spanish free

Spanish free daily Mini Diario, launched in 1992 in Valencia, got a total make-over. The design has a consistent use of color throughout the paper. The paper has different editions for Valencia and Alicante.

The current circulation is around 70,000. The paper counts 16 pages on most days. The oldest 'black and white' design can be viewed of the 'history page' of the paper. Later version used color but not on every page.

New design for 20 Minutes

French free daily 20 Minutes will introduce a new 'more visual' design in November. The new 20 Minutes will have more and bigger pictures, a 4 column lay-out and new subjects covered. Editorial space will not suffer according to editor-in-chief Corinne Sorin. The paper will also contain more local and economic news.

The sacking of internet chef Hufnagel resulted in a 5 day strike of the website in August. Lawyers of both parties has negotiated a solution. The reason for the conflict was described by director Pierre-Jean Bozo as "different views" of Hufnagel and editor-in-chief Corinne Sorin.

In the first six months of 2008 20 Minutes had a share of 16% of total national newspaper advertising income in France, before Parisien/Aujourd'hui (15%), Le Figaro (14%), Metro (13%) and Le Monde (12%). (L'Express)

Danish Metro printed in Sweden

Danish MetroXpress, will be printed from January 2009 on in the Swedish town Malmö, less than 40 kilometers from Copenhagen. It will be the second free daily leaving printer Dansk Avistryk because also Nyhedsavisen was printed by the company. (Mediawatch.dk)

Total make-over for .ch

Swiss free daily .ch will go through a total make-over at the end of October. Home delivery will be stopped altogether. Distribution will be in public transport like competitors 20 Minuten and News, which will probably lead to more readers per copy. The number of boxes will increase from 650 to 2000. Sacha Wigdorovits, founder of the paper will step down.

The paper had 204,000 readers in the first months of 2008, with a circulation of 370,000. Also content will change, focusing on news and entertainment. A new design by Katja Hösli will be introduced as well. On 28 October capital will be increased from CHF 10 million to CHF 18 million. (Persoenlich)

PEOPLE

New Metro CFO

Metro International announced that Frank Mooty, Chief Financial Officer, left Metro on 30 September. Anders Kronborg, currently Chief of Staff, will replace him.

New editor for RedEye

Editor Jane Hirt, who left Chicago free daily RedEye to become the Chicago Tribune's managing editor will be succeeded by Tran Ha. Ha started at RedEye as copy editor in 2003 and later went on to edit Chicago Tribune features. She returned to the Tribune's free daily in 2007 to help launch a Saturday edition. (E&P)

Törnberg returns

Pelle Törnberg, former CEO of Metro International, has returned to the land of the free. Tornberg is now member

of the board of (free of course) city website Qype. Qype operates city websites with reviews on local services in the UK, France, Germany and several other European cities. The publishers of Qype recently succeeded in getting an investment of €8 million from Wellington Partners, Advent Venture Partners and Partech International. (Förderland)

New directors De Pers

Since the beginning of September, Dutch free daily De Pers has new directors: Robin Kolner en Rene Spanjer, formerly working for financial paper FD.

RESEARCH

Integrated newsroom questioned

Frédéric Filloux, formerly working for free daily 20 Minutes France, and now employed by 20 Minutes owner Schibsted, questions on his Monday Note blog the 'Integrated Newsroom' model: "Let's kill a myth. The dream of a compact newsroom, able to output a high-intensity general news website doesn't fly. Numbers simply don't add up."

Filloux mainly questions the expected online revenues, and does a lot of (depressing but fair) calculations on his blog. The bottom line is that online readers bring in too little money, while the cost of news is still rather high.

New article in Journalism Practice

In the most recent issue of the Journalism Practice journal I published an article on "The simultaneous rise and fall of free and paid newspapers in Europe". In major European newspaper markets the possible substitution between free and paid dailies is researched.

Free weeklies in Germany

Germany lacks commuter free dailies, but has many free - mostly local - weeklies. In 2008 no less than 1400 different titles were published with a total circulation of 90 million. Half of the weeklies are published on Wednesday, more than a third on Saturday or Sunday. Almost 70 dailies distribute more than 200,000 copies a week. In 2007 the weeklies realized €1,971 million in revenues.

EVENTS

Frankfurt Int. Comm. Forum

On November 4, I will talk at the International Communications Forum in Frankfurt. Other speakers include Prof. Dr. Frank L.W. Thevissen, Freie Universität Brüssel, Brüssel; Dave Armon, CEO PR Newswire, New York; Jürgen de Graeve, Audi AG; Malte von Trotha, Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Hamburg and Bertrand Pecquerie, Director World Editors Forum, Paris. More info on www.newsaktuell.de/ikf/index.htx.

Barcelona Free Press Conference

The details of the 3rd International Free Press Conference, on 19 November have to be confirmed.

Scottsdale INMA

The 9th Annual INMA Summit on Audience Development, will be on January 21-23 at the Scottsdale Cottonwoods Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona. I will talk about moving from cannibalism to expanding the newspaper audience.

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