

# lingua business

30<sup>th</sup> October 2007

## Paper vs. Digital: The Eternal Debate

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**While times certainly have changed, some things will just never change. Take the newspaper business for instance. About ten years ago, the digital gurus of the new superhighway (internet) were predicting the complete eradication and bankruptcy of most local or mid-sized newspapers, coinciding with the advent of online versions of newspapers and daily news alerts. Boy, were they ever wrong!**

You certainly can not deny the convenience, timeliness and even presentation of digital presentations and convenience of audiovisual effects for news stories on the web. But in much the same way, you can not steal the tradition of reading the newspaper with your morning coffee.

Call it stubbornness if you like, but there is something to be said for the smell and touch of a newly printed newspaper. The smell of the ink, the size of the letters, the pictures you can move back and forth and away from your eyes as you like.

I was thinking about all of this as I observed the local newspaperman selling newspapers at the entrance to the motorway in my last visit to Chicago. How can they still make money?

Well, for one thing, the old adage: “any publicity is good publicity” certainly rings true today. Businesses can not limit themselves to just one form of advertising, but rather sign up for any and all of them. Sure you can post a company banner at a website and receive clicks, but you are not going to see anyone printing off coupons or special offers from their computer screens, let alone go through the trouble of printing it off to show their friends at any given point in time (the way you can with a newspaper).

Well, the age of digital advertising is just about to reach an exciting climax with the latest wave of mobile advertising. So as the digital advertising market continues to grow, the age of newspaper advertising would appear to be in full recession. But is that really so?

Long time spent in front of a computer screen causes eye strain, contributes to partial loss of sight capacity and even can induce strong headaches. In fact, many of these dangers are either avoided or non-existent when reading a paper newspaper. However, the same argument could be made from reading the newspaper while travelling - this may lead to dizziness and light-headedness.

Many analysts point to the fact that newspapers have decreased circulation since the dawn of the internet age, but that all depends on the way you look at it. Most if not all of them have an online version which has not only decreased circulation but actually increased the demand and market share for these publications.

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