Annotated Bibliography

Research topic: Can a shift from broadsheet to tabloid help to save newspapers from declining circulation and advertising revenues?


Farhi’s article debunks much of what many critics are calling the end of the newspaper era. He believes quite the opposite. Evidence of declining revenues and audience, he says, are no different in other forms of media — cable TV, radio and the Internet. In fact, he says newspapers are in better shape. He argues that because of their hold on cities as “the source for news,” their newsgathering power, the benefit of the “local” news, a specialized demographic, brand name recognition and historic profitability that they will only improve. They just need the ownership to do so, as he shows in Philip Anschutz’s transformation of the San Francisco Examiner.

Much of my research focuses on the tabloid as the saving grace for newspapers, but this article uses historical data and tradition to prove that there may be more than just
form that will save the newspaper. It’s an important, relevant perspective that will make the research more balanced.


Berinstein sheds light on what is behind the so-called decline in newspapers. He investigates, using data and case studies, whether the death of newspapers is on the horizon or if they are merely recovering from a slump. More importantly, though, he tries to uncover what the implications are for information professionals. To get to the heart of that, he discusses the evolution of the newspaper, readership, reader demographics, the rise of the Internet, confidence in the news, advertising revenue, and attempts to recover lost audiences.

This is important because of its in-depth look at the newspaper as a form, similar to Farhi’s article above. This takes a more monetary approach and uses a lot more solid data. It helps to show that newspapers aren’t dying — they are reinventing themselves or evolving, sometimes by targeting a different audience and sometimes by simply changing their form (tabloid versus broadsheet).

Cheses gives a perspective of life at Chicago’s RedEye, the offspring of the Chicago Tribune aimed at a younger audience. It gives a day-in-the-life-of approach as he sits in on an editorial meeting and follows editors and reporters. RedEye editors admit that their product is different and that it is not an extension of the Tribune. If readers want the Tribune, they won’t get it by reading the RedEye, by which he uses the analogy of comparing a McDonald’s cheeseburger to a gourmet meal. “…[W]e’re not saying we’re anything we’re not,” the editor says.

I wanted to use this article because it shows that with the change to a tabloid format, editors hope to tackle a new, younger audience. They don’t only do this by the size, but they do it in the form the reporting takes. The editors here describe how their younger readers didn’t want editors to talk down to them. They just wanted the information in a more digestible presentation.