

# Newspaper industry in trinidad and tobago

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In 1799 publisher M. Gallagher inaugurated the very first English Language newspaper in Trinidad and Tobago called 'The Trinidad Weekly Courant'. In 1825 the 'Port of Spain Gazette' was introduced . Later, on the 21st January, 1832 the government established 'The Trinidad Gazette'. This move by the Governor brought with it competition in the newspaper market in the country. By the early 19th century there was over nine major published newspaper in Trinidad and Tobago. This signal and began a boom in the industry, since newspapers became the most relevant form of mass media of the population. A multimillion dollar industry. Almost two hundred years after the first newspaper was introduced, one may think that the industry is at its very peak of success. But nothing could be further from the truth. The Newspaper is a dimming light. The inception of various forms of mass media over the past two centuries including radio, television streaming media and the world wide web, the ways in which audiences and users intake news and information has totally changed by a great force. A situation called convergence. The traditional way of reading a newspapers has been affected by different ways and forms of convergence, which lead to the downfall of the newspaper. Or has it really not? Convergence thus affected the newspaper industry and the media landscape at a whole and has created advantages and disadvantages to the industry. Convergence in Mass Communication is defined as where the distinction between various mediums disappears by way of the contents being distributed in various forms. Audience fragmentation, the development of the internet, the world wide web, digitalization, and finally concentration of ownership and conglomeration are solely responsible for convergence in mass media. As of

2013, Trinidad and Tobago has three major newspapers which includes 'The Trinidad Express', 'The Trinidad Guardian' and 'The Trinidad and Tobago Newsday Newspapers' all which is locally considered national newspapers. With the inclusion of several weekly and specialized newspapers and a monthly journal. All three major newspapers are available through the newspapers websites, websites that makes available web based versions of the publications that sometimes generate thousands of comments and replies on hit articles and streaming videos. the website also makes available classified advertisements and other advisories from authorities and other information. with an increase of the number of persons who has access to broadband services increasing and the introduction of high-speed telecommunication mobile networks from TSTT and Digicel in the country , almost anyone can access the websites and web base software created by the company via their pc, laptops, tablets and Smartphones. Convergence can once again comes in another form. The Trinidad Express is owned a sole or lone firm. The newspaper is owned by a parent company 'The Caribbean Communications Network (CCN), which is further owned by 'ONE Caribbean Media Ltd.'. This organization is a perfect example of concentration of ownership, because the latter company owns other forms of mediums other than a newspaper. This includes a television station 'CCN TV6' and also several radio stations. Contents of all news information and other articles made available on the Express newspaper can be showcase on the televisions news cast and the radio stations hourly news update. This is also a reality with The Guardian Newspaper, with the exception of The Newsday being self owned. Convergence has created a total flop of the newspaper

industry in Trinidad and Tobago. Views is argued to become biased and local information has become stagnant and limited. Newspapers has long been replaced by television, radio and the world wide web as the more relevant forms of mass media. Audiences wants news and other information at a more convenient time, quickly and at a more cheaper expense as opposed to newspapers. Also with most of the younger audience today widely making use of the internet and owning smartphones, companies has taken steps to further tap into the growing sector. The Express also has a visible presence on most social media websites like Facebook and Twitter, with the wise use of tabloid journalism and extended use of entertainment articles and celebrity related videos. But with it all said and done all these can similarly be found on a printed newspaper. It's clear the audience is taking full advantage of the various forms of mediums so convergence is needed. Further pushing convergence forward but at the same time under minding the traditional newspaper. Convergence, concentration of ownership and conglomeration can also be argued to be the reason why newspapers are still afloat anyways. with the larger parent company like CCN now making bigger profits that Trinidad Express would not have been managed to make on its own the printed version can manage to continue. Trinidad and Tobago has been affected by convergence whether it is in a positive or negative form. It just showcases and represents a well productive media industry that is also showing signs of growth