

# Print journalism assignment assignment

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It has been said that the media sells audiences to advertisers. Is advertising necessary to fund Journalism? Discuss with reference to the debate in the media about the future of newspapers, quality and independent Journalism. An editing room is before everything, a profit-making business and like every other businesses, there has to be investment, expenses, funding and revenue. Today's most major revenue for newspapers is achieved through advertising. It does then, right from the start, appear clear enough that advertising plays a vital part on the " survival" of a swapper, or as said, Journalism.

To better understand the whole mechanism behind advertising, newspapers or the whole funding activity, we have to look way back, two centuries ago. Advertising on written handouts dates back to the 18th century. At that time, advertising was only a trivial source of revenue for publishers as only a few companies/businesses advertised on written handouts or newspapers. What funded newspapers then? The bigger share of revenue came from other practices and features made available by newspapers; one of them was long time subscription service.

You wouldn't just walk in a shop everyday and buy a newspaper. One would pay a sum of money at the beginning of the year and he/she would be guaranteed to have a newspaper delivered on the doorstep every time a new handout was published. It was then thanks to these long term subscription fees that newspapers kept running for almost a century until the boom of advertising happened in the 19th century. More and more advertisers were " born" and advertising took a remarkable path uphill. From that moment up to now advertising became the biggest source of revenue for newspapers.

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Numbers do speak for themselves; for the USA only, gains from advertising on newspapers amounted to \$38.60 billion in 2013 and this was more than the preceding year by 2.7%. Also, the New York Times has announced that it had experienced a 2.6% increase in revenue resulting in \$390 million gained. So we see that advertising is essential for a newspaper to exist. Every business needs funding and a newspaper is of no exception. There does however exist other sources of income for newspapers or magazines.

Take the examples of renowned publications like National Geographic ND Newsweek which, apart from advertising, gain a fair lot from subscriptions. Generic publications or newspapers also gain from government subsidies. This allows them to lighten their expenses thus increasing the revenue. A third way for newspapers to gain finances is from business partnerships. For example, the Intercontinental Hotel in Bangkok might have an agreement with Newsweek or a local newspaper to only exclusively provide their publications in the lobby or the rooms.

As said earlier, it does appear clear enough that advertising is necessary to fund journalism. If we have a look at the actual model for Mauritius, our first impression would be that advertising feeds the media. Be it for “Lisper’s”, “Weekend” or “Lee Maintain”, our reading brings us to the conclusion that on average, 3 pages out of 10 are adverts; which means that almost 30% of newspapers is advertising. It somehow is not surprising at all to learn that adverts generate on average over 69% of Mauritania newspapers’ revenue.

Since advertising crowds our eyesight every day, be it on billboards, television or in newspapers we can question ourselves about the quality of

newspapers in the true. Although, when we think about it, we are in yesterdays future and things are looking quite bad. Forget that 30% of what we read is advertising. This means we only get 70% of wanted material but how much of that is actually worth it? With the every- growing number of different names and publications, there is a real war in the newspaper market. Readers can't help but point out a noticeable fall in the quality of news that they are being fed.

Menial items are being reported just for the sake of filling up columns and giving off a thick bunch of pages. Also, competition in the swapper market also forces each other into disinformation. This then leads to sensationalism in many cases and results in a fall on credibility and consequently, the reliability of the publication. Then what about the future of newspapers? It is true that written publications are evolving quite fast these days. Most of them, apart from proper websites, have pages on social networks. Most newspapers are going the digital way.

When we think of it then, the whole idea of newspapers might become obsolete very soon. There are 2 ways to look at it. The pessimistic way and the enthusiastic way. The pessimistic would be quite ill at ease with how things are turning out with newspapers now and in the near future. They would say that newspapers are a matter of tradition and habits. New digital platforms challenge established habits according to them. There will always be a man who would prefer to sit on a rocking chair, newspaper in one hand, cup of coffee in the other on a Sunday morning. New platforms would also leave some people behind.

People who are not well-acquainted with technological devices might find it tedious. People left Enid would thus mean a fall in circulation which would then consequently result in a decrease in exposure and this is not what a newspaper wants. The enthusiastic on his side would say newspapers will live on but have to be in a whole different form; I. E, the digital form. The New York Times has announced that they are terminating tens of Job contracts to decrease costs in order to create a fund for the digital future of the firm. They call it “ moving with time” and they’re not wrong at all.

Hundreds of millions of internet users are out there and they represent a massive potential audience. Most people nowadays don’t want to go out and look for news. They want the news to come to them. It is already happening with major publications posting on twitter or Backbone. Sometimes after a natural disaster or a serious accident we are fed news via social networks almost instantly while in the case of a conventional newspaper, we have to wait for it to be published to get access to the news. We can’t say it is the most suitable system for today’s fast-paced society.

We have seen so far that big media organizations, newspapers and magazines are primarily funded by advertising but following the question “ is advertising necessary to fund Journalism? ” we come to think of a particular type of Journalist who is not part of organizations or newspapers; independent Journalists. They work on their own with no significant backing and sometimes anonymously. So, they work without the support of advertising revenue. As far-fetched as it might sound, detectives are independent journalists and what they do is essentially Journalism.

Follow a path, look for evidence, gather data and produce information. This also partially matches the tizzy-journalist's profile. A passer-by taking out his/her phone and snaps a picture of a robbery getaway to later trade the image with a newspaper is performing journalism at no cost and without the support of advertising revenue. Same for bloggers who raise topics and discussions online, look for factual data before producing reliable information. In those cases we see that contextually, advertising is not the sole means for funding Journalism.

We have had a look at the origins of advertising and how it became a major phenomenon, the local advertising-to-funding del and how the future of newspapers look to end with the quality of newspapers and how independent Journalists exist without funding from advertising. Despite what I demonstrate in my example of the independent Journalists and how they do not rely on advertising revenue, I do believe that it is not considerable enough to affirm that advertising is not necessary to fund Journalism. The focus should remain on conventional Journalism and how inevitable it is for it to keep on relying on advertising revenue to stay afloat.