

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu / The Culture, Welsh Language
and Communications Committee
Newyddiaduraeth Newyddion yng Nghymru / News Journalism in Wales
CWLC(5) NJW17
Ymateb gan Andrew Campbell, Daily Post / Evidence from Andrew Campbell,
Daily Post

1) The Daily Post is reaching a growing number of people.

The Daily Post has shown substantial digital audience growth while remaining one of the UK's best performing print titles in terms of year-on-year sale. According to the latest ABC figures, the Daily Post's daily digital users stood at almost 109,000 in May 2017 – an increase of 31% year-on-year. At the same time the unaudited print sale stood at just under 20,000 – representing a year-on-year decline of –7.87%. That figure is significantly better than the industry average decline of more than 12%.

This would suggest the growth in digital audience is more than offsetting the loss of print readership and that the Daily Post is reaching new readers.

Analysis also points to a large increase in the Daily Post's local digital audience.

2. The Daily Post focuses on local news and things that matter to North Wales people

The Daily Post remains committed to local news and sport in print and online. Add to that content about Welsh culture and regional identity, we have what is, and always has been, the Daily Post's lifeblood. However, the Daily Post continues to publish selected national and international content on all channels which is of interest to its local audience. This is nothing new. Indeed, coverage of the big north west football clubs (Manchester United, Liverpool FC and Everton FC in particular) has always been an integral part of the Daily Post content mix – along with extensive coverage of lower league football and grassroots sport particularly through Trinity Mirror's weekly titles in North Wales.

3) We can see in detail, what people are reading and what they want to read

Our local content decisions are now aided by web analytics which offer real-time insight into how many people are looking at individual stories and where they are from. This allows us to truly identify content that engages our readers. In reality, the 'best' stories perform well in print and online – with analytics adding the statistical confirmation that backs up editorial choices.

4) The Daily Post has invested in its North Wales future

The Daily Post's creation of a North Wales office in 2000 and split from the Liverpool Daily Post in 2003 emphasised an increased commitment to the region. That investment continues and was highlighted by the Daily Post's relocation to a more modern office in Colwyn Bay in May this year. We are committed to retaining a Welsh HQ. However, we have shut smaller offices to save costs. We would always rather close offices than shed jobs.

5) The Daily Post is determined to forge a digital future

In keeping with Trinity Mirror's strategy, The Daily Post produces content aimed at developing and increasing its digital audience while extending the life of print for as long as possible. Print circulation has been declining for decades across all regional newspapers – long before the advent of the internet. We must ensure we have our content on the platforms where people wish to consume it. We are proud of the extensive digital training we are providing for our journalists. We believe we lead the regional media sector in this area.

6) The goal is to be a company in growth

Trinity Mirror's strategy is to build digital audience – and digital revenues – to a level that outstrips the loss of print revenue. The Daily Post is part of this strategy which offers the prospect of a long-term sustainable business. Our digital audience is growing – and we know how to grow it – while the long-term newspaper sales trajectory is downward. The Daily Post and Trinity Mirror as a whole are working hard to develop an array of commercial options that increasingly suit the multi-channel needs of advertisers, however the dominance of Facebook and Google present serious challenges in an already challenging digital advertising market.

7) Politics is local, national and multi-national

The Daily Post has withdrawn journalists from Westminster and more recently Cardiff to avoid duplication of Trinity Mirror resource. These are challenging times for the industry and copy sharing is vital. The Daily Post has access to Trinity Mirror and Press Association content from both seats of Government. By withdrawing from the Assembly, the Daily Post is able to employ a politics reporter based in North Wales with responsibility for covering a more 'local' level of government while adequately covering Westminster and Cardiff. Resource is not infinite.

8) Political decision-making and holding politicians and public servants to account

This remains vitally important. We cover these stories because we have a duty to inform, even though on occasions this means expending resource on stories that are unlikely to drive print sales or substantial audience online. We remain committed to finding new ways of engaging our audience with stories of this nature. The BBC democracy reporting scheme, ultimately funded by the public, presents a major step forward by offering us a means of reporting day-to-day democracy in action while mitigating our need to monetise the content. Within Trinity Mirror we have invested heavily in data journalism which enables us to use central resource in Cardiff and Manchester, and best practice, to support our role as scrutineers.

9) We need support

Continued commitment by public bodies to advertise within trusted local media would help to fund proper journalism and keep titles in business.