



# Advertising In Newspapers Boosts Ad Campaign Effectiveness, Study Shows



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Do you want to see a dramatic improvement in all of your marketing and advertising efforts? Channel more of your ad budget into newspapers. That's right, the same print news that has been the subject of many untimely death predictions is now being shown to boost ad revenue overall and improve the performance of other campaigns substantially.

This news is the result of a Newsworks study in the UK. The research, which focuses on the total effectiveness of newspaper advertising, consists of three separate studies: ROI, business effectiveness and brand health. Newsworks says, "We knew that we needed to prove the effectiveness of newsbrands beyond reasonable doubt."

## ***Print is Dead; Long Live Print!***

It's enough to give advertisers and publishers whiplash. One opinion proclaims that print newspapers are going the way of the dinosaur. And to hear some of them tell it, the

whole industry is already on life support and digital is ready to yank the plug. But then a rogue comes along to remind that they're not dead at all.

Digital isn't performing like anyone had expected, hoped or even feared. In fact, a Pew Research State of the News Media report released in June shows that print still accounts for a whopping 78 percent of weekday circulation and 86 percent of Sunday circulation.

So much for death throes. No one in the industry has their head in the sand. But even with a continual decline, print is still far and away the leader over digital and mobile.

Pew further explains that of people who do read a newspaper, 51 percent read it in print form only. A meager 5 percent read it only on desktop and another 5 percent use a mobile device as their only go-to platform. Readers who use both desktop and digital make up about 7 percent of readership.

### ***ROI of Print***

Newsworks commissioned the econometrics consultancy, Benchmarking, to perform the research to prove what they already knew. The return on investment or ROI part of the study used results from over 500 economic models. The consulting firm "has proved that newsbrands continue to play a very important part in the modern media mix." They further explain that a shift back to 2013-level ad spending is the best course correction.

The data, which ranges from 2011-2016, "paint an impressive picture" of the importance of newspapers in the whole media mix. Here's what Benchmarking found:

- Overall campaign effectiveness increased 20 percent for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and quadrupled for services campaigns.
- Newspapers add a strong and healthy boost to existing online display, TV and radio ad campaigns. TV effectiveness doubles, online display ads quadruple, and radio ads experience 10 times their effectiveness when newspapers are in the mix.

Interestingly, digital and print have a reciprocal benefit. When digital is added to a print media campaign, print ROI increases fivefold.

### ***Business Effectiveness of Print***

The IPA Effectiveness Awards was the basis for the second part of the Newsworks

analysis: the [IPA Databank Study](#). For this study, Newsworks commissioned Peter Field, effectiveness expert. These awards show that when newsbrands are included in the media mix, business performance improves and the business effectiveness of other media also gets a boost.

The global IPA Effectiveness Awards, says Field, provides "compelling evidence that campaigns create measurable financial value for brands." His research shows that print and digital newsbrands have a "long-term" effect on campaign effectiveness. Here's what Field discovered:

- Newsbrands boost campaigns by 36 percent when compared with campaigns that omit print. In the long term, the benefit might be as high as 62 percent.
- The greatest effect happens when both print and digital are included in a campaign. The improved business effect is +58 percent.
- Newsbrands improve TV ad effectiveness by 65 percent, online display by 53 percent and social media by an amazing 118 percent.
- Print and digital give every aspect of business, but the greatest improvement is seen with acquiring new customers, improving profitability and affecting market share in a strong and measurable way.

### ***Multi-Platform Campaigns and Brand Health***

For the third and final aspect of the Newsworks project, the [Multi-Platform Study](#), they "collaborated with media agencies to measure five client campaigns across newsbrand print and digital platforms." They commissioned BDRC Continental to perform "matched, controlled exposure tests." This aspect of the project aims at measuring and understanding brand health in the presence of print, tablet, computer and mobile devices, as well as how they perform together.

Every new device that catches on gains its own audience. But before this part of the analysis, Newsworks says that there was no meaningful way to measure the effect of advertising on brand health. BDRC uncovered these findings that paint a much clearer picture:

- Print is far and away the "most effective single newsbrand platform for brand

building." That's quite a statement, and it's supported by a 5 percent boost in brand health.

- Ad Digital to print, and you've got the most efficient platform combination, with a 17 percent improvement in brand health.
- "Print plus digital newsbrands produce a 3.4 times multiplier effect on brand health measures."
- When readers see print ads, they respond in a more positive way to the digital ads in the campaign.
- While digital ads have an effect on their own, it's the combination with print that delivers the boost.

While advertisers are busy charting the future of digital, some of the most respected names in data analysis and research say, "Not so fast!" Print is declining; that's a documented fact. But to abandon such an effective advertising platform is a bit foolhardy. That's especially true when you look at the big picture.

Digital is gaining and print is declining. By some accounts, the former is growing at a slower pace than the latter is sliding. But print is still a major player. Print circulation far outpaces digital, even if the numbers tumble year after year. And perhaps more importantly, print makes ad campaigns much more effective than any other combination that excludes print.

Factor in the affordability of print advertising, and it makes even more sense.

The times are changing. Newsrooms are shrinking and legacy media companies remain confounded on what to do about it. But the answer, at least for now, is perhaps much simpler than anyone thought. It's also a lot more effective than critics give it credit for.

Print has a strong place in advertising campaigns as long as you let it. You can expect a healthier ROI, better business effectiveness and measurably improved brand health. What's not to love about print? Now that Newsworks and its collaborators have done the hard part, there's much more evidence to support a well-rounded ad campaign that always includes your old friend, print.

If you're looking for ways to improve ad spend effectiveness and efficiency, you're in the right place.

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Chris Atkins is the CMO at PandoLogic who is passionate about making marketing what it should be.. a conversation no matter what the medium may be. Now, he and the amazing marketing team at PandoLogic are turning their skills into valuable education pieces for Talent Acquisition professionals as the world of HR adopts the principals of marketing.

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