Measuring Media Audiences

University of Hamburg, 9 January 2014

Dr Neil Thurman
The unfinished science story: Journalist-audience interactions from the Global South
DM Sacke, S Tlalka, M Dunlop, A Kingdon, E Amend - Journalism, 2011 - jou.sagepub.com
Abstract: Science journalists are increasingly confronted with the ability of audiences to comment on science stories, create and share multimedia content, and blog about science. Yet, there is a surprising lack of literature exploring the narrative impacts of such changes...
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Deliberative, agonistic, and algorithmic audiences: Journalism’s vision of its public in an age of
Deliberative, agonistic, and algorithmic audiences: Journalism’s vision of its public in an age of
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(Re-)discovering the audience: The relationship between journalism and audience in
(Re-)discovering the audience: The relationship between journalism and audience in
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Audience Clicks and News Placement: A Study of Time-Lagged Influence in Online Journalism
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“HAVE THEY GOT NEWS FOR US?”

Audience revolution or business as usual at the BBC?

Andy Williams, Claire Wardle, Karin Wahl-Jorgensen
• Who determines journalism’s ‘audience’ and why?
• What is the ‘audience marketplace’?
• How are audiences measured, with what limitations?
• How is new technology undermining & disrupting the creation of journalism’s audience …
• …and with what effect on the content & structure of journalism’s institutions?
• Who determines journalism’s ‘audience’ and why?
News of the World, October 1843
“The profit of the newspaper arises from the price paid for advertisements, and the greater the number of advertisements the greater the profit.”

- Viscount Palmerston in a letter to Queen Victoria, 30th October 1861.
“The profit of the newspaper arises from the price paid for advertisements, and the greater the number of advertisements the greater the profit. But advertisements are sent by preference to the newspaper which has the greatest circulation”

- Viscount Palmerston in a letter to Queen Victoria, 30th October 1861.
CIRCULATION

OF THE
LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

We are sure our friends, and the advertising public will be gratified with the following weekly average circulation of the Mercury, carefully drawn up from our stamp stock book and printing account.

WEAKLY AVERAGE SALE OF PAPERS
EVERY FRIDAY.

First half-year, 1846 .................... 8257
Third quarter, to Sept. 25, 1846... 8404
Second half-year, 1846 ............... 8523
Fourth quarter, 1846 ................. 8643

This result calls for the most grateful acknowledgments of the proprietors to the public, and must be highly satisfactory to their advertising friends, as it is a larger number than was ever previously attained for a similar period.

The number of the third quarter is the common average, excluding altogether the large extra sale of papers on the occasion of Prince Albert’s visit to Liverpool. Had that excess been added, the average of the quarter would have amounted to 9657 each week.
136,407 PEOPLE READ 'The Listener'

Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

All enquiries to: Head of Advertisement Department,
ABC re-launches Spiders & Robots service
This new service is available industry wide

Find out more
Players in the audience marketplace

- Media Organisations
- Audience Measurement Organisations
- Advertisers
- Consumers of advertisers’ products and services
Players in the audience marketplace

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• Who determines journalism’s ‘audience’ and why?
• What is the ‘audience marketplace’?
• How is that audience measured, with what limitations?
• How is new technology changing / challenging conception of journalism’s audience?
• How does audience measurement affect content & structure of journalism’s institutions?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>Circulation (physical copies)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And…?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
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<td>Radio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Metrics</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Min-by-min physical presence in room when TV is on (‘people meter’), etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Newspapers | Circulation (physical copies)  
|          | Readership, etc                                                         |
| Internet | Unique Users  
|          | Page views, etc                                                         |
| Radio   | Individuals who say they’ve listened for least least 5 mins / week (questionnaire), etc |
TV

- Physical presence in room when TV is on (‘people meter’), etc
Radio

- Individuals listening for least least 5 mins / week (questionnaire), etc
media audiences have been described as “institutionalized”, defined in particular ways, “using analytics tools and perspectives that reflect [media organizations’] needs and interests”

- Napoli, 2011: 3.
“although many advertisers, media organizations, and media planners are aware of the limitations of audience measures, they seldom consider these limitations in day-to-day practice. As long as all participants in the transaction treat the data as accurate, the inherent unreliability of the data has no significant effect on the exchange. The marketplace conveniently overlooks the estimated nature of all measures and instead perceives and treats them as the ‘truth’ (Gitlin 1983).”

- Napoli, 2003: 82
“the audience marketplace illustrates two countervailing forces. On the one hand, the desire for better quality in audience measurement persists, because better measurement means a higher-quality product (something generally desired by both advertisers and media organizations). On the other hand, the audience marketplace wants a single parsimonious currency, something achievable only when the provider of audience data is a monopoly”

- Napoli, 2003: 20
<table>
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The number of the third quarter is the common average, excluding altogether the large extra sale of papers on the occasion of Prince Albert’s visit to Liverpool. Had that excess been added, the average of the quarter would have amounted to 9657 each week.
Fifteen years ago, The Telegraph brand reached one in five of the UK population per year. Today, it reaches one in three.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/advertising/ (6 June 2013)
“most efficiently and effectively reach our readers in all-digital format”

Tina Brown & Baba Shetty
“most efficiently and effectively reach our readers in all-digital format”

Tina Brown & Baba Shetty
Limitations of ‘circulation’ as a measure of newspaper audiences

• Physical newspapers can be read by more than one person
Limitations of ‘circulation’ as a measure of newspaper audiences

• Not all copies circulated are read [‘bulks’]
Limitations of ‘circulation’ as a measure of newspaper audiences

- Circulation is a measure of ‘exposure’ but not attention / engagement
• Montly Page Views / Impressions
• Montly Unique Users / Browsers
Limitations of ‘unique user / browser’ as a measure of online audiences

- Measures browsing devices not people. A person can be counted as three ‘users’ if they access a website from home computer, work computer & mobile device
- Spiders / Robots can be counted (not real people!)

"On the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog."
Limitations of ‘page impression’ as a measure of online audiences

- Again Spiders / Robots can be counted (not real people!)
- Interactive features (e.g. games / data visualization) not page based
- Long online video session = single ‘page view’
Incompatibility of newspapers’ standard print/online audiences metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online metrics - monthly</th>
<th>Online metrics – measure pages read and browsing devices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Audiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print metrics - daily</td>
<td>Print metrics - measure physical copies distributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Time spent reading
• Daily popularity
• Time spent reading

“our media system is migrating towards a post-exposure audience marketplace … in which traditional exposure metrics will lose their predominant position [and may be] ….supplanted by other dimensions of audience behaviour [this]... may have dramatic implications for the process of cultural production”

- Napoli, 2011:15
• Time spent reading

  • **Online** – available from a variety of commercial providers:
    • Nielsen – mainly panel based tracking
    • Hitwise – data from ISPs
    • ComScore – mainly panel based tracking
  
  • **Print** – available in the results of face-to-face reader surveys (e.g. UK National Readership Survey)
• Daily Popularity

• **Online** – number of daily online ‘sessions’ can be sourced from a variety of commercial providers (e.g. Nielsen, in this case).

• **Print** – daily print readers: derived from the results of face-to-face reader surveys (daily ‘readers per copy’ x daily circulation).
• Time spent reading
• Daily popularity
## Time Spent Reading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience \ Channel</th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>RQ2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td>RQ4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Popularity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience \ Channel</th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>RQ5</td>
<td>RQ6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>RQ7</td>
<td>RQ8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample: 12 UK National Newspapers

- 2 middle market (Daily Mail, Daily Express)
- 5 popular / tabloid (Sun, People*, Mirror, Daily Star, Daily Record)
- 5 quality / broadsheet:
  - 3 free to access (Independent, Guardian, Telegraph)
  - 2 with paywall (FT, The Times)

- Monday-Fri, Saturday and Sunday print editions and their online channels (excluding ‘apps’) were considered

* - Sunday-only newspaper
UK Audit Bureau of Circulations
The Nielsen Company (UK panel)
Note: Nielsen page views give the zero percent baseline. The data series represent the percentage difference between that baseline and the number of page impressions registered by ABC.
Results: Domestic Popularity

Av. daily readership per print copy (2011)

Av. no. online sessions / day (2011)

Lower estimate
Results: Domestic Popularity, 2011

* Due to the 2011 closure of the Sunday edition of The Sun—The News of the World—the print component of these figures relate to The Sun’s Monday–Saturday editions only.
† The People publishes in print on Sundays only.
Domestic popularity. Changes 2007-11

Estimated changes in the combined print and online 'popularity' of 12 individual UK national newspaper brands (based on their domestic readerships), 2007–2011

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Results: Domestic Attention

- Time spent reading, 2011, 12 UK national newspapers

Estimated Online reading time (excludes ‘apps’) (minimum)

Estimated Print reading time
Results: Domestic Readership – time-spent-reading, 2011

- The Times
- The Sun
- The People
- The Independent
- The Guardian
- Financial Times
- The Daily Telegraph
- Daily Star
- Daily Record
- Daily Mirror
- Daily Mail
- Daily Express

Estimated print reading time
Estimated online reading time (excludes 'apps')

Billions of minutes / year
Results: Domestic Readership – time-spent-reading, 2011

Billions of minutes / year

- The Times
- The Sun
- The People
- The Independent
- The Guardian
- Financial Times
- The Daily Telegraph
- Daily Star
- Daily Record
- Daily Mirror
- Daily Mail
- Daily Express

Estimated print reading time
Estimated online reading time (excludes 'apps')
Due to the 2011 closure of the Sunday edition of *The Sun*—*The News of the World*—these figures relate to *The Sun*'s Monday–Saturday editions only.
Overseas time-spent-reading (print & online)

The Daily Mail, The Mail on Sunday, and MailOnline
Comparison of monthly page impressions recorded by Independent.co.uk and *The Independent*'s iPhone, Android, and Blackberry ‘apps’

*Excludes automated page impressions*
Results: Domestic Readership – time-spent-reading, 2011 (no apps)

The Times
The Sun
The People
The Independent
The Guardian
Financial Times
The Daily Telegraph
Daily Star
Daily Record
Daily Mirror
Daily Mail
Daily Express

Estimated print reading time
Estimated online reading time (includes 'apps')

Billions (10^9) of minutes / year
Results: Domestic Readership – time-spent-reading, 2011 (with apps, est.)

- The Times
- The Sun
- The People
- The Independent
- The Guardian
- Financial Times
- The Daily Telegraph
- Daily Star
- Daily Record
- Daily Mirror
- Daily Mail
- Daily Express

Estimated print reading time

Estimated online reading time (includes 'apps')

Billions (10^9) of minutes / year
Conclusions

• Success of ‘quality’ newspapers (+Daily Mail) in reaching out to online readers
Conclusions

- Success of ‘quality’ newspapers (+Daily Mail) in reaching out to online readers
Billions (10^9) of minutes / year

For the year 2011

Domestic print reading time
Domestic online reading time
Overseas print reading time
Overseas online reading time

The Independent
The Daily Telegraph
Daily Mail
For the year 2011

Billions (10⁹) of minutes / year

- **Domestic print reading time**
- **Domestic online reading time**
- **Overseas print reading time**
- **Overseas online reading time**

**The Independent**

**The Daily Telegraph**

**Daily Mail**
## Key information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate type</th>
<th>Worldwide traffic</th>
<th>Daily average</th>
<th>Monthly total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>Unique Browsers</td>
<td>970,899</td>
<td>21,251,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Page Impressions</td>
<td>2,896,419</td>
<td>89,789,001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Exposed

EU CLEARS $1.2BN FRENCH AID TO PEUGEOT ARM

Brussels approves first instalment of $7bn in planned state guarantees and requires carmaker to propose restructuring plan for its entire business

Engaged

The University for business and the professions