

Young spend more time with newspapers in print than online

****UNDER EMBARGO until 7th December at 12:01am GMT****

Readers aged 18–34 are spending nearly twice as much time with newspapers' print editions than with their websites and apps, according to a new study from the universities of Oxford, London, and Munich.

In 2016, the 18–34 year old British readers of eight UK national newspapers spent a total of 21.7 billion minutes reading the news brands' print editions, but just 11.9 billion minutes using their websites and apps.

Lead author Professor Neil Thurman from Ludwig Maximilians University Munich and City, University of London said, "for younger readers, like for middle-aged and older consumers, newspapers' print editions provide an experience they invest time in, compared to how they snack and scan news online."

The study shows that newspapers' 18–34 year old print readers spend an average of 23 minutes reading each weekday print issue (and more on Saturdays and Sundays). However, those same newspapers' 18–34 year old online readers visit the brands websites and apps for an average of less than one minute/day (43 seconds).

The report reveals one exception to this trend, the *Daily Mail*. Brits under 35 spend more time with the brand online than in print, over twice as much. "The popularity of MailOnline with younger readers is due to an editorial approach focussed on entertainment and celebrity—very different in character from the more conservative stance taken in print" says Dr Richard Fletcher, the report's co-author.

Although most newspapers are attracting more attention from younger readers via their print editions than via their online channels, the young are spending less time with newspaper brands than they used to, even though digital distribution has made access easier and cheaper.

The report compares the time spent with newspapers in 2016 against the time spent at the turn of the millennium. Overall there has been a 40% drop, with much larger falls in the attention coming from younger (-64%) and middle-aged (-57%) readers than from the older (-14%) audience segment.

***Guardian and Evening Standard* 'more visible' than in 1999/2000**

However, some newspaper brands have bucked this downward trend in visibility. The report found that the total time spent with *The Guardian* and the *London Evening Standard* by their British audiences had actually increased since the turn of the millennium, by 19% and 17%, respectively.

In the case of *The Guardian* the report credits the gain to the title's relatively successful online editions, which have attracted more attention than has been lost from declines in its print readership, and to Brexit and Trump 'bumps' in print readership in 2016. In the *Standard's* case, becoming a freesheet in 2009 boosted readership—and, as a result, time spent with the brand.

The report calculated the total time spent with eight UK newspaper brands (*The Mail*, *Mirror*, *The Sun*, *Star*, *Standard*, *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and *The Times*) by their British print and online (PC and mobile) audiences (aged 18 and over) using data from the National Readership Survey and comScore.

PLEASE NOTE: The full paper will go live at this link at 12:01am GMT 7th December 2017:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/1461670X.2017.1397532>

It is also available here for immediate download (please respect the embargo of 00:01 GMT 7th December):

<http://neilthurman.com/files/downloads/has-digital-distribution-rejuvenated-readership.pdf>

For an interview, please contact: Professor Neil Thurman, Ludwig Maximilians University Munich and City, University London. Email: neil.thurman@ifkw.lmu.de Mobile: +44 (0)7813 009590