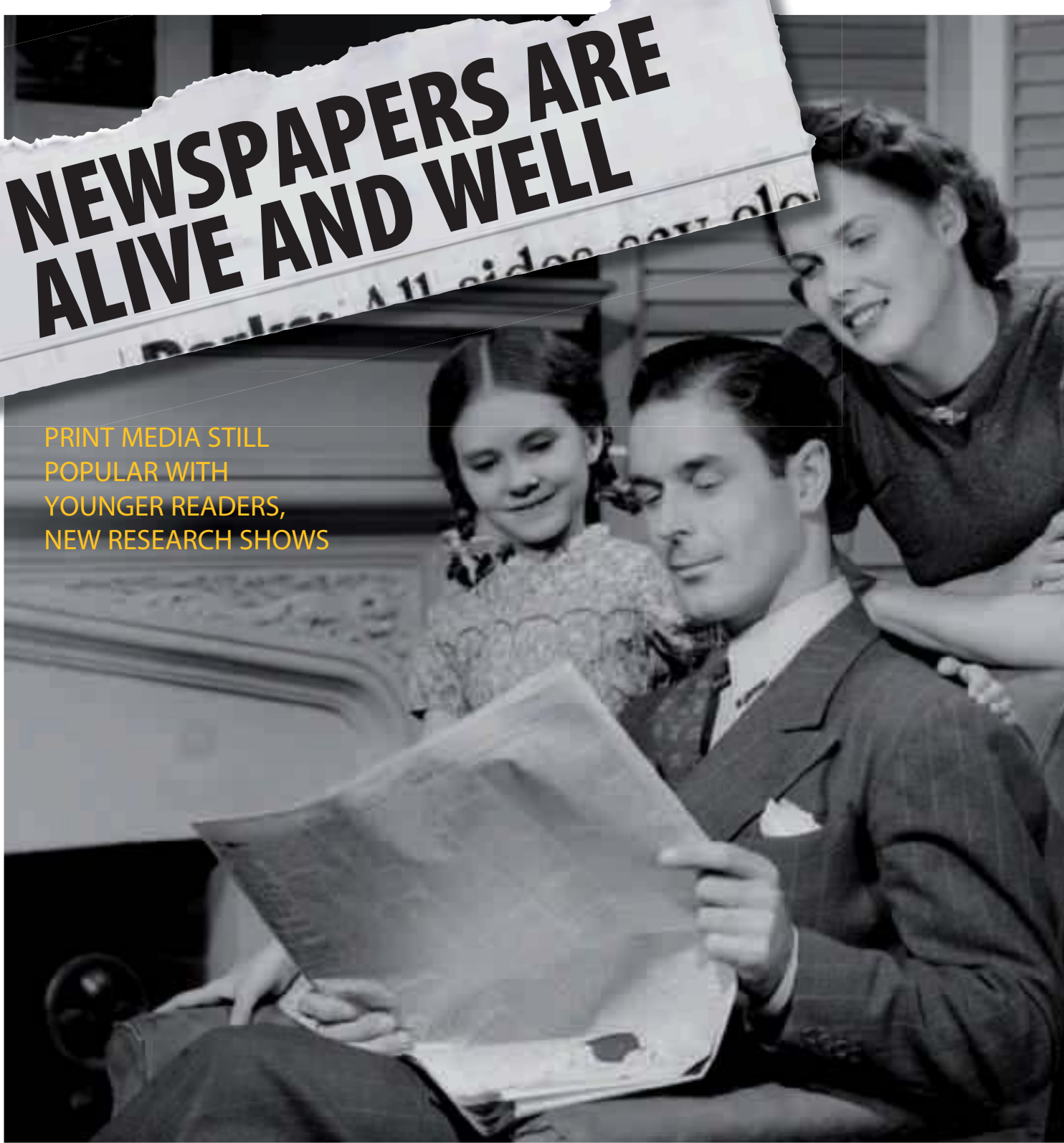


NEWSPAPERS ARE ALIVE AND WELL

PRINT MEDIA STILL POPULAR WITH YOUNGER READERS, NEW RESEARCH SHOWS



According to leading experts, digital content is set to double over the next five years. Paul Zagaeskji, an analyst with emerging technology markets research company GigaOM Pro, estimates that the worldwide market for digital goods will grow to \$36 billion by 2014, up from \$16.7 billion in 2009. The factors in this include an ever-growing user base, migration from physical formats to digital distribution, and a proliferation of new connected devices.

Interestingly though, despite the increasing popularity of digital media, consumers still appear to be keeping faith with traditional

media platforms, according to latest data from the National Readership Survey (NRS). The NRS provides reliable readership estimates for national newspapers and major consumer magazines, with over 250 titles regularly surveyed. To capture trends in readership, NRS interviews 36,000 adults (aged 15+) each year, with interviews conducted face-to-face in respondents' homes.

Technophile analysis

Latest data from the NRS shows that printed newspapers and magazines are still popular with the British public. During the past twelve months, the NRS has incorporated

questions on the use of technology into the survey, particularly on access to media. The results identified that those who most enjoy technology also enjoy reading newspapers and magazines. More detailed survey data reveals the characteristics of these people and whether their media consumption is changing, particularly among Generation Y.

Of those who responded, 33 per cent actively used technology in four or more of the eight ways included in the questions. The most common activities were PVR at home (22 per cent), listening to music on a mobile phone (22 per cent) and listening to DAB (25 per cent). However in terms of their media preferences,



these technophiles are more likely to be light consumers of commercial TV and radio. On the other hand they use the internet daily, and lead the way in consuming all kinds of media online, including RSS feeds. Despite their substantial online consumption, they are still keen readers of newspapers and magazines, reading 25 cent more titles than the average British adult.

Print media's popularity

Perhaps most intriguing are the reading habits of 15 to 24 year olds. It is often assumed that this generation will give up on print media. However, the reverse is true for the 2.5 million in this age group who are the most active



consumers of technology, since the number of magazines and newspapers they read is well above average.

Overall, the survey showed that the magazines that particularly appeal to tech-savvy consumers include *Stuff and What Hi-Fi*, while other titles mentioned were *NME*, *Kerrang*, *GQ*, *Men's Fitness* and *Men's Health*. Newspapers selected with an above-average readership comprised of the *Financial Times*, *The Independent*, *Independent on Sunday* and *Sunday Times*.

Although it is true that active consumers of technology are more likely to be male than female, nearly 2.5 million women have participated in four or more of the activities mentioned above. Alongside their interest in technology, they are particularly heavy consumers of print, reading an average of more than 10 titles apiece, compared to the norm of seven. They are also interested in a wide range of publications, including many titles normally targeted at men. Examples of those women's magazines with above-average popularity are *InStyle*, *Elle*, *New!* and *Glamour*.

Reading the future

Intriguingly, similar findings emerged from *Reading the Future*, the report of the third annual survey carried out by The Bookseller into what readers and book buyers are thinking. This year's survey offers a wide-ranging look at the industry, with business-critical data and information ranging from the ongoing effect of the financial meltdown on buying habits, the genres that are likely to go up or down, the key factors that drive purchases, from recommendations, to marketing, to television, and where customers like to buy their books.

This survey took the form of an online poll of 3,000 people, with respondents coming from all regions of the UK, and including a representative spread of adult age, gender and socio-economic groups. The survey stipulated that all respondents had to have read at least

one book in the last year. For the first time, however, respondents were asked how likely they were to buy an e-reader, what innovative products they knew about, and which initiatives and awards they were aware of. In analysing the results, the data was broken down by age, gender, genre (what fans of certain genres prefer) and retail behaviour (based on respondents' preferred places to shop, e.g. bookshops, online etc).

E-reader dips

The findings might surprise you. Three-quarters of respondents were not aware of the Amazon Kindle. Three in every five had never even heard of a Sony Reader. The vast majority of consumers (68 per cent) were either unlikely to buy or dead set against buying an e-book reader. Despite extensive press publicity about digital books, the popularity and enthusiasm for different types of electronic readers has dipped.

Approximately three quarters of respondents were aware of the BlackBerry, iPhone and Nintendo DS – probably because these consumers are already using these products. And Apple's massive marketing efforts have clearly paid off, with sixty per cent of respondents aware of the iPad, even though this survey was concluded two months before the device's 28 May UK launch. This compares with the Sony Reader, which is known by less than half, and the Kindle by only just over a quarter. Other e-readers, from the iLiad to the BeBook Neo, are even less well known even than the two industry leaders.

Older respondents appear to be most aware of e-readers. Over 35s are most aware of the Sony Reader and 36–55 year olds of the Kindle, while the 16–25s are slightly more aware of the iPad. Otherwise, the devices are fairly equally known among age groups (though awareness often falls off among those over 60).

When asked about the possibility of buying an e-reader, respondents did indicate an interest. But while more than two thirds of respondents think there is at least a chance they might buy an e-reader in the next year, just one in 14 respondents thought they would "probably" buy one. And only 3 per cent of all respondents currently owned a reader. The 25–45s are most likely to buy an e-reader in the next 12 months; and the over 45s least likely to buy one. Also, though for the last two years books' downloadable to a mobile phone/iPod' were most popular with 16–30s, this year they were most popular with 31–35s: the new 'Smart Phone Generation'.

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