

Special Management Series

Print versus digital: Four reasons why print is still around

This is a series of Training for your
Management TEAM

Presented by J.W. Owens



A Management
Perspective 303 Series

Management - JWO 397



Print versus digital:



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- Over the past few years, the digital age has made a major impact on how business is done and how consumers are engaged. **However, in the age-old battle of print versus digital, why is it that print still comes out on top?**

Print media is surviving in spite of the predictions of some doomsayers. **In fact, in a number of areas, it remains the preferred format.** As the dust from digital's disruption begins to settle, print may be finding some safe footing once again.

"Print has proved to be more resilient than people thought," says Mark Beare, director at Cape Town-based content marketing agency The Publishing Partnership.

"I think there was an 'over-correction' three or four years ago, where people thought that everything must be digital, that print wasn't going to survive at all."

However, here we are in 2019 and print is nowhere near dead. **So why is that?**

Where do YOU think the future of media lies? Print, digital or both? media update wants to know your opinion!

Print versus digital:



Four reasons why print is still around

Here are four reasons why people and publishers continue to invest in print:

1. People like engaging with print materials

- Although digital seems to offer a multitude of benefits, like being immediately adjustable, free to access and interactive, print media is still very much ingrained in consumers' collective memory. This means that people continue to be attracted to, and willing to read, print media, regardless of whether we're talking about magazines and newspapers, flyers or catalogues.

The print medium offers a variety of content – and often many publishers and advertisers use more than one type of printed content to get their brand message across.

“[Print has] got its own particular [set of] characteristics that are more in-depth and that are more at leisure with time to spend. And they’re more physically accessible. I think that’s the other thing that’s underestimated – how physically accessible print is,” says Beare.

He believes that print will continue to have a place as it remains a very persuasive medium, which people tend to spend more time on, making it a stronger source of messaging.

“It just works – it works for readers and it works for advertisers, [especially] in terms of response levels. And, for as long as something has an intrinsic value, there’ll be a market for it.”

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2. Print stimulates more senses

- One exclusive quality that print has and the digital media can never match is just how tangible it is. Consumers are able to browse through a magazine, feel the paper and even distinguish between certain paper densities and compositions.

For example, one specific advert may be printed on a thicker, more porous paper that is easy to take notice of, compared to the rest of the glossy sheets in the magazine. Also, there's the smell of ink on paper that adds to the overall experience of reading something printed.

These are important senses that cannot be stimulated in the digital environment – or not yet, at least.

Complex information is also better absorbed in print than in digital, because people need to locate themselves in the text when looking at complex ideas – and that's much easier to do in print than in digital.

“Very often, when you read something from a printed magazine or book you can recall where on the physical page it was when you saw it – you can recall if you were two-thirds of the way through, or half of the way through,” says Beare.

The tangibility that print has to offer also makes readers pay more attention to the content than digital does. This is because readers have to actively engage with printed content to read it – they have to pick up the content, hold it and read it. With digital content, they can passively scroll through it, without having to focus too much.

Print versus digital:



Four reasons why print is still around

3. Different print channels have their own benefits

- When you think of print media, **what do you think of?** Newspapers, magazines, leaflets? Each type of content has something to offer and has found its own niche of readers, playing a very specific role in their lives.

For example, newspapers lure their readers through impartially written news and information. But, you might say that digital news is more widely consumed than newspapers. The truth is, however, that online news and printed newspapers play different roles. Online sources are used to keep up to date with the latest news headlines, whereas newspapers are the space for in-depth reporting, satire and analysis.

Magazines still continue to sell copies – although many have a combination of print and online presences. Printed magazines continue to be dominated by entertainment content, often with their digital versions leading people to buy the printed copy.

Leaflets and catalogues are used as a mere source of information for consumers to learn from, **before actually making a purchasing decision, often done online.**

Print versus digital:



Four reasons why print is still around

4. Print can truly captivate readers

- **What does print offer that digital certainly doesn't?** An uninterrupted reading experience. This means that there are no distractions for a reader that is committed to finishing an article. Once they start reading, there are no other bits of news, auto-playing videos or pop-ups taking the spotlight off the article.

This means that a reader's full attention is oriented to that specific content, which guarantees a greater engagement with the brand since the reader is more likely to be impacted by it and remember it long-term.

“The unique way in which materials in newspapers and magazines are written, with subheadings, headlines and pictures, further offers the consumer the opportunity to isolate a certain passage into their mind and return to it whenever they need to,” says Ana Kec, writing for Business2Community.

“This happens a lot more rarely in the digital space, where you first need to remember to bookmark a page in order to later return to it.”

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Good Selling !



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