



Planting New Ideas:

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What do you think?

MPA staff has been publishing Planting New Ideas for some time now, and we'd like to find out from our members how it's working.

Please e-mail us at readership@michiganpress.org and let us know what you think. What were some of the good ideas? What ideas could you have lived without?

We are also looking for other ideas to help newspapers all over the state grow their readership. If you've seen anything interesting in your travels, or have been doing something innovative at your paper, forward the idea to us and we'll get the word out.

Don't forget to visit our Web site MichiganPress.org to find out what's new at Michigan's newspapers.

Opportunities for community involvement

As more and more newspapers create Web sites, more opportunities for community involvement are created.

Below are some ideas for drawing online readers in to Web content and letting them be involved in community forums online.

-Recipe exchanges—In southern Oregon the *Mail Tribune* has a recipe site with over 2200 recipes. Their site offers a way for readers to provide their own recipes online and has a search function and a huge variety of categories in which to search. They salted the mine by inputting more than 1,000 recipes ourselves over the course of a couple of months. You can see their site at: www.mailtribune.com/recipes

-Gardening exchanges—A gardening blog could offer readers an opportunity to communicate with other gardeners regarding when and what to plant, different types of gardens from kitchen to flowers and regional information about what works best in various climates.

-Local clubs—The *Detroit Free Press* utilizes an online tool called Meetup.com to help

readers find other people in their community with like interests. Meetup makes it easy for anyone to organize a local group or find one of the thousands already meeting up face-to-face. More than 2,000 groups get together in local communities each day, each one with the goal of improving themselves or their communities. For more information go to www.meetup.com.

-Parenting tips—*The Indianapolis Star* has a blog called Indy moms like me that provides an interactive place for area moms to discuss parenting tips and tricks. This is a site designed for area mothers that features a searchable database of listings, a calendar highlighting events for kids, blogs written by women at varying stages of motherhood and ongoing forums on parenting. To check out Indy moms go to: <http://indianapolis.momslikeme.com/members/exploregroups.aspx?pi=126>.

The key to community involvement online is to feature topics important to readers. Community members can be key in helping to pick topics of interest.

Summer readership

Below are 10 tips for improving summer newspaper readership:

- Events calendars that offer a comprehensive look at what is coming up in the community.
- Giveaways-offer drawings to readers with prizes like movie tickets, sporting tickets or tickets to local concerts.
- Provide lots of pictures and coverage of local festivals and other events.
- Book lists-provide a book review every week for good "beach" reads.
- BBQ tips and recipes. Outdoor chef's are always on the lookout for the perfect way to make those baby-back ribs.
- List top picnic spots in your area. Include details about the locations like playground equipment, water access etc.
- Rate the golf courses in your area.
- High light a nearby weekend getaway every week. Michigan provides many opportunities for getting away from the everyday.
- Have a summer safety tips column. Provide tips and tricks for dealing with everything from bee stings to sunburn and poison ivy.
- Sponsor a lawn or garden contest. Feature various locations throughout the summer and at the end of August have readers vote on their favorite.

How teens use media

From AdWeek.com

Don't get too caught up in the hype of digital media usage. That is a key message of "How Teens Use Media," a new research report the Nielsen Co. presented recently.

"The notion that teens are too busy texting and Twittering to be engaged with traditional media is exciting, but false," according to the executive summary. Instead of replacing traditional media with new media consumption, teens are simply making time for both, it concludes.

Other myths that the report debunks are that teenagers' preferences differ vastly from adults, that teens' media and entertainment spending is insulated from the recession (they actually reduce it, with out-of-home entertainment more affected than in-home)

The leading type of media use among teens is still television, with the average teenager watching 3 hours and 20 minutes per day, countering the myth of YouTube as the lead medium. Actually, Nielsen says that teens watch more TV than ever, with usage up 6 percent over the past five years in the U.S.

In comparison, a typical teen only watches about 11 minutes of online video per day, Nielsen found, or an average of about 3 hours per month. The most popular site for online video among teens is YouTube, but

networking sites MySpace and Facebook, as well as Hulu are also popular choices.

The second-most popular medium among teens is the PC (including applications), with an average of 52 minutes per day. The Internet, with an average of 23 minutes per day, comes in third, according to Nielsen.

However, teenagers also spend less time on the Internet than other demos, spending only 11 hours and 2 minutes online per month - less than half of the 29 hours and 15 minutes that the average user spends on the Internet each month. The report attributes this to the fact that teens in school are less likely than working adults to be sitting in front of a computer all day.

While parents and teens may argue about programming choices, the youngsters' preferences are not much different as U.S. teens' favorite TV show ("American Idol") and top Web site (Google), as well as teens' favorite TV genre around the world (general dramas) are in line with overall preferences.

unique, but they are not as bizarre and outlying as some might presume."

Other key findings of the study include:

- * Half of all teenagers use an audio-only MP3 player each day, while one in four watch video on an MP3 player.

- * On an average day, one in four teens reads the newspaper.

- * While teens multi-task in their media usage, this behavior may actually be lower than among adults.

- * South African, Venezuelan and Indonesian teens are the biggest couch potatoes.

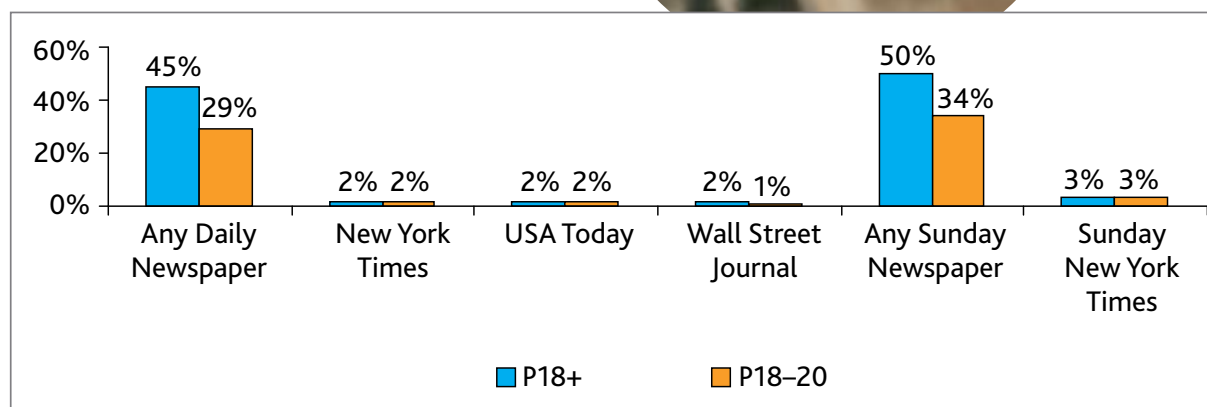
- * 35 percent of U.S. teens may have DVRs, but they prefer live TV viewing.

The Nielsen reports that it's a myth that teens wouldn't know a newspaper if the paperboy hit them in the face. The reality is that more than a quarter of U.S. teens say they read a daily newspaper and more than a third say they read on Sunday. As some newspapers shut down and pundits predict the downfall of others, a popular perception is that a new generation of media consumers can be blamed for the decline and fall of print media.

It's true, older teens 18-20 measured by Scarborough Research were less likely to read a daily paper than average, but still more than a quarter (29%) of U.S. persons 18-20 say they read a daily newspaper on an average day. About a third, 34%, say they read a paper on an average Sunday.



Figure 21: Newspaper Readership—U.S. Persons 18-20—2008



Source: Scarborough Research