

A LOOK AT HOW NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND ADVERTISING SALES
EXECUTIVES COMMUNICATE: WHERE DOES THE WALL STAND?

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Master of Arts

by

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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

A LOOK AT HOW NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND ADVERTISING SALES
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and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate the following thesis to all of my best friends at the Missouri School of Journalism. From Mark Twain to Mojo Ad—each of you has made my college experience and provided me the encouragement and motivation to keep moving forward.

Thanks also to my parents, sisters and friends from home for always being a phone call away. It is because of your support that I earn this degree. All of you have helped me get through one of the most stressful yet exciting academic stages in my life, and for that I thank you.

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A LOOK AT HOW NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND ADVERTISING SALES EXECUTIVES COMMUNICATE: WHERE DOES THE WALL STAND?

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how management executives from news and advertising departments at daily print newspaper organizations see their own roles, as well as how aware they are of what is going on in the other department. Furthermore, people were asked how they define and are educated about their publication's audience, or reader base. Eighteen management members—nine individuals in newsroom leadership and nine in advertising sales leadership—were interviewed at nine newspapers in medium-sized media markets across the Midwest and East coast. The research found that unification across departments in news organizations is stronger than ever before, with newspapers upholding the wall of separation between advertising and news for ethical purposes and unbiased content, but developing a greater respect for the opinions, suggestions, and revenue ideas to create a solid business model as a joint staff. Interview subjects admitted to letting the wall between these two divisions stand too tall, with both neglecting that they were together in the same business until desperate measures overturned the way newspaper organizations operated. As news organizations develop multi-platform bundled delivery and new revenue streams internally, media companies are enforcing weekly meetings and open-mindedness to ideas from other departments to grow successfully as a business.

Ch. 1: Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine how two different departments within a newspaper—the news and advertising departments—communicate with each other to deliver a news product and cater to their audience. With respect to their different roles, this research involves in-depth interviews with newspaper management staff to investigate how newspaper leadership sets a standard for the business model of the news organization.

As newspapers transition from delivering one print product to multi-platform, multi-product media organizations with smaller staffs than they had just 10 years ago, there is greater unification among various departments as the business fights pressure to survive and develop new revenue streams. Yet how, if at all, have editors and advertising executives changed their ways to deliver quality products without stepping into the unethical territory of paid content? This study presents three questions:

- RQ1: How do newspaper editors and business staff members understand their own roles in the organization?
- RQ2: How do the editorial and business departments in medium-sized newspapers understand each other's role in the news organization?
- RQ3: What perceptions does each department have of what it means to serve the publication's audience? How does each envision the readers?

Eighteen interviews were conducted with nine newspapers to gain a sense of management's viewpoints on coverage priorities, staff allocations, market research and communication across departments. As news organizations innovate and emphasize the collection of audience data and analytics, exploring these perspectives through the lens of organizational theory provided insight into how newsrooms continue to adjust and build relationships across departments.

Previous newspaper industry research shows that American newspaper audiences have suspected in the past that a publication's advertisers influence news content (Downie & Kaiser, 2002). But as this value has been cemented into ethical codes and practices, challenges are arriving as ethical standards are set for new revenue sources, such as sponsorships, new advertising formats, public efforts and specialized digital products.

This research contributes to industry knowledge by providing a 21st century lens into how newspaper officials see product quality in the changing media landscape. As media business models in the print and digital industry continue to experience a massive evolution, this study refines knowledge by recognizing the attitudes of newspaper management. Furthermore, looking at news and advertising departments within the same newspaper rather than letting individuals identify with their roles as a journalists or advertising sales employees offers observation into how decisions are made on a company level, and not just through positional ethics.

Americans continue to support the print and digital industry and respect a quality, community newspaper. Newspapers were a \$38.6 billion industry in 2012. According to Scarborough data provided by the Newspaper Association of America (NAA) in March 2013, 157.9 million U.S. adults read a newspaper in the past seven days ("The American newspaper," 2013). In NAA's annual review of the newspaper industry in 2012, advertising dollars accounted for more than 57 percent of the newspaper media's revenue. Print advertising made up 46 percent of income, and digital advertising accounted for 11 percent. Eight percent of income is coming from new revenue sources, with another 8 percent coming from niche publishing and direct marketing efforts ("The American newspaper," 2013). With this evolution, this research analyzes the impact of modifying roles, business motives, communication barriers and how personal ethics and values drive editors and advertising executives to their decisions.

Ch. 2: Literature Review

Newspaper's Role in Society

To comprehend the importance of how newspaper editors and business staff members see their organizational roles, the function of the newspaper in society must be established. Newspapers are an influential news medium with great political and social impact (Kung, 2008). According to Williams in *Newspaper Organization and Management*, the purpose of a newspaper is to inform by disseminating information. A newspaper provides the role of a communication medium, bulletin board, educator, and freedom protector to its community members (Williams, 1978).

Looking at a town's newspaper reflects its needs and sense of responsibility. The press by nature has a watchdog function and needs to fulfill democratic responsibilities through truth, context and vigilance in its journalism (Lazaroiu, 2012). Newspapers are a tangible product, with many influential factors based on the structure of the news organization creating it. Downie (2002) explains that ownership impacts these key aspects by stating, "Three factors distinguish newspapers from one another: ambitions, resources and values. Ownership is probably the greatest influence on all three" (p. 76).

Newspaper organizations have gone through tough times in the 2000s, managing decline, experimentation with new platforms, and a change in the business model simultaneously. There are about 1,350 daily print newspapers in the United States, with a large portion of these newspapers considered "smaller" with circulation

of 25,000 or less (Rosenstiel, Jurkowitz & Ji, 2012). In 2012, only 70 newspapers remained with print circulations over 100,000. In addition to these changes, the print industry overall suffers from changes in consumers' reading habits and the implications they have for the future (Kung, 2008). Other difficulties news organizations face include "shrinking profit, declining circulation and increased competition from online media" (Albarran et al. 2006). Newspaper management has felt jeopardized by the changes, struggling to decide on modifications in line with news values and what news Americans will consume. In the Pew Research Center's 2012 State of the Media report, one interview subject was quoted saying, "There's a big difference between understanding the new media environment and comprehending what it takes to adapt" (Rosenstiel, Jurkowitz & Ji, 2012).

Authority is established within news organizations when its key officials execute their responsibilities accordingly (Williams, 1978). Two integral positions are the editor and the advertising director, who oversee content that will be published in these areas. The departments must function together because "While there are clear internal distinctions between the two types of content (described as 'church' and 'state'), editorial and advertising activities are closely interlinked" (Kung, 2008, p. 39). The greater amount of advertising content and revenue sources the advertising department brings in, the larger the number of pages that the newsroom staff can fill with content. This helps make the tangible newspaper product appear more valuable to readers and thus, more attractive. Kung (2008) adds, "It is therefore critical that the two areas work closely together" (p. 39). Newsrooms strive for a harmonious

relationship with advertising departments because teamwork is vital to a successful news organization and both are dedicated to the same mission. Even as news organizations offer news products across platforms, advertising continues to be the primary source of news revenue, so this relationship must remain intact, with both groups dedicated to the same goal of a quality product.

The argument for producing good journalism is put into question in this case because chain publications can be pressured to cut the budget for reporters in poor economic times, decreasing journalists' contribution to the greater good while maintaining the organization's business. Newspaper organizations have established codes of ethics that guide their daily work. The general impression of the newspaper business is that "Corporate owners take as much of the paper's revenues as its executives think they can while preserving enough quality to enable the paper to maintain a meaningful connection to its readers" (Downie & Kaiser, 2002, p. 79). Newspaper literature shows that while the key goal is to share news with its readers by developing good journalism, organizations also must fulfill business needs. It is tough to do this in an environment where many constituencies are at stake, such as the readers, advertisers, those employed by the news organization, and sometimes, parent companies. Kung (2008) explains:

Newspapers therefore have two interlinked markets, readers and advertisers. A newspaper's appeal to advertisers depends on its circulation (the average number of copies distributed), the number of readers (readership may be

higher than circulation because copies can be read by more than one person) and those readers' socioeconomic profile. (p. 38)

With varying skills, priorities, and business needs across departments, newspaper organizations house a dynamic environment. The challenges of daily operations in news are explained by Redmond & Trager (2004) saying, "All of this occurs in a media organization within the context of creative disciplines that bring to bear their own cultures, ethics, and perspectives of information and entertainment production" (p. 67). It is imperative that one understands more about how newspaper departments operate to serve the good of journalism and readers in a challenged and changing environment, while simultaneously addressing business needs.

Current Challenges in the Newspaper Industry

Of the nearly 1,350 daily newspapers in America, 450 have implemented paid subscription models ("The state of," 2013). Because digital advertising accounts for only 15 percent of revenue sources, news organizations are being forced to experiment with new revenue ideas and the reallocation of positions within their organization ("The state of," 2013). Most of the newspapers implemented paid subscription models throughout 2012, with parent companies such as Gannett, McClatchy and Scripps rolling pay plans out across properties throughout the year.

In addition to paid subscription models, conflict exists in media companies over how to best move forward with the challenges on the table. With veteran reporters, editors and staff members who were not trained with digital skills, some

staff still want to save the print product. Editors interviewed in a Pew Research Center study report a “Continuing tension between people in their organizations who are advocating a more aggressive digital approach and those more aligned with the legacy tradition” (Rosenstiel, Jurkowitz & Ji, 2012). From a newspaper management perspective, this creates a difficult work environment that must become emergent and strategic (Kung, 2008). The results of this changing environment are described as an atmosphere where “industry boundaries are unclear, business models are evolving, consumer preferences are not well known, and competition can come from hitherto unknown players” (Kung, 2008, p. 86).

Another challenge from a hiring standpoint is the changing roles needed to staff a successful news organization. Job descriptions are being rewritten, work is being reallocated and role responsibilities are changing (Edmonds, Guskin, Mitchell & Jurkowitz, 2013). Some of the new positions created with the rise in digital content include newsroom job descriptions such as “aggregator, coordinator of community conversations [and] technologist... Some argue the new jobs are making newspaper content more relevant and deepening connection with audiences as preferences change about how to get news, share it and talk about it” (Edmonds, Guskin, Mitchell & Jurkowitz, 2013). These debates pose a myriad of issues for newsroom management besides the general task of producing quality content.

Newspapers as News Organizations

Newspapers are delivered by news organizations, with rich room for studying organizational culture, newsroom communication, and the influence of the social environment on cross-departmental communication and audience perceptions. Some organizational characteristics that can be analyzed include the news organization's structure, environmental embeddedness, goals, and how it coordinates activities (Miller, 1995). The study of media organizations also involves analyzing human collectives and areas such as people, behavior, management, and effectiveness (Redmond & Trager, 2004). One of the most critical organizational activities is decision-making, which newsrooms deal with daily, and even by the minute, as they decide which stories to cover, how to cover them, and where to place content and advertising.

When classical management, such as editors and business managers with traditional values, are present, they tend to see "one best way" and enforce a structure with a "well-defined division of labor and a strict hierarchy" (Miller, 1995, p. 38). News organizations execute this with a classical job design by routinizing roles and "fitting" employees to their tasks. Advertising staff members sell advertising and oversee the funding and business operations of the newspaper, while the journalists and editors make the news budget decisions.

For the organization to function economically, newspapers must sell advertising, but also readership and subscriptions. Sullivan writes in 2013:

Commercial media companies rely heavily on the viewership of millions of people so that they can sell their attention to advertisers for a profit. Although a number of scholars have disputed the precise nature of what is being sold to advertisers, political economists are in general agreement that media audiences in capitalist societies are incorporated into the economic system of exchange. (p. 82)

Advertising income subsidizes a newspaper's cover price, and "a strong advertising sales force is therefore central to the success of a newspaper" (Kung, 2008, p. 39). According to the Pew Research Center's 2012 State of the Media report, losses are occurring in the print advertising sector and are evenly distributed across categories such as classified and retail accounts (Edmonds, Guskin, Rosenstiel & Mitchell, 2012). Another alarming result from this research is "The number of print-focused sales representatives outnumbered digital-focused reps by about 3-1" (Rosenstiel, Jurkowitz & Ji, 2012). This calls for an evolution in the business model newspaper organizations have traditionally practiced, as customizing the model to best fit a newspaper's community needs will be a key metric for success (Jurkowitz & Mitchell, 2013). Thankfully, by addressing new business models where advertising and circulation revenue merge closer together and additional sources provide the rest of the publication's income, news executives estimate the "rise of digital paid content could also have a positive impact on the quality of journalism as news organizations strive to produce unique and high-quality content that the public believes is worth paying for" ("The state of," 2013).

This is exactly what the industry needs from the new business model because acknowledging the business of a news organization has traditionally been tough for reporters and editors. They serve a dual role by providing quality information to citizens and speaking up for the powerless while also trying to maintain a strong circulation. Fuller wrote in 1996:

Newspapers have attracted to their editorial staffs a lot of people who feel that journalism is different from other businesses in that it has a soul. So naturally it has been uncomfortable for them to hear their publishers speak openly and unashamedly about their cost and profit goals. (p. 98)

There is a dichotomy in the beliefs of the newsroom staff, as the editorial and business departments tend to see different goals within the operation. Reporters and editorial staff see social benefit as the goal, while the business staff is trained to see profit as the goal because it keeps the organization in business. Kovach describes the intersection of these goals by contending that a newspaper's business operations provide funding to meet a social purpose (as cited by Fuller, 1996).

Picard (2004) describes the modern newspaper model's adjustment by newspapers "Seeking larger audiences by reducing the price for papers, altering content to appeal to a mass audience and shifting costs to retail advertisers that developed with the changes in economic and social life" (p. 58). One rationale as to why modern news providers struggle with the business of serving their product to readers is because they do not assume that audiences were intrinsically interested in

their product. Per the evidence of polls, a fashionable assumption in the 1980s to 1990s was that Americans lost interest in hard news (Downie & Kaiser, 2002). So what does it mean to have a quality news product that editors are proud of and audiences buy?

The Intersection: Market-driven Journalism

Along with the financial troubles of the 2000s, a forced immersion began across the advertising sales and newsroom departments. The transition to digital and changes in the business model raised the question: Does serving the market conflict with serving the public? The notion of “market journalism” defines journalism that serves the logic of the marketplace—where consumers are buying and selling goods and services (McManus, 1994). McManus explains that four social impacts result from the rise in market journalism: less consumer learning from the news, misled consumers, the possibility that new sources become manipulative, and an apathetic audience when it comes to politics (1994).

To address the changing business sphere in the 1993 book *When MBAs Rule the Newsroom*, Underwood made predictions about leadership in newsroom and potential effects. He says,

An increasing number of newsroom executives will come from finance or general management and have responsibility for controlling costs and managing process. Though they will not be editors, they will inevitably force editors to question some of the practices followed in the past. (p. 13)

One trend emerging in American journalism since the early 2000s is a greater acknowledgment of the news organization's business model by the editorial staff. Newspapers started to incorporate editors into business practices. Downie (2002) explains, "Today's editors are expected to do things that old-fashioned editors wouldn't have dreamed of, like sitting on their paper's marketing committee" (p. 92). Intertwining these entities helped both departments acknowledge the other's role, but little literature addresses the perceptions each department has of the other.

In addition to perceptions, ethical questions are raised as editors are exposed to the financial truth of their news organizations. This has the potential to result in market-driven journalism, where editorial decisions are formed "through considerations about news as a saleable commodity" (Zelizer, 2010, p. 72). This also helps avoid marketers and advertiser dollars controlling a newspaper. When marketers indirectly control the news organization, "the substance of the newspaper becomes secondary to the planning, prettifying and promoting of the newspaper" (Underwood, 1993, p. 27). How does the newsroom prioritize in this case?

In addition, audience becomes an issue as market-driven journalism's rise occurred simultaneously with the lack of engagement from young adults in news content, "[making] the empirical assessment of market journalism's impact on society urgent" (McManus, 1994, p. 183). Readers, the audience, are the primary constituency, and advertisers become the secondary constituency. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that advertisers take a risk when selecting newspaper advertising as a medium. Advertiser dollars finance a large portion of the business

model, but Fuller (1996) emphasizes that it does not mean advertisers win with coverage or growing their own businesses. He states,

The editorial department may exercise its independent judgment in deciding what to say on the topic, and the advertisers have to take their chances—as they do everywhere else in the paper, knowing full well that journalism is drawn to controversy. (p. 201)

A problem newspaper staffs must acknowledge is that they are responsible for serving a community. Are they serving readers or serving authority to implement news and business decisions?

Serving News Audiences

At the end of the day, readers keep news organizations in business. It is important for the news organization to feel a sense of journalistic responsibility in its reporting, but it also must serve an audience while disseminating the news and running a business venture. Sullivan (2013) defines media's mass audience as when "many anonymous individuals are receiving a particular message via some kind of media channel—simultaneously or at different points in time" (p. 16). He adds, "The story of the audience is always closely connected to the ways in which the audience is defined and by whom."

Prior research has found that because journalists have minimal contact with their audience, routines develop to reduce uncertainty about whom they are catering to. Journalists and editors use "imaginary interlocutors, critiques from more

experienced editors & conversations in and outside of budget meetings” to envision an audience, which has bridged a disconnect between the actual and perceived readers of newspapers—with ramifications for news consumption (Sumpter, 2000). The problem with this misperception of the reader, according to Redmond & Trager (2004), is that:

The consumer is the key to any business, because without a consumer of the product there is no business. We don't always think of those who engage with media organization products as consumers, or customers, but that's what they are. (p. 128)

Difficulties arise here because newspaper products are targeted toward a community and have to have mass appeal to individuals in the market they serve.

In addition, because of the crises news organizations are facing, higher demands are placed on readers if they want to consume news. Audience strategies changed in 2009 when newspapers were no longer financially stable enough to attract audiences with low circulation prices and had to raise subscription prices substantially to stay in business ("The state of," 2010). This meant readers needed to pay more for content they were used to paying less for because the advertising sales business model no longer financed the entire publication. To mitigate the issue of imaginary audiences and grow engagement in the news product from audiences who were paying more, the notion of participatory journalism began to rise.

Marchionni (2013) describes this idea of audience participation in the news as “news as a conversation.” She writes, “It stands in contrast to decades of traditional journalism as a *lecture*, in which the professional journalist alone presumably knows what is news and conducts a monolog with the public on such matters, or perhaps a dialog with public officials and other elites” (p. 131).

Critics of this notion believe that audience participation is a marketing ploy to increase audience, directing readers to civic action instead of informing them of civic matters (Marchionni, 2013). Editors continue to retain a stronghold on content, which is an issue because it implies that “journalists essentially are all-knowing, and they alone know what is news” and calls for unilateral communication with readers (Marchionni, 2013, p. 133). Research shows benefits in this newsroom and audience interaction, as media audiences must relate to external communication efforts (Redmond & Trager, 2004).

This calls for a reform in the traditional ways of newspaper organizations, as changes not only occur from the business standpoint, but also as better access to audience and analytics data is available. Newspapers ultimately serve geography—the local community and audience first, but readers of different ages and educational backgrounds consume news differently. Audiences also consume news differently based on the platform they are using, adding another layer into the mix. With consumption habits changing, the newsroom must adjust yet uphold the traditional value of “a sense of dedication to this overriding privilege and responsibility of keeping the public informed within the framework of a free society, then cooperation

among the various internal functions of the newspaper will be assured” (Williams, 1978, p. 451).

The newspaper will win reader confidence and acceptance thorough coverage, accurate reporting, honesty, and attentiveness. The theory of agenda setting demonstrates that news has the power to acquaint readers with their needs and provide the proper information to teach them how they can be met. Newspapers must take steps to engage the public in conversation and spark discussion (Fuller, 1996). In order to do this, newspaper staffs must have the same definition of who their readers are. Unfortunately, the nature of their defined roles as reporters, editors or advertising professionals narrow how they see and what exposure they have to the audience.

Staff Roles at a Newspaper

News organizations are structured with two key departments: the newsroom staff and the business staff, and each has more distinct sectors within them. The business sector oversees advertising, circulation, and the account department, while the editorial staff oversees reporters, writes editorials, and oversees the gathering and handling of news (Williams, 1978). The hierarchical structure begins with the publisher, who may report to a Board of Directors or parent company. Then, the revenue-generating departments and news coverage branch are divided to “maintain an ethical separation so that journalism is not unduly influenced by business considerations” (Redmond & Trager, 2004, p. 26). The lines between these divisions have begun to blur as departments merge or staff members are laid off to save money

within the news organization. As in any successful business, management sets a standard for the quality of the work produced.

Editorial staff.

The editor heads the news and editorial sides, with a managing editor that takes care of administrative work (Redmond & Trager, 2004). Many editorial staff members have worked their way up to management through reporting and editing in news organizations. Their daily duties include making news judgment calls, getting involved with news and overseeing and coaching their reporters to produce good journalism. Redmond and Trager explain that because of their unique roles carrying on a higher sense of purpose for society, these individuals do not have the proper education about the business side of media companies. Those who work in newsroom departments—whether they are editors, reporters or designers—assign their role to that of a journalist and uphold certain standards. For example, Redmond & Trager (2004) cite that “They are often extremely concerned about ethical issues affecting telling the truth and not distorting reality” (p. 74).

To accomplish this, editors must have a strong understanding of each section’s role. Downie (2002) writes, “When editors are asked what makes a good newspaper, the best ones all have similar answers” (p. 102). Understanding the community the publication serves is vital to the position so the cultural and economic environment can be reported on appropriately.

University of Oklahoma professor Peter Gade studied how newsroom editors integrated their marketing awareness with traditional journalistic values to examine how management defined these values in the 2000s. After analyzing a series of statements that editors sorted, he labeled three profiles for editorial staff. These are the critical skeptic, change agent, and resigned pragmatist. The critical skeptic believes the increased emphasis on profit has resulted in “sacrificing journalistic principles,” and is unhappy with the blurring of these lines. The change agent fully supports a closer relationship with readers and their interests, and is content with restructuring newsrooms accordingly (Gade, 2004). Lastly, the resigned pragmatist “accepts the realities of change while trying to preserve traditional journalism principles,” wanting to leave a business-editorial wall intact but aware that it needs to adjust to current trends (p. 148-150). These definitions help categorize newspaper editors and their approaches to business adjustments in the changing media landscape. Understanding these approaches helps to indicate factors that contribute to editors and reporters’ notions of audience and news values.

Business department.

The business department of a newspaper oversees all revenue-producing staff, such as advertising and circulation (Willis, 1988). The American Marketing Association defines advertising as “any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. American consumers pay for most of their media by watching, listening to and reading advertisements” (Biagi, 2003, p. 193). Being exposed to clients and businesses supporting the news

organization forces the staff to be well versed in the paper's mission, readership, and audience.

Specific departments under business include advertising sales, circulation, promotions, printing and marketing. Specific duties of the advertising and promotions department include the duty to "sell and market space in the paper, circulation handles subscription and street sales delivery, and printing services gets the paper printed" (Redmond & Trager, 2004, p. 26). Different hierarchical structures are in place depending on the news organizations, but many advertising departments are broken up into classified and retail sales branches. Within each, advertising sales representatives work under managers to pursue clients and keep the publication's advertising space full (Rankin, 1986). These representatives meet with clients to share "the merits of advertising in their publication, brainstorms campaign strategies with prospective businesses and sometimes even writes copy and designs graphics" (Mogel, 2000, p. 157).

In the mid-1990s, newspaper business departments began to structure their advertising sales staffs into specializations, focusing on the product categories of their clients (Fisher, 1994). With goals of establishing better relationships with marketers and advertising agencies, advertising representatives started to oversee special business units such as "auto sales" or "real estate" when it came to accounting for their major accounts and clients. This practice helped boost advertising sales and produce the expectation of relationships in advertising sales, which still holds true today.

In *The Practice of Newspaper Management*, Vance Stickell, former EVP of marketing at the *Los Angeles Times* recognizes qualities that feed into good sales management officials in the newspaper business (Rankin, 1986). Strategic thinking is integral to leadership in all news organizations, to keep the organization moving in the right direction. It is also integral to select staff members who “could act, look and represent the newspaper on their own” (Rankin, 1986, p. 39), who are individuals that seek ideas for their customer and not only newspaper revenue. Other attributes for these roles are individuals who have proper motivation and set and achieve goals.

The business staff is not just arbitrarily making money, but advertising representatives must tell a story to advertisers exclaiming why the company should establish a presence in their newspaper (Rankin, 1986). They must sell the concept of newspaper products to clients by showing them their publications produce accurate and quality journalism across different platforms. This has been a struggle in the 2000s as newspapers, instead of competing with other local newspapers, compete with other news outlets—such as online-only news organizations, television, radio and additional Internet-only properties.

Because of this, newspaper organizations have had the opportunity to act as media companies and offer solutions to clients’ business needs across platforms. They help businesses understand who their prospective customers are and where they search in the market—explaining how the size, composition, and demography of the newspaper’s readership intersect with the client’s customer base (Rankin, 1986). Although newspaper advertising rates are set on contingent factors like revenue

needs, cost per thousand by circulation and the competitive environment of the newspaper, this rate acknowledges the product quality of the newspaper (Willis, 1988). As a result, business management needs to balance their economic goals, needs, and resources with the priority of maintaining the newspaper's quality. Yet how do the roles of editorial and business staff limit individuals from working in the same way to reach agreed-upon goals?

Boundary Spanners

Editors and high-level advertising executives tend to act as boundary spanners in organizational environments because of the management required to serve this function. Both positions require extensive communication internally and externally within an organization, so boundary spanning looks at these relationships organizationally with respect to the environment. Boundary spanners are defined by Adams as people who often exchange with various components or individuals within the organization with high levels of collaboration (Miller, 1995). Individuals with the role of disseminating information to minimize conflict and coordinate activities of key departments are subject to becoming boundary spanners (Wyatt, Smith & Andsager, 1996). Haytko (2004) describes them as “economic agents representing their firms contractually to achieve specific goals” (p. 312).

Boundary spanning roles can function as information processing or external representation, and newspaper management must process emerging information while simultaneously representing editorial structure to uphold their environment (Aldrich

& Herker, 1977). Prior research shows that individuals seen by their co-workers as competent and of a higher status are more likely to be boundary spanners (Hsu, Wang & Tzeng, 2007). Boundary spanners possess skills such as innovation and are competent in their job performance.

Staff members at news organizations are subject to acting as boundary spanners because the companies, by nature, exhibit “high levels of collaboration, communication, and participatory decision making” (Murphy, 1991). In fact, advertising sales management, circulation teams, and marketers are more likely to act as boundary spanners because of their involvement with the “acquisition and distribution of an organization’s product” (Miller, 1995, p. 259). Therefore, when examining newspaper staff’s cross-departmental communication and perceptions of roles and audience, one must account for organizational roles and those that act as boundary spanners.

Defining News Values

When selecting coverage in the newsroom environment, journalists apply values and a standard of newsworthiness when pitching story ideas. While some parties argue that news values are irrelevant in the current media landscape due to user-generated content and the growth of new media, news values provide subjective criteria that exists in journalists’ minds when managing the day’s news flow (Zelizer, 2010). Editors and newsroom staff continue to make news decisions such as which stories will appear in the print publication and which content headlines the website,

and news judgment is a vital skill for editors. A variety of literature discusses attributes and criteria for news values and the newsworthiness of a topic.

Topics that fulfill newsworthiness encompass “sufficient interest, importance of topicality so as to draw mention in the news” (Zelizer, 2010, p. 95). In *Controversy as News Discourse*, Cramer (2011) explains news values as a professional system of preference for reporting on certain types and features of events (p. 70). Fuller (1996) defines timeliness, community interest and significance as news values (p. 7).

Previous research attempts to define specific factors that journalists incorporate into their news values. Norwegian researchers Galtung and Ruge concluded a 1973 study by establishing the following 12 news values while coverage of international crises (Zelizer, 2010). These values include frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons and negativity (Cramer, 2011). In 1979, Gans described a set of news values that define how journalists base their news coverage. Qualities including ethnocentrism, altruistic democracy, responsible capitalism, small-town pastoralism, individualism, moderatism, order and leadership appeared (Biagi, 2003).

News organizations started a trend in the 1990s by hiring consultancies to advise them on their business models, which caused controversy because of a difference in news values (Downie & Kaiser, 2002). It was difficult to address this

question because consultants had not been in organization where news values and business goals were mixed in the same environment. Downie (2002) writes:

No market researcher or consultant can teach a news organization how to be good. That requires years of tradition, persistent high standards, intelligence and determined professionalism. Unfortunately, frivolous news values were easy to embrace, easy to pursue and easy to defend as the best way to cope with a competitive marketplace. (p. 251)

Thus, news organizations must set a standard in their leadership through management members acting as role models and executing these goals.

Newspaper Product Quality: The Ethics of Quality vs. Profit

According to Willis in 1988, factors such as “completeness of coverage, accuracy and ethics, design and appearance, writing and editing, community service, aggressiveness, photography, the business page and the features section” make a quality newspaper (p. 74). Economists argue that product quality is higher in a competitive environment, meaning local daily newspapers have a lower standard to fulfill (Demers, 1991). Regardless of ownership type, newsrooms have to think holistically about how they can balance the interests of the audience and its owners to deliver a quality product. Fuller stated in 1996:

Newspaper organizations have a lot of work to do to bridge the two cultures without threatening the independence of judgment that is necessary for the newspaper to live up to the truth discipline. Editors and ad salesmen...all need

to take responsibility for reconciling the interests of shareholders with the rigorous adherence to news values, because news values are fundamental to a newspaper's business success, and business success is fundamental to the vitality of the news values (p. 211).

Rather than operating like a corporation, news organizations must acknowledge that the lifeblood of journalism is the American public “whose tastes and choices determine the success of any pitch made to it” (Downie & Kaiser, 2002, p. 246).

Perceived quality of the newspaper product is diminished when journalists feel pressured by their news organizations to attract certain audiences, fulfill marketing efforts or write for special sections, as they feel like they are “selling out to profit motives” (Redmond & Trager, 2004, p. 73). This is particularly an issue in the 2000s as newspapers attempted to “target more up-market readers with special sections on subjects such as ‘living,’ home’ technology, entertainment” (Kung, 2008, p. 37). A quality news product has an ethical grounding in news values and is not intended to please publishers or advertisers.

Painful issues arise when it comes to advertiser dollars financing the news, since nearly 60 percent of a newspaper's revenue comes from advertiser dollars, according to the NAA. In 1999, *Editor & Publisher* conducted a survey of 105 newspaper publishers and editors that addresses some of the ethical issues and values decisions that rise in news organization settings. Four in 10 editors said their own papers had published special news sections to obtain certain kinds of advertising even when they

knew the sections' content had 'little reader interest' (Downie & Kaiser, 2002). This was identified as a practice used to meet profit targets set by newspaper management.

Rising pressure exists to please constituencies and have a competitive advantage in news organizations, as advertisers historically have pulled their advertisements if a negative story is written about their company. Just in May 2013, Bloomberg News reporters were caught using financial data terminals to seek data that would help them advance news coverage and get an edge on financial news (Chozick, 2013). The influence of business partnerships and advertising dollars on news content has always been a debate on the table.

Rosenstiel writes in a 1997 *New York Times* column that although newspaper circulation is decreasing, giving up editorial independence for market-driven news is not the answer. "Journalism really is a business and a public service—and that is an economic argument, not simply a moral one. ...What journalism companies are selling is their authority as a public asset" (Rosenstiel, 1997). While efforts are being made to create cross-departmental teams with the editorial, advertising and marketing staff, it is not enough (Picard, 2004). Although these efforts are a good start, newspaper organizations must work together to create a quality product that appeals to all and breaks through the changing media landscape of multi-platform content, investigative journalism and sponsored events.

Conclusion

Limited literature exists in the realm of internal relationships between advertising and newsroom staff and how they influence content and audience perceptions. A study was published in the *Journal of Advertising* titled "Advertiser pressure on daily newspapers: A survey of ad sales executives," using circulation size (large vs. small newspapers) and ownership type (independent or chain-owned) as factors to test four scenarios and advertising executives' influence on news content (An & Bergen, 2007). The research concludes the line between advertising and news content continues to blur, discussing boundary spanners who are susceptible to ambiguity (p. 113). An & Bergen (2007) conclude by claiming "More research is needed on the internal relationships between the news editorial and advertising sales departments and factors increasing role ambiguity" (p. 119). This study addresses these role perceptions and builds on the topic by examining from an organizational standpoint how cross-departmental communication has evolved and where audience priorities fall. The pace of change in newspaper organizations is accelerating rapidly, and it is important to examine the effects of these changes (Jurkowitz & Mitchell, 2013).

With a variety of literature exposing dimensions of news values such as implications from the business model, product quality, effect on commercialism and serving audiences—it is time to look at advertising and newsroom staff members in their own organizational environments, instead of with a position-level approach. Do today's editors and business staff fulfill these roles as they are described traditionally

and how has that changed as boundaries blur? This research enhances industry knowledge by interviewing individuals in management roles on the editorial and business staff of their respective publications.

Ch. 3: Methodology

Theoretical Framework

Organizational theory guides this research, as the roles and relationships between editors and advertising staff within media companies are subject to the publication's organizational culture. This theory "conceives organizations as complex social actors and investigates how the structures they adopt affect their behavior" (Darity, 2008). It looks at formal and informal structures to address relationships and work culture within the organization, which helps explain behaviors and how the organizations came to be. Organizational theory was considered "for the benefit of identifying common themes for the purpose of solving problems, maximizing efficiency and productivity, and meeting the needs of stakeholders" (Barzilai, 2011). This allowed the opportunity for interview questions to probe individual, group, and organizational processes to identify each newsroom's culture and how newsroom leadership as well as sales representatives and reporters interact with and perceive specific topics.

Interviewing members of these departments within newsrooms through the lens of organizational theory let the researcher understand what motivates these individuals to be in their own roles, what perceptions they have of other departments, and how comfortably they communicate across departments to deliver a final product.

Of the four types of newspaper studies—readership, circulation, management and usability—this research qualifies as newspaper management research. While

some management research looks at ownership concentration in the media industry, this research analyzed how newspaper management affects the newsroom environment and journalism produced (Wimmer, 2011). Wimmer (2011) adds that management research “is still a significant research area and will probably continue to remain important as newspapers and magazines downsize and streamline” (p. 343).

When investigating the organizational culture, research suggests using an “onion model” that looks at three levels of the organization (Miller, 1995). Using this model, news organizations and the staff within them were analyzed based on first: individual behaviors and artifacts, second: values, and third: assumptions. The interview discussion guide and order of its questions was formatted this way to match this finding.

Miller (1995) suggests that qualitative methods fit well with organizational studies, in order to gain an understanding of the “complicated, fragmented and changing nature of cultural groups” (p. 122). Since print news organizations are in a time of transition due to massive declines and a changing business model, qualitative methods helped to build understanding on how individuals feel about this period as well as their evolving role within a newsroom’s organizational culture. Using qualitative methods also allowed for data collection that could be overlooked by quantitative newspaper studies, such as probing perceptions (Wimmer, 1995).

Method

In-depth interviews were conducted with senior-level advertising and editorial staff members at nine newspapers. These interviews allowed the research to gain rich data by hearing specific stories, events and experiences pertaining to the participants' everyday life at work (Guion, 2001). Interviews were the best way to hear about newspaper staff and views from their own perspectives, allowing the researcher to discover communication methods, role perceptions and audience perceptions in an environment without others' influence. A top-level editor and a top-level advertising executive were interviewed at separate times for that purpose. The research gained a deep understanding of each entity's conceptions of audience and inter-newsroom communication in their publication's environment.

Interviews were semi-structured to receive interviewee anecdotes while still acquiring information in specific categories. Semi-structured interviews followed a script of pre-written questions, but allowed for the opportunity to follow leads as subjects reached rich topics of discussion (Bernard, 2011). This was particularly helpful in probing company-wide initiative and special projects that arose in conversation. Interview questions were asked in four categories: the individual's position and background in the industry, departmental structure, audience and describing the publication's reader base and the relationship and communication across the advertising and editorial departments. See the full discussion guide in the Appendix.

Interviews lasted approximately one hour and were conducted over the phone. This allowed the researcher to solicit subjects from anywhere in the United States, as phone interviews provided not only a further reach of participants, but also more flexible scheduling and the freedom to shift time slots when there was a busy news day. Since newspaper management staffs are “elite members of a community—people who are accustomed to efficient use of their time,” this interview flexibility helped the process (Bernard, 2011). Some interviews only lasted 30 minutes depending on the editors’ or advertising executives’ scheduling needs.

Selection

Research suggests that innovative, medium-sized organizations have the most opportunity to integrate their entire staff into decision-making processes, making medium-sized newspapers a good target (Gade, 2004). The number of boundary spanning roles also depends on an organization’s size (Aldrich & Herker, 1977), so interviewing individuals from publications in medium-sized cities provided a mixture of those who act and do not act in boundary spanning roles.

Interview sampling was purposive with the “aim is to select people who possess specific characteristics in order to illuminate the phenomena being studied, rather than selecting a representative sample of the entire population” (McCraken, 1988).

Therefore, to define ‘medium,’ the researcher began by identifying the dominant daily print newspaper in each designated media area (DMA) between 50

and 75, starting with No. 50 in Jacksonville, Florida and ending with No. 75 in Omaha, Nebraska ("Nielsen 2012-2013 DMA," 2012). DMAs were obtained from Nielsen's 2012 DMA and market universe estimates, to be used in the 2013 season. Rather than setting a circulation limit, the researcher chose to reach out to medium-sized markets because newspaper print circulation numbers are changing dynamically as news organizations introduce bundled subscription models and multi-platform approaches.

The researcher found the company email addresses of the executive editor, managing editor and director of advertising and sent each position a personalized email soliciting participation. The specific titles of these individuals varied by publication, for example: Vice President of Advertising or Senior Vice President of News or Content, but the researcher selected the most appropriate individuals based on the newsroom contact list provided on each publication's website. If a newsroom contact list was not provided, the researcher called the publication to receive the appropriate contact names. See the recruitment email in the Appendix.

Overall, senior-level positions in both the news and advertising departments were interviewed at nine newspapers, totaling 18 in-depth interviews, in June 2013. Eleven newspapers responded, but two publications did not meet the scheduling needs of the researcher. One newspaper declined participation due to preoccupation with a recent change in its parent company. An additional two newspapers out of the 25 media markets selected were ineligible because they cut print circulation to three or five times per week and therefore were no longer a daily print publication.

The selected population of daily print newspaper organizations in medium-sized markets solicited excellent feedback because of the organizational environment relative to advertising sales. The advertising and news departments at each publication typically sat on different floors in the same building, but contained a structure where management members communicated weekly or bi-weekly. Pressures to meet management profit goals and sell certain types of advertising vary at different sized newspapers, and this size blended the attributes of being responsive to reader interests and advertiser complaints, while also having pressure on advertising sales that is not as strong as small or Top 50 market newspapers. The economic competitive environment is stronger at mid-sized newspapers than at small newspapers, with less pressure on advertising than large, multi-layered companies (Demers, 1991). Many of the publications also were experimenting with new revenue models and new paid subscription options, which are not being rolled out as quickly in smaller newspapers. In addition, newspapers with a circulation of 50,000 or less would not be attractive representations for this study because as circulation size increases, editors proliferate and an organizational structure with more defined roles is established (Picard & Brody, 1997). One exception was granted here to Newspaper 8 in DMA No. 74, granted because the publication fit all other qualifications except circulation because of declines in its market. Therefore, the newspaper was ruled as valid to research.

The researcher acknowledges that editors drew on their previous industry experience, but as prior research suggests, this is normal and helps staff to solve new

problems they face in the workplace (Barber, 1988). Selection criteria assured that at least one of the two staff members at each publication had worked at the publication for at least one year to confirm knowledge of the specific work environment. In one newspaper's case where the advertising director had only been in her role for a few months, she had 23 years of experience in the same position with other newspapers owned by the same parent company.

Of the nine newspapers interviewed, participation was spread geographically with two newspapers from the southeast, one from the northeast and six publications from the Midwest. This can largely be attributed to the proportion of media markets in these territories between DMAs 50 through 75. A variety of ownership companies were recruited, with participation from two McClatchy newspapers, two Berkshire Hathaway newspapers and representation from Morris Communications, WEHCO Media, AH Belo Corporation, Scripps and Gannett. Circulation ranged from about 29,000 to nearly 180,000. See Table 1 for participating publications.

Analysis

Interview data was analyzed with constant comparative method, which involved the “theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information” (Creswell, 2009, p. 13). This analysis method allowed for generating results and suggesting ideas and theories in many categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Data triangulation was applied to produce valid and accurate research. First, this was implemented through speaking with more than one source from each newspaper staff, spanning across departments. Participant feedback was solicited from individuals who were interviewed when needed to assure the accuracy of their statements and intent. Allowing some of these members to read the interpretation of the work allowed for verification and insight (Johnson, 1997). Selected interviewees were contacted via email following the completion of the analysis with instructions and a time frame for providing feedback to confirm accurate transcription of their perceptions.

Ch. 4: Results

The interview data was compared on multiple levels by looking at the results from a variety of factors, including the publication, the interview subject's role, the effects of the ownership structure and the newspaper's geographic location. The advertising director and upper-level editor's explanation of concepts was compared to what similar roles said (ex: other advertising executives interviewed or editorial staff interviewed), and how it compared to the other interviewee from his or her news organization.

The findings show that the relationship between advertising and editorial department leadership is stronger than ever and emerged because the changing newspaper business model left no choice. Both departments acknowledge that they are working toward the same goals and that the other's role would not exist if one side did not carry its weight. The advertising side cannot bring in revenue if they are not promoting accurate content in a good product, and the journalists cannot continue to report the news without the revenue stream the business staff brings in. Both sides acknowledge that they let the separation between church and state—or the wall between news and advertising—grow too tall and holes did not emerge in this wall until they realized it was an immature way to do business.

The researcher conducted 18 in-depth interviews at nine newspapers, and Table 1 defines the circulation and geographic location of these newspapers. Numbers were assigned to each newspaper to refer to size or region when analyzing the

examples given, and those same numbers are used to describe interview participants at their respective publications. For example, the editorial staff member at Newspaper 1 will be referred to as “Editor 1” and the advertising executive will be referred to as “Advertising Director 1.” Findings from each of the three research questions are described below.

TABLE 1: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS ~Denotes estimate provided

<i>PUBLICATION</i>	<i>PARENT</i>	<i>WEEKDAY CIRCULATION as of June 2013</i>	<i>GEOGRAPHIC REGION</i>
Newspaper 1	Morris	96,968	Southeast
Newspaper 2	AH Belo Corp.	86,534	Northeast
Newspaper 3	WEHCO	179,197	Midwest
Newspaper 4	Berkshire Hathaway	95,063	Midwest
Newspaper 5	Scripps	82,600	Southeast
Newspaper 6	McClatchy	~70,000	Midwest
Newspaper 7	McClatchy	~60,000	Midwest
Newspaper 8	Gannett	~29,000	Midwest
Newspaper 9	Berkshire Hathaway	132,332	Midwest

RQ1: How newspaper editors and business staff members understand their own roles in the organization?

Editor motivations.

Newspaper editors described their main duties in their role as overseeing the newsroom and its content for both the web and print editions of the newspaper product. News judgment, reporting skills and budgeting the news content were vital skills required to accomplish this. When describing their roles, editors also mentioned the administrative work such as overall management, staffing, sifting through reports, dealing with legal matters, and making public appearances to represent the news organization in its community. Many remained heavily involved, even the leaders on public-service journalism or special investigative projects that contained high-profile news content. Editor 8 said:

My real role as executive editor is to provide the overview, oversight of our hard news gathering and publishing operations, both print and digital. I'm more responsible for the strategic direction, and then I supervise the editors who actually do a lot of the day-to-day work.

The majority of the editors cited the lasting impact of journalism as a motivation to get involved with and stay in the industry. The ability to make a difference, opportunity to benefit society and notion of changing the world came up when asked about motivations. The advertising staff's role was to sustain the revenue model that allowed them to do this. Editor 5 said:

I certainly believe in the higher calling of journalism, the higher purpose that we serve in society and the reason why we have the First Amendment protection that we do and you know if I can keep doing it, I'm going to do it. I

also find the business model challenge that the industry is facing to be extremely fascinating.

Overall, the news editors did not go into as much detail about their specific duties as the advertising executives did. Boundary spanning was evident because of their collaboration with both newsroom leadership and reporters. See Table 2 for the positions of the news editors interviewed, and Table 4 for the skills editors cited as integral in their roles.

TABLE 2: NEWS EDITORS INTERVIEWED

<i>PUBLICATION</i>	<i>Interviewee on Editorial Side</i>	<i>Years in Position</i>
Newspaper 1	Editor, Vice President for Journalism	5½
Newspaper 2	Senior Vice President and Executive Editor	3
Newspaper 3	Managing Editor	14
Newspaper 4	Managing Editor	Data not provided
Newspaper 5	Executive Editor	11
Newspaper 6	Editor & Vice President	4
Newspaper 7	Executive Editor & Senior Vice President of News	8
Newspaper 8	Executive Editor	Data not provided
Newspaper 9	Executive Editor	6

Advertising sales motivations.

Advertising management discussed being responsible for all sales activity as its main role. Strategic thinking, vision and big-picture strategy were skills cited by advertising leadership to assure that they are accomplishing this goal. Other relevant skills listed by executives as important to their positions are shown in Table 5.

Advertising Director 2 added that it is important to have “an understanding of why our media will succeed, and that includes the power and value of journalism,” acknowledging that the reputable content from the editorial side makes the newspaper a quality product.

Because they are involved in sales for a news organization rather than a different industry of sales, management had a deep understanding of news ethics and the importance of providing accurate and unbiased content. “I have a tremendous amount of respect for the editorial side and what they do. Without what they do and doing it well, I don’t have anything to sell,” Advertising Director 3 said.

A secondary part of advertising directors’ roles, in addition to managing sales, was the notion of developing local businesses by creating optimized plans to fit their advertising needs. Advertising Director 9 said, “I really don’t talk in classified or retail anymore—I just talk in business. What kind of solutions do we need to bring to the table to help this business with their marketing needs and solve their business problems?” Advertising Director 8 cited the same mindset, adding that his job is to uncover and understand the paints that exist in businesses today and matching them

with solutions. Although departments are still structured with direct reports from individual categories like retail, classified and local and automotive, many have created in-house agencies with additional staff or allocation to offer digital solutions across different platforms, not just their owned media, for clients. All of this contributes to their role's goal of creating advertising plans that reach the most "eyeballs." Advertising Director 7 attributes the agency approach to the fact that newspaper organizations can offer so much as a media company now, like print, digital and video advertising capabilities across platforms. He said, "It's one of the best times to be in our business because it's very innovative, very creative, you've got a lot more flexibility than I think you've ever had in terms of the advertising department."

Therefore, a strong comprehension of the digital advertising landscape and willingness to experiment with it was another vital skill mentioned by the advertising executives. Four of the advertising directors cited the creation of "digital agencies" at their publications because of the unique selling point that newspapers are a trusted source and are established in the community, clients know their news organization and respect it. Advertising directors believe this brings them an advantage as they compete with customers from across the United States, rather than just local advertisers, as newspapers expand their online presence.

Advertising roles have also transformed in the past few years to address emerging revenue ideas as the business model evolves. This includes adopting multi-platform responsibilities and training, adding sponsorships and events to their role as

marketing departments are joined with advertising or cut, and putting advertising staff in charge of contests for consumer engagement.

In order to do this, interviewees explained that they need to be capable of training, educating, and motivating their staff to succeed in the sales business at a news organization. Because of the industry challenges, fitting the mold of the past will no longer cut it, so continuous education is a necessity. Advertising Director 3 admitted that sales is in fact an easy business because achieving or failing at one's goals is very objective. He said:

To me, there's nothing more challenging than the newspaper industry right now. From a lot of angles, it's a forced evolution. It's fun to be a part of that, it's fun to help save that, it's very exciting to take something that's been proven, that's profitable and help make it something more to ensure that it maintains that profitability into the future.

See the titles of advertising executives interviewed in Table 3.

TABLE 3: ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES INTERVIEWED

<i>PUBLICATION</i>	<i>Interviewee in Advertising Department</i>	<i>Years in Position</i>
Newspaper 1	Vice President of Sales	2
Newspaper 2	Senior Vice President of Sales/Marketing	Data not provided
Newspaper 3	Retail Advertising Director	2
Newspaper 4	Special Sales Manager	Data not provided
Newspaper 5	Director of Advertising	8
Newspaper 6	Vice President of Advertising	<1
Newspaper 7	Vice President of Advertising	1
Newspaper 8	Senior Advertising Manager	2
Newspaper 9	Vice President of Advertising	Data not provided

Similarities in role perceptions.

Both positions believe that strategic thinking is integral to their roles. Working in news organizations the majority of their careers, interviewees felt fascinated by the changes in the business model and seemed to enjoy the challenge and the opportunities it provided on a big-picture level. They also enjoyed working in fast-paced environments.

Organizationally, both roles were described as community-focused, and many individuals on both the advertising and news side had a journalism or writing background. There was a mutual respect for their individual departments as well as the entire staff of the news organization and mention of working synergistically through financial crises over the past few years. Many felt accomplished that new business models and revenue streams are intact and felt that their roles within the news organization had shifted, job descriptions had been rewritten or time was reallocated to address the current needs. “It’s something different every day, it’s a constant challenge to deal with people think newspapers are dying everyday so it’s fun to go out and tell the story about how we’re reinventing newspapers and kind of dispelling that myth,” Advertising Director 7 said. Tables 4 and 5 show the skills interviewees listed as important in their roles in the news organization.

TABLE 4: SKILLS FOR EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT (as reported by themselves)

<i>PUBLICATION</i>	<i>Skills</i>
Newspaper 1	Grounding in journalism (principles, practices and ethics), leadership ability, thinking strategically, marketing background
Newspaper 2	Data not provided
Newspaper 3	Management, planning, budgeting, doing the journalism
Newspaper 4	Ability to diffuse rocky situations, good sense of news judgment, people person
Newspaper 5	Writing, management, experience
Newspaper 6	Well-organized, digital-savvy, communication, willingness to try new things, be a good reporter, news judgment, community awareness
Newspaper 7	Optimism, positive but realistic, seeking opportunities, organization, long-range vision
Newspaper 8	Reporting experience, learn new things, organization, big-picture/strategic thinker
Newspaper 9	Well-organized, identify strengths of staff / assessing human resource talent, news judgment, good communicator to staff and public

TABLE 5: SKILLS FOR ADVERTISING MANAGEMENT (as reported by themselves)

<i>PUBLICATION</i>	<i>Skills</i>
Newspaper 1	Forward thinking, perseverance, inspire & encourage change, innovation
Newspaper 2	Leadership, strategic planning, strategic vision
Newspaper 3	Patience, big-picture strategy, organization, strong ethical code, coaching, understanding politics, empower others rather than take it all on yourself, adaptation
Newspaper 4	Leadership, organizational skills, sales, communication
Newspaper 5	Sales experience, understanding digital, sales management, work through people, be fast-paced
Newspaper 6	Development, understanding and motivating people, maximize their potential
Newspaper 7	Understanding digital media, cross-platform advertising
Newspaper 8	Communication, collaboration, strategy, people development, results-driven, deadline-oriented, organizational skills
Newspaper 9	Mentoring, foster collaboration, understand goals, problem-solving

RQ2: How do the editorial and business departments in medium-sized newspapers understand each other's role in the news organization?

The wall.

When asking editors and advertising directors about how they perceive their counterpart's role in the news organization, the first thing that came up was the traditional "wall"—or separation of church and state—between news and advertising. This "wall" is in place for integrity purposes and to assure that advertisers and business motivations do not influence news content, thus providing unbiased and accurate news to audiences. Interview subjects admitted that this wall got too high and inhibited proper communication across departments, but that this has loosened up over the past few years. Many editors recalled a time when advertising executives were not even to be seen on the newsroom's floor.

"I thought you needed a pass code to talk to anybody in the newsroom," Advertising Director 7 said. "It was like an old secret handshake to make sure that they would listen to you. But over the last 12 years, that relationship has really evolved and it's really more of a team and cohesive function."

Advertising Director 3 added that news organizations only started to peek over the top of this wall in times of crisis, which was affirmed by other advertising staffs. "With a lot of editors prior to 2007, you would find separation of church and state between advertising and editorial," Advertising Director 6 said. "But when 2007

hit and the recession hit, newspapers had to find more creative ways to generate revenue.”

Although editors mentioned that young and eager sales representatives sometimes have not yet learned the wall, both departments believe in keeping it high but understanding how to communicate as a business. Newspaper 4 was one of the only publications interviewed that had implemented a cross-departmental meeting between the editors, advertising and circulation staff before the crisis hit.

With the loosened wall and evolution of news organizations and their revenue models, advertising sales representatives felt more comfortable volunteering ideas for creative revenue and advertising opportunities.

“It’s like we’ve been through a war together these last few years because it’s been tough,” Advertising Director 1 said. “At media companies, we had [economic problems] and I’m happy to say we’re very close to ending that challenge. With that problem we had layoffs, a shifting of duties, economic challenges and I think that really strengthened our results to work together.”

How does editorial understand advertising’s role?

That being said, interview subjects on the editorial side mentioned a heightened appreciation for the advertising department, understanding that their primary function is to bring revenue to the news organization.

“With what’s happening on the revenue side, the newsroom is more sympathetic to and grateful to the advertising department and what they do than was ever the case in the past,” Editor 5 said. “We’re really rooting for them to make money because we know our jobs depend on it and our future depends on that. And so there’s a sense that they are people and they really need to be successful so we can be successful.”

Editors comprehend that they accomplish their goals by selling advertising packages across platforms, seeking new business, and customizing solutions for advertisers—not only as a newspaper, but as a media company that can now provide more options digitally. Editors had mixed feelings on sharing any types of news budgets with the advertising department. All agreed that they would never share specific content plans, but “softer” budgets like doing a section on camping or football were sometimes shared so they can sell ads as adjacencies to this content, offering more opportunity for monetization. Editor 8 said:

I like to get paid, the newsroom staff likes to get paid; they understand advertising is a key part of paying the bills. But we also, we know where the lines are and I think the advertising staff totally understands and agrees with that because what they are selling is an audience that [seeks] credibility and trust, an important part of why they get our content. So I think everybody here is on the same page about that.

Editors were more open to expanding in areas where the wall was too hard in the past, such as the idea that the advertising staff members at their news organization are people on the street who are involved in the community and hear news too. Editor

7 said, “If they hear something, I don’t want them to ever feel like they can’t pass it along to the newsroom.”

Advertising department’s understanding of the newsroom.

The advertising department showed a deep respect for the newsroom and journalists at their news organizations. Advertising Director 4 said that the newsroom did a great job of providing accurate and unbiased news and really provided the level of complexity and expertise that the publication owns.

Advertising Director 5 said that the department feels more understood because of the more communicative atmosphere that has emerged in news organizations. “Today, it’s a much more synergistic atmosphere,” she said. “We can still talk to each other and [the editor] can still understand the business side without feeling like jeopardizing his ethics as a journalist.”

Advertising management described the newsroom’s role and editorial role overall as sharing compelling stories and quality content that has an impact. Three advertising executives mentioned feelings that the editorial side might feel some resentment that salespeople make all the money. Advertising Director 3 elaborated on this matter, describing motivations to enter the field of journalism. He said:

My perception is that editorial is not about revenue. Revenue to them is viewed as potentially green, the money side of it. [I think] there is a purity, a pristine obligation and feeling that might come from being a writer. Because I don’t think you become a writer for the money. I think you become a writer because you want to make a difference, make a name, have an impact, be Woodward...or break that story. They don’t think they do it for the money so

I think they view advertising as doing it for the money and those are just a number of things that create this false wall between departments.

Overall, advertising departments understood the division, want content adjacencies to bring greater monetization opportunities and want their news organizations to keep moving forward in its innovation.

Planning media together.

Newspapers mentioned the need to plan their media together to create a desirable product, because ultimately advertising is content too—it is just not editorial content. The editor at Newspaper 1 used the Thirds Model to describe where editorial content is obtained. The first third of content is what he referred to as the “big journalism,” such as watchdog projects, investigative stories and long-form journalism. The second third is features and various daily content and the last third is contributing content from readers or users.

He said that advertising executives and sales representatives have gotten more sophisticated and understand that their role is not to change or compromise the journalism, so editorial staff is more comfortable partnering with the advertising department in content adjacencies. Editor 8 described this by saying, “We don’t do stories specifically in response to an advertisement or to a promise of advertising, but that doesn’t mean that we don’t pursue things of mutual interest.”

Overall, communication is kept to a management level because these individuals are regarded as established in the news organization and understanding

the division at its fullest. Because communication occurs in the upper-level management meetings, leadership sets the standard for the rest of the staff. One example of promoting positive relations between the two departments occurred at Newspaper 1 and was mentioned by both the Editor and Advertising Director there.

Editor 1 said:

When the advertising [staff] made their monthly goals, several times the newsroom has bought cookies or donuts and as a group carried them over to the advertising department and served them to the advertising sales people because we understand that they support our journalism. So it is really night and day compared to the old model where we were almost adversaries. Now it's to the point where we understand that we are partners and colleagues, in an appropriate setting. So advertisers still don't influence our journalism but we plan and work together appropriately.

Increased collaboration.

Individuals in both departments admitted that they want to attribute the increased collaboration to being good people, but the relationship was ultimately born out of necessity. Editor 9 said:

Newspapers have to work harder now than they did 20 years ago to have a really good profit margin. ... In that environment, there is more conversation about what [editorial] is doing that [advertising] might be able to monetize and what they're hearing from their advertising customers that would be useful for us to know in terms of what types of content they would like to be around. When newspapers were making 30 percent profit margins, nobody needed to have those conversations. Nobody worried about it.

The increase in teamwork across departments has delivered effective results to both the newsroom and advertising sectors. One situation provided as an example was the opening of a new automotive dealership in Newspaper 5's market. The advertising department knew about the opening and passed the information along to

the newsroom, without advocating for the car dealership as a client. Editors and advertising executives acknowledged that passing along is different than advocating for a business, so the advertising department knew that once it was out of their hands, content was at the newsroom's discretion and the newsroom could do with it what they please.

With this type of communication has also come a greater willingness to listen to each other's ideas—both on special sections and revenue streams. One of the advertising managers at Newspaper 2 was described as having great ideas for features content when the two departments meet to discuss special sections. “Since she respects the division, they respect her ideas for content,” Editor 2 said.

Editor 6 described the culture of open-mindedness through the economic struggle:

I would say that openness has come about because the world has shifted beneath our feet. There is such massive change going on in the industry that I think there's a lot of good minds across lots of different divisions so I think everybody is trying to come up with bright ideas, different ideas and new approaches—and the more good ideas and the more minds you have at the table, the better off you're going to be. But I think that the pace of change has been so amplified in the past three to four years in particular that there has been a need for that kind of increased collaboration.

“I think that there is a realization across the board that we're all in this together, which might have been there before but when times get tough, you either point fingers or pull together,” Advertising Director 9 said. “We pulled together.” With this unification, the synergy between advertising and news has improved immensely.

Meetings culture.

One way newspapers have exhibited this cross-departmental communication is through weekly or bimonthly meetings with advertising and news leadership. In some cases, circulation and the publisher are invited to the meetings. Seven of the nine newspapers interviewed mentioned the existence of this meeting, and the other two publications described that they communicate on a need-basis and set up time as matters arise. The agenda of the meetings usually discusses what is on the horizon and looks at upcoming community events and the calendar to seek joint opportunities. Editor 5 said that the main question they discuss is, “Is there anything we should be sharing so that we, as a business, can coordinate in ways that there’s opportunities to coordinate?”

Another level of communication on a position-basis came from each news organization’s ownership structure. Many ownership companies have the privilege of communicating with other editors or advertising directors within their parent company to help each other out. Although it is on a role-by-role basis, many mentioned how helpful this was when it came to making decisions about metered websites and other matters relative to their business model.

News organizations are businesses.

When asked what factors they attribute the loosened wall between news and advertising, executives said that business dictated that it had to. The high wall inhibited effective communication, which must occur in any business. Although the

heightened wall worked with the print newspaper, it is not a successful way to run the business model of the future if news organizations dwell in the past. Editor 7 said, “There are certain things you don’t communicate cross-channel on, but to know within our business what other parts of our business are doing only makes sense.”

Advertising Director 5 said:

We all realize we are business-first...well I shouldn’t say business-first, but we work better as a newspaper if we all understand each other’s side of the business. There’s no reason why the newsroom can’t be supportive of the business side and the business side can’t be supportive of the news side. It’s more just an evolution, that kind of puts behind that thinking that you can’t work together without influencing each other.

In addition to serving business purposes, the greater demand in customers from an audience and advertiser standpoint has indicated a greater need for news and advertising working together. This shift is heavily attributed to multi-platform news products, but frequent meetings, task forces and communication across departments appear successful in making sure that each department buys in to decisions the news organization makes.

Special sections: ADVERTorial or EDITorial?

The one exception to high-level communication was when it came to coordinating opportunities for special sections, when it becomes completely acceptable for sales representatives, advertising directors in specific categories and section editors to meet independently. Special sections were described as the result of a vested interest in news or advertising and started off with a negative connotation to the news team. “It was really a disconnect because it was either a news section and

advertising could sell it, or an advertising section and news didn't support it," Advertising Director 2 said.

The amount of special sections done by the newspapers interviewed differed immensely, but the larger newspapers had their own advertorial writing staffs consisting of anywhere from four to five writers and one to two advertising editors who write content for special, advertising sections. Annual special sections that included editorial content typically consisted of sports seasons—such as football and basketball.

“What gets lost a lot of time is that advertising is content,” Advertising Director 1 said. “It's not editorial content, but it is CONTENT and it's content that people enjoy. We hear that time and time again in surveys that people like looking at the ads.” Special sections appeared to remain integral to additional revenue as seasons change, special events come to the market or sports seasons kick off.

Emerging revenue ideas.

In addition to special sections, news organizations mentioned experimentation with a variety of special projects to bring in additional revenue as the business model alters. Newspaper 2, Newspaper 5, and Newspaper 9 all had cutting edge projects that are beginning to be replicated by other news organizations.

Corporate partnerships.

One initiative that Newspaper 2 has been practicing is establishing partnerships with non-profit organizations to support the newspaper during contests. Corporate partnerships have also been sought to sponsor community education seminars or special courses through organizations like One Day University. One Day University is an organization that brings in professors to teach guest lectures (<http://www.onedayu.com/pages/about>). Consumers purchase tickets and an additional partnership is established to take care of e-ticketing and additional costs. Newspaper staff mentioned that it felt right to do a sponsorship with a non-profit, and they generally stay out of the touching of money to be careful with the wall. Editor 2 said she begins all partnerships by saying,

The first thing I need to tell you is if you do anything wrong, don't call me because it's going to be in the paper. If your school does anything wrong, if your organization does anything wrong, I'm not going to save you. It is going in the paper. 'I can't do something wrong...' you can't use the [newspaper] for that. You're doing this because you think it's a good thing for the community, you're not doing this for your connection to the [newspaper].

The community enjoys the opportunity to learn through these extra courses and the newspaper, in turn, is provided an opportunity to brand itself and sell subscriptions.

Productization and multi-platform initiatives.

As part of Scripps' four-platform initiative across the print publication, web, mobile and tablet applications, Newspaper 5 is an excellent example of actionable research through the development of projects based on reader interest.

In a partnership with the Knight Digital Media Center and Magnum Associates, a market survey was sent out to audience members probing various demographic niches and their interests so they can create target personas for particular types of content on specific devices.

Within the newsroom, franchise topic teams were created to investigate six subject areas in two phases: crime and personal safety, business, entertainment, local government, education and college sports. Within each topic, a primary and secondary target audience persona was developed based on the research. After qualitative research with the personas to understand what type of news they are interested in, products are being proposed for specific platforms to better engage that audience in the news content.

For example, interviews with young, middle-aged women with children in the crime and personal safety franchise topic showed that they seek out news to paint a clear picture of incidents occurring in their neighborhoods and other warnings. As an actionable result, Newspaper 5 developed an interactive crime map that takes all of the incidents in the metropolitan area each day and maps them. To remain efficient with the staff available—each day a different type of crime is mapped. Burglaries, violent crime, drugs and alcohol and other crimes are mapped on different days of the week. The product is digital-only, targeted for tablet and web consumption. These types of products provide more targeting opportunities for advertisers in the future and build user engagement with the news brand.

Book publishing to promote valuable content.

In 2010, a reporter at Newspaper 9 had the idea to compile a book about the closing of a nearby stadium by writing and designing new content and looking back into the newspaper archives to record the book's history. The book brought in revenue the company was not expecting, and Newspaper 9 continued to release books for other historical and special events in its market. The content came from reporters and the newspaper's archives.

The editor at Newspaper 9 says, "In my overall sort of strategic thinking about our industry...these books in our community are promoting the idea that our content is valuable. Which we have to believe that ourselves and promote that idea in the marketplace because the business model of relying 80 percent on advertising revenue is altering in the Internet age." The books provide an opportunity to build revenue from readers and promote the content that has been undervalued in the industry.

With innovation in the multi-platform sphere, better communication across departments and paid subscription models intact, interviewees felt that they had overcome a crazy time in the news business and are optimistic about the future. Editor 2 said, "We were in survival mode, and we're transitioning now as an organization that's going into attack mode."

RQ3: What perceptions does each department have of what it means to serve the publication’s audience? How does each envision the readers?

After discussing the organizational culture, interview subjects on both the advertising and editorial side were asked to describe their publication’s target audience or reader base. Both sectors acknowledged their audience as the traditional print reader: better educated, more affluent and skewing older. “Our reader is just like any other newspaper reader throughout the country, typically more affluent, skews slightly older,” Advertising Director 6 said. Descriptions from editors and advertising directors used terms like “local,” “general interest publication” and “community-based” to describe the readers. Because of the DMAs selected, many of the medium-sized markets were heavy university towns or areas where college sports are a large priority for coverage and interest.

Although digital platforms the audience to expand outside the newspaper’s DMA or footprint, priorities for editors and advertisers were local consumers. Editor 8 described that while its newspaper serves its market and established community audience first, the publication has denoted secondary targets for its readers. The first of these is natives of the market who have strong connections or family ties to the geographic area. The second are labeled “female CEOs”—women who are in charge of their households and need to stay in tune with what’s happening in the community. News products are being developed to better reach these groups. Newspaper 2 appeared to have similar targeting issues.

“The challenge that we have is our reader tends to be an older reader,” Advertising Director 2 said. “How do we get that younger person that has gone to school here or lived here and is now settled down, and I think the captive audience for us is when that young, professional enters into the world of their early 30s.”

The editor and advertising director at Newspaper 3 passed on wisdom that their publisher reminds them of constantly: the readers come first. The publisher says, “Newspapers have many constituencies: they have readers, advertisers, employees, sometimes predators or stockholders. Keep all of the things in that order.”

How the newsroom envisions its audience.

Across editors’ descriptions of their publication’s target audience, the following themes arose.

Using vague factors to describe readers.

Editors began as describing their news audiences as skewing older, higher educated and higher income individuals. Other terms to describe the readers included “general,” “statewide,” “quite large” and “diverse.”

They envision the readers like them.

When describing how the readers use the newspaper’s platforms online and in print, Editor 3 said, “I’m sure there are a lot of people out there who do what I do.” As Sumpter (2000) described in prior research, it is common practice for editors to envision audiences similar to their own habits. Sumpter explains in his study’s

findings, “While their imaginary or constructed readers incorporated some aspects of Gans’ known and unknown audiences, the editors also frequently consulted a near audience composed of fellow editors” (Sumpter, 2000, p. 338).

This sentiment was seen among many editorial interview subjects. Another anecdote provided by Editor 1 discussed going out to dinner with some friends at the end of a long weekend after dealing with a lawsuit that the newspaper was involved in. Although the story was covered for three days in a row—as the front page story, a column and additional coverage—none of his companions had seen it. He described the friends as individuals involved in the community, such as teachers and politicians. He was distraught by their lack of awareness of the news, asking, “How do you people live?”

The finding falls in line with engagement in newspapers across the nation, as many Americans are unaware of the extremity of the industry’s financial crisis. Pew’s State of the Media overview explains, “Overall, awareness of the industry’s financial struggles is limited. Only 39% have heard a lot or some. But those with greater awareness are also more likely to be the ones who have abandoned a news outlet” (“The state of,” 2013).

Quality journalism finds an audience.

Because many editors entered journalism because of its higher calling and societal impact, some interview subjects on the editorial side seemed to not care about defining the audience. Editor 7 felt it was dangerous to describe readers and say they

are this way or that way, because it is limiting to the news product. Priorities focused on quality journalism that will tell a story and be valuable—and it didn't matter if the audience was in mind here.

“We want our reporters to try and build their audiences as much as possible, but mainly we want our reporters to do good journalism. Which may or may not have an audience,” Editor 1 said. An example he provided was a long-form investigation about a local community college that revealed mismanagement and got staff members fired as a result. Editor 1 said that the audience was not in mind when that story was published, but the story and its long-term impact was.

With changing media habits, editors felt it was their duty to engage people in the news first and then bring audience to news stories and not just grazing over social media. With declining readership and pressure to reach younger audiences, newspaper editors said they were not going to create a product that serves the target that is reading the publication now. Editor 3 mentioned that its newspaper leaves the stock report in the publication every day because even if everyone is not looking at it, it was reaching someone, and newspapers are a general interest publication.

Therefore, the addition of digital products and maintenance of older features are included to serve everyone. He said:

We run a lot of things that we know have fairly limited appeal, but they appeal to someone. And that's still very important to us. So we're not trying to make our newspaper just something that has the most popular content in it. We're trying to make it a publication that has a lot of material in it that appeals to everybody, no matter what their interests are.

Readership surveys sometimes conducted.

Outside of information from circulation, marketing or advertising departments, many newsrooms mentioned conducting reader surveys in the newsroom to poll readers about what they are interested in. Many of these surveys asked about types of content.

Advertising department's perception of audience.

Advertising executives were more specific in their audience descriptions, but this was attributed to data used in sales pitches and from the market research sector of the newspapers.

Geographic, demographic and behavioral targeting.

Advertising options to clients run on three levels: geographic, demographic and behavioral. They broke down the audience into these three categories of metrics and associate each with their propensity to purchase a product.

More likely to mention specific statistics for income or home ownership.

In addition to describing a typical newspaper reader, advertising directors added home ownership in their descriptions of the publication's target audience. This denoted a specific income level, and they often mentioned targeting individuals at specific income levels—for example, families with a household income of \$75,000 or greater.

Aware of marketing data because the audience is “eyeballs” for their clients.

Newspapers that are eligible have long subscribed to Scarborough, a market research company and source for insights in selected media markets. Scarborough measures “the lifestyle and shopping patterns, media behaviors and demographics of American consumers...detailing the dynamic lives of American adults”

(<http://www.scarborough.com/about.php>). Because of trainings, presentations and slides used in sales pitches by advertising representatives to their clients, advertising executives were generally aware of unusual statistics related to their publication’s audience or to newspaper readers in their DMA, or “footprint” as many described it.

Audience varies across platforms.

Another interview question asked to both editors and advertising executives was to describe their print and digital audience. Although many began by describing the stereotype that print audiences were older and digital audiences skewed younger, many added that this is changing. As multi-platform options increase and publications offer bundled approaches in their paid subscription models, interview subjects referenced research that different audiences consume news differently—not just differing by demographics, but as they adjust to various platforms as well.

One example of acknowledging this was with Newspaper 6. In its paid subscription model, there is a higher threshold of articles that can be seen before

paying on mobile devices than on tablets and the website edition. Editor 6 attributes the higher mobile meter to the fact that mobile users are more likely to be grazers.

In addition, Newspaper 2 is experimenting with a tool from Northwestern University that uses multimedia to allow readers to navigate through a story through different paths—acknowledging that different audiences consume news differently. Editor 2 said, “This is our audience—they’re everywhere and they’re on all different platforms but they want information, want to consume it differently and the different platforms and we have many fewer people to produce is that way.”

Ch. 5: Discussion

This study of high-level newspaper management interviewing editors and advertising executives at nine newspapers looked at how they perceive their own role, how they interact with the other department and how they describe the publication's audience. Over three weeks, 18 interviews were conducted. Although none of the three research questions directly addressed the idea of the wall between the news and advertising divisions, it became a dominant theme in a useful way for the study. The wall provides a touch point for the debate about the newspaper's role in society as the media evolve, and examines how newsrooms look at public service and the requirements of their business model. The ethical code of separation between the advertising and news departments is unique to news organizations, portraying a distinctive organizational structure in the news organizations studied that affected cross-departmental communication.

Contrary to the sense of panic presented by the Pew Research Center's State of the Media reports over the past few years, a great sense of optimism was found in the interviews. While experimentation and staffing challenges are occurring, newspaper organizations are confident in the decisions they have made and look forward to a bright future now that their content is accessible on various platforms. When the wall came tumbling down a few years ago, all hands from all departments at newspaper organizations were on board to solve the problem. As a result, cross-

departmental communication methods are in place and continue to evolve. The takeaways from the qualitative data obtained are described here.

The wall got too high

Although the wall between news and advertising is in place to assure integrity and unbiased journalism, the wall inhibited other communication within news organizations as businesses. Interview subjects laughed when they thought back to the time just a few years ago when it was a burden to speak with someone from another department. While the wall still stands on a content level, it must not be allowed to prevent communication on an organizational level so all departments within a news organization can share ideas for revenue streams and share what they know about their products as community members.

Editors must continue to be trained on the business of their news organizations

As previous literature cited, it was confirmed that newspaper organizations have attracted editorial staffs who see journalism with a higher purpose than other businesses (Fuller, 1996). Redmond & Trager (2004) added that the editorial staff members are not properly educated about the business operations of their company, and as Sumpter (2000) added, they had minimal contact with their audiences.

Therefore, more training is needed to educate these individuals to help transform their traditional mindsets. The general question of the interview subjects at the newspapers interviewed had was what products the organizations can create to attract audiences to their mass-appeal product. They assume that if they build the right products or

produce quality content, audiences will come. Because this is a doomed model, rather than looking at it like this, they must think about what audiences need from the media to get their own jobs done in society, looking at it from more of a business standpoint. Further education in business practices could help accomplish this transformation.

Respect and relations between the two departments are closer than ever

Interviews showed that many practices are in place that have helped the relationship between news and advertising departments turn around a complete 180 degrees in the past 10 years. Because the division and content wall is respected, staff members are working together across departments to develop best practices on new platforms for advertising and editorial content, and meeting with each other to talk about how to monetize existing ideas. Both sides are doing a good job of offering without advocating, which is integral to an effective business relationship in the news. From an organizational lens, this type of acknowledgement of the other departments is true progress and the thinning of the ‘wall’ has served an organizational purpose and contributed to better business practices.

Leadership and management set a standard for the rest of the publication

Frequent, routinized meetings were held at seven of the nine publications to encourage communication between the editorial and advertising staff. Sometimes, the publisher, section editors and advertising leadership even attended this meeting. Because the relationship between the advertising and newsroom departments is kept to a management-level, it’s important for these individuals to set an example and

properly train and educate their other staff members. As Advertising Director 2 said, “If you don’t have the leaders or the offices of the company truly leading the organizations and letting them work through things, ...[letting them see] that they are part of this process, it will fail and it will fail miserably.”

Newspaper 2 said that the word “management” and the stigma that comes with it is rarely used in its newsroom anymore, with efforts such as open doors and walking the floor to be visible at work utilized to upkeep a more positive atmosphere.

Research in news organizations needs to be more actionable

Plenty of market research is conducted through readership polls and surveys, access to Scarborough information and surveys from vendors like MORI (the Minneapolis Opinion Research Institute)—but actionable goals do not always come out of this information. Many newspapers mentioned having subscriptions to these products, but not using the results to their fullest potential. Although the studies have good intent, newsrooms should prioritize the questions they ask as they utilize news judgment with content in their own publications, asking integral questions that can make a difference.

Editors have a strong belief in journalism’s higher calling, whether there’s an audience or not

As mentioned earlier, the editor at Newspaper 1 said that while editors want reporters to build audiences, the first priority is doing good journalism, which may or may not have an audience. As an example, one long-term project completed by two

reporters was an eight-month investigation of a local community college that revealed mismanagement, misappropriation of funds and as a result, the president and other leaders were fired. When the story was assigned, the editor said it was not intended to reach a specific reader base, but the rigorous work would build an audience not only at the college but also among taxpayers. Ultimately, his point was that “We don’t want to, spend a lot of energy feeding back specific audience data to specific reporters in hopes that they change what they do. But reporters generally are aware of our audiences.”

Although the societal result of the community college piece is a positive externality of quality journalism, newsrooms need to set and reevaluate their metrics for success as they fight to meet the bottom line financially. The dichotomy between catering to the audience and producing quality content is an interesting one, and ethical practices must not be forgotten as newspaper organizations strive to meet financial goals.

They are in this together for a common goal

Interview subjects and those that have remained in the business of news organizations throughout the changes that have occurred truly care about engagement in the news and their news organizations as a whole. They believe in storytelling and quality content, and all are seeking the best ways to serve news and advertising content on all platforms audiences will use to consume the media. With this mutual understanding, there are hopes for the future of newspaper media as it expands its platforms.

Ch. 6: Conclusion

This study shows that an enhanced relationship between the advertising and editorial departments at news organizations has been a result of the newspaper crisis over the past couple of years. It shows how even with historical wall of separation between major departments, the industry has come together to develop new sources of revenue for newspaper organizations and how in turn, more effective internal communication has emerged. Since both the news and advertising entities are involved, there is more buy-in to company-wide decisions and support for survival initiatives and changes. A strong sense of optimism exists for the future of newspaper organizations.

The advertising-editorial wall exists when it comes to content, but does not appear to be as strong of a superiority complex on the editorial end as it used to be. Because of the joint decision-making on management's end, sponsorships of events and niche digital news products are more accepted and preliminary discussions are held with potential sponsors so the client and the newspaper organization understand the partnership and can both effectively carry out their respective missions.

Both the newsroom and advertising departments have adopted new vendors, research, surveys and employee allocations to understand who the audience is and analyze the metrics, but do not seem to be using this information to its full potential. Opportunity exists to use this information in a more actionable manner, so products can be created and in turn, bring in more revenue to news organizations. In addition,

in-depth observation could be conducted in newspaper advertising and marketing departments to see how market research is utilized to see if this is a valid perception.

Though this study examined the current relationship, it's important to note its limitations. By only reaching out to DMAs 50 through 75, newspapers in Top 50 media markets may have trends, best practices and examples that medium-sized markets could adopt. In addition, perhaps medium-sized market news organizations can refine these trends and set a standard for smaller-market newspapers when the time comes for them to adopt revenue sources outside of print and digital advertising.

Another limitation of the study is the geographic prevalence of the Midwest in interview locations. Although it was due to the response rate, future research could look at specific geographic regions to see if more communication exists or if there is a more rapid or slower adoption of industry trends. Similar questions could be asked looking at newspaper parent companies as a variable.

Although interviews were conducted with high-level management on the editorial and advertising sides of the business operation, the publisher has a strong influence on such operations and could be interviewed as well in future research. Additional research could examine if reporters and sales representatives, the lower-level staff members who have not yet entered leadership roles and frequent corporate meetings, feel the same sentiment of the unity organizationally that the management has described.

Ultimately, the study confirmed positive trends for newspaper organizations in terms of revenue and internal communications across departments. Through the lens of organizational theory, it contributes an in-depth examination of the wall between advertising sales and newsroom operations, and an analysis of how each department feels this communication has changed.

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APPENDIX

Recruitment Email

Hi *executive editor or advertising director*,

My name is Katie Artemas and I am a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism. I am conducting thesis research exploring how editorial staff understands its own as well as the business and advertising staff's role in medium-sized news organizations, and how both entities perceive your newspaper's readers. Because of its size and location, **your publication** would be a great source for this study.

I am seeking candidates to conduct in-depth interviews and would love your insight to enhance my research.

Would you be able to help me out by participating in an in-depth interview with me? I will speak with you about how your news organization understands its audience and how you conduct relations between the business/advertising staff and the news desk/reporters.

The interview will take approximately one-hour and may be conducted over the phone or on Skype. If you are available, please let me know what your schedule is like between June 17-29. If you have any questions about the research, please reach out to me via email or with a phone call.

Let me know if you will be able to help me in this process and I greatly appreciate your participation and contribution to academic research.

Thank you,

Katie Artemas

University of Missouri | Journalism

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In-depth Interview Discussion Guide

INTRODUCTION

Hi, I'm Katie. Thanks for taking speaking with me today, I appreciate it and your insight will benefit my thesis research. No identifiers will be used with your responses and my research questions explore communication between editorial and business departments at newspapers, ultimately leading to role and audience perceptions.

Do you mind if I record this?

BASIC QUESTIONS | POSITION AT NEWSPAPER

What is your full first/last name and job title?

How long have you been at PUBLICATION? How long have you been in this position?

PROBE: Previous positions at the newspaper

What is your background?

PROBE: Where else have you been in the industry? Are the other newspapers you've worked at under the same ownership company? Is your past work in editorial or business?

To confirm, what is PUBLICATION's circulation and readership?

YOUR POSITION | STRUCTURE

Describe what your duties are in your position.

PROBE: Daily, weekly, monthly

PROBE: Skills that contribute to your expertise & how they define your role

What motivates you to stay in this position?

Describe the structure of your department and if you have any direct reports.

Have any new positions been created at your publication in the past three years?

LISTEN FOR: Corporate structure changes, reallocations, words used to describe new roles, positions

How does the ownership structure influence what you do?

LISTEN FOR: Parent company rules

What is your proximity to editorial decision-making?

PROBE: Website vs. print desk, attending budget meetings, proximity to advertising sales and business matters, etc.

ASK FOR: List of job duties and responsibilities, metrics for failure and success

What is your newspaper's current paid subscription model?

What are some recurring challenges in your management role?

AUDIENCE

I'd like to ask you a few questions about your readers. How would you describe your publication's target audience?

PROBE: If a specific target exists, what are your readers interested in? What do you think they care about? Do they have a label at your newspaper?

How do you make decisions on how to write for your readers?

LISTEN FOR: What constructed the audience definition

What reader data is collected and who collects it?

PROBE: Do you conduct market research or readership surveys outside of Scarborough information?

LISTEN FOR: Specific department or audience development team, how it is presented to you (meetings, etc), how you interpret this information, differences between responses in business vs. editorial

What reader data is used to make advertising pitches?

PROBE: How do you still push print within a digital bundle atmosphere?

Do you see a difference in your print and online readers? Describe how you perceive each.

If you have an audience editor or community engagement team, how do you define engagement?

PROBE: News consumption on different platforms, if audience consists of readers or users

Do you have any large research projects or publication-wide initiatives going on right now?

BUSINESS VS. EDITORIAL

Describe your interaction with the other branch of the newspaper (business or editorial).

PROBE: What type of skills other department has that they gravitate toward, what skills do you wish you had? If you had this experience, would you still communicate with the department?

How has that changed throughout your time in the industry?

LISTEN FOR: Time when these changes started, has this relationship changed at all when your publication converged (ex: digital)

Do you feel digital newsrooms shaped the relationship between business & editorial?

Describe the landscape of special sections at PUBLICATION.

PROBE: Do you have an advertorial writing staff? Who initiates these conversations?

What is your perception of the department at PUBLICATION?

LISTEN FOR/PROBE: Factors that contribute to this perception

What do you think their perception of you is?

PROBE: What occurrences or situations have created it

Do you host any sponsored events as a publication?

LISTEN FOR: New revenue structures

In one sentence or less, how would you define the relationship between business and editorial staff at PUBLICATION?

CONCLUSION

Is there anything you would like to add that we did not discuss?

Do you have any other information you would like share?

Thank you for participating in this interview, I appreciate your time. Let me know if you have any questions and I may contact you in the future to discuss my analysis of your responses. What is the best way to contact you?

Thanks!