

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

Katie Artemas

Dr. Margaret Duffy, Thesis Supervisor

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.