

Local daily newspaper Web sites: Usage and experiences, 2008

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Executive summary

The Readership Institute has conducted studies of [100 newspaper markets](#) in the United States to measure Reader Behavior Scores (RBS) since 2000. A [detailed report](#) with this year's results is available on the Readership Institute's [Web site](#).

In this report, we describe findings relating to the usage of the same newspapers' Web sites using a self-reported metric, [SUM](#) (Site Usage Measure). We also report on people's "experiences" with their local daily newspaper's Web site (or how engaged and involved they are with it; see [here](#)), as well as on their civic involvement and its relation to consumption of newspapers online.

Highlights: Newspaper Web sites usage

- Newspaper Web sites continue to have limited penetration in most communities. As we have mentioned in earlier reports, the potential to develop a strong and differentiated local online brand and to establish usage among groups who don't read the newspaper much or who prefer to get their news and information online is largely unexploited. Overall, 62% of respondents have never visited their local daily newspaper's Web site.
- The average SUM for Impact newspapers Web site is 1.26. When considering only site users, SUM = 2.54. These scores are much lower than the average RBS (both on a scale of 1-7): 3.38 for all adults and 4.70 for readers only.
- In general, people in smaller markets are less likely to have visited their newspaper's Web site than those in larger markets. Web site users tend to be younger, more educated, and have higher income. Men report more frequent usage than women.
- Among those who read the print newspaper, we see higher RBS scores for those who read the print paper only, compared with those who read the print and online products.
- The study finds that there is a small, but significant, negative relationship between online usage of the newspaper and readership of the newspaper in print. Considering only people who are both print readers and online users, the higher the SUM, the lower the RBS.

- RBS of the print product among people who read the online version of the paper is lower than those who don't (4.54 vs. 4.78 on a 7-point scale). This disparity has significantly grown this year, and did not exist when we first measured in 2002.

Highlights: Newspaper Web sites experiences

- People have a lukewarm response to newspaper Web sites on these qualitative dimensions of engagement – they are not very engaged.
- For all but one experience, people rate the print newspaper higher than the same paper's Web site. That is, respondents rated "Gives me something to talk about," "Looks out for my interests," "Ad usefulness," and "Touches and inspires me" higher for the print newspaper than the Web site. These differences in the ratings are statistically significant. Since experiences correlate with behavior, it is not surprising that the higher engagement level with the print product translates into higher readership, whereas lower engagement with the Web sites is reflected in lower usage.
- The experience of "Trust and credibility" received the same rating both in print and online, perhaps suggesting that the brand name is a strong factor that translates to various media outlets.
- In addition, people who are heavy consumers of the brand (i.e., read in print and online), rate the newspaper slightly higher than those who only read the print paper, especially on the "Gives me something to talk about" experience. On the other hand, the online experiences of those who use the paper in print and online are no different than the experiences of those who only use the paper online.

Highlights: Web site usage and civic behavior

- Usage of local daily newspapers' Web sites is linked to civic behavior – in general, heavier users are more engaged in civic life.
- Differences in SUM levels between those who participate in civic activities and those who do not are not as pronounced as the differences in RBS, suggesting that civic involvement has more to do with readership of print newspapers than it does with the use of newspapers' Web sites.

Table of contents

Page 4	How the study was done
Page 4	Usage of newspaper Web sites
Page 5	Who uses the local daily newspaper Web site
Page 8	Detailed Site Usage Measure (SUM) results
Page 8	All adults
Page 9	Users only
Page 11	SUM component: Frequency
Page 12	SUM component: Time
Page 13	Online usage and print readership
Page 16	Newspaper Web site experiences
Page 19	Civic behavior and news consumption in print
Page 21	Appendix 1 – SUM components by demographics

How the study was done

This study was conducted by Wilkerson and Associates by telephone in the original 100 Impact markets and comprised 3,072 interviews. All results have been weighted by age and gender to accurately reflect the markets included in the study.

Note: A list of the [Impact newspapers](#) and a copy of the [questionnaire](#) are located on our Web site at www.readership.org.

Usage of newspaper Web sites

To date, newspaper Web sites have achieved a relatively low level of penetration in their markets compared with the penetration of the print product – and a level that has been virtually unchanged since 2003. On average, over 60% (62%) of respondents have never accessed their newspaper's Web site, and only 14% have visited the site within the past week.

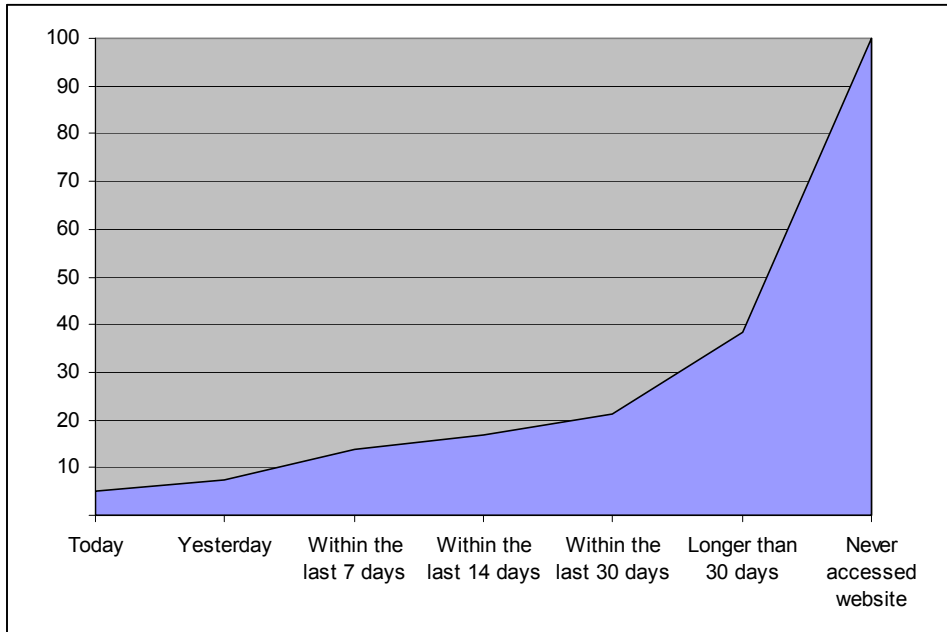
The last time accessed the newspaper Web site*

	2008	2006	2005	2003
	n=3,072	n=3,097	n=3,049	n=3,028
	%	%	%	%
Today	5	2	3	2
Yesterday	2	2	2	2
Within the last 7 days	7	6	7	5
Within the last 14 days	3	2	3	2
Within the last 30 days	4	2	3	4
Longer than 30 days	17	18	18	15
Never accessed Web site	62	67	64	70
Total	100	100	100	100

* This question was not asked in 2002.

About a fifth (21%) say they have accessed within the last 30 days. Of the total 1,159 people who have ever used a site, almost half (45%) have not used it in the last 30 days.

Cumulative percent most recent use of newspaper's site



Looking at these data by circulation size, we find that the size of the print newspaper circulation does not significantly correlate with the papers' Web site penetration in their markets. At the same time, news organizations with higher print circulation (and supposedly more resources for their Web sites) have slightly more loyal users – higher circulating print newspapers have a higher proportion of users who visit at least once a week, compared to lower circulating print newspapers.

The last time accessed the newspaper Web site, by circulation

2008	Industry	Circulation Size (000)				
		10-25	25-50	50-100	100-200	200+
Sample Size	3,014	1,001	610	643	302	458
Newspaper Markets	100	34	20	21	10	15
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Today	5	5	3	4	9	6
Yesterday	2	2	2	2	2	4
Within the last 7 days	7	5	7	7	7	9
Within the last 14 days	3	4	3	2	5	2
Within the last 30 days	4	4	4	5	5	3
Longer than 30 days	17	18	16	21	14	16
Never accessed Web site	62	62	65	59	59	60
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Who uses the local daily newspaper Web site?

The table below shows demographic information for those who have *never* used the newspaper's Web site compared to those who have. The two columns on the right compare those who used the site within the last 30 days with those who have used it longer than 30 days ago.

Gender is about evenly split among those who never accessed the newspaper's Web site. In terms of age, those who have never accessed the newspaper's site tend to be older – about 30% are over 65 years old. In the same vein, older people report accessing the Web site less recently than younger people.

Income and education also play a role in access to the newspaper's Web site: Those who have never accessed the newspaper's Web site have lower levels of income and education. However, income and education do not seem to play a large role in how recently the site was accessed.

Results for race/ethnicity should be interpreted with caution due to small sample sizes for some of the groups. Slightly more Whites report having accessed the Web site at some point (85.4%) than not (82%), and a greater proportion of Whites reports accessing the site more recently, rather than less recently. These results are in contrast with the data on minority groups, for which the results are reversed – they are slightly more likely to have never accessed the Web site (than to have accessed it) and to have accessed it less recently.

Newspaper Web site usage, by demographics, 2008

	NEVER used	EVER used	USED within last 30 days	USED longer than 30 days
n=3,012	n=1,857	n=1,159	n=637	n=522
	%	%	%	%
Male	48.73	49.65	49.45	50.00
Female	51.27	50.35	50.55	50.00
18 to 24	6.29	5.01	4.55	5.57
25 to 34	11.33	20.57	20.41	20.73
35 to 44	22.07	36.91	40.50	32.44
45 to 54	13.12	15.73	15.23	16.51
55 to 64	17.14	14.35	13.19	15.74
65 or older	30.04	7.43	6.12	9.02
BELOW \$25,000	22.16	9.24	8.83	9.75
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	26.96	23.56	22.41	25.00
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	19.19	23.75	23.77	23.73
\$75,000 OR MORE	31.69	43.45	44.99	41.53
Less than H.S. grad	6.76	2.17	1.90	2.50
Graduated H.S. (including G.E.D)	29.23	14.15	12.84	15.74
Some college	31.35	30.47	31.06	29.75
College degree	18.48	27.26	28.21	26.10
Post-grad	14.18	25.95	25.99	25.91
White/Caucasian	82.00	85.43	88.64	81.55
African American	9.00	7.29	6.08	8.74
Hispanic	3.98	2.90	1.92	4.08
Asian	2.32	2.02	1.76	2.33
Or a member of another group	2.21	1.58	0.80	2.52
Mixed, Multi-racial	0.50	0.79	0.80	0.78

Detailed Site Usage Measure (SUM) results

To more precisely measure usage, we used the Site Usage Measure ([SUM](#)) which measures behavior online. SUM is a composite measure of online behavior which combines frequency with time spent, and transform these to a single scale ranging from 1 (non user) to 7 (heavy user).

All adults

When looking at all adults in the sample, the average SUM score is very low (1.26 on a scale of 1-7), indicating that usage of the newspapers' Web sites is light and that their penetration in their respective markets is quite low.

People with higher education and income, and people who are age mid-20 to mid-40 tend to be heavier users of these sites. Gender and race do not appear to be relevant factors.

SUM summary table: All adults

2008	Count	SUM
Overall	3,012	1.26
Male	1,479	1.26
Female	1,532	1.26
18 to 24	174	1.29
25 to 34	447	1.42
35 to 44	833	1.40
45 to 54	424	1.25
55 to 64	481	1.17
65 or older	639	1.05
BELOW \$25,000	463	1.17
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	694	1.24
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	569	1.34
\$75,000 OR MORE	980	1.29
Less than high school graduate	149	1.11
Graduated high school (including GED)	699	1.16
Some college	926	1.26
Completed 4-year degree	652	1.31
Working on or completed post graduate	557	1.38
Caucasian	2,456	1.27
African-American	246	1.20
Hispanic	105	1.20
Asian	65	1.24
Other	57	1.17
Mixed / Multi-Racial	17	1.34

The size of the news organization, as measured by the print newspaper circulation, does not correlate with online usage. It comes into play only when the circulation is very large, and even then it does not pass statistical significance.

SUM by circulation group

2008	Industry	Circulation size (000)				
		10-25	25-50	50-100	100-200	200+
SUM	1.26	1.25	1.21	1.26	1.29	1.34
Sample Size	3,012	1,001	611	641	302	457
Newspaper Markets	100	34	20	21	10	15

Users only

While looking at users among the general adult population gives a picture of performance in the market, it is also important to look at what is happening among those who do use the newspaper's Web site (measured as SUM >1 who have used the site within the last 30 days). SUM for users only is 2.54, higher than for the population in general.

When users are separated from non-users, it is apparent that the proportion of non-users in the sample affects overall SUM levels. This year's sample includes 83% non-users.

Sample make-up: Users vs. non-users

2008	Non-users	Users
n=3,012	n=2,501 83%	n=511 17%
SUM (scale 1-7)	1.00	2.54

Young people, while a much smaller proportion of users, have higher SUM scores than older users (this is a different pattern than readers-only and readership, or RBS, of the print newspaper). Women also tend to be heavier users of newspapers' Web sites. No real patterns emerge with respect to income, education, and race / ethnicity and their relationship to SUM for users-only. Note that small sample size in these categories require that we interpret these findings with caution.

SUM summary table: Users only

2008	Count	SUM
Overall	511	2.54
Male	266	2.44
Female	246	2.65
18 to 24	27	2.82
25 to 34	116	2.64
35 to 44	212	2.55
45 to 54	75	2.44
55 to 64	58	2.42
65 or older	24	2.26
BELOW \$25,000	45	2.77
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	113	2.50
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	111	2.77
\$75,000 OR MORE	210	2.36
Less than high school graduate	12	2.45
Graduated high school (including GED)	68	2.66
Some college	157	2.51
Completed 4-year degree	140	2.46
Working on or completed post graduate	131	2.64
Caucasian	442	2.53
African-American	32	2.57
Hispanic	10	3.01
Asian	11	2.48
Other	4	3.69
Mixed / Multi-Racial	2	3.37

SUM component: Frequency

For all adults, the average number of visits to a given site barely registers (0.4 on a given weekday and 0.1 on a given weekend day). When looking only at those who use the Web site (i.e., SUM > 1), the average rises to 1.7 times on a given weekday and 0.6 on a given weekend day.

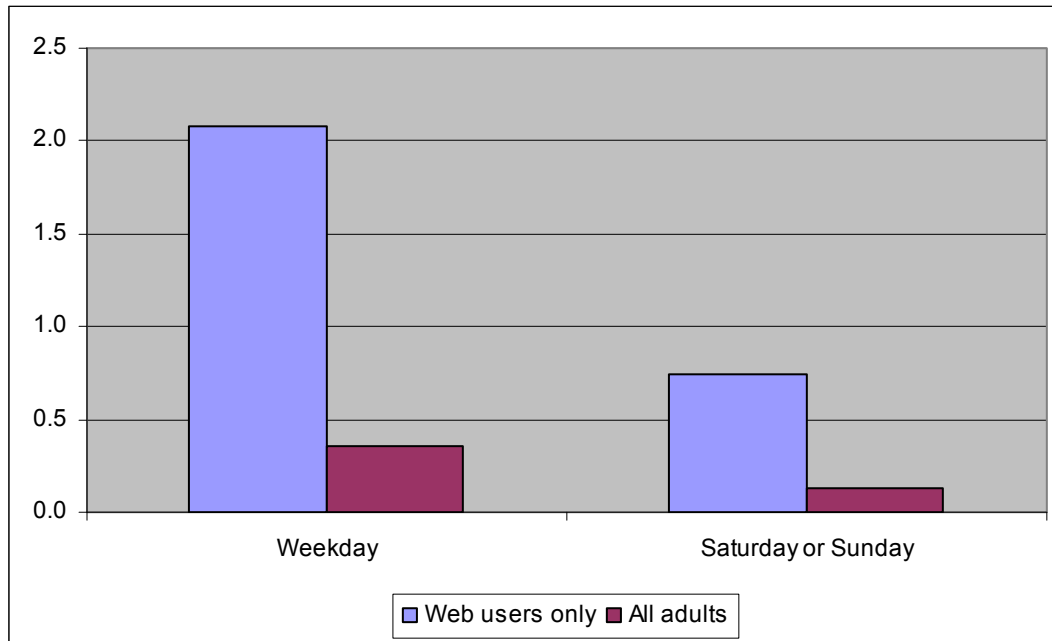
Number of visits to paper's website on a typical weekday

		1 time	2 times	3 times	4 times	5-6 times	7+ times	Do not visit on a typical weekday	Average # of times visited
2008	Users only	56%	17%	7%	5%	6%	6%	4%	2.1
	Adult population	10%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	84%	0.4

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical Saturday or Sunday

		1 time	2 times	3 times	4 times	5-6 times	7+ times	Do not visit on a typical weekday	Average # of times visited
2008	Users only	38%	8%	2%	1%	1%	1%	49%	0.7
	Adult population	6%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	91%	0.1

Average number of visits to newspaper's website on a typical day



SUM component: Time

For all adults, the average minutes spent with a given site is about 3 minutes (2.9) on a typical weekday and about 2 minutes (1.9) on a typical weekend day. As for those who use the Web site (i.e., SUM > 1), the average time spent is about 14 minutes (13.9) on weekdays and 9 minutes on weekend days.

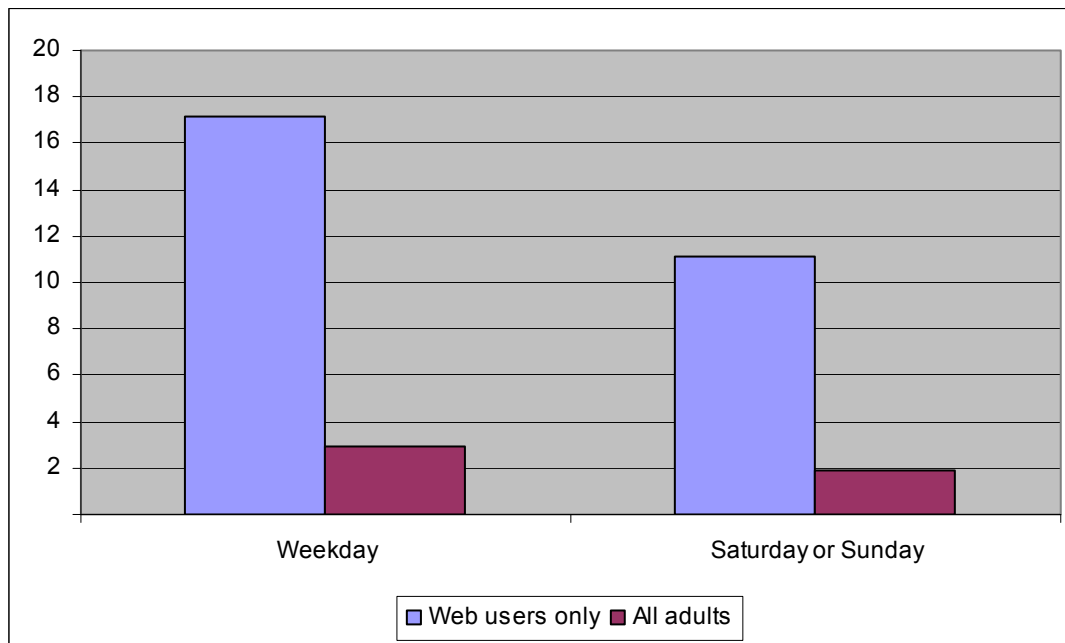
Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical weekday

		None	1-5 mins.	6-15 mins.	16-30 mins	31-45 mins.	46-60 mins.	1-1.5 hrs.	1.5-2 hrs.	2+ hrs.	Average minutes
2008	Users only	10%	22%	33%	23%	3%	5%	3%	1%	2%	17.2
	Adult population	85%	4%	5%	4%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2.9

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical Saturday or Sunday

		None	1-5 mins.	6-15 mins.	16-30 mins	31-45 mins.	46-60 mins.	1-1.5 hrs.	1.5-2 hrs.	2+ hrs.	Average minutes
2008	Users only	51%	9%	17%	12%	3%	2%	4%	0%	1%	11.1
	Adult population	92%	2%	3%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1.9

Average minutes spent visiting a newspaper's website on a typical day



Online usage and print readership

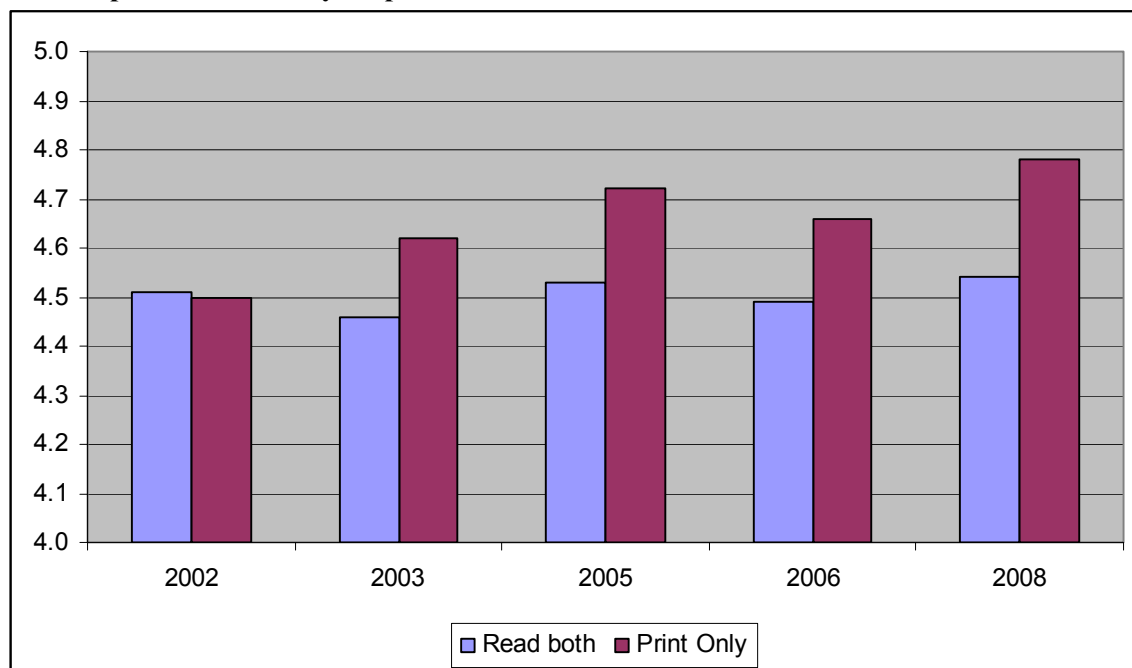
When considering all adults, the average SUM for Impact newspapers' Web sites is 1.26 – much lower than the average RBS, 3.38 (both on a scale of 1-7). While the measures are not identical – RBS measures time, frequency, and completeness whereas SUM only measures time and frequency – they have been tested and validated ([working paper](#)) and are shown to be robust and comprehensive indicators of audience behavior with these news products.

The study finds that there is a small, but significant, negative relationship between online usage of the newspaper and readership of the newspaper in print ($r = -.170$, $p < .001$).

When considering only people who are both print readers and online users, the higher the RBS, the lower the SUM. This means that, among those who read both the print and online versions of the same paper, the more they use the site, the less likely they are to read the paper in print and vice versa: the more they read the print paper, the less they use the Web site.

It is not surprising, then, that among those who read the print newspaper, we see higher RBS scores for those who read the print paper only, compared with those who read the print and online products. This indicates that online readership may be substituting for some readership of the print product. In 2002, the RBS for exclusively print readers was about the same as for readers who read both print and online. But beginning in 2003, there is a noticeable and statistically significant difference between the two groups: Readers who also read online score lower on RBS than those who read the newspaper but do not visit its Web site.

RBS for print readers only vs. print and online readers



The 2008 study confirms this pattern. The table below shows that the gap in RBS between those who read the print newspaper only and those who read the print and online versions – which has remained fairly stable through 2006 – has increased in this study.

RBS for print readers only vs. print and online readers

RBS among those who...	Read both print and online version of the local paper	Read only the print version of the local paper – does not read online	Difference in RBS
2008	4.54	4.78	0.24
2006	4.49	4.66	0.17
2005	4.53	4.72	0.19
2003	4.46	4.62	0.16
2002	4.51	4.50	-0.01

Looking at the data from another perspective, we find that readership of the print newspaper (measured by RBS) is slightly higher for those who have never used the newspaper’s Web site compared to those who have (this is for all respondents, including non-readers). Again, indicating that those who use the online version of the paper read the print version a bit less.

	NEVER used	EVER used	USED within last 30 days	USED longer than 30 days
	n=1,857	n=1,159	n=637	n=522
RBS (scale 1-7)	3.51	3.17	3.15	3.19

People who had visited their newspaper’s Web site within the past 14 days were asked about the impact of the Web site on their reading behavior with the same print newspaper (511 of the 3,072 respondents qualified for this question).

Do people use the print newspaper less because of the newspaper’s Web site?

	2008	2006	2005	2003
People who access site within the past 14 days	511	358	414	355
% of total respondents	17%	12%	14%	12%
More often	7%	6%	6%	8%
Less often	27%	25%	22%	19%
About the same as before you started reading (newspaper Web site)	66%	68%	71%	71%

These results indicate that the proportion of people who substitute the print newspaper with the online version is steadily increasing (among those who have accessed the site within the last 14 days). Note that, in any of the studies, respondents did not have the option to say they have never read the print newspaper – we assume that those people were forced to choose the option “About the same as before you started reading (newspaper Web site).”

Newspaper Web site experiences

As part of the 2008 study, we also report about people’s “experiences” with the online version of their local daily newspaper (or how engaged and involved they are with it). Experiences are measured by asking newspaper Web site users to rate how well a series of statements describes their own feelings about their local daily newspaper’s Web site (by name). The questions are asked on a 1-5 scale, (1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”). A complete [list](#) of all online experiences is on our Web site. In this study, we have measured five experiences people have with local daily newspaper Web sites.

It is useful for news organizations to measure and keep track of their audience’s experiences with various news products (e.g., newspaper, Web site). These experiences are shown to have a relationship with usage – they can either motivate or inhibit usage. We believe experiences provide a road map for various changes the organization can make – in content, presentation, marketing, functionality, etc. – that can lead to increased usage. A news organization can focus on small number of experiences, strategically selected, and make changes that will lead to enhanced experiences and increased usage. For this reason, we recommend that news organizations periodically measure audience experiences as a form of quality control against the strategic changes they make.

Several interesting findings emerge from our measurement of online experiences with the 100 Impact newspapers’ Web sites:

None of the experiences we measured rate very strongly one way or another. In other words, people have a lukewarm response to newspaper Web sites on these quality dimension of engagement – they are not very engaged. The experience ratings for these newspaper Web sites, as a group, are quite similar to the ratings these same experiences received when we measured 39 sites in 2005 (including non-news sites). While the methods used to sample respondents and implement the survey differ between the two studies, a comparison does help show that these ratings are in the same ballpark.

Newspaper Web site experiences	2008 Impact Web sites study (100 sites) n=511	2005 Online experience study (39 sites) n=2,215*
Something to talk about	3.31	3.09
Looks out for my interests	3.01	3.26
Ad usefulness	2.46	2.68
Touches and inspires me	3.05	3.02
Trust and Credibility	3.41	3.38
Connect with others	2.97	2.86
Average	3.05	3.05

* Note that caution should be taken with any direct comparison between the two studies, as they employed different survey methods in terms of sampling frame, sampling approach, and mode.

In this study, we measured the same experiences with regard to online and print, which enables us to compare experiences with the Web site to those readers have with print newspapers.

We find that for all but one experience people rate the print newspaper higher than the same paper’s Web site. That is, respondents rated “Gives me something to talk about,” “Looks out for my interests,” “Ad usefulness,” and “Touches and inspires me” higher for the print newspaper than the Web site. These differences in the ratings are statistically significant. This maps nicely onto the higher behavior scores for the print paper (measured by RBS) compared to behavior scores for the sites (measured by SUM). As mentioned above, experiences correlate with behavior, and the higher engagement levels with the print product translate into higher readership, whereas lower engagement with the Web sites is reflected in lower usage.

The experience of “Trust and credibility” received the same rating both in print and online, perhaps suggesting that the brand name is a strong factor that translates to various media outlets.¹

In addition, people who are heavy consumers of the brand (i.e., read in print and online), rate the print newspaper slightly higher than those who only read the print paper, especially on the “Gives me something to talk about” experience. On the other hand, the online experiences of those who use the paper in print and online are no different than the experiences of those who only use the paper online.

	All print readers	Print readers only	Both print & online readers	Online users only	All online users
Print newspaper experiences	n=1,975	n=1,626	n=316	x	n=316
Something to talk about	3.59	3.56	3.74	x	3.74
Looks out for my interests	3.42	3.42	3.45	x	3.45
Ad usefulness	3.26	3.24	3.33	x	3.33
Touches and inspires me	3.38	3.36	3.45	x	3.45
Trust and Credibility	3.35	3.35	3.35	x	3.35
Average	3.40	3.39	3.46	x	3.46
Newspaper Web site experiences	n=388	x	n=316	n=195	n=511
Something to talk about	3.24	x	3.35	3.25	3.31
Looks out for my interests	2.94	x	3.00	3.01	3.01
Ad usefulness	2.44	x	2.49	2.40	2.46
Touches and inspires me	2.96	x	3.02	3.09	3.05
Trust and Credibility	3.41	x	3.44	3.38	3.41
<i>Connect with others (Web only)</i>	2.98	x	3.03	2.94	2.97
Average	3.00	x	3.06	3.03	3.05

* Experiences are measured on a scale of 1-5.

** Online average does not include “Connects with others”

¹ Note that the Web version of the trust experience includes the two additional items which were not asked in the newspaper version: “I would trust this site with any information I give it” and “I feel safe in using this site.”

Note that we did not ask respondents to make a direct comparison, but an independent evaluation of their experiences with the newspaper and with the Web site.

Below are more details about the Web experiences:

Newspaper Website Experiences in 2008

2008 newspaper website experience factors	WEB Something to talk about	WEB Looks out for my interests	WEB Ad usefulness	WEB Touches and inspires me	WEB Trust and Credibility	WEB Connect with others
Overall	3.31	3.01	2.46	3.05	3.41	3.00
Male	3.31	2.91	2.38	2.95	3.37	2.99
Female	3.31	3.11	2.54	3.15	3.47	3.00
18 to 24	3.64	3.01	2.65	3.01	3.25	3.42
25 to 34	3.48	3.00	2.43	3.04	3.48	3.02
35 to 44	3.27	3.02	2.48	3.07	3.47	2.99
45 to 54	3.25	3.01	2.38	3.04	3.25	2.89
55 to 64	3.15	3.00	2.39	3.01	3.41	2.93
65 or older	3.09	2.95	2.52	3.07	3.36	2.97
BELOW \$25,000	3.13	2.97	2.37	3.17	3.29	2.99
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	3.45	3.12	2.70	3.14	3.47	3.08
\$50,000 TO \$74,999	3.46	3.23	2.54	3.11	3.47	3.23
\$75,000 OR MORE	3.22	2.82	2.29	2.94	3.38	2.85
Less than H.S. grad	3.48	3.09	3.54	2.76	3.39	3.58
Graduated H.S.	3.40	3.02	2.69	3.22	3.48	3.21
Some college	3.30	3.02	2.51	3.08	3.36	2.99
4-year degree	3.28	2.91	2.28	2.99	3.45	2.94
Post grad	3.28	3.09	2.34	3.02	3.42	2.91
White/Caucasian	3.30	3.00	2.40	3.04	3.40	2.97
African American	3.45	3.17	3.12	3.24	3.88	3.40
Hispanic	3.65	3.32	2.34	3.22	3.34	3.02
Asian	3.36	2.93	2.90	3.06	3.36	3.33
Other group	2.94	2.36	2.77	2.27	2.28	3.51
Mixed / multi-racial	4.00	2.68	2.31	3.61	3.37	2.64

* n=511, experiences are measured on a scale of 1-5.

Civic behavior and news consumption online

In 2008, we continue to examine the relationship between media behavior and civic activities. We asked respondents about their participation in civic activities and its importance to them and looked at their relationship to readership of print daily local newspapers and to usage of these newspapers' Web sites.

Three questions in the Readership Institute's 2008 study gauge people's level of civic involvement and its perceived importance. Other research has shown that civic involvement often relates to newspaper use. Here we asked how important certain civic activities were, whether respondents participated in a number of civic activities, and whether they voted in recent elections and plan to vote in upcoming elections.

The main results are reported in the [RBS study](#), and include:

- Respondents rate the five civic activities they were asked about as fairly important (between 3.23 and 3.79 on a 5 point scale).
- Women generally rate these activities higher than men, except for keeping up with state and national issues.
- Generally, older people rate some civic activities higher than younger people (i.e., elections, keeping up with local and with national issues), and others lower (e.g., doing volunteer work and donating money). The youngest group, 18-24 year olds, however, consistently rated all civic activities very high.
- Higher income and education correlated with higher importance ratings.
- Race and ethnicity are not a factor in importance ratings.

Further analysis shows that people who say civic activities are important have higher SUM scores. This echoes our findings with RBS:

SUM and importance of civic activities, 2008

2008	Not at all important	Not very important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Elections	1.08	1.20	1.21	1.28	1.33
Keeping up with local/ community events	1.04	1.18	1.26	1.33	1.29
Keeping up with state and national issues	1.07	1.15	1.23	1.31	1.31
Doing volunteer work or community service	1.08	1.22	1.28	1.34	1.21
Donating money to worthy causes	1.14	1.25	1.28	1.28	1.24

* n=633, SUM is measured on a scale of 1-7.

Also, similar to the RBS results, people who say they participated in various civic activities have higher SUM (statistically significant for all activities except “Given money to any organization or causes altogether totaling more than \$500” and “Volunteered in an organization affiliated with religion”):

SUM and participation in civic activities

2008	SUM (1-7)		RBS (1-7)	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Contacted an elected political official	1.43	1.20	3.48	3.34
Attended a political meeting or rally	1.41	1.24	3.53	3.36
Participated in a protest, march or demonstration	1.57	1.25	3.40	3.38
Signed a petition, in paper or on the Internet	1.37	1.21	3.30	3.42
Volunteered in an organization affiliated with religion	1.28	1.25	3.47	3.31
Participated in an organized project to try to solve a community problem	1.42	1.21	3.46	3.35
Given money to any organization or causes altogether totaling more than \$500	1.27	1.26	3.46	3.34
Voted in the November 2004 (Bush/Kerry) presidential elections	1.29	1.17	3.56	2.74
Voted in the 2006 congressional elections	1.29	1.21	3.65	2.78
Plan to vote in the 2008 presidential elections	1.28	1.15	3.48	2.67

When we add age into the mix, we find that the relationship between SUM and participation in civic activities holds for the younger age groups (specifically, 25-34 and 35-44), but that there is no statistically significant relationship between SUM and participation in civic activities for the youngest group (18-24) and people older than 45 years old.

Our study confirms a relationship between usage of newspaper Web sites and civic involvement. However, differences in SUM are not as pronounced as the differences in RBS, suggesting that civic involvement is not as sensitive to use of newspapers’ Web sites as it is to readership of print newspapers. Note that the study does not test for causality (i.e., whether readership leads to more civic involvement).

Appendix 1 - SUM components by demographics

2008 telephone study: SUM results by newspaper's circulation level

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical weekday						
	Industry	circ 1	circ 2	circ 3	circ 4	circ 5
	n=3009	1001	611	642	300	455
1 time	9.5%	9.6%	9.7%	7.6%	12.7%	9.7%
2 times	3.0%	2.1%	2.0%	4.7%	3.0%	3.7%
3 times	1.1%	0.6%	1.0%	1.1%	1.3%	2.2%
4 times	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	0.9%	2.7%	0.2%
5-6 times	1.0%	1.7%	1.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%
7+ times	1.0%	0.8%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%	2.6%
Do not visit	83.6%	84.5%	85.3%	84.4%	79.7%	81.1%
Avg. # of visits	0.35	0.34	0.28	0.33	0.38	0.48

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical Saturday or Sunday						
	Industry	circ 1	circ 2	circ 3	circ 4	circ 5
	n=3006	1001	609	641	302	453
1 time	9.5%	9.6%	9.7%	7.6%	12.7%	9.7%
2 times	3.0%	2.1%	2.0%	4.7%	3.0%	3.7%
3 times	1.1%	0.6%	1.0%	1.1%	1.3%	2.2%
4 times	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	0.9%	2.7%	0.2%
5-6 times	1.0%	1.7%	1.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%
7+ times	1.0%	0.8%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%	2.6%
Do not visit	83.6%	84.5%	85.3%	84.4%	79.7%	81.1%
Avg. # of visits	0.12	0.15	0.08	0.13	0.11	0.15

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical weekday						
	Industry	circ 1	circ 2	circ 3	circ 4	circ 5
	n=3003	998	609	641	301	454
None	84.8%	86.6%	86.2%	84.6%	81.4%	81.9%
1-5 mins.	3.7%	2.7%	4.6%	3.3%	6.6%	3.3%
6-15 mins.	5.5%	5.3%	4.4%	5.3%	3.3%	8.8%
16-30 mins	3.9%	3.6%	3.0%	4.2%	7.0%	3.3%
31-45 mins.	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%
46-60 mins.	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%
1-1.5 hrs.	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%	0.2%
1.5-2 hrs.	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2+ hrs.	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.9%
Average minutes	10.1	9.0	8.6	11.9	11.7	10.9

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical Saturday or Sunday						
	Industry	circ 1	circ 2	circ 3	circ 4	circ 5
	3007	1001	609	642	302	453
None	91.8%	91.3%	93.4%	91.4%	92.1%	90.7%
1-5 mins.	1.6%	1.9%	1.1%	2.0%	0.7%	1.5%
6-15 mins.	2.9%	3.5%	3.0%	2.3%	1.7%	3.3%
16-30 mins	2.0%	2.1%	1.5%	1.9%	4.3%	1.3%
31-45 mins.	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%	0.9%	0.3%	0.2%
46-60 mins.	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%
1-1.5 hrs.	0.7%	0.4%	0.3%	0.9%	0.7%	1.5%
1.5-2 hrs.	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
2+ hrs.	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Average minutes	6.8	6.2	4.5	8.2	7.9	8.7

2008 telephone study: SUM results by age

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical weekday							
	Industry	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	n=2996	173	446	833	423	482	639
1 time	9.6%	8.1%	12.6%	15.0%	10.4%	6.2%	2.8%
2 times	3.0%	2.9%	4.7%	4.2%	3.3%	2.5%	0.3%
3 times	1.1%	1.2%	2.5%	0.8%	1.4%	1.2%	0.2%
4 times	0.9%	0.6%	1.1%	1.8%	0.7%	0.4%	0.0%
5-6 times	1.0%	1.2%	2.0%	1.2%	0.7%	0.8%	0.2%
7+ times	0.9%	1.2%	1.3%	1.7%	0.9%	0.2%	0.2%
Do not visit	83.6%	85.0%	75.8%	75.3%	82.5%	88.6%	96.4%
Avg. # of visits	0.35	0.35	0.56	0.53	0.36	0.23	0.06

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical Saturday or Sunday							
	Industry	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	n=2994	174	443	833	424	481	639
1 time	6.5%	5.7%	7.7%	10.8%	6.8%	4.4%	1.6%
2 times	1.4%	2.3%	3.6%	1.3%	1.4%	0.8%	0.0%
3 times	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.8%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%
4 times	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
5-6 times	0.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
7+ times	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Do not visit	91.3%	91.4%	87.4%	86.6%	91.3%	94.2%	98.3%
Avg. # of visits	0.13	0.12	0.23	0.19	0.12	0.08	0.02

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical weekday							
	Industry	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	n=2994	173	445	835	422	481	638
None	84.7%	85.0%	76.6%	77.0%	84.4%	89.6%	96.7%
1-5 mins.	3.7%	2.9%	4.5%	6.1%	3.3%	3.3%	0.8%
6-15 mins.	5.5%	3.5%	8.1%	8.1%	7.1%	2.7%	1.7%
16-30 mins	3.9%	5.8%	7.4%	5.3%	3.3%	2.7%	0.6%
31-45 mins.	0.5%	1.7%	0.7%	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%	0.2%
46-60 mins.	0.8%	0.0%	1.6%	1.7%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%
1-1.5 hrs.	0.4%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%
1.5-2 hrs.	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
2+ hrs.	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.8%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Average minutes	10.2	11.5	18.5	14.4	9.1	7.1	1.6

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical Saturday or Sunday							
	Industry	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	n=2993	173	443	831	425	482	639
None	91.7%	91.9%	87.6%	87.6%	91.5%	94.0%	98.3%
1-5 mins.	1.6%	0.6%	3.4%	1.6%	1.9%	1.7%	0.5%
6-15 mins.	3.0%	3.5%	3.6%	4.5%	3.8%	2.1%	0.6%
16-30 mins	2.0%	2.3%	1.8%	4.0%	1.6%	1.2%	0.5%
31-45 mins.	0.4%	0.0%	0.9%	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%
46-60 mins.	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.7%	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%
1-1.5 hrs.	0.7%	1.7%	2.3%	0.7%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%
1.5-2 hrs.	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
2+ hrs.	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Average minutes	6.8	8.9	12.2	10.1	5.7	4.2	1.0

2008 telephone study: SUM results by gender

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical weekday			
	Industry	Male	Female
	n=3009	1478	1531
1 time	9.5%	11.0%	8.1%
2 times	2.9%	2.2%	3.6%
3 times	1.1%	1.3%	0.9%
4 times	0.9%	0.6%	1.2%
5-6 times	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%
7+ times	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%
Do not visit	83.6%	82.9%	84.3%
Avg. # of visits	0.35	0.35	0.36

Number of visits to paper's website on a typical Saturday or Sunday			
	Industry	Male	Female
	n=3008	1477	1531
1 time	6.5%	7.1%	5.9%
2 times	1.4%	1.5%	1.2%
3 times	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
4 times	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%
5-6 times	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
7+ times	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Do not visit	91.4%	90.7%	92.0%
Avg. # of visits	0.13	0.13	0.12

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical weekday			
	Industry	Male	Female
	n=3007	1478	1529
None	84.8%	83.8%	85.7%
1-5 mins.	3.7%	4.0%	3.5%
6-15 mins.	5.5%	6.8%	4.3%
16-30 mins	3.9%	3.9%	3.9%
31-45 mins.	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
46-60 mins.	0.8%	0.7%	0.9%
1-1.5 hrs.	0.4%	0.1%	0.8%
1.5-2 hrs.	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
2+ hrs.	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%
Average minutes	10.1	9.5	10.7

Total time spent visiting newspaper's web site on a typical Saturday or Sunday			
	Industry	Male	Female
	n=3008	1478	1530
None	91.8%	91.1%	92.4%
1-5 mins.	1.6%	2.0%	1.2%
6-15 mins.	2.9%	3.5%	2.4%
16-30 mins	2.1%	2.0%	2.2%
31-45 mins.	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%
46-60 mins.	0.3%	0.1%	0.5%
1-1.5 hrs.	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%
1.5-2 hrs.	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
2+ hrs.	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
Average minutes	6.9	7.0	6.8