

How Quality Content will Survive the Media Tipping Point

The Changing Media Landscape



By Jennifer Risi, Managing Director of Ogilvy Media Influence and Head of Media Relations, North America for [Ogilvy Public Relations](#)

For many of us, our interaction with media begins when our eyes open and only ends when our eyes close. As digital platforms continue to gain share of voice, the media landscape is transforming quicker than ever.

Every day our world is becoming increasingly more mobile. It wasn't long ago that laptops made the (at the time) shocking move past desktops as the computer of choice. Pretty soon, there won't be a need for a device that doesn't fit in your pocket. We will be able to access the web anywhere, anytime from any screen. Times have changed, and the tipping point is behind us.

As mobile and video move to consume us, publishers and media are wondering how to adapt to the new model of consumption?

Nearly two-thirds of Americans own a smartphone, and a significant number of them rely primarily on their smartphone for access to pretty much everything. As more people migrate online, fewer people are reading physical newspapers.

According to [Pew Research Center's State of the News Media 2015 Report](#), last year newspapers underwent a decline in circulation by three percent. News is consumed in shorter bites and shorter time than previously, and our mediums for consumption have also changed as new platforms and devices emerge such as Snapchat, Vine and wearables.

Today, digital traffic is the major force driving news consumption, and mobile platforms especially outpace desktop platforms; 39 out of 50 news sites gain more traffic from mobile devices. The media industry has kept pace with this change – beginning to recognize that mobile platforms, with their large readerships, make non-mobile devices less relevant.

Notably, the trend doesn't suggest or reflect any less of an interest in news in general, or any less of a standard for quality reporting. Throughout the television industry, local and network news actually increased their numbers of viewers this year. Cable news, saw declines last year but their website audience grew.

The media world is changing so rapidly it has been difficult for many print outlets to figure out how to adapt. Newsweek, one of America's oldest weekly news magazines was rocked by declining advertising and subscription revenues several years ago and was forced to merge with The Daily Beast, a next generation news outlet at the time. But the marriage wasn't a good fit and a few years later the magazine was sold off and The Daily Beast remained – and today it is one of the fastest growing news sites.

On the other hand, savvy media outlets haven't just been sitting back and watching their circulation numbers drop. They've recognized the audience's hunger for mobile news, and have adapted. For example:

- The Wall Street Journal recently launched a new mobile

app for subscribers called “What’s News”. The app isn’t trying to provide long reads – it simply provides the most recent ‘Top 10 News Items of the Moment’ – entries are a maximum of 350 words. This content is written exclusively for the mobile consumer, on the platform they want.

- Time Inc purchased Zooey Deschanel’s online media startup Hello Giggles for around \$30 million and Jame Pratt’s women’s lifestyle websites, xoJane and xoVain – bolstering its women’s lifestyle digital portfolio. As only a few traditional media conglomerates remain intact, the savvy companies will continue to expand their portfolios to make investments in non-traditional media and digital ventures as they seek to create a multi-platform audience.
- CNN the creator of 24/7 cable news is embracing new media video capabilities. CNN is launching “Vice news-style” video series targeted at millennials called Great Big Stories which is a news platform that spans across desktop, iPhone, Android and Facebook.

In this new space, as advertisements have become increasingly synonymous with mobile platforms, editors will continue to worry about revenue. This is an integral part of the media industry, and it’s not changing anytime soon. As print subscriptions rapidly decline, publishers are looking for a way to survive. A lifeline for quality media is the emerging trend of content partnerships between brands and traditional media outlets: sponsored content. Research shows that millennials (the largest demographic group) are averse to digital advertisements (pop-ups, banners, etc.) however, this group appreciates engaging sponsored content. Quality is key. Millennials will consume branded content and will even engage and associate itself with a brand if its attracted to its content. In light of branded content’s appeal to millennials, we should see a spike in media ad revenue driven by these content partnerships.

In the end, quality will always be the difference maker and the biggest attraction for consumers. People will always want the news, distribution and form aside – and we know that content will always be KING – something the savviest of media brands have known all along.

***About the Author:** Jennifer Risi is a seasoned communications executive with more than 15 years of experience in strategic global media relations, CEO and executive positioning, crisis communications, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and business-to-business strategy development. At Ogilvy Public Relations, Risi is responsible for building and driving global strategic media relations for many of the firm's clients as well as to oversee overall media relations strategies across North America. Risi has also handled visibility programs for high-profile CEOs and heads of state including President Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia, CEO Emilio Lozoya of PEMEX and CEO Bruce Van Saun of Citizens Financial Group, to name a few. At Ogilvy PR, Risi launched UN Women's iconic HeforShe campaign with Emma Watson and UN Women executive director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka – creating a historic, worldwide movement encouraging gender equality. She also spearheaded Nationwide's Make Safe Happen campaign focused on reducing preventable childhood injuries in the home, which launched at Super Bowl XLIX. Additionally, Risi leads the agency's relationship with Citizens Financial Group – a focused national media relations campaign promoting the bank's portfolio and executive team, while also handling the bank's phased IPO [the most successful financial services IPO in U.S. history]. Risi also led the agency's award-winning global relationship with the government of Mexico, which focused on promoting the country as an investment hub and travel destination of choice. Currently, she leads the agency's award-winning global relationship with the countries of Colombia and the U.S. Prior to Ogilvy PR, Risi worked with Weber Shandwick for over a decade, where she co-founded the*

firm's Global Strategic Media practice, a specialty practice focused on driving corporate brand awareness via a mix of media relations, speaking platforms and digital content. Risi has won multiple awards including most recently, 2014 SABRE Multimarket Campaign of the Year for government of Colombia and Two 2012 Gold SABREs and was a 2013 Cannes finalist for the government of Mexico. Risi earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Barnard College, Columbia University. She is also on the Advisory Council for LitWorld, a children's literacy advocacy group, and serves as senior media relations advisor to Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women.