

One News Page

News Release

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Public rejects Murdoch's intent to charge for online news

A poll of nearly 200 regular news consumers finds the public adamant that news on the internet should be free of charge.

This week Rupert Murdoch publicly mooted introducing charges to read his major News International titles online (News of the World, the Sun, The Times and the Sunday Times). The poll by recently-launched international news headline portal One News Page (<http://www.onenewspage.com>) found that over three quarters of respondents (77%) would **not** be willing to pay to read news on the Net.

The One News Page poll will offer little hope to cash-strapped media organisations suffering from big falls in hard copy advertising revenues.

Respondents under the age of 40 (*the internet generation*) were the most vociferous advocates of free news content. In this age group, over 90% of respondents who spoke to One News Page said that they would scour the Net for free stories rather than take out pay subscriptions.

In terms of news reading habits, 63% of those polled said they used the internet to see headlines rather than read stories in detail.

Fifty-two percent claimed they found it annoying that there were too many pictures and not enough stories on news sites' home pages.

There were some rays of hope for the journalist profession. Almost three quarters (72%) said reading stories from a "credible news source" was more important than the speed of story.

And just under a half (47%) were worried that if all news were free then professional journalism as it exists today might be threatened.

More than a third (37%) believed that in 10 years' time, newsprint would still be around, and just under a half (48%) still buy a daily paper despite being enticed by free newspapers on their daily commute to work.

Dr Marc Pinter-Krainer, Chief Executive of One News Page, comments:

"While no-one will dismiss the views of Murdoch, who is both shrewd and a notoriously hard-nosed media mogul, our poll shows that he will certainly have a battle on his hands. Put simply, online readers like free content, especially for mass market titles, and this is

particularly true of the 'internet generation'. In short, introducing subscription charges online is a risky business.

“More positively for news groups such as News International, despite the rise of citizen journalism, the public still largely look to established news providers for their stories.

“It is this public trust which offers the established quality news providers an opportunity to devise a successful business model going forward. Whilst charging for news content on the Net may not be the way, new delivery channels such as electronic readers (including the Kindle and Sony Reader) readily lend themselves to subscription models from the outset.”

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About One News Page:

One News Page is an international news portal website. Aggregating news headlines from major trusted news sources around the World, the One News Page site provides users with a powerful search engine to locate relevant news coverage easily. Users are referred to the source website directly by clicking on a news headline.

Users can access the One News Page website for the latest news headlines at

<http://www.onenewspage.com>.

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