

Thursday, 10 May 2018

It's official: Newspaper masthead readership is up 3.2%!

Roy Morgan today releases the latest readership report for Australian newspapers for the 12 months to March 2018.

16.1 million or almost 80% of Australians 14+ now read or access newspapers in an average 7 day period via print or online (website or app) platforms, an increase of 3.2 per cent from a year ago.

Four of Australia's top five leading mastheads have grown their cross-platform audiences, with Melbourne's The Age experiencing the strongest growth during the past year of over 10%.

These are the latest findings from the Roy Morgan Single Source survey of 50,014 Australians aged 14+ in the 12 months to March 2018.

[For full details of all mastheads surveyed click here.](#)

Australia's most widely read masthead is again the Sydney Morning Herald – with a cross-platform audience of 4,269,000, up 0.6 per cent from a year ago. This increases its lead over Sydney rival the Daily Telegraph which has a cross-platform audience of 3,301,000, up 0.1 per cent in a year.

Melbourne daily The Age has experienced the fastest year-on-year growth of an impressive 10.9 per cent and now has a cross-platform audience of 3,102,000. While the Herald Sun is the only top five leading daily to not to grow its cross-platform audience, down 4.1 per cent to 2,982,000.

Australia's two leading national mastheads have experienced divergent results over the past year. The Australian has grown its cross-platform audience by 4.7 per cent to 2,585,000 while the Australian Financial Review's cross-platform audience has declined 5.2 per cent to 1,404,000.

Top State-wide & National Mastheads by Total 7 Day Cross-Platform Audience (Print & Online)

Publication	Print		Digital (web or app)		Total Cross-Platform Audience* (print, web or app)		
	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	% Change
	'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s	%
Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)	1,098	1,051	3,638	3,801	4,243	4,269	0.6%
Daily Telegraph	1,410	1,325	2,228	2,396	3,298	3,301	0.1%
The Age	946	926	2,355	2,647	2,797	3,102	10.9%
Herald Sun	1,555	1,491	2,006	1,948	3,110	2,982	-4.1%
The Australian	934	858	1,769	1,971	2,470	2,585	4.7%
Courier-Mail	1,049	948	1,278	1,338	2,064	2,033	-1.5%
Australian Financial Review (AFR)	426	392	1,199	1,103	1,481	1,404	-5.2%

*Total cross-platform audience comprises print which is net readership in an average 7 days and digital which is net website visitation and app usage in an average 7 days.

[Total Cross-Platform Audience results available to view here.](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Print Readership

Overall 7.3 million Australians read print newspapers, including over 5.2 million who read weekday issues, more than 4.4 million who read Saturday editions and nearly 4 million who read Sunday titles. Although print readership has declined year-on-year to the early part of 2018, the latest figures show 36.5 per cent of Australians are reading print newspapers. In today's digitally-focused world they continue to be an important advertising medium to reach large numbers in key audiences.

At a state-level a bright spot was national broadsheet The Australian's performance in New South Wales which increased its weekday readership by 15.1 per cent to an average issue readership of 107,000 and weekend edition readership by 12.6% to 170,00 in Australia's largest state.

Weekend Newspaper Readership down, but AFR Weekend defies trend, up again

Australia's leading weekend newspaper is again Sydney's Sunday Telegraph with an average issue print readership of 878,000 – down 3.7 per cent over the past year – ahead of southern stablemate Melbourne's Sunday Herald Sun which has a print readership of 825,000 (down 3.4 per cent).

Other major titles that declined include the Saturday Herald Sun down 5.7 per cent to a readership of 764,000, the Saturday Sydney Morning Herald down 4.1 per cent to a readership of 633,000, the Sunday Mail in Queensland down a sizeable 13.7 per cent to a readership of 619,000 and the Saturday Age which was down 4.9 per cent to a readership of 616,000.

The AFR Weekend increased its readership by an impressive 9.6 per cent to 137,000. Driving the growth for the The AFR Weekend was the state-level increase in Victorian readership, up 32.4 per cent to 49,000.

Readership of national broadsheet The Weekend Australian was down 4.4 per cent to 608,000 while Schwarz Media's The Saturday Paper' readership was virtually unchanged at 110,000..

Top Weekend Newspapers – Ranked by Print Readership*

Publication	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	% Change
	'000s	'000s	%
Sunday Telegraph	912	878	-3.7%
Sunday Herald Sun	854	825	-3.4%
Saturday Herald Sun	810	764	-5.7%
Saturday SMH	660	633	-4.1%
The Sunday Mail (Qld)	717	619	-13.7%
Saturday Age	648	616	-4.9%

*Print readership is average issue readership.

[Full Newspaper Readership Results available to view here.](#)

Newspaper Inserted Magazines: Stellar & Financial Review Magazine up 16%+

Relative newcomer Stellar increased its print readership by an impressive 16.6 per cent to 1,051,000 in the year to March 2018. Good Weekend remains Australia's most widely read newspaper inserted magazine with print readership of 1,167,000 (down 10.2 per cent).

Also performing strongly over the past year were the Financial Review Magazine which increased its readership 17.3 per cent to 401,000, stablemate Boss magazine now with a readership of 150,000 and the Sunday Herald Sun TV Guide which was up 4.8 per cent to 498,000.

Other leading newspaper inserted magazines did not match these performances with Sunday Life on 695,000 (down 11.6 per cent) and the Weekend Australian Magazine on 650,000 (down 10.8 per cent).

Top Newspaper Inserted Magazines – Ranked by Print Readership*

Publication	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	% Change
	'000s	'000s	%
Good Weekend	1,300	1,167	-10.2%
Stellar	901	1,051	16.6%
Sunday Life	786	695	-11.6%
Weekend Australian Magazine	729	650	-10.8%
Sunday Telegraph TV Guide	602	565	-6.1%
Sunday Herald Sun TV Guide	475	498	4.8%
Financial Review Magazine	342	401	17.3%

*Print readership is average issue readership.

[Full Newspaper Inserted Magazine Readership Results available to view here.](#)

Newcastle Herald, Illawarra Mercury and Launceston Examiner grow readership

The Newcastle Herald is Australia's leading regional weekday masthead in the year to March 2018 growing its print readership by 5.3 per cent to 79,000 over the past year. Other regional titles to grow their print readership over the past year included the Illawarra Mercury up 8.3 per cent to 39,000 and the Launceston Examiner up 15.2 per cent to 38,000.

Top Regional Newspapers – Ranked by Print Readership (Monday – Friday)*

Publication	Mar 2017	Mar 2018	% Change
	'000s	'000s	%
Newcastle Herald	75	79	5.3%
Gold Coast Bulletin	63	53	-15.9%
The Hobart Mercury	50	49	-2.0%
Canberra Times	50	47	-6.0%
Cairns Post	53	45	-15.1%
Geelong Advertiser	61	41	-32.8%

*Print readership is average issue readership.

[Full Newspaper Readership Results available to view here.](#)

The Newcastle Herald is the fastest growing leading regional title when it comes to total cross-platform audience. The Newcastle Herald has grown its total cross-platform audience 2.8 per cent to 289,000. However, the Canberra Times is still clearly Australia's most widely read regional masthead with a total cross-platform audience of 452,000.

Total Cross-Platform Audience for available regional titles

Publication	Print		Digital (web or app)		Total Cross-Platform Audience (print, web or app)		
	Mar 2017 '000s	Mar 2018 '000s	Mar 2017 '000s	Mar 2018 '000s	Mar 2017 '000s	Mar 2018 '000s	% Change
Canberra Times	102	99	462	382	538	452	-16.0%
Newcastle Herald	150	168	154	153	281	289	2.8%
The Hobart Mercury	112	106	130	117	218	205	-6.0%

**Total cross-platform audience comprises print which is net readership in an average 7 days and digital which is net website visitation and app usage in an average 7 days.*

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan, says:

"A record high 16.1 million Australians 14+ access newspapers in an average 7 day period either in print, or online via website or app. This represents a healthy increase of 3.2% in cross-platform audience size with an extra 500,000 Australians now consuming newspaper content via one format or another compared to a year ago.

"The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) is again Australia's leading masthead with a total audience of over 4.2 million, nearly a million more readers than local rival the Daily Telegraph which now has an audience of 3.3 million.

"The strongest 12 month performance was by Fairfax daily The Age which grew its cross-platform audience by over 10% to 3.1 million. Almost matched in audience size by its Melbourne competitor the HeraldSun at just under 3 million.

"Also performing well over the past year was national broadsheet The Australian up 4.7% to an audience of almost 2.6 million.

"The take out from today's readership figures is that Australia's leading mastheads are continuing to build large and diverse digital audiences to replace declining print readership. As time progresses consumers of news will increasingly look to trusted media brands and outlets for the latest news.

"Retaining that edge for trust and reliability is key for newspaper mastheads continuing their audience growth that we have witnessed in recent years."

To learn more about Roy Morgan's Readership research, call (+61) (3) 9224 5309 or email askroymorgan@roymorgan.com.

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 75 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2