




IN PRINT WE TRUST

FACED WITH AN INCREASING NUMBER OF ONLINE CHALLENGES, PRINT REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST TRUSTED MEDIUMS IN THE EYES OF READERS, CONSUMERS, ADVERTISERS, AND MARKETERS.

| Sam Upton





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When was the last time you read a piece of fake news? If you spend a lot of time online, it's highly likely the answer is within the past few days. For some, it could be in the past hour. The scourge of online fake news has become a major problem for the publishing and marketing industries over the last five years, but more worrying is the fact that an increasing amount of people are being taken in by the stories.

A poll by newspaper industry marketing body Newsworks, has revealed that over 8 in 10 people in the UK come across fake news in their day-to-day lives, while over half (52%) admit they have been deceived by fake news at least once. Of these, almost a quarter say they have sometimes been duped, and 6% say that they have been caught out regularly. In Australia, only 36% of our youth believe they know how to tell the difference between fake and credible news.

Of course, a lot of fake news can be immediately discounted (the piece published by fake news publisher Ending The Fed "Pope Francis shocks world, endorses Donald Trump for President" which produced over 960,000 Facebook engagements) but the business of fake news is becoming increasingly sophisticated and lucrative, making it more and more difficult for the user to separate fact from fiction.

A Trusted News Environment

While the rise of fake news generates a deep sense of distrust among the public and a financial headache for brands (analysis by NewsGuard and Comscore found the misinformation industry generates around \$2.6bn in global advertising revenue), it does hold traditional print publishing and marketing up as a shining beacon of integrity.

"With the rise in misinformation from Russia and allegations of fake news driving political behaviour, trusted journalism matters more now than ever before," says Jo Allan, Chief Executive of Newsworks.

The Local Angle

The loss of trust in online media is outlined in the most recent Edelman Trust Barometer, which recorded a significant decline in people's trust of social media, from 43% in 2019 to 35% in 2021. However, in many countries, news is seen as one of the most credible sources of information. AUT's Research Centre for Journalism, Media and Democracy (JMAI) found while only 48% of Kiwis trust news, commercial and community newspapers both sit in the top five most trusted news and information mediums for COVID.

Whether it's for newspapers, magazines, catalogues, direct mail or door drop, the public's trust in print is now translating into positive action from brands and marketers. A recent article in the esteemed *Harvard Business Review* applauded a return to traditional advertising, predicting that B2C service companies would increase their traditional advertising spending by 10.2% over the next 12 months, and B2C product companies by 4.9%, largely led by online retailers.

WHY NOW?

So, what are the reasons for this resurgence? You could point to digital exhaustion or the mistrust people have in digital media. But what it boils down to is the fact that print works. Whether it's giving readers a clear, credible understanding of a story or compelling them to buy a product, print has a compelling power to engage and cause action.

"When used together, traditional and digital marketing can reach more audiences, build and keep trust, and motivate buying from consumers who otherwise might tune out marketing messages," concludes the HBR article.