

Q2 2022 Audited Circulation analysis (ABC/VFD)

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Local newspapers as a category continue to be the dominant force in the print media landscape accounting for 84% of all audited newspapers.



Local newspapers now circulate more than five times as many copies as daily, weekly and weekend newspapers combined (5,731,683 vs 913,503 copies in Q2 2022).

Weekly and weekend newspapers

Weekly and weekend newspaper sales continue to decline. Since Q2 2021, their sales have declined by 15.9% and 13.3% respectively. This is a total decline of 96,446 copies.

In Q2 of 2022 there were no weekly or weekend newspapers showing year on year growth.

The biggest declining weekly newspaper is *Soccer Laduma* with a loss of 18,000 copies. Significant declines were also recorded by *Ilanga* (6,592 copies), *Mail & Guardian* (3,578 copies) and *The Voice* (2,317 copies).

Amongst weekend titles, declines were recorded by *Rapport* (10,792 copies), *Sunday Nation* (7,988 copies), *City Press* (7,554 copies), *Isolezwe ngoMqibelo* (7,294 copies) and *Sunday Times* (6,976 copies).

Daily newspapers

As a category, daily newspapers have declined by 12.4%.

Daily Sun showed the largest decline in this sector with a 29.74% decline i.e 13,822 copies. *The Daily Sun* now only sells 32,661 copies.

Other big losers in the daily newspaper category include: *Isolezwe* (9,536 copies) and *Son* (5,392 copies).

There were daily newspapers that recorded slight growth. *The Star* and *Business Day* sales increased by 662 and 660 copies respectively. *Daily Dispatch* has also seen a slight increase of 348 copies.

A closer look at free local papers

Growth in some free local titles have been offset by declines in others.

Titles showing the biggest growth in the free local newspaper category include *Chatsworth Tabloid* (10.99%) *Heidelberg Gazette* and *District Mail* (11.61%), *Overport Rising Sun* (5.9%) and *Chatsworth Rising Sun*.

Year on year declines were recorded for *Tygerburger Eersterivier/Blue Downs* (8.01%), *Citi Vision Langa/Gugulethu* (6.58%), *Go& Express* (7.58%), *Highway Mail* (5.8%) and *Maritzburg Echo* (6.2%).

Evaluating sold local papers

Sold local newspapers face similar pressures to sold daily, weekly and weekend titles. But the 3% year on year decline in this sector is much lower than their daily and weekly counterparts.

These papers have localised content and regional news as their foundation - as such they are still in demand.

The sold local titles that have shown the largest growth include: Witbank News, Middelburg Observer and Mpumalanga News.

Noteworthy increases were recorded by Witbank News and Middelburg Observer who have grown by 8,812 and 6,307 copies respectively.

The papers showing the largest decline include The Weslander, Limpopo Mirror, African Reporter, George Herald and Mosselbay Advertiser. The average decline is approx. 1,000 copies.

Hybrid local papers

This category is a mixed bag with some papers growing while other decline.

Lowvelder Friday / Lowvelder Express has grown from 34,325 copies to 35,554.

South Coast Herald Ugu District News has dropped slightly from 14,915 in Q2 2021 to 14,504 in Q2 2022.

The Daily Maverick has changed sector, moving from hybrid to weekly. This accounts for the biggest decline in this sector.

In conclusion

In 2022, Local papers continue to provide better coverage than daily, weekly and weekend newspapers.

A press schedule which includes every audited daily, weekly and weekend title provides just over 1 million copies, countrywide.

In contrast, a local newspaper strategy can distribute ±5.7 million newspapers a week.

Being distributed and sold in geographically defined areas, makes them an effective route to market for more targeted, niche campaigns.

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