

**SURVIVING IN AN ELECTRONIC WORLD:
A DELPHI STUDY OF THE PREDICTED
FUTURE OF NEWSPAPERS**

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PREFACE

This study offers views about the direction of the newspaper industry and includes experts' predictions of that future. Specifically, this study offers views of what problems newspapers will face, some suggested solutions to those problems and some opinions about the physical look and content of future newspapers.

I would like to thank Dr. Charles Fleming, my adviser and dissertation chairman, for his wisdom, guidance and patience throughout this study. I also would like to thank Dr. Constance Lawry, Dr. Edward Welch and Dr. David Webster, my committee members, for their contributions to this study and to my academic experiences at Oklahoma State University.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Planning Ahead

“Paperless newspaper” sounds like an oxymoron, but that term may be a key one in the newspaper industry’s future. The idea of a pocket-sized electronic newspaper – one that someone might pull out every hour or so to check on stock reports or headlines – does not seem as outrageous of an idea as it did 15 or 20 years ago (Booker, 1992; Fidler, 1992; Fisher, 1992). After all, computers are getting smaller and more powerful, and such electronics are proven gimmicks: We already have tiny televisions and compact disc players. But the issue of what newspapers of the future will look like and what type of information they will provide has less to do with the available technology and more to do with economics, competition and the needs of the readers.

Those involved with the newspaper industry – either as professionals or educators – have to be concerned about suggestions for any radical changes in the physical appearance of a product so familiar to readers. This has to do with more than just whether readers will “accept” a computerized product. Those under the age of 35 grew up with computers, and many of those older have adopted them into workplaces and homes. The success of the home computer has proven the acceptance of the electronic medium.

Another important issue to consider is the extent to which advertisers can find a niche in electronic newspapers. Given the capability to zip through their

daily paper, will readers bother to pay any attention to the ads? Will interactive ads, in which readers have direct and immediate access to the advertisers, make a difference?

Many of those involved in the industry would say they expect to see an electronic newspaper – perhaps as a hand-held device or a computer modem or as some form of audiotex (via telephone) widely used within 10 years. But few, at least now, say they expect the electronic version to replace the current version anytime soon. So, at the Associated Press Managing Editors or the Newspaper Association of America meetings, when panelists discuss the future of newspapers, they concentrate on the issues at hand: how to improve the newspaper in its current physical state.

Change is a daily concept in a news industry. Changes, however, seem to come easier on the front page than within the industry. Newspapers have, of course, adopted many of the popular technological advances of the 1970s and 1980s. Electronic word processing, four-color reproduction and instantaneous photo development and transmission, in particular, are mainstays of every newspaper that can afford them (Garneau, 1986a).

Despite the sometimes splashy colors, the detailed graphics and varied fonts, newspapers of the 1990s, some have noted, are remarkably similar – at least in actual physical look – to those printed some 275 years ago in the North American colonies. Perhaps the biggest changes stem from the fact that corporations, not postmasters, are the chief publishers, and the toughest challengers are other media, not censors.

Even with the increasing competition for advertising from local television, cable television, shoppers, independent publications, magazines, department store fliers and radio, newspapers played a dominant role in the information sector until the late 1970s. Some newspaper analysts point to a slow economy as one of the

main reasons so many newspapers have failed since then (Garneau, 1990; Garneau, 1992d). When news consumers are on a tight budget, they are more likely, it seems, to cut the newspaper subscription than to throw out the television set. The future, from a 1993 viewpoint, is no more certain: Any newspaper barely sloughing along now seems unlikely to be around 10 or 20 years from now.

Versatility and redefinition may provide the answers as to how newspapers can survive and gain new readers in a world dominated by electronic motion and color. The focus should be on the effective use of technology – in particular, the inspiration to try something new while avoiding a gamble with company funds – and the sincere effort to meet the needs of readers. Newspapers have always stood out as the only media able to provide detailed information every day. Certainly, nothing can substitute for solid newsgathering and crisp writing. But the survival of the media may depend on innovations in the display of news and sensitivity to the type of information readers crave. The willingness to change – and remain flexible – could mark the difference between a newspaper with declining profits and one with a healthy future.

Background

Survival of the Strong

Newspapers have announced their own obituaries so often since the late 1970s, the deaths hardly warrant mention on the networks anymore. But the losses are stacking up, in many cases leaving large cities with only one daily newspaper. One of the most disturbing aspects of this is that many of those newspapers carried circulations of 300,000 or more. (Bagdikian, 1987, p. 118). Some of them had been around for a couple of centuries: The *Elizabeth* (New Jersey) *Daily Journal*, at 213 years, one of the oldest in the nation, was the first

print victim of 1992, ceasing publication in early January (Garneau, 1992a). According to the American Newspaper Publishers Association, between 1980 and 1991, the number of morning and evening newspapers dropped more than 8 percent (Peck, 1991).

J.E. Tynen (1992) offered a bleak view of life without a newspaper when he reflected on the drivers' strike at the *Pittsburgh Press* and its Joint Operating Agreement partner, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. As Tynen, a journalism instructor, moved through the days without either daily paper, he reached the conclusion that, "Newspapers supply in fact all the substance; TV can give us only a reminder of something we have picked up elsewhere" (p. 56).

Tynen added that, "My experiment leads me to the tentative conclusion that people who get all their news from TV do not have the foggiest notion of what is going on" (p. 47).

The strike ended in January 1993, and a single paper emerged: *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. But analysts of the newspaper industry noted that businesses in the area seemed to survive just fine without a major daily. During the eight-month ordeal, businesses relied on direct mail, telephone hotlines, suburban newspaper ads, printed fliers and extra broadcast time ("Pittsburgh," 1993).

Recent financial reports from publicly traded newspaper companies offered some hope for future financial stability: Knight-Ridder, owner of the *Miami Herald* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Daily News*, boosted profits for the first quarter of 1992, as did the New York Times Company and the Times Mirror Company, owner of the *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday* and the *Baltimore Sun*. Many, however, were simply regaining lost ground after two financially dismal years (Garneau, 1992d). The best time to sell a newspaper, as one newspaper analyst pointed out, was several years ago (Morton, 1992a).

So, why did American newspapers that had survived the Civil War, the Great Depression and 30 years of television start dropping out of existence during the 1980s? The best indicator, as this study will show, is that imperfect gauge known as “the needs of the readers.” The needs of newspaper readers have changed, as have the lifestyles of those readers. Newspapers, as familiar printed products, seem unlikely to disappear anytime soon. But electronic forms of newspapers have been around awhile: Some newspapers and other media started experimenting with home communication systems – often referred to as teletext or videotex – in the late 1970s and early 1980s. As Hynds (1980) explained, such systems allow for the transmission of electronic print via a monitor or television screen. The 1970s systems offered continuously transmitted information and, in some forms, allowed viewers to select information from an index and call it up by directly interacting with the monitor (p. 281). The Viewdata Corporation of America, Inc. administered some of the testing of home communication systems in the United States (p. 282).

Experts have disagreed for years about the actual potential of videotex (Weaver, 1983, chap. 2), seeming to agree only that videotex would not replace the newspaper as a provider of news but is more likely to act as a complementary provider of information.

Newspapers worldwide have transmitted information via telephone wires and television lines (Fitzgerald, 1990a, Stein, 1993a). More newspapers than ever are using some form of electronic information services, mostly audiotex, (Fitzgerald, 1990b), and some are using facsimile machines to provide tailored, updated news (Baker, 1992). The *Lansing (Michigan) State Journal*, in response to readers’ requests, offered a two-page facsimile tip sheet on mortgage refinancing (Baker, 1992). Some larger newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, offer multi-page abbreviated versions of their daily product for overseas readers

and cruise ships. Some are now experimenting with video newspapers and printing “tailor-made” sections, facsimile sheets and newsletters. Prototypes of computerized newspapers are already in use (Fidler, 1992).

Adapting to Change

Perhaps newspapers, like some people, gain strength in times of strife. Newspapers are like any other business in that they must remain flexible enough to adjust to economic or political conditions – or to changing demographics. Hynds (1980), offering predictions for the 1980s, suggested that newspapers needed to “think of themselves as information ‘providers’ and their audiences as information ‘consumers’” (p. 11). Technology, he said, should be used to improve delivery and meet the needs of the consumers. Newspapers of the 1980s followed Hynds’ advice in many ways, as they followed the 1970s example of the *New York Times* (Hynds) in offering special sections on such topics as business, food, science and sports. Likewise, many followed *USA Today* in its innovative use of color, graphics and shorter stories – all based on marketing surveys of readers’ preferences.

In the 1980s, the newspaper industry got serious about using computer technology. By 1990, many dailies had incorporated computers into the newsroom, not only for word processing, but also for pagination and in-house graphic design. Late 1980s figures indicated that some 10 percent of U.S. daily newspapers used electronic pagination – layout of pages via a computer terminal and specific software (Russial, 1989). The numbers have continued to increase. The facsimile machine (still mainly for the transfer of press releases and sports statistics), the modem (for computer data transmission), the scanner (for integration of words and graphics into a computer) – most of these technological

words entered print journalists' vocabularies just within the past 10 years. All are now vital tools in the newsroom.

The current trend, led in part by the Missouri Institute of Computer-Assisted Reporting at the University of Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia, is to train reporters to see the computer as a reporting tool. Specific software can guide a reporter through the records of a city building inspector's office, police reports or a list of the officers of registered corporations. With CD-ROM (compact disk read-only memory), reporters can sift through hundreds of back issues of newspapers (Gibson, 1992), books and public files.

The Associated Press (Rosenberg, 1992) led the way in the introduction of the electronic darkroom, with the installation of its Leafdesk. The Leafdesk, an electronic picture desk (EPD) that serves as a wirephoto receiver and workstation, allows for the all-digital delivery of AP photos. AP members receive the photos electronically via an EPD, where an editor selects and prints the ones the newspaper intends to use. Knight-Ridder offers a similar service through PressLink, its computer-to-computer information service. Technology has allowed for the processing of photos taken with a digital camera via a Macintosh computer equipped with image editing equipment. In addition, some systems, such as Nikon's Color Direct Telephoto Transmitter, work with a portable Macintosh to allow photographers to process and transmit photos within an hour of taking them – from almost any location.

The Future of the Industry

The future of the newspaper industry is a popular topic among educators and professionals. Many agree that newspapers will survive in some printed form – but only if they change to meet the changing needs of the readers. Donald Shaw, professor of journalism at the University of North Carolina, told *Editor &*

Publisher (Rockmore, 1992) that he was optimistic about the future of newspapers because, “qualitatively, they are better than ever today” (p. 28). He predicted that future newspapers would look more like daily magazines (in terms of format and design) and offer the in-depth pieces that television news does not have time to explore.

John Naisbitt, author of Megatrends, said (Rockmore, 1992) newspapers should avoid getting into a popularity contest with television and instead concentrate on providing a quality product. Newspapers, he said, are too dependent on sports and classified advertising and should consider spending more time covering the growing area of cultural arts.

Knight-Ridder’s director of New Media Development, Roger Fidler, agreed that newspapers “cannot survive as they are” (Rockmore, 1992, p. 30). He suggested they would have to undergo a transformation into an electronic medium – and thus, enter the age of the paperless newspaper. More recently, Fidler suggested that the ink-on-paper format will be a relic in 20 years (“K-R,” 1993).

A reporter and editor who is also a journalism professor, Jack Hart (1992) insists that the future of newspapers depends on the basics of the profession: writing. He notes, “We can fuss all we want about graphics and design, research and marketing, but nothing matters more to the future of newspapers than the quality of their writing” (p. 4).

Rupert Murdoch (1990), chief executive officer of News Corporation and a man known for his ability to shake up the media industry, wrote in *Fortune* magazine that, “As the world gets bigger, daily newspapers are finding it harder to keep people’s attention” (p. 120). Media, he said, need to be interactive and more geared to people’s specific interests. He predicted that within the next 10 years, most homes would include facsimile machines and printers.

A study conducted by the Future of Newspapers Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (1991) also suggested that future readers would require personalized news. According to the study, “at-risk” readers – occasional readers – wanted more “packaging” of the news. That is, they wanted information that is easy to find and easy to use. The results also suggested that those “at-risk” readers and “potential” readers were interested in newspapers that met their needs in terms of how they use their newspapers, rather than how they were targeted geographically.

The managing editor of the *Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star* in Norfolk, predicted at a panel discussion (Stein, 1992d) that daily newspapers would continue to attract more readers by offering better storytelling, more first-person reports and more computer-assisted reporting. He also predicted the newsrooms will bring in experts in such fields as science and economics to prepare reporters to handle those subjects. At that same meeting, Safir Ahmed, managing editor of the alternative newspaper, *Riverfront Times*, in St. Louis, predicted that newspaper dailies are too resistant to change and “will die” (p. 10).

A market study conducted by the consulting firm Clark, Martire & Bartolomeo Inc. (Garneau, 1993b) concluded that few newspapers have demonstrated the ability to make the necessary changes – such as investing more in promotion and product development – to build for the future. The study also predicted further circulation drops and that newspapers will deliver through whatever vehicle necessary (electronic services, alternate delivery) to meet reader and advertiser needs.

Statement of the Problem

In the adoption of new technology (namely, computers) newspapers have demonstrated their capacity for change. But how can they compete when CNN,

ABC, NBC and CBS are airing instantaneous pictures of wars, natural disasters, political events? The problem, as examined in this study, is that newspapers have to find a way not only to survive but to succeed in attracting new readers and stimulating the ones already faithful to the media. How will newspapers adapt to a changing industry? How will they compete in a world dominated by electronic images?

Technology, obviously, will continue in its important role in the changing realm of mass media. But perhaps flexibility and attention to readers' needs will also act as determinants in whether – or in what form – newspapers will survive.

Purpose of the Study

This study offers a look into the future of the newspaper industry. Specifically, this study examines newspapers based on the opinions of a panel of experts in the professional journalism field and in journalism education. The experts have predicted the problems that newspapers will encounter in the future, ranked those problems and offered solutions. In addition, they have predicted the physical form and content of newspapers in the future.

Research Questions

This study offers a panel of experts' opinions in response to the following questions: What problems will the newspaper industry encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers? How likely is it that each problem will occur? Which of these problems or issues are the most pressing? What are some possible solutions to these problems? What will newspapers physically look like in the future? What will the content of newspapers be in the future?

Methodology

This study uses the Delphi Technique, designed mainly to make predictions and consider solutions to current problems. In this case, the Delphi Technique involves a series of predictions and comments by experts in college-level journalism education and the professional journalism field. The professionals include newspaper analysts, newspaper owners/general managers, newspaper editors and representatives in industry organizations. The educators include college-level instructors in journalism who have studied newspapers, worked in the industry and/or offered public comment on the future of the industry.

This study consists of three rounds of surveys. The first round garnered the panelists' opinions as to the physical look and content of newspapers of the future and the problems newspapers are likely to encounter in the future. A compiled list of the problems and the predicted forms was identified from Round I and returned to the panelists, who were asked in Round II to indicate the likelihood of occurrence of each problem and each predicted form. They also ranked the top five most important or pressing problems. Panelists were asked, in Round III, to examine a ranked list of eight problems and offer their possible solutions to the problems and their predictions as to the future of newspapers.

Significance of the Research

This study offers journalism professionals and educators some guidance in preparing for the future of the newspaper industry. Because it consolidates many of the views about how newspapers might use technology to an advantage, this study gives professionals and educators perspective on how they can prepare for the future. Professionals may learn new ideas from what others have suggested;

educators might consider what changes in curricula might benefit students preparing for careers in print media.

This study offers a compilation of many of the ideas of recent years regarding the future of the industry and offers a consensus based on the expert panelists' views.

Scope and Limitations

The Delphi Technique study involves three rounds of surveys with experts in college-level journalism education and the professional newspaper field making predictions about the future of newspapers. The main limitation of this study relates to the Delphi Technique. Although the experts are chosen based on their knowledge and experience in the newspaper industry, they are not chosen randomly. Thus, results cannot be generalized to a larger population and must be accepted as the views of this particular panel. This study recognizes the fact that the responses represent the opinions of those involved and not necessarily an accurate prediction of the future.

Outline of the Study

In this study, Chapter II consists of a review of the literature – including a brief history of newspapers and some current views of those in the field. Chapter III outlines the Delphi Technique – the research methodology and design for this study – and briefly introduces the expert panel. Short biographies of the experts are included in Appendix A. Chapter IV includes a presentation of the findings, with analysis and interpretation. Chapter V includes a summary, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Overview

This chapter begins with a discussion of the current state of the newspaper industry in the United States and why a study of the future of the industry might contribute to the industry's longevity.

Also included in this chapter is a review of the relevant literature, focused primarily on the most current information about media technology systems, how newspapers are coping against stiff competition in a depressed economic environment and some industry professionals' views of the future.

Background of the Problem

The financial collapse of the *Washington Star* in August 1981 triggered what may be considered one of the most dismal eras ever in the United States newspaper industry (Bagdikian, 1987). The *Star*, nearly 140 years old and with a circulation of a third of a million, was only the first of many newspaper elders that would succumb to the pressures of severe advertising competition and a lackluster 1980s economy.

Three weeks later, the *New York Daily News* went out of business. Just four months after that, the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, established prior to the Civil War, went under, taking with it some 400,000 subscribers (Bagdikian). That same year the presses stopped at the *Cleveland Press*, established in 1878, and the

Minneapolis Star, which was more than 100 years old. Throughout the 1980s, the list grew. The *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* was one of the biggest losses in the 1980s, closing its doors in November 1989 (Stein, 1989).

The trend continued into the early 1990s (Hargrove, 1992), with closings including the *Anchorage (Alaska) Times*, the *Hollywood (Fla.) Sun*, the *Richmond (Va.) News Leader*, the *Spokane (Wash.) Chronicle*, the *Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) News* and the *Knoxville (Tenn.) Journal*. The second year of the new decade proved to be one of the harshest in the history of the industry. In 1991, Dallas joined the list as one of the largest U.S. cities with only one general-interest daily when *The Dallas Times Herald* sold out to rival *Dallas Morning News* (“Dallas Times,” 1991). That same year, the *Arkansas (Little Rock) Gazette* lost out to its inter-city rival, the *Arkansas Democrat* (Garneau, 1991b). *The National*, a short-lived national sports newspaper, also ceased publication (Morton, 1991b). The 1991 list also included: *The New York Tribune*, the *Lawton (Okla.) Constitution*, the *Shreveport (La.) Journal*, the *Union City (N.J.) Hudson Dispatch*, *The Manchester (Conn.) Herald* and Baton Rouge’s *The State-Times* (Wilson, 1992).

Similar to the 1980s trend, the afternoon papers suffered the most in 1991, as 42 of them folded, leaving 1,042 (Garneau, 1992b). What seemed to be an extraordinary number of newspaper losses prompted industry analyst John Morton (1991c) to comment that the trend toward one-newspaper cities (in which the morning paper usually survives) had been in motion for 40 years. The growth of suburbs and the development of modern printing technology have contributed to competition for the city newspapers, he noted. Morton said the changing market has created new competition – suburban newspapers, local television and radio – for the established city papers. He added that, “The closing

of any newspaper is a sad event, but unfortunately it will be recurring until market forces run their course” (p. 50).

The *Tulsa Tribune* folded in 1992, after its Joint Operating Agreement with *The Tulsa World* expired (“Good paper,” 1992). Rather than shutting down completely, some independently owned papers are hooked into JOAs with nearby papers. Under such an agreement, newspapers usually share advertising and production departments and maintain separate newsrooms. But JOAs may no longer be considered salvation (Naughton, 1993), because lately, afternoon papers (usually the weaker of the partnership) have been shut down as soon they start to drag on the profits of the group.

Newspapers’ other rescuers arrive in the form of media groups. Family-owned newspapers are harder than ever to find. Some fear corporations’ ownership of so many newspapers means a loss of independent voices. (Bagdikian, 1987). Bittner’s figures (1986) indicated that 60 percent of the daily newspapers in the United States were owned by chains (p. 50). That number has continued to increase. The biggest publicly traded newspaper companies include the New York Times Company, the Times Mirror Company, Dow Jones & Company and the Gannett Company. (Garneau, 1993a)

Len Forman, executive vice president of the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, (1989) noting the intense competition from yellow pages, weeklies, shoppers, television and direct marketing, suggested that newspapers “must create a bond with their customers strong enough to keep competitors at bay” (p. 45). To do this, newspapers, he said, must provide quality, a high level of service, innovation and a responsiveness to readers’ needs.

Kenneth Berents, industry analyst for Alex Brown & Sons, predicted further financial troubles for newspapers in the early 1990s but lauded those organizations, such as Gannett and Knight-Ridder, that had established programs

designed to meet the needs of readers (Fitzgerald, 1991d). The New York investment banking firm, Veronis, Suhler & Associates Inc., offered the most optimistic view of the early 1990s, with a prediction that newspapers would rise above their 10-year economic doldrums and experience an increase in advertising and circulation at an average rate of 6.7 percent a year through 1994 (Garneau, 1990). An aging population, the firm predicted, would aid newspapers. Newspapers did indeed make some gains in the first two years of the 1990s, but those involving advertising revenue were actually regains – of less than 1 percent – after a three-year slump (Garneau, 1993a).

But even as newspapers continue to go out of business all over the country, “Few people are predicting that the newspaper as we know it will vanish” (Bittner, 1986, p. 51). All the same, survival may depend on what Roger Fidler, director of New Media Development for Knight-Ridder Inc. (Markoff, 1992, p. F11), has termed “mediamorphosis” – newspapers’ ability to transform into an electronic media.

Need for the Study

There can be little certainty associated with predicting the future. Economists, armed with statistics and line graphs, and meteorologists, surrounded by computerized Doppler equipment, still step cautiously into the realm of prediction. But predictions about the future of the newspaper industry, like those of economists and meteorologists, represent more than just educated guesses. Much of the technology that will affect – perhaps dramatically – newspapers beyond the year 2000 is already in experimental or prototype use. Some of the technology has been around for years but has been limited in use. Some of the experts in this study have already used much of the technology and/or been involved in groups studying the future.

This study was designed to garner much of the existing information about newspaper technology and to offer – through the consensus of experts – some idea of how professionals and educators can plan for the future. Industry experts, after all, do seem to agree on one thing: Survival in the media industry, as always, depends on innovation and the willingness to change.

Review of the Literature

This review will focus on newspapers' efforts to cope – and improve their standings – in a changing industry. The relevant literature primarily covers the types of technology currently in use or currently under experimentation. Those whose views are reflected here are, like the experts in the study, insiders in the newspaper industry who are or have been involved in some of the innovative methods in use.

Not all of the relevant literature deals with technology. Many of those in the industry believe that newspapers should focus on doing better what they have always done – providing a good source of local news and offering news consumers in-depth information behind the headlines. The ideas of some of these people are reflected in this review.

Plugged In and On-Line

Ted Turner – the broadcasting tycoon who launched the Cable News Network – announced triumphantly in 1981 that newspapers would be out of business in 10 years (“Ted Turner’s,” 1992). The chairman of Turner Broadcasting System Inc. was, fortunately for the newspaper industry, incorrect in his generalization. He later admitted (Consoli, 1988) that he may have spoken too soon. But the industry, choked by competition and a slow economy, suffered throughout the decade.

Perhaps to readers or anyone outside the newspaper industry, the technological changes that have occurred since the early 1970s are not so obvious. Bittner (1986) noted that despite financial woes, political debates, world wars and social destruction, the newspaper “remains essentially the same type of medium that it was centuries ago” (p. 22). Indeed, *Public Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestic*, the Benjamin Harris publication that some consider the first American newspaper, contained the standard headlines, black-ink paragraphs and piercing editorials.

Actually, the basic format of newspapers is remarkably the same as in colonial days. For that matter, the way that news is revealed – through personal interviews, research and eye-witness accounts – has changed little. For newspapers, the key technological changes involve the methods through which news is gathered and the transformation of news events into a printed product.

Tape recorders, telephones, copiers and facsimile machines have all played roles in the transformation of news gathering. From hot type to cold, offset type to flexography printing, the pressroom, too, has undergone major changes. Garneau (1986a) reviewed some of the advances of the early 1980s now commonplace in many newsrooms: transmission of stories from portable computers, the use of a color scanner, pagination (electronic page composition), flexography – a keyless type of printing used in other industries for years as a cheaper printing method that brings out vibrant colors – the use of low-rub inks and electronic insertion systems. Changes inspired by computers have occurred so rapidly that Hynds’ description (1980) of video display terminals in the newsrooms of the late 1970s sounds incredibly archaic:

The terminal looks very much like a television screen with a typewriter keyboard attached to it. ...The person creating copy on a VDT types out his story on the keyboard as he would on an electric typewriter...If the

writer wishes to delete or insert something, he can do so easily by using his keyboard and cursor. The cursor is a blinking pulse on the screen that can be moved to indicate where the deletion or insertion is to be made (pp. 270-271).

Computers are widely used, even in the smallest of newspaper offices, for composing and editing stories, manipulating graphics and designing pages. A late 1980s study indicated that editors rated electronic editing cleaner and faster than the paper method (Lindley, 1988).

Kerry Northrup, an editor at *The Burlington (Vt.) Free Press* has designed the Reporter's Workbench, a user-friendly personal computer system that can be used to help with just about every newsroom task: running the writing and editing system, assigning stories, scheduling employee hours, preparing news budgets, retrieving graphics and maps and allowing reporters to access on-line databases at libraries. Through this system, reporters can speak their stories into the computer, play taped interviews into it, send or receive faxes, answer the phone or watch television. Northrup based the system on Apple Computer software and a Macintosh computer (Hardie, 1992).

Actual newsgathering, too, often relies on computer databases. Four universities house formal programs designed to assist journalists with using electronic records (Whiteside, 1991, p. 2pc). The programs include: the Missouri Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting (MICAR) at the University of Missouri in Columbia; The National Institute for Advanced Reporting, based at Indiana University in Indianapolis; The University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill) Program in Precision Journalism; and Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse. Such programs teach journalists how to use personal computers to interpret data (Whiteside).

Elliot Jaspin was the founder of the MICAR, one of the first organizations in the industry to promote exclusively the use of personal computers to analyze mainframe databases (Landau, 1992, Rosenberg, 1991b). With a modem and a personal computer, reporters can access electronic services like Lexis/Nexis, Vu/Text, DataTimes and Dialog, as well as public records and research journals. The basics of reporting remain the same, but through the speed of electronics, reporters can put together complex stories quickly. The computer does not replace the skills of the reporter; it enhances them.

Indeed, reporters can use computers to sort through all types of databases, including government records. *Newsday's* editorial librarians have created databases for news (in-house clips), voter registration lists, biographies, photo cross-references, advance obituaries and books (Stein, 1992c). Cecilia Friend (1992) reported data indicating the growing trend of computer-assisted reporting. A survey of 192 daily newspaper editors concluded that more than half use some sort of computer-assisted analysis. Most of those editors said the ability to use computers in this way would be important in the next decade.

Reporters have used database statistics to break major stories about the Internal Revenue Service, the National Transportation Safety Board, campaign contributions, property tax assessments and child abuse (Corcoran, 1991). The *Atlanta Journal* and *Constitution* won a Pulitzer Prize (Friend, 1992) for its 1988 series, "The Color of Money," which relied on databases to uncover a pattern of race discrimination in mortgage-lending practices.

Electronic Information Services

Newspapers have dabbled in some form of electronic information services ever since the early 1970s. Teletext was first used in Great Britain and later established as a prototype unit at Bonneville International Corporation's KSL-TV

in Salt Lake City (Bittner, 1986, p. 291). This one-way system sends newspaper “pages” over television signal frequencies or cable lines. Readers/viewers can then use a decoder to select or browse through the pages on a television screen or monitor.

Industry optimists thought they were looking into the industry’s electronic future with the emergence of videotex in the United States in the late 1970s. Videotex systems function as two-way information systems through a video display terminal or television set connected to a central computer via cable wires, telephone wires or computer modems. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) noted that videotex acts as an interactive system that allows users to send and receive data. The monitor is connected through the wires or modem to a mainframe computer, through which users may request a variety of information. Through videotex, which some have called the “electronic newspaper,” users have access to the most current information on such newspaper items as the front-page headlines, sports scores, stock market reports and weather charts. One of the earliest videotex services in the United States, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*’s StarText, has been on-line since 1981 and is a profit-making venture that provides news, stocks, classified ads, encyclopedia information, sports, travel data and electronic mail (“StarText,” 1992).

As DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) pointed out, Knight-Ridder, Times Mirror and other information companies spent a considerable amount of money setting up videotex services. The service has not been profitable for most, however, as the cost of buying the special receiver discouraged some potential users. Knight-Ridder and Times Mirror took their services off-line in 1986 (Zerbinos, 1990). H&R Block’s CompuServe, one of the few successful videotex services, uses home personal computers, equipped with modems, for transmission.

Although the number of homes equipped with a computer *and* a modem is still quite small, some newspapers have hooked up with this electronic bulletin board.

The *Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch*, in 1979, became the first newspaper to use CompuServe. The two-way system, which allows users – often businesses – to “write back” to the newspaper, was later made available by the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *San Francisco Examiner* (Bittner, 1986). The excitement has not gone unnoticed:

With a computer and modem, and a subscription to an electronic information service ... one can read ... the wires of the Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, among other news sources. Enough for any news addict. It is the video newspaper of the future, now. With nothing to throw away unless you print hardcopy of selected stories. And best of all, no inky fingers! (Line, 1990, p. 4)

Bittner noted that some business newspapers, including the *Wall Street Journal*, have made database information from Dow Jones available through a similar service. The *Journal* also makes certain pages of the newspaper available to subscribers via their home computers. Zerbinos (1990) offered evidence that people use videotex to search for specific information and remember more of what they see, as compared with newspaper readers.

But overall, videotex has not lived up to its overhyped potential. Some analysts say the early systems did not allow readers enough interaction in determining the news (Underwood, 1992). Another plague: The newspaper industry has lost court efforts to keep the Regional Bell Operating Companies (Baby Bells) out of the electronic information business – a new form of direct competition with newspapers (“Bells Ready,” 1991; Fisher, 1991a; Fisher, 1991c; Fitzgerald, 1987; “Judge Reluctantly,” 1991; Radolf, 1989; Smith, 1989). The

French Minitel system gives telephone users in France access to communications services via mini-computers, perhaps setting the precedent for American phone companies considering entry into the information services business.

Audiotex – voice information services – has gained in popularity. Audiotex is referred to by many different names, including data retrieval, electronic publishing, telephone information, talking newspapers, electronic information and computerized information (Buckman, 1991; Fitzgerald, 1990b; Garneau, 1986b; Kelsey, 1991; Stein, 1988). A typical system operates under one of two methods of access: a touch-tone telephone or a personal computer equipped with a modem (Smith, 1991). Most services use the telephone, allowing users to access recorded (regularly updated) information about sports, headlines, auto repair, stocks, pet care, horoscopes, television shows, music and many other areas. Most also include taped commercials promoting the newspapers. Some newspapers experimented with audiotex in the 1970s and 1980s but abandoned the idea after failing to make a profit (Fitzgerald, 1990b).

Slowly, newspapers again turned to audiotex in hopes that the old technology would help them keep up with the demand for instant news. The *Tulsa (Okla.) World* became one of the new pioneers in August 1986 with its introduction of an interactive system called CityLine (Garneau, 1986b). The system was developed by Brite Voice Systems Inc. and marketed by Mycro-Tek Inc., both of Wichita, Kansas. In the newspaper office, the Brite equipment consists of a personal computer with specialized software that can enter voice input onto a disk (Smith, 1991). The system receives news updates from the Associated Press and satellite-delivered recordings from Brite. The local staff members generate updates on local news.

Brite's system may be out of reach for smaller newspapers. The minimum equipment investment is \$40,000, but equipment can cost upward to \$200,000,

with operating costs running from \$76,000 to \$175,000 a year (Smith, 1991, p. 12TC). Other prominent providers of audiotex equipment and electronic updates include Perception Electronic Publishing of Canton, Massachusetts; Microlog of Germantown, Maryland; and Octel of Milpitas, California (Smith). Dow Jones Voice Information Services, a trailblazer in the original audiotex services, provides the popular Market Report and the Wall Street Journal's JournalPhone (Fitzgerald, 1990b).

Only 42 newspapers offered audiotex three years ago; that number increased to 450 by February 1991 (Fitzgerald, 1992a, p. 16). The managing director of Audiotex Group placed the figure at 1,200 in 1992 and predicted that some 2,000 dailies, weeklies and free community papers would offer the service by the middle of 1993 (Fitzgerald). The *San Diego Union* and the *San Diego Tribune* use audiotex to run personal ads (Stein, 1991c). That use alone is gaining a lot of attention and may be the most consistent money-maker. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* offers a similar service (Smith, 1989). Voice classified ads, which allow readers to get more information about a printed advertisement by calling a phone number, generate profits (Conniff, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1990b; Kerwin, 1992b; Stein, 1991c). *The Wall Street Journal's* Persian Gulf War news line generated 95 cents a minute and offered headline updates, features and direct reports ("Operator," 1991).

The Atlanta paper, and other Cox newspapers, are experimenting with a three-digit number, N11, with a nominal fee per call, as an alternative to the commonly used 800 and 900 numbers (Stein, 1993b). Confusion between 800 (toll-free) and 900 (cost per minute), as well as some electronic information users' distrust of 900 number prompted the experimentation.

Some have warned that newspapers must do more than dabble in audiotex and go beyond offering the conventional stocks, sports and headlines. One

expert in marketing technology noted the telephone companies' superior capacities to transmit information and warned newspapers to update their equipment and the use of audiotex (Fitzgerald, 1990a; Stein, 1990a).

At the InfoText '93 conference in Las Vegas, newspaper panelists claimed that audiotex can pay off when used correctly (Stein, 1990a). Those newspapers that have generated profits from the system have used them in ways that drew advertisers: as a pipeline between schools and parents, as a contest to pick winners in a basketball conference, as a provider of hospital information (Stein).

An expert in the electronic directory market service sees voice classifieds as the beginning of a new technological trend in newspapers: the Personal Newspaper (Conniff, 1993). Michael Conniff sees newspapers venturing more into electronics as a means to reach specific groups of readers with the information that they want – be it sports, business news or lifestyles features. Conniff noted that Knight-Ridder Inc. and the Tribune Company are already experimenting with such technology. Audiotex and the facsimile machine are key to the future of the Personal Newspaper, he says, in that both give newspapers the necessary equipment to update the news that readers want.

Newspapers executives were warned in a publication issued by the American Newspaper Publishers Association that they need to understand the importance of fiber optic development and consider the role of the thin wire networks – particularly as used by phone companies – in the development of information services (Rosenberg, 1991a).

Ever since the formation of the seven regional phone companies following the 1982 breakup of AT&T, those “Baby Bells” have sought to offer electronic information services, one of the markets forbidden to them. They eventually gained permission to enter the business on a limited basis. Newspapers, naturally, were shaken by the prospect of yet another competitor, and the American

Newspaper Publishers Association has fought through Congress the Bells' attempts to gain entry (Fisher, 1991a; Fisher, 1991b; Fitzgerald, 1990c; Gersh, 1991; Gersh, 1992; Radolf, 1989; Sukow, 1992;). The Yellow Pages Publishers Association, on the hand, fears the headstart on talking yellow pages that newspapers seem to have grasped (Fitzgerald, 1991b).

Chicago Online, a joint venture between the information network provider America OnLine Inc. and Chicago's Tribune Co., the media giant and owner of the Chicago Tribune, may well be the first partnership between an on-line service and a media company (Booker, 1992). Chicago Online's general manager said he hopes the venture will result in an electronic newspaper complete with electronic advertisements and individual databases tailored to demographic groups (Booker).

Technically, anyone with a computer, a modem and the proper software can become a publisher in the electronic information business. Computer bulletin boards and electronic newsletters are quite common and, in recent years, have complicated the legal issues involved in print journalism (Branscomb, 1991).

The USA Today Approach

Perhaps the most obvious physical change in the looks of printed newspapers came with the emergence of the Gannett Company's national newspaper, *USA Today*, which debuted on September 15, 1982 (Anderson, 1990). Unlike any other newspaper, *USA Today* attracted readers with its vibrant colors, short, crisp articles and lengthy special sections. The newspaper prompted imitations throughout the country, and some still say that this style, as opposed to the lengthy articles of a magazine style, will control the future of the industry (Bittner, 1986, p. 52).

The color aspect alone was not the newspaper's uniqueness. In fact, the *Milwaukee Journal* first used color in 1891, when it ran a red, white and blue banner across its front page in celebration of a gubernatorial inauguration (Anderson, 1990, p. 2C). With the first use of offset presses in the 1950s, color reproduction improved, and color advertisements were more common by the 1970s (Anderson). But the quality of *USA Today's* spot color and four-color reproduction pressured everyone else into doing a better job. The facts were – and are – that readers like color (Anderson).

Even *The Gray Lady*, the *New York Times*, gave in and added color to several Sunday sections in 1990 (Garry, 1990). Now that the *Times* has taken the plunge, color ads are next (Loro, 1992). The new \$300 million printing facility of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, allows that newspaper the capability of vibrant color printing (Loro). The *Los Angeles Times* is known for its quality color reproduction (Rosenberg, 1990). Improvements in photo reproduction, press systems (keyless inking, on-line video monitoring, six-page-wide presses), platemaking, paper quality and ink mixtures promise even better color reproduction over the next decade (Garneau, 1991a; Garneau, 1992c; Rosenberg, 1990).

A number of newspapers took on *USA Today's* popular “section” idea, an expansion of *The New York Times* format that tailors groups of articles toward the special interests – entertainment, business, sports, farming – of their readers. Many larger papers also tailor a special section of the newspaper for distribution in a certain region of their circulation area. This means, for example, someone in the south side of a metroarea will receive a “south section” filled with locally generated news. Computer-based distribution systems, designed to tailor sections of a newspaper for certain parts of a city, have been in use for quite some time, and now satellites and microwave transmission systems aid in the international

production and distribution of larger newspapers (Bittner, 1986, p. 46). *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*, to name two of the largest papers, use this technology to offer same-day delivery to customers across the nation.

Newspapers also use sectionals inserts – in sports, food, business and entertainment usually – to appeal to certain groups in their audience. The *Chicago Tribune* illustrated the latest trend – targeting the younger reader – with its recent launching of KidNews, a colorful section aimed at 9- to 13-year-old readers (Fitzgerald, 1992d). The 12-page, Tuesday section has been labeled a hit with young readers and is gaining in its success with advertisers (Hume & Teinowitz, 1992).

Knight-Ridder's 25/43 project, referring to the ages of the post-World War II "baby boomers," experiments with formats that appeal to that particular readership. The company's Boca Raton, Fla. *News* was redesigned in 1990 as a prototype to attract younger readers. Based on the results of 30 focus groups (Benson, 1992; Morton, 1990), the paper incorporated shorter stories (no jumps), indexing and front-page news briefs. The paper also developed seven daily feature tabloids focusing on such special interests as business and parenting. Some of the overall new features include shorter stories, key words or phrases, more graphs and more use of color ("K-R", 1992). The readers' response was positive during that first year (Fitzgerald, 1991c), and reader satisfaction jumped from 37 percent in 1989 to 59 percent in 1991. In similar fashion, some Gannett papers are aiming special sections, with titles like "Prime Time Plus," "50 Something" and "Vintage," at older readers (Pollack, 1992, p. 7).

Ralph Langer, former president of the Associated Press Managing Editors, told an audience at the group's 1991 convention that newspapers need to work harder to meet the needs of a variety of readers. Newspapers, he said, should diversify information "while our relative resources are on an Ultra Slim-Fast diet"

(Barnes, 1991/1992, p. 3). Langer pointed out that although daily newspapers still cost only 35 to 50 cents, consumers say “we don’t have enough value in their lives to be worth their effort and their quarter” (p. 3). Langer said newspapers need to find out what people value and want to know about.

David Lawrence Jr., publisher of the *Miami Herald* and former president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, agreed that newspapers need to be relevant to the needs of the 1990s societal trends. In particular, he said, newspapers should be open to the issues of a changing readership. Readers are better-educated and living more diverse lifestyles than ever before, he said. Newspapers should seek more diversity in the news and seek more input from readers, he said (Fitzgerald, 1991a). Lawrence (1992) said newspapers should provide readers with useful information, reflect the diversity of communities (in staffs and pages) and be smarter about customer service.

The Gannett Company’s attempts to meet the future needs of consumers involve News 2000, a long-term program aimed at bringing the editors and reporters closer to the people who read the papers. The project, being implemented at all Gannett-owned newspapers, emphasizes “community” in the construction of an editorially sound paper (Kerwin, 1992a). The project, based on improving editorial content through 10 key areas that form a pyramid (Benson, 1992), encourages a balance of news, with a focus on the topics of interest to the people in the newspaper’s community. Gannett papers are using focus groups, community forums, readership studies and surveys to plan their futures. Gannett editors evaluate the progress of the papers in accordance with company goals (Karius, 1991).

Cox Newspapers formed Cox New Ventures Group (Benson, 1992) in 1992 to pursue new ways of presenting the news. Some Cox papers, including the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, are already involved in facsimile delivery

of information. The paper also started publishing an Olympics Games newsletter in 1992.

Such programs are only part of what appears to be a trend for all newspapers to become what has made *USA Today* so successful: the people's newspaper. An emphasis on reader-generated stories, lifestyle features, graphics, shorter stories and larger body type represents the transformation of the 1970s ivory tower newspaper into a community publication (Stepp, 1991).

Susan Miller, Scripps Howard's vice-president/editorial, said a reader-driven newspaper is a reflection of the idea that service to consumers is the wave of the future and possibly the industry's salvation (Underwood, 1992). Newspapers might accomplish this by offering a "core" section and added-on, color-coded additional sections focusing on whatever news areas particular subscribers request (Gibson, Gholdston & Porter, 1990). By this method, readers might be reached through demographic – not geographic – zoning.

Lloyd Schermer, former chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Association (Stein, 1991a), said newspapers need to focus on matching editorial content to readers' interests and use information services and special events to reach readers. Newspapers must reinvent themselves, he said, or "lose control of our future" (p. 13).

Jean Gaddy Wilson, executive director of New Directions for News, a journalism research and development institute, suggested (1992) that newspapers hoping to survive must be innovative in their methods of reaching readers in a nation changed dramatically by immigration, an aging population, a changing family structure and rapid technological changes.

The president of the American Newspaper Publishers Association and publisher of *USA Today*, Cathleen Black, emphasized that newspapers must think foremost about customers – both readers and advertisers ("The Key," 1991).

Perhaps Frank McCulloch, a veteran of 50 years in the news business who retired as managing editor of the *San Francisco Examiner*, summed this trend up when he encouraged newspapers to give readers what they want – “hamburgers and a Coke” rather than “quiche and Evian water” (Stein, 1991b) Pleasing the public and publishing a quality newspaper is a tough but possible task, he said.

Paperless Newspapers

“Paperless” is the buzzword that has been whispered in newsrooms for some 20 years. Business analysts have predicted for some time that the “paperless” business office would someday replace the familiar one and influence scores of industries. Now, a new Boca Raton, Fla., firm known as Imaging Dynamics Inc. has devoted its resources to producing the equipment designed to outfit the office of the future (Knight-Rider, 1992) Frank Bennack, president and chief executive officer of the Hearst Corporation, did not use the term “paperless” but suggested that newspapers must be reactive to changes in the market and society.

Now, as we all know, television has had an impact but cannot and will not replace newspapers. Television forced us to confront the necessity of change ... to reshape and revitalize the industry. There’s no reason we cannot continue to occupy the premier role in society if we can accept that things change (Gersh, 1989, p. 24).

Panel members at “Journalism 2008,” a conference at the University of Missouri’s School of Journalism, delved into the issue of media in the future. Byron Calame, senior editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, predicted that by 2008, newspapers would publish “basic stories” with guides to more detailed versions available electronically (Stein, 1992b, p. 69).

Claude-Jean Bertrand, a professor of American Civilization at the University of Paris, said future newspapers would use computer technology to tailor papers to meet the needs of particular subscribers (Stein, 1992a). The media in 2042, he said, will deal with news in terms of information about the whole world rather than as a “mosaic of silly little events” (p. 70).

Knight-Ridder Inc., one of the early backers of videotex, is now investing time and money in the belief that newspapers will become paperless products. Knight-Ridder’s Roger Fidler told *Editor & Publisher* he believes newspapers cannot survive in their current state and predicts that prototypes of a new electronic medium, designed to replace the printing press, will be on the market by 1995 (Fidler, 1992; Markoff, 1992).

Fidler and Knight-Ridder Inc. colleagues (Markoff) experimented with an electronic newspaper, Viewtron, in the late 1970s. But Fidler’s latest prototype, developed independent of the company, is a notebook-sized, pen-based computer. Fidler’s advancements rely on flat-panel computer systems, which are currently priced out of reach of most consumers. Fidler foresees an interactive electronic newspaper that will allow readers to tap into an advertisement to contact the advertiser, to call up a sports page from the menu or to enlarge the size of the type for a particular story.

Fidler is director of Knight-Ridder’s Information Design Lab in Boulder, Colorado, which opened in 1992 and works on prototypes, assessing new technologies and the effects on the newspaper industry (Rosenberg, 1992). One of the devices Fidler and the others are studying is Apple Computer’s Newton, a pocket-sized computer device with a flat-panel display. A special pen allows the user to interact with the device, which may be an appropriate delivery vehicle for an electronic newspaper (Booker, 1992). Apple Computer, meanwhile, made plans to open a research and development lab adjacent to the Knight-Ridder lab (“K-

R,” 1993). Both companies seem to be gambling on the day that newspapers will be multimedia devices available on portable, touch-sensitive, flat-panel displays (Underwood, 1992).

Fidler (1992) notes that “dabbling in audiotext and fax news or tinkering with content and format are not solutions” (p. 24). He contends that newspapers should focus on a vision that is not dependent on ink-on-paper printing.

In the late 1980s, scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology developed their own version of an electronic newspaper, a computer system that actually scanned on-line databases of newspapers, wire services, magazines, television broadcasts and other services in search of items aimed at a specific person’s interests (Katz, 1990). Now, MIT’s Media Laboratory is researching the creation of “The Daily Me,” a paper tailored to an individual’s interests that may be available in such forms as a personal computer screen, a PC printout, a TV screen or an audio outlet (Fisher, 1992).

Some electronic systems offer a blend of videotex and an electronic newspaper. At Stanford University, MediaLink, an experimental news service that can be channeled through the university’s computer network, offers viewers moving pictures and sound to accompany news stories. The system utilizes a type of Apple Computer software named QuickTime, and the videos can be backed up and replayed or printed (Driscoll, 1992). The system, as Scott Kirk, manager of the typesetting shop and one of the main forces behind the system, pointed out, offers “the benefits of having the written word and also adding the visuals, (sound) and animation you get from television” (p. 19). The service operates rather slowly and was not designed to replace *The Stanford Daily*, which is still published. But even June Cohen, at that time the editor of the *Daily*, commented, “Newspapers can’t be everything” (p. 19). Similarly, at the University of Missouri, a journalism instructor is experimenting with a similar project. The

Digital Missourian, an electronic version of the *Columbia Missourian*, utilizes Optel, a computer program designed by Optical Telecommunications in Denver, and IBM personal computers.

Doug Campeljohn of Apple predicted that the publication of a daily interactive electronic newspaper would be possible in the near future (Driscoll, 1992) but added that he didn't see the new technologies replacing newspapers that soon. Stein (1990d) noted that John C. Malone, president and chief executive officer of Tele-Communications Inc. of Denver, said the electronic newspaper would not arrive as quickly as some believe because it lacks "the real power" of a print paper (p. 20).

Broc Sears, assistant managing editor/design for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, (1992) predicted that interactive television and newspapers would mix to create a comprehensive information service. He noted that he based his predictions on several assumptions, including the larger role of advertising in newspapers' existence and the inclusion of interactive promotional spots (perfume samples, glimpses into an upcoming movie).

Michael Conniff (1993), senior editor of an electronic directory market intelligence service, has predicted that the new technologies (including electronic newspapers) can work if the industry operates under the idea of the Personal Newspaper – one that is individualized according to particular readers' needs.

Scott Whiteside, vice president of strategic planning and advanced systems for the Baltimore *Sun*, said (Kerwin, 1992c) newspapers should focus on the electronic delivery of local news as a supplement to the newspaper.

It is important for newspapers to develop skills and procedures for packaging information for electronic delivery. Regardless of how it is displayed once it is delivered ... digital television, display telephone ... newspapers need to do something (p. 28).

Howard Publications has converted 18 of its papers to full pagination; the ultimate goal of publisher William E. Howard: fully digital production in which all color and graphics reproduction is done by computer (Fitzgerald, 1992b). *The* (Munster, Ind.) *Times* has reaped advertising benefits from the publisher's financial backing into computer software, Macintosh upgrades and a new building (Fitzgerald).

The Pulitzer Publishing Co.'s planning group, Pulitzer/2000, was created to examine and put into use new forms of technology (Fitzgerald, 1992c). Pulitzer launched a videotex project, Post-Link, recently. Ralph Martin, vice president/division manager, Metro Division, Thomson Newspapers Corp., (Consoli, 1991) told executives at the 1991 American Newspaper Publishers Association Technical Conference that newspapers must be "ruthless" in deciding on which technologies they want to spend their money and should be open to changes.

Clearly, even if the technology changes, newspapers still have the responsibility of filling in the news gaps around the other media. Joseph W. Ostrow, executive vice president and worldwide media director for Foote, Cone & Belding Communications Inc., said recently that "if newspapers grasp the inherent values of the changed technology," (Rockmore, 1992, p. 112) he believed they could become more important than ever. Ostrow predicted that newspapers would put more emphasis on services and less on news coverage. That could mean, he noted, packaging a newspaper for a specific readership.

Newspapers have put themselves in a box; they need to recognize they are more than printers of newsprint. They should open their eyes to what they are. They are the birth-to-death database of a community and they must learn to use that to help agencies and marketers accomplish their goals (p. 112).

Some see newsletters emerging as small, easy-to-produce newspapers of the future. Newsletters (Griffiths, 1993) can focus on precisely defined audiences and offer them the information they crave on specific topics.

The popularity of facsimile machines offers newspapers another way to reach their readers. *The New York Times* sends news summaries outside the mainland United States. The six- to eight-page version appears in five English-language editions: for Hawaii, Japan, the Caribbean, cruise ships and international readers. *USA Today* offers a sports fax sheet. Atlanta's Fax Interactive Inc., in collaboration with the *Atlanta Journal & Constitution*, offers a stock portfolio fax.

The Old-Fashioned Way

Not everyone sees the electronic newspaper replacing the traditional one. John Naisbitt told the journal that "it is pointless to try to recapture readers who get their news from television" (Rockmore, 1992, p. 28). Naisbitt said newspapers should concentrate more "on being important than on being popular" (p. 28) and added that "a flat screen will never replace newspapers" (p. 30).

Likewise, not everyone believes that newspaper journalists should be dreaming about an electronic entity saving the industry when old-fashioned techniques might do the job. Doris Walsh, *American Demographics* magazine publisher, predicted (Fitzgerald, 1989) that newspapers of the 1990s would need to work harder to understand and reach readers because of the change in demographics. In addition, she said, newspapers should seek a diversity in newsroom staffs, with the addition of older people, teenagers and minorities.

In 1990, the American Newspaper Publishers Association's "A-Team" studied three successful newspapers to determine the things newspapers needed to be doing for survival. Their results included: matching customer needs,

cultivating staff loyalty, using information vehicles, exhibiting, fair reporting, covering local news and not backing away from the type of stories people like to talk about (Stein, 1990c).

The chairman of the Roper Organization Inc., Burns W. Roper, predicted newspapers' future growth in providing more analysis and entertainment (Underwood, 1992). Roper, who certainly didn't seem convinced that a paperless newspaper would become a reality anytime soon, said he believed newspapers would function mainly as deliverers of fashion, health, entertainment and ads.

Newspaper journalists should also take heart from the fact that virtually none of those who gaze into the future are predicting the near-term demise of the newspaper-on-print. Technology, so far, has been unable to match the efficient way the eye can scan the newspaper page or the way a newspaper can be folded up and carried around – or the way it can be read while breakfasting over coffee and bagels on a Sunday morning” (Underwood, 1992, p. 27).

Richard O'Mara, foreign editor of *The Baltimore Sun*, (1990), said people were not choosing newspapers because of bad writing and limited story selection. Newspapers could survive, he said, if made into better products. A “Look at the Future” panel at a meeting of the American Newspaper Publishers Association agreed that newspapers are not just “relics of the past” (Stein, 1990d, p. 20) and noted that newspapers would have to learn to cope with the homogeneity of the markets.

A task force (Newspapers, 1990) studying the future of suburban newspapers reached these conclusions: Readers want news; readers want news relevant to them and where they live; readers do not want newspapers to ignore what is going on elsewhere; readers are not fooled by gimmicks; readers want

practical tips and advice; readers want specific information about sports; readers want logical designs and concise writing.

Uzal Martz Jr. (1990), president and publisher of the *Pottsville* (Pennsylvania) *Republican* told an audience at an international conference on telecommunications that, “By 2001 electronic delivery of news and advertising messages will be a widespread reality,” and he added that, “There will continue to be printed newspapers” (p. 146).

Change in the media industry – as in other industries – often serves as the catalyst for change in the members of that industry. Some predicted the demise of radio broadcasting with the arrival of television. The rise of cable television, some have said, could put an end to local broadcasts. But as one industry analyst noted, change rarely means obliteration.

It is important to remember that no form of communication – starting with newspapers and continuing through magazines, radio, television, direct mail, matchbook covers, billboards and what have you – has ever been destroyed by the emergence of new kinds of media. Existing businesses have had to change in response to new forms of competition, but they have always done this well enough to stay alive (Morton, 1991a, p. 46).

Dan Charnas, vice president and associate media director of FCB/Laber Katz Partners in New York, outlined the final moments of a fictional “last daily newspaper” in a 1990 article. Although a self-admitted fan of newspapers, he seemed resigned to their disappearance. “Yet, considering the technological advances that have been made in the field of communication during the past 40 years,” he said, “is it entirely inconceivable that in another 40 years, newspapers will be extinct?” (p. 82).

A newspaper analyst with Lynch Jones & Ryan (Morton, 1992b), offered an optimistic prediction for newspapers, noting that people “continue to desire

local information,” and he added that, “Newspapers are still hard to beat for convenience and low cost” (p. 64).

In September 1992, Ed Turner (no relation to Ted), the executive vice president of CNN, predicted that 24-hour news networks like CNN would be created in nations throughout Western Europe and Japan (Logan, 1992). “We are no longer a 9-to-5 society,” he said, “and people want to have access to the news when they want it” (p. C4). In that article Turner did not mention newspapers but the implication was clear: Newspapers, in their current state, can’t compete with CNN.

Hynds, in making predictions for 1980s newspaper industry trends, warned (1980) that newspapers must be adaptable to any possibilities, “if breakthroughs in technology dictate that the mainstream package itself be delivered by electronic rather than traditional means” (p. 282). That reality may have seemed far off in a decade when word processors were just beginning to penetrate newsrooms. But in the past 10 years, technology has changed the way journalists – and their consumers – view reality.

William Cowles III, at that time publisher of the *Spokesman-Review* and the now-defunct *Spokane (Wash.) Chronicle* and former chairman of the American Association of Newspaper Publishers, (Stein, 1990b) told *Editor & Publisher* his vision of the future of newspapers. Cowles said newspapers would develop cost-effective programs and exploit technology (fax machines, audiotex and videotex) to survive. He also predicted that newspapers and regional telephone companies would become allies.

John Diebold, a newspaper consultant, told those attending the American Society of Newspaper Editors convention (“Predicting,” 1988) that “the greatest danger for newspaper management lies in standing still” (p. 108). Diebold said newspapers need to keep up with changes in technology and take advantage of

opportunities. He added that he expected new media to complement – not replace – the existing paper form.

The head of an advertising executives organization (Fisher, 1992) predicted a market for a variety of electronic information products but added that “a portable product, like the traditional newspaper, will still be the newspaper of choice for a long time” (p. S-8).

Summary

Newspapers, having suffered recently through one of their worst financial periods ever, are struggling to find ways to survive – and gain new readers – in a time in which electronic sounds and motion dominate. Many newspapers are using such technologies as audiotex and facsimile machines to fill in the gap for immediate news updates that readers want.

Some industry experts predict that other electronic forms of newspapers, such as pocket-sized computer versions, soon will appear as accompaniments to the printed version and may one day replace the traditional newspaper.

Perhaps the one consensus that can be drawn from an examination of opinions about the future of newspapers is this: Newspapers must cease to be a part of the media ivory-tower syndrome. That is, newspapers should make efforts to find out what the readers want: be it shorter stories, more local news, more photos, more graphs – whatever. Survival depends not only on logical use of available technology but also on sensitivity to the needs of those who have supported the existence of newspapers since the beginning.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter details the research plan involved in this study, including a description of the Delphi Technique as a data collection method for investigating the future of newspapers. The chapter also includes explanation of the research questions guiding this study, a discussion of how the subjects were selected and the specifics of the three rounds of questionnaires. In addition, the chapter reviews the data collection plan, analysis of the data and limitations of the study.

Research Methodology

Allen (1978) described the social science methodology of the Delphi Technique as a tool used by policymakers to forecast and make plans for the future. Forecasters, he noted, often rely on the opinions of experts but find themselves perplexed when those experts disagree on an issue. The Delphi Technique, as Allen explained, offers a systematic method to “reduce the uncertainty to unity” (p. 119).

The Rand Corporation in California (Allen) developed the Delphi in the 1960s as a way to eliminate the influences of personal interaction among the members of a group. In the first practical use of Delphi, researchers collected the advice of seven experts to develop an industrial target system for nuclear weapons. The Delphi, Allen noted, operates under three distinct characteristics:

anonymous responses, controlled feedback and statistical group response. Perhaps most important, with the Delphi, the results are reported anonymously to each member, with an allowance for feedback on each issue in the questionnaire.

Of course, no one can be certain of future events – particularly of an industry's future – and thus, in this study, the Delphi method does not promise to reveal what daily newspapers will be like in the distant future. However, the experts in this study conducted their anonymous discussion based on their experience in the newspaper industry and their knowledge of technology potential and economic conditions. The result of this Delphi represents, as Allen emphasized, “a communication climate most conducive for rational and objective thought” (p. 121).

Selection of Subjects

Delphi methodology does not require random sampling of subjects. Allen suggested a panel of 10 to 30 and emphasized that panelists be experts in the topic: The main point is that they “have information to share, are motivated to work on the problem, and the time to complete the tasks involved with the procedure” (p. 123). The panelists for this study were selected based on their experience in professional newspaper work, their research about newspapers and/or their participation in national newspaper groups such as the Newspaper Association of America or the Associated Press Managing Editors. Most of the participants have commented publicly – either at conferences or through industry trade journals – about the future of newspapers. Computer database searches of industry trade journals, journalism faculty listings, trade magazines and newspapers led to the development of a list of potential panelists.

The idea was to assemble a panel of people with a variety of experiences in newspapers: editors of various size newspapers; publishers; professors;

consultants; analysts; and news services executives. More specific information about the participants is included in Appendix A. One panelist, Cathleen Black, was unable to participate after Round I, but her verbatim comments on the issues from that Round are included in Appendix M. The other 18 completed Round II, although one panelist's responses arrived too late to be included in Round III. All the responses to Round II are included in Appendix N. For Round III, 17 of the 18 panelists returned the questionnaire. The verbatim responses to Round III are included in Appendix O. The panelists include:

- Jennifer Allen; Ironton, Ohio; president and publisher of *The Ironton (Ohio) Tribune* and a member of the board of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association.
- Ben Bagdikian; Berkeley, California; professor emeritus of journalism in the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California in Berkeley, and author of The Media Monopoly.
- Cathleen Black; Reston, Virginia; president and chief executive officer of the Newspaper Association of America.
- Diane Borden; Arlington, Virginia; a former newspaper journalist and now an adjunct instructor at Mount Vernon College in Seattle.
- Phil Currie; Arlington, Virginia; vice president/news for the Gannett Company.
- Martin "Red" L. Gibson; Austin, Texas; professor of journalism at the University of Texas in Austin.
- Robert Haiman; St. Petersburg, Florida; president and managing director of The Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg.
- Ernest C. Hynds; Athens, Georgia; professor of journalism and mass communications at the University of Georgia and author of American Newspapers in the 1980s.

- Bill Kovach; Cambridge, Massachusetts; curator of The Nieman Foundation at Harvard University and former editor of the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*.
- Ralph Langer; Dallas, Texas; senior vice president and executive editor of *The Dallas Morning News* and past president of the Associated Press Managing Editors.
- David Lipman; St. Louis, Missouri; chairman of the Pulitzer Publishing Company's long-range planning group, Pulitzer/2000, and former managing editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.
- Maxwell E. McCombs; Austin, Texas; professor of communications at the University of Texas in Austin and former director of the American Newspaper Publishers Association News Research Center.
- Patricia G. McNeely; Columbia, South Carolina; associate dean of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina.
- Alan R. Miller; Arlington, Virginia; a newspaper consultant who is a former newspaper journalist and retired professor of journalism at the University of Maine in Orono.
- Dale Peskin; Detroit, Michigan; assistant managing editor of *The Detroit News*.
- David Scott; Atlanta, Georgia; vice president of the Cox Corporation's Newspaper Division.
- Patsy Watkins; Fayetteville, Arkansas; head of the Department of Journalism at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.
- Jean Gaddy Wilson; Columbia, Missouri; executive director of New Directions for News, a national think tank for newspaper editors and publishers.

- Nancy Woodhull; Pittsford, New York; president of Nancy Woodhull & Associates, a media consultation firm.

An initial group of 47 individuals was asked, via an introductory letter and stamped return envelope, to participate in this study. A list of those who were asked, including their responses, are included in Appendix A. Originally, 23 agreed to participate in the study. One respondent, David Lawrence Jr., publisher of the *Miami Herald* and former president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, said he was too busy to participate and dropped out via letter before returning the first questionnaire. Two others, John Morton, analyst for Lynch Jones & Ryan, and Allen Neuharth, chairman of the Freedom Foundation and retired chairman and chief executive officer of the Gannett Company, originally agreed to participate but dropped out during the first round. Morton did not respond to a follow-up letter, facsimile note or phone call message. Neuharth wrote a letter saying he did not believe he should be included in the study because he is retired from the newspaper business. He did not respond to a phone call message or facsimile note encouraging him to remain in the study. A fourth panelist, Bill Baker, vice president for news at Knight-Ridder Inc., left that position during Round I and was replaced by Marty Claus, vice president for news. Claus was asked to participate via a phone call message and follow-up facsimile letter but did not respond.

Of the 47, nine chose not to participate, while 12 did not respond to the introductory letter or follow-up letter. Two individuals died during the period in which the introductory letter was mailed. Another person responded to the introductory letter too late for inclusion in the study. (See Appendix A.)

Research Instrument

This study used three rounds of questionnaires as the research instruments for the Delphi Technique. The first and third rounds consisted of open-ended questions designed to garner a variety of opinions from the panelists, while the second round sought an evaluation and ranking of the responses of the first round.

Round I provided panelists' varied views on the physical look and content of future newspapers and their opinions as to the problems newspapers will encounter in meeting the needs of consumers. On the question of problems newspapers will face, panelists were asked to list five. The panelists were asked to list three to five physical and content changes, as well as an explanation of why these might occur and what effects they might have on readers. The panelists were asked to avoid ranking any of their responses in Round I. The Round I instrument is included in Appendix E.

Round II used a five-point semantic differential scale to allow panelists to note which physical and content characteristics newspapers were "most likely" and "least likely" to acquire in the future. Panelists did the same with the problems and were also asked to rank the top five problems, with "1" representing the most significant or of most concern. The Round II instrument is included in Appendix H.

In Round III, panelists were asked to suggest possible solutions to seven problems that made Round II's top five lists either as a result of the rankings or the scales. Open-ended questions were used to encourage free responses. The panelists were also asked to provide biographical information in this Round. The Round III instrument is included in Appendix K.

A personally addressed cover letter accompanied each questionnaire in each of the three rounds. The Round I cover letter elaborated on the introductory letter, including an explanation of the purpose of the study, the need for the study, the promise of anonymity among respondents during the study, the purpose of Round I, the response deadline, the address and phone number of the researcher and a statement of appreciation. For Rounds II and III, the cover letters included a statement of appreciation for the participant's prior response, the purpose of the round, the response deadline, the address and phone numbers of the researcher. In Round III, participants were also asked to submit a short biography/resume to allow for proper credit. The Round III letter also thanked each panelist for his/her participation in the study. Copies of the standard formats of the letters used in the Rounds are included in Appendixes C, F and I. A copy of the introductory letter is included in Appendix B.

Pilot Studies

Three experienced professional print journalists completed preliminary versions of the Round I questionnaire and offered their advice for it and subsequent Rounds dealing with the questionnaire. Those who participated include: Cindy Brown, an attorney in Norman, Oklahoma, who formerly worked as a reporter and copy editor for newspapers in the state; Brian Sherman, editor of a national medical magazine based in Oklahoma City, and former reporter and editor for newspapers in Texas and Tennessee; and Berry Tramel, sports writer and columnist for a statewide newspaper based in Oklahoma City and experienced reporter, editor and journalism instructor. Their responses, which are included in Appendix L, closely mirrored those of some of the experts who participated in the study. All three influenced the changes made in the instrument before its use in Round I.

Three persons with experience in social science research were asked for their feedback on the instrument designed for Round II. Those participants included: Mitch Bettis and Chris Morrison, graduate students in the Oklahoma State University mass communications program, and Tracy Behre, a graduate of the OSU Educational Administration and Higher Education master's program. All offered suggestions that led to the refinement of the instrument.

Research Design

For this Delphi study, 18 experts in the newspaper industry predicted the physical look and content of future newspapers, identified problems in newspapers' struggle for survival and suggested possible solutions to those problems.

"Experts" were chosen based on their experience in the industry and, in most cases, based on their public comments about the state of the industry and newspapers' future. The "physical look" of the newspaper was a reference as to whether the newspaper of the future would continue to be printed on newsprint, recycled paper (and if so, whether as a broadsheet or a tabloid) or take other forms, such as electronic. This also referred to the use of color, graphics, photographs and design techniques. The "content" referred to special sections to attract certain groups of readers, such as teenage readers, retired professionals, etc. A "problem" was defined as any situation, environment or dilemma that could threaten the stability of the newspaper industry.

Mail questionnaires, including stamped, self-addressed return envelopes or the option of a facsimile return, were used to collect the data.

Round I

Panelists were asked to identify problems that they believed the newspaper industry might encounter in the future. In addition, they were asked to describe the physical look and content of future newspapers. The questions were designed deliberately as open-ended ones to avoid limiting panelists' answers and allow the panelists the opportunity to guide the outcome of the study.

Round I's instructions asked the panelists to make predictions in three main areas, but they were not asked to set any priority on those listings. The instructions stated that the priority listings would be conducted in a later round.

Round II

The responses from Round I were recorded anonymously and then consolidated and paraphrased into general categories to be sent anonymously as part of Round II. The respondents viewed all the predictions made in Round I and were asked to rate each on a five-point semantic differential scale, noting which problems newspapers were "most likely" and "least likely" to acquire in the future. They were also asked to rank the top five problems, with "1" representing the one most likely to cause problems for newspapers in the future. Panelists also rated, on a five-point semantic scale, which predicted physical changes and content changes were "most likely" and "least likely" to occur.

Round III

In Round III, panelists were asked to suggest possible solutions to those problems that made the top five either as a result of the rankings or the semantic differential scales used in Round II. The open-ended format of this round, as in

the first round, was designed to encourage uninhibited responses. The panelists were also asked to provide biographical information.

Data Collection Plan

A letter asking the experts for their participation in a Delphi study concerning the future of newspapers was mailed on September 30, 1992. The deadline for reply was October 20, 1992. The initial letter was mailed to 38 potential panelists. A goal of 20 to 25 panelists was set for this study. A second letter, mailed to five "backup" experts, was sent out on November 16, 1992. The deadline for final formulation of the panel was November 30, 1992. Round I questionnaires were mailed on December 3, 1992, with a deadline of December 21, 1992. Round II questionnaires were mailed on February 5, 1993, with a deadline of February 19, 1993. Round III questionnaires were mailed on March 5, 1993, with a deadline of March 15, 1993.

Data Processing and Analysis

From Round I, the listing of predicted physical form, content and potential problems were reported as nominal data. The frequency of the listed characteristics and potential problems were tabulated. A "master list" of problems, predicted physical changes and predicted content changes was compiled for distribution as part of the Round II questionnaire. Those responses considered similar were consolidated. No statistical test was warranted, as the experts were not chosen randomly.

The responses from Round II – the ratings of likely format, content and problems – were tabulated as score data, with the mean and standard deviation calculated for each listing. Each panelist's ranked responses were scored based on a system of five points for each first place, four points for each second place,

three points for each third place, two points for each second place and one point for each fifth place. The responses were also scored based on a system of points for the semantic differential scales: five points for the space closest to “likely,” down to one point for the space closest to “unlikely.” Totals were tabulated for use in Round III and for comparison to the means.

Round III responses – possibly solutions to the problems the newspaper industry faces – were considered nominal data, with frequency tabulated and similar answers noted.

Summary

A panel of experts in the newspaper industry was selected based on individuals’ experiences, involvement with current newspaper issues and willingness to comment publicly on the future of the industry.

In the Delphi’s Round I, the respondents listed and/or briefly described their visions of the physical look and content of the newspapers of the future. Each was also asked to list potential problems of newspapers of the future. In Round II, each rated the likelihood of the predicted formats and content of the newspapers and ranked the top five problems, either as a result of the rankings or the semantic differential scales according to significance. Finally, in Round III, the panel members offered possible solutions to those seven problems that made one or both of the top five listings.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

General

Twenty-three newspaper executives, educators and analysts initially agreed to participate in this study. Round I questionnaires were mailed to all 23. Two people officially dropped out and one person left an executive position (and could not be reached) during Round I. Another person did not respond to the Round I questionnaire and did not respond to a follow-up letter, a follow-up facsimile letter or a phone call. Thus, 19 of the original 23 returned Round I, for a return rate of 83 percent. One of the 19 dropped out after Round I; all 18 remaining panelists returned Round II for a return rate of 100 percent. Seventeen of 18 returned Round III, for a return rate of 94 percent.

Round I

Panelists were asked to answer three open-ended questions for this round. The first asked them to list the five most important problems that they believe the newspaper industry will encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers. The second asked them to predict the next three to five most important changes in the physical look of future newspapers, explain why they think those changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. The third question asked panelists to predict the next three to five most important changes in

the content of future newspapers, explain why they think those changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers.

Potential problems/issues

The 19 panelists listed 95 answers to the question of what problems newspapers might face in the future. Similar answers were consolidated into a master list of 44 (see Appendix H) for use in Round II. Some responses, which actually referred to more than one problem, were divided among more than one category, thereby explaining the discrepancy between “95” and the number of people noted as specifically mentioning each problem. This listing illustrates the number of panelists who referred to each topic, either specifically or generally. The 44 problems are listed below in the order in which they appeared on the Round II questionnaire.

Problem 1. Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.

Six people listed or mentioned this. One commented that, “Segmentation, fragmentation and diversification of the newspaper market has only just begun to be recognized by the newspaper industry.”

Problem 2. Increased competition from electronic delivery systems.

Six people referred to this, and one person noted that newspapers will be “offering electronic on-line access to newspapers ... and provide such service in the homes, offices and workplaces.”

Problem 3. The education of future journalists.

One person mentioned this as a possible problem, noting that the education of future journalists is “sorely lacking.”

Problem 4. Changing psychographic characteristics of newspaper employees.

Two people referred to changes within news staffs.

Problem 5. The poor image of the industry.

Three people mentioned the image of the industry as a problem. One noted the importance of this issue, “in light cast by television journalism which many people see as characterizing all journalists.”

Problem 6. Elitism of the press corps.

Five people referred to what they see as a gap between newspaper journalists’ idea of news compared to that of the readers. “All too often,” one person wrote, “newspaper professionals put together newspapers that mirror their needs, not the readers.”

Problem 7. Lack of innovative use of technology and customer service in the circulation department.

Five people pointed to specific problems with the delivery of newspapers. One commented that the industry “will face increasingly difficult problems in the production and delivery of the ‘product’ to media consumers.”

Problem 8. Further consolidation of media industries.

Two people referred to the ownership of newspapers as a potential problem.

Problem 9. The need to learn how to use technology in a way that will interest advertisers.

Three people noted the need for newspapers to use such technology as audiotex in a way that attracts advertising. Currently, one person noted, “Other mediums can better deliver what advertisers want.”

Problem 10. The pressures of time to put out a quality product.

Three people mentioned time as an issue that newspapers are struggling with, as one noted that, “The newspaper industry is wedded to the mechanized printing press, obsolete 19th century technology ...”

Problem 11. Financial burdens of purchasing new equipment.

Two people noted that the impact of new technologies places further financial burdens on newspapers.

Problem 12. Changing psychographic characteristics of news sources.

One person noted that “The new power elites may have different demographic and psychographic characteristics than sources in the past.”

Problem 13. Providing local news.

Five mentioned local news as vital to the future of newspapers. “Connecting readers to their local community” and “relevant” news are important, two panelists noted.

Problem 14. Disappearance of retail advertising as an economic base.

Three people noted the problems newspapers are having attracting advertisements.

Problem 15. Plummeting subscriptions.

One person called this “a critical problem that must be addressed.”

Problem 16. Competition with television and radio.

Seven panelists noted the problems of competing with electronic sound and motion. As one mentioned, there are “flashier, easier ways to get news: The newspaper takes work.”

Problem 17. Increasing illiteracy in the United States.

Three people listed illiteracy as a problem affecting the status of newspapers. “No really strong efforts seem underway to solve it,” one person noted.

Problem 18. Increasing legal restraint and restricted access to gathering information.

Two people mentioned access to information as a problem the industry will face.

Problem 19. Competition from international organizations.

One person specifically noted this type of competition as a concern.

Problem 20. Environmental concerns.

Four people saw this as a problem that newspapers will have to deal with in the future. Newspapers, one person said, must “explore other ways of delivering our news product other than on smashed trees.”

Problem 21. The rising cost of newsprint, production and distribution.

Two people noted the problems associated with the physical delivery of a printed product to thousands of addresses.

Problem 22. The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.

Four people mentioned the problem of providing compelling, attention-grabbing information.

Problem 23. Connecting local readers to national and international problems.

One person noted the difficulties in bringing national and international issues to a local level.

Problem 24. Pricing the newspaper competitively with other news sources.

Two people mentioned the relative low cost of newspapers in comparison to other media.

Problem 25. The need to overhaul management structure of newspaper organizations.

One person noted a concern over the management structures, adding that newspapers need to work on "abandoning the old hierarchies."

Problem 26. Learning to access and make sense of the enormous amount of information stored on computer data bases.

One person noted the problems associated with the changes in how reporters do their jobs.

Problem 27. The rising age of readership.

One person noted that this issue may cause problems for the industry.

Problem 28. Trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year-olds.

One person noted the importance of this issue in newspapers' attempts to "increase penetration of households in the U.S."

Problem 29. The intrusion of business-office concerns into the leadership of news and editorial departments.

One person listed this as a potential problem.

Problem 30. Competition from other activities for people's time.

Two people referred to this type of competition – as opposed to that provided by other media – as a potential problem.

Problem 31. Low salaries of newspaper employees.

One person said this might contribute to problems of finding and keeping competent employees.

Problem 32. Increasing homogenization of newspapers.

One person mentioned this, noting that "Newspapers used to be vital parts of their communities. Few these days are."

Problem 33. Newspapers' slow acceptance of change.

Two people suggested that newspapers will have a hard time dealing with the technological changes and changes in audience demographics.

Problem 34. The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.

Three people noted the problems associated with reaching a younger audience.

Problem 35. A weaker image among advertisers.

Two people mentioned this as a problem. One noted in particular that newspapers need to find better ways to deliver advertisers' messages.

Problem 36. Staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives.

"Relevance" was the key word here, as four people noted the problems in trying to provide the news that people want.

Problem 37. Lack of research and development.

One person mentioned this as a problem within newspapers and media corporations.

Problem 38. Lack of experimentation.

Three people said newspapers need to be working on prototypes for the future. One said, "In a fast-changing world, they are sluggish institutions that strive for stability, permanence and order."

Problem 39. Inability to reorganize to become guidebooks to the future.

Two people noted that newspapers need to offer readers information for the future – not just reports of what happened yesterday.

Problem 40. The necessity of mid-career training for journalists.

Two people noted that journalists might require training to learn new technologies and new ways of providing the news. One of the two listed this under “content changes,” but the response was recorded under “problems.”

Problem 41. Finding the right mix of content.

This proved to be an important concern, as eight people mentioned the problems associated with content. Solving the problem of what readers want, one person noted, might decrease the dependency on advertising.

Problem 42. The struggle over the two main competing philosophies.

Two people mentioned the problems with design: specifically, the *USA Today* (capsule approach) versus the magazine format.

Problem 43. Confusing writing styles.

One person noted that newspapers seem to be having an identity crisis as to what constitutes journalistic style.

Problem 44. The ongoing discussions of what constitutes the best format.

Although several alluded to this, two people specifically noted the problems newspapers are having in deciding what format – computerized, tabloid, audiotex – to take in the future.

Physical changes

The 19 panelists listed 67 answers as predictions of what newspapers may look like in the future. Similar answers were consolidated into a master list of 23 (see Appendix H) for use in Round II. Question 2b was added as a supplement to

Question 2 to get a better idea of the panelists' feelings about computer newspapers. Some responses, which actually referred to more than one problem, were divided among more than one category, thereby explaining the discrepancy between "67" and the number of people noted as specifically mentioning each problem. The 23 predictions are listed below in the order in which they appeared on the Round II questionnaire.

Physical change 1. The supplementation of the regular newspaper with specialized publications/sections.

Four people referred to a type of zoning that would allow newspapers to reach specific groups of people.

Physical change 2.a. The appearance of an electronic newspaper.

Four people predicted that newspapers would appear in an electronic form.

b. The eventual complete replacement of the paper version by an electronic version.

None of the panelists suggested that an electronic form would replace the printed paper.

Physical change 3. A handier, smaller size and format.

Seven of the panelists said they expected newspapers to appear as tabloids or smaller versions – more of a magazine format. "The broadsheet size of newspapers has always been cumbersome for the reader," one person noted.

Physical change 4. More readable/legible typefaces for headlines and text.

Two people suggested that typefaces would have to change (specifically, to larger types) for aging readers.

Physical change 5. More departmentalization of the news.

Seven people noted that newspapers need to be made easier to read – with more summaries, pointers, indexes, etc. “Newspapers ought to become directories to more information,” one wrote.

Physical change 6. Shorter stories.

Four people predicted that newspapers would rely on shorter stories.

Physical change 7. More photographs.

Four people mentioned this as part of the future look of newspapers.

Physical change 8. Experimentation with typography.

Two people predicted that newspapers would experiment excessively with type faces and design.

Physical change 9. More color.

This seemed to draw a definite consensus, as 12 people mentioned that newspapers would rely more on color. One noted the overuse of color in the past: “Too many of us have jumped on the color bandwagon without really knowing how to use it. Instead of creating eye-catching layouts, we create something akin to a circus gone crazy.”

Physical change 10. More layering of information.

Five people noted that newspapers will use graphics, photos and copy to tell a story completely.

Physical change 11. More forms of availability of newspaper information made available.

Three people predicted changes in the overall physical look of newspapers: as audiotex, compact disc, “virtually any form,” one noted.

Physical change 12. More frequent use of magazine-quality graphics.

Five people predicted that newspapers would rely on more (and better) graphics to explain the news.

Physical change 13. Variety as the key to format.

One person predicted a greater variety in all aspects of design: column size, typefaces, etc.

Physical change 14. Increased use of better newsprint stock for better reproduction.

One person specifically mentioned better stock as a possibility; another noted that newspapers would look more like magazines – and thus rely on a different type of newsprint for quality.

Physical change 15. Special delivery of business sections as updated, color facsimile pages.

One person suggested that business sections, in particular, would be delivered in this manner.

Physical change 16. More use of text to convey the messages of graphics/photos.

One person predicted that too many graphics and photos – with accompanying copy – would turn off readers.

Physical change 17. Cutbacks in the number of pages produced.

One respondent said that, because of poor advertising sales, newspapers would be thinner in the future.

Physical change 18. Continuing pressure on format decisions (in general) by a variety of issues.

One person said environmental needs, costs, computerization and the need for speedy updates would change the format into a variety of forms over the years.

Physical change 19. More interactive advertising.

One person said future newspapers would likely offer advertising that allows readers to purchase goods directly from advertisers by calling numbers in the ads.

Physical change 20. Less emphasis on the organization and look of sections created specifically to attract advertisements.

One person mentioned that this space would be shifted “to concerns of the average family.”

Physical change 21. More efforts to attract targeted advertisements.

Two people mentioned this type of zoning: trying to attract advertisements for specific groups of identified readers.

Physical change 22. Expanded “personals” advertising sections.

One person predicted this.

Physical change 23. Newspapers may appear on plastic, foldable, pliable screens.

One person specifically mentioned this as a physical change in newspapers.

Content changes

The 18 panelists listed 74 answers as predictions of what content newspapers may contain in the future. Similar answers were consolidated into a master list (see Appendix H) for use in Round II. Some responses, which actually referred to more than one problem, were divided among more than one category, thereby explaining the discrepancy between “74” and the number of people noted as specifically mentioning each problem. This listing illustrates the number of panelists who referred to each topic, either specifically or generally. The 38 predictions are listed below in the order in which they appeared on the Round II questionnaire. One person suggested that readers would witness a thinning of the line between editorial and advertising – an item that was inadvertently left out of this list.

Content change 1. More special sections dealing with issues geared to younger readers.

One person noted that these sections would be necessary to attract younger readers. Another person considered this a part of zoning.

Content change 2. More special sections aimed at older readers.

Two people predicted sections aimed specifically at older readers.

Content change 3. More advertising geared toward older readers.

Two people noted the importance of advertising aimed at an important readership.

Content change 4. More relevant business news.

One person noted that, “Business is a popular news area which is often given short shrift, especially by the smaller newspapers ...”

Content change 5. More variety in the content of stories and art.

Three people predicted more variety in the overall content of newspapers.

Content change 6. More “for-the-record” (such as obituaries, marriages, divorces, other court records) information in great detail.

One person predicted this as a selling point of newspapers.

Content change 7. More coverage of world events – defined from a business perspective.

One person predicted this.

Content change 8. More women’s news.

Three people predicted that newspapers would need to provide more stories of women in the news and more stories for women.

Content change 9. More local news and features.

Seven people predicted that newspapers would need to focus more on local stories – and local people – and, as one person said, “This is where newspapers can most effectively compete with television and other media.”

Content change 10. More in-depth reporting of many specialty areas.

One person predicted more reporting on such areas as business, science, religion and education.

Content change 11. More reader involvement in content.

Three people predicted the importance of the interaction of local people with their newspaper.

Content change 12. More entertainment news.

One predicted the use of more entertainment news to attract younger readers.

Content change 13. More coverage of lifestyle issues.

Four people noted the importance of covering such issues as health, aging, leisure.

Content change 14. More content concerned with the interests of specific ethnic groups.

Four people noted the importance of targeting content to certain groups.

Content change 15. More articles dealing with religious and ethical issues.

One person predicted this.

Content change 16. More feature-oriented stories.

One person predicted more features in newspapers.

Content change 17. Growth of coverage of a multicultural society.

One person predicted this, adding that coverage might include “stories (that) are presented in languages other than English.”

Content change 18. Greater attention to “communities of interest.”

Four people predicted this type of targeting – more attention to readers’ interest rather than their geographic communities.

Content change 19. A general increase in the quality of writing.

Two people mentioned problems with writing and predicted that newspapers would have to improve writing to attract new readers.

Content change 20. More explanatory writing.

One person predicted that newspapers would provide further details in stories.

Content change 21. Writing that is more simple, clear and direct on editorial pages.

One person noted this prediction.

Content change 22. A return to community leadership and responsibility in editorial commentary.

One person predicted this change.

Content change 23. A better job of anticipating change.

Two people predicted that newspapers will focus on the future, “instead of just reporting what has already happened.”

Content change 24. More self-promotion.

One person noted that newspapers will “let readers and potential readers know how they have change and what more they are doing.”

Content change 25. Easier access to further details for stories.

Two people predicted that newspapers would have to offer readers ways to access further information – such as “pointers” within the paper or audiotex.

Content change 26. Less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.

One person predicted that newspapers would de-emphasize wire copy.

Content change 27. More lists, listings and hard data relevant to readers’ daily lives.

One person suggested that newspapers would need to ensure that all copy include relevant information.

Content change 28. Better backgrounding and context in stories to connect the news to the reader.

Three people predicted that newspapers would provide readers with the information not available from other sources.

Content change 29. Less emphasis on events (traditional meetings, political actions) and more on trends and situations.

Two people suggested that newspapers would have to get the “story behind the story.”

Content change 30. More informative graphics.

Three people predicted that newspapers would rely on graphics as the main source for content.

Content change 31. Erasure of the line between “news” and “entertainment.

One person predicted “competitive and economic” reasons for the mix of “shopping-mall beats” and hard news.

Content change 32. More formation of story ideas based on demographic information identified through marketing research.

One person suggested that newspapers will rely more on research to determine what readers want.

Content change 33. Coverage of issues that matter more to readers than to advertisers.

One person predicted that newspapers would cease catering to advertisers and worry more about pleasing readers.

Content change 34. Fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television (i.e. Somalia).

One respondent said newspapers would spend less time and space on stories already widely covered by other media.

Content change 35. Rebirth of the rewrite desk.

Three people suggested that content will be specifically re-written or re-edited to meet the needs of specific groups of people. “The ‘rewrite’ desk will be

reborn,” one said, “as editors and writers rework the same material in a multitude of different ways for individual groups of consumers.”

Content change 36. Fewer “fluff” pieces.

One person predicted fewer non-news pieces in future newspapers.

Content change 37. Reallocation of the front page to fit the demographics of the community.

One person specifically predicted that the front page would change as part of a zoning program for newspapers.

Content change 38. More efforts to bring global news to a local level.

Two people predicted greater efforts at bringing national and international news to local levels.

Round II

For Round II, the 18 panelists were asked to rate the problems, physical changes and content changes (generated from Round I) by means of a semantic differential scale. Seventeen panelists completed the questionnaire. For each problem or change, panelists checked one of five blanks between bipolar adjectives of “likely” and “unlikely.” Panelists were told to mark closer to “unlikely” if they did not consider a particular issue a “problem” or if they disagreed with a given presumption or perception.

For statistical purposes, the blank closest to “likely” was scored a five, with the others scored in descending order to one for the blank closest to “unlikely.”

Problems

Table I lists the problems (as identified in Round I) in descending order from “likely” (5.00) to “unlikely” (1.00). When the means of two or more problems are tied, the problem with the lower standard deviation will be listed first.

TABLE I

RATINGS OF LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE
OF PREDICTED PROBLEMS FOR
THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

Problem	Mean	SD
Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.	4.706	.470
The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.	4.412	.870
The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.	4.354	.931
Trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year-olds.	4.235	.752
Competition from other activities for people's time.	4.235	1.091
Learning to access and make sense of the enormous amount of information stored on computer databases.	4.176	.883
Increased competition from electronic delivery systems.	4.118	1.054
The necessity of mid-career training for journalists.	4.059	1.088

TABLE I (Continued)

Problem	Mean	SD
Elitism of the press corps.	3.941	.899
Disappearance of retail advertising as an economic base.	3.882	.857
The poor image of the industry.	3.882	1.166
Increasing illiteracy in the United States.	3.824	.809
Plummeting subscriptions.	3.824	.883
The education of future journalists.	3.813	1.276
Competition with television and radio.	3.765	.903
The rising age of readership.	3.765	.970
Pricing the newspaper competitively with other news sources.	3.765	1.033
Lack of research and development.	3.765	1.480
The rising cost of newsprint, production and distribution.	3.706	.920
Changing psychographic characteristics of newspaper employees.	3.647	.996
Changing psychographic characteristics of news sources.	3.647	1.057
The need to overhaul management structure of newspaper organizations.	3.647	1.115
The pressures of time to put out a quality product.	3.588	1.121
Staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives.	3.588	1.228
The need to learn how to use technology in a way that will interest advertisers.	3.471	1.007

TABLE I (Continued)

Problem	Mean	SD
Increasing illiteracy in the United States.	3.412	1.064
Lack of experimentation.	3.412	1.326
The intrusion of business-office concerns into the leadership of news and editorial departments.	3.412	1.417
Connecting local readers to national and international problems.	3.412	1.460
Low salaries of newspaper employees.	3.412	1.583
Lack of innovative use of technology and customer service in the circulation department.	3.353	1.169
Environmental concerns.	3.294	1.047
Inability to reorganize to become guidebooks to the future.	3.294	1.312
Confusing writing styles.	3.294	1.359
Finding the right mix of content.	3.188	1.167
The struggle over the two main competing philosophies: USA Today versus newsmagazine approach.	3.154	1.144
Newspapers' slow acceptance of change.	3.118	1.317
Further consolidation of media industries.	2.941	1.298
Increasing homogenization of newspapers.	2.882	1.409
Providing local news.	2.706	1.404
Financial burdens of purchasing new equipment.	2.647	1.272

TABLE I (Continued)

Problem	Mean	SD
Increasing legal restraint and restricted access to gathering information.	2.588	1.121
The ongoing discussions of what constitutes the best format.	2.333	1.345
Competition from international organizations.	2.059	.899

Physical changes

Table II lists the physical changes (as predicted in Round I) in descending order from “likely” (5.00) to “unlikely” (1.00).

TABLE II

RATINGS OF LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE
OF PREDICTED PHYSICAL CHANGES
IN FUTURE NEWSPAPERS

Physical change	Mean	SD
The supplementation of the regular newspaper with specialized publications/ sections.	4.500	.516
More departmentalization of the news.	4.412	.795
More layering of information.	4.353	.786
More forms of availability of newspaper information made available.	4.294	.920

TABLE II (Continued)

Physical change	Mean	SD
More color.	4.235	.970
More interactive advertising.	4.176	.883
More efforts to attract targeted advertising.	4.118	.781
More frequent use of magazine-quality graphics.	4.000	.935
More readable/legible typefaces for headlines and text.	3.882	1.269
Variety as the key to format.	3.875	1.204
Expanded personals advertising sections.	3.824	1.131
More photographs.	3.706	1.047
Continuing pressure on format decisions (in general) by a variety of issues.	3.647	.702
The appearance of an electronic newspaper.	3.588	1.417
Shorter stories.	3.412	.795
Cutbacks in the number of pages produced.	3.294	1.047
Special delivery of business sections as updated, color facsimile pages.	3.176	1.237
Increased use of better newsprint stock for better reproduction.	3.118	1.111
More use of text to convey the messages of graphics/photos.	3.000	1.265
A handier, smaller size and format.	2.706	1.448
Experimentation with typography.	2.647	1.579

TABLE II (Continued)

Physical change	Mean	SD
Less emphasis on the organization and look of sections created specifically to attract advertisements.	2.125	1.147
Newspapers may appear on plastic, foldable, pliable screens.	2.059	1.298

Content changes

Table III lists the content changes (as predicted in Round I) in descending order from “likely” (5.00) to “unlikely” (1.00). When the means of two or more problems are tied, the problem with the lower standard deviation will be listed first.

TABLE III

RATINGS OF LIKELIHOOD OF OCCURRENCE OF PREDICTED CONTENT CHANGES IN FUTURE NEWSPAPERS

Content change	Mean	SD
More advertising geared toward older readers.	4.706	.588
More local news and features.	4.647	.606
More coverage of lifestyle issues.	4.529	.514

TABLE III (Continued)

Content change	Mean	SD
More special sections aimed at older readers.	4.529	.800
Easier access to further details for stories.	4.529	.800
Better backgrounding and context in stories to connect the news to the reader.	4.294	.686
More reader involvement in content.	4.294	.985
More content concerned with the interests of specific ethnic groups.	4.235	1.033
More variety in the content of stories, art.	4.176	.883
More explanatory writing.	4.176	.883
More special sections dealing with issues geared to younger readers.	4.176	1.286
More informative graphics.	4.118	.697
More relevant business news.	4.118	.781
More in-depth reporting of many specialty areas.	4.118	.928
Greater attention to "communities of interest."	4.059	.827
More women's news.	4.059	1.029
More formation of story ideas based on demographic information identified through marketing research.	3.824	.951
Writing that is more simple, clear and direct on editorial pages.	3.824	1.131
More "for-the-record" information in great detail.	3.824	1.185

TABLE III (Continued)

Content change	Mean	SD
More self-promotion.	3.765	.970
More entertainment news.	3.765	1.033
More lists, listings and hard data relevant to readers' daily lives.	3.765	1.033
Growth of a coverage of a multicultural society.	3.765	1.251
Coverage of issues that matter more to readers than to advertisers.	3.750	1.390
More feature-oriented stories.	3.706	.849
A better job of anticipating change.	3.706	.920
More efforts to bring global news to a local level.	3.706	1.213
Less emphasis on events (traditional meetings, political actions) and more on trends and situations.	3.588	.870
More coverage of world events – defined from a business perspective.	3.588	1.121
A general increase in the quality of writing.	3.529	1.231
Reallocation of the front page to fit the demographics of the community.	3.471	1.007
More articles dealing with religious and ethical issues.	3.412	1.064
A return to community leadership and responsibility in editorial commentary.	3.412	1.228
Fewer “fluff” pieces.	3.353	1.057

TABLE III (Continued)

Content change	Mean	SD
Rebirth of the rewrite desk.	3.176	1.286
Less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.	2.625	1.258
Erasure of the line between "news and "entertainment."	2.412	1.176
Fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television.	2.412	1.417

Round III

Round III was designed to ask the panelists for possible solutions to those problems which made the top five listing as a result of the panelists' rankings or the total points the problems accumulated on the semantic differential scales.

The problems, as ranked by the panelists, were scored on a basis of five points for each first-place ranking, four points for each second-place ranking, three points for each third-place ranking, two points for each fourth-place ranking and one point for each fifth-place ranking. Problems were also scored based on the total points of the semantic differential scales. For example, a problem that generated 12 marks in the space nearest "likely" (five points each) and five marks in the next descending blank (four points each), scored 80 points. Problems that made one or both of these rankings were used to generate the questionnaire used in Round III. The results of these two methods of ranking are listed in Table IV below. Eight problems made the list; these are listed in the same order as they

appeared on the Round III questionnaire. If a particular problem did not make the top five ranking in one of the categories, it is so indicated by dashes.

TABLE IV
TOP FIVE RANKINGS OF PREDICTED PROBLEMS
(BY TOTAL POINTS AND BY SCALES)

Problem	By Points	By Scales
Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.	1 (38)	1 (80)
The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.	2 (19)	3 (74)
Increasing illiteracy in the United States.	5 (12)	--
The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.	--	2 (75)
The poor image of the industry.	3 (tie: 14)	--
Elitism of the press corps.	--	4 (tie: 72)
Competition from other activities for people's time.	3 (tie: 14)	4 (tie: 72)
Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds.	--	4 (tie: 72)

Solutions to the problems

The panelists were asked to provide possible solutions to each of the eight problems listed in Table IV. Seventeen of the 18 panelists returned the Round III

questionnaires. Brief versions are listed here. Similar solutions were consolidated into this master list. The problems are listed in order of their appearance on the Round III questionnaire. The order was not determined by the problems' rankings. Complete answers are listed in Appendix O.

Problem A

Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.

Solution 1. Newspapers should represent their subscribing audience; they should look at the subscribers and put out a newspaper that reflects that group.

One person said this, adding that, "Newspapers have disenfranchised the majority of their readers with too much coverage of issues and events that do not represent mainstream America (AIDS, homosexuality, racial problems, etc.)"

Solution 2. Cover activities of all groups in the circulation area, regardless of economic, social or occupational status, without excluding groups not yet well assimilated into the mainstream.

Two people suggested this. One person cautioned against excluding "groups not yet well assimilated in mainstream American culture (because their children soon will be)."

Solution 3. The changing market will solve this, as news providers will have to reflect the change in coverage or decline.

One person said this.

Solution 4. Newspapers must do much more hiring – and promotion – of non-white minority group members to change newsroom sensibilities and decisions.

Nine people suggested that newsrooms needed to diversify staffs. One commented that, “That problem results from overwhelmingly white executives, editors and journalists creating a product for an audience which is much more diverse.” One person specifically noted the need for a breakdown in the demographics of newspaper publishers: 52 percent female; 12 percent African-American; 9 percent Hispanic; 3 percent Asian; 1 percent Native American.

Solution 5. Invest in research methods to break down the demographics of the readership area. Make a concerted effort (through special sections, departmentalization) to meet the needs of potential readers.

Six people discussed the importance of research and efforts to reach specific groups of demographically identified readers. Newspapers “must be willing to invest in some sophisticated research methods to cope with this problem,” one said. One person specifically noted the need for research on a national scale and for local newspapers.

Solution 6. Universities must broaden multicultural education and diversify their student bodies.

One person noted this.

Solution 7. Newspapers must develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation and world. Abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world.

One person suggested this.

Solution 8. As technology develops, consumers will be able to physically choose the information that they want. Reporters and editors will become storehouses of information.

One person suggested this, noting that newspapers would become diversified because of the demands of their readers.

Solution 9. Constantly and systematically remind staff of need for diverse product.

One person said this.

Solution 10. Step up efforts to tell customers why they need the publication.

One person noted this.

Solution 11. Reflect, in the content, the everyday lives of a diversity of people.

One person mentioned this.

Solution 12. Listen to and respect the views of a diversity of people on the newspapers' staffs.

One person suggested that, beyond diversifying the newsroom staffs, newspaper management needs to pay more attention to a wider diversity of staff members.

Solution 13. Get out of the office and talk to people who live, work and contribute to the community.

One person mentioned this.

Problem B

The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.

Solution 1. Newspapers must be willing to focus more intensely on local news and, in particular, make news reports more relevant/useful to the public.

Ten people referred to local news, specifically news that is relevant and useful to the community. "The only approach which is not self-defeating is to make news reports more relevant to the serious and difficult problems with which the public must cope," one person wrote. Another suggested that newspapers "must be willing to focus more intensely on local news, with an emphasis on names and faces."

Solution 2. Use more "user-friendly" techniques of secondary headlines, summaries, pull-outs and quote-outs, news summaries, the dividing of long stories into shorter ones.

Four people suggested format changes that might make newspapers easier to read.

Solution 3. Use more attractive layout and design, more photos, better graphics, better typographic styles, more color, attention-grabbing headlines.

Seven people suggested design changes.

One suggested that "the use of images has replaced the use of words in our culture. The use of color photographs and illustrations must become total."

Solution 4. Change the size of the paper: Try something in between the cumbersome broadsheet or tabloid: perhaps more of a magazine form (or) fewer pages and a tabloid or quarterfold size.

One person suggested that neither the current broadsheet or the smaller tabloid is the right size for a newspaper.

Solution 5. Target niche segments of the population and customize their information packages. Two people specifically suggested this as a solution to this problem.

Solution 6. Find new ways of covering general news. News must evolve new ways of viewing the world.

One person suggested this and said, “The old formulations of what news is just don’t work that well anymore. News – like our language and our social history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world.”

Solution 7. Provide more timely, thoroughly and honestly covered, hard news.

Three people said newspapers should get back to the basics of news coverage.

Solution 8. Improve the skills of writers – in particular, stop trying to “featurize” every story.

One person suggested this.

Solution 9. After making changes, newspapers should promote themselves – in media other than their own.

One person suggested that newspapers need to promote themselves more.

Solution 10. Keep the staff focused on the concerns and interest of real people.

One person said staff members need to be reminded of the interests of the people who read newspapers.

Problem C

Increasing illiteracy in the United States.

Solution 1. Newspapers should work in concert with the educational system to support literacy training/programs. Four people suggested strong support of literacy programs.

One suggested that the “newspaper industry must work with other cultural institutions to design literacy programs, including adult literacy programs.”

Solution 2. Fight editorially for better school budgets.

One person mentioned this.

Solution 3. Make the newspaper a part of daily life in schools, civic clubs, church groups, etc. and underwrite literacy programs through community programs.

Two people suggested that newspapers should try to be a bigger part of the community and community efforts. “Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper,” one person said.

Solution 4. Support societal efforts to address the problem through legislating bodies; broach the efforts if necessary.

One person suggested this approach.

Solution 5. Support efforts to make English the first language of the United States.

One person mentioned this, noting that “Although this may sound reactionary, most other countries require that their citizens speak and read the language of their adopted country before they can acquire citizenship. Once that barrier is overcome, then appealing to a variety of readers through a common language (English) may be accomplished.”

Solution 6. Media foundations must contribute grant and fellowship monies to literacy programs. Commit private resources to public resources.

Two people suggested financial support of literacy programs.

Solution 7. The higher education system must stretch out a hand to the secondary and primary systems to help them address the problem.

One person suggested deeper involvement of higher education.

Solution 8. Promote and help improve public education through proper coverage (school boards, information about reading levels of students, etc.).

Three people suggested a news coverage approach.

Solution 9. Use the newspaper as a tool in teaching people to read and then as an object for new readers.

One person suggested this.

Solution 10. Support learn-to-read programs at all levels, especially in the early grades.

Two people mentioned this.

Solution 11. Support – and start, if necessary – Newspapers in Education programs.

Two people mentioned this. “Newspapers can help educators and parents win the battle against illiteracy by improving and expanding – in some cases, starting – Newspapers in Education programs,” one suggested. “Newspapers can be used to help teach almost anything from the pre-school years on up.”

Solution 12. Increase the status of teachers.

Two people said this.

Solution 13. Demand that politicians make better public education a No. 1 priority.

One person suggested that newspapers pressure politicians to spend more time and money on public education.

Solution 14. Spend time in local schools talking with youngsters.

One person suggested this approach.

Solution 15. This is a problem for education. The role of the media is to provide the clearest possible presentation of events.

One person suggested this.

Solution 16. Help all elementary classrooms produce a daily newspaper.

One person suggested this as a means of motivating and teaching children.

Problem D

The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.

Solution 1. Children's pages, special teen sections, etc. are not viable vehicles to attract youngsters' attention; we must attack the information needs, instead, of adults, ages 25 and up.

One person suggested that newspapers concentrate on older readers.

Solution 2. Put newspapers in the classrooms, free and non-promotionally; stop treating children's news with gimmicks.

One person said this.

Solution 3. Don't use gimmicks to pursue this age group; instead, have a stake in the community and the future of that community's life.

One person suggested that newspapers be involved in the community as a whole rather than trying to snare a certain age group of readers.

Solution 4. Use special pages, features, writing. Why not run two versions – adult and teen – of reviews, editorials, front-page stories, main news?

Two people suggested this approach.

Solution 5. Seek ideas from demographic studies, teen magazines and the young people themselves (perhaps through advisory groups) on how to apply the newspaper directly to younger readers. Produce material that addresses their interest, needs and desires.

Four people suggested that newspapers use research to find out what younger readers want in a newspaper. "Children enjoy music, entertainment, clothes, fads, dancing, peer evaluations, popular entertainers and contemporary events," one wrote. "Little in the newspaper of today is directly applied to the younger readers, especially the elementary students. Why not?"

Solution 6. The newspapers industry must combine forces with visual media industries and the computer industry to design programs to attract young readers. New media companies with diversified media holdings must lead the way.

Three people suggested that the problem is what of design. One person suggested that, “Maybe what we’re really saying is that they’re not interested in what we traditionally define as front page news.” Another suggested, “Explore new media ‘bridges’ to a younger audience, perhaps via electronic publishing through telephone, discs, CD-ROMs and fax.”

Solution 7. Use more creative ways of covering the news. Abandon old patterns and don’t try to rely on targeted news. Have greater sensitivity to the messages produced in news stories.

One person suggested this.

Solution 8. Don’t try to make the newspaper look like a television screen without any energy. Return to the basics – be concerned with content.

One person suggested this.

Solution 9. Support the Newspaper in Education program and get the paper to them.

Three people specifically mentioned this program, which involves the use of newspapers for educational projects.

Solution 10. Reach them through a compelling comics page.

One person said this.

Solution 11. Help teachers understand that children's interests can be met through newspapers: i.e., sports, movies, celebrities.

One person suggested that newspapers work more closely with teachers, who might encourage newspaper reading.

Solution 12. Help elementary classrooms produce a daily newspaper.

One person suggested this.

Solution 13. Be an advocate for the rights of all individuals – be they black, white, old, young, ethnically diverse, etc.

One person wrote this.

Problem E

The poor image of the industry.

Solution 1. We need to become more civilized in our actions (less arrogant, less brash), be less sensational in our reporting and writing.

Four people noted this solution. "The cockiness and brashness can undo the good that thousands of working news people bring to their readers each news cycle," one said. "Assertiveness can be there without being offensive."

Solution 2. Make the newspaper a part of daily life and an important part of the community.

One person suggested this solution.

Solution 3. Get the newsroom staff out in front of the community. Strip away the arrogance and impersonality of the editors and reporters.

Two people suggested this, with one adding that this means “more community efforts which get editors out in front of the community and out from behind the granite and glass walls of their buildings.”

Solution 4. Establish better policies on corrections and apologies.

One person suggested this as a way to better relations with readers.

Solution 5. The people within the industry must change – into a newly diversified workforce.

One person said this.

Solution 6. Improve the quality and thoroughness of our efforts. Return to the basics: good, timely, well-written, well-balanced relevant stories.

Seven people mentioned “the basics” as a way to improve the image of newspapers. “Our best image is conveyed by our best newspapers,” one noted.

Solution 7. The industry itself has to undergo significant changes in terms of how reporters/editors view and cover stories and how sensitive they are to the messages contained in the stories.

One person said this.

Solution 8. Raise pay high enough to attract top students.

One person said this.

Solution 9. Raise ethical standards.

One person suggested an overhaul of standards in ethics.

Solution 10. Make a concentrated effort to cover the industry itself.

One person said this.

Solution 11. Let readers know that newspapers can and will help them meet their needs for information, opinion and entertainment – involve them in the process.

Two people mentioned this.

Solution 12. Newspapers should stand for something in their communities and work to improve government, business and other aspects of society.

One person suggested that newspapers become stronger members of the community.

Solution 13. Use promotion to tell readers and potential readers about improvements.

One person said newspapers should promote themselves – and their improvements.

Solution 14. Develop programs that are more relevant to the advertisers.

One person said this.

Solution 15. Improve and set high standards for accuracy.

Two people mentioned accuracy as utmost in importance.

Solution 16. Insist on a civil tone to all stories – no snide references, no stereotypes, no putdowns.

One person suggested that newspaper journalists be more aware of the hidden messages in stories.

Solution 17. Journalism education should help re-define what journalists should be.

One person suggested this.

Solution 18. Product improvement plus its evolution into electronic forms distribution will help.

One person said this.

Problem F

Elitism of the press corps.

Solution 1. We need to be more willing to correct our mistakes (self-regulation). We should also listen when people call or write us.

Three people said this.

Solution 2. Make sure the paper covers non-elite parts of the cities so that reporters and editors come to know cities and neighborhoods.

One person said this.

Solution 3. Editors and reporters should make efforts to reach the community through visits to civic groups, church groups, classrooms, etc. or involvement in Little League or other activities. This may include eating lunch with business executives, teachers, accountants, doctors, etc., instead of other reporters.

Four people mentioned this type of interaction with the public. One said, “Newspapers should not have company cafeterias; they only abet reporters eating lunch with other reporters, during which they massage each other’s biases.”

Solution 4. Do away with that “self-appointed expert” role and reduce arrogance. Newspapers are special only as long as they serve the needs of the public.

Three people said newspapers should be less arrogant and more responsive to their audiences. “Greed, fame and huge egos sometimes are the undoing of the press corps, not to mention instant analyses or constant carping without offering any concrete solutions to problems,” one wrote.

Solution 5. Change the workforce of the newspaper industry – to one that is more diversified – in demographic and psychographic characteristics.

One person mentioned the importance of diversification.

Solution 6. Schools of journalism, especially, should address this problem and promote the understanding that the daily newspaper is a public journal – a public trust.

Three people noted the importance of journalism schools in changing the image. “College journalism curricula should place an increased emphasis on sensitizing students to the traditions and values that define the profession of journalism,” one wrote.

Solution 7. Beat it out with in-house training. Don’t stand for it in print or in the newsroom.

Two people mentioned this.

Solution 8. Use more advisory groups and expose all staffers to the advisory groups.

One person noted this.

Solution 9. Perhaps continuing education about the perils of losing touch with the readership would help.

One person said this.

Problem G

Competition from other activities for people's time.

Solution 1. We should concentrate on the quality of writing, photography, layout, reporting, etc. and make the paper itself more compelling.

Four people mentioned changing content or design of newspapers. "I do not think the *USA Today* strategy of covering everything in 10 inches of copy or less is the way to successfully compete for people's time," one wrote.

Solution 2. Be more serious and reliable about people's central concerns, which does not mean a lack of entertainment. Make the news relevant.

Four people noted that the news should be relevant to the people in a community. "A more compelling paper will earn and retain its share of individuals' time," one said.

Solution 3. The key, again, is to make the newspaper a part of daily life. Find out what it takes to be vital in readers' lives.

Three people suggested that the newspaper must be a vital part of the community. "They might encourage readers to look at the paper while traveling on

a plane, train or bus, while waiting on someone, while waiting for the movie or show to begin, or while having a refreshment break,” one person said. “They might encourage them to read it with or to their young children; but the key is still giving them something they want and cannot get elsewhere.”

Solution 4. Get into the electronic news business – through audiotex, on-line databases, teleconferencing, electronic newsletters, interactive media. Aim for user-friendly in-home use.

Four people suggested this. “The newspaper business had better be prepared for the 21st century by getting into the electronic news dissemination business,” one wrote. Another suggested, “Make meaningful, useful information available in a variety of ways.”

Solution 5. Newspapers must be multicultural in appeal and in understanding.

One person said this.

Solution 6. The industry can’t do anything about competition from other activities.

Two people said this.

Solution 7. Give readers what they want: be it quick-read form or longer-read form.

One person said newspapers need to be more conscious of what readers want in a newspaper. “They must provide the quick read if that’s all readers want,” one wrote.

Solution 8. Complement other activities as a guide/index.

Two people said newspapers should concentrate on providing information about those other activities.

Problem H

Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds.

Solution 1. We shouldn't diverge to capture other groups; we should be planning strategies to keep the middle-class 18-to-49 year olds.

One person suggested this and said, "Face it, the middle-class comprises the majority of our readers. If we disenfranchise that group, we really are dead in the water."

Solution 2. Use serious, systematic coverage of all groups.

One person suggested this solution.

Solution 3. Make the newspaper a part of everyone's daily life. Produce a newspaper that readers will see has something to offer them. Promote it.

Four people suggested this. One noted, "Doesn't it come down to which role newspapers take – that of giving readers what is good for them, versus figuring out what readers need (and want) to know?"

Solution 4. Lower the cost of the paper – try to build an audience.

One person suggested this.

Solution 5. Use better writing.

Two people mentioned this.

Solution 6. Use targeted special sections and true local coverage.

One said this. “Much as people in the journalism profession may poo-poo the idea of truly local coverage, we find that many of the more successful newspapers have been the innercity alternative newspapers and the smaller weekly in the suburbs, capturing a readership often overlooked by the larger dailies,” the panelist wrote.

Solution 7. A solution is possible only if advertising continues to be the driving force behind newspaper publication and only if they see a market.

One person said this.

Solution 8. Train journalists with the understanding of how to serve a diverse audience. Cover news in creative ways – abandon the old ways.

One person suggested this.

Solution 9. Use more relevant content.

Three people suggested content changes.

Solution 10. Use superior graphics, better printing, interconnects with other media.

One person suggested this and noted, “It may be that newspapers simply are a mature industry on the lip of ultimate decline. In that case, the news people who work there had better wean themselves from huge iron machines through which a sheet of paper runs, to another medium which informs the public, but not through newspapers.”

Solution 11. Provide more hard news and less “fluff.”

One person said this.

Solution 12. Use research to reach former readers and potential readers with a focus on finding out what people want to read in the paper.

Four people said newspapers should research these groups. “Older readers probably want more information about health issues, retirement economics, and similar matters, but the way to find out for sure is to ask them,” one person wrote.

Solution 13. Pay attention to readers. Give them what they want in terms of content – be it longer stories or shorter stories.

Two people suggested this.

Solution 14. Increase diversity in the newsroom.

Two suggested this. One said, “Install a diverse work force in editorial rank-and-file and management.”

Solution 15. Improve accuracy.

One person suggested this.

Solution 16. Eliminate the industry’s elitism fix.

One person said this.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Is the oldest form of media too antiquated to compete in what has become an electronic world? No one should expect newspapers, which have been a part of America since colonial days, to disappear any time soon. But the key to newspapers' survival is the same as for any industry in a similar situation: change. The experts in this study agree that newspapers cannot continue as they are and expect to gain new readers and entice advertisers.

The 1980s represented one of the worst decades ever in the history of the American newspaper industry. Weakened by a slow economy and wounded by tough competition for advertising, some of the country's oldest newspapers folded under the pressure. Those that survived scrambled to find new ways to attract subscribers and hang on to advertisers. Just in recent years, many have latched onto electronic news services and are using relatively old technology (audiotex) to offer a supplemental news source to their readers.

Some say that such surface use of technology is not enough, and that if newspapers are going to prosper in the future, they must become more devoted to a real change – even to a change that does not involve newsprint. Those who are actively involved with the prototypes of computer newspapers (such as Knight-Ridder's Roger Fidler) see this as the true future of newspapers. Computer

newspapers, some say, will not just be a supplement to printed newspapers: They will be *the* newspapers of the future.

Despite such talk, indications are that most people involved in the newspaper industry believe that future is too far away to contemplate. They concentrate, instead, on doing a better job at doing the things that newspapers are known for: providing more in-depth coverage of news events; providing for-the-record information such as birth announcements, obituaries and stock indexes; offering piercing commentaries on current events; using entertainment to break up the hard news of the day, etc. To those journalists attempting to do their current jobs better, technology is definitely a part of the everyday routine (through word processing, pagination, color processing, photo reproduction) but is not an imminent threat to the way newspapers reach the public.

The purpose of this study was to identify and seek solutions to potential problems, predict the physical look of future newspapers and to predict the content of future newspapers.

Using the Delphi Technique, this study sought a consensus on these issues based on the opinions of a panel of experts on the newspaper industry. The panel included newspaper analysts, consultants, educators and executives. The Delphi Technique is designed especially for generating expert predictions and for helping the researcher reach conclusions without the interferences caused by a physical gathering of the experts involved. Advantages of the Delphi include the confidentiality of the respondents to one another and the equality in the opportunities of each person's chances to respond to each issue.

Nineteen experts participated in this study (with one participating in Round I only). Each was asked to respond to three rounds of questionnaires. In Round I, the panelists were asked to list the five most important problems that they believed the newspaper industry would encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of

media consumers. Panelists were also asked to predict the next three to five most important changes in the physical look of future newspapers and predict the next three to five most important changes in the content of future newspapers. In Round II, panelists were asked to rate the likelihood of occurrences of each problem, each physical change and each content change on a five-point semantic scale and to rank the five most important problems. In Round III, panelists were asked to suggest solutions to those eight problems that made the top five listing by either the scores on the rankings or the scores on the semantic scales.

Summary and Conclusions

Nineteen panelists participated in this study. One person, because of a heavy work schedule, dropped out after the first round, but that person's answers are included in the verbatim responses of Round I (Appendix M) and the master list of Round II (Appendix H). The remaining 18 panelists completed Round II, while 17 responded to Round III.

Although this study sought responses from educators and professionals, no attempt was made to compare differences between two such groups (or any other groups for that matter), because the experts could not be placed into only one group or another. All of the educators, for example, have had professional experience – some quite extensive. In addition, some of those panelists who might be considered “professional” as opposed to “educator” are either analysts or consultants and thus occupy a position distinct from, say, an editor or professional. This study sought a consensus of experts from various sides of the newspaper industry and was not an attempt to compare the views of newspaper journalists with journalism educators.

The 19 panelists responded with a total of 95 individual answers as the most important problems in the Round I questionnaire. They also predicted a total of 67

individual answers to potential physical changes and 74 individual answers to potential content changes. Master lists of 44 problems, 23 physical changes and 38 content changes were compiled to eliminate repetition in responses.

Regarding the potential problems the newspaper industry faces, the most striking thing about Round I is the number of answers that centered on changes, in particular changes in readership (multiculturally), changes in competition (due to technology) and the *negative* changes in coverage (less in local news). The panelists' concern about newspapers' ability to meet the needs of a changing readership was obvious, as demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers was the No. 1 problem in both rankings and the semantic scale. In conjunction with that, eight people also mentioned that "finding the right mix of content" was a problem that newspapers would have to overcome to gain new readers in their communities.

Competition, always a concern among journalists, was also a concern among the panelists in this study. Six people listed "increased competition from electronic delivery systems" as an important issue in the industry. But most also discussed competition in terms of technology: finding better ways to deliver the newspaper product; learning how to use technology effectively; beating the pressures of time; the financial burdens of purchasing necessary equipment to compete; finding better ways to compete with television and radio; learning to access database information.

Despite the implication that newspapers must keep up with technology, the panelists were critical of the negative changes in coverage: that is, of newspapers' tendencies to neglect good writing in favor of colorful graphics and to spend more time on design than on coverage of local stories. The panelists mentioned "the basics" of good journalism in listing a number of potential problems: providing local news, the challenges of grabbing readers' attention; winning back readers;

competition for people's time; the lack of interest among younger media consumers; confusing writing styles.

When predicting physical changes, many of the panelists referred to special sections/specialized publications as the future of newspapers. "Zoning," the distribution of special sections to certain groups of people, was frequently mentioned. The panelists emphasized, however, that zoning would have to go beyond the common type used now – geographic zoning. Instead of distributing the newspaper sections to people based on where they live ("metro," "south side," etc.), newspapers will have to distribute the sections based on demographic data, the panelists suggested. Based on the suggestions of physical change that this panel made, the newspapers of the future will:

- Be a smaller size – perhaps a tabloid or magazine size.
- Continue to use better graphics, more photos and more color.
- Use more departmentalization, indexes, pointers and summaries for easier and quicker reading.
- Supplement the daily publication with facsimile sheets or electronic (via phone or computer) updates.

In this round, four people specifically mentioned the appearance of an electronic (computer) newspaper.

When discussing content changes, the panelists again emphasized the need for targeted special sections, geared mainly toward certain demographic groups such as older readers, teen readers, female readers and business executives. They also emphasized again the need for more local news ("relevant" to the audience) and suggested that readers need to be more involved in the selection of content. The general improvement of writing was also an issue, as panelists mentioned the need for quality writing, explanatory writing, simple and direct writing and better backgrounding writing.

Based on the suggestions of content change that this panel made, the newspapers of the future will:

- Gear more special sections and advertising toward older readers.
- Aim more special sections at younger readers.
- Offer more thorough coverage of local issues.
- Report more on lifestyle issues.
- Get the readers more involved in the selection of content.
- Offer readers more ways to receive content: i.e., audiotex, computer modems.

- Use better backgrounding to connect the news to readers.

Each potential problem and each predicted physical and content change was included in the master lists, even if only one person suggested it. The Round I lists were used to generate the Round II questionnaire, giving the panelists a chance to rate the importance of their answers with those of the others and a chance to read the responses of the other panelists.

Round II used a semantic differential scale with five choices between “likely” and “unlikely.” The problems, predicted physical changes and predicted content changes were scored based on the panelists’ selections of the likelihood of occurrence of each. The means, (Table I) based on the semantic scales, suggested that the most important problems facing the newspaper industry were (in order):

- demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers
- the lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers
- the challenges of grabbing readers’ attention daily
- trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year olds (tie)
- competition from other activities for people’s time (tie)
- the increased competition from electronic delivery systems

In terms of how the panelists ranked the top five problems, the listing included (in order):

- demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers
- the challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily
- increased competition from electronic delivery systems
- competition from other activities for people's time (tie)
- the poor image of the industry (tie)
- increasing illiteracy in the United States

In terms of how the panelists indicated the likelihood of occurrence of a particular problem, (based on total points) the listing included:

- demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers
- the lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers
- the challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily
- competition from other activities for people's time (tie)
- trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year-olds (tie)
- elitism of the press corps (tie)

The three methods of scoring provided consensus on the types of problems that these panelists see as concerns for the newspapers industry. Some other problems were also rated highly but did not make these lists. Panelists expressed concern about such problems as the further consolidation of media industries (and, in particular, the monopolization of editorial content); staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives; and learning to access the enormous amount of information contained on computer databases.

Also interesting to note are the problems that most panelists did not see developing or did not agree with the implications of: competition from international organizations, increasing homogenization of newspapers (loss of local and community identity), the problems of what constitutes the best format

(broadsheet, tabloid, etc.) – these did not appear as important concerns to the majority of the panelists.

The most interesting information derived from the predictions about physical changes involves the idea of a computer newspaper. The panelists, as a group, did not reach a definite consensus as to whether such a newspaper would appear in the future. On the semantic scale, six marked “likely;” four marked the next closest space; three noted the middle space; two marked the space second from “unlikely;” two marked “unlikely.” But the panelists, as a group, defeated the idea of the “complete replacement” of the paper version by an electronic version: 13 marked “unlikely” or the space next to the “unlikely” space.

The other physical changes the panelists see as least likely included: less emphasis on sections created specifically to attract advertisements; newspapers appearing on plastic, foldable, pliable screens; more use of text to convey the messages of graphics/photos; experimentation with typography; and a handier size and format. The latter suggestion could be considered borderline; answers were fairly evenly distributed.

Most of the content changes were rated as likely; none of the scores was low enough to stand out. However, those the panelists considered least likely included: fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television; erasure of the line between “news” and “entertainment;” and less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.

In Round III, panelists were asked to identify possible solutions to eight of the problems that made the top five in either the rankings scale or the total points scale. Most of the panelists listed more than one solution to each problem. Solutions were considered separately for inclusion into a master list. Solutions that were similar were consolidated. Thus, 13 separate solutions were listed to the problem of “demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.” The

solution most frequently discussed was mentioned by nine panelists. All nine specifically said that newsrooms must do more hiring – and promotion – of non-white minority group members within the newsroom. Diversify the staff, they suggested, to meet the needs of a diversified audience. The next most frequently mentioned solution was the use of research to break down the demographics of a community. Five people suggested this and noted the importance of using special sections and departmentalization of the paper to meet the needs of specific groups of people.

Ten separate solutions were listed to the problem of “the challenges of grabbing readers’ attention daily.” The most frequently mentioned solution was: focus on local news and make news reports more relevant to the public. Ten people referred to this. Local news, they agreed, continues to be the core of community newspapers. Seven people suggested that layout changes (design, photos, graphics, typographics) would aid in solving this problem. The next most frequently mentioned solution was listed by five people. They referred to making newspapers more “user-friendly” with summaries, pull-outs, secondary headlines and other format changes.

The panelists listed 16 different ideas for how the newspaper industry can help solve the problem of illiteracy. No single solution dominated on this question, although the overall consensus suggested that newspapers work with other groups – through the community – and support editorially the efforts of literacy programs and public education.

On the problem of “the lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers,” the panelists offered 13 separate solutions. The most commonly mentioned were: seek ideas from research (four people) and support the Newspapers in Education program (three people). Most panelists agreed that newspapers should make a special effort to include content that appeals to younger

readers. However, one person did suggest that newspapers should not concentrate so much effort on reaching this particular age group. Two others said newspapers should avoid “gimmicks” and involve the newspaper more in the community.

“The poor image of the industry” attracted 18 different solutions, as panelists attempted to reach a consensus on a problem that plagues nearly all journalists in every type of media. The most mentioned solutions were: improve quality and thoroughness and return to the basics of good writing (seven people) and be less arrogant and brash (three people). The solutions did seem to center on a theme of making the newspaper a bigger part of the community, paying more attention to what readers want and raising standards of ethical behavior and accuracy.

Nine different solutions were suggested for the problem of “elitism of the press corps.” No real consensus was reached on this problem, but three people noted that newspapers should be more willing to correct mistakes and listen to people who call or write. Four people also said that editors and reporters should make more efforts to get involved in the community and get to know members of the community.

For “competition from other activities for people’s time” Eight separate solutions were also mentioned. Four people specifically noted that newspapers should concentrate on the quality of the newspaper – making the paper itself more compelling. Five people also noted that the content of the paper should be relevant and more reliable about people’s concerns. Four people said the key is to make the newspaper a part of daily life. Four people said newspapers should get involved in the electronic news business.

For solutions to “trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds,” the panelists listed 16 solutions. Most of the panelists listed similar solutions as to the other problems; some listed their responses as “same as above”

or “same as answer to” one of the other problems. The most consensus on these solutions came on three problems, with three people mentioning each of these solutions: make the newspaper part of everyone’s daily life; use more relevant content; use research to reach former readers and potential readers by finding out what they want in the paper.

Recommendations for Implementation

This study was designed to draw a consensus of newspaper industry experts about the future of newspapers. No one, not even experts, can accurately predict the future of any industry. But this study should be of interest to newspaper professionals and to journalism educators as they prepare for a future that must reflect change just for the sake of survival.

Journalism professionals should take note of the types of problems that the experts in this study have listed. These are by no means the only problems that the newspaper industry faces, but they are many of the same problems that have been discussed in trade journals and magazines over the past decade. Perhaps more important is the fact that these experts reached consensus on the most important problems. The changing readership, for example, (to a more demographically and multiculturally diverse one) was by far the most popular answer in the discussion of future concerns to the industry. Newspapers will have to face the fact that they cannot win back readers or reach potential new ones without offering content that appeals to those readers. As many of the panelists suggested, the use of research can help newspapers break down the demographics of a community and determine what content best suits the people in a particular area.

Competition, a consistent theme throughout this study, has always been a concern to newspaper professionals, and the experts added their opinions to this issue. But as the experts noted, perhaps the best way newspaper journalists can

deal with competition of any kind – be it electronic or other paper forms – is to improve the quality of the newspapers. The panelists consistently mentioned local news as the mainstay of newspapers. Local news is something that newspapers can provide better and more thoroughly than all other media. In conjunction with this is the idea that newspapers need to find out what type of news is most relevant to their readers and to potential readers. Research can help determine this type of information. As one panelist noted, “If newspapers are to contend with demographics, then they must be willing to invest in some sophisticated research methods to cope with the problem. Figures need to be gathered and then solutions applied.”

Newspaper executives should also take careful note of this panel’s emphasis on the demographics of the newsroom. One panelist was explicitly clear on this issue: “The problem results from overwhelmingly white executives, editors and journalists creating a product for an audience which is much more diverse. It will take much more hiring – and promotion – of non-white minority group members to change newsroom sensibilities and decisions. That is a must.” Another noted, “We must continue to build diversified staffs that can provide appropriate and desired information (and entertainment) for each significant group – no matter what multimedia vehicle is used to deliver it.”

Also emphasized was the importance of staff training and development. “Some in-house (and in-class) education must take place in order for any inroads to be made in the arrogance and bias perceptions given the public and the readers/viewers of the journalists today. ... Assertiveness can be there without being offensive. You can be tough but oh so gentle – especially if you know our readership is falling off, and you may be without a job or newspaper if your image isn’t improved in the public eye. This can and should be accomplished without jeopardizing the code of ethics or the purposes of providing news and the First

Amendment Rights – of newspapers and their readers.” This includes, according to the panelists, an increased awareness of (and less ridicule of) the opinions of readers. “Keep staff focused on concerns and interest of real people so that daily decisions about things to cover and ways to display news and information reflects the needs and interests of actual readers and potential readers,” one suggested.

Another panelist noted the importance of image: “Reporters/photographers unfortunately tend to be a rather sloppy bunch, too, and need to adhere to a dress code that makes us appear more professional. ... Finally, we as an industry need to listen when people call or write us and then be willing to implement those suggestions rather than shrugging them off as ‘stupid.’”

Also, on the suggestion of listening to readers, one panelist noted, “More appreciation by everyone on the newspaper that we should be working Outside In rather than Inside Out; that is, we should be listening to cares, concerns, issues that matter most to our readers and potential readers and reacting to those with significant stories, rather than always feeding readers what we are sure is good for them, whether it is relevant to them or not. (I am not advocating pandering to readers; I am advocating being more responsive to them.) Obviously, newspapers should and would continue to maintain their critical watchdog role on matters that should be watched.”

The panelists did indicate that newspapers should be more involved in electronic methods of delivery (as many are with audiotex) but emphasized that newspapers should concentrate on improving the product in its current format. One panelist, in particular, noted the importance of a change in attitude: “To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don’t work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new

ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers' attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience."

The panelists also emphasized the importance of the physical look of the newspaper – particularly in terms of design. "Newspapers have to be more visually attractive. They have to present stories in a way that recognizes many of our readers are pressed for time," one suggested. "That means fewer 40-inch stories and more stories broken into manageable pieces; it means more recognition of the fact that a graphic often can tell a big part of the story."

Several panelists also emphasized the importance of promotion of the newspaper – through media other than just the newspaper. "In short," one said, "fix it, and then promote." Another said that, "Newspapers simply do not do enough promotion – advertising themselves, if you will – in media other than their own. Once newspapers are fixed, they need to tell the readers about all the improvements. This should bring more current non-readers to the newspapers."

Journalism educators, too, should be aware of some of the suggestions of this panel. Some panelists emphasized that higher education curricula must include the necessary changes to keep up with the changes in the newspaper industry. Although some referred directly to the technological changes, they also noted that journalism educators should help students learn how to deal with a diverse group of people. One panelist also suggested, "College journalism curricula should place an increased emphasis on sensitizing students to the traditions and values that define the profession of journalism, ensuring that they understand that these traditions and values are social customs, not natural laws."

Those who teach journalism should also pay attention to the comments these panelists made about the quality of newspaper writing. The panel, as a group, made it clear in this study that no technological advances or colorful designs can overshadow the need for quality writing in a newspaper. Educators should, of

course, be concerned with updating students on the latest in technology, but they should, these panelists say, be more concerned that students learn to write thorough, accurate, unbiased and interesting stories. One panelist, in particular, emphasized the importance of good writing: “Writers will have to have better skills. The recent efforts of newspapers to ‘featurize’ news to make it more interesting or to report news only as an issue several days after it happens is one of the poorest ways to grab the attention of readers. Yet I see this happening in a lot of newspapers.” Another panelist suggested that, “Glitz and glitter cannot replace good, timely, well-written stories. The other day I picked up a column written years ago by Ralph McGill when he was a columnist for the *Atlanta Constitution*. I could not stop reading, and, within minutes, I was in tears. It was a plain, simple story. I can’t tell you the last time one of our modern newspaper stories made me cry.”

Both professionals and educators should also be concerned about the image of the industry. The first step to changing that image may be the panelists’ suggestions about newspaper involvement with the community. Panelists consistently mentioned the idea that newspaper journalists are too isolated from the community. Certainly, one could argue about the implications of getting too close to sources, but the panelists suggested that journalists should get out of their professional clichés and get to know people in the community. As one said, “Get actual newspaper staff members out in the community to meet people, answer questions, explain what we do.” One said that “Newspapers should not have company cafeterias; they only abet reporters eating lunch with other reporters. Reporters should, instead, be eating lunch with cops, business executives, teachers, welfare workers, accountants, carpenters, doctors.” That panelist added that, “I support nepotism rules. Journalists would be less elite and incestuous if they were married to the people listed above, instead of other journalists.”

Recommendations for Further Research

Sometimes researchers shy away from the study of the future of anything, simply because of the implication of a prediction: The results can never be certain. But the panelists in this study offered their opinions based on extensive experience in the newspaper industry, extensive knowledge of the types of technology in actual or prototype use and extended discussions through newspaper groups and conferences. The importance here is not how accurate this particular panel was in making predictions but how well the newspaper industry handles the changes going on around it. How many of the potential problems will actually be of concern to the industry? How helpful might some of the solutions suggested here be to those in the industry? What will newspapers look like in the future and how important will the role of computer newspapers become?

The Delphi Technique was not designed to allow a researcher to make generalized predictions or to measure the opinions of all professionals and educators in the newspaper industry. The idea is to provide some sense of what people in different areas of the industry think about what is going to happen to newspapers. None of the panelists claims to know that future, but all have looked ahead and, using their own experiences, offered a picture of things to come. Journalists at various sizes of newspapers are likely to combat different types of problems in the future. The financial burdens that come with upgrading equipment and hiring personnel, for example, are more likely to affect smaller newspapers. On the other hand, larger newspapers may have more problems trying to reach all segments of their communities, and staff members may be less in-tune with those communities. The point is, all will have to deal with the problems as they arise.

Future studies – perhaps every five years or so – might use the Delphi Technique to get an idea of how experts are viewing the future. Researchers might

compare those views with the ones expressed in this study. Such studies could be useful in newspapers' plans for change and for journalism schools' planning of curricula. A future study might concentrate on the opinions of specific groups of people: for example, of the editors of large newspapers versus those of smaller newspapers; of long-time educators versus editors. Another study might consider the views of media analysts only. Vital to any future such studies is a comparison with this one and an offering of solutions.

Any studies dealing specifically with technology and its effects on the industry – the response of media consumers or newspaper journalists in particular – could provide helpful information. Finally, studies examining the changing needs of readers should also be undertaken.

Conclusion

For the first time in their history, newspapers are – right now – at a sort of crossroads in their history. Until the 1980s, newspapers seemed to have a firm grip on their place as an important source of news and entertainment. That changed, quite dramatically, with the start-up of the Cable News Network and the popularity of other types of advertising outlets, such as local television and radio broadcasts. No one in this study suggested that newspapers will disappear anytime soon. But newspapers cannot expect to survive without expecting to change.

The most obvious form of change involves technology. Newspapers that are not already experimenting with some type of electronic news delivery should do so as soon as feasible. They should, as experts have cautioned, be wary of buying without research and of buying, for example, an expensive audiotex system that will be outdated in a few years. On the other hand, they can and should be using the more obvious forms of technology to improve the look of newspapers. Excellent graphic programs are available for individual newspapers' use, and

detailed graphics are also available through the Associated Press and other services. This study and others have indicated that readers want more graphics and photographs.

Newspaper executives have heard before that they should be emphasizing local news and, especially, local people, and the experts in this study agree on that suggestion. A newspaper that spends too much time and space on national and international events, on photographs and stories about issues less relevant to its immediate community is a newspaper doomed to lose readership. Trying to compete directly with other media does not seem to be the answer. As one panelist pointed out, “One reason that readers are turning to radio and television for their news and entertainment is because it’s there in a handy, understandable format. Newspapers are trying to be something they aren’t.”

The vital newspaper of the future will be one that makes itself an important part of the community by making itself an important part of each individual reader’s life. Certainly, newspapers would have a difficult time trying to include the content desired by each person in a community, but that’s where research comes in – find out what a particular community wants in the paper. The idea, as one panelist said, is to make the newspaper the “public journal” that it was designed to be. Another panelist seemed to sum it up: “Newspaper people sometimes argue about whether a particular newspaper is a writer’s newspaper or an editor’s newspaper when the question should really be, “Is the newspaper a reader’s newspaper?”

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

THE PANELISTS: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

An initial group of 47 people was asked to participate in this study. Eighteen of the following 19 participated in all three Rounds. Cathleen Black participated in Round I only.

Jennifer Allen is president, publisher and editor of *The Ironton (Ohio) Tribune* and a second-term member of the board of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association. She is the chairwoman of the national APME Small Newspapers Committee. She previously worked as the editor/vice president of *The Natchez Democrat* in Mississippi, managing editor of *The Commercial Dispatch* in Columbus, Mississippi, editor of *The Corsicana Daily Sun* in Texas and news editor of *The Hamilton Journal-News* in Ohio.

Ben Bagdikian is professor emeritus in the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California in Berkeley. Bagdikian has worked as a newspaper reporter, foreign correspondent and editor. Bagdikian has also served as an ombudsman and was project director for Rand's News Media Technology Study in the late 1960s. He has contributed to numerous publications, including *Harper's*, *Atlantic*, *Nation*, *New Republic* and the *New York Sunday Times Magazine*. He is the author of five books, including The Media Monopoly, now in its third edition.

Cathleen Black is president and chief executive officer of the Newspaper Association of America, an organization formed in 1992 as the result of the

merging of the American Newspaper Publishers Association with the Newspaper Advertising Bureau and five other newspaper associations. She is the former publisher of *USA Today*.

Diane Borden, who was selected by the Gannett Company for its management training program, advanced through the ranks of newspaper management and has served in numerous newspaper positions, including copy editor, managing editor and publisher. At this writing, she is completing a Ph.D. at the School of Communications at the University of Washington in Seattle and is an adjunct instructor at Mount Vernon College, teaching courses in magazine article writing and typography.

Philip Currie, vice president/news for the Gannett Company Inc., started his journalism career at that company's *Rochester (New York) Times-Union*, where he worked as a general assignment reporter, editorial writer, political reporter and executive city editor. He served in several corporate positions before advancing to his current one in 1989. Currie works with such news matters as consolidations, the development of new papers and product improvements with the staffs of Gannett's 80 newspapers. In 1991, he chaired the Newspaper Division sessions that led to the development of News 2000, Gannett's program to improve the content of its newspapers for the future.

Martin L. Gibson is a professor of journalism and head of the News and Public Affairs Reporting in the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas in Austin.

Robert Haiman is the president and managing director of The Poynter Institute for Media Studies, an educational institution in St. Petersburg, Florida. The institution aims to encourage original research, training and educational programs for the communication media and for newspaper journalists in particular. Haiman has worked as a reporter, copy editor, city editor, national editor,

managing editor and executive editor for the *St. Petersburg Times*. He is a past president of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association and is a director of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He has been a visiting lecturer at numerous journalism schools.

Ernest C. Hynds is a professor of journalism and mass communication and head of the department of journalism in the College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia. His primary teaching and research areas include contemporary newspapers and magazines, reporting, editorial writing and mass media history. He is the author of *American Newspapers in the 1980s* and two other books. He has written numerous articles for such journals as *Journalism Quarterly* and *Newspaper Research Journal* and for such professional publications as *The Masthead* and *Editor & Publisher*. Hynds has worked at the *Atlanta Constitution*, WEB radio station in Atlanta and the *Athens (Georgia) Banner-Herald*.

Bill Kovach is the curator of The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University. He is the former editor of the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* and the former Washington bureau chief of *The New York Times*. He also has extensive experience as an editor and reporter for the *Times*, *The (Nashville) Tennessean* and the *Johnson City (Tennessee) Press-Chronicle*.

Ralph Langer is senior vice president and executive editor of *The Dallas Morning News*. He is president of the National Freedom of Information coalition and president of the Council of Presidents, a coalition of heads of U.S. journalism organizations. He is past president of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association and past president of the Associated Press Managing Editors Foundation. Langer's professional activities include work as managing editor of the *Port Angeles (Wash.) Daily News*, copy editor at the *Detroit Free Press*, managing editor of the *Dayton (Ohio) Journal Herald* and editor of the *Everett*

(WA) *Herald*. He joined *The Dallas Morning News* in June 1981 as managing editor.

David Lipman, is the chairman of Pulitzer Publishing Co.'s long-range planning group, Pulitzer/2000. Previously, he served as managing editor of the *St Louis Post-Dispatch* for 13 1/2 years. Lipman has worked in various newspaper positions, including as a sports writer, assistant sports editor, general assignment reporter and news editor for the *Post-Dispatch*, the *Jefferson City Post-Tribune* and the *Kansas City Star*. The author of seven biographies of sports stars, Lipman is a member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and serves on its minorities committee. He has also served on numerous committees for the Associated Press Managing Editors Association.

Maxwell E. McCombs is Jesse H. Jones Centennial Chair in communication in the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas, where he was chairman of the department for six years. He has taught at Syracuse University, the University of California in Los Angeles and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has been widely published and is perhaps best known for his pioneer studies (with Donald Shaw) in media agenda-setting. He also has experience as a newspaper reporter and is the former director of the American Newspaper Publishers Association News Research Center.

Patricia G. McNeely is associate dean of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. As an associate professor, she served as head of the news-editorial department for 15 years. McNeely has also worked as a news editor, copy editor, newsletter director, reporter and writing consultant. She has worked for *The Charlotte Observer*, the *Columbia (South Carolina) Record*, the *Washington Post* and the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*.

Alan R. Miller is retired as emeritus professor of journalism/mass communications from the University of Maine in Orono. He currently serves as a reference librarian at Arlington Central Library in Virginia and is a media consultant with a specialty in newspaper management. His professional experience includes work as a copy editor for *USA Today*, as a free-lance reporter at the National Press Building in Washington D.C., as acting director of public information for the University of Maine and as a communication specialist for the U.S. State Department. He also worked as publisher and editor of the *Amherst (Massachusetts) Journal*. He is the author of four books, including a history of Maine newspapers, and has published numerous free-lance and academic articles.

Dale Peskin is assistant managing editor of *The Detroit News*.

David Scott is vice president of the Cox Corporation's Newspaper Division.

Patsy Watkins is head of the Department of Journalism at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Jean Gaddy Wilson is the executive director of New Directions for News, a national think tank organization of editors and publishers that is housed at the School of Journalism in the University of Missouri in Columbia. The research and development institute, founded in 1987, and dedicated to increasing the impact, effectiveness, readership and appeal of American newspapers. She is also on the University of Missouri faculty and is the author of numerous book chapters and magazine articles.

Nancy Woodhull is the president of Nancy Woodhull & Associates Inc. of Pittsford, New York and Washington D.C., a company that specializes in assisting media companies in identifying news readers and new media with special emphasis in understanding the female consumer and worker. Clients include Time-

Warner and Great American Broadcasting. She was a founding editor of *USA Today* and a former editor-in-chief of *Southern Living* magazine.

Four other people agreed to participate in the study but then did not:

Bill Baker was vice president for news at Knight-Ridder Inc. in Miami, Florida, but he left that position before responding to Round I. Marty Claus, who took over Baker's position, was asked to participate (via a phone call message and a facsimile message) but did not respond.

David Lawrence Jr. is the publisher of the *Miami Herald* and past president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. After receiving Round I, he wrote a letter indicating that he did not have time to participate.

John Morton is a media analyst with Lynch Jones & Ryan in New York and author of a column that appears in *Washington Journalism Review*. He did not respond to Round I or to a follow-up phone call message and facsimile letter encouraging his participation.

Allen Neuharth is chairman of the Freedom Foundation and former chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Association. He is the retired president and chief executive officer of the Gannett Company and founder of its national newspaper, *USA Today*. After receiving a copy of Round I, Neuharth wrote a letter suggesting that, since he was retired from the newspaper industry, he was not an appropriate person for the study. He did not respond to a follow-up phone call message or facsimile letter encouraging him to participate.

The following people, after receiving the introductory letter, chose not to participate:

Robert Alles is editor of *The Detroit News*.

Katherine Fanning is a journalism professor at Boston University and former editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Suzanne Braun Levine is editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

Joseph W. Ostrow is executive vice president and worldwide media director for Foote Cone & Belding Communications Inc.

Geneva Overholser is editor of the *Des Moines Register*.

John Reid is vice president and director of communications and technology for The Associated Press.

Sue Reisinger is Broward managing editor of *The Miami Herald* and president of the Associated Press Managing Editors.

Judy Turk is dean of the College of Journalism at the University of South Carolina.

Seymour Topping is director of editorial development for the *New York Times* Regional Newspapers and is former managing editor of the *New York Times* and former president of the American Society of News Editors.

Those who did not respond to the introductory letter or to a follow-up letter include:

William Ahearn is vice president and executive editor of The Associated Press.

Frank Bennack is president of the Hearst Corporation and former chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Association.

Doug Campeljohn, a software consultant specializing in newspapers at Apple Computer Company.

Roger Fidler is director of new media technology for Knight-Ridder Inc.

David Halberstam, an award-winning newspaper reporter, is the author of several books about the media industry.

William Howard is publisher of the *Hammond Times* in Munster, Indiana.

Kathy Kozdemba is editor of *The Journal Newspapers* in Springfield, Virginia.

John Naisbitt is the author of Megatrends and its follow-up books, which offered numerous speculations about the future of the media industry.

Burns W. Roper is chairman of the Roper Organization Inc., which specializes in researching the media industry.

Donald Shaw is a professor of journalism in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

Michael Schrage, of the Center for Coordination Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has conducted research on electronic newspapers.

Two participants died during the period of the mailing of the introductory letters and follow-up letters:

William H. Cowles III was the publisher of the *Spokesman Review* in Spokane, Washington.

Paul Poorman was a professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Kent State University.

One other person agreed to participate but replied too late to be included in the study:

Bob McGruder is managing editor/news for *The Detroit Free Press* and a member of the Associated Press Managing Editors board of directors.

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Mr. Bagdikian:

People used to predict an imminent doomsday for newspapers – that the industry would fold under the pressures of competition from electronic media and independent publications. But although many newspapers have died in the past 15 years, the forecast now is quite different: Newspapers will be around in the year 2000 and beyond but will gain strength only if they take advantage of new technology and new methods of reaching media consumers. As a former newspaper and magazine editor and now a free-lance writer and graduate student, I am interested in studying this phenomenon. I am pursuing a doctorate of higher education (Ed.D.) with an emphasis in mass communications at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

I would like to invite you to participate in a Delphi study of the future of the newspaper industry. The Delphi method involves a selective panel (no more than 30) of professionals and educators in the newspaper industry. I have chosen prospective panelists based on my background reading of those who have significant experience in the field and/or specific knowledge about the developing technology. I chose you in particular because of your position as an educator and author.

Your participation would involve filling out three short questionnaires, mailed to you over the next five months. The questionnaires are designed to take up a minimal amount of your time. However, you will be allowed a great amount of freedom in your responses. Your responses will be distributed anonymously to other panel members, and you will receive their responses. In the reporting of the data, I will not associate your name directly with any of your answers on the questionnaires. The final report will include a biographical sketch of your professional experience. As a participant, you could also request a summary of the results of the study.

I would appreciate a response as to your willingness to participate by **Tuesday, Oct. 20**. A reply form and a pre-addressed, stamped envelope are enclosed for your response. If you have any questions or prefer to respond by phone, please call me at one of the numbers listed below. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sherri Ward Massey

744 Highland Parkway Norman, OK 73069
(405) 744-4030 or (405) 364-9714

APPENDIX C

ROUND I COVER LETTER

Dear Dr. McCombs:

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in my study of the predicted future of newspapers. I value your opinion and appreciate your contribution.

I have enclosed the first of three rounds of questionnaires that you will be asked to complete over the next few months. The purpose of this first round is to garner your predictions about the physical look and the content of newspapers of the future. I am also interested in the problems that you foresee for newspapers.

This round involves three open-ended questions. Please type or print legibly. For each question, use the back of the pages and extra paper if needed. **The deadline is Monday, Dec. 21.**

Rounds II and III will involve ranking the problems, deriving a consensus of the future look of newspapers and discussing possible solutions to the problems.

I have assigned you a number on the answer sheets so I can keep an organized record of the returned questionnaires. However, as I told you before, during the course of this study, your name will not be revealed to the other participants in this study, and your name will not be associated directly with your responses. In my final report, I will include a list of the participants and my reasons for selecting them for this study.

Thank you,

Sherri Ward Massey

744 Highland Parkway
Norman, OK 73069
(405) 744-4030 or
(405) 364-9714

APPENDIX D

ROUND I FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Dear Ms. Borden:

As of today, I have not yet received your responses to the Round I questions of my study of the future of newspapers. From our phone conversation, I know that you intended to return them. I need your reply to continue with Round II.

In case you have misplaced the questionnaire, the questions are:

QUESTION 1:

List the five most important problems that you believe the newspaper industry will encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers. Do not attempt to rank the problems or offer solutions; these issues will be dealt with in Rounds I and II.

QUESTION 2:

List what you foresee as the next three to five most important changes in the physical look of future newspapers. For each, please briefly explain why you think these changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. Do not attempt to rank your responses; this will be dealt with in Rounds II and III.

QUESTION 3:

List what you foresee as the next three to five most important changes in the content (including types of coverage, types of special sections, etc.) of future newspapers. For each, please briefly explain why you think these changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. Do not attempt to rank your responses; this will be dealt with in Rounds II and III.

I have assigned you a number on the answer sheets so I can keep an organized record of the returned questionnaires. **Your number is 29.** Please include this number on your responses. I would appreciate your reply as soon as possible.

You can **mail** your responses to:
Sherri Massey; 744 Highland Parkway; Norman, OK 73069
or **fax** your responses to:
ATTENTION: Sherri Massey (405) 692-4446

Thank you,

Sherri Massey
(405) 364-9714 or (405) 743-4030

APPENDIX E

ROUND I SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The Predicted Future of Newspapers

QUESTION 1:

List the five most important problems that you believe the newspaper industry will encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers. Do not attempt to rank the problems or offer solutions; these issues will be dealt with in Rounds I and II.

QUESTION 2:

List what you foresee as the next three to five most important changes in the physical look of future newspapers. For each, please briefly explain why you think these changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. Do not attempt to rank your responses; this will be dealt with in Rounds II and III.

QUESTION 3:

List what you foresee as the next three to five most important changes in the content (including types of coverage, types of special sections, etc.) of future newspapers. For each, please briefly explain why you think these changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. Do not attempt to rank your responses; this will be dealt with in Rounds II and III.

NOTE: Each question was listed on a separate page.

APPENDIX F

ROUND II COVER LETTER

Dear Mr. Scott:

Please don't panic at the number of pages in this, Round II, of my survey about the future of newspapers. This Round contains no open-ended essay questions. All you have to do is mark an "X" on the scales and provide a five-item ranking. According to the results of my pilot study, the estimated time of completion is 15 to 20 minutes.

This round consists of three sections, each dealing with the questions that you answered for Round I. In each section, I have consolidated, paraphrased and even moved some answers around. If you don't think all of your answers are included, look closer – they may have been reworded. I found a great deal of consensus on some of the issues. Your complete responses will be included in my final report.

The deadline for this Round is Friday, Feb. 19. Feel free to respond either by using the enclosed stamped envelope or by fax (especially if the deadline sneaks up on you). The fax number is listed below.

As I told you before, I have assigned you a number on the answer sheets so I can keep an organized record of the returned questionnaires. In Round III (the last one), we will deal with (more specifically) some of the problems you have identified, and I will collect some biographical information for an appendix.

Thank you for sticking with me!

Sincerely,

Sherri Ward Massey
744 Highland Parkway
Norman, OK 73069
home phone: (405) 364-9714
school phone (Monday-Thursday): (405) 743-4030

FAX: (405) 360-6394

APPENDIX G

ROUND II FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Dear Dr. Gibson:

As of today I have not yet received your response to Round II of my survey about the future of newspapers. If you have already mailed your questionnaire back, please disregard this letter.

If you have not mailed the questionnaire yet, please do so as soon as possible. You can **fax** the questionnaire back at **(405) 360-6394**.

If you did not receive the questionnaire, please call me at (405) 743-4030 or (405) 364-9714.

Your responses are important to the results of my study.

Thank you,

Sherri Massey

744 Highland Parkway
Norman, OK 73069

APPENDIX H

ROUND II SURVEY INSTRUMENT

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES

What follows is a consolidated list based on the opinions of the panelists in this study. In your opinion, how likely is it that each will be a problem/issue that affects the newspaper industry in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers? If you don't consider a particular listing a problem/issue or you disagree with a given presumption or perception, then mark closer to "unlikely." **Please indicate by an "X" on the scales.**

1. Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers. Based on the assumption that the U.S. is undergoing a rapid diversification in population, some believe this presents newspapers with new, complex challenges in meeting the needs of readers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

2. Increased competition from electronic delivery systems. Technological innovations in information production and distribution (i.e., facsimile transmissions, electronic bulletin boards, interactive media, teleconferencing) compete with newspapers in the rapid transferral of timely information.

Unlikely _____ Likely

3. The education of future journalists. Journalism schools will need to change curricula and teaching methods to prepare students for changes in the newspaper industry.

Unlikely _____ Likely

4. Changing psychographic characteristics of newspaper employees. The attitudes, beliefs and lifestyles of news workers will have an even greater impact on mass media content in the future, causing new management challenges in the industry.

Unlikely _____ Likely

5. The poor image of the industry. The perceived lack of credibility of the mass media negatively affects newspapers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

6. Elitism of the press corps. This view suggests that reporters and editors out of touch with communities – both geographically and attitudinally. A gap exists between journalists' political/social values compared with those of the readers. Newspapers do not understand the readers they serve.

Unlikely _____ Likely

7. Lack of innovative use of technology and customer service in the circulation department. Newspapers have not kept up with technology (interactive computer programs, for example) that would allow for faster and better distribution of the news. This will continue to be a problem as newspapers are struggling to catch up.

Unlikely _____ Likely

8. Further consolidation of media industries. Newspaper groups and corporations will continue to buy newspapers. This may cause such problems as newspapers' loss of identity and sense of community and a monopolization of editorial comment.

Unlikely _____ Likely

9. The need to learn how to use technology in a way that will interest advertisers. Newspapers will have to use other methods, i.e., book publishing, audiotex, videotex, online access, to attract advertisers' support.

Unlikely _____ Likely

10. The pressures of time to put out a quality product. Even more than before, time pressures (keeping the news updated) will affect newspapers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

11. Financial burdens of purchasing new equipment. Newspapers' attempts to "keep up" with advances in technology will cause financial problems.

Unlikely _____ Likely

12. **Changing psychographic characteristics of news sources.** The new power elites may have different characteristics than sources in the past. For example, they may favor broadcast to print industries.

Unlikely _____ Likely

13. **Providing local news.** Digging up the news that is relevant to a community is likely to be even more difficult, considering the changes in the industry.

Unlikely _____ Likely

14. **Disappearance of retail advertising as an economic base.** Newspapers will have to deal with the problem of continued inadequate (and perhaps diminishing) funding from advertising.

Unlikely _____ Likely

15. **Plummeting subscriptions.** Newspapers will struggle to gain and maintain reader loyalty.

Unlikely _____ Likely

16. **Competition with television and radio.** The instantaneous delivery of timely news in an arena of electronic sight, sound, color and motion will continue to challenge newspapers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

17. **Increasing illiteracy in the United States.** Illiteracy is increasing, causing newspapers further problems in gaining readership.

Unlikely _____ Likely

18. **Increasing legal restraint and restricted access to gathering information.** Tightened controls on the release of information in government and commercial venues will make it tough for reporters to get information.

Unlikely _____ Likely

19. **Competition from international organizations.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

20. **Environmental concerns.** The costs and complexities involved with recycling will affect the newspaper industry.

Unlikely _____ Likely

21. The rising cost of newsprint, production and distribution. The problems of delivering a paper product to individual addresses each day will affect the directions taken by the industry in the future.

Unlikely _____ Likely

22. The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily. Newspapers will have to work harder to keep from boring readers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

23. Connecting local readers to national and international problems. In a changing world and changing industry, newspapers will have more trouble trying to bring world issues to a local level.

Unlikely _____ Likely

24. Pricing the newspaper competitively with other news sources. Newspapers will have to deal with the issue of whether to increase the price of the product or keep the prices low in relation to other news sources.

Unlikely _____ Likely

25. The need to overhaul management structure of newspaper organizations. Most newspapers, especially the newsrooms, need to be overhauled with an eye toward abandoning the old hierarchies and replacing them with collegial teams.

Unlikely _____ Likely

26. Learning to access and make sense of the enormous amount of information stored on computer databases. The information is there, but now newspapers have to learn how to use it.

Unlikely _____ Likely

27. The rising age of readership. Based on the presumption that the majority of newspaper readers are older – newspapers will have to adjust.

Unlikely _____ Likely

28. Trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year-olds. Newspapers will have to consider whether advertising and special sections should be aimed at other target groups.

Unlikely _____ Likely

29. The intrusion of business-office concerns into the leadership of news and editorial departments. The struggle between administration (with concern for finances) and the newsroom (with concern for content) will be a problem in the future.

Unlikely _____ Likely

30. Competition from other activities for people's time. Newspapers will have to compete, not only with other media, but with work, vacations, movies, etc.

Unlikely _____ Likely

31. Low salaries of newspaper employees. Low salaries will cause problems for the industry, as qualified employees will be hard to find and hard to keep.

Unlikely _____ Likely

32. Increasing homogenization of newspapers. Newspapers will increasingly become stripped of local identity and sense of community, as all are made to look and read alike.

Unlikely _____ Likely

33. Newspapers' slow acceptance of change. Newspapers will have problems accepting new technology as part of their daily existence.

Unlikely _____ Likely

34. The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers. Dealing with the issue of how to attract younger readers will be a problem.

Unlikely _____ Likely

35. A weaker image among advertisers. Newspapers will have to overcome their current weaker image (compared with other media sources) among advertisers – especially those controlling national accounts.

Unlikely _____ Likely

36. Staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives. Trying to stay aware of what issues people want to read about will be tough for newspapers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

37. Lack of research and development. Newspapers, as well as corporations, are not spending money and time in research that could help prepare them for the future.

Unlikely _____ Likely

38. Lack of experimentation. Newspapers are not making efforts to prototype new additions, sections or stories.

Unlikely _____ Likely

39. Inability to reorganize to become guidebooks to the future. Newspapers may have trouble giving up the historical stance (of reporting yesterday) to report for the future.

Unlikely _____ Likely

40. The necessity of mid-career training for journalists. As jobs are likely to change rapidly, reporters will need to be more computer literate and familiar with databases.

Unlikely _____ Likely

41. Finding the right mix of content. Newspapers are having an identity crisis. Do readers want more local news? Do they want coverage of events or overall situations?

Unlikely _____ Likely

42. The struggle over the two main competing philosophies. Which is likely to appeal to readers: the *USA Today* capsule approach or the less timely but more in-depth newsmagazine approach?

Unlikely _____ Likely

43. Confusing writing styles. Newspapers are hunting for the type of article that attracts all readers: As a result, many articles are poorly written and badly organized.

Unlikely _____ Likely

44. The ongoing discussions of what constitutes the best format. Should newspapers stick with a broadsheet, change to a tabloid or perhaps spend more time developing on-line computer sources?

Unlikely _____ Likely

SECTION 1A: RANKING

Now, considering ONLY those items listed in the above section (SECTION 1), please rank the top five problems/issues facing the newspaper industry. Simply write a number next to those you believe will be the most difficult to deal with in the industry. A "1" represents the problem/issue that will cause the most problems.

SECTION 2: PHYSICAL CHANGES

What follows is a consolidated list based on the predictions of the panelists in this study. In your opinion, how likely is it that each physical change will occur in the future? Please indicate by an "X" on the scales.

1. **The supplementation of the regular newspaper with specialized publications/sections.** Newspapers will probably be demographically (as opposed to geographically) zoned and cater to readers through weekly sections, weekend sections, special-interest publications, neighborhood newspapers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

2. a. **The appearance of an electronic newspaper.** This refers specifically to a computer form, such as: hand-held, "flat panel" (laptop) or compact disc.

Unlikely _____ Likely

b. **The eventual complete replacement of the paper version by an electronic version.** This refers specifically to the types noted in 2.a.

Unlikely _____ Likely

3. **A handier, smaller size and format.** The broadsheet size will be replaced by a smaller size, perhaps a tabloid.

Unlikely _____ Likely

4. **More readable/legible typefaces for headlines and text.** This may result in larger type (for older readers) or other changes.

Unlikely _____ Likely

5. **More departmentalization of the news.** The result will be something similar to current news magazines – including use of indexing, pointers, breakouts, directories.

Unlikely _____ Likely

6. **Shorter stories.** Newspapers will cut the length of the typical news story, thus providing less detail and background information.

Unlikely _____ Likely

7. **More photographs.** Computers and phone-linking technology will result in more immediate images; thus, more photos will be used to tell the stories.

Unlikely _____ Likely

8. **Experimentation with typography.** There will be an explosion of this to the point where typography loses its integrity – at least for a while. Watch for colorized headlines, awkward tracking and kerning.

Unlikely _____ Likely

9. **More color.** We'll see more spot color and full color.

Unlikely _____ Likely

10. **More layering of information.** Newspapers will use headlines, summaries/digests, supplemental information boxes, explanatory graphics to tell the full story.

Unlikely _____ Likely

11. **More forms of availability of newspaper information made available.** Media consumers will be able to access newspaper information through telephone (audiotex), facsimile, on-line service, cable – any form in demand.

Unlikely _____ Likely

12. **More frequent use of magazine-quality graphics.** Everything from infographics to photographs will be of higher quality – in terms of color, intensity. We may even see some animation.

Unlikely _____ Likely

13. **Variety as the key to format.** Everything from typeface to the size of columns will be tried.

Unlikely _____ Likely

14. **Increased use of better newsprint stock for better reproduction.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

15. **Special delivery of business sections as updated, color facsimile pages.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

16. More use of text to convey the messages of graphics/photos. Readers will be turned off unless graphics/photos fully convey information.

Unlikely _____ Likely

17. Cutbacks in the number of pages produced. This will result from a continuing decrease in advertising revenues.

Unlikely _____ Likely

18. Continuing pressure on format decisions (in general) by a variety of issues. Some of the most important issues include production costs, environmental concerns, computerization and the need for instant updates.

Unlikely _____ Likely

19. More interactive advertising. Readers will note phone numbers in the advertisements and make purchases via computer or telephone.

Unlikely _____ Likely

20. Less emphasis on the organization and look of sections created specifically to attract advertisements. Newspapers will attempt to cater more to readers and less to advertisers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

21. More efforts to attract targeted advertisements. That is, newspapers will expand certain sections, such as movie, television, home, kitchen, to lure targeted advertising.

Unlikely _____ Likely

22. Expanded personals advertising sections. Newspapers will expand these sections – at readers' request and because of the profit-making motive.

Unlikely _____ Likely

23. Newspapers may appear on plastic, foldable, pliable screens. Changes in delivery will affect design: The headlines, columns, graphics and art may look the same on the screen, but art may move – like television.

Unlikely _____ Likely

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES

What follows is a consolidated list based on the predictions of the panelists in this study. In your opinion, how likely is it that each content change will occur in the future? Please indicate by an "X" on the scales.

1. **More special sections dealing with issues geared to younger readers.** This may mean Q and A columns, advice columns and other columns geared to children, juveniles and young adults.

Unlikely _____ Likely

2. **More special sections aimed at older readers.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

3. **More advertising geared toward older readers.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

4. **More relevant business news.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

5. **More variety in the content of stories, art.** This will become necessary as newspapers try to meet the needs of a changing readership.

Unlikely _____ Likely

6. **More "for-the-record" information in great detail.** Newspapers will print more of the type of information readers cannot get elsewhere: marriage licenses, divorces, property notices, obituaries, etc.

Unlikely _____ Likely

7. **More coverage of world events – defined from a business perspective.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

8. **More women's news.** Women's lifestyles have changed considerably over the past 30 years. Newspapers will need to reflect that with information that appeal to women who work – both in and out of the home.

Unlikely _____ Likely

9. More local news and features. Newspapers will cover more news of interest to local readers and will localize national, regional and state news.

Unlikely _____ Likely

10. More in-depth reporting of many specialty areas. Newspapers will place more emphasis on the coverage of such areas as business, science, education.

Unlikely _____ Likely

11. More reader involvement in content. Readers will have a greater say in what is published and thus will have greater access through letters to the editor, guest columns, Action Lines, panel discussions.

Unlikely _____ Likely

12. More entertainment news. This is based on a presumption that one of readers' goals of reading newspapers is escapism.

Unlikely _____ Likely

13. More coverage of lifestyle issues. This includes health, aging, leisure and parenting issues.

Unlikely _____ Likely

14. More content concerned with the interests of specific ethnic groups.

Unlikely _____ Likely

15. More articles dealing with religious and ethical issues.

Unlikely _____ Likely

16. More feature-oriented stories. This may derive from "people," "fluff" or "hard news" angles.

Unlikely _____ Likely

17. Growth of coverage of a multicultural society. Stories may even be presented in languages other than English.

Unlikely _____ Likely

18. **Greater attention to “communities of interest.”** Newspapers will be concerned with what specific groups of people want to read, rather than geographic communities. A reader may choose only the “International” or “Metro” section, for example.

Unlikely _____ Likely

19. **A general increase in the quality of writing.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

20. **More explanatory writing.** Readers want to know WHY, and HOW it affects THEM.

Unlikely _____ Likely

21. **Writing that is more simple, clear and direct on editorial pages.** There will be less elitist pontification.

Unlikely _____ Likely

22. **A return to community leadership and responsibility in editorial commentary.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

23. **A better job of anticipating change.** Newspapers will not just report what has already happened. They will focus more on the future, not just the “yesterday” and “today” news covered by other media.

Unlikely _____ Likely

24. **More self-promotion.** Newspapers will let readers and potential readers how they have changed and what more they are doing.

Unlikely _____ Likely

25. **Easier access to further details for stories.** Readers will be able to get more information through phone access lines, audiotex, computer modems or other methods.

Unlikely _____ Likely

26. **Less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.**

Unlikely _____ Likely

27. **More lists, listings and hard data relevant to readers' daily lives.** This could take the form of businesses' and non-profit groups' open hours and purposes, phone numbers for "help" groups, etc.

Unlikely _____ Likely

28. **Better backgrounding and context in stories to connect the news to the reader.** "What it means to you" will guide story writing.

Unlikely _____ Likely

29. **Less emphasis on events (traditional meetings, political actions) and more on trends and situations.** Newspapers will offer a different approach (other than the information provided by television) to the news.

Unlikely _____ Likely

30. **More informative graphics.** More graphics will stand alone and provide details without the necessity of accompanying copy.

Unlikely _____ Likely

31. **Erasure of the line between "news" and "entertainment."** Newspapers will deal with the same issue as that on television: "Hard Copy" versus the 10 p.m. news.

Unlikely _____ Likely

32. **More formation of story ideas based on demographic information identified through marketing research.** Newspapers will use information provided by researchers to determine how to reach specific readers.

Unlikely _____ Likely

33. **Coverage of issues that matter more to readers than to advertisers.** Newspapers will spend less time printing stories to wrap around advertisements.

Unlikely _____ Likely

34. **Fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television (i.e. Somalia).** Realizing they cannot compete directly with television, newspapers will cover other issues.

Unlikely _____ Likely

35. **Rebirth of the rewrite desk.** A story may be rewritten/edited several times for different special sections and, thus, for different groups of people.

Unlikely _____ Likely

36. **Fewer "fluff" pieces.** Everything, even features, will provide useful information and not just act as "fillers."

Unlikely _____ Likely

37. **Reallocation of the front page to fit the demographics of the community.** This may mean a gearing toward women, African-Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, Asians, etc.

Unlikely _____ Likely

38. **More efforts to bring global news to a local level.** How do the events in Somalia affect our community?

Unlikely _____ Likely

-30-

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX I

ROUND III COVER LETTER

Dear Mr. Scott:

Here it is – Round III – the final Round of my survey about the future of newspapers.

Based on the panel's responses to Round II, I calculated the top five problems newspapers face in two ways: one, by the actual rankings and two, by the indications on the semantic differential scales. In this Round, you are asked to identify potential solutions to those problems that made one or both of those top five lists.

The deadline for this Round is extremely important. I have set the deadline for Monday, March 15 and enclosed an SASE. If you cannot make that deadline by mail, **please** fax your responses to (405) 360-6394. I would be happy to reimburse you for any expense that might involve – just send me a bill or receipt.

I have provided space for your responses, if you wish to type or write them. If you choose to use a computer to type your responses, please include your assigned number (46) at the top of your pages.

I am so grateful to you for staying with me through this study. As I told you before, no individual will be identified with his or her specific responses. However, I will list your name in the methodology chapter and would like to include a more detailed description of each panelist in an appendix. You could help me out a lot by **including a vita/resume or brief description of your background in journalism.**

I will send you a copy of the results of this study in late May or early June. Thank you again, and call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sherri Ward Massey
744 Highland Parkway
Norman, OK 73069
home phone: (405) 364-9714
FAX: (405) 360-6394

APPENDIX J

ROUND III FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Dear Mr. Scott:

As of today, I have not yet received your response to Round III of my study of the future of newspapers. I value your opinions and would really appreciate it if you would mail (in the enclosed SASE) or fax those responses to me.

Also, I would like a copy of your resume or a short biography for inclusion in an appendix about the panelists who participated in this study.

Just in case you did not receive the Round III questionnaire, you were asked to suggest solutions to the following problems:

- a. Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers
- b. The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily
- c. Increasing illiteracy in the United States
- d. The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers
- e. The poor image of the industry
- f. Elitism of the press corps
- g. Competition from other activities for people's time
- h. Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds

If you recently mailed your responses, please disregard this letter.

Sincerely,

Sherri Ward Massey
744 Highland Parkway
Norman, OK 73069
home phone: (405) 364-9714
FAX: (405) 360-6394

APPENDIX K

ROUND III SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The Predicted Future of Newspapers

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

For this Round, you are asked to provide possible solutions to the predicted problems that newspapers may face in the future. The following problems made the top five predicted lists based on your rankings and/or your indications on the semantic differential scales (likelihood).

For each, please provide a possible solution or a way that the newspaper industry (including professionals and educators) might address the problem. If you feel that the industry can do little about the problem, say so.

- a. Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers –**
- b. The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily –**
- c. Increasing illiteracy in the United States –**
- d. The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers –**
- e. The poor image of the industry –**
- f. Elitism of the press corps –**
- g. Competition from other activities for people's times –**
- h. Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds –**

NOTE: The questionnaire was separated into four questions on each of two pages.

APPENDIX L

ROUND I PILOT STUDY

These are the verbatim responses of the three people who participated in a pilot survey using a preliminary version of the Round I questionnaire. [The capital letters do not represent any particular respondent; the responses are not presented in any particular order.]

QUESTION 1: List the significant problems that you believe the newspaper industry will encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers.

A. 1. Timeliness – The increasing availability of up-to-the-minute news and information via electronic media sources decreases the value of newspapers as the consumer's source of information. People want information instantly and are provided with this through avenues such as CNN.

2. **Credibility** – The public perception of media bias is a problem that must be addressed.

3. **Cost-effective news gathering/dissemination.**

4. **The death of the evening newspaper.**

5. **Somebody has to something about that damn black ink that rubs off on your fingers.**

B. 1. Newspapers has we know them today cannot be as timely as other media. Consumers can be updated on important news and sports events by watching television, listening to radio or obtaining information through home-computer networks long before their morning newspaper hits the driveway. The major reason most big-city afternoon dailies are relics of history is that they could not compete with the timeliness of their morning competitors. Now morning newspapers are suffering the same fate at the hands of the electronic media.

2. Like judges who have overstepped their authority by making laws rather than simply interpreting them, some newspapers have ventured too far into the realm of opinion-making by disguising opinion as news. Taking a stand on the editorial page is fine, indeed, it is the duty of a good newspaper. Letting the

personal opinions of the owners or editors drift onto the other pages is an abomination. Many consumers know this and they resent the bias of some newspapers.

3. Sadly, the electronic media will have to be the major source of news for an increasing number of Americans who simply cannot read.

C. 1. Combating the video-age mentality. Papers are going more and more to glitz journalism – or are feeling pressure to. If quality writing isn't stressed, the business will suffer.

2. Keeping up, financially speaking, with technological gains. With the incredible advances being made, any major investment is a risk – your technology could be outdated very quickly.

QUESTION 2: List what you foresee as the significant changes in the physical look of newspapers over the next few decades and beyond. Please briefly explain why you consider each a significant change.

A. 1. Newspapers will move from full-sheet to tabloid size. This is significant because of the convenience of tab sheets.

2. The *USA Today* factor will cause more and more newspapers to use more color, larger pictures and shorter stories. More graphics, less in-depth coverage.

B. 1. More color, in photos and graphics: Front-page color is quite common now, and color on some inside pages is not rare. But the top magazines are full-color on every page, and as technology advances, newspapers will move in the same direction.

2. Newspapers will eventually not use paper – they will be transported into homes via cable or phone lines.

C. 1. I do not see significant changes in the physical look of most newspapers. In the past, newspapers competed with one another on newsstands, and, in many cases, the best-looking publication, the one with the most color or with the most exciting layout, sold more copies. In most places, this no longer is the case because the number of multi-newspaper cities in this country is dwindling.

With a few exceptions, there is no local newsstand competition. And it seems unlikely that anyone will launch another national newspaper just for the privilege of warring with *USA Today* to see who can lose the most money. Indeed, newspapers are the most traditional of media outlets and, hence, the least likely to make major changes.

QUESTION 3: List what you foresee as the significant changes in the content (including types of coverage, types of special sections, etc.) of newspapers over the next few decades and beyond. Please briefly explain why you consider each a significant change.

A. 1. More localized stories – publications without a focus will die. The focus could be topical, geographical, whatever.

2. More creative writing – either commentary, personal columns, first-person accounts, whatever. Space will be at a premium, and only the best writings will be used.

B. 1. Newspapers will have to provide their readers with information they cannot obtain through the more timely but less durable electronic media. For example, newspapers can provide in-depth analysis of current events. This is a significant change because in the past, most people read newspapers to find out what was going on. Now they read them to find out why it is going on.

2. Newspapers will have to broaden their appeal by offering a wider range of news, analysis, features and sports. People no longer have time to read an entire newspaper every day. However, many people will buy a newspaper every day just to read one or two regular features: a particular columnist, baseball box scores, a crossword puzzle or the comics, for example. This is a significant change because newspapers can no longer count on readers based on what's on the front page. People can get the same information on television eight hours before they can read it in a newspaper.

3. Newspapers will have to offer their advertisers a wider range of options, including special positioning and special sections on topics such as football, the state fair, weddings, senior citizens, politics and schools that will permit advertisers to target their messages to specific groups of consumers. Newspapers will no longer be able to sell advertising based simply on total circulation. They will have to convince potential advertisers that at least some of their readers are interested in purchasing the products and services these advertisers are offering, and they will have to make an effort to place these ads where potential buyers will see them.

C. 1. According to *USA Today* (11/24/92), newspapers are going back to specialized sections designed to target certain markets, particularly women.

2. Newspapers may split into smaller newspapers covering a more specialized interest group (geographic, ethnic, political) rather than continue with diversified coverage.

APPENDIX M

ROUND I VERBATIM RESPONSES

QUESTION 1:

List the five most important problems that you believe the newspaper industry will encounter in future efforts to meet the needs of media consumers. [NOTE: Responses are listed in no particular order; the capital letters do not represent particular respondents.]

A. Because some definitions are necessary to frame my answer, I have chosen to define the following terms in this way:

“Newspaper industry.” The dominant-culture press; daily newspapers.

“Future:” Within 20 years, by year 2010.

“Needs:” Information and entertainment.

“Media consumers:” People who use a variety of media to meet their needs for information and entertainment.

The five problems are:

1. Demographic diversification of media consumers:

The 1992 presidential election campaign clearly demonstrated that voters (read media consumers) wanted “unfiltered messages from the candidates. Recognizing this, the candidates, particularly President-elect Bill Clinton and third-party candidate Ross Perot, bypassed or supplemented traditional news channels to send their messages to a diversified audience of voters. The candidates used non-traditional media, such as television talk shows and MTV, 30-minute infomercials, and a citizen-participant form of televised debate to promote their image and their views.

Media consumers no longer depend on one source – the newspaper – to meet their information and entertainment needs (if, in fact, they ever did). U.S. media consumers are demographically diverse, and they don’t easily fall into neat consumer categories, as advertisers once believed they did. The trend toward “demassification” began on the airwaves more than 20 years ago, and now cable television and videocassettes threaten the power of the major networks to define content. Segmentation, fragmentation and diversification of the newspaper market has only just begun to be recognized by the newspaper industry.

2. Technological innovations in information production and distribution:

In the next 20 years, the newspaper industry will face increasingly difficult problems in the production and delivery of the “product” to media consumers. The channels of information distribution will continue to become more and more complex, as information itself becomes central to economic and political power. Whoever controls the channels of information controls the world. In addition to the

dizzying array of broadcast channels, the newspaper industry will encounter global competition in information delivery from such new technologies as facsimile transmissions, teleconferencing, electronic newsletters and interactive media (compact discs that supply not only sound, but also visual computer images, which can be manipulated by the media consumer).

In addition, as the destruction of the forests continues and supplies of newsprint necessarily continue to shrink, resulting in astronomically high costs, the newspaper industry will face even larger economic problems than it does currently. Similarly, as the infrastructures of the cities (road, streets, bridges, etc.) continue to break down and the marketing of the automobile rather than mass transit continues unabated, the newspaper industry will encounter unimaginable traffic congestion, resulting in immense distribution problems. Conversion from afternoon to morning publication will no longer provide a solution to this problem.

3. Consolidation of media industries:

At the same time that media audiences are becoming more fragmented and diversified, the ownership of media industries is becoming more consolidated in fewer hands. The newspaper industry will face growing monopolization in the next decades, adding to the plethora of structural, organizational and personnel problems that already exist within the large newspaper groups.

4. Psychographic characteristics of news workers:

Studies have shown that the typical U.S. journalist is a white Protestant male, with a bachelor's degree, married with children, politically moderate and thirtysomething. As noted in answer No. 1 above, these demographic factors certainly influence the content of the mass media. But psychographic characteristics of news workers – their attitudes and beliefs and lifestyles – will have an even greater impact in the future. The newspaper industry will encounter new management challenges as members of the “me” generation take center stage in the ranks of news workers.

5. Psychographic characteristics of news sources:

Similarly, the newspaper industry will have to come to grips with the new generation of economically and politically powerful, those most often used as sources by news workers. The new power elites may have different demographic and psychographic characteristics than sources in the past. For example, the new rulers will be more visually aware and perhaps less text-oriented than their predecessors, which could favor broadcast rather than print industries.

B. 1. Elitism of the press corps. Reporters and editors are out of touch with communities – both geographically and attitudinally.

2. Lack of innovative use of technology and customer service within the circulation department.

3. Education of future journalists sorely lacking. Most journalism educators never worked in the industry or were fired from it.

4. It needs to learn how to use other media to deliver its message in a way that advertisers will buy into. I.E. book publishing, audiotex.

C. 1. News that is not compelling and relevant.

2. Impact of news technology.

3. Time pressures.

4. Lack of interest.

5. Targeting.
6. Poor image.

D. 1. The most critical problem in newspaper today is the ongoing air of arrogance their staffs demonstrate when dealing with their reading public and in putting together a product that mirrors the markets needs. All too often, newspaper professionals put together newspapers that mirror their needs, not the readers. Unfortunately, games such as Gannett's news readership program won't be effective because they seek to further homogenize newspapers rather than diversify them to meet their market's needs.

2. The continuing erosion of subscriber numbers is a critical problem that must be addressed. As our reader base continues to slip, so will our advertiser volume. However, if newspapers address the problem outlined in answer No. 1, then this problem as well as the problem that I will list in No. 3.

3. We cannot continue to lose advertisers to broadcast outlets as well as secondary outlets, such as circulars sent via the mail, etc. Whether journalism purists believe it or not, it is a fact that readers want a combination of news and advertising as part of their daily newspaper. Of course, news/sports/etc. are important, but readers also want to know about what's on sale at Kmart, etc.

4. The past 20 years have brought a technological revolution to newspapers. Today, technology is virtually obsolete within a year or so of its installation. Suppliers must realize that costs must come down or newspapers won't be able to survive annual outflows of cash to purchase new equipment.

5. Local news must become every newspaper's primary concern. In fact, local news is the only thing that differentiates each us from every other news outlet. We have to realize that "chicken dinner" news that ranges from honor rolls to senior citizen center activities are what makes us important to our readers. We need to educate a news generation of journalism professionals that appreciate that concept of community journalism. Unfortunately, I don't see that happening. We just have too many ivory tower professors in journalism schools who have absolutely no concept of what is needed in the real world.

E. 1. Maintaining or gaining reader loyalty.

2. Building a stronger advertising base.

3. Offering electronic on-line access to newspapers – dailies and weeklies – and provide such service in the homes, offices and workplaces of subscribers/readers.

4. Redesigning the format of newspapers. Not much has changed re page size, convenience of reading, layout, headlines, photos, ad infinitum.

5. Contents must keep pace of the news and the needs of readers.

F. 1. Increased competition from a myriad of sources of news and information, electronic and otherwise.

2. Irrelevance of the daily report as the population becomes less white and illiteracy increases.

3. The disappearance of retail advertising as an economic base.

4. Increasing legal restraint on gather information in both government and commercial venues.

5. Competition from international organizations.

G. 1. Literacy.

2. Multicultural/minority dominated population.
3. A growing diversity of information sources – the multimedia era.
4. Environmental concerns, and cost of newsprint, and production and distribution costs of newspapers.
5. The quality of the news product, given alternative sources of information.

H. 1. Squeeze between search for profits and need to invest in product consumers will find vital to their lives.

2. Improving credibility with readers and potential readers, particularly in light cast by television journalism which many people see as characterizing all journalists.
3. Staying abreast of what things are of importance to people's lives.
4. Designing content to serve needs identified above.
5. Diversity within news staffs and the attendant problems thus created.

I. 1. Gaining readers attention daily.

2. Connecting local readers to national/international problems.
3. Connecting readers to their local community.
4. Competitive pricing.
5. Finding the right mix of content.

J. 1. Providing appropriate info to meet the needs of an ever-more splintered audience.

2. Determining how to balance amount of text versus number, size, content and complexity of visuals (graphs, info graphics, photos, other graphic devices).
3. Nature of format – continued newsprint broadsheet; newsprint tabloid; on-line computer service; liquid crystal displays – determining what format(s) will serve various audience segments most effectively.
4. The capability to access and make sense of/use of the enormous amount of info stored on computer data bases.
5. How much info to provide – the *USA Today* capsule approach or the longer but less timely newsmagazine article approach.

K. 1. To locate, recruit, hire, train, motivate and retain a corps of journalists which will reflect the changing demographics of the population.

2. To explore ways to shift more of the cost of publication to readers and away from advertisers. (When a newspaper cost 5 cents, a pack of cigarettes cost 10 cents. Now the cigarettes cost \$1.25 and the newspaper costs – on average – 30 cents. We are not charging enough for the value we offer.)
3. To completely overhaul the management structure of newspaper organizations, especially newsrooms, abandoning the old hierarchies and replacing them with collegial teams.
4. To revamp content to better reflect the lives of readers.
5. To update the look and form of newspapers and to explore other ways of delivering our news product other than on smashed trees.

- L. 1. Delivery systems.
- 2. Recycling.
- 3. Rising age of readership.
- 4. Competition with television.
- 5. Animosity toward media on the part of consumers.

M. 1. Declining literacy and the resulting plunge in newspaper readership and penetration.

- 2. Advancing generations who do not develop the habit of relying on newspapers as a primary source of information.
- 3. Increasing cost and complexity of delivering a physical paper product to individual addresses each day.
- 4. Dull, mediocre, gray newspapers competing for attention in an arena of electronic sight, sound, color and motion.
- 5. Content which frequently is of little use to the modern reader.

N. 1. Winning back constituencies of readers it has neglected for many years, the cohorts not among the 18-to-49 year-olds in the middle class, and in so doing increase the penetration of households in the U.S.

- 2. By making content more relevant to serious concerns of readers, to decrease dependency on advertising and increase revenues from subscriptions.
- 3. Stop the intrusion of business-office concerns into the leadership of news and editorial departments.
- 4. Widen the underlying political and social values that now play a part in determining news and feature emphasis, but which is in stark contrast to these values held by the total American population.
- 5. Stop the spread of ownership to non-newspaper and non-media financial interests and thus return leadership attention to the printed news product itself.

O. 1. Adequate revenues form advertising and other sources to fund services.

- 2. Increasing audience segmentation.
- 3. Access to information about government, business, et al.
- 4. Competition from other media, other activities for people's time.
- 5. Finding and keeping competent employees at the low salaries many pay.

P. 1. Timeliness. The newspaper industry is wedded to the mechanized printing press, obsolete 19th century technology that ultimately delivers information to readers hours after it is most useful and valuable. Other media can deliver information almost instantaneously.

2. Usefulness. The gap between what journalists think is important and what readers think is important is growing. Newspaper devote paltry space to information that people can really use.

3. Sense of place. Newspapers used to be vital parts of their communities. Few these days are. Most papers are indistinguishable; they look and read alike. They have been homogenized by designers and stripped by local identity by here-today-there-tomorrow editors and newsrooms.

4. Demographically-targeted advertising. Newspapers are a mass-market medium. Today's advertisers are more interested in demographic groups than mass markets. Other mediums can better deliver what advertisers want.

5. Conventional thinking. Newspapers define the news, then cover, edit, present and produce it the same way, day after day. They are slow to adapt to change (consider audiotex: the 'new technology' that so many newspapers are celebrating is the telephone). In a fast-changing world they are sluggish institutions that strive for stability, permanence and order.

Q. 1. Lack of discretionary time on potential readers' parts. People are working more/longer; many more things compete for what leisure time remains. It's harder for them to give attention to newspapers; it's harder for newspapers to get their attention.

2. Illiteracy. It is a growing problem. No really strong efforts seem underway to solve it. A corollary to this (and in some ways a more serious part of it) is inadequate education – either because schools are failing or society is failing to encourage/help students.

3. Flashier, easier ways to get news: the newspaper takes work; sometimes newspapers are boring; the fall-off in younger readers suggests that difficult times are ahead for most newspapers in their present form. A piece of this is that many more forms of information and information-presentation also are competing with newspapers.

4. A weaker image among advertisers, especially those controlling national accounts. This can affect the advertising base of newspapers; with less revenue, the newspapers can do less on the news side; the cycle – unless addressed – can spiral downward.

5. Lack of "breakthrough" thinking on the part of many newspapers and newspaper companies. Can they "think outside the box?" Can they develop really new approaches? And can they do so while still remembering a basic fact: NEWS does sell newspapers? Actually, some newspapers/media companies are addressing these things now. Will they go far enough fast enough? We'll see.

R. 1. Lack of understanding the individuals the newspapers serve.

2. Lack of research and development country wide – in newspapers, in corporations.

3. Lack of experimentation (only 30 percent of newspaper prototype any additions/sections/new kinds of stories in 1992) to reach aging, dwindling audience.

4. Inability to reorganize to become guidebooks to the future – giving up historical stance (reporting yesterday).

5. Advertising will diminish as people of color, people of the 90s and beyond, women, kids find information sources which serve them much better than current content in newspapers.

S. 1. Circulation problems – the method of delivery.

2. Content – newspapers are having an identity crisis.

3. Form – Should newspapers continue to be published on paper or are there other forms, such as plastic or computer squares that may be better.

4. Design.

5. Competition – the way the newspaper industry identifies its competition and how it will compete.

QUESTION 2:

List what you foresee as the next three to five most important changes in the physical look of future newspapers. For each, please briefly explain why you think these changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. [Responses are listed in no particular order; the capital letters do not represent particular respondents.]

A. 1. The #3 of Question 1 – format decisions pressed by environmental needs, cost factors, the spread of computerization, the need for speed (instant updates).

2. Photographs – camera/computer/telephone line linking technology will result in more immediate images. W/ continuing debate about digital alteration of pix.

3. More sophisticated computer hardware/software and more sophisticated designers (in terms of computers) will result in a more graphically intense look – possibly even some animation.

So far, I haven't read much speculation about impact on readers. I guess I hope the move is in the direction of greater and easier accessibility to info – which, in the case of visuals, would suggest greater degree of legibility and ease in finding and understanding info.

B. 1. Produce the newspaper in a handier, smaller size and format.

The broadsheet size of newspapers has always been cumbersome for the reader. This isn't to say that it has its advantages re play of news and ads. However, its very size can be vexatious and a challenge to most readers. Tabloids have not met the needs of newspapers although reader acceptance has been more successful than the myriad complaints generated by broadsheets. It stands to reason that readers will be more receptive to more convenient, attractive-sized publications which will be the newspapers of the future.

2. Ever more readable/legible typefaces for headlines and text. Currently, the typefaces, although Bondoni is still my favorite, are rather bland and could use some modernization. I would increase the size of the type to 10 points, or at least 9 on 10 pt. The better newspapers (such as the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*) would be much easier to read with a larger typeface to welcome the reader. More departmentalization of the news – similar to current news magazines – may mean better use of the copy editor and make the indexing of a newspaper's contents commonplace and less a jumble than is the current practice.

3. Magazine-quality graphics – from infographics to photographs and all in color – will make a more attractive, vibrant and dynamic news package to attract readers – at the news stands and at-home delivery. Much as there may be some weaknesses in the *USA Today* approach to news presentation, it still remains on the cutting edge of ever-better graphics approach to the news. *USA Today* is in the 21st century; much of the newspaper publishing business needs to follow suit. Readers have too many demands on their time and attention; better graphics will

help hold the readers' interest, coupled with excellent writing in a simple style understandable to readers of all levels. The graphics may also gain a foothold with the younger reader who is today virtually lost to the attractiveness and dynamism of television.

C. 1. For the next decade at least, newspapers will be in the form that we know now. The changes as such will be in efforts to reach more readers, including more specialized readers. So you'll see more zoning (for news and advertising purposes) to utilize the same newsprint space many times over; you'll see more specialized sections develop. Such moves enable the newspaper to reach more people and – the newspapers' hope – expand the base.

2. There will be more efforts at specialized publications supplementing the regular newspaper. They will be demographically zoned rather than geographically. For example, those who wish more business news will be able to order it and – for a premium – get more than is in the regular paper. Such efforts will be made in other areas: national/international news; sports; health; and more. The reason: again, trying to reach more people on topics they care about more.

3. Niche publications will continue to grow. These are offshoots of the "mother ship." Some examples: Neighborhood associations will turn to the newspaper to "turnaround" collected data and deliver to their members; weekly publications will (and already are) supplementing daily publications to get more local-local news; special-interest publications (health, seniors, etc.) may be handled separately from the main newspaper, and the same with some advertising publications (homes, cars – again some is being done already). The information base of newspaper will be utilized to give potential readers products they want; the revenue will help support the Mother Ship.

4. Design of newspapers will change to be easier to read; breakouts will be increased; more stories or parts of stories will be told in graphics; "long" stories will be broken into understandable, readable, digestible lengths. Pages will be more visually appealing, partly in an effort to draw more readers and especially more younger readers. (Much of this is underway already; but it will have to be refined.)

5. In 10 years, and maybe less, newspapers also will begin to appear in "flat panel" electronic form. This will enable an electronic feed to a reader's home; the flat-panel computer (about the size of an 8 1/2 X 1 tablet, and about an inch thick) will take the information from the feed, store it, and enable the reader to take the "newspaper" wherever he/she wants. It will let the reader call up any story; it even (in time) will provide video with that story if the reader wants it. It will be able to store more information than today's average newspaper can provide because of space limitations. For a time, the printed newspaper and the flat panel will run parallel; eventually, it may be that the paper version will disappear – although in my lifetime, someone always will at least want a printout to post on the refrigerator door or to file away.

D. 1. The decade of tortured type ... then a renaissance.

Desktop design and pagination have opened up a Pandora's Box of tantalizing type to editors and designers. The result: colorized headlines, exotic fonts, multiple type combinations, awkward tracking and kerning, and blasphemous stretching and pulling of letterforms. Newspapers will experiment to

the point where typography loses its integrity. Readers will become even more confused than they are now. A return to classic typography will follow. By that time, readership will have eroded even more.

2. Colorization. The print equivalent of colorizing wonderful black-and-white movies will continue. More publishers will buy color presses and direct the news and editorial departments to use every color the presses can print. Readers will become more attracted to the color than the content. The distinction between news and ads will erode. For readers: more confusion.

3. Layering. Newspapers will increasingly tell stories through layers of information. Labels constitute the first layer, headlines the second. Summaries or digests referring to more complete stories that run inside constitute the third layer. Supplemental info boxes with highlights and facts constitute the fourth. Explanatory graphics constitute the fifth. The layering strategy enables readers to wade into stories at their discretion and to consume as much or as little as they want.

4. The electronic newspaper. Within the next decade hardware and software will be developed that will enable newspapers to deliver information electronically. This will ultimately eliminate the printing press and costly production and distribution systems. A portable, electronic newspaper will enable readers to program and edit their own newspaper. They will be able to access as much or as little information as they want, when and where they want it. Advertising will be interactive; readers would be able to purchase goods from the ad and have their credit cards billed.

E. 1. More and better use of color – this is necessary to compete with television and magazines and to appeal to younger readers.

2. Increased use of graphics, pictures, illustrations – television has conditioned people to want information in simple, visual forms.

3. Could get more of a magazine look – it's reader friendly and could accommodate modules that could be easily changed for segmented audiences.

F. 1. Less emphasis in content and organization to those sections created mainly to attract advertising, and shifting this energy and space to concerns of the average family. At present, the editorial content and display of a substantial portion of daily pages is designed for ad support, and in most cases is of marginal interest in text for the readers.

2. If present trends continue, there will be more space and energy spent on color and graphics, even though it now reaches irrational levels for reasons other than inherent use to the reader. If the trend is reverse or stabilized, papers will look not too different from the present.

3. If newspapers create specialized electronic delivery systems for certain customers, these readers – certain business and professional subscribers – may be diminished in the printed paper.

4. There will be much tighter zoning of papers, with each zone presented as a local and even a neighborhood newspaper.

G. 1. More color, more pictures, more graphics.

Newsprint should come alive, perhaps along the lines of magazine layout, to capture the attention of customers being enticed by TV, cable, VCRs, electronic

books and other dynamic forms of informational distribution. It can be argued that generations coming after us find these latter informational vehicles more exciting and fulfilling than static ink on paper.

2. More “pointers” to related information.

Newspapers ought to become “directories” to more information. Pointers might take the form of boxes or bold-faced lines in stories which refer readers to related information both in the newspaper and beyond. Our newspapers ought to become known as focal points of information – either we’ll provide it on the spot or we’ll direct you to the proper place to get it.

3. Eventually, “newspaper” information will be made available to readers in virtually any form in demand including via telephone, fax, PC on-line service and probably cable.

Newspapers eventually will be unable to burn large amounts of expensive newsprint on matter of interest to a relatively small portion of a market. But this information could be made available by mail, fax or down a wire to the home, perhaps to a printer. Customers who can’t get the information they want in a timely, convenient manner will cease to be our customers.

H. Any change that goes beyond faddishness must have as its base a desire to make the newspaper easier to read and understand – more convenient, if you will.

1. I expect to see much greater compartmentalization. Reader convenience. Presumably, better grouping will help give readers a different perspective on how stories fit together.

2. I expect to see more color. Few will be able to resist what others do. On the other hand, color does add some things that black and white cannot. It makes some things more interesting.

3. I expect to see greater focus on special pages. We will probably have a multitude of short stories and just a few specials. Newspapers do a fine job of examining some kinds of stories, but they often overwrite on inconsequential stories.

I. 1. Many stories shorter, so there will be room for those which must run longer. (Reduce boredom.)

2. Front pages will be summaries and guides to inside content. (Readers want to get more from papers while spending less time to do it.) All illustrations in full color. (The world is in color.)

3. Many more graphics, not just to illustrate stories but to tell stories. (Better way to tell many stories, and to compete with TV.)

4. Smaller format pages. (Handier, more economical of paper.)

J. 1. More informative graphics.

2. Layout that guides the reader more quickly to his/her interest. (e.g., more indexing, summary boxes, standard departments for news)

3. Greater variety in typefaces, size of columns, other aspects of layout

K. 1. More color.

2. People are accustomed to color in everything, notably television. Newspapers need to keep pace, to use color routinely, creatively.

3. Ever-better organization of newspaper to make it easy for readers to find what they want and need in a reasonable amount of time.

L. 1. Greater and more effective use of color to compete in a visual age. Without this, the product will take on an antiquated, unappealing appearance that will miss some readers.

2. Growth of tabloid-sized papers because of the cost of newsprint (tabs can help reduce consumption) and for ease of handling.

3. Greater use of solid summaries and reference boxes to complete stories inside. This will enable the reader pressed for time to quickly survey the news of the day and will quickly tell the reader what's inside – avoiding butchering stories just to appeal to the reader with little time.

4. Electronic papers – as a supplement, or alternative, to printed product for the computer generations.

M. 1. Expanding back of the book sections to order to chase specific markets of readers – more movie, television, home, kitchen, etc. formats to lure targeted advertising. This will occur along with an expanded personals advertising section.

2. The front of the book – hard news – will shrink and the material contained therein will be a combination of briefs and judgmental essays.

3. More color, graphics and white space. (a) To compete with the universe of more colorful and exciting communication which will be flooding the system; the white space will result from expanding type-size to appeal to older readers. The net result will be reduced information but made to appear more through the stimulative effect of make-up and color.

4. Smaller page size. 4. (a) Because of environmental concerns and reduction of cost to compensate for 5. Combined 3-4 and 5 will result in a paper which looks more like a daily magazine. All of this may lead to an effort to move some Sunday sections into specific weekday papers to see if the Sunday circulation and advertising can be stretched into midweek editions.

5. Better newsprint stock for better reproduction.

N. 1. Although I think overall newspaper design/layout will not change dramatically in the future, I believe we should place a continued emphasis on quality photographs that emphasize people doing things rather than empty pastoral scenes. In fact, that emphasis on people should pervade every design decision. For too many years, we have forgotten that it is people who buy and read our products.

2. I also think color – full and spot – will or at least should be refined further in the design of newspaper pages. We should look for ways to create local charts and graphs using our front-end systems or Macintoshes. We need to be able to give readers a better understanding of every story through some sort of graphic. Unfortunately, too many of us have jumped on the color bandwagon without really knowing how to use it. Instead of creating eye-catching layouts, we create something akin to a circus gone crazy.

3. We need to begin writing shorter stories – tightening our approach to giving readers information. In other words, we need to give them more in a smaller space. I don't think we all need to adhere to the *USA Today* edict of 12 inches or

less, but too often we tend to meander through our copy without getting to the point succinctly and quickly.

BOTTOM LINE: Let's put the people back in our coverage. Let's show people doing things; tell people how the city council's vote will affect them, etc. We have forgotten that people have other things to do with their lives than sit around every morning or evening and read our products. We must make our newspapers easier to read or we'll lose in the news race to the electronic media 60-second sound bite.

- O. 1. Better organization.
2. Shorter stories.
3. More color, use of graphs, charts.
4. Better design.

P. 1. As color fax becomes available cheaply, we may see business sections delivered in smaller form via this delivery truck. This will occur because info is currency in business world. The bizpeople will be willing to pay for this product if it means timely delivery of important information.

2. More sections of newspaper, but targeted. For instance, I may get different sections than my neighbor. This will occur as new presses and insertion machines come on line. They would have ability to know which paper is mine from the start of the press run.

3. More use of text. People want substance. Unless graphics or photos convey info it will turn readers off.

Q. The same definitions apply in this answer as did in the previous answer. "Newspapers" are defined as the dominant, daily press. Three most important changes in look will be:

1. Downsizing.

Newspapers will downsize in two different ways. First, they will become thinner in the sense that they will cut back on the number of pages produced because advertising revenues will continue to decrease and will, therefore, not sustain current levels of newshole allocation. Second, broadsheet (full-size) newspapers will convert to tabloid size for economic reasons, for distribution reasons and for consumer convenience. Some readers (media consumer) will react favorably to smaller products, but most will continue to delete print media from their media needs' suppliers.

2. Typographical potpourri.

The clean design of the 1970s and 1980s will be replaced by a hodgepodge of typographic styles and devices. Consistency in appearance will be out and creative chaos will be in. Headline and text typefaces will vary from section to section and will differ even on one page. Art and illustration styles will be unique to the individual artist and will follow no rules of style. In fact, typographic style rules will fade from newspaper style books. These changes will occur because the use of images has replaced the use of words. Targeted readers (media consumers) may react favorably because they are part of the image culture.

3. Color immersion.

The use of color photographs, illustrations and type will be total. Black and white will only be used in retro. The same reasons and effects apply as in No. 2.

- R. 1. Smaller – newspapers may try to fit the size to a time-stressed public.
- 2. Briefing points – The newspaper as an index.
- 3. Increased size of type – Audience is aging and small type looks old-fashioned.
- 4. Future newspapers will be CDs, faxes, phone messages, hand-held devices.

S. 1. The format – this encompasses changes that may involve something besides paper. (Readers will still want something that can be carried and read, but this may be a thin plastic computer screen.)

2. The delivery – this encompasses some other type of delivery besides the paper carrier and will probably be some type of computer assisted delivery. The paper carrier will ultimately be obsolete because of advancing delivery systems.

3. The design – changes in the format (paper vs. plastic or something) along with changes in the delivery system will affect the design. The newspaper of the future may still look the same with headlines, columns, graphics and art, but the images may be on a plastic, foldable, pliable screen that can be held and read. There may be small buttons for forward and reverse and print capability. Instead of still photos, newspapers of the future may have art that can move, like television.

QUESTION 3:

List what you foresee as the next three to five most important changes in the content (including types of coverage, types of special sections, etc.) of future newspapers. For each, please briefly explain why you think these changes will occur and what effect these changes will have on readers. [Responses are listed in no particular order; the capital letters do not represent particular respondents.]

A. 1. Pages dealing with issues, Q and A, advice columns and other columns geared to children, juveniles and young adults. The special tabloid-size pages for children appearing in some of today's dailies are ineffective. Incorporate those special sections into the newspaper – but make it a special section which will be solely for the kids – children, juvs, y.a.'s. It will give them the identity they seek and which is reached through fan magazines, entertainment radio and television. Daily and weekly newspapers are light years behind in making their product attractive to the younger readers. Why? Just peruse your daily newspaper and you'll find the answer: there's little that is directed to the young reader. Yet advertising is geared to the younger set. Tie in both news/features/graphics to the youngsters and even more ads will follow.

2. Why is AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) so successful with its 30-million members? It is cheap (\$5/year) to join, it has many benefits for the 50 and over set, and it has strong lobby power in Washington, D.C. Couple this formula with special sections for the seniors or older readers and newspapers may find another source of readership and ad revenues. Granted, many of the older readers are the most loyal to dailies, but the readers shouldn't be taken for granted: beef up attention paid to those important readers. It is only logical that stronger

coverage of this important age group will mean stronger and more loyal readers and advertisers.

3. Included in content must be advertising. How many older people are ever featured in advertising photos? It's as though those over 35 don't exist. It's a rare day when ads feature grandparents or the older citizens. With such a powerful economic readership already in place, it stands to reason that more ads be aimed at the older citizens.

4. Some of the much too-long stories which oftentimes run over 5 or 8 columns could well be cut back. Investigative reporting is fine, but the reader will be lost after the first column or two, no matter how fine the reporting, writing and subject matter. If editors and reporters insist that their story must run overly long in order to tell the story, then break it up into a series and break it up with telling graphics. The reader becomes bogged down and bored with the Pulitzer-bidding tomes.

5. Business is a popular news area which is often given short shrift, especially by the smaller newspapers which seem reluctant to do other than shovel 5-point stock market quotes in long-near-legible columns. The stocks are important but so are the relevant business news notes that lend to the weight of the news and the business pages. For the smaller papers, a news-brief column featuring business news can work wonders.

B. 1. More and varied content as targeted sections grow. See question 2 for explanation.

2. More "for-the-record" information in great detail. Will be selling point of paper because it will be only vehicle that can provide this early.

3. More world coverage. But defined differently. Defined from business perspective.

4. More women in the news as women's power grows. They now control 85% of the consumer buying and are 53.4% of professional work force. Their power will be seen in content.

C. 1. More local news and features and more localizing of national, regional and state news – this is where newspapers can most effectively compete with television and other media.

2. More in-depth reporting of business, science, religion, education, and similar areas of reader interest. Some of this material might well be presented in special sections that could be purchased separately and delivered on certain days along with the regular package. Newspapers can do this better than the other mass media.

3. More reader involvement in content through letters to the editor, guest columns, Action Lines, and other features such as the children's section or the teen section. Newspapers must build rapport with readers to compete with the personalities on television.

4. More entertainment news – this appears to be the quickest way to reach young readers.

D. 1. More interest in health, aging issues, education, retooling, financial affairs, leisure – as everyone else has noted: aging of baby boomers, an immense market.

2. More specialized media according to ethnic and/or other minority group interests – people are raising the question already of who is not a member of a minority group?

3. Greater interest in news/articles dealing with religious issues, questions of ethics, how to live a “good” life – again, aging of baby boomers; but also, the growing movement in the U.S. toward interest in a spiritual life, a belief system, whether Baptist or Buddhist.

E. 1. People, people and more people. I think without a doubt we cannot survive without returning our emphasis to our local readers and the concerns in their lives. Too often in the past, our writing has been either too sterile and devoid of humanity or too cute. Unfortunately, neither has been effective in reaching and meeting reader needs.

2. I think we will see more special sections that deal with local people and events, such as local festivals, local teams, etc. Instead of doing a stock version of a spring car care section, we need to focus on our local auto dealers and their maintenance department. Advertorials has become a buzzword, but I think we need to direct our energies increasingly in that direction. Readers don’t particularly care about what Valvoline and its press people say about the product. Instead, they would like to know what’s available down the street at Joe’s Garage.

3. Local, local and more local. I honestly see a day in which none of us will subscribe to wire services and instead concentrate totally on local news. Readers can get more recent national or international news from the television broadcasts. We need to realize that the national/international niche is gone forever for newspapers. I think that once we make that switch to local news, we’ll see readers begin to return.

F. 1. More diverse content.

2. More feature material.

3. More targeted sections are imperative.

4. Newspapers must listen to their customers.

G. 1. Growth of coverage of a multicultural society, even to the extent stories are presented in languages other than English, to deal with diverse groups. Otherwise, the AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian American and Native American) will conceivably turn elsewhere for information.

2. More attention to lifestyle matters – health, fitness, morality, leisure. The crucial detail on how to cope with societal challenges or how to achieve reasonable satisfaction can best be delivered in print. More and more readers will turn to us for this while more time-sensitive media will provide the “breaking” news that once was our staple.

3. Greater attention to “communities of interest” rather than geographic communities. In our complex society, our mobile society, people often – usually – identify more with those of like interest or involvement than with a particular statutorcally defined geographic entity.

H. 1. Local, local, local. Newspapers will increasingly turn inward, attempting to appeal to readers where they live. Some will attempt to compete

directly with weeklies by publishing micro-newspapers that are zoned for specific communities.

2. Demographics. Newspapers will use marketing research to identify the demographics of their market and design coverage around topics that appeal to specific demographic groups. You'll see expanded coverage of women's issues, parenting, health and exercise, television and entertainment.

3. Magazines. Newspapers will become more like magazines. They'll spin off weekly publications on topics of broad interest. Look for more "added value" publications on personal finance, entertainment, health and exercise, technology, parenting.

- I. 1. All stories will be better written. (Readers want it; the task demands it.)
2. More explanatory writing. (Readers want to know WHY, and HOW it affects THEM.)
3. Much more zoning, including demographic and psychographic as well as geographic. (People are turning inward and focusing on themselves.)
4. More special interest sections, melding news and advertising which focuses on that special interest.
5. More customized papers, delivering to a particular a paper with special emphasis on her or his personal interests.
6. Editorial pages which are simple, clear, direct; less elitist pontification.

J. 1. For newspapers to succeed, the most important change in content has to be for them to become more relevant to readers' lives. Exactly what form that will take is dependent on the nature of each community and the newspaper that serves it. Basically, newspapers need to determine what topics are of keenest interest to and can most affect their readers. Then those topics have to be covered. Period. This does not preclude covering other topics; nor does it mean dropping newspapers' traditional watchdog role. It rather means being sure that what newspapers are writing about really matters to the people the papers are trying to reach. If newspapers fail to reach the readers, nothing else they publish really matters – because not enough people are reading to make it matter.

2. I fully expect newspapers to re-exert themselves in the area of community leadership/editorial commentary and responsibility. Many, many newspapers have become quiet voices, barely heard in their communities. Instead, they need to be agenda setters for the communities, leading the way on various concerns, pointing out problems, and – most important – getting the communities to do something about it. This leadership will come through traditional editorial-page pushes; but it must go beyond that to aggressive reporting and activity in the communities that organizes and moves the communities forward. This kind of leadership can help reconnect the newspapers with their communities.

3. More reader interaction and more reader-help information will appear in the newspapers. Panels of readers will offer counsel/story ideas. Much more "empowerment" information will appear to help readers make a difference. Again, this is needed to help people "connect" more with their newspapers, to find them more important in their lives.

4. Newspapers will have to do a better job of anticipating change, instead of just reporting what has already happened. If readers are told what may be coming, the newspapers again will be more essential to readers' lives.

5. Newspapers will promote more. They'll let readers and potential readers how they have changed and what more they are doing. They'll tell their story to their audience, with the hope of bringing in and keeping more readers. But they'll also have to make many of the adjustments mentioned above for the promotion to work. If there is substance as well as sizzle, readers and potential readers will see that and will stick with the papers; if there is only sizzle (promotion without substance), nothing lasting will happen.

K. 1. Items 1 and 2 from Question 2. They were included there because they will change the look of the paper in that the back of the book will mean more free standing sections and the make-up of the A, or hard news section, will become a different mix of horizontal and verticle make-up to accommodate news briefs and essays.

2. Coverage, even of hard news, will be more feature oriented 'a la the Marines coming ashore at Morgadishu, Somolia, this week.

3. Women's news in all its forms will come to dominate the paper. Even though much, if not most, of the material will be of equal interst to men the effort will be make to cast the material as of special interest to women.

4. News of interest and use to an aging population will grow, perhaps into special sections.

L. 1. There will be geographically local zoning of editions with strictly local distributions. It will be done to fill in present gaps in coverage of areas not served sufficiently by metropolitan news and for local advertisers who cannot afford metro-wide rates, or want metro-wide coverage.

2. Content, to be successful in the future, may/will be more closely aligned to the wide spectrum of family and neighborhood needs, not so much to retail trade zones for middle-class families.

3. Successful papers will print longer and more detailed stories or will provide, on easy acess, further detail for many stories. While the prepare total printed package will have considerable longevity, papers will compete with data bases and specialized publbications as larger portions of the population become sophisticated in these alternative sources.

M. 1. Metros need to provide more and better local coverage through various mechanisms, probably zoning, in order to stay in touch with and be important to readers.

2. More lifestyle information. People have lots of information needs. If newspapers don't provide it others will. Actually others will anyway. It will be competitive with phone companies and others seeking the same customers and same revenues.

3. More lifestyle news: relationships, healthy, child-raising, career assistance because those things are of concern to real people.

N. 1. I probably dealt with this a little in the question on physical changes. Anyway, I expect – or at least hope – to see a shift away from coverage of meetings and toward coverage of policies and actions that come from those meetings. (Skip the school board meeting and find out what is going on in the classroom.)

2. I expect newspapers to devote considerably less of their energy toward national and international news because television wins the battle. That means newspapers will handle local news, where they compete much more successfully with other media. I do not expect newspapers to abandon non-local news, just to de-emphasize it. Thoughtful readers will feel betrayed or at least disappointed.

3. Newspapers will probably have more photographs, but they will realize that their images cannot compete directly with TV. So they will have fewer special sections on events covered by television – starvation in Somalia, for instance.

O. 1. Lots of “hypertext” pointers and other reference tools to send readers to additional sources of related information.

As much as possible, stories ought not to leave any questions unanswered. At the very least, readers ought to be directed to where they can obtain more information. This additional information could be in any form including audio, video and data.

2. More lists, listings and hard data relevant to reader’s daily lives.

Recreational reading in newspapers will continue to exist but there should be little room for “fluff” pieces, the kind of stuff often used to fill out special sections. Even features ought to be as useful as possible. The reader audience is becoming more sophisticated and will go where the real value is.

3. More emphasis on local news and how it may affect individual lives.

One of newspapers’ single most valuable franchises is the coverage of local news. This isn’t necessarily the detailed reportage of every city government proceeding but rather stories drawn from the fabric of local life which provide solid information as to how to cope.

P. 1. Better backgrounding and context in stories to connect the news to the reader.

2. Less emphasis on events and more on trends and situations.

3. Less emphasis on traditional news topics, such as crime and the day-to-day details of politics.

4. More experimentation with new news topics.

5. Finding the right mix of content.

6. More informative graphics.

7. Layout that guides the reader more quickly to his/her interests (e.g., more indexing, summary boxes, standard departments for news)

8. Greater variety in typefaces, size of columns, other aspects of layout

Q. The same definitions apply in this answer as did in the previous answer. “Content” is defined to include both editorial and advertising.

The three most important changes in content will be:

1. Erasure of the line between “news” and entertainment.”

In the broadcast media, news and entertainment are one. There is little difference between, say, a Larry King interview of President Bush and one conducted by Dan Rather. There is little difference between “docudramas,” such as “9-1-1” and the 10 o’clock news. In newspapers, the establishment of shopping-mall beats and color-cartoon graphics depicting the tragedy of the space shuttle Challenger are harbingers of the erasure of the line between (traditional) news and entertainment. The reasons for the change are competitive and economic. Readers

(media consumers) won't notice, and the changes will have little impact on using or maintaining print in their media-use mix.

2. Individualized choices for media consumers:

Through advanced technology, newspapers will become more and more customized to meet each reader's information needs. Consumers will make choices about the specific kind of information they desire. The "rewrite" desk will be reborn, as editors and writers rework the same material in a multitude of different ways for individual groups of consumers. The reasons: economic. The effect: Many media consumers will find individualized products helpful and useful.

3. Thinning of the line between editorial and advertising:

Use of traditional typographic devices to separate ad content from news content, such as rules, borders, placement, etc., will continue to erode. In addition, more editorial content will be about advertising or will refer to advertisers; an example of this change already exists in political reporting on campaign commercials. The reason for the change: economic. The effect: Readers won't notice, and the changes will have little impact on using print.

R. 1. The first page will be reallocated to fit demographics of the community – 52 percent women/12 percent African-American/9 percent Hispanic/3 percent Asian/1 percent Native American and increasingly older coverage for an older nation.

2. Episodes will be replaced by "what it means to you" understanding of a fast changing world.

3. Focus on Future – The yesterday and today are dominated by TV and radio and computer services. Newspapers can go to what's coming.

4. More local, more global – here is what's happening, being learned in Sri Lanka and what it means to us in Poukepsie.

5. Pictorialization of local people – their newspapers rather than institutions' newspapers.

S. 1. The writing style – Newspapers are hunting for the perfect type of article that attracts all readers. As a result, many articles are so poorly written and so badly organized that readers find newspaper articles are too much of a chore to read.

2. Special sections will probably be changed to packages of special interest areas. Thus, readers interested in metro news will be able to select metro news, which will either assemble from a computer command or will be pre-assembled in a computer directory. Readers will also be able to select a newspaper that will read itself to the reader or a newspaper that can be read.

3. Reporters will need more mid-career training because their jobs are likely to change rapidly in the next decade. Reporters will be expected to provide instant, accurate reports with adequate background. Reporters will have to be computer literate, familiar with databases and able to file instant reports that can be continually updated. Perhaps reporters will be part of a team consisting of spot coverage combined with a computer assisting reporter, who may work with several reporters.

APPENDIX N

ROUND II RESPONSES

For Round II, the panelists marked semantic differential scales according to the likelihood of the occurrence of each problem, physical change and content change. The number below each blank indicates the number of panelists who marked that space. “Scales total points” are derived from the scoring of the scales. The blank closest to “likely” is scored a five, with each of the others scored in descending order, ending with one for the blank closest to “unlikely.”

For Section 1, the panelists were also asked to rank the top five problems in terms of importance. For each problem that received a ranking, this is so indicated. For example: first – 1. The numeral indicates the number of people who chose that problem for that particular position. Like the scales, the rankings were scored based on five points for first place, four points for second place, three points for third place, two points for fourth place and one point for fifth place. The “ranking total points” are indicated by each problem that received any ranking points.

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

4. Changing psychographic characteristics of newspaper employees.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 62

fourth: 1

fifth: 1

Ranking total points: 3

5. The poor image of the industry.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 66

first: 1

second: 1

third: 1

fourth: 1

Ranking total points: 14

6. Elitism of the press corps.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 72

third: 1

fifth: 1

Ranking total points: 4

7. Lack of innovative use of technology and customer service in the circulation department.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 57

third: 1

Ranking total points: 3

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

8. Further consolidation of media industries.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 50

first: 1

third: 1

Ranking total points: 8**9. The need to learn how to use technology in a way that will interest advertisers.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 59**10. The pressures of time to put out a quality product.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 61

third: 1

Total ranking points: 3**11. Financial burdens of purchasing new equipment.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 45

second: 1

Total ranking points: 4

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

12. Changing psychographic characteristics of news sources.

Unlikely _____ 3 4 6 4 Likely

Scales total points: 62

fourth: 2

Total ranking points: 4**13. Providing local news.**

Unlikely 4 4 5 1 3 Likely

Scales total points: 46

fifth: 1

Total ranking points: 1**14. Disappearance of retail advertising as an economic base.**

Unlikely _____ _____ 7 5 5 Likely

Scales total points: 66

second: 1

fifth: 3

Total ranking points: 7**15. Plummeting subscriptions.**

Unlikely _____ 1 5 7 4 Likely

Scales total points: 62**16. Competition with television and radio.**

Unlikely _____ 1 6 6 4 Likely

Scales total points: 64

second: 1

fourth: 1

Total ranking points: 6

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

17. Increasing illiteracy in the United States.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 59

first: 2

fourth: 1

Total ranking points: 12**18. Increasing legal restraint and restricted access to gathering information.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ Likely

Scales total points: 44

fifth: 1

Total ranking points: 1**19. Competition from international organizations.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{10}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ Likely

Scales total points: 35**20. Environmental concerns.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 56**21. The rising cost of newsprint, production and distribution.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 67

third: 3

total ranking points: 3

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

26. Learning to access and make sense of the enormous amount of information stored on computer databases.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{7}{7}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 71

third: 1

fourth: 1

Total ranking points: 5

27. The rising age of readership.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{7}{4}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 64

28. Trying to win back readers other than middle class 18-to-49 year-olds.

Unlikely _____ _____ $\frac{3}{7}$ $\frac{7}{7}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 72

first: 2

Total ranking points: 10

29. The intrusion of business-office concerns into the leadership of news and editorial departments.

Unlikely $\frac{2}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{4}{5}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 58

third: 1

fifth: 5

Total ranking points: 4

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

30. Competition from other activities for people's time.

Unlikely 2 2 3 10 Likely

Scales total points: 72

first: 1

second: 1

third: 1

fourth: 1

Total ranking points: 14**31. Low salaries of newspaper employees.**

Unlikely 3 2 4 1 7 Likely

Scales total points: 63

fourth: 1

fifth: 2

Total ranking points: 4**32. Increasing homogenization of newspapers.**

Unlikely 4 2 6 2 3 Likely

Scales total points: 49**33. Newspapers' slow acceptance of change.**

Unlikely 1 6 4 2 4 Likely

Scales total points: 53

fourth: 1

Total ranking points: 2

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

34. The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{1}{1}$ $\frac{1}{1}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ $\frac{10}{10}$ Likely

Scales total points: 75

first: 1

third: 1

fifth: 1

Total ranking points: 9

35. A weaker image among advertisers.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{7}{7}$ $\frac{6}{6}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 65

second: 1

fourth: 2

Total ranking points: 8

36. Staying abreast of issues important to people's daily lives.

Unlikely $\frac{1}{1}$ $\frac{2}{2}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 61

first: 1

second: 1

Total ranking points: 9

37. Lack of research and development.

Unlikely $\frac{3}{3}$ _____ $\frac{2}{2}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ $\frac{7}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 64

first: 1

fourth: 1

Total ranking points: 7

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

38. Lack of experimentation.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 58

39. Inability to reorganize to become guidebooks to the future.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 56

second: 1

Total ranking points: 4

40. The necessity of mid-career training for journalists.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 69

41. Finding the right mix of content.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 51

No answer: 1

fifth: 1

Total ranking points: 1

42. The struggle over the two main competing philosophies.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ Likely

Scales total points: 41

No answer: 4

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS/ISSUES (Continued)

43. Confusing writing styles.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 56**44. The ongoing discussions of what constitutes the best format.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 35

No answer: 2

second: 1

Total ranking points: 4

SECTION 2: PHYSICAL CHANGES

1. The supplementation of the regular newspaper with specialized publications/sections.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ Likely

Scales total points: 72

No answer: 1

2. a. The appearance of an electronic newspaper.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 61

SECTION 2: PHYSICAL CHANGES (Continued)

b. The eventual complete replacement of the paper version by an electronic version. This refers specifically to the types noted in 2.a.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{11}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ Likely

Scales total points: 28

3. A handier, smaller size and format.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 46

4. More readable/legible typefaces for headlines and text.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 66

5. More departmentalization of the news.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{10}$ Likely

Scales total points: 75

6. Shorter stories.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ Likely

Scales total points: 58

7. More photographs.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 57

SECTION 2: PHYSICAL CHANGES (Continued)

8. Experimentation with typography.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 45**9. More color.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{9}$ Likely

Scales total points: 72**10. More layering of information.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{9}$ Likely

Scales total points: 70**11. More forms of availability of newspaper information made available.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{9}$ Likely

Scales total points: 73**12. More frequent use of magazine-quality graphics.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{9}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 63**13. Variety as the key to format.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 62

No answer: 1

SECTION 2: PHYSICAL CHANGES (Continued)

14. Increased use of better newsprint stock for better reproduction.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 53**15. Special delivery of business sections as updated, color facsimile pages.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 54**16. More use of text to convey the messages of graphics/photos.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 48

No answer: 1

17. Cutbacks in the number of pages produced.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 56**18. Continuing pressure on format decisions (in general) by a variety of issues.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{10}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ Likely

Scales total points: 62**19. More interactive advertising.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 67

SECTION 2: PHYSICAL CHANGES (Continued)

20. Less emphasis on the organization and look of sections created specifically to attract advertisements.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ Likely

Scales total points: 34

No answer: 1

21. More efforts to attract targeted advertisements.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 70

22. Expanded personals advertising sections.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 65

23. Newspapers may appear on plastic, foldable, pliable screens.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 35

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES

1. More special sections dealing with issues geared to younger readers.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{10}$ Likely

Scales total points: 71

2. More special sections aimed at older readers.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{12}$ Likely

Scales total points: 77

3. More advertising geared toward older readers.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{13}$ Likely

Scales total points: 80

4. More relevant business news.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 70

5. More variety in the content of stories, art.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ Likely

Scales total points: 71

6. More “for-the-record” information in great detail.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 65

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES (Continued)

7. More coverage of world events – defined from a business perspective.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 61**8. More women's news.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{8}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 69**9. More local news and features.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{12}$ Likely

Scales total points: 79**10. More in-depth reporting of many specialty areas.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 70**11. More reader involvement in content.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{10}$ Likely

Scales total points: 73**12. More entertainment news.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 64

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES (Continued)

13. More coverage of lifestyle issues.

Unlikely _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ Likely

Scales total points: 77**14. More content concerned with the interests of specific ethnic groups.**

Unlikely _____ 1 _____ 1 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ Likely

Scales total points: 72**15. More articles dealing with religious and ethical issues.**

Unlikely _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 5 _____ 7 _____ 2 _____ Likely

Scales total points: 58**16. More feature-oriented stories.**

Unlikely _____ 9 _____ 4 _____ 4 _____ Likely

Scales total points: 63**17. Growth of coverage of a multicultural society.**

Unlikely _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ Likely

Scales total points: 64**18. Greater attention to "communities of interest."**

Unlikely _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 9 _____ 5 _____ Likely

Scales total points: 69

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES (Continued)

19. A general increase in the quality of writing.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 60**20. More explanatory writing.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ Likely

Scales total points: 71**21. Writing that is more simple, clear and direct on editorial pages.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ Likely

Scales total points: 65**22. A return to community leadership and responsibility in editorial commentary.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 58**23. A better job of anticipating change.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{10}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 63**24. More self-promotion.**

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{7}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ Likely

Scales total points: 64

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES (Continued)

25. Easier access to further details for stories.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{1}{5}$ _____ $\frac{11}{5}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 77

26. Less energy devoted to coverage of national and international news.

Unlikely $\frac{3}{5}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ $\frac{1}{5}$ $\frac{2}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 42

No answer: 1

27. More lists, listings and hard data relevant to readers' daily lives.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{2}{5}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ $\frac{5}{5}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 64

28. Better backgrounding and context in stories to connect the news to the reader.

Unlikely _____ _____ $\frac{2}{8}$ $\frac{8}{7}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 73

29. Less emphasis on events (traditional meetings, political actions) and more on trends and situations.

Unlikely _____ $\frac{2}{5}$ $\frac{8}{5}$ $\frac{2}{5}$ _____ Likely

Scales total points: 61

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES (Continued)

30. More informative graphics.

Unlikely _____ 3 9 _____ 5 Likely

Scales total points: 70**31. Erasure of the line between “news” and “entertainment.”**

Unlikely 3 _____ 8 4 _____ 2 Likely

Scales total points: 41**32. More formation of story ideas based on demographic information identified through marketing research.**

Unlikely _____ 2 3 8 _____ 4 Likely

Scales total points: 66**33. Coverage of issues that matter more to readers than to advertisers.**

Unlikely 1 3 2 3 7 Likely

Scales total points: 60

No answer: 1

34. Fewer special sections on events already widely covered on television (i.e. Somalia).

Unlikely 6 4 3 2 2 Likely

Scales total points: 41

SECTION 3: CONTENT CHANGES (Continued)

35. Rebirth of the rewrite desk.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{4}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 54

36. Fewer “fluff” pieces.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ Likely

Scales total points: 57

37. Reallocation of the front page to fit the demographics of the community.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{\quad}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ Likely

Scales total points: 59

38. More efforts to bring global news to a local level.

Unlikely $\frac{\quad}{1}$ $\frac{\quad}{2}$ $\frac{\quad}{3}$ $\frac{\quad}{6}$ $\frac{\quad}{5}$ Likely

Scales total points: 63

APPENDIX O

ROUND III VERBATIM RESPONSES

The Predicted Future of Newspapers

In Round III, the panelists were asked to suggest possible solutions to those eight problems that made the top five listing as a result of either the panelists' rankings or scores on the semantic differential scale. The verbatim responses are given below. The responses are not listed in any particular order; the numbers do not refer to particular panelists.

Problem: (a) Demographically/multiculturally diversified media consumers.

Possible solutions:

1. If newspapers are to contend with demographics, then they must be willing to invest in some sophisticated research methods to cope with the problem. Figures need to be gathered and then solutions applied. Break down the demographics, then think in terms of what those potential readers want and make a concerted effort to answer those needs by special sections, features, figures, information and the like. In other words, meet those needs by specialization/departmentalization.
2. The changing market will solve this problem itself. As the population changes, the news providers, which do not also reflect this change in what they cover and how they cover it, will soon decline.
3. The problem results from overwhelmingly white executives, editors and journalists creating a product for an audience which is much more diverse. It will take much more hiring – and promotion – of non-white minority group members to change newsroom sensibilities and decisions. That is a must. In the meantime, newspapers should do “diversity audits” to see clearly the extent to which their content is out of sync with their audience.
4. First, newspapers must recognize that this reality exists. If it has turned up on your list of five critical issues, that's a good sign.

Next, there must be much greater attention to: 1. The makeup of the staffs and management of our newspapers (they **MUST** reflect greater diversity). 2. The content of the newspapers to reflect the everyday lives of more diverse people. 3. The recognition that if we bring diverse people to our newspapers' staffs, we should listen to their views and respect the various ways they see communicating. That is, we can't put everyone into the white male managers' mold. This is not an easy change to accomplish.

5. Aggressively recruit a demographically/multiculturally diverse work force and strive to integrate diversity at all levels, particularly management.

6. Continue efforts to diversify the newsroom. Give constant, systematic staff reminders of need for diverse product. Step up effort to tell customers why they need the publication.

7. As technology develops, consumers will probably be able to physically choose the information that they want to consume. This means that instead of being the choosers, reporters and editors will also become providers – storehouses – of information. Readers will probably be able to choose the topics and amount of information in pre-selected areas to be delivered electronically and on a can-be-printed basis, or readers will be able to select their information from a daily menu.

8. Newspapers might launch “satellite” papers directed toward such groups. I don't have any sense that this would work on a cultural/societal basis, however. Groups so defined tend to want to publish their own journals from within the community. Perhaps journalism education could focus on assisting such groups in these efforts.

9. Invest in R&D on national scale for all newspapers to provide a number of strategies to meet information needs of diversity. Invest in R&D in local newspaper – target, create new products, fit the product to the consumer (they are not bad and it will not be sidestepping journalism's higher calling – rather it serves it). Invest in staff – hire. Make 52 percent of publishers female, 12 percent African-American, 9 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Asian, 1 percent Native American.

10. Begin serious, systematic coverage of all groups in the circulation areas, regardless of a group's present economic, social, or occupational status and without excluding groups not yet well assimilated in mainstream American cultures (because their children soon will be).

11. Newspapers should represent their audiences. For example, if the subscribing public is predominantly white, then the coverage should reflect that. I think newspapers have disenfranchised the majority of their readers with too much coverage of issues and events that do not represent mainstream America (AIDS, homosexuality, racial problems, etc.). Instead of worrying about what kind of newspaper college professors think is appropriate, newspapers should look at their subscribers and then put out a newspaper that reflects that mix (or lack thereof).

12. We must develop the ability to appeal or reach each diversified group of consumers. But, first, we must continue to build diversified staffs that can provide appropriate and desired information (and entertainment) for each significant group – no matter what multimedia vehicle is used to deliver it. Our universities must broaden their multicultural education menus and diversify their student bodies to provide the practitioners of diversity.

See (h) also: Journals of today and tomorrow must be multicultural in appeal and in understanding. Survival depends on our reaching these readers, too. Moreover, we need to deliver information (and entertainment, if you will) in a manner desired by the consumer and at a time and by a means chosen by the consumers of information. Ours is the job of delivering information, not delivering paper, or voices, or images – but all of these.

13. Stay in touch with all elements within the newspaper's community. Study demographic trends in order to stay ahead of events. Talk to people who live, work and contribute to the community. Get out of the office.

14. Since media consumers no longer depend on one source – the newspaper – to meet their information and entertainment needs (if, in fact, they ever did), and since U.S. media consumers are demographically diverse and don't easily fall into neat consumer categories, as advertisers once believed they did, the newspaper industry must become part of the trend toward "demassification." Begun on the airwaves more than 20 years ago, now cable television and videocassettes threaten the power of the major networks to define content. The newspaper industry must begin to recognize that segmentation, fragmentation and diversification of the market is the only solution meeting the needs of a multicultural, multimedia audience.

Specifically, the industry must first hire, train and promote a diversified, multicultural work force and as well as a diversified leadership; then it must, with the new leadership in place, create newspapers targeted to specialized audience segments. Through advanced technology, newspapers must become more and more customized to meet each reader's information needs. Consumers must be asked to make choices about the specific kind of information they desire. The "rewrite" desk must be reborn, as editors and writers rework the same material in a multitude of difference ways for individual groups of consumers.

15. Many newspapers already have tried to reach specific audience segments with news and features on narrow interest topics – everything from antiques to skiing. Others have pondered the same strategy for more international news, for example, more news in Southwestern newspapers about northern Mexico or Latin America in general. But the news hole can only be stretched so far and the number of potential specialty interests is infinite! Experience has already exhausted the utility of this strategy.

To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don't work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers' attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience.

16. Newspapers must find out through research such as surveys, personal interviews and focus groups what their diversified readers want and cannot get elsewhere – or at least cannot get elsewhere as easily; then they must provide it in attractive formats, including the traditional package and alternative services delivered by telephone, facsimile or other technology. They must think in terms of special sections and services for specific readers. In some instances, they may have to provide some of these services in a language other than English. They must also develop promotional campaigns to let these diverse readers know they care about them and want to serve them.

17. Assist the white male message machine in not being threatened by diversity.

Problem: (b) The challenges of grabbing readers' attention daily.

Possible solutions:

1. The newspaper industry must downsize, redesign and commit to more and more color. Newspapers must become thinner and must convert to tabloid or quarterfold size for audience convenience. Newspaper must utilize new and unusual typographic styles and devices because the use of images has replaced the use of words in our culture. The use of color photographs and illustrations must become total.

2. Understand your target communities of interest and write for them in an efficient way. Do a multi-entry informative story: i.e. graphs, charts, analysis, news summaries.

3. More attractive layout and design. More photos. Shorter stories. Better graphics overall which will appeal to all the demographic and multicultural readers mentioned in No. 1. Broadsheet is cumbersome to read; tabloid too difficult to lure advertisers and too big a package re: printing. What about a go-between, or possibly consider more of a magazine format (larger than 9 X 11; perhaps more the size of *Billboard* magazine).

4. Newspapers, unfortunately, must compete with the very popular video world for readers' attention. We cannot rely on the same old story mix to make our readers happy. To meet this challenge, we must be willing to focus more intensely on local news, with an emphasis on names and faces. We also must be willing to curb our tendency to sensationalize everything, instead concentrating on softer news that is more feature in nature. Readers always tell us they are tired of doom and gloom as well as lurid headlines. That approach might be all right with the tabloids, but hometown newspapers must be willing to find good things about their markets and then create packages that showcase that material.

5. More news that is seriously relevant to each significant group's central personal and family concerns and become their best source of information on those concerns that they do not get elsewhere, including on television or radio.

6. Better graphics and design, yes. But also more “user-friendly” techniques of using secondary headlines, summaries, pull-outs and quote-outs, the dividing of long stories into separate smaller stories. Front pages should be menus of entire content. Better selling of stories which explain “what this means to you.” (That, of course, will require more stories written from that perspective.)

7. Newspapers must do more than provide attractive packages for their readers. They must provide news, information, and opinion that readers cannot get elsewhere. They need to concentrate on local issues – report them on their news pages and take editorial stands regarding them on their editorial pages. More color, more pictures, more maps, more graphs, attractive layouts, and gimmicks can perhaps help, but the key to getting readers’ attention and keeping it on a continuous basis is to meet their needs.

8. The only approach which is not self-defeating is to make news reports more relevant to the serious and difficult problems with which the public must cope.

9. Same as (a): Many newspapers already have tried to reach specific audience segments with news and features on narrow interest topics – everything from antiques to skiing. Others have pondered the same strategy for more international news, for example, more news in Southwestern newspapers about northern Mexico or Latin America in general. But the news hole can only be stretched so far and the number of potential speciality interests is infinite! Experience has already exhausted the utility of this strategy.

To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don’t work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers’ attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience.

10. Simple – provide relevant content in respectful, creative ways.

11. Promote editorial excellence via solid, meaningful reporting; good writing and effective, compelling packaging.

12. Bigger headlines do not grab my attention; nor do color photos. As a reader-in-a-hurry myself, I am best served by full, long stories on the main events, accompanied by synopses of significant points boxed off and maybe even bulleted. Therefore, I suppose I believe this is a design problem.

13. Newspapers have to be more visually attractive.

They have to present stories in a way that recognizes many of our readers are pressed for time. That means fewer 40-inch stories and more stories broken into manageable pieces; it means more recognition of the fact that a graphic often can tell a big part of the story.

Headlines aren’t good enough in most papers. If you don’t get a reader’s attention, you don’t get readers into the newspaper.

Newspapers aren't relevant enough in too many cases. Editors need to work much harder at being sure the things that affect people's everyday lives are in the newspapers. This does not exclude government coverage; rather the aim would be to include a much broader range of topics every day.

Our company's NEWS 2000 program seeks to identify the 8-10 key topics for our readers and to be sure we include information on those topics regularly (at least three times a week; more often five for the top topics). The point: If we are more relevant to our readers, they will more likely turn to us for information.

Finally, newspapers simply do not do enough promotion – advertising themselves, if you will – in media other than their own. Once newspapers are fixed, they need to tell the readers about all the improvements. This should bring more current non-readers to the newspapers.

14. Keep staff focused on concerns and interest of real people so that daily decisions about things to cover and ways to display news and information reflects needs and interests of actual readers and potential readers.

15. As I see it, the only way that newspapers can regain the readers they've lost and gain new readers is to go back to the basics and provide more hard news instead of trying to fluff up information as "issues." The newspapers are going to have to provide timely information in clear and understandable fashion on a daily basis – several days after the fact.

Writers will have to have better skills. The recent efforts of newspapers to "featurize" news to make it more interesting or to report news only as an issue several days after it happens is one of the poorest ways to grab the attention of readers. Yet I see this happening in a lot of newspapers. This is not to say that featurized news is not good: It's just that I'm beginning to dread more and more the first five or six paragraphs of most newspaper stories because **THEY ARE SO BORING**. Sometimes the subject chosen by the reporter to localize an incident is boring and sometimes that subject has little or nothing to do with the focus of the story.

Newspaper people sometimes argue about whether a particular newspaper is a writer's newspaper or an editor's newspaper when the question should really be, "Is the newspaper a reader's newspaper?"

16. Use better color and high-quality photography throughout as a matter of routine. Select stories of immediate use to readers. Provide honest, thorough coverage of news of importance to readers.

17. Quality of product, responsiveness to the consumer's needs and interest and riveting presentation will bring attention daily. Even more, targeting niche segments of our population and customizing their information packages to address their requirements will do much of the same. However, we cannot overlook offering to each a package of information that helps mold these many into a cohesive society.

Problem: (c) Increasing illiteracy in the United States.

Possible solutions:

1. By making the newspaper a part of the daily life of the community. Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper. News organizations should underwrite literacy programs through libraries and other community centers.

2. A major problem, with no easy answer. Newspapers should support societal efforts to address the problem as they are broached in legislating bodies. When they are not broached, the newspapers should broach them. When efforts are launched, newspaper companies should join them. But, in my darker moods, I fear we are heading toward a day when there will be a large cohort of permanently illiterate people, and newspapers will be read by a smaller, elite group. Reading will not disappear; those who say it will are prattling nonsense. But, as someone once said, like opera, it will increasingly be an activity of a small elite.

3. Newspapers can help educators and parents win the battle against illiteracy by improving and expanding – in some cases, starting – Newspapers in Education programs. Newspapers can be used to help teach almost anything from the pre-school years on up. Newspapers need to work with teachers on how best to accomplish this common goal. They need to work with parents on how newspapers can be used to motivate children to read.

4. Fight editorially for better school budgets and recognize that the places in their communities with the lowest levels of literacy need the smallest classes and the highest expenditures per student and not the present reverse.

5. Help improve public education. Newspaper-in-education programs by local newspapers. Spend time in local schools talking with youngsters. Hold educators accountable for results and emphasize reading skills in early grades.

6. Again, the industry needs first to more fully realize the extent of this problem.

Next, every newspaper in every community should seek to deal with the problem through reading programs, cooperation with school systems, support of volunteer programs and the like.

And someone needs to come up with something much more dramatic to really make it work.

7. It is a sad commentary that a growing number of adults in America are functionally illiterate. Unfortunately, I believe there is little our industry can do except work in concert with the educational system to support literacy training. It is impossible for us to find illiterate individuals through our news pages because if the person(s) is illiterate, he/she cannot read our products.

8. There is little that newspapers can do directly about this problem other than to support the efforts of others. This will principally have to be financial support.

9. We must commit private resources to public resources, and these must be expanded. The higher education system must stretch out a hand to the secondary and primary systems to help them address the problem. But this must become a national priority – we must have a national rallying cry that catches everyone up: Read One for the Gipper, possibly.

10. More stringent requirements that English is the first language of the United States. Although this may sound reactionary, most other countries require that their citizens speak and read the language of their adopted country before they can acquire citizenship. Once that barrier is overcome, then appealing to a variety of readers through a common language (English) may be accomplished.

Barring that revolutionary idea, then the other alternative may be to educate our readers through more graphics and infographics – aiming more and more at the younger readers to get them into the habit of reading the newspaper along with their favorite children’s stories or juveniles’ books.

11. The newspaper industry must work with other cultural institutions to design literacy programs, including adult literacy programs. Media foundations must contribute grant and fellowship monies to literacy programs, and professionals and educators must work together with the public education system to make reading a priority. The efforts of the Newspaper in Education programs of the last decade must be strengthened.

12. Promote literacy programs with great vigor. Use the newspaper as a tool in teaching people to read and then as an object for new readers. Support learn-to-read programs at all levels.

13. Promote education. Promote all those programs that are designed to combat illiteracy. Illiteracy has occurred because newspapers haven’t done their job telling readers how bad the situation is, preferring instead to let the “professionals” do their thing. The “professionals” have succeeded quite well in doing newspapers out of an audience. A national effort by newspapers – all at the same time – looking at the illiteracy problem in the schools would be a beginning.

Newspapers must assign staff to cover education properly and report it on the same day all across the country, and then continue to report on it until something is done about it. School board meetings should be covered – again. The types of stories that we see on education are usually “fluffy” articles about “cutesy” things going on in the schools. When was the last time anyone wrote an article about the reading levels of students and what students are reading and how educators are teaching reading?

14. Demand politicians make better public education a No. 1 priority. Increase status of teachers.

15. I do not believe that we should either “write to a common denominator” or segregate the reporting of news according to ability to decipher. This is a problem for education. The role of the media is to provide the clearest possible presentation of events.

16. Focus attention on America's schools. Appropriately reward teachers and administrators. Restore order to classrooms. Make our educational system a top priority.

17. Each newspaper should help all elementary classrooms produce a daily newspaper – kids would be motivated, skills would be learned, newspapers would create a labor force and market and informed citizenry.

Problem: (d) The lack of interest in newspapers among younger media consumers.

Possible solutions:

1. This is a problem I am afraid is bigger than us. Children today have been reared in a video world where the printed word has little appeal. I do not think children's pages, special teen sections, etc., are viable vehicles to attract and to hold youngsters' attention. What we must do is to attack the information needs of young adults, ages 25 and up. It is in that group that we as an industry can make inroads.

2. Young people are not reading newspapers because newspaper editors are trying to make the newspaper look like a television screen without any of its energy. Newspapers must return to the basics. That doesn't mean that layout and design aren't important, but too many newspapers are letting design dictate content. If the art and charts and graphics aren't ready, the story is held. If the art and charts are good, the story is page one, regardless of the story content.

3. Support Newspapers in Education program. Run stories of particular interest to youngsters. We may have to take the radical step of asking them what they want rather than divining it on our own.

4. Put newspapers in the classroom, free and with non-promotional guides on how to read a newspaper. Stop treating children's news with condescension and gimmicks.

5. Special pages, special features, special writing. (*The St. Petersburg Times* now runs two reviews of new movies: one written by the adult reviewer and one written by one of a group of high-school reviewers the paper has recruited. The young people are ignoring the adult-written reviews and reading and talking about the ones written by their peers.) What about doing the same thing for main news, front-page stories, editorials?

6. Reach them through a compelling comics pages. (Some) 74 percent of junior high kids who read the paper read the comics page.

7. Younger consumers read. They are not reading us. Measure interest, need, desires – and produce material addressing that. Stress anew the need to acquire

reading skills. And, if you will, make reading us fun or so valuable you have to pick us up. Then you have interest!

8. I bet they read the sports pages. Maybe what we're really saying is that they're not interested in what we traditionally define as front page news. I don't really have an answer for this. I suspect there is a design component involved; just look at the new 'zines coming out of the west coast.

9. See c: Each newspaper should help all elementary classrooms produce a daily newspaper – kids would be motivated, skills would be learned, newspapers would create a labor force and market and informed citizenry. Also, be relevant; newspapers today serve yesterday's status quo; be an advocate for the rights of individuals – be they black, white, old, young, ethnically diverse, etc.

10. See (a), (b) and (f): Many newspapers already have tried to reach specific audience segments with news and features on narrow interest topics – everything from antiques to skiing. Others have pondered the same strategy for more international news, for example, more news in Southwestern newspapers about northern Mexico or Latin America in general. But the news hole can only be stretched so far and the number of potential specialty interests is infinite! Experience has already exhausted the utility of this strategy.

To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don't work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers' attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience.

(f) The industry suffers the elitism of all professions, which have a tendency to grow insular and apart from their clients (in our case, the audience). College journalism curricula should place an increased emphasis on sensitizing students to the traditions and values that define the profession of journalism, ensuring that they understand that these traditions and values are social customs, not natural laws.

11. Get the paper to them through any means possible – newspaper-in-education programs, etc. Help teachers understand the various interests children have that can be met via daily newspapers – sports, movies, celebrities.

12. Children enjoy music, entertainment, cloths, fads, dancing, peer evaluations, popular entertainers and contemporary events. Little in the newspaper of today is directly applied to the younger readers, especially the elementary students. Why not? Again, some basic research into the needs of the younger readers would enhance the chances of capturing this elusive age group. Look to the Soap and teen magazines for some ideas without detracting from the good efforts being made by many newspapers to bring the news to their readers.

13. A serious newspaper penetrates the "youth" market when, and only when, they have a stake in the community and the future of that community's life. Pursuing

this audience too aggressively would require changes that would exacerbate the problem cited in (b) [grabbing readers' attention] above.

14. Newspapers can improve and expand the use of Newspapers in Education programs in an effort to build the newspaper habit as well as assist teachers in their fields. They can use surveys, personal interviews and focus groups to find out what young people want that newspapers can provide for them better than anyone else. Then they can provide it in attractive packages and, as appropriate, in alternative delivery systems.

15. The newspaper industry must combine forces with visual media industries (broadcasting, film) and with the computer industry to design programs to attract young readers. Since such joint efforts would be unlikely unless economic rewards are recognized, new media companies with diversified media holdings must lead the way in designing specific solutions to this problem.

16. In some ways, this goes back to point two: the challenges in grabbing readers' attention.

All of the factors that will work for readers in general should work for younger readers. More programs with schools might also help.

However, in addition to general "reader grabbing" stuff, newspapers need to have topics of interest to younger readers, and they need to bring these potential readers into the process more. Teen pages are a way to get that age group in – and involved. But that's only one way. Teen and college-age reader advisory groups for newspapers can introduce more people to the newspapers and even more significantly can help get more relevant content.

Also, at the college-age level, there may be some alternative (campus/off campus) publications that will be more relevant.

Finally, the where-to-go, what-to-do information can appeal to younger readers if the right kind of information is included.

17. Improve editorial presentation and include material of interest to younger persons. Explore new media 'bridges' to a younger audience, perhaps via electronic publishing through telephone, discs, CD-ROMs and fax.

Problem: (e) The poor image of the industry.

Possible solutions:

1. The approach in (c) above: By making the newspaper a part of the daily life of the community. Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper. News organizations should underwrite literacy programs through libraries and other community centers.

2. Get actual newspapers staff members out in the community to meet people, answer questions, explain what we do. Set and maintain top standards for sourcing, accuracy. Insist on a civil tone to all stories. No snide references, no stereotypes,

no putdowns. Establish a human conversation with readers and treat them like friends. (Intelligent friends.)

3. Some in-house (and in-class) education must take place in order for any inroads to be made in the arrogance and bias perceptions given the public and the readers/viewers of the journalists today. The cockiness and brashness can undo the good that the thousands of working news people bring to their readers each news cycle. Assertiveness can be there without being offensive. You can be tough but oh so gentle – especially if you know our readership is falling off and you may be without a job or newspaper if your image isn't improved in the public eye. This can and should be accomplished without jeopardizing the code of ethics or the purposes of providing news and the First Amendment Rights – of newspapers and their readers.

4. The image of the newspaper industry can change only if the people within the industry change. That is to say, old, white, heterosexual men must make way for a newly diversified work force and a newly diversified leadership. The image of the industry will improve initially with just that one step.

5. Do something about the “poor image” whatever it may be. Teach reporters to be calm and unsharklike when in crowds of reporters. Recognize that more and more people may damn “newspapers” but where their particular paper please them, they make an exception.

6. There is myth and there is reality here. The myth is that newspapers are in bad shape financially and getting worse. The reality is that while some very large profit margins have declined, the newspapers still far exceed most industries in percentage of profit for dollars invested. So newspapers aren't exactly going out of business.

But there is reality too: declining penetration, flat circulation, declining market share of ad revenues, etc. These are the trends that have to be reversed.

Many newspaper companies (and individual newspapers) are addressing these concerns with aggressive programs to reverse the trends.

The way to address this concern is: 1. to put out better, more relevant newspapers; 2. tell the public that newspapers are doing this; 3. involve the public more in the process; 4. tell the public that newspapers are doing that; 5. develop programs that are more relevant to the advertisers; 6. tell the public and advertisers that newspapers are doing that. In short, fix and then promote.

7. To remedy our poor image, we have to take a hard look at the way we conduct business, from print to broadcast. The frenzied approach of the national media (for example shouting rudely at national press conferences) is ample proof that we need to become more civilized in our actions. Reporters/photographers unfortunately tend to be a rather sloppy bunch, too, and need to adhere to a dress code that makes us appear more professional. We also need to be more willing to be less sensational in our reporting and writing as well as more readily willing to correct our mistakes. Finally, we as an industry need to listen when people call or write us and then be willing to implement those suggestions rather than shrugging them as “stupid.”

8. Raise pay high enough to attract top students. Raise standards in news presentation. Raise ethical standards. Make a concentrated effort to cover the industry – to tell the story of newspapers.
9. Product improvement plus its evolution into electronic forms of distribution will help. Continue to make integrity a high priority.
10. The only way to achieve long-term improvements in image is to do the job better – put out better newspapers – and tell people about it. Newspaper must invest more money in putting out a quality product, and they must let readers know that they can and will help them meet their needs for information, opinion and entertainment. Newspapers must stand for something in their communities. They must work to improve government, business and other aspects of society.
11. One reason that readers are turning to radio and television for their news and entertainment is because it's there in a handy, understandable format. Newspapers are trying to be something they aren't. Glitz and glitter cannot replace good, timely, well-written stories. The other day I picked up a column written years ago by Ralph McGill when he was a columnist for *The Atlanta Constitution*. I could not stop reading, and, within minutes, I was in tears. It was a plain, simple story. I can't tell you the last time one of our modern newspaper stories made me cry.
12. When newspapers truly serve their communities – they will not only make money, they will improve their image. The lack of integrity (being judgmental and aloof while claiming to serve communities) is the key element to be targeted.
13. Journalists are notorious for their independence. They cannot even agree on a definition of themselves as professionals. Thus, because of this lack of organization and leverage against those who stray, the industry has no way of "policing" itself. Journalists must therefore act independently in making whatever effort is needed to "reimage" themselves. Journalists could begin to improve their image by utilizing absolute care in reporting, getting facts right, respecting sources. Studies show that people are more greatly influenced by their personal contacts with others than by images in the media. Certainly journalism education has a role in defining what journalists should be.
14. Improve accuracy. Provide more balanced coverage. Tell the many sides of a story (not just two).
15. I fear the public relations advertising campaigns are doomed to failure. Raising performance standards would help. So would better policies on corrections and apologies. So would more community efforts which get editors out in front of the community and out from behind the granite and glass walls of their buildings. And some of it just goes with the territory. As James Reston has written, All of the nostalgic longing for an earlier time when newspapers were better is myopic. Newspapers are much better now, he says; I know it because we are so unpopular.

16. First, improve the quality and thoroughness of our efforts. Our best image is conveyed by our best newspapers. Second, strip away the arrogance, impersonality of all too many of editors and reports. We must be responsive to the public we serve – to the people who buy us.

17. The image will change only when there has been significant change in the industry itself. The necessary changes are outlined in (a) and (b) above: Many newspapers already have tried to reach specific audience segments with news and features on narrow interest topics – everything from antiques to skiing. Others have pondered the same strategy for more international news, for example, more news in Southwestern newspapers about northern Mexico or Latin America in general. But the news hole can only be stretched so far and the number of potential specialty interests is infinite! Experience has already exhausted the utility of this strategy.

To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don't work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers' attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience.

Problem: (f) Elitism of the press corps.

Possible solutions:

1. The answer to question a (getting a more diverse staff) will help. So will editors insisting that their staffs be less incestuous. (Newspapers should not have company cafeterias; they only abet reporters eating lunch with other reporters, during which they massage each other's biases. Reporters should, instead, be eating lunch with cops, business executives, teachers, welfare workers, accountants, carpenters, doctors. (That would be good for the doctors, too.) It's not popular, but I support nepotism rules. Journalists would be less elite and incestuous if they were married to the people listed above, instead of other journalists.

2. The only possible cure for this is greater exposure of reporters and editors to readers and non-readers (real people). More focus groups, more tapes of focus groups to show to all staffs. More advisory groups, more exposure of all staffers to the advisory groups. More appreciation by everyone on the newspaper that we should be working Outside In rather than Inside Out; that is, we should be listening to cares, concerns, issues that matter most to our readers and potential readers and reacting to those with significant stories, rather than always feeding readers what we are sure is good for them, whether it is relevant to them or not. (I am not advocating pandering to readers; I am advocating being more responsive to them. Obviously, newspapers should and would continue to maintain their critical watchdog role on matters that should be watched.)

Also, editors and staffers should participate more in their communities – in organizations, churches, Little League, whatever – to become a part of the community, not aloof from it. This can be done without creating a conflict-of-

interest situation that won't work. Newspaper people have maintained such a firm arm's length relationship from the whole community that most have failed to understand its inner workings, and the people in the community fail to understand the newspaper staffers.

Finally, newspapers traditionally have pointed out problems without offering solutions. More work needs to be done to suggest possible solutions whenever newspapers identify major concerns.

3. What exactly are you talking about here? The Washington press corps? Some perceived tendency of newspaper owners to think that they are part of the elite governing body? Some perceived tendency of newspaper people generally to think they are more important than others and deserve special privileges? I suppose the answer – if I understand the question – is to accept the reality that newspapers are special only as long as they serve the interests of the public.

4. See answer for item (e): To remedy our poor image, we have to take a hard look at the way we conduct business, from print to broadcast. The frenzied approach of the national media (for example shouting rudely at national press conferences) is ample proof that we need to become more civilized in our actions.

Reporters/photographers unfortunately tend to be a rather sloppy bunch, too, and need to adhere to a dress code that makes us appear more professional. We also need to be more willing to be less sensational in our reporting and writing as well as more readily willing to correct our mistakes. Finally, we as an industry need to listen when people call or write us and then be willing to implement those suggestions rather than shrugging them as “stupid.”

5. Don't stand for it in print or in the newsroom. Emphasize interests of readers and insist on a civil tone in stories.

6. More stress on audience – respect for readers/viewers and their needs and interests. Less insularity. More I.F. Stones; fewer Sam Donaldsons. Again, education has a responsibility to inculcate values.

7. Get reporters out of newspapers and into communities. Newspapers have bureaus out in the white suburbs of Beirut. Put them where they matter – where people are, live, invest (as in with tax dollars).

8. Self-regulation and a greater understanding that the daily newspaper is a public journal and that connotes a public trust. Top management must insist on having elitism addressed. Our schools of journalism, especially, must address this problem.

9. The industry suffers the elitism of all professions, which have a tendency to grow insular and apart from their clients (in our case, the audience). College journalism curricula should place an increased emphasis on sensitizing students to the traditions and values that define the profession of journalism, ensuring that they understand that these traditions and values are social customs, not natural laws.

One promising development in this area is the “new criticism” outlined in McCombs’ lead essay in the Winter 1992 Journalism Quarterly (pp. 818-21). Journalism has paid little explicit attention to the structure and style of its stories, especially in terms of their social consequences or their utility to the audience. The “new criticism” studies these questions within the framework of agenda setting theory. Greater sensitivity to the messages that they produce should curb the negative aspects of professionalism.

10. I do not think this is a problem except in the biggest cities with the biggest papers. Make sure the paper covers non-elite parts of the cities continuously so that reporters – and editors and publishers come to know their own cities and neighborhoods beyond the best restaurants.

11. Diversification of work force, leadership and ownership is the only solution to this problem. The dominant-press press corps in this country has always been demographically elite (white Protestant male, educated, married with children, and politically moderate), and these demographic factors certainly have influenced the content of the mass media. But psychographic characteristics of news workers – their attitudes and beliefs and lifestyles – will have an even greater impact in the future. The newspaper industry must open its elite ranks, even as members of the “me” generation take center stage, if there is to be any hope at all of breaking down the hegemonic structures that define U.S. mass media.

12. Too many newspeople have assumed a self-appointed role as experts in everything, and this is exacerbated by the sometimes appearing conflict of interest when a person is on a talk show (radio/TV) and commenting on a variety of issues be they political, economic or science, to mention a few. This cockiness and arrogance is usually repugnant to the unanointed reader/viewer. Thus the press corps should clean up its act. Greed, fame and huge egos sometimes are the undoing of the press corps, not to mention instant analyses or constant carping without offering any concrete solutions to problems.

13. Newspaper reporters and editors need to stop listening to themselves and listen to their readers.

14. I’m not sure I agree that the entirety of the press corps is elitist. To the extent the big-city and Washington contingents might be, perhaps continuing education about the perils of losing touch with the readership would help.

15. Beat it out with in-house training.

16. The approach in (c) above if the program required editors and reporters to make the presentations: by making the newspaper a part of the daily life of the community. Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper. News organizations should underwrite literacy programs through libraries and other community centers.

17. Eliminate the industry's elitism fix. CEOs of media companies think they are gods. Therefore everyone else aspires to same.

Problem: (g) Competition from other activities for people's time.

Possible solutions:

1. There is no other basic remedy – be more serious and reliable about people's central concerns. Those central concerns do not include a lack of entertainment.
2. I do not think the *USA Today* strategy of covering everything in 10 inches of copy or less is the way to successfully compete for people's time. Instead, we need to be concentrating on the quality of our writing, photography and layout techniques as well as covering events, etc., that truly have an impact on people's local lives. If we can demonstrate those attributes, we will have a better chance of successfully retaining our readers' attention.
3. In the next 20 years, the newspaper industry must devise new ways to deliver the newspaper to the audience. As the channels of information distribution continue to become more and more complex, information itself is becoming central to economic and political power. In addition to the dizzying array of broadcast channels, the newspaper industry must begin to devise strategies to encounter global competition in information delivery from such new technologies as facsimile transmissions, teleconferencing, electronic newsletters and interactive media (compact discs that supply not only sound, but also visual computer images, which can be manipulated by the media consumer). Such strategies must acknowledge that time – speed of information transmission – is key.
4. People do not have “less time” than they once did; rather they are choosing to spend it in other ways. A more compelling paper will earn and retain its share of individuals' time. Even then, the general disaffection with government official society will erode interest in a journal which spends a great deal of its space chronicling that part of the society.
5. As the Information Age grows exponentially, so does the competition for our time. The newspaper business had better be prepared for the 21st century by getting into the electronic news dissemination business. Many newspaper now have stock reports, weather, sports, news reports – all obtainable over telephone wires. However, these pieces of information are obscurely found in a small five-or-six-point typeface in a 1-by -4 - inch house ad. Advertise in broader terms and toot your own horn is advice the newspapers should heed forthwith.

Newspapers on CD ROM on on-line databses are in the minority, but they can be improved, sold for in-home consumption and at a profit to the newspapers. They should be made more user friendly and at cheap enough rates to compete with their natural rivals: radio and television.

6. The approach in (c) above: By making the newspaper a part of the daily life of the community. Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper. News organizations should underwrite literacy programs through libraries and other community centers.

7. This is an age-old problem growing worse. If we are responsive to the public's interests, if we stress quality – if we are, in other words, readable and informative – we will command reasonable amounts of time. We have to quit writing for each other, quit creating the average reader, who never really existed but was created by us to dignify what we did or wanted to do. We need to provide what the reader wants, or what he or she needs in a way that makes him/her want it.

8. A more relevant journalism will fare better in the competition for people's time. See (a), (b) and (f): Many newspapers already have tried to reach specific audience segments with news and features on narrow interest topics – everything from antiques to skiing. Others have pondered the same strategy for more international news, for example, more news in Southwestern newspapers about northern Mexico or Latin America in general. But the news hole can only be stretched so far, and the number of potential specialty interests is infinite! Experience has already exhausted the utility of this strategy.

To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don't work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers' attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience.

The industry suffers the elitism of all professions, which have a tendency to grow insular and apart from their clients (in our case, the audience). College journalism curricula should place an increased emphasis on sensitizing students to the traditions and values that define the profession of journalism, ensuring that they understand that these traditions and values are social customs, not natural laws.

9. The industry can't do anything about competition from other activities.

10. Complement other activities with being a guide and index to assist in making your agenda.

11. This is the REAL problem for newspapers, more than what's on TV news or in the news magazines. First, my answer that must now seem like a broken record to you: We must have content more relevant to people's lives that helps them meet their changing needs. If there is a reason for people to pick up the newspaper, they'll pick it up. If there isn't, they won't.

Additionally, we have to be aware of this competition for time and present the information in quick-read form as well as in slower-read form if that's what readers want. Headlines become critical in story-telling here. 1. They must provide the quick read if that's all readers want. 2. They must attract people to stories in

such a way that people want to read more. 3. They must be compelling not cute; informative not elusive.

12. People will invest time in things that are important to them. Newspapers must provide through their traditional packages, or alternative means, information, opinion and entertainment that people want and cannot get – or cannot get as easily – elsewhere. Newspapers can use research such as surveys, personal interviews and focus groups in an effort to find out what people want.

The Newspapers in Education program can help build in a reading habit, but newspapers must learn what people want and provide it. They must remember that different people may want different things of their newspapers and respond accordingly. They might encourage readers to look at the paper while traveling on a plane, train or bus, while waiting on someone, while waiting for the movie or show to begin, or while having a refreshment break; they might encourage them to read it with or to their young children, but the key is still giving them something they want and cannot get elsewhere.

13. Produce a newspaper with news and other information of value. Go like mad to promote it, to tell people what you have and why they need your product more than they need another hour of Oprah Winfrey.

14. It'll always be there and probably grow. Key is to find what it takes to be vital in readers' lives and then meet those needs. If readers don't have time for us, they're really saying we don't have enough content that is important enough to them to be worth spending the time. People make time for what's really important.

15. Be the guidebook, expert on the other activities. Ride the horse in the direction it's going. Quit seeing individuals as mean, unfeeling and walk with them.

16. The industry can do little about this.

17. Make meaningful, useful information available in a variety of ways – ink on newsprint, telephone, discs, fax, CD-ROM, books, magazines and any other way competitors serve their customers.

Problem: (h) Trying to win back readers other than middle-class 18-to-49 year olds.

Possible solutions:

1. See (a): Begin serious, systematic coverage of all groups in the circulation areas, regardless of a group's present economic, social, or occupational status and without excluding groups not yet well assimilated in mainstream American cultures (because their children soon will be).

2. Face it, the middle-class comprises the majority of our readers. Instead of trying to diverge to capture other groups, we ought to be planning strategies to keep our

middle-class 18-to-49 year olds. If we disenfranchise that group, we really are dead in the water.

3. A solution to this problem is possible only if advertising continues to be the driving force behind newspaper publication and only if advertisers see a market for this audience segment.

4. Produce a newspaper that readers will see has something to offer them. Promote it. Get the staff to understand that they are selling a product. If they don't help sell it, their jobs will go away.

5. Install a diverse work force in editorial rank-and-file and management.

6. In the midst of all the obligations on their time, people will only attend to what demands their attention or is relevant to their daily lives – or provides them with some relaxation. Doesn't it come down to which role newspapers take – that of giving readers what is good for them, versus figuring out what readers need (and want) to know?

7. See (b): As I see it, the only way that newspapers can regain the readers they've lost and gain new readers is to go back to the basics and provide more hard news instead of trying to fluff up information as "issues." The newspapers are going to have to provide timely information in a clear and understandable fashion on a daily basis – several days after the fact.

Writers will have to have better skills. The recent efforts of newspapers to "featurize" news to make it more interesting or to report news only as an issue several days after it happens is one of the poorest ways to grab the attention of readers. Yet I see this happening in a lot of newspapers. This is not to say that featurized news is not good: It's just that I'm beginning to dread more and more the first five or six paragraphs of most newspaper stories because **THEY ARE SO BORING**. Sometimes the subject chosen by the reporter to localize an incident is boring and sometimes that subject has little or nothing to do with the focus of the story.

Newspaper people sometimes argue about whether a particular newspaper is a writer's newspaper or an editor's newspaper when the question should really be, "Is the newspaper a reader's newspaper?"

8. See (a), (b) and (f) above: Many newspapers already have tried to reach specific audience segments with news and features on narrow interest topics – everything from antiques to skiing. Others have pondered the same strategy for more international news, for example, more news in Southwestern newspapers about northern Mexico or Latin America in general. But the news hole can only be stretched so far and the number of potential specialty interests is infinite! Experience has already exhausted the utility of this strategy.

To reverse the declines in readership what newspapers must do is to develop more creative ways of covering the general news of the local community, the state, nation, and world. The old formulations of what news is just don't work that well anymore. News – like our language and our history – must abandon old

patterns and evolve new ways of looking at the world. This is the strategy for grabbing readers' attention daily and of well serving a more diverse audience.

The industry suffers the elitism of all professions, which have a tendency to grow insular and apart from their clients (in our case, the audience). College journalism curricula should place an increased emphasis on sensitizing students to the traditions and values that define the profession of journalism, ensuring that they understand that these traditions and values are social customs, not natural laws.

9. Care about this group first. Study it. Serve it. Hire it. Believe it. Be a friend and advocate. Turn over the same percentage this group is of the circulation area to space in the newspaper, reflecting it adequately.

10. Forgive me, but all the answers above apply here: more relevant information, more attentiveness to readers, more inclusiveness in the newspaper's content and its operations. I'll not repeat everything.

11. Journals of today and tomorrow must be multicultural in appeal and in understanding. Survival depends on our reaching these readers, too. Moreover, we need to deliver information (and entertainment, if you will) in a manner desired by the consumer and at a time and by a means chosen by the consumers of information. Ours is the job of delivering information, not delivering paper, or voices, or images – but all of these.

12. I'm not so sure that the under 18-year-olds were ever in the newspapers subscribers' files or among their readers. However, I believe that most readers thrive on news of their locales – therefore, make certain that the local scene is covered thoroughly. Much as people in the journalism profession may poo-poo the idea of truly local coverage, we find that many of the more successful newspapers have been the innercity alternative newspapers and the smaller weekly in the suburbs, capturing a readership often overlooked by the larger dailies. Many larger dailies realize this competition and print their own weekly supplements aimed at specific suburban communities. Other dailies might follow suit. Older people are interested in their communities, their health cares, fellow seniors' concerns, keeping active, retirement concerns and the like. Are newspapers concerned about the elderly – truly concerned. Read the ads – not many elderly are directly addressed in that important area – nor do the news columns or other columnists meet the needs of more than 30 percent of an overlooked readership – those over 50.

13. We may need a different marketing-pricing approach. What about reducing the cost of the paper each year, instead of raising the cost to subscribe. Why not build an audience? After all, isn't that what we sell to advertisers? Beyond that, the same prescription makes sense: Better writing. More relevant content. Superior graphics. Better printing. Different publication cycles and/or days. Interconnects with other media, such as computers and audiotex. If we do all of this it may help. But there also is the possibility that nothing will make a difference ultimately. It may be that newspapers simply are a mature industry on the lip of ultimate decline. In that case, the news people who work there had better wean themselves from huge iron

machines through which a sheet of paper runs, to another medium which informs the public, but not through newspapers. Otherwise they may end up like Lloyd's of London, whose chairman recently said: "They made a fatal mistake. They thought their tomorrows would be just like their yesterdays."

14. The approach in (c) above: By making the newspaper a part of the daily life of the community. Newspapers should be carried in to civic clubs, classrooms, union shops, school, church and civic groups and used as part of a program to involve the community in reading the paper. News organizations should underwrite literacy programs through libraries and other community centers.

15. The same research approaches, including surveys, personal interviews and focus groups can be used in an effort to reach former readers as well as potential readers. The focus would be on why these people quit reading and what the newspapers would have to provide to get them back. Older readers probably want more information about health issues, retirement economics and similar matters, but the way to find out for sure is to ask them. A doctoral student at the University of Georgia did an interesting study on why long-time readers of a Georgia newspaper had stopped reading it. She conducted in-depth interviews with the former readers to get her answers.

16. Study demographic trends to stay ahead. Get involved in the community. Keep the staff focused on the concerns of real people. Don't stand for elitism. Find out what readers want in the newspaper.

17. Understand the target communities and write for them. Improve accuracy.

APPENDIX P

RESEARCH APPROVAL

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board
For Human Subjects Research

Date: 11-09-92

IRB#: ED-93-035

Proposal Title: Surviving in an Electronic World: A Delphi Study
of the Predicted Future of Newspapers

Principal Investigator (s): Dr. Charles Fleming, Sherri Massey

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer (s): Approved

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for
Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Provisions Received and Approved

Marcia L. Tilley

Chair of Institutional Review Board

VITA 23

Sherrri Denise Ward Massey

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: SURVIVING IN AN ELECTRONIC WORLD: A DELPHI STUDY OF
THE PREDICTED FUTURE OF NEWSPAPERS

Major Field: Higher Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Fayetteville, Arkansas, April 3, 1963, the daughter of Fred Ronald and Billie Carlene Ward.

Education: Graduated from Springdale High School, Springdale, Arkansas, in May, 1981; received Bachelor of Arts degree in print journalism, with a minor in sociology, from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville in January, 1986; received Master of Arts degree in mass communications, with an emphasis in management and human relations, from the University of Oklahoma in May, 1989; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1993.

Professional: reporter, then editor of University of Arkansas student newspaper, Arkansas Traveler, in Fayetteville, 1981-1984; writer/copy editor for Agricultural Publications in Fayetteville, 1984-1985; public education reporter for Springdale News, in Arkansas, 1985; reporter promoted to copy editor/weekend wire editor/assistant city editor for Norman Transcript, in Oklahoma, 1986-1989; assistant editor for Private Practice medical magazine, 1989-1991; graduate teaching assistant for Oklahoma State University Journalism and Broadcasting Department, 1991-1993; graduate research assistant/newsletter editor for Oklahoma State University's Office of University Assessment, 1992-1993.