

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Robert Jordan (713) 626-0333

International Demographics, Inc.
10333 Richmond Avenue, Suite 200
Houston, Texas 77042
1-800-324-9921

Readership Increasing Steadily For Newspaper Front Sections; Eleven Other Sections Decline

Houston – (5/23/06) – From 2000 to 2005 the percentage of adults reading the front section of a daily newspaper increased from 51.4 to 53.0 percent in the 87 metropolitan markets surveyed regularly by The Media Audit.

The percentage of adults varies from 68.2 percent in the New Haven metropolitan area to 41.8 percent in the Las Vegas market. There are 16 markets where more than 60 percent of adults read a front page section regularly and 19 markets where less than 50 percent read a front page section regularly.

“The same research shows the percentage of adults reading the other 11 sections of a daily newspaper declined,” says Bob Jordan, president of International Demographics, Inc., a 35-year-old research firm which produces The Media Audit. Jordan emphasizes “readership” in contrast to circulation. “We measure readership only,” says Jordan.

Most Vulnerable Sections

“The declines,” says Jordan, “tell an interesting story. The severest decline in percentage of readers was in the weekend television guide book. Its percentage of readers dropped from 31.9 to 23.1

between 2000 and 2005. It appears to be the most vulnerable product because it can/and has been most easily duplicated by other media.”

The Movie/Entertainment section readership dropped from 26.5 to 23.1 while Travel sections dropped from 19.6 to 17.7 and Lifestyle/Fashion from 23.7 to 21.7. “The other sections each lost about one percentage point in readership,” says Jordan, “and, although the percentage of decline is small that doesn’t mean the problem is small. Five years without growth is a substantial problem.”

The front page section improved its readership position, says Jordan, “and that seems reassuring because it is the closest thing newspapers have to a proprietary product. Much of what the front page section contains is hard news developed by the local staff (plus news services). The front page section is the content other media can not duplicate without enormous investments in staff development.”

More Affluent & Better Educated

The demographic profile of the front page readership shows the group to be better educated and more affluent than the general population. Those earning more than \$50,000 in annual household income index at 108 (100 is average of the general population). Those earning more than \$75,000 and more than \$100,000 have indexes of 113 and 117.

Those with liquid assets of \$100,000 or more, \$250,000 or more, index at 126 and 135. Those who traded stocks/bonds/securities during the past year index at 125.

More than 74 percent of the front page reader group says they voted during the past year in a local, state or national election.

“Marketers can (and many do) view the front page section as though it was a stand alone media product. It can be of great service to those marketing products or wanting to influence voters,” says Jordan.

Jordan cautions that newspapers are local products and each must be considered separately, the same is true of the front page section.

The Data Source

The Media Audit, a syndicated media ratings service currently covering more than 80 metropolitan markets, provides both qualitative data for media websites as well as for traditional media.

Traditional media – print, broadcast and outdoor – have used The Media Audit data in sales, marketing and management for more than 33 years. In 1998, the survey started providing data on local media websites. The surveys now contain more than 400 fields of qualitative information in addition to quantitative measurements of local web audiences.

Note: If you would like to periodically receive news releases containing market survey data from The Media Audit, please contact us by email (info@TheMediaAudit.com) and leave your name, title, company affiliation and email address.