

DOES HOPE REMAIN FOR THE NEWSPAPER BUSINESS?



Internet news has nearly taken the place of the newspaper publishing business. Many papers look to post news online to keep up with society's demand. As newspaper sales continue to suffer, the question remains: Is there any hope for the newspaper medium? Last week, two small Long Island weekly newspapers experienced an exponential growth in sales seemingly overnight. The two papers combined printed approximately 8,620 copies to sell at newsstands. This week, the copies seemed to fly off the rack, requiring the newspaper company to print 5,500 more to keep up with customer demands. Could this prove to be hope for newspapers across the nation? Unfortunately, this has proven to be a localized event. Troy Gustavson, the owner of the TimesReview Newsgroup, said that 30 different outlets reported bulk purchases of the paper. Apparently, two buyers scoured the community, snatching up approximately 4,000 copies of the paper. This bulk purchases were estimated to have cost the buyers \$6,000. Gustavson says that he has never experienced such an event during the half a century he has spent in the newspaper business. Gustavson speculated that the two mystery buyers had good reason to buy the bulk amount of copies. He narrowed down his guessing by using the articles from that paper's story. His speculations included: proud members of the Shoreham-Wading River football team, which recently won 19-0 against Greenport; supporters of the arrested Riverhead doctor that allegedly committed Medicare fraud; proud firefighters celebrating the 125th birthday of the Southold Fire Department; or local politicians covering up the attack advertisements from the opposition. Andrew Olsen, the publisher of the newspapers, seems to believe that someone has tried to silence the paper and hide an uncomfortable story from the general public. However, with the prominence of the Internet, no one has much chance of hiding a juicy story by buying out the newspapers. Olsen claims that they have suspicions as to who has bought the papers in bulk. However, at this time they do not have any proof to support these suspicions. A local 7-Eleven in Riverhead caught a woman buying dozens of copies and storing them in the trunk of her car. However, even with the surveillance footage, the identities and motives behind the two citizens that bought the papers in bulk remain unknown. Olsen does not seem too bothered by the scenario, but rather, intrigued. All of the newspapers were purchased through a legal sale. The newspaper would appear foolish if they did not see this as a short-lived victory for the newspaper. While newspapers do not appear to be the main medium of citizens receiving the news, it does prove that the newspaper still affects some local community members; at least two of them in Long Island, New York. While the two bulk buyers remain unknown, the newspapers are rejoicing in the unexpected spike in sales, even if it has not lasted long.

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