

READEX REVIEW

Summer 2008

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Printed Publications Alive and Kicking Despite Online Information Boom

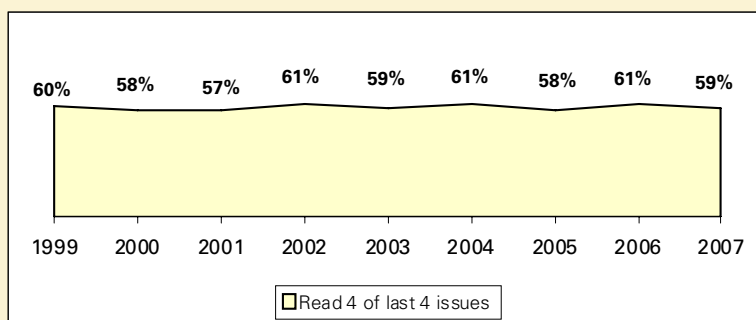
Has the advent of the Internet spurred the downfall of printed publications? This hot topic has its skeptics and its supporters. Although the immediate and inexpensive delivery of information has its allure, many people prefer to read articles on paper, liberated from their computer screen. With those dynamics in place, the big question on advertisers' and publishers' minds is whether or not readers continue to read and engage with printed publications.

While speculation might be that printed publications are a dying breed, in reality, there hasn't been a significant change in readership behaviors over the past nine years

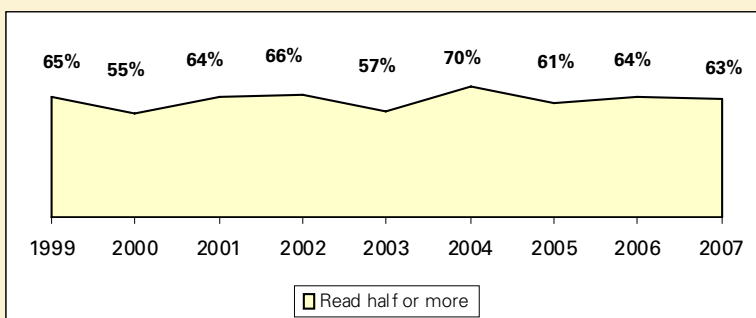
according to results from Readex surveys. The charts below illustrate that printed publications aren't nearing the end of their life cycle, nor do they seem to be slipping away. The analysis referred to in this article includes data from 771 Readex customized studies conducted from 1999-2007.

On average, the common metrics typically used to measure reader involvement with print publications haven't experienced erosion. These results indicate that printed publications cut through the information clutter and still deliver an engaged circulation.

The majority of readers continue to report that they read four of the last four issues.



Readers continue to read half or more of each issue.



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More Charts on page 2

Change of Address? Be sure to let us know.

The *Readex Review* is mailed to a variety of people that represent our customer publications.

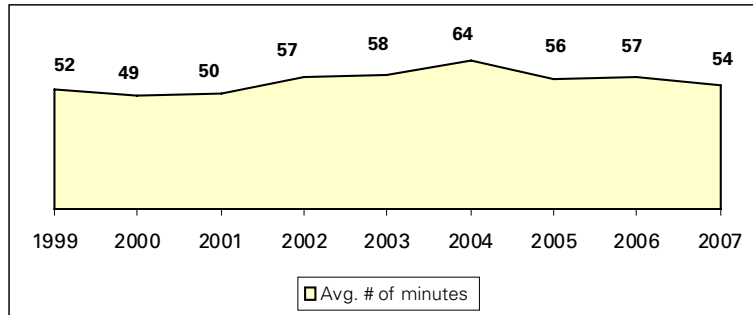
Please help us keep our mailing list up to date by emailing us at distribution@readexresearch.com if...

- your mailing address changes
- you notice that we're sending the newsletter to someone that no longer works with your publication
- there are any members of your sales staff that don't receive the *Readex Review* and would like to start
- you would rather receive the newsletter via email

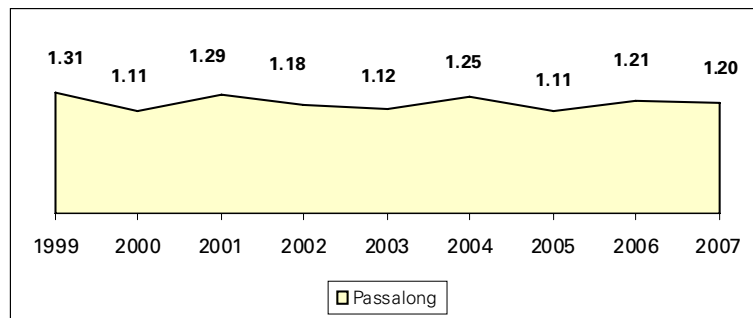
Your assistance enables us to deliver the newsletter to the appropriate people while cutting down on waste.

Printed Publications—from page 1

Almost an hour is devoted to reading each issue.



On average, passalong at least doubles exposure.



Where did this data come from?

Questionnaire design for Readex Research's customized surveys start from scratch; however, we have standard ways of asking common questions, including the questions for which we've reported the results here. Overall, the cited data was pulled from 771 studies that collected data regarding typical measures conducted between 1999 and 2007.

Mail Surveys—from page 4

delivered, providing the best opportunity for receipt. Physical addresses tend to change less frequently than electronic addresses, and when street addresses do change, the post office provides forwarding for a period of time.

Cutting through the clutter

This factor is a big one. When online surveys began to pop up, one thing that made them attractive was that there was less electronic clutter than that delivered by the postal carrier. Today, many would argue that the opposite is true. Today a printed letter may be more noticeable since emails that make it into the inbox of a potential respondent have to fight with many others for attention.

Personal attention reaps personal response

A mailed letter shows more effort on the survey sponsor's part and is likely to gain the attention of the recipient. In addition, if the survey kit is designed to look like personal correspondence, it is even more likely to get response. Another benefit is that if a respondent is unable to complete a mailed survey immediately, it is apt to sit on a desk for a while as a reminder to be filled out.

When taking the above advantages into consideration, mailed surveys shouldn't be discounted as an effective way to collect the data necessary to represent a circulation, or another group, as a whole.

Effective Advertising: Show the product in use



	LEDtronic, Inc. Ad	Issue Average
Saw	75%	63%
Read	46%	23%

Respondents were asked whether they saw and read ads placed in the February issue of *Architectural Record*.

Special thanks to LEDtronic and *Architectural Record* for their permission to feature this ad.

One technique that many effective ads rely on is using photos to show the product being used. Dynamic images that depict products in use attract much more attention than static images that lack energy. Furthermore, ads that demonstrate products in a realistic environment can spark ideas in the minds of the readers, helping them to visualize how they might be able to use the products.

The LEDtronic, Inc. ad, shown above, depicts a variety of uses for their products and illustrates how this technique can contribute to success. On the lower right of the ad, a bright light serves as a memorable focus point, contributing to a Saw score 19% above the issue average.

In addition, both the close-up of the shining light and the vivid photos of a variety of products in use at actual customer sites successfully transformed browsers into readers. These elements helped the ad receive a *Read score double that of the issue average*. The glowing picture actually lights up the ad—grabbing readers' eyes, pulling them into the content.

Instead of relying on readers to use their imagination to envision how a single light can provide dramatic effect, the photos along the left vividly illustrate product impact when used in numbers

The LEDtronic, Inc. ad is a great example of how to put this technique into action for two reasons: First, the advertiser creatively overcame the potential obstacle of the product being difficult to illustrate in use. The success of this ad can encourage advertisers whose charge is to promote a seemingly static widget to attack the design process from a different angle.

Second, it's easy to imagine what the impact on the ad would be if the light were shown unlit and if there were no examples along the left. Without these impressive elements, we might be left with a single dimmed lamp or an uninspired sample of products scattered around the ad.

The LEDtronic, Inc. ad illustrates that showing a product in use through vivid photos and examples of product outcome can contribute to advertising success.

Ways to create effective advertising:

- Present one main idea in an ad
- Support the basic proposition with all the elements of the ad
- **Show the product in use**
- Appeal to the readers' needs and self-interest
- Sell the merits of the product/service
- Emphasize benefits, not facts
- Design the ad for easy reading
- Use humor with care

Frequently Asked Questions: With so much online activity, is the mail survey still effective?

The answer to this question is a resounding “yes.” The mail survey, depending on your objectives, can be an excellent methodology; however, the appeal of low budget online surveys is often too much for some to refuse. The reasons why a mail survey is effective continue to mount, so there are a number of factors to consider before deciding on a methodology.

Results don't represent people you cannot survey

When a survey's objective is to represent a population as a whole, sample representation is one of the key indicators of the quality of results.

Surveys can only tell you about the group of people that has been sampled. For reader surveys you're likely to have street addresses for close to 100% of your subscribers, enabling each and every active subscriber to have the opportunity to be chosen for the survey sample.

On the other hand, if a publication doesn't capture email addresses as a requirement to receive the publication, it might only have accurate email addresses for a fraction of its readers. An emailed survey sampled from this group would only represent the characteristics and opinions of this specific segment of readers.

Higher response leads to more stable data

Another indicator of data quality is response rate. The higher your response rate, the better job the data will do at describing your population

(circulation) as a whole. As response rate dwindles, the chances that the readers who responded to your survey are different from the readers that didn't respond increases and dilutes the strength of your results.

In general, mailed surveys continue to yield respectable response rates. Also, mailed surveys can benefit from a wide variety of techniques designed to boost compliance when working with a rather non-responsive sample.

Motivating circumstances

A survey incentive works best when it invokes a feeling of reciprocity—you gave me this token gift and I feel obligated to return the favor by completing the survey. Furthermore, when the incentive is given to each respondent as part of the appeal, as is done with mailed surveys, it becomes more effective at boosting response rate and the projectability of the results.

The ease and immediacy of incentive delivery with mailed surveys provides an advantage. A dollar bill has been tested time and again and remains tops for return on incentive investment. This effective incentive is flat, so it easily slips into the mailed survey kit; is lightweight, so it doesn't impact postage costs; has universal value; and has proven to be successful in eliciting the desired effect—a completed survey.

Deliverability

Mailed surveys are delivered where the publication is

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