

Thursday, 9 November 2017

## It's Official: Over 15.5 million Australians read newspapers in some form

Roy Morgan Research today releases the latest readership report for Australian newspapers for the 12 months to September 2017.

15,568,000 Australians 14+ (77.8 per cent) now read or access newspapers in an average 7 day period either in print, or online via website or app – 'cross-platform'. This is down 1.7 per cent from a year ago.

Cross-platform audiences have increased for three out of the top five leading mastheads in Australia and analysing the print and digital modes of readership shows that over the past 12 months five of Australia's leading mastheads have increased their digital audience and two have increased their print readership.

[For full details of all mastheads surveyed click here.](#)

Leading the way in this latest report is the Sydney Morning Herald – again the most widely read Australian newspaper with a cross-platform audience of 4,040,000, down 3.5 per cent from a year ago.

Behind the SMH are News Corp dailies the Daily Telegraph with a cross-platform reach of 3,330,000 up 6.5 per cent in a year; and the Herald Sun with a cross-platform reach of 3,015,000 up 1.0 per cent in a year. Also growing is The Australian with a cross-platform audience of 2,352,000 up 1.4 per cent in a year.

### Top 5 Metropolitan Mastheads by Total Cross-Platform Audience (Print & Online)

Publication	Print		Digital (web or app)		Total Cross-Platform Audience* (print, web or app)		
	Sep 2016 '000s	Sep 2017 '000s	Sep 2016 '000s	Sep 2017 '000s	Sep 2016 '000s	Sep 2017 '000s	% Change
SMH	1,152	1,104	3,609	3,527	4,187	4,040	-3.5%
Daily Telegraph	1,519	1,380	2,044	2,332	3,127	3,330	6.5%
Herald Sun	1,563	1,572	1,839	1,927	2,985	3,015	1.0%
The Age	953	949	2,375	2,405	2,861	2,842	-0.7%
The Australian	934	913	1,628	1,659	2,319	2,352	1.4%

[Total Cross-Platform Audience results available to view here.](#)

\*Total cross-platform audience comprises print which is net readership in an average 7 days and digital which is net website visitation and app usage in an average 7 days.

### Print Readership

Overall 7.7 million Australians read print newspapers, including nearly 5.5 million who read weekday issues, 4.6 million who read Saturday editions and 4.2 million Sunday titles. Although these numbers have declined over the past year, the sheer size of the audience demonstrates that Australia's print newspaper media has an important role to play in the media landscape now and into the future.

## *Weekend Newspaper Readership – Sunday Herald Sun the exception*

Australia's leading weekend newspaper is Sydney's Sunday Telegraph with a print readership of 893,000 – although this has fallen by 11.4 per cent over the past year ahead of southern stablemate Melbourne's Sunday Herald Sun with readership of 874,000 (up 0.1 per cent).

Other weekend newspapers to perform well include The Age which increased print readership to 646,000 (up 0.2 per cent), The Australian which increased readership to 642,000 (up 0.6 per cent), the Australian Financial Review which increased readership to 134,000 (up 6.3 per cent) and relative newcomer The Saturday Paper which increased readership 5.2 per cent to 121,000.

### **Top 5 Weekend Newspapers – Print Readership**

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Sep 2016</b>	<b>Sep 2017</b>	<b>% Change</b>
	<b>'000s</b>	<b>'000s</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sunday Telegraph</b>	1,008	893	<b>-11.4%</b>
<b>Sunday Herald Sun</b>	873	874	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Saturday Herald Sun</b>	825	789	<b>-4.4%</b>
<b>The Sunday Mail (QLD)</b>	772	654	<b>-15.3%</b>
<b>Saturday SMH</b>	704	648	<b>-8.0%</b>

### **Full Newspaper Readership Results available to view here.**

Other leading titles to lose ground include the Saturday Herald Sun down 4.4 per cent to a readership of 789,000, the Sunday Mail in Queensland which declined a sizeable 15.3 per cent to a readership of 654,000 and the Saturday edition of the Sydney Morning Herald which was down 8.0 per cent to a readership of 648,000.

## *Newspaper Inserted Magazines (NIMs)*

Despite a small drop market leader Good Weekend retained top spot with print readership of 1,259,000 (down 1.3 per cent) ahead of News Corp Sunday newcomer Stellar (1,024,000), Sunday Life on 747,000 (down 0.9 per cent) and the Sunday Telegraph TV Guide on 609,000 (down 2.6 per cent).

The Weekend Australian Magazine increased its readership by 1.7 per cent to 712,000 more than matching the encouraging performance of its national broadsheet Monday-Friday 'brother'.

Strong performers outside the top 5 included the Financial Review Magazine which increased its readership 7.6 per cent to 395,000, Wish which soared 42.4 per cent to 131,000 and Boss magazine which was up 11.3 per cent to 118,000.

### **Top 5 Newspaper Inserted Magazines – Print Readership**

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Sep 2016</b>	<b>Sep 2017</b>	<b>% Change</b>
	<b>'000s</b>	<b>'000s</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Good Weekend</b>	1,275	1,259	<b>-1.3%</b>
<b>Stellar*</b>	-	1,024	<b>-</b>
<b>Sunday Life</b>	754	747	<b>-0.9%</b>
<b>Weekend Australian Magazine</b>	700	712	<b>1.7%</b>
<b>Sunday Telegraph TV Guide</b>	625	609	<b>-2.6%</b>

### **Full Newspaper Inserted Magazine Readership Results available to view here.**

\*Stellar magazine launched in August 2016 as a magazine insert in News Corp publications The Sunday Telegraph (NSW), Sunday Herald Sun (VIC) and The Sunday Mail (QLD). Stellar replaced the Sunday Style magazine which had a readership of 944,000 in the year to September 2016.

## Cairns Post defies Regional Newspaper Readership trend

The Newcastle Herald remains the most widely read regional masthead with a readership of 78,000 down 12.4 per cent over the past year while the Cairns Post was the only leading Australian regional masthead to increase print readership over the past year – up 8.5% to a readership of 51,000 now level with The Mercury in Hobart.

### Top 6 Regional Newspapers – Print Readership (Monday – Friday)

Publication	Sep 2016	Sep 2017	% Change
	'000s	'000s	%
Newcastle Herald	89	78	-12.4%
Gold Coast Bulletin	69	57	-17.4%
Cairns Post	47	51	8.5%
The Mercury	55	51	-7.3%
Geelong Advertiser	58	49	-15.5%
Canberra Times	50	48	-4.0%

### Full Newspaper Readership Results available to view here.

The total cross-platform audiences of the Newcastle Herald and The Mercury in Hobart also declined but a notable exception to these trends was the Canberra Times which despite a small drop in print readership over the year managed to increase its total cross-platform audience to 512,000 (up 3.0 per cent).

### Total Cross-Platform Readership for available titles

Publication	Print		Digital (web or app)		Total Cross-Platform Audience (print, web or app)		
	Sep 2016	Sep 2017	Sep 2016	Sep 2017	Sep 2016	Sep 2017	% Change
	'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s	'000s	%
Canberra Times	107	101	428	438	497	512	3.0%
Newcastle Herald	169	165	176	130	321	270	-15.9%
The Mercury	122	96	147	111	240	206	-14.2%

*\*Total cross-platform audience comprises print which is net readership in an average 7 days and digital which is net website visitation and app usage in an average 7 days.*

**Michele Levine, CEO Roy Morgan Research, says Australia's leading mastheads are generally growing their cross-platform audiences despite the challenging environment:**

*"The market for Australia's leading newspaper mastheads isn't getting any easier as different forms of media converge in the digital realm. However, Australia's leading newspaper brands have in recent years successfully leveraged their reputation for trust and reliability to build their digital audiences. Today more Australians now consume their news from these mastheads via digital means than via print.*

*“Analysing the entire market shows over 15.5 million Australians 14+ (77.8 per cent) now access newspapers in an average 7 day period either in print, or online via website or app – ‘cross-platform’ – a huge market for advertisers to target.*

*“In the year to September 2017 Australia’s leading masthead measured by cross-platform audience was again the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) with over 4 million readers via print and digital, slightly down on a year ago.*

*“Despite the softening in SMH readership the Sydney masthead remains well ahead of Sydney rival The Daily Telegraph and Melbourne daily the Herald Sun. Both News Corp publications increased their total cross-platform audiences over the past 12 months above 3 million and national broadsheet The Australian also grew its total audience.*

*“The competitive pressures in the industry have recently been illustrated by the decision of Fairfax Media to demerge the digital property group Domain. Post demerger Fairfax will still control a majority of the new real estate group (60%) which reportedly has an estimated value of up to \$2 billion.*

*“The demerger of Domain focuses the fortunes of Fairfax Media more tightly on its leading mastheads including the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and the Australian Financial Review – each of which have a substantial total cross-platform audience; Sydney Morning Herald (4,040,000), The Age (2,842,000) and The Australian Financial Review (1,293,000).”*

**To learn more about Roy Morgan’s Readership research, call (+61) (3) 9224 5309 or email [askroymorgan@roymorgan.com](mailto:askroymorgan@roymorgan.com).**

**Please click on this link to the [Roy Morgan Online Store](#).**

### **About Roy Morgan Research**

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in New Zealand, Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

### **Margin of Error**

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2