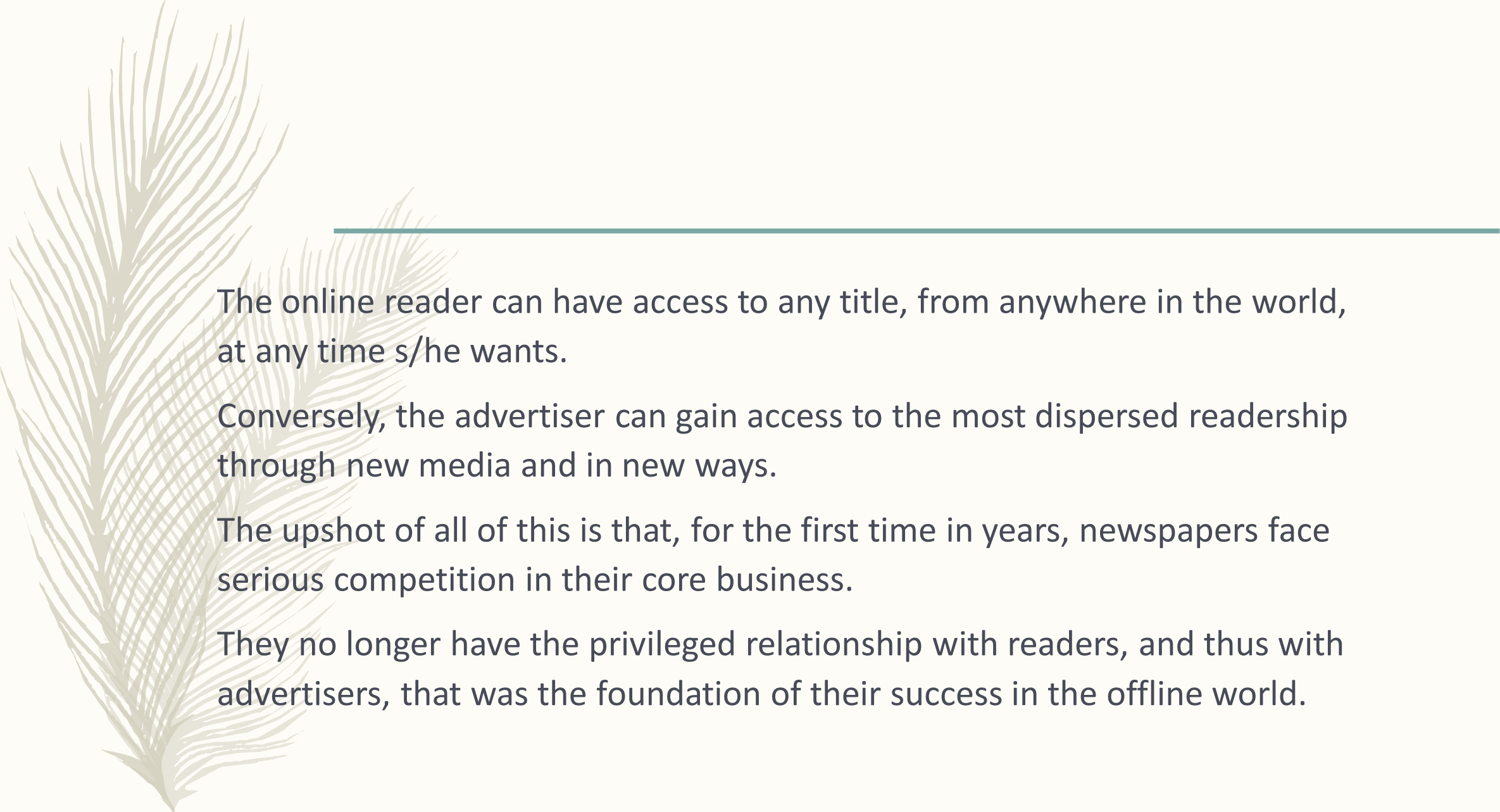




Newspapers & Their Challenges

مادة اعلامية س 1 ف1

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The online reader can have access to any title, from anywhere in the world, at any time s/he wants.

Conversely, the advertiser can gain access to the most dispersed readership through new media and in new ways.

The upshot of all of this is that, for the first time in years, newspapers face serious competition in their core business.

They no longer have the privileged relationship with readers, and thus with advertisers, that was the foundation of their success in the offline world.



The new competition affects both their editorial content, and advertising.

In the editorial field, the newspaper now faces direct competition from four types of rival.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

1) The first of these is competition from other newspapers.

The effective abolition of distance means that no newspaper can now rely on being insulated by geographical location.

Titles that had previously enjoyed undisputed domination of their tiny local market now face competition from other newspapers.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

Obviously, some of these are also small provincial, operations, that pose little threat, but others are the strongest brands in the newspaper business, like the New York Times and Washington Post.

While newspapers like this might not be much of a threat to local news, they are certainly a strong challenge when it comes to the coverage of major national and international stories, since they can afford to dedicate many more resources, both online and offline, to such issues.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

2) The second challenge comes from media that were previously delivered by different technologies at different times and in different places, but which now occupy the same place as online newspapers.

Some of these, like CNN, pose a threat similar to that of the big metropolitan newspapers, since they have very strong brands that are attractive to news consumers.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

Others, however, like radio and television stations, threaten to undermine the pre-eminence, of the, newspaper as source of local news and information in the online world.

They can reasonably claim to have as much of a focus on the community as does the newspaper, and can offer the same kind of online news and feature material, as well as possible supplementary material, like sounds and images, derived from their different offline operations.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

3) The third type of competition is from the proliferation of news sources on the internet.

In order to have news and related material, it is not necessary to have an offline news presence.

There are examples, particularly from specialist areas like technology, of enduring online news operations that are wholly web-based.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

4) The final type of competition comes from news sources themselves.

The main generators of much of the standard news diet like government bodies, large businesses, pressure groups and so on - no longer need the newspaper as an intermediary to reach the public.



The Challenges of the Editorial Content:

They can now publish their own material, selected, edited and presented in ways that they see fit, and offer it directly to the public in competition with the newspaper journalists' reports of their doings.

They are freed from what they perceive as the restrictions imposed by conventional news values, which they often believe stress conflict, edit for brevity and, with last marginal and oppositional groups, impose dominant meaning frames on activities.



The Challenges of the Advertising Content:

The advertising content of newspapers also faces a severe challenge, from the same types of competitor, In the web-based version of the display advertisement, the banner ad, the challenge comes from those large sites, whether portals or strongly branded news outlets, that are able to demonstrate, that they can, in the industry Jargon, “aggregate the eyeballs” on a large scale.



The Challenges of the Advertising Content:

Much more importantly for the finances of the newspaper, classified advertisements can readily be migrated to the web, which even offers a better environment for them than does print.

Quite apart from the new ability of online radio and television outlets to offer a home for classified advertising, there are a number of websites devoted exclusively, to the publication of classified advertisements, they are particularly strong in the core areas of jobs (e.g. Monsterboard.com), cars (e.g. CarPoint.com), and real estate (e.g. Realtor.com).



Conclusion

Overall, then, the newspaper faces a serious challenge in the online world.

It faces a “vicious online circle” that contrasts, in all respects with its virtuous offline cousin, Online, the newspaper faces serious competitors for the first time, which can offer some or all of its main products and services more cheaply or more efficiently.

Some of these are other newspapers, which for the first time can compete directly online. Some are other media, which now find themselves in the same social and technical space as newspapers.

Conclusion

Still, others are new entrants to the market for news. The same new competitors are also hungry for the advertising that the revenue newspaper has traditionally enjoyed.

The newspaper faces, the classic threat of 'disinter-mediation': the main suppliers of the components of its business model find that they can reach their intended clients directly, without the benefit of an intermediary.