



WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

...world's oldest press association, established 1853

Mr. Scott Grosz
Wisconsin Legislative Council
Principal Attorney
PO Box 2536
Madison, Wi 53701-2536

August 9, 2016

Dear Mr. Grosz:

Per the Legislative Council Committee request, I am providing readership numbers and other information that I believe may be helpful to the Committee as it reviews the publication of public notices in newspapers.

2015 Newspaper Readership Numbers

The Wisconsin Newspaper Association maintains annual readership numbers for newspapers that are members of the Association. The readership numbers are based on the circulation of the hard copy edition of the newspaper.

Readership numbers are collected annually by the WNA during the fourth quarter of the year. The totals for 2015 reflect a statewide annual readership at **2,875,163**. These numbers are publicly available and are published each year in the WNA Newspaper Directory.

The population for the State of Wisconsin as reported by the Wisconsin Department of Administration dated January 1, 2015, was **5,753,324**.

The readership numbers, based upon the reported population for the State of Wisconsin for 2015 reflects that **50%** of Wisconsinites are being reached by Wisconsin newspapers.

**These numbers DO NOT reflect the readership numbers of Wisconsinites who regularly visit newspaper websites for news and information; nor do they reflect the number of subscribers who purchase the newspaper via electronic editions.*

**The newspaper industries 50% penetration rate is one that no other media can claim. Newspapers have always had, and continue to have the highest consumer penetration in an extremely segmented media market that includes radio, TV and online news outlets.*

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2015 Financial Totals for Publication of Public Notices

The Wisconsin Newspaper Association issued a request to its members asking for the 2015 annual revenue derived from the publication of public notices. The newspapers were asked to provide a break-out of revenue based on notices that were placed and paid for by governmental entities; and those notices that were placed and paid for by the private sector.

The WNA membership is comprised of **31 dailies** and **188 weekly** newspapers. The request for revenue totals resulted in a **70% response** rate. The responses include numbers from **23 of the 31 dailies**.

The revenue totals reflect an almost 50 – 50 split between monies paid by government vs. private sector to newspapers for the publication of public notices.

The revenue totals for 2015 broken out by government vs. private sector placement are as follows:

Private Sector Placement: **\$1,291,585.29**

Government Placement: **\$1,378,408.58**

**It is important to note that the government placement total reflects the expense for public notices where the cost for the notice was recouped by government.*

**The revenue numbers for the top ten newspapers in the State of Wisconsin are reflected in the above totals:*

1. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
2. Wisconsin State Journal
3. Green Bay Press-Gazette
4. The Post-Crescent
5. The Journal Times
6. La Crosse Tribune
7. Leader-Telegram
8. Kenosha News
9. The Janesville Gazette
10. Wausau Daily Herald

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Wisconsin Newspapers Have Highest Readership in Nation

Gannett Wisconsin Media which includes **13 of the 31** daily and **15 of the 188** weekly newspapers published in Wisconsin, including Press-Gazette Media and Post-Crescent Media, have the highest readership in the nation - again.

For the second straight year, Scarborough Research, a top national media and consumer research firm, reported that Gannett Wisconsin print and digital products in Appleton/Fox Cities (Post-Crescent Media), Fond du Lac (Action Reporter Media), Green Bay (Press-Gazette Media), Manitowoc (HTR Media) and Oshkosh (Oshkosh Northwestern Media) together reached 60.8 percent of the adult audience in the market for a second straight year.

The data is based on total integrated audience of the print and digital editions in 156 Designated Market Areas (DMAs). The nation-leading Gannett Wisconsin group of media organizations — all in the Green Bay DMA — ranked first in the nation in research.

Gannett Wisconsin Media's Appleton, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Manitowoc and Oshkosh properties ranked third in the nation in weekday-and-Sunday print reach (55.2 percent of the adult audience). It ranked fourth in Sunday print reach (40.7 percent) and fifth in daily print reach (28.5 percent). Its online reach of 19.2 percent was fifth nationwide. The Post-Standard in Syracuse, N.Y., had the highest online readership, reaching 26.6 percent of the adult audience.

Gannett Wisconsin Media offers daily print newspapers, as well as mobile, tablet and desktop digital-platform news content in 10 markets. In addition to those in the Green Bay DMA, Gannett operates news organizations in Marshfield, Sheboygan, Stevens Point, Wausau and Wisconsin Rapids. Those five markets are not included in the Green Bay DMA study.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel ranked ninth in the 2014 study with a 49.9 percent overall weekly reach, down from its ranking of eighth in the nation last year.

Note: The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel was purchased by Gannett in 2015.