



Mobile Is Critical To the Future of Newspapers

Roger Fidler

Program Director for Digital Publishing
Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute
at the Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia

FidlerR@RJOnline.org



Why Is Mobile Critical?

- Smartphones are evolving at a rapid pace.
- More than half of mobile phones in U.S. are now smartphones.
- 4G and broadband Wi-Fi steadily migrating beyond urban areas.
- Growing popularity of Apple iPad and other media tablets.



Why Is Mobile Critical?

- Majority of Americans now consider mobile access to the Internet anywhere, anytime as essential in their lives.
- The next 10 years will be more transformative for human communications than in the past 30 years.



Tablets Are Game Changers

- First viable digital alternative to ink printed on paper.
- Reduced costs for production and distribution.
- Greater accessibility to local news and advertising.
- Low barrier to entry for new competitors.



Key Findings About Users

- Majority of tablet users are affluent, well-educated men between the ages of 35 and 64.
- Overall satisfaction with the Apple iPad is very high and appears to be growing over time.
- Satisfaction with other tablets not yet known.



Key Findings About Users

- Use of tablets is heavily dominated by media consumption, especially news.
- Most tablet users want and expect a relaxed, enjoyable reading experience within news apps.



Key Findings About Users

- Majority use their tablets mostly in the evening and early morning hours while relaxing at home.
- Most users spend more than an hour a day with their tablets.
- Majority of tablet users are willing to pay for subscriptions to newspapers within apps.



Key Findings About Users

- Long-form journalism is likely to thrive in newspapers with tablet apps.
- Videos are important, but well-written stories will continue to be the mainstay of newspapers.



Challenges For Publishers

- Legacy publishing systems designed exclusively for print.
- Limited resources.
- Small staffs wedded to traditional newspaper work-flow, production processes and ad sales methods.
- Lack of affordable training.



What Can Publishers Do?

- Put tablets and smartphones in the hands of your staffs.
- Install Wi-Fi in your buildings.
- Use tablets and smartphones for reporting and editing, meetings with citizens and advertisers.
- Encourage innovation and entrepreneurial thinking.



What Can Publishers Do?

- Create new products for smartphones and tablets that generate revenue.
- Involve your community.
- Challenge young people to develop new products.
- Learn from other publishers.

iPad

3:00 PM

63%

Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute



RJOnline.org

Roger Fidler

Program Director for Digital Publishing
Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute
at the Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia

FidlerR@RJOnline.org