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Founder's Message: Trade publications are here to stay

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Here's an item that I recently picked out of Forbes Magazine. We could assume that they are biased, but I honestly believe that there are several media outlets that have been around long enough and respected enough that they can be trusted, and Forbes is one of them. Here's what they reported: "During the 12-year life of Google, all magazine readership has actually increased 11%." What that proves is that a new medium doesn't necessarily displace an existing one.

Movies did not kill radio. TV did not kill movies. Snowboarding did not replace skiing, and surfing did not replace swimming. So why has the Internet played such havoc with daily newspapers and books?

The newspaper one is easy. Readers can receive national and international information almost when it happens. So when they pick up their daily newspaper, they have already seen the information on morning TV or on their iPods. Books can now also be read on your computer, Kindle, or iPad, and it appears as though the new generation is so comfortable doing this that book publishers will have a difficult time deciding how many of John Grisham's latest sure-fire bestseller to print. Already knowing that it has a million sure readers, do they print a million, or just one?

Magazines don't necessarily have the same problems. No one expects a monthly magazine to be timely, so as long as they remain interesting and picture pretty, they will survive and thrive. The weekly or monthly trade publication is more like a magazine. It doesn't claim to report daily events, and as long as it has information and interesting articles, and puts people's names in big headlines, they will survive. The lease of a few thousand, or even a lot of thousand s/f does not light up the Twitter airways, and neither does a commercial mortgage on an old apartment building or a new skyscraper. That info remains ultra important to our readers, and always will be.

So that explains why magazine sales have grown and our readership keeps expanding. By the way, I also love the Wall Street Journal, the number one selling newspaper in the United States. But have you ever noticed that they never print anything positive? I recommend that you save it for evening reading. Start your day on a positive note. I know of only one newspaper that never prints anything negative -- The New England Real Estate Journal.

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