

Children's Comics and Magazines

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Children's comics and magazines are doing fine and dandy

Many of us will remember comic book heroes Dennis the Menace, Minnie the Minx and Desperate Dan. And while you might think that when faced with competition from modern technology, comic books would have been left behind, latest research from Mintel shows that this childhood classic is still going strong today- albeit with a modern twist.

Indeed, things are looking good in the world of comics and children's magazines. Valued at £136 million this year, sales have seen a massive 72% growth since 2003. Meanwhile, sales of women's magazines increased by just 15% over the same period and teenage magazines declined by 61%.

"It seems that the humble comic is standing the test of time and even today they provide an ideal treat for children. The market for this traditional favourite has gone from strength to strength due to a host of new launches, price rises and the fact that publishers now bring out more issues per title each month," comments Mark Brecchin, Senior Leisure Analyst at Mintel.

What is more, the industry has responded quickly both in terms of up and coming TV characters and changing children's preferences. New titles coming to the market, such as Dr Who Adventures and In the Night Garden, have proved popular. But old favourites such as the Beano and Dandy also have strong circulation figures today. These traditional characters clearly still strike a chord with a new generation of youngsters.

Within the market, it is sales of pre-teen (over 7's) comics that are doing particularly well, with the sector having increased by as much as 82% in the four years from 2003 to 2007. The popularity of these comics is an impressive feat for traditional media amongst 21st century kids, who are increasingly technology-savvy.

"Sales of comics have flourished despite the wide variety of media and other forms of digital entertainment now aimed at pre-teens. Children today enjoy reading and sharing comics, and there is no real indication of replacement by other media," says Mark Brecchin.

Sales of comics are set to increase a further 21% to reach £165 million by 2013.

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