

Sunday's New Sun Gets A Warm Reception From Readers

Contributed by Ipsos Mori
 Wednesday, 07 March 2012
 Last Updated Wednesday, 07 March 2012

There were 231 days between the closure of the News of the World (NOTW) and the launch of the Sunday edition of The Sun. With reports of sales figures for the first edition hitting 3.22m copies, it appears that Rupert Murdoch has timed the move well.

Nevertheless, it is too early to say what the settle-down sales figure will be or indeed how readership numbers will fare against the 7.35m NOTW reported in its last set of NRS data (Jul10-Jun11).

But was the launch of the Sunday edition of a title that's been around for 43 years a good idea or not? Rupert Murdoch clearly thought so, but what about the nation as a whole?

Core readers seem satisfied

An Ipsos MORI poll found that nearly a quarter (22%) of the British population felt that the launch of the Sunday edition of The Sun was a good idea.

It may not be surprising to note that those who were warm to the idea were already readers of News International red-tops. Around three in five (58%) of The Sun readers of Monday to Saturday copies were in favour, as were two-thirds (66%) of former regular readers of NOTW; for the latter, the figure fell from 74% prior to the launch to 63% after the launch, which may suggest that expectations of some former NOTW readers were not met. By comparison, overall seven in ten (69%) readers of the new Sunday edition of The Sun also thought the launch was a good idea.

So is it all good news?

A third of the population (32%) thought it was not a good idea. This figure is consistent both pre and post launch. A relatively small proportion among The Sun (13%) or former NOTW readers (12%) were not enamoured with the move. Furthermore, only one in ten (9%) of those who actually read the new Sunday issue were also not in favour of the launch. With early reports of The Sun's second week Sunday sales reducing by around 500,000 copies (-17%) even with the maintained discounted 50p cover price, there were perhaps a number of curious newsagent visitors or simply souvenir hunters on the 26th February.

Will The Sun keep shining?

Another interesting figure is the 46% of adults who did not have an opinion on the matter at all. In times of declining newspaper circulation and readership numbers, the print advertising industry would certainly welcome a boost. The launch of this Sunday edition has brought a ray of sunshine for now, however, the forecast suggests there may still be clouds ahead.

Director at Ipsos MediaCT, John Carroll, said:

"I think the results of this poll tell us that, on the whole, Sun readers want a Sunday edition. The new paper is clearly not a News of the World clone, which has possibly put off a relatively small number of those readers, but not the majority. There is however a wider issue at stake with the current health of the press advertising industry which these results also touch on. While this launch is a tonic for the press and News International, I feel that the real industry focus for the future lies more with distributing and monetising digital content to prop up the underlying ad revenue decline."

Downloads

Download the survey Topline (PDF)

Technical note

Ipsos MORI conducted a representative sample of 1,992 face to face, in-home interviews with adults aged 15+ between 24th February and 1st March 2012 in 143 sampling points across Great Britain. Data have been weighted to the known profile of the population.

Two versions of the question were asked on either side of the launch date for the new title: The Sun newspaper is launching/launched a new Sunday edition this/last weekend. Do you think the launch of this Sunday paper is/was a good idea or a bad idea? Very Good / Fairly Good / Not very good / Not at all good / No opinion.

Regular readers of a publication are defined as those who read at least 3 out of every 4 issues.

About Ipsos Mori

For more information please visit <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/>

6 March 2012

