

Publishers share greatest threats, fears for 2018 media industry

'World News Publishers Outlook 2017', the new report from World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (Wan-Ifra), examines what are the world's top media executives' priorities in profitable news media businesses around the world.



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They are not supporting social media and see the change of organisational culture as critical to success.

The report based on the results of the most recent annual survey of news media decision-makers worldwide by Dr François Nel, who also wrote the report, and Dr Coral Milburn-Curtis of the Innovation Research Group, a partnership between researchers at the University of Central Lancashire and the University of Oxford.

"The study sheds light on what executives at the world's most profitable media companies expect to be doing more of in contrast to less profitable companies," says Wan-Ifra CEO Vincent Peyrègne. "Whatever else they are investing in; they are not prioritising ad-supported media – including social media. As their future seems to hinge on reader revenue, at least for the foreseeable future, mobile and other revenue streams like e-commerce are attractive."

Resistance to change major obstacle

One of the key findings of the report emerged, when respondents of the survey were asked, "What is the single most important risk to your news organisation's future success?" The largest number of respondents/executives answered: their organisation's reluctance to innovate.

"What questions should we be asking ourselves if the single biggest risk to our future success is not from outside forces but lurking inside our organisations," said Peyrègne.

"Many heritage news brands face this dilemma when it comes to completely rethinking their core business. In that process, collaboration is essential for unlocking their innovation potential. I hope this report will be a wakeup call and help to foster more collaboration among industry players, as well as across industries."

Four areas

The survey's 22 questions looked at four areas:

1. Profile of respondents, including the nature and activities of their firm.
2. Current revenue streams, financial performance during the past book year, and the anticipation of future revenue sources.
3. Specific priorities for change and investment in the next year and in the medium term (3-5 years).
4. How leaders experience change and risk.

Other key findings

- When asked what is the single most important change that has to be implemented in their news organisations over the next year, the top response (21%) was 'Organisational Culture'.
- 70% say that during the next 12 months, up to 30% of their income should come from non-traditional media activities (ie other than content sales and advertising) if they are to reach their financial goals. Those figures flip exactly when asked for their medium-term outlook.
- Seven out of 10 respondents expect that during the next five years more than 30% of their firm's income will need to come from diverse revenue streams if they are to be successful.
- The perspective of the report is global: the survey was available in 11 languages and received 235 responses from 6 countries across six continents: Africa, Asia, Australia/Oceania, Europe, North America and South America.

Wan-Ifra members can download the report free; there is a charge for non-members. For more information, click [here](#).

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