

A media market update – an in-depth look at what's been happening in: Print: revenue forecast for 2016 -2%

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ES&I set to make big changes

ES&I Media have announced that The i is being sold to Johnston Press, subject to shareholder approval, and The Independent will become digital only, with the last printing dates set to be the 26th March for The Indy and the 20th for IOS. This will make The Independent the first national newspaper to make such a move, allowing them to capitalise on the strength of their existing position as the fastest growing UK quality newspaper website with 70 million global unique users.

Evgeny Lebedev, The Independent's owner has said: "The newspaper industry is changing, and that change is being driven by readers. "The Independent has always been a pioneering newspaper with a track record of innovation" so "this decision preserves the Independent brand and allows us to continue to invest in the high quality editorial content

that is attracting more and more readers to our online platforms.”

In order to support this digital push ES&I will also be launch a new mobile App and new editorial bureaus in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Notably, the hugely successful the i100.co.uk site will become indy100.com in the hopes of further boosting the Indy’s online presence. Jon O’Donnell, the Group Commercial Director has said “Over the last 12 months a significant proportion of our revenue has been generated through digital. We are committed to working towards independent.co.uk being the first UK news business to be traded 100% programmatically. The Independent brand will no longer be a traditional UK newspaper business, but a pure-play global digital publisher. As such we are adapting our commercial business models to be more innovative and agile.”

MediaCom POV

It’s a shame to see national newspaper cease print; however it’s great that the publisher is really focussing on what they do best with the Indy, and in this instance that’s digital. Readers are still consuming its journalism, just in a different space, and ES&I’s decision responds to that.

Commercial Opportunity

The refinement of Independent online will be great news for digital advertisers as, hopefully, this will further strengthen and grow the number of UUs, particularly with the extension of the Indy to indy100.com.