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***WSJ* circulation figures offer glimmer of hope for publications**

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The Wall Street Journal has announced a growth in its daily circulation with figures presented to the **Audit Bureau of Circulations** showing a 0.6% increase compared to the same six month period last year.

The modest rise means the paper is now the top circulating U.S daily after previous number one, *USA Today*, recorded its worst year ever with a 17 percent drop in circulation.

[Reuters reports](#) that the success of *The Wall Street Journal* is a result of 'ongoing investment that **Dow Jones** has made in the franchise during the past few years. This growth combined with increased subscription rates has led to an increase in total circulation revenue of 10.1% to the *Journal* year-over-year.'

The *WSJ* has invested heavily in its print and digital properties and this has been suggested as the reason behind its growth. The paper has done much to offer its readers and advertisers better value, with greater coverage of political and international news, additional editions, a *WSJ* magazine, the launch of the 'News Hub' (a twice daily news broadcast across the *WSJ* digital network), as well as developing applications for Blackberries and iPhones. CEO of the Dow Jones & Company's Consumer Media Group, **Todd Larsen**, said: "Subscribers continue to gravitate to the *Journal* franchise because of the commitment to quality editorial and the continued expansion of our products and new delivery platforms to reach readers on their terms."

The appeal for advertisers is more obvious, with *WSJ* performing well among key demographics. 'According to the [2009 Mendelsohn Affluent Survey](#) *WSJ* is the top title in reaching adults with a personal income of \$150,000+ and it remains number one in reaching top managers in large corporations. With an average household income of \$290,000 and an average net worth of \$1.8 million, *Journal* readers are among the most affluent audience segments represented in this survey.'

The paper also credited some of its circulation success to a recent change in policy of **Marriot** hotels. The hotel chain stopped automatically delivering copies of *USA Today* to rooms in April, instead offering customers a preference: *USA Today*, *WSJ*, the local paper or no paper at all. The change saw a 20% jump in Marriot hotel sales of the *WSJ*.

"We hope the Marriott program will encourage more hotels to give their customers a choice when it comes to their newspaper preference," **Paul Bascobert**, chief marketing officer, said in a statement.

The *WSJ* boost in numbers is a welcome surprise given many publications are currently suffering from sharp drops in circulation. As people tighten their belts post-crisis, many find the daily newspaper something they can economise on. That the *WSJ* has managed to avoid this, even growing slightly, gives a glimmer of hope to other newspapers and perhaps using its tactics could help other publications to follow suit.