

Audience growth continues to hold from 2017

The total audience growth for Australia's news media sector has held its ground again in February, with 16.5 million or 90 per cent of the population (aged 14+), reading news media across all platforms, according to the latest emma (Enhanced Media Metrics Australia) data for February 2018.

In 2017, news media grew by 2 per cent for the second consecutive year, as consumers increasingly recognise its trustworthy and credible content, and that audience continues to be stable.

Print audiences for news media also remained stable, at 12.5 million, or 68 per cent of the population in February, as consumers continue to value newspapers.

Almost three quarters of the population (74 per cent), or 13.6 million people, consumed news media on digital devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops.

National news media was read by 2.5 million, or 14 per cent, of the population in February. Metro newspapers were read by 10.3 million people, or 56 per cent of consumers, over the same period.

Regional and community news media brands are read by more than one third of the population (35 per cent), or 6.4 million people.

News media readers are also brand advocates for a host of products and services. For example, 3.8 million readers (23 per cent aged 14-plus) encourage other

people to buy travel products and services based on their own experience. For the automotive sector, 3.2 million news media readers (19 per cent) encourage others to buy, while in financial products and services the figure is 1.8 million (11 per cent).

“Consumer trust in news media does carry over to the advertising within. The overwhelming degradation of trust being confronted by Facebook over the Cambridge Analytica scandal, which now has the attention of the Australian Privacy Commissioner, is certain to fuel consumer and advertiser mistrust of social media platforms,” NewsMediaWorks CEO Peter Miller said.

“The lack of trust in social media was highlighted in an Australian study which found that social media was the only channel where more consumers mistrusted content than those few that trusted it. Social media also ranked last for consumer trust in ads. This is where news media stands tall as the most trusted media for consumers for both content and ads of any media channel. Coupled with news media’s audience gains, trust will play an even more significant role now in how Australians chose to consume news and information. Advertisers, seeking brand-safe environments, are following suit.”

The *Sydney Morning Herald* is Australia’s highest-reaching title across all platforms with 5.1 million readers. *The Daily Telegraph* followed, reaching 3.84 million readers and the *Herald Sun* on 3.78 million (see table below).

emma cross platform readership (000s, last four weeks)	emma February 18
Sydney Morning Herald / smh.com.au	5095
Daily Telegraph / thetelegraph.com.au	3842
Herald Sun / heraldsun.com.au	3780
The Australian / theaustralian.com.au	3180
The Age / theage.com.au	2967
Courier-Mail / couriermail.com.au	2532
West Australian / thewest.com.au	1795
Financial Review / afr.com.au	1721
Sunday Times / perthnow.com.au	1435
Adelaide Advertiser / AdelaideNow.com.au	1387
Canberra Times / canberratimes.com.au	731
Newcastle Herald / theherald.com.au	568
Gold Coast Bulletin / goldcoast.com.au	492
Sunshine Coast Daily / sunshinecoastdaily.com.au	404
Mercury (Tas) / themercury.com.au	295

Sources:

1. emma™, 12 months to February 2018. Readership based on last four weeks. Trends compared with 12 months to February 2017. Survey conducted by Ipsos Connect, people 14+, Nielsen Digital Ratings (Monthly), February 2018. Following the introduction of Nielsen Digital Ratings Monthly (DRM) data into emma in February 2016, year on year comparisons of digital audiences are valid from February 2017 onwards. Note: emma™ Population figures adjusted down 2.5% in Q1 2018 vs Q4 2017. emma is based on All people aged 14 years and over who are fluent English speakers. This is sourced from ABS Census data (2011) and ABS Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data. 2016 ABS Census releases have now allowed population to be updated to actuals, replacing the ABS estimates used to Q4 2017. Adjusted populations are most evident for populations in WA (-5.7%) and NT (-7.9%). Readership estimates are impacted accordingly.

2. Galaxy Research online questionnaire, June 2017 was conducted among a

nationally representative sample of 2,863 Australians aged 18 years and older. Results referred to are Net ADTRUST and Net CONTENT TRUST which, on a scale from 1 to 7, is Percentage agreeing (5,6,7) less Percentage disagreeing (1,2,3).