



Frank Baier

## Expertise through trade media

**Decision-makers in business and administration primarily use trade journals. They have a wide circulation as valuable sources of information in the printing industry.**

Visitors from major trade fairs can also be found at the trade press stand – and are lost in thought when they read some publications intensively. It's no longer surprising: trade media offerings are at their best when regularly used as B2B information sources. This is the result of a special evaluation of the reader analysis [Entscheidungsträger in Wirtschaft und Verwaltung e.V.](#), which was commissioned by the [German trade press](#) and used to survey the LAE 2020. Which sources of information do decision-makers in business and administration use regularly as well as regularly or occasionally, was investigated.

According to this, trade magazines (print edition or e-paper) are clearly in 1st place in terms of usage. Events and digital offerings from specialist media occupy almost equal 2nd and 3rd places, followed by sales force visits and trade fairs in Switzerland and abroad in 4th and 5th place. The trade media industry thus proves its important role as a partner of the economy, marketplace and source of information with specialist journalistic expertise.

### **Trade magazines and the printing industry**

Within the printing industry, specialist media are widely distributed. As a result of structural change over the past 30 years, company and personnel capacities have been lost – but most

trade magazine suppliers with a predominantly distinctive concept have remained in the market. Especially in Germany, several trade media exclusively focused on the graphic arts industry still dominate the market.

Such a variety is astonishing. Most of them cover the value-added chain with a focus on printing processes – for example [„Deutscher Drucker“](#), [„Druckmarkt“](#), [„Druck & Medien“](#), [„Druckspiegel“](#), [„Print & Produktion“](#), [„World of Print“](#) or the [„Graphische Revue“](#) published in Austria.

Others focus on individual areas, technologies or markets – [„Bindereport“](#), [„Paperazzo“](#) or [SIP-online.de](#). These include tabloid magazines, market study and technology editions as well as reportage, personality or PR publications – the content profile is very broad. Additional print and online trade media are available for the label and packaging industry and also for the advertising materials industry.

### **Consequences of digitization**

In the LAE special evaluation, 57.4 percent of those surveyed stated that they regularly use one or more trade magazines. At least occasionally they even use 89.8 percent – and thus around nine out of ten decision-makers in business and administration. Trade journals underline their importance, particularly in times of digitization.

This picture is also confirmed by the LAE 2020 main survey, according to which industry-specific trade journals are the most important media group for professional activities, accounting for 73 percent of the total. Be it websites or social media, newsletters or apps –according to LAE research, the digital offerings of the specialist media houses are convincing. More than a quarter use them regularly. At least occasionally, the figure is 76.2 percent. In addition, the positive growth trend in digital offerings is currently experiencing a further boost from the Corona pandemic.

Up to now, digital services from specialist media houses in the print industry have often only been available to a limited extent. Informatively structured websites alone, as well as topic or advertising newsletters, will not always be enough in the future. 41.2 percent of decision-makers who regularly obtain information from trade magazines regularly use digital specialist media offerings, and 39.9 percent also regularly attend events. Ultimately, the LAE study reveals the following requirement: specialist content must be offered in various formats and through various media channels.

Your  
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