

Community Insights: News publishers call on Canada Post CEO to Support Local News

For many Canadian community news publishers, Canada Post is really the only game in town when it comes to distributing their newspapers to readers. This is especially true in more rural and remote communities. A year ago, Canada Post decided that community newspapers with commercial inserts ? like Canadian Tire or grocery store flyers ? were no longer exempt from Canada Post's Consumers' Choice program, which allows Canadians to opt out of receiving ?junk mail'.

Like advertisements on the pages of a newspaper, commercial inserts pay for the news content our journalists produce. This abrupt U-turn from Canada Post's long-standing policy was made without proper stakeholder consultation or economic/social impact analysis.

Clearly, community newspapers with commercial inserts are not ?junk mail.? The decision is having a demonstrable and devastating impact on community newspaper revenue. By way of example, recently, the East Central Alberta Review announced that it was shuttering after faithfully serving the community for 114 years.

Joyce Webster, who started off as a receptionist and typesetter and eventually became the publisher and owner, devoted 44 years of her life to the paper. In a recent column, she cited Canada Post as one of the contributing factors. She wrote, ?I could write a book on how Canada Post (who we depend on to deliver our time-sensitive product) treats their newspaper customers since they became our ?competitor?! Newspapers are all about bringing market information to the public and yet their policy of not permitting ?advertising? (our bread and butter) flyers into our total market coverage newspapers effectively removed \$24,000 annual revenue from the Review bottom line when they changed their policy in 2024. That's just one of many policies. Add poor delivery policy, newspaper bundles ending up in post office recycling bins, even in garbage dumpsters, and postal strikes.?

In addition to harming community newspaper publishers like Joyce, Canada Post is hurting local small businesses, like local grocery and hardware store franchisees, who keep their customers informed about sales and Canadian made products through commercial inserts. With the price of many goods, especially food, remaining elevated ? coupled with the Trump tariff threats ?Canadians are very conscious about both price and country of origin these days.

On behalf of the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association, BC & Yukon Community News Media Association, Hebdom Québec, Manitoba Community Newspapers Association, National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada, News Media Canada, Ontario Community Newspapers Association, and Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, we are calling on Canada Post CEO Doug Ettinger to reverse this decision that is harming community newspapers, our readers, and our advertisers and their customers.

Newspapers keep Canadians informed, connected, and engaged. Canada Post shouldn't be hampering their ability to earn scarce advertising revenue, which pays for vital local news content.

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