

24/7 Wall Street evaluates top 25 US news sites

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24/7 looked at newspaper websites in the context of what works across the Internet at news, entertainment, sports sites, and blogs on the assumption that newspapers have the opportunity to benchmark "best practices". The subjects were given a ranking from 'A' to 'F', according to: 1) strength of content; 2) ease of use and navigation; 3) use of new technology and online tools including comment sections, message boards, and multimedia; 4) layout; 5) presence of a strong set of advertisers; and 6) size of audience based on unique visitor data from May measurements by Compete.com.

As one expert told 24/7:

"The strength of a newspaper web site is its ability to present almost endless information, far more than it could ever afford to print. The best newspapers take advantage of this by explaining in their print editions where additional information on a particular subject can be found -- the full text of a speech or a court document, for instance."

The Wall Street Journal and USATODAY, while topping the circulation figures, have not been included in the assessments. They are national properties with corporate budgets not accessible to other newspapers.

Grades for the top 25:

1. The New York Times. **A**
2. The Los Angeles Times. **B-**
3. The Washington Post. **B-**
4. The New York Daily News. **B+**
5. New York Post. **C**
6. The Chicago Tribune. **B**
7. Houston Chronicle. **D+**
8. Arizona Republic. **B+**
9. The Denver Post. **B**
10. Newsday. **A-**
11. The Dallas Morning News. **D-**
12. The Minneapolis Star Tribune. **B**
13. Chicago Sun-Times. **B**
14. The San Francisco Chronicle. **B-**
15. The Boston Globe. **D**
16. The Cleveland Plain Dealer. **D+**
17. The Detroit Free Press. **B**
18. The Philadelphia Inquirer. **D-**
19. The Star Ledger. **F**
20. St. Petersburg Times. **A-**

Source: 24/7 Wall Street

Newspaper web sites to check for design:

Florida Times-Union
Knoxville News Sentinel
New York Times
St. Petersburg Times
Wall Street Journal
Washington Post

NNA's top two in 2009:

Sonoma Index-Tribune
Statesboro Herald