

Louisiana: Family Ownership Persists

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Most Southern state capitals now have chained-owned newspapers. But not in Louisiana. In the center of the Pelican State, residents still depend on an independent, family-owned newspaper.

In Baton Rouge, the Manship family's closely knit newspaper and television station pay close attention to state government and politics. *The Advocate*, the morning daily newspaper, and ABC-affiliate WBRZ-TV feature links to each other on a common Internet site (www.2theadvocate.com).

While *The Advocate* maintains a state capital bureau just a few blocks away from its main office, the *Times-Picayune* of New Orleans also has a capital bureau of several journalists who

report for a newspaper that reaches many more readers. The *Times-Picayune*, according to *MediaWeek's* 2003 Market Report, reaches 50 percent of households in each of the six New Orleans metropolitan area parishes.

Louisiana's Sunday newspaper circulation is equal to 17.1 percent of the state's population, down from a 1990 high of 21.1 percent. This rate is below the national average of 20.1 percent and slightly below the Southern average of 17.6 percent.

The *Times-Picayune* endorsed Republicans in the 2000 presidential and 2003 gubernatorial elections, while *The Shreveport Times* endorsed Democrats in the same races. *The Advocate*, in sharp contrast, does not offer endorsements of specific candidates.

WWL-TV, the CBS affiliate in New Orleans owned by Belo Corp., dominates the market. Its nearest competitor, NBC affiliate WDSU, has a market share less than half of WWL's. In Richard Angelico and Alec Gifford, WDSU has two of the most experienced TV reporters on public affairs in the state.

Louisiana has an array of commentators who keep a close eye on the state's spicy politics and charismatic politicians. One of the longest-running commentators is independent journalist John Maginnis, whose Internet site (www.LApolitics.com), supplies links to other Louisiana sites, as well as to his weekly political column and his newsletter available to subscribers.

Carl Redman, managing editor of *The Advocate*, writes a weekly column on Louisiana issues. In New Orleans, James Gill offers often acerbic commentary on state politics for the *Times-Picayune*. Stephanie Grace also writes a regular political column for the *Times-Picayune*. Clancy Dubois is an experienced analyst of state and local politics for New Orleans' *Gambit Weekly*. And the biweekly *Baton Rouge Business Report* also keeps abreast of doings in state government and politics. ■

Louisiana Sunday Circulation Trends

Year	Sunday Circulation	Total Population	Sunday Circulation as % of Population
1970	670,965	3,643,180	18.42
1980	806,130	4,203,972	19.18
1990	892,078	4,219,973	21.14
2000	801,977	4,482,585	17.89
2002	776,639	4,536,437	17.12
'02 South	13,370,554	98,755,426	17.59
'02 US	58,780,299	294,654,345	20.09

SOURCE: *Editor and Publisher Yearbook*, various years.

Louisiana Media Landscape

A) MAJOR DAILY NEWSPAPERS

Paper	Owner	Sunday Circulation	Endorsements		Web site
			2000 President	2003 Governor	
<i>New Orleans Times-Picayune</i>	Advance Publications	309,274	Bush (R)	Jindal (R)	www.timespicayune.com
<i>Baton Rouge Advocate</i>	Capital City Press	136,000	none	none	www.theadvocate.com
<i>Shreveport Times</i>	Gannett Co.	90,047	Gore (D)	Jefferson (D)	www.shreveporttimes.com
<i>Lafayette Daily Advertiser</i>	The New York Times Co.	21,576	none		www.acadiananow.com

B) MAJOR WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS/ALTERNATIVE PRESS

Paper	Owner	Weekly Circulation	Endorsements		Web site
			2000 President	2000 Governor	
<i>Gambit Weekly</i>	Gambit Communications Inc.	58,000	none	Ewing (D) and Jindal (R) in runoff	www.bestofneworleans.com
<i>Greater Baton Rouge Business Report</i>	Louisiana Business Inc.	10,000 (biweekly)	Bush (R)*	Jindal (R)*	www.businessreport.com

*endorsements are made in a signed column by the publisher rather than by the publication as a whole

C) MAJOR BROADCAST TELEVISION STATIONS

Station	Market	Affiliate	Owner	Web site
WWL-TV	New Orleans	CBS	Belo Corp.	www.wwltv.com
WAFB-TV	Baton Rouge	CBS	Raycom Media	www.wafb.com
WDSU-TV	New Orleans	NBC	Hearst-Argyle	www.khou.com
WBRZ-TV	Baton Rouge	ABC	Louisiana Broadcasting	www.wbrz.com

D) LEADING COMMENTATORS

Commentator	Organization	Resource Type	Web site
Jeff Duhe	"Louisiana: The State We're In"	PBS Show	www.lpb.org/programs/swi
James Gill	<i>The Times-Picayune</i>	Column	www.nola.com/news/t-p/gill
Stephanine Grace	<i>The Times-Picayune</i>	Column	www.nola.com/news/t-p/grace
Larry Lorenz	"Informed Sources"	PBS Show	www.wyes.org
John Maginnis	LA Politics.com	Internet Site	www.lapolitics.com
John Maginnis	<i>The Times-Picayune</i>	Column	www.nola.com/news/t-p/maginnis
Carl Redman	<i>The Advocate</i>	Column	www.2theadvocate.com/columnists/carl_redman.shtml
	PoliticsLA.com	Internet Site	www.politicsla.com