



EMBARGOED UNTIL 2100 THURSDAY 9 NOVEMBER

Local Media Works Awards

Speech by Newsquest Chief Executive Henry Faure Walker presenting the Best of the Best Award.

Thank you Rich.

I was very pleased to hear Claire speak so powerfully earlier about the ability of local news brands to deliver great results for Government ad campaigns.

In particular, her comments about strengthening the partnership that Government has with our sector – a long overdue move which would benefit both sides and, most importantly, our audiences - are most welcome.

Today, with so many questions being raised about ad fraud and brand safety in the digital space, local media represents a unique proposition for national advertisers.

Firstly, we are highly trusted by our audiences. Online, local news sites are nearly three times more trusted than social media.

Secondly, we are market leaders in delivering brand safety for our advertisers. Brands who advertise with us know that they will not appear next to any inappropriate content. Unlike Facebook or YouTube, our content is curated and checked by thousands of hard working professional journalists up and down the country. For us, context is crucial and everyone from the largest advertisers like P&G and Unilever to the smallest local advertisers is starting to wake up to this fact.

And thirdly, we command huge local audiences. At Newsquest most of our daily news sites are read at least once a month by over 70 per cent of adults in our respective towns and cities across the U.K. When you consider that Facebook's audience penetration is only 50 per cent and now plateauing, you start to appreciate the power of local news brands.

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And because of this we deliver great results for our advertisers. Through industry collaboration such as 1XL, which brings together 30 regional publishers across the UK, we have also become much easier to transact with. Through 1XL, national advertisers can serve one digital campaign across 800 local news sites reaching up to 23 million people, in one transaction.

It is vital that national advertisers and their ad agencies make the most of what we have to offer as a sector. And they can do so in the knowledge that advertising with us also helps to sustain great local journalism, a great public good and a backbone of local democracy.

Local Media Works Awards judge Andy Bolden, Europe Media Director and Global Head of Trading for GSK Consumer Healthcare, summed up these arguments brilliantly in a piece for Campaign this week.

His conclusion was, and I quote: "I hope that brands remember the immense value of connecting with customers through local media and invest their media spend accordingly."

I couldn't have put it any better myself...

On that positive note, let's find out who tonight's winner is who will be taking home the grand prize of £1000 worth of Apple vouchers...