

Backgrounder
The Roanoke Times: Interviewed November 29, 2010

Newspaper	The Roanoke Times
Owner	Landmark Media Enterprises (public)
Address	201 W. Campbell Ave. P.O. Box 2491 Roanoke, Va. 24010-2491
Phone number	(800) 346-1234 or (540) 981-3211
URL	Roanoke.com
Circulation	75,740 daily; 91,066 Sunday
Mission Statement	We will pursue our vision by strengthening our core products and focusing on targeted audiences and niche products as informed by our market research.
President and Publisher	
Name	Debbie Meade
Start Date	1983 as reporter; 2007 as publisher
Phone number	540-981-3326
E-mail	Debbie.meade@roanoke.com
Newspaper Staff	
Total FTEs	350
Publication cycle	7 days a.m.
Circulation	
	September 2010 Publisher's Statement
Weekdays	75,740
Sundays	91,066
E-edition	Used for subscriber acquisition and Newspaper in Education program
Readership	200,000 plus readers daily; a quarter-million plus local adults on Sunday
Price	
Weekday newsstand	\$.75
Sunday newsstand	\$1.75
Subscription annual	\$185.64
Ancillary Businesses	Laker Media (includes Smith Mountain Lake Magazine, Laker Weekly and smithmountainlake.com)
Newsprint for Roanoke Times only	
Tons/annual	6,800 tons
Sources of Revenue	
	Percentages
Circulation	26%
Display ads	24%
Inserts	21%
Special Sections	Included in display
Classified	18%
Legal Notices	5%
On-line Ads & Fees	6%
Other	2%
Trends/Changes over 3 years	We've experienced a shift from display and classified advertising to inserts and circulation revenue. Online revenue continues to grow slowly as a percentage of our total revenue.

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Digital	
Pay wall?	No
Considering a pay wall?	Maybe
Editor	
Name	Carole Tarrant
Start date	2005 as managing editor; 2007 as editor
Phone number	540-981-3210
E-mail	Carole.tarrant@roanoke.com
News Staff	
Total FTE	97
Reporters and columnists	36
Editors	17
Photo	8
Other	Community journalists: 4 Online producers: 3 Other (copy, layout, and editorial assistants): 29
Bureaus	Christiansburg, Va. (Virginia Tech); Richmond, Va. (State Capital)
Coverage	More than 50% of their time
Local government	Yes
Courts	Yes
Public safety	Yes
County government	Yes
School Board	Yes
Business	Yes
Sports	Yes
Entertainment & arts	Yes
	1 - medical/ 1 families reporter
Online Editor	
Name	Meg Martin
Start date	April 2007 as multimedia producer; fall 2008 as online editor
Phone	540-981-3103
E-Mail	Meg.martin@roanoke.com
Website start date	1995
Digital News Staff	
Size	4 FTE [Work closely with colleagues in digital media dept. and IT dept. for site maintenance and project/product building.]
Reporting/Photo staff	
Does reporting staff feed materials for digital media	Reporting staff feeds print stories, photos and graphics directly to DTI (print CMS) Breaking news and ongoing news updates throughout the day come from reporters via assigning editors or online news team and are published through digital CMS to update mobile and web sites, and later fuel posts to Twitter, Facebook, blogs, text-messaging alert system or e-mail alert system, depending on content of story. Ongoing updates and posts are also fed to blogs by reporters, editors

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	and the online news team throughout the day.
Capabilities	
Web platform software?	Homegrown CMS supplemented by Word Press (for blogs)
Content management system: software?	In-house CMS
Does your organization write code?	Yes
Number of coders?	Roughly, 8: 4 journalist/coders on online team plus 4 on digital media team. Also: A handful of folks throughout the newsroom with a smattering of HTML or JQuery or other such knowledge.
Proprietary or open-source code? Why?	Both.
Flexibility & response time	
Can you change web platform – coding, architecture, software -- at least once a month? Do you?	Fundamental site structure remains stable but design is flexible and modifiable. Sections, microsites and stories are built as needed. Gateway centerpiece (the focal point of our homepage) is updated multiple times a day, and is often redesigned and modified to fit the needs of the news and events of the day.
Digital Tools	
Crowd sourcing?	Yes.
Data visualization?	Yes.
Investigative reporting?	Yes.
Documentary video?	Yes.
Any other kinds of digital tools are being used?	Digital presentation tools: Polls; photo galleries; CoverItLive; live video streams; comment forums; interactive maps; audio galleries/Soundslides; podcasts; webcasts; Twitter/Facebook feeds; live blogging; Twitter aggregation; Storify; audio; interactive games; Qik live streaming; word clouds; Scribd for embedding original documents; breaking news text alerts; interactive maps; user-generated maps; interactive timelines; custom widgets; Flickr galleries/feeds; Flickr groups; user-generated videos/photos; interactive tours and multimedia projects; panoramas; interactive panoramas; Gigapans; RSS feeds; curated content from elsewhere; Skype; (tossing around using Tumblr) In addition, we use many other digital production and newsgathering tools.
Social Media	
What is the overall organizational commitment to collecting, creating, shaping and delivering all your news/information products through these digital channels?	Since 2010, we have a Dayside Delivery Editor, and more recently a nightside counterpart, who manage our social media presence. We are on facebook, twitter, youtube and flickr. You can find more at http://roanoke.com/social . As of March 2011, we have 17 twitter accounts; 8 facebook accounts; 1 youtube account, and 5 flickr accounts.
To what extent is your newspaper connected to people through social media?	Extensively.
Advertising	
Is your advertising staff able to provide competitive digital services to merchants?	Yes

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Does your advertising department sell "digital services", such as helping merchants with website production?	We do not sell web production services, but we do offer Search Engine Marketing (SEM) services to our customers.
Does your ad department sell electronic coupons or other modern digital products?	We do have restaurant coupons on our food site, plateup.roanoke.com . We also launched an online group buying product, roanoke.com Daily Deal in August 2010. It was the first group buying product for our market, and it has been very successful for our advertising customers as well as our users.
Assessment	
How do you assess your digital news/information products?	Using Google Analytics and OAS We also assess our social media presence in a handful of ways
Page-views?	6.7 million
Monthly uniques?	More than 600,000
What other metrics do you use?	25 staff blogs. Find more at http://roanoke.com/blogs .
Do you assess news content?	
Writing or visual journalism impact?	We have a panel of readers whom we regularly ask to evaluate both content and ads. The feedback we receive from this panel is instrumental in making strategic decisions in our newsroom.
Editing	
Are there different procedures (layers of editing) for web vs. print products?	All stories are edited at some level. Blogs are not edited.
Do you use AP Style in your digital products?	Yes
Revenue	
Do you charge for any digital news products?	Yes, our archives and e-edition
Which products and how much?	Archives (before 2007) by Newsbank
Digital Delivery Systems	
What delivery systems do you employ?	
E-edition? (software?)	Yes; Olive (vendor)
Smart Phone - apps	Currently use mobile platform – m.roanoke.com , a free mobile site.
-- iPhone	
-- Android	
-- Blackberry	
-- Palm	
-- Other?	
Tablets	
-- iPad	Under development
Kindle	No
Knowledge products	
Do you offer "knowledge products," such as books, magazines, and television or radio programs in addition to the core daily paper?	No
Future	
Do you foresee your news organization offering one hundred percent digitally-	

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delivered news/information products in the foreseeable future? (<i>See Interview</i>)	
Sources of Information	Twitter; RSS feeds; Mashable; Poynter; Nieman Lab; The Guardian; Wired; KDMC; SXSW; ONA; SND; NPR; colleagues; experimentation; etc.