

Since its launch in 1999, The Metro has kept over a million Brits waist deep in up-to-the-minute news on a daily basis. But can it justify the 1 million copies that are printed five days of the week, when it seems that so many end up just being thrown away? The Metro has supplied the people of Britain with free news that is informative and light-heartedly interesting for nine years. Obviously, this is a good thing, but have we considered the environmental impact of not only The Metro but the handful of other free publications that clog up our transport system day after day? It's already painfully clear that our planet has a problem with the destruction of natural greenery, as well as the build up of waste, so why should we make the problem worse still by cutting down acre after acre of woodland and producing tons of rubbish that so quickly becomes discarded? We wanted to know more about this and a few other things, so we decided to go straight to the top; we went up to London for an interview with Kenny Campbell, the editor of The Metro, to find out more.

YU: Nowadays people are very concerned with the environment and this is a huge issue with free newspapers, where people just read them and then discard them. What is your opinion on people throwing away free newspapers?

Kenny: We always try hard to get people to take The Metro away with them;

the more people take it away, the more people read it, the more people talk about it. It's about the brand image too – we don't want our paper to just be seen as a bit of rubbish or litter. But with all the terrorist threats, we can't have bins on the Underground, which does make things difficult. However, we do get people to go onto trains and tubes, clearing out the carriages for us, and apparently there are experiments being run on bomb-proof bins! It's not only the litter issue that bothers us though; we have to consider other environmental impacts. The Metro is made from roughly three-quarters recycled paper and we try our best to run a 'green office'.

“Newspapers are not a dying industry.”

YU: You write for a variety of ages, and lots of young people read The Metro. Do you feel that it's important for younger people to get the news and read newspapers?

Kenny: It's important for everybody to remain informed, and it's particularly important for people in their teenage years because that's when their opinions are developing. But why should people read newspapers? Why shouldn't they just rely on TV or the internet? With the internet you have to know what you're looking for, but if you pick up The Metro in the morning, you've got a catalogue of stuff. There's the obvious news that

everyone reports on, but also the weird stuff, the stuff we put in page three, you'd have never known that that exists.

YU: Is there any advice that you could give to young people who want to become involved with journalism?

Kenny: Do it! Working in the media is a challenge but it gives so much back. In terms of work, it's interesting and varies from day to day, and emotionally you go through the complete spectrum, it can be tough today but fantastic tomorrow. And all this talk about the web marking the end for newspapers? That's rubbish. Really, we're the same, we both have words, stories, headlines, pictures; most importantly, we both deliver news and information to the public. Newspapers are not a dying industry. Having said that, getting into the business is still hard. You need either contacts or experience, preferably even both, they're so important. If all else fails, just force your way in as a junior admin or assistant and work your way up – we've got people here that did exactly that. Badger papers for a job, or even for a work experience placement. You'll need skill once you're in the job, but you have to have enthusiasm and ambition to get there... and, lastly, a little bit of luck.

Want to know more about The Metro? Try their website, www.metro.co.uk or just pick up one of their papers!

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