

Successful relaunch

Consistent orientation towards the reader`s needs contributes to the diversity of coverage

One year ago still a strong newcomer, by 2005 winner of the **Media Tenor** Online Award: With its relaunch in spring the online version of **Financial Times Deutschland** has again gained in userfriendliness – beating the big web publications from the UK and North America as well as **Spiegel**, **FAZ** etc. in Germany.

A tight race - improved quality

Compared to the years before, the gaps between the top candidates in the ranking have tightened, indicating that the quality of online journalism altogether has further improved. Electronic publications are profiting not least from the closer cooperation with their print counterparts: This development from an ousting competition towards a profitable coexistence was not necessarily foreseeable. But as long as the majority of readers considers the durable print media rather sustainable than slow, little will change. This does not need to be of any harm to electronic publications, because at best they can even profit from the strengths of the “classic” media. If this is the case, as it is with many candidates for this year’s **Media Tenor** Award, online media have gained in diversity of coverage and thus also in acceptance. In this sense, the **Media Tenor** Online Award remains a clear vote for the chances of the electronic media,

but this year for the first time it is also an honour for established opinion leadership.

So it is no coincidence that this year’s award winner deliberately seeks to be close to the printed sister publication: In contrast to many of its competitors, the online version of **Financial Times Deutschland** does not insist to have its own logo with domain address, and in layout and topic structure, the parallels to the printed medium are obvious.

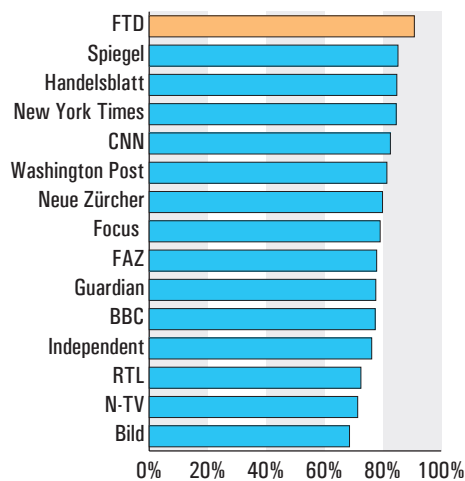
However, especially this example of **FTD** shows clearly that online publications do not only profit from print media, but they increasingly contribute to the media landscape themselves. For a broad spectrum of innovative transfer of contents is always combined with having one’s own thematic emphasis. The consistent orientation towards the



needs of the target group – for which fast, succinct and omnipresent information means more quality of work and thus more quality of life – requires a change of emphasis in the selection of news, a

Result in the category

“User-friendliness”



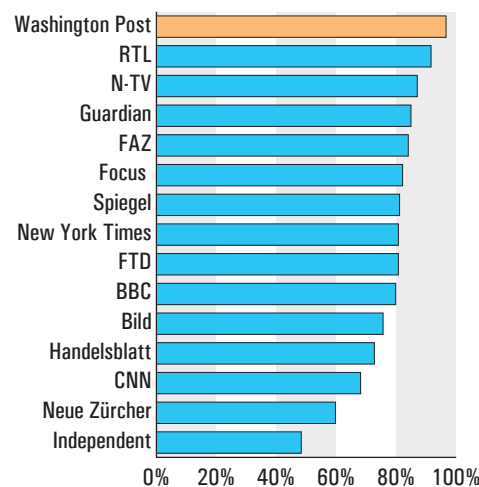
100% is equivalent to a perfect score

Source: Media Tenor September 2005

Basis: 49 criteria in the category „User-friendliness“

Results in the category

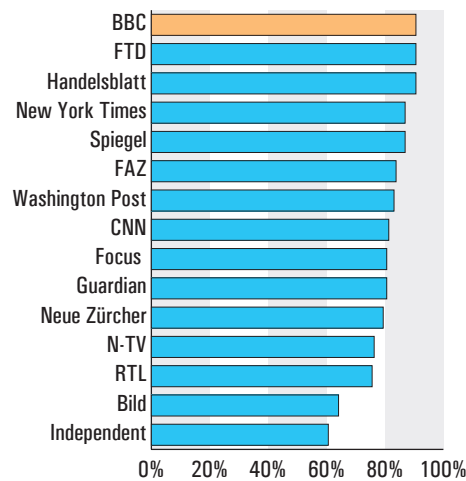
“Interactive Possibilities”



Source: Media Tenor September 2005

Basis: 16 criteria in the category “interactive possibilities“

Result in the category "Information"



100% is equivalent to a perfect score

Quelle: Medien Tenor
September 2005

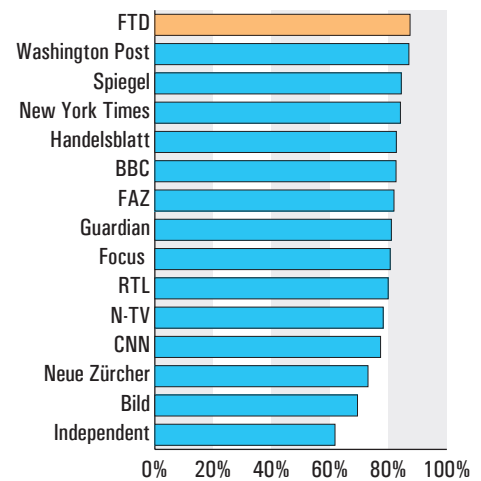
Basis: 25 criteria in the category
„Offer of Information“

special choice of topics and a distinct journalistic style. Not least this independence is what makes **FTD** worthy of winning this award, because it guarantees an improved quality. Same is true for **Spiegel**, winner of the **Media Tenor** Online Award 2003. Matthias Blumencron's team only just losing against **Financial Times Deutschland** and last year's winner **Washington Post**, is not due to serious weaknesses. **Spiegel Online** is established, and many of the today common trends in the media landscape have been set by the Hamburg-based team themselves. This much of prestige obliges to deal with one's own image carefully in a world where newcomers use new opportunities more consistently and more aggressively. **The Washington Post** has given impressive evidence again this year that offering a broad range of interactive features in the daily work routine of online editors is feasible even today. In this category even the overall winner, **FTD**, is lagging behind – more customizing and forum and chatroom utilities would be options for the future.

Stricter evaluation criteria

The strong overall improvement in quality of the analysed media has made **Media Tenor** raise the standards for the 93 analysed evaluation criteria. Especially the standards of structural clarity, user guidance, textual work-up and archive functions have risen in the evaluation of 2005, to account to the bigger amount of information on the respective websites. Media like the **New York Times** or **BBC** offer a broad spectrum of features, however are

Media Tenor Online Award 2004: overall results



100% is equivalent to a perfect score

Source: Media Tenor
September 2005

Basis: A total of 91 criteria
in the 3 categories

not able to ensure fast access to them in all cases. Therefore, despite some excellent results in particular categories, in the overall ranking they lag behind a little bit.

More significant is the lag with those online media that hesitate to make or even consistently avoid to make concessions to user-friendliness. **Bild.t-online.de** e.g. shows a strong orientation with the print version not only in content but also in its visual presentation, making it less comfortable to navigate and harder to distinguish between content and advertising – a trend **Media Tenor** has already followed critically in recent years and which has intensified further at least with the online version of **Bild-Zeitung**.

Despite a few innovative approaches the **Independent** has delivered the weakest result in the overall ranking: At the time of the analysis the website did not only have technical problems, it also seems to be undergoing a metamorphosis to become some kind of think tank among the online media. So far, though, the results of this restructuring convince only in parts. sm

Basis:

Media: bbc.com, bild.t-online.de, cnn.com, faz.net, focus.msn.de, ftd.de, guardian.co.uk, independent.co.uk, handelsblatt.de, n-tv.de, nytimes.com, nzz.ch, rtl.de, spiegel.de, washingtonpost.com (alle www)

Time: September 2005

Analysis: The quoted websites were analysed due to 91 criteria within the categories „interactive possibilities“, „user-friendliness“ and „information supply“