

VareseNews

I buy bread, but who buys newspapers?

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Dear Director,

as I imagine and wish that many other people have done, this morning I turned on the computer, and I went to see what Luca Sofri had done with his Post.

The impression is that I will come back very often to read it, because the web site is well done, well written and has that original look on things (in particular an opening in addition to the narrow door of our house) of which we really need. But... but: the Post is born by creating – even better, by incorporating in its DNA – the basic misunderstanding that it is sending the information vertically. (I cite verbatim) it is an “aggregate of someone else’s contents.” You aggregate today, you aggregate tomorrow, is there someone who has ever asked who will have to produce these longed-for contents? I say it to you: they are the traditional media, first of all the really insulted editors of the printed paper, that guarantee “gratis et amore dei” contents to millions of blogs and web sites.

Now (I say it for the benefit of who will answer to this letter objecting: here is the dinosaur of newspapers that wants to guarantee his salary! As if in this world everyone works for the glory...): Internet is the future, people go towards that direction and they do not come back. But the Post and a lot of experiences on the net have not yet given an answer to the million dollar question yet, that maybe I have just had occasion to ask: why do I pay for the bread that I buy every day, I pay the petrol that I put into car, I pay everything but I have the demand to know, without spending any coins, what is happening in the world?

Today the traditional broadsheets are prey to an infernal trap: they see their incomes falling at the newspaper kiosk, they have to lean more and more on advertising and on the on-line editions with a deadly consequence, events and news are favourably “covered” if containing “sex, blood and sport (more gossip), because they are those that guarantee more clicks therefore more advertising income. So the news that are destined to heavily engrave on our future (for example the debt of Greek) are overshadowed.

If this misunderstanding is not solved, the consequence will be only one: the journalists’ salaries won’t disappear, but the news, the newspapers (on-line and off-line) will be prey for press releases, press offices, events organised for the press

usage. The fact is that creating information is expensive, creating good information is even more expensive. Having a correspondent in Afghanistan, someone who reads the financial reports of Goldman & Sachs, someone who visits the little villages of Northern Italy in order to tell what Lega is, is expensive. I know that I'm telling a strong thing, I know that it is a provocative slogan, but if we go on in this way, the Internet risks to worsen the quality of information considerably.

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