

## Maximize Your Advertising Potential

**D**ear Prospective Advertiser:

The following guide is designed to provide you with the information you need to make an informed choice about advertising in *The Rock River Times* (TRRT) weekly newspaper and on the newspaper's website, [rockrivertimes.com](http://rockrivertimes.com). After reviewing this guide, we are confident you will find TRRT to be the best vehicle to help you deliver your goods, services and messages to your target market.

This guide is divided into 10 parts, which will discuss how:

1. TRRT has an average net print circulation of 20,648 and 2.25 readers per print edition. Each week, 46,458 people read the print edition of TRRT!
2. TRRT's newly re-designed website, [rockrivertimes.com](http://rockrivertimes.com), has 3,294 unique weekly digital edition visitors who view a total of 53,627 pages, meaning each weekly visitor views 16.3 pages per visit. The website also boasts 7,365 unique digital edition visitors each month who view 107,938 pages, meaning each monthly visitor views an average of 14.7 pages per visit. The national average for page views per visitor is 4.25, meaning visitors spend more than 3 times more time on TRRT's website than they do on other publications' websites.
3. The weekly newspaper creates award-winning ads that 79.4 percent of its readers (36,888) frequently act on
4. TRRT has staying power; 31 percent of readers (14,402) keep each print edition copy for a minimum of five days
5. TRRT's readership is affluent (88 percent are in the age bracket with the most expendable income), young (48 percent are younger than 45) and educated (65 percent have some college education or have graduated or completed advanced degrees)
6. TRRT's readership is expanding while circulation is dropping at dailies across the country
7. The newspaper has been awarded for its editorial excellence
8. TRRT has established itself as "Rockford's Green newspaper"—winning the Seth B. Atwood Memorial Park and Conservation Service Award (Business Category) in 2009 and being inducted into the National, Illinois and Chicago Environmental Halls of Fame in 2010
9. The newspaper is the "newspaper for the arts"
10. TRRT can help you "Maximize Your Advertising Potential"



*The Rock River Times* is locally owned and operated, and has been in publication for more than 20 years. The newspaper is distributed every Wednesday to 2,035 commercial outlets throughout Rockford and the surrounding community.

We look forward to assisting you in delivering your message to prospective buyers.

Thank you for considering being a part of "The Voice of the Community."

— The Staff of *The Rock River Times*



## Maximize Your Advertising Potential

# What you will gain by advertising in Rockford's locally-owned newspaper

*Serving the Rockford, Chicago, northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin regions*

### 1. 20,648 net circulation



According to an independent, third-party audit for the period of April 1-Dec. 31, 2009, conducted by the Circulation Verification Council (CVC)\*, *The Rock River Times* has an "Average Net Press Run" of 22,000 weekly newspapers, meaning 22,000 copies of the newspaper are published every week. With a remarkably low return rate (unread papers) of just 6.1 percent (national average for comparable publications is around 17 percent, while the return rate for daily newspapers is even higher, around 22-25 percent), the "Average Net Circulation"—or total number of newspapers picked up by readers every week—is 20,648.

According to the CVC report, an average of 2.25 readers read each copy of the newspaper every week, giving *The Rock River Times* a readership of 46,458. That means 46,458 people read *The Rock River Times* in print every week.

\* Circulation Verification Council is an independent, third-party reporting audit company that audits more than 4,900 editions nationwide with a combined circulation of more than 70 million. For more about the organization, visit <http://www.cvcaudit.com/> or call 1-800-262-6392.

### 2. Readers logging on to [rockrivertimes.com](http://rockrivertimes.com)



According to the CVC, the success of a newspaper's website to attract readers is judged in part by the percentage of online visitors in comparison to unique digital edition visitors. *The Rock River Times* attracts 7,365 "unique visitors" to its website every month, which equates to about 36 percent of its "average net circulation" of 20,648. According to the CVC, very few publications attract more than 25 percent of their "average net circulation" to their website.

Additionally, according to the CVC, visitors to [rockrivertimes.com](http://rockrivertimes.com) spend more than 3 times more time on *The Rock River Times'* website than they do on websites of similar publications. The national average for page views per visitor is 4.25. *The Rock River Times'* website has 3,294 unique weekly digital edition visitors who view a total of 53,627 pages, meaning each weekly visitor views 16.3 pages per visit. The website also boasts 7,365 unique digital edition visitors each month who view 107,938 pages, meaning each monthly visitor views an average of 14.7 pages per visit.

For value added, place your banner, tower, or single or double ad on [rockrivertimes.com](http://rockrivertimes.com). And don't forget, the print version stays up all week online in printable PDF format!



is a proud member/affiliate of these fine organizations:



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### 3. Award-winning ad designs THAT WORK



According to a Supplemental Readership Study\* conducted by the CVC, 79.4 percent (national average is 74.4 percent) of survey respondents said they “frequently purchase products or services from ads seen in *The Rock River Times*.” Multiplied times the total number of readers each week, that means 36,888 weekly readers frequently purchase products or services from ads seen in *The Rock River Times*.

*The Rock River Times* has also received the “Advertising Excellence” award presented by the Illinois Press Association to the newspaper in the state with the best overall quality of advertising design.

\* CVC estimates the information in the Supplemental Readership Survey has a maximum error margin of +/-2.5 at the 95 percent confidence level. The survey was conducted using recommended guidelines developed in part from the Advertising Research Foundation newspaper readership guidelines.

### 4. Staying power



Data from the CVC Supplemental Readership Survey show that of the 46,458 people\*\* who read *The Rock River Times* every week, 31 percent (14,402 readers) keep the newspaper a minimum of five days before discarding it.

### 5. Affluent, young, educated readers

*The Rock River Times*' 46,458 readers\*\* are generally affluent, young and college-educated.

Affluence



According to the U.S. Department of Labor's 2008 “Consumer Expenditure Survey,” a majority (62 percent) of the “average annual expenditures” (amount of money consumers spend in a year) come from those between the ages of 25 and 64. According to the CVC Supplemental Readership Survey, of the 46,458 people who read *The Rock River Times* every week, 88 percent (40,883 readers) are between the ages of 25 and 64. Market demographics show 68 percent in the 25-64 age bracket, meaning *The Rock River Times* delivers strong market penetration (20 percentage points higher than market demographics) in the age bracket with the most spendable income.

Of the 46,458 people\*\* who read *The Rock River Times* every week, 20 percent (9,292 readers) are in the highest income bracket, and earn \$100,000 or more per year. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's 2008 “Consumer Expenditure Survey,” a majority (71 percent) of the “average annual expenditures” come from those who make \$100,000 or more per year. *The Rock River Times*' 20 percent in this category is 2 percentage points higher than market demographics (18 percent), meaning the weekly newspaper delivers strong market penetration in the income bracket with the most spendable income.



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### Youth



Of the 46,458 people\*\* who read *The Rock River Times* every week, 48 percent (22,300 readers) are younger than 45. On a national scale, 60 percent of those who read daily newspapers are older than age 44.

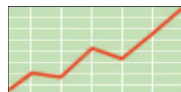
### Education



According to the U.S. Department of Labor's 2008 "Consumer Expenditure Survey," a majority (78 percent) of the "average annual expenditures" come from those with a minimum of some college education. Of the 46,458 people\*\* who read *The Rock River Times* every week, 65 percent (30,198 readers) have a minimum of some college education. Market demographics show 53 percent with some college education, meaning *The Rock River Times* again has very strong market penetration (12 percentage points better than the market demographics) in the area with the most expendable income.

\*\* TRRT has an average net circulation of 20,648 and 2.25 readers per copy. Each week, 46,458 people read TRRT!

### 6. Expanding readership



*The Rock River Times* is attracting younger readers who are more likely to still be reading the newspaper in 20 years, and the newspaper's readership is expanding during a time when newspaper readership is declining across the country.

Between 2003 and 2009, daily newspapers lost 5 percent of their daily circulation per year and 7 percent of their Sunday circulation per year. In the six-month period ending March 31, 2010, the Audit Bureau of Circulations reported Sunday sales of dailies dropped 6.5 percent and weekday sales of dailies dropped 8.7 percent compared with the same six-month period a year ago.

As the graphs on page 9 of this report show, according to an audit conducted by the Audit Bureau of Circulations, the corporately-owned daily newspaper in Rockford, the *Rockford Register Star*, has seen its "Monday-Friday Average Paid Circulation by Quarters" decline by 21 percent (67,187 for the calendar quarter ending June 29, 2003, down to 55,512 for the calendar quarter ending March 30, 2008). Meantime, the *Rockford Register Star* has seen its "Sunday Average Paid Circulation by Quarters" decline by nearly 16 percent (79,187 for the calendar quarter ending June 29, 2003, down to 68,607 for the calendar quarter ending March 30, 2008).

Contrary to local and national daily newspaper trends, *The Rock River Times* has **increased** its "average net press run" (total number of newspapers printed) by 16 percent (from 19,000 in 2000 to 22,000 in 2006). Additionally, *The Rock River Times* has also seen an increase in its "net circulation," from 19,988 in the fourth quarter of 2008 to 20,745 in the fourth quarter of 2009.

These numbers are bolstered by a young readership—48 percent (22,300 every week) of *The Rock River Times*' readers are younger than 45. For reference, 60 percent of those who read a daily newspaper are older than age 44.



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### 7. Award-winning editorial content



Since *The Rock River Times* joined the Illinois Press Association in 2004, it has been honored by the statewide organization of 600 daily and weekly newspapers for its excellence in news reporting, entertainment reviews, photography, sports columns and editorial cartoons.

### 8. Rockford's Green newspaper



*The Rock River Times* and Editor & Publisher Frank Schier were inducted into the National, Illinois and Chicago Environmental Halls of Fame July 21, 2010, in recognition of their eco-friendly practices and promotion of sustainability.

*The Rock River Times* and Schier founded the Rock River Trail—a recreational/eco-tourism destination, similar to the Appalachian Trail—in February 2010. The Rock River Trail would run along the 287 miles of the Rock River, through 10 counties and 33 cities and villages in Illinois and Wisconsin. Visit [rockrivertrail.com](http://rockrivertrail.com) for more information.

In May 2009, *The Rock River Times* was named recipient of the Seth B. Atwood Memorial Park and Conservation Service Award (Business Category) for its dedication to the preservation of natural areas and park spaces, recreation and education.

In April 2009, the Illinois Park and Recreation Association and the Rockford Park District presented a Community Service Award to Schier in recognition and appreciation of outstanding contributions and unselfish devotion for the advancement of parks, recreation and leisure.

Since 2002, *The Rock River Times* has featured a “Renewable Energy” section that includes a regular column by Drs. Robert & Sonia Vogl, president and vice president of the Illinois Renewable Energy Association (IREA), respectively, and fellow National, Illinois and Chicago Environmental Halls of Fame members. The newspaper also features a “Naturally Rockford” section, which offers alternative health, organic and environmental news coverage; an “Outdoors” section, which offers regular columns from Severson Dells and other environmental organizations; and a “Farmers’ Market” section, which offers news and information about area farmers’ markets.

*The Rock River Times* has been a “Major Sponsor” of the Illinois Renewable Energy & Sustainable Lifestyle Fair, in its ninth year in 2010, since its inception, and Schier is a member of the IREA’s board of directors.

The newspaper was instrumental in organizing the Winnebago County Green Business Awards, which recognizes businesses and individuals for making strides toward a greener community, and the Save the Kishwaukee River Committee, which lobbied to protect the natural areas surrounding the Kishwaukee River. *The Rock River Times* is also a member of Four Rivers Environmental Coalition and Green Communities Coalition.



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### 9. The newspaper for the arts



In addition to its award-winning entertainment reviews, *The Rock River Times* has also been nominated multiple times for the Mayors' Arts Award. The newspaper offers regular entertainment calendars, news and reviews, and the newspaper's editor & publisher, Frank Schier, is a co-founder of the Rockford Area Music Industry (RAMI). The newspaper is also a sponsor of the Rockford Art Museum's Greenwich Village Art Fair and other events throughout the year.

In recognition of the important role the arts play in the community, *The Rock River Times* offers all musicians and not-for-profit arts organizations the bottom (52-time) advertising rate.



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### 10. Maximizing the return on your investment

Use *The Rock River Times*' investment calculator (below) to determine the return on your advertising investment in *The Rock River Times*.

#### Investment Calculator

A. Your business type: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Your business's average sale per customer: \_\_\_\_\_

C. *TRRT*'s total readership: 46,458

D. Percent of *TRRT*'s readership that buys products from *TRRT*'s advertisers: 79.4 percent

E. *TRRT*'s buying readership: 36,888  
(Multiply line C x D)

F. Percent of *TRRT*'s readers planning to buy products or services in the next 12 months offered by your business type  
(See list of business types with percentages (on page 7), and select the percent that best applies to your business type):

\_\_\_\_\_

G. Your estimated income from advertising in *TRRT*: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Multiply lines B x E x F)

H. Ad size: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Number of ad runs/cost per run: a. \_\_\_\_\_

Total cost for runs: b. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Multiply number of runs times cost per run)

J. Cost for color per issue, if desired: a. \_\_\_\_\_

Total cost for color: b. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Multiply number of runs times cost per run)

K. Total cost of advertising in *TRRT*: \_\_\_\_\_

(Add lines I (b) and J (b), AND multiply times 95 percent for a 5 percent prepay discount; 90 percent for a 10 percent prepay discount; and 85 percent for a 15 percent prepay discount)

L. Your estimated net profit: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Subtract line K from line G)

M. Percent of amount spent with *TRRT* in relation to amount earned through advertising in *TRRT*:  
(Divide line K by line L)

\_\_\_\_\_

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### Products and services readers plan to purchase in the next year

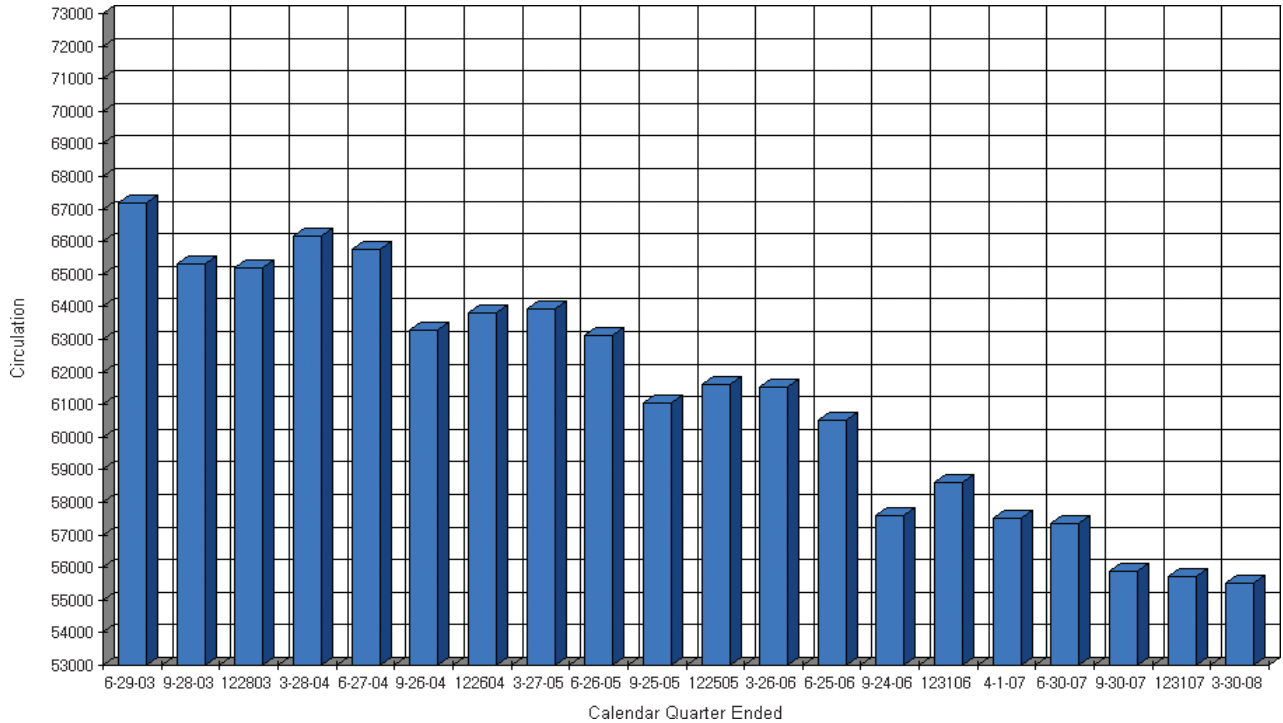
According to a Supplemental Readership Study conducted by the Circulation Verification Council (CVC), the following percentage of readers responded positively to the following question:

**“Which of the following products or services do you plan to purchase during the next twelve months?”**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Percent</u>
New Automobile	14
<b>Used Automobile</b>	<b>10</b>
Antiques/Auctions	21
<b>Furniture/Home Furnishings</b>	<b>39</b>
Major Home Appliance	19
<b>Home Computers</b>	<b>15</b>
Home Improvements/Supplies	34
<b>Television/Electronics</b>	<b>39</b>
Carpet/Flooring	21
<b>Automobile Accessories (tires, brakes &amp; service)</b>	<b>64</b>
Lawn & Garden	57
<b>Florist/Gift Shops</b>	<b>25</b>
Home Heating/Air Conditioning (service, new equipment)	32
<b>Vacations/Travel</b>	<b>53</b>
Real Estate	04
<b>Men’s Apparel</b>	<b>78</b>
Women’s Apparel	84
<b>Children’s Apparel</b>	<b>41</b>
Boats/Personal Watercraft	02
<b>Art &amp; Craft Supplies</b>	<b>30</b>
Childcare	21
<b>Education/Classes</b>	<b>34</b>
Attorney	10
<b>Veterinarian</b>	<b>22</b>
Chiropractor	15
<b>Financial Planner (Retirement, Investing)</b>	<b>28</b>
Tax Adviser/Services	64
<b>Health Club/Exercise Class</b>	<b>29</b>
Cleaning Services (Carpet Cleaning, Air Duct Cleaning, Home Cleaning)	35
<b>Weight Loss</b>	<b>04</b>
Lawn Care Service (Maintenance & Landscaping)	31
<b>Legal Gambling Entertainment (Lottery, Casinos, Racetracks, Bingo)</b>	<b>47</b>
Pharmacist/Prescription Service	79
<b>Cellular Phone New/Update Service</b>	<b>21</b>
Dining & Entertainment	81
<b>Jewelry</b>	<b>19</b>
Wedding Supplies	10
<b>Athletic &amp; Sports Equipment</b>	<b>43</b>

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Graph showing Rockford Register Star's Monday–Friday Average Paid Circulation by Quarters



Graph showing Rockford Register Star's Sunday Average Paid Circulation by Quarters

