

## UK Publishing Media Manifesto – April 2005

UK Publishing Media is an £22bn alliance of newspapers, magazines, books and data publishers, which collectively represents one of the largest investors in the rapidly expanding information society

The UK publishing industries generate more than £22bn in sales annually - around 30 per cent of a great UK success story, the creative industries. Publishers in particular have grasped opportunities offered by the new technologies and are leading long-term investors in digital content and on-line services. Publishing employs some 140,000 people and generates a significant trade surplus from more than £2bn in export revenues. UK publishing helps UK plc to extend its influence throughout the globe, both generally through the UK's powerful newspaper titles as well as in hundreds of critical specialist markets. The organisations representing national and regional newspapers, magazines and business-to-business media, books and journals and data publishing have come together under the umbrella of UK Publishing Media jointly to represent these businesses. In addition to thousands of accompanying on-line services, publishers also drive most UK – and many international – exhibitions, events, directories, newsletters and information services.

This manifesto outlines policies the publishing industries would like to see adopted by any political party wanting to run UK plc.

<p><b>Protect freedom of expression and a free and diverse Press</b></p> <p>Freedom of expression, through a free and diverse Press and publishing industries, and freedom to publish, is an essential part of a democratic society. While the principle is enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, which is incorporated into UK law, governments face endless enticements to nibble at this freedom so fundamental to a democratic society.</p> <p><b>The Government should</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaffirm its commitment to freedom of expression, introduce freedom of expression audits of all new legislative proposals, reform defamation law and the Official Secrets Acts 1911-1989, and oppose 'regulatory creep' threatening to constrain internet publishing</li> <li>• Reaffirm its commitment to a self-regulatory system for the Press</li> <li>• Consult publishers fully on the future framework of media ownership regulation.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce new controls over Internet and other media publication, by statute, co-regulation or other compulsory systems, including rating or filtering, in addition to the multiplicity of existing civil and criminal laws that already restrain publication</li> <li>• Introduce or foster privacy law in any form damaging to freedom of expression.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ensure advertising is legal, decent, honest and truthful</b></p> <p>A robust and competitive economy requires freedom of commercial expression - the freedom to promote legal products and services through advertising and sales promotion techniques in ways which are legal, decent, honest and truthful.</p> <p>Publishing media, together with advertisers and their agencies, have maintained a self-regulatory system for more than 30 years which has gained the respect of the public and legislators alike and which, in 2005, was expanded to include broadcast media in a one-stop-shop to handle consumer complaints.</p> <p><b>The Government should</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaffirm its support for the voluntary self-regulatory system of non-broadcast advertising and sales promotion</li> <li>• Ensure that future co-regulation of broadcast media does not threaten the proven self-regulatory system of non-broadcast media.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to impose ever more stringent controls and bans on commercial freedom of expression through banning advertising which is legal, decent, honest and truthful about legal products and services</li> <li>• Seek to inhibit unnecessarily and unreasonably the use of data legally held for direct marketing activity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>If you want people to read - don't tax reading</b></p> <p>For much of the second half of the last century successive UK governments have been persuaded by the arguments in favour of not taxing reading and these are as clear as ever:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A well-informed, functional population is a literate one</li> <li>• A literate population requires the stimulus to read</li> <li>• This stimulus comes through books, newspapers and magazines</li> <li>• VAT on publications would force the closure of large numbers of newspapers and magazines</li> <li>• VAT on publications would remove an important stimulus for UK content creators</li> <li>• While education is the key investment to ensure economic development, literacy is at the core of any educational curriculum.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State clearly that it will not tax reading</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be persuaded that harmonisation of tax at EU level requires a tax on reading in the UK.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Recognise and protect intellectual property</b></p> <p>Digital content is intellectual property, as much the property of the rights owner as any other form of property and recognised as such both in law and through international treaty.</p> <p>In the information society, advances in communication technology will mean that content will become increasingly more valuable, and investment in intellectual property will become more critical.</p> <p>The UK is particularly strong in IPR related industries, and the exploitation of this advantage requires their protection.</p> <p><b>The Government should</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise intellectual property rights as an increasingly important and innovative dynamic in a knowledge economy</li> <li>• Develop and exploit the economic potential of IPR industries as a priority of industrial policy and reaffirm support by ensuring adequate legal protection for intellectual property and related rights</li> <li>• Implement anti-piracy and counterfeit measures in the UK and campaign internationally for the implementation of relevant trade related treaties such as TRIPS and other World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) conventions.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow copyright protection to be undermined by short-termism in consumer debate or the development of “grey” markets</li> <li>• Endanger future creativity by unduly favouring lenders and users.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Encourage e-Friendliness...</b></p> <p>UK Publishers are huge investors in digital content - essentially online services and products which offer information, news, opinion, entertainment or analysis.</p> <p>These services are also very often key trading hubs, for local, academic or business-to-business communities as well as broader communities such as music or the arts, lifestyle and lifestyle, interests and pursuits.</p> <p>UK publishers prefer governmental moves that encourage a self-regulatory approach to online trading, supported by existing laws governing commercial activity.</p> <p>The UK must play a leading role ensuring an e-friendly approach is adopted at European and international levels.</p> <p><b>The Government should</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct policies which make the UK a destination of choice for the development and trading of online services</li> <li>• Combat policies, especially at the European level, which might impinge on content and advertising legal in the UK</li> <li>• Encourage consumer confidence in e-commerce transactions by fostering high trading standards through self-regulatory redress mechanisms.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow UK companies to be exposed to laws in other countries when pursuing trading practices legal in this country</li> <li>• Allow privacy arguments unduly to restrict legitimate commercial activity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Super-retailers must not have power to censor the Press</b></p> <p>The main route to market for newspapers and magazines is through a complex supply chain ensuring the widest achievable availability of the greatest possible diversity of news, opinion, ideas and entertainment.</p> <p>As multiple retailers take an ever-greater share of sales of newspapers and magazines the fear grows that they will want to control the Press supply chain as they do most others. In the case of the newspaper and magazine supply chain they would gain the power of decision over which publications reach the market. In short, to assume the power of censorship.</p> <p>While publishers strongly support moves to update the supply chain, bringing improved service levels and reduced waste, they also believe such essential changes are best achieved in a consensual way by the industry itself.</p> <p><b>The Government should</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept that a free and diverse Press needs a secure route to market and that absolute territorial protection for supplies is the only way to achieve this.</li> <li>• Encourage a consensual outcome</li> <li>• Discourage super-retailers from seeking a position where they could jeopardise freedom of expression and a free Press.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Government should not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regard freedom of expression and a free and diverse Press as an issue able to be safeguarded by a competition authority.</li> </ul>
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## In summary...

**UK plc can be justly proud of its robust publishing industries. They are world class – and in many respects, best in class.**

Publishers of newspapers, magazines, journals, books and data are leaders in a wide variety of new and exciting related ways which will ensure that their core businesses continue to thrive in the changing market conditions of an information - and e-information - society. UK Publishing Media represents an important area of growth for UK plc. We ask any political party seeking to run UK plc to be aware of the diverse contribution our £22bn sector makes within the creative industries and urge that policies are developed which encourage this growth to continue. Thank you for your support.

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