

Mass Media in the USA

1. Read the text

Newspapers

The power of press in the USA is enormous. The U.S. Constitution guarantees freedom of press and the press media act as a check on governmental action.

The largest daily newspapers published in the USA are The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times (which was published in 1851 by Henry Raymond), The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, The Chicago Tribune and many others. All these are serious „quality papers“ or broadsheets, which offer more serious information about politics, home and national news, also information about sport, art, music...But they do not offer only government information as some foreigners believe.

Reading the Sunday paper is an American tradition. There are 762 Sunday newspapers in US. The New York Times is ranked as „the world’s top daily.“

There are state, city, and local newspapers. A few of the best-known newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal can be found throughout the country.

The most popular are tabloids, which are more popular than broadsheets. Articles in these papers are not very long and serious, they usually have huge pictures, they use strip cartoons and humorous drawings and reacting for some political events. The most popular tabloid in US is USA Today’s.

The largest American newspapers also collect and sell news, news features and photographs to many other newspapers in the USA and abroad.

The two U.S. news agencies are there: AP (Associated Press) and UPI (United Press International). There is no official or government-owned news agency in the U.S., there are no official or government-owned newspapers. There is no state censorship, no „official secrets act. “

Magazines

There are over 11 000 magazines published in the United States. They cover all topics and interests and some have international editions, e. g. National Geographic or Vogue.

TV

There are three privately owned networks, which offer free programming financed by commercials – NBC, CBS and ABC.

In the meantime, the fourth major commercial network, FOX, has come into being and challenged the big three networks, several local TV stations have switched their affiliation from one of the big three to the newcomer. Two more national networks – WB and UPN – have also come along, and the number of cable television channels continues to expand.

Hundreds of radio stations of USA broadcast in other languages than English for minorities. Millions of American TV viewers watch television transmitted over cables. The cable TV is very popular as it increases the number of channels. Since the time the U.S. launched the world's first communication space satellite in 1965, the satellite TV has become quite common in the U.S.A. and other countries of the world.

There are 335 public television stations across the U.S. and each of which is independent and serves its community's interests.

RADIO

In the U.S. besides the 10 000 commercial radio stations are also 1 400 public radio stations, which broadcast for educational purposes and are financed by public funds and private donations.

Internet

The Internet is a very popular source of information. It brings news, facts or scandals, news about celebrities or the royal families.

In 1993, TIME became the first magazine to offer an on-line edition. In 1996, software magnate Bill Gates started SLATE, a magazine covering politics and culture that was intended to be available exclusively on-line and the Slate's publisher soon decided to add a print version.

Most American newspapers are available on the Internet, and anyone with a personal computer and a link to the Internet can scan papers from across the country.

Appendix 1.

Vocabulary: The Wall Street Journal, AP (Associated Press), National Geographic, UPN, The New York Times, CBS , 762, UPI (United Press International), The New York Times, FOX, The Washington Post, 11 000, Vogue, NBC, The Los Angeles Times, WB, The Chicago Tribune, SLATE, ABC, 10 000, 335

2. Complete the chart

US daily newspapers	
Number of Sunday newspapers	
news agencies	
Number of magazines	
international editions	
four privately owned networks	
Two national networks	
Number of public television stations	
Number of commercial radio stations	
the first on-line magazine edition	

3. Fill in the gaps using the words: guarantees, offer, ranked, cover, challenged, continues, increases, started.

The U.S. Constitution _____ freedom of press.

American „quality papers“ or broadsheets do not _____ only government information as some foreigners believe.

The New York Times is _____ as „the world’s top daily.“

US magazines _____ all topics and interests and some have international editions

FOX _____ the big three networks.

The number of cable television channels _____ to expand.

The cable TV is very popular as it _____ the number of channels.

Bill Gates _____ SLATE

4. Answer the questions

1. Why can we say that media act as a check on governmental action?
2. What is one more American tradition?
3. Why is the cable TV so popular?
4. How are US radio stations financed?
5. What did Bill Gates start in Mass Media?