



Michael Kilian
Executive Editor
Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
USA TODAY NETWORK

Deadline changes reflect continuing evolution of reader habits, preferences

Dear D&C readers:

The local news business is rapidly evolving, thanks to advances in technology and the shifting pace of daily life. As readership habits and preferences change, the Democrat and Chronicle is changing with you in terms of the content we deliver to serve Greater Rochester readers.

Traffic to our pages online grew 6 percent in the past year. Projections are that our digital subscription totals will surpass our print newspaper subscription level in the next few years. And high school sports generate more new digital readership than any other topic, reflecting local community pride and the fact every athlete is someone's child, grandchild or neighbor. Other online subscription drivers: Food and drink coverage and stories about the impact of growth and development on our city and towns.

In short, we grow our audience and support our business when we serve up the stories that matter most to large numbers of people.

This evolution of local news is also causing some painful changes to our printed newspaper. Because newspapers no longer break news in print, our deadlines are moving much earlier. This week, we close the D&C's printing plant at Canal Ponds Business Park in Greece, costing more than 100 hard-working people their jobs.

Whether you prefer to read the D&C on paper with your morning coffee or on your smartphone while you are waiting to pick up your kids from lacrosse practice, we remain committed to serving you and covering news in and around Rochester and the Finger Lakes. Rest assured, our commitment to you is unwavering even amid considerable change and challenge in a world of 24/7 cable TV news and a wide array of social media channels.

If you are a longtime reader of the printed newspaper, you've noticed its role has changed. We're long past the years when you'd pick up a newspaper to see if the Yankees won last night or to learn about what happened in Washington yesterday. Nearly always, you already know those things.

So the newspaper, starting with the front page, is a place to read in depth about things and places and people that matter to the quality of life here in Western New York. Many stories are analytical in nature, answering "how?" and "why?" about changes at a business or about why your utility bill might have been so high.

In short, when you already know basic details of news events, the printed newspaper's job is to help explain what it all means and how the news might affect your family and you. Indeed, we expanded our Sunday opinion section in 2021 to give you an extra page of insights about both local and national issues.

Your paper version of the D&C will always offer the tried-and-true features you love.

The comics, of course. Puzzles? Many of you are experts at these. Coverage of restaurants and food trends in our Friday Flavors section remains highly popular. Our Thursday Weekend section helps you plan the things you'll do each week.

And we expanded the Sunday newspaper nearly two years ago. It can take a long time to read the whole thing. Of that, we are proud.

So what value will the printed D&C have going forward? Quite a bit. Simply put, it is like a friend that comes to visit you for coffee every morning.

When you want the latest news of the day, however, you'll want to visit www.DemocratandChronicle.com, or download the D&C app onto your phone, or follow our Instagram, Twitter or Facebook accounts on social media. Or subscribe to one of our emailed newsletters, which curate the most important general news or topical news on subjects like food, high school sports and the Buffalo Bills.

As for you die-hard sports fans, you'll want to bookmark www.usatoday.com/sports to keep up with everything you might want to know about professional or college sports. If the print newspaper can't give you timely accounts of games and listings of standings and statistics, our colleagues at usatoday.com sure can, and they do.

Local news will always survive, whatever the challenges. The D&C is proud to be part of a long line of Rochester journalists dating back two centuries who have sought to meet those challenges and surmount them. So please visit our website or app or social media channels 1-2 times daily. And enjoy the printed newspaper with your coffee.

No matter what, our journalists are here to serve you, our loyal readers. Thank you.

Michael Kilian is executive editor of the D&C. Email him at mkilian@gannett.com.