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Harrisburg paper begins publishing a 'compact' edition

HARRISBURG, PA -- The Patriot-News Company, of Harrisburg, has joined a select group of newspapers around the world by publishing a "compact" format of its daily edition, The Patriot-News. Some of the largest markets and most prestigious papers in the world have switched to smaller, more concise newspaper formats. The Patriot-News is one of the first papers in the United States to offer the new format and is the only newspaper in the country to offer both formats of the newspaper every weekday so that readers can choose the format that fits their lifestyle.

The new edition is called "The Patriot -- a compact edition of The Patriot-News." It features a smaller size and easy-to-navigate format. It still contains local, national and world news, The Patriot simply presents it in a format better suited to people with busy lifestyles.

"The one-size-fits-all model is no longer ideal for newspapers in today's marketplace, any more than it is ideal for magazines or cars or spaghetti sauce," said John Kirkpatrick, president, publisher and editor, of The Patriot-News Company. "You can now buy nine different versions of a Hershey's Kiss, but only one version of the daily newspaper." Like the chocolates, one version of the paper is not superior to the other, it's a matter of personal preference.

"Over and over, we've heard time-starved consumers and other occasional readers of The Patriot-News say they would value a compact, condensed version of The Patriot-News," says Kirkpatrick. The Patriot has answered these requests with a smaller size and a format that includes an index and color-coding for easy navigation, and an appealing mix of news, sports and lifestyle features.

The Patriot offers the opportunity for advertisers to expand their reach by capturing a larger share of time-starved adults, women and young adults. That is, adults who are busy working, raising families, participating in extra-familial activities, etc. The compact edition has been designed to fit their needs and has been modified to suit their lifestyle as a result feedback from focus group sessions. Because it is an edition of the paper, ads that appear in The Patriot-News will also appear in The Patriot. Ads in The Patriot will be reduced in size, but offer the same page impact.

The Patriot was designed to meet the needs of the on-the-go audience, so it's not an exact replica of The Patriot-News. Only the most compelling local and national news stories are included in The Patriot and almost all news stories begin and end on the same page. A color-coded index and pages are easy to navigate. While The Patriot does not publish the entire stock table, there are stocks of interest. Sports, entertainment and Home & Garden sections are in The Patriot.

Larger metro markets have successfully switched to smaller, tabloid-size papers, but would a smaller market in central Pennsylvania be receptive to, or even desire, such a change? Earlier this year, The Patriot-News Company held a series of focus groups conducted by Strategic Eye, of Hershey, Pa., to find out. The response to The Patriot prototypes was overwhelmingly positive and the information gathered allowed The Patriot-News Company to fine-tune The Patriot to meet the information needs of time-starved adults, women and younger adults. Some of the positive comments from the focus groups included: "it fits my life"; "it's for me"; "it's for on-the-go folks"; "it gives me what I need and does it quickly and neatly"; and "makes you want to reach for the paper more."

The Patriot is distributed wherever you can purchase The Patriot-News, in newspaper vendor boxes throughout central Pennsylvania and by home delivery. A Web site, www.patriot-news.com/thepatriot, has been set up for readers to learn more about the product and to voice their opinions.

The Patriot-News is a regional daily and Sunday newspaper serving Dauphin, Cumberland, Lebanon, Perry and Northern York counties. It provides award-winning coverage of world and local news, but is equally noted for excellence in entertainment, feature and diversity reporting. The company is headquartered in Harrisburg, and has six news bureaus and a press facility located throughout central Pennsylvania. It is part of the Newhouse News Group.

The Patriot-News takes pride in staying at the forefront of the newspaper industry. Since 2000 alone, it has invested in a Goss Colorliner press and state-of-the-art newspaper production facility, and introduced an entirely new design, new sections and new niche magazines. In 2004, The Patriot-News earned over 30 industry awards, celebrated its 150th anniversary, successfully converted the Sports section to a tabloid size and introduced Go!, the area's largest entertainment guide.