

Research Title:

Training Needs Assessment of Independent Newspaper Managers in South Africa



Prepared by: Tiffany Tracey, Johanna Mavhungu, Pete Du Toit and Francis Mdlongwa
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Executive summary

The following report details the results an investigation conducted by the Sol Plaatjie Institute for Media Leadership (SPI), funded by the MDDA, into the business training needs of independent community newspapers in South Africa. The research is intended to assist in the development of a course, to be carried out by SPI, to equip managers to run successful and sustainable newspaper businesses within the competitive and time consuming context of the community print sector. Managers are often unable to leave the business for extended periods to receive training (or take part in research), and this is a need that must be considered in structuring a course. By encouraging community newspapers in this manner, it is hoped that a more diverse and democratic media environment can be fostered.

The research described below thus explores what business skills are needed in the sector. By gathering the opinions of the independent community newspaper sector in general, experienced managers of newspapers, and managers of newspapers that have recently started, an overall picture of these training needs can be constructed. Further opinions from trainers of media practitioners are intended to assist in understanding the structure of a course curriculum.

Thus the research comprised four phases:

1. A quantitative survey to elicit general opinion from the sector;
2. Three focus groups with experienced managers;
3. Email and telephonic interviews with managers of papers that have recently begun;
4. A qualitative questionnaire sent to media trainers.

The findings of the research reflect two overarching concerns: training content and training delivery. It is a central finding of the research that financial skills are required by the sector. Related to this is the need to encourage professional

attitudes, processes, and systems within the sector. It is necessary to manage the business in a professional manner in order to gain the support of the community as well as advertisers. Such support contributes to the sustainability of the business. In terms of delivery, on-site training, mentorships and information exchange are emphasised because of the managers' time and resource constraints. While accredited, theoretical training is perceived as important and worthwhile, participants emphasised the importance of experiential training.

The research concludes with a detailed outline of a new qualification the SPI will be seeking to register which will enable it to make a contribution to the small independent community newspaper sector.

The research has encountered one central obstacle. The sector is characterised by competition and lack of resources, thus managers are not able to leave their businesses for extended periods of time, and do not always answer telephone calls or emails that are not an immediate priority.

Acronyms

AIP	Association of Independent Publishers
LSM	Living Standard Measure
MDDA	Media Development and Diversity Agency
PDU	Print Development Unit
PDMM	Postgraduate Diploma in Media Management
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPI	Sol Plaatjie Institute for Media Leadership

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1. Introduction

The Sol Plaatjie Institute for Media Leadership (SPI) is a semi-autonomous unit affiliated with the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University. The Institute was established in late-2002 to contribute to developing management capacity in all media sectors across the SADC region. SPI offers courses for media professionals accredited by Rhodes University on a broad range of topics, as well as the year-long Postgraduate Diploma in Media Management (PDMM). The Institute incorporates a research unit that explores areas of interest to managers in the media industry and which informs the SPI's training and educational activities.

Further to building management capacity in the region and especially in South Africa, the Institute is exploring the possibility of developing and designing a training programme for managers and owners of independent newspapers in South Africa. Because the Institute is aware that the challenges that these media stakeholders¹ encounter are significantly different from those encountered by stakeholders in larger corporate publications, this course must be structured with these particular needs in mind. This awareness stems from and was emphasised by the research and writing of the MDDA funded booklet *Key Editorial and Business Strategies: A Case Study of Six Independent Community Newspapers*. SPI intended to build on the findings from this previous research and extend knowledge of the sector by conducting the present research, in order to develop appropriate business management training.

¹ The term community newspaper has been used throughout the document. We are aware that there is ongoing debate over the most appropriate nomenclature, but have chosen this term because, from our perspective, it does capture the essence of what small independent publications operating in geographically bounded areas seek to accomplish, i.e. creating a central meeting space where members of a community can talk to and among themselves.

2. The research in context

In the post 1994 South African context, there has been a shift from newspapers that focused on issues associated with struggle politics to papers structured to reflect the concerns of a community. Thus the Print Development Unit (PDU) (2002) notes that there has been a shift towards entrepreneurship, and a similar shift in business practice is also required. The focus has shifted from newspapers serving a political agenda in the interests of liberation to newspapers continuing to make an ongoing contribution to transformation and community building. As Milne, Rau, du Toit and Mdlongwa (2006) suggest a community newspaper's success as a small business is contingent on its ability to bring communities together while simultaneously promoting business development and growth in the area it serves.

In this section the necessity of balancing social with business concerns is discussed. The particular climate in which independent community newspapers currently exists, involves certain opportunities and limitations, as well as a complex range of skills that are required to manage sustainable enterprises. Considering the scope of skills that are required as well as the limitations involved, the manner in which business training is delivered to newspaper managers is also an important consideration.

2.1 Independent community newspapers: balancing social and business concerns

Community papers typically serve specific communities, such that content is informed by the target community's needs. The PDU (2002) suggests that they promote diversity, in terms of geographical coverage, language and class in the emerging South African media landscape. They may also serve as an interface between government and a community, thus fostering a climate of social justice, and a strengthened civil society, through access to information and participation in dialogue and change (Toft & Cunningham, 2007). By representing experience,

concerns and opinions outside of the mainstream, community newspapers contribute to a climate of democracy (Howley, 2007). Their role is thus significant on numerous social and political levels.

While these social concerns are of importance, there are also market related challenges to serving this role. Many community newspapers serve an emerging lower class. The rise in population, improved literacy, rapid urbanisation and current events has lead to an increased low-end market. It is this market that the PDU (2002) believes community media needs to tap into, and it is an editorial challenge to reflect the lives, experience, aspirations and needs of this emergent lower class. As such community outreach and a participatory environment should be viewed as a necessity, rather than a luxury, to the success of a small print venture (Milne, Rau, du Toit & Mdlongwa, 2006). Such interventions not only develop society but also increase the relevance and visibility of the business (PDU, 2002).

These political, social and cultural concerns can be viewed as impetus towards specific editorial processes and procedures that are not fully separable from good business practices. Editorial concerns shape readers and thereby advertisers' perception of the paper and these perceptions are vital to sales of the paper as well as the advertising that forms the bulk of revenue (Milne, Rau, du Toit & Mdlongwa, 2006). The PDU (2002) believes that small print businesses need to develop the required to to tap into these emerging markets and editors and managers need to

The ability to tap into and serve this low-end market is however, compromised by advertisers' reluctance to invest as well as a lack of resources associated with serving an economically marginalised sector of society. Pillay (2003) suggests that the low-end market is perceived to have a lack of disposable income, so that advertisers seem reluctant to invest. However, community media has the potential to build a participatory democracy on which a strong economy could be

founded on, and could reach a large, previously untapped market. As such, advertisers should perhaps rethink their reluctance (PDU, 2002).

The reluctance of advertisers to invest is also reflected in difficulties in getting bank loans, and a general lack of resources and skills characterises the sector (PDU, 2002). Small media houses seldom have substantial financial reserves and this can make them vulnerable to pressures from advertisers wishing to compromise their editorial independence. Small publication also seldom have their own printing facilities and are reliant on those provided by the large commercial publishers, which can impinge on their ability to fully control their own production processes. Competition from other businesses and municipal papers also plague the small print business and may be in competition for advertising revenue. In this way Milne, Rau, du Toit & Mdlongwa (2006) remark that editorial and business matters are again intertwined.

2.2 Range of skills

Business training thus needs to address this complex arena of journalistic, political, financial, marketing and production concerns. The ability to adequately balance all of these concerns may be vital to creating a sustainable enterprise. Here we refer to PDU's (2002) definition of sustainability as "the ability to stay in business and provide on-going, valuable spin-offs to the community". This involves the creation of trust at all levels of the business and journalistic enterprise, including truthful reporting and ethical dealings with funders and suppliers (Milne, Rau, du Toit & Mdlongwa, 2006).

Milne, du Toit and Rau (2006) have explored media management training needs of media managers across the SADC region. Their findings reflect the merging of political, social and business concerns, and they identify the following central knowledge areas:

- General management
- Human resource management and leadership

- Editorial leadership
- Financial management

The research also explored issues surrounding management of materials, but these are excluded here as beyond the scope of the project. The relevant areas shall be described in more depth below.

- General management

A successful newspaper should be structured and managed to meet the objectives and goals associated with community media. As such, a mission statement to guide the newspaper is important to aligning social with business concerns. A comprehensive business plan, outlining the organisational, financial, advertising, marketing and editorial structure of the newspaper is central to ensuring that the business is appropriately placed in relation to its market. Because of the social relevance of these kinds of businesses, appropriate policies to guide activities inside the workplace need to be developed, implemented and monitored. Change management to successfully negotiate diversity and transformation in the workplace is also essential (Milne, du Toit & Rau, 2006) and can assist in enacting an organisational structure appropriate to the work associated with community engagement and representation (Toft & Cunningham, 2007).

- Human resource management and leadership

Toft and Cunningham (2007) suggest that organisations that work for social change and democracy need to reflect these aims in their organisational structure, and as such managers need to develop an appropriate management style and implement appropriate processes. Employees in community newspapers often work in a very stressful, demanding environment for very little pay (PDU, 2002). As such, skills in managing human resources and in effectively leading staff are essential. Clear job descriptions outlining tasks and responsibilities are invaluable, and performance appraisals can help to monitor the needs, limitations and strengths of each employee. Employees need to be

supported in their difficulties and motivated through times of difficulty, and helped through group conflicts and problems (Milne, du Toit & Rau, 2006).

- Editorial leadership

In order to reflect the concerns of a community or communities of interest, it is necessary for an independent community newspaper to maintain clear editorial policies governing the content of the paper. An independent community newspaper should be managed in such a way that editorial independence is maintained (PDU, 2002). This requires strong editorial leadership, skills in organising editorial and production teams, basic journalistic skills as well as skills in reporting on particular fields (Milne, du Toit & Rau, 2006). It is also important that market research be conducted in order to maintain awareness of concerns of the community. It is also important that a culture of participation and a sense of ownership be fostered through community involvement with the newspaper (Howley, 2007). This can assist in the creation of a unique identity that is distinct from competition in the marketplace and skills in understanding and managing competition (Milne, du Toit & Rau, 2006).

- Financial management

Proper financial systems, that monitor credits to and debts of the business, are essential to the business of managing an independent community newspaper (PDU, 2002). Skills that ensure that revenue is brought into the business, through increased circulation, securing of advertising, grants from funders or other income generating activities, are essential to the success of a community newspaper. A general knowledge of market trends that effect the environment in which the newspaper is marketed may also impact on the business' ability to place itself within the market successfully (Milne, du Toit & Rau, 2006).

2.3 Delivering skills to the sector

A wide range of skills is required to obtain and maintain the balance between social and business concerns, and yet the sector is characterised by a lack of

skills. Community papers seldom generate the revenues attracted by large corporate media houses and are thus unlikely to retain and attract qualified employees who are lured away by more lucrative offers from these large titles. These small papers are also generally understaffed meaning that, even if they could afford to pay for training for their staff, they cannot afford to release people to attend courses. As such, training that addresses the knowledge and skills relating to the areas identified above must be delivered in a manner that accommodates the limitations of independent community newspapers and this poses a significant challenge (Milne, Rau, du Toit & Mdlongwa, 2006).

Research conducted by the PDU (2002) has suggested that on-site training, tailored to the needs of the organisation is necessary. Experiential, on-the-job learning provides the opportunity to practice skills that may have been learnt in theory, and can assist in remembering and problem-solving in the implementation of a skill. Milne, du Toit and Rau (2006) suggest that community newspaper practitioners may favour exchange programmes and learnerships that can extend seminars and workshops on-site. Internet resources and distance learning may provide a supportive network that can enable continued, on-site learning.

Research for the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) has suggested that mentoring is required. Ideally a mentor would be employed by the MDDA on a full-time basis, in order to travel between organisations for regular on-site mentoring sessions. The PDU (2002) suggests that a general skilling of the industry is required, and this would involve alliances between tertiary institutions, industry and new print media. Basic and more advanced journalistic, management and business skills can be provided by many accredited tertiary institutions around the country. Partnerships and networks between organisations may enable the sharing of resources and knowledge, and conferences in which practitioners meet to discuss relevant issues could enable such sharing. These kinds of skills are essential in providing a sound basis for the management of an independent community newspaper business (Milne, Rau & du Toit, 2006).

There is however little literature or research to define the kinds of training that is required. The following research seeks to address this short-fall by exploring the kinds of content that small print ventures require as part of business training as well as the format that such knowledge transfer might take.

3. The research process

3.1 Rationale for the study

The research aims to enhance the understanding of staff at the SPI in relation to the training needs of managers of nascent and struggling independent community newspaper businesses. It also aims to aid the Institute in considering how it could most effectively make a contribution by developing a comprehensive course curriculum that would benefit these managers. However, as will become evident, this is no simple task. The sector is complex and the constraints faced by managers make the development of a formal programme exceptionally tricky. In considering a new curriculum this study thus draws primarily on the knowledge and insights of seasoned managers in the industry in identifying a set of important training areas. The insights of these managers were then tested against the current experiences of managers from emerging and often struggling publications and further insights were obtained from media trainers with experience of working in this sector.

3.2 Problem statement

Independent community newspapers have a significant role to play in a democratic media environment in South Africa. Media stakeholders in this sector experience unique challenges and require training in all areas of business management in order to equip them to meet these challenges. Furthermore, managers in this sector can ill afford to leave their newspapers for lengthy periods in order to receive training. Research is required to better understand what training managers in the sector require as well as how to deliver this knowledge.

3.3 Research objectives

The research seeks to understand the needs of independent community newspaper managers, with regards to business management, as well as how best to deliver this training. The research will focus on two aspects of training:

- Content areas to include in training;
- Delivery of training.

In order to gain an overarching picture of these needs, several communities of stakeholders must be accessed:

- The general category of independent community newspaper managers in South Africa;
- Experienced managers of independent community newspapers in South Africa (who can inform on best practice in the sector);
- Managers who have recently started their business, or who have identified difficulties with sustaining their newspaper (who can therefore provide insight into the difficulties this sector faces);
- Media trainers (who can assist in structuring a curriculum).

3.4 Research process

The research involved four phases that made use of a mixed methods design (Creswell, 2003). The phases were intended to enrich and extend one another, such that data could be collected to contribute towards the construction of a comprehensive course in business skills for independent community newspapers:

- **Phase One**

In the first phase a quantitative survey was conducted to gather a range of ideas regarding what kinds of content areas should be included, as well as how business training should be conducted. A questionnaire was administered by email and/or fax to every independent community newspaper in South Africa on the Association of Independent Publishers (AIP) database. Data from the 30 fully completed, returned questionnaires was entered into a spreadsheet and then analysed statistically using the Statistica software package.

- **Phase Two**

In the second phase of the research, three focus groups with experienced managers and publishers of independent community newspapers were held in Johannesburg, Durban and East London. These newspapers were included according to the following criterion outlined by Milne, Rau, du Toit & Mdlongwa, (2006):

- Be independently or community owned, with a commitment to ensuring that historically disadvantaged communities be involved in the leadership or governance of the publication;
- Publish at least one edition per month;
- Be financially sustainable;
- Serve all sectors of the community, including the lower ends of Living Standard Measure (LSM) scales;
- Be committed to promoting media plurality, diversity and democratic governance;
- Be committed to providing readers with solid journalistic content;
- Be able to serve as a model for small newspapers in terms of editorial and business practice.

Here managers and publishers with already-developed skills and experience in the sector assisted understanding what skills a manager of a newspaper business in the sector may need to be taught. The focus groups were audio-taped, transcribed verbatim and analysed according to a simple thematic analysis as outlined by Kelly (1999). This analysis reveals themes in a data set, as well as the relationships between themes.

• **Phase Three**

In the third phase of the research, newspapers that had recently started or identified issues around their business' sustainability in the first phase questionnaire were interviewed. Every newspaper that had started before January 2007 on the AIP database was invited to take part, but only three responded. This phase enabled those managers for whom business training is an immediate need, to provide input into the development of a curriculum for

training. The interviews were conducted over email and telephone, and where necessary transcribed verbatim from audio-tape. The data was analysed according to a simple thematic analysis as outlined by Kelly (1999).

- **Phase Four**

In the fourth phase of the research, nine facilitators recommended as key informants on business training by the MDDA and SPI staff were contacted. Each informant was asked to review a summary of findings from the first three phases of the research, and to fill in a qualitative questionnaire. At least one informant indicated that she was not suitable to answer questions concerning business training. Three indicated that they were too busy to take part in the research. Only two of the facilitators provided written feedback.

4. Phase One: Quantitative Survey

In the following sections, descriptive statistics and non-parametric tests are used to describe responses to questionnaire items (for more detailed analyses of this data see appendix B). A total of 30 responses to the questionnaire were received from the 207 that were distributed, representing a response rate of 14.5%. While this seems to represent a poor response rate, anecdotal evidence suggests that this is a relatively good response rate. It is possible that a comparatively high number of newspaper managers responded to this phase because it required only a few minutes to complete. Managers in this sector have significant time constraints, and this seemed to be a barrier to participation in subsequent phases. (This issue is described further in section 6.)

4.1 Business training areas

The following sections concern content areas that are necessary for training in business skills in the context of the South African independent community newspaper sector. Four focus areas and indicators of these areas were derived from the survey of independent newspaper business training needs in the SADC region conducted by Milne, du Toit and Rau (2006). These focus areas structured the questionnaire as well as the following discussion:

- General management
- Human resource management and leadership
- Editorial leadership
- Financial management

4.1.1 General management

The following content areas were used as indicators of general management training needs derived from the survey by Milne, du Toit and Rau (2006):

- Construction of a mission statement with clear goals and objectives;
- Development of a comprehensive business plan;
- Development, implementation and monitoring appropriate policies;

- Management of diversity of race, class, gender, sexuality, HIV status etc. in the workplace;
- Development of successful partnerships with other organisations.

The following content areas were ranked as very necessary:

- Business plan construction (60%),
- Partnerships with other organisations (60%).

Statistical analyses revealed the following group of related indicators:

- Development, implementation and monitoring of appropriate policies;
- Management of diversity with regards to race, class, gender, sexuality, HIV status etc. in the workplace; and
- Construction of a mission statement with clear goals and objectives.

This group of related indicators could suggest that training in how to construct a mission for an independent community newspaper business requires coherence with training in sensitivity to diversity and appropriate use of policies.

A separate relationship between knowledge of how to develop a comprehensive business plan and knowledge of how to develop successful partnerships with other organisations could suggest that training in constructing a business plan could be extended with knowledge of how this business could effectively and efficiently relate to other businesses and organisations.

4.1.2 Human resource management and leadership

The following content areas were used as indicators of human resource and management training needs derived from the survey by Milne, du Toit and Rau (2006):

- Construction of job descriptions that define tasks and responsibilities;
- Development of an appropriate management style;
- Management of groups, teams and interpersonal conflict;
- Means to evaluate staff performance;

- Support of staff development;
- Motivation of employees.

The following content areas were ranked as very necessary:

- Motivation of employees (77%),
- Staff performance evaluation (56%),
- Support of staff development (53%),
- Management of groups, teams and interpersonal conflict (50%).

Statistical tests reveal an association between knowledge of how to manage groups, teams and interpersonal conflict with knowledge of how to support of staff development. This strong association could reflect a concern for effectively managing the dynamics of an organisation while also supporting the growth of that organisation through staff development.

Three further indicators were strong correlated:

- Staff performance evaluation;
- Construction of job descriptions; and
- Management of groups, teams and interpersonal conflict.

This group of related indicators suggests that concern for organisational dynamics can be managed through clear understanding of job descriptions, performance management techniques, and attention to staff and conflict management.

Content related to construction of job descriptions is linked with knowledge of how to evaluate staff performance. Understanding of the job description process could perhaps usefully be related to understanding of how to conduct evaluations of staff performance.

Further, staff performance evaluation was also associated with knowledge of how to support staff development. This relationship suggests that knowledge of how to

appraise performance should be linked with strategies of encouraging better performance or rewarding good performance with developmental training.

These groups of related indicators strongly suggest that organisational dynamics are relevant to independent community newspaper businesses. Proper organisational systems could assist organisational dynamics. (This is extended by the qualitative data, presented in section 5 below.)

4.1.3 Editorial leadership

The following content areas were used as indicators of editorial leadership training:

- Maintenance of editorial independence;
- Organisation and structuring of editorial and production teams;
- Understanding and management of competition;
- Conducting and using audience research;
- Construction of interventions that include the participation of the community(ies);
- Development of a unique product identity that is distinct from the competition.

The following content areas were ranked as very necessary:

- Development of a product identity (73%),
- Maintenance of editorial independence (70%),
- Competition management (70%),
- Organisation of editorial and production teams (47%),
- Audience research techniques (47%).

There was a strong statistical relationship between knowledge of how to maintain editorial independence and content related to organisation of editorial and production teams. The association of these content areas relates the specific

concerns of the manager for maintaining editorial independence, with concerns for organisational dynamics and team work.

A separate relationship between content related to developing a unique product identity that is distinct from the competition is associated with knowledge of how to understand and manage competition. The association of these indicators suggests that it is necessary to understand the business context in which a newspaper is distributed in order to construct a specific, unique product.

Another weak association, between knowledge of how to lead community participation and knowledge of how to construct a unique product identity, could suggest that the creation of a unique product relies on understanding of the audience as well as this community's participation in the process. It is noteworthy that knowledge of how to lead interventions that include the participation of community(ies) is correlated only to knowledge of how to develop a unique product identity that is distinct from the competition.

4.1.4 Financial management

The following knowledge areas were used as indicators of financial management training:

- Fundraising and conducting of income generation strategies;
- Keeping track of debtors and creditors;
- Understanding of market trends that impact on the newspaper industry;
- Development of budgets;
- Writing of funding proposals;
- Securing of advertisers;
- Establishment and management of a distribution network;
- Increase of circulation.

The following content areas were ranked as very necessary:

- How to secure advertisers (87%),

- Distribution management (83%),
- Keeping trace of finances (83%),
- Understanding of market trends (80%),
- How to increase circulation (73%),
- Budget development (70%),
- Income generation strategies (40%).

A strong relationship exists between knowledge of how to develop a budget and knowledge of how to keep track of debtors and creditors. This correlation may reflect the association between these skills, in that it is necessary to keep track of finances in order to successfully manage a budget.

An equally strong correlation was revealed between knowledge of how to understand market trends that impact on the newspaper industry and knowledge of how to establish and manage a distribution network. This association may reflect the necessity of understanding the financial and market context in which a paper is produced and distributed. Interestingly, this indicator is associated with finances, while it could also be related to production concerns. The survey provides no means to investigate this potential interpretation.

4.1.5 Conclusion

The following are knowledge areas that were ranked as very necessary by more than 70% of the total responses. It is noteworthy that all these knowledge areas are indicators of financial management:

- Securing advertisers: 87%
- Distribution management: 83%
- Understanding of market trends: 80%
- Circulation increase: 73%
- Budgeting: 70%

Three central relationships arise from these important content areas. These relationships suggest the importance of financial skills, knowledge of the economic context in which the independent community newspaper business operates and understanding of how to situate the product within this context. As such the relationships suggest that training content needs to be strongly situated and related to the local context of the paper:

- Statistical tests show similarity between content related to understanding market trends and how to manage a budget. The similarity suggests that these content areas are of comparable importance and could be a focus of business training.
- Statistical similarity was apparent between content related to how to understand market trends and how to develop a unique product identity. This association implies an extension of the financial management skills into marketing skills and content areas.
- Another similarity between content related to how to develop a product identity and how to manage a budget was revealed. The similarity is closer between market trends and product identity than between market trends and budgeting. Thus it seems that concerns for marketing are related to financial management, and may be of greater importance.

These financial management skills are also associated with organisational management, specifically of human resource management and of maintenance of an independent editorial stance. As such, financial management skills should related to the concern for the organisation structure including staff, as well as the purpose of the newspaper.

- Both knowledge related to understanding market trends and the management of a budget are statistically similar to content related to how

to motivate employees. This relationship suggests that the economic context is an important factor in relating to staff.

- Both understanding of market trends and the management of a budget are statistically similar to content related to how to maintain editorial independence. In this way, the financial management of the business is related to editorial and production concerns. That is, the economic environment has an impact on the manner in which the newspaper is produced.

Organisational concerns for motivating staff and for directing the newspaper towards independence are again associated with the economic context of the business. Both these distributions are similar to content related to managing competition.

4.2 Knowledge delivery

The following sections relate to modes in which content areas might be delivered to independent community media practitioners. The first section concerns training that is accredited and the second section deals with modes of training that are focused on experiential learning. In the final section, there is a brief exploration of limitations to training delivery experienced in the sector.

4.2.1 Accredited training

50% of the sample ranked accredited training as very necessary. Only 8% of the distribution ranked accredited training as somewhat unnecessary, unnecessary or very unnecessary.

The modes of accredited training were ranked as follows:

- 50% ranked short courses as very appropriate.
- 50% ranked distance training and on-line courses as appropriate.
- Tertiary training was most frequently ranked as of neutral appropriateness.

The strongest statistical relationship is between on-line and distance training. This association could suggest that the best manner in which to deliver training over a distance is via on-line media. A further association between short courses and on-line modes suggest that on-line media might also be an effective manner in which to deliver short courses in business training.

Another relationship is suggested between learnerships training and distance and on-line training. This somewhat weak association could suggest that respondents perceive a need for a face-to-face, practical component to distance and on-line modes of delivery.

4.2.2 Experiential training

A larger proportion of the sample than for accredited training (61%) ranked experiential training as very appropriate.

The following were ranked as very appropriate:

- On-site training (63%),
- Mentoring (50%),
- Exchange programmes (43%).

The strongest statistical relationship exists between mentoring and exchanges of information. This association could suggest that mentoring should take place as an exchange of information. That is, a practitioner from another organisation could mentor another organisation on a matter they have experience with but that pose as a challenge for the mentored institution. This process could then be reversed.

Another, slightly weaker correlation exists between exchanges of information and on-site training. This association might support the interpretation described above.

4.2.3 Limitations to training

All three limitations measure by the questionnaire were ranked as very appropriate to limiting training in independent community newspapers. Of the 30 responses 18 (60%) rank the lack of relevant courses, 13 (43%) rank lack of time and 12 (40%) rank lack of resources as very appropriate to limiting training. As such, there is little difference between these distributions, suggesting that all create limitations to training in the sector.

4.2.4 Conclusion

Both accredited and experiential training were perceived as appropriate to training independent community newspaper practitioners. Slightly more responses ranked experiential training as appropriate, and slightly fewer as inappropriate, than for accredited training.

Short courses and learnerships were most frequently ranked as very appropriate. The correlation of these modes of training to distance training, as well as the high frequency ranking this mode of training as appropriate, suggest that this mode of training is also perceived as appropriate to training independent community newspaper practitioners.

Of the modes of experiential training measured by the questionnaire, only conferences were ranked neutrally. Exchange programmes, on-site training tailored to the specific organisation and regular mentoring by a dedicated consultant were ranked as very appropriate, while internet resources were ranked as appropriate.

5. Phase Two: Focus groups with experienced managers

Phase Two involved an exploration of the opinions of experienced practitioners in the independent community newspaper sector. Three focus groups were conducted with the following participants.

	Participant	Newspaper
Durban	Shelley Seid	Kwana News
	Sue Comber	Free 4 All
	Barry Comber	Free 4 All
Johannesburg	Diphete Bopape	Seipone
	Paul Crankshaw	Consumer Fair
	Annalie Rautenbach	Eastern Group
	Zaidi Khumalo	Kathorus Mail
East London	Vuyani Mrewtyana	Isizwe
	Ronel Bowles	Grocotts Mail
	Luvuyo Mananga	East Cape Voice
	Siphiwe Fatmann	East Cape Voice
	Zanda Twala	Idikelethu

The participants' responses suggested that training in the management of independent community newspaper business requires entry level standards. Training should be directed at two overarching focal points: at inculcating professionalism in the sector and inspiring community oriented newspapers. These topics shall be described in greater detail in the following sections.

5.1 Standards for entry to training

Participants suggested that training should not be seen as something that can be applied to every manager of an independent community newspaper, and Shelley Seid noted that "training is not a panacea".

Two central criteria for entry into training arising from the focus group discussions that shall be described in more detail in the sections below:

- Inherent qualities of the manager or publisher that predispose them to success.
- A level of experience or education that contextualises understanding of what is learnt.

5.1.1 Inherent qualities

Participants in every focus group expressed the belief that the operators of independent community newspapers need to have an inherent commitment to and enthusiasm for the profession of journalism. Vuyani Mrewtyana reiterated throughout the discussion that “passion” is the most important aspect of running a community newspaper, Sue Comber expressed it as a “hunger” for the work, and Shelley Seid observed that “[y]ou have got to actually love what you’re doing, you've got to really, really love what you do”.

Some participants suggested that without passion for the business and the profession of journalism there is no training that will make a newspaper work. It is a quality that Shelley Seid suggests is a kind of criterion for success in that it “weed[s] out the money makers”. Similarly, Luvuyo Mananga indicates that being a journalist is different from other professions: “Because if you are a journalist and you want money then you are not a journalist. Journalism is quite different from other professions”. Vuyani Mrewtyana describes journalism as a “noble” profession.

At the same time, passion is not always enough and passionate, creative, quality papers fail because of lack of business acumen. Shelley Seid remarks that “there are a lot of people who work for mainstream publications who have gone and set up papers, and who have died a sorry death because they were in the newsroom or in editorial, or they were sub editors, and they have no idea about how to run the business”.

In consideration of this observation, it is possible that training should be offered only to journalists that have already worked in the industry and have demonstrated commitment to the sector. Prior to acceptance to such courses it may be necessary to interview or otherwise assess the candidates' dedication.

5.1.2 Levels of training

Participants suggest that training needs to be aimed at different levels. Training that is directed at preparing managers of independent community newspaper businesses require a basic journalistic background. Shelly Seid remarks that “I think you've got to get to a level of establishment before you're given help. I think there are criteria that you've got to reach, you've got to reach a point”. For example, Zanda Twala points out that Thembi Mjiba, the manager of Idikelethu, had eight years of experience as a journalist and she needed some assistance and mentoring in starting her paper.

Newspapers that are in the first phases of starting have different needs to those that have run for several years. The managers of papers who have run for a short period may require courses on particular aspects of running the business that they are experiencing as difficult. That is, from one or more of the knowledge areas suggested in the following section.

Those that are starting up may benefit from general training in the management of the business. That is, from all of the training areas suggested in the following section. They may particularly benefit from support in gaining access to funding. Ronel Bowles remarks that “they always tell you how much money there is for start up newspapers. But the criteria to actually obtain that money, is unbelievable [...] I've never looked at the forms or tried to complete the forms, but apparently they are absolutely pages and pages of things.”

A further issue related to independent newspaper practitioners who may not have experienced educational disadvantages. This may require that training address

issues associated lower levels of education, including literacy. The difficulties associated with such disadvantaged practitioners, may compromise trainers' ability to identify the candidates' suitability in terms of the previous criterion, which may only be assessable after some years as a practitioner.

5.2 Training areas

Participants remarked that training areas are interlinked. Vuyani Mrewtyana remarks that “[training areas] are all needed equally. It is like the human body. Without legs you are not a complete human being. So all of them are very, very important”.

Paul Crankshaw suggests that a “goal oriented” training is necessary because knowledge areas are so intertwined. He suggests that “[training] work backwards from the goal to the practical stuff, rather than try to work out the myriad details that actually go on in every organisation. We focus [training] on certain outcomes or goals”. By focusing on the goal, trainees may be able to understand the reasons that certain practices are necessary.

Training areas can be understood to coalesce around two central goals that go towards a successful independent community newspaper business, that are described in the sections below:

- Professionalism
- Community orientation

5.2.1 Professionalism

Annalie Rautenbach outlines the need for representing independent community newspaper businesses as professional enterprises: “[T]here’s a perception out in the market, even sometimes in that particular rural area and then the larger publishing world that this is subordinates and this is unstructured and it’s not really viable and not worth it. But it’s not. It’s different but it is viable and

powerful but the people need to be equipped to have exactly a system that they can present themselves in order to be viable and perceived as knowledgeable”.

Participants emphasised the need for independent community newspaper to structure and represent themselves as professional, efficient and effective businesses. Independent community newspapers are businesses and need to be run as businesses. Regarding this issue Shelley Seid says “if you can't make money then why are you running it, because it's all about making money. It's about making money to be able to continue your product, but if you can't make the money you're out, you're closed”.

- **A quality product**

Sue Comber remarked that “print is the poor, poor cousin” within the South African media context. That is, advertisers are more likely to want to place adverts on radio or television, and consumers “don't want to feel that print ink on their fingers anymore”. For this reason it is important to develop a quality product to attract both readers and advertisers.

Content was also spoken of by participants as central to creating a quality product. Luvuyo Mananga believes that there are “other ways of marketing yourself, it doesn't only have to be on the guys in marketing and advertising. We as journalists also have the call.”

The following aspects of newspaper management were suggested by participants as means of creating a quality product. These aspects of management go towards successfully packaging the newspaper so that it is attractive and reputable to both consumers and advertisers:

- Quality control is of central importance at each phase of production. Sue and Barry Comber say they have never missed the printing of their paper, because they always check the colours and positions of the content.

- Careful distribution strategies are required because the credibility of a newspaper is perceived to drop if it does not arrive on time, or is seen to be discarded by shop owners and other vendors.
- Photography can be used as a means to engage the public, and can be viewed as a very necessary dedicated skill, even though journalists may not be trained in photographic skills. Annalie Rautenbach remarks that “the power of photography is incredible”.
- Headlines attract readers and can be understood as an art in themselves.
- Graphic design adds to the visual appeal of a paper and also attracts readers. Diphete Bopape also notes that it can be used as an income generation strategy, by offering the service to other businesses.

Participants also described content as a means of accessing the community’s concerns in terms of representing gender, language and the development of indigenous languages. Vuyani Mrewtyana believes that content is of central importance, and his reasons for this focus shall be described in more depth in the following section.

At the same time, content is not as important as business skills. Journalistic knowledge was also described by the participants as an entry level requirement for training managers of an independent community newspaper, as has already been described. The importance of balancing sound journalistic principles with the need for advertising revenue to keep the newspaper running shall be discussed in the next section.

- **Advertising**

The creation of a quality product through professionalism has the advantage of attracting advertisers. An attractive newspaper that is well written and researched can be presented to advertisers to convince them to place an ad in a paper. Annalie Rautenbach remarks that “[n]o Pick ‘n Pay or Spar is going to spend their money if they don’t know if it’s in fact published regularly, if it’s professional and if

it's dogs breakfast". Advertising revenue, especially national advertising, was described as imperative to keep the paper going.

Participants spoke of the perception of advertisers, both local and national, that community newspapers are not worth advertising in. The creation of a quality product, could work against this perception in the following ways:

- By accessing the concerns of a community, a community newspaper can attain a deeper reach into specific communities. For example, rural communities may not necessary have access to larger papers, while they are likely to be targeted by community papers. Zanda Twala describes the argument her paper presented to a national advertiser: “We go to the deeper parts, like the rural areas, where the [...] bigger papers will not go to. They just don't have access to those papers.”
- Audience and market research can be used to show papers that they reach an advertisers market. While Ronel Bowles has realised that national advertisers do not necessarily conduct research to find out who their market is, a newspaper that can present some statistical findings regarding their audience and reach may be in a better position to convince an advertiser.
- The advertising department of a paper should be trained in customer relations. They should be taught principles of salesmanship in order to sell the paper. Paul Crankshaw remarks, “[t]his is not about how to smile at your customers, it is about how to make sure that your customer knows that you are adding value”.
- The association between advertising and the financial aspects of the business require that there be effective financial systems that keep track of debts, payments and accounts. This adds to the professional image of the

- paper as Paul Crankshaw notes, “[y]ou can very easily get into the mindset when we running around, don’t know how much we making, don’t know how much we should be charging”. Careful management is needed to dispel this lack of structure.
- The marketing teams needs to carefully plan and time their pitches to advertisers. Ronel Bowles notes that some national advertisers do not have local advertising budgets. In these cases, it may be necessary to “nag” the advertiser at least a year before the paper can be included in the national advertising budget.
 - It is necessary to understand the legal implications of contracts with advertisers. It is necessary that the paper use such contracts to clarify their position with advertisers. Zaidi Khumalo describes difficulty with holding an advertiser to a contract, because his paper is reliant on at least some revenue: “If we loose that advertiser, we don’t know when we will get another advertiser to take a double spread. So you stick with that advertiser until such time that you are able to solicit someone to come in and give you even a single spread at the cost of what that man has paid for, double the two pages.” As such, community newspapers need to understand both how to construct and keep to a contract, including debt collection principles.

There is a tension between the need to include quality content and obtain sufficient ad revenue to keep the business running. According to Paul Crankshaw: “This is the central dilemma of the whole sector, that you have journalists wanting to start newspapers. You don’t have sales people wanting to start newspapers”. Also expressing this tension, Barry Comber says “We are not in this business to make money, we are in the business of literacy, but to keep the business running obviously a lot of attention has to be paid towards the money”.

The manager of Luvuyo Mananga's paper is described as a businessman whose focus is on the business and not the integrity of the paper. The focus on the "bottom line" is to the detriment of the quality of the product. Luvuyo says, "[h]e will tell you, as long as money is coming in, he is happy. Even if the paper is filled with adverts and there are two articles, he doesn't care". This example counsels the need for balance between the journalistic and business principles of the newspaper.

- **Administrative systems**

In order to present the sector as viable and professional the business needs to have administrative systems in place. There should be structures for every process in the business, including but not limited to: layout, finances, distribution, human resources, recruitment and retention, meeting agency criteria, customer, relations, ad rates, and material specifications.

These systems ensure the smooth running and production of the paper in a predictably professional manner. Shelly Seid describes how systems can assist with the smooth running of all aspects of a paper: "[...] if you have systems in place and people are referred to those systems things will go wrong, but you will have less chance of things going wrong, and when things do go wrong you've got somewhere to refer people to that is neutral."

5.2.2 Training through resources

These systems that are central to running a professional independent community newspaper business could be passed on to start-up or starting phase newspapers in the form of what participants referred to as a "cookbook", or the "newspaper in a box". By providing systems that are ready-made there is a concrete resource that can be referred to by all staff members at all times.

This may assist with the staff-turnover that plagues the sector. Independent community newspapers are sometimes seen as "breeding ground" that trains

effective practitioners for the newspaper industry. Staff may be attracted to larger newspapers by larger salary packages that community newspapers are not able to offer. In this way the resources from the “cookbook” that stay with a newspaper contribute to continuity, stability, because it is a back-up.

Diphete Bopape explains: “I believe that would go a long way in helping us, because even when these guys are gone and I think this could be packaged in such a way that they got a booklet that goes along with a video or an audio tape which is something that would always be there in the organisation as a resource that the organisation could use whenever they recruit new staff because we really are losing people.” In this way, resources that remain with the business provide an element of stability as well as assisting with the training of new recruits

While many of the participants recognised the value of a resource that remained with the newspaper, Paul Crankshaw remarks that the maintenance that is required to keep these systems in place may be prohibitive to implementing them. He describes the process: “If we make a change, then it gets discussed and written down. That sort of discipline is incredibly hard to keep in a small organisation because you just so damn busy. I’d like to say that I think we need to bear in mind that old framework issue and resources, cookbooks and style guides and ‘how-to’ type guides for all aspects of the business. But then how do you make it real in terms of implementing. That’s the real challenge.”

It is also difficult to find the time within the busy day-to-day working of the newspaper. Annalie Rautenbach remarks that “[t]here’s a lot of books and stuff on advice, but they don’t always have time to refer to it and you as the publisher remains responsible of what is said”.

Because of this challenge, it may be necessary to deliver these structures through two mediums:

- through training modules that communicate theoretical modules;

- through mentoring that monitors that implementation and practise of the systems. In structuring a mentoring programme Paul Crankshaw remarks that “the key thing would be the regularity of contact with someone who would say this is possibly the need here and this is where you are having a problem”.

5.3 Community orientation

The community of a newspaper is central. It should be broadly conceived of in sectoral, rather than geographical terms. While a community sector may be associated with a particular, geographical area, it is more important to present the newspaper as serving a specific sector of society. Ronel Bowles observes that “[t]he paper sells if you have the kind of stories in the paper that the community is interested in. And when the paper does that. People begin to respect that.”

While this conception of community can assist with the business principles of the newspaper, it also is associated with the entrepreneur-journalists “passion”. For Vuyani Mrewtyana, this is a need to “speak with the people’s voice”. He says, “[y]ou are part of them and you speak for them. You are the mouth piece and the eyes of that community. And you must polish up your skills so that, exactly, you can enunciate all their concerns properly.”

This needs to be associated with the “goal oriented” approach recommended by Paul Crankshaw. He suggests that “[w]e can start with the question, what is the entrepreneur trying to communicate? From there will flow the idea of newspapers, publicly communication. You don’t want to start a newspaper because that’s what all journalists are doing. You have to start a newspaper because that’s a good way of communicating. “

- **Understanding the community**

Successful papers find a market and develop a following within a particular community. This can assist in increasing the impact of the paper. Shelly Seid

believes that niche marketing is required. She says, “if there is more of a force from community papers it might hit the market, touch the market”.

This may involve:

- Creating new markets;
- Reaching ones that have not been reached yet by “finding the gatjie”;
- Following trends “of enthusiastic readers who respond word for word, so we go with the flow, and we have changed considerably over the years because we’re constantly on top of what the specific thing is”.

An understanding of the community that the paper wishes to speak for and serve should, structure the business and the business plan. Diphete Bopape has realised the importance of research and the connection between marketing, business principles and the community. He says: “Do the research. Find out what the community consumers out there want and what the structure of that would be. If I had done that rather than doing it much later when I had already spent a lot of money that would have been a very good start. Because market research would have enabled me to put together a more clever business.” As such, it is necessary to balance the concern for the community with business concerns, understandings of marketing principles are essential.

Careful quality control to create expertise for a specific, critical audience is necessary. Audience research can help to refine the goals and aims of a newspaper so that the newspaper reaches an audience who is willing to buy it. Diphete Bopape remarks of his experience: “I never thought there could be such a lot of resistance from the speakers of the same language towards reading about that language, contributing towards its development. Market research is what would have enabled me to pick those things up and to prepare myself in terms of dealing with the resistance.”

While market research is identified by the participants as central to the structuring of an independent community newspaper, it is difficult to conduct, implement and communicate to staff. Annalie Rautenbach believes it is difficult “to make it [market research] accessible and understandable, so that they [staff] can utilise it in an abbreviated form”. Training in how to conduct audience and market research should include training in how to use and communicate the findings of the research. In this way, a newspaper manager is better able to communicate to staff regarding the meaning that arise from research.

- **Community participation**

For Vuyani Mrewtyana, it is important to access all sectors of a community, including those that are disadvantaged. He says: “If you talk for those people in the corner, you can grab all those doctors and lawyers to come down to help this person. And you uplift the standard, this is our community. We can fight for this. We can fight for our community.”

Similarly, Ronel Bowles suggests that it is necessary for a newspaper to actively show the community that the newspaper is concerned for the community’s welfare. She recommends that a paper “[s]how [the community] that you want to be part of the community, get involved in clean ups, and sports days, and stuff like that.”

This involvement and participation of the community has the function of protecting the newspaper. Vuyani Mrewtyana remarks that, “[i]n this way, just like a fish in the water [...] nothing will happen to you. Even the state cannot easily finish you, take you away from the cover of the people you represent”.

- **Distribution**

Understanding the community also implies an understanding of where and how to distribute the paper. Annalie Rautenbach noted that “you need to know where you are, how many shopping centres, how many hospitals are in there, how many

schools are in there, how many old age homes are in there, how many clubs and organisations are in there, how many sports facilities are in there”.

The focus on the community implies that each paper has specific and contextual concerns that lead to unique challenges. While the theoretical training that is required does prepare the practitioner for the management of an independent community newspaper, it is also difficult to implement this abstract knowledge in a specific context. Annalie Rautenbach notes that “[t]hey’ve got the academic knowledge, but they can’t really apply it. They have to learn how to apply it in the specific newspaper”.

5.3.2 Training through sharing

These issues suggest the three forms of training:

- Peer review: Independent community newspapers require the support of others in the industry. This support could be maintained through a culture of recognition for good work. Paul Crankshaw notes that “one of the main reasons why people need to move on from our papers because they need the recognition. And if we can develop our own [award system], journalism could be a profession, like lawyer or artisan, because your peers recognise you”. Such recognition need not be monetary.
- Mentoring: Participants suggested that regular contact with some one who can help, who knows the sector and has literally “d[one] it all before” would be useful. A mentoring programme that allows experts in the practise of managing an independent community newspaper would be the most appropriate manner in which to offer on-site training to struggling papers.
- Information exchange: Participants suggest that newspapers could exchange information in order to implement best practise of certain skills. Shelly Seid provides an example: “if I have a new person selling

advertising I'd like to send them to an extremely successful paper that has piles of adverts and I'd like them to spend a couple of weeks there, so it is on site but not on my site, because my site is not going to be able to teach anything". Such an exchange of information would require an audit of newspapers' strengths and weaknesses by a central agency. In this way it would be possible to pass on the best information regarding how to accomplish particular tasks. Shelly Seid explains that "when you watch best practise [...], then you learn and you take it back, whereas if you are in a place where you're mediocre you're only going to learn a level of mediocrity".

These three forms of training require the skill of networking. Such learning requires a network of experts and expertise in the newspaper sector. This network could assist in helping newspapers through difficult stages in the life of the business. As Zaidi Khumalo notes, "If you are strong enough you won't lose faith and become despondent but you change as you go along. Because you realize that the plans that you had when you started the paper were so huge, you thought this is going to be the greatest community newspaper anyone can start. Once you realise that you start looking for advice from people".

These forms of training have the advantage of allowing a staff member to continue to contribute to the running of the newspaper while being mentored, exchanging information or being rewarded by peer review. However it is possible that the organisation required to arrange such mentoring and information exchange is prohibitive. Shelley Seid describes an instance in which an information exchange could not happen at her newspaper: "Every month it was put off and put off, and so it just fell away, but it possibly was around him not having the time to actually get it together. I think it's a sort of catch-22 for these tiny [newspapers], and I think they're too small, actually."

5.4 Conclusion

The two focal points of training suggested by the participants imply the following training areas are required to prepare practitioner for managing an independent community newspaper business:

- Advertising skills are required to ensure the advertising revenue to finance the business.

The following are specific skills related to advertising that could be included in training:

- Customer relations and customer care;
- Understanding of legal contracts and contractual obligations;
- Sales skills, including understanding of the unique benefits of advertising in community newspapers;
- Planning and timing of sales;
- Understanding of the market in which the business operates;
- Understanding of the importance of advertising revenue to the business of running an independent community newspaper.

- Market research skills are required to ensure that the newspaper is able to understand and access the community the paper serves.

The following specific skills are related to market research that could be included in training:

- Knowledge of how to conduct, implement and communicate market and audience research;
- Understanding of how to understand and access who the community and audience of the newspaper are;
- Ability to use research to support sales;
- Ability to use research to support content;
- Understanding of how to involve the community and inspire community participation;

- Understanding of the community should influence the structuring of the business and business plan;
 - Understanding of how to reach the community through effective distribution strategies.
- Skills associated with producing a quality newspaper, while an entry level requirement, need to be contextualised within and understanding of how these are linked with sound business principles.

The following three specific skill sets are related to producing a quality newspaper:

- Editorial skills, including layout and design, headline writing, article writing, sub-editing, editing, research, photography, that contribute to producing a newspaper that looks good, ability to include the needs, interests and opinions of the community;
 - Business skills, such as understanding of how best to communicate the aims and purpose associated with the newspaper’s business plan, of how a quality product can be used to market the newspaper to the community and advertisers;
 - Management skills and processes associated with quality control, staff management techniques that contribute to producing a quality newspaper and alleviate the effect of high staff-turnover.
- Administrative systems are required to ensure the smooth running of every aspect of the business.

The following skills are related to structuring and implementing administrative systems:

- Understanding of how to implement systems within the specific context of a specific newspaper business;
- Practises related to maintaining, tracking and altering systems so as to save money and time;
- Understanding of how to refer to systems as a “neutral third party”;

- Specifically detailed knowledge of financial systems, related to budgeting, accounting and book keeping;
- Techniques of debt collection;
- Techniques of debt management.

Training should incorporate both theoretical and practical components:

- Theoretical components should be directed at preparing managers who handle various aspects of the newspaper business to become professional, effective practitioners in the sector. These components should educate managers so that they are able to enact successful business principles.
- Practical components should be directed at assisting the manager to use theoretical knowledge. It should be directed, through on-site training, mentoring, and information exchanges, at implementing best practise for that particular business and community context.

6. Phase Three: Interviews with start-up practitioners

Phase Three involved an exploration of the opinions of practitioners who had recently began managing their own independent community newspapers. All newspapers on the Association of Independent Publishers database that had started business after January 2007 were contacted. Of the total 37 recently started newspapers, 3 were outside of South Africa, 10 did not have traceable contact details, 9 were not suitable for the sample.

Only 15 were thus included in the third phase sample. Of these 4 never answered telephone calls placed to their offices between 1 August and 30 September, 4 did not respond to telephone and/or email messages, and 4 refused to take part in the study. Two agreed to take part in the research, and were interviewed over email, and one consented to a further telephonic interview.

In addition, four newspapers that had responded to the survey questionnaire in the first phase of the research, and who indicated that they had issues with sustainability were invited to take part in the research. One newspaper agreed to further participation in the research and responded to email questions.

The following newspapers took part in the research:

Participant	Newspaper	Province
Roy Dowling	Coastal Times	Eastern Cape
Hester Nortje	Kathu Gazette	Gauteng
Quintus Loots	Highlands Panorama	KwaZulu-Natal

The responses gathered from the phase three participants can be understood to concur with those of the participants in phase two of the current research. That is, the experience of practitioners that are beginning to manage independent community newspapers, in general, corresponds to that of practitioners who have

been managers in the sector for an extended period of time. In the following sections, the participants' responses that coalesced around the central themes of professionalism and community orientation from phase three will be compared and contrasted with the responses that arose from the second phase.

6.1 Professionalism

In the second phase of the research, focus group participants emphasised professionalism as an underlying business principle. Here qualifications are important in so far as they allow the manager to create a quality product that can be presented to advertisers. Proficiency and good customer relations in the independent newspaper sector may assist the newspaper in convincing advertisers to support the business by convincing them that it is a viable site to place adverts. This is a significant obstacle that recurs in both qualitative phases of the research.

All the participants in the third phase had formal journalism qualifications and extensive experience in the industry. Quintus Loots and Roy Dowling each had 20 years experience, and Hester Nortje had 9 years work experience. In addition, Roy Dowling had some business experience.

While Quintus Loots felt that his formal qualifications had “stood him in good stead”, he also noted that “nothing beats experience”. Here he reflects the understanding proposed by the second phase of this research, that both theoretical and practical components must be included in training for running an independent community newspaper business. He is in support of the kind of mentorship training proposed in the previous section of this report.

The following specific skills sets were discussed by the participants as relevant and important:

- Business management and administration
- Financial skills

- Advertising skills
- **Business management and administration**

Quintus Loots listed managerial, book keeping and administration as skills that he might still require, that are central to running the business. Because the manager of an independent community newspaper must be “Tom, Dick and Harry” within the organisation, these skills are necessary to maintaining the smooth running of the business. While his other partners have one of these skills each, it has also been necessary for him to “pick up” the skills, over-and-above his journalism skills.

These skills were described as important because they ensure the smooth running of the business. Here Quintus Loots reflects the emphasis placed on systems that a manager within an independent community newspaper can use to structure the business, as was described in the focus group research of the second phase. These systems structure the business and ensure that all staff members, including the manager, have a definite reference point in all business dealings.

- **Financial skill;**

Roy Dowling listed his greatest success as making a profit on the eighth edition of his newspaper, and this suggests that financial skills are of central importance. Quintus Loots described a need for financial skills that would enable him to better manage the expansion of his paper. In both instances, the central importance of running a newspaper as a successful, profitable business is emphasised.

The emphasis on financial controls and systems reflects the importance that phase two participants placed on the same skill set. Here book keeping, financial systems, as well as obtaining advertising revenue (discussed in the next section) are relevant skills. These skills were referred to, but not elaborated on in this phase of the research, but are dealt with in greater depth in the previous chapter.

- **Advertising skills**

Roy Dowling and Hester Nortje listed their biggest challenge as accessing the support of advertisers. This challenge was also noted by participants in the second phase focus groups. Roy Dowling related this difficulty to the process of networking with the community, and this shall be discussed further in the following section. For Hester Nortje, the use of these kinds of skills successfully is complicated by the larger area that her community newspaper serves. For her, the ability to obtain the support of a wide range of advertisers is both a challenge and a success.

That both these participants emphasised the need for skills related to obtaining advertising suggests that the skills identified in the second phase by the experienced practitioners are relevant. These are skills involved in researching and creating a quality product, as well as understanding of the context in which advertisers operate (described in detail in the previous chapter), are of central importance.

6.2 Community orientation

In the second phase of the research participants suggested that the inherent passion that an independent community newspaper manager brings to the business implies a commitment to the community in which the newspaper practices. By understanding the community, through involvement in it as well as through market research, it is possible to create a more successful newspaper. This understanding was also apparent in the responses of the third phase participants.

- **Seeing the ‘gap’**

All three participants described identifying a “gap” in the market before they began their newspapers. It is suggested that the ability to see and understand this gap contributes to the success of the newspaper. Quintus Loots’ main reason

for beginning the Highlands Panorama was to “answer the needs of a community” that other local newspapers were not serving. Roy Dowling found a “gap in the market”. Hester Nortjie began the Kathu Gazette in a town where no local newspaper served the community. Here the participants echo the sentiments related to community orientation that arose from the focus group research.

- **Connecting with the community**

Quintus Loots felt that his status as a long standing member of the community in which his paper operates has allowed him a close connection to this community. He has been able to “build up contacts”. This is a process he feels cannot “happen over night” and must be worked at. This close connection to the community, through being a resident, serving on community committees and partnerships with community organisations, is described as very important.

At the same time, research skills that provide an overarching understanding of the community, including market trends and readership profiles, are also important. Such research assists in keeping up with the changes that happen in a community. Here the participants are in agreement with the focus group participants, as is described in the previous chapter of this report. As such, the skills detailed in the previous chapter pertaining to market research are of great importance.

- **Partnerships**

The focus group research suggested that networking within the community is an important means to ensure the success of the newspaper. Successful networking can secure advertising and community buy-in to the newspaper. It was also described as a means to access training from other newspaper businesses, through information sharing and exchange. For Quintus Loots, partnerships and networking took place at the level of structuring his business. His two co-founders of the newspaper have relevant and important skills that he does not have

himself. Between the three of them they have journalism, business, government and administrative skills, such that the business has access to a wide range of skills.

6.3 Conclusion

In general, the participants in the third phase of the research reflected and extended the opinions of the participants in the second phase. That is, the practitioners who have recently begun to work in the independent community sector agree with the more experienced practitioners. As such, the fuller picture provided by the in-depth focus groups are likely to provide sufficient information to construct a curriculum to training practitioners for the business of running an independent community newspaper.

6.3.1 Training areas

Skills relating to management, administration, finances and advertising sales were described as central to the smooth and successful running of an independent community newspaper business.

Access to the community was also emphasised, such that research skills and participatory means of ensuring community involvement are further skills of central importance.

6.3.2 Training delivery

The relatively low response rate and high level of difficulty contacting participants for this phase of the research may result from the high pressure environment a new independent community newspaper must establish itself in. Four of the newspapers contacted refused to take part, all on the ground that they could not spare the time.

While these difficulties are understandable, they also are likely to prevent these new newspapers from seeking training and assistance. It is possible that those

that refused or did not respond did not see the benefit of taking part in a research project, and may make time for a more obviously beneficial training course. However, the obstacles that prevented new independent community newspapers from responding to requests for information in this research are likely to mitigate against training participation as well.

As such the modes of training suggested in the previous section that allows the newspaper to continue running while accessing new skills, through mentorship and on-site training, may be the most appropriate mode of skill delivery.

7. Phase Four: Questionnaire; to trainers

Phase Four of the research involved feeding the findings of the research to well placed trainers who were in a position to comment on, and make suggestions regarding the research findings. Because the research was directed at developing a curriculum for training business skills to independent community managers, this input, from trainers served to extend the ideas already collected as well as validate the findings.

Trainers were recommended by the MDDA as well as SPI trainers. Nine trainers were identified. They were emailed a summary of the findings from the first three phases of the research, and a qualitative questionnaire asking them to comment on the findings (questionnaire attached as appendix D). Of the nine trainers contacted in this manner, only two agreed to take part in the research. One was uncontactable through the details provided, one felt unable to answer the questions based on her experience as a trainer, two were unreachable despite repeated emails and three were too busy to take part in the research. Because of this low response rate, the summary of responses presented below is merely descriptive.

The following trainers responded to the emailed questionnaire:

- Marilyn Honikman
- Jolyon Nuttal

Central findings from the two responses are presented below.

7.1 Entry requirements

One respondent included literacy, numeracy, language proficiency (English and one other South African language) as skills that should be entry level requirements tested by a proficiency test. The same respondent also drew attention to the need for passion for the business.

In contrast, the other respondent recommended that only practitioners who have already begun a newspaper business, and therefore have an established level of journalistic skills, should be included in such training.

Taken together, these responses support the suggestions made by the experienced practitioners in phase two. That is, passion is emphasised, but skills and a degree of language proficiency is required.

7.2 Content areas

One participant suggested content that focused on research skills, including client, marketing and reader research. These skills were described as a means of furthering the managers understanding of the product, thereby creating a better placed newspaper.

The other respondent suggested the following skills are of the greatest importance:

- Ethical standards, emphasizing integrity and editorial independence as a requirement of running of a profitable enterprise;
- Leadership and professional management;
- Strategic planning including drafting of a vision and mission, corporate goals based on SWOT analysis and timetable for implementation of capital, revenue and expenditure budgets.
- Specific skills aimed at developing a viable product including marketing and advertising skills, circulation and distribution knowledge, effective market research skills, administration and HR skills (and policies) and specific accounting skills;
- Alternative media.

These responses differ from the findings of the previous phases in that financial skills are not identified as central to the running of a community newspaper

business. For one respondent journalistic skills were most important, while for the other research skills and advertising skills were primary. While the questionnaire alone is not sufficient to negate the findings of the other phases, these responses suggest that these skills should perhaps be emphasised more than the previous phases suggested.

7.3 Training delivery

One respondent suggested that both on-site and off-site training should be provided. The off-site components allow managers from various locations and with diverse experiences to share knowledge and learn from one another. On-site training allows the training to be contextualised. This response supports the findings of the previous phases.

The other response suggested that a participatory approach is required. This is an approach that has not been suggested in previous stages, although it is compatible with an experiential form of training.

7.4 Conclusion

In general, the responses from the two participants of phase four support the findings of the previous phases. At the same time, these responses also suggest new aspects to be considered on structuring the curriculum.

8. Conclusion

It is a central finding of the research that financial management skills are an overarching category that managers of independent community newspapers require proficiency in. Other skills sets, including production of a quality newspaper; advertising skills; market research skills; and administrative skills require grounding in the understanding that an independent community newspaper is a business operation that must be made financially sustainable.

It is another central finding of the research that both accredited and experiential training are required to deliver the skills identified as relevant. Accredited training should in part be viewed as an entry level requirement, as should certain qualities, such as passion. However, participants in all phases of the research emphasised that theoretical concepts should provide the basis of business training, and that experiential training should be used to help practitioners contextualise this knowledge.

8.1 Training areas

The quantitative survey revealed that financial management skills are perceived as particularly necessary to business management for independent community newspapers. Between 70 and 87% of the sample ranked the following skills associated with business finances as very necessary.

In the focus groups, and to an extent in the interviews, the financial management skills were described as skills related to advertising and to management systems. The focus group participants emphasised the need to make an independent community newspaper a business that is successful and sustainable in financial terms. However, they subsumed financial management skills within other aspects of business management. As such, financial skills emerge as a skill set that is inter-related to other skills sets, and thus appears as a necessary underpinning of all business pursuits.

This is further emphasised by the findings that arose from the quantitative data. Three central relationships suggested the importance of financial skills, knowledge of the economic context in which the independent community newspaper business operates and understanding of how to situate the product within this context.

There was also an association revealed between financial management skills and organisational management, specifically of human resource management and of maintenance of an independent editorial stance. As such, financial management skills should be extended to an understanding of how to structure and manage the organisation as a whole. Organisational concerns for motivating staff and for directing the newspaper towards independence are again associated with the economic context of the business.

While financial management should be understood as a skill set that underlies all major business activities in an independent community newspaper, it is possible to understand the following knowledge as central to managing the business of an independent community newspaper:

- Production of a quality newspaper;
- Advertising skills;
- Market research skills;
- Administrative skills.

These are described in more depth in the tables below.

Production of a quality newspaper	
The following skills should be understood as an entry level requirement. However these skills need to be contextualised within an understanding of how they relate to sound business principles.	
	Skills, including layout and design, headline writing, article

	writing, sub-editing, editing, research, photography, that contribute to producing an appealing product;
	Understanding of how best to communicate the aims and purpose associated with the newspaper's business plan;
	Ability to include the needs, interests and opinions of the community;
	Understanding of how a quality product can be used to market the newspaper to the community and advertisers;
	Skills and processes associated with quality control;
	Understanding of staff management techniques that contribute to producing a quality newspaper;
	Techniques and practices that effectively manage staff for the production of a quality product and alleviate the effect of high staff-turnover;
	Understanding of how staff management contributes to the production of a quality newspaper.

Advertising skills	
Required to ensure the advertising revenue to finance the business, and includes the following skills:	
	Customer relations and customer care;
	Understanding of legal contracts and contractual obligations;
	Sales skills, including understanding of the unique benefits of advertising in community newspapers;
	Planning and timing of sales;
	Understanding of the market in which the business operates;
	Understanding of the importance of advertising revenue to the business of running an independent community newspaper.

Market research skills	
Required to ensure that the newspaper is able to understand and access the community the paper serves and includes the following skills:	
	Knowledge of how to conduct, implement and communicate market and audience research;
	Understanding of how to understand and access who the community and audience of the newspaper are;
	Ability to use research to support sales;
	Ability to use research to support content development;
	Understanding of how to involve the community and inspire community participation;
	Understanding of how knowledge of the community should influence the structuring of the business and business plan;
	Understanding of how to reach the community through effective distribution strategies.

Administrative systems	
Required to ensure the smooth running of every aspect of the business.	
	Understanding of how to implement systems within the specific context of a specific newspaper business;
	Practises related to maintaining, tracking and altering systems so as to save money and time;
	Understanding of how to refer to systems as a “neutral third party”;
	Specifically detailed knowledge of financial systems, related to budgeting, accounting and book keeping;
	Techniques of debt collection;
	Techniques of debt management.

8.2 Training delivery

In all phases of the research, both accredited and experiential training were perceived as appropriate to training independent community newspaper practitioners. Participants in the second phase of the research suggested that many of the theoretical skills associated with journalism and the creation of a quality product should be viewed as entry levels requirements. However, contextualisation that locates these skills, and the other listed above, are required in theoretical training components.

As such, the research suggests that training should incorporate both theoretical and practical components:

- Theoretical components should be directed at preparing managers to become professional, effective practitioners in the sector. These components should educate managers so that they have the knowledge enact successful business principles.
- Practical components should be directed at assisting the manager to use theoretical knowledge. It should be directed, through on-site training, mentoring, and information exchanges, at implementing best practise for that particular business and community context.

The quantitative data suggests that short courses and learnerships as perceived as the most appropriate modes to deliver accredited training. There is also a strong association between these modes of training and distance training, such that it is possible that distance training could be a means of presenting short courses.

While theory is of central importance and many practitioners in all phases of the research emphasised the worth of their formal qualification, experiential training also emerged as worthwhile. For the specific challenges associated with managing an independent community newspaper, training that is able to take place on site and attends to the particulars of the context of the newspaper is highly important.

In the quantitative data, most of the modes of experiential training measured were perceived as relevant: exchange programmes, on-site training tailored to the specific organisation and regular mentoring by a dedicated consultant were ranked as very appropriate, while internet resources were ranked as appropriate.

The following arose from the survey and focus group research as possible modes for experiential training:

Modes of experiential training	
Peer review	Independent community newspapers require the support of others in the industry. Such support may be fostered through recognition of quality work. Recognition need not be monetary and may take the form of awards.
Mentoring	Regular contact with some one who knows and has experience working in the sector could help deliver skills. A mentoring programme that allows experts in the practise of managing an independent community newspaper would be the most appropriate manner in which to offer on-site training to struggling papers.
Information exchange	Newspapers could exchange information between organisations. In this way, a newspaper with experience of best practise of certain skills could pass on the best information regarding how to accomplish particular tasks. An audit of newspapers' strengths and weaknesses by a central agency would be required to facilitate this exchange of information would require an.

9. A way forward for the SPI

This final section of the report explores how the Sol Plaatje Institute anticipates being able to draw on the findings of this research in developing a strategy that will enable the Institute to make a contribution to this important sector within the South African media landscape.

In this respect it is notable that when the SPI first approached the MDDA for support in conducting this research, it was envisaged that the results of the study would contribute towards the development of an intensive training programme for managers, editors and owners from small independent community-orientated newspapers. The provision of such a programme, in our view, appeared to be the most important intervention needed in the sector. However, having completed this study it has now become clear that while formal training is recognised as an important vehicle for preparing managers for the challenges of running small independent titles, there is an even greater demand for on-site training and mentoring services that are envisaged by the MDDA in its Mentoring Framework (September, 2007). As such the research conducted by the SPI lends weight to the MDDA's commitment to providing ongoing and sustained mentoring at community-orientated media houses, including newspapers. The research also supports other plans outlined in MDDA strategy documents relating to exchange programmes and the benefits that can accrue from facilitating exchanges that enable managers from new and start up publications to spend time with successful publications observing best-practice operations in action (See Annexure 1 of the MDDA's Mentoring Framework Report, "Concept Note: Learnership Exchange Programme").

While the SPI recognises the value of these types of interventions and would be extremely willing to explore ways in which we could support or assist the MDDA in these endeavours, they do fall outside the Institute's direct activities as a training provider. Instead the SPI would like to begin the process of registering a formal qualification for current and aspirant managers in the small independent

community newspaper sector that specifically addresses concerns that have arising from this research. These include:

- The fact that it is unrealistic to expect participants to spend a considerable amount of time away from their newspapers. Training will need to employ a mixed methods design including a short intensive burst of residential training, distance learning and Work Integrated Learning² (WIL).
- In meeting the needs of the sector we need to recognise that there is a considerable variation in educational levels across the sector and that the programme should be as inclusive as possible.
- The programme should be as practical as possible and participants should be able to take the skills learned and apply them directly to their workplaces.

For these reasons the SPI will begin working towards the registration of a Higher Certificate in Community Newspaper Management. This is a 120 credit programme situated at level five of the national qualifications framework. The Higher Certificate addresses the concerns outlined above in the following ways: (1.) it would be open to any participant who has completed his/her National Senior Certificate, (2.) it is “primarily vocational, or industry orientated” and (3.) it “typically includes ... a work integrated learning component (WIL)³” meaning that time on the job is also viewed as learning time and can contribute towards the total number of credits.

We envisage that the programme will be structured in the following way: the course would be divided into five distinct modules taught through a combination of residential training at Rhodes, distance education using on-line learning methods and WIL in which participants would apply lessons within their workplaces. Each module would count 20 credits towards the overall qualification. The remaining 20 credits required for this certificate will be allocated

³ DOE, Government Notice 924 (October, 2007)

to work-based learning activity in which participants will need to construct a business plan for their organisations.

Students taking these modules will need to complete a range of preparatory exercises before their arrival. They will then receive an intensive overview of the core materials covered during the particular module. Thereafter they will return to their workplaces where they will be guided through a series of on-line learning exercises that focus on relating theory covered in class to workplace situations. In structuring the course in this way the SPI will be responding to concerns raised by participants in the research. Not only will the contact teaching time take place within a context much akin to short courses, but this training will be supported by online learning opportunities. Furthermore, as a means of promoting an exchange of information within the sector itself the SPI also intends to draw on editors and managers from successful titles in leading many of the seminars. In drawing on these experienced editors the SPI hopes not only to introduce participants to highly relevant skills, but also to make a financial contribution to the newspapers that are releasing their senior staff to teach on the programme.

The course will be structured in the following way:

Module One: Understanding financial planning and management (20 Credits)

This module introduces participants to the fundamental tools of financial planning and management. It is specifically intended to ensure that participants are equipped to consider the financial imperatives as they relate to the content of all future modules.

Module Two: Sustainable community-orientated newspapers (20 Credits)

This module explores critical relationships between the business imperatives of a small community-orientated newspaper and its social functions within a community. It explores different business models successful media companies have employed and how these might be applicable in the participant's contexts.

Module Three: Marketing and market research for community newspapers (20 Credits)

Students will develop a comprehensive understanding of the core marketing principles that are relevant for a community newspaper. They learn to assess the potential of a market, how to identify untapped potential in an existing market and ways of assessing the viability of that market. They will also be introduced to principles of market research and to specific approaches community newspaper can employ.

Module Four: Developing the business through strategic planning (20 Credits)

Students will be introduced to valuable tools they can use in thinking strategically about the development of a business. They will also learn how to construct a business plan for a newspaper and be introduced to tools they can use for assessing the viability of that plan.

Module Five: Human resource management and leadership (20 Credits)

By enhancing their understanding of theories of leadership and management participants will enhance their ability to lead teams of diverse and creative people in pursuing a newspaper's vision. They will also be introduced to the key human resource management functions of recruitment, motivation, discipline and how these functions are governed by the South African labour relations legislation.

Remaining credits (20)

Students will be coached through the process of drawing on all of the lessons covered during this programme in developing a coherent and comprehensive business plan for their publication. This will be an authentic exercise in which skills are applied to a working or envisaged business. Students will thus not only get to develop the skills of developing a business plan, but they will also get expert advice that they can apply directly in growing or developing their businesses.

Please note the following with regard to this course:

1. We do not anticipate enrolling more than 12 students per year because our aim will be to provide highly individualised attention and support.
2. The SPI will need to secure funding to make this project possible as it is unlikely any of the emerging newspapers will be able to afford the cost of this programme. We will certainly be approaching the MAPPP-Seta in this regard, but will also be exploring other avenues.
3. The SPI will be exploring the possibility of creating mentoring opportunities during the programme, but identifying and allocating mentors from within the sector to each of the students.

Appendices

Appendix A - Survey

1. Contact details

Please supply us with the following contact details by filling them in the column provided.

1.1	Name of paper	
1.2	Telephone	
1.3	Fax	
1.4	Email address	

2. Background information

Please supply us with the following background information by filling it in the row provided.

2.1	In what year was your newspaper established?
2.2	Who owns your newspaper?
2.3	Briefly define your target community.
2.4	How do you understand the role your newspaper plays in your community?
2.5	What language is your newspaper published in?
2.6	Is your newspaper's circulation audited?
2.7	How often is your newspaper published?

2.8	What is your newspaper's actual advertising/editorial ratio?
2.9	How many people work at your newspaper?
2.10	Do you regard your newspaper as financially sustainable? Please explain your answer.

2.11	Is your newspaper willing to send a representative to one of the research focus groups?	Click to select answer:
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3. Business training areas

Consider what you know and have learnt about running an independent community newspaper business. Please answer the following questions related to training areas that could be included in business training for independent community newspapers.

3.1 General management

Please rate how necessary each of the following training areas related to general management of independent community newspapers. Choose an option from the drop-down box.		
3.1.1	How to construct a mission statement with clear goals and objectives	Click to select answer:
3.1.2	How to develop a comprehensive business plan	Click to select answer:
3.1.3	How to develop, implement and monitor appropriate policies	Click to select answer:
3.1.4	How to manage diversity of race, class, gender, sexuality, HIV status etc. in the workplace	Click to select answer:
3.1.5	How to develop successful partnerships with other organisations	Click to select answer:

3.2 Human resource management and leadership

Please rate how necessary each of the following training areas related to human resource management and leadership of independent community newspapers. Choose an option from the drop-down box.		
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3.2.1	How to construct job descriptions that define tasks and responsibilities	Click to select answer:
3.2.2	How to develop an appropriate management style	Click to select answer:
3.2.3	How to manage groups, teams and interpersonal conflict	Click to select answer:
3.2.4	How to conduct performance appraisals	Click to select answer:
3.2.5	How to support staff development	Click to select answer:
3.2.6	How to motivate employees	Click to select answer:

3.3 Editorial leadership

Please rate how necessary each of the following training areas related to editorial leadership of independent community newspapers. Choose an option from the drop-down box.		
3.3.1	How to maintain editorial independence	Click to select answer:
3.3.2	How to organise and structure editorial and production teams	Click to select answer:
3.3.3	How to understand and manage competition	Click to select answer:
3.3.4	How to conduct and use audience research	Click to select answer:
3.3.5	How to lead interventions that include the participation of the community(ies)	Click to select answer:
3.3.6	How to develop a unique product identity that is distinct from the competition	Click to select answer:

3.4 Financial management

Please rate how necessary each of the following training areas related to financial management of independent community newspapers. Choose an option from the drop-down box.		
3.4.1	How to fundraise and conduct income generation strategies	Click to select answer:
3.4.2	How to keep track of debtors and creditors	Click to select answer:
3.4.3	How to understand market trends that impact on the newspaper industry	Click to select answer:
3.4.4	How to develop a budget	Click to select answer:
3.4.5	How to write a funding proposal	Click to select answer:
3.4.6	How to secure advertisers	Click to select answer:

3.4.7	How to establish and manage a distribution network	Click to select answer:
3.4.8	How to increase circulation	Click to select answer:

3.5	Are there any further knowledge areas that are necessary, but not included in these sections?	

4. Knowledge delivery

Please answer the following questions related to the manner in which business skills training could be delivered to independent community newspaper practitioners.

4.1	How necessary is accreditation for training?	Click to select answer:
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Please rate each of the following modes of accredited training in terms of how appropriate they are to training independent community newspapers.

4.2	Tertiary training	Click to select answer:
4.3	Short course module(s) on relevant subjects	Click to select answer:
4.4	Learnerships that would lead to employment	Click to select answer:
4.5	Distance training	Click to select answer:
4.6	On-line courses	Click to select answer:

4.7	How important is the inclusion of experiential training?	Click to select answer:
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Please rate each of the following modes of experiential, non-accredited, training in terms of how appropriate they are to training independent community newspapers.

4.8	Exchange programmes	Click to select answer:
4.9	Conferences and information sharing	Click to select answer:
4.11	On-site training tailored to the specific organisation	Click to select answer:
4.12	Regular mentoring by a dedicated consultant	Click to select answer:
4.13	Internet resources	Click to select answer:

4.14	Are there any further modes of knowledge delivery that are appropriate, but not included here?	
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Please rate each of the following limitations to training in terms of how appropriate they are to training independent community newspapers.		
4.15	Lack of time to devote to training	Click to select answer:
4.16	Lack of finances to pay for training	Click to select answer:
4.17	Lack of courses relevant to independent community publications	Click to select answer:

4.18	Are there any further limitations that are relevant, but not included here?

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix B – Detailed statistical analysis

The following tables extend the analysis provided in section three concerning the first phase of the research.

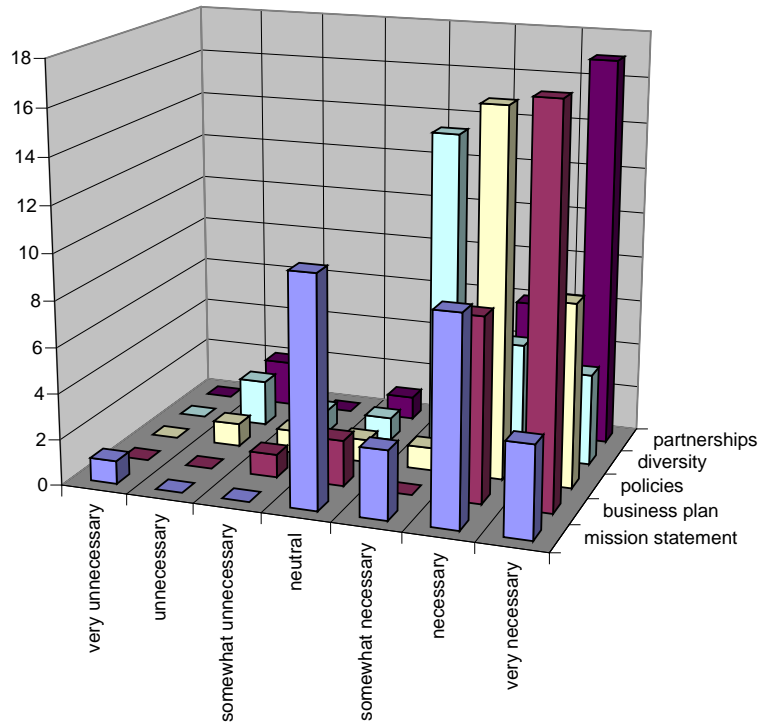
General management

The table below reflects the most frequently occurring rank (mode), the frequency of this rank, minimum and the maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each indicator of general management training:

	Mode	frequency of mode	Minimum	maximum	range
mission statement	4	10	1	7	6
Business plan	7	18	3	7	4
policy	6	17	2	7	5
diversity	5	14	2	7	5
partnerships	7	18	2	7	5

The distribution of ranks assigned to each of these indicators of the necessity of general management training is represented graphically below:

General management



Knowledge of how to develop a business plan and develop successful partnerships with other organisations were most frequently ranked as very necessary, while knowledge of how to develop and implement workplace policies was most frequently ranked as necessary, and knowledge of how to manage diversity in the workplace was ranked as somewhat necessary.

A table of significant Spearman R correlation scores below suggests how these indicators relate to one another:

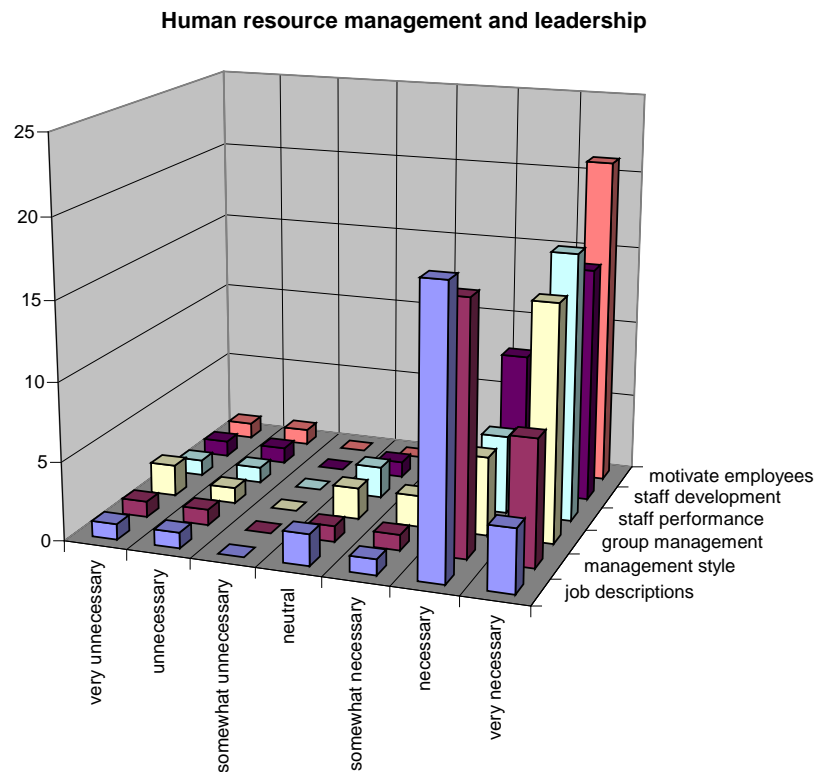
	statement mission	business plan	workplace policy	workplace diversity	partnership
mission statement	1		0.6	0.6	
business plan		1			0.6
workplace policy	0.6		1	0.8	
workplace diversity	0.6		0.8	1	
partnership		0.6			1

Human resource management and leadership

The table below reflects the most frequently occurring rank (mode), the frequency of this rank, minimum and maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each indicator of human resource management and leadership training areas:

	mode	frequency of mode	minimum	maximum	range
job descriptions	6	19	1	7	6
management style	6	16	1	7	6
group management	7	15	1	7	6
staff performance	7	17	1	7	6
staff development	7	16	1	7	6
motivate employees	7	23	1	7	6

The distribution of ranks for indicators of the necessity of human resource management and leadership training areas is represented graphically below:



A table of significant Spearman R scores below suggests several relationships between indicators:

	job description	manage style	team manage	performance	development	motivate
job description	1	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.5	
manage style	0.6	1				
team manage	0.6		1	0.8	0.9	0.6
Performance	0.8		0.8	1	0.7	0.5
Development	0.5		0.9	0.7	1	0.6
motivate			0.6	0.5	0.6	1

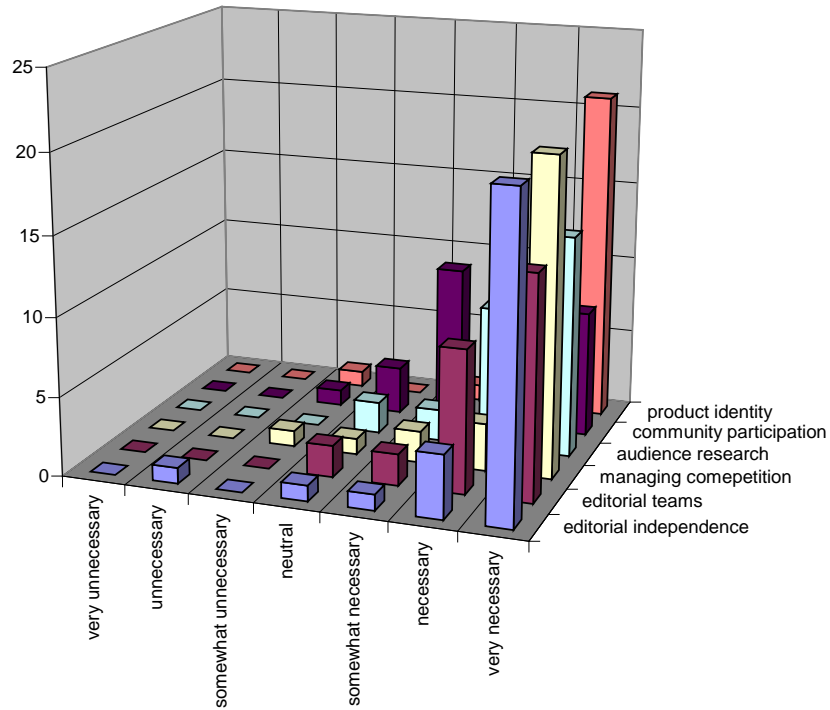
Editorial leadership

The table below reflects the most frequently occurring rank (mode), the frequency of this rank, minimum and maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each indicator of editorial leadership training areas:

	mode	frequency of mode	minimum	maximum	range
editorial independence	7	21	2	7	5
editorial teams	7	14	4	7	3
managing competition	7	21	3	7	4
audience research	7	14	4	7	3
community participation	5	10	3	7	4
product identity	7	22	3	7	4

The distribution of the ranks for indicators of the necessity of editorial leadership training areas is represented graphically below:

Editorial leadership



A table of significant Spearman R scores below suggest correlation between several indicators:

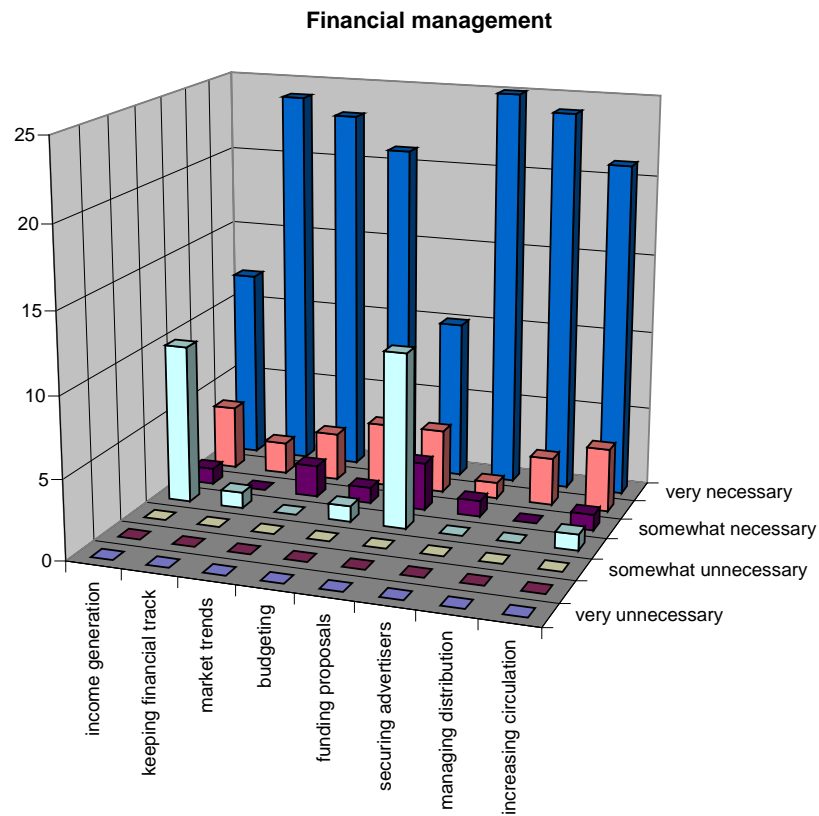
	independence	teams	competition	Audience research	participation	Product identity
independence	1	0.8	0.5			0.5
Teams	0.8	1	0.5	0.6		
competition	0.5	0.5	1	0.5		0.6
audience research		0.6	0.5	1		
participation					1	0.5
Product identity	0.5		0.6		0.5	1

Financial management

The table below reflects the most frequently occurring rank (mode), the frequency of this rank, the minimum and the maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each indicator of financial management training areas:

	mode	frequency of mode	minimum	maximum	range
income generation	7	12	4	7	3
keeping financial track	7	25	4	7	3
market trends	7	24	5	7	2
Budgeting	7	21	4	7	3
Funding proposal	4	11	4	7	3
securing advertisers	7	26	5	7	2
manage distribution	7	25	6	7	1
increase circulation	7	22	4	7	3

The distribution of ranks for indicators of the necessity of financial management training areas is represented graphically below:



A table of significant Spearman R scores below suggests correlations between several indicators:

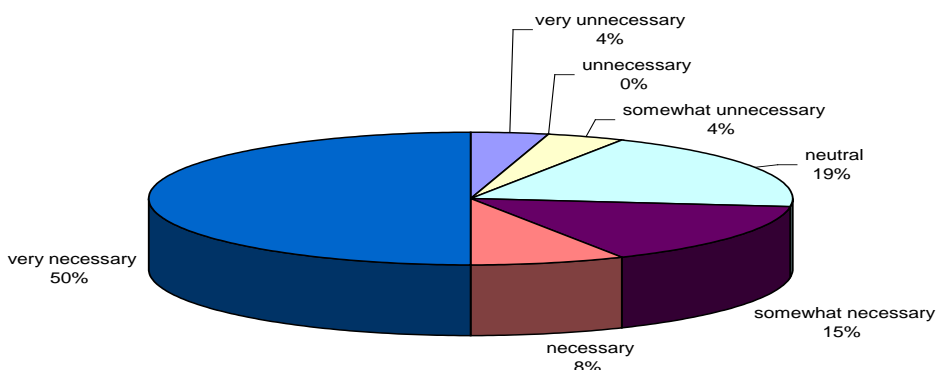
	fundraise	debtor/creditor	market trends	budget	proposal	advertisers	distribution	circulation
Fundraise	1				0.8			
debtor/creditor		1					0.6	

market trends			1	0.6		0.6	0.7	
Budget		0.7	0.6	1		0.5	0.6	
Proposal	0.8				1			
Advertisers			0.6	0.5		1		
Distribution		0.6	0.7				1	0.6
Circulation							0.6	1

Knowledge Delivery

Below is a graphic representation of the relevance of accredited training:

Relevance of accredited training

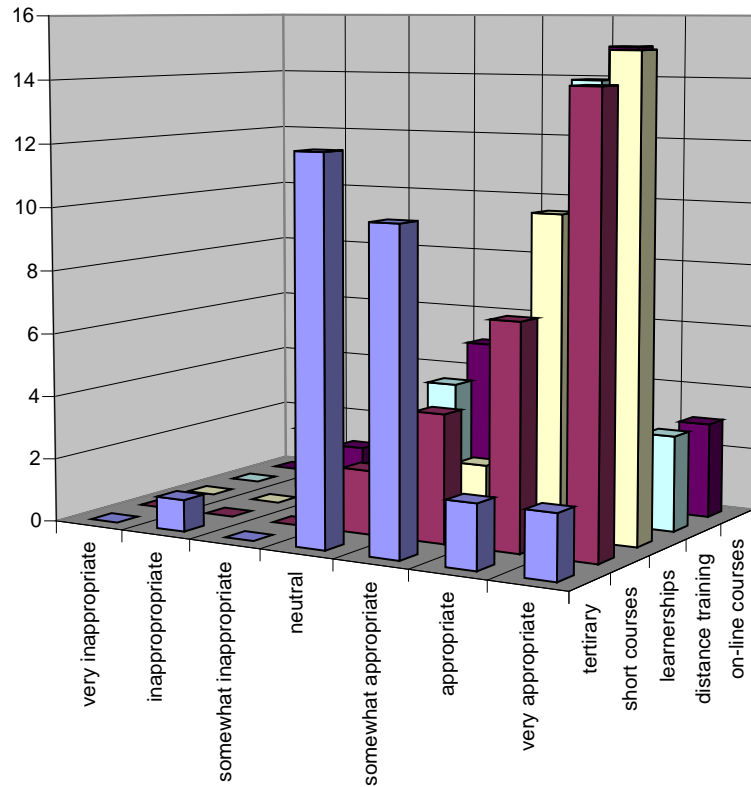


The table below reflects the most frequently occurring rank (mode), the frequency of this rank, minimum and maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each indicator accredited mode of training:

	mode	frequency of mode	minimum	maximum	range
tertiary	4	12	2	7	5
short courses	7	15	4	7	3
learnerships	7	17	5	7	2
distance	6	15	2	7	5
on-line	6	15	2	7	5

The graph below depicts ranks of the appropriateness of several modes of accredited training:

Modes of accredited training



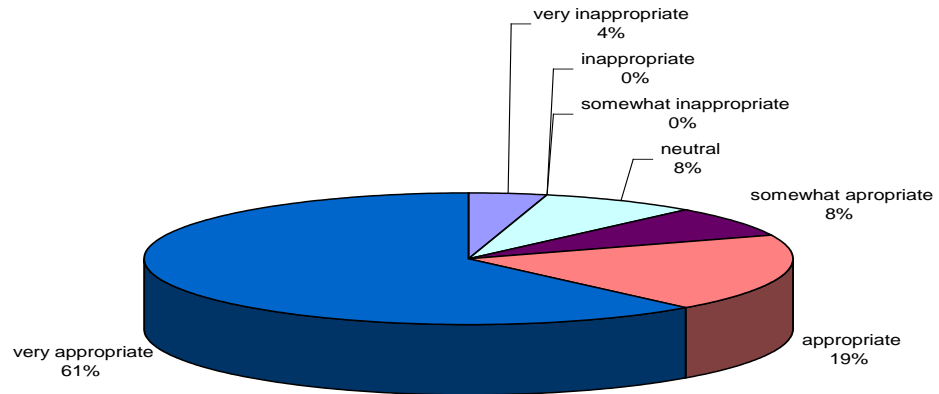
The table below represents significant Spearman R correlation scores that suggest relationships between several modes of training:

	tertiary	short courses	learnerships	distance	on-line
tertiary	1				
short courses		1			0.6
learnerships			1	0.5	0.5
distance			0.5	1	0.7
on-line		0.6	0.5	0.7	1

Experiential training

Below is a graph depicting the relevance of experiential training:

Relevance of experiential training

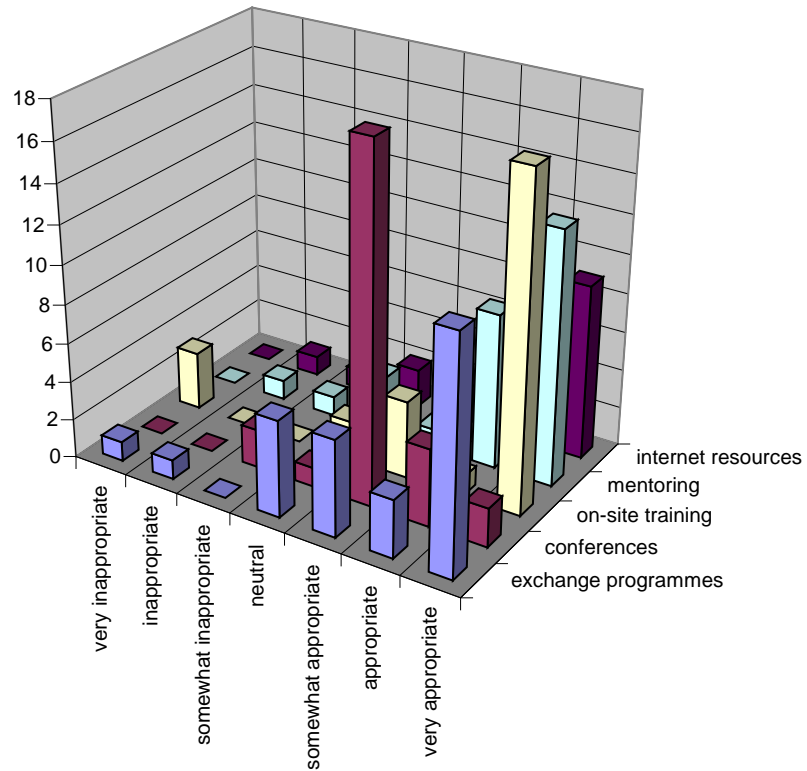


The table below reflects the most frequently occurring rank (mode), the frequency of this rank, the minimum and the maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each indicator experiential mode of training:

	mode	frequency of mode	Minimum	maximum	range
exchange	7	13	1	7	6
conferences	5	18	3	7	4
On-site	7	19	1	7	6
mentoring	7	15	2	7	5
internet	6	11	2	7	5

The graph below represents the appropriateness of several modes of accredited training:

Modes of experiential training



The table below represents significant Spearman R correlation scores that suggest relationships between several modes of training:

	exchange	conferences	on-site	mentoring	internet
exchange	1		0.6	0.7	
conferences		1			0.5
on-site	0.6		1	0.5	
mentoring	0.7		0.5	1	
internet		0.5			1

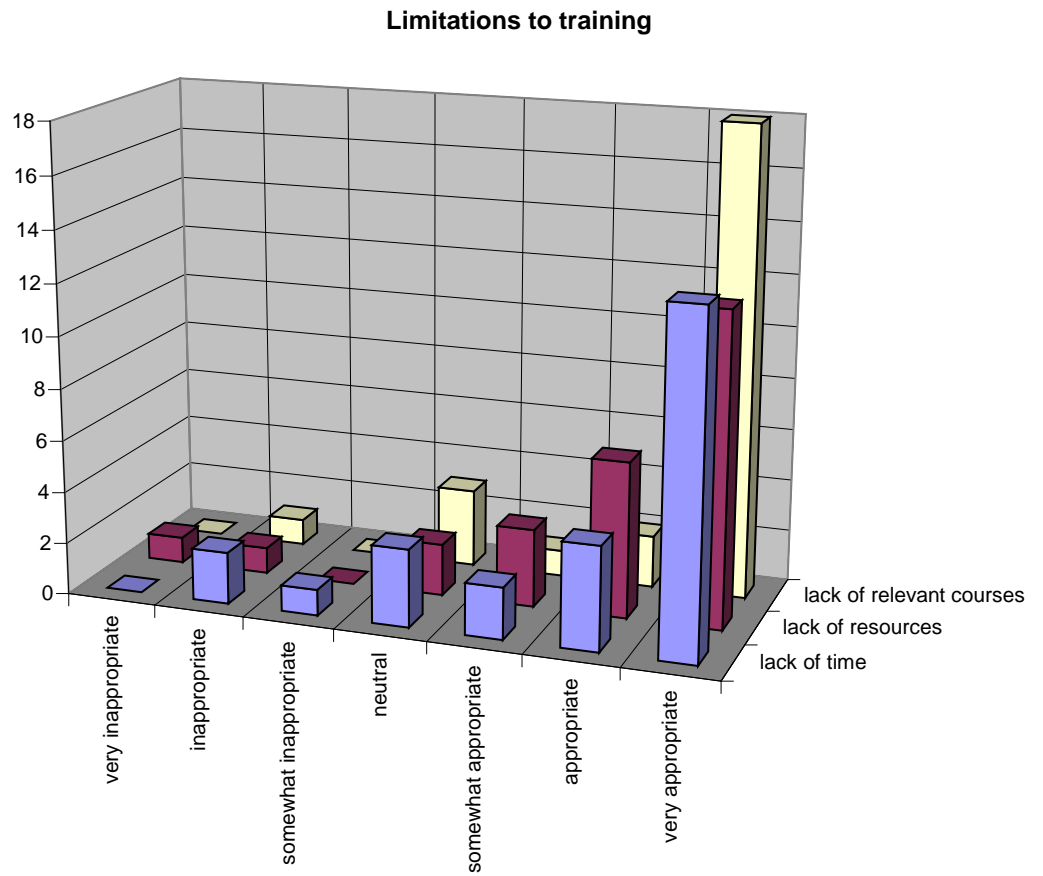
Limitations to delivery

frequency of this rank, minimum and maximum ranks, as well as the range of ranks ascribed to each limitation to training:

	mode	frequency of	Minimum	maximum	range
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		mode			
lack of time	7	13	2	7	5
lack of resources	7	12	1	7	6
lack of relevant courses	7	18	2	7	5

Below is a graph depicting limitations to training in independent community newspapers:



Appendix C – Phase our questionnaire

Based on the findings of the research and on your own opinion and experience, please answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

1. What in your opinion should entry level requirements for business training in independent community newspapers be?

Type your answer here

2. What findings stand out to you as significant?

Type your answer here

3. How would you incorporate these significant findings into training?

Type your answer here

4. Are there any other content areas you would want to see included?

Type your answers here

5. Would you prefer to deliver theoretical or on-the-job training to teach business management to independent newspaper managers? Please provide reasons for your preference.

Type your answer here

Appendix D – Questionnaire to Phase four questionnaire

We would like your opinions about what content should be included in a course to train business skills for independent community newspaper managers, and how best a course could be delivered. Based on the findings of the research and on your own opinion and experience, please answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

1. What entry level requirements should apply to business training for independent community newspapers?

Type your answer here

2. What are the most important content areas to be included in this kind of training?

Type your answer here

3. Are there any content areas not mentioned in the summary that you would include in this training?

Type your answer here

4. What mode of delivery would best suit business training for independent community newspapers?

Type your answer here

5. Are there any other issues relating to this training that you would like to mention?

Type your answers here

*Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form
Your participation is greatly appreciated.*

