

Children's Newspaper for the 21st Century — It's the grandparents!

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The Yomiuri Shimbun

The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun

- The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun is a weekly newspaper published by The Yomiuri Shimbun,* Japan's largest daily newspaper.
- The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun is written for children, in a joint operation with a publisher of children's books.
- The ultimate goal of the Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun is to help the Japanese people discover the joy of reading.

**The Yomiuri Shimbun has a circulation of nearly 10 million copies.*

The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun

A daring new direction

- The Yomiuri Shimbun launched its newest print edition, the “Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun,”*for children aged 6-12, and their parents, in March 2011.
- The initial sales goal was set at 150,000 copies, on the basis of rival publications, but this was achieved in less than four months. As of June 2012, it has reached over 220,000 copies and there are requests to distribute it overseas.
- The stronger-than-expected sales growth is particularly impressive considering that the target group consists entirely of “digital natives.”
 - *Yomiuri Children’s Express (or Newspaper)

The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun

An appealing new format

- The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun is a 20-page national weekly.
- The full-color newspaper is delivered to both schools and households every Thursday morning.
- Five pages are dedicated to news.
- There is another page that presents topical vocabulary from the news, with explanations provided by Detective Conan, the world-famous child detective/animation hero, and his friends.
- Six pages consist of special stories prepared by Shogaku-kan, a major publisher of children's books.

The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun

A surprising new partnership

- Yomiuri's collaboration with Shogaku-kan started in spring 2010, following an agreement to join forces to challenge the perception that reading print was out of fashion.
- Shogaku-kan's experience in producing books and magazines for children was appealing to the Yomiuri, while Shogaku-kan hoped to benefit from the Yomiuri's marketing power. (Yomiuri distributors have information on which of its readers have children.)
- The two publishers concluded that they should do something together to encourage children to read more.

Formula for success

Choose the best reporters

- The Yomiuri chose seven reporters – five men and two women – from the police beat to concentrate on the project. The reporters average about 10 years of experience, combining maturity with youthful stamina and flexibility.
- Mr. Shimizu, the then editor, required that the reporters have no background in reporting educational matters. The purpose of the KODOMO Shimbun is not education per se, but appeal.
- The editor also required that reporters have a cheerful outlook. “I never wanted this new medium to look too serious. Children deserve positive material.”

The cheerful crew

KODOMO Shimbun reporters, with a book of letters from schoolchildren they have interviewed.



Formula for success

Test the market thoroughly

- The pilot newspaper was completed in August 2010.
- In December, four groups were asked to comment on the pilot.
- Through the interviews, the project team found out that:
 - 1) Children were interested in international issues and sports, just like adults.
 - 2) Children are drawn into stories by interesting headlines, just like adults.
- Various layouts were tested. The children favored a design by Shogaku-kan over the more newspaper-like design from the Yomiuri, and this was chosen for the final layout.

Breaking the barriers

Each side brings something to the party



Japan's leading news publication



(Page 1 of the first issue)



A major children's publisher

Breaking the barriers

Training reporters in the magazine style

- Newspaper style emphasizes each story as its own unit, running from the headline with the most important facts in the “lede” and continuing in inverted pyramid style.
- The magazine style, by contrast, breaks each feature into smaller blocks which can be read independently.
- The newspaper staff working on the pilot commented they often did not know where to begin reading a particular article. The magazine staff showed them how this was by design and contributed to the overall appeal to younger readers.

Letting the money talk

Gift subscriptions with new possibilities

- The Yomiuri Kodomo Shimbun's attractive price is another reason for its success.
- The KODOMO Shimbun is a weekly, priced at 500 yen per month. In comparison, the two competing major children's newspapers are both daily and cost around 1,500 yen per month.
- A new scheme of payment was introduced for the new medium: Yomiuri made a special offer allowing grandparents who subscribe to the Yomiuri Shimbun to purchase subscriptions of the KODOMO Shimbun for their grandchildren.

YOMI-suppo

A gift for the future



YOMI-suppo

Satisfied customers are our best asset

- YOMI-suppo is The Yomiuri Shimbun's latest strategy for transforming our most avid readers into our best newspaper salespeople.
- The renewal rate for subscriptions is three times higher via YOMI-suppo than ordinary sales. There are already indications this will boost sales of other Yomiuri publications.

**YOMI-suppo (read "yoh-me sapo") is an abbreviation in Japanese for "We support reading."*

Innovative marketing

Japan's huge market is divided many ways



- Japanese newspapers have risen to the highest circulation figures in the world via a system of local distributors (Yomiuri has 7,700) to deliver newspapers and collect the fees. The local agents also go door-to-door to try to drum up new subscriptions.

It's a huge task to knock on every door in Tokyo.

Innovative marketing

Making it easier for everyone

- YOMI-suppo encourages subscribers to order by:
 - Making a toll-free call from anywhere in Japan
 - Allowing them to order for delivery anywhere in Japan
- YOMI-suppo makes paying easier by allowing subscribers to:
 - Pay once for a whole term (six months)
 - Pay for the gift subscription (even when it is delivered to a different area) together with their own subscription
 - Pay by wire transfer from post offices
 - Pay at convenience stores

Innovative marketing

We marketed the marketing system

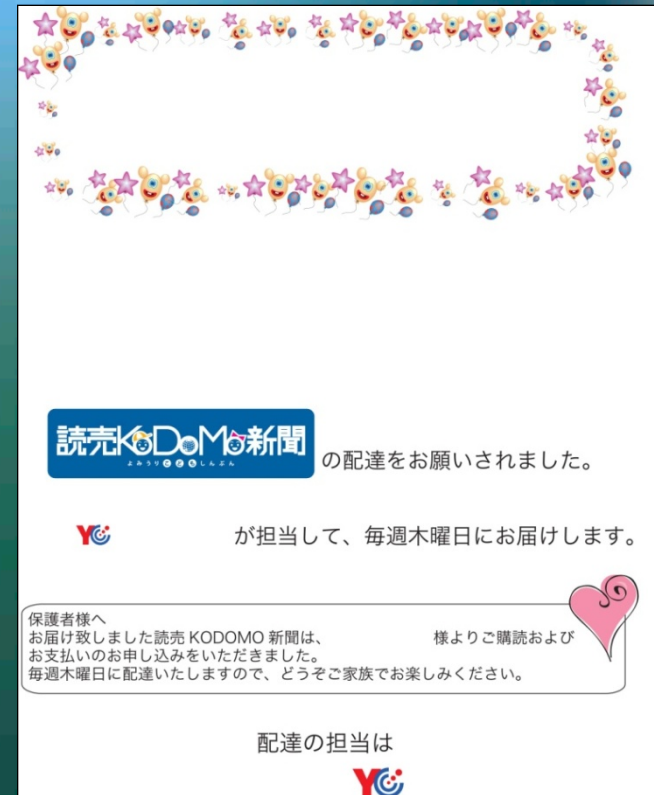
- On June 23, 2011, The Yomiuri Shimbun introduced the YOMI-suppo in an advertisement on the front page of its flagship paper.
- Two staff members were appointed to respond to calls. The newspaper estimated it might get as many as 100 calls.
- In fact, The Yomiuri Shimbun was deluged with 20,000 phone calls over the next two days.



The original advertisement in The Yomiuri Shimbun. Never underestimate the impact of a newspaper ad.

... making everybody happier

- The child receives a gift card together with the first delivery of the Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun, saying it is a present from the grandparents.
- In response to a request from a subscriber, the gift card was revised to allow room for the names of up to three recipients.



The message card: The distributors write the names of the recipients on behalf of their sender.

... and keeping the cycle running

- The best way to keep the subscription alive is to keep the subscriber (in this case the person who is paying the fee) satisfied.
- The KODOMO Shimbun held a campaign to prompt children to write letters to their grandparents on Respect for the Elderly Day (a national holiday in September).
- Distributors took this opportunity to insert original post cards into the KODOMO Shimbun, making it easy for the children to write thank-you notes to their grandparents.



A special issue of Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun suggesting children write to their grandparents.

Benefits spiral

Keeping in touch

- Some grandparents have also decided to subscribe to the KODOMO Shimbun themselves to keep track of what the younger generation is reading.
- YOMI-suppo allowed grandparents to bridge over the generation of their children – notorious for their indifference to newspapers – to reach their grandchildren. Thus the cycle of keeping the newspaper brand in the family is renewed.



With YOMI-suppo, families can share the enjoyment of reading together even if distance separates them.

Benefits spiral

Taking advantage of the experience

◆新しい配達サービスのしくみ

事務局
よみうり購読サポート

お客様のご指定先に新聞をお届けする「よみうり購読サポート」(よみサポ)のお申し込みは、よみサポ事務局で受け付けています。購読期間は6か月以上。ご

希望の新聞名、新聞を読まれる方の住所・氏名をお伝えいただくと、最寄りの読売新聞販売店(YC)から配達をします。複数箇所でもお届けできます。10月20日までにお申し込みいただければ、読売新聞と英字紙デイリー・ヨミウリが11月1日朝刊から配達できます。毎週木曜日発行の読売KDDOMO新聞は11月3日号からスタートします。購読料はクレジットカード決済、コンビニ店か郵便局での一括払い込み(手数料不要)。読売本紙とデイリー・ヨミウリには月払いのクレジットカード決済、銀行口座振替もできます。一部配達できない、配達日が遅れる地域、郵送となる地域があります。

【申し込み・問い合わせ】よみサポ事務局(読売ハートサービス内0120・941・441、平日午前10時～午後5時)。専用サイト(<http://www.yomisapo.com>)でも受け付け。

An announcement carried in *The Yomiuri Shimbun* on October 5, 2011, offering the YOMI-suppo system for all Yomiuri publications.

- With the YOMI-suppo, it is the most loyal readers who are reaching out to their family members and encouraging them to continue reading newspapers.
- YOMI-suppo now offers subscriptions to *The Yomiuri Shimbun* and the *English-language Daily Yomiuri*. Parents place orders for their children, knowing that keeping abreast of the news via general newspapers is an essential aid to getting a job and entering the real world.

Benefits spiral

Making us even stronger

- YOMI-suppo subscriptions account for nearly 3 percent of total KODOMO Shimbun sales.
- Nearly 60% of YOMI-suppo subscriptions are ordered by relatives (primarily grandparents) living in different prefectures from the recipients.
- YOMI-suppo has succeed in:
 - opening doors to prefectures where Yomiuri has not shown strength previously.
 - getting into households which are subscribing to rival newspapers.
 - achieving renewal rates as high as 80%, compared to the renewal rate of less than 50% for ordinary subscriptions.

Benefits spiral

Continuing the cycle through generations

- The success of the Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun has inspired many regional newspapers to start their own children's newspapers. Some of them simply copied the layout and structure of Yomiuri's.
- The long-term goal of the Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun project is to inspire children to read. In reading an attractive and meaningful newspaper, the children may be stimulated to read books. This may lead to better-informed adults who will themselves be more likely to have an interest in continuing to read newspapers.

Our message

Print media is not doomed

- The Yomiuri KODOMO Shimbun demonstrated that print media is not doomed. The project has shown that children are willing to read newspapers if the material is presented in an appealing way and matches their tastes.
- An excellent product by itself may not be enough. An innovative strategy of marketing and promotion clinches the deal.

Thank you for your attention!
Questions, suggestions, comments, or
concerns?