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ВІД ПЕРШИХ ДРУКОВАНИХ ГАЗЕТ ДО ФІЛОСОФСЬКОЇ ПРЕСИ: ІСТОРІЯ, РИНКИ ТА АВТОРСЬКА КОНЦЕПЦІЯ «ЧОМУ?»

Анотація. У статті розглянуто, як змінилися функції газет після переходу оперативних новин в онлайн і за яких умов спеціалізоване українське видання могло б залучити платних читачів. На основі історичного порівняння, галузевих даних і сценарного бюджету простежено розвиток преси від ранніх періодичних видань до сучасних передплатних моделей. Розмежовано наклад, перегляди сторінок і кількість передплатників, оскільки кожен із цих показників вимірює різні відносини між виданням і його читачами. Автор пропонує «Чому?» — незалежну україномовну газету, яка бере подію тижня за відправну точку для філософського питання. Уявні відповіді історичних мислителів мали б посилатися на їхні першоджерела й пояснювати межі кожної аналогії. Для пілотного накладу в тисячу примірників за ціною 160 грн кожен продаж 600 примірників дає орієнтовний дефіцит 19 000 грн, тоді як продаж 800 залишає 5 000 грн до оподаткування. Цифровий пілот, два альтернативні варіанти першої шпальти й платні передзамовлення дали б змогу перевірити попит до друку. Повторні оплати та здатність покривати редакційні витрати із зароблено доходу стануть підставою для рішень щодо наступних випусків.

Ключові слова: газети, філософська преса, журналістика, передплата, редакційна незалежність, економіка медіа.

Abstract. This paper examines how the functions of newspapers have changed as breaking news has moved online and under what conditions a specialist Ukrainian publication could attract paying readers. Historical comparison, industry data and a scenario budget trace the development of the press from early periodicals to contemporary subscription models. Circulation, page views and subscriber counts are distinguished because each measures a different relationship between a publication and its readers. The author proposes Why?, an independent Ukrainian-language newspaper that takes an event of the week as the starting point for a philosophical question. Imagined responses by historical thinkers would identify their primary sources and explain the limits of each analogy. For a pilot run of one thousand copies priced at UAH 160 each, selling 600 copies produces an estimated deficit of UAH 19,000, while selling 800 leaves UAH 5,000 before tax. A digital pilot, two alternative front pages and paid pre-orders would test demand before printing. Repeat payments and the ability to cover editorial costs from earned revenue would inform decisions about subsequent issues.

Keywords: newspapers, philosophical press, journalism, subscriptions, editorial independence, media economics.

Вступ

“The unexamined life is not worth living.” — Socrates, Apology, 38a [1].

Online news travels faster than print, but newspapers select events, compare arguments and document their time. Which functions can sustain paying readers in Ukraine?

Мета і завдання

Trace newspaper production and use, distinguish print, magazine and digital formats, and design a Ukrainian philosophical newspaper.

Методи

Historical comparison, secondary statistics, editorial modelling and scenario budgets. Market indicators are assessed separately.

Результати та обговорення

Ancient Roman public notices and handwritten newsletters were predecessors of newspapers. They lacked the regular mass circulation associated with the modern printed press. Johann Carolus's Relation, published in Strasbourg from 1605, is widely recognised as the earliest printed periodical newspaper. Its emergence marked an economic transition from news copied by hand for wealthy clients to a product that could be reproduced and issued regularly [2].

One of the earliest periodicals printed in what is now Ukraine was the French-language Gazette de Léopol, published in Lviv in 1776. The first Ukrainian-language newspaper in Galicia, Zoria Halytska, began publication in 1848 [3]. The history of printing on the territory of present-day Ukraine and the history of Ukrainian-language periodicals thus have different chronological starting points. Table 1 traces the principal stages.

Table 1. Stages in the evolution of the newspaper Source: Author, based on [2; 3; 4].

Таблиця 1

Period	Change in format	Economic and social function
1605	Relation, Strasbourg	News sold as a reproducible periodical.
1776 / 1848	Gazette de Léopol / Zoria Halytska	Local and Ukrainian-language press emerges.
19th–20th centuries	Mass printing and advertising	Daily news, notices and public debate.
21st century	Web, apps, subscriptions	Editorial brand extends beyond print.

Social and video platforms now lead news consumption across surveyed markets (Table 2). Among 18–24-year-olds who had not read a newspaper in the preceding week, 56% had never read one regularly. This percentage describes recent non-readers [5].

Delays, paper and delivery costs, free online news and personalised feeds constrain print. War and displacement disrupt Ukrainian distribution; their effects remain unmeasured. Ukrposhta still offers the official newspapers Uriadovyi Kurier and Holos Ukrainy in its 2026 catalogue [6; 7; 8].

Of 13.76 million New York Times subscribers, most paid for digital access alone (Table 2). Quarterly digital-only subscription revenue rose 14.6% year on year; print fell 0.7% [9]. Copies, paying accounts and page views measure different activities.

Table 2. What the reported indicators measure Source: [5; 9; 10; 11].

Таблиця 2

Indicator	Reported value	Interpretation
Reuters Institute, 2026	54% used social or video platforms for news.	Surveyed audiences across markets [5].
New York Times, Q3 2026	13.22 million digital-only subscribers.	One publisher's paying audience [9].
Japan, Oct 2025	24 million copies per day.	Aggregate print circulation [10].
Ukrainska Pravda, Q4 2025	49.2 million monthly page views.	Online traffic, including repeat visits [11].

Publication frequency matters, but it is only one distinguishing feature. Newspapers generally follow current events through dated reports and shorter articles. Magazines typically organise issues by theme and publish essays, interviews and signed columns that remain relevant for longer. There are also weekly newspapers with extensive analysis and magazines that respond to breaking news [4]. This distinction matters for the proposed project: calling it a newspaper entails regular editorial engagement with events beyond the compilation of timeless aphorisms.

Table 3. The newspaper, the magazine and the digital news outlet Source: Author, based on [4].

Таблиця 3

Criterion	Newspaper	Magazine	Digital news outlet
Publication rhythm	Regular news agenda	Thematic issue	Continuous updating
Typical item	Report, explainer, column	Essay, long-form feature	Article, video, newsletter
Reader value	Selection and context	Depth and lasting reference	Accessibility and speed
Revenue	Subscriptions, copy sales, advertising	Single-issue sales, subscriptions	Subscriptions, advertising, membership

The Financial Times and The Wall Street Journal specialise in business reporting; Yomiuri Shimbun retains a substantial print readership. Ukrainska Pravda, NV and Ekonomichna Pravda illustrate the influence of digital newsrooms, while Ukraine's official newspapers retain a practical print function [6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11].

The claim that society generally takes a negative view of philosophy would require a separate representative survey. A testable hypothesis is that difficult language, perceived distance from academic debate and a lack of obvious practical benefit limit interest among some readers. Before launch, readers could be asked what they associate with the word "philosophy", whether they would read short analyses, and whether their interest changes after seeing a sample issue.

Philosophy Now and New Philosopher publish in print and online [12; 13]. Why? would enter this existing niche by linking philosophical questions to the week's news.

Table 4 distinguishes retailer selections, catalogue availability and expert recognition. None measures how many people worldwide actually read a philosopher [14; 15; 16].

Table 4. Philosophers and texts featured in 2026 selections Source: Author, based on [14; 15; 16].

Таблиця 4

Author	Work or tradition	Basis for inclusion and possible newspaper topic
Marcus Aurelius	Meditations; Stoicism	Barnes & Noble bestseller selection; attention and discipline [14].
Albert Camus	The Myth of Sisyphus; the absurd	Barnes & Noble selection; work and meaning [14].
Friedrich Nietzsche	Beyond Good and Evil	Barnes & Noble selection; how convictions become fashionable [14].
Plato / Seneca	Republic / Letters to Lucilius	Barnes & Noble selection; justice and time [14].
Taras Liutyi	Skhodyt porozhnia povnia (An Empty Full Moon Rises)	Book of the Year 2026 selection; nihilism [15].

Author	Work or tradition	Basis for inclusion and possible newspaper topic
Petro Kraliuk	Istoriia filosofii: Ukraina (History of Philosophy: Ukraine)	Book of the Year 2026 selection; Ukraine's intellectual tradition [15].

Why? is conceived as an independent Ukrainian-language fortnightly of 12–16 pages with a digital edition and QR links. Its readers include students, teachers, educated non-specialists and creative and social professionals. It examines algorithms, economic freedom, responsibility, personal and collective memory, justice, law and consumption. Facts, interpretations and literary experiments would be clearly identified.

A NEWSPAPER ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

WHY?

Big questions in plain language

PILOT ISSUE • 2027 • No. 1 **AUTHOR'S CONCEPT**



WHY DO WE TRUST ALGORITHMS?

Freedom of choice in the age of artificial intelligence

Algorithms increasingly decide for us what to read, watch and buy, and even whom to talk to. We delegate part of our everyday decisions because doing so is convenient, quick and often efficient. But do we remain truly free?

Philosophers call this the paradox of "soft loss of autonomy": when control becomes so subtle that it seems to be our own. In this logic, an algorithm becomes more than an instrument. It becomes a partner in shaping our worldview.

In this issue, we examine how technology influences our freedom, responsibility and ability to think critically. Can we remain ourselves in a world where even our desires are predicted by machines? • pp. 2–3

Money and freedom

Does financial independence give us freedom, or create new dependencies? We examine how economic choices shape our dignity and sense of happiness. • p. 4

The right to doubt

Why does doubt become such an important skill in an age of information overload? On critical thinking, manipulation and learning to stand up to the world's imposed certainties. • p. 5

Can AI be held responsible?

If artificial intelligence makes a decision, who answers for the consequences? We examine the ethical limits of technology and whether we can demand morality from machines. • p. 6

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

The philosophy of stress: how to hold on to yourself in a fast-moving world • p. 7
Why we need beauty: aesthetics as a basic need • p. 8
A short guide: five books that will change how you think • p. 8

Figure 1. Front page of Why? English rendering of the proposed Ukrainian newspaper.

Source: O. V. Briukhno, concept and editorial structure. The original mock-up was visualised using generative AI.

Table 5. Editorial plan for one issue of Why? Source: Author's editorial model.

Таблиця 5

Section	Sample question	Editorial task

Section	Sample question	Editorial task
Cover story	Why do we trust algorithms?	Establish the facts, present competing positions and explain terms.
Philosophers comment	What would Socrates have said about fake news?	Label reconstructions of historical positions explicitly.
Money and freedom	Does income make us independent?	Connect economics, law and ethics.
Two dissenting views	Should digital identification be compulsory?	Present the arguments for and against, without implying a consensus.
Philosophy in a minute	What is the categorical imperative?	Give a concise explanation and an everyday example.
Reader's letter / QR link	What struck you as unjust this week?	Start a conversation, collect feedback and test demand.

A distinctive feature is a series of short "comments" by philosophers on current news, written as a literary device. These texts are editorial reconstructions. They cannot be presented as authentic statements by historical figures, rediscovered interviews or literal translations of their works. Every column would carry the label "An imagined response inspired by the thinker's ideas", a reference to the primary text and a brief note on the limits of the analogy. Without these safeguards, the newspaper would spread misinformation and undermine its educational purpose.

An independent academic adviser would help editors check concepts against primary texts and avoid attributing views on unfamiliar technologies to historical thinkers. Living thinkers would participate in any commentary published in their names.

A digital pilot would test demand before a limited print run for subscribers, book events and universities. With content held constant, an A/B test would compare two cover lines: "A Philosophical Newspaper" and "A Newspaper About Difficult Questions in Plain Language". Demand requires paid orders and viability requires a printer's quotation.

Table 6. Illustrative budget for one pilot issue (UAH) Source: Author's calculations, UAH.

Таблиця 6

Item	Cautious scenario	Optimistic scenario
Copies printed / sold	1,000 / 600	1,000 / 800
Price per copy	160	160
Gross revenue from copy sales	96,000	128,000
Printing / editorial / other costs	55,000 / 28,000 / 8,000	55,000 / 28,000 / 8,000
Distribution (25% of revenue)	24,000	32,000
Estimated balance before tax	−19,000	+5,000

The estimates exclude VAT, returns, launch financing, payroll outside the issue budget and reserves. The positive balance is therefore provisional. Paid membership, lectures and clearly labelled book advertising offer additional revenue options subject to editorial independence.

Table 7. Testable outlook for newspapers and the Why? project, 2027–2029 Source: Author's conditional forecast.

Таблиця 7

Year	Expected development	Indicator
2027	Digital news leads; specialist titles test subscriptions and print specials.	Paying readership; pilot sales.

Year	Expected development	Indicator
2028	More specialised newsletters and reader clubs; QR links connect print and web.	Repeat sales, retention, revenue per reader.
2029	A paying community may sustain a small title. Growth is uncertain.	Issue margin, earned revenue share, editorial independence.

Test both covers with regular philosophy readers and those who bought no philosophy books in the past year. Track pre-orders, reading time, QR visits and repeat payments alongside stated preferences.

Identify the source work and editorial reconstruction in every historical mini-column. Keep book advertisements separate from reviews, avoid spurious quotations in headlines and maintain a public corrections log.

Benchmark the pilot against a newsletter and a specialist magazine before commissioning regular print runs.

Висновки

The decline of print as the primary carrier of breaking news leaves intact the public value of selecting and explaining events. The digital transformation of major publishers, Ukraine's continuing print subscription market and existing philosophical periodicals show that these formats can coexist. Whether a new title will attract paying readers remains to be tested. Why? offers another point of entry into philosophy: a current event gives rise to a question, and the question to several arguments that readers can examine. Its practical novelty lies in short newspaper commentaries openly identified as reconstructions and in the use of current reporting to explore philosophical ideas. The first measure of success should be readers' willingness to return regularly and pay for an independent publication. A social media follower count cannot establish that commitment.

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