

NEWSPAPER COMPARISONS

Dow Jones & Company and its flagship publication, The Wall Street Journal, are without question the definition of quality—and have earned a contract that should reflect that quality. But for the sake of comparison, here is a recap of the recent settlements reached in the newspaper industry.

New York Times

An eight-year contract was negotiated in 2003, well before the current industry “crisis” and before the first assault on health coverage at Dow Jones. The deal at the Times called for annual raises of 3% between 2003 and 2007, with 2% increases in each of the three final years -- 2008, 2009 and 2010. The unit, however, subsequently voted to divert the 2005 raise (3%) in order to put those funds into the joint labor-management controlled health insurance plan.

As 2006 ended, the Times Health Plan was running a \$400,000 a month deficit with the actuaries warning reserves would be depleted by the end of 2008.

On September 20, 2007, the Newspaper Guild of New York, representing employees at the Times, reported that the Times Health Plan is no longer losing the \$400,000 a month it had been losing last year. In fact, its income/spending levels are nearly "flat" with a \$5-Million reserve this year, and is now projected by the actuaries to remain solvent through the end of 2008, at least, due in large part to a change in networks.

Washington Post

The current Post contract was settled in November of 2005. It was a three-year deal. There was a \$2,000 signing bonus but no raise for the first nine months. There were then four raises of \$10.50 @ month each during the remaining 27 months. Health insurance at The Post is a non-negotiable “me-too” agreement with employees receiving the same the health plan as management. The Post can change the plan for employees, including premiums, at any time, as long as the changes are uniform for all employees. Washington Post employees currently pay 20% to 25% of the premiums.

Philadelphia Inquirer- Philadelphia Daily News

Three year contract with a wage freeze for the first two years and a \$25 @ week raise in final year that is expected to be diverted to pay for health insurance. There is a lump sum bonus of \$750 in 2007 and 2008. Pension was frozen. Sick leave was reduced to 65% of pay.

Boston Globe

\$600 lump sum on 1/1/07. Wage increases will be paid only if Globe revenue for certain defined periods is greater than the revenue collected in that period of the previous year: 1/1/07: \$7.50; 7/1/07: \$8.00; 1/1/08: \$9.00; 7/1/08, \$8.50. Employees pay about 30% of the cost of health insurance premiums.

Pittsburgh Post Gazette

Wages reduced by 7% with those funds going to support pension and health insurance. Pension frozen. No increases in the reduced wages for life of three-year contract. Numerous other concessions.

Boston Herald

Previously negotiated wage increases will be given up for the next two years in order to pay for health care increases. Employees pay about 80% of the premiums.

Baltimore Sun

Four year contract. Wages increase \$10 each year; additional merit pay averaging \$10, \$12, \$15 and \$15 each year must be paid. Signing bonus of \$750. Employee health care remains at 25% of premiums.

Detroit News

No wage increases other than merit pay for 3 year contract. Medical: individual plan – employee pays \$11.90 a week; \$33 for family, can increase by 1% each year.

Detroit Free Press

Same as above except for a 1% wage increase in first year.

Toledo Blade

Wages for current employees earning more than \$490 a week reduced by 8%. New hires will be paid 25% less than current rates. Employees pay 22.5% of health care premiums; work day lengthened by 30 minutes and loss of two personal days a year. Numerous other concessions.

San Jose Mercury News

Two-year contract with 2% raises each year, health insurance went to 30% premiums paid by employee; pension was frozen and many jobs eliminated by allowing subcontracting.

Manchester Union Leader

Two year wage freeze. Lump sum payment in first year. Substantial increase in health insurance premiums.

Buffalo News

Three year contract extension with raises of 2% in each of the first two years and a freeze in the third year, with payment of a \$1,100 bonus in lieu of a raise. Low-end health insurance plan remains available without employee premiums. Two-tier wages accepted for circulation district managers.