

## Montreal's La Presse pulls plug on daily print edition

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Guy Crevier, president and publisher of La Presse, the main newspaper in Quebec, pictured on April 17, 2013, said the paper's digital strategy "paid off"

One of Canada's largest newspapers, Montreal's La Presse, will pull the plug on its daily print edition next year, its publisher said Wednesday.

The French-language daily will only be available in print on Saturdays as of January, continuing the news industry's inexorable shift online.

The broadsheet did away with its Sunday print run in 2009, then two years ago introduced a free tablet edition, which publisher Guy Crevier said Wednesday is now more popular than the 131-year-old print version.

It also comes a day after the Toronto star launched its own tablet edition, after licensing La Presse's tablet technology.

"The digital strategy has paid off," Crevier said, with many advertisers who had shifted spending to other online and mobile news platforms coming back to La Presse after its tablet edition was introduced.

The tablet site, which relies solely on advertising for revenue, has nearly half a million weekly readers, Crevier said. Around 60 percent of La Presse's revenues already come from digital.

The shift online is expected to rely on urban consumers, as Internet access in many rural parts of Canada remains slow and spotty.

"For more than a decade, core indicators have heralded the newspaper industry's demise unless it can adapt and put in place a strong digital strategy," Crevier said.

He noted that North American ad revenues fell 63 percent from 2006 to 2013, for a total loss of \$29 billion, while subscriptions fell 22 percent.

"The decline is unfortunately irreversible," he said.

Speaking to staff gathered Wednesday for the announcement, Crevier said it costs Can\$30 million (US\$ 22.8 million) per year to [print](#) the newspaper and that going all digital will save Can\$20 million annually. The tablet technology cost Can\$40 million to develop.

Parent company Gesca, which is owned by the Desmarais family, sold off almost all of its other newspaper holdings in March.

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