

News Corp reports profit jump to \$87 mn

10 November 2017

US media group News Corp said Thursday it returned to profit in the past quarter, as it saw improvements in digital subscriptions at the Wall Street Journal and other newspapers.

The media conglomerate led by mogul Rupert Murdoch and his family reported a profit of \$87 million in the fiscal quarter to June 30, compared with a flat result a year earlier.

Revenues grew five percent to \$2.01 billion.

Chief executive Robert Thomson said revenues and operating income grew in all segments, including its real estate websites.

Thomson said the newspaper outlook appears positive following changes made by Google in its indexing of online [news](#) to help support digital subscription models.

"We have reason for optimism about the future of our premium media businesses, in light of the profound changes agreed by Google in the ranking of news content," he said.

"These changes follow almost a decade of campaigning by News Corp, which led the world in understanding the threat to and the opportunities for quality journalism in the digital age. We are continuing our discussions with both Google and Facebook about further facilitating subscriptions and the sharing of permissioned personal data."

For the newspaper segment, revenues were up two percent as gains in the US and Australia offset declines in Britain.

In addition to the Wall Street Journal, the company publishes the New York Post, The Times and Sunday Times of London, The Sun and a number of Australian newspapers.

The Wall Street Journal saw the number of digital subscribers increase to 1.3 million from 967,000 in the prior year.

In Australia the company had 375,400 digital subscribers, up from 283,100 a year ago.

The Times and Sunday Times saw its subscriber base rise to 212,000, compared to 181,000.

For digital real estate, which includes the realtor.com listing site, revenues were up 20 percent.

The company retained most of the print operations of the original News Corp when it was broken up in 2013 into two separate firms as part of a plan to "unlock value" for shareholders.

The breakup led to the creation of a separately traded 21st Century Fox, which includes most of the film and television properties in the Murdoch empire.

Murdoch, 86, began a gradual withdrawal from both companies in 2013, and now shares the title of chairman with his eldest son Lachlan at both firms.

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