

## Is Closing NOTW an Opening for BSkyB?

The closing of the News of the World on 10 July in the wake of the phone hacking scandals is being presented by its owners as the decent thing to do in order to deal with the tarnished reputation of the paper. It may be an appropriate response to the crisis generated by the hacking scandal. But as the hacking investigations continue there is another story line developing – what does the NOTW closure mean for News Corp’s bid for BSkyB?

The public reaction to the tactics used by the NOTW may mean that News International and its parent company News Corp enjoy less popular support, and loose some support among political elites. Ofcom’s recent intervention has already called into question whether it is a “fit and proper” license holder.

But what about the numbers upon which the assessment of the bid and negotiations for the undertakings such divestiture of Sky News are based? If NOTW is out of the picture will things change? [Ofcom’s report](#) on the public interest test for the bid takes into account the total share of news audiences across all types of media. News Corp was the largest national newspaper group with News International accounting for 34.8% of circulation for all daily newspapers, and 41.3% of circulation for all Sunday newspapers. NOTW was certainly a large contributor to those numbers.

So what will the hacking scandal and NOTW closure mean for the BSkyB bid? Will decision makers use this opportunity to really investigate whether News Corp is fit and proper or could a recalculation of market shares simply work in News Corp’s favour in negotiations for the bid?

---

July 7th, 2011 | [Media Plurality and Ownership](#) | [0 Comments](#)

---

⌵