

AIKB Radio Project: Information Sheet

Title: P.23 O+A Connexion

Introduction	I am talking today to Sarah Smith who is not only the editor but also the owner and founder of Connexion Newspaper which serves the English speaking community here in France.
Sandra	Sarah, could you tell me why you started Connexion?
Sarah	I moved over to France, having worked in journalism in the U.K., not planning to set up a paper. Nothing so mad as that, but after a few months I realised that there were quite a few practical issues and information that I wasn't able to get and realised as well that there were probably lots and lots of people in a similar situation; so I decided to put together first editions of Connexion which started in 2002 and printed 10,000 copies. The response led me to develop the paper into what it is today.
Sandra	How many reporters do you have today?
Sarah	We use freelance reporters in different areas of France. We don't have regional pages with a regional correspondent. What we do is work with people who have a particular knowledge.
Sandra	I would assume that at some times you must have lots and lots of choices of stories. How do you decide which ones you are going to include?
Sarah	We are quite in touch with the readership and France, particularly at the moment, in the last year or two, has been a place where there has been an awful lot of change announced. We look out for those stories that, for our readers, are going to tell them about issues that may be to their benefit or something that they should know about which is changing. We are a new paper which is very focused into English speaking residents of France and we are very keen that we don't focus on the ex-pat community

	so we have many, many more stories about French people because that's the way that we are going to learn a bit more about France.
Sandra	Do you know if you have any French readership?
Sarah	We do have people who report back to us that they like the publication, despite being French and being able to access quite a bit of information and news already in French. They like our presentation and they like our news selection of what's exactly going on because they feel it gives a fair view of events in the country during the last month.
Sandra	What's been the most interesting story for you that Connexion has covered?
Sarah	Ah! That's a good question. I like that one! I know the edition I'm looking at now, which has a story about the history of the beret and why French people wear berets and facts like the way that you slant the beret on your head is supposed to denote your political persuasions. It's things like that that we enjoy talking to French people involved in these particular trades and cultural aspects to find out a little bit more.
Sandra	Could you just tell us what your website is called?
Sarah	It's www.connectionfrance.com (for those in this country) And it's Connexion with an 'X'. We update our website daily with events that wouldn't find a place into a market publication just because of their timing. They would be too old and change by the time we actually went to print.
Sandra	Thank you very much Sarah.

