

Russian journalists get peek at U.S. media

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A group of Russian journalists is getting lessons about life in the United States by visiting Northern Colorado.

The group's visit, which is funded by the U.S. Library of Congress, has included time with area businesses, leaders from Colorado State University and United Way of Larimer County and a stop at the Coloradoan.

Three journalists from Saratov, a city of 800,000 with 50 publications, asked questions Thursday about how the newspaper business model works and also how reporters choose and develop their stories.

The journalists, who speak limited English, worked with translator Elena Goldis to communicate.

The journalists were Viktoriya Kontarchuk, an advertising manager for Komsomolskaya Pravda-Saratov; Gerontiy Tsinaridze,

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general director for the publishing house Stolitsa Povolzhya; and Vladimir Mikhaylva, director of Our Version-Povolzhye newspaper.

The Russian journalists discovered one of the major differences in how they operate compared with American newspapers is the Russian papers are limited to no more than 40 percent advertising space in their issues. The Russian papers also take what they call "indirect" advertising, which is content paid for by a business or politician. In some papers, that content is labeled as paid. In others, it is not.

Mikhaylva's paper, which has no advertising, is published by a board of trustees who cover the costs.

The Russian journalists



Miranda Grubbs/The Coloradoan

Gerontiy Tsinaridze, left, talks about how his newspaper is funded while Victoria Kontarchuk listens during a meeting Thursday with the Coloradoan advertising staff at the Coloradoan in Fort Collins.

face shrinking circulation, cuts in advertising money and increasing readership online. However, each of the journalists has set ambitious goals for the coming year.

Kontarchuk said her publication's goal is to increase its circulation. Mikhaylva's paper

anticipates challenges covering the new governor for Saratov's region. And Tsinaridze wants to double his paper's 10,000 copy circulation. When his company took hold of the publication in February, it had 700 subscriptions and reached 4,000 people.