



## Digital vs. print: It doesn't have to be a war

Many publishers are asking themselves if they should go digital. After all, “experts” are predicting the demise of the printed publication. However, these are the same experts who predicted that we would all have paperless offices when computers came on the scene.

Just like video didn't kill the radio star, digital magazines won't kill their print counterparts. Quite the opposite. In fact, the two can live in perfect harmony.

### Look before you leap

Before we get to the proper way to manage the digital vs. print question, we should state that the landscape is littered with publications that have gone from print only to digital only and have not been successful. “Lately I hear more about publishers who have not

had success going digital,” says Carla Kalogeridis of ARION Media Services, a publishing consultant and services provider for associations. “A totally digital publication is a different animal, and most people approach it incorrectly. Associations that make the digital vs. print decision based solely on economics are the ones that fail.”

In many cases, by the time associations get around to considering the digital option, their print publications are at the end of their rope. The industry may be in trouble, the economy isn't good for anyone, they may be losing advertisers, and the board is desperate to cut costs. “People will look at the big printing bill, the postage bill, and the bill for graphic design, and just decide ‘Hey let's go digital,’” she says. “But

because they're at the end of their rope, they don't have the time to develop a strategy and approach that sets up the digital publication for success.”



Jim Fazio for ESPN The Magazine

### We surf the Internet. We swim in magazines.

The Internet is exhilarating. Magazines are enveloping. The Internet grabs you. Magazines embrace you. The Internet is fleeting. Magazines are immersive. And both media are growing.

Barely noticed amidst the thunderous Internet clamor is the simple fact that magazine readership has risen over the past five years. Even in the age of the Internet, even among the groups one would assume are most singularly hooked on digital media, the appeal of magazines is growing.

Think of it this way: during the 12-year life of Google, magazine readership actually increased 11 percent.

What it proves, once again, is that a new medium doesn't necessarily displace an existing one. Just as movies didn't kill radio. Just as TV didn't kill movies. An established medium can continue to flourish so long as it continues to offer a unique experience. And, as reader loyalty and growth demonstrate, magazines do.

Which is why people aren't giving up swimming, just because they also enjoy surfing.

**MAGZINE**  
The Power of Print™

Five major magazine companies have gotten together to launch one of the largest print advertising campaigns ever created to promote the vitality of magazines as a medium. Young & Rubicam New York created the campaign, which begins in May and will run for seven months in both magazines and Web sites. It will cover 100 titles, as well as third party sites, and will reach 112 million readers per month. For more information, please visit <http://multivu.pnnewswire.com/mnr/magazines/42679/>.



Exceeding our customers' expectations for more than 60 years...

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A better approach is to look at digital as a value-added product, not a replacement product. Essentially, you look at both print and digital for their respective strengths and formulate each product accordingly. It would also be wise to consider this statistic from publishers who have offered a digital option alongside a print magazine: the average opt-in rate for the digital product is 15 to 20 percent. That makes a pretty good case for keeping both options.

### Digital is different

But how do you decide which content goes where? Kalogeridis also feels strongly about not just taking your print magazine and placing it on the Internet. “The way you design a magazine for print is nothing like how you should design a digital publication. The vertical format doesn’t work.”

“Digital and print publications are also two different content models,” Kalogeridis continues. “For digital, you’ll want shorter, hard-hitting articles. The print publication can feature longer articles that have in-depth research. People still need those types of articles to run their businesses, and print is the best host for that kind of content. You’re not going to find someone reading an in-depth article online.”



### A few examples...

“Eighty-five percent of our members continue to want the print version [of our magazine] despite our online digital publication.”

Kim Howard  
Editor in Chief, ACC Docket

“Our sales folks are having an extremely tough time selling ads in the digital-only issues.”

Terri Tracey, CAE  
Vice President, Technology and Publications, Institute for Supply Management

*(The two quotes above were posted by members on the listserv of Association & Media Publishing.)*

While 91 percent of ... respondents said they always or frequently read the magazine in print, a whopping 74.6 percent said they did not read the online issue.

— results of Columbia College Today readership survey

“In surveys, we’ve asked if people have visited the online version of the magazine, and the response to that has been really low – always around 5 to 10 percent.”

— Chuck Luce, editor of Arches magazine at the University of Puget Sound

And despite the naysayers who argue that nobody reads anymore, people are in fact still reading. “People will make the time to read things that are of value to them,” Kalogeridis maintains. “Things that will give them an edge professionally, help them establish benchmarks for their businesses, and give them a better grasp of their industries. One of my clients has very lengthy articles each month, and members say they read the magazine from cover to cover and love it.”

That said, there are digital options for every publication that can enhance

*(The two previous excerpts are from the March issue of Currents magazine, which is published by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education)*

### A giant speaks

Publishing giant PennWell Corp. revealed some interesting statistics in a recent report on its digital business-to-business publications. The firm surveyed 6,300 readers who have opted to receive PennWell’s publications in a digital format. Thirty-six magazines were represented in the survey. Some results:

- The average time spent reading a digital publication is 30 minutes.
- Thirty percent of digital readers said they want the magazine in both digital and print format.
- Adoption of a digital publication builds quickly but then levels off to about 15-25 percent of the total circulation.

### Fast fact

During the 12-year lifespan of Google, magazine readership has increased 11 percent.

the content experience you give your readers. It’s just a matter of using each medium effectively. “Just because airplanes fly, that doesn’t mean we’ve done away with cars,” Kalogeridis says.

“The world is complicated, and there is so much junk sent to us online,” she concludes. “People still love to curl up in a chair with a printed magazine. People today are cherishing magazines more than they ever have.” ■

Editor’s note: We will be delving into this topic again in our next issue, so please stay tuned.

# One on one

**JPA profile:** Jill Rambo, sales representative

**Number of years with JPA:** 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

**Why she loves JPA:** “It really is a team effort here. It seems like every department will do whatever it takes to help another department if they need it. Plus, everyone knows




everyone. Even though it can be busy and hectic, we’ll always ask how did so and so do at the dance, how is your son feeling, etc. It’s a real family atmosphere. It’s not unusual to see someone bring his or her grandkids in for a visit.”

**Family life:** “Phil and I have been married for 15 years. We have four sons and one daughter. Their names and ages are Jason (33), Jacob (23), Dustin (20), Justin (20), and Molly (25). We have two grandchildren: Sophia Elizabeth and Carson Matthew, cousins who were born two weeks apart from each other. They soon will be celebrating their 2nd birthdays.”

**Hobbies:** “I’ve been volunteering for the Livingston County Humane Society for 10 years. I scoop poop, do fund-raising, show animals, transport animals, work in the office — whatever is needed. You name it and I’ll do it. I’m currently on the board and I enjoy seeing animals find their new ‘forever’ homes.

“I come by it naturally, from my parents. We always had pets. My uncle gave me my first dog, a Boston Terrier puppy named Pokey, when I was 2 years old. Today, we have seven rescue dogs at home.”

**One cool fact:** “JPA was a customer of mine before I started working for them. I worked at a prepress facility called Flying Color for more than 20 years. They were closing my Flying Color location and were moving it to another city when Randy Pennington (a JPA sales representative) suggested to JPA President Dale Flesburg that he speak with me. I actually knew many people at the plant, so the transition was easy.” 



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Permit No. 592

## RECIPE

### Easy Italian Beef

- 3 pounds of stew meat (not frozen)
- 3 packages of dry Italian dressing (Good Seasons)
- 8 ounce jar of pepperoncini

**Place meat and dressing** in a crock pot and put it on low. (You do not have to add liquid.) It’s typically ready in 18 hours. Halfway through, break up meat with a fork. Within the last two to three hours of cooking, add jar of pepperoncini (with juice) to taste.

**Serving tip:** Melted cheese on top is a nice touch.

**Notes:** For every pound of meat you add, add one package of dressing. If you have some left over, it does keep well in the refrigerator.

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