

# CONSUMER MAGAZINE REVIEW



## DEAD OR ALIVE?

### An Examination of Consumer Magazines' Evolution

*While many in the advertising business are ready to proclaim that print is dead, there are those executives who stand by the medium. In fact, pharma continues to spend on print advertising – with at least 19 different ads currently circulating in print this month.*

BY AMANDA EHRLICH

The cries that “print is dead” seem to be growing louder. Headlines proclaim that newspapers are obsolete and consumer magazines are doomed. Vibe, Domino, Blender, Teen, Country Home, PC Magazine and Playgirl all folded in 2009. Advertising Age keeps a fairly humorous running tally of these publications (and others) that have recently bid adieu to existence. Daily Finance has a “death watch” underway, projecting the next magazines that are likely to become “media casualties.”

It is a tough world right now for consumer print media. The numbers reflect this reality. TNS reported that ad spending in consumer magazines dropped 19.2 percent in the first quarter of 2009. And data from the Publishers Information Bureau (PIB) shows that total advertising revenue for consumer magazines fell 21.2 percent in the first half of 2009, compared with 2008.

In their traditional reporting of ad sales for September issues, fashion magazines saw drastic declines. Ad Age reported that W

saw a 53 percent decline in ad sales while Allure and Self were not far behind, with a 52 percent and 51 percent drop, respectively. Circulation numbers are dropping as well. Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) reports that Star Magazine saw a whopping 12 percent drop in circulation from the previous year.

Amidst these falling numbers and failing magazines, corporate shakeups and magazine overhauls are popping up. President and chief executive Steven Pleshette Murphy of Rodale stepped down from his post at the media giant. Newsweek recently announced plans to drop its circulation base from 3.1 million to 1.5 million by next year to focus on the most loyal consumer base. Finally, U.S. News & World Report has gone from a weekly publication to a monthly one.

#### It's not all bad news

Despite the growing concerns that print media is on its way out, many are not willing to count out the medium just yet. Some believe that print is facing such heavy declines recently

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because the economy has been so poor of late. Lou Cona, a senior vice president of Conde Nast Media Group, told Ad Age that he is “incredibly proud” of his group’s performance “given the media recession and the overall economic recession.” He said that “the reason why [Conde Nast is] seeing these negative numbers posted is not because there’s a problem with our magazines or any other magazines. It’s because our clients’ businesses are impacted at retail. Circulation is up, readership is up, engagement is up.”

Indeed, despite the declines in ad sales, overall consumer magazine circulation numbers actually appear to be performing better than would be expected given the economic climate. ABC reported that Vogue actually had a 6.3 percent increase in circulation and The Economist had a 10 percent increase in subscriptions. While the full report is not scheduled to be released until the end of August, an early examination appears to indicate that print is actually showing some readership and circulation increases.

This increase in readership could be due in part to the content that many of the magazines are making available. Reader’s Digest vice president and group publisher Tracey Altman told DTC Perspectives that “in this ever-changing media landscape, companies that produce valuable, original content, regardless of medium, will thrive.”

## Pharma willing to stick with print

While magazine ad sales have dropped in the past year, TNS reports that some pharma brands are actually boosting their advertising budgets – some, such as Abilify, by as much as 153 percent. Pharma marketers still place 26 percent of their ad spending with consumer magazines. That’s 26 percent com-

pared with 5 percent on Internet advertising. VMS data also indicates that DTC marketers are running numerous advertisements in print. Some recent ads spotted include those for Crestor, Cymbalta, Pristiq, Toprol XL, and Symbicort, among many others.

There’s no denying that print is still an invaluable medium for DTC marketers. Joe Hoholick, executive director of marketing at Amgen, offered praise for the medium.

“If I’m looking for high reach numbers in a specific demographic audience, I cannot get it any better than with print,” he told DTC Perspectives. “A lot of drugs are demographically targeted, so I think print offers an advertiser really great reach and efficiency. Also, the audience that I reach in a magazine is, by nature, more involved. They are the type of audience that is perfect for DTC advertisers because they are more likely to be proactive.”

Hoholick also pointed out an interesting bonus to print media – the ability to place your message at the point of care. No other medium is as readily available at the point of care as consumer magazines. Health TV is very slowly making its way into physicians’ offices, and the Internet is still far from being ubiquitous.

It is evident that print is still fairly dominant in the pharma industry. And it’s no wonder why – currently new media is incapable of reaching the mass audiences and broad demographics that magazines can reach.

Stu Klein, executive vice president and general manager at Lowe Alchemy, agreed. “It is essential to include print in the overall plan, as it broadens the plan’s overall reach/frequency given that TV will only reach so many viewers,” he said. “Until the media planning programs say that print no longer expands reach/frequency when included with TV, print will be around for many years.”

## Print is changing

Jim Joseph, managing director at Saatchi & Saatchi Consumer Health and Wellness, summarized the fate of print like this: “Just like TV advertising, print is not dead. It’s changing, but it’s not dead. As part of a total marketing mix, it can be a great way to reach a specific audience with more information to educate them and help them make choices. It’s also a great way to drive traffic online where the consumer can get even more information and potentially connect with others experiencing similar issues.”

Perhaps drowning out the “print is dead” cries are an alternate idea – print is just changing. Currently, numerous magazine publications are altering their websites to provide more content than before. They are adjusting their publications toward modernization and devoting more resources to online journalism. Reader’s Digest, for example, completely redesigned both its Web site and magazine and “reallocated”

### Top 10 Consumer Magazines for Rx Drug Advertising Time Period: January-December 2008

Rank	Title	1/08–12/08 Dols (000)
1	Woman's Day	\$83,457.40
2	Good Housekeeping	\$76,866.70
3	Parade	\$74,122.40
4	Better Homes & Gardens	\$73,518.90
5	Ladies' Home Journal	\$66,153.10
6	People	\$60,909.30
7	Reader's Digest	\$60,407.30
8	Time	\$56,045.80
9	Prevention	\$51,784.10
10	Family Circle	\$50,566.70
<b>TOTAL Rx ADVERTISING</b>		<b>\$653,831.50</b>

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resources toward developing content for both print and new media.

Carlos Lamadrid, senior vice president and chief brand officer of the Woman's Day Brand Group, is another firm advocate of print's long-term future. "Print is very much alive, however it's going through a transformation – the traditional [or] old notion of print is on the decline. Print publications that will do well in the future have to carve out their piece of an ever-growing multi-media pie. The successful titles will be more accessible, include more response-driven metrics and be brand-

centric, with the ability to reach their consumers in all the venues they are part of (e.g., online, mobile, etc)."

So for now, it appears that print media will live on, straddling its current practice of printed, in-hand publication and upgrading to a digital design. Publishers are currently brainstorming to develop a system in which, when print inevitability is forced to become entirely an online entity, they can still charge a subscription fee for their content.

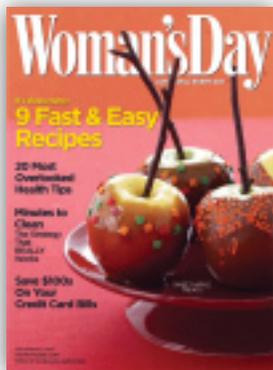
Until then, print advertising remains a time-tested practice, one that many pharma marketers still consider invaluable.

## Woman's Day

**Publisher:** HFMUS-Hachette Filipacchi Media U.S.

**Circulation:** 3,920,867 (ABC)

**URL:** [www.womansday.com](http://www.womansday.com)



Woman's Day produces 15 issues per year and reaches more than 22 million readers with its health tips, easy recipes, relationship columns and home and fashion style guides. The magazine strives to live under the premise of "Live Well Every Day." In doing so, the magazine provides "the tips, tools and solutions to make every woman's day a little easier, a little more fun and a whole lot more

satisfying."

The publication has built upon its success in print to develop a popular Web site, which receives 1.5 million-plus unique visitors per month. Recently, Woman's Day formed the Woman's Day Brand Group to incorporate all Woman's Day titles under a chief brand officer.

According to Carlos Lamadrid, senior vice president and chief brand officer of Woman's Day Brand Group, Woman's Day "has a long history of health coverage." In every issue Woman's Day covers a wide range of health-related topics. Its "authority is augmented by partnerships with leading health organizations," such as the American Heart Association, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the American Diabetes Association, and others, Lamadrid said. Additionally, health is one of the magazine's leading editorial categories and "accounts for one-fifth of all pages – making [it] the third-largest of all magazines for health coverage."

Readers of Woman's Day are responsive to this health coverage, with data showing that 79 percent "took action as a result of exposure to healthcare advertising in the last 12 months, and 48% of readers are willing to ask their doctor for a prescription medication they have seen or heard advertised."

## Better Homes & Gardens

**Publisher:** Meredith

**Circulation:** 7,659,823 (ABC)

**URL:** [www.bhg.com](http://www.bhg.com)



Better Homes & Gardens, "the largest women's magazine in America," reaches 31 million women, with its "vibrant, down-to-earth guide" that covers issues related to the home and to the garden and everything in between. According to vice president and group publisher Jim Carr, Better Homes & Gardens, with its June 2009 issue, "premiered a freshly nuanced editorial look and feel

that includes new front-of-book 'Fresh' and 'Calendar' section, enhanced health coverage and new design treatments throughout."

BHG also revamped its health section to include a feature called "Live Well," "filled with small bites of health news and know-how." About 12 percent of the magazine covers health issues that "motivates women to lead healthy lives and empowers them to take charge of their health and their family's."

According to a MARS study, 83% of BHG readers are the health gatekeepers in their family; meaning BHG reaches more "of these decision-makers than any women's title." BHG parent company Meredith also claims to "deliver nearly one in three adults (or 31 percent) and more than two out of five of the nation's women (43 percent) who "discussed an ad with their doctor" as a result of seeing a healthcare ad in one of its magazines.

More than 12 DTC ads ran in the August issue of BHG, including ads for Zostavax, Crestor, Pristiq, Spiriva, Vyvanse, Symbicort, Cymbalta, Concerta, Lyrica, Ambien CR, and Plavix.

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## Readers Digest

**Publisher:** Reader's Digest Association, Inc.

**Circulation:** 8,168,667 (ABC)

**URL:** www.rd.com



Amidst the poor economy, Reader's Digest reports strong ad revenue and a circulation of more than 8.1 million. Currently, according to Reader's Digest's vice president and group publisher Tracey Altman, the publication is "out-performing the market for both the women's service and general interest categories in ad page and market share."

To maintain its strong readership and revenue streams, Reader's Digest has developed a two-part plan to modernize their publication and to make it available in "multiple media platforms." This plan included a re-design and re-launch of Reader's Digest and RD.com, which won the publication the ASME for General Excellence. The plan will also see Reader's Digest reduce its U.S. rate base from 8 million to 5.5 million and its publication frequency from 12 issues to 10, to "reallocate the resources to launch content across new and varied platforms."

In terms of health coverage, Reader's Digest contains more than 30 pages of health editorial in every issue. In fact, Reader's Digest ranks in the top 2 percent of all magazines for editorial pages devoted to Health/Medical Science, according to Hall's Reports, a magazine research firm. And it's no wonder why – the majority of Reader's Digest readers fit into the category of caretakers for their children, themselves, or their parents.

## Family Circle

**Publisher:** Meredith

**Circulation:** 3,914,927 (ABC)

**URL:** www.familycircle.com



The year 2009 has been an "extremely successful" year for Family Circle, "the only family service magazine," with the magazine experiencing "double-digit growth," according to publisher Carey Witmer. The successful publication "celebrates today's family and champions the women at its center."

Last year, Family Circle launched a new design and made

"tweaks" to its editorial content, including the health sections. The publication's Web site is also modernizing, with an entire "community" section complete with message boards and forums for lifestyle discussions.

Family Circle's health section is one of its largest editorial categories, with focuses on "everyday wellness and prevention." This health content has been honored by the National Health Information Awards for its excellence in health coverage. Family Circle also is the only "women's lifestyle/service magazine with a page dedicated to Kids' Health in every issue."

The publication also has a highly health conscious audience. According to a 2009 MARS study, "87 percent of Family Circle readers are the main healthcare decision makers in their households." Additionally, Family Circle readers "represent 19 percent of all doctor visits each year" and "21 percent of all prescriptions filled." Finally, the publication's readers represent 21 percent of the out-of-pocket payments for Rx medications each month.

## Health Monitor Network

**Publisher:** Data Centrum Communications Inc.

**Circulation:** 40,000,000 (Health Monitor publications); 1,000,000 (New York Giants Health Monitor); 1,000,000 (Health Monitor at Home)

**URL:** <http://www.healthmonitornetwork.com>



Health Monitor Network, a leading provider of patient education, has one of the largest marketing platforms at medical offices in the United States. The firm's nine publications reach more than 40 million consumers via 120,000 medical offices and more than 300,000 doctors.

The patient education publications have delivered average ROIs of 4:1, 6:1 and even as high as 29:1 for advertisers, according to Alex Dong, vice president of marketing and new-product development. Titles include Health Monitor at Home, a digest-sized health and wellness magazine distributed nationwide on a quarterly basis; New York Giants Health Monitor, a collaboration between the publishing company and the NFL's New York Giants to raise awareness of conditions geared to men ages 40 years and older; as well as seven therapeutic-focused magazines. New York Giants Health Monitor launched at the beginning of the 2008-2009 football season and is currently circulated quarterly to more than 3 million readers at Giants Stadium, mailed directly to season ticket holders (including those on the waiting list), and doctors'

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offices in the New York metro area. The partnership made it the largest sports/health venture in the country. The therapeutic-specific publications consist of the bi-monthly releases: Arthritis Health Monitor, Diabetes Health Monitor and Health Monitor; and quarterly releases: Allergy & Asthma Health Monitor, Heart Care Health Monitor, Digestion & Diet Health Monitor and Living with Cancer Health Monitor.

Health Monitor Network's publications rank at the top of the list throughout the MARS OTC/DTC annual studies. Each magazine is guided by an editorial board of top doctors and other healthcare professionals to recommend and review content.

## MediZine's Healthy Living, REMEDY, RemedyMD & Diabetes Focus

**Publisher:** MediZine

**Circulation:** 3,450,000 (Healthy Living, MRI Double-base); 2,650,827 (Remedy/RemedyMD, ABC); 1,650,000 (Diabetes Focus, MARS Database)

**URL:** <http://www.medizine.com>



MediZine is a foremost health education communications company reaching consumers through its partnership with leading pharmacies and doctors' offices. Its flagship publication, MediZine's Healthy Living is available in more than 70 pharmacy chains and 255,000 copies in doctors' offices, making it the nation's largest consumer health magazine. The quarterly publication has a circulation of

3.45 million, with a readership of 15.1 million. Each issue includes special sections, with the Fall 2010 having coverage on heart health, pain management and raising a healthy child. It too has an advisory board comprised of health professionals to oversee editorials and ensure accuracy. Healthy Living has received more than 110 awards in recognition of its editorial excellence throughout the years.

MediZine made its first acquisition, REMEDY, in 2001, which has now become the nation's third-largest health magazine, distributed to opt-in consumers and available in doctors' offices. This led to the launch of REMEDYMD three years ago, which is available in specialists' offices to strengthen the patient-physician relationship. The publishing company also launched Diabetes Focus in 2003 per retailers' interests. It has since become the largest diabetes magazine in America and was deemed "Best Consumer Health Publication" by Medical Marketing & Media (MM&M) in 2007.

MediZine's latest acquisition occurred in June 2009. To keep up with the growing use of the Internet as a health resource, MediZine acquired Healthcommunities.com. Healthcommunities.com encompasses 30 health channels and a physician subscription Web site management system, adding to its reach in doctors' offices. "Over the last few years, it's been strategically important to leverage technology more. HealthCommunities.com is a wonderful platform and organized in a way that really allows us to effectively distribute our published assets online," said Mike Cunnion, president of MediZine. "With fragmentation of media, there has been such rapid change and it is critically important to us to be committed to education regardless of the channel or medium."

## Parade & Parade's HealthyStyle

**Publisher:** Parade Publications

**Circulation:** 32,200,000 (Parade); 8,000,000 (HealthyStyle)

**URL:** <http://www.parade.com>



Parade is the country's most widely read magazines reaching nearly 73 million readers each week via more than 500 newspapers nationwide. Several times a year, the publication releases special health and wellness focused issues. In 2009, special issues focused on health include "Men's Health,"

"Practical Guide to Better Health," and "Women's Health." According to data from Magazine Publishers of America, Parade ranked as the number one Sunday magazine for Q2 2009, with \$154 million in "reported" ad dollars. According to Christie Emden, vice president of communications at Parade Publications, The Association for Women in Communications selected Parade Presents: Inspiration as the Clarion Award Winner in the Custom Publications: Magazine, Best Overall category. Amgen's Neulasta sponsored the special issue.

Parade also launched the monthly publication HealthyStyle in September 2008. HealthyStyle covers a number of topics, ranging from health news, food and recipes, fitness, and nutrition. The issue debuted in 46 newspapers across the nation with a circulation of 8 million, currently reaching more than 28 million readers. Despite the downturn in the economy, Randy Siegel, president and publisher of Parade, was quoted in Media Life as saying it was still a good time to launch the magazine because "readers are interested in additional health and style content. And we have had a great response from advertisers and newspapers."

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Parade.com also includes a large Health section which features original editorial and interactive content. Visitors can view health news and videos, find recipes, as well as health and fitness secrets of the stars. They can also scroll through slide shows about wellness, fitness, food and weight loss tips, under their Health & Food photo gallery. The Web site also provides a long list of resources for consumers, ranging from consumer generated content sites, such as Parent Dish, to government and third-party sources, such as U.S. Department of Health and Mayo Clinic.

## Prevention

**Publisher:** Rodale

**Circulation:** 3,339,616 (ABC)

**URL:** [www.prevention.com](http://www.prevention.com)



Prevention magazine is an authority for health information, reaching 2.8 million subscribers, with an additional 330,000 newsstand sales each month. Targeted to women, over one-half of each issue's content covers either health (29 percent) or food/nutrition (27 percent). Furthermore, some issues focus on a particular topic for women, such as cancer or breast cancer. After 60 years of production, the magazine still managed to generate \$31.2 million in ad revenue in the second quarter of 2009. The September issue is focused on anti-aging along with features about differences in personal health from "your mom's middle age" to "the new middle age," a workout routine for consumers 40 years old and over, and the annual Defy Your Age beauty awards.

Prevention encourages healthier lifestyles through various forms of engagement: upon beginning a subscription, consumers receive a free pedometer; TeamPrevention holds several full-length and half marathons; there are also several exercise DVDs; the magazine even launched its own diets, entitled the Flat Belly Diet and DTOUR for diabetes' sufferers. Both diets include their own cookbooks, DVDs, and online support programs where participants can read expert content, track their successes and connect with peers.

The Web site also has its own original content, allowing for daily consumption of information. The Web site sees an average of 1.8 million unique visitors viewing a total 17 million pages. In addition to offering more health information, such as condition- and treatment-specific updates, the digital version includes recipes, fitness and health tracking tools, videos from Prevention TV to further engage views, blogs and

forums to create an interactive area for members. Prevention also has 1.3 million e-mail subscribers for its four times per week newsletter.

## WebMD the Magazine

**Publisher:** WebMD Publishing Services

**Circulation:** 1,065,188 (ABC)

**URL:** <http://www.webmd.com/magazine/default.htm>



WebMD the Magazine utilizes an at-a-glance interactive format to further promote the patient-physician dialogue about specific medications, treatment and conditions. Publishing eight times a year, each issue of WebMD the Magazine has a particular focus (heart health, mental health, summer health, and back to school, to name a few) and includes a health-focused cover story with a celebrity, as well as an array of other leading health subjects such as conditions, pain, fitness, recipes/nutrition, parenting, beauty, among others. Each section is color-coded to provide consumers with quick access about a particular topic.

Distributed in more than 85 percent of physicians' waiting rooms nationwide, WebMD the Magazine reaches patients at the point-of-care to help them make the most of their interaction with a doctor. Delivered to more than 400,000 high-prescribing doctors, the magazine is the second-most read health publication among women. It has a circulation of 1.05 million and reaches nearly 11 million readers. Editorial contributions come from WebMD.com medical experts, WebMD.com community users and readers. WebMD the Magazine is the second-most read publication among women's health titles, and third-most read among overall health titles, according to the MARS 2008 OTC/DTC Study. The study also noted that their readers are more than twice as likely to be proactive in talking to their doctors about their health. VISTA research also found that their readers are 60% more likely to take action after seeing a DTC ad in WebMD the Magazine, 21 percentage points above the magazine norm. It has also been selected as a finalist for this year's MM&M Awards, under the Best Healthcare Consumer Publication category (winners to be announced in October).

In addition to their magazine, WebMD.com is an award-winning online source for consumers when searching for healthcare information, receiving 21 awards in 2009. According to comScore, WebMD.com was the second-most visited health Web site source among all consumers, reaching more than 20 million unique visitors in Q2 2009.