

Magazine Writing Key attributes

Key attributes that have been professed to characterize the magazine, attributes that developed in a writing search including the course books, distributing industry sites, web journals and tweets, and a wide range of media designs that self-recognize as magazines. Instructing and investigating in the space of magazines expects us to characterize our object of study; delivering and perusing magazines includes a comprehension of what the media structure is, and what it isn't – not a book, not a paper, not a continually refreshed site. Also, when our examination is recorded, to have the option to discuss the historical backdrop of this medium, it appears to be imperative to conceive of magazines as a distinct media format.

Magazines and medium

Magazine is a 'bound pamphlet issued more or less regularly ... containing a variety of reading matter and ... a strong connotation of entertainment.

'Magazines are printed and bound publications offering in-depth coverage of stories often of a timeless nature'.

Industry diehards such as Professor Samir Husni (Mr Magazine) insist, in full awareness of the changes that digital and mobile technology have brought to the production and consumption of magazines, that the definition remains tied to the **medium of print**: 'If it is not ink on paper, please try to find another name to define that new medium, because in my book if it is not printed it is not a magazine' (Husni 2010).

'The biggest problem for magazines has been that the physical expression of technology keeps

changing, and each change is not only like starting all over again, it brings in its wake new challenges for modes of production, methods of distribution and means of making money’.

The rising tide of convergence culture, that the specific technology used to transmit and consume content, **if it isn’t a printed object, how can it be a magazine.**

‘To many it’s no longer clear exactly what a magazine is; to others the shake-up had opened their eyes to what it always was: something that cannot be **reduced to mere paper.**

Andrew Losowsky would agree that the medium of delivery is not defining. **Magazines can, he says, ‘be online, downloaded, could be a poster, could be graffitied on a wall’** (2009: 7)

Mute, for example, is a magazine that critically covers culture, politics and technology. Since 1994, it has taken many forms across different media. Initially the magazine was published as a broadsheet printed on the same pink newsprint as the *Financial times*. It then became a mainly black and white saddle-stitched magazine; then a colour, glossy highly graphic perfect-bound magazine; then a large almost book-like publication; and now a hybrid print and web magazine.

Magazines have an editorial philosophy

Editorial philosophy is a somewhat grand term, but it ‘explains what the magazine is intended to do, what areas of interest it covers, how it will approach those interests, and the voice it will use to express itself.

The editorial philosophy, sometimes called a mission statement or theme or concept, guides the content of a magazine.

The editorial philosophy is intimately connected to a vision about subject matter, voice, style, readers, market niche, format and design.

‘News’ for a magazine is new information and/or entertainment curated for its readership. The newness is not simply determined by timeliness or currency of information; new is also considered as the manner of presentation. Each element of new content is highly considered and chosen to provide a balance across the whole magazine. More content is rejected by magazine editors than included.

Alan Rutter describes magazines as:

A collection of thematically linked stories. Take stories in the loosest possible sense. Part of the beauty of magazines is their flexibility – they can encompass everything from hard news to esoteric illustration. ... magazines will never be arbitrary in their presentation of content. Remember that we are telling stories ... Design is the part of magazines that makes stories greater than the sum of their parts – the presentation matters. And it’s not just about the facts you’re given, it’s about how it makes you feel.

Design is another important point of differentiation between newspapers and magazines, and a crucial part of the vision behind the publication: ‘Every periodical aims to create a **visual language** and attitude that are so distinctive that its readers would recognize them instantly from any random layout.

Newspapers are designed to follow a much stricter and **more formulaic design** template.

Magazines by contrast see graphic design as content.

Magazine cover, advertising, contents page, editor’s letter, contributors list, short newsy pieces followed by longer feature articles or photospreads, a scattering of advertising with cheapest ads at the back – within that structure is careful consideration of design for every element.