

10 Killer Reasons Why You Should Be Using Print



By Juliett Stott (<http://readcontentmag.com>, <http://bit.ly/28Mycb0>)

Contrary to the heralded demise of print, it's alive and kicking. And, according to these media experts, it's here to stay. Many of the brands that abandoned their print products during the recession have been clambering back into the world of ink on paper. Why? Because it works. Print increases engagement, drives sales and cements relationships.

Don't just take our word for it, in the first of a four-part series looking into the value of print, *Content Magazine* has spoken to these five content experts, from both the US and the UK, to find out why print is still relevant in a digital world.

Samir Husni (aka Mr Magazine™)

1. It opens your customer's mind

"The most important factor, besides the feel and touch [of print], is the element of surprise. We're trained how to find information in the digital age, but with print there's always an element of surprise. You can be browsing through pages and encounter a great story unexpectedly. In digital we are always looking for something specific, limiting our imagination. Print opens our mind to things we never knew we were interested in, or even existed."

2. It saves your customers time

"I had a conversation with the CEO of Imagination, one of the content marketing businesses in Chicago, who said five years ago their revenue was 55% digital, 45% print. Today it's 55% print and 45% digital, because even their clients have recognized the importance of having something delivered through the mail box, on your table or on your desk. Consider for a moment that we live entirely in a digital world – print does not exist. Everything is on our screens, and someone comes to you and says: 'I've invented this new device. I know you are interested in media, journalism and design. So I've searched all that we have, and put it together for you in a 68-page device that needs no computers, no charging. It's fully loaded; you don't need to download anything. It's called a magazine!' You'd look at it and say: 'Wow! You're saving me money, time and searching, plus you've done all the curation and homework for me!'"

Andrew Hirsch (CEO John Brown Media)

3. It increases product awareness

"We are quite old fashioned; we like our content to sell something on behalf of its client. For the ROI of print, we look at sales. Take for example the *John Lewis Edition* magazine – we track the sales [of products featured in the magazine] and we can prove – using data – that the content we've created is driving sales – either in store or online. We sell millions of pounds' worth of advertising in our magazines – but this just off-sets the cost of production. The real prize, for the retailers we work with, is making consumers aware of products. For example, in the *Waitrose* magazine, the main idea is to get the customer to put two or three new items in their shopping basket that they wouldn't normally buy. The magazines are really about encouraging you to buy products you wouldn't actually buy."

4. It re-engages lapsed customers

"There is one very good use for print, better than other content delivery systems and not enough brands are using it for this purpose, that is, re-engaging lapsed customers. If you've ever bought from an online brand, but for whatever reason, whether it was price or quality, you've not bought anything from them since, you will have been sent endless digital communications from that company. What this is actually doing is pushing you further and further away from a decision to buy. Their communication has become an irritation. What brands should do, instead of bombarding customers with more and more digital communication, is send them a print product, because more often than not this re-engages the customer. Online footwear retailer, Zappos (which is not one of our clients), was experiencing a problem with re-engaging with lapsed customers. About two Christmases ago it sent their lapsed customers a print catalogue, and overnight some went on to become their best customers."

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218-722-5002 • FAX 218-722-4096
adv@lakesuperior.com
www.LakeSuperior.com

10 Killer Reasons Why You Should Be Using Print *continued*



Tony Silber (Vice President, Folio)

5. It gives your customers an identity

“Print does a few things really well that digital has not proven to be the equal. One of them is to develop a measure of ‘wantedness’ – where people actually want to spend money to subscribe to the magazine. It does a much better job than any digital media possibly could of reflecting an individual’s values and priorities – whether it’s professional on the B2B side or vocational on the consumer side. You might read *Cosmo*, *The Atlantic* or *Hamptons Magazine* and put them on your coffee table – because it says something about you in a way that digital can never replicate on your phone or on your computer.”

6. It acts as a springboard to other media

“Magazines have done this way better than newspapers. It’s tragic because newspapers have played such an important role in our society for hundreds of years. Magazines lend themselves to that 360-degree product orientation. You have a print magazine, then do a TV show, events, or any number of digital products. There are many revenue streams that you can create from a magazine brand, that have proven to be very successful. For example, Folio has a pretty robust awards business. It has a strong conference. It has a vibrant, robust website and newsletters and custom content webinars, whereas 25 years ago it was only print.”

Sean King (CEO Seven)

7. It offers your customers an immersive experience

“Coming from a publishing background, the team at Seven understands the power of print, of actually spending time with a high quality magazine as opposed to just spending time online, which is a much different experience. Print is a much more immersive experience than a website. When you’re on a website you’re more than likely searching for a specific thing – but in a magazine you’re exposed to a content experience that you’re not necessarily looking for, opening up an entirely new set of opportunities and discovery for the reader.”

8. It drives sales

“We did all the publishing for ASOS when we launched its magazine. We were able to prove what impact the magazine had on basket size and frequency. You can measure this stuff when people receive print magazines especially if you’re an online retailer – there’s a feedback loop when they make a sale. We publish a lot of magazines for clients, so we completely get the value of print for a brand. Traditional media is finding it harder to make money; to make the economics work. But brands can afford to do it. They can have a different view as to the value of the customer. If that customer is going to spend, say £250 a year (on the back of reading a magazine), it’s worth providing them with a magazine.”

Keith Sedlak (Executive Vice President & General Manager, *Manifest*)

9. It engages millennials, not just the older demographic, too

“Recent research has found that the younger millennials are starting to appreciate and turn to magazines in the last 18 months. I think a lot of magazines are being read by the older demographic, and they still lead the majority in terms of the readers, but I do believe that millennials are engaging with print too. Obviously they are consuming content on a mobile device, as they’ve grown up in a digital age, but they’re starting to appreciate the difference that a magazine offers. There is a shift happening – a younger generation is appreciating print more than they did three, four or five years ago.”

10. It’s a more relevant read

“I think that we’ve all become schizophrenic online readers – in that you can be reading an article that’s informative for the business that you’re in, then click on a suggested article link which takes you from Inc.com to *Business Week* or to BuzzFeed. There’s no method to the madness. I think that’s the opportunity for print; if you know your audience, your database of customers, your content becomes more relevant, personable and customized. Those publications stand the test of time.”

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