

Some newspapers do not hesitate to apply the best technologies, work with a more innovative design and improve their journalistic presentation to offer their readers more than just the day's news. This is where we begin to talk about 'daily magazines.'

Ingredients in place for 'new' recipe

Whereas no one questions the fact that, some years ago, the newspaper industry underwent an unprecedented process of switching to the tabloid format, stating today that there is a trend among daily newspapers towards imitating magazines still seems a bit risky. Still, designers, journalists and heads of production unanimously agree that the newspaper, as a living product, is changing and adapting with the times. And it is clear that it allows itself to be influenced by its "brother," the magazine.

For designer Ron Reason, who was director of Visual Journalism at the Poynter Institute from 1994-1999, "three visible trends indicate a conversion to the magazine style: a reduced newspaper size, conversion from broadsheet to the Berlin and smaller formats; a growing concern due to the drop in revenues and increased costs, mainly for newsprint; as well as the arrival of newspapers as PDF editions in an A4-type format that readers can print out and read on the way home from work."



"Newspapers must compete at the content level: more explanations, more context, more analysis and more background. If they do not do so, they will lose both their credibility and their influence. If that means changing to the magazine format, then let's go ahead!"

» Toni Pique
Project manager at Cases i Associats

Similarly, designer Michael Stoll, who is the representative of the Society of News Design for Germany (his home country), Austria and Switzerland, sees in these changes a good reason to welcome the "daily magazine." He also adds two new reasons to change the daily newspaper to the magazine style that numerous titles have already accepted as a solution to their

problems – mainly involving circulation: "A change in the balance between text and images, in favour of the image; and the priority given to 'lighter' subjects to the detriment of 'harder' news items accompanied by a large number of additional explanations, information graphics, boxes, etc."

Other prominent designers, such as Mario García and Pelle Anderson, do not agree. García doubts whether the conversion to the magazine format constitutes a solution to the problems of the daily newspaper or corresponds to what readers want. Anderson, who created the freesheet Metro, wonders whether the simple fact that a daily newspaper is published in a compact format, printed in colour and stapled automatically makes it a "daily magazine." He comes to the conclusion that, if that is the case, there are already such daily newspapers in many markets.

Characteristics of the daily mag

Given the different opinions on this subject, it is perhaps useful to define what makes up a daily magazine. After approaching some of the world's best designers, a number of characteristics that define what a daily magazine is can be identified – namely:

- > An appearance resembling that of a magazine, in terms of format, paper, design, use of colour, etc.
- > On the front page: little text, large-sized photos and headlines, as well as a good navigation system.
- > Inside pages retain the magazine style (larger headings and photos, more white space so that the pages can "breathe").
- > Greater use of colour. A specific range of colours is used as a brand throughout.
- > Use of sections. The rhythm is crucial. Each section has a strong lead-in, with a large photo. The concept of each section is that of a "magazine within a magazine."
- > Illustrations and information graphics play an important role.
- > Writing style is of major importance. The pure news and hard facts are identified through different journalistic styles, i.e. distinguishing between interviews, reports, profiles, etc. The emphasis is on the story rather than on data.

There is no doubt that nearly all newspapers worldwide have gradually in-



"The change to the magazine format was applied only to the sections suitable for this change, without this adversely affecting the seriousness of the other content."

» Alberto Torregrosa
Director of Arcadia, editorial design studio

roduced a number of these elements – if not all – frequently following events that called for a greater deployment of resources. Several examples are shown on pages 26 and 27.

But to describe a newspaper as a "daily magazine," it is necessary to take into account attributes connected not only to the design but also the technological and journalistic aspects.

A new way to inform

However, without a doubt it is the purely journalistic aspect of the conversion to the magazine style that merits the greatest attention due to its innovative nature, but another aspect that is no less demanding: "I believe that, in our never-ending struggle to keep readers informed about world events, design tends to be overestimated. It seems to me that writing style, editing, printing and distribution of the daily newspaper are more relevant than its design," says Anderson, himself a designer.

The Uruguay newspaper, El Observador, commissioned design specialists Cases i Associats to give its Saturday edition a magazine style. On Saturdays, their readers are not so interested in reading about the latest news, but rather in getting an overview of the week's events. "Thanks to the new design, we succeed in giving greater importance to analysis and to a more in-depth treatment of the news," says Ricardo Peirano, director of the daily newspaper de-

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- » Michael Stoll, designer SND representative for Germany, Austria and Switzerland (3897)
- » Ron Reason, designer, former director of Visual Journalism at the Poynter Institute (3898)
- » Mario García, designer and founder of García Media (3899)
- » Alberto Torregrosa, designer and director of the Arcadia consulting company (3900)
- » Pelle Anderson, founder of A4 design (3907)

scribed in a case study on page 28. “On the one hand, the redesign helps the readers to distinguish pure and hard news from the analyses and background stories of the week. On the other hand, it helps ensure that the journalists work with different journalistic styles and deal with the information in greater depth as well as put it into context.”

In addition, journalists at the Norwegian daily newspaper *Bergens Tidende*, one of the last to convert to tabloid in that country – in 2006 – have discovered the editorial benefits of switching to the magazine format and design. Einar Hålien, chief editor of the newspaper, says: “With this change, we wanted to offer a product that is fresher and less predictable in terms of news presentation and how we deal with a subject. It is important to produce a quality tabloid newspaper because all the content is more heavily exposed – it is no longer possible, as perhaps in the past, to hide a lower quality article at the bottom of the page. Everything is now more visible. The demand for a smaller format also means the need for larger numbers of higher quality photos and graphics. Now, we can present the news in a way that is both more understandable and attractive.”

Technologically possible

In addition to design and news presentation, the daily newspaper also needs technological assistance to convert to a “daily magazine.” Asked about this, Manfred Werfel, Ifra Director of Research, recalls an anecdote: “On April 5th, 1992, the media entrepreneur Kurt Falk (co-founder of *Kronen Zeitung* in Austria) launched a print product in the new format in Austria, bearing the title *Täglich Alles* and corresponding to the daily magazine concept. This product was supposed to combine the quality of a magazine with the advantages of a daily newspaper. To attract advertisers looking for high-quality advertising, we installed a hybrid technical concept combining rotogravure and coldset newspaper off-set printing. Thus a daily magazine was born – a world first – printed by the gravure process and ‘wrapped’ in a newspaper.” To ensure that the gravure cylinders were ready in time, we had to employ a large number of cylinder engraving machines capable of producing the printing formes and magazine pages simultaneously.”



Red Eye, in Chicago, is a daily newspaper – first paid-for, but now free – that has adopted magazine-type characteristics to attract young readers.

Nowadays, printing a daily magazine represents practically no technical problems. According to Werfel, the production needs for modern hybrid products such as this are not dependent on the technology, but rather the market demands. From the technical point of view, nearly everything is possible today; a fact confirmed by reality.

Last year, a new daily newspaper product with many typical magazine-like



“Stitching and trimming (mainly three-sided) as well as the use of a dryer on a newspaper

press and the use of SC or LWC paper are considered preconditions for changing to the magazine format.”

» Manfred Werfel
Ifra Director of Research

characteristics was launched in Austria. Österreich, belonging to the Fellner Media group, a well-known magazine publisher in Austria, is printed daily on a coldset-heatset MAN Roland Geoman press. The product consists of a newspaper in the conventional sense, printed by the traditional

coldset process, and two magazines printed by the heatset process (see case study on page 30). Moreover, as explained already by Gert Edlinger, editorial manager of the project, in an interview with *newspaper techniques* last November (pages 46-48), printing is not the only process that gives the daily newspaper its magazine character: The product is also stitched, in full colour, in a compact format, and in addition to the days news, provides readers with useful background and context information. For the Österreich team, like that of *El Observador*, what is important is not so much the information itself as explaining the consequences of what has happened in the story.

Anderson believes in heatset printing for daily newspapers. “The titles *Dernière Heure* and *La Libre* will soon be printed on a new heatset press in a format 30 percent smaller than tabloid. I think this will affect all newspapers in the long term. Heatset presses produce a better quality that web offset presses cannot match.” His consulting company, A4, is redesigning *Dernière Heure* (Belgian daily) with the objective of taking maximum advantage of the new printing capacities to present the news in the best way possible.

De Morgen, also in Belgium, took the same step last year, too. Its publishing company, De Persgroep, decided in favour of the waterless offset KBA Cortina to print its flagship product, *Het Laatste Nieuws*. De Morgen is printed on the same press and therefore also underwent a format change, leading to a new design that attracted attention beyond the borders of that small country (see case study on page 29).

In the near future, advertisers and media planning agencies are preparing to take a joint planning approach for magazines and daily newspapers due to their similar format and character.

So have “daily magazines” truly arrived? Leaving aside questions of title, one thing that is certain is that daily newspapers must offer their readers more than the status quo, stale news or a product similar to what can be obtained free of charge in the streets of any city. Customers – readers and advertisers – are not looking for the same things from a newspaper today as they did 20 years ago. If satisfying customers, developing further and striving towards perfection means changing to a magazine style, then let’s get on with it! <