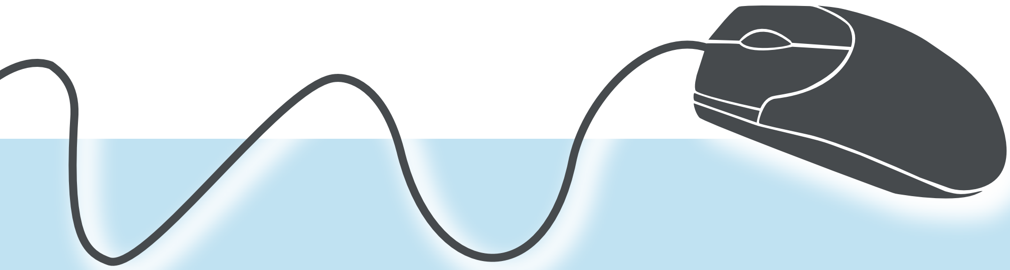
FIPP



Routes to Success

For Consumer **Magazine Websites**

GUY CONSTERDINE

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For Consumer Magazine Websites

Introduction and objectives

Following surveys in 2005 and 2003, the *International Federation of the Periodical Press (FIPP)* has conducted a third study of successful websites operated by consumer magazine publishers around the world.

The survey's objectives were:

- To examine good practice online, among successful websites
- To learn about the ways in which these publishers measured and achieved online success
- To share some of the lessons about using the medium in conjunction with printed magazines

Whether or not a website was successful was left to the judgement of the publisher. Success could be defined in whatever terms the publisher chose: making a profit, generating significant online revenues, developing online branding, creating successful online products, attracting subscriptions or in any other way a publisher chose to measure success against defined objectives. The sample was not intended to be representative of all consumer magazine websites – instead, the aim was to learn from those who had achieved success.

The sample of websites on which this report is based (37) was insufficient to be a base for reliable percentages to be published, and accordingly this document is written as a qualitative report rather than as a statistical analysis.

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Summary of findings

This is a survey about successful consumer magazine websites. Success is defined in whatever terms the publisher considers relevant—online branding, profit, new revenue streams, new products, new audiences or advertisers, or any other relevant defined objective. This 2007 follows similar surveys conducted in 2005 and 2003.

Organisation and objectives

The most common way in which the successful websites in our sample are organised is for online activities to be handled centrally for the whole company, by a single business unit. Comparing the position two years ago, there is an implication that the increasing investment being placed in website development is creating a move towards greater use of specialist internet units.

Four factors stood out as major objectives for the websites: to create new revenue streams/profits in the long term; to expand the audience beyond the print audience base by creating an online audience (i.e. including non-readers of the print publication); to use the website to attract new readers for the print products; and to build a community around the brand. Each of these objectives was claimed by more than eight out of every ten respondents. These four objectives also topped the ranking in the 2005 study.

Hesitancy about increasing one's investment online (which was evident in the 2005 and especially the 2003 results) has all but disappeared. Nearly 100 per cent of 2007 informants (all but one publisher) expected to expand their online efforts in the next 12 months.

Funding and profitability

For these successful websites, almost half of their revenue comes from earnings from the website. The other significant sources of revenue for the online operations are internal funds provided centrally and internal funds provided from the relevant publication. Each of these two internal sources provides more than a quarter of overall revenue; however, there is wide variation from one website to another.

Just over half of the income from online activities came from advertising revenue. Most of this was display advertising revenue. Again, there was great variation from one website to another.

The available finance has funded an increase in the man-hours devoted to website operations. Comparing with the position one year ago, two-thirds of respondents said that the number of man-hours had increased by 20 per cent or more. Almost all the other respondents said that the number of man-hours had increased but by less than 20 per cent.

Profitability is only one of several possible criteria on which we asked respondents to judge whether or not their website was 'successful'. Almost half of these sites are profitable—a substantial increase compared with the 2003 survey, and approximately the same proportion as in the 2005 survey. About a quarter of sites are breaking even. Less than 20 per cent of the sites are losing money.

Audiences

The trend in audiences continues to be very strongly upwards, as one would expect. For about two-thirds of our sample of websites, visitor numbers have increased by 20 per cent or more in the last year. Most of the rest have experienced audience increases but less than 20 per cent.

In almost all cases, these successful websites have attracted new audiences to the brand—people who do not read the printed magazine but visit the website. For about two-thirds of the sites (a rather higher percentage than in 2005) the new audience equates to 20 per cent or more of the readership of the magazine. For more than a quarter of the sites (a lower proportion than in 2005) the new audience is less than 20 per cent of the magazine readership. In essence, during the last two years, the new web-only audiences have tended to grow in relation to the size of the printed magazine's readership.

The new audiences fall into three main categories: people who are outside the primary target audience; people who are within the primary target audience but whose commitment to the brand or to print is insufficient for them to buy the magazine; readers outside the home country.

Website content

What content attracts the new audiences? The sense of community; interactive content; the sheer scope of material available; time-critical content; and searchable archives and databases. Underlying much of this are the themes of community and personalised information.

These successful websites found many ways in which to exploit the internet's ability to deliver easy and instant two-way communication. Among the most widely employed were chat room or message board discussion groups, public debates, print subscription requests, blogs or articles submitted for publication on the site (not paid for), offers/discounts exclusive to members/subscribers, and hyperlinks to relevant external sites proposed by visitors.

Other widely offered facilities included email newsletters linked to the website, archive retrieval, video clips and RSS feeds. All of these were offered by a higher proportion of sites than in 2005.

Just over half the sites had e-commerce capability for online products/services.

Overall, compared with 2005, the general picture in 2007 is one of growth in the range and number of facilities offered by successful websites.

Some websites promoted digital editions of the printed magazine—an exact reproduction in electronic form. About a quarter of the magazines participating in the survey also published a digital edition.

Advertisers and sponsors

The proportion of websites attracting new online-only advertisers has been growing during the last four years. In 2007 about eight out of every ten sites had gained advertisers online who did not advertise in the printed magazine.

The new advertisers could be attracted by any of a range of factors: audience type; audience size; low cost; advertisement packages; speed; interactivity; sales leads; continuous presence; and measurability.

Most publishers create advertising and/or sponsorship opportunities across both the print and online brands with the aim of encouraging magazine-only advertisers to use the website as well and vice versa.

Around a third of the websites offered search/contextual advertising.

Marketing

There are four primary ways in which these websites are marketed to customers: promotion within the printed magazine(s) hosting the website; email promotions; promotional links (paid-for or free) from other websites; and promotion within other magazines owned by the company.

Many other marketing activities are also in use by a minority of sites. These include promotional events, buying search advertising on external search engines, taking paid-for advertising in non-owned print media, TV, radio, etc, setting up exchange arrangements with these media, and cross-referencing from the publishers' own services on mobile phones and other platforms.

Competitors online

More than half of publishers believe that their competitors online for attracting site visitors are mainly different from their competitors to the printed magazine.

The new competitors include other types of traditional media which have also developed their own internet services and thus, within a given market, compete with magazine publishers in a much more direct way (ie. television, newspapers).

However, the main thrust of the new competitors lies in entirely new kinds of service which are creatures of the internet. Examples are online communities, portals (ie. *MSN*, *Yahoo!*) and specialist web-only services. The strength of competition from these types of facilities has been growing.

Barriers to success and lessons learned

The three main barriers to success for consumer publishers in operating websites are: resistance by existing employees who work on print products; insufficient funds for web development; and pressure to focus on print products.

Respondents offered a variety of advice and lessons based on their own experience. These have been listed in this report under the following headings:

• Strategy • Co-operation between print and online teams • Staffing • Content • Communities • Audiences • Marketing • Technology

The findings

1. Organisation of website operations

The most common way in which the successful websites in our sample are organised is for online activities to be handled centrally for the whole company, by a single business unit. Almost half of the websites were operating in this way.

In our survey two years ago, this way of operating was rather less prominent, ranking second to a system whereby strategy is developed centrally but content is created by each publication. This accounted for almost half of the websites in 2005, but only about a third of websites in 2007. The implication is that the increasing investment being placed in website development is creating a move towards greater use of specialist internet units.

For the remaining fifth of websites, each publication develops and manages its website on its own in almost all cases.

As in the 2003 and 2005 studies, for the great majority of the websites (about nine out of ten), the company operates more than one site. About half the companies have ten or more sites (similar to 2005) and a handful have 50 or more.

2. Strategy and objectives

What are the major objectives for the websites? The questionnaire listed 12 possible objectives (including a write-in) and asked respondents which applied to them.

Four objectives stood out ahead of the others.

- To create new revenue streams/profits in the long term
- To expand your audience beyond the print audience base by creating an online audience (ie. including non-readers of your print publication)
- To use the website to attract new readers for the print products
- To build a community around your brand

Each of these objectives was claimed by more than eight out of every ten respondents. These four objectives also topped the ranking in the 2005 study.

The fifth-ranked objective (which also ranked fifth in 2005), listed by about seven out of every ten informants, was:

- To communicate with the target audience on a more frequent basis than the magazine can do.

The other objectives which attracted a substantial number of respondents were, in rank order:

- To provide website advertisements as added-value for advertisers in print publications
- To allow your audience access to your content at times and in places that are most convenient for them
- To form online partnerships with others, to develop more powerful services
- To increase your product lines
- To create new revenue streams/profits in the short term

All these were claimed by half or just over half of all informants. It was notable that while almost everyone aimed to generate new revenue streams and profits in the long run, only half aimed to do so in the short term.

Few people claimed as an objective discouraging the print audience from drifting to other online sources, and there were few additional write-in objectives.

Overall, the relative importance of the various objectives was little changed from two years earlier.

One aspect, however, has changed over the years. Hesitancy or doubt about the necessity of increasing one's investment online has all but disappeared. Nearly 100 per cent of informants (all but one publisher) expected to expand their online efforts in the next 12 months. The one exceptional publisher planned to maintain the company's online efforts at about its current level.

In the 2003 study, there was an even balance between expansion of efforts and maintaining current levels. In the 2005 survey, there was a shift towards expanding the investment, but in 2007, this majority has become overwhelming.

3. Funding and profitability

For these successful websites, almost half of their revenue comes from earnings from the website. The other significant sources of revenue for the online operations are internal funds provided centrally and internal funds provided from the relevant publication. Each of these two internal sources provides more than a quarter of overall revenue.

This is broadly similar to the results two years ago.

There is wide variation from one website to another, however. Some sites are largely dependent on central funds, other sites rely mainly on the host magazine's own resources, and yet others are primarily funded by earnings online. A number of websites enjoy a fairly evenly balance between these sources.

Turning in more detail to income from online activities, just over half came from advertising revenue. Most of this was display advertising revenue. Small contributions were made by recruitment advertising, other classified advertising and search/contextual listings.

About one-tenth of total online revenue was derived from subscriptions to paid-for web content and almost as much came from sponsorship income. Other, lesser sources of revenue included e-commerce, content syndication, partnership revenue and one-off payments for content (as distinct from a subscription).

Again, there was great variation from one website to another. For example, for one publisher, a significant minority of online revenue came from cell phone downloads from the website—wallpapers, video, games, ring tones, etc.

The available finance has funded an increase in the man-hours devoted to website operations. Comparing with the position one year ago, two-thirds of respondents said that the number of man-hours had increased by 20 per cent or more. Almost all the other respondents said that the number of man-hours had increased but by less than 20 per cent. No one had reduced the number of man-hours.

Bearing this and all other relevant overhead and operating expenses in mind, are the websites making a profit? Profitability is only one of several possible criteria on which we asked respondents to judge whether or not their website was 'successful'. A site could be losing money yet be considered a success because of its performance in other ways. Nevertheless, what is the profit situation?

Almost half of these sites are profitable—a substantial increase compared with the 2003 survey and approximately the same proportion as in the 2005 survey. About a quarter of sites are breaking even. Less than 20 per cent of sites are losing money. A few respondents were unable to answer the question, sometimes because accounting procedures do not show website economics separately.

4. Audiences

As in previous surveys, the number of site visitors ('unique users') received each month varied a great deal. Several of these successful sites attracted five million or more unique users a month, while at the other end of the scale around a fifth of sites attracted less than 20,000 unique users. Sheer size of audience is not an automatic predictor of success, nor do relatively small audiences necessarily mean failure. The numbers reflect the size and nature of the magazines and their target audiences—from niche magazines in small markets to global brands with broad appeal worldwide.

More instructively, the trend in audiences continues to be very strongly upwards, as one would expect. Visitor numbers have increased by 20 per cent or more in the last year for about two-thirds of our sample of websites. Most of the rest have experienced audience increases but less than 20 per cent. A few have maintained a similar number of visitors to a year ago, but none of these sites have suffered a decrease in audience. This is a similar pattern to the 2005 survey.

The number of page impressions also varied enormously. Over a fifth of sites enjoyed more than 10 million page impressions a month, and at the same time, a handful had less than 200,000 impressions.

In almost all cases, these successful websites have attracted new audiences to the brand—people who do not read the printed magazine but visit the website. For about two-thirds of the sites (a rather higher percentage than in 2005) the new audience equates to 20 per cent or more of the readership of the magazine. For more than a quarter of the sites (a lower proportion than in 2005) the new audience is less than 20 per cent of the magazine readership. In essence, during the last two years, the new web-only audiences have tended to grow in relation to the size of the printed magazine's readership.

As before, less than a tenth of the publishers believe their websites have not attracted new audiences.

Who are the new audiences? They fall into three main categories:

- People who are outside the primary target audience. One example quoted was women visitors to the website of a heavily male-oriented brand. The web enables a brand to attract marginal customers and thus extend the brand's footprint.

- People who are within the primary target audience but whose commitment to the brand or to print is insufficient for them to buy the magazine. Some of these are readers of rival printed magazines. They are keen on the subject matter but prefer a rival publication, yet are happy to browse the 'secondary' brand's website. Others are people who don't read much in print, particularly younger people who are more online-oriented than print-oriented. So they visit the website but don't read the magazine.

- Readers outside the home country. This was often mentioned by respondents. Some of these are ex-patriates who wish to maintain contact with the home country. Many others are people in the magazine's target audience who simply live in a different country and thus don't have ready access to the printed magazine because of geographical separation. These overseas customers are believed to take the view that the delay in delivery and the cost of subscription copies of the magazine are too great, and so they prefer the website. In addition, for some global magazine brands that publish different websites in different countries, there are international surfers who like the brand so much that they visit some of the brand's sites outside the surfers' own country.

One respondent remarked that many of the web-only audience find her website through search engines—rather than independently identifying the site as one to visit.

5. Website content

What Content Attracts the New Audiences?

- The sense of community. It is created by discussion forums, personal user pages, blogs, 'ask our experts', voting, consumers' own stories and all the other types of user-generated content. As one respondent wrote: "the need to belong to something larger draws them in".

- Interactive content. Online games, quizzes, exams, evaluation, discussion forums, etc. To some extent, this is another way of saying 'community', but this also includes online activities that a surfer may do on his or her own, such as certain games or quizzes.

- The sheer scope of material available. One example cited was galleries of photographs, such as female celebrities on a men's magazine website. Other examples mentioned were video clips and podcasts.

- Time-critical content, such as news services and listings of forthcoming entertainments and other events.

- Searchable archives and databases. Examples given included online restaurant guides, visitor attractions for tourists, recipe database, shopping advice, an archive of video clips, new car prices and specifications, and an online used car database.

Underlying much of this are the themes of community and personalised information.

Around two-thirds of the websites are updated daily, most of them continuously throughout the day. Almost all the rest are updated weekly.

Interactive Facilities Offered

These successful websites found many ways in which to exploit the internet's ability to deliver easy and instant two-way communication. The questionnaire listed 11 ways in which visitors might interact directly with the site's publishers or with other visitors. The most widely employed, by about three-quarters of sites, were:

- Chat room or message board discussion groups; public debates
- Print subscription request

Three other types of facility were offered by around half of the sites:

- Blogs or articles submitted for publication on the site (not paid for)
- Offers/discounts exclusive to members/subscribers
- Hyperlinks to relevant external sites, proposed by visitors

About a third or quarter of sites provided these facilities:

- Online subscription to member-only area

- Special interest clubs to which visitors may subscribe
- Paid-for articles, reports or features

Other interactive facilities mentioned by respondents included personal pages (some with lists of friends), galleries for photos submitted by members/visitors (in some cases, photos of people, in other cases photos related to the site's topic such as visitors' cars), opinion polls, online voting on issues relevant to the magazine brand (ie. 'hot or not' guys and fashion 'hit or miss' on a teen girl site), send postcards or news to friends, consumer stories, the rating of items, online auctions, classified advertisements supplied by visitors, and competitions with branded gifts for winners.

Once again, 'community' is the theme underlying much of this.

Other Facilities and Information

Among a range of other facilities listed in the questionnaire, the most widely used was email newsletters linked to the website. More than eight out of every ten sites offered this – rather more than in 2005. Almost as frequent was archive retrieval—again up on 2005.

Around two-thirds of sites included video clips. About half the sites offered RSS feeds. Both these proportions are substantially higher than two years ago.

Other facilities employed by a minority of sites included services designed for mobile phone access, services designed for PDA/handheld computer access, a news flash service, a search engine which searches external sites as well as the host site, and podcasts.

Overall, compared with 2005, the general picture in 2007 is one of growth in the range and number of facilities offered by successful websites.

Almost all the sites take information that has not been published in the printed magazine(s) and edit/package it for the website. Some sites do this extensively, while some do this in a limited way. Examples include video clips, audio clips, other imaging, news updates, as-they-happen exclusives, background stories, journalists' blogs—as well as all the content that is provided by site visitors, of course. For many sites, most of the web content is original material.

Few of these websites charge for access to any of their pages and none impose a charge for the whole site.

E-commerce

Just over half the sites had e-commerce capability for online products/services.

The most popular products on sale were print magazine subscriptions (almost everyone offered these), purchase of individual copies of print publications, subscriptions to online services, and branded goods (about half the sites offered these). A minority of sites were ready to sell tickets to concerts, shows and other events.

6. Digital editions

Digital editions of magazines—an exact reproduction in electronic form—are not necessarily connected with the magazines' websites in any way, but about a quarter of the magazines participating in the survey also published a digital edition.

The subscribers to the digital editions usually amounted to less than one per cent of the circulation of the printed magazine. The highest figure was three per cent.

For some digital editions, quite a high proportion of subscribers came from outside the home country. But with the other digital editions, subscribers residing outside the home country were a very low proportion.

In many cases (half the digital editions), subscribers were mainly new readers who did not previously receive the printed magazine. That is, the digital edition had increased the brand's footprint. By contrast, there were as many cases where subscribers were mainly existing readers who continue to receive the printed magazine. These subscribers find value in having both formats. There was only one instance where the publisher believed that subscribers were mainly existing readers of the magazine who gave it up because of receiving the digital edition.

7. Advertisers and sponsors

Web-Only Advertisers

The proportion of websites attracting new online-only advertisers has been growing. In the 2003 survey, 53 per cent of publishers said they had gained advertisers online who did not advertise in the printed magazine. By 2005, this had risen to 66 per cent of publishers, and in 2007, it was about eight out of every ten sites.

The new advertisers could be attracted by any of a range of factors including:

- Audience type. The websites can offer slightly different audiences, which could be more attractive to advertisers. A prime example is younger audiences than the magazine achieves. Loyal visitors who repeatedly come back to the site, as members of a community, were also appealing to advertisers. Another key characteristic is the ability to target a particular audience – not merely all visitors to the site, but visitors with specific interests, revealed by their choosing certain relevant pages within the site. Some advertisers are providers of internet services, and have as their prime target audience consumers who are already online.

- Audience size. The high traffic built up by some websites, in some cases amounting to hundreds of thousands or even a few million each month. One respondent stated that the website was the biggest online community in the country for his website's specific audience.

- Low cost. The low cost (as it is perceived) of advertising on the net is a major factor. Advertisers with small budgets who cannot afford to use television or magazines can afford to use the internet.

- Ad packages. Many publishers create tailor-made offers for individual advertisers, pitching the cost and the benefits of online advertising so as to make it an attractive package. Some sites benefit from being part of a larger group of websites operated by the same organisation, and run-of-network packages can be created.

- Speed. It was mentioned that compared with a weekly or monthly magazine, the immediacy of getting an advertising campaign into action on the net and updating the ads can help bring in new advertisers.

- Interactivity. Examples are clicking on hyperlinks and being put straight through to further details on an advertiser's own website, and placing the advertiser's branding on interactive games and other activities. One respondent mentioned that textual links can help his advertisers get better ratings on Google for their own websites.

- Sales leads. The ability of online advertising to drive consumers to click through to an advertiser's website, thus revealing themselves as hot sales leads. If there is also a facility for direct selling off the web page, the sales lead can be converted into a direct purchase.

- Continuous presence. Another benefit is being able to maintain a continuous presence through web advertising, rather than advertisements having a limited life in a magazine, television, radio and so on.

- Measurability. Advertisers like being able to see the numbers which show how many people have visited their ads, and even how many have clicked through to the advertiser's own website.

Multi-Media Packages

Most publishers (about eight out of every ten in our sample) create advertising and/or sponsorship opportunities across both the print and online brands, with the aim of encouraging magazine-only advertisers to use the website as well and vice versa. There may also be discounts for taking ads on more than one website and/or more than one magazine within the publishing company. Publishing opportunities on mobile phones or other platforms may also be brought into the packages.

One publisher wrote "In the past, online was considered 'added value' but this model has changed since our recent website revamp. Online and mobile advertising is paid for and individually priced, but customised packages are put together to suit each advertiser's needs."

In one case, the packages are built around competitions which run through both the magazine and the website —an advertiser may sponsor or advertise within the competition. Another publisher runs voting campaigns online, with the results featured in the magazine; again, advertisers can associate themselves with these in both medium. A third publisher runs awards, which feature in both medium with sponsorship support. A fourth runs a series of other types of event, with sponsorship and advertising linked to it.

Search/Contextual Advertising

Around a third of the websites offered search/contextual advertising—that is, the placing of advertisements on the screen according to keywords used by visitors when searching the site. These sites were evenly divided between saying the advertising revenue from search advertising was 'quite important' and 'not very important'.

About a third of publishers themselves bought search advertising on the sites of external search engines in order to drive traffic to their own sites.

8. Marketing

There are four primary ways in which these websites are marketed to customers, which are used by more than half the websites.

The principal method, of course, is promotion within the printed magazine(s) hosting the website. Almost all sites do this.

Email promotions rank second, used by about three-quarters of sites.

Promotional links (paid-for or free) from other websites are used by a similar proportion of websites.

The other method used by the majority of sites (about two-thirds) is promotion within other magazines owned by the company. However, some sites were for publications which do not have any sister titles.

Some publishers run events which promote the website (as well as the printed magazine, often).

As noted above, about a third of publishers bought search advertising on the sites of external search engines in order to drive traffic to their own sites.

A small proportion of sites take paid-for advertising in newspapers, magazines and other medium. In some cases, instead of paying for the advertising, there is an exchange arrangement. Other arrangements include partnerships whereby any mention in print or online of specific external websites results in a reference on those external sites to the publisher's own site.

Some publishers operate mobile phone services and there is much cross-referencing between these services and the website.

9. Competitors online

More than half of publishers believe that their competitors online for attracting site visitors are mainly different from their competitors to the printed magazine.

The new competitors include other types of traditional media which have also developed their own internet services and thus, within a given market, compete with magazine publishers in a much more direct way. Television networks, cable networks and newspapers were specifically mentioned.

However, the main thrust of the new competitors lies in entirely new kinds of service which are creatures of the internet.

A prime example is online communities. For example, new youth-oriented communities which are pure internet inventions are competing very powerfully against teen magazines' websites. One respondent wrote "community websites that don't belong to publishers are becoming our main competitors."

Another type of new competitor is portals. "Portals such as *MSN* and *Yahoo!*", wrote one respondent. Many special interest fields have portals available to them which compete with magazine websites. Some magazine publishers have created their own portals, of course, but these are not considered competitors in this context.

A third type of new competitor is specialist web-only services. These exist in every significant market and some attract considerable audiences. For instance, one respondent cited a web-based learning service as a serious competitor to the website of his education-oriented magazine.

In our 2005 survey, only a third of respondents thought their online competitors were mainly different from their print competitors. The increase in this proportion to more than half of respondents in 2007 is likely to be a reflection of the general growth and strengthening of online communities, special interest portals and web-only services (ie. those not published by magazine companies).

10. Barriers to success

The questionnaire listed nine potential barriers to success for consumer publishers in operating websites and asked respondents which ones were significant for them.

The most important barrier was resistance by existing employees who work on print products. Just over half of respondents found this to be a problem.

Almost as many cited insufficient funds for web development and pressure to focus on print products.

These three factors were also the top three in the 2005 survey and with roughly similar proportions claiming them.

Other barriers of some significance—but mentioned by less than half of respondents—were finding staff with the right skills, mastering the technology, rapid changes in technology and initial low or negative return on investment in the web.

One of the least significant of the listed factors was slow acceptance by internal management of the need for electronic products. Nevertheless, a third of respondents mentioned this as a barrier which needed to be overcome.

A few respondents thought that rapid changes in their sector's marketplace were a difficulty.

11. Lessons shared

The final question for respondents was an invitation to write down the principal lessons they would like to pass on about developing and operating a web strategy. Most respondents were willing to share some of their experiences. Their comments are grouped under a series of headings below. Naturally enough, some of the advice is contradictory!

Strategy

- Web development is crucial for a magazine brand. It not only helps brand awareness and increases credibility and brand loyalty, but it also offers a huge potential for interaction with the target group, leading to valuable feedback. It is one of the main ways to evolve and improve one's brand.

- Web strategy needs to be flexible—without that meaning it being hastily created and lightly managed. The basic problem for publishers is that they are not able to rapidly adapt to the online market due to issues of legacy. Building on online activity needs to be constant, aggressive and frequently revised. It's not only about putting great content online, but even more about creating the right environment for online users to feel at home. The main competitor is no longer the next magazine publisher, but the individual who can develop an idea at home, publish it and create the next web success story.

- Develop a company-wide web strategy and platform with generic functionality and let the existing magazine websites benefit from these investments.

- Do not have a long-term strategy. The web changes too fast.

- Flexibility is the key to any online strategy. Often, technology and online trends move too fast for publisher giants to follow. This could mean joining forces with small web agencies that are at the edge of online developments in order to stay ahead of the game.

- A non-updated and 'static' website is practically a worthless investment. One should not have a website just to have a presence on the web, but one should always invest in equipment, in expertise (the right people) and the latest technology in order to be able to profit in the long run.

- Start slow and expand according to demand and possibilities. Forget about the dream of building the perfect site all at once.

- To optimise human resources, develop many simultaneous projects.

- Ignore EVERYONE with a nay-saying "glass is half full" mentality.

- You must invest in the future.

- Have sufficient funds to maintain subsequent development.

Co-operation Between Print and Online Teams

- Make sure you get buy-in from the magazines before you start anything or life will be difficult.

- Good cooperation between the print team and web team is most critical.

- Lack of support from the print counterpart, especially in the initial stage, can mean the difference between success and failure.

Staffing

- Appoint a dedicated digital publisher and editor on the same level as the print publisher and editor. Make sure the digital chief is on your management team/board.

- The web has to be operated by people from the web, not from print. But the management of the company has to commit in order to understand this new business and make strategic choices in terms of business and editorial. Enforcing interaction between web and print is not easy.

- Be flexible in terms of staff structures.

- You must be sure that you'll be able to maintain the same level of creativity and innovation that you offered when you started.

- Avoid having not enough manpower to create interesting and always-changing content.
- Manage your own content updates.

Content

- If the magazine cannot offer any added value to its readers online, there is no future.
- Offer more than in print. It does not have to be much, but your web audience should feel that there is always more to explore

Duplication of print content on the web is NOT the answer. Produce original content across different media.

- Include multimedia content in addition to printed content (ie. exclusive photos, videos, etc.)
- Usability is key to developing a website. Whether a website is cute, pretty or sleek is irrelevant in comparison to whether or not people can navigate through it without having to stop to figure out how.
- Your website has to be very intuitive, so test it again and again. Systems have to be foolproof.
- Look at the cultural changes at editorial level via dialogue and 24/7 updates instead of monologue and once a month.
- People who get into this business should stop developing websites for themselves but think about the people who are the end-users—the people who will use the site.

Communities

- Start building interactive communities that allow the visitors to contribute.
- Create your own community and earn money with them.
- Community and tools for community to interact and participate is the key, but it is not easy to build. It may take time and you should be patient (if the magazine has community, you are able to build a web-community based around the magazine).

Audiences

- Know your users as well as you know your readers.
- Study visitor trends and react appropriately.
- Listen to your website users very carefully.
- Don't launch bells and whistles (forums, podcasts, etc) until you have built an online audience.

Marketing

- Promotion is as important as development.

Technology

- Always research the latest trends in technology to keep up with competitors and your audience's whims.
- Stay in touch with new media developments.
- Technology is too sophisticated, so it is difficult to introduce changes quickly.

Appendix: Methodology

The universe for the survey was publishers of consumer magazine websites, where the publisher considered the site to be successful. Whether or not a website was successful was left to the judgement of the publisher. Success could be defined in whatever terms the publisher chose: making a profit, generating significant online revenues, developing online branding, creating successful online products, attracting subscriptions or in any other way a publisher chose to measure success against defined objectives. The sample was not intended to be representative of all consumer magazine websites—the aim was to learn from those who had achieved success.

In order to invite publishers to participate in the survey if they qualified, FIPP approached member publishers directly and through their national magazine associations. FIPP's database of association and corporate members was the principal sampling frame.

An online questionnaire was used. Potential respondents were emailed details of the survey and the URL of the page where the questionnaire could be found.

Fieldwork was completed in August 2007. A total of 44 responses were received, but after rejecting incomplete questionnaires and questionnaires concerning business-to-business magazines (which were ineligible for the survey) 37 questionnaires were available for analysis. This is too small a base for reliable percentages to be published, and accordingly, this document is written as a qualitative report rather than as a statistical analysis.

The survey respondents' names and their answers are confidential. The questionnaire did, however, conclude with the request "If you would be prepared to have your company listed simply as having participated in the survey, please indicate by writing in the appropriate company name". Those who did so are listed below.

(A)WAY Publications, Belgium • BBC Magazines, UK • BYC Communicaciones, Chile • Design House Inc., Korea Edipresse, Switzerland • Editorial Atlántida S.A., Argentina • Editorial Perfil S.A., Argentina • Europress Media Group, Greece • Grupo Zeta, Spain • IPC Media, UK • Knack.be, Belgium • Liberis Publications, Greece • Luna Media Pty Ltd, Australia • Manstein Verlagsges.m.b.H, Austria • Meredith Corporation, USA • Motor Presse Stuttgart, Germany • Option Press S.A, Greece • Playboy Enterprises Inc., USA • Psychologies magazine, France • Ramsay, Son & Parker (Pty) Ltd, Republic of South Africa • Reed, The Netherlands • Ringier AG, Switzerland • R-PRESSE, spol. s r. o., Czech Republic • Spotlight Verlag GmbH, Germany • Summit Media Inc., Philippines