

The World of Magazine Design

What is a magazine?

There are many different views and opinions to what a magazine is or what it should be. I personally believe that a magazine is very simply just form of communication and it is the multitude of different ways that a magazine can convey its content that creates confusion in some parties. With the array of content that is available, pretty much any subject matter can be found in a magazine, it can sometimes seem difficult to link them together and say what exactly makes a magazine. Maybe if we consider what makes a magazine different, they are able to expressive creativity as they are not bound to the same strict laws of a template, for example a newspaper or even a website. When you have a book or film you need to see a common theme running all the way through, one story, and with this you need a certain level of reflection in order to hold the story but with a magazine you can fly through many features that do stay under a much more general overall theme. In looking at the content it is clear to see that there is a special relationship between image and text, it is once again a subject that cannot easily be defined as in a any magazine you could have a full page of text or even a full double page spread of one image it all depends what you are trying to convey. This special relationship then, to me what makes it so is the flexibility and variation that is allowed in order to make a perfectly balanced page whether it be all text or all image there is no law to abide to except to give the page it's own personality and characteristic while maintaining the fact that there has to be a balance of flare and legibility of text. There are many of these relationships to consider when you are forming a magazine, the next I'm going to look at is the problem of trying to give a magazine issue it's own characteristics but still keep it true to the overall brand. There should be a connection between two magazines in the same series that run further than the title. One way in which magazine designers try to keep this harmony is to try to have the same style of cover, with each cover being as 'busy' as the next. If we take Vogue for example when you see a few covers at the same time there is a similar basic structure of one main image that spans the whole cover and clippings of content, usually in modern or slab serif fonts, around the sides. So what can we make of this overall delicate and sophisticated system that makes up what we now call magazines, it is one of creativity and balance a combination do drawing you in with design and flare and then interesting you with its content.

Creating a magazine.

As with most new designs you have to start with some sort of idea conception and collaboration, literally brainstorming through many different ideas and from there condensing your information and then adding more content as you focus on your final ideas. As I delved into this subject I have realized that there is a distinct correlation between the amount of work you put into making these notes and the final design you produce, this may seem obvious but trying to go straight into a final design can be detrimental to the effectiveness of your final piece. Another tip that I have found is that rushing to a computer in this Information Age is extremely tempting but once again it is better to start small and work your way up from small sketches, which can be moved onto computer later in the process. I'm sure that many designers feel more comfortable making their first rough sketches and then moving onto more advanced skills. 'The precondition for good design is conceptual thinking', this simple quote pretty much sums up everything about the idea and drafting stage of creating a magazine. So what happens when you have all of your idea set?

Layout and drafting, at this stage it is good to look at the key differences between a cover and a double page spread. In making a cover there are much fewer 'rules' you can really get creative with where you put your content and how you convey your information, for example you get to use the full array of design type available from display through slab serif and even old style if you wanted the choice really is up to you. It is this freedom that make magazine covers infinitely variable from outstandingly complex to beautifully precise and simple. With double page spreads there is still scope for design and creativity but there are some preformed idea that you should stick to like a grid system that makes sure your columns and other various forms of content stay inline and precise, don't get me wrong these grids do not have to be kept to entirely but as long as you keep most of your content on the grid you will be fine. So when you have your ideas and you know the area of the magazine you are designing the you are ready to start drafting ideas of layout, this part takes time and effort to get right but when you find a design you like you then take that on into further drafts adding more detail each time. Whether you are taking your own photographs or using existing imagery you must now decide how much of the page you would like the image to take up and it's position, then of course how you want the text to interact with the images. A main image is a great place to start designing the structure.

Using a computer or mac is now very much the norm in the creation of magazines with Photoshop and Indesign offering a multitude of skills that are a necessity in creating beautiful designs that engage and inspire. The next part of the designing process is really the easy bit if you're drafting is of a high standard, the simple laying out of your information on the page. The best idea is to have pre typed your text and already have decided on your font before trying to start putting any text or images onto a page. Then when you have your grid, or not for covers, you can simply add in all your



Magazine History.

As we progress through to some more modern magazines, wired was one of my favorite as it was the first to try to capture the new technological age in the form of a magazine. The magazine is still running now and there is still reference to the first magazines as the title has the same display text, the overall design and style has changed dramatically with the colour schemes getting brighter and of course the technology on the cover moving forward, thus the abilities of modern camera's are so much greater so the photo's are much more defined. The earlier you look into magazines the more you realize the thought that must have gone into the actual taking of the photo's as of course without photoshop the the image had to be perfect without the use of editing software. When you look at history of a craft such as this it becomes apparent that the techniques of developing and completing magazines are what have changed the most, especially when you consider that the first magazine would have to be hand printed individually. This brings larger problems than just slow production but also; very expensive prices, limited distribution and because of the lack of income from this manufacturers couldn't afford to make many copies to send to the distributors. But saying all that, as many people will tell you, if your product is good enough then eventually it will take off and this is exactly what happened with the magazine. As more people buy, manufacturers have more money and can make more, they can be distributed further and thus this snowball effect goes on and on until you get to the massive industry that we have today. It is the added income and then the added demand that forced a change in manufacture so it did not take long for the introduction of the rotary press in the nineteenth century, number of magazines that were available to be created expanded almost instantly and thousands of people had opportunity to purchase magazines and what happens when you get when there are many readers? Advertising. The first advertising agency was set up in 1890 and after that advertising flourished and with advertising brings money and lots of it. With that money came something new and something exciting, colour. Colour prints soon took over and the evolution of loads of new types of magazines began, philosophy changed to fashion and markets moved from a very male orientated outlook to a much more balanced system with men and women having a clear divide in magazine style. There were still limitations with prints though as the quality wasn't quite there, what we now know as 'retro' was replaced with photography.

Magazine analysis.



In this report I will be considering and evaluating the similarities and differences of technology magazines compared to fashion magazines. First off though a little background, I have chosen these two magazine genres mainly because I believe that I can hopefully find some transferable styles that I can add to my final technology design. My choice is to focus on magazine double page spreads in this report as this is where I feel the magazine designers have the most freedom to express their creativity in these pages.

Looking firstly at a selection of fashion magazines it is very clear that the main focus across the pages is a large photo that most of time the articles seem to be placed over the top. Simplicity is vital and creating a clean and polished look is very important. This can be seen in few technology magazines but my overall impression is that there is more going on across the pages, where there is less focus on one impressive image but more on a selection of smaller images. This being said there is still a clean cut design. What makes these two very different styles work in similar ways and far as the organised clean lines goes is that they both keep to a grid system, making sure that the images and text are kept under control. Now I will look more at the text specifically and firstly the content, fashion tends not to compare items quite so much and more focus entirely on one product or person. This is usually with the top end though and with some fashion magazines all they do is compare cloths, I believe there is much more creativity in the more simplistic designs. An article that doesn't take up too much room on the page so nothing is detracted from the picture. Comparison does take up more room in tech magazines and where there is one simple article it does take up a lot of the page. Although saying that whenever I have looked at any apple products in technology magazines there is more of a simplistic feel, but I think that this is more the product rather than these general theme for magazine design. Next I looked at type, there's more use of display type in the technology magazines as the type is usually dotted around the page, this is reasonably different to fashion magazines which tended to have one piece of display type, being a fancy serif type rather than the bolder sans serif types than I found in the text magazines. What also appealed to me when reviewing these styles is the use of white space in the designs, it's brilliance is in its simplicity and it is this that I will be trying to recreate with my piece, I believe the key is to have the information you need, spaced well and I need to know when to stop adding text and images. It is very important to include structure in these designs, I have experimented in the past with using grids to keep everything in proportion, I have learned a lot from looking at these differences between these two quite different styles of magazine but most important to me is that there is no one way to make something structured and organised, you can add multiple texts and images but as long as you think about how they are spaced, the size and making sure that you keep to the grid system. You are allowed of course to slightly cross over the grid but as long as it is within reason you should be fine. Back to the magazines though, one more thing that I have looked into how different parts overlay each other, prior to doing this research I believed that the largest and most important display text would be at the front to add emphasis. I could not be further from the truth when I looked at some of the design, especially the fashion magazines where smaller display font are usually overlaid over the main text firstly to take up less room and also to create a more faded and relaxed look, rather than the more bold and in your face design

REGARDLESS OF SEAT STATUS, A BANK OF PRISTINE WHITE LUGGAGE SAYS FIRST CLASS.

Silk/linen trench coat, \$1,644; Embroidered poplin blouse, \$1,302; Both Alberta Ferretti; Minkskirt, \$241; Gianfranco Ferré. Leather and porcelain sandals, \$2,085; Alexander McQueen. Leather cuff with zip detail, \$90; Longchamp. *On road*, leather tote bag, \$1,020; Prada. Mock-croc laptop case, \$205; Jimmy Choo. *On floor*, mock-croc weekend bag, \$1,285; Jimmy Choo. *On trolley*, *From rig*, leather shoulder bag, \$285; Longchamp. Cuirva-jacquard and leather luggage case, \$1,850; Cuirva-jacquard and leather trunk, \$3,300; Both Goyard.

Mock-croc shoe case, \$2,165; Mock-croc shoe case, \$1,485; Both Jimmy Choo. Hair: Shon. Makeup: Polly Osmond. Nails: Arienne Newman. With thanks to BAA and Munich. Location: Heathrow Terminal 5 (Heathrowtown). Model: Katia Step. Gey Robinson. Fashion editor: Charlotte Pélcher.

Accessories take a new route: luxe white, artisan techniques and zesty colour are all set to fly. Photographed by Raymond Meier

TRANSIT

Having looked at the conceptual differences of these two magazines it does become clear that they are both trying to achieve the same goal, expressing their views on their own both very modern contexts, but it is way that they convey the content they have that makes them so different. What I have learned though is that there are no wrong answers, there is no set path you have to keep to whatever magazine you are trying to design, as long as you can keep a valuable balance of clarity and design you should be o.k. I am going to use this knowledge in the creation of my own magazine cover and double page spread, but the most important thing I have learned is from mainly the fashion magazine and that is that more is not always better and cutting down and making more use of white space is going to create a modern technology design that I think with show some creativity and individualism.

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