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The Relationship of Women's Magazines and Their Websites: A Comparative Analysis of Print and Web Content

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The Relationship of Women's Magazines and
Their Websites: A Comparative
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Their Websites: A Comparative
Analysis of Print and Web Content

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Journalism

By

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Hendrix College
Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, 2006

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Abstract

With the digital expansion of magazines, it is essential to determine how a magazine's online and digital content compares to its print content. The editorial strategy for print content versus Web content could make a difference in consumers' brand attachment and loyalty to a magazine. Magazines must have a dynamic online strategy that offers a different experience than printed material in order to gain new relationships and strengthen those relationships people already have with the brand. A comparative analysis of the print content versus the online website content of four separate women's publications can help determine if each magazine is using a dynamic online strategy or if the Web content will substitute the print magazine for readers. It should be noted that success in the digital world can be whatever the publisher considers relevant, which could range from online branding to new audiences to new revenue streams (FIPP, 2007). The results of this analysis can be used to determine how the relationship between the online content and print content of a magazine affect its overall brand success.

This thesis is approved for recommendation
to the Graduate Council.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to everyone who's ever dreamt of being a writer.

Table of Contents

The Relationship of Women's Magazines and Their Websites:

A Comparative Analysis of Print and Web Content

In today's world, every popular magazine has a website. It is rare for any printed publication to not have an online presence, and there are countless online-only publications. Many magazine brands have leveraged multiple platforms to increase the overall audience and brand awareness. From 2006 – 2011, the number of consumer magazines with websites increased 30 percent and the number of readers grew more than 4 percent (The Association of Magazine Media, 2011, p. 52).

In an effort to stick out from the plethora of information available on the Internet, magazines initially took a different approach than newspapers in relation to online content. The general trend in the newspaper industry is to have the print edition replicated on a website at no additional charge for subscribers. While this is not the case for most magazines, some magazine websites now include the option to purchase a digital copy of the print publication for an additional fee. Since the Apple iPad was introduced in 2010, the definition of what a magazine is has continued to evolve. Many magazines use the iPad and other formats to distribute digital issues. Often, these digital issues are replicas of the print publications. However, magazine websites typically take a different approach. Instead of replicating what is in the print edition, many magazines have attempted to expand the website content, which is separate from content included in a magazine's digital edition. This has led to two main types of magazine websites— a companion site and a destination site (Barsh, Lee, & Miles, 1999).

Most magazines have developed their website as a companion site, offering a variety of options not available in the print edition while still having an overlap of content. "A strong companion site supports and enhances the print magazine by helping to build its brand and reach

new audiences while adding an extra dimension for its existing one" (Barsh, Kramer, Maue, &

Zu, 2001, p. 84). Destination sites are usually top sites in their categories and provide a

complete experience that comes with unique content and applications. While there are some

magazine brands with digital audiences larger than print, none of these are the top women's

consumer magazine brands (American Magazine Study, 2011).[1]

The content on magazines' websites varies depending on what digital initiatives the

publisher pursues, and the consumer experience can be different for various audiences who have

looked at the same website. Hence, it is possible for the impact of a magazine's website to be

different for a subscriber and a non-subscriber. The digital expansion has made it easier to reach

readers across the globe, which also means it is critical for magazines to maintain their

customers. Ellonen, Tarkianen, and Kuivalainen (2010) concluded that magazine website usage

may substitute the print magazine for non-subscribers.

> A website could make it easy for customers to be in contact with the brand in between the
> publication of the print issues of the magazine. From the publisher's perspective, this is
> an efficient method for relationship building and magazine websites could thus be seen as
> new means in the quest for customer loyalty and market share. (pp. 21-22)

If the online content of a magazine could substitute for the print edition, why would a

magazine choose to maintain a website? Magazines have expanded to the Web and other digital

platforms because that is what today's publishing world demands. As many studies have shown,

by having a website, magazines risk something most consumer goods do not—cannibalization

(Kaiser, 2006). However, magazines are more than just content. They have their own culture

that involves the concept of reading for pleasure. There is the physicality of actually holding the

magazine and turning the pages that many people crave. People can tear out the pages they want

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[1]*ESPN the Magazine* is an example of a magazine brand with a larger digital audience than print. Its total print
audience is 11,090,000 while its total digital audience is 24,941,000. It uses multiple digital platforms including a
website, social networks, tablet apps, e-reader apps, and Texterity (American Magazine Study, 2011).

to save or keep their favorite issues for generations. In fact, magazine readers spend an average

of 42 minutes on each issue, making it a personal experience that "fulfills the needs and reflects

the values of the reader" (The Association of Magazine Media, 2012, 2004, p. 5). When the

American Magazine Study (2011) asked people who said they were not users of digital

magazines for a reason they are not utilizing this technology, they reported they just prefer to

read the printed version. There is something about the experience of holding and reading from a

printed publication that digital media cannot provide.

Overall, the digital expansion has not negatively affected most magazines in the

publishing world. Instead of competing, print magazines, digital magazines, and magazine

websites can supplement each other. The Internet provides the opportunity for magazines to

rethink their strategy or try a different approach, such as providing access to publication

archives. Content is more than just information—it is about the differentiated experience for the

reader. Many magazines include the link to their website in each print edition, and numerous

publications even include a page, typically near the beginning of the print issue, that previews

current or upcoming website content. Based on industry research, it seems like the magazine

publishers who can successfully utilize digital trends will be able to expand a magazine's brand

and gain a larger readership (Ellonen et al., 2010).

It is clear that the websites of women's magazines are not yet replacing the printed

material but acting as supplements to the material. However, there are many questions that come

up about what it will take to maintain a successful magazine brand in the constantly changing

digital landscape. A recent example is the digital magazine. Kawohl (2011) stated that tablet

devices such as the iPad may help magazines take the next step in the evolution of editorial

design and reader experience through creating an immersive experience of the brand (p. 3).

There are distinct differences between a digital magazine and a website including editing, design, and issue identification (i.e. date-stamped content); but the primary distinction is the metering, which can be pagination or any other method of going through the issue from beginning to end (BPA Worldwide, 2010). While digital editions of magazines continue to increase in number, my research only examines the websites because the digital editions are not necessarily connected with the magazines' websites. Also, most digital versions are just replicas of a magazine's print edition. According to figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations, digital editions totaled 3.1 million in the second half of 2011, which is about 1 percent of total circulation—the digital readership figures include magazines' digital reproductions and apps but not websites (as cited by Moses, 2012).

This paper is an analysis from 2008 and an analysis from 2012 of four women's print magazines and their websites to see if there is a difference in the editorial topics covered, and if so, what the difference is between the two mediums. Through a comparative analysis of the four women's magazines and their websites, the purpose is to examine how print magazines are dealing with the continuing expansion of technology, and how a magazine's Web presence affects the "brand" of individual magazines when the magazine maintains a website. My research is important because previous studies have established the objectives of magazines through the website, but it is not clear whether the magazines are achieving their objectives. Comparing the print and website content will reveal possible differences in the magazines' editorial content with the digital expansion. Reviewing their current circulation numbers to those in 2008 might provide some insight into the strategy behind content choices. If the comparison shows evidence of change in content between the print and online version, this might relate to circulation numbers and magazine brand expansion. By combining the comparative content

analysis results with qualitative information, the analysis will also give some insight into the

magazines' brand.

Literature Review

The literature review will look at the history of magazines, particularly women's magazines, and their transition into today's technology. It will also address the current health of the magazine industry, and it will include what previous studies have revealed about the publishing world's online expansion and its effect on the printed magazine.

For my research purposes, I only looked at women's magazines whose target audience is below the age of 40. I chose to look at a niche category as opposed to a broader category, such as news, because of the timeliness issue. People do not buy a fashion magazine or visit *Cosmopolitan*'s website because they are looking for up-to-date news. In fact, more than 90 percent of magazine readers continue to buy the print magazine when the identical content is available online and is free (Kadiyali & Simon, 2007).

Magazine Industry History

Throughout history, magazines have refashioned themselves to respond to what readers want to purchase. *Ladies Mercury*, which first appeared in England in 1693, is believed to be the first women's magazine. The publication was addressed to an aristocratic audience, and the content topics were similar to today's magazines, including fiction, illustrated fashion articles, educational material, and readers' letters with editorial responses (Talbot, 1995, p. 148). In the United States, women's magazines have been around for more than 200 years, becoming widely circulated in the late 19th century. In 1792, *The Lady's Magazine* was the first to be published in the United States. By the 1820s, women's magazines began to appear in every city large enough to have a printing press. These publications are important because they frequently reflect how society's view about the role of women continues to change. The early publications targeted to women included facts, calendars, and collections of prose and poetry. Most magazines did not

survive longer than two to four years, and the first women's magazine to be published for more than five years was *Ladies' Magazine*, founded in Boston in 1828 by Sarah Josepha Hale (Mott, 1930). Mott pointed out that the magazine topics were "sober and moral, though often mildly entertaining. There was an engraving, a colored fashion plate, and a piece of music in each of the numbers throughout much of the magazine's file" (p. 350). *Ladies' Magazine* went on to combine with *Godey's Lady's Book*, a magazine that was published in Philadelphia by Louis Godey. Hale was the editor of *Lady's Book* from 1837-1877. In 1852, Hale began a regular section in the publication titled "Employment for Women," which discussed women in the workforce. Education was important to Hale, and she used *Ladies' Magazine* and then *Lady's Book* as a medium to advocate education. *Lady's Book* even advertised that women were the sole editors of the publication (Mott, 1930). The creative promotional strategies and innovative print technologies put women's magazines at the forefront of the industry. Another transition during the late 1800s was the focus on middle-class women. According to Zuckerman (1998), this was a change from the "ante-bellum publications targeted primarily at the elite. New columns appeared advising readers about cleaning, cooking, making clothes, buying goods, supervising servants, child care, and the home needs of husbands" (p. xii).

The women who read these early magazines were very engaged. As Mott (1930) stated, "The stories and poems were read and re-read and cried over, the fashions were studied and copied, the engravings were cut out and framed, and the editor's advice was considered the final pronouncement" (p. 580). Throughout the years, women's magazines have played a variety of roles including entertainment, sources of education, and trade journals. The American women's magazine is a place "where women first came to constitute themselves as a distinct public in American life and letters" (Aronson, 2002, p. 2).

For its time period, *Lady's Book* had high circulation numbers—150,000, which it obtained in the 1860s. In 1877, Godey sold *Lady's Book* to John Hill Seyes Haulenbeek. After Haulenbeek's death in 1898, the magazine that included one of Edgar Allan Poe's earliest short stories and featured a hand-tinted fashion plate at the beginning of each issue was no longer published. Before the Civil War, publications like *Lady's Book* survived on subscription rates because they usually contained no advertising. Because these publications, like those we have today, were profit-oriented businesses, this eventually led to two target groups—advertisers and readers. While early women's publications occasionally worked to reform and improve women's lives as well as society, Zuckerman (1998) stated this was not typical. Generally, the publications represented mainstream thinking even when publishing articles on political and social issues. "The capitalist structure in which the magazines were and are embedded defined the boundaries within which they operated" (p.xii).

By the end of the 19th century, there were six magazines, known as "The Big Six," that led in circulation. These included *Delineator*, *McCall's*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Pictorial Review* (Zuckerman, 1998, p. 6). *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Home Companion*, and *Good Housekeeping* focused on entertainment as well as home management advice. The publications "started as women's advice page supplements to newspapers or as publications directed at the home in general, filled with homemaking tips and service departments" (Zuckerman, 1998, p. 4). In earlier magazines, such as *Lady's Book*, the advice on what to wear was considered more of a moral instruction than the fashion tips found in "The Big Six." *Delineato*r, *McCall's*, and *Pictorial Review* were created to promote the fashions of pattern manufacturers. By the beginning of the 20th century, these three expanded to "focus on women's concerns more broadly defined" (Zuckerman, 1998, p. 4). During this time period,

women's publications also included numerous nonfiction articles. "Nonfiction pieces on political, cultural, and social topics appeared, often written by well-known figures such as Theodore Roosevelt and Ida Tarbell" (p. xiii).

Unlike the 19th century publications that were frequently edited and sometimes owned by women, the major publications in the early 1900s were owned and published by men. There were a few exceptions. *Vogue*, a magazine used in my analysis, had a female leader from 1914-1952: Edna Woolman Chase (Zuckerman, 1998). Throughout the 1900s, women's magazines continued to transform and develop. In 1903, *Ladies' Home Journal* became the first American magazine to surpass 1 million in paid circulation (p. 159). By the 1920s, there were fewer articles on social, political, and cultural issues. Content was affected by various factors, including World War II and the women's liberation movement. Magazine readers also started to write letters to the publications, which influenced content decisions. In the 1970s, the male-dominated industry began to shift, and in today's magazine world, women hold most editor positions.

As society has changed, so have the publications meant to provide advice, guidance, and entertainment to women. Since the 1990s, as Zuckerman (1998) illustrated, women's titles have offered a large amount of information, "frequently in highly condensed form, on topics such as decorating, quicker ways to clean house and cook, juggling children and career, how to get back into the job market, and fashions for home and work" (p. xv). Today's women are busy, and many magazines tend to focus on how to live a balanced life.

> … although women may not be able to have it all, in varying degrees the world over they are keen to have as much as they can. The more power and money women have, the more demanding and acquisitive they become. Time, inevitably, is the one thing that they are short of. It is all the more important, therefore, for publishers to attract their attention in innovative ways. (Taylor, 2010, p. 17)

Despite content changes throughout the years, one thing remains true—the area a women's magazine chooses to focus on is important; the content defines and represents a publication's brand.

Technological Transition of Magazines

Printing technology innovations changed the publishing world after the Civil War (Zuckerman, 1998). Similarly, over the past few decades, the Internet has transformed how the world communicates. Technology advancement is another mode for magazines to communicate and grow their brand, but magazine publishers also have to figure out how to utilize these technology outlets in a way that aligns with their brand.

When expanding beyond the printed page, magazines have to continue to think about harnessing the brand's value through other mediums. Previous research seems to indicate different success rates for magazines' existing customers and the attraction of new ones when a magazine expands to the Web (Ellonen et al., 2010). According to a study by the Periodical Publishers Association, a role for magazines could be to act as a bridge to interactivity. "Interactive media helps to promote a stronger relationship with the brand itself as well as with other brand users" (Ellonen & Kuivalainen, 2007, p. 89). The magazine publishers who stay ahead of the technology learning curve will be able to create and grow successful integrated mass-media companies. It is possible to see the technology transition as a positive thing for magazines that have a companion website because these sites allow "consumers to get an idea about a magazine free of charge and hence may generate consumer awareness" (Kaiser & Kongsted, 2005, p. 5).

The American Magazine Study (2011) reported that approximately 187 million American adults read magazines in print or digital form—with 95 percent reading the traditional printed

versions of magazines and 54 percent accessing magazine content in digital form. However, 87

percent of people interested in reading magazines on a digital device still want a printed copy

(The Association of Magazine Media, 2011).

With the digital expansion, research has shown there are certain features that enhance a

user's online experience more than others. At the top of this list is video (The Association of

Magazine Media, 2011). It is also important to note the profile of the digital reader. The

American Magazine Study reported that males tend to be higher digital magazine users than

females. Overall, women's magazines have made the decision to not offer a digital version of

their magazine on their website. Some magazines have decided to have digital versions of their

print magazine, and some publications have completely stopped printing magazines, only

offering a digital version. When magazines first started going digital, the only option was to

download the magazine—usually in a portable document format (PDF). There are also online

sites that display magazines and include links and navigation for quick, selective reading. The

PDF and other online replicas have not resulted in a large-scale shift of paid subscriptions from

print to digital formats (Kon, Gosalia, & Portelette, 2010, p. 3). Now, digital magazines are

available on e-reading devices such as the Apple iPad.[2]

In the past, readers have said they like print magazines because they are engaging.

"Readers get enthralled in editorial, moved by design and photography and even enjoy and learn

from the ads. They tear out pages of interest, copy down urls and save coupons found in ads"

(Folio & Texterity, Inc., 2007, p. 1). However, technology is making all these things possible

with the digital editions. "Interactive magazines and newspapers represent a truly different

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[2] In 2010, the Audit Bureau of Circulations expanded its definition of digital magazines. Previously, a digital edition had to be an exact replica of the printed version. The new definition says it needs to contain the same content and advertising as its print counterpart, but it doesn't need to be identical in layout to the print version to be counted as paid circulation (Moses, 2010).

experience, offering more than just a PDF replica or Web repurposing of the print product" (Kon et al., 2010, p. 4). Interactive publications are another way for magazines to generate circulation revenue as well as strengthen their brand with both new and existing readers. Kon et al. (2010) found the new products introduced by magazines must be more than just a digital replica in order to strengthen the brand. "These new products can be feature-rich, contain enhanced content (including video), use innovative yet intuitive navigation, and offer opportunities for personalization" (p. 11). Often, it is up to publishers to decide what level of information they will distribute digitally. RSS feeds are another one of the most popular features on magazine websites (The Bivings Group, 2006). Magazines choosing to have digital versions typically keep their websites as well as the digital magazine. To clarify, digital magazines can qualify as part of a magazine's audited circulation (BPA, 2010). With the average person spending 42 minutes reading a magazine, 32 minutes reading the digital minutes, and nine minutes reading the website, the engagement metrics between digital editions and print magazines are much closer than the time spent on a magazine website (The Association of Magazine Media, 2012).

Beyond readership, magazines also consider the potential revenue from digital expansion opportunities. According to Taylor (2012c, p. 11), Hearst Magazines International is getting more money for tablet subscriptions than print versions. Hearst's digital replicas are the same price as the print publications. Duncan Edwards, president and CEO of Hearst Magazines, reported that when it comes to digital publications, Hearst's bestsellers are "straight replicas of the magazine. In the U.S, we are selling 500,000 magazines each month on the tablet now and aim to reach one million by the end of the year" (p. 11).

Health of the Magazine Industry

While the digital expansion of magazines is exciting, the industry's two main sources of revenue are still print sales and print advertising. Unfortunately, both of these numbers fell in 2011. The digital revenues continue to expand, but they still only make up 5 percent of the total revenue. Overall, the total revenues for consumer magazines, including advertising, circulation and digital spending, were $20.9 billion, which is a 1.2 percent growth from 2010. In the second half of 2011, total circulation dropped 1 percent, which is an improvement from the 1.5 percent drop during the same time period in 2010. In 2011, the newsstand sales were down far more than paid subscriptions. Compared to the same period in 2010, they dropped about 9 percent. There are a few exceptions to this, such as *Cosmopolitan*, one of the magazines used in my analysis. From 2010 to 2011, total circulation for the magazine went up 3 percent, from 2,905,659 to 3,040,013 (Matsa, Sasseen, & Mitchell, 2012). One positive spot in the industry is publishing companies are still investing in new ventures. Since 2009, the number of consumer magazines has continued to increase with 7,163 in 2010 and 7,179 in 2011 (The Association of Magazine Media, 2012, p. 85). The economic downturn that started in 2008 had a major impact on the magazine industry. Advertising revenue declined and Taylor (2012b, p. 37) reported that North America is the region where the magazine industry has suffered the most.

Even though magazines have not yet been able to make up lost revenue through digital technology, in today's digital world, consumers are demanding content be delivered in new ways, such as video and social media. Kadiyali and Simon (2007) addressed some problems magazines might have when publishing digital content. Most magazines have websites, but they reported that offering digital access to the entire current print magazine reduces print sales by

approximately 9 percent. Kadiyali and Simon did not address whether magazines make up this loss of sales through the website's potential profit.

Ironically, The Association of Magazine Media (2008) found magazines to be the most effective media in driving traffic to advertisers' websites or other Web-based marketing sites, such as those related to online promotions. Even though Kadiyali and Simon (2007) emphasized that digital content is not a good substitute for print content, they pointed out that it is possible for a magazine's website to complement its print version by attracting new readers to the print magazine. This is an example of how the Internet is a way to grow awareness for a magazine brand. Magazines are not only competing with other magazines online—they are also competing with other traditional media players for consumers' time and money. The American Magazine Study (2011) reported the biggest audience gain for the largest magazine brands is from digital users visiting "magazine-branded social networks—up 5.7 percent to 30 million consumers" (p. 1).

Taylor (2012a, p.11) pointed out that even though print is only one element of magazine media brands, each magazine has its own personality. Consterdine stated:

> The medium's strength lies in the active way in which readers choose and use their magazines, and find titles which connect with the personal self. Print magazines are an active medium as they call for the reader's participation, with the reader in full control of decision-making about what and how to read and for how long. (as cited by Taylor, 2012a, p. 11).

Research also shows that time spent reading magazines has not been reduced by the growing use of websites, smartphones, laptops, tablets, and other digital media. In fact, since the digital expansion, reading time has increased (Taylor, 2012a, p. 13). When it comes to the motivation behind why people choose to read certain magazines, the four most frequently mentioned

motivations are "to give me ideas, to learn things, to relax and unwind, and the content suits my tastes and interests" (Taylor, 2012a, p. 11).

A reason magazines will continue to thrive is because magazines are highly successful at driving purchase intent, which is essential to advertisers. The Association of Magazine Media (2008) reported that magazines are the "most effective medium at the bottom of the purchase funnel" (p. 4). It also showed that magazines most consistently drive Web traffic and searches. Kon et al. (2010) stated the power of print remains strong for current magazine subscribers. With the digital expansion, these subscribers will stay with print only or in addition to interactive editions (p. 2).

In order to succeed in today's publishing world, magazines are going to have to offer a wider variety of online options that incorporate more of today's technology to replace the decreasing amount of print readers and to compete on the Web. "By embarking on more aggressive Web strategies that incorporate the technology of today's Web 2.0 environment, magazines can use expanded online readership to supplement print subscriptions, thus securing the industry's position in the media marketplace" (The Bivings Group, 2006, p. 12). Technology such as tablets and e-readers are just an additional distribution method for most magazines. However, print is not dead.

Magazines and Their Websites

Most magazines today have a website and are using it to offer easily obtained information and unique interactive features that cannot be found in the print editions. From 2006 – 2010, the number of consumer magazine websites increased nearly 50 percent (The Association of Magazine Media, 2010, p. 23). Even though the consumer magazine industry has been slow to capitalize on the new media options available, the number of brands engaging in the integration

of print and digital media is continuously increasing. On the other hand, consumers have more

choices than ever when it comes to deciding where and how they are going to get the information

they seek. For most magazines, the point of an online counterpart is to offer content that can be

an effective supplement to, as opposed to a replacement of, the print content (Kaiser &

Kongsted, 2005).

The content a magazine uses in its print edition versus the content a magazine posts on its

website varies throughout the publishing industry. Kadiyali and Simon (2007) defined four

categories of digital content that reflect the content overlap between the print and digital versions

of a publication. These categories are:

- Distinct: This is the lowest level of overlap, indicating a website that does not

  provide content or description of content from the most recent print magazine.

  "Distinct content may be nothing more than a paragraph describing the

  magazine's editorial focus or history" (p. 347).

- Preview: This type of magazine website has a partial or full table of contents from

  the latest issue or an abstract of at least one current print article (p. 348).

- Selected Articles: The magazine has a website and offers free access to some, but

  not all, full-length articles from the current print issue (p. 349).

- Full text: This type offers free digital access to the contents of the current print

  magazine (p. 349).

Overall, most magazine websites offer preview content (Kadiyali & Simon, 2007).

However, reader engagement with a digital interactive magazine, according to The Association

of Magazine Media (2011), is four times greater than reading websites of similar content (p. 43).

Also, digital extras, such as video, in digital magazines resulted in 45 percent of respondents

reading articles they typically would not have read (The Association of Magazine Media, 2011, p. 44). The goal of magazines having companion websites is not to make a quick profit from the website. According to a FIPP (2007), the worldwide magazine media association, survey, creating new revenue streams and profits in the long term is twice as important as creating revenue and profits in the short term. A magazine's website is inevitably going to attract significant numbers of people who do not read the print magazine but visit the website, and the website could be how that person forms an opinion of the brand. Kadiyali and Simon (2007) found that typically, a magazine's print circulation declines about 3 to 4 percent when it offers a website. If a magazine offers entire access to its online content, the print sales are reduced by 9 percent. According to their research, there is no positive correlation between online content and print content.

> The Internet offers many widely touted advantages: digital content can be updated on an almost continuous basis; websites can hold unlimited amounts of content; readers can exploit the Web's superior search capabilities to locate the information they seek; and unlike magazines, websites can be interactive. (p. 345)

However, it is important to point out that the website could attract new readers to the print magazine. Ellonen et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between a consumer's experience on a magazine's website and that consumer's loyalty toward the print magazine. Their research found customers who are loyal to a magazine's website will also show more loyalty to the parent brand (p. 420). Their research also showed that magazines that use the website as an extension of the brand, while complementing the print publication, will have a competitive advantage in relation to brand loyalty. "Our results indicate that media websites may have beneficial business implications; in fact, by fostering consumer loyalty to the parent brand they may contribute to keeping up current circulation levels" (p. 421).

Another important aspect of a magazine's website is the online strategy. In a case study, Kuivalainen, Ellonen, and Sainio (2007) found a magazine's online success can be linked to making the best use of multi-channel tactics in product development while also utilizing more than one online revenue stream. They emphasized active involvement of the readers as an essential part of a magazine's online strategy. According to Taylor, there is a symbiotic relationship between magazines and their websites that benefits the reader, publisher, and advertiser (2007, p. 24).

The main goal for magazine websites tends to be to expand the magazine audience by creating an online readership[3] while attracting people to read the print version is a close second (FIPP, 2007). These objectives both relate to the goal of creating a community around a brand. The magazine brands used in this study are more than just publications that disseminate information to women. A brand is a signifier of a company's values, its culture, and its "covenant to the consumer" (Chevron, 1998).

The Magazine Brand

FIPP reported in many cases, subscribers to a magazine's digital edition are mostly new readers "who did not previously receive the printed magazine. That is, the digital edition had increased the brand's footprint" (2007, p. 7). The brand extension of magazines is important because it can be a determining factor in the future success of the publication. The brand is what helps establish a relationship with consumers. It goes beyond the printed or written material. This is why brand expansion does not mean only duplicating the printed content on the magazine's website. However, in the 2012 first quarter issue of *Magazine World* (Taylor,

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[3] Eighty-one percent of the magazines surveyed by FIPP used Internet brand extension to acquire more readers for the print magazine (2007).

2012c), Duncan Edwards, president and CEO of Hearst Magazines International, pointed out that

magazines do not necessarily have to change content for digital. Edwards said:

> People like magazines on the tablet, and, in our experience, they like to read magazines
> without many additions – without too many bells and whistles. That isn't surprising,
> because the magazines are very good. Our bestsellers are straight replicas of the
> magazine. By a long way. In the U.S., we are selling 500,000 magazines each month on
> the tablet now and aim to reach one million by the end of the year. (as cited by Taylor,
> 2012c, p. 11).

For Hearst, as well as many other publishers, there is some additional content on tablets

such as galleries and video, but mainly the tablet versions of the magazines are strictly replicas

of the magazine. Because of this, there are not the same concerns as when comparing the print

and website content. In a 2010 *Magazine World* article, the managing director of *The Economist*

pointed out that the iPad offers an opportunity to grow readership. "They may not have come

across our brand in print, or they may have an image of us that is outdated. Digital devices are a

way for us to show those people that our content is relevant to them" (as cited by O'Regan, p.

21).

Ellonen et al. (2010) hypothesized that website usage has a positive impact on brand

trust, and their research supported the belief that the frequency and length of a consumer's visit

to a magazine's website can have a positive impact on brand trust. This can either happen by

visiting the website frequently or by spending a lot of time during certain visits. However, they

did not find the same support for the relation between virtual-community participation, which

refers to how readers participate on a magazines' website, and brand trust (p. 96). A problem

magazines might encounter is the ability to get readers to not only visit the website, but to visit it

often and for a longer amount of time. "Although online users all have experience of the

website, they do not automatically have a relationship with the print magazine" (Ellonen et al.,

2010, p. 22).

Research Questions

One major difference between most magazine print content and magazine website content is the Web content is free, but the majority of consumers pay to read the print content. Most magazines are printed monthly and website content must be updated more frequently. In my research, I address the issue of whether the content is different between the two mediums. This leads to my first two research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the difference between the content on women's magazine websites and articles in the print editions?

Research Question 2: How do the content topics in women's magazines vary when comparing the website content and the print content?

To compete in the digital world, women's magazine websites are expanding the topics covered beyond what they typically focus on in the magazine print editions.

It is an obvious strategy for a publication to try and reach a larger audience and gain more customers through its websites. The website offers opportunities to let people who do not read a publication learn a little about the brand. For this to have a positive impact, it would seem that the online content needs to align with the overall magazine brand to help attract additional consumers. This leads to my third research question:

Research Question 3: How does the website content of women's magazines affect the brand, and what is the purpose of this content?

Methodology

With the endless cycle of articles that question whether the print media will persevere, I wanted to examine the content correlation between the print edition and the website of a magazine. I chose to examine women's magazines because they contain content that is not general news, so the consumer time demand for the information is not generally an issue as it is with magazines such as *Newsweek*. Ultimately, magazines need to determine whether they have two distinct sets of consumers—print and digital. To answer some of the questions about the transition of magazine brands into the digital world, I conducted a comparative analysis of four women's magazines from three separate publishers.

The reason for choosing different publishers is when I began to look at magazine websites, I noticed those with the same publisher had the same layout and similar content. Choosing four magazines from the same publisher would skew the analysis. Publishers are an important aspect of any magazine analysis because they are making the decisions about which channels to use to extend the reach of their brands. In the future, it would be interesting to compare a larger group of magazines with the same publisher in addition to those with separate publishers.

The magazines I chose for the analysis are *Cosmopolitan*, *Women's Health*, *W*, and *Vogue*. Hearst publishes *Cosmopolitan*, Rodale publishes *Women's Health*, and Condé Nast publishes *Vogue* and *W*. I chose these four magazines because the age range for readership is similar, so I wanted to see how the content topics differentiated despite having similar target audiences.

I chose two magazines from Condé Nast for two reasons. First, I immediately noticed when I looked at the website for *W* that much of the online content was also in the print issue, so

I wanted to further examine what, if anything, the magazine was doing to differentiate the website content from the print edition. Second, when I first analyzed *Vogue*'s website in 2008, the url address was www.Style.com, which attempted to be a center for all things related to style. However, in 2010, Condé Nast announced the split of www.vogue.com and www.style.com.

As Table 1 demonstrates, the publishing companies I reviewed are seeing dramatic shifts or possible increases in their traditional audience profiles.

Table 1
Readership Mix of Print and Digital Properties

Publisher	Total Brand Audience	Total Print Audience	Total Digital Audience	# of Brands Measured
Hearst	94,643,000	84,154,000	33,478,000	18
Rodale	38,901,000	33,591,000	11,194,000	6
Conde Nast	62,701,000	54,855,000	20,600,000	17

Note. From the American Magazine Study, 2011.

My comparative analysis is based on the May 2008 print edition and April 2012 print edition for each magazine. In 2008, I looked at the websites ranging from April 16 – April 25, and in 2012, I looked at the websites ranging from March 12 – March 20. I looked at the May 2008 issue during April and the April 2012 issue during March because that is the issue on the newsstand during that time, and each website also listed it as the current issue.

Six of the categories I used for the analysis came from a previous analysis of *Seventeen* magazine (Schlenker, Caron, & Halteman, 1998). I also took the categories Hall's Reports uses for its division of editorial content and expanded my categories to make them applicable to an older audience. Hall's Reports (2008) has been the industry standard for editorial content analysis of consumer magazines for years. I came up with 10 total categories as part of the coding system to use for my analysis.

The categories are:

1. Entertainment/Celebrity: articles featuring or focusing on celebrities

2. Appearance: latest fashion trends; shopping for clothes; hairstyles; makeup; beauty products; how you look to others

3. Self-Development: health; how to take care of yourself; quizzes about your personality; relations with friends and parents (excluding boys); hobbies; stories about other women changing their lives

4. Male-Female Relations: fiction and nonfiction stories dealing with relationships/love; advice columns about relationships/dating; how to shop for or please your significant other

5. Home: sewing; crafts; playing hostess; decorating

6. Food & Nutrition: recipes and information on how to live a healthy lifestyle

7. Career Development: what it is like to work in a certain career area; how to be successful in a career; other career tips

8. Political/World Issues: environment; international issues; political articles; issues that are affecting the world

9. Art/Culture: information about people in the fashion world; information about art or artists; traveling to other countries

10. General Interest: other articles that do not fit in the other categories such as book club information; news about someone's career; technology

For the comparative analysis, I used percentage of total content per category as the basis of comparison. The percentage of pages devoted to one category was determined by dividing the category page total for the print issue by the total number of pages analyzed in that issue. I also

compared the number of categories in which a magazine had articles categorized. I analyzed all editorial information from the print magazines and placed it into categories based on the number of pages. So, if an article was two pages long, it would be counted twice in its appropriate category. To get the percentage of how much of the print magazine was devoted to a certain category, I used a variation of the method used in a previous *Seventeen* magazine analysis (Schlenker et al., 1998). The difference in my analysis was the number of issues involved. In my analysis, I placed each article into one of the 10 categories and noted the number of pages. Next, I divided the number of pages in each section by the total number of editorial pages in that issue to get the category percentage. Using Schlenker et al.'s (1998) study as a basis, it should be noted that letters from the editor and letters to the editor were not included in the analysis. Also, I did not include the magazine page featuring what can be found on the magazine's website.

I divided the website content into the same 10 categories I used for the print publications. Throughout this paper, I refer to all content I reviewed as "articles." It should be noted this term encompasses every type of information I included in the website and print analyses. For the websites, I took the information on the homepage, which is the initial "landing" page of a website, as well as articles displayed when you clicked on the tabs and subtabs at the top section of the websites. Some of the sites had additional navigation sections on the right side of the page, but I did not include these in my analysis.[4] I did this because the magazines I analyzed divide the content of their websites into separate tabs, and some sites also include subtabs. All the websites contained archived information from each category. I did not use the archived information because I wanted to compare the current issue with the content on the main website

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[4] Based on my familiarity with the websites I reviewed, the majority of the content on the sites that included additional navigation beyond the top section can be found in other sections of the sites.

pages during that time period. I did not use articles that appeared in more than one section. For example, the articles on the homepage or on a main tab were usually included in a different section of the website, but I only counted the article once. While I analyzed more online articles than print articles due to the amount of content on each magazine website, I did not account for length for the online articles. Generally, the online articles were all about the same length on each website.

I took the total number of articles I reviewed on each website to determine the percentage of each category. While completing the analysis, I looked for overlap in material. If an article was in the print edition and the online edition, I noted this information. I used all content, including video topics, quizzes, how-to lists, and other similar articles. If there was an online blog, I used the content from the most recent post to determine the category. Women's print magazines are usually not full of lengthy articles, so I included the same type of information on the website analysis. I simply examined the content and placed it in the appropriate category. Limitations: Length for the online articles was not accounted for, which could make a difference in what is considered the amount the website focuses on a certain issue. Future studies could use word count or paragraph count to determine whether a longer online article should count as more than one article.

To help answer my third research question, which concerns whether the online content aligns with the overall brand, I utilized the qualitative and quantitative data gathered in my analysis to focus on analyzing whether the online content aligned with the print content of the magazine brand.

It should be noted that the May 2008 *Women's Health* issue had a special section in the back (the back cover was not an ad—it was another cover that said *Women's Health Cooks!*).

This section is not typically in the magazine, so I did not include it in my editorial analysis because it would not be a typical representation of the magazine's division of content topics. However, it is important to include the online information not in the print version because it is a possible attraction for new audiences who do not see the print magazine. This information is the content that works best on the Web including time-critical information, interactive content, searchable databases and archives, personalized content, and content that brings the sense of community (FIPP, 2007).

Table 2 shows the median ages for the print and digital audiences of the four magazines I used in my analysis. Table 2 also demonstrates that despite technology's continuing advancement, the audience numbers for a print magazine versus the digital audience for that magazine are vastly different for most magazines.

Table 2
Audience Comparison of Magazines Used in Analysis

Magazine	Total Brand Audience	Median Age	Print Audience	Median Age	Digital Audience	Median Age
Cosmopolitan	19,449,000	31.4	17,245,000	31.5	4,476,00	28.3
Vogue	11,502,000	38.0	10,189,000	39.2	2,182,000	31.5
Women's Health	10,028,000	41.5	8,254,000	42.5	2,581,000	38.1
W Magazine	2,378,000	38.9	2,063,000	39.6	431,000	35.1

Note: From the American Magazine Study, 2011

The following information explains how I gathered the online articles from each magazine's website. The method used to collect the online content is different than the method used for print material. Detailed information from 2008 and 2012 is listed separately for each magazine.

Cosmopolitan

April 2008.

Below, I listed the tabs used to retrieve information from *Cosmopolitan*'s website. I clicked on each tab and each subtab and used the articles displayed on the main page as the content I was going to analyze. I also included the articles on the home page, which is the landing page for the website. In 2008, I did not use the "Fun and Games" or "Cosmolicious" tabs because the information was either interactive online content only that did not contain any editorial-type information, or I found the content in another one of the tabs. The tabs are bold and the categories following are the subtabs.

1. **Sex & Love**: Sex Positions, Dating, Relationships; Sex; Sex Tips from Guys; Bedroom Blog; Joe Hottie's Dating Blog; Body Language Decoder; 100 Hot-City Guide; Advice

2. **Style & Beauty**: Beauty; Hair; Celeb Hair Virtual Salon; Beauty Awards; Fashion; Fashion Show Videos; 250 Most Common Beauty Q&A's; Shoe Addict; Beauty Editor's Picks

3. **Hot Guys**: Guy Without His Shirt; Boyfriend Wars; Cosmo Bachelors; Guy Gallery; Shirtless Sweethearts

4. **Celebs & Gossip**: Cosmo Celebrity TV; Cosmo Exclusives; Party Pix; Red Carpet Fashion, Stylist's Day Off; Love It or Leave It; Beauty Blunders

5. **You, You, You**: Conversation Starters; Cosmo Quiz; Horoscopes; Confessions; You, Even Better; Your Health; Working Girl; 30-Day Blogs; The Making of a Cosmo Girl Blog

6. **Fun & Games**: Boy Toy; More Cosmo Games; Be a Cosmo Cover Girl; Free E-Cards; Free Stuff; Contests; Wallpaper

7. **Cosmolicious**: Cosmo Community; In This Issue; About Us; Cosmo Radio; Cosmo Books; Cosmo Mobile; Cosmo for Your Guy; Be in Cosmo; Bikini Bash

March 2012.

1. **Sex /Love**: Sex Position of the Day; Sex Tips from Guys; Body Language Decoder; Relationship Articles; Dating Articles; Sex and Dating Videos; Bedroom Blog; Sex Advice; Sexual Health Q & A; 31 Days of Hot Sex; Cosmo's Best. Sex. Ever. Blog.; All Sex Positions; Cosmo's Ultimate Date-Night Guide: Be Even Sexier After Dark!

2. **Hair/Beauty**: Sexy Beauty Secrets Blog; Celeb Hair Makeovers; Beauty Articles; Beauty Tips; Beauty Videos; Celeb Hair Wars; Hair Color Ideas; Virtual Makeovers & Hairstyles

3. **Celebs/Style:** Conversation Starters; Red Carpet Fashion; Splurge vs. Steal; Star Style Evolution; Love It or Leave It; Stylist's Day Off; Shoe Addict; Celebrity Videos

4. **Food/Cocktails**: Quick & Easy Recipes; Cocktail Recipes; Party Ideas & Tips; Cosmopolitan Cocktails; Vodka Cocktails; Frozen Drinks

5. **Secrets/Advice**: Confessions; Your Body; Life Skills; Work & Money; Gift Ideas; Be in Cosmo; Forums & Boards; Cosmo Fights Campus Rape; Cosmo's Practice Safe Sun

6. **Quizzes/Freebies**: Take Today's Poll; Quizzes; Games; Be a Cosmo Cover Girl; Free Stuff

7. **Videos**

8. **Cosmo for Guys**: Sex & Dating Articles; Videos; Polls; About the App; Download CFG Now

Table 3 shows the comparison of the main tabs on *Cosmopolitan*'s website.

Table 3
Comparison of Cosmopolitan's Website Tabs

2008	2012
Sex and Love	Sex/Love
Style & Beauty	Hair/Beauty
Hot Guys	Celebs/Style
Celebs & Gossip	Food/Cocktails
You, You, You	Secrets/Advice
Fun & Games	Quizzes/Freebies
Cosmolicious	Videos
	Cosmo for Guys

Women's Health

April 2008.

Below, I have listed the navigational tabs for the *Women's Health* website. In 2008, the site also included subtabs. In 2008, when you clicked on the tab the newest articles came up, but most tabs had several pages of articles. I only used what was found on the first page of the tab for my analysis. I also used the articles from the homepage without duplicating any material. The tabs are bold and the categories following are the subtabs.

1. **Fitness**: Getting Started; Workouts; Yoga; Running; Sports; Gear; Lose Weight; Playlists

2. **Sex & Relationships**: Better Sex; Decode Him; Relationships

3. **Nutrition**: Recipes; Healthy Eating; Cooking; Smart Shopping; Vitamins

4. **Weight Loss**: Getting Started; Eating Strategies; Work it Off; Success Stories

5. **Health**: You and Improved; Be in the Know; Conditions; Special Reports

6. **Beauty & Style**: What to Wear; Perfect Skin; Easy Hair; No-fail Makeup

7. **Life**: You and Improved; Woman to Woman; Action Figures; Simplify Your Life

   March 2012.

   In 2012, there were only the main tabs on the *Women's Health* website.

1. Fitness

2. Sex & Love

3. Food

4. Weight Loss

5. Eat This!

6. Health

7. Beauty

8. Style

9. Video

Table 4 shows the comparison of the main tabs on the *Women's Health* website.

Table 4
Comparison of Women's Health's Website Tabs

2008	2012
Fitness	Fitness
Sex & Relationships	Sex & Love
Nutrition	Food
Weight Loss	Weight Loss
Health	Eat This!
Beauty & Style	Health
Life	Beauty
	Style
	Video

Vogue

      April 2008.

In 2008, *Vogue*'s website was different than the other websites because it was the epitome of a magazine trying to expand its brand online. When you typed "www.vogue.com" into the address bar, you were directed to "www.style.com/vogue." Instead of branding the entire site, "Vogue" was one of the tabs at the top of the website. In 2008, I clicked on each tab and subtab and included the articles displayed on the page. I also used the articles displayed on the homepage. I did not use the "menswear" subtab because it directed me to *Vogue*'s website for men. I also did not use the "video archive" subtab. The tabs are bold and the categories following are the subtabs.

1. **Fashion Shows**: Ready-to-Wear; Look of the Day; Couture; Resort; Pre-Fall; Fall Preview; Editors' Picks; Style Hunter; Video Archive; Designer Directory; Menswear; Power search; fashion forum

2. **News & Trends**: Candycast; Style File Blog; Trend Reports; Year in Fashion; Anatomy of a Classic; Accessories Report; Style Notes; Focus On; Style News

3. **People & Parties**: Parties; Year in Parties; Red Carpet Watch; Street Style; Celebrity Search; Model Search

4. **Shopping**: Shopping Guide; The Shopper; Item of the Week; Holiday Travel; Shopping Forum

5. **Beauty**: Beauty Guide; Spa Guide; Backstage Confidential; New in Stores; Beauty Icon; 5 Great; Beauty Forum

6. **Vogue**

   March 2012.

   By March 2012, *Vogue* no longer used www.Style.com as its website. *Vogue* relaunched the magazine's website (www.vogue.com) in 2010 with a new look as well as new content.[5] www.Style.com is still a website, but the two sites no longer share resources. The tabs are bold and the categories following are the subtabs.

1. **Fashion**: Vogue Daily; 10 Best Dressed; Guides; Beauty; Most Wanted; 5 Days 5 Looks 1 Girl; The Verdict Is In; Street Style

2. **Collections**: Collections Home; Previews; Accessories

3. **Parties**: All Parties; Fashion Week

4. **Culture**: Art; Books; Film & TV; Music; Theater; Profiles; Travel & Lifestyle

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[5] Ellonen et al. (2009) pointed out that the use of the same brand name in different channels "is an attempt to leverage the brand's equity" (p. 409).

5. **Videos**

6. **Magazine**: Cover Story; Features

Table 5 shows the comparison of the main tabs on *Vogue*'s website.

Table 5
Comparison of Vogue's Website Tabs

2008	2012
Fashion Shows	Fashion
News & Trends	Collections
People & Parties	Parties
Shopping	Culture
Beauty	Videos
Vogue	Magazine

W

April 2008.

In 2008, *W*'s website did not have any subtabs. I used the articles that came up when I clicked on the tabs at the top of the page. As with the other magazines, I did not duplicate the articles found on the homepage because they were also in other sections of the website. I did not use the "Magazine" tab because it only contained the table of contents for the current issue as well as past issues.

1. Fashion

2. Art & Design

3. Celebrities

4. Accessories

5. Jewelry

6. Beauty

7. Travel

8. Magazine

9. Blog

March 2012.

In 2012, some of the main tabs on *W*'s website included subtabs. Under the video tab, I did not include user submitted videos in my analysis. The tabs are bold and the categories following are the subtabs.

1. **Fashion**: Collections; Accessories; Fine Jewelry

2. **Beauty**

3. **Celebrities**: Cover Stories; Archives

4. **Parties**

5. **Art & Design**

6. **Travel**

7. **Editor Blogs**: The Daily W

8. **Video**

Table 6 shows the comparison of the main tabs on *W*'s website.

Table 6
Comparison of W's Website Tabs

2008	2012
Fashion	Fashion
Art & Design	Beauty
Celebrities	Celebrities
Accessories	Parties
Jewelry	Art & Design
Beauty	Travel
Travel	Editor Blogs
Magazine	Video
Blog	

I completed each analysis, excluding the *Cosmopolitan* and *Women's Health* websites, twice to make sure I came up with results that were close both times. I completed the *Cosmopolitan* website and *Women's Health* website analyses three times in both 2008 and 2012. These two sites have much more content than any of the other magazine websites analyzed, so I wanted to ensure my analysis was thorough and each article was placed in the correct category. Because of the complexity in analyzing the data due to the Web, I decided against having a second person code. For future research similar to this, I would recommend working with someone who understands what you are doing to help make the results more reliable.

Discussion of Results

The comparative analysis of the four magazines I reviewed shows the percentage ratio for content topics is different for the website content and the online content. The overall results of the analysis are in Table 7 in the Appendix. This table was used to gather the data to determine whether the website content and online content are different, whether the content on the website is more varied, and whether the online content aligns or supports the magazine brand.

In 2012, the *Cosmopolitan* website was the only one in my analysis that had articles in all 10 categories. In 2008, the *Women's Health* website had articles in all 10 categories, but that number went down to nine in 2012. Table 8 in the Appendix shows the number of content categories for each publication.

The magazines with the larger circulation numbers and larger online audience, *Women's Health* and *Cosmopolitan*, also have content in more of the content categories, which could be related. From 2008, to 2012, the total number of articles in *Cosmopolitan* decreased 8 percent and the total number of online articles increased about 146 percent; the total number of articles in *Vogue* decreased 2.4 percent and the total number of online articles increased by 26.5 percent; the total number of articles in *Women's Health* increased 16.7 percent and the total number of online articles increased 10.1 percent; the total number of articles in *W* decreased 39.8 percent and the total number of online articles increased 122.1 percent. *W*'s strategy is clear—the publication has made placing more content online part of its strategy over the last four years. One main theme for all the magazines is the increase in overall number of website articles from 2008. Figure 1 demonstrates the trend.
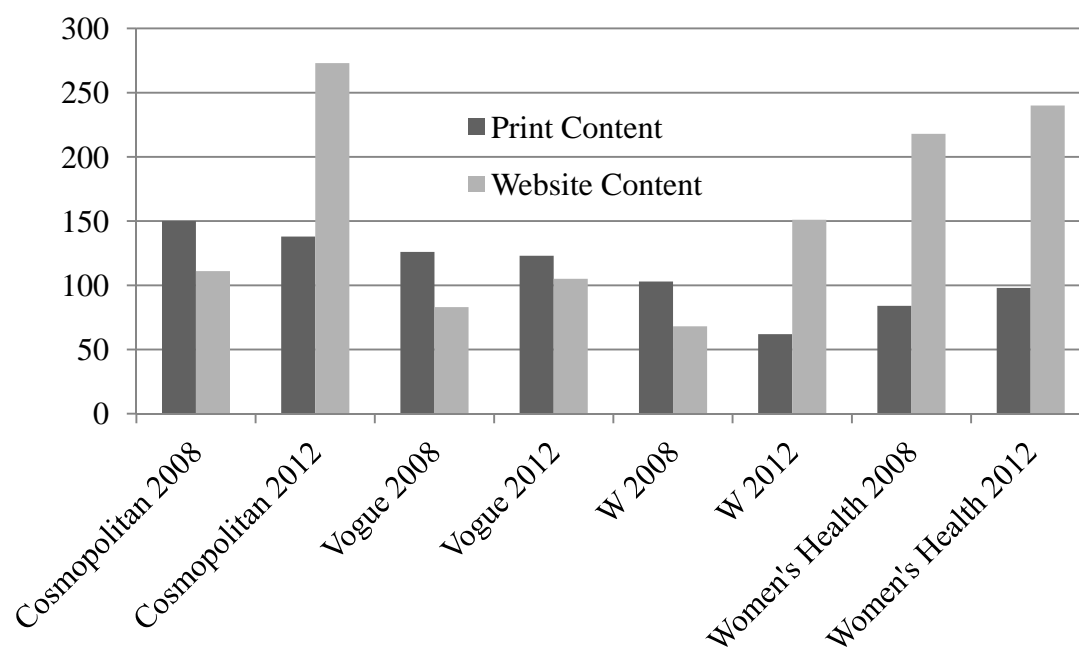
Figure 1. Magazine and website total content comparison in 2008 and 2012.

For example, in 2008, *Cosmopolitan* had 150 articles in its print edition and 111 articles on the main section of its website. In 2012, *Cosmopolitan* had 138 articles in its print edition and 273 articles on the main section of its website. *W* had a dramatic increase in website articles, but it also had a dramatic decrease in print articles. In 2008, *W* had 103 print articles and 68 online articles. In 2012, *W* had 62 print articles and 151 website articles. This demonstrates a shift in strategy for the magazine by focusing on adding more dynamic online information.

Cosmopolitan

Table 9 demonstrates the comparison of the topics based on the number of articles found in the print edition and on the magazine's website in 2008 and 2012.

Table 9
Percentage Comparison of Cosmopolitan Print and Web Content

Content category	2008 Print %	2008 Website %	2012 Print %	2012 Website %
Entertainment/Celebrity	4.66	18.12	9.01	18.32
Appearance	34.67	23.91	37.84	15.02
Self Development	20.67	18.12	11.72	13.55
Male-Female Relations	36.00	32.61	29.73	31.14
Home	0	0	.90	5.49
Food & Nutrition	.67	0	4.50	7.69
Career Development	.67	5.80	.90	2.93
Political/World Issues	1.33	1.44	4.50	.73
Art/Culture	0	0	0	1.83
General Interest	1.33	0	.90	3.30

While the main focus of the magazine remains the same on the website, there is a wider variety of topics on the website, as well as a much larger amount of content. The 2008 and 2012 versions of *Cosmopolitan*'s website were definitely both preview types as described by Kadiyali and Simon (2007). The most notable expansion of content on the magazine's website is in the entertainment/celebrity category. On the 2012 website, 18.32 percent of the editorial content was placed in this category, while 9.01 percent of the print edition was placed in the category. The difference was even larger in 2008, where only 4.66 percent of the print content was in the entertainment/celebrity category—there was three times the content in this category on the 2008 website than the 2008 print edition. The focus on male-female relations, which is the basis of the *Cosmopolitan* brand, remained the about the same in both years in the print and website content.

Other trends include focusing more on the home on the 2012 website and more on food and

nutrition in both the 2012 print and online content.

Vogue

Table 10 demonstrates the comparison of the topics found in the print edition and on the

magazine's website in 2008 and 2012.

Table 10
Percentage Comparison of Vogue Print and Web Content

Content category	2008 Print %	2008 Website %	2012 Print %	2012 Website %
Entertainment/Celebrity	10.32	24.1	9.01	16.19
Appearance	48.41	51.81	37.84	44.76
Self Development	11.11	0	11.72	0
Male-Female Relations	0	0	29.73	0
Home	6.35	2.41	.90	2.86
Food & Nutrition	0	0	4.50	.95
Career Development	0	0	.90	0
Political/World Issues	0	3.61	4.50	0
Art/Culture	23.81	13.25	0	31.43
General Interest	0	4.82	.90	3.81

In 2008, I was surprised by the interactive nature of *Vogue*'s website. In fact, most of the

website was interactive and included very little text. It focused on videos of runway shows.

Under the runway show section in the video archive, there were 284 fashion show videos. It also

included a designer directory tab with 376 designers and photos, reviews, and videos from the

runways. This website was a great example of the community strategy suggested by Gronlund

and Toivonen (as cited in Ellonen & Kuivalainen, 2007, p. 86), which is not the most common

strategy. For a consumer magazine, they found the brand strategy, which means supporting

existing products and targeting a mass audience, to be the most common.

Women's Health

Table 11 demonstrates the comparison of the topics found in the print edition and on the

magazine's website in 2008 and 2012.

Table 11
Percentage Comparison of Women's Health Print and Web Content

	2008 Print	*2008 Website*	*2012 Print*	*2012 Website*
Content category	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Entertainment/Celebrity	4.76	3.67	6.12	4.58
Appearance	19.05	26.1	28.57	28.75
Self Development	46.43	32.57	37.76	32.92
Male-Female Relations	9.53	16.06	6.12	13.33
Home	4.76	.46	0	.83
Food & Nutrition	8.33	14.68	13.27	17.92
Career Development	0	.46	1.02	0
Political/World Issues	2.38	2.75	6.12	.83
Art/Culture	0	.92	0	.42
General Interest	4.76	2.29	1.02	.42

In the 2008 print edition of *Women's Health*, almost half of the entire magazine content

focused on self development. While it was still the main focus in the 2012 print edition, the

percentage of content focused on self development went down to 37.76 percent. In the 2008 and

2012 online articles, the majority of articles were still the self development category, but the

percentage was not as high. Having self development as a major focus aligns with the *Women's*

Health brand. As stated on its website, "Most of all, [*Women's Health*] focuses on what you can

do, right now, to improve your life" (Women's Health, 2012). The website also included more nutrition information in both years as well as art/culture, which was not included in either print issue of the magazine. In both years, the online articles covered more category topics than the print edition.

W

Table 12 demonstrates the comparison of the topics found in the print edition and on the magazine's website in 2008 and 2012.

Table 12
Percentage Comparison of W Print and Web Content

Content category	2008 Print %	2008 Website %	2012 Print %	2012 Website %
Entertainment/Celebrity	12.26	14.71	14.52	15.23
Appearance	26.42	30.88	51.61	37.09
Self Development	0	1.47	4.84	1.32
Male-Female Relations	0	0	0	0
Home	2.83	0	0	.66
Food & Nutrition	0	0	0	0
Career Development	0	0	0	0
Political/World Issues	0	1.47	0	0
Art/Culture	55.6	42.65	29.03	45.04
General Interest	4.76	8.82	0	.66

In 2012, the print version of *W* focused almost twice as much on appearance as it did in 2008. The website appearance percentage was also higher in 2012 than 2008. This could mean magazines are taking areas where their brand focuses and they are increasing that focus on the website to stand out from competitors since the online competition is much larger. While the

main focus in the 2008 print and online articles was art/culture, the percentage was lower online, and the website included a wider variety of topics. So, *W* stayed true to its editorial focus in both formats in 2008, while expanding the type of content on the website. However, in 2012, the percentage of online articles about art/culture was 16.01 percent higher compared to the print articles in the art/culture category. The research showed that a strategy for *W* could be to have different online and print focuses during the same timeframe. So, while there was different content on *W*'s website, the content was not more varied, which helps answer my second research question by addressing the variation between the print and website content.

Conclusion

With the growing spectrum of digital options, there will always be some curiosity about how magazines will creatively utilize their websites to gain readership. A major point that can be made from the results of my analysis is that different magazines and publishers are doing different things when it comes to the website and print content. Magazines are trying to figure out what works, and the online objectives are often different than the print objectives. My first research question addressed the difference between the content on the websites of women's magazines and articles in the print editions. Each magazine used in the analysis had different content on the website and print edition. However, there was some overlap, which is why these magazine websites are considered companion or preview sites and not destination sites.

While the results showed that women's magazines' websites offer different content than their printed counterparts, the second question concerning the variation between the online content and the print content had different results for each magazine. *Cosmopolitan*, *W*, and *Women's Health* offered a wider variety of content topics online in both 2008 and 2012. The opposite was true for *Vogue*, which actually had more variety in its print magazine than its website. In 2008, *Vogue* offered the same variety of content topics on each medium, and in 2012, *Vogue* actually offered more content variety in its print edition than its magazine. However, the total amount of content offered online did increase for each magazine from 2008 to 2012.

Through my comparative analysis, I found that online content tends to align with a magazine's overall brand, which leads to my third research question: How does the website content of women's magazines affect the brand, and what is the purpose of this content? By sticking with the magazine's core focus, a publication is able to attract additional consumers who

might not read the print edition while also providing the content current customers are looking for. *Cosmopolitan* is a magazine whose brand is built around relationships between men and women. "At the heart of *Cosmopolitan* is emotional relationships—primarily between men and women …. The stuff on the surface changes to reflect the zeitgeist of the time, but the core remains the same" (Taylor, 2010).

My results seem to hold true to Kaiser and Kongsted's (2005) findings of only positive effects from website visits to circulation since these magazines are maintaining a companion website but still have a much larger print audience than digital audience. The correlation could be made from the increase in content covered on the website compared to the content covered in the print edition, thus having a positive effect on the magazine's brand. Keeping the brand aligned in the online and print content is essential for publications because "connecting with the personal self" has been identified as one of the key roles of magazines (Taylor, 2012a, p. 15). If the two do not align, then the connection a person feels will not be the same when reading the online content versus the print content.

However, the main focus on the website and print edition is not always the same. For example, in the 2012 print edition of *W*, more than half the content fell into the appearance category, while the largest online content category was art/culture. *Women's Health* and *Cosmopolitan* both had clear focuses in their 2012 print editions, self development and appearance, respectively, but the online content was more evenly spread across a wider variety of topics. *Vogue* took a different approach than the other three magazines. While its online content did align with the brand based on comparing the categories of content between the print and online content, the magazine seemed to utilize its website to include content that is completely different than the print content. In 2012, more than 30 percent of the website content was in

art/culture category and during the same time period, none of the print content was in this category.

The results showed there is not a standard strategy for the type and amount of content women's magazines are placing on their online counterparts. As research has found that duplicated content can cause a magazine to lose money, it makes sense to create an online home that works as a brand extension while providing a separate content base than the print version. Also, some content is better online than in the print edition of a publication. *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *W* all included more entertainment/celebrity content online in 2008 and 2012. The reason for this could be that by the time the publications went to print, the celebrity news would no longer be newsworthy.

The four magazines I analyzed generally have the same demographic age group. But their approaches to their online counterparts are distinctly different. From 2008 to 2012, there is a definite shift into content that is created strictly for the website. In 2008, none of the sites had "Videos" listed as one of the main tabs. In 2012, each magazine website had a tab titled "Video" or something similar. I think the conclusion can be made that of the websites I analyzed, online content aligns with the overall magazine brand to help attract additional consumers who might not read the print edition.

With my research findings and previous research that showed the success of the *Cosmopolitan* brand, it could be stated that duplicating print content on a magazine's website could potentially harm the brand value and cannibalize some of the print traffic. One of the websites I reviewed, *W*, is an example of a magazine website that could possibly be cannibalizing its print edition. The magazine itself focuses more on the visual aspects of publishing, but the small amount of editorial text content it does have in the magazine is always

duplicated on the website, including the imagery associated with the article. On the other hand, it could be said that offering a wider variety of content online, such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Women's Health*, which both offered online content in several more categories than *W* and *Vogue*, could lead to an increase in print circulation numbers. Figure 2 in the Appendix shows how the circulation numbers for *Cosmopolitan* and *Women's Health* have increased since 2008 while the circulation numbers for *Vogue* and *W* have decreased.

A useful analysis would be to use the same methods I used but instead look at the print advertising versus the online advertising to see how the content topics relate. A concern I had while comparing the online content and the print content was the amount of content on the *Cosmopolitan* and *Women's Health* websites. Further research could add iPad magazine content as a third method of consumption to study. Another focus could be whether digital tablet versions of magazines will replace or affect printed material. Ellonen and Kuivalainen (2007) looked at the different online strategies used by various publishers. To further develop my comparative analysis, you could compare the content differences between the print magazine and the magazine's website to the online strategy used by the publisher. By comparing this to the different audience numbers, you could draw conclusions about successful strategy. Above all, the goal of a women's magazine website appears to be as a natural extension of the print brand that will be useful in the overall promotion of the brand's integrated strategies.

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Appendix

Table 7
Comparison of 2008 and 2012 magazine print content to online content based on categorization

Category	Cosmopolitan		Cosmopolitan Website		Vogue		Vogue Website		Women's Health		Women's Health Website		W		W Website	
	2008	2012	2008	2012	2008	2012	2008	2012	2008	2012	2008	2012	2008	2012	2008	2012
Entertainment/ Celebrity	7	10	25	50	13	18	20	17	4	6	8	11	13	9	10	23
Appearance	52	42	33	41	61	50	43	47	16	28	57	69	28	32	21	56
Self Development	31	13	25	37	14	23	0	0	39	37	71	79	0	3	1	2
Male-Female Relations	54	33	45	85	0	0	0	0	8	6	35	32	0	0	0	0
Home	0	1	0	15	8	4	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	0	0	1
Food & Nutrition	1	5	0	21	0	0	0	1	7	13	32	43	0	0	0	0
Career Development	1	1	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Political/World Issues	2	5	2	2	0	1	3	0	2	6	6	2	0	0	1	0
Art/Culture	0	0	0	5	30	27	11	33	0	0	2	1	59	18	29	68
General Interest	2	1	0	9	0	0	4	4	4	1	5	1	3	0	6	1
Total number of articles:	150	111	138	273	126	123	83	105	84	98	218	240	103	62	68	151

Note. Percentages for each year can be found on the table for each individual publication.

Table 8
Total Number of Articles for Each Magazine Medium in 2008 and 2012

| Publication	Medium	Number of content categories (out of the 10 used in the analysis)	Total Number of "Articles"
2008 Cosmopolitan	Print	8	150
2008 Cosmopolitan	Website	6	111
2012 Cosmopolitan	Print	9	138
2012 Cosmopolitan	Website	10	273
2008 Vogue	Print	5	126
2008 Vogue	Website	6	83
2012 Vogue	Print	6	123
2012 Vogue	Website	6	105
2008 Women's Health	Print	8	84
2008 Women's Health	Website	10	218
2012 Women's Health	Print	8	98
2012 Women's Health	Website	9	240
2008 W	Print	5	103
2008 W	Website	6	68
2012 W	Print	4	62
2012 W	Website	6	151
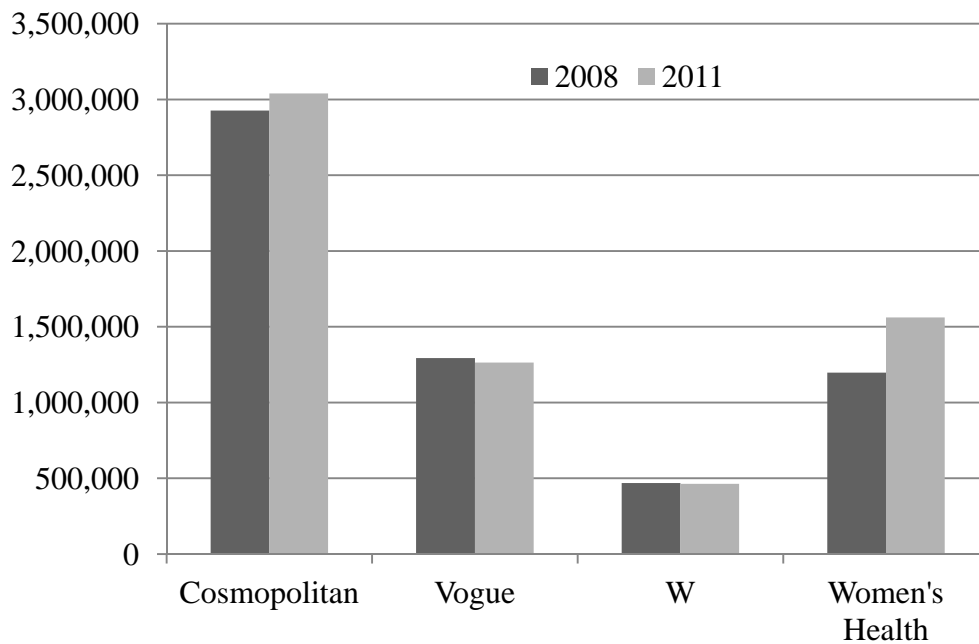
Figure 2. Magazine print circulation for 2008 and 2011 (The Association of Magazine Media,

n.d.).