

The Fall and Fall of the p-Zine

By Sam Vaknin, Ph.D.

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<http://home.wuliweb.com/index.shtml>

<http://www.pshares.org/>

The circulation of print magazines has declined precipitously in the last 24 months. This dissolution of subscriber bases has accelerated dramatically as economic recession set in. But a diminishing wealth effect is only partly to blame. The managements of printed periodicals - from dailies to quarterlies - failed miserably to grasp the Internet's potential and potential threat. They were fooled by the lack of convenient and cheap e-reading devices into believing that old habits die hard. They do - but magazine reading is not habit forming. Readers' loyalties are fickle and shift according to content and price. The Web offers cornucopial and niche-targeted content - free of charge or very cheaply. This is hard to beat and is getting harder by the day as natural selection among dot.bombs spares only quality content providers.

Consider Ploughshares, the Literary Journal.

It is a venerable, not for profit, print journal published by Emerson College, now marking its 30th anniversary. It recently inaugurated its web sibling. The project consumed three years and \$125,000 (grant from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds). Every title Ploughshares has ever published was indexed (over 18,000 journal pages digitized). In all, the "website will offer free access to over 2,750 poems and short stories from past and current issues."

The more than 2000 (!) authors ever published in Ploughshares will each maintain a personal web page comprising biographical notes, press releases, new books and events announcements and links to other web sites. This is the Yahoo! formula. Content generated by the authors will thus transform Ploughshares into a leading literary portal.

But Ploughshares did not stop at this standard features. A "bookshelf" will link to book reviews contributed online (and augmented by the magazine's own prestigious offerings). An annotated bookstore is just a step away (though Ploughshares' web site does not include one hitherto). The next best thing is a rights-management application used by the journal's authors to grant online publishing permissions for their work to third parties.

No print literary magazine can beat this one stop shop. So, how can print publications defend themselves?

By being creative and by not conceding defeat is how.

Consider WuliWeb's example of thinking outside the printed box.

It is a simple online application which enables its users to "send, save and share material from print publications". Participating magazines and newspapers print "WuliCodes" on their (physical) pages and WuliWeb subscribers barcode-scan, or manually enter them into their online "Content Manager" via keyboard, PDA, pager, cell phone, or fixed phone (using a PIN). The service is free (paid for by the magazine publishers and advertisers) and, according to WuliWeb, offers these advantages to its users:

"Once you choose to use WuliWeb's free service, you will no longer have to laboriously "tear and share" print articles or ads that you want to archive or share with colleagues or friends. You will be able to store material sourced from print publications permanently in your own secure, electronic files, and you can share this material instantly with any number of people. Magazine and Newspaper Publishers will now have the ability to distribute their online content more widely and to offer a richer experience to their readers. Advertisers will be able to deploy dynamic and media-rich content to attract and convert customers, and will be able to communicate more completely with their customers."

Links to the shared material are stored in WuliWeb's central database and users gain access to them by signing up for a (free) WuliWeb account. Thus, the user's mailbox is unencumbered by huge downloads. Moreover, WuliWeb allows for a keywords-based search of articles saved.

Perhaps the only serious drawback is that WuliWeb provides its users only with LINKS to content stored on publishers' web sites. It is a directory service - not a full text database. This creates dependence. Links may get broken. Whole web sites vanish. Magazines and their publishers go under. All the more reason for publishers to adopt this service and make it their own.

Sam Vaknin is the author of "Malignant Self Love - Narcissism Revisited" and "After the Rain - How the West Lost the East". He is a columnist in "Central Europe Review", United Press International (UPI) and ebookweb.org and the editor of mental health and Central East Europe categories in The Open Directory, Suite101 and searcheurope.com. Until recently, he served as the Economic Advisor to the Government of Macedonia.

His web site: <http://samvak.tripod.com>

10 Profitable E-zine Joint Venture Ideas!

By Larry Dotson

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1. You could ask an e-zine publisher to trade solo, sponsor or classified ads. If the e-zine has a larger circulation you could offer to run more ads.
2. You could ask an e-zine publisher to run your ad in return for a percentage of each sale. The offer is usually more successful if your product is brand new.
3. You could ask an e-zine publisher to run your ad in exchange for getting your product at no cost. It is more persuasive if you let them try out the product.
4. You could submit your article to e-zine publishers. They would receive valuable content and you would get free publicity.
5. You could offer an e-zine publisher new content by writing an original column for each issue. They're always looking for original content for their readers.
6. You could ask an e-zine publisher to trade articles. This would give you both new content to publish and cross promote each others' business.
7. You could ask an e-zine publisher to run your ad in return for you holding a contest or sweepstakes for their subscribers.
8. You could ask an e-zine publisher to trade thank you and welcome message ads. This is a great way to trade ads without cluttering up your e-zine with ads.
9. You could offer an e-zine publisher the option of you publishing their e-zine in return for them running your ad.
10. You could offer an e-zine publisher's subscribers a discount on your product in return for them running your ad.

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