

## Style magazine goes out of fashion

The iconic *Style* magazine is being closed down in the new year, with the December issue being its last, Caxton announced yesterday, Wednesday, 1 November 2006. This came on top of the news that the plug had also been pulled on the newly-launched lads' mag, *Krew*, putting 20 staffers out of work just eight weeks before Christmas.



By Louise Marsland<sup>2</sup> Nov 2006

Caxton justified its reasons for closing down *Style* in a terse statement, as follows: "While still popular, smaller niche publications like *Style* are not part of the new publishing strategy at Caxton. A number of mass market titles are planned, the first of which will be *Cleo*, ACP's highly successful young women's title which should launch in the first half of next year."

Caxton anticipate no retrenchments of staff. "They are all excellent," said Denise Stamm, Caxton Magazines' publisher, "and we have place for all of them in the division. We hope not to lose anyone."

The editor of *Style*, Naomi Larkin (previously editor of *Tatler* in Singapore) will also stay on, partially to assist with the launch of *Cleo* and partially to co-ordinate the launch of a number of other titles which are destined to come to market shortly, the Caxton statement read: "With her 16 years of expansive experience both here and overseas, Caxton sees her as a valuable asset as they step up the pace of their magazine division growth."

Attempts to reach Larkin for comment today, Thursday 2 November, were unsuccessful.

Independent media commentator and Bizcommunity.com columnist, Chris Moerdyk, said he was not in the least surprised that Caxton was closing down *Style* and would not be in the least bit surprised if it closed a newspaper like *The Citizen* also. "They are making so much money out of their free sheets, that I'm not surprised they are not bothering with titles that people actually have to buy! They absolutely dominate the South African market in terms of profitability from free sheets and I guess one can't fault them for focusing on profit, which seems to be their core business."

### ***Krew* cut**

The staff of one of the newest kids of the block, *Krew* magazine, are not so lucky. Told a week ago that they were all being retrenched - as their Dutch funder, World Report Media had pulled out to focus on other business interests in South Africa; according to retrenched *Krew* publisher, Tim Culley - they heard yesterday that attempts to get Caxton to buy them had failed.

Launched up against Media24's similar target market mag, the just-launched *Zoo Weekly*, *Krew* was about to put its fifth issue to bed.

Devastated *Krew* staff told Bizcommunity.com that they had not yet been paid for October month, but that some plan was afoot to sell off office equipment to try meet the salary bill. One staffer, who preferred to stay nameless, said the irony was that they were beginning to get on media schedules and were about to sign a major international client for "a couple of million".

Tough talk? Maybe, maybe not, but it remains dreadfully sad when a publisher pulls the plug so suddenly, leaving staff, advertisers and other stakeholders stranded. It does no good to the media and publishing industry and makes it all the more harder for new and independent entrants into publishing to survive unless backed by one of the big media groups.

Of the 22 *Krew* staffers, all based in Cape Town, only two have been retained, leaving 20, including publisher Tim Culley, without jobs.

"It's been a frantic week, we got very close to Caxton, but it was a timing thing, they can't rush into a big decision like that, it's been a desperately sad week... World Report Media didn't give us chance to find a new buyer - they wanted to put more

money into other SA interests. Unfortunately the brand and staff didn't matter," Culley told Bizcommunity.com yesterday.

World Report Media also asked Bizcommunity.com this morning, Thursday 2 November, to pull the official media statement on Krew's closure, put out by Culley, from the official Krew Press Office on Bizcommunity.com.

Anyone who needs experienced media sales reps, journalists, production people and admin staff can contact Culley direct for CVs and references on .

## ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

Louise Burgers (previously Marsland) is Founder/Content Director: SOURCE Content Marketing Agency. Louise is a Writer, Publisher, Editor, Content Strategist, Content/Media Trainer. She has written about consumer trends, brands, branding, media, marketing and the advertising communications industry in SA and across Africa, for over 20 years, notably, as previous Africa Editor: Bizcommunity.com; Editor: Bizcommunity Media/Marketing SA; Editor-in-Chief: AdVantage magazine; Editor: Marketing Mx magazine; Editor: Progressive Retailing magazine; Editor: BusinessBrief magazine; Editor: FMCG Files newsletter. Web: [www.sourceagency.co.za](http://www.sourceagency.co.za).  
View my profile and articles...

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>