

Keeping print alive through changing landscapes

Michele Lupini, owner and publisher of AutoWeek saw an opportunity to change the way coldset printing is viewed and how to produce a successful, quality publication, in a time when media commentators were saying new print publications were not a good idea.

"With the right support, you can do great things," says Lupini, who took the leap and started an auto-focused magazine, with a fresh take on traditional publishing, in March 2012. Glossy magazines, printed on heatset printers are norm of most magazines, while coldset printing is traditionally that of newspaper and retail inserts.



Printed material

"The biggest challenge is the shift in thinking for our advertisers." What by all accounts should have been a traditional glossy magazine was printed in the same way that newspapers are printed and this posed a number of challenges. His support team at Paarl Media, one of South Africa's most technologically advanced professional printing groups, shared this vision.

"It hasn't been an easy ride but we know it works and we've proven it works." To this end according to the ABC (Audit Bureau of Circulations SA), AutoWeek was up 40% year-on-year in the 4th quarter of 2013 to 12,438 copies sold, while the always more difficult 1st quarter saw the publication up again, this time by 30% to 10,225 copies sold.

Due to its affordable price, it appeals to an emerging and aspirational market, a market that reads printed material, as opposed to digital content, but still values current and relative information.

Searching for content

As consumers seek content, they are often met with the challenge of finding local content, relevant to their unique needs; this is particularly true when searching online for motoring content. "Content is king and the magazine plays perfectly in the gap between the internet and the glossies, it's all about immediacy."



Conrad Rademeyer, MD: Coldset at the Paarl Media Group adds, "There is more to the company than just our technology. It is in our approach, commitment, willingness to listen and leverage our technology, skills and resources that were all factors in executing the new vision for AutoWeek."

"A place will always exist for the print medium, though this may change and shift to meet the needs of the readers. Whether printed in high gloss or on the same printer as the daily paper, the magazine has found a comfortable place in the hands of consumers seeking great content at a reasonable price," concludes Lupini.