

Cheers, custom title for Tops from Integrated Media

A new custom title for Tops at Spar, entitled *Cheers*, will be published by Integrated Media, adding to its other liquor-themed title, *Whisky*, which is now published quarterly. *Cheers* will be a 72-page glossy publication, published every two months.



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"We're excited to announce that the first issue of the magazine has been published and will be hitting outlets this month," says Shayne Dowling, owner and publisher, from Integrated Media's new premises in Tannery Park, Rondebosch, Cape Town. He said the lifestyle publication had been in the pipeline for a number of months. Discussions with the client's group liquor executive, Mark Robinson had been ongoing since November 2011.

"The magazine was something Robinson wanted to get up and running almost immediately after taking up his new position late last year. However, his first priority was focussing his attention on taking over responsibility for all the Tops at Spar business, which was a substantial task.

"As with any negotiation regarding a custom title, it was the final details that took some time to sort out. It will be a free magazine which the chain will offer to its customers, as a value added product."

In charge of editorial is Fiona McDonald, current editor of *Whisky* magazine and former *Wine* magazine editor. "Planning a new magazine from scratch is not something editors get to do every day, so it's been a thrill. It's been important to work with Robinson and his team to find out what they'd like to offer their customers and then adjusting the editorial plan to fit that framework."

The challenge

While the magazine offered an opportunity to write about more than just whisky and wine, McDonald said the challenge was to do so in a way that interested the chain's clients. "What can we tell them about beer, cider, brandy or alcoholic fruit beverages that they don't necessarily know? It is also important to get the tone of voice right and offer additional lifestyle content, so that the publication is engaging, making people want to pick up their free copy at the tills."

Handling the creative and production side is Megan Knox, art director of *Whisky* magazine and former *Getaway* magazine designer. "The client relationship has been really productive. They have made suggestions along the way which we've taken on board but essentially they have trusted us with the look and feel of the magazine, which is a great vote of faith in us."

"We're starting off small, with 30 000 copies but Robinson is quite bullish about wanting to grow this figure substantially. Obviously with 500 outlets to supply, 30 000 copies are not going to go far..." Dowling said.

Highlights of issue one includes:

- the back story of the Four Cousins range of wine;
- how the company got to be such a big liquor chain in just 10 years
- just what differentiates lager from ale
- the return of the billowing sails of the blue-topped bottle, which used to exhort people to stay as they were for the rest of their lives... or change!

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