



The Newsletter for
Magazine Sellers,
Buyers & Circulators

From
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The Biggest Time Drain in Magazine Buying

This piece is my quixotic adventure for this issue.

Quixotic, the dictionary says, means tending to take a romanticized view of life. The word, of course, comes from Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, the classic tale of a well-meaning but naïve country gentleman who descends so far into fantasy that he becomes convinced he is a roving chivalrous knight.



I don't think of myself as either naïve or chivalrous but I am going to tilt at a windmill here. Which one? Tell you in a second. First, I need you to play along for a bit.

Start by thinking of all the steps you take to buy a page in a magazine.

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The Confusing World of Sponsored Circulation

The previous issue of CircMatters focused on several aspects of the ABC's FAS-Fax: single copy sales, verified subscriptions, paid subscriptions, etc. FAS-Fax only allows you to see a limited part of the circulation picture for any magazine...after all, it's only a "top line" report. As a result, many important circulation areas are not covered there.

Like Sponsored Sales. That's an area that can't be explored in FAS-FAX. You have to wait for the Publisher's Statements to come out to dive into this often overlooked type of circulation. **Why is sponsored so confusing?**

First, it got itself a great name...sponsored.

Next, it's classified with paid circulation. That's gotta be good, right? Not so fast.

Let's first review what Sponsored Sales are...or, to be more precise, what Sponsored Sales were during the second half of 2007. How this category is handled by the ABC changed for all issues beginning January 1, 2008. We will cover how these ABC rule changes affect Sponsored Sales in a later edition of CircMatters.

Today, we need to focus on Sponsored Copies in 2007 and examine how some publishers used the Sponsored category in the most recent six months.

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What Matters Most

Biggest Time Drain Revealed

ANA Survey: TV's not working as well

Time to Subscribe to CircMatters

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The Biggest Time Drain in Magazine Buying

For any magazine under consideration, a diligent magazine planner or buyer will:

- Meet with representatives to understand as much as possible about the titles under consideration
- Read magazines to get a sense of the editorial and how readers traffic through an issue
- Review past circulation performance
- Do independent analysis on readership using syndicated research and/or subscriber studies
- Discuss ways to integrating the magazine buy with non-magazine assets (websites, events, sampling programs, etc.)
- Build value-add programs that meet client objectives
- Negotiate rates
- Etc., etc.

All of those seem like smart steps on the path to a solid client recommendation. All seem like a good use of time.

One aspect of everyday buyer/seller dialogue is not on the list. I left it off intentionally. I didn't leave it off because it's a minor item.

Oh no. Just the opposite. It **eats up lots of time** at both agencies and publishers. It's a giant time drain.

Not only is it a significant drain on valuable time but it also **adds an unhealthy level of stress** and tension on both sides. And, in the final analysis, it **may not improve the effectiveness** of a client's magazine advertising

What area am I talking about?

Positioning. Ad positioning...the biggest unproductive time drain in the business

Unlike Don Quixote, I'm not so naïve to think I can change a lot of beliefs or actions. However, it's time someone asked the question: **Are we wasting too much time dealing with positioning ads inside magazines?**

I think we are.

Ad positioning challenges come in so many forms that it's hard to know where to begin.

Let's start with the popular quest to be in the **front of the book**...or as one publisher called this "The Vanity Request". Whether it is first quarter, first third, or first half, the desire to be upfront seems pervasive. (One salesperson shared that one of his accounts wants "first 21 pages"...do readers close their eyes from page 22 on?)

What's the support for this seemingly universal desire for the front of the book?

I couldn't find anything compelling. There's plenty of research though suggesting that front of book positioning doesn't make a difference.

Take, for example, the VISTA data below. Many agencies hold Affinity's VISTA service in high regard when it comes to shedding light on topics like engagement or copy effectiveness. Yet, they ignore VISTA's recurring finding that ads in the second half of the book do just as well as ads in the first half on all three VISTA measures.

Position in Book	Total Recall	Brand Associated	Action Taken
1st Half	55%	84%	54%
2nd Half	54%	84%	53%

Source: Affinity Research, Fine Print, First Quarter 2008

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This finding is consistent with what Starch has reported for years. If you go on the [MPA's website](#), there is a report on Positioning that has data going back to the 60's. While skeptics will note that the MPA certainly has a dog in this fight, research companies like Starch and Affinity don't.

How about some research on positioning by a major media agency?

A paper presented by Starcom media researchers Richard Fielding and Judy Bahary at the Worldwide Readership Symposium in 2003 asked the question "Does Ad Positioning Matter?" The study analyzed a battery of 494 ads against 7835 respondents. The Starcom study contains a table with ad recall indices by household income for a range of positioning variables...including the front and back half of the book.

The indices on front and back of the book appear below. (Remember, 100 = the recall score for the average adult). While some might say the back of the book is to be avoided if you are targeting low income homes, there doesn't seem to be any reason to favor the front of the book for any annual income break above \$35,000.

Position in Book	Recall Indices by Household Income (Index based on Total Adults)			
	<\$35M	\$35-49M	\$50-99M	\$100M+
1st Half	104	106	92	105
2nd Half	87	109	107	98

Source: Fielding and Bahary, "Now You See Me, Now You Don't!", Worldwide Readership Symposium, 2003

The penchant to be first...that is, to be in front of category competitors within the book...**has moved from bad to bizarre.** One representative told me that the agency of a major watch account has multiple definitions of "first" just so it can rationalize that its client was "first": first between cover 2 and TOC, first from TOC to edit well, first after the edit well, etc. Who's kidding who?

Beyond "Vanity Requests"

It's just not arguments over being far forward or ahead of your competition that seem a pointless waste of time. Without turning this into a book, let's highlight other positioning nonsense that really should be examined:

- **Over-Specified Requests:** Here, the agency wants to be next to edit that is going to be terribly hard to come by. Something like "must be opposite quick-to-prepare recipes featuring spicy mustard." This kind of request, undoubtedly the product of a well-intentioned agency brainstorm, makes it virtually impossible for most titles to satisfy the customer. The "ask" is just too specific.
 - The time drain happens when seller and buyer try to come to agreement on where the ad can actually go. Can't you hear the conversation: "I don't have a spicy mustard recipe...would cilantro work?" Sounds silly but you know this stuff happens.
- **Vague Requests:** This problem is at the opposite end of the spectrum from the "over-specified requests." Sometimes, agencies are just too vague about what they want. That causes time to be wasted in getting some direction.
- **The "Tell Me Now" Problem:** Sellers complain that agencies want to know what they'll be opposite months and months in advance. Not just where in the book but what the content will be.

The Biggest Time Drain in Magazine Buying

- **“Avoid Controversy” Requests:** This is a subset of the vague request problem but it merits its own listing because it’s so subjective. How does a publisher interpret: “Can’t run opposite anything controversial”?
 - Magazines are the medium of information and ideas. Controversy comes with the territory.
 - Controversy is what readers want...and not just in newsweeklies or a thought-leader book.
 - Suppose a women’s title runs the story of a mom who successfully beat drug abuse and regained custody of her children. Is that controversial? Most would find it uplifting, even inspirational. Yet, if the agency feels it’s controversial, then there’s going to be several rounds of conversation to resolve the problem. More time down the drain.
- **Compromised Title Selection:** Sometimes positioning will trump factors like audience quality, circulation vitality, and reader engagement in deciding which title should be recommended. A lesser book will get the business because they could offer a premium position. **To me, this is like getting jazzed about sitting down front at a Milli Vanilli concert.** Positioning shouldn’t trump quality.

Representatives use words like “ridiculous”, “insane”, and “out of control” to describe what’s going on. The negative characterizations, though, don’t stop there. You get a sense of how bad it is when matters escalate to the point where terms like “threatening” creep into conversations on the topic. “Do this or else” type talk.

It’s not just raising the tension at magazines. Someone in the fashion category told me she had to console a sobbing agency person who believed she would lose her planner job if she didn’t get a certain ad position.

Five Simple Suggestions

I’m not against agencies seeking ways to provide value to clients via meaningful ad positioning strategies. Here’s four things presented for your consideration that might lead to better positioning for your ads but save a lot of time and tension:

- **Focus on positioning that really *does* matter**
 - Seek back covers. They are worth the premium in just about every instance. Yet, be realistic about how many you can expect for your commitment to the book.
- **Build a pool of franchise positions** (covers and other desirable spots) for clients over time
 - This takes time to build but pays dividends over the long haul
- **Study every book** to gauge the best inside positions. They aren’t all in the front. Look for places where readers stop...be next to those places.
 - Regular features are there because readers like them
 - Cover-featured stories are, in the editor’s opinion, going to appeal to the magazine’s readers. Trust the editor. They know the reader.
- **Give the book some flexibility** as you relate your ad adjacency requests
 - Lay out a range (6-10) of optimal positioning options inside the book. Rigorously check to ensure your client’s ads rotate within your acceptable options.
- **Watch people reading magazines**
 - It will challenge your predispositions. Bet you’ll have a whole different view of “being up front”.

Sancho Panza and I have to ride off now...I have a date with Dulcinea.



The Confusing World of Sponsored Circulation

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CircMatters POV on Sponsored Copies

If the rules regarding Sponsored Circulation are changing, you might ask "Why bother with it now?" Here's why in my opinion:

- Sponsored copies are really a lot like published-provided verified circulation
 - They're largely sent to public places
 - The addressee pays nothing to get the copy
- Sponsored copies don't currently live under the same rules as Verified
 - No quantity limitations per location as verified copies (see side bar box for detail on limitations on verified circulation)
 - No disclosure requirements with regard to the top 5 types of businesses receiving these copies
- Sponsored copies are presently tallied up within the Paid Subs section of the Publisher's Statement (or pink sheets or pinks)
 - They don't "stick out" like Verified
 - They aren't broken out in Fas-Fax

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Playing Through: Travel + Leisure Golf and Our Dirty Dozen

Remember the CircMatters' Dirty Dozen?

In our last issue, we spotlighted a dozen titles that had anywhere from 18% to 56% verified circulation as reported in the ABC FAS-FAX released on February 11. While most reasonable people will agree that some modest level of verified circ (publisher-provided copies to either public places or individuals directly) is acceptable, most media agency personnel would likely view the high percent of total circ accounted for by verified copies in the Dirty Dozen list as going too far.

When I published the list, I thought I'd hear complaints from several books on the Dirty Dozen.

I didn't.

I only heard from one book: Travel + Leisure Golf (TLG hereafter).

The note from TLG began: "**Ouch**.....I have to say that we at TRAVEL+LEISURE GOLF were very disappointed with your (sic) lumping us among the "dirty dozen" in your new CircMatters. ...We have a very specific circulation strategy to move more to a controlled circ model - similar to our sister title Departures." (Editor's note: Departures is a benefit for American Express Platinum Card and Centurion members.)

I responded to TLG that my view of verified is largely driven by **how little disclosure there is** regarding how those receiving the title are selected (whether public place or individual) and how the publisher knows that recipients want it or read it. In short, it is a fear of the unknown (or the undisclosed perhaps more appropriately).

More disclosure could lead to more understanding and less loathing of verified circulation. Understanding can breed greater acceptance. The absence of information leads to suspicion and non-acceptance.



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The new ABC rules that took effect with 2008 issues will force public place sponsored sales into the Verified category where they belong. **That's a change for the better in our book.**

Back to the pinks coming out now.

When you look at pink sheets for the second half of 2007, you will find the Sponsored Sales subs (and single copy Sponsored Sales, if any) in Paragraph 6 (see circled items).

SUPPLEMENTAL ANALYSIS OF AVERAGE PAID & VERIFIED CIRCULATION

The following averages, as reported below, are included in Par. 1 and annotated here per applicable rules. See Par. 9 for full explanation

	Average for Period	% of Circulation
PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS		
Individual Subscriptions*	1,630,924	64.0
Loyalty/Award Point*	200,690	7.9
Partnership:		
Deductible*	68,560	2.7
Sponsored Sales	51,696	2.0
TOTAL PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,951,870	76.6
VERIFIED SUBSCRIPTIONS		
Public Place (See Par. 6A)	159,425	6.3
Individual Use (See Par. 6B)	3,748	0.1
TOTAL VERIFIED SUBSCRIPTIONS	163,173	6.4
TOTAL PAID & VERIFIED SUBSCRIPTIONS	2,115,043	83.0
SINGLE COPY SALES		
Single Issue Sales	415,900	16.3
Sponsored Sales	17,667	.7
TOTAL SINGLE COPY SALES	433,567	17.0
TOTAL PAID & VERIFIED CIRCULATION	2,548,610	100.0

The pink sheet identifies Sponsored Sales as a sub-set of paid circulation. Technically, these are paid copies.

Remember, though, the definition of **paid circulation is a penny a copy or higher...that's the ABC definition for any type of paid copy**. Industry practice, for the most part, is that these Sponsored Subs are penny-a-copy circulation. Thus, by rule, they fall within the paid grouping today. (Note: there are single copy sponsored sales but they are less than 2% of total Sponsored Sales across all ABC member titles.)

Who buys these sponsored subs?

- The ABC rules required the "sponsor" to have a "professional or business interest in marketing to consumers." Thus, a pharmaceutical manufacturer could sponsor copies to doctor's offices or an exercise apparel company could sponsor copies at health clubs.
- A subscription agent would not be able to provide copies to public places without first finding a sponsor appropriate for the public place locations to purchase the copies.

The 100,000+ Club

Let's see who's using a high level of sponsored sales.

The table on the next page presents those titles that served 100,000 or more sponsored copies in the second half of 2007. One caveat: not all ABC member titles had filed their pink sheet by March 1, our date cut-off for this analysis. As a result, some titles whose use of Sponsored Sales was high in the first half may join this 100M+ Club. Large consumer titles not filing as of March 1 which had 100,000 or more sponsored copies in their June 2007 Publisher's Statement included:

- U.S. News & World Report (217.9M sponsored copies)
- Good Housekeeping (115.6M sponsored copies)
- O, the Oprah Magazine (106.7M sponsored copies)

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In all, there are 13 titles on the list below. Here are some "highlights":

- Two magazines, Connell’s Taste for Life and Penton’s Delicious Living, are essentially non-paid books
- Newsweek is, by far, the largest user of sponsored sales among major titles
 - Over half million sponsored copies, constituting one of every six of the copies of the magazine
 - The 519M sponsored copies is a 113M increase in this source (+28%) over just 6 months prior
- Meredith’s Siempre Mujer is closing in on 300M sponsored copies
 - With verified and sponsored combined, over 4 of 5 copies are not paid for by recipients
- Playboy double-dips into both the sponsored and verified categories
 - One of eight of their copies are unpaid....and they still missed rate base in 2007
- Working Mother, PC Magazine, Black Enterprise, and Spin are all over 20% sponsored plus verified

Magazine	Sponsored Sales	Verified Subs	Sponsored + Verified	Total Circulation	Sponsored as % of Total Circ	Sponsored + Verified as % of Total Circ
TASTE FOR LIFE	726,525		726,525	742,117	97.9%	97.9%
NEWSWEEK	519,180		519,180	3,109,228	16.7%	16.7%
DELICIOUS LIVING	408,266		408,266	408,266	100.0%	100.0%
SIEMPRE MUJER	298,842	24,999	323,841	394,119	75.8%	82.2%
PLAYBOY	210,551	117,539	328,090	2,700,262	7.8%	12.2%
WORKING MOTHER	181,625		181,625	834,389	21.8%	21.8%
GUIDEPOSTS	181,249	109,133	290,382	2,371,316	7.6%	12.2%
PC MAGAZINE	173,384	7,821	181,205	718,693	24.1%	25.2%
ARTHRITIS TODAY	162,966		162,966	724,290	22.5%	22.5%
BLACK ENTERPRISE	125,523	12,094	137,617	520,304	24.1%	26.4%
TV GUIDE (U.S.)	108,292	58,138	166,430	3,288,740	3.3%	5.1%
VIBE	103,396	29,500	132,896	894,861	11.6%	14.9%
SPIN	99,971	5,000	104,971	491,174	20.4%	21.4%

Source: ABC, Publisher’s Statements, December 2007 (released as of March 1, 2008)

Some may ask why this matters. Why should advertisers care when a book has a high level of sponsored sales?

For me, **it’s largely a matter of uncertainty and the absence of disclosure.**

We don’t know who gets these copies or how they were selected to get them...and we don’t know whether they are welcomed where they go.

- Recall that sponsored sales are not broken out by place of business. We don’t know where they go.
- Sponsored sales in 2007 didn’t have to abide by the restrictions on the number of copies of an issue served to a public place location like verified copies.
- There is no guarantee that any or all of these copies are put out for display. It’s not tracked.



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The next time you go to a salon or barber shop ask the proprietor whether or not they pitch any of the magazines they get in the mail as soon as they arrive.

Why would they throw away free magazines?

- They may get so many titles that there's not be enough room to display them all
 - Note: **there is no limit on how many different titles a publisher can send** to a public place that agrees to accept magazinesjust how many copies of each issue.
 - **Locations are not asked to "opt-in" by title**....just to "opt-in" to receive titles from individual publishing companies.
- Some titles don't match up with the demographics and/or interests of their clientele
- They get too many of a type. My barber Ben gets at least eight "car books." If your title isn't the first or second to arrive in a given month, he pitches it. He runs a barber shop, not a library.

I mean it....ask your hair salon or barber shop operator (or other small businesses) how many magazines they get and what they do with them....I've asked....the answers are scary. I'd love to hear what you learn.

The White Hat Gang...The Good Guys at the Other End of the Spreadsheet

When I finished the above piece on Sponsored Circulation, I needed to cheer myself up. You may need a lift now too.

While important to point out areas of concern like over-use of sponsored or verified circulation, it's just as important for CircMatters to **shine the spotlight on the many titles which are not over-emphasizing these sources.**

So, I looked at the other end of the spreadsheet....the end where the guys wearing the "white hats" were.

There, I found a whole bunch of magazines using low levels of combined Sponsored and Verified circulation relative to their total circulation size. In other words, **they are actually selling magazines** instead of giving them away on a grand scale. **They're the good guys...the CircMatters White Hat Gang**.....and it's time to put them in the limelight.

To keep it simple and to maximize the "cheeriness factor" of this piece, we won't focus on the absolute level of publisher-provided circulation (verified plus sponsored). We will only focus on the relative levels; in other words, we will report on the percentage of total circulation made up by verified and sponsored combined.

Agencies are not all of one mind when it comes to what is unacceptable with regard to unpaid circulation. In fact, there's likely to be as many different "lines in the sand" with regard to non-paid circulation acceptability as there are agencies.

We hear that some media agencies say 5% non-paid is the limit; some agencies are more generous, others a



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ANA Member Survey: "TV is Less Effective"

Many trade press outlets gave a lot of ink to a survey conducted by the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) in association with Forrester Research, Inc., an independent research firm. The headline grabbing finding from the survey was that **a majority of marketers believe that television advertising has become less effective in the past two years**. Specifically, 62% of marketers believe TV advertising has become less effective.

Rather than dwell on the findings which you can find on the [ANA website](#), I'd rather give those of you planning media or selling space **four facts you can use to hasten the erosion of confidence in the selling power of TV**.

- **Fact 1:** [Lieberman Research](#) reports that 2 out of 3 TV viewers decide what to watch on TV **AFTER** they sit down at the set. **How engaging can TV be with so much unplanned viewing?**
- **Fact 2:** DVR users are becoming even more aggressive in skipping commercials

According to a recently released *Digital Life America* tracking study from [Solutions Research Group](#), **65% of DVR owners say they "always" skip commercials**, up from 52% a year ago.

Percent of DV Owners Skipping Commercials		
Survey	Always	Frequently
Oct. 2006	52%	29%
Nov. 2007	65%	23%

Source: Digital Life America Q4 '07, February 2008

- **Fact 3:** The most likely programs to be recorded for later viewing (and ad zapping) are the most popular shows like American Idol, The Office, Survivor and Lost. No big surprise there.

What are the consequences of this TV/DVR reality for a client's media plan?

- These programs are ones clients are depending on for reach
- They're the same ones they're paying the most money for
- **Fact 4:** [Nielsen](#) reported at its February client meeting that playback from DVR's is increasing the amount of time people spend watching television. Comparing TV usage for persons 18-49 in November, 2007 to usage in November, 2005, Nielsen reported that viewing was just slightly up throughout the day, three percent higher at 9:00 p.m., and five percent higher between 11:00 p.m. and midnight

The Nielsen spin on this is a smokescreen. **It's not time spent with TV that matters. It's time spent viewing commercials.** DVR's are not helping advertisers there at all.

To wrap on this, **let me share a "Ripley's Believe it or Not" moment.**

It shows the lengths that at least NBC seems to be resorting to in order to keep advertisers on board. [The Wall Street Journal](#) reported that NBC sponsored research on viewers as they zapped through ads. After measuring eye movement, heart rates, and sweat production, the Peacock Network reported (apparently with a straight face) that DVR viewers tended to remember ads with celebrities or familiar brand icons.

Spots that included a prominently featured company logo also did well...sort of like an outdoor billboard...except at a significant CPM multiple.

Playing Through: Travel + Leisure Golf and Our Dirty Dozen

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So, I offered to meet with TLG if they would be open about three areas:

- How those who receive the book are selected
- Whether and how these prospects have the opportunity to opt-out
- How the publisher determines whether they read it, enjoy it, and want to continue to get it

TLG agreed to meet and we had two meetings lasting a combined 3+ hours.

The TLG team (ad sales and consumer marketing) were quite forthcoming. Now, as a part of American Express, there were areas where customer privacy concerns did not allow AMEX personnel to respond in as much detail as I might have liked. That's understandable in their business.

So, I supplemented the AMEX discussions with chats with current and former media pros familiar with areas of interest to me. Here's where I come out after my meetings with TLG and the additional information that came from other sources:

"When someone first gets TLG, they can tell AMEX whether they want it or not."

A lot of care is taken to select the right kind of people to receive TLG

- AMEX shared that they are able to model which customers would be the right prospects for TLG. (Yet, that's as far as they would go.)
 - From independent contacts, I learned that TLG has a multi-stage process employing, among other factors, both travel and golf-related spending.
 - Another source shared that he believed the controlled portion of the TLG sub file averaged over \$100M annually in charges. That's more than the median income (not just credit card spending) of virtually every MRI measured title. (While that's a subscriber versus total audience comparison of different measures of affluence, we thought that drawing this comparison for CircMatters readers would provide useful context.)
- In addition, AMEX has a partnership with the USGA providing them with the ability to offer TLG to the premium tier (most expensive membership) of the USGA member file.
 - The success of this targeted selection (as well as the strategic mining of the AMEX information) yielded an audience that, according to the 2007 Mendelsohn Affluent Survey, played golf an average of 47 days in the past 12 months.

People who don't want TLG can stop it from coming

- When someone first gets TLG, they're asked if they want to continue. They have to opt-in.
 - This is a change in practice from the initial method used by TLG where a recipient had to opt-out of receiving the book. **That's a change for the better, in my opinion.**
- A golfer friend of mine told me that they received TLG but could not recall ever "opting in". (He did say he would look at some of the issues.) With my friend's permission, I shared his "didn't opt-in"

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story and his name with the consumer marketing folks at TLG.

- TLG solved the puzzle when they located records indicating that my friend (or someone in his household) had returned the opt-in card. I was impressed.
- People receiving the magazine will be “regularly” asked whether they want to remain on TLG’s subscriber file. I say “will be regularly asked” because TLG has not had to “re-qualify” opt-in subscribers as yet. So, they have not settled on a timing standard to re-qualify subscribers going forward.
 - If subs are re-qualified annually, that would be great. If it’s every 3 years, that would not be so great.

TLG has a multi-level research program in place to gauge the reaction of both paid and non-paid subscribers

- Three types of research make-up the “reader satisfaction” evaluative piece:
 - Editorial focus groups, editorial issue reading studies (conducted twice a year by mail) and occasional internet research among recipients providing their email addresses to get feedback on specific stories and covers
- TLG shared the results of the last 3 semi-annual issue reading studies. Because TLG is, at the moment, part paid/part controlled circulation, they can compare the two groups on issue satisfaction, percent of issue read, time spent reading, and satisfaction with their subscription. The findings:
 - Slightly higher issue satisfaction levels among the paid group
 - Slightly longer reading time by the non-paid group
 - No consistent difference on reading 75% or more of the issue
 - No difference on satisfaction with the subscription

The Bottom Line

Every client and media professional will have to assess whether TLG makes sense for inclusion in the media program. There are lots of factors to consider in reaching that determination. Circulation should be one of them.

On the circulation front for Travel + Leisure Golf, I walk away with the belief that:

- The individually-addressed copies of TLG are going to carefully selected recipients
- These recipients now opt-in to receiving the book and will be regularly asked to re-qualify themselves as willing and interested subscribers
- A reasonable and varied research program is in place to gauge whether any differences exist between those who pay to receive TLG and those who don’t

So, **the CircMatters “Dirty Dozen” has an opening.** I am taking Travel + Leisure Golf off the “Dirty Dozen” not only because they are on the path to becoming a completely controlled circulation publication but also because all indications suggest that they have a process in place to deliver to clients an attractive audience that wants and likes the book.

One final note: If any publication on the CircMatters’ Dirty Dozen wants to sit down and discuss **on the record** how they address the three areas noted earlier in this article, just shoot me a note and we’ll set it up.

The White Hat Gang...The Good Guys at the Other End of the Spreadsheet

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bit less tolerant. Even the strictest media agency would have a hard time arguing that less than 3.5% of total circulation falling into the combined verified and sponsored category isn't a commendable accomplishment. So, that's the level we'll focus on here...publications with less than 3.5% verified plus sponsored.

The White Hat Gang

How many major titles that had filed their Publisher's Statement by March 1 (when we closed this article) achieved a level of unpaid circ lower than 3.5%? Who's a member of the White Hat Gang?

The chart below presents 44 major titles that used less than 3.5% verified and sponsored copies relative to their total circ levels.

- **Bauer titles are well-represented.** First, In Touch, M, and Woman's World were in the 0% group and J 14 and Life & Style Weekly were under 1%. Very commendable.
- **The Week, Ducks Unlimited, Fortune, ESPN, and GQ** lead a group of men's titles on this list
- Affluent/Thought Leader books are well-represented with titles from **The Economist to Vanity Fair to The Atlantic making the list**
- Women's titles from **Women's Health and Cooking Light** at 0% to **Woman's Day, Weight Watchers, Rachael Ray, Martha Stewart Living, Country Living, three Meredith titles**, and other major players show that giving copies away on a grand scale does not pervade the entire business

Sponsored + Verified as a Percent of Total Circ			
None (0%)	0.1 - 1.0%	1.1-2.0%	2.1-3.4%
BOYS' LIFE	ECONOMIST	ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY	ATLANTIC MONTHLY
COOKING LIGHT	J 14	ESPN THE MAGAZINE	BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS
COOKING WITH PAULA DEEN	LIFE & STYLE WEEKLY	EVERY DAY W/ RACHAEL RAY	BICYCLING
DUCKS UNLIMITED	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	FORTUNE	BLENDER
FIRST	THE WEEK	GQ GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY	COSMOPOLITAN
IN TOUCH WEEKLY	VANITY FAIR	MARTHA STEWART LIVING	COUNTRY LIVING
M MAGAZINE	WEIGHT WATCHERS	POPULAR MECHANICS	EVERYDAY FOOD
M.ENGELBREITS HOME COMPANION	WOMAN'S DAY	ROLLING STONE	FAMILY HANDYMAN
MOTHER EARTH NEWS			IN STYLE
PEOPLE STYLEWATCH			LADIES HOME JOURNAL
SATURDAY EVENING POST			MENS FITNESS
WOMAN'S WORLD			MIDWEST LIVING
WOMEN'S HEALTH			PETERSENS 4 WHEEL & OFF ROAD
YANKEE			SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

Now, before you write telling me that your title should have made the list, you have to remember four things:

- CircMatters focuses on mostly on titles with circulations over 300,000
- Your pink sheet had to be available by March 1. (You can still make the final White Hat Gang that we'll put on our [website](#) once all the pinks are filed... but you're just riding into town a little late.)
- You could not claim any Analyzed Non-Paid circulation (sorry, CircMatters is not a big fan of that).
- You had to a player in the national marketplace. Sorry, Oklahoma Living.

Congratulations to the first CircMatters White Hat Gang. Hi-Ho, Silver, away!





Insight and Information on
Magazine Selling and Buying

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It's Time to Subscribe to 



I want to thank everyone who's dropped me a note on the first two issues of the newsletter. Your feedback, questions, and ideas are all appreciated.

Now, show me the money!

Seriously, **the free distribution period for CircMatters comes to an end with this issue.** Starting with Issue 4, we switch to being supported by subscribers. Here are the details:

- We will stay with publishing every three weeks
- That's 17 issues over the next year (through March 2009)
- The cost of those 17 issues is \$400

To subscribe from Issue 4 onward, just send me an email and I'll add you to the list of subscribers. Please be sure to let me know the email address or addresses that should receive future issues.

If you want to pay by check, please make it out to Hanrahan Media Services LLC and send it to me at 42 Brodwood Drive, Stamford, CT 06902.

If you want to pay by credit card, I will have that option set up shortly. Please indicate that this is your preference when you send me a note to subscribe. I will send an email to all of those who prefer to pay by credit card once that is in place.

If you need an invoice so you can process payment through your company, just let me know. Around March 17, I will send an invoice to all subscribers who prefer that option.

Unless you want to offer to cut my lawn or bring firewood for next winter, that covers the payment options.

Issue 4 will be out near the end of March. One of the feature articles will be on the topic of circulation rate base guarantees.

Thank you to those who have already subscribed. I've got your names and email addresses down already. I will send you an invoice in mid-March and you can select your preferred payment option.

Cordially,

Jack Hanrahan