

Advertising-Editorial Guidelines

Why Magazines Strive to Preserve Editorial Integrity

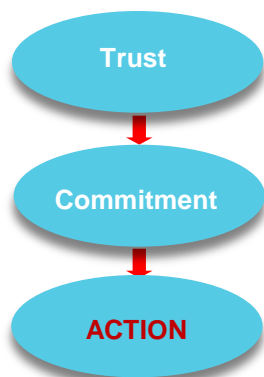
Integrity and Trust

Magazine readers value both editorial content and advertising as useful sources of information. It's how consumers stay in touch with what's new and what's relevant. However, a clear distinction between the two is important if the reader is to continue to trust editorial content. That's because trust is of vital importance to readers when selecting a title to read.

What attributes are most important to you when choosing a magazine to read?

Accurate in its reporting	90%
Believable	85%
Credible and trustworthy	84%

Source: Roper Reports



Not only is trust, accuracy, believability and credibility important to the reader, but researchers have determined that:

“Reader trust, along with commitment, appear to be *the two fundamental psychological drivers which produce advertising response* – both in terms of perceived reader relevance of advertising and ultimately purchasing of advertised brands.”

– Berlin Readership Symposium

If magazines are to be trusted by consumers, readers must be assured of editorial integrity. Without it, both editorial and advertising lose credibility in the eyes of the reader. Because readers come willingly to a perceived authority, there can never be a question as to what a magazine's motives are when publishing content.

Given that the role of magazines is to attract, genuinely engage and deliver readers of a particular value to advertisers, a loss of editorial integrity would destroy the reason why advertisers use magazines in the first place. In this scenario, no one wins.

This doesn't mean that magazines aren't interested in or unable to provide brand integration. In fact, magazines are very adept and oriented towards working with advertisers to find an advertising application for almost every idea that comes along. And in truth, most advertisers are serious about not wanting to impinge on editorial integrity. They simply want to get it right.

Advertising-Editorial Guidelines

Magazines have come together to issue Ad-Edit guidelines to make sure that the difference between advertising and editorial content is transparent to readers, and to ensure that there is no undue advertiser influence or pressure on editorial independence. The guidelines are intended to help editors, publishers and advertisers maintain an industry-wide standard for preserving this important distinction. These guidelines have been designed so that all stakeholders clearly understand them and are able to confidently communicate them to customers. The latest Advertising-Editorial guidelines are available on the following page.

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Advertising-Editorial Guidelines #1

Part I: Advertisements

An advertisement is content paid for by an advertiser to promote its products or services. Such content may appear as a single page, double-page spread, fractional configuration, insert or onsert. Special advertising sections are addressed separately in these guidelines.

1. Labelling

Any advertisement that contains text or design elements that have an editorial appearance must be conspicuously identified with the word "advertising" or "advertisement."

2. Appearance

The layout and design of advertisements should be entirely different from the publication's normal layout/design.

3. Covers

No advertisement may be promoted on the magazine cover or included in the editorial table of contents, unless it involves an editorially directed contest, promotion or sponsored one-off editorial extra (see #7).

4. Logos

The magazine's name or logo should not appear in advertisements, unless the advertisements are for the magazine and/or its promotions (or the advertised product has previously received an editorial award or review from the magazine). Similarly, the magazine's name or logo may appear in a third-party advertisement for a promotion, contest or event in which the magazine is a sponsor, partner or participant. Advertiser logos should not appear on editorial pages, except in a journalistic context, including editorial driven contests, promotions or sponsored one-off editorial extras (see #7).

5. Adjacency

Advertisements should not be placed immediately before, within or immediately after editorial content that mentions the advertised products or services. Exceptions are allowed for listings and contests, as well as multiple-source articles that quote representatives from companies that have placed advertisements; wherever possible, efforts should be made to distance the advertisements from the comments. There must be no promise of editorial mention in exchange for securing advertisements.

6. Product Placement

No advertiser may purchase product placement or mention in editorial pages, photographs or illustrations.

7. Sponsorship

An advertiser's name or logo may not be used to suggest advertising sponsorship of any regularly appearing editorial. Nor shall any regularly appearing editorial be labeled as "sponsored" (or "brought to you by" or any other variation thereof) by an advertiser. Sponsorship language may only be used with one-off editorial extras, such as special features, sections, contests, standalone brand extensions, inserts and onserts, provided the editorial content of the editorial extra does not mention or endorse the advertiser (and the advertiser does not have input in the creation of the editorial). Sponsorship language may also be used for annual awards programs and rankings.

Part 2...

Advertising-Editorial Guidelines #2

Part II: Special Advertising Sections

A special advertising section is a set of advertising pages unified by a theme, accompanied by editorial-like text. In order to avoid potential conflicts or overlaps with editorial content, publishers should notify editors well in advance of their plans to run special advertising sections.

Labelling

Each text page or spread in special advertising sections must be conspicuously identified as advertising, using phrases containing the words advertisement, advertising or promotion.

Appearance

The layout and design of such sections should be entirely different from the publication's normal layout and design.

Cover

No special advertising section may be promoted on the publication's cover or included in the editorial table of contents.

Logos

The publication's name or logo should not appear in the headlines, text or folios of such sections (unless the advertised product has received an editorial award from the magazine). A line such as, "As published in [magazine name here]" may appear on the first page or cover of the advertising section to accommodate overrun opportunities.

Staff

The names, titles, bylines and/or pictures/headshots of regular, full-time editorial staff should not appear in or be associated with such special advertising sections. Nor should their names, bylines and/or pictures/headshots be associated with third-party inserts in their magazine. In topics and fields that they cover editorially in their magazine, staff should not be associated with contract magazines published by their magazine company, by advertisers themselves or by third parties such as contract publishers. Exceptions can be made for art staff desiring to improve the appearance of a special advertising section to better suit their magazine's environment.

These Advertising-Editorial guidelines ensure that the difference between advertising and editorial content is transparent to readers, a guarantee that there is no undue influence or pressure on editorial independence. The guidelines are intended to help editors, publishers and advertisers maintain an industry-wide standard for preserving this important distinction.