

Appendix H

*Do you already have a newsletter and find yourself thinking that you're ready to take your publication to the next level? **Here are some important things to be aware of in regards to high-volume publishing...***

Case Study: What to Consider before Starting your own Newspaper!

So, you want to be a publisher...

There are many things to consider, but two things to remember when you're talking about launching a newspaper. You'll actually be developing two products—

1. An information vehicle for delivering news to your readers; and,
2. A readership that you will deliver to your advertisers.

What does a newspaper department look like? Imagine it as a wheel with many spokes. At the centre is the publisher who safeguards the vision, mission, ethics and values of the organization. The spokes of the wheel are: editorial (content), advertising (sales), distribution (subscriptions), and administration, which includes accounting and management.

Decide who your readers are and what kind of information they will need or want. Then decide what kind of advertisers would pay to gain the attention of those readers.

How will you finance this venture? Advertisers won't just come flocking to your door. It often takes 12 to 18 months of consistent and quality publishing before you'll get on the radar of advertising agencies. If you choose a paper product, you should know that after the cost of staffing, your major expenses will be printing and distribution. You will be charged about \$800.00 just to put the paper on the press. The cost goes up each 100 newspapers you print. For example, a 20-page press run of about 3,000 newspapers could cost as much \$1,500.00. Multiply that over the number of issues you will publish in a year.

Will your readers be willing to pay for a yearly subscription? Advertisers may consider a paid subscriber base more appealing than one where the paper is distributed free to whomever or dumped in stacks in pre-determined locations. If you mail to homes, those 3,000 copies will cost another \$1,500.00 to deliver.

You could consider developing a web product and cut out the press costs altogether. Which potential readers will you exclude if you choose E-News? Is everyone in your community plugged into the Internet? And the expectation for fresh news goes up with a web news product. A paper can come out once a month and get read, but if a Web product isn't refreshed daily, then your readership will dwindle and so will your advertising revenues.

Publishing a newspaper is a lot of work. It takes a long-term commitment of energy and funds, but its value in the community is immeasurable. It connects friends and family and provides a forum for adding the community's perspective to the wider discourse on important issues and events.

Here's an idea...

- Research other community newspapers and take a look at what their advertising rates are and what kind of information they print. Do they have a website? A subscriber list? Do they have a News Blog *and* a printed copy?

By Debora Steel
Editor in Chief Ha-Shilth-Sa Newspaper
dsteel78@telus.net