

Future magazine focuses on interacting and experiencing

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The Internet has a major impact on the consumers' media habits. The market situation for magazines is changing in line with the continuing increase of online media content. Success will require a completely new business approach. A recent study conducted by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland highlighted value and experientiality perceived by the consumer as the starting point and prerequisite for service development of future magazines.

The digitalisation of the media has led to fragmented audiences and the rise of social media to adopt the role of an information filter alongside conventional information channels. Digital content and services continue to gain in popularity as smartphones and tablets become more common.

Genuine interaction required to commit readers

The magazine of the future will be a visible brand in printed, electronic and [mobile media](#), and form a tight community created around a media brand. It will be essential that magazine services are accessible to consumers through several channels, both in printed and digital format. This includes reader communities that allow service users to become co-creators of content. The publisher will act as the coordinator of the community.

Emphasis will be on the readers' central role as customers of the magazine service. The readers must feel that their opinion counts and

that they have an opportunity to influence. This will require genuine interaction that is honest and open – the foundation of [customer loyalty](#). It will be important to answer questions quickly and to show that media/the company values its customers.

The new service model offers consumers improved opportunities for choosing the most suitable content for themselves in whichever format they find most convenient at the time. If the best possible account is taken of the needs and experiential aspects of different consumer segments, then consumers will have an important role to play, and the magazine service will feel tailored.

Existing business models and audience metrics no longer suffice

In the digital environment, business risks are high. Advertisers react both to the changing economic climate and to burgeoning online [media content](#). The transformation of the media business into a service business will demand a new approach – that of a service-oriented business model.

The media business revolution has rendered existing business models and audience metrics obsolete. The Internet can be used to obtain information via a multiplicity of channels. This poses great challenges for publishers, and thus also for value chains.

Future magazines must take a more painstaking account of the various consumer groups, their needs, how they perceive different forms of media and what constitutes value for them in each media format, and how all this can be turned into profitable business in the years ahead. It is vital to understand consumer needs and build strong brands that meet these needs in various channels. The crux will lie in generating benefit and making it pay.

Paper supplier becomes publisher's partner

Digitalisation and the declining use of printed products are also pressuring change in the forest industry.

According to VTT, the new role of paper manufacturers will cover not only the production of raw material for the printed product's value network, but consultation to provide information and support for customers' processes. Paper manufacturers would be wise, therefore, to expand their role from enhancing the publication process towards enhancement of the magazine business.

Printed products will retain their place in the hearts of consumers, but the kind of experiential significance they embody will be rather more difficult to discern. Here the paper manufacturer can easily support the publisher. Understanding of the business logic and needs of a publisher-customer will be an advantage, and open dialogue with the customer of vital importance. The goal is to establish a good relationship based on mutual trust, a relationship with the potential of becoming a partnership.

The paper manufacturer would benefit from knowing the operators of the printed product's value network and other networks of the magazine service, and above all, the end-users of the service – the readers.

In the future magazine project Fumaga, VTT searched for new service models by means of four case studies: hybrid [media](#) applications in magazines, new title launch, brand experience and service concepts for customers' processes.

More information: www.vtt.fi/inf/pdf/technology/2013/T83.pdf

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