

Women's mags remain strong while news, business and TV mags lag

BY WILLIAM SHIELDS

Chatelaine is No. 1 again. The jewel in Ted Rogers' magazine crown may not have an editor (eight months and counting) but it certainly has the jam, posting an 8.6% revenue jump last year to vault it past the \$50-million mark—a first for any Canadian magazine. More about that in a bit. First, you should know something about how we've built this year's Top 50, because it's different than last year's ranking.

In the past, we've relied solely on ad sales data collected by Leading National Advertisers (Canada), a tracking organization that keeps tabs on Canada's largest magazines. But, year after year, several titles with significant ad revenues—but aren't tracked by LNA—have been conspicuously missing from the list. Because we want the most accurate ranking possible, that's been a sore point. The solution: we went directly to those publishers and requested their sales data. In all cases, they obliged. Does it mean more work

for us? Yup, but you get a better ranking. (For those publishers who belong on our list but aren't, give us a call.) So, the big-money newcomers to the Top 50 are: the new French language weeklies *La Semaine* and *Sensass*, wedding mags *WeddingBells* and *Today's Bride*; *MuscleMag* and *Oxygen*.

The newcomers

You'll note that the last three of those seven titles cut far larger profiles outside of Canada than at home. In the case of *MuscleMag* and *Oxygen*, the owner/publisher is Robert Kennedy, who publishes out of Mississauga, Ont., but who targets the big market to the south. *Vice* was started by a trio of young Montreal-based entrepreneurs, and has editions around the world. Success abroad, therefore, does not disqualify a magazine from taking its place on our Top 50 list.

About *Vice*: Its ranking at No. 49 is deceptive. The figure, supplied by associate publisher Erik Lavoie, is Canada-only. There are

controlled-circ editions of *Vice* in seven other markets (U.K., Japan, Australia/New Zealand, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia and the U.S.). Combined ad revenue, including Canada and after weighted with a 0.7 multiple to take into account discounting, is a staggering C\$21.9 million, says Lavoie.

La Semaine, the new *People*-like weekly launched by Claude Charron in January 2005, is going head to head with TVA's *7 Jours*, which appears to have risen to the challenge, posting a 24% gain in estimated revenue.

And if you ever wondered what those door-stoppingly huge biannual wedding magazines rake in, now you have an idea.

Women's mags

The real driver at *Chatelaine* was not circulation revenue, which we estimate has declined 7.2% from an estimated \$9.1 million in 2004, but rather ad sales. We estimate run-of-press ad sales revenue jumped by 12.4% to \$41.9 million. The November 2005 issue was the

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2005	2004	Title	Advertising revenue	Circulation revenue	Total estimated revenue	Annual change
1	1	Chatelaine	\$41,916,716	\$8,457,652	\$50,374,368	8.6%
2	2	Canadian Living	\$31,717,802	\$9,323,520	\$41,041,321	0.3%
3	3	Reader's Digest	\$16,440,566	\$21,051,613	\$37,492,179	-5.4%
4	4	Maclean's	\$21,885,178	\$14,051,713	\$35,936,891	1.7%
5	5	Time	\$15,976,520	\$8,997,004	\$24,973,524	-10.7%
6	7	CDN House & Home	\$16,164,264	\$5,472,873	\$21,637,137	7.9%
7	9	7 Jours	\$6,985,134	\$14,360,110	\$21,345,244	24.0%
8	6	TV Guide	\$8,883,473	\$8,858,073	\$17,741,545	-18.4%
9	8	Flare	\$15,168,754	\$2,242,614	\$17,411,367	-3.5%
10	10	Châtelaine	\$12,540,992	\$3,337,412	\$15,878,404	8.1%
11	11	Coup de Pouce	\$10,195,871	\$4,291,111	\$14,486,982	1.8%
12	—	La Semaine*	\$1,853,859	\$11,930,411	\$13,784,270	—
13	17	Now	\$13,261,745	\$0	\$13,261,745	16.1%
14	15	Fashion	\$11,245,819	\$1,783,769	\$13,029,588	11.8%
15	13	L'actualité	\$8,167,522	\$4,456,769	\$12,624,292	5.3%
16	14	Style at Home	\$8,874,410	\$3,655,731	\$12,530,142	6.9%
17	12	Today's Parent	\$10,353,877	\$2,049,867	\$12,403,744	3.0%
18	—	Sensas*	\$2,008,267	\$10,348,000	\$12,356,267	—
19	16	Canadian Business	\$8,282,688	\$2,239,000	\$10,521,688	-8.4%
20	—	WeddingBells*	\$9,601,456	\$372,619	\$9,974,075	—
21	—	MuscleMag*	\$7,224,508	\$2,594,610	\$9,819,118	—
22	19	Canadian Geographic	\$2,427,086	\$7,263,116	\$9,690,202	-6.7%
23	20	Homemakers	\$6,941,568	\$2,609,269	\$9,550,837	-1.7%
24	23	Elle Québec	\$7,645,705	\$1,813,318	\$9,459,022	7.2%
25	27	enRoute	\$9,267,650	\$0	\$9,267,650	21.9%
26	24	Toronto Life	\$7,740,887	\$1,508,049	\$9,248,936	10.5%
27	—	Today's Bride*	\$8,744,292	\$205,998	\$8,950,290	—
28	25	Elle Canada	\$7,226,888	\$1,625,721	\$8,852,608	8.5%
29	21	Selection du RD	\$3,295,879	\$5,310,235	\$8,606,114	-11.2%
30	18	Starweek	\$8,502,068	\$0	\$8,502,068	-18.6%
31	28	Clin d'oeil	\$7,016,728	\$1,107,181	\$8,123,909	8.2%
32	22	TV Hebdo	\$2,201,840	\$5,785,730	\$7,987,569	-13.3%
33	29	Report on Business	\$7,256,862	\$0	\$7,256,862	-0.5%
34	30	glow	\$6,523,011	\$121,622	\$6,644,632	-0.2%
35	—	LouLou	\$4,782,252	\$1,635,263	\$6,417,514	—
36	—	Wish	\$4,684,432	\$1,611,500	\$6,295,931	—
37	32	Financial Post Business	\$6,182,783	\$0	\$6,182,783	-5.1%
38	—	Oxygen*	\$2,620,061	\$3,513,757	\$6,133,818	—
39	39	Food & Drink	\$6,022,108	\$0	\$6,022,108	21.6%
40	35	Western Living	\$5,912,467	\$37,228	\$5,949,694	9.3%
41	38	eye	\$5,893,045	\$0	\$5,893,045	14.7%
42	33	Decoration Chez-Soi	\$4,590,604	\$1,294,894	\$5,885,588	2.2%
43	34	Le Bel Age	\$3,471,520	\$2,175,652	\$5,647,172	-1.4%
44	43	Famous	\$5,184,410	\$0	\$5,184,410	21.7%
45	36	Les idées de ma maison	\$4,098,714	\$1,015,548	\$5,114,263	-3.6%
46	31	Inside Entertainment	\$5,076,728	\$23,000	\$5,099,729	-21.8%
47	37	Canadian Gardening	\$2,877,622	\$2,220,430	\$5,098,052	-3.3%
48	40	Cottage Life	\$3,047,779	\$1,798,742	\$4,846,521	2.4%
49	44	Vice*	\$4,694,690	\$0	\$4,694,690	17.3%
50	42	50Plus	\$3,088,470	\$1,086,370	\$4,174,840	-3.6%
TOTAL			\$435,767,565	\$186,432,330	\$622,199,895	8.6%
TOTAL (2004)			\$409,951,880	\$162,821,709	\$572,773,589	4.0%

*publisher-supplied ad sales data



Vice has estimated annual ad sales worldwide of \$21.9 million



Mississauga, Ont.-based Oxygen targets U.S. market



Claude Charron's La Semaine competes head-on with TVA's 7 Jours

biggest in recent memory at 340 pages (348 in some regions). "We have a great team of experienced and capable salespeople who are pretty talented and aggressive at developing new business," says publisher Kerry Mitchell. "I definitely think this is a great time for magazines, and as we see the bloom coming off the rose of some other media, it's a good time for us to clearly illustrate the benefits of our

medium." And it's the medium as a whole, she says, and not just *Chatelaine*, that is benefiting. Growth areas include retail and packaged goods, with new products continuing to roll out. (Indeed, Procter & Gamble, Canada's single-largest magazine advertiser, bought at least 4,314 run-of-press magazine ad pages last year, up 3.7% over 2004, representing a total of \$72.1 million, according to LNA.)

Many wonder, however, how *Chatelaine* is operating editorially without having an editor-in-chief at the controls. Recall that former EIC Kim Pittaway resigned noisily in August 2005 citing editorial interference from management, thereby stigmatizing the position for her successor. The magazine had completed its eighth month without an editor at our press time, despite having searched

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as far away as England for a replacement. Also at press time, *Chatelaine* had completed its fourth month without an art director. So, one wonders: How's morale in the editorial suite? A raft of resignations and no single authority—is it Mitchell, or editorial director Lise Ravary or executive editor Craig Offman?—suggest it's something less than ideal. Former staffers have already said as much. But if the bottom line is the bottom line, Rogers appears to be doing a bang-up job with the 77-year-old brand.

Overall, the women's category was up 6.2% in ROP pages and 8.2% in ROP dollars, reports LNA. Newcomers in this category to this year's list are the shopping mags that launched in the fall of 2004—Rogers' *LouLou* and St. Joseph Media's *Wish*. They completed their first full years in 2005, and attracted \$12.7 million between them. The ad pie in women's service appears to have grown, with *Flare*, *Homemakers* and *glow* showing only small declines at English-language women's titles while others posted hefty gains despite the shopping-title threat, such as *Fashion* (up 11.8%) and *Elle Canada* (8.5%).

Canadian Living, Transcontinental Media's flagship title, held steady with a 0.3% gain. New publisher Lynn Chambers, just four months into the job, notes that the October 2005 issue marked *CL*'s 30th anniversary, which helped produce two 300+-page issues last fall. She notes that advertisers increasingly want to become a part of the "emotional connection" that *CL* has with readers. "I also see a trend toward [advertisers] allowing us to do more creative for them, so we've responded by developing our in-house creative department." She also sees an increase in requests-for-proposals from advertisers seeking "exclusive package deals...It tends to be between Rogers and ourselves, and it ends up being an all-or-nothing, win-or-lose situation," she says, noting that such RFPs involve multiple publications.

News & business

Combining all LNA-tracked titles in this category, 2005 was not a good year. There was an 8.7% decline in ROP pages and a 3.3% dip in ROP dollars. The single-largest dent likely came from a 16.3% drop in computer and business equipment advertising, which dropped to 1,056 ROP pages from 1,262 pages in 2004. *Time* (Canada) took the biggest hit in 2005 with an estimated revenue drop of 10.7%, followed by *Canadian Business* (-8.4%).

Maclean's was for years the largest magazine in Canada but since 1998, when we estimated total revenue at \$49.1 million, revenues have nosedived by 26.9% to the current level of \$35.9 million. (*Time*, over the

same period, declined 28.6%.) *Maclean's*, however, appears to have stabilized, posting a relatively respectable 1.7% gain versus last year's drop of 6.4%.

What is it with this category? A few things: (i) a burst tech bubble that sucked away a lot of IT ads in 2001; (ii) consumers who've moved to the Web for their news; and (iii) ferocious newspaper warriors hungry for ad revenues following the 1998 launch of Conrad Black's *National Post*. However, *Maclean's* editor-in-chief/publisher Kenneth Whyte (who was the *Post's* founding editor and, later, associate publisher), says the war is

TOP 10 ALMOST-MADE-ITS

Title	Revenue
TV Times	\$4,037,131
Movie Entertainment	\$3,982,799
Decormag	\$3,826,910
Good Times	\$3,664,947
Outdoor Canada	\$3,556,255
Tribute	\$3,480,632
Canadian Home Workshop	\$3,422,042
Canadian Home & Country	\$3,367,757
Le Lundi	\$3,231,808
MoneySense	\$3,222,108

no longer diverting ad dollars from the category as it once did. "I don't think that the *National Post* is taking more than \$80 million or \$90 million out of the market and the [tabloid] *Financial Post* was taking that much out before [the *National Post*]." The challenge, he says, is proving that news and business magazines remain relevant. "I think they've suffered a bit from seeming unfashionable and that a lot of money has rushed to the Web and other less proven and but trendier options." Contrary to what you might think, he's not happy about *Time's* recent decision to close its Canadian bureau, which was part of larger cutbacks at Time Warner. "I don't think it's good for the media industry...when a major player retreats. While there may be some short-term advantages to us on the advertising side, I frankly wish they'd kept their presence here because everyone benefits from a healthy, growing industry. While the competition from the newspaper war drove a lot of publishers nuts, it did also drive a lot of money into the sector. There's no doubt [the ad pie] grew."

TV books

We continue to see a slide in ad and circ revenues at the television listings magazines. CanWest's *TV Times* has fallen out of the Top 50 altogether, coming in a No. 51 after posting a sickening 49.4% drop in ad revenue. National sales director David Titcombe notes that the proportion of homes with digitally

delivered television jumped from 34% in 2003 to 43% in 2005. "Digital TV provides its own electronic listings," he notes in an e-mail. And despite beefing up the editorial to remain eligible for its postal subsidy, *TV Guide* posted an estimated 18.4% revenue decline, slipping from No. 6 to No. 8 on the list. At Torstar's *StarWeek*, general manager Tony Cahill says his retail advertising was stable but, just like at *TV Times*, the migration of broadcaster ads to the more timely newspaper medium and to outdoor is what made the difference. Ad rev at *StarWeek* was down 18.6%

Other notables

Air Canada inflight title *enRoute* had an outstanding year. Passenger volume increased 7%, says John Panagiotopoulos, director of sales at custom publisher Spafax Canada, but ad sales at the magazine jumped by 21.9%. Beer, wine and liquor ads doubled, he says, and the luxury goods category also shone. Bundling the mag with inflight cinema and sampling programs in Air Canada Maple Leafs lounges also helped drive ad sales.

Over at feisty independent *NOW*, Michael Hollett's altweekly Toronto tabloid, travel ads are growing as are restaurant ads and retail generally. Arch rival *eye*, owned by Torstar, inspires something akin to disgust for Hollett. "Their rate slashing has exceeded new levels," he scoffs. *Eye* publisher Peter Burke has having none of it. "I prefer not to sling mud around," he says. While *eye* did post a 14.7% gain in estimated ad rev, actual ROP pages declined by 0.3% where *NOW's* increased by 6.2%.

And finally, there are the almost-made-its (see chart). These titles either got squeezed out by the aforementioned newcomers or are making their way up the food chain.

With overall ROP ad pages at LNA-tracked titles growing by just 0.4% to 44,114 pages, it can at least be said that the "old-fashioned" medium of magazines is maintaining its market share in a mediascape burgeoning with newfangled options. **M**

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Except where noted, advertising revenues were provided by LNA Canada and weighted with a 0.7 multiple to account for discounting; ad data provided by publishers are also weighted with a 0.7 multiple. Circulation revenues tallied using ABC/BPA audit data and publishers' listings in the December 2005 issue of *CARD*. Subscription revenues were weighted with 0.6 multiple to account for discounting (except for *Canadian Geographic* and *Cottage Life*, which don't discount); newsstand revenues were weighted with a 0.5 multiple to account for sales commissions and fees extracted by distributors, wholesalers and retailers. To make the task manageable, magazine brand extensions and ancillary products, such as consumer shows, are not included.