

CHAPTER 9 MAGAZINES

Why do we save old magazines?

Early magazines 1740-1825

reprints of newspaper articles and literary essays

very small circulation

expensive subscriptions

had limited readership mainly of educated elite

Changes in mid-19th century because

Postal rates come down (Postal Act of 1879)

Postal service improved (Rural Free Delivery)

Rise in literacy (public school systems)

Specialized audiences emerged like Women or Farmers

Godeys Lady's Book

Saturday Evening Post

Harpers

Technological advances including

Railroads allowed national distribution.

High speed printing lowered costs

Photographs were printed

Color illustrations

Rise of the General interest magazines (late 19th to mid-20th century)

Saturday Evening Post (Curtis Publishing 1897)

Time (1923)

Reader's Digest (1922)

Life (1936)

large circulation

variety of articles

with illustrations and photographs.

economics were based on mass subscriptions and low cover price

sold below actual cost of production

advertising covers the difference

Pass-along readership

Fall of the General Interest Magazines

However, many of the large circulation magazines in the late 20th Century were

Doomed by

new media (TV) taking content and advertising

declining ad revenues

rising postal rates

large circulation becomes a handicap not an advantage

Life, Look and Saturday Evening Post all disappear.

Domination of Specialization

Special interest magazines (Table 9.2 p. 330)

with the same economic plan as the old magazines but aimed at highly

specialized audiences and charging a higher cover price.

regional editions

demographic editions

split runs

returns

The survivors/exceptions: Note circulation figures on p. 321

Reader's Digest

Time

TV Guide

AARP

Supermarket Tabloids

Web Magazines

Organization of magazine publishing:

Editorial Content

Production and Technology:

Advertising and Sales:

Circulation and Distribution:

paid vs. controlled.

Magazine chains (see pp. 342-343)

Provide economies of scale:

for publishing costs

advertising sales

circulation/distribution.

But allow separate editorial content

Example: Advance Publications (p. 345)

More magazines sold by subscription now than by single copy sales.

Q. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR A NEW MAGAZINE?