



Magazines are studied in the following areas of the AS/ A level specification:

Component 2 Section B:

AS and A level: Historical magazine

A level only: Contemporary magazine produced outside the commercial mainstream

Level	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<b>AS and A level</b>	<b>Woman</b>  (23-29 August 1964) (IPC)	<b>Woman's Realm</b>  (7-13 February 1965) (IPC)	<b>Vogue</b>  (July 1965) (Conde Nast)
<b>A level</b>	<b>Adbusters</b>  (May/June 2016, Vol.23 No.3) (Adbusters Media Foundation)	<b>Huck</b>  (Feb/Mar 2016, Issue 54) (TCO London)	<b>The Big Issue</b>  (Oct 17-23 2016, No.1227) (Dennis & The Big Issue Ltd)

**These magazines need to be studied in relation to the following areas of the theoretical framework:**

- Media Language
- Representations
- Media Industries
- Audiences

**Relevant contexts and theoretical approaches need to be studied:**

- Historical Context
- Social and Cultural Context
- Political Context
- Economic Context



Theories and theoretical perspectives also need to be studied, as detailed in the specification.

	Theory/Theoretical Approach	AS	A level
Media Language	Semiotics, including Roland <b>Barthes</b>		
	Structuralism, including Claude <b>Lévi-Strauss</b>		
Representation	Theories of representation, including Stuart <b>Hall</b>		
	Theories of identity, including David <b>Gauntlett</b>		
	Feminist theory, including Liesbet <b>van Zoonen</b> and <b>bell hooks</b>		
Media Industries	Power and media industries, including <b>Curran and Seaton</b>		
	Regulation, including <b>Livingstone and Lunt</b>		
	Cultivation theory, including George <b>Gerbner</b>		
	Reception theory, including Stuart <b>Hall</b>		

## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION to Magazines

1a)  
It might be useful to begin by discussing learners' own interaction with, and consumption of, magazines at the start of the topic. The 'Discussion Prompts' activity will introduce learners to some of the key areas of the topic while reflecting on their own experiences. The prompts can



be used as a digital resource or as printed cards to be discussed in pairs/ groups. Discussion should raise issues about different genres of magazine – lifestyle, special interest etc., about the changing nature of the industry – print, digital, online, and about audience consumption and interaction.

1b)

## Industry Overview

**The following information and task for learners is included in the resource ‘Overview of the industry’**

The magazine industry has changed significantly since the 1960s when the historical set products were published. The marketplace was less crowded and the industry was dominated by a small number of major publishers. Today, the industry is still dominated by major publishers (such as Hearst, IPC, Bauer) but there is a much wider range of titles available and much greater competition for readers. Print circulation is falling and there has been a rise in digital sales. Magazines need a strong online and social media presence as well as a clear, unique brand identity, in order to compete – many titles, such as Nuts and Loaded, have closed in recent years, and others, such as Company, have become online-only magazines. Woman’s Realm merged with Woman’s Weekly in 2001 as, according to research by IPC, it ‘no longer reflected the financially independent lives of its target readership’.<sup>1</sup> Many mainstream lifestyle magazines have struggled to survive, however there is now a wider range of niche, or specialised, magazines available and those that have developed a unique selling point and secured a loyal audience have been able to succeed.

<sup>1</sup>Information taken from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1316559/Womans-Realm-fails-to-find-recipe-for-its-survival.html>

### **Task**

Read the three sources below and briefly summarise:

- The key changes that have taken place in the industry in recent years
- The current state of the industry

## Source 1: Article from the Huffington Post.

*The heyday of the magazine came in the early 20th century, when mega-publisher William Randolph Hearst launched Harper’s Bazaar, Good Housekeeping and National Geographic. Female-targeted Vogue and Vanity Fair followed, bringing fashion and women’s issues to the forefront of popular culture. Time was founded in 1923. The ’30s brought about aspirational magazines like Esquire and Fortune. Widely popular, topical publications directed at niche audiences rolled out in the ’40s and ’50s, including Sports Illustrated and Rolling Stone. The ’60s and ’70s gave us the celebrity- and*

entertainment-focused magazines *People* and *Cosmopolitan*. In the following decades, magazines diversified, with *The Face* debuting in 1980, *Entertainment Weekly* in 1990, *Wired* in 1993.

The late 1990s and 2000s brought about the digital revolution. But while newspapers have suffered steep declines amid the rise of the Internet, magazines are another story. Across the industry, subscriptions are down, but the picture is more complicated than the overarching numbers suggest. Magazines aren't dying. About 190 new titles launched in 2014, up from 185 in 2013, according to database *MediaFinder*. While some legacy publications are struggling to keep their readers, magazines like *Glamour*, *Parents* and *Better Homes and Gardens* all reported increases in paid and verified circulation from 2013 to 2014.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/16/magazine-covers-digital-revolution\\_n\\_7590566.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/16/magazine-covers-digital-revolution_n_7590566.html)

<sup>1</sup>Information taken from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1316559/Womans-Realm-fails-to-find-recipe-for-its-survival.html>

Source 2: Data from the National Readership Survey

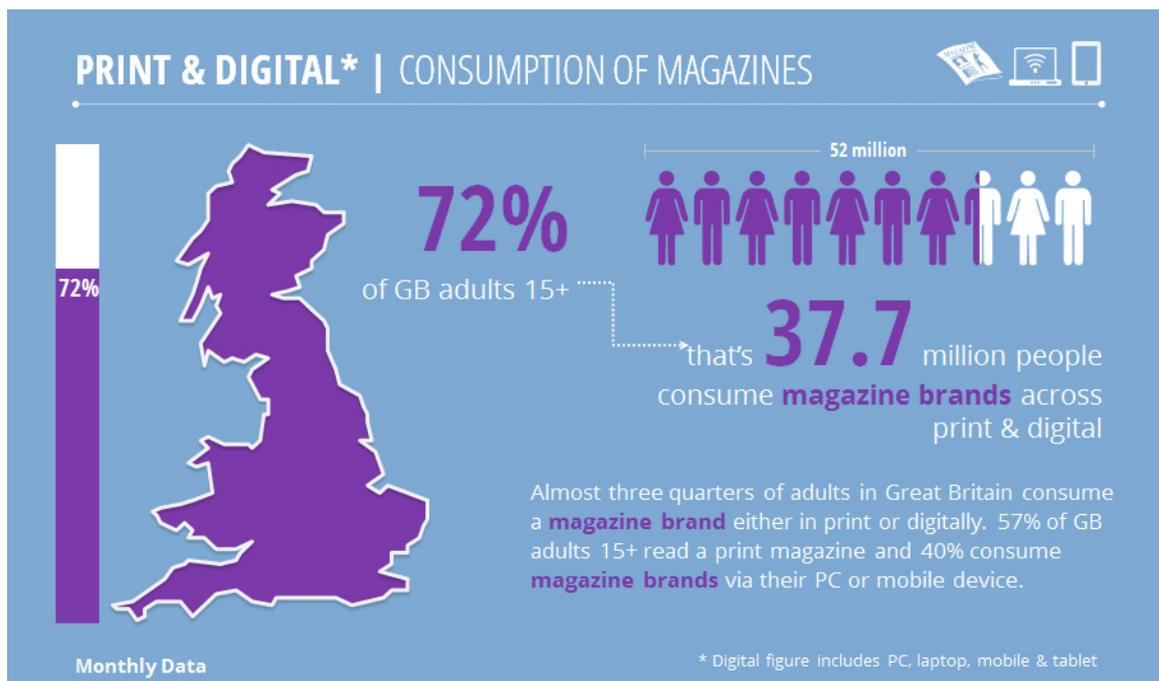


Image taken from <http://www.nrs.co.uk/latest-results/facts-and-figures/magazines/> download of top lefthand slide



Source 3: Extract from Inside Magazine Publishing by David Stam and Andrew Scott

## Size of the Market

*While the magazine market is under attack from some powerful commercial organisations, it is important to be clear that the UK magazine market remains a major media sector and industry in its own right.*

*Combined research for Inside Magazine Publishing estimates that annual value of the magazine industry in 2012 to be £3.55 billion. This is split as follows:*

- Consumers spend £1.8 billion on magazines at retail or via subscriptions.
- Print magazine advertising totals a further £750 million.
- Content marketing agencies (the producers of customer magazines) contribute a further £1 billion.
- There are in excess of 2,400 consumer magazines.

Information taken from <https://goo.gl/1WDQI6>

1c)

## Introduction to historical/social/cultural contexts for historical magazines

The 1960s was a decade of great change in British society. Following the post-war period of austerity, the economy was growing and employment rates were high. This led to a growth in the consumer goods market, an increase in the number of people travelling abroad and an explosion in popular culture. Socially, traditional boundaries relating to social class and gender were shifting, and the feminist and civil rights movements had a significant impact on British society.

It would be helpful for learners to gain an understanding of the social/ cultural context of their historical magazine. The following links provide a range of articles that give general background context to the 1960s. These are not included in the learner resources as teachers may wish to direct learners to specific sources that are relevant to their chosen historical magazine.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/overview\\_1945\\_present\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/overview_1945_present_01.shtml)

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/the\\_queens\\_diamond\\_jubilee/9288411/The-Diamond-Decades-The-1960s.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/the_queens_diamond_jubilee/9288411/The-Diamond-Decades-The-1960s.html)

<https://corporate.uktv.co.uk/news/article/swinging-sixties/>

**All of the historical magazines are women's magazines, and so an understanding of women's**



roles in 1960s society would be helpful. The following BBC2 History File extract gives a concise contextual overview of some of the key issues and there is a digital resource [The Changing Role of Women in the 1960s](#) to accompany it.

## Task

Listen to the audio extract: *The Changing Role of Women in the 1960s – BBC History File*  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00wfrgf>

Learners can watch and summarise the key issues raised – it would be useful to then discuss these in relation to their set magazine – this is an introductory exercise and the ideas will be developed more fully in the representation section.

## Further task:

*How do these issues relate to your set historical magazine (Vogue, Woman or Woman's Realm)?*

*Key points:*

- *Increased opportunities for women to have jobs – be more than wife or mother.*
- *Developments – women attending university – intellectual and financial freedom – greater expectations.*
- *Woman realised they were being badly treated – not paid the same as men for example.*
- *Advertisements criticised for offering a limited view of women.*
- *Betty Friedan (American feminist) – ‘women are shown solely as: men’s wife, mother, love object, dishwasher, cleaner and never as a person’.*
- *Women’s rights ‘hot news’ by the end of the 1960s – women’s liberation movement – shocking for some.*
- *Demands for equal pay/ opportunities – protests/ marches.*
- *Advertisers ‘unsure how to react’ to the women’s movement – advert for intercity – women singing about their rights - but heading home before their husbands find out.*

## SECTION 2 MEDIA LANGUAGE

Learners will need to be introduced to the appropriate terminology and codes and conventions of magazines, especially if they have not studied GCSE Media Studies.

**2a)** The ‘**Terminology match-up**’ exercise introduces key terms that should be used when analysing the set products. It is available as a digital resource or as a PDF that can be printed and cut into cards.

**2b)** The ‘**Magazines codes and conventions**’ activity asks learners to identify key conventions common to all magazines before thinking about women’s magazines (for the historical products) in more detail. It might be useful to have copies of contemporary magazines to use here – as



well as the historical set product to compare. While the activity asks learners to focus on the similarities and differences between monthly 'glossy' magazines and women's weeklies, teachers can focus more specifically on the relevant sub-genre in relation to their chosen historical product.

A level learners will also need to analyse the codes and conventions of non-mainstream magazines. While many of the familiar conventions will apply, learners can also use this activity to identify the ways in which their magazine differs from mainstream consumer magazines by subverting conventions or including more specialist/ niche features.

## 2c) Initial analysis of magazines

Learners can begin to engage with a magazine by completing some initial tasks to gain an overview of the content and advertising – the 'summary worksheet' print resource could be used for this purpose.

It might be helpful for learners to begin by analysing a recent edition of Vogue or Woman to identify the conventions of a woman's magazine and then compare this with the historical edition. There is an example of an initial summary sheet for a recent edition of Vogue in the resources (2d).

### Analysing front covers

The front cover is vital in communicating a clear sense of the brand identity of the magazine to the target audience and in appealing to potential readers at the newsstand. In such a competitive print market, magazine front covers need to stand out and attract the attention of potential purchasers. It is important that the front cover maintains a clear sense of familiarity for regular readers but also attracts potential new readers. Front covers have a clear set of expected codes and conventions. Mainstream magazines tend to conform quite closely to these conventions while magazines produced outside the commercial mainstream are more likely to challenge or subvert these conventions.

This is an interesting article about the continuing importance of magazine front covers: <https://www.themediabriefing.com/article/do-magazine-covers-still-count>

2e) Digital resource: Semiotic analysis of the front cover of your historical magazine. The digital resource includes activities for analysing the front cover of each magazine, with some suggested responses. There is also a printable analysis worksheet (2f) that learners can use to record their responses – or complete for homework.

2g) For A level learners there is a similar activity for the contemporary non-mainstream magazines.

2h) Magazine **contents pages** are very useful for analysing codes and conventions, and also contexts and target audience. There is a digital resource for analysing the historical magazines



with a suggested extension to analyse the contemporary non-mainstream magazines for A level learners.

2i) Media language will also be analysed in relation to the construction representations in articles and advertising in the representation section. There is a printable worksheet '**Analysing a Magazine Article**' that can be used for analysing the use of media language in any article.

## SECTION 3: Representations

The digital resources for this section focus on key articles and examples of advertising from the set products, however it will also be appropriate to revisit the front covers and contents pages from the media language section and analyse the representations in more detail.

### Historical magazines

Women's magazines became very popular in the post-war period and, in the 1960s, sales of women's magazines reached 12 million copies per week. While this was a period of great change and increased independence for women, many magazines and adverts continued to perpetuate narrow and stereotypical ideas about gender. The representations in women's magazines should be analysed in relation to:

- the genre (and ideologies of consumerism driven by the need to 'deliver' readers to advertisers)
- the social, cultural and historical context (the feminist movement in particular)

This short video about the history of *Vogue* provides some useful context for all of the women's magazines:

<http://www.vogue.co.uk/video/inside-british-vogue-a-brief-history-of-100-years/>

- 1960s – cultural change, swinging 60s
- 70s-80s – second wave feminism – women 'having it all'

3a) The '**Historical contexts of representation**' resource is focused on the Vogue Money Q&A article – this is excellent in terms of highlighting some of the legal constraints on women in the 1960s and it will be useful for all learners to read this article. The digital resource is a highlighting exercise to identify some key representational and contextual points, and a written task. This same activity could be used for the editor's letter page of *Woman* or *Woman's Realm* (page 3 in both magazines).

There is a **digital resource for analysing advertising** in each of the historical magazines: 3b) Vogue, 3c) Woman, 3d) Woman's Realm

These activities could be adapted to the contemporary magazines as well, for A level learners.



3e) The **'Theoretical Approaches 1 – stereotyping in historical magazines' resource** includes an activity where learners apply ideas from Hall and Gauntlett to key examples from their set magazine. This could be repeated with other examples from the magazine.

3f) The **'Theoretical Approaches 2- feminist perspectives' resource** considers more advanced ideas and includes some links to articles relating to the 'ideal woman' and Friedan's 'Feminist Mystique' – while these are American sources, they have relevance in relation to the British magazines. The tasks require learners to apply key feminist ideas to the magazine they have studied and to rank these in order of helpfulness in understanding the representations. Learners could focus on one key element of the magazine here (perhaps dividing the content between groups of learners) or look at the magazine holistically. Van Zoonen is included here, along with other ideas specifically related to women's magazines.

### **Contemporary non-mainstream magazines.**

There is a digital resource for analysing representations in one article from each set product. These activities can be adapted to analyse other articles.

3g) Huck: Öcalan's Angels pages 18-25 in the set edition.

This article is about young Kurdish women in Syria who have joined an organisation that is fighting ISIS. It addresses global socio-political issues and references the situation for Kurdish people, especially women, in Syria. The article gives quite a lot of background information but learners could undertake research to gain a deeper understanding of the context.

3h) Adbusters: Louibouton 'advert' page 20

3i) The Big Issue: Moving On pages 33-34

3j) There is a resource specifically **applying theoretical perspectives to the article 'Beyond Binary' in Huck pages 58-62**. This article features representations of individuals/ social groups that have traditionally been underrepresented and misrepresented. The article can be viewed in a contemporary social/ cultural context where there is increased understanding of gender fluidity and non-binary notions of gender. According to The Guardian, 'there were advances in 2015 for trans visibility and rights' – visibility in the media through, for example, reality TV star Caitlyn Jenner and the sitcom 'Boy Meets Girl' on BBC2. Dr Jay Stewart of the group Gendered Intelligence was quoted in the Huffington Post as saying that Britain is 'moving towards an era where it is a fundamental human right for each of us to self-determine our gender identity'.

A similar activity could be used for other articles – the 'Letter to my Younger Self' article in The Big Issue for example.



## SECTION 4. INDUSTRY

The activities in the introductory section of the resources give some general context to the industry and to the 1960s to inform learners prior to undertaking textual analysis of media language and representation. This section provides resources to develop knowledge and understanding of the industry in relation to both the historical and contemporary magazines, focusing on key areas of the subject content.

**1960s magazine industry context – women’s magazines** – these links are not included in the student resources as they provide background information and teachers can decide if/ how they wish to use them.

The following article provides a wide overview/ **history of women’s magazines**: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/dec/20/women-pressandpublishing>

The following extract provides a general summary of the **magazine industry in the 1960s** to give some industry context.

Inside Magazine Publishing by David Stam and Andrew Scott: 1960s industry developments pages 27-29:

<https://goo.gl/CF00vh>

Learners need to develop a detailed understanding of their historical magazine in terms of ownership, production, distribution and circulation.

**There is an industry worksheet resource for each historical magazine** - these provide learners with some background information about the set product and include research tasks using articles and video clips to enable them to gain an in-depth understanding of the industry context of the magazine.

### **b) Current state/ future of the magazine industry**

The **digital resource ‘How can magazines survive in the current climate?’** sets tasks for learners to consider the current state of the industry and the ways in which magazines can be successful.

The extract from **The Media Show on Radio 4** gives a good insight into current issues for the industry. The focus is on *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue* but the issues raised are relevant to the non-mainstream magazines set for A level. The information about *Vogue* would also be interesting for learners who are studying this magazine as a historical product.

The key points from the show are summarised below.



## **The Media Show 23/11/2016 9.25 to 17.40**

Item about magazines - current state of industry - print v digital

*Print succeeding in some areas - luxury end of market e.g. Vogue celebrated 100 years with biggest ever issue, Cosmopolitan has quadrupled its sales figures.*

*Some magazines are in decline e.g. In Style and other weeklies are struggling, described as suffering from a 'reader and advertiser exodus'.*

*Major problem – so much free content on line – the content featured in many magazines is easily replicated.*

*Cosmo 'eco-system - ad revenue important, most still from print but also from other platforms e.g. snapchat. Events - live experience of Cosmo*

*Cosmo dropped price to £1 - 'millennials expect to get content for free'*

*Website - not dig or print its dig and print - content online is v different to mag - mag has longer articles, reportage, different content*

*Vogue - 100th anniversary 'creates expectation, like opening a present' – can't be replicated online - advertisers high-end, don't want to advertise online e.g. adblocking, want to work in print*

*'Lean back' experience – can't replicate the experience of leaning back and relaxing with a print magazine – premium publishers need to emphasise that unique experience.*

*More advertising in Vogue than before*

*£36000 full page advert*

*A lot of mags - 'glossies' - not doing very well. Print 'transitioning' - will survive - people willing to pay for some magazines, but those that replicate what's online won't survive*

### **Questions**

Why are some magazines, particularly fashion magazines and weeklies, in decline?

How has Cosmopolitan succeeded in increasing its circulation?

How can magazines increase advertising revenue across different platforms?

Why do some advertisers prefer to advertise in print publications than online?



How can premium publishers maintain an audience for print magazines?

What is the 'lean back' experience?

Summarise the key points in the extract about the current challenges that magazine publishers are facing and the strategies that they need to adopt to survive into the future.

## **Further task**

Read the following articles:

1 'Are we living through an indie publishing revolution?' By Ruth Jamieson. The following paragraph is particularly significant:

### **Were there any common themes that emerged from successful independent mags?**

Common themes are doing something no one else is doing, and offering something digital media can't offer. That and great art direction and editorial, a focus on the reader rather than the advertiser, and having a strong, unique idea at the magazine's core. Oh and investing in the magazine as an object, so, good paper stock, expert printing, well-researched, well-produced content. Overall, these magazines are defined by their attention to detail and commitment to lovingly crafting something people will want to keep forever rather than throw in the recycling bin the next day. <http://www.tcolondon.com/blog/2017/2/16/are-we-living-through-an-indie-publishing-revolution>

2 'An antidote to the prevailing madness' - The titles leading a resurgence in magazine journalism', by Dominic Ponsford

<http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/an-antidote-to-the-prevailing-madness-the-titles-leading-a-resurgence-in-magazine-journalism/>

**Use the information from these articles and The Media Show to answer the following question:  
How does your contemporary non-mainstream magazine offer its audience a unique experience?**

Suggestions for final question:

**Huck** – digital and print editions, print magazine offers long form journalism and reportage not included on website, content is not easily replicated, high quality collectable print magazine with excellent photography – luxury 'lean back' experience, publisher has brand partnerships with some premium brands advertised in the magazine, clear ethos/ counter-cultural ideology, appeal to niche/ specialised audience.

**Adbusters** - digital and print editions, print magazine offers long form journalism and reportage

not included on website, content is not easily replicated, high quality print magazine, clear ethos/ anti-consumerist ideology, lack of advertising (and inclusion of 'spoof' adverts) – unique in the magazine marketplace, appeal to niche/ specialised audience

**Big Issue** - digital and print editions, print magazine offers long form journalism and reportage not included on website, tells an 'outsider story' and features 'voices.. rarely heard in main media', a combination of current affairs and popular cultural/ entertainment features, content is not easily replicated, clear ethos/ social conscience – unique in the magazine marketplace, not a luxury brand but a clear sense of identity.

### Contemporary non-mainstream magazines (A level only)

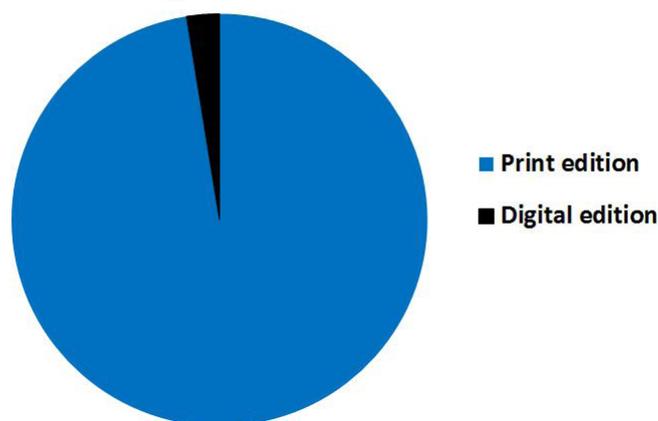
**There is an industry worksheet resource for each contemporary non-mainstream magazine** - these provide learners with some background information about the set product and include research tasks using articles and video clips to enable them to gain an in-depth understanding of the industry context of the magazine.

**c) The impact of digital technology on magazine production and distribution – the following is available as a digital resource and is relevant to the contemporary non-mainstream magazines.**

Producing a digital edition of a magazine poses challenges for publishers as the technology required to create a digital edition is different to that required for print – so, if the content is going to work on a digital platform, it requires a big investment.

Digital circulation of magazines is growing, however currently accounts for a very small percentage of overall magazine circulation. According to the Press Gazette ([pressgazette.co.uk](http://pressgazette.co.uk))

**UK magazine circulation**



*'Digital magazines accounted for 2.5 per cent of the total circulation audited by ABC in the second half of 2016. Digital editions (defined by ABC as digital versions which largely replicate the print edition) accounted for a further 1m in circulation (up from 750,000 in the same period a year ago).'*

Image taken from <http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/magazine-abcs-digital-editions-account-for-2-5-per-cent-of-uk-mag-sales-with-economist-leading-the-way/>



1 Research task: find out where readers can buy your contemporary non-mainstream magazine - in print and digital form.

2 Zinio is the world's largest digital newsstand (Huck and The Big Issue are distributed via Zinio). Study the image below, and the link to the article for Huck or The Big Issue, and answer the following question:

What are the advantages for magazine publishers of using a digital distributor such as Zinio?

The image shows a screenshot of the Zinio website. It is divided into three main sections. The top left section is blue and titled 'ZINIO', describing it as the world's largest digital newsstand. The top right section is purple and titled 'ZINIO PRO', describing it as a SaaS-based platform for publishers. The bottom section is dark blue and features a central headline and five statistics: 6,000+ Magazines, 33 Local Language Newsstands, 500M+ Magazines delivered, 10M+ Customers, and 20+ Distribution Partners.

Statistic	Value
Magazines	6,000+
Local Language Newsstands	33
Magazines delivered	500M+
Customers	10M+
Distribution Partners	20+

Images taken from <http://corp.zinio.com/>

The extracts from the articles are included here for teachers – learners will access this through the link in the digital resource.

**Huck** <http://www.huckmagazine.com/art-and-culture/print/top-picks-print/the-raddest-mags-on-zinio/>

### *Top Digital Magazines on Zinio*

*For the first time, Huck is now on sale in a digital edition. To celebrate the mag's launch on Zinio, we rounded up ten of our favourite mags on the site.*

*Like our writers and photographers, physical copies of Huck are always travelling. By air, sea, rail and road, this very minute, bundles of the mag are making their way to newsstands around the world – to stockists like Mac's Fireweed Books up in the Yukon or Mag Nation down under. A tablet or mobile phone can never have that same ink-and-paper smell as a new copy of Huck, but there is something to be said for being able to read the mag instantly anywhere.*

*That's why we've made Huck available on Zinio, the world's largest digital newsstand. We hope you'll check us out – especially if you have yet to see what we can do in print. You can find the latest digital issues of Huck here, starting from Huck 41, The Documentary Photography Special (which was named one of the best covers of 2013 by CreativeBloq).*



**The Big Issue** [https://gb.zinio.com/www/browse/product.jsp?rf=sch&productId=500940522#/  
/](https://gb.zinio.com/www/browse/product.jsp?rf=sch&productId=500940522#/)

*A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out*

*The Big Issue is a UK-based street paper that supports the homeless, the vulnerably housed and those seeking to escape poverty. Vendors normally buy the magazine for £1.25 and sell to the public for £2.50. We are using Zinio digital editions to create additional revenue opportunities to fund our street-based and pastoral care services for our vendors. We are a social enterprise company and all revenues go to support the vulnerable communities we serve. Our goal is to move our vendors away from dependency and towards full time employment*

### **Suggestions:**

*Global reach – available worldwide*

*Huge range of titles (6000+), some mainstream some niche/ independent, so readers may subscribe to one magazine and find out about others through Zinio*

*10 million readers – maximising audience reach*

*Availability to download onto almost any digital device – maximising potential audience reach  
Zinio offers single issue or subscription – allows readers the chance to read one copy and then subscribe if they want to*

*Huck is not widely available in mainstream print outlets (tends to be more specialist retailers), so Zinio potentially allows readers to access the magazine more easily*

*Huck encourages readers to seek out other magazines – including Huck's sister publication, Little White Lies - cross-promotion of other cultural magazines, suggesting this is a community where readers can access other, similar magazines*

*The Big Issue uses revenue from digital sales to fund further support for vendors, as a 'social enterprise' organisation*

### **d) The online presence of a magazine – the following is available as a digital resource and is relevant to the contemporary non-mainstream magazines**

Websites and social media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube channel, Instagram etc.) have become a vital part of the magazine experience and allow publishers to extend the brand and reach audiences through digitally convergent platforms. This article gives an insight into the redevelopment of Huck's website and its impact in terms of generating more visits to the site, the length of time people spent browsing the site and engagement with social media: <https://totheend.co.uk/our-work/huck-magazine/>. It will be useful background reading whichever contemporary magazine is being studied.



## Task

Research and analyse the website and social media feeds for your contemporary non-mainstream magazine. Give examples to support your points.

[www.huckmagazine.com/](http://www.huckmagazine.com/)

[www.adbusters.org/](http://www.adbusters.org/)

[www.bigissue.com](http://www.bigissue.com)

How does the website reinforce the brand identity of the magazine?

Is there a clear 'house style' that is evident across the magazine and the website?

What does the website offer that is different from the content of the magazine?

How does the website extend the brand (e.g. through videos, merchandise etc.)?

How does your magazine use social media (e.g. to market the latest edition or offer additional content)?

How can readers interact with the magazine through the website and social media?

**Write three paragraphs explaining why it is important for print magazine publishers to have an online presence, giving specific examples from your non-mainstream magazine.**

## Suggestions

- Appeal to audiences, who can access a much wider range of associated additional content, such as videos, online
- Online versions of magazines offer numerous opportunities for audiences to interact and become more loyal to the brand, including encouragement to follow on social media
- Regular updates mean that readers don't have to wait until the next edition is published
- Publisher can reinforce its brand values by, for example, offering additional features on specific topics
- Publisher can offer prominence to specific advertisers
- Exclusive previews of magazine content online to encourage potential readers to buy the product e.g. on Huck's Social Feed
- Cross-platform content reinforces the brand e.g. Huck TV 'The interrogation of Kim Gordon', Adbusters' YouTube channel
- Online magazines cross-promote other products/ initiatives from the same publisher e.g. Huck recommends 'Little White Lies' (sister publication) in its 'best of the web' feature

## e) Magazines and advertising (historical and contemporary magazines)

Magazines generate revenue primarily through sales of copies (print and digital) and through advertising. Advertising accounts for approximately one third of total revenues across the



industry. It is, therefore, vitally important that the magazine and advertising content target the same audience in order that the advertising brands benefit from increased sales as a result of advertising in the magazine.

Andrew Green identifies the ways in which magazine advertising can benefit the advertisers in an article entitled '**ESSENTIALS: The Power of Magazine Advertising**':

- High audience engagement
- Less distraction likely from other activities
- The ability to target niche audiences
- High production values
- Potential for placement in highly relevant editorial environment
- Non-intrusive (readers can turn the page)
- Long shelf life

Digital magazine formats can offer, in addition to these benefits:

- The potential for interactivity and personalised targeting
- New high engagement formats such as video

Information taken from [https://www.ipsos-na.com/dl/pdf/knowledge-ideas/media-content-technology/Understanding\\_Magazine\\_Audiences.pdf](https://www.ipsos-na.com/dl/pdf/knowledge-ideas/media-content-technology/Understanding_Magazine_Audiences.pdf)

Task: Analyse the adverts in your set historical or contemporary non-mainstream magazine. How far is the advertising:

- Targeting a niche audience?
- Reflecting high production values?
- Placed in a highly relevant editorial environment (advertising closely linked to the subject matter – or values – of the magazine)?

Refer to the website for your contemporary non-mainstream magazine:

- Does the website feature interactive or personalised advertising?
- Does the site have video advertising?

**Extension task:** read the article '*Why advertising in Print Magazines is more important than ever!*' By Kevin LaPalme

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-advertising-print-magazines-more-important-than-ever-lapalme>



## Answer the following question: how important is advertising to the magazine industry?

### Suggestions

- The relationship between advertising and magazine content and the ways in which magazines need to 'deliver' audiences to advertisers
- How advertising reinforces the brand identity of the magazine – epitomising the symbiotic nature of the relationship between advertising and magazines – and the values and ethos of the magazine
- How advertising specifically targets the audience of the magazine
- *Adbusters* is independent, funded by subscriptions, sales of copies and donations as a not-for-profit magazine – it is anti-consumerist and does not feature adverts. *Adbusters* subverts the traditional relationship between magazines and advertising through the use of spoof adverts as an appeal to its readers, and anti-capitalist social campaigns such as 'buy nothing day'.
- *Huck* is independent published by TCO – a 'publisher-agency' encompassing *Huck* magazine and a film magazine (*Little White Lies*). *Huck* has 'brand partnerships' with many large companies including Nike, Van's, Microsoft and also features advertising from smaller/ niche companies such as specialist printers to reflect the independent, counter-cultural nature of the magazine.
- *The Big Issue* is independent (published in conjunction with Dennis) and not-for-profit. The magazine does feature advertising for consumer goods but also a high proportion of charity and public information advertising.

### f) Applying theoretical approaches: Curran & Seaton

The different magazines can be explored in relation to different aspects of this theory. The first two bullet points could be applied to the historical magazines while the third point is more relevant to the contemporary non-mainstream magazines.

- The idea that the media is controlled by a small number of companies primarily driven by the logic of profit and power
- The idea that media concentration generally limits or inhibits variety, creativity and quality
- The idea that more socially diverse patterns of ownership help to create the conditions for more varied and adventurous media productions

The print resource: Applying theoretical approaches includes some key points relating to Curran and Seaton's ideas with targeted tasks for learners to apply and evaluate the theory in relation to their specific magazine.

### Circulation figures

*The article (link below) 'An antidote to the prevailing madness' - The titles leading a resurgence in magazine journalism, by Dominic Ponsford in the Press Gazette, 10 February 2017, argues that 'The latest ABC figures show that the decline of print journalism is far from inevitable with many titles*



*experiencing strong growth’.*

One of the recent success stories identified was The Big Issue:

***The Big Issue** was another winner in this sector and has bounced back over the last two years under editor Paul McNamee after some years of circulation decline.*

*Uniquely, it is sold by homeless people rather than newsagents and grew its total by 5 per cent year on year to 82,294.*

*McNamee said: “We’ve focused on stories and voices that really tell an outsider story. Important voices that are rarely properly heard in main media. Hitting 25th anniversary lead me to look again at what The Big Issue was at launch, so we’ve gone back to early approaches of a certain stridency, a more agitating voice. And there is plenty of news around to get teeth into.*

*“Also, I think our covers really work hard and draw people in. There is wit and immediacy.”*

<http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/an-antidote-to-the-prevailing-madness-the-titles-leading-a-resurgence-in-magazine-journalism/>

## SECTION 5 Audience

It might be useful to return to the introductory activity (discussion prompts) to discuss learners’ own interaction with magazines as a basis for discussing audience.

5a) The **‘Categorising Audiences’** activity applies psychographic profiling to selected adverts from the historical and contemporary magazines. This can be extended to cover the advertising throughout the set product and also the content of the magazine. The first part of the resource focuses on the historical magazines; the second part focuses on the contemporary magazines for A level only. The following link provides more information about the 4Cs that learners can use to develop understanding of Cross-Cultural Consumer Characterisation:

<https://issuu.com/youngandrubicam/docs/4cs>

5b) Learners need to determine the **target audience** for the chosen set magazine/s. These can be defined by demographics/ psychographics. Learners could re-visit the industry research tasks, and analysis of the magazines and advertising here and complete the profile of the ‘ideal reader’ resource.

5c) **Appeals/ Pleasures** of magazines – the digital resource can be used to identify these and then apply them to the chosen historical magazine.

A level learners can use the second part of the resource to determine the specific appeals of their contemporary non-mainstream product.

Here, it is particularly important that publishers know their specialised audience and offer



something unique:

“People are more acute than ever about sniffing out cloned content. Magazine content needs increasingly to be valuable and exclusive: what do you have that no one else does?” Colin Morrison

<https://www.royle.com/industrynews/what-is-the-future-of-magazine-media>

## **Audience Response – Stuart Hall**

It is particularly important to consider the impact of context on response to these magazines – a young contemporary audience may have an oppositional reading of the 1960s magazines, the representations, messages and values inscribed. Learners’ responses can be used here – show pages from the set magazine and ask learners to record their own response (it might be sensible to undertake this task before textually analysing the magazines). Discuss these responses in terms of age/ gender/ social & historical context.

5d) Audience response resource – historical magazine – learners consider reception theory in relation to their set magazine, considering the impact of context on interpretations.

5e) Audience response to contemporary magazine (A level only) – learners consider reception theory in relation to the magazines and actual responses.

5f) Applying Cultivation Theory to historical magazines

## SECTION 6 Practical Task

Learners have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding to a practical exercise. This could be used as practice for Component 3 if the magazine option is offered.