

## Magazines are NOT Dead, After All



*If you run an online search for the subject 'magazines are dead' you'll get 70 million results in about 20 seconds. 70 million. And yet, as I scroll through the results, I find that many posts only use 'magazines are dead' to grab your attention because, when you actually read the posts, it's clear that magazines, in fact, are not dead. Through posts, and through my experience and connections, I increasingly hear that online entities are launching magazines to better connect with their customers.*

Two companies that have launched publications as an extension of their brand are the online fashion site Net-a-Porter and the travel site Airbnb. Communicating to their audience and building a community of like-minded followers appears to be the goal of both. What is surprising, and for me delightful, is that the internet economy is returning to print as an effective marketing channel. It seems that this marketing channel translates a community of potential buyers into purchasers. In a recent CNN Money1 article, Tara Macleod-Smith, Vice President of Publishing and Media at Net-a-Porter Group, said, "Women who love fashion and who spend money on fashion, cited print as being the key influencer in purchasing decisions. We felt we needed to reinvigorate the model." Although this magazine, titled *PORTER*, is tied to a website that sells the products it covers, it is certainly more than a glorified catalogue since its content is driven by editorial. In fact, less than a year after it launched, *PORTER* magazine began to be sold on the newsstands, combining the intimacy of print with a digital shopping experience. *Domino Magazine*, in an inversely related way, began as a freestanding magazine with a cult following. After it folded in late 2013, it re-launched with a home decorating website and a quarterly publication that features the products available on the site, but also draws on the editorial cache of the original publication. As with Net-a-Porter and *Domino*, it seems that today's lifestyle and design magazines have a tighter connection with the products they sell, though less like catalogues, and more solidly editorially-driven. Is this a new genre of magazines that are more tightly (and straightforwardly) connected with products and sales channels than more traditional magazines and advertising? We don't know yet, but, we love reporting that pundits, who claim print is dead, are wrong. For these companies—and many more like them—print, once again, is playing a key role in the marketing mix. Sappi is a major supplier of paper to the magazine industry so I, for one, am very happy to see magazines launch, thrive and renew themselves. Does that make sense? 1 O'Brien, Sara Ashley. "Print's Not Dead. Here's Proof." *CNN Money*. 5 Mar. 2015. Web. 30 Apr. 2015. PORTER COVER PHOTO CREDIT: Ryan McGinley