

Online magazine

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An **online magazine** is a magazine that is delivered in an electronic form. An online magazine may be online-only, or may be the online version of an otherwise print-published magazine. Today, most online magazines are Internet websites.

An online magazine that caters to a niche or special interest subject matter, i.e. a zine, is referred to as an **ezine** (usually pronounced "e-zeen"). An ezine that appears on the World Wide Web is called a **webzine**, although webzine may also refer to all online magazines. Other names include **cyberzine** and **hyperzine**. For web sites that represent an existing print magazine, the web site is usually referred to as "<publication title> Online", whereas an online only magazine is often titled "<publication title> Online Magazine".

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Format

A webzine tends to be published on a regulated basis (weekly, biweekly, monthly) and may maintain an editorial control system. A distinguishing characteristic from blogs is that webzines bypass the strict adherence to the reverse-chronological format; the front page is mostly clickable headlines and is laid out either manually on a periodic basis, or automatically based on the story type.

Delivery

Today, the majority of online magazines use a website. Historically, the first e-zines were delivered on electronic media such as CD-ROM by mail; this is now relatively rare. There are some publishers that publish with an online presence that is archived on to CD's at the end of the publishing year as a volume and distributed through postal mail.

There are also subscription newsletters delivered by e-mail. Most modern online magazines use websites, and often offer e-mail subscription to either notify the subscriber of updated content, or in some cases, send the content itself.

Business model

Many general interest online magazines provide free access to all aspects of their online content although some publishers have opted to require a subscription fee to access premium online article and/or multi-media content. Online magazines generate revenue based on targeted search ads to web-site visitors, banner ads (online display advertising), affiliate links, online classified ads, product-purchase capabilities, advertiser directory links, or alternative informational/commercial purpose.

Many large print-publishers now provide digital reproduction of their print magazine titles through various online services for a fee. These service providers also refer to their collections of these digital format products as online magazines.

The original ezines and diskmags, due to their low cost and initial non-mainstream targets, may be seen as a disruptive technology to traditional publishing houses.

History

Cult of the Dead Cow claims to have published the first ezine, starting in 1984, with its ezine still in production more than 20 years later. While this claim is hotly debated, ezines certainly began in the BBS days of the 1980s. Phrack began publication in 1985 and, unlike Cult of the Dead Cow which publishes articles individually, Phrack published collections of articles in a manner more similar to a print magazine.

Growth

In the late 1990s Ezine publishers began adapting to the interactive qualities of the Internet instead of duplicating magazines on the web. Some of these attempts included *Kafenio* (ISSN 1108-6866) and *Zone451* (now renamed *JustSayGo* and first published in traditional format in 1995). *Themestream* (2001, now defunct^[1]) was another attempt at generating content by opening its pages to everybody who cared to write and get paid by the click. *Webseed* tried to take up on the idea but to the contrary of *Themestream* created individual zines.^[2] This experiment was terminated shortly after the dot-com crash though some of the zines created are still on the market such as *NatureOfAnimals* or *FranceForFreebooters*.

The tendency seems to be that the new concepts of the Ezines go more towards interactive content and those using old fashioned layouts are slowly ceasing publication, such as zinos. These changing trends are in part due to escalating problems getting ezines past ever-more-vigilant spam filters and to the increasing popularity of weblogs (blogs). Many established ezines have now become little more than teasers for web-based versions, or for blog versions that provide greater interaction.

In the 2000s, some webzines began appearing in a printed format to complement their online versions. These included *Movie Insider*, *Slate*, *Synthesis* and *Lucire* magazines.

Webzine Conference Series

Between 1998 and 2005, in San Francisco and New York, a series of webzine-focused conferences brought together independent personal online publishers to share their experiences. Started by Srimi Kumar, the "Webzine" conferences were continued primarily by filmmaker Ryan Junell and Eddie Codel. Junell has worked to track the history of the early webzine movement through these festivals; his research is linked below. After a hiatus, Codel and Junell organized the return of the Webzine conference to the Bay Area in 2005. Webzine 2005 took place over two days at the Swedish-American Hall in San Francisco. It consisted of three main areas: speakers and panel discussions, workshops and a self-organizing area called the Master's Lounge modeled after BAR Camp. Webzine 2005 was emceed by veteran Webzine emcee Justin Hall, Annalee Newitz and Charlie Anders.

See also

- Diskmag
- History of the Internet
- News site
- Online journal
- Sole Proprietor Magazine
- textfiles.com
- Underground ezine
- webmonkey
- Zine

References

- ↑ Themestream.com is closing its doors
- ↑ Webseed

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