Course Description

Today, with the advent of the internet and social media, the purpose of print magazines has been thrown into question. Indeed, with digital media often able to deliver on the premise of print magazines faster and more comprehensively, the following questions arise: in the digital age, what should the role of the print magazine be? What should the relationship between digital and analogue media evolve into? And finally, given the above, what does the future of magazines look like?

These issues will be addressed in this five-session course.

Guest Speakers

To add greater depth to class discussions, guest speakers will be a part of the first four sessions. Industry experts will share specific expertise on course topics and offer their respective vision of “The Future of Magazines”.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>Parviz Parvizi – Co-Founder, Clammr; former Associate Principal, McKinsey &amp; Company</td>
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<td>4/5</td>
<td>Nicholas Thompson – Editor, newyorker.com</td>
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<td>Monica Ray – EVP, Consumer Marketing, Condé Nast</td>
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<td>4/12</td>
<td>Michael Klein – EVP, Programming &amp; Content Strategy, Digital Channels, Condé Nast Entertainment</td>
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<td>4/19</td>
<td>Nicole Zussman – VP, Human Resources, Condé Nast</td>
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Assignments & Grading Criteria:

Students will be expected to review each guest speaker’s bio before the class session in which he or she will be speaking. Additional assignments for each class are outlined in the syllabus, below.

Course grade will be based on a final project that students will present during the final class session: Tuesday, April 26th.
**Course Outline**

**WEEK 1**

**March 29 (2.5 hours): The Media Landscape**

This first class will give a broad overview of the roles magazines have played in modern culture and the services various magazine genres provide to readers.

In addition, **guest speaker Parviz Parvizi**, Co-Founder, Clammr and former Associate Principal, McKinsey & Company, will deliver a synopsis of the media industry since 2008 and discuss the impact both the recession and technology have had on magazines.

**The Media Landscape Part I**

Gina Sanders will introduce herself and share a brief description of her 29-year career in magazine publishing. An overview of the business and editorial functions of a magazine will also be provided.

To demonstrate the ways magazines have both reflected and impacted culture, seminal magazine moments will be explored (e.g. *Vanity Fair*'s Demi Moore cover and Caitlin Jenner feature; *The New Yorker*'s Abu Ghraib exposé; *Vogue Italia*'s issue exclusively featuring models of color; *LIFE*'s photojournalistic coverage of the Vietnam War).

Second, we will look at how magazines have always been more than just “printed matter”: they’ve been brands themselves. From the “Good Housekeeping Seal”, to the “Vanity Fair Oscar Party”, to “The New Yorker Festival”, to “TIME Person of the Year”, to the “TIME 100 Most Influential People Gala”, magazines and their influence have always extended beyond the printed page.

Today, with more and more readers consuming media digitally, print revenues are in steep decline. Still, digital advertising has yet to make up the shortfall. Hence, the need for magazines to diversify into multiple revenue streams and extend into other businesses has never been greater.

**The Media Landscape Part II**

In the second part of this class, Mr. Parviz will explain what has happened in the magazine industry since 2008 (i.e. The Great Recession, the advent of digital media and social media, direct-to-consumer marketing, and disintermediation at large). Students will learn how these forces have disrupted the media industry; and importantly, will initiate class discussion about what “The Future of Magazines” might look like.
Mr. Parvizi will answer the question: what does “The Future of Magazines” look like (in his view)?

**Assignment #1 (due April 5):**

Read this week's *The New Yorker*.
Read and review www.newyorker.com.

Students will be asked to discuss the many ways they found to interact with *The New Yorker* as well as their own ideas for how *The New Yorker* content might be distributed. We will also discuss why these ideas might or might not work for this unique brand.

**WEEK 2**

**April 5 (2.5 hours): Case History: The New Yorker**

**Guest Speakers:** Nicholas Thompson – Editor, newyorker.com; Monica Ray – EVP, Consumer Marketing, Condé Nast

Perhaps no other magazine in the world is more respected for—and has more respect for—the written word than *The New Yorker*. Ninety-one years old, and the publisher of articles, fiction, poetry, and art by no less than 546 great writers and artists, this storied publication has made an astonishingly fast transition to the digital age.

**The New Yorker Case History Part I**

Nicholas Thompson, Editor, newyorker.com, will share the story of *The New Yorker’s* transition to the digital age. Mr. Thompson will discuss *The New Yorker’s* raison d’être and how that has been expanded through digital platforms. Questions addressed include: what are *The New Yorker’s* new products and ways of communicating with readers? What initial fears did the editors have when beginning this digital evolution? What have been the challenges along the way? What are the types of issues that raised hackles? How does *The New Yorker* balance preservation and progress?

What ideas did students bring to class? Discussion to follow.
The New Yorker Case History Part II

In the second part of this class, we will discuss how these new products are marketed and delivered to consumers.

To lead this conversation, we will be joined by Monica Ray, EVP, Consumer Marketing, Condé Nast. Ms. Ray will lay out how these new “New Yorker” products have been introduced to consumers and the results they generated. Focus will be on The New Yorker’s pricing strategy and the pivotal decision to charge for digital content.

Students will be asked to share their ideas for new ways to distribute The New Yorker content. A discussion will follow during which student ideas will be analyzed in light of the case history shared by Mr. Thompson and Ms. Ray.

Both Mr. Thompson and Ms. Ray will be asked to offer their own views regarding “The Future of Magazines”.

Assignment #2 (due April 12):

Students will be asked to identify their favorite magazine. Reading through the current issue, they will identify a specific feature that could be made into a movie, TV or web series, and come prepared to present the rationale for their choice.

WEEK 3

April 12 (2.5 hours): New Opportunities for Traditional Publishers

Guest Speaker: Michael Klein – EVP, Programming & Content Strategy, Digital Channels, Condé Nast Entertainment

In this class, we will explore how the entire media landscape has been disrupted. Again, with the advent of digital media, social media, live streams, and YouTube, how content is delivered and consumed has changed radically. While this has presented monumental challenges, it has also opened up doors for magazine publishers to use and package their content in new and innovative ways.

Michael Klein, EVP, Programming & Content Strategy, Digital Channels, Condé Nast Entertainment, will discuss how this transformation is transpiring at Condé Nast. Mr. Klein will provide an overview of the disruption that has occurred, including what the landscape used to look like and what it looks like today.

Mr. Klein will outline the various capabilities within the recently-formed Condé Nast Entertainment (CNE) group and present data on the breadth, depth, and sheer
number of initiatives in which CNE is involved. He will offer insight into the cultural and institutional challenges this massive endeavor has posed.

Mr. Klein will describe his background, career path, and current role. He will present projects that he has steered during his tenure at CNE, sharing the development process from idea origination to execution, the cultural obstacles encountered along the way as well as project results.

Students will be invited to share their ideas for movies, TV or web series from their favorite magazines. Feedback will be provided on feasibility and strength of narrative for development.

In parting, Mr. Klein will be asked to offer his vision of “The Future of Magazines”.

**Assignment #3 (due April 14):**

Students will be asked to get a print magazine and familiarize themselves with the mastheads. Note there are two: editorial and business mastheads. Students should come prepared to ask questions about roles in which they are interested or about which they would like to learn more.

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**WEEK 4**

April 19 (2.5 hours)

**Guest Speakers:** Nicole Zussman, VP, Human Resources, Condé Nast

In this session, we will look at what all this disruption in the media world means for students. In other words, if magazines today are so much more than just “printed matter”, and if “magazines of the future” will look radically different from those today, what professional skills will be required to create these magazines, and what roles will be in demand?

Additionally, this class will outline the final course project.

**Part I: Q&A with Nicole Zussman**

The first part of this class will be a presentation by—and Q&A with—Nicole Zussman, VP, Human Resources, Condé Nast. Nicole will dissect the editorial and business magazine mastheads. She will explain the skills most in demand by hiring managers today and discuss what roles, skills, and experience will be sought after in the future. Q&A on how to identify the right role for students’ individual interests will follow.
Part II: Discussion of Final Project (presented April 26):

If disintermediation is the trend of the future, what would the “Uber of Magazines” look like? Students will be encouraged to pursue radical options as well as look back at older, successful models and reinvent or rework them for the digital age.

Parameters for the final project will be provided along with grading criteria and an overview of the class “prize structure”. Specifically, one winner and two runners up will be selected and subsequently invited to a “Day at Condé Nast”. Students will have an opportunity to ask questions about the project in class or during office hours the following day. (Gina Sanders will remain in Boston on Wednesday, April 20th for this purpose.)

WEEK 5 (FINAL SESSION)

April 26 (5 hours): Final Project Presentations

Students will present their individual projects to the class.

All students will receive a grade on their final presentations, which will be their final course grade. In addition, one project winner and two runners up will be selected. These three students will receive invitations to a day-long Program at Condé Nast where they will watch magazines operate in real-time and witness strategic discussions about “the future of magazines”. If desired, informational interviews can be arranged for these three students to explore potential job opportunities at Condé Nast.