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AMERICAN HORSE PUBLICATIONS *FOR THE RECORD*
AUGUST 2008



AHP FOR THE RECORD AUGUST 2008 ISSUE

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FROM THE HOME OFFICE THE MAGAZINE: MEDIA'S DARLING CHILD

BY: JEREMY W LAW, EDITOR

It's obvious we're in a recession. The value of the dollar is down, while unemployment rates and fuel prices continue to rise. The rising fuel costs drive up the overhead for most publishers. Further injury is inflicted as hikes in the cost of living take a bite out of consumers' disposable income. It almost seems like a good time to panic.

Magazine Publishers of America disagrees—or, rather, the research in their latest handbook appears to allay our unscientific fears and calm the would-be panickers. Using the results of various research groups, the MPA Magazine Handbook for 2008/2009 presents some interesting trends. The handbook is a great tool for any publication looking for more figures and statistics to back up its advertising pitch. The news is rosy, if not downright encouraging.

- Since 1997, the total number of magazines on the market has only increased.
- Usage of magazine affiliated web sites has increased faster than the usage of the web overall—12 percent in the past year to only 8 percent for the entire web.
- Far above television and the internet, magazines are the number one “medium of engagement.” They are considered far more “trustworthy,” “life enhancing” and “inspirational” than TV or the web.
- Since 2003, the number of total magazine readers has increased by 5 percent. The percentage of adults (18 and older) who read magazines has held at 85 percent.
- For those worried that magazines have sold out: the average editorial to advertising ratio is at a relative high in favor of editorial content—53 percent.

- For more than half of magazine readers, advertising actually enhances the reading experience and readers see magazine ads as more credible than those on TV or the web.
- The top 25 magazines vastly outperform the top 25 prime-time television programs in reaching targeted audiences.
- The typical, dedicated magazine consumers are more likely to try new products, and are also younger, more affluent and better educated than their TV-watching counterparts.

These are only a few, morale-boosting highlights from the 80-page handbook, which can be downloaded for free at:

www.magazine.org/advertising/handbook/Magazine_Handbook.aspx

Even if your sales pitch doesn't need any help, you should give the handbook a gander. In these trying times, there's nothing indulgent about an uplifting read.



AHP MEMBER SPOTLIGHT DARRELL DODDS



**WESTERN
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Darrell Dodds, publisher of *Western Horseman* was kind enough to answer our questions about his background, and some of the secrets to his success. In addition to being a writer, editor and businessman, Dodds is also an accomplished photographer. His images accompany many *Western Horseman* feature articles and often grace the magazine's cover.

How long have you been in publishing? How long with Western Horseman?

My first job was selling advertising for a small California newspaper company right out of college. A few years later, I started my own weekly newspaper that I eventually sold. In 1982, I went to work for the *Appaloosa News* (now *Appaloosa Journal*). Ten years later, I moved to Texas and took over editorial responsibilities for the *Paint Horse Journal*. In 2002, I edited *Horse & Rider* magazine before assuming publisher duties at *Western Horseman* in 2006.

What drew you to publishing?

In a word, Watergate. For a short period of time in the mid-1970s, journalists were revered for being defenders of freedom and the service they provided to society was considered rather noble. They also wore cool suits, hung around bars a lot and always seemed to be surrounded by attractive, intelligent people. Later, I discovered the truth, but by then, I was hooked on the trade so stuck with it.

What does your publication do to remain current and fresh? Have there been any recent renovations or additions?

Well, we worry a lot. We also spend a lot of time at Barnes & Noble looking at cool magazines, none of which have much to do with horses. Fortunately, I inherited an incredibly creative staff that dislikes the status quo as much as I do. I basically try to stay out of their way.

For example, shortly after arriving on staff, I suggested we place editorial material into topical sections so readers could find what they were most interested in quicker. Once the idea was accepted, the staff took the concept much further than I had imagined. Repaginating and redesigning a book like *Western Horseman* was risky but it has turned out to be successful.

We've also placed greater emphasis on original, creative photography and are far more selective in the type of articles we pursue. We took a portion of the money that we were spending on freelancers and began buying more plane tickets for staff writers and photographers. I believe that spending more time in the field has helped rejuvenate our magazine more than anything else. It is hard to get excited about horses and horse people when you are staring at a computer screen.

What is the role of the web for WH?

We are entering this game rather late. Morris Communications, our parent company, also owns HorseCity.com, one of the most successful equine-oriented websites in the world. Consequently, we've been in a supporting role until recently. Next month, we are introducing a modified template with many more interactive features. Traffic is getting to the point where we will be pursuing a selective group of clients to help us support our website strategy. More than anything, we want our website to be an extension of the *Western Horseman* brand, not just another digital directory.

The Western lifestyle is steeped in a rich history and tradition. Has that been a significant factor in how WH developed its digital content?

I think it was at first but the web isn't a traditional medium, consequently, we are looking at successful websites that cater to an enthusiast audience, then we try to figure out how we can borrow some of the better ideas out there and adapt them to our subject and audience. What little we've done with slideshows and videos has increased our numbers rapidly, so I see us providing more content in that format. People don't want to read on the web as much as they want to be entertained. If they just want information, there is always Google and Wikipedia.

How has the current economy affected your publication?

More staff members are requesting to work from home, especially those who drive diesel trucks. On a more serious note, we're facing greater challenges on the newsstand and advertising dollars are more difficult to come by. At the same time, expenses are going through the roof. Consequently, we do a lot more testing now than we used to, not only with covers but also with content. We don't take anything for granted. While making budget is a challenge, I believe the added pressure is making us a better magazine. I know it's making us better photographers, writers and designers.

What other challenges does WH face today?

Skyrocketing production and distribution costs scare us the most. It would be great if we could pass

those expenses along to our customers but there is a limit on what you can charge without it negatively affecting your business. I think the magazine industry has done a poor job of valuing their product. People don't flinch at paying \$7 for a latte and a muffin but they think they are being robbed when you ask them to pay \$5.00 for a magazine that costs much more to produce and deliver.

What do you believe to be the future of publishing?

I just read *Folio's* latest issue where ten of the highest paid and most successful publishers offered their opinions on the future of publishing. They agree that publishing, as most of us know it, is dead. Today, publishers must develop and distribute content for multiple platforms simultaneously. I expect mainstream media will be far more aggressive in pursuing new technologies and business models, with equine-oriented publications lagging behind. Most of us just don't have the resources to experiment or to be on the cutting edge. Many of us are already distributing digital newsletters, creating online communities for readers and doing other things in order to strengthen our brand and to be more interactive with our customers. But I expect we'll look back on these efforts a few years from now and see just how minimal they really were.

AHP NEWS

SAVE TIME AND MONEY WITH THE AHP NEWSSTAND BOOTH

The AHP Newsstand Booth is a cooperative program that provides members with a cost effective way to exhibit at national and regional equine events.

When budgets are tight, invest wisely and allow AHP to distribute your publications or promotional materials for you. At each event, AHP holds a drawing for a free, one-year subscription for a magazine featured at the newsstand booth. You'll receive a list of the generated subscriber/contact leads as well as the original entry forms from those entrants who checked your publication or business. The AHP Newsstand Booth offers an easy, affordable way for you to present yourself to thousands of potential subscribers, advertisers and horse owners.

Get more information and download the Participation Form at:

www.americanhorsepubs.org/programs/trade_show/

COULD BRIGHT, YOUNG TALENT GIVE YOUR EQUINE PUBLICATION OR BUSINESS A BOOST?

The American Horse Publications Internship Program is designed to bring students interested in pursuing careers in the equine publishing industry to work at AHP member publications and businesses. Interns gain valuable experience that helps them enter the workplace; member publications and businesses get additional help where they need it most. This is a wonderful opportunity for AHP members, whether you have an existing internship program or want to establish one.

Only AHP members are eligible to be listed in the handbook. The information you provide will be compiled in the 2009 AHP Internship Handbook, which will be sent to colleges and schools across the country with journalism, equine studies, agricultural communications, and riding programs.

If you are interested in hosting an intern, visit the "Member News" section at:

www.americanhorsepubs.org/ to get more information and download a form for the 2009 Internship Handbook. Completed forms are due by September 15.

SARATOGA SCORES HIGH WITH ATTENDEES

BY CHRIS BRUNE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Break from the Gate in 2008

AHP SARATOGA



"The fact that the seminar was held in horse country definitely enriched the experience as a whole," wrote one attendee about the location of the AHP "Break from the Gate in 2008" Seminar held in Saratoga Springs, New York in June. Nearly 78% of the respondents to the seminar evaluation survey agreed that the location was excellent (4.66); and 69% indicated they would like the AHP seminar to return to Saratoga in the future. Saratoga Springs is a charming town brimming with anything and everything horse.

Selecting a meeting site that meets all of the needs of both the planners and the attendees is challenging, but the Saratoga Hilton proved to be

an excellent choice garnering over 4.0 for guest rooms (4.12), hotel services (4.19) and food (4.27). AHP arranged for a shuttle service sponsored by the Saratoga Convention and Tourism Bureau, Impressions of Saratoga, ST Publishing, Parting Glass Racing, Cheshire Horse, and National Museum of Racing to assist attendees with transportation from/to the airport in Albany. Members who took advantage of the discounted rates scored the shuttle service 4.3.

The survey asked attendees to rate sessions on a 5 point scale with 5.0 indicating very valuable. Every session scored above 3.36 with the top-rated session being Integrated Media Sales with Ari Rosenberg (4.39) closely followed by Jim Nissen's two sessions, Design LIVE (4.23) and The Joy of Self Review (4.29). Ann Wylie's three sessions also rated high with Play With Your Words (4.14) earning the highest score. One comment that echoed the thoughts of others was: "The seminar was outstanding from start to finish, and Jim Nissen's and Ari Rosenberg's sessions were especially useful and memorable - solid speakers."

The "Best of Saratoga" Tour on Thursday scored an excellent rating of 4.39, but the highest score for events went to the showing of the "First Saturday in May" that received a 4.82. More than 50% of the members who responded stayed after the Friday night TOGA Party to watch the movie which was introduced by one of the film's producers, John Hennegan, who sold out of DVDs he brought along. The Student Award SaraTOGA Party also performed well with a score of 4.07.

One area of concern was the length of the Awards Banquet and Presentations. The event scored a respectable 3.78 despite the fact that it ended too late in the evening, especially for those members with early flights home. The Board of Directors plans to address this concern at its October board meeting and already has a list of recommendations to help shorten the duration of the night's events.

One of the most rewarding results from the survey was that all 17 of the first-time attendees who took the survey responded that they were made to feel welcome. Here are some of their "first-time" impressions.

This was my first time conference and it made me so proud to be a member. I want to come every year.
Judy Walker, USHorse.biz, California

I was delightfully surprised to be contacted, as a first-timer, by my assigned 'mentor.' That was a helpful, classy, encouraging and welcoming gesture, and a leg up in the networking that is such an energizing part of this experience - big kudos to Laurie of Flying Changes for taking me under her wing.

L.A. Pomeroy, Affiliate Member, Massachusetts

I cannot express strongly enough...the Seminar was absolutely wonderful, far beyond my hopes or expectations. A first-time attendee, I felt so much embraced by AHP members and administrators.
Marion Altieri, Affiliate Member

As a first-timer, I was welcomed quite warmly. Although I could only attend for a short time, it made me want to

plan to attend the entire event in the future.

Lynn Larrabee, W.F. Young, Inc., Massachusetts

Overall a very nice seminar. I met so many terrific people and have so many contacts now. I also felt energized and couldn't wait to get back to work to get crackin' on new ideas!

Stephanie Sanders-Ferris, Massachusetts Horse, Massachusetts.

Attendees arrived from 26 states and 3 countries including Canada, Germany and The Netherlands. Traveling is not an easy feat these days and not without delays, long layovers and cancelled flights, but once in Saratoga, everyone enjoyed being there. Fran Jurga ended her pre-seminar article on Saratoga with this paragraph.

"During an August telecast of one of the big stakes races from Saratoga, broadcasters spliced together a music video of scenes to the music of Bon Jovi's song "I Love This Town."

As the lyrics say:

"No matter where you're from, tonight you're from right here. This is where it all goes down...I love this town."

AHP came...AHP saw...and AHP fell in love with this town.

REVISIT THE SEMINAR

Now you can revisit the Break from the Gate in 2008 AHP seminar in Saratoga Springs with images submitted by AHP members, Tracy Gantz, Robert Bolson, Daniel K. Lew and Christy West.

To access the Saratoga Springs Photo Gallery, use the link below or click on "Seminars" from the AHP home page.

www.americanhorsepubs.org/album/2008_seminar/index.html

If you have any images from Saratoga that you would like to share with fellow members, please send them to Webmaster Christy West at cmwest@thehorse.com. Be sure to caption all images.



PHOTOS BY CHRISTY WEST

SMALL BUT MIGHTY- FOR AND FROM SMALL PUBLISHERS

GET IN FRONT OF YOUR CUSTOMERS!

BY: CHERYL ERPELDING, CEO OF RIDING'S PUBLICATIONS

One of the best ways to keep your publication healthy is to keep it in front of your customers. There are many ways to do so. Be careful not to assume that once you have an advertiser or reader that they will always be there. Don't hide in your office and depend on e-mails and phone calls to get the work done.

If you are shipping your magazine to tack and feed stores, consider doing some deliveries yourself. Pick an area, load up your car and make those deliveries in person. When I first started my magazine, I drove all around San Diego County, stocking feed stores and walking the big barns to make sure the magazines were in all the right places. This month I plan on making more of those personal deliveries to distribution locations in San Diego County. Last month when I was out and about, I found out that one feed store was under new ownership. Because of my visit, the owner bought a half page ad in our annual California Horseman's Directory.

Delivering the magazine myself will also cut some of my shipping costs and give me a good opportunity to talk directly with readers and advertisers, as well as potential readers and advertisers.

Having a booth at a trade show or horse show is another great way to meet advertisers and readers. I'm always amazed when I walk around at a show, passing out magazines, people will say, "Hi, I want

to run an ad in your magazine!" Even though I send e-mails, make phone calls and have a great website, it is that face-to-face contact that inspires many advertisers to book space in our magazine. At trade shows, we also hold drawings for free advertising in our magazine or directory. This is another way to get valuable contact information for potential advertisers.

Trade shows and horse shows are also great places to find new readers. You can gather their information by placing them on your complimentary mailing list.

If you have a problem or a great idea to share with the small publishers, please send me an e-mail.

cheryl@ridingmagazine.com



AHP NEW MEMBERS

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Cowgirl University: National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame

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Contact: Chad Isham

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Fort Worth, TX 76107

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Fax: 817-336-2670

chad@cowgirl.net

www.cowgirlu.org

Cowgirl University is a dynamic series of educational programs dedicated to sharing the western lifestyle with a broad audience both inside and outside the museum utilizing the National Cowgirl Museum's most important resource, its honorees. Proceeds from Cowgirl University will benefit the National Cowgirl Museum's educational department.

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NEW STUDENT MEMBERS

Caitlin Rooney

Delaware Valley College

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Warrington, PA 18976

Phone: 646-772-7579

rooneyc@delval.edu

Caitlin has been around horses for the past 10 years. She is a senior at Delaware Valley College majoring in equine science and management with a minor in written communications. Throughout college she has written for the school paper, but her only other equine writing experience before this summer was advertising and marketing her family-run Horse Rescue in New York. She has moved to Texas for a summer internship with the American Paint Horse Association in the Marketing/Public Relations department. Working there has been very helpful in her career path because it has given her the experience to decide whether she wants to continue working in the equine industry.

Jennifer Ellen Vare

University of South Florida

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Jennifer's career goal is to find a job in equine publishing that would utilize her creative writing abilities, computer and customer service skills, passion for horses and her creative photography skills. She has been involved with horses since she was five, including dressage and cross-country jumping competitions. She has assisted at horse shows, managed barns, been a counselor at a youth horse camp, provided individual horse care and volunteered at the Smith Center (now "InStride"), an equine program that works with the handicapped. In high school, she completed Honors English classes, worked on the yearbook staff where she was responsible for photography, design and layout of the pages and wrote stories to match the pages and photos. She has also held part-time jobs. At the University of South Florida, she continues to take creative writing, journalism and public relations classes, along with photography.

**TECH TIPS NEVER LOSE ANOTHER
COMPUTER FILE**

BY: JEREMY W LAW, EDITOR

I can't say it enough: back up your files. Back 'em all up—work files, music, pictures and e-mail. Many of today's computers have back up tools—some of them are even automated. They take snapshots of your hard drive in case data gets corrupted or you accidentally delete a valuable file. These snapshots help, but what if your hard drive dies or your computer gets destroyed or stolen?

If you lost all your important files, what would you pay to get them back? Chances are you'd pay more than the cost of a reliable, external hard drive. If you have any files you can't do without or easily replace, you should invest your "insurance" money now. Backing up is now easy and affordable. There are no more excuses for not backing up, or for backing up files using outdated (i.e. unreliable) technology.

Enter the external hard drives. Most external drives are larger than the majority of internal hard drives. The external drives range from 120 GB to 2 TB (1 Terra Byte = 1000 GB) and cost between \$70 and \$300, connecting to your computer via a USB cord. Some of the larger drives will have both a USB cord and a separate power cord, while the smaller, portable models are powered by your computer through the USB port. There are two important notes. First, the available drives vary slightly in how they connect to the computer, so make sure the drive's plug matches your computer's port. Second, nearly all the external hard drives work with PCs and Macs for storage, but, many drives include backup software that may only work with PCs, and usually only those running Windows 2000, XP or Vista.

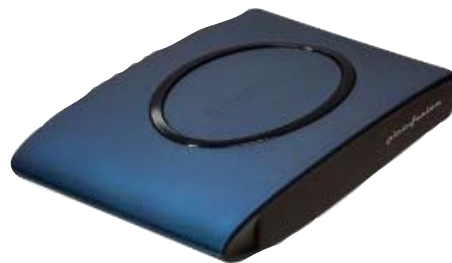
Fortunately, most externals are “plug and play,” meaning you just plug them in and they’re quickly—or immediately—ready to use. The important compatibility information you’ll need to verify is listed on the product packaging or can be found on the manufacturer’s or retailer’s web site. Also, you may need to format the drive to let a Mac write to it. Formatting is easy with Mac’s Disk Utility; just remember to copy any useful programs or files from the drive first. If you’re not yet ready to head to the store, below is a quick run-down of some available models and their prices.

The 160 GB Seagate Go lists for about \$90 and offers the ability to carry your computer desktop in your shirt pocket. The drive comes with software that enables you to carry your e-mail, IM client, passwords, internet browser and favorites with you. This allows you to use any PC as your own. If that’s not what you need, the 160 GB Seagate Go can simply serve as a storage drive. It also includes a “file sync” program, which I find frustrating. It copies files from your computer to the external drive, but also copies files from the external to the computer. If you clean up your computer, the external may restore the files you deleted. Even when it asks first, I find it to be a nuisance. The drive, which also comes in a 250 GB size, is good for storage and back-up in a small size and at a good price.

Seagate offers a larger, desktop external USB drive in several sizes for varying prices. The 250 GB is about \$65, the 500 GB is just over \$100, The 750 GB is about \$160 and the 1TB drive is about \$200. It’s physically larger than the Seagate Go, but, has the same, attractive cappuccino body and an illuminated amber bar. A stand minimizes its footprint, and it takes up about the same space as a stapler.

lomega offers a few nice options, too. I still have my old lomega Zip Drive, though it doesn’t get much use these days. The company now has a small, easily portable 320 GB eGo portable external drive. Via download you can get software to carry your desktop to other computers as with the Seagate Go. Additionally, the lomega eGo provides drop protection up to about 4 ½ feet. lomega also offers a 500 GB Prestige desktop hard drive for about \$90. It includes a stand to minimize the space it occupies.

SimpleTech sells an eco-friendly external drive. The 500 GB SimpleTech [re]drive is made of bamboo and recycled aluminum. There’s no fan—the aluminum functions as a “heat sink” to draw off warmth from the drive’s works. It, too, stands on its side in a modest footprint. For about \$125 you get to back up your files with a hip external drive that will impress even your greenest friends from Boulder or Eugene.



SimpleTech also offers a line of Signature Mini externals. The pocket-sized drives come in a variety of colors, ranging in size from 120 to 320 GB and at prices from about \$70 to \$180.

Here in our office, we use three backup drives because we have a lot of client files that we’ll need to keep for a while. Two of the units are Seagates—a 75 GB and a 250 GB, along with a 300 GB Maxtor One Touch II. The larger drives are used more for archiving, and the large size is perfect because we

collect a lot of files. They’ve all performed well as back-up drives, though we don’t use the large drives as full-time hard drives. However, I do know people who use them constantly without any problems.

A small Seagate drive is what I use for my personal computer. It’s only 75 GB, but the size encourages me to clean up now and then. Invariably you end up with several versions of a single file, or other files that you’ll never need again—all of which can be deleted. I have played it safe, backing up every single picture, word document, e-mail and song, though I’ve barely filled 20 GB.

If you’re archiving a lot of video or graphics files, you’ll likely need a drive with a few hundred GB. Also, consider storing your back-up drive in a fire-proof safe, or at least storing it apart from the computer you’re backing up. If flooding, fire, lightning or theft claims the computer, you will still have your back-up. If you have to travel with an external drive, I’d get two and keep one in a safe place in your office or home. As long as you’re careful and willing to carry it, just about any external drive can be used as a portable drive. If you don’t like your drive’s included software—or if you didn’t get any—there are a myriad of free, tiny applications made to run on external drives available at www.portableapps.com.

Whichever drive you choose, choose it today. Losing computer files is a matter of “when,” not “if.” Of course, if you are the rare person who’s never lost a file or had any accidents whatsoever, please contact me. I’d like your help picking my lotto numbers.