

Magazine Launch Production Checklist

You've heard it a thousand times: time is money. This axiom is even clearer when outsourcing work to anyone who bills by the hour—writers, designers, lawyers, and so forth. It's true of your in-house staff as well. Getting well organized before you make assignments will save you time, money, and even a little heartache in the long run. This checklist will help your planning for your production cycle launch to go smoothly. For the launch to go high-end and more effective, let's talk about SPARK Publications handling many aspects for you!

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Create your media brand platform.

A brand platform is more than just your logo, masthead, or magazine name. It includes your mission and values and describes the tone you'll use when communicating with your audience. It will serve as guidepost when making decisions about content, imagery, marketing, and more. Of course, your magazine design must reflect your brand platform. We can help you with that.



Determine your budget.

Forecast all your expenses, which may include writers, editors, designers, printing, mailing, web hosting, your own salary, and more. If you work with us, we'll help you get highly competitive print rates. Once you've forecasted expenses, you can set revenue goals. Note that ad revenue may not be enough. Many niche publishers rely on special events to meet revenue goals.



Create your production schedule.

Advertisers will expect their ads to hit the market on time. Creating and, more importantly, sticking to your production schedule is paramount. Begin with the date you want the magazine to arrive in mailboxes and back up from there.



Create your editorial calendar.

Your editorial calendar is a playbook for your staff, contractors, and advertisers. It maps out planned content for the coming year's worth of issues. It will help editorial staff generate story ideas, sales staff target advertising prospects, and advertisers plan their spend.

For more information and to focus on your specific publication, let our specialists guide you.



Create your story budget.

The story budget is the editor's game plan. It helps them plan balanced and interesting content, provides a to-do checklist for writing and photography assignments, and generally helps gather the process in one place. You'll need to create one for each issue.



Create your ad list.

Putting together a magazine is a little like working on a jigsaw puzzle without knowing what it's supposed to look like at the end. A designer skilled in long-form content layout (like those at SPARK Publications) has a special sort of brain that can imagine the end result and make all the pieces fit. A well-organized ad list helps them work more efficiently. The list should show the advertiser name, ad size, orientation, any page placement requests, and whether the art is new or a pickup. The list also helps your sales staff ensure commitments are met.



Organize your content.

When submitting content to your designers, it's very helpful to group it in folders by article or section. This goes back to that jigsaw analogy. It helps the designers more efficiently create a picture of what goes where.

Check out a list of many of our services to help you plan and produce your magazine:

<https://sparkpublications.com/all-spark-services.html>