

Women's magazines in Germany: Two thirds of all women read women's magazines

Women's magazines in Germany play a huge role in the German magazine market. In aggregate, they reach over 66% / 22 million of the total of 33 million women in the over 14 age group. At the present time, the 108 weekly, fortnightly or monthly women's magazines recorded by IVW boast a total sold circulation of over 21 million copies per individual publication date. Although the German market for women's magazines is a hard fought, highly competitive, and densely served sector, it is very attractive for the German publishers. Women's magazines have a reputation as effective advertising formats which can speak to the multilayered, female consumer target group in a differentiated way. The total advertising sales in German women's magazines in 2008 exceeded Euro 863 million. This corresponds to more than 22% of all advertising expenditure attracted by popular magazines over this period.

The primary function of the classic women's magazines has hardly changed in Germany since they first appeared in the market. They are still an important source of advice on fashion, cosmetics, housekeeping and partnership. However, the magazines have had to adjust over the years to the increasing fractionation of their readership.

Female biographies today are not as uniform as in the 1950s and 1960s: there can be huge differences today in the lifestyles of a 40-year-old woman and her female friends of the same age. To an increasing extent, women's magazines can therefore no longer assume that their readership always shares the same interests. To ensure that they maintain their relevance against this background, women's magazines therefore have to keep permanently on their toes to adjust their content to this continuous flux. Not all of them succeed in doing this. Conceptual weakness, as well as the knock on effects of the economic crisis, and the associated growing problems in the overpopulated media markets, has already dragged many women's magazines under – including well known brands such as AMICA.

Although the top sellers amongst the classic women's magazines are not immune to the problems affecting the market, they have so far maintained their positions even in the face of the growing competition in recent years from new and specialised magazines. The market for fortnightly women's magazines continues to be dominated by BRIGITTE. Its market leadership is undisputed with a coverage of 3.21 million women. As an advertising medium with a large proportion of exclusive readers who read no other classic women's magazines, it has been an indispensable advertising vehicle for many decades.

Our portrayal of the German market for women's magazines "Women's Magazines in Germany" does not focus solely on the strengths of G+J women's magazines, it also gives an insight into the complexities of the market, and paints a precise picture of the market positions of the main, plannable women's magazines.

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