

MAGAZINES – UK – 2023

AI can open up opportunities for magazines to enhance the readers' experience and offer personalisation.



Yogita Burke, Cross-category Research Analyst



Magazines - UK - 2023

This report looks at the following areas:

- Magazine readership including format and genre
- Magazine purchasing and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis
- Consumer attitudes towards digital experiences and use of new technologies in the magazine sector
- Consumer attitudes towards sustainability and magazines
- Launch activity and competitive strategies from magazines



AI can open up opportunities for magazines to enhance the readers' experience and offer personalisation.

Overview

Single print issues appeal as readers cut back on subscriptions

The cost-of-living crisis has led to one in five adults spending less on magazines. Many readers are opting for single issue print magazines, which can be seen as an affordable luxury and a means to [treat themselves](#), whilst avoiding the financial commitment of subscriptions, particularly during times of household financial pressures.

Provide readers with added value

The growing consumer focus on sustainability will further shift magazine consumption towards online formats and will continue to pose a threat to print magazine formats. Online features that provide added value will gain further traction, such as interactive features unlocking financial incentives.

Young readers are open to the use of AI

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While there are mixed feelings and concerns over AI generated content, young magazine readers are significantly more likely to be [open to AI generated magazine content](#), as well as receiving personalised recommendations and advice from magazine website/app AI chatbots. Magazines and publishers can also use surveys to help shape the future of digital experiences and features.

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Report Content

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Opportunities within the magazine sector

- Generative AI can assist with personalisation within online magazine formats
- Engage with readers to encourage loyalty
- Encourage sustainable behaviour among Gen Z print readers/buyers

Market dynamics and outlook

- The five-year outlook for magazines
- People feel more confident about their financial prospects
 - Graph 1: the financial confidence index, 2016-23

What consumers want and why

- Magazine readership levels increase back to pre cost-of-living crisis
 - Graph 2: magazine readership in the last three months, by format, 2021-23
- Target young male readers on magazine website/apps
 - Graph 3: paid-for access to magazine website/app content in the last three months, by gender and age group, 2023
 - Graph 4: paid-for access to magazine website/app content in the last three months, by gender, 2023
- Families and young adult readers are seeking information on the cost-of-living crisis
- Young readers are open to the use of AI
 - Graph 5: consumer attitudes towards digital innovation for magazines, 2023
- Magazine readers show an interest in buy-back scheme but publishers may face challenges

Innovation

- BBC Good Food and Olive magazine partner with Uber Eats
- Consett Magazine introduces AI chatbot

MARKET DYNAMICS

Macro-Economic Factors

- The recovery of consumer finances has begun...
 - Graph 6: the financial wellbeing index, 2016-23
- ...and people feel more confident about their financial prospects
 - Graph 7: the financial confidence index, 2016-23
- Magazines are an affordable treat
 - Graph 8: expected money-saving actions as a result of rising prices, 2023

Social, environmental and legal factors

- The first global AI Safety Summit takes place
- Magazine subscribers feel positively towards AI articles
- Royal Mail requests to stop Saturday deliveries

WHAT CONSUMERS WANT AND WHY

Magazine Readership

- Magazine readership levels increase back to pre cost-of-living crisis
 - Graph 9: magazine readership in the last three months, by format, 2021-23
- Print magazines maintain wide appeal
 - Graph 10: magazine readership in the last three months, by generation, 2023
- Online magazine formats appeal to Gen Zs and Millennials
- Free magazines are the most popular type of magazine
 - Graph 11: magazine readership in the last three months, by genre, 2023
- Opportunity to launch diverse sports magazines
- Print magazine readership dominates most genres
 - Graph 12: magazine readership in the last three months, by genre and format, 2023

Magazine purchasing

- Magazine purchasing remains level
 - Graph 13: magazine purchasing in the last three months, 2021-23
- Print magazine subscription purchasing drops
 - Graph 14: print magazine purchasing in the last three months, 2021-23
- Growth in multiple magazine titles digital subscriptions
 - Graph 15: digital magazine purchasing in the last three months, 2021-23
- Young males more likely to pay for access to magazine website/app content
- Opportunity to target young male readers with magazine website/apps
 - Graph 16: paid for access to magazine website/app content in the last three months, 2021-23

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on magazine purchasing

- Cost-of-living crisis has driven consumers to spend less on magazines
 - Graph 17: consumer behaviour towards magazine purchasing in the last 12 months due to the cost-of-living crisis, 2023
- Online magazine format readers are seeking vouchers
 - Graph 18: proportion of magazine buyers searching for vouchers for magazines due to the cost of living crisis in the last 12 months, by format, 2023
- Families and young adult readers are seeking information on the cost-of-living crisis
 - Graph 19: read magazines for information on the cost-of-living crisis, by age, 2023

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- Graph 20: read magazines for information on the cost-of-living crisis, by lifestage, 2023
- QR codes and AI could aid content discovery on cost-of-living crisis

Interests in and attitudes towards digital magazines, magazine websites and apps

- Entice magazine website/app readers with financial rewards
 - Graph 21: magazine website/app-based activities of interest, 2023
- Young readers show interest in the use of AI chatbots from magazines
- AI opens up opportunities for magazines to explore
 - Graph 22: consumer attitudes towards digital innovation for magazines, 2023
- News and current affairs magazines can use AI chatbots to provide trusted news
- AI chatbots can inspire TV and fashion magazine readers
- Let readers shape the future of products, services and content

Sustainability and magazines

- Majority of print magazine readers recycle their magazines
 - Graph 23: consumer attitudes and behaviours towards sustainability in the magazine sector, 2023
- Encourage Gen Zs to recycle print magazines
 - Graph 24: recycling behaviour of print magazine buyers, by generation, 2023
- Encourage more-sustainable behaviour among young magazine readers
- Magazine readers show interest in a buy-back scheme...
 - Graph 25: consumer interest in buy-back scheme for print magazines, by area, 2023
- ...however, magazine publishers face challenges

INNOVATION

Competitive strategies

- Fabulous magazine launches shoppable newsletter
- BBC Good Food and Olive magazine partner with Uber Eats
- Readly partners with brands to offer free subscriptions

Launch activity and innovation

- Consett Magazine introduces AI chatbot
- Olive magazine gives readers instant access to tailored video content

BRAND RESEARCH

Women's fashion magazines

- Vogue is a popular brand...
 - Graph 26: key metrics for selected women's fashion magazine brands, 2023
- ...that is trusted among readers

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- Graph 27: attitudes towards and usage of selected brands operating in the women's fashion magazine market, 2023
- Cosmopolitan is accessible and fun
 - Graph 28: brand image of selected brands operating in the women's fashion magazine market, 2023
- Elle (UK) provides inspiration for readers

Home/interior magazines

- Ideal Home has high brand awareness...
 - Graph 29: key metrics for selected home/interior magazine brands, 2023
- ...and is a trusted brand
 - Graph 30: attitudes towards and usage of selected brands operating in the home/interior magazine market, 2023
- Country Living is aspirational
- Your Home is perceived as accessible and fun
 - Graph 31: brand image of selected brands operating in the home/interior magazine market, 2023

APPENDIX

Supplementary data

- Online magazine readership
- Print and digital magazine purchasing

Report Scope and Definitions

- Market definition
- Abbreviations and terms

Methodology

- Consumer research methodology

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