

Magazine World

The operating environment for SCMP magazines was extremely competitive in 2006. The print media revenue base has matured and the market is saturated with product. With few opportunities for growth, publishers compete for the existing market share of readers and advertisers.

This competition is best exemplified in the women's magazine sector, which experienced another cover price war. To maintain circulation margins, SCMP stuck to its cover price (HK\$40) for *Cosmopolitan* and *Harper's Bazaar*.

SCMP Hearst

Turnover for SCMP Hearst magazines in 2006 was \$109.4 million, slightly ahead of the 2005 mark. Of this amount, display advertising provided the majority of revenues for *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *CosmoGirl*!.

Coming off two solid years of gains, *Cosmopolitan* faced a challenging year that saw a decline in newsstand sales and a modest rise in ad revenues. The cover price war combined with an average book size of over 600 pages affected copy sales.

It was a good year for *Harper's Bazaar*, which enjoys an excellent reputation in the fashion industry and is the first choice for luxury goods advertisers. Ad revenue increased 13% year-on-year, though magazines sales were impacted by competition in the women's segment. *Harper's Bazaar* co-sponsored the Style Awards with *SCMP* this year.

CosmoGirl! faced reallocation of ad spending from the youth market as cosmetic brands shifted budgets to the women's segment. To illustrate target market reach, a university project (Project CG!) strengthened ties with Hong Kong students.

Automobile

As the most established Hong Kong car title *Automobile* ad revenue rose by 22% over 2005. New car sales figures are a barometer of the Hong Kong economy. New car sales rose 2.8% in 2006, reviving ad spending.

Maxim Hong Kong & China

Ad revenue for *Maxim* Hong Kong was below expectations. The *Maxim* market positioning falls between mass weeklies and brand building monthlies while the "lads" editorial remains a concern for Hong Kong advertisers.

Maxim China completed its first year of full-scale operations. The title performed below expectations but demonstrated growth potential. Maxim China ranked fourth in a third-party study of newsstand sales in the men's sector. Although volume was small, ad yield per page was higher than expected and monthly ad sales progressed in the second half 2006.

Outlook

Despite challenging market conditions, the outlook for magazines is positive, although ad growth is expected to moderate in 2007 and pressure on circulation continues.

SCMP will devote efforts to enhance revenue growth at *Harper's Bazaar*. One objective is to improve ad volume from beauty and cosmetics categories, which have a relatively low ad spend in the magazine.

Cosmopolitan addressed book size by creating Book A and Book B in March 2007 to accommodate more display ads and create new prime positions for advertisers. The focus will be on growing circulation through content upgrades and a promotional program to strengthen the subscription base. CosmoGirl! expects to enrich content to build readership, a prerequisite for more ad income.

Automobile is headed for a strong year. Cross border traffic between Hong Kong and China has doubled in five years and new roads will stimulate car sales.

Maxim Hong Kong will position editorial to target more upscale male readers and increase the universe of advertisers. Efforts will be devoted to maximize ad revenues for Maxim China by promoting readership gains.