

# MAGS U 2006 COVER CLINIC

*Some key points to ponder...*

## 1. THE EFFECTIVE USE OF COVER LINES

- Variety of font, size & colour
- Content of cover line – validity and relevance to the magazine
- Ask yourself – **SO WHAT?** Does it matter to your reader or your potential reader?
- Avoid clutter – You can't put your entire table of contents on the cover. Be selective.
- Always remember – You only have a split second of the consumer's attention – **MAKE THE MOST OF IT!**
- Keep your 'noise' / clutter to a minimum. **SIMPLICITY WORKS BEST!** Don't let your cover lines overshadow or diminish the effectiveness of your cover photo.
- Avoid contradiction in your cover lines – For example – Don't have a line that reads – 'The best in Comfort Food,' alongside another line that reads, 'Lose those unwanted pounds.'
- Good use but not overuse of 'buzz' words – for example – *Hot / New / Best.*
- *Sneak Preview* – works well – implies being on the inside track and advance notice.
- Be sure to deliver what you say you are! Don't have a great cover line and lousy follow-up inside the book!
- Avoid 'white on white.' Doesn't jump or have any impact at all in the sea of magazines on the newsstand – even with black outlines.
- Use but do not overuse 'starbursts.' Make sure the information within a starburst has real relevance and meaning. For example, a special price or added value insert.
- Remember – Your entire cover will not always be visible to the consumer! Consider at all times the impact of 'mainline fanning,' and partial cover. Most often – it is the **LEFT SIDE** of your magazine that gets seen. Make the very best of this visual space!

## 2. EFFECTIVE USE OF YOUR MASTHEAD / LOGO TAG LINE

- Say something about your magazine with a strong tag line – For example: The Robb Report – For the luxury lifestyle and Real Simple – Life Made Easier
- Give the consumer a reason to look and buy!

### **3. THE USE OF CELEBRITY**

- Celebrity is hot – Celebrity sells
- Be careful – too much of a good thing can also work against you!
- Smart and in moderation. Try and be unique and not a copycat.

### **4. USING NUMBERS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE**

- Using #'s to highlight a feature within the magazine – But be realistic and deliver on the promise!
- For example – 100 great holiday ideas, 50 fabulous flea market finds etc. etc.

### **5. FANTASY VS. REALITY**

- Reading a magazine is an escape of sorts – but be careful – Don't make promises you don't keep inside the magazine.
- Give some ideas for dreaming, but make the ideas real and achievable.
- Allow the reader to be realistic able to envision themselves. If it isn't 'real' it will not sustain itself.
- Use of cover models – watch the airbrushing – Fake is NOT in!

### **6. WATCH THE CLIP ART!**

- Avoid looking like a high-school English project – the cut & paste look. Make it flow.

### **7. COLOUR**

- Relevance to season and subject matter
- Don't overdue it – limit the # used. Stay pure and simple.
- Be careful with white – sometimes get lost on the newsstand.
- Blend your colours – integrate a colour from your photo into the cover lines professionally and subtly.

### **8. BE TRUE TO YOUR BRAND**

- Don't try and be something that you aren't. Be real. Be true.

### **9. HAVE SOME FUN**

- Don't be afraid to try new things with your cover. Your readers will forgive you. Your potential readers may try you for the first time. Remember – they will forget by the time they read the issue and certainly by the time they see your next issue on the newsstand!