

Gracija

Market

The first issue of Gracija, a two-week magazine for the modern woman in Bosnia and Herzegovina, appeared in 2005. Faced with an impoverished and divided market, at the very start the magazine employees opted for the more difficult, but in any event safer and sounder approach – they decided to create a magazine with top-quality concept and design that would be read, advertised and sold throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a goal to secure and sustain the position of the leading BiH magazine for women through continuous innovations as one of the essential guidelines of its concept. After four years of existence, reactions from all parts of the country and the world, its circulation results, reliable cooperation with clients and uninterrupted growth in every respect, all confirm that the mentioned goal has been fully accomplished.

Achievements

After the initial searching, magazine's editorial and marketing leaders chose the concept of gradual and sustained development, which they maintained to the present day. From the very first issue Gracija has been printed on the finest quality paper. Accordingly, the team of photographers was carefully selected, and they have probably the most modern and expensive

equipment in the country. Owing to their professional advancement, acquisition of complete state-of-the-art photographic equipment and their work for Gracija, today these people have an opportunity to work on editorials and other demanding assignments for numerous international clients.

The combination of fine quality paper, exceptional photographs, interesting topics and easy to read texts resulted in the reputation that Gracija enjoys today. The magazine is recognised for its affirmative stories and interviews, both with public figures and unknown individuals who give an exceptional contribution to their respective professions and society in general.

However, all these features are prerequisites that are understood by the magazine as the starting point, rather than its final goal. Gracija is the first BiH magazine that has been improving the aesthetic dimension of its pages, constantly and without visible decline, year after year. Each text is carefully prepared and laid out. The entire creative team of the magazine participates in this endeavour, from the editor, journalist and photographer, to the technical director. Written reactions that employees of Gracija regularly receive and keep, but are no longer published due to lack of space, confirm that readers have recognised that particular quality of Gracija and have been enjoying it over the past years.

Like other magazines of similar profile, in the beginning Gracija too was faced with an unavoidable dilemma regarding the magazine content – should they choose the easier path and turn to formulas that never fail, which rely on the reaffirmed concept consisting of "yellow elements" such as adulteries, divorces and weddings, or should they turn to new, unexplored concepts of journalism grounded in the search for true values.

Confronted with this difficult choice, because the first solution ensures survival and prosperity while the second ensures quality, Gracija employees opted for the latter. It proved to be the right choice after all. The market confirmed such orientation and year after year Gracija has been constantly developing, and the readiness with which it faced the crisis is yet another

proof of correctness of its initial orientation. In mid 2009, which has been fatal for many newspapers, magazines and periodicals, it may be rightly concluded that Gracija's potentials were optimally used: there were no layoffs, and the magazine is successfully overcoming recession traps and crisis difficulties.

History

The first issue of Gracija magazine was published and hit the stands on 22 April 2005. To mark the occasion, owners and managers organised a memorable and glamorous event in the Holiday Inn Hotel in Sarajevo, for which many sought extra tickets for weeks. The very nature of the event, divested of distastefulness and cheap solutions, heralded the nature of the future magazine. Numerous guests who attended the promotion of the new magazine for women that evening became and remained Gracija's regular clients.

After that, Gracija engaged in a difficult market battle without any restraints. Excellently staffed, with an optimal number of professionals, Gracija has constantly



been a product to invest in. For well-known reasons, print media in Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot boast of a well-developed correspondence network. What is even worse, they have no funds and often no willingness for expensive trips from which their journalists could send authentic information and photographs. Even in this segment Gracija endeavoured to live up to professional standards: its journalists send feature stories from Croatia, Slovenia, Germany, Macedonia, and Austria, and follow up on all important and relevant events in the world of fashion, film and design... Very few can take pride in the fact that they managed to arrange an exclusive interview for this region with the ultimate pop star Justin Timberlake, and in summer 2009 Gracija was the only media outlet from the territory of the former Yugoslavia to have been offered this privilege, and it is also one of the very few magazines that had an opportunity to meet the legendary muse of Quentin Tarantino, Uma Thurman.

Particular attention is devoted to humanitarian activities. One of the strategic orientations of the magazine is not to celebrate its anniversaries with expensive events, but to direct the money used for jubilee celebration to humanitarian purposes instead. These activities were so well noticed that every year more and more clients insist on participating in these events together with Gracija, on an equal basis.

Product

Gracija is a two-weekly magazine. In accordance with its publishing rhythm, the magazine's concept is different than that of other magazines, published more frequently. Since it appears on newsstands twice a month Gracija is not in a position to compete with other magazines for exclusive information, but rather focuses much more attention on structuring its topics, texts, feature stories and interviews. The readers, men and women alike since they read it with equal attention, say that the fifteen-day rhythm is ideal for them because it takes them at least two weeks to carefully skim through the pages first, and then to read all the interesting texts in detail.

Apart from photographs and the layout, Gracija editors devote special attention to texts. Some of the most prominent names in journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina write for the magazine, while the extensive network of associates always provides the magazine with attractive and up-to-date information from all areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Wishing to avoid Sarajevo-centricity at all cost, Gracija devotes equal attention to editing and publishing articles from Banja Luka, Mostar, Medugorje, Trebinje, Nevesinje, Tuzla, Zenica, Bihać etc.

Recent Developments

For two years Gracija has been working intensively on



upgrading all the aspects of the magazine. Despite being slowest in terms of its publishing rhythm, its employees like to point out that it is the fastest in terms of the scope of envisaged and implemented changes. "Change before you have to change!" – this is one of the fundamental postulates of modern business, one that has faithful advocates in Gracija magazine. In a little over 30 months, which in this case implies only 60 issues,



Gracija realised more than 50 editorial and conceptual innovations. And this process will neither stop nor stagger. Gracija's editorial and journalist teams remain consistent to the step-by-step concept, namely the continuous introduction of minor changes that eventually offer to consumers an entirely new concept, resistant to sudden twists, but also to stale paradigms that haven't changed in years.

Promotion

From the very beginning Gracija magazine has been investing greatly into advertising. Promotional videos are regularly broadcast on television, and special audio announcements are carefully prepared for each issue and aired by many radio stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If self-criticism is the fundamental requirement for every development, then there is full awareness in Gracija magazine that true development of promotional activities is yet to follow, and that they must constantly seek new methods of promotion and advertising.

Gracija is a media sponsor of numerous

humanitarian actions, as well as important cultural, scientific and sport events.

Brand Values

The entire industry of print media is facing the most difficult challenges. Many foresee a dark future for this form of journalism. If predictions according to which we have entered "the last five, or in best case ten years of existence of print media" are accurate, and the fact that only the most innovative and adaptable paper editions will survive the electronic cataclysm, then Gracija will most certainly be among those to survive. With visionary thinking for the years and decades ahead, the magazine has already prepared its concepts for the most diverse technological and civilisational changes, while the confirmed and successful innovative practice has received wide support from readers and clients. The number of advertisers and partners increases year after year, the number of organisers of various sport and cultural events that seek sponsorship by Gracija is constantly increasing, and the regular two-way communication with readers worldwide confirms that innovation, change and constant improvement – as the most important concept guidelines for Gracija – represent a perfect formula for times to come.

www.gracija.ba



Moj život s predsjednikom



THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT...

Gracija

- Online issue of Gracija magazine is available at www.gracija.ba, which is among 20 most visited websites in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- The oldest reader of Gracija is a 93-year old woman who lives in Zurich, and she has been a regular magazine subscriber from the beginning.
- For two consecutive years Gracija's website has ranked among 20 most visited internet sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is an unusual but encouraging piece of information for the magazine's employees, because it does not happen often that a magazine of this type overshadows with its texts the current political issues, abundance of unrestrained variety and uncontrollable yellow content that ravage the Internet.