

# NACIONAL

## Market

Since its first release thirteen years ago, the Nacional magazine has taken up a very strong and important position on the Croatian newsprint market, and has become one of the most influential medium in Croatia. Its success is even greater and more important when one takes under consideration two of the following reasons. Firstly, because the market itself is limited to a relatively small population and it is almost impossible to sell abroad, with a few exceptions, because of the scarce amount of people that understand the Croatian language. The second reason is that in recent years a great amount of new printed media has emerged on the market, especially magazines; for which Nacional and its publishing house the NCL group, is most concerned with. But even so, by being one of the first magazines to appear on the market and secure a reputation, it wasn't difficult for Nacional to withstand the rising competition, and to extend the range of its publishing activities in even other segments of the group. Even though a great number of its competitors, which surfaced in the same segment, were forced to bail out, the market is still very lively, and demands constant innovation and quality.

## Achievements

Nacional is primarily a political weekly and for this reason does business and functions in a specific way. For this reason it greatly differs from other companies that deal with the production of other goods, as well as other media companies that are not focused with politics. The company's greatest achievement as a market brand is the fact that it has been able to establish itself as an independent and influential magazine, whose readers fit a profile of influential individuals in politics and entrepreneurship. This represents an important factor for the magazine's success in asserting itself firmly on the market, not only with its readers but also for advertisers that consider it one of the best ways to promote themselves.

## History

Nacional was established, with their own finances in 1995 by a group of journalists from the Globus magazine, who were unsatisfied with changes that occurred in the editorial policy of the weekly. The first issue came out in November 1995. The founders wanted to fulfill their own vision of what they like to say. "their very own magazine" - that would be fully



independent in a time when media freedom in the independent Croatia was dramatically limited.

Despite such a political and media environment, Nacional has, from the very start, been able to assert itself as an independent political weekly that was strongly critical of the government at the time. Its main commitment was to promote democracy, a multiparty system and integration with Western Europe and the world. From the very beginning the magazine's team was fast to uncover certain political and business scandals, of which they were not shy to criticise even the then President Franjo Tudman and his family, his close associates, as well as members of the opposition parties that were involved in certain scandals. Nacional, through its articles and interviews, made it possible for leading Croatian politicians in the opposition, business people, intellectuals, journalists and artists to express their views and criticism of the regime, who were not at liberty to do so in the media that was controlled by the government or those that were controlled by media moguls connected with the ruling party. From the very start, Nacional was easily distinguishable for its noted comments of its authors, and very soon, shortly after its establishment, became one of only a few "windows of democracy" in the Croatian media and a very important political factor.

After the death of President Tudman and the change of regime in 2000, came also the

time for Nacional to change as well. Many at the time claimed that with the change of the regime, whose members Nacional strongly criticised, the function of the magazine of strong political views, printed on cheap paper, with an editorial policy of the standard tabloid with bombastic headlines, was lost to the change of tide and that its future was in jeopardy.

Fortunately, those assumptions were wrong, for the magazine had the knowledge and strength to transform and adapt to new social, political and primarily economic situations in the country, to whose development it had also contributed. In autumn 2000, the weekly changed its format from a standard newsprint to a weekly magazine printed on fine paper in colour. While retaining its original content that dealt mainly with political subjects, Nacional added new material that covered not only issues concerning the economy, but also started printing articles that dealt with cultural and mass media issues; appropriate to the latest printing technology used Nacional's team, whose budget at the time was mostly based on the amount of issues they sold, became an important source for other companies to advertise themselves and their products; which guaranteed the magazine's financial and material stability. Many of the new projects that Nacional launched as a pioneer in new concepts, for instance, their special thematic supplements devoted to certain products and services, all came to be through the company's collaboration with its advertising partners and as such set a brand new standard of advertising in Croatia. This

was at the time when the Vienna Capital Partners investment fund from Austria entered Nacional's ownership structure with 25 percent of shares in order to promote the magazine's business with its experience in investments.

The newly transformed magazine still continued to issue articles that uncovered dark secrets in politics and society considering this, along with its affirmation of what is positive in Croatian society and economy to still be its main and most important media mission. There followed numerous new scandals that were uncovered many of which were concerned with the abuse of power and scandals in the former government, but also the inability and lack of will of the new government to sanction previously committed crimes. This continued later, when the Croatian political scene got a different democratic party profile and the political climate was far from the era of Tudman's rule.

In the meantime, Nacional extended the range and diversity of its publication by launching other periodicals and occasionally books as well. In 2003 Nacional came out with a new weekly called Extra, which at first dealt with issues about celebrities and the media and later evolved into a high-quality magazine for women. Soon after, followed Gameplay, a specialised magazine for video gamers, the first issue of which hit the stands in 2002. In 2004 the NCL Media Group put in motion its biggest project yet; News, a new and free weekly, which by the end of 2007 achieved a quota of several thousand copies, and became the only newspaper that was delivered to homes in numerous cities and counties in Croatia. The News weekly currently has the highest circulation quota of any newspaper in Croatia and the region, and research estimates that it is read by over a million readers.

## Product

Nacional focuses its business on two things; its readers and its those that advertise in Nacional, and for this reason its editorial staff is greatly concerned with creating a product that satisfies both. This task is made easier due to the fact that both groups are intrinsically connected for the simple reason that more readers equals more advertisers and vice versa. Because of this, the editorial staff strives to produce a maximally informative and interesting publication every week, dealing with relevant social issues in an interesting and professional way and disclosing unknown facts. It is exactly in this way that the magazine aims to increase the number of its readers, especially readers who are sophisticated, professional, influential and those of higher financial status - all of which are the main focus groups that advertisers look for. All this is proof of success of Nacional's editorial staff, when one takes under consideration that that the magazine's readership is at the top of the list of Croatian printed media when it comes to education, professions and financial status, which is especially relevant for advertisers. It is also of exceptional interest to them that they can use other publications of NCL Media Group and the on-line issue of Nacional to their benefit by enveloping a wide and diverse, yet defined range of readers to the scope of their promotion.

## Recent Developments

The magazine has begun to change in content, devoting more articles to the economic issues and Croatia's accession into the European Union,

top »  
stipendija  
za top  
studente

Along with this, Nacional wishes to offer its advertisers more than the competition, and for this reason publishes supplements concerned with specific propulsive segments of the economy, such as Auto, Banka, Nekretnine (Real Estate), Hi-Tecti and the like. Along with Nacional magazine, two separate magazines are sold with Nacional: Zdrav život (Healthy Life), focused on health and lifestyle, and Nstyle, an ultimate guide to fashion and way of life for the successful and modern man. Alongside all of the above, Nacional also follows the trend of development of multimedia contents, so it regularly issues special CDs that are popular both with readers and advertisers. The CDs are a type of interactive "yellow pages" for the sake of cars and boats, real estate and interior design. The website is also becoming an important on-line extension to the brand itself, which recently became a true on-line site that covers subjects of not only politics and the economy, but also movies and other entertainment such as photo galleries, columns and more.

## Promotion

Nacional uses a wide range of methods of promotion. Intensive promotion, as is the case with most publishing houses, is done through NCL Media Group and in this promotes not only itself but other products of the group. Along with this, the free News weekly with its numerous readers, offers excellent room for promotion in almost every household in Croatia. Furthermore, the magazine uses other media channels like local television programs to promote upcoming issues at prime time. Nacional informs its readers on every upcoming issue - on its contents, articles and subjects via radio stations. As a weekly Nacional has the difficult task of positioning itself due to the fact that every week it is practically a different product in itself. Nevertheless, with its consistent values and views, the magazine has successfully created its own recognizable brand. Nacional's journalists and authors are often guests and co-commentators on television and radio shows as well as other public discussions, which greatly contributes to a firm defining of the brand. Very early on, the NCL Media Group came to understand the importance of social responsibility when it comes to doing business. Its responsibility is ever the greater, when it comes to being a publishing house that has a respectable, important and influential role in defining Croatian society. In accordance with this, in 2001 Nacional launched a project called "Top Scholarships for Top Students," which with partners such as Podnava, INA, Ingra, Diners Club, VIPnet and the Croatian Radio and Television (HRT), and collaboration



with the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and other governmental institutions, grants the highest scholarships to students in Croatia.

## Brand Values

Nacional aims to present and comment on relevant facts about current issues in politics, the economy, society and culture to the Croatian public in a direct, independent, honest and truthful way - and by doing so builds on its reputation and attracts new readers on the country's dynamic press market. With its stances, its goal is to encourage positive political and social processes in Croatia in order to strengthen democracy, develop business, expand culture and promote European values - with the aim for Croatia to become a member of the European Union as soon as possible.

[www.nacional.hr](http://www.nacional.hr)

## THING YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT...

### Nacional

- Nacional was founded in 1995 by eight journalists with their very own capital of 300,000 Euros. Although there were changes in the ownership structure and the value of the company has multiplied, today 25 percent of the company's shares are owned by the founders and 75 percent by foreign investors.
- The magazine built its prestige by printing exclusive material, which it does to this day. The most sensational story was printed in 2003, when it issued an exclusive article and interview, at an unknown location, with retired and runaway Croatian general Ante Gotovina, which was led by NCL group editor, Ivo Pukanić. It was one of Nacional's issue that achieved record sales and copies.
- Nacional's headquarters are stationed in the very center of Zagreb in a modern building, which in 2006 was completely renovated and equipped for the new era of development in the NCL Media Group as a multimedia company.
- During the eight years since Top Scholarship was launched, by 2009, 217 scholarships were granted to students that study at more than 50 different universities in Croatia, while seven million kuna were invested in the project. The President, Prime Minister and many other government officials have in the past years supported the scholarship programme and are always present at the formal announcement of the winners. In 2006, under the initiative of Nacional and Top Scholarship, the Croatian government abated taxation on scholarships; Nacional's team also gives out the Top Student special award to a student who impresses the team the most with his or her achievements. Today the award carries the name "Ivo Pukanić Scholarship" after the president of the NCL Group who was killed in a brutal assassination in autumn 2008.

