

Better Homes and Gardens.



making its Down Under debut. In February 1995, the magazine made worldwide news when it launched its own national 30-minute show on prime-time television. Astonishingly, the show was produced by a magazine publishing company with no previous experience in television production!

The credibility of the magazine content translated well to the small screen. Viewers tuned in to watch original hosts John Jarratt and Noni Hazlehurst show and tell how they got the most out of hearth and home. More recently, Noni Hazlehurst has held the hosting role and is joined by various experts who present specific specialist segments.

The show, which first aired on commercial television on Tuesday nights at 7.30pm, was an instant success, enjoying the kind of ratings that make network executives preen. It was no surprise, therefore, when the show walked off with the Logie Award for Best Lifestyle Program of 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 and again in 1999. From 2000-2003 the show continued its popular run

and in 2004 the TV show has been given a one-hour spot, every Saturday night at 7.30pm. This is further testament to the strength of the program, as it becomes a weekend staple for more than a million viewers.

Sales of the magazine initially soared by nearly 60 per cent as *Better Homes and Gardens* went down in history as the most successful masthead-publishing venture in the world.

Today, more than 1.2 million Australians participate in the *Better Homes and Gardens* experience every week by watching the television show, 300,000 purchase the magazine monthly and 186,000 visit the website each month, making it the world's most successful multimedia brand per capita.

The magazine and television staff continue to sit side by side in their cross-media teams. In every sense, the *Better Homes and Gardens* multimedia experience has been a watershed event in television, both locally and worldwide. "Having a top-rating television show is evidence of how hot *Better Homes and Gardens* is," declared Murdoch Magazines' managing director, Matt Handbury.

HISTORY

In spite of a lack of celebrity gossip, fashion features, the perennial "Seven Ways to Spice up Your Sex Life" and the absence of bodice-ripping fiction, *Better Homes and Gardens* is a mainstream magazine that continues to flourish steadily in the new millennium.

The magazine made its debut in the US shortly after WWI as *Fruit, Garden and Home*. Founder and publisher E T Meredith, who served in US President Woodrow Wilson's cabinet, had a clear vision for the magazine focused on creating the ideal home environment for one's family.

Meredith's magazine changed its name two years later to the *Better Homes and Gardens* we know today.

The magazine went on to make history with several publishing milestones: 1923 saw the magazine's first recipe contest; 1925 its first DIY project; 1929 the launch of 'taste-test' kitchens; 1930 the title's first article on cooking for men (yes, men!); 1941 the magazine's first barbecue feature, and so on.

THE MARKET

Australians read as many magazines per capita as any other nation in the world. Since 1990 alone, more than 350 new titles have appeared in newsagents and supermarkets. As almost nine in every 10 Australians regularly read one or more titles, it's not surprising that sales of magazines climbed steadily over the past decade, with magazine publishing one of the country's boom retail industries.

Better Homes and Gardens has been leader of the homemaker magazine pack since launching in Australia in 1978. Successfully transferring the homemaker ingredients which made it a publishing star in the US, *Better Homes and Gardens* is today part of the Australian landscape.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Better Homes and Gardens enjoyed success with Australians from its inception, ranking among Australia's top 10 selling magazines since

NEW TV SHOW - 7.30pm Saturday

chocolate the best tart ever!

food for you

- The perfect RISOTTO
- Sweet ways with COFFEE
- Easy TEMPURA prawns

LAYING A GRAVEL PATH

- 1 Mark out your path with paper and string, making sure the width is consistent along its length. Dig out the base of the path to a depth of 10cm. In some areas, dig down to 15-20cm as the edges need to be better defined.
- 2 Lay out the gravel along the path, ensuring there is a 5cm margin between the gravel and the edges. Check that the level is below the level of your lawn.
- 3 Lay out the gravel along the path's base, using highlighted materials, divide the gravel.
- 4 Spread the gravel about 7.5cm deep, making sure the base height is about 1cm below the top of the gravel. This will prevent the gravel from settling out.

In Australia, *Better Homes and Gardens* has enjoyed 25 years of successful operation with an unstinting focus on home, gardening, decorating, food, DIY and crafts.

In 1991, after witnessing the success of service journalism in the United States, Matt Handbury bought the Australian publishing rights to two of the most successful publications of this ilk, namely *Better Homes and Gardens* and *family circle*, from Rupert Murdoch.

By the early '90s – as word of 'cyberspace' and 'information technology' began to spread – the company's multimedia dream for its successful homemaker titles began to take shape. "Australians throughout the '90s focused on the home, and service providers like *Better Homes and Gardens* have never been more relevant," noted Handbury.

Most importantly, publishers on both sides of the Pacific have never underestimated the intelligence of *Better Homes and Gardens* readers, aiming rather to enhance the audience's spirit of home and family. The result is a well-loved brand that continues to grow in popularity and nurture Australians' involvement in their home life.

THE PRODUCT

Abundant, involving, personal, affordable, achievable, empowering – these are the magazine's and television show's core brand values. Experts in their field share their passion for gardening, decorating, cooking, DIY and crafts with an inexhaustible enthusiasm and attention to readers' and viewers' needs. Armed with ideas, information and inspiration, people thus turn to the home for self-expression, creativity and harmony. With its clear manifesto to provide better ideas, and inspiration, *Better Homes and Gardens* encourages and empowers people to revel in their home and homelife.

At the core of the magazine and television show's editorial strength is a commitment to *service journalism*. This is a way of providing readers with ideas and information that will inspire them to action. Magazine and readers enjoy a two-way relationship based on reliability and trust.

Handbury emphasises the importance of every editorial and television-show staffer aligning his or her creativity and know-how with this purpose, to support the high involvement positioning of *Better Homes and Gardens*.



RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 2000 the magazine launched its own website to further enhance the *Better Homes and Gardens* experience with monthly hits peaking at more than 186,000 unique visitors per month in 2003, and well over a million page impressions.

The magazine has also led the way with its contribution to the community. In 1995, the Handburys, together with Meredith Corporation, bought a 100-hectare farm south of Sydney with a mission to get street kids off the street. *Better Homes Farm*, as it is known, is run by a charismatic priest, Father Chris Riley, whose mission it is to help a community of boys and girls overcome their difficult backgrounds.

PROMOTION

The strength of the *Better Homes and Gardens* brand has spawned many successful brand extensions. In Australia, big names are forming partnerships with *Better Homes and Gardens* to maximise marketing opportunities. Increasing numbers of companies recognise and appreciate the strength of the title and the multimedia branding opportunities produced by its own television show. This, teamed with 'Better Ideas' branded TV commercials, DVDs, and the supermarket sales strategy 'Retail Solutions', provides advertisers with a host of powerful integrated options.



Better Homes and Gardens continues to build on its commitment to home with collector books under its banner, including diaries, cookbooks, gardening, barbecue and DIY annuals.

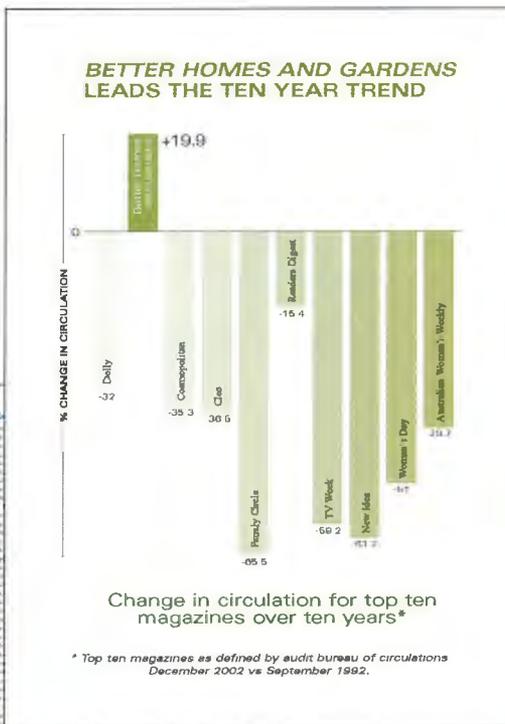
The magazine also sponsors a pavilion at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney, as well as a number of gardening and craft exhibitions and fairs.

BRAND VALUES

Better Homes and Gardens empowers its readers in the area of greatest meaning in their lives, and the area with which they most powerfully identify – their homes. Their time with *Better Homes and Gardens* makes them feel better about how they can enhance their homes, home life and themselves.

The success of *Better Homes and Gardens* is built on the following core brand values, creating a unique and powerful relationship with readers: holistic attitude to home; inspirational ideas; empowering advice; realistic approach; trust in editorial; and active reader involvement.

A recent Newspoll Magazine Involvement Study found that almost three-quarters of the magazine's readers trust the information provided by the magazine. In addition, half its readers believe *Better Homes and Gardens* is a magazine for people who want to actively improve their lives.



THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS

- Down Under, more than one in four Australians participates in the *Better Homes and Gardens* experience every month.
- *Fruit, Garden and Home* was the original name of *Better Homes and Gardens* when it was launched in the United States in 1922.
- In Australia, the magazine's editor-in-chief has always been female, while in the US, the first woman editor-in-chief was only appointed in 1993.
- The Australian television show has won the People's Choice Logie Award for Best Lifestyle Program for the first five years it was entered, as well as a number of World Food Media awards for its regular cooking segment.
- *Better Homes and Gardens* has published over 300 issues since its launch in Australia and screened almost 200 hours of television.
- The magazine was the first ever in Australia to attach free seeds to its cover. The seeds appeared on the September 1986 issue.