

City Press's new magazine the talk of the town

By  Oresti Patricios

4 Oct 2011

Hot off the back of a strategy lead by editor Ferial Haffajee, *City Press* is investing heavily in ensuring it becomes the most noticeable and noted Sunday media brand. The latest accent in that drive to own the Sunday newspaper market is a magazine that Media24's publication has simply called *i* magazine.



Launch edition of *i* magazine from City Press, 2 October 2011

[click to enlarge](#)

While Haffajee's intent has slowly unfolded in the past two years since she left the *Mail & Guardian* to become editor of *City Press*, *i* magazine is the most bold and noticeable move yet. Since July 2009, when she was brought in to revive *City Press*, she has worked on upping the game considerably, in both the look and read departments.

Aggressive and intelligent approach

A big makeover saw *City Press* get a fresh new look and style, with new supplements, sections and a fresh, modern design. The other part of Haffajee's strategy has been ground-breaking stories and leading news. It is an aggressive and intelligent approach to news in a world where so many other titles have taken a more tabloid approach to appeal to a mass market.

Haffajee's been smart because her market isn't a mass-media market; rather she's focusing on aspirant, emerging, middle-to-upper income consumers, which is a boon for advertisers. And it is exactly the kind of market cool brands, relevant brands and proudly South African companies are appealing to right now.

What's given *City Press* a massive share of voice is the paper's approach to investigative reporting and we see that the newspaper's ability to break big stories almost every week has not only made it a talking point around water coolers on Mondays, it has also set social media on fire.

City Press's consumers are currently Gauteng and KZN movers and shakers. They are upwardly mobile, aspirant and are filling out South Africa's middle class very rapidly. These people are au fait with social networks, use Facebook, and want to be in the know. They are also very vocal when it comes to speaking about political and social issues.

Leads the discussion

What the Sunday newspaper has done with its investigative work and with the big news stories that it breaks is to lead the discussion about what is happening in SA. This creates a larger-than-life voice for *City Press* on Twitter and on other social networks. Not only is other media giving *City Press's* brand love by quoting breaking stories, but social networks are abuzz with debate on these big issues as they break.



[click to enlarge](#)

Launching a glossy magazine is a smart next logical step for *City Press*. While investigative reporting, reportage and punchy columns give the paper a hard, newsy edge, it is the big-sized full-colour magazine that will reach out to new markets.

The first thing you notice about the magazine is its size. Close to A2, the larger format makes *Sunday Times'* magazine look a lot more like a badly printed pamphlet. The typefaces are modern, the photographs are world-class and the layout experience is very clean and spacious. Reading through it was a luxurious experience because of the paper, the writing and the visual appeal.

The advertising inside *i* magazine is a brand dream. Full-colour double-page spreads on glossy print paper or massive full pages that make a huge statement about the advertisers. The premier issue of the *City Press* magazine included luxury brands such as TAGHeuer, Le Creuset, Mercedes-Benz and other luxury brands.

'High definition' print quality

A big beef for luxury brands which have advertised in newspapers has been the print quality of the press. *i* magazine solves that problem really smartly with advertising that borders on being 'high definition'.



[click to enlarge](#)

The content inside the magazine is wide enough to appeal to both men and women, and is defined by aspiration, rather than any particular demography. This certainly makes it an appealing read for urban sophisticates who want to know about top brands and be seen wearing top brands.

The writing style in the magazine is short, punchy and isn't laboured, so even though there's more than enough to keep people happy way past Sundays, in a world where time has become increasingly precious and there's just so much content, the read is definitely enjoyable.

Internationally, well-crafted newspaper magazines such as those found in *The Guardian*, *Mail On Sunday* and the UK *Sunday Times* have done a brilliant job for broadening market share, growing newspaper brands and making the Sunday press last well beyond Monday morning. The surprising insight about these magazines is that they also make money for the media brands they represent.

Although *City Press* has yet to show growth in the ABCs after Haffajee's arrival, the media brand is very much still consolidating and looks like it is taking a very smart, long-term approach to growth by offering readers more and more value for their money.

For more:

- Bizcommunity Search: [iCity Press](#)

ABOUT ORESTI PATRICIOS

Oresti Patricios, CEO of the OrnicoGroup (www.ornico.co.za), has long been on the cutting edge of the media, advertising and branding industries. He has an MBA at GIBS and did his thesis on social media when Twitter was barely a twit. He has always driven his vision of dominating African media & brand intelligence. Contact Oresti on tel +27 (0)11 884 5041 or email Oresti@ornicogroup.co.za and follow @orestaki on Twitter.

- Pay-tv cap won't save the SABC, measurement and innovation will - 6 Aug 2021
- Brand advertising puts people ahead of sales in trying times - 22 Apr 2020
- Fighting fake news flames - 25 May 2017
- Why media research across Africa needs to be harmonised - 12 Aug 2016
- Harmonising media research across Africa - 27 Jun 2016

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>