

MEDIA/PUBLISHING

Print remains an institution for equestrian sports community

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Banner of The Chronicle of the Horse. Image courtesy of The Chronicle of the Horse.

By JEN KING

Although a relatively small niche, consumers who partake in competition equestrian sports lead highly active lives and are entrenched in a high-value market, and luxury advertisers are taking note.

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The international equestrian industry is growing in popularity, and currently contributes a direct economic effect of \$40 billion per year in the United States alone. Boasting an overall, cross-channel audience of 1.358 million, print publications such as The Chronicle of the Horse, a weekly covering show jumping and the competitive sport horse community, and the bi-monthly "out of the saddle" title Untacked, encapsulate the interests of an extremely lucrative market segment who are well-educated, have high disposable incomes and invest heavily in their horses.

"As with those with a passion for sailing, golf, skiing or tennis, The Chronicle's audience represents a highly targeted and extremely close-knit niche of active sporting lifestyle consumers who relate to established brands and the finest products," said Linda Andersen, senior account manager and business development at **The Chronicle of the Horse Media Network**, Middleburg, VA.

"By virtue of the equestrian's competition interest and level of involvement often spanning generations - luxury advertisers have an opportunity to be associated with our elite audience's passion and lifelong commitment to the sport horse," she said.



Linda Andersen of The Chronicle of the Horse and Untacked. Image courtesy of Ms. Andersen

The equestrian sport-focused Chronicle of the Horse and Untacked, which offers fine foods, gifts, equestrian-inspired fashion sporting art, travel and profiles of the world's leading equestrians and philanthropists count Hermes, Rolex, Sotheby's, Longines and Land Rover, among others as advertising partners.

Also, both publications have a total all-paid circulation, across print and digital, of 22,000. The Chronicle of the Horse's Web site sees 750,000 monthly visitors and a social media community of 486,000 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

In this Q&A, Ms. Andersen discusses why the equestrian sport niche is a worthwhile investment for luxury marketers, explains what stands out about The Chronicle of the Horse and Untacked and provides a glimpse of the average profile of the passionate horse owner and rider community.

Can you please describe the average reader profile?

The Chronicle of the Horse is read by some of the most affluent, educated consumers in America.

Average age: 50; average net worth: \$1.3 million with more than 10 percent of readers reporting net worth of more than \$3 million; [Readers are] 94 percent female; average acres owned: 34; average number of horses owned: three; average times [readers] compete annually: eight.

What are the costs involved with owning competition-level horses?

Top hunter jumper horses range from \$750,000 to \$1 million. Top dressage horses can cost more than \$1 million for those winning internationally.

Cost to compete at the AA circuit shows such as the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, FL and The Hampton Classic in New York run about \$25,000 to \$30,000 per month, including show entries and stall rental.

THE CHRONICLE of the HORSE

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Inside:

Jeremy Steinberg's String Theory Of Dressage p. 64
The MD Hunt Cup: Where Anything Can Happen p. 70
Chris Newton's Novel Approach To Nerve Pain p. 86

The Chronicle of the Horse publishes 34 times per year. Image courtesy of The Chronicle of the Horse, pictured: May 15 and 22, 2017 issue

How has the surge in interest in equestrian sports benefitted The Chronicle of the Horse?

Popularity of equestrian sports continues to broaden in this country, with major events including the Kentucky 3-Day and show jumping series sponsored by companies such as Rolex, Fidelity Investments, Longines and Land Rover being broadcast on the major network sport channels.

The rise in exposure of the sport has yielded even more in-depth coverage of the equine and equestrian athlete, and is attracting more non-endemic advertisers from the fashion, luxury good, travel and architectural design industries.

Print has remained an institution in the sport horse world, but The Chronicle of the Horse's online properties have grown up all around it and taken on a huge life of their own.

Our online forums and very active Facebook community have become the place to go to talk to like-minded horse enthusiasts, make lifelong friends and find answers to questions and challenges that arise with horses.

What is driving consumer interest in equestrian sports and lifestyle?

Horse sports have a long history of high-profile enthusiasts, not the least of which is the British Royal family.

Indeed, Princess Anne's daughter Zara Tindall is a European champion and Olympic silver medalist, following in the footsteps of her mother, who also represented Great Britain in the equestrian sport of three-day eventing. Jackie Kennedy, a serious equestrian and regular fox hunter, was the epitome of style in and out of the saddle.

Many competitors are very high-profile, including some at the very top of the sport. Jessica Springsteen and Georgina Bloomberg have both represented the United States in international competition, and celebrities such as Kaley Cuoco, Lyle Lovett, Athina Onassis, Ann Romney, Portia Di Rossi and Destry Spielberg are regulars on the show circuit.

Horses are great equalizers, and animal-lovers from all walks of life are drawn to the thrill and beauty of the equestrian sport and lifestyle.



Line 'em up and strike a pose! Ponies are underway at #devon2017

A post shared by The Chronicle (@chronofhorse) on May 26, 2017 at 9:33am PDT

Given how often The Chronicle publishes, 34 times per year, how does this impact the relationship between publication and advertising partner?

The Chronicle carries more than 600 advertisers per year.

Most run a minimum of 6-12x in print and compliment their brand presence with appearance on our digital platforms, including our Web site which attracts more than 700,000 visitors each month and our Facebook page, which currently attracts more than 395,000 followers.

Our frequency is a plus to our seasonal advertisers who want to be prominent in specific months, for example luxury real estate in the equestrian intensive areas such as Wellington, FL throughout the winter season, and luxury advertisers who want to appeal to our readers during the wedding, travel and gift giving months.

Many of our advertising partners are also sponsors and boutique vendors at the high-profile horse shows throughout the country. Their advertising enables them to have an added presence before, during and after the shows that The Chronicle covers.

Can you please share the advertising statistics of an average issue of The Chronicle, and separately Untacked, to compare?

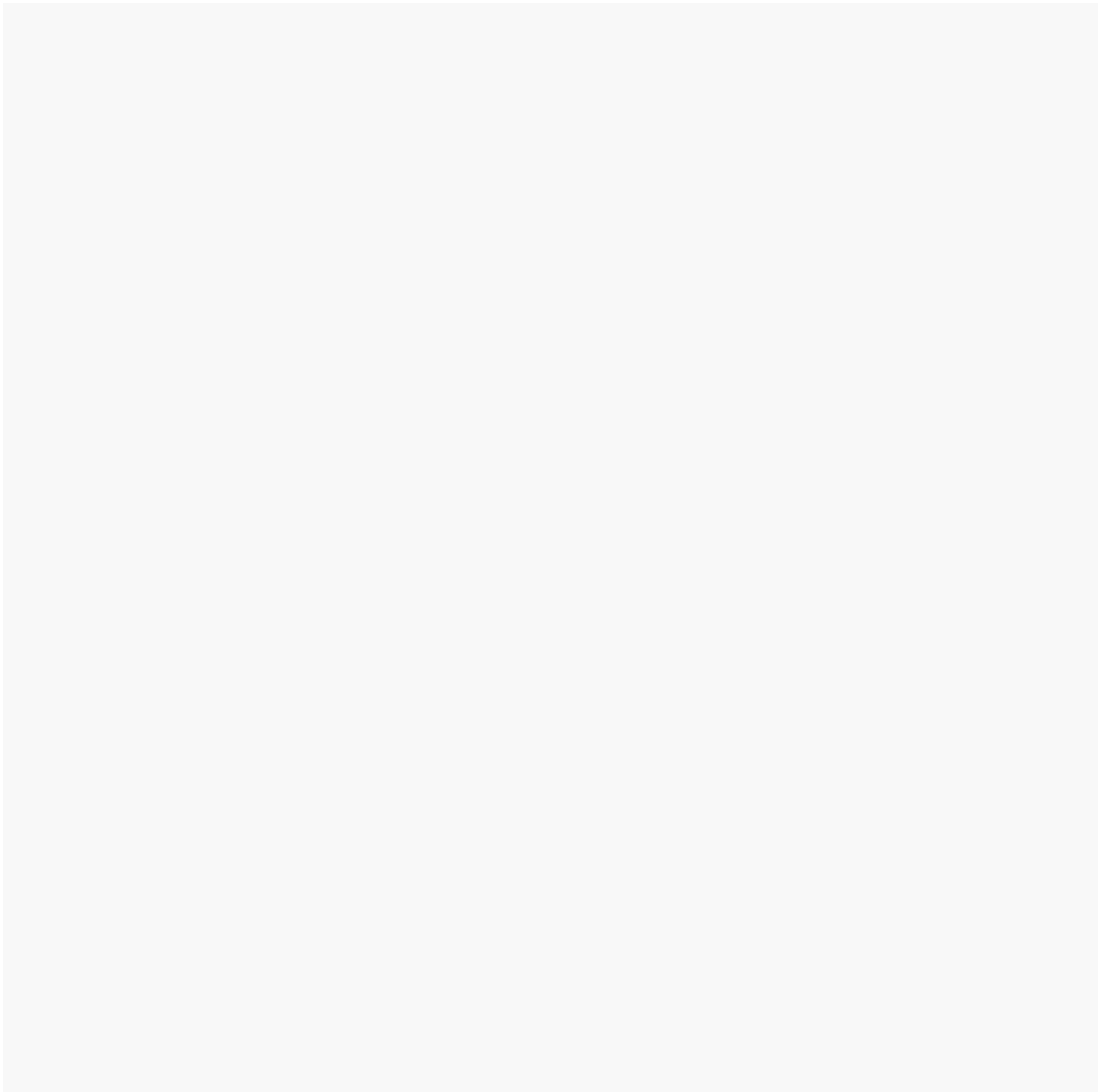
The Chronicle of the Horse averages 130 pages per issue, 34 times per year, with a 60/40 editorial:advertising ratio.

Untacked averages 120 pages per issue, six times per year, with a 70/30 editorial:advertising ratio.

Why should luxury advertisers turn their attention toward The Chronicle's discerning audience?

As with those with a passion for sailing, golf, skiing or tennis, The Chronicle's audience represents a highly targeted and extremely close-knit niche of active sporting lifestyle consumers who relate to established brands and the finest products.

By virtue of the equestrian's competition interest and level of involvement often spanning generations - luxury advertisers have an opportunity to be associated with our elite audience's passion and lifelong commitment to the sport horse.



What other horse show can you watch in a bikini? #lgctmiamibeach

A post shared by The Chronicle (@chronofhorse) on Apr 13, 2017 at 8:14pm PDT

What are the benefits of running Untacked as a lifestyle companion alongside The Chronicle?

Untacked was launched in 2013 to provide our readers and advertisers with an opportunity to have access to the

more social, historical and lifestyle aspects of the horse showing community.

For a remarkable 80 years, The Chronicle has provided them with the news, analysis, results, training, performance insights and stunning photography that serious equestrians rely on.

With Untacked, advertisers can also enjoy a "coffee table" connection with the legendary personalities, travel, fashion, beautiful farms and homes and all that inspires the equestrian lifestyle.



The July/August 2017 issue of Untacked. Image courtesy of The Chronicle of the Horse

As a paid subscription-only publication, how has the events circuit assist in The Chronicle's growth and audience base?

There are more horse shows and events in this country than ever before. Amongst the premier rated shows, horse show entries nationally have climbed by 20 percent over the last two years.

With the expanded involvement of spectator, competitor, trainer, owner and vendor participation, demand for The Chronicle of the Horse subscriptions have been growing each year. The Chronicle has selected complimentary issue distribution with special show subscription offers at key events such as Devon, The American Gold Cup, Winter Equestrian Festival, The Central Park Horse Show and more.

The Chronicle of the Horse is also a recognized media sponsor of the world-renowned Kentucky 3-Day Event, which attracts approximately 80,000 individuals over the course of the weekend. This particular event attracts hundreds of new subscribers and renewals each year.