

MEDIA/PUBLISHING

Cond Nast, Meredith double down on most recent pivot to video

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Cond Nast is moving to paywalls. Image credit: Cond Nast

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Media groups Cond Nast and Meredith are pushing forward with more investments into original video programming, as traditional publishers continue to pivot their strategies in a bid to reach and retain audiences.

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Sales, mergers, paywalls and new digital products and video verticals have been dominating the magazine world as publishers look to reverse their business fortunes. The younger consumers that advertisers covet, particularly members of Generation Z, gravitate to video and other visual content.

"Luxury always has been image-based," said Vincent Krsulich, president of **Martini Media**, New York. "Video has not been the primary outlet. Name one luxury commercial that stands out over the years."

"In my experience, video has been about reach and scale, not luxury," he said. "If media groups become better curators of unique and interesting video, then perhaps luxury advertisers will follow."

Video investments

At its NewFronts presentation on April 30, Cond Nast revealed it has 175 pilots in development, including about 50 returning series and new additions from publications including *GQ* and *Vogue*.

Cond Nast counts about 27 million subscribers across its YouTube channels.

An episode of "Ask Anna" on YouTube

Its current video roster includes popular series "73 Questions" from *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*'s "Lie Detector Test." *GQ* also has a forthcoming video channel centered on sports.

Some of the group's titles have already collaborated with luxury brands on special video content and native content partnerships.

Cond Nast's *British Vogue* and U.S. jeweler Tiffany & Co. launched a video series centered on the behind-the-scenes figures at both brands. While allowing Tiffany to further associate itself with fashion and film, this series also allows consumers to get to know the minds behind their jewelry or magazine ([see story](#)).

Similarly, *GQ* and Italian fashion label Gucci partner on an ongoing sponsored film series, "The Performers." The episodes focus on influential men and their journeys to unexpected places, and how it has shaped their "spirit and vision" ([see story](#)).

Meredith is also launching more video content, with 20 series of fully vertical, original content optimized for IGTV. The lineup includes *Money's* "Mini Moguls" and a second season of "Badass Women" for *InStyle*.

Earlier this year, Meredith introduced "F&W Cooks," a new multimedia franchise as part of the *Food & Wine* brand. It includes weekly recipe videos shared on IGTV.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

It's Friday, so your strawberries deserve a little champagne. Specifically in the form of zabaglionea boozy Italian custard saucemade by whisking together egg yolks, sugar, and a splash of wine, or in this case, champagne.

#FWCooks

A post shared by Food & Wine (@foodandwine) on Apr 26, 2019 at 8:04am PDT

F&W Cooks on Instagram

While video marketing continues to thrive on YouTube, Instagram has emerged as a surprisingly strong platform for film-based consumer engagement.

Generation Z in particular has shown a strong affinity for YouTube. These consumers use the platform to discover new television, music and influencers ([see story](#)).

Media moves

Aside from investments in video, publishers are experimenting with other ways to reach audiences and advertisers.

In January, Cond Nast announced that it plans to expand its paywall strategy to its entire portfolio of U.S. brands. After seeing success with metered paywalls for three of its titles, Cond Nast anticipates that readers will be willing to pay for the digital extensions of all of its brands, including *Vogue* and *Architectural Digest* ([see story](#)).

Cond Nast shelter publication *Architectural Digest* has launched a new members-only platform, as the media group looks to further engage professionals. AD Pro debuted in April and includes exclusive news, trade tools and services, as well as access to special events ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, Meredith's *Travel + Leisure* is focusing on the human side of travel in a redesign that centers on making the magazine more luxurious and modern. The revamped layout aims to be more engaging and personal through first-person storytelling, hand-drawn details and photography ([see story](#)).

"It is very hard to see where video is going to be this year, next year and beyond," Mr. Krsulich said. "Media groups will win by creating amazing programming that is wanted.' It all starts with that."

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