

MEDIA/PUBLISHING

Pandemic puts pressure on US magazine publication schedules: WWD

December 11, 2020



Anna Wintour is editor in chief of Vogue and artistic director of Cond Nast. Image credit: Cond Nast

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Magazine publishers Hearst, Meredith and Cond Nast have been forced to scrap issues and lay off staff amid the fallout of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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A new study from *Women's Wear Daily* suggests that not all of these cuts will be permanent, however. As the end of 2020 nears, *WWD* found that while 26 of the 45 U.S. titles it surveyed "had a lower print frequency" this year than in 2019, only two have stopped their print operations permanently.

Temporary COVID-19 hit?

Of the three top publishers surveyed by *WWD*, Hearst shrunk its print operations the most. Per the research, *Esquire* was cut back to six issues from eight and the publication of *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Elle Decor*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Marie Claire* and *Town & Country* was also reduced.

The changes are not necessarily here to stay as *Harper's Bazaar*, *Elle* and *Marie Claire* are all expected to increase the frequency of their issues in 2021, according to *WWD*.

The economic impact also extended to Cond Nast, which introduced pay cuts and either laid off or furloughed 200 staffers. *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair* and *Allure* all published one issue less in 2020 while *Cond Nast Traveler* still put out eight issues and *GQ* even managed to up its publication to 11 issues from 10.

Allure also managed to quell rumors that it will go the way of *Glamour* and become a digital-only brand, by revealing that it will publish 10 issues next year, the same amount released in 2020.

Over at Meredith, the situation was slightly more benign as only *Entertainment Weekly* and *Southern Weekly* pared back issues, with those decisions in both cases made before the pandemic came.

The Iowa-based publisher did part ways with 180 staffers across its business as well as cut pay and put its dividend on hold, per *WWD*.

Forbes and *The Atlantic* were on the list of magazine that saw their issues cut in 2020, while *California Sunday*

Magazine and *Paper*, meanwhile, are the two titles suspending publication entirely this year.

As the pandemic hit, many fashion magazines were quick to turn their social media and digital channels into places of information and calm.



Fashion icon Meryl Streep giving a toast on a Zoom call, featured on Vogue's Instagram page. Image credit: Vogue

Cosmopolitan magazine's Instagram featured calming ideas for baking during the crisis, as well as profiles of frontline workers.

Vogue also kept people entertained with news of fashion icons enjoying life in lockdown and sporting fashionable face masks or giving cheers during virtual happy hours. Movie star Meryl Streep was featured in a post with a martini from a Zoom happy hour ([see story](#)).

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