

GUEST COMMENTARY

NINA LINK

WHY AUDIENCE MATTERS

(This is *Magazine Publishers of America* president/ceo Nina Link's response to Hanrahan Media president Jack Hanrahan's April 7, 2008, *min* column, Why Rate Bases Matter.)

Magazine Publishers of America announced an initiative last month to improve the measurement of magazine audience. Since then, the subject has been discussed extensively in the trade press and at industry gatherings. Two questions have been asked repeatedly:

1. Why did the magazine industry undertake this initiative? And,
2. Does the magazine industry plan to abandon circulation measurement?

So let's set the record straight.



The reason for this initiative is simple. It responds to what the magazine industry heard from the advertising community. In the last year, magazine industry leaders held in-depth conversations with more than two dozen advertising executives to get their views on enhancing magazine measurement.

The ad community's overall recommendation: *It is time for a new magazine measurement model that is more timely and comparable to other media* (particularly as multiplatform deals increase). They also want increased accountability to clients' results such as a greater focus on reader involvement and action taking. This requires that magazine metrics allow advertisers to buy based on the number of people who read our magazines, not just the number of distributed copies.

But let's be clear on one key point. Improving audience measurement does not require jettisoning circulation. It will always be important even as the magazine industry must develop better audience measurement tools so we can get richer and more robust information to advertisers.

Other media keep improving how they measure audience. Their experience shows that change can be accomplished. To keep pace, magazine measurement must also change to ensure a healthy future for our medium.

Nina Link has been Magazine Publishers of America president/ceo since November 1999.

IN 2007, APPLE COMPUTER FOUNDER/CEO STEVE JOBS WAS PAID A BUCK.

One dollar was Jobs' salary/bonus/stock award last year, which ranked him last among the 200 publicly held company ceos' executive pay in *The New York Times* survey (April 5). But with \$851,213,835 in **Apple** equity earnings (ranking him 10th), Jobs can well afford it.

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