

# MAIN STREET

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUNCIE AND DELAWARE COUNTY

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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## *MAINSTREET -- Purpose*

Mainstreet Magazine is a magazine for culturally and community minded people and personalities; specifically those found in Muncie and the surrounding Delaware County. It's a magazine for people about people -- people the readers know, people they would like to know, people they just find interesting and people they would like to imitate.

In this light, as a magazine specifically centered on the Muncie and Delaware County community, Mainstreet will serve a cultural focus point for the area. It will serve to tie together the members of the community who see culture and community activism as not only desirable, but necessary, for a growing and evolving area.

Finally, as a joint production of Ball State University and WBST public radio in Muncie, Mainstreet will also serve the interests of these two groups by 1) better serving WBST members, as well as enhancing the cultural awareness of the area, which, in turn, may attract more members, and 2) to provide an outlet for student writing, reporting, photography and overall publication experience.

## *MAINSTREET* -- Market

The city of Muncie has a population of approximately 78,000. Delaware County, of which Muncie is a part, has a population of approximately 129,000. Out of these totals, Mainstreet will focus on the upper to middle class citizens, with an emphasis on those culturally and community minded citizens who are members or donors to community and cultural organizations.

According to the SRDS Report (August 1989), the target market for a city/regional magazine is more specifically defined as follows:

Male	46.9%
Female	53.1
Median age	47.7 years
Married	72.4%
Education	
Attended college	25.2%
Graduated college	21.9
Post graduate work (no degree)	10.0
Completed post-grad studies & received degree	20.0
Income (Total HH income before taxes)	
Under \$40,000	27.3%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	11.6
\$50,000 - \$74,999	25.6
\$75,000 - \$99,999	14.8
\$100,000 - \$199,000	14.2
\$200,000 - \$499,999	5.0
\$500,000 or more	1.5
Occupation of head of household	
Top management	24.9%

Middle management	14.6
Professional & technical	21.9
Retired	20.2
Own own home	85.4%
Market value of primary home	
Median	\$126,098
Average	\$185,235
Number of vehicles owned	
One	26.8%
Two	44.5
Three	17.4
Four or more	9.7

Competition within Delaware County for reaching this market exclusively is relatively nonexistent. In a sense, Mainstreet will be competing with the newspapers, The Muncie Star and The Muncie Evening Press, but the overlapping will not be such that one will take away from the other in significant numbers.

There are also no existing magazines of any focus concentrating on the Muncie and Delaware County market. Arts Indiana and Indianapolis Monthly are the closest comparable magazines to Mainstreet and it would take a mixture of these two magazines plus a refocusing onto Delaware County for it to do so. However the concepts are admittedly similar.

The presence of Ball State University (19,000 students) in Muncie and a handful of other smaller colleges in surrounding areas also helps in attracting additional culturally aware readers and providing a haven for the current culturally minded citizens of Delaware County.

## *MAINSTREET -- Market Strategy/Advertising*

Step number one in breaking into the Delaware County media market is to conglomerate the area's cultural and civil centers. This will be the main vehicle for reaching Mainstreet's target audience and attracting their interest.

Mainstreet will conglomerate these centers in one of two ways. Following in the mindset of Modern Maturity and its parent publisher, the American Association of Retired Persons, both possibilities rely on free subscriptions to Mainstreet through a citizen's membership or donation to a county cultural or community organization. Thereby an advertiser would be guaranteed to reach his target audience through Mainstreet.

On the part of the organizations, offering a well-written, high quality, unbiased piece of editorial can only benefit the organizations' subscription rates. On the part of Mainstreet, getting the magazines (and advertising) into the hands of the target audience will only cement Mainstreet's presence in the community.

The two ways to do this is as follows. Number one is take a chance solely on advertising to cover the cost of production. The promise of reaching 100% of a products target market could give weight to high advertising rates.

The second way is a bit more promising. By building up the economic benefits to the advertiser and subsequently the community

economy, as well as expressing the positive psychological benefits a city/regional magazine can bring to the community, Mainstreet's original funding may come from community officials themselves. This would alleviate any reliance, and subsequent rate deals, upon the advertisers, and would open the door to even higher ad rates if the magazine is successful after the first year.

Following up on this community pride angle, Mainstreet's focus builds the community's less tangible benefits quite heavily. With an underlying focus on the arts and culture of the area, followed by a strong push towards citizens' activities, among other community orientated articles and departments, Mainstreet wants to increase the level of pride in the area. Regular columns and departments are devoted to giving credit to area good works, projects, plans and the people behind them. Essentially, Mainstreet is a magazine about people -- who are the families on the other side of town doing things beneficial to the community? Of course, Mainstreet will also very likely be involved in the traditional Top 10 citizens of the county Awards, or Muncie's Best, or any other type of congratulations for jobs well done lists at the end of a year, etc. Perhaps this type of recognition can nurture a sense, however slight, of social responsibility and pride.

Additionally, Mainstreet can be a trendsetter for the area. Perhaps not so much a trendsetter itself, but rather through solid and honest reporting in a community that deserves to be recognized and featured, Mainstreet can hopefully keep a finger on the county's pulse and keep track of changing and adapting trends in a more objective and culturally--based way than other mediums of the community.

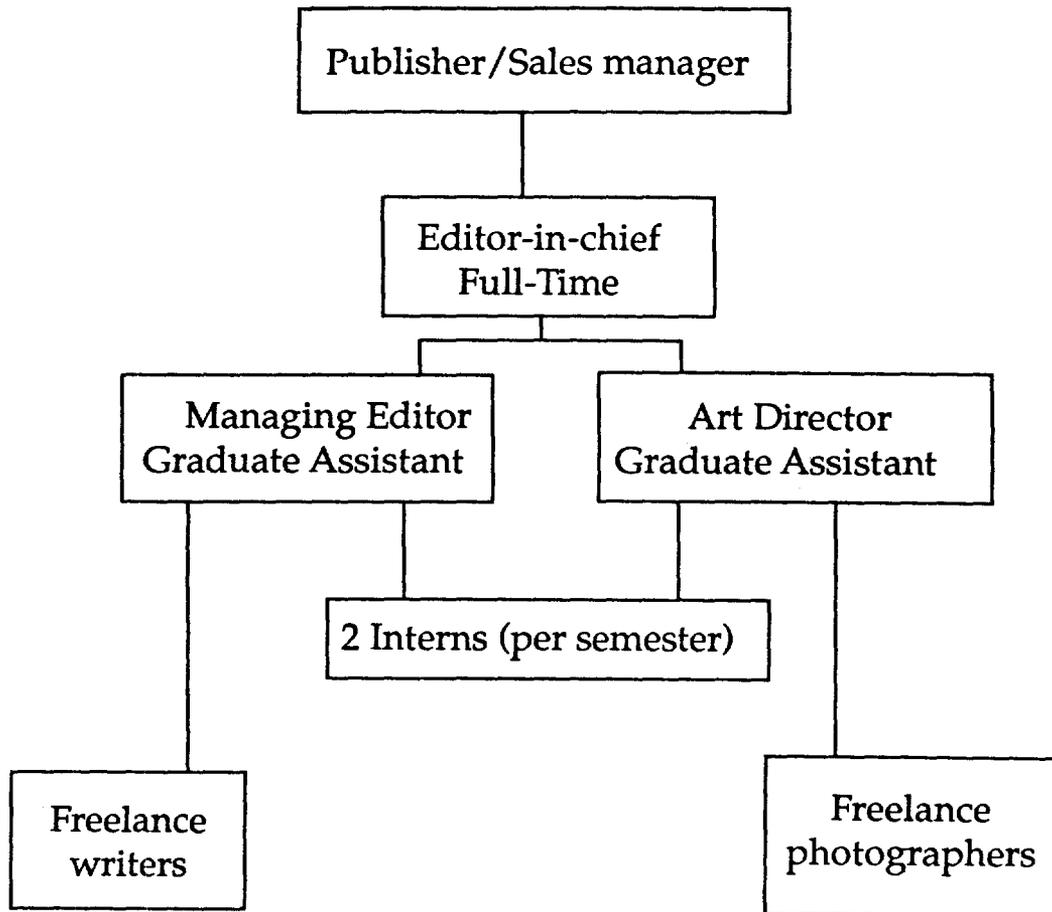
## *MAINSTREET* -- Editorial Philosophy

Mainstreet Magazine is a magazine for culturally and community minded people and personalities; specifically those found in Muncie and the surrounding Delaware County. It's a magazine for people about people -- people the readers know, people they would like to know, people they just find interesting and people they would like to imitate.

Mainstreet features two investigative pieces per issue about the area. Topics include schools, politics, government agencies, art, culture, strong profiles, events, community service, etc. Articles need not be Watergate II. However, Mrs. Jones' secret banana bread recipe unveiled is even more off the mark. The best angle would be to apply a national concern to Muncie and Delaware County (either before the newspaper does, or in a clearly deeper, more thorough fashion.)

Columns/Departments include people in the news (both big and small), cultural interests, senior matters, health mix, home and family and personal profiles. Essentially, the columns and departments are geared more towards the little guy, the mother of four who also served as the driving force behind a community recycling program, etc.

## *MAINSTREET* -- Management Policies



As a joint project involving the editorial, design and photography skills of the Ball State Journalism Department and the cultural and community experience of WBST public radio in Muncie, Mainstreet Magazine will use this advantage to the utmost. First of all, on staff, Mainstreet will offer two internships for students per semester. The managing editor and art director positions may also be graduate assistant positions -- thereby obtaining up and coming talent at a minimum cost.

As far as freelance material goes, Mainstreet will also push for

involvement from within the undergraduate journalism majors. By having access to a young and eager writing and reporting corps, with a strong editor and publisher keeping a tight reign on the culture and community focus, Mainstreet can be a very high quality magazine with a new and fresh outlook on the community.

Whereas Mainstreet will encourage freelance material from students and others in the community, it will not necessarily print a high majority of the material received due to early budget constraints. The fact that Mainstreet is a bimonthly magazine with only 42 pages, including cover, will also help as it offers a bit of leeway for the paid staff to eliminate much of the need for freelance material. Additionally, with only two main features per month and the rest of Mainstreet made up of regular columns and departments, the paid staff may find writing and reporting part of the daily routine. The percentage of freelance material would therefore have to be no more than 30%.

The freelance percentage for photography will be higher, however -- depending on the work of the art director, and what her photography skills are. Due to the limited number of pages in the book, there will subsequently be less room for photos. Therefore, the photos that are run will have to be very high quality with a limited number of basic headshots and posed photos. This will force Mainstreet to put more photographers on the streets to find those "just right" photos.

Being a magazine for a relatively older and established audience in a Midwest conservative area, Mainstreet's use of graphics won't be extensively extravagant and will more or less be taken care of by the paid staff.

# MAINSTREET - Launch Budget

## Production rate

8 issues, 40 pages each, over 14 months

## Production Costs

Printing estimates (36 B/W pages, w/ 4 color cover).....	\$50,000
Office supplies/Phone, etc.....	\$750
Photo supplies.....	\$2700

## Personnel

Publisher (percentage of current salary/load).....	\$5000
Editor-in-chief .....	\$25,000
Managing Editor (grad assistant).....	\$18000
Art director (grad assistant).....	\$18000
Interns (2 per semester).....	\$8000

## Freelance

Per feature.....	\$50
Per full column.....	\$20
Per photo.....	\$10
Per cover shot.....	\$20

2 features, 8 columns  
per issue.

12 features,  
48 columns  
per 6 issue year

→ \$1560

Photos- 8 cover shots  
plus 38 inside photos.

→ \$450

## Other

Mailing costs.....	\$.13 X 60,000.....	\$7800
Marketing/Promotion.....		\$4000
Emergency.....		\$2000

**total 143,260**

## A New Future for the WBST Program Guide

**P**ublishing a magazine is not an easy job. Most readers have no idea of the enormous amount of time that goes into publishing a single printed page, much less a whole magazine. The WBST staff is busy producing radio programs every day, and publishing the *Program Magazine* has been just another chore sandwiched in between other responsibilities.

Several months ago, Joe Misiewicz, chair of the Department of Telecommunications, approached me about the possibility of having magazine students help produce the *WBST Program Magazine*. The Magazine Sequence in the Department of Journalism has seventy majors and their major publishing project is *Expo Magazine*. But since this magazine comes out infrequently, we don't have many opportunities for students to display their talents.

As a magazine writing teacher, I see some excellent work. In my classes, students have produced fascinating articles about Muncie's people, places, and happenings. Unfortunately, however, most of their work goes unpublished.

This "partnership" between the Magazine Sequence and the WBST staff seems like an ideal marriage. It gives the students more opportunities for their articles to be published, and it gives the WBST staff more time to produce excellent radio programs.

The team that has planned this joint venture includes Stewart Vanderwilt, director of marketing, and Nancy Wood, director of audience services for WBST. They have worked with me, and with Professor Pat Mills, John Christensen, a senior magazine major, and Amy Metz, *Expo* editor, to plan a list of themes for the next six months and coordinate the logistics of enlisting writers and articles. Professor Alfredo Marin-Carle, who teaches graphic design, is working on a re-design of the program guide. And we've also had strong support from John Eiden, WBST Station Manager, and Earl Conn, chair of the Department of Journalism.

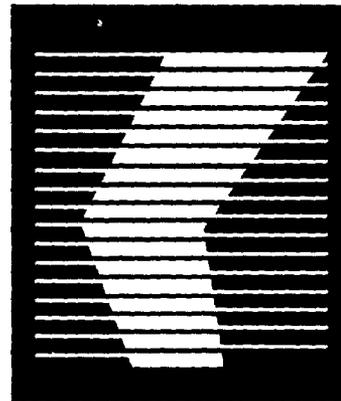
This first issue on "Making Muncie Green" has articles by two students. John Christensen's article (page 12) profiles the three major B.S.U. environmental groups and the people behind them. Terry Dudley, a junior, has an article on "The Simple Things" (page 11) you can do to conserve natural resources. Next month's theme will be "Indiana Festivals," with articles on fairs, festivals, and other summer events within easy driving distance of Muncie.

Our long-range goal is to turn the program guide into a regional magazine, similar to *Indianapolis Monthly*, with personality profiles, investigative reports, events calendars, and restaurant and entertainment reviews. The changes you will see in the coming months will emerge slowly, and we hope you will enjoy them.

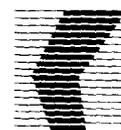
—David E. Sumner, Assistant Professor of Journalism  
& Magazine Sequence Coordinator



Dr. David Sumner



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