

# BALANCE

A Magazine For Non-Traditional College Students

An Honors Creative Project

by

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Muncie, Indiana

April 1996

May 1996

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### Purpose of Project

This magazine idea was created for non-traditional students across the country. As a non-traditional student, some of the challenges that I have faced throughout my college career are different than those of my traditional friends. The articles not only address these issues, but they offer suggestions and experiences of other students.

As far as the market and the need for such a magazine, in 1993, there were more than 6.3 million adults over the age of 25 who were attending college. That number does not include students who are under the age of 25 and be a parent or married. There are no other magazines of this nature on the market to meet their needs and the number of non-traditional students is growing annually.

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A Magazine for Non-Traditional College Students

## *Production Plan*

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Editorial Profile: A magazine that focuses on the lifestyles and interests of non-traditional college students. The magazine will focus on certain aspects faced such as financial concerns, family situations, travel, commuting problems as well as issues dealing with professors and classes.

Editorial Objective: Is to inform the readers that 1) there are other students in the same situation and could offer encouragement, 2) to give helpful hints in dealing with issues faced by non-traditional students and 3) to give examples of inexpensive family recreating activities.

Editorial Calendar:

A. July (Family Times)

1. Family Travel *inexpensively*
2. How to spend quality time w/ your spouse and/or children and juggle classes.
3. Summer Safety tips
4. Summer recipes the entire family can help with.

B. August (Back To school)

1. 25 ways to cut cost of back to school clothes for you & your children
2. Ways to get the most out of your education
3. Not too early to prepare for the holiday budget
4. Coping with Marital/Family problems as related to school

C. September (Fitness & Health)

1. Stress & Time Management
2. Exercise beneficial both physically and mentally
3. Low-fat foods even when you are in a hurry
4. Effectiveness of campus health centers: How practical are they for your family?

D. October (Joining the Work Force and other money matters)

1. To work or not to work
2. The Welfare Cycle for students
3. Job Search Techniques
4. Employment agencies: do they honestly help you find a job or are they a scam

## The Editorial Need

*BALANCE* would be the only national magazine for non-traditional students specifically, The only other magazines that were even remotely close to meeting the needs and covering some issues of the non-traditional students were the following...

*The Black Collegian* - was established in 1970 and has a circulation of 121,000. this magazine based out of New Orleans is published bimonthly during the school year and offers articles on career and job information, cultural awareness, history, trends, and current issues. This magazine is for African-American college students.

*College Monthly* - the topics covered in this magazine are lifestyle and entertainment, including humor, personal experience, travel, sports and fashion. The Massachusetts based magazine was established in 1986 and has a circulation of 73,000.

*Florida Leader* - is out of Gainesville, Florida and has a circulation of 27,000. All of the features are Florida college related. The special issues include Careers and Majors, Florida Leader High School Edition, Transfer, Returning Student and Student Leader.

However, all of those mentioned above are have narrowed region of audiences. They do not cover the potential national audience.

The void that a magazine for non-traditional students would fill would be encouragement, advice, suggestions, and any piece that focuses on the lifestyle, (academic and personal) of non-traditional students. Sometimes when people feel like they are alone (the only one going through a certain situation) it can get discouraging. This is when an article of other people going through the same situation or who gave successfully reached their goal can be of help. A great deal of encouragement and helpful ideas could be attained from this magazine.

## The Reader Potential

My definition of "non-traditional" is anyone who attends college and is married or a parent or just a returning student. The age of the potential readers could be anyone 18+. The readers could range from an 18 year old married student to a 40 years old person who decided to change careers or to a 36 year old business executive taking a refresher computer course.

In 1993, more than 6.3 million adult over the age of 25 were attending college and two out of every three were women. Recent statistics show that at Ball State University there are 4,000+ non-traditional students. The national statistic show that around 40 percent of all 4-year college students are over the age of 25 years. That number is rapidly approaching the 50 percent mark. Furthermore, an estimated 60 percent of all students enrolled in two-year colleges are also over the age of 24 years.

These statistics do not include the non-traditional students who are under the age of 25 and may be married or a parent. As a single parent, I find that there are not really any magazines geared especially towards these individuals. Attending college and raising a family is not an easy task.

I believe that there are a number of factors that control the way that they are able to study, schedule classes, maintain a family life and some students even juggle a full-time job as well. For some people it is a choice to go back or to keep going and take care of a family. For others it seems to be more of a need to get a degree to provide for one's family.

The reader potential would be college students of any age, they could be male or female. The income would most commonly be low to middle, but as I mentioned the student could be a professional who is taking a refresher course or just learning more about a subject. Therefore, their really is no definitive income bracket, however, it would most likely be low to upper middle.

With these figures in mind, I would say that there is definitely a market.

## The Advertising Potential

The advertising potential is relatively unlimited.

Non-traditional students have to be well organized of their time , as well as their lives.

The potential advertisers in to fill this category could include, but not be limited to; Rubbermaid, other storage device companies, notebooks, day planner manufacturers and even software programs that allow for schedules to be created on the computer.

In addition to time, the audience most often does not have a lot of time to spend in the kitchen preparing meals. This is when the advertisements for food products is prominent. Advertisements for easy preparation dishes, mixes where you just add meat or water, soup starters or frozen meals would be a strong clientele. Coffee would be another strong advertising market, as well as snack foods.

With the magazine offering a department in travel and leisure, the advertisements for this sections could include states, promoting tourism, a special tourist attraction, a city or something recreational in activity, such as a camping ground. Once again, there is a large potential for advertising in this area.

As the one thing in common among all of these people is that they are students, another potential group of advertisers would be any manufacturer of school related products, health supplies, pain relievers, computer equipment, software packages or children's products.

Since many of these individuals are about to enter the job market, advertisers of professional products could find an interest in advertising in this magazine. Those products could include briefcases, portfolios, job search books. suit makers, male and female, or shoes.

Really almost anything has the potential of advertising in the magazine. With some of the students having children, some may be homeowners, some may have pets, some may already have a career, there is an unlimited number of potential advertisers.

## The People Involved

**Editor-in-Chief** – Responsibilities divided into four areas; staff relations and communication, editorial supervision, planning and public relations. Duties include keeping the errors out and the shaping of the magazine. Also an editor must keep in close contact with all of the staff members. Often an editor is thinking ahead several issues and in terms of seasons. They also keep in contact with the advertising department and let them know what themes are running as well as any other special type of article that would attract a certain type of advertiser.

**Senior/ Managing Editor** – Duties include seeing that the daily nitty-gritty work gets done. The managing editor tends to work more on the current issue than the future issues.

**Associate Editor** – The responsibility of this position is to make decisions regarding the manuscripts that are received in the mail.

**Art Director** – Duties include overseeing the layout and design of the magazine. Also, responsible for overseeing the photographer and photo shoots, as well as freelance photographers and artists. The Art Director selects typefaces for titles and other illustrations. The person may or may not execute the plans. Oversees the work of the Art Assistant.

**Photographer** – Responsible for taking the photos of all staff written stories and possibly some freelance articles. Works closely with Art Director in ensuring the high quality of photos.

**Business Manager** – Duties include handling all of the financial matters of the magazine, from paying the expenses, to collecting and recording the revenues. Also in charge of payroll accounts and advertising accounts.

**Art Assistant** – Duties include laying out the magazine. Also, responsible for the design and/or execution of headlines and titles. May assist the Art Director or Photographer as needed.

**Advertising Director** – Duties include the overseeing of the advertising sales and ensuring that the advertisements are ready to go by the deadline. This position also requires prospecting and building up the advertising account list.

**Sales Manager** – This position would be added in the second year. Duties would include assisting the Ad Director in servicing the advertising clientele. Also, duties would include prospecting new accounts.

**Production Manager** – This position would be added in the second year. The main responsibility of the production manager is to work in executing the design and layout of the advertisements. This person would also assume the responsibility that all of the advertisements were ready to go by the time of the deadline.