



Study: Affluent People Reading More Magazines Than Ever Before

Thursday, September 28, 2006

By [Linda Zebian](#)

Affluent people are spending more time reading magazines, according to the latest Mendelsohn Affluent Survey. The top quarter of U.S. households with current household incomes of \$85,000 or higher are reading more magazines than ever before, citing increases over the previous year in both the number of publications read as well as the number of issues.

According to the survey, 85.8 percent of participants claimed to read one publication or more, an estimated increase of 4 percent over last year's figures. The average number of publication titles read increased from 6.2 to 6.9 while the average number of publication issues read increased about 12 percent since 2005.

The Top 10 publications posting the largest average issue audience increases among affluent readers in 2006 are: *People*, *House & Garden*, *Time*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Southern Living*, *National Geographic*, *Food & Wine*, *Automobile Magazine*, *Us Weekly* and *Cooking Light*.

Primedia's *Automobile* beat out palpable lux heavyweights like *Vogue*, *Robb Report* and *Forbes*. "The survey results do not impact our approach to readers however, as we have consistently invested in the quality of the publication by increasing both the weight and quality paper stock to attract a higher quality newsstand reader," says Brad Gerber, publisher of *Automobile*.

The more than 25 million households that make up this demographic are a significant target market for advertisers and publishers, as they account for over 50 percent of total U.S. household incomes, according to the study. Gerber says the magazine is looking to break more upscale, non-endemic advertisers in categories like timepieces and apparel, financial services, travel, spirits, and consumer electronics.

The results are not surprising to many of the publishers listed in the Top 10. "Our marketing strategy has not really changed to specifically target upscale advertisers or affluent customers," says Scott Kerr, director of marketing and strategic research for the *People* Group, the magazine that came out on top. "From our franchise platforms to our entertainment and retail marketing partnerships, we provide our advertising partners to unique access to all types of consumers."

CondeNast's *House & Garden*, which recently announced plans to up its rate base to 950,000 in 2007, landed second on the list. "*House & Garden* has found that affluent

women overwhelmingly choose the home as the single best reflection of their personality," says Joseph Lagani, the magazine's vice president and publisher. "Advertisers know this too, which is why we've had such a high demand from our advertisers regarding our Luxury issue." Lagani says the magazine will publish two luxury-themed issues in 2006.
