

2015 Winner: International Coach Federation

Entry Title: Coaching World

Project Overview/Elevator Pitch:

Coaching World is the International Coach Federation's quarterly, digital magazine, designed to provide professional business and life coaches with tools, tips and insights to enhance their practices and grow their businesses. Prior to 2014, each issue of CW was filled with long-form features organized around a single theme (e.g., technology, alternative revenue streams). Last year's CW "refresh" moved the publication away from long-form articles and single-theme issues in order to appeal to a diverse and growing community of professional coaches from around the world. The new CW is characterized by a magazine look and "feel," the presence of columns and departments organized around coaches' key concerns (business development, aligning with ICF's Core Competencies for practitioners, research and scholarship impacting coaches). They completed the facelift by adopting a new digital publishing platform for a more user-friendly experience.

Project Goals/Objectives:

The goal for the CW facelift was to position the magazine as a go-to resource not only for ICF's 25,000-plus members, but for the global coaching community, which boasts an estimated 47,000 members. To this end, they sought to increase reader engagement, as measured by PDF downloads (the preferred medium of many of our members); pageviews and time spent in the issue, create a platform for more contributors' voices by maintaining our page count while decreasing article length and increasing variety of subject matter.

Additional objectives included to offer ICF Members and non-members alike multiple "reasons" for engaging with the publication, regardless of their interest in an issue's "theme," to identify and implement a user-friendly platform to enhance the readers' experience and engagement and decrease reader satisfaction (as evidenced by support requests to ICF HQ) and offer readers a visually appealing product that aligns with ICF "brand basics" while still feeling fresh, current and relevant.

Strategy:

- In April 2013, ICF hired a Communications Coordinator with a background in consumer magazine publishing to serve as CW's managing editor. She oversaw the creation of CW's new editorial framework, which incorporated departments, columns, and mini- and full-length features for a true "newsstand-magazine" look and feel.
- The marketing and communications team also widened its net for soliciting volunteer contributors. Previously, with only a handful of "slots" available in each issue, writing for CW was positioned as an elite opportunity for a select few contributors, most of whom submitted full manuscripts for consideration.
- Beginning in 2014, the ICF Marketing and Communications team used social media to disseminate calls for CW proposals; they also initiated a query-review process.

- The new CW truly offers something for everybody. Although each issue continues to galvanize around a central theme (2014 examples included The Science of Coaching and Making a Difference), editorial requirements no longer call for each and every article to align with this theme. As a result, readers are more likely to engage with each issue, regardless of their relationship to the issue theme.
- They adopted the Joomag digital publishing platform in mid-2014. Previously, CW was published via Issuu, and ICF HQ staff fielded several questions and complaints per month about poor user experiences with the technology. From a user-experience perspective, Joomag outpaced its counterparts in many areas; it also boasted robust analytics that would position ICF to better measure readership and engagement.

Success Metrics:

- An increase in engagement from online viewers with session durations almost doubling from ~5:30 in 2013 to 9:03 and pages per session for 2014 is 11.3.
- It has been “read” on our online viewer 37,071 times and there have been 12,571 downloads this year.
- Email open rates for 2014 have consistently been at 44-45% for the general membership, and up to 66% for our subscribers (both up from 42% in 2013).
- Click-through rates on those emails average 8.55% for the general membership and 21% for subscribers. Within the issues, the internal links see up to 19% click-through rates.
- Since the migration to Joomag, ICF HQ staff have received zero support requests or user experience complaints from ICF Members and non-member coaches.

Learn More:

<http://www.joomag.com/en/newsstand/coaching-world-issue-12-november-2014/0547505001416845717>

<http://www.joomag.com/en/newsstand/coaching-world-issue-11-august-2014/0311374001407443858>

<http://www.coachfederation.org/>