

TO: K. Lewis
FROM: Kristen Meloche
DATE: 9/3/02
SUBJECT: Bravo Original Programming



Looking for new sponsor for a new Bravo Original Series similar to Inside the Actor's Studio but dealing with literary figures.

Introduction

Salon.com is a unique and irreverent daily web-published news magazine. Published by Salon Media Group, Inc., Salon is a collection of continuously updated sections of arts and entertainment, books, life, news, people, politics, sex, and technology and business. The site also contains an audio section, highlighting literary works in the author's voice, as well as two online subscription discussion communities,

History

Salon was founded in 1995 by a group of journalists tired of traditional newspaper work. The group secured initial funding Apple Computers, Adobe Systems, and Hambrecht & Quist, and launched a web-based magazine targeting a literate audience attracted to highbrow content.



Site Sections
A & E
Books
Comics
Life
News
People
Politics
Sex
Tech & Business
Audio

Communities
Table Talk
The Well
Salon.com Blogs

Salon Publications

Afterwords
An essays compiled by Salon's editorial team about 9/11

Unmasking Deep Throat
John Dean's e-book about history's most elusive news source.

Salon.com Reader's Guide to Contemporary Authors
An encyclopedia of today's most important authors

Salon.com's Wanderlust: Tales of Real-Life Adventures and Romance
An offbeat collection of 34 travel essays.

Mothers Who Think: Tales of Real-Life Parenthood
An unsparing look at varying aspects of being a mom.

- 1996, Salon was selected as Time Magazine's Best Site of the Year.
- 1999, Salon expanded its current website sectioned format and offered its first IPO (Hoover's Company Profile).
- With the dotcom crash, Salon.com's stock fell from roughly \$15 a share to under \$1. Ad sales also took a hit, as many of the advertisers were related to the internet.
- In 2001, the magazine cut its staff by 20% and launched a subscription-based service, Salon Premium, in an effort to recoup losses.
- In 2002, Salon faced a crippling \$ 76 million debt, and fought off closure with a secured bridge loan financing and corporate donations.

Salon Corporate Profile

The Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of the Salon Media Group is David Talbot and the President, CEO, and Director is Michael O'Donnell. Salon is a publicly traded company [NASDAQ:SALNC]. Company stake holders are Adobe Systems (about 35%), Rainbow Media Holdings (18%), directors John Warnock (18%), Rob McKay (11%), Michael Fuchs (10%) and David Talbot (5%). Salon has operations in New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, DC (Hoover's Company Profile)

Readership

A consistent circulation base of 2 million unique users shows the strength of the Salon brand and the loyal base of regular visitors to Salon.com. Salon, like Bravo, has a core audience of upscale viewers. Almost all Salon readers are college educated; 37 % of readers have completed a professional degree. Over half of Salon readers own their own home and the median household income is \$84,024 (Cyber Dialogue)

Public image

Salon is credited with putting Web-only journalism, criticism and commentary on the media map as a worthy competitor to print and broadcast (Piller C1). Over the seven years Salon has been publishing, it has won most major Web awards including three Webbys, Best Website by Entertainment Weekly, Best of the Web by Business Week and Website of the Year by Time magazine and the Year 2000 General Excellence in Online Journalism Original to the Web and Enterprise Journalism Original to the Web Online Journalism Awards sponsored by the Online News Association and the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism (Salon.com).

"They've demonstrated that you can be literary, pointed and analytic on the Web in a way that's as effective as in print," said Tom Goldstein, dean of Columbia Graduate School of Journalism (Piller C1).

Salon's investigative reporting has garnered much praise. In January 2001, Salon broke the story that top TV shows such as "ER" included anti-drug messages as part of a deal with the White House that relieved networks of a government obligation to air public-service commercials (Forbes).

Salon's most controversial story was its revelation in late 1998 that Rep. Henry Hyde of Illinois, the leader of Congressional impeachment efforts had an extramarital affair 33 years earlier. Several large papers and broadcasters had passed on the story, yet followed Salon's coverage even as it was denounced as sleaze (Piller C1).

Along with investigative reporting, Salon has established itself in the literary community. Along with daily book reviews and writers interviews, Salon's Books site holds an annual literary event honoring the year's best books, the Salon Book Awards.

Advertising and Partnerships

According to the 2001 Annual Report, Salon continues to focus its advertising ventures towards Fortune 1000-type clients and has been successful in securing advertising contracts from large corporations such as Intel, Lexus, Motorola and AT&T. Salon.com recently made its content available to Rainbow Media Holdings to develop television programming. Similarly, Salon signed a deal with HBO Films, which optioned any story ideas for future film adaptation (Cablefax).

Bibliography

(Piller C1)

(Farhi 36)

Dan Forbes Prime-Time Propaganda Salon.com

CABLEFAX August 14, 2002 Vol. 13, No. 156 Programming

(Cyber Dialogue)

(Creed)

(Hoover's Company Profile).