

SA publishing industry reels from news of AMP's closure

 By [Josephine Buys](#)

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It is with a heavy heart that I share these difficult words: Associated Media Publishing (AMP) has just announced its closure. Covid-19, and its side-effects, has taken one of our very best and most revered magazine media owners.



Julia Rapaely. Image source: Associated Media Publishing's [Twitter](#).

This news comes on the same day that *BizCommunity* had just published an opinion piece I contributed about my appeal to marketers and advertisers not to abandon South African publishers during these uncertain times.



Advertisers will benefit from continued use of trusted media

Josephine Buys 30 Apr 2020



I feel as if one of my closest friends over many years is gone. A friend I relied on, shared with and with whom I enjoyed an incredibly close bond of trust and companionship. I know I'm talking about inanimate magazine media here, but I've always felt the best magazine media develop close personal relationships with their loyal readers and fans. In my case, I had such a bond with the magazines produced by the incredibly talented team at AMP.

The medium truly is the message

The reason for my feelings is that the best magazine media have always been about the relationships cultivated between their creators and their readers. They reach out, through the medium of magazines, straight into the hearts and minds of their loyal fans. Both are better for it.

The media visionary Marshall McLuhan was correct all those years ago. The medium truly is the message.

Launched by media industry doyenne Jane Raphaely in 1982, over the last decade Associated Magazines was transformed into AMP under her daughter Julia's leadership. The company has always been a family business, which makes the news of its closure even harder to bear.



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30 Apr 2020



AMP was showing some promising signs lately, swimming upstream in a sea of lower circulation numbers and a move to digital platform advertising offered by global behemoths such as Facebook and Google. AMP pivoted to embark on a digital business model and by keeping a keen focus on quality content, one-on-one relationships, deep engagement and shop windows for loyal and engaged readers.

Before Covid-19, it seemed as if they were starting to turn the tide. AMP has always had strong relationships with key advertisers, built over decades from the time that Jane's trusted advertising sales partner Volker Kuhnel assisted her in launching a local edition of *Cosmopolitan*. These steady commercial relationships continued under Julia's expert leadership.

Advertisers trusted AMP to delivered high-quality audiences in high-quality editorial environments issue after issue, article after article, post after post and event after event.

How devastating then, that some of those very advertising partners, who admittedly are suffering grave losses of their own, have been unable to continue supporting this media leader.

Devastating casualty of this crisis

I would thus like to add to my appeal mentioned at the start of this article:

“ Advertising decision-makers, please consider that the millions of us at home rely on trusted, credible media to keep us connected, informed, inspired and educated. Reader consumers are increasingly aware of which brands are showing up in our time of need with empathy, care and concern. Advertising support in this time of crisis, with messages of assistance and future-focused optimism, will influence which brands we will support in our next normal. ”

Please do not desert the publishing sector during this extraordinary time of uncertainty.

I also have a message for the AMP family, a devastating casualty of this crisis. I offer deeply felt words of support for your leadership and your talented workforce who, against all odds, responded to the disruption and change in our industry with passion, skill and commitment to drive conversations that matter in print, online and in person: I salute you.

ABOUT JOSEPHINE BUYS

Josephine Buys is CEO of The Publisher Research Council (PRC).
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