Description

_Zipped_ magazine is the only student-run fashion and beauty magazine on the Syracuse University campus. _Zipped_ is one of 11 publications at Syracuse University, not including two recently added publications. The magazine started as an Honors Capstone project and offers a great window on the difficulties, challenges, and obstacles publications face. My experience as editor informed my decision to create my Honors Capstone project, “Guide to Student Publications.” The project covers all areas of a student publication: staffing, editorial, fashion, art & photography, public relations, social media, advertising, and publishing or the budget. Each section of the guide goes into detail about problems that arise for editors of student publications. The largest sections of the guide are staff and editorial. The sections chronicle important topics like creating a copy flow, order in which articles are edited, house style sheet, style guidelines for specific publications, hiring staff, conflict resolution, utilizing your faculty advisor, and much more.

Some of the areas I felt more unprepared for when I became the editor of _Zipped_ were fashion, art & photography, public relations, and the budget. When I had questions about photo shoots for example—how to find models for photo shoots, how to borrow clothing from local stores, rent studio space—it was not easy to find answers. I ended up solving most of the issues by consulting with my advisor, contacting former editors and staff members, and working with the current staff members to come up with a plan. What I realized was that each campus publication would benefit from a guide that answered questions similar to the ones I encountered.
The guide is designed to help with the transition period each campus magazine, student publication, and organization goes through in late spring and/or fall. On student publications, new editors experience difficulty with this transition because the former editor or leader graduates, and a majority of the time there is no record of his or her expertise, history, or experiences to guide the new staff. Often, the former editor and staff members work full-time after graduation and have little time to field questions. This makes them unavailable to help students and this is where my project comes in.

When I started as the Editor-in-Chief of Zipped in May 2010, the former editor and I met to go over the basics of managing the magazine. When I arrived on campus for my senior year, I experienced tough new challenges—from creating a budget to sending the publication to print—and I longed for a guide to direct me and offer suggestions on how to manage a magazine. At the same time I became the editor of Zipped, I also took the class Magazine Editing with Professor Harriet Brown. I started thinking about editing in an entirely new way. Professor brown supplied our class with tools, ideas, suggestions, and guidance on how to become the best editor possible.

The opportunity to serve as the editor of a campus publication is overwhelming, stressful, terrifying, and daunting, but when they finished product comes off the printer, an editor feels something in-between extreme relief and immeasurable gratification. What draws me to magazines, and what always has, is the change for personal expression, the glossy pages, and the eloquent writing. This guide is meant to serve as a reference for the necessary tactical, mechanical, and critical items for student editors. Future Editor-in-Chiefs should use the guide as a way to familiarize themselves with the editing process. This guide also contains information for younger students on how to get involved in a student publication.
Methods

Throughout my time as editor there were significant lessons I took away from my experiences. At certain points throughout my time as editor I dealt with my Art Director stepping down, a Photography Director consistently showing up late to meetings, writers not turning articles in on time, and struggles to obtain funding for a speaker we were bringing to campus, and much more. The guide is made up of my takeaway from several experiences as well as advice from Magazine Department Chair, my advisor, Honors Capstone advisor, and Zipped faculty advisor, Melissa Chessher, and magazine professor Harriet Brown. Their advice and lessons about magazine editing informed many of my decisions as editor.

In addition to these methods, I consulted several magazine students and fellow student editors. JERK magazine is a well-known alternative arts publication that prides itself on jerking the reader out of their mainstream views. The editors and staff hold their publication to high standards. I wanted to learn from the editors about how they hire staff, what they important skills they think editors should have, and how they continue to grow as a publication. I include this advice as well as information on several other student publications.

Two sources I referenced when writing about social media and the Internet were Jon Glass, the General Manager of the Collaborative Media Room in Newhouse at Syracuse University and the book The Zen of Social Media Marketing by Shama Hyder Kabani. Glass’ has tremendous expertise with regard to the web. As the Executive Producer of TheNewhouseHouse.com he understands the challenges of creating web content and appealing to a student audience. The book, The Zen of Social Media Marketing, provides advice about how to turn your company, or in this case a student publication, into
a brand. In today’s technology-driven culture it’s important to think of magazines or student publications as brands. As part of this, I wanted future editors to have a well-rounded understanding of social media, web, public relations, editorial, and art. This makes them well-rounded editors who can oversee the entire publication.

**Significance**

My project is not a thesis or research project. But it will be useful to editors for years to come. The service nature of my project means students in similar difficult situations to what I experienced will reference my project. I envision students coming into the magazine department or Office of Student Life with concerns and questions, and using my guide as a reference. An important takeaway for student editors is to realize that an increase in publications on campus might mean a decrease in funding.

Currently, the Student Association is struggling with how to allocate money to the increasing number of publications on campus. It is becoming ever more important to create a strong publication on campus, which has a robust web and social media presence, intense public relations plan, advertising in place, and in-depth research and writing. The Student Association needs to make decisions about how to allocate money and this means the money must get cut from somewhere.

Managing a magazine outside of classes and extra curricular activities is not an easy task. My goal is for students to benefit from the information in “Guide to Student Publications.” I hope the information helps guide future editors and assist them in their process as editor. I also hope it informs future magazine students about the possibilities of writing, editing, photographing, and working for student publications at Syracuse University. The project has helped me become a better editor and I want it do the same for more editors to come.