



Respect Magazine

Country: France

Organisation: Group SOS – www.respectmag.fr, www.noghetto.org

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Target Group: Young people from diverse backgrounds, minority groups, social actors and decision makers

Programme Description:

The founder of Respect magazine was a career journalist. Through his own research he began to recognise that the mainstream media was not representative of a large part of French society, particularly young working class people and minorities. He also found that when topics were discussed they were from a biased point of view due to the lack of diversity in the newsrooms across France.

Respect Magazine is a glossy publication. Its high quality image and content is actively fighting the stereotype that youth or minority targeted publications are cheap or poorly made. Each edition focuses on one theme, for example, Gender issues, Religion, Suburbia or Equal Opportunities in the work place. The content includes in depth interviews, feature length articles, photos and social or cultural news.

The team that creates the magazine is as diverse as the topics they report on. Journalists, NGO workers, students, volunteers, artists and writers form a group of people from totally different social, cultural and professional backgrounds that all share a common goal.

Not only does Respect Magazine give a voice to the voiceless it also acts as a mediator between the main stream media, the public, policy makers and minority communities. By highlighting issues that are otherwise ignored by the press, Respect bridges a gap that no other publication in France is currently able or willing to do.

To keep on top of the latest issues Respect magazine organises frequent editorial meetings where anyone is

welcome to join in and discuss their ideas for content. This open door policy means that people from hugely diverse backgrounds come together and interact about challenges that are affecting them and the society around them.

Challenge: How to deal with diversity issues in France in a way that won't alienate the audience

Solution: 5 years ago nobody was talking about diversity. It was important, and still is important, to write articles that are easily accessible to the public. Someone who has never read an article about diversity issues before must be able to pick up a copy of Respect magazine and understand the concepts discussed within it.

Impact and Success Stories:

- Creating links between public and private organizations. Respect magazine is sustainable through a mixture of public funds and advertising.
- A project with the Ministry of Justice saw Respect giving internships to problem teenagers. Kids interviewed artists they admire and wrote an article for the magazine about it. This exercise motivated them to improve their skills and gave them a sense of self respect.
- In 2007 Respect magazine won the French media for diversity award³¹ for an article about Urban culture and where it sits within French culture. It has since been approached by Unesco and The Alliance of Civilizations (UNO) to develop articles with young people from Africa, Middle East and America.

"Our core job is to keep being a critical observer of what happens in France, or should happen, in the field of diversity." Réjane Ereau, Editor, Respect Magazine

³¹ Unfortunately this award had only one edition so far (in 2007), due in particular to a lack of sustainable funding.