

Hue Magazine Proposal

Hue Magazine: The Magazine for Real Women of Color

*Proposal Submitted to
New York Angels*

*By
Melissa Brown Levine, Publisher/ Editor-in-Chief
Hue Magazine
April 17, 2008*

Definition of Project

- The Project

Hue Magazine is a print publication that will focus on “real women of color.” The magazine will feature minority women who are seen in neighborhoods, schools, churches, and grocery stores all over the country. Articles will discuss the needs of these low to middle class women of color: finding mom-friendly employers, budgeting for a growing family, returning to school, managing debt while maintaining relationships with significant others. The target audience is women of color, ages 18-45, who fall in the lower to middle income brackets, married and divorced, with and without children.

- Qualifications

I have been a freelance writer for four years focusing on the concerns of women of color. I also have experience as a master’s prepared counselor working with women individually and in groups. I am an African American woman who has personally dealt with many of the issues that *Hue Magazine* will feature.

- Funder

New York Angels (NYA) is the funder I am submitting this proposal to. NYA is a group of wealthy investors who provide capital to a variety of start-up companies including

Hue Magazine Proposal

those in the media industry. The funder's openness to media companies is a benefit to our organization.

- Reasons for seeking funding

As a start-up business, *Hue Magazine* requires funding to produce, market, distribute, and maintain the product.

- Amount of funding sought

I am requesting \$500,000 for start-up capital. This amount will compliment the \$2,750,000 that *Hue Magazine* has already raised from publishing executives, equity partners, and the founder. Several major advertisers have already signed on for the inaugural issue.

- Project implementation

The target launch date for *Hue Magazine* is January 2009. Production began in January of 2008. We have developed a cover design and we are recruiting freelance writers. Many staff members are equity partners. A test copy of the magazine will be presented to focus groups in New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Miami, and Chicago from June to August.

The finished first issue will be distributed nationwide the first week of January 2009.

Audience Analysis

- The magazine will cater to women of color (African American, Hispanic and Asian, and others) from 18-45, low to middle class income.
- The women *Hue Magazine* will cater to are looking for a publication that celebrates their beauty and informs them about the issues that affect their daily lives: money, relationships, education, fashion and beauty.

Hue Magazine Proposal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2008, positive images of women of color continue to be illusive in the media. *Hue Magazine* is a new publication that will respond to this imbalance in the representation of thousands of minority women. We are requesting \$500,000 in start-up capital from the New York Angels to launch the publication.

Hue will address the concerns of lower to middle income minority women seeking their own images and information about money, family, education, fashion and beauty that fits within the parameters of their lifestyles. The magazine's office is located in New York City and will be run by the founder, three equity partners, and supporting staff. The magazine is in early production. We are currently recruiting freelance writers and "real women" models for the January 2009 launch.

We hope to meet the following objectives with this publication:

- a. To present positive images of women of color.
- b. To provide women of color resources on issues that directly impact their lives.
- c. To inform women of color about domestic and global issues that affect their communities.

The funds requested will augment previously secured funds for the development, production, and national distribution of the magazine. Future funding has been committed by long-term investment partners. *Hue Magazine* is also in the process of negotiating reoccurring advertising contracts with major corporations and retailers, which will sustain our product past the projected five year start-up period.

Hue Magazine Proposal

BUDGET

Staff:

Publisher/Editor-in-Chief	*0.00
Creative Director	*0.00
Senior/Features Editor	*0.00
Health and Beauty/Fashion Editor	*0.00
Interns (Four part-time undergraduate or graduate students)	0.00

Sales/Advertising Manager (Full-time = 40 hours a week) \$40,000.00

Freelance writers (Articles payments @ \$1.00 per word 500 min.- 1500 max.)

With 6 short articles and 4 features per issue

\$500x6=\$3,000x12=\$36,000

\$1500x4=\$6,000x12=\$72,000) \$108,000.00

Models (6 per issue @ \$300 per model per issue) \$21,600.00

**None paid staff members are equity partners who will begin receiving returns on their investment once a profit of 20 percent above revenue needed to maintain the publication has been achieved.*

Total Staff \$169,600.00

Direct Project Expenses:

Printing/Typesetting (100,000 copies @ \$1.51 per issue x 12 months)	1,812,000.00
Postage (@ \$.80 per copy)	960,000.00
Advertising (online and print/annually)	50,000.00
Website (design and maintenance in-house)	0.00

Hue Magazine Proposal

Total Direct Project Expenses 2,822,000.00

Administrative or Overhead Expenses:

Office rental (12 months @ \$1500/month) 18,000.00

Utilities 4,000.00

Office supplies/equipment 30,000.00

Total Administrative or Overhead Expenses 52,000.00

Total Expenses 3,043,600.00

Other Financial Backing:

Founder 100,000.00

Equitable partners (3 @ 50,000 each) 150,000.00

Publisher executives 2,500,000.00

Total Other Financial Backing 2,750,000.00

Hue Magazine Proposal

STATEMENT OF NEED

Hue Magazine will celebrate women of color by using real women as models and focusing on the issues that directly affect this demographic including childcare, education, employment, relationships, fashion and beauty, and money. We request financing in the amount of \$500,000 to cover expenses associated with start-up, design and production, circulation and distribution.

Historically, women of color (including African American, Hispanic and Asian American, and other groups) have been absent from or misrepresented in print magazines. The standard of beauty offered to women's magazine readers does not often focus on the attributes of women of color. With 83 percent of the adult African American population and 75 percent of the adult Hispanic population representing magazine readers, presenting images of white runway models as the example of womanhood to strive for is not realistic, nor desirable to the minority community. In addition, many of the women's magazines on newsstands cater to the higher income members of our population. And even when minority women are showcased, such as in *Essence*, *Latina*, and *East West* magazines, celebrities and not the common woman are usually featured. *Hue Magazine* will educate and inform women of color about what is happening in their own communities and in the world, while also celebrating the beauty of women that comes in multiple shades.

Hue Magazine Proposal

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Hue Magazine

...for Real Women of Color



Photo by Angela Sevin.

Real Women of Color

A woman in her mid- thirties stands in front of the row of magazines in her local grocery store. She has conducted this exercise in book stores all over the large city where she lives. In fact, this woman has been involved in this very act since she was thirteen. She is looking for herself among the women's magazines elegantly displayed for her purchasing pleasure. Most of the faces that stare back at her are young and pretty. Some are thin and others just slightly fuller in body. With the exception of those featuring health and fitness, all of the women are draped in something clingy and often sparkly. Hair the color of gold falls around their shoulders and their light colored eyes twinkle for the camera.

Now, there are some faces that are the same shade as hers, but with extra hair and slimmer forms. And many of those are celebrities who look this way for a living. This woman is not a celebrity, nor is she in the higher income ranks. She is a mother, a wife, a student, and an employee Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5:30pm. The magazines all offer suggestions on beauty and the latest styles, but this woman rarely has time to use a curling iron, often opting for a pony-tail and a swipe at her lips with an

Hue Magazine Proposal

outdated color of lipstick. She's looking for practical tips to keep herself healthy and cute. She also wants to know about saving money when shopping in the store she's standing in and for clothes for her three children. This non-model, non-rich, non-white woman would like to find the magazine that features real women who look like her and have problems and concerns like she has, and that encourages her to feel good about herself even when she can't pull off more than a neat pony-tail. This woman is looking for *Hue Magazine*.



Photo by Angela Sevin.

Hue Magazine is a print publication that will focus on “real women of color.” Our mission is to celebrate and promote the beauty of minority women and to educate the minority community about the issues that impact them the most. The magazine will feature women who are seen in neighborhoods, schools, churches, and grocery stores all over the country. Articles will discuss the needs of these low to middle income women of color: Finding mom-friendly employers, budgeting for a growing family, returning to school, and managing debt while maintaining relationships with significant others.

The target launch date for *Hue Magazine* is January 2009. The publication will be a monthly glossy. The single copy rate will be \$3.50 and the annual subscription \$20. Advertising rates will range from \$1500.00 to \$10,000.00. Production began in January of 2008. We have developed a cover design and we are recruiting freelance writers. Many staff members are equity partners. A test copy of the magazine will

Hue Magazine Proposal

be presented to focus groups in New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Miami, and Chicago from June to August. The finished first issue will be distributed nationwide the first week of January 2009.



Photo by Angela Sevin.

Promoting Positive Images of Women of Color

Even in 2008, it is difficult to find images of women of color who look like the mothers, sisters, daughters and friends most people live and work with. *Hue Magazine* will fill the need minority women have to see themselves in the pages of a national magazine by going into communities and recruiting these women to feature on the cover and throughout *Hue*'s pages.

1. The Creative Director will post notices recruiting everyday women in universities, daycare centers, laundry rooms, grocery and retail stores, and online woman-focused discussion boards and job boards.
2. Women chosen to model will be paid \$300 per session. Models' information will be kept on file at *Hue Magazine* for possible future photo shoots. We have developed relationships with designers for Target, Wal-Mart, and Kohl's and will feature their seasonal lines in our pages.
3. Celebrities features will include only non-glamorous photo shoots that will be associated with our "Blue Jeans and Beer" monthly interview. Celebrities will share their own concerns or frustrations with image in their industry and the strategies they use to manage.

Hue Magazine Proposal

The woman who picks up *Hue Magazine* from her local grocery or book store will see herself and other women who have similar experiences in navigating a world that does not value their beauty as it should. And with a large percentage of the minority community devoting money and time to the consumption of magazines, we expect these positive images will not only draw women to the magazine, but induce them to subscribe.

Our Issues

With just over 11 percent of Asian and Hispanic women and a little under 20 percent of African American women surviving below poverty level, minority women are faced with a multitude of issues that impact them at home and on the job. With the word of mouth influence of magazines at 61 percent, *Hue* has an opportunity to reach deep into minority communities and provide education and resources that can be put to use immediately.

1. Monthly editorial content will include online and offline resources. The money and health sections will also offer pull-out pages printed on cardstock that will include the article's main points and the contact information of all the resources provided.
2. In every issue: "Dressing for Work and Play on Budget" (high fashion alternatives); "Making Money Work for You" (managing income and debt); "Our Bodies/Our Health" (beauty, health and fitness); "Going Back to School" (educational programs and funding sources); "Blue Jeans and Beer" (celebrity interviews).
3. Short and feature articles will focus on a variety of themes: purchasing a home; maintaining relationships with men, friends, and family; seeking out and holding on to jobs; employers that allow flex-time or telecommuting; parenting tips; romance on a budget, etc.

Hue Magazine Proposal

4. *Hue Magazine* will also provide a global knowledge section that will keep our readers apprised of country-wide and global problems and educate them on how they will affect their communities. This section will also stress the importance of charitable giving on a small scale.

As with the images *Hue Magazine* will showcase, readers will see themselves—their families and communities—in the editorial pages of the magazine. The mother managing the budget of her two income household will find cost-cutting tips and answers to her questions about financing a graduate degree while also getting a glimpse at how mothers around the world fare in comparison.

STAFFING

The Publisher and Editor-in-Chief is Melissa Brown Levine. Levine has four years of experience as a freelance writer producing work in creative non-fiction, fiction, and book reviews. She is currently earning a Master's in Professional Writing from Chatham University. Levine also has degrees in counseling and library science.

Lee Brown, Jr. holds the position of Creative Director. Brown has over ten years of experience managing the production and lay-out of print and online publications such as *The Consumerist*, *WebMD*, and *CNEWA*. Lee has a BFA in Digital Media Program.

The Senior/Features Editor has sixteen years of experience as a freelance writer and contributing editor. Kim Shane has worked with several women's magazines including *Essence*, *Latina*, *EastWest*, *Glamour*, *Vogue*, and *Body and Soul*. Shane has also written feature articles for *Newsweek*, *Time* and *USA Today*.

Hue Magazine Proposal

Brenda Thompson, our Health and Beauty/Fashion Editor, is a former plus-size and the founder of The Color of Beauty, a line of cosmetics and skin care products for women of color. Thompson has been a contributing editor with *Essence* and *Ebony* magazines.

The Sales/Advertising Manager is Martha Jenkins is a twenty-year veteran of magazine advertising sales. Jenkins has worked for *Ebony*, *Time*, and *Business Week*. In addition to receiving a full-time salary, Ms. Jenkins will earn a 20 percent commission of each six month advertising commitment she negotiates.

Freelance writers will be recruited by the Senior/Features Editor. We will acquire a roster of writers based on experience and writing style. Freelance writers will be paid per article upon publication.

Interns will be completed from undergraduate and graduate writing programs from schools in the New York City area. These will be non-paying internships that will give students experience with production and lay-out, developing stories, interviewing, writing and editing features, and miscellaneous administrative duties.

Hue Magazine Proposal

EVALUATION

The success of *Hue Magazine* will be told in the number of copies and subscriptions sold. *Hue* will be entering into a competitive women's magazine market with high circulation revenue. The following table identifies the circulation sales of three leading women's magazines:

Circulation Revenue 2007

Publication	Paid Subscription Sales	Single Copy Sales
O, The Oprah Magazine	\$43,641,836	\$43,634,503
Essence	16,557,640	12,468,383
MORE Magazine	19,276,030	7,828,000

Source: Magazine.org (<http://www.magazine.org/circulation>)

To be competitive, *Hue Magazine* will need to reach one-third of both the subscription and single copy sales of the lowest earner in each area during the first six months of the 2009 launch year. For paid subscriptions this would amount to \$5,519,213.00 and \$2,609,333.00 in single copy sales. *Hue Magazine* expects earnings to increase by another one-third by the end of the launch year.

Sustainability

With on-going support from the magazine's founder, equity partners, publishing executives, and angel investors, *Hue Magazine* will increase all circulation sales by 50 percent every year during the first five years. From the fifth year and beyond the advertising support we have cultivated currently and will gain in the near future, along with increasing circulation revenue, will sustain the magazine.

Hue Magazine Proposal

CONCLUSION

Hue Magazine will provide a voice for thousands of women of color who have spent many years searching for their own faces in the pages of the magazines that they loyally support year after year. Our magazine will put an end to that search by supplying positive images of women of color and information relevant to their communities. With the assistance of our private investors in the publishing industry, we hope to reach every major city in the United States and eventually expand globally. We are excited about the opportunity to partner with New York Angels as we launch the publication that will strongly challenge the standard of beauty in this country while also meeting the needs of this diverse audience.