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National Post

Tuesday, October 10, 2006

NATIONAL POST

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Celebrating a decade of divorce

Founder was associate publisher at Wedding Bells

Emily Mathieu, Financial Post

Published: Saturday, October 07, 2006

With the celebration of its 10th anniversary, it's a safe bet that Divorce Magazine has outlasted many Canadian marriages.

Founded in 1996, the twice-yearly publication, with a circulation of 125,000, is designed to help newly swinging singles negotiate the legal pitfalls and emotional train wrecks of a typical divorce. You can pick up a free copy at Shoppers Drug Mart, Pharma Plus, A & P and Canadian Tire. Yearly subscriptions are \$13.95.

The magazine and Web site, [divorcemag.com](#), were inspired by the divorce of CEO and publisher, Dan Couvrette. It was launched the year of his divorce.

The pages are filled with an eclectic mix of articles and advertisements, everything from anger management and redecorating tips to booking an extended stay at a hotel (finding one that offers spa treatments is recommended) while the divorce is underway.

And, of course, there are pages and pages of advertisements for lawyers.

To the unmarried, or those in the thralls of wedded bliss, a magazine devoted to divorce may seem odd. But the number of people falling out of love seems to increase every year, so divorce services are big business.

In fact, it is such big business that Divorce Magazine is just one facet of the Toronto-based Divorce Marketing Group. The group also provides marketing services for people or firms looking to tap into the divorce market -- everything from Web site construction and designing ads, to tuning your advertising pitch.

"What we are trying to do is help people to understand the process," says Mr. Couvrette.

Few people are as qualified to comment on the process as him. A former associate publisher of Wedding Bells magazine from 1984-1989, Mr. Couvrette also knows a thing or two about getting hitched.

"I guess it's ironic in a sense. But not to me," he says, pointing out roughly 30% of people involved in the first process will experience the other.

Still, not many people understand what the experience of divorce is all about, says Katherine Cooligan, head of the family law group at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Ottawa.

She says that most couples don't understand that a separation involves not just a verbal agreement, but the paperwork that will outline and determine their property and personal rights.

"The divorce itself isn't what will solidify their rights and obligations," she says. A divorce is just a switch in your marital status, she explains.

That's why information and services about the process are key for people to weather the storm, Mr. Couvrette says.

Beyond the advice on paper work, psychological considerations and how to move on afterward, there's an overriding theme that Mr. Couvrette wants readers to keep in mind.

"The decisions that you make today will affect your future. Try to make those decisions with the most information possible."

