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Zoomer's big plans for BlogTO are already underway

If you think ZoomerMedia allowed itself to take a breath between purchasing Freshdaily and integrating its BlogTO property, think again.

"Because we did a simultaneous sign-and-close, it means that we immediately jumped into integration," Omri Tintpulver, deputy COO and chief digital officer at ZoomerMedia, told MiC of the company's \$15 million purchase. "There was no downtime. And trying to integrate a company during a lockdown makes it even more challenging. But it is really exciting too."

When it was first announced last month, Zoomer's acquisition of BlogTO might have seemed like an odd match. ZoomerMedia is a company that was founded to explicitly serve Canadians over the age of 45, an audience the company has promoted to advertisers as large, growing and underserved in the media landscape. BlogTO, by contrast, is heavily youth-oriented, with coverage of Toronto's culture, lifestyle, entertainment and real estate landscape geared towards millennials and Gen Z.

But the acquisition of Freshdaily literally changed ZoomerMedia's metrics overnight, as the company's digital properties leaped from 50 million pageviews a year to 350 million, as well as bringing in a much younger demographic to complement the company's older reach.

The addition of BlogTO to ZoomerMedia's existing TV (VisionTV, OneTV, FaithTV and JoyTV,) radio (Zoomer Radio AM740/96.7FM, The New Classical 96.3FM/103.1 FM/102.9 FM), magazine (Zoomer, On The Bay Magazine, Tonic) and digital (EverythingZoomer.com, CARP.ca) empire was meant to unlock immense cross-platform opportunities, says Tintpulver.



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"This acquisition allows us to win RFPs from agencies and clients that are looking for a full spectrum buy," he says. "We anticipate that our business will grow when it comes to national agency, national direct and campaigns. There's also an emphasis on local advertising, something we have been strong on through Zoomer Radio and The New Classical FM. That is an area where we see opportunity with BlogTO, because the majority of their selling to date is national."

"In general, an area we've been focused on quite heavily over the last two years is integrated selling," he continues. "We're no longer focusing on one platform versus another, but packaging our audience in a multi-platform way. I think with BlogTO, it just adds one more feather to that packaging and really makes the digital component of an integrated play a first-class citizen, as well as that it's a full-spectrum demographic reach now for us."

But the acquisition goes beyond Zoomer simply being able to package younger eyeballs in with buys targeting its traditional audience.

"One of the first things we looked at when we acquired BlogTO was how much overlap there was between our existing demographics," he says. "On the surface of things, we cater to the 45-and-over demographic and they cater to the 35-and-under demographic. But the data tells a different story. On the website and e-mail, they distribute across different platforms, but there's an overlap with our demographic. On Facebook and Instagram, there's an overlap. We can promote our existing Zoomer properties and products into and through BlogTO's distribution channels and it will resonate with the portion of our demographic that overlaps."



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Besides audiences, the other strength BlogTO adds to Zoomer's operations are social and video development. Tintpulver says ZoomerMedia founder Moses Znaimer is about to launch "a couple of experimental, free-for-all digital channels" in the near future.

"He's got great designs for local and daily video and daily news and his pedigree really speaks to that," says Tintpulver. "The acquisition is not just for all the synergies and benefits we see by combining the two demographics: it's also because there's a shared vision between Moses and [Freshdaily owner] Tim Shore for where the company can grow."