



'Mad Dog' goes wild at Condé as McKinsey watches



By KEITH J. KELLY

It hasn't taken long for Richard "Mad Dog" Beckman to rile up the troops in his new role as CEO of Condé Nast's Fairchild division.

Sources said Fairchild insiders are particularly worried that they will be hard hit by the McKinsey & Co. consulting report due on the desk of Condé Nast CEO Charles Townsend and Chairman S.I. Newhouse Jr. in October.

And they feel that Beckman, famous for living large in traditional Condé Nast fashion, doesn't understand the culture of the more low-key Fairchild Fashion Group.

It hasn't helped that Beckman brought over a number of high-priced former staffers to Fair-

child, including three new associate publishers at Women's Wear Daily who collectively refer to themselves as "Charlie's Angels."

The three are Erika Barkman, who had worked with Beckman at Vogue, Elizabeth Lunney, previously the corporate sales director in the Condé Nast Media Group and Paula Fortgang, an ad director at Vanity Fair.

Occasionally, Lisa Howard, who was the vice president of interactive at Condé Nast Media Group and is now the senior vice president and chief revenue officer, gets labeled as the fourth angel.

Beyond that, there's been chatter that Beckman has undergone significant renovations of his office, and, according to one source, gone through three sofas since arriving.

Beckman, for his part, insists that his office at Fairchild has simply been repainted, not extensively remodeled, and that he brought most of the furniture he had when he worked at Condé Nast's tower at 4 Times Square over with him to Fairchild's offices on Third Avenue.

As for the sofas, Beckman maintains he tossed out just one, which dated back to when Mary

Berner was Fairchild's CEO. He replaced it with a new one only because the one that used to sit in his old office was "too big for this office."

As for bringing in new people, Beckman was unapologetic. "The business was not being well run when I got here," he said. "I was asked by management to turn things around. I hired the people that I consider the best for the job. If that ruffles people the wrong way, that's unfortunate, but we have to turn this business around."

New Vibe

It looks as if there will be life for Quincy Jones' fallen Vibe magazine, after all.

Adage.com reported yesterday that Uptown magazine and its private-equity partner, Leo Hindery's InterMedia Partners, had completed a deal to buy Vibe, with plans to re-launch both the magazine and its Web site.

And in many ways, the deal is a homecoming of sorts: Leonard Burnett Jr., who was a former group publisher of Vibe back in its glory days, has now

become an executive at Uptown. Vibe was shut down in June after Wicks Capital, with backing from Capital Source, failed to find fresh funding for the money-losing hip-hop magazine. Wicks had bought the title in 2006 for \$35 million from Robert Miller and Freeman Spogli. Jones and Time Inc. founded the magazine in 1993.

According to a source familiar with the matter, InterMedia plans to revive the Web site within two weeks, and re-introduce the print version in November as a quarterly with a circulation of around 300,000.

Hot shot

Janice who?

Michael Steele, who was named acting editor-in-chief of Us Weekly when Janice Min abruptly walked away from the \$2-million-a-year job, is proving he can stand just fine on his own.

In his first week of putting an issue to bed by himself, Steele appears to have bested his old boss with a monster hit of a cover. If he keeps that up, it may put

pressure on Us Weekly owner Jann Wenner to erase the "Acting" in front of Steele's title.

Last week's Us Weekly sold over one million copies on newsstands, thanks to a cover story about trouble between "The Bachelorette" star Jillian Harris and Ed Swiderski, who proposed to Harris on the ABC reality show and has since been accused of cheating on his future bride.

Us Weekly's strong performance last week stood in stark contrast to middling results for the other magazines.

People, which featured a cover shot of Farrah Fawcett, sold 1.25 million copies, below its 1.4 million average.

In Touch, which featured a cover story about Jon Gosselin, of "Jon & Kate" fame, sold 800,000 issues, while its sister title Life & Style, which included a lead story on Kelly Ripa getting a boob job, sold just 300,000 copies.

OK!'s cover story about Jessica Simpson sold a paltry 417,000 copies, while Star, which featured Brangelina sold an estimated 625,000 copies.

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