

Creating a “Shockingly Better” Magazine for Mended Hearts



Mended Hearts®

**"IT'S LIKE THE
MAGAZINE HAS
BECOME A BELL
WITH A REALLY
CLEAR TONE, AND
LOTS OF PEOPLE
ARE HEARING IT."**

— MICHELE PACKARD MILAM, CAE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MENDED HEARTS

About Mended Hearts and *Heartbeat*

Mended Hearts is the world's largest and oldest peer-to-peer cardiovascular patient-support network. It has grown from a group of four people in 1951 to over 96,000 members operating in all 50 states and 20 countries.

For over 70 years, Mended Hearts has built a strong reputation for being a friend in need to millions of patients with heart disease nationwide — and *Heartbeat* magazine, the official publication for Mended Hearts, is the pulse that keeps these relationships going.

Marketing Challenges

Mended Hearts staff felt like *Heartbeat* magazine had no clear editorial voice. And while they were doing a great job of getting the magazine to their members, they wanted to get *Heartbeat* into the hands of non-members by providing interesting, relevant and actionable content. Mended Hearts staff also wanted to grow its membership and readership to those in their 40s and 50s and living with heart disease.





**“THE MAGAZINE
IS SHOCKINGLY
BETTER THAN IT
USED TO BE.”**

— JODI LEMACKS, ESQ.
NATIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR
MENDED HEARTS

How m3Magazines Helped

In health care, there has been a major shift over the last decade or so to put the patient at the center of care. With this in mind, m3Magazines turned the magazine on its head. Instead of continuing to run canned, pre-written content from a health care patient-education service (articles that members could find virtually anywhere on the Internet), m3Magazines took a more traditional journalistic approach, writing every story from the patient’s point of view.

We started with a reader survey, asking members for their input. Next, we developed story ideas based on that reader survey. We then began forming relationships with sources, including physicians and researchers who could serve as authoritative, credible subject-matter experts for the content. Most importantly, we put the patient at the center of the story by ensuring that every major feature includes at least one patient’s perspective on the topic. We also started an editorial advisory board, whose members join in on the content-planning process for each issue.

The Results — So Far

To date, the redesign and repositioning has resulted in rave reviews from members and from the Mended Hearts staff, and it has won numerous national awards for Best Design and Most Improved Publication. Prompted by members’ enthusiastic response, Mended Hearts increased the frequency of *Heartbeat* from four times a year to six times a year. And thanks in part to the increased frequency, two new sponsors signed on to create custom inserts for the magazine, which directly boosted Mended Hearts’ bottom line. *Heartbeat* also now publishes annual professional issues, with increased distribution through doctor’s offices and cardiac rehab facilities throughout the U.S.

LET’S TALK!

m3Magazines

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