

# Why Spirit-Inspired Written Words Will Never Go Out of Style

It was 43 years ago this month that I began working on a magazine called *Charisma*. Much was different about the culture and the church back in 1975. As our journalistic ministry has grown, we have had to grow, develop and change in important ways.

One of the most recent additions to how we communicate the Good News of Jesus and the Spirit-led life is podcasts. And this week, we surpassed 4 million downloads. Check out (CPN) and see what we have available. One of our shows is the Strang Report, and thankfully, some of those episodes have had a large number of downloads.

CPN was the vision of Dr. Steve Greene, executive vice president and publisher of our media group. I asked him what this milestone means.

“It means our audience continues to want more content from us,” he said. “We have interesting shows. We are growing at an increasing rate. We had only 1.2 million downloads last year. We have already exceeded 1 million downloads so far this year.”

Podcasting is only one of the ways we try to cover the Spirit-filled community and bring a spiritual dimension to the news. We also pursue this goal by posting fresh, relevant content on and publishing timely books in both English and Spanish. We even publish the Modern English Version of the Bible. And to offer you even more spiritual heat, we will hold our first Charisma Conference in many years on June 22-23. It promises to be a powerful time of ministry. You can learn more [here](#).

With the advent of the internet—the first new medium since television—a lot has changed in the publishing world. Podcasting is a new platform, and it allows us to report stories in real time and to produce much more content than we could in a monthly magazine or a book, which can take up to a year to write.

I enjoy digital. I consume most of my news on my smartphone and read many books on my Kindle. As someone involved in publishing, I understand how the internet allows us to sell many e-books to people in faraway places who would never see our books in a bookstore. Electronic publishing is also more cost effective—and doesn't require sawing down trees for paper!

I'd be happy to publish only electronically, but print is not dead. In fact, readers still want the reading experience of holding a magazine. Believe it or not, *Charisma* subscriptions are continuing to grow. Even Millennials seem to like print. One proof of this is the success of my son Cameron's magazine, *Relevant*, which talks about God and life for the Millennial generation.

Some have postulated print is dead. But that reminds me of one of my favorite authors, Mark Twain, who once said, "Rumors about my death have been greatly exaggerated."

Since Twain was such a fan of reading the written word (I cannot imagine him in his white suit, rocking away near the Mississippi River, engaged in the latest digital dribble), I think he would bark with clarity, "Well, of course, print is not dead, nor is it sleeping. We just need to get better words on the paper!"

The problem today is that writing for print is not the same as writing for digital. Print words should be crafted for print and no other medium. Print is long form. Digital is for the rapid-thumb generation.

In a recent blog, Dr. Greene cited four reasons why print should have an important role in your marketing plans if you are trying to reach people through media. I found them so interesting I wanted to share them with my readers:

- You grow awareness of your brand over the long run. The need to build awareness has always been at the top of the funnel. Brands are rarely built with quickly forgotten digital hits. Brands are designed and built to serve generations.
- Print allows an opportunity for the customer to engage with the message. When someone decides to read a magazine, their attention is more open. Readers will spend more time with your message and recall will last longer. Return on investment extends beyond cost per thousand readers.
- Print readers seek content in specific interest areas. Readers want to know more about a lifestyle or belief. If our ads match the content style, we have an opportunity to connect with our target audience. We need to consider advertising within the environment of editorial content.
- Advertising agencies and marketing planners tend to err on the side of immediate response. It's easy to find people who will speak of print as dearly departed. Print advertising will still be valuable long after the short-term decision maker has been fired for lack of long-term brand building. You build energy with frequency.

He said to the marketers reading his blog: "Your click-through and conversion rates will improve with media synergy—brand in one hand and drive conversion with the other. Improve attention to your brand and increase comprehension and energy to purchase. Build your brand and watch digital investments improve performance. Back your campaign with print!"

Dr. Greene concludes with four summary words to remember:

1. Branding
2. Attention
3. Content
4. Kinetic

And I say for people in ministry trying to reach other people through the media, these are things worth remembering.