

# The Value of our Readers, a Matter of Trust

By Mike Davis

I'd like to share a little secret with you. We publish this magazine for a living! It is not a hobby, although we very much enjoy putting it together. Our business model primarily relies on advertising revenue, in addition to our often enthusiastic subscribers. We put a lot of effort into creating and distributing our publication. We maintain a high standard of journalism, which builds trust with our audience. We run our business ethically, but we get the impression from some advertisers that some magazines don't or can't follow through on their promises.

We occasionally run into cynicism if they had a bad experience with others. We, however, do what we say we will do. We say we print and distribute 25,000 copies of each issue. We do. We say we give copies to all of our advertisers who wish to distribute. We do. We are true to our word.

Although our advertisers pay us for space, in the end we are really funded by you, our audience. Our advertisers trust us to deliver their message to you, and to make sure our publication is something you, their market, want to experience. Our audience trusts us to continue publishing high-quality, interesting magazine journalism. You enjoy what we

do, some reading every word on every page, ads included. We see first hand, the glint in the eye of people picking up a copy of our magazine to read an interesting story. We call that "jumping down the rabbit hole," as Alice in Wonderland did, and we see it all the time. You are the ones who pick up the magazine from our advertisers, some making special trips just to get a copy, and if you support our advertisers, they see that their ad is working.

## Small Entrepreneurs

I enjoy working with small independent entrepreneurs, like us, who comprise most of our advertisers. They see first hand what is going on. We find larger businesses seem to hire specialists to deal with marketing or get attracted to the latest trends. They seem to have computer models, counts per thousand and spreadsheets where they try to compare apples to oranges to get the best bang for the buck. It is prudent to be efficient, but how do you quantify quality? Can you quantify loyalty, where a reader phones the shop owner asking if the magazine has arrived? Yes, that happens with *Niagara Escarpment Views!*

We frequently get told that print editorial on a business or organization has a huge amount of value. They view an independent editorial piece about them as much more trusted by an audience, but at the same time seem to be much more reluctant to support the magazine through advertising. Yet print can't survive without support.

Making the final sale online seems to be more and more the

way to do business, but getting to that point, promoting a business online can be more difficult and can be expensive to do. Building the trust of a product/service and getting customers to the point where they will buy can be achieved through many different marketing channels including magazines such as ours. Some of our potential advertisers are getting advice to stay away from print, but are they served by other marketing channels?

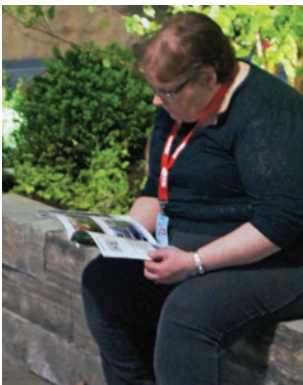
## Invest in Quality

A high-quality magazine such as ours tends to be highly valued. It is kept and re-read, passed on to others. Many tell us it stays by the toilet, which we are very happy about! Our audience identifies that our advertisers are investing in quality when they support us, which implies that they, the advertisers, are interested in quality and are worth a visit by our audience.

You help the magazine thrive if you tell our advertisers that this magazine matters; hint: it is best to start at the top. Tell them their support of the magazine, by buying an ad, matters. Ideally spend some time to look over, with the intent to buy, the services/wares offered by our advertisers.

Also, please complete and send in our survey, so we can qualify what we already think we know about our audience.

*Mike Davis is co-publisher of, principal photographer and accounts manager for Niagara Escarpment Views. Contact him about advertising at ads@NEViews.ca or 905.877.9665.*



◀ Some of the people spotted disappearing "down the rabbit hole" of *Niagara Escarpment Views*. PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS.