

## Consider the Source

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More than likely, you receive a number of chiropractic publications. Did you ever think about why each one prints what it prints?

Who owns each publication? What is their agenda? What is their history?

There are only two categories of publication: non-profit and entrepreneurial. Publications of non-profit entities are not owned by anyone. They may only be used to further the intentions of the non-profit organization. Entrepreneurial publications have different motives.

State or province association journals, college publications, and national association journals are all similar; they are held by non-profit entities. In the United States, the ICA Review and the ACA Journal each present different viewpoints in keeping with the ideals held by each association. Some articles that appear in one publication could easily appear in the other. Both journals have a history that runs parallel to the philosophies of their respective memberships. This is also the category that Dynamic Chiropractic would fall into. It is the publication of the non-profit Motion Palpation Institute.

Entrepreneurial publications have a different agenda. These are publications that require advertising to keep them going. They don't have an association, college or institute (with their non-profit motivations) behind them. They are usually owned by one person. Their editorial usually follows the philosophical beliefs of their owners, with a careful regard for the need to encourage advertisers.

Who writes for the publication? Who is on the editorial board? Do they "sell" their editorial space?

Who the editors and columnists are is very important. Look at the list of editors. Are they people you respect? If the contributing editors include those whom you feel have questionable ethics, you may want to write the editor or publisher and ask why this person is on the editorial board.

Does the editorial board consist of advertisers? If so, you may also want to question this practice. How objective can a publication be if its authors and editors consist of its advertisers?

What you want to see is as wide a diversity as possible of individuals who are respected in their various areas within the chiropractic profession. These writers should provide articles that are educational and informative.

You may not like the groups or organizations that these people represent. The opinions of the writers may differ from your own. But the columnists should be well-respected within their particular areas. This diversity of opinion allows you to constantly be exposed to a full spectrum of the ideologies and beliefs that are currently held by a reasonable number within our profession. Understanding promotes tolerance; tolerance promotes unity.

Lastly, do you find yourself reading "advertorials?" These are "articles" written by the publication or by

the advertiser to try to sell you on a product by disguising the sales pitch in the editorial section of the publication. It has unfortunately become a common practice of entrepreneurial publications (and some non-profit publications) as a means of seducing and placating advertisers. This approach can be used when an advertiser is getting poor response from their ads.

This is not the same as an article that recognizes an advertiser who has "given back" to the chiropractic profession in the form of research grants and college donations. This is a practice that needs to be encouraged. Published recognition is a way to encourage this type of activity.

Many people feel that advertorials are deceptive. The reader naturally assumes that the publication can validate what is printed. This is usually not the case. Many times the editorial staff of the publication has never even seen or experienced the product or service that it is promoting.

One publication published what was effectively SIX PAGES (8 1/2 x 11) of advertorial on one of its advertisers (and also also a contributing editor). When a chiropractor wrote a letter pointing out that the editor had not completed a sufficient investigation to know the true facts about the company being praised, the editor replied "The article wasn't intended as an investigation..."

When reading an article or considering whether you want to read a publication, you should consider these points:

Who owns the publication?

Who are the editors and columnists?

How is the publication motivated?

Is the editorial space used to sell you on the products of the advertisers?

After considering these questions, you may find that it is easier to be more selective about what you spend your valuable time reading.

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