

## MPA Media 101: A History Lesson

If you've ever studied the front page of *Acupuncture Today* for more than a few minutes, you've most likely seen the words "An MPA Media Publication" at the top of the page, just below and to the right of the words "An Open Forum for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine." Many people in our profession have assumed that MPA Media was formed when the first issue of *Acupuncture Today* was published in January 2000. While I've mentioned Michael Devitt, AT's managing editor, more than a few times in this column, it didn't occur to me until just recently that I've told you next to nothing about our publisher. So this month, I'm allocating all of my space to tell you about MPA Media and what they've done, not just for acupuncture and Oriental medicine, but for the alternative and natural health care field.

MPA Media began in 1977 as Maxwell Petersen Associates (MPA - get it?). At the time, MPA was a marketing and public relations firm that coordinated seminars for chiropractors and published nutritional information for consumers. In 1983, MPA began publishing its first newspaper, *Dynamic Chiropractic (DC)*. Like AT, *Dynamic Chiropractic* was originally published once a month. By 1987, DC was being published twice a month; it's now published every two weeks.

Also in 1987, MPA began co-publishing alternative health care textbooks. Through DC, MPA also began selling books, audiotapes and videocassettes from other publishers. During this time, MPA continued administering postgraduate and continuing education seminars to a variety of clients. To date, MPA Media has conducted some 1,500 seminars.

In 1996, MPA started to make its presence known on the World Wide Web. MPA's first website, [chiroweb.com](http://chiroweb.com), began offering news and information to professionals and consumers and rapidly became one of the most visited alternative health care sites on the Web.

In 1998, MPA began publishing two monthly newsletters, the *Chiropractic Research Review (CRR)*, for health care professionals, and *To Your Health (TYH)*, for consumers and patients. The following year, *To Your Health* was made available in an e-mail format. Both newsletters put a spotlight on the latest discoveries in health and wellness research, and have been quite well received (CRR has a circulation of over 31,000, while TYH has a print circulation of over 20,000 and more than 100,000 e-mail subscribers).

Now we come to the year 2000. With the start of a new century, MPA decided to expand beyond the chiropractic profession. Our first instinct was acupuncture and Asian healing, and *Acupuncture Today* was the result. From the start, we decided that *Acupuncture Today* would be different from other publications in that it wouldn't be affiliated with any particular organization. We had - and continue to have - no particular bias or agenda, other than to deliver the latest news and research, and to provide an open forum for the entire profession, no matter what a practitioner's affiliation or philosophy may be. I think not having an agenda and being as objective as possible are two of the reasons *Acupuncture Today* has become so successful.

Later that year, MPA unveiled [acupuncturetoday.com](http://acupuncturetoday.com). The site includes all of the content contained in the print version of *Acupuncture Today*, along with several interactive and consumer-friendly features (such as the Acupuncturist Locator and Herb Central) that are only available online.

Approximately 50,000 people visit [acupuncturetoday.com](http://acupuncturetoday.com) each month, making it one of the most frequented acupuncture sites on the Web.

As we began expanding beyond print media, the powers that be at MPA realized that a name change was in order. Thus, in the summer of 2000, MPA became MPA Media, a name that more correctly represents everything we've become.

Last year, MPA Media launched its third newspaper, *Massage Today*. *MT* currently reaches more than 90,000 massage therapists and spas across the country. Its companion website, [massagetoday.com](http://massagetoday.com), is beginning to enjoy significant traffic. Kudos to *MT*'s editor, Cliff Korn, and managing editor, Peter Crownfield, for the job they've done in brining *Massage Today* and [massagetoday.com](http://massagetoday.com) to life.

This year, MPA celebrated its 25th anniversary in business by creating an acupuncture-oriented version of *To Your Health* available by e-mail. Later this year, we will launch new programs designed to help acupuncturists and doctors of Oriental medicine in practice, and will offer preferred, peer-reviewed educational products to the acupuncture profession beginning with the October issue of *Acupuncture Today*.

Why should all of this matter to you? Two reasons:

First, we at MPA want to assure our readers that we're a stable and dependable organization. MPA has been in business for a quarter of a century - nearly as long as acupuncture has been licensed as a profession in the U.S.

Second, we wanted to show you our commitment to complementary and alternative medicine in general, and acupuncture and Asian healing in particular. For 25 years, we've put our best efforts into informing health care professionals and the patients they serve about the benefits of chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy and other forms of care. We plan on doing so for the next 25 years - and beyond.

Hillary Clinton is famous for saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." It takes a small village of people to publish a new issue of *Acupuncture Today* every month. MPA is here to serve your needs, no matter how great or small. We are dedicated to providing you the highest level of quality and service every step of the way. It's a challenge we look forward to, and something we are extremely proud to have earned.

AUGUST 2002