

API Moving Forward

The Angus Journal gets a new design and new direction.

by Sheryl Smith-Rodgers

Notice anything different this month?

Welcome to the fresh look of the Angus Journal! Six months in the making, the publication's brand new design melds bigger and easier-to-read typefaces with dynamic photographs and visual graphics to create an overall reading experience that's both informative and fun.

The *Journal's* bright new facelift — along with one coming soon for the *Angus Beef Bulletin* — is just one part of many positive changes in the works at Angus Productions Inc. (API), the for-profit media arm of the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Mo. The company's burst of energy largely stems from President Rick Cozzitorto and General Manager Sara Reardon, who both came on board with API in mid-2017. Together, the two share a strong commitment to the Angus breed.

New direction

As API's top leader, Cozzitorto brings years of experience in livestock sales and marketing, establishing partnerships, and inspiring staff members to strive for their personal best.

"We want to be the leader in service and technology," he says, "and take our customers to the next level through advertising campaigns, sale books, websites and videos so they'll get more bang for their bucks. We plan to train our regional



managers so they can better help our customers with their promotional plans. We're also working on better customer experiences, one customer at a time. We've got a lot of customers, and that's how we're going to accomplish that goal — one at a time."

Readers will also notice that the magazine's editorial content is organized into four sections — Your Herd, Your Business, Your Association and Your Life.

For her part, Reardon's organizational skills in creative communications, multimedia marketing, and strategy and project management will escalate API to new levels of success.

"It's all about leveraging multiple media channels to engage your audience," she says. "Our professional team members here at API know how to do that, and we will provide unrivaled service and opportunity for our Angus breeders."

Such enthusiasm at a leadership level has brought a new excitement to the API staff.

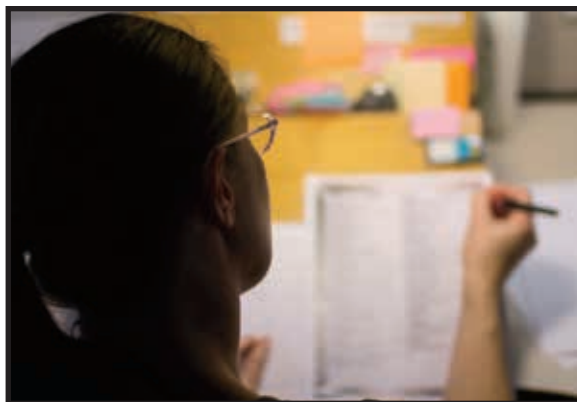
"The combined passion of Rick and Sara is a real gift, and we need that as an organization," says Shauna Hermel, *Angus Journal* editor. "Our Association members have been through a lot in recent years. Hopefully, we can motivate them, help them better see the future and help them market their herds effectively.

"It's important for members to know that even though we've had a lot of changeover in leadership in the last four years, we're

stronger than we've ever been," Hermel continues. "We are committed and passionate about helping our customers through our marketing department. We want to supply information and resources that will keep our breeders at the forefront of the industry. The *Angus Journal* is a reflection of the Angus business and a window to what's to come. It should be the first resource that breeders use to plan their future."

The *Journal's* much cleaner, more streamlined look is the second since Hermel became editor in 1997.

"We'd been wanting to do a redesign for a long time, but it was put off for various reasons," she explains. "One of the goals that we stressed to our designer was that we want the magazine to be more inviting and less intimidating, connecting with additional information online. We want to brighten our look and set the tone for what's to come. We also want to be more appealing to the younger generation within our membership, and we know they are not as loyal to print."



New leadership is adding energy to API's mission to increase demand for registered Angus cattle by being an indispensable partner to the beef industry, providing leading-edge information and marketing strategies through a unique range of print and digital platforms.

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"In his book *I Dare You!*, William Danforth, who founded Ralston-Purina in 1894, said four key components — mental, physical, social and religious — need to be in balance to achieve success in life," Hermel explains. "It takes a similarly balanced approach to succeed in the Angus world. Our members are balancing herd management, business realities, membership

opportunities and their personal lives."

Reader feedback also played an integral part during the redesign process. It still does.

"Our readers let us know that they want nuts-and-bolts information — how to raise, manage and market their cattle better," Hermel says. "We'll definitely continue to cover management issues in our editorial content because that's what keeps people in business. We will continue to provide editorial content and marketing tools that will put our members and customers at

the forefront of our industry. We've had that mission for a long time, but now we have the leadership and passion to make it happen."

Moving forward, "We want members to tell us what they like and don't like in the new look," Hermel says, encouraging members to write or email their comments to her.

What's next? Says Hermel: "Keep reading your *Angus Journal*. We'll keep you informed." **AJ**

Editor's Note: Sheryl Smith-Rodgers is a freelance writer from Blanco, Texas.



API President Rick Cozzitorto leads the weekly API morning meeting, at which he regularly challenges the team to find ways to improve the customer experience.