

Bob Guccione, Jr. Biography

Bob Guccione, Jr.

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Biography

Bob Guccione Jr. (born ca. 1956) publisher of *Spin*, a music magazine for Generation X, becoming profitable when the music it endorsed finally started rising to the top of the charts.

In 1985 Bob Guccione Jr. introduced a new magazine to the American public. While it was centered around popular music, *Spin* gained greater attention for its irreverent take on American culture. In this respect it was more similar to edgy, youth-oriented 1980s magazines such as *Spy* than to its direct competitor, *Rolling Stone*. "Let the Baby Boomers read *Rolling Stone*," Guccione seemed to be saying; "this is a magazine for Generation X."

You Can't Keep Me in Your Penthouse

The son of the publisher of *Penthouse* and *Omni*, Guccione came into magazine publishing naturally. His parents separated in 1965, and he lived with his mother in her native England until they moved to New Jersey when he was fifteen. A high-school dropout, Guccione worked in magazine circulation and marketing before launching *Spin* under the *Penthouse* aegis with \$500,000 from his father. It was a bold venture: in sharp contrast to *Rolling Stone*, the magazine covered unknown performers and criticized major names in the music business. At first it failed to attract enough subscribers and advertisers to turn a profit, and Guccione Sr. announced in 1987 that the magazine would cease publication. But Guccione Jr. decided to separate *Spin* from *Penthouse* and publish it with support from independent investors--a move that created a rift between father and son.

Success

Spin would remain unprofitable until 1992. It was able to hang on because young music fans found its irreverence appealing, and because the alternative rock it championed went to the top of the charts in the early 1990s. *Spin* was more current than many magazines of the late 1980s: for instance, it featured a monthly column on AIDS long before the mainstream media devoted much attention to the disease. It also featured offbeat journalism and satire.