

# Marcus Fairs

Interview with Marcus Fairs, founder and editor-in-chief of Dezeen on online journalism and how to stay ahead as one of the world's leading architecture and design magazines.

Let's start with your own path as a journalist and eventually founder of one of the most influential architecture and design platforms to date. How did your job change from being a designer, to becoming an editor and founder of the print magazine ICON, and eventually Dezeen.com?

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I studied design and did a degree in 3D design, but I wasn't particularly good at it. I understood it and I was able to write about it really easily, but it took me a long time to realize that I should be a journalist; that happened ten years later in life. To cut a long story short - I did a post graduate journalism course, started to write on architecture for newspapers and then I got hired to launch Icon Magazine in 2003.

During that period the internet started to become something important in people's lives, but there was nobody doing good design and architecture journalism on the internet. I got fired from ICON after three and a half years and thought, what am I going to do now? I don't want to work for someone else, I want to do my own thing and the internet could be a platform for me. So, I switched from being a print journalist to being an internet journalist and quite quickly learned, or got my head around the difference between writing for print and writing for online. Online is mostly about speed, to get things up quickly and the ability to link content together, through hyperlinks. This is really profound for journalism and also stops journalism being a one way street. Meaning, you tell your readers what's happening, because readers in the internet give feedback through comments and things like that. So that was quite revealing as well, the way the reader can get involved in the conversation much more.

So, that was the short version of the story how Dezeen started.

It is interesting that you did mention the interaction with the audience as one of the big differences between print and online. How different is it to tell a story? Isn't the internet so much more about the image than the text?

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I don't think that it is more image based, because the internet has infinite storage capacity. In print you only have that much space, the page. So, it is a constant battle between how much space do you give to words and how much to images, how much to nothing, like white space. The art director always wants to have bigger pictures, the editor always wants to have more words, but in the internet you don't have that problem. You can have as many words and as many pictures as you like, so it becomes more visual, because it can, because it can handle it. Actually, that creates another