

# ADWEEK

**Quarterback:**  
Aaron Rodgers,  
Green Bay  
Packers

**Running back:**  
Adrian Peterson,  
Minnesota  
Vikings

**Wide receiver:**  
Calvin Johnson,  
Detroit Lions

**Coach:**  
You—and  
27 million  
other fans



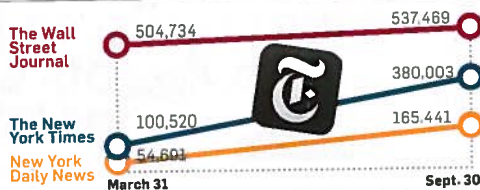
FANTASY  
FOOTBALL

How a national obsession  
created a multi-billion dollar  
business. By Anthony Crupi

## Newspaper Digital Circ Climbing

Growth in newspapers' digital circulation is helping them make up for continued declines in print circulation. Most of the **increase comes from tablet and e-reader editions**, but some is due to more papers selling online subscriptions.

SOURCE: AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS. SIX MONTHS ENDED SEPT. 30



# Juggling a Full Plate

**By Lucia Moses** *Top Chef* judge Gail Simmons went from cooking to working for a chef to a magazine and then to TV—and now she has a book on the way. She spoke with *Adweek* about all of it.

Gail Simmons seems to have done it all. Born in Toronto, she attended culinary school, trained at Le Cirque 2000, and worked for Daniel Boulud and food writer Jeffrey Steingarten before joining *Food & Wine* and becoming a judge on Bravo's *Top Chef* and the host of its spinoff *Top Chef: Just Desserts*. In her forthcoming memoir *Talking With My Mouth Full*, due out in early 2012, she dishes about her career and the people she's met along the way. The new season of *Top Chef* premiered last week.

### **Adweek: Why did you decide to write a memoir at the ripe old age of 35?**

I was feeling a lot of energy around writing a book. I thought about writing a cookbook first. But the landscape is very crowded. I realize there are a number of questions I get asked, like, "How do you become a food judge?" I kind of wanted to tell my story.

### **You're unusual in that you straddle magazines and television. What advice do you have for magazines as they try to translate their brands into video?**

*Food & Wine* had always thought, "How can we be on television and bring the brand to a broader audience?" Bravo came to them. [Current publisher] Chris Grdovic had the foresight to say, "This could work." It's aligning yourself with good quality partners that have the same goals as you, knowing your audience, and knowing your mission.



Simmons mixes media ingredients.



### **What's most misunderstood about the show?**

People's biggest misperception is that the producers predict things, and we make quick decisions and that we aren't fair. In reality, we take many, many hours. And we take it very seriously. We do not judge people cumulatively on what they do. Every thing has to stand on its own. You don't get second chances in the real world. People also think you can be very harsh. You can't see everything we say.

### **Is it hard to read everything people write about your looks, your clothes, your decisions?**

It used to be. What am I going to do? When you put yourself in the public eye, that is always something that will happen. I don't engage with it. I can't possibly keep up with it. I will say, I'm lucky because we're on a show that has a high engagement. It's more about the fact that there's a dialogue, even if it isn't always lovely.

### **Is there really a rivalry between you and Padma [Lakshmi, the host of *Top Chef*], as the *New York Post* suggested?**

No, I have amazing respect for Padma, and even more so now that I host a show. She has been incredibly supportive, and I realize now just how much work she does. The role of the host is a lot more complex than people think she is. I'm the Mary Ann to her Ginger, we like to say.

### **You worked for Jeffrey Steingarten, who's known as being a very tough boss. What was the toughest part of that?**

Jeffrey gave me the education of a lifetime because it was real world experience, but it was founded in research. Idiosyncratic. He certainly didn't let you do things the easy way. We couldn't just find a pizza dough recipe and replicate it. We had to do 30 and try each of them. He never does anything halfway. He could be incredibly stubborn. But there was a method to his madness.



## **E-COMMERCE** **Subscription Shopping: Fad Or the Future?**

Lazy shoppers have never had it so good. Thanks to e-commerce, consumers have been making purchases without moving their butts for years. But a wave of new subscription startups want to take care of the selection process too.

Yes, Fruit-of-the-Month and similar clubs have been around for decades. But the latest services take advantage of the Web by automating and curating an endless range of purchases.

Hoseanna, which ships monthly must-have toiletries, cuts to the chase with a tagline that says it's "the Netflix of nuisance products." Shoppers can also get beauty products from Birchbox, kids' activity materials from Kiwi Crate, shoes from ShoeDazzle, green goods from blissmo, and more.

While subscription e-commerce is attracting millions of venture dollars, its long-term prospects aren't clear. Forrester analyst Sucharita Mulpuru, for one, notes that customer acquisition is a challenge, and historically subscription services have depended on consumers simply forgetting to cancel.

Still, Phineas Barnes, a venture capitalist behind the trend, says, "People are overwhelmed with choice... [To] make it easier to navigate this landscape is a massive opportunity." —**Ki Mae Heussner**