Morton I. Sosland took over his family publishing company in the late 1960s, successfully guiding the business through a period of transition and pushing it onto the cutting edge of the publishing industry.

Sosland Publishing Co. was founded in 1922 by three brothers, Samuel, Sanders and David Sosland, the latter Morton’s father. The business began with the launch of The Southwestern Miller, a milling magazine that would serve the flour millers of Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. Before the brothers could begin production of their magazine, The Northwestern Miller, the largest trade magazine of the time, sought an injunction, claiming that the name of the Soslands’ new publication was too similar to their own. The judge in the case denied the writ and despite financial setbacks from the legal fees, The Southwestern Miller successfully debuted March 7, 1922.

Mr. Sosland was born three years later to David and his wife, Esther. Over the course of his youth he became familiar with the family business, passing high school and college breaks working alongside his younger brother Neil as an office boy, junior clerk and even taking on minor editorial duties.

After graduating magna cum laude in economics from Harvard College and serving in the military, Mr. Sosland joined Sosland Publishing Co. full-time in 1947. After a few years as a general reporter he was named associate editor, eventually gravitating toward the business side of publishing while still reporting, writing occasional stories and a
Mr. Sosland joined Sosland Publishing Co. in 1947 and has been its leader since 1968. The milling and baking industry landscape changed by consolidation, leading many industry publications to fold. Among them was the Goliath of the industry, The Northwestern Miller.

“I will never forget the day that the owners of The Northwestern Miller offered to sell us their magazine,” Mr. Sosland said. “They published their 100th anniversary issue and folded the magazine soon thereafter.”

The consolidations not only led to the folding of milling magazines, but also of many baking publications, prompting Mr. Sosland and others at Sosland Publishing to recognize the opportunity to add bakery-oriented content to The Southwestern Miller. Many bakers already read the publication because they wanted to know what was happening among the suppliers of their major ingredient, flour.

In order to capture the opportunity to the fullest extent, the magazine not only broadened its content, but also changed its name, becoming Milling & Baking News on Oct. 3, 1972. Over the years, Sosland Publishing has expanded its coverage with additional baking focused publications, including Baking & Snack, Baking & Snack International and Baking Buyer.

Following the magazine’s expansion in format, Mr. Sosland began using his weekly editorial column as a means of providing leadership to heads of the baking industry. In the early 1970s, Mr. Sosland actively advised the industry on how to deal with escalating wheat prices. At the time, the industry was paying a domestic wheat certificate tax and the government was subsidizing wheat exports. His column urged the industry to work with members of Congress and the administrations on stopping the subsidies and ending the wheat certificate tax, both of which were successfully achieved. More recently, he has used his column to urge the industry to respond to attacks on the nutritional quality of bread and baked foods.

Throughout the years, Mr. Sosland also has lent his support to the industry’s societies and associations, including the Grain Foods Foundation, the American Bakers Association, the American Society of Baking and the American Institute of Baking.

But his main focus has been providing the industry with relevant, timely news and information. At Sosland Publishing, he often has been a force for change with regards to modernizing the production process. Because of this, Milling & Baking News was the second magazine in America to go to electronic typesetting and to be created by computer. In 1997, Sosland Publishing became the first publisher in its field to establish a presence on the internet by posting a few pages on www.sosland.com. Two years later the company rolled out Bakingbusiness.com. As Mr. Sosland sees it, all of this means that the company’s publications provide more current news into every issue and allows its editors to be more journalistic, meaning better information for the industry.