

**PREMIER  
ISSUE**

WINTER 2008

FOR PUBLICATIONS ONLY

# LEPOD

GET CREATIVE

MAKE 'EM LISTEN!

## 10 Things Editors WANT From Designers

MASTER CLASS

!@#%  
The GRID

GREAT START

Mission Statements  
That MATTER

SOS

Make GOOD  
Things Happen to  
BAD Pictures



**Plus:**

**PROCESS**

A REDESIGN  
RFP THAT  
GETS RESULTS

QUESTIONS  
FOR: MICHAEL  
GROSSMAN

SHOULD YOU  
COVER YOUR  
NAMEPLATE?

5 WEBSITE  
MISTAKES MANY  
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STILL MAKE

**TOOLBOX**

TYPE: RAG RIGHT  
DONE RIGHT

LAB—THE SECRET  
COLOR SPACE

TIME-SAVING  
PAGE LAYOUT  
PROGRAM TRICKS

**R&R**

REVIEW OF  
MICROSTOCK  
SITES

NEW FONTS  
NEW LAUNCHES

ARTIST  
SHOWCASE

# Two-Day Intensive Workshop May 8 & 9, 2008

WASHINGTON, D.C.

## 10 Reasons Why [FPO] Master Classes Are Worth the Trip:

- 1 MAKE YOUR MAGAZINE MORE ENGAGING** Change the structure of your magazine, rethink your rhythm, and brainstorm new departments and franchise content.
- 2 INCREASE READER SATISFACTION** Refine your mission and focus your scope to bring your audience exclusive content and specific subjects of vital interest.
- 3 SAVE MONEY ON PRODUCTION** Examine your workflow to get the most from your staff and avoid costly mistakes and errors that make it all the way to the printed page.
- 4 ENHANCE STAFF PRODUCTIVITY** Improve the morale and quality of work from your team by defining their job parameters and building in incentives for growth and advancement.
- 5 NETWORK WITH PEERS** The small class size is augmented with exercises that encourage attendee interaction, and networking lunches and a reception are part of the fee.
- 6 RAISE YOUR "Q"** Make your publication the leader in your niche by leveraging your editorial and business resources to broaden your penetration into both alternate and more mainstream media.
- 7 CRITIQUE YOUR PUBLICATION** Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your current publication and plan a strategy for improving your magazine as soon as you're back at work.
- 8 REFRESH YOUR CREATIVITY** Share experiences, see dozens of examples of redesigns, hear success stories, and look at your own title from a fresh perspective.
- 9 LEARN C/P/R** This exclusive approach to evaluating your magazine's structure, content and reader expectations is a powerful tool for both augmenting your current book and charting a new and improved one.
- 10 FIND ADVERTISING/EDITORIAL SYNERGIES** Develop strategies to create vertical markets and content initiatives that will improve ad revenues and stimulate business promotion—and still protect editorial integrity.

# [FPO]

## Master Classes

ON MAGAZINE  
EDITORIAL,  
PRODUCTION  
& DESIGN

### How Will Master Classes Improve YOUR Publication?

Make your book more **ENGAGING**

Increase reader **SATISFACTION**

**SAVE MONEY** on production

Enhance staff **PRODUCTIVITY**

- ▷ **2 DAYS**
- ▷ **3 TRACKS—EDIT, DESIGN PRODUCTION**
- ▷ **8 INSTRUCTORS—MANY WHO WRITE FOR [FPO]**
- ▷ **16 SESSIONS—PICK ANY 6**
- ▷ **HANDS-ON CRITIQUES**

“**[FPO Editor] Rob Sugar is a unique expert in his field, and his classes will benefit art directors and editors. It's not a class for “tips and tricks”—it focuses on design from the inside-out, as he calls it. You examine your pub from the starting point, the mission statement, to the underlying structure and then to the fine points. It's a fun and comprehensive program that I highly recommend.**”

DAVE YOUNT,  
ART DIRECTOR,  
NFA JOURNAL

Complete session descriptions, speaker biographies, class schedule and registration will be available in January 2008 at [fpomagazine.com/masterclass](http://fpomagazine.com/masterclass)

## [FPO] is a WIP

Is creating a magazine about creating magazines the ultimate meta-concept or just some hot-dog idea?

“NO ONE WANTS TO SEE the sausage being made”—it’s a warning to anyone who thinks the dirty little details of any process might be interesting to others. I think they are. In fact, I’m betting this magazine on it.

The mission of [FPO] is simple: Bring magazine creatives ideas that will make their product better—more fun to read, less costly to produce—and enhance the impact of editorial, design and layout.

Maybe the big bosses at Hearst, Condé Nast or Time Inc. have nothing to learn from our little magazine, but staff at the other 26,000 or so titles published in North America should find something that justifies 76 bucks for a year’s subscription and a few hours of their time. And the additional 73,000 corporate, industry and government publications might find some of the ideas we’re stuffing into our book pretty tasty and exciting, too.

At least we hope so. We’ve spent the last year developing our issue map and trying to pack it full of useful editing, design and production ideas. For example, when we were mulling over what would make a grabby cover, someone suggested promoting our feature, “What Do You Want From Me?” by showing an art director finally getting her editor to pay attention to her point of view. It was pointed out—rather quickly by our associate editor—that this might bother a large percentage



of editorial folks who make up a good part of our audience, and that, in her opinion, the *opposite* scenario was a more apt metaphor anyway.

Before fisticuffs broke out, we decided we’d let the readers decide which cover they like better. We went ahead and shot the two set-ups, then printed both covers and randomly used them for our mailing list. Which one works better for you?

This “cover story” demonstrates one of our goals for [FPO]—trying out ideas and sharing the process and results with our readers. In this case, printing two covers cost almost nothing extra besides a little more shooting and prep. In return, we get to demonstrate a low-cost idea that generates some reader interaction.

We think of [FPO] as a work in progress—a WIP—a place to experiment with ideas and have fun in a way that’s unique to a magazine *for* magazine creatives. It’s a very meta-ish concept, like having a restaurant for chefs or



a hair salon for stylists. However you think of it, the real fun occurs when the professional community gets involved with some sausage-grinding of its own.

We want you to share your best stuff—your comments, your ideas, even your work. We encourage you to contribute with comments on our stories and uploads of your best work. We want [FPO] to be the first place to find out new and interesting things to spice up your own publications. Our website isn’t just a rehash of magazine content. You’ll find supporting documents for our stories, templates and fonts to download, and links to other great design sites—but only for subscribers after December 31.

Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have an overwhelming urge to step out for a *kielbasa*.

ROBERT SUGAR  
Publisher



## 24 What Do You WANT From Me?

Great magazines don't just happen—they're made by **CREATIVE PROS** who collaborate and prove that the whole is always greater than the sum of the parts. These **TEN POINTS** help designers understand how to turn raw editorial into effective layouts and motivate editors to present their stories to reap the **MAXIMUM DESIGN POTENTIAL** for publication.

## 32 Writer's Camp

Finding freelance writers who deliver the goods is a matter of cultivating relationships that **WORK BOTH WAYS**. Here's one writer willing to put her business cards on the table.

## 34 !@#% The Grid

A sophisticated **MODULAR GRID** is at the foundation of every great magazine template, but sometimes interesting things happen when we **BREAK THE RULES**. A good designer knows when—and how—to reject the rigidity of the structure and, more importantly, *why* it makes sense to color outside the lines.

## 40 Six Degrees Of Preparation: Degree One—Mission: Possible

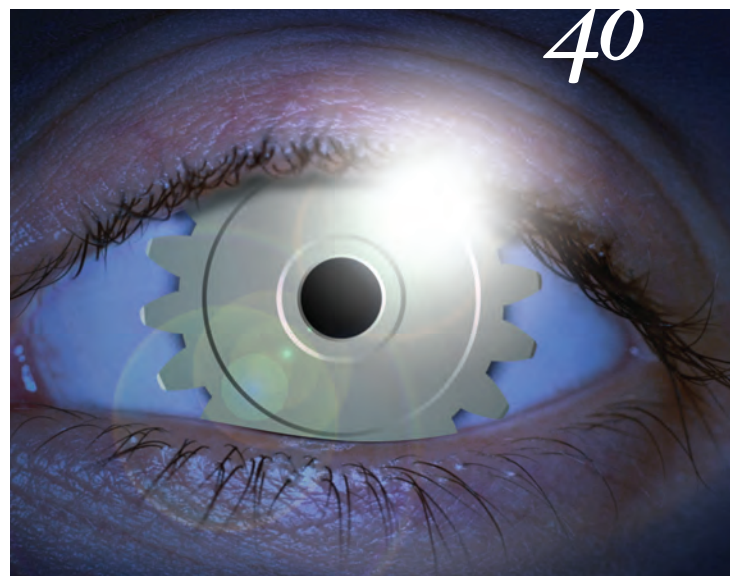
If you're ready to **IMPROVE YOUR MAGAZINE**, this six-part approach could be a revelation. Degree One examines the magazine **MISSION STATEMENT** and how it can be the editorial **OUTLINE** that builds a more successful publication.

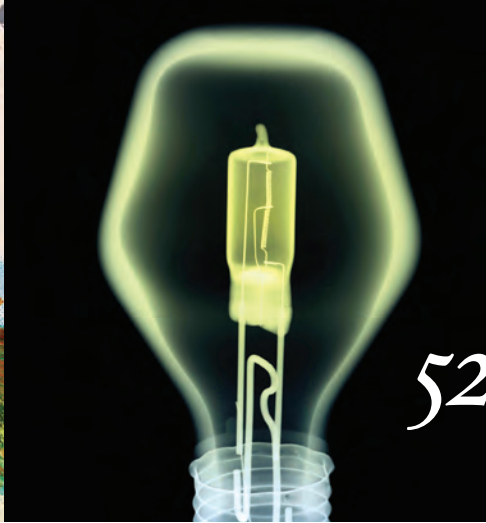
## 44 SOS: Images In Distress

The luxury of commissioning all the photography for your pub is a rare—maybe even extinct—practice. Often **LESS-THAN-PERFECT IMAGES** are the rule, not the exception. These **TECHNICAL TRICKS**, creative dodges and artistic manipulations can **MAKE LEMONADE** of sour photographic lemons.

*“I don't believe in art. I believe in artists.”*

MARCEL DUCHAMP





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OBSERVED IN THE MARGINS

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**Work More Creatively**  
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**Great Moments in Publishing**

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IN EVERY ISSUE

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**[FPO] is a WIP**  
 It's **OUR POSITION ONLY** (get it?), but it's time for a magazine that helps magazine creatives grind some sausage.
- 5 H&J**  
**Prime the Pump**  
 Each issue [FPO] publishes the good and the bad—**HOSANNAS AND JIBES**. But where do you get stuff for the first issue? You ask for it, of course.

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 Diagramming a story can help spot weaknesses and potential solutions to troublesome first drafts—and prevent the need to hijack and rewrite them.
- 16 RE:DESIGN**  
**RFP Makes a Great Redesign Simple as 1-2-3**  
 What to ask for when you're looking for an outside firm to remake your magazine, and how to get the redesign you need.

- 18 CREATIVE BRIEFS**  
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 How to bring your best ideas to the table to get the best out of your designers.

- 20 QUESTIONS FOR:**  
**Michael Grossman**  
 As the original designer of *Saveur*, *National Geographic Traveler*, and *Entertainment Weekly*, Grossman has evolved beyond mere design—but what exactly does that mean?

- 22 WEB WE WEAVE**  
**Five Mistakes Websites STILL Make**  
 If more than two of these points apply to your website, maybe you should think about the importance of your online presence.

## [ToolBox]

PRACTICE MADE PERFECT

- 50 LAYOUT**  
**Mondrian Was A Painter**  
 The term Mondrian Layout gets banded about like everyone knows exactly what it is and who Mondrian was. In fact, Piet Mondrian has something to offer magazine designers.

- 51 TYPE SET**  
**Rag Momma Rag**  
 Fully justified type is out of fashion these days, but the art of creating ragged margins is often left to the computer. Here's what to look for and how to adjust settings to get the best-looking text.

- 52 WRITER'S BLOC**  
**Thinking Backwards**  
 Sometimes imagining what your article looks like *after* it's designed can make your writing better.

- 53 IMAGE CONSULTANT**  
**Back to the LAB**  
 Most designers know the difference between CMYK and RGB, but few of us realize the value of that "other" color space: LAB. It can do amazing things.

- 55 THE WHITE STUFF**  
**Read 'em and Sweep**  
 A magazine is a physical product, so if you're designing what gets printed on one, keep in mind how readers actually read them.

- 56 HANDS-ON**  
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 Learning the power of preferences, keyboard commands and palette interactivity makes shorter work of technical tasks.

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- 58 STOCK MARKET**  
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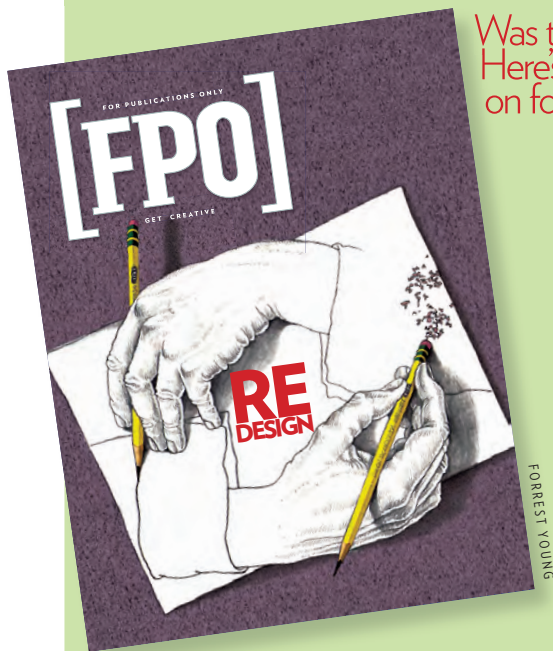
- 59 FONT FOUNT**  
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- 60 LAUNCH PAD**  
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 Although these titles are as different as can be, one thing ties them together—excellent approaches to design and branding.

- 61 SWEET SPOT**  
**Dave Clark**  
**Ralph Butler**



# IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF [FPO]



Was the first great issue a fluke?  
Here's what we're working  
on for our Spring issue.

## Six Degrees of Preparation: Degree Two—Archetypes

No magazine exists in a vacuum. Every issue has to meet expectations for its audience, its advertisers and even its staff. Where do these expectations come from? To a great degree, they derive from the way magazines are broadly classified according to content, history and competition. Don't believe in archetypes or their importance? Just go to a newsstand and see how the magazines are displayed.

## SOS: There's No Art For This Story!

The classic feature spread is dependent on the impact of a great illustration or photograph to quickly communicate the tone and content of a story. What can you do if there's nothing available? Here are great suggestions for working with that most difficult design challenge—the text-only feature.

## Don't Bury the Lead

You've got about five seconds to hook readers. The clock starts the minute their eyes fall on a page. The first 50 words—including heads, decks and blurbs—make or break the article. Editors and writers take the same material and write their own leads—and describe the process—then we design 'em (the stories, that is).

## PLUS

**FACE-LIFT**—Step-by-step color correction and manipulation of portraits that give everyone the star treatment.

**SPECIALTY STOCK SITES**—An overview of useful, obscure and just plain weird stock sites that can yield fresh images for your publication.

**THE ART OF THE ABSTRACT**—Tell your story in thirty words or less AND improve your branding by developing an exclusive abstract style for features.

**PLUG-INS & XTENSIONS**—Make Adobe InDesign and QuarkXPress do things you only wished they could do—until you add these helpers. Plus, six FREE add-ons you shouldn't be without.

**WEB/PRINT SYNERGY**—Develop deliberate content to drive readers to your website—and browsers to your magazine.

## Health & (UN)happiness?

The editor and art director of *Health* magazine made a bold move, hiring AdamsMorioka, a design firm known mainly for branding and identity work for such firms as Nickelodeon and Adobe, to give their magazine a fresh look. Three issues into the new design, staff designers began to grumble, and six issues later the design was abandoned. Yet, advertising was up and reader satisfaction seemed improved. What went wrong, and what does it mean for magazine designers?

## Three Redesigns for Three Reasons

Meet *Direct*, *MacLife* and *NewsMax*. One is a B-to-B moving from a tabloid to a standard trim; the second, an enthusiast pub re-branding itself for broader appeal; and the third trying to create more credibility for its political content. The solution for all three: a new design. How they did it and what happened, with commentary from publishers, editors and designers.

## Editorial Design Consultants— Thinking Outside the Staff

Magazine design is a special skill that is way different than laying out single issues, so finding the right firm to help you make the jump from your old book to a new one is a critical match. What to expect (and demand) from outside consultants, how to get the most from them, and where you can find them—including a comprehensive list of magazine designers and studios that want to work for you.

FOR PUBLICATIONS ONLY  
[FPO]  
GET CREATIVE

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**Nancy McKeithen**  
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**Sharri Harris Wolfgang**  
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**David Fox**  
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**Tanya Nuchols, Jinna Hagerty**  
GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

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WEB MANAGER

**Ted Bonar**  
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

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Unsigned articles are produced by [FPO] staff writers.

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FPO Magazine, 8435 Georgia Avenue, Third Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Be sure to include both old and new addresses.

If you like [FPO] the magazine, you're going to love [FPO] the website.

EACH ISSUE of [FPO] will be complemented by additional material that expands on the content of the printed issue.

On the website this issue are Quicktime movies that demonstrate the maneuvers described in "SOS" on page 44 and "Back to the LAB" on page 53. There are more [FPO] cover parodies (we couldn't dare print!). There's a free fun font of cave drawings for fans of the cartoon on page 13, and direct links to the cool sites mentioned on the same page.

You'll also find an early media kit from *GOOD* magazine demonstrating its early mission strategy.

There will lots more stuff as we ramp up the website's content.

#### PLUS

- ▶ Fonts to download and lots more coming.
- ▶ Links to dozens of resources
- ▶ Magazine templates
- ▶ Expert advisors on call
- ▶ Artist showcases

...and much more to come.

WWW.FPOMAGAZINE.COM

**HOW DO YOU GET LETTERS FOR THE FIRST ISSUE OF A MAGAZINE?** You contact psychics, of course. But since Patricia Arquette isn't around until January '08 (the official cover date of this Premier Issue, BTW), we sent early copies to various industry people for comments. Here are some of the replies:

#### Critical Mistake?

I HAVE ALWAYS FELT like I'd enjoy reading a magazine about the magazine industry. And there looks to be a lot of interesting stuff in [FPO]. I think the only thing that kind of rubbed me the wrong way was seeing a few criticisms of other mags in the front-of-book, like the typography error side box (*on page 12*). Just seems like your goal is to support the industry and help improve things. While it's interesting to see mistakes in other mags, I think calling people out in [FPO] might be creating more distance between you and the reader. Just a little thought. Again, overall, I think it looks like it's going to be a good pub. Can't wait to read the first issue.

NEELY HARRIS, EDITOR  
MENTAL FLOSS MAGAZINE

Well, if we can't laugh at Rupert Murdoch, who can we laugh at? Seriously, though, criticism is part of this package, and we want it to be fair and objective, but with maybe a trace of attitude (see "Snark Attack" on page 8).

#### Watch Yer Back

MAKE THE NEXT ISSUE'S cover art for [FPO] a photo of your back with a big bull's-eye on it! You've chosen one of the pickiest readerships on the planet—the kind of readers who take great glee in circling typos in others' publications. Yet, [FPO] is exactly what our industry needs—a magazine filled with valuable content that is unafraid to laugh at itself or others, and can remind us, the self-appointed guardians of all things written, that taking a chance, using humor, and offering up the unexpected makes for an infinitely more enjoyable read than simply playing it safe.

MARTHA SILVER, EDITOR  
OPASTCO ROUNDTABLE

Actually, next issue's cover MIGHT be the one on the previous page. Or, it might not. We'll soon be posting THREE cover comps on our website, and we'll let the readers decide.

#### Coffee Break Buddy

MY FIRST MENTOR kindly explained why my prose, inspired by 19th-century novels, didn't translate to a modern magazine. Later, I learned from a colleague's example how to tighten a manuscript without losing the author's voice. Now, working at home as part of a virtual company, I've missed that on-the-job interaction. *FPO Magazine* is my new information source and coffee-break buddy rolled into one.

TERRI STONE, EDITOR IN CHIEF  
CREATIVEPRO.COM AND  
INDESIGN MAGAZINE

#### DIY is TDF

ABOUT THE DIY CRITIQUE WORKBOOK: Fabulous! My first reaction was that this is too much great material to give away so early in the [FPO] franchise rollout. A wonderful, but perhaps too-generous gesture. On second thought... this may be such an alluring hook that readers will have no choice but to say, "Holy crap—this stuff is really useful." The nice thing about the workbook is that even seasoned (i.e., grizzled) magazine makers will likely find parts of it that are helpful in reassessing their books. Excellent stuff. [FPO] has a chance to develop into an important industry resource.

CABLE NEUHAUS, EDITOR  
NEWSMAX

All subscribers to [FPO] receive a link to a 16-page workbook called *The 10-Step Do-It-Yourself Magazine Critique* to help them review their own publications. If you've subscribed but haven't received the link, contact us at [editor@fpomagazine.com](mailto:editor@fpomagazine.com).

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!** Send your comments, criticisms, nitpicks, lame jokes and other ephemera no matter how small to:

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or e-mail  
[editor@fpomagazine.com](mailto:editor@fpomagazine.com)

# [P]asteBoo

OBSERVED IN THE MARGINS

## ... Try to Fool Me 57 Times, Shame On You

### LOOK AT THESE LETTERS.

They all have different return addresses from different companies, different fonts, different promotional text, even different paper stock. But they're all from one company, and they all contain the same thing: an "invoice" for a \$100-plus magazine subscription from Eli Journals that you never asked for.

We actually received a couple issues of its *Inside Adobe InDesign*, and while it wasn't actually packed with "insider" user information—more like simple stuff for newbies and casual

users—the 16-page newsletter was respectable. Its subscription practices are anything but.

We aren't certain where the company got our address to begin with, but once it sent us unsolicited issues, it began faxing and mailing us something that *looked* a lot like a bill. In a six-month period, we got 57 letters with 16 different company names and 21 different return addresses—and all of them had the same "invoice" inside. Yes, it *says* "This is not an Invoice." But in business environments where small-ish bills tend to get shuffled right into accounting, it's way too easy to miss this detail. So, is this fraudulent? Maybe it's not illegal, although it certainly skims the edge.

The envelope at right is the epitome of the issue, with its vaguely government-sounding name and lots of little "official" elements that are totally meaningless. And it replicates the deliberate visual inscrutability that signals official Federal business mail. Then, below that, there's the faux registered letter, as if response is critical. Both envelopes use design cues to mimic mail from organizations with more authority or to imply they contain invoices, not solicitations.

Is this any way to do business? It must be, because the Worlddata mailing list for Eli

Journals' design titles has 12 publications listed with 142,000 subscribers, and that's only a small portion of the more than 800,000 people who supposedly get one of the 61 technology titles from Eli Journals, New Hill Services or the other half-dozen names for the same company, which seems to be headquartered in Naples, Florida.

What can you do if you're getting these letters? The easiest thing is to do nothing. Throw them away and hope they get bored with you. But for the more proactive types, we've posted the USPS Fraud Claim Report PDF on our website.

“Every night I pray that clients with taste will get money and clients with money will get *taste*.”

BILL GARDNER  
PRINCIPAL, GARDNER DESIGN



Or go directly to <https://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/fraud/MailFraudComplaint.htm>.



# rd]



## WTF?

What's This Font?  
Answer on page 13.

This spicy type is used many ways, but mainly turns hollandaise into béarnaise.



## Bigger Monitor, Bigger, uh, Results?

The French firm Pfeiffer Consulting suggests that the larger your monitor's screen, the greater your productivity. Conducting user trials of the new 30-inch Cinema Display monitor from Apple, Pfeiffer claimed that the large screen—as opposed to the more typical 17-inch monitor—yielded productivity gains of 50 to 65%, which translates to significant savings in both time and money. The main source of the increase is likely due to the improved ease with which separate applications can be displayed side-by-side, as opposed to overlapping windows on smaller monitors, which often necessitates continuous back-and-forth clicks of the mouse.

But not all of Pfeiffer's peers accept these findings. A Denver-based consulting firm, The Productivity Pro, finds such numbers to be too high and thinks the increase in productivity is more likely 5%, with the addition of a second monitor altogether adding, at most, 30%. Meanwhile, a Pennsylvania firm, Neen James Communications, suggests that a larger screen's most significant effect likely is a reduction in eyestrain, although on a case-by-case basis, individual users may find that the larger screen actually helps them better visualize their work.

## RE:CYCLED

REJECTED [FPO] COVERS



# SNARK ATTACK

BIG MAGAZINES THAT OUGHT TO LOOK BETTER

We love *Gourmet* Magazine, with its rich history, its slightly snooty demeanor and its willingness, under current editor Ruth Reichl, to try some real journalism now and then (excusing, of course, the David Foster Wallace debacle from 2004: “Consider the Lobster”). Although we love the fantasy food party articles that populated the pre-Reichl era, there’s plenty to admire in the current incarnation. All the more reason to be nitpicky.



## D ADVERTORIAL-ITIS.

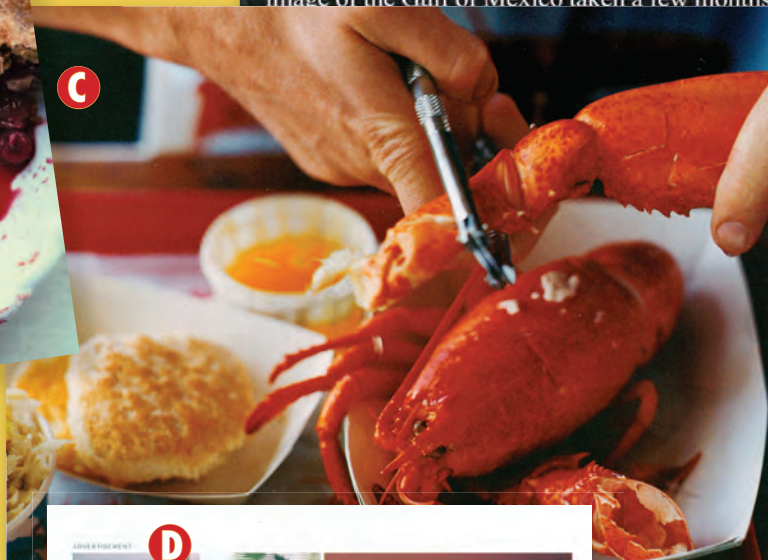
All the big food magazines have advertorial sections, but none of them are as intrusive and prone to misinterpretation as real editorial as these in *Gourmet* with teeny-tiny “Advertising Section” disclaimers often over busy images. Designed to look like editorial, but schlockier, these advertorial pages run throughout the book, disturbing the editorial flow and taking credibility down a notch. We know it takes ads to keep a book alive, but too much ad crossover ultimately hurts the book—and future ad sales.



## AGAINST THE GRAIN

Civilization was built on an annual wheat crop. But a few visionary thinkers say it's to break the habit. BY STEVEN JOHNSON

LOOK AT SATELLITE IMAGES of the upper Mississippi River valley in the spring, and you'll see a vast broad gash running across the land: untold acres of fields stripped of all vegetation, plowed and seeded, waiting for the first annual crops to emerge. And then look at an image of the Gulf of Mexico taken a few months later, ooms t



C

## C UNAPPETIZING IMAGES.

Food magazines ought to pay special attention to their color separations and printing, but the images throughout this issue (and others) are consistently flat, dark, with little detail in shadow areas, and have appalling color casts. As for the actual photography, we get the idea of short depth-of-field for compositional effect, but there ought to be a lot more in focus than out (especially on this cover!) It's not like the food moves or anything.

D



## VERSATILE DESIGN MEETS INNOVATION

Leading the charge with the latest in kitchen technology, new ultra-premium ovens and discreet refrigerated drawers by Viking Range are coveted additions to any kitchen.

Every cook knows the importance of quality appliances that work with the functionality of a kitchen. The new undercounter refrigerated drawers from Viking are designed in a sleek and efficient manner. With features like full-extension drawer glides, interior LED lighting and high vertical storage space, these units assemble perfectly with existing Viking products and any kitchen's style. Also ideal for both bar and entertaining areas, Viking refrigerated drawers keep food and beverages perfectly chilled—and guests perfectly happy.

Keeping in sync with the performance and aesthetic that Viking is known for, the new Designer Electric Touch Control built-in ovens were one of the most highly requested introductions in Viking Range history. Don't

be fooled by the gentle curves and minimalist design—these ovens deliver full-throttle commercial-style and the professional features you expect from Viking. Available in an array of models and finishes, the four custom-designed electronic controls, the 1 oven cavity in the industry, a patent-pending V Dual Flow™ convection system and many other advanced features—ensuring an oven that will active epicurean lifestyle.

With an unparalleled combination of performance and design, the convenient refrigerated drawers and Designer Electric Touch Control built-in ovens by Viking take culinary performance to a whole new level.

For more information on the full line of Viking appliances, visit [vikingrange.com](http://vikingrange.com).

E

FOR CHICKEN  
2 whole chickens (each about 3½ lb)  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

MAKE FILLING: Preheat oven to 400°F. Lower third.

• Cook garlic in oil in a small heavy skillet, stirring occasionally, until pale golden, 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and stir in ricotta, eggs, parmesan, and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

STUFF AND ROAST CHICKENS: Cut out 1/2-inch slit on each side of chicken between thigh and breast (near drumstick) with kitchen shears (freeze bones for meat). Cut a ½-inch slit on each side of chicken between thigh and breast (near drumstick) with kitchen shears (freeze bones for meat). Cut a ½-inch slit on each side of chicken between thigh and breast (near drumstick) with kitchen shears (freeze bones for meat). Cut a ½-inch slit on each side of chicken between thigh and breast (near drumstick) with kitchen shears (freeze bones for meat).

• Sprinkle each chicken with ¼ teaspoon pepper and spread chickens flat, skin side up, on a (17- by 12-inch) shallow baking pan. Get between skin and flesh of breast and leg (be careful not to tear skin). Using a finger, push ricotta mixture under skin, using a finger

## E READABLE RECIPES?

A clean margin is a great thing, but separating steps in a recipe with tiny light-colored arrows might cause a reader to miss an important step, and that's a recipe for disaster.

## Six Ways to Make a More Creative Workplace

A magazine can only be as creative as the people who make it a reality. To develop an innovative magazine, start by developing innovative people. Here are a few tips on how to develop more creative employees at your magazine.

### EDIT YOUR LAYOUT.

Research shows that most employees are more creative in environments that keep them happy and engaged. Create bright open spaces: Windows, natural light and fewer walls help employees feel more comfortable and less boxed in.

Allow employees to make their areas their own. One company has gone so far as to allow employees to knock down the walls between their cubicles and install old-fashioned ceiling fans to create a sense of comfort and community.

### TAKE A PAGE FROM ANOTHER

**BOOK.** Encourage innovative thinking by providing employees with extra time and resources to come up with new solutions to old

problems. Engineers at Google are encouraged to spend 20% of their time each day working on independent projects and thinking of new ideas.

Give your employees a set amount of time to think up new ideas to take your publication in a new direction. Instead of creating one template for a feature or department, create two—one standard and one innovative. Even if you don't end up using the innovative option, you'll be surprised at how often you incorporate ideas from both into your final product.

### THINK INDEPENDENTLY, WORK COLLABORATIVELY.

Creativity doesn't occur in a vacuum, and it certainly doesn't occur in a cubicle between coffee breaks. Encourage people to bounce ideas off each other, and watch them change for the better.

When putting together a project team, try to select people who share the same vision, but bring different perspectives to the task. They'll be mutually supportive, but still push each other to move the project in new directions.

### DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE

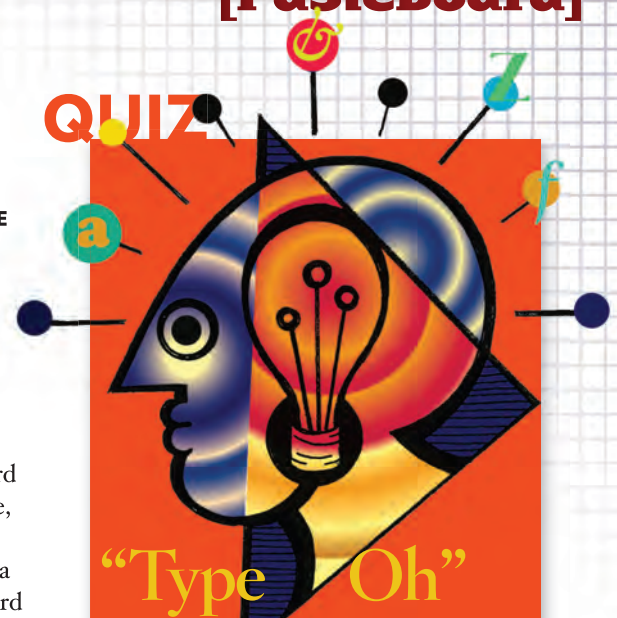
**MISTAKES.** Dr. Robert Sutton of Stanford University points out an important difference between innovative organizations and those that fail to innovate. Too many organizations reward success and punish failure, making employees afraid to take risks. To develop a culture of creativity, reward success and failure, and punish inaction.

### FLATTEN YOUR ORGANIZA-

**TION.** When companies employ a strict chain of command, they cut off lines of communication. Employees are afraid to speak their minds, and they focus too much on fitting in. Let employees know that it's okay to challenge an idea, or even make fun of the boss's new shirt!

### CHALLENGE EMPLOYEES.

Dr. Theresa Amabile of Harvard University has shown that intrinsic motivation encourages creativity much more than extrinsic motivation. This means employees won't think up more creative ideas just because they're offered bonuses or raises. Instead, engage employees in their work by offering them challenging projects that match their interests. —RYAN FEHR



1. Why are block serif fonts often called "Egyptian" fonts?
2. What distinguishes "Oldstyle," "Transitional" and "Modern" typefaces?
3. Which of these faces isn't named for its creator?  
a) Mantinia b) Benguiat c) Frutiger d) Novarese e) Stone
4. The name of the original font on the first Macintosh system was called:  
a) Apple Gothic b) Charcoal c) Jobs Bold d) Chicago
5. Why does the sans serif font Bell Gothic have a serif on the letter "i"?
6. For what magazine did Herb Lubalin design Avant Garde?
7. What is the purpose of "lining figures?"
8. What is the newest typographic character in modern fonts?
9. When type is set to a line depth of fewer points than its point size, it's known as:  
a) solid type b) reverse leading c) illegible d) Carson-ogenic
10. Who said "Anyone who would letterspace blackletter would steal sheep?" ►BONUS: What does that mean today?

Answers on page 13

## SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

2007



1999



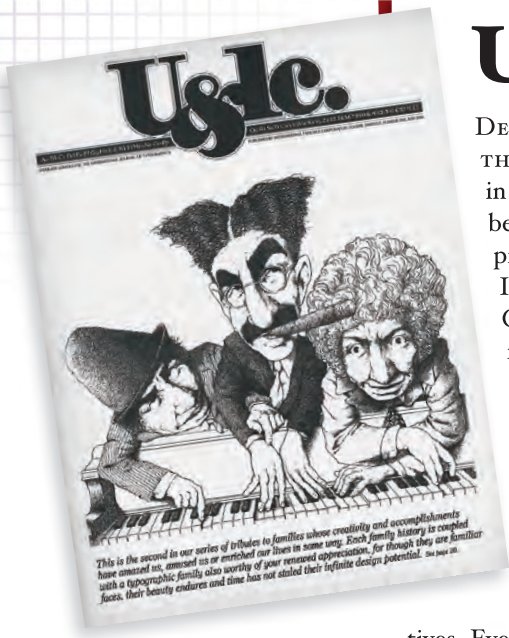
## GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

### U&lc (1978–1999)

DESIGNERS WHO CUT THEIR professional teeth in the '70s must remember this tabloid quarterly produced by ITC—the International Typeface Corporation. Obviously meant as a showcase for new ITC fonts, the quarterly *U&lc—Upper & lower case*—achieved a stature among the design community that far surpassed its promotional objectives. Even today, the bravado of these large spreads—often

produced by guest designers from the top rungs of the design community—is still enthralling and inspiring. They're also a hoot, a trip down memory lane before the advent of electronic publishing and the demise of typesetters, photo-typesetters and the whole hierarchy of graphic professionals that kept the advertising, corporate communications and publishing worlds afloat in Dyluxes, C-prints, transfer type and 3M Matchprints. The early '70s marked the end of the metal typesetting era and the beginning of

photo-typesetting. With new typesetting technology came new possibilities for manipulating type. And the elimination of metal typesets allowed a phenomenal increase in the number of fonts that typesetters could have available for clients to use. *U&lc's* mission was to demonstrate creative application of new fonts, inspire their use by designers and ultimately compel typesetters to buy the fonts for their shops. *U&lc* didn't have to be great, but it was, largely because of the fortunate choice for the first editor and original

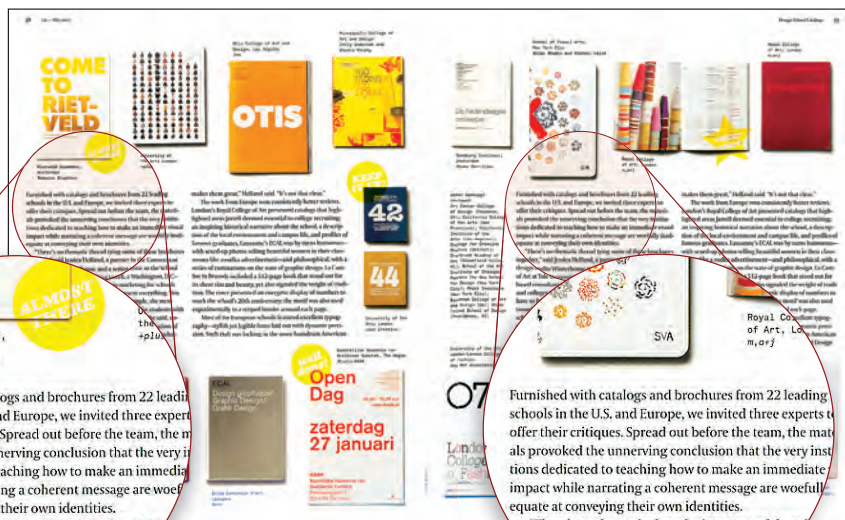


## OOPS File

*I.D. Magazine* is often thought of as the most cerebral of the design magazines, perhaps more admired in the abstract than read. So, what happened on pages 58 and 59 of the May 2007 issue? It's a nice critique of design school promotional catalogs, and the text reads well centered across the spread until your sense of déjà vu kicks in and you realize you've read it all before—on the previous page.

Thomas Porostocky, art director of *I.D.*, describes the faux pas as a perfect storm that is more bad timing than procedural lapse. "We sent an InDesign file of page 59 to Black Dot [their production house] with a correction. When we eliminated the previous page, the linked copy rolled into the text box, and no one caught it until after it was printed.

"We were at a photo shoot when one of the editors saw it on a read-through of the samples and gave us a heads-up. So, I wasn't there when the mistake was spotted, but I imagine a few choice epithets were uttered."



Furnished with catalogs and brochures from 22 leading schools in the U.S. and Europe, we invited three experts to offer their critiques. Spread out before the team, the materials provoked the unnerving conclusion that the very institutions dedicated to teaching how to make an immediate impact while narrating a coherent message are woefully inept at conveying their own identities.

"There's no thematic thread tying some of these together," said Jessica Helfand, a partner in the design studio Winterhouse and a senior critic at Yale University. Andrea Jarrell, a partner in the studio who specializes in branding, said "It's not that they're bad, it's that they're so bad they're almost there."

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*I.D.* published a correction in the next issue and put the article on its website for anyone who wanted to read the whole story, but according to Porostocky, no readers actually commented on the gaff. Nevertheless, the lesson learned is simple: "From now on, we're sending the whole file again when there's a correction," said Porostocky.

designer. Herb Lubalin, whose virtuoso intermingling of type and graphic elements raised the stature of type and typography from a vendor craft to an indispensable part of the designer's toolbox, applied his creative muscle to *U&Lc* for a decade. ITC couldn't have had a better spokesman for its fonts, and designers couldn't have been more inspired.

Today, there is no design publication for designers that fosters the mix of delight and envy that accompanied the arrival of each issue of *U&Lc*. Delight, not only at the inspiring large format presentation, but also the eclectic subject matter, which ranged from the history

of art, to studio, illustrator and designer portfolio features, to such wide-ranging subjects as primitive masks, antique books and postage stamp design. Envy, because looking at these issues, especially the ones put together by "guest designers" in the early '90s, made publication designers salivate at the possibility of finding their own "dream jobs."

Today, the print version is long gone. Monotype bought ITC assets in 1999, and *U&Lc* sits on the company's website, a mere shadow of its glorious past. Fortunately, anyone who wants to see what *U&Lc* was all about can purchase *U&Lc: Influencing Design and Typography* by John D. Berry, who was the



magazine's last print editor, and see many full-sized layouts from the history of the magazine.

## MAGAZINE BEASTIARY



### The Insatiable Gutter Monster (*Engulficus editorialis*)

**T**his beast lurks in the center gutter of every perfect-bound magazine, waiting for the feckless designer to just try and run a headline across a spread or move a copy block too close to the binding. It doesn't matter how much extra space you allow, this beast somehow manages to swallow just enough copy to make reading an exercise in completing sentences from incomplete words. So, beware using words like "shirt" too near the center of a double-truck headline.

## [FPO] CONTEST #1



**“Once I picked it up, I couldn’t put it down.”**

### Excess Blurb-age

**Our first contest uses your powers of search and deploy.** We may think we have the industry clout to write a juicy blurb for a major book, but few of us have the opportunity. Your challenge is to find a book on Amazon, and write a convincingly clueless yet apropos blurb in highest praise of the title.

**Get the idea?** Our winner will be judged harshly, but rewarded handsomely with a crisp C-note. Lucky runners-up will enjoy our “Get Creative” tees. On your mark, get set, go! Send entries by January 1, 2008 via email to [FPOcontest@fpomagazine.com](mailto:FPOcontest@fpomagazine.com) and be sure to include the link to the book you are a-blurbing!

### Where Did the Term “Blurb” Come From Anyway?

**GELETT BURGESS** was an early 20th century American humorist, probably best remembered as the author of the classic quatrain “The Purple Cow” (“I never saw a purple cow/I never hope to see one/But I can tell you anyhow/I’d rather see than be one”).

In preparation for his speech at the 1907 American Booksellers Association banquet, Burgess concocted a humorous mock dust jacket for his latest book, which was then distributed to the attending guests. The cover featured a drawing of a pulchritudinous young woman (whom Burgess dubbed, for no apparent reason, “Belinda Blurb”), as well as satirically overblown praise for his own work.

“Blurb” caught the ear of the publishing industry and was soon being used as a synonym for any sort of breathless advertising hyperbole, in particular the sort of “not too obvious lies” authors fabricate for the

back of their own book jackets.

Incidentally, while Burgess was justly proud of his invention of “blurb,” he grew so sick of hearing his “Purple Cow” recited that he eventually penned a sequel: “Ah yes, I wrote The Purple Cow/I’m sorry now I wrote it/But I can tell you anyhow/I’ll kill you if you quote it.”

—EVAN MORRIS, THE “WORD DETECTIVE,” whose whimsical etymology research can be found online at [www.word-detective.com](http://www.word-detective.com)



### COVER-UPS

As our article on page 14 points out, partially covering your nameplate is a good idea, but be careful of what still shows.

This TIME cover drew a lot of friendly fire for putting horns on the Reverend Billy Graham, and as for Men’s-uh-Journal, why do we think the missing letter is “P”?

### APOSTRO[CATASTRO]PHE



Now that Rupert Murdoch has his hands on *The Wall Street Journal*, he can use its excellent copy editors to make sure that the millions of people who watch Fox won’t be subjected to such blatantly bad typography. Then again, he paid so much for *WSJ* that he might have to let ‘em go.

## GREAT TOOL

### Kensington Expert Mouse

Almost since the dawn of desktop publishing, Kensington has made the Turbo Mouse (now re-dubbed the Expert Mouse), an upside-down replacement for the traditional keyboard sidekick. Unlike that space-craving, carpal-tunnel-syndrome-producing rodent, the Expert Mouse sits in place, its large ball swiftly moving the pointer across the screen with a mere flick of the wrist. Almost as amazing as the ball is the great Mouseworks software that makes small moves more precise and large moves even faster, and allows the four buttons to do custom keyboard actions. Designers with a 20-inch screen or larger need the Expert Mouse to save their wrists and their sanity. The only question we're asking Kensington: Where's the Bluetooth version of this thing?



## NET Scape Explorer

THERE'S A DAZZLING DIVERSITY of content on the Web, and it's no wonder there are gems that no one stumbles onto. When it comes to design and publishing, we've searched high and low for the best sites. You can click through directly to them on our website, [FPOMAGAZINE.COM](http://FPOMAGAZINE.COM). But, sometimes we find things that are so weird, fun or astounding that we want to share them with you here. You gotta take a look at these sites:



► [LABS.LIVE.COM/PHOTOSYNTH](http://LABS.LIVE.COM/PHOTOSYNTH) (NO WWW)

Is this the future we're looking at? Currently, the "try it" only runs on the latest Windows platforms, but anyone can watch a presentation at <http://labs.live.com/photosynth/blogs> and scroll to *Photosynth at TED Conference*. Photosynth may come from Microsoft (the video presenter can't quite believe it either), but this demonstration of new visualization software and image recognition is truly mind-blowing in its implications.

► [WWW.AIGA.ORG/CONTENT.CFM/REDESIGNING-THE-NEW-YORKER-PART-ONE](http://WWW.AIGA.ORG/CONTENT.CFM/REDESIGNING-THE-NEW-YORKER-PART-ONE)

Who would dare present an unsolicited redesign of one of the most venerable American magazines? KT Meaney would, and it's a fascinating argument that combines a history of publishing design and practical visual ideas that can benefit any magazine.

► [WWW.BEMBOSZOO.COM](http://WWW.BEMBOSZOO.COM)

In the tradition of alphabet bestiaries that date back to the Middle Ages, this creative Flash™ show manipulates the name of an animal into a picture of the animal—all in characters from the Bembo family. Really fun.

## GREAT MOMENTS IN PUBLISHING #1



REBECCA SUGAR

"Is that the only dingbat font you have?"

## ANSWERS

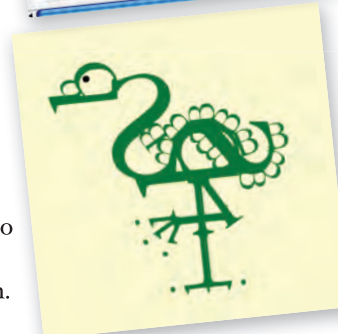
### TYPE OH from page 9:

1. These fonts were created for use on posters that promoted popular exhibitions of Egyptian artifacts presented in London theatres in the early nineteenth century.
2. The variation in stroke weight within a character. Oldstyle has the least, Transitional a bit more and Modern the most.
3. a—The font was designed by Matthew Carter.
4. d—The original Mac fonts were bitmaps and were named after cities.
5. The font was for phone books, so it was important not to confuse the letter "l" with the number "1."
6. *Avant Garde Magazine*—duh.
7. Lining figures are monospaced numbers with regular baselines that are used in columns of numbers so they'll line up.
8. The Euro symbol, €, introduced in 1999.
9. b—(although sometimes c would be accurate, too).
10. Frederick Goudy.

BONUS: Today, it means that putting lots of space between lowercase letters in a word is so heinous an aesthetic typographic sin that the culprit is the equivalent of some dullard who would steal candy from a baby.

For more in-depth answers, visit [www.fpomagazine.com/quizzesanswers](http://www.fpomagazine.com/quizzesanswers).

WTF? from page 7: Tarragon



## COVER CHARGE

### The Case of the Hidden Nameplate

Is it a bad idea to block your magazine's name with an image?

THE FEBRUARY '07 SWIMSUIT issue of *Sports Illustrated* has a great picture of Beyoncé on the cover. Would a casual reader wonder why she's on "Spots Illuted" magazine? Probably not.

Many editors worry unnecessarily that their publication's brand presence is somehow

diminished when images go "on top" their nameplates. The main argument—that the nameplate is the "logo," so it should always be visible—is more a warning sign than a maxim.



An iconic, logo-like nameplate can be partly hidden and still communicate identity.



Here's why: Your nameplate is more than just words. Together, a distinctive font, size and positioning of your title make it your "logo." Readers need to see only part of the name to "get" the whole thing.

Likewise, a cover template

is more than just a nameplate. Regular readers and subscribers identify their favorite magazine by such graphic elements as rules, colors or boxes; distinctive fonts; and cover line structures.

The cover concept and execution should be consistent. Although many designers lament the passing of metaphorical cover treatments that seemed to flourish in some "golden age" of magazine cover design (usually noting the George Lois *Esquire* covers of the '60s), they seldom note how consistent the approach was issue to issue. (Perhaps they're really lamenting the loss of the prominent position for exercising their skills, but that's another article.)

While this doesn't mean that each cover should have the same look, a limited palette of graphic approaches and a well-defined editorial scope result in covers that brand the magazine. The rock-star portraits on the cover of *Rolling Stone* or the eponymous cover subject of *O—The Oprah Magazine* are great examples.

If your covers lose their identifying character when the nameplate is obscured, this should be a wake-up call to make your nameplate more of a visual statement and your cover template more sophisticated. And, in evaluating your cover images, take stock of their editorial branding value.

When your nameplate doesn't carry the entire weight

of your branding, the advantages of using the entire cover as a canvas for your editorial presentation become obvious. Larger, more dramatic foreground images have greater newsstand impact. The old axiom that readers respond to faces on your cover actually has scientific validation, and the bigger the better.

Using "figure/ground" illusion makes your book look bigger. When your central image overlaps the nameplate, it establishes a plane of reference defining the figure from the ground, visually "popping out" the central image from the cover—a compelling effect difficult to achieve any other way.

There's also more room for cover lines. Bigger images and more copy might seem contradictory, but when the central focus of the image is moved up on the cover, the negative space that cover lines fill is also moved up on the page. The coveted upper-left-below-the-nameplate spot then falls somewhere one-quarter down the main image, a more natural composition than parallel with the top of the foreground subject.

Trust your regular readers to find your current issue, and be confident that a compelling cover concept will attract new readers through visual impact. It takes more than a nameplate to make a magazine cover. It takes a distinctive look that embodies not just the title, but every square inch of your magazine's most valuable real estate. [FPO]



## Map Your Story From the Inside Out

Diagramming it gives you perspective and insight.

I STARE AT THE WRITER'S manuscript, scanning it a third time in a futile search for meaning. My fight-or-flight instinct is about to kick in. But neither response would help at a time like this. I need the story finished—soon. Lashing out lets me blow off steam, but it doesn't produce a clear story that makes a point.

So, what are my choices? I could return the story, riddled with notes to the author, suggesting revisions and asking fact questions. That is, after all, what we editors do. But what's the point? We're dealing with a writer who's lost. Draft No. 2 is likely to be just another form of jumble. I could hijack the story and finish it myself. It may come to that—doesn't it often?—but I want the writer to own this story, and I need to work on other stories.

My solution: a story diagram. Before careful line editing, copy editing and polishing; before plugging fact and logic holes; even, if necessary, before settling on the story's main point, I use a pair of diagrams to map out (1) what we've got now, and (2) what we might have once it's fixed. The first diagram tells the writer, "Here's what you gave me." The second, "Here's what I consider a publishable story." The latter version might be largely hypothetical if you aren't yet to the point where you can tell what the story actually is. But a hypothetical, told in diagram form, is better than

grunting vague encouragement to the writer to try again, or burying a writer in questions that don't attack the root problems of structure and story.

This ain't rocket science. Writers know the value of an outline before they plunge into drafting. But I'd guess that not many story editors are quite so methodical. If they were, they might get more out of their writers' second drafts. Here's how to add that extra step in unraveling and reassembling a messed-up story.

For starters, it helps to think of story diagrams in aerial terms, or maybe as a trip to MapQuest. Pull back far enough from what you're looking at—gain enough altitude—and you'll get the big picture. So, from the perspective of the greatest zoom-out we see only one thing: the story's main point. As we zoom in, but long before we descend to a thicket of paragraphs and sentences and facts, we see the story as a few major sections, then as a skeleton, and finally in the kind of detail that might be called an outline.

The two farther-out views simply give us our bearings: What are we talking about here? The third view starts to address the story's structural problems. You're explaining in a graphic way why you're dissatisfied: The point isn't clear, or the body of the story strays from the point. You're able to show where the story repeats itself, and where it shoots off on illogical tangents.

Here's what the article you're now reading looks like at three levels of magnification:

**MAXIMUM ZOOM-OUT:**  
How to use diagrams to fix stories

**ZOOM-IN:**  
Problem: bad story

Solution: diagrams

Example

Wrap-up

**ONE MORE ZOOM-IN:**

Problem: bad copy  
Typical solutions

My solution: diagrams

What they are, why they help

Three examples:  
close, closer, closest

More on why they help

Circle back to anger theme

If we move in yet another notch, it would look like a traditional outline.

The diagram of where you want the story to go, while maybe still wishful thinking, charts a storytelling map for a confused writer. Wherever you ask questions because the needed facts weren't included in Draft No. 1, you're compiling the writer's to-do list for a new round of reporting and research.

If the tactic works, you've just saved hours of rewriting and kept a writer from despairing that the revision bears no resemblance to the original work. If it fails, then you've at least had time to choose your next strategy: fight, flight or rewrite. **[FPO]**

**MARK OBBIE** teaches magazine journalism at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and writes for business and legal magazines. He is the former executive editor of *The American Lawyer* magazine, and has more than 25 years' experience as a reporter, editor and newsroom manager. He blogs about legal journalism at the LawBeat blog.

# RE:DESIGN

## RFP Makes a Great Redesign Simple as 1-2-3

To get the best firm, you need to ask for the right stuff.

THE SKILLS FOR DESIGNING a magazine template are different than those for issue-by-issue design, so when you add the extra workload on top of the already difficult job of getting each issue out the door, hiring an outside firm to handle the redesign makes a lot of sense. The Request for Proposal (RFP) is a critical component in finding the right vendor.

Like in any RFP, capabilities, scope and deliverables should be the main elements of the document. Potential designers should establish their credentials and unique skills for tackling your job, whether it's familiarity with your market segment and content or a compatible working style. It's a lot easier to

establish that when the scope is clearly explained. The RFP should also contain a clear list of deliverables, both for the process of evaluation and for the final product.

Here are simple categories that should be in every Redesign RFP:

### **CAPABILITIES**

A responding firm needs the opportunity to present itself for evaluation.

**COMPETENCE** The history of the firm and extent of its business capabilities.

**RELEVANT SKILLS** Specific background that qualifies the firm's suitability for the project.

**WORK PROCESS** How the firm will staff, interact with the client

and proceed with the job.

**SIMILAR CONTRACTS** Case studies of projects that have relevance to the current RFP.

**REFERENCES** Contacts that verify the work experience, preferably in conjunction with the case studies or samples provided.

### **SCOPE**

Your RFP should be very clear about your rationale for redesign and your expectations.

**MISSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA** To help define your audience and purpose.

**REASON FOR REDESIGN** The political, economic and practical reasons for the change.

**EXTENT OF REDESIGN** What exactly will be changed: branding, structure, navigation, grids, fonts, editorial issue map?

**GOALS OF REDESIGN** The aesthetic, business and editorial expectations of the final product.

**TIMELINE** When the final materials are needed and interim deadlines.

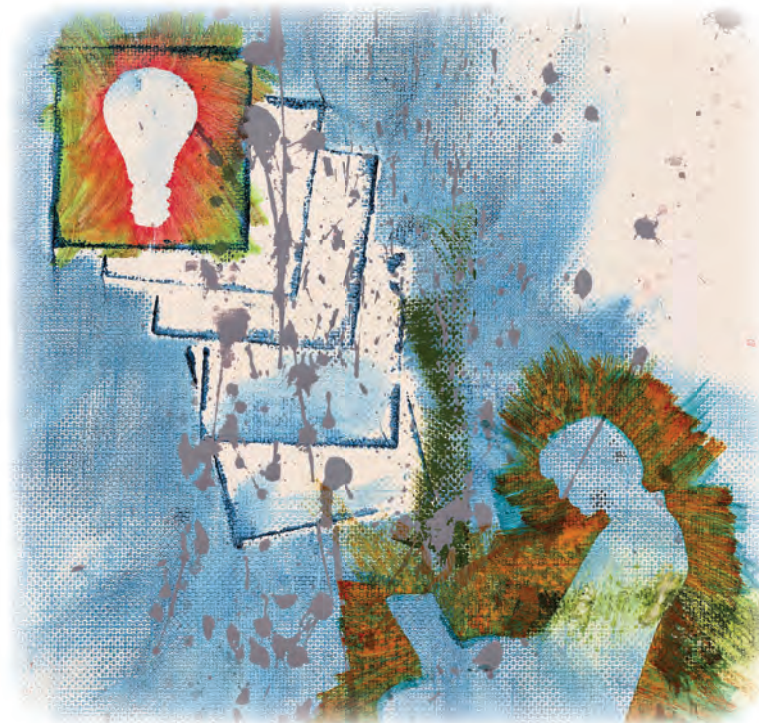
### **DELIVERABLES**

These should always be spelled out, since the fee structure is tied to the work.

### **FOR EVALUATION**

**SAMPLES** Magazines similar in budget and editorial scope with before-and-after examples.

**CRITIQUE** Short, open-ended essay allowing respondents to demonstrate their grasp of the project and unique insight into possible directions. This should be used for evaluation, not as a locked-in blueprint.



# RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

**FEE SCHEDULE** A grid tied to deliverables can be helpful, but allowing the firm to delineate its own fee schedule reveals a lot about its sense of responsibility.

**DURING THE REDESIGN PROCESS**  
**COMP SETS** Number of iterations and of what parts of the book define work scope and when additional fees are acceptable.  
**TEMPLATES** Specific qualifications of application, fonts and auxiliary files.

**STYLE GUIDE** Complete guide to using the templates that demonstrate style sheets, techniques and aesthetic theory of the redesign.

**POST-DELIVERY CONSULTING** Duration of project support, including critique, evaluation of in-house work or even tweaking of files. “Live” design work should always be considered a separate job.

**OWNERSHIP** Who maintains rights to the application files, fonts and art.

EACH OF THESE ITEMS helps each respondent deliver an accurate quote for the project and establish the scope and contract of the working relationship. The detail should be sufficient to cover the expectations of the project so that later disputes over going outside the scope won't occur. Providing flexibility within the RFP to anticipate problems and how they will be resolved helps start a big project on the right footing. In addition, it's important for the RFP to

set the standards for the work. Responders who balk at parts of the deliverables are going to challenge other parts of the project when things get difficult.

It's tempting to ask for spec work in the evaluation deliverables, the design of a feature or a nameplate, but there are a lot of reasons to avoid this. Spec work is performed with only limited knowledge of the parameters of the project, is not representative of the process necessary to achieve the best results, and can bias consideration of later comprehensives. If work from a competing proposal is compelling but the respondent isn't selected, the work might stymie the efforts at a later, more critical stage of the process, or worse, might be integrated into the design.

It isn't unfair to ask for a short critique based on the redesign scope and some suggestions of how the designers might proceed. In fact, their critical appraisal can be the best indication of who will do the best job on your redesign.

A redesign is an opportunity to freshen the approach to your editorial mission. But making maximum use of your outside design team requires accepting the challenge of seeing your publication from someone else's perspective. Setting a collaborative tone and clearly describing the scope and deliverables will go far in keeping the working relationship on course and—dare we say it?—fun. **[FPO]**

**The best RFPs have clear instructions, pertinent questions and realistic goals, but still leave room for vendors to display initiative.**

## DO

**Use a bullet list of criteria whenever possible.** This makes it easier for respondents to match their comments to your needs.

**Be clear about the time frame.** A redesign should take about 8 weeks to do well, but could be accomplished in as little as 4 weeks. It isn't unusual for one to drag on for months, however. Setting a launch date for the new design helps keep the process on schedule.

**Ask for a laundry list of non-inclusive charges, without being specific.** Travel, photo research or shoots, scans, FedEx and font creation are a few of the extra elements that can add significantly to the cost of a job. If you want to specify how many face-to-face meetings should be built into the fee, be explicit what they are for.

**Encourage alternative suggestions for scope, deliverables and workflow in your RFP.** Using the experience of your respondents to improve your selection process can give you valuable insight for your final choice. Just be certain to alert all the respondents about changes or extensions to the original RFP so that you are always evaluating apples to apples.

**Debrief your final candidates.** A simple conference call can put to rest any lingering doubts or confirm your gut choice.

## DON'T

**Never assume a deliverable to be part of the project fee.** It's better to be overspecific than vague, and better still to encourage respondents to be specific about their products.

**Avoid asking for spec work.** Not only does it go against the established ethical guidelines from respected trade associations such as the AIGA, it simply isn't the best basis for making a decision. Even critiques of your current book and suggestions for the direction of the redesign are uninformed by realities of politics, budget and history. But critiques provide insight into the thought process of the respondent and are a guide to how articulate and clear future communications could be.

**Try not to use the prototype as a “live” issue.** Your staff needs time to learn the new template, and the degree of finesse that a real publication demands is often missing from a final prototype. Besides, creating live content is out of the scope of most redesign RFPs. If you want to use the firm doing the redesign to produce the initial issues, it should be a separate contract.

**Don't let the fee influence your decision—too much.** The work and communication skills of the respondents, the enthusiasm of the referrals and the match to your needs can mean a lot more than the fees, and the dirty little industry secret is that there are no “standard” fees. By the same token, the low bid is not always the best choice, and if you amortize the cost over the life of the redesign, the actual difference between high and low bids is less significant than getting the work done correctly from the start.

# CREATIVE BRIEFS BY MARC OXBORROW

## We've Got to Stop Meeting Like This

How to make your art meetings matter



IT'S A SCENE RIGHT OUT OF a situation comedy: Talented people sit in uncomfortable silence around a conference table. Finally, one of them speaks up and says, "What if we used an image of, um, two people shaking hands?"

Ah, the brainstorm that produces only sprinkles. The art meeting that yields paint-by-numbers ideas. I've been in that meeting. You've been in that meeting. Let's never do it again, shall we? Use the following tips to make your

next creative gathering actually worthy of its name.

**PREPARATION** "Chance favors the prepared mind," said the great innovator Louis Pasteur, and his advice works just as well for art meetings as it does for milk safety. Avoid homogenized ideas by distributing story copy, assignment letters or even rough story topics (whatever you've got) in advance. Two or three days before the meeting is perfect; it gives your colleagues a chance to familiarize themselves

with the content, and their subconscious minds some time to make connections.

**ORGANIZATION** Brainstorming may be a right-brain activity, but a little left-brain organization will help keep it on track. As your colleagues enter the room, distribute an agenda with a list of the stories/departments/sections you must cover. Have a stack of back issues handy, to deliver a quick answer when the inevitable "didn't we use that approach last year?" query comes up. Equip the room with a whiteboard (or one of those giant pads of paper beloved by consultants and trainers) for impromptu sketches. In short, create a structure within which ideas can bounce and bubble—and be captured.

Assigning specific roles to participants will help, too. Start with a moderator, whose responsibility it is to get (and keep) the whole group involved. This requires someone who can tactfully steer discussion back to the original topic (when brainstorming becomes BS-ing) and who can actively draw out less extroverted participants. (Could the staleness of your art concepts be related to the fact that the same people dominate every brainstorming session?)

Appoint a timekeeper and try a "lightning round" approach. The goal? Generate the maximum number of art ideas for each story in a fixed amount of time. You'll need someone

*“Whoever invented the meeting must have had Hollywood in mind. I think they should consider giving Oscars for meetings: Best Meeting of the Year, Best Supporting Meeting, Best Meeting Based on Material from Another Meeting.”*

—WILLIAM GOLDMAN,  
ADVENTURES IN THE  
SCREEN TRADE

with decent handwriting and a steady hand with the dry-erase markers to record the flurry of ideas as the clock ticks down.

**INSPIRATION** A fashion director I know gets almost all of his inspiration from art history. With an eye on the season’s trends, his preparation for a brainstorm session involves leafing through books of paintings, or a tour through the virtual galleries of online museums. His concepts often spring from a specific painting, but the input of the rest of the editorial team (not to mention the photographer and stylist) turns it into something unique.

Provide the same kind of unexpected source material for your brainstormers. Along with the latest issue of *GQ* or

the *SPD* annual, bring some niche magazines from outside your industry, an inspiring annual report, your favorite indie rock poster, or one of Steven Heller’s thousands of books on design history.

And if casting a wide net works when looking for new ideas, why not try it with people? Try inviting salespeople, production managers and even the folks from finance to your art meetings. This is especially effective (and fun) when combined with a “bad-idea” approach to brainstorming: Simply come up with the worst way possible to illustrate a story. Freed from the pressure of having to be “good,” ideas flow freely, and their conceptual mirror-image is often a great visual solution.

Don’t forget that every art meeting has invisible participants—the illustrators, photographers and designers who will eventually be assigned to take your ideas and make them real. Allow or insist (as required) that illustrators supply sketches of more than just your ideas; encourage photographers to chime in with their own ideas for locations. In fact, make it clear to everyone involved that the art brainstorm meeting is just the beginning of the visual presentation of the magazine. (You’ve cultivated a great relationship with your editor that allows for great art ideas to emerge during the design process, right?)

## REMOTE CONTROL

With more and more publications being assembled by teams of freelancers, part-timers, remote workers and flex-timers, the face-to-face art meeting is becoming a bit of an anachronism. But diverging schedules and time zones don’t have to get in the way of creative collaboration. Leave it to the Web development industry, where far-flung teams (and crazy Red Bull-driven timetables) are the norm, to develop online applications like Campfire and ConceptShare, designed to improve virtual meetings and brainstorming.

Group chat and file sharing are at the heart of Campfire ([campfirenow.com](http://campfirenow.com)), developed by 37 Signals. Up to 60 (!) people can chat simultaneously and upload files and images viewable by the entire group. A free membership that allows up to four chatters provides a way to test the service.

ConceptShare ([conceptshare.com](http://conceptshare.com)) provides its users with a virtual workspace, where participants can provide real-time feedback on uploaded documents by chatting, leaving Acrobat-style “sticky notes” or by drawing, er, “mousing” directly on pages. One workspace is included in the free trial membership.

So, don’t settle for light showers and low-wattage sparks from your next brainstorm. Your art meetings may never be as compelling as must-see TV, but with a little preparation and enthusiasm, they can be blockbuster in their own right. **[FPO]**

Raised on a steady diet of *Sports Illustrated*, *Boys’ Life* and *Dynamite*, **MARC OXBORROW** turned his life-long love of reading into a career as a magazine designer. Today, as design director for McMurry, the nation’s leading custom publisher, he channels that early love of magazines into award-winning art direction for such clients as CBS, Ritz-Carlton and Amtrak. Reach him at [marc.oxborrow@mcmmurry.com](mailto:marc.oxborrow@mcmmurry.com).

## Michael Grossman: Making A Case for Multi-Tasking

Call him creative, call him a problem-solver. Just don't call him a "designer."

Michael Grossman has designed, edited or consulted for more than 40 magazines. He gave *Entertainment Weekly* its look; consulted on the launch of *O, the Oprah Magazine*, and helped turn around *Real Simple* after its troublesome birth. His work has won more than 250 awards, but here's the thing: he hates it when you call him a "designer." Grossman tears the word "Design" off the masthead and calls for editors who think like art directors and art directors who solve deeper problems than layouts.

**FPO:** You finally agreed to this interview only after multiple assurances that we wouldn't label you as a designer, and that [you could critique] the premise that designers have fundamentally different jobs than editors.

**MICHAEL GROSSMAN:** I love designers and some of my best friends are designers. But I do think that "design," as practiced in the magazine world, is inherently flawed, because you can't really design from the position of the designer. The sequential nature of magazines, which grew out of books really, is: create the product and then design the surface of it, which isn't just unsatisfying, but it's also not a good way to do right by your product, whatever it is.

I just realized over time that to do the most good for a client or a product or an employer, my aspiration is to be more than a designer for them. Another way of looking at it is that design is the act of conception in other disciplines and in the creation of other products. In architecture or fashion, it's not like you make a building and then call in an architect to design the surface of it. Or you create the clothing first and then the fashion designer comes in and sprinkles a little color on top of that. You design from the beginning. Design is invention. And there may be a client, there may be a given, but it's never: "Here, we fully conceived it, now make it pretty." I think it's changing, and it's certainly different in start-ups, but it's not a great place to be starting from. I just try to do right by the product I'm working on, and I'm always pushing against that.

**FPO:** Well, if there's a startup situation...where there was a narrowly defined target reader, a business plan, and an editorial director and editor already in place, how would you work within that team?

**MG:** In any project, if I'm working with people that I haven't worked with before, there's sort of this...surprise at first if I want to be involved and make contributions in areas that don't really have anything to do with design. I have to establish myself in that way in working with them. But we do all end up thinking editorially, thinking from a marketing point of view, thinking from a production point of view, thinking about the bottom line—just trying to think holistically about what it is that we are doing.

When conceiving a magazine, my ruling metaphor is the geometric proof: every project is driven by givens, and figuring out what they are is, if not half the job, then a crucial part of it. And sometimes they're not what they appear to be and you have to push against the few givens and create new ones.

**FPO:** What kind of things are you thinking of when you say "givens?"

**MG:** "This doesn't actually have to do with design, but I know your research indicates that this aspect of the magazine is the most popular with readers, but does it lure the younger newsstand audience that is your best shot of circulation expansion?" Or: "I know you think this is your trim size, but with the money we've saved on paper, could we upgrade something else?" Or: "I know this is the name that you've had for fifty years, but is this name

going to serve you best over the next fifty years?" Maybe changing the name of the magazine is the right thing to do. So is that a given that it stays?

All of these things would appear to be givens, but it's really an energizing thing for everybody working with it to stop and think: "Well, we haven't thought of that as something that we could change, but maybe it's the right thing to do."

**FPO:** Who should be thinking this way, and who should have the power and the final say to start, lead, and end these types of conversations? Is that the role of the design director or some new, super-designer/consultant brought in above or beside the person producing pages every day?

**MG:** My feeling would be that everyone should think this way. Obviously, you can't think about it every second, but having the big picture in mind with everything you do is how you make a product better. All the time (or maybe not as often as they should be) people are thinking about "what is the world of the magazine?" and the world where a lot of the information we used to provide is available with immediacy on the Web. People's relationships with television have changed over the years, and the same is true for newspapers. I mean, what are the givens now?

I don't know if there should necessarily be an additional position, but I do think that the best editor and the best designers are people who think holistically, and that the distinction between them is vanishing. A little example I use a lot is

# DESIGN IS INVENTION. AND THERE MAY BE A CLIENT, THERE MAY BE A GIVEN, BUT **IT'S NEVER: "HERE, WE FULLY CONCEIVED IT, NOW MAKE IT PRETTY."**

that once upon a time, a designer had rubber cement, T-squares and type books, and there were also typewriters and style manuals around, and each of those tools was at a different end of the office. Now we've all got a monitor and a keyboard and mouse, and the same software. Sure, I can use a tool set to design a spread, but I can also write a headline, and I do. Even when I was more constrained in the designer role, I could be the one to stop and say "should we bring this part to the top?" or "should we pull this out and make this a sidebar?" or "here's a good quote." But I couldn't do that with my X-acto knife and my T-square. And now editors, god help us, can re-crop a picture. (Laughs)

No tool is going to make somebody who doesn't have skills do something skilled. But just as I've managed to develop skills that are outside my normal, assumed, skill set, it would be great if everyone in magazines would aspire—just the way everybody in film aspires to be a director—to be the visual person, the conceiver, the creator.

I admire, for instance, the fact that Susan Casey at Time Inc. has gone from being an art director to being an editor. I'd like to see it happen in the other direction. But more than crossing an aisle, it should be that you're morphing into one person who does all of these things. I hate people who use the word "both." It's just strange, but magazines have grown up this way. When you look around at other products, you don't separate the creation of them that way.

**FPO: Is the natural inclination of your clients to think of you as the person who makes things pretty? Are you having to fight that perception and make it clear at the outset that you want the latitude and the charter to work more broadly than that?**

**MG:** Well, I think they naturally think of the designer as somebody who is going to make things pretty. Sometimes the problem is not what the client defines as the problem, and sometimes someone brings me in, and would bring anyone in, and they think, "well, change all the typefaces and make it more modern."

While working on *Real Simple*—which was kind of my first charge when I went to Time Inc.—the thought was that there needed to be a redesign. But really, the typefaces and the things that one would normally think of as what would be redesigned weren't the problem, and those weren't the things we changed. It was more that the architecture and labeling of the components of this magazine needed to be clearer. It was a magazine about organization and simplicity, and it was beautiful, but it wasn't clearly organized and it wasn't that simple.

Those changes were, in a way, more about the editorial than the design. So a lot of times you are looking at a problem, looking at what someone thinks is the problem and seeing something slightly different. I've been in many situations where I talked somebody out of redesigning something they thought needed redesigning. It's not the best thing for me sometimes.

**FPO: How can designers and art directors empower themselves to get out from under the perception of just being the design guy or the design girl?**

**MG:** For both editors and designers: talk about it, and try to educate yourself. There are obviously "protecting your turf" issues here. But I think it's true at Martha Stewart's publications, for example, where you have "projects." I don't know exactly what they call them, but the senior editor/project manager/art director person for a particular discipline is fully conceiving stories and producing them.

The idea of producers and directors of projects within magazines, rather than who might be an "art person" or "editorial person" is a better way to be thinking from scratch. "How do we present this kind of information? Maybe this entire story should be a timeline?" You know, there are different ways to do things, and if you are not starting from the notion that, well, this is the sequence of things: the writer is going to write, and then the photographer is going to photograph, and the editor is going to tell some stuff to the art director, and the art director is going to put it on the page and make it pretty. If you can break from that in whatever way, you are going to make better magazines.

**FPO: And how many people in the business right now are able to do that? Or have the inclination to do that, rather than just succumb to institutional inertia? Do you have to start teaching this to people at the outset of their careers, or can you retrain people?**

**MG:** Yeah, I think it's true that there are people who are going to specialize, and that's fine. In movies, there are cinematographers who don't want to direct. And I think there will always be a place for somebody who is really good at one thing. Just like there are editors who are very good at one kind of editing—they're really good with story editing, but they're not going to be the editor of the magazine, they don't have that kind of overview—there is a place for that. I just think that looking at places to reach past the conventional constraints is really helpful.

I was talking to somebody about the idea of "church and state," which I think is a hugely important issue in magazines. For all the line-blurring I'm a proponent of, I think that with what's happening on television and in movies and on the Web—the inability of the consumer to tell the difference between content and advertising—one of the strengths of magazines is really having a voice, a critical voice. I'm always pushing: "can you say it with more judgment? Let's not be relentlessly upbeat, let's say something critical right here to let you know that we are judging."

But in editorial, the line there is more like the line between political parties. We've made it so that there are the art people and the editorial people, red and blue. We'd make better legislation if there weren't political parties—if everyone was collaborating and blurring those lines completely. You'd just inherently be able to do better stuff. **[FPO]**

# WEB WE WEAVE

BY MICHAEL GOLD

## Five Mistakes Websites Still Make (and How to Fix Them)

ON THE WEB, MOST PEOPLE are impatient, fixated on completing a few self-serving tasks, and yet easily distracted or spooked. Confronted with words, they don't read—they scan.

This is not a complaint. This is a handy reminder.

It should come as no shock to editors and designers that an online audience's interactions with Web pages are completely unlike the relationship that readers have with a printed magazine. Yet, when we build publication-related websites, we often overlook these differences and commit more than a few of the five bonehead mistakes listed below.

Hold on tight to the image of the Web visitor as a no-nonsense curmudgeon and you will avoid—or recover from—most of these pitfalls.

### 1 BURIED TREASURE

**PROBLEM** Hard to believe, but the killer stuff is often three clicks deep, with barely a hint on the home page that it's down there.

**SOLUTION** Ask yourself (or check your analytics to find out) what are the two or three hottest hot buttons for your Web audience—then make them impossible to miss. On the home page, create prominent links to and offer tempting samples of crucial content. And give users easy access to their critical tools. At the very top of *Cooking Light's* home page, right next to the magazine's name, is a box that enables those time-pressed, task-driven, fickle site visitors to quickly search the magazine's vast warehouse of recipes. It's also at the top of every other page on the site.

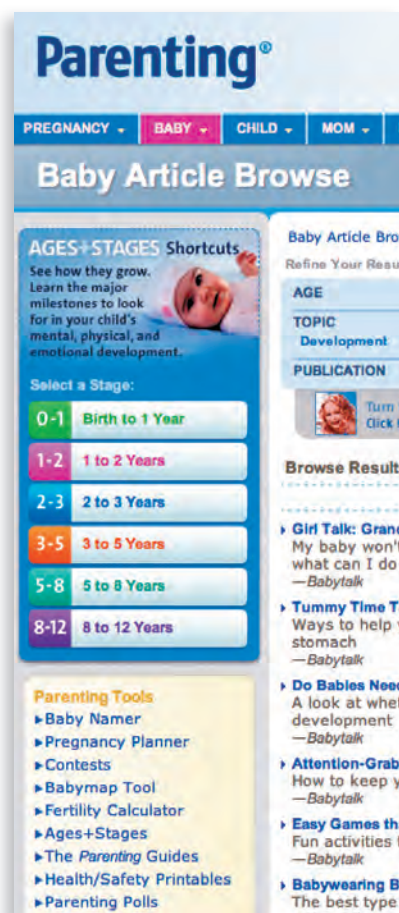
**SHOW OFF THE TREASURE** *Cooking Light's* treasure trove of recipes is definitely not buried. "Above the fold" are more than a dozen prominent links and labels for this hot-button resource.

### 2 THE DUMP

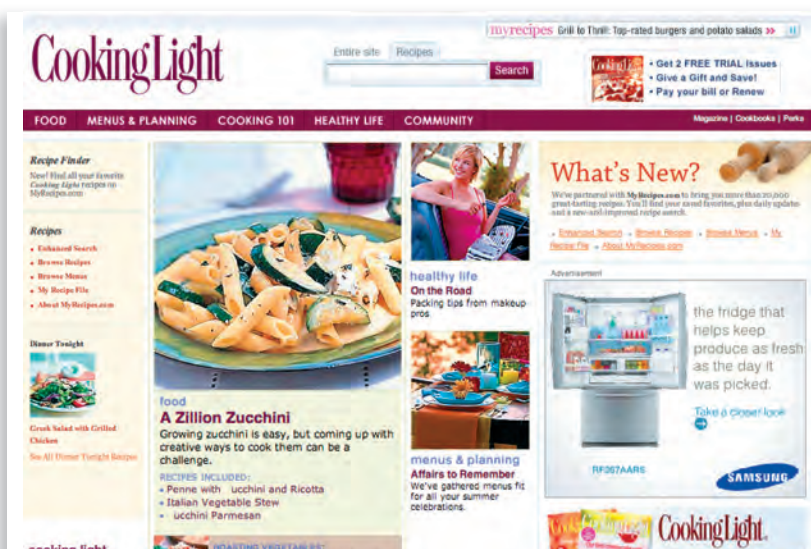
**PROBLEM** The site looks and acts like a magazine that's been dumped on to the Web—a serious mismatch of message and medium.

**SOLUTION** Rather than aping the print publication's setup using categories such as "cover story," "volume and number" and magazine-specific departments, organize the site around the Web audience's areas of interest. *Consumer Reports's* site, for example, is built around types of products. That's very different from the magazine's structure, but it's perfect for the task-oriented Web user whose refrigerator just died. Similarly, clever headlines and decks need to be rewritten in a more straightforward style to communicate on the Web, where they lack the full context of a print environment.

But most important, a magazine website needs to make the leap from inert print content to interactive tools and experiences. By carving up, indexing and feeding its print-based content into databases, a site can offer useful related material, custom Web feeds and alerts, flexible browsing and searching of archives, personalized presentation of pages and "power tools," such as recipe finders and product selectors.



**DON'T JUST DUMP** By arranging its print-derived content into age groups, *Parenting* online provides users quick and easy access to the material that's most relevant to their needs.





### 3 UNCONVENTIONAL NAVIGATION

**PROBLEM** “Creative” schemes that stray from Web conventions force users to learn—or guess at—the new rules. Many will give up quickly; others won’t bother to try.

**SOLUTION** Don’t fluster the already skittish Web visitor with “concept navigation,” such as barnyard maps or orbiting planets. Use simple, familiar formats such as text within tabs or buttons, and place the navigation at the top or left side of the page. Put the logo in the upper left, and link it to your home page. Make sure text links are recognizable as “clickable” by using a single, unique color and, to eliminate all doubt, underline the link. Keep navigation consistent, and always indicate the user’s current location by “lighting up” the appropriate signpost. Finally, resist the urge to invent Flash-driven widgets to perform tasks such as scrolling and linking, for which there are straightforward and well-known routines. As the title of a terrific book on website usability by Steve Krug says, “Don’t make me think.”

**BUILD POWER TOOLS** *Family Fun* carves up, indexes and feeds past articles into a database. The result goes way beyond what a print publication can deliver: a tool for finding craft projects customized to the user’s preferences.

### 4 SQUANDERED VERTICAL SPACE

**PROBLEM** Oversized elements hog the top of the page, pushing what’s most important “below the fold,” where it’s invisible unless users scroll down. “So let ‘em scroll,” you may say, “newspaper readers look below the fold.”

**Not this edgy bunch.** According to usability guru Jakob Nielsen, on average only 20% of website visitors will scroll on a home page; 40% on interior pages.

**SOLUTION** Keep logos, banner graphics, display copy and other top-of-page elements shallow. Don’t waste vertical space on non-informational “theme art” and low-value text blocks such as “Welcome!” messages. If necessary, signal the presence of material “below the fold” with top-of-page links that let users jump down to the content.

### 5 “UN-WEBIFIED” TEXT

**PROBLEM** Long columns of dense, gray, unformatted text are hard to digest and painful to read on computer screens—just the opposite of what impatient, mission-oriented scanners are looking for.

**SOLUTION** Think service journalism on steroids. Shorten all print-derived text drastically. Carve long pieces into bite-sized sections labeled with clear headings, and provide top-of-page “document navigation” to the sections. Help scanners grab information at a glance by highlighting key text with bullets, bold type and links. And put the bottom line (the most promising treatment for hiccups, the restaurant with the best burrito...) at the top. [FPO]

**MICHAEL GOLD**, former executive editor of *Health* magazine, is a content and strategy consultant with years of experience in managing, editing and writing. His firm, West Gold Editorial, specializes in launching and improving publications and websites. [www.westgoldeditorial.com](http://www.westgoldeditorial.com)

**BEYOND MAGAZINE MODE** Rather than mirroring the magazine’s organization and labeling, [ConsumerReports.org](http://ConsumerReports.org) is set up the way a task-driven Web user thinks—by product type.

The screenshot shows the FamilyFun.com website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for arts + crafts, parties, recipes, games, travel, and print. Below that, there are more specific links for Holiday & Seasonal, Crafts by Age, Quick & Easy, and Classroom. The main content area features a "Craft Finder" section with a search bar and filters for "Search Crafts by: Season/Holiday/Occasion" (set to All), "Age" (set to All Age Group), and "Time Needed for Craft" (set to Doesn't Matter). There's also a "Go to My Craft Box" button and a "Browse by Craft Group" section with "Animal Friends & Crazy Critters" selected. A "TOP 3 CRAFTS" list is visible, including "Lunch Money Holder", "Keep-Track Rack", and "Doggie Clutch".

The screenshot shows the ConsumerReports.org website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Cars, Appliances, and Electronics & computers. Below that, there's a "Highlights" section with a list of product categories and their associated content: Cars (New Cars, Used Cars, Portable GPS navigation systems, Pricing, SUVs, Tires), Appliances (Ranges, Refrigerators, Vacuum cleaners, Washing machines), Electronics & computers (Computers Decision Guide, Digital cameras, MP3 players, TVs Decision Guide), Home & garden (Gas grills, Laundry detergents, Paint, Self-propelled mowers), Health & fitness (Elliptical exercisers, Nursing home guide, Treadmills), and Personal finance (Extended warranties, Mutual funds). There's also a "Back to School" section with "Best bets in backpack" and a "Latest Ratings" section.

*Ten strategies to put editors & designers on the same page.*

**IT'S A STORY AS OLD AS TIME.** People who should be friends and partners are out to kill each other—Cain and Abel, dogs and cats, Dr. Frankenstein and the Village. The clichéd battle between editors and art directors is near the top of the list. But why? Is it one-upmanship, jealousy, possessiveness or simply a misunderstanding about how peckish one should be in the pecking order? Did Meryl Streep really have to screw over poor Stanley Tucci to keep her job? ¶ When editor–designer interaction becomes all about keeping score of who wins and who gets credit, it produces anxiety and resentment. Not exactly high retention qualities for a job. The creative process is more enjoyable, more exciting and more fruitful when everyone is open and focused on the same goal. ¶ Designing layouts that seduce readers into the stories and leave them satisfied is everyone's goal. And one that requires the skills and collaboration of both a word-smith and a visual artist. ¶ Editors need to prepare their copy to inspire design creativity, and designers need to be articulate and objective in defending their

**WHAT DO YOU  
WANT  
FROM ME?**

concepts. In short—as Betty Ford so famously noted about marriage—the relationship works best when *both* sides give 60% and expect 40%. ¶ So, what should make up that 60% from an editor and a designer? Simple things, like clear communication, unbiased collaboration and mutual respect. ¶ Here are 10 things you can do to make your magazine a whole lot better.



## BRIEFCASE

**1. Prepare the Story**

A great start on a story design begins with a great hand-off. The designer should know as much as the editor does about why the story is running and how big it should play.

**DESIGNER**

*“I want to get all the materials to do the layout up front.”*

**EDITOR**

*“I want to give the designer copy that’s ready to go.”*

**A Creative Brief puts everyone on the same page.** A short conversation between editor and designer is good, but a creative brief is better. This short document—the editor should craft one for each story—synopsizes the goals of the writer, the importance of the story in the magazine and possible design approaches. It can also include descriptions of supplied art and images, proposed and alternate headlines and decks, references to source material available online, and examples of tone associated with the story.

**Annotate the manuscript to highlight critical phrases, keystone concepts and personal preferences.** Point out where charts, figures or illustrations are referred to in the text. This is invaluable in helping the designer stay focused on the intent of the story and work through technical layout decisions.

**2. Define the Three S’s: Setting, Subtext, Structure**

Editors can help the designer nail the concept by explaining what the story is all about. Setting, subtext and structure each approach content from a different angle; together, they create a foundation for building a creative and pertinent layout.

**Why the article is being run and how it’s aimed at your readers provide the SETTING for the piece.**

The setting is what determines the appropriate presentation. In enthusiast and hobby publications, for example, settings for how-to articles might be distinguished by skill level. The same idea exists for almost any kind of magazine. For a 10,000-word essay, a setting with little illustration might be appropriate for

**Make a Turn-Off a Turn-On**

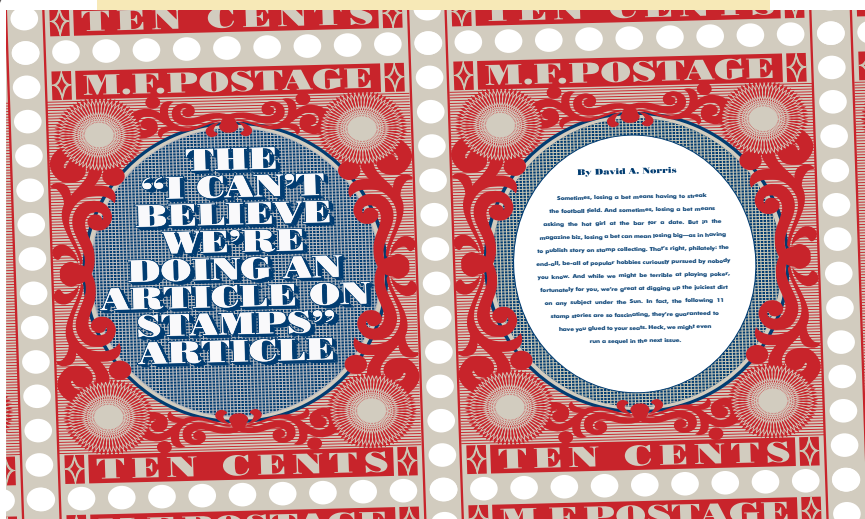
A few years ago, a freelance writer sent us a piece about some of the stamps he’d collected over the years. We were blown away by how fascinating the history and stories behind these stamps were, and we knew our readers would be, too. Of course, we also knew the topic of stamp collecting was considered dull to an almost cliché degree, so the task of figuring out how to draw readers into the article seemed almost impossible. In fact, we weren’t even going to run the piece unless we could figure out a great way to sell the story.

We have an incredibly small staff at *mental\_floss*, with just two full-time editors and one designer, but that also makes it easy for the three of us to get together and openly toss around ideas. Our art director, Winslow Taft, is always very open to our thoughts and ideas about design, and we welcome his thoughts on editorial angles, as well.

For the title, we decided to go with a self-aware, almost self-deprecating approach—an open admission that we knew stamp collecting seemed like a boring topic. “The ‘I Can’t Believe We’re Doing an Article about Stamps’ Article” struck all of us as the perfect way to get people smiling and warm them up to the idea of reading on. On the design side, Winslow pointed out that using actual scans of postage stamps on the opening spread would convey some of the dull and stale stereotype associated with the hobby. Instead, he offered a modern, graphic approach to the imagery and iconography of stamps that would give it a fresh look. With the editorial and design concepts both in place, Winslow pretty much just ran with it, and I think we were sold on the first mock-up he showed us after that.

Basically, we worked together to take everything that could be considered a turn-off about the topic and turned it into a turn-on. The design and the editorial on this opening spread are both fun and appealing, and together, they make the article approachable. Years later, we still have people telling us how much they enjoyed the story.

—NEELY HARRIS, EDITOR  
MENTAL\_FLOSS



*The New York Times Magazine*, but totally inappropriate for *Maxim*.

**Every story has an underlying agenda—a SUBTEXT—with an emotional component.**

This agenda, or subtext, is the way the editorial is intended to make readers *feel* about the content, and by connection, about the magazine.

Nailing the emotional context of a story in the opener can do more to engage the reader than any other element in the design. The process of creating a dramatic visual concept is more effective when the designer knows how the reader is intended to react to the story. But that's not always obvious from the manuscript. With input from the editor, the designer is better able to give readers a great design concept to "get" the story.

For example, if *Ms. Magazine* publishes a major feature on abortion, the emotional context is based on the approach to the story—moral outrage, fear of conservative inroads and a commitment to the magazine's position. The subtext follows the magazine's mission to advance women's rights.

Even neutrality has an emotional component. Dispassion, rational argument and lowering the invective are just as important as turning the emotional screws. A good design can communicate all of these emotional elements.

Implying through the design that the magazine shares important values with readers is the glue that builds community. A story that exposes government waste or mismanagement in *The Nation* has an emotional tenor of disgust or disappointment or exasperation that reflects the magazine's values. Even something as basic as a product overview story in *Macworld* contains elements that build community—enthusiasm for innovation, excitement at new capabilities or satisfaction for great value.

While setting and subtext are more conceptual, **STRUCTURE is a practical recognition of the way the story is constructed for maximum**

**comprehension.** Using graphic or type techniques to define the structure of the article makes the story more reader-friendly—and comprehensible.

It helps if the author has given some thought to creating an engaging structure while writing the story; if so, it's easy for the designer to accentuate the structure through visual cues. While old-school editors might sneer at "list" journalism, it's simple to see the graphic potential of the design. Sometimes structure isn't apparent, though, so finding something in the story—a continuity break, a change of viewpoint, a new argument—that can be emphasized by the designer will help the layout.

**3. Pay Attention to the Opening**

The opening spread is the money shot of magazines. The reader needs to be convinced that the article is worth the time to read, and the opening needs to make that case. Heads, subheads, decks, eyebrows, abstracts, leaders, quotes and blurbs are all ways of throwing content on to the page to find something that will resonate with readers. It's difficult to gauge the effectiveness of the opening copy without seeing how it's presented in the design.

**Text and image should be synergistic.**

The interplay between visual and text elements in an opening layout is enhanced when both supply interesting and *non-repetitive elements* to the whole. If a picture is worth a thousand words, it doesn't need a thousand *actual* words in the story that only repeat what readers glean from the image. The juxtaposition of text and graphic elements provides emotional nuance, projects the tone of the article and conveys a snapshot of a story that demands to be read.

**Think of the opening material as somewhat separate from the story itself.**

Used as a jumping-off point, the opening gives the designer raw material for developing an effective layout—one that yields

DESIGNER

*"I want to know the tone and what's important about the story."*

EDITOR

*"I don't want to bury you in detail, but you need to know why we're running this."*

DESIGNER

*"I want to make the opening jump off the page."*

EDITOR

*"I want the story to grab readers and hold them."*

## BRIEF CASE

## Milieu Mix Master

Parking lot security may be important, but it isn't exactly a sexy topic. So, how do you make a cover subject with impact? That was the challenge faced by the art director (me) and the editor-in-chief of *Security Management* (Sherry Harowitz).

Our idea was to create emotional empathy by putting the reader in the frame of mind of someone alone in a dark lot—when security really matters.

With that broad concept in mind, the editor came up with the headline “Parking Lot Perils,” which, of course, brought “Perils of Pauline” to my mind. I thought a modern interpretation of the damsel in distress would make an interesting visual.

Many illustrators would be perfectly able to paint a picture of a woman in a dark and scary parking garage. However, one particular artist came to mind—James Jean, cover artist for the Fables comic books from Vertigo.

The series deals with various characters from childhood fables and folklore.

Jean is a tremendously talented illustrator. I knew he would deliver a great illustration. But would the editor of a professional trade magazine share my enthusiasm in trusting our cover to a comic book artist?

It is at times like this that the level of trust between the art director and the editor matters most.

Sherry was skeptical, but I brought several Fables comic books with James Jean covers from my personal collection into the office to show her that Jean could handle any subject and bring to life any scenario. She was not totally convinced but she trusted my judgment and gave me the green light to contact the artist.

Jean ultimately produced the wonderful noir-inspired illustration that you see here—beautifully rendered, with dramatic lighting. The image of a single female in a dark parking garage with car keys in hand and

an ominous shadow falling over her back captured the feeling of danger and suspense we had hoped for.

—ROY COMISKY, ART DIRECTOR  
SECURITY MANAGEMENT



more insight than a design that merely ornaments what has been written.

**Designers are sometimes effective editors as well.** Allowing a designer to present additional comps with alternate heads, decks and even opening lines in pursuit of an interesting opening spread or cover might seem heresy to some editors, but a separation of church and state here stifles creativity. Editorial design is a search for complementary text and illustration; the designer should be encouraged to rethink both image and text in search of a dramatic presentation that best serves an article.

#### 4. Build in Brainstorm Time

Designers used to have their own ivory tower, far removed from concerns of production, page composition and prepress. Type specimen book in one hand, DesignMarker in the other, the art director's role was to imagine concepts, then let others make them work.

The pace of older technology and a certain workplace class order kept the editor and designer apart from the production process and engaged in the creative task. Not so much these days. The editorial hand-off is often equivalent to a kiss-off. As the designer begins a long fluid sprint to the finish line at the printer, creativity may come in second to meeting deadlines.

**Time needs to be deliberately built into the workflow for revision and even retrying ideas from scratch.** Few people work well with their back against the wall. When there's time only for approval, designers will try only safe and surefire approaches.

**Trust and respect make brainstorming more effective.** Brainstorming—whether during the initial art meeting or at comp presentation—needs to be conducted in a positive, non-hierarchical environment. The focus should stay on the merit of

#### DESIGNER

*“I want time to think about and rework designs.”*

#### EDITOR

*“I need time to review the design, too, not just the copy.”*

the ideas, not on the agenda of the person who champions them. Evaluation or criticism shouldn't be avoided, just focused on issues.

## 5. Bring Examples

Every issue of a magazine is an exercise in theme and variation. The more information supplied to engage the designer, the better the result. As a starting point, examples from previous issues, other magazines and even other media can provide a lot of information for the designer to start something fresh.

**Be certain examples are just that—**

**examples.** It's pretty insulting to bring a printed piece to a designer, then ask for the idea or layout to be ripped-off. It *does* make sense to use it to help demonstrate an approach that might work for a particular story.

**Because magazines are periodical, they can exploit cultural currency.**

Fads, meta-concepts, slang and celebrity define the time period in which the magazine is produced and read. Rather than avoid currency, use it sparingly to make stories more poignant and approachable. Contemporary metaphors and colorful comparisons can enhance a story; interesting source material that can be applied ironically or imitated can jump-start a fresh approach to a story.

## 6. Respect

Collaboration is a two-way street, and the traffic needs to flow in both directions. Many publishing environments, including some at the highest level, suffer from masthead-itis. It's where the extreme need to maintain one's position on the list is proven through constant displays of unilateral decision-making.

All the advantages of having a truly talented staff are lost when they aren't allowed to express a better idea. One manifestation of this is the rigid delineation of roles in the creative process: The word people are the word people and the art people are the art people—and

nobody gets to express an idea out of their job description.

**Everyone has a right to be heard.**

Editors, assistants, designers, production people—even, occasionally, the publisher—should be invited to join the discussion, make contributions and evaluate comps. This in no way invalidates the chain of command; rather, it improves it, by giving the decision-makers access to more information. Simultaneously, it empowers and energizes the entire staff by granting them shared responsibility and credit for the process and the product.

## 7. Read, Parse, Restructure

An old canard in the magazine world is that designers don't bother to read the copy. Fundamental to the designer's job is an obligation to make the content easier to understand and more engaging to absorb, as well as to emphasize important ideas in each story. That's hard to do without reading the text.

**Readers don't read magazines; they browse through them.**

Whereas writers think in linear prose, readers tend to scan stories—reading parallel content, sidebars and captions indiscriminately while diving into and out of the main text.

**The designer is the first non-writer to look at the material and is, in effect, the proxy for the reader.** The designer can improve reader comprehension of the story by creating more entry points to engage readers and by crafting a visual rhythm that enhances understanding.

That's where this three-step approach works so well. **Read** the article, **parse** the meaning, then imagine possible approaches to **restructure** the content to improve the presentation as a magazine layout.

Ancillary material, such as sidebars, parallel content or secondary stories, provides a lively mix of content that engages the reader with multiple entry points and stronger graphic power. Often, material can be extracted from the body of the story to use in this way.

EDITOR

*"I don't want to be afraid to contribute my design ideas."*

DESIGNER

*"I wish they'd let me take more chances."*

DESIGNER

*"Show me what you're thinking."*

EDITOR

*"We need a creative solution like this for the story."*

EDITOR

*"I want you to understand HOW the story works."*

DESIGNER

*"I want to be free to suggest copy changes that enhance the layout."*

At some magazines, designers aren't encouraged to suggest story changes because they aren't considered "editorial" enough. But that's precisely why they *should* collaborate. If the designer doesn't understand the article, with the editor and writer available to explain it, it's time to collaborate and reconstruct the article into something more approachable.

### 8. Get High

Designers and editors need common ground to objectively evaluate how well a concept works. Drama, hyperbole, metaphor, cultural reference and ironic juxtaposition are all powerful creative tools for enhancing a story—if they accurately depict the content. But like any powerful tool, they can be misused, so an objective evaluation tool can help.

One way of critiquing a comp is to

graph the value of the concept on two axes: Impact and Complexity. The Impact axis shows how powerful or appealing the comprehensive is, and the Complexity axis indicates how completely the ideas in the article are represented. Obviously, Low Impact and Low Complexity are least interesting on this scale. But while the best concepts should have high indices of both Impact and Complexity, sometimes High Impact with Low Complexity works better than High Complexity with Low Impact. It depends on the magazine.

**Part of the tone of the magazine is how Impact and Complexity are used on a regular basis.** The front page of the *New York Times* and the *New York Post* are both reserved for important news, but each has a very different

EDITOR & DESIGNER

*"We're so close to these stories and designs, we really need an objective way to determine whether or not they WORK."*

## BRIEF CASE

### Less Isn't More, But It's Better

We recently were about to run a five-page well story on an undeveloped piece of land and how various experts—an architect, builder, landscaper and wildlife biologist—would plan the property for a country home. The story had been in the works for several months, and we had it pretty well planned. Or so we thought. We knew otherwise when we saw the layout.

It all made sense to us in previous discussions—the story line, how it would be written, the graphics we would use.

Now, it was obvious that nothing here would make sense to the reader. All the pieces were here, but they were just jumbled.

It's never easy to tear a story apart. In this case, the writer, the designer and the editor all had to stand back, look at the finished story, and argue (just a little) before we could start over.

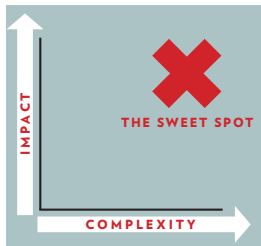
We took the story and, with the graphics in front of us, reorganized it into a sequential piece. Instead of one long story, we broke up the story into before, step-by-step, and finished project. We reorganized the graphics to go with the new flow of the stories, and to a large degree edited the story to fit with the flow of the graphics and the layout. We also threw out a couple of nice photos because they didn't say anything, and added a couple that weren't that great but illustrated what we wanted to show.

The end result won't win any awards, but we all agreed it was far superior to what we started with.

—JOE LINK, EDITOR  
PROGRESSIVE FARMER







definition of what that is. On our scale, it's easy to see that the *Times* goes for Lower Impact and Higher Complexity, while the *Post* chooses Maximum Impact and Low Complexity. Each publication has a distinct style, and too much variation in that style confuses the reader. When editor and designer agree where on the chart stories should fall, it's much easier to arrive at successful designs.

### 9. Enhance Branding, Theme & Variation

The designer is more than an editorial interpreter. A designer is also the defender of the magazine's template and responsible for maintaining a distinct rhythm throughout each issue. The issue map of the magazine shows the structure of the feature well and the priority and placement of articles. But it's the designer's mission to create visual elements that help the reader see the relative importance of stories and to "brand" stories using similar design motifs that define their connection.

EDITOR

*"I want this story to stand out."*

DESIGNER

*"The design needs to look like it belongs in our magazine."*

**Designers have a responsibility to check their self-aggrandizing tendencies and adhere to designs that fit their magazine's template.** Some layouts—driven by visions of contest awards and portfolio pieces—are more representative of the ego of the designer than the needs of readers. The price of professionalism is to place what's best for the magazine above individual likes and dislikes.

**The Art Director should be the champion of what's graphically best for the magazine, and charged with defending the visual integrity of the template, even in the face of a higher name on the masthead.** For defending capricious alterations that violate the look-and-feel of your title, an ROI defense ("it's more profitable for the magazine") always works better than an aesthetic argument ("it's more professional"). Finding a solution that satisfies everyone earns a designer respect—and more ready authority in the future.

### 10. Sweat the Small Stuff (and it's ALL Small Stuff)

As an issue begins to take shape, concepts are approved, final edits are made and art is assigned. That's when the designer takes on the last and most thankless role—guardian of legibility and protector of style.

**Legibility decisions belong to the designer.** If things look dicey on the proof, odds are they will only look worse on the printed page. Even a close call is too close. The emotional fallout from unreadable type is pervasive. Editorial loses confidence in the designer's respect for the printed word and suspects that the design is all that matters—as if there has to be a choice.

**Inattention to detail is costly.** A mispositioned photo caption or poor alignment of text across a gutter is way more noticeable than a misplaced modifier or a dangling participle, even though they're all errors. Sure, it may be all small stuff, but it adds up. In the modern production workflow, a designer's professional credibility is built on fastidious craftsmanship. Mistakes send a message that she doesn't care as much about the magazine as she should. While sweating the small stuff seems like the least of the issues that designers face, by proving their competence and focus, it could be the most critical in expanding their collaboration with editorial.

WHEN EDITORS AND DESIGNERS work toward the same goals, and those goals are focused on producing the best publication possible, mutual respect and inspiration become part of the normal working environment. We're all after the same thing—helping our readers see the big picture. Our mandates are simple: Play well with others, share the effort and reward of a job well done, communicate with each other, and focus on what works best on the page. Together, they make life more interesting and fun—and your magazine better. [FPO]

EDITOR

*"We don't want readers distracted by typos and technical goofs."*

DESIGNER

*"I want to find the mistakes before the print process, not during."*

# Writers' Camp

BY JENNY ROUGH

While We're  
On the Subject,  
Here's What  
Your Freelancers  
Really Want, too.

TWO AND A HALF years ago, I waltzed out of a law office and into a new career as a freelance writer. Despite that I held a JD and had five years of legal experience under my belt, when it came to journalism I was as green as a baby tree frog. I wasn't sure how to craft a query, didn't understand pitching protocol and had never heard terms like galley, FOB or masthead, not to mention I was without a single industry contact.

For guidance, I read articles—written by editors—offering tips for freelance writers. While I found the advice helpful, I also sensed a communication gap. I agree that writers should familiarize themselves with a publication before pitching, but I wonder if editors have ever attempted to page through their own magazine's back issues at the library. Small publications often aren't in stock. Larger publications are often missing, or if there, ripped to pieces with gum stuck between the pages. I'm not making excuses; I simply want to share a perspective from our side of the desk. And I sincerely thank editors who keep online archives. At the risk of hopping onto a very delicate branch, I collected thoughts from nearly 30 freelance writers who offered these tips to editors:

**RESPOND TO QUERIES—EVEN IF THE ANSWER IS “NO”** By far the biggest pet peeve among writers is unresponsive editors. We want replies to our pitches, even if they're negative. Crafting pitches is time-consuming, and a quick acknowledgment doesn't necessarily mean deciding

on the spot whether you'll buy a piece. I work with one editor who will often say, “Run this idea by me again in a month.” She also says that I'm free to try to place it elsewhere (in fact, at times she's so altruistic that she'll suggest a specific venue). Even though she may not bite, I'm grateful to know where I stand. Bill Becher, a Los Angeles-based photographer and writer, used to work as an editor and believes it's doable to send a professional reply to everyone. “It's a simple business courtesy to respond to all pitches, especially when they come by e-mail,” Becher says. “It takes only a few seconds to hit reply and type ‘no thanks.’ I suspect that a magazine's IT department could write a macro that can do this with a keystroke—call it ‘one-click rejection slip.’”

**OFFER GUIDANCE** In addition to e-mail responses, we like deadlines. And word counts. Such guidelines give us direction. “Sooner rather than later,” isn't a deadline; it's confusing. “I have an editor who keeps deadlines open, and it's pretty much a guarantee that I'll put off the assignment,” one freelance writer admits. As far as article direction, balancing a publication's needs and a writer's creativity can be a delicate act. “One editor I work with is very specific, and I prefer it,” says Carissa Sutherland, a part-time writer. “In the end, I give her what she wants and I'm edited less, allowing more of me to come through in my writing.” Regardless of whether an article's angle is writer-driven or editor-driven, one New York-based freelancer says, “There's nothing worse than being assigned a piece, agreeing on the angle, only to have the editor come back to you and tell you that they've rethought it and need you to take another angle. Um, if you're going to pay me to rewrite it, that's fine. Otherwise, it isn't.”

**WORK OUR VOICE** “The greatest editors don't try to wedge my work into something that sounds like what they are accustomed to; rather, they work to my voice,” says Amy Friedman, a columnist

who has also worked on the editorial side of the desk. Editors have their own ideas, and it is fine to steer writers and make our voice sound best, Friedman adds, but “when editors don’t realize that writers sweat blood for just one sentence—and it’s something editors should understand because it’s what they do, too—I want to scream.” In particular, she mentions an editor who understands this concept. He has worked with voices as different as her own, Gerry Trudeau and Ann Landers, and “He gets that he’s working to make the best of each of us.”

**SEND A GALLEY** Let us read final copy. Giving writers the opportunity to see changes editors make before publication is helpful (for both parties), because editing copy can inadvertently make the piece factually incorrect. “Sometimes an editor might read or interpret something in the wrong way, so their changes are based on what they believe to be true, not what I actually reported,” says one anonymous writer. “Or they might be trying to cut down on words, so they replace what I’ve written, but then it slightly—or not-so-slightly—changes the meaning.” For first-person pieces, seeing the galley allows us to note if an editor has altered language and used words we would never say. If so, it gives us an opportunity to substitute the phrase with vocabulary that sounds more like us.

**KEEP THE CONTRACT IN CHECK** When I was in the legal field, I spent two years almost exclusively buried in contracts. If there’s one thing I learned during the drafting, reviewing and negotiating of these legal documents, it’s this: Contracts are over-lawyered to death and they don’t need to be. In most cases, a simple one-page agreement laying out the assignment topic, deadline, word count, rights purchased and pay will suffice. Most importantly, the terms should be reasonable. For example, it’s one thing to hold writers responsible if we libel someone, but it’s not acceptable to hold writers responsible for editors’ errors.

**PAY US** Writers agree: Too many publications offer abysmal pay rates. Maybe we need to negotiate higher fees, but

publications also need to stop paying peanuts. One of my first assignments involved co-authoring a book. I was so excited about the project that I (stupidly) said I’d write my half for free. The client considered my suggestion, looked into my eyes and said, “I believe in the concept of *quantum meruit* [as much as deserved].” Then, he offered \$10,000. He did the right thing. Publishers should offer fair compensation, as well as reimburse us for expenses. If you require photos to accompany the article, factor that into the fee. Writers have mortgages to pay, groceries to buy and kids to put through college. Payment in the form of promises to “link” us or promote us “like crazy” doesn’t cover those bills. Speaking of bills, “if there’s someone we’re supposed to hound for payment besides you, let us know who that person is and how we can contact him or her,” one freelance writer says.

**BE HONEST ABOUT BACKLOG** A travel writer once told me she sold a piece to a parenting magazine and then found out, after the article was finalized, the fee negotiated and the contract signed, that the publication had a three-year backlog for the column. The magazine paid well—on publication. Waiting 36 months for the writer’s invoice to be processed for work she’d already completed wasn’t feasible, and, fortunately, the writer was able to void the contract, submit her piece elsewhere and amicably part ways with the editor. Obviously, evergreen content may be pushed out longer than timely inventory, but simply being forthcoming about backlog and when a piece will run can save both parties a lot of headache.

**MAKE YOUR EDITORIAL CALENDAR ACCESSIBLE** Writer’s guidelines, editorial calendars, information about which sections are exclusively staff-written and which are open to freelance contributors—this is a wealth of knowledge to writers and we appreciate it when it’s readily available, such as posted on the magazine’s website. “Knowing what magazines need at a given time is extremely helpful when developing pitches,” says freelancer Nora Zelevansky. Writer Beth Morrissey concurs: “Make it easy for us to please you and we’ll happily

agree.” Once an article is assigned, style guides are helpful, too, Morrissey notes, because style preferences can vary from publication to publication.

**PROMOTE US** Including a small write-up and accompanying photo on a contributors’ page is ideal for writers, but even a one sentence bio line is greatly appreciated. Bio lines are beneficial to writers because it gives us the chance to market ourselves by listing our websites, promoting our books and mentioning other articles. But bio lines are also beneficial to the magazine’s readers because they personalize the article and help the reader connect with the author.

**PITCH US, TOO** Oftentimes, “Editors are awfully demanding without equal reciprocation,” one anonymous writer confesses. When it comes to drumming up article ideas, many writers agree that both sides should be engaged in serving and receiving. “I love it when editors assign me stuff,” says Amy Nazarov, a Washington D.C.-based freelance writer. “I wouldn’t expect it off the bat, but after I’ve, say, pitched ten stories and written five for one editor, it’s nice when it turns into a two-way street and ideas start coming from her side.”

**GIVE PRAISE (AND A COPY OF THE PUB)** “Great job!” “Perfect!” “Nice work!” These phrases are music to our ears. Of course, it’s necessary to give honest feedback and call attention to our mistakes, but don’t forget to let us know when we’ve done a good job, too. “Writers spend an awful lot of their time getting rejected, so it really brightens our day—and attitude—to know when we’ve delivered exactly what you expected,” says Allison Winn Scotch, a New York-based freelance writer. Finally, adds one writer, “When our articles run, it would be absolutely fantastic if editors sent us a copy of the magazine.” **[FPO]**

**JENNY ROUGH** is a freelance writer and has written articles and essays for *The Washington Post*, *Writer’s Digest*, *Whole Life Times*, and *mediabistro.com*, among other publications. Visit her blog *Roughly Speaking* at [www.JennyRough.com](http://www.JennyRough.com).

!@#% TH



# THE GRID

BY TIMOTHY SAMARA

ILLUSTRATION BY LANCE LEKANDER

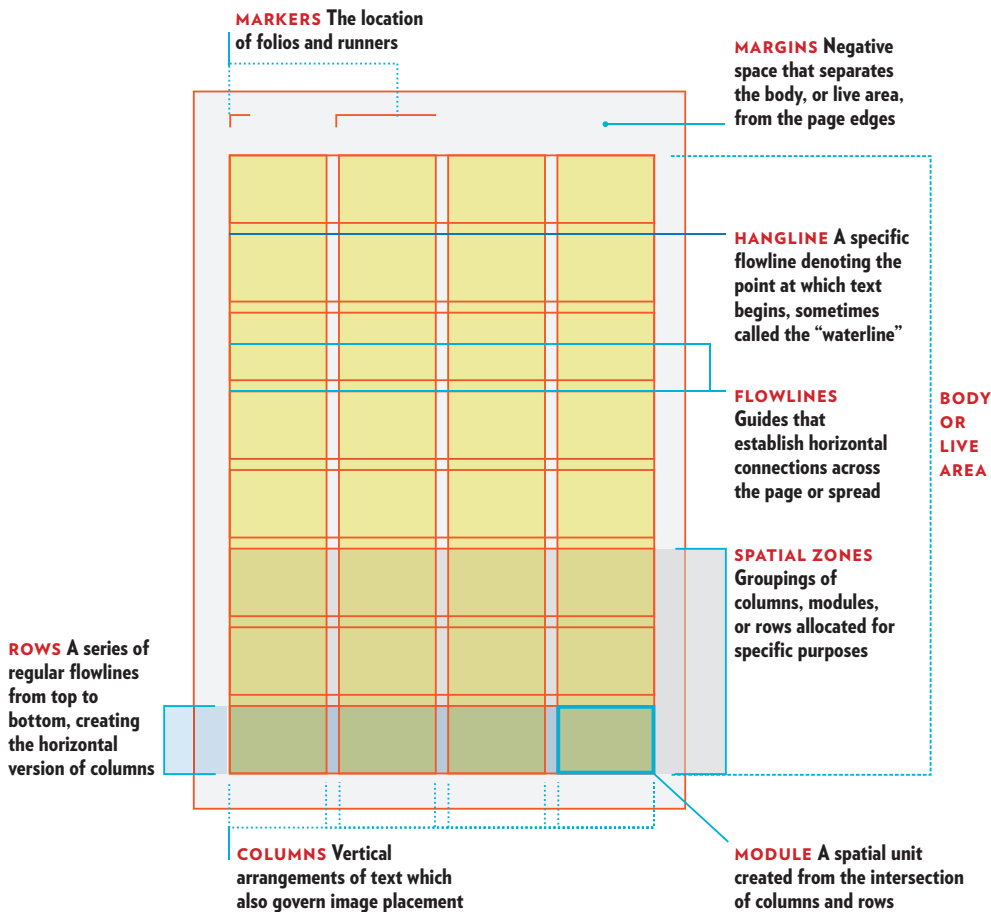
**The consistency that a grid provides can be a source of terrible frustration for publication designers. An inveterate grid-nik offers some help in taming the grid and putting more life into your layouts.**

**MOST DESIGNERS**, especially publication designers, are familiar with the grid—or, as we design snobs like to call it, The Typographic Grid—that invisible column structure that tells us where to put things in a page layout. Over some 100-odd years, as the grid evolved from hot-type limitation to canonized methodology, arguments for and against it have been varied and strident. Its most famous advocate, the Swiss graphic design pioneer Josef Müller-Brockmann, spoke of its “will to order” in reverential terms. In the 1970s, deconstructivist Katherine McCoy (then of the Cranbrook Academy of Art) said the grid was “just so much housekeeping” and suggested we all move on.

After a brief hiatus, the grid is once again in vogue. And again, the cry goes up to abandon it and be free, free, free! “I’ll lay out each spread in a completely different way,” the revolutionary cries, “consuming as much production time as I can and ensuring a publication without discernible features!” Sometimes, the best way is given; the wheel, after all, needs no improvement. As an organizational tool, the grid has been tested over time and been proven mighty useful. It makes all the parts of a page talk to each other and neatly integrates two very different kinds of content—text and image. A grid also allows constantly changing content, along with its absence—white space—to comfortably coexist. With a grid in place, many people can contribute to a publication’s design without it looking that way.



## REFRESHER COURSE: GRID BASICS

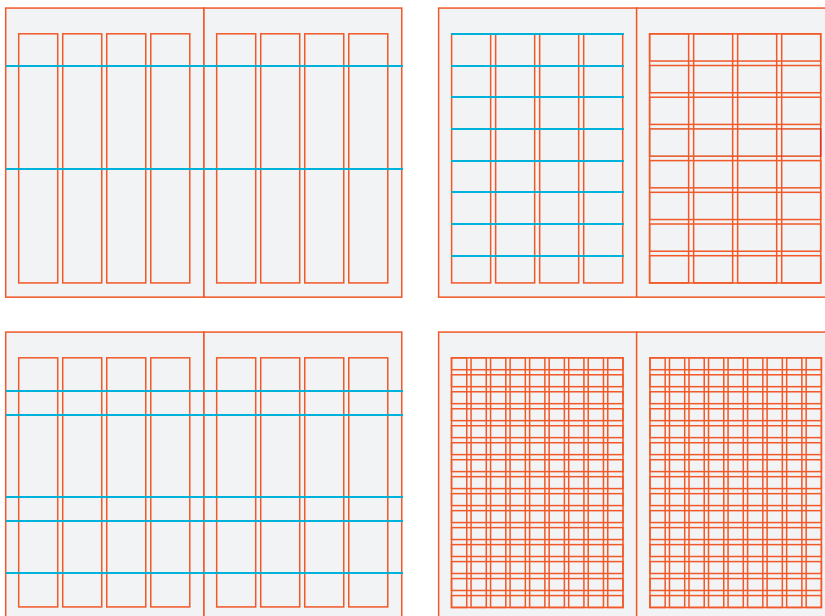


A publication’s grid is more than just the widths of its columns, gutters and margins. It’s an idea about how the content is presented and navigated. This idea includes the rules for how content behaves inside the columns, and it’s this behavior that counts most. The very same grid can articulate spreads with breathtaking space and movement, just as quickly as it can stifle a reader (and designer!) with formulaic repetition. Getting a grid to behave flexibly can be tricky, and it can’t be said often enough: Grids don’t make dull layouts—designers do. The difference lies in approaching the notion of structure as an advantage, not getting mired in the rigidity it’s often assumed to imply.

### THE GRID GIVETH, NOT TAKETH AWAY

For creative people, accepting limitation as an advantage can be a difficult pill to swallow. This is especially true for newly hired designers confronted by a publication’s long-standing grid. Working within predefined limitations—how many columns, how far apart they are and so on—removes some design possibilities from consideration, surely, but think how helpful it is to have someone narrow things down a bit.

With eight billion options excluded, finding a place for the headline is that much quicker. Even so, the permutation in the number of locations possible is still an enormous number. Imagine a relatively simple modular grid: six columns and eight rows, top to bottom. That means a total of 48 modules on a single page, and 96 modules in a spread...and therefore 96 places a headline can start. Multiply



**DEGREES OF COMPLEXITY**  
A column grid may have any number of defined flowlines (left) or be made modular by introducing regular breaks top-to-bottom, or rows (right). The module becomes a building block for proportioning both images and text, and creates a very precise degree of control for a designer. The more modules there are, the more specific and more numerous the options for position and proportion of content.

that by locations for decks, text starts, picture sizes, overlaps—there are enough possibilities in position alone (never mind type style, size changes, color) to lay out many years' worth of feature articles with nary a repeat. Plus, given the fast pace of editorial design schedules, it's exceedingly helpful to recognize one can put stuff just about anywhere on the grid and feel confident it'll look okay. The grid *creates* possibilities, rather than hinders them. The possibilities just all happen to be harmonically related to each other.

The efficiency this notion implies is another stumbling block for designers who feel constrained by grids. "It's so mechanical and unnatural!" they'll say. Remember that designers are primates and part of the natural world, like snails and flowers. The grid is a tool these primates developed to help organize things...so a grid is really an organic construct. Plus, geometry occurs in nature all around us (think "nautilus shell") and, further, the grid is a natural outgrowth of our writing system.

What is type, after all, other than a series of vertical lines strung together to make horizontal lines that are then stacked to make vertical columns that are grouped side-by-side to make big horizontal blocks? The horizontal/vertical nature of grid-based layout is as natural and elegant as a flower. Overcoming the irrational fear of the grid's order is the first step in using it effectively and flexibly.

### RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: THE DESIGNER WORKS THE GRID, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND

The structure itself is one part of the picture. What happens on top of it is the interesting part. Any rules can be established for how text and images behave on any grid structure, and much of this behavior is determined by the nature of the content itself. For instance, if there are a lot of charts or sidebars accompanying articles, a column or two may need to be devoted to them so they can stay clear of the text. Beyond that sort of functional requirement, it's mostly

about rhythm and flow, creating balance between consistent elements and variations on how they're used—a logic for what happens and how.

I like to start by finding a column width for text based on roughly 60 characters per line at a decent point size, minimal hyphenation, and no rivers of white (if I'm setting it justified). Most often, this means two to four columns side-by-side on a page, depending on margins. However many columns, I usually divide these in half to double the number overall—three becomes six, four becomes eight—to create more potential page breaks left to right.

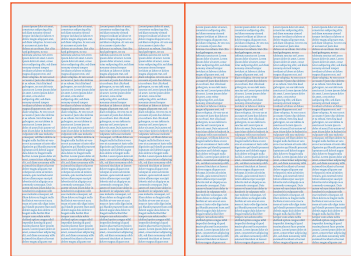
I find that using one, more complex, grid for an entire publication, rather than several grids customized for different parts, is most functional. Using a twelve-column grid, for example, means I can use two-, three-, and four-column text structures, plus weird variations like six narrow columns, ten really narrow columns with a big left margin, and so on. Aside from creating a conceptual elegance, working with one master grid enforces proportional harmony among wildly different sections, further helping to visually unify the publication. And, it creates greater opportunity for varying the layouts.

Then, it's time for the rules. I'll pick a head, deck and caption size to complement the text, and play with where these things can go. A grid's flexibility is determined by the logic governing the behavior of content. The single most important factor in being able to work flexibly within a grid is to build variation into the rules. If you find yourself trying to bust out of the grid all the time because that always seems to work better, the grid needs an adjustment or a new rule.

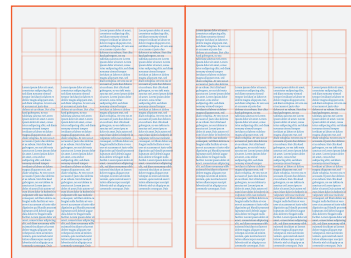
The more irregularity permitted for content behavior within the columns, for example, the more possibilities the designer has for how pages can be laid out. Text, for instance, may all hang from a certain depth and justify at the foot margin; the columns may stagger in depth, creating an irregular shape along the bottom of the spread; or, the

## COLUMN LOGIC

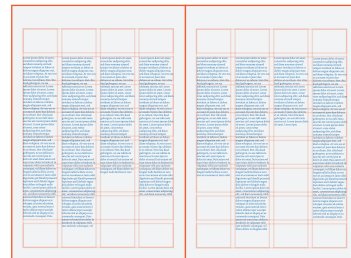
There are five basic strategies for text behavior, beginning with the most rigid and progressing to the most organic:



1. Text justifies to the margins, top to bottom.



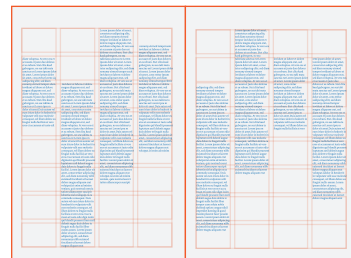
2. Text justifies in columns, but the columns shift up and down.



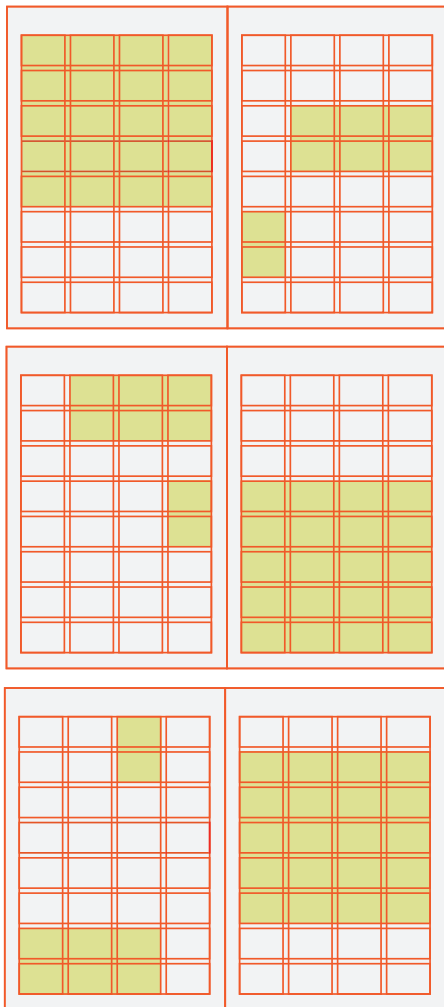
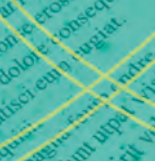
3. The text hangs from a flowline and drops to different depths.



4. Column depth is consistent, but there is no consistent hangline.



5. Both column depth and position are allowed to change.



**BOUNCY, BOUNCY** The name of the game is variation within a system, and in these hypothetical page spreads, the variation is about the relationship between size and position of images. Note that in each spread, the image proportions are the same.

**COMBINATORICS** Always keep in mind that columns may be combined to form wider columns—and that not all columns need be filled. In this example, different use of column widths and density helps create a dynamic layout on a very precise grid.

columns may be all the same depth and stagger up and down, making a rhythmic, ever-changing shape across the spread.

Remember that text, as well as images, may straddle different combinations of columns, creating more permutations in the logic. So, too, the starting position for various elements, left to right, can present more opportunities for rhythmic variation. Again, variation within the system of spaces afforded by the grid structure is what enables a rich diversity of layouts that all appear related.

One way of forcing variation is a strategy I call “bounce”—to arbitrarily size three photographs to the columns or modules—one small, one medium and one large (or one square, one vertical and one horizontal)—and vary their locations from spread to spread. Or, one might work with several images of the same size, but vary their locations, column by column. For instance, if there are three columns with defined top, mid-page and lower positions, changing which position an image occupies in each column creates up-and-down movement across the spread.

### THE YIN GETS THE YANG

Here’s where the difficulty appears. If the grid is, in fact, such a flexible structure, what about consistency? By establishing clear rules—like how images are proportioned, where text is situated when a story starts versus when it continues on the next page or spread—you create consistency by excluding all possibilities other than those that play by the rules. Along with column logic, choosing styles and sizes for text components is equally important in terms of creating flexibility and consistency. There’s a seesaw effect: As one aspect increases in complexity, some other aspect must be simplified.

Very often, I define specific styles for head, deck, caption, callouts and text subheads, but allow them to appear anywhere on the grid. An opposing approach is to define several styles for heads, but always position the head in the same location, relative to where the text starts. Or, perhaps, define three different places where text can start, while the head stays in the same place. This tension between consistency and flexibility—and how far it can be pushed—is what transforms grid-based





layouts from repetitive, mechanical formulae into vital, rhythmic, expressive compositions.

### HERE, KITTY KITTY KITTY

Then, of course, there's cheating. Every designer, however rigorous in following the rules, has cheated something off the grid sometime. Structure be damned, there's no substitution for eyeballing. Sometimes, it's a drop cap that simply must stick out into the gutter to appear accurately aligned with text, or a silhouetted image whose contours must poke through adjacent column walls to make it look more "comfortable." Sometimes, it's more drastic than that—like rotating an entire sidebar at an angle because the picture it accompanies demands it.

Violation is the lifeblood of effective grid use. The reader—and the designer—needs to see something out of place every now and then. Such deviation helps reinforce the publication's structural clarity. Plus, it calls attention to itself, making it extremely useful for highlighting important content.

Oddly, it's a good idea to devise a consistent logic for *how* things deviate, because the way the violation occurs is a "rule" that forms part of the recognizable visual logic. For example, if a sidebar in a colored box is rotated to violate the grid, maybe it rotates 37° in either direction, but *only* 37°. Of course, these things are free to evolve over time, so the anomalies themselves don't become too repetitive.

The great grid maestro Massimo Vignelli said, "A grid is like a lion in a cage, and the designer is the lion-tamer; it's fun to play with the lion, but the lion-tamer has to know when to get out before the lion decides to eat him." Good advice. [FPO]

**TIMOTHY SAMARA** is a New York City-based graphic designer who teaches design and typography at SVA, Parsons, NYU and Purchase College, and author of six books: *Making and Breaking the Grid*, *Typography Workbook*, *Publication Design Workbook*, *Type Style Finder*, *Design Elements* and *Design Evolution*, all from Rockport Publishers.



**VARIATION CAN BE FUN** Before thinking about typeface and color, consider possibilities for location. Here, the same four elements—head, deck, text and callout, each in the same respective size, style and color—are alternated in position to show the possible variation inherent in the simplest of grids. Imagine, now, how much MORE is possible if the sizes, weights, faces and color could change as well.

**TYPE AND IMAGE** Never be afraid to run type across an image. Even on the same grid, both kinds of content can flow effortlessly into and over each other—so long as both remain legible. Overlap, if appropriate, is a great way of introducing unexpected spatial relationships, and both kinds of content can remain on the grid.



**THE PROCESS OF STARTING A NEW PUBLICATION, OR REDESIGNING AN EXISTING ONE,** benefits from anything that might improve the probability of success. Over the six installments of this series, we'll take a practical and philosophical look at what makes magazines work. Together, these six segments will comprise a blueprint for magazine success.

Here's what we'll delve into over the next few issues:

**MISSION STATEMENTS** How do you get from idea to launch and increase the probability of success? Start with a plan.

**ARCHETYPES** Why should your magazine be more like other magazines, except when it shouldn't? The answer lies in two centuries and 100,000 titles.

**BRANDING** More than a logo, more than a title, the soul of your publication is in its organization, tone and memorability. It's what keeps readers coming back for more.

**SCOPE** What, exactly, should your magazine be about? And how does it validate the mission and create a path for growth and prosperity? In many cases, it's not what you put in; it's what you leave out.

**ISSUE MAPPING AND NAVIGATION** What's on each page and why are key to making readers appreciate what makes your title unique and worth reading.

**C/P/R: COMMUNITY, PRODUCTS AND REFERENCE** These are the DNA of every successful enthusiast, B-to-B and association publication. Harnessing the power of C/P/R can jump-start or revive your magazine.

# SIX DEGREES *of* PREPARA

# MIS

Your favorite magazine was once just a **GLEAM** in someone's eye. Before there were stories and staff and advertisers, before there was a template and a nameplate, there was only an **IDEA** for a periodical that could be profitable.

Similar to restaurants or Broadway shows, a lot of the expense in starting a magazine is up front. Usually, the publication needs to be staffed, designed, produced and printed before you can convince a single subscriber to make a permanent commitment. A large launch, like Condé Nast's *Portfolio*, might cost as much as \$100 million over the first three years of publication. But people have launched successful magazines with less—a *lot* less.

How do you get from the idea to the launch? After all, a magazine is more than just stories and pictures; more than fonts, images and printing; more than subscribers and advertisers. A magazine is a creative business based on an informed assumption: *If enough people like the content, they will buy the publication or at least provide a steady, well-defined demographic that advertisers will pay to reach.*

Like any publication, your start-up needs a business plan. Along with an ROI (Return-On-Investment) strategy, you need a creative rationale that will function as a blueprint for building the actual publication. That document is the Mission Statement.

Many people confuse a Mission Statement with a briefer, more promotional positioning statement found in media kits. A positioning statement often glibly presents a publication's relevance to advertisers, whereas the Mission Statement is actually a magazine's business plan. You wouldn't go to a bank trying to land a loan with a one-paragraph business plan, so why would you start a magazine without a Mission Statement? It provides, in equal measure, justification for the profitability of your magazine and a creative manifesto for content scope and audience growth on a continuing basis.

# MISSION: DEGREE ONE

# MISSION: POSSIBLE

JASON CLARKE

## Parts of a Mission

A Mission Statement should contain the seeds of everything that grows into the magazine you launch or defines your existing magazine. These elements define the publication:

- ▶ **Why there is opportunity for this title**
- ▶ **The size, availability and potential of your target audience**
- ▶ **The scope of the publication, and how editorial content will uniquely define the magazine**
- ▶ **A comparison of the competition**
- ▶ **Broad benchmarks for success and growth**

This may seem familiar to veteran journalists. It's as simple as Why, Who, What, Where and When.

## Why This Magazine?

There are many reasons to publish a magazine, and not all of them have a bottom line based on economic profit. Some magazines raise the profile or credibility of an organization; others promote religious, social, political or promotional agendas. Whether or not you intend for your magazine to make money, it still costs money to publish. Justifying the expenditure to the sponsoring organization still requires evaluation of the opportunity cost—why this publication is the best use of the capital available for achieving the desired goals.

In fact, what *are* the goals? A good Mission Statement begins with why the publication should exist. Since this is an internal document, all reasons should be

included. While it's perfectly acceptable to create a publication with the primary goal of turning a profit with as little cost or effort needed, that reason would sound crass and manipulative used as a positioning statement in your Media Kit. But you *would* list it on the Mission Statement.

Usually, the reasons listed are more practical—need for ongoing promotion, or a demographic underserved by current publications. Sometimes, there's opportunity for a more focused publication in a broader niche, such as a luxury homes publication in a market where real estate publications already exist. So, the Mission Statement begins with a Statement of Opportunity.

For our fictional start-up magazine, the following gets at the heart of the



opportunity: “Our publication intends to be the primary reference for 1 million gadgeteers who are avidly searching for credible and up-to-date information on cutting-edge gadgetry, but can only find occasional general information on this subject in noodler publications.” Here is a recognized substantial sub-demographic of an already successful enthusiast niche that wants a narrower, more explicit focus on a field of interest.

“The growth of the gadget segment of the noodler community has been exponential since the release of Gadgetron 2.0 kits, attracting more and more noodlers to this area and bringing new enthusiasts into the fold,” explains why this opportunity is exploitable.

Finally, “Creators of ever-expanding gadget peripherals will join the current noodler advertising segment as interested participants in the new publication,” defines the economic feasibility of the magazine. These statements describe why the publication has a chance for success, and they become the basis for the other components of the Mission Statement.

### Find Your Audience, or Imagine It

The rationale for large-circulation general-interest publications becomes increasingly dicey when other forms of mass communication promise larger, more immediate contact with audiences. Television did it, and the Internet and cell phones have followed suit. But much like national AM radio evolved into regional FM broadcasting in the '60s, the opportunity for publishing niche content to smaller audiences has grown tremendously.

Success for your publication begins with defining a universe for your content scope and then accurately estimating what percentage can be lured into your reader community. Some universes are small but can be almost totally converted—for example, an association that gives a magazine subscription as a membership benefit. Other universes are large, hard to define and produce fewer dedicated readers; examples include the consumer

# YOUR MISSION: WHY,

business and shelter markets, which are

notoriously fickle. Overestimating the number of converts is a common mistake and can have serious ramifications on cash flow and advertising support.

Another approach to finding your audience is to define a paragon reader, often the founder of the magazine. To a great extent, *Playboy* is an extension of who Hugh Hefner thought he was—or wanted to be—in 1950. Other magazines share similar beginnings. Certainly, there wouldn't have been a *Cook's Illustrated* or *Wizard* magazine without the conviction of their publishers that a large like-minded audience existed.

There's something almost romantic about the publisher-as-paradigm success story, but unless you're Donald Trump or Oprah Winfrey, don't expect investors to be impressed. Still, not every magazine needs to roll out to a million readers. With the Mission Statement approach, you've got an undeniable gut-check built into every decision.

Even with the best demographics, it's often a guess as to how many readers will love your magazine. The debate over what comes first, the wants of the reader or the scope of the magazine, can be an agonizing seesaw. And sometimes, readers don't even realize they want something until they see it. How can you process statistics for that?

### What's in It for Me?

The editorial scope of your publication is the defining factor for your audience and your advertisers. The more explicit it is in the Mission Statement, the easier it will translate into an actual magazine. Breaking down the scope into major content areas and defining themes for feature content will help you gauge the depth of your magazine's concept. Imagining franchise content (think *SI Swimsuit* issue, the *Fortune* 100) and ancillary programs

(books, conferences)—both of which are

important ways to generate unique content—also helps build credibility for the editorial stamina of the publication.

Getting back to our sample publication, now called *Gadgeteer*, the scope in the Mission Statement includes all things gadget-related: products, projects, tools, theory, processes, creativity, application, inventions, the gadget community, gadget celebrities and even gadget humor. If this sounds like an editorial lineup, it should. Beyond that, the publisher envisions ancillary projects, such as The *Gadgeteer* Conference, Greatest Gadgets of the Year, *Gadgeteer* Innovator Awards, Gadget Workbook Series and “Great Gadgets Hour” on the DiY Network. All of these possible franchise enrichments will provide editorial fodder for the magazine.

Mission Statements for magazines also should account for more than the printed edition. Developing a strategy for the website component of your new publication at this initial stage can provide a clear structure for growing the entire media enterprise. Imagine elements that work better in cyberspace: Forums, webinars, downloads, multimedia demonstrations, and links to other resources are effective additions of content not easily achieved in print.

Specific content targeting possible vertical markets for advertising can also go into the Mission Statement. In some publications, the primary advertisers are obvious—they make products or services that directly support the content. At the next level are advertisers interested in your readers because they fit into a desirable demographic, usually by income or age, but this group has little effect on scope.

Developing the editorial model at this stage will have important benefits as the book is realized. A detailed description of the content in the Mission Statement will have a direct relationship to each editorial



# WHO, WHAT, WHERE & WHEN

element in the premier issue. It should be possible to vet every new editorial idea by comparing it against the scope described in your Mission Statement.

## Why Is This Magazine Different From All Other Magazines?

Package designers go to a supermarket and shoot pictures of the shelf display of products in the same category as their project. They're not doing research for creating something exclusive or wholly different; their goal is to create a package that is unique among other products yet also feels like it belongs among them.

Comparing a magazine to the competition works in a similar fashion. What works for one publication might also work for yours, but with a new, distinctive branding. Finding areas of content that are underrepresented, or handled in a shallow way, may provide actual editorial distinction between your title and others.

Examining the tone, or editorial voice, of the competition is also informative.

In the '70s, Marvel Comics helped redefine superhero comics by contrasting its voice against that of the competition. In rival DC Comics' universe, the mythic, emotionally unconflicted exploits of Superman involved fighting clearly defined external evil in imaginary places like Metropolis. In the Marvel universe, Spiderman lives in a recognizable New York, and his teen angst and inner demons are as potent as his super-powerful adversaries, whose own destructive paths are often the result of debilitating tragic flaws. This new approach to storytelling and character development defined the Marvel world and ended the domination of a decades-old franchise. Ultimately, DC Comics was forced to reappraise and relaunch *its* classic characters. For example, in the hands of Batman's next writer and artist, Frank Miller, the Masked Crusader became the morally conflicted and obsessed Dark Knight.

Finding a niche in a niche through editorial voice is one good reason for comparing your publication to your direct competitors. Widening the circle to include other publications that overlap only somewhat in content will give you a perspective on the broader interests of your intended audience. Also, it may be a source of mutually beneficial editorial and business relationships.

Niche publications are always interested in reaching a broader audience, and more mainstream publications want the expert content that can come from narrowly focused titles. It wouldn't be surprising to find that niche magazine *Gadgeteer* provides content to *Noodler Monthly* in exchange for promotion and resources from the larger, more broadly scoped magazine.

## Mission...Possible?

Thomas Edison said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." Since publication growth is an ongoing process marked by subscriptions or ad pages or reader response, success for your publication must be benchmarked. Appropriate documentation, objective evaluation and timeline projections are important parts of every mission, including your magazine's.

Business plans often exploit the potential of a concept that captures the imagination and enthusiasm of its target market. The YouTubes, Facebooks and Googles of today are examples of the capacity for untested ideas to generate a firestorm of interest that far exceeds expectations during the growth phase of the product. As enticing as those stories may be, they are the exceptions.

Generating benchmarks that are relevant often starts with worst-case scenarios and minimum acceptable results. For publications, the chart usually shows how much outgo can be tolerated

with the expected start-up costs and when the magazine will produce a profit.

The total revenue from all sources—subscriptions, advertising, special promotions, ancillary programs—should be figured into the numbers, but only when a project is actually launched. It's just not kosher to anticipate funds from a project that doesn't exist.

The three-year plan is the classic magazine model. Expecting loss in year one, growth and modest profit in year two, and maturation and sustainability by year three allows plenty of time for evaluation, course correction and, if necessary, a soft landing. But, as noted at the top of this article, profit is not the best benchmark for every magazine, so it's critical to find the right indicators and analysis tools for your magazine.

Elaborate business plans for new publications often include elaborate budgeting and multiple achievement scenarios. While these are important, especially to satisfy external investors, they're overkill as part of a Mission Statement. With criteria for success, and a timetable for when that success may occur after launch, are included, it's easy to see how well the Mission Statement functions as a legitimate business plan.

For *Gadgeteer*, capturing 5% of its million-plus universe and securing a 20/80 ad-to-editorial ratio for its 96-page issues ensured that production costs, editorial development, and initial marketing lists and materials would be covered. By year three, at 40/60 ratios, 120 pages and a 75,000 circulation, it turned a nice profit, especially with the success of the first *Gadgeteer* Conference, which drew over 2,000 participants.

Now, the only thing to look out for is the launch of *Noodler's Gadget Monthly*, because nothing breeds imitation like success. But the publisher isn't too worried, because he already thought of that in the Mission Statement. [FPO]

# Images IN Distress

GOT A **SINKING FEELING** THAT YOUR IMAGES NEED HELP? DON'T **BAIL** YET.



**DIGITAL PHOTOS ARE BOTH** a boon and a bane for magazines. The elimination of expensive and time-consuming color separations has been a boon, but the trade-off in image quality and flexibility causes myriad problems that are hard to solve and simply look bad on the printed page. No doubt, the quality has declined, but since no one's going back to Kodachrome and the photo-multiplier tube, the next best thing is to learn ways to mitigate the damage and improve the picture.

Bad images can fall into four categories: 1) insufficient resolution, 2) compression artifacts, 3) color casts, and 4) poor exposures. (There *is* a fifth category—taking lousy pictures—but that's another article.)

Many photographers—even excellent semi-pro shooters—aren't clear about what is really happening inside their digital cameras. Film and chemistry had one great advantage: Photographers had few options besides choosing a film stock and taking careful exposures.

After a digital image is shot and saved, the danger only increases. RGB to CMYK conversion truncates

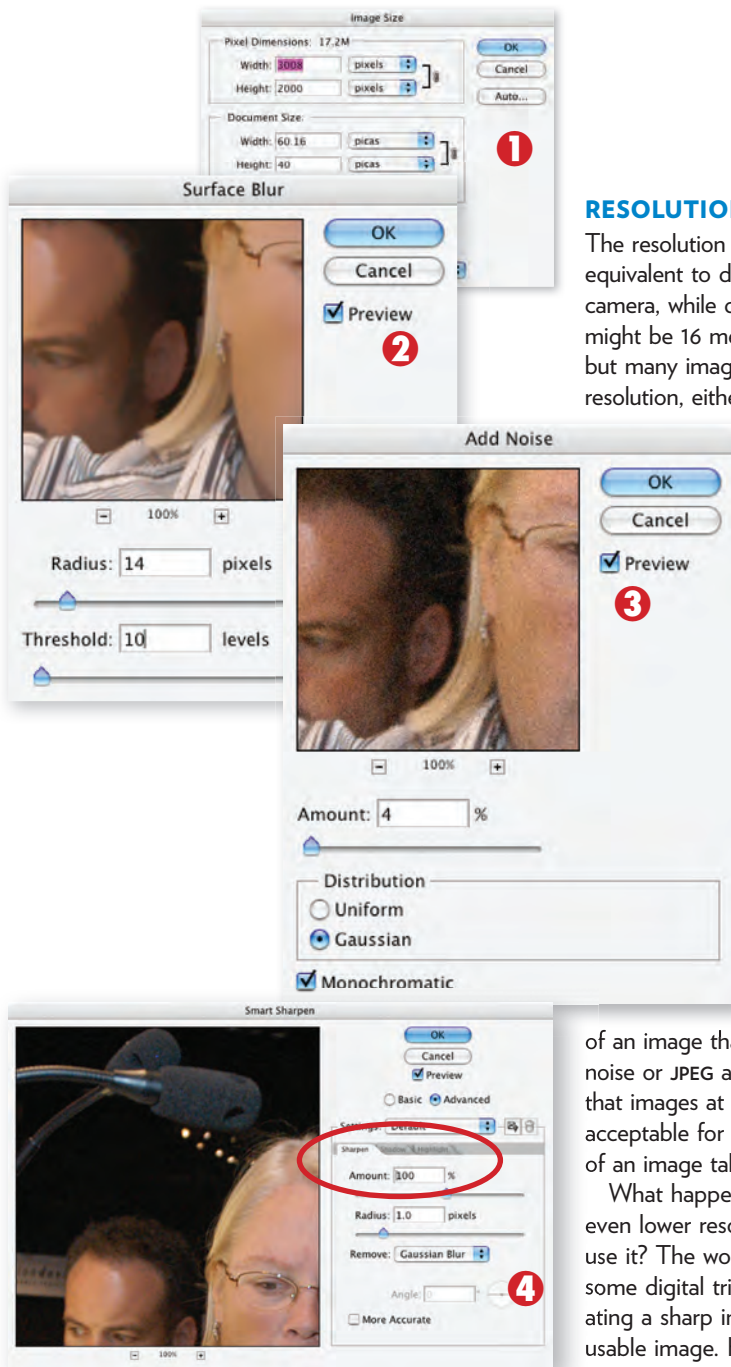
the color gamut and drops detail in the shadows. Repeatedly saving in JPEG format adds increasing levels of artifacts and noise, and well-meaning middlemen might even reduce resolution. By the time a magazine gets an image from a client or stock house, there's no guarantee that the original data hasn't been severely compromised.

**GETTING STARTED**

The kind of quick, down-and-dirty color correction described here is impossible without a calibrated monitor and controlled ambient lighting. You need to trust that the onscreen image represents the actual printed result; otherwise, every correction is a shot in the dark.

An image viewed by transmitted light on your RGB monitor is always going to look different than when viewed by light reflected off a page printed with CMYK inks. But making a practice of reviewing printed images against the final files on your monitor still helps sharpen your skill in selecting and applying tools. ▶▶▶





## RESOLUTION

The resolution of 35-millimeter film is roughly equivalent to data from a 20-megapixel camera, while digital images at their largest might be 16 megapixels. That's still plenty, but many images are shot at much lower resolution, either to conserve space or just by mistake. The old rule of thumb is that images need at least twice the resolution of the printed line screen, so a full-page magazine image is about 2200 x 2800 pixels, the amount taken by a 7-megapixel camera. In truth, digital images at even lower resolutions do have a surprising ability to be “rezzed-up” and still look pretty good, but it depends on starting with a clean image. A program such as Genuine Fractals, or even the interpolation algorithm in Photoshop CS3, can effectively double the resolution

of an image that is not marred by excessive noise or JPEG artifacts. Practically, it means that images at 130 dpi at a given size can be acceptable for publication—and that’s the size of an image taken by a 3-megapixel camera!

What happens when an image has even lower resolution, yet you still need to use it? The worst-case scenario involves some digital trickery that—far from creating a sharp image—can still make a usable image. Here’s how to do it.

**1 Resample the original image to the final size you need (Image>Image Size).** A 4-inch-wide 72-dpi image needs to be sampled up to a 300-dpi 4-inch image if you’re going to use it at that size. Now, you’re ready to manipulate the picture.

**2 Select the Surface Blur filter (Filter>Blur>Surface Blur).** Using this filter is sort of the opposite of Unsharp Masking. Adjusting the pixel width and threshold sliders, starting at about 14 pixels wide and a threshold of 10, will smooth out jaggies and hide digital noise. When you use the filter judiciously, the intermediate result will be a soft, painterly image with clean colors.

**3 Next, use the Add Noise filter (Filter>Noise>Add Noise).** Dither added to the image creates more realistic photo “grain.” The amount is subjective, but too much added noise darkens and flattens the image, while too little doesn’t alter the image appreciably. About 4% is a good starting point, although the effect is size-dependent.

**4 Finally, use the Smart Sharpen filter (Filter>Sharpen>Smart Sharpen) to add some edge enhancement.** Adjust the Shadow and Highlight values to minimize grain in flat areas. While the final result is by no means as good as a better original, it can be used when nothing else is available.

## COMPRESSION ARTIFACTS

The same technique can be used to diminish the appearance of false contouring and blocking caused by high JPEG compression, but it’s nearly impossible to eliminate all of the effects. Luckily, blocking and contouring usually appear only in areas where there is little difference in color or value (that’s how JPEG compression works), and these areas are easy to select and isolate using the **Magic Wand** or the **Color Range** tool.

Adding surface blur and noise to these areas can eliminate only the worst of the artifacting. For more natural-looking and subtle correction, the more difficult approach is to layer the image with cloned data added at an opacity of 30%, and taken repeatedly

**IT’S NOT PERFECT** Upsampling is always a compromise, and some images do better than others. These images are viewed at 200%.

STRAIGHT UPSAMPLING



[FPO] UPSAMPLING





from different parts of the selected area. The result adds more complexity to the pixel structures that were compromised by the JPEG compression process.

Like the resolution solution, it doesn't add new data, but hides the artifacts by obscuring the original data with a more random pixel structure. To be most effective, the correction needs to be carefully painted on, a small section at a time.

## COLOR CASTS

Color casts occur when the white balance of an exposure is thrown off by artificial lighting or room colors reflecting off the subject. The human eye is very sensitive to color shift, but the human brain compensates unconsciously, even under extreme color temperature shifts. We've all seen the results of an image taken under fluorescent lighting that makes skin tones a ghoulish pale grey, yet our memory of the color in that same space seems normal. Digital cameras try to compensate in the same way by using *white balance* settings, where the image data is evaluated and the highlights are corrected to be "white" in order to achieve a natural color balance.

The exposure and the white balance are related, and hot spots like a bare lightbulb—called specular highlights—can fool a camera into making a poorly exposed image whose colors are muddy and dark. A complicated lighting situation, such as a flash fill markedly different from the ambient light color temperature, also creates complicated color cast problems that require manual correction to fix. The starting point for all color correction is choosing what part of the picture constitutes the lightest pixel (the white point) and the darkest pixel (the black point).

Doing most of the color correction in RGB—the original color space of the camera sensor—gives more natural results than manipulating the gamut-truncated CMYK converted color space. Whatever the original source, once the image has been imported into Photoshop it's best to change the mode back to RGB for manipulation if the picture needs more than a tweak.

The secret to color cast correction is a three-step process, using tools in the **Curves** (Command-M) or **Levels** (Command-L) dialog box.

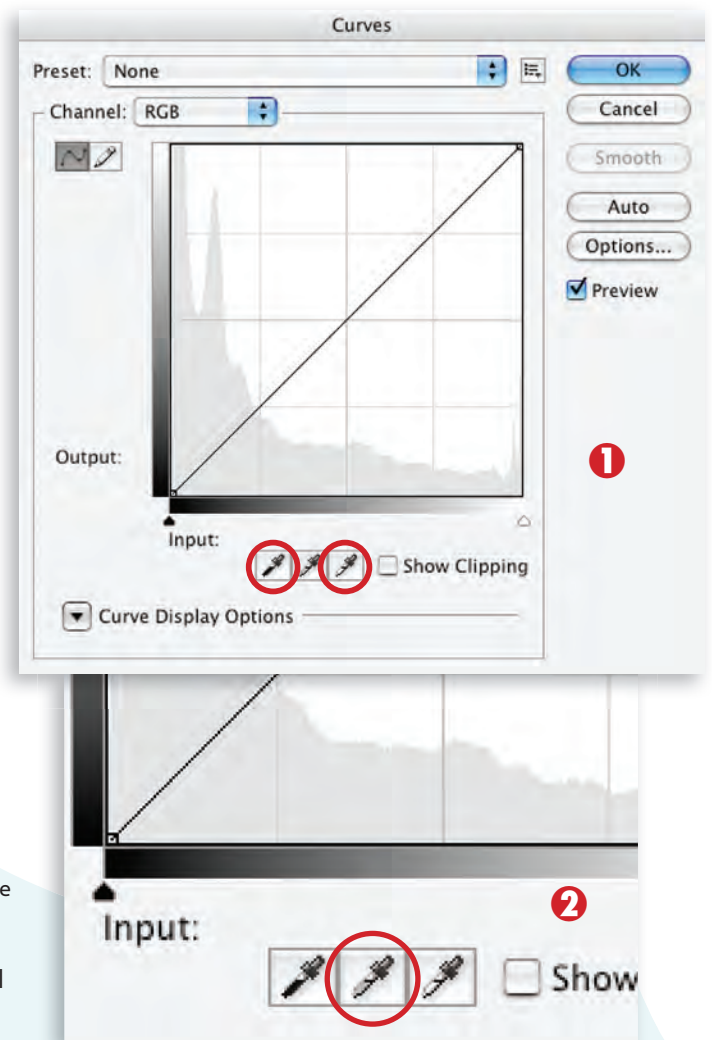
**1 Set appropriate white and black points, using the eyedropper tools in the Curves or Levels dialog box.** Start with the darkest and lightest data points in the image, but keep clicking on different points until the overall look of the image has the right amount of brightness and snap.

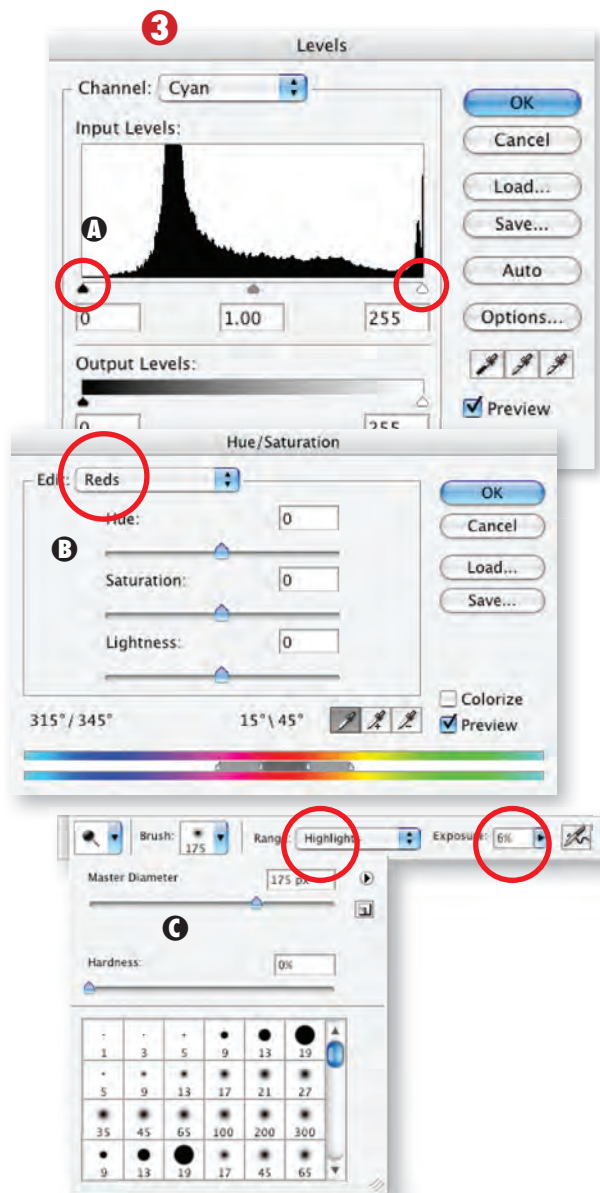
Often, the white point that works best is an area slightly darker than the technical white point, and the best black point is slightly lighter than the darkest point. Sometimes, the technical white point is a poor choice for the image; for example, the highlight from a street lamp or the reflection of the sun off a window. These specular highlights don't reflect the real tonal range of the image. The right choice for the white point is a creative decision that needs real eyes looking at the composition. Selecting the proper white and black points has the added benefit of minimizing color casts in shadows and highlights.

**2 Set the appropriate neutral gray point, using the middle eyedropper tool in the Curves or Levels dialog box.**

Find an area in the photo that should be a neutral gray and click on it with the middle eyedropper tool. This might involve quite a lot of clicking around the image, and sometimes the right choice may not be neutral at all, depending on the intent of the photographer. It makes little sense aesthetically to convert the golden-yellow of a sunset scene to a neutral color balance, and you'll find no good point that looks natural.

To a great extent, it's a judgment call and an acquired skill. Trying many middle-gray points can show lots of possible corrections; the one where the most natural delineation of subtle color variations "snaps" into alignment is the best choice. Eventually, you know it when you see it.





ORIGINAL



AFTER 3-STEP COLOR CORRECTION



**3 Convert to CMYK and do some additional touch-up.** The histogram for the CMYK image will look different than the RGB version. Conversion to the more-limited gamut of CMYK may cause only a subtle visual change or—in the case of bright blue sea or sky—a dramatic and usually dulling change. Using the **Levels** and **Hue/Saturation** dialogs, plus the **Dodge** tool (set for Highlights), this final touch-up will improve color saturation, create more neutral highlights and add the elusive “snap” to the picture.

**A** In the **Levels** dialog, for each color channel (C, M and Y), use the black slider to adjust the density of the image and brighten color lost through conversion; use the white slider to eliminate the last of a cast in the highlight areas. In most cases, the black channel should be left alone.

**B** Next, use the **Hue/Saturation** dialog (Command-U) to add some final color enhancement or tame specific colors that have “bloomed” during correction. Adding a few points of saturation will improve most images. The most common correction reduces the Red component of the color range (pull down the Edit: selection bar to Red) to tame the reds that often mar flesh tones and give people a sunburned glow.

**C** Finally, most images can use a little help popping off the printed page. Technically, this is accomplished by adding contrast in the darker areas of the image—improving detail, reducing plugging in the shadows, and most importantly, brightening the image. Select the **Dodge** tool, set the

range for Highlights, and change the exposure to between 3 and 8%. A large-diameter brush with a hardness of zero works well, but it’s easy to overdo it. A deft hand with the tool is important. Multiple attempts and undos usually prove that less is more. Especially, avoid painting in highlight areas, as the dodge tool will quickly turn the pixels white. The best rule-of-thumb is that if the correction looks too obvious, it probably is.

### POOR EXPOSURES

Even with a good exposure, the dynamic range of an image can exceed the camera sensor’s ability to capture data, resulting in blown-out highlights or too-dark midtones. The ability to print the dynamic range of a digital image in CMYK is limited, too, so some compensation should be applied to improve the printability of the image.

Although there are many approaches to bringing detail out of shadows and highlights in Photoshop, the best one-stop solution is the **Shadow/Highlights** Adjustment (Image>Adjustments>Shadow/Highlights). This powerful manipulation tool can improve a picture or ruin it, depending on the skill of the operator. The tool is most effective with the Show More Options box checked—and also far more dangerous.

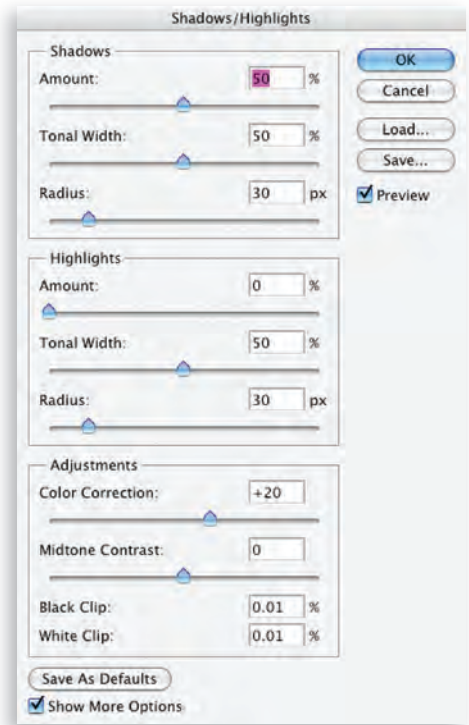
In its most basic mode, it compresses the dynamic range of an image toward the mid-tones, making shadows lighter and highlights darker, although these two functions operate independently. Far more often, the shadows need lightening, and the exact adjustment is critical. The extended controls allow adjustment of both the affected tonal range and the amount of effect applied to pixels surrounding the target adjustment. The effect of these adjustments extends the amount of the image tones that are adjusted, widening the reach of the effect. Although the factory default for the amount is 50%, a better default is 20%. The radius is a function of image size, but most magazine-bound images work best at a 20–40 pixel radius.

Finding the best adjustment is a matter of experimenting with variations in the Amount and Tonal Width sliders until the detail in the shadows is brought out, yet still appears realistic against the midtone values. It’s easy to overdo it, so erring on the side of discretion is always better.

ORIGINAL



AFTER ADJUSTMENT



In images with blown-out highlights, use the Highlights adjustments to find detail in areas that seem pure white by reconstructing detail on all channels if it's available in only one channel. Sometimes, the effect seems magical, but always lurking is the danger of flattening the image's tonal range.

By tweaking both the Midtone Contrast and the Color Correction sliders, you can finesse the final look, adding some needed snap and desaturating the color in the newly revealed shadow areas. Again, a little adjustment goes a long way here.

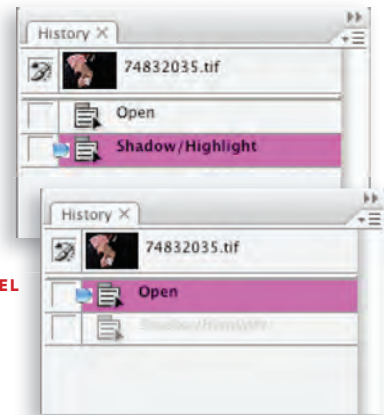
**AFTER YOU'VE MADE ALL THE CORRECTIONS** described above, how can you evaluate the quality of your work? The best tool is your own set of eyes. Using the **History** palette,

you can revert the image to the original data. Then, clicking on the last item in the palette should "peel away" an obscuring off-color or cloudy film from the image. If the effect is too extreme, or the image loses its natural complexity through overmanipulation, it's an indication that you need to start over again and apply more conservative changes.

There's no way to make a bad image look as good as a well-shot picture. It's easier to make a decent image look great than a poor image look acceptable, but sometimes you have to work with what you have. These techniques can serve as a useful starting point for your own solutions, and maybe even save your butt when there's no other choice. **[FPO]**

**SHADOWS & LIGHT** This powerful dialog can bring details out of the shadows and find detail in blown-out highlights—but too much of a good thing can look bad.

**IMAGE WITH A PEEL** A quick check of the original image after you've made all your corrections will prove you've made all the right moves.



## [FPO] PRO TIPS

### Bail Yourself Out of Trouble

**FEWER IS BETTER.**

Every alteration of the pixel structure introduces randomness that destroys the original natural relationships of the pixels. The more moves that are made, the more randomness is introduced. If you end up making repeated small moves, it's better to start over and make one precise move.

**GO OVERBOARD.**

The best way to gauge a correction is to overdo it. Adding brightness to an image by moving the highlight slider to the center may blow all the detail from highlights, but it could make the rest of the picture look great. And it's hard to tell when there's enough Unsharp Masking until you've gone too far and backed off a bit.

**MAKE SURE YOU'RE FEELING 100%.**

Viewing your image at 100% provides an exact pixel-for-pixel relationship with your monitor that makes a difference when sharpening or blurring images. Although not nearly as critical for color correction work, enlarging the image as close to 100% as possible still pays off.

**TRY "AUTO" PILOT.**

Clicking the "auto" bar in Levels and Curves does the same thing: finding the first shadow and highlight data point in each channel and moving the adjustment sliders right up to them, effectively spreading all the data over the entire range. Sometimes, this dramatically improves the picture—and sometimes makes it look awful. Still, it doesn't hurt to try it. You can always hold the option key down and revert to cancel the move without closing the dialog box.

**BE BLUE.**

The most common color cast is caused by incandescent lighting. RGB images can be corrected easily since the correction usually involves moving the highlight slider in the Blue channel until it reaches some data points, then compensating for bluish tints with a small move of the highlight slider in the Green channel.

**TRUST YOUR EYES.**

When you're confident that your monitor calibration represents a close approximation of the printed image, your color correction can actually improve the original image. The goal of down-and-dirty correction is to make an image that prints great, not that matches some previous sample or even an original film transparency.

# [Tool BOX]

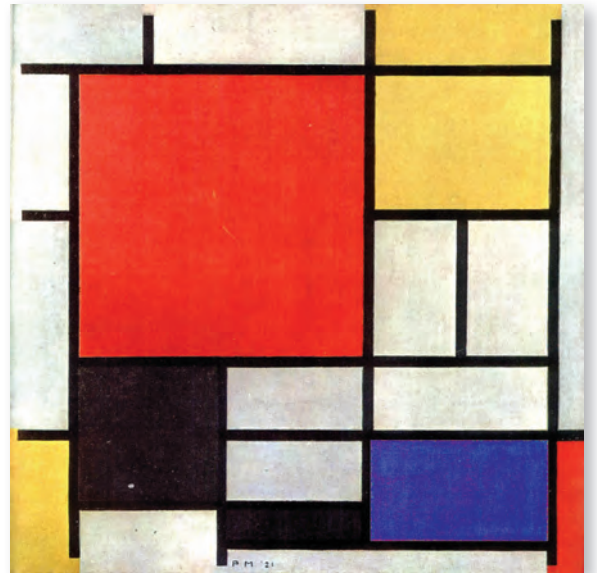
## LAYOUT

### Mondrian Was a Painter

If you're gonna use the name, know why.

TODAY, DESIGNERS OFTEN TOSS around the phrase "Mondrian layout" to describe a composition of multiple related parts defined by a structured grid using asymmetrical elements, either typographic or visual. But Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) was a painter, best known for the Cubist-influenced primary-colored works he produced from 1920 onward.

This deceptively simple geometric style is marked by rigid horizontal and vertical lines, usually black, against a



white canvas, punctuated by squares of yellow, red and blue. These minimalist abstractions were an expression of the spiritual nature that motivated Mondrian throughout his career.

For many designers, Mondrian has become a term more associated with Swiss Style—a graphic design movement created in the 1950s by Swiss designers Emil Ruder, Armin Hofmann and Josef Müller-Brockman that emphasized grids, asymmetry and sans serif type. Looking at the work of Ruder, it's easy to see how Mondrian's work could be referenced. Although there's no direct attribution to Mondrian in the writing of any of these influential designers, the timeline and aesthetic leanings certainly make it more than probable.

Can Mondrian the layout be enriched by insight from Mondrian the painter? Here's how he described the thinking behind his work:

*"I construct lines and color combinations on a flat surface, in order to express general beauty with the utmost awareness. Nature (or, that which I see) inspires me, puts me, as with any painter, in an emotional state so that an urge comes about to make something, but I want*

MOMMYFIT

by Jeannette Jenkins, The Hollywood Trainer  
Fitness instructor to stars like Queen Latifah and Carmen Electra

# 21 Days

## TO A BRAND NEW YOU

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit" - Aristotle

Exclusively designed for \$25 readers

**DAY 1** Total Body Circuit

**DAY 2** Cardio Burn

**DAY 3** Total Body Circuit

**DAY 4** Cardio Burn

**DAY 5** Total Body Circuit

**DAY 6** Cardio Burn

**DAY 7** Rest, relax and rejuvenate

**SCULPTING**

**1** Squat with shoulder press (10-15 reps) (60 seconds)

**2** Reverse lunge with bicep curls (10-15 reps on each leg) (60 seconds)

**3** Standing leg lift with tricep kickbacks (10-15 reps on each leg) (60 seconds)

**CARDIO**

**BEGINNER:** March in place (60 seconds)

**INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED:** Jog in place (60 seconds)

**BEGINNER:** Step touch from side to side (60 seconds)

**INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED:** Jumping jacks (60 seconds)

**BEGINNER:** Alternating knee-ups (60 seconds)

**INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED:** Alternating front kicks (60 seconds)

# TYPE SET

## Rag Momma Rag

Ragged right type is all the rage, but do right right.

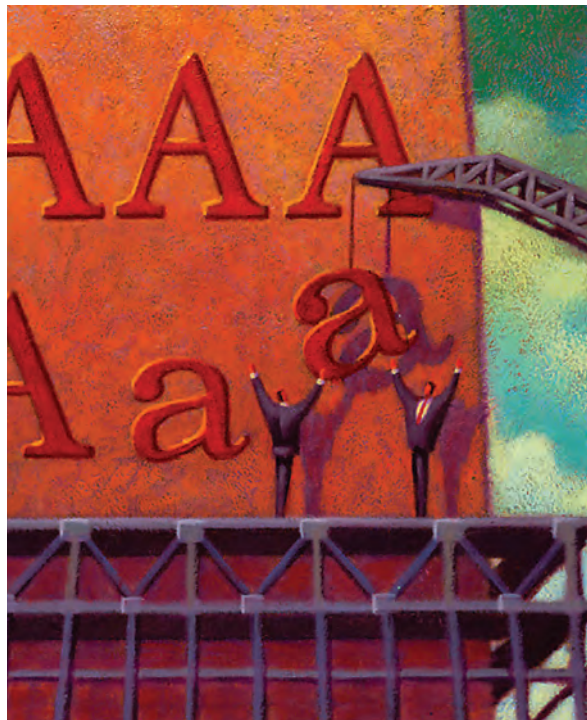
*to come as close as possible to the truth and abstract everything from that, until I reach the foundation (still just an external foundation!) of things...*

*"I believe it is possible that, through horizontal and vertical lines constructed with awareness, but not with calculation, led by high intuition, and brought to harmony and rhythm, these basic forms of beauty, supplemented if necessary by other direct lines or curves, can become a work of art, as strong as it is true."*

Using Mondrian's ideal, the beauty and effectiveness of the layout result from the tension created between the systematic and the intuitive, as well as pressure to move the eyes around the contained rectangular nature of a spread. Positioning of the graphic elements contributes to the grace and balance.

Mondrian's "Composition with Red, Yellow, Blue and Black" (1921) demonstrates the approach. There are major elements and a determined compositional imperative to move the eye around the canvas. The large red square acts as a counterbalance to the blue and reflects the edge of the canvas, while contrasting with the busy interplay of the black lines that form the grid structure. The color rectangles lay against the grid in a counter-clockwise swirl that ends at the bottom right corner, while the black, white and gray squares resolve the movement to rest on the single blue rectangle. Yet, nothing seems simple or predictable.

The spread from *Sister2Sister* magazine at left shows a Mondrian-like layout. Multiple-size rectangular units—some text and some images—are designed to move your eye around the page and resolve itself at the bottom right. Why? To move you to the next spread. Mission accomplished. [FPO]



CLASSIC SWISS-STYLE DESIGN advocated sans fonts and ragged-right margins. Today, that use has become more widespread, even finding its way into such old-fashioned publications as *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* (although not as the primary body type). You're looking at ragged-right type now.

There are lots of good reasons why it's become popular. Better-looking type and greater legibility are often cited. Justified type is harder to set with an even gray color, is prone to excessive hyphenation,

and creates more egregious rivers and valleys within type blocks. However, all of these issues can easily be overcome by a skilled typographer.

Much commentary refers to studies that offer evidence of greater legibility for ragged-right text, usually owing to the more even presentation of word- and letter-spacing. But the real gist of many of these studies is that the reading process is incredibly adaptable and individual aptitude is far more variable than any other factor.

So, if typesetting skill and legibility factors are taken from the argument, what is the reason for the move toward greater use of ragged-right type? One factor is certainly cultural. Justified type is identified as more conservative and formal; a rag is seen as the opposite. As our culture has become increasingly informal, perhaps our typographic tastes have moved in the same direction. Another argument is that the ragged alignment softens the rigid grid structure that underlies most publications and avoids the strong negative space created by straight gutters. A third possibility is that the huge range of typographic choice, both in weight ranges within families (for example, the font *Agenda* has *seven* weights) and the sheer number of fonts available ▶▶▶

▶▶▶ have lessened the need for the clear distinction of body type from captions, sidebar material and other content that create complex pages.

These are all valid rationales for choosing ragged-right type over justified type. But there is a fourth: The designer just happens to like the look of it. The “rules” of typography have become far more subjective since desktop publishing relieved typesetters of their proprietary ability to generate product.

Setting type with a rag still requires some care. These five points can serve as a checklist for improving your own product.

**1. AVOID HYPHENATION, BUT DON'T ELIMINATE IT.** Many traditional typographers insist that hyphenation should be entirely unnecessary with lines of uneven length. To some degree that is true, but not everyone can be expected to tweak lines for an even rag. Setting hyphens for no more than one in a row will minimize their use and still provide a nice tight rag.

**2. FORCE CONSISTENT WORD- AND LETTER-SPACING.** Use your H&J settings in Quark to make a style or use the justification screen that's part of a paragraph style box in InDesign and make the minimum, maximum

and desired settings identical. While rag-right settings use little spacing alteration, this will ensure that there is none.

**3. GIVE YOURSELF A LITTLE EXTRA GUTTER.** Justified type can have a slim gutter—as small as 6 points—and still look good, but ragged type needs a little extra space to give the right margins a clean appearance. At least 12 points, but preferably 18 points, in the gutter make nicer-looking columns.

**4. DON'T RAG AROUND RUN-AROUNDS.** Creating a special justified paragraph style for use when wrapping around an object

takes a bit of finagling, but the result is worth it.

**5. TWEAK A LITTLE.** You could go crazy, but a little experimentation with tracking can even out some paragraphs. When a long line between two short lines creates an obvious bad rag, some experimental hyphenation a few lines above can reset the rest of the paragraph. This is a perfect application of *discretionary hyphens* (command-shift-hyphen).

Justified type may still be alive and well, but ragged-right type has become preferable in a wide variety of publications—including ours. **[FPO]**

## WRITER'S BLOG

BY JANE CLELAND

### Thinking Backwards

Imagining what your article looks like *after* it's designed can make your writing better.

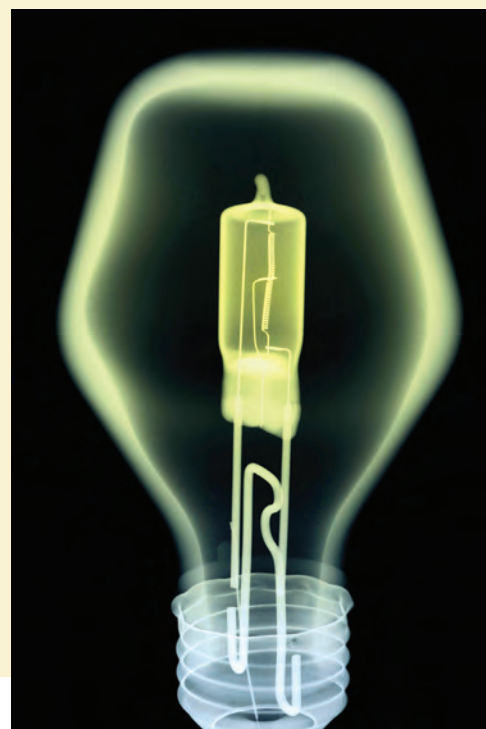
IT'S COUNTER-INTUITIVE, but sometimes the quickest way to write killer copy is to slow down and give some thought to how it will look in a magazine layout. Before you put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, ask yourself what components your editor needs you to fill and how to satisfy the publication's overall look and feel.

Most professional writers spend a fair amount of time thinking about the points they want to make; the examples that will resonate with their editors and readers; and the facts, quotes, references and other forms of proof they want to integrate into the content. But what many freelance and even some staff writers don't think about much (or at all) is how savvy writing can be improve the design.

Doing so can facilitate reader acceptance and understanding. For example, Linda Landigran, editor-in-chief of *Alfred*

*Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*, says that before writing her editor's letter, she first considers the issue's theme, how all the stories link together. From this assessment, she determines whether she'll create a light and airy bulleted list of key points or whether the theme is more appropriately written as denser narrative. "Readers get visual clues that help draw them in to the content," she says.

Other times, writing to a specific design is an essential part of branding. "Readers buy our materials because they're easy to read and easy to understand. Our design and format support that accessibility," explains Paula Munier, director of product development for Adams Media. "We buy writing based on a design blueprint. We like sidebars, illustrations, charts and bulleted lists, so we require writers to organize their content to suit those design imperatives."



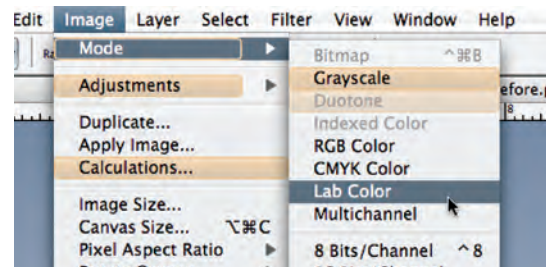
# IMAGE CONSULTANT

## Back to the LAB

This least-known color space has some surprising strengths.

**MOST PHOTOSHOP USERS** understand color spaces because we learn early in our training about the native technologies that use them. So, RGB is the color space of electronic transmissive-color devices used in video and digital still cameras, and CMYK is the format used by printing presses to render color images on paper. But, from the first version of Photoshop there has been another color space that is seldom mentioned: LAB—Luminance\*a\*b\*, pronounced *ell-ay-bee*. With the largest gamut of any color space, LAB is capable of numerically describing colors outside human perception. Because LAB color is device-independent, its numerical values should yield the same result when applied in a variety of situations—an important capability for industrial designers and global manufacturing.

But, what is the value of LAB for photographers and production people? Since



it's based on human perceptual values, it excels at corrections that involve brightness, contrast and dynamic range. And since the color axes are separate from grayscale information, color casts and saturation are easier to accomplish, and cause less degradation of the original data. Finally, since the color gamut is huge, there are seldom losses associated with conversion into the color space, and few artifacts with conversion back into RGB or CMYK. ▶▶▶

If you want to experiment with this approach, it can be helpful to ask yourself these questions:

### What mood does the layout convey?

(Or, what mood does your editor want?) Does he want the layout to appear:

- ▶ **Serious and conservative?** Write longer sentences and paragraphs and use fewer illustrations and other graphic devices.
- ▶ **Friendly and playful?** Write shorter sentences and integrate more graphics.
- ▶ **Newsy?** Use kickers and select content-rich photographs that lend themselves to captions that explain why the photograph was chosen, not merely what it shows.
- ▶ **Educational?** Add sidebars packed with how-to instructions, tips, shortcuts and the like.

### How committed are the publication's readers? Are they:

- ▶ **Devoted?** Provide loads of details without worrying about the denseness or complexity of the text.

- ▶ **Scanners?** Integrate white space to allow for easy starts and stops.
- ▶ **Seeking out something specific?** Clearly differentiate units of content.

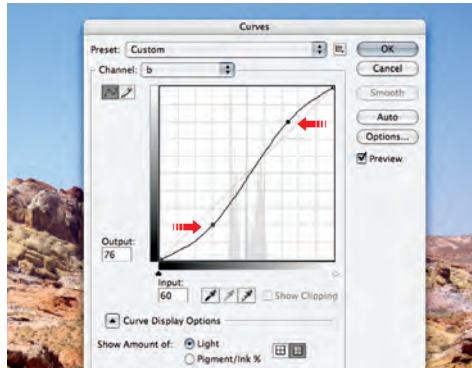
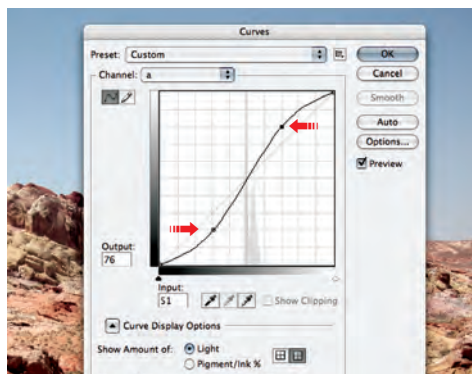
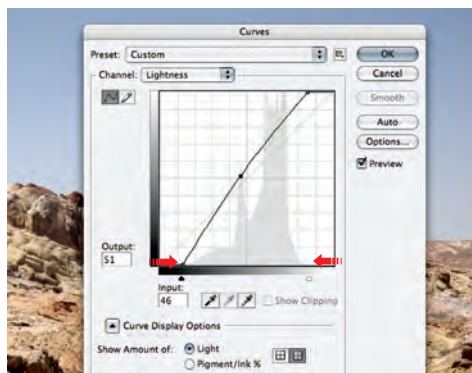
The benefits of using this strategy stretch beyond the speed and efficiency of writing; you'll help designers bring your words to life. Certainly, the editor and you, as the author, are in the best position to know which points should be highlighted. By thinking of the layout from a design perspective, you help the designer showcase your words. Further, communicating your suggestions positions you as an ally, not an adversary. You'll be viewed as a team player and as someone who's easy to work with if you go the extra mile and suggest which parts of the content will:

- ▶ likely hook readers' interest (pull quotes/blurbs).
- ▶ serve as a "take-away" listing (sidebars, inserts).
- ▶ add secondary and/or tertiary benefits (kickers/subheadings).

- ▶ segregate units of content that may be of interest to some (but not all) of your readers, such as technical specs, a success story and the like (text boxes).
- ▶ work well in promotional or editorial contexts (abstracts used to flesh out tables of content, editorial letters or notes, decks).

VISUALIZING THE DESIGN before you write can be a shortcut to producing on-the-mark writing as well as facilitating a harmonious design. The bottom line: Don't write in a vacuum; instead, picture the layout from the reader's perspective, then use that image to clarify and structure your content and communicate your ideas to the designer. [FPO]

**JANE K. CLELAND** is the author of business communications books, including *How to Create High Impact Design* and *Business Writing for Results*. She also authors the Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery novels. *Antiques to Die For*, the third in the St. Martin's Minotaur series, will be published in April 2008.



**LOOK AROUND THE LAB**

When you convert an image into LAB, you'll see three channels. The L channel looks like a grayscale picture, but the a\* and b\* channels look almost like the images on old glass photo plates—nearly flat, 50% gray images with subtle variations in tone that are different for each channel. But, go into Photoshop's preferences and check "Show Channels in Color" in the Interface selection, and you'll see that a\* is actually magenta/green and b\* is blue/yellow.

Together, a\* and b\* contain all of the color data but none of the value information. In many ways, LAB is much more similar to the way we "see" images and so correction is more intuitive.

The histograms, too, have some surprises. While the L channel looks like a familiar curve, the a\* and b\* channels show very dense information in the midtones and hardly any data at the extremes. The relationship between the magenta/green and blue/yellow channels makes a neutral gray when both channels have pixels right at 1.00.

**WHEN TO GO TO THE LAB**

With the value information all in one channel, it's easy to change the overall contrast and snap of an image. The Shadow/High-light adjustments look more natural in LAB

**LAB RETRIEVER** Above, adjusting this image from Valley of Fire State Park in Nevada reveals the bright strata the area is known for. Below, adjusting the lightness channel for snap, and the a\* and b\* channels for saturation creates a vivid image.

(although, as mentioned in "SOS: Images in Distress" on page 44, a little adjustment goes a long way).

The LAB color space is ideal for correcting color casts in pictures and adding saturation. Changing the midpoint of the a and b channels varies the cast dramatically through the interaction of only two channels, making corrections easier. Moving the quarter-tone and three-quarter-tone points toward the center adds even saturation to the colors while minimizing JPEG artifacts or color blooming that occur in other color spaces.

LAB is a great choice for flat, desaturated images that need life breathed into them with added dynamic range, stronger colors and subtle color cast correction. In *Photoshop LAB Color: The Canyon Conundrum and Other Adventures in the Most Powerful Color Space*, author and color guru Dan Margulis demonstrates how foggy aerial images or bleached-out desertscapes can be improved through two simple moves in the Curves dialog.

**THIS ONLY HEADS THE LIST** of LAB color strengths. With color separated from value, making specific color replacements becomes easier and more natural-looking, and subtle retouching can improve flesh tones on portraits and bring out highlights without blowing out whites. If you've never tried the LAB color space, it's worth your time to move a lackluster image or two into it and do some experimenting for yourself. And get the book. [FPO]



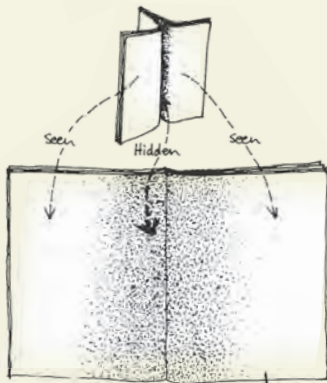
# THE WHITE STUFF

BY JAN V. WHITE

## Read 'em and Sweep

The cover catches your curiosity about something. You pick up the issue to find out more. Flip, flip and there it is—wowie! In theory, at least.

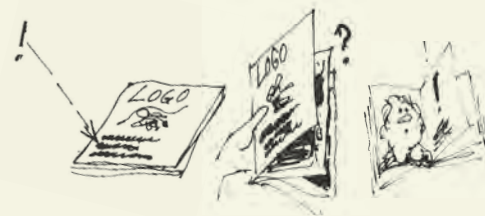
A PUBLICATION IS FAR MORE COMPLEX than a stack of single-page or two-page-spread layouts stuck together in a package. A well-made magazine is not a random mess, but a deliberately planned, carefully constructed template with physical characteristics on which the “design” must be applied. These practicalities should be obvious, so why are they often ignored? The object is picked up...and held by the spine...in order to flip the pages. The inside is hidden because the hand is holding it, and the only parts that are visible are the outsides of the pages.



**THE VALUABLE SPACE IS ON THE OUTSIDES**, so should we always put the most valuable material there? Unfortunately again, it is a bit more complicated than just using the outsides. When you flip the pages of a publication, looking for what interests you, where do you actually look?

**THE PAGE TOP IS WHERE YOUR EYES STAY** (unless something dramatic pulls them down the page). Try it. Remember that when you design pages, you may be working on a flat-surfaced monitor, but your product is on floppy paper that remains unseen until it is revealed on purpose by your target viewer.

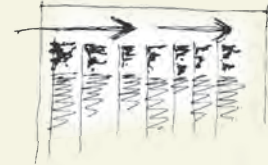
**THE TOP-LEFT AND TOP-RIGHT CORNERS ARE THE MOST VALUABLE REAL ESTATE.** The least valuable is the bottom near the gutter.



**DISPLAY PICTURES ACROSS THE PAGE-TOPS**, because that's where they will do the publication the most good—that's where they will be noticed. Forget about page composition and balance and “design” and all that. Magazine-making is not art but industrial design.

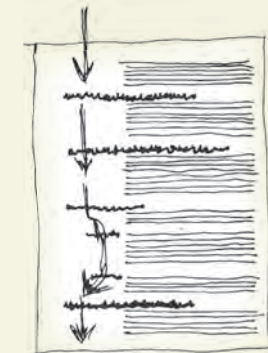


**THE VIEWER'S EYE TRAVELS LEFT-TO-RIGHT.** Take advantage of the motion—flow choices as though they were laid out as a buffet (rather than as long sausages in vertical text columns).



**NEXT, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VERTICAL SCANNING DIRECTION.**

The curious viewer's eye will follow down the page, after it's caught by something at the top. Give viewers reasons to stop and then pull them into the message by displaying the highlights as hanging indents in white space.



It's not only clever, creative subject matter that will stop the uncaring page-flipper, but where it's placed on the page by the canny art director. [FPO]

**JAN V. WHITE**, author of the classic *Editing by Design*, lectures worldwide on the relationship of graphic design to editing. He persuades word people to think visually and visual people to think verbally, because blending their skills increases impact and quality.

Illustrations from *Editing by Design*, Third Edition, by Jan V. White, 2003, Allworth Press, N.Y. ([www.allworth.com](http://www.allworth.com)).

# HANDS-ON BY MICHAEL BRADY

## Faster Means SMARTER

Focus on your work by learning how to make common tasks EASIER.

SURE, IT'S HARD TO FOCUS on customizing your layout program when designs and deadlines are hounding you. But time spent making your program your own can improve your workflow exponentially. These QuarkXPress and InDesign tips and tricks cover three areas—configuration, layout, and text and type—and will help you concentrate more on designing the magazine and less on running the software.

It's an ongoing struggle, when using a professional layout program, to control and organize your workspace. With a few changes, you can maximize your comfort and convenience.

### GO CONFIGURE!

**KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS** You don't have to keep the program as it's set up, right out of the box.

Many programs (for example, Word, InDesign, Photoshop) allow you to change default settings, customize the appearance of menus and add keyboard shortcuts. In Quark you need some outside help, but luckily there's Badia Software's LiveKeys, an XTension that adds complete keyboard

functionality. You can assign shortcuts for such things as applying title caps, sentence-

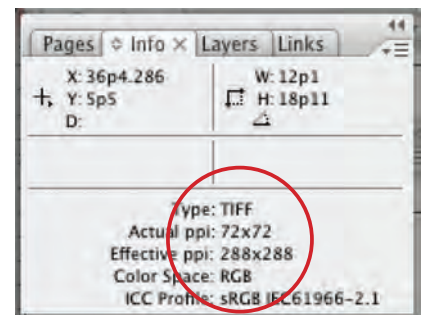
style caps or all lowercase to selected text; scrolling up and down by a full spread (not just a full screen) and by single pages; merging and unmerging table cells; and opening the Table Cell Fills dialog box.

A custom keyboard shortcut can also change a clumsy (or annoying) default to more “natural” behavior. By default, when you type the Tab key while in a table cell in InDesign, the cursor moves to the next cell. If you want to insert a tab character, you have to remember to type Opt-Tab (Ctrl-Tab in Quark). Why not change the behavior so that Opt-Tab moves the cursor to the next cell, which then allows you to type a Tab character in a cell and have a Tab character appear? What's more, you can assign keyboard shortcuts to Paragraph and Character Styles in Quark and InDesign—right there in the General section, when you define the style, under the “style name” and “based on” pop-up menus. Just type in the shortcut (using a modifier key and a number on the number pad) and voilà, you have a quick keystroke to assign the style to the selected text.

**REDUCE CLUTTER** As you work, the panels and palettes—those floating boxes you use to adjust various layout features—seem to grow like mushrooms after a summer rain. Soon, your layout is obscured by them. InDesign

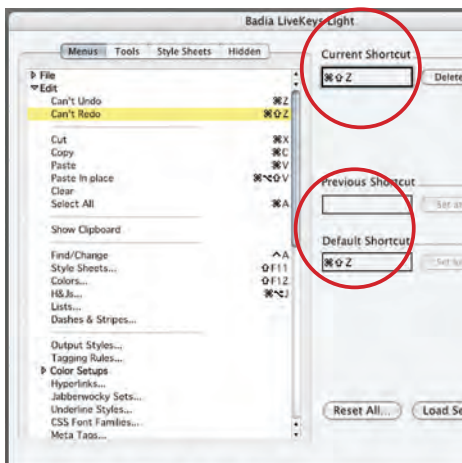


CS3 allows you to float the panels in the central space of the screen and collapse them into thin title bars, or drag them to the sides of the screen and reduce them to small icons in a “dock” area. When even that becomes clutter, InDesign's toggle feature lets you hide and show all the panels. A variation is to hide all the panels except the Toolbar, leaving it visible. Quark lets you do almost all of the same things, shrinking palettes to just the title bar. To minimize palettes in both programs, choose the smallest size view of the contents.



### LAYOUT POSITION

**GET INFO!** The Info panel in InDesign (Window>Info, or

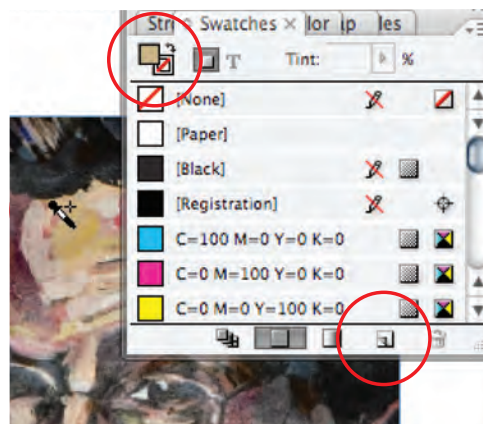


F8) might seem to be of little benefit, but it can give you some useful data while you're working. For example, you can put your text cursor in a story and find out how many characters, words, lines and paragraphs are in the frame. You can select an image and see its dimensions, resolution in pixels per inch (ppi), color space and color profile. InDesign even displays both the "Actual ppi," meaning the resolution of the image at full size, and the "Effective ppi," meaning the resolution at its final size. If you have a large image at a low resolution (say, 72 ppi) and you reduce it dramatically (say, to 25%), the Info panel shows that you wind up with a final image with an effective resolution sufficient for good halftone output (288 ppi). Or, if you place a small image at a high resolution (say, 300 ppi) and enlarge it a great deal (say, 3 times), you can see that its effective resolution becomes too low for good output (in this case, 100 ppi). With the Info panel, you can save time verifying that all the images you've placed in the layout are suitable for high-resolution output. While Quark doesn't offer this in the program, Badia Software's FullMeasure Control Palette Enhancer does.

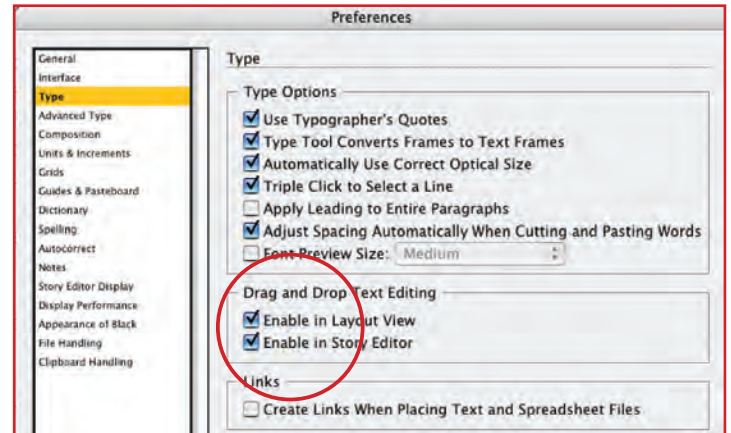
**LAYERS** Use styles for text and layers for complicated layouts. Layers allow you to manage the stacking order of elements, to segregate and lock objects so you can work on other objects without accidentally moving them (especially useful in maps and diagrams), and to switch between variations (for example, of the background picture) within the same document. An

especially useful effect of layers is the ability to put items like page numbers on a high layer on the Master Page and then have them appear in front of other objects on lower layers on the live pages.

**COLORS ON-THE-FLY** In InDesign, you can add a color to the Swatches panel on the fly. If you create a color box by using the color fill or outline box on the tools panel, or use the eyedropper on a placed image to load a color, you'll notice it shows up at the top of the swatches panel in the little selection box at top left (below). Simply click on the "New Swatch" icon at the bottom (next to the trash can) and the color is automatically added to your palette. There's no way to do this in Quark without the help of add-on extensions. But the i-Dropper tool from Gluon does the same thing for Quark.



**COLOR MY WORLD** If you want to change the colors of several different objects to one color in InDesign (and you don't need those other colors elsewhere in the layout), do this: In the Swatches panel, select the new color you want to change the objects to and drag it to the top of the panel, then select all



the other color swatches. With the color swatches highlighted, select Merge Swatches from the flyout menu. The color swatches will be merged to the top color, the other swatches will disappear and the color of the objects will change to the top color. In Quark you can do much the same thing, but you need to option-click on a color to bring up the colors dialog box. Then, Command-click the colors

you want to delete and select a single replacement color for them all.

**JUST MY TYPE**

**DRAG AND DROP EDITING** InDesign's drag and drop text editing is enabled by default in the Story Editor, but not in the layout. If you want to use it during layout, just change the preferences: Open the Preferences >Type dialog pane and check "Enable in Layout." You enable drag and drop editing in Quark in the Preferences panel in the Input Settings sub-dialog.

**FONTS WITH FACES** For an alternative to plain text for

your next headline, place an image into the text—right there, inside the letter shapes. InDesign and Quark allow you to convert any text character to outlines (Type>Create Outlines). From there, select an image, position it over the outlined text, cut it, then paste it inside the group of letters. Once you do, the text is no longer editable, so you can't use the spell checker and other features on it. But you can do other nifty things to it, like apply a gradient blend. It's as easy as selecting the letters or words with the text tool, opening the Gradient panel and applying a gradient. You can also apply a gradient swatch from the Swatches panel to the selected text. To adjust it, simply open the Gradient panel and tweak the colors. [FPO]

**MICHAEL BRADY** is a designer and artist living in Hillsborough, N.C. Starting in the late '60s, his career as a graphic designer has spanned hot metal, cold type and almost 20 years of the digital revolution we know as DTP. In addition to art and design, Brady writes art criticism, art reviews and magazine articles about publishing and electronic design. Reach Michael at [www.michaelbradydesign.com](http://www.michaelbradydesign.com).

BY JINNA HAGERTY

## Always Low Prices

Top picks of some of the CHEAPEST stock sites on the Web

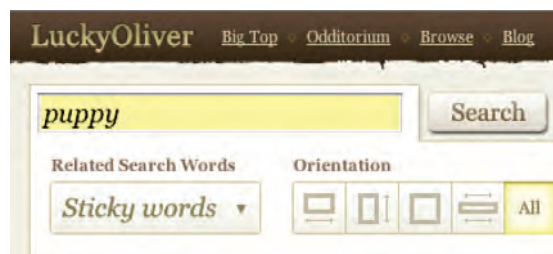
**TRADITIONAL STOCK ART SITES**, such as Getty Images, have an impressive collection of images, but even the royalty-free ones can cost hundreds of dollars to use. Is it possible to find great images at bargain-basement prices? Maybe. Now there's an alternative—microstock sites.

These sites sell incredibly low-priced royalty-free images—some for as little as a dollar an image. How do they do this? They've harnessed the incredible power of Internet distribution to collect the work of thousands of photographers—amateur and professional—who are willing to sell their work for pennies an image. [FPO] took a look at the burgeoning microstock market, and the bottom line is that it provides designers with a surprisingly impressive combination of quality and ease of use.

### HOW WE GRADED

To see how they stack up against their more pricey counterparts, we tested a number of these sites for ease of use, consistency of image quality and search relevance. Excluded (for now) are microstock sites with exclusively subscription-based pricing models. We used the same keywords on a variety of sites, timed the results, noted the number of returned images, and evaluated the relevance of the results, as well as the quality of the images. We judged the sites on their ease of use and the community-building tools that improved the user experience. Then, we created ratings from 1 (most annoying) to 5 (most valuable).

In the end, we found that while image quality with microstock sites can sometimes fall short—no surprise—most more than make up for it with their community-building features, surprisingly thorough search options, and, of course, price. Ultimately, these images cost next to nothing. And what publisher doesn't love that?



### ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

EASE OF USE 5  
IMAGE QUALITY 4  
SEARCH RELEVANCE 4  
1,800,000+ IMAGES



**WHAT WE LIKE** We couldn't help but give a nod to the big, friendly giant that was one of the first to offer decent \$1 illustrations and establish a solid online community. It offers a superb variety of mostly consistent quality. **WHAT WE DON'T** Everyone already knows about it. You'll meet few people in the industry who haven't heard of this site already. That includes Getty Images, which purchased this site in 2006 for \$50 million.

### LUCKYOLIVER.COM

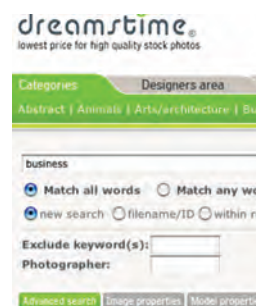
EASE OF USE 3  
IMAGE QUALITY 4  
SEARCH RELEVANCE 5  
100,000+ IMAGES

**WHAT WE LIKE** LuckyOliver provides a great space for photographers and designers alike. Hard-working and earnest, LO staff members really do pay attention to relevant keyword matching and image quality. Oh, and the really big type is easy on the eyes. **WHAT WE DON'T** Maybe just a little over the (big) top, the site is extremely user friendly

unless you aren't familiar with the lingo. In terms of stock photography, what are "carnies" anyway?

### DREAMSTIME.COM

EASE OF USE 4  
IMAGE QUALITY 3  
SEARCH RELEVANCE 3  
1,400,000+ IMAGES



**WHAT WE LIKE** This site offers users easy control over very specific and well-categorized search options. Users can choose parameters that span from model age to image license type. Don't see what you're looking for? Time permitting, you can test out the photo request thread on their message board. **WHAT WE DON'T** The opening page doesn't impress and a number of images we reviewed were uninspired. But there are definitely valid reasons to try it out yourself.

### CRESTOCK.COM

EASE OF USE 3  
IMAGE QUALITY 2  
SEARCH RELEVANCE 2  
100,000+ IMAGES



**WHAT WE LIKE** Judge Ross, the Crestock baby and articles like "10 Stock Photos That Just WON'T Sell!" add a sense of humor to a site that is very serious about photography. Crestock clearly focuses on building great community. **WHAT WE DON'T** Not the best organized interface, but it works. As for search relevance and image quality, they're spotty. However, as microstock sites expand, there's more room to purge underqualified images. Crestock is doing just that.

### PHOTOCASE.COM

EASE OF USE 1  
IMAGE QUALITY 5  
SEARCH RELEVANCE 1  
95,000+ IMAGES



**WHAT WE LIKE** Or in this case, what we love—Photocase. It's daring but not all that practical. This site emphasizes the availability of exceptional images, and if we were fluent in German, we'd love it even more. **WHAT WE DON'T** Photocase is not for the print designer...yet. This is a place to keep in mind for your next hip Web project.

## Opticals No Illusion

### EXTRA, EXTRA

Here are some other sites that we found to be worthwhile. The following may be new, unusual or difficult to categorize, but they're still inexpensive sources.

### BIGWHITEBOX.COM

Limited database, but the proceeds go to charity.



### EONIMAGES.COM

This site offers moderately priced historical and contemporary images.

### FLICKR.COM

By contacting the individual photographer, you might be able to sort out a good deal on this image-sharing site.

### FOTOSEARCH.COM

This one's a stock image database, not a microstock site.

### SHUTTERSTOCK

This is a good microstock site, but only uses a subscription-based pricing model.

### SNAPVILLAGE.COM

Recognizing the potential of microstocks, Corbis has come up with its own entry that allows photographers to choose their price. Just in beta version, this site oozes potential. [FPO]

A SINGLE OPENTYPE FONT can contain thousands of characters. Adobe has taken advantage of the conversion to OpenType by compiling its Expert Sets and Oldstyle Alternates into a single font that contains small caps, oldstyle and lining figures, a complete set of fractions, and even alternate characters and ornaments.

Eliminating the need for a set of alternate files has allowed typographers to extend the finesse of type families by providing font variations based upon the specific point size that will be applied. These are called optical sets.

It's actually an old idea. Metal foundries used to cast type that had variations based on the point size—smaller fonts had thicker thins, and larger point sizes had thinner thins—but this was an impractical idea for phototypesetting and even digital type. Now, technology has caught up with the past.

### Arno Pro

Designers who bought Adobe CS3 have an opportunity to check out a bundled font family with optical weights—Arno Pro. Designed by Adobe veteran Robert Slimbach, it is a virtuoso production designed to show off the power of OpenType and the quality of the Adobe Originals brand. It's a transitional face, such as Jenson or Palatino, with modern embellishments and includes an incredible amount of ligatures, alternate fonts, ornaments, a multiple-alternates swash set for the italics, and even complete Greek and Cyrillic alphabets.

But the most interesting new feature is the optical variations—five slightly different renderings of each font weight that you choose based on the point size of the type used. Adobe classifies the various optical sizes as caption, small text, regular, subhead and display, in order of ascending size use. The ultimate effect is subtle,

ArnoType  
ArnoType  
ArnoType  
ArnoType  
ArnoType

IT'S ALL 32 PT. SEMIBOLD From top to bottom, these are examples of the optical choices: caption, small text, regular, subhead and display.

ArnoType  
ARNO TYPE  
Arno Type  
ArnoType  
& e & e  
Th ct sk sp

ONE FONT, MANY CHOICES Each font has an array of alternates, ornaments and ligatures.

but the goal is typography with a more consistent gray color when smaller and larger versions of the same font weight are used on a page and better legibility at small point sizes. And the display versions are the most elegant renderings of the font, as one might expect for their intended use in large headlines.

Other foundries have been releasing optical font sets, too. This might be a case of the next-great-idea actually being 600 years old.

### ITC Avant Garde Pro

OpenType fonts have another advantage. Since a single font is capable of having 22,000 characters, a font is capable of having as many alternate letterforms as the designer can conceive. One font that has been chafing at the ASCII bit for years is Avant Garde, designed in the late '60s by Herb Lubalin, who created over 70 variations on the standard letterforms. The only place many of the exotic variations could be found was in the reels of film made for use on Typositor headline machines.

Now, that has been remedied with the release of ITC Avant Garde Pro, an OpenType version of the font that finally contains ALL the alternates that were originally designed for the font. Looking at the possibilities in the glyphs palette is a reminder of what a powerful typographic tool the new standard can be.

Although myriad alternates have been developed for many calligraphic fonts for a more handmade look, no type designer yet has come up with a font that even approaches the range of Avant Garde's alternates. Maybe the next gauntlet has been thrown down. [FPO]

AVANT GARDE AVANT GARDE  
AVANT GARDE AVANT GARDE

M M M M C C C  
DE DE GO HT LA KA IR  
R R R R S S S S T T T T

CUSTOMIZED The huge set of alternates was originally designed to eliminate awkward negative spaces in the nameplate for the magazine *Avant Garde*, but the look proved so intriguing that designers clamored for an entire alphabet.

## New Magazines Get a Head to Succeed

Your nameplate is the start of your BRANDING, but it needs to do much more.

**THE MODERN AMERICAN ADULT** has an attention span of 2.5 seconds. This means that in the time it takes you to read these first two sentences, the chances are good that your mind has already wandered off the subject of this article. It also means the magazines we produce have to be the best possible product we can create. I have always said that the aim of what we do is to give the customer more information in less time and less space. That is why I always tell my clients that a logo should be more than just some words on your cover. A logo should be able to stand alone, regardless of what surrounds it. It should be an independent element that retains its beauty regardless of what pictures, colors or words are around it.

At first glance, the logo for *Need* grabs your attention, not for what it has but for what it doesn't have. *Need* premiered with its winter 2006 issue as a humanitarian magazine "not out to save the world but



to tell the stories of those who are." The lack of the initial "e" in the logo tells the reader there is a need that should be filled.

The logo for *Good* speaks in the same way to its readers. The four simply designed characters in its logo emanate a goodness from them that is successfully echoed through *Good's* pages each issue. It's plain, straightforward design gives you all the information you need to know about what this magazine is about.

Just like a personalized license plate, the nameplate of *eldr* is phonetic and whimsical. As a magazine that celebrates aging, *eldr* uses the bright palette of orange, blue and white to create a lively and cheerful logo that draws readers in to its pages.

Once a logo entices a reader beyond the cover, it shouldn't disappear. I'm not saying the logo should be plastered across every page, but the logo should be carried into the magazine. In the case of *Need*, the same need that is

expressed in the logo is brought to each page through simple, elegant design that draws no attention to itself. The content of *Need's* gallery-style layout, with its large margins and ample white space, forces the reader to focus on the need the articles and photographs depict. The simplicity of the logo is apparent in the design of every page.

Where *Need* carries that simplicity through the pages, *Good* carries the logo's ability to communicate information. The pages of *Good* are loaded with beautiful infographics that not only save valuable space, but give an abundance of information in a far more reader-friendly way. The same information that is included in a two-page infographic would take six, eight or possibly ten pages of copy to replicate.

*eldr* is about celebrating being alive, and just as the logo suggests, the pages should never look drab, dull or boring. The logo of *eldr* is reflected on the pages of the magazine by using the lively colors of the logo—and then adding a few more. The pages are full of department headings with bright greens, blues, reds and yellows. The spreads are simple and colorful,



keeping with the established feel the logo presents on the cover.

A nameplate is more than a name, it is the face of a magazine. Just like the face of a person can tell you what that person is thinking or feeling, the logos of our magazines should give us information about what is inside and what is important to the magazines. With only those first few seconds to hook a reader, the nameplate needs to be visually compelling. There may not be another opportunity. [FPO]

**SAMIR HUSNI**, also known as "Mr. Magazine," is Chair of the Journalism Department at the University of Mississippi. He is the author of the annual *Samir Husni's Guide to New Magazines*, which is now in its 22nd year.

**From the Vault** In my opinion, one of the best nameplate logos of all time was that of *Families Magazine*, launched by *Reader's Digest* back in the early '80s. The logo, designed by none other than Herb Lubalin, depicted an iconic family of three. Judge for yourself and see how a powerful logo projects the power of the brand instantly. That's a logo that works. —SAH



# SWEET SPOT

**DO YOU HAVE FAVORITE ILLUSTRATORS OR PHOTOGRAPHERS?** Do they reliably come up with great solutions to your toughest editorial challenges, on time and under budget? Are they too good to let other magazines know about? Then they're the kind of people [FPO] wants to profile (along with some of your work, too). Send your nominations along with a PDF sample of their work in your book to [editor@fpomagazine.com](mailto:editor@fpomagazine.com). And to set the bar, we're profiling a couple of our favorites.

**LOOK FOR THESE ILLUSTRATORS IN ARTIST SHOWCASE ON THE NEXT SPREAD.**

**F**EAR OF FLYING

Flying can be nerve-racking under any conditions. Given the events of last September, though, more people than ever are having second thoughts about hopping on a plane for that next business trip.

Charles S., a 250-pound North Carolina native who looks strong enough to "go bear-hunting with a switch," is a case in point. But bears are one thing, airplanes another. Faced with the necessity of traveling to a business meeting in Indiana, he found his usual fear of flying so escalated after Sept. 11 that he couldn't get on a plane. His solution? He traveled the 1,500 miles by car, in a trip that ironically would have been much safer by air.

"Every time an airplane accident occurs, we have more fearful flyers," says Duane Brown, a professor of education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who specializes in counseling and psychology and who has led AAirborne seminars for American Airlines about overcoming the fear of flying. He counseled Charles and others like him in the aftermath of last fall's tragedy.

Counselors around the country report a similar upsurge in demand. "Television viewers saw video of the tragedies replayed 50 to 100 times," notes Capt. Tom Bunn, a Connecticut-based airline pilot and licensed therapist who counsels individuals who fear flying.

"When you have something written to your mind that often, it gets carved into your brain. Most Americans saw airplanes connected with disaster."

Even experienced travelers are not immune to the unease. With 30 years of flying experience, Bunn himself says he feels anxious when he hears a plane pass overhead. "It's inescapable to feel some alarm," he says, adding that no one should feel ashamed of such fears. "It's helpful that people understand they are not crazy."

While the fear may be normal, however, it is also costing businesses and organizations big money as people opt out of travel to trade shows and business meetings that are beyond driving distance. Internal fears as well as pressures from family members can keep people at home. In the face of such resistance by clients and employees, business owners face difficult challenges when planning conventions, trade shows and business meetings at remote locations.

"Our members expressed substantial concern about the concept of the fear of flying," says Edwin L. Griffin Jr., president of Meeting Professionals International, a Dallas-based organization of 19,000 members who conduct more than 700,000 meetings and conferences.

*Philip Perry writes about business management, workplace psychology and law. He's a two-time recipient of the American Bar Association's annual award for editorial excellence.*

Don't let it ruin your business

BY PHILLIP M. PERRY



**SHARRI WOLFGANG**  
Art Director, American Style

"RALPH BUTLER is one of my favorite go-to illustrators because his results always surprise me. His imagination takes my vague concepts beyond what I dream. A variety of styles allows his art to be used for a wide range of stories. That he's also fun to chat with is just icing on the cake."



**DAVID FOX**  
Art Director, Biblical Archaeology Review

"DAVID CLARK'S greatness lies in his ability to deliver above and beyond the initial concept. He's always enthusiastic to read the entire story and put his unique and often hilarious spin on our ideas, and they're always improvements. I love the facial expressions he draws. Plus, in all the years I've worked with him, he's never missed a deadline."

# EXTRA! EXTRA!

## Philistines in the Newsroom!

David's Battle with Goliath Rages on as Reporters Enhance Their Stories with Biblical Quotes

LEONARD J. GREENSPON



Happily, my personal reaction on biblical allusions in the news has proven helpful. Many well-meaning folks have contacted me regarding the biblical allusions in the news. And I'm not a reporter, and my only real journalistic contribution is to be a good listener. I've been inundated with e-mails and letters from folks who are frustrated by the way that biblical allusions are used in the news. I've even received e-mails from folks who are angry because I've been so vocal about the way that biblical allusions are used in the news. I've even received e-mails from folks who are angry because I've been so vocal about the way that biblical allusions are used in the news.

David & Goliath

Let's start with David and Goliath. David is the underdog, commoner and the one who is killed by the titan Goliath. Hence, David, Goliath, and all that is good can be associated with David, whose small size hides the source of his strength and his ability to see through Goliath's armor. But to really get a good sense of the story, you have to understand the biblical context and the significance of the story. So, for example, the name Michael Moore, who is known for his film "The Big Sick" and his book "The Endgame" is also a name that is associated with a biblical figure.





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Paul has been illustrating since the early '80s. His work has been used by *Philadelphia Magazine*, Dorian Recordings and the University of the Arts, among others. Zdepski's ability to render "in-your-face" concepts and mastery of various styles has led to a broad illustration portfolio.



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Lance Lekander's work demonstrates an over-the-top style and features characters that depict fun or zany situations. Lance's elementary school doodles have developed into thoughtful expressions that interpret the needs of such clients as McGraw Hill, 3com and *Scholastic* magazine.



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Allan Burch creates portraits and editorial illustrations driven by mood and subtlety, allowing many stories to surface. Allan has 13 years of experience, and his work has been recognized by the New York Society of Illustrators, *Communication Arts* and *American Illustration*.



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Using traditional creative tools and Adobe CS3 software, Donna Berger creates stylized realistic illustrations, line drawings, icons and other business graphics for books, magazines, corporate ads and other collateral materials. See more of her award-winning work at [www.donnaberger.com](http://www.donnaberger.com).



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Dave's whimsical cartoon style is highly expressive and covers the entire range of illustration, from serious editorial to works of fancy. Awards include the Reuben Award (Newspaper Illustration), Noah Bee Award (Magazine Illustration) and the Educational Press Association Award.



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Renée Comet specializes in food and still-life photography. Whatever the subject, her visual treatment is uncomplicated, fluid and elegant. Ms. Comet's contemporary photographic style features unique dishes, minimalist propping and a surprising use of backgrounds.



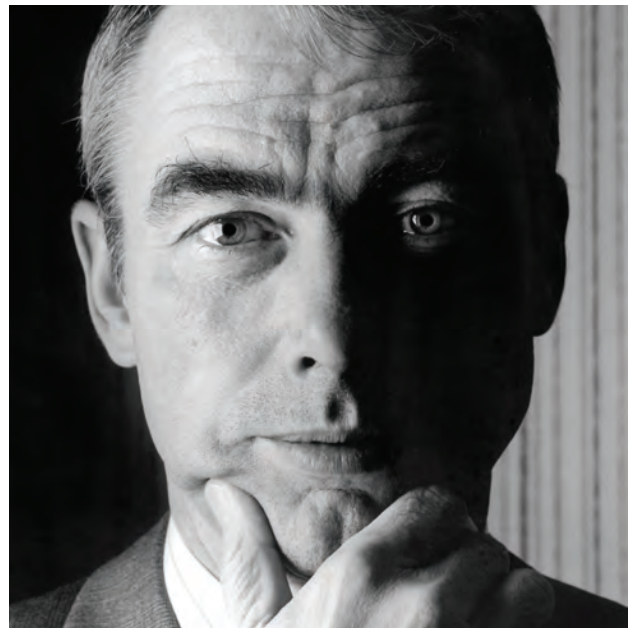
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Ralph has 20 years of experience serving a wide variety of clients (National Wildlife Federation, *The Wall Street Journal*, John Wiley & Sons Publishing, Gannett Publishing) with award-winning book, editorial and advertising illustration (Society of Illustrators, Illustrators Club of Washington, Maryland and Virginia, ADDYs).



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Daniel Peck specializes in photographing people. His warm and unassuming style and his rapport with children and youth have benefited his work for the National Education Association, The Girl Scout Council, and other education and family-focused clients.

## De Nile—Not Just a River in Egypt

And Scope is more than a MOUTHWASH.

AS I WAS ENTERTAINING a client at a posh restaurant in Virginia, the server came and offered us water—not a fresh glass from a pitcher, but a choice of Sparkling or Still. We chose the Still, and a pretty glass tube was placed on our table. It cost six bucks at the end of our otherwise delightful meal.

Never mind that the restaurant probably marked up the water 1000% (imagine doing that to a bottle of wine) or that the energy cost of shipping a bottle of water is an incredible waste of resources, the real issue is that the server didn't even give us a choice of free tap water. Perhaps we could have asked for it, but by controlling the interaction (Still or Sparkling?) she set the parameters of the choice.

Some publishing operations manage to turn dysfunction into virtue by defining the parameters of success. An editor at a large institution describes the home stretch of releasing a monthly publication: "Well, we all pull together and put in a week of late nights, and there's a lot of back and forth at the very end when we catch those last mistakes, but because we have such a great staff we always manage to get it out the door on time!"

That gee-whiz-let's-put-on-a-show bravado sounds like loads of fun, but what is she really saying? They can't get their book out on schedule without loads of overtime, and they're still finding errors that should have been caught earlier in the production process. Chances are, if you talked to the printer QC, he's shaking his head over the number of AAs he has to eat as PEs during the prepress stage or the number of late PDF files he gets for replacement after delivery.

Producing a magazine should be like piloting a cruise ship—steaming into port with a boatload of editorial ready for a lovely holiday at the printer. Instead, it's more like a roller coaster, and you're in the front of the lead car



RALPH BUTLER

at the top of the big crest, hands in the air, looking down at the near-vertical descent and wondering if that chili dog is going to stay put in your stomach.

Why is this? Usually, there are two culprits: *denial* and *scope*. Denial that there isn't enough manpower or money; denial that missing interim deadlines affects the whole operation; and denial that last-minute changes aren't really that easy because they're just a direct replacement with something else.

Scope is about backbone. Who tells the publisher his last-minute new photo won't fit the shape of the old one? Who sits on writers who won't turn in their stories on time? Who tells the designer that almost anyone else could design three stories in the time it takes him to do one? And if the ad people are still selling pages while you're making PDFs to send to the printer, someone has forgotten the meaning of "close date." Pity the poor production manager, trying to keep everyone happy by promising the impossible and constantly juggling schedules and dates like flaming torches.

When is the post-delivery review that never seems to happen? Maybe it's easier to live with the fun fantasy of pulling out all the stops to conquer the dreaded deadline instead of facing the myriad personnel issues and production compromises that screw up each issue.

When you take a close look at the scope, it's impossible to live in denial. You realize that the amount of money wasted on printer corrections, the useless anxiety of constantly working under pressure and the inability to improve quality because you can't get past the next delivery date are not romantic at all, but part of a cover-up hiding the need for more time, better people and bigger budgets.

Really, it's enough to make your mouth go dry. Now, there I can help you—if you've got six bucks. *Still or Sparkling?* [FPO]

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