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Producing award-winning publications

Jacob Christian Farbman
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PRODUCING AWARD-WINNING PUBLICATIONS

by
Jacob Christian Farbman

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ABSTRACT

Jacob Christian Farbman

Producing Award-winning Publications,
1999.
Advisor: Dr. Donald Bagin
Seminar in Public Relations,
The Graduate School
Rowan University.

This thesis provides research findings on what design elements public relations professionals use to produce award-winning publications. Professionals in the workforce who use desktop publishing software to produce publications can use these findings as a reference guide. A survey was conducted of 15 public relations professionals who have won national awards for either their newsletters or brochures. These professionals belonged to one of the following public relations associations: the International Association of Business Communicators, the National School Public Relations Association or the Public Relations Society of America. Respondents were found to use serif typefaces for body copy, sans serif typefaces for headlines, and prefer using paragraph indents instead of flush left style. Respondents also preferred using photographs as copy-breaking devices. The majority of respondents prefer using two typefaces in a publication. Almost half of the respondents use three columns of type in a newsletter page to make it effective. No consensus appeared when respondents were asked how they use the last page of their newsletters. No consensus appeared when respondents were asked how they evaluate their publications.

MINI-ABSTRACT

Jacob Christian Farbman

Producing Award-winning Publications,
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Advisor: Dr. Donald Bagin
Seminar in Public Relations,
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This thesis provides research findings on what design elements public relations professionals use to produce award-winning publications. Respondents were found to use serif typefaces for body copy, sans serif typefaces for headlines, and prefer using paragraph indents instead of flush left style. Respondents also prefer photographs over other copy-breaking devices.

Acknowledgments

I could not have completed this body of work without the guidance, support and understanding of Dr. Don Bagin. To my friend and mentor, I thank you. I also thank Mrs. Claudia Cuddy, who has the heart of an angel, for helping me learn everything I could about page layout and design.

I would also like to thank my parents, Barbara and Gene; my sister, Jackie; and my grandmother, Bertha, for their love and support.

To Laura Litrenta, Tobias Bruhn and Allison Rohner, I couldn't have done this, or the comprehensive exam, without your help.

To R. Matthew Richards, thanks for your support and a copy will cost you only $29.95.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

With the rise in popularity of desktop publishing in the public relations

profession, more and more PR practitioners are using desktop publishing software to

produce brochures, newsletters, fliers, advertisements and other print communication

tools. Many of these practitioners, however, use programs that use templates. In other

words, many professionals write copy for a print communication piece but use a

computer program for layout and design.

More and more professionals in the business world are using desktop publishing,

but do they really know what makes a publication good? Do people using desktop

publishing know about base-line alignment, picas and the proper uses of typefaces? The

researcher will attempt to help these professionals who use desktop publishing in their

business environments.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to discover what award-winning public relations

practitioners consider to be the most important rules to remember when using desktop

publishing to produce communication tools.

The results of the study can be used as a guide that professionals can reference when completing projects using desktop publishing.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Jan V. White, former art director at Time, Inc., wrote in his book, Great Pages A Common-sense Approach to Effective Desktop Design, that a communicator's job is to transmit information.[1]

Communicators mass-produce information. They are so good at it, that the volume of information produced doubles every couple of years. Willard Kiplinger published the nation's first newsletter, The Kiplinger Washington Letter, in 1923. Today, over 150,000 newsletters are published on a regular basis, a number that is expected to grow by 40 percent per year.[2]

With the rise in popularity of desktop publishing comes a chilling fear, according to Tom Lichty, senior instructor and consultant at the University of Oregon's Continuation Center in Portland. In his book, Design Principles for Desktop Publishers, he wrote that "a flood of ineptly designed materials will arrive with the proliferation of desktop publishing systems, giving the entire publishing industry and everyone associated with it a bad name."[3]

Today, more small businesses are using desktop publishing to create marketing materials that communicate to their target audiences. Formerly, most of these small-business owners contracted graphics-services companies or print shops to produce their

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[1] Jan V. White, Great Pages A Common-sense Approach to Effective Desktop Design (El Segundo, CA: Serif Publishing, 1990) 7.
[2] Tom Lichty, Design Principles for Desktop Publishers (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1994) 1.
[3] Ibid., 1.

promotional materials, catalogs, newsletters, advertisements and other publications. Today, much of that has changed with the availability of new, easy-to-use graphics and publishing software and low-cost, high-quality computer hardware such as color printers, scanners, digital cameras and storage systems.[4]

Anyone can be a publisher, especially since many companies, such as Microsoft, Adobe and Design Canon Computer Systems, are creating software for beginners. These programs make desktop publishing just as easy to use as word processing programs. One advantage to using this software is that business people can create materials that rival those of other companies. With desktop publishing equipment and software becoming user-friendlier and equipment prices declining, more business people will experiment with creating print communication tools in-house.[5]

Roger Black, New York Times editorial art director and former designer of Newsweek, Rolling Stone and New York magazines, wrote in his book, Roger Black's Desktop Design Power, that for non-designers, designing with desktop publishing "appears to be an arcane branch of knowledge, like particle physics or the French language – so hard that it might not be worth learning." [6]

Roger Parker, president of The Write Word, an advertising and marketing consulting firm in Dover, New Hampshire, believes that desktop publishing is a tool, not a solution. He once noted, "Just as automatic transmissions simplify driving but don't

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[4] Tim McCollum, "In-house publishing, professional results," Nation's Business, November, 1996: 34.
[5] Ibid., 34.
[6] Roger Black, Roger Black's Desktop Design Power (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1991) 2.

replace the need for an alert, trained driver, desktop publishing alone does not an effective publication make. The hardware and software have to be properly put to work."[7]

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Alignment is the positioning of letters so that all have a common baseline.

Banner is a large multicolumn headline that extends across the top of the first page in a newspaper or newsletter.

Baseline alignment is the positioning of characters so the bottom of the x height lines up evenly on a horizontal line.

Body type is type used for the reading copy of a publication. It is differentiated from display or headline type.

Border is a frame around type, art or complete layout in either plain lines or ornamental design.

Brochure is a marketing publication about a company or service.

Camera ready is the completed format of a document from which the printing plate is made.

Caption is used in layout and design to explain the content in accompanying art.

Copy is information ready to be printed or reproduced in a publication.

Desktop Publishing is a computer software package designed to create various print communication tools.

Face is the style of type, such as boldface

Family is a major division of typefaces.

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[7] Roger Parker, Newsletters from the Desktop (Chapel Hill, NC: Ventana Press, Inc., 1990) 2.

Flier is a publication that announces an event or situation related to a business or organization.

Flush left is type that is set even on the left margin

Flush right is type that is set even on the right margin.

Font is all the characters and punctuation marks of one size and style of type.

Format is the appearance of a printed piece, including page size and number of columns per inch.

Gutter is the margin of the page at the point of binding or inside the page margin.

Hanging indent is a headline style in which the first line is full width and succeeding lines are indented the same amount from the left margin.

Hard copy is the printed copy from a computer or word processor.

Headline is the title of an article in a newsletter or newspaper.

Justified type is type that is aligned on both the left and right margins of a page or column.

Layout and Design is the process used to create a desktop publishing document.

Leading is the space between lines of type.

Masthead is the area in publication that lists the name of the publication, staff, date and issue number.

Mock-up is a full-size, experimental layout for study and evaluation.

Newsletter is a communication tool used to deliver company news in a timely fashion to internal or external audiences.

Pica is a 12-point unit of measurement used in desktop publishing.

Point is a unit of measurement in desktop publishing that equals 1/72 of an inch.

Primary optical center is the spot where a reader's eye first lights on a page in a publication, the upper left quadrant.

Print communication tool refers to a hard copy document used to communicate a message from an organization to one of its publics.

Pull-quote is a copy-breaking device that consists of a phrase or group of words from the copy that is enlarged to draw the reader's attention.

Resolution is the number of bits per inch used to represent a character or graphic image.

Reverse is a printing area in which the background is black and the image is white.

Sans serif type is a race of type without finishing strokes on characters.

Serif is the finishing stroke at the end of a primary stroke of a character.

Serif type is a race of type with finishing strokes on characters.

Subhead is a display line that is auxiliary to the main headline.

Template is a program within a computer software package that allows one to produce a document without layout and design.

Text wrap is used to run text around an illustration on a page layout.

X height is the distance between the baseline and the meanline of type.

ASSUMPIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The researcher assumes that many people who use desktop publishing can be classified into two groups, those who know how to use desktop publishing and those who don't. Those who do not know how to use desktop publishing use templates to design their publications.

The limitations of the study are the people surveyed and the availability of the people surveyed. The people surveyed will be 1997 or 1998 award-winning members of the International Association of Business Communicators, the National School Public Relations Association or the Public Relations Society of America. A sample frame of 28 names was developed. This was the total number of people who won awards for their newsletters and brochures from the past two years.

The availability of these people to respond to the survey is a limitation because the researcher does not expect all of these award-winners to participate.

Another limitation in the study is choosing the participants from the International Association of Business Communicators. Only the award winners from the United States were included in the sample frame.

PLAN OF STUDY

The plan of study is to survey members of the International Association of Business Communicators, the National School Public Relations Association and the Public Relations Society of America. These respondents will be distinguished members of their respective organizations because they have won awards for either their newsletters or brochures.

CHAPTER II

RELATED RESEARCH

This chapter contains information from various books and magazines and excerpts from an interview conducted on February 11, 1999 with Rowan University publication layout and design instructor Claudia Cuddy.

To find related literature, the ERIC Database was searched for books in print from 1992 to 1998 using the keywords "publication design," "newsletter design" and "brochure design." One match was found. The Infotrac Searchbank was used to find newsletters from the last five years related to the topic under investigation. The search was conducted using the keywords "publication design," "newsletter design" and "brochure design." Sixteen documents were found.

The Infotrac Searchbank was also used to find magazine articles from the past five years related to the topic under investigation. The search was conducted using the keywords "publication design," "brochure design" and "newsletter design." Thirteen documents were found.

Next, the VALE ABI/Inform Business Database was searched for articles and books related to the topic under investigation. The search was conducted using the

keywords "publication design," "newsletter design" and "brochure design." A total of 530 articles and books were found.

The purpose of this section was to review the literature related to designing effective newsletters and brochures, as well as to discuss desktop publishing design essentials. The review is divided into three sections. The first section reviews literature on publication design. The second section reviews literature on brochure design. The third section reviews literature on newsletter design.

PUBLICATION DESIGN

Jan V. White, author of <u>Great Pages: A Common-sense Approach to Effective Desktop Design</u>, wrote that designers perform a service to readers. People want information fast and clear, so publications should be made to generate enthusiasm.[8]

In his 1995 graduate thesis, Brian McCallum found that beginning and professional designers fail to realize that the primary goal of design is to help the reader understand the messages sent by the publication's designer.[9]

Stephen Manousos and Scott Tilden, authors of <u>The Professional Look</u>, suggest that good design leads readers through publications, from issue to issue, page to page and story to story. Excellent design sparks interest, draws attention and gets readers to commit to reading the messages.[10]

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[8] Jan V. White, <u>Great Pages: A Common-sense Approach to Effective Desktop Design</u> (El Segundo, CA: Serif Publishing, 1990) 18.

[9] Brian McCallum, "Research Findings and Proven Techniques for Producing Effective Promotional Literature" Master's Thesis, Rowan College of New Jersey, 1995, 104.

[10] Stephen E. Manousos and Scott W. Tilden, <u>The Professional Look</u> (San Jose, CA: Venture Perspectives Press, 1990) 116.

White also states that "to produce a document that communicates effectively, all the various elements that go into its makeup must be manipulated and balanced." These elements include: ideas; messages; the flavor of the language; the images; importance of the elements; the sequencing of thoughts on the page; the contrasts of size, scale, colorfulness, dullness and boldness; the typefaces; and the size, shape and texture of the paper used, which obtains an immediate response from the reader.[11]

In his book Publication Design for Editors, author Robert Bohle expressed that every page layout should strive to enhance communication. Layout should attract readers to the first page and then every element on that page. Design elements should attract readers so they stop and read a piece of copy that identifies with them. The layout should hold readers long enough for the content to keep the readers' attention. Layouts should visually connect elements on the page that are related and separate elements on a page that are not related.[12]

Thomas Bivins and William E. Ryan, authors of How to Produce Creative Publications, believe that good layout and design brings order to publications.[13]

White suggests that publication designers should "bait the hook" with attractive information that reaches the reader's self-interests. Designers should make the copy answer the reader's question, "What's in it for me?"[14]

Roger C. Parker, one of the world's leading experts on desktop publishing, believes that designers should start their publications by drawing rough illustrations.

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[11] White, 9.
[12] Robert Bohle, Publication Design for Editors (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1990) 55.
[13] Thomas Bivins and William E. Ryan, How to Produce Creative Publications (Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Business Books, 1991) 40.
[14] White, 52.

Rough illustrations give the designer a map that indicates the appearance of the final produced pages.[15]

According to Jacci Howard Bear, founder of The INK Spot, a magazine for home-based desktop publishing professionals, a designer must understand his or her software and following basic design principles. These are the two most important parts in learning how to produce documents using desktop publishing."[16]

McCallum covered important theoretical design elements in his thesis. These elements are:

Proportion – the relationship of sizes and lengths of various parts of a printed page.

Balance – how the visual weight is distributed throughout the page.

Contrast – a comparison of elements in terms of size, shape, tone, texture, dimension and the deepness and darkness of color.

Rhythm – the repetition of similar shapes, sizes, textures and like-elements in a publication.

Unity – how well all of the elements on the page fit together.[17]

Manousos and Tilden suggest that it is important to consider the three parts of a page that call the most attention to the reader: the geometric center of the page found by drawing an "x" from all four of the page's corners; the optical center, the point where the unaided eye naturally falls on a page, generally two-thirds up from the page's bottom;

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[15] Roger C. Parker, Roger C. Parker's One-minute Designer (New York, NY: MIS:Press, 1997) 7.

[16] Justin T. Scott, "Desktop Publishing for Beginners," Office Systems March 1998: 47.

[17] McCallum, 106 – 110.

and the focal point, which draws the reader's eye because of a headline, color, illustration or other design element. [18]

It is also important to consider that in western cultures, people read from left to right and start at the top of the page and work their way down.[19]

White offers ten ways to intrigue and attract readers:

- List interesting information on the front cover.

- Make the table of contents look inviting and exciting.

- Let the table of contents' own organization reflect the way the entire publication is structured.

- Lead the viewers' eyes around the page to the text. The biggest picture is usually the first element noticed. Pull readers from there to the smaller picture, the headline, the caption and the text by arranging the page to follow a pattern.

- Box the information that can be broken away from the main body. This makes the text appear less challenging to read.

- Use pictures to pull viewers into the information.

- Always use captions to explain the contents of the photograph.

- Use charts and graphs to translate statistical data.

- Provide indexes, listings and coming attractions and locate them in visible areas of the publication.

- Use ample white space on the page. White space is not wasted if it exposes the material printed on the page.[20]

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[18] Manousos and Tilden, 84-85.
[19] Ibid, 85.
[20] White, 18 – 19.

Also, White notes that to design for the viewer, topic titles should stand out by using contrasting size, blackness and color, so the skimmer can not help but become oriented. Light screens should be used to distinguish areas on the page; 20 percent is as dark as the screen should be. Broad bands of white space should be incorporated to separate the elements that need to be separated. Readers should be given typographic clues to help find and interpret information. Big and bold is interpreted as important, while small and pale is less significant.[21]

Claudia Cuddy, instructor of publication layout and design at Rowan University and regionally known design expert, suggests that two typefaces should be used throughout a publication. She warns that using too many typefaces in a publication will hurt the publication's believability. She said that in her opinion, using many typefaces gives the publication a "ransom note" appearance.[22]

White wrote that the typeface used in a publication should be appropriate to the audience. The ratio of type size to line length should be considered: the larger the line, the larger the type; the smaller the line, the smaller the type. Also, the ratio of line length to leading should be considered: the longer the line, the more spacious the leading; the shorter the line, the tighter the leading. Other elements that White said to consider include using either justified or ragged right text alignment and using either paragraph indents or spaces between paragraphs. [23]

White revealed design downfalls that can easily be avoided. "Setting anything in all caps is the kiss of death. Italics are harder to read than plain type. Sans serif is harder

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[21] Ibid, 20 – 21.
[22] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[23] White, 68 –72.

to read than serif, so use serif for body copy. Widows are bad; avoid them at the top of columns. Breaking up type is desirable. Running type in reverse is bad."[24]

Former art director of Time-Life Books and Life International Edward Hamilton believes that justified lines of type and ragged right lines of type are about equally readable. Their use is simply a matter of individual choice.[25]

Cuddy added that ragged right gives the designer perfectly even spacing between words, giving typed lines a neater look from line to line. Justified lines of type give the designer rivers of white space, but offer a cleaner appearance when looking at a page as a whole. She also noted to always indent paragraphs when using justified lines of type.[26]

Cuddy said that it is good to use copy–breaking devices in a publication to fit the 30-3-30 rule. According to Cuddy, designers should create a publication with the three types of readers in mind:

- The 30-second reader who will only look at photographs and illustrations

- The three-minute reader who will look at photographs, illustrations, pull-quotes, headlines, bulleted lists of copy, and photograph captions

- The 30-minute reader who relies mainly on the content of the publication.[27]

Parker, author of <u>Roger C. Parker's One-minute Designer</u> and <u>Looking Good in Print</u>, offers several suggestions on fixing common mistakes made when using desktop publishing software to produce a quality publication.

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[24] Ibid, 64 – 68.
[25] Edward A. Hamilton, <u>Newsletter Design, a Step-by-step Guide to Creative Publications</u> (New York, NY: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1996) 64.
[26] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[27] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.

Designers should use white space to signal the relationship between subheads and the adjacent text. More space should be left above subheads than below them.[28]

Parker notes that subheads should be used to organize material and provide visual breaks. Long, uninterrupted columns of body copy discourage readers. Designers can increase the readability of their publications by adding a subhead each time a new idea is introduced. Subheads provide a valuable opportunity to attract readers' attention and invite them to read the text.[29]

Parker also advises designers avoid using many contrast tools in a publication. The minimum use of bold type, italic type and underlining will significantly reduce redundant emphasis on headlines and subheads.[30]

Parker suggests designers use matching typefaces for headlines, subheads and pull-quotes. Designers should use different weights, widths, styles and alignments of a single typeface for all display type. By choosing variations of a typeface, a designer can make each category of type stand apart without visually cluttering the page.[31]

Parker suggests that pull-quotes should be placed within paragraphs rather than between paragraphs. Readers should not be able to confuse pull-quotes with headlines or subheads. If pull-quotes appear between paragraphs, they can be mistaken for headlines or subheads. [32]

Parker advises designers to never use the automatic line spacing (leading) in a desktop publishing computer program. Leading is second only to type size in terms of its

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[28] Parker, 50.
[29] Ibid, 49.
[30] Ibid, 40.
[31] Ibid, 55.
[32] Ibid, 59.

importance in determining the look and readability of a publication, and the automatic leading in a software program spaces lines too far apart from each other. [33]

Parker notes that designers should maintain consistent baseline alignment when using multi-column documents. In a well-designed multi-column page, the baselines of text in the first column should line up with the baselines of the text in the second and third columns. Pages appear disorganized when baselines are not aligned.[34]

Parker suggests avoiding orphans -- a few words of a single line at the top of the page -- and widows, one word isolated at the bottom of a column. [35]

Parker also suggests that to make publications look more professional, designers should replace two hyphens (--) with an em dash (–) when introducing parenthetical statements. [36]

Parker also advises designers to use an ellipse (...) rather than three dots separated by spaces to indicate omitted words in copy. [37]

Parker suggests eliminating unnecessary spacing before and after punctuation, such as:

- Two spaces after periods
- Spaces between currency symbols and amounts of money ($5.00)
- Spaces following periods in acronyms with internal periods, such as a.m. and Ph.D. [38]

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[33] Ibid, 83.
[34] Ibid, 88.
[35] Ibid, 95.
[36] Ibid, 109.
[37] Ibid, 109.
[38] Ibid, 112.

Parker notes that excessive hyphenation slows the reader and creates unwanted parallel lines at the end of lines of type, so three or more hyphenated lines in a row should be avoided. [39]

Cuddy suggested that black ink on white paper is the most common ink/paper combination used because it is the cheapest. However, black ink on yellow paper provides the most legibility. [40]

BROCHURES

According to Theodore Conover, author of Graphic Communications Today, the first step in producing an effective brochure is planning. The designer must form a statement of purpose. It is vital to determine the audience and its characteristics. Designers should develop a checklist of essentials to include in the copy, including benefits and features. A timetable for execution and distribution must be developed as well.[41]

When it comes to designing an effective brochure, Cuddy suggests considering the reader's eye direction, well-written copy and an identity associated with the brochure. The identity can be anything from using the same ink colors and paper colors in various brochures from one company to using the company logo in the brochure.[42]

According to Manousos and Tilden, authors of The Professional Look, brochures play three roles when used in the business world:

- Sufficiently motivate readers to call for more information
- Remind prospects of key points made during sales calls

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[39] Ibid, 125.
[40] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[41] Theodore E. Conover, Graphic Communications Today (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1990) 230.

- Provide justification to bosses and associates for why readers need to conduct business with you.[43]

Jane Maas, author of <u>Better Brochures, Catalogs and Mailing Pieces</u>, noted that brochures should carry an objective. The designer should ask, "What do I want this brochure to accomplish?" [44]

Effective brochures must also follow these rules:

- Sequence

The reader must be able to move through the brochure in an orderly way to understand what's being read. When deciding how to organize a brochure, designers should remember that it requires a careful arrangement of the parts to be read and understood.[45]

- Balance

Brochures present balance problems that don't exist in other printed communication. Panels must be balanced individually and collectively.[46]

- Unity

Unity considerations include using just photographs as artwork or keeping the illustration styles the same throughout. Consistency in type, artwork, column width, and every other design element will help establish and maintain unity in a brochure's design.[47]

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[42] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.

[43] Stephen E. Manousos and Scott W. Tilden, <u>The Professional Look</u> (San Jose, CA: Venture Perspectives Press, 1990) 83 - 84.

[44] Jane Maas, <u>Better Brochures, Catalogs and Mailing Pieces</u> (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1981) 11-12.

[45] Bivins and Ryan, 358.

[46] Ibid, 358 – 359.

[47] Ibid, 359.

- Emphasis

Something within the brochure's design must dominate the brochure, its panels and the unfolded panel sections. Artwork, photography or typography, colors, headlines or blocks of copy. Without emphasis, a layout suggests that nothing in the content is special.[48] Copy-breakers such as bulleted lists of copy or pull-quotes add emphasis.[49]

- Proportion

Proportion helps establish spatial relationships. Proportions modify space and affect other design elements.[50]

For an effective brochure, a target audience must be determined. The copy should include consumer benefits, followed by evidence supporting the benefits. The tone and manner, or personality of the product or service, should also be expressed.[51]

However, brochures targeted to audiences with a high-interest in the product or service will require fewer design concepts than those targeted to low-interest audiences.[52]

To make a brochure more effective, a designer must determine what type of brochure is needed. Three types of brochures exist: a service brochure that describes a firm or association's goals and products or services; a line brochure, which features one category or one item of a product line; and a product-specific brochure, which features a specific purpose.[53]

[48] Ibid, 359 – 360.

[49] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.

[50] Bivins and Ryan, 360.

[51] Maas, 11-12.

[52] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.

[53] Roger C. Parker and Carrie Beverly, Looking Good in Print (Research Triangle Park, NC: Ventana, 1997) 240.

Brochures can follow different themes, but all share three common design requirements:

- A front-cover that summarizes the primary benefits of the product or service being offered.

- Facts and figures that connect ideas and relationships for readers and encourage a positive customer decision

- Prominently displayed, clear reader response instructions.[54]

Brochures will generally have no more than two facing pages. The most common brochure is the letter-size, but sizes can vary and are limited by the creativity of the designer.[55]

When several types of brochures are used for one project, they should share a common look based on similar typographic and visual elements to offer consistency.[56]

Manousos and Tilden suggest that the key to the design of a brochure is the cover. The designer should place the main benefit of the product or service on the cover of the brochure. A good headline should be used so readers open the piece and continue reading.[57]

Parker advises designers to center brochure titles one-third of the way down from the top of the first panel. Designers should avoid floating the title equidistant from the top and bottom of the front panel of the brochure. Floating titles are difficult to read at a glance.[58]

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[54] Parker and Beverly, 237.
[55] Manousos and Tilden, 165.
[56] Parker and Beverly, 239.
[57] Manousos and Tilden, 165.
[58] Parker, One-minute Designer, 227.

Robert Bohle urges designers to use the cover of a brochure to sell the contents inside. The cover should tease the reader and demand the reader's response. The cover must motivate the reader to see the brochure, pick it up and read it.[59]

For the brochure's typeface, select typefaces for readability. Avoid unusual typefaces. Many typographers feel that a serif face is more easily readable for text. Headlines can be set in either serif or sans serif. Generally, body copy or text set in upper and lower case is easier to read than copy set in all capital letters.[60]

Avoid printing body copy in reverse type. When copy is brief, such as a headline, reverse type can produce dramatic effects. Long copy printed this way is tedious and reduces readership.[61]

Cuddy said that brochures should feature only one picture on the cover, perhaps a picture that captures the essence of the product or service the brochure is promoting.[62]

Cuddy also said that designers should consider the fold when designing a brochure.[63] The most popular fold is the letter-size page, 8 ½ x 11, folded into thirds. A legal-sized sheet folded into fourths comes out to about the same size as a letter-fold.[64]

Another design element to consider in brochure design is the placement of the panels in a relevant order. The first panel has to open to something important.[65]

Bohle agrees that the trouble spot in brochure design is the second front. He suggests using a graphic element to connect the two panels and to carry them over into

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[59] Robert Bohle, 135.
[60] Ibid, 32-33.
[61] Ibid, 34.
[62] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[63] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[64] Manousos and Tilden, 160 – 161.
[65] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.

the inside of the three-panel presentation. Designers should make it easy for the reader to understand when to enter the copy and where to go next.[66]

Cuddy urges designers to place tear-offs on the end panel. No contact information should be included in the tear-off, because it gets lost when the reader removes that panel. She suggests placing contact information on as many of the other panels as possible.[67]

Parker also advises designers to avoid boxing or bordering each page uniformly. This interferes with the reader's natural progression from panel to panel.[68]

Manousos and Tilden recommend using good paper and a high-resolution output device because the brochure should leave a lasting impression with the reader.[69]

Jan Maas offers her tips of the trade to produce better brochures:

- Put the selling message on the cover.

- Use familiar graphics and logos that resemble the advertising campaign.

- Use one illustration on the cover. Research shows that one large illustration is more effective than several small ones.

- Select a picture that tells a story.

- Always put captions under photographs.

- Avoid cliches, both visual and verbal.

- Don't be afraid of long copy. If customers wrote for a brochure, tell them everything they need to know.

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[66] Robert Bohle, 135 – 136.
[67] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[68] Parker and Beverly, <u>Looking Good in Print</u> 238.
[69] Manousos and Tilden, 165 – 166.

- Spotlight the important facts. Tell customers what is included and what the costs are.

- Use photographs instead of drawings. Research shows that photographs increase recall 26 percent over drawings

- Be helpful, not clever. Avoid gimmicky layouts and humorous copy.

- Make a brochure worth keeping.

- Don't stint on quality.

- Tell the truth.

- Use the envelope to deliver a message. Tease the reader by offering a benefit for reading on.

- Ask the reader to take action.[70]

NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are major patrons of the desktop publishing revolution. Highly specialized newsletters that once were impractical because of high typesetting and paste-up costs can now be produced using the most basic desktop publishing and word processing software.[71]

Newsletters need layouts that are clean and forceful. Ideally, they should be distinctive enough to stand apart from the junk mail that clutters mailboxes. At a glance, they should look appealing, authoritative and worthwhile.[72]

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[70] Maas, 17-24.
[71] Parker and Beverly, <u>Looking Good in Print</u>, 208.
[72] Hamilton, 67.

The nature of a newsletter is to get information to people quickly, cheaply and attractively.[73]

To get information to people quickly and attractively, Cuddy recommends that designers should follow these concepts of design when preparing a newsletter:

Restraint – don't use too much of anything.

Contrast – give people variety by using dark and light percentages of ink.

Proportion – everything doesn't have to be the same size. Otherwise, a reader does not know what to read first.

Relevance – The newsletter must be relevant to the audience. If a designer fails to incorporate relevance, that person fails to communicate with the right audience.

Eye direction – the human eye follows a page in a backward letter z, a reverse number 6 and a letter z pattern.[74]

Michele Cooper suggests that a successful newsletter offers recognition from one month to the next. A series of newsletters should feature a constant and a variable – design and content. Continuity comes from such graphic elements as the nameplate, column grid, typefaces, illustration styles, borders, rules and color. Variety comes from the articles included in each issue.[75]

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[73] Bohle, 131.

[74] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.

[75] Michele Cooper, "Make Over Your Newsletter," Home Office Computing January 1997: 110.

Cuddy said that the best type size for body copy is between 10 and 12 points. The leading should be 1 or 2 points above the type size. Ex.: 10 point type, 11 point leading.[76] While Hamilton recommends 9 or 10 points for body copy, he also believes that leading should only be 1 or 2 point sizes greater than the type.[77]

Manousos and Tilden urge newsletter designers to vary the size and style among headline type to indicate to readers which stories are most important. Headline type choices should be kept in one family of type, changing only the point size, weight or style to indicate relevance.[78]

Hamilton suggests that headlines should be limited to five words because five-word headlines are more likely to be read.[79] They should be written in a way that makes the article more inviting to read.[80]

Subheads can be used to break up large blocks of copy. More space should be placed above a subhead than below a subhead.[81]

Another kind of copy-breaker, a pull-quote, invites readers into articles.[82]

Manousos and Tilden suggest that running heads – which include the newsletter's name, publication date, page number and location – should be placed on every page of a newsletter because photocopies may be made of the newsletter, and the editor should get the credit.[83]

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[76] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[77] Hamilton, 60.
[78] Manousos and Tilden, 127.
[79] Hamilton, 75.
[80] Ibid, 50.
[81] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[82] Hamilton, 49.
[83] Manousos and Tilden, 124 – 125.

The nameplate of the newsletter should not compete with front-page headlines.[84]

A study in <u>Journalism Quarterly</u> reported that 78 percent of newspapers in America use grids in design. [85]

A grid is the plan for an editorial page layout.[86] A designer should use the same grid throughout the newsletter. The same column size and placement should be used for each page of a newsletter.[87]

A one-column grid looks too much like a regular letter. It shouldn't. The newsletter should stand out from other forms of printed communication.[88]

However, two columns give little opportunity for design variations. Art is forced to be wide. This is difficult when using small photographs. So the text ends up wrapped around a photo or two photos are inserted to fill the space. This leaves the page looking unattractive.[89] While the text set at 10 or 11 points of a two-column grid is very readable, one- or two-column graphics can be inserted into the page, but it is difficult to feature small illustrations without cutting into the text.[90]

Three-column grids have the width similar to newspaper columns. Three-column grids allow a number of headline sizes and stories ranging in length from a few lines to several columns.[91]

Three-column grids also allow a number of design opportunities.[92]

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[84] Parker, One-minute Designer, 248.
[85] Manousos and Tilden, 117.
[86] Hamilton, 68.
[87] Parker, <u>One-minute Designer,</u> 249.
[88] Hamilton, 132.
[89] Robert Bohle, 133.
[90] Hamilton, 68.
[91] Ibid, 70-71.
[92] Robert Bohle, 133.

Cuddy recommends a three-column grid for four-page 8 ½ x 11 newsletters. All of the paragraphs should be indented, but as a style consideration, the first paragraph of each story can be flush-left, with drop caps to add emphasis and draw attention to the story.[93]

Newsletters need ample white space because the reader's eyes need to rest when browsing through a newsletter.[94] Manousos and Tilden recommend using a minimum of three picas for the gutter, three or four picas for the top margin, and four picas for the outside margin and five picas for the bottom margin.[95]

Many techniques for creating effective white space exist, according to Barrie Sosinksy. One approach is to increase the margins and inter-column spacing. Use closeness to relate items to each other and space to separate them.[96]

The nameplate is the newsletter's identity. A nameplate that is visually catchy but unclear in meaning does as poor a job at communicating as one that is straightforward but dull to look at.[97] The nameplate should cover about 20 percent of the depth of the first page.[98] The publication's name, volume and issue number, publication date and purpose statement should all appear in the nameplate.[99]

The masthead should be located on the inside cover or second page of a newsletter. The masthead tells the reader who created the newsletter, where it came from and why the newsletter was produced. Included in the masthead are: the newsletter's

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[93] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[94] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[95] Manousos and Tilden, 119.
[96] Barrie Sosinksy, "Newsletter Design 101: Using Desktop Publishing Programs," PC Magazine May 12, 1992: 298.
[97] Michele Cooper, 110.
[98] Manousos and Tilden, 125.
[99] Ibid, 127.

a statement of frequency, the subscription price (if there is a subscription price), the

editor's name, the mailing address, a phone number, the printer's name, a copyright

notice and the purpose statement.[100]

Always use captions with photographs.[101] Readers should not be forced to

interpret the meaning of a photograph. Most readers won't stop long enough to interpret a

photograph or they will come up with an inaccurate interpretation. A well-written caption

combined with a photograph will communicate more effectively than words or pictures

alone.[102]

Consistency in design can help designers achieve a unified package of various

materials. Designers should use a primary photograph on the front page. Keep margins,

boarders and graphic accents consistent. Place photos in the same position from one page

to the next. [103]

If newsletters are published in different kinds of type from issue to issue, one

might wonder about the consistency of the organization.[104] If a designer is making a

newsletter on a regular basis -- weekly, monthly, or every six-months – the newsletter

shouldn't be so complicated that each issue is a major project to design. Keeping the

design consistent helps readers recognize the publication and feel comfortable with it. [105]

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[100] Ibid, 132 – 133.
[101] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[102] Hamilton, 49.
[103] Parker and Beverly, Looking Good in Print 239.
[104] Rochelle Parry, "Newsletters by Desktop: Avoid These Design Blunders, Agency Sales Magazine August 1992: 29-31.
[105] Roger Black, Roger Black's Desktop Design Power (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1991) 299-300.

Newsletter stories should be written as short as possible. Edit them to the most concise length possible.[106]

Use teasers to invite readers inside a newsletter. A short table of contents on the front cover can draw attention to articles and features inside or on the back cover. The table of contents should be a focal point. [107]

Use subheads and short summaries as lead-ins to provide transition between headlines and body copy.[108]

Conover recommends avoiding crowded pages. Conover claims that dull and static layouts have little accent or variety. He recommends avoiding printing tiny photos that could have been enlarged for more impact. He urges designers not to use group shots in which faces are hardly recognized. But most importantly, he notes to avoid inconsistency in design.[109]

Lisa Beach claims that if a newsletter is not accomplishing its purpose, the designer should establish clear-cut goals and define the target audience. [110]

As a general rule, do not sacrifice type size to fit in more copy.[111]

Rochelle Parry recognizes that mixing typefaces will almost always have a disastrous result. Pages that look too busy and awkward are dead giveaways of an unprofessional product.[112]

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[106] Ibid, 299-300.
[107] Parker and Beverly, Looking Good in Print 216.
[108] Ibid, 218.
[109] Conover, 416.
[110] Lisa Beach, "Is your Newsletter Doomed to Fail?" Nonprofit World January/February 1998: 42-43.
[111] Parry, 29.
[112] Ibid, 29.

The basic items in each newsletter issue include: a masthead, including nameplate logo, volume number, identification of ownership, date and issue number; a table of contents or teaser on the front page; page numbers; credits; photos, illustrations and charts; captions: jumplines; and a return address if it is a self-mailer. [113]

Claudia Cuddy offers these design tips when producing a newsletter:

- Stay consistent from page to page and issue to issue.

- Use the same typeface, style and weight for headlines and subheads, but vary the sizes to show importance.

- Use the same color ink, the same color paper from issue to issue

- Keep the elements, such as the nameplate and the masthead in the same spots from issue to issue.

- Use upper and lowercase letters for body copy.

- Design headlines and subheads in down style type.

- Avoid all caps at all times.[114]

Hamilton suggests that a number of popular design techniques can be a disadvantage to editorial layout and should be avoided, such as: tilting pictures at various angles; running type over photographs and illustrations; positioning captions far away from photographs; and running type in reverse.[115]

Conover notes that judges in newsletter competitions look for no odd or unusual layouts; good front pages and nameplates; the use of color paper instead of white; no

[113] Marcelle Lapow Toor, "Designing a Desktop Newsletter" <u>American Demographics Marketing Power Supplement </u>November 1995: 4.
[114] Claudia Cuddy, personal interview, 11 February 1999.
[115] Hamilton, 76.

nondescriptive names or initials for newsletter names; no small, difficult to read type;

attractive and neat layouts; and consistency from issue to issue.[116]

[116] Conover, 418 – 419.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Related research was conducted using the Rowan University Library on-line

catalog, the ERIC database, the Virtual Academic Library of New Jersey, the Lexis Nexis

periodical database and the Searchbank periodical database.

A survey was conducted of public relations practitioners who have won awards

for their publications over the last two years. Each of these 15 professionals belonged to

one of the following public relations associations:

- The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

- The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA).

- The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

Lists of the 1998 publication award winners were obtained by various methods. A

list of PRSA Bronze Anvil award winning companies was published in the September

1998 issue of PR Tactics. The list of companies was then cross-referenced with the

Public Relations Tactics Blue Book. Contact names were found in the Blue Book.

A list of IABC award winners was obtained through the IABC website,

<www.iabc.com>.

A list of NSPRA award winners was obtained from the NSPRA website, <www.nspra.org>.

The complete list of award winning public relations practitioners sampled is provided in Appendix A.

To begin this study, thesis advisor Dr. Don Bagin recommended that the researcher interview Claudia Cuddy, instructor, Rowan University Graduate Public Relations Program. Professor Cuddy teaches Publications Layout and Design for the Graduate PR Program and has a background in the publishing business. She is regionally known as an expert in page layout and design.

A survey was developed by using the information obtained in the interview and information gathered from related literature.

After Dr. Bagin reviewed the survey, the survey was pre-tested by members of the graduate seminar.

Postcards were then sent out to the 28 names on the sample frame. Fifteen agreed to participate in the study.

After successful pre-testing, surveys, along with pre-addressed and pre-stamped return envelopes, were mailed to the 15 selected PR professionals. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix B. Results were tabulated, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter explains the results of the survey conducted of 15 public relations

practitioners who have won national publication awards from the International

Association of Business Communicators, the National School Public Relations

Association or the Public Relations Society of America. Twenty-one questions were

asked. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 1. Headlines should be in a sans-serif typeface.
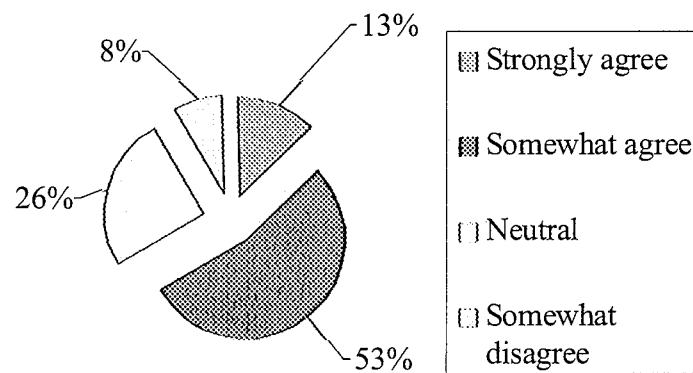
About two-thirds of the respondents (66%) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed

that headlines should be in a sans-serif typeface. Twenty-six percent answered neutral.

Eight percent somewhat disagreed.

*Figure 2*. Body copy should be in a serif typeface.
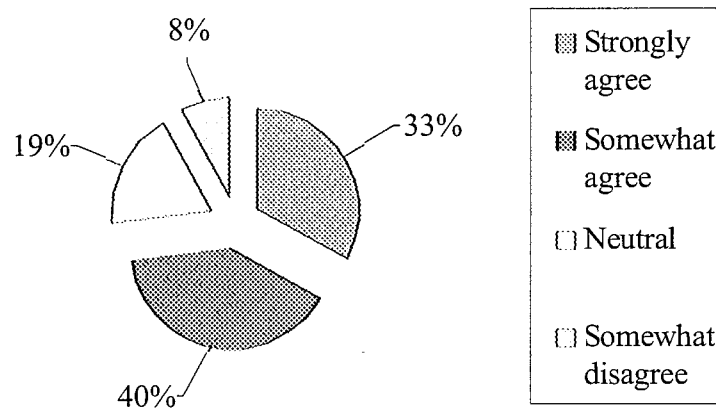
8%

19%

33%

40%

- ▣ Strongly agree
- ▨ Somewhat agree
- ▢ Neutral
- ▢ Somewhat disagree

Close to three-quarters of the respondents (73%) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that body copy should be set in a serif typeface. Nineteen percent answered neutral. Eight percent somewhat disagreed.

Figure 3. Number of typefaces used in a publication.

8%

13%

46%

33%

- ▣ Two
- ▨ Three
- ▢ Four or more
- ▢ Whatever works
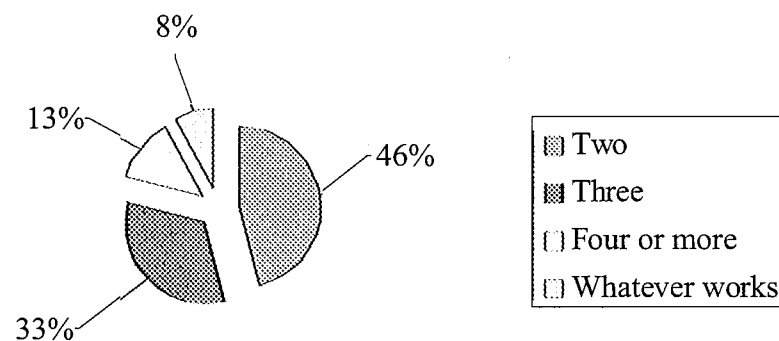
Forty-six percent of the respondents answered two typefaces should be used in a publication. Thirty-three percent answered three typefaces should be used in a publication. Thirteen percent answered four or more typefaces should be used in a publication. Eight percent answered "whatever works for the publication's audience."

Figure 4. Column style in publications.
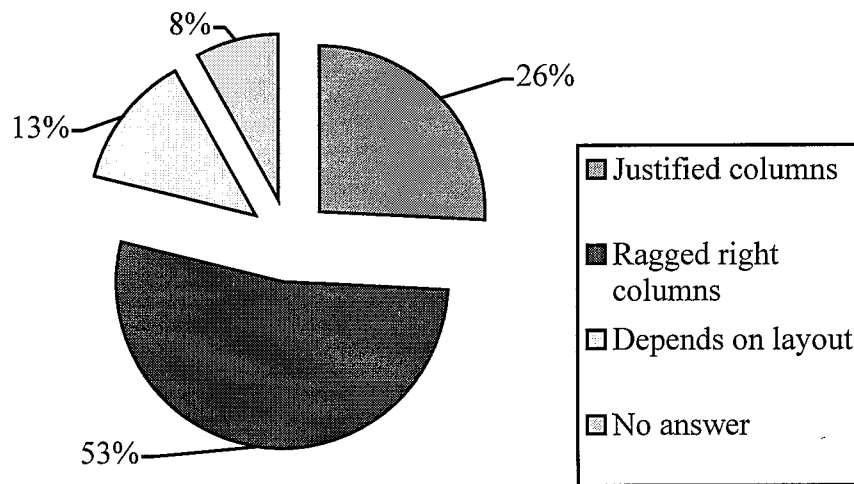
Fifty-three percent answered ragged right columns should be used in publications.

Twenty-six percent answered justified columns should be used in publications. Thirteen

percent answered "it depends on the layout." Eight percent gave no answer.

Figure 5. Effective type style for headlines.

7% 13% ▣ Down style

7% ▨ Small caps

▢ Upper &
Lower case

▢ All caps and
upper and
lower case

73%
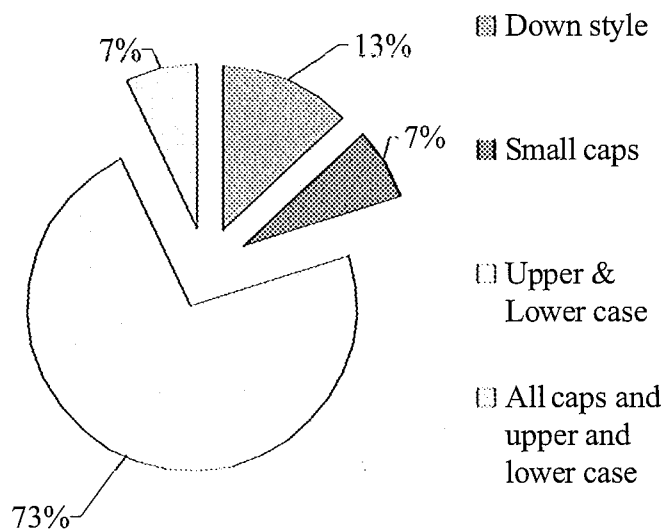
Seventy-three percent answered upper and lower case letters are the best style.

Thirteen percent answered down style. Seven percent answered small capital letters.

Seven percent answered all caps and upper or lower case letters are the best for headlines.

Figure 6. Best color of ink for one-color publication.

20% ▨ Black

▨ Depends
on
publication

80%
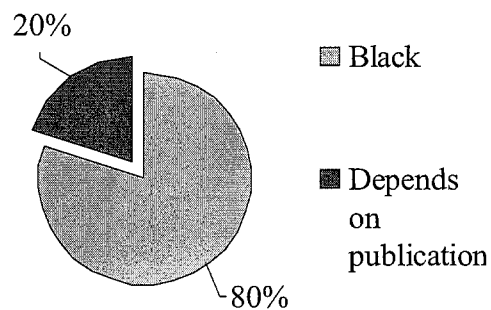
Eighty percent answered black is the best color ink for a one-color publication.

Twenty percent answered "it depends on the publication."

Figure 7. Best color of paper.

14%

20%

66%

☒ White

▨ Cream

☐ Depends on
publication
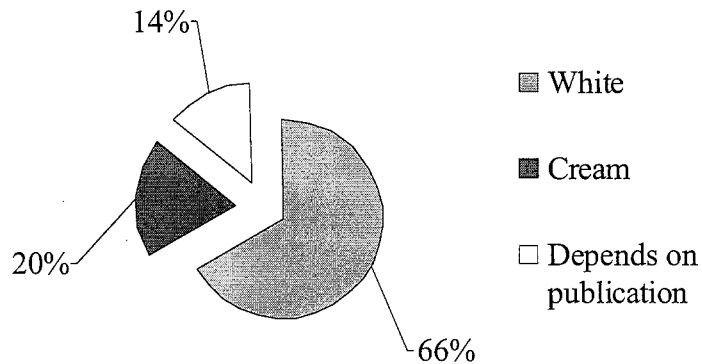
Sixty-six percent answered white is the best paper color. Twenty percent

answered cream. Fourteen percent answered "it depends on the publication."

Figure 8. Importance of white space in a newsletter.

13%

87%

☒ Very
important

▨ Somewhat
important
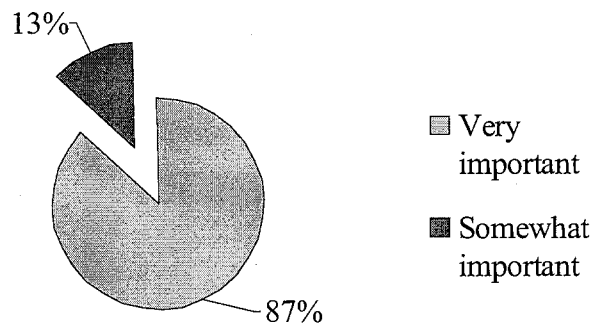
Eighty-seven percent answered very important, while the remaining 13 percent

answered somewhat important.

Figure 9. Number of columns of type on a typical 8 ½ by 11 newsletter page.

▨ Two	
▩ Three	
☐ Four or more	
☐ Two or three	
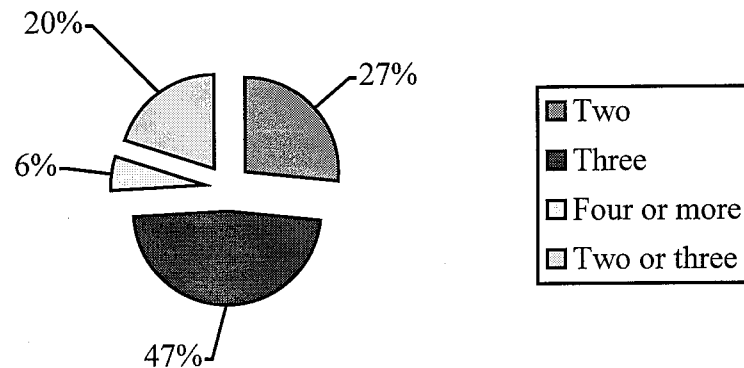
Forty-seven percent answered three columns. Twenty-seven percent answered two columns. Twenty percent answered two or three columns are best. Six percent answered four or more columns are best.

Figure 10. Importance of consistency in a newsletter from issue to issue.

▨ Very important	
▩ Somewhat important	
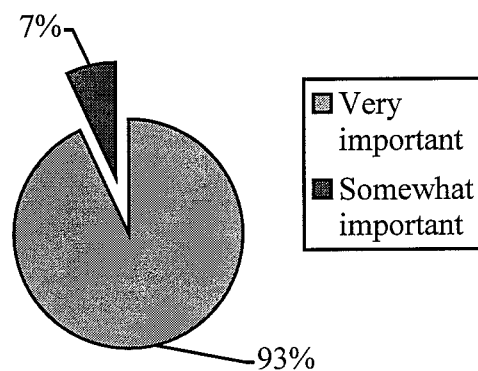
Ninety-three percent answered very important, while the remaining seven percent answered somewhat important.

Figure 11. Most effective paragraph style in a newsletter.

13%

■ Indented
paragraphs

■ Flush left
paragraphs

87%
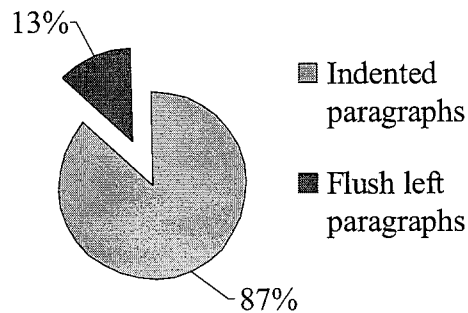
Eighty-seven percent answered indented paragraphs, while 13 percent answered

flush left paragraphs.

Figure 12. Number of colors that make a newsletter effective.

6%

20%

13%

61%

■ Two

■ Three

▢ Four

▢ One, two, three or
four
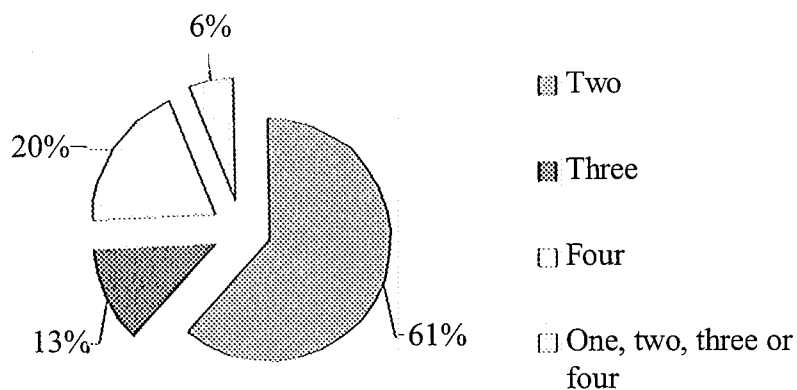
Sixty-one percent answered two colors make a newsletter effective. Twenty

percent answered four colors make a newsletter effective. Thirteen percent answered

three colors make a newsletter effective. Six percent answered one, two, three or four

colors, depending on the purpose of the publication.

Figure 13. Number of photographs used on a brochure cover.
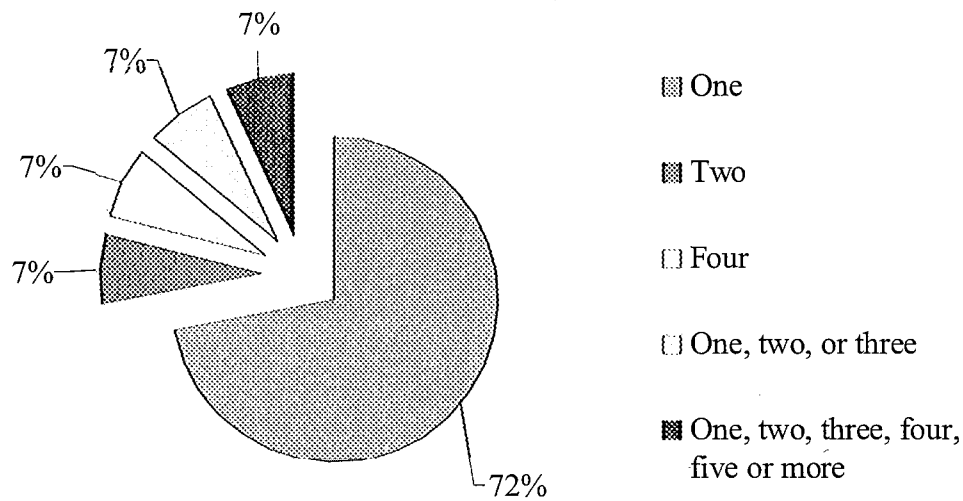
Seventy-two percent answered one photograph should be used on the brochure's cover. Seven percent answered two photographs should be used on the brochure's cover. Seven percent answered four photographs should be used on the brochure's cover. Seven percent answered one, two or three photographs, depending on the brochure's purpose. Seven percent answered one, two, three, four, or five or more photographs, depending on the brochure's purpose.

Figure 14. Most effective copy-breaking device for a brochure.
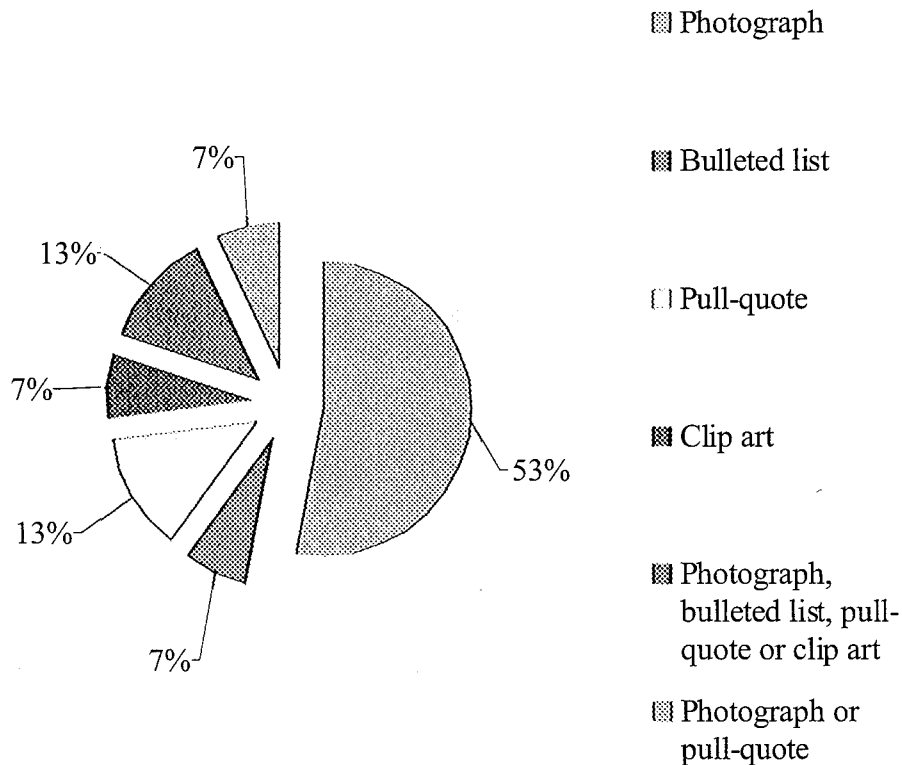
Fifty-three percent answered photographs are the most effective copy-breaker. Thirteen percent answered pull-quotes are the most effective copy-breaker. Thirteen percent answered photographs, bulleted lists of copy, pull-quotes and clip art are the most effective copy-breakers. Seven percent answered bulleted lists of copy are the most effective copy-breakers. Seven percent answered clip art. Seven percent answered photographs or pull-quotes are the most effective copy breakers.

When asked why these copy breakers were the most effective, five respondents wrote that photographs convey words and feelings, as well as draw the reader's attention quickly.

Three respondents wrote pull-quotes communicate the key messages of the copy, while catering to the to the 30-3-30 reader rule. Also, pull-quotes are easier on the reader's eye.

One respondent wrote each choice could be most or least effective depending on the message the designer is trying to convey.

One respondent wrote using copy to break copy doesn't provide relief. Clip art doesn't involve the reader or contribute to a message. Clip art is like popcorn – it has no nutritional value.

One respondent wrote all of the choices work, but designers shouldn't use photos or pull-quotes for no reason or too much – photos and pull-quotes can also distract a reader.

One respondent advised to rarely ever use bullets and pull-quotes in brochures, and try to never use clip-art.

One respondent wrote photographs and pull-quotes break up copy easier for the reader. The copy is not so overwhelming and it is easy on the eye.

Figure 15. Most effective copy-breaking device for a newsletter.
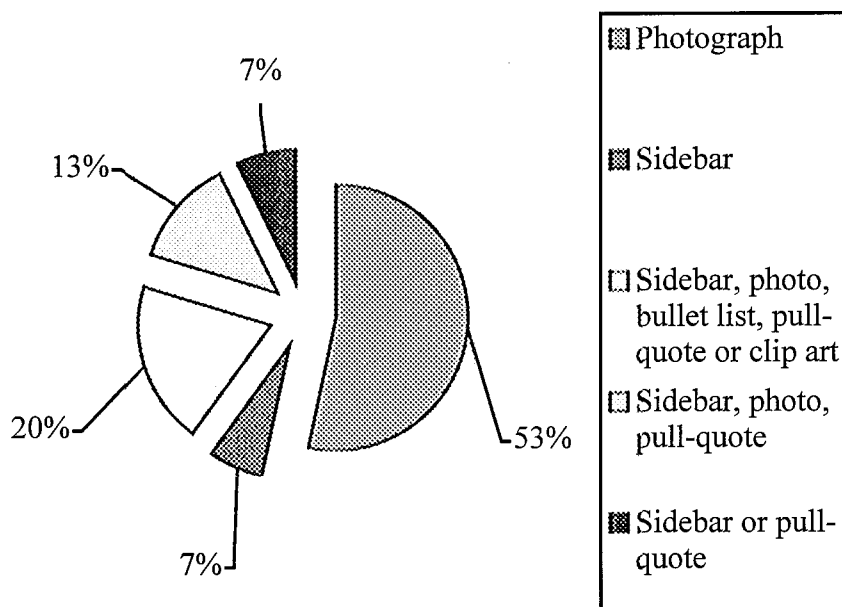
Fifty-three percent answered photographs are the most effective copy-breaker. Twenty percent answered sidebars, photographs, bulleted lists of copy, pull-quotes and clip art are the most effective copy-breakers. Thirteen percent answered sidebars, photographs and pull-quotes are the most effective copy-breakers. Seven percent answered sidebars are the most effective. Seven percent answered sidebars and pull-quotes are the most effective copy-breakers.

When asked why these copy breakers were the most effective, two respondents wrote that all could be effective if used correctly.

Two respondents wrote photographs draw attention and break up copy. Photographs also help pull readers into a publication.

One respondent wrote photographs and pull-quotes break up text.

One respondent wrote pull-quotes and sidebars call attention to key points or

issues, while photographs visually break up copy with images.

Figure 16. Last page of a newsletter is best to:
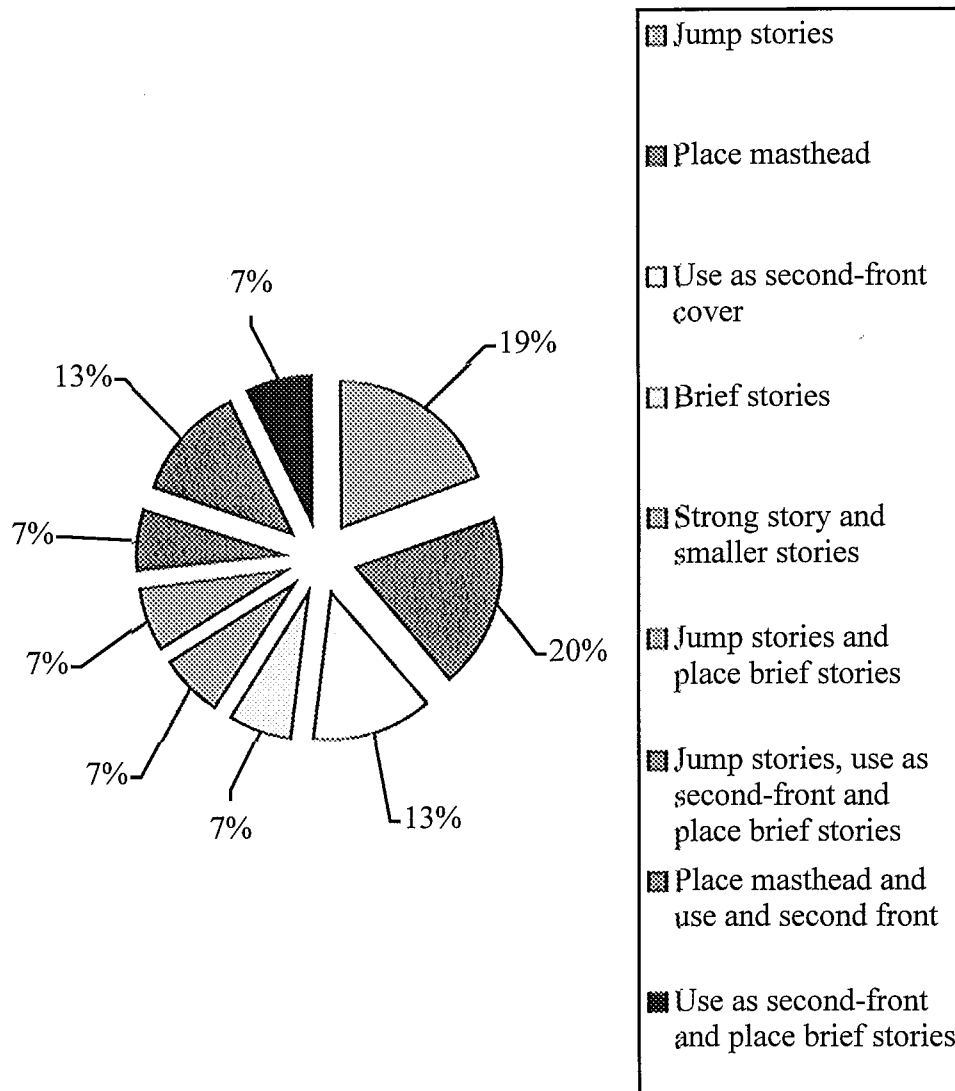
Twenty percent answered the last page is the best to place the masthead.

Nineteen percent answered the last page is best to place the jump in stories. Thirteen

percent answered the last page is best to place the masthead and use as a second-front

cover. Thirteen percent answered the last page is best to use as a second front cover.

Seven percent answered the last page is best to place brief stories. Seven percent

answered the last page is best to place another strong story and several smaller stories. Seven percent answered the last page is best to jump other stories and place brief stories. Seven percent answered the last page is best to jump other stories, use as a second front cover and place brief stories. Seven percent answered the last page is best to use as a second-front cover and place brief stories.

Figure 17. A story that is too long for the allotted space should:

Legend:
- Jump to another page
- Shorten to fit in space
- Make a sidebar out of some parts
- Jump the story, shorten it or make a sidebar
- Jump the story or shorten it
- Shorten the story or make a sidebar

Pie chart values: 7%, 20%, 20%, 27%, 13%, 13%
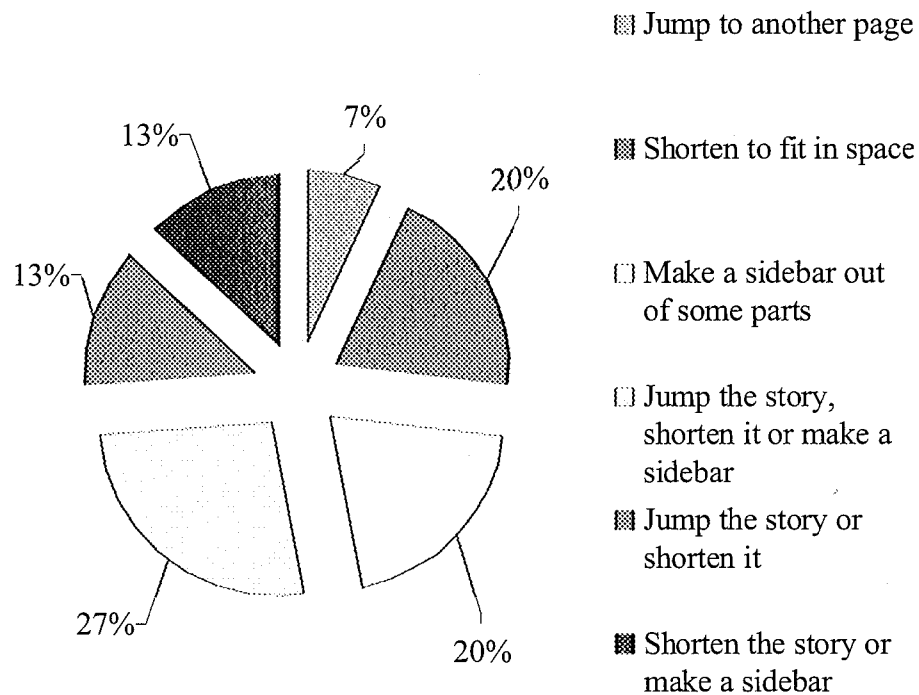
Twenty-seven percent answered jump the story, shorten the story to fit it into the allotted space or make a sidebar out of some parts of the story. Twenty percent answered shorten the story to fit in the allotted space. Twenty percent answered make a sidebar out of some parts of the story. Thirteen percent answered jump the rest of the story to another page or shorten the story to fit into the allotted space. Thirteen percent answered shorten the story to fit in the allotted space or make a sidebar out of some parts of the story. Seven percent answered jump the rest of the story to another page.

Figure 18. Design elements used to communicate key messages to people with only three minutes to read the newsletter.
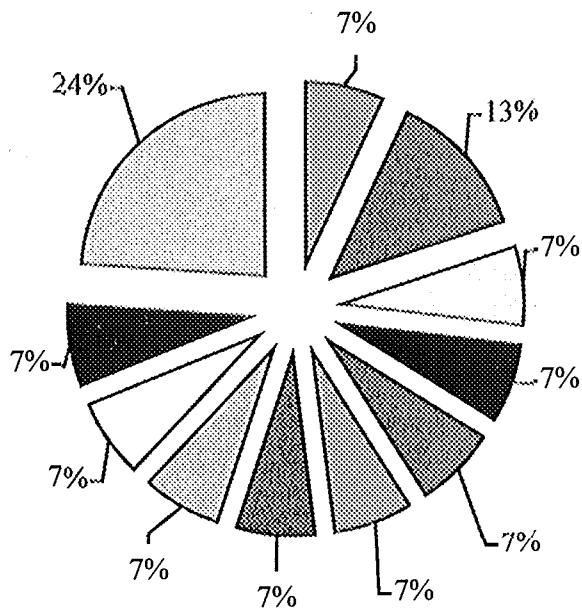
7%

24%

13%

7%

7%

7%

7%

7%

7%

7%

7%

▣ Headlines

▣ Photos and captions

▢ Pull-quotes

▢ Subheads

▣ Sidebars

▣ Headlines, photos and captions, subheads and bulleted lists

▣ Headlines, pull-quotes, bulleted lists and sidebars

▣ Headlines, photos and captions, pull-quotes, subheads, bulleted lists of copy and sidebars

▢ Headlines and pull-quotes

▣ Headlines, photos and captions and bulleted lists of copy

▢ Headlines, photos and captions and pull-quotes

When asked what design elements should be used to communicate key messages to people with only three minutes to read the newsletter:

- Twenty-four percent answered headlines, photographs with captions and pull- quotes

- Thirteen percent answered photographs with captions

- Seven percent answered headlines, photographs with captions, subheads and bulleted lists of copy

- Seven percent answered headlines, pull-quotes, bulleted lists of copy and sidebars

- Seven percent answered headlines, photographs with captions, pull-quotes, subheads, bulleted lists of copy and sidebars

- Seven percent answered headlines and pull-quotes

- Seven percent answered headlines, photographs with captions and bulleted lists of copy.

Seven percent each chose one of the following copy-breaking devices: headlines, pull-quotes, subheads, or sidebars

Question 19 asked, "What suggestions do you have to make a publication distinctive?"

Four respondents wrote strong, simple and clever layout with good photos and graphics, the use of white space and the use of spot color. The respondents also suggested using artwork that relates to the stories in the publication.

Four respondents wrote the writing of the piece makes the publication distinctive. Respondents advised writing about real issues in internal newsletters, and to use easy, breezy and clear writing readers understand. One of these respondents advised writing in the active voice.

Three respondents advised using a professional graphic artist and a professional photographer.

One respondent wrote, "Don't follow all of the rules."

One respondent advised considering the organization's image and message. Also, the respondent advised considering the audience. Younger readers want energetic pieces while conservative groups want a more stable look.

One respondent wrote design should be based on the audience's needs. Designers should ask themselves, "Will they read it? What format should the publication have? What worries and concerns do members of our audience have? What elements must be incorporated into the publication so the audience will be more receptive to it?"

One respondent advised using more than one typeface for headlines, the masthead, copy and pull-quotes as well as investing in photography to make all photos clear in the print job.

One respondent advised analyzing and improving writing and design on a periodic basis. Also, don't use clip art in a publication. Clip art isn't as strong as photographs.

One respondent advised, "The less design, the better."

Question 20 asked, "What's the best cost-saving idea you can suggest?"

Six respondents advised working with a printer who can get the designer the best price on paper.

One respondent advised contracting a print broker who can get the designer a better deal because he or she works with different printers.

One respondent advised getting a sponsor or underwriter to absorb the costs.

One respondent advised designing a catchy template, using office software and using a color copier to make copies.

One respondent advised making a digest-size newsletter that could be folded to fit in a number 10 envelope.

One respondent advised using screens to maximize the use of color. One color could look different in three different screen values.

One respondent advised using newsprint to reach a large audience.

One respondent advised making the newsletter a self-mailer.

One respondent advised re-using newsletters as much as possible, such as sending previously read copies to area realtor offices.

One respondent advised making the publication perfect before it goes to the printer because author's alterations are expensive.

Question 21 asked, "How do you measure the effectiveness of your publications?"

Nine respondents reported conducting readership surveys on a periodic basis.

Two respondents conduct surveys, focus groups and informal feedback on a periodic basis.

One respondent conducts focus groups periodically.

One respondent has informal conversations with readers.

One respondent asks these questions: "Are the people, subjects and layout interesting? Is the publication journalistically sound? Are people talking about any of the subject matter and or calling or writing the public relations department about it?

One respondent evaluates the publications by whether or not people want to read them.

One respondent uses e-mail feedback to evaluate publications.

One respondent in school-community relations invites all 50 of the schools in the district to reprint articles in their individual school newsletters. The respondent also evaluates publications by the number of calls received immediately following publication.

One respondent evaluates publications by the number of state and national competitions publications win.

One respondent evaluates publications by asking, "Did it stay on budget?" and "Does senior management decide to keep it year after year?"

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The author's study examined the criteria public relations professionals use to develop award-winning brochures and newsletters. This was accomplished through a literature search and a survey of 15 public relations professionals who won national awards for their publications.

<u>Conclusions</u>

About two-thirds of the respondents (66%) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that headlines should be set in a sans serif typeface.

Close to three-quarters of the respondents (73%) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that body copy should be set in a serif typeface.

Almost half of the respondents (46%) believe only two typefaces should be used throughout a publication.

Over half of the respondents (53%) believe that designers should use ragged right column style while little more than one-fourth (26%) prefer using a justified column style in a publication. Thirteen percent answered the column style depends on the layout, while the remaining eight percent gave no answer.

Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (73%) believe upper and lower case letters should be the style used for large lines of type in a publication.

Four fifths of the respondents (80%) believe black is the best choice for ink in a one-color publication.

Almost two thirds of the respondents (66%) believe white is the best paper color choice for a publication.

All of the respondents believe it is important to use ample white space in a newsletter.

Almost half of the respondents (47%) believe that a typical 8 ½ by 11 newsletter page should have three columns of type.

Nearly all of the respondents (93%) believe consistency from issue to issue in a newsletter is very important.

Over three-quarters of the respondents (87%) believe indented paragraphs are the more effective than flush left paragraphs in a publication.

Close to two-thirds of the respondents (61%) believe a newsletter is most effective if it is printed in two colors.

Almost three-quarters of the respondents (72%) believe a brochure should have only one photograph on its cover to make it effective.

Over half of the respondents (53%) believe a photograph is the most effective copy-breaking device for a brochure. When asked why these copy breakers were the most effective, five respondents wrote that photographs convey words and feelings, as well as draw the readers' attention quickly.

Over half of the respondents (53%) believe a photograph is the most effective copy-breaking device for a newsletter. When asked why these copy breakers were the most effective, two respondents wrote photographs draw attention and break up copy. Photographs also help pull readers into a publication.

A variety of answers were given and no consensus appeared when respondents were asked what the last page of a newsletter was best used for:

- Twenty percent believe the last page of a newsletter is best used as a place to put the masthead.

- Nineteen percent believe the last page is best used to place the jump in stories.

- Thirteen percent answered the last page is best to place the masthead and use as a second-front cover.

- Thirteen percent answered the last page is best to use as a second front cover.

- Seven percent answered the last page is best to place brief stories.

- Seven percent answered the last page is best to place another strong story and several smaller stories.

- Seven percent answered the last page is best to jump other stories and place brief stories. Seven percent answered the last page is best to place the jump, use as a second front cover and place brief stories.

- Seven percent answered the last page is best to use as a second-front cover and place brief stories.

A variety of answers were given and no consensus appeared when respondents were asked what is the best thing to do with a newsletter story that is too long for the allotted space:

- Twenty-seven percent would jump the story to another page, shorten it to fit into the allotted space or make a sidebar out of some of the story's parts.

- Twenty percent would shorten the story to fit it into the allotted space.

- Twenty percent would make a sidebar out of some of the story's parts.

- Thirteen percent would jump the story or shorten the story to fit it into the allotted space.

- Thirteen percent would shorten the story to fit it into the allotted space or make a sidebar out of some parts of the story.

- Seven percent would jump the story.

A variety of answers were given and no consensus appeared when respondents were asked what design elements should be used to communicate key messages to people with only three minutes to read the newsletter:

- Twenty-six percent answered headlines, photographs with captions and pull- quotes.

- Thirteen percent answered photographs with captions.

Seven percent of the respondents each answered:

- Pull-quotes

- Subheads

- Sidebars

- Headlines, photographs with captions, subheads and bulleted lists of copy

- Headlines, pull-quotes, bulleted lists of copy and sidebars

- Headlines, photographs with captions, pull-quotes, subheads, bulleted lists of copy and sidebars.

- Headlines and pull-quotes.

- Headlines, photographs with captions and bulleted lists of copy.

When asked what makes a publication distinctive, four of the respondents answered "a good layout." Four other respondents believe good writing makes a publication distinctive. Three respondents believe that using a professional graphic artist and a professional photographer make a publication distinctive.

To cut costs when producing a publication, six of the 15 respondents advised working with a printer who can get the designer the best price on paper.

To evaluate the effectiveness of a publication, nine of the 15 respondents reported conducting readership surveys on a periodic basis.

<u>Recommendations</u>

It is recommended that large lines of type in a publication, such as headlines, be set in a sans serif typeface. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (66%) agreed. According to research stated earlier (see Chapter II), experts recommend large lines of type to be set in a sans serif typeface.

It is recommended that the body copy in a publication be set in a serif typeface. Close to three-quarters of the respondents (73%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, sans serif type in body copy is harder to read than serif type in body copy. Design experts such as Roger C. Parker, Jan V. White and Claudia Cuddy, recommend setting body copy in a serif typeface.

It is recommended that a designer use two typefaces, one serif (for body copy) and one sans serif (for headlines), when producing a publication. Almost half of the respondents (46%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, using too many typefaces in a publication will hurt its believability.

It is recommended that designers should use ragged right column style instead of justified column style in publications. Over half of the respondents (53%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, ragged right column style gives the publication perfectly even spacing between words, which gives lines of type a neater look from line to line.

It is recommended that upper and lower case letters should be used for large lines of type, such as headlines, in publications. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents chose upper and lower case letters over all capital letters, small capitals and down style. According to research stated earlier, anything set in all capital letters identifies the publication as amateurish.

It is recommended that black ink and white paper should be used to produce a one-color publication. Eighty percent of the respondents believe that black is the best color to use for a one-color publication and about two-thirds of the respondents (66%) believed white is the best paper color. According to research stated earlier, black ink and white paper are the most used combination because they are the cheapest combination.

It is recommended that designers use white space as a tool in a newsletter. All of the respondents agreed. According to research, newsletters need ample white space to allow the reader's eye to rest. Research also suggests that white space separates items.

It is recommended that pages in an 8 1/2 by 11 have three columns. Over three-quarters of the respondents (87%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, three columns allow a number of design opportunities, as well as a number of headline sizes and story sizes.

It is recommended that newsletters remain consistent from issue to issue. Nearly all of the respondents (93%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, consistent newsletter design helps readers recognize a publication and feel comfortable with it.

It is recommended that paragraphs in a publication should be indented instead of being set flush left. Over three-quarters of the respondents (87%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, all of the paragraphs in a publication should be indented to give the reader "entrance ramps" to the copy. However, as a style consideration, the first paragraph of a story can be set flush left if the designer chooses to use a drop cap to add emphasis. The remaining paragraphs in the story should be indented.

It is recommended that only one photograph should be used on the cover of a brochure. Almost three-quarters of the respondents (72%) agreed. According to research stated earlier, experts recommend using one picture that captures the essence of the product or service the brochure is promoting. Too many photographs on the cover of a brochure can send mixed messages about the product or service.

It is recommended that designers use photographs as copy-breaking devices to make brochures and newsletters more effective. Over half of the respondents (53%) chose to use a photograph as a copy-breaking device in a brochure over a bulleted list of copy, pull-quote or clip art. Over half of the respondents (53%) chose to use a photograph as a copy-breaking device in a newsletter over a sidebar, bulleted list of copy, pull-quote or clip art. Survey respondents indicated that a photograph draws attention quickly, conveys emotion to the reader and helps pull readers into a publication.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the variety of answers given for questions 16, 17 and 18, it is recommended that a more detailed study be conducted of award-winning newsletters to determine the following:

- What is the best way to use the last page of a newsletter?

- What is done with a story that is too long for the space allotted for it?

- What design elements are used to communicate key messages to people who have only three minutes to read a newsletter?

Based on the general responses to question 19, it is recommended that a more detailed study be conducted on what makes an award-winning publication distinctive.

Based on the general responses to question 20, it is recommended that a more detailed study be conducted to determine cost-saving ideas for publications.

Based on the average responses to question 21, it is recommended a more detailed study be conducted to determine the best ways to measure the effectiveness of publications.

It is recommended that a detailed study be conducted to determine the most desired content in an award-winning publication.

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Toor, Marcelle Lapow, "Designing a Desktop Newsletter" <u>American Demographics Marketing Power Supplement</u> November 1995: 4.

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Appendix A

Thesis Survey Frame

PRSA Bronze Anvil Winners 1998

Cynthia Elise Kramer, Sr. PR Account Executive
Westwayne, Inc.
401 East Jackson Street, #3600
Tampa, FL 33602
For: newsletter, Publix Supermarkets, Inc. Family Style

Lawrence Werner, Exec. VP/Director, PR
Ketchum Public Relations
6 PPG Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-5406
For: brochure, Dept. of Community and Economic Development

Thomas E. Eppes, President
Price/McNabb
2800 NationsBank Corp. Ctr.
Charlotte, NC 28202
For: brochure, Loaves and Fishes

Sal Cinquegrani, VP
360 Communications Company
8725 West Higgins Rd.
Chicago, IL 60631
For: newsletter, "the Circular" City of Chicago

Kimberly Asbill, PR Manager
Chernoff/Silver and Associates
801 Gervis St.
Columbia, SC 29201-3162
For: newsletter, Nickelodeon Inside Kids

Roni Schraeder, Sr. Acct. Exec.
Medisphere Communications, Inc.
41 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10010
For: brochure, C.A.L.M. – An Easy Approach to Managing Your Child's Fever, McNeil
Consumer Products

Charles Beeler, PR Director
Mark Russell & Associates
360 South Warren St.
Syracuse, NY 13202
For: Gold's Gym Newsletter

NSPRA Award Winners

Debbie Steudeman, Events/Projects Specialist
Rockwood School District
1955-A Shepard Rd.
Glencoe, MO 63038-1431
For: I Have a Question Brochure

Sharon Sumner, Executive Editor
Dallas Public Schools
3700 Ross Ave., Box 40
Dallas, TX 75204
For: New School Brochures

Michelle Alexander, Community Schools Coordinator
Edenton-Chowan Schools
PO Box 206, 300 E. King St., Suite 300
Edenton, NC 27932
For: School Systems Info Brochure

Kelly LaGrutta, Personnel Manager
Educational Service District 101
1025 W. Indiana
Spokane, WA 99205
For: Step-Star brochure

Cele Bona, Coordinator of Community Relations
Downers Grove School District # 58
1860 63rd Street
Downers Grove, IL 60516
For: Bridges newsletter

Candace LaForge, Executive Director, Fulton County Schools
Fulton Education Foundation
786 Cleveland Ave., SW
Atlanta, GA 30315
For: Partners newsletter

Peggy Lyons, Director of Information
Pittsford Central School District
42 W. Jefferson Rd.
Pittsford, NY 14534
For: Pittsford School News newsletter

Kris Miehlich, Asst. Dir. School/Community Relations
Elgin Area School District u-46
355 E. Chicago St.
Elgin, IL 60120
For: Learning U-46 newsletter

Brita Wilk McKenna, Coordinator, Alumni & Parent Programs
Illinois Mathematics & Science Academy
1500 W. Sullivan Rd.
Aurora, IL 60506-1000
For: IMS Alum newsletter

Deborah Morgan, Communications Specialist
Fort Wayne Community Schools
Grile Adm. Center
2700 S. Clinton St.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46807
For: Reporter newsletter

Myra Thompson, Program Administrator
Guilford County Schools
712 N. Eugene St.
Greensboro, NC 27401
For: Inside GCS newsletter

Ray E. Willis, Director, Public Information Office
Clark County School District
4212 Eucalyptus Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89121
For: Insider newsletter

Josephine B. David, Director of Communications
The Brearly School
610 E. 83rd St.
New York, NY 10028
For: Campaign for Brearly Brochure

1998 IABC Gold Quill Winners

Michelle Hillyer
US West Media Group
7800 East Orchard Rd.
Englewood, CO 80111
For: UMG.world newsletter

Ed Stewart, Director, Public Relations
Southwest Airlines
2430 Shore Crest Dr.
Dallas, TX 75235
For: Plane Trails magazine

Steve Bender, Communications Director
Tennessee Valley Authority
400 W. Summit Hill Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37999
For: Inside TVA magapaper

1997 Gold Quill Winners

James W. Harr
Utah Retirement Systems
540 E. 200 S
Salt Lake City, UT 84102
For: Cycles newsletter

Deb Dupont
Aetna Retirement Services
151 Farmington Ave.
Hartford, CT 06156
For: Aetna Perspective newsletter

Nicolle Henneuse
Silicon Graphics Inc.
2011 N. Shoreline Blvd.
Mountain View, CA 94043
For: All Hands newsletter

Becky Toney
Federal Express
2005 Corporate Ave.
Memphis, TN 38132
For: Signals newsletter

Mary-Anne Ward
Prax-air, Inc.
39 Old Ridgebury Rd.
Danbury, CT 06810
For: Praxair News newsletter

Bill Zabit
Zabit & Associates
565 Bridgeway
Sausalito, CA 94965
For: It's Your Future, It's Your Move

Appendix B

Survey of Award-Winning PR Publications Designers

Hello, I'm Jacob Farbman and I'm studying which characteristics public relations professionals consider when designing award-winning publications. The results of this survey will be used in my graduate thesis at Rowan University. Also, I will send you the results.

Directions:
Please circle the answer that best reflects your experience in winning awards for your publications. When finished, simply place this survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope enclosed and mail it.

1. A sans-serif typeface should be used for headlines in a publication.
   strongly agree   somewhat agree   neutral   somewhat disagree   strongly disagree

2. A serif typeface should be used for body copy in a publication.
   strongly agree   somewhat agree   neutral   somewhat disagree   strongly disagree

3. How many typefaces should be used in a publication? (including headlines and body copy)
   a. One   b. two   c. three   d. four or more

4. Which column style is best for publications?
   a. Justified columns   b. Ragged right columns

5. In a publication, which type style is most effective for large lines of type, such as headlines?
   a. Down style
   b. All capital letters
   c. Small capital letters
   d. Upper and lower case letters

6. What is the best choice of ink color in a one-color publication?
   a. Black
   b. Red
   c. Blue
   d. Other_____

7. What is the best choice for paper color?
   a. White
   b. Yellow
   c. Cream
   d. Other_____

8. When designing a newsletter, how important is ample use of white space?
   very important   somewhat important   somewhat unimportant   very unimportant

9. In a typical 8 1/2 by 11 newsletter, how many columns of type should be used to make up the pages?
   a. One
   b. Two
   c. Three
   d. Four or more

10. In newsletter design, how important is consistency from issue to issue?
very important   somewhat important   somewhat unimportant   very unimportant

11. In a newsletter, which paragraph style is more effective?
   a. Indented paragraphs   b. Flush left paragraphs

12. Ideally, how many colors make a newsletter effective?
   a. one   b. two   c. three   d. four

13. If using photographs for a brochure, how many should be used for the cover?
   a. one   b. two   c. three   d. four   e. five or more

14. In a brochure, which copy-breaking device do you deem most effective?
   a. Photograph
   b. Bullet list of copy
   c. Pull-quote
   d. Clip art

Why?_____

_____

15. In a newsletter, which copy-breaking device do you deem the most effective?
   a. Sidebar
   b. Photograph
   c. Bullet list of copy
   d. Pull-quote
   e. Clip art

Why?_____

_____

16. Do you consider the last page of a newsletter a good place:
   a. to jump other stories
   b. to place the masthead
   c. to use as a second-front cover
   d. to place brief stories

17. If you have a story that is too long for the allotted space do you:
a. jump the rest of the story to another page
b. shorten the story to fit in the allotted space
c. make a sidebar out of some parts of the story
d. shrink the typeface to fit the story into the allotted space

18. What do you use to communicate key messages to people who have only three minutes to read a newsletter?
a. headlines
b. photographs with captions
c. pull quotes
d. subheads
e. bulleted lists of copy
f. sidebars

19. What suggestions do you have to make a publication distinctive?

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. What's the best cost-saving idea you can suggest?

_____

_____

_____

21. How do you measure the effectiveness of your publications?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Again, thank you for your time.