Inside news & feature page design

Military news pages should be simple, organized, and consistent in style and design. Photographs and graphic devices may help attract readers, but headlines also provide interest to the pages. These pages may also contain well-placed pulled quotes or summary boxes to help readers quickly key in on important aspects of a story. It’s your job to effectively present news and information to readers in a professional and streamlined format.
Inside news page design

Compared to the newspapers of yesteryear, today’s news pages look lively and sophisticated. It’s our responsibility as public affairs practitioners to do our best to package our stories effectively to catch readers’ attention. As you may recall, the front page of a newspaper should entice your reader to pick it up and start reading. Once you’ve got them to open your paper, the design must stay consistent and follow the rules of a modular design – keep it simple. Let’s take a look at the inside page.

The inside page should contain two to four stories. Remember to stay simple and deliver your message and news free of clutter. Because our paper is tabloid size, a good rule of thumb is to limit the number of stories between two and four. Just because we’re inside the paper doesn’t mean we forget to run our best photos big.

Use infographics such as pulled quotes and charts to entice the reader to get more in-depth with your work. Each headline, photo and graphic device creates an entry point that can catch a reader’s eye and draw them deeper into your stories. Pulled quotes are pulled from the body of the story and are set in display type, usually 14 to 18 points.

Jumps will never be popular, but they do offer increased layout options on key pages. Pages 1 and 3 are key pages, therefore jumps are acceptable. Experts generally discourage jumping a story from an inside page to another inside page because the practice loses readers.

A clear, consistent format for jumps will help readers regard them as minor detours, not major roadblocks.

Other graphic elements to consider include timelines, maps, diagrams, charts, tables and checklists. As you improve your design skills, you may include some of these more advanced graphic elements in your work.
Inside News & Feature Page Design Layout and Design

Inside news examples

Chinese Muslim in Gitmo limbo

Bailout legislation set for vote

Wall Street’s shivers rattle soon-to-be retirees

Kids overscheduled? Maybe not
Regardless of the page you’re designing, you need to have a CVI to anchor your page. During your planning, ensure that you have a dominant photo that helps focus you’re page and maintains the ideals of modular design.

So far we have been working with several modules on a page, each unrelated to the others, some jumping to other pages. This is the style people are used to for news sections, but feature pages often have a more relaxed style. It’s not unusual for a feature story with its photos to take up an entire page or more. Designers can use white space to help draw the eye in, colors and tables, or graphic illustrations. Next we’re going to talk about graphic illustrations and their role in feature page design, as well as lay out a page with the complete-story concept.
Feature page design

The goal is to fill the page while not jumping to elsewhere in the paper, making it convenient for the reader to get the full impact and appreciation for the story and page as a whole before moving on. Remember, you still need to have a strong CVI to anchor your page and provide focus.

Most newspapers only use jumps on the cover page. This gets readers to open up the paper and flip through it in order to continue the story they started. Stories rarely jump inside the sections though, because readers might skip stories elsewhere on the same page. Feature pages especially commit to showing the entire story on one page, sometimes committing the entire page to a single story accompanied by photos or art.

There are several types of designs you can use for each module.

1. The “L” design can work with any shape of photo, but the photo must be facing to the left. This design lets the byline touch the headline while keeping a dominant photo. The headline is usually placed over the story and the picture to top off the module in its entirety, but sometimes it can be placed beside the photo and over the text instead. This design works well with a large vertical photo and a long story.

2. The “U” design can also work with any shape of photo, but works best with horizontal or square pictures. The text continues along the bottom of the photo before rising near the top of the module again in the last column. This design works well for a long story with a large picture that faces to the center, or even to the left or right.

3. The banner design requires a large horizontal photo, preferably one that’s not too deep. Think about a widescreen movie when considering this design. The headline should be underneath the photo, and the story should be beneath the headline. This way, the byline still touches the headline. Within the columns of text, designers can add pull quotes or sometimes even more photos to break up the gray. This design works best when the photo faces to the center and downward.

4. The side head design works with a vertical photo that is very deep but an accompanying story that is relatively short. By placing the headline above the story but beside the photo, it can fill white space. This is far from a “cure all” for short stories. If the headline takes up more than a quarter of the room the story does, the module looks awkward and unbalanced.

5. Depending on the design, some variety in headlines may also dress up the page. Hammers or tripods can shake up a five-column headline to keep it interesting. Almost any of the designs can use a drop headline too.
Feature Page Design Example

**Dominant image**
- Anchors the page and provides the design a focus.

**Feature headline**
- Headline is playful and adds an interesting graphic element to the page.

**White space**
- Don’t try to fill up all available space. Learn to use white space to give graphic relief to your design.

---

**HighLife**

**In the Moment**
A weekly column of the story of the Week Valley in Photos, 1999

**Monday, 1-21-08**

**1/26/08 Section C**

**Home | Feature Page Design | Graphic Illustrations**

---

**You can be a DJ, too**
Interested in hosting a radio program on KYFS Radio, Free Minturn?
Visit our radio station and find out how to fill out the DJ application form online.
For more information, call 827-9029 or visit the Web site.

---

**Radio free Minturn gives DJ hope for a chance to shine**

---

**Feature Page Design Example**
The CVI is the dominant image on the page and provides the page with a solid focus. In addition, remember to create entry points for your reader by “jazzing up” your headline – rather than just a simple banner – and utilizing white space to create a sense of graphic relief. Let’s take a look at some examples.

When laying out the page, we have to look at the overall plan, making sure photo, headline and story all work together to communicate our focus. In the future, to help accomplish this task, you may need to use a number of different types of graphic illustrations to communicate your story.
Feature page design examples
Feature page design examples
Graphic illustrations

Feature stories can often focus on abstract concepts, where finding an event or person to photograph that still relates to the focus is difficult or even impossible. Depression, dreams, habits, morale, ethics, money, stress ... the best visuals for these ideas will not often occur naturally. However, artwork can normally be found or created that communicates the idea quickly and easily, arousing curiosity and drawing the reader into the story.

Four-step Public Relations process (RPIE)

"The old 'flying by the seat of the pants' approach to solving public relations problems is over."
- Edward J. Robinson (p. 339)

Some years ago, an oil company decided to close one of its sales divisions as part of a reorganization to increase efficiency. This meant that 600 employees would have to move or find new jobs. As a result, the community where the division was located would suffer economic loss, customers would be concerned about getting equally good service under the new setup, and investors would be curious about the meaning of the move. The first task of the company was to gather all the facts through research so the move could be explained and justified to employees, stockholders, and customers. The next step was to plan the announcement. Timing was important. The news had to be broken swiftly, before rumors started, released simultaneously to all those affected, and communicated in such a way as to explain satisfactorily the necessity and wisdom of the change. The plan included memorandums, meetings, letters to employees and dealers, a statement of banking arrangements for community banks, a general office letter, and plans for meetings. The news was released in a coordinated program of meetings, letters, and media coverage. Evaluation of the plan focused on the department's original assessment of the problem situation, the techniques used, and the reactions of those affected. This is an oversimplification of what actually happened, what's important to understand is that without a good plan, a great idea can fail.

For many years we perpetuated the myth that Public Affairs deals with intangibles and cannot be measured — this is simply not true. Public affairs has evolved to an applied science — no longer do just hunches, gut feelings and personal experience serve as an adequate basis for our public affairs programs. Communication Planning is a process designed to deal with various PA issues, as well as capitalize on opportunities. Leadership rarely accepts a PAO's recommendations or simple claim that a program is, or was, successful on faith alone. They want to see proof. If done well, the final product will clearly illustrate the goals and intended audiences identified in the planning process. Where to start? The mission statement for public affairs builds upon the command's mission statement and helps an organization achieve its mission by doing the following:

- Collect and analyze information on the changing knowledge, opinions, and behaviors of key publics
- Serving as the central source of information about an organization and as the official channel of communication between the command and its publics
- Communicating significant
Clip art is probably the most common type of graphic used in military papers. It is inexpensive and plentiful. Your office in the fleet or field may have purchased computer disks with hundred or thousands of images. But be careful, many of these images look tacky, low brow or even “cheesy.” We want our pages to look professional, not like ads for the local mall. Choose Clip art that compliments the design and style of your publication. The simple, clean pieces are the best to use.

Artwork can be a way to spruce up an otherwise gray-looking page. Most services have multimedia specialists who can draw very impressive illustrations for your publication with enough notice. Historical engravings, wood cuts or paintings from pictorial archives can sometimes provide a classier look. Be very careful about simply pulling pictures from the Internet though, as much of the material is copyrighted. Never, ever use copyrighted material without permission. Even with permission, do not use artwork that promotes a commercial company. Remember SAPP.

When you use clip art, consider using it big and how it will affect the overall page design. While it should never be as large as professional artwork, it can be worked into a headline as a typographical effect or the top of the story as surely as any photograph.

Do not break up lines of text with clip art, just like you wouldn’t break it up for a photo or pull quote. If the art is placed between columns, ensure that it is still a pica of spacing around it, and that the columns are not narrowed to the point of breaking optimum line length.
Sometimes a posed photograph using actors and props can make a point as surely as any drawing. With modern day software, photographs can be altered in wild and improbable ways until they look more like artwork than actual event. These photographic illustrations can express ideas, capture moods, provide symbolization or express an idea. However, people associate photography with truth. “The camera never lies.” This concept makes photographic illustration very dangerous.

A photographic illustration cannot, in any way, be confused for the real thing. If the photo needs a cutline to explain what is happening and that the picture is an illustration, then the entire thing fails. Some type underneath the photo cannot undo the reader’s first impression. It is dishonest to pass off a posed photo as the real thing. Remember that the “A” in SAPP stands for the same thing as it does in the ABCs of journalism – accuracy!

Use props or programs to make the picture surreal. A good photographic illustration shows the photographer’s skill with camera angles, lighting and special effects. Distort angles, use odd models, manipulate lighting ... anything to emphasize the photo is not authentic.
Conclusion

The process of dummying, designing and paginating a page in a publication is a basic skill that you may use throughout your career. You must remember that designing and producing a publication is an important part of effectively communicating with your readers. Your design will bring together all the elements of journalism you’ve been using so far to sell the complete package. The challenge is to present a larger story in its entirety without making the page look “gray.” Most military publications use this style of design for the majority of their pages, making it an important skill to master.
References