

PRINT MATTERS

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Is it time for a redesign?

It was around 2 a.m. when inspiration struck Charles Hively, publisher of *Creative Quarterly: The Journal of Art & Design*. Hively and his team had been mulling over possible changes to their quarterly publication's design, but it was that epiphany in the wee hours of the morning that kick-started the process and gave Hively a vision to pursue. By that afternoon, he had a sample page layout completed.

Of course, it didn't hurt that Hively has extensive experience in graphic design. Even with reams of expertise, however, redesigning a publication typically does not occur overnight. "It usually would take six to eight weeks minimum, and possibly up to several months," he said.

There's no doubt that redesigning a publication can be time-consuming, but if your publication needs to address design shortcomings, update its look or signal a new direction, the process is worth the effort, said James McAnear, graphic designer for Houston-based



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Transocean. “It’s a very crowded market,” McAnear said. “First impressions are everything.”

How long has it been?

From what McAnear has seen, the most logical candidates for redesigns are long-running publications that essentially look the same as they did in their early years. “If a magazine has been around for years and is starting to look a bit dated, you can make it more appealing to readers,” he said. “If the use of colors and fonts are starting to show their age, it might be a good idea to take it through a face-lift.

“That’s not to say there aren’t timeless designs, like *Time* magazine. If you have a classic look, I wouldn’t recommend a change.”

McAnear suggests taking the time to make a thorough assessment of your publication’s appearance, including its cover, table of contents, colors, fonts, use of photography, infographics, layout and any other factors that contribute to its overall presentation and personality.

It also helps to take a look at other publications to see how they approach their design. “Pick a half dozen publications or so that you would consider top of class,” McAnear said. “What are they doing right? Draw some inspiration.”

In the case of *Creative Quarterly*, Hively revamped the entire product. He added regular features and changed the publication’s format, size, layout and fonts. “We looked at what the competition was doing and tried to do something different,” said Hively, whose business, HivelyDesigns, also publishes *3x3* and *The Magazine of Contemporary Illustration*. “What we wanted to do is involve the reader more, be a curator of events and do things that would inspire artists and designers.”

With layouts, Hively’s goal was to develop a look readers would find clean and interesting. “We try to have that format throughout the book. There is a definite grid to it. Our previous issue was a little bit scattered. We wanted to make it look more professional.”

The visual appeal of your publication has a direct correlation with how much time readers will spend with it, McAnear said. So it’s important to avoid time- and money-saving elements that will detract from the look you’re going for. “One common mistake is using too much clip art,” he said. “There’s lots of it out there, but over-reliance can make your publication look dated.”

Sometimes the problem is being too immersed in the product to recognize its design shortcomings, Hively said. “The biggest thing I see in trade publications is there are no peaks and valleys. You see one thing after another, all the same. It’s poor layout, poor typography and no real thought to the total book. With publishers, they’re not necessarily looking at what other publications are doing. They’re so involved with getting their publication out they don’t have time to analyze it.”

Firm foundation

Once you commit to a redesign and identify the areas you need to address, you’ll need to finalize your publication’s new approach to design. Ideally, you’ll be working with a designer or someone with design experience on this step. “Establish early on the style and look you want to use in your publication,” McAnear said. “Moving forward, maintain a consistent look and style from issue to issue.”

If in one issue you have charts and infographics, and there’s a color palette you use, and the next time you use charts with a completely different treatment, that can be jarring.



This is a redesigned book review page from *Creative Quarterly*.

The same rule applies to typestyles, he said. “Use a limited family of type so you have a consistent look. That’s not to say you’re stuck with the same color palette and fonts from now to 10 years from now. You’re free to break the rules — when applicable. But I would recommend having a style guide.”

The style guide should be detailed, McAnear said, with the publication’s approach not only to color and font, but also photography, graphic elements and grid layouts for single and two-page spreads. “When in doubt, you always can refer back to it.”

Also important is identifying your approach to the publication’s cover, McAnear said. “That’s the first thing people see. Keep it nice and clean. Don’t clutter it up with a lot of images; that makes it hard for the reader to focus on any one thing.”

Above all, McAnear said, your publication design should reflect its content, its purpose and its personality. “Use your own definition of elegance, based on your audience, but keep it classy,” he said. 

One on one

JPA profile: Bob Wilkey, Press Operator

Number of years with JPA: Nearly 2 (in industry since high school)

Why he loves JPA: "At JPA, printing a quality product is more important than running a bunch of production."

Family life: Wilkey is the father of two grown children: Jennifer (and husband John) live near Chicago, and Keith lives in Baltimore. He's also a proud grandpa. Jennifer and John have a son, Ryan, who is 18 months old. Wilkey

enjoys visits with his grandson and loves watching him grow and learn new things. Becoming a grandfather has been a very nice experience. "It feels pretty good."

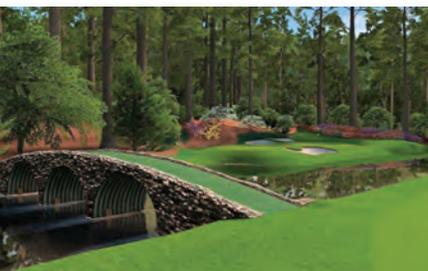
Hobbies: Wilkey has enjoyed playing golf since he was in high school. "My dad got me started," he said. "Actually, I played all of the sports in school: basketball, baseball and golf. Golf is a sport you can do at any age." Wilkey is a member of a golf course about four miles from home and plays as much as time permits.

Cool Fact: When Wilkey was in second grade, he and his family were part of a live audience for the TV show that starred Bozo the Clown. Tickets were very hard to come by, but

Wilkey's mom and her friend got tickets five years in advance. A friend in their group was targeted by the show's popular "magic arrows," meaning he was selected to play "Bozo Buckets" in the Grand Prize game. The idea was to throw a ball into a series of buckets, increasingly farther away from the child. "Our friend wasn't in kindergarten yet," Wilkey said. "He got all the way to bucket No. 6, but missed the pail. It was pretty neat." 



Bob and Ryan



Wilkey plays at Wolf Creek in Cayuga, Ill.

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RECIPE

Libby's Famous Pumpkin Pie*

- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 large eggs
- 1 can (15 ounces) Libby's 100% Pure Pumpkin
- 1 can (12 fluid ounces) Carnation Evaporated Milk
- 1 unbaked 9-inch (4 cup volume) deep-dish pie shell

Mix sugar, salt, cinnamon, ginger and cloves in a small bowl. Beat eggs in a large bowl. Stir in pumpkin and sugar-spice mixture. Gradually stir in evaporated milk. Pour into pie shell. Bake in 425 degree oven for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 350 degrees, and bake 40-50 minutes or until knife inserted near center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 2 hours. Serve immediately or refrigerate.

*Note: Wilkey said he always enjoyed eating his grandmother's pumpkin pie. When people complimented her and asked for her recipe, she always told them she used the recipe on the pumpkin can.

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