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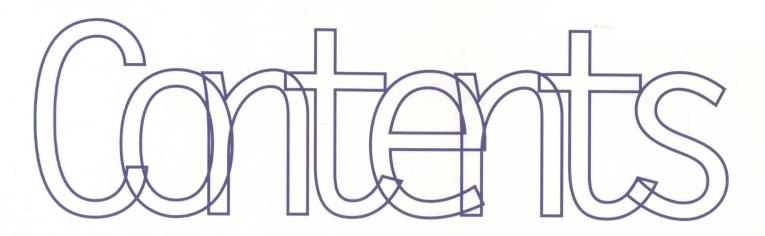
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MITCHELL ENGELMEYER, Creative Director, MARKETING SERVICES AT THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

discusses the innovations in today's creative arena and subsequent challenges facing corporate marketers:

CO: What exactly is the function of the Marketing Services department at The Wall Street Journal?

WSJ: The Wall Street Journal divides its marketing efforts between circulation and advertising. Like most other publications, it is advertising revenue that generates the profits, so ad sales marketing has more substantial budgets and generates the lion's share of marketing materials. My function is to lead the creative group of graphic designers and copywriters who provide a national sales force of 75 reps in 17 offices with the ammunition needed to sell advertising space. We do this through videos, multimedia presentations, web sites, rate cards, media kits, our own space advertising and collateral of every size and description. The volume of work is substantial, deadlines are tight and we're experiencing a revolution in both the types of materials we produce and how we produce them.

CO: WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST INFLUENCES ON THE CREATIVE PROCESS AS IT RELATES TO YOUR EFFORTS AT THE WALL STREET JOURNAL?

ws. Certainly the rise of electronic design,

which arrived more or less in tandem with our attempt to implement an integrated design standard for our materials, has played an important role in our design process AND budgets. Also, the move toward information being disseminated by and viewed primarily on the computer screen, while not having as immediate an impact on our work as digital print design, is a trend that we are investigating and strategizing for now because of its long-term potential.

CO: In what ways has the 'Standardization' of digital design changed the way your staff operates?

WSJ: The 'standardization' sort of snuck up on us as a creative team. Prior to my arrival at The Journal, simple photographic or illustrative representations of The Journal were common graphic solutions. A handful of high profile projects were produced more ambitiously, with assignment photographers and illustrators. Even these pieces, though, were lacking a sense of congruity. Although the Journal's name was consistently present, there was little that tied them together visually. We needed to develop creative standards and a style that exuded a 'look and feel' that was unique to The Journal.

With the aid of John Waters and the staff at Waters Design Associates our look now mirrors the complexity and richness of the ideas in The Journal, rather than simply a depiction of the paper itself.

Our goal of creating a mosaic that reflects The Journal's information-rich environment relies heavily on the use of multiple image photography which could only be achieved through the sophistication of software programs such as Photoshop and Illustrator.

A significant investment was made in equipment and the classes our in-house designers needed to develop their expertise. The rise of digital design meant this move was necessary anyway (in fact it was overdue), but the challenge of the new scheme was an added motivation that helped jump start both our equipment purchases and training programs.

CO: How has your department's use of imagery been affected by your new systems and design sensibilities?

WSJ: The move to a more integrated identity program with a heavy dependence on electronic design had important implications to our purchase and use of imagery. We now required easy access to a vast cache of images. This library had to have both depth of range and quality to facilitate our searches for the right image. The increasing sophistication and diversity of stock photography offered us a cost-effective source for multiple image purchases.

At the other end of the spectrum are the 'assignment-like' collections of quality images we use when image choice is more important. And of course when specific image concepts need to be fulfilled, assignment photography is essential. Interestingly, our use of illustrators has not been much affected by the rise of digital design. If anything, we use them more because of the intriguing possibilities offered by multimedia and animation.

CO: WITH ALL THIS IN MIND, HOW HAVE 'DIGITAL DESIGN' CAPABILITIES CHANGED THE FINAL PRODUCTS GENERATED BY YOUR DEPARTMENT?

WSJ: Digital design is, after all, a means to the same (print) end we've always had. The tools may be different, but we still end up at a commercial printer, smelling the ink and praying that the finished product bears some resemblance to the image on the computer screen. When the end product is on the computer screen, however, the rules have well and truly changed. This brings us to a discussion of the 'screen as paper'...CD-ROM, expanded hard drives and the internet are all reasons why our current mix of print and electronically delivered material will change significantly.

Today, roughly 30 percent of what we produce is distributed electronically—as a means of providing additional distribution channels for our marketing information for those clients who prefer getting their information this way. In a few years, virtually everything will be available electronically. I foresee stand alone print materials becoming less and less important. They will still be used, but only for either the very top and bottom ends of our business. The irony is that as we evolve to that inevitable future, we find ourselves producing more print materials than ever before — sales reps insist on a complete printed 'leave behind' as compliment to every computer product.

CO: IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU PREPARING FOR THAT 'INEVITABLE FUTURE'?

WSJ: We started down the multimedia road two years ago, with a presentation called The Affluent Investor. Photoshop, Quark and Illustrator were used to produce it, but only to manipulate images that were inserted into Macromedia Director. A relatively simple presentation, The Affluent Investor was presented on Macintosh Duo laptops and projected for larger groups. The project was highly successful in its giving Journal sales reps access to the key decision makers at leading financial advertisers. It also won a gold medal at the NewMedia Invision Multimedia Awards in 1994.

Partly as a result of this presentation, laptops were ordered for the entire national sales force. The road was now open to start thinking about how paper-less materials could aid the sales process on a national level. For each computer-phobe on the sales force, we had an equal number that were genuinely excited by the potential for interactive presentations linking Journal reporters with potential advertisers or creative animation that could simplify some of the more complicated aspects of buying the Journal, such as regions and editions, and the various size, position and premium space options.

CO: WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

WSJ: Our current goal is to create a presentation engine and multimedia library of all our print materials. Templates will offer us the ability to insert text, data, charts, video and audio on demand. Without doing much more than pointing and clicking, our marketing managers and salespeople will be able to create client-specific multimedia presentations on their own.

CO: DO ANY OF YOUR OTHER PRODUCTS, OTHER THAN CLIENT PRESENTATIONS, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES?

WSJ: We produce newsletters on CD-ROM which offer video capabilities and more in-depth data than a printed version could. And then there's the internet. We currently have two operational web sites, each with a distinct objective.

Adfinder.wsj.com acts as an adjunct to a new advertising section in The Journal entitled: The Internet Directory. This section published on the last Thursday of each month, offers advertisers the opportunity to purchase ad space in the Journal with the added plus of a free a listing on the Adfinder web site, with a link to their own internet page.

Our second site, adsales.wsj.com, is a place where media planners and other marketing types can, among other things, download a current Journal rate card, check circulation data and explore general advertising opportunities at The Journal. The site offers links to select advertising agency sites and a bulletin board for shared information. It is our intent that this site become the Mecca for media and marketing professionals.

One caveat to this new age is the constant administration of a web site and the ever-frequent obsolescence of software and technologies. Designing a web page was the easy part, the redesigns and upgrades continuously challenge a company's directive to stay at the cutting edge.

CO: What are the far reaching implications of this move towards technologically delivered information?

WSJ: I believe they are more significant than the move to computer design proved to be in the last decade. While printed materials will obviously be around for some time, the shift has already resulted in some interesting changes. Corporate video production, for example, is experiencing considerable upheaval because of the symbiotic relationship between multimedia and video. Successful video companies are those that have learned the new technologies and developed multimedia capabilities.

Imagery, as I mentioned earlier will be as important as ever, but again, because of the vast demand, there will be more pressure on producers to buy out images in quantity. Illustrators who develop animation and interactive skills will open themselves to new markets and opportunities. Graphic designers are under constant pressure to learn *and* integrate the latest software into their daily routine. Those who do will open themselves to new markets, like the internet, requiring their services.

CO: SO, IN YOUR OPINION, WHERE DOES ALL THIS LEAVE THE FORWARD-THINKING CREATIVE?

WSJ: The fact is, while the pace of change and the knowledge necessary to keep current are considerable, the opportunities are likewise enormous. The line will continue to blur between traditional disciplines. Designers who write, writers who think visually, computer 'production' artists who contribute creatively, illustrators who animate, photographers who manipulate their own work electronically—all will see exciting new opportunities develop in the world of corporate commercial art.

Composer

The creative and communications directors are responsible for establishing the overall strategy and objectives - the basic melody or theme.

Conductor

The account executive or project manager has the responsibility of setting priorities and integrating all the parts, calling on some to play louder, others softer, some fast and others not at all.

Maying

from the same

Today's changing communications environment has led to tremendous advances and offers 'information architects' never before thought of advantages and tools. The fast pace has also introduced confusion, doubt and second guessing on the part of clients and creatives alike.

To best juggle this influx of new projects, dissemination vehicles, tighter budgets, shorter deadlines and perpetually increasing expectations, design professionals should remember the constants—the four basic phases of every communication objective:

1 Evalution: marketing analysis/problem definition/input
2 Design idea: generation/concept exploration/idea testing
3 Production: assembling the elements and replicating them
4 Distribution: identifying vehicles/mailing/drop shipments

This all may sound very logical and look neat and easy. In reality though, the segments are usually not clear cut, the process is rarely logical, it's never easy and is often quite messy. Particularly when corporations are championing shorter development time for the same number of, and often more, new products - all for less money.

While today's technology is providing a host of new methods for both development and distribution it has also heralded a discrepancy in the traditional who's who of the creative hierarchy. Input and ideas may now come at any point in the process from any participant. Details like production requirements, for example, must now be taken into account at an earlier stage of development than ever before, and, based on the distribution vehicle, may change at any time.

Also, where contributors' geographic compatibility used to be a problem, we now have the potential loss of interpersonal communications and brainstorming to contend with. We've conquered the obstacle of getting the perfect artist, writer, designer and photographer together via state of the art communication vehicles — modems, faxes and email. But now we suffer from a new syndrome: segregated thoughts and objectives, each player often seeing only his/her piece of the pie. It's as if we're sometimes communicating in cyberspace without capitalizing on the thoughts and benefits of each other's human reality.

Lyricist

The copywriter through the language of words and the designer, communicating visually, work together to further elaborate on the basic theme.

Strings

Like a guitar soloist or bass violinist, photographers, illustrators, typographers and programmers bring their essential talents to the mix - syncopating the rhythm, and heightening the clarity.

Winds

No orchestra would be complete without the trombone, clarinet or trumpet, so too, a creative communications team operating without the backbone of an accountant, investor relations staff or MIS department.

Percussionist

The production coordinator establishes schedules, monitors the tempo and maintains a cadence.

design professionals must remember the constants

each must rely on the written creative brief as the map that provides the melody or theme

song sheet

I often think we'd have an easier time of it if we viewed the corporate development process as if it were a piece of music. Like sheet music to an orchestra musician so is the marketing plan to the players in the 'creative band' — the creative director, the communications director, account executives, writers, designers, production coordinators, photographers, illustrators, programmers and even accountants and MIS departments. Each must rely on the written creative brief for each project as the map that provides the melody or theme, allowing it to identify the key and the beat. It is there to tell the players how loud or soft to play and when to rest.

The brief identifies the media, audience, distribution vehicle, deadline and budget just like the score identifies the orchestral or yocal parts of a musical composition. Each of these elements, and the person who controls them, is equally important to the quality of the whole. Alterations to the brief can be contributed by individual performers, at any stage of development, often further enhancing the piece by differing from or mirroring a concept.

With that, we as communications specialists must continue to recognize today's fast paced environment and the reality that we often don't know where the next concept or design will come from or what form the 'latest' communications medium may take....

Let's face it, the great composers probably never thought their creations would some day be interpreted through digital instruments. I'd venture to guess, though, that they'd label it a metamorphosis of sorts — a variation on their original theme. This is because today's orchestras work long and hard together to maintain the integrity of the original composition and insure the message and tone remain as they were intended.

Like them, creative teams have opportunities to communicate and create in an environment that their predecessors could never have imagined. Working together and understanding and respecting each other's contributions and responsibility to the whole is the first step to figuratively playing together from the same song sheet, enriching the melody and ultimately bringing the music to life.

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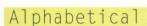
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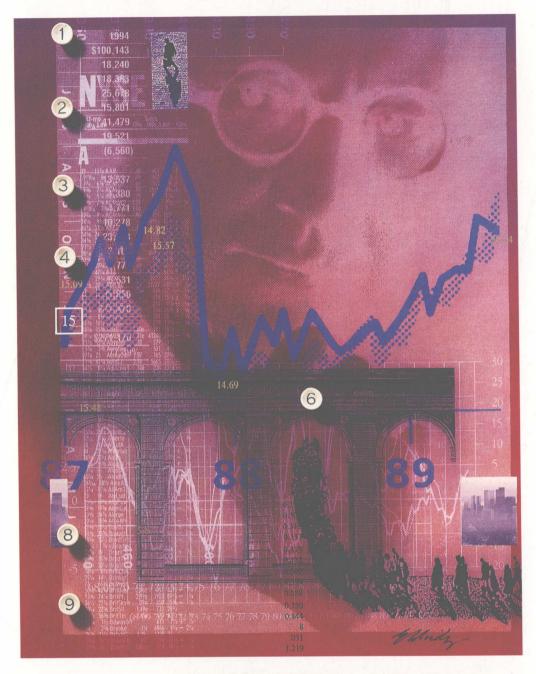
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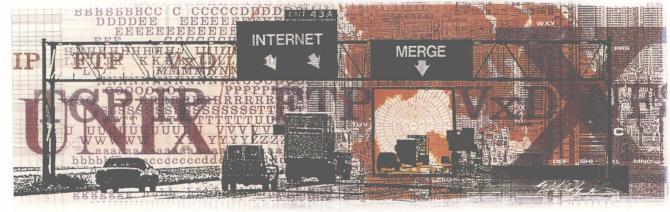
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