



## More than just a pretty face

Move over, Elvis — content is king! In the last couple of issues of our newsletters, we've talked about communications audits and corporate identities. What these topics have in common is a focus on brand, or *image*.

But, as your mother always told you, image ain't everything. A well-designed corporate identity is only half the communications battle. To succeed, your brand must be supported by articulate, meaningful written material, or *content*. What's more, that content won't do much for you if it's vague, rambling or riddled with errors. You've spent the time and money to create your brand; you need to pay the same amount of attention to the words behind the image. In this issue of **inkspots**, we'll explain why effective communications solutions are about more than just a pretty face.

### Just another buzzword?

You've probably heard the terms 'content' and 'content provider' thrown around. But what do they mean?

In the Internet age, the term 'content' grew up to mean the text on a Web site.

Everyone rushed to get online, and then realized they needed something to say once they got there. Enter the 'content provider,' a communications expert who wrote Web copy.

Think of content as just about any text — on-line or in print — from a slogan to a newsletter article, from a book to a billboard.

Whatever the medium, it's important to realize that content is less about the writer than it is about the *reader*. To paraphrase writer and content consultant Dylan Tweney, content is *whatever the person visiting your Web site or reading your newsletter is interested in*.

Keeping the reader in mind, then, the overall aim of any content can be summed up in three overlapping categories: to inform, delight and/or persuade.

By 'inform,' we mean that content should give your reader information

she or he values. That information might be the date and time of an event, how to cook pasta, what monks in the 13<sup>th</sup> century thought about the nature of the self, or the latest numbers from a financial statement.

By 'delight,' we mean just that. Reading should give you pleasure. Think of your favourite novel, or a letter or e-mail from a good friend. Your newsletters, Web pages and other creative communications

### Our best foot forward

Have you visited us on-line lately? We're made some improvements to our Web site. Check us out at [www.nymanink.com](http://www.nymanink.com).

solutions should be written with the 'pleasure principle' in mind: even potentially dry information can be made palatable when it's well-written and skillfully edited.

Finally, when we say 'persuade,' we mean that the purpose of some content (especially in the business world) is to *convince* its readers. The goal might be to sell something (or someone — like a political candidate), solicit donations, plug membership or simply to let readers know why your business, organization, product or event is as wonderful as it is. In academic and journalistic writing, persuasive writing helps convince readers of an argument.

## The final touch

All of this is well and good, but we know it's not as easy to do as it sounds. Well, we're here to help!

**Nyman Ink** is a 'content provider.' We can write content for your

newsletter, Web site or any other communications materials from scratch. We'll brainstorm with you about ideas, do research, conduct interviews and create clear, sparkling original copy.


In addition to providing content, **Nyman Ink's** talented team can spice up the content you provide us. Many of our clients give us raw copy, which we transform. We make sure that content is error-free and grammatically bulletproof, of course, but we don't stop there. We'll pinpoint the purpose of a piece and make sure it stands out. We make passive voices active. We clarify confusion, cut length, where necessary, without sacrificing meaning and generally make you sound great on paper.

What's more, we'll come up with headlines, photo captions, pull-quotes and any other final flourishes that make a project look professional and interesting.


On the internet, we make sure that content fits the medium: on-line text must be short and snappy. We also take care of the technical side of things: we'll make sure that links link, but we can also incorporate graphic tricks to make your site shine.

If you've got the writing and editing down pat, **Nyman Ink** can also act as that fresh pair of eyes, proofreading and checking the final copy for any glitches that may have escaped your gaze.

## Help for the content-challenged

Content is a crucial element of any communications or marketing effort. If you're stuck for words, or need a little help informing, delighting and persuading your readers, give us a call. You — and your readers — will, uh, thank us, thank us very much. 

## Coming Next Issue

The newsletter's out the door; the Web site's finally up and running. But the job's not done yet. You need to make sure your communications tools are working. In the next issue of **inkspots**, we'll take a look at feedback: how to get it and what to do with the constructive criticism you receive. 

**inkspots** is a periodic bulletin from **Nyman Ink**

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