Yearbook Design Checklist

Good design helps readers know what is important and centers their attention on the copy and photos. Good design helps communicate the message to the readers. The design of the book should be integrated with the theme from cover to cover. When designing a book, don't overlook little things like folios, rule lines and bylines. These little things can be the difference between a mediocre design and a great design.

Design

- ☐ Does design reflect the design trends of the year?
- ☐ Is design and graphic use consistent within each section?
- ☐ Do designs incorporate column layout to make it easy for the viewer to flow through the page? If not, is the design clear and easy for the viewer to "use"?
- ☐ Is an eyeline evident or near-misses avoided?
- ☐ Has all white space been kept to the outside edges of the page or been incorporated to create consistency? Is white space used consistently in each section? Is inner space consistent?
- ☐ Is color use coordinated, often being pulled from the photos?
- ☐ If spot color is used, is it used creatively and attractively, adding to the spread but not calling attention to itself?
- ☐ If you have chosen to break design rules, do you know why? Does it work?
- ☐ Is material "packaged" to prevent an overly busy look (mugs, paneled group shots and related photos and facts or statistics)?
- ☐ Are scoreboards consistent in design, type placement and size?

Graphics

- ☐ Are graphics contemporary, well-planned, consistent and used for a purpose rather than decoration?
- ☐ Does every spread have a center of visual interest, probably a dominant photo that is at least twice as large as other photos on the page?
- ☐ Does every spread contain a combination of horizontal and vertical photographs?
- ☐ Have photos been placed so action comes into the spread and not off the page?
- ☐ Is the use of ghosted or mechanically treated photographs avoided?
- ☐ Is the use of crude artwork and clip art avoided?

Yearbook Design Checklist, continued

Headlines, Captions & Copy

- [ ] Is body type a consistent width, size leading and typeface and consistent with captions within a section?
- [ ] Are single columns of copy avoided for the main story? Have overly narrow or overly wide columns of type been avoided?
- [ ] Does each spread contain only one main headline and copy block? If sidebars are used, is it evident that they are secondary rather than fighting with the main story for importance?
- [ ] Does headline placement lead into the story and avoid going past the copy? Is it kept with the copy?
- [ ] Is headline type attractive, easy to read and part of the design scheme?
- [ ] Do caption widths adhere to the column plan?
- [ ] Do captions "touch" the photos they identify without being "sandwiched" between pictures? Are all captions kept to the outside and never placed more than two across or deep?
- [ ] Does picture/copy placement vary from spread to spread?
- [ ] Is the use of body type in colored ink avoided?
- [ ] Is type kept out of the gutter?

Folios, Index, Colophon

- [ ] Do the folios, index and colophon help the reader realize that the book was planned and help to unify every spread?
- [ ] Are folios throughout the book consistent in size, design and placement?
- [ ] Do the folios identify content specifically?
- [ ] Does every spread contain consistently placed folios?
- [ ] Are folios easy to find and use? Do they avoid competing with the rest of the design?
- [ ] Is the index attractively designed?
- [ ] Is the index complete, including all individuals, clubs and organizations, teams, events, story topics and advertisers?
- [ ] Are pages numbered accurately and indexed? Is every student's name spelled and indexed correctly?
- [ ] Does the book contain a colophon that contains all the technical and sales data about the book?
- [ ] Are the editor's notes free from inside jokes?