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EDITORIAL REPORT



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – COVER

REVIEW #1

The May 2006 cover imagery and cover sell are trying to be irreverent and edgy and I find that inconsistent with the tone of the feature. The feature is written in a straightforward, even bland style, so you get a feeling of disconnect between the feeling conveyed by the cover and the feeling of the piece. At the same time, the interior imagery of the cover story (the legs and shoes of a businessman navigating a difficult terrain) is very corporate in tone. That matches the tone of the writing, but, again, that tone heightens the disconnect between what the cover says and what the story says. Why use edgy imagery and tone on the cover while using corporate imagery and tone in the actual story? I think the publication risks setting up a credibility problem with the reader when you have this kind of mismatch.

When you look at the June 2006 issue, with its corporate imagery on the cover, the problem raised by the May issue is heightened even more. The June 2006 cover is far more bland, yet its tone matches the tone of the writing and interior imagery. So you come to the same question: what is so different about the May 2006 feature that it warrants an edgy cover treatment? There doesn't seem to be a difference, and so it seems arbitrary. Having said all this, I note that the editor's note and the departments are written in a modestly edgy tone, and so those pieces fit the tone of the May 2006 cover. But they're not the subject of the cover; the corporate-sounding feature is.

Aside from tone, the choice of the donkey is puzzling. I understand the play on the word "assets," but that's a weak connection to the subject of the piece, which is mainly about effective ways to categorize different kinds of files (text as well as non-textual files like video) for effective searches for users. The cover story raises very interesting questions about our relationship with non-textual information in a textual environment, raising some interesting art ideas. The use of the donkey, while visually interesting (especially with the slightly distorted look) doesn't capture the ideas in the feature effectively. What the story is investigating in part is the challenge of identifying non-textual information in a text-based environment, so really you're talking about how to find a square object through a round hole or something, whereas the cover is saying, don't be an ass and think having a DAM is all you need to create good search functionality.

The June 2006 cover is more appropriate given the tone and content of the feature, but it's not a particularly exciting image. The use of the two spotlights is good, but they also add to the confusion. It might have been more appropriate to have a figure that's complex except where the spotlight is shining. That way, the spotlight suggests you can have clarity in chaos, and that's what the search function is supposed to do. On a positive note, both covers are good compositions from an aesthetic standpoint. They're attractive with good use of empty space. The cover feature stands out well. The use of black is effective. The only change I might suggest is to make secondary sells a bit larger. I understand you don't want the secondary sells to distract from the cover feature, but they're almost too small. It might make more sense to have just two secondary sells and make them slightly larger rather than four that are kept so small.

REVIEW #2

There is no page number listed for the cover story. This cover would not work on a newsstand. It is reminiscent of '80s-era Newsweek style, but it looks a little dated. Elements are effectively placed, but it would be more effective to move the ALSO column to the right-hand side and list the other items first. Font choices on the cover are a good size and good colors. They are well spaced and easy to read at a glance.

Cover art doesn't really 'say' anything. It might be that the industry does not lend itself to helpful, attractive art. The art is bordering on clipart. Tag lines should match the story headline exactly to help the reader find the proper story.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – TABLE OF CONTENTS

REVIEW #1

TOC page is clean, informative, and its organization very clear. In sum, very much what a TOC page should be. Also, I'm glad it's all on one page. A magazine has to be pretty big to justify a two-page TOC, in my view.

That said, the point size is very small and discourages reading. I found myself a little reluctant to read the feature summaries in part because the font size is so small. To be sure, the font is very clear and readable. It's a good choice given the small size, but I would recommend fewer words and bigger size. I would also recommend fewer words from a substantive point of view. The "Factiva 2.0" review in the May 2006 issue is a case in point. It's extremely long. Do you really need a sentence in the summary that says, "With 2.0, Factiva is taking its search platform to a whole new level"? Aside from the fact that it looks like it came off a Factiva press release, it doesn't say anything. And then it says, "Factiva 2.0 is completely different." Neither of these sentences is useful because they're talking at the reader. Why not let the fact that Factiva is different speak for itself, as it does in this sentence: "The familiar Search Builder interface that allows you to construct a search by outlining your search parameters has been replaced with a Google-like search box." That kind of sentence is informative and implies that Factiva is different without anyone having to say it.

It's interesting that the TOC doesn't have a section about what's online at XXXXXXXXXmag.com. Unless I'm just missing it, I would be interested to know why online content isn't listed.

I found the different placement of the TOC page in the May and June issues a little disconcerting. In the May issue, the TOC is the first page, and it's followed by the masthead (after an ad spread). In the June issue, the masthead is first, followed by the TOC. It would be better to be consistent. Also, I think the TOC page should precede the masthead. Having the masthead before the TOC is like running the credits of a movie before you run the title.

REVIEW #2

TOC is very clean and easily navigated. It is uncluttered and very organized. The art/graphics are nicely labeled and add some zing to the page. Overall, the TOC is very clean and inviting. Proper use of white space helps. Page numbers and headings are sometimes lost in a tan font. More contrast would be helpful. Cover story should always be labeled as such to draw reader interest.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – EDITORIAL

REVIEW #1

The writing style of the columns and departments is so different from the style of many of the features that it's almost like reading two magazines. Each author should have a unique voice, but all of the voices should sound like they're in the same crowd talking to the same people. While the tone of the columns is hip and edgy, the tone of many of the features is corporate, even colorless, and can be plodding. Compare these two opening sentences from the June 2006 issue:

“With new social networking sites springing up daily, it has become more difficult than ever for parents to monitor who their kids are talking to online.” (column)

“As enterprise users face growing repositories of valuable data, it becomes increasingly important to be able to search across these data storehouses (and the Web) to find the best available answers to a query, then to effectively apply that data.” (feature)

There's a sense that the editors spend a lot of time crafting their words in their columns and departments while giving only a light edit to the contributors who provide the features. The features often come across as leaden and jargon-ridden, and it doesn't have to be that way. The columns and departments show that you can write about XML and DAM without slipping into a corporate monotone.

In the first example above, the writer paints a very clear picture for the reader, and the writing that follows that opening continues in that vein. The problem is identified and the solution is explained. It's a very different story for the feature (“Complex search at your Web service”). Problems and solutions are introduced, set aside, new points raised, and then problems and solutions are brought up again, and so on. It starts out talking about the need to search across different data storehouses, and then says XML and other services have made that possible, albeit with a lot of work on their part, and then it changes the focus from enterprise users to content owners, and then it switches to what Web search companies have done. By the end of the first two paragraphs, the reader is working very hard trying to hold all the different pieces together and still doesn't know which direction the piece is moving in. No doubt the subject of the feature is far more complex than the subject of the column (searches across different sources v. a controlled blogging universe for young people), but all stories are simple at their core. Readers are being asked to work very hard to make their way through the feature.

Recommendation: For complex features, start off with an anecdote (like the New England Journal of Medicine case study on p. 36) and use the anecdote to illustrate the problem/solution relationship to be described in the body of the piece. Another feature in June provides a good example of keeping things simple. In “Building the foundation for content success,” the writer begins by citing two examples of publications that redesigned their web content in anecdotal form. As a result, the reader steps into the piece with a clear picture of the issues and the direction the writer is heading in.

REVIEW #2

Editor does a good job at showing she is ‘in the know’ and in touch with the industry in general. She has good tone and flow throughout the column. She sounds concise, educated and delightfully chatty. No photo is used. This would be a good place to use a photo. The page is very text heavy and a photo might add some reader interest.

No e-mail or other contact information for the editor is at the end of the column. It's listed on the staff box, but contact information would be better here as well. Random pull quote looks like a space filler and does not add to the column.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – NEWS COVERAGE
REVIEW #1

News writing is lighter, quicker-paced than feature writing. I like the mix of long and short items in the “content news” section. The long items do a nice job of mixing news with analysis and commentary. There are some lost opportunities to get the maximum value out of the lede sentence, particularly with the short items, but that can be corrected. All seven of the news and product briefs in the May 2006 issue start out the exact same way:

“Microsoft Corp. has announced the acquisition of...”

“Vasont Systems has announced that a ...”

“Justsystems U.S. Holding, Inc., and Blast Radius, Inc. have announced...”

“Newstex has announced...”

“Mark Logic Corp. has announced...”

“Hoover’s Inc. and Visible Path have announced...”

“VideoEgg, Inc., has announced...”

Do you really want to use the most important sentence in a news brief to say the exact same thing? You’re basically saying that the news is the announcement rather than the reason behind the announcement. Recommendation: start with what the announcement means rather than the fact of the announcement:

“Microsoft hopes to make it easier for you to save your Web research through a new Windows toolbar function incorporating technology from Onfolio, Inc., a Cambridge, Mass.-based information management provider it has acquired.”

“A Darwin Information Typing Architecture setup now comes included with every installation of the Vasont Content Management System.”

“A procurement program for the U. S. General Services Administration by Spectrum Systems will offer the Mark Logic XML content server in a new partnership.”

Some of the longer news pieces don’t make the best use of the opening sentence, either. The long news piece, “Building on basis for multilingual digital forensics,” starts with an announcement sentence just like the short items:

“Basis Technology recently announced an initiative....”

It might be better to get to the core of the announcement right up front by saying something like this:

“Basis Technology is betting that its multilingual information retrieval expertise can help police solve crimes and military planners make better use of intelligence. The company has tapped one of the foremost U.S. digital forensics experts to lead its push into new digital forensics products....”

On a minor note, there are a few quirky things in the news section. For example, in the digital forensics piece, Brian Carrier is referred to as Dr. Brian carrier, Ph.D. That’s redundant. You either say Dr. Brian Carrier or you say Brian carrier, Ph.D., but you don’t say both, because otherwise you’re saying, Doctor Brian carrier, Doctor of Philosophy—in other words, you’re saying doctor twice.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – NEWS COVERAGE

REVIEW #1 CONT.

Another minor quirk. In “Born digital, not yesterday,” the writer refers to “morays” in the first sentence of the second paragraph. But that’s not a word. It’s “mores.” And there’s an incorrect metaphor in the “Follow the money” column in the June issue when the writer talks about content dividing and sub-dividing like so many amoeba. Amoeba don’t divide and sub-divide; cells do.

REVIEW #2

In many of the updates, you can tell that they involved true research and were not just pulled from press releases.

News coverage is superb. Magazine seems to know its audience and can analyze industry information.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – DEPARTMENTS

REVIEW #1

The News department is addressed above, so no comment here. The “Metrics” department in the May 2006 issue is great, so it’s a disappointment that it’s not included in June, too. Readers seem to like simple statistical information, so having a statistical feature each month would invite readers into the magazine quickly the way Harper’s Index does. Consider running it in each issue in more or less the same place in the magazine? It seems like it wouldn’t be hard to gather compelling statistical data each month; there is enough research being done on the Internet and digital communications that there would be no shortage of content.

One comment on presentation: the item called “U.S. Internet Users, Visiting Blog Hosts vs. Standalone Blogs,” is confusing because of the different widths of the bars in the bar chart. There are more blog hosts than standalone blogs, so the blog host bar is higher, yet the bar for standalone blogs is wider, and looks like its actually larger than the other one when its extra width is taken into account (like those old math problems about comparing volume in two different-sized shapes). The different widths creates ambiguity where there need not be any. Also, it’s disconcerting that in three of the four bar charts, the first letter in each word is upper-case (for example, “Internet Video Ad Spending”) while in the fourth item, only the first letter in the first word is upper case (“Which new or recent technology...”). Why the difference? It’s especially disconcerting because elsewhere in the magazine, everything is lowercase, including titles like department names (like “metrics”). Just don’t get it.

“Faces of XXXXXXXXX” is a good idea. Readers love to read about themselves. Nicely designed, too. I would suggest building the department entirely around a well thought-out Q&A rather than set it up with so much editorial description before you hear the person’s voice. The important thing is what the person has to say – his or her ideas – rather than hearing the editor say something like, “Fielding’s deep understanding of standards helps Day build...” It would be much better to show that Fielding has a deep understanding of standards by hearing his ideas about standards in a Q&A rather than hear the editor tell the reader that he has a deep understanding. (Better to show than to tell.)

“News & Product Briefs” along with “Peopleware” are subsets of “Content News” and aren’t departments in their own right, but a few comments about them. Readers like briefs about who’s taken which job, etc., the kind of thing featured in Peopleware, but for the most part these briefs aren’t very useful for the main reason that they’re generated by press releases, not by the editor’s initiative. That means people who send in a press releases (with a photo sometimes) get mentioned, and people who don’t, don’t. So, the people who are featured don’t necessarily represent the most important developments in the field, just the ones that came across the editor’s desk. Unless the editor actually seeks out and finds the most interesting personnel changes, I would relegate the section to the back. On the other hand, if the editor ran blurbs about people readers really care about, based on the editor’s initiative, I would play them up big, because readers will be really interested in them.

I touched on the “News & Product Briefs” in my remarks about the news section, where I pointed out that each and every item began the same way, “Acme Company has announced that...,” and should be rewritten to showcase the news first. I would also suggest here that these product briefs suffer from the same problem as people briefs; they tend to be based on press releases that fall on the editor’s desk. Few probably are the result of editor initiative, so the result is that the blurbs have no correlation with what the most important product developments are. There is one big problem with this, and it has to do with the boy who cried wolf. Readers get so used to not seeing anything in there that’s especially important that when there really is an important announcement, whether the editor solicited the information or it just fell on the editor’s desk, few readers will notice it because the whole section is written off as a throw-away by readers.

REVIEW #2

The Metrics page is superb for disseminating information. The layout is clean and communicated the facts cleanly and quickly to the reader. This is one of the best graph pages I have ever seen.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – COLUMNS**REVIEW #1**

For the most part, the columns are far better written than the other parts of the magazine. It seems like the tone and content of the columns are what the magazine is striving for but not quite reaching. The columns do a good job mixing conversational and at times irreverent tone with good information. XXXXXXXXX's "Follow the money" column is a good model, since it's a good read and thought-provoking. The art director seems to be art directing for his column, not for the features (see comments about the cover, etc.). XXXXXXXXX's marketing column, "after thought," is good, too, although in his June column, it wasn't clear what the reader was supposed to do with what he talked about. What the reader was supposed to get out of the column was more clear in the May issue, in which he talked about viral marketing. Here it was clear to readers that they would benefit by thinking about the need for, and how to do, viral marketing; the June column, which talked about marketing departments within tech and communications company, didn't provide direction for readers from an e-content standpoint. The link between the role of marketing departments and e-content should have been made clearer.

Other columns share with the two mentioned above crisp writing and good information. Keep up the good work.

REVIEW #2

Some of the columnists were a bit risqué. I do not think cursing (hell, damn, etc.) is appropriate for a business magazine designed for executives, no matter which industry.

Columns would have more impact if they were presented together, rather than mixed in with the features. It might be better to break up the text with subheads rather than random pull quotes (or outtakes) that seem more like space fillers. The random outtakes do not improve the column or offer any place for readers to enter the columns.



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – FEATURES**REVIEW #1**

Some features, like “Get enriched quick,” are written fairly crisply, but several features are hard to get through and it’s not because the content is complicated; it’s because the writing makes the content complicated. A case in point is “Finding your own assets,” which I talked a little bit about in the section on cover art. When you use a variety of writers you’ll get a variety of styles, but it’s not a good practice to run features that stylistically diverge too far from other parts of the magazine like the columns. “Finding your own assets” in the May issue is a hard read and it doesn’t have to be. The writer seems lost in the material and only the most dedicated reader will make it through to the end. That’s too bad, because the search issues raised by different types of media are important and inherently interesting. Aside from the organizational challenges of “Finding your own assets” is the sharp tonal difference with the rest of the magazine. As I mentioned in the section on covers, the tone is corporate and humorless, creating dissonance with the cover and the magazine’s self image as edgy (it has to be edgy if you’re going to use “farting” in one of your titles, as Steve Smith does in his column). I put “Complex Search at your Web service” in June in the same category as “Finding your own assets.” It’s a hard read with little of the levity of other parts of the magazine.

To be sure, the idea of features is to have a place to explore at length serious issues, but serious isn’t the same as dull. A feature in The Economist magazine sounds the same as a news item and as a column; there’s consistency in tone. That’s a function of editing.

Other features do a better job tackling a subject comprehensively without giving up on readability. “Building a foundation for content success” in June launches with an anecdote, a good strategy. “Get enriched quick” has something of the tone of the columns.

Aside from readability, not all of the features do as good a job as they could balancing competing views. “Get enriched quick” talks breathlessly about the rise of rapid e-learning, but like a lot of new trends in the digital world, no one knows if this new trend isn’t just the latest flavor of the month and it isn’t until the last 150 words of the piece that we hear a dissenting voice. And when we hear it, there’s not much room to go into detail. One critic calls rapid e-learning “old solutions sold in new packages.” That’s not a minor criticism; it’s a major view that should be brought way up to the front of the piece so readers are aware throughout that what they’re reading needs to be leavened with a dose of skepticism.

REVIEW #2

N/A



■ MAGAZINE ARCHITECTURE – OTHER

REVIEW #1

The organization and layout are attractive, and there isn't too much content. It's an airy magazine, with excellent use of white space. It has a relaxing feel to it. The edit-to-ad ratio skews heavily in favor of edit, which any editor likes, although it makes you wonder if the magazine will be able to sustain itself if it relies on ad pages for the bulk of its revenue.

For the most part the look and feel is consistent throughout the magazine with the exception of some of the features, which have a corporate look that doesn't mesh with the identity the magazine is trying to convey.

The magazine uses a lot of screen shots, which it should given the nature of the content. But they're presented in a pretty bland way. Given the big role screen shots play, some thought should be given to different ways to present them so they're more visually interesting. Also, many of the screen shots are simply hard to see well. It's a major eye strain trying to really see what's being presented in the shots. Better to run fewer shots at a larger size, otherwise readers will simply avoid looking at them carefully.

REVIEW #2

Peopleware and Product Briefs sections might be better served at the back of the book and together on the same page. The story jumping was distracting and hard to follow. Continue lines are hard to read: They are small and often in a light-colored font. Both Peopleware and Product Briefs are currently in the news section, and it makes the section look like to has too much filler in some issues.

Watch using industry slang and symbols too freely (example: in one feature, @ was used to mean 'at' and also as the initial drop cap to represent an 'a.')



■ GENERAL EDITORIAL SCOPE – HEADLINES, DECKS, ETC.

REVIEW #1

Some catchy titles like “VideoEgg cracks the code” and “Get enriched quick,” but in some cases it looks like word play overtakes meaning. “Finding your own assets” is a bit misleading, I think, because unless I’m mistaken it’s about making your assets easier for others to find. The titles of the reviews should probably include something substantive rather than just the product name. In May it’s “Factiva 2/0” and in June it’s “JabberNow.” If readers aren’t well versed in those products, the product names are meaningless, so it might be better to say something substantive about the products in the title.

REVIEW #2

Cutlines can be a little hard to read: white text on a baby blue background or using small baby blue font hides the cutlines. Everything seems to be neatly labeled and color-coded, which really helps the reader. Byline placement is consistent and highly effective. It is very easy to tell where the stories flow. Plus, you can actually read the graphics.



■ GENERAL EDITORIAL SCOPE – EDITING, FLOW, TONE

REVIEW #1

I didn't see any typos but there were a few small copy editing issues, although little worth mentioning. There were a couple of bad analogies and mixed metaphors, like Steve Smith's reference to amoeba's dividing when I think he meant cells. A few thing like that but nothing major.

REVIEW #2

Cursing (hell, damn, etc.) has no place in a professional magazine.

Columnists might be more effective in a package rather than interspersed with the features. Placing subheads on top of columns on continuing pages is confusing. It gives the impression that the article ends on the previous pages when the paragraph and section end before the flip. One rule to follow: Always make sure that there are 2 lines above and below a subhead on top of a column or new page.

Case Study section and Product Review are both well-written without talking down to the readers or having that 'buy this' tone. Both are quality sections that add to the integrity of the magazine.



■ GENERAL EDITORIAL SCOPE – REPORTING, INTERACTIVITY

REVIEW #1

Surprisingly little interactivity for a magazine about XXXXXX. Unless I missed it, there's nothing talking about what's on the magazine's Web site and, also unless I missed it, nothing in any of the pieces inviting reader feedback. Also, I didn't see anything at the end of pieces inviting readers to the Website for more details or to read blog entries on the topic, etc. Seems like for this kind of magazine there should be more of that, and at least an online content TOC.

REVIEW #2

Magazine seems to have a good assembly of outside writers and experts in the field to lend credibility.

There is a space at the end of columns and letters to e-mail letters, yet there is no letters section in the magazine. This seems very odd.



■ GENERAL EDITORIAL SCOPE – OTHER

REVIEW #1

N/A

REVIEW #2

Pages with partial ads should have a line to separate editorial and ad copy.



■ SUMMARY – MISSION STATEMENT

REVIEW #1

The mission statement on the one hand says it's supposed to be understandable for non-technical readers and then says, on the other hand, that its readers are extremely technically savvy. Which is it? Is this a magazine making technical issues comprehensible to non-techies or is it a magazine for techies? Because of that disconnect, it's hard to know if the magazine meets its mission. The columns and some departments seem to be written in a way that non-techies can understand, but some of the features seem to be written only for people who are deeply into the technology and are ready to plow through heavy, jargon-ridden writing. If the features were better edited and industry news items based on reporting rather than on what appears to be rewriting of press releases in many of the cases, then the magazine would meet its mission.

REVIEW #2

The magazine lives up to its mission statement. It clearly 'identifies and explains XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.' Everything in the magazine seems to belong there.



■ SUMMARY – STRENGTH & CHALLENGES

REVIEW #1

STRENGTHS: Columns. They are what the magazine seems to be striving for.

CHALLENGES: A lot of the product news and people blurbs seem items of convenience rather than of importance. Because many of the people items are probably generated by press releases, why run so many of them? In one issue, they make up nearly a page. How helpful are some of the product and company announcements? Some of them probably are not very important. Also, to repeat what I've said about some of the features, they're not consistently well written and need to see a heavier editing hand, not only to make them more consistent with other parts of the magazine but even just to make them more readable.

REVIEW #2

STRENGTHS:

1. News section had the appearance of being in-depth without appearing to be too long.
 2. Metrics is an excellent section for a set of at-a-glance topics.
 3. Sections are well marked and easy to follow.
- Coming next month is great in the staff box. It helps make sure the reader tunes in again.

CHALLENGES:

1. Covers look dated and are not enticing to readers.
2. Magazine needs better graphics and more color. Many features and pages appeared to be very gray.



■ SUMMARY – GENERAL COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS

REVIEW #1

N/A

REVIEW #2

1. Overall, the layout is nice and clean. Articles and sections are easily identifiable and it is relatively easy to follow their flow. Columns are the perfect length.
2. Body text font size is easy to read and the line spacing is adequate. Some fonts and headlines are too light to be easily readable.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. A feature well might help tie in the magazine's feature stories. Currently, columnists are peppered throughout the magazine.
2. Cover art is too nebulous.
3. Fonts should be bolder. Baby blue and white fonts are hard to read and may turn off page flippers.
4. Move Peopleware and News & Product sections to the back of the magazine.



DESIGN REPORT



■ GENERAL DESIGN – COVER

REVIEW #1

Overall, it's a very appealing cover. I like the black bar at the bottom with the inside information. However, you might want to watch closely what color you choose to appear on the black, the blue (in the June issue) is a bit hard to read. The logo is very strong and balances well with the headline, deck and inside information. I didn't understand how the donkey played into the story, especially since it didn't appear on the inside spread or contents page.



■ GENERAL DESIGN – OVERALL LAYOUT

REVIEW #1

Overall the magazine is very clean and easy to follow. The fonts used throughout are good, but overall the leading could be cut back a bit. There also seems to be some inconsistency in regards to justification; some type is ragged right and some is justified. Try keeping all serif copy justified and sans serif ragged right. Or, keep main body copy justified and sidebar body copy ragged right. The feature well would flow better if it was solid features; try putting all the departments and columns before or after the features, not in between. The space in between columns could be a bit smaller.



■ GENERAL DESIGN – TABLE OF CONTENTS

REVIEW #1

Overall, the contents page is very well balanced and it's easy to find what you need. It might be nice to see one large piece of art, to break up the vertical look of the page. Maybe shorten the descriptions on the left hand side and add a horizontal photo at the bottom. It's also difficult to see the headers. They might work better in all caps, with a rule below them or reversed out in a colored bar. The page numbers under the "Content News" section are also distracting. Maybe try putting them after the description, to separate them out from the other "main" page numbers. Something like:

8 Content News
Vive les Copies! French Legislation
Tackes Copyright. XXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX8

Or,

8 Content News
Vive les Copies! French Legislation
Tackes Copyright. XXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX, 8



■ GENERAL DESIGN – FEATURES

REVIEW #1

Try adding some drop caps. At times it was difficult to differentiate between decks and the beginning of the body copy. A drop cap would eliminate this confusion. Also, try adding some variety to the layouts of the features, all six samples that were viewed were spreads that had a full bleed image on the right and copy on the left. Most of the art was interesting and caught my attention. However most of the secondary art was too large. Try adding some pull quotes if space needs to be filled. The subheads might look better if they were the spot color and the copy below was not indented.



■ GENERAL DESIGN – DEPARTMENTS

REVIEW #1

Overall, the headlines need to “pop” a bit more. At times they were too short in length or too small in size. Also, adding some headshots to the columns would add a well-needed visual that’s not expensive to do. Also, don’t be afraid to use stock art in columns and departments. The drop caps might look better if they were capitalized and there should be some consistency — I saw some on two lines and some on three lines. I liked the solid colored boxes at the bottom, versus the ones with the photos (and I didn’t understand why some had images, the other solid colored boxes). I thought the images were a bit hard to see and the colored boxes added some “punch”.



■ GENERAL DESIGN – GRAPHICS/ILLUSTRATIONS

REVIEW #1

Most of the illustrations used were eye-catching and had good colors in them. It would be nice to see some photos for main art, in addition to the illustrations. Also, the size and placement of graphics could be improved upon (see notes under “feature” comments).



■ GENERAL DESIGN – PHOTOS

REVIEW #1

Not enough photos! As noted under “department” comments, try adding some headshots to the columns. Also, there are really good stock photos available.



■ GENERAL DESIGN – OTHER

REVIEW #1

In the masthead, try drawing some more attention to the “coming next month” section. It gets a bit lost and I think this is a useful tool that can really keep a reader coming back. The folio lines could be brought down some; they are pretty close to the body copy and there is a lot of white space underneath. Also, in the folios, it might help if the page numbers stood out a bit more and the website was the same point size as the month and magazine name.



■ SUMMARY – GENERAL COMMENTS

REVIEW #1

1. Overall, a strong magazine. I think with a few enhancements, it would be spectacular.
2. Since it is a “techy” magazine, have some fun! There is lot’s you can do to play up the subject manner.



■ SUMMARY – STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES

REVIEW #1

Strengths

1. Very clean
2. Easy to read and follow
3. Interesting subject matter

Challenges

1. Layouts that are too similar
2. Art that is often used too large, it tends to look more like a filler than useful information
3. Not having enough photos and illustrations



■ SUMMARY – SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

REVIEW #1

1. Work on the features; take the departments/columns out of the feature well, add some variety to the feature designs and add/change something in the top header so the features really stand out from the departments.
2. Add some art to the departments. Maybe some “techy” items; i.e., a large “@” symbol shaded behind copy, some binary numbers going across the page, etc.

