

# Memo

**To:** Dr. Karen Kuralt  
**From:** Stephanie Williams  
**Date:** July 2, 2018  
**Re:** Design Memo for Portfolio Project 2 – Redesigned Article/Layout

---

## **Introduction and Purpose**

Portfolio Project 2 is a redesigned article for the Humane Society of Pulaski County (HSPC). For one of our weekend projects for this course, we were tasked to spruce up a boring layout and given six articles from which to choose. I chose to redesign the article about the HSPC for the project. Each week we were asked to choose our top 3 favorites from our classmates' redesigns during the prior week; my HSPC article was favorited more than any of my other designs for the class. Thus, it seems appropriate to include it in my final design portfolio.

The general purpose of any article is to share information. This particular article is meant to inform the public regarding the mission and activities of HSPC while encouraging (persuading) the readers to get involved and/or donate. The information in the article is the type that could be shared in a newsletter or press release, promotional flyer, or even on the web.

## **Description of the Readers**

HSPC is an organization based in and serving Pulaski County, Arkansas. HSPC seeks public involvement and support through volunteering, animal adoptions, and monetary donations. Thus, the organization must appeal to its residents.

Pulaski County primarily consists of Little Rock and North Little Rock. Its residents<sup>1</sup> are generally white or African American between the ages of 18 and 65, with a median household income of approximately \$47,000.00. Approximately 15% of its residents are over the age of 65, and there are a significant number of nursing homes in and near the county.

## **Description of the Context and Design Constraints**

The context for this document redesign is that it will be published as a print article. Though, as mentioned above, the information could be presented on an organizational "About" webpage, I designed the article for the print medium rather than the web medium. In print, the article could be used in promotional materials, given to new residents and animal clinics, or repurposed for news releases, etc. The content (including images/graphics) could be utilized for the web, and much of the design would still work, but some care would need to be taken to ensure alignments and elements translate properly.

Because the Portfolio Project 2 is the version I submitted for the class weekend project, I considered recreating in web format for the Portfolio; however, given the portfolio requirements and time constraints, I decided against taking on this "extra" work at this time.

## **Design Evolution and Rationale**

Accompanying this Portfolio Project 2 are early drafts and necessary reference materials. I have included the Weekend Design Project: Spice Up a Boring Layout Assignment Instructions for point of reference and the original HSPC article content (hereinafter, "Original"). Further, you'll see two early drafts of the article redesign ("Early Draft 1" and "Early Draft 2," respectively) followed by the final redesign of Portfolio Project 2.

With each version, I made at least one significant change to the article layout and/or added visual elements.

Please see the table below for detail of changes from one version to the next (rationale for these changes will be discussed further below the table):

---

<sup>1</sup> "QuickFacts – Pulaski County, Arkansas." *U.S. Census Bureau*, 1 July 2017, [www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/pulaskicountyarkansas/PST045217](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/pulaskicountyarkansas/PST045217). Accessed 28 June 2018. (On a related note, I have chosen to use footnotes, rather than an end of paper source list, for this memo because I think footnotes are more appropriate for the professional memo format).

<b><u>VERSION</u></b>	<b><u>TYPOGRAPHY</u></b>	<b><u>VISUALS</u></b>	<b><u>LAYOUT</u></b>
Original	Times New Roman; regular 12pt body & 18pt bold headings	No visuals	Full page; single-spaced with extra spacing between paragraphs; left-aligned-jagged text
Early Draft 1	Increased main heading to 26pt; added additional subheadings throughout content; changed heading/subheadings font color to coordinate with main photo	Added 3 images from web (with smaller text captions in text boxes below images)	Used full-page width for images, with text wrapping before and after; reorganized content in a few of the paragraphs; changed mission statement to bulleted list; adjusted alignment to justified
Early Draft 2	Replaced main heading with organization logo; reverted subheading font color to black	Added organization logo from website to top as article heading; added a 4th image with color to compliment logo; added small star visual for pop of different color	Modified, resized and/or cropped images and visuals to be in line/paragraphing with text (with left or right alignment)
Portfolio Project 2	No additional changes	No additional changes	Revised to two-column layout, adjusting paragraphing and moving images to create balance; added dotted line at end followed by visuals credits not included in captions

Several of our graduate readings informed the evolution of my redesign of Portfolio Project 2. Given that our assignment was to “spruce up a boring layout,” I started by searching the web for images/visuals that I could use ethically in my design. In looking for images, though, I tried to keep in mind the recommendations from one of our readings, “Guidelines for Designing and Evaluating the Display of Information on the

Web,"<sup>2</sup> which warns against using purely decorative images. I chose happy images (rather than sad or hurt animal images) because I think the article while trying to encourage donations, is intended to convey positivity rather than pity.

Even though that reading focused on web content, much of the recommendations can be applied across mediums for document design; for instance, the article recommends grouping similar information together, a recommendation that corresponds with our reading about proximity.<sup>3</sup> Proximity was definitely on my mind while reorganizing paragraphs and adjusting photos in line with the text.

One of our first readings, the "Teaching Text Design" article<sup>4</sup>, provides a plethora of practical tips for document design. This was the reading I chose to summarize and respond to during week 1; therefore, I had the article and my response readily available while doing many of my projects for this class, including this Portfolio Project 2.

Perhaps the tip from this article that has resonated with me the most is the recommendation to view the page as a grid. Viewing the page as a grid, rather than simply a broad container for words, has helped me better visualize how to present content in more effective ways. The article discusses uses simple, defined blocks of print and shorter lines for serious content. Those recommendations, coupled with the "Putting Your Best Font Forward" article<sup>5</sup>, which suggests using columns for shorter line length, led me to make the major change from full-page-width content to the two-column format. The HSPC article is packed full of serious content because the organization wants to inform the public of all that it does while encouraging the public to become involved. The sheer amount of the content is what prevented me from turning this into a front-and-back flyer – it was impossible to do without cutting important information or making the text too small to read.

The "Teaching Text Design" article also suggests using distinguishable point shifts between headings, sub-headings, and text. The Original did not do this at all, so I shifted the point sizes of the heading and subheadings.

Another graduate reading, "The Psychology of Color in Marketing and Branding"<sup>6</sup> emphasized the importance of color fitting the brand or personality the organization intends to convey. When I decided to incorporate the HSPC logo header from its

---

<sup>2</sup> Williams, Thomas R. "Guidelines for Designing and Evaluating the Display of Information on the Web." *Technical Communication*, vol. 47, no. 3, 2000, pp. 383-96.

<sup>3</sup> Williams, Robin. "Proximity." *The Non-Designer's Design Book*, 3rd ed., 2008, Peachpit Press, pp. 15-32.

<sup>4</sup> Kramer, Robert, and Stephen A. Bernhardt. "Teaching Text Design." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1996, pp. 35-60.

<sup>5</sup> Opsteegh, Michael R. "Putting Your Best Font Forward." *Technical Communication Summit: STC's 58th Annual Conference*, 15-18 May 2011, San Francisco, CA, Society for Technical Communication.

<sup>6</sup> Ciotti, Gregory. "The Psychology of Color in Marketing and Branding." *Help Scout*, 1 Mar. 2018, helpscout.net/blog/psychology-of-color/. Accessed 7 Jun 2018.

website, I wanted to draw on the color in that logo image, so I removed the green color I had previously applied to the subheadings. I was unable to determine the exact coding for the color of the paw prints, so I looked for additional images that had a similar color. Ultimately, I located the photo of the elderly woman in a shirt with a similar color to the paw prints from the logo, and the photo fits perfectly with the contextual cues from the article.

## **Design Assessment**

I am quite pleased with this Portfolio Project 2. As I mentioned in the introduction of this memo, this redesign received a lot of positive feedback from my classmates during the course. Overall, my peers applauded the clear organization, clean two-column format, great use of color, images and bullet points, and said that my redesigned document accentuated the role of the organizations and its needs for community involvement.

If I had additional time, I would do one or both of the following: (1) revise the content so that it would fit (but still be readable) on a front-and-back flyer or tri-fold brochure; and/or (2) redesign as a webpage. I think either of those two options would better serve the document's purpose and reach its audience in a more meaningful, effective way.