



DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Our paper has limited visual resources compared to most North American dailies of similar size. So our strategy is to stick to the basics and try to do them well: disciplined typography, effective packaging and dramatically large black-and-white photos.

Construction of page one, and all other pages with space, is focused on a main package - story with photo(s) and sometimes graphic - grouped within a box. These packages get the most attention in terms of typography: drop head, pull quote, highlight box. Sometimes even the mainline story is boxed to tie it to related elements on the page.

We aim to stop readers with a dramatic package - like the "damnfaced lie" piece - and hope they sample the other offerings on the page.

This one-box-on-a-page theme is carried throughout the paper. As a result, columns of briefs and columnists' pieces are rarely boxed - that treatment is reserved for the main event.

On typical news days, we usually run four stories on page one - maybe one more if there are no ads at the bottom. Obviously, our story count is low due to the space taken up by advertising - a fact of life almost everywhere except the U.S.

Layouts are more vertical than horizontal, and we try to present the majority of the page one photo above the fold.

Page two is treated as a second front page, where we almost always park a stand-alone, boxed package - although not on Feb. 10 as it turned out. We also do our best to limit the number of story jumps. By dividing the page one report between two pages, we believe we are doing a better packaging job for our readers.

Color photos are rarely used on page one, and spot color is limited to the furniture and the odd graphic.

As for our image- the nameplate - we think it is an accurate reflection of what we are: a paper of stability that serves a fairly conservative Canadian province.

DESIGN RESOURCES

- About 35 editors, all of who come from a word background, are involved in designing and paginating pages during the run of a week;
- An agency takes all our pictures inside our core urban area and bureau reporters take shots outside;
- Our art department is staffed by two part-time Mac artists.

Michael Bird
Assistant Managing Editor (Design)