

February 26, 1993

Howard Finberg/AME
The Arizona Republic
120 E. Van Buren
PHOENIX, AZ 85.004
U. S. A.

Dear Mr. Finberg:

Thanks a lot for your January 24 letter. We, at La Nación, are very happy to be part of "A Day in Design". Enclosed you will find our February 10 edition. What follows are some additional comments on our newspaper:

Design philosophy

Our mayor design philosophy is to create every day a package which delivers our journalistic content in a forceful, clear and attractive way.

We tend to follow a consistent pattern in typography, content allocation and sections distribution, yet we also try to be as flexible as possible so that each edition represents both the character of the newspaper and the singularity of each day's content.

Being La Nación both the largest-circulation and most prestigious newspaper in Costa Rica, we should keep a balance, in content as well as in design, between the graphic and dramatic drive of each day and the long-term expectations of our readers. We also have to keep in mind our limited resources. This is most critical in the design area, which is a relatively new activity in Costa Rican journalism, and, therefore, first-rate human resources are scarce or in the making at the newspaper.

On February 10 we applied a rather traditional layout in our front page. The main headline is devoted to a major follow-up to a top economic story: the potential establishment, by the European Community, of import quotas to bananas produced in Latin America. It is common for us to use that kind of headline.

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The extremely horizontal photo is less common; it responds to the need to have something of a major accident of the day. However, its quality is rather poor (both in content and reproduction), and divides our front page in a monotonous way.

At the bottom we use some design tools which are characteristic of our newspaper: a box with two different items, having in common their departure from the news-of-the-day category. We also include two small icons to stress the identity of the themes. Finally, our second most important news is left for the bottom right corner, and deals with another mayor story: the candidate for the second liver transplant to be performed in the country had died weeks before and doctors did not know about it.

The "ear" at the top right, another consistent element on our page, calls to our kids supplement.

On innovative sections

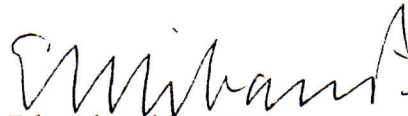
We include two Friday editions of our daily style section (called Viva - Life). They are aimed mainly at young readers and have a freer, more innovative, design.

We also include one issue of each of the following:

1. Our technological supplement (monthly).
2. Our food and nutrition supplement (monthly).
3. Our Sunday magazine.

Please, feel free to write or call me if necessary.

Sincerely,


Eduardo Ulibarri B.
Editor-in-Chief