

Little things mean a lot

A one-hit wonder back in the early days of rock 'n' roll, Philadelphia crooner Kitty Kalen topped the charts with "Little Things Mean a Lot."

"Blow me a kiss from across the room,
Say that I'm nice when I'm not.
Touch my hair as you pass my chair,
Little things mean a lot..."

More than 50 years later, it's still true: Little things mean a lot.

I've often mentioned that God is in the details—because it's attention to the details that carries a newspaper's design to excellence.

Here's a quick look at some of the details that make your paper better:

Baseline grid: If you're still not aligned to the baseline, get there.

Tracking: Not too tight, please. And keep it consistent.

Word spacing: Ditto.

Type size: It has to be large enough to make the text easy to read.

Spacing between packages: To help readers navigate the page.



Getting the details right is an important part of designing your paper properly.

Lighter rules: For a classier look.

Photo frames: Use 'em.

Paragraph indents: Not too much, not to little.

Picas and points: They're more precise than fractions of an inch.

Gutters: A pica within a package...more elsewhere.

Bylines: Big enough to be seen, not so large that they dominate.

Photo credits: Small...and tucked out of the way.

Taglines: Enough to tell me something about the writer...but brief.

Headline type: Classic. Readable. Credible.

Color: Controlled. Consistent. Classy.

Photo size: Always a dominant photo on the page.

Photo placement: Over optical center.

Drop shadows: Soft. Light. Consistent.

Those who insist that design is a really just a matter of taste don't know what they're talking about. It's about paying attention to the details...and thinking about what we do.

Get the little things right and it's a cinch you'll get your design right.



'101 HENNINGER HELPFUL HINTS

is filled with so many good ideas. You'll find yourself asking: "Why didn't I think of that?"

Kevin Slimp

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ED HENNINGER is an independent newspaper consultant and Director of Henninger Consulting.

Offering comprehensive newspaper design services including redesigns, workshops, design training and design evaluations.

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