



Ridden out on a rail

Me and my big mouth. Some time ago, I asked readers to submit ideas for columns. Some did...and that was good. Some of the topics were ideas I could easily write about, in part because I had touched on those subjects in the past.

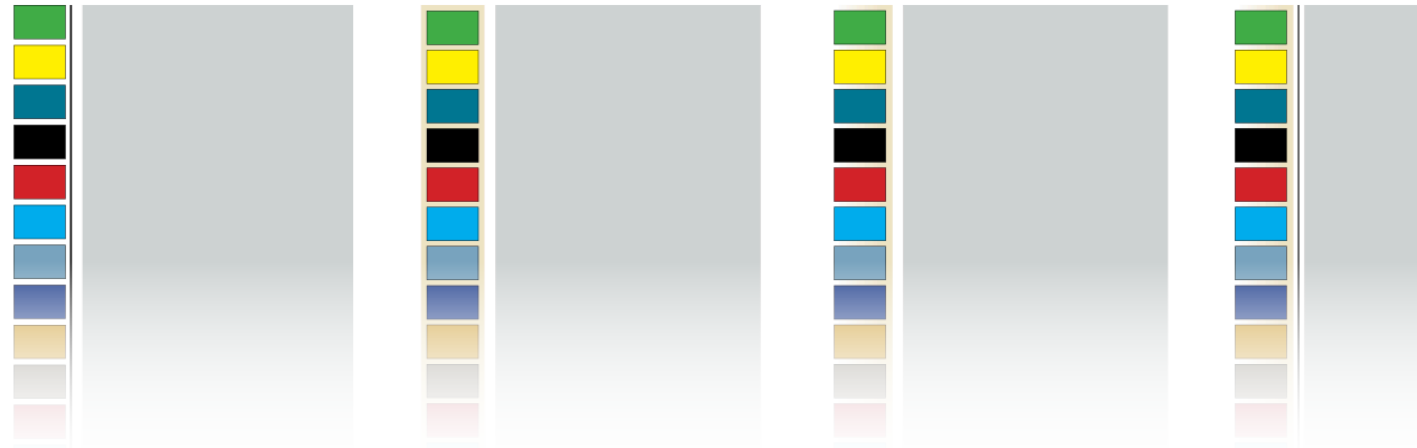
But then comes Lauri Shillings, a dedicated column reader and a frequent contributor to my blog, with this one: "How do you go about making your front page look 'great' with an entire column of 1x1 ads running down the left side of 1A."

Now, that's really a tough one—and I'm not at all sure you can have a "great" looking front page with a rail of ads.

But there may be some steps you can take to make it at least a "good" front page. Most of those steps lie in strongly separating the ads from the rest of the front.

Here are some ideas:

NEGATIVE SPACE: Leave more than the standard gutter space between the ad rail and the rest of the page. If your gutter is 1 pica, consider 2 picas, perhaps even 3 picas. This will help readers to see that the ad rail and the news area of the page are separate entities.



Try various approaches to separate an ad rail from the news hole on your front page.

A HEAVY RULE: For some editors, just a 2 point or 3 point rule will do the job of separating ads from the news.

A TINT BLOCK: Placing a tint behind the ads serves two purposes. First, it will help to group the ads together into one mass. Second, it again will help to separate the ad rail from the rest of the page. For this approach to work best, choose a tint block with a neutral hue, like a gray or a soft tan. Stay away from aggressive colors such as yellow or red.

A FADED TINT: Using a gradient tint may give the

ad rail even greater separation, especially if the gradient is lighter at the outside edge of the page.

A COMBINATION: If using the rule alone does the trick for you, fine. But you may want to try a combination of the rule, extra space and a tint block to develop a look that works best for you.

None of these approaches will negate the pull from an ad rail—especially one with strong colors, reverses and the like. But separating the rail from the news hole will at least give the design of the news area a fighting chance.

'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
Director
Institute of Newspaper
Technology

FREE DESIGN EVALUATION:

Ed Henninger offers design evaluations—at no charge and with no obligation—to readers of this column.

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.

www.henningerconsulting.com
edh@henningerconsulting.com
803-327-3322