



THE NEXT GENERATION OF DESIGN

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STRUCTURE

grid design

A gridded structure is paramount for success using modular design. It provides lots of flexibility for width of elements and consistency as well.

Size 7
26 grids, 2.3 picas each with one pica internal margins

Size 8
28 grids, 2.4 picas each with one pica internal margins

Size 9
32 grids, 2.1 picas each with one pica internal margins



truly mod(ern) design

CREATE FRESH LAYOUTS THAT END VISUAL REDUNDANCY USING MODULAR DESIGN

When it comes to yearbook, we don't need to look back very far to see a clear evolution in design as each new trend corrected problems found in previous processes— and then created other dilemmas for future designers.

Columnar design was all the rage in the early '80s, and a new organized look made yearbooks appear more professional. From there, columnar variation followed. We saw nine columns, ten and eleven; we used plus columns and jumbos to display quote bars and group photos.

By the early '90s, more schools had started to produce their books on the computer and there was an increasing desire for flexible design patterns that gave us options. For the first time, yearbook designers used grids to lay out their pages. The grid was certainly not a new device; it has been used by artists and designers for hundreds of years— but the concept had never been applied to yearbooks before. Soon, many schools were using the grid. Yet, in just a couple of years, America's yearbooks— even using the grid— fell right back into the rut of similarity. Cookie cutter yearbooks had returned.

Before long, the best of staffs decided that this visually redundant approach to section design was not a better way to operate. They consciously

chose to vary the sizes and shapes of elements as they built the spreads for their templates, often choosing a vertical, a square AND a horizontal dominant element as they designed sections, knowing that they also could flip and flop the designs for even more variation.

But spreads still were often designed before anyone knew how many great photos they would have or what approach the copy would take. Then came the next solution: content-driven design. If a topic "required" more than one spread, the editorial/design teams might choose to allocate two, three, even four spreads to do it right. If one story was word-heavy, maybe that was how it should be. Once again, flexibility in design was emphasized.

The drive for visual variety created opportunities for new and distinctive copy treatments and headline designs that are visually connected but not formatted identically.

With an emphasis on coverage, staffs thought of more kinds of secondary packages. Some topics call for secondary coverage of mainly action photos. Others require more words. When it comes to quotes or first-person stories, the number of sources would be dictated by the needs of the spread, not a pre-determined design.

WHITE SPACE

external margins

A nice wide, white frame for your spread allows for an open presentation that doesn't appear crowded.

Size 7
External margins: top and sides 3 picas, bottom 5-6 picas

Size 8
External margins: top and sides 4 picas, bottom 6-7 picas

Size 9
External margins: top and sides 4-5 picas, bottom 7-8 picas



PLUG-IN BEGINNING

PLANNING

When staffs first used modular design in their yearbooks, it was because they found an interesting new way to expand the possibilities for secondary coverage.

Using plug-in modules, a section designer might feature a consistently-sized unit that could be run either vertically or horizontally. Others opted for more variety still and did not require that all mods were the same size.

The possibilities seemed endless; some mods were made up mostly of additional photo content while others featured verbal coverage like definitions, fast facts or top 10 lists. Of course, a third category was combinations with quotes and mugshots, candid and first person profiles or other combinations of visual and verbal coverage.

Best of all, new kinds of coverage emerged. When a team working on the marching band spread decided that the playlist for their award-winning halftime show was not all that interesting, they might have decided to create an infograph about how the band raised needed funds to march in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

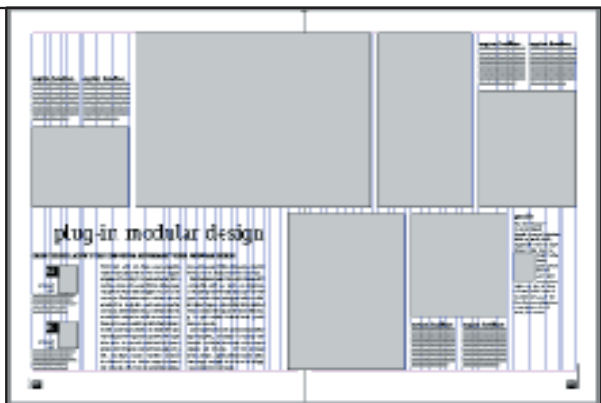
step one

Design your sections with a consistent-sized module in addition to the main story and a photo/caption unit. Remember that the section will not be made up of designs that look the same with a slightly changed module. There should be the same emphasis on visual variety and varying dominant photo packages and type treatments as before. Many staffs choose to have both a vertical and horizontal module option in the same section. If this is the case, you might decide to make it the same size and just change the orientation.



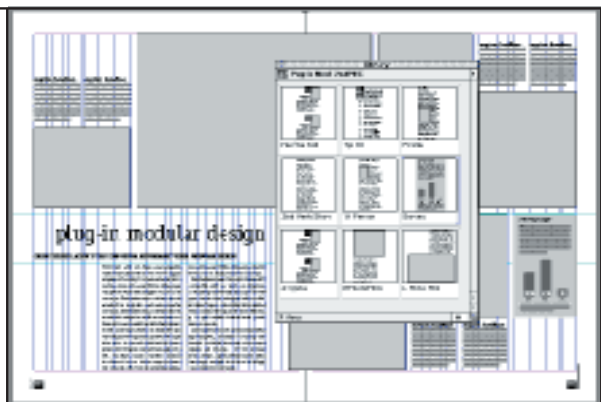
step two

Create your first two modules based on the coverage needs for a particular kind of spread. Using visual cues from the headline design for the section, repeat type decisions (font, weight, emphasis, capitalization and alignment patterns) and graphic devices in the secondary packages. As you continue, you'll want to have a collection of photo packages that have both vertical and horizontal dominant photos. You may need some spreads with short copy and some with longer blocks. And, definitely, you'll want more mod possibilities.



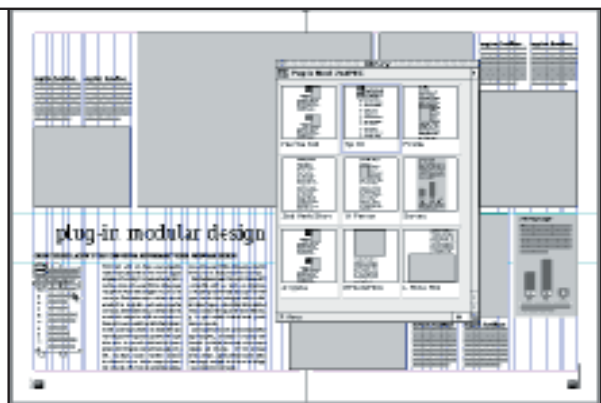
step three

To get to the library palette, pull down the Windows menu to Plug-In Palettes and select "Show Library." Using the arrow at the top right corner of the new window, select "New Library" and name your library, using the name of the section. Select all components of the first mod and use the plus sign (+) at the bottom right hand corner of the library palette to add that module to the library. Double click on the mod once it appears in the library and name it with a designation like "First person, with mug" or "Three quotes."



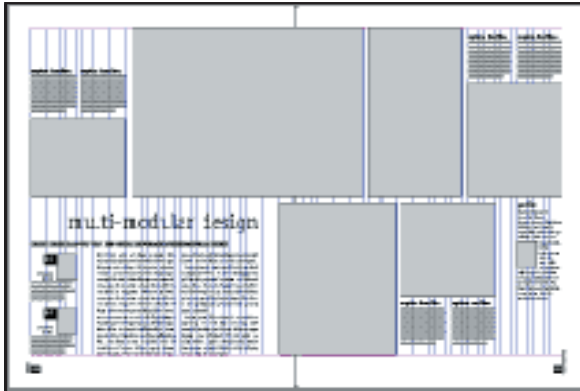
step four

In order to have as many choices as possible, designers from each section should work to build mods they know they are going to use before the first deadline. Once all mods are part of a master library for the section, placing them on the next spread is as easy as designing the photo and type packages with spaces left open to hold secondary content. Then you'll open the library, decide which coverage options will work best on the new spread, select the correct mods and drag them into position.



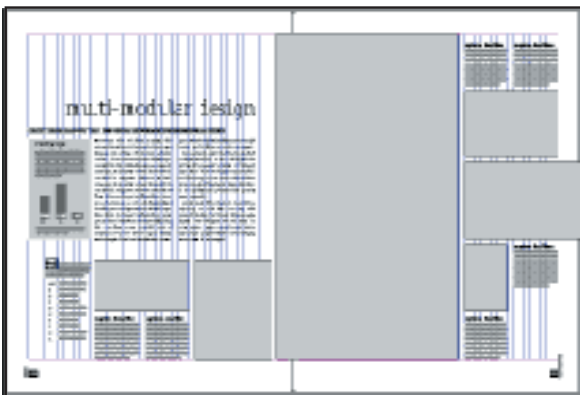


MULTI-MODS ADVANCED



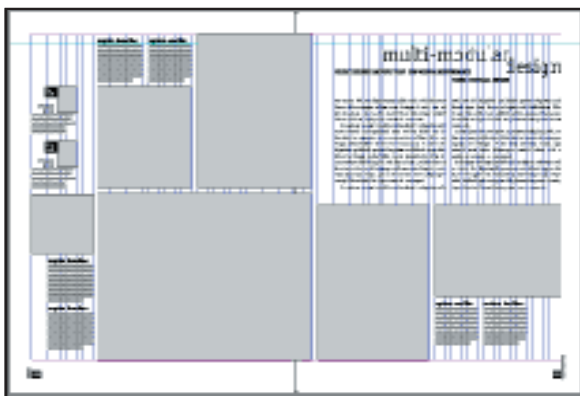
step one

To use multi-mods, you will create a complete spread that makes you happy. Select display type treatments and graphics and polish the design to technical perfection. As with all great layouts, you will want your photo package to have ample variety in sizes and shapes. Make sure you have enough copy to tell the full story and that your headline has a subhead as well. Captions should be the same width (except for group or team photos) and the lead-in devices and secondary headlines should relate to all other display type.



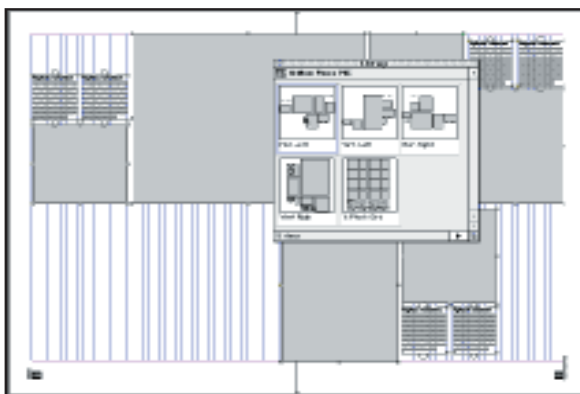
step two

Using the design decisions you made for the section, create several other spreads. It will be important to vary the number of photos, the shape of the dominants, the length and position of the main body copy, and the scope of coverage in the secondary modules. If isolation was used to set apart certain elements in the first spread, make sure that you repeat its use in following spreads so that it is clear that the spreads belong in the same section. Make a conscious effort to create as many coverage options as possible.



step three

Before you get too far in the process, remember that using mods will never change the fundamentals of great design or organized production. When you have the variations for a section completed, print them out at 100% and hang them on the wall. Look at them up close and from far away. Invite others to give suggestions. You want to make all of your changes before you start building libraries because otherwise the consistency that the technology affords you is lost and you'll make all of the changes manually (and miss some).



step four

Then, rather than building one library for the section's secondary coverage modules, you will have at least three libraries per section. You will build separate libraries for photo/caption packages, headline/copy treatments and secondary coverage mods by methodically selecting all related components and creating libraries containing all of the packages you've designed. If you have the photos that you will be using, you can choose the photo package that has the best number of pictures and showcases the shapes most accurately.

OPTIONS

Using the plug-in module was really only a start. Some staffs saw other possibilities and started pushing the technology right away.

Why not save photo packages and headline/copy units in libraries as well, they asked. Why not, indeed.

By creating a mix of photo packages that have the same graphic treatments but variety in number, size and shape of photos, you can give your section both variety and consistency.

And, while varying copy treatments inside the section used to mean that someone was "cheating" or did not know the rules, now it more often means that an art director or design editor knows how to vary copy/headline units with strong enough similarities that it is clear that it's intentional and he or she has taken the time to make the section the best it can be.

If you study professional publications, you'll learn that in many cases a designer will create a more horizontal option for copy simply by changing the number of grids that each column of the story fills. What does not change is the font, size or leading.



MULTI-MODS step five

CONT'D

CONSISTENCY

It is imperative that someone on staff (might be a technical editor, an art director or an editor-in-chief) check the spread after all the components are on the page.

In the perfect world, this would happen twice, once after the page editor placed all elements from the various libraries and again after they put in the real text and made adjustments for the actual photos and the spread was edited and ready for submission.

DETAILS

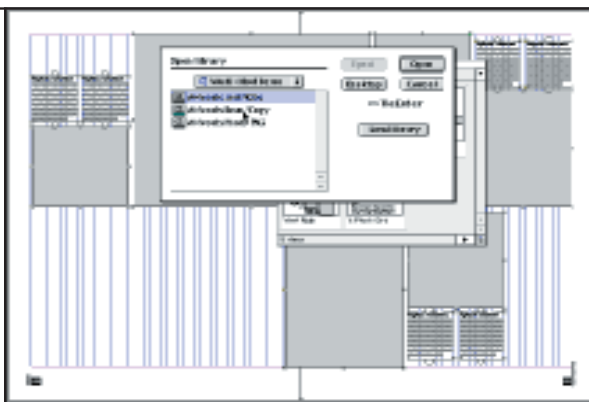
The “tech check” is an essential part of the success of any sophisticated publication.

It will include attention to the following details:

- grid alignment (everything has been placed so that it hits a grid exactly and grids have not been customized)
- consistent isolation
- internal margins (usually at one pica)
- consistent capitalization patterns on all display type

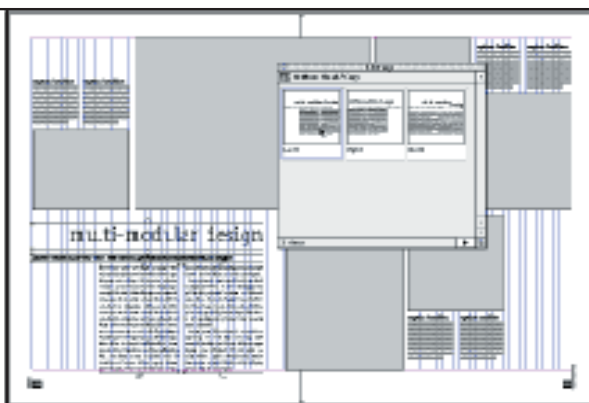
This is also when you will want to spellcheck all type, check names and eliminate double spaces after periods (or between words).

Just like you would when you design a single layout, you will place the photo/caption package first, add the appropriate headline/copy treatment and finish up by selecting the secondary coverage options that help you tell the story best. Your different libraries won't all contain the same number of components. You might have five photo/caption packages, three different headline/copy treatments and 12 different secondary coverage options, depending on what you anticipate happening in the section.



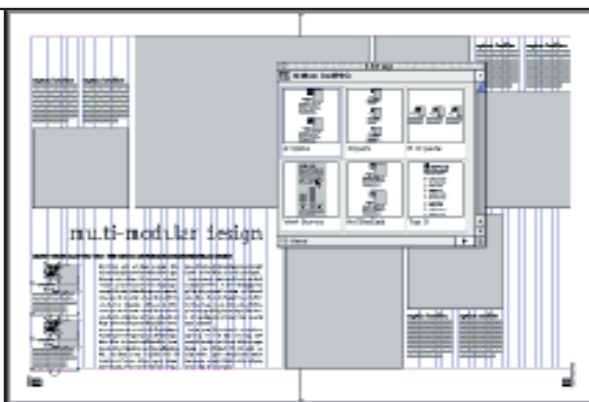
step six

If you do not keep track of which packages you use on each spread (your ladder or editor's binder is the best place to do this), you may find that the visual redundancy problem that you were trying to solve didn't go away. While the average reader might not be able to articulate some of the design devices you use well, lots of people will notice that eight spreads in a row had horizontal copy in the bottom lefthand corner or vertical dominant photos. You don't want to create a pattern, but you definitely want to avoid repetition.



step seven

Selecting the right secondary coverage allows you to tailor each spread to the topic. Somewhere in your room, you need to have a set of full-sized printouts of the choices from each library so everyone working on a section can see all of the options they have for photo/captions packages, headline/copy units and secondary coverage modules. If too many people have already used the photo package with a vertical dominant, you might need to create a second photo package with a vertical dominant to avoid overuse.



step eight

If you were to decide that a timeline was needed to tell the story, but that your library did not contain that as an option, it is never too late to add another possibility. You will probably end up with the greatest number of secondary coverage mods (because you may use several on each spread) and it is likely that you'll have more photo packages than type treatments. While you'll have a copy option that is more vertical and another that is more horizontal in nature, some would be similar copy shapes with different headline options.

