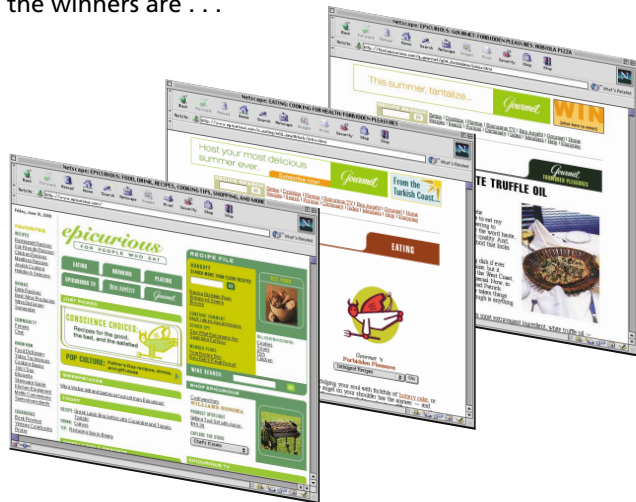


The E-nvelope, Please. . .

>> Amid much hoopla in San Francisco on May 11, Web sites in 27 categories were honored at the fifth annual Webby Awards. The Webby's own judges decided on The Webby Awards while the public (130,000 people voting via www.webbyawards.com) decided on The People's Voice awards. And some of the winners are . . .



Web Watcher *continued from previous page*

applications could act on specific information embedded in XML format on a Web page. Let's say you're interested in bidding on a Tickle Me Elmo doll in any online auction that happens to have one. You could tell your XML-enabled auction-monitor software to watch for the dolls at five specific auction sites, and it could continually search, retrieve results, and give you a stock-ticker-like display of products and availability.

Or consider your favorite money-management program. If it were XML-enabled, and if you had accounts at different banks that offered XML-enabled account viewing, the program could retrieve data from all of them via the Web in a seamless fashion. None of this "export data in format x, import into the program, answer these questions, delete the stuff you don't need." Instead, the program could merge the data from its own local accounts and transactions with the remote data and display a merged set.

XML is starting to appear practically everywhere in the electronic world, making it easier for Web users to work in many different programs, exchange data, and get things done more efficiently. It's really the ultimate case of form following function: content becomes paramount—which is what it's all about in the end. ▀

Glenn Fleishman is coauthor, with Jeff Carlson, of *Real World Adobe GoLive 5* (Adobe Press). You can reach him at glenn@glennf.com.

WEBBY AWARD

ACTIVISM

Ad Busters
www.adbusters.org

ARTS

Webstalker
www.backspace.org/iod/iod4Winupdates.html

BROADBAND

Video Farm
www.videofarm.com

COMMERCE

BabyCenter
www.babycenter.com

COMMUNITY

Cafe Utne
cafe.utne.com/cafe

EDUCATION

Merriam-Webster Word Central
www.wordcentral.com

FILM

Atom Films
www.atomfilms.com

FINANCE

Gomez.com
www.gomez.com

HEALTH

ThriveOnline
thriveonline.com

HUMOR

The Onion
www.theonion.com

KIDS

Scholastic.com
www.scholastic.com

LIVING

Epicurious
www.epicurious.com

MUSIC

Napster
www.napster.com

NEWS

Media News
www.medianews.org

POLITICS & LAW

Politics.com
www.politics.com

PRINT & ZINES

Nerve
www.nerve.com

RADIO

Lost and Found Sound
www.lostandfoundsound.com

SCIENCE

The Cave of Lascaux
www.culture.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/en

SERVICES

Evite
www.evite.com

TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Google
www.google.com

TRAVEL

Outside Online
www.outsidemag.com

TV

MSNBC
www.msnbc.com

WEIRD

Stile Project
www.stileproject.com

PEOPLE'S VOICE AWARD

The Hunger Site
www.hungersite.com

SFMOMA Presents Bill Viola
www.sfmoma.org/EXHIB/viola/fr_splash.html

Atom Films
www.atomfilms.com

Amazon
www.amazon.com

Slashdot
slashdot.org

Merriam-Webster Word Central
www.wordcentral.com

Internet Movie Database
www.imdb.com

Paypal
www.paypal.com

Intelihealth
www.intelihealth.com

The Onion
www.theonion.com

Scholastic.com
www.scholastic.com

Blue Mountain Arts
bluemountain.com

Napster
www.napster.com

ABCNEWS.com
www.abcnews.go.com

FindLaw
www.findlaw.com

Slashdot
www.slashdot.org

BBC Radio 1
www.bbc.co.uk/radio1

Monterey Bay Aquarium
www.mbayaq.org

Epinions
www.epinions.com

Google
www.google.com

Discovery's Travel Channel
travel.discovery.com

CNN
www.cnn.com

Stile Project
www.stileproject.com



ON PAPER

Pulp (non) Fiction *By Constance J. Sidles*

I've always believed there is no such thing as bad paper. Oh sure, every now and then I find the occasional poorly formed sheet that has to be rejected. But a sheet that is inherently bad, in fact made to be bad, no. Such things cannot be.

Recently, however, I had an experience that shook my simple faith. I was producing a publication for a charitable institution, and the paper was—not to mince words—bad. Roughly finished, inconsistently formulated, brittle to the touch, and yet strangely bright, this paper was a misbegotten mish-mash of malformities. Bad to the bone.

Unfortunately, we had no choice in the matter. The organization had solicited a donation, and that's what we got. When my designer saw the paper samples, she nearly fainted. I don't mean she fell into the everyday tizzy staged by creative types with hypersensitivities. I mean, I actually had to sit her down and get her a drink.

When the designer came to, she asked me how we could possibly print our publication's 200-plus halftones on paper like that. Then she demanded to know how we could ever convey the high-quality image our client wanted when our substrate was screaming cheap, cheap, cheap. "I'm in despair," she said.

If you've ever despaired in similar circumstances, take heart. There are steps you can take to make even the most bark-like paper produce good results. Well—acceptable results. Here are a few tips.

Learn the press's tolerances. It's always a good idea to talk to your printer ahead of time to find out the ideal specifications for the press you'll be on. But it is crucial to have this information if you're printing on iffy paper. You need to know the press's ideal lines per inch (or dots per inch) before you scan any artwork. In our case, the printer recommended a screen of 100 lines

per inch, with scans at no higher resolution than 300 dots per inch. Those specs may sound coarse, but with paper as absorbent as ours, anything finer would simply plug up on press.

Start with high-quality prepress. You may think it's oxymoronic to insist on high-quality artwork when you're taking the low road on press. But on bad paper, excessive dot gain makes dark tones darker and mid-tones muddier. Small dots will get lost in the rough paper fibers, so you lose detail. Start with sharp halftones that are perfectly exposed and not too contrasty. If your design calls for four-color, make sure everything is color-balanced exactly. This is one occasion when you simply cannot color-balance "that last little bit" on press. You might also ask the printer how much you can reduce the overall color saturation of your art, knowing you will gain it back on press. If you must spend a lot of seat time tinkering with your art in Photoshop, do so; it will be time well spent.

Mind your p's and q's. Use fonts with thick strokes that won't get lost, and open counters that won't fill in. Forget finely drawn typefaces like Caslon or Baskerville. If you're reversing type, use sans-serif type, at a minimum size of ten point.

Insist on strong design. A strong design can help to compensate for weak reproduction quality. That does not mean that the design has to be bold or clunky. Rather, the concept should be imaginative and clear, able to rise above the lack of bright colors or beautiful halftones.

Don't skip the press check. When printers encounter bad paper, they tend to ink everything lightly in order to minimize plugging and reduce hickeys. This is not the time to take a global approach, however. You should look at each page of each signature and make sure the press operator has done everything possible to bring out the best in your artwork. And you should also resolve in-line conflicts on an individual basis, balancing the needs of the layout against the limits of the process.

You may encounter some resistance to this approach from your printer, who may feel that you're trying to finagle a Cadillac job at a Yugo price. To some extent, you are. Admit this freely and push for as much as you can get, within reason. You're going to need it. ▀

Constance J. Sidles is a production consultant and writer in Seattle. Her column "On Paper" appears regularly in *Adobe Magazine*.

Adweek's Agency Picks

"You know excellence when you see it," say the editors of *Adweek*, "whether it's an especially memorable execution of a new Web site, the introduction of a proprietary killer technology, or the way a company can transform the same old banner ads into something fresh and exciting."

Adweek's picks for its Top 10 list of interactive agencies:

- 1 **Organic**, San Francisco
- 2 **Razorfish**, New York
- 3 **Agency.com**, New York
- 4 **Red Sky**, San Francisco
- 5 **Euro RSCG**, New York
- 6 **Modem Media**, Norwalk, CT
- 7 **OgilvyInteractive**, New York
- 8 **Grey Interactive**, New York
- 9 **Digitas**, Boston
- 10 **Sapient**, Cambridge, MA

Rising stars to watch:

- @tmosphere Interactive**, New York
- Icon Medialab**, New York
- Ideutsch**, New York and Los Angeles
- Lot21**, San Francisco
- Luminant**, Dallas

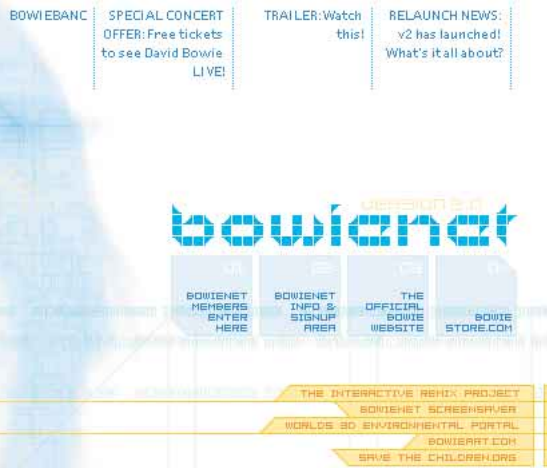
Internet Stardust Provider

David Bowie's self-branded internet service provider, BowieNet (www.davidbowie.com), certainly hasn't grabbed much market share from ISP giants like AOL since it went online in August 1998. But its 10,000 members may represent a most essential community: a new high-arts culture. Bowie is putting money on the idea that the boundless creative energy pouring into new media will give rise to new arts.

"I suppose there's a 'good' and a 'real' reason for doing anything," says Bowie, when asked why he went into the Internet access game. "I know that my 'good' reason is that it was a far more ambitious way to do things. Since its inception I've had a broader idea that my site should be more than simply music. Content is still king for me."

Part of that content, he reasons, lies within the structure of the Web itself. A full-service site committed to a community of technologically and artistically savvy users could unlock leading-edge content. But rock's serial hybridist is also not afraid to admit that his "real" reasons had something to do with ego. "The temptation to go ISP was just too great to resist," he says. "No one else had, so why not?"

Excerpted from an article by Dean Kuipers first published on Adobe.com. Read the full story at www.adobe.com/web/features/dbowie/main.html.



Spinning a Web: challenges and opportunities

WEB DESIGNERS SAY their top challenge today is dealing with the competition, according to a new TrendWatch survey of Web designers and developers, interactive agencies, corporate Webmasters, and Web portals. "Web design can be a cutthroat market, but it still attracts new designers every day," says the survey report. "These include high-school or college students who offer Web design services for a fraction of the cost of experienced professionals—often at a fraction of the quality."

Keeping up with technology—a challenge that dominates the print-based creative and publishing professionals' businesses—was cited by only five percent of survey respondents. "Our guess is that this field attracts intelligent, creative, and motivated personalities who enjoy the fast-paced world of technology and find it more stimulating than challenging to stay abreast of

changes," says the TrendWatch report.

In the category of "other" challenges, Web designers cite things like building a reputation, educating clients about Web technology, and constantly updating sites.

Web designers are extremely optimistic about the potential to grow their companies. They believe that growth will be defined by offering more types of services, serving more clients, and supporting more locations and languages. And there are opportunities associated with the overall growth of the Internet, e-commerce design and development, wider bandwidth communications, and even partnerships and acquisitions. "So in a nutshell, designers see a bright future shaped by improved technology and a strong economy," concludes the report. "This is a young market in which the players have a great deal of control over how they define their future."

Excerpted from TrendWatch Internet Design and Development survey, Winter 2000. For more information about the TrendWatch Reports on the graphics, publishing, and electronic media markets, go to www.trendwatch.com.

Fast Facts:

Preferred tools and resources

- Adobe Photoshop is the number-one application for all aspects of Web design, from page and graphic design to image processing.
- Web designers prefer to code pages by hand, using word processors or text editors to write their HTML.
- Web designers much prefer reading print-based material, such as magazines, to help them stay on top of developments in their industry, for both business and technical news.
- Web designers favor function over form at the sites they use. Content is the number-one requirement of a useful site, followed by a site's ability to help them solve technical problems. Aesthetics are of least importance.