

NOTES ON CHAPTER 6

BEST QUOTE

Most Americans are poor geographers. They have a tough time remembering even the easy stuff, like where New York City is.

BY THE NUMBERS

38

Pages in this chapter

8%

Writing for non-readers

55%

Sidebars and infographics

5%

Graphic packages

5%

Package planning

11%

Graphics gallery

8%

Graphic guidelines

Percentages may not total to 100% due to the addition of structural pages and exercises.

WRITING FOR NON-READERS

Narrative is what the written word does best — storytelling that transports us emotionally from one place to another. Some types of information are best expressed in narrative form.

Today's readers are visual. Impatient. Easily bored. They want news packaged in a combination of text, data and images.

SIDEBARS AND INFOGRAPHICS

Sidebar — any short feature that accompanies a longer story.

Infographic — blends text and images to convey information visually.

Infographics:

- Carve up complicated material into bite-size chunks.
- Offer an alternative to gray-looking text.
- Let writers move key information into a separate, highly visible spot.
- They add reader appeal.

GRAPHIC PACKAGES

The bigger the story, the more explanation it needs. Such packages require time, teamwork, expertise and a firm commitment of space.

PACKAGE PLANNING

The Maestro Concept emphasizes teamwork, integrating writing, editing, art and design. The *maestro* is a visual journalist who orchestrates the interplay of all key staffers.

GRAPHIC GUIDELINES

Before you begin, ask yourself:

- What's missing from this story?
- What's bogging down the text?
- What data needs clarification?
- How much time and space do we have?
- What's the point of this sidebar or graphic?

Compiling and editing graphic data:

- Collect data carefully.
- Edit carefully.
- Convert to understandable values.
- Simplify.

Constructing a good graphic:

- Keep it simple.
- Keep it accurate.
- Label it clearly.
- Dress it up.

Major categories of sidebars and infographics

- Fast-fact box
- Bio box
- List
- Glossary
- Checklist
- Quiz
- Q&A
- Opinion poll
- Quote collection
- Fever chart
- Bar chart
- Pie chart
- Table
- Ratings
- Timeline
- Step-by-step guide
- Diagram
- Map