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2002 STAFFING & COMPENSATION SURVEY

Don't call it a comeback—yet

► PM EXCLUSIVE Salaries and productivity are up, but hours are longer and hiring is only a memory

When we looked at staffing and compensation last year, the situation for corporate publishers was a bit gloomy.

Salaries were down more than 6 percent, annual pay raises had dropped and an overwhelming majority of companies had no plans to hire additional staff. This

year's results paint a brighter picture. Although a near-freeze on hiring is still in effect, salaries and productivity are up.

Return of the specialist?

In last year's survey, generalists ruled. In fact, less than a third of those responsible for producing corporate publications

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STAT BOX

Words mean more work

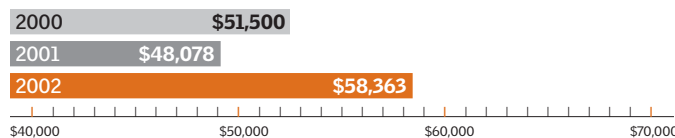
How do corporate publishers spend their time? Not surprisingly, they devote 52.3% of their day to publications. Here's how the numbers break down by title:

Title	% of day spent on publications
Editorial	67.4%
Design	52.1%
Communications	43.1%

SOURCE: PM STAFFING & COMPENSATION STUDY

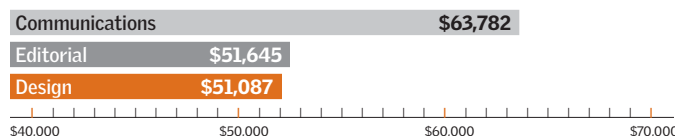
WE'RE IN THE MONEY...

ANNUAL SALARY OF CORPORATE PUBLISHING STAFF MEMBERS



... SOME OF US MORE THAN OTHERS

2002 ANNUAL CORPORATE PUBLISHING SALARIES BY TITLE



A deeper talent pool

One happy effect of tough times: experienced writers are hungrier than ever

Newspapers and magazines are suffering—even dying off—at the hands of the current economic slump. Laid-off journalists are flooding the freelance market, creating a much larger group of writers to produce your marketing materials.

“Top-notch experienced journalists are now going off into the laid-off workforce and becoming freelancers,” says Evan Schuman, CEO of The Content Firm, a New York company that specializes in creating content for marketers.

The real question is: How do you find these talented writers, and what do you do with them once you do?

If you are unable to find freelancers through recommendations from colleagues, the Web is a good place to start. Some of the most commonly used

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in 2001 called themselves editors or designers, while 71 percent of publication staff members carried a communications title. But don't hide that degree in art or journalism just yet—this year, only 57 percent of the average staff was comprised of “communicators.”

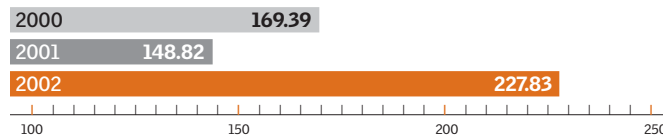
Designers and editors made substantial gains in 2002, especially at large organizations. In companies with more than \$500 million in annual revenue, 37 percent of staff members are editors, while more than a fifth (21 percent) are designers. We attribute at least part of the dramatic gains for designers (up from just 9 percent overall last year) to the continued growth, in number and complexity, of Web sites and e-newsletters. As electronic publications increase in sophistication, they require technical and design skills beyond the training of most communications generalists.

In the money

Despite a sluggish economy, corporate communication salaries rebounded in this year's survey, with an average salary of \$58,363 for publishing staff members, up from \$48,078. For the third straight year, those with communications titles outpaced their editorial and design colleagues—and the gap seems to be widening. Editors and designers made 23 percent less than their communications colleagues, compared to a 17 percent difference a year ago. This pay disparity is most evident at the executive level, where those with communications titles will earn \$133,000 in 2002, while salaries for senior editors and

PUMPING OUT PAGES

PAGES PRODUCED PER FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE



designers hover near \$60,000.

Surprisingly, jumping to a larger company doesn't necessarily mean a huge pay increase. When all titles are grouped together, the difference between what companies above and below the \$1 billion revenue line pay their publications staff is just \$2,530 per year. The difference for large-company editors is even less significant: They make only \$500 more than their counterparts in smaller companies.

Regardless of where they stand on the pay ladder, though, publishing professionals can look forward to average raises of 3.56 percent in 2002. Although the average pay increase has declined for the second year (from 4.01 percent in 2000), it's approximately double the rate of national cost-of-living increases. And nearly a quarter (23 percent) of our respondents will offer their staff members pay hikes of 5 to 9 percent.

Staff projection

Are you spending a little more time working on corporate publications this year? If so, you're not alone: our respondents devoted an additional 5 percent of their time (a little more than two hours in a 40-hour week), to publishing efforts. While some harried publications staff members might see this is a setback, for many it means the opportunity to return to their core competencies, rather than juggling

the additional responsibilities created by last year's layoffs and hiring freezes.

Not that lean staffing is a thing of the past. Nearly 90 percent of our respondents do not plan to increase their corporate publishing staff in the coming year. The 11 percent of companies that plan to hire will add an average of nearly one person (0.81 full-time employees), slightly less (0.93 FTE) than those who planned to hire last year.

Perhaps the most dramatic result in this year's survey was the impressive increase in the number of pages per full-time employee. After dipping to roughly 148 pages/FTE in 2001, this number exploded to more than 227 pages/FTE this year. Are corporate publishers really accomplishing that much more in their extra two hours per week? A more likely explanation is an increase in the amount of work being outsourced to custom publishers, design firms, freelancers and other third parties. ■

For complete results from this and other exclusive PM surveys, visit the *Subscribers Only* section of pubmgmt.com

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Talent pool

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Web sites for posting freelance queries are:

- ▶journalismjobs.com
- ▶journalistusa.com
- ▶writersweekly.com
- ▶mediabistro.com
- ▶allfreelance.com
- ▶about.com

You'll be inundated with resumes and clip packets. Some you'll be able to throw out on first glance. But then, a discerning eye will be necessary to select a writer who's suited for your project.

"Finding good writers is probably easier than most recruiters and hiring managers realize," says Bob Johnson, the director of public relations for St. Bartholomew's Church in New York. The key, he says, is realizing that a good writer can tackle almost any subject regardless of expertise. "A good writer writes—regardless of the subject matter," he says.

Even if you are open to overlooking specialty areas, you still have the difficult task of choosing the best writer. This process tends to be harder for corporate communicators who have come up through the marketing ranks, instead of through journalism, Schuman says.

"People who have no background in mass communication cannot tell who is great and who isn't," he says. "The only way they'll know is at the end of the project."

Carefully review the packets that freelancers send you. Don't rely on price as a guide, Schuman advises, and references are not accurate either.

Schuman points out that any clip you see has been edited, but you have no way of

knowing just how heavily. That doesn't mean clips aren't meaningful, just make sure you get clips that span years and publications, Schuman suggests.

Does the writer's voice change every time he or she changes publications? If you can identify a consistent voice in stories that come from different publications over the years, you can be confident that the writer has honed his or her voice. If the voice changes a lot, the writer is probably being heavily edited.

One common error is to look at clips and assume that

anyone with prominent publications on his or her resume is, by necessity, a good writer. This isn't always the case—these publications often have dynamic editors who can polish any rough piece of writing.

Paul Entin, president of epr, a New Jersey marketing firm, warns that not all good newspaper reporters can successfully transition from news writing to drafting marketing materials.

"Since newspapers require copy to be easily digested by the least educated and

involved readers, writers who came from newspapers have trouble adjusting to the more polished and grammatically accurate style needed to communicate in public relations," Entin says.

The attitude and mentality of a newsroom is to be skeptical and critical, not promotional, so "it can be hard for them to say what's good about a product since that's exactly what journalism schools tell them not to do," Schuman adds. In a perfect world, you want to see brochures or other

Magna cum lousy: New grads face a tough market

When Katherine Blok graduated from the University of Maryland last May, she thought she had a resume that would make editors drool. Blok had held internships every summer during college including stints with the Capitol News Service program, the *Trenton Times* and the *St. Petersburg Times*. She had double majored in journalism and political science and had a high GPA.

But at graduation, she didn't have a job. "Papers didn't want a new graduate," she recalls. "And those who were willing to take a new grad were already in a freeze."

The recent slump has left many journalists out of work and recent grads still looking.

"I think we're beginning to see more positive signs now,"

says William Rodgers, the Cummings Professor of Economics at the College of William and Mary. "The worst is over."

But even modest good news does little for 2001 and 2002 journalism graduates left out in the cold by hiring freezes.

Brock Vergakis, a 2002 University of South Carolina graduate, has a resume stacked with three and a half years at his campus daily, internships in two *Charlotte Observer* bureaus and a current job with *The State*.

Yet after sending out 27 internship applications, he's lost count of the rejection letters. And full-time positions seem even more elusive.

Blok had worked for the *Trenton Times* in college, so she called the managing editor and explained she was looking for a job.

"They were kind enough to offer me a full-time beat on an intern pay schedule," she says. The internship was to last through December with a permanent job hinging on the economy. But by the end of

November, the paper announced it was cutting all internships.

Rodgers, a former chief economist for the U.S. Department of Labor, says that although the least experienced workers typically bear the brunt of slowdowns, the unemployment rate among college graduates is still low.

"The best candidates are coming out and finding jobs," he says. "Maybe they're not getting as many interviews as they would have three or four years ago."

Fortunately for Blok, she was only out of work for a few weeks. Now at the *Express-Times* in Easton, Pa., Blok is happy to have a job in journalism.

This month, graduates will march out of J-schools with resumes full of internships, editorships on the campus daily and accolades galore. They did everything right, but will they be able to find full-time jobs?

Blok hopes so, but her path has been so rocky she won't make any predictions.

"People told me I was doing everything right," she says.

marketing items they've written in addition to "pure journalism," he suggests.

Once you find a writer, you need to be able to identify your target audience, the topic and the message you wish to convey in very specific terms, Schuman says. "Journalists are not used to having to manage and set the agenda," he adds.

Once the assignment is set, Schuman offers these tips:

- ▶ Freelance writers are—by definition—not on your staff and not salaried, so don't treat them as if they are. Stay on schedule. If you say the project will end on August 1, don't expect your freelancer to be available after that. You can always ask, but he or she might have a new project lined up.

- ▶ Make sure your writer has only one contact. Journalists are accustomed to having one editor on a story. If the president, vice president and marketing coordinator all have ideas and changes, make them give their changes to one person who can relay the information to the writer.

- ▶ Pay as soon as possible. Some writers will even reduce their rates if they know you'll pay them quickly. Thirty days from the time you receive the assignment is typical, but the most important thing is to stick with the terms you establish. That might mean prodding your accounts payable department, but the better you are about payment, the better writers you'll be able to get.

And the better writers you get, the better you'll look. ■

Stephanie Connor is a freelance writer and journalism major who successfully landed a job as an associate at Neuman and Company in Washington D.C.

You oughta be in pixels

A trade association uses print principles to brand its e-newsletter

As marketing experts, the members of the Custom Publishing Council, a trade association of custom publishers, are well aware of the importance of branding. So when the CPC decided to launch an e-newsletter to complement its annual printed guide, they knew it was important for the electronic publication to share a common design and editorial approach with its paper sibling.

The 68-page annual (naturally titled *Custom Publishing*) was produced by Pohly & Partners, a Boston-based custom publisher, whose clients include Continental Airlines and Sotheby's. With its bright color palette, geometric



Custom Publishing's clean, modern design helped guide the creation of its e-newsletter counterpart.

ornamentation and largely san-serif typography, *Custom Publishing* was primed for conversion to pixels.

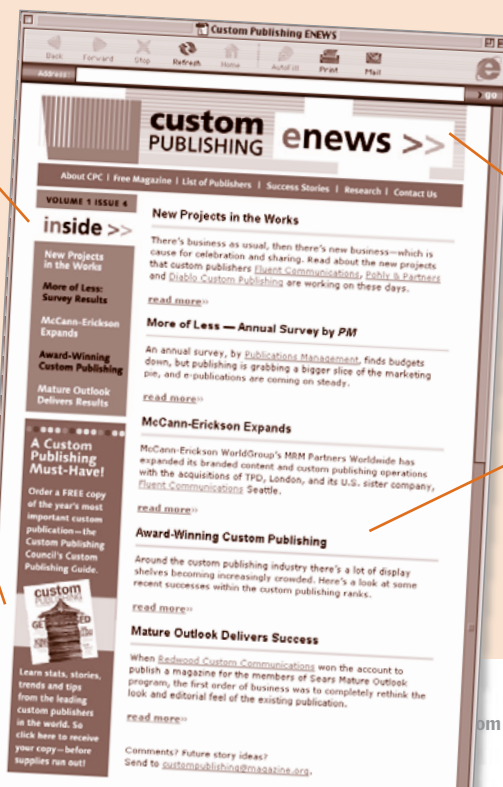
Creation of the e-newsletter was handled by Phoenix-based McMurry, where art director Heidi Easudes used the brackets, narrowly-spaced rules and

multicolored bullets of the print publication to brand *Custom Publishing E-news* as a member of the CPC family. While most of these branding elements were rendered as graphics, basic HTML was used for the body text to create a compact e-newsletter with impact. ■

Page-turner: From CMYK to cyber

Like their print counterparts, effective e-newsletters offer busy readers a quick summary of an issue's contents.

E-newsletters work best when they offer short bursts of information to a parent Web site for greater detail.



Department headers from the print version served as models for the logo of *Custom Publishing E-news*.

In order to keep file size as small as possible, basic HTML was used for the e-newsletter's body text.