

To: Dr. Flammia
From: Amy Toole
Project Name: Document Redesign of *Round Town News* Community Newsletter
Report Date: September 9, 2020

Overview of The Document Redesign

The *Round Town News* is a free monthly publication for residents living in a rural Texas community. The newsletter provides timely information in a friendly manner, but its design is busy and outdated. It has been redesigned to enhance readability by improving its arrangement, balance, color, and typography.

The August 2020 publication is the 70th issue of *Round Town News*. The newsletter is a well-known staple of the community that serves to promote local events and businesses. Copies of the newsletter can be found online or at neighborhood restaurants and shops. After 70 issues, the *Round Town News* is due for an upgrade: its crowded pages make it difficult to find pertinent information, and the abundance of color, type, and images are both distracting and passé.

This edition of *Round Town News* has been redesigned to enhance its readability while maintaining an ethos of small-town hospitality. A new hierarchy provides structure that brings the reader's attention to articles and announcements. Content has been rebalanced to emphasize community involvement. Additional intentional design choices, such as color and type, strengthen document coherence.

A Medium Well-Suited for Its Purpose

The newsletter medium is an appropriate choice to fulfill the purpose of disseminating information to community members monthly. *Round Town News* has sections to relay updates, such as community events and business promotions, and sections to bring levity and warmth, such as "Kat's Corner" and the monthly recipe. The newsletter format was preserved in the redesign.

An Ethos Well-Suited for the Audience

Round Town News is a charming small-town newsletter. The publisher, Kat Donnell, exudes an ethos of friendliness and familiarity beginning with her opening column, "Kat's Corner," and continuing through the pages. Ms. Donnell maintains a lighthearted tone as she encourages local educators, introduces the monthly recipe, and shares the name of a new restaurant. It was important to maintain this sense of connection and belonging throughout the redesign process.

Lack of Focused Arrangement

The primary weakness of the document is its arrangement: the newsletter is filled from margin to margin with text and graphics. The pages are packed with visual information but there is no clear anchor to guide the reader's attention. Advertisements and body text are arranged in two columns with frames around most elements, requiring the audience to examine each box separately to determine whether the text is pertinent to

their reading goals. The redesigned format has a well-defined structure, with content grouped to establish a clear focus for every section. Most of the frames were eliminated; boundaries between topics are now created using dotted rules.

Unbalanced Content

Balance is another weakness in *Round Town News*. The newsletter has three apparent goals – to relay information, to provide entertainment, and to promote business – but the amount of space for each goal is not represented equally. The redesign dedicated more room to city updates and reduced the number of jokes. Additionally, all advertisements were shifted to the back page. A table of contents was added to let the reader know what to expect in the current issue.

Haphazard Color Palettes

The *Round Town News* does not have an intentional color scheme. The abundance of generic clip art combined with the number of business ads create a cacophony of color. The inconsistent use of color and shading adds to the “busy” feel of the document that is noticeable even on copies printed in grayscale. The redesigned newsletter replaced clip art with a handful of stock and local photos. The color palette was reduced to a simple black and white theme. This will allow the reader to focus on newsletter content and will also bring uniformity to print and online versions.

Excessive Typographical Selections

The final weakness of the *Round Town News* is its use of typography. A basic hierarchy is suggested by using a different typeface for every heading, but this only adds to the overall sense of overwhelm and distraction. The redesign created a hierarchy of headings, subheadings, and body text with consistent typefaces, weights, and sizes. The emphasis and italics of the original document were maintained to preserve the tone of the author.

Conclusion of the *Round Town News* Redesign

The essence of *Round Town News* is cherished by the community, and hopefully, new issues will continue to be published for many months to come. The redesigned format makes the newsletter accessible to a wider audience by making articles and announcements easier to identify and read. The structure of the redesigned document can be used as a template for future publications. Maintaining a consistent structure is beneficial to readers who want to know where to find updates, events, and business information month after month.

Adjustments may be made to the advertisement section to meet the needs of the publisher and businesses. In this case, it is recommended that advertisements remain contained to one section to maintain structure and focus for the overall publication. Additionally, the publisher may wish to establish sizing, color, and text guidelines for businesses.

Attachments: *Round Town News* original; *Round Town News* redesign