

With **modular design**, traditional photo spaces become content modules, opening a host of coverage options. Study the yearbook spread and answer the following questions using complete sentences. Use the back of this sheet. Refer to the following pages.



[Syracuse High School, KS]

1. Circle the content modules on the spread.
2. How did the designer use typography and graphics to unify the modules?
3. List the different story formats, like quick-reads, quotes and captions, used on the spread.
4. Does the primary and secondary headline presentation unify the spread? Why/why not?
5. In what ways does the photo strip on the top left contribute to the spread?

Design 01



TRADITIONAL MODULAR | A time-tested approach to yearbook design, this traditional modular design features 10 photos and a traditional feature story supplemented by a sidebar module. The design features a dominant photo as a centerpiece with five supplementary photos all separated by standard spacing. A rail of expanded spacing separates the headline/story presentation and the sidebar module. [Christ Presbyterian Academy, TN]

01 | MODULAR DESIGN expands coverage and design options.

Photo blocks become content modules.

Rethinking the use of space, staffs use modular design to take control of the amount of content and how it is presented on the spread. With modular design, traditional photo spaces become content modules, opening a host of coverage options.

Modular design fosters a team approach.

Modular design provides direction and efficiency while including more students in the reporting and designing process. A team of students can plan the overall spread with different team members reporting, writing, photographing and designing the individual modules.

Newspapers pioneered the modular approach.

Even though a newspaper is dominated primarily by words and a yearbook by photographs, contemporary yearbook staffs have effectively adopted modular design. The result has been diversified coverage and visually interesting presentations.

From traditional to maximized, modular design approaches offer flexibility.

Spreads don't have to be filled with content modules. In fact, many staffs create designs consisting almost entirely of traditional photo blocks supplemented by a limited number of content modules. Through different approaches, modular design is flexible

enough to meet the coverage needs and design tastes of nearly every yearbook staff.

TRADITIONAL: This is the time-tested approach to yearbook design. Photos and perhaps a headline and traditional feature story make up the entire spread with perhaps a single sidebar module.

MODIFIED: With this approach, enough traditional photo blocks remain to retain a more traditional look while presenting several content modules.

MAXIMIZED: For maximum visual and verbal content display, each module is used for verbal and visual coverage approaches.



Design 02

MODIFIED MODULAR

| With this approach to modular design, enough traditional photo blocks remain to retain a more traditional look while presenting several content modules. On this spread, an infographic, quote presentation and top-10 list supplement a traditional presentation of seven candid photos. Stacked books serve as an effective visual in an infographic about student reading habits. [Marian High School, NE]



02 | Content modules are MINI-DESIGNS displayed together as part of a big layout.

Modular designs are built using a three-layer approach.

Layers provide a visible and invisible structure for the design:

A base layer features a modular grid framework of narrow vertical and horizontal columns. 4 picas is an ideal width for the narrow columns and results in flexible 4-pica squares. This layer is invisible to the reader.

A modular layer is constructed using a variety of rectangles that will hold content. For the most part, this layer is invisible to the reader.

A content layer is what the reader actually sees. Words and photos in dynamic modular arrangements make up this layer.

Basic design strategies and rules apply to modules and spreads.

Whether designing the overall spread or the individual content module, a designer applies the same basic strategies and rules of design.

One of the blocks on the modular layer should be visibly larger than the others to establish dominance. Use of an eyeline should be considered. A variety of modular sizes creates contrast. Following the vertical and horizontal column guidelines when positioning content modules ensures consistent spacing.

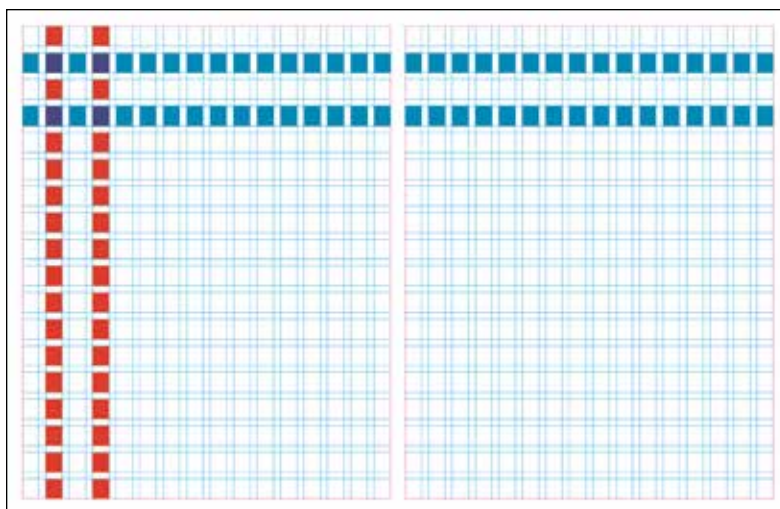
Designing content modules becomes less intimidating if they're seen as

small layouts within a big layout. The strategies and rules used to design the spread are simply applied on a smaller scale to the modules.

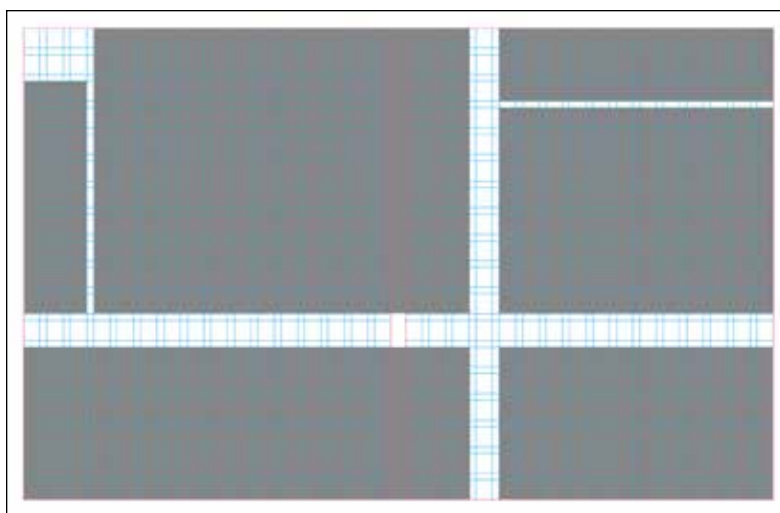
Graphic techniques such as lines and tints might be used to lightly frame or highlight modules.

For unity, elements within the module should be spaced an equal distance apart. Tight spacing, generally 1 to 6 points, is often used within a module to conserve space. Consistency is the key.





BASE LAYER | Begin with a framework of vertical columns and horizontal grids. This base layer can be used for the entire yearbook. Leave standard, 1-pica spacing between the columns and grids. The width of the columns and the height of the grids should be equal to create squares.



MODULAR LAYER | Following the modular grid on the base layer, arrange modules on the spread. Each of the modules will hold content. Some modules might contain a single photograph while other modules will contain multiple photos and story presentations. A dominant module is visibly larger than the other modules and is placed in the center of the design. On this design, standard and expanded spacing are both used to separate the modules.



CONTENT LAYER | This layer is the final design that appears in the yearbook. Content modules are like small designs housed within a big design. With this in mind, design each content module using the same design strategies used for a spread. With some standardization of sizes, content modules can be designed in advance and saved in a library to be used as a starting point. On this design, the dominant module accommodates a collection of four photos separated by tight spacing to unify the presentation.

Design 03



MAXIMIZED MODULAR

| For maximum visual and verbal content display, each module is used for verbal and visual coverage approaches. Each module reports a different angle to the overall spread. From tailgaters to UT games, the stories on this spread all involve football. Tight spacing is effectively used for two photo presentations. Rails of expanded spacing add breathing room both vertically and horizontally. [Westlake High School, TX]

03 | The individually designed modules must work together to create VISUAL UNITY on a spread.

Subtle repetition is the key to visually unifying content modules.

Modules are unified from a content perspective. Through careful planning, each module presents a different visual and verbal angle to the topic.

The challenge, when designing content modules, is to maintain the unique look of each mini-design while making them look good together. Subtle visual elements repeated in different content modules link them together:

Consistent typography with a limited number of fonts and point sizes.

Repetition of graphics such as lines, shapes, tints or colors.

A headline visually and verbally unifies the spread.

A dynamic headline package, with strong primary and secondary components, can unify the spread presentation by verbally introducing the content and visually introducing fonts and graphics that might be repeated in other content modules on the spread.

Story modules feature mini-headlines and photos.

Modules consisting primarily of text might feature a headline repeating the font and design techniques used for the spread's main headline package. Headlines within the modules are often miniature versions of the main headline.

Modules made up entirely of text are generally not as appealing to readers as those with both photos and text. Photos are effective reader entry points into story modules.

Photo modules are enhanced by dominance and eyelines.

Using a dominant photo and perhaps even an eyeline increases the visual appeal of modules featuring photo arrangements. Captions or identifications still look best to the outside of the photo collection. Photographs might be numbered for easy identification.





VISUAL VARIETY | By using rails of expanded spacing to effectively set off the story presentation and photo collection, the designer includes 13 photos without crowding the spread. A large dominant photo contrasts the smaller photos used in the two photo clusters. A hierarchy transitions the reader from the large headline into the 14-point type used for the introductory paragraph followed by the 10-point text used for the remainder of the story. [Thomas Jefferson High School, IA]



SPLIT PERSONALITY | By dividing the spread into two parts, a visually interesting modular design results. A time-specific feature on the top portion of the spread reports on the Sept. 26 magazine sales drive. A timeless feature on obsessions is presented on the bottom. A black background nicely separates two topics. Modular design is used effectively on both portions of the spread. [Coronado Middle School, CA]