

## CHAPTER 3

### DECIDING ON THE NEWSLETTER'S LAYOUT

This chapter makes several references to **NAAP**, which is the AACA's 'new' Newsletter Achievement Program. Please refer to **Chapter 7** for complete details on this program.

So your club can't afford a 20 page typeset newsletter printed in two colors on glossy paper; so what? The most polished publication with little content will pale in comparison to a simple photocopied two-page newsletter with a staple in the corner if the two-pager is packed with well-written timely and informative local material. But what size pages will that two-pager have, or on what size paper? Think about what you want your newsletter to look like.

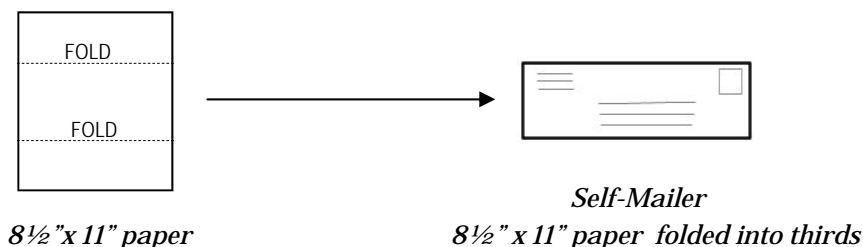
#### 3.1 NEWSLETTER SIZE

The size of the paper that you use and the orientation in which you print on the paper will determine the final size of your newsletter.

##### 3.1.1 LETTER SIZE—8½" x 11"

###### A. Single Page

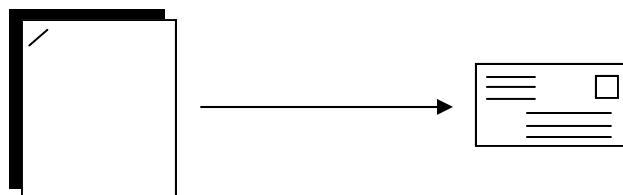
For very small clubs and/or new editors, it may be all that's required, or possible. Just fold a 8½" x 11" sheet in thirds, address one panel, and it's a "self-mailer."



A disadvantage to this format is that a single sheet is flimsy and can easily get chewed up in the Postal Service equipment. You can get around that problem by mailing in a business-size #10 envelope or by printing on the heavier weight (but more expensive) paper known as "card stock."

###### B. Multiple Pages

With the 8½" x 11" format, as you have more material to include, it's simple to add another sheet as needed. Staple in the upper left corner, fold in half if you like, staple or tape it shut, stamp, and mail. The corner staple makes for awkward reading, but it's a flexible format because you can add pages one sheet (two sides) at a time.



*8½" x 11" paper stapled in left corner*

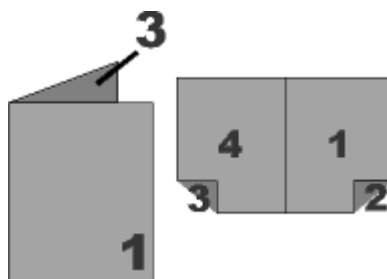
*5½" x 8½" folded*

You may want to staple it vertically down the left side with two or three staples to give it more of the feel of a magazine. Either the first or last paper page can be used as a cover. You can use card stock for the cover, and if it goes over an ounce no folding is necessary. But the Postal Service would really prefer that you use mailing envelopes.

### **3.1.2 TABLOID SIZE-11" x 17"**

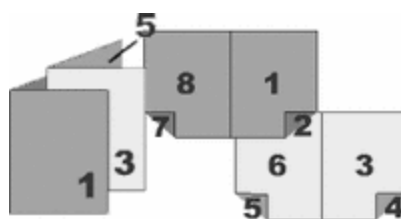
A sheet of paper that is twice the size of standard letter size paper is known as tabloid size and is a 11" x 17" sheet size. However, the actual dimensions of a finished tabloid size publication can vary from 11" x 17" to some smaller variation depending on the size of the sheet of paper you start with.

With the 11" x 17" format, the number of pages in your newsletter will always be equally divisible by four and when folded will be letter size. Each sheet of 11" x 17" paper has two pages printed on each side of the sheet to create four pages per sheet. This allows the newsletter to open out flat when you're reading it. The larger paper costs a little more, and some smaller printing operations may not stock it. It does give a more finished look to your newsletter.



*11" x 17" paper  
4 page newsletter*

The disadvantage to this format is that if you need to add one page, you have to add another 8½" x 11" sheet (the equivalent of two full pages) or another 11" x 17" sheet (the equivalent of four full pages); be sure your "filler" file is well stocked!



8 page newsletter

For an eight page newsletter, pages one and eight would be printed on one side of the sheet, and then pages two and seven would be printed on the back. Pages four and five would be printed on one side of another sheet, and then pages three and six would be printed on the other side.

Stapling this format is an option that makes it easier for your reader to handle; but it requires a special "saddle stapler" that's available for about \$30 from larger office supply stores. If you or your staff volunteer the labor, the saddle stapler can pay for itself in the long run, since the cost of having the printer do it runs 3-4 cents a staple.



Long Reach Stapler

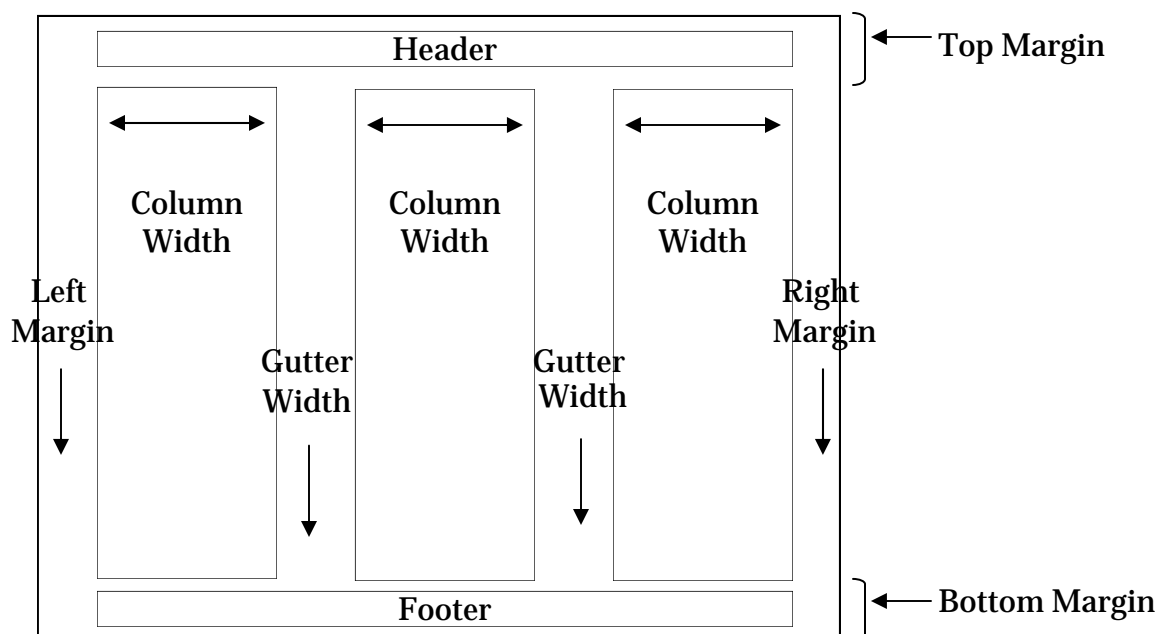
### 3.1.3 DIGEST SIZE

If you take a letter size piece of paper and fold it in half, that is roughly digest size. However, the actual dimensions of a finished digest size publication can vary from 5½" x 8½" to some smaller variation depending on the size of the sheet of paper you start with. Remember that you'll be adding four 8½" x 5½" pages each time you add another sheet of paper. See 4.1.2—Tabloid Size.

<b>NAAP SCORING:</b>	<b>VALUE (+)</b>
# 13—Number of Pages in the newsletter, (only pages that contain actual newsletter content will be counted, including ad pages)	_____ 10 max
A. Ten or more pages    10 points	} _____
B. Eight or nine pages    08	
C. Six or seven pages    06	
D. Four or five pages    04	
E. Two or three pages    02	
F. Less than two pages    00	
<b>Note:</b> see Chapter 7 for complete NAAP scoring sheet	

### **3.2 DESIGN ELEMENTS**

Now that you have decided on the orientation and size of your newsletter it is time to figure out how you are actually going to lay out the newsletter — number of columns, masthead, etc. Most newsletters are designed with a grid system in mind, which assist in the placement of certain elements on a page—width of left, right, top and bottom margins, the number of columns, the width of the columns, and the width of the gutter or alley (space between the columns). A grid can also aid in the placement of header, footers and page numbers. A design grid will provide consistency between pages and issues.



*Sample Newsletter Grid—three column*

#### **3.2.1 NUMBER OF COLUMNS**

The number of columns you use in your newsletter can vary anywhere from one to four. Most newsletters will probably use the two or three column format.

##### **A. One Column**

A one column newsletter does not allow for much creativity with regards to layout and thus tends to be monotonous for the reader if more than one or two pages in length.

##### **B. Two Column**

The two column layout is a popular choice especially if you decided on the digest size for your newsletter. It allows you more creativity

in your other layout choices, allows for use of large illustrations, and doesn't require too much design work for each issue.

**C. Three Column**

The three column newsletter is also a popular choice and provides you great flexibility in layout. More is required of the editor in designing the pages of each issue.

**D. Four Column**

The four column format is the most challenging of all as it requires a lot of design work on behalf of the editor. With so many columns, the layout will tend to look busy with many of the newsletters features fighting for the attention of the reader.

<b>NAAP SCORING:</b>	<b><u>VALUE (+)</u></b>
# 3—Layout in two/three columns versus one generally except special layouts_____	05
<b>Note:</b> see Chapter 7 for complete NAAP scoring sheet	

**3.2.2 MARGINS**

When trying to decide how wide your margins should be, consider how is your newsletter is going to be utilized by the members. If they are going to save each issue, you may want to make your left margin to be at least 3/4 inch to allow them to punch three holes in the left margin so that it can be kept in a binder.

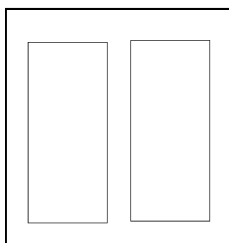
But even if your newsletter will not be kept in a binder, do not think of your margins as wasted white space where you are unable to put text and graphics. They are an important design element of you newsletter. They provide the reader with relief from what would otherwise be a busy, crowded, and congested page of black ink.

**3.2.3 GUTTER WIDTH**

The gutter, or alley width, is the white space between the columns of text. The important point here is not to make them too narrow (allowing the columns to run together) or too wide (disturbing the aesthetics of the newsletter). Whatever width you decide for the gutter space be consistent and use the same measurement on all your pages.

### **3.2.4 COLUMN WIDTH**

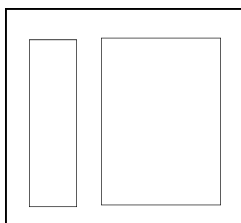
You can make all your columns the same width. Their size will be determined by the paper size and the top, left, right, and bottom margins that you choose. For example, with a two column 8½" x 11" page with ½" margins, your columns can not be any wider than 3¼". This does not allow for any alley space between the two columns. If you allow an gutter space of ¼", then your columns can not be wider than 3".



*8½" x 11" with 2 equal columns*

Width of paper	8.5 inches
Minus left margin	.5 inches
Minus right margin	<u>.5 inches</u>
	7.5 inches
Divide by no. of columns	<u>2</u>
	3.25 inches

But you do not have to make your columns all the same width. You can change the width of the columns to suit the type of article that you are writing. For example, you could make one column twice as wide as the other in a two-column layout.



*8½" x 11" with 2 columns, one twice as wide as the second*

### **3.2.5 HEADERS AND FOOTERS**

Headers are items that appear at the top of every page; footers appear at the bottom of every page. They usually contain information about the newsletter—publication name, page numbers, etc. Try to keep them short as they are repeated on each page.

## **3.3 COLOR**

The first thing you must decide as editor is whether your publication really needs color. You need to ask yourself if the use of color will enhance your publication or are you just adding color to be adding color.

Second, you must consider whether your newsletter can afford color. The addition of color can be an expensive addition to your overall budget particularly if you do not print the newsletter at home and use a professional printer.

If you decide to use color, be careful with what colors you decide to use. The use of color is an effective way to make or emphasize a point, but a poor choice in color combinations can defeat your original purpose in adding color—to enhance your newsletter.

If you decide your newsletter could benefit from color, here are a few low-cost ideas.

- \* Colored paper. The simplest and cheapest way to add color is to change the color of the paper that you use from white to a colored paper. Ivory, gray, or beige are popular choices. Do not use dark colored paper.
- \* Colored Stock. Use a different color paper for the cover matching your choice to a particular holiday or event. For example, a red cover would be good for a February newsletter.
- \* Colored Ink. Use color to emphasis a headline, logo, or box. For regular publications, use the same colors with every issue.

And finally, when choosing an ink color for a newsletter that may be copied on a photocopier, make sure you use a color that photocopies well. Some of the paler colors disappear on the photocopies.

<b>NAAP SCORING:</b>	<u>VALUE (+)</u>
# 4— Photos present somewhere in the newsletter	<u>10</u>
<b>5 bonus points to be added to initial score of 10 with the use of 1 or more color photos in the newsletter</b>	<b><u>05</u></b>
<b>Note:</b> see Chapter 7 for complete NAAP scoring sheet	

### **3.4 BEFORE YOU DECIDE**

Take some time to look at other newsletters for formatting ideas. Contact other car clubs in your area and ask for sample copies of their publications. Ask your printer for copies of newsletters that his customers bring him to print, or of one that he may publish himself to promote his own business. Check with local churches; they frequently mail weekly or monthly newsletters to their members and would be happy to share a back issue with you. Many professional people publish regular newsletters for their clients. The layouts are often done by commercial designers who market them to doctors, dentists, CPAs, stock brokers, credit unions, and the like; ask in your community for sample copies, to get a look at the variety of ways trained layout specialists handle newsletters.

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