

## Reviews

### **Editing Your Newsletter, 4th ed.**

*Mark Beach. Writer's Digest Books, Cincinnati, OH (ISBN 0-89879-641-5) 1995. 154 pages plus cover. 8-1/2 x 11, 4-color and 2-color. \$22.99*

The book is a basic, concise yet comprehensive review of newsletter production methods. It runs the gamut— from planning and establishing objectives, getting story ideas, writing, layout and production, through distribution and evaluation. It's ideal for the non-journalist who's inherited the job of editing the company newsletter.

Especially pertinent are the short sections on defining goals, establishing objectives and identifying audiences. "Newsletters typically start with one or two audiences in mind; editors add other audiences as production becomes routine." How true, but Beach offers a solution.

"Divide your audience into categories having the fewest possible readers. Ask yourself the best way to accomplish your objectives with each category. Perhaps people in some groups would prefer learning news via electronic mail or at a luncheon meeting. Maybe VIPs should get personal letters instead of a printed newsletter."

We can learn from his last point. How many of our newsletter lists include legislators and other influentials? I edited a newsletter a few years ago where the publisher insisted on including legislators in the mailing of a newsletter intended primarily for our organization's educators and specialists. It took a letter from a state legislator requesting to be removed from the list to make the point!

The book is true to its word— it will help you "produce an effective publication using traditional tools and computers" (although you won't find much detail on designing and editing with the computer).

Nonetheless, the book is a good teaching resource and a valuable reference. For the professional, it's worth the price for the many "real" examples of layout, design, and color.

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