

# **Genre Report on Creative Review**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report provides an analysis and evaluation of the articles of Creative Review, a trade journal that mainly revolves around the ideas of design that involve innovative ideas, design issues and creative inspiration.

### *Methods used*

The methods of analysis used in this report include overview, visual, discourse analysis. The overview analysis contains a brief synopsis of the trade organization, what the trade journal is about, their main audience, mission, publication frequency, and a brief description of their issue articles and columns. The visual analysis includes the page layout, typefaces used, type hierarchy, effective uses of negative space, titles, headers, footers, decks, alleys, bindings, drop caps, pull quotes, captions, images, and other accents such as colors and borders. The discourse analysis contains the type of specific terminology used for a targeted audience, grammar style, overall structure, paragraph size, sentence length and its complexity.

### *Results of Analysis*

The results of the overall analysis shows that Creative Review is an organization that targets those who are interested in design topics and have consistent publications to satisfy their audience. Their attention to their visual layouts also reflects on how important design is for their organization. There are apparent design elements incorporated within their article layout, such as effective use of type hierarchy, gestalt principles, negative space, text formatting, and accents. In addition, their discourse is written in a way where it targets a larger audience instead of just designers. This is efficient in gaining more readers as well as informing more people around the world about what they have to share.

### *Recommendations*

Creative Review overall has a presentable composition of its visual and discourse components. Though, there are still room for improvements. Since this is a trade journal that is involved with design, there are some design related recommendations that should be acknowledged. The trade journal articles do not have an effective or interactive impression when looked at as a whole. Even though it follows several design concepts and principles, others who are not aware of them will not appreciate the layout design due to the lack of a unique overall visual. These recommendations include:

- Incorporating more infographics that help guide their readers throughout the readings
- Integrating more colors to give the articles a sense of excitement towards the topics
- Playing with word and image placements to create a creative flow throughout the reading

### *Limitations*

The analysis of Creative Review in this report contains limitations that consist of the components that cannot be visually analysed such as the reasons as to why this trade journal is designed and written the way it is and other background information that are not presented in the trade journal's articles.

## **Journal Overview**

The trade journal chosen is Creative Review. It is a magazine published in the United Kingdom by Creative Review. This kind of journal covers the creative aspects of all kinds of graphic design. The mission is to inform their readers about the different kinds of creative ideas and inspiration from around the world. The audience are aiming for are young adults to older adults who are interested in design around the world. Creative Review their own website, print and digital copies of their articles. Each annual subscription includes 12 issue publications.

There are usually just different articles that range from different types of design. This can range from interior, graphics, print, fashion, and product designs. Some of these articles are used to inform their readers about concerns, new ideas, or just random fun facts about different kinds of design ideas. There are also articles that are interviews of designers who answer questions or talk about something that will be important that they learned and want to share with their readers. They do not include any other columns or sections. Each article are from 1 to 5 pages, with an average of 2 pages per article. The feature and cover articles depend on what is the most popular of the time before the publication such as a project the corporation works on or a featured designer that is related to their issue topic.

## **Visual Analysis of Feature Articles**

These articles are similar in that the base layout consists of a thick black bar line going across the top of the page with the subject of the article following below it, which in this case, it says "MONTH IN REVIEW" on most of the articles. In every article, the header and sub-headers are in sans-serif typefaces while the body text is in a serif typeface. The sans-serif typeface creates a more open invitation to readers. While the serif typeface introduces the readers to a more serious and professional atmosphere, which is another way of telling the reader that they are reaching a different segment of text.

As you can see from the article screenshots at the end of this analysis, there are at least 2 columns of body text in every article. There's always some type of graphic content on the articles. There are a good use of white space throughout every article. It is also apparent that these articles are aligned to grids to create aesthetic design. As for other spacing analysis, the alleys are quite narrow, but the placement of the graphics also have a similar amount of spacing, resulting in a balance between the text and graphics. The graphics Creative Review use includes both computer graphics and photography. The graphics are placed throughout the articles so that the readers to go through the article without it looking too text-heavy. The images are related to the text they are placed next to. Each article is usually one page, but if it's on a certain and important topic that has impacted the world of design, the article can go for several pages. As you can see in the "Track, measure, motivate" article, the header, sub header, deck and interviewer on the first page. The next few pages just consists of text, graphics, captions, and pull-quotes.

The trade journal, Creative Review, consists of terminology that is used by the targeted audience. Their articles are written to inform young adults and older who are interested in design. Even though all the articles within Creative Design is about design, there is no specialized vocabulary or language used that is targeted for designers. This idea and goal of



director” (Introducing Creative Leaders 50, par 1) and “It’s more essential than ever for leaders to understand how to wade through available options – from digital asset management (DAM) to content and email marketing to social media tools” (par 11). As a designer, there is usually no problems with understanding what these two quotes are talking about, and that others will get a general idea about it as well. They do not need to know exactly what a design director, art director or creative designer is responsible for, but they can get the general idea from the word, director. It is the same with digital asset management, content and email marketing and social media tools; they can get a sense that it is management and marketing skills.

The ideas and goals for the articles, “Of Love & Hate” and “Smile after Smile in the Mind”, are to inform their readers about different creative views and opinions on design ideas. The article, “Of Love & Hate”, is about an interview with a photographer who accidentally stumbled upon a knuckle tattoo project. Since it was an interview, the content of this article is casual, since they were the direct words from the photographer. “Smile after Smile in the Mind” is more of an informative article for those who are interested in product design. The tone of the content is informing with a sarcastic sense. The sarcastic sense of humor can be seen from a few of their shorter sentences. This creates a more enjoyable kind of reading.

As for other text analysis, the paragraphs of from Creative Review are short, ranging from two to six sentences per paragraph. The writer get to the point of the topic and avoids wordy sentences. The headers are used to inform the readers about a upcoming new topic or idea. The grammar style is formal and informative, providing a lot of information to their readers.

## **Conclusion**

Creative Review is a trade journal that covers the creative aspects of all aspects of design, thus, their audience pool consists of those who are interested in design. Their mission is to inform their readers about the different kinds of creative ideas and inspiration from around the world by including different types of design that involves innovative ideas, design issues and creative inspiration.

After reviewing their visual and discourse analysis, it can be concluded that their page designs and writings are effective in achieving visually pleasing and well written articles. Their visual aspects had several signs of good graphic design used in their page designs. For example, the different typefaces used in styling the headers and body text helped create type hierarchy throughout the pages. There was also effective use of negative space so that images and text were not all cluttered in one area. There were also other efficient uses of titles, headers, footers, decks, alleys, bindings, drop caps, pull quotes, captions, images, and other accents such as colors and borders. As for the discourse aspect, there were also effective usage of terminology used for their targeted audience as well as appropriate grammar style and over structure of the text. Their presentable composition contributed to successfully written articles that are aimed to informing their readers about what they want to share.

Even though there are several positive attributes that help create a presentable composition for Creative Review’s page designs and articles, but there are still some improvements that can be made. First of all, the entire page design is a bit dull since the color

scheme is black and white. It would be better to integrate more colors to give the articles a sense of excitement of interaction towards the topics. Also, incorporating more infographics will help guide their readers throughout the text. Finally, playing with the word and image placements will help create a more engaging flow throughout the readings.

Overall, the trade journal, Creative Review, has its advantages and disadvantages in their visual and discourse aspects. Although their positive aspects are already sufficient in achieving an abundant amount of readers, there are still some improvements that can be made to better their articles.