Ideas For Newspaper Redesign

I declare that this assignment is my own work and that I have correctly acknowledged the work of others. This assignment is in accordance with university and school guidance on good academic conduct (and how to avoid plagiarism and other assessment irregularities). University guidance is available at www.ncl.ac.uk/right-cite.

I chose to redesign a Nigerian Newspaper – the Saturday Punch. This is a paper that has been around since I was a child and one, I am very familiar with, which was my main reason for selecting it for this redesign project. One of the paper's strengths is its ability to appeal to audiences of varying ages and statuses, essentially catering to the information needs of both the young and the old with content including but not limited to news, features, sports, cartoons. As an ardent reader, the Punch's design is very evidently unpleasant, not appealing and difficult to read most of the time. The front page usually sports several headlines which are presented in a chaotic manner and the layout has differing bodies of text and many colours.

In the Saturday edition, the newspaper uses various elements including news, on the front page, features, in the centre spread and sports on the back page. The centre spread is written in a magazine-style format, which is laid back, entertaining and educative.

My aim was to create a design that would compliment all sections of the newspaper with carefully selected images and good use of fonts and colour, while retaining the paper's original character and appealing to a similar audience, including to women, who are usually less targeted by the paper. I did this to represent the 'apolitical' nature of the paper, also I made the demographic of the new design ages 15-50 years.

Some leading themes of my redesign were,

1. Creatively aligning text and using fonts consistently and directionally.
2. Creating a new logo for the mast head, which was originally customised by the designer.
3. Changing and layering the colours, as some signature colours are green, red, yellow…
4. leaving enough whitespace on each page

Some of the elements ensure a degree of continuity through the four pages, and while not everything may seem uniform, the text and fonts tie the thematic construction together.

On my cover page, I chose to create a new mast head because I had trouble recreating the exact original version. I tried a various font till I got this simple yet appealing and close to the original design, also I chose to use a single picture accompanying text, to give room for a second story, a chart and content list. The stories are arranged around the anchoring image, so that the reader can easily navigate the page, a much-needed improvement on the original. The body of text is informative, yet light enough to keep the readers' attention and give them markers for stories on the inside pages, as opposed to the excess and untidy text used previously. I also put the page numbers in the colour red creating visibility which was lacking in the original.

The redesigned double spread is an educative piece about Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), that affects 1 in 10 women, of reproductive age, around the world. I featured this because, it is a topic that will attract a reader's attention as many people do not have the answers they need regarding, health. It comprises of a testimonial, common symptoms, a PCOS diet cheat sheet and a PCOS survivor's quote. The original comprised bits of celebrity gist, all clumped up, in long form writing, with dull colours and unappealing cut-outs. As an improvement, I used times new roman – a popular and pleasant font to read; high quality images, and colours which match the images and maintained the theme.

The back page of The Saturday Punch is always dedicated to sports news, and my redesign was inspired by The Courier. The colour green, which is synonymous with The Punch Newspaper, is something I retained on the back page, making sure to use high resolution pictures and different shades of green which created contrast, while maintaining the theme. I also introduced panels of stories on the right that are continued on the inside pages. Another trademark I retained is the cartoon skits which are usually on the back pages of punch papers, they are entertaining to read and sometimes thought evoking and educative, even to children. I went on to remove the last text box because it contained information already present on the front page (folio line) and addresses that were already beside the cartoon box.

I set out to redesign the Saturday punch with the goal of making the elements on each page unique to the theme of the original paper while becoming more appealing to my target audience. Though not flawless, I am confident that I have presented an informative and attention-grabbing layout at the end of the process and have left it much less confusing than it originally was.