



“Change is a Coming”

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Thirty years ago, I began kicking old cardboard boxes every time I wrote an article. It was a cumbersome affair between my old manual typewriter, the wobbly stand it sat on, a partial roll of yellow teletype paper and my feet. The cardboard box held paper that I fed into the roller so that the finished article would be typed onto one continuous but long piece of paper. Journalists at the time typed out their articles before giving them to the editor and typesetter to prepare for publication. Having the entire article on one single piece of paper avoided mixing up pages as the article passed from one desk to another. This also saved the effort of changing paper every time I typed enough lines to fill a standard-sized sheet. So it became useful and therefore habit for me to use the cardboard box to keep the paper from rolling all over the office floor as I typed.

This, of course, gives some understanding to my perspective of the whole cut-and-paste computer world we live in today. Writing before computers was not clean. For me, cut-and-paste was always a literal thing whenever a paragraph or sentence needed to go away or be placed somewhere else. A pair of real scissors took care of that on actual paper alongside a messy jar of rubber cement with its' unique odor and stickiness. The result of the writing process – clear concise wording that hopefully told the story – for me was usually an ugly wad of yellow, sticky paper placed carefully into the editor's box on his or her desk. It was through the magic of designers, vision of wise editors and skill of graphic artists that the yellow wad transformed to something attractive that readers would want to pick up and, preferably, read.

Over the years a romantic relationship developed between the process, words and me in my storytelling affair – gritty blue-collar efforts as first steps to flashy professional appearing executive products. I guess that's still true today as youngsters who were born after manual typewriters became obsolete blog and twitter away in the social media world of technology. For them, the relationships that make words special are founded in a world that I will vaguely understand and, I guess, will never fully appreciate. For me, I like my comfort zone. An example of these different approaches to words came when our graphic design mastermind collaborated with the senior editor to influence me to update the appearance of the Editor's Blog pages. For me, I liked the ink-to-paper feel of the old Blog. For them, they thought we needed a design using computer and blog icons to bring things current.

What I feared – and fear – was that journalistic personality of a computer age would be swallowed by the glamour of a fad or series of fads. Don't get me wrong. I threw that cardboard box and teletype paper roll away as soon as I could get a computer screen and keyboard onto my desk. I embraced – and embrace – technology. Admittedly, though, this acceptance has been through the perspective of how the computer-printer combination has improved the process of publishing printed products such as newspapers and magazines. While I hate that the experts say that newspapers are doomed and probably going away, I hate more that there is a possibility that journalism may lose its shine of human connection and feeling.

Maybe I am wrong. Maybe I should trust that there will always be the emotion and feeling tied to words and images and the packaging of all that regardless of the medium. I was still skeptical when I went to the Army Worldwide Public Affairs Symposium earlier this month where the topic was hot on how social media can help inform the American population about our efforts. MG Kevin Bergner, chief of Army Public Affairs, told us that our end state of the current worldwide information environment must always seek a better informed public. Tom Curley, president and CEO of the Associated Press, indicated that technology is forcing journalists to embrace new ways to find and participate in a larger conversation. As I left the symposium, I e-mailed the change in direction for these pages. I invite our readership to participate in our newly established online blog and twitter accounts. Please join the conversation.

Posted by Mike Howard at 10:37 AM



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What are you doing?

15

Posting the Army Space Journal Spring edition on the web ... shifting gears to the Summer edition ... theme "Tapping in to Space, a How-To Manual" ... later ...

Latest: Sending Spring edition to printer ... finally ... on street soon ... one of our best efforts ... start using social media tools to plug the gaps with Space Community.



Home



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3 minutes ago from the web, 7 May 2008



theASJeditor CEO of Associated Press says internet forces news orgs to reorganize and connect new dots ... like using social media tools ... to get info out ... issue is how orgs get paid.
3 days ago from the web, 4 May 2008



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June 2009

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
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Edition Focus

- **Summer Edition**
"Tapping into Space"
- **Special Edition**
"Space - Best Job in the Army"
- **Fall Edition**
"Space Warrior Mission Essential Task List"

Important Dates

- **1-12 June 2009**
Design - Summer Edition
- **22 - June 2009**
Article deadline - Special Edition
- **15 - 26 June 2009**
Printing - Summer Edition
- **6 - 17 July 2009**
Design - Special Edition
- **20 - 31 July 2009**
Print - Special Edition
- **3 - 7 August 2009**
Cover FA40 Conference
- **TBA**
Stay tuned for the Fall Edition's production schedule