

FROM THIS ▶



TO THIS ▶



The old and the new:
From broadsheet to tabloid; from a sober blue mast-head to a powerful buy-me red; from a conventional front page to a colourful poster Page 1

■ **The rebirth of a newspaper:**
On May 17 the Sunday Star made one of the most radical changes in South African newspaper history. It changed its size, its typography, its outlook, its target, its philosophy. Editor Dave Hazelhurst tells of the roller-coaster ride.

JUST a year ago when I became editor, the Sunday Star was in trouble. We were losing money; our sales, after an initial drop at the beginning of the year, had become stagnant in the low eighties; and it was widely speculated that we were about to close. We were still within the target set at our birth seven years before – an upmarket paper aimed mainly at affluent whites, selling between 75 000 and 130 000 a week – but it was clear that unless we found a cure, the sickness would be terminal.

The more I researched, the clearer it became that the Sunday Star's malaise was part of the world's, part of the frightening flight from print in this country and internationally. The figures said it all: No paper in this country had increased its circulation anywhere near in keeping with the population and literacy explosion.

Why? Here I'll deal with the Sunday Star only, for although I'm sure there are some universal truths, other newspapers might have other problems. Summing up the bad points that emerged from our

WHY AND HOW

research and focus groups over seven years: Our reports were too long; we looked too similar to the Sunday Times and, indeed, to the daily Star; we were regarded as authoritative but too distant; people respected us, but didn't love us; their Sundays were busy and they found long reports formidable; in short they could take us or leave us. We then called in the world's foremost newspaper designer, Dr Mario Garcia, from the Poynter Institute in the United States. There isn't the space here to detail his work with us, but perhaps his most important contribution was to get me to re-examine all the legacies of the past and to throw away those that I had worshipped but were no longer relevant.

The redesign of the Sunday Star was, then, a combination of all our own research, scores of international studies and papers, extensive and intensive work with Garcia and our art director Gail Irwin, workshops with our staff and my

own gut feeling. The greatest hurdle I cleared was to realise we were, too often, producing newspapers for ourselves, newspapers that would impress our fellow journalists; we were writing for ourselves and other writers and academics, which is fine if you have enough of them to buy you, but we didn't.

So we decided on a complete redesign. And by that I don't mean layout – we redesigned our approach to news, the way we wrote stories, the architecture of the stories, the layout, our typography, our use of colour – and we redefined news.

The aim of all of this was simple: Design wasn't there for designers; colour wasn't there to dazzle; headlines weren't there to be clever; pictures and graphics weren't there to merely be looked at; layout wasn't there to impress layout subs.

Design was there to get people to read the writers.

The content was paramount – the rest, the candyfloss and pizzazz that would get the stories read. Our design was based on three cornerstones:

- **News you can handle:** The tabloid – most of our readers told us they preferred a tabloid and they, unlike journalists, didn't see it as downmarket.
- **News that touches your life:** We saw no point in running long, important stories that made us feel good but weren't going to be read.
- **News you can see:** Graphics and pictures used aggressively throughout the paper with lots of colour.

How we're doing it ▶

Five major platforms

The parts of the hole

These are some of the main elements we try to put on each page, and with stories that cry out for them

1 No typographical pyrotechnics

The architecture of our pages is aimed at guiding the reader rather than dazzling the eye. We wanted the excitement of a Lost City without losing the reader.

2 More graphics to help the reader

Sometimes words just aren't enough to make stories easily understandable. Where necessary, we use graphics aggressively.

3 Like life, as much colour as possible

No one watches black-and-white TV out of choice. And no one objects to a blaze of flowers. Sometimes we go overboard, but we're getting it right.

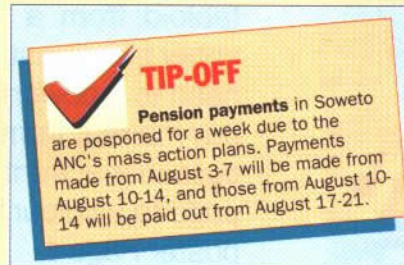
4 Breaking down long stories

Research has shown beyond question that most "non-dedicated" readers are put off by long stories which look formidable. They don't read them. So why do it? We still run long stories that deserve it, but we break them up.

5 Guiding readers from start to finish

Through the use of icons, arrows, numbers and colour, we show readers exactly where to go on a page.

THE TIPOFF



■ Readers want guidance. We give it wherever we can in this form. If, for instance, we carry a story about drug problems we tell people where they can get help.

THE SUMMARY



■ This does what it purports to do – it tells the reader exactly what the story is about and enables the reporter to use a lot of imagination in writing the story.

THE TREEPOSTER



■ We all see treeposters every day. We've turned them into a typographical element to tell readers about coming events and to brighten dull areas.

THE ICON



THE ACCUSED THE DEFENCE THE VERDICT

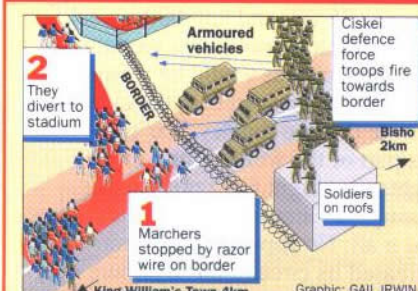
■ One of the most important elements. Research shows that if, for instance, you use the Coca-Cola logo in a finance story 29% more people on average read the story. Icons lure readers and at the same time break up stories and pages. They can also be used to guide readers through a page or story.

THE FACTFILE



■ These give essential, zany, interesting facts about stories – and enable reporters to write without mundane facts interrupting the flow.

THE GRAPHIC



■ They're one of our main thrusts, there to explain and complement stories. Surveys show they're one of our most popular features

Putting it all together: The page

Serious? Yes. Sombre? No. We believe this is the way to the future. The week's big analysis turned into compulsive reading – and compulsive viewing

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INSIGHT

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WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

THE primary purpose is to make the Government meet 14 ANC demands before Coetzer can resign. Allied to this is, in Nelson Mandela's words, to have an elected constituent assembly, the end of minority rule, and transfer of power to the majority.

WHO'S IN

THE ANC, the SACP, Congress of South African Students, SA Democratic Teachers' Union, National Education Coordinating Committee, all the state associations, health workers represented by the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Association of SA, a number of households, in the capacities as the ANC's Coetzer aims.

WHO'S NOT

THE ANC, the SACP, Congress of South African Students, SA Democratic Teachers' Union, National Education Coordinating Committee, all the state associations, health workers represented by the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Association of SA, a number of households, in the capacities as the ANC's Coetzer aims.

THE RULES

NO intimidation, no abuse, no violence of any kind. No weapons to be used. No political activities are permitted. No political activities, no violence of any kind. No weapons to be used. No political activities are permitted. No political activities, no violence of any kind. No weapons to be used. No political activities are permitted.

THE RISK

THE risk is of a violent confrontation between the strikers and the police. The risk is of a violent confrontation between the strikers and the police. The risk is of a violent confrontation between the strikers and the police.

THE LIKELY OUTCOME

THE likely outcome is a negotiated settlement between the ANC and the Government. The likely outcome is a negotiated settlement between the ANC and the Government. The likely outcome is a negotiated settlement between the ANC and the Government.

SEVEN DAYS that could change history. Tomorrow is the start of the ANC-Alliance campaign to force the Government to negotiate. We tell you how it will affect your life

A survivor's guide to mass action

Strikebusters will find staff if required

STRIKEBUSTERS will find staff if required, says the Minister of Labour, Mr. Nkomo. He said that the Government would not allow the economy to be paralysed by the strike. He said that the Government would not allow the economy to be paralysed by the strike. He said that the Government would not allow the economy to be paralysed by the strike.



HELP A PHONE CALL AWAY... Denise Wippen and John Love say they can provide replacement staff for factories and businesses during the strike.

Transport services key to the outcome

TRANSPORT and transport services will be a key to the outcome of the strike, says the Minister of Transport, Mr. Nkomo. He said that the Government would not allow the economy to be paralysed by the strike. He said that the Government would not allow the economy to be paralysed by the strike.

WHAT'S OPEN, WHAT'S NOT, YOUR QUICK GUIDE ON HOW BEST TO GET THROUGH THE WEEK	TRANSPORT	MUNICIPAL	REFUSE	SUPERMARKETS	SCHOOLS	GARAGES	POLICE	STAPLES	HOSPITALS	FUNERALS	BANKS
TRANSPORT No public transport services will be available during the week. Only taxis and private cars will be used.	MUNICIPAL Municipal services will be disrupted. No refuse collection, no street cleaning, no water supply.	REFUSE Refuse collection will be disrupted. No refuse collection, no street cleaning, no water supply.	SUPERMARKETS Supermarkets will be open but with limited stock. No fresh produce, no meat, no fish.	SCHOOLS Schools will be closed. No classes, no exams, no sports.	GARAGES Garages will be open but with limited staff. No repairs, no oil changes, no car washes.	POLICE Police will be on duty but with limited staff. No patrols, no investigations, no arrests.	STAPLES Staples will be open but with limited stock. No paper, no ink, no pens.	HOSPITALS Hospitals will be open but with limited staff. No operations, no treatments, no consultations.	FUNERALS Funerals will be open but with limited staff. No services, no prayers, no music.	BANKS Banks will be open but with limited staff. No deposits, no withdrawals, no transfers.	

FOR the Sunday before mass action kicked off, we designed this page. It was planned with the designer, the graphic artist, the sub, the news editor, the reporter and the photographer – and it's a classic example of what we try to achieve. The country was jittery and confused and we combined news that touches your life with news you can see.

On the left there's a page-deep fact file which is largely an affirmation and summary of the build-up, but done in an easy-to-follow way with icons to help break up copy and guide the reader. We start with what it's all about, then take the reader through who's in, who's out, what the risks are and then wind up by sticking out our necks and giving our prediction of the likely outcome.

Under the main head is a calendar of what people can expect day by day through the week. We used the picture to personalise the story – if it had been the main focal point we would have used it bigger.

This is followed by the news that will affect everyone's life: The what, where, when and

how of the mass action. Each of the items had its own icon: if you wanted to buy milk, you looked for the milk bottle; if you were worried about refuse collection, you went to the rubbish bag – and – conversely if you weren't interested, you could skip the item and move to the ones that affected you.

It's a great time-saver for the reader, but it's tough, painstaking work putting it all together. You can't contemplate doing it

FACT FILE

■ **Don't be fooled.** They may look simple and small, but each of these icons is a miniature masterpiece that took 100% inspiration and 100% perspiration. The calendar at the top took the best part of two days and the rest another day. Without Gail Irwin, who's without peer for talent, enthusiasm, ideas and hour-after-hour, head-down, hard work we could never attempt pages such as these.

unless all your staff understand why you're doing it, are enthusiastic about feeding in ideas for new approaches and are prepared to shoot for the moon from conception to execution. I'm lucky to have such colleagues.

So what?

Just what does all this add up to? Is the new Sunday Star a success? The venture was never meant to be a quick-fix revival, but as I write seven months down the track, the signs are there: our average before we launched was about 82 000. This week (November 22) we sold 125 000. We have been properly promoted for the first time; we have run Scoop and Jokers' Wild competitions, and all of this has helped. I think we'll know just where we stand in about three to six months. I am confident we've made a remarkable turnaround. I'm also convinced that we're going to see more and more newspapers taking this route – and I'm lucky, despite all the trauma, to have had the chance to take this roller-coaster ride.

Going for graphics ▶

Seeing it as it was, is, and can be

New ways of telling the news, summing up events, making complex situations understandable and displaying different sections

The fine art of 15-man rugby

1. France calls a short lineout 12m into South African half.

2. Olivier Roumat taps the ball down to Aubin Heuder who flicks it to Alain Penaud.

3. Running right the ball goes to Frank Mesnel and again short to Philippe Benetton, who is held up.

4. The ball comes back again to Heuder and

and moves again right to Jean Baptiste Lafond.

5. He straightens to make space for Laurent Cabannes.

6. The flank is brought down by the combined efforts of Hugh Reece-Edwards, Adrie Geldenhuys and Jacques Olivier.

7. Roumat wrenches the ball clear to twist over for France's first try.

Graphic: GAIL IRWIN

KYK WEER ... the French ran rings around the Boks with this try – and a graphic shows how they did it

- 1 THE TALE OF THE TAPE**

Nigeria has seen 5 videos of SA. SA has only seen 2 of Nigeria.

NIGERIA → SOUTH AFRICA
- 2 THE INVISIBLE COACH**

Six weeks before game, coach and assistant sent out of country.
- 3 NO TEAMWORK**

Squad has not trained together since last game. New members face trying task.
- 4 CLUBS FIRST, SA SQUAD SECOND**

Bobsave Cup seen as more important than World Cup.

SWALLOWS
CHIEFS
PIRATES
- 5 LAST CHANCE LOST**

Friendly against Botswana cancelled. Perfect practice opportunity gone.
- 6 THE STATE OF PLAY**

Hot African sun and empty, earthy pitch completely demoralised SA players.

Sunday Money

EVERYBODY KNOWS THE BEST TIME TO BUY IS WHEN NOBODY ELSE CAN AFFORD TO DO SO. FOR A LOT OF COMMODITIES THAT TIME IS NOW—IF YOU HAVE THE EXCESS CASH.

INSIDE

- 2 QUANT SPEAK**
- 4 MOVING STORY**
- 6 THE A TO Z OF TIMESHARING**
- 7 COMING HOME**
- 10 BIG SCREEN, BIG BUCKS**
- 11 NINE WAYS TO WIN**
- 12 12 ARBITRE PRECAUTIONS**

COMPUTING: WHY E-MAIL IS REGARDED AS A GROWTH AREA

▲ **NEW LOOK ...** we turned high finance into Hi, finance! with eye-grabbing covers.

◀ **HOW TO ...** and how not to. We show the mistakes SA's World Cup coach made.

FULL DETAILS ... all you need to know. ▶
The reporter concentrates on writing.

MATCH AT A GLANCE

RESULT

South Africa ... (0) 0
Congo ... (0) 2

Venue: Ellis Park, Johannesburg

SUMMARY

South Africa paid the price for using negative tactics against robust opponents.

MAN OF THE MATCH

South Africa: Mark Anderson
Congo: Brice Samba

SHOTS

On: South Africa 2, Congo 4.
Off: South Africa 2, Congo 4.

HEADERS

On: South Africa 2, Congo 4.
Off: South Africa 2, Congo 4.

CORNERS

South Africa 0, Congo 1.

OFFSIDE

South Africa 2, Congo 4.

FOULS

South Africa 0, Congo 1.