

RUNNING HEAD: Rathmel819\_RepackageALA

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SLIM LI819XI, Summer 2009

Repackaging portfolio – Assignment 1

The repackaging of the ALA's Code of Ethics began with a review and basic inventory of the information package as it is presented on the ALA website. It appears in a standard style sheet consistent with the rest of the ALA website. This includes a faded purple hue background, font headings in a more bold purple and the main text content in black font. There are no graphics associated with the page aside from the ALA logo in cranberry red that is incorporated within the web design. It was somewhat difficult to determine the intended audience in this format. On one hand, the language of the document in the first person plural, we, calls out to fellow ALA members as the audience. But as a publicly available document it is also clearly intended for anyone who might encounter it regardless of their membership in ALA. As a result of this ambiguity, choosing an audience for whom to repackage this content was guided in large part by the desire to more clearly define the original intended audience. This essay will show how this audience was defined and then explain the choices made in repacking the information accordingly.

The Center for the Study of Ethics Policy (CSEP) (Illinois Institute of Technology, 2008) summarizes that codes of ethics in general have a controversial aim. Some argue they are useless and problematic. Others, who are supportive, disagree about the reasons for their importance. One supported use of codes of ethics is as a means of protection from the possible pressure to not ascribe to such ethics in practice. The CSEP also cites usefulness of ethics codes as educational devices. Tyler (1992) cites a parallel example, corporate logos, where audience education and shared belief are goals. Company logos, like codes of ethics, are also intended both for members and those who come in contact with its members or the institution. Logos and ethics persuade the audience to share the beliefs of the organization. The language choice in the ALA ethics code shows the intention that the audience will be participatory in a similar way.

Understanding these potential uses for this content, the repackage focused on the audience of new and potential library professionals, and specifically potentially new members of ALA. The repackaged content would also be a useful to students of the profession, who probably fall into these former

categories as well. In the potential membership category, the purpose of the repackaged information would include persuasion to action (to join ALA), as well as education. As for the new professional category, the importance of communicating the protection element of this code of ethics would be important as well.

Considering this new audience, the website version as reference point of record does fulfill its educational objective. But for the other purposes, to persuade and inspire shared belief for this intended audience, visual and textual changes are needed. The information required an entirely new context to match the newness of the audience for which this content focuses (new librarians, new members). The repackaged design is then presented as either a pamphlet or poster. It would be undesirable as a redesign for the website, except as an optional .pdf to print out for educational and promotional display purposes.

Overall design choices for making the content more visually appealing and artistic were based on Tyler's (1992) description of logo design. Moving away from the scientific and more distant aspect of the original design, the repackaged product expresses individuality and thereby acknowledges the audience's existence. This was accomplished by including more emotion or individuality in the design than just the standard template and formal text format of the website version. The aim was to give the code content reflecting these aspects of logo design. The key elements of repackaging this content centered on color and categorization. Maintaining use of purple and added more cranberry red text color ties in the ALA logo and compliments the purple. Round touching circles encapsulate the ideas and keyword headers were added for each code. The use of circles also implies a sense of wholeness, well-roundedness, and connectedness. The centered alignment of text within the circles reflects the central aspect of the information presented (core beliefs). The keyword headers to categorize the content and their color choice (cranberry red) aim to provide more immediate access to the information presented. The code itself was also renamed to more clearly define its audience with reference to the source of the actual content in the lower left corner.

Admittedly, this represents a relatively safe approach to audience choice in repackaging this content – as a new member of ALA, a library student and almost new library professional. But this experience speaks to the difficulty and risk that is presented by keeping an audience, particularly one different from yourself, in mind when designing information. Clear and dynamic designs prove that these risks are necessary and worthwhile. When audience is not addressed adequately, there is ambiguity in the message, like that faced at the start this project.

**References**

Illinois Institute of Technology. (2008). *Codes of Ethics Online*. Retrieved June 19, 2009 from the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions at IIT website: <http://ethics.iit.edu/codes/coe.html>

Tyler, A. (1992). Shaping belief: the role of audience in visual communication. *Design Issues*, 9(1), 21-29. Retrieved June 19, 2009 from JSTOR.