

Newspaper Excellence Awards

THE SEVEN CIRCULATION CATEGORIES HAVE CHANGED SINCE LAST YEAR SO YOUR PAPER'S CATEGORY MAY HAVE SHIFTED.

Category A	up to 1,600
Category B	1,601-3,000
Category C	3,001-4,500
Category D	4,501-10,000
Category E	10,001-17,000
Category F	17,001-30,000
Category G	30,001 and over

Please note:
Your circulation category refers to your "NX Circulation" as defined in the spreadsheet provided to all members – **it does not refer to your paper's actual circulation.**

Please submit a PDF of the FRONT PAGE of ONE edition from the date range below. Upload it to www.betterbnc.com by **9pm on Monday, January 25, 2021.**

Then, submit three copies of every issue published consecutively within any one week run in **FEBRUARY 2020** and any one week run in **SEPTEMBER 2020**. We need three identical sets of papers so that each of three judges will have one set. Please send these hard copies directly to the BCYCNA office at 9 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1P1 by **5pm on Monday, January 25, 2021.**

The BCYCNA office staff cannot pull archived copies of your newspaper.

Judging of the Newspaper Excellence category is based on a point scale, as follows. The following pages give more details on these judging criteria.

Editorial Content

(45 marks total)

No wire content to be considered	
Front page	10
Community news	10
Editorial page & Op-Ed	10
Local features	5
Sports, Recreation & Leisure	5
Arts, Entertainment & Lifestyle	5

Overall Design & Appearance

(10 marks total) 10

Photos & Production

(20 marks total)

Photography	10
Production quality	10

Advertising

(15 marks total)

Advertising content & design	10
Classified advertising	5

Online Presence

(10 marks total) 10

TOTAL 100



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Newspaper Excellence Awards

Front page (10%)

First impressions are lasting.

Judges look for:

News stories or articles that are relevant to the community. Leads should be tight and intriguing. Writing must be simple and straightforward. Each story must provide a complete understanding of the event or issue.

Design should be clean and sharp with simple, uncluttered mastheads. Lead stories and pictures should feature prominently. Creative use of spot colour that contributes to a powerful image or front page is an asset.

Photos (black-and-white or colour) are judged on news or feature content, composition, cropping, quality, size and placement. Static colour photos used only to put colour on the front page are not given extra consideration. Carry-overs should be kept to a minimum.

A powerful headline should easily identify the lead story. Heads should be informative and pull readers into stories. Judges watch for: words in headlines spaced out to fill in space; too much or too little white space; too much or too little variety in headlines.

Points are deducted for ads only if they interfere with or overpower news elements. A wrap is considered a flyer and therefore will not be considered by judges as part of the front page. If the wrap has a masthead and there is no other front page with masthead behind it, the wrap shall be considered the front page and judged accordingly.

However, if there IS a front page with masthead behind the wrap, THAT page shall be judged as the front page.

Community news (10%)

A good newspaper should provide news content that is relevant to the community and gives a clear reflection of the nature and the people of the area it serves.

Judges look for:

Well-written stories with tight leads. Stories should contain reporter insight, initiative and a complete understanding of the events and issues. Stories should be easy to read and interesting. Look for all sides of the story. A mix of reporter-generated news with some input from sources within the community indicates good community support and interaction. The use of outside sources should be localized. Judges look for locally-generated copy, rather than canned filler. Heads should pull readers into stories and snappy leads should keep them reading. The "5 Ws" must apply—who, what, when, where and why. Stories should attempt to answer readers' questions. Quotes must be solid and attributed. Long stories should have visual breaks.

Photos should be relevant, sharp, active, well composed, tightly cropped and properly sized. Stand-alones should be designed to clearly identify them as separate news items. News photo essays must include all the elements of a news story.

2021 Award Judging Criteria

Editorial page & Op-Ed (10%)

The editorial page and/or op-ed page are the heart of the newspaper and should be judged as one element. Editorial cartoons (especially from a local artist) add to a good editorial section.

Judges look for:

One or more staff-written editorials, an appropriate cartoon or editorial photo that makes a statement, letters to the editor, editorial style columns and/or guest opinions. Content is the most important element here, but all elements of good layout and design should be present on these pages. The editorials are worth the most points. The best designed page leads to nothing if there is nothing on it worth reading.

Editorials should be written in simple language and have a clear message. Tight and concise writing is paramount to length. Good editorials identify problems and offer reasonable solutions or alternatives. An editorial can be about a local or national topic as long as it has relevance to the local community. Editorials inspire thought, question, and provoke action. Editorials are opinions. They should be judged on the quality and the presentation of the opinion. Editorials can be signed or unsigned.

Good letters attract readership. Reader response can be sparked by an editor's stand on the issues and by controversial opinions. Quality local opinions score higher than syndicated columns. This page should show a balance of opinion. All elements of good layout should be present on these pages.

Local features (5%)

Local features go beyond the news, providing a more in-depth look at the issues and people of the community.

Judges look for:

Interesting topics, accompanied by powerful presentation, creativity and graphic elements.

Sports, Recreation & Leisure (5%)

Sports, recreation and leisure are a significant part of community life.

Judges look for:

Sports pages that include different age levels as well as a variety of events and activities that reflect the community. Judges aren't necessarily looking for a Sports section, but for sports coverage AND/OR pieces on outdoor opportunities, travel, staycations, hiking, biking, etc.

Staff-generated copy should be active, lively and concisely written. Photos should be featured prominently. Interesting and well-written local sports opinion columns are a definite asset, as are local sports features. The page design must be lively and attractive. Headlines should be active. Effective presentation of score stats is an asset.



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Arts, Entertainment & Lifestyle (5%)

Arts, entertainment and lifestyle highlights the local scene and goings-on in a community.

Judges look for:

A variety of stories, listings and photos which reflect the diversity of arts and entertainment available within the community. Judges aren't necessarily looking for an Arts & Entertainment section, but for arts & entertainment coverage AND/OR pieces on parenting, senior, home & garden, environment, etc. Special attention should be given to locally generated photos and stories.

Overall design & appearance (10%)

A well-designed newspaper is inviting to the reader.

Judges look for:

Clean lines, organized sections; attractive and easy-to-read layout.

Photography (10%)

A photo is the focal point of the page.

Judges look for:

Colour or black-and-white photos that are well cropped and have impact, action, technical quality and good composition. The photos should be properly sized and positioned on the page. Judges look for effective use of colour where applicable, rather than the presence or absence of it.

Quality is better than quantity. Watch for: grip and grins; dull, static photos; cheque passings; group shots where nobody can be identified; too many people in too small a picture. Sometimes, these shots are necessary but the photographer should look for creative ways to present the scene. Photos should tell the story.

Cutlines should fill in the significant details and clearly identify all subjects.

Production quality (10%)

The production quality directly reflects the newspaper's commitment to excellence.

Judges look for:

Their overall impression of the newspaper. Points are awarded for the sharpness of the printing reproduction and the quality of the newsprint. Quality control must be a priority throughout the complete production process (ie neat fold lines, colour registration, etc.)

Advertising content & design (10%)

Advertising content is important to the bottom line of a newspaper. It is also an indication of how well the newspaper and the community work together for the readers.

A well-designed ad is a benefit to both the advertiser and the reader.

2021 Award Judging Criteria

Judges look for:

Content: Innovative ideas by advertising staff that bring additional lineage into the paper. Simple promotions that build extra revenue on community interests (i.e. festivals, sporting events, hobbies, seasonal topics or product or customer features). There should be evidence of both traditional advertisers and creative new ideas, such as business and profile features and in-house promotions to support sales staff.

Design: Effective advertising. Good ads are laid out attractively and are easy to read. Placement should be conducive to overall design of the newspaper. Judges look for effective, uncluttered artwork; effective use of white space; copy that is complete, easy to read and understand and that provides extensive information about the product. The four basic elements of an ad (headline, body copy, graphics or photos, and signature) must work together to sell the product.

Classified advertising (5%)

A strong classified advertising section attracts readership.

Judges look for:

Classified advertising that is properly classified (organized and categorized). Layouts should be easy to read and ad categories easy to find with good headings and a wide variety of classifications. Clear and helpful instructions make buying classified ads and using the classified section easier. Display classifieds are well integrated with word classifieds. The section should strive to engage with its community by creating and maintaining a community marketplace and meeting place. Volume of classified advertising is a measure of readership and community participation.

Online presence (10%)

A strong online presence indicates that a paper is current and connected.

Judges look for:

Digital elements that support or add to print content; social media presence and engagement from readers. URLs and a sample of any relevant social links should be uploaded to the contest website. Judges look for specifics such as:

- paper's URL listed clearly in paper
- social media icons/links provided clearly in paper
- Facebook page updated today
- Twitter updated multiple times per day
- other social such as Instagram
- website easy to navigate
- website encourages online/email tips
- healthy number of fans/likes
- website and social comments are handled well (quick replies, thoughtful engagement, etc.)



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