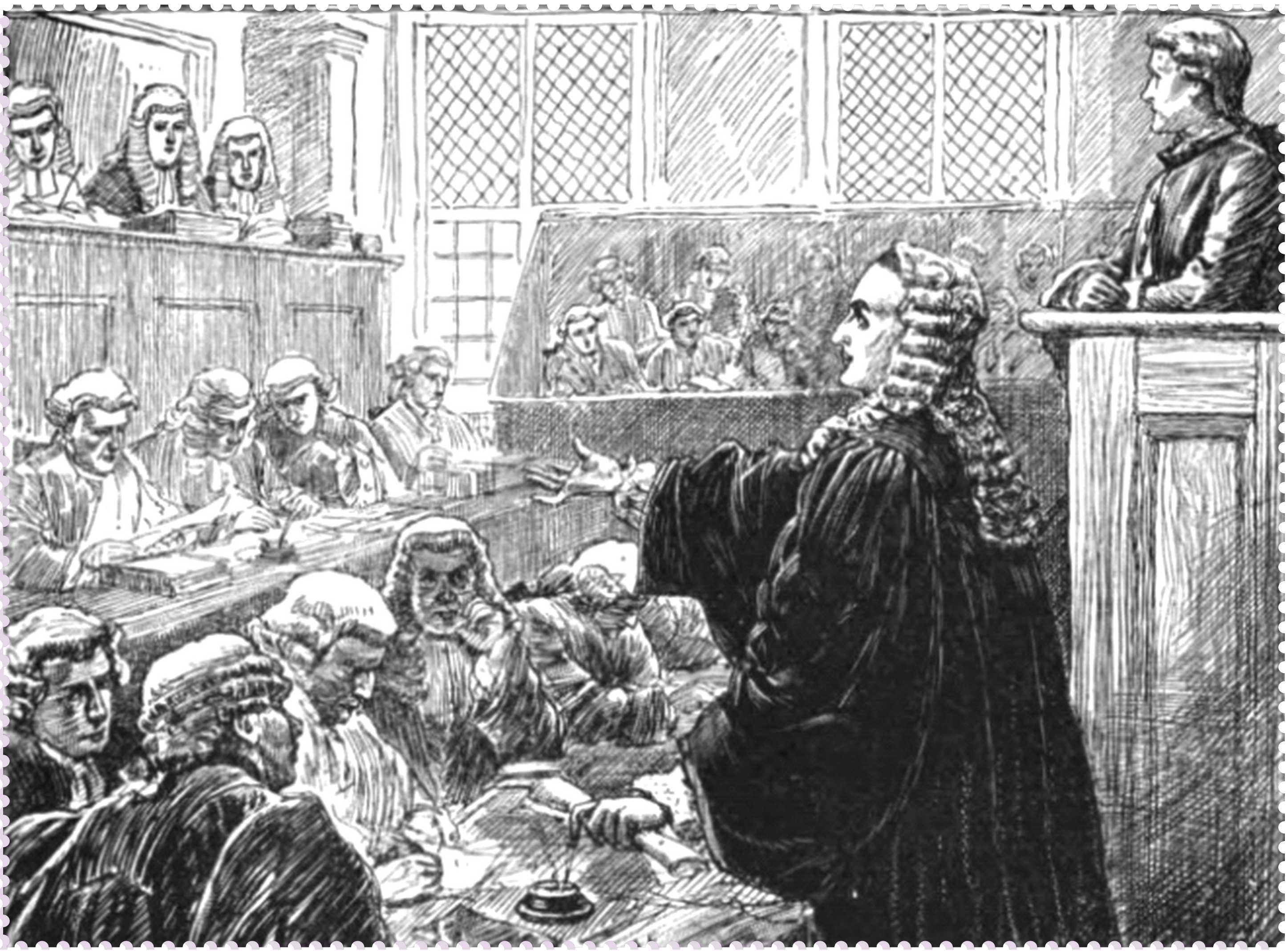
AADEJ
Established 1931
&
American College of Dentists
1920 100 2020
Established 1921

Volume Eight, Issue Two
Working Together Again
Two Thousand and Twenty-Two

The Communicator

Official Publication of the American Association of Dental Editors & Journalists



The trial of John Peter Zenger, 1735

The Price of Free Speech

John Peter Zenger (1697-1746)

Daniel L. Orr II, DDS, PhD, JD, MD, CDE, Editor-in-Chief

All editors, if not all Americans, should know about John Peter Zenger's courageous 1735 legal battle that allows the writing of truth-based works.[1,2] This essay may bring to mind current restrictions on free speech in the United States,[3] and that is, in fact, part of the reason it is being written.

In the pre-colonial era, freedom of the press was not codified in the law prior to the First Amendment recognition of our inalienable right to the freedoms of speech, religion, assembly, and the press. Writers were often fined or imprisoned for publishing critical comments about government officials or their policies, even if the opinions were true.

The Zenger story occurred in New York and, not surprisingly, pitted an ordinary citizen against powerful politicians who, in modern parlance, sought to cancel Zenger.

William Cosby was appointed as the colonial governor of New York in 1731. Cosby was actually domiciled in England for over a year after his appointment. When he arrived in the Colonies in 1732, he demanded to be paid for his year in abstencia. The Chief Judge in the subsequent litigation, Lewis Morris, ruled against Cosby. Cosby then removed Morris from the bench. Tyrants have, do, and will always exist.

Zenger was retained as a printer for Cosby-opposed citizens, generally distributing the writings of others. Subjects written about in relation to Cosby's despotism included voting irregularities,[4,5] administrative incarceration without a trial or a jury,[6] and seizure and/or destruction of personal property. In 18th Century England, the ceremonial burning of books and other printed material by the public hangman symbolically reinforced the power of the government to restrict freedom of expression.[7]

Indeed, Cosby's first responses included the public burning of issues of Zenger's paper, *The New-York Weekly Journal*. In 1734, Zenger was arrested and charged with seditious libel. Zenger's wife continued to coordinate the more secretive printing of the *Journal*.

Zenger's defense was legally problematic. English legal precedent allowed prohibitions against any statement that could prompt the public to criticize the government. The actual truth of the statements was irrelevant and inadmissible.

Truth remains irrelevant at times even today.[8]

Zenger secured a zealous and capable advocate, James Alexander. As has happened recently secondary to "misinformation" as adjudicated by governments and their apparatchiks, Alexander's professional license was stripped away.[9,10] There was, of

"No nation ancient or modern ever lost the liberty of freely speaking, writing, or publishing their sentiments, but forthwith lost their liberty in general and became slaves." John Peter Zenger

course, no such thing as misinformation.[11] There were only alternate narratives that did not align with governmental-approved opinions. Cosby marshaled the politically approved media to opine that the *Journal* was printing lies, but history demonstrates that it was the Cosby regime that was not forthright.

Zenger then found Andrew Hamilton, an older and sickly attorney who agreed to risk his legal reputation defending Zenger, whom many felt was untendable according to legal precedent.

Hamilton shocked the court with his opening statement that admitted that Zenger both printed and distributed the papers in question. He followed by stating that Zenger's crime was in publishing the truth. It appeared to many that the jury had no option, per previous precedent, but to convict Zenger. Later Hamilton used contrary legal precedent, such as the Magna Carta, to deride a law that disregarded the truth.

Hamilton now argued for the freedom to publish truth. Hamilton shared with the jury that not only was Zenger's freedom on trial, but so was every truthful citizen's. This was not a hypothetical argument; Zenger had been incarcerated for nearly a year.

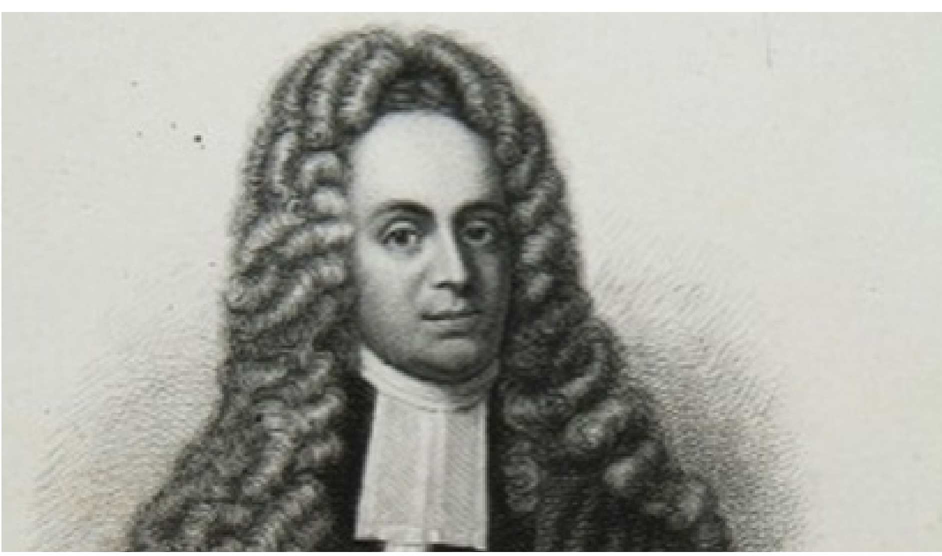
Hamilton's defense resulted in direct legal threats to himself from the Zenger prosecutor.[12] Hamilton pressed forward boldly, arguing to the jury that the case was one of tyrannical slavery versus freedom, and that the jury would be the ultimate arbiter for freedom and truth, if they so choose to do so.

The jury responded with a not guilty verdict. Zenger continued to print and publish for another decade; Hamilton became a respected judge; and Cosby died within a year with the Zenger case forever staining his reputation.

The Colonists now knew they could successfully prosecute unfair British law. In a real sense, Zenger presaged the Boston Tea Party, the Revolutionary War, and the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

It is accepted that nearly all speech is free today, even false speech. It is ironic that government-condemned speech, true or false, has recently come under severe attack, just as in Zenger's day. At times, conflicted government opinions now once again trump truth.

Fight On!



Editor's Note: *The impetus for this editorial was a Turner Classic Movie short, The Story That Couldn't Be Printed (1939),[13] and recent history. The AADEJ encourages circumspect member commentary.*

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Responsibly Responding to Communication

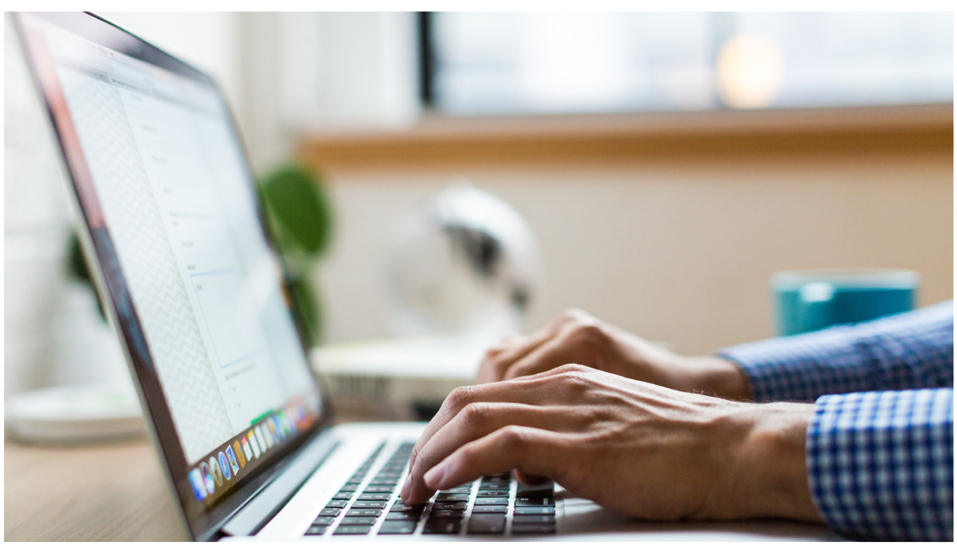
Stuart Segelnick, DDS, MS, AADEJ President

Editors of dental publications receive hundreds of emails, texts, phone calls, and social media messages each week. Most of these could be considered spam; however, many of these messages are not. One of the most frustrating, and yes, even agonizing periods, is the time waiting on a response from someone you have sent a well-crafted, long, thought-out communication to—especially one requiring a timely answer. Realistically, we should be aware of the etiquette of a punctual reply and your options to rectify.

Searching for guidance on appropriate response times, I came across an interesting article by Steven MacDonald, where the author shares his company's sponsored survey of 3,200 clients and their expectations for a timely commercial response time to their emails. (The sponsoring company sells software to help with this issue.) Around half of the customers expected a response within four hours, and according to Jeff Toister who conducted the survey, almost "a third of customers expect businesses to respond to emails in one hour or less."[1,2] The company that sponsored the survey also conducted its own research and found in 1,000 companies they surveyed, the average response time of the companies that responded was actually 12 hours! Big difference from what people want and what companies are providing.

Judith Kallos in her online article recommends responding "as fast as you can!...and at least within 24 hours." Deepak Chopra and Kabir Sehgal,[3] recommend immediately responding by acknowledging that you received the email and plan to follow up if needed.[4] Mac Cassity in his article "Email Etiquette 101: A Timely Response is Crucial" gives a simple checklist to follow of responding immediately, then deleting "the email (if you have responded or it is spam)," and finally, filing it on your computer folder and then scheduling a reminder to address it later. Specific times throughout the day should be scheduled to check your email.[5] Recently, I was surprised to see email responses from colleagues that I was cc'd on though not included in the original email. When you suspect missing an email, before jumping to any conclusions, I recommend checking your spam. The original email could be there, along with other important emails. Lesson learned, and now I've added the routine of checking my spam at the end of the day to recover legitimate email and then delete genuine junk.

In a 2022 article by Adam N. Pate, et al., the authors surveyed full-time faculty, part-time faculty preceptors, and students from the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy. The responders felt two days was an acceptable response time to emails, which they didn't consider as time



sensitive as texts or phone calls. 95% of participants believed text, and 91% believed phone calls, required under 24 hours as a reasonable response period. "Most students (77%) indicated that a faculty or preceptor's response time to their text or phone call impacted their perceptions of feeling valued and important." 69% of respondents felt communication responses received after their own most suitable timeframe affected their opinion of the replier's professionalism. This led the authors to advise responding within 24 hours or less during the week and even earlier to text messages.[6] Inadvertently causing people to feel undervalued and unimportant, along with hurting our own reputation by being considered unprofessional, are all significant reasons to better our own responsiveness. However, sometimes the overwhelming number of communications you need to respond to may lead to unhealthy stress and anxiety. Different coping mechanisms may need to be employed, along with strategies to handle communication overload.[7,8]

Back in May 2022, weeks went by before I realized that I had never received a reply from several different people at the ADA. Since then, I have begun keeping separate computer folders for communications I need to reply to and those I have responded to but are waiting for a response, which has been very helpful. In the past, the ADA had been very responsive to my queries, which made it even more mysterious not to hear back from them. Then I realized the cybersecurity attack they suffered could easily have been the culprit. Here is when a follow-up email is indicated. According to Jeff Hoffman, salespeople increased their target's reply rate when sending a follow-up email. He also recommends waiting at least three days before sending your follow-up email.[9] I happened to wait a few weeks before sending my follow-up emails, and planned, if I had not heard back, on making some direct phone calls. Happily, within days of my follow-up emails, I received my replies.

Authors submitting articles to our publications, should also have timely replies and updates on where their articles stand in the review/acceptance/rejection process.[10] When the submission process goes smoothly, and timely, authors may be more likely to submit material in the future.

When you suspect missing an email, before jumping to conclusions, I recommend checking your spam. The original email could be there, along with other important emails.

The AADEJ is committed to helping the dental community communicate better. Responding quickly and concisely with possible further timely follow up communications, when appropriate, are tenets we all should strive for. I look forward to seeing everyone in person at our upcoming October Annual Meeting in Houston. Please register for the program as soon as possible since space is limited. If you have any questions or concerns, let us know, and we will respond promptly and diligently.

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Reliable Sources are a Click Away

Ann Marie Gothard, AADEJ President-Elect

Have you ever been working on a story and found yourself in need of a credible source? Or wondered how to identify and connect with an expert, someone highly specialized and maybe outside of your field, network, or industry? Fortunately, there are several online services available to help editors and journalists find and engage with reliable sources.

Everyone from managing editors to staff reporters and freelancers, representing state dental associations, component societies, dental specialty groups, student, and commercial publications, can benefit from finding sources and gathering news from online services that grant access to their vetted subject matter experts. To help you get started, here are three to consider for accessing leading sources, industry experts, and even crowdsourcing story ideas.

HARO (Help A Reporter Out)

HARO connects journalists seeking experts to include in their reporting with sources who have that expertise. With more than 30,000 journalists and bloggers using the site, HARO bills itself as the largest source repository with more than 250,000 expert sources looking to share their expertise, top tips, and case studies.

The process is simple. Journalists submit their pitches—brief synopsis of their story, required qualifications for the perfect source, and a deadline directly to HARO. An alert is issued to registered sources containing the request details with responses routed directly to your inbox and HARO account. Once a source is chosen, the expert's contact details are included making it easy for you to reach out to schedule an interview or request additional information.

There is no fee to register. Visit www.helpareporter.com to learn more about HARO's guidelines for journalists.

Journalist's Toolbox

In 2008, the Society of Professional Journalists launched The Journalist's Toolbox. It is managed by Mike Reilley, University of Illinois-Chicago journalism senior lecturer, who founded the site in 1996. The site is updated daily and contains thousands of free (and some fee-based) resources organized by beats and more than 80 searchable topics.

As described by Reilley, The Journalist's Toolbox is specially designed for journalists, students, and professors seeking reliable resources for reporting, editing, verifying, and visualizing information for complex stories. Originally used by news librarians to support research requests, the site has evolved over the years to accommodate the needs of reporters and editors as newsroom libraries are downsized or even closed.

Fortunately, there are several online services available to help editors and journalists find and engage with reliable sources.

Visit www.journaliststoolbox.org to sign up for the twice-monthly newsletter and browse the comprehensive list of topics and expert resources.

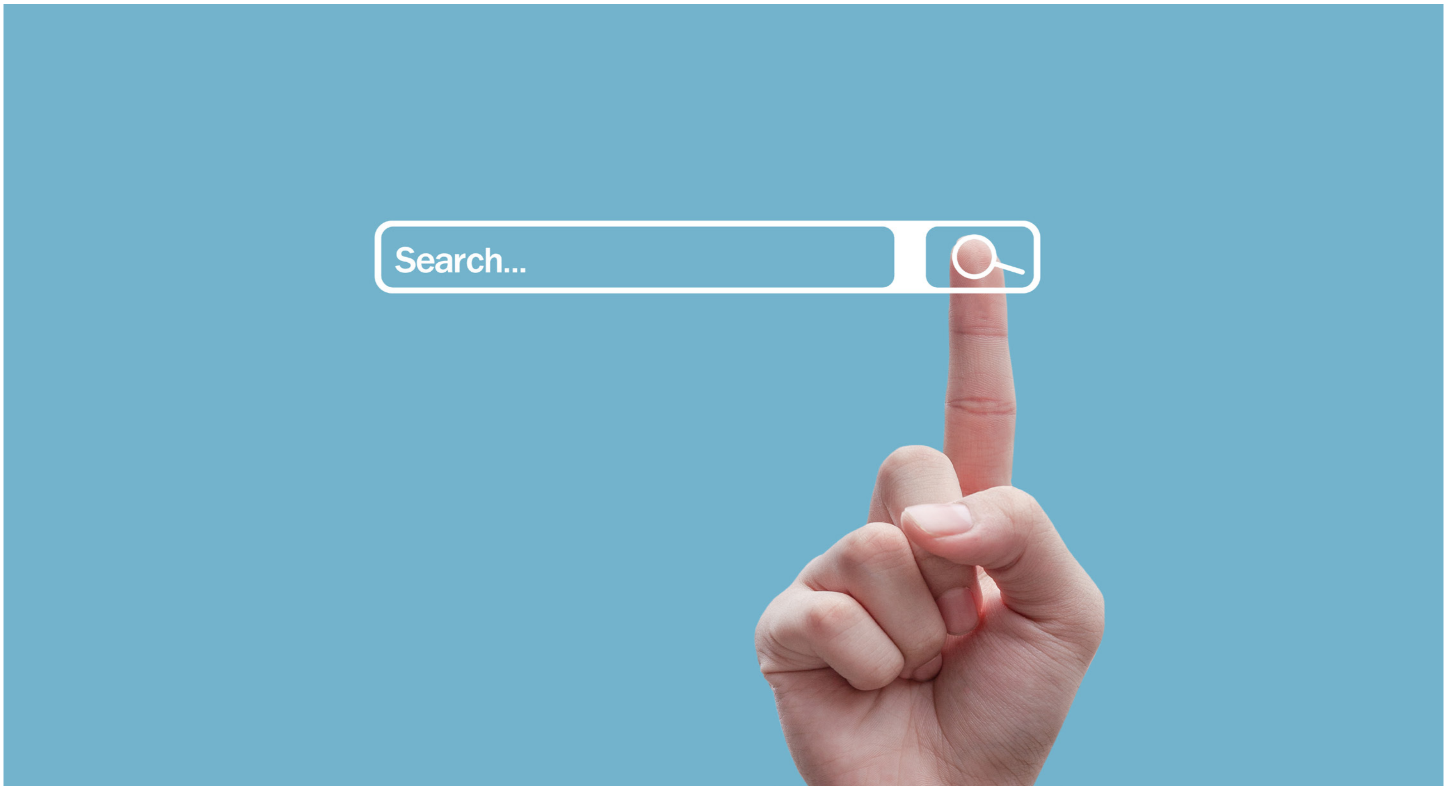
ProfNet for Journalists

ProfNet for Journalists (ProfNet) is a free service offered by PR Newswire to media professionals. Connecting journalists with experts since 1992, ProfNet offers a database of more than 30,000 expert profiles searchable by world region and expert type. Journalists can also issue time-sensitive queries to help find experts quickly.

ProfNet queries are arranged in 10 subject areas—Business, Finance & Technology, Government, Law, Education & Science, Health, Entertainment & Living—and sent to subscribers throughout the day. Journalists may submit a query detailing the expertise they seek, deadline, and preferred method of response. Filtering options are also available making it possible to target queries by institution type and geographic location. The site is available in English and Spanish.

To sign up, visit https://www.prnewswire.com.

While building a network of reliable sources takes time, using one of these services can have an immediate impact and enhance your reporting. The services offered by these sites offer you the opportunity to post queries, meet new sources, and quickly raise your profile and that of your publication—all with the click of a mouse.



10 Hints for Editors from the Layout/Designer

Denise Maihofer, AADEJ Secretary-Treasurer

The Word docs have all been gathered, along with digital photos, logos, and miscellaneous items, and you are ready to send them off to the designer for layout, right? Not so fast! Before you do, there might be a few things that would help any designer, provide you with a better end result and may even save you money in the long run! Here are some things to think about and add to your checklist before hitting the "send" icon.

1. **Have your articles been proofed and edited?** The more eyes on an article prior to layout saves time on the back end. Don't assume your authors are excellent writers and have performed spell check. Err on the side of caution, and READ and PROOF each article before you hand over the files for layout. Doing this will ensure that any changes will be minor and won't cause layout changes to the article, which can cause time delays and as well as extra costs for changes.
2. **Check your photos!** Editors may not always be able to determine the resolution of a file. Take a good look at the file on your computer, and visually enlarge it on your screen. If your photo looks blurry, soft, or pixelated, chances are it's low res. Knowing this, you could ask your source for a higher res version. Since most photos are taken with cell phones, remind your source to send the photo at the highest quality (or largest size file) offered by the phone. Most phone programs offer a choice of photo sizes when emailing a photo.
3. **Photos should not be included within the Word doc.** Ask for any photos to be sent separately. Having separate photos saves time in separating the photos from the Word doc and ensures that you have the highest quality possible from the original.
4. **Make sure to include photo call-outs.** They can be part of the title of each digital photo or on a separate list with the number of the digital file and the corresponding callout. This is a huge help when laying out an article, especially a photo page. If it is an informational or clinical article, make sure each photo is identified by the figure number, and make sure the placement of the figure is indicated within the text so the designer knows where each photo, graph, etc., should appear and with what callout.
5. **It's good to have backup.** A few good short articles and backup items are always helpful to have available in case there is an empty spot on a page, or a full page, that needs some fill-in material. If the designer has this information clearly marked as "FILLER," they can use as needed and not have to wait for items to be provided.

6. **Full-page photos,** such as those used on a cover, should always be a minimum of 300 dpi and ideally at least 8.5 x 11." This will allow for enlargement for the 1/8" bleed required when bleeding a photo off the edge of the cover in print.

7. **Keep articles and their elements in a digital folder.** It is most helpful to have everything for an article in one digital folder—photos, article, callout list, logos, charts, graphs, etc. It saves a lot of search time if items are kept together.

8. **Never pull anything from the web** to use within any publication unless you have written permission from the owner of the file. Just because something appears on the internet does not mean it is in the public domain. The larger the distribution of any publication, the more likely legal problems could arise without that written permission. No matter how large or small a publication is, always beware of copyright issues before publishing.

9. **Keep records of signed releases.** If clinical photos are to be used, always make sure a release is signed by the person in the photos, if they can be identified. This is especially true for children! Make sure a parent gives written permission through a release form for that child's photo to be published, whether or not they are named. This does not generally apply to event photos, as these are public events where photographers are usually present, and everyone is aware that photographs are being taken and could end up in a publication or event report online.

10. **ALWAYS check a printer's proof.** Many things can happen between files from the original digital layout as they transition to plating for press. These errors are usually minor. A text line can jump. A provided file, such as a logo, graph, etc., may not translate into the plating software exactly as anticipated. If all photos have been calibrated and made CMYK, the photo colors should be fine.

This quick checklist may help editors organize more efficiently and avert some of the pitfalls on the publishing end. In the long run, it could save on design and layout changes, and help you avoid extra charges and missed deadlines. The more that can be done prior to the beginning of layout, the better!

Happy editing!

In the long run, it could save on design and layout changes, and help you avoid extra charges and missed deadlines. The more that can be done prior to the beginning of layout, the better!

The Oxford Comma—Cause for Pause

Mali Schantz-Feld, MA, CDE

Editing is all about nuance. Writers provide the words, but editors add subtle shades of meaning to the text with punctuation and grammar. Some grammatical rules are unquestionable. A period comes at the end of a full sentence. A full sentence contains a subject and a verb. Others, like the Oxford comma, also known as the serial comma, have caused some controversy and debate.

The Oxford comma is defined as a comma used after the penultimate item in a list of three or more items, before the "and" or "or." For example, the dentist extracted the central incisor, cuspid, and first premolar. The controversy arises because the Oxford comma is optional in American English, and not used at all in Britain. So, editors turn to their chosen stylebook for guidance. The *AMA Manual of Style, MLA Style Manual, The Chicago Manual of Style, Strunk and White's Elements of Style,* American Psychological Association, Oxford University Press, and the *U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual* all support the Oxford comma. *The Associated Press* and *The New York Times* do not support the Oxford comma.

Who is responsible for the Oxford comma? English printer and biographer, Horace Hart wrote *Hart's Rules for Compositors and Readers* in 1893 as a style guide for the Oxford University Press. Hart's rulebook placed a comma before the coordinating conjunction. Even today, the Oxford University Press notes that the serial comma is "a hallmark of our house style."[1]

The Oxford comma brings clarity to otherwise murky phrases. Here are some common examples:

- **This book is dedicated to my parents, Queen Elizabeth and God.** Without the Oxford comma, the author seems to be the offspring of a set of really dynamic parents. With the Oxford comma, the book is dedicated to three separate entities.
- **She traveled to Boston with Fred, her husband and her patient.** Without the Oxford comma, she is traveling with Fred, who also is her husband and her patient. With the comma, she is traveling with three different people.
- **The breakfast menu at the restaurant listed eggs, toast, hash browns, chicken and waffles.** Without the comma, "chicken and waffles" is a specific dish. With the Oxford comma, you can order either chicken or waffles, and if you are hungry enough for both, be prepared to pay separately.

Here's a story that Oxford comma fans adore. It's about a legal case where not using the Oxford comma cost a company $5 million. (Brace yourself Oxford comma fans—you may never feel this level of satisfaction again.) In 2018, *The New York Times* summarized the situation this way, "Ending a case that

An Oxford comma is a small addition with a big return. Especially now, when I use it I feel like 5 million bucks!

electrified punctuation pedants, grammar goons and comma connoisseurs, Oakhurst Dairy settled an overtime dispute with its drivers that hinged entirely on the lack of an Oxford comma in state law."[2] (Please note that the above quote omits the Oxford comma. *The New York Times* does not prefer its use.)

At Oakhurst Dairy, the drivers' employer claimed to be exempt from overtime pay, according to Maine's labor laws. Part of the law exempts certain tasks from receiving overtime compensation. The law's guidelines originally stated exempted tasks as:

The canning, processing, preserving, freezing, drying, marketing, storing, packing for shipment or distribution of:

1. Agricultural produce;
2. Meat and fish products; and
3. Perishable foods

The Oxford comma is not used in the phrase "packing for shipment or distribution of." With the comma, it is very clear that the overtime pertains to people who are performing either of two different tasks—"packing for shipment" or "distribution." However, without the comma, "packing for shipment or distribution" can be construed as the drivers packing for both tasks. The drivers asserted that since they didn't actually do any packing, they should not have been exempt from overtime pay. The circuit judge wrote, "Specifically, if that [list of exemptions] used a serial comma to mark off the last of the activities that it lists, then the exemption would clearly encompass an activity that the drivers perform."[3]

National Public Radio (NPR) reported, "A three-judge appeals panel heard the case. Judge David Barron, of the 1st Circuit, opened his 29-page ruling saying, 'For want of a comma, we have this case.'"[4]

The Times article summed up the outcome. "The relatively small-scale dispute gained international notoriety last year when the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit ruled that the missing comma created enough uncertainty to side with the drivers, granting those who love the Oxford comma a chance to run a victory lap across the internet."

I must admit, as an ardent member of Team Oxford comma, I did do a small dance of joy and celebrate with like-minded editors. I may have gloated just a tad to my friends who eschew the much debated but very necessary (as deemed by the court) comma. Back to dental writing and editing, it is important to be as succinct as possible. Any time that you can be more concise, your readers will appreciate it—especially when dealing with complicated procedures, lists of materials, or medicaments. You wouldn't want readers to think that you may have mixed your last two ingredients or performed two separate procedures at the same time when they were supposed to be administered or performed separately.

An Oxford comma is a small addition with a big return. Especially now, when I use it, I feel like 5 million bucks.

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