REDESIGN GALLERY

THE BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIAN

The Bakersfield Californian is a midsize daily (circulation 70,000) north of Los Angeles. Its dramatic 2005 redesign, under the guidance of design consultant Alan Jacobson, created a bold new look for the front page and attempted to change the way the newsroom edited stories, as the prototype at right shows.

BEFORE

AFTER

Flag and promos: *A traditional Old-English flag prints in black. Above it, skyboxes use postage stamp-sized art to promote inside stories. At that size, those promos (and the ones along the bottom of the page) are easy to ignore.*

Flag and promos: *The flag has been retooled; now it's reversed out of the colors and images in those bigger, bolder promos. Note the unusual "L" shape that results in the top-left corner of the page.*

Headlines: *Two traditional, conservative families: serif Century for most headlines and decks, with sans-serif Franklin Gothic used for special accents.*

Headlines: *Poynter Gothic gives headlines a more contemporary feel, as does the Mercury Display used for section flags and accent headlines.*

Color: *Like most American newspapers, photos run in color — but all other design elements use colors minimally, with a muted, unpretentious palette.*

Color: *It's now used much more aggressively. Note the variety of bold color splashed across the page, including red headlines for extra impact.*

Story presentation: *The page is text-heavy and gray except for the lead story (which uses three photos too loosely cropped). Otherwise, most stories run at least 15 inches long and lack images. As executive editor Mike Jenner pointed out before the redesign, "Readers tell us their lifestyles are busier than ever before. We wanted to address the issues of time-starved readers."*

Story presentation: *Virtually every story element has been reworked in a more efficient, engaging way. The quints story, for instance, adds a red headline and photo, and no longer jumps off the page. The Social Security story, once 22 inches long, now uses just three sentences. Everything else, from the lead photo to the headlines, has more punch.*