

Create Pull Quotes with a Macro
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If you've ever had a conversation with someone who obviously wasn't listening, you probably felt like using a two-by-four to get that person's attention. If you've ever written a newsletter, you've no doubt had the same problem: how to get the attention of your readers. After all, if no one reads your article, what's the point of writing it?

One of the most effective tools for drawing attention is the pull quote. This article explains what pull quotes are, how to use them, and how the included PULL.WPM macro can help.

Why use pull quotes?

Most people scan an article before reading the actual copy. They first look at the title, the artwork, the captions and the pull quotes. If you haven't caught the attention of your readers with these items in the first 30 seconds or so, chances are that they'll move on to another article.

A pull quote is a phrase or sentence pulled from the text of your article. You want material that hooks your readers by grabbing their attention. The longer your readers keep their eyes on the page, the more likely they are to read the article.

When creating pull quotes, look at your article from your readers' standpoint. Ask yourself this question: "What phrases or sentences from this article will make people want to read it?" Once you've determined what the most provocative phrases or sentences are, you've found good material for pull quotes. Keep the pull quotes short. Anything longer than a couple of sentences is intimidating.

Besides interesting your readers in the content of the article, pull quotes also serve two other purposes:

Pull quotes create visual interest on the page. Nothing drives away readers like vast stretches of hard-to-navigate text. By using pull quotes as one of your desktop publishing elements, you break up the page and provide visual relief.

Pull quotes create a visual hierarchy. The biggest visual element commands the most attention. Take a look at the six examples in Figure 1 below. What do you first notice? Probably the large or unusually formatted text.

Design elements of good pull quotes

1. Be consistent. Once you've settled on a design for your article or publication and you've chosen your quotes, don't change in midstream. Use the same kind of pull quote throughout the article and even throughout the publication. This gives your work a unified look that's easier to read.
2. Increase the type size. One option is to use the same font and weight as the body type, but make it bigger (see example 1 in Figure 1). An enlarged pull quote should use at least an 18-point font to stand out sufficiently.
3. Increase the type weight. This is a variation on design element number 2. Make the pull quote bolder than the text. You want to make the pull quote noticeably different from the surrounding

text (see example 3 in Figure 1). While I'm discussing example 3, notice that when the pull quote is placed between columns it's easier to read if the text in the first column has been fully justified. Imagine how rough the left white space would be in example 3 of Figure 1 if the text in column one remained unjustified.

4. You can also draw attention to the pull quote by using small caps, coloring the text (not shown) or shading the box. Example 5 in Figure 1 demonstrates the use of small caps and using a shaded box.
5. Use a dedicated column. One way to draw attention to your page is to place the pull quote in a column of its own. This is an excellent way of breaking up the text. If you don't use a dedicated column for your pull quotes, remember that most beginners are too stingy with the white space. Give your quote some elbow room. Giving it the white space it needs adds to its importance on the page.
6. Open the line spacing. This makes the pull quote look shorter and easier to read. You should consider adding at least a half line space per line. This method works well with italic type. See examples 2, 4 and 6 in Figure 1 for different treatments of the same italicized text.
7. Use box rules. Examples 4 and 6 in Figure 1 show how parts of the box border can be used to help draw attention to text that might otherwise be too weak in appearance. In his book *Type in Use*, Alex White says, "Be careful not to overuse boxes: they tend to deaden a page and repel readers. To overcome this likelihood, avoid using ordinary boxes."
8. Don't position a pull quote too close to its appearance in the text. Readers are looking for the context of the extract. If they find it too easily, they may not read the rest of the piece. Also, always position the pull quote in the middle of a sentence. This helps the reader read past the pull quote by indicating that the text continues.

A pull-quote macro

Making pull quotes look just right takes a lot of work. The included macro PULL.WPM is designed to help speed the process of creating pull quotes. It isn't meant to create the final product. This is what the macro does for you (see Figure 3 below):

- It gives you the option of creating a pull quote that fills a single column or is centered between two columns of your choice.
- It lets you create a pull quote with text that's either black on white or white on black. This ability, of course, is printer dependent. Check your printer manual if you're not sure what your printer can do.
- It offers the use of typographically correct quotes.

The macro won't do the following:

- It won't balance your text for you. You'll have to do some tweaking of your own to get the text looking right.

- It only offers two simple styles of pull quotes. You'll probably want to use more sophisticated pull quotes in some of your publications. Until then, PULL.WPM should help you get started.

Using the macro

To use the macro, start with your document on-screen. The macro creates a box anchored to the page, so place your cursor in position before running the macro. For example, if your cursor is in column three, halfway down your page, WordPerfect can't place your pull quote in column one, two inches from the top of the page.

To create the pull quote in example 3 of Figure 1, position the cursor in column one, about two inches from the top of the page. Press Macro (Alt-F10), type "pull" and press (Enter).

Type the column or columns for the pull quote, for example, 1-2 and press (Enter). At the next prompt, decide if you want your text reversed (white on black). The default is normal text. You can press (Enter) to accept the default. Next choose whether you need quotes. Unless you're using a direct quote, you don't need them.

The macro finishes by leaving you in the Graphics Editor screen. If you chose to add quotes, your cursor is under the second of two small boxes. These are the open and close quotes. The justification is set to center and the font is an 18-point CG Times. Type your text, then press Exit (F7) twice to return to the document screen. Make adjustments to the pull quote as needed.

If you choose the white text on black background option, you may need to reset the User Box Option code after each pull quote. This is required only if you have other user boxes in the document that are not using white on black text.

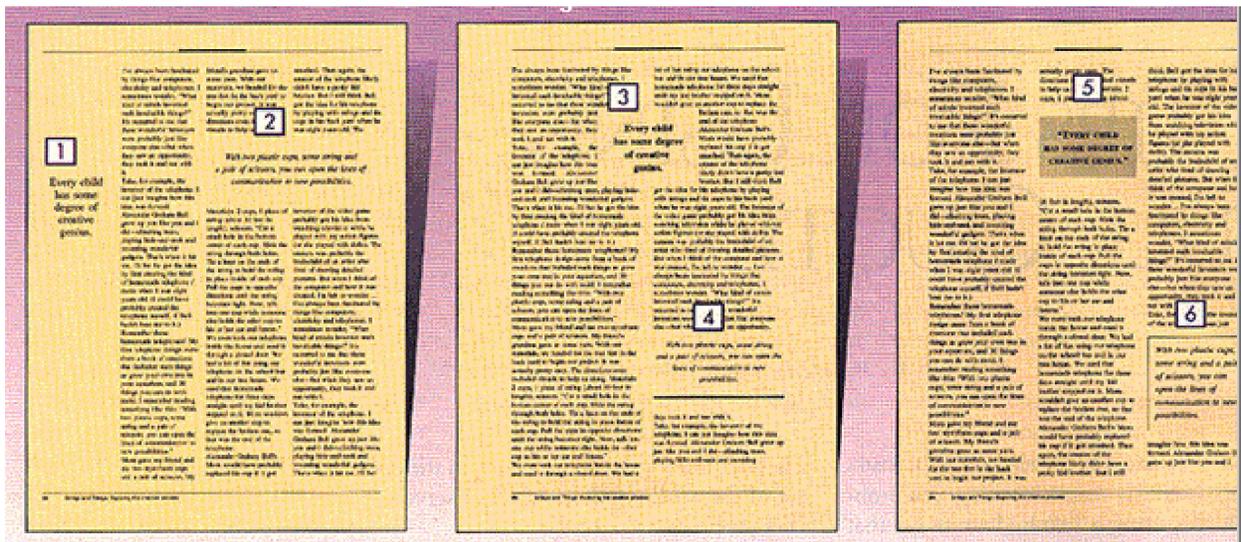


Figure 1

