

The Two Different Kinds of Publication Mastheads

Mastheads and nameplates serve complimentary purposes

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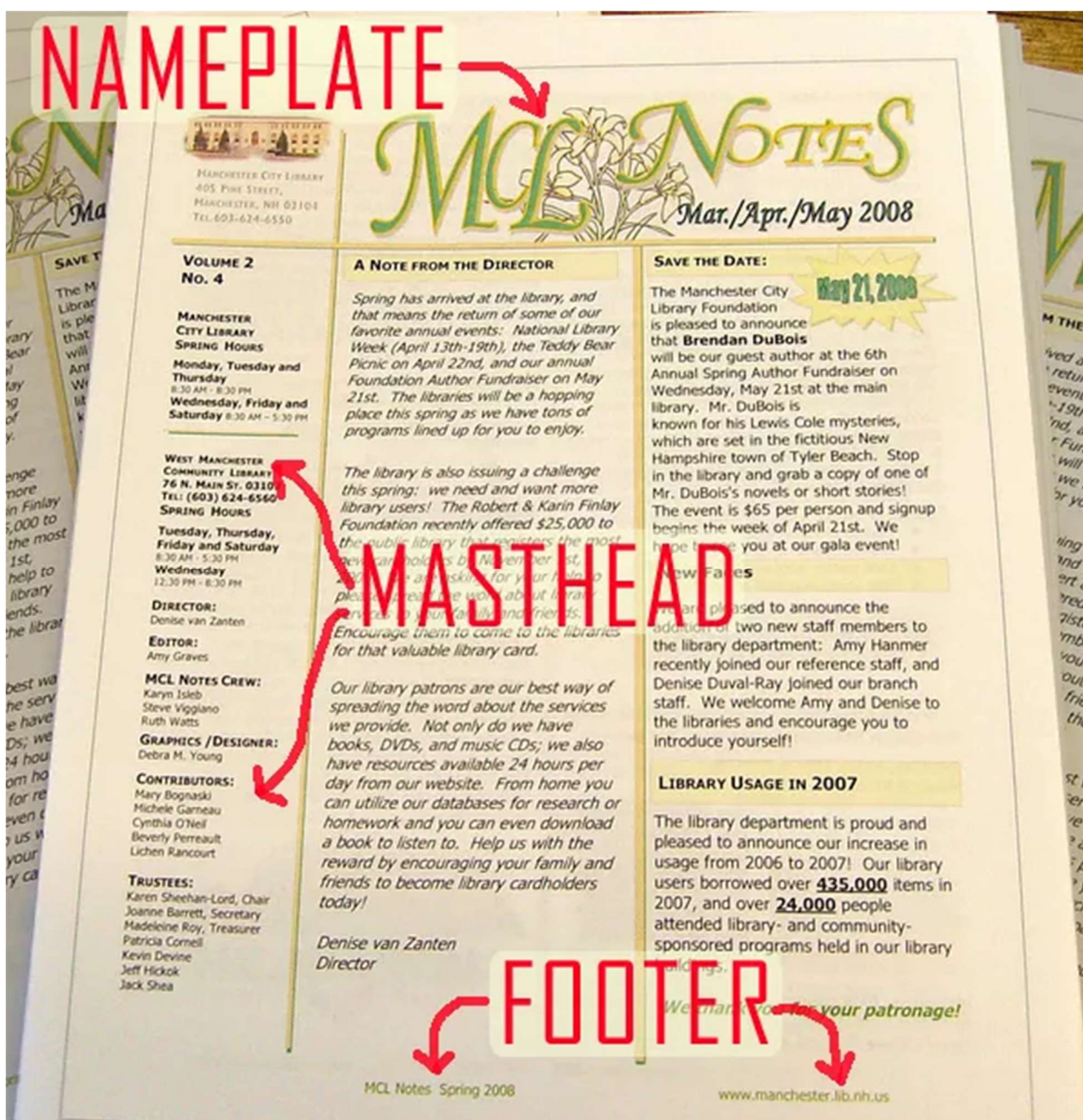


In a magazine or a newspaper, you may see the *masthead* (also called a *nameplate*) on the cover or front page, but in a newsletter, it may be on the inside, often with slightly different elements.

1. **Masthead 1:** A section of a newsletter, typically found on the second page (but could be on any page) that lists the name of the publisher, contact information, subscription rates, and other pertinent data.
2. **Masthead 2:** An alternate name for the nameplate of a magazine or newspaper.

While masthead and nameplate may be used interchangeably in the newspaper business, they are two separate elements for newsletter publishers. Know your industry to know which term to use. Then again, if you know what each one contains and where it is placed, it won't matter what other people call it, as long as you know whether you're creating the fancy title on the front of a publication or the publication's identification panel on some other page.

Components of a Masthead



Both nameplate and masthead are on page 1 of this newsletter. MCLNotes from Manchester Library CC BY-SA 2.0 license

Consider the masthead a standing element in your publication. Except for changes to the names of contributors to each issue and the date-and-volume number, most information remains the same from issue to issue. Place the masthead anywhere you want in your publication, but it is typically found on the second page or last page of a newsletter or somewhere in the first several pages of a magazine. Be consistent in placement. Because it's not an article, a smaller font is common. The masthead may be framed or set inside a tinted box. The masthead may contain some or (rarely) all of these elements:

- The publication **logo** or perhaps a smaller version of the newsletter nameplate.
- Name of the publisher, editors, contributors, designers, and other staff responsible for creating the newsletter. Some mastheads present these in some detail – especially arts and often special interest publications; other publications, usually ones with large staffs, can be terse, sometimes limiting the info to publisher and editor only.
- Address, phone number, and other contact information for the publication.
- Date and volume number (may also be found as part of the nameplate).
- Subscription information, if applicable, or other details on how to obtain copies of the newsletter or how to get off the mailing list.
- Ad rates (if advertising is accepted) or contact information for the ad department.
- Information on how to submit material for the newsletter (if outside contributions are accepted).
- Colophon-like details such as the fonts and software used in the publication.
- Copyright and legal notices as may be required by your local government or jurisdiction (such as postal regulations for some types of publications).

If the newsletter editor is one person and the publication doesn't seek advertisers, contributors, or paid subscriptions (such as promotional or marketing newsletters for a small business) you can skip the masthead altogether. There's nothing wrong with having a masthead anyway, but for informal publications like blogs it can come off being a little old-fashioned unless the contents are presented informally and briefly.