

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

ARMY AL&T MAGAZINE WRITERS WORKSHOP

27 March 2014



OUR MISSION

To serve the Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology community by educating, informing, motivating and instructing the AL&T Workforce, in support of the ASA(ALT) and principal military deputy and with guidance and direction from the Army AL&T Editorial Advisory Board.

ARMY AL&T MAGAZINE STAFF

Nelson McCouch III: Editor-in-chief; more than 25 years in communications, public relations, corporate communications. M.A. in Communications, Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College and a Bachelor of Journalism (Broadcast) from the University of Missouri (Columbia).

Margaret (Peggy) Roth: Senior editor; B.A. in Russian language and linguistics from the University of Virginia; more than a decade of writing about the Army in particular and more than two decades' experience in journalism and public relations. Published nonfiction author and MG Keith L. Ware Award recipient.

Robert Coultas: Departments editor; a retired Army broadcaster with nearly 40 years of combined experience in public affairs, journalism, broadcasting and advertising. MG Keith L. Ware and DOD Thomas Jefferson Award recipient.

Catherine DeRan: Creative director; more than 15 years in strategic communications. M.A. in publication design from the University of Baltimore and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in photography from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

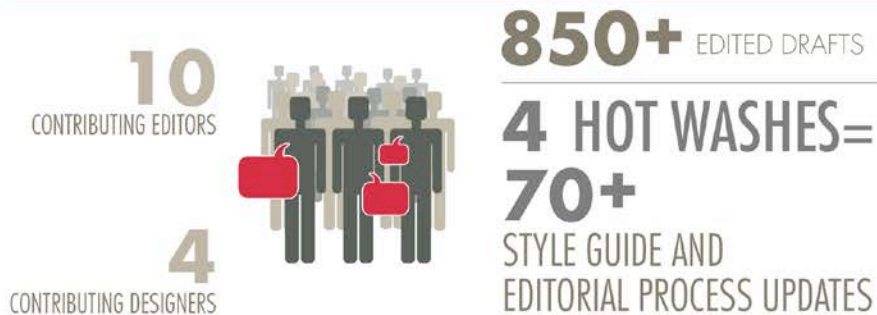
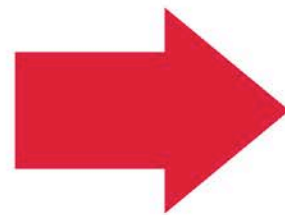
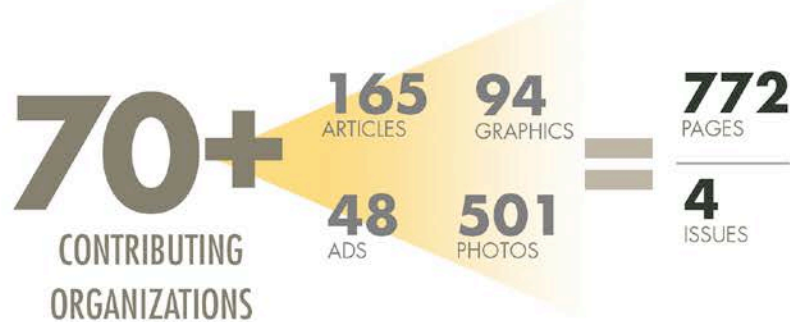
Uri Bombasi: Layout and graphic design; 10 years in graphic information and design; B.A. in art and visual technology from George Mason University.

Steve Stark: Editor; M.A. in creative writing from Hollins University and a B.A. in English from George Mason University, with more than a decade of experience writing about the military, technology and the Army, and more than 20 years as writer, ghostwriter, novelist, critic and editor.

DESIGN • DEVELOP • DELIVER • DOMINATE

ARMY AL&T HIGHLIGHTS 2013

5,548 PRINT COPIES / 27,784 WEB VISITS / 638,490 PAGE VIEWS



2,909 SUBSCRIBERS

5,548 COPIES



638,490 PAGE VIEWS

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4

WEBSITES/OUTLETS



1,170 USAASC FANS



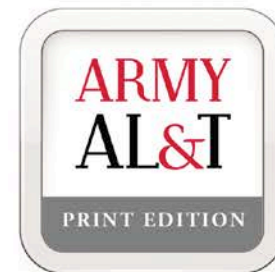
498 USAASC FOLLOWERS



796 PHOTOS



8+% MOBILE WEB VISITS



478 APP DOWNLOADS

3 PLATFORMS

Unclassified/For Public Release

WORKSHOP GOALS/AGENDA

Army AL&T magazine processes.

General guidelines for Army AL&T magazine articles.

Writing tips: how to make your articles better.

Guest Speaker: Claire Heininger.

Photos and Graphics

- Submitting more photos.
- Simplify graphics.

Updated e-magazine.

Upcoming Themes.

ALTies.





Story ideas



Send outline/
intro paragraph



Send final draft
OPSEC approved and
functional lead approved

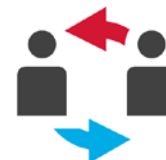
Editors
review



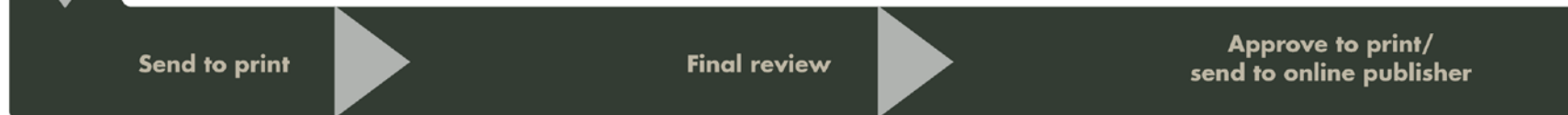
Review
proofs



Finalize edit send to layout



Send Questions back to sender



GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ARMY AL&T ARTICLES

Basic parameters:

- 1,600 words, give or take maybe 50, not including captions or bios.
- 3-4 photos and/or graphics.
- Command and OPSEC approval and functional lead approval.

See Writers Guidelines and Army AL&T Overview at **asc.army.mil/publications**.

Each issue of Army AL&T magazine has a topical theme. The editorial calendar is based on guidance from the Army AL&T Editorial Advisory Board of senior AL&T leaders.

Themes support ASA(ALT)'s key messages and the Army themes.

We accept articles on both theme and non-theme topics. Theme articles get better play.

No "quick-and-dirty" news stories; the "inverted pyramid" doesn't apply as a structural guide in organizing the article. Our Access AL&T online news service is often the best venue for these kinds of articles.

WRITING TIPS

How to make your articles better

WRITING

Tell a story.

The best stories have some element of cross-domain relevance.

Start with the big idea to hook the reader.

Focus on program challenges, lessons learned and results.

Use concrete details and avoid abstractions.

Quotes add credibility to the "argument" you are making.

Include "for more information" contact info at the end (POC(s) and/or website(s)).

HOW TO AVOID BAD WRITING

Your article is not an English paper.

- Don't save your best stuff until the last paragraph.

Avoid long sentences with a lot of unit or organizational details and initials.

Don't be boring—passive voice and abstractions are boring.

- Passive voice: "The decision was made to roll the two directorates into one."
 - Who made the decision? Why?
- Abstractions: "Rigorous analysis is a hallmark of the program."
 - Show, don't tell. What is the focus of the analysis? What improvements have resulted from it?

EXAMPLES ON HOW TO IMPROVE WRITING

Make every detail count.

- "A vehicle was parked next to a structure" tells you very little useful information.
 - Compare that to: "A beat-up yellow 1972 Gremlin stopped in front of the shabby storefront."
- "The contractor provided engineering solutions to PEO Widgets"
 - What were the "engineering solutions"?
 - "The contractor developed an innovative way to help boost radio frequency transmission signals in RF-hostile environments, and built a solution that PEO Widgets employed immediately."

FACT CHECKING

We are going to ask you to document facts—make it easier by doing it before we ask.

- If you say a “program began years ago,” we're going to ask in what month and year, specifically.
- If you claim a program “saved \$4 million,” we're going to ask you to substantiate that.
- Please provide specifics at all times.

5 QUESTIONS TO A BETTER ARTICLE

1. Does it describe a problem solved or challenge met, in a way that could help other program managers solve other problems or meet other challenges?
2. Is the article a “good read”? Does it tell a clear and compelling story with authority?
3. Does the article provide information not available in other publications, or from your own STRATCOM media?
4. Does it go “behind” a program or process to offer a detailed, analytic perspective that another program, project or product manager would appreciate?
5. Have you written it in plain English that could easily be understood by a neighbor or Hill staffer who knows nothing of your discipline? Have you avoided or eliminated jargon and buzzwords? ("Game-changer," "leveraging synergies" and so forth.) Jargon has its place, but that's usually in the lab or in the academy.

LET US KNOW

We hear anecdotally that an article helped a reader develop a solution from the solution illustrated in the article.

If you hear about this sort of thing, let us know ASAP- we'd love to tell the story of how one of your stories made a crucial difference to the workforce.

PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS

PHOTOS

Send more photos.

- You are the best judge of what photos supports your story.
- We need help showing the Army AL&T community at work. There are more than 40,000 workforce members; let's highlight as many as possible doing the good work they are accomplishing.

Faces of the Force.

- We'd like to highlight at least one photo per issue of a workforce member at work.

Plan ahead.

- Make sending photos along with your article part of your planning process.



SEND PHOTOS FROM ARMY WEB RESOURCES -

YOU KNOW WHAT ILLUSTRATES YOUR STORY THE BEST



TOTAL LOGISTICS INTEGRATION

The Logistics Modernization Program (LMP) is a fully integrated system of supply chain management

UNIQUE SITUATIONS NOT NORMALLY COVERED IN OTHER ARMY RESOURCES



GRAPHICS AND ADS

Keep your message as simple as possible.

- Ads and graphics should help communicate your message, not add confusion.

We're here to help.

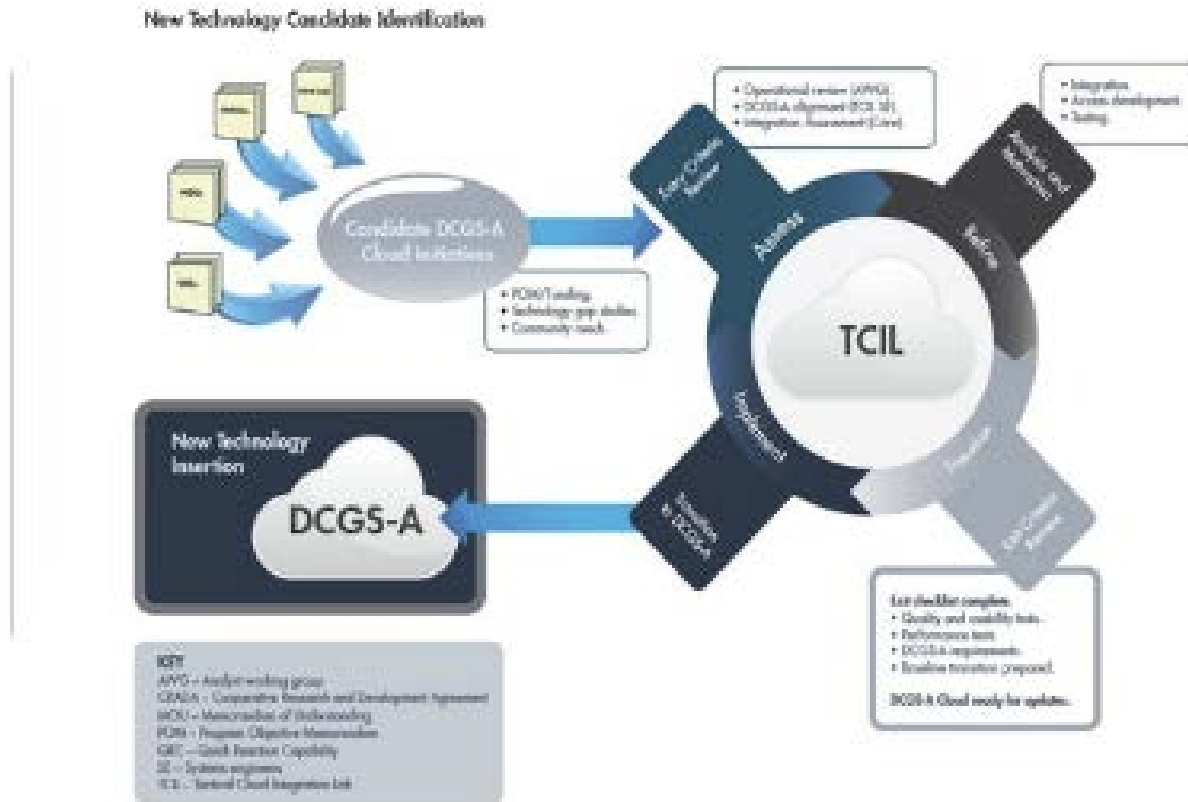


KEEP TEXT TO A MINIMUM



GRAPHICS CAN HELP ILLUSTRATE A COMPLICATED PROCESS

FIGURE 1



UPDATED E-MAGAZINE

UPDATED ONLINE PRESENCE

Converts PDFs from print edition to online format with more interactive features.

Able to add "Click to see more" buttons that can show additional information including videos, animation and photo galleries.

Publisher's platform is an HTML5 base.

- HTML5 is structured in such a way that allows for different elements of the website to be responsive to view ports/screen sizes. The content adjusts to the specific view port on which the user is viewing.

Each page has its own link, making it really easy to share.

Update your bookmark to: <http://usaasc.armyalt.com/>.



UPCOMING THEMES

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July-September 2014: Training and Force Readiness.

- Articles due May 1.

October-December 2014: TBD (We're planning for an EAB meeting in April).

- Articles due August 1.

Editorial calendar is online at
<http://asc.army.mil/web/publications/>.