



ACN
Agricultural
Communicators
Network

Communications Awards

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2026 Call for Entries

<https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/acnawardscontest2026>



Entry Deadline for All Divisions - April 30

Use this 2026 Call for Entries as a guide to category names and numbers, plus general instructions. When the awards contest opens, detailed instructions for logging into the Awards Platform and for preparing and submitting entries will be emailed to members, posted on the award program home page and available under Awards at www.agcommnetwork.com. Consult this document for overall rules.

Eligibility

The Ag Communicators Network Communications Awards are open to all CURRENT members. **You must be a paid member by the award entry deadline of April 30.** Graced members will be required to renew their membership for 2026. Entries will be disqualified if member dues are not paid within 45 days of April 30, 2026. For more information about your membership status contact Kristin Harner at kristin@agcommnetwork.com or 507-649-0377.

Publication Dates

All Agricultural Communicators Network Communications Awards entries must have been published between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026.

Entry Fees and Payment

Writing: \$30 per entry
Photography: \$15 per entry
Design: \$25 per entry
MarComm: \$35 per entry
Digital & Social Media: \$30 per entry

Early Bird Deadline - April 15

20% Fee Increase - Between April 16 - April 30

Contest Closes - Entries in all divisions must be entered by *Midnight PST on April 30.*

Contest closes on April 30 at Midnight PST.

Join Today!

You must be a member by the award entry deadline.

Membership.

- New Member Dues: \$210 First Year
- Editorial, Associate or Partner: \$260
- Freelancer: \$175
- Retired: \$135
- Students: \$75

Pay online at www.agcommnetwork.com, over the phone at 952-855-8701, or mail membership form and check to:

ACN
126 West Main Street
New Prague, MN 56071

For more information contact Kristin Harner at kristin@agcommnetwork.com.

Payment

The contest platform collects payment at the time of submission. Once you have submitted your entries, you will be taken to a payment page. Follow the directions to pay for your entries via credit card. You can check the payment status of your entries by checking the "My Submissions" tab on your profile.

If you would like an invoice or prefer to pay via check, contact Kristy Mach at kristy@agcommnetwork.com.

Entry fees for the ACN Communications Awards Program are non-refundable, even if entries are not accepted for judging.

Log-In Information

When logging into the Reviewr platform you will need to create a profile with your email address.

Join us at Ag Media Summit!

The ACN Communications Awards will be presented during the Ag Media Summit in St. Louis, Missouri.





2026 Ag Communicators Network Writing Awards Division

The Writing Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:



Judging for all writing categories will be based on overall writing quality, clarity and the author's proficiency in the category. The writing judges are instructed to NOT consider layout and design in overall scoring criteria.

Writing Entry Basics

- Entries in the writing contest should not include articles written by artificial intelligence (AI) writing tools, such as ChatGPT. While AI tools can be used for the writing process to outline notes, brainstorm titles, etc., AI-generated copy is not allowed.
- To begin the entry process, go to:
<https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/acnawardscontest2026>
- A writer is limited to:
 - Two entries in each category for Categories W01 through W11.
 - Three entries for Category W12, Emerging Writer.
 - No limit of entries for Category W13, Team Story and Category W14: Series or Special Issue.
 - **Note:** We have not set entry limits in the platform. We understand in some cases, a contestant manager will be entering for multiple editors at a publication. We will check to be sure no member has entered more than two entries in Category W01-W11; and no more than three in Category W12.
- **Entries in all categories must have been published in print or online between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026.** Entries with more than one author must be entered as a **Team Story in Cat. 13** or a **Series or Special Issue in Cat. 14**. **All authors of a team story must be ACN members at the time of entry.** You will see a section called "credits" on the entry page where the name and affiliation of each team story author should be added in the boxes.
 - **Note:** Team Story entries will not be considered as a part of a writer's portfolio for the Writer of the Year, but the first-place Team Story is eligible for Story of the Year.

- A series may be entered as a single entry in any category except **Cat. W03, Editorial Opinion**, and **Cat. W09, Regular Column**. No special consideration is given to a series as compared to a single-story entry in a category.

Preparing Your Entry

- All Writing Division entries will be judged online by two judges per category who will view the entries on the online award platform only. No physical entries will be mailed in.

Also, the files you provide should be a web link or a PDF of the article as it appeared in the magazine, with all information -- including byline and publication name -- left intact and visible. If you retrieve the article as a Word doc from your system, convert the file to a PDF before uploading so the judge can view it easily. You will be able to upload multiple documents per entry, such as when entering a series of stories as one entry.

- Be sure the words in the article can be read clearly.
- **IMPORTANT:** An objective, target audience and circulation of the publication or website is required on the online entry form. Fill out each required field in the entry form. You will not be able to submit your application if you have not filled out the required fields.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Writing Awards Division

The Writing Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:



Writer of the Year/Story of the Year

In order to be considered for the **Writer of the Year**, you must enter in **Category W15: Writer of the Year**.

Your three-story portfolio must consist of three stories you believe are your strongest work from any category, except from Cat. W 13, Team Story.

Name your WOY entry as "Your Name Writer of the Year." Your portfolio becomes eligible for consideration for WOY if you place first, second, or third in any Writing Category besides Team Story or a Series or Special Issue with multiple authors.

The judges will rely solely on this portfolio to determine WOY. No story substitutions will be made.

We will contact you for clarification if your entry has more than three or fewer than three stories. You will have to pay an additional entry fee for Writer of the Year.

The judges will select the **2026 ACN Story of the Year** from among the 13 first-place category winners. This includes Team Story but excludes the Series and Special Issue category.

ACN Master Writer Program

Each year, those who enter the Writing Awards Program build points toward becoming Master Writers. The program allows a writer to gauge personal professional development by means other than category wins.

One "judge's merit" is awarded to any writer placing first, second or third in a category, or when one or both category judges mark(s) a non-placing entry as deserving of merit recognition.

Contact Kristin Harner at kristin@agcommnetwork.com for more information about your Master Writer Program level or about what categories you need to move up a level.

Master Writer Levels

Level 1: One judge's merit.

Level 2: Two judge's merits in two different categories **OR** win first place in a category.

Level 3: Three judge's merits in three different categories **OR** win first place in a category and earn a judge's merit in another category.

Level 4: Four judge's merits in four different categories **OR** win first place in a category and earn two judge's merits in two other categories **OR** earn the ACN Writer of the Year Award.

Level 5 Master Writer: Five judge's merits in five different categories **OR** win a place in three categories **OR** receive Writer of the Year Award and three judge's merits in three different categories.

Level 6 Writer of Merit: Receive judge's merits in 10 of the 14 categories.

View the 2025 Writer Winners!





2026 Ag Communicators Network Writing Awards Division

The Writing Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:



Writing Categories

Cat. W01: Breaking News

This category is for first-day, breaking news published in any medium. Entries will be judged on news value, the immediacy of the story and the writer's ability to write well under tight deadlines.

Cat. W02: Economics and Management

The economics and management article focuses on the financial, marketing and economic aspects of agriculture.

Cat. W03: Editorial Opinion

The editorial confronts an issue by clearly explaining it, building arguments on fact and logic and stating a clear position. The editorial convinces the reader of the need for specific action. Enter only one example per entry. If you are submitting two entries for this category, it should be for two separate columns.

Cat. W04: Human Interest

The human-interest article addresses the human experiences found in rural areas. Entries may delve into any cultural, social or emotional aspect of farm or agribusiness life.

Cat. W05: Humorous Article

The humorous article looks at the lighter side of farm life or agriculture -- to enlighten or entertain.

Cat. W06: Issues

The issues article is the "big picture" feature/news story that looks at pressing agricultural topics. It gives an objective view and airs all sides of the issues with the purpose of providing enough information so the reader can draw conclusions.

Cat. W07: On-Farm Production Article

The on-farm production article informs, educates and illustrates agricultural production techniques. The story details the "how-to" of the farm practice, potential benefits and limitations. The article should help the reader decide if the practice would benefit their own farm.

Cat. W08: Personality Profile

The personality profile is an in-depth look at one individual and their contributions to local, regional or national agriculture.

Cat. W09: Regular Column

The regular column can be found routinely in the publication (print or electronic) and is clearly identified as a standing column. Unlike the editorial category, the regular columnist is free to use personal observations and feelings in the narrative. The strength of the regular column lies in the fresh, unique perspective of the writer. Enter only one example per entry. If you are submitting two entries for this category, it should be for two separate columns.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Writing Awards Division

The Writing Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:



Cat. W10: Technical Feature The technical feature examines the specialized aspects of agriculture. Typical subjects include cutting-edge machinery technology, and technical solutions encountered in the production, transportation and processing of (bio)fuel, food and fiber.

Cat. W11: Farm Feature

The farm feature highlights the people and production practices that make each farm unique. The story should provide an in-depth look at the practical aspects of farm production, including highlighting innovative practices, products, methods, or businesses that set the farm apart.

Cat. W12: Emerging Writer

This category is open to members who have yet to place 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the ACN Writing Awards. Entrants are limited to up to three entries in this category. Entries entered in this category may also be entered in another category.

Cat. W13: Team Story

The team story is any single story with more than one author. Only one entry and one entry fee need to be submitted for a team story, with one author's name as the main entrant on the entry form. All of the authors should then be listed on the entry where indicated, and all need to be ACN members or must join at the time of entering the awards program in order for the entry to be accepted. No limit to the number of entries in this category.

Cat. W14: Series or Special Issue

The series or special issue should include multiple articles on the same topic written by one author or more than one author. Only one entry and one entry fee are required for a series or special issue, with one author's name as the main entrant on the entry form. The rest of the criteria is the same as the team story.

Cat. W15: Writer of the Year Your three-story portfolio must consist of three stories you believe are your strongest work from any category, except from Cat. W13, Team Story. Your portfolio becomes eligible for consideration for WOY if you place first, second, or third in any Writing Category you have entered. The judges will rely solely on this portfolio to determine WOY. No story substitutions will be made. We will contact you for clarification if your entry has more than three or fewer than three stories.

Deadline: April 30, for entries and payment.*

*If a corporate check will arrive after the deadline date, email Kristin Harner at kristin@agcommnetwork.com.

Writing Checklist

- Is your ACN membership current?
- Was your entry published in print or online between April 16, 2025 and April 15, 2026?
- Have you submitted a maximum of two entries in each category (except for Team Story, which has no limit)?
- Have you listed the name and affiliation in the credits section?
- In the event of a winning entry, this is the information that will be on the plaque and powerpoint.
- Do you wish to be considered for Writer of the Year? If so, enter your three-part portfolio in Cat. W15:Writer of the Year.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Photography Awards Division

Photography Entry Basics

Enter images published as editorial material between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026, in a farm publication or website employing ACN active members or in a company - or association - sponsored farm publication. Only stock images taken for editorial purposes by a current ACN member who was a member at the time the stock photos were shot are eligible. No other stock images or PR photos were originally taken for client work may be entered.

ALL ENTRIES, except those entered in Cat. P9, must be published within these publication dates.

All entries must be submitted in digital format through the online awards platform. As part of each entry, you must submit a PDF (or JPEG) of the "tear sheet" for printed media, or a website URL, to serve as "Proof of Publication."

Name the file with the Cat. no., entry title and the words "Proof of Pub." For example; if a photo entry in Cat. P1 is titled "Wheat," the file name of the article or web page PDF (or JPEG) should be "**P1-Wheat-Proof of Pub.**"

The judges will only judge the image itself. For Cat. P8 and P12, use the comment section to describe the concept and the methods used to create the illustration.

The same image cannot be entered in two different categories, unless it is an image published as part of a picture story (Cat. P5), or is part of a POY portfolio (Cat. P6).

A published image entered in Cat. P5 can be entered in one other category. Categories P1-P3, P7-P12: Submit one digital image for each entry.

See the category descriptions on the following pages for other category-specific directions, including for multi-image entries.

Enter the name of the photographer and publication or organization in the **Credits** section of the entry form.

No HDR (High Dynamic Range) photos may be entered in any category except P12.

The ACN Photo of the Year Award will be chosen from the winners of categories P1, P2, P3, P4A, P4B, P5, P7, P8 and P10 at the judges' discretion.

A photographer may submit more than one entry for categories P1-P5 and categories P8 and P10.

Exception for multiple image entries: In Nuts and Bolts categories P4A and P4B, a photographer can enter a group of photos as a single entry.

How to Enter

To begin the entry process, go to:
<https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/acnawardscontest2026>

File type for photo entries: JPEG or PNG through the online system. No mailed-in entries will be accepted.

Deadline: April 30, for entries and payment.*

*If a corporate check will arrive after the deadline, email Kristin Harner, kristin@agcommnetwork.com.

Photoshop/Enhancement Guidelines

Acceptable manipulations for all categories (except P12) includes:

- Darkening highlights and opening shadow areas
- Color correction to make photos appear more realistic
- Removing dust and scratches
- Sharpening in moderation

Unacceptable manipulation includes:

- Removing or adding elements
- Changing elements in relation to one another
- Digitally applied photo filters
- HDR (High Dynamic Range) imaging



2026 Ag Communicators Network Photography Awards Division

Photography Categories

Cat. P1: Portrait/Personality

Photographs entered in this category should be of a person and reveal the essence of that subject's character.

Cat. P2: Pictorial

Photographs in this category should be graphic images in which beauty, composition, tonal qualities and color (if applicable) are more important than subject matter.

Cat. P3: Feature

Photographs entered in this category are usually "found" situations with strong human interest and a fresh view of the commonplace.

Cat. P4A and P4B: Nuts and Bolts

Photographs entered in this category should enhance the editorial message of the technical copy. Photos should be of a practical or illustrative nature but will also be judged on creativity. Entries in this category may be a single photo or multiple photos from the same story. Upload such multiple photos into ONE Cat. P4A or P4B entry. Cat. P4A, Nuts and Bolts - Livestock, will include livestock or livestock equipment. Cat. P4B, Nuts and Bolts - Crops, will include crops or cropping equipment.

Cat. P5: Picture Story, Photo Sequence or Photo Essay

Photographs in this category should work together to create a cohesive story or point of view. Submit one digital file for each image. Include one tear sheet layout labeled with category and name, followed by a one-or two-word description followed by "tearsheet." **Example: P5-Smith-feeding tearsheet.JPG.** If additional photos were not published because of space limitations, you may include them in the entry. Those photos that were added, but not published, cannot be entered into any other category.

Cat. P6: ACN Photographer of the Year

Evaluation of portfolios will be on the basis of subject matter, originality, technical excellence, and versatility. The portfolio must consist of no more than 20 images. However, Cat. 5 photo stories each count only as "one" of those 20 images. Unpublished photos (Cat. P9) entries are not allowed in Cat. P6 Photographer of the Year entry. Upload one digital file of each image into our Cat. P6 Photographer of the Year entry, keeping the file name each image had in its original category. (Remember to edit carefully and only showcase your best images in your portfolio.) Only one Cat. P6 entry per photographer.

Cat. P7: Emerging Photographer

Open to members who have yet to win 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place in the ACN Photography Awards. Subject matter is unlimited. Entrants are limited to up to three entries in this category that have not been entered in another category; one photo per entry.

Cat. P8: Photo Illustration

For Cat. P8, a photo illustration is defined as a photograph created to illustrate a concept or issue being discussed in a story. The image can be created either in a studio setting or in a natural environment. Example: illustrate a story on corn being used in pharmaceuticals with a photo of corn kernels spilling out of a prescription bottle. Photos entered in this category will be staged concept photos that illustrate an idea, issue or other concepts in an article or on a cover. The entries will be judged primarily on how clearly the illustration conveys the editorial concept. Describe the concept and the methods used to create the objectives section on the entry form. Submit a "Proof of Publication" of the whole page featuring the photo illustration.

Cat. P9: Unpublished Photos

Ag-related images entered in this category should be images taken for editorial assignment or stock purposes between April 16, 2025 and April 15, 2026; but not published as editorial material. These images will not be eligible for Photographer of the Year or Photo of the Year. Entrant limited to up to three separate entries in this category that have not been entered into another category; one photo per entry.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Photography Awards Division

Cat. P10: Advertorial Photos

Ag-related images must clearly tell the story of the advertising and editorial content associated. The subject matter is unlimited. Provide the original photo and the advertising.

Cat. P11: Rotating Theme - "When the Sun Goes Down"

The rotating theme captures photos taken after the sun has set.

Capture the last rays of a sun set, a cowboy silhouetted against a dimming sky or a harvest that goes on into the night under the stars. The only rule is the entirety of the sun itself needs to be beyond the horizon, or, for the early bird, not yet started to come above it. Nail a great photo "when the sun goes down" and you'll be "feelin' alright!"

Cat. P12: Digitally Enhanced Photos

In this category, entrants are allowed to let their post-production editing prowess shine. This category is designed for photos that have been significantly manipulated, altered or composited, including HDR photography. The usual enhancement rules (see above) don't apply for Cat. 12. Winning entries will be selected based on the best use of photo editing tools such as Photoshop and HDR to enhance the original image.

View the 2025 Photography Winners!



Master Photographer Program

The awards you earn in the photo awards program determine your level in the Master Photographer Program

Level 1: Earned by entering the photo awards program.

Level 2: Place 2nd, 3rd, or honorable mention in the one category.

Level 3: 1st place in one class or place 2nd, 3rd, or honorable mention in two different categories, or win Photographer of the Year.

Level 4: 1st place in two different categories, or place in three different categories.

Level 5: Photographer of the Year and place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in two different categories or honorable mention Photographer of the Year and place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in three different categories, or place 1st in three different categories.

Master Photographer: Photographer of the Year and place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in three different categories, or honorable mention Photographer of the Year and place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in four different categories, or place 1st in four different categories.

Contact Kristin Harner at kristin@agcommnetwork.com for more information about the Master Photographer Program, your current level, or what you need to achieve in order to move to the next level.

Photography Checklist

- Is your ACN membership current?
- Was your entry published in print or online between April 16, 2025 and April 15, 2026?
- Have you included the required PDF, JPG, PNG, or website URL for Proof of Publication?
- Have you listed the name and publication (organization) of the photographer in the credits section?
- In the event of a winning entry, this is the information that will be on the plaque and powerpoint.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Design Awards Division

Design Entries will be judged on creativity, concept and clarity of design, with the main emphasis on its effectiveness in communicating editorial messages, not "art for art's sake."

Most categories are split into Commercial and Custom publications, defined as follows:

Commercial: A publication that contains paid advertisements or charges subscribers to receive the publication.

Custom: A publication without paid advertising, such as publications from companies, associations and cooperatives targeted to their customers and/or members.

Design Entry Basics

You may enter as many entries as you wish in categories D01 through D17.

The person or persons who designed the work (not a publisher or editor or a different designer) must be credited in the credit fields, or the entry will be disqualified.

IMPORTANT: An objective, target audience and specific challenges or requirements for the design is required within the online entry platform. Fill out each required field in the entry form. You will not be able to submit your application if you have not filled out the required fields.

See category descriptions for other specific information to put in the Comments, which are visible to the judges.

How to Enter

To log in and begin the entry process, go to:
<https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/acnawardscontest2026>

Select either Commercial, Custom or Both for a list of categories.

Cat. D09 — Special Editorial Section Design. Individual pages within the special section may also be submitted in other categories, including single-page design, use of typography, or use of chart and graph material.

For Opening Page or Spread, Commercial (Cat. D05) and Custom (Cat. D06), submit ONLY the opening page or spread, not the entire article. A story that is composed of only one page would not be eligible for this category. Entrants need to choose between either "Opening Page or Spread" (Cat. D05 or D06) or "Two-Plus Page Design" (Cat. D07 or Cat. D08) when entering multiple-page layouts. Any entry submitted in both categories would be disqualified.

For all design entries requesting a PDF, please provide high-resolution, print-ready PDFs, to aid the judges in accessing entry content.

Any material submitted as URLs must remain available online through August of the entry year.

What to Send

Upload a high-quality, print-ready PDF or provide a web link to the entry.

For more information, contact Kristin Harner,
kristin@agcommnetwork.com.

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2026 Ag Communicators Network Design Awards Division

Design Categories

Cat. D01: Cover Page Design – Commercial

Submit PDF of cover design.

Cat. D02: Cover Page Design – Custom

Submit PDF of cover design.

Cat. D03: Single-Page Editorial Design – Commercial

Submit PDF of single-page design.

Cat. D04: Single-Page Editorial Design – Custom

Submit PDF of single-page design.

Cat. D05: Opening Page or Spread Design – Commercial

Submit PDF of only the opening page or spread, not the entire article. Spreads must be output as PDF spreads (click “save as spreads”). Please test before submitting.

Cat. D06: Opening Page or Spread Design – Custom

Submit PDF of only the opening page or spread, not the entire article. Spreads must be output as PDF spreads (click “save as spreads”). Please test before submitting.

Cat. D07: Two-Plus Page Design – Commercial

Submit multiple-page PDF. Spreads must be output as PDF spreads (click “save as spreads”). Please test before submitting.

Cat. D08: Two-Plus Page Design – Custom

Submit multiple-page PDF. Spreads must be output as PDF spreads (click “save as spreads”). Please test before submitting.

Cat. D09: Special Editorial Section Design – Commercial/Custom.

Submit a PDF example of an editorial-controlled, single-subject section, clearly designated as a special section and distinguishable from other features in the issue. No advertorials or “special advertising sections.”

Cat. D10: Overall Magazine Design – Commercial

Submit a PDF or weblink of the entry.

Cat. D11: Overall Magazine Design – Custom

Submit a PDF or weblink of the entry.

Cat. D12: Overall Magazine Design – Special Issues - Commercial/Custom.

Submit a PDF or weblink of the entry.

Cat. D13: Special Publication Design – Annual Reports, etc. – Commercial/Custom.

Submit a PDF or web link of the entry.

Cat. D14: Web Design – Electronic Newsletter/Magazine – Commercial/Custom

List URL where indicated on entry form for the site to be judged “live” online. In Objectives PDF and in Comments section online, provide any log-in information judges need to gain access.

Cat. D15: Best Use of Typography - Commercial/Custom

Each entry is one specific situation of type use: a headline, a graphic element, a story start or an entire story layout if it reflects a typographical theme. Do not enter an entire publication issue or multiple and/or unrelated uses of type as a single entry in this category. Submit a PDF.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Design Awards Division

Cat. D16: Best Use of Chart and Graph Material – Commercial/Custom

Each entry is one specific situation within or accompanying a story that uses a chart or graph to communicate information. Enter a PDF of the chart within the accompanying story (for context).

Cat. D17: Best Use of Photography in a Print Periodical - Commercial/Custom

Submit a PDF of three consecutive print issues as one entry per print periodical title. Evaluation will be on the ability of the photographs to effectively communicate editorial messages.

Cat. D18: Designer of the Year Portfolio

Four entries from Cat. D01-D17 above, designed and executed solely by the entrant. See page 10 of this PDF for detailed instructions for how to enter this category: ACN Designer of the Year.

Deadline: April 30 for entries and payment.*

*If a corporate check will arrive after the deadline, email Kristin Harner, kristin@agcommnetwork.com.

Design Checklist

- Is your ACN membership current?
- Was your entry published in print or online between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026?
- Have you listed the name and affiliation of the designer in the credits section?
- In the event of a winning entry, this is the information that will be included on the plaque and powerpoint.

View the 2025 Design Winners!



ACN Designer of the Year

The ACN Designer of the Year Award is dedicated to recognizing a graphic designer who brings a fresh, relevant, and innovative approach to their work-related to publications within the agricultural industry. Also, this person takes risks with design projects and succeeds. They set the tone creatively and have a distinct graphic impact within the agricultural publishing community.

How to Enter ACN DOY

To be eligible for consideration for Designer of the Year, an entrant must enter Cat. D18, DOY Portfolio, as a separate entry, paying an entry fee of \$25 (total) for the portfolio. Choose what you believe to be your four strongest entries, only one per category, in any four categories from Cat. D01 through D17.

Important: Each one of the four DOY portfolio entries, including overall-issue categories D10-D13, must have been designed and executed solely by the DOY entrant. To enter, select D18 Designer of the Year from the category list.

Upload the separate PDFs of the (up to) four entries you have chosen. (These will be duplicates of the individual entries from the four categories.) You do not have to provide publication dates again.

How to Qualify for DOY

If you place first, second or third in any of the 2026 ACN Design Award categories AND you have entered Cat. D18 DOY, then your Cat. D18 portfolio becomes eligible for consideration for ACN Designer of the Year.



2026 Ag Communicators Network MarComm Awards Division

2026 MarComm Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:

MarComm entries will be judged based on creativity, quality and clarity; the success of the tactic in meeting objectives; appropriateness and perceived value of the information for the target audience; and the entrant's proficiency in the category.

Marketing Communications Categories

For those involved in marketing communications (i.e., public relations, media relations, etc.) for a company, agency, trade association or other non-publishing organization.

MarComm Entry Basics

To log in and begin the entry process, go to <https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/acnawardscontest2026>

Entries must list the **PRIMARY CONTRIBUTOR** of the piece. A primary contributor is defined as, "the person primarily responsible for creating the piece that is being entered and must be a current ACN member." Primary contributors can only have five (5) entries to their name.

Companies can enter more than five (5) entries, but they cannot be attributed to the same primary contributor.

For the Master of Communications program, enter a name in the credit box for those primarily responsible for creating the entry. Credit for winning entries will be given to the agency or organization, the client, and the principal creator.

If you want only the agency or agency and client company names to appear on plaques or certificates, provide that text in the credits section.

Submit everything as digital files and/or web-based entries for which you provide a URL and log-in information if needed.

See the individual category descriptions below for what is to be submitted for each category.

In the Event of a Winning Entry: Provide an image you would like to be included in the annual awards program PowerPoint.

MarComm Categories

Cat. MC1: Advertorial - One-Page

Enter one example of a single-page article written by the entrant for paid placement as editorial content and published in an agricultural publication or newspaper (printed or electronic) to garner support for an issue, product, service, organization, or program. Submit PDFs of the advertorial as they appeared.

Cat. MC2: Advertorial - Multi-Page, Series, or Special Section

Enter one example of a multi-page or special section written by the entrant for paid placement as editorial content and published in an agricultural publication or newsletter (printed or electronic) to garner support for an issue, product, service, organization, or program. Submit PDFs of the materials as they appeared.

Cat. MC3: Media Kits / Online Media Rooms / Media Events / Advertising Kits

Enter materials developed and provided for working agricultural, business or other media to support a company, product or service. The materials can be produced by a company, association, agency or organization. The materials developed may include resources for media, product kits for media or farmers, online media rooms, electronic product information, special media events or advertising media kits. Upload PDF, JPEG, GIF and/or PNG files. Include a summary of how and where the materials were used. If the entry is electronic or web based, include the URL in the URL/Link fields on the entry page, and type any log-in information a judge would need into the objectives section of the entry.

Be sure to select the **For-Profit (MC3A)** or **Not-for-Profit (MC3B)** subcategory.



2026 Ag Communicators Network MarComm Awards Division

The 2026 MarComm Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:

Cat. MC4: Collateral Piece

Enter one example of a collateral piece promoting a product, service or program created for an agricultural sales team. Submit the entry as a PDF with an accompanying statement of purpose, including the intended audience, and project objective and strategy.

Cat. MC5: Feature Article

Enter one example of a feature article written for submission to agricultural publications or general media (print or electronic) on an agriculture-related topic or developed for use in materials for internal or external audiences. Content may include human interest, anecdotal and situational information, and/or other creative approaches and techniques. Submit file of article as it was sent out, uploaded as an entry in PDF form only. Also, upload PDF of at least one published appearance of the article.

Cat. MC6: News Article

Enter one example of a news article written for submission to agricultural publications or general media (print or electronic) on an agriculture-related topic or developed for use in materials for internal or external audiences. Content should describe breaking news, current industry news, and the who-what-when-why of a newsworthy topic. Submit file of article as it was sent out, uploaded as entry in PDF form only. Also, upload a PDF of at least one published appearance of the article.

Cat. MC7: Print News Release Enter one example of a time-sensitive news release regarding a product, service or program written for submission to agricultural publications or general media (print or electronic, on an agriculture-related topic. (Please note: In general, multisource news content should be submitted in Cat. MC6 as a News Article). Submit title of release as it was sent out, uploaded as entry in PDF form only. Also, upload a PDF of at least one published appearance of the release.

Cat. MC8: Audio News Release

Enter one example of a time-sensitive audio news release regarding a product, service or program written for submission to agricultural publications or general media on an agriculture-related topic. (Please note: In general, multisource news content should be submitted in Cat. MC6 as a News Article). Submit title of release as it was sent out, uploaded as entry in MP4 form with an accompanying script. Also, upload a report of at least one instance of where and when the release was broadcast.

Cat. MC9: Technical Writing

Enter one example of technical content written on an agriculture-related topic for internal or external audiences. Upload a PDF of the document or publication.

Cat. MC10: Speech/White Paper

Enter a speech or white paper for a company / association /organization targeted at an agricultural audience or to a general audience on an agricultural topic. Submit speech text, speaker notes, or other written materials provided to the speaker, or white-paper text as PDF only. (No visuals or recordings of the speech.)

Cat. MC11: Writing for Special Projects Enter an annual report, commemorative publication, calendar, book or other special publication or piece written and produced for a company/association/organization and directed to an external or internal audience. The piece may be a component of a media/special event entered in Cat. MC3. Upload high-quality file(s) or print-ready PDF of project or provide website URLs. NOTE: Any material submitted as URLs must remain available online through August 2026.

Cat. MC12: Publication - Print or Electronic

Enter one example or set of one or more issues of a magazine or newsletter - print or electronic - written, designed, and published on a periodic basis to offer timely information to an agricultural audience. Submit PDF of printed publications, or URL if available and any log-in information.

Be sure to select the **For-Profit** (MC12A) or **Not-for-Profit** (MC12B) subcategory.



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Cat. MC13: Marketing Video

Enter one example of a video for use at an event or online that promotes an agriculture-related product, service or program. Submit the entry either in a playable file or via link to YouTube or another site. Provide an accompanying statement of purpose, including the intended audience, and project objective and strategy and a report on the metrics appropriate to the video deployment. For example, a video used with a digital banner would include CTR and time on video. Limit to three entries by a company, association, agency or organization.

Cat. MC14: Video Production Enter one program/feature, special program/feature, documentary, promotional segment, or regularly produced program. Please submit up to a 10-minute sample from the program/feature by providing the URL/link for video streaming or downloading. Please include any log-in instructions needed to view the video in the objectives PDF. Finally, if the program/feature is longer than 10 minutes, please denote the proper time data to ensure the 10-minute sample (at maximum) is accessible for evaluation purposes in the objectives section. Limit to three entries by a company, association, agency or organization.

Cat. MC15: Podcasts Enter an audio or video program produced solely to be downloaded to portable media players (iPods, iPads, MP3 players, etc.) or archived and streamed online for public relations or promotional purposes. To enter video and audio, paste the URL/ Link from where the work is published or performed (YouTube, Vimeo, Issuu.com, etc.) in the URL/Link fields on the entry page. Do not upload MP3 or other files directly. Type any login information a judge would need to view the content into the objectives section of the entry form.

Cat. MC16: Blogs Enter a Web-based journal, or blog, used for public relations, educational or promotional purposes. Provide URLs for 3 blog entries with comments, posted between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026. Or, submit PDF(s) of the posts & comments. Type any log-in information a judge would need to view the content into the objectives section of the entry.

Cat. MC17: Websites

Enter a website used to promote a company/association product or service. Can be for an internal or external audience. List URL(s) in the URL/Link fields on the entry form; type any log-in information a judge would need into the objectives section of the entry.

Cat. MC18: Webinars

Enter media files of content distributed using streaming media technology or provided for viewing/downloading on a website. List URLs on the entry form and provide any log-in information a judge would need in the objectives section of the entry form.

Cat. MC19: Social Media Enter examples of innovative use of social media, such as Facebook, X(Twitter), Foursquare, Google+, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc., to communicate with audiences for public relations, promotional or educational purposes. Submit a pdf of screen captures/downloads of five specific examples. The platform will not be judged as a whole.

Cat. MC20: Mobile/Tablet Technology Applications Enter a smartphone or tablet application (app) used as a public relations, promotional or educational program to reach an ag audience or to reach the general public on an agricultural topic. Upload PDF, JPEG, PNG and/or GIF files of materials related to the app order page/description. Include brief instructions on where and how to download the application in the objective section of the entry.

Cat. MC21: Communicator of the Year

Your portfolio must consist of three entries you believe are your strongest work from any category. Your portfolio becomes eligible for consideration for COY if you place first, second, or third in any MarComm Category, you have entered. The judges will rely solely on this portfolio to determine COY. No entry substitutions will be made. We will contact you for clarification if your entry has more than three or fewer than three entries.



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Master of Communications Program

The program allows an ag communicator to gauge personal professional development by means other than category wins.

One “judge’s merit” is awarded to any ag communicator placing first, second or third in a category, or when one or both category judges mark(s) a non- placing entry as deserving of merit recognition.

Level 1: One (1) judge’s merit.

Level 2: Three (3) judges’ merits in at least two different categories OR win first place in a category.

Level 3: Five (5) judges’ merits in at least three different categories OR win first place in a category and earn a judge’s merit in another category.

Level 4: Seven (7) judges’ merits in at least five different categories OR win first place in a category and earn two judges’ merits in two other categories OR earn the ACN Communicator of the Year Award.

Level 5 Master of Communications: Eight (8) judges’ merits in at least eight different categories OR win a place in three categories OR receive Communicator of the Year Award and three judges’ merits in three different categories.

Level 6 Communicator of Merit: Receive judge’s merits in 10 of the 20 categories.

MarComm Checklist

- Is the primary contributor a current member of ACN?
- Was your entry published in print or online between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026?
- Have you listed the appropriate name(s) in the credits section?
- In the event of a winning entry, this information will be on the plaque and powerpoint.

View the 2025 MarComm Winners!





2026 Ag Communicators Network Digital & Social Media Awards Division

The 2026 DSM Awards are sponsored by the Ag Communicators Network through funding provided by:



Digital & Social Media entries will be judged based on creativity, quality and clarity; the success of the tactic in meeting objectives (results); appropriateness and perceived value of the information for the target audience; and the entrant's proficiency in the category. The Digital & Social Media Awards Division are for those involved in editorial writing for commercial or custom publications, electronic or print.

Digital & Social Media Entry Basics

To log in and begin the entry process, go to:
<https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/acnawardscontest2026>

Entries must list the **PRIMARY CONTRIBUTOR** of the piece. A primary contributor is defined as, "the person primarily responsible for creating the piece that is being entered and must be a current ACN member." Primary contributors can only have five (5) entries to their name.

Publishers can enter more than five (5) entries, but they cannot be attributed to the same primary contributor.

An entrant may enter as many entries per category as desired, except in the Video Production category, where as many as three entries are allowed.

In the credits section of the entry page, list any special instructions about how to word the certificate or plaque if you win (if other than the names credited for the work).

See individual category descriptions below and online to see what is to be submitted for each category.

In the Event of a Winning Entry: Provide an image you would like to be included in the annual awards program PowerPoint.

For more information, contact Kristin Harner,
kharners@agcommnetwork.com.

Digital & Social Media Categories

Cat. DSM1: Podcasts Enter an audio or video program produced solely to be downloaded to portable media players (iPods, iPads, MP3 players, etc.) or archived and streamed online. To enter video and audio, paste the URL from where the work is published or performed (YouTube, Vimeo, Issuu.com, etc.) in the URL fields on the entry page. Do not upload MP3 or other A/V files directly. Type log-in info in objectives section.

Cat. DSM2: Websites Enter an editorial website published by a publication. List URL(s) in the URL fields on the entry page; type any log-on information a judge would need to view the content into the objectives section of the entry form.

Cat. DSM3: Webinars Enter media files of editorial content distributed using streaming media technology or provided for viewing/ downloading on a website. List URL(s) in the URL/Link fields on the entry page; type any log-in information a judge would need to view the content into the objectives section of the entry forms.

Cat. DSM4: Social Media Enter examples of the publication's use of social media, such as Facebook, X(Twitter), Foursquare, Google+, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc. Submit a pdf of screen captures/downloads of five specific examples. The platform will not be judged as a whole.



2026 Ag Communicators Network Digital & Social Media Awards Division

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Cat. DSM5: Multimedia Story Enter an online story or series that uses multimedia tools such as audio, video and/or photo galleries as part of the narrative process. List URL(s) in the URL/Link fields on the entry page; type any log-in information a judge would need to view the content into the objective section of the entry form.

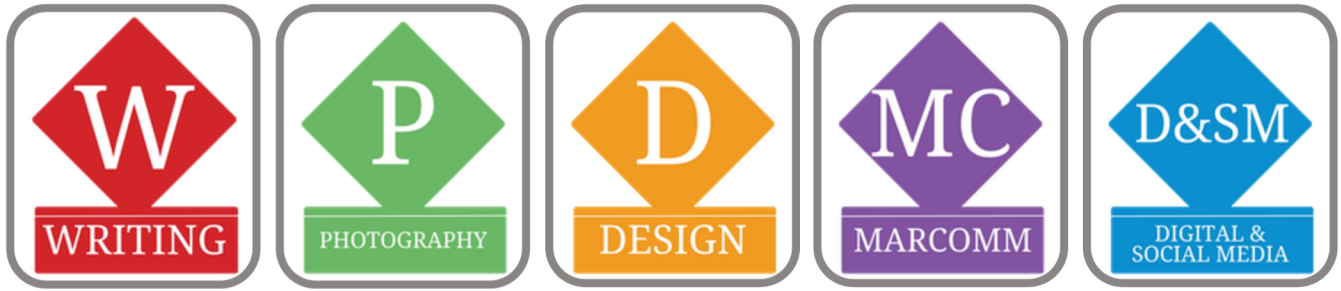
Cat. DSM6: Video Production Enter one program/feature, special program/feature, documentary, or regularly produced program. Program/feature must have aired on a commercial / noncommercial broadcast station or on publisher's website or publisher's YouTube (or another video-publishing) channel. Please submit up to a 10-minute sample from the program/feature by providing the URL for video streaming or download. Please include any log-in instructions needed to view the video in the objectives section. Finally, if the program/feature is longer than 10 minutes, please denote the proper time data to ensure the 10-minute sample (at maximum) is accessible for evaluation purposes in the objective section. Limit to three entries per publication.

Digital and Social Media Checklist

- Is the primary contributor a current member of ACN?
- Was your entry published in print or online between April 16, 2025, and April 15, 2026?
- Have you listed the appropriate name(s) in the credits section?
- In the event of a winning entry, this information will be on the plaque and powerpoint.

**View the
2025 Digital & Social Media Winners!**





Questions about what or how to enter?

For all division and general awards questions, contact

NOTE: Any material submitted as URLs must remain available through August 2026.

Join us for Agricultural Media Summit St. Louis, Missouri July 19 - July 21, 2026

The Agricultural Media Summit is a joint meeting of the The Ag Communicators Network, the Livestock Publications Council and the American Business Media Agri-Council. This industry-wide gathering of agricultural communicators offers one of the best opportunities for professional improvement and industry networking.

The ACN Communications Awards will be presented during AMS.

Learn more at www.agmediasummit.com.

