



COPYWRITING PORTFOLIO

EYE MAGNETS



What is an Eye Magnet?

It's a poster covering an interesting nugget, question or talking point, presented in an eye-catching way.

The Eye Magnets were part of a monthly programme of workplace posters, sent to clients in various industries. They were displayed in a board alongside posters on a variety of subjects, such as safety, health, environmental issues and professional conduct.

In testing, changing the Eye Magnet twice a week kept employees coming back to the board, where they would also absorb the workplace information and reminders.

During my employment, I researched and wrote nine Eye Magnets every month – more than a thousand in total.

Are you looking for captivating content, convincing copy or creative concepts?

You can get in touch and tell me about your needs using the form on my [contact page](#).

**Maths experts reckon
there are over two trillion
ways to lace your shoes.**

Their calculation is based on how many ways a lace can be threaded through the six pairs of eyelets on an average shoe.

The most common patterns are used for fashion, comfort and speed of lacing.



ALL TIED UP

POP CULTURE

What common workplace material links decoration, packaging and stress relief?

The answer is Bubble Wrap®.

Bizarrely, the material was originally designed as an easy-to-clean textured plastic wallpaper with a 'space-age' look.

The inventors quickly realised that the product was useless as a wallpaper, but was excellent as a wrapping for delicate items.

Many people have found that popping the blisters can help to ease stress. In 2007 *Bandai* brought out a bubble popping key chain to recreate the sensation.





BIG AND BLUE

Forget dinosaurs – the largest creature ever known to live on Earth is the blue whale.

The blue whale can grow longer than a space shuttle orbiter and weigh as much as eight DC-9 aircrafts.

Its tongue alone weighs as much as an elephant and its mouth is large enough to hold 100 people.

A blue whale's heart is as big as a Mini Cooper. Its heartbeat can be detected from two miles away and a person could easily crawl along its major arteries.

Its blowhole is big enough to hold a toddler and its spray can reach the height of a three-story building.



LOST?

A study has shown that people who are lost really do go round in circles.

Volunteers were placed in a flat, forested area, with no landmarks. They were given a GPS transmitter and instructed to walk in a straight line for several hours. Most of the volunteers ended up walking in a circle.

In a follow-up experiment, 15 blindfolded volunteers tried to walk in a straight line. In repeated attempts they walked in very small circles – less than 66 feet in diameter – and randomly changed direction.



**GOING
ROUND
IN CIRCLES**

LONG-WINDED

One of the longest musical performances to be undertaken is scheduled to run for 639 years.

Organ²/ASLSP (As SLOW as Possible) was composed by John Cage in 1987. The piece is meant to be played 'as slow as possible', but Cage never specified exactly how slowly that should be.

A pipe organ performance is currently taking place at St Burchardi church in Halberstadt, Germany. It began in 2001 and is not set to finish until 2640.

The organ was built specifically for this performance. It sounds constantly and has to be surrounded by a tube of acrylic glass, to reduce its sound emissions.





68,986ft – Highest manned hot-air balloon flight
21,027m

327360ft – Kármán line (edge of space)
100,000m



36,100ft – Highest-flying bird (Rüppell's Vulture)
11,003m



30,000ft – Cruising altitude of a commercial jet
9,144m

29,029ft – Mount Everest
8,848m

26,000ft – Death zone – above this point oxygen levels too low to sustain human life



20,000ft – High clouds (Cirrus)
7,000m



6,500ft – Low clouds (Cumulus)
2,000m

2,717ft – Burj Khalifa (World's tallest building)
828m



0ft – Sea level

**UP,
UP
AND
AWAY**

DEEP, DEEP DOWN

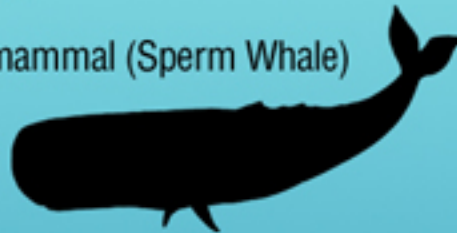
0ft – Sea level

100ft – Absolute recreational diving limit
30m



1,083ft – Deepest scuba dive
330m

9,843ft – Deepest diving mammal (Sperm Whale)
3,000m



12,080ft – Average depth of the ocean floor
3,682m



12,460ft – Wreck of the Titanic
3,798m

18,360ft – Deepest oil well (Deepwater Horizon)
5,600m



27,460ft – Deepest recorded sea fish
(Abyssobrotula galathea)
8,370m

35,814ft – Deepest recorded ocean depth (Mariana Trench)
10,916m

40,230ft – Depth of the deepest man-made hole
(Kola Superdeep Borehole)
12,262m

VACUUM, ZOOM

Imagine being able to travel from London to Edinburgh in just five short minutes!

According to the London Mechanics' Register, in 1825 there was a plan to introduce a high-speed train between London and Edinburgh.

Metal tubes, each 390 miles long, were to run underground between the two cities.

Boilers placed at two-mile intervals would create a strong vacuum inside the tubes to power passenger trains above the ground.

The trains were expected to travel more than 480 miles in only five minutes!



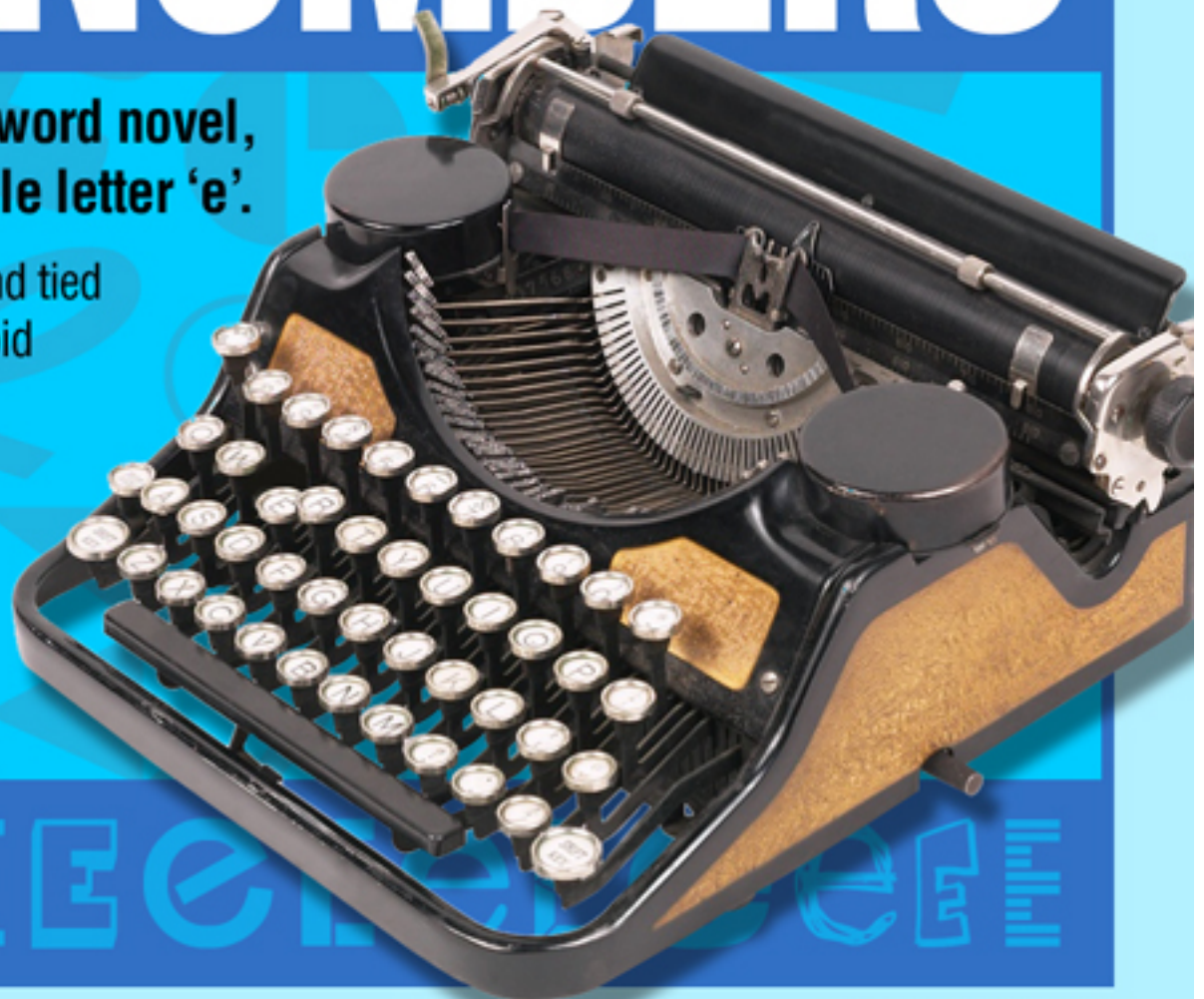
NO 'E' NUMBERS

Ernest Vincent Wright's 50,000-word novel, *Gadsby*, does not contain a single letter 'e'.

He wrote the piece to baffle his critics and tied down the 'e' key on his typewriter to avoid making any mistakes.

Unfortunately, he never saw his work in print as he died on the day the book was published.

This type of constrained writing is called a lipogram.





Land animal
– Cheetah – **70 mph**

Land speed record
– Thrust SSC
– **763 mph**



Manned spacecraft
– Apollo 10
– **24,790 mph**

Passenger train
– Maglev (China) – **361 mph**



Water speed record – Spirit of Australia – **318 mph**



Fish – Black Marlin
– **80 mph**



Manned air-breathing aircraft
– Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird
– **2,194 mph**



Street-legal car
– Bugatti Veyron
Super Sport
– **268 mph**

Man cycling – Sam Whittingham (Canada)
– **83 mph**



Bird
– Peregrine Falcon
– **200 mph**



Man sprinting – Usain Bolt (Jamaica) – **22 mph***

THE WORLD'S FASTEST...

WATER PISTOL

What sea creature is just two inches long, yet confounded submarine crews during the war?

The story goes that, during WWII, submarines found they couldn't detect enemy ships because something was interfering with their sonar.

The cause? Pistol Shrimps – small sea creatures capable of producing sounds over 200 decibels. That's louder than a rocket taking off!

The sound is created by the shrimps' huge claws snapping shut. The snaps not only stun their prey, but also communicate with other shrimps.





Faraway **PHONE**

How did an isolated phone booth in the Mojave National Preserve become an Internet sensation?

The booth, located miles from anywhere, was installed in the 60s for use by locals and miners.

In 1997 a man wrote about his visit to the booth and published its number. Soon after, the phone started ringing. Many called the number, hoping for a reply. Others visited the booth to answer its calls – one man, who spent 32 days there, answered more than 500 calls.

In 2000 the phone box was removed from service, but its story inspired both the movie, *Mojave Phone Booth* and the short film *Dead Line*.



(HANGING TASTES

The Miracle
Berry is like the
Willy Wonka of
the plant world.

After eating the berries, lemons taste like candy, Tabasco tastes like doughnut glaze, Guinness tastes like chocolate malt and goat's cheese tastes like cheesecake.

The berries contain miraculin, a glycoprotein, which binds to the sweet taste receptors on the tongue and temporarily changes the way we taste sour and acidic foods.

When European explorer Chevalier des Marchais travelled to West Africa in the 1800s, he noted that local people ate the berries before meals to make their food taste better.

Good as Gold

The Japanese art of Kintsugi has turned pieces of repaired pottery into collectors' items.

Kintsugi is Japanese for *golden joinery*. It is the art of mending broken pottery using lacquer resin sprinkled with gold.

Japanese craftsmen developed Kintsugi in the late 15th century as an artistic alternative to the ugly metal staples that were often used.

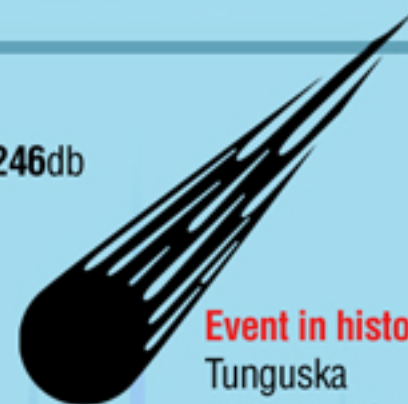
Some collectors so admired the golden seams that they would break their expensive pottery on purpose just to get it repaired!



THE LOUDEST...

Unexplained noise

The Bloop, underwater recording - 246db



Event in history

Tunguska meteor explosion - 315db



Earthquake

5.0 Richter earthquake - 235db

Volcano eruption

Krakatoa, 1883 - 180db



Marine mammal

Blue whale - 188db



Crustacean

Pistol shrimp - 200db



Rock gig

150db



Jet engine

140db



Land mammal

Howler monkey - 140db



Siren

Chrysler air raid sirens (US) - 138db



Human whistle

Marco Ferrera, USA - 125db



Human scream

Jill Drake (UK) - 129db





FORGOTTEN GEMS

You've heard of agate, jasper and quartz, but what about Fordite?

Fordite is characterised by stripes of bright colours in swirling patterns. It is often used in jewellery, but is not actually a gemstone.

The material is made from hundreds of layers of dried paint that built up in car factory paint bays when cars were spray painted by hand.

It is thought that some creative paint shop workers may have chiselled off the hardened paint and taken it home to make it into jewellery.

The 40 Fruit Tree



Imagine if you could grow 40 different stoned fruits on just one, individual tree.

It sounds like fantasy, but this is exactly what artist and Syracuse University professor, Sam Van Aken has managed to achieve.

Van Aken uses the ancient method of chip grafting to splice branches of the tree with buds of different varieties. It is a process that takes several years.

In the spring, the tree blossoms pink and purple. By the summer it bears 40 fruits including nectarines, peaches, apricots and almonds.



GHOST in the MACHINE?



A soda machine in Seattle, USA, has left locals baffled, intrigued and fearful.

The machine has been on the same street corner for at least 15 years. It looks dated and faded, but still works and is known for its 'mystery' button, which dispenses a variety of old and odd flavours.

Locals have come to believe the machine may be haunted. They can't understand how it is always stocked and working, as they have never seen anyone come to refill it, or collect the money.



CREEPING CAMOUFLAGE

***Boquila trifoliolata* has been described as the world's most mysterious plant.**

The vine is native to Chile, where it creeps across forest floors looking for host plants to climb up.

When it finds a host plant to cling onto, the vine camouflages itself by changing the shape of its leaves to mimic its new host. It is the only plant known to science that can do this.

It is thought that its camouflage helps stop the vine from being eaten. The more interesting question is how can a vine, supposedly with no brain or senses, 'see' its host and copy what it 'sees'?

UNHEALTHY GLOW

Long before we understood the dangers of radium, it was marketed as a miracle.

In the early 20th century, Dr Sabin von Sochocky perfected *Undark*: a radium-based, glow-in-the-dark paint, used on the faces of watches for the military.

Radium soon became America's new wonder ingredient, used in cosmetics, toothpaste and even drinking water for its supposed health benefits.

By the late 1920s deaths from radium poisoning had become a real concern. The victims were so contaminated, if you held a Geiger counter over their graves today, it would still pick up radiation.



CAUSING A STINK

Hold your noses! Here are six of the smelliest substances on Earth



Ethyl Mercaptan is used to give odourless propane a distinctive smell. It smells like leeks, but much worse.



US Government Standard Bathroom Malodor was designed to test air fresheners and smells like extra potent human faeces.



Butyl seleno-mercaptan is a core molecule in skunk's spray. It smells like rotting cabbage, garlic, onions and burnt toast.



Cadaverine is created when living flesh decays and amino acids interact. It literally smells like death.



Pyridine is used in pesticides and as a solvent for making dyes and rubber. It smells like decaying fish and rotten soy sauce.



Isovaleric acid smells like strong sweat and athlete's foot. Oddly, it is used to mix perfumes and medicines.

Works of art?



At first glance, these images may appear to be paintings, but they are actually photographs of the Namib Desert.

The vivid colours and light effects are all natural, but give the appearance of a strange, alien landscape.

DIZZY HEIGHTS

If construction goes to plan, by 2020 these will be the top five tallest buildings in the world.





super shrimp!

The mantis shrimp is a fascinating creature.

While human eyes have just three colour-receptive cones, a mantis shrimp's eyes have 16. This means they can see five times' more colours than we can.

The mantis shrimp has two hunting spikes on its front that move with the same force as a 22-caliber rifle – a force so strong it makes the water boil.

It is virtually impossible for aquariums to display the shrimps – they can kill every other creature they are housed with and even smash the tank itself.

CAKE OR BISCUIT?

Jaffa Cakes – cake or biscuit?
Which are they and
why does it matter?

In the UK we pay VAT on chocolate-covered biscuits, but not on chocolate-covered cakes.

Jaffa Cakes were originally classed as biscuits as they are the shape and size of a biscuit, and are also packaged and eaten as biscuits.

However this changed at a 1991 tribunal when the manufacturers won the legal right to classify them as cakes — and to avoid the VAT.

To win their case, the manufacturers produced a large, sliceable Jaffa Cake to demonstrate more clearly, its spongy, cake-like texture.



NATURAL GEOMETRY

In nature there are amazing patterns everywhere.



Most plant structures follow the Fibonacci sequence. Each number in this sequence is created by adding together the two numbers before it, so 1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 and so on.

SENSELESS SENTENCE?

**Did you know that 'Buffalo buffalo Buffalo
buffalo buffalo buffalo Buffalo buffalo'
is actually a valid sentence?**

The sentence works because there are three separate meanings for the word 'buffalo':

Buffalo (a.) — the city of Buffalo, New York.

Buffalo (n.) — American bison (plural).

Buffalo (v.) — to bully or intimidate.

Using colours to distinguish the meanings and some incidental words we can make it easier to understand:

<The> **Buffalo** buffalo <that> **Buffalo** buffalo buffalo

<also> buffalo **Buffalo** buffalo.



Black Pudding



Did you know, there is a fruit that tastes just like chocolate pudding?

The Black Sapote, also known as the chocolate pudding fruit, is a species of persimmon native to eastern Mexico, Guatemala and Colombia.

When ripe, the fruit has a smooth, glossy pulp with the taste and texture of chocolate pudding. It is low in fat and high in vitamin C.

Black Sapote can be eaten fresh, or in recipes as a chocolate substitute. In Mexico, the fruit is mashed with orange juice or brandy and served with cream.