

**Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware**  
**Communication Competition**  
**Judging Guide – 2017**

*Revised February 2018*

# Overview

The KLV communication awards uses a 10-point grading system. Each respective category will follow the rules outlined below. Categories not in DVIDS will still be evaluated using a 10-point scale. Judges will score entries on a scale of zero (lowest) through 10 (highest).

Entries will be judged on their technical excellence, creativity, originality, storytelling ability and/or overall support of Army themes and objectives. Entries must meet the highest standards of execution and professional excellence, while contributing to the command information objectives of the Army.

Judging panels may include distinguished CMF/FA 46/25 senior noncommissioned officers, officers and civilians in each respective field. Entries will be judged on overall professional excellence.

No ties are allowed. Judges may designate no more than one first-place winner and two honorable mentions. If no first-place winner is selected, no honorable mention will be selected.

Judges may decide not to name a winner in a category if the entry:

- Does not meet the specific entry criteria outlined in Part III of the KLV SOP
- Is entered by personnel who do not meet eligibility requirements
- Fails to follow federal law or established DoD policy
- Is not uploaded to DVIDS as required in the category descriptions
- Does not meet basic technical standards outlined by the Defense Information School.

Judges' decisions are final. The judges' discretionary comments and feedback will be provided after the competition. Judges' decisions are reviewed by OCPA, who retains discretion for final approval and authority for release of results and other contest information.

# Broadcast Categories

## Audio (Categories D-F)

*Voice quality, delivery and creativity distinguish professional broadcasters in the Army as in any other organization. Consider the CI relevance and impact as well as talent, energy, technical mastery and entertainment value when evaluating news products. Bear in mind many AFN products and campaigns are command directed. This cultivates CI relevance but at the expense of creative license and initiative.*

## Video (Categories A-C and G-L)

*Imagination, ingenuity and story, shot and interview selection – not to mention camera work, script writing, editing and announcing – contribute heavily to the quality of a video product. Judges must consider impact, effectiveness and, in many cases, contribution to the CI mission.*

## Categories M-O (broadcast top honors)

*Consider accomplishments and qualities identified in supporting materials as well as the products submitted in support of these packets. The Videographer of the Year should contribute heavily to the team, the command and the Army, and embody the qualities of an outstanding Soldier or Army Civilian as well as shoot good video, edit well and enunciate clearly.*

***Broadcast categories will be graded as follows:***

## Fundamental Criteria

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate fundamental criteria. If a product meets a criteria requirement, it will earn one star. Meeting all three requirements will earn it the maximum stars allowable. The fundamental broadcast criteria are:

**Command information:** Entries should support commanders' communication objectives. If the material doesn't effectively communicate the story of a command, its Soldiers and/or the Army, it is not an effective product regardless of technical quality.

**Focus:** Strong focus is a paramount to an excellent product. The product must remain on a central theme throughout the entire piece. Does the video engage you from the onset or does it lose momentum?

- Each segment in an audio entertainment entry should have a hook, set up and a payoff.
- Audio entries should be strong and capture the audience interest. Music should reflect the tone and substance of the product and conform to relevant copyright law.
- Video entries should include two or more three-shot sequences; video spots should include at least one. Opening and closing shots should be strong, well composed and arouse audience interest. Shots, sequences and narration should be appropriately paced and edited to complement the product.

**Copyright/SAPP:** All products must comply with copyright guidelines as noted in the Keith L. Ware Competition SOP. Entries compromising security are obviously inconsistent with commanders' intent and success in the competition. Entries that also violate command or service policy or are published with inappropriate subject matter, improper language or unacceptable style or tone should not win CI awards. A factual error pertaining directly to the focus of the story seriously jeopardizes the credibility of the story and its author.

## Technical Criteria

**Four stars** will be used to evaluate technical criteria. Judges will evaluate the technical aspects of the product and can give from zero up to four stars in this category. Multiple mistakes in one respective area or minor mistakes across multiple areas should result in a loss of a star. If a product does not earn at least one technical criteria star, the judge can recommend the entry be disqualified due to lack of technical standards. Broadcast technical criteria includes:

**Story Telling** – Entrant was able to convey their idea, message or thought in an original and imaginative way through their lens, narrative, performance, etc. The entrant is able to let their product evoke the viewer’s imagination, which may differ by each viewer. Is the story being told the right story for the Sponsor and their brand?

**Production** – the quality of the video including how smooth the transitions are, and whether the editing compliments the flow of content. Having that finished look. Edits should be smooth and free of “dirty” edits. No jump cuts or 180-degree violations. All shots and sequences should complement each other and avoid “pop-ins” and “pop-outs.” Special effects should be aesthetically pleasing and appropriate to the tone and substance of the product they support.

**Speaking/Delivery:** The contestant articulates and enunciates well, does not stumble and pronounces words properly. The contestant should have a solid grasp of the copy and makes effective transitions. He or she should speak with authority and avoid reading.

**Sound-bites and stand-ups:** Stand-ups and sound-bites should contribute significantly to the product. Their duration should be commensurate with the length of the story and the importance of the input; accompanying video should not distract the audience. Military subjects should adhere to an appropriate standard of wear and appearance of uniform. Extraneous items such as access and security badges, microphones and cords should not appear in video.

**Composition:** Shots should be effectively composed. Proper head space and rule of thirds should be applied. Video should be properly white balanced. Video should avoid unnecessary movement. Jerky video distracts from natural video flow and should be avoided (*exceptions should be considered in training and operational photography categories*)

**Lighting:** Video should be appropriately illuminated and free of hot, dark or auto iris shots. Was the lighting applied in the video (manmade or natural) properly used to enhance the visuals? Is the entrant and images clearly visible, centered, in focus and without any glare? Was the video well-lit throughout filming and each shot properly exposed?

**Audio:** Audio/sound should be heard and the dialogue should be intelligible and dynamically balanced. The sound in all shots should have the same volume. Audio levels should be properly adjusted and synchronized. The contestant should apply solid microphone placement technique, producing audio free from distortion and including good natural sound.

*(Category L: Social Media Video will also measure engagement analytics as technical criteria. Effective engagement should be measured by two-way activity instead of volume. Shares and comments should be valued higher than ‘likes’ however a large volume of any engagement should be viewed favorably.)*

## Creativity

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate effectiveness and creativity. Judges will evaluate originality/creativity of the product and/or if the product was effective at meeting its intended goal. Judges can give at least one but no more than three stars in this category.

# Community Relations Categories

*You're judging the effectiveness of the programs and their value to units, commands, Soldiers, Army Civilians, Family members and the Army as a whole. Bear in mind programs will differ significantly in scope, type, emphasis and resources. Allow some flexibility as you assess the value of products, evidence of success and testimonials: each program and contributor will differ in aim and emphasis. Quality is more important than quantity: don't confuse the scale of the "document dump" with the value of the entry.*

**Community relations categories will be evaluated based on how effectively it answers the questions listed below:**

## **Support materials**

- Were support materials (letters of recommendation, news clippings brochures, videos, posters, etc.) present?
- Do the materials demonstrate and reflect the entries' contributions to effective Community Engagement efforts?

## **Planning**

- Was the planning process identified and detailed?
- Were the objectives clearly defined and measurable?
- Did the objectives support the organization's goals?

## **Execution**

- Was the execution of the engagement effective in meeting the objective?
- How were the objectives achieved?

## **Effectiveness**

- Was the analysis conducted thorough and relevant?
- Did the program foster good Community Relations?
- Did the program increase public awareness?
- Did the program inspire patriotism, cultivate a positive image of the command and enhance the prestige of the Army and the military service?
- If applicable, did the program support recruiting efforts?

## **For the individual category also evaluate personal contributions like:**

- Did the individual's efforts support one or more Community Engagement events?
- Was the individual's contributions effective in relation to resources (Personnel, budget, and supporting agencies) available?
- Did the individual take personal initiative in achieving the desired outcome?

# Graphic Arts Categories

*You're judging the effectiveness of the graphic and its value to units, commands, Soldiers, and the Army as a whole. Bear in mind each product will differ significantly in scope, type and emphasis. Allow some flexibility as you assess the value of products. Consider the CI relevance and impact as well as talent, energy, technical mastery and entertainment value when evaluating graphic arts products. Bear in mind most graphic products are command directed.*

**Graphic categories will be graded as follows:**

## Fundamental Criteria

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate fundamental criteria. If a product meets a criteria requirement, it will earn one star. Meeting all three requirements will earn it the maximum stars allowable. The fundamental graphic arts criteria are:

**Focus:** Entries should support commanders' communication objectives. If the material doesn't effectively communicate the objectives of a command, its Soldiers and/or the Army, it is not an effective product regardless of technical quality.

**Ineligible methods:** Entries should not contain two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods; using dry or wet-based methods such as line art, sketches, water colors and oil paintings; work created using pencil, chalk and/or charcoal; pictures of displays and fine art pieces.

**SAPP:** Graphics compromising security are obviously inconsistent with commanders' intent and success in the competition. Graphics that also violate command or service policy or are published with inappropriate subject matter, unacceptable style or tone should not win CI awards.

## Technical Criteria

**Four stars** will be used to evaluate technical criteria. Judges will evaluate the technical aspects of the product and can give from zero up to four stars in this category. Multiple mistakes in one respective area or minor mistakes across multiple areas should result in a loss of a star. If a product does not earn at least one technical criteria star, the judge can recommend the entry be disqualified due to lack of technical standards. Graphic arts technical criteria includes:

**Alignment:** Entry keeps design objects in line, not only vertically or horizontally but across any linear plane.

**Balance:** A design composition does not have to be symmetrical or linear to be considered balanced, the balance is global to all elements even the absence of content.

**Emphasis:** Emphasis can be achieved in graphic design by placing elements on the page in positions where the eye is naturally drawn, by using other principles such as contrast, repetition, or movement. Bold and italic type provides emphasis for text. Graphic elements gain emphasis through size, visual weight, color, complexity, uniqueness, placement on the page, and other features.

**Gestalt:** Sometimes considered a distinct principle of design, gestalt is the concept that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

**Proportion:** This indicates the relative visual size width, and weight of a particular graphical elements in a design composition.

**Unity:** The individual parts come together as visually compelling and a meaningful whole.

**White Space:** In graphic design, the white space, or negative space, is considered an important element of the overall design. It is used - and evaluated - based on the same criteria as the rest of the elements in the design. White space can add to or detract from the balance, unity, harmony, rhythm and overall success of a design. White space can give emphasis, contrast, and movement. It can be used for repetition and pattern, and work within various relationships with other elements of the positive and negative spaces in the design.

### Creativity

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate effectiveness and creativity. Judges will evaluate originality/creativity of the product and/or if the product was effective at meeting its intended goal. Judges can give at least one but no more than three stars in this category.

# Photo Categories

*You're judging the effectiveness of the captions and imagery and how they combine to form a unique medium. These elements should complement, support and reinforce each other effectively. Consider how images and words communicate a story as well as the poignancy of the pictures(s). Evaluate the pictures in terms of their story telling and CI function as well as their focus, composition, creativity and poignancy. Pay attention to context when evaluating captions. A "skeleton" or deliberately terse caption may be more effective and appropriate than an elaborate "extended cutline" when accompanying a story. Captions ideally complement, rather than reiterate, a full-length story. So don't automatically punish a photojournalist for a short caption or reward the producer for a comprehensive one.*

***Photo categories will be graded as follows:***

## Fundamental Criteria

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate fundamental criteria. If a product meets a criteria requirement, it will earn one star. Meeting all three requirements will earn it the maximum stars allowable. The fundamental graphic arts criteria are:

**Subject:** Entries should support commanders' communication objectives. If the material doesn't effectively communicate the objectives of a command, its Soldiers and/or the Army, it is not an effective product regardless of technical quality.

**Attribution:** Captions that identify the subject should include the correct rank (if appropriate), unit, job title, and organization as well as service when ambiguous.

**SAPP:** Photos compromising security are obviously inconsistent with commanders' intent and success in the competition. Photos that also violate command or service policy or are published with inappropriate subject matter, improper language or unacceptable style or tone should not win CI awards.

## Technical Criteria

**Four stars** will be used to evaluate technical criteria. Judges will evaluate the technical aspects of the product and can give from zero up to four stars in this category. Multiple mistakes in one respective area or minor mistakes across multiple areas should result in a loss of a star. If a product does not earn at least one technical criteria star, the judge can recommend the entry be disqualified due to lack of technical standards. Photo technical criteria includes:

**Action:** Entries should display strong action appropriate to the subject matter at hand. Inaction, weak action, hidden action, action out of frame and posed action detract from the quality of a photograph.

**Camera movement:** Shooting at slow shutter speeds, unsteady camera grip and poor shooting technique can produce blurry images or poor focus.

**Composition:** Composition errors include, but are not limited to, cluttered foreground or background, cutting off of essential body parts, inclusion of objects apparently "growing out of heads," extraneous appendages in the frame, wrong format, too much extra space and inappropriate distance from the subject.

**Exposure:** Exposure mistakes may result in "whitewashed" or inappropriately dark photos, poor color and "blown out" highlights. Army photojournalists tend to employ automatic settings; but



the best photographers will effectively manage camera settings, ambient light and flash to achieve proper exposure.

**Flash technique:** Shadows should fall behind the subject's head. Good photographers will tend to employ indirect flash and more sophisticated technique, producing balanced lighting and an appropriate level of illumination.

**Focus:** Good photographers select and capture an appropriate focal point and achieve a consciously crafted level of focus for the subject matter at hand. An ideal action photo of a rifleman in action, for instance, might focus on the Soldier's eyes and face with the body and foreground remaining relatively crisp and the background somewhat blurred. The subject matter should inform expectations. A close-up taken in a garrison environment should achieve intense and dominant focus on the subject's eyes; allow greater tolerance for a long-distance shot of a rapidly moving object.

**Special Techniques:** Special techniques like multiple exposures, sandwiching, panning, or cross processing. If the image is digitally manipulated, has the manipulation altered composition or only technical issues (exposure, focus, etc), which could be also accomplished by conventional techniques?

**Story/Mood:** How well does the photograph capture or illustrate the {topic of contest}? Does the image effectively tell a story about {topic of contest} or convey a mood or value?

### Creativity

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate effectiveness and creativity. Judges will evaluate originality/creativity of the product and/or if the product was effective at meeting its intended goal. Judges can give at least one but no more than three stars in this category.

# Print Categories

## Publications (Categories A-C)

*These unit categories embody all elements and qualities comprising the product, including headlines, teasers, captions, graphic elements and special features as well as stories and photographs. "Content" includes the quality, relevance and substantive merits of stories and supporting elements. "Professional Excellence" includes all qualities contributing to the dignity, prestige and credibility of the product. Consider the relevance of a product's content to the command and community. Material addressing substantive local issues generally supports those objectives better than generic "filler" material, for instance. Online publications establish a clear identity as an electronic publication. Most substantive and design criteria overlap those of print publications.*

***Publications will be graded as follows:***

### Fundamental Criteria

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate fundamental criteria. If a product meets a criteria requirement, it will earn one star. Meeting all three requirements will earn it the maximum stars allowable. The fundamental publication criteria are:

**Focus:** Entries should support commanders' communication objectives. If the material doesn't effectively communicate the objectives of a command, its Soldiers and/or the Army, it is not an effective product regardless of technical quality.

**Attribution:** Entries should consistently attribute any direct or indirect quote throughout the publication. Stories in the publication should include the correct rank (if appropriate), unit, job title, and organization as well as service when ambiguous.

**SAPP:** Publications compromising security are obviously inconsistent with commanders' intent and success in the competition. Publications that also violate command or service policy or are published with inappropriate subject matter, improper language or unacceptable style or tone should not win CI awards.

### Technical Criteria

**Four stars** will be used to evaluate technical criteria. Judges will evaluate the technical aspects of the product and can give from zero up to four stars in this category. Multiple mistakes in one respective area or minor mistakes across multiple areas should result in a loss of a star. If a product does not earn at least one technical criteria star, the judge can recommend the entry be disqualified due to lack of technical standards. Publication technical criteria includes:

**Design:** The entry should be a clean, aesthetically pleasing design. The following is a list of potential design problems that should be avoided: headlines placed over unrelated elements; story columns, copy or caption too wide or narrow for readability; using 'Align Left' for news stories or 'Justify' for feature stories; an off balance page; a photograph or any artwork too large/small for the supported material; photograph/artwork action leads off the page; photograph/artwork separates the byline from the headline; not placing most important story on the top of page; using the wrong size/font/format of type; and 'sticks' of copy laid out in the wrong order.

**Alignment:** Offset or poorly aligned headlines, art, copy, etc.

**Spacing:** Relationship or separation of design elements

**Bumping:** If the meaning of text is not apparent to the reasonable reader, writing creates unintended or detrimental ambiguity, or a story leaves obvious lingering questions, lack of clarity may be a problem.

**Rules (boxes and lines):** Consistent, proportionate and appropriate to the elements they support. Boxes and lines should be employed judiciously and sparingly to separate distinct elements, usually in the absence of supporting imagery.

**Tabs:** Frequent errors include paragraphs not intended or inconsistent indents within a story or page.

**Photo cropping:** Feet or hands cropped, too much clutter, poor shaping, etc.

**Headline errors:** These include failure to use downstyle, padding, and failure to use historical present tense for headlines, misspellings and clarity problems. Headlines should not be too long or too short (they should come halfway through the last column of the module).

**Pulled quote abuse:** Pulled quotes are important design elements as well as vehicles for conveying dynamic observations. They should be poignant, appropriate in length, enticing to the reader and worded exactly the same way as the passage in the body.

### Creativity

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate effectiveness and creativity. Judges will evaluate originality/creativity of the product and/or if the product was effective at meeting its intended goal. Judges can give at least one but no more than three stars in this category.

### **Outstanding Digital Media Management (Category D)**

*This category requires the most creative thinking in evaluation. The grading criteria are necessarily general and include no standard substantive formula for success. The best CI social media simultaneously support command and Army communication priorities, provide an attractive interactive forum for the command community, generate interest in the organization and the Army, and encourage participation. Several of these goals are in tension; evaluating social media achievements requires flexibility and openness to unconventional techniques. All online presences, to include websites, blogs, social media accounts, should be registered with HQDA. The registration status is available at <http://www.army.mil/media/socialmedia/>.*

When judging Category D, evaluate according to how well the product answers the following:

#### **Platforms**

- Are there the required number of platforms?
- Are the platforms synchronized in their communication efforts?
- Do they receive consistent, effective engagement?

#### **Background paper**

- Does the entry outline how local communication objectives?
- Were the objectives measurable and clearly defined?
- How well did the objectives support the organization's goals?
- How thorough was the plan?
- To what extent were the objectives achieved?
- How thorough and relevant was analysis?

#### **Technical**

- Are all the sites registered in the Social Media Directory?

- Does the website adhere to DA guidelines?

### **Media Campaign Plan (Category E)**

*This unit category, consider the quality of print and electronic as well as broadcast products generated in support of the campaign. Consider the impact, effectiveness and value of the campaign as well as its products. Reward teams that communicated important command-driven messages in a dynamic, powerful manner more richly than those that generated the greatest volume of video, CI copy and glossy brochures.*

When judging Category D, evaluate according to how well the product answers the following:

#### **Issue statement**

- Is the issue identified?
- Does the opportunity help the command attain its goal?

#### **Research**

- How thorough and relevant was the research?
- Did the research reflect a genuine need?
- Evaluate the research methods used to develop the program

#### **Planning**

- Were the objectives measurable and clearly defined?
- How well did the objectives support the organization's goals?
- How thorough was the plan?

#### **Execution**

- How efficient and effective was execution of the plan relative to resources?

#### **Evaluation**

- To what extent were the objectives achieved?
- How thorough and relevant was analysis?

#### **Effectiveness**

- How much did the plan help the command achieve its goal?
- How much did the program increase public awareness in the unit?
- To what extent did the products produced support the overall objective?

### **Print Stories (Categories F-J)**

*Consider the quality of interviews, source selection, writing and story-telling, and value to the audience as well as the prevalence or absence of mechanical mistakes. Human Interest Features cover the broadest range of subject matter – potentially virtually anything relevant to primary audiences. Allow some creative license in judging features. Ideally, Army journalists strive to meet command information objectives and communicate material in the most compelling manner, not follow a rigid formula. Skillful judges understand the difference between a literary device consciously employed for effect and a mechanical error. By definition, commentaries tend toward the polemical, so allow some leeway in “objectivity” standards. Ideas communicated in commentaries should support command and Army information objectives. A well written, persuasively presented commentary advocating a position you disagree with should score higher than a less well-argued commentary you agree with.*

### Categories K-M (print top honors)

*Consider accomplishments and qualities identified in supporting materials as well as the products submitted in support of these packets. The “Print Journalist of the Year” should contribute heavily to the team, the command and the Army, and embody the qualities of an outstanding Soldier or Army Civilian as well as write good copy or take compelling pictures.*

***Print stories and top honors will be graded as follows:***

#### Fundamental Criteria

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate fundamental criteria. If a product meets a criteria requirement, it will earn one star. Meeting all three requirements will earn it the maximum stars allowable. The fundamental print criteria are:

**Focus:** Entries should support commanders’ communication objectives. If the material doesn’t effectively communicate the story of a command, its Soldiers and/or the Army, it is not an effective product regardless of technical quality. Strong focus is a paramount to an excellent product. The product must remain on a central theme throughout the entire piece. The focus is the main theme to a story, and it should be maintained throughout the article. The conclusion must not leave the reader wondering what the story was about. Just as the lead gives the reader an idea of what the story is about, the conclusion confirms, restates or provides perspective on an idea. Obviously, not every story will include a riveting conclusion, but each should entail a conscious strategy. No conclusion is a weak conclusion.

**Attribution:** The entry should properly attribute any direct or indirect quote. Stories should include the correct rank (if appropriate), unit, job title, and organization as well as service when ambiguous. Observations require no attribution but should be supported by empirical evidence. You obviously won’t have access to entrants’ interview notes or recordings to determine inaccurate attribution however experts can determine obvious shifts in sources, word choices and implausible quotes. (ex. A Pashtun tribal chieftain quotes read like theater Public Affairs Guidance.)

**SAPP:** Stories compromising security are obviously inconsistent with commanders’ intent and success in the competition. Stories that also violate command or service policy or are published with inappropriate subject matter, improper language or unacceptable style or tone should not win CI awards. A factual error pertaining directly to the focus of the story seriously jeopardizes the credibility of the story and its author.

#### Technical Criteria

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate technical criteria. Judges will evaluate the technical aspects of the product and can give from zero up to three stars in this category. Multiple mistakes in one respective area or minor mistakes across multiple areas should result in a loss of a star. If a product does not earn at least one technical criteria star, the judge can recommend the entry be disqualified due to lack of technical standards. Print technical criteria includes:

**Storytelling:** The entry is has a strong lead emphasis. A weak lead fails to emphasize the most important information. A lead that omits important information fails to communicate the gist of the story or includes an inordinate amount of extraneous or irrelevant material. A feature lead should attract the reader’s attention, give them an idea what the story is about and compel them to continue. The substance of the lead should reflect the substance, focus and tone of the story.

**Clarity:** If the meaning of text is not apparent to the reasonable reader, writing creates unintended or detrimental ambiguity, or a story leaves obvious lingering questions, lack of clarity may be a problem.

**No variety:** The entry uses alternate word use, sentence and paragraph length, structure and opening words and avoids repetitive prose.

**Omission:** Entry should not appear to have essential parts missing.

**Redundancy:** Repetition employed to avoid additional research, avert mistakes, pad story length or forestall the need for creativity is inconsistent with excellent writing.

**Wordiness:** Occurs when three or more total words can be deleted from any sentence or the entire sentence can be deleted.

**Stylebook:** Entry should conform to AP style for grammar and punctuation. Material should also conform to AP style unless superseded by a local stylebook furnished by the command. Make allowance for service-directed policies such as the capitalization of “Soldier” and “Families.”

### Creativity

**Three stars** will be used to evaluate effectiveness and creativity. Judges will evaluate originality/creativity of the product and/or if the product was effective at meeting its intended goal. Judges can give at least one but no more than three stars in this category.