

# WILL SHORTZ

New York Times Crossword Editor

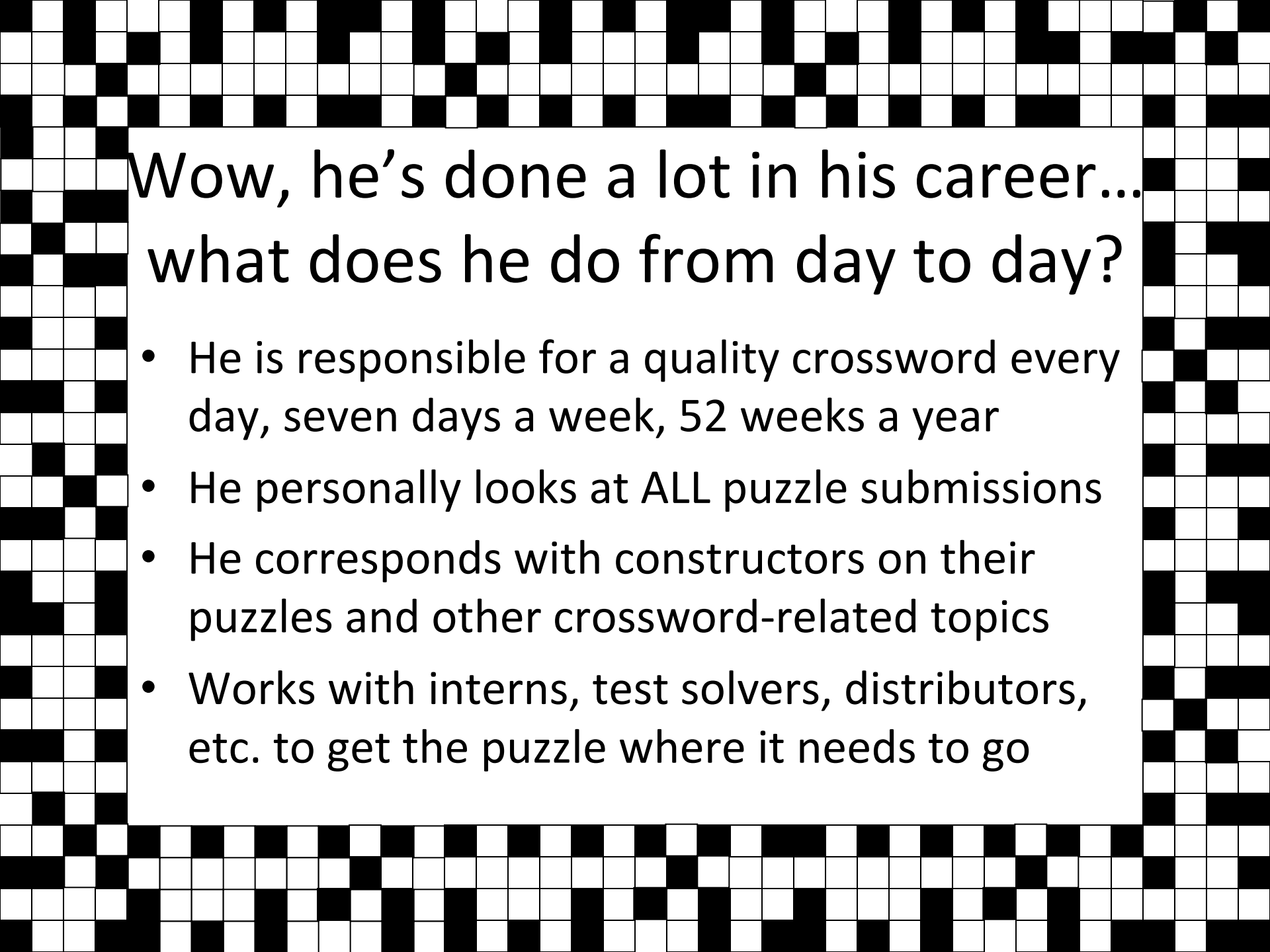


Don Christensen

# Who is Will Shortz?

- Holds the world's only degree in Enigmatology, the study of puzzles
- Was Editor of *Games Magazine* for 15 years
- Founded the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament in 1978
- Has had a Sunday morning segment on National Public Radio since 1987
- Founded the World Puzzle Championship in 1992
- Became *New York Times* Crossword Editor on November 21, 1993





Wow, he's done a lot in his career...  
what does he do from day to day?

- He is responsible for a quality crossword every day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year
- He personally looks at ALL puzzle submissions
- He corresponds with constructors on their puzzles and other crossword-related topics
- Works with interns, test solvers, distributors, etc. to get the puzzle where it needs to go



Anna Shechtman



Frank Longo



Paula Gamache



Joel Fagliano



Ellen Ripstein



Deb Amlen



# How has technology impacted the *Times* crossword puzzle?

- Shortz no longer has “a huge advantage”
- Eliminating obscurities and writing better clues has become a lot easier
  - Blogs and bloggers play a role
- Electronic media also supplement the profit for the New York Times Company
- Still, the majority of solvers solve on paper

January 17, 2013  
by Milo Beckman



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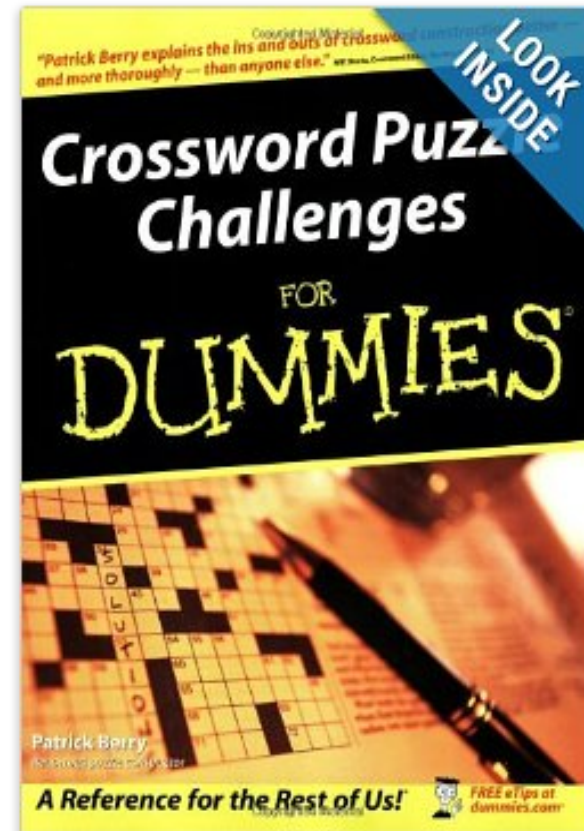
April 4, 2013  
by Corey Rubin



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# Could one make a living off of this?

- Not easily; only about 6 people in America make their living as puzzle makers
- Will says two things:
  - #1 – Learn your craft, whatever it is, and learn to do it well
  - #2 – Make connections in the business





What advice does he have for YOU?

- Start creating crosswords!
- Or take a crossword from a newspaper and try filling it by hand
- Visit [Cruciverb.com](http://Cruciverb.com) and read what the experts have to say
- Go to puzzle events, national or local



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#### The CRUCIVERB Database

Many puzzle constructors and editors have used this great tool for years. With a Gold Membership, so can you!

- Search **answers**
- Search **clues**
- Find **publication info**
- Get access to **word lists**

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#### News from our friends at Puzzazz

Earlier this year, Puzzazz won the GeekWire Innovation of the Year award for our TouchWrite handwriting recognition technology.

In June, they launched support for the New York Times daily crossword. Puzzazz is the only app supporting the print version of the crossword every day -- a full-fidelity experience with none of the problems that other apps have. About ten times a month, Puzzazz is the only app on any platform that presents the puzzle as it's supposed to be.

More recently, they launched a major update, Puzzazz 3.0, which updates the look to match Apple's new iOS 7. The change was natural because their solving experience was already exactly what Apple wants -- an interface that presents the content first and foremost, without extra on-screen elements that detract from the puzzle. They also created a new icon that is a great balance between the Puzzazz aesthetic and Apple's design principles.

See for yourself, click here to download Puzzazz: <http://www.puzzazz.com/ituneslink/rlf>

#### Crossword Maker For Cruciverbalists

#### Today's Puzzles

##### Across Lite puzzles

- [New York Times](#)
- [CROoked Crosswords](#)
- [Merl Reagle](#)

##### Other puzzles

- [CrosSynergy](#)
- [Creators Syndicate](#)
- [LA Times](#)

#### Archives

- [LA Times](#)

#### Other Sites

##### Resources:

- [Will's Calendar](#)
- [Ray's links](#)

# Further Reading (and Solving):

Crossword Puzzle Challenges for Dummies, by Patrick Berry

Cruciverb, crossword resource center: <http://www.cruciverb.com/index.php>

XWord Info, NY Times crosswords since 1980: <http://www.xwordinfo.com/>

American Crossword Puzzle Tournament:

<http://www.crosswordtournament.com/>

Matt Gaffney's Weekly Crossword Contest: <http://xwordcontest.com/>

Puzzles by George Barany and friends:

<http://www.chem.umn.edu/groups/baranygp/puzzles/>

20 Under 30, puzzles from young constructors:

<http://twentyunderthirty.com/>

Crossword Compiler, constructing software:

<http://www.crossword-compiler.com/>

Across Lite, solving software:

<http://www.litsoft.com/across/alite/download/>