



# Community Papers of Michigan

# INFORMER

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# Congratulations Wes Smith! Recipient of the 2018

## John Gaedert Outstanding Community Paper Professional Award!



From Left: John Gaedert's daughters - Brinda Ridenaur and Cindy Gaedert-Gearhart, Wes Smith, Don Rush



# CHECKING OUR PULSE

*What are newspapers saying about the state of things?*



Kevin Slimp  
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Over the past two weeks, I've traveled from coast to coast speaking at newspaper conferences and meeting with Canadian and American journalists about what is happening at their newspapers and, hopefully, offering a little good advice.

As I've met with publishers, writers and editors in places like Keene, New Hampshire, Phoenix, Arizona and Bismarck, North Dakota, I've become even more convinced that the results of the Newspaper Institute spring publisher's survey were right on target when it comes to the state of newspapers across the U.S. and Canada.

At newspaper conferences, I often



Dylan Kahl is editor of *The Mystician*, student newspaper at Bismarck State College in Bismarck, North Dakota.

give a "pop quiz" to learn a little about what is going on at newspapers and what journalists think is going on at papers across the country. I used to be surprised that most attendees

could guess, with relative success, the answers to the quiz.

For instance, while much of the general public might think most papers are part of large groups, the fact that 51 percent of newspapers are independent and locally owned, doesn't get past most quiz-takers, and the fact that less than 20 percent of papers are related to large regional or national groups doesn't surprise too many.

At each recent conference, I've taken time to visit with journalists about what is happening at their papers. Just this week in Bismarck, North Dakota, I met with publishers, editors and reporters from more than 20 newspapers in one-on-one meetings.

What did I learn? I learned there are quite a few younger editors and publishers moving up the ranks at newspapers. I learned most newspapers are doing well, and are continually looking for ways to improve their products and serve their communities better.

I met with college and high school newspaper staffs who are excited about their futures in journalism. I met with metro newspaper investigative reporters about how to dig deeper to get better stories. I met with several publishers who were concerned that their readership was rapidly shrinking due to centralized production, meaning their papers are filled with stories from other places that local readers have no interest in reading.

I learned that reporters still struggle with boredom while covering school board, city commission and other meetings that must be attended. I learned there are still a lot of newspapers where one or two people do everything from reporting, designing, selling ads and running the paper.

I learned that print is still king. I've learned that the further a newspaper is from its corporate headquarters, the more likely it is that its readership is shrinking rapidly.

Meeting over dinner conversation, I heard many times how hard it



Keith Gentili, publisher of *The New Boston (N.H.) Beacon*, discusses his one-year-old newspaper at a recent conference in Keene, New Hampshire.

is to be a journalist. Hard work and long hours, combined with the wrath of angry readers, requires a special breed. I also learned while many publishers and editors talk about someday moving off to the mountains or beach, in reality they can't imagine doing anything else.

Yes, journalism is unlike any other career, and newspapers require a special type of journalist. I suppose that's why I fall in love with every place I go and feel close to so many people I meet.

I recently heard one publisher say, "Journalism is a thankless job." I turned to her and said, "Thank you."

Callings aren't always easy. Usually, they're not. But something within continues to drive us, and the world is a better place because of what we do.

I still fall in love with every place I visit. I still meet close friends and make new friends at each conference. I suppose that's because we've heard the same calling.

Oh, by the way, thank you.

[newspaperacademy.com](http://newspaperacademy.com)

Last month I presented a flyer that needed work... lots of work! This month changes are made, but don't get your hopes up just yet, as we look at the revised...

# FLYER 2



**Sequels are good**, right? And with that in mind, I bring you a revised flyer from last month... and I know this will not work either, but let me walk you through my thought process. I kept the same format, but the concept is still wrong. I intend to show you that sometimes you can't "fix it" and have to rethink the design content and concept.

The reason I kept the same format is to show why this still is not going to work effectively—even with changes in art, type and some of the layout. The flyer is definitely more striking, but the message is still "muddled."

The use of a vertical word is difficult at best, so the idea is to keep it short and sweet. The word "VACATION" is way too long and using more than one word in the "stack" makes it extremely difficult to handle... both readability and legibility suffer. When you do use a vertical word, you want to make sure the letter forms are of similar width for better uniformity and continuity.

I like to show how small changes can make an ad more effective but this is not one of those times. I did a third and somewhat "final" version with new copy... and artwork... and a new format. Now that I think about it, most of the copy remains, but everything else is gone. If you are in control of the content make sure that there is a theme, organization and unity!

## WHERE I BEGAN

The first thing I did was to get rid of the background art. It did not support the content and just made the copy/text more difficult to read. I left all the text as is, except I modified "Lakeshore Newspapers



can help with that." The words "with that" are not necessary, so I deleted them. Everything else is the same.

When I think "extra money," I don't necessarily think vacation first. Sometimes it's just nice to order out, or go to a restaurant for a meal and drinks with family or friends.

The idea here is "extra money" by being a carrier. So for me there's a little disconnect between carrier wages and a vacation. I added artwork to depict the ideas of simple ways that money can be spent.

Contrast (the red color) was used to tie the business, theme and contact information together.

The typeface I chose is **Amplitude** because it's a sans serif and offers Compressed, Ultra and Wide choices. This also allowed for larger type and as I said last time, I did choose to use all caps. While the vertical type is stronger and the surrounding text is also better, the vertical type still does not work and readability is still not effective. In the September, 2017 issue of **CPM INFORMER**, I went into more detail regarding the use of vertical type.

## NO WASTED EFFECTS

Since we have so much going on in this flyer, I did not use any outlines or drop shadows. Number one, it would not support the text and number two, there is still an issue with readability.

This flyer was in trouble from the start. Always look over the copy to get an idea of the information to be presented. If you have a chance to write your own copy, make sure that it is clear, concise and unified. And stay away from vertical type if you can! Again, the vertical type "VACATION" is too long and letter shapes too dissimilar to work effectively.

The contact information was placed in the red box to be similar and help unify the business and it adds a bit of balance between the top and bottom of the advertising.

## "VISUAL CLUTTER" IS STILL HERE...

We are agreed that there was a lot of visual clutter last month... and we still have it. But we know that it is the vertical type that has created this dilemma. The principles that I concentrated on were...

**CONTRAST** which works with all the design elements—I used color to create visual interest and help organize information by providing a focal point. Whatever stands out the most gets noticed. I also created more visual contrast with the size and color of the vertical type and surrounding text. The red reverse type areas help to unify the business and the contact information.

**REPETITION** was used with the food. The size is about the same, the transparency is at 60% (if I didn't lessen the strength, the food art would have also competed with the text and added to the "clutter"). This was also a way to unify these items as well. The food is repeated at about the same size and intensity which helps tie them together.

**ALIGNMENT** is better... at least there is a better visual connection between the headline and contact information. The art also feels less like an afterthought and the food art takes advantage of those big gaping areas of negative space.

**PROXIMITY** in this flyer is still a problem. There are still too many disparate (oh, I like this word, it just means dissimilar) pieces. So no visual connection for the reader.

**STILL TO DO...** In my opinion, this flyer still doesn't work. In my long-time experience, this flyer would never have looked like this to start with. But trying to salvage your message has to be part of the initial thought process to avoid situations like this.

Know the limitations, and I go back to the use of vertical type. Look over all the copy before you start, because sometimes you can't just "fix it." Next month, the vertical type is going to be gone and the copy will be reworked. The third time's the charm...

*I started as an art teacher and changed to a graphic design career in the 1980s. I write for IFPA TIP, and the CPM INFORMER. For info, PDFs of articles, or have ideas, e-mail: [hanrahan.ln@att.net](mailto:hanrahan.ln@att.net) Ellen Hanrahan ©2018*

**Rountable discussion during the October 9, 2018 General Membership Meeting in Lansing**





By Bob Berting  
*Berting Communications*

# Tips For Coaching The Sales Team



Because of their value to the publication, it's very important to focus on the performance of the sales team. While many sales managers will lament about the sales force and their inability to build advertising sales, the critical problem is that the salespeople are simply not motivated. In my experience as a large suburban newspaper sales manager, then executive, and current newspaper marketing consultant, I find the following points to be valid in coaching the sales team:

## Enthusiasm breeds excitement

We always like to be around someone who truly enjoys what they do. Our prospects and customers enjoy working with salespeople when they are enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is a sign of belief that people can sense. The axiom "To be enthusiastic, you must act enthusiastic" can be applied for good results. The enthusiasm of the sales manager is important. If the manager is low-key, aloof and too reserved, this could affect the enthusiasm of the sales team.

## Self esteem creates greater self worth

This is probably one of the great assets of a successful publication sales team. They

believe in themselves, and they don't worry excessively about what people think of them, but how they feel about themselves. The sales manager has to always keep the self esteem of the sales team at the highest level by respecting their feelings and individual goals.

## The subconscious mind helps to achieve excellent attitudes

Salespeople can program themselves to set goals and beliefs. The sales manager has to instill a good team attitude by his or her attitude every day. If the sales manager is perceived as someone who is constantly pre-occupied with worry and negative beliefs, this will have a negative effect on the attitudes of the salespeople.

## Investing in the sales team

Positive thoughts need to be projected every day and this can be done by the development of a reference library of self help books, DVDs, and podcasts. Listening to podcasts while driving to and from work, as well as between sales calls is an excellent way to develop "spaced repetition", by repeat listening of the same podcasts in spaced intervals. (Continued on page 7.)

## Tips For Coaching The Sales Team

*Continued from page 6*

### Having more fun

One of the greatest forms of motivation is to lighten up and work at making things fun. The use of humor in advertising campaigns is powerful. The sales team needs to brainstorm in sales meetings how they can effectively create more humor in their customers advertising. The sales manager needs to have a sense of humor to direct this activity.

### Avoiding comfort zones

Although it's very easy for a very experienced salesperson to get into a comfortable rut, newer salespeople can have the same problem, although sometimes to a lesser degree. The sales manager has to ensure that their salespeople are learning something new on an ongoing basis.



Bob Berting, Newspaper Marketing Consultant, is offering his new e-book for the newspaper industry "Power Selling Tools For The Advertising Sales Consultant". The new e-book has valuable content for both the beginning and experienced advertising salesperson. Bob has 2 previous e-books for the newspaper industry: "Dynamic Sales and Image Power" and "Advanced Selling Skills For The Advertising Sales Pro". Go to Bob's website [www.bobberting.com](http://www.bobberting.com) to order any one or bundle of 2 or all 3 books.

*Bob Berting is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and columnist in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. Contact Bob at [bob@bobberting.com](mailto:bob@bobberting.com) or 317-849-5408. He is President of Berting Communications, 6330 Woburn Drive, Indianapolis In 46250.*



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By Peter Wagner Founder and Publisher, The N'West Iowa REVIEW

GET REAL THE PRINTED PAPER IS STILL A PUBLISHERS BEST ASSET!

Another Newspaper Means More Opportunity

My family's publishing company, Iowa Information, purchased the Hawarden Independent/Ireton Examiner and the Area Wide Ad-Vertiser the first of this month.

That's the fourth paid circulation newspaper and third free circulation Shopper we've either started or acquired.

My wife and I started our Golden Shopper right out of college in 1962. We had no print advertising or actual printing experience.

Next came The N'West Iowa REVIEW, a regional newspaper established in 1972. Except for what we had learned the 10 years publishing our Golden Shopper, neither of us had any experience in the newspaper business.

That might have been our greatest strength. We had no idea of what couldn't be done or shouldn't be done. We didn't know, for example, that there was an unwritten agreement between community newspapers to stay out of each other's towns. We managed to hang on by selling advertising all across the region.

There have been more than a few who've asked me why we continue to purchase and publish community

newspapers. "Don't you know the newspaper business is dying?" they say.

"Don't you know the need for and importance of local hometown newspapers?" I respond.

Who else but the local newspaper reports all the scores from last weekend's youth baseball tournament, keeps a tight watch on what is happening at city hall, writes a heart-warming story about a local lady celebrating her 103rd birthday or pens the much-needed editorial creating consensus for repaving main street? The nearby television station won't. It covers too wide of an area with too little real broadcast time for such details. The local radio station can't. It would be too big a job for their one- or two-person news department. Between our offices we have 12 people in our newsrooms.

True, the internet has brought many changes to the way people get the news today. It offers communication opportunities not before available in small town America. A person can go on the internet and find a good recipe, check the temperature almost anywhere, learn who invented the combustible engine and list the names of all 100 senators currently in office. (Cont. on page 9.)

Area Wide AD-VERTISER

Area Wide Ad-vertiser advertisement featuring various real estate listings with photos and contact information.

Peoples Bank MasterCard Debit Card advertisement and Dr. Amber Meyer dental advertisement.

We've got you COVERED advertisement listing local news and services, including city government, church announcements, and high school sports.

HAWARDEN INDEPENDENT IRETON EXAMINER newspaper masthead and subscription information.

Whistlestop Casino advertisement and Citizens' chance to HAVE A VOICE article snippet.

West Sioux to reroute traffic to curb high school parking lot congestion article snippet and a map of the area.





## Another Newspaper Means More Opportunity *Continued from page 8*

There is no other media that cares that much about the town or the people of the town as the newspaper. The hometown newspaper – paid or free circulation - is the community's most credible news and information source. The local paper reports the news and delivers information about the best local deals as conveniently and completely as possible without comment.

There have been a few who have suggested we will eventually shut down the Independent/Examiner and force readers to subscribe instead to our regional N'West Iowa REVIEW.

That, of course, is ridiculous. There is a need for both a regional paper like the Saturday REVIEW and the community papers we publish during the middle of the week. The REVIEW addresses regional issues that affect or could affect all the communities in our corner of Iowa. Our local papers, as well as those published by others in the area, amplify the local connection to those regional reports while it shares additional information especially important to that community.


Local newspapers continue to be the first writers of local history. They

continue to be the archives of people's lives and organizational changes.

All of our family, and those who work with us Iowa Information, are thankful to be in a position to publish so many area newspaper, shopper, specialty publications and magazines in our part of Iowa. We plan to continue to publish news and advertising papers, for the good of the community, for many years to come.



*Peter W. Wagner is founder and publisher of the award winning N'West Iowa REVIEW and 13 additional publications. This free monthly GET REAL newsletter is written exclusively for State and National Press Associations and distributed by them to their members. To get Wagner's free PAPER DOLLARS email newsletter for publishers, editors and sales managers email him at pww@iowainformation.com. The two monthly email newsletters contain information completely different than found in Wagner's monthly Publisher's Auxiliary column. Wagner can be contacted by emailing pww@iowainformation.com or calling his cell at 712-348-3550.*



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By John Foust  
Raleigh, NC

# Ad-Libs

## A Strategy for Organizing Your Advertisers' Information

I was talking to Greg, a veteran sales manager "Our sales team knows the importance of asking questions and gathering the right information," he said. "But the key is to write it down accurately and keep it organized. When sales people review their notes later, they need to be able to move as quickly as possible to the next step in the process, whether that's a proposal or the first ad in a new campaign.

"To deal with the challenge, I put together a simple format for note-taking," he explained. "It has evolved over time, and I'm sure it comes from a combination of ideas I've seen in training programs and books over the years. Our team likes this approach, because it saves time and gives them a track to follow."

Greg's format can be used by anyone who takes notes in a meeting where several topics are covered. Although a sales person goes through a progression of questions, a conversation sometimes veers into other areas, and an important point can get lost in a sea of notes. "Simply use a legal pad and divide it into four sections," he said. "Draw a line from top to bottom and another line from left to right. Label each quadrant with the titles you want – and you're all set. On the next page, you can continue the same four categories or use four new ones.

Here's a look at Greg's favorite quadrants:

1. Put audience information in the top left quadrant. "This is for notes about the



advertiser's target audience," Greg said. "Their demographics, their interests, their age ranges, and especially their buying motives. What about the similarities and differences between their existing customers and the customers they want to attract?"

2. Put information about products and services in the upper right quadrant. "This tightens their focus," Greg explained. "Don't let the advertiser get away with puffed up generalities like 'fantastic' or 'incredible.' Dig for specific features and benefits. When you review the notes, you'll see some connections between audience motivators and product benefits."

3. Write history notes in the bottom left

quadrant. According to Greg, this is the place for the advertiser's previous marketing experiences. What worked? What didn't work? What media vehicles were used? What kind of budget did they allocate? In their opinion, what could they have done differently to generate better results?"

4. Put notes on ad plans in the bottom right quadrant. This is the spot to write ideas for new ads. Do some special tactics come to mind? What about testimonials? Or tie-ins between print and digital promotions?

"The system works like a charm," Greg said. "If the advertiser mentions a product fact while history is being discussed, there's no problem. Just put that product note in the proper section. We use this format in other meetings, too. For example, in creative strategy conversations, we may label the sections Offer, Headline, Illustration, and Schedule."

It's all about writing it down the right way. Worth a try, isn't it?

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*John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com*



Michael Angelo Caruso



# Getting Referrals Like Pulling Teeth?

Many salespeople and business owners struggle with getting referrals.

I once had a dentist who was having trouble growing his practice. He never seemed to have many patients.

I asked him why he had never asked me for referrals. I'll never forget his answer. He said, "I don't want to seem needy."

Salespeople miss huge opportunities by not being open to the idea of having new customers.

Referrals are great because they usually allow you to skip the cold call scenario, so you can get straight to business on your first interaction with a prospect.

With a referral, you can often shorten the sales cycle, as well. This allows you to close faster and then spend more time closing other deals.

Referral selling (often called "referral marketing") is a great way to all but guarantee that your leads are pre-qualified and genuinely interested in your services or products before you

make time to visit with the prospect.

Getting referrals doesn't have to be hard. It seems like referral selling would be a no-brainer for any salesperson. But there are many reasons we don't truly systemize the referral process:

- Were never taught how
- Not in the habit
- Afraid of rejection
- Not sure of the best time to ask
- We get too busy and forget
- "I missed my first (best) chance and now it's awkward..."
- We think that satisfied customers won't want to help us

Want help with your sales?

In my online presentation training course, I help salespeople learn how to:

- Never forget to ask for referrals
- Speed up the selling cycle
- Microwave cold referrals
- Keep you from working against yourself

- Cultivate reciprocity by helping the prospect first
- Double your referrals with one word
- Get your referral program to constantly feed you warm leads

Start getting referrals today!

Michael Angelo Caruso is one of America's premier keynote speakers. He is known as "the speakers' speaker."

Mr. Caruso teaches presentation skills and is in demand for conventions, conferences, and annual events of all kinds. Michael specializes in working with leaders, salespeople, and the customer service industry.

Mr. Caruso has spoken in South America, Africa, Australia, Asia, the Middle East, and 49 of the 50 states. He spends lots of time working and playing in California, Texas, Florida, and New York.

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