

INFORMER



Community
Papers of
Michigan

April 2019



OUR DATA
SPEAKS VOLUMES



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Don Rush
CPM President

Why I Give A Damn About Community Papers

You would be amazed — or maybe not — on the amount of times I hear this comment, or one just like it. "You still work at a newspaper?"

That comment is usually spoken in a solemn, apologetic manner, like the speaker wanted to console me on the loss of something near and dear to my heart. Folks, why the long faces? Granted, daily and regional papers are taking a hit, a point broadcast and digital media platforms love to opine about. However, community papers are still the growth in the industry.

And, while it's harder to make a buck at community papers, they still are making dollars; and the ones doing the best are the ones continuing to understand and deliver on their mission. What mission is that, you ask?

Simply, to engage and inform.

I give a damn about community papers like the ones I have worked at for (a-hem) more than a few years for a number of reasons. The Number One Reason, of course, is because it has allowed me to pay my bills, raise, cloth, feed and shelter my family and kids. (I put that in the number one slot,

because, after all it really is all about me.)

Aside from the selfish reasons, I give a hoot about community papers because I love community life, the sense of being a part of something bigger than myself. I find comfort in the fellowship stemming from common interests, attitudes and goals in the communities around here — communities I have lived, worked and played in almost my entire life. I reckon you can say I'm locally invested.

The community paper business dovetails nicely into my own personal feelings. Community papers like ours, The Citizen, The Clarkston News, The Lake Orion Review and The Oxford Leader are invested in each of our individual communities. We're brick and mortar businesses paying local school and property taxes. That said, it's in our own best interest to pay attention to the actions of local officials and governmental boards.

It's our job to attend local school board or city or township meetings. It is our job to be our community's watchdog. I know sometimes we want to be the "nice guy," merely reporting on what happens at these meetings. However, all of the time we need to wear our big boy pants when reporting. For more engaging articles we need to also write on the tone of meetings — was it tense in there? Jovial? Or, were council members robotic in their manner?

I love when our papers report on new businesses. I love it when we report on

all the groovy things our kids are doing in the classrooms and out of the schools. While I hate having to report on a tragedy, my spirits are always lifted when I read the stories of our communities come together to lift up the stricken or fallen.

From sperm to worm, it's our job to report on the life and times of those who reside here. From announcing new arrivals with birth notices, to running life stories in obituaries, and all the accomplishments in between, we publish the news of our community. And, we do it better than any other media source.

We cheer with the community at our successes, we mourn at loss and we also point out wrongs. We promote civic liberty and welfare; we shine light into dark places; we filter out rumor and innuendo that is so common on social media these days. We present facts. I give a damn about community papers for those reasons and more.

A community paper, if it is worth its salt, cares not only for the residents it represents, but also the commercial engines which drive our communities economically. Local brick and mortar businesses — like the local grocer, or retailer, or mechanic, are invested in our communities, too. They are the ones who sponsor little league teams, or donate items for charitable endeavors. They take the risk of doing business locally. Without them, I shudder to think what would happen to our communities. (Continued on Page 11.)

2019 Publishers Survey

Annual survey offer insights into future of industry



by Kevin Slimp
kevin@kevinslimp.com

I was excited about the opportunity to speak to the publishers of New York recently at the NYPA Spring Convention. Let's face it, New Yorkers take their newspapers seriously, and the NYPA convention is always special.

I spoke on eight topics over two days while in New York, but it was the second session that drew the biggest crowd. The room was packed to hear me speak on the topic, "What's Really Happening at Newspapers Today."

Fortunately, I was a week into crunching numbers from my 2019 survey of U.S. newspaper publishers. I quizzed the audience before sharing the results of the survey to see how they thought other publishers would respond to the survey's 35 questions. On some, they were close. On others, they were audibly surprised.

We began conducting this annual survey in 2014, while I was directing the Newspaper Institute at The University of Tennessee. In each year since, we've had between 400 and 700 publishers participate. That's easily enough to indicate results representative of the industry.

While with the New York group, I took some time to look at the differences between daily and non-daily papers. We examined the numbers of locally-owned newspapers to those owned by large groups. We even compared newspapers in New York state to papers in other geographical areas of the country.

In coming columns, I'll share some of the most interesting details from these comparisons. In this column, I will share some general results of the completed questionnaires.

Where are the participants located?

No surprise here. Most respondents came from the Southeast, Midwest and Northeast geographical areas of the U.S. It makes sense, since these are the areas with the most newspapers. These were followed by the Southwest, West Coast, and Pacific Northwest.

I always get a chuckle out of this question. There will always be a few publishers from Texas who select "other," and insist Texas is its own geographical region.

How many copies are printed?

This one always seems to stump the audience. Most folks usually seem to think

other papers are much larger than their own, so they will guess somewhere around 10,000. Then when I ask how big their papers are, they will usually come in around 3,000 to 5,000. Audience members always seem surprised to learn that most of their papers are like most other newspapers in the business.

How is the health of your newspaper?

When it comes to guessing the overall health of most newspapers, audience members usually guess correctly. Almost 45 percent of publishers in the survey responded their overall health as "Not bad, but not great." That was followed by 36 percent who responded the health of their papers was "Relatively healthy."

Only 10 percent of newspaper publishers indicated their papers are in "Poor health," while less than one percent checked "Near death."

Compared to one year ago, 52 percent of publishers indicate their papers are "About the same" health. 23 percent of papers seem to be in better shape than a year earlier, while 25 percent indicated they are in worse shape.

When compared to three years ago, the numbers aren't quite as rosy. "Better than three years ago" was selected by 24 percent of respondents. "About the same" was the answer for 25 percent, and 49 percent indicated they are in worse shape than three years ago.

Where is the money coming from?

Most folks in the New York audience guessed correctly to the question, "What is the primary revenue source of your main publication?" They were, however, surprised by the low number of papers that answered something besides "Print Advertising."

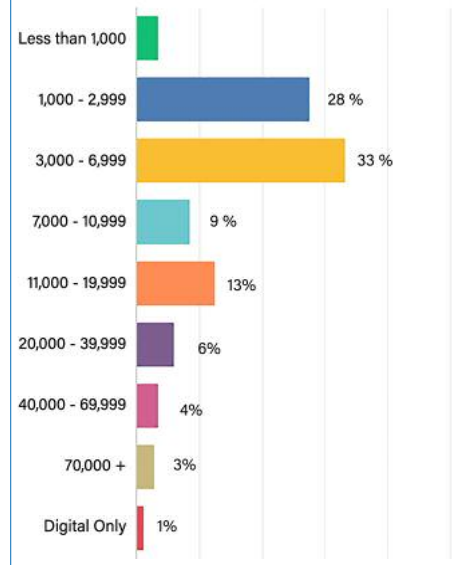
A full 95 percent of respondents answered "Print Advertising" when asked what was their primary revenue source. Another three percent indicated "Print Subscriptions," while 3 percent answered either "Digital Advertising" (1.6 percent) or "Digital Subscriptions" (.3 percent).

It seems that digital is a long way from "the goose that laid the golden egg." While many survey participants indicated they see some benefits from their digital presence, many are hard-pressed to find any financial benefits.

What's the bottom line?

Well, I'm still crunching numbers but it's safe to say this year's survey looks a lot like the surveys from 2014-2018. There are fewer newspapers without a digital presence. Newspapers aren't quite as optimistic

Average Print Run



Most newspapers print 5,000-6,000 copies.

about their long-term futures, but most think they will be around for a long time to come (12 years or longer) in printed form, though publishers aren't as confident as they were in previous years.

What surprised attendees the most in New York? From their responses to the survey results, I'd guess they were surprised that their newspapers were so similar to other papers around the U.S.

Like in most geographical areas, the large majority of New York papers are locally-owned. New York has its share of big metro papers, but most newspapers are weekly/community publications. They're not making the profits they were 30 years ago, but they are healthy and expect to continue in business for a long time to come.

When I began to call my session to an end, one of the audience members asked if I could share a little more information. I was surprised when other audience members indicated they'd like to learn more.

I continued to share some of what I'd learn visiting thousands of newspapers over the years and answering questions, while others shared their thoughts.

The truth is that I like just about every place I visit, and my few days in New York left me once again with the realization that our industry is in good shape. With spring convention season behind me, I suppose I'll have to visit a few papers to keep my adrenaline flowing.



Wes Smith, *Group Publisher*
View Newspaper Group

Community Newspaper Icons Left Their Mark

Michigan's weekly newspaper business lost two icons in February. Both will be long remembered for their contributions to their communities and for the newspaper family legacies they each leave behind.

James Sherman, Sr. of Oxford passed away at age 92 on Feb. 16. "Big Jim" and his wife Hazel were the founders of Sherman Publications, Inc., publishers of the weekly newspapers Oxford Leader, Lake Orion Review, Clarkston News, The (Ortonville/Brandon) Citizen, The Advertiser, Penny Stretcher and the Big Deal magazine.

Gilbert Demers of Grosse Pointe Park passed away at age 89 on Feb. 25. Gil and his wife Charlotte were the founders of C&G Newspapers, a group of 19 weekly newspapers serving communities in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties from Grosse Pointe to Farmington Hills including their flagship paper, The Warren Weekly.

The two men came into the newspaper business from different directions. Jim from the journalism side and Gil from the advertising side.

Sherman, who was born in Owosso, served in the Navy after high school and studied journalism at MSU when it was still known as Michigan State College. After college, and stints working at the Gladwin County Record and the Clinton County Republican-News, Sherman and his wife bought the Oxford Leader in 1955. He served as that paper's publisher until his retirement in 1993.

Demers grew up in the neighborhoods on the east side of Detroit. He had a variety of jobs around that area as a boy and young man, always looking for a way to earn money to support his family and himself during and after the Great Depression. By the time he was 18 he was the owner-operator of a small grocery store on McClellan Ave. in Detroit. He sold the store, got married, served in the Army and held a variety of sales jobs until starting his first paper, The Shores Shopper, in 1977.

It was during that era, the late 70s, that I came to know both men.

I was working at Webco Press, the commercial newspaper printing division of The County Press at that time. Gil Demers with his brand new "shopper" was a client. Even though we were of different generations, we

immediately hit it off. It was hard not to like Gil. He always had a smile and a funny anecdote. He had a knack for putting people at ease and always showed concern beyond business. He'd always ask, "How's your job going?" and "How's your wife doing?" His questions were not perfunctory business patter. He genuinely cared about what was happening in the lives of the people with whom he worked.

Jim Sherman Sr. and Jim Fitzgerald, editor of The County Press from the mid-50s until he moved to the Free Press in 1976, were good friends dating back to when they had each entered the newspaper business and found themselves working just across the county line from each other.

They shared and uncanny ability and love for skewering hapless local politicians in print and each other over cocktails. The Shermans and Fitzgeralds, Jim and his wife Pat, attended annual Michigan Press Association conventions together. I married into Fitz's family in 1978 when I was fortunate to betroth the lovely Christie and we'd tag along with her folks to the convention.

That's how I came to know Big Jim and Hazel Sherman. (Continued on page 5.)

Newspaper Icons (Continued from page 4.)

Jim Sherman was a mover and shaker within the MPA, serving as both a member of its board of directors and its president. He later served on the MPA Foundation and was instrumental in creating the foundation's scholarship program for aspiring journalists. Back in his community, Big Jim had expanded



Jim Sherman

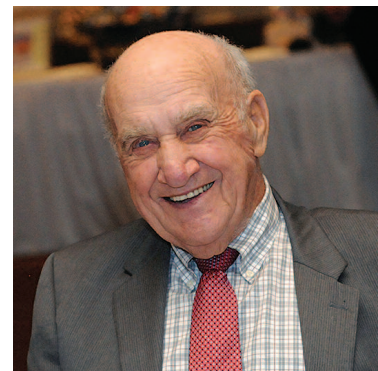
his newspaper business to include newspapers in Lake Orion, Clarkston and Ortonville. He served on and chaired numerous local committees, was a leader in Oxford's Rotary Club and helped create that community's Lone Ranger festival. (Oxford was home to Brace Beemer, the radio Lone Ranger.) Even as his publishing business grew beyond what might be considered small-town, Sherman embodied the best qualities and characteristics of a small-town publisher and editor - hold local elected and public officials accountable, help promote and grow local business, bring the community together. He did so while maintaining that acerbic sense of humor in his weekly column, Jim's Jottings, applying pressure via the printed word when necessary to move his community forward and rolling up his sleeves at the local charity fundraisers.

Over on the east side, Gil Demers was growing his startup publishing business. Gil was an incredible salesman and I mean that in the most positive sense. Long before "consultative selling" (Google it) was a thing, Gil was a natural master of the art. Because it came from his heart - he really cared about the people he was selling ads to. He asked about their business goals and came up with an advertising plan that would help them achieve those goals and grow their business. He got excellent results for his advertisers and his own business grew from a single newspaper, to a few, to a dozen and more. Today C&G Newspapers has more than 600,000 copies of their 19 direct-mailed newspapers in print every week. Their tagline is "In Your Mail Every Week." Even though Gil was a natural salesman, he also knew the power that local newspapers have to bring a community together. Although his shopper model worked without news content, as soon as he was able, he began hiring reporters, photographers, copy editors and editors and started covering local governments, schools and organizations in the communities his papers served.

One thing that Sherman and Demers shared was deep commitment to family. Both built their businesses with their wives working at their side, giving those great women full credit for both the success of their business and for making them the men they were. Both the Shermans and the Demers brought their children - all of their children - into the family business. For the Shermans it was Jim Jr., Luan and Susan, all of whom work in the family newspaper business today. Unfortunately, their mother, Hazel, preceded their father in

death by several years. For the Demers it's Karen, Jeff, Gregg, Keith and Suzanne all of whom work at their family newspaper business today. Their mother, Charlotte, continues to be involved.

Through the years, hundreds of journalists, salespeople, graphic artists and others started their careers, or at some point in their career worked, at either Sherman Publications or C&G Newspapers. It would be unusual to be in a gathering of a dozen or more newspaper people in this state and NOT run into someone who has worked at one place or the other - or both. And most, if not all, of those alums would have a funny or touching or motivational story to tell you about Gil or Big Jim.



Gil Demmers

Either one of those men could have been hugely successful in any business or field they chose. Our business - the local, community newspaper business - is better off for each of them having chosen the path they did. They will be missed. They will be remembered. And their legacy will live on through their families and through the lives of the many newspaper people they influenced throughout their remarkable careers - including mine.



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

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

Print Advertising Salespeople Need To “Tell Their Story”

Many of today's print advertising salespeople aren't selling. They're not getting face-to-face with potential customers and they are not “telling their story.”

Too many print advertising professionals are simply getting by, slowly losing their customer base, soliciting new and repeat advertising by email.

You and I know how that works. We all get dozens of sales proposals by email every day. My usual response is a quick push of the delete key. I don't even take time to respond with a “No, thank you.”

Newspaper and shopper sales representatives have to put much of the blame on themselves for the “newspapers are dying” statements echoed by the various electronic and digital media companies. We are not putting up any defense. We are not “telling our story!”

History has proven the printed record is the one society depends upon to recall past facts and interpret the present. Digital files can be fleeting,

are mostly undocumented and often are nothing more than personal opinion or harmful propaganda.

Here are some reasons your community needs and should support their local paper. More important, here is why local advertisers will still reach the greatest number of committed, local buyers through printed publications. These are key points you can include in your valuable, important “story.”

1. OUTREACH. Social media and locally produced websites, postings and blogs only reach select groups of like-minded followers. They only confirm the thoughts of a minority and split the community. Community papers reach deep into all the various social and economic levels to create consensus and positive action. Printed publications have a long shelf life. Printed papers are credible and are often referred to for everything from the high school basketball team's conference record to which councilman voted what way during the latest tax issue.

2. READERSHIP. Contrary to populist

edicts, the local paper still reaches readers of all age groups and all interests. That's why papers put so much emphasis on publishing a well edited, extensive mix of local news, scholastic and recreational sports, previews and coverage of local entertainment and family-fun activities as well as both opinion and commentary pieces. Even the local papers' ads help guarantee cross-culture readership with information on everything from that week's grocery specials to the “specially priced spring tune-ups at the local bike shop.”

3. PROFESSIONALISM. No one business is so well prepared to offer readers and advertisers a more professional mix of news and advertising services, The local paper can provide everything from quality writing and editing to fresh and effective design at one quick stop. Publication readers can be sure they will get a great, hometown publication complete with the latest details on everything they want to know. Advertisers can be equally sure their message will be perfectly presented to the exact audience they want to reach. (Continued on page 7.)

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

Print Advertising People (Continued from page 6)

4. LOCAL EXPERTS. The local paper shares the ideas and opinions of local experts from the clergy to the local historian to hometown chefs in columns that both enlighten and cause readers to dig deeper and get more involved in the community. Those same columnists each have a local following who are potential customers at local stores.

5. A CONNECTION WITH THE FAMOUS. The local newspaper is often the first, and sometime only, local stop for any politician, actor or artist, activists of other nationally or regionally known individuals visiting the community. Through their articles and photographs the paper shares the excitement and purpose of the visit with the community.

6. THE PAPER IS NON-INTRUSIVE. Unlike Facebook and other social media sites the newspaper keeps the readers names, addresses, views and interests

private. The hometown paper does not collect and sell their reader's comments, interests or secrets that are gleaned by reading the electronic exchanges between paying users of some international non-traditional information service.

7. PAPERS ARE ESSENTIAL. Newspaper reporters are everywhere that most citizens don't have the time or opportunity to be. They attend meetings, interview sources, research facts, ask questions and create stories that keep voters, tax-payers and all interested citizens informed and involved. Hometown papers assure the future of their community by being a relentless watchdog of all that goes on around them. Without the local paper the community would just be a group of individuals passing through the same geographic area. Without community papers, local businesses would have no

customer base to whom to sell their goods.

But nobody is going to know that truth unless local papers begin to "tell their story."

Looking for good local sales training for your paper or group, or for a direct-to-the-point program to recommend to your group or press association manager? Contact Peter W.Wagner at (cell) 712-348-3550 or pww@iowainformation.com.

Peter W. Wagner is publisher of the award winning N'West Iowa REVIEW and 12 additional publications. He is often called "The Idea Man" and is a regular presenter at State Press Association and Publishing Group conventions and seminars. You can contact him regarding his programs "100 Ideas for Fun and Profit" or "Selling Print Advertising the Wagner Way" by emailing pww@iowainformation.com or calling his cell 712-348-3550 anytime.



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Our members are encouraged to contribute to this site with industry-related info, local editorial features and other information our members and readers would find interesting.




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Ad-Libs

By John Foust
Raleigh, NC

Multi-tasking = Multi-risking

Joseph was talking to me about something he feels is important to the ad staff he manages. “These days, there’s a lot of talk about multi-tasking,” he said. “But according to what I’ve read on the subject, there’s no such thing. We can shift back and forth between tasks, but doing two tasks at once would be like putting a stick-shift car in first gear and second gear at the same time. It can’t be done.

“Sadly, multi-tasking is seen as a desirable skill,” Joseph explained. “I know a lot of people who claim it’s one of their greatest strengths. Some job descriptions even list it as a requirement. They just don’t understand that multi-tasking is an unrealistic cliché.”

Psychologists agree that a human being is not capable of doing two tasks at the same time. Sure, we can do two things that don’t compete for our focus (like carrying on a conversation while walking), but we can’t concentrate on more than one thing at a time. When we think we are multi-tasking, we are actually task-switching – moving quickly from one thing to another. Think of it as a fast shift between first and second gear.

“I think of multi-tasking as multi-risking,” Joseph said. “We’ve all seen YouTube videos of people walking into telephone poles and falling into fountains while they’re looking at their phones. And of course, we know that texting and driving is a lethal combination. Talking on the phone while driving is distracting enough, but texting is stupid. It’s as dangerous as drunk driving.

“In the business world, trying to do two things at once might not put your life in danger, but it can cause mistakes. For example, if you try to write an email and talk on the phone at the same time, you’ll risk miscommunicating something to both parties. You can give one or the other your undivided attention, but not both. Even if you don’t make a mistake, it can be frustrating to the person on the other end to hear your keyboard clicking in the background.

“Trying to multi-task can also damage relationships,” he said. “I remember going to a luncheon which featured several presenters. The manager of one of the speakers was there to support her staff member, but spent the entire time looking down at her phone. Her seat was at the head table, right next to the lectern, so everyone in the audience could see that she wasn’t paying attention. A few days later, I ran into

the speaker, and he told me that his manager’s actions showed that she obviously didn’t care about what he was saying, even though he was talking about the company where they both worked. Not surprisingly, a few months later he left to take another job.”

Joseph is right about multi-risking. When someone tries to concentrate on two important things at the same time, it creates a risk that is not worth taking.

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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



I like options and using vector artwork gives me options and flexibility. It's very different from a bitmap program like Adobe Photoshop. Adobe Illustrator is a program that creates . . .

Vector Art



Bitmap vs. Vector

Photoshop vs. **Illustrator** (or similar programs). The biggest difference is in scalability... vector images retain clarity whether it's one inch or 100 inches plus.

Bitmap images will degrade and clarity suffers at vast changes in sizes. It really depends upon the final application of the artwork.

I've gathered vector artwork from many places— iStock-photo.com, MightyDeals.com, Storyblocks.com, etc.— basically wherever (and whenever) I can. I think I am also partial to floral or stylized images. For the ads that I did (small space ads with a fair amount of text), this type of art fills the bill. Especially when the advertiser adds "use appropriate art"—as if there's any room! Here are some of my favorite illustrations...



A lot of potential

The use of a photograph has its limitations—mostly a size issue. In the small ads, using the photo as an attention-getter was not an option due to lack of spacing. So an illustration became more adaptable for my uses.

When I look for an illustration, it has to 1) fit the message; 2) be able to be "deconstructed;" and 3) be generic enough to be used in or as a frame for a variety of ads, from help-wanted to home fix-up. Flowers or floral designs fall into that category for me.



SEE OUR
SPECIAL
WASHINGTON
COUNTY FAIR
SECTION
COMING
JULY 17

We were putting together one of our spring home sections and had an odd 1x5 space to fill. The above artwork would work nicely. As it turned out, this was an ideal place to take apart this artwork, reverse it and add info regarding the upcoming fair section.

Black and white offers a strong contrast and since there was not a lot of text in the ad, it was easier to reverse it because I could use the text at a larger point size and still have it readable.

I did not use all of the flower parts because the floral element would have been too small and less of an attention-getter. I also eliminated some of the vertical stripes in the background. In a one-column ad the use of a lot of contrasting vertical stripes can appear to "segment" or "chop up" the ad.

We have used this 'template' for other small, one-column promos.

For your Spring Inspiration

Visit Unique Interiors
Distinctive Home Accents
& Elegant Gifts

Unique  Interiors

555 North Main Street Downtown Hartford
262-555-5555

Shoppe Hours:
Monday-Friday 11-6pm; Saturday 10-4pm

Another deconstruction The original artwork appears in the top left side of this column. I did a lot more "tweaking" with this file as shown above right. The ad above shows the final use, but there wasn't any way that the original art would work effectively in this ad. The art itself was totally suitable for this springtime ad and by simply removing the background, flipping the art and repositioning the pieces made for an eye-catching frame for the ad. I also made the artwork more transparent to soften it and let the words remain dominant.

And yes, there's more... The beauty of vector art is that it can be used in a number of ways—backgrounds, help-wanted, birthdays, retail stores, etc., and you have many parts to choose from. The vector artwork can also be modified in any drawing or illustration program to create the parts that will best fit in your ads.

This art was from iStockphoto, but similar types can be found in any number of services that handle vector artwork. You can even create your own!

I have only shown some floral art available, so imagine what glorious art can be created with swirls and circles and lines—oh my! *Until next time...*



I was an art teacher and changed to a graphic design career in the '80s. I write for IFPA TIP, and the CPM INFORMER. For info, PDFs of articles, or have ideas, e-mail: hanrahan.in@att.net Ellen Hanrahan ©2019



By Bob Berting
Berting Communications

The Second Call of a Three Call Selling Process – Building Trust

Let's think about some strategy before we get into the second call. We are assuming you are talking with the person who makes the buying decision for the prospect company. We notice that some popular columnists use magic phrases to quickly sell a prospect, but when it comes to the real world of selling, we find it is actually a process. That process begins with the reality that customers buy improvement. They also buy solutions to their problems. But before they buy improvement and solutions to their problems, the salesperson has to establish credibility and now in the second call—build trust.

A Fact Finding Approach

This session begins with a needs analysis by the advertising salesperson which includes matter of fact questions—not progressive interview style questioning. The sharp salesperson has already looked at the prospect's website, so they should have insights about the prospect's business to help them with their questioning. There is a natural flow of discussion where the salesperson needs to listen intently to the prospect because listening builds trust. The more the prospect believes and trusts you, the quicker they'll accept your ideas.

Do Rough Layout Sketches

As the needs analysis begins to wind down, ask the prospect if it's OK to do some rough ad sketches. The whole

strategy now is to get them involved in the ad content. This is a creative way of personalizing an ad layout with a message from the prospect. Don't worry if you are not artistic—simple stick figures and circles and squares will be sufficient. The BIG IDEA is to get their ego involved. Ask for the reasons why customers shop their business. These reasons can be the headlines of the rough layouts you do. Next ask what special services they offer. This information can go into the boxes you've drawn in your rough sketch.

A Real Life Story About Rough Sketches

I once had a paint company owner who was questioning a campaign proposal by me. We were in his shipping department so I pulled off a roll of brown wrapping paper and drew 4 squares left to right. I then began to ask him what services he might advertise. As he related the services I printed each one as the heading of each ad. Soon all 4 squares were filled with his copy ideas. Soon he began to realize that a campaign could be very effective. He then gave me permission to convert the rough layouts to comprehensive ad layouts. This approval is important, because there is no need to proceed with out it. Of course there must also be the approval of the size of the ad, which will be discussed later in this article.

If you get the prospect's ego involved in the planning process, they are more

receptive to not only seeing your comprehensive layouts, but understanding the need for a campaign to tell the story of their business. (Continued on page 11.)



The Second Call

(Continued from page 10)

The prospect can see the salesperson understands good layout design—will respect the salesperson—and consider them in a more professional light.

The salesperson takes the rough layouts and gives them to the staff graphic artist who is able to produce comprehensive layouts that actually reflect the needs of the prospect and a clear understanding of the image to be projected.

Ask about their budget

This segment could be difficult but if you have shown them how effective an ad campaign can be and how much improvement there will be in their business as well as solutions to many of their problems, the prospect will be receptive to a discussion. By even without a rough layout exposure, this would be a process of telling them you want to bring them an advertising plan (not proposal), and you need some guidelines to decide how much the plan will cost. Explain that the national average for an advertising budget is 5 % of their yearly gross sales. If the prospect will agree to that premise, ask how much of their budget is committed to other media. Of course commitments to other media can be changed (as any ad agency knows), but as least you'll have a figure to

work with regarding an advertising plan.

The final step

At this point, ask permission to bring an advertising plan and some comprehensive layouts to the third meeting. The ad layout size will be determined by the salesperson's estimate of how much of the prospect's budget can be allocated to their publication. When the prospect agrees to do so, set the appointment. This process is based on positive thinking and that the trust and belief in the advertising salesperson has been established. Now the stage is set for a third call which will be discussed in the next issue.

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 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. He is President of Berting Communications, 6330 Woburn Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46250. 317-849-5408

Why I Give A Damn

(Continued from page 2)

A community paper, if it is worth its salt, cares not only for the residents it represents, but also the commercial engines which drive our communities economically. Local brick and mortar businesses — like the local grocer, or retailer, or mechanic, are invested in our communities, too. They are the ones who sponsor little league teams, or donate items for charitable endeavors. They take the risk of doing business locally. Without them, I shudder to think what would happen to our communities.

I get shivers in me timbers every time I hear one of our advertisers tell me the ads they run in our pages really help their business. I feel all goose-bumpy when they call and say, "Thank you for standing up for local business when even the chamber of commerce promotes taking money out of town to invest it in digital platforms."

Community papers connect local business to local residents better than any other medium.

If you're a local business person, how do you feel about locals buying goods and services online, when you are invested locally? If you're a local resident how much do you think Facebook, Amazon, Instagram and other online businesses give back to your community?

I give a damn about my job, about being a part of a community paper because I give a damn about the people and businesses who make up this community. And so I will endeavor to beat the drum of community papers; I will continue to engage and challenge readership. I will continue to be the cheerleader and the pain in the backside, just because I give a damn. It's my job.

Do you give a damn about community papers? Tell us your story.





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