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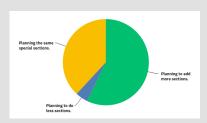
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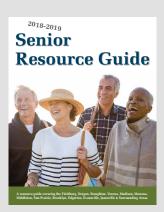
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The October issue of INK will explore the often difficult task of finding and keeping professional sales personnel. This is an activity that we all struggle with from time to time, so sharing ideas and best practices should prove to be a great resource.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Bring news and resources to the attention of the free paper industry by publishing a responsible quality magazine.

DEADLINES: The deadline for classified ads, display ads and editorial is the 4th of every month.

Free Paper INK is dedicated to keeping the industry informed on key issues, topics and industry news. If you have any items of interest that should be shared with people throughout the Free Paper Industry, simply email them to loren@afcp.org. We welcome your input, appreciate your readership and look forward to your contributions to our content.

Free Paper INK is not liable for errors appearing in advertisements beyond the cost of the space occupied by the error, and notification must be made in writing within ten days of publishing. The right is reserved by Free Paper INK to edit, reject, or cut any copy without notice.

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LOREN COLBURN **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Special Promotions: What is **Critical?**

WHAT IS THE CRITICAL ASPECT OF putting together a special promotion or section that is successful from both a readership and a revenue perspective?

When I reflect on all the special sections and promotions we put together during my 33 years at the Scotsman Press, we ran the full gamut from huge success all the way to complete flops. So what common element is there that stands out with the successful ones that may have been missing with the unsuccessful ones?

It's funny how much clearer things seem to be in the rear view mirror than they were when you were focused toward the horizon of the revenue generation. The single biggest aspect that stands out between the winners and the losers is the level of excitement our sales staff had toward the promotion. When our sales team got excited for the promotion, the sales seemed to take off with a leap. If the sales team was lukewarm on an idea, sales seemed to lag behind expectation with the same lackluster results.

That being said, I believe we could have been more successful by developing two sales approaches for each new program we put together. We spent a great deal of focus and energy creating great sales collateral for each promotion that featured the benefits of its specific circulation, market penetration and targeted readership for the sales team to utilize in their sales calls. Somehow we thought these great pieces would generate excitement for our salespeople to go make successful sales calls.

The element we could have focused more attention on to improve results was our sales campaign to our sales team. The mere presence of a nice marketing piece to make a sales call with

was not always sufficient to generate a level of enthusiasm to really fire them up. A more focused approach to sell the sales team on why this promotion or section was a fantastic opportunity for them to help their advertising clients would have sparked much stronger enthusiasm.

Advertisers feed off the enthusiasm of the salesperson, or lack thereof! The more confident the sales team is of the benefits of the promotion to both the advertiser and to the salesperson, the more commanding the presentation will be for the client. Enthusiasm drives energy levels on both sides of the sales call and companies that are better at building enthusiastic sales attitudes will see much higher levels of success.

The old school mentality relying on "that is what the commission is supposed to do" does not take into account the true nature of human motivation. We need to constantly provide the sales pitch to our sales teams that promote the features and benefits to them just like we expect them to do for their clients. If we leave that piece to be taken for granted, I am convinced our sales teams will not reach their full potential when presenting their special promotions or sections.

Zig Ziglar said it best. "For every sale you miss because you are too enthusiastic, you will miss a hundred because you're not enthusiastic enough." So remember, with each promotion you put together, to focus on how you are going to sell this to your sales team, not just how they are going to sell it to their clients.

And until next month, tell all those media buyers, "If it's Free – Buy It!"

In Memoriam: Robert Kapp



ROBERT KAPP, THE FOUNDER of Kapp Advertising Service and publisher of the Merchandisers, passed away on June 25, 2019 at the age of 94.

Raised in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, Kapp served his country during World War II, stationed aboard the Navy's USS WASP. Following his service he

retuned to Lebanon County to marry and start a family.

Energetic and ambitious, and wanting to make a better life for his wife and family, the young veteran founded Kapp Advertising Service in January of 1950 with the purchase of a small paper called the Merchandiser. Beginning with an initial circulation of 2,300 Myerstown, Pennsylvania area homes, Kapp quickly grew both the paper and the company. Today the Merchandiser of Central Pennsylvania and Northern

Contact sales at 800-647-0035

or info@cummingsprinting.com.

Maryland is one of the ten largest groups of independently owned weekly publications in the United States with a total circulation of nearly 289,000 homes.

An industry leader and Free Paper pioneer, Robert Kapp was a charter member and served on the board of the first national free paper association.

An avid golfer, philanthropist and deputy sheriff, Kapp had retired to Florida with his wife of 23 years, Helga. A friendly, social man, he enjoyed traveling back and forth from Florida to Pennsylvania.

Fondly referred to as 'Rob' by his employees, he enjoyed greeting and joking with them when in Pennsylvania. Many of his employees had worked for him for over 30 years.

Preceded in death by his first wife, Erma (Gerberich), Kapp is survived by his two daughters – Carol, wife of Robert Smith, and Susan, wife of Terry Longenecker – and his son, George, husband of Nancy, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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Metro Wants to Increase Your Revenue!

IF YOU'VE EVER BEEN TO AN AFCP CONFERENCE, you are no doubt familiar with longtime AFCP associate member Metro Creative Graphics, a leading pro-

vider of advertising, creative and editorial resources. You've probably met Lou Ann Sornson, Metro's face at the AFCP Trade Shows. You may even already be utilizing Metro's ready-to-use images, editorial features, sales tools or other services designed to help you make money with your print, online and mobile products.

But are you taking advantage of Metro's fully-templated print and digital special sections? If not, you are missing a valuable opportunity to increase revenue with minimal effort on your part.

With Metro's templated sections, the time-intensive work of design and programming has already been

done for you. A simple point-andclick interface allows you to co-brand your chosen template with your publication's logo and contact information, local features and special offers, even your own photos and videos. If you can attach a pdf file to an email, you have the necessary skill to use these templated sections.

With 36 different digital templates a year – and access to three years of archived templates – and identically themed print sections, you can choose a specific theme to target specific readers, resulting in better results for your advertisers and more ad revenue for you.

With Fall just around the corner, it's a great time to run a "Fall Home" or "Fall/Winter Sports" special section. You still have plenty of time to sell ads for an October "Breast Cancer Awareness", "Craft Beer" or "Halloween" special section. The holidays are fast approaching, so consider a "Celebrate the Season", "Home for



the Holidays" or "Holiday Gift Guide" special section. There are themes for every season, for trends such as "Think Green" and niche interests such as "Tech

Culture, Gadgets & Games."

The 24-page, 20-article print special section templates are already populated with editorial that you can use as is or customize with localized editorial such as a feature on a bridal shop or a local wedding venue. Two versions of each print template are available from which to choose – one with placeholders for you to plug in your ads and a second with actual spec ads for suggested advertisers.

Your publication is too small to have an ad designer on staff, you say? No problem. You can create an ad quickly and easily

with Metro's MiAd Wizard. Just visit their ad library, choose the size, format and style of ad you like from

their premade templates, type in the advertiser's basic contact information, and the MiAd Wizard instantly creates the ad for you. It will take you longer to decide which ad you want to use than it will to actually create it.

The online special sections, which use the same fonts, images and colors to create the same look and feel as the print sections, feature five ad sizes on each page to maximize your ad revenue opportunities. There is a Premium Sponsor spot (360 x 60 pixels) at the extreme top of the page, followed by a Leaderboard ad spot (728 x 90) as part of the page image. Running down the right side of the page are spots for Rectangular (300 x 250), Sliding Directory and Skyscraper (160 x 600) ads. You can sell ads into all of these positions or only some of them. If a spot isn't sold, the site shifts so there are no blank ad locations showing.

The Sliding Directory spot includes your advertiser's business name and

Continued on page 14







VINNIE GRASSIA Named Regional Publisher of D-R Media & Investments

THE ASSOCIATION OF Free Community Publications (AFCP) is pleased to welcome back to its membership a well-known, longtime free paper industry publisher, Vinnie Grassia in his new position as a Regional Publisher with D-R Media & Investments LLC.

D-R Media & Investments was created in June of 2018 when the Dunn-Rankin family sold the Sun Coast Media Group to Adams Publishing Group. At that time, D-R Media President and CEO David Dunn-Rankin chose to retain the newspapers in Highlands and Polk Counties, as well as the Sun Events entertainment division of the company.

A few months later, in September of 2018, Dunn-Rankin announced the acquisition of Sun Publications of Florida, a group of four weeklies in Lake and Sumter Counties, from Lakeway Publishers. That purchase included a 38,000 square-foot manufacturing and distribution space in Polk County that produces and mails the former Lakeway publications, and also serves as a commercial print facility for other third-party products throughout Florida.

"We like the mission of community newspapers. Helping local businesses thrive and making our communities a better place to live because we are there," said Dunn-Rankin. "We hope to be in the community newspaper business for a long time to come."

Based at D-R Media's Polk News Sun offices in Winter Haven, Florida, Grassia oversees the Winter Haven Sun, the Polk News-Sun and the Four Corners News-Sun.

"I'm excited because I see Polk County as one of the fastest growing counties in Florida – it's really amazing how many people are moving here and



looking to open up businesses here," Grassia said. "I think D-R Media President David Dunn-Rankin has a clear vision of where community newspapers fit into our world these days and the future success of a company like this. I'm excited to be a part of that."

Active in the newspaper industry for over 30 years, Grassia brings a solid publishing background to his new position. Most recently he was the owner of Ad-Visor Media Consulting, a consulting, troubleshooting and advisement company for all print and digital media products. Prior experience includes that of CEO of Iwanna Division of Fayetteville Publishing Co. in Asheville,

N.C., group manager of the Journal Community Publishing Group in Florida, and general manager of the Jacksonville Shopping Guide. Earlier career positions included outside sales rep, sales manager and ad director.

Grassia has volunteered countless hours to AFCP, the Community Papers of Florida (CPF) and Paper-Chain, serving on their boards of directors and on various committees. He is a recipient of both the AFCP Publisher of the Year Award and the CPF Presidential Award. Under his leadership, PaperChain established a relationship with the March of Dimes that led to national publicity for the free paper industry.

The recipient of a Bachelor of Arts degree from Rutgers University in New Jersey, Grassia has been an active member of each community he worked in. Most recently he served as a Rotarian in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. He also served in various capacities on the Ponte Vedra Beach Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

He and his wife of 32 years, Holly, are the parents of two grown children: Nick and Vincent Jr.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED

Association of Free Community Publications

MEMBER BENEFIT

Rising Stars Program

The AFCP Rising Stars program is designed to honor individuals under the age of 36 who are emerging leaders in the free paper industry. This ongoing program recognizes up to 7 individuals each year who represent the best of our up and coming industry professionals from nominees submitted by our member publications. These individuals exemplify good character, leadership, and professionalism not only at work, but in the communities they serve.

These young professionals demonstrate the promise of and a commitment to impacting their publications as well as the community publication industry in a positive manner through professional achievements. They not only perform their jobs to a high standard, but they also have a commitment to furthering their knowledge and abilities through participation in this national program.

Award recipients are recognized in INK Magazine, the official publication of AFCP and participate in an awards presentation program at the AFCP Annual Conference and Trade Show. They are privileged to receive free conference registration, conference meal plans, specialized training sessions and up to \$500 in travel reimbursements as part of their ongoing active participation.

The AFCP Rising Stars program does not end with this initial recognition program as Rising Stars are asked to assist the various initiatives of the association on an ongoing basis for up to two years as part of their commitment to the program. AFCP recognizes

that we have much to learn from these talented young people and desires to use their skills to help us shape the free paper industry going forward. In return for this participation in regularly scheduled conference calls and for volunteering their time to assist with AFCP initiatives, AFCP provides additional leadership development training and the opportunity to attend a total of three conferences for additional professional development.

Nominations for the 2020 Rising Stars Program are available for download on the AFCP website, www.afcp.org. The nominations deadline for the the next Rising Stars group is December 2, 2019. Nominees that are acceted into the program will be notified by mid-January in preparation for the upcoming conference to be held April 23-24, 2020 in Orlando, Florida.





Stronger Together

by Charlie Delatorre

As I write this, another mass shooting has occurred, actually two. Over a thousand miles apart, two unsuspecting communi-

ties are hit with what has become an all too familiar tragedy. I'm not the first person who's written about this topic and unfortunately, I won't be the last, because it's certain that by the time you read this, it will have happened again.

Maybe it'll be a school in Wisconsin or a mall in New York. Maybe it'll be a club in Florida or a theatre in Pennsylvania. Or maybe... just maybe, it'll be at an event one of our own member publications hosts in their community. So many of us are using food fests, pub crawls, art walks and a ton of other community events as a source of additional revenue and to keep our businesses top of mind in a rapidly changing media world. Isn't it just a matter of time before one of us, one of our events, is the epicenter for a mass shooting?

I'm sorry to say it so bluntly. I'm sorry to even tempt fate a little by suggesting it. But the truth is, every day our kids go to school where they're taught what to do when an "active shooter" strikes. Think I'm kidding? Ask your kid, grandkid, niece or nephew and they'll tell you the specific strategy their school will deploy, when it happens. It's just a matter of time until one of us, or someone in our family, is in the crosshairs.



I'm like most of you. I sit and watch for a while, say "how sad" and go about my day. I think to myself, "What can I really do about it?" and part of me thinks, "It's the price we pay for living in a free world." But here's the thing... there are a lot of other free countries in the world that don't have this issue, so why do we? Yes, we can blame absentee parents or video games. Criticize gun laws, mental health issues or the NRA. But what I do know is that it will take all of us coming together to develop a plan and create change.

I'm on a "stronger together – than apart" kick these last few columns because I believe it in my core. I don't care if we're talking about the best ways to manage our business or if we're trying to solve the pressing issues facing our modern society. It's an Aesopian concept that dates back hundreds of years before the birth of Christ – when even then the concept was woven into a fable – reminding people that United We Stand and Divided We Fall.

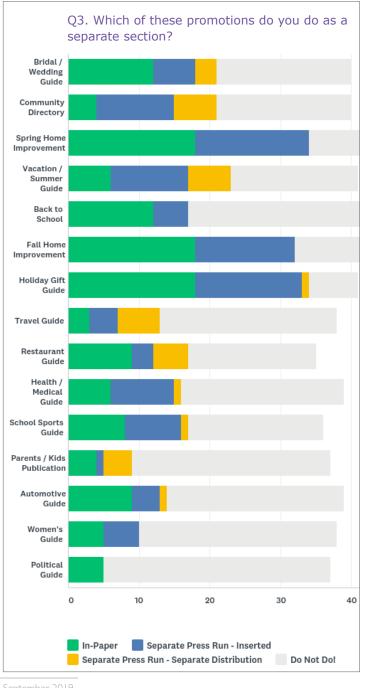
We don't have to be liberal or conservative, Re-

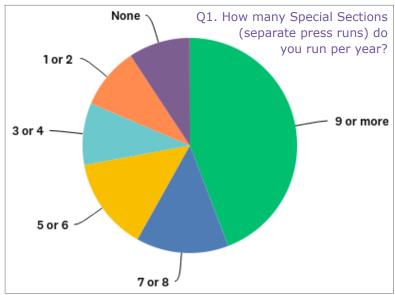
publican or Democrat to know that this is a ridiculous cycle in which we find ourselves and it's going to take us all, respecting one another regardless of political leanings, race or gender, working together to find a solution. I for one am done sitting on the couch and muttering to myself "how sad."

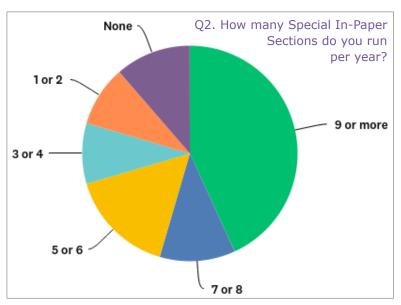
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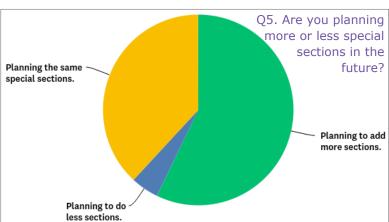
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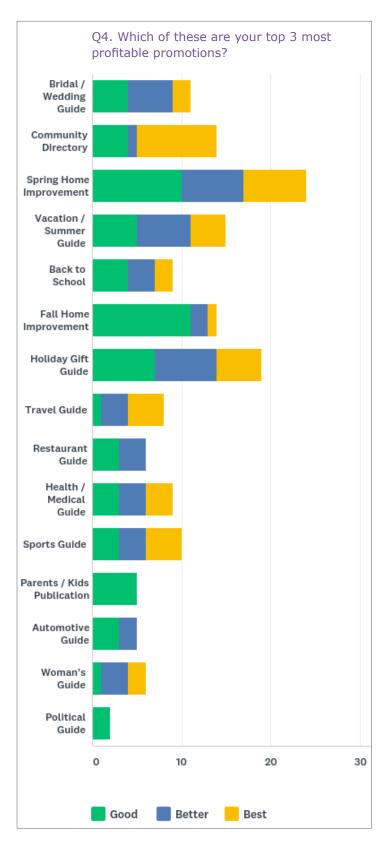
The following industry perspectives are the results of the survey we conducted of our membership regarding their use of special promotions and special sections. We want to thank the 44 companies who took the short time to participate by sharing their information. We will be conducting these types of surveys going forward to keep the industry informed on trends within the community paper industry. We encourage everyone to participate in this critical sharing of information.

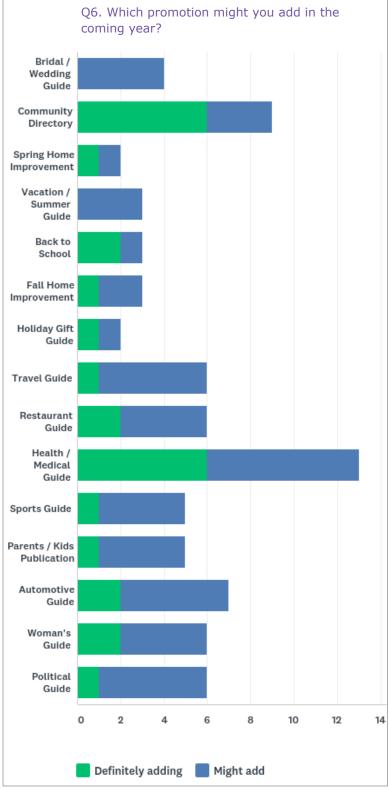












More Ideas from The Choice!



In the last issue of INK we

shared the winning entries from The Choice Idea Exchange presentation at the recent AFCP conference in Las Vegas, but there were plenty more excellent ideas presented. Here's another one for you to consider stealing borrowing and recreating for your own market.

get to play BINGO, enjoy a catered lunch, live music, dancing and so much more. We work hard to make sure there is a lot of energy in the room!

"Last year I convinced a local jeweler to participate. (I'd asked him for four years.) He was thrilled with the level of business at the event! That day he had the opportunity to talk to over 200 people (people with money to spend) that value local, quality service. Before leaving for the day, he signed the

2019 contract and gave the name of one other businessman he thought would benefit by attending.

"In addition to the Expo, we also produce a Senior Resource Guide that is handed out to the attendees. The Resource Guide is filled with advertisements from local businesses that cater to seniors, along with information that guides readers to the right sources to answer questions they may have. This has proven to be an extremely valuable and highly read

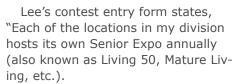
"If others aren't hosting senior expos in their market, they are missing

out on a great niche!

"We also host Wine Walks, Job Fairs, Health and Wellness, and Bridal Expos. All profitable. All serving interested niches. And, as we learned at conference two years ago: The deeper the niches, the greater the riches!"

Entry: Senior Expo Lee Borkowski

Shopping News
Richland Center, Wisconsin
Email: Iborkowski@wcinet.com

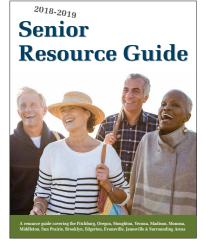


"Folks 50 and over make up more than 30% of the population. Odds are if you're not a senior, then you are

caring for one! The Expo is held over the course of one day and includes vendor interaction and seminars.

"In addition, we work hard to make sure our attendees are having a great time. That means that in addition to the booth visitation and seminars the also





Metro Wants to Increase Your Revenue

Continued from page 8

a brief description, an image and a link to their website. It rotates from ad to ad while on the page, so you can sell multiple ads into the same spot. Some sites have 20 or 30 advertisers in their Sliding Directory! It's a great promotion to bundle in conjunction with a print ad.

There is also additional upsell potential with photo galleries, videos and special offers.

Take a wedding theme for ex-

ample. You can upsell an advertiser-sponsored photo gallery page for a happy couple. Upload their wedding photos and the system automatically creates a slideshow. Add their names prominently in the area on top of the slideshow. Running alongside the gallery are ad spaces for the sponsors. The happy couple and their friends can print copies of their wedding announcement on printer-friendly pages that include your publication's logo and the advertiser's information, increasing the ad's shelf life.

"It's all about making YOU money," said Dan Perez, Metro's Vice President of New Media. "The idea is [for you] to spend time making money on special sections, not developing special sections." That sounds like a pretty good idea.

Access to the templated sections is by individual purchase or a discounted monthly subscription plan. For additional information or to arrange for a demo of this easy-to-use product, contact Lou Ann Sornson at Isornson@metro-email.com.

The **LEADERSHIP** Institute

by Jim Busch

The Leadership Institute is a structured sales and sales management training program sponsored by the Association of Free Community Publications.



To date, 1,814 free paper professionals have attended classes at the AFCP, state and regional conferences, earning over 10,935 class credits in 66 different course curriculums. A total of 81 people have completed all the requirements and been certified as Associate Advertising Executives (AAE) by the AFCP Board!

"If you are persistent—you will get it!
If you are consistent—you will keep it!"

- Unknown

I got my first job in advertising when I was

thirty years old. Before that I sold cash registers, soda systems and industrial pipe fittings.

Selling advertising differs from other sales jobs in that we create our products as we go along. Most sales people can demonstrate their product or point to a picture in a catalog; advertising sales people have to come up with fresh new ideas to promote their customer's business.

When we are trying to land a new account, we pull out all the stops. We take the time to talk to the prospect to discover their needs and their future plans. Using this information, we create a marketing plan for their business and work with our artists to prepare spec ads. Successful sales people listen carefully to everything the prospect says (except when the customer says "NO") and keep pushing the prospect to advertise. Note: this is the "Persistence" part of the program!

Once we have landed a new account there is a strong temptation to coast a bit. Coming up with new ideas is hard work and very time consuming. It is far easier to stick with the original advertising program and ad design. All we have to do is visit the customer, chat about sports or the weather, pick up a check and then move on to our next call.

While this is an efficient way to work in the short term, the most dangerous thing a sales person can say is, "Should we run the same ad again?"

In addition to space in the paper, customers are paying for our creativity and marketing advice. In today's ever changing business environment, we have to constantly ask every advertiser about their current needs and their future plans for the business.

A good sales person anticipates their customer's needs and presents them with new ideas and ad layouts. This demonstrates their interest in the customer's business and their willingness to work hard to make them successful. Failing to do this creates an opening for a competitor to come in and "Wow" the customer with fresh ideas.

Your goal is to have your customers think of you as someone who always ("Consistently") delivers ideas and a high level of customer service. If you are persistent, you will get new business; if you are consistent, you will keep it!



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That's what sets us APART

by Sam Seay, Rising Star

As I sit down to compose this article a

multitude of thoughts cross my mind. To be honest, Why did I agree to do this? is the first one, followed by, Just pick a subject. You can write about anything. Write about that weird but funny phone call from the other day. Write about meeting goals, staying organized, getting out of your comfort zone... But seriously, just write something, Sam! rings louder than

them all.

As a blank notepad document stares me dead in the eyes, the subject matter literally falls from the sky and lands on my desk. A copy of another local free classified publication lies across my keyboard. I look up to see another sales representative bringing the grim news that it's their last issue. That's when my mind really begins to spin.

My anxiety raises from moderate to peak freak out (not unusual for me). Profanity after profanity crosses my mind and I am certainly

not thinking clearly, or at all. I frantically flip through the pages scribbling a list of my customers who have advertisements with them. Do they know? What if they don't? How do I break the news? How do I ask for their budget? Will I be able to earn that budget and add it to ours? Do I have an updated media kit? What if I quote the wrong price?

Taking a few deep breathes and getting some much needed insight from our publisher and other sales representatives, we devise a plan: Reach out to all advertisers before our next issue. If they don't know, gently tell them about the closure. If they need an ad, help them. If they need a media kit, send them one. The ultimate goal is to create a seamless transition and hopefully gain some new

permanent advertisers. There is a critical countdown to our next issue and the time starts now.

Many cups of coffee and calls later, our latest issue is out. It's a hearty 40 pages full of ads large and small, bright and bold. It's a great looking issue if I do say so myself. Any Spokanite could find whatever they wanted and more in between these pages. It's an issue to be proud of, to brag about and to improve on of course. What will next week bring? An additional eight pages, more advertisers, brighter colors, more ads? It's hard to tell at this point.

There's a few days to catch our breath and then we hit the ground running again on Monday. In publishing, that's what it's all about though. Taking the time to appreciate what we produced, find areas where we can improve and hustle harder the next week to deliver an even better print product than the week before.

Appreciate Improve Hustle



Joint Conference & Trade Show

Association of Free **Community Publications**

Florida Media Association

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Westgate Lakes Resort & Spa Orlando, Florida



When One Ad is NOT ENOUGH

by Bob Berting



DID YOU SELL AN ad for your newspaper today?

If you did, you may be wasting some of your advertiser's time, your newspaper's time, and your own time.

You may be affecting the results for your advertisers—and you may be leaving advertising dollars on the table for your competition to gobble up. The

strategy of selling a single ad does not work in building a prosperous sales territory or helping new and existing advertisers reach their marketing goals.

Let's explore a much better selling strategy.

The strategy is an advertising campaign or program selling strategy which affords you, your newspaper and your advertisers two major benefits: saving time and creating / enhancing results. The elements of a campaign or program will include a series of ads within a time frame, coupled with an "audience extension" digital advertising approach, which can include banner ads on the publication website, mobile, and social media. This package approach is projected to a prospective advertiser in a reach and frequency format. An ideal approach would be to propose a yearly program of 52 print ads coupled with online ads on the publication website, and mobile. This approach has to have an anticipated goal or outcome. If these elements are NOT present and approved at the outset of your advertiser's schedule, you will find yourself selling single ads to this advertiser.

A major element is consistency.

One of the major elements in any successful advertising campaign or program is consistency; not repetition of the same message, but rather a consistent, planned advertising program. Here the advertiser's name and overall message is before the potential audience on a long-range basis.

Help your potential advertiser understand the need to plan.

The emphasis here is to thoroughly plan their advertising strategy to produce the desired results. Demonstrate to them that sporadic and infrequent advertising does not work. Consistent advertising, in good times and slow times, delivers the ongoing results and business growth. Selling an idea, a campaign, rather than a single ad, has numerous benefits for your potential advertiser, your newspaper, and you.

The potential benefits to you are numerous.

Simply put, selling an idea, a campaign, rather than one ad, enhances your ability to manage your territory or account list. It helps achieve maximum revenue generation for your publication and YOU, saving time, money, and effort. Selling an idea and a campaign is selling smart, not harder. You will be spending more creative time and less production and crisis reaction time. There will be more opportunity to spend more time getting to know and help your customers to succeed, which in turn will help your successful professional and personal growth.

The bottom line reality.

The reality of all this discussion boils down to this scenario. The potential advertiser convinces you that he or she wants to test your newspaper with a one-time ad. This most often can lead to a situation where you are trying to convince them, week after week, that your paper is right for them. The logical choice is that they can trust you as a professional consultant and believe that your publication should be the major player in their media mix. This trust leads to the decision that they will agree and commit to a budget for a campaign or long-range program with you...and not a single ad.

Bob is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and columnist in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. The president of Berting Communications, he can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408

Bob's e-book for the newspaper industry "Power Selling Tools For The Advertising Sales Consultant," has content for both the beginning and experienced advertising salesperson. Let Bob's experience help you achieve more business for your publication. Visit www.bobberting.com to order Bob's three e-books on a bundled purchase basis.



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