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THE INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER

DECEMBER
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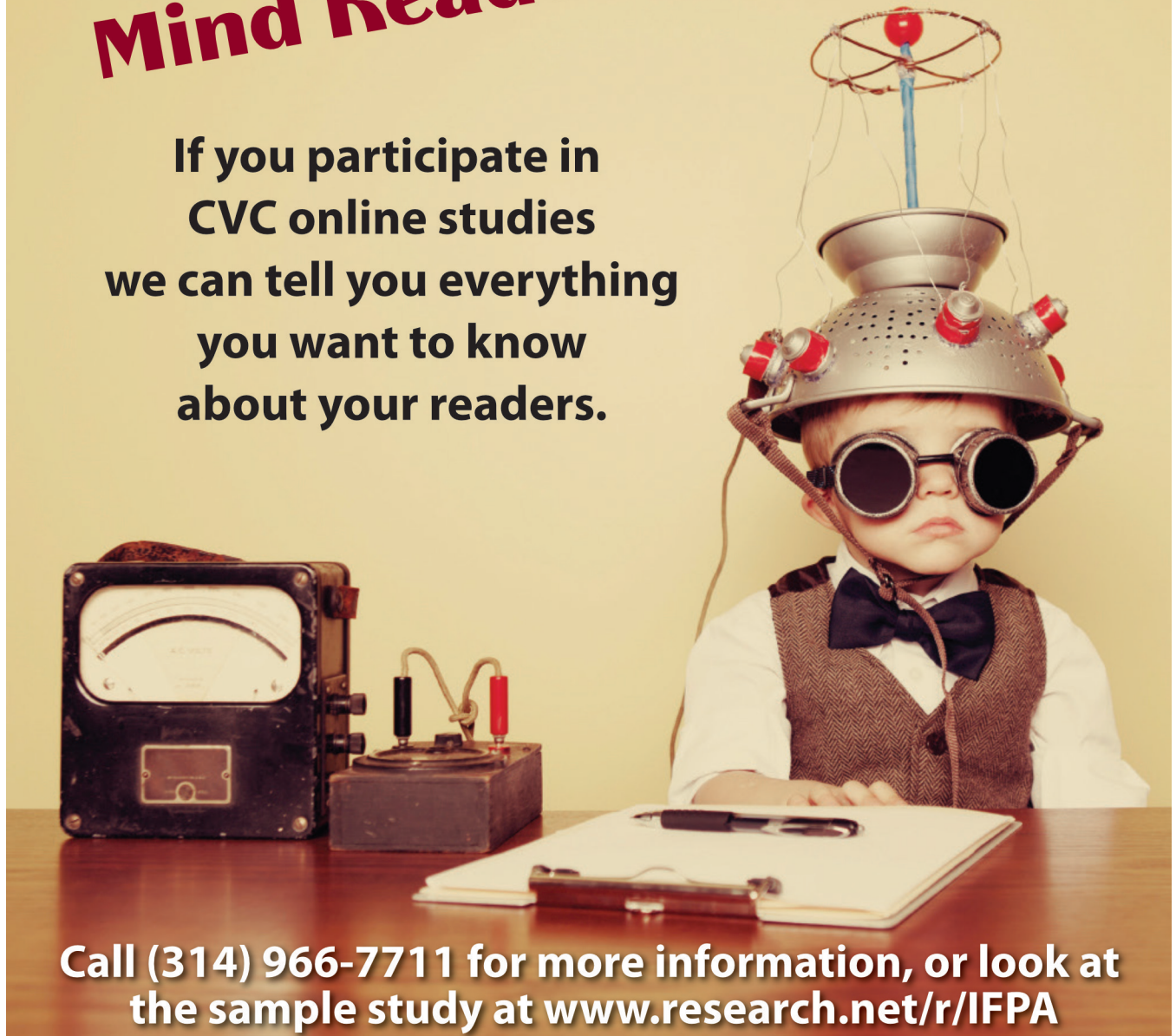
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-- Victor R. Jose IFPA Founding Conference
September 20, 1980

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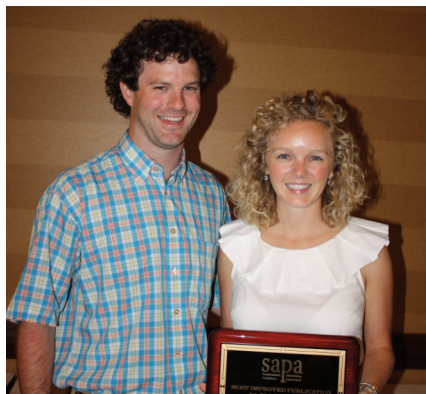
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Gary's Gallery
Can you name each person in these photos?



Angus Mark Smith, Jr.

January 21, 1965 – September 23, 2019



This month's column is a personal one for me. Mark Smith, one of the board of directors of our sister association, SAPA, recently passed away. He was a great friend to me and to our industry. Another light has gone out. He will be missed.

Angus Mark Smith Jr., 54, of Madison, passed away Monday, Sept. 23, 2019. A memorial service was held at Madison Presbyterian Church on Friday, Sept. 27, 2019 in Eatonton, Georgia.

Mark was born on Jan. 21, 1965, to JoAnn and A. Mark Smith Sr. He started his career in the newspaper industry at age 20 while he was a student at UGA. He had 21 years in the business before joining his family at Smith Communications Inc. in 2006. For most of his years there, he led the advertising department as the company expanded to add multiple newspapers and magazines. In recent years, he began to embrace the more creative side of the business. Since he started writing, Mark has entertained readers with witty columns that gave insight into his outlook on growing up, living in the modern age and, of course, football. He saw the Georgia Bulldogs take the field as often as possible and took award-winning pictures that have graced the pages of his family's newspapers. He could give insight into most SEC stadiums that he had visited through the years and would be sure to explain why Sanford Stadium is superior. In 2018, Mark received a first-place award for Humorous Column, known as the Joe Parham Trophy, from the Georgia Press Association.

Mark was a leader of the youth group at Madison Presbyterian Church, where he always found a way to help the kids, ranging from cleaning dishes after an event to leading the group on ski trips. He found another calling in coaching youth soccer. He wasn't only involved in these activities because his daughters were involved; he loved the interaction and being a part of shaping young lives.

Mark was a devoted husband and father. He was a friend to everyone he met, enjoying getting to know people as much as he enjoyed telling his own stories. He was at his best while encouraging others to excel, and he will be deeply missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

He also served on many local civic boards and newspaper associations.

Mark is survived by his wife of 30 years, Hannah; daughters, Caroline and Natalie; parents, JoAnn and A. Mark Smith Sr. of Eatonton; and brothers, Michael Smith (Alison) of Incline Village, Nevada, and Matt Smith (Jen) of Milledgeville. ■

The Editor's Letter
By Douglas Fry

**Newspapers • Magazines • Shoppers
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Dear Kevin (Kamen & Co. Group Services),

Although you represented the sellers in this deal, I want to thank you, Kevin Kamen, for all that you did in brokering the sale of The Wave newspaper of the Rockaways in Queens, N.Y., to my family and me. Your leadership, negotiating skill-set and knowledge of the business, market and industry served as a most valuable tool throughout the entire process. When negotiations hit a bit of a snag you were able to masterfully get the two sides together to compromise. As the buyer of this wonderful legacy newspaper, The Wave of Rockaways, I want to personally thank you for everything you did to make the sale happen. You were always professional, reasonable and did a great job!

- Walter H. Sanchez - Queens Ledger News Group, NY

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North Carolina Weekly Shoppers. In business several decades.

Contact Kevin Kamen
516 242 2857
info@kamengroup.com

December 2019

If you're sick of hearing about Millennials (what they want, how they buy, whether they're the greatest or laziest or most confusing generation on earth) – you're in luck. Today's most progressive brands are already on to the next thing, err, generation. They're called Gen Z, and not a single one of them can remember a time without the internet. Heck, most of them can't remember a time without a smartphone.

Made up of youngsters born between 1997 and 2012, Gen Z is also known as the iGeneration. They're native on as many as 5 screens at a time (phone, watch, tablet, laptop and yes, they still watch TVs) and are the largest and most diverse generation to date.

While most Gen Zers don't have a pile of cash in their own bank accounts quite yet, they're big influencers of how their parents' (a combination of GenXers, and older Millennials) money is spent, and account for as much as \$143 billion in direct spending. Not too shabby for a cohort with a median age of 15. But, getting a piece of Gen Z's spending power isn't as easy as running an ad during Saturday morning cartoons – or creating a page on Facebook.

Gen Z communicates and consumes advertising differently than any other generation, from their own unique language (yeet!) to the platforms they use to communicate and the type of engagement they expect in return. So, what do brands need to know in order to connect with Gen Z on social media?

LET'S START WITH THE BASICS: WHERE TO FIND GEN Z ON SOCIAL MEDIA

If you've been hearing rumors that “nobody is using Facebook anymore,” they're false. Facebook still boasts the most total monthly users of any social network in the world (2.41 billion). BUT... if you're looking to reach Gen Z specifically, there might actually be a bit of truth to the whispers.

Facebook usage has declined over the past year to the tune of about 15 million users, and the vast majority of those lost users are between the ages of 12 and 34 (Gen Z and younger Millennials). While Facebook usage overall remains largely stable (the platform saw a slight decline in users in 2019), the demographic makeup is shifting. Younger people are signing off, while Americans 55+ (the only demographic to show an increase in Facebook usage in 2019) are logging on.

So where are the Gen Zers going? The answer is – not far. The only social me-

They're called Gen Z,
and not a single one of
them can remember a
time without the
internet.

dia platform that's growing in popularity among young Americans is Instagram (conveniently owned by Facebook). Snapchat and WhatsApp are also popular, although Gen Z says they use these apps primarily for peer-to-peer conversations (basically, the next generation of texting), versus Instagram (and to some extent YouTube), which is where they go to hear from and communicate with brands.

So, if you're a brand looking to reach Gen Z, Instagram (and Instagram Stories) is an excellent place to start.

What to Say to Gen Z on Social Media

The most fundamental truth about Gen Z is that they were born into an era of economic instability and social change. This generation does not remember the “good old days.” If Millennials were the generation asking for a seat at the table, Gen Z is the generation ready to flip it. They want nothing to do with “the ways things have always been” and instead seek out brands that are progressive, in-

Just @ Me Next Time: How to Talk to Gen Z on Social Media

novative, and authentic in their advertising and communications.

SO, WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE ON INSTAGRAM?

While Millennials favored a curated feed full of rainbow walls and impeccably dressed fashion influencers, Gen Z prefers a more raw, ephemeral aesthetic. They want the truth – and not just the polished-for-Instagram truth – but actual real life. Gen Z influencers capture real (often not-so-aesthetically pleasing) moments and trade curated feeds for pithy jokes and witty social commentary – told primarily through emojis, face filters and GIFs.

But brands should be careful not to overdo it. If you're trying to sell a product, you've still got to make it look nice (or stylish or expensive or delicious). In comparison to Millennials, Gen Z is much more focused on appearing successful. They're looking for brands and products that will help them convey the right image. A combination of high-end photography in the Instagram feed, with real-time, behind-the-scenes content on stories is often the ticket to Instagram success.

HOW TO WIN OVER GEN Z ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Winning over Gen Z on social media is fairly simple, albeit labor intensive. What the cohort wants most from brands isn't promo codes or insider deals (although, those are popular, too). Instead, Gen Z is looking for engagement. Their primary measure of trust and authenticity is how deftly a brand engages with them online. A lack of engagement is seen as overly corporate or "cagey," whereas ongoing sharing, banter, and positive reinforcement is seen as authentic and real. [Learn how to develop a social media engagement process here.]

Essentially, Gen Z is looking to talk to the people behind the brand, not just some corporate robot. They don't want overly edited or canned responses; they want a real person clapping back in the

comments or sharing their tagged images.

Not surprisingly, brands with massive social media teams (think Nike, Oreo, JetBlue) tend to resonate well with Gen Z (Oreo is the #1 most trusted brand amongst Gen Z, Nike is #2). They are brands that not only appeal to this tech-forward, progressive audience, but also have the manpower to respond to hundreds of comments a day, share photos, and truly engage with their fans.

While smaller brands often don't have this luxury, they can make the most of their existing social power by focusing on the following three engagement opportunities:

1. SHARE USER-GENERATED CONTENT

When a user tags you in their content, it's a big deal! They're reaching out and saying, Hey, I bought your product and I love it so much I'm sharing it with my friends – notice me! The Gen Z phrase "@ me next time" is actually derived from tagging someone on Instagram. It means calling someone out specifically (instead of giving a vague directive or feedback).

When someone tags you in their content, they're reaching out to you directly, so be sure to acknowledge them. This can take the form of something as basic as a like or a heart emoji – or as engaging as re-sharing the tagged content on your own feed. More than discounts or deals or special promo codes, Gen Z wants to be noticed and acknowledged. Fortunately, it only takes a couple clicks to give it to them.

2. UTILIZE (AND MONITOR) BRANDED HASHTAGS

Social listening tools (i.e. software programs that help you "listen" for people talking about your brand or related terms on social media) can be expensive, and searching through hundreds of social hashtags is labor-intensive. That's where branded hashtags come in. Branded hashtags are Instagram (or

Twitter) hashtags that you can own (i.e., almost nobody else is using them). A branded hashtag can be as simple as your brand name (for example, #airbnb) or more focused, like #airbnbadventures.

The benefit of a branded hashtag is that virtually all of the content shared with the tag will be relevant to your brand (unlike general hashtags where hundreds of thousands of users post content to it every day – for example, #love). Branded hashtags are a great way to encourage users to include you in their conversations as well as to be able to quickly and easily find the people who are talking about you online and engage with them. Make sure you let people know which branded hashtags you're using, and encourage them to use them

3. LISTEN AND ACT

The key here is to listen on social media, and then act in the real world. If you're hearing a lot of negative feedback online, perhaps instead of deleting comments, it's time to make a change to your product line or customer service. Instead of thinking about social feedback as a liability (what if somebody bashes us?!), think about it as a valuable "ear on the ground" that can provide insights into how you can efficiently grow and evolve your brand and your business.

Keeping up with Gen Z can seem like a daunting task, especially for brands that feel like they've just finally figured out Millennials. But catering to this up-and-coming generation doesn't require a wholesale strategy shift. Subtle changes in language, targeting, imagery, and platforms are often enough to keep Gen Z interested and engaged as they navigate their way into adulthood and begin to form brand allegiances.

Ethos is a multiplatform branding agency that develops and executes integrated marketing campaigns across multiple channels for companies inside and outside of Maine.

After a year-long search, APG Media's TN/NC/VA group has selected SCS/Track to modernize its ad building services. This APG region is comprised of 20 newspapers, including The (Maryville, TN) Daily Times, The Greeneville (TN) Sun and The Mt. Airy (NC) News.

SCS/Track will replace a production environment featuring many manual steps, various disjointed advertising systems, and a paper-centric workflow at APG's Greeneville and Mt. Airy offices, and will further expand Mt. Airy's capabilities as this region's centralized ad production hub.

"For this project, we needed to provide the functionality for our ad builders to build ads coming from three disparate ad order entry systems," according to David Clark, Director of IT at APG East. "The open nature of SCS's systems made SCS/Track a natural fit for our needs."

APG TN/NC/VA will be in full production with SCS/Track in November 2019.

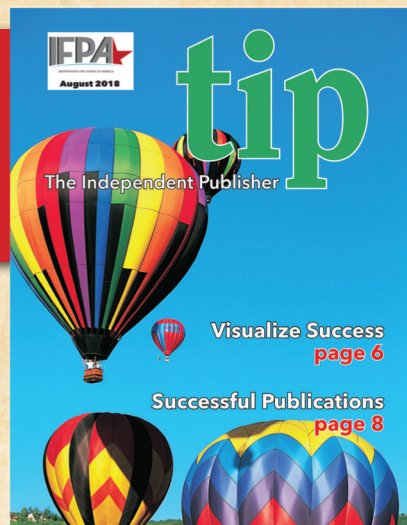
ABOUT APG MEDIA:

Adams Publishing Group owns and operates 34 daily newspapers and over 100 weekly newspapers in 20 states. In addition to its community newspaper company, the Adams family operates radio stations, outdoor advertising, a wine distribution business, Camping World, Good Sam Club and Gander Outdoors.

ABOUT SCS:

SCS offers an extensive line of publishing-related applications, including Layout-8000™. More than 300 sites producing over 2,000 publications in 10 countries in 5 languages use SCS mission-critical software every day. SCS is privately held by Richard and Martha Cichelli. You can learn more about SCS at www.newspapersystems.com. ■

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5 Tech Tools to Grow Your Publishing Business

Publishers continue to face new challenges in the evolving industry of print publishing. However, new technologies are now giving publishers opportunities they never had. Here are a few technologies and services that can help you grow your business beyond print.



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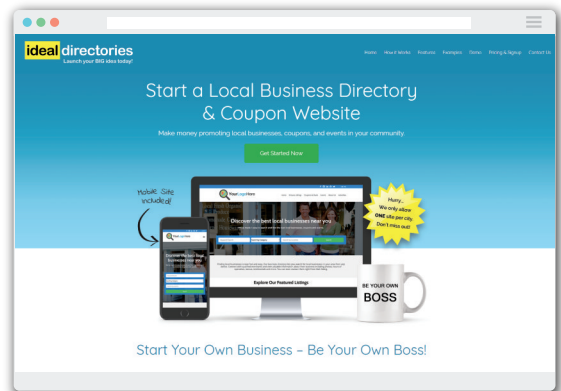
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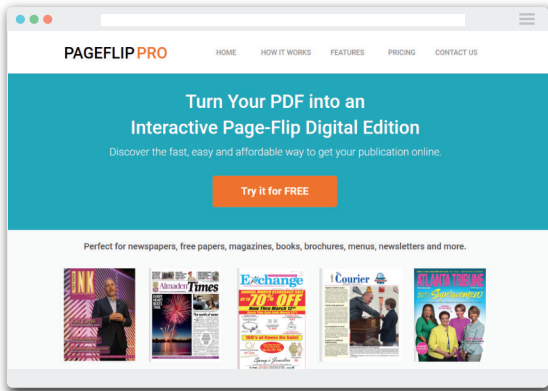
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PageFlip Pro

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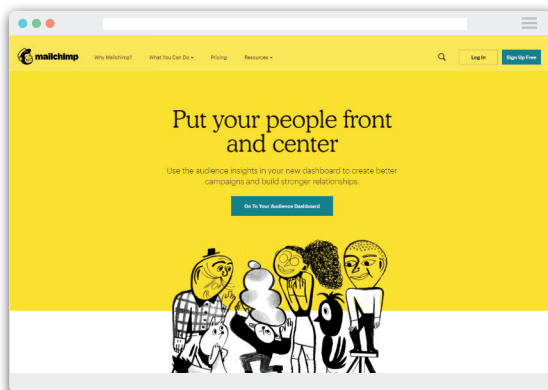
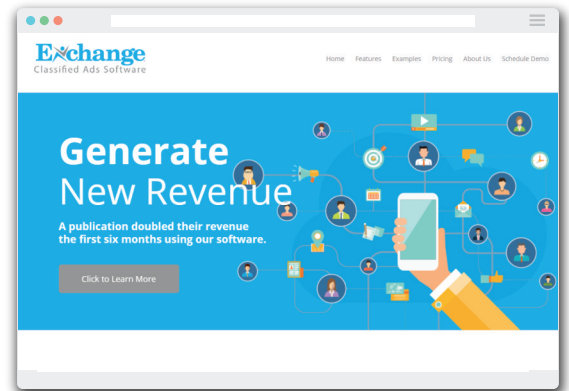
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Mailchimp

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An easy-to-use email marketing system that lets you send out thousands of emails at once.

How can it help you grow?

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Gary's Gallery

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Graphic Hooks

By Ellen Hanrahan

Seriously... December already!? It seems to me that the months speed by faster than ever... and I still have projects that need to be finished. I do the newsletter for our Camera Club and I get to start that the minute I am finished with this article.

Because I am involved in a camera club, I've been working with a software program called **Topaz Studio 2**— a creative photo editing program. It works inside of **Adobe Photoshop** or as a "stand alone." However, more on that next month!

This month, though, I am going to share some holiday ads with a twist. I've made a lot of border graphics over the years, so I have quite a variety—it helps speed up the process to "re-purpose" them. A successful border (for me) is one that's different than the standard rule line, yet not so large as to take up valuable text space.

The samples shown have been modified to fit the column width (13p6) and they all have the same depth (9p) for consistency and more accurate comparisons.

These ideas can also be altered depending on the season, size of the ad space and most don't take a lot of time to complete. These borders may be all the artwork that you need for smaller size ads, but they would also work well for larger ads, too.

Most of these holiday borders will give me the best use of the space without distracting from the information contained within the border. Backgrounds were used in instances when I wanted to offset the text slightly—again, a lot of this depends on the amount of text, what is being sold and whether or not there is room for any other artwork—in most instances there isn't.

Holiday Border Ideas

The artwork comes from a variety of sources— many from **storyblocks.com** — and others I've had for a very long time!


Personally, I am not fond of borders that repeat on all four sides because the space for the border is predetermined. I like a little more control over the amount of space that I can use in the ad. By shifting (or cropping) the art I have chosen, I can add or subtract space within the ad boundaries.

By choosing to use artwork in a corner, across the top or bottom of the ad also allows me to control more of the inside spacing— and this use of the art adds a bit more interest to the ad.

These sample ideas can be modified to fit a variety of sizes as well. Disclaimer: **Not all ad samples are the most effective!**




This art is flexible enough to be used for thank you ads, invitations, events, church events, even help wanted ads. The holiday art can still be offset more, cropped or even "flopped." The ad next to this one shows a simpler border with the art.



Same art, but a 3-point rule to give even more space for the message. The holiday art can still be offset more, cropped or even "flopped." Just remember that the wider the border, the more you have to keep the text away from the edges.




Best Wishes for a Peaceful Holiday Season and Joy-filled New Year!



A patterned background this time, with the text. This type of background can work, but it starts to verge on the "busy" side which is not the look you are going for. My intent is to show combinations—the design effectiveness is up to you!



Best Wishes! Holiday greetings from advertisers would work best for this combination!



All of these small ad samples can work on a larger scale as well. The artwork helps to call attention to, and frame, the information—and you get to control the interior spacing!



I've used these ornaments for a variety of publications, ads, promos, etc., so it's safe to say that this grouping is a "go-to" pick of mine. I gave the ad a little more depth because you don't want to make this art too small in an ad. Make art as large as you can or else don't use it in your ad.



You can use any of this artwork (or graphic) in a coupon as well. There really is no restriction—other than size of the ad and the amount of text that needs to be included in the ad space. Again, build up a library of artwork... especially seasonal art because it seems to get here faster than you anticipated!

Final Thoughts

Hopefully these few samples may get you to think of using any artwork or graphics in a slightly different way. When I started in the 1980's, the sophistication of art was not what it is today— even early photos left a lot to be desired!

Most art services provide a variety of elements to choose from. I use "Storyblocks" for two reasons— 1) it offers me a very good selection of photography and vector graphics and 2) it's in my price range (I think it's about \$100-\$129 a year!

Anyway, another year wrapped up and next month I will share info on options to Adobe Photoshop!

Best wishes for a joy-filled Holiday season!

 Until next time...

Ellen Hanrahan hanrahan.ln@att.net ©2019

The Power of Restraint

by John Foust
Raleigh, NC

On an out-of-state trip, I saw a billboard that compelled me to pull off the road to take a closer look. What was so unusual? It had more words than I had ever seen on a billboard – 45 words. “What in the world were they thinking?” I asked myself. “I’m probably the only driver who knows what the billboard says, and that’s because I stopped to count the words.”

The person who designed that sign hadn’t considered what it would look like on the side of that two-lane highway. He or she had created it on a screen or layout pad, with no awareness of the fact that drivers would have only a few seconds to read it. For years, I’ve heard that eight is the maximum word count for a readable billboard. That one had 45.

The billboard needed what a lot of ads need – restraint. Here are three areas that call for that special brand of discipline:

1. THE SALES CALL.

This is where it starts. It’s understandable for advertisers to be excited about their products and services, but they shouldn’t be encouraged to put unsubstantiated claims and exaggerations in their ads. Salespeople who are close to closing a sale often have a tendency to accept anything their clients want to run. But this is the time to hold firm and gather the raw material that is needed for an effective ad campaign. First, learn about the client’s audience. Then learn about what is being advertised – with a focus on features and benefits.

2. THE AD COPY

The next step is to translate that information into an idea, and then to transform that idea into convincing words and pictures. Even the best ad concept in the world will fall flat if it is not put together the right way.

It’s important to use restraint in writing copy. Readers don’t respond favorably to words like “unbelievable” and “fantastic” and “incredible.” They prefer to hear the truth, because that’s what they need to

make informed buying decisions.

Specific language works better than generalities. “Save 40 percent on a new widget” is more effective than “save money on a new widget.” “Three-year warranty” is better than “great warranty.” And “one-acre lot” is more descriptive than “large lot.”

3. THE AD DESIGN

A store owner once told me about his philosophy of print advertising. “I think white space is wasted space,” he said. “I want my ads to be filled from corner to corner.” It was no surprise that his ads were bursting at the seams with illustrations and blocks of multiple colors. To

The billboard needed what a lot of ads need – restraint. Here are three areas that call for that special brand of discipline:

make matters worse, he thought that all upper-case type made his copy more important.

Sadly, his ads looked like indecipherable blobs on the page. I don’t think anyone would make the effort to read them.

Poet Robert Browning is famous for writing, “Less is more.” Although architecture later adopted the phrase, it is just as appropriate for this business of advertising. Less is definitely more.

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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. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com



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Are Community Papers Akin To A Circus?

by Peter Wagner

There are times when producing a community paper can seem like being in a circus. One moment you are the acrobat balancing your way across a high wire and the next you're the featured clown.

I learned, while attending seminars in Massachusetts recently that the small tent and arena circus and community papers have much in common.

The revelation hit me during a panel discussion featuring four of the nation's leading small show circus producers. You probably wouldn't recognize any of their names, but the panel included former Ringling stars Jeanette Williams and Bello Nock. Both can trace their roots back to family-owned European circuses.

What immediately drew me into the discussion were the opening words of the first speaker: "The circus is not dead," he shouted passionately to the crowd. He went on to say that public perception was there was little or no interest in the circus now that Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, often referred to as "the big one" had closed.

His statement echoed that of the similar uneducated "Newspapers are dead" cry we often see hurled at our industry. A statement that is often followed with examples of huge metro papers closing or cutting back.

Outside pressures and single-minded organizations are making major changes to the circus, the producers agreed. Today's audience doesn't seem to want animals in the circus, for example. But Cirque Du Soleil's many productions with their central storyline and human performers are attracting huge crowds.

The performance program many have changed, the producer's agreed, but those who love the human desire for live performances and work in the business "have an obligation to see that the circus survives."

And the same is true of the publishing business. Our audience may have changed, and a generation may even have seemingly turned in other directions for their limited news, but the majority of people living in most local communities still want and embrace their hometown paper. Like those individuals struggling to maintain the circus, we who love the printed paper have an obligation to keep it going.

Making it in the circus world, the producers said, is simply a question of supply and demand. The closing of RB&BB can be seen as an opportunity by some. That two-headed giant, the red and blue units, often exhausted a family's available entertainment budget for that kind

The small tent and arena circus and community papers have much in common

of entertainment. The absence of Ringling in metro communities promises greater audiences for shows playing smaller towns and the rural areas.

In the same way, metro papers reducing their number of publication days or area of distribution opens new opportunities for hometown publishers.

But here are the four key points of the circus producer's message. It could be a survival treatise for all of us in the publishing business.

1. "We need to find new options for the circus," one stated. "If we can't attract a following with elephants and tigers what should we feature?"
2. "We have to give consideration to packaging," said another. "The theme, costuming, lighting, music and spectacle is as important as the content."
3. "We must return to what the circus once was," was a third comment.

Peter Wagner stands with Bello Nock, former Ringling star



4. “Attending a circus is still about adding quality to life,” shared another.

I sat there with my heart warming as I heard suggestions for the revival of the circus that also apply to our publishing industry.

Like the circus, we need to find new editorial and revenue options. Many local publishers are growing their online and social platforms, but those are not creating the financial return possible from a well-supported newspaper.

To that end, we must revise our content and coverage to provide the information most important and interesting to our subscribers. That means less canned news releases and more original hard news coverage of the local government agencies, sports coverage, school news, business news and well-written pieces on local people and places.

Packaging, too, is a must if local newspapers are going to survive and grow. The number one reason readers give for preferring a printed paper over the internet is the convenient gathering together of material. Subscribers can find the information they want — sports, social news and council news — nicely edited and interestingly presented in the printed paper. More importantly, the pages are designed in a way that draws the reader into the material with many re-entry points that keeps the reader interested. With the internet, it is sometimes necessary to search for the information desired and there is often a question of credibility.

Plus, like the circus, we must find ways to return to what the local paper once was. The community paper was the first social media with tidbits of who had Sunday dinner with friends or relatives and who was visiting in town. The hometown paper has always been the only source of detailed information regarding the local school, sports team, church activities and local government issues. Community papers have to truly dig into all that is “local” if the publish-

ers expect to hold on to their readership.

The same is true about advertising. We, as an industry, have sometimes outpriced our value and expected more of our advertisers than we should. In the current multimedia mix and growth of small ad agencies, we must present our story clearly and boldly, offering easy to understand and use promotions at prices smaller advertisers can afford.

But the best statement I heard at the circus seminar was the one about maintaining the “quality of life.”

The local newspaper is the sounding board of the community sharing balanced ideas from all sides. It is the community cheerleader promoting growth, wise decisions and family values. It is the watchdog, making sure those in authority live up to the standards expected of elected officials. It should have a passion for assuring a “quality of life” for all the people it serves.

What is true about the status of the circus and the community paper is equally true about many small, meaningful enterprises in our city. Many are facing the same threats from the big investors working the internet.

Perhaps some future loss from not being able to obtain goods and services locally will be reversed in the days to come. If so, it will probably be through the new local partnerships and local community marketing ideas.

But, to me, there will always be a need for the community paper. Too often I have seen when a community loses its newspaper everything else eventually seems to disappear.

We, who care about our industry, need to reinvent how the world sees and uses the newspaper. ■



Will the Internet kill your free community paper? Did instant potatoes kill potatoes?

New technologies change many things. But not everything. You may tweet, blog, surf, shop, or search online but you continue to read your free community paper. You just proved it.

Readership of free community papers is now higher than paid daily papers and continues to grow. Rather than being replaced by “instant” media, your local free community paper has become an important part of our neighborhood.

The reason, which sometimes is not heard

because of all the noise about the Internet, is pretty obvious: your free community paper does what the Internet doesn't. We promote connections at a local level. Free papers join readers and advertisers in ways digital media don't.

In fact, the local content and power of your free paper makes advertising even more effective. We are the number one medium for driving purchases. That's important in every product category.

Including potatoes.

Free Papers

Working For You

There are some pretty important people in your organization, and I bet many of them don't know just how important they are. Most likely, they aren't getting the recognition they deserve.

I was talking about this concept with my friend, Kent Higginbotham, and he shared a perfect example of this. Kent was in the Navy, and we affectionally nicknamed him "Admiral." While in the Navy, Kent flew helicopters. Kent mentioned that most people think the pilot and co-pilot are the most important jobs on a helicopter. No doubt, without these two—or at least one of them—the helicopter can't take off and land. However, Kent had a different perspective. To him, the most important person was the mechanic who made sure the helicopter was safe to fly. His words were, "That guy never got the credit he deserved."

Not long ago I wrote about the famous chef, Thomas Keller. His first job at a restaurant was washing dishes. While it was probably the lowest-paying job in the restaurant, it wasn't long before he realized it was one of the most important. No matter how famous the chef is—or how good the food is—if a meal goes out to a guest on a dirty plate, it's getting sent back. Without clean dishes, you can't serve the food.

In the corporate world, the job of a receptionist may not be the highest-paying in the company—most likely, far from it. However, the receptionist answers the phone, and the way they do it sets the tone for the rest of the interaction the customer may have with others in the company. Some companies have bestowed the title "Director of First Impressions" upon the receptionist, giving their responsibility the recognition that it deserves.

If the receptionist gets the title "Director of First Impressions," maybe the dishwasher should have the title, "Manager of Cleanliness," and the Navy's helicopter mechanic should have the title, "Chief of Keeping the Team Alive." You get the idea. Everyone deserves a title that reflects their true role in the organization—and recognizes how important they are.

Think of the different jobs everyone has where they work. What are their most important responsibilities? It doesn't matter if it's the lowest- or highest-paying job. Everyone has something they do that is crucial to the organization—something that would be noticed if that person were. Once you know what yours is, excel in it. Be the best you can be at it. And, above all, give everyone the recognition they deserve for their unique and important role within your company.


Shep Hyken is a customer service expert, keynote speaker, and New York Times bestselling business author. For information, contact 314-692-2200 or www.hyken.com. For information on The Customer Focus™ customer service training programs, go to www.thecustomerfocus.com. Follow on Twitter: @Hyken



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