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MARCH **2020**
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HOW IMPORTANT IS BUY LOCAL?

INDUSTRY NEWS

CONFERENCE UPDATE

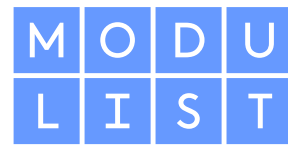
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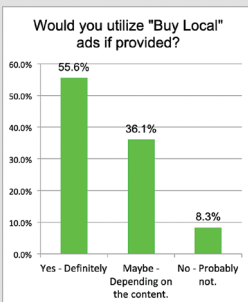
April 23-24, 2020

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Orlando, Florida*

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COMING next month

The April issue of INK will be the annual Trade Show Issue where we highlight some of the opportunities available from our Associate Members. Profiles of the companies and products that offer business-improving solutions to publishing problems will accompany the regular assortment of industry news and current events.

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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.

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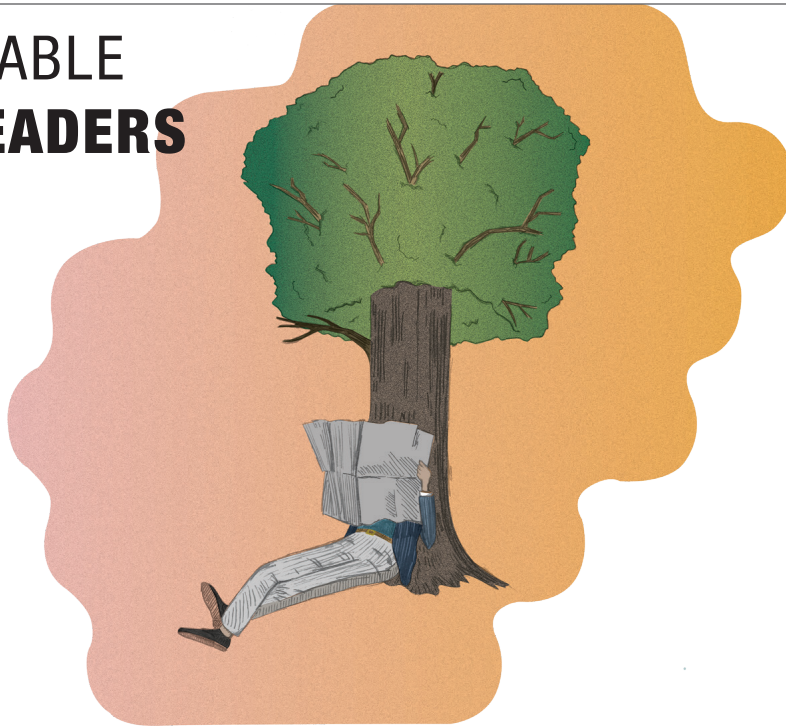
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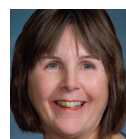


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LOREN COLBURN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The state of our Industry

ONCE AGAIN I FIND MYSELF WAITING for a connecting flight at O'Hare Airport reflecting on the state of the Free Community Paper Industry! I have to say based on my experiences the last two days, I feel really good about the industry and great about the people that are actively participating in navigating a path to its positive future.

I just participated in a strategic planning session in Minneapolis to identify the objectives that the Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP) will be focusing on for the coming 12 months. This experience has reinforced my belief that there are industry professionals with the insights, energy and commitment to actively drive their companies and fellow industry associates to succeed in this ever-changing environment. It also reenergizes me with the excitement that is contagious when you spend time with people who are so passionate about the industry they have invested their careers in.

I don't want to give the impression this was a session seeing some kumbaya, bed-of-roses future for publications. On the contrary, it was a realistic evaluation of what we need to be doing to help members move their companies in a positive direction. This process will require looking outside our normal comfort zone of doing more of what we always have done, to developing a clearer understanding of what our readers want, what would make non-readers into readers and closely watching shifts in these factors as information sources change.

The one thing I am absolutely sure about is that the group of Board Members MFCP has at their helm has a solid vision of their local market's best interests and clearly uses that vision as the compass directing their publications. Armed with an unwavering belief in their opportunity to serve their local

communities while at the same time providing for their employees, each of them focuses on maintaining a product that puts local content, local buying information and the good of their communities at the forefront. Their passion for their products, their industry and their communities is not only obvious, it is profound.

As we look at the concept of "buy local" in this issue of INK, I am confident that our industry needs to take the lead in educating our communities about the immense benefits of supporting local businesses as well as the long-term costs of not supporting them. The few dollars saved in the name of convenience, may bring even more significant long-term costs to the communities they live in. No one in each individual market understands local better than community papers, and no one is in a better position to educate businesses and residents on the many unseen benefits of those two groups working together.

Much like our dedicated associates on the MFCP Board, let's concentrate our focus on how best to serve all of our stakeholders. That group would include our employees, readers, advertisers and community members who rely on our publications to provide the information that connects them all together. They all need to understand both the importance and the complexity of this symbiotic relationship.

Thanks again to the MFCP Board for reinforcing my belief in the people who participate in this incredible industry and for reigniting the enthusiasm that makes me feel good about the industry I have chosen to invest the last 42 years of my professional life with. Your devotion to directing positive outcomes is as essential as it is inspirational.

Remember to not only "buy local" but to remind those media buyers... "If it's FREE, buy it!" **INK**

Get to Know This Gold Partner



CHRIS SEDLAK, Owner
Little Fish Big Ocean Inc.

It's 8 A.M. MONDAY MORNING. You walk in the door, coffee in hand, ready to start your day. Your sales manager is sick today. There's a note on your desk from your production manager. A full-page ad never made it in the issue and a 1/2 page pick-up never got updated. And to top off your morning, the person who does your billing emailed you that \$3,000 was never invoiced last issue because they didn't get the info from sales.

While you're probably cringing right now and vowing that it will never happen to you, it can and unfortunately does. The good news is that it can be prevented with a good organizational system in place. This is where MaxPro comes in.

MaxPro Publishing is a solution developed by Little Fish Big Ocean Inc. of Florida. Developed specifically for the independent publishing industry, MaxPro is perfect for bringing departments together. As soon as a company grows and departments are created, the lack of communication grows and begins to hinder smooth operations. From ad placement to billing and everything in between, MaxPro allows each department to enter their information on a single, shared platform. With this "enter it once" philosophy, double-entry is a thing of the past. Errors from lost paperwork or miscommunication are virtually gone, including lost revenue for neglecting to place or invoice an ad.

So you're probably thinking to yourself, "Well, we've been using Excel all these years and we're doing just fine." Yes, that may be true, but have you ever wondered if you may be missing out on more business? Do you have access to all of your clients' information or do your sales people have it in their computers or phones? What

if something happens to your sales people? There are so many potential problems that can come your way. Do you really own your data or can it walk out the door at any moment?

When business owners look at MaxPro or similar solutions, they compare it by face value.

Off-the-shelf products or basic online business solutions that are not geared towards publishers may cost less and seem like a viable solution. True, it costs less money, but there's a reason for that. How much time are you going to spend trying to create workarounds for all of its shortcomings?

If you want to compare the real value, let's look at your return on investment after a one- or two-year period. Did your sales team have more time to go get new sales? Were there fewer errors in placement or maybe an

advertiser that was about to drop out who renewed his contract?

Unfortunately, most people are looking for immediate results. "If I spent \$300, I expect my sales to increase by \$500 in a few months." This thinking is short-sighted.

So often we hear, "Well, I'll just hire an office assistant." If you hired an assistant for one person for, let's say, \$10 an hour, it would run you roughly \$20k plus taxes, benefits, etc. etc. So, for one assistant, you're looking at about \$25k/year. WHAT IF you could hire an assistant that worked 24/7, was available anywhere the internet is available, helped every person in your office and made filling in for someone easy? And this assistant would cost you LESS THAN 1/4 of a regular employee?

MaxPro was designed for those reasons.

Continued on page 8

"Spreadsheets work, but there's a better way."

– Chris Sedlak



TESTIMONIAL

"Our company has been using MaxPro software since September 2011. Since incorporating Max we have experienced increased sales and more efficiency in our composing process. The system has been greatly embraced by our sales reps, and our production department has had a load of responsibility removed from them. I highly recommend any publisher to explore the possibilities that MaxPro has to offer!"

– Greg Ledford
Community First Media
Shelby, N.C.

Gold Partner Little Fish Big Ocean

Continued from page 7

Installation and implementation is quick and painless. Support is free and quick. MaxPro's interface is designed to be friendly, not gray and drab. Users will find it easy to navigate and it's virtually plug-and-play for new users. But most importantly, your data is safe, secure and backed-up, and all at your fingertips with support you can always count on.


"If you've ever thought about expanding your company by adding a new publication or beefing up your sales staff, then we need to talk," said owner Chris Sedlak. "We are honored to be working with so many great businesses around the U.S. and look forward to helping you."

Since 2008, Little Fish Big Ocean Inc. has been helping small businesses grow. Schedule a live online demo to see how your workflow can be improved by contacting Chris Sedlak at chris@maxpropublishing.com or by calling 407-656-2777. And if you're planning to attend the upcoming Annual Conference and Trade Show in Orlando, plan to stop by and chat with Gold Partner Little Fish Big Ocean!

"Run your business. Don't let your business run you," said Sedlak. **INK**

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All proceeds from the silent auction go to the Bill Welsh Foundation to help provide scholarships for Rising Stars to attend the AFCP annual conference.

On the fence? It's DECISION TIME!

by Greg Bruns, 2020 Conference Committee Chair

THIS AFTERNOON I PRINTED out my travel itinerary for our upcoming conference in Orlando. My 14-year-old was hanging out in the Arcadia News office after school, bored and waiting for a ride home. Parents know the drill: phone in the face; sporadic open-mouthed sighs with the occasional eyeroll to further illustrate the world-weariness; yet still attentive enough to pick up on every little thing that could perhaps – directly or indirectly – affect his life. He peered over his phone to see me pinning the American Airlines schedule to the corkboard.

“Where are we going?” he asked, placing a confident emphasis on the word we. “Is this the Orlando trip?”

I confirmed the destination and let him down easy on the insinuation of a family journey. We had talked about the idea of a Florida vacation when we learned of this year's AFCP/FMA Conference location, but our school break doesn't line up, so Disney World will have to wait.

Which is fine by me, because this trip to Orlando is for me, my employees and my business. This trip is about growing my circle of friends, acquaintances and industry professionals. It's about what I can bring home to share with my employees, my family and my customers. Every year I learn something new and every year I learn how to look at something old from a different angle.

Like most of my fellow members, I've chosen to spend my professional life in an industry I love, which is currently being challenged on all sides. The reputation and relevance of newspapers seem to be assaulted regularly on a national scale, which makes it easy for ad buyers and marketing specialists to dismiss community publications



Greg Bruns

as just another player on the same team. We see it nearly every day; and while I'm tired of arguing the same points to defend our industry, I'm not going to quit. Thankfully I'm not alone – we're all survivors, finding our way together.

Last year I attended the (23rd annual!) Saturation Mailer's Coalition breakfast round table with Donna Hanbery (it's on Friday

It is an honor to be selected as the Conference Chair for the 2020 AFCP/FMA Joint Conference in Orlando. I've been a member of AFCP for just over a decade, joining after I attended my first AFCP conference in Tucson in 2010, which was a convenient 90-minute drive from my hometown of Phoenix. Coming home from that conference I was ecstatic, having finally found some people who understood what I was going through!

Part of my job as this year's conference committee chair is to entice you to conference. If one person comes up to me in Orlando and tells me my columns in INK gave you that extra nudge that was needed to commit to the conference, I will have done my job and I will gladly buy you a drink.

morning this year). There were about a dozen of us (publishers who use the U.S. Postal Service), sitting with two higher-ups from the USPS in Washington, D.C., and Donna was the acting mediator of the session. I'm really glad I didn't miss that meeting because I needed those new D.C. relationships last week while working on a CBD advertising issue. I know most of my local postal workers, but it will always be good to have contacts in Washington when it comes to federal institutions that I have to do business with.

I had an answer from our D.C. friends within 24 hours. It wasn't what I wanted to hear, but I knew it was correct and my problem was solved. That is just one of many examples I can share to encourage others to come to Orlando.

The Conference Committee is also excited to announce a last-minute addition in the form of a closing keynote speaker. Mike Blinder is a lifelong media guy and industry advisor who believes in the power of our business so much that he just sidestepped retirement and took ownership of Editor & Publisher (E&P) magazine. Mike's message is “Time to Get Our Swagger Back!” and it encourages us to focus on what we do best as an industry. Learn more about Mike and his message on page 10 in this issue of INK – and then come see him in person.

If you're on the fence about attending this year's conference, it's time to make a decision. The AFCP/FMA special room block closes March 20th and after that, you're either paying full price for the room if you're coming, or you're missing out on the opportunity that is this year's conference.

See you in Orlando! 

Closing Keynote Speaker Announced for Orlando!



MIKE BLINDER

“Time to get our
SWAGGER
back!”

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT DIGITAL DISRUPTION IS affecting our audience and profits. However, are we living a self-fulfilling prophecy by moving our focus away from leveraging our print publication assets as a core revenue source? There is profit for publications when we focus on what we do best!

Mike Blinder is a sales street fighter who has generated \$100 million in multimedia ad sales. And last September he surprised the entire industry with his purchase of Editor & Publisher Magazine. Mike will dissect the latest research and data showing that we are still a great industry, with great products and a great future ahead. As long as we keep our eye on the ball!


Mike has been in love with media his entire life. In high school he held part-time jobs as an intern at WPEN radio in Philadelphia and at Radio Shack, where he sold the first generation of home computers.

While attending George Washington University he held a full-time job as a DC Deejay, becoming a station manager within five years. From radio Mike moved to TV and eventually print, starting one of the first digital newspapers in the United States where he was nominated by the Newspaper Association of America as a “Digital Pioneer.” Today he owns one of the world’s most respected media consulting firms with over 350 newspaper clients worldwide where he has trained over 20,000 of their staff on how to innovate to embrace new media concepts.

Best known for his SMB (small- medium-sized business) marketing training sessions, Mike brings his lifelong learning and love of media together in entertaining and engaging classes to cities and towns across the world. Over 100,000 business leaders have attended his sessions on how to use all forms of media more effectively to guarantee maximum results.

Mike is also the CEO (Chief Evangelist Officer) of the Curated Experiences Group, the new owners of Editor & Publisher (E&P), a magazine that has served as the authoritative voice of news publishing for over 140 years. Mike is E&P’s new publisher.

The author of “Survival Selling,” Mike has won numerous media awards. He is the past president and board member of a number of media/marketing associations and has been a sought-after speaker at conferences around the world.

Mike lives in Tampa Bay, Florida with his wife, daughter and Golden-Doodle, Ginger. 



Prime Delivery vs. Buying Locally

by Charlie Delatorre

I HAD A FRIEND OF mine who was looking for work this past holiday season. He had been recently let go from his

previous employer and needed a job. Finding full-time work in late October was tough for him so he took a job working temporarily for Amazon delivering packages.

He's a pretty easygoing guy, loves music and used the 8-10 hours a day he worked hopping in and out of his car listening to a variety of classic and southern rock. Occasionally I would get texts from him declaring his love for some random 70's classic. The work was boring and unfulfilling but it was a job and he needed it – even if it was on a temp basis.

So the guy worked 54 straight days from November 1st till December 24th and delivered a total of 5,778 packages.

That's an average of 107 packages per day. He was one of many hired to perform the same task all over my little town of Gainesville, Florida (Go Gators!). I have to be honest, I freaked out when I heard that number.

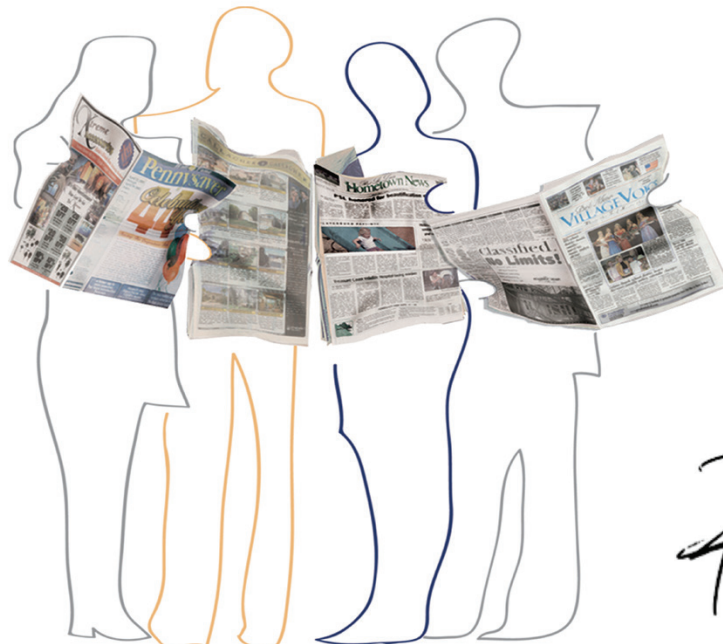
Don't get me wrong; I use Amazon all the time. It's easy, simple and convenient. But I couldn't help but think that was 5,778 packages full of items that could have been purchased locally.

Multiply that by the other 20 drivers all doing the same thing in my town and that's tens of thousands of packages that weren't purchased locally. That's an incredible number of sales, items and goods that used to be purchased at your local hardware store, bookstore and grocery store.

I get it. Times change and our industry knows better than most how difficult it can be to stay relevant, to stay pertinent, to stay local. But I was amazed at the sheer volume that was happening in my own backyard. You know as publishers we often talk about how great our circulation is but most people don't know what 30, 40, or 50,000 copies of something looks like. Ever taken a client to the printer to see what 30,000 magazines actually looks like? They freak out! Well, that was me when I stopped and thought about that number...5,778!

I don't think we're going back to the way it was – Prime Delivery is just too good of a deal. But

what I do know is our businesses are about as local as it gets. For years, even generations, some of us have been reliant upon our revenue coming from locally-owned or independently-owned businesses. And we should be doing everything we can to focus on these amazing places that dot the landscape of our communities. **INK**



CHARLIE DELATORRE
AFCP PRESIDENT
TOWER PUBLICATIONS

The Survey Says...

INTERESTING INSIGHTS...

83.3% of publications belong to their local Chamber of Commerce

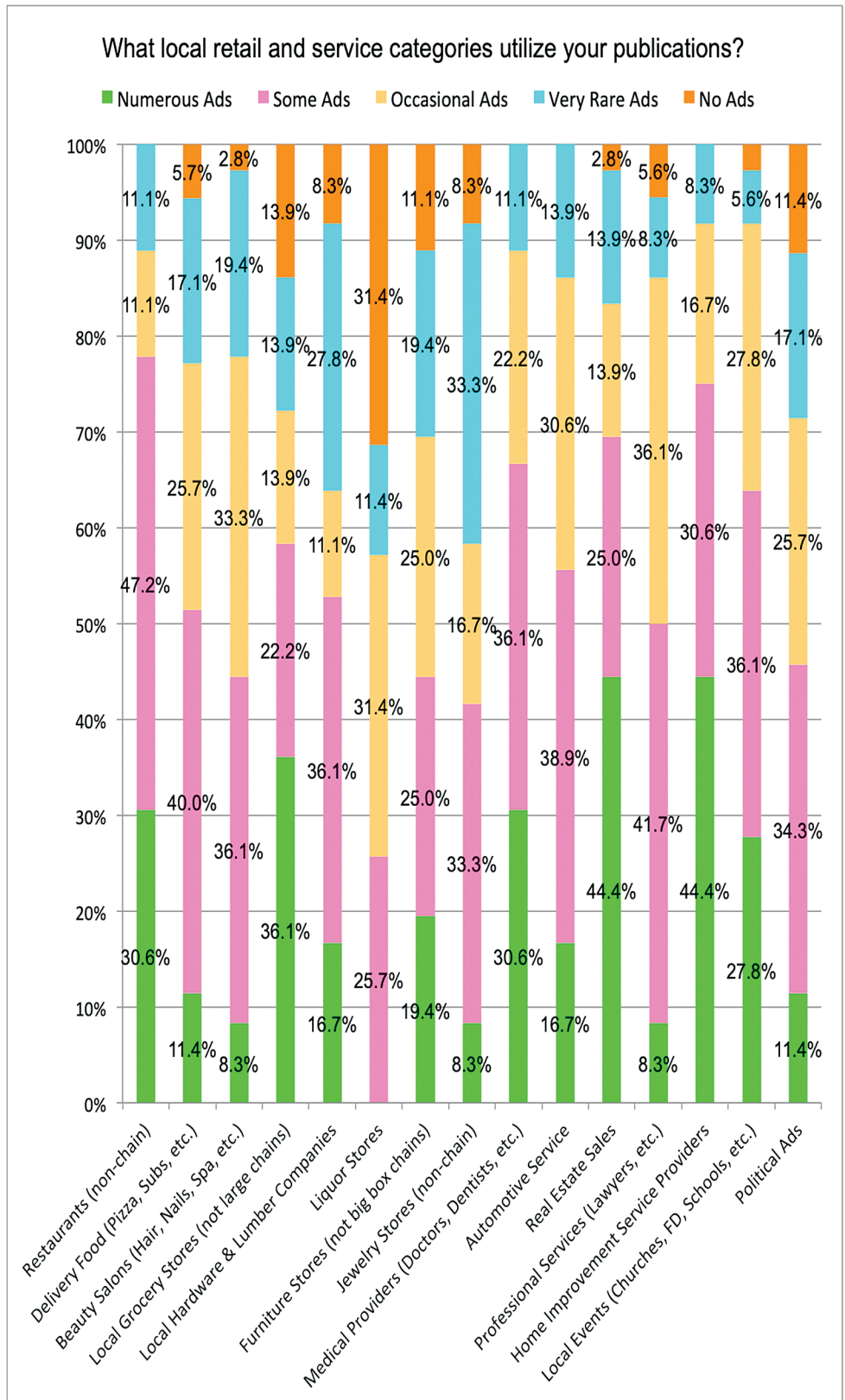
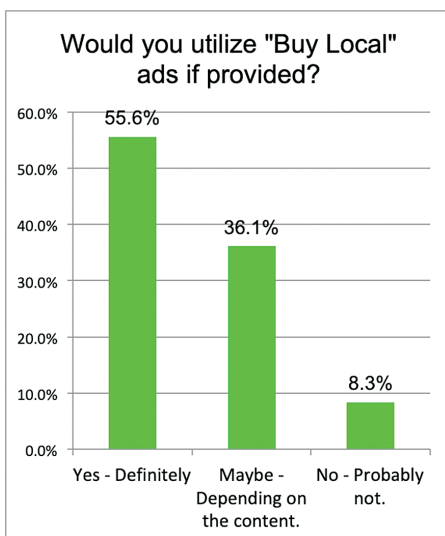
44.4% belong to their local Rotary Club

72.2% of publications support multiple youth programs within their communities

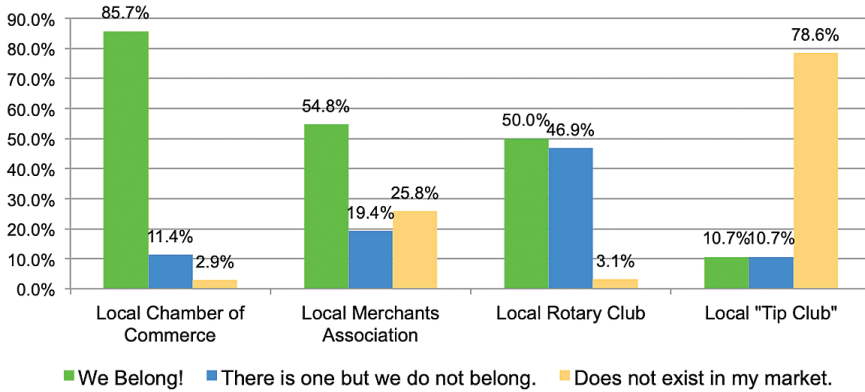
61.1% of publications support at least one local senior group

Strongest Ad Categories...

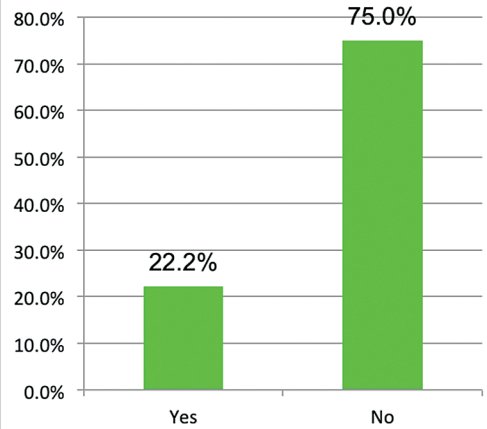
1. Restaurants
2. Home Improvement
3. Real Estate
4. Medical Service Providers
5. Local Events



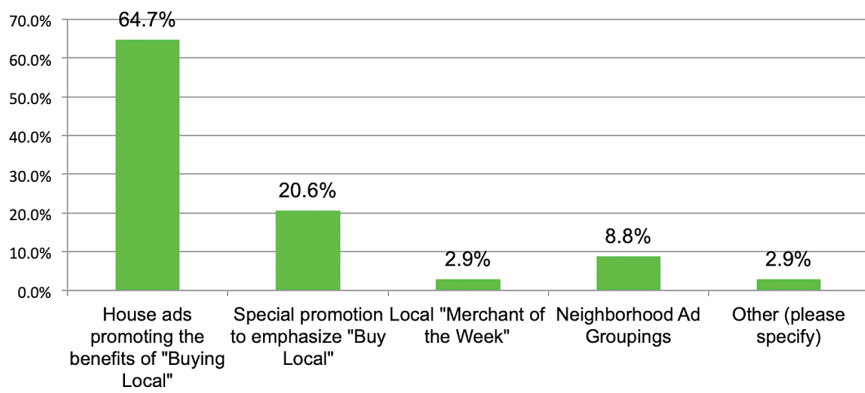
Does your company belong to any of the following? (check all that apply)



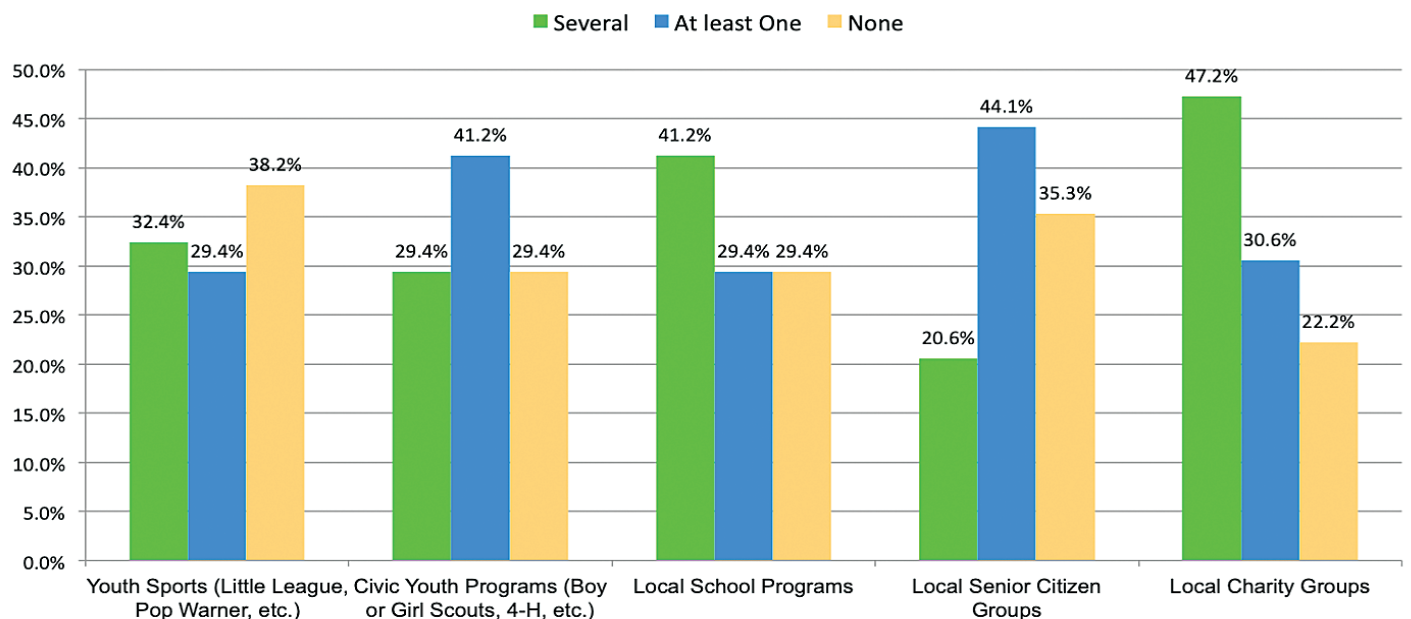
Do you currently use any programs or incentives to encourage your employees to shop from your advertisers?



Do you do anything to promote "Buy Local" in your market?



Does your publication directly support any of the following?



Why Buy Local?

ARE HOME VALUES RISING where you live? Is your local economy thriving? Does your community have enough money to maintain its roads, schools and emergency services? Are there plenty of jobs available?

If you answered no to any of these questions, did you know that there's something you can personally do to help revive your local economy? Evidence shows it's as easy as buying local.

Take Shakespeare & Co., a small independent bookstore in New York City, for example. The American Booksellers Association reported that after years of intense competition from Amazon and big box superstores, independent bookstore ownership fell by almost 40 percent from the mid-90s through 2009.

The original Shakespeare & Co. bookstore succumbed in 1996; but as the "Buy Local" movement grew and more customers chose to spend

their dollars in neighborhood stores, Shakespeare & Co. was able to make a comeback in 2018. Owner

Dane Neller, who recently opened his third bookstore, said, "Bookstores are back and they're back in a big way."

The American Booksellers Association notes that independent bookstores act as community anchors, serving a unique role in the cultural life of communities while creating economically vibrant neighborhoods. With its inviting café, onsite publishing and custom while-you-wait book printing, Shakespeare & Co. is more than just a bookstore. It's what Neller calls a "cultural sanctuary."

From big cities like New York to small towns such as Malad City, Idaho – population 2,104 – buying local has made an impact.

Hess Lumber opened in Malad City in 1935. Owner Doug Crowther began working in the store as a kid, and now he hopes to teach a new generation of kids how to work.

It started simply enough. The new Hess Lumber store was equipped



These are some of the print ads available for use when you join Independent We Stand. Visit: IndependentWeStand.org to sign up.

with a cardboard baler to compress boxes and packaging material for recycling. Soon, Hess began baling cardboard for two neighboring companies as well. The little side business grew to include over a dozen businesses in town using the service. The small monthly fee Hess charges the other businesses for the service pays for the forklift time to transport the cardboard, while simultaneously creating jobs for the high school students who run the program.

"It keeps them moving and doing stuff," said Crowther. "That's what I was raised doing, and we had that opportunity because of the family business."

A common misconception about small businesses is that small stores can't compete

with big box stores and online retailers because they don't have the same buying power. However, many independent

small businesses belong to buying groups that give them that boost in buying power on necessities such as inventory and advertising so that their prices can stay in line with the market.

The current tendency for local governments and economic development organizations to think about job creation in terms of attracting

and retaining large companies needs to be changed. A report by the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) suggests that comparable efforts to strengthen and grow small businesses may have

Continued on page 17

"Small, locally-owned businesses are really the lifeblood of local economies and local communities. And without your support, they can't survive."

**– Bill Brunelle
Independent We Stand**



Remind your customers to support local businesses – including yours! – with these social media campaigns, also available for download at IndependentWeStand.org when you join.

Did You Know?

- Small businesses accounted for 65% of all net new jobs over the past 17 years.
- Small businesses employ 77 million Americans.
- 89% of consumers agree that independent businesses contribute positively to local economies.
- Residential neighborhoods served by a successful independent business district gained, on average, 50% more in home values than their citywide markets.
- Independent retailers return more than three times as much money per dollar of sales than chain competitors.
- Independent restaurants return more than two times as much money per dollar of sales than national restaurant chains.
- If independent businesses regained their 1990 market shares, it would create 200,000 new small businesses, generate nearly \$300 billion in revenues and employ more than 1.6 million American workers.
- If just half the U.S. employed population spent \$50 each month in locally owned independent businesses, it would generate more than \$42.6 billion in revenue.
- For every square foot a local firm occupies, the local economy gains \$179 vs. \$105 for a chain store. **INK**

Sources: Small Business Administration; Intuit Small Business Innovation Study; American Express OPEN Independent Retail Index; Civic Economics/American Booksellers Assoc., U.S. Dept. of Labor. Reprinted with permission from IndependentWeStand.org.



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3X* MORE MONEY TO
OUR COMMUNITY BY
CHOOSING TO SHOP
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A BIG BOX STORE.**

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*American Booksellers Association/Civic Economics



Mother's Day Facebook Buy Local ad campaigns are also available for download when you join Independent We Stand.

Continued from page 15

the same payoff.

The ICIC report, which examined small business job creation in 10 large U.S. cities, found that small businesses (defined as no more than 250 employees) made up at least 99 percent of all businesses in the cities. Micro businesses (defined as one to four employees) accounted for the largest number of businesses, but the small businesses created up to 72 percent of the available jobs.

Big cities don't have to be the only demographic benefiting from the information gleaned from the ICIC report. Independently owned businesses in small towns across the country are banding together and reaching out to their communities about the benefits of buying local.

There are two ways you can teach and inform your customers and community about the importance of buying local.

First, consider joining – and promoting to your customers – Independent We Stand (IWS), an association of independent business owners across the country that are united to inform their communities about the importance of buying local to boost local economic development. A free basic membership lists your business in the IWS “locals only” search engine and on mobile apps so customers can find you via a keyword search. It also gives you access to downloadable marketing materials.

A \$49 premium membership in IWS does all that plus links to your social media accounts, lists your business hours, generates leads, integrates YELP reviews, allows you to customize the marketing materials, and more. A full list of the benefits available with a premium membership is listed on the IWS website.

A second way to teach and inform

Continued on page 18

How Can I Get Involved?

CHOOSE TO BUY LOCALLY!

- Seek out a local business you've never been to and see what they have to offer.
- Get your prescriptions filled at a local pharmacy.
- Eat lunch at a local eatery instead of a chain restaurant.
- Purchase birthday gifts at a local gift shop.
- Frequent your community's Farmer's Market for your produce.
- Join a locally-owned gym.
- Visit a local nursery for your lawn and garden needs.
- Get your outdoor power equipment from the local hardware store instead of a national chain.

TELL YOUR COMMUNITY!

- Inform your friends about that great new shop/gym/nursery you found.
- Take your friends out to eat at that great new restaurant.
- Post a picture on Facebook of that awesome birthday gift you gave your Mom, along with a picture of the store it came from.
- Watch for “Buy Local” posters in your community's storefronts and make a special effort to visit those establishments.
- Suggest to the owners of the local businesses you frequent that they register their business with IndependentWeStand.org, where their

listing will appear in a searchable national database!

A study in Grand Rapids, Michigan, found that if 600,000 people shifted 10 percent of their spending to local stores, the following would be created locally within one year: 1,600 jobs; \$137 million in new economic activity; and \$53 million in new wages. **INK**

Think about the impact you can have with every purchase you make!

Source: www.IndependentWeStand.org, www.civiceconomics.com/localworks

Google Tips


Online retail shouldn't just be for Amazon! These Google-approved tips will help locally-owned small businesses to reach new customers via online retail:

1. Claim Your Google My Business Listing – This is the easiest way to increase your chances of appearing in a Google search. Your listing will show up in the right-hand side of a user's Google results, showing your business name, location, operating hours and more. To claim your free listing, visit business.google.com.

2. Get Your In-Store Products Online – It might be easier than you think to reach new customers online when they're searching for a particular item. Pointy has a plug-in device that connects your existing point-of-sale system and barcode scanner, automatically building your online inventory as you scan each item.


3. Use Google's Free Tools to Get More Customers – Google's "Grow My Store" tool provides you with a report offering specific advice to optimize your website and drive more traffic to it. The "See What's In Store" tool works with online inventory tools like Pointy, adding your inventory to your "Google My Business" listing.

4. Easily Advertise Online to Local Customers – People often search for a business or product "near me." By using a partner such as Pointy, you can target the local consumers who matter most to your business.

5. Use Events to Get More People into Your Store – Since consumers can buy almost anything online, when they choose to go to a local store they're looking for something more such as customer service, knowledgeable staff and superior products. Plan an event to bring them in. 

Continued from page 17
your customers and community about buying local is by joining the new "Start Us Up" coalition. "Small business" and "entrepreneurship" are popular buzzwords in this election cycle and every candidate will claim to have a plan to support America's businesses. But the Start Us Up coalition members have come up with a bipartisan plan for policymakers at all levels of government that is focused on creating new jobs and leveling the playing field for small businesses and startups. It focuses on the four pillars that new business owners need:

1. Opportunity: A level playing field and less red tape;
2. Funding: Equal access to the right kind of capital everywhere;
3. Knowledge: The know-how to start a business; and
4. Support: The ability to take risks.

To view the full bipartisan plan, visit www.startusupnow.org. 

Sponsored by STIHL, Inc., Do it Best Corp., Nationwide Marketing Group and PPG Paints, Independent We Stand is a national association of independent business owners united to inform their communities about the importance of "Buying Local." For additional information, visit www.IndependentWeStand.org or call 888-787-8IWS (8497).

DID YOU KNOW...

- When you spend \$100 at an independent business, \$68 returns to the local community. Spend that same amount at a national chain and it drops to \$43.
- Locally-owned businesses reinvest in the local economy at a 60% higher rate than chains and internet retailers.
- Small businesses create more than half the non-farm private gross domestic product (GDP).
- Locally-owned and operated businesses create higher-paying jobs for you and your neighbors.
- More of your tax dollars are reinvested in your community to fund local schools, hire more police officers and improve roads.

**Sources: Civic Economics – Andersonville Study of Retail Economics; U.S. Chamber of Commerce – Small Business Nation; Civic Economics – San Francisco Report on Retail Diversity; U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; Buy Local Berkeley.*



Here are a few more Mother's Day Facebook Buy Local ad campaigns.

Where Does “Shop Local” Begin and End?

by Manuel Karam, 2019 Rising Star

IN OUR LINE OF WORK, WE’VE COME TO embrace the importance of shopping local. It couldn’t be more significant to the fabric of our communities and therefore, our publications. In some ways it’s an unwritten mission statement that we are in the business of helping our clients succeed and capture local dollars in the face of dynamic and unapologetic digital change.

But has anyone noticed how one-sided this sometimes feels?

Recently our sales team sat in on a meeting of local main street merchants. The topic was generally “marketing.” Although we were in attendance with businesses we’ve served for many years, we weren’t invited to speak. Instead, the focus of the discussion was on how each business should tag one another in Facebook posts to boost viewership. There was also a segment on purchasing a type of Google device to help with SEO. There was no mention of print.

The meeting later concluded with our attendees feeling confused and disappointed. Sadly, this was not an outlier; this same type of event comes in different shapes and sizes – a chamber of commerce hosting a summit on social media strategies, or even hearing from a client that she is promoting her Small Business Saturday sale on Facebook.

Local businesses lament the fact that Amazon, Carvana, or any number of other technology companies have negatively affected their sales. They hang “Shop Local” signs in their storefronts and they are quick to tell their clients to keep dollars in the community. Yet, do these same businesses truly care about practicing what they preach? Certainly, in many cases the answer is “yes.” But on the whole, it sometimes feels like the “Shop Local”

movement forgot about media providers.

On a recent sales call, I visited a business that had a banner on the wall that read, “Don’t raise problems without offering solutions.” In the spirit of this statement, it’s not enough to talk about the issue above and stop. So what can we do in the face of this trend?

The answer, I think, is to change our approach. We know our products work, so why are we so

keen to nod our heads and commend sales prospects for a strong “media mix”? Has this strategy helped to change the trend in print advertising sales in our industry? I know for us it has not.

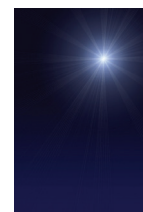
Local print revenue is continually reinvested in some way or another. Whether it’s compensating employees, paying local taxes, sponsoring charities – or even, yes, shopping local – print advertising revenue usually comes back in the community to keep the ecosystem strong. But you and I know this already. Our customers

need to be made aware as well.

What I’m challenging us to do is to feel good about raising up our print product under the banner of “Advertise Local.” It may take time for this idea to set in with your customers. They sometimes only see threats that affect them directly, and Facebook has been a friend that provides cheap or free advertising when traditional retail revenues are in jeopardy. But shopping local is not a part-time idea. It applies to all of the businesses that keep dollars in the community.

So in 2020 and beyond, don’t stop at “Shop Local.” Tell your clients to advertise local; not only because we reach thousands of homes, are read by thousands of people, or influence thousands of readers, but because it’s the smart thing to do. **INK**

“What I’m challenging us to do is to feel good about raising up our print product under the banner of ‘Advertise Local.’”



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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, 2,265 free paper professionals have attended classes at the AFCP, state and regional conferences, earning over 13,841 class credits in 87 different course curriculums. A total of 124 people have completed all the requirements and been certified as Associate Advertising Executives (AAE) by the AFCP Board!

"Dedication makes dreams come true."

– Kobe Bryant

THE TRAGIC DEATH OF BASKETBALL GREAT KOBE BRYANT in a helicopter crash sparked a nationwide outpouring of sympathy. Tributes poured in from his teammates and his former opponents. He received praise from every corner of American society and memorials to Bryant were created around the country. These tributes honor more than his exceptional success on the basketball court, but also honored him for the man he was. Bryant set an example for hard work and dedication that is an inspiration to us all.


Bryant was blessed with a strong body and natural athletic ability, but this is not what made him a champion. At six-foot-six he was an inch shorter than the average NBA player, and he was dwarfed by the 20+ players who top seven feet.

Every player who shared the court with Bryant possessed extraordinary athletic abilities. So what set Kobe Bryant apart and made him a champion? The answer is really quite simple—it was Bryant's dedication to excellence and his willingness to work hard to achieve his goals.

During a press conference, his high school coach said that even as a young man Bryant accepted "no excuses, no short-cuts, no days off." Jeremy Treatman, who covered Kobe's high school career, told CBS, "He was doing things I never heard of, like getting a key from a janitor, coming into the school at 4 or 5 a.m. and taking 500 shots. He took 500 shots every day before school and 500 shots every day after school."

While many players are born with natural talent, very few are born with Bryant's drive and will to excel. Even when he had reached the pinnacle of success, he continued to hone his skills and practice harder than any of his teammates. He understood that success is a journey not a destination, making him one of the most reliable and consistent players in professional sports.

While few of us will ever be able to sink a game winning shot from half court, we can emulate Bryant's "no excuses, no shortcuts" approach to life. We can refuse to accept limitations and commit to preparing ourselves to become a champion in our own "game."

Every player does their best during the game. What makes a champion is the work they do when no one is watching. A champion's dedication to their profession is what makes their dreams come true. 



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Tailored for SELLING

by John Foust



HAVE YOU FALLEN INTO an order-taking rut? Are you passively relying on your accounts to tell you what and when to advertise? Are you following their creative directions like a police artist? (“Make the hair longer, make the ears bigger.”) Are you keeping up with events in their industries? Do you

know which products are selling? Do you know what offers have worked in the past? What about seasonal merchandise? Should they consider featuring those products in a separate ad – or a bigger ad?

There’s no excuse for being in a rut. If we look, we’ll find plenty of opportunities.

We can learn a lot about selling by studying other salespeople. Each time someone tries to sell us something, we see the good and the bad come to life – from a consumer’s point of view.

I remember a trip to a clothing store to buy a new suit. I had shopped there before and knew I would have no trouble finding what I wanted. I was a hot prospect, ready to buy.

When I arrived, all the salespeople were huddled around the front desk, talking and telling jokes. Expecting someone to follow me, I walked directly to the suit section and found my size. I glanced at the front of the store and realized that – even though I was the only customer in the store – no one had noticed me.

I picked out a suit and tried on the jacket. It looked like a good possibility, so I took the trousers

into the dressing room, rolled up the legs and put them on. Then I put the jacket back on and stood in front of the mirror. With a few standard alterations, the suit was just what I wanted.

Another glance toward the front desk still revealed no signs of life. So, having made a decision to buy, I found the alteration department and asked for the tailor.

There I was – standing at the mirror, pants rolled up 12 inches, coat sleeves reaching my knuckles, price tags hanging from the sleeves, tailor on the way with pins and chalk. Then a salesperson walked up and said, “Can I help you?” (No kidding, that’s what he said.)

“What a relief,” I thought. I was afraid I was going to have to write up the sale myself. (I wonder if they would have paid me a commission?)

In spite of the inattention, I did buy the suit. But that’s all I bought. The store was staffed with poor observers. In addition to taking ten minutes to recognize a customer, my salesperson missed a chance to sell a couple of shirts and ties to go with my new suit. If he had been good at his job – if he had been more than an order taker – perhaps he could have sold another suit, as well. He made a sale and lost a sale at the same time.

Months later, I walked through that shopping mall again. The store was no longer there. **INK**

Copyright 2019 by John Foust. All rights reserved. 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



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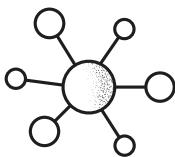
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SAUSAGE grinder, stepping STONES, and Pro-Principle

by Bob Berting



IN THE REAL WORLD OF advertising sales, many publications could fall into these categories:

1. Sausage Grinder

This publication pushes immediate income and has their salespeople push one-time promotions and bring ads in on a crash basis. Their salespeople are perceived as order takers.

All activity is on a treadmill and there is a great deal of stress and turnover on the sales staff. The publication lives from week to week.

2. Stepping Stone

This publication is obsessed with designing beautiful specialty tabloid covers and ads that are works of art. Since the emphasis is on ultra-creative ad design, there could be a lack of attention to content of campaigns and long-range programs. Response to ads could be diminished.

3. Pro-Principle

This sales staff is highly trained to be advertising professionals. Their customers are committed to long range programs because they perceive their salespeople as trusted advisors who want to tell the story of their business in a creative, thoughtful, and purposeful way. The customers are committed to the publication as a major player in their media mix strategy.

How advertising salespeople can be pro-principle

Primarily they must be believed and trusted in the customer's eyes. They have to be a trusted advisor

and counselor, not an interviewer who drones on and on with progressive questioning tactics. They must know competitive media. How can a contract or long-range program be sold to a prospect if the prospect doesn't believe the paper is a key player in their media mix? The pro-principle salesperson has to know the advantages and disadvantages of all competing media and be able to make precise comparisons accordingly.

Know layout and copy backwards and forwards

The pro salesperson must be able to explain type faces, headline selection, overall ad design, creative copy, and how the flow of ads are developed into a strong campaign.

They need to get their customers involved in the creative process of their ads by getting them to participate in the design of rough layout sketches to be submitted to the layout artist. In regard to creativity, there might be several meetings to go over a concept, to thoroughly understand customer needs and see how their ego will play a part in the process. Patience will win out and the happy ending will be a strong, comprehensive ad campaign... and a very happy customer.

Sell long range programs

Finally, ask the customer for all the reasons why people buy from them. These reasons can be converted into headings for individual ads in an ongoing, long-range program. **INK**

Bob is the author of three e-books for the newspaper industry as well as a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and columnist. He is the president of Berting Communications and can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408.

sales TALK by BOB



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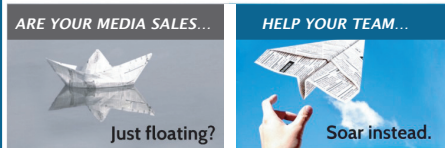
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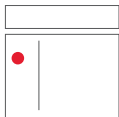
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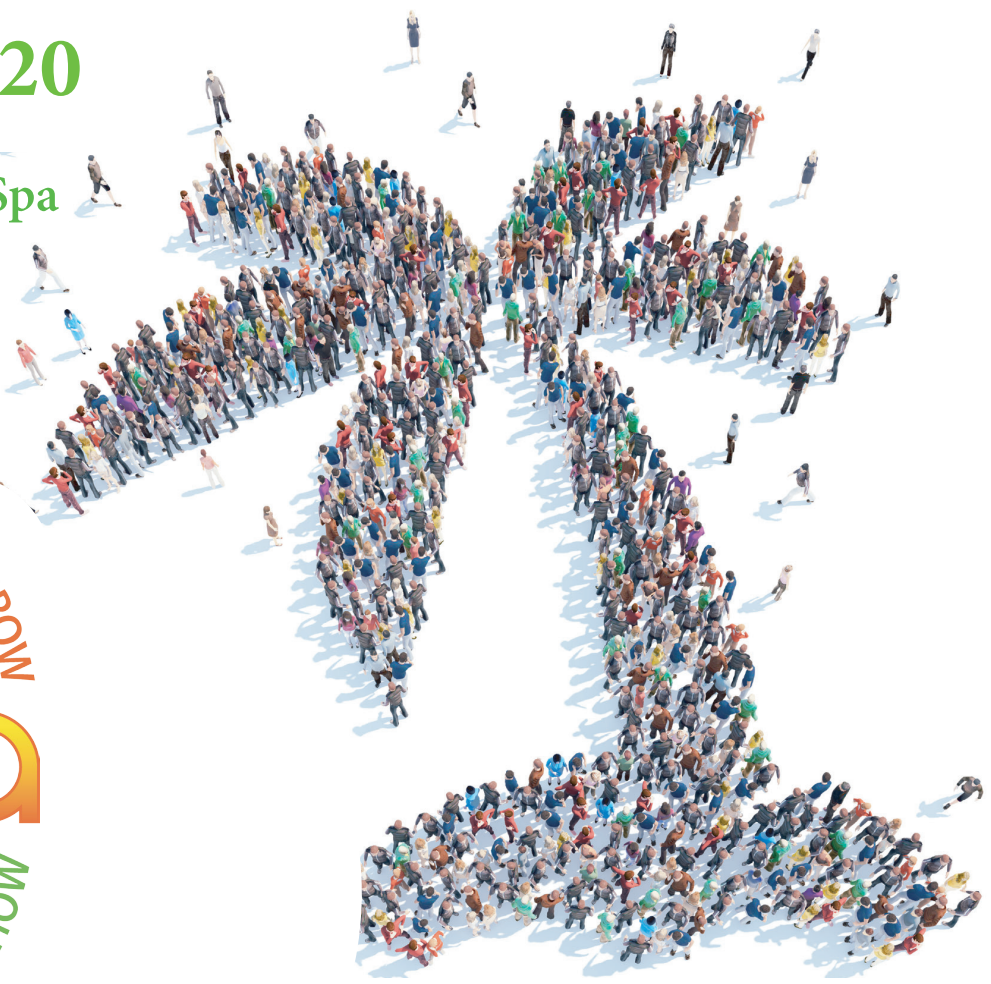
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