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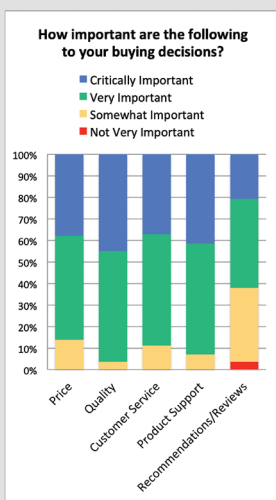
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COMING next month

The May issue of INK is our annual Conference issue! Make sure you read about the people, activities and businesses that shape this industry along with all the current events to keep you informed.

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

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

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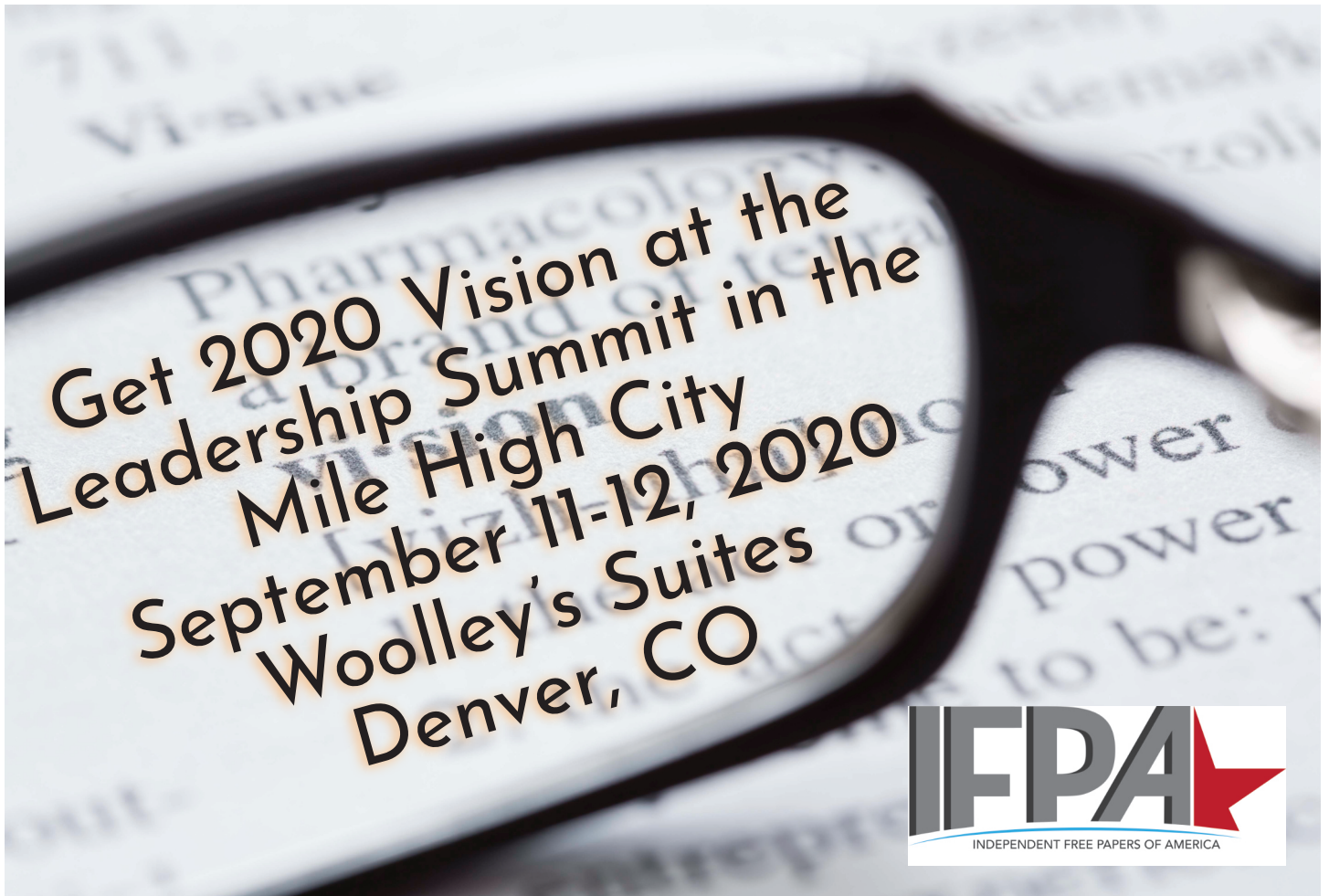


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RIISING STAR REPRESENTATIVE



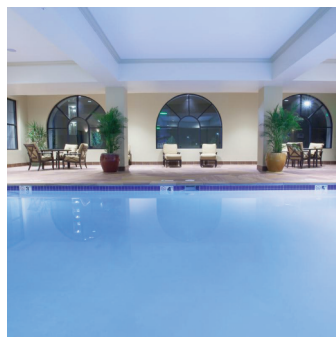
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LOREN COLBURN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A Different Point of View

WHY IS IT WE LOOK AT SELLING our products to advertisers so much differently than we look at buying products from businesses selling to our industry? Almost every publisher can immediately begin to list a ton of reasons a merchant should be advertising in their publication. We can bring in new customers to your business! Your ad message will be read in more homes! We are a trusted source of information to local consumers! And the list can go on for quite some time.

Yet when the table is turned 180 degrees and we mention trade shows, people in our industry put their buying hats on and many begin to act like the “I don’t want to be sold” merchants that they encounter all the time.

I would like to challenge you to take a different approach to the sales process the next time you find yourself on the buyer’s side of the discussion. Forget your knee-jerk defensive reaction to identify your reason not to consider this product, service or business solution. That posture will only provide barriers to your success.

I want you to picture for a minute, the sales call you made where the buyer discussed your publications with an open mind and sincere focus on the presentation of its unique features and benefits. They were engaged in the discussion and asked relevant questions that sparked additional information exchanges. Remember how excited you got putting together the ad campaign that set in motion the most successful seasonal sale the merchant had ever experienced. Recall the feeling of accomplishment when the customer thanked you for helping build his business with the successful ad campaign in your publications. Now, I need you to hold on

to all those good vibes while we make a shift.

With all those success memories fresh, I need you to put yourself in the position of having to solve a problem or fulfill a need at your publication that will require the help of an outside source. Take a moment to understand what your objective needs to be to take advantage of the opportunity or eliminate the problem. What questions will you need to have answered in your search for a solution? What suppliers might have solutions available for you? Where can you find suppliers who might be able to provide those solutions? Where can you network with other like businesses to get recommendations on solutions and providers?

I believe one of the best answers to all of this is the AFCP Annual Conference and Trade Show. You see, the trade show is NOT an event you need to avoid in order to prevent being sold something. It is an incredible resource for you to search out solutions to problems, answers to specific needs, and opportunities for expanding your publication’s capabilities! Your opportunity to deliver that “thank you” to a supplier for successfully helping your business improve is only an open mind and one trade show away.

So what are you waiting for? Embrace the trade show opportunity coming in Orlando. Or if you can’t be in Florida, reach out to the trade show partners listed in this issue of INK. Just like you selling advertising, their long-term success is not reliant on them selling you something. It is reliant on them solving your problems and building success stories.

And until next month – tell those media buyers, “If It’s Free, Buy It!” **INK**

Modulist: A company that offers you a Better Way

DO YOU REALLY NEED A STAFF PERSON ON your payroll to write obituaries and announcements? Or is there a better way?

There is a better way. It's called Modulist, and it does so much more than obituaries and announcements.

Modulist is a media services company that works on behalf of newspapers. Basically, the service collects the low-hanging fruit of paid verticals, doing all the production work for you so that you can use the time you used to spend writing such content doing something more profitable.

Here's how it works. Your newspaper sets up an account in Modulist, choosing from 13 available categories of content that you can make available to

your readers. Choose as many or as few categories as you want to make available to your readers. Obituaries are the largest revenue producer, so we'll use funeral homes as an example.

After you set up your publication's account, Modulist then works with you to set up relationships with funeral homes in your readership area. You choose the funeral homes closest to your publication. These would be what Modulist calls "Tier 1" accounts, as they are the most likely to use the service due to their proximity to your publication. Modulist will offer them "white glove" treatment setting up their account so they can submit obituaries to you, even going so far as to travel to their location to set up an account if necessary.

"Tier 2" accounts are a little farther away from your publication. Those funeral homes would be invited to view a webinar explaining the service, with Modulist talking them through the account setup. "Tier 3" accounts are the greatest distance from your publication. Modulist would send out mailers to introduce the service with an invitation to contact Modulist to get set up.

Next, Modulist provides you with in-house ads and ghost-written articles to run in your publication

informing your readers about the new service available to submit their personal birth, death, engagement, wedding, anniversary, birthday and other announcements. Individuals can then set up their own



The talented staff at Modulist stands ready to help you increase your revenue!

accounts to easily submit their stories. The customer can write the story the way they want it to appear, choose the layout – with or without a photo – easily crop a photo, and even calculate the cost of the announcement at any time during the process of writing it.

When a funeral home or an individual submits a story, Modulist handles all the production. They will reach out to the client for a new photo, if the one submitted is not good quality. They will verify with the funeral home that the death is legitimate, if the obituary was submitted by an individual. Finally, Modulist will collect payment and send you a print ready pdf.

Continued on page 8





Continued from page 7

You can log into your Modulist account at any time to see pending orders and where they are in the production process. You can run reports to see how much space to reserve for the current issue, or for end-of-month or year-over-year financials. Your monthly manifest will show how many ads Modulist created for you, how much you earned and how much was charged in fees. Modulist pays you monthly via check or direct deposit. The process is completely transparent, and all articles are archived in perpetuity.

So, what will this service cost you?

Nada. Zip. Zero. You set your own prices for the content, normally on a per-column-inch basis, and Modulist charges a processing fee to the consumer. Funeral homes add their own fees and build the charge into the total cost of the funeral.

Funeral homes love the Modulist software because they can simultaneously submit an obituary to multiple papers requested by the deceased's

family, with different run dates. They can receive an instant proof to show the family and confirmation of the cost they can present to the family in advance.

There are currently 13 modules available. In addition to obituaries, the categories include milestones, business announcements, community engagement letters, pet milestones, and job postings. Category number 14, press releases, is in beta testing; number 15, legals, is in testing with development; and number 16, classifieds, is being planned.

Modulist wants to partner with publications for their mutual benefit. By taking paid content orders for you, your time is freed up to allow you to focus on the core tasks of putting out your media, thereby reducing your costs and increasing your revenue.

"It's not about a quick sale for us," said President Devlyn Brooks. "I want to be asking you in three years what we can do to help you."

Stop by Modulist's booth at the upcoming Trade Show in Orlando, visit www.modulist.news, or call 701-241-5545 for additional information. **INK**

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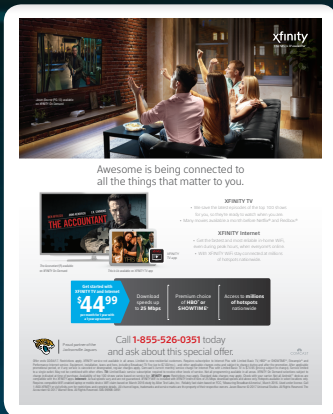


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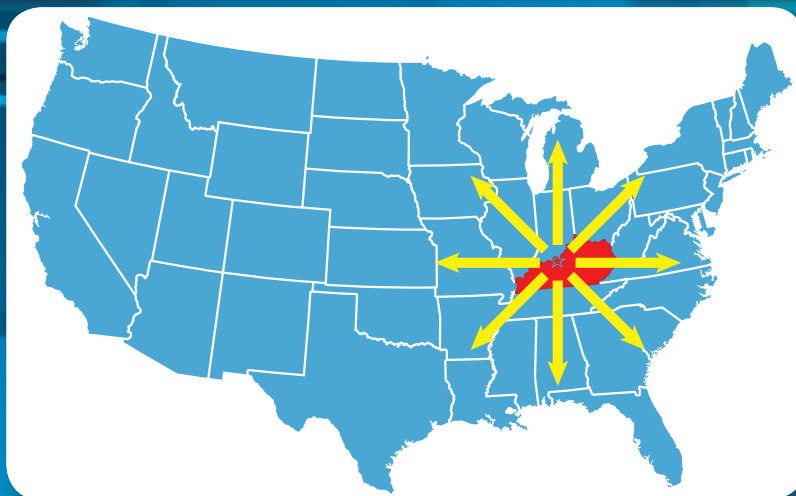


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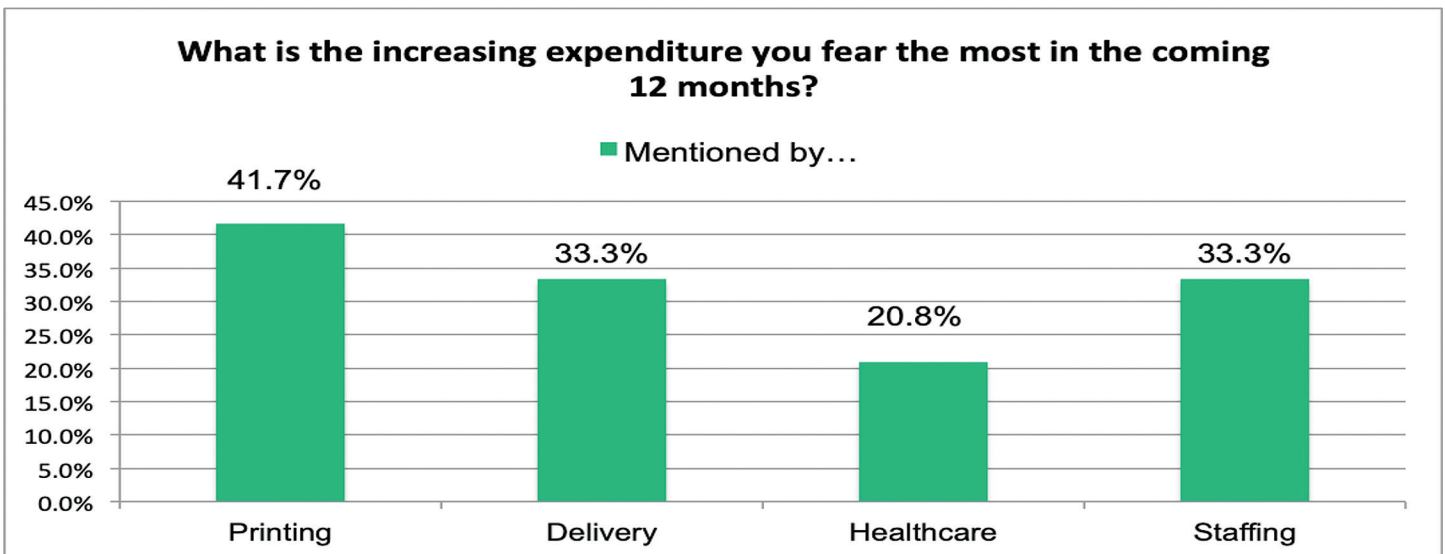
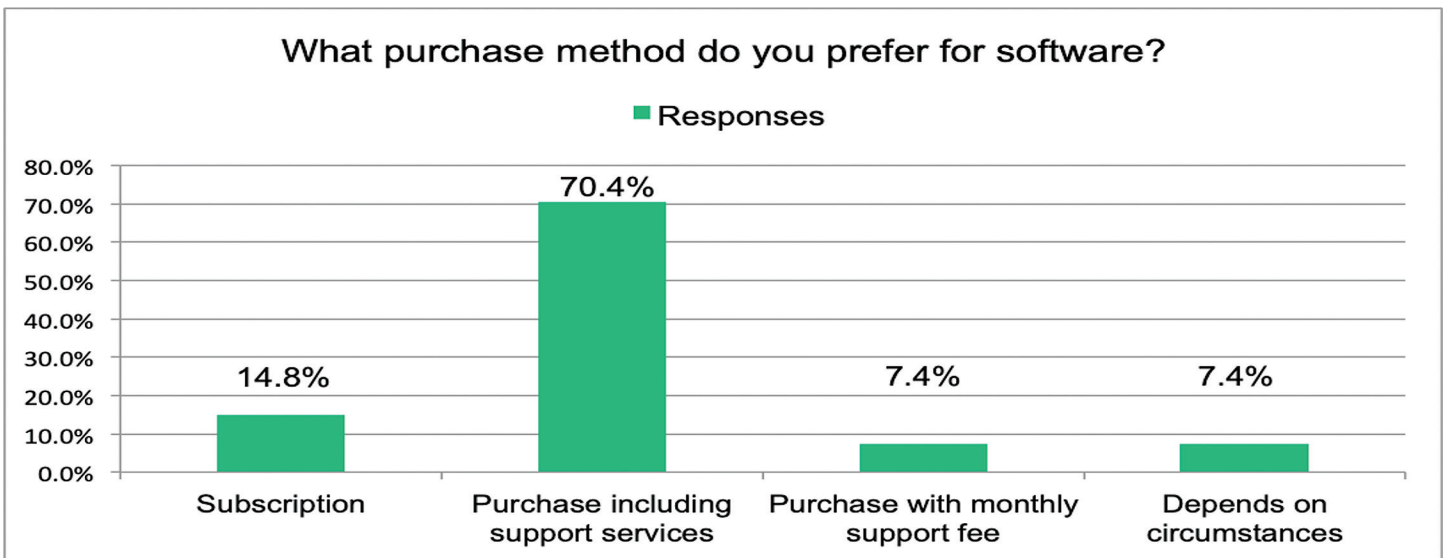
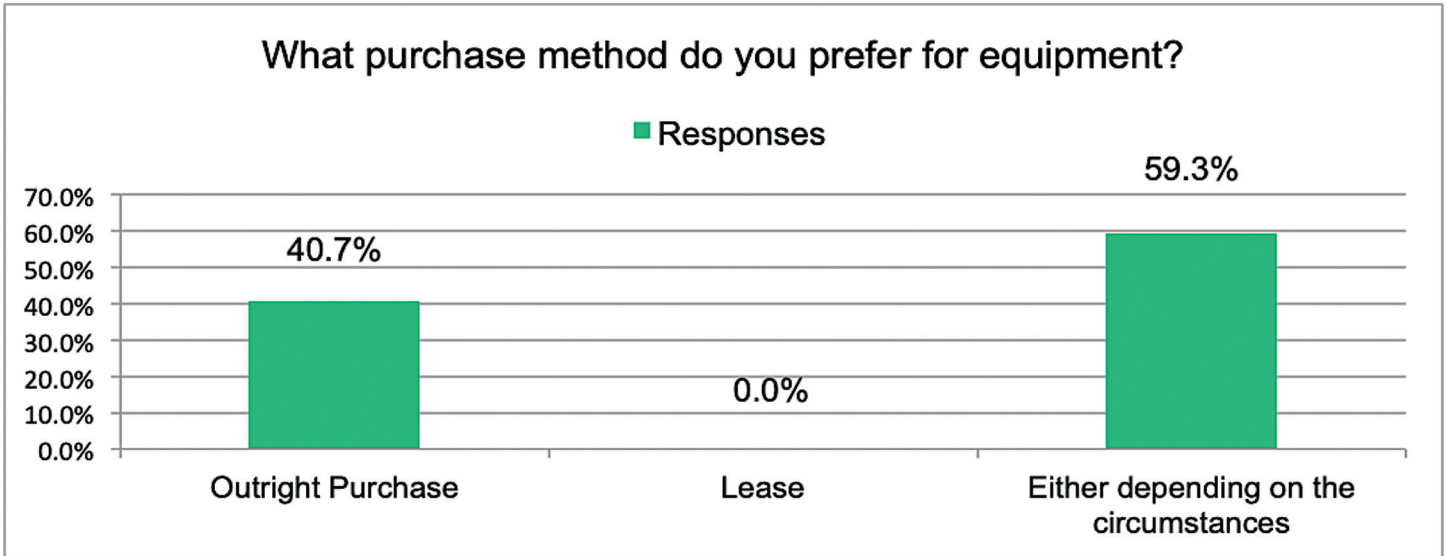
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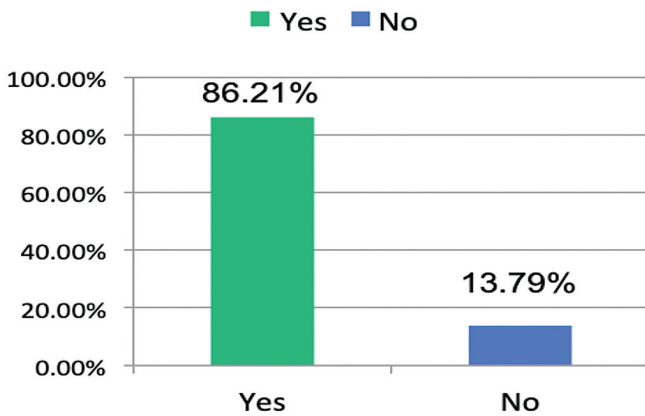
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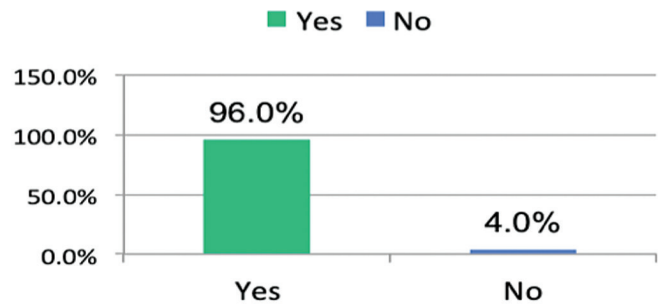
The Survey Says...



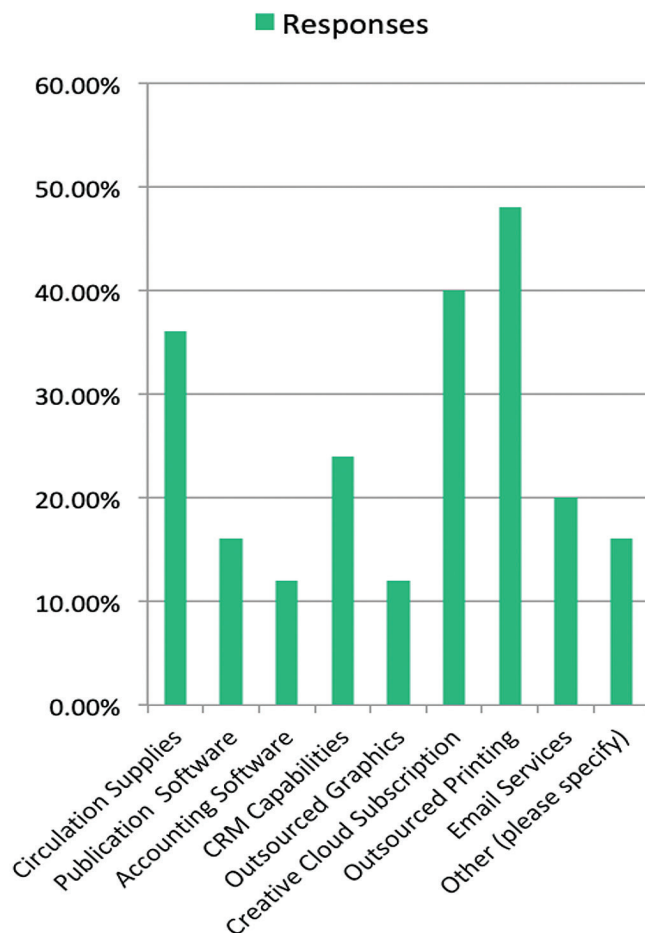
Have you ever attended an AFCP Conference Trade Show?



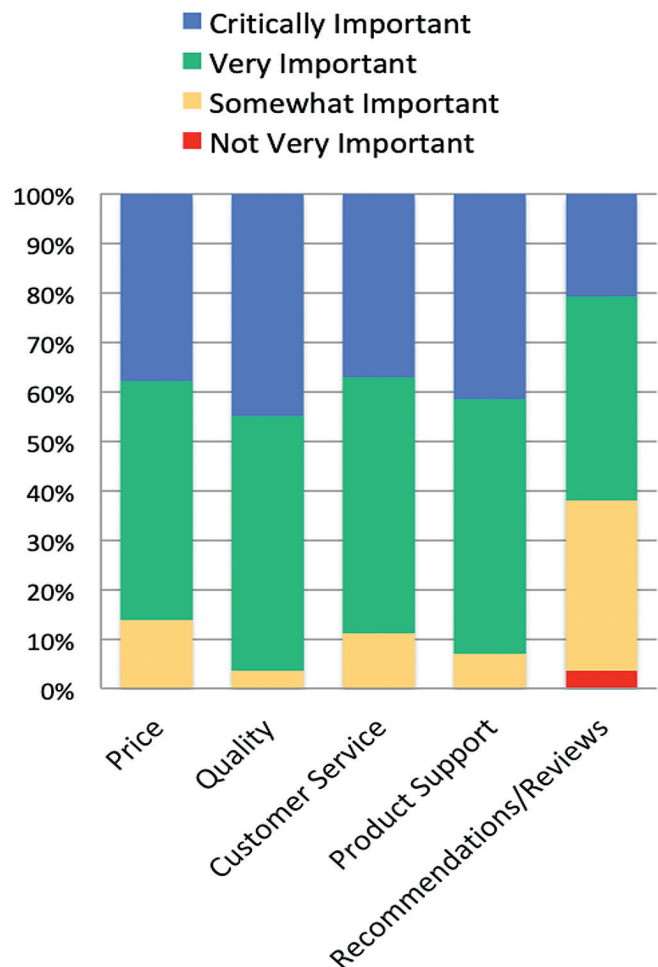
If you answered yes to attending, have you ever purchased goods or services from a merchant you met at an AFCP Conference and Trade Show?



Which of these do you plan on purchasing in the next 12 months? (check all that apply)



How important are the following to your buying decisions?



Joint AFCP & FMA Conference and Trade Show

April 23-24, 2020

Westgate Lakes Resort & Spa - Orlando, Florida

TOPICAL FORUM DISCUSSIONS

Topical Roundtable Discussions Schedule

Thursday, 4/23/20: 2:35 – 3:50 PM

Bring a question to share! - Thought provoking open mic session to get the energy and engagement fired up. Your chance to make sure your "need to know" item gets discussed.

Thursday, 4/23/20: 4:20 – 5:35 PM

Self Promotion and Readership – Tips to build your image and your audience. From community engagement to outside promotion techniques – ideas that work.

Niche and Special Section Alternatives – What's working for members and what does it take to jump in! Find a new revenue source or breathe fresh life into an old one.

Friday, 4/24/20: 9:15 – 10:30 AM

Circulation – Driving receivership up while driving costs down! Let's include discussions of voluntary subscriptions, demographic zoning and requester subscriptions.

Selling PRINT – in a digitally focused environment. Understanding the powerful benefits print products can deliver for today's advertisers.

Friday, 4/24/20: 11:00 – 12:15 PM

Content – What to include in your print product to build revenue, readership or both! How can you develop that content cost effectively?

Print and Digital Packages – Blended programs to build revenues. Who's making it work, who doesn't think it works and how can other publications take advantage of these best practices?

Friday, 4/24/20: 1:15 – 2:30 PM

Sales Professionals – tips, tactics and tendencies that will improve your effectiveness. This is for the "feet on the street" salesperson to take advantage of their peer network!

Sales Management – from compensation, incentives, training and hiring - what's working to drive sales and fill openings with qualified professionals.

Unique Revenue Opportunities – Events and other options that utilize existing resources and assets. Building additional revenue streams that compliment your current products.





Committed to Each Other

by Charlie Delatorre

AS SMALL BUSINESSES, most of us are deeply entrenched in our local communities. Many of us sit on area boards, volunteer with civic or

non-profit organizations, worship, coach T-Ball, attend chamber functions and a thousand other things that bind us to the communities our publications serve.

As publishers, we often pride ourselves on the content we write, the homes we reach and the value we provide our readers and advertisers alike. We quote readership surveys and our most recent CVC audit figures in an effort to prove our relevancy and to show the commitment we have for our towns.

You should know, I had a different column already written for this edition of INK. It talked about the annual conference and our trade show partners, but as I sat proofing my column tonight, another school is closing, another event has been canceled and fears of a global pandemic are everywhere.

In this world of instant gratification, Instagram influencers and the Presidential Twitter Feed, nothing like a good ole fashion infectious disease to make us remember what really matters – each other! I don't care if

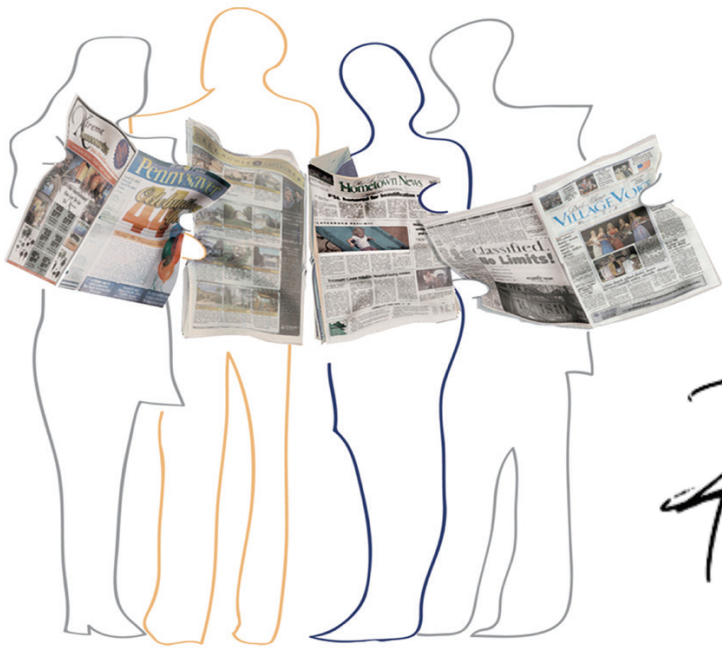
you're a Republican or a Democrat, live in a red state or a blue state or really believe Mikey died eating pop rocks and Dr. Pepper – now is the time to be committed to each other.

These last few days have been (and most likely the days and weeks ahead) are like a scene from a movie. The suddenness with which this situation has turned normal, everyday life into "The Walking Dead - Episode 1" has been unnerving to say the least. I hear many of my friends and some of the customers we work with everyday, think most of this is a bit overblown. My answer to all of them is always the same – I hope you're right.

I don't know what's coming next or what will have happened between the day I write this and the time you read it, but I can promise you this, I won't be taking this opportunity to talk about politics, how much I hate the right or left or perpetuating the myth that this is some mass conspiracy

brought about by people who want to crash our economy or hate our economic system.

This is the time to come together and remember what's most important – each other! Stay Safe. **INK**



CHARLIE DELATORRE
AFCP PRESIDENT
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Continued on page 16



Continued from page 15

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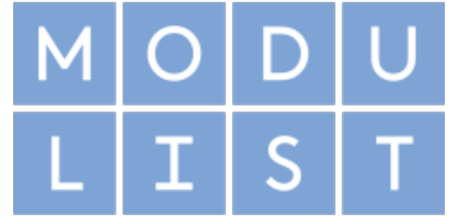
The Newspaper Manager helps thousands of publishers move their business forward. According to our recent client survey, 98% of clients surveyed are satisfied with client service. Contact www.newspapermanager.com to learn more!



MODULIST

Modulist is a media services company specializing in the processing of user-generated paid content submissions for newspapers, among other media services. Our tagline is "Publish life's stories" because we help newspapers publish stories about the lives of the people in their community. We do that by providing a world-class, convenient five-step online

portal to submit paid content such as obituaries, announcements, and other milestones directly to multiple media outlets with a single transaction. In addition to paid content publishing, we also offer other media services such as page reprints, photo reprints, ad creation, page design and concierge content production. Our experienced and knowledgeable employees and our company's focus on maintaining long-term partnerships with local media outlets help position our partners for the future by decreasing production costs and increasing revenue in integral content categories.



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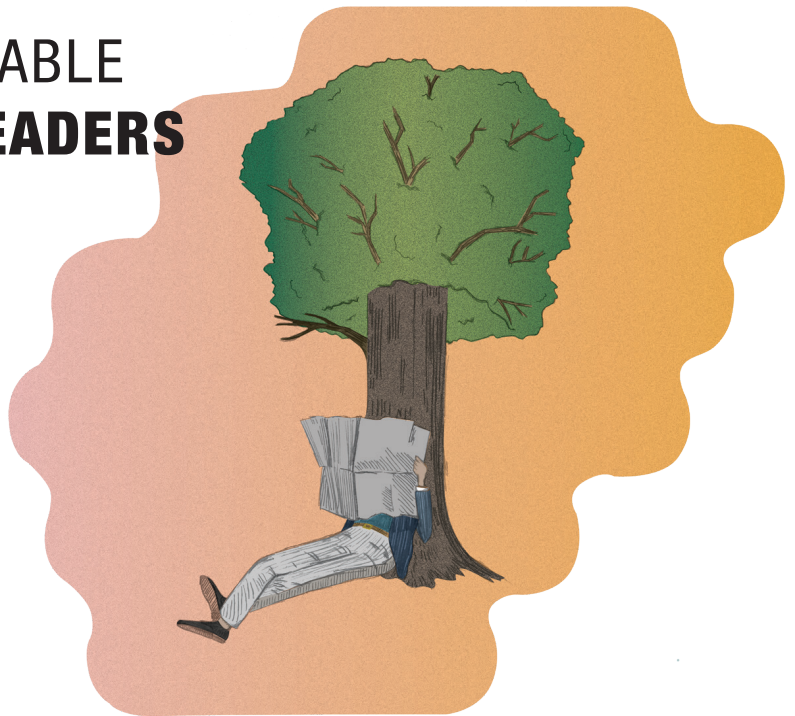
Preferred Marketing Solutions is a single source for FSI print, catalogs, and direct mail execution. Everything a newspaper company would need for seamless

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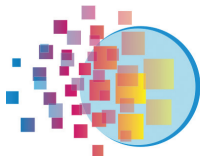
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TownNews equips local media organizations with the digital services and guidance to transform their business models and flourish in the digital age. Our tools and expertise in print, digital, video, OTT and advertising enable forward-thinking media organizations in dynamic markets to efficiently engage their audiences, increase security and grow revenue.



Fueled by a passion for local media and a 30-year proven track record of success, more than 2,000 news organizations have benefited from the platform and tools we've built specifically for the media industry to thrive.



CUMMINGS PRINTING

Our History

In 1914 Lew A. Cummings and two employees opened a small commercial printing company and began operation. Over the next 100 years Cummings Printing evolved into a magazine and catalog printer competing on a national scale. We believe in investing in the future of the publication printing industry and evolving with it and its publishers. Print is not dead; in fact we see just the opposite happening. It is growing and thriving in many categories, niche magazines being one of them. As it has been for over 100 years, our main objective is to use our

experience of publication printing to partner with our clients and offer the best possible product and service in the industry.

Our Mission

Our objective at Cummings Printing has been simple: provide customers with a quality product, delivered on time and within budget.



Quality is an overused cliché at most companies, but at Cummings it is a way of doing business. As an ISO 9002 company, Cummings has implemented a quality management system that involves every employee, from customer service to shipping.

What sets us apart?

Cummings Printing is a partner that is easy to do business with. Your publication or magazine will be handled with professionalism and attention to detail. A customer service representative will know your job intimately as they guide it through production. Your CSR will be there to answer questions and to help make the print process easy and efficient. We are a full-service publication printer. Owned and operated by the Cummings Family since 1914, we have built a reputation for competitive pricing, flexible scheduling and personal service. At Cummings Printing, we are proud of our ability to deliver a quality product time and time again. We want to make your job perfect. As a family-run publication printer for 100 years, our focus is on printing runs of 2,000 to 100,000, so we'll always give your job the attention it deserves.

METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS, INC.

Metro Creative Graphics, Inc. is the leading provider of advertising, creative and editorial resources designed to help media companies create, sell and profit with their print, Web, social and mobile efforts. With an unparalleled dedication to providing the finest resources available for ready-to-use images, spec ads, ideas, stock-quality photos, logos/trademarks, auto manufacturer photos, marketing/sales materials, copyright-free editorial features, print templated sections, online e-Sections, and groundbreaking digital ad development tools — plus custom image, ad design and editorial services — Metro



Continued on page 18



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remains unmatched in serving the creative and sales needs of today's media companies.

LITTLE FISH BIG OCEAN, INC.

Little Fish Big Ocean Inc. was founded in early 2008 with the goal of helping small businesses compete with the big guys through the use of affordable business management software.

My name is Chris Sedlak and I've been in the publishing industry since 1998. I got my start working as a production manager for a community paper in Southwest Orlando. After a few years, I decided that general manager was my next move. So I approached the owner and spoke to him about my goal. He told me that a GM is accountable for improving sales and I needed to find a way to increase sales in order to earn that title.

So I took this new direction and met with the sales manager. It didn't take me long to realize that inefficiencies were taking a lot of time away from making

calls. I then created a simple database to pull his information together and eliminate wasted time. His calls immediately doubled; and as you can imagine, his sales went up. I took this new success back to the owner, who then asked me to do the same for the rest of the sales department. Once that was completed, he then asked me to see what I could do with the billing department, then production, and – well, you see where this is heading.



It took me a while, but I realized a few years later that the GM position had been filled – by my program. It was about that time that I decided that I could help other publishers improve sales using the same techniques. That's when Little Fish Big Ocean Inc. was formed.

We created a unique system for publishers that they could log into from anywhere. Remote salespeople could easily communicate with the rest of

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the office. And we added plenty of “smart” features that take the work out of things like managing sales territories and creating a credit scoring system for advertisers that automatically warns of problems.

MaxPro is like having an assistant for each one of your staff members that can be remotely accessed from anywhere. Tying each department together eliminates repetition and reduces errors, but it’s the centralizing of your company’s data that is most critical. You as the publisher actually “own” your information, instead of it being on your sales staff’s phone. Imagine if your best salesperson walked out the door. Are you going to lose time and money trying to figure out where they left off? The answer without a doubt is “YES!”

We’re so thankful to be involved in this industry and look forward to helping you. I can be reached anytime at 406-656-2777 or by email at: chris@maxpropublishing.com.

PUBLICATION PRINTERS

Publication Printers is a leading print partner for newspaper publishers, providing expertise in creating niche special publications.



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MERRIMACPLUS

The company started in 1987, when the publisher of the weekly newspaper in the Brooklyn, N.Y., neighborhood where Tom and Kate Vachon lived at the time asked Tom to help them rescue their mailing list from a dying computer.

Personal computers were becoming affordable for small businesses, but there was little software available to help owners automate their operations in a way that was specific to their needs. After he successfully rescued the circulation data, the newspaper owners asked Tom to develop a comprehensive



management system for their operation. Drawing on his program development experience

as well as on accounting programs he had written for other clients, he developed the beginnings of the system that became the Merrimac Publishing Manager (MPM).

It soon became obvious that the time and investment required to develop a comprehensive, integrated management system could not be justified by a single custom installation. With the original clients’ help and encouragement, Tom presented a prototype of the current Merrimac Publishing Manager at the New York Press Association’s fifth annual convention in the spring of 1989.

The reception by other publishers was enthusiastic. They were impressed by its scope, its focus on the needs of weekly newspapers, its ease of operation, and its reasonable projected cost. That all remains unchanged, but many modifications and improvements have been made in response to user input.

Merrimac was purchased in 2017 by Carol Toomey, owner and publisher of Action Unlimited and the Smart Shopper. She not only owns the company, but also has used Merrimac every day for more than 20 years to manage the publishing of her nine Massachusetts weekly publications. Carol is supported by the MerrimacPlus team consisting of service manager Sabrina Fobes and computer software engineer Jim Loughner.

THE ULTIMATE PRINTSOURCE

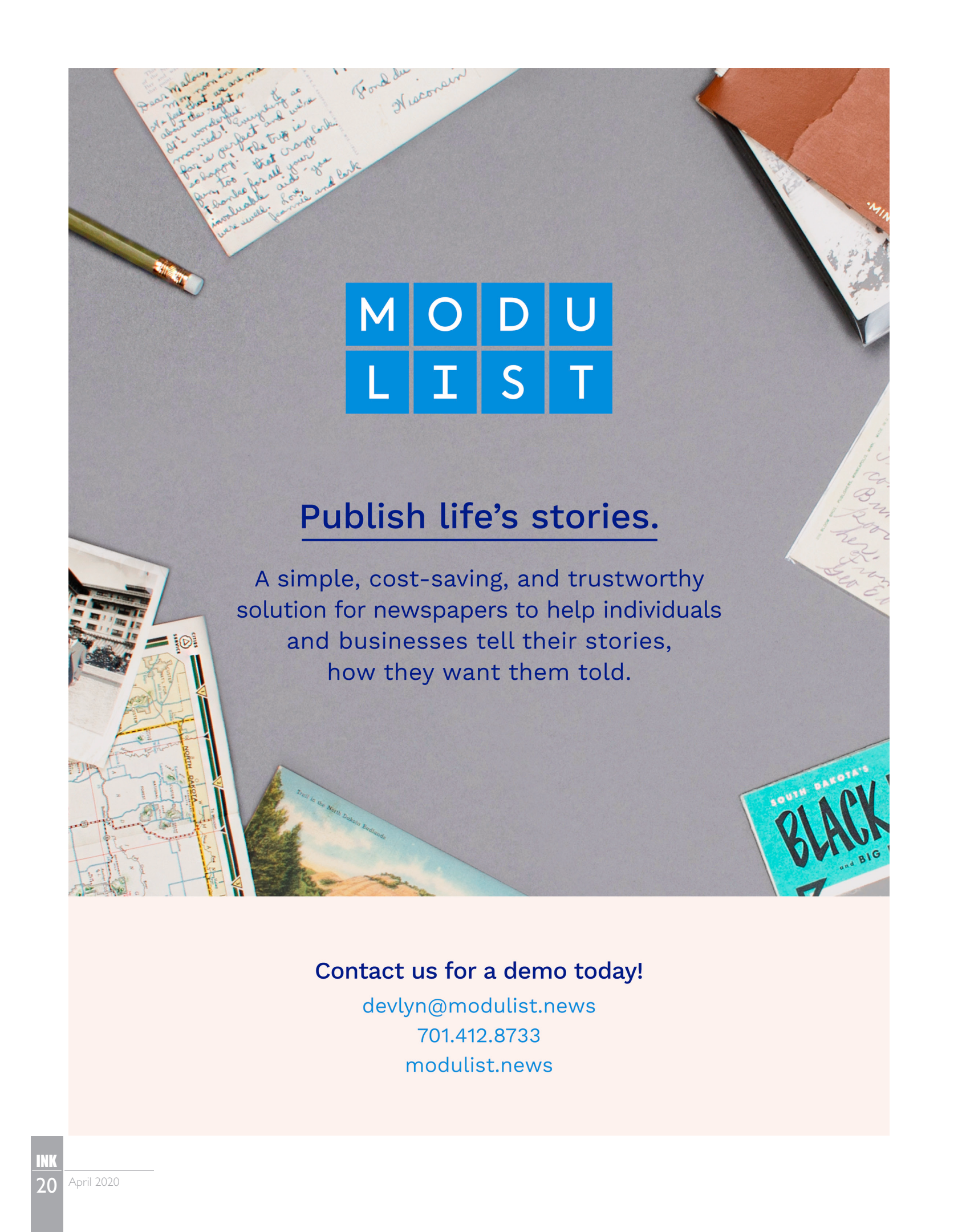
The Ultimate PrintSource, Inc. operates as a seamless extension of your newspaper operation. Since 1991 we have partnered with over 50 newspapers across the country providing print for advertising, circulation and marketing departments. Although our quality and pricing are excellent, it is our service that sets us apart



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We created a website portal to make sending

Continued on page 21



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Continued from page 19

orders and files easy and less labor for you. Some of our products include single sheet/4 page inserts, Direct Mail, EDDM, Rackcards, Bundle Hangers, NCR forms, booklets/publications on a variety of stocks from newsprint, offset to glossy. We have a digital department for short run, sheet fed for medium runs and web presses for long runs. So no matter whether you have an order for 100 or 100,000 and up, we have a press that fits your need.

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Ask CRM

ASK-CRM is a sales software designed from the ground up, specifically for media company sales teams of all sizes. We start by integrating your business system data into ASK-CRM, making real business intelligence data available to everyone in the sales process. In addition to robust contact management, ASK-CRM features prospect management, email and text message marketing campaigns, and goals tracking.



Also, we just integrated the buyer intention survey data from CVC to make it a seamless part of your sales team's day-to-day productivity. ASK-CRM does all of this and so much more; plus, it is affordable for media companies of all sizes. Please stop by and see us during the conference to learn even more about what we offer.

SCS

Family-owned and employing a staff of U.S.-based developers, sales and support staff, SCS provides advertising, production and digital asset management software to publishers of all shapes and sizes. SCS



software is currently running in more than 300 locations, producing 2000+ publications worldwide in 10 countries.

Whether you're a small weekly or a large daily, SCS has solutions that "Fit your business... Fit your

budget... and Fit your culture." We believe that good technology should decrease the cost of production and free your staff from repetitive tasks.

At SCS, we have four pillars of solutions for publishers:

- (1) Production Suite – Premiere dummyming, workflow management and pagination modules.
- (2) Community Advertising System – A complete, managed service, advertising and production solution.
- (3) Newsroom Solutions – A print editorial resource and workflow management system.
- (4) Digital Asset Management – Photo archiving and web presentation plus automated color toning.

Our systems run on SCS-provided on-premise equipment in the form of next generation hardware from Intel. And of course, this is all backed by SCS's 24/7/365 support. Our staff is one of the most experienced and creative in the industry and are our best and brightest. When we say we provide "We have your back!" service, we mean it!

Best of all, our Managed Service plans allow you to enjoy all the benefits of the software while we take care of the maintenance.

Finally, we've formed strategic partnerships with many fellow AFCP partners, including ASK-CRM, MSG Payment Systems and Times-Shamrock Creative Services. AFCP members The Genesee Valley Penny Saver, Kapp Advertising and Hometown News use SCS's systems every day. Talk to us to learn what SCS can do for you!

CVC

CVC provides circulation audits and readership studies to newspapers, magazines, shoppers and niche publications throughout North America. CVC audits include print, website, digital edition, social media, email marketing, mobile and text media.



CVC readership studies utilize a multi-tier study platform that

OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES

can include residential phone, cell phone, online, QR code, social media and email push studies to give publishers accurate demographics spanning multiple media platforms.

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BLUEFIN TECHNOLOGIES

Bluefin Technology Partners has a single vision: to generate new revenue sources for publishers by offering advertisers the best tools available to place, review and publish their print and digital advertising buys.

The Opportunity – Newspaper publishers are in the best position to become the local destination for online buyers and sellers. To achieve this, publishers need to:

- Aggressively adapt to the changing world of online and print.
- Leverage “Brand Equity” to increase online / mobile revenue and readership.
- Simultaneously grow their local markets through both print and online channels.



The Solution – Bluefin Technology Partners helps publishers enhance their classified presence in print, online, and mobile. Our industry-leading Bluefin Place Ad provides advertisers with the best self-service place ad solution available. Bluefin Marketplace gives newspapers an engaging online classified portal that keeps advertisers and readers on your site.

We are introducing our newest offering, Bluefin BizLocal, an integrated business directory solution that works seamlessly with your business classifieds to enhance relationships with your commercial clients.

Since 2007, Bluefin Technology Partners has delivered the highest level of customer support to hundreds of newspaper titles in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and South Africa. Our principals have many years of experience delivering the best advertising publishing solution available.

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NEWSPAPERS.COM

Newspapers.com is an Ancestry.com site that partners with newspaper publishers with a no-cost solution to digitize and monetize their historical archives.



KING FEATURES SYNDICATE, INC.

King Features Syndicate, Inc. is a print/digital syndication company owned by Hearst Communications that distributes about 150 comic strips, newspaper columns, editorial cartoons, puzzles, and



games for print and digital media to nearly 5,000 newspapers worldwide.

Founded in 1915 by William Randolph Hearst and Moses Koenigsberg, King offers production services in partnership with its sister company, Reed Brennan Media Associates. King is a global licensing leader, representing popular classics including Betty Boop and Popeye as well as new brands like Cuphead and Tulipop. King is growing digital business focused on connecting with and monetizing fanbases around the world. For more information call or e-mail Randy Noble @ 319-329-2693 or rnable@hearst.com

MSG PAYMENT SYSTEMS

MSG Payment Systems, 19-year AFCP member, provides credit card and ACH payment processing solutions for the publishing industry. We streamline operations with a plethora of solutions, including software integration and virtual terminal.



MSG PAYMENT SYSTEMS

The MSG Payment Systems virtual terminal is a

secure, cloud-based portal where users can accept credit card and ACH/electronic check payments anywhere, anytime. Core features include:

- Software Integration: Process payments directly in your software (including AccountScout and Community Advertising System) to save time on manual procedures and bookkeeping.
- Recurring Payments: Automatically charge customers on a recurring basis for a specific time interval. Perfect for customers on subscription plans.
- Vault: Secure, PCI-compliant credit card and bank account data storage.
- Fraud Protection: A suite of fraud protection tools proven to reduce the risk of fraudulent transactions.
- QuickClick: Quickly and easily customize a secure online form for customers to submit a payment. The form can be distributed by sending a link or embedding a button on your website.
- Mobile & Tablet Processing: Use select Android and Apple devices to accept credit card payments.

Our goal is to help grow your business by providing payment solutions that streamline operations and minimize expenses. For more information or to request your free cost analysis, contact our team at 888-697-8831 or hello@msgpay.com, or visit msgpay.com/quote.

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SRDS Media Planning Platform

com daily to navigate that landscape and effectively identify their best options among newspapers and digital brands.

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PROIMAGE

ProImage is a leading developer of browser-based automated production workflows, ink optimization, image color correction software, and press registration solutions that help publishers reduce costs. Modular cloud solutions are assisting publishers to improve efficiencies by automating workflow processes from Preflight, Ripping, Imposition, through to output management. Our ECO SaaS GCR solution reduces ink usage up to 30% while maintaining quality, while OnColor SaaS automatically color corrects and tones images, eliminating the need to manually touch them up in Photoshop. Lastly, our press registration solution provides faster make ready and improves press quality by adjusting the Tiff file for known press issues.



CT GENIUS, INC.

CTGenius, Inc. provides innovative advertising sales solutions for the publishing industry. As a provider of software and services, we can help you get the most out of your investment in technology without the burden of maintaining hardware. We can also provide IT consulting services to help you determine your technical needs, evaluate your systems and make sure you are getting the most out of your investment in technology.



NEWSPAPER PRINTING COMPANY

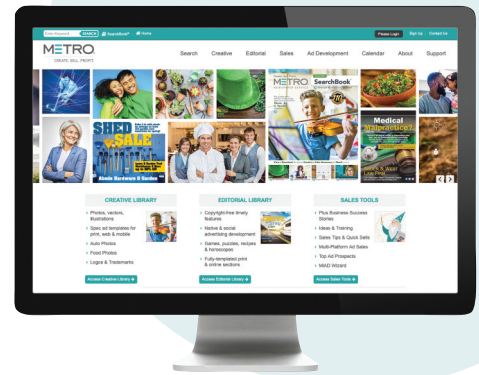
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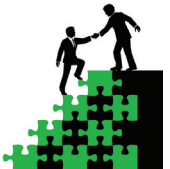
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With a single sign-on, a Clean Ticket works like a gift card, purchasing paid editorial from any participating publication. Prices as low as 2 cents make it easy to buy a single story. For presenting samples of your product, this is far better than a paywall. Or, the whole edition can be sold.

Micropayment means customer feedback. Editors are informed of reader interest better than ever before. Specialized content can find its audience. Result: a higher story count, a loyal audience.

Welcome your new Latino audience in their own language. A simple click will switch from English to Spanish.

Readers can leave a tip for reporters when moved to do so.



Readers who only want one or a few of your stories are the biggest market segment of all.

But they want it immediately, without complications of any kind. The Clean Ticket Company is simple, fast and fun to use.

Unbundle your subscription and find new revenue. **INK**

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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!

"Those who are lifting this world upwards and onward are those who encourage more than criticize."

– Elizabeth Harrison

IN MY DESK DRAWER, I HAVE A COLLECTION OF business cards. They all bear my name, but the titles listed vary widely. The cards from my industrial sales days read Service Manager and Technical Consultant. I have cards reading Inside Sales Manager, Territory Manager, Market Research, Sales Trainer, and Feature Writer. Of all the titles I've been given, I am proudest of the title of Salesman.

At my core, I have always been and will always be a salesperson. I like being a salesperson and being in the company of salespeople. We salespeople are a special breed. Tell a group of "civilians" what you do for a living and someone will inevitably say, "I couldn't do what you do, I'd be too afraid."

Fundamentally, salespeople spend their lives doing all the things our mothers told us not to do. "Don't talk to strangers. Don't talk about people's problems. Don't ask too many questions." And most of all, "Careful, don't get hurt!"

While salespeople don't get many skinned knees on the job, we do expose ourselves to a lot of emotional "boo-boo's." We get a lot of doors slammed in our faces, both literally and figuratively, and we hear a lot of emphatic "NO's!" In spite of this, we dust ourselves off, pick ourselves up and start all over again. This can take a toll on even the most resilient psyche.

Fortunately, we do not have to face the emotional toll of rejection and chronic stress alone. Our brother and sister salespeople are there for us. When I had an especially bad day, my coworkers were always ready to offer encouragement and lift my spirits. After a brief moment of commiseration, "I know...customers can be a pain in the backside," they would quickly switch into encouragement mode, "but you're a great salesperson. You'll get the sale next time."

This is why I like spending time with salespeople. We live in a negative culture. Far too many of our conversations are comprised of complaints and snarky insults. There is a direct link between our success in life and our ability to stay positive and encourage others. Because of how they make their living, salespeople understand this better than almost anyone else.

Salespeople lift the world upward and onward and this why I am proud to count myself amongst them. **INK**



Introducing the Clean Ticket Company

Readers who only want one or a few of your stories are the biggest market segment of all. Unbundle your subscription and find new revenue.

With a single sign-on, a Clean Ticket works like a gift card, purchasing paid editorial from any participating publication. Prices as low as 2 cents make it easy to buy a single story. For presenting samples of your product, this is far better than a paywall. Or, the whole edition can be sold.

Micropayment means customer feedback. Editors are informed of reader interest better than ever before.

Specialized content can find its audience. Result: a higher story count, a loyal audience.

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Readers who only want one or a few of your stories are the biggest market segment of all. But they want it immediately, without complications of any kind. The Clean Ticket Company is simple, fast and fun to use.

Unbundle your subscription and find new revenue.



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The Blank Page

by Ericka Winterrowd, Rising Star

I'VE OFTEN THOUGHT OF PEOPLE AS BOOKS.

Some are very weathered with tattered but loved pages, and some are so new they still have a plastic wrapper on – like when I witnessed my niece, Mollie, being born. Her tiny hand squeezed onto my index finger as she received her first shots in the delivery room. That moment, for example, would be in the first two pages of her story. I, on the other hand, knew it would be a whole chapter in mine: “The day I met the most magical girl in the world.”

My first foray into the world of storytelling began with theatre. I fell in love with drama and the spoken word of Shakespeare. I remember when I was cast in a high school production of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” I was enchanted with the magical world of fairies and lovers, as well as the rhythm I felt on my tongue as I read such beautiful words aloud.

It was later, however, that I discovered just how much I love words in general and that they are the building blocks of storytelling. Writing can be a tricky business, though. Most often it’s a solitary one, but I happen to like it that way. I see the process as a sacred time where I sit at my desk staring at a blank word document and repeat these words: “Just tell the story, Ericka.” And then I begin. You see, the beginning is always the hardest part.

The truth is, I’ve often found that blank page ter-

rifying. OK, not just terrifying but infuriating. Poet Dorothy Parker is quoted as having said, “I hate writing, I love having written.” Man, that Dorothy knew what was up. As a writer, I know all too well the feeling of a story being held captive. You can feel it bubbling up inside of you and you’re the only one standing in its way. That’s pretty powerful. And daunting.

What I’ve come to realize after years of putting pen to paper, or rather fingers to keyboard, is that a white canvas is actually freeing. It’s a new beginning.

A white canvas is
actually freeing.
It’s a new
beginning.

The ‘Story of Life,’ however (for those lucky enough to have lived a decent number of chapters), shows us that new beginnings can often-times be incredibly lonely and even painful. Those are the pages where the main character gets their heart broken or experiences great loss – the kind that makes you ache in places you never knew existed.

If you keep turning the page, though, a new cast of characters eventually enters. And slowly, word-by-word, new adventures are written. Our heroine’s character arc shoots across the sky as she discovers new meaning and purpose – and who knows – maybe even new love. All of that comes from having the courage to stare the emptiness down and tell it – “Not today, blank page, I’m gonna keep writing. My story isn’t finished yet!”

On the contrary, it’s just beginning... **INK**



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A few words about **Buying SIGNALS**

by John Foust



IN MY SENIOR year of high school, I met the new girl in town on the first day of school. Louisville, Kentucky seemed like a world away

from Greensboro, North Carolina, where I had spent all of my life to that point. And I was intrigued by the girl whose family had just moved from that exotic place.

We chatted several times between classes. Although her favorite topic was her boyfriend in Louisville, my teenage brain missed the significance of that information because Louisville seemed a million miles away. After turning me down a number of times, she finally agreed to go to a movie. As we walked to the theater, she stopped in front of a wedding shop, and "oohed" and "aahed" over the wedding gowns in the window, saying she was looking forward to marrying her boyfriend.

That's when I realized I didn't have a chance. She couldn't have been more obvious if she had said, "John, here's a clue you can't miss. I'm not interested in you. In fact,

I'm planning to elope tomorrow."

Things turned out for the best. I don't know if she ended up marrying the boyfriend back in Louisville, but I eventually met the real woman of my dreams, to whom I am happily married.

Buying signals. If we pay attention, they will show us where we stand in the selling process. There are negative signals, like the unmistakable "no" of the Wedding Shop Incident. And there are positive signals. Some are more definite than others. Let's take a closer look:

1. **Non-verbal signals.** Your prospect may be prepared to move to the next step in the sales process if he or she...

- Nods frequently, agreeing with the points you are making.
- Leans forward with an increasingly pleasant expression.
- Holds his or her pen near the advertising agreement, as if ready to sign.
- Smiles while re-examining your sales materials, especially any suggested ads you are presenting.
- Maintains good eye contact, and is not distracted by a cell phone, email, or non-related items on the desk.

- Takes possession of the ads you are presenting, by positioning them on his or her side of the desk.

- Calls for an associate to step into the room to hear your ideas.

2. **Verbal signals.** A number of prospects won't say, "I'm sold. Where do I sign?" But they will say other things that show they're ready to make a commitment. Be ready to move quickly, if he or she...

- Asks about the agreement.
- Asks when the ad campaign can start.
- Asks about your billing procedures.
- Requests clarification of an earlier sales point. For instance, "Tell me again how you can reach my target audience."
- Requests a change in the ad copy you are presenting.
- Indicates a willingness to close by asking, "What's the next step?"
- Stops referring to THE ads and starts referring to MY ads. This is one of the strongest buying signals of all, because it shows that he or she already owns what you are selling. **INK**

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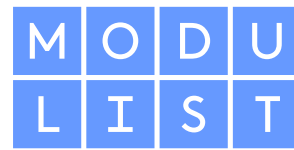


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Six Clues a Publication is in TROUBLE

by Bob Berting



IT'S RARE FOR A NEWSPAPER to head off a marketing strategy problem before a crisis is upon them. More often it takes the sudden entry of a new competitor in the market, a serious plunge in sales, or a similar emergency to get a strategy change. The answer is to evaluate the publication's marketing program in an objective, ongoing weekly basis.

Here are six clues that the publication is heading for trouble:

1. Cutting rates becomes the driving force to get sales. Deep discounting and constantly offering "special deals" is an indicator that the publication is using lower prices to beat competition. Customers see the publication as just a low-cost medium and don't see any other value in doing business.

2. The publication can't be differentiated from its competition. It is vital that the publication maintain a unique identity that distinguishes it from the competition. This branding process is ongoing and under constant review. The question is—how often is it reviewed?

3. A steady stream of sales gimmicks. When one special promotion runs into the next, customers soon think that nothing is really special. Instead of getting customers on an ongoing campaign, the publication floods the market with signature pages, national widget month, and other one-time fluff promotions that threaten the budgets of advertisers

who want to put their money in campaigns that get response.

4. Sales management tactics change arbitrarily. Instead of a roller coaster of contests, trips, and bonus programs, the publication needs a unified plan of rewards that will motivate the salespeople on an ongoing basis. This can be an incentive plan based on increasing sales or any activity that helps dramatically improve the image of the publication in the marketplace.

5. More and more leads come from the sales force. Of course salespeople should develop leads; but if salespeople are the primary source of new business, the publication has a marketing problem. Even the best salespeople can't be at the right place, at the right time, all the time. The publication needs a well developed marketing program to keep their name in front of prospects so when they're ready to buy, the sales staff can enter the picture from a position of strength.

6. Customers start saying, "I didn't know you did that." Even when longtime customers don't have a clear picture of the publication's overall capabilities, it's a sign that marketing is failing. So many times, a booklet or brochure showing ALL the publication's services can be very effective because it clarifies and reinforces what the publication offers. Of course an effective website is another powerful tool. But that's another story. [LINK](#)

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 in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. He is the president of Berting Communications and can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408.

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GRAPEVINE

GRAPEVINE

HERALD PUBLISHING COMPANY of Carroll, Iowa, recently announced the sale of the Lake Panorama Times and the lakepanoramatimes.com website to Big Green Umbrella Media of Johnston, Iowa. Both companies are locally-owned media companies.

Herald Publishing Company's co-owner, Tom Burns, stated that the transaction made operational sense for both companies.

"We had sold our newspapers in Guthrie County a few years ago, but we held on to the monthly Lake Panorama Times," said Burns. "As we focus more on our newspapers in Carroll and Greene counties, the timing of this made sense. And we didn't want to sell it to a large corporation. We have known Shane and Jolene Goodman and many of their staff for years, and we wanted to make sure the publication would be in good hands."

"We will be proud to publish the Lake Panorama Times," said Shane Goodman. "It is a great fit for what we do with our group of monthlies in our company, and it will help us expand further west from the Des Moines metro area. The Burns family did a wonderful job with this publication, and we plan to continue with that tradition

of excellence."

Goodman said the company plans to continue with the writing and photography services of Susan Thompson, and Stormy Baker will continue as the publication's advertising sales representative. Shane Goodman will serve as the editor and publisher. Jolene Goodman will manage the advertising processes.

The Goodmans have recently become property owners on the lake as well.

"We look forward to working — and playing — at Lake Panorama," said Jolene Goodman.

Herald Publishing Company will continue to publish the Carroll Times Herald and the Jefferson Herald.

Big Green Umbrella Media publishes CITYVIEW news and entertainment magazine and 19 locally-zoned Iowa Living magazines on a monthly basis, as well as five locally-zoned Adviser publications on a weekly basis, and many annual and quarterly niche publications.

The Lake Panorama Times is mailed monthly to all homeowners of Lake Panorama.



WHAT'S GOING ON...

DEVLIN NEWSPAPERS INC. has sold their Staples World newspaper in Staples, Minnesota, to RMM Publications, LLC, a new company that involves long-time Minnesota newspaper owners Rick Gail and Mike Kremer, as well as the current editor of Staples World, Mark Anderson.

The sale brings to a close a 26-year era of owning the Staples World for Bill and Margie Devlin of Finley, North Dakota. It is also their last newspaper holding, having spent much of their careers, and marriage, publishing community newspapers in North Dakota and Minnesota.

Brenda Halvorson, General Manager of Staples World, announced that her retirement from journalism would coincide with the sale of the newspaper. She has held that position for the past 30 years.

Rick Gail and Mike Kremer have been partners in four weekly newspaper ventures in the past, spanning thirty years. The two added current Editor Mark Anderson to their business partnership with the purchase of Staples World.

Julie Bergman of Grimes, McGovern and Associates represented Devlin Newspapers in the sale. **INK**



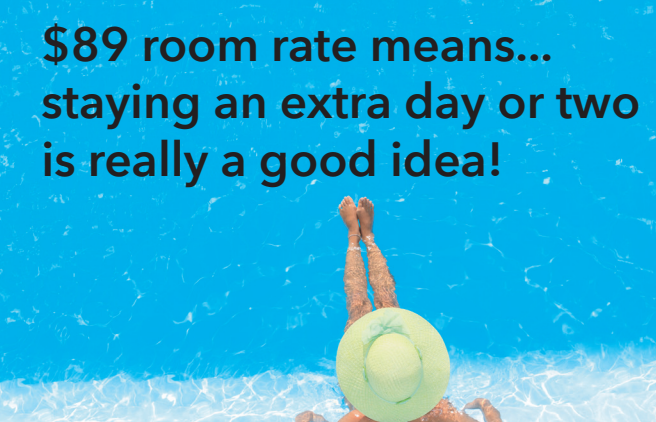
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| july

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Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). 65th Anniversary Celebration, Okoboji , Iowa. For information contact Kelly Coy at 507-388-6584 or email: director@mfc.org.

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Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA). Leadership Summit, Woolley's Suites, Aurora, Colorado. For information contact Douglas Fry at 931-922-4171 or email: douglas@ifpa.com.

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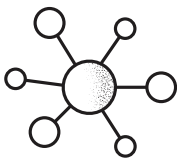
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A monthly publication provided by the Association of Free Community Publications. INK's mission is to bring news and resources to the free community publication industry.



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