





Towns Most Often Shrivel Up When the Local Paper Closes

High School student Johnny Jenkins, the local jeweler's son, hit two bases-loaded home runs during the school's baseball game last Friday. But most of the locals won't know about Jenkins' batting proficiency until the paper comes next Wednesday. community appreciates the local team, but few actually attend the games.

On Monday night the city council voted down the much-hoped-for improvements to the swimming pool. But most folks won't know why until they read Wednesday's paper. The council thought it was good idea, but the high-cost remodeling estimates couldn't be fitted into the town's shrinking budget.

Early Tuesday morning the local Wilson's Men's & Women's Clothing Store decided to hold a 50th anniversary. Wilson's is offering savings up to half-off, but few residents saw the Facebook notice and traffic has been slow. But business will increase once the paper and the store's half-page ad come out on Wednesday.

Newspapers are the lifeblood of every community — from those of a

few hundred population to thousands of residents. The hometown newspaper is the only media that consistently provides all the breaking local news and everyday activities information in neatly organized detail.

The local radio station doesn't. There isn't enough time in the onthe-hour five-minute newscasts to cover everything, let alone provide the details.

The nearby metro television stations don't. They just give token coverage to the smaller communities in the hope they'll enhance viewership and perhaps get some occasional advertising.

The independent internet sites don't. Most are heavily biased and more interested in selling their political position. Besides, the majority are not properly staffed to cover all the news important to the community.

Meanwhile, the already mammoth cable system doesn't. Most are only interested in retransmitting provided programing, finding ways to further increase their monthly fee and are not staffed to be a news-gathering organization.

So, it's the printed paper, and only the printed paper, that week after week provides the much-needed news. And in the process it is that same paper that creates community, consensus, citywide cooperation, local commitment and the very lifeblood that keeps the city alive.

But the current state of local print journalism is questionable. The impact of COVID-19 has been devastating on newspapers and free circulation shoppers.

According to a recent study by the University of North Carolina Hussman School of Journalism, more than one-fourth of America's newspapers, that's 2,100 papers, have closed their doors since 2004. Of that number more than 2,000 have been non-dailies. While 70 have been daily publications.

The early belief that digital websites might fill the void has not proven true. Most newspaper digital sites, although they attract a growing readership, have not begun to provide even close to the same advertising revenue as the once revered printed paper. (Continued on page 3.)





Towns Most Often Shrivel Up... by Peter Wagner Continued from page 2

Perhaps the future will provide exciting new business models such as foundation-supported nonprofit publications, the newspaper industry being underwritten by government funds bills like the proposed H.R. supported 7640 papers exclusively by subscription revenue. But whatever happens I can only hope the publishers will always first consider how the publication can best serve the community as a whole and their unique reader base before making any change.

Meanwhile, I continue to stress the importance of selling ideas, promotions, special sections, packages and community support pages in our current situation.

Promotions because advertisers need fresh, exciting, well-planned and executed locally produced campaigns to draw customers — both local and from outside the territory — into their businesses advertising in your publication.

Special sections lead the list because they bond your publication with the community and with your readers. More importantly they often are unique subject keepsake sections that give local advertisers an ideal opportunity to blend their sales message with the specific message of the section. Keepsake sections are good investments for advertisers since they often are held onto and shared within the family and community for years to come.

Multi-week or monthly packages are important because most business people are hesitant to make many decisions during our current trying times. To get a longtime commitment now can result in exceptional income for weeks or months to come. It's also a well-respected fact that consistent advertising is always a better investment for the client.

Special pages add to the mix because many advertisers want to keep their names in front of the local public but, with COVID, have limited dollars to spend. The opportunity to participate in a salute to veterans, agriculture, the local football team, Girl Scouts or any hometown group or event lets them feel good while they promote their business.

And most important, ideas! Advertisers need all the help they can get to stay in business during this COVID crisis and newspapers and shoppers need all the advertising they can get for the same reason.

But saving the community and hometown paper is more than just continuing the flow of local information. It's about preserving what is the voice of the people and the watchdog of those who govern our democracy.

And that is why I still believe in the future of the printed word.

Peter W. Wagner is founder and publisher of the award winning Sheldon, IA, N'West Iowa REVIEW and 13 additional publications. This free monthly GET REAL newsletter produced especially publishers, editors and sales managers who still believe in the value and importance of the PRINTED paper. CLICK HERE, to also receive Wagner's free PAPER **DOLLARS** email newsletter featuring a unique sales ideas and promotions. The two monthly email newsletters contain information completely different from each other. You can contact Wagner can be contacted pww@iowainformation.com or (CELL) 712-348-355 for information regarding his convention programs and webinars on publishing better papers and enjoying greater profit.





DAILIES VS. WEEKLIES

2020 Publishers Survey: Examining the differences



by Kevin Slimp kevin@kevinslimp.com

Each year, I survey U.S. publishers and general managers about the health of their newspapers. During the late spring/early summer of 2020, I received completed surveys from participants representing 500 newspapers or groups. In my previous column, I discussed some of the overall results of the survey, especially those related to financial health. In this column, we're going to look at some of the differences noted between daily and weekly newspapers.

In some areas of the survey, there were little differences between weeklies and dailies. For instance, when compared to two years ago, both groups report similar health. While 58 percent of weekly newspapers indicate worse overall health than two years ago, 63 percent of dailies gave the same response.

Most newspapers in both groups answered "not bad" to "very healthy" when asked about their overall health, while 14 percent of weeklies and 19 percent of dailies indicated they were in poor health.

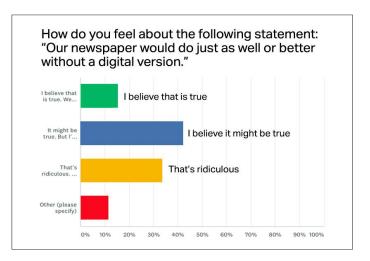
When it comes to page count, again we see some similarities. 68 percent of dailies answered they had reduced pages compared to two years ago, while 61 percent of weeklies responded similarly.

Digging into other questions, we begin to see

differences between dailies and weeklies:

- A majority of 71 percent of weekly newspapers are independent, with local owners, while only 27 percent of daily newspapers are owned and operated in their local communities.
- The primary source of revenue for 98 percent of weekly newspapers is print advertising.
 The same is true for 81 percent of dailies, with subscriptions and digital advertising bringing in a higher percent of revenue than at weeklies.
- While only 7 percent of weekly newspapers answered that their digital efforts were financially profitable, 22 percent of daily papers see a financial profit on digital platforms. 30 percent of weeklies and 43 percent of dailies indicate they see other benefits besides financial profit from their digital efforts.
- A whopping 30 percent of daily newspapers report that more than 20 percent of their revenues come from "non-newspaper sources." Only 6 percent of weeklies responded the same way.

Speaking of digital, only 32 percent of daily newspaper publishers/managers responded that it "might be true" that they would be better off without a digital version of their newspaper.



That number jumps up to 44 percent for weekly papers, with an additional 15 percent indicating they believed they "would be better off" without a digital version. Add those together and 59 percent of weekly respondents answered they might, or would, be better off without a digital version of their newspaper.

One answer that has changed significantly since I began surveying newspapers six years ago is "How long do you think you will continue to produce a printed newspaper?" In 2015 and 2016 surveys, more than 90 percent indicated they would be producing newspapers more than 20 years into the future. In this most recent survey, roughly 48 percent of weeklies and 39 percent of dailies expect to be printing papers more than 12 years from now.

Fake News

What about all that "fake news" we keep hearing about? Fortunately, fake news is "fake news" in most places. While it is a problem

for many daily newspapers where 21 percent of respondents answered that more than 25 percent of the folks in their communities consider them to be fake news, weekly newspaper seem to be more trusted by their communities. Only 2 percent of weekly newspapers answered, "more than 25 percent," while 39 percent of weeklies responded, "That's silly. None. Zero." 51 percent of weeklies answered, "Somewhere between 1 and 10 percent."

I guess it just goes to show, there are always a few crabby readers out there.

In the 2020 survey, hundreds of respondents sent in advice and suggestions about things that have worked at their newspapers. In my next column, we'll take a look at ideas newspapers have come up with to increase revenue and readership. Yes, 12 percent of weeklies and 17 percent of dailies report being in better overall health than two years ago. We're going to find out why.

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By Ryan Dohrn President/Founder, Brain Swell Media LLC

Consider that when you have a linear conversation, a one-way conversation with a client, what you do is keep them inside their own bubble. And it's not until somebody gets out of their bubble—OUT of it—that they realize, "Oh, other people out here are happy, they're being successful, and I want to be like them. What are they doing? What is their weight loss plan? How did it work for them? What made them happy?"

As a media salesperson, if I can help customers be happy—happy like other advertisers—then all of a sudden they start buying what it is that I'm selling. It's a simple sales concept that works and that resonates with customers.

I've had the opportunity to walk through and be a part of almost every sales training program in America, from Carnegie to Sandler. And a problem I see is that they focus on a one-way conversation where you identify somebody's pain and then you fix that pain.

Are Customer Needs Assessments Dead?

(Part Two of a Two-Part Series)

That's great in theory, but as a salesperson you can actually take it to the next level by telling them about other happy customers whose pain you have eliminated. It's about proving that you have done something for other people.

It's about getting beyond the old fashioned Customer Needs Assessment to start recommending products, sharing success stories, and creating comparative conversations.

And remember, in these conversations, be mindful of the questions that you ask. Make sure those questions take you to a better place.

So, what are the questions?

I try not to ask the same questions that have been asked for the last 10-15 years, the ones that make you sound like all the other salespeople that have shown up either face-to-face, on Zoom, or on the phone.

I strive to ask the questions that other salespeople don't. In that vein, I don't ask, "What keeps you up at night?" I would rather ask a question, something along the lines of, "If we could help bring you one perfect customer, what would that customer look like?"

Or, "When you agreed to meet with me, was there a business challenge you were hoping that I could help you solve?"

I'll say it again, rather than asking, "What's your budget?" ... especially in the ad

sales world where I spend a lot of my time in the advertising business, I'll say, "If we could help you be bigger and better than your nearest competitor, what would that look like?" "In the past, what have you done to solve these types of problems?"

Or I might use something back from my good old Sandler days like, "What is the biggest challenge that you're facing right now that you think I can help you solve?" Next, "How long has that been a challenge or a problem for you?" Next, "What have you done in the past to fix that problem or remove that problem from the greater equation of your business?"

When you ask your questions, remember these ideas I espouse in my ad sales training program: Most people want to be led. Most people like recommendations. Most people don't like a linear conversation—they want to know what others are doing and what you have done to help other people.

So, in closing, the Customer Needs Assessment isn't dead, necessarily, but if we don't breathe some new life into it, if we keep doing the same thing we've always done, we're going to get the same result. If we want to see a different result, we've got to do something different.

That's why we're advisors ... try to be an advisor, don't be a salesperson. Breathe some new life into your Customer Needs Assessment.

And managers out there—sales directors, sales leaders—look at the questions your media salespeople are asking prospects and customers. Make sure that they're updated. Make sure they reflect the current situation that we're in. (Continued on page 6.)



By Bob Berting

Berting Communications

Possibility Thinkers in The Newspaper Industry

In this stressful time of the virus, the newspaper industry is making a comeback with advertising sales counselors who come up with new ideas, new concepts, new discoveries and technology. We don't have employees. We don't have staff. We have team players in search of creative possibilities. An idea, a new technology is worthless until someone accepts it, runs with it and molds it into something you can sell. Implementation of that which is new, requires team effort.

Today, many sales teams are selling media buyers and major prospects on dynamite marketing packages.

This selling effort is enhanced by what is called "first brain selling" reaching prospects with presentations that sell with emotion and justify with facts. These successful sales teams have charisma, credibility, and trust and get ahead because they know how to connect. They

have developed into master communicators who get their sales messages across effectively, powerfully, persuasively and memorably.

Publication salespeople are thinking all the time

If they are thinking of failing, the publication might fail. If they have the feel of success the publication can succeed. As a business friend of mine says "Words inspire and ideas stun, but only deeds can get it done". Another friend says "If you eat the bread, you've got to bake the bread." The possibility publishers in the industry are building satisfaction into their operation. Advertising salespeople have to feel satisfied...to have a sense of belonging. Every human being needs a vision and are happy being part of a team... a team that has a constant challenge to give their very best. Giving their very best in the middle of a critical, stressful time of the Coronaviris is what is needed.

Bob's newest e-book is "Smart Customer Connections For Advertising Salespeople". You can order all 4 of Bob's books on his website: www.bobberting.com. Read Bob's books and discover how his vast experience and know-how can help you achieve much more business for you and your publication. You'll greatly benefit from the wisdom of one of America's top advertising sales experts. Bob is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and leading 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.



Customer Needs Assessments

-Ryan Dohrn Continued from page 5

Then finally, always remember. If ad sales was easy, everybody would be doing it. And they're not. So we're either crazy... or we've found a career that will feed our families for a lifetime.

Your ad sales training coach, Ryan Dohrn.

About this author: Listen to Ryan's ad sales podcast, Ad Sales Nation, on iTunes, Spotify, or on Soundcloud. Keep up to date with Ryan's ad sales training advice on Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/RyanDohrnLIVE

Ryan Dohrn is an award winning ad sales training coach, a nationally recognized internet sales consultant, and an international motivational speaker. He is the author of the best-selling ad sales book, Selling Backwards. Ryan is the President and founder of Brain Swell Media and 360 Ad Sales Training, a boutique ad sales training and sales coaching firm with a detailed focus on ad sales training, internet consulting, and media revenue generation. Ryan is also the Publisher of Sales Training World.

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By John Foust Raleigh, NC

Ad-Libs

Read Any Good Catalogues Lately?

Over the years, I've heard ad professionals talk about the outstanding copywriting that can be found in catalogues. Of course, there are other approaches to advertising creativity, but catalogues excel when it comes to descriptions of product features and benefits.

Some of the best examples can be found in L.L. Bean catalogues. Let's take a look at a two-page spread featuring their famous snow boots. Even if you live in an area which doesn't have snowy winters, it's easy to appreciate this well-crafted concept.

A color photograph occupies the entire left page and half of the right page. The close-up photo shows the boots being worn in the snow. The tops of the boots are just below the cuffed jeans, demonstrating the ankle height of one of the styles. Although there is snow on the boots, it is clearly not soaking through. The headline reads, "Bean Boots for the Snow."

The sub-headline reads, "Presenting our limited-edition waterproof Bean Boots, with 400 grams of toasty PrimaLoft insulation and a breathable Gore-Tex lining to keep your feet dry and comfortable in extreme wet weather." The PrimaLoft and Gore-Tex logos appear at the bottom, along with their slogans.

The main copy to the right of the photo states, "For men and women...handcrafted in Maine since 1912, one pair at a time. Premium full-grain leather sheds snow and



rain. Supportive steel shank enhances stability and comfort. Waterproof rubber boot bottom with chain-tread sole provides traction and durability."

Under that is a section which provides details on sizing for lined and unlined styles. There are six more photos, three of men's boots and three of women's boots. Each photo is accompanied by a few words of additional information on boot heights, available colors, linings and prices. At the bottom right corner of the page, there is a box which encourages readers to "See more styles and colors at LLBean.com."

What else do you need to know? It's all right there on those two pages: A succinct fiveword headline, a photo that shows the product in use, features and benefits in the copy, product details to help you choose the right size and style, and where to go for more information.

This is just one product in the catalogue. Descriptions like this appear on every page. In addition, L.L. Bean enhances their marketing efforts with generous discounts, guarantees and delivery policies – all of which are designed to provide consumers with reasons to trust (and buy) their products. Because they don't resort to shallow claims and exaggerations, you won't find words like "unbelievable," "fantastic" or "awesome" in their descriptions. By keeping the focus on relevant features and benefits, they essentially let the products do the selling. And it's no secret that they sell a lot.

Obviously, not all advertisers are planning to publish a catalogue. But many of them can increase sales by using these catalogue techniques.

In other words, if the shoe fits, wear it.

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John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from inhouse training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com





Are North American Forests Really Shrinking? What the Data Tell Us - By Kathi Rowzie

Across all environmental issues related to the manufacture of paper-based products in North America, the harvesting of trees for wood fiber is arguably the most familiar, yet also the most misunderstood. Decades of misguided marketing messages that suggest using less paper protects forests along with anti-paper deliberate campaigns environmental groups that twist scientific facts to suit their own agendas have left many feeling guilty for using products that are inherently sustainable. They are made from a renewable resource, are recyclable and are among the most recycled products in the world, and are manufactured using a high level of renewable energy – all key elements in a circular economy.

So, what's the most effective way to reverse the misconceptions of those who believe the North American print, paper and paper-based packaging industry is shrinking U.S. and Canadian forests? It's simple: Show them the data.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been monitoring the world's forests at five- to 10-year intervals since 1946. The FAO's 2020 global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) presents a comprehensive view of the world's forests and the ways in which this important resource changed between 1990 and 2020. The data from 236 countries were collected using commonly agreed upon terms and definitions through a transparent, traceable reporting process and a well-established network of officially nominated national representatives. These include the USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Canada.

Since 1990, there has been a net loss of 440 million acres of forests globally, an area larger than the entire state of Alaska. A net change in forest area is the sum of all forest losses (deforestation) and all forest gains (forest expansion) in a given period. FAO defines deforestation as the conversion of

forest to other land uses, regardless of whether it is human-induced. FAO specifically excludes from its definition areas where trees have been removed by harvesting or logging because the forest is expected to regenerate naturally or with the aid of sustainable forestry practices.

In contrast, despite deforestation by urban development, fire, insects and other causes, total forest area in the United States actually increased and forest area in Canada has remained stable since 1990. This is due in great part to sustainable forest management practices implemented by the North American paper and forest products industry, the highest percentage of certified forests (nearly 50%) in the world, and laws and regulations aimed at protecting forest resources.

Global Data

The world has a total forest area of around 10 billion acres or 31% of total land area. More than half (54%) of these forests are in just five countries – the Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the United States and China.

Africa had the largest annual rate of net forest loss in 2010–2020 at 9.6 million acres, followed by South America, at 6.4 million acres.

While the net loss of 440 million acres of forest is troubling, there is some improvement in the global numbers. The rate of net forest loss decreased substantially over the period 1990–2020 due to a reduction in deforestation in some countries, plus increases in forest area in others through afforestation (establishing forest where none existed previously) and the natural expansion of forests. The annual rate of net forest loss declined from 19.2 million acres in 1990–2000 to 12.8 million acres in 2000–2010 and 11.6 million acres in 2010–2020.

While an estimated 1.04 billion acres of forest have been lost worldwide to

deforestation since 1990, the rate of deforestation also declined substantially. Between 2015 and 2020, the annual global rate of deforestation was estimated at around 25 million acres, down from 30 million acres between 2010 and 2015.

Globally, 54% of forests have long-term forest management plans. FAO defines forest management as the process of planning and implementing practices for the stewardship and use of forests targeted at specific environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives. Around 96% of forestlands in Europe has management plans, 64% in Asia, less than 25% in Africa and only 17% in South America.

U.S. and Canada Data

According to the 2020 FRA, the United States and Canada account for 8% and 9%, respectively, of the world's total forest area.

In the U.S., total forest area increased by 18 million acres between 1990 and 2020, which averages out to the equivalent of around 1,200 NFL football fields every day. Canada's total forest area remained relatively stable over the 30-year assessment period at approximately 857 million acres.

Approximately 59% of forestlands in North America has long-term forest management plans.

Help Spread the Word!

The North American print, paper and paper-based packaging industry plays a significant role in keeping U.S. and Canadian forests sustainable for future generations, and that's something to be very proud of. One of the best ways to show that pride is by taking every available opportunity to bust the myth that the production of paper products destroys forests. For more facts to help you spread the word, check out our Two Sides fact sheet on Paper Production and Sustainable Forestry here.



It's already October and I was thinking what a miserable, scary year this has been, which (witch) got me to thinking about Halloween and the fact that I know some pretty ...



We ran a lot of promotions in our papers, but the ones that we received the greatest response from was the "coupons" promo. Everybody wanted to save money where they could, so naturally, we offered many opportunities to group the business coupons together for easy access. Most times, these coupons were grouped under a very simple heading, usually a six-column by one inch deep heading, similar to the one below. Our challenge was to convey the seasonal aspect in a very limited amount of space... usually with a simple graphic and distinctive typeface.



Appropriate type...

The typeface we choose for **spooktacular** was not a typeface that was used everyday. Fortunately, there are websites that offer free fonts—which is just what we needed for a once-a-year promo (we had very little call to use this in our "regular" ads.

Anyway, last year I was fortunate and found that Mighty Deals had a group of Free Halloween Fonts; unfortunately when I checked today, I could not find them.

https://www.mightydeals.com

But not to worry, when I typed in the name of the first font, Broken Glass, it took me to a website that also had free fonts: These fonts are basically for personal use only, and they did have similar looking typefaces. Here is the link to dafont which offers these free typefaces, but be aware that the fonts presented on this website are their authors' property, and are either freeware, shareware, demo versions or public domain.

https://www.dafont.com

Searching a little bit more, and typing in the Needleteeth font, I came across another site that offered commercial use. This font comes in regular, psycho, creepy and spooky...as I said, you only need one.

https://www.1001fonts.com

Another site I found was freefontspro, when I typed in Coraline's Cat... also with commercial free usage. Just be sure to read the usage on any of the websites you visit.



In this column, I've listed some typefaces that are suitable for Halloween. I recommend that you limit them to a couple of words, or a short headline to get the most effective impact.

Using these typefaces at the largest size possible also adds impact. I have also chosen to show what size was used because they vary so much in their dimensions—some at 30 points and others at 18, 20 and 24 points. One size does not fit all!

Needleteeth at 30 point

Needleteeth Spooky

Trade Winds at 24 point

Zombie at 24 point

It's hard to say what's going to happen this year social distancing and all—but Halloween has been a huge fun-filled event. The specialty typefaces info for Halloween can apply to almost any

Sometime you have to treat the typeface as artwork, because it's distinctive, so don't try to add a lot of graphic images. Treat the typeface as the graphic and incorporate small suggestions of the season into/with the type.

Interactive PDF...

I am also experimenting with the interactive PDF. I have included links that you should be able to click and it will (should?) take you to that website. I have used it with my Camera Club Newsletter and it appears to work, however, there can always be those little "bugs" that show up. In the beginning it was more on me, but hopefully have gotten the hang of it. I hope this works out because sometimes it's just easier for me to point you in the right direction!

The Adobe InDesign program can do so much, and I haven't even touched the surface... and speaking of Adobe, read on...

Adobe MAX- The Creativity Conference: Oct. 20-22

Since I really have no place to go... except virtually... Adobe MAX is free and online this year and is geared toward all things Adobe.

I went to see what types of sessions were available and was overwhelmed by a myriad of sessions... 350+ sessions, labs and creativity workshops—but you need to register!

https://max.adobe.com https://max.adobe.com/sessions/

Final thoughts...

I have also been attending some virtual sessions for the Independent Free Papers of America to see what is going on with other publications and how they are, dare I say, "reinventing" the way they are doing business.

I was already part of a "reinvention" when desktop publishing was "born." Will it last, what's to become of the way we used to do it? Well we survived and I suppose this is just another way (although forced) of transitioning. In essence, in the beginning of the "Desktop Revolution (Evolution?)" some thought that we were being forced to adapt then as well.

Wow, gotta stop, I'm beginning to editorialize... sorry. Anyway, check out the Adobe Max Creativity Conference. There are some industry gurus to add to you knowledge base, so take advantage while you can. There are also many other workshops and teaching sessions offered by experts in their fields.

Let me know how the interactive portion of this article turns out. There are some websites I would definitely like to share.

Stay Safe until next time...

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