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The Free Paper Industry's NEWS SOURCE

MARCH 2016
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Rob Zarrilli

A LONG & WINDING ROAD

The Leadership Institute
7 New Classes! Descriptions Inside

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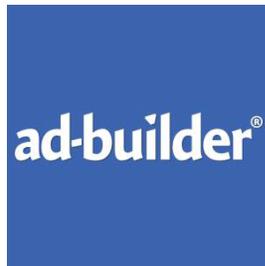
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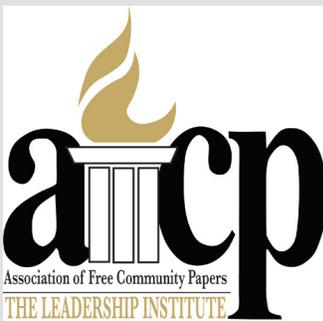
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COMING
next
month

The April issue of INK will focus on the upcoming trade show in San Diego in April as well as the Associate Members who will be participating. Trade shows can be very efficient and valuable tools for your business – stay tuned to find out how!

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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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Michelle Farnham, Rising Star

"What were you thinking?"



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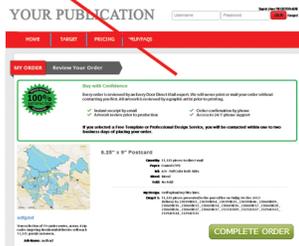
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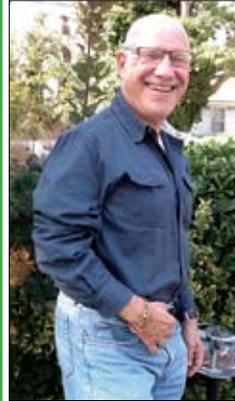
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- Paul Tash (Mr. Tash is Chairman of the Pulitzer Board and CEO/Chairman of the Tampa Bay Times.)

"Kevin Kamen is one of the world's best-known and most-prolific brokers of media properties and companies."

- Gypsy C. Gallardo, CEO/Publisher of The Power Broker Magazine

Whose judgment do they trust?

"Kevin Kamen correctly predicted as far back as 2010 that a buyer would be willing to pay \$42 million to \$51 million for The Journal ... 'They paid about \$4 million to \$5 million more than they should have,' Kamen told WPRI.com ... Kamen suggested Gatehouse was motivated to pay a premium in part to ensure a competing newspaper chain didn't get The (Providence) Journal instead."

- Ted Nessi, WPRI 12, Providence, Rhode Island

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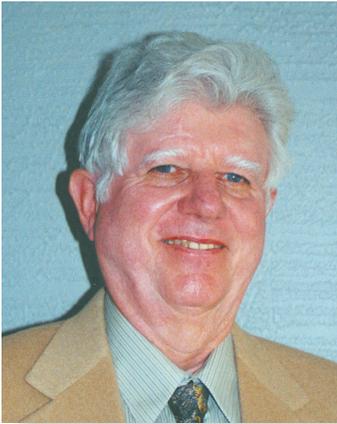
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“From the Basics to the Innovative”



Dave Neuharth

DAVE NEUHARTH
EDITOR

Training: An Invaluable Benefit

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE PRINT industry depends on sales to pay the bills. Working the phones to solicit classified ads or walking the streets to sell display ads has been the lifeline of the history.

Over the past years I have observed many operations that put an emphasis on training. In-house sessions, outside trainers and the cost were part of the annual budget. Others did not emphasize training and sometimes hired reps and turned them lose without any training. The ones that stuck to their budgets for training usually excelled in business.

Training is the focus of this issue of INK. As a result, we have featured Rob Zarrilli in an article.

Rob has been on both sides of the coin, working in the free paper industry – where he learned to fine tune his training abilities – and outside of the industry as a trainer and as the dean of The Leadership Institute (TLI). The numerous training sessions by TLI have resulted in over 50 different training classes provided by volunteers in the free paper industry, who in turn attend training sessions done by Rob. A huge thank you to the Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) for funding TLI.

As we know, times in the print industry have changed. The web has become a factor that we never dreamed of, if you have been around this industry as long as I have.

Training possibilities have also changed.

The web has offered opportunities with podcasts and webinars. Experts in the training field can reach across the country and provide valuable training for those who take the opportunity to participate.

A webinar is a living meeting that takes place over the web. The meetings can be a presentation, discussion, or instructional session. Participants can view

documents and applications via their computers, while shared audio allows for presentation and discussion.

Podcasts are a form of digital media that consists of a series of audio, video, digital radio, PDF or ePub files subscribed to and downloaded through web or streamed online to a computer or mobile device.

TLI has done an excellent job on both sides of the coin. The web has provided a great tool for TLI to use to make training tools for AFCP members to use and take advantage of.

The Online Learning Center currently offers classes that members can use to train their sales staffs without travel expenses. The classes can be completed at your office during normal business hours or from any location at any time. The classes offer credits for their certification as an Associate Advertising Executive.

You can't beat the AFCP Podcasts Archive starring the Podfather, Rob Zarrilli.

To date, 28 live Podcasts have been presented by Rob. And the good news is that these valuable training programs are available in the archives on the AFCP website.

The sales tools you need to educate your sales team are just a computer away. Go to www.afcp.org.

While Podcasts and Webinars are a work in process, Douglas Fry of IFPA notes that their Share Group (a group of similar positioned people who get together to talk about their jobs/challenges/successes on a monthly basis) has proven valuable.

The same goes for AFCP with their Peer-to-Peer scheduled sessions that are headed by board member Dan Alexander.

No travel costs, no paying the fees for a facility to conduct training sessions, no charge for sales reps to attend, and no need to worry about food service.

What a deal! **INK**

The Rising Stars Need Your Help

by David Sickels, 2014 Rising Star



David Sickels

OK, I REALIZE THIS request might be a stretch if you're not listening to Sarah McLaclan singing sad music, but this is important stuff: The Rising Stars are seeking donations for our second annual silent auction at this year's San Diego conference April 28-30.

Last year the AFCP's Rising Stars group raised more than \$5,000 with its inaugural Rising Stars Silent Auction, and honestly, that really blew our socks off. The generosity of members of the AFCP is truly first class, and we thank you from the bottoms of our hearts.

That money is being used to create scholarships to offer new, young professionals in the free paper industry the opportunity to attend the AFCP conference through the Rising Stars program. As a member of the program myself, and I'm sure most of you can relate based on your own conference experience, I can assure you it's an event well worth the cost of admission.

The group was able to raise those funds thanks to your donations. Last year we collected 25 total, which included everything from a Nolan Ryan-signed baseball (thanks Loren Colburn!) to a vacation in St. Myers Beach in Florida (thanks Wendy Murray!).

This year our goal is to ramp it up, but we'll need

your help to do it. We're hoping to collect at least 35 items this go-around.

If you're like most of us and don't have signed memorabilia or a condo to share, that's OK! We'll take anything you think will catch bidders' eyes. Acceptable items include jewelry, artwork, gift cards to national chains like Starbucks and Amazon, electronics, gift baskets – you name it. No matter the size or value of a donation, the Rising Stars will benefit from it.

Donations can be shipped to the hotel, or carried with you and brought to the registration table by Wednesday, April 27. Even if you can't attend the conference this year, we can still accept your donation!

Shipping and the costs related are the sole responsibility of the donor. Starting bid suggestions will be considered at the discretion of the Rising Stars. For items such as trips and timeshares, we ask you to please provide photos.

All forms necessary to donate are available online at www.afcp.org.

Any items that need to be shipped to the conference can be sent to Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina, 1380 Harbor Island Dr., San Diego, CA 92101. Please keep in mind there is no refrigeration available at the hotel.

For questions, please contact Alix Browne in the AFCP office at alix@afcp.org or at 877-203-2327. **INK**



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Metro Creative Graphics:

Creating Opportunities for Over a Century

IF MOSES SHAPIRO, WHO FOUNDED METRO IN 1910 with his five sons, found himself in the middle of his company's current headquarters, he would likely say, "I'm glad to see that nothing has changed." While he would be dazzled by the gleaming computers and note the absence of the engraving plates and "ad mats" that held Metro's earliest advertising art, Shapiro would instantly recognize that Metro had stayed true to its mission of providing state-of-the-art advertising solutions to its news media partners.

A LONG LIST OF "FIRSTS"

When Moses Shapiro and his wife Esther arrived in America from Russia, they had no inkling that they would launch an enduring family business that would usher in many "firsts" in retail advertising and newspaper publishing. Their business got off the ground once Moses recognized that his son Jack's illustrations for a prominent New York City menswear retailer could be reproduced and used by newspapers to promote the same clothing brands sold by retailers in other cities. This idea — that advertising art could be syndicated — was the first of many groundbreaking innovations pioneered by Metro.

From day one, Metro has built its success around two key principles: seizing the opportunities that spring from technological advances, and creating strong and enduring partnerships with its clients. During the first decades of the 20th century, when all five Shapiro brothers were involved in the business, Metro salespeople took to the road, building enduring relationships with clients and listening to their needs. Based on that feedback, Metro took the concept of syndicated advertising to the next level by introducing specialty services for jewelry, clothing, furniture and department store retailers.

After the stock market crash of 1929, when many Americans had to buy goods "on credit," Metro created a specialty "credit" service. During this period, Metro also made the switch from etched printing plates to "mat casting," enabling the company to provide better service to its client companies at a lower cost.

ONGOING INNOVATION

As Metro expanded its presence in the retail and newspaper advertising industries, the Shapiro brothers continued to innovate. In 1937, Metro launched Plus Business, a vehicle for sharing advertising ideas and revenue-building strategies with its clients that is still being published today. The following year Metro responded to the needs of its clients by introducing the first newspaper special section. These topic-driven sections offered newspapers

opportunities to connect with targeted groups of readers while attracting new or additional advertising revenue.

In the 1950s, when offset printing became the most popular form of commercial printing, Metro left "mat casting" behind and produced its first "proof books." The term "clip art" stems from this period, when the production staff of large retailers and newspapers physically clipped desired images from the books to build ads.

The range of Metro's images expanded dramatically during the 1950s and 60s to meet the needs of the company's growing client base, which now included newspapers of every size and scope throughout the United States and Canada. In the mid-1960s, Metro introduced its Holiday Advertising Service — a once-a-year collection of winter holiday-themed ads and special section covers designed to help newspapers boost their fourth-quarter sales.

TECHNOLOGY OPENS DOORS

While Metro's first 50 years focused on expanding its advertising art offerings — first via etched printing plates and ad mats, then in printed "clip art" books — the company's second 50 years reflect both the explosion of technology and its impact on news media and publishing. In the 1980s, when the first IBM and Macintosh personal computers — as well as the World Wide Web — made their debuts, Metro launched Classified Dynamics, which delivered auto, real estate and recruitment advertising images to clients' desks. By 1989, Metro had transferred all of its creative content to floppy disks, making it easier than ever for newspaper production departments to access Metro images and create high-quality ads for their advertisers.

Just two years later, in 1991, Metro swapped its floppy disks for LaserArt CD-ROMs, which offered far greater storage capacity, faster speed and greater durability. Technology was exploding, and Metro made its mark by adding services aimed at boosting ad revenue through the use of spec ads and the addition of color. In addition to adding spec ads and color digital files to its LaserArt CD-ROMs, Metro launched Sales Spectaculars, which supplied themed small-space spec ads and served as the precursor to today's Metro interactive Ad Designer Spec Ad Library.

GOING DIGITAL

The turn of the century was a major turning point for Metro. With the launch of MetroCreativeConnection.com — Metro's online gateway to all of its ready-to-use images, spec ads, ideas, photos, logos/trademarks, auto photos and marketing/sales materials — in 2000, Metro subscribers gained instant access to everything they

needed to boost advertising revenue.

The transition to an online platform opened the door to a wide range of new opportunities for both Metro and Metro subscribers. Both then and now, any member of a client publication's staff can access and download Metro's content and services using MetroCreativeConnection. The shift to a digital platform coincided with major changes in the media landscape that resulted in the downsizing of staffs at publications across North America. Challenged to maintain revenue levels despite having fewer hands on deck, publishers were in need of creative advertising solutions that could be accessed quickly and easily by multiple members of publications' advertising teams, including sales managers and representatives.

ADDITIONS AND REFINEMENTS

Metro responded to those needs with several new offerings, all aimed at harnessing technology to boost ad revenue. By introducing online special sections in 2008, Metro expanded advertising revenue opportunities for client publications. After the introduction of Metro's overnight custom ad design service, ADS On Demand, that same year, Metro users were able to capitalize on every sales opportunity despite time and staffing constraints.

The following years saw important additions to Metro's lineup of services and big leaps in creativity and flexibility for publications, including MiAD, which allows users to create spec ads and finished ads right on screen with only a Web browser and an Internet connection, and ready-to-sell, fully-templated print and digital special sections.

Recent refinements have focused on adding mobile into the mix and making Metro's creative imagery, editorial content and design elements easier to access on the go. Multiplatform Ad Packages for print, Web and mobile were launched in 2012, followed by the MiAD Mobile app for iPad in 2014. In 2015, MetroCreativeConnection received a complete overhaul to meet the current demands of publishers large and small. The site's Intuitive navigation and innovative search features enable any user to generate everything from ideas to layouts to targeted, presentation-ready ads in minutes—with no time lost on training. The revamp also introduced online, interactive SearchBooks that connect directly to content for instant downloading.

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

This year, Metro has already added two new features—MiAD Wizard, which allows sales teams to produce polished, presentation-ready spec ads for print, Web and mobile in a matter of minutes—and e-Connect Specialty Websites, a service designed to help Metro users expand their online offerings through the development of advertiser websites. Future enhancements to Metro's products and services will not only reflect the changing media landscape, but will continue to respond to the specific needs of publishers and their publications.

As the publishing industry and technology evolve, so will Metro's services and content. The only thing that will never change is the company's commitment to harnessing technology and forging strong partnerships with client publications. **INK**

1910's	1920's	1930's	1940-1970's	1980's	1990's	2000 - Present
<p>Metro launches first syndicated art services to newspapers</p> <p>World War I ends (1919)</p>	<p>Women gain right to vote (1920)</p> <p>Prohibition begins (1920)</p> <p>Great Depression (1929)</p>	<p>Plus Business launched as first trade publication designed for ad departments</p> <p>Themed Special Sections introduced to expand newspaper ad sales beyond ROP</p>	<p>(1940's) Printed proofbook pages replace mats to accommodate offset presses</p> <p>World War II</p> <p>1950's Rock 'n roll popularized</p> <p>First Super Bowl played (1966)</p> <p>Neil Armstrong, first man on the moon (1969)</p> <p>U.S. Bicentennial (1976)</p>	<p>Classified Dynamics delivers auto, real estate & recruitment advertising (mid-80s)</p> <p>Metro introduces images delivered on floppy disks (LaserArt - 1989)</p> <p>First IBM personal computer (1980)</p> <p>First Macintosh computer (1984)</p> <p>World Wide Web invented (1989)</p>	<p>Image content delivered on LaserArt CD-ROMs (1991)</p> <p>Spec ads and color digital files added to LaserArt CD-ROMs (1997)</p> <p>Sales Spectaculars service supplies themed small-space spec ads (1994; now called MiAd Spec Ad Library)</p> <p>First digital presses sold (1993)</p> <p>First smartphone is produced (1999)</p>	<p>(2000) MetroCreativeConnection (MCC) goes live to provide online access to all content</p> <p>(2008) Print Special Sections expand to online with e-Sections</p> <p>(2008) Overnight custom ad design service, ADS On Demand, launched for print and digital</p> <p>(2009) Metro interactive Ad Designer (MIAD) enables sales teams to personalize spec ads online</p> <p>(2009) Online e-Editions give online viewing access to services for all</p> <p>(2011) Presentation-ready Fully Templated Print Special Sections launched</p> <p>(2012) Multi-platform Ad Packages for print, Web and mobile multimedia ad sales added</p> <p>(2014) MIAD mobile app for iPad released for digital ad presentation</p> <p>(2015) Next-generation of MCC website launches to meet evolving online demands</p> <p>(2015) Online interactive SearchBooks connect directly to content for download</p> <p>(2016) MIAD Wizard launches for fast spec ad personalization</p> <p>(2016) e-Connect Specialty Websites help clients expand online offerings</p> <p>Social Media appears online Facebook, 2004; Twitter, 2006; Instagram and Pinterest, 2010 The first generation iPad was released (2010)</p>

Lynda.com: The Full Toolbox for Training!

by Coastal View News Staff

THE PUBLISHING BUSINESS CHANGES EVERY DAY. New programs and services hit the market all the time to make jobs easier and products better. Within one of these services lies the key to maximizing the potential of a publication's most valuable and critical asset, its staff.

Lynda.com boasts a library of over 4,200 online courses that cover technical skills, creative techniques and business strategies. Each course is comprised of anywhere from a few to a hundred videos in which experts walk learners through the process of completing a specific task.

"We know that people learn differently, and we've broken things into such small-sized bites on purpose so that you can come into the service and get the one answer you need as quickly as possible. And many of our members use it for that reason alone, and other people love to spend 10 hours teaching themselves something," says Lynda Weinman, co-founder of Lynda.com and company namesake.

Universities use it. The government uses it. More than half of the Fortune 500 companies use it. And the clincher for publishers—16 of the top 20 media companies use Lynda.com. The company, which started in Ojai, Calif., in 1995, was acquired by LinkedIn last year for \$1.5 billion.

"It really starts with our world class content," said Jolie Miller, Senior Manager of Content for Business, IT and Education at Lynda.com. "We want to empower our learners to have their own success stories. We

want people to walk away learning more than they even expected to."

In a newsroom, a Lynda.com subscription can be a vital tool for increasing efficiency and cultivating new staff skills. Rather than sit down and train an employee on a topic, a publisher can assign a Lynda.com

course. Rather than fall behind on the rapid-paced changes in social media, marketing and computer software, a publisher can stay on top of it all by completing whichever Lynda.com courses suit specific needs.

"Everyone tends to wear a lot of hats in small companies," says Miller. "You have the ability to access all the content, which makes wearing all those hats possible."

Lynda.com's library features over 700 authors who develop scripts that are edited and approved for quality and simplicity of content. They are recorded at the company's 12.5-acre, state-of-the-art production facility in Carpinteria, Calif. Lynda.com adds 25 new courses each week. A

monthly subscription buys access to the full library of courses, and company memberships can be purchased.

Courses can be found by searching by topic and filtering by various categories. Miller highlighted a handful of courses from among the hundreds that could benefit publishers: Developing Resourcefulness, Creating Better Blog Content, Grammar Fundamentals and Small Business Marketing Fundamentals. **INK**

In a newsroom, a
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can be a vital tool for
increasing efficiency and
cultivating new staff skills.
And the clincher for
publishers – 16 of the top
20 media companies
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It's Just More **Work** for the **Teacher** and the **Student!**

by Dennis Wade, Trainer – Speaker – Publisher



GIVE A MAN A FISH, FEED HIM FOR a day.

Teach a man to fish, feed him for a lifetime.

We are all called to teach.

We are all called to learn.

Teaching is work. In reality, teaching someone something new often requires a great deal more energy and time than does just doing the work yourself. Teaching requires patience.

What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing. But until someone that knows what they are doing teaches us how to get it done, we are all fishing and floundering!

Learning is work. We all need to be taught. Learning requires patience. The right people are willing to help you learn and know that frustration is a positive by-product of learning. Learning by observing and paying close attention will be productive as long as you are open and willing. The actual doing will likely be more difficult than you expect it to be. Everything is hard at first but know that repetition is the Mother of education. So do it over and over and over – wrong, until you get it right.

When endeavoring to learn, ask for help from someone who actually

knows how to do that which you want to learn. The right people want to and are willing to help, if you will just ask. The first step in asking for help is getting past your disinclination to ask, for fear of being rejected or judged. If you don't ask, the answer is always no.

Be wary of the overzealous "I can do anything" person who says they can help when they really have no idea what they are doing. Choosing the right teacher is half of the solu-

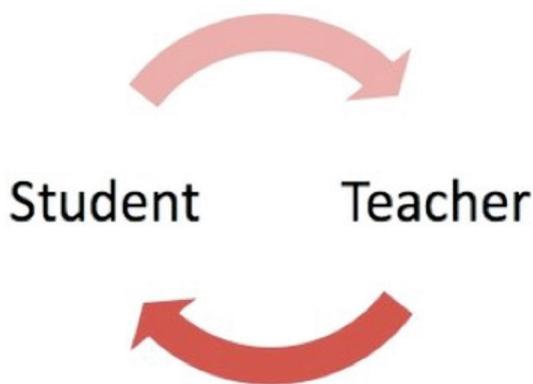
tion. The other half is making sure you are the right student. The right teacher is willing to teach and has no reservations about issuing necessary correction without damaging the will of the student. The right student is

willing to learn and accepts correction without being offended.

Find the folks with the battle scars. You can't actually see the scars but you can tell they are there by the confidence these warriors exude when they walk the walk and talk the talk. They are the finest teachers.

When you stop learning you stop. If you stop teaching, others stop. **INK**

For regular doses of Dennis' great perspectives – visit rightthingrightwayrightnow.blogspot.com



The Online Learning Center Gets Salespeople Off to a Good Start

by Jim Busch

IMAGINE THIS SCENARIO: YOU'RE LYING ON A gurney in a hospital. You've just been given the anesthetic for your surgery when you hear the following conversation.

"Welcome to our staff, Bob. Here's everything you need to get started. This is a list of the surgeries performed here and a price list. With your plumbing experience, I'm sure you'll pick up this surgery thing with no problem. Your patient is waiting, so knock 'em dead, doc!"

Of course, this would never happen – it takes years of training to become a surgeon – but this is how many sales people in our industry begin their careers. They are given a price list and a few papers and sent out to call on prospects and advertisers. While selling advertising may not be quite as complex as being a surgeon, today's sales people need to be well trained to succeed in a competitive environment that offers business owners an ever-growing choice of ways to market their enterprises. Salespeople today not only need to understand their company's products, pricing and procedures, but they need a good foundation in advertising sales techniques.

Most publishers and sales managers recognize the value of properly training a new sales person. A lack of advertising sales training leads not only to lost revenue and lost opportunities, but also to rep dissatisfaction and employee turnover. Unfortunately, the same competitive and market pressures that make training so vital make it difficult to find time to bring new reps up to speed.

Sales managers are already overwhelmed trying to drive revenue and "putting out fires." They simply do not have the time they know they should devote to bringing a new rep up to speed. Often the only training a new rep receives is a few days in the field with an experienced sales person. This can be useful, but seldom gives a new rep a good understanding of the sales process and may even result in a new person picking up a few bad habits.

One of the most frequent comments that Leadership Institute faculty members hear from sales managers who attend their classes at AFCP and regional association conferences is, "I just don't have time to train my salespeople." In response to this challenge, several years ago the AFCP

leadership announced a new online training initiative.

AFCP's "Online Learning Center" combines state-of-the-art technology with the knowledge and expertise of the TLI faculty to make world class sales training available 24/7/365. The "OLC" is easy to use and is available at no cost to all AFCP member publications. The OLC provides small organizations, which can't justify the expense of having a full-time trainer on staff, a way to give new hires the skills they need to get off to a good start.

HOW TO USE THE OLC WITH NEW REPS

You can gain access to the OLC by going to www.AFCP.org and clicking on Member Benefits. Clicking on The

Leadership Institute will then give you access to the Online Learning Center. The seven courses available on the OLC are designed to provide new reps with an understanding of the steps of a sales call.

Rob Zarrilli, The Leadership Institute's Dean, worked closely with a distance learning specialist to make the OLC courses both interactive and engaging. Each OLC course offering concludes with a quiz which allows the student, and their manager, to gauge their grasp of the material. Because the OLC courses are designed for independent study, sales managers can assign a course and then go about their regular activities while their new hires complete a lesson.

The first step to creating a new-hire training program is to go on the OLC webpage and take either of the first two classes in the selling sequence, TLI-104 and/or TLI-106. Once your company's AFCP membership is verified, you will be sent an "enrollment key" via e-mail. This key will permit you to access and take the rest of the classes in the selling progression.

I feel it is wise for the managers to go through the courses themselves. This will take some of their time; but the familiarity with the material and the OLC process they gain by doing so will be helpful in guiding their new reps through the process. Since this is a web-based process, they can elect to do this outside of their busy workday if they would like.

When a new sales person joins the team, they should be assigned to take the OLC courses. While the courses

A lack of advertising sales training leads not only to lost revenue and lost opportunities, but also to rep dissatisfaction and employee turnover.

can be taken in any order, it is best to take them in an order approximating the normal flow of a sales call:

1. TLI-104 Opening a Sales Dialogue
2. TLI-106 Effective Questioning
3. TLI-105 Communicating Through Listening
4. TLI-107 Making Recommendations Using Features and Benefits
5. TLI-103 Answering the Classic Sales Objections
6. TLI-101 Closing the Sale
7. TLI-108 The Four Essentials of an Effective Advertising Program

The new rep should be told that it is important that they fully grasp the materials. They should be encouraged to take their time and

read the material carefully, jotting down any questions they may have to discuss with the sales manager.

The sales manager should sit with the new person as they go through at least the first few pages of the first course to ensure that they understand the process. After completing each course, the rep should take the quiz and print out the results to share with the manager.

The manager should meet with the rep after they've completed each OLC course. The manager should review the rep's quiz results and ask what they learned from the course. To make sure the rep fully absorbed the lesson the manager should role-play the skill learned. For example, after the rep has finished Opening a Sales Dialogue, the manager should let the rep practice their call opening. They might even require the new rep to write out several openings to make them more comfortable with the process. If the manager does not feel that the new person fully understands the lesson, they should ask them to repeat the session.

Once the rep understands a lesson, they should be assigned the next session in the program. The manager should follow the same review process after each session to build the new rep's skills. It is advisable to roleplay all steps of a call completed by the rep. For example, when the rep has completed the first four steps listed above, the roleplay should take the call through the opening,

probing and recommendation phases. This means by the time the new person has completed all seven sessions they will have practiced their opener at least seven times, probed seven times etc. This will build the rep's skills and their confidence before they make their first "solo" call.

This will also give them a thorough understanding of the flow of the sales process. Combined with training in your products and pricing, this program will give the new hires the skills they need to start their sales career off on the right foot.

Using the OLC to train new sales people provides structure to your training program. OLC also frees up the sales manager's time by letting the rep learn the basics

of the sales process on their own. There is some evidence that indicates that this may even be a more effective way to train younger people who grew up getting their information from the web.

In addition to training new reps, the OLC can be used to improve the skills of the entire sales team. If a manager sees that a rep is struggling with some part of the sales process, they may assign an OLC course to help them get back on track. For example, a rep

that is having trouble closing would benefit from reviewing TLI-101 Closing the Sale. Every manager I have ever met talks about having to constantly reinforce the basic selling skills with their teams. The OLC sessions are short enough that they can be used as a group exercise during a sales meeting to refocus the team on the fundamentals.

HELP AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Sales managers need all the help they can get today. They find themselves wearing far too many "hats." They have to be a leader, administrator, and super salesperson. The AFCP's Online Learning Center can help sales managers to perform one of their most critical functions – training their reps to be effective sales people.

When it comes to building your team's skills, help is just a few quick clicks away. **INK**



Set Sail for Success

by John Draper, Conference Committee Chair

IN JUST A NUMBER OF WEEKS, AFCP MEMBERS will “Set Sail for Success”. As our disembarkation nears, let’s take a quick inventory of our planning, supplies, and tour schedule.

PLANNING

- **Registration:** If you haven’t taken this first step, get on it today. The AFCP website – www.afcp.org – provides a quick and easy way to reserve your place in San Diego.

- **Travel Arrangements:** Anyone who has flown recently knows that flights and schedules book up fast. Plan to arrive no later than Wednesday, April 27 and depart on Sunday, May 1. Of course you can come early or stay late so as to take in more sights and experiences of a great American city.

SUPPLIES

- **Pack Your Bags:** Plan for moderate temperatures with average highs near 70 degrees. Evenings may cool down a bit so consider some options.

- **Bring an Open Mind:** With so many of the industry’s brightest publishers and vendors on hand, come prepared to listen and learn. Successful ideas aren’t just your own, but many times gleaned from peers.

- **Bring your Appetite:** As always, AFCP is putting together some great meals and social events. These events offer the perfect opportunity to nourish your body and your mind. Plan to sit by a stranger during your meals, network with new faces, and if so moved, discuss our industry over a drink.

- **Silent Auction Item:** Plan to donate an item or service to the AFCP Silent Auction. This fun fundraising event helps raise money for the continued success of the AFCP Rising Stars program. Details are available at www.afcp.org.

TOUR SCHEDULE (HIGHLIGHTS):

- **Thursday Kick-Off:** Our event gets started first thing Thursday morning by acknowledging AFCP TLI graduates and Rising Stars. This ceremony honors those who have shown a commitment to their careers, publications, and the industry. Following will be a keynote presentation by Sam Richter.

- **The Leadership Institute:** TLI will conduct 24



Downtown Seaport Village Marina.

Credit: Joanne DiBona

different classes throughout the event. Six new classes are being offered for the first time in 2016 and TLI welcomes three visiting professors to the line-up.

- **Management & Content Tracks:** A great variety of sessions are in the cards for all. The management track will cover topics related to sales management, digital media initiatives, and a host of others. The content track includes sessions led by San Diego State University staff, a panel on “Today’s Newsroom”, and open mic discussions where everyone can learn from all attendees.

- **Trade Show:** The industry’s biggest and best trade show happens once a year at AFCP. Gathered will be technology providers, operations experts, quality printing providers, and a host of others. Learning the tools to success happen in the sessions and on the trade show floor, so don’t miss out.

- **Socials:** Thursday night’s dinner and entertainment will be held on the flight decks of the USS Midway. This vintage aircraft carrier offers a great view of the city, flight simulators and history exhibits. When the event is done, feel free to meander through the nearby city streets of San Diego. Friday night we will dine outdoors at the resort, then open Club AFCP. New to the club this year is a game show event designed to entertain participants and spectators alike. After the game show, relax a bit and try your hand at a wide variety of games.

The opportunity for you to “Set Sail for Success” is entirely before you. We look forward to seeing you on our excursion. 



A Quick Update on **NANI**, **NPC Travel** and **INK**

by Greg Birkett

IT HAS BEEN INTERESTING to hear Loren Colburn and Cassey Recore talk excitedly about helping folks

with their travel needs from around the country as the readers of our NANI ads call in to NCP Travel, responding to the ads in our papers. Not only is the new travel business an alternative revenue stream for our association, but it also has helped Loren and Cassey learn more about our NANI network, our readers, and how to make the phone ring.

The NANI network continues to produce results not only for NCP Travel, but for our other advertisers as well. The new single tier lower rate structure simplified the network for our sellers and their clients. It also has brought the price of a NANI ad way down, to a level that I believe may attract more Main Street businesses from our hometowns.

We need to take a look at our advertisers in our papers and ask ourselves if the NANI network would work for them. If you need more information about the NANI network, see the website (www.afcp.org) or call the AFCP office. We need to keep NANI strong to continue to fund our association, so thank your NANI members for running the ads. In addition, let's all take a look to see if we can sell NANI ads ourselves.

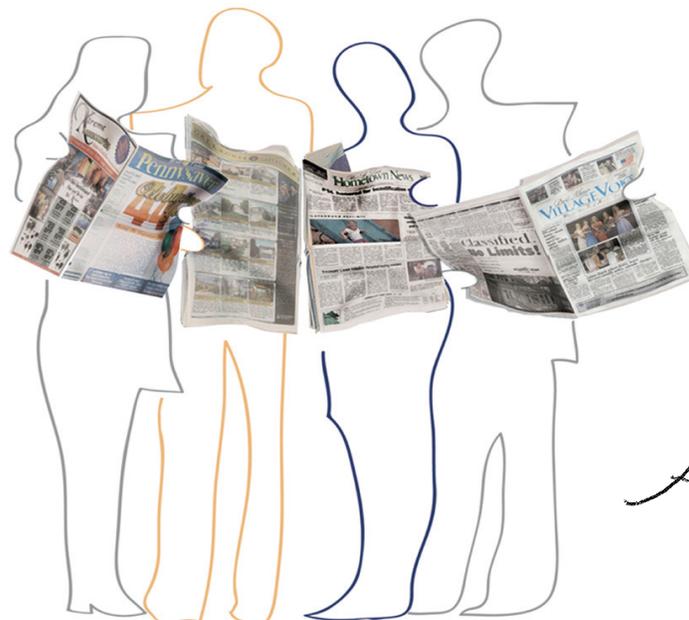
By the time you get

this issue of INK, we will be less than two months from Setting Sail to San Diego for the annual conference (April 28-30). Most of the planning is done and final details are being worked out. I can assure you that all attendees will have great networking opportunities, learn a lot from the conference sessions and have a great time doing it!

The INK committee has been working hard to bring you this monthly magazine all about our industry. There have been many subtle changes to INK over the years to make this an enjoyable read for the members of AFCP and our industry as a whole. Hats off to the committee and to Dave Neuharth and Barb Holmes for all their efforts in bringing INK to your mailbox (or web browser) each month. I know they are always on the prowl for great story ideas – perhaps you have an idea to share. If so, please email Dave Neuharth or Loren Colburn. They also have been

reaching out to writers in our industry for help in bringing great story ideas to life. Let us know if you would like to help.

Hope you are all having a great start to your year. I hope to see many of you in sunny San Diego! **INK**



GREG BIRKETT
AFCP PRESIDENT
DUBUQUE ADVERTISER

Rob Zarrilli – A Long and Winding Road

IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN THE FREE COMMUNITY PAPER industry for any length of time, the chances are excellent you have experienced some type of contact with Rob Zarrilli. It might have been at the AFCP annual conference, in a TLI classroom, at a state or regional conference, or right in your own company if you work for one of Rob's many publishing clients. But you may not be aware of the origins of Rob's success.

Zarrilli kicked off his publishing career working in New York City associated with Grolier International, an international leader in the educational publishing field. Rob's rise through the corporate ranks was quickly fueled by him winning national attention as the #1 salesperson for Grolier International two years running.

It wasn't long before Rob was driven to start his own company, Spectrum, where he truly began to realize his passion for hiring, training and developing top sales talent of his own. It was through this experience and watching the people he had mentored at Grolier grow professionally, that it became clear to Rob where his talents would provide him the greatest rewards.

"One of my proudest and happiest moments by far was not receiving a top sales honor myself. It was watching someone I hired, gave guidance and support to then go on to win that same award and actually break the sales records I had established."

In 1992, Rob's commitment to family would bring him to Florida to be closer to his son Rob Jr., who was living with his mom in Orlando. That year would be monumental in his eventual career path as he joined The Flyer Magazine in Tampa as the director of sales for their call center operations. It was here where he met Bill Mulcahey, Dick Mandt and eventually Carlos Guzman, who Rob still credits with his growth and development, calling them all his mentors in life.

In 1996, Rob was promoted to vice president of sales and for the next nine years was instrumental in the growth and expansion of The Flyer Magazine including

heading up the Tampa Flyer's daily operations for Carlos Guzman and Harte-Hanks.

When that position was eliminated by Harte-Hanks in 2009, Rob decided it was time to devote his entire focus to training and strike out on his own by forming Zarrilli Training and Consulting. As a premier motivator, trainer, keynote speaker and executive consultant, Zarrilli has established himself as one of the most sought after sales and leadership trainers in the country. Rob's ability to transform

adversity into opportunity in his own life adds impact to his ability to coach others through that process.

A few years prior, Craig McMullen, then AFCP's executive director, and Carlos Guzman, president of TheFlyer.com in Miami, approached Rob to be the architect of a multi-purpose, multiplatform, university-style training program as part of the AFCP education initiative. The concept was to develop The Leadership Institute (TLI) to provide industry specific sales and management training for the community publishing industry.

Rob set out to develop a unique and different training program that would inform, inspire, entertain and challenge the membership. Rob knew this undertaking would require the support of a large group of qualified sales trainers to ever become a reality.

"I knew the only way to launch a one of a kind program like this was to surround myself with people much smarter than I am, individuals who understood the importance of this initiative and were ready, willing and able to make a difference. With that in mind, I called Jim Busch, Elaine Buckley, Charlie Delatorre, Jon Cantrell, Bill Osborne and others to support this effort."

The Leadership Institute has established itself as a focal point of AFCP's member benefits with hundreds of classes presented at National, State and Regional conferences over the years to thousands of industry professionals. Today TLI has a curriculum of more than 60 classes covering all aspects of the sales and sales management spectrum.



Rob and his wife, Marlen, on their anniversary.

That being said, for Rob, Elaine, Jim and the entire TLI faculty, the road to the present has been paved with challenges. The classroom has been in many cases replaced with computers and mobile devices; even the most popular universities must offer their curriculum online, which now includes live streaming, online classes, webinars, blogs and podcasts to train and develop; an expensive undertaking for an organization like AFCP that is thin on resources.

Committed to the initiative, AFCP made the investment and expanded TLI's parameters to include a digital component to their already extensive offering. Rob oversaw the development of TLI's digital offerings which now includes seven online classes and a video library of over 30 five-minute podcasts, making it easy for publications all over the country to utilize this industry-specific training in a virtual world.

Looking back over the many turns in Rob's career, Rob has no regrets and is appreciative of all the opportunities and successes that he has experienced along the way.

"We have all had to reinvent ourselves to some degree using the lessons we've learned from the relationships we've developed to guide us. Life is all about change, as I said in a recent podcast. While we fear the unknown, we must embrace change moving us out of our comfort zone and enabling us to learn and grow. Change in life is inevitable."

As the Dean of TLI, Rob Zarrilli continues to spearhead AFCP's efforts in developing and maintaining curriculum for the classroom and online offerings while also preparing for national events. He leads a faculty of experi-



Rob Zarrilli doing what he does best: speaking and teaching.



enced, knowledgeable training professionals every year at our national conference, which represents the cornerstone of AFCP's annual educational offerings. He is quick to tell everyone that much of the heavy lifting is done by the amazing volunteer faculty who still meet regularly to sharpen their skills in an effort to provide the best training forum any industry has to offer – digital or otherwise.

In 2009, Rob was recognized for his contributions to both the Association of Free Community Papers and the entire free community publication industry over the years by being awarded the AFCP Distinguished Service Award. This award celebrates not only

his time commitment and unwavering dedication to the industry he LOVES, but the thousands of industry professionals whose professional growth and performance has been directly impacted by Rob.

It would be remiss to not recognize that Rob has two passions in his life – his family and his work, in that order. Rob describes it as being blessed with a blended "Modern Family" of five children, two grandchildren (with a third on the way) along with his beautiful, successful wife Marlen. He is quick to share that his family remains his primary source of inspiration and purpose in his life.

We are all fortunate that Rob Zarrilli's long and winding road passed through the heart of the free community paper industry! **INK**

Changes are taking place All Over

WILL THOMAS HAS ASSUMED the role of president of the Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA).

Thomas is the chief executive officer (CEO) of Exchange Media Group in Fayetteville, Tenn. The company creates print and digital platforms to connect people.

Prior to serving as CEO, he held various positions for Exchange931.com and managed sales for Pulaski Web, a commercial web printer.

Thomas has a Business Economics

undergraduate degree from Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C. While in college he met his wife, Pierrine, and they have two children.

Active in the community, he is a board member of the Bank of Lincoln County and the Fayetteville Lincoln County Industrial Development Board and has served as its chairman.

Thomas belongs to Vistage, an international CEO best practice group, and is a member of the First United Methodist Church in Fayetteville. **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 Papers.



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

"Your prospect is not going to buy cold hard facts. He is going to buy warm people benefits."

– Zig Ziglar

A FEW YEARS AGO, ONE OF THE SALES MANAGERS I worked with asked me to spend time with one of her reps. The rep in question was having trouble selling special sections. I scheduled some field time with him to present our upcoming spring home and garden tab.

I met the rep and he was well prepared for the day. He had a stack of flyers detailing the coverage of the tab, the prices and the deadlines. To each of these he had stapled one of his business cards along with a note stating, "Please take a moment to look this over and give me a call. Thanks. Bob."

I jumped in the car with him and we spent the morning walking into local businesses asking for the owner. In most cases, the owner wasn't available (or had suddenly decided to join the witness protection program!), so Bob would leave one of his brochures.

On those rare occasions when someone admitted to being the decision maker, Bob would hand the information sheet to them saying, "We have our spring tab coming up. It's a great deal. You can buy an eighth page for as little as 40 bucks. Would you like to be in the tab?" Most of the prospects said, "I'll think it over and get back to you." Bob marked these down in his "win column" as future sales.

After a morning of observing Bob, I took him to lunch to discuss the morning's activities. I asked Bob if this was his typical approach to selling special products and he acknowledged that it was. I went on to ask him why his customers should buy the tab and Bob responded, "Because it's a great deal." This prompted a lengthy discussion on the benefits of the product and how to present them.

I took the lead in the afternoon and we were significantly more successful. Bob was actually not a bad rep. He wasn't afraid to make calls, but when the pressure was on, he forgot the basic rule of sales: "Customers don't buy products, they buy benefits!"

Whenever a sales person is struggling to hit their goals, I've found that they are either not making the calls or they talk about their products rather than their customer's needs. In Zig's words, it's time to spice up those "cold hard facts" a bit with some "warm people benefits!" 



The Leadership Institute **Class Schedule**

Room	Breakout 1	Breakout 2	Breakout 3	Breakout 4	Breakout 5	Breakout 6
Day:	Thursday 4/28/16	Thursday 4/28/16	Friday 4/29/16	Friday 4/29/16	Saturday 4/30/16	Saturday 4/30/16
Time:	2:25 - 3:40 PM	4:10 - 5:25 PM	1:00 - 2:15 PM	2:25 - 3:40 PM	8:00 - 9:15 AM	9:25 - 10:40 AM
Nautilus 5 (seats 60)	New Class! TLI 311 Increasing Sales Through Co-op Advertising <i>Patricia Betts</i>	New Class! TLI 312 Better Understanding of Ad Design and Designers <i>Hank McAfee</i>	New Class! TLI 313 Pitch Anything With Emotional Intelligence! <i>Joe Mathes</i>	New Class! TLI 311 Increasing Sales Through Co-op Advertising <i>Patricia Betts</i>	New Class! TLI 312 Better Understanding of Ad Design and Designers <i>Hank McAfee</i>	New Class! TLI 313 Pitch Anything With Emotional Intelligence! <i>Joe Mathes</i>
	New Class! TLI 240 Presenting & Recommending to National & Small Advertisers <i>Elaine Buckley</i>	New Class! TLI 238 10 Ways to Retain Great Employees <i>Rob Zarrilli</i>	New Class! TLI 237 Going Native! <i>Jim Busch</i>	New Class! TLI 238 10 Ways to Retain Great Employees <i>Rob Zarrilli</i>	New Class! TLI 237 Going Native! <i>Jim Busch</i>	New Class! TLI 239 The Power of Positive Thinking <i>Rob Zarrilli</i>
Nautilus 3 (seats 60)	TLI 190 Advertising Sales Professional - Open Forum - <i>Charlie & Tom & Rob</i>	TLI 290 Sales Management - Open Forum - <i>Charlie & Elaine</i>	TLI 143 Positioning Your Product Against the Competition <i>Elaine Buckley</i>	TLI 128 Once is Not Enough - Selling Customers on the Value of FREQUENCY <i>Jim Busch</i>	TLI 231 Leading Across the Generations <i>Bill Osborne</i>	TLI 140 Principles of Ad Design for Non-designers <i>Jim Busch</i>
	TLI 129 How to "Wow" with Exceptional Customer Service <i>Jim Busch</i>	TLI 116 Selling Network Advertising <i>Tom Cuskey</i>	TLI 233 Why We Follow Great Leaders <i>Rob Zarrilli</i>	TLI 141 Turning Adversity Into Opportunity <i>Tom Cuskey</i>	TLI 123 Building Unstoppable Self-Confidence <i>Tom Cuskey</i>	TLI 213 Power of Praise <i>Tom Cuskey</i>
Nautilus 2 (seats 60)	TLI 102 Prospecting: The Key To Selling Success <i>Jon Cantrell</i>	TLI 214 Coaching and Mentoring <i>Bill Osborne</i>	TLI 135 Negotiating a Win/Win Solution <i>Bill Osborne</i>	TLI 217 Holding an Effective Meeting <i>Charlie Delatorre</i>	TLI 222 Overcoming Objections - Part II <i>Elaine Buckley</i>	New Class! TLI 240 Presenting & Recommending to National & Small Advertisers <i>Elaine Buckley</i>
	TLI 102 Prospecting: The Key To Selling Success <i>Jon Cantrell</i>	TLI 214 Coaching and Mentoring <i>Bill Osborne</i>	TLI 135 Negotiating a Win/Win Solution <i>Bill Osborne</i>	TLI 217 Holding an Effective Meeting <i>Charlie Delatorre</i>	TLI 222 Overcoming Objections - Part II <i>Elaine Buckley</i>	New Class! TLI 240 Presenting & Recommending to National & Small Advertisers <i>Elaine Buckley</i>

The Leadership Institute Courses

100 LEVEL COURSES

TLI102 – Prospecting: The Key To Selling Success

Every great book begins with an exciting first page that grabs your imagination, pulls you into the story and leaves you wanting more. This course will teach you how to grab a prospect's attention and turn your cold calls into warm appointments.

TLI116 – Selling Network Advertising

The world is your territory when you know how to effectively sell network classifieds. Learn how to identify network prospects and sell state, regional and national advertising programs to increase your profits and expand your advertisers' product offerings to customers.

TLI123 – Building Unstoppable Self-Confidence

This powerful workshop offers a snapshot of how important self-confidence is in every aspect of your business, personally and professionally. Give your business the credibility you seek to set yourself apart from your competition in the marketplace.

TLI128 – Once is not Enough – Selling Customers on the Value of Frequency

Experts agree that frequency is the key to any successful advertising program. This course will discuss how to overcome customer reluctance to making long-term commitments and convince them to run regularly using current research into effective advertising. This class will show you how to make you and your advertisers successful with consistent advertising.

TLI129 – How to “Wow” with Exceptional Customer Service

Now more than ever, you need to show your customers how important they are. Attend this session

to get fresh ideas for astounding your customers with exceptional service.

TLI135 – Negotiating a Win/Win Solution

This class demonstrates specific techniques for resolving disputes with customers without damaging your relationship with them. Negotiate with customers without “giving away the store” and turn customer service problems into opportunities. Find Win/Win solutions that will increase your sales and build long-term relationships with your advertisers.

TLI140 – Looking Good! Principles of Ad Design for Non-Designers

Learn how to use simple design rules to create powerful ads that will jump off the page and generate a better response for your advertisers. This class will also cover how to sell customers on the advantages of well-designed ads and how to use your design skills to take business away from your competition.

TLI141 – Turning Adversity into Opportunity

Ernest Hemingway once said: “The world breaks everyone, and afterward, many are strong at the broken places.” This life-changing class will show you how to respond (rather than simply react) to adversity and stress in ways that will make you a better, more resilient person.

TLI143 – Positioning Your Product Against the Competition!

This session will demonstrate how to create a competitive matrix that will help prospects to see the value of your free paper versus other media. This is a powerful addition to your selling skills.

TLI190 – Advertising Sales Professionals Open Forum

Do you have questions about selling advertising? Here is your chance to join in this Q & A session with members of the TLI faculty. This roundtable discussion is your chance to “pick the brains” of experienced sales trainers and get the answers you need to become a more effective sales person.

Continued on page 22



2000 LEVEL COURSES

Continued from page 21

TLI213 – Power of Praise

Learn to develop your staff by “praising them to success.” This session will cover how to use praise to motivate your people to adopt behaviors that will increase their effectiveness.

TLI214 – Coaching and Mentoring

Learn how to impart your knowledge of business and life to the people who work for you and use these skills to ensure the success of your enterprise – today, tomorrow, and far into the future.

TLI217 – Holding an Effective Meeting

Learn to run meetings that are interesting, informative and inspirational. Gain a wealth of practical advice on planning, running and getting the most from your staff meetings.

TLI222 – Overcoming Objections, Part II

This important topic has too much to present to fit into one session! Attend this session to discuss some of the more difficult objections and sure-fire ways to address them.

TLI231 – Leading Across the Generations

Managing the younger generation? Or, someone much older than you? Generational gaps can often present unique management issues. Attend this session to discuss how you can effectively communicate and manage people in other generations.

TLI233 – Why We Follow Great Leaders

No matter what role you play in life – Mom, Dad, sister, brother, sales associate, executive or entrepreneur – your actions make a dramatic impact on everyone you touch. This interactive lesson on Leadership from the eyes of those who follow you will make you better both personally and professionally. Learn how to inspire others by understanding what types of behavior motivates them to follow, ultimately reaching the outcome everyone desires.

TLI237 – Going Native!

New Class!

In today’s busy world “content is king!” This course will show you how to sell and produce sponsored content and advertorial features into your publication even if you do not have an editorial staff. This “native content” will drive readership of your publication while adding revenue to your bottom line.

TLI238 – 10 Ways to Retain Great Employees

New Class!

Retention and turnover are the two biggest challenges organizations face TODAY. Turnover is a debilitating disease and retention of top employees is at the core of your organization’s success. Learn easy-to-practice guidelines, new approaches and proven methods for avoiding turnover and retaining top talent in these competitive, challenging times.

TLI239 – The Power of Positive Thinking

New Class!

One of the most important steps you can take toward achieving your greatest potential in life is to learn to understand and monitor your attitude and its impact on your work performance, relationships and everyone around you. Learn hands-on methods to improve your attitude to impact your life and everyone around you in a positive way.

TLI240 – Presenting & Recommending to National & Small Advertisers

New Class!

Whether you’re in a boardroom presenting to a National Account or you are in front of a “Mom and Pop” advertiser, presenting the right product and recommending the right program is critical! If you want to retain accounts, ensure maximum response, and provide the most cost-effective advertising vehicle, this class is for you! Class includes tried and true methods to keep your account active long after the sale!

TLI290 – Advertising Sales Management Forum

Do you have questions about managing an advertising sales team? Here is your chance to join in this Q & A session with members of the TLI faculty. This roundtable discussion is your chance to “pick the brains” of experienced sales trainers and get the answers you need to become a more effective advertising sales manager.



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TLI311 – Increasing Sales through Co-op Advertising

New Class!

Did you know there is an estimated \$50 billion dollars of advertising subsidy available to your clients that is left unspent every year? Learn how to sell and secure co-op advertising and increase your sales while building lasting relationships with your clients.

Instructor: Patricia Betts, General Manager, IWANNA USA, Inc.

TLI312 – Better Understanding Ad Design and Designers

New Class!

Learn the keys to stronger ad design – and just as important, the keys to communicating with your ad designers. The combination offers ads and ad orders that work!

Instructor: Hank McAfee, Associate Publisher/Creative Director, Tower Publications

TLI313 – Pitch Anything with Emotional Intelligence!

New Class!

When was the last time you sold something...really sold something? Today's distracted buyer needs to be emotionally engaged more than ever before with a sales pitch that cuts through the clutter. This session features concepts from two of the most relevant sales books in recent history: Pitch Anything by Oren Klaff and Emotional Intelligence for Sales Success by Colleen Stanley. Learn how to apply these concepts to sales in general and advertising specifically.

Instructor: Joe Mathis, Vice President, Delta Publications

Check out the above listing of The Leadership Institute offerings and you will understand why you need to get your top performers into these classes. It can only improve their effectiveness and increase your sales! **INK**

Closer to Home

Health of newspaper largely depends on ownership model

by Kevin Slimp



Kevin Slimp

IT SOUNDS LIKE THE BEGINNING of a bad joke: “What do you get when you gather 760 newspaper executives and ask them how things are going at their papers?”

That’s just what I did in late January, and a few of their answers came as a surprise to me.

Continuing a practice begun in late 2014, I contacted newspaper publishers, CEOs, owners and

other top management throughout the U.S. and Canada to get information about the state of their newspapers. After a week, I’ve received just shy of 800 responses. I suspect that number will increase even more by the time I finish summarizing all the information.

It’s an arduous task, compiling and going through this much data. In the time it took to write those first two paragraphs, three more publishers responded. By the time I finish writing this column, a few more will arrive.

Truth is, after about 300 responses, it is clear what the results are going to be. Answers don’t change much after that. So with nearly 800 responses, it’s safe to say we have a good idea what is happening in the industry on this day in February 2016.

Interestingly, this particular survey had the best response of any I’ve conducted. Papers of all sizes and types are represented in statistically reliable numbers. There are plenty of metro dailies, as well as tiny weeklies, and everything in between. Even a few monthly and online-only publications took part.

The most responses came from the Midwest and Southeast United States, in nearly identical numbers, which is usually the case. Very few responses came from Eastern Canada, which is also normal. It’s also interesting that newspapers in the Midwest and Southeast U.S.

appear to be the healthiest, which may (or may not) be an indication of why there are more papers in those areas.

One of the most interesting aspects of conducting these surveys is the ability to break the numbers up in a variety of ways. For instance, I can tell you how advertising sales at metro papers on the West Coast compare to those at independently owned weekly papers in Texas.

It’s fascinating to speak at a newspaper association convention and share how their papers compare to newspapers in other areas. It’s even more interesting to see how different types of papers in the same area are doing, based on their size, ownership and other variables.

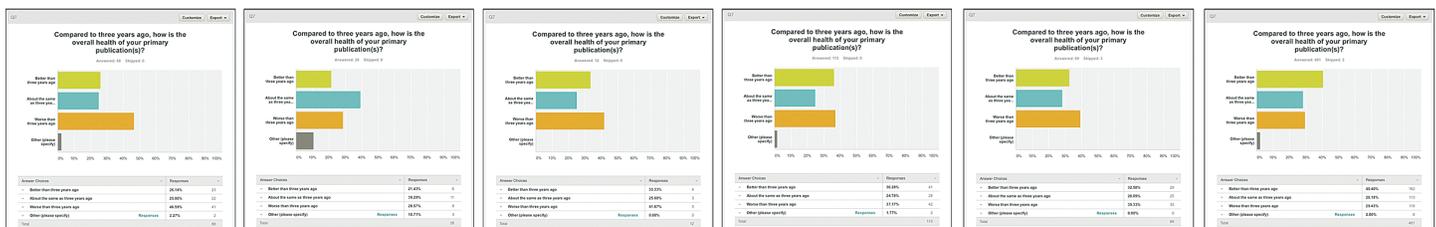
I knew that newspapers were doing well overall. I just didn’t know how well. As with other places I’ve visited recently, publishers I spoke with at a Michigan convention this past weekend shared that they were having very good years and their numbers are steady or growing. I visited with owners of free papers, paid circulation papers, community papers, collegiate newspapers, daily papers and weeklies. I spoke with several publishers who had started new papers that are doing quite well. It was inspiring to hear their stories.

I had planned to deliver an overview of this survey, so you could see for yourself how papers are doing in North America. However, I was struck by the results of one question and would like to spend the rest of this column sharing those responses with you.

The question: “Compared to three years ago, how would you describe the overall health of your primary publication(s)?”

My interest was peaked when I took screenshots of responses to that lone question, based on the types of newspapers.

By sheer coincidence, I laid out the various responses by group on my screen. The groups included:

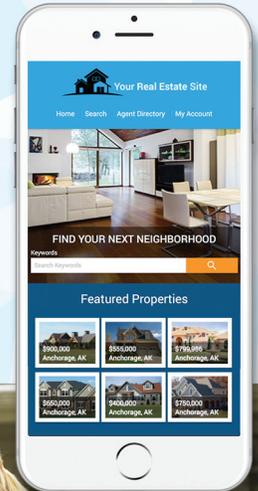


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- Independent newspapers, locally owned and operated;
- Part of a small group (5 or fewer papers);
- Part of a mid-size group (6 to 20 papers), but act much like an independent paper with most of the work done locally;
- Part of a mid-size group, with much of their work directed or done at a central location;
- Part of a large regional group (20 or more papers in one geographical region);
- Part of a large national group, covering more than one geographical area of the country.

While 26 percent of newspapers affiliated with large national groups and 21 percent of those in large regional groups indicated better health than three years ago, that number, represented by a green bar on my screen, increased as the newspapers indicated more local control:

- 26 percent : Large National Group
- 21 percent: Large Regional Group
- 33 percent: Mid-size Group with Central Control
- 36 percent: Mid-size Group with Local Control
- 32 percent: Small Group
- 40 percent: Independent, Not Part of a Group

With almost 800 responses so far, it seems that newspapers locally owned and operated are almost twice as likely to have experienced improved health over the past three years, compared to large regional groups. It seems, as the control of the newspaper gets closer to home, so do improvements in its health.

These findings are still preliminary and it's almost guaranteed that there will be plenty of surprises awaiting me as I dig through the numbers over the next few weeks.

One thing is clear: Newspapers are doing better than they were a few years ago, and most are reporting they feel good about the future. We seem to have turned a corner and attitudes and numbers indicate a solid future ahead.

So much to report. So little space. **INK**

Kevin Slimp is director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology, a training program for newspaper designers, publishers and technical staff. For more information concerning the Institute, please visit www.newspaperinstitute.com. To read past columns, visit www.kevinslimp.com.



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Associations IN the NEWS

THE COMMUNITY

Papers of New England (CPNE) has scheduled a Wednesday sales roundtable moderated by Doug Fabian on March 15 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Action Unlimited in Concord, Mass.

The cost for lunch is \$15 and space is limited to 20 publishers or sales managers. For information or reservations, email dphillips@vt-world.com.

DENNIS WADE IS ONE of the keynote speakers at the Free Community Papers of New York (FCPNY) Sales Summit and Graphic Awards Pro-

gram scheduled April 1 at the RIT Inn & Conference Center in Rochester, N.Y.

Wade will be joined by Kevin Slimp to work with graphic artists.

ELAINE BUCKLEY WILL be the keynote speaker on sales and Kevin Slimp on graphics at the Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP) spring conference scheduled March 11-12 at Prairie

Meadows in Altoona, Iowa.

The Ad Contest winners will be announced along with the awards presentations at the Friday evening banquet.

THE ASSOCIATION OF Free Community Papers (AFCP) is seeking nominations for the 2016 AFCP Publisher of the Year and the Craig S. McMullin Distinguished Service Award.

The Publisher of the Year Award seeks to recognize an

individual who has invested his or her time and talents toward the good of the entire association throughout 2015.

The Craig S. McMullin Distinguished Service award recognizes the contributions of an individual who has dedicated significant efforts and

commitment over a number of years to advance the free paper industry.

Nomination forms for both awards are available at www.afcp.org. The deadline for submission of nominations is March 14, 2016.

THE INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFIED MEDIA

Association (ICMA) has changed its name to the International Classified Marketplace Association.

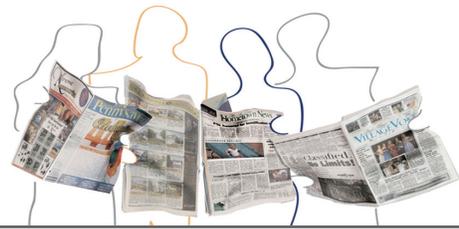
ICMA will celebrate its 30th anniversary and new name at its ICMA Spring Conference scheduled May 4-6 in its hometown of Amsterdam.

The association is the global community of leading players in the Digital Classified Marketplace Industry. ICMA has members from 32 countries.

NICHE MEDIA IS CELEBRATING ITS 10th anniversary at its Niche Media Conference scheduled April 4-6 in Austin, Texas.

The conference will include a publishers track session; a Camp Niche Ad Sales Training Track including print, online and integrated sales; peer-to-peer roundtables; a bonus day on new tools and technology that can create new revenue streams; and a niche orientation party 10th anniversary bash.

To submit your "associations in the news" story, please contact Dave Neuharth by fax (1.352.347.3384) or email: DJNeuharth@aol.com.



mar.

ATLANTA, GA : MARCH 5, 2016
Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA). Leadership Retreat at the LeMendiant Hotel, Atlanta, Ga. For information contact Douglas Fry at info@sapatoday.com.

ALTOONA, IA : MARCH 11-12, 2016
Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). Spring Conference at Prairie Meadows in Altoona, Iowa. For information contact Kevin Haezebrock at 319-341-4352.

apr.

AUSTIN, TX : APRIL 4-6, 2016
North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA). Niche Media Conference in Austin, Texas. For information contact Gary Calligas at gary@maturepublishers.com.

GREEN BAY, WI : APRIL 15-16, 2016
Wisconsin Community Papers (WCP). Annual Conference at the Tundra Lodge, Resort and Waterpark, Green Bay, Wis. For information contact Janelle Anderson at janderson@wisad.com.

To list your conference information in Free Paper INK, send it to:
DJNeuharth@aol.com

**SEVEN SPRINGS, PA :
APRIL 22-23, 2016**

Mid-Atlantic Community Papers Association (MACPA). Annual Conference, the Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Seven Springs, Pa. For information contact Alyse Mitten, info@macpa.net.

SAN DIEGO, CA : APRIL 28-30, 2016

Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP). Annual Conference & Trade Show, Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina on the shoreline of San Diego Bay, San Diego, Calif. For information contact Loren Colburn, loren@afcp.org.

may

**AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS :
MAY 4-6, 2016**

International Classified Media Association (ICMA). Annual Conference ICMA's head office in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The site of the conference will soon be announced. For information visit www.icmaonline.org.

july

MANKATO, MN : JULY 13-14

Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). Publisher's Summit, Mankato, MN. For information contact Kevin Haezebrock at Kevin@mfcop.org.

sept.

**DENVER, CO :
SEPTEMBER 25-28, 2016**

North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA). National Convention, the Magnolia Hotel, Denver, Colo. For information contact Gary Calligas at gary@maturepublishers.com.

**ORLANDO, FL :
SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 2, 2016**

Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA), Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA) and Community Papers of Florida (CPF). Joint Conference, the Caribe Royale All-Suite Resort, Orlando, Fla. For information contact Douglas Fry, info@sapatoday.com, or Dave Neuharth, djneuharth@aol.com.

2017

LOUISVILLE, KY : APRIL 20-22, 2017

Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP). Annual Conference & Trade Show, Gait House, downtown Louisville, Ky. For information contact Loren Colburn, loren@afcp.org.

To list your conference information on the AFCP website, send it to:
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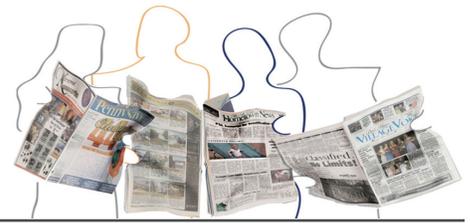
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Deborah Phillips

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ana Weekly Newspapers (two). Seattle, WA Niche Glossy Magazine. Pennsylvania Regional Magazines (three). Cleveland, Ohio Niche Newspaper. Kentucky (area) Newspaper Group. Las Vegas, Nevada Glossy Tourist Magazine. NYC (area) Newspaper Group. Famous Coupon Queen Booklet. South Dakota Weekly Newspaper. (Europe / Overseas Listings). Copenhagen, Denmark - Daily Newspaper. Jerusalem, Israel - Auto Parts (Manufacturing) Magazine. Florence, Italy - Cultural & Regional Magazines (four). Iceland - Weekly Glossy Tourist Magazine. Lucerne,

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	100	\$39,900	\$5,000/mo.	\$60,000
	200	\$79,800	\$10,000/mo.	\$120,000
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	1000	\$399,000	\$50,000/mo.	\$600,000



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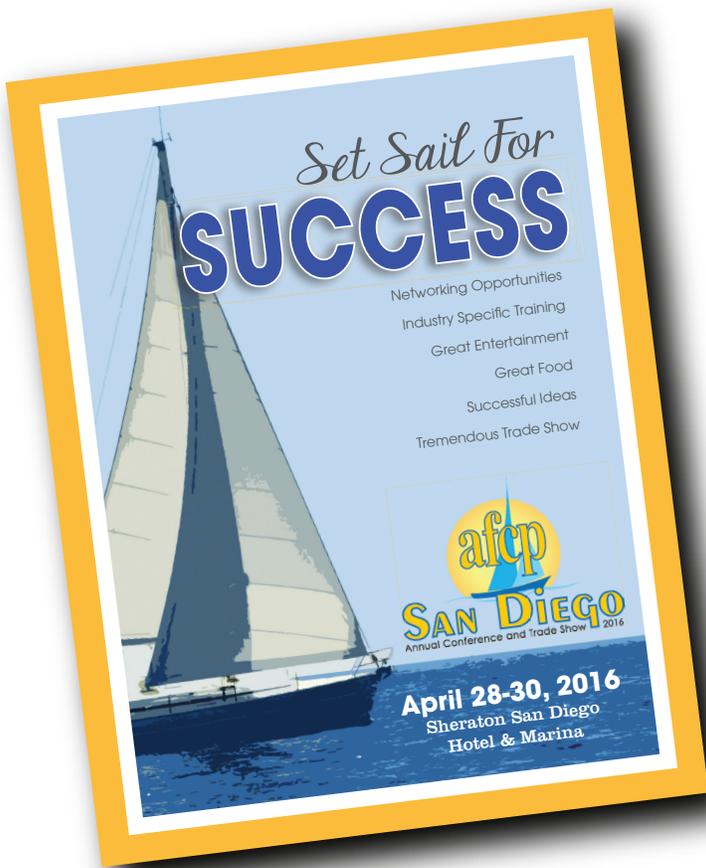
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