

# Publish

MAY 2021



## Finding Good Salespeople

THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY PUBLISHERS

acp



Publish  
Life's Stories

M

O

D

U

L

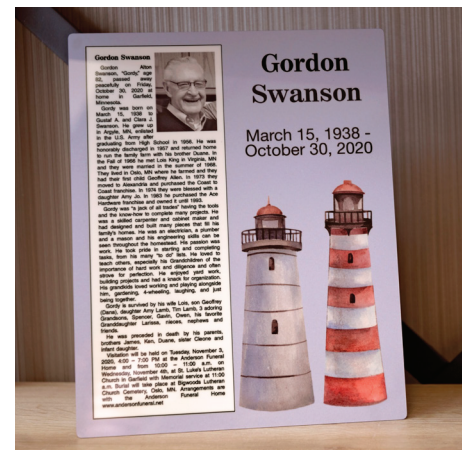
I

S

T



Set up a  
demo to  
learn how  
newspapers  
can integrate  
this effective  
service for  
free.



devlyn@modulist.news  
701-241-5545  
Modulist.News



# Publish

**PUBLISHED BY**  
Association of Community  
Publishers, Inc.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Loren Colburn  
Douglas Fry  
Cassey Recore

5701 E. Circle Dr. - #347  
Cicero, NY 13039-8638  
Office: 877-203-2327

Email: [Loren@communitypublishers.com](mailto:Loren@communitypublishers.com)  
[Douglas@communitypublishers.com](mailto:Douglas@communitypublishers.com)  
[Cassey@communitypublishers.com](mailto:Cassey@communitypublishers.com)

## MARKETING REPRESENTATIVES

Wendy MacDonald  
Lotta Kagell

3105 Camino Del Arco  
Carlsbad, CA 92009  
Office: 913-461-3721  
Email: [Wendy@plan4growth.com](mailto:Wendy@plan4growth.com)  
Email: [Lotta@plan4growth.com](mailto:Lotta@plan4growth.com)

## DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Design2Pro  
[www.design2pro.com](http://www.design2pro.com)

Howard Barbanel  
516-860-7440  
Email: [howard@design2pro.com](mailto:howard@design2pro.com)

*Publish* is a monthly publication dedicated to covering the people, events and companies that are the community publishing industry.

Nothing may be reprinted in whole or in part without permission of the publisher.

*Publish* is mailed free of charge to community publications all across North America. Other businesses may subscribe for \$20 annually.

*Publish* is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. All letters and photos received become the property of the publisher.

**Cover Photo:**  
[vectorkuro/shutterstock](https://www.shutterstock.com/user/vectorkuro)



## CONTENT/INDEX

### IN THIS MAY ISSUE...

- 7 FROM THE TOP by John Draper  
**DON'T GIVE UP**
- 8 THE ONE THING by Douglas Fry  
**WHAT YOU SAY MATTERS**
- 9 PERSPECTIVE by Loren Colburn  
**DESCRIBE YOUR BEST BOSS**
- 11 INDUSTRY FEATURE by Chris Orlob  
**35 SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
- 15 INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS LISTING
- 16 THE SURVEY SAYS...
- 19 INDUSTRY UPDATE  
**FINDING THE RIGHT SALESPeOPLE**
- 21 MEMBER PROFILE by Barbara Holmes  
**SUN COMMUNITY NEWS AND PRINTING**
- 22 ASSOCIATE MEMBER UPDATE  
**CREATIVE CIRCLE**
- 23 RISING STAR by Carl Appen  
**A RECRUIT'S VIEW**
- 24 THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE by Jim Busch  
**MAKING SURE THE PIECES FIT**
- 25 AD-LIBS by John Foust  
**SETTING REALISTIC GOALS**
- 26 SALES TIPS by Bob Berting  
**THE MOST IMPORTANT WORD..."RETENTION"**
- 27 GRAPHIC HOOKS by Ellen Hanrahan  
**AT TIMES I'M STUMPED**
- 29 BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY

---

### COMING NEXT MONTH

*Publish* will take a closer look into what the Association of Community Publishers has planned for members in addition to covering the people, information and issues that are influencing the community publishing industry.

# 5 REASONS EVERY PUBLISHER SHOULD BE SELLING WEBSITES WITH SITESWAN

## 1. Every Business Needs a Website

There are over 28 million small businesses in the U.S. and over 500,000 new businesses are started every month. What's the one thing they all have in common? They all NEED a website, but only about half of them have one. That leaves thousands of advertisers in your market in need of a local web designer...will it be YOU?

## 2. Generate Worry-Free Recurring Income

Building and selling websites provides a reliable and sustainable source of recurring revenue. Most small businesses have a "set it and forget it" mentality when it comes to their website, providing years of locked-in, worry-free income. While businesses will often pause or completely stop advertising in print during slow months, it's nearly unheard of for businesses to do that with their website. You can count on your clients to pay you month after month, year after year for their website.

## 3. You Already Have the Staff in Place

Even the smallest publications can start offering website design without having to hire additional staff...if you're using the right tools. With SiteSwan, you can launch your web design business overnight - no developers, no programmers, no tech gurus needed. Your existing designers will feel right at home with our platform. Your salespeople will feel confident pitching "spec sites" (like spec ads) with our included training. Whether you're a one-person shop or a media powerhouse, SiteSwan is the perfect fit.

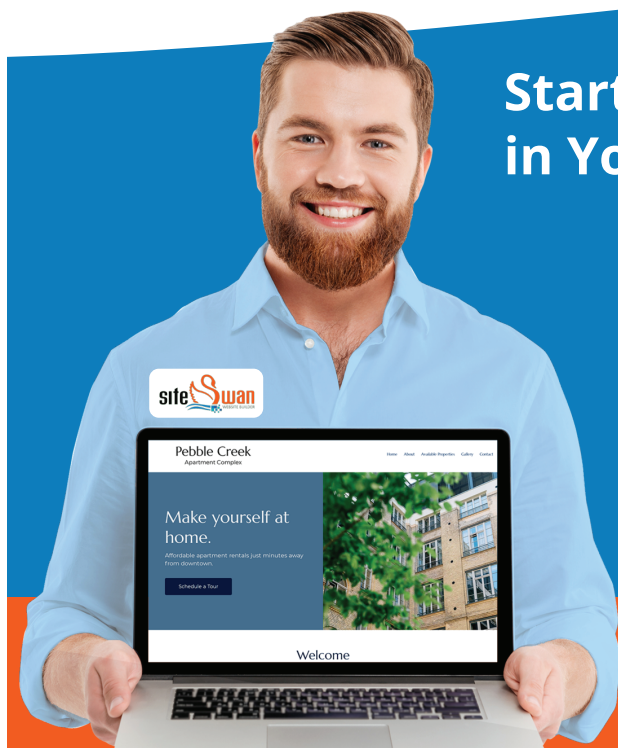
## 4. Websites Are a Gateway to Other Services

Websites are often referred to as the "hub" of the small business marketing wheel. The website is at the core of your client's local marketing efforts and all other services are spokes stemming from that hub. Control the hub and you can control the entire wheel. This gives web designers a huge amount of control and influence over how small businesses will spend their marketing budgets.

## 5. Print Ad Revenue Continues to Decline

Let's face the facts - print advertising is declining while online advertising is on the rise. Why not leverage your client relationships, market share and your brand recognition to expand your services into web design? With SiteSwan you can start generating additional revenue for years to come.

“When you manage a business's website, it's much easier to pitch them on other marketing services like **PRINT ADVERTISING**. One of the most common questions a small business will ask their web designer after launching a new website is "How can I get more traffic to my site?" Wouldn't it be nice if you could recommend your print publication to advertise their business (and new website)?”



## Start Building and Selling Websites in Your Market with SiteSwan

The SiteSwan platform has everything you need to start, run and grow your own web design business.

- Easy-to-use software
- Over 100 professionally designed templates
- 100% white label solution
- Training, how-to videos and support
- Sales and marketing material included
- Set your own prices - KEEP 100% OF THE SALES

Learn More at [www.SiteSwan.com](http://www.SiteSwan.com)  
(800) 462-9814

# 2021 ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY PUBLISHERS BOARD



**PRESIDENT**  
**John Draper**  
*The Free Star*  
P. O. Box 277  
Pipestone, MN 56164  
jdraper@pipestonestar.com  
507-825-3333



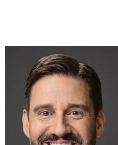
**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Rick Wamre**  
*Advocate Community Newspapers*  
6301 Gaston Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75214  
rwamre@advocatemag.com  
214-560-4212



**Barb Perry**  
*Reminder Publishing, LLC*  
280 North Main Street  
East Longmeadow, MA 01028  
bperry@reminderpublications.com  
413-525-6661



**FIRST VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Manuel Karam**  
*Genesee Valley Publications*  
1471 Route 15  
Avon, NY 14414  
ManuelKaram@gvpennysaver.com  
585-226-8111



**AT-LARGE DIRECTORS**  
**Charlie Delatorre**  
*Tower Publications*  
4400 NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Gainesville, FL 32606  
charlie@towerpublications.com  
352-372-5468



**Jane Quairol**  
*Kapp Advertising*  
P.O. Box 840  
Lebanon, PA 17042  
janeq@themerchandiser.com  
717-273-8127



**SECOND VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Joyce Frericks**  
*Star Publications*  
522 Sinclair Lewis Avenue  
Sauk Centre, MN 56378  
joyce@saukherald.com  
320-352-6577



**Shane Goodman**  
*Cityview*  
8101 Birchwood Court, Suite D  
Johnston, IA 50131  
shane@dmcityview.com  
515-953-4822



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**Douglas Fry**  
*ACP*  
104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401  
Douglas@communitypublishers.com  
877-203-2327



**SECRETARY**  
**Farris Robinson**  
*Hometown News*  
2400 S. Ridgewood Ave. #22  
South Daytona, FL 32119  
frobinson@hometownnewsmedia  
group.com  
386-322-5900



**Lisa Miller**  
*New Century Press*  
P. O. Box 28  
Rock Rapids, Iowa 51246  
lmiller@ncppub.com  
712-472-2525



**Cassey Recore**  
*ACP*  
5701 E. Circle Dr. - #347  
Cicero, NY 13039  
Cassey@communitypublishers.com  
877-203-2327



**TREASURER**  
**Greg Birkett**  
*Dubuque Advertiser*  
2966 JFK Road  
Dubuque, IA 52002  
gbirkett@dubuqueadvertiser.com  
563-588-0162



**Joe Nicastro**  
*New View Media Group*  
5 Vista Drive  
Flanders, NJ 07836  
joe@mjmediallc.com  
973252-9889



**Loren Colburn**  
*ACP*  
5701 E. Circle Dr. - #347  
Cicero, NY 13039  
Loren@communitypublishers.com  
877-203-2327

## We're Not Mind Readers, but...

If you participate in  
CVC online studies  
we can tell you everything  
you want to know  
about your readers.



OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES



Call (314) 966-7711 for more information, or look at  
the sample study at [www.research.net/r/publish](http://www.research.net/r/publish)

Increase your revenue now! Call to schedule a free 30 minute training webinar for your staff.



# Need a Makeover?

To effectively compete in the world of 21st Century print media you've got to look your very best. Do your publications look the same as they did 10, 20 or even 30 years ago? Are you doing layout and production the same way from back in the day? How is that working for you? Circulation declining? Ads down? Just treading water? Wondering what you can do about it?

A bright, bold, attention-grabbing modern redesign is just the prescription for reader lethargy and advertiser apathy. Make yourself stand-out, make yourself a must-read. The best-looking publications are the ones thriving in this challenging environment for print media.

And how about your ads? Better looking ads mean more readership of your ads. More readership translates into more ad response for your advertisers. This leads to happier, more satisfied advertisers. Happier advertisers take more ads with you and spend more money with you.

At Design2Pro you can have your newspapers, magazines, ads and collateral materials produced for a fraction of the cost of in-house by some of the world's most talented graphic designers. And when you work with us, we can redesign your publications for no extra cost whatsoever – no hefty fees to fancy high-priced consultants. Save a bundle and look your best. More than 285 newspapers and magazines trust us every week and it's our 17th year serving the industry. Give us a call and see what we can do for you.

## Design2Pro

*We Make Publishing Prettier and More Profitable.*

Howard Barbanel, VP/Director of Marketing  
516-860-7440 • Howard@Design2Pro.com  
[www.Design2Pro.com](http://www.Design2Pro.com)

## DON'T GIVE UP



BY JOHN DRAPER

If there's one topic that has been bantered about at every free paper event I've attended throughout the years it is "how do we find good sales people?" I suspect none of you will disagree with this observation.

Why is this so? Is it because we're all in the dark as to what a good salesperson is? Is it because our industry simply doesn't attract the best? Could it be that we fail to develop mediocre reps into good reps? Are we too cheap and unwilling to pay for success?

As I look back at my sales hires, I think that perhaps all of these have been a factor. For me, I try to look inward as the root cause for failure. Take an analysis of what went down then try to alter or adjust the tactic for the next round. This inward look has revealed some things to consider.

In our sometime desperate search for new sales blood, we've all made poor decisions. The urgency of the matter drives us to a feeling that anything is better than nothing. We convince ourselves that a warm body can be molded to be like us, to be a top performer. We over estimate our ability to focus on that person's training.

Eventually we fail them and ourselves. I've since come to the determination to not fall into this trap. Our relationships, our time, and our reputation are far too valuable to roll the dice on a questionable hire. Right or wrong, I've decided that not making a decision is better than making a really bad one.

This doesn't mean that I've given up on the goal/need to hire good people. It simply means, the expectations of the job need to drive the process, not my desperation for a warm body.

As we evaluate the qualities that we intend to hire for, I've found it useful to apply those same standards to myself. I know that enthusiasm for the product is essential. How enthusiastic am I during my interviews and when a new rep joins the force? I know that saying what I'm doing to do, then doing it is a key factor in building trust. Am I consistent in showing this attribute to my employees?

Be a living example to others of the qualities we expect from them. Not the golden ticket, but certainly something that we can control, something that I've seen as a failure when I take that inward look.

Unfortunately, honestly, I still don't have the solution to this age-old question, but in the words of the late Jimmy Valvano "Don't give up. Don't ever give up."

We can't give up because our businesses depend on us. We can't give up trying to find new reps and most certainly we can't give up on the development of new and existing reps.

To give us up to admit defeat. This is not the free paper industry I know. Our industry has many talented individuals who have all struggled with finding and retaining quality sales reps. We've managed and thrived for years, and if we continue to look inward and reach outward for help, we will succeed. Don't give up, there is far too much at stake to do so. ■

# WHAT YOU SAY MATTERS



BY DOUGLAS FRY

As a young boy I was extremely shy, bashful, even timid. I went to school at Manette Elementary School from Kindergarten to 6th grade. The school did nothing to get me out of my shell or make it easy to become more extroverted. Mr. Onsted was the principal. He was huge! He was well over 5' 6"! I guess to a small kid all adults are huge.

Mr. Onsted lost his right thumb and forefinger in an accident giving him a mysteriously threatening appearance. This only added to the feeling I had that he was unapproachable. When I saw this giant roaming the halls of Manette Elementary School all I could see was his disfigured hand. I couldn't tear my eyes away. To say I was afraid of him doesn't capture the terror I felt each time I saw him.

My 8 year old brain knew I needed to get outside myself so I hatched a plan to overcome my shyness. Let me set the stage for you. First of all, I loved to play baseball. We had outdoor recess 3 times a day: mid morning, lunch, and mid afternoon. During those times an impromptu game of baseball usually erupted at the far end of the playground. Mr. Onsted pitched to the kids. They were apparently able to see beyond his claw grasping the ball with three fingers and hurling it toward them. All the "cool" kids played baseball with Mr. Onsted. I looked on from the monkey bars as I did my comic routine of falling off hitting each bar on the way down.

I decided that if I could gather the courage and approach Mr. Onsted I would be invited into the inner circle of the baseball pantheon at Manette. The day finally arrived. The weather was perfect, not a cloud in the sky. It was a day ideal for baseball. Putting my plan in action, I fell off the monkey bars, dusted myself off, and cautiously made my way to approach Mr. Onsted. He was talking with some other kids.

With weak-kneed nerves I asked him, "Mr. Onsted may I play baseball with you?" He looked at me for a split second and asked, "Do you see me playing baseball?" I was crushed! "No," I managed to stutter and slunk back to the monkey bars where I

knew I might get hurt, but not like that.

I never played baseball at that school all the years I was there from Kindergarten through 6th grade. Never.

I don't want you to feel sorry for me because within a month of that shattering experience my life turned around. I was a Cub Scout who earned all the badges and arrowheads possible. Our Cub Scout den had a fund raiser selling "Pronto Pups" at the local supermarket one Saturday morning. If you don't know what a Pronto Pup is you are really missing out. OK, not really. A Pronto Pup is just a Corn Dog with good PR. My job at the fund raiser was to take a wiener, stab a stick through the length without exiting the dog, dip it in the liquified corn meal, and then carefully lower it in boiling oil. At the exact second of doneness I extracted the delicacy, wrapped it in a paper towel, and offered it to the patrons.

Someone has to say this, I was a natural. My Pronto Pups were golden brown, done all the way through, and delicious. A college student, on summer break, was helping us out, Jim Dewey was his name. Well, Jim noticed my cooking and presentation skills and simply told me, "Douglas, you make the best Pronto Pups I have ever tasted." I was on cloud 9, maybe 10. With this encouragement I started peddling the deliciousness of the Pronto Pup to anyone who walked by. Soon enough we had sold all the pups and had packed up to go home.

In both these experiences it was only the words of a person that made the difference. One crushed my soul, the other lifted me to new heights. That's the One Thing I'd like you to consider. Do the words we use when speaking with others extinguish or ignite? The One Thing you can do when speaking with others is to simply take a moment to consider if what you say will lift or defeat another. Just take a beat to say the right thing. As you practice this skill you'll find that more people want to be in your company, buy from you, and enjoy being your friend. They might even ask you to attend a baseball game complete with Pronto Pups. One can only hope. ■



BY LOREN COLBURN

# DESCRIBE YOUR BEST BOSS

**T**his issue addresses what is probably the most common concern we hear from publications, “How do I find good salespeople?” If I could offer a one size fits all solution to this problem, I could change the industry forever! Unfortunately, it’s a whole lot more complicated than that.

What I can tell you is that in my years in publishing, I did come to the conclusion that identifying as much of the right information during the interview was one of the most important components (if not the most important) to making effective hiring decisions. That responsibility was on me, not the candidates. It was up to me to determine the truth about their employment history, their professional capabilities and their personality.

I was impressed by the questions offered in the “35 Sales Interview Questions” article you will find in this issue of Publish. It provides some insightful ways to get great information on a salesperson’s natural talents and habits. All of them accentuate the importance of the interviewer’s listening skills to extract the critical information within the responses. The skillset of the interviewer is always a key component in the success or failure of making the right hire. It is much easier to blame the candidate providing misleading information as the reason the hire was unsuccessful rather than to blame ourselves for asking the wrong questions or missing the cues offered during the interview.

There was a set of two questions that was not on the list of 35 that I would like to offer as an addition since they have always proven to be my most informative questions when interviewing for any position. “Describe for me the best boss you ever worked for and why you feel that way?” Followed by “Describe the worst boss you ever worked for?” The responses to these questions will provide some insight into a number of critical pieces of information for making effective hires. I usually saved it for the end of the interview and only asked it for candidates that I still felt were potential hire material.



Listen closely as the response will include many of the keys their manager is going to need to maximize their performance, job satisfaction and quite often their longevity with the company. You should hear important telltales about their coachability, their responsiveness to direction and even their accountability for their personal performance. These two questions can also provide an opportunity where excessive negativity may surface or super critical tendencies. Most importantly for sales positions, it helps determining if they believe they are personally responsible for their success or if the environment and people around them are responsible for what happens to them.

Their answers will also provide a good view into what they require in a manager to be most effective at their position. They are going to describe how they prefer to be treated and what type of management style they will react best to. If the description you hear does not match the person they will be reporting to – the chance of success drops substantially. The candidate who describes a boss who gave them assignments and then the freedom to run with it totally on their own will not fit well with a manager whose style leans toward the micromanager, authoritarian type. The person who describes a manager who gave clear and understandable directives throughout each task will not be effective with a manager who has a hands off, laissez-faire management style. A great candidate in the wrong environment rarely provides more solutions than problems and gambling on people changing is never a good bet. If the position will be working directly for you, take the time to honestly understand your own management style.

All too often, interviews are focused solely on verifying the quality and accuracy of the information on the application form and the technical abilities of a candidate. This is an important aspect of the interview, but it will not address the “fit” components of the candidate to the culture, structure and personalities surrounding the position. Aligning a candidate’s needs and tendencies with the organization’s existing environment will be just as critical for their long term success as their technical abilities. The important distinction being you can teach technical abilities but you can’t teach compatibility.

Until next month, spend the necessary time to prepare for conducting your interviews and don’t forget to tell media buyers, “If it’s FREE, buy it!” ■

# AFCP AND IFPA MERGER IS COMPLETE!

**C**ICERO, NY and COLUMBIA, TN – April 6, 2021 – The Association of Free Community Papers, Inc. (AFCP) and the Independent Free Papers of America, Inc. (IFPA) have finalized the definitive merger agreement to create the Association of Community Publishers, Inc. (ACP). This merger will create the largest free community paper association in North America, representing media companies with a combined circulation of over 7.3 million homes.

Under the terms of the agreement, which was overwhelmingly approved by both boards and both memberships, there will be a new board providing direction for ACP that is comprised of six members from both AFCP's board and IFPA's board. In anticipation of the merger, both associations have worked closely to assure a smooth transition and full member benefits continuation through the unification process.

At the core of this unification is maintaining and enhancing value to the members. For members who belonged solely to IFPA or AFCP, the unified entity will bring together member benefits such as CVC circulation audits, peer groups (with even more peers), in-person and virtual events, learning opportunities, rising stars programs and much more. Benefits from each association will now be benefits for all of the collective members.

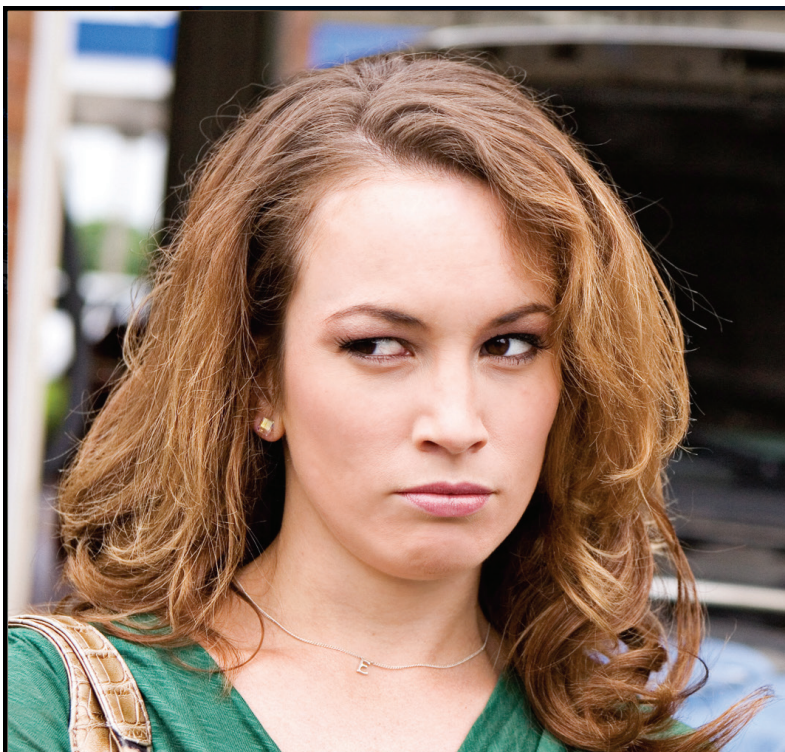
For the publishers who maintained a membership in both associations, their suite of benefits will remain. Through unification, there will be no need to pay dues to two associations, participate in two classified networks, or choose which events to attend.

This unification will not only improve operations, but deliver a more robust advertising network and consolidated associate member program for our industry partners. Over time,

we'll be able to combine cost centers at a net savings and eliminate the duplication of efforts and initiatives. The merger will provide the ability for the association to focus on developing the single, solid industry voice necessary to represent the needs of our diverse membership.

To lead the new organization, the ACP board recently named Douglas Fry as the Executive Director of the association. Fry has served as Executive Director of IFPA since 2014 and SAPA (Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association) since 2002.

Incoming ACP President, John Draper of Pipestone Publishing Co. in Pipestone, MN said, "Looking ahead, we see a future where the "we" becomes all of AFCP and IFPA. Two great national free paper associations working together as a united and stronger association to lead our members' Publications into the future." ■



**Greg Booras, National Sales Manager,  
The Newspaper Manager - Mirabel Technologies**

Office: 706-750-0016 • Cell: 563-508-4081  
gbooras@mirabeltechnologies.com • www.newspapermanager.com

## Paying too much for software?

*That's your sign,  
you need The  
Newspaper Manager!*

**M THE NEWSPAPER  
Manager™**

# 35 SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO HIRE THE BEST SALESPEOPLE

BY CHRIS ORLOB

**L**et's start with the toughest category of all: interview questions that aren't for the faint of heart. They're intense job interview questions that sort the wheat from the chaff. These "magic bullet" questions help you predict a candidate's potential with a *high degree of accuracy*. They're *very* hard to fake and will quickly reveal your candidate's strengths and flaws.

## 1. When I Ask [Your Former Boss] About Your Strengths And Weaknesses, What Am I Going To Hear?

This is the single most powerful sales interview question you can ask, in my opinion. To tee it up well, let the candidate know that your hiring process includes talking to former bosses. That small reminder will make them answer differently ... more honestly. No BS allowed. It will become obvious if they have poor relationships with former bosses (usually a red flag), and many will self-qualify themselves out of the hiring process after the interview. The great ones won't get flustered. Poor performers squirm under this question.

## 2. Thanks For Joining Us Today. Over To You.

If your candidate is up to par, they'll take control and show you that they can run a meeting. If they fall flat, you've got someone who:

- Didn't prepare, and
- Can't control a conversation

The best of the best will relish this question, setting a purpose or agenda for the meeting, asking questions, and scheduling the next step at the end.



## 3. Would You Be Willing To Do A Mock Sales Call With Me Right Now?

Similar to the first interview questions, this will reveal their ability to run a great sales process. (Tip: Watch their body language when they respond to this one.) In a mock sales call, you'll learn something about your candidate's approach and sales process, but the *real point* is to see how they respond under pressure. Making them perform a live cold call takes this one step further.

## 4. How did you prepare for this interview?

It will be immediately obvious if they didn't do much prep for their interview, which is a huge red flag. The perfect candidates will do the proactive research you'd expect and *then some*. They'll show up ready to impress and inspire.

## 5. You're Really Nice, But You're Not An Absolute Top Producer, And I Only Have Room For Top Producers.

This isn't a sales interview question. It's an interview test. I learned this move from the late Chet Holmes (an absolute legend). When you pose this statement toward the end of a sales interview, you'll learn a lot. The best candidates will maintain their composure and even start using objection handling techniques.

"*Why do you say that?*" they will calmly ask.

Then you *know* you've got a superstar. As for people who aren't cut out for the ongoing rejection of a sales career, they'll crumble and politely thank you.

## 6. How Do You Think This Interview Is Going Right Now?

The answer to this sales interview question can range from a one-word "great!" to something longer. There is no right or wrong answer to this question. But their answer almost always does tell you something about them, whatever it is. People with *deep confidence* will have more to say, and this is someone you want to add to your sales team.

## 7. What Do You Know About Me?

The best sales reps will know a lot about you, the hiring manager. They did their research beforehand. People who aren't cut out for running deals to closure will fumble on this. A huge part of sales is research. Failure to research is a glaring red flag. Selling is about knowing your audience, and a solid candidate will have done their homework. They should know more than stats about your company. They should know *who they're dealing with* before they walk into the

# INDUSTRY FEATURE

interview. It will also tell you what kind of information they think is important, and where they gather their information from.

## LEARNING-ORIENTATION SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A great sales hiring strategy is this: hire learning machines. People who have stopped learning aren't cut out for a career in sales, which is an endless learning curve. Here are the sales interview questions that light the way.

### 8. What Was The Last Sales Book, Blog, Or Podcast You Took In?

There's nothing quite as relieving as discovering that you have a self-motivated learner on your sales team. They'll keep everyone (including you) up on the latest 'best thing'. Candidates have a hard time faking answers to this one. You can't speak coherently to a video you haven't watched or a book you haven't read.

### 9. Tell Me Something You've Taught Yourself Recently.

Learners. We can't get enough of them. But which *kind* of learner do you have on your hands? Some do their yearly professional development and are satisfied with that. Others couldn't stop soaking up information if they tried. They're the ones you're looking for. Deep learners. They try to teach themselves more than just sales skills.

### 10. What's The Most Meaningful Failure You've Had And What Did You Learn From It?

You'll get lots of cheesy one-liners in response, but every now and again you'll get a stellar candidate with a solid story. Admitting to failure is a sign of maturity. Learning from failure is icing on the cake. A good rep will know you're not trying to embarrass them, you're looking for signs that they can evolve. If they

“Admitting to failure is a sign of maturity. Learning from failure is icing on the cake. A good rep will know you're not trying to embarrass them, you're looking for signs that they can evolve.

can't *understand* their mistake, *cop* to it, and *learn* from it, **they're not coachable**. And you need coachable sales reps for good sales coaching. In their response, look for a story. You're not evaluating their storytelling technique, but those that tell stories about failure are the ones who have learned the most.

### 11. Talk Me Through 2-3 Deals You Lost In The Last 6 Months.

This is similar to the last one, but it's not about whether they can cop to failure. It's about whether they can look back at a process and assess why it went off the rails. Critical thinking. That's what you're on the lookout for here, and it could potentially be one of their greatest strengths. If they have pointed analyses that rely on clear-headed assessments, keep going. You've got a good one on the line.

### 12. What's The Most Difficult Feedback You've Received And How Did It Change You?

It doesn't matter whether the candidate tells a personal or work-related story here. What's relevant is how the candidate responded to difficult feedback. The answer could go in a thousand directions, and there's no right one. The point is to understand *how* the candidate *responds* to criticism. This is another question that shows you if they are coachable. (It's also interesting to see whose opinion matters to them. We tend to register 'difficult feedback' as feedback from people whose opinions we care about.)

### 13. If You Had A Mentor, What Kind Of Things Would They Help You With?

This interview question is straightforward. It tells you whether a candidate has been proactive and thought through their own areas for improvement.

Having clarity around weak spots is a *good thing*. You *want* people who can articulate where they need help so they can grow. Otherwise, you run the risk of weaknesses hiding and becoming a problem.

### 14. Tell Me What You're Excited To Learn About Next And How It Will Make You More Successful.

Yes, this tells you where your candidate may need help. It *also* tells you whether or not they're actively learning things (rather than the passive "I just like to learn from experience.")

### 15. Why Would You Fail Here?

The best sales reps identify risk. Mostly in terms of deals they're working, but also in career opportunities. They're *a little bit* paranoid. Reps who can't answer this question well are probably prone to "happy ears."

## EXPERIENCE SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The best predictor of future performance is past performance. It's much better than using hypothetical scenarios. Past behavior is based on the *truth* of what's already happened, and by extension, what is likely to continue to happen.

### 16. Walk Me Through One Of Your Most Strategic Sales Cycles, From Contact To Contract.

This is the easiest way to separate the wheat from the chaff. You'll learn *really quickly* whether your candidate understands the components of a successful sales cycle. You'll also learn which sales methodology they

subscribe to if any. A superstar will surprise you with a unique take on the process, or an insightful reason for using a certain tactic.

#### 17. What's Your Process?

This is a lot like the sales cycle question, but goes beyond one deal and dives into the mind of your rep, unpacking how they strategize to hit their number. The best sales reps have a systematic, step-by-step process that they've engineered, and it will be obvious if they don't. You should be able to stop them at any point to dig into a good conversation. Then carry on, knowing whether they're top-notch.

#### 18. Your Whole Team Uses The Same Sales Process, So What Sets You Apart To Consistently Hit The Quota You Said You Hit?

Far too often sales leaders hear "I hit my quota the last three years" and say, "Good enough for me!" Not digging in can lead to a series of terrible hires. You can't fake your way through this question, and an ideal candidate won't have to. If your candidate doesn't know what makes them successful, it will become obvious.

#### 19. How Have You Turned Around A Losing Streak?

You're not trying to trip them up here ... everyone's had one. (And you can say that in the interview.) What matters is what steps they took to turn it around. Did they diagnose the cause of the problem? Try out a new process? Do they understand what led to the losing streak in the first place?

#### 20. What Skill Have You Had To Develop And How Has It Helped You Do Your Job Well?

This will tell you what has been their greatest weakness in their sales skills without asking them that question directly. Smart reps work on their weakest attributes. They know there's no shame in self-improvement. They'll be able to tell you *exactly* how that skill upped their game. And good on them.

### MOTIVATION SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Anyone who brags about their natural talents isn't paying attention to the question. Sales success primary comes down to *gut-wrenching motivation*. You don't succeed automatically with it, but without it, you're doomed. So hiring *driven* people is critical. What *drives* your candidate and makes them want to work harder?

#### 21. Why Is Your Mentor Your Mentor?

Your candidate reveals a lot about what they value when they tell you why they chose their mentor. Pay attention to the weight they give to competencies, personality, reputation, and achievements. And if they don't have a mentor of any kind, watch out. The superstars always do. Even if those mentors are "remote" (through sales books, online courses, etc.).

“Ideal candidates are those who can tell you how they've given back to their community are more likely to be team players, leader, and mentors.

#### 22. How Do You Give Back To Your Community Outside Of Work?

Ideal candidates are those who can tell you how they've given back to their community are more likely to be team players, leader, and mentors. Rockstar candidates (usually) have impressive lives outside of the office.

#### 23. What Advice Would You Give A Salesperson Just Starting Their Career?

If you *truly* understand something, you can teach it. The ability to deliver a lesson indicates true understanding of a concept. This interview question can also tell you whether your candidate is rosy, negative, or a good balance of the two. And it can give you a good sense of whether they might be a good mentor.

#### 24. What Are You Not Interested In Doing Professionally?

Interviewers rarely ask this question, but it's good to know their ultimate career aspiration. Instead, they stick to positive questions, like "What's your *favorite* part of your job?" But this small reframe can elicit some very telling answers, like which tasks will be tough to motivate your candidate through. And that's worth knowing.

#### 25. What's The Best Way For A Manager To Motivate Their Team?

Great people will tell you how *they* like to be managed, and you'll learn really quickly how they'd manage others if promoted through the ranks. Their answers can help indicate whether they have junior, moderately evolved, or superstar-level knowledge of how healthy teams succeed.

#### 26. Which Sales Metrics Do You Pay Attention To?

Everyone will say quota, obviously. But next-level reps will have something to add. They can *back into their number* by knowing the leading indicators:

- Average deal size
- Close rates
- Number of opportunities received by marketing per month
- Sales cycle length

The best reps view their job as a machine that can be tweaked.

### LEADERSHIP SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These sales interview questions help you identify leadership potential. (You already know why this matters in sales.) Everyone's drawn to leaders, especially buyers. Leaders are comfortable in their own skin and know how to put the people around them at ease. These sales interview questions are the leaders' opportunity to shine.

#### 27. Tell Me Why You're A Superstar.

Say this with almost an impatient, skeptical tone. (You know, the way buyers often speak in real selling situations!) Top-notch salespeople won't balk. They'll start listing specific achievements. You'll usually hear a

# INDUSTRY FEATURE

bit of ego behind their answers. Candidate's who aren't up to the task? Their answers will be wishy-washy. The real point of this question: Assess how they respond to a semi-rude, abrupt demand (akin to a tough objection they'll receive in the field).

## 28. What's The Most Common Misconception About You?

Great salespeople and leaders are self-aware. They'll be very aware of how they're perceived, and that will include misconceptions. If they don't know how the world sees them, that's a warning flag that their EQ isn't as sharp as it needs to be. There's a connection between knowing how you're seen, and being able to adjust your behavior appropriately for any given sales situation.

## 29. Give Me An Example Of A Time When You Were Forced To Comply With A Policy You Didn't Agree With. How Did You Handle It?

There is no right answer to this sales interview question, but leaders (and hotheads!) know where they stand. They know what they like and what they dislike. The difference is that hotheads fight over everything, are impulsive, and leave a lot of damage in their wake. Leaders know how to tactfully navigate these situations. The policy your candidate disliked and their reaction to it should *both* be informative.

## 30. Tell Me Something You Believe Is True That Others Might Disagree With.

This is a blatant steal from Peter Thiel in his book *Zero to One*. The best leaders have developed a unique way of thinking. Most people won't give satisfying answers to this question. They'll give you things they *think* other people disagree with, but few people actually do (such as "our education system is broken"), and

this can be a very fine line. You're not looking for wild conspiracy theories here. Just good old fashioned individuality. It's an indicator of someone who thinks about novel solutions and sees the world with an insightful perspective.

## 31. What Would Your New Team Members Learn From You?

Does your candidate know what they bring to the table? Unless you're looking for one very specific contribution to your team, there's an *infinite* number of answers that could be right. The point is to understand how your candidate interacts with people, and the role they see themselves playing on a sales team.

## 32. Describe And Rate The Personalities Of Two Previous Coworkers And A Former Boss.

As people, we tend to see the good and bad in others that we see in ourselves. This is called "projecting yourself onto others." Pay attention to whether your candidate responds by citing positive or negative attributes. Leaders are more likely than their peers to cite what impressed them about people. They're focused on lifting people up, not putting them down. This is the type of person that will add to a great work environment.

## MISCELLANEOUS SALES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These people are reliable team members who like to be ready when it counts. They do their research. They prep. They learn. They have solid information at their fingertips every time.

## 33. Why Do You Want THIS Job? Why Us?

Your goal is to find out whether the candidate has a *real reason* to take this job over others. Some reps will have watched your sector for a while and will know exactly why you're the right organization for them and hold the same core values. Others will see that you could make use of a skill set that's important to them. And those are *great* indicators. You want to know your candidate is curious and driven enough to assess you at the same time that you're assessing them.

## 34. What's One Question You Wish I Asked?

This is a good closer. It lets the candidate show you that they prepared well, and position themselves in their own words. Both can highlight their natural strengths. Exceptional candidates will bring the conversation back to how their skills will serve your team.

## 35. What's One Small Habit You Have At Work That Has A Huge Impact?

Habits matter and superstars know that. (They've probably read a book or two about it.) This is one of the more important behavioral sales interview questions. You *have* to know your own habits to truly excel. "At the end of each day, I prioritize the next day's activities." "I read one industry-related blog post every day to keep my skills sharp." Small? Yes. Impactful? Also yes. Keep that person. They're paying attention and it will help them *win*. ■

*Reprinted with permission. Chris Orlob is Senior Director of Product Marketing at Gong.io. To find more information on all aspects of selling, visit [www.Gong.io](http://www.Gong.io) and sign up to get "insanely effective sales tips" sent to your inbox.*



Leaders are more likely than their peers to cite what impressed them about people. They're focused on lifting people up, not putting them down. This is the type of person that will add to a great work environment.

## We're in the cloud!

- For Mac and PC users.
- Perfect for working at home.
- Accessible from anywhere in the world.
- One software for ALL your newspaper needs.
- All this and we are still the least expensive.
- World's Best Service.\*

**Scheduling webinars at  
your convenience.**

*\*According to Carol Toomey*



207.452.2476 • sfobes@merrsoft.com

Proud to be the expert media financial valuation resource for  
the FORBES 400 List of America's Richest People 2015 - 2021

## KAMEN & CO. GROUP SERVICES, LLC

Media Appraisers, Accountants, Advisors & Brokers



626 RXR Plaza  
Uniondale, New York 11556  
Phone: (516) 379-2797  
Cell: (516) 242-2857

**Kevin B. Kamen**  
President/CEO

E-mail: [info@kamengroup.com](mailto:info@kamengroup.com)  
[www.kamengroup.com](http://www.kamengroup.com)

## Supercharge your audience revenue

iQ Audience+ by TownNews gives media organizations of all sizes powerful new tools to lift subscription rolls and preserve advertising revenue, while boosting audience engagement.

**iQ Audience+**  
by TownNews

**TN**  
TownNews

Learn more at: [TownNews.com/Audience](http://TownNews.com/Audience)

## INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

### NATIONAL

#### ACP

**Association of Community Publishers**  
5701 E. Circle Drive #347, Cicero, NY 13039-8638  
877-203-2327  
Loren Colburn / Douglas Fry / Cassey Recore

#### CANADA

##### Blain Fowler

c/o the Camrose Booster  
4925 48th Street, Camrose, AB, Canada T4V1L7  
780-672-3142  
[cbads@cable-lynx.net](mailto:cbads@cable-lynx.net)

#### NAMPA

**North American Mature Publishers Association, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 19510, Shreveport, LA 71149-0510  
877-466-2672  
[maturepublishers.com](http://maturepublishers.com)

### REGIONAL

#### CPNE

**Community Papers of New England**  
403 U.S. Rte. 302 - Berlin, Barre, VT 05641  
802-479-2582  
[www.communitypapersne.com](http://www.communitypapersne.com)

#### MACPA

**Mid-Atlantic Community Papers Association**  
P.O. Box 408, Hamburg, PA 19526  
507-388-6584  
[www.macpa.net](http://www.macpa.net)

#### MFPC

**Midwest Free Community Papers**  
29160 Hell Hollow Rd., Richland Center, WI 53581  
888-899-6327  
[www.mfcp.org](http://www.mfcp.org)

#### PNAWAN

**Pacific Northwest Association of Want Ad Newspapers**  
c/o Exchange Publishing  
5111 E. Trent Ave., Spokane, WA 99212  
800-326-2223  
[www.PNAWAN.org](http://www.PNAWAN.org)

#### SAPA

**Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association**  
P.O. Box 456, Columbia, TN 38402  
931-223-5708  
[www.sapatoday.com](http://www.sapatoday.com)

### STATE

#### CPM

**Community Papers of Michigan**  
5198 Windsor Highway, Pottersville, MI 48876  
800-783-0267  
[mifreeads.com](http://mifreeads.com)

#### FCPNY

**Free Community Papers of New York**  
621 Columbia Street Ext. - Suite 100, Cohoes, NY 12047  
518-250-4194  
[www.fcpny.com](http://www.fcpny.com)

#### FMA

**Florida Media Association**  
P.O. Box 773840, Ocala, FL 34477-3840  
352-237-3409  
[FloridamediaAssociation.org](http://FloridamediaAssociation.org)

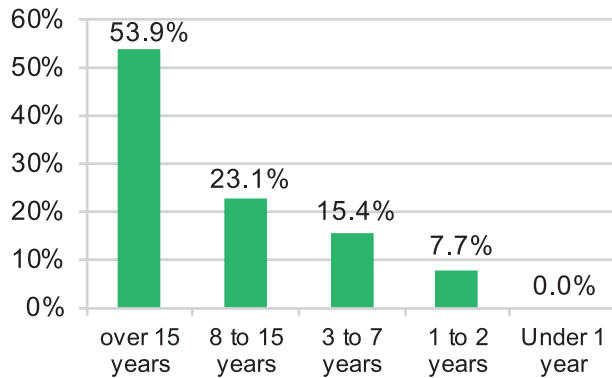
#### WCP

**Wisconsin Community Papers**  
P.O. Box 1256, Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1256  
800-727-8745  
[wisad.com](http://wisad.com)

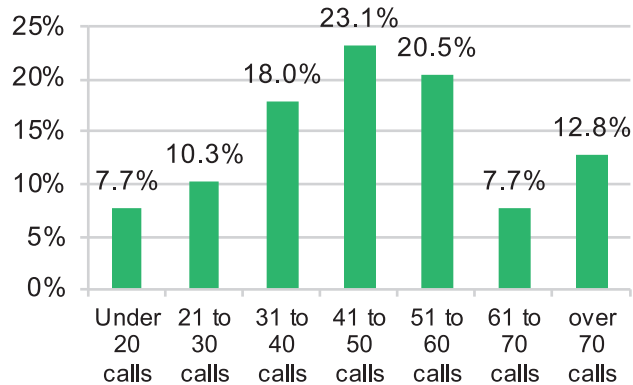
# THE SURVEY SAYS...



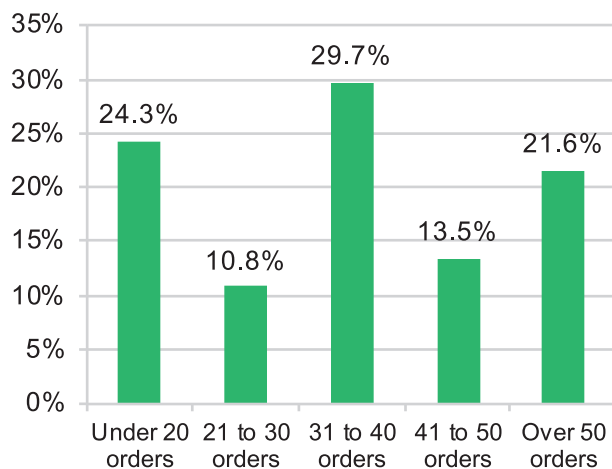
How long has your top salesperson been with your company?



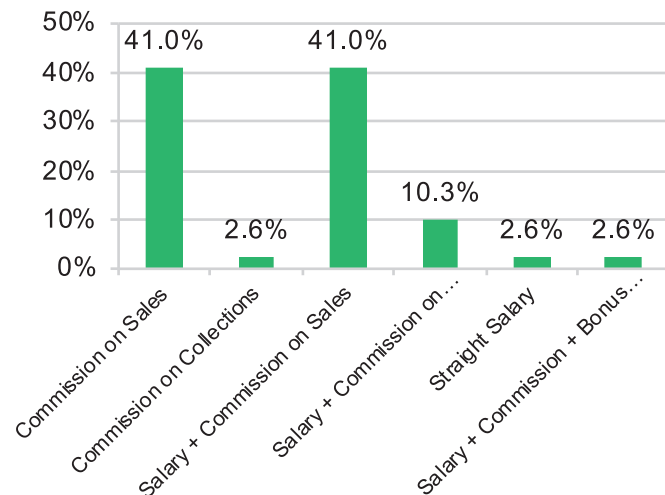
How many sales calls does your top salesperson average per week?



How many orders does your top salesperson average per week?

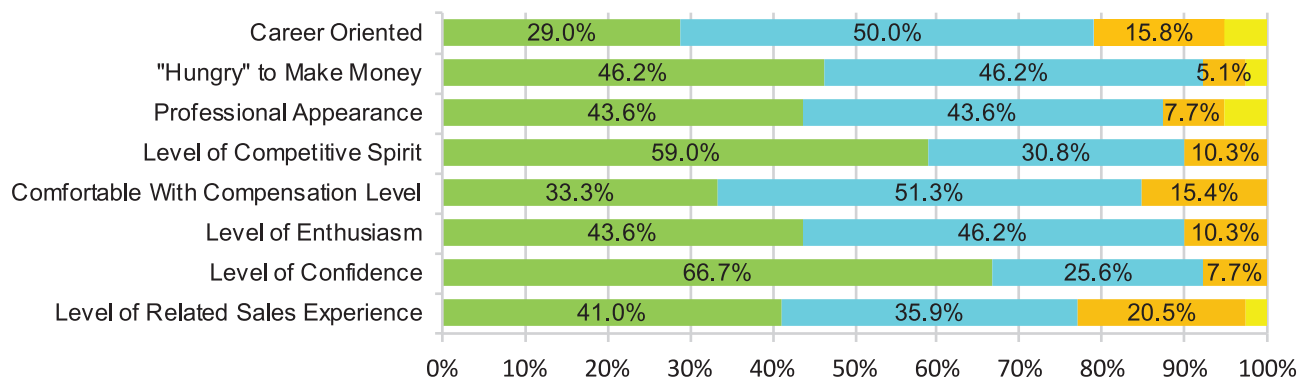


How is your top salesperson compensated?

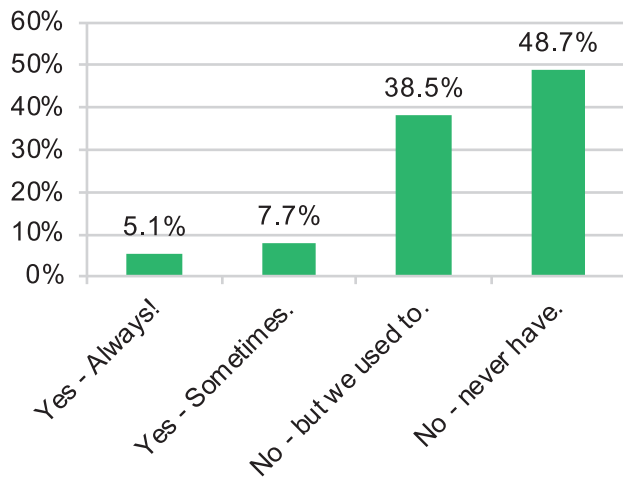


How would you rate these characteristics in your top salesperson?

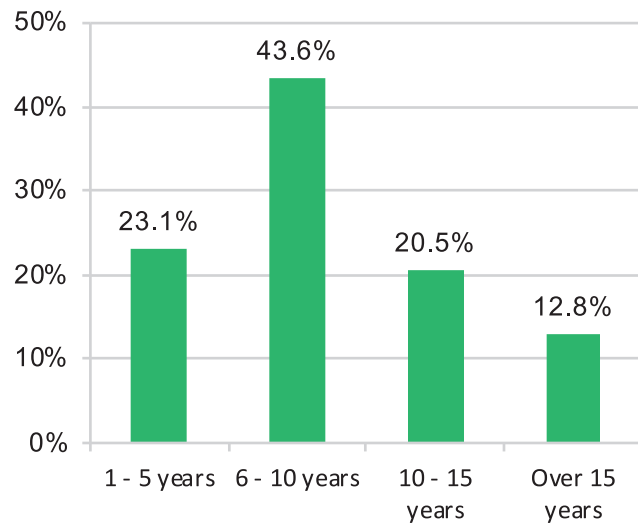
■ Extensive ■ Significant ■ Moderate ■ Little significance



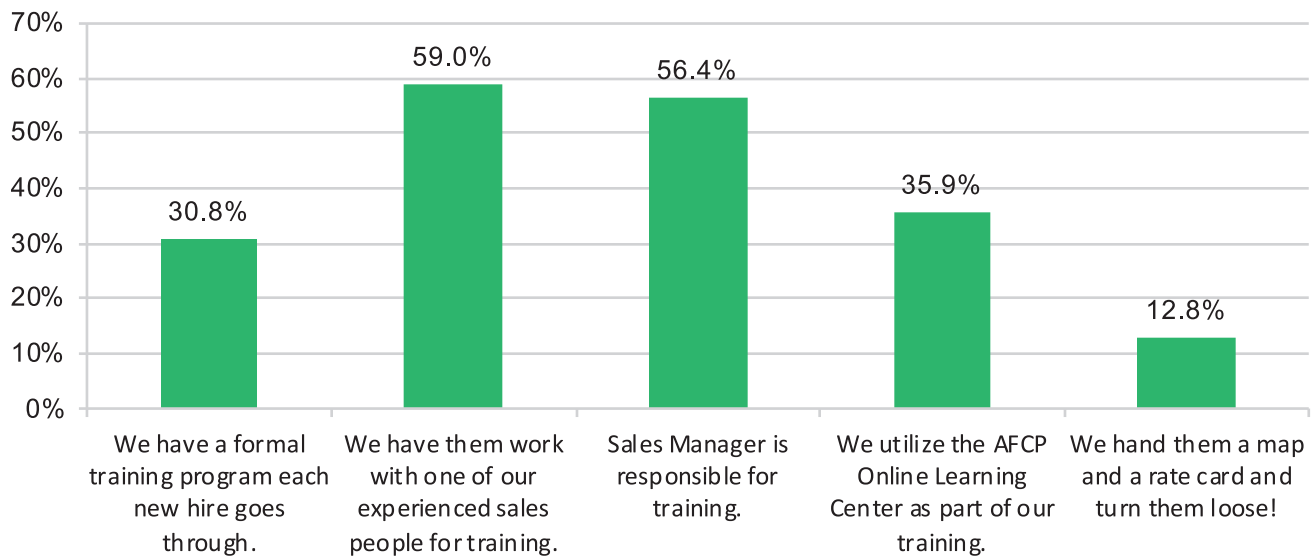
### Do you use any type of personality testing in your sales hiring process?



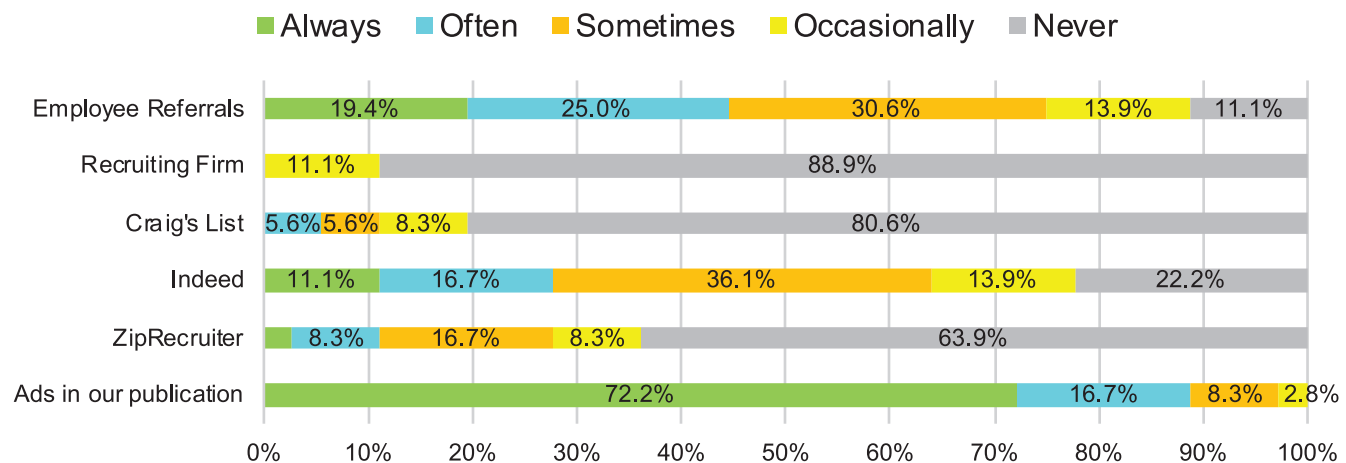
### What is the average length of service for your sales team?



### What does your training process consist of?



### What methods do you use to recruit new sales people?



Fast, economical and high quality Print & Promotions — the Preferred Way

Custom Promotional Products  
Every Door Direct Mail®  
Full-Service Color Provider  
We Design, Print and Mail Postcards

1 to 3 day shipping for more than 70% of the U.S. from our centrally located facility.

EDM • PROMO ITEMS • PRINTING • 24-HOUR TURN TIME • FULFILLMENT • DIRECT MAIL • FSI PROGRAMS

Print and Deliver FSI Programs

Direct Mail and Variable Digital Printing for a Personal Touch

PREFERRED Marketing Solutions  
www.preferredms.com

For all quote requests, please contact

**Chad Swannie**

Phone: 713-320-3021 • Email: [chad\\_swannie@preferredms.com](mailto:chad_swannie@preferredms.com)

There are a lot of reasons to take advantage of our member benefits, like...

## THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

### SALES TRAINING



Membership has its benefits - benefits you need!



To inquire about membership information for your publications, call our offices at: 877-203-2327

Somebody once said...

“Sell the problem you solve, not the product.”

Matt Mazzie

## ON THE HORIZON

# 2021

SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2021

### Association of Community Publishers (ACP) and Midwest Free Papers (MFCP)

Joint Annual Conference  
and Trade Show in Des Moines, Iowa.  
For more information as it becomes  
available, contact Loren Colburn  
email: [loren@communitypublishers.com](mailto:loren@communitypublishers.com)  
or Lee Borkowski  
email: [director@mfcpc.org](mailto:director@mfcpc.org)

SEPTEMBER 30 –  
OCTOBER 2, 2021

### National Newspaper Association (NNA)

Annual Convention and Trade Show  
will be held at the Hyatt Regency in  
Jacksonville, Florida.

Go to [www.nnaweb.org/convention](http://www.nnaweb.org/convention)  
for more details.

OCTOBER 3, 2021

### North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA)

National Convention, Sheraton San Diego  
Hotel and Marina, San Diego, CA.

For more information contact  
Gary Calligas at 877-466-2672  
or email: [gary@maturepublishers.com](mailto:gary@maturepublishers.com)

# FINDING THE RIGHT SALESPEOPLE

BY RENÉE K. GADOUA

**J**ulia Thompson got into advertising sales nearly 30 years ago. Trained as a teacher when supply outstripped demand, she subbed for a few years, then looked for a new career. “I tried a couple things and then started with the shopper as a sales rep for a small weekly newspaper,” she said. The job turned out to be a good fit, and she moved up the ranks at The Freeborn County Shopper in Albert Lea, Minnesota. Now she’s general manager, overseeing two weekly shoppers with circulations of about 17,000 each.

“When I was younger, I worked retail. I sold shoes,” she said. “You learn how to communicate with people and treat people and customer service and things like that.”

Although that experience served her well, outside ad sales required additional qualities. “Now people aren’t coming to you saying, ‘Here’s what I want,’” Thompson said. “You’re going to them saying, ‘You know, would you like this?’ The rejection is tough at first.”

Her favorite part was “just getting out and seeing people,” she said. “I would go out and see people and ask, ‘How are the kids? How’s the family? How’s that sprained ankle?’ Then I’d start talking about, ‘We’ve got this promotion going on right now,’ or whatever. It was always catching up with life first.”



Business and publishing practices have changed plenty since Thompson got into the business: the growth of digital ads and products, a technology explosion put communication and productivity tools into people’s pockets; and the tradition of lifelong employment gave way to shorter stints, especially among younger workers. And that’s before COVID-19 restrictions made most people remote workers. But when

Thompson hires sales representatives, personality and communication skills remain high on her list of must-have qualities.

“Somebody that is outgoing and bubbly, I just always think that that’s a plus,” she said.

Farris Robinson, president of Hometown News Media Group in eastern Florida, agrees. “Ultimately you’re looking for someone that has personality. Period,” he said. “If they have personality

and the ability to initiate conversation, you can teach them products and prices.”

He sees “no room for an introvert” on his sales staff. “Now you have to be even more of an exhibitionist and extrovert,” he said. “It’s too easy for people to put you off. You have to be extremely charismatic because you’re either over the phone or you have to know how to write an extremely creatively worded email.”

# INDUSTRY UPDATE

But personality alone doesn't spell success. "You have to have somebody that has some organization and follow through and takes care of the customers and doesn't just make empty promises," Thompson said. "As long as you do what you say you're going to do, customers are usually fairly happy. It's when you don't do what you say you're gonna do that gets you in trouble."

Robinson looks for "a person that is motivated by change, by greed, to an extent because we are commission sales. If you're not motivated by money, then you probably shouldn't be in sales."

He supervises 26 people who sell for 15 community newspapers and a digital advertising agency. Successful sales reps "need to be well rounded and versed in print and digital," he said. "You need to be that person that has a smartphone, a tablet and a laptop."

They also "have to be comfortable with change, because every day this industry is changing," Robinson said. "They have to be motivated by money and growth."

Robinson has recently turned more to LinkedIn and the company's YouTube channel than community contacts to seek candidates. He usually knows when candidates aren't cut out for the job.

"There's this perception that, 'Oh, marketing: You get to dress nice and drive around in your car and go talk to people,'" he said. "That's not reality. The hardest thing you'll ever

do is convince a business owner who has worked his whole life to work for himself and to own his own business, to trust you with his livelihood."

Randy Miller, general manager of Kapp Advertising Services, Inc. in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, worked on the road for 17 years before moving into management. The company publishes nine weekly publications and a monthly glossy magazine.

After 40 years, he still loves sales. "When you help a customer with an ad that brings in a lot of busi-

“ Scaled commission, incentives and competitions motivate many advertising employees. Others are motivated by recognition, the managers said.

ness and they call you with that excitement, that makes it all worthwhile," he said.

He's not the only long-timer there; at least two sales reps have been there 20 years, and one 30. "Then there's always one or two people that seems like are rotating jobs," he said. "I can't quite figure out how to not have that."

His gut isn't always right about candidates. He remembers interviewing a young man with a great personality he thought would do well. "I figure I'm gonna have him two or three years and that's it," he said. "Well, now 18 years later, he's an assistant district sales manager."

Scaled commission, incentives and competitions

motivate many advertising employees. Others are motivated by recognition, the managers said.

Praise goes a long way, too. "Wow. Great job, guys. Oh, my goodness, he's doing such a super job this week," you know, that kind of thing," Miller said. "They really like that. It's not necessarily the money, because the last year the money wasn't there."

Thompson said job flexibility is key. "One of my reps, she's got kids, and she likes to start her day just a little bit later," she said. "The other rep, she's young

and she just loves her Friday afternoons off. As soon as the papers get sent to print on Friday, she's out of here. And she just couldn't be happier about that."

Miller strives for a collaborative company culture. "I always say two heads are better than one," he said, describing a recent sales meeting. "It wasn't just about, what the district manager wanted to say and what I wanted to say," he said. "It was, 'I have some questions. What do you guys think about this idea?' You sort of get them involved and you get them excited, I think it makes them feel like they're not an employee, it makes them feel like they're a part of the company."

Manuel Karam, director of advertising sales at Genesee Valley Penny Saver in western New York, left a law career four years ago to join the business, owned by his wife's family.

He looks for sales reps who are multitasking, fast and organized workers. "Of course, they have to be personable, and trustworthiness is of the utmost importance because we have a big geographic area," he said.

Karam first thought "more feet on the street" would pump up profits. But staff turnover led him "to realize it's about having a more engaged team than a huge team, and that's been more successful for us."

When one territory experienced staff turnover, Karam created a team made up of new employees and a veteran. All sales went into a pool, and compensation was based on the group's success. "It has done great for us," he said.

An old-school attitude builds employee loyalty at the Penny Saver.

"I think they love the company," Karam said. "I think that they've done it for so long that it's just become a part of who they are. They like working with local businesses. They like the product. They believe in it. And a lot of people that have stayed have helped build the company over the years to what it is. ■"

*Renée K. Gadoua is a freelance writer and editor based in Central New York and a journalism instructor at Cazenovia College. Follow her on Twitter @ReneeKGadoua.*

# SUN COMMUNITY NEWS AND PRINTING

BY BARBARA HOLMES

**H**igh in the northeast corner of New York State lays the hamlet of Elizabethtown, the county seat of rural Essex County and home of the 18,000-square-foot Sun Community News production facility.

Founded in 1948 by William Denton, the family-run company then known as Denton Publications operated a small print shop and published the Valley News, a paid weekly, out of the family garage. Forty years later, Dan and Gayle Alexander purchased Denton Publications from the Denton family and continued the family owned-and-operated tradition under the same moniker.

The 1988 circulation of 20,000 consisted of all small paid weeklies, which the Alexanders converted to free newspapers with a strong focus on local news copy – high school sports coverage, local events and typical community news. As time went on, they realized that since each of the papers had a different name but the corporate name was still Denton Publications, consumers and agencies were not connecting the dots and realizing that the papers were related.

"In 2015 we converted all the papers to The Sun, which created a strong brand," said Dan. "We now market ourselves under the name Sun Community News & Printing, allowing all who



see the product to recognize our vast North Country."

Overall, the Sun employs over 50 people between the newspapers and printing plant. "We are now printing some of our competitors' papers, becoming allies instead of competition to benefit the communities we serve," said Dan. "We recently put in an upper former that allows us to run a two-section paper as one print run. That's important because we recognize many corporate newspapers are looking to outsource their print operations and have contacted us to bid on their printing. We've grown the print shop from five units to 21 units with two folders, which allows us to run more process color. All our papers are mailed which has allowed The Sun to build a strong inserting department too. Our focus has been to reinvest in people and equipment such as a 12-into-1 smart inserting machine with inkjet capabilities and even the ability to adhere peel n' stick notes to the front page."

Currently there are six zones of the Sun distributing 62,000 community newspapers weekly. Some zones that were merged together because of the pandemic and closures of many schools, activities and events will be adjusted as the pandemic eases.

"We are doing more coverage on a regional basis currently as a result of the pandemic as so much is controlled now by New York State," said Dan. "The news that might normally have been more localized has become more regionalized. The Sun converted from tabloid to broadsheet in 2018, which allowed us to neatly put more inserts into the paper. Prior to the pandemic we had as many as 20 inserts in some zones."

One of the things that makes Sun Community News & Printing unique is their ability to control their distribution. "We are 100% mailed while all other free publications in the area are demand drop so they can't control their distribution

or know who their readers are. Our customers get great response because our requested circulation list allows us to know who our readers are while having the control to stop distribution to those homes that don't want it," said Dan.

In January of this year, Dan and Gayle announced that Dan Jr. (DJ) and his wife Ashley were taking over as publishers. Gayle had previously retired in 2020 to spend more time with the grandchildren – Daniel III (8) and Gracie (7), while in-person schooling was occurring on a very limited basis – while Dan stayed on but stepped back as publisher. "I have to give credit to DJ and Ashley," said Dan. "DJ is a skilled graphic artist and a perfectionist. He brings the creative side to our company, having designed the brand and look of The Sun, while Ashley provides the steady hand of managing the business. They make a great team, and their talents compliment each other. It's only fair as we move further into the digital age to turn the reins over to them while Gayle and I provide support wherever it's needed."

Plans for 2021 include launching a new mobile app to accompany the website, and the addition of several new printing customers as their outsourced vendor. The Sun recently hired six new employees to accommodate the expansion. ■

# CREATIVE CIRCLE

is dedicated to helping family publishers thrive, in print and online

**W**hen it comes to technology partners, Creative Circle is like no other. We're much more than a software firm.

We got to where we are by being passionate about helping local publishers get access to top quality solutions at an affordable price. We believe local media should be locally owned. So we've worked to keep local ownership in place and to help local buyers save newspapers from hedge funds. We are driven to create products our publishers need when they need it. We work hard to get our publishers out in front of industry trends.

With decades of experience designing print newspapers and training newsrooms to create more engaging content, when we created our web software, it was built to maximize design, content, user friendliness and simplicity. So it's nothing like what you have now.

Just switching to Creative Circle's web platform will increase your traffic, click throughs and time on site because of our more dynamic and user interfaces, better SEO and ease of use consistently delivers better traffic numbers.

Our software will give you dozens of new ways to sell ads and make more money. It's much easier to use and learn than what you have now, saving you time, too. And we can often replace several vendors.

Because of our background, we can help you in more ways than any other partner – with training, strategic thinking, design, content and software.

We can help you rethink your print publications or streamline your print and web production process with the most cost-effective print production CMS in the industry.

We can ratchet up your digital revenue with an in-market sales blitz or help you strategize product improvements.

As the first software CMS vendor to create a pay wall in 2005, our platform can execute any paywall you

can imagine and integrate with your circulation system – or replace it.

Here are three initiatives we launched to improve our services in the past year that demonstrate how we think and deliver for our publishers:

1. When the pandemic hit, we knew our clients needed a way to make up for lost print revenue. Fast. So in two weeks, created a web application called "What's Open." It did one task: It allowed local businesses to quickly and easily post information about their status – curbside pickup only, closed, open by appointment, etc. Posting the basics was free, but businesses could add more details and contact info for a fee. We gave the app to all of our existing clients for free, but sold it outside of our client base to offset our costs. Hundreds of sites used the app (and many are still using it) and hundreds of thousands of local businesses got help getting the word out, often for free.

We followed up with two more apps. One to help make a fuss over 2020 graduates who couldn't have a normal graduation. Parents could post basic info about their kids for free and pay a fee to build out a whole page bragging on their kid. They could invite friends and relatives to contribute, too. We followed that up with an election app to get content and revenue from local political candidates. Our reverse publishing tools allowed publishers to create print products for local grads and elections.

And our election app handles results, too, creating charts and widgets to show who won and by how much.

We have a dozen new apps on the drawing board.

2. Our publishers needed more passive revenue from their web sites. One option was adding national programmatic ads. But most local publishers didn't know where to start and couldn't get good rates. So we pooled all of our local media sites and cut deals with top providers to assure we could deliver higher rates and higher quality ads. Now we're

making thousands in new revenue for our publishers every month.

3. During the pandemic, we commissioned a national poll to find out what people wanted from their local newspaper. (We gathered a lot of great data – local readers, for example, only expressed a 52% confidence in "the media" but 82% confidence in their local media outlets.)

Our poll proved what we already suspected: Your readers are craving more coverage about food, pets, finances, travel, health, home improvement and more. These are topics most papers abandoned during two decades of cost cutting. We didn't dump them because readers didn't want them. We dumped them because we didn't have to resources to pull it off anymore.

So we launched "Premium Pages" with coverage of pets, health, food, money matters, home improvement and seniors. We'll eventually deliver 24 pages – essentially year-long special sections – and a wide range of topics from fashion to outdoors.

Editors in our offices curate the pages. New content flows daily. We also regularly change the page layouts to keep them fresh. These pages are great resources for selling local sponsorships, growing traffic, extending run of site advertising, increasing national programmatic revenue or launching a branded content effort. One \$200/month sponsorship on each of these 24 pages would generate \$57,600.

The best news is, we're delivering them FREE to all our clients.

Is your software vendor helping you with that level of commitment and innovation? If not, it's time to schedule your talk with Creative Circle.

And don't forget to bring some popcorn for the show, because we like making success fun, too! ■

*Contact Bill Ostendorf, president, at [bill@creativecirclemedia.com](mailto:bill@creativecirclemedia.com) or 401-455-1555 or Sean Finch at [sean@creativecirclemedia.com](mailto:sean@creativecirclemedia.com) or 309-269-7834.*

# A RECRUIT'S VIEW!

BY CARL APPEN

“Cutting my teeth in media sales has given me a broad, education on countless industries. As a result, I’m not only a more well-versed salesperson but I’m a more well-rounded person.

The first trip I took as a media salesperson wasn’t to a hotel lobby or a coffee shop or a clubhouse. It was to a softball tournament. My trainer for the day – who also happens to be my brother and Publisher, was taking pictures of the teams. Hans said his client, the head of a local Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, had asked him if the paper could lend some extra coverage to the event. We were already covering it as a story, but Hans wanted to personally make sure the photos were eye-catching. He wasn’t a photographer or really even a part of the newsroom. That didn’t matter. “They rarely ask me for anything. So, when she does, she gets it.” Athletic tournaments bring a lot of visitors to town, who stay in hotels and eat out. It’s how I learned about CVBs and hotel/motel taxes.

My second trip was more of a traditional “sales call.” It was at a brewery, meeting with a local couple who ran the place. I learned about building rapport, asking discovery questions and the importance of researching ahead to see what businesses were nearby. “If you’re going to drive out here, spend the time well and introduce yourself to the folks at next door.” Turn one sales call into four.

In the time since that initial call, I’ve stayed in contact with the couple. From them I learned the intricacies of booking talent to

play house concerts. About partnering with nearby retailers to send traffic back and forth. When the pandemic hit I saw first-hand their resilience and adaptability. They hosted drive-in movies in their parking lot, sold beer to folks tubing down the river and donated excess produce to a nearby school lunch program. Our discussions shifted but I was still learning from them. Those are things I wouldn’t have seen if I was selling software or accounting services.

Here are some things I’ve learned about in media sales *this week*: hotel-motel tax, vender systems, gemstone margins, promotional item bidding, chambers of commerce, press releases and special event permits. Those are things I don’t think I would have heard about selling accounting software. Recruitment is hard for a lot of companies. For newspapers, magazines and other print media it’s just another drop in the bucket of tough challenges. As with its trials, the industry brings with it unique advantages. I’ve never hired a salesperson. I’m new to the field. What I do know is what it has done for me. Cutting my teeth in media sales has given me a broad, education on countless industries. As a result, I’m not only a more well-versed salesperson but I’m a more well-rounded person. I think that’s something that we can lean on more when recruiting people into the field. ■

The Leadership Institute  
is a structured, industry  
specific sales and  
management training  
program sponsored by the  
Association of Community  
Publishers.



**OVER THE LAST  
14 YEARS**

**2,344**  
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS  
HAVE PARTICIPATED

**15,210**  
CLASS CREDITS HAVE BEEN  
AWARDED

**132**  
CERTIFIED ADVERTISING  
EXECUTIVE CERTIFICATIONS  
AWARDED BY ACP

**103**  
DIFFERENT CLASS  
CURRICULUMS PRESENTED

## MAKING SURE THE PIECES FIT

BY JIM BUSCH

“I wasn’t looking for the best musicians, I was looking for the right musicians.”  
—Bruce Springsteen

Though I’ve never been a big rock and roll fan, for the last several days I’ve been thoroughly engrossed in Bruce Springsteen’s new autobiography, “Born to Run.” Springsteen has accomplished a lot in his career, a string of popular albums, induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and even winning an Oscar. Springsteen is known as “The Boss” for his musical achievements but until I read his book I never realized how appropriate this title is. In addition to his musical talents, Springsteen is an effective business manager who carefully planned his career. Like all good managers, he quickly realized that he could not achieve his goals alone; he needed a team, in his case a band, to make his dreams come true. This is where Springsteen really distinguished himself from the average rock band leader.

Most rock and roll bands last about as long as snow in April. They come together and melt away, often lasting only a few months. Even the legendary Beatles were only together for eight years. Springsteen’s “E Street” band has played together for decades. They not only have stuck together but they continued to excel in their field. They’ve continually improved their musical skills and their ability to work together as a cohesive unit. The longevity of the E Street Band was no accident; their success is a result of Springsteen’s efforts to recruit people whose skillset and personalities fit his vision of the perfect rock band. First, Springsteen formed a clear vision of the kind of band that he wanted to create. He clearly articulated his creative and career goals. He then thought about the kind of people needed to realize his objectives. He understood that any organization, a band or a company, is like a machine where all the parts have to mesh together smoothly. He not only thought about how well potential band members could play their instruments, but also how their personalities would fit in with their bandmates and with his personal vision for the band. If we want to build a team as successful as the E Street Band, we need to take the “Boss’s” lesson to heart. We need to look at recruiting like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, looking for “pieces” that will fit with all the other pieces to produce a beautiful picture. ■

# SETTING REALISTIC GOALS



BY JOHN FOUST  
RALEIGH, NC

**D**erek placed more ads in the paper than anyone else on the sales team. Low volume clients suddenly increased their expenditures. Large clients started running even bigger ads. Revenue was rolling in.

Then it all fell apart. First one advertiser, then another, complained about invoicing. Quickly it became evident that Derek had been placing ads in the paper without permission. His scheme worked for a while, because some of his clients didn't check records carefully. At first, the paper rationalized that refunds were a cost of having a high-energy salesperson with a poor eye for details. Then they realized that the problem was deeper than that, and eventually had to let him go. Justice prevailed, but that wasn't the end of the story.

The accounting department worked overtime to clean up the mess. And the ad department hired a replacement. But in an inexplicable act of greed and stupidity, the ad manager gave the new person a goal that was ten percent higher than the pre-refund amount generated by Derek. In other words, the new person would have to produce more revenue than a crook.

Although this is an extreme example, it illustrates the fact that some managers need a better understanding of realistic goals. If you are involved in the goal-setting process, here are some points to keep in mind:

## 1. FAIRNESS IS IN THE EYE OF THE

**BEHOLDER.** If a salesperson feels a goal is unfair, it is either (1) truly unfair or (2) you need to do a better job of explaining how you arrived at the goal.

**2. GOALS IMPACT MORALE.** When a person makes progress toward a goal, morale soars and she can be self-motivated to work even harder. On the other hand, when a person finds himself falling short

week after week, he can get discouraged and say, "What's the use?"

**3. MORALE IS CONTAGIOUS.** Although salespeople spend a big part of each day working independently, they are part of a team. When there are problems, they are often likely to talk to each other than to the boss.

**4. CONSIDER MULTIPLE FACTORS WHEN SETTING GOALS.** Across-the-board increases are common, but inherently out of touch with reality. Let's use the ten percent figure at Derek's paper to illustrate. If you're looking for an overall

ten percent increase, see that figure as an average. Some accounts could project a five percent increase and others could project 15. It's like the old management saying, "If you're treating everyone the same way, you're treating most of them the wrong way."

**“** If a salesperson feels a goal is unfair, it is either (1) truly unfair or (2) you need to do a better job of explaining how you arrived at the goal.

## 5. USE THE S.M.A.R.T. FORMULA.

This technique has been around for a long time – and it has helped a lot of ad managers set meaningful goals. It represents goals that are (1) Specific, (2) Measurable, (3) Achievable, (4) Relevant, and (5) Time-sensitive. Wise managers get each salesperson's input in each area for each account.

Although "Derek" wasn't his real name, this tragedy actually happened. His replacement lasted less than a year. With realistic goals, that story could have had a different ending. ■

*(c) Copyright 2021 by John Foust. All rights reserved.*

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

# The most important word in advertising sales is.... “RETENTION”



BY BOB BERTING,  
BERTING  
COMMUNICATIONS

“The continued possession, use, or control of something”

“The condition of retaining something”

“The fact of keeping something in one’s memory”

**C**ustomer retention is the ability of a publication to retain its customers over a specified period—namely a commitment to advertise in a publication through a contractual agreement. How is this done when recent surveys show that 80% of newly acquired accounts do not come back the next month, while 90% fail to come back the second month. The number one place publications can get revenue is retention. There is no one product that’s going to save them. They need to stop being so product oriented and work on establishing an effective strategy for their customers. That strategy will include a marketing plan which will commit them to a long range program with the publication.

### WHAT IS SUCCESSFUL CUSTOMER RETENTION?

High customer retention starts with the first contact with a prospect and continues throughout the lifetime of a relationship and successful retention effort takes this entire lifestyle into account. A publication’s ability to attract and retain new customers is related not only to its product and services, but also the way it services its existing customers. This service generates a reputation that creates a powerful image within and across the marketplace. Customer retention also has a direct impact on profitability. Research indicates that engaged and very satisfied customers generate 1.7 times more revenue than normal customers, while having an engaged publication team and engaged customers return a revenue gain of 3.4 times the norm.

### TRUST AND BELIEVABILITY

The bedrock of customer retention is also based on these factors:

- The image and reputation of the publication. How does it fit in the media mix of the customer? What is the strength of their readership?
- The trust and believability of the salesperson.
- The plan of action for the customer will include the following promises:
  - 1.I will** design a compelling advertising campaign using my publication to present your products and services in the most creative way possible.
  - 2.I will** work with you as your marketing partner to fine tune your ad campaign and adjust it to changing market conditions.
  - 3.I will** treat your advertising dollars as if they were mine, giving you the best discounts available to control your costs.
  - 4.I will** keep you up to date with what is going on in the market from my communication with other business owners.

### THE FINAL WORD ON CUSTOMER RETENTION

Customer satisfaction is a strong predictor of both customer retention and repurchase behavior. Repurchase intentions are statistically and positively associated with repurchase behavior. ■

*Bob is the author of 4 e-books for the newspaper industry, available on [www.bobberting.com](http://www.bobberting.com). Bob is a professional speaker; advertising sales trainer; publisher marketing consultant and columnist in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. He can be reached at [bob@bobberting.com](mailto:bob@bobberting.com) or 317-849-5408.*

# Graphic Hooks

By Ellen Hanrahan

hanrahan.in@att.net ©2021

*At times I'm stumped...* some months I seem to be at a loss for what to "pass on" to you and now it appears to happen more often. Sometimes in my mind, it's all about repeating and I will think that "OK, I just covered that topic," or "Wow, I'm talking about type again." I realize that design information can seem a bit repetitious, but on the other hand, I do keep seeing some of the same problem areas whenever I look at printed materials (and online advertising and pages can also benefit.).

Take the ad directly below. This was a typical ad in an area paper years ago, but I bet I can easily find current examples.

I changed only the size (70%) and the address and phone number because this could be an ad that is in any hometown paper.

My initial issue is my perception that it seems like three ads... so many boxes that isolate the information. Plus, this is not seen on a page with other ads of equal width. I have a tough time seeing this as a "whole." The idea is to make information easier to read and remember. If you only do one thing to change your approach to creating an ad, it's to stop putting roadblocks in the way of reading. By the way, color would not make this ad any better.

## A few simple steps

The typefaces that are used are *Times New Roman* and *Helvetica Neue*, pretty standard, so I will stick with them for this demo. I also tried to stay as close to the original layout as possible to show how simple changes can affect the overall look and readability, but in some areas I had to make a change. First of all, if you run reverse areas, keep them away from the border! That's where you start to get the most separation of your elements. Remember "breathing room"? I also varied the reverse areas with some at 100% black and other percentages to subdue some of the contrast. There are still three areas in the ad, but they don't divide the ad area as much.

I chose *Helvetica* as the main typeface. This is a financial ad and *Times* may be readable and work in large text blocks, but in this case I felt a more solid, simple typeface got the message across in a more business-like way. I also chose to left align the copy. When you center everything, you have no control of the negative space (the "eye" likes balance!). See how the "bullets" line up in a less distracting way?

Removing the background from the photos also eliminated more boxes and opened up the space. Their photos could actually be larger.

## Elements that had to be changed

I switched the address and phone with the "call us" info because it gave more room to clearly present the online address. Business addresses and phone numbers do need to be in the ad, they just don't have to dominate the space! I believe that the address and phone could still be smaller.

Be wary of single words on a line by themselves. "Also" is not that important, yet it connects the important stuff. By the way, the "dots" after "Also..." in the left ad are referred to as ellipsis and are made up of dots (Mac ellipsis: hit option + semicolon; Windows ellipsis: Alt + 0133 on numeric keypad). I revised this area to call attention to what they specialize in, and by overlapping the circle, it was also tied to the loan information. I didn't like the way "Also" looked in either *Times* or *Helvetica*, so I chose a script to call attention to the area, then takes your eye into the specialty info.

Last, but not least, the logo. The word "corporation" just hangs there, and again, because it is a single word on its own line (surrounded by white space), it gets more attention than it needs. As a quick fix, I just added a 20% gray box behind it to subdue it, while bringing in some of the gray from the graphic, and repeating the gray from the address area. However, I think the logo needs to be modified, which is another discussion... maybe next time!

**HEIGHTS FINANCE**  
CORPORATION

**Healthy Credit  
is the Key to Your New Future**

**CONSOLIDATE WITH US!\***

- Payday Loans • Medical Bills
- Past Judgements • Credit Cards

*Also...*  
*We specialize in establishing good credit after a bankruptcy!*  
*It is very important to build credit, we'll give you that opportunity!*

**PERSONAL LOANS • AUTO LOANS**

1000 South Main Street, Hometown  
(555) 555-5555



Jodi Schuppel  
Branch Manager

Jessica Staus  
Credit Manager

Call us today  
or apply  
online at  
[www.heightsfinance.com/loans](http://www.heightsfinance.com/loans)

\*This offer is subject to our normal credit requirements and may be subject to the provision of acceptable collateral for the loan. Heights Finance makes it a regular practice of assisting individuals with previous credit problems, tight budgets and past bankruptcies. We cannot help every customer with these credit issues.

**HEIGHTS FINANCE**  
CORPORATION

**HEALTHY CREDIT IS THE KEY  
TO YOUR NEW FUTURE**

**CONSOLIDATE WITH US!\***

- Payday Loans • Medical Bills
- Past Judgements • Credit Cards

*We specialize in establishing good credit after bankruptcy!\** • *It is very important to build credit – we'll give you that opportunity!*

**PERSONAL LOANS • AUTO LOANS**

CALL US TODAY OR APPLY ONLINE AT  
[www.heightsfinance.com/loans](http://www.heightsfinance.com/loans)



Jodi Schuppel  
Branch Manager

Jessica Staus  
Credit Manager

1000 South Main Street  
Hometown  
(555) 555-5555

\*This offer is subject to our normal credit requirements and may be subject to the provision of acceptable collateral for the loan. Heights Finance makes it a regular practice of assisting individuals with previous credit problems, tight budgets and past bankruptcies. We cannot help every customer with these credit issues.

# INDUSTRY NEWS UPDATE

**B**luefin Technology Partners adds The Journal-News to client list for Self-Service Advertising and Digital Classifieds Marketplace.

Andover, Massachusetts, March 23, 2021 – Bluefin Technology Partners, L.L.C., a leading provider of print and digital advertising solutions for the publishing industry, is pleased to announce that The Journal News Company of Hillsboro, Illinois has deployed Bluefin's premier offerings for increasing advertising revenue and enhancing online readership content.

(Site link: <https://classifieds.the-journal-news.net/>)

The web-hosted solution includes *Bluefin Place Ad*, allowing advertisers to place classified ads in multiple

print and online publications, all from a single user experience available 24 x 7. Powerful upsell features help drive advertising revenue by giving advertisers tools to make ads stand out.

The *Journal-News* also deployed *Bluefin Marketplace* to host their online advertising listings, providing a user-friendly environment for relevant and vetted advertisements. In addition to generating incremental advertising revenue, Marketplace offers a source of relevant reader content that enhance their print and digital products.

"The Journal-News has always strived to be the leading source of trusted and reliable local news serving Hillsboro and Montgomery Counties in southern Illinois," said John

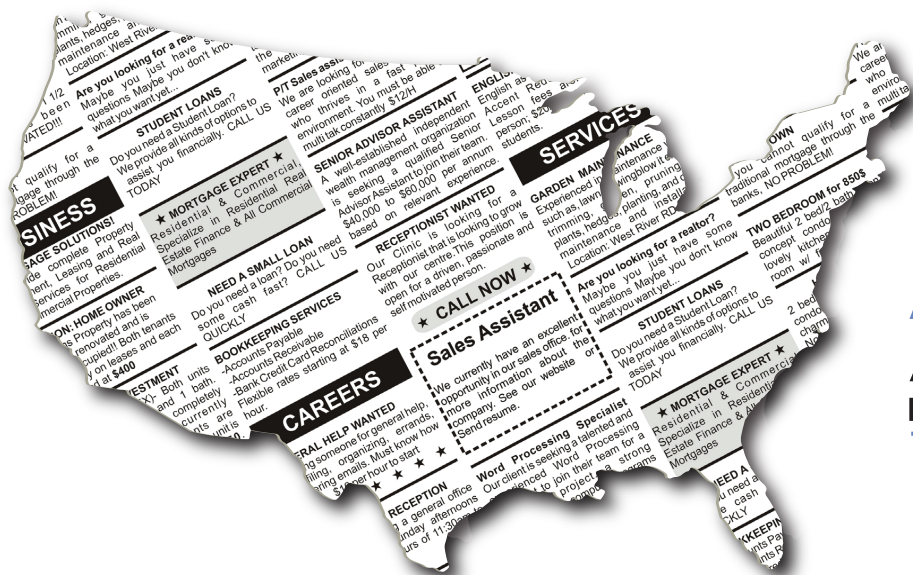
Galer, owner of The Journal-News.

"Our selection of Bluefin's online advertising publishing platform enhances our ability to do just that by give our advertisers and readers a great user experience, delivering high quality advertising content in our print and digital publications."

"We are extremely grateful and delighted to welcome The Journal-News to the Bluefin client family," said Rich Grover, General Partner and founder of Bluefin Technology Partners. "We pride ourselves to deliver great application solutions that help local newspaper companies to sell, produce, and publish superior digital and print advertising content. Their selection further reinforces our commitment to provide 'best-in-class' product offerings and customer service." ■

## Coast to Coast Classified Ads

Over 7 Million Homes With a Single Order



**ADS**  
ADVERTISING  
DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

Formerly the NANI and CADNET Networks

**877-203-2327**

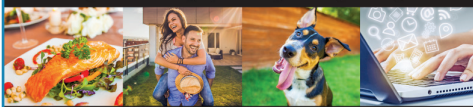
**Start your sales team selling national ads today!**

A members only benefit of the Association of Community Publishers, Inc.

# Community Publications Business and Service Directory

## ADVERTISING SERVICES & SOLUTIONS

**CREATE. SELL. PROFIT.**



**METRO**  
metrocreativeconnection.com

## CONTENT AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Digital Publishing Solutions For  
News and Media Organizations



www.townnews365.com

800-293-9576

Online Solutions.

Bottom-line results.

## DIRECT MAIL OR PRINTING

**Direct Mail?**

**Turn-Key Saturation**

**Direct Mail Programs**

• Easy • Fast • Profitable

jeff@ultimateprintsource.com 909-947-5292 x-320

www.UltimatePrintSource.com

## APPRAISALS & BROKERING

Newspapers  
Magazines - Shoppers  
Book Publishing

Confidential  
Customized - Comprehensive

**KAMEN & CO. GROUP SERVICES**

516-379-2797 WWW.KAMENGROUP.COM

For more information - see our ad on page 31

## CREATIVE SERVICES



- PRINT DESIGN
- WEB AD DESIGN
- BILLBOARD DESIGN
- LOGO DESIGN
- PAGINATION
- CUSTOM SOLUTIONS

855-614-5440 WWW.TCSDIRECT.COM

## DISTRIBUTION SERVICES FOR PRINT MEDIA



Helping reinvent American newspaper  
distribution through improved delivery,  
circulation and marketing support services.

248-572-6100 www.ansnewspapers.com

## AUDIT & READERSHIP STUDIES

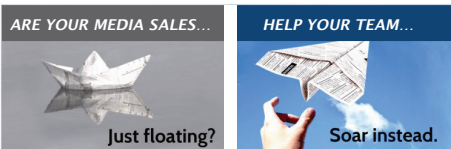


**CVC Audits and  
Readership Studies**

Third Party Print & Digital Verification  
Increased Exposure to Media Buyers  
Learn What Your Readers Want

Call 800-262-6392 or visit www.cvcaudit.com

## CRM - CUSTOMER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



**ASK-CRM** ASK-CRM is a newspaper-centric CRM  
tools to streamline media selling designed to maximize your sales efforts.  
robin@ask-crm.com, 301.800.2275, www.ask-crm.com

## E-COMMERCE CLASSIFIED SOLUTIONS

**BLUEFIN PLACE AD**

THE BEST SELF-SERVICE AD PLACEMENT  
SOLUTION AVAILABLE TO PUBLISHERS

978-662-3323

WWW.GETBLUEFIN.COM

**Bluefin Technology Partners**

Advertising Solutions for Publishers

## CIRCULATION SUPPLIES

"from the basic to the innovative!"



**STEEL CITY CORP**

800-321-0350

- Make sure you see our ad on page 4 -

## DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM



The leader in local digital.

Unifying the sales process, marketing execution,  
and reporting in a single toolkit.

303-656-1355  
info@adcellerant.com

## EDITORIAL RESOURCES

High-Quality,  
Free Print & Digital Content

Food and Recipes  
Lifestyle and Health  
Home and Garden



Visit familyfeatures.com or contact Cindy Long @ 913-563-4752

## CIRCULATION SUPPLIES

Your trusted source for  
circulation supplies

**Poly Bags - Rubber Bands**

Event Bags - Bundle Rain Covers - Carrier Bags



Contact us at:  
800.634.0017

sales@pdisanek.com  
fax: 614-890-0467

## DIGITAL REVENUE CONCEPTS

START A BUSINESS DIRECTORY WEBSITE

**ideal directories**

Launch your BIG idea today!

Perfect add-on to your Wedding & Home  
Improvement Special Sections

www.idealdirectories.com

From the owners of Page Flip Pro & SiteSwan

## ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT

Providing its partners with free entertainment  
content from our stable stable of publications,  
including TV Guide, TV Weekly, Channel Guide,  
HOPPER, and ReMIND magazine.



- \* ASK MATT
- \* CHEERS & JEERS
- \* MOVIE REVIEWS
- \* CELEBRITY INTERVIEWS
- \* BEHIND THE SCENES
- \* DAILY BEST BETS
- \* DID YOU KNOW?
- \* ReMIND ReWIND

888-584-6688 ntvbmedia.com/edge

## CLOUD SOLUTIONS

**PROIMAGE**  
Making Complex Publishing Simple



Cloud Solutions to Help Reduce Costs

- Automated Workflow
- Color Correction
- Ink Optimization
- Press Registration

303-426-7171

www.new-proimage.com

## DIGITAL SALES TRAINING



"Igniting digital media advertising sales!"

INCREASE YOUR DIGITAL MARKET SHARE  
HANDS-ON DIGITAL SALES TRAINING

800-917-0820

info@sparkdigitalsalesgroup.com

## LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICE AUTOMATION

Your Legal Notice Experts



Our proprietary system automates the entire  
process, saving time, money, and manpower.

866-672-1600

info@legalnoticeservice.com

Your Go-To Guide for Community Publication Business and Service Support

# Community Publications Business and Service Directory

## MAGAZINE DESIGN

### The Flip180 difference

Flip180's magazine website designers understand online content. Through our multi-channel approach, we'll find new opportunities to enhance your brand and create value for your business. We're a magazine design agency that brings deep interactive expertise, thought leadership, and fresh ideas to the table. We don't merely design magazine layouts. From layout design to website development to paywalls and digital marketing solutions, we bring it all together to propel your business forward, onward, and upward.



**Flip180**  
media  
Vee Banionis 818-855-7603  
Flip180media.com

## NEWS FEATURE CONTENT PROVIDER

News to Use  
*Featurettes*



**Feature News  
Free Content**

www.mynewstouse.com  
email: info@napsnet.com • 800-222-5551



## PUBLISHING SOFTWARE

- ✓ FULLY INTEGRATED
- ✓ EASY TO USE
- ✓ AFFORDABLE
- ✓ FREE DEMO
- ✓ DIRECT MAIL
- ✓ COMMERCIAL BILLING
- ✓ GENERAL ACCOUNTING
- ✓ PAYROLL



603-323-5077 WWW.MERRISOFT.COM

## MAILROOM CONTROL SYSTEMS



**The leader in US Newspaper  
Mailroom Controls.**

888-3069-0639 (x83)  
www.miracomcomputer.com

## PAID CONTENT



Publish life's stories.

Low-cost, turnkey solution to publishing  
paid content on all platforms.

devlyn@modulist.news  
701.412.8733  
modulist.news

## PUBLISHING SOFTWARE

**THE NEWSPAPER MANAGER**

### How Publishers Profit

CRM • SALES • PRODUCTION • BILLING  
INTEGRATED MARKETING

Ph: 706-750-0016 | gbooras@mirbeltechnologies.com  
www.newspapermanager.com

## MARKETING PLATFORM



The Only Turnkey Solution  
Designed Specifically for  
Local Community Publishers!

**BECOME YOUR  
COMMUNITY HUB**

**LOCABLE**  
Publisher Network  
916-585-8468  
locablepublishernetwork.com

## POLY BAGS

Production, Fulfillment, Printing and  
Distribution of Quality Poly Bags, Poly  
Bag Sampling and Door Hangers.



Michigan Office  
Advertising Network Solutions  
109 N. Washington  
Oxford, MI 48371  
Office (248) 572.6100  
Fax (248) 572.6152

## PUBLICATIONS PRINTING

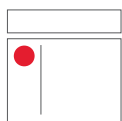
**Cummings**  
Publication Printers Since 1914

- ✓ MAGAZINES
- ✓ JOURNALS
- ✓ CATALOGS
- ✓ GUIDEBOOKS
- ✓ HIGH QUALITY
- ✓ SHORT-RUN PUBLICATIONS

800-647-0035 CUMMINGSPRINTING.COM

## MEDIA CONSULTING

**Design. Content. Ideas.  
Software. Training.**

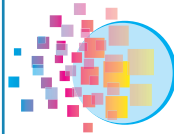


Providing the knowledge,  
experience and technology to  
help publishers grow and thrive!

**401-455-1555**

Creative Circle  
MEDIA SOLUTIONS  
www.creativecirclemedia.com

## PRINTING AND PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT



**PREFERRED**  
Marketing Solutions  
www.preferredms.com

**800-270-1769**

## SEARCH PLATFORMS



SEARCH ENGINE  
PLATFORMS

**MARKETPLACES  
AUTOMOTIVE  
REAL ESTATE  
RECREATIONAL  
AGRICULTURAL**

**VERTICAL & HORIZONTAL**

800-944-3276 (ext. 0)  
AUTOCONX.COM

## MEDIA SELLER SOLUTIONS

**SRDS Solutions for Media Sellers**

*Premium visibility packages deliver your  
information where media decisions are made!*



847-375-5000 ♦ srds.com

## PRINTING - FULL SERVICE

*We specialize in the art of printing!*

**Newspapers • Publications • Shoppers  
Catalogues • Magazines • Directories • Coupon Books**



205 Spring Hill Road, Trumbull, CT 06611

**203.261.2548**

www.trumbullprinting.com

## SELF SERVE NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING



*Schedule your demo today!*

**Grow revenue and lower costs.**

by providing the leading self-serve advertising platform for print,  
digital and social media advertising.

ipublishmedia.com

## MERCHANT CARD PROCESSING

**Merchant Card Processing**

*Request a free quote:*

1-888-697-8831 • msgpay.com  
hello@msgpay.com

Ecommerce • POS  
Mobile • Software



## PRINTING FOR PUBLISHERS

**WE PRINT FOR PUBLISHERS.**

**DIRECT MAIL - MAGNET MAILERS  
AUTO DEALER MAILERS**

Contact us today!



715.273.4601 • 800.533.1635

info@helmerprinting.com  
www.helmerprinting.com

## SOFTWARE SYSTEMS FOR PUBLISHERS

**SCS BUILDS TRUSTED SYSTEMS**

Find out why our customers call us "the best  
tech support team" and say "we wish we could  
contract with SCS to support all our products."



Software Consulting Services, LLC  
SCS builds trusted newspaper systems

phil@newspapersystem.com

800-568-8006

**Your Go-To Guide for Community Publication Business and Service Support**

A Member Benefit of the Association of Community Publishers (ACP)

# OPEN MEMBER NETWORKING SESSIONS FOR PUBLISHERS

*Bring your questions, find your answers!*



## Thursdays - 4:00 PM Eastern

Watch for your registration invitation  
in your email each Tuesday to sign up!

If you're not receiving the invitation emails or want to join ACP, call the ACP Office at 877-203-2327 or email [cassey@communitypublishers.com](mailto:cassey@communitypublishers.com).



Publish is a monthly magazine produced by the Association of Community Publishers.

The mission of *Publish* is to cover the people, companies and events that shape the community media industry - one issue at a time.

# Publish

5701 E. Circle Dr. - #347  
Cicero, NY 13039-8638

PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Permit #22  
Slayton, MN

What do we doing NOW?  
What do we going to do NEXT?  
What should we do NEW?  
Find out in Des Moines!

Growing  
in the  
*Heartland*

ACP & MFCP Are Proud To Present

**2021 Joint Conference & Trade Show**  
**Des Moines - September 17-18, 2021**

Mark your calendars and prepare for a city and experience you will find absolutely amazing!