
INFORMER

May 2021



**Community
Papers of
Michigan**



by Kevin Slimp
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In my previous column, I mentioned that there seem to be a lot of positive feelings in the community newspaper industry right now. Four weeks has passed since I wrote that column, and I'm even more convinced that good things are happening at many of our papers.

Just before sitting down to write this column, I interviewed a new graduate of the University of Tennessee School of Journalism for a collegiate journalism conference I'll be speaking at this coming Friday. Two years ago, he came by to see me to tell me he changed his major from computer engineering to photojournalism. Recently, he landed a dream job as a journalist, his future is bright, and I asked if he was glad to have changed majors. He visibly rose from his seat with enthusiasm as he answered, "Oh, yes. I am so glad. There's no looking back!"

Like a lot of folks, I've been living and working out of my home for the past 15 months and I was excited to have lunch with Dale Gentry, publisher of the Jefferson City, Tennessee newspaper last week. It was my first in-person business meeting since March 2020. His official reason for asking me to lunch was to discuss plans for a redesign at his newspaper. As we visited, I was able to ask about

his paper and was glad to learn that things are going quite well at the Standard-Banner. Dale was very enthusiastic about the future and is looking forward to the energy created during a redesign.

The reason I'm writing this column in the middle of the night (It's 11 p.m. on Sunday night), is because there is such a demand for training right now from newspapers. My normal workday begins around 9 a.m. and ends around 2 a.m. The requests aren't for any specific area of training. It just seems like publishers are looking forward to a return to "normal," and are ready to invest in improving their products.

You may have read some of the columns I've written about Affinity Publisher, the software that's poised to give Adobe InDesign a run for its money. Those of you that know me know that I'm an Adobe guy. I'm not going to be tossing out InDesign and Photoshop anytime soon. But after leading several Affinity training sessions over the past six months, I'm convinced Af-



Joey Young

finity will eventually own a big chunk of the newspaper software market. Just this past week, I taught three half-day classes for a national newspaper group.

I've received requests from community papers and groups across the U.S., wanting to know when they can be trained to use the software. Some are even asking for help creating new templates in Affinity Publisher.

My guess is the primary reason Serif, Inc. (Maker



Kevin visits with recent graduate Camruinn Morgan-Rumsey about his future after graduating with a degree in journalism.

of Affinity) isn't making a bigger push in the U.S. newspaper market is because they are having so much success in Europe. I'm quite certain we'll be hearing a lot more from the folks at Serif in the not-too-distant future.

Tomorrow morning I'll be interviewing Joey Young, the young publisher who has gained quite a bit of national attention for the work he's doing in Kansas. I remember like it was yesterday, Joey sheepishly walked up to me at a newspaper convention in Des Moines and asked my advice about starting a new community paper in his hometown. That was about eight years ago, give or take a year. He told me he knew he could start a successful paper.

The last time I counted, Joey had seven publications in Kansas. Every time I visit with Joey, I come away even more enthusiastic about the future of community newspapers.

It's been 12 years since I made my bet with the renowned journalism educator that there would still be newspapers standing after 2018. I

knew then that newspapers weren't going away anytime soon, and I'm more confident than I have been in years about the future of community papers. (I still want to get t-shirts printed that say, "Kevin was right!"

Well, what do you know? I made it to 800 words before midnight. I'm never at a loss for positive things to say about the community newspaper industry. I'm proud to be associated with this family. Let me suggest, as we move back to a period of "normalcy," you take a look at your newspaper to see what can be done to create a stronger product, draw more readers and attract more advertisers. What we do is incredibly important, and this is the time to let our communities know that we did, indeed, make it past 2018. Let your readers know you're making plans for a future in which the local paper remains a vital component of a healthy community.

If anyone wants to make a bet, I'm betting most of us will still be around in 2028.

Kevin's upcoming webinar schedule is at:
newspaperacademy.com



Ryan Dohrn

President/Founder,
Brain Swell Media LLC

Helping Advertisers Prepare for the Buying Bump

10 Ideas to Update Your Media Sales Game

All research points to a buying bump that is set to occur. We see citizens getting back to some level of normalcy. Many buying habits will soon come back into play. Yet, our advertisers are still throwing us the same COVID based objections. Do they not want to get back to business? Why is it so hard for them to grasp that advertising starts the process to get customers back in the door? I would suggest to you that business owners are suffering a sort of PTSD that comes from the massive shock to their business that the COVID pandemic dealt them over the last 12-months. So, how do we help them? The first step is to understand them.

As a media sales rep myself, I have the chance to speak to advertisers daily. I also have the unique opportunity to coach media sales reps around the globe. Sarah in Singapore, Peter and his team in Australia, John and his colleagues up in Toronto, and of course my teams here in the United States. They all report a distinct change over the last 12-months in their advertisers. For the last three years, each Friday I ask a group of my coaching clients to answer this multiple choice question. What type of advertiser attitudes did you come across last week? Advertisers making ego driven advertising decisions? Advertisers making logical based ad buying

decisions? Or, Advertisers making decisions based on emotion and how they feel at the moment? 5% of media sales reps reported that they met with ego-driven individuals last week, and this did not change much between 2019, 2020, and 2021. Interestingly enough, and sorry to all of the agency media buyers out there, reps reported that many clients in this 5% were agency buyers. Now, let's look at the percentage of logical buyers. Down 9% from 2020, logical buyers represented 21% of the buyers that your fellow media sales warriors met with last week. These logical buyers typically want nothing but the facts, just the numbers. Next, and what's really interesting, is the number of emotional buyers—up 9% last week and reported at 74%! You read that right. Seventy-four percent of the media sales warriors I'm regularly coaching are telling me that the buyers they're meeting with right now are highly emotional. This doesn't mean that they don't use any logic in the process of making decisions, but they're showing us that they're very emotional in the way that they're buying. It's a lot about how they feel, regardless of the facts that are being presented to them. With this knowledge in hand, we have to change how we sell media. If we keep selling traditional media in traditional ways, we will keep getting traditional results.

Here are 10 thoughts on changing your media sales approach to increase your close rate as you sell in a post-pandemic media sales world.

1. Emotional buyers do not respond well to data and stats. You will find your best success in selling with advertiser success

stories or case studies. Talk up-front about the three advertisers that you love the most and the results they are seeing.

Do NOT ask the standard questions you have been asking for years. Why ask what their budget is and reinforce the fact that they have no money to spend? Instead, talk ethically about your other advertisers that are seeing results. Paint them a picture of potential. A better question to ask would be "tell me about a local business you feel does a good job of marketing?" Then, talk about what marketing success could look like.

Do not try to win the traditional vs digital argument. Instead talk about multi-media. Speak to five or six things that other business owners are doing to win. Traditional and digital. Digital is really kind of the bare minimum, actually. We've got to raise the bar or set the bar with our advertisers and prospects, and that's one of the things I want you to seriously consider. As ad sales pros, we've got to control the narrative. Digital only advertisers limit themselves and their total ROI.

Talk about minimums required for ROI success. There is a reality to marketing. There is a dollar value attached to that reality. Show the reality. It might sound something like this. "If you're going to be competitive, there's a certain minimum number of marketing initiatives that you need to do in any given 30-day period just to be competitive." These minimums should be shown in your pricing plans/packages you show on every sales call. (Continued on page 5.)



By Bob Berting
Berting Communications

6 Point Service Philosophy For Publications

After the sale, many times, there is a letdown in the manner in which a new customer is serviced. As a matter of fact, a lot of business is lost because the intensity of caring drops off and the customer is now taken for granted. The publication salesperson who sold the account sometimes doesn't know why the new customer has lost interest. Is it because the response is lacking, is it because other media competition has convinced him or her that they have made a mistake in going with your publication—or what happened? I'll give you the answer. Many times it's because the publication doesn't have a service philosophy that resonates with the new customer and takes them for granted.

Here are 6 ways for a winning service philosophy:

1. "We want your business." What do we have to do to show you how much we appreciate your business?
2. "We want to make you happy." We not only want to make you happy but very satisfied.
3. "We are as close as your phone." Call us if you have any questions. We want to hear if you have any questions.
4. "We take care of our contract customers." You have made a commitment to us, so we owe you the utmost consideration.

5. "We want you to feel comfortable". This is important because there should be a definite comfort level with us.

6. "Confidentiality". We will never discuss your business goals with your competitors.

The overall important factor is trust

When it comes to earning a customer's trust, actions speak louder than words. Sometimes it takes a little more time and effort to forge that bond, but trust is the most important factor in developing long range relationships. The 4 elements of trust are: competence, reliability, intentions, and appearance.

Competence

When you know advertising and your publication well, you will inspire the customer's confidence. They will look to you for answers to their problems, so make yourself a well read resource. Take constant responsibility for your own career growth and sales expertise. Do the things necessary to encourage your customers to have faith in you.

Reliability

Your reliability will be the most important factor in their decision to trust you. Position yourself as a problem solver in correcting problems quickly and efficiently. Like it or not, your reliability may suffer due to a careless sales secretary or absent minded service person, so insist on a high level of performance from everyone who comes in contact with your customers.

Intentions

At certain times, your relationship may get off track due to some glitch in communication. But if the customer knows your intentions are good. You usually will have a good chance to redeem yourself.

Emphasize that their needs come first and you'll do whatever it takes to earn their complete trust and satisfaction. Continued:

Appearance

Though appearances can be deceiving, sometimes you can judge a book by its cover. If you drive a clean, late model car, and have a well-groomed, professional appearance, customers will be more than likely to view you as the representative of a reliable, well established publication. Enhance your image further with good posture, a broad vocabulary, a clear voice, and frequent eye contact. The latter says to the customer "you can trust me".

The more your customers trust you, the greater the odds that your profitable relationship with them will last a long time.

Bob Berting's new e-book #4 for advertising salespeople

Bob is the author of 4 best-selling e-books for the newspaper industry Bob's newest e-book "Smart Customer Connections For Advertising Salespeople" is a publication that is very relative and helpful for print media salespeople dealing with their customers in today's CoronaVirus atmosphere. You can order any of Bob's books on his website: www.bobberting.com.

Read Bob's e-books and discover how his vast experience and know-how can help you achieve much more business for you and your publication. You'll greatly benefit from the wisdom of one of America's top advertising sales experts.

Bob is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and leading columnist in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. He is the President of Berting Communications and can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408.

Helping Advertisers Prepare *by Ryan Dohrn Continued from page 3*

Come with ideas ready to roll. Most people have lost patience for just about everything. The last thing they want to do is sit through a sales discovery interrogation session. You are 70% more likely to close business when you recommend what somebody needs to do as opposed to what they want to do. Sure, ask questions, but stop being a custom solution builder. There is no proof that custom advertising solutions sell more than recommending what will work for a tested category of your clients. Custom solutions require a higher level of knowledge. They take longer to close. And, they require most customer support from your team.

In a time of crisis, most people want to be lead. So lead. You are a Media Sales Advisor. Recommend media options based on what has worked for our other advertisers. I'll reiterate: it's not about budget. It's about what the advertiser's category demands. Identify what they NEED, get them results, and you'll have customers for a lifetime.

Social media is not the single answer to marketing. If Coke or Tide could get away with doing only social, they would. Yet, they collectively spend millions each year on traditional media. I might ask this to my advertising clients right now, "Mr. or Mrs. Advertiser, so you love social media. Great. We do too. But, pretty much every business is on Facebook. Let's talk about what things are you doing to be different?" Because everybody's on social media right now. Social media is really, really saturated. Digital as a whole, quite honestly, is saturated. So the question is, "What are you doing to stand out from the crowd in a digitally cluttered, digitally saturated marketing landscape?" I love digital. But, it is not the single holy grail.

Digital and social are different. Show the difference. Social is intrusion based advertising. The digital we sell as a media company is permission based marketing. If you've watched the Netflix documentary "The Social Dilemma," we've got Apple, iOS, and Chrome about to block all cookies, and in fact some of those things have already happened. From watching this documentary and from observing numerous other sources as well, I believe we're going to see a traditional media resurgence. Now, is it ever going to be the way that it was in the '80s? No. But neither is the music ever going to be the same.

Traditional media is a dominating marketing play. Not everyone can afford print or radio. Every business does social. Not every business does traditional. What's interesting, for those of you who sell traditional advertising, is that we're seeing in almost all of our research that one of the best drivers of social media activity—search activity, Google, etc.—comes from traditional media sources. Look no further than the NNA, Borell, or the Association of Magazine Media for facts to back this up.

Sell the marketing triangle of success? Traditional, digital, and social. Because events aren't really in play right now, stick with these main three now. Yes, there are virtual events and they're working in B2B. But the trifecta right now is going to be social and digital, and then having traditional media in the mix as the differentiating factor. Because, if Advertisers wants to be dominant in their marketplace, they have to do what others either don't know how to do, or what others think they need to do but can't execute on because of budget or other circumstances. Media sales warriors, people have been putting off significant buys for quite some

time. COVID forced them into that scenario. Now with vaccinations rolling out, with restrictions being lifted, people are going to come back out and buy. The critical question is, "Mr. or Mrs. Business Owner, are you going to be ready?" It doesn't matter if you're local, national, or global. Are you going to be positioned ahead of time to take advantage of the buying bump that's going to occur? Demand for products is going up, and it's going to go up higher than it ever has before. Are you going to be positioned correctly? Think about it, friends. You're dealing with a lot of emotional people—74%, remember. So guide them. Lead them. Help them understand what they need to do to be successful.

You know what I always say, "If ad sales was easy, everybody would be doing it." And they're not. Is that because we're crazy? No. (Well, maybe we are a little bit.) The truth is that we've found careers that will feed our families for a lifetime. And there has never been a better time than now to sell media.

Listen to Ryan's ad sales podcast, Ad Sales Nation, on iTunes or on Soundcloud. Keep up to date with Ryan's ad sales training advice on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/brainswell/> Ryan Dohrn is an award winning ad sales training coach, a nationally recognized internet sales consultant, and an international motivational speaker. He is the author of the best-selling ad sales book, Selling Backwards. Ryan is the President and founder of Brain Swell Media and 360 Ad Sales Training, a boutique ad sales training and sales



By Peter Wagner
Founder and Publisher,
The N'West Iowa REVIEW



Connect with the Community with a Weekly Publisher's Column

One of the best bits of advice I received before starting The N'West Iowa REVIEW came from the editor of the newspaper where we would be printing the new paper.

"You need to write a weekly column," he told me. "You need to let your readers know who you are and what you believe."

That was easy for him to say. He was a college-educated, experienced wordsmith. I was just an advertising salesman with a dream. For the first months we published the paper I would carefully count each word as I wrote, much like a student required to write a 300-word essay. I hardly ever produced more than 10 inches of printed copy.

But those columns grew longer — too long, my wife and editor often tell me — as I recognized the value of sharing reflections regarding local readers and community events.

I strongly believe community newspapers, and locally written columns, are the first recorders of local history. I also believe that we have an obligation to be the watchdogs of government and public trusts. But most of all, I believe hometown newspapers, especially with personal columns, need to provide strong, personal positions



Locally written columns, are the first recorders of local history.

regarding challenges to personal and corporate freedom and opportunity.

I wrote my first columns attempting to appear wise and knowledgeable. But I was inexperienced in the processes of local government and clueless regarding the worthiness of local and state politicians. Absent of great ideas to expound upon, I wrote about the one thing I knew: my day-to-day experiences.

I wrote about picking strawberries with my wife and two young sons, the boys participating in Cub Scouts, attending our first Orange City Tulip Festival and all the stages of our sons' growing-up years including their weddings and the births of our four grandchildren.

By rough count, I've probably written more than 2,200 original columns for The REVIEW and our community newspapers.

But one of the most satisfying group of columns, 52 in all, were produced over a 12-month period just a few years ago while passing a major milestone in life.

It began with my realizing how little I know regarding my grandparents and even my parents. All of them were deceased and there is nobody to share their stories with me or especially my grandchildren. The result was writing one year of columns titled "Letters to My Grandchildren." (Continued on page 7).

Connect with the community...

by Peter Wagner Continued from page 6

To keep the weekly efforts interesting to my readers as well as family I jumped between generations and different members of my wife and my families. I thought it especially important that I shared stories about my sons, Jeff and Jay, growing up.

The columns were very personal and were meant to be since I eventually planned to put them together in a book for my four grandchildren. The subjects moved from fun times and sad times, stories of both Connie and my parents, moments that changed our lives and vacationing at our lake place to exceptional times with each of those

grandchildren, now all college age. One column shared the story of how their great-grandfather, Hans Herman Wagner, burned the family barn to the ground.

His mother and father had driven into town and my dad, along with his brother Bill and two sisters Anne and Hertha were playing firemen.

One by one they'd take turns lighting the hay against the barn on fire and shout fire as loud as they could. That would be the signal for the other three to come running with buckets of water to put out the fire. But when it was Dad's turn to shout fire, all his siblings

were in the house eating pie.

Someday soon I plan to publish the columns into book form with appropriate photos. Along with the four grandchildren I plan to give copies to my deceased older brother's grandchildren since many of the stories are their history, too.

And what about my subscribers who were asked to read this obviously self-serving material? One lady at church mentioned that many of the columns reminded her of her own lifetime experiences as well as made her feel like she was one of our family.

Peter W. Wagner is founder and publisher of the award-winning N'West Iowa REVIEW and 13 additional publications. He often is called Newspaper's Idea Man. You may contact him regarding his programs "100 Ideas for Fun and Profit" and "Seven Steps to Selling Success" by e-mailing pww@iowainformation.com or calling his cell 712-348-3550.



It's been a while since I compared ads and looking through my files, I came across an ad for a Casino Night that ran in consecutive years. Pretty much the same info, but "Ad B" definitely had more info in the same amount of space! So let's get on with the...

Comparison

Ad Talk

with Ellen Hanrahan

I chose these ads because St. Mary's had held their Casino Night and Auction for a couple of years, yet a year later, the look had changed. **Ad B** (2007) added a lot more information to their ad space without increasing the size of the ad. So you work with what you have.

Fitting a lot more information into a pretty compact space is a real challenge. By the way, these ads are 75% of the actual size—they ran as a 2 column by 4 inch ad in our paper.

Choose art wisely

Ad A has a more "decorated" look. The difference between designing and decorating is huge. The heading in this ad is too busy to be sandwiched between the type area. If you want to use a heading such as this, fine, but place it at the top so that it leads into the ad. Also, make the "& AUCTION" information part of that design element to make it more cohe-

sive, otherwise it looks as if it was an after-thought. See my fairly quick "Casino Night" redo in the next column. Not the best but it makes the heading work as one unit and it took less than five minutes.

Choose one graphic for an ad this size (see **Ad B**). The two graphics in **Ad A** just compete with each other and you lose the focal point. Another problem is that text runs over the card graphic and creates a more "muddled" background. I know a lot of advertiser's want you to put the art behind the text—but resist! It degrades the contrast between the information and at times, you can't even tell what the art or graphic is in the background.

Not to mention that now the text is harder to read. Remember when we discussed elements that "impede readability"? This is an example, so keep the info clear and concise in order to sell the product, service or event!

A

St. Mary's School of Mayville is pleased to announce a full evening of entertainment for adults



CASINO NIGHT & AUCTION

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2006
AT THE MAYVILLE GOLF CLUB

Doors Open/Social Hour 5:30pm
Casino Games 7-Midnight

Guest MC Tim Brela of Mayville's Great 98 WMDC

LIVE AUCTION • SILENT AUCTION • MINI RAFFLES
\$25 Advance • \$30 at the Door

Tickets Available at: St. Mary's School Office; Marshland Drugs; Ben Franklin, Mayville; Rock River Tap, Horicon; Timlin's Furniture, Hartford and St. Mary's Daycare at Andrew's Campus, Leroy

For more information call 555-555-2222

B

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL OF MAYVILLE

7TH ANNUAL
CASINO NIGHT & SILENT AUCTION

SATURDAY, MAY 12
MAYVILLE GOLF CLUB

5:30pm Doors Open
Social Hour/Bufferet
7-Midnight Casino Games

PRIZE & CASH RAFFLE DRAWING AT EVENT \$1500 Travel Voucher

\$25 Advance • \$30 at the Door
Bring in a non-perishable food donation and receive \$5,000 more in funny money*

Tickets Available at: St. Mary's School Office; Marshland Pharmacy, Ben Franklin, Mountin's Piggly Wiggly, Mayville; Rock River Tap, Horicon; and Timlin's Furniture, Hartford

For more information call 555-555-2222

Sponsored by St. Mary's School, Mayville
*5% will be donated to Mayville Food Pantry



LIVE AUCTION
Lake Michigan Fishing Charters • Dinner for four prepared and served by Father Tom • Dessert of the Month • Grouse Hunt

SILENT AUCTION
Theme baskets • Golf packages • Furniture • Many gift certificates and much more

MINI RAFFLES
Jewelry • Hunting Gun • Cash • Filled Freezer • Captain's Cove

* The typeface in both ads changed because more text was added and **Ad A** had to be reorganized to make all the new text fit, and keep like-minded items together. There was more detail about the auctions and raffles. Granted the "Guest MC" info was eliminated, but donation info was added and had to fit while keeping it near to the pricing for the event. Proximity, keeping like-minded information together, helps the reader remember more information, without having to hunt for it.

In **Ad A**, all the information runs horizontal in a one-column format. In **Ad B**, two columns were created in the space, thereby keeping all the auction and raffle information together, while separating it slightly from the event, pricing and ticketing info.

Also be consistent in type and type size for greater unity. Every two lines in **Ad A** appear different. It

can be the same type family, but when you make use of bold, caps and size changes, it can seem that you are using a variety of typefaces. Consistent use of the typeface and size help in uniting the elements in **Ad B**, thereby creating a more organized and easier to read ad.

The border in **Ad B** helped to isolate it from other ads on the page. The name of the organization sponsoring the event fit nicely into the thicker border.

Don't add art to fill space, it can add clutter. Even if there is a lot of text you can control the outcome—most of the time! Choose a typeface that looks bigger (larger x-height of the characters), or is more condensed, then stick with the size to create the illusion that you have more space. Make any ad stand out and present the ad's message in a clear and concise manner. How to do that is always the challenge.

An appropriate heading

The Casino Night graphic was from an art service, which makes it easy, but in this case, the addition of "& Auction," separates the thought.



It didn't take much to change the graphic header, just a little change in Adobe Illustrator.

But, in **Ad B**, the word "SILENT" was too much text to add without redoing the entire graphic, so I chose to add the cards and use type for the heading.

Sometimes the artwork just won't work. But if you do use this header, keep it large and make it the focal point of the ad—squished between blocks of type it acts as a barrier between text info. Keep an organized flow for the easiest readability.

Black and white, or color?

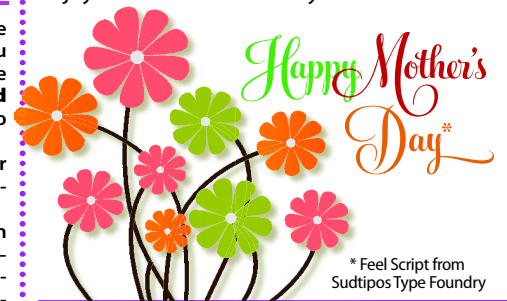
Back in the day, color was an extra expense for the advertiser, but today, there is a more abundant use of color. Maybe all ads are not cut out for color, however.

If I had to add color, I would consider the heavy border and the "Casino Night & Silent Auction." However, I would probably opt to leave it just black and white. The contrast is good and there is a lot of text—and in a sea of color on the page, this ad would stand out... remember though, this is just my opinion!

Final Thoughts

An update on *Affinity Publisher*... This past Thursday I watched a demo on how to work with the program, so I am slowly beginning to see what the program can do. It appears to be able to do most of the functions that I am used to in **Adobe InDesign**. Be forewarned, I still have my work cut out so let's see what I have to report next month!

We are almost halfway through this year and it's May in Wisconsin (for what it's worth!), so enjoy the warmth of the days to come!



I was a student, an art teacher, a graphic designer, a writer and again a student. For info, PDFs of articles, or have ideas or comments, you can e-mail: hanrahan.ln@att.net Ellen Hanrahan ©2021



SUBMITTED BY

Donna Hanbery

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The steering committee for the saturation mailers coalition (SMC) had an opportunity to meet with Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy to talk about the Postal Service's 10-year plan and discuss the concerns of saturation shared mailers.

There were seven (7) companies represented and eight (8) different speakers. The Free Paper industry was well represented by John Hemperly the Publishing Operations Manager for Engle Printing & Publishing from Mount Joy, PA. Hemperly also spoke on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Community Paper Association (MACPA) and the Association of Community Publishers (ACP).

With John's permission, I am including the remarks he made to the PMG about the business of free papers, and the opportunities for mutual growth if the USPS could provide reasonable rates and predictable pricing.

I want to thank you for making time to talk to us about the Plan and giving us some time to talk about our

FREE PAPERS REPRESENT!

By John Hemperly

businesses and how we work to promote the Mail and the UNITED STATES POSTAL SYSTEM. Importantly I want to thank you and the almost half million Postal employees who have delivered the US Mail 6 days a week, week in and week out with special appreciation for their essential services during the challenges of the past 13 months.

My name is John Hemperly with Engle Printing & Publishing from Mount Joy PA. where I work as the Publishing Operations Manager. I also am the President of the Mid Atlantic Community Paper Association, and past vice president of American Free Papers Association -these are regional and national trade associations that represent the free paper industry.

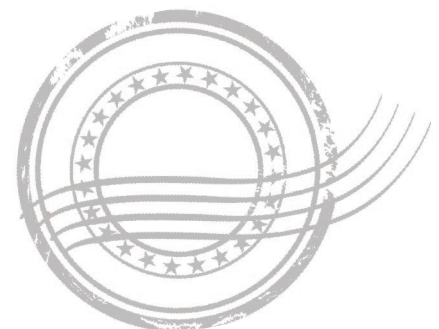
For over 65 years our family-owned business has been delivering free community papers on a weekly basis to south central Pennsylvania. Our papers are sent using saturation mail to every home in our market area. We publish under different banners or titles providing hyper local news to every home in our market. Our papers help our readers follow their local High School Sports, learn about the Spring Musical, and promote the fund raiser for the local volunteer fire company – all at no charge to them.

Our papers are supported by the sale of advertising on our pages and by free standing flyers – also called inserts or preprints. – that our

advertisers or our company can print to be delivered with the paper. From time to time our outside sales team sells a Detached Marketing Label that gets delivered with our paper – and brings added revenue to our company – and to you as well.

Most of our advertising customers are the locally owned independent Mom & Pop shops and tradesman providing essential services to our community. Our sales force helps these entrepreneurs develop advertising campaigns to boost their business. They appreciate the reliability of our publications being mailed. We print and enter our papers into the mail-stream in carrier route sequence, at a weekly scheduled time. Roughly 85% are taken to the DDU by our trucks thereby saving trucking costs and wear and tear on the Post Office's fleet. I've been told and witnessed our papers act as a sort of wrap for each boxes' mail the day of delivery.

Together we have been able to provide a cost-effective advertising vehicle to help local business spread the word about their products and services. (Continued on page 10.)



Free Papers Represent (Continued from page 9)

Today I am speaking for our 16 zoned weekly papers. But I also want to mention the business opportunities for the Postal Service to distribute and partner with the free paper industry nationwide. As the Daily papers lose circulation – the demand and relevance of local papers like mine increases. Nationwide, publications like ours known as Pennysavers, Shoppers or Bargain Sheets probably number 35 million copies weekly circulation. Yet less than 38% are utilizing the USPS for distribution. The remaining 62% are an area of potential growth for the Postal System. We hope to have more opportunities like this to talk about our business and do more together as business partners. Saturation mail and free papers are different from all other marketing mail – we are ‘all in’ -every box on a letter carrier’s’ route on a routine and predictable cycle. We believe this could be a source of growth for the USPS. I know Donna will hope for the chance to talk to you and your team more about that in the future.

We hope we can share a bright future – but this has been a tough time- for our industry and our customers. Last fall due to the hardships from COVID and loss of advertising revenue – we made the painful decision to cut 197,000 pieces from the mail each week. We did not turn our back on the mail or cut by choice. We continued to cover all our markets – but had to cut our frequency from every week to every other week. We want to come



back and hope that the USPS works its plan in a way that helps us do that. We hear you that you are losing pieces along with carrier counts and this is not sustainable. But if the USPS can work with free papers that want to be weekly saturation mail customers, we can bring business back to the mail.

We’d like to increase our presence in the mail this fall. Adding count and possibly exploring new markets. But getting advertisers back will be hard work. Many of our advertising customers set their budgets on a calendar year basis so a mid-year rate adjustment would be detrimental to growth. Some of our big traditional customers – like grocers – have had strong business in spite of cutting their ad spend. We will need to win them back. Many are still struggling with uncertain inventory – or moved their advertising dollars to other areas. They will not come back especially if we need to increase our rates. But we are here to tell you we want to fight for

that business and hope you will help us do that.

Together we are facing many of the same customer challenges. Advertisers these days are quick to jump on the digital band wagon for their marketing needs. We don’t feel this method is as effective as the printed message that arrives in the consumer’s mailbox each week.

Merchants are seduced by the lower cost of digital – regardless of the track record for the printed word. The combined losses due to Covid and digital make it harder to win back customers that we have lost – or where portions of their advertising budgets have been moved to other media. But we are big believers in print and mail. We hope you see our company and the free paper industry as in this together with the USPS.

We, and publishers like us around the country have a dedicated sales force of outside salespeople and customer service reps that promote how our products utilize the US Mail every week for distribution. We’d like to get more businesses using the mail and bolstering their bottom line which is good for them, their employees, and our neighborhoods at large.

I want to continue to tell my readers and advertisers that we are in the mail, every mailbox, every week. Please help us bring back the nearly 10 Million pieces a year we had to cut due to Covid and work with us – and our industry – this year and in the years ahead. (Continued on page 11.)

Free Papers Represent (Continued from page 10)

The PMG was intrigued by John's comments about the use of the Postal Service for delivery. John mentioned that a recent survey conducted by a free paper association showed that only 38% of papers were using the mail. DeJoy asked where that figure came from. John explained that some associations do audit their combined members' circulation and periodically survey papers' distribution methods, and that this was a recent survey result. DeJoy asked if the rest of the distribution was digital. John explained that the other distribution was predominantly carrier delivery or demand. He mentioned that free papers are predominantly "all in" for print. DeJoy seemed intrigued by

these opportunities for future mail growth. He indicated that he would be asking John about that survey. Thanks to the good coverage on survey and industry information about publishers, I have already taken the liberty of making a copy of the portion of this survey that showed this results from the April 2021 issue of Publish and have forwarded the survey report to the Postmaster General.

Other SMC Steering Committee members also represent the free paper industry. I want to extend thanks to Dan Alexander, Steve Harrison, Shari Rapone and Carol Toomey, for participating in our meetings. Harrison and Alexander

were particularly helpful in coaching our speakers during a pre meeting rehearsal call and in helping me draft and edit out follow up thank you and "Where do we go from Here" letter to Post Master DeJoy.

Personally – I have missed the opportunity to see – network – and have fun with many of our Publisher friends and the 'usual' April annual conference events. But I have not lost my faith and confidence in the free paper industry and am grateful for such passionate and dedicated publishers helping me on our SMC Steering Committee and with other postal issues.

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The Gateway to Creative Presentations

Michael Angelo Caruso

Creativity is important when it comes to speaking and presenting.



I once read that Peter Gabriel instructed his session drummer to record Red Rain without using cymbals. It was a unique concept. Cymbals are commonly used for percussive accents and are an integral part of most drum tracks. The idea, by the way, went another direction when Gabriel hired Stewart Copland from The Police, just to play high-hat (cymbals) on the song. Creativity is not always easy. Trying new things requires leaving your comfort zone, often without proof of concept and sometimes with no guarantee that things are going to work out.

Even inserting a new joke into your presentation can be traumatic. Belly flops in public are no fun and these days a camera is often recording the experiment. Salespeople are

particularly loathed to switch it up. No one wants to take a chance on mucking up their commission check.

So there are lots of reasons not to try something creative. Keep your eyes on the prize The goal is to help more people by delivering your content in even more efficient and effective ways. So, what can you do to leverage creativity in your presentations? - Purposely use less time? - Avoid



PowerPoint? - Use only one slide? - Do a "cold open" by starting with a story? - Begin with your call to action? - Move twice as less? - Move twice as much?

I just finished watching Hemingway, the three-part PBS series by Ken Burns. "Papa" was the master of the declarative sentence. He wrote short sentences using short words. You

might consider applying the Hemingway technique to your presentation: - Limit your sentences to twenty words or less

- Don't use words that have more than two syllables

- Double down on repetition or use of the word "and" Let me know if you want help

Get ongoing tips in my Present Like a Pro group on Facebook. If you're under pressure to get creative quickly, let's jump on a call and get you some help right away. Use this form to tell me what's going on.

Michael Angelo Caruso teaches leaders and salespeople how to be better presenters. He's a valued communication consultant to companies and organizations all over the world. Michael has delivered over 2,000 presentations and keynote speeches on five continents and in 49 of the 50 states. He's an internationally recognized expert on the subjects of leadership, selling and improved customer service.

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By John Foust
Raleigh, NC

Ad-Libs

12 ad copy tips

Once an ad's graphic design attracts readers' eyes, it has to say something of value. Otherwise, readers will skip the ad and miss the message completely. Here are a dozen copywriting tips to gain and hold attention:

1. Don't try to appeal to everyone.

Every large group (newspaper readers, for example) is composed of smaller groups (homeowners, parents, accountants, etc.). When you clearly define a specific target audience, you'll be able to tailor the advertising to fit their needs.

2. Make the headline sell.

According to research, four out of five people don't read beyond an ad's headline. This means the headline has to do a lot of the heavy lifting. Its primary purpose is to convince readers to keep reading to learn more about the product being advertised.

3. Give relevant information.

Before they make buying decisions, consumers need to know the answers to several key questions: who, what, when, where, why and how much does it cost?

4. Use simple language.

Readers lose interest when they encounter complicated terminology or long explanations. When that happens, they turn the page or click the button – and the advertiser loses. It's best to keep things simple.

5. Say or imply "you."

Readers care more about themselves than about anyone else. That's human nature. And that's why the focus should always be on the consumer, not the advertiser. "How you can save on your heating bill" is a better message than "How we cut heating bills."

6. Use product benefits to appeal to readers' self-interest.

This is a sensible way to keep the focus on "you." People don't buy features, they buy benefits. They don't buy products, they buy what those products can do for them.

7. Don't exaggerate.

Advertisers lose credibility with words like "unbelievable," "fantastic" and "incredible." Consumers simply don't believe that kind of puffery. And they are likely to disbelieve everything else those advertisers say, even if some of those things are true.

8. Don't make unsubstantiated claims.

When advertisers say their products have certain attributes or accomplish certain results, they should support those statements with evidence. That could be in the form of data, examples or testimonials.

9. Limit exclamation marks.

One sign of weak writing is the overuse

of exclamation marks. If numerous sentences require special punctuation to sound important, it would have been better to use more important words instead. Take a look at national advertising, and you may not see any exclamation marks at all.

10. Don't criticize the competition.

When an advertiser blasts competitors, it looks like sour grapes. Comparisons are much more believable. Some ads even feature charts with point-by-point comparisons of specific features.

11. Create urgency.

If you're running a response ad (as opposed to an image ad), give people a reason to buy immediately. Is inventory limited? Will the offer expire soon?

12. Ask readers to take specific action.

What do you want people to do when they finish reading an ad? Stop by the store today? Call for information? Place their orders now? Don't make them guess. Tell them.

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