

Publish

DECEMBER 2021

LOOKING FORWARD!

2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028

START

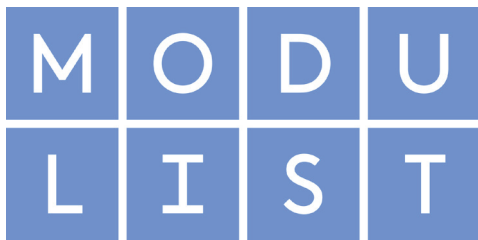
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Publish is a monthly publication dedicated to covering the people, events and companies that are the community publishing industry.

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

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Cover Photo:
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COMING NEXT MONTH

The January *Publish* plan is to look at the cyber security threats that effect publishers. As always, we will also cover the people, information and issues that are influencing the community publishing industry.

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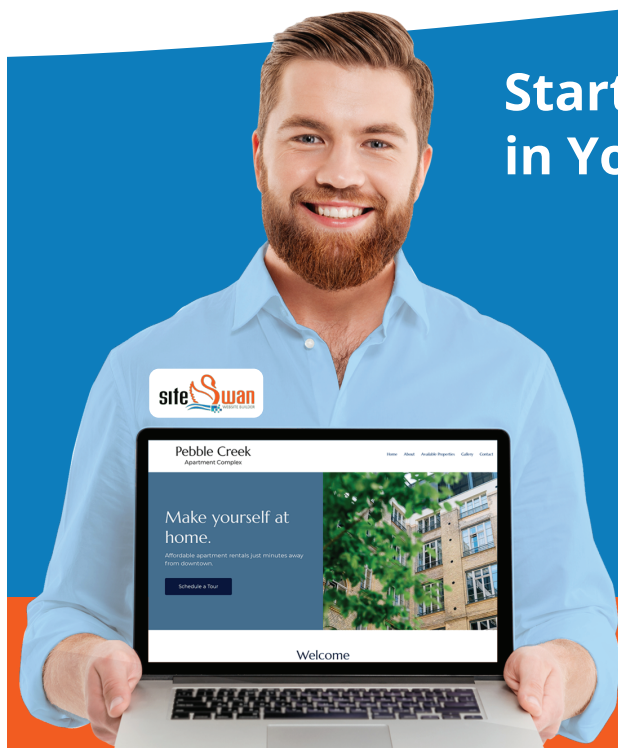
4. Websites Are a Gateway to Other Services

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CREATING OUR FUTURE



JOHN DRAPER
ACP PRESIDENT

One year ago I, along with then-IFPA president, Rick Wamre, penned a column “Coming together.... creating our future.” We wrote of the journey we had taken to unify our national trade associations and what our future together would look like.

Most importantly we stated: “At the core of this unification is maintaining and enhancing value to our members.” Our vision was guided by this statement and plans were put in place to get us where we needed to be.

Planning our actions to achieve the vision is where the real work begins. Vision leads to plans, plans lead to actions, and actions take us through the plan and back to the vision. Sounds pretty simple when taught in a classroom or written in a column, but we know better.

We all know there are a myriad of forces that will impact our plans and our actions. Some of these impacts will be positive and push us forward, while others will serve as detours and slow our path. Regardless, we know where we are going and the planning is what gets us there.

As ACP came through a successful unification vote last December, we immediately began our planning and action process. Forces in our favor included a dedicated staff and board of directors and an

engaged membership. The biggest hinderance we had to plan around was a pandemic that didn’t allow us to meet in person to really hash out our actions. To be honest, good solid planning took a backseat to simply getting the daily and weekly tasks done that needed to be done. Sound familiar?

Regardless of the detour, ACP has seen many aspects of our vision come to reality through our plans and actions. In the spring we held a virtual conference with training, roundtables, and associate member interactions. We conducted our first ACP national conference this fall. We have integrated business systems from two organizations, we have increased our member benefits, and we have come together as a board to lead ACP forward.

In October we finally worked through the travel issues and came together to better define the plans and actions that will take us even closer to our vision. We solidified the belief that we are a member-driven organization and are here to help you become even more successful in your market. Your plans to achieve your success will certainly face positive and negative forces along the way. ACP will be a positive force pushing you forward.

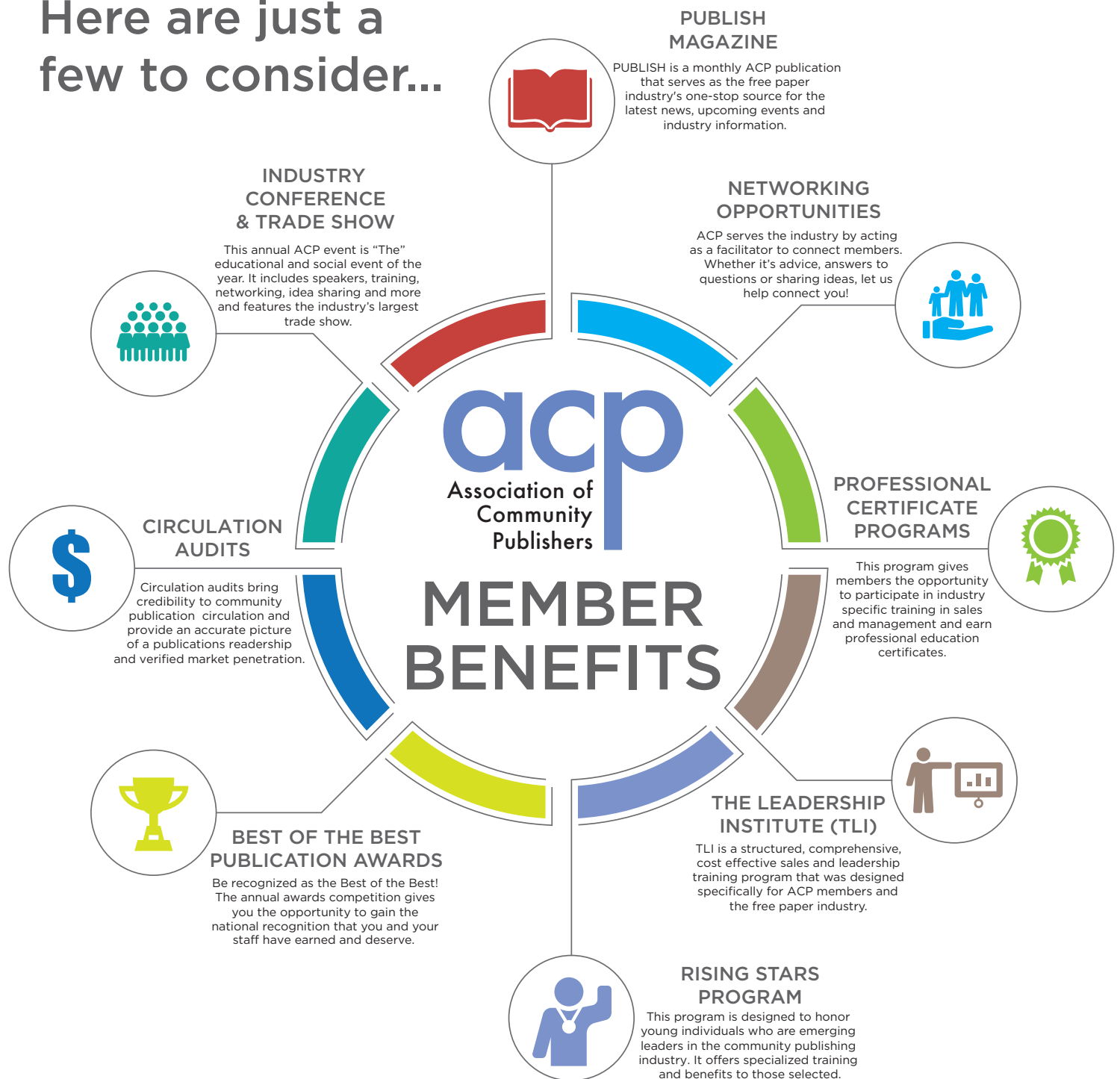
During our strategic planning session, we identified four key areas that, when focused upon, will drive us to our vision. These are: training/education, marketing, members benefits, and events. We assigned people and actions to each focus area and immediately went to work. I feel confident that our plans will get us ever closer to our vision of enhancing value to our members.

Getting back to that column from a year ago.... we have come together, now we are creating our future. ■

“We all know there are a myriad of forces that will impact our plans and our actions. Some of these impacts will be positive and push us forward, while others will serve as detours and slow our path. Regardless, we know where we are going and the planning is what gets us there.”

Are you taking full advantage of all your member benefits?

Here are just a few to consider...



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FOLLOW THROUGH



BY DOUGLAS FRY

As you look forward to a new year you may ask yourself if 2022 is going to be better than 2021. The sad news is that unless you change something for the better 2022 is going to end up just like 2021. Wow Douglas! That was a pretty negative way to start your article. Sorry about that. Seriously though, how can we expect things to get better if we keep doing things the way we always have?

The One Thing you can work on right now that will result in a much better 2022 is "Follow Through." If we compare sports and sales there is a case to be made for following through. Imagine a golf player whose stroke stopped the moment her golf club made contact with the ball. That type of golf swing would look like she was playing Croquet instead of Golf. Or maybe the baseball player whose shoulders and arms stop the moment his bat hits the speeding fast ball. The result of that type of swing would be a series of consistent bunts. You get the idea that in sports follow through is important.

But what about follow through in sales? Sales follow through may not be as obvious as in golf, tennis, or baseball but it can and must be done. Perhaps a story might illustrate The One Thing.

Before I became a community publisher I was the manager of an electronics store. Back then TVs were more like furniture than wall

hangings, stereo was the rage, and a four function calculator was the epitome of high tech. We sold lots of stereo equipment: speakers, amplifiers, receivers, and turntables to play vinyl records. That was when vinyl was cool because there wasn't anything else.

Sales were going alright but we knew we had to do something to increase them. Every day a constant stream of sales reps from radio, tv, and newspapers called on us telling us of the amazing ways they could help our bottom line rocket upward. We relied on the daily newspaper to handle our advertising. But we soon realized in order to improve we had to change. So it was that when a radio sales rep called on us I got her to work up a pretty large order of radio spots to run for two weeks. She wanted me to sign the contract right then and there. I asked her to leave a copy of the contract with me so I could run it past the owner. I would have a signed contract for her to pick up in 4 days.

The owner signed the contract and gave it back to me to hold for the sales rep when she returned. You probably guessed what happened by the title of this article. She didn't come back for over a month. I didn't feel that it was my responsibility to call her and remind her of what she had promised to do. After the radio rep ghosted us, the publisher of a local shopper (the Ad-Pak) called on us. He gave us a copy of his paper, presented his circulation numbers, and even had a mock up of what our ad might look like. All we had to do was decide which stereos to put in the ad. He then told us he would come back in two days to pick up our clip art along with a list of the items to sell and run the ad the following week.

This time the sales person actually did what they said they would. He came back in two days for the

“Call, email, text, or whatever to your customers letting them know that they are important and that you will follow up with them. Keep your word. Finally, when a fast ball approaches the plate swing with all your strength, let the bat go through its entire arc, and watch the ball go over the fence. That's follow through.

THE ONE THING



copy. We ran the ad and watched in amazement as customer after customer came in to the store with a copy of the Ad-Pak in their hands wanting to buy one of the items we had advertised. The newspaper rep was furious that we didn't run the ad with them. The radio sales associate was hurt that we didn't call her to remind her of the buy we had worked up. Really?

The end result is that we switched the majority of our advertising to the Ad-Pak and dramatically reduced

radio, tv and newspaper advertising. Our sales did go through the roof. In fact, after about 6 months I was so impressed by the shopper that I went to work there, became the publisher, and have been in this industry ever since.

What made the difference? Simple follow through. If the radio rep had followed through and merely returned to pick up the signed contract I might be in a totally different business today. Heck, I've been told I have a face for radio. If the newspaper rep had come to us with ideas of

his own rather than simply picking up copy we might have stayed with them. But no one except the Ad-Pak sales rep/publisher bothered to do what they said they would. The result is that we went with someone we could count on. Most people do that.

How do you follow through? Every chance you get input the events of the day into your CRM system or enter it in your calendar app or simply write it on paper and file it so that you see it the day you need it. It doesn't have to be intricate, it just has to be consistent so that you can follow through.

Call, email, text, or whatever to your customers letting them know that they are important and that you will follow up with them. Keep your word. Finally, when a fast ball approaches the plate swing with all your strength, let the bat go through its entire arc, and watch the ball go over the fence. That's follow through. ■



**Greg Booras, National Sales Manager,
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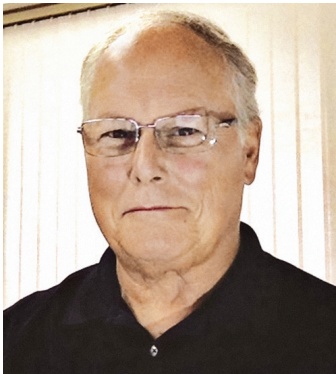
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REFLECTIONS AND VISIONS...



BY LOREN COLBURN

It's amazing just how fast another year heads for completion and we begin to prepare for the next. It actually seems like only yesterday we were making plans for what our objectives for 2021 would be. As the calendar comes to the December close, it seems important to take a look back and assess if we actually made any progress.

Our most important objective for the year was to complete the industry unification process by merging AFCP and IFPA into one association. By April 1st, the Association of Community Publishers (ACP) was finalized and the merger documents and filings all complete! That process determined a structure and Board of Directors that would oversee the transformation of the two independent organizations and their diverse sets of initiatives into one national association with a single, clear vision. A national association that will promote the interests and provide for the needs of an ever-changing industry and membership. Objective accomplished!

The next hurdle was looking for a way to mesh the staffs and programs of two competing organizations into one cohesive, collaborative organization to facilitate the unification of all the working parts of both associations. Ad networks, circulation audits, training programs, events and all the other member benefits had to be transitioned into one stronger and more encompassing program for industry participants while making the process seamless to the members. With the selection of Douglas Fry as the new Executive

Director, the process moved forward as planned and the assimilation of the two groups has progressed much faster and far smoother than anyone had imagined. Objective accomplished.

With the influence of COVID-19 dramatically impacting event planning for 2021, the new organization quickly adapted by moving the in-person Des Moines event from April to September and developing a virtual alternative to provide an April networking and training option. With a successful industrywide participation with the virtual event, ACP offered additional TLI virtual classes over the summer with strong member participation. That lead up to the first large scale industry conference since Las Vegas in 2019, "Growing in the Heartland" in Des Moines, Iowa. This joint conference with MFCP saw 140 participants gather to learn, network and exchange ideas to build stronger businesses. All in all, it was a robust and very successful events schedule – despite the pandemic!

That should help put 2021 in the books as not only monumental historically for the industry as it relates to the unification, but also as it relates to overcoming the impacts of the pandemic to return to programs that facilitate the exchange of ideas and knowledge within the industry. The industry and business in general continues to change rapidly, but this will be remembered as a year where we kept pace with those changes and made significant strides forward.

Now let's look toward 2022. Packed with the potential offered through utilizing our new "strength in numbers" position created by a unified and reformulated association, I believe the sky is the limit as to what we can accomplish. The realist in me says this won't be an easy process and one that will certainly require all-hands-on-deck, but isn't that always the case with things of great value. So full steam ahead into 2022 and with an open mind, a focus on objectives and a willing spirit, 2022 just could be the year that publishers will remember as the year media buyers truly embraced – "If it's FREE, buy it!" ■



THIS MONTH'S FEATURED Association of Community Publishers

MEMBER BENEFIT

Rising Stars Program

The ACP Rising Stars program is designed to honor individuals under the age of 36 who are emerging leaders in the free paper industry. This ongoing program recognizes up to 7 individuals each year who represent the best of our up and coming industry professionals from nominees submitted by our member publications. These individuals exemplify good character, leadership, and professionalism not only at work, but in the communities they serve.

These young professionals demonstrate the promise of and a commitment to impacting their publications as well as the community publication industry in a positive manner through professional achievements. They not only perform their jobs to a high standard, but they also have a commitment to furthering their knowledge and abilities through participation in this national program.

Award recipients are recognized in Publish Magazine, the official publication of ACP and participate in an awards presentation program at an ACP National Conference and Trade Show. They are privileged to receive free conference registration, conference meal plans, specialized training sessions and up to \$500 in travel reimbursements as part of their ongoing active participation. This funding is a joint program of ACP and the Bill Welsh Foundation.

The ACP Rising Stars program does not end with this initial recognition program as Rising Stars are asked to assist the various initiatives of the association on an ongoing basis for up to a total of three years as part of their commitment to the program. ACP recognizes that we have much to learn from these talented young people and desires to use their skills to help us shape the community publishing industry going forward. In return for this participation in regularly scheduled conference calls and for volunteering their time to assist with ACP initiatives, ACP provides additional leadership development training and the opportunity to attend at least one national conference for in-person professional development.

Nominations for the 2022 Rising Stars Program are available for download on the ACP website, www.communitypublishers.com. The nominations deadline for the the next Rising Stars group is December 31, 2021. Nominees that are accepted into the program will be notified by January 31st to begin participation in ongoing Rising Stars activities and conference calls.



BORRELL FORECASTS UNEVEN BOUNCEBACK FOR LOCAL ADVERTISING IN 2022

WILLIAMSBURG, VA. – Borrell released its market-level 2022 Local Advertising Forecast for hundreds of U.S. markets today, predicting another healthy increase in advertising expenditures by local businesses. But spending levels will be uneven market to market, according to Borrell.

Overall, Borrell forecasts that local businesses will increase spending yet again in 2022, by 6.4%, to \$138.9 billion. The growth rate is nearly two points higher than the Compound



BORRELL

Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for local advertising over the past five years and comes on the heels of a projected 9.9% increase this year.

“Because COVID recovery varies by state and by locality, not every market will participate in the bliss,” said Corey Elliott, Borrell’s EVP of market intelligence and key forecaster. “Some markets have been devastated by business closings, which depresses advertising. Other markets have rolled along without much of a hiccup and have even seen some significant growth in new business creation.”

Moreover, Elliott said, a market’s rate of bounce-back in this year will dictate the level of “normalcy” it may experience next year. “Simply put,” he

	YEAR OVER YEAR CHANGE		
	2020 over 2019	2021 over 2020	2022 over 2021
Cable TV	-9.5%	-1.4%	5.3%
Cinema	-33.9%	10.8%	3.1%
Direct Mail	-16.6%	11.5%	3.9%
Directories	-30.1%	-7.5%	-11.4%
Email	-3.9%	17.7%	8.2%
General Paid Search	-4.1%	8.2%	2.0%
Listings Paid Search	1.6%	8.5%	6.5%
Local TV Stations	-8.8%	4.5%	12.3%
Newspaper	-25.9%	-10.9%	-6.0%
Other Print	-17.9%	-13.9%	-7.5%
Out of Home	-17.7%	11.4%	5.1%
Radio	-27.1%	23.7%	-4.6%
Streaming Audio/OTT	1.0%	24.7%	17.8%
Streaming Video/OTT	12.6%	28.7%	18.5%
Targeted Banners	5.4%	12.6%	12.6%
Telemarketing	-15.0%	15.1%	8.7%
Untargeted Banners	-16.5%	3.6%	-4.6%
TOTAL	-7.3%	9.9%	6.4%

INDUSTRY FEATURE

added, “some areas came back faster in 2021 and thus will see modest growth in 2022, while others are still recovering this year and won’t see more explosive growth until 2022.”

In addition to business closings and restrictions on customers, other local factors such as unemployment or natural disasters also drive fluctuations. For instance, Elliott said, Las Vegas is forecast to see local TV advertising expenditures rise at nearly three times the nationwide average of 12.6% next year, while Lake Placid, New York, is likely to see a 3.5% decline. In Biloxi, spending on streaming video/OTT is forecast to rise 38% next year, while other markets may see low single-digit increases in video spending.

Overall, local advertising continues to be a very healthy sector. Money spent on advertising and marketing by the nation’s estimated 18 million local businesses has swollen, especially for digital media.

Elliott said the pandemic has fueled a new trajectory for spending on things like paid search, social media, and streaming video.

“SMBs were spending an average of 57% of their budgets on digital advertising prior to the pandemic,” he said. “They hunkered down in 2020 and 2021 and put a lot more into bottom-of-the-funnel marketing to drive business. As a result, we’re now seeing 65% of their budgets going to digital media and forecasting that it will reach 67% next year.”

SUMMARY OF 2022 FORECAST:

- Local advertising remains very healthy. After a projected 9.9% increase in 2021 — the strongest since the recovery period after the Great Recession — Borrell is forecasting that local advertising will rise an additional 6.4% in 2022, to \$138 billion. The 2022 growth forecast is nearly two points higher

than the CAGR that local advertising has experienced over the past decade. (2010 to 2020).

- The biggest growth in 2022 is forecast for streaming video/OTT (18.5%), streaming audio/podcasting (17.8%), targeted banner advertising (12.6%) and broadcast TV (12.3%).
- Streaming video/OTT is forecast to grow to \$21.3 billion in 2022, more than twice as much as what’s forecast to be spent on broadcast TV advertising.
- Four types of media are forecast to see declines in 2022: radio (-4.6%), print directories (-11.4%), newspapers (-6.0%), magazines and other print (-7.5%), and untargeted banner advertising (-4.6%).
- Despite strong increases in 2021, nine of 17 different types of media advertising will not climb back to the level of spending seen in 2019: Cable TV, outdoor and cinema, all

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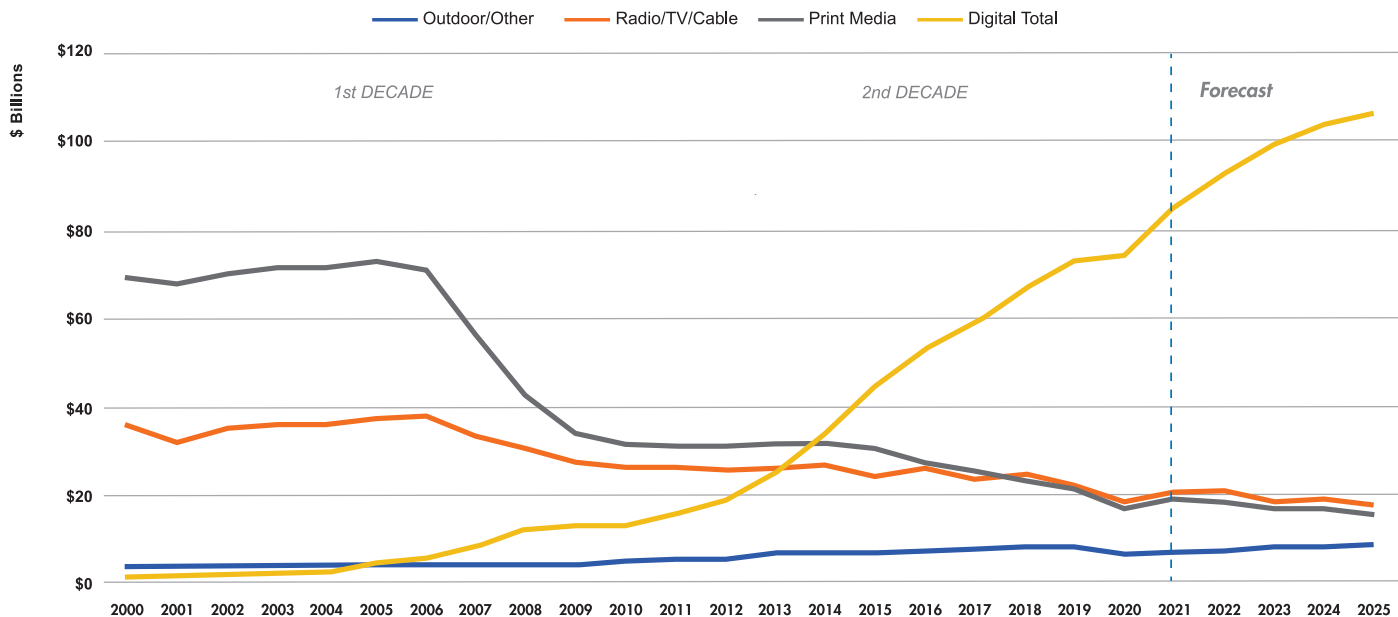
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The Long View of Local Advertising

U.S. LOCAL ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES, 2000-2025



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Source: Borrell Associates Inc., Oct. 2021

forms of print media, radio and untargeted banner advertising. Local TV is the only traditional medium that will see 2022 spending levels exceed that of 2019.

- The good news for newspapers is that the year-over-year decline in local advertising expenditures will drop to single digits, -6%, in 2022. The industry hasn't seen single-digit declines for seven years.
- Individual market forecasts can vary widely from national averages due to severity of COVID-19 impacts, business closings, state or local regulations, unemployment rates, natural disasters, etc. For instance, in 2022:
 - Local TV advertising in Las Vegas is forecast to increase 33.4%, nearly three times the national average, while in Lake Placid, New York, it is forecast to decline -3.5%.
 - National Spot TV in Oakland, California, is forecast to decline

-2.9%, while in Springfield, Missouri, it is forecast to rise 26.3%.

- Cinema advertising in Blacksburg, Virginia, is forecast to decline -9.3%, while in Victoria, Texas, it is forecast to increase 20.3%.
- Cable advertising in Lincoln, Nebraska, is forecast to drop -9.7%, while in Corpus Christi, Texas, it is forecast to rise 29.3%.
- Newspaper advertising in San Francisco is forecast to drop -14.8%, while in Shreveport, Louisiana, it's forecast to rise 12.8%.

KEY FACTS

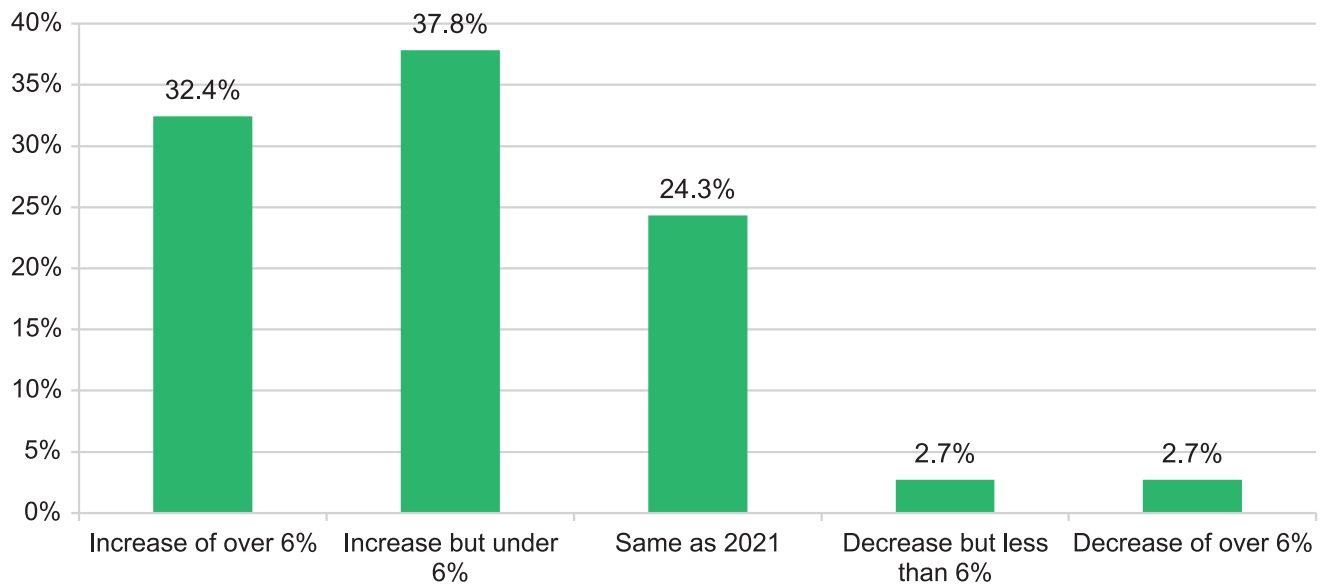
- Borrell's forecast focuses on local advertising expenditures
 - 2019 spending: \$128.0 billion
 - 2020 spending: \$118.7 billion, down -7.3% from 2019
 - 2021 projection: \$130.5 billion, up 9.9% from 2020
 - 2022 forecast: \$138.9 billion, up 6.4% from 2021

- Borrell's data is different than other forecasters' because it is derived from expenditures by local businesses, not revenue from media companies.
- Data comes from business activity in all U.S. markets
 - Covering all 3,145 counties, parishes, boroughs and independent cities
 - Derived from business openings, closings, size of businesses, types of businesses
 - COVID-19 data (infection rates, death rates, business restrictions, etc.)
 - U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) employment data and trends
 - Borrell's ongoing surveys of thousands of local advertisers and local ad agencies
 - SEC and other financial documents (10Q, 10K, company statements, presentations, etc.) ■

THE SURVEY SAYS...

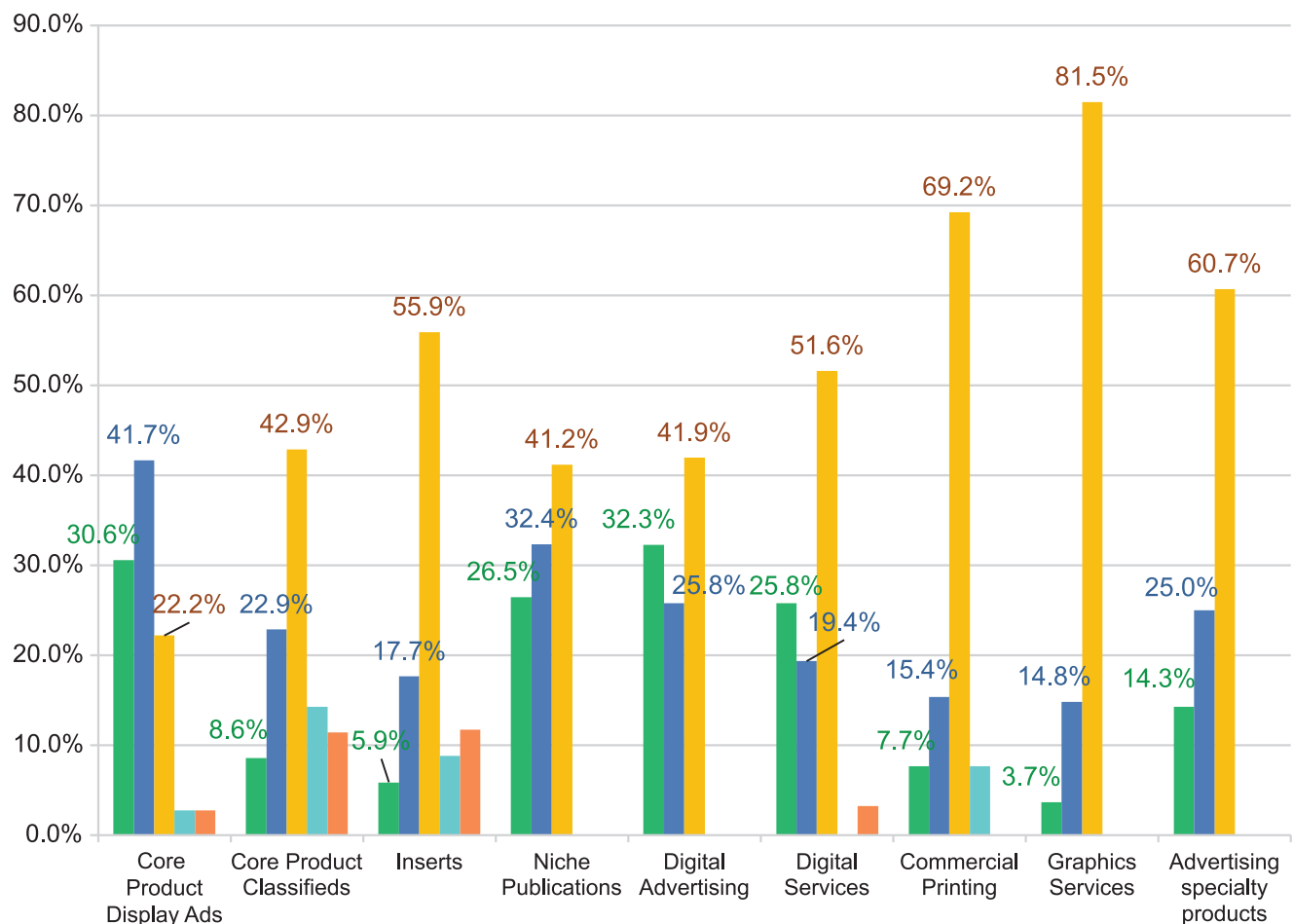


What does your overall 2022 revenue projection look like?

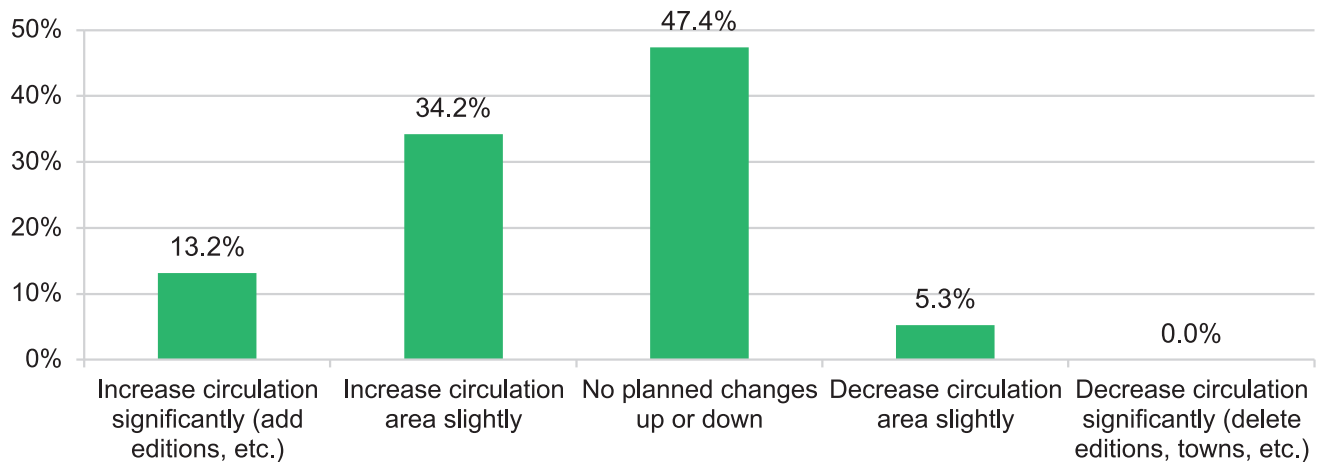


What is your revenue projection by product?

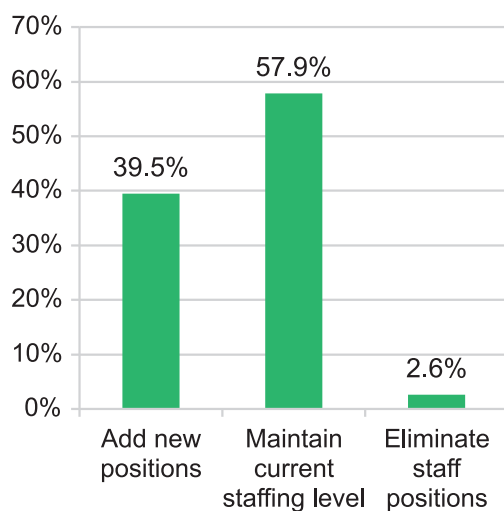
■ Increase - over 6%
 ■ Increase - under 6%
 ■ Remain the same
 ■ Decrease - under 6%
 ■ Decrease over 6%



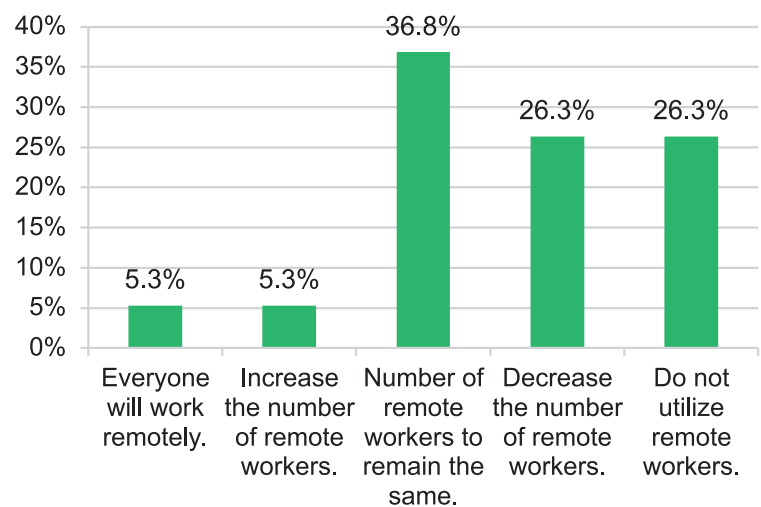
What are your circulation plans for 2022?



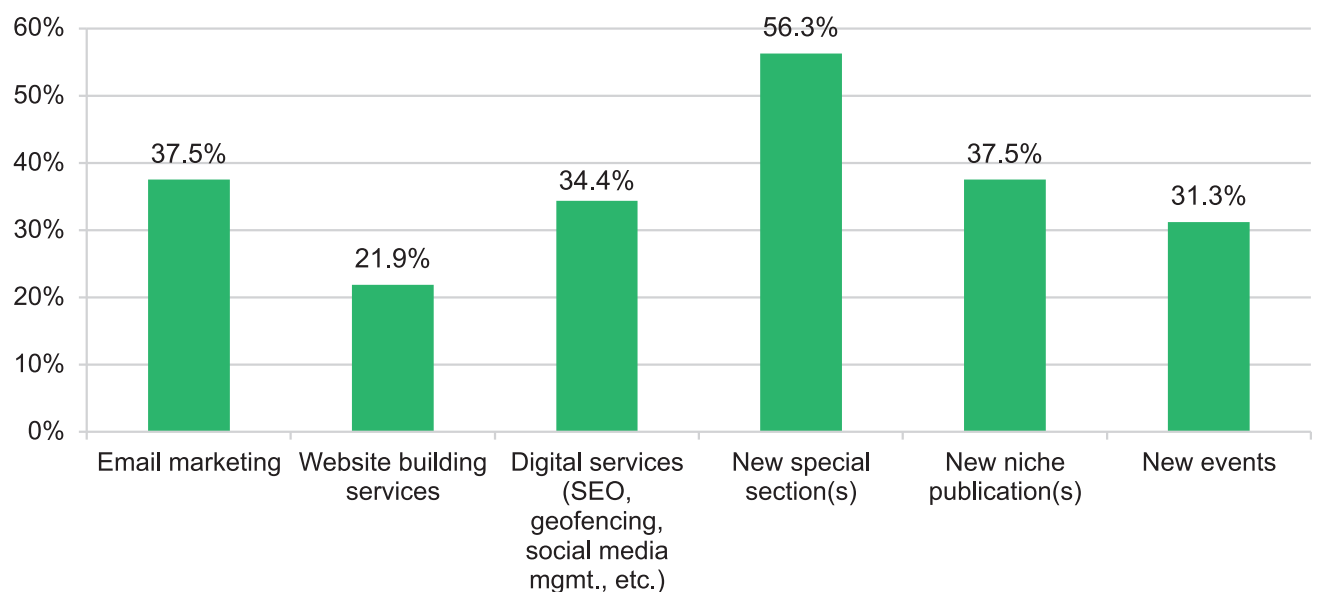
What do you plan for staffing in 2022?



What are your plans for 2022 regarding working remotely?



Do you plan on adding any of the following revenue streams in 2022?



8 GOAL-SETTING MISTAKES – AND 8 BEST PRACTICES

BY MICHELE MCGOVERN

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8 BIGGEST MISTAKES TO SETTING GOALS

There are so many points along the sales journey where something can go wrong. You'd hate to make one mistake so early in the process. Here are the eight biggest mistakes to avoid:

Mistake No. 1: Closing the door

Sometimes sales leaders forget (or choose not) to include all the stakeholders when they're creating sales targets. But the success of any sales initiative depends on salespeople, leadership, customers and prospects.

Sales goals conversations should involve specific customers and their needs, health of the pipeline, strength of existing relationships, depth and quality of a prospect list and trends in business. Sales reps and leaders, plus marketing and customer success pros – who all know the most about risks and opportunities in the customer base – should be in on goal-setting conversations.

Mistake No. 2:

Looking only at history

Sales goals are about looking forward, yet sales leaders sometimes rely solely on the past to set goals. They might set percentage increase in revenue based on last year's results or increase new account acquisition by a specific number.

Historical performance is a piece of the pie. But trends, demands, industry conditions, team capabilities and potential challenges need to be considered every time goals are set.

Mistake No. 3: Aiming too high

We know – your team is smart. You're ambitious. You have a proven record. You should be able to smash goals. So you set them high. Really high. And salespeople struggle

to meet them in the expected time frame, get discouraged and lose their motivation.

One rule of thumb: Be about 80% confident that the goal can be reached.

And remember: every sales goal needs to follow the old-fashioned SMART tool – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely.

Mistake No. 4:

Leaving no wiggle room

Sometimes sales leaders set goals so rigid, salespeople feel crushed long before they miss target – and end up falling even shorter than they might have if they'd had some leeway.

As long as you have a specific methodology for adjusting quotas at a specific point, it's OK to make changes that still encourage salespeople to stretch and cause revenue to increase.

Mistake No. 5: Being too narrow

Sales goals should be about increasing sales. But not entirely. Sometimes sales pros only set goals based on increasing numbers. And they forget about goals based on the activities necessary to achieve those numbers.

Along with sales numbers goals, sales professionals want to set training, reading, networking and personal development goals (that ultimately affect their sales performance).

Mistake No. 6: Being too broad

On the other side of being too narrow, some sales organizations are too broad: They set too many goals, and salespeople don't know how to prioritize their work or targets. Setting too many goals – whether in one or several areas – won't allow sales professionals to focus their time and energy on the goals that matter most.

Set quality – over quantity – goals. Focus on the goals that will realistically improve your organization's health and individual salespeople's careers.

Mistake No. 7: Lacking change

When sales grow year-over-year, sales professionals tend to set more ambitious goals – and understandably so, considering things have been looking up. But growth doesn't happen just by working harder. Professionals need to work smarter – and that almost always involves a shift in the ways of doing things to generate more sales.

So if you continue to move the needle, it's important to also do a gap analysis before setting new, higher goals. Look at the next goal you want to achieve and consider what needs to change to get to the next level. Perhaps it's a stronger system to generate leads or a new product line. Those things need to be calculated into the cost of raising sales goals.

Mistake No. 8:

Lacking accountability

Some sales leaders set lofty goals and never grind down to who's responsible for what. For instance, the team may be charged with bringing in 20% more new business in a quarter. But salespeople don't have individual goals for new customer attainment or existing sales growth. Then many people aren't clear on who's working toward the group goal and how?

Goals need to include objectives and activity levels – perhaps number of client visits, prospecting calls, speaking gigs, email contacts – and expectations for who's doing what. Give people some structure and create consequences for not doing what's expected.

GOAL SETTING



8 BEST PRACTICES FOR SETTING GOALS

Every organization will have different sales needs and goals – and those will evolve over time. So one best practice may fit this year, but not next year. Or a few strategies may make all the difference in motivating salespeople to excel this quarter and leave them bored the next quarter.

Perhaps the best practice of all is to include a regular analysis of your goal-setting to determine what's working and what isn't, the strategies that need to be put to rest (at least temporarily) and new approaches you want to try.

Now take a look at these sales goal-setting best practices – some proven by practitioners and some proven by research.

Best practice No. 1: Reward within a range

Define performance ranges and expectations, rather than an exact, single number goal, suggest Harvard Business School researchers. For example, instead of a \$1 million goal for a salesperson, create a “success range” – perhaps \$900,000 to \$1.25 million. You can have smaller incentives start at the low number and the largest incentives handed out if the salesperson hits the high end.

“If you are less confident about your goal setting accuracy, have a

larger ‘success range’ with a slower rise in incentive payout,” suggest the research authors.

Best practice No. 2: Focus on activities, not just results

When sales are tough to predict, you might measure and set goals for activities that contribute to landing sales. Or add incentives to the activities in an overall “sales capture goal.” You might include new leads generated, VP-level conversations, pipeline movement and cross-sells, for example.

This approach can also sustain salespeople's motivation longer in the sales cycle as they get incentives for incremental steps.

Best practice No. 3: Set shorter time frames

Short time frames between setting and achieving goals can help eliminate issues with goal attainment. It's easier to identify potential shortfalls and correct course when the goal is expected to be reached within a week, month or quarter (depending on your sales cycle).

And if your sales cycle is more complicated and longer, set incremental goals within smaller time frames – rather than one, big end goal – to create momentum.

Best practice No. 4: Cap it

This isn't the most popular goal-setting standard for top performers, but

caps and decelerators can protect against high incentive costs if goals aren't set correctly.

So this best practice is one that you might want to try short-term – to level the playing field, and get a better picture of who's capable of what and in what kind of time frames.

Best practice No. 5: Set a rolling forecast

Traditional forecasts are set on an annual or quarterly schedule because they usually coincide with business financial reporting. Sales leaders tend to look at performance evaluation within that same time frame. With a rolling forecast – set a schedule that makes more sense for your industry, organization or sales process – you can evaluate the opportunities and risks in the near future.

This also gives you opportunities to have rolling, one-on-one discussions with salespeople, who can talk about the health of their pipeline and ways to improve it, if necessary.

Best practice No. 6: Put a hold on goals

Setting goals and incentives for reaching them makes sense in most sales situations. But here's one when you might approach it differently (at least for a short term): You're moving into uncharted territory. When you launch into a new territory or your

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Somebody once said...

“Cheers to a new year and another chance to get it right.”

Oprah Winfrey

sales team is working on completely level ground (every territory has equal opportunity), consider paying on a commission and possibly adding a bonus if the team hits a company-wide goal.

Then, after you see what's possible, you can forecast better and set sales goals according to a different plan.

Best practice No. 7: Stack goals

You can set up several simplified, yet different types of goals, all leading to same target. Try:

- **Waterfall goals.** If you want to drastically increase any activity (perhaps, prospecting calls, emails or appointments) or sales result (perhaps conversions, dollars or volume), raise the goal by 5% or 10% per week until you hit the major goal (such as 50%). It's good for morale because salespeople see incremental wins and they improve performance at a decent rate.
- **Sequence goals.** Determine which goals bring in the highest value when hit, and focus salespeople on that those goals first. When they accomplish the highest priority goals, they can move to the next set of goals. Point is, they'll meet the goals that matter most first.
- **Stretch goals.** When salespeople start to hit sequence and waterfall goals – and you hit the sales results you had in sight – add some stretch goals for salespeople who have proven they work well under pressure. Offer incentives for hitting 125% of a goal, for instance.

Best practice No. 8: Review progress

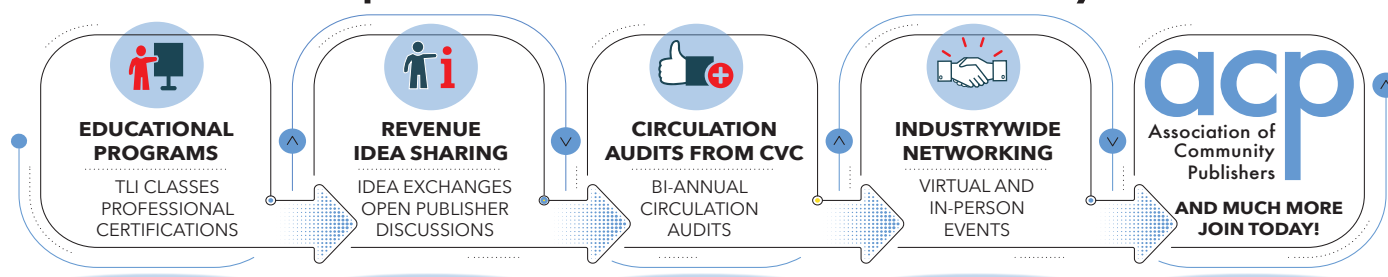
Goals that are set well have a deadline. But you don't want to wait until the deadline to check on progress. When setting goals, schedule dates and times to take stock of what's been done and what's ahead.

One good way: Set small sub-goals for each check-in. Celebrate successes and dig into what's not working so you can adjust and stay the course to hit target. And – if you didn't make Mistake No. 4 of allowing no wiggle room – you can adjust the goal and approach, if necessary. ■

Michele McGovern - Michele is a veteran writer and editor who has focused on what makes businesses rock and roll for more than 20 years. She has authored many white papers for upper-level execs and business news posts on topics such as employee morale, customer service, loyalty and sales.

For more sales related material that delivers practical advice, visit www.ResourcefulSelling.com.

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KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI) FOR PUBLICATION SALES

BY LOREN COLBURN

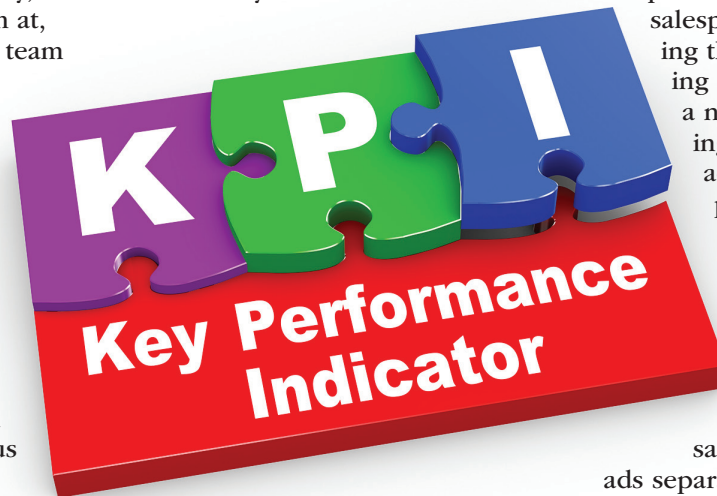
As we fine tune the goal setting process going into 2022, it is important you make sure to include the components that will maximize the chance for your success. Putting an overall goal of "increase company sales by 10%" is often both the beginning and the end of how many of us set our sales projections. In reality, that may be a great target to aim at, but it fails to provide individual team members what actionable activities they can take to help your publication reach that goal.

What your team really needs is short term goals they can directly impact and will provide clear indicators of either success or failure. That's where we need to include Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that will generate the clear feedback needed to help salespeople focus their time and energy on the tasks and projects they have control over and that directly contribute to that overall company goal.

What are some of the KPI metrics that publication sales teams can utilize to drive and measure performance? The following is a list of some of the measurable, performance metrics that will provide opportunities to produce individual sales targets that Rob Zarrilli tells us must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound). By defining KPI this way, we make sure that outcomes are clearly identifiable as pass or fail. Let's look at some ways we can all measure performance.

DOLLAR SALES – Most of you will immediately jump to the old standby of tracking Dollar Sales – probably the most common target we all set and monitor to track our sales-

person's effectiveness. Although it is one that you need to keep a close watch on, it does not define specific, actionable activities for the salesperson. This "non-activity specific" approach will quite often leave salespeople confused or discouraged and not provide the necessary direction to assure success. Let's focus more on some activity connected KPI.



NEW ACCOUNTS – Here is a KPI that if used as a target for salespeople, will direct their activities in a positive direction. Let's say the target is 2 or maybe 3 new accounts per month. This will direct activity toward making more cold calls to achieve the necessary target. It can force more attention to accounts of all sizes since it is not dollar specific. New accounts will help make up for the natural attrition of business closings, credit problems and other advertiser discontinuations that are a normal part of ad sales cycles.

NUMBER OF COLD CALLS – I prefer the new accounts KPI over this one as it helps focus salesperson attention on the quality of the call itself, but the sheer number of cold calls made each week can drive sales increases. One way to keep call qual-

ity in focus is to also track closing rate percentage of cold calls made. This keeps reps from just knocking on doors to make a number, they need to incorporate meaningful calls to be more successful.

INCREASED FREQUENCY – Tracking account activity by the number of insertions per month or quarter can provide targets for salespeople to focus on increasing the engagement from existing customers. This KPI places a needed emphasis on focusing reps attention on having advertisers continue existing programs while adding insertions in special sections rather than shifting dollars from normal weekly ad budgets. Car dealers are a great opportunity for this KPI as it puts an emphasis on having salespeople target service ads separately from new or used car sales to build account frequency. To put this KPI in perspective, if an account was averaging 3.0 insertions per month (36 per year) and you can get them to increase just three ads per year, that should amount to 3.25 insertions per month and an anticipated 8.3% annual sales increase if ad size is consistent!

INCREASED AD SIZE – This one may be statistically more difficult to build and track but is a great way to build on existing advertisers who appreciate the power of your publications. I always sold by the column inch, so tracking the number of inches/pages each advertiser purchased month to month was part of our normal tracking. If you can move that ¼ page advertiser into a ½ page advertiser for just their four largest promotions (one each quarter), that should produce a 7.7% sales increase

"HOW TO" FEATURE

with that customer annually. Determining customer averages and setting a targeted increase in average ad size going forward can be supported by incorporating spec ad programs that illustrate to customers how effective the additional space can be.

NUMBER OF CALLS PER DAY/WEEK – This one, much like cold calls, needs to be mindful of making sure “calls” are meaningful discussions about advertising and not just hit and run marathons designed to satisfy a count. If the quality of the calls is maintained, there is a great deal to be said about the more people you talk to and the more times your talk to them, the amount of success a salesperson will have is going to increase. Remember, 80% of sales require 5 follow-up calls and 66% of salespeople give by the time they get the second “no.”

NUMBER OF ORDERS PER ISSUE – Tracking how many ads a rep writes each issue and basing one of

their KPI on this metric is a proven performance enhancer. Like new accounts, this KPI takes the focus off just the “homerun” accounts that consume full pages and makes the small advertiser important. The old adage that eight 1/8 page advertisers will be worth more over the long term than one full page advertiser becomes most apparent on the day they stop advertising. There is strength in numbers when it comes to advertisers.

INCREASED ZONE COMBINATIONS – For those of you who have multiple zones to offer, there is no more profitable sale than an ad that picks up an additional zone. There is no extra graphics required, no sales time to expend and no additional accounting cost to invoice/record payment. A KPI built around the average number of zones per insertion or the average number of zones for each account and some targeted increase will produce increased sales but even

more importantly, increased bottom lines due to the inherent efficiencies.

These activity-based KPI will clearly define what salespeople need to focus on to meet their objectives and that should translate to the publications meeting their overall objectives. A year is also a long time and adjustments to the targets may need to incorporate unforeseen circumstances that were not anticipated in December when the targets were agreed on. Things like pandemics, business closings, supply issues, etc. impact advertisers and we need to adjust expectations when necessary to avoid having salespeople get discouraged. The key is to have specific methodology for adjusting targets and to be uniform in the application to all your salespeople. Once you define both the objectives and the activities required to be successful, the monitoring and feedback should keep everyone focused on activities that move everyone in a positive direction. ■



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Members' class credits are recorded and maintained in the ACP database for every TLI participant. Once a member has completed a prescribed number of credits

in the classroom or from the Online Learning Center, they are eligible to take the comprehensive exam at the ACP national conference. When a member has completed the following requirements, the ACP Board of Directors confers upon that member the designation as a certified Associate Advertising Executive.

This year in Des Moines, Iowa the following individuals joined the 134 previously certified as Associate Advertising Executives, by having completed the following requirements:

- 15 Unduplicated TLI Class Credits with a minimum of 6 obtained in ACP conducted in-class training sessions.
- Passed the Comprehensive AAE Exam
- Completed at least one full year on-the-job experience with the member publication.



GREG BRUNS –
Arcadia News, Phoenix, AZ

Greg Bruns is the publisher of the monthly community newspaper, ARCADIA NEWS. Greg started out as a writer in 1997, when he approached his neighborhood paper about printing a humor column he had just created. The freelance writing gig led to advertising sales, photography, graphic design and publication production (back when

InDesign was v 1.0). In 2001, the owners offered Greg the opportunity to purchase the publication.

The father of two teen boys with wife Jennifer of 19 years, Greg volunteers frequently in his community. He has seven years of leadership with Scouts BSA, where both of his boys are active. Greg has held a position on the AFCP board and served as Conference Chair for the ACP Conference last September in Des Moines.

PAT CHECKETTS –
Cityview, Des Moines, IA

"Pat Checketts is the CITYVIEW magazine advertising manager at Big Green Umbrella Media in Johnston, IA. Pat has been with CITYVIEW since October 2020. Prior to CITYVIEW, Pat worked in production and

ad trafficking at the Meredith Corporation in Des Moines for a couple years, and prior to that had a fourteen year career in community newspapers in Nebraska.

In his spare time, he enjoys camping, biking, live music and trying new recipes with his wife Jennifer. Pat is a 2004 graduate of Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska."



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



MANUEL KARAM – Genesee Valley Publications, Avon, NY

Manuel Karam is currently Director of Advertising Sales and soon to be General Manager of Genesee Valley Publications (GVP) in Avon, New York. GVP's flagship Penny Saver reaches over 85,000 homes in the region each week. The company also serves its customers and

readers with a number of niche titles, printing and promotional products and digital solutions.

Manuel is currently First Vice President of ACP and is grateful Elaine Buckley convinced him to get this AAE certification! Prior to joining his wife's family's business in 2017, Manuel was an attorney practicing law in the insurance and investments sectors in Baltimore, Maryland.

LISA MILLER – New Century Press, Rock Rapids, IA

Lisa Miller is General Manager at New Century Press (NCP), an independently-owned group of 21 weekly publications covering communities in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. Lisa has experience in a variety of roles including circulation, production and management and is currently overseeing operations for 4 free-circulation community publications for NCP. As a manager, she respects work-

ing with a great team and starting new projects while continuing to grow core products.

Lisa's 20 years of community publication experience provided an opportunity to get involved with the MFCP board culminating with her term as President which just concluded. Lisa was elected as a director to the AFCP board in 2020 and subsequently as an at-large director with the ACP board. She is married to Ryan and has two children, Devin and Kylee. Devin is a junior at Iowa State and Kylee is a senior in high school.



MARTHA MUNRO – Iowa Living Magazine, Johnston, IA

Martha Munro is an Advertising Account Executive for Big Green Umbrella Media in Johnston, Iowa. Big Green Umbrella Media publishes the Iowa Living Magazine and the Des Moines CITYVIEW along with several supplemental publications.

Munro started selling advertisement in the Iowa Living magazines in 2020 and enjoys meeting with new and current customers to consult on their advertising needs. Outside of work, Munro enjoys spending time with her family and friends, reading books, and cheering on her favorite sports teams.

DEBORAH PHILLIPS – The World, Barre, VT

Deborah Phillips' first love of the newspaper business started in high school, blossomed in college at Eastern Michigan University's newspaper and eventually ended up in central Vermont at The World in Barre, VT. The World newspaper The WORLD is weekly every Wednesday and is circulates 14,000 newspapers throughout Washington, Orange and Lamoille counties.

Phillips is past president of IFPA and Community Papers of New England (CPNE) and current treasurer CPNE, as well as Vermont Press Association. She is also on the board of the Advertising Distribution Services, a subsidiary of ACP. Phillips and her husband, Rob have two daughters and are now proud grandparents of 2-1/2-year-old Liam and 8-month-old Henry. Phillips enjoys reading, Pilates, and going to the movies as well as cats, gambling, and chocolate.



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LOOKING FORWARD

BY JIM BUSCH

“Never look back unless you are
planning to go that way.

—Henry David Thoreau

A few years ago I read a story in Popular Mechanics written by a championship race car driver. The article offered advice on how to drive like a professional and maintain full control of your vehicle in all situations. One bit of advice he offered was “Always keep your eyes in the direction you want your car to go.” This might seem like unnecessary advice; don’t people always keep their eyes on the road ahead of them? The driver noted that when a car goes into a skid or a spin, amateur drivers often focus on what they are going to hit rather than on getting their vehicle back on the road. They lock their eyes on that big roadside tree or lamp post. When a driver does this the car obediently follows their gaze into that obstacle with a loud bang.

While intended for the roadway or the racetrack, this advice also applies to the highway of life. Psychologists have long known that the head follows the eyes and the body follows the head. We are simply hard wired this way. There is a reason that great leaders are described as men or women of vision. They keep their eyes totally focused on where they want to go and on what they want to accomplish. In life, we end up where we set our sights. Having a clear goal to move toward is a powerful motivator. The challenge we face is that we are climbing a mountain whose slopes are shrouded in fog. We have no way to know what changes and challenges we will encounter along our way. The one thing that we know about the future is that we need to face up to it and meet it head on. We can’t afford a minute longing for “the good old days,” we need to constantly move toward our future goals. We need to believe that whatever comes our way we will adapt to it and continue to grow and to thrive. Thoreau put a lot of thought into what it means to live a successful life; here is another thought from the sage of Walden Pond, “if one advances confidently in the direction of his/her dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he/she has imagined, he/she will meet with a success unimagined in common hours.” ■



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DEVELOPING SALES POWER IN YOUR MARKET BATTLEFIELD



BY BOB BERTING,
BERTING
COMMUNICATIONS

What can be done to develop greater sales and image power in your market battlefield? Although there are many activities that can be worked to achieve greater recognition in the market place, there are certain guidelines that will give an immediate plan. These guidelines will help your salespeople be accepted as advertising consultants, help publishers give direction to their sales management, and serve as a yardstick for recruiting quality people.

SIX BUILDING BLOCK GUIDELINES

1. Have all salespeople work with customers as a trusted friend and advisor. In this time of crisis, it is important to ask “How can I to help you?” and “What can I do for you?”

2. Don’t keep bombarding customers with dozens of ways to advertise. They should be sold on the publication as the major player in their media mix and on an ongoing program that requires consistent advertising on a set basis. Many well meaning publishers will constantly start new promotions and put pressure on their salespeople to sell them. The end result is that the customer sees the salesperson as a peddler and order taker who wants to constantly add more costs and changes to a set program, not a trusted advisor.

3. It is absolutely vital that salespeople know and understand their media competition to effectively compete against them.

4. All advertising plans submitted to prospects must feature programs with consistent, repetitive advertising. Salespeople should always present plans, packages, campaigns, and programs, even when the customer is not sure how much they want to invest during these stressful times. The key is to show advertisers how to be innovators and be prepared for a sustained period of advertising that will keep their top of

mind awareness going through a critical time frame.

5. If possible think about a revival of a cross functional team, involving salespeople, graphic artists, tele-marketers, and marketing support people. Publications with these teams will achieve a greater relationship with their customers and will see greater response to their creative efforts.

6. Have a recruiting and interviewing policy that requires new salespeople to have the following traits:

- A. Excellent communication skills**—can they paint word pictures verbally?
- B. Good attitude and values**—hire people you can trust, especially if you know they will be a part of a cross-functional team.
- C. Good work ethic**—are they goal oriented and can they manage their time—especially customer contact time.
- D. Creativity**—are they innovative, do they have good ad design ability? Can they put together a marketing plan?

The bottom line is that a publisher can win on the battlefield by constantly working on their branding and top of mind awareness.

The harsh reality of most competitive battlefields is that few come in second and do well in today’s environment. Consequently every effort must be made to develop a tough sales force that has the right attitude toward the publication, the customer, and the skill of selling advertising programs to develop top of mind awareness for their advertisers. ■

Bob is the author of 4 e-books for the newspaper industry, available on 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 or 317-849-5408.

ADVERTISING IS ALL ABOUT MOTIVATION



BY JOHN FOUST
RALEIGH, NC

When you peel back the layers of advertising philosophy and technique, it all comes down to one thing: Motivation. People buy things because they are motivated. And the most effective ads are those that appeal to the right motivation.

There are two basic motivators: (1) desire for gain and (2) fear of loss. Think about your own experience and it's easy to see that your purchases can be traced to a desire to get (or maintain) something you want or to prevent the loss of something you don't want to lose.

This goes for big and small buying decisions. Why do you move to a new house? (Real estate experts say the three biggest reasons are location, location and location.) Why do you buy new tires when your old ones wear out? (Fear of an accident.) Why do you go to the movies? (Desire for entertainment.) Why do you wait for something to go on sale before buying? (Desire to save money.) Why do you buy a convertible? Why do you join a gym? Why do you buy an insurance policy?

Smart advertisers find – and stick with – the right motivators to sell their products and services. Take tires, for example. Although every brand of tire is built for safety, Michelin took that universal benefit to a new level – with imagery of smiling babies riding in the protective embrace of their tires. That strategy positioned Michelin as the “safe tire” – a benefit that is tied directly to a major motivator for parents.

You can do the same thing for your advertisers. Simply identify a dominant motivator and package it in the form of a benefit. Then make that benefit crystal clear in the headline and graphic images.

“People buy things because they are motivated. And the most effective ads are those that appeal to the right motivation.”

Here are some formulas to write better benefit headlines. Look for the motivational elements.

1. “How to _____ (fill in the blank).” In many cases, whatever you put after the words “how to” will automatically promise a benefit. For example, “How to simplify your vacation plans”... “How to learn a foreign language”... “How to lose five pounds in five days.”

Some words are powerful links to basic motivators. “Protect” and “secure” are strongly connected to fear of loss (“How to protect your home from intruders”). And “save” and “increase” are associated with desire for gain (“How to increase your gas mileage”).

An interesting feature of a “how to” headline is that the words “how to” can be dropped to create a shorter version of the same statement. “How to secure your retirement” can become “Secure your retirement.”

2. “Save ___ on ____.” This headline requires a specific dollar figure or percentage. (“Save 40 percent on new carpet.”)

3. “Quick and easy way to ____.” This is a promise of hassle-free ways to do things. The words “quick and easy” can be used together or alone. (“A quick and easy way to do yard work”... “A quick way to refinish furniture...” “An easy way to find the right camera.”)

4. “Free” offers like ... “Buy one sandwich, get one free” or “First month’s rent free.” ■

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

Graphic Hooks

By Ellen Hanrahan

hanrahan.in@att.net ©2021

The end of another year... and I think I am going to spend a great amount of time next year upgrading/purging my **Type 1** fonts. It seems that every document I open now alerts me to the fact that I have **Type 1** fonts in that document!

A brief confession... I intended to get to some **Adobe Max** sessions, and I, in fact did not. Hopefully I can still have access to some of those sessions... but my vacation was refreshing (even met a graphic designer from the U.K.)

Start with a Concept... and Typefaces

It's time for special sections and promotions and also a time to figure out graphics and what typeface to use for head lines in these special sections. I always work with a theme (mentally—sometimes obvious and sometimes not) because it helps to give direction to my choices. One Christmas tabloid we did was called "Flights of Fancy" so I needed to choose a typeface that was somewhat whimsical, like **Monotype's Curlz MT...**

Flights of Fancy **Flights of Fancy**

... or **Whimsy ICG** (Image Club Graphics). Both give a "visions of sugar-plums" feel and take up the same amount of space, but **Whimsy ICG** also has a bold and heavy weight so it could be used for call-outs and/or subheads too. So **Whimsy** it is—although both of these are **Type 1** fonts :(

It's not always easy to know what typefaces to use, but try to determine what the mood of the article or section is and let the type do the talking, a "**visible voice**" (John McWade, and a little more about him later).

When in doubt, choose a typeface that offers a family of different weights and styles—it gives variety and consistency, also **Curlz** might be a tad more difficult to read (personal thought).

Flights of Fancy!



The text typeface for the Christmas section was **Shinn** by **Red Rooster**.

This entire paragraph is set in **Shinn** so you can get an idea of the "pairing." This sans serif typeface has some of the "round" characteristics of the headline type and also repeats the round quality of the artwork, but offers a clean, easy-to-read contrast and informal style in keeping with the mood. The idea is to unify all the components for easier readability and lessen the distraction of "jarring" elements.

Coordinate The Graphics

Metro Creative Graphics offered a wide variety of art-work and I really like what I call "roundhead art" that I have used throughout the years—I used them in promo pieces and gift guides. There's a series of santas, elves, reindeer, trees, snowmen, etc. This art would work for a series of ads or in self-promotion pieces, too.

Have a plan. It helps to find the right artwork to develop a theme or mood for the message(s) to provide continuity. The right art provides flexibility with type use because you can alter the art (size, position, etc.) while maintaining control of type use in the space.

No matter what type of artwork you choose—line art or photo—make it work with the text or message and not just fill "empty" space. If you don't have a lot of room... crop! It's not necessary to fit the entire graphic into an ad to make it effective. Don't worry, the eye will finish off the necessary information for you (Gestalt theory of Continuation). Again, if you use the artwork to draw attention to an ad or area, don't decorate! Using more art will only diminish the impact of the original art. Keep it simple.

Nostalgia and Food for Thought

Earlier I mentioned John McWade, so I thought I would take a little time and share some of his ideas about design, because he was one of my first "mentors."

John McWade is the founder and voice of **Before and After: How to design cool stuff**. I received the premier issue in 1990 and was absolutely amazed by the beauty and information packed into those first sixteen pages. He not only understood the art of design but also the science of design and advertising and proceeded to share his knowledge with his readers. It was design specific, software changed, but his focus was always about the design. Visit his site...

<http://www.mcwade.com/DesignTalk/about/>

In 1995 he wrote a piece about his ideas—that design was for life. Desktop publishing was just beginning when he started his publication. Here are some of his thoughts...

"What does it take to be a designer?"

- 1) It starts with an interest. ... I started by being interested, and began to love it after I...
- 2) began acquiring skills. ... if you're going to make it happen you need to get your hands on it, ... get involved, ... work the tools.

This is what makes the computer exciting; it's a store full of tools. With it you can set type, you can draw pictures, you can modify photos. You can design every aspect of every page, print it in your office and see the results in seconds. ... Today the whole show is in the box on your desk. "To succeed as a designer it's important that you respect your need to learn. Give yourself room; there is a lot to know. I'm not telling you to stop short of the highest. But take pleasure in every small victory on the way up.

Design is not a contest, and what I mean by that is you can't lose, not as long as you keep at it. You may not get this job or that, but you'll get better and better."

Still great advice... even more so today with all our modes of communicating! See you next year!

Happy Holidays to all!

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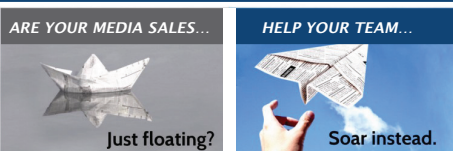
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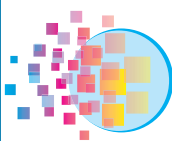
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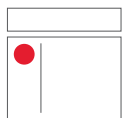
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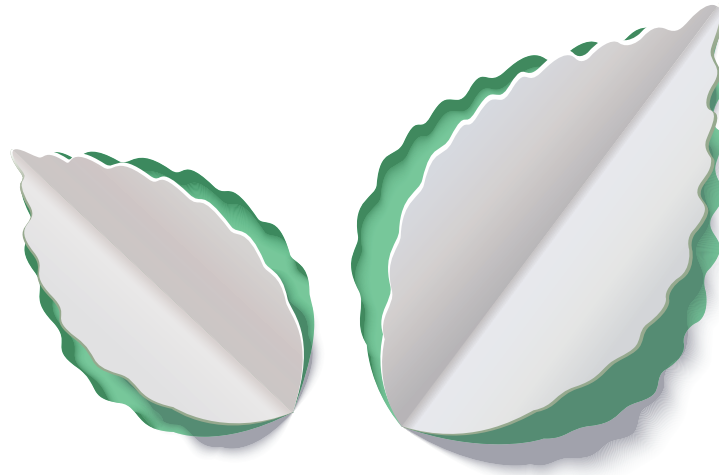
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