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APRIL 2022

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Association of Community
Publishers, Inc.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Douglas Fry

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

Email: Loren@communitypublishers.com
Douglas@communitypublishers.com
Cassey@communitypublishers.com

MARKETING REPRESENTATIVES
Wendy MacDonald
Kristi Dale

3105 Camino Del Arco
Carlsbad, CA 92009
Office: 913-461-3721
Email: Wendy@plan4growth.com
Email: Kristi@plan4growth.com

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
Design2Pro
www.design2pro.com

Howard Barbanel
516-860-7440
Email: howard@design2pro.com

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

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

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COMING NEXT MONTH

The May *Publish* plan is to take a look into how publications can reduce cost while maintaining quality. As always, we will also cover the people, information and issues that are influencing the community publishing industry.

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



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



Jane Quairoli
Kapp Advertising
 P.O. Box 840
 Lebanon, PA 17042
 janeq@themerchandise.com
 717-273-8127



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



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



Carol Toomey
 Action Unlimited
 100-1 Domino Drive
 Concord, MA 01742
 carolaction@aol.com
 978-371-2442



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



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



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



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



Joe Nicastro
New View Media Group
 5 Dancer Dr.
 Budd Lake, NJ 07828
 joe@mylifepublications.com
 973-809-4784



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



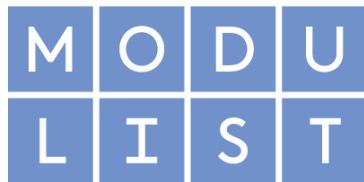
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Greg Birkett
Dubuque Advertiser
 2966 JFK Road
 Dubuque, IA 52002
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 563-588-0162



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



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



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A KICK IN THE PANTS



JOHN DRAPER
ACP PRESIDENT

The first weekend in March I had the pleasure to join fellow free paper lovers in Ames, IA for the Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP) Spring Conference. As with the vast majority of industry events I've attended, this conference revealed the overwhelming enthusiasm we all have for our industry.

The past number of years have certainly given us much to be worried about. No need to list them. But how refreshing it is to see genuine enthusiasm for the future of our publications.

So why the enthusiasm? From my conversations it seems that many publishers have learned valuable lessons in lean operations. As revenues trend up with the slowing of the pandemic, efficient operations forced upon us during the pandemic may now be showing up on the bottom line.

I also think local print gained a bump in trust and credibility through the pandemic years. Readers and advertisers are looking for media they can trust, they are looking for consistency in a topsy-turvy world, they are looking for partners who were there for them during good and bad times. These are not necessarily new qualities of free papers, but I think qualities that have come to the fore. This is a testament to enthusiastic publishers, designers, and sales reps who didn't stop servicing our customers when we easily could have.

Could it be that my view of industry enthusiasm is tainted because I pen this column having just returned from Ames? I think that's an assessment with some credibility. However, attending that event might be just what I needed.

A little kick in the pants to remind me to stop worrying and take action, a conversation with another publisher about what's working for them, or learning some new sales tips will all build some enthusiasm. That's a good

thing. That's why groups like ACP and MFCP conduct these events for their members. It's to give us that little kick in the pants to push forward. If we think we don't need that, we're lying to ourselves.

Is it coincidence that publishers at these events are optimistic, yet realistic, about their futures? Is it coincidence that these event attendees are overwhelmingly enthusiastic? I think not. I think their optimism and enthusiasm are a reflection of the fact that they attend industry events. If you've been wondering if there is a measurable return from attending industry training sessions, stop. The answer is "yes".

“ Our goal is your success. With roll-outs of new training platforms, a variety of virtual and in-person events, and a robust network of industry peers, we will continue to build enthusiasm and offer that kick in the pants to push you along.

True to every training session we attend, the biggest value is what outputs we create with the information or ideas we take in. Enthusiasm can be quick to fade. Notes from a discussion or training session can be buried under a pile of to-do items. What you do is up to you, but please know that ACP and other groups like MFCP will not stop feeding you these inputs.

Our goal is your success. With roll-outs of new training platforms, a variety of virtual and in-person events, and a robust network of industry peers, we will continue to build enthusiasm and offer that kick in the pants to push you along. ■

TRAINING



BY DOUGLAS FRY

You might have heard me talk about the need for training, practice, role play, or andragogy. OK, not so much andragogy (which means adult education) but the rest for sure. Anyway, let's talk about the need for training. In the old days we learned from what were known as "books." Whether it was at school, Sunday School, or new software we learned by reading about it and then trying it out. But that only goes so far.

As a foolhardy young man I enjoyed mountain climbing. In fact, by the time I reached my 19th birthday I had climbed all the peaks of the Olympic Mountains visible from Seattle. For pleasure I read every book about mountain climbing I could get my hands on from the local library. But reading about mountain climbing is not the same as actually doing it. It helps, but nothing can replace the real thing. So, I supplemented my reading with training out on the rocks.

Near our home was a low mound of rock called Green Mountain. You could drive to the top. We used the cliffs around the summit of Green

Mountain as our practice area. We would rope up with safety lines and harnesses and then attempt to climb up the face of those cliffs. Each time we practiced or trained we learned something new. So, when the time came to actually get out there and climb a wall of rock or ice we knew what we had to do. The best part about practicing at Green Mountain was that the penalty for failing was very mild. The person at the other end of the rope would belay or catch you if you "fell." Your ego was bruised but you came away relatively unscathed.

Training today involves web based tutorials, YouTube videos, and, yes, even books. ACP is offering a new member benefit of training for you and your teams at Power Sales University. If you were to purchase PSU for your team it would cost \$1,800 per month! Yet another reason to belong to ACP. To take advantage of Power Sales University you log in to the system and participate in sales training videos by sales professionals then take a short quiz to make sure you understand the content or technique. Once you have passed that quiz you are able to go on to the next topic. Have I said the content is great? Well it is. Plus, there is enough content to keep your newest hire or your most seasoned veteran learning for years to come.

We are also adding videos from TLI (The Leadership Institute) so your

people can obtain credit for those courses even if they don't attend in person. Finally, we are adding content for graphics, front office, and other areas of your business that is industry specific and designed to help everyone succeed. I don't know if you have realized this but it's harder than ever for publications to be profitable. ACP provides the tools and support needed to be more successful. Power Sales University is one of those tools.

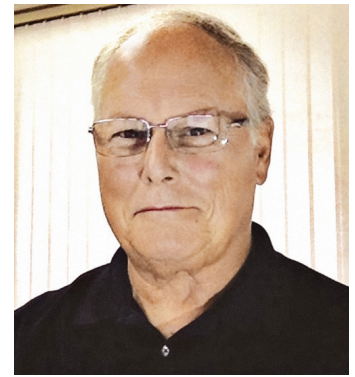
If you merely point your people toward the PSU (Power Sales University) site and expect them to watch every segment on their own, becoming proficient merely by watching a video, you'll be disappointed with the results. Not because the content isn't top-notch. But because they haven't internalized the material without proper practice or training. Remember Green Mountain? The place we could try, fail, and keep trying until we succeeded in a safe environment? The parallel here is found in your own office.

Give your people the assignment of training on one specific topic at PSU. Then have them practice what they learned during your next sales, graphics, or front office meeting. This will be that safe environment where it is alright to fail because they are among friends. They will keep trying until they succeed using the new technique or training topic they learned. Then they take that new skill and use it in real life for the next week or two, reporting back to your team any modifications they found which helped them be more successful.

In order to reach new heights at your publication you and your people need to continue learning better techniques for success. If you got this far I invite you to listen to a 5 minute Podcast about Training/Practice/Role Play on the Elev8 podcast library found on the www.communitypublishers.com website. Just click on the Podcast button at the top of the page and you are ready to learn. Andragogy at its best. ■



“WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IS UP TO YOU”



BY LOREN COLBURN

According to the U.S. Labor Department's latest Job Openings and Labor Turnover report, 2021 shattered all previous records with a whopping 47.4 million people voluntarily leaving their jobs for a different job. That record was a product of a variety of factors. One factor being the 4.7% wage rise was well behind the 7% consumer price index jump year-over-year, causing people to look for income growth by changing companies. Add to that the fact that there were 58 unemployed workers for every 100 job openings as of December, this puts additional pressure on companies offering higher wages to attract the right talent. It has reached such a high level that economists have coined this employee exodus, “The Great Resignation!”

So what options do publishers have to help hold on to existing employees as well as attract people to fill inevitable openings that come up? Most publications will admit they are not in a position to increase payroll costs while experiencing sales declines and margin erosion. The good news is, for employees, it's not always about the money. According to LinkedIn's 2019 Workplace Learning Report, 94% of employees say they would stay longer at a company if it invested in their learning and development. This same study indicated 75% of employees would take a course their manager assigned.

If we look specifically at sales training, it would actually help increase the income of your sales personnel as they gain sales proficiency, while at the same time increasing job satisfaction and company loyalty based on the research. That's a huge win-win scenario for employees and publications. The only question left is the



return on the investment for the cost of the training program. That's where ACP membership and member benefits really come into play!

ACP has made the investment on behalf of its members in a new training option that you will find detailed in this issue of Publish. We urge member publications to take the time and opportunity to examine this comprehensive and robust sales training material. Without adding any additional cost to member publications, member sales personnel can immediately begin to experience ACP's new On Demand Training Center based on their own personal schedule. The existing curriculum will methodically guide each salesperson, regardless of prior experience or training, through every critical aspect of the art and science of sales.

So let's recap this together – increased sales, increased job satisfaction, increased company loyalty, no additional costs, available 24/7 to eliminate scheduling problems! What could possibly prevent this from having an amazing impact on the community publishing industry? Just one thing could stand in the way, commitment. Regardless if you are a salesperson, sales manager or publisher reading all this, without your commit-

ment to instituting a regular training routine, all the resulting benefits will never impact your company.

We have all heard Rob Zarilli say many times, “What happens next is up to you!” in his training classes. The truth of the matter is, he is 100% correct. We can provide the material for you, we can cover the cost for you, but we can't make you commit to taking advantage of the opportunity. It will be easy to make excuses not to institute a regular, ongoing training program for salespeople – “we can't afford the time out of the territory” – “we are too experienced to need this training” – “we have tried this before” – and on and on we go. The truth is...you can't afford not to take advantage of this program. If you are too experienced to learn anything more, you should consider retirement! No matter what you have tried before, it will only impact one aspect of this program – your level of commitment and your attitude to make it happen!

All we ask is that you look this program over with an open mind, a focus on sales growth and improvement, and a desire to increase job satisfaction and company loyalty. If enough of our members will commit to that, we will commit to building on this program to incorporate modules beyond just sales training to benefit your whole company. Plans are in the works to expand the training content to include graphics, office staff and management components. All that is missing is your commitment to utilize what has been provided. Once we have that, we are one large step closer to each buyer's commitment to “If it's FREE, buy it!” ■

2022 ACP & SAPA JOINT LEADERSHIP SUMMIT SPONSOR PROFILES

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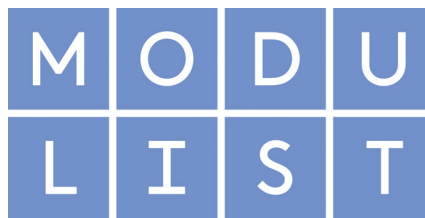
MODULIST

Modulist, a media services company, specializes in the processing of user-generated, community content submissions for any media type, regardless of size, frequency or distribution platform.

Our tagline is “Publish life’s stories,” and that is our mission. We match people and businesses wanting to publish vital content in the local media products where they want their content published. We do this with a world-class online portal where clients submit their content, such as business announcements, classifieds, letters to the editor, obituaries, death notices and milestones like birth, engagement and wedding announcements sent directly to one or multiple media outlets through one, single transaction.

Our process is simple, efficient and intuitive.

1. Readers build their content placement.
2. We format content to match publication’s specs, including column sizes, specific fonts and photo size and resolution.
3. Readers proof their ad on the platform or with downloadable pdf before payment.
4. The platform collects payment for the placement, with an option for readers to save their info for later placements.



5. Our team does quality assurance
6. Publication receives ready-to-place pdf for all printed publications and a digital file into your content management systems.

Our process assures media organizations keep their community content within their publications.

Simply put: We process the work on your behalf; provide white-glove client service seven days per week; produce a quality order for all of your platforms, and newspapers keep their revenue.

“Modulist will add depth to your professionalism and efficiency to your operation,” said Aaron Becher, Forum Communication Co.’s vice president of newspapers operations.

Publishers experienced an increase in submissions after onboarding Modulist. Letitia Lister, publisher of the Black Hills Pioneer in Spearfish, South Dakota, described how their paid content process change once they started using Modulist.

Like many community newspapers, the Pioneer managed obituaries with a decades-old process. As Lister put it, the Pioneer staff was working harder, not smarter, on obituaries.

“We were losing too many obituaries and the revenues they could have generated,” said Lister.

“What I first liked about Modulist is all the people there come from a newspaper background. They understand the inefficiencies of processing obituaries.

“With Modulist, families and funeral homes can upload obituary text and photos themselves. Modulist’s staff verifies, edits and prepares the obituaries for us. We started using Modulist during June 2021, and our obituary revenue increased 48% from 2020, itself a year of above-average obituaries because families couldn’t have in-person funerals.”

Modulist’s President Devlyn Brook said Lister experience is his team’s ultimate goal, so newspapers can focus on their vital journalism to help communities thrive.

“Our mission is to establish a long-term partnership with our clients, helping to position them for the future by decreasing production costs and increasing revenue,” Brooks said.

Set up a Demo today.



ASK-CRM

ASK-CRM is an “affordable” Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool developed and designed specifically for the media industry by seasoned media

industry professionals. ASK-CRM is currently deployed to over 200 weekly and daily publications, with distribution ranging from 5,000 to nearly 200,000. Accordingly, our client sales staff’s

range in size from a single account executive to more than 100. Regardless of your scenario, ASK-CRM truly is a “tool that streamlines media selling” for everyone. We can help!

For starters, ASK-CRM captures all advertising customer information, along with the associated sales transactions from your business system to present a total picture of your customer landscape. By doing this, your sales team can easily target inactive and churned accounts at the touch of a button. Gone is the time consuming, arduous and complex process of extracting data from your business system so that you can manipulate it into a spreadsheet for distribution to your sales team. Instead, ASK-CRM automatically provides robust, flexible and up to date information to everyone involved with the sales process; freeing your time for coaching, selling and driving more revenue!

Now that your business system sales history is in ASK-CRM, it is simple for anyone to create targeted lists. Point and click filters are available to isolate advertisers based on their activity in certain publications or rate codes. Perhaps you want a list of advertisers in a

specific zip code, city, county or state. Maybe you want to find all of your inactive accounts. One can even create and maintain your own custom groups of accounts based on any criteria you need. All of this flexibility means that you can create call lists at the click of a button for your entire sales team and have the calls assigned to the account owner or anyone of your choosing. You can even use your custom lists for emailing. Whether you want to send individual emails to your contacts or if you want to send the same email to everyone in a mass email, ASK-CRM is up for the challenge.

We have integrated a robust html email editor, complete with tracking statistics (opens, clicks, etc.). Our email editor also allows you to create emails that include mail merge functionality so each email is individually addressed and personalized. Plus, we can include hyperlinks to your sales flyers or to an advertiser's previous ad.

Yes, we even host final versions all of your prior ad history as part of our integration with your systems. The ads are organized and included as part of the customer information for each and

every one of your advertisers. Gone are the days of searching through the archives, looking for an old ad for an advertiser. Just another way we give you more selling time.

Another feature that saves time and finds revenue is our “flexible” advertiser churn analysis. By default, each account executive is provided a year-over-year view of the current month picture. Additionally, they can easily see comparisons by weeks, months or years. Whatever fits their current needs is available in less than 5 seconds. No more waiting on someone to run a report and email it to them. Providing this information aids your team's account retention and reactivation efforts.

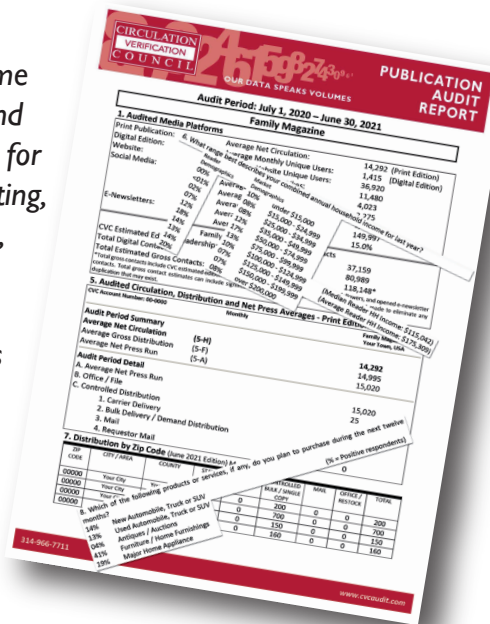
ASK-CRM is loaded with additional features like contact management (complete with email address validation), automated call reports, and milage tracking/logging; just to name a few.

As they say...the proof is in the pudding and several of your ACP friends are already clients. Please reach out today so we can talk in-depth about your needs and evaluate how we can assist.

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CVC

CVC provides circulation audits and readership studies to newspapers, magazines, shoppers and niche publications throughout North America. CVC audits include print, website, digital edition, social media, email marketing, mobile and text media. CVC readership studies utilize a multi-tier study platform that gives publishers accurate demographics spanning multiple media platforms. Eligible ACP members receive all CVC services as a free member benefit.



JANUARY SPRING

January Spring serves agencies, publishers & resellers, acting as your back-office digital media buying partner.

Whether your business is in the midst of its own Digital Transformation or has fully embraced the need to service your advertising clients with an agency approach – you've found the right partner with January Spring.

As you get to know us, you'll see we don't act like a big, stuffy firm. Our team has built a proven model to enhance your offering to include off-site digital using a combination of geo-fencing, device targeting, household targeting, paid social, and search marketing.

Going beyond our back-office heavy lifting, January Spring will coach and mentor your reps as they take digital to market. We'll help with pricing, packaging, pitches and proposals. You will always have a digital expert at your side.



SCS

SCS's business is providing software to the newspaper industry. Family-owned and employing a staff of US-based developers, sales and support staff, SCS has long been a trusted vendor for publishers of all shapes and sizes.

SCS's Community Advertising System (CAS) packages the core systems a publishing company needs to put out a paper. CAS includes retail and classified order entry, accounts receivable, display ad dummyming, classified pagination, ad production management, and news pagination management. CAS also comes with web-based self-service modules for customers to place classified ads, proof display ads and view electronic tearsheets.

Each CAS component can be purchased separately and can integrate into your current workflow. Our Production Suite – Layout-8000, SCS/ClassPag, and SCS/Track – fit in nicely with most of the other systems on the market.

Check out SCS's rebranded editorial system, now known as the Community Publishing System (CPS), if you're tired of paying exorbitant fees for legacy systems. CPS is perfect for content creation, curation and multi-channel distribution with edition planning and monitoring, is web-based, and integrates beautifully with Adobe InDesign.

In 2021, SCS introduced the premiere tool for Automated News Pagination. It's called ANP and it uses SCS AI to assemble complete, output-ready editorial pages with ads, photos, captions, headlines, page furniture.

SCS's subscription packages are backed by 24/7/365 support with NO PER CALL CHARGES and include either SCS-provided Local Cloud Appliances or a cloud-based instance.

ACP members The Genesee Valley Penny Saver, Kapp Advertising and Hometown News use SCS's systems every day. Talk to us to learn what SCS can do for you!

Google News Initiative

GOOGLE

The Google News Initiative works side-by-side with publishers and journalists of all sizes to build a more sustainable, diverse and innovative news ecosystem. We offer a range of resources, products and digital expertise to support the advancement of quality journalism, stronger and more sustainable publisher business models and collaborative solutions that spur progress across the industry.



MSG PAYMENT SYSTEMS

MSG PAY

Many publishers collect payments through multiple software or online platforms for subscriptions, ads, and classifieds. We see that scenario often and know it can result in extra administrative work and unnecessary costs. No matter which systems you use, we can streamline your merchant account and make A/R more efficient.

We've provided merchant services for newspapers since the early 2000's and can help you:

- Save labor hours
- Simplify A/R
- Reduce unnecessary fees
- Minimize inefficiencies

Get the technology you need to accept payments now + into the future. We work with you to ensure your systems are the right fit for your business and keep up with how consumers want to pay. Contact us to discuss what improvements your business could use at hello@msgpay.com or 888-697-8831 or visit msgpay.com/contact.



WHUTSFREE

WhutsFree is a new app that allows consumers in areas all across the U.S. to get something new for FREE, with no purchase necessary and no strings attached through local and online offers. Everyone knows that NOTHING BEATS FREE!

WhutsFree can be a huge win for your publication and allow you to expand into the mobile ad market without cannibalizing your publication. Our Co-Founder Loren Dalton has over a 25-year background in local publications and was President of the Nor Cal Pennysaver (circ. 3,000,000) and created WhutsFree with publishers and local advertising in mind.

Publishers partnering with WhutsFree are co-branded and white labeled on the app to your publication. You are the hero bringing the free offers to your community and as we grow you are seen as the owners of a well-known nationwide app! This is a great way to have additional recognition in your community and to expand your publication's reach to digital only consumers.

There are zero start up fees and once you sign up your geography is protected. It's all yours! We pay a 50% commission on all revenue sold in your territory, 80% on all sponsorships sold and provide 3 tiers of startup bonuses (earn an extra \$2,750 in bonuses alone). This is a great zero cost way to add a digital component to your publication and to grow extra profits for your publica-

tion. Grow revenue by gaining a "foot in the door" with businesses saying no to print and build a relationship with them to later leverage them into print as well as having another way to provide additional methods of advertising for businesses in your area. As the trusted local publication, you can control the print and digital markets in your territory!

For more information call us at (833) 948-8737 or email us at publishers@whutsfree.com

If you are interested in signing up, we can get you started as soon as next month!



CUMMINGS PRINTING

Since 1914 Cummings has specialized in the printing of short-run publications. We offer a streamlined pre-press workflow through InSite, multiple heat-set web presses and strategic mailing options like co-mailing and destination drop-shipping. That said, the strength of our company lies with our dedicated

employees. We work for you. Clients never get lost in the shuffle. Every job gets the attention it deserves.

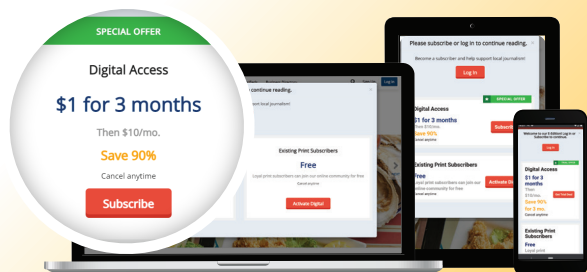
As a four-generation, family-owned company with over 100 years of experience in publication printing we know what service is all about. Every day we strive to make sure our clients know that they are never just another account. We value our relationships and it has served us well through the years. We make sure you utilize all the efficiencies possible and answer any questions you have. That's our job.

Our objective at Cummings Printing has been simple: provide customers with a quality product, delivered on-time and within budget. Although "Quality" may be an overused cliché at some companies, at Cummings it is a way of life. As an ISO 9002 company, Cummings has implemented a quality management system that involves every employee, from customer service through shipping.

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WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT— PRODUCT TRAINING OR SALES TRAINING TO DRIVE DIGITAL SALES?

BY ALINA MCCOMAS – VICE PRESIDENT AND SENIOR CONSULTANT, THE CENTER FOR SALES STRATEGY

Product-focused training and sales skill training – both are important to increase the knowledge and expertise of a sales team, but which is more important? Which has the larger impact? Before I answer that question, let me define the differences between the two to make sure that we are all on the same page.

PRODUCT TRAINING

Product training focuses on the nuts and bolts, on educating your sales force on *the features and benefits of what you sell*. What the product (or service or solution) is, what problems it's intended to solve, how it actually works, what it costs in its various configurations, how you handle it internally to ensure the client gets what they bought, and everything else you might need to talk about the product. Most product training is delivered in a classroom environment where the facilitator is doing most of the talking and answering questions along the way.

SALES TRAINING

Sales training, on the other hand, is less about the product and more about *how to help the prospect relate the product's capabilities to their problems*. Most products and services these days need to be configured, applied, tailored, or integrated in some fashion in order to maximize the ROI the client sees on its purchase.

In other words, it's about creating value. As a result, sales training¹ teaches how to converse with the prospect about their needs and how

to collaborate on solutions. The goal is to give salespeople the confidence to go out and discuss how their products can be used to deliver results, which is much more than just how it works. The ideal environment for sales skill training is small groups that promote interactivity, application of what has been learned, and group discussion.

WHICH IS MORE ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS IN DIGITAL MEDIA SALES?

I have experienced both product training and sales skill training first hand, as a participant and, in recent years, as a facilitator. I can say with confidence I know them both inside out. Each has its place in driving results, but I have come to realize that, at least when it comes to selling digital media, sales training drives results faster and further.

Salespeople need to understand the products² they have available, so this tends to be a big focus in the

digital media space. This emphasis gets an extra push due to the fact that it seems like a new product or changes to existing products are introduced almost daily. However, while training focused on terminology and product details will typically deliver a bump in sales immediately following a training session, it often fails to sustain results and retain customers.

Why? Because it does little to build the salesperson's confidence to go deep into the prospect's needs and to collaborate on solutions that deliver superior value. Deploying digital media products thoughtlessly, without tailoring and integrating them into the client's marketing and sales system, often delivers profoundly poorer results. Without that confidence and that collaboration, the right conversations never happen and clients drift away, either before buying or after experiencing limited value.

I remember, just a few years ago, one of our largest clients simultaneously purchased digital media product training from one vendor and digital media sales skill training from us. A year later, they canceled the product training and focused exclusively on the sales skill training we were delivering, because they saw clearly which initiative was powering their sales team forward. I see the real world results in every digital workshop³ I facilitate. We spend very little time on the details of the specific products salespeople have, and most of our time on understanding needs and how to converse, collaborate, and configure. Since 2015, we





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INDUSTRY FEATURE

have helped our clients generate close to \$26 million in new digital business in just the first 90 days following our various digital sales skills workshops. Far more was generated in months and years following.

DON'T TRAIN JUST FOR THE SAKE OF TRAINING

Executives and managers who like to be able to check off "training" on the list of things they think they ought to be doing often purchase product training, check the item off their list, and move on. They see little return, can't understand why, and lose confidence in all training. Those who connect training with their corporate objectives and their sales strategy are more likely to provide their people with sales skill training, to see results, and to maintain that investment.

The companies that get it right also know that the training must live beyond the workshop, that their people need to apply what they've learned, they must continue to learn, and most importantly, that their line managers must support the transfer of skills from the classroom to the field.

Much like doctors need to stay abreast of changes in the practice of medicine, salespeople and managers need to stay current with the rapid changes in digital media. ■

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Editor's Note: This post was originally published in March 2015 and has been updated by the author.

¹ <https://360learning.com/blog/engaging-training-for-sales/>

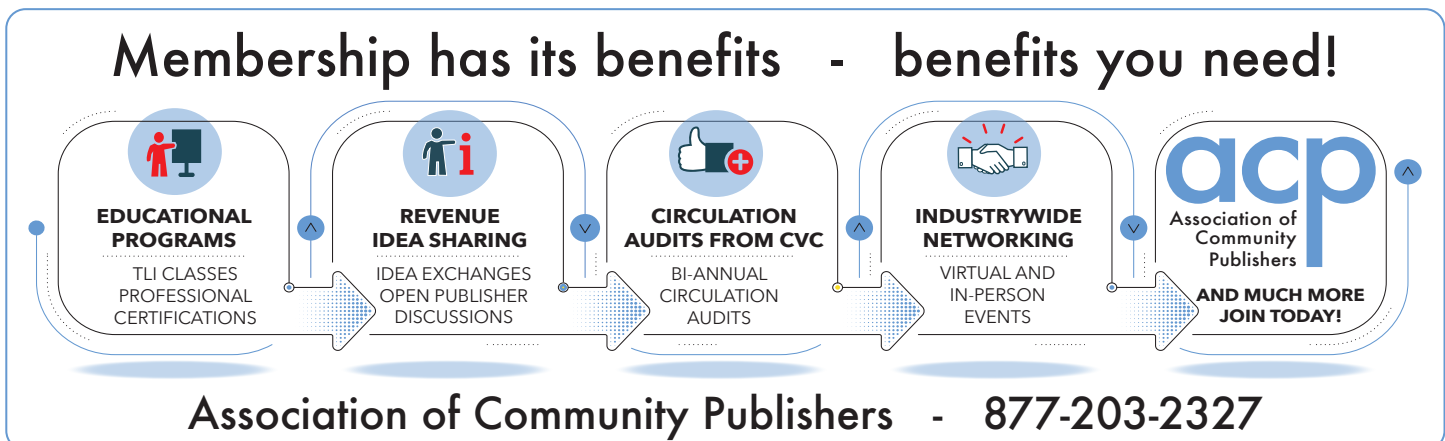
² <https://blog.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/blog/bid/106233/SELLING-DIGITAL-ADVERTISING-The-Magic-of-the-Digital-Needs-Analysis>

³ <https://www.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/services>

alinamccomas@csscenter.com

Original article – <https://blog.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/which-is-more-important-product-training-or-sales-training>

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MANAGING EMPLOYEE TRAINING

BY JAMES A. BAKER – FOUNDER OF BAKER COMMUNICATIONS

One of the most important tasks of a manager is to ensure that employees are properly trained. We are all aware of this, yet many of us have a tendency to enroll a new employee in the company training program or assign a senior employee to mentor them, and consider the job done. Additional training for existing employees tends to be a low priority because it takes time away from their regular work.

Then, when an employee is ineffective, lacks knowledge of company policy, or demonstrates a poor understanding of how to do some aspect of their work correctly, we wrongly assume the problem is with the employee.

Managers are busy people. With so much on your plate, taking the time to ensure your team is properly trained can be a challenge. However, good training is critical to the success of your employees and your team. Aside from the most obvious advantage – that a properly trained employee will be able to perform his or her job effectively and efficiently – there are a number of other reasons why training your employees well should be a top priority.

EMPLOYEE MORALE

Employees want training, especially when they are new on the job. Very few people enjoy being thrown into an uncertain situation without first being equipped with the necessary tools to handle it. When you, your company trainers, and senior employees take the time to make sure the employee has all the training they need to be successful, it demonstrates that you care about and are willing to invest in the employee's success. For the new recruit, this inspires confidence in the company and a willingness to adapt to their new role.



An effectively trained employee will be able to integrate more smoothly with your existing staff and gain the approval of co-workers. The resulting positive feedback will keep new employees happy and motivated. A well-trained team functions better as a group, which fosters higher morale, and contributes to greater success.

Proper training, and the resulting level of confidence and satisfaction, greatly contributes to employee retention. Nothing will kill an employee's motivation like being left to flounder and fail. An employee who dreads coming to work every day because they don't know what they are doing is not an employee who is likely to stick around for long. Employee turnover is a costly and inconvenient problem – far more costly and inconvenient than getting the employee adequate training to begin with.

MAKING YOUR JOB EASIER

While taking time out of your regular schedule to help with training may seem like a hassle at the time, your return on investment is likely to make it all worthwhile. You know that good training will give you a more effective employee, but what does that mean for you in the long run?

For one thing, you'll spend less time compiling constructive feedback and cleaning up after the mistakes and messes made by a poorly trained employee. Someone who doesn't

understand their job, know the proper procedures, or have adequate resources will only create problems. These headaches and problems can all be averted by providing thorough training at the outset.

A well-trained employee will be better able to take responsibility for their own work, and ask fewer questions. While you should always be open to questions from employees, especially during the initial training period, the ultimate goal is to get your personnel up and running on their own two feet.

Once they find their footing, employees will gain proficiency and eventually develop into a valuable resource – someone to whom you can delegate. Delegation is one of your most powerful management tools, but obviously you won't be able to assign anything to an employee who doesn't understand the job. Grooming employees to take on more responsibilities is an important priority with huge potential payoff for the manager.

THE BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE TRAINING

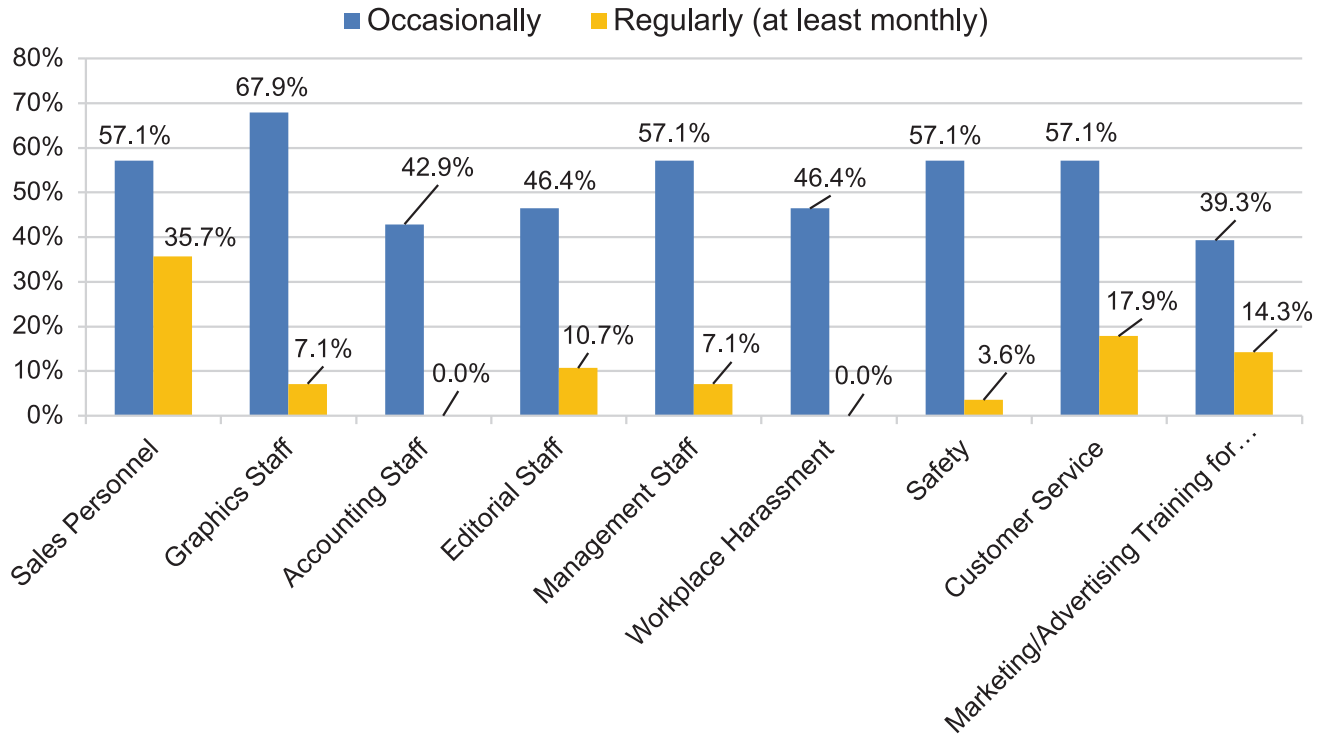
Effective employee training is a group effort, but the final responsibility for ensuring your employees are adequately trained rests on you as the manager. The training process is time intensive, but in the long run the investment is well worth the effort. Your team members will be more motivated, more confident, more effective, and more able to take on responsibility. Good training is the foundation of your team's future success. ■

James Baker
Baker Communications
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THE SURVEY SAYS...

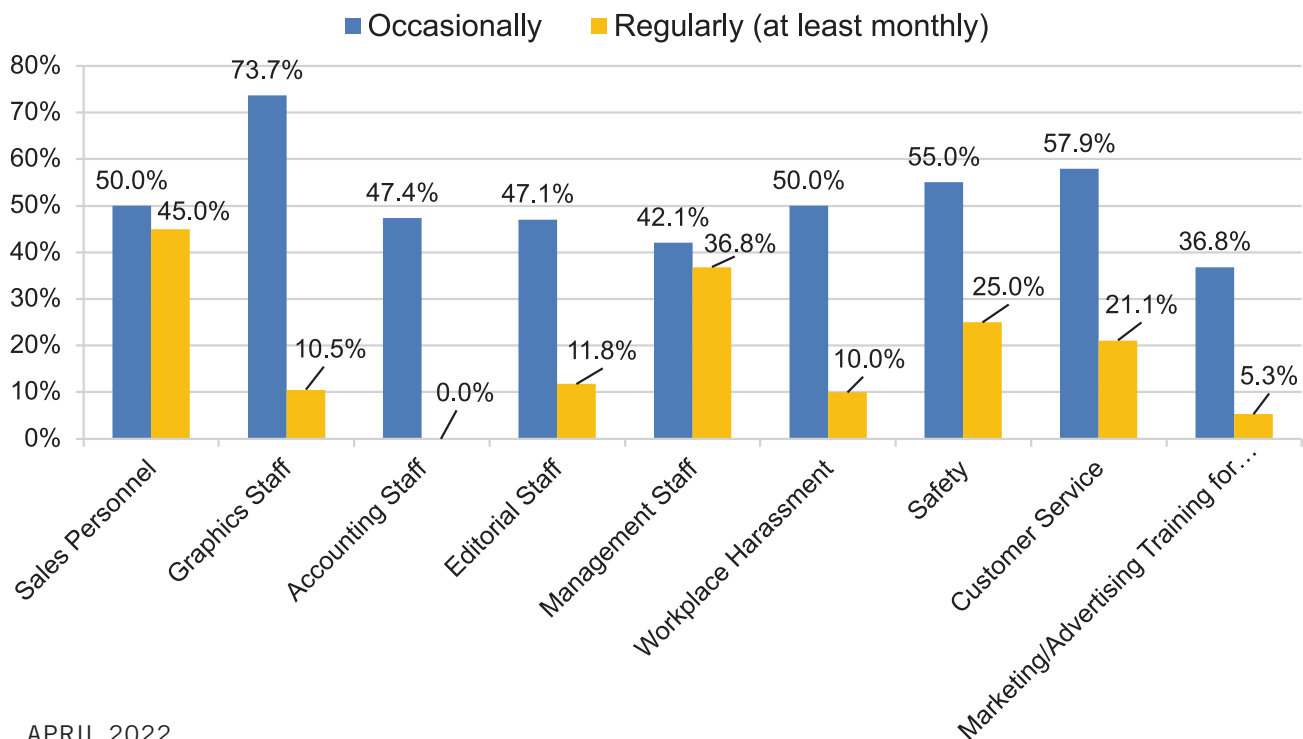


How often do you provide training for the following positions/topics? **(2022 Responses)**

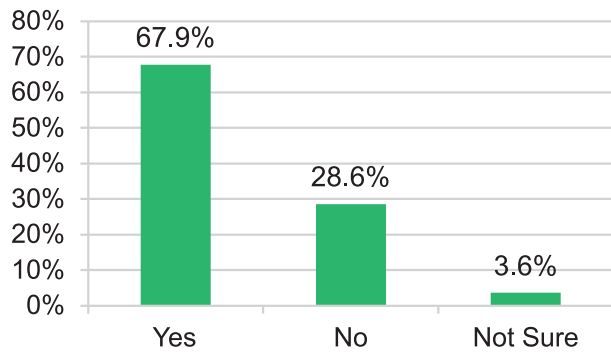


Results from same question asked in 2019

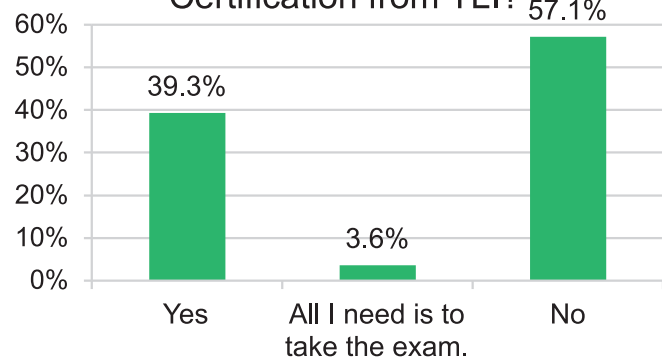
How often do you provide training for the following positions/topics? **(2019 Responses)**



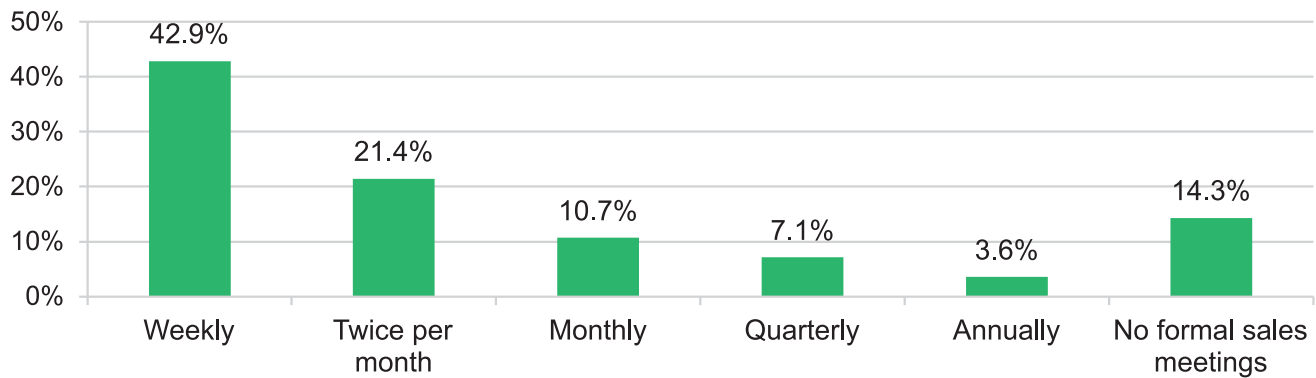
Have you ever taken TLI Sales Training classes?



Do you have your Associate Advertising Executive (AAE) Certification from TLI?

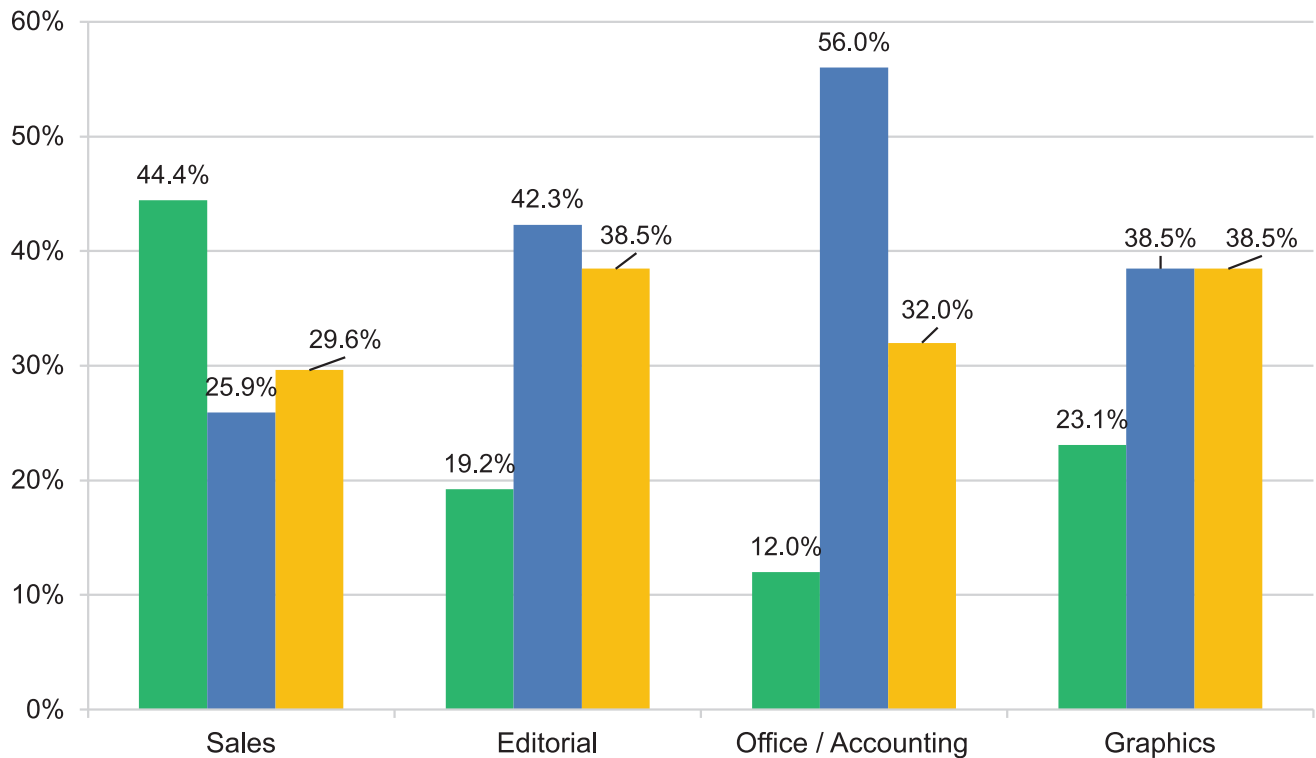


How often do you have formal sales meetings with your sales team (select the closest answer)?



Do you have a formal (written) onboarding program for new hires in the following departments?

■ Yes
 ■ No
 ■ We have an informal program





INTRODUCING THE NEW ACP ON DEMAND TRAINING CENTER

Are you ready to take your sales to the next level? If so, you'll definitely want to read on about this exciting new member benefit that will launch on April 1, 2022.

The ACP board and staff are always on the lookout for the next great benefit to offer our membership in the community publishing industry. That also includes potential upgrades to our existing benefits. When we can find a way to enhance or add to the member experience, we're all for it! That's exactly what we've done with the new ACP On Demand Training Center.

The past few years have been hard on everyone. We understand that in many cases, it is no longer feasible for publishers to bring their sales team to the annual conference or other in-person events for training. So we decided to look for ways that we could bring the training to you! The ACP On Demand Training Center will offer 24/7 training that can be completed on an individual basis or in a group setting, depending on your needs. It will offer both industry specific sales training from The Leadership Institute (TLI) as well as a world-class, general sales training program for your team, brought to you by Power Sales University, all in one place.

Many of you are probably familiar with the existing ACP Online Learning Center. While this has been a great training tool for our members over the years, the content on the site

has become outdated and limited. In partnering with PSU, we were able to update and completely refresh the current TLI material, add additional industry specific content through the TLI program and enhance the collection of training videos to increase our online offering.

In addition to the TLI material, we are now able to offer you over 130 interactive sales training modules from the Power Sales University platform. Regardless of prior experience or training, this program guides you through every critical aspect of sales methodology in a short, easily digestible, and actionable way for you to immediately implement in the field the techniques you learn. It will also give you access to a series of videos where the sales trainer has videoed himself on a live sales call.

The PSU material is designed with flexibility in mind so you can either have your sales team work individually at their own pace, or, if you choose, it can be used for training in a team setting, giving you the cues to stop for discussion with your team at certain points. This could come in handy for those who conduct sales meetings on a regular basis. You also have the ability to assign training to specific users, create teams in the platform, manage users and receive notifications upon completion of assignments for your staff if desired. These are just a few examples of the wide range of tools the new On Demand Training Center will offer.

Another great feature is that the PSU modules are short – most of them are less than 20 minutes in length.

As for the TLI side, we have a great training series for new hires or salespeople who are just beginning a sales training program. This is a series of 8 classes with Rob Zarrilli, our TLI Dean, which are very specific to the industry. They run through the basics of the sales process, specifically relating to advertising sales. These TLI training videos are a little bit longer, averaging about an hour each. As we launch the new platform, we will have a few other higher level TLI classes available as well, and we will continue to add to that library over time. Our goal is to add additional industry specific training for a range of other departments including graphics and editorial in the future, also.

Whether you're using the TLI training or the PSU training, you will be sure to find something for everyone. From the salesperson who is on their first day in the field, to the most seasoned sales professional, no matter what level you are, you will take something away from this training.

As mentioned earlier, this will be a growing library of content as we continue to add material to the site and PSU will continue to expand as well. One of the best features of this new member benefit is the convenience that it provides. With short sessions and the flexibility to train at your own pace, these programs can easily fit into anyone's schedule.

TRAINING FEATURE



We would like to take a moment here to thank ACP Board Member Joe Nicastro for bringing PSU to the table. Having used the PSU training in the past, Joe was impressed enough with the program that he thought providing it to our membership would be a great benefit for everyone and we certainly agree!

In the process of getting this site set up we asked Jane Quairoli of Kapp Advertising Service to give the site a “trial run” for us. Jane serves as an ACP Board Member and also

on the Education & Training Committee, so she has been as close to this project as anyone. Jane has been using the site for a couple of months now and has been a huge help with working out the “bugs” to ensure we are ready to launch. We asked Jane to share her overall opinion based on her experience and here is what she had to say:

“I’ve been through an extensive amount of training in 37+ years at Kapp, but I am so excited about this. I wish I would have had the PSU

training modules when I first started. While not industry specific, everything I have viewed can be applied in our industry. I often “rewind” the video to hear a great point over again & have watched a few twice. As for the TLI training class videos, I can’t say enough about Rob’s TLI courses. I have always enjoyed TLI training. This site is the best of both worlds.”

This new benefit is included for all current ACP members in good standing at no cost to you, saving you thousands of dollars a year. You



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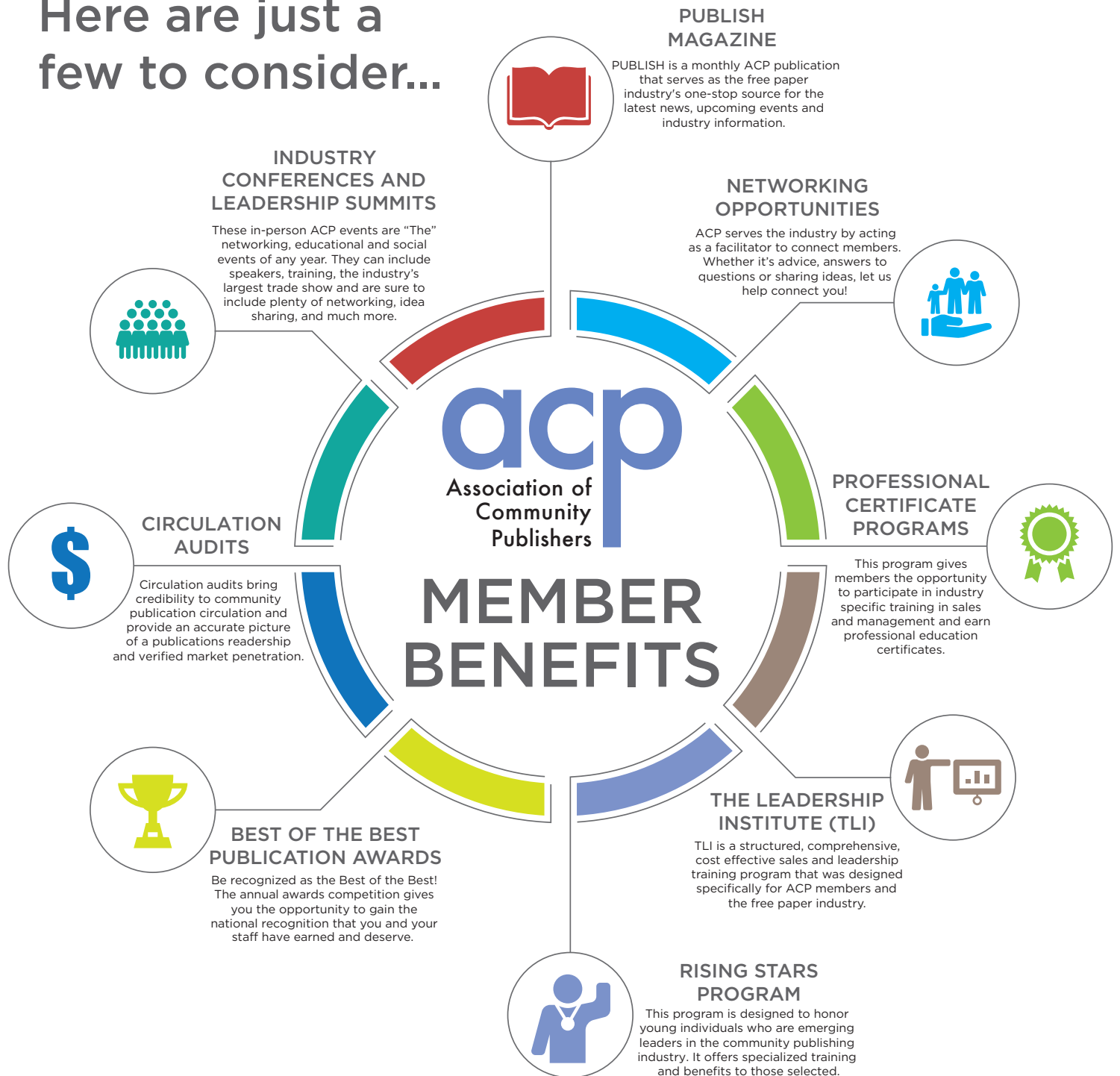


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have nothing to lose! Contact the ACP office at 877.203.2327 to get started today. You have the option of setting up your sales team yourself or we can provide you with a link that you simply email to your staff, and they can follow the process to set

themselves up in the system. We will also have training videos available for both managers and salespeople to make it as easy as possible to get started.

We are confident that if you commit to giving the ACP On Demand Train-

ing Center a try, it will be well worth your time investment and benefit you and your staff in many ways.

The following is an outline of the course modules offered in the PSU portion of the On Demand Training Center.

CURRENT PROGRAM OUTLINE

140 Modules / 1,722 min.

YOUR FOUNDATION

(124 minutes)

- Module 1** Introduction
- Module 2** Beliefs
- Module 3** Certainty Part I
- Module 4** Certainty Part II
- Module 5** Congruency
- Module 6** The Inverted Pyramid Sales Method TM
- Module 7** The Approach and First Initial Seconds

NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

(92 minutes)

- Module 1** NLP
- Module 2** Visuals
- Module 3** Auditories
- Module 4** Kinesthetics
- Module 5** How to Sell a Visual
- Module 6** How to Sell an Auditory
- Module 7** How to Sell a Kinesthetic
- Module 8** The Eyes, and the Ever-Changing Modes

RAPPORT AND THE POWER OF QUESTIONS

(118 minutes)

- Module 1** Rapport
- Module 2** The Power of Questions Part I
- Module 3** The Power of Questions Part II
- Module 4** Listening
- Module 5** Matching and Mirroring
- Module 6** Pacing and Leading

COLLECTING AMMUNITION AND ELIMINATING OBJECTIONS

(114 Minutes)

- Module 1** Body Language (55%)
- Module 2** Voice Qualities (38%)
- Module 3** The Words (7%)
- Module 4** Collecting Ammunition & Eliminating Objections
- Module 5** Finding the Need
- Module 6** Anchors
- Module 7** Positives and Negatives
- Module 8** Establishing Outcomes
- Module 9** Instant Replay Technique
- Module 10** Eliminating Objections
- Module 11** Breaking the Pact

THE LIQUID PRESENTATION

(154 minutes)

- Module 1** Feature / Benefit / Emotional Anchor
- Module 2** Assuming
- Module 3** Reduce It to the Ridiculous

- Module 4** Emotion
- Module 5** Creating Urgency
- Module 6** The Takeaway
- Module 7** Pain
- Module 8** Tie-Downs
- Module 9** State and Floating Personality Types
- Module 10** Total Control with an Open Mind

CLOSING AND HANDLING OBJECTIONS

(167 minutes)

- Module 1** Knowing When to Close
- Module 2** Closing
- Module 3** Handling Objections
- Module 4** The Objection-Handling Formula
- Module 5** The Ultimate Rebuttal to, "I want to think about it."
- Module 6** Additional Objection-Handling Techniques
- Module 7** Get 'em Real, Get the Deal!
- Module 8** Wrap Up

GROUP 7

(62 minutes)

- Module 1** How to Upsell or Penetrate Deeper Into an Existing Account
- Module 2** Mindset – Managing Your State Through NLP
- Module 3** Your Daily Routine – Anchoring & Conditioning Your State Through NLP
- Module 4** This Month's Selling Over the Phone – Making Cold Calls Part I
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

GROUP 8

(55 minutes)

- Module 1** Competing with a Lower-Priced Competitor
- Module 2** Time Management
- Module 3** Prejudging
- Module 4** This Month's Selling Over the Phone – Making Cold Calls Part II
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

GROUP 9

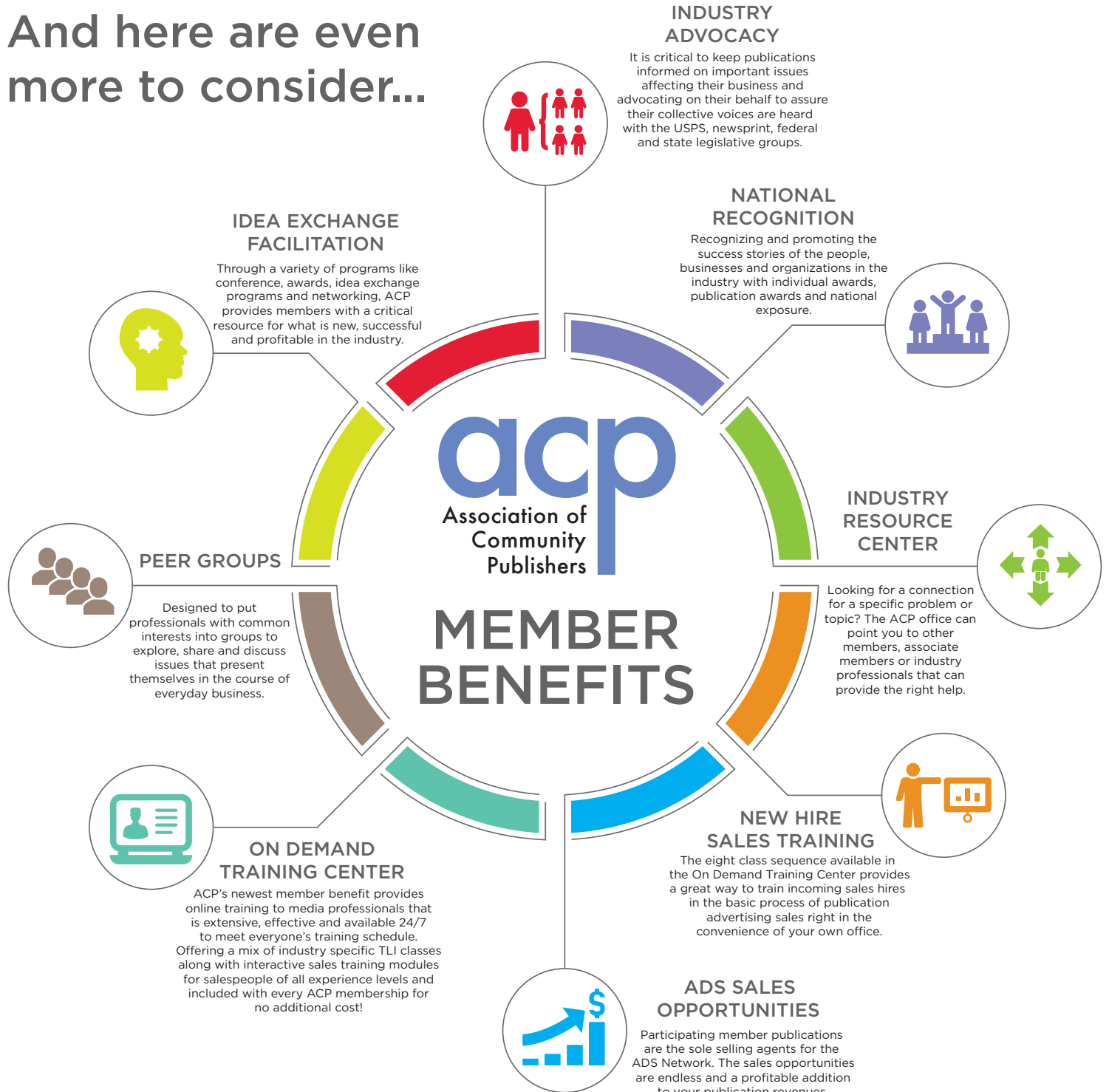
(63 minutes)

- Module 1** Getting Through the Gatekeeper
- Module 2** Your Health and Fitness
- Module 3** Additional Rapport Techniques
- Module 4** This Month's Selling Over the Phone – Making Cold Calls Part III
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

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GROUP 10

(50 minutes)

- Module 1** How to Really Get Referrals
- Module 2** Bringing Up Negatives for Credibility
- Module 3** Aligning With the Customer's Value System To Build Rapport
- Module 4** This Month's Selling Over the Phone – Making Warm Outbound Calls
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

GROUP 11

(69 minutes)

- Module 1** Getting Internet Leads and Leads in General to Pick Up Their Phone
- Module 2** Showing Certainty Through Breath, Pauses, and Other Nonverbal Communication
- Module 3** Global Rapport
- Module 4** This Month's Selling Over the Phone – Inbound Calls, Verifications, and More
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

GROUP 12

(60 minutes)

- Module 1** How to Talk to and Close Business Owners
- Module 2** Third-Party Stories
- Module 3** Don't Create Unnecessary Barriers to Entry
- Module 4** Selling Over the Phone – Visualizing Body Language Through Voice Qualities
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

GROUP 13

(51 minutes)

- Module 1** Selling a Commodity – Part I
- Module 2** Selling a Commodity – Part II
- Module 3** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 4** This Month's Selling Over the Phone – Your Body Language, Voice Qualities & Breathing
- Module 5** This Month's N.L.P. Techniques

GROUP 14

(47 minutes)

- Module 1** Mastering Transitions
- Module 2** Certainty Bombs
- Module 3** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 4** How To Control a Runaway Talker
- Module 5** Stepping Outside of Yourself

GROUP 15

(62 minutes)

- Module 1** Customer Profiling
- Module 2** Have Your Customer Sell You on Why They Need Your Product or Service!
- Module 3** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 4** Dress for Success
- Module 5** Excuses Salespeople Need to Stop Using

GROUP 16

(56 minutes)

- Module 1** How to Close Salespeople and Others That Know Sales Techniques
- Module 2** Professionalism
- Module 3** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 4** Success & Achievement Blueprint – Part I
- Module 5** Success & Achievement Blueprint – Part II

GROUP 17

(39 minutes)

- Module 1** Commandments
- Module 2** Hypnotic Language Patterns
- Module 3** Power of Suggestion
- Module 4** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 5** Importance of Having a Sense of Urgency

GROUP 18

(50 minutes)

- Module 1** How to Identify and Deal with Very Specific People
- Module 2** Not Changing Your Voice Qualities and Being Real
- Module 3** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 4** How to Effectively Manage Leads – Part I
- Module 5** How to Effectively Manage Leads – Part II

GROUP 19

(46 minutes)

- Module 1** Justify Your Drop Close – Part I
- Module 2** Justify Your Drop Close – Part II
- Module 3** Justify Your Drop Close – Part III
- Module 4** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 5** Queuing Someone up Mentally

GROUP 20

(48 minutes)

- Module 1** Selling with R.O.I.
- Module 2** Taking the Fight Right Out of People
- Module 3** This Month's Education & Motivation
- Module 4** Build Presentations Around Your Toughest Customer – Part I
- Module 5** Build Presentations Around Your Toughest Customer – Part II

GROUP 21

(42 minutes)

- Module 1** Visualize the Sale Like 3-Dimensional Chess
- Module 2** The Hidden Beliefs That Makeup the Master Closer
- Module 3** Qualifying the Customer
- Module 4** A Powerful Question That Elicits and OCD Response
- Module 5** Let Them Know You're a Salesperson

GROUP 22

(49 minutes)

- Module 1** Public Speaking – the Path to Ultimate Confidence and Certainty
- Module 2** You Should Always Present This Way
- Module 3** The Power of the Pause
- Module 4** Operating Your Personal Business – Part I
- Module 5** Operating Your Personal Business – Part II

GROUP 23

(38 minutes)

- Module 1** Negative Pitching and Mirroring Skepticism
- Module 2** The 80/20 Rule Applies to Everything
- Module 3** Managing Customer Expectations
- Module 4** Being Present – Part I
- Module 5** Being Present – Part II

GROUP 24

(36 minutes)

- Module 1** Using FBI Negotiation Techniques To Build Rapport and Understanding
- Module 2** How to Close Someone Based on Their Profession – Part I
- Module 3** How to Close Someone Based on Their Profession – Part II
- Module 4** How to Close Someone Based on Their Profession – Part III
- Module 5** Our Journey Doesn't End Here!

GET IN THE HABIT OF MAINTAINING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

BY WALTER ROGERS – PRESIDENT AND CEO, BAKER COMMUNICATION

According to legendary New York Yankees catcher Yogi Berra, "90% of baseball is mental. The other half is physical." Clearly, Yogi – despite his fractured math – could have also been a legendary sales professional if he had wanted to be, because that is exactly the same formula that highly successful sales professionals live by every day. To be perfectly clear, there is a physical, functional, tactical side to selling. Product knowledge, presentation skills, proficiency in the use of the CRM and other Sales 2.0 strategies – these are all vital for achieving sales success. But in the end, Yogi hits the nail square on the head; the biggest key to success is 90% mental.

We all know that selling can be a tough business. When the economy is down or the competition is tough, sales professionals start hearing a lot of "Nos," which can be devastating. It is not unusual for the average sales professional to lower their aspirations, and begin to doubt their abilities at times like this. Highly successful sales professionals, however, don't allow temporary setbacks to define them. That is what makes them highly successful. It is also what leaves the rest of us wondering, "How do they do it?"

First of all, let's clear about one thing: Highly successful sales professionals are human, just like everyone else. It is not that they never get frustrated or experience a let-down when a promising deal falls through; they are subject to those inner voices that try to plant discouragement and doubt, just as are we all. However, what separates highly successful sales professionals from the rest of the herd is the mental and emotional discipline they are able to bring to bear at such times that helps them to stay focused



and constructive. The good news is that anyone can learn to apply this discipline and focus in their own lives, and reap the benefits as well.

To achieve Yogi's 90% mental benchmark, highly successful sales professionals lay a strong foundation built on four solid pillars:

Believe in your product – Some sales professionals see selling as just a job. It pays the bills and it is better than being a door greeter at a discount retailer, and with that attitude, they are able to make an okay living selling anything to anyone. On the other hand, highly successful sales professionals are passionate about the products and services they sell, and are unabashedly enthusiastic about the value and benefits they bring to their customers. Yes, they also care about closing business and driving revenue, but it is also very important to them to know that what they offer their customers is exceptional in every sense of the word. The confidence they have in their product helps to motivate them, even when the market is rough, because they know they have good news for someone today.

Believe in your training – Effective training is a key component of selling success, and we are not just talking about product training or being able to run a demo. Anyone who can read a brochure or a spec

sheet can come away with a decent grasp of product knowledge. What we are really talking about here is solid, in-depth training in sales process, consultative skills, customer relationship strategies, sales effectiveness with CRM, and a host of other skills and capabilities to help the sales professional feel confident in any customer-facing situation. When a sales professional receives this kind of training, and when it is reinforced by regular, focused coaching, it delivers a steady boost of positive mental energy that the highly successful sales professional can leverage to overcome temporary setbacks.

Believe in your company/organization – This is not exactly the same as believing in your product. If the company culture doesn't have a strong commitment to treating customers well, and also treating sales professionals well, then a lot of the joy of selling evaporates as the sales professional spends too much time fighting the organization and its policies, either on behalf of himself or his customers. The resulting burn out can quickly lead to discouragement, lower productivity, and, ultimately, to the sales professional leaving the organization in search of a place where the opportunity for success on their terms is greater.

These first three pillars are certainly important keys to helping a sales professional maintain a positive attitude. If you believe in your product, your training, and your organization, then your emotional energy can be channeled into being proactive and creative in the face of market adversities, instead of being flamed off as frustration in other areas. However, these three pillars alone can't consistently deliver a positive attitude. In

many ways, the fourth pillar is the most important attitude pillar of all:

Believe in yourself – Entire books and sales courses have been built around this topic. It is huge; it is the holy grail of creating and maintaining a consistently positive mental focus. Right now we will focus on a very important principle:

Situations don't cause emotions. It is what we believe about the situation that causes our emotions to it, and our emotions usually determine how we will react.

This is a universal principle of human behavior, but here is a very simplified example of how it applies to sales.

Bob, to sales manager: "This economy is terrible. No one is buying. My customers hate me. I can't get past the gatekeeper at my biggest opportunity. There is too much competition. I can't sell anything. I give up."

Sales manager: "Really, what makes you say that?"

Bob: "Over the past week, I bet I have made 200 calls and I can't get anyone to set an appointment. Obviously, I don't have a chance."

Sales manager: "Hmm, that's odd. I was talking to Amanda this morning and she was actually excited today. She told me that, even though she had made 200 calls this week with no luck yet, she was convinced her luck was about to change. She refocused her strategy, refined her presentation, and has narrowed her target prospect set to maximize the impact of her new presentation. She was really pumped when I talked to her."

Bob and Amanda both had the same situation: 200 calls and no appointments. Bob believed this meant there was no opportunity for him and no option but to fail, so he was ready to quit. However, Amanda, rather than blaming the economy or the prospects, believed this to be a temporary slump that could be rectified by changing her approach. To her, the situation represented an opportunity to succeed by learning something new, so she got right to work on a new strategy.

Respected motivational speaker and life coach Tony Robbins would say that Amanda has learned to "tell herself a different story" about her situation and her options. Bob looked at his slump and told himself that he was going to fail. Amanda looked at her slump and told herself that if she would change her strategy and learn to do some things differently, her chances of success would go way up. It isn't hard to predict which story will have the happier ending.

Highly successful sales professionals never let the situation – i.e., the economy or the competition or the customer – define them or dictate their attitudes and emotions. Instead, they believe in their product, they believe in their training, they believe in their organization and – most of all – they believe in themselves and their ability to adapt, grow and learn from any situation to achieve greater success. That is the story they tell themselves, and they stick to it, no matter what.

TAKE ME BACK TO THE BALL GAME

Returning to the baseball metaphor in closing, what pitcher has won more games than any other pitcher in the history of Major League Baseball? The answer is Cy Young, who won an astonishing 511 games between 1890 and 1911. As a matter of fact, his name is on the award that is given every year to the best pitcher in each league. Now, this next question is a little trickier. What pitcher LOST more games than any other pitcher in the history of Major League Baseball? The answer is Cy Young! Between 1890 and 1911 the winningest pitcher in the history of baseball was also the loser a whopping 316 times! And just to add insult to injury, this pitcher – whose job it is to get people out – also gave up more hits than any other pitcher in history – 7,092 to be exact. That brings up another record held by Cy Young – most runs given up: 2,147.

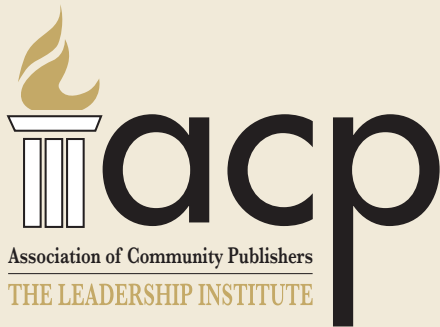
Okay, so where are going with all of this? We are simply trying to point out that the most revered and honored pitcher in the history of baseball also holds all the records for being the biggest LOSER! But in baseball, just like in sales or in life, even when you lose some, you still have a chance to recover and come out a winner. Cy Young didn't quit the game because of a few losses. He loved the game, he loved to play, and he knew he was good. But most of all, he knew that the key to being a winner is 90% mental, and went to work every day expecting to win. Highly successful sales professionals believe – and act – in exactly the same way.

Action Items:

- Take an attitude inventory: On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest, do you:
 - ♦ Believe in your product
 - ♦ Believe in your training
 - ♦ Believe in your organization
- If you score a 3 or below on any of these, you are likely to have attitude problems. If your cumulative score for all three is less than 10, you are definitely likely to have attitude problems that will make it hard for you to keep a positive mental attitude and become a highly successful sales professional.
- Thought experiment: What kind of stories do you tell yourself when you hit a slump when deals aren't closing or margins are too low? Do you make excuses, rationalize, blame the economy or the customer? What would happen if you told yourself a different story? What could you tell yourself that would help you reframe the situation and focus on actions that would lead to a different outcome? ■

Walter Rogers is the President and CEO of Baker Communications. Baker Communications is a sales training and development company specializing in helping client companies increase their sales and management effectiveness. He can be reached at 713-627-7700.

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A PASSION FOR LEARNING

BY JIM BUSCH

“Chance favors the prepared mind.

—Louis Pasteur

I first heard this quote from my English professor in my first semester of college. Her intention was to instill in us the importance of working hard to get a college education. She was a great teacher and her words have stuck with me for over five decades now. I embraced this idea throughout my college career and far beyond. These five words are a corollary on the more popular “*The harder I work, the luckier I get.*” It translates to “*The more I know, the luckier I get.*” This philosophy has served me well in every part of my life. I am not alone in this; over the years I’ve noticed that the most successful people I’ve met, all share this passion for learning. Paradoxically, the people who need training the most are the ones who are “too busy” to take part in training sessions, while the people who are already at the top of their game are always found in the front row. A quick glance at the list of people who have earned the title of TLI AAE confirms this. The ranks of TLI graduates include publishers with decades of industry experience, people who are consistently at the top of their company’s sales rankings, and even professional sales trainers. When I teach classes, these are the people who ask well considered questions and take copious notes. I greatly enjoy spending time with them between classes and during conference social events. Invariably we end up discussing ways to polish our skills and swapping the titles of books we found useful and interesting. This interest in books is not surprising; in their quest for knowledge, these highly successful folks seek out every opportunity to learn. In addition to taking every TLI class available, they are constantly reading books, watching training videos, and listening to motivational speakers. Their interests are wide ranging; in addition to knowing their own products and markets, they study current books in marketing, advertising, and psychology. To acquire practical knowledge they seek out people whose demonstrated abilities make them leaders in their fields; they ask them to be their mentors and emulate their actions. In addition to their drive and their work ethic, the thing that sets consistently successful people apart from their peers is they are constantly preparing their minds—ever ready to seize every chance that comes their way. ■

EXPECTATIONS ARE LIKE ICEBERGS



BY JOHN FOUST
RALEIGH, NC

Saundra's experience as a sales manager has given her a unique perspective on client relationships. "Most sales people in the advertising business are taught to discover problems and prescribe solutions to those problems," she said. "Too often, a sales person hears about a problem and says, 'We can fix that. Just advertise with us, and everything will be fine. It'll be fantastic.' I think that's a flawed approach, because it sets unrealistic expectations.

"A long time ago, I heard that expectations are like icebergs," she explained. "Only ten percent is above the surface. It's the ninety percent you can't see that can sink your boat. The obvious things are above the surface: when the ads run, how much they cost, and copy that has been proofed for typos. The hidden expectations – the things below the surface – are their expectations on the results the ads are supposed to generate.

"Expectations can be our best friends or our worst enemies," she said. "When we meet – or exceed – advertisers' expectations, they feel good about our product and want to run more ads. But when the ads let them down, they might move their ad dollars somewhere else."

Saundra went on to say that she teaches her team how to bring hidden expectations above the surface. "Advertisers are going to have expectations whether or not we bring up the subject. The key is to have some control over those expectations. We want our advertisers to understand that an image campaign is not going to make their cash registers ring right away. And we want them to know that a response campaign has to make the right offers in order to create immediate results."

Here are some key points:

1. Ad results drive ad sales.

An old friend in the advertising business once said, "When you're catching rabbits, don't move the box." In other words, when an ad strategy produces good results, it makes sense to continue that strategy. On the other hand, if a merchant's ads in a particular media outlet produce disappointing results, he or she may think, "Ads in the Gazette don't work."

When ads start running, there's a lot riding on results.

2. Go for measurable outcomes.

The surest way to convey the value of running ads with you is to measure results. It's hard to believe a statement like, "Car dealers get good responses from advertising here." It's more convincing to say, "Ace Motors ran a two-month campaign with us last year, and they generated x-percent increase in sales over that same period in the previous year."

3. Look for comparisons. On one level, you can compare ad response rates within your own paper. ("When Advertiser A changed from image ads to weekly specials, their response rates increased x-percent.") On a deeper level, you can compare results with other media outlets ("Advertiser B moved their ads from XYZ Media to us and generated x-percent increase in traffic.")

Selling requires us to manage expectations. That's a good way to melt a few icebergs. ■

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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.ln@att.net 04/2022

As I write this ... I am looking forward to “Daylight Saving Time.” I am not a fan of the dark at 6:00 in the evening. I am also not a big fan of learning new types of software—on my own. Granted, it needs to be done, but I am in a “comfort zone” which has so far worked well for me.

Anyway, my new issue of *Creative Pro Magazine* #5 arrived recently (used to be *InDesign Magazine*) and the focus is “Alternatives to Adobe.” The information presents options to page layout, illustration and image editing software, and covers the pros and cons of the software examined in a relatively concise, yet thorough manner. It was interesting to read what was happening with *QuarXPress* (my program of choice for many years—until June of 2004), as well as *Affinity Publisher* and *Adobe InDesign*.

That same issue also contained an article on basic steps to transition to Affinity Publisher. At this stage of the game, I’m not sure I will give up my Adobe products entirely, but other options would make it easier for me to eventually hand over the Camera Club Newsletter that I do—or just have someone as a backup! I need a simpler and less costly program to work with.

I have always relied on books to keep me up-to-date, but the internet has made that a little more difficult. Staring at a screen can get uncomfortable! However, I will let you know how things turn out.

I will link you to the website for your own copy of this magazine.

It’s the Message

Over the years, I’ve had my share of judging (and being judged). I have also used a variety of “tools” to create my messages—but the concepts remain pretty much the same. So much has changed since I started in publishing! :(

I always looked forward to help judge advertising. It was always interesting, educational and fun to see what the designers came up with. When I evaluated, I did have a short list of certain criteria that I looked for, and as I reviewed this list, it’s safe to say that it really hasn’t changed.

Here are a few of the guidelines that I automatically include in any evaluation because they can often be overlooked, yet can change an OK ad into something that really stands out. The same can be said for any visual ad whether it be print or digital.

Back in my day, color was always an additional expense for the advertiser, but with the internet, it’s now not as important (financially) as it once was... but design fundamentals have not changed! It’s all about perception...

■ Text running too close to the border.

This causes a distraction in smooth eye flow in reading the copy. The thicker or more ornate the border, the more space you need between the border and the copy. This is true for any visual advertising. See “Don’t Touch Me” below and also the “ads” in the next column. Adjustments may have to be made to the type or **type size to fit** within the ad parameters.

■ **Color for the sake of color.** The idea is to use color as an attention-getter. If the entire ad is engulfed in color, or even gradients (especially gradients!), the less impact the color has. Use color sparingly and use it only to call attention to the most important information in the ad. Color cost is not as big an issue as it was in the past (the customer wanted his money’s worth), but too much of a good thing dilutes the impact and focus of the message.

■ **Be picky about typefaces.** Learn all that you can about type. Most advertising that I see can be made better by adjusting the type or choosing a more appropriate typeface for the message. Don’t use too many different typefaces in one ad and be consistent in size. Type that changes in size or weight from line to line is distracting and unity in the ad is compromised. My must have typeface is **Myriad Pro** because of the options within that family—and it’s clean and easy to read.

■ **Using a text wrap or run-around can be tricky.** Make sure you leave enough room between the art and the text. Too often I see text almost bump into the art and that will end up being a distraction. However, having your word spacing inconsistent can also distract. Too much space between words creates “rivers,” so plan the text wraps carefully—especially if you are using justified text, otherwise see if “flush left” is a better choice.

■ **Lots of razzle-dazzle will not make up for a poor design layout.** Make sure the ad copy is organized and the artwork supports the copy. And always organize. Unified information will always help the reader make sense of and, most of all, remember the information. Graphics or art need to part of the total concept. Artwork placed to fill a void usually creates unwanted distractions.

Heavy or wide borders

The wider or more decorative the border, the more you need to increase the margin. This nine point border is quite heavy, but so is a border that contains artwork. Treat them the same. This is a 6-point inset, but the border is sooooo powerful that it’s hard to keep your attention focused on the words. Your attention is focused on the heavy border.

See the difference

However, increase the margin area (I’ve set a twelve point inset (one-pica). The reader’s attention is now drawn back into the text area. So if you want to use a really heavy border, make sure that the ad space is great enough to accommodate the thick rule line! This is also true for very decorative borders as well.

Don’t Touch Me!

Keeping your distance with text helps improve readability. The samples with the wide border (top) help demonstrate that text that runs too close to a border can distract. Very decorative borders often pose a challenge as well, because most of them tend to have a lot of detail and you don’t want to have the border be more important than the content or information contained in the ad.

I used the example of the flowers to the left to demonstrate keeping an appropriate amount of space between copy and art in a run-around or text wrap. Make sure text still appears to have the same amount of word spacing. Too much of a gap between words, especially in justified text, is also just as distracting. Edit or hand-break the text if necessary and yes, I had to do that to this text wrap—I adjusted the wrap to keep spacing somewhat unified.

The amount of space between text and border/art is up to you. If your eye tends to stray or “jump” to the border or art, the text is too close.



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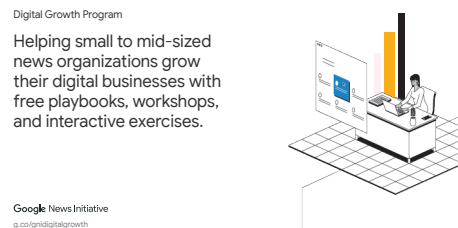
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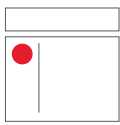
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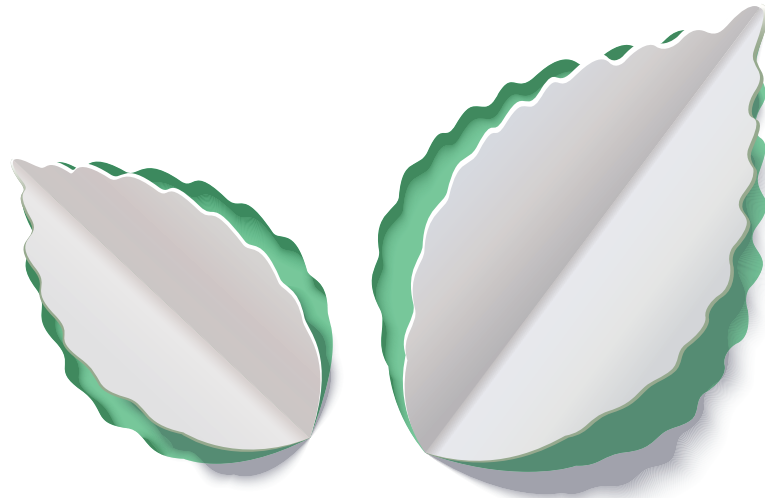
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