

September 2022

INFORMER



**Community
Papers of
Michigan**

Your Type 1 Problem

Don't wait until the last minute. It has already passed.

I woke up with a perfectly good plan this morning: to write about the huge crowds that are showing up for training these days, along with my theory on why that is the case. However, I've been getting a lot of questions about the conundrum related to Adobe's looming end of support for Type 1 fonts. Some have asked if I will be leading webinars on the topic. Others wanted to know if I could meet with their staff to discuss the issue.

The good news is that it doesn't take a webinar or a one-on-one meeting to understand what is about to happen with Type 1 fonts. It's simple. Beginning in January, Adobe users will not be able to create documents using Type 1 fonts. Even more alarming, files created with Type 1 fonts before January will not be editable without replacing the fonts.

Go ahead and take a moment to think about that.

Excuse me while I move away from my monitor. I can feel the deep exhale coming at me from thousands of readers.

Now that you've had a moment to let that reality settle let's discuss what this means to your newspaper. I'll wait another moment while you grab a pen. You're going to want to take notes.

Just know that I'm in the same predicament. My company has been replacing fonts and making changes to documents for the past three years, preparing for the eventual reality that most of our old files contain fonts that won't work beginning in 2023. Hopefully, you've been doing the same. If not, I'd advise you to start right now because there won't be a magic fix come January.

FONT ISSUES!

Type 1 fonts will no longer be supported starting 2023. Your document contains 14 Type 1 fonts. [Learn more](#)

Unless you do something quickly, many of your files won't open or print correctly beginning in January.

The good news is: You're probably not using many Type 1 fonts. Type 1 fonts have been around since 1984. If that year sounds familiar to some of you that have been around the block a few times, it's because 1984 was the year that Apple released the first Macintosh computer. Shortly after, Aldus (eventually purchased by Adobe) released Pagemaker, followed a year later by a pagination application called Quarkxpress. The Type 1 font was a significant technological advance because it rendered the same on the computer screen and the printer. (I imagine younger readers are quivering just about now as they realize that WYSIWYG hasn't always been with us).

Here's a bullet list of things to know before you wake up to (not from) a terrible nightmare one day in January:

- Type 1 (also called Postscript fonts) will not work after January 2023, meaning you can't create documents using those fonts after January 2023.
- Files created before January with Type 1 fonts won't open correctly. Fonts will be replaced, probably not the way you

want them replaced. If you've not prepared, it could be a disaster.

- PDF files created before January with Type 1 fonts embedded should work fine. Most newspapers know to embed their fonts, so most of your old PDFs should work as expected. There will be issues with some PDFs you've received from others.

What can you do to prepare? Let me share a second bullet list of ways to make sure you're not surprised in January:

- Immediately meet with your design and editorial staffs and begin making plans.
- Make a list of fonts used frequently. Be sure to include all of the fonts used in your InDesign paragraph styles.
- Either choose alternate fonts (not Type 1) or purchase Open Type versions of the same fonts immediately. I purchased Nimrod because it's the primary body typeface in most of my documents.
- Save a new version of your newspaper template free of any Type 1 fonts. Otherwise, you'll

be greeted with nasty warnings and messages each time you open one of these files. Someone will need to spend a few hours reviewing the template and searching for/replacing all Type 1 fonts.

- Go through your InDesign ad files (hopefully, your PDF files will be okay) and replace any Type 1 fonts.
- Look for text elements saved in InDesign libraries. If any contain Type 1 fonts, someone will be in for a surprise when moving these elements from the library to a page.

Yes, it's going to be a headache. Everyone is bound to miss some Type 1 fonts that will result in extra work at deadline. It will be manageable, however, if you start working on potential issues immediately rather than waiting until the deadline.

I'm working on several newspaper redesigns right now. I meticulously review every font to be sure there are no Type 1 fonts in paragraph styles, libraries, or anyplace else that might cause problems beginning in January.

Now, are you ready for my webinar? Just kidding. Trust me. You can handle this. Don't wait any longer. I guarantee that Type 1 fonts are roaming your documents as we speak. You can thank me later.

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newspaperacademy.com



Ad - Libs



Two advertising goals: Attention and Retention

BY JOHN FOUST

As mentioned in previous articles, there are two types of advertising: image and response. Image advertising – sometimes known as institutional advertising – is designed to give people a good impression of the advertiser. (“We’re the dealership that cares.”) The objective of response advertising is to generate immediate response to a specific offer. (“Take advantage of these special discounts.”)

These two ad types have something in common. Each one – whether image or response – should strive for attention and retention. In other words, the ad has to grab attention from the outset, then make the message memorable enough to stay in readers’ minds. It’s not an easy task, but it’s necessary for the ad to have any chance of success.

Because we are bombarded with thousands of commercial messages every day – and because we can’t possibly notice or remember everything we see – we are

instinctively selective. A number of factors influence attention and retention, including eye-catching illustrations, legible typography, uncluttered ad designs, plenty of white space, and reader-centered headlines. But the biggest factor is relevance. If an ad doesn’t communicate instant relevance, it will fail the attention test. And if doesn’t leave the reader with a sense of relevance, it is not likely to be retained.

Let’s say you run across an ad that attracts your eye, because it features a large, detailed photo of a new widget. The headline is a simple statement of the major benefit of owning this new model. The layout follows the rules of simple, easy-to-follow graphic design. As a result, you stop browsing through other ads long enough to read the copy, which is refreshingly free of exaggeration. You have owned a couple of widgets in the past, and now that you think about it, this might be a good time to consider a new one. This particular store looks like a good place to shop for one.

What just happened? In a matter of seconds, you made the jump from surface-level appeal (being attracted by the looks of the ad) to a deeper level (seeing the personal relevance of the product). In other words, the widget ad has won your favorable attention.

What about retention? What would compel you to remember the widget and the store where it can be purchased? There are two primary elements: relevance (again) and repetition.

Relevance plus repetition equals retention. We remember the products which fill a specific need – or offer a solution to a problem we have. And we remember the things which we see and hear repeatedly. How did you learn the multiplication tables? (By reviewing them over and over.) How did you learn the lyrics to so many rock ‘n’ roll songs? (By hearing them – and singing along – countless times.)

What does all of this mean? Attention is important, for certain, but it is only the first of two goals. In order for an ad’s core message to work, it must also be retained.

Put these two together – and you have a winner.

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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

A HISTORY OF THE WAGNER FAMILY PUBLISHING BUSINESS CHAPTER TWO

It Was What We Didn't Know That Counted

Peter Wagner



The Radio years

Those two experiences with the Sioux Falls Argus-Leader perked my interests in the publishing business, but my teenage heart belonged to radio.

My older brother, Robert (Bob) Wagner, had been part of a one-semester weekly Washington High School radio program when he was a junior.

Washington High School no longer produced the program seven years later, but I was anxious to experience being on-the-air.

Radio was still the major electronic media in Sioux Falls in 1957. Many local announcers were well-known celebrities in the community. Wayne Pritchard oversaw the morning his show on KSOO. Ray Loftness ruled the afternoons from that same station. He enjoyed exceptional ratings from Thanksgiving to Christmas with his annual Holiday Inn program. Eddie Thomas stepped forward each evening with his late show on KELO.

Sioux Falls was a four-station market in 1957 with KELO holding the top spot. KSOO came second, followed by KISD (then still a Sioux Falls station) and KIHO. They all were AM stations and FM still something new.

One Sioux City station, KMNS, offered a Top-40 format and actually had more Sioux Falls listeners than KIHO.

But it was that fifth-place rating that led to me – an inexperienced high school junior – to get hired as the night announcer at KIHO, a commercial radio station. I was bold enough to walk in the door and ask for a job, and I could be hired cheap. More importantly they needed a night man and needed him immediately.

The night man really wasn't on-the-air much. KIHO was a Mutual affiliate and carried the Bob and Ray Show early in the evening and National League Baseball most of the rest of the night.

If the game ended early enough, I hosted a record show from 10:30 to the midnight sign off. The program was called "Castles in the Air" and my on-the-air name was Will Castle. For some reason the station's management required their announcers to work under a name different from their real name. I chose Will from my middle name, William, and Castle since it was my mother's maiden name.

I don't clearly remember how long I worked at KIHO, running there directly from my last high school class each day. The studios were only a block away, on the second floor over Williams Piano Company.

But it ended too quickly. When I arrived at the studios one afternoon, I was informed I was fired. A local man, Jack Schaffer, had just moved back to Sioux Falls from Minneapolis where he had attended Browns Scholl of Broadcasting. The program director had hired him that morning to replace me and he took over the late shift that very night.

But the radio bug was too deeply instilled in my heart. Within days I applied for a similar position at KISD, a 250-watt Sioux Falls station. The station's transmitter and studios were located in the basement of the owner's home located at the west side of the city.

The owner and General Manager was Verl Thompson, who had broken into broadcasting at KSOO and later worked NBC in Chicago. He taught me almost all I know about broadcasting. He was kind, understanding and allowed me great latitude. It was while at KISD that I learned, by experience, copy writing, advertising sales and the art of producing lively production commercials.

I had enough credits my senior year to get out of school at noon. My airtime at KISD started at 1:00 and continued until 7:00. The station had 4 announcers, 2 salesmen and 2 women handling continuity and accounting. Mr. Thompson usually did the 10:00 news himself. (Continued on pg. 5)

Peter Wagner Story Cont.

KISD had a block-segment format, meaning the day was broken usually into half-hour segments offering various programming. I hosted everything from the Lawrence Welk show to reruns of old Red Skelton broadcasts. The highlight of each day, for me, was Musical Mailbox from 5:00 to 6:00. Targeted toward the teenage audience it featured playing the current hits as requested by by postcard and reading dedications to their friends. Every Saturday I played either an hour of Elvis Presley or Pat Boone depending upon which got the most post card votes that week. Elvis almost always won the contest.

One afternoon halfway through my senior year, I arrived at work to find the parking lot overflowing with cars. Inside the tiny office there were at least 25 bodies. Mr. Thompson had spent some time in Omaha listening to KOIL and had decided to turn KISD into a Top Forty station. Among the new hires was Vince Casey, who came to KISD from WMNS in Minneapolis. He was hired as the new program director.

Casey looked at me during the first staff meeting and asked Thompson "What will we do with the kid?"

Mr. Thomson never missed a beat. "He was here when you came," he said, "and he will

be here when you're gone."

"Well then, said Casey, "he can do the Top Forty Show. He can't mess that one up" The Top Forty Show ran from 4 to 7 every weekend night. It featured 38 of the week's most popular songs starting at the bottom and working up to number one as well as the Pick Hit. There was no need for any patter or personality. The host just said, "Number 27 last week and moving up to number 13 this week, here's the Everly Brothers with Wake Up, Little Susie."

But it was a favorite program with teenagers, the working class and anyone on the road. Suddenly, I hosted one of the most popular radio shows in the market.

Then graduation and summer passed, and I found myself headed to the University of South Dakota to get a degree in broadcasting.

Working at KUSD at USD was a wonderful experience. The college helped me cover part of my tuition and expenses producing two program series for NPR. The first was "Lectures in Miniature", featuring single subject talks by various USD professors. The second was "My Story", a compilation of personal experiences by various individuals

around the campus and community.

But it was soon evident that I didn't want to go to college to learn to do what I had been paid to do for the previous two years. I switched my major to history and never looked back.

During my summers I returned to radio to earn money for college. I worked at KISD and for one summer back at KIHO where they had just lost their production manager to a job out east. But that job out east didn't work out and my predecessor came back, hat in hand and full of new ideas. Once again, I was fired. That only happened twice but both times it was the same employer.

My last year in college I ran short of money the middle of the second semester. Looking for an answer, I sent an employment application to WNAX in nearby Yankton.

As it happened, they needed a continuity director and fill-in announcer, and they hired me the next day. I was able to attend college in the mornings in Vermillion and then drive to Yankton to work at WNAX in the afternoons and early evenings.

It was at WNAX that I met my wife, Constance (Connie) Jeanne Johansen and fell immediately in love. But we'll get to more about that in the next chapter.



The image is a promotional banner for SiteSwan. At the top, the logo features the word "site" in a dark, sans-serif font, followed by a stylized orange swan icon with a blue wave underneath, and the word "Swan" in a large, orange, rounded font. Below "Swan" is the text "WEBSITE BUILDER" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. The background of the banner is a light blue sky with a yellow sun and green trees. At the bottom, the text "Learn how to profit from selling websites to your advertisers at: SiteSwan.com" is written in a bold, orange, rounded font.

Picking art or graphics to support your message can be daunting... however, picking type can be a nightmare! I still see a lot of print advertising and this month I will address various ways to choose better, or at least more appropriate ...

Type Combos



Contrast and Type

What typefaces will work well together? Well, unfortunately there is no specific rule or formula for choosing, but there are certain considerations: what typefaces are best for text; appropriate typefaces to use; how to use the typeface; and typeface classifications to determine better typeface combinations.

Type is a visual element and needs to be treated as part of the design process and that comes from experience, trial and error and observations.

Many factors can determine typeface use:

- 1) Size of the ad can affect the typeface... just because an ad is small doesn't mean you have to choose a condensed typeface. At times, a smaller point size is more effective than condensed type.
- 2) How much content is in the ad?
- 3) Will there be images, products?
- 4) The whole idea of readable, legible and creative use of type covers a lot of little elements that by themselves are not always significant, but can make a big difference in the look of the visual information. Some of these little elements consist of similar typefaces, trapped white space, box-it-is, rule-it-is, reverses, drop shadows, screens, as well as the architecture of type—alignment, spacing, size, style, weight, x-height, etc.
- 5) Perhaps this is why the correct use of type is much more difficult to address than picking out the right art or graphic.

I've chosen **Myriad Pro**— with multiple options from **Light Condensed** to **Black SemiExtended**, thereby maintaining the integrity, legibility and readability of the type. The x-height makes it readable even at smaller sizes and this sans serif mixes well with a variety of other specialty and decorative typefaces.

I used **Helvetica** for many years because of the aforementioned options— but switched.

I have decided to take the easiest way I know how in dealing with type combinations— and that is using contrast.

One of the most common pitfalls in setting type is lack of contrast (see the "Winterfest" ad on the left below). There is no hierarchy, no emphasis and probably a good chance of being overlooked!

Surprisingly, you can choose totally different typefaces that still work well together—but the key is to choose wisely.

Don't choose typefaces that are similar. If they are not from the same family (the italic version paired with the regular version of the same family), use two typefaces that are very different. The similarities can create a conflict, not a contrast.

Choose dissimilar typefaces. If a font in your ad is a sans serif, don't pick another sans-serif; instead mix the sans-serif with a script with flowing forms or a font with strong thick and thin serifs.

If you use an italic type for a bridal ad, don't combine the italic with another face that slants and flows; instead choose a strong sans-serif or a square slab serif.

But it's not just enough to choose different typefaces—you need to add contrast in other ways also: size, weight, structure, form, direction, and/or color. If you're going to contrast size, make it a big contrast—14 point type is no contrast to 12 point type and for weight contrast, go for the light with the extreme heavy—mixing a semibold with a bold won't cut it.

The "Winterfest" ad on the right makes better use of contrast in guiding the reader to a clearer, more unified, more readable presentation of the event.

A large typeface family takes a lot of the guess work out of your design process.

Typeface Combinations—Simple

As I stated in the first column, I had used **Helvetica** as my basic type choice for many years. It was a personal choice, but **Myriad Pro** offered me many of the same options, and falls in the category of a humanist san-serif typeface (this classification of typeface opens up a whole other discussion and if you are interested just "google" type categories or classifications—way more information than is needed now).

It's all well and good to develop contrast within a particular type family, but what happens when you decide to mix a serif and sans-serif typeface?

The first thing to be aware of is the difference between text type and display type. There are many, many books available that deal with typography and fonts, but I am just going to cover a very brief overview of the subject.

Text typeface: Type that is designed for maximum readability and legibility at 9–12 points in size.

Display typeface: A decorative typeface meant for larger point sizes (18 points and above). Often unsuitable for long passages or text sizes.

Serif typeface: A small stroke at the end of a terminal or arms of the letter.

Sans-Serif typeface: Type that has no such strokes attached.

The times when you want to combine typefaces is when you want to choose a headline and body copy. If you remember the use of contrast, this can be easier to achieve. Start by choosing the typeface that will be used the most... the rest is like creating a recipe:

- Combine large and small
- Combine structure (serif and sans-serif)
- Combine light or heavy weight
- Combine form (caps or lower case)
- Combine width (regular combined with condensed or expanded)

Start out simple and as you gain confidence, you'll be able to expand your choices. I suggested books above, but there are also a number of websites that will suggest possible combinations to get you started.

If you reread the bullet suggestions, you will note that contrast is the biggest factor in all the combinations.

I can not give you a recipe for specific type combos, but again, there are many websites that offer more specific pairings. I just want you to realize that these simple steps will get you started...

Final Thoughts...

It's September and I still haven't gone through my Type 1 fonts— but before I do that, I recently upgraded my operating (iOS) and now I have to figure out where all my "stuff" has been relocated (blasted security!).

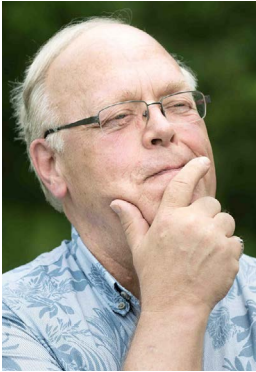
Enjoy the rest of the summer!

I was a student, an art teacher, a graphic designer, a writer and again a student. For info, PDFs of articles, or have ideas or comments, e-mail: hanrahan.ln@att.net Ellen Hanrahan ©9/2022



These ads are a good example of contrast in both type... and also image. The original on the left has contrast, but it's too subtle to the point of being "washed out," and therefore nothing really stands out. The type use is too similar in weight to assist in readability. The gray background also diminishes contrast and effectiveness. This misuse of contrast leaves an ad that will just get lost on the page.

The ad on the right uses contrast to create a message that is more visual and readable. The shade and type creates more visual interest within the ad itself and using one snowflake at a larger size adds additional impact. Type use helps break the content into specific areas of content. A reader will be drawn to this ad and the word "Winterfest" has also become more graphic and therefore more compelling.



By
**Mark W.
 Rummel**
Fenton, MI

YOU'D BETTER SHOP AROUND:
**Your grandmother knew
 Lydia E. Pinkham, an early
 advertising expert**

One of America's first national advertisers — and a unique marketing genius — ran small and medium-sized ads in papers, on her way to creating a fortune. Your grandmother knew her name, and perhaps she even used her popular products.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM (1819-1883) was an American inventor and marketer of an herbal-alcoholic “women’s tonic” for menstrual and menopausal problems. Most medical experts dismissed her Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound, saying it was a quack remedy. But millions of women were happy customers, often because her products seemed to bring them relief. Maybe it was the alcoholic ingredients, or maybe it really worked... but a modified Lydia Pinkham compound is still on sale today!

Running frequent “story ads” in papers across the growing nation, Pinkham directed her messages to women, who only began voting in 1920. She invited them to write her for

advice — and she wisely answered every single letter! Indeed, her staff kept answering them long after she died in 1883.

IT WAS that aggressive marketing of Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound that raised its profile, while also rallying her skeptics. Long, chatty copy would dramatize “hysteria,” “women’s weakness” and other themes commonly referenced at the time, historians note.

Most big advertisers 100 years ago were men, so Lydia stood out instantly. By speaking to women, she created an audience rarely shared by others.

Female customers knew her name, likely including our own grandmothers and great-grandmothers. Maybe they were slightly more gullible than folks are today, but Lydia knew a good thing when she advertised it.

FROM GIRLHOOD TO WOMANHOOD

Woman Relied Upon Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Emporia, Kansas. — “I began using Lydia E. Pinkham's medicines years ago when I was a girl. For several years I had severe pains at menstrual periods, making me very weak and interfering with my regular duties. I tried several remedies without obtaining relief. I was induced to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound by friends and it restored me to normal health. I often have occasion and do recommend your Vegetable Compound to my friends who have troubles similar to my own. You may use these facts as a testimonial.” — **EVA ALDRICH, [218 Union St., Emporia, Kansas.**

There are many women who first used our Vegetable Compound during their girlhood days. They found it a valuable help during trying periods. In later years they use it whenever they feel those annoying symptoms which women often have.

It is prepared carefully from medicinal plants, whose properties are especially adapted to correct the troubles women have. — Advertisement.



ALL THESE ADS ARE FROM 1920s MICHIGAN PAPERS, 100 YEARS AGO

Healthy Mother Merry Children Happy Home

TO maintain a happy home the housewife must keep in good health. Her duties are many and various, and it seems as if every other member of the family depended very much on her.

“Where is my hat?” cries the boy.
 “What did you do with my coat?” asks the daughter.
 “I can’t find any handkerchiefs,” yells the husband.
 The housewife is usually the advisor and general manager of the family.

Lydia E. Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound helps women to maintain a happy home by keeping them in good health.

Larwill, Ind.—“My back was so bad always tired out and had no ambition seemed to worry me and I had awful pains in my right side. I felt badly about four years and could not do my Lydia E. Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound people good that I began to take it myself. I am feeling fine now and ever so well. I live on a farm, do all my work, and have three little girls to take care of. I am recommending this medicine to my friends and know it will help them.”—Mrs. Jitamar Long, R. R. No. 4, Box 7, Larwill, Ind.

Cincinnati, O.—“I suffered for a year with nervous troubles and irregular Vegetables Compound. My back pained all the time and I was unfit for household work. I was unable to do my washing, if I would take your Vegetable Compound and Liver Pills I would be relieved. After taking the first bottle I felt better, so kept on taking the Vegetable Compound and now I am the fat and healthy and I am sure I could for your Vegetable Compound.”—Mrs. Cramer Fenner, 318 W. Liberty Street, Cincinnati, O.

Thousands of women owe their health to
Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound
 LYDIA E. PINKHAM MEDICINE CO. LYNN, MASS.




Mark worked at papers in Saginaw, Port Huron and the Thumb Area, plus served on the CPM Board. He and wife Sally even worked for The Walt Disney Company here in Michigan. He then opened and ran a successful restaurant for 17 years. Share topic ideas you'd like to see at: MarkWRummel@gmail.com



Building Main Street, not Wall Street

Finding the Road to Better Roads - by John Newby

Germany Kent once said, “We are all on the road to success. Some people just act like they want it more than others.”

It is rare that I visit a community where “roads” are not a hot topic. Every community believes they have the worst roads in their State, or even country. When someone makes a “roads or potholes” post on social media, it is sure to contain one of the longest string of comments that week. Suffice it to say, roads are usually a topic that brings out the passion in everyone.

Not long ago, I was on social media where someone had posted how bad the roads were in their community. As is predictable, dozens of comments followed, all chiming in with comments mirroring the original author of the post. Ironically, in the very next post, one of the commenters on the previous roads post was indicating how they were looking for things to do that upcoming weekend and thought they would be going to a community 45 minutes away for dinner, shopping, and maybe a show. Others from the previous “roads post” chimed in with like sentiments.

The answer, while simple, is not very well known. In many states, fixing the roads within the state or within the communities comes down to a very basic equation. The equation is this. The funds used to repair and maintain roads typically come out of the sales taxes generated in those communities, counties, and

state. As go the sales tax revenues, so goes the road upkeep. Nothing more, nothing less. Yes, the allocation of road funds is subject to debate within local governments, balancing the need for police, fire, and so forth is never easy. But it is still very basic, spend local, improve your roads. Spend out of town, pave the roads of where you are spending your money.

Want better roads, find ways to spend more dollars locally. When we factor in the 3X compounding impact of locally spent dollars, the impact is huge. If each resident in a community of 20,000 people spent just \$25 additional dollars locally each month, that would equate to an additional \$18,000,000 circulating through the community each year. With a 10% local sales tax, that is \$1,800,000 additional dollars for police, fire, AND roads. Not to mention how many jobs that will help to save or create. Certainly, there is a little more to it than this simple example, but the point remains – want better roads, spend more locally!

There is a catch. Most of us aren’t wired in such a way to be constantly thinking about spending locally or building our internal local DNA. With that being the case, we really can’t place the blame on the residents for not spending enough locally. The blame lies with the community leaders in that they are failing to educate the community about this critical component needed to have a successful community. City leaders, Chambers, Main Streets, Media, and others should be constantly educating 24/7, year-round. Studies indicate a person must hear a marketing message at least seven times before it really begins to resonate

internally. Most convey this message once or twice and believe the job is complete. Nothing is further from the truth – the job has only just begun.

Every community must begin communicating more effectively. Every community must begin to market the various messages that are needed to change the mindset of each resident. Every community must start thinking how they can encourage business growth, after all that is the foundation of your sales tax dollars. Communities that communicate a strong local message, are business friendly, and work to grow their business base have a chance to survive. Those unwilling or unable to do those simple things are simply bidding their time on the road to oblivion.

Let me close with a quote by Oscar Bimpong, he said “Where you are coming from doesn’t matter but where you are going does. Hence look forward and not backwards. Your eyes are placed in front of you for a reason. Your eyes only look backwards for special references. Keep your eyes on the road.” May each of us choose to keep our eyes on the path of success as we build better communities, and roads.

John Newby is a nationally recognized Columnist, Publisher, Community, Business & Media strategic consultant & speaker. His “Building Main Street, not Wall Street,” column runs 60+ communities around the country. As founder of Truly-Local, he assists community leaders, businesses and local media to build synergies creating more vibrant communities. He can be reached at: info@Truly-Localllc.com.



THE ILLUSION OF TRUTH: How Greenwashing is Hurting your Business

By Kathi Rowzie, President, Two Sides North America

Sustainability has gone mainstream, with more people than ever before concerned about the environmental impacts of the products and services they buy and use. They understandably want to do the right things for the planet, but the explosion of greenwashing is causing consumers and businesses to use – or in the case of paper, not use – products without any basis in fact.

The Oxford Dictionary defines greenwashing as “Disinformation disseminated by an organization so as to present an environmentally responsible public image.” And you don’t have to look far to understand the scope of the problem. In a recent survey conducted by [The Harris Poll](#) for Google Cloud, 72% of CEOs and C-suite leaders in North America admitted that their companies are guilty of greenwashing, even as most gave their companies an “above-average” rating for environmental sustainability. [Greenwashing investigations](#) of ESG (environmental, social, governance) investment funds are becoming commonplace. And, as reported in the [Harvard Business Review](#), studies show that companies that tout their environmental credentials often have poor environmental compliance records.

As major companies, service providers and government agencies attempt to disguise their cost-saving efforts as environmental responsibility, unsubstantiated claims that encourage people to go paperless are among the most often repeated greenwashing ploys. Going paperless is green, saves trees, eliminates waste and reduces your carbon footprint, they say. The evidence is clear that [greenwashing works](#). But why do messages that are so contrary to fact resonate so well with consumers and business decision makers?

Psychological research has shown that when people see and hear unsubstantiated claims over and over again, they start to believe them as true, and ultimately incorporate them into their decision making. This phenomenon, called the “illusory truth effect,” was first identified in a 1977 study ([Hasher, et al.](#)) which found that repeated statements are easier to process, and subsequently perceived to be more truthful. This conclusion, that misconceptions become part of our knowledge base and inform our choices as a result of repetition, has since been repeated dozens of times by cognitive, social and consumer psychologists. Evidence of the robustness of this effect comes from studies showing that the illusory truth effect occurs even when the repeated statements are highly implausible ([Fazio et al. 2019](#)) or when the repeated statements directly contradict a person’s prior knowledge ([Fazio et al. 2015](#)).



So what does this mean for your business? Two Sides North America (TSNA) research illustrates the damaging effects that repeated greenwashing claims are having on the U.S. paper, printing and mailing sector, finding that 65% of consumers who have seen anti-paper greenwashing claims from their service providers are influenced to switch from paper bills and statements to digital versions. The study, conducted in partnership with global research firm Censuswide, also found that

the TSNA Anti-greenwashing Campaign has preserved more than \$300 million in annual revenue for the sector. But the results of this study, while telling, represent just a small slice of the broader anti-paper greenwashing epidemic.

Anti-paper greenwashing is accelerating as inflationary pressures drive large corporations and other service providers to implement deeper cost cuts. But greenwashing is not exclusive to the service sector, and printing papers are not the only products at risk. Even as interest in paper-based packaging as a sustainable solution to plastics pollution gains momentum, unsubstantiated claims portraying paper as less environmentally sustainable than plastics are on the rise. So too are misleading claims used to promote packaging made with alternative fibers and non-fiber materials. And the media’s repetition of environmental myths about paper only serve to reinforce the illusion of truth.

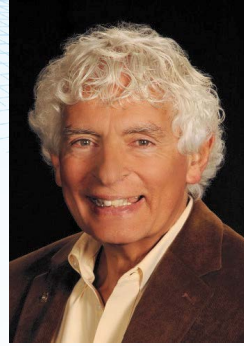
TSNA’s Anti-greenwashing Campaign is the only industry effort to directly challenge these anti-paper greenwashing claims at their source, and with great success. Working with major corporations, government agencies and the media, the campaign has eliminated literally billions of instances of unsubstantiated “go paperless” environmental claims over the last decade.

But there’s much more work to do as the growing chorus of anti-paper voices continues to repeat the same opportunistic greenwashing claims, threatening the financial future of paper-focused businesses and the livelihoods of people who work for them.

You can help by reporting greenwashing claims to Two Sides at info@twosidesna.org.



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