

July 2023 INFORMER



What Are You Doing To Celebrate
Free Community Paper Month in July?



**Community
Papers of
Michigan**



What are you doing to celebrate FREE COMMUNITY PAPER MONTH in July?

To do with your readers...

- Invite readers to express their feelings regarding your free paper. Print the good and the bad in a special feature.

To do with your advertisers...

- Run a contest for the "oldest drawer or trunk liner" in the community. The winner must bring the paper to your office to claim the prize.
- Run a trivia contest about your paper or community and give always prizes to the winners.
- Print a photo layout of community sites that have since changed. Let the readers guess that sites and award prizes to the winners.
- Ask key advertisers if you can include the free paper logo in their ads.
- Set up a shopping center display. Mall organizers are always looking for displays that will attract people while shopping.
- Give a prize to the person who calls with the 13th (or whatever number you choose) classified ad for each week or month of July.
- As several of your consistent advertisers to write testimonials about how your paper works for them and print the testimonials with photos.
- Honor the longest consistent advertiser who currently runs in your paper. Put the business owner's photo in the paper and run some of his/her early advertising.
- Offer all advertisers spot color during the celebration.

To do with your staff...

- Print the objectives, goals and mission statement of your business and how you strive to meet and surpass those ideas.
- Feature your employees in a photo and caption page describing what they do, what their first job in the free paper industry was and why they chose a career in the industry.
- Challenge advertising reps to a record-breaking number of ads during the month and reward the efforts with cash prizes.
- Brainstorm with your staff and develop ideas on how to celebrate Free Paper Month.
- Encourage your staff to express their feelings regarding your free paper. Print the good and the bad in a special feature.

- Unveil some significant changes in your format, rates or policies during the month.

To do with your community...

- Ask the mayor to proclaim July as National Free paper Month in your community and feature the proclamation and photo in your publication.
- Set up a shopping center display. Mall organizers are always looking for displays that will attract people while shopping.
- Feature a story about the contributions your publications have made within the communities you serve. (Note civic memberships and participation your publication has contributed to over the past year. Include events for Chambers of Commerce, DDA, Retail and Non-profit group relationships.
- Remind local civic presidents and program chair people about the celebration as far in advance as possible and offer to help set up a special program for them.
- Establish an annual competition in the name of your free paper for the best news story, photo or feature in the high school paper. Put a plaque in the school or feature in the high school paper. Put a plaque in the school bearing the name of the winner each year.
- Sponsor an essay contest about how your free paper helps the community or why a free press is important.

To do in your paper...

- Run the Free Paper Month logo and advertisement in your publication.
- Add the Free Paper Month logos to your masthead or flag.
- Explain the historical basis of the importance of free papers and the origin of the industry.
- Explain in a feature how a story or an ad makes it to print - the people who write it, sell it, compose it, print it, deliver it, etc.
- Develop "Did You Know" fillers to use during the month. For example, Did you know...newsprint usage for one year would stretch from local point to local point; the combined experience of sales staff; the miles driven by circulation people in one year; newsprint used; etc. (Use the facts available from the current "Did You Know" sheet.)
- Feature a member of the community who is the same age as your publication. Highlight the growth of both.

Whatever you do...Celebrate JULY Free Community Paper Month in July!



By
Mark W.
Rummel
Fenton, MI

YOU'D BETTER SHOP AROUND:
This response shows many think "disappearing" old values should return...

Last month's "Shop Around" column in this space dealt with a 2023 survey showing America's "old values" are disappearing... in big numbers. The summary of this comparative survey appears below, at the bottom left.

Within two days of that column appearing, I received this thoughtful response from a reader who shared his/her sadness at these survey results.

This anonymous reader noted we are losing vital personal interest in patriotism, religion, parenthood and community involvement — while the only survey upward movement is in the perceived importance of money today.

TO STIMULATE these discussions, and in the spirit of offering "Letters to the Editor" so popular in many publications over the years, here is that response in its entirety:

"As you noted, this is a turmoil-filled time.

"Life is no longer easy or stress-free, as there seem to be life-changing events for many all too often.

"THE ONE THING that I see is many in the younger generation do not want to work as hard as we had to. Interestingly though, money is important. And we earn money how???

"Also, the country has never been more divided. Conservative and liberal viewpoints have been around for many generations, but I remember co-existing.

"Now so many feel their beliefs are the only way and lines have been drawn, dividing families, friends, neighbors. It's really evident in this area — You are either considered far-left or a far-right

MAGA extremist. I am certainly NOT far left — or left for that matter, nor am I a far-right extremist.

"What ever happened to Patriotism and One Country Under God?"

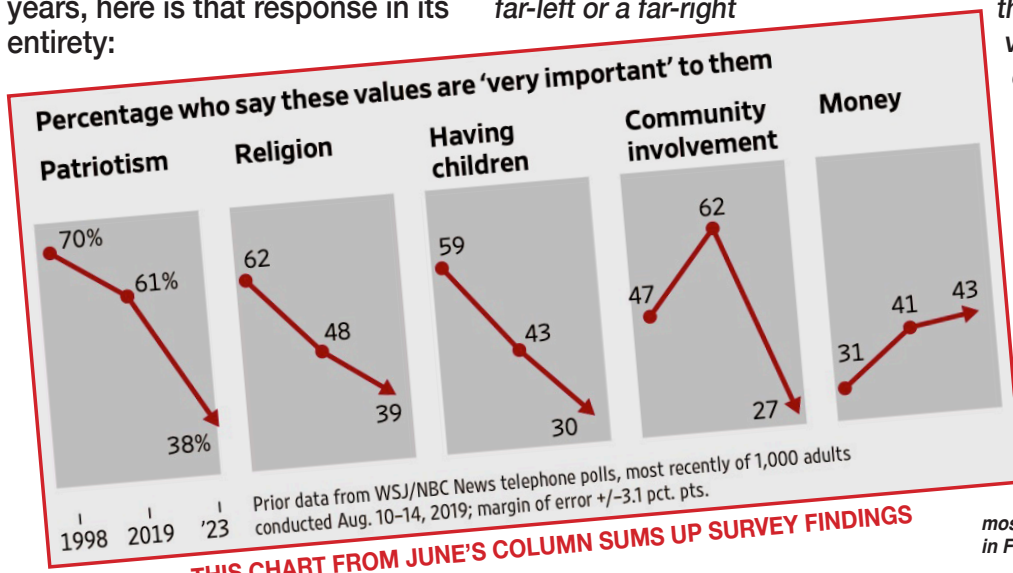
"When our generation of Boomers are gone, these numbers will drop to single digits if more people do not get involved and teach the younger generation what made this Nation Great!

"POLITICIANS AND many teachers are indoctrinating our children to believe much of the liberal beliefs that make many of us cringe. They are also teaching children to win at all costs, and that it is okay to lie for their perceived greater cause. That is not true at all!

"Things were not perfect in the 1960s through the 1990s, but much was very right — at least it was for me, our family and friends.

"I just shake my head at these findings. Let's hope things turn around... and soon.

"These are frustrating times for many of us to be sure..."



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. He also opened and ran a successful restaurant for 17 years. He's mostly retired but still does some social media work in Fenton, Mich. Comments are always invited at MarkWRummel@gmail.com



BY JOHN FOUST

Ad - Libs

If it's 10:08, it Must Be a Watch Ad

Legendary UCLA basketball coach John Wooden once said, "It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen."

That's certainly true in advertising. Consider the nuances of photography. For example, the next time you run across an analogue watch ad in a newspaper, magazine or store poster, check out the photo. Whether it's Rolex or Timex or another brand, there's a good chance that the time is 10:08. Or in rarer cases, 1:52. That's because the placement of the hands creates a v-shape at the top of the watch face, which is where most timepiece makers place their logos. This v-shape frame sets the brand name apart from everything else on the face.

Watch manufacturers – and other smart advertisers – know how to photograph their products. They realize that a photo makes an instant impression on an audience. And they understand the overall impression is heavily influenced by those vital details that coach Wooden talked about.

When we hear the phrase "photo bomb," we think about children jumping around in the background of wedding photos or family pets intruding on serious family poses. Mishaps like that are obvious and can be re-shot or corrected in commercial photos. It's the little things that often create problems, because they can be missed in the design or editing process.

I remember seeing a photograph of a group of several people in a full-page ad. It was a generic image which probably came from a stock photo library. Although all of the people were looking toward the right side of the ad, it was clear that they had been looking to the left in the original shot. One of the subjects was wearing a shirt which featured a large slogan in words that were backward. The photo had been "flopped" to create a mirror-reversal across a vertical axis. The result was a photo of people looking in the desired direction, but with a distracting detail that had slipped through the editing cracks. Just think

how easy it would have been to start out with a different picture or eliminate the words altogether.

In extreme cases, I've seen flopped cars with backward logos. That kind of mistake is sure to make an advertiser cringe – or even reconsider the decision to run more ads in that publication. Sometimes, there are legal reasons for what can and cannot appear in a commercial photo. You may have seen professional athletes in ads without any team identification. That usually means the athlete had agreed to appear in the ad, but the team or the league would not allow visible logos.

The point of all this is to think carefully about

photography. Before and after a photo is taken or selected, there's a lot of detail work to be done. Make sure the legal angles are covered. Make sure there are no photo bombs. And make sure the photo casts a strong light on the advertiser.

In other words, make sure it meets the Wooden Requirement.

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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. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com



I look forward to summer! But truth be told, I don't do well in the heat. No energy to speak of, and if I could, I'd like to invent a machine to automate and simplify the...

Design Process

Ad Talk with Ellen Hanrahan

The Design Process can be simple or complicated. Unfortunately, there is no “one size fits all,” because each customer/client has their own specific message. At times, the process can be streamlined, but each advertiser has a customized message to tell.

I've been trying to “declutter” my life and I came across some early articles of mine and thought I would share, visually, what goes on in my head. So with some help from *Rube Goldberg*,* here goes my visual interpretation of the Design Process.

Concepts & Analysis: In other words—information. What does the advertiser need to create the best message for their business. What's the purpose of the ad—size, color, season. If it's support material or marketing collateral, what is the budget, when is it needed, what is the message. No matter the type of advertising, who is the target audience. Most of this information can be gathered from the advertiser or sales rep.

The more information you have at the start, the easier it will be to avoid any mistakes or delays. Changes or alterations in the job can be more costly and time-consuming as it nears completion.

Think Tank: Armed with the background information, you can now concentrate on refining the concept—generating ideas to help reach the intended audience.

What typefaces, graphics, photos will you need. More importantly, what are the size constraints and don't forget readability and legibility.

Are there product photos? Is there even room for other art.

Since I am “old school,” I still use pencil and paper to make some rough sketches to get a better idea of placement within my borders.

Large ads aren't always easier.

Production: This is the time that the “building” of the message begins, relying on the basic elements and principles of design. *Elements: Line, Shape, Space, Color, Texture, Size, and Value. Principles of Design: Contrast, Repetition, Alignment and Proximity (also Balance, Emphasis, Rhythm and Unity).*

The bottom line is to generate advertising that's reader-friendly, unified and memorable. In the past I've addressed each of the elements and principles and if you would like a copy, email me with “*Design Basics*” in the Subject line.

During the production phase I am able to call on my past experiences to help me decide what works (see “*Out: The Evaluation*” below) and repurpose graphics that I have saved.

Deadline: Not too much can be said here. There comes a point where the work must be finished. It is easier with years of experience, though.

Out: The Evaluation Whether you are working on print or digital publications, it's always good to see how effective your design was. Did the ad stand out? Were you able to keep a unified, cohesive look to your message. At times, you need to check how other ads filled the page for you to make future adjustments, whether to keep text away from the borders or to make sure that your use of a reverse or screen did not become “muddy” on the printed page, or too overpowering on the digital page. There are many factors in creating any visual message but readability and unity go a long way in clarifying the content.

***Rube Goldberg:** Reuben Garrett Lucius Goldberg, (1883–1970) was an American cartoonist, sculptor, author, engineer and inventor. He was known for his cartoons depicting complicated gadgets performing a simple task in an overly complicated (and impossible way).

A Design Machine?

Unfortunately it's not real. Although with the advent of **AI** in the software programs, I'm not even sure about that!

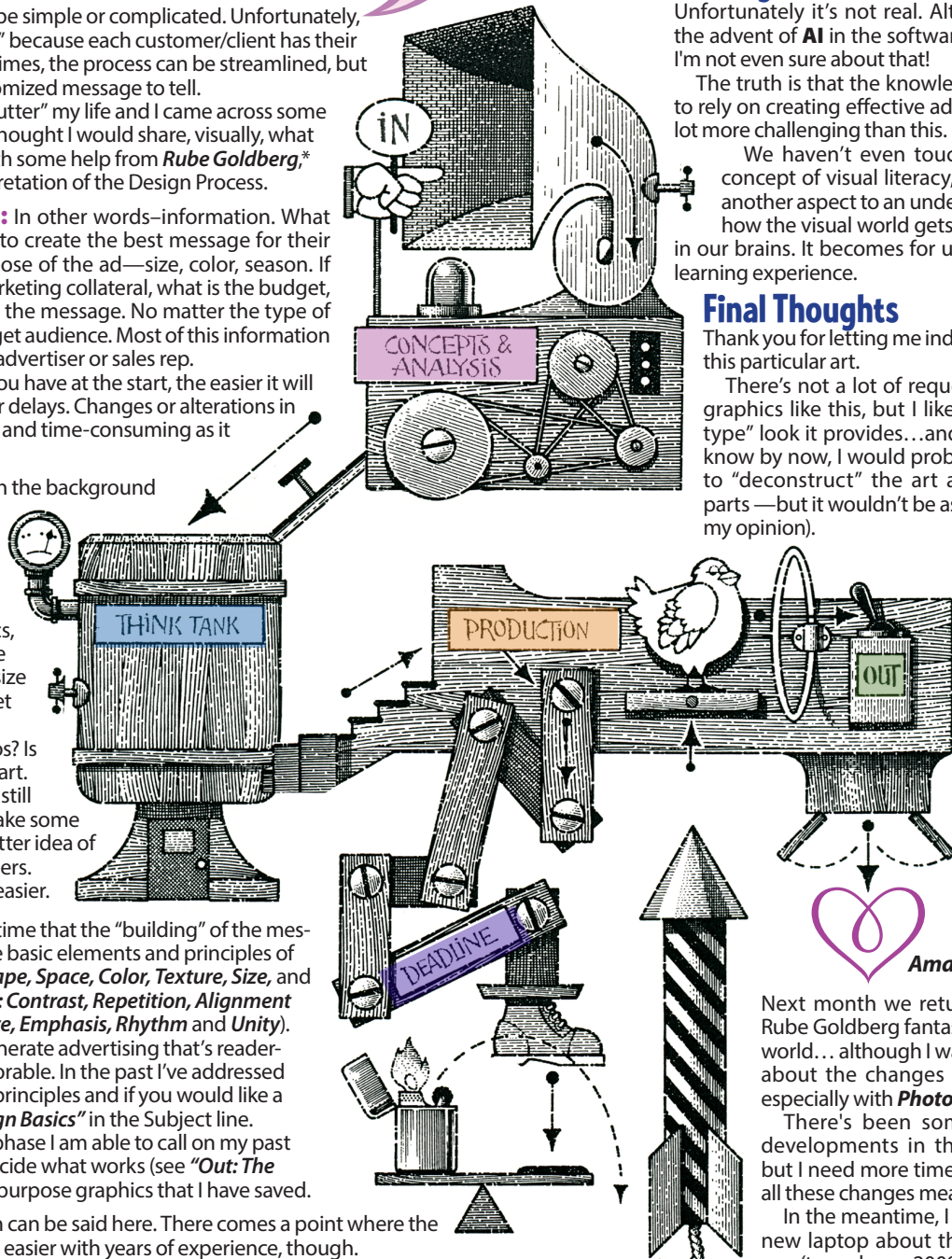
The truth is that the knowledge needed to rely on creating effective advertising is a lot more challenging than this.

We haven't even touched on the concept of visual literacy, which adds another aspect to an understanding of how the visual world gets to and stays in our brains. It becomes for us, a life-long learning experience.

Final Thoughts

Thank you for letting me indulge in using this particular art.

There's not a lot of request for some graphics like this, but I like the “wood-type” look it provides...and as you also know by now, I would probably be able to “deconstruct” the art and just use parts—but it wouldn't be as effective (in my opinion).



Next month we return from my Rube Goldberg fantasy to the real world... although I wasn't kidding about the changes in software, especially with **Photoshop**.

There's been some amazing developments in this program, but I need more time to see what all these changes mean for us.

In the meantime, I purchased a new laptop about three months ago (to replace a 2008 model) and I am still transferring my files (although it's my fault for putting it off). So lots to do and until next month...

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 ©07/2023

Sharing the Good News

Everywhere I turn I see healthy, growing newspapers

By Kevin Slimp

As I listen to the holiday fireworks outside my window, my thoughts revolve around the newspaper colleagues I've met over the past few weeks and the lessons I've learned. Having finished several major redesign projects in June, I've recently traveled to speak at several newspaper conventions and visit some newspapers on-site.

In Alabama, I spoke about my vision for newspapers. I told stories of things I've seen in the past that had both negative and positive effects on our industry. I shared about newspapers that are growing, as well as newspaper colleagues who are starting new papers across the U.S. Following my presentation, I visited with several publishers individually to discuss their papers. My enthusiasm about the state of our industry was once again renewed while visiting with Tommy and Dee Ann Campbell.

Just three years ago, Tommy left his publisher's position in Tennessee after he and Dee Ann purchased the Linden, Alabama, newspaper. The circulation had fallen

to 133. While Dee Ann continued to serve as publisher of the newspaper in Gilbertown, Alabama, Tommy took over as publisher of the Linden newspaper, newly named "The Leader." Today, The Leader has more than 1,500 subscribers.



Joey Young answers questions during the Kansas Press Association Covention about new ventures his newspapers have begun over the past year.

In Kansas, I was able to visit with my friend Joey Young. I've written about Joey and the success he, Lindsey Young, and their team have enjoyed several times in previous columns. While in Wichita, I sat in while Teri Finneman interviewed Joey and Lindsey about new things they've initiated over the past year at their newspapers.

Once, several years ago, Joey asked me why I was working so hard to make him famous. I explained

that I wasn't doing anything to make him famous. I just liked telling my newspaper friends about this young man in his late 20s and the success he and his wife had found beginning new newspapers in Kansas. A few years have passed, and I still beam with pride when I see Joey and Lindsey speaking in front of audiences at newspaper conventions. Joey didn't need me to make him famous. The work he and Lindsey were doing spoke for itself.

If you are a regular reader of my column, you've heard me mention Dale Gentry and his staff at the Jefferson City (Tennessee) Standard Banner several times. Dale and his team continue to make improvements at their ever-growing newspaper, discovering new ways to meet the demands of their readers. I love the newspapers Dale's staff publishes for each school in the area. Stories written by the students are featured in these papers, printed on broadsheets, distributed to the schools, and inserted into The Standard Banner. Is it any wonder that after 96 years, The Standard Banner continues to grow?



Jill Friesz' latest renewal project is the Billings County (North Dakota) Pioneer.

Having just finished several months of work with Dale's staff, we'll soon be focusing on creating a new publication. Like other growing newspapers, The Standard Banner has learned that cutting to grow doesn't work. Investing in future growth does.

While preparing to speak in Alabama, I contacted North Dakota publisher Jill Friesz to ask how things were going with her ever-growing group of community papers in North Dakota. It seems that Jill has been quite successful at creating new papers – or reviving former papers – in communities where newspapers have been closed. I was thrilled to hear things were going great at her papers, not just because that allowed me to include her example in my Alabama keynote. I was also excited to hear that Jill has recently revived another community

paper in the state.

I plan to take some time to relax, maybe two or three days, before jumping into several redesigns in July and August. I'll also visit on-site with a few newspapers from Knoxville to Chicago. I may sound like a broken record, but I don't make this stuff up. I run into healthy, growing community papers everywhere I look and wherever I go. That's one reason I love working with newspapers so much.



Kevin Slimp
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Kevin Slimp is a popular consultant, advisor and trainer in the newspaper industry. From 1997-2018, Kevin directed The Newspaper Institute of The University of Tennessee. He currently serves as CEO of Market Square Publishing and Chief Guru at NewspaperAcademy.com.



By Hillary Carroll



Circulation **TIPS** & **INFO**

AI to Gain and Retain Subscribers

With the rise of artificial Intelligence and tools like ChatGPT, there is growing skepticism over how this plays out in the world of print journalism. While there is certainly some cause for concern over matters of authenticity, there are areas in which AI can be utilized and even embraced.

Faced with staffing shortages, increased print costs, and looming USPS rate hikes, publishers need to get crafty and implement tools and technology where it makes sense to do so. One example is gaining and retaining subscribers.

Qualifying for a Periodical permit is a time consuming, albeit worthwhile, endeavor when it comes to cutting costs. By getting over 50% of your total distribution to formally request (or subscribe to) your newspaper, you can apply to receive the lowest commercial mailing rate available. This applies to both free and paid circulation newspapers.

Here is the cool part. AI can be used to generate compelling new subscriber or renewal letters in seconds. This allows your editorial staff to focus on covering the local news that matters most to your readers. All you need to do is write a quick prompt and AI will do the rest.

I tested this and ChatGPT returned an extremely well written and customizable letter in no time at all. I was seriously impressed! **Pro Tip:** The more detailed prompt you include, the better results

you'll get. Try a few different prompts until you get exactly what you're looking for.

Max out your Advertising

Knowing how to calculate advertising percentage can be tricky. And if you're considering a Periodical permit, it's crucial to know what qualifies as advertising content and what the allowances are. Here are a few helpful reminders,

For a paid circulation Periodical:

- No more than 75% advertising in half the issues per year.
- Example: For a weekly, you can exceed 75% advertising in 26 issues.

For a requester Periodical:

- No more than 75% advertising in more than 25% of the issues per year.
- Example: For a weekly, you can exceed 75% advertising in 13 issues.

Pro Tip: Save your over 75% allowances for issues that historically include a lot of advertising or multi-page inserts (think holiday shopping or park district guides).

By strategically planning and tracking your advertising content, you can maximize your revenue while ensuring postal compliance.

For more information on converting to Periodical mail, [contact hillary@requesterpro.com](mailto:hillary@requesterpro.com)



BUILDING MAIN STREET NOT WALL STREET



May the Odds be Ever in Your Favor

by John Newby

I am constantly thinking about how small and medium sized local communities can defy the odds and transform themselves despite the odds not being in their favor. I am reminded of the famous line used many times in the movie series, The Hunger Games, that goes, "May the odds be ever in your favor". At times I feel many of these local communities are doing a very poor job of assuring the odds of winning are in their favor. In fact, many seem to be bent upon assuring the odds are stacked against them.

Through my travels over the years, I am reminded of a couple communities that have defied the odds and stacked them in their favor. The first community that comes to mind is Ottawa, IL.

While I have mentioned Ottawa, IL. before in this column, let me reacquaint you with this town. Ottawa was a struggling town on the Illinois river about an hour or so from Chicago. There wasn't much to do and most of the residents traveled north or east for entertainment and good restaurants. All that changed with a visionary Mayor that wouldn't settle for the status quo. Despite fighting against the city council, he started cleaning up the heart of the city, their downtown. They started street-scaping, they started planting not only flowers, but a vision for the future. It wasn't long and a business relocated to downtown. Then a second business, then a third. Each year brought more street-scaping, more flowers and plants, and more businesses. To make a long story short, Ottawa has become a destination where people from the north and the east, all directions for that matter

now travel to Ottawa for nice dining, shopping, and entertainment. Ottawa has transformed itself from within through a hefty vision coupled with a lot of hard work and perseverance.

Another great example I like to point to is Dubuque, IA. Dubuque is a town located on the Mississippi river in Iowa. The town is really a city unto itself, with not really any major cities within 40-50 miles. While John Deere has a presence in Dubuque, the city was in a rut for quite some time. Many of the leaders in the city worked together over many years to plant the seeds of a brighter future. The local media company did what local media companies should do, they spread that vision often and consistently. The local media didn't just report the negative news as it happened, they became the biggest cheerleader for the community. They spread the message far and wide, in essence became the conduit of information to the both the residents and the outside world. As more and more leaders and citizens caught the vision, progress was made, old buildings were either restored or torn down to be replaced by new and attractive buildings and parks. Thanks to a vision, hard work and a local media company that cared, Dubuque today is a vastly different and more vibrant town than yesteryear.

While I point out these two examples, I am sure there are many more like them scattered across our great country. With that said, I can also confidently say one thing. Many communities will never experience these types of dreams coming true because they think way too small and fail to dream big. You will never make a

game-winning shot if you don't take it. I am convinced that one of the biggest obstacles for most communities is the simple fact that they think too small. They are willing to settle for mild successes obtained on the road most traveled because they are safe roads with few obstacles in the way. It is those leaders willing to traverse the road less traveled, knowing that obstacles will be faced, that win the big prize.

My challenge to any community, regardless of size is to dream big, expect to win and play as if you will win. The only downside to dreaming big is you may not always win, but you will be battle hardened to keep moving forward on the next big idea. Be the community in the arena. Be the community that doesn't dwell on their current negative conditions but keeps plowing ahead to change those conditions. Always strive for perfection, knowing that perfection is nearly impossible to attain. Understand in your quest for perfection, there is nothing wrong with falling short and settling for greatness - that is the trick to winning.



John Newby is a nationally recognized Columnist, Speaker, & Publisher. He consults with Chambers, Communities, Business & Media. His "Building Main Street, not Wall Street," column appears in 60+ newspapers and media outlets. As founder of Truly-Local, he assists chambers, communities, media, and businesses in creating synergies that build vibrant communities. He can be reached at: John@Truly-Local.org.



Two Sides North America Survey

The Importance of Paper in Learning and Literacy

- Submitted by Kathi Rowzie

Over the last two decades, technology has become part of almost every facet of our lives. The expansion of broadband, smartphones and portable technology has changed how we communicate, access information, work and learn.

While many of these changes are positive, there is growing evidence that this isn't always the case. In recent years, there has been a gradual shift away from paper-based learning materials in schools toward digital and online tools. This shift accelerated rapidly during the pandemic when almost all schools moved lessons online. Research has shown that this increasing reliance on digital methods and resources may be negatively affecting the ability of students to learn and remember information. There is also growing concern about the impact of digital technology on mental and physical health.

Digital Vs. Paper-Based Materials: Learning

A 2018 meta-analysis involving more than 171,000 readers that compared reading from digital text with reading from printed text. The analysis found that comprehension was better overall when people read printed as opposed to digital texts.

Similarly, a study involving millions of high school students in the 36 countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) found that those who use computers heavily at school "do a lot worse in most learning outcomes, even after accounting for social background and student demographics." Another analysis revealed that fourth-grade students (approximately 9 to 10 years old) "who used tablets in all or almost all their classes had, on average, reading scores 14 points lower than those who never used

them—a differential equivalent to an entire grade level."

Patricia Alexander, a psychologist at the University of Maryland who studies how we learn, discovered that although students think they learn more reading online, tests show that they actually learn less than when reading print. Part of the problem can be attributed to the speed with which we typically read text on a screen, much of which is easy-to-understand text messages or social-media posts. When it comes to reading more complex information on screen, which requires more attention and thought, people still tend to scan it rather than read it properly.

As well as encouraging us to read quickly, reading online usually involves scrolling, which

can make it hard for the brain to create mental maps that help us to remember. When reading a printed book, for example, it's easy to know roughly which page you're on, but that's far more difficult when scrolling through text on a screen. A 2019 study revealed that it's not just when scrolling that the brain struggles to make mental maps. When a group of 50 participants was asked to read a 28-page story, half of them read a printed version and the other half read the story on an e-reader. Those reading the printed version understood the chronology of the plot better than those reading the digital version. The researchers suggest that "the haptic and tactile feedback of an e-reader does not provide the same support for mental reconstruction of a story as a print book does." (Continued on page 10)



Two Sides North America Survey

The Importance of Paper in Learning and Literacy *(Continued)*

- Submitted by Kathi Rowzie

The benefits of paper-based learning materials aren't restricted to reading; writing on paper rather than typing on a keyboard can also produce better results. A 2014 study compared the outcome of students taking lecture notes by hand with those who took notes on a laptop. When it came to testing the students on their knowledge of the information, they were allowed to review their notes for 10 minutes before the test. Those who took longhand notes performed better on both factual and conceptual questions.

The authors of the study concluded that "laptop use can negatively affect performance on educational assessments, even – or perhaps especially – when the computer is used for its intended function of easier note taking. For that reason, laptop use in classrooms should be viewed with a healthy dose of caution; despite their growing popularity, laptops may be doing more harm in classrooms than good."

Perhaps one of the most noticeable differences between reading printed matter compared to reading on a screen is distraction. When reading from a screen, we're more often than not connected to other services, which bring with them pop-ups and pings from social media, emails and text messages, all of which divert our attention and break concentration. Even in schools, depending on the school's policy, this can be an issue, particularly when tech-savvy students know how to bypass firewalls and other restrictions.

Digital Vs. Paper-Based Materials: Mental and Physical Health

There is growing concern about the impact of digital devices on mental health, including increased rates of anxiety and depression. With devices now being used by students in school as well as outside the classroom, there is little respite from the constant stimulation they deliver. Paper-based learning materials, in addition to providing cognitive benefits, also provide a much-needed break from the digital world.

A study conducted by researchers at the University of Washington found that students who used paper-based planners were less likely to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression than those who used digital planners. Published in 2017, the study involved 264 undergraduate students who were randomly assigned to use either a paper-based planner or a digital planner. The researchers found that the students who used the paper-based planner reported lower levels of anxiety and depression than those who used the digital planner.

The negative effect of digital devices isn't limited to their use during the day. The blue light these devices emit also affects how well we sleep. A study conducted by researchers at Harvard

Medical School found that those who read from a tablet took longer to fall asleep, had less REM sleep, and felt less rested in the morning than those who read from a paper book.

Poor sleep quality can bring with it a range of negative health consequences. In addition to the effect poor sleep has on mental well-being, it also increases the risk of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

Conclusion

Compared to centuries of paper use, digital and online educational tools are very much in their infancy, with much research still to be done on their impacts. A growing body of research suggests that a switch to electronic learning materials from paper-based materials may be detrimental to students' ability to learn and remember information, as well as to their overall health and well-being. With healthy, well-educated students as the ultimate goal, perhaps we should slow or even pause the shift to digital materials in schools until we more fully understand their effects on learning and literacy.

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