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## COMING NEXT MONTH

The September *Publish* will take a look at the impact artificial intelligence (AI) could have on the our industry. As always, we will also cover the people, information and issues that are influencing the community publishing industry.

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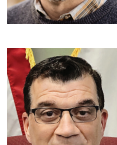
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## ACP BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS


ACP Board of Director Nominations for the fall elections is open until August 11, 2023.

The positions are for 2-year terms that will commence on January 1, 2024.

Positions up for election in this cycle are the six At-Larger Board Member seats on the Board of Directors. All current incumbent directors have acknowledged their intent to re-run for their current seats.

Any ACP member in good standing is eligible to run for one of the positions but must submit their intention to run in writing by the stated nomination deadline. Nominations should be emailed to office@communitypublishers.com no later than August 11, 2023 and include the following information: Nominee's Name, Member Company, Company Position, Email Address, Mailing Address, and a description of the nominee's qualifications that will be used in the election information sent to members.


After vetting all candidates to make sure they are employees of members in good standing, the formal candidate announcements will be made September 1, 2023 and in the September Publish. The election process will take place between October 2, 2023 and the end of day October 13, 2023. Election results will be announced no later than November 2, 2023. Any questions related to this upcoming election can be directed to the ACP Office at 877-203-2327.



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# OH.... THE CUSTOMER IS THE HERO



BY MANUEL KARAM

**Y**ears ago, we hired a young salesperson named John. John joined the company right out of college but did have a little experience selling ads for his school newspaper. We knew it would take time to develop his skillset and that was OK because his initial position involved supporting ad consultants rather than selling directly. However, because of an unexpected resignation in the field he was soon given an opportunity to manage a full sales territory.

I was sales manager at the time and really wanted him to succeed. It was clear John had strong social and customer service skills but needed help with time management, and more importantly handling a “no.” Luckily, I had just attended an IFPA event where the book *Building A Story Brand* by Donald Miller was discussed. I thought it had a message worth sharing with John.

For those of you that haven’t read it, a major theme within the book is that business and sales relationships can be framed like common popular storylines, particularly in movies: a character encounters a problem and needs a guide or teacher to help overcome that problem. Example, main character Luke Skywalker has a problem with the Empire and needs teacher Yoda’s help to learn the ways of the Jedi and save the galaxy. In sales, the buyer or prospect is the one with the problem that needs solving, think not enough customers, and the salesperson is the one to help guide them, with a perfectly executed print advertising campaign of course. A new salesperson

might make the mistake in thinking he or she is the main character or hero out to make a lot of sales. But we know that’s not the case now—the customer is actually the hero in need of help.

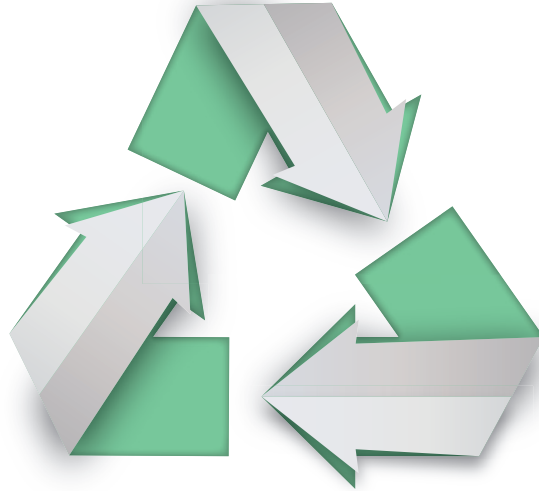
It seemed simple enough to me. After the IFPA conference I came back excited to share the message, not only with John but the entire sales team. Before our next meeting I downloaded the book, read it cover to cover, then spent time creating a Power Point presentation (I had more time at night before kids). John was into movies and so I stuck with the Star Wars theme of Luke being the hero/customer and Yoda being the guide/salesperson. If John wasn’t thinking of himself as the hero, getting a “no” shouldn’t bother him as much because it’s not about his personal success anymore.

The day of the presentation came, and I was eager to see how John and the others received the message. I got up in front of the team, shared the Power Point, and then asked what everyone thought. There was general silence. Down the table I saw John lean over to another team member and whisper, “What the heck was that?”

Strike out! To this day I’m not sure where I went wrong but I haven’t given up hope on the point of Donald Miller’s book. When we’re out with customers, are we focusing on their needs? Or are we thinking of ourselves and our revenue goals? After all, what we’re really trying to do is help the customer succeed. And as Yoda would say, “Do or do not, there is no try.” ■

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## THE ONE THING



BY DOUGLAS FRY

# TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS

I used to pilot small aircraft. When I was taking flight lessons my flight instructor, Phillip, was a young college student. He would instruct me, pre-flight the aircraft, be with me during maneuvers, and afterward taught me how to improve.

When we were done with each flight lesson we would go to my home where we sat at the kitchen table and I tutored him in college math (algebra, trigonometry, and finally calculus). It was a symbiotic relationship. He helped me get my pilot's license and I helped him get his diploma. He has been a good friend for over 40 years because of what we went through together.

This relates to sales managers and sales professionals because there is a symbiotic relationship there too. Let's face it, each wouldn't be nearly as successful without the other. Working together managers and reps are greater than the sum of their individual parts. What is the analogy you ask?

Sales managers have the duty and responsibility to train their people how to do their jobs better. ACP

can help with this task through the Power Sales University. If you were to purchase this package for your team it would be \$1,500 per month. But as a member benefit of ACP you get it for the same price you charge for your publication... FREE. You and your staff will receive years of on demand training everyone can benefit from. Finding training materials and subjects is a challenge for all of us, Power Sales University helps us with that challenge. With consistent training the "instruction" part of our analogy is taken care of.

Before each flight the pilot in charge walks around the aircraft checking to make sure all components are functioning properly. The pre-flight continues inside the cockpit as each system is checked and double-checked. A physical checklist is used to ensure that all items are working as they should... you can't pull over at 10,000 feet.

What is your checklist before you go out into the field or before you call on a customer? Fresh Breath – check. Materials for the prospect in hand – check. Recall significant

events in prospects life to work into conversation – check. Have answers to previous questions – check. All paperwork completed ready to sign – check. Fresh breath one more time – check and double check. Now you're ready to face the prospect.

Make mental notes about what goes well and what doesn't during the sales call. When you return to the office discuss these items with your sales manager and expect positive direction and feedback.

Sales Managers: always make time to discuss the effectiveness of their "maneuvers." Congratulate the wins and help them prepare better from the losses. Teach them how to improve in a non-judgemental environment. If the conditions for feedback are positive both the manager and the rep improve their respective situations. If negative both will feel like it was a waste of time.

Sales managers should instruct, help with pre-flighting the sales call, be ready to discuss the maneuvers after the call and learn from what happens. Sales reps just remember you can't pull over at 10,000 feet. ■

*If you would like information on how to get set up to use PSU (Power Sales University) please call me at 877.203.2327 or watch the video on our website at: <https://www.communitypublishers.com/on-demand-training>.*



## BEST PRACTICE

**W**orking on compiling information regarding “best practices” has been an interesting experience. I have researched best practices for selling, management, leadership, accounting, human resources and a whole lot more! There is an abundance of information available but it tends to be very generic in nature, not to say that it’s not valuable if you translate it to what we do every day.

It prompted me to take a look at the association a bit differently and start looking at what are the “best practices” used within the Association of Community Publishers (ACP) to provide benefit to our members. We constantly work on our member benefits to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our ever-changing industry. Let’s take a look at what I came up with as my top six “best practices” we focus on for our members.

The one that always seems to get mentioned first is the circulation audits we provide for member publications through CVC. This practice was started by IFPA a number of years ago and was incorporated into the benefits provided by ACP to members. The savings from having to contract independently for a comprehensive circulation audit more than pays for an annual ACP membership. The value of the information the audit

provides when incorporated into your marketing program becomes priceless in establishing your verified performance in delivery, readership and influencing buyers. If we did nothing else, this practice more than justifies joining ACP.

The other top mention when we ask members what they value most are opportunities to network with other people who are doing exactly what they do. We provide conferences, summits, peer to peer call groups and any other occasions we can identify to connect our members. The idea sharing, advice swapping, experience exchanges all create opportunities to identify ways to improve your sales, operations and practices without repeating the learning curve a fellow publisher has already navigated. Again, this benefit alone will more than pay for your annual membership in ACP.

How about the educational programs provided by ACP Membership? The On Demand Training option we offer through Power Sales University (at no charge to members) would cost your publication \$1,500 per month to contract for independently. The potential sales gains available from having a more educated sales team is incredible and undeniable. Along the same lines is the Leadership Institute and New Hire Sales Training Sequence available

as part of your membership. What are the potential gains from having new sales people better prepared when they enter the field or experienced sales people remain in place longer as they gain their Associate Advertising Executive (AAE) certification? Yes again, just one month of this benefit will more than pay for the annual expense of an ACP membership (the other 11 months are money in the bank).

How about the publication you are reading this article in? We produce Publish Magazine every month with the objective of providing the community publishing industry with information on events, trends and developments that can impact their business. Staying informed is critical to any publication’s success and Publish covers the community publication industry “one issue at a time!” Publish also promotes the professionalism and depth of our industry to government entities, industry associates, and advertising agencies across the country in an effort to strengthen the overall image of community publications.

Another practice we believe provides great value to many of our member publications is our ability to provide them with industry recognition through our Best of the Best Publication Awards. Award winning publications use their recognition to promote the quality and professionalism of their publications and production teams within their markets. The image improvement throughout the community is only exceeded by the lift to the entire publication’s self-esteem from producing a product worthy of national recognition.



BY LOREN COLBURN

Last but not least, the practice of developing and providing materials that assure publications can take advantage of the USPS Emerging and Advanced Technologies postage discount of 3% for Mobile Shopping. This discount is available from May 1st to November 30<sup>th</sup> and for a weekly publication of 10,000 or more using marketing mail for their distribution, it more than covers the cost of the annual ACP membership. Taking the time to understand the requirements, develop the collateral materials and verify their acceptance by the USPS are all taken care of by ACP before you apply for the discount.

Everything considered, by utilizing these top six benefits (or even one or two of them), ACP is providing outstanding value to its participating members. With returns far exceeding the cost of membership, I truly believe ACP has positioned itself to be “**the best practice for community publications**”! The old saying “you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t force them to drink” comes to mind – all publications need to do is join and take advantage of the existing member benefits! The voice community publications can build with ACP membership is sure to make media buyers hear us loud and clear, “If it’s free, buy it!” ■

# 40 TIPS FOR SELLING BUYERS UNDER 40

A SPECIAL REPORT POWERED BY SALESFUEL

If you're trying to sell to Generation Z buyers, new data shows they have a radically different mindset even from millennials and buyers overall, requiring businesses and sales professionals to adjust tactics to close the deal.

Gen Z are those born between 1997 and 2015, which puts them at 6-24 years of age, making them the latest wave of consumers in the marketplace. Millennials have birth years from 1981 to 1996, with their oldest buyers turning 40 this year.

Put together, Gen Z and millennials represent "younger buyers" versus "seasoned buyers" comprised of Gen X and boomers.

SalesFuel's "Voice of the Buyer" Study reveals that new sales and marketing approaches are needed to make the sale for younger buyers versus seasoned buyers.

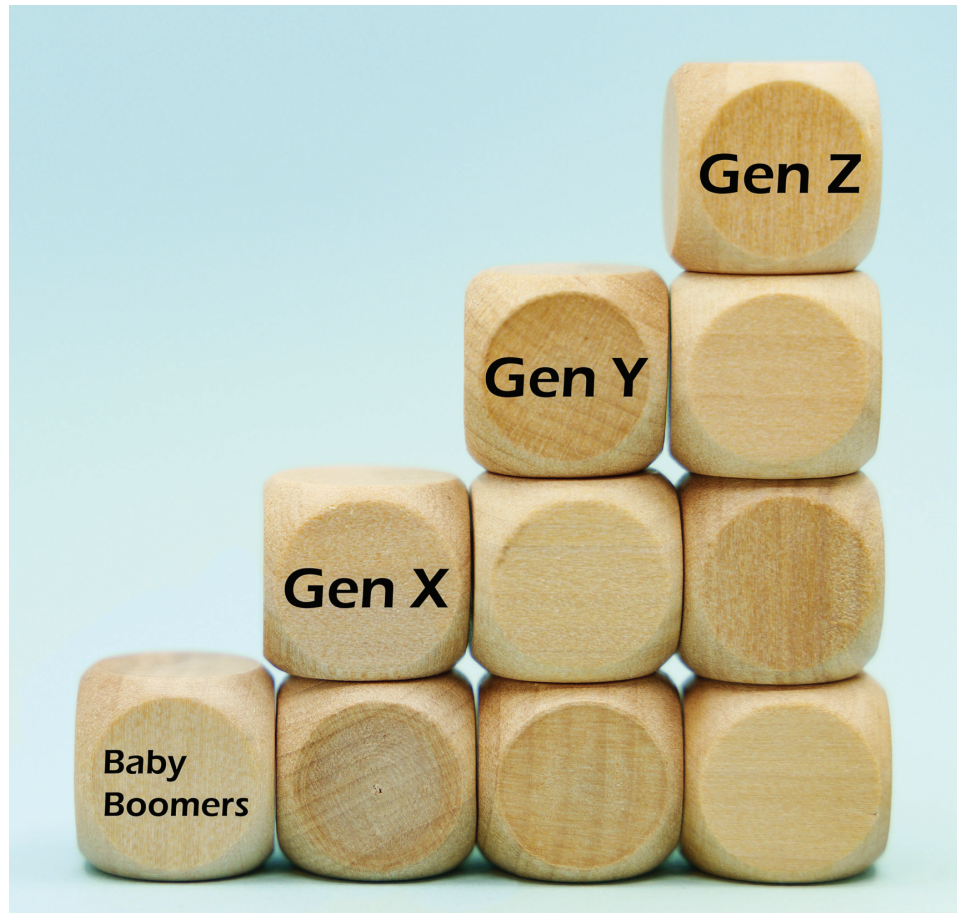
Here are 40 quick insights for selling to younger buyers – Gen Z and millennials – according to their reported preferences.

**1. Always be credible.** 44% of younger buyers do not see salespeople as credible in what they say and do. 30% of them also believe citing research that is misleading or from questionable sources is a deal-breaker. AdMall's data can support sales professionals with what they need to impress new business targets.

**2. Be human.** Younger buyers want to know who you are, not just what you can do for them. They want you to care about who they are as well.

**3. Be empathic.** In the past 12 months, 36% of younger buyers have felt stressed, and 37% have worked longer hours. Go beyond benefits to the company and talk about the personal benefits to the buyer.

**4. Always be available and responsive to them.** It's good advice in general, but 48% of younger buyers rank



responsiveness in the top five for most desired salesperson attributes.

**5. Be frank, open and transparent.** Have a conversation, not a presentation. Younger buyers care about how things look, but they also have a healthy skepticism that can sniff out inauthenticity with relative ease.

**6. Never ask "tell me about your business."** Younger buyers are 15% more likely to rank "Knows their products and how to use them to solve my business problem or achieve my goal" in their top 5 desired salesperson attributes. SalesFuel provides this kind of intelligence through AdMall. its SalesCred app, available in the Apple app store and Google Play store.

**7. Don't just know their business, know their customers.** Younger buyers are nearly 20% more likely to rank "knows my customers" in their top 5 desired attributes of a salesperson that calls on them.

**8. Understand your position in their buying process.**

- First, 35% attempt to solve the problem/meet the goal with their current resources.
- Next, they'll go to their current supplier.
- Then they'll turn to someone they trust for advice. 34% will discuss the problem/goal with peers, an outside consultant or industry expert. 28% will hold discussions

# SELLING BEST PRACTICE

with internal stakeholders affected by the problem or goal.

- Finally, they'll consider new suppliers.

**9. Use case studies and how-to content to fill the top of your funnel.** Younger buyers are 23% more likely to share their contact info with a seller to get insights on how your product can solve their business problems. This is also a great way to engage prospects that have gone cold.

**10. Don't count on them checking your website before speaking with you.** Only 28% of younger buyers will visit your company's website initially. They opt for the opinions of peers and sites they consider to be more objective sources. Seasoned buyers, by contrast, are much more likely to check your website first.

**11. Be prepared to talk about price on the first conversation.** If they do manage to visit your company's website, they're looking

for price. 26% of younger buyers are reluctant to buy from companies whose websites don't clearly include the cost of their products.

**12. Talk about how great they can become, not how great you are.** One-third of younger buyers consider "talking too much about how great your products are" instead of "what they can do for me" a deal-breaker.

**13. Reach out to younger buyers later in the day.** 61% more likely to prefer emailing or talking to salespeople between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. (nearly 20% say this is a best time). Contrast this with seasoned buyers, who generally prefer to get an early jump on the day. That said, one-third of younger buyers are always-on and will check their business email first thing in the morning.

**14. Emotional Intelligence > Artificial Intelligence.** Don't fall into the trap of relying on your sales tools too heavily to pump out multiple emails.

Make your email more personal, less templated. Personalization goes well beyond putting their name at the top.

**15. Use video more often.** Even if you already are using video in your email and LinkedIn posts, it's likely not enough. Younger buyers are twice as likely to look for video when researching your company or products. They also look for podcasts.

**16. Start texting them occasionally.** They are more open to getting texts from salespeople, and your message won't get lost in their spam folder or in a sea of other email. This starts with asking for their mobile number or getting it from a source like SalesIntel.io.

**17. Avoid Zoom calls that could have been emails.** 2/3 of younger buyers want to meet with salespeople by Zoom and online meetings. Ironically, they're also 23% more likely than seasoned buyers to experience Zoom fatigue.



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**18. Consider sending emails on Saturday.** 21% of younger buyers will email salespeople on Saturday.

**19. Be helpful.** Be interesting. Be gone. You're talking to generations who tweet, instantly post photos on Instagram and watch TikTok and YouTube more than TV. Get to the point and never be boring.

**20. Keep using testimonials and case studies.** Much like seasoned buyers, 38% of younger buyers report their buying decisions can be influenced by a testimonial from a satisfied customer if the testimonial seems legitimate.

**21. Read the online reviews of your company or product frequently.** Online ratings and reviews are critical to informing purchasing decisions for younger buyers. 47% usually read reviews or comments from others who have already purchased the product they're considering.

**22. Help your company respond quickly to negative reviews.** 28% of younger buyers trust negative reviews of a business, and they influence the buyer's decision against the seller. However, the same percentage will respond positively when businesses respond to negative reviews. If you spot a negative review that has not been addressed, pass it to the proper channel ASAP.

**23. Periodically research your company like a buyer.** Start with a simple Google or Youtube search and go down the rabbit hole. This is the first impression your company makes on a younger buyer.

**24. Become known online.** 30% of younger buyers will also Google the salesperson's name before the first meeting. They are 21% less likely to spend time with a salesperson if they can't find you in a Google search.

**25. Share your experience in the industry.** Under-40s rely on more traditional criteria when researching a salesperson before meeting them, with over a third agreeing that years of experience and educational background are top factors of consideration. Logically however, younger buyers are less likely to consider a

salesperson's lack of experience a deal-breaker. Share stories of other people you've helped in similar situations – while maintaining confidentially, of course.

**26. Spend as much time on your social media as your LinkedIn profile.** The importance of using LinkedIn profiles to vet sales professionals takes a huge drop from millennials to Gen Z, from 36% to 25%. Yet vetting a salesperson via social by Gen Z is 30% higher than for millennials.

“SalesFuel's “Voice of the Buyer” Study reveals that new sales and marketing approaches are needed to make the sale for younger buyers versus seasoned buyers.

**27. Run a social media audit on yourself.** Younger buyers are 35% more likely to look for the salesperson's posts on social media. Don't let a sale get derailed by a joke or snarky remark you posted 5 years ago that can be taken out of context. SalesFuel provides a social intelligence report that scans 7 years of internet posts through an in-app purchase on its SalesCred app.

**28. Never troll, ever.** If younger buyers find you insulting, trolling or disrespecting another person online, it will turn a potential meeting into a non-starter with 26% of them. And no, it doesn't matter if your sports team is better or who you thought should have won that big celebrity court case. Just be kind online.

**29. Consider locking down your videos and photos to your friends and close acquaintances.** Younger buyers are 30% more likely to search for the salesperson's videos and photos.

**30. Boost your follower and connection count.** The younger the buy-

er, the more important the number of likes and followers is. If you have a low number of LinkedIn connections, for example, it suggests not many people see the business value in being connected with you.

**31. Don't be too aggressive after connecting on LinkedIn.** More than 1 in 4 younger buyers have blocked a salesperson in the past year after they've “spammed me after connecting on LinkedIn.” Start your new relationship by providing relevant value and helpful insight on your first 1-2 messages without “going in for the kill.”

**32. Remove disreputable companies from your employment history.** The companies you've chosen to work for indirectly tells the buyer something about you.

**33. Don't be a jerk.** Confidence is still highly sought after with younger buyers but be careful not to cross the fine line into arrogance. 30% of younger buyers will not engage with salespeople who have poor manners, social skills or treat their support staff poorly.

**34. Be the change.** Younger buyers are 15% more likely to buy from companies that support and act on social and cultural issues. Regardless of what your company says and does, a safe-for-work way you can do this is to get involved with charities and volunteer projects in your community. If there is a chance the charities and non-profits you support can be prickly to some prospects, discuss this with your manager during your next 1-on-1 session.

**35. Be ready to talk about sourcing and environmental impact.** Younger buyers are 20% more likely to buy from companies that have believable “green” credentials, minimize environmental harm and/or invest in sustainability.

**36. Tread lightly with political views.** Younger buyers are 24% less likely to buy from companies led by people whose political views differ from theirs. Some buyers won't be shy about talking politics but keep in mind these can easily become two-edged swords. Alienating half

## SELLING BEST PRACTICE

of your potential buyers only makes your job harder.

**37. Understand the advantage now goes to the larger and online companies.** Younger buyers are 17% more likely to be concerned about the size of your company and firmographics, and they are 39% less likely to make locally owned businesses their first choice. If this is favorable to you, tout it. If not, be prepared to discuss your advantages how supporting local business benefits the community and your online offerings.

**38. Your #1 cause is still solving problems and producing positive business outcomes for the buyer.** Younger buyers may want to talk about other causes, but this is still priority one to them – and to you.

**39. Make buying from you a great experience.** 28% of younger buyers will pay a premium to buy from companies that provide a superior customer experience. That occasionally means going out of your

way, and possibly outside of scope, to delight them.

**40. It's no longer about how you qualify the buyer.** It's how the buyer qualifies you. This is why the sales process you use doesn't matter if the buyer, especially a younger buyer, doesn't perceive you as credible.

**40+1. Be agile in your approach.** Use this report to be more effective in selling to younger buyers, but you still have to sell to seasoned buyers. More importantly, each buyer needs to be treated as an individual – with their own unique challenges, goals and emotions. Their attitudes may differ from their peers.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Younger buyers represent a market segment that continues to grow. Many traditional sales techniques won't work in this new era. Salespeople must adjust to this new reality and adapt their approach.

To truly be effective, today's salesperson must:

- Be human.
- Be credible.
- Be helpful.
- Be interesting.
- Be on point and to the point.
- Be digitally-savvy.
- Be driven by the cause of helping the buyer, not closing.

The challenge is yours to decide. Will you cling to what's "always worked" or embrace the mindset of the new buyer?

*SalesFuel's portfolio of sales tools, training and intelligence provides thousands of sales teams nationwide with is the power to Sell Smarter®. Our platforms leverage data and critical insights that empower executives, sales managers, recruiters, and their teams to attract a higher level of talent and clientele. For more information on SalesFuel or a copy of this or other Special Reports available from SalesFuel, visit their website: <https://salesfuel.com>*

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## 8 ESSENTIAL REMOTE WORK BEST PRACTICES

BY KIMBERLI LOWE-MACAULEY

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**T**he internet has changed how we work, and there are now more opportunities than ever to join the remote work movement. If you're considering transitioning to working from home, it's crucial to ensure that you're setting yourself up for success.

From **ensuring that you can be as productive as possible to creating and maintaining a healthy work-life balance**, there are a few key things to remember when transitioning to your home office.

### BEST PRACTICES FOR REMOTE WORKERS

#### 1. Develop and Maintain a Routine

One of the benefits of working remotely is that you have greater flexibility when setting your schedule, even if it's simply enjoying the freedom to roll out of bed and head to your home office without a commute.

However, it's important to establish and maintain a routine to stay productive. **Stick to your regular morning routine as much as possible**, changing into "real" clothes and getting ready for the day. That will help your mind shift to work mode.

Work with your natural rhythms if you land a role that allows for a flexible schedule. If you know you're not a morning person, don't try to force yourself to start work at 6:00 a.m. Instead, **find a routine that works for you and stick to it**.

In addition to setting regular hours, taking frequent breaks is essential to boost your productivity. Get up and stretch your legs, grab a snack, or take a walk around the block. And don't discount how much vacation days can help you stay focused while avoiding burnout, even if you're no longer in a traditional office space.

#### 2. Create a Dedicated Workspace

Another **key to being productive when working remotely is to create a dedicated workspace**. If possible,



find a room in your home that you can use as your office. You'll be able to prepare mentally for work mode and avoid distractions.

If you don't have an extra room in your home, try to create a space that is separate from your living area. Perhaps a corner of your bedroom or a spare closet could fit the bill. The important thing is to designate a space that is just for work. That way, when your work's complete, you can **leave that area and mentally tune into your home life**.

#### 3. Build Solid Boundaries

It can be easy to let your work life and home life start to creep into each other when you're working from home. But building healthy boundaries between the two is key to protecting your work time and keeping your anxiety levels down.

**Establishing a healthy balance between work and home is the trick**. And whether it's the constant stream of social media notifications, your super chatty neighbor, or your family, you owe it to yourself to establish boundaries from the beginning. Otherwise, you might easily fall into the "always working" mode as you try to catch up, which isn't healthy for anyone.

#### 4. Establish Transparent Communication

Maintaining team collaboration and transparent communication can be challenging when everyone is working remotely.

One way to make it easier is by simply keeping your teammates updated on your progress on agreed-upon tasks. Additionally, build relationships to ensure they feel comfortable checking in with you, whether it's to offer support or say hello.

A little communication can go a long way in **maintaining a solid team dynamic** when everyone works in different locations.

#### 5. Invest in the Right Tools and Resources

Realize early on that **your life will be much less hectic if you have a comfortable and productive environment to work in**. In addition to a laptop and internet connection, you may also need higher capacity Wi-Fi and an ergonomic chair for extended periods of sedentary work.

Having a backup plan for when things go wrong is also important. For example, how will you continue to work if your internet goes out until the problem is resolved?

Investing in a hotspot or working at a nearby coffee shop are easy solutions to help you stay connected and productive. But create your plan ahead of time so you're not scrambling at the moment it's needed.

#### 6. Engage in Career Development

Working remotely can offer you many career opportunities you wouldn't find if a local commute limited you.

# REMOTE WORK BEST PRACTICE

However, once you've landed the job, don't forget to maintain a focus on your career goals.

Keep up with industry trends to know what's happening in your field. Consider taking courses or attending conferences to further your education. And don't forget to communicate and set goals with your leader so that they can support your development with stretch assignments.

## 7. Be Vigilant Regarding Online Security

Working from home doesn't mean that you can only work from home. If your job allows you to, working at the coffee shop down the street can be an excellent break from your home office.

But **be mindful that public Wi-Fi is notoriously vulnerable, as it's a shared network.** This means that anyone else can see and steal any data you're using while logged in. Ensure you consistently practice online safety by using a personal hotspot or phone to create a private connection. Never

leave your laptop unattended while you use the restroom, and sit with your back to a wall so no one can view your screen.

In addition, you should use strong passwords and encryption to protect your data. Always be mindful about what information you share online. If possible, store files in the cloud or on an external hard drive.

## 8. Prioritize Your Well-Being

Undoubtedly, working remotely has many unexpected benefits. Still, it's vital to ensure you're taking further steps to **care for yourself physically and mentally, rather than falling into bad habits**, which is easier to do when you do not see officemates daily.

Prioritize getting enough exercise, eating healthy meals, and balancing work to get enough sleep. It's also essential to find ways to manage stress and avoid feelings of isolation and burnout. Taking breaks, setting boundaries, and managing your time are all important things to schedule intentionally.

By taking care of yourself, **you'll be able to work more effectively and enjoy the benefits of working remotely.**


## CREATING AN OUTSTANDING REMOTE WORK ENVIRONMENT

By following these best practices, you can set yourself up for success when working remotely. Establishing a routine, creating a dedicated workspace, and staying connected with your coworkers are all critical things to keep in mind. And don't forget to take care of yourself both physically and mentally. Following these tips, you can be productive and successful in your work.

Once you've built the best possible remote work environment, it's time to land the remote job you've been dreaming of. Take the tour and discover all of the ways that a FlexJobs membership can support your flexible career goals! ■

*Original Article:*

<https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/5-best-practices-for-remote-workers>



The latest research shows the 2022 estimated cost of digital ad fraud in North America to be \$23 Billion!

SOURCE: TrafficGuard

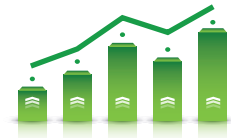
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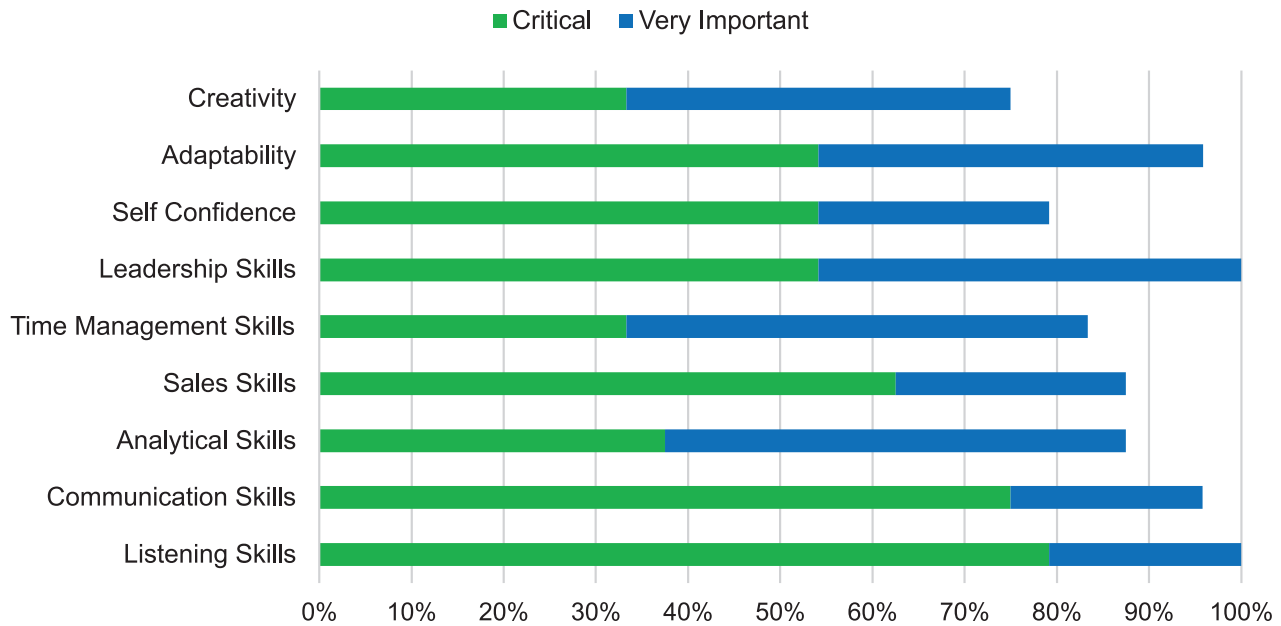
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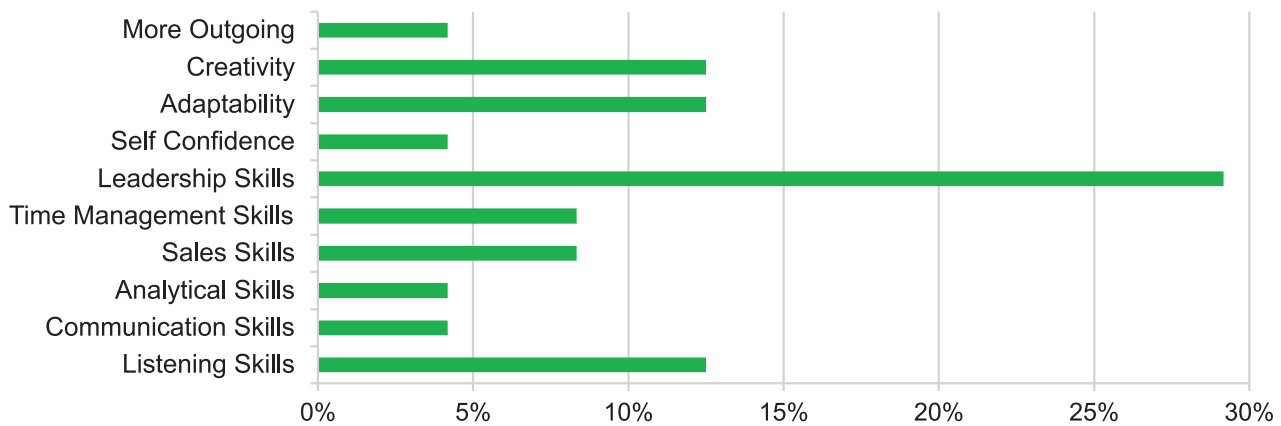
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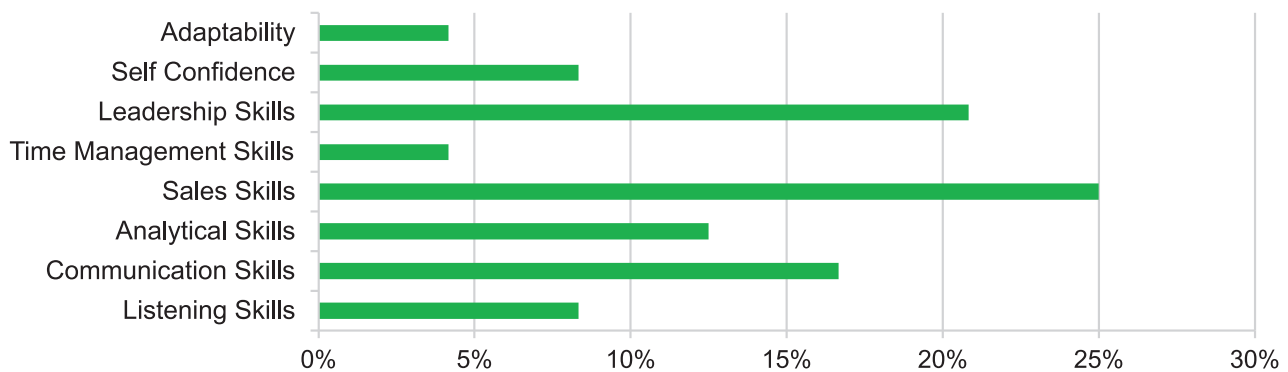
Rate importance of each of these in being successful in business?



If you could personally improve in one of these areas, which one would you want most?



Which of these would you consider to be your strongest asset?



# 2023 BEST OF THE BEST AWARDS

The Best of the Best Awards is the annual showcase of the amazing quality ACP Member publications incorporate into their products. From covers and special sections to individual ads and articles, this year's Best of the Best Awards contained over 1500 entries. The judging was done in conjunction with

Middle Tennessee State University and Columbia State Community College.

The following are a few of the highlights from this year's awards and the full presentation and a list of all of this year's award winners is available on the ACP website at: <https://www.communitypublishers.com/awards>

## BEST OF SHOW CONTENDERS



Featured Media



Big Green Umbrella Media



Camrose Booster

As always, the competition for Best of Show was close but in the end, Featured Media (formerly Genesee Valley Penny Saver) in Avon, NY took the 2023 Best of Show award! The Camrose Booster of Camrose, Alberta, Canada and Big Green Umbrella Media of Johnston, IA also made impressive runs for the title.

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE - UNDER 15% EDITORIAL



Star Publications



The Florida Mariner



The Shopper - Windom

In the "General Excellence – Under 15% Editorial" category, **First Place:** Star Publications of Sauk Centre, MN. **Second Place:** The Florida Mariner, North Port, FL. **Third Place:** The Shopper-Windom, Windom, MN.

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE - OVER 15% EDITORIAL



Fillmore County Journal



Arcadia News



WK Times, LLC

In the “General Excellence – Over 15% Editorial” category, **First Place:** Fillmore County Journal, Preston, MN. **Second Place:** Arcadia News, Phoenix, AZ. **Third Place:** WK Times, LLC, St. Louis, MO.

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE - GLOSSY



Big Green Umbrella Media



Advocate Media



Exchange Media Group

In the “General Excellence – Glossy” category, **First Place:** Big Green Umbrella Media, Johnston, IA. **Second Place:** Advocate Media – Dallas, Dallas, TX. **Third Place:** Exchange Media Group, Fayetteville, TN.

## MOST IMPROVED PUBLICATIONS



1ST - Featured Media



2ND - Exchange Media Group



3RD - Clay Today

In the “Most Improved Publication” category, **First Place:** Featured Media, Avon, NY. **Second Place:** Exchange Media Group, Fayetteville, TN. **Third Place:** Clay Today, Fleming Island, FL.

## SPECIAL SECTION WINNERS

In-Paper



Featured Media

Seperate Section



Exchange Media Group

Stand Alone



Big Green Umbrella Media

In the “Best Special Section” categories, the first place winners were, **In-Paper:** Featured Media, Avon, NY. **Separate Section:** Exchange Media Group, Fayetteville, TN. **Stand Alone:** Big Green Umbrella Media, Johnston, IA.

## BEST FRONT PAGES

Glossy



Exchange Media Group

Newsprint With Ads



Featured Media

Newsprint No Ads



Reminder Publishing

Special Section



Nickels Worth Publications.

In the “Best Front Page” categories, the first place winners were, **Glossy:** Exchange Media Group, Fayetteville, TN. **Newsprint – With Ads:** Featured Media, Avon, NY. **Newsprint – No Ads:** Reminder Publishing, East Longmeadow, MA. **Special Section:** Nickels Worth Publications, Coeur d’Alene, ID.

*We would like to extend a BIG CONGRATULATIONS to all of our impressive 2023 Best of the Best award winners! We look forward to once again seeing all of your great work in 2024 where you can earn the national recognition your teams work so hard to produce. The complete list of winners can be downloaded at: <https://www.communitypublishers.com/a/uploads/2202858/download>*

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### **Madden Media – Article**

#### **Advertising Best Practices**

This article walks through the components of effective advertising that applies to print, social media, online and beyond. If all ads covered these steps – results would improve dramatically.



### **Employee Connect – Blog Article**

#### **6 Best Practices to Drive Your Recruitment and Selection Process**

By Ari Kopoulos

This article covers a solid list of “dos” when it comes to finding and hiring the right talent. It offers a sophisticated look at what is too often treated as a very simple task.



### **Fellow – Article**

#### **Meeting Facilitation Best Practices: Run Your Meetings like a Pro**

By Hannah Ross

Here is some solid advice on how to facilitate a successful meeting. These 10 practices and techniques should be adopted by anyone responsible for effective meetings.



### **ZDNET – Article**

#### **5 ways to be a better manager: Best practices every leader should know**

By Mark Samuels

In order to manage your team to better results, you need to become an effective manager. Incorporating these best practice tips will improve your chances of becoming a better manager.



### **Business Management Daily – Article**

#### **6 management best practices you can implement now**

By Beth Braccio Hering

This article offers more step by step actions you can do to build these six management practices into your through appropriate actions and behaviors.



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## America's SBDC - Article

### 12 Social Media Best Practices for Small Business Owners in 2023

By Ken So

Taking a strategic approach to your social media marketing through implementation of these best practices can greatly improve the opportunity for a successful outcome.



## Faster Capital

### Best Practices for Outsourcing your business services

Outsourcing services is a consideration in almost all aspects of the publishing process right now. Regardless of what your company may be outsourcing, following these 9 recommended practices will be a huge help.



## Shoboxed - Blog Article

### Simple Record Keeping: 6 Best Practices for Small Businesses

A down-to-earth guide to understand what records to keep and how to go about keeping them. Worth the read on something that always seems simple and quickly becomes a major headache.



## Sales Assembly - Blog Article

### Recruiting Salespeople: How To Discover and Attract Top Talent in an Evolving Remote Landscape

This article looks at the impact of the remote work environment on sales offering some interesting strategies to find, attract, hire, and retain salespeople.



## Newest addition for your "Advertiser Help Page" Listings

## 5 Star Marketing & Distribution - Blog Article

### 10 Benefits of Adding Print Advertising to Your Marketing Mix

Too many advertisers are missing opportunities to maximize the success of their marketing by taking a digital only approach. Here are 10 advantages only print advertising can effectively bring to a marketing plan.



## A LOVELESS LEGACY

BY PEGGY LOVELESS

**B**oyd and Marlys Loveless were born and worked most of their lives in Southern Minnesota and Northern Iowa. Marlys was a native of Forest City, IA and Boyd was from Hantontown, IA.

Boyd was working for the Railroad and Marlys was a teacher when they decided to get into the Shopper business.

They bought their first Shopper, The Wesley Reminder, in Wesley, IA in 1957 and ran that paper until 1962 when they sold out to a young man named Merle Been and a partner.

Because of Marlys' arthritis, they bought the Five Star Shopper in Chandler, AZ later that year. The heat and sun put Marlys' arthritis in remission but really got to Boyd. About three years later, they sold out and returned to Iowa, with the intention of finding a place that was open to the idea of a Free Advertising Publication. They chose Cresco, IA and started the Cresco Shopper in the Summer of 1965 with a circulation of 3,600.

The business was run and printed in the garage of their first home, then



Boyd and Marlys Loveless



Peggy and John Loveless

moved to a second home, added a few staff members, and printed the shopper in Riceville, IA.

In 1983 it was moved to an out-of-home Highway 9 building and a new web printing press was purchased. In addition, some very much-needed room for the Small Press, Graphic Design Department and Retail Area was added offering Office and Party/Wedding Supplies. The building was expanded in the early 2000's.

Boyd and Marlys have 4 daughters, Mary Ann, Janet, Diana and Sue and two sons, John and Jim. John came back to Cresco to help out his parents

after college. John married Peggy (Hurst) in 1988 and purchased the business in 1991. Peggy, a Cresco native, carried Shoppers as a child (as did many of her large family of 11 children). She started working as a Route Driver and Printers' Assistant in 1985, eventually getting into Sales because of her Tupperware Sales background while dating John in the mid 80's.

Over the years, The Cresco Shopper has grown to its current circulation of 13,500 and a staff of (6) full-time and (5) part-time staff members along with (2) route drivers. John and Peggy's children, Hillary and Liza and grandchild, Veronica and her husband, Garrett, are currently involved in the business.

Boyd and Marlys helped to get SGI (Shoppers Guides of Iowa) started and continued to be involved in

MFCP for years with Boyd being the President of SGI in 1962. Boyd and Marlys talked about the times when they would pass the hat for meeting expenses back in the day. Their family vacations were many times planned around Conferences growing up.

John and Peggy started coming to Conferences together and as a family in the mid-80's. They often state, "we always come away from them with an idea of how to make or save a thousand dollars or more". They attribute their success to many of the ideas and assistance they have received as a result of their membership and friendships in MFCP.

John and Peggy both eventually became Board Members and served as President. Peggy is currently on the board and serves on the Network Advertising Committee. ■

“Over the years, The Cresco Shopper has grown to its current circulation of 13,500 and a staff of (6) full-time and (5) part-time staff members along with (2) route drivers.

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# BEST PRACTICES



BY CHRISTINE WHITE

There are so many best practices out there for sales reps, especially in the advertising industry, so how do you write an article about them? Well, just like I do in my everyday work life, I'll think about what would be best for my clients and how I'd approach them with marketing solutions.

When meeting with a client, take the time to understand your audience. Listen to their pain points and their needs. This will help tailor your recommendations to their requirements and increase the chances of success. Each client is unique, so avoid taking a one-size-fits-all approach. Demonstrate how your offerings can address their troubles and deliver a return on investment.

It's also crucial to educate prospects, past, or current advertisers. Many businesses may not fully understand the potential of print and digital advertising. Helping them see the benefits, effectiveness, reach, as well as success stories and testimonials helps build trust and confidence that you and your products are the right fit. We even have those clients that "only do print" or "only do digital", and by showing them how both work, and maybe shutting specific myths down will help them consider trying something different.

People buy from people they like! Sales is not just about closing deals, but also building long-term relationships. Foster trust and credibility with your clients by delivering on your promises and providing excellent service. Maintain regular communication (oh, and also ask when and how they'd like to be contacted!), be responsive to their needs, and seek feedback to continuously improve what you offer.

Advertising is constantly evolving, especially in the digital realm. Staying ahead of the latest trends, technologies, and strategies in print and digital again will help your clients feel confident, rely on you as the expert, and your knowledge will help you stay ahead of the competition! By doing our homework, it could make or break a sale.

Although harder to do with print, clients want to see data and track their return on investment. Offer metrics and analytics that demonstrate the effectiveness of what we recommended. Show clients how they can track and measure the performance of their campaigns such as website analytics, click-through rates, audience engagement metrics, or simply asking their customers how they heard about the company. This way, they can see what's working (and what's not), not just taking our word for it.

Using some of these best practices can help enhance your sales approach and effectively promote print and digital advertising solutions to your clients, but doing what you can to help them and make recommendations will go further than just selling an ad and hoping for the best! ■

“When meeting with a client, take the time to understand your audience. Listen to their pain points and their needs. This will help tailor your recommendations to their requirements and increase the chances of success.”

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**“ Quality does not just happen,  
it is built in.**

— W. Edwards Deming

BY JIM BUSCH

One wouldn't think that my degree in Medieval/Renaissance Literature was exactly a great way to prepare for a business career. I found it to be quite useful because it taught me to read and think about what I was reading. When I got into business I read everything I could on selling and management. My reading gave me access to some of the greatest minds in the business world like Hal Geenen, Peter Drucker, and W. Edwards Deming. Deming was the driving force behind Japan's economic revival after WWII. He introduced me to looking at "processes," of thinking about how every small step along the way impacted the desired outcome. He introduced the concept of "kaizen," an approach to produce continuous improvement by making many small changes in the process. This is the concept that won Toyota a reputation for building extremely reliable cars and trucks. Kaizen is a very customer-centric approach to business. The goal is to provide a product or service that meets the needs of the customer. For this to work, every employee in the organization has to be mindful of how their job can better serve the customer. Managers need to be open to their employee's ideas and they have to empower their staff to take the initiative needed to better serve the customer. Many companies offer rewards to employees who come up with even small changes that improve the process of serving customers. Kaizen also requires everyone to be constantly looking for areas for improvement. Asking customers about their experiences, reviewing the company's performance, looking at what went right after a successful project, and asking what went wrong after a failure. Companies need to embrace change and be constantly looking to adopt the most advanced and most effective ways to work toward an optimal customer experience. Deming created a 4-step process consisting of Plan-Do-Study-Act. Simply stated this means thinking of something, trying it, reviewing how well it worked, and making corrections. Deming used a circle to illustrate this idea as he believed there is no end to one's efforts to improve how they run their business. Kaizen is not about making major changes, it has been described as "Instead of trying to improve things 100%, make 100 things better. This is how in Deming's words, we "build in" quality in our organizations. ■

# WHAT ADVERTISERS CARE ABOUT



BY JOHN FOUST  
RALEIGH, NC

**B**ack in my ad agency days, I learned a big lesson about what to do – and what not to do – in a sales presentation.

I was sitting in the office of the owner of a construction business, ready to show him that I was the right person to handle his advertising account. I had been referred to him by a mutual acquaintance at a much larger ad agency, an agency that was pursuing only big national accounts.

At that point in my young advertising career, my sales presentations consisted mostly of showing samples of my work and evaluating the state of a prospect's current ads. So I opened the portfolio book of ads I had created for other clients and proceeded to describe the strategy behind each ad. After a few pages, this prospect stopped me cold in my tracks. He said, "I don't care what you've done for other people. All I care about is what you can do for me."

All of us have experienced events that were turning points in our lives. Meeting our future spouse. Finding a new job. A conversation with a favorite teacher or coach.

WII-FM has been a sales cliché for years. It's an acronym for everyone's favorite radio station: "What's in it for me?" That acronym came to life for me that day – in a comment that became a turning point in the way I conducted business presentations. Of course, he was one hundred percent correct. Why in the world should he sit there and listen to me talk about me, when all he cared about was himself and his business? Thank goodness, I was able to shift gears and ask about his business situation and his marketing goals. And

thank goodness he threw caution to the wind and gave a marketing assignment to me.

I'll always be grateful to that direct – but exceedingly wise – advertiser for teaching me an important lesson. As it turned out, the assignment was an audition. I handled his company's ad account for 24 years. Over time, I realized that he was not being intentionally rude that day. His philosophy was, "Give me the information I need to make a decision and do it quickly."

Sometimes I joke that his words should be posted in advertising departments: "I don't care what you've done for other people. All I care about is what you can do for me." That cuts right to the core of a sales presentation. It's not about the salesperson or the salesperson's product. It's about the customer.

There's nothing earthshakingly new about all of this. Every time a salesperson prepares for an appointment, he should simply ask himself, "How can I make this presentation revolve around the prospect's needs?" And every time a salesperson displays samples of ads, she should ask herself, "What's relevant about these ads? How can I relate the characteristics of these samples to the goals of this specific advertiser?"

Do these things and stay in step with your advertisers. ■

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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 © 08/2023

The design thought process can be impacted by brain function... and I have become an expert at this because I live with the right brain/left brain conundrum daily. My spouse and I have been married for more than fifty years... he was a science teacher and I was an art teacher. See where I'm going with this? He's left brain, I'm right brain and we have many years of navigating common situations.

Sales people and graphic people are no different in the "marriage" of ad creation.

As a graphic designer, I depend on a sales person to tell me what the customer is looking for and at times it's easier said than done. But the bottom line is that between the two of us—sales with their left brain approach and graphics, with our right brain approach, we need each other.

There are articles on the web that can help make our co-dependency work.

## Bridging the Gap

Mike Clark of Shelf Identity has the ability to combine the business side with the creative side to help his customers move their products (Shelf Identity is a creative and strategic brand agency which offers a full range of branding services):

<https://www.facebook.com/shelfidentity/>

The web site is geared toward package design, but the concepts provided can be applied to the print process as well.

In the meantime, I'll use his general techniques but apply them to our specific business/design expertise:

• **Be a bridge builder** Unfortunately, the bridge-building falls on our shoulders. As you can see from the graphic, each side of the brain seems to encompass a different set of skills. It's difficult to focus on numbers and be able to imagine or visualize, so this first technique is better left to you.

• **Diffuse right-brain issues first** Before someone can appreciate the creative element of our work, they need to understand the reasoning behind it.

It may be easier for me to talk to another creative because we have a language and understanding of the design fundamentals. While it may seem tedious to act as a "Rosetta Stone" to someone outside of our field, this can actually be a good thing as well. At times I can get lazy, but this reaffirmation of why I am doing what I am doing, can make the design process easier.

When I started in this business, my brother (who had been at it longer than I) would ask me why I used a rule/line in a certain place.

If there wasn't a real good reason for me to use the rule (other than to "fill up space"), I got rid of it. It never hurts to question what you are doing because the

## Left Brain

- Analysis
- Reason
- Logic
- Language
- Numbers

design process is not constant.

Design trends come and go but understanding the fundamentals of design can carry you a long way. There is no substitute for thorough understanding of your craft.

### Be the expert

I think one of the perceptions about our jobs is that we just push some buttons or do mouse clicks to achieve our results. While I certainly can do more with the programs I have (and not all of us have the latest technology/programs) it still takes time to achieve the results.

Yes, you can eliminate backgrounds (and much more) in *Photoshop*, but it's a whole lot easier to avoid a cluttered background in framing the original photo!

It's also a good idea to compare ads. Haul out some of the *Ad Comparisons* I have done over the years. It's easier to see the changes... a picture can clarify and solidify understanding.

• **Know your audience** This is the part where your discussions with the sales person helps develop trust. Since we usually never meet the client, we need to understand and get a little perspective on what the client wants the advertising to do for them. It helps to create the best advertising if I know what the client's expectations are. Which leads to...

• **Speak their language—but teach them yours** There are certain words we use as a "short-hand" to communicate faster. There are also simple concepts that can be implemented.

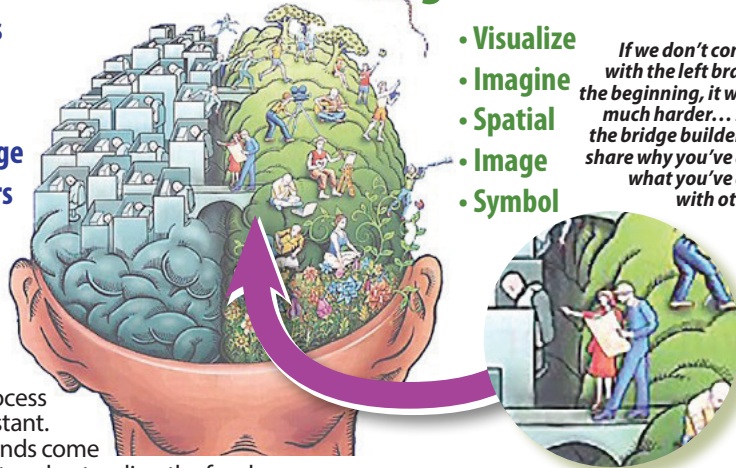
If interested, I have design articles for various publications going back to 1993 if you would like a copy. As I have stated before, good design concepts never go out of style.

Anyway, explain your rational and share the reasons why you have done what you've done. They will understand!

## Right Brain

- Visualize
- Imagine
- Spatial
- Image
- Symbol

*If we don't connect with the left brain at the beginning, it will be much harder... so be the bridge builder and share why you've done what you've done with others.*



• **Listen** You can learn a lot by not saying a word. One thing that I used to wonder was who was going to teach the client. Since we rarely interact with them, we must rely on the sales staff to give us insight into their clients and to help their clients understand how to advertise effectively.

It's a two way street. The more we can educate the sales staff, the better they will be at helping their clients.

That means that we must stay on top of our game. I know that the sales staff usually have meetings. Would it help if the creatives/designers were also involved... maybe once every other month where they can discuss, share and clarify information with the sales staff and get feedback on the advertising that is produced in the organization?

Each organization, and business, is different, and sometimes it's easy to dismiss change, especially in this day and age when change is happening so fast!

But you will never know if it works if you don't give it a try. There is insight to be gained on all sides. It is said that knowledge is power, so imagine what can happen if the entire organization understands.

It's the best way for this business "marriage" of left brain and right brain individuals can succeed.

## Final thoughts...

There are a lot of changes going on with the Adobe software that we use (especially in *Photoshop*). I will be looking into those changes and let you know how that will affect our ad creation.

I'm still transferring files/programs onto a new laptop... but this month I am going to finish that task! Promise!

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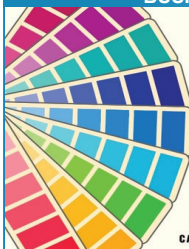


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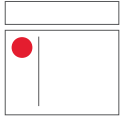
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