

October 2023
INFORMER



Benjamin (Ben) Jerome Sovinski 1925-2023



**Community
Papers of
Michigan**



Don Rush

From the President



Good October, Membership!

I know fall starts a busy time of sales and marketing. This is the time of the year publishers, ad and editorial staffs are working with promotions of all types – holidays, school-related, festivals and other local events. The fast-paced last quarter of the year is the lead up to what can be a slower first quarter of the next year.

And, while you're all making hay while the sun shines, maybe it is too much time to think about planning for the next year and beyond. In other words, your future! As you are not only leaders of your publication(s) you are also leaders in your communities. Your communities look to you and want you to continue to be there for them. Here are some seeds to set – ideas to contemplate.

In our rapidly changing world, everything is always a work in progress, it's the same for the future of all community papers in our state. One thing CPM members have in common is their community's trust. Your readership trusts your papers to inform them with timely ads and where available honest, relevant news. Those small community businesses who market with your publications trust your circulation numbers, trust you to deliver their messages to the community; they trust your ad staff will design eye-catching ads with effective messaging.

Build on that trust

Have you considered that your ad staff should also be their client's eyes and ears in the community? Running a small business is not for the faint-of-heart and takes more hours than there are in the day. Your sales staff, aside from selling and designing effective campaigns, can build trust by keeping eyes out for their

customers – when they are out in the community meeting people and while they are on social media sites.

When I sold advertising, I was able to build relationships with business owners and managers by watching out for negative talk in town or online about my client businesses for my client owners and managers. Many times I found they were not aware of someone posting about a "bad" experience. I let them know. I consulted with them not to engage in a "tit-for-tat" dialogue online, in public. I suggested ways to handle the situation: reach out personally to the "offended" and also how to combat bad publicity with advertising messages targeting any issue. My advertising clients appreciated the heads up and the initiative taken on their part.

Engage Your Communities

Surveys across the country continue to show community papers are not only trusted, but they are also well-read and an effective means of delivering advertising messages. While we deliver excellently for our readers and business partners on a regular basis, how often do you actually engage your community or tell your story? Here are a few ideas to ponder.

Use Social Media

I know, I know that sounds counter intuitive. We're PRINT, for goodness sakes, why should we give credence to a media that has taken from us? Social media, however, can be a tool we can and should use. It lets us connect to those who we may not otherwise touch. "How?" you ask.

As stated before, sales staff can use social

media as a way to keep up on and look out for their clients (or potential clients). Ad leads are on social media.

Social media can be used to promote future special promotions.

Social media can be used to promote your publications online (Look in this week's print XYZ publication for \$200 in local business coupons! Make sure to catch this week's XYZ publications for pictures of this week's Homecoming Court! You get the idea.)

Social media can be used editorially to engage the community for new leads and photos. I had a wonderful response from my community when I asked them to send me pictures and love story leads for Valentine's Day. When I asked for "cute" pictures of the first day of school, or kids playing outside when school was called because of snow, I received hundreds of responses. We'd run the best few in print and as many as we could online. Parents and grandparents love that stuff and I received numerous "thank you for publishing" messages. (It's also an easy, inexpensive way to fill space.)

And, of course social media can be used simply to share your story to the community. Get a testimonial, post it! Have an anniversary, post it! Win an award, hire a new person, post them!

Use CPM

Have an issue? Chances are other CPM members are having the same issue or have dealt with that issue in the past. It never hurts to ask if CPM can help. Sometimes we can, sometimes we can't but we always try. By being involved with CPM, sharing not only issues but victories and ideas we help keep the industry we all love and make a living by being alive, strong and thriving.

Critiquing Common Issues

Kevin shares what he learned while critiquing papers in Colorado

By Kevin Slimp

A funny thing happened to me in Denver a few days ago while I was in town to speak at the Colorado Press Association Convention.

I had just finished my fourth presentation of the weekend. The topic was “Designing a Better Newspaper.” Most of the folks in the room had been around for all four of my sessions, and the time to end the workshop had come and gone.

As people were getting up to leave, a voice spoke up. “Do you have a minute to look at my newspaper and give me some advice?”

I told her I’d gladly sit with her and look over her paper. That’s when the “funny” thing happened. Another person asked, “Could I get you to look over mine, too?”

It was as if someone blew a whistle and told everyone to stop in their tracks. Most of the group began walking back toward their seats.

I asked if anyone else would like me to look over their papers. To make a long story short, all but a few people returned to the room and took out copies of their newspapers.

I invited the group to circle me as I sat at a long table. I spread the newspapers across the table and began critiquing them individually. As I finished one paper, I immediately started critiquing the next paper. Another funny thing: no one left. Everyone stayed to see what I would say about the other papers.

We stayed in that room

for nearly 90 minutes until I mentioned they were scheduled to attend a banquet in a few minutes.

As I think back to the phenomenon of a group electing to stay late at a workshop, I’m reminded of the similarities between their papers. I repeated much of my advice repeatedly as we looked through the newspapers on the table.

Here are a few of the most common critiques that came up in Denver:

Headlines: Use fewer words and bigger fonts. By using fewer words, it leaves room to use bigger text.

Instead of “Rumors of new Amazon distributorship coming to town in November,” I’d suggest something like “Amazon Rumors” in big letters. A subhead underneath the headline could provide more details, “Rumors of distributorship coming to town in November seem to have merit.”

Photos: Fewer small photos should be included with stories. It seemed common for the Denver papers to place three or four smaller images with a front-page story. Because there were so many photos, they drew less attention. In many cases, I suggested a single three or four-column photo to replace the multiple photos with a story.

Page Headings: Cute is out. Consistent is in. Page headings like “Local,” “Agriculture,” and “Features” should have similar looks. As tempting as it is to use a big piece of clipart at the top of the Classified page, don’t do it. Keep the page consistent with the others.

SERVING ANTELOPE, BOONE, and WHEELER COUNTIES, NEBRASKA SINCE 1883

The Elgin Review

Wednesday
October 4, 2023

Volume 140, Number 52 1 Section, 12 Pages USPS Number 172-8220 \$1.00

In Brief

Elgin garage sales
Elgin's community-wide garage sale will be held Friday and Saturday, June 16 and 17. More garage sales are located will be published in the June 11 issue of The Elgin Review. To be included on the map, residents need to contact the newspaper (402) 843-5500 no later than 2 p.m. this coming Monday, June 12 to provide an address, times as well as a short description of items to be sold. Maps will also be available at locations around town on June 16-17.

School board meeting
District #18 board meets Tuesday

As a city of good humor (avereuda celidistia sime mite corchere chustibus, essequillo dipudi opta velit parum tempore perant omittit et senilibus, ut velipar ebit hincem fugiam qui bono seducte bovine ma vendunt emporio, ha am. cum maxime)

ANTELOPE VETERANS

Last Union soldier honored

By Lynnell Morgan
co-publisher

Elgin — In a solemn, brief ceremony Friday morning, the last Antelope County soldier who fought for the Union during the Civil War was relieved of his command.

West Cedar Valley Cemetery was swash with sunlight and airy a breath of wind could be felt. The only sound was birds singing, setting the scene for a ceremony to honor

Norman Weber, Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs, president of the West Cedar Valley Cemetery Board. They stood side-by-side to honor the man who called Elgin home.

“We are here today to honor and forever mark the resting place of the last Union Civil War soldier of Antelope County.”

“All veterans are aware, a soldier cannot leave his post without being properly relieved,” said William J. Bell, Civil War was relieved of your post, I have your command. Best in peace.”

During the Civil War, Bell served in Company F of the 11th Indiana Infantry. He served from August of 1862 to October 1863.

“I met him for the first time when I was in Missouri, doing guard duty, spent most of the ceremony. Bell’s unit had left men. They were sent to the Chicago Confederate guerrillas. Part of the unit was captured by Confederate soldiers and later returned to the Union as part of a prisoner exchange. In his unit, three died of disease, two men died of their wounds and two deserted.”

“All his time in the Union Army, Bell returned to Elgin and spent most of the remainder of his life here. He spent his last five years at the Grand Island Soldiers and Sailors home, Weber said. Born November 14 1842, he died October 11, 1942 at the age of 99 years.

He is survived by a son that lives in Canada and a daughter that now lives in Oklahoma.

“Mr. Bell, we take this opportunity to thank you for all of your duty to your country,” Weber said, respecting the ceremony.

Weber, a retired science teacher from Winier, said the goal of the Sons of Union Veterans to dis. Joining Weber at Friday morning’s ceremony was Max Bowman, president of the West Cedar Valley Cemetery Association.

Photo by Dennis Morgan

I broke my own rule when the client wanted an American flag in the “flag” on the front page. Otherwise, the only color elements are photos, ads, and kickers.

Borders: Yes, have borders around your photos. And get rid of the drop shadows. They (drop shadows) were in five years ago, but not so much now. A thin border, .4 or .5 in width, should do the trick nicely around images. Don’t forget to keep the border inside the frame so it doesn’t stick outside the column.

Color: In my designs and redesigns, you’ll find color in only three places: color photos, ads, and kickers (those short bits of text like “County Commission” above a headline). I rarely include color in the flag (top of the front page) unless it’s in a teaser photo above it. Leave the cute clipart for the high school newspapers and church newsletters.

Everyone laughed as I feigned heart issues while looking over pages. I jokingly uttered, “I’ve seen worse, but I can’t remember when,” a few times. The truth is most of the papers looked pretty good, but there’s almost always a lot we can do to improve the look of our papers. And when our newspapers look better, it encourages people to pick them up and read them. Let’s face it, that’s what it’s all about.

I’ll be leading a publisher’s event in Washington state in a few days. I think I’ll encourage everyone to bring copies of their paper. It just makes my job easier.

Kevin Slimp is a popular consultant, advisor and trainer in the newspaper industry. From 1997-2018, Kevin directed

Kevin Slimp, “The News Guru”
kevin@kevinslimp.com

COMMUNITY PAPERS OF MICHIGAN | CALL US! 1-800-783-0267 | MIFREADS.COM | 3

A Fond Farewell to Hi-Lites Shoppers' Guide's Benjamin (Ben) Jerome Sovinski



1925-2023



Ben and Marie Sovinski in 1996 celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary

THE HI-LITES HISTORY

Taken From The Original (See pg. 5) that was featured in the Fremont Sesquicentennial book printed in 2004

The Hi-Lites was started in early 1947 by Frank Parker and Ben Jensen. Later in the year, Ben Jensen went to Buchanan, MI to begin another shopper. Frank & Yvonne continued the shopper here in Fremont. In July, 1947, Ben Sovinski was hired for composition and artwork. The paper at that time was printed by mimeograph and all work done by hand or typing on stencils. On June 1, 1948 Ben and his wife, Marie, bought the business from Frank & Yvonne Parker. This was a difficult undertaking as this type of advertising was a very new concept.

The advertising concept was to sell classifieds and display ads from merchants and mail the shopper to every home and business in the area with no subscriptions and free to every home and business giving almost 100% advertising coverage. Circulation that was originally about 3,500 households increased in stages to its present circulation that exceeds 20,000.

The first office was located in the basement of the former Clemens building adjacent to the Kim bark Inn on South Division Street across from the post office (now part of the Huntington Bank drive-in and alleyway). The Hi-Lites moved very shortly to the basement of the Fremont Bank & Trust building on the corner of Main and South Division. The next move was to the office building on Deur Chevrolet's used car lot located on West Main. From there it went to 18 East Main next to the Ben Franklin Dime Store where the office was shared with the Credit Bureau. This was originally a bank building and is now utilized as lawyers offices.

In the late 1960's, an opportunity arose to rent the main floor and basement of the former Mason building at 430 West Main Street - now used as a parking lot for Webb Lumber and Tire Whole-salers. At this location, new presses and new offset printing was begun. Many advances were made in the technology of printing preparation procedures and the actual printing. Printing presses were reserved for job printing, and the Shoppers' Guide pages were prepared and processed through photonegative style, then were jobbed out for printing on big presses at Allegan and then later at Ravenna.

In the early 1980's, plans were considered to bring the Shoppers' Guide printing production inhouse, but a much larger building was required. The Ori-Slide Company was moving into a larger facility so Hi-Lites acquired their building at Connie and Locust at the entry of the Fremont Industrial Park. By moving to this new location, many advancements were made possible including a web printing press to print the Shoppers' Guide as well as other regional newspapers and periodicals, multi-color printing presses, bindery and computer composition equipment to expand the commercial printing portion of the business.

Today the business still continues as a family run operation with Ben & Marie's son Jon Sovinski and son-in-law Tom Kowalski presently involved as working partners in the business. (See page 5 for more)

U.S. Postage Paid
 Sec. 562, P.L. & R.
 Permit Number 25
 Fremont, Michigan

R.F.D.#1
 Fremont, Michigan


FREMONT SHOPPING CENTER
 of NEWAYGO COUNTY

HI-LITES

No. 1, Vol. 19
 26 June 1947
 Phone.....51
 Fremont, Mich

Issued by B.W. Jenson & F.F. Parker, 16 1/2 S. Division St., Fremont Michigan (Phone - 51)
 COMPLETE CIRCULATION: Fremont and all Rural Routes, Star Route, Burnsville, Hosperia, and R.F.D.#1&# Hosperia, R.F.D.#1 Grant, White Cloud, R.F.D.#1 & #2 Newaygo.


THEATRE PROGRAM 7 FREMONT, MICHIGAN		
Fri.....Sat June 27-28	Sun.....Mon.....June 29-30	Tue, Wed, Thurs July 1-2-3
"SIOUX CITY GUY" --with-- Gene Aubrey Lynn Roberts --added-- Sports Shorts Color Cartoon	"BOOMERANG" with Bena Andrews-Jane Wyatt --plus-- Shorts News Color Cartoon	"THE JOLSON STORY" in Tech-Microlod --with-- Larry Parks-Brylyn Keyes --also-- News
"VALLEY THEATRE" "QUEEN OF AMAZONS" plus "SAN JUBERTIN"	"THE JOLSON STORY" added News	"ANGEL AND THE DANISH" also Shorts News



MACHINES
WILL DO
IT EASIER.

Milking machines will increase your efficiency and lighten your dairy work. So will electric coolers, water systems or many other labor-saving devices. If you wish to finance dairy equipment come in and apply for a loan.

FREMONT STATE BANK
 Member of the Fed. Reserve System
 Member of the Fed. Depositors' Ins. Corp.



MONEY TO BURN...?
 Of course not! Yet everything you have is worth money--and should be insured against loss through fire. Phone 39 or 500 now and make an appointment with us to discuss your needs. We're firm believers in adequate, but not excess, protection.

It is better to have insurance and not need it than to need insurance and not have it.

All Forms of Insurance
THE WHITE AGENCY
 Established 1973
 Fremont, Mich

Charles White Al Pugno
 Bon DeKuiper Charles Hawkey
 18 E. Main Street Phone 39-500


Consult the experts when you plan your wedding.

The ministers for the service, the bride!

Vredeveld's Shoes has been a family shoe store operating in Fremont since 1909. The shoe store has been within the Vredeveld family for four generations.

H.A. Vredeveld and John Schreur opened Vredeveld's & Company on East Main Street. Within two years, George Vredeveld joined his father and relocated the store at its current location at 8 West Main Street.

1909 - H.A. Vredeveld
 1910 - George Vredeveld, son, joins father, H.A.
 1934 - Morris Vredeveld, son, joins father, George
 1947 - Glen Vredeveld joins father, George, and brother, Morris
 1948 - Morris Vredeveld sudden, unexpected death. Jim Haveman joins George & Glen Vredeveld
 1980 - Lon Vredeveld joins Glen Vredeveld at Jim Haveman's retirement.



VREDEVELD'S
 THE FAMILY SHOE STORE
 8 West Main - Downtown Fremont - 924-3920



HI-LITES GRAPHICS INC.

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1947 South Division location
 Front row (L to R):
 Edna (Cook) Schilling,
 Laura (Luchies) Vanderzee,
 Gene Mumper and
 Velma (Jordan) Hehkus.
 Back row (L to R): Ben Jenson
 and Frank Parker.

1212 Locust St. • Fremont
 Phone (231) 924-0630
 www.hi-lites.com



HI-LITES
 18 EAST MAIN STREET... FREMONT
 PHONE - 51

Hi-Lites
 Shoppers' Guide

432 W. Main Street - Fremont, Michigan





Hi-Lites
 Shoppers Guide



Hi-Lites
 Shoppers Guide



HI-LITES
 SHOPPERS' GUIDE



Hi-Lites, 430 West Main Street location, 1960's to 1980's.

Ben had told his son Jon Sovinski, that there were less than a handful of publications like Hi-Lites in Michigan when he purchased the paper in 1948. Jon added, "We have been told over the years that he and this publication had made a lot of money for a number of people from exposure to their businesses, as well as developing Fremont into the shopping center for Newaygo county and surrounding areas."

Jon's mother Marie worked equally as hard and devoted her life to family and the business. Marie is 102 and still living in the family home where Ben passed away.

Hi-Lites continues running as a family business today with his son, Jon Sovinski and wife Julie at the helm.





BY JOHN FOUST

Ad - Libs

Don't Sell Your Clients Short

Gene told me about an experience he had when he was fundraising for the Boy Scouts. "I was young and completely sold on the value of scouting because some years earlier I had earned the designations of Eagle Scout and Order of the Arrow," he said. "My boss asked me to visit a Mr. Jones, who had been a big contributor to scouting for a long time. I knocked on his door, and he welcomed me with a big smile. When we sat down in his living room, I thanked him for his support and asked if he would like to make a generous contribution of \$2,500 for that year. He enthusiastically agreed, pulled out his checkbook and wrote a check.

"When I got back to the office and proudly showed the check to my boss, he patted me on the back and said, 'Gene, Mr. Jones is such a loyal supporter that he would have written a check for just about any amount you suggested, even more than \$2,500.'

"That was in the days before computer spreadsheets and easily access to previous years' records," Gene explained. "But I still felt responsible for not doing some advance research. My boss never told me what happened next, but I wouldn't be surprised if he asked Mr. Jones to increase his contribution. It was an important lesson."

Gene's story applies to anyone in sales. Just about all of us have undersold our products and services at times. When you're upselling, here are some points to keep in mind:

In your presentation, begin with sincere thanks for the client's business in the past. Then take a minute or two to describe the specific benefits of looking at a new approach to their marketing. Next, compare the benefits of the old way to the new way.

1. RESEARCH

As soon as his boss told him about the missed opportunity, Gene realized that he should have done some homework. In today's world, we have lots of research tools, including in-house records on years of advertisers' budgets and expenditures, spreadsheets, online searches of company histories and growth plans, and notes from others in your advertising department.

2. BUILD UP TO THE ASK

After you've done your research and arrived at a fair and reasonable ask – whether it's a long-term marketing proposal or a single ad in a special section – put some thought into how you're going to present the idea. After all, you know it's more than your client has spent on similar things in the past.

3. REASSURE

Your recommendations may be a stretch for your client. As a result, it's important to reassure them that you – and your newspaper, which has years of experience – are confident in the plan you are presenting.

4. BE FLEXIBLE

Be sure to tell them you will be happy to work with them to adjust the plan once it is underway. After all, the captain of a ship sailing across the ocean continually needs to tweak the course as it goes.

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The last quarter of 2023... and that means "holiday" ads, and that means multiple ads on a page with a common theme... and the need for group headings. So let's review some effective ways to handle these...

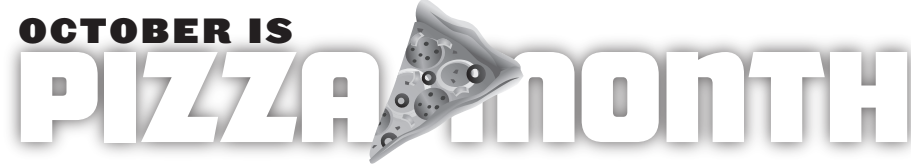
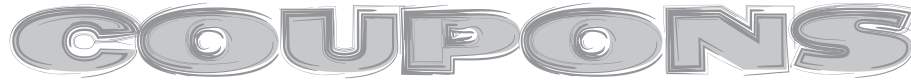


Group Headers

Headaches—er, sorry, I meant to say headers... you know, those very wide and very short "caps" positioned at the top of a special promotional page. In our paper these "headers" were six columns wide and at most two inches deep—at most! On **Coupon** pages, the header is only one inch deep. OK, so sometimes we fudge and add another 1/8"—but not too often, because we just don't have the room.

Below are some headers from our paper—sized proportionately to fit into this page (most are made to fit across our pages—about 10 inches). That is the only change from the originals. The first two headers feature the word **Coupons**—which is large and dominant.

The artwork is used large and cropped. If we were to try to fit the entire art into the allotted space, the result would be a graphic "blob."



Hey, down here!

The bottom two headers again show a somewhat proportionately scaled 6-column x 2" header and a 6-column x 1" header. These also were not enclosed in a box, and there is more information that needs to fit into the space. Try to keep information to the pertinent—the who, what, when, where. The look and feel is similar to keep the page itself identifiable but

words and art were modified to best fit the space available.

The figure of our little Germanfest guy was used as large as we could to reinforce the text and cropped, otherwise we would have lost a lot of the details... and his engaging grin!

I repeat, by not enclosing the header in a box, we have created a more flexible and time-saving way to handle these somewhat awkward sizes.



You wouldn't be able to tell what the art represented. Bigger is better.

We could even recycle, oops, I mean "repurpose" the word coupon in the second example by adding some appropriate art and making the text smaller. I had gotten into the habit of trying to make it easier for our "paginator" to create different size headings. This is where the addition of a little white space not only creates the area but allows for more flexibility in the process.

We don't have to put a lot of information into this header because this is used as a unifying element to tie similar pages together. There is no rule or box placed around the area either. There are enough coupon boxes on the page all ready—coupons are 3-column x 3" size with dashed borders. By eliminating a box around the header, we can visually expand its size.

A few small examples

By eliminating a box around our headers, we also have the flexibility to change the size easily. The "cleaner" the text and background, the easier it is to make modifications.



The "Early Shopper's Gift Guide" does pose a bit of a challenge, but not every header has to be the same. Here the distinctive backdrop makes the heading stand out a little more.

The "Holiday Happenings" on the other hand gives more spatial options. So you just need to determine what will work best for your publication. By the way, these smaller samples would probably be the absolute smallest sizes to be used, but you can see that the information would still tie a grouping together.

Final thoughts...

Headers are an effective way to group similar ads for continuity and organization. Keep in mind the restraints you face:

- Keep header information short
- Use text and art as large as possible
- Pertinent information dominates
- Eliminate borders for greater flexibility

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.in@att.net Ellen Hanrahan ©10/2023



By
Mark W.
Rummel
Fenton, MI

MarkWRummel@gmail.com

YOU'D BETTER SHOP AROUND:
Lists, Lists, Lists...
EVERYBODY has their own list these days

No wonder people are confused today! Experienced folks lament that the “old days” were simpler and somehow better than today. Of course, dreams of how things once were don’t include the medical and technical advances we enjoy today.

BUT IF YOU wanted to know something maybe 50 years ago, you’d go to your local paper, or the phone book, the dictionary or the encyclopedia to get the ONE answer you were seeking. Thanks to the internet, life doesn’t work like that today.

Take a simple subject such as asking “What Are the **10 Best Places to Visit in Michigan?**” By looking through that encyclopedia in the “old days,” you would get one answer. But look at the variety of choices you get today, when searching online

asking that same question! It’s not a bad thing at all to have multiple answers, because such a subject LEADS to many choices. It’s difficult to compare what’s good about busy Detroit with what’s good about sedate Isle Royale, for instance. Plus, everybody has his/her own opinion on EVERYTHING today!

MAYBE THAT’S THE strength and positive part of life today. Everyone who can read papers, use their phones and cruise the internet can find more information than a thousand encyclopedias ever carried. But it also means we need to decide whether to believe the source we are reading at that moment.

This is one more great reason community papers will continue to be the trusted, hometown source for believability.

- 10 Best Places To Visit in Michigan - from U.S. News & World Report**
1. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
 2. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
 3. Mackinac Island
 4. Tahquamenon Falls State Park
 5. Traverse City
 6. Isle Royale National Park
 7. Saugatuck
 8. Holland
 9. Petoskey
 10. Grand Rapids

- 10 Best Places To Visit in Michigan - from Touropia.com**
1. Mackinac Island
 2. Detroit
 3. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
 4. Grand Rapids
 5. Traverse City
 6. Isle Royale National Park
 7. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
 8. Saugatuck and Douglas
 9. Holland
 10. Tahquamenon Falls State Park

- 10 Best Places To Visit in Michigan - from MyGlobalViewpoint.com**
1. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
 2. Mackinac Island
 3. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
 4. Tahquamenon Falls State Park
 5. Detroit
 6. Warren Dunes State Park
 7. Traverse City
 8. Isle Royale National Park
 9. Saugatuck
 10. Porcupine Mounts. State Park

- 10 Best Places To Visit in Michigan - from TravelAndLeisure.com**
1. Isle Royale National Park
 2. Arab American Nat'l. Museum
 3. Graffiti Alley, Ann Arbor
 4. Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids
 5. Mackinac Island
 6. Meyer May House, Grand Rapids
 7. Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation, Dearborn
 8. Sleeping Bear Dunes
 9. Windmill Island, Holland
 10. Marquette County Waterfalls



By Hillary Carroll



Circulation TIPS & INFO

Why Bother With Periodical Mail?

When I was first introduced to Periodical mail in 2009 my head was spinning. How was I possibly going to organize tens of thousands of subscription requests across several different publications? This is one of the first actions I was tasked with. It took a great deal of discipline, learning as I went, and sheer determination. But I did it. And I never looked back.

In just a few short years our company's portfolio grew from a handful of newspapers to 15 with nearly 200,000 copies in weekly circulation. This would not have been possible without the savings and reliability of Periodical mail.

During my time as a Circulation Director I oversaw the grassroots start of several brand new publications. The tactic to bring these papers to life was to saturate a desirable zip code and sample the entire town for anywhere from 6 - 12 months while collecting subscription requests. We did this with neighboring towns and were able to sell clusters to advertisers looking to maximize their market penetration.

As a publisher, have you considered entering the mail stream but can't afford Marketing mail pricing? Becoming a Periodical makes mailbox delivery possible. This can be achieved with free or paid circulation. You can qualify for Periodical rates by having 50% + 1 of your total distribution request the newspaper even if mailed at no cost to the reader.

Requests can be submitted in a variety of forms including direct mail, email, and postcards. One of the most important things publishers can do to prepare for the postal eligibility audit is maintaining well organized records. I recommend working with someone who has been through the process

and knows what to expect.

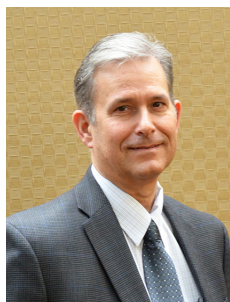
There are many benefits of Periodical mail but here are a few of my favorites. Being able to publish legal notices. This can be a major source of revenue and an important community resource. Having peace of mind that your publication will never be left behind on driveways or hidden among racks people don't pay attention to. Enjoying priority status with the post office, it's the most prestigious and affordable commercial mailing class. And, of course, bragging rights that your paper is highly valued by readers who have requested delivery.

Don't forget there's an added opportunity to increase advertising revenue by charging higher rates thanks to proven requested status or an increased overall circulation due to sampling efforts.

So why aren't more community newspapers taking the plunge? Simply put, the post office makes more money off of publishers sending their product under a Marketing Mail permit. Why encourage Periodical permits when they are already operating at a massive deficit? Many local Post Masters are unfamiliar with periodical mail and can't give expedient or reliable advice. Most publishers are wary of the process and often don't know where to begin.

Based on conversations with publishers across the nation I realized the need for a go to resource in the industry. I knew I had to make my expertise available to those wanting to go Periodical but not knowing where to start. That's where Requester Pro, LLC comes in handy.

If you have questions about how a Periodical permit can benefit your operations, send an email to hillary@requesterpro.com. Let's do this together and keep print media alive and thriving!



BUILDING MAIN STREET NOT WALL STREET



Local Business Competition Strengthens Communities

by John Newby

It is no secret that your local businesses base forms the backbone of communities, providing essential goods and services while fostering a sense of belonging and identity. In any given local community, competition among locally owned businesses may seem counterintuitive; however, it plays a vital role in making these businesses grow stronger. Let's look at some of the economic advantages of local business competition.

Price competition is one of the most apparent benefits of competition among locally owned businesses. It is the driving force that it exerts on price competitiveness. When multiple businesses in the same niche vie for the attention of local consumers, they are forced to offer better prices, service, and promotions, resulting in cost savings for consumers.

Competition stimulates product and various services innovation. Locally owned businesses competing against each other are more likely to invest in research and development, leading to

the introduction of new and improved products and services. This innovation, in turn, attracts more customers and bolsters business growth.

In the pursuit of gaining an edge over their rivals, local businesses continuously seek ways to streamline their operations. This often results in greater operational efficiency and productivity. Efficiency gains can translate into reduced costs and, consequently, more competitive prices for consumers.

Healthy competition leads to business growth, and growing businesses require a larger workforce. As locally owned businesses expand to meet increased demand, they create job opportunities within the community, reducing unemployment and improving the overall economic well-being of the area.

Competition fosters community engagement. When local businesses vie for customers, they often become more involved in community events, sponsorships, and initiatives. This engagement strengthens the bonds between businesses and residents,

leading to a more vibrant and cohesive community.

Competition among locally owned businesses preserves the unique identity and character of a community. Each business contributes to the distinct flavor of the area, ensuring that it remains an attractive and memorable place to live and visit. This local identity can lead to increased tourism and support for the businesses.

Competition ensures a diverse array of choices for consumers. When multiple businesses offer similar products or services, consumers benefit from a wider range of options, allowing them to make choices that align with their preferences and needs. This diversity enhances the overall quality of life within the community.

In a competitive environment, businesses must stay attuned to market trends and consumer preferences. This adaptability ensures that local businesses remain relevant and resilient in the face of evolving economic conditions. *(Continued on page 11.)*



Local Business Competition Strengthens Communities- *Continued from page 10*

Additionally, diversified competition helps insulate a community's economy against external shocks. When one business faces a crisis, such as a natural disaster or economic downturn, others can step in to fill the gap, reducing the overall impact on the community.

More importantly, a thriving competitive environment encourages entrepreneurship. As individuals witness the success of local businesses, they may be inspired to start their own enterprises, further contributing to the community's economic growth and vitality. The city of Eureka Springs, Arkansas is known for its vibrant local business scene, showcases how competition among locally owned businesses can drive economic growth. It is home to numerous locally owned shops, cafes, and boutiques that thrive on competition, offering residents and tourists unique products and experiences.

Competition among locally owned businesses is a dynamic force that has a profound impact on both the economic and social aspects of a community. Competition contributes to the long-term sustainability of a community by fostering adaptability, resilience against external shocks, and a culture of entrepreneurship. Therefore, rather than viewing competition among locally owned businesses as a zero-sum game, it should be seen as a virtuous cycle that benefits the entire community. Local businesses, by competing with each other, not only thrive individually but collectively contribute to the prosperity and well-being of the community they serve. In essence, the competition among these businesses is a testament to the resilience, creativity, and interconnectedness of local communities worldwide.

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.



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