

November 2023  
**INFORMER**



**Community  
Papers of  
Michigan**





# Congratulations President Rush!

**Michigan State Representative Josh Schriver presented CPM President Don Rush** with a Special Tribute from the state on Friday, Oct. 6, 2023. “... Mr. Don Rush has done a wonderful job of serving our community through his meticulous reporting at the Oxford Leader over the last 37 years, and it does not go unnoticed. Through good times and bad times . . . (He) has done his very best to speak what is right for the sake of our community. On behalf of Oxford residents, I officially recognize Mr. Rush for his selfless service with this tribute as a symbol of appreciation for his dedication to the people of Oxford, Michigan.”



## HR. 4756

# A Bill to Provide Tax Incentives That Support Local Media



By Cliff Yankovich, *Retired J-ad Graphics Editor*  
(Reprinted with permission of *The Lowell Ledger*)

In July of this year, Republican Representative Claudia Tenney (NY 22) introduced a bill to provide tax incentives that will support local newspapers with a great one-two punch. The bill was co-sponsored by Democrat Suzan DelBene (WA 1). HR 4756 goes by the name Community News and Small Business Support Act. Since that time, the bill is gaining some traction with support from eight more representatives, four from each party.

The bill is designed to support all kinds of local media, including local papers, digital media outlets, radio stations, and even TV stations. For the purpose of this article, we will only be considering the importance and impact of small-town newspapers.

Before we look into the great possibilities of HR 4756, it is imperative to examine the current situation when it comes to small-town newspapers in Michigan and around the country. In a word, the situation is dire.

For many years big corporations bought-up small newspapers, many, if not most, of which are published weekly. In the last decade, there are estimates that over two thousand or more small papers have been shuttered across the country.

Gannett is the largest newspaper chain in the U.S. They have been buying-up small papers for many years. They follow the typical corporate model and operate with both eyes firmly focused only on the bottom line, with little to no regard for the communities the smaller papers serve.

Without a doubt, our increasing desire to get our news on our devices has led to fewer subscribers to local papers. Fewer subscriptions means fewer advertising dollars, and thereby, a steady downward spiral happens. When profit is the sole

consideration, it becomes easy to trim-off a paper that fails to produce, not only a profit but an increase in profit from year-to-year, which is what corporations and their shareholders expect/demand.

It is worth noting that while overseeing a corporation that has closed hundreds of small newspapers in the last few years, the Gannett CEO brought home a paycheck of 3.3 million dollars in 2022, which was down from over 7.7 million the year before. There is an eight-member Board of Directors at Gannett – all of whom received somewhere between \$186,000 to \$220,000 per year. This is in sharp contrast to the average salary of \$48,000.00 for an employee of Gannett.

Before we examine the attributes of the bill, it is worth taking a moment to realize the importance of small-town papers. Want some publicity for your son or granddaughter and their efforts on a sports team or to celebrate them winning the chess invitational? How about a story heralding the success of your church group or favorite non-profit's fund raising efforts? Want to learn more about the new small business that opened on Main Street? It is a safe bet that one of the online news services is not going to devote any time to those kinds of stories; it is the purview of a small-town paper, like the one you are reading right now. Producing a weekly paper is an expensive undertaking; this year alone saw a huge spike in the cost of newsprint on which to print it. Rising costs and loss of revenue are why corporations like Gannett choose to just shutdown a paper instead of working hard to do whatever it takes to keep it afloat.

On a very positive note, HR4756 would address several issues with one piece of legislation that could actually go a long

way in the right direction, when it comes to helping out any and all remaining community newspapers. The bill lays out a five-year plan to provide payroll tax credits to local and community news outlets to hire and retain local news reporters. It is our understanding that these tax credits will only be allowed for media outlets with fewer than 750 employees. (So Gannett, et al, will not benefit from this.) Small businesses, with 50 or less employees, that advertise in local newspapers, digital news sites, on local radio or with local TV stations are eligible for tax credits.

Another great part of the legislation is that it only applies to local news reporting. It would give great tax incentives to the Ledger to do what we enjoy doing – reporting on the stories that involve and affect our readers.

Eligible newspapers will be allowed to apply for tax credits of up to \$25,000 per local journalist the first year and up to \$15,000 per local journalist for four more years. The benefit to small businesses would be a tax credit of up to \$5,000 the first year and up to \$2,500 for up to four more years. So, if a Main Street business spent \$2,500 advertising in the Ledger, not only do they get to deduct the advertising expense, but they can also claim the tax credit, which would be a wonderful incentive for them. The bottom line, a tax credit has a bigger impact on a small business than an advertising expense, and the two of them together would go a long way to helping small businesses compete. This reporter is very encouraged by the fact that this bill defines a small business as having less than 50 employees because, many times businesses with as many, as 1,500 employees are classified as "small". (Continued on page 7.)





By  
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## **YOU'D BETTER SHOP AROUND:** **10 businesses that were killed by the Internet according to Yahoo! Finance**

When the story and history of the 2010s and 2020s business world is written, the expansion of the Internet will be declared the biggest change in the universe.

You cannot name a type of business that hasn't been changed — or often killed — by the Internet's power.

Yahoo! Finance recently listed "**10 Businesses That Got Killed By The Internet**," and it's amazing how many types of American companies have basically disappeared in the past quarter-century.

And we predict that will only continue in the future.

Reporter Sarah Cunnane created this list of brick-and-mortar locations that were once growing and profitable, but met dramatic change — or vanished — once the world wide web got rolling. These include:

**1. Arcades** — Once found everywhere, classic arcades have disappeared. Homes now have their own video game consoles, plus chains such as Dave & Busters have replaced most local gaming centers.

**2. Toys R Us** — Imagine a complete building holding nothing but toys. Wandering around Toys R Us unsupervised was a holiday season ritual for many kids in the '80s and '90s. But the Internet allowed Amazon, Walmart, Target and others to take over most toy sales, changing the retail landscape forever.

**3. RadioShack** — At one point, it seemed there was a RadioShack everywhere you looked. The electronics stores were sprinkled across galleries, strip malls and kiosks all across America. Now they're long past their prime. Online buying plus places like the Apple Store took their place. And, smartphones now mean there is no longer a need to own the extra gadgetry you could buy at RadioShack.

**4. Blockbuster** — In the age of on-demand streaming, Blockbuster is a relic of the past. Nobody prefers going to a store — and facing possible late fees — anymore. But many of us miss browsing around and stumbling upon something new and exciting.



**5. Discovery Channel Store** — This store was an early place to shop online, but now science-loving kids of all ages can buy their techy stuff online.

**6. Borders** — Buy books in person off a shelf in your own town?? What a great idea, but it didn't last, as Borders couldn't compete with online book retailers.

**7. Hastings Entertainment** — This Texas-based company was a one-stop shop for music, movies, videos and comics. But it lost the online fight.

**8. Flea Markets** — These local shopping places were a bargain hunter's go-to shopping destination for decades. But that's changing now, as flea markets are struggling to keep up with online sellers.

**9. Sears** — Once the world's largest retailer, Sears has shuttered all but 10 of its U.S. locations. After it merged with Kmart in 2005, losses continued for both firms, and shoppers went elsewhere.

**10. GameStop** — This is a company that still has 2,940 U.S. stores, but the once-huge seller of video games and consoles has changed dramatically. Can it be the exception to the "Internet-kills-everything" rule? If so, it will need to keep promoting and advertising.

This list should remind us that things always change, and we in the community paper business need to be ready for change, and advertise ourselves accordingly!

Almost the end of the year... and my InDesign has been updated (my fault, I've been out of the country and then had a nasty cold, so wasn't paying attention!?). Anyway, let's revisit some revised and updated...

# Holiday Ads

Here we are, finishing the candy from Halloween and already we start with the craft fairs, cookie sales and all those other holiday events. These two ads ran years ago and have been modified only to fit this page. They ran as a 2 column by 5 inch ad in our paper. Same event, but what a difference a year makes. Putting in lots of artwork is not always a good idea. Organization and a single focal point make a big difference in the looks of these ads, plus, the "readability" level is greatly increased.



**Holiday Arts & Crafts**  
Show and Bake Sale!

Come help us celebrate our 17th year and see truly unique hand-crafted items and home-baked treats. Many door prizes given and a chance to win a porcelain doll or full-size quilt all hand-made by area artists. Ample parking and refreshments available!

**FREE ADMISSION!**

**November 9th**  
9am-4pm

Minter's Hall at Hillside  
Corner of Hwy P & S

Do your holiday shopping with us.

**Timeless Treasures**

**Holiday Arts & Crafts Show & Bake Sale!**

Come help us celebrate our 18th year and see truly unique hand-crafted items and home-baked treats. Many door prizes given and a chance to win a porcelain doll or full-size afghan all hand-made by area artists. Ample parking and refreshments available!

**FREE ADMISSION!**

**November 10th**  
9am-4pm

Minter's Hall at Hillside  
Corner of Hwy P & S

**Timeless Treasures**

Do your Holiday Shopping with us.

**Ad A** has not only the tree branch on the side but also cookie shapes at the upper right and lower bottom portion—too much art (and also too different in technique). The ad would be better and less distracting if those cookie shapes were eliminated (as you can see)—let the tree branch grab your attention. Simplify. **Ad B** uses a traditional holly leaf on the side. The star calls your attention to the text where all the information lines up, so it doesn't "bounce" all over the place—keep similar information together.

In the headline **Holiday Arts & Craft Show and Bake Sale**, we have five type size changes in **Ad A** alone. The text does not flow as one thought. Plus, the word "show" is on a separate line. It should read as **Arts & Crafts Show**—just one thought. Breaking up the text too much doesn't help to unify the idea. It only adds to the "visual clutter."

There are now two type size changes in the headline of **Ad B**. "Holiday," "and Bake Sale!" and date/time are the same point size as well (although I changed "and" to an ampersand for more unity).

The heading is now more cohesive and readability is improved, plus it has a more "crafty" visual feel. It also helps to keep most of the text aligned to help direct the reader to the appropriate information.

Another problem in **Ad A** is putting the name of the event sponsor in the black band at the bottom of the ad. It gets lost and there is the potential that an ad that runs below it may be in reverse. (Advertisers do love those reverse ads!) Anyway, the name will be lost due to the proximity of the ad below and the stark contrast is a bit too strong and separates the info from the body copy.

In **Ad B**, we moved the event sponsor to a slightly more prominent location. And with the information more organized in this ad, we were able to add a thicker border to help all the information stand out. You do not need to fill all the available space within the ad boundaries.

Typefaces used in **Ad A** are from the Times family and typefaces used in **Ad B** are **Hot Salsa** and **Kukulkan** from **Sudtipos Type**. [sudtipos.com](http://sudtipos.com)

## Final Thoughts

As I have stated at the beginning of this page, **InDesign 2024** replaced my 2023 version.

Now I have to figure what changed and maybe where they placed different items. I know that I will have to check all my preferences and I know that they have added emojis (but haven't a clue as to why or how to access them).

Anyway, it appears that I will be "unwrapping" new information this month... and in the meantime, count your blessings and have a

*Joy-filled Thanksgiving!*

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](mailto:hanrahan.in@att.net) Ellen Hanrahan ©11/2023

## Vector Art

I love vector art! Some of these icons were from a group of ornamental graphics from a few years ago, but talk about multi-tasking, oh my! These would be perfect to use as a "fill." The border has got to go, but the shapes are simple and easily recognizable, so are great for small ads and small spaces.

See the variations and flexibility that these vectors can provide.



See our special section Gift Guide

Only 25 shopping days until Christmas!



MOST STORES OPEN TILL 11:00PM!

In 2008 I used these art elements for a promotional piece as they were originally configured and let them be the "headers" for the categories and promotions that we were doing. They were simple, attention-getting and at a larger size effective in organizing and breaking up the text areas. (Wow! That was 15-years ago, and while pricing... and delivery... have changed, I believe that the flyer would still be viable!)



Original Vector Art (plus tree light not shown)

**2008 Holiday Offerings**

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS APPROACHING. WE OFFER A VARIETY OF HOLIDAY PROMOTIONS AND PUBLICATIONS TO HELP YOU SHOWCASE YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THROUGHOUT WASHINGTON AND EASTERN DOGUE COUNTIES WITH A PROGRAM FOR EVERYONE'S BUDGET!

**Early Shopper's Gift Guide**  
Just in the "City of Mice" in Hometown and West Bend and/or Sunday.  
Published Sunday, Nov. 16

**EARLY SHOPPER'S GIFT GUIDE**  
Published Sunday, Nov. 16

**After Thanksgiving Sale**  
Published Sunday, Nov. 23  
Tuesday, Nov. 25

**KEEP 'EM LOCAL**

**West Bend Promotion**  
**DOWNTOWN PAGE**  
Published Tuesday, Nov. 25

**Hometown Promotions**  
**CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND**  
Published Tuesday, Nov. 18

**CHRISTMAS SHOOTING REALNESS**  
Published Tuesday, Dec. 9

**CHRISTMAS SECTION**  
Our first special West Bend and Hometown Christmas section is dedicated to more than 40,000 homes in the district with holiday traditions, gift ideas, church services, and gifts.

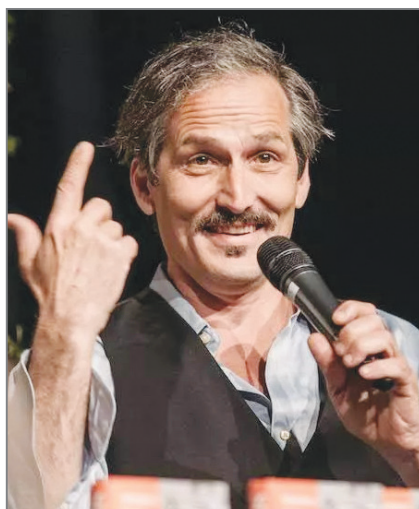
**CHRISTMAS SECTION RATES:**  
FULL PAGE \$528  
3/4 PAGE 798  
1/2 PAGE 505  
1/3 PAGE 372  
1/4 PAGE 297  
1/5 PAGE 153

**Trade Up Bonus!**  
Participate in three weeks of any of our Holiday promotions—Early Shopper's Gift Guide, After Thanksgiving Sale, etc.—basically anything with real trees in the store and receive a Trade Up Bonus during the month of January. Buy a quarter page and Trade Up to a half page, or buy a half page and Trade Up to a full page. The ad can run anytime in January.

**TheBooster**  
OUR 70TH YEAR

31 West Safford Street Hometown 302.223.2900 402.242.0210  
834 South Main Street West Bend 247.344.5889 616.242.7842  
Email: [info@thebooster.com](mailto:info@thebooster.com) [www.thebooster.com](http://www.thebooster.com)

# Prize-Winning Journalist Says America Needs Community Newspapers



**Charlie LeDuff is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist** who has been championing the cause of ordinary people living in challenging circumstances since his first assignment as a summer intern for an Alaskan fishing journal. Since then, he’s been holding government, business, political, and media leaders accountable from the Texas-Mexico border, to Flint during the drinking water crisis of 2014-16, to more recently East Palestine, Ohio following a chemical railroad car derailment.

LeDuff holds a degree in economics from the University of Michigan and is an alumnus of the Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. A former columnist for 12 years with the New York Times, he is the author of four books, *Work and Other Sins* (2004); *US Guys* (2006); *Detroit: An American Autopsy* (2013); and *Sh\*t Show: The Country’s Collapsing and the Rating are Great* (2018).

LeDuff is currently a columnist for the Detroit News in his hometown of Detroit where he also hosts the podcast *NoBSNewsHour* and serves as

the maintenance man every Tuesday at his local Coney Island hot dog shop.

As J-Ad Graphics launches its annual Reminder fund raising campaign, LeDuff recently spoke of his passion for and the vital importance of local community newspapers with special correspondent Doug VanderLaan.

**Q. Would you include the demise of newspapers (6,377 still existing from 31,000 in 2005\*) in the observation of the subtitle of your 2018 book that the country is collapsing?**

I might say that one reason the country is collapsing is because newspapers are collapsing.

**Q. But we still have a vibrant social media accessible to anyone. How relevant are newspapers?**

I suppose there are good things about electronic communication, but my feeling is that there is a fine line between social media journalism and ranting. Where does the ranting begin -- when someone posts about the dog barking in my neighbor’s yard? Where are the stories about the Steele dossier? And how about the illegal dumping of waste in the waterway?

**Q. You might not see stories like that in a community newspaper like The Reminder, either.**

Liberal or conservative, newspapers make an honest attempt to inform. It’s like David Simon (author screenwriter best know for *The Wire*) said, until newspapers figure out how to fund themselves it’s going to be Romper Room for the government.

**Q. J-Ad Graphics does a good job of that with its weekly publication The Banner, but The Reminder and its sister papers, The Sun and News, The Lakewood News, and The Maple Valley News carry more of the “happy news” of their communities.**

That’s not a bad thing. Today, we think news has to be remarkable, not normal. It does require some balance, but people need happy stories – we’ve turned the corner away from that somehow. You’ve got to gain trust and likeability from your community. If you always go around throwing punches, you’ll eventually hit everybody. You’ve got to be Atticus Finch in the community – when the hard things come, you want people to accept you.

**Q. That sounds like the people from the**

**Flint trailer park you wrote about who all had red-stained teeth from red Kool-Aid they drank after their water was contaminated in 2014-16.**

Happy stories serve the community, too, and a newspaper story can make someone feel good not just for a moment but for a long time. When I was with the New York Times, I was sent out to Jamaica Bay (far suburb of New York City) to cover the opening of the striped bass season. An old fisherman showed me all about it. Five years later, or so, I get message left on my phone, “Charlie, you won’t remember me, but you wrote about me during the striped bass season opener. I clipped out the article and put it in my desk drawer so that when I’m feeling blue, I can pull it out and read it again. Today, you made me feel better.” That’s what a small newspaper gives you, it’s tangible. I love them because you can go back five years later and there’s still a story there about life. It’s almost like a spiritual feeling. *(Continued on pg. 7)*



(From pg. 6)

**Q. So even small community newspapers are worth fighting for?**

Community newspapers are a binding force. If I go up North to a cabin, I might ask, "Where is Sanilac County?" Well, it's the newspaper. If I go into a gas station and there's no newspaper, how do I know what the community is or what the people are like? I might have no running water in my cabin but what the local newspaper tells me about what's happening with the water in Flint affects me – I'm going to have to pay for it with my tax money even if I'm in a little cabin in the Thumb.

I like the little things from other places that are published in a small community newspaper. I come across things like my state senator handing out money for a new parking ramp in Royal Oak like it's a Reader's Digest Sweepstakes check. That just tips me off to the whole attitude in Lansing, the Queen bestowing our own money on us. It takes the trained eye of

a small community paper to know what's being done with our tax money.

**Q. Circulation numbers are lower for with community newspapers as compared to news outlets in bigger cities. How many people will actually see a local report on what's being done with taxpayer money?**

Hey, I don't know your politics, but I can tell you the next election will be decided by 200,000 votes or less and they'll all come from two counties over here (near Detroit). Before I vote, I want to know what people in other places are thinking. How does that community talk? What binds them together? That's what a small newspaper gives you.

**Q. But should people be asked to financially assist a free circulation paper like The Reminder?**

That's called a subscription and why is that a perverted thing? All the way back, social media gave away its content for free and now everyone's still looking for a sugar daddy. Look what happened to the

Internet. Eventually it had to go to online scrolling (ad copy) and now you're getting rolling commercials.

**Q. That's where newspapers have always been, reliant on advertisers to support the news. With advertising revenue now dangerously declining, readers need to step in to assist.**

We need Fred (Jacobs, J-Ad Graphics publisher) because he's a sensible man, he's not a Martian speaking some crazy language.

Fred is a respected man and he will tell you when it's going bad. Unlike big media that tell you what they think you should know, I see local community newspaper journalists being turned on and local people digging this stuff up. And I have to pay for that? Yes, because I get to watch people have pride in the place they live.

**Q. Thank you, Charlie.**

Local newspapers can bring the light. It's the real world and that's not a concept – it's community.

*"This is an annual six-week campaign. On week three, an envelope is inserted within The Hastings Reminder that includes the info for the Voluntary Partnership Program (shown at the right), and a request for input from readers. This program has been very successful. Positive comments dominate the input provided. These comments are given to sales reps to share with their clients."*

**Fred Jacobs, President J-Ad Graphics**

**The Hastings Reminder Voluntary Partnership Program**

- YES** I want to help keep my community strong. Please include me as a voluntary newspaper partner in that vital effort.
- NO** I am unable to make a voluntary contribution at this time, but I continue to enjoy and to support your publication's effort each week to keep our community strong.

Please join our mission to share the good news of our community with all who live in or visit Barry County. In community we have strength. Fill out the convenient form and either return it to us via U.S. Mail, drop it off at our office, or fill out the giving form with your credit or debit card information.

-OR-

Go online to [www.hastingsreminder.com](http://www.hastingsreminder.com)

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

**PERSONAL CHECK**  \$40  \$52  
(Make payable to The Hastings Reminder or J-Ad Graphics)  \$100  Other

**CASH** please indicate the amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARGE MY:**

VISA  MasterCard  American Express

\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_\_| 3 digit security code \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Total Payment: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**1351 N. M-43 Hwy., Hastings, MI 49058  
269-945-9554**

**HR. 4756 (Continued from page 3)**

Both of our political parties pay a lot of lip service to small businesses – they like to refer to them as “the backbone of America”. We agree completely and we celebrate this effort that would go a long way to making sure that the backbone is strong and up to the task. Both parties should support HR4756 with no hesitation. Corporations are given tax breaks and incentives that the little mom & pop businesses have no chance of getting. This bill is one for the little folks, for sure.

What can we all do at this point? Well, if you value the production and distribution of local news, then take a couple minutes to encourage support from our representatives. Michigan has thirteen of them. We would suggest a phone call or email to all thirteen of them, asking for them to get behind the bill and do what ever they can to see it become law. If you value the small businesses that help make Lowell the cool place that it is, then let our representatives, know that you expect

them to vote to help keep them afloat.

If you go to <https://www.house.gov/> representatives you can scroll down to Michigan and you will see all 13 of them listed. If you click on a name, you will be taken to the reps website and a link with information on how to contact them via phone or email. It would be wonderful if everyone reading this would take the time to encourage support for HR4756 from one or more of our representatives.



BY JOHN FOUST

# Ad - Libs

## Ad Lessons From A Wall Poster

I remember going to the ophthalmologist a few years ago for my regular eye checkup. In the exam room, there was a large poster on the wall which featured a number of photographs of the same view of New York City from the water. The top left photo showed the unenhanced view, and after that, each one demonstrated what the view would look like with various eye disorders—nearsightedness, farsightedness, cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, etc.

It was a powerful message, because it gave the doctor a way to explain important facts at a glance. It enabled patients to see things through the eyes of people with specific eye conditions. It showed – in the most graphic way – what was happening with their vision.

As I looked at the poster, I couldn't help but think about this business of advertising and the importance of seeing things from others' perspective. It goes beyond seeing things from our clients' perspective. We have to see things from all of their customers' points of view. And perhaps most challenging of all, we need to help each one of our clients see things from their consumers' perspective.

David Droga, who founded the Droga5 global advertising agency, said, "I really believe in the power of advertising... the power of advertising that's in sync with what consumers want." The key is in the words "in sync," which is a

shortened way to say "synchronized." In the old war movies, the grizzled old officers would say, "Okay, everybody, let's synchronize our watches." In other words: Before we get to the drop zone, let's all set our time at 0500 hours.

Successful advertising executives like David Droga have a deep respect for the importance of seeing things from the other person's point of view. They are constantly asking questions, probing



for information, learning about other people and their needs and ideas. And they carefully consider demographic and psychographic research (much of which is available to newspaper advertising departments).

I've heard that some ad copywriters even picture a person representing a client's target audience sitting in a chair in their office. The idea is to talk to that person about the product, then use it as a springboard for consumer-centered copy. How does the target consumer talk? What words resonate?

What product offers can generate interest? It's a way to individualize and humanize a large group of people. It's a way to get in sync.

When you're in sync, you forget about yourself and concentrate on the other person. Like the famous saying, "Knowledge is power." How else are you going to have a feel for how Client A is likely to respond to a new campaign idea? How is Target Audience B likely to react to Offer C? And how much does Advertising Manager D rely on input from the company owner?

The bottom line is that those who see things from the other person's point of view will sell more ads and create better ads than those who don't.



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John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. Email for information: [john@johnfoust.com](mailto:john@johnfoust.com)

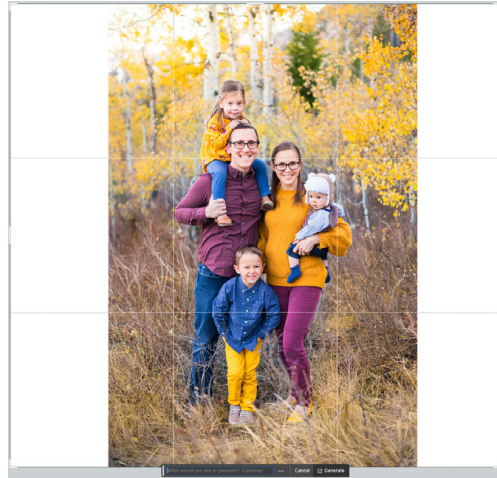


# New tools elicit warning

Latest versions of Photoshop include use of artificial intelligence



This is the original stock photo before any changes from istockphoto.com.



The small black box below the photo is the Contextual Task Bar. The Crop Tool is designates the expanded image space.



This image was created using the Crop Tool and Generative Fill tool to generate more content on each side of the image.

By Kevin Slimp

By now, you would think I've learned not to write things that will get me in trouble. So, before I write another word, I'm inserting a warning label:

## THIS COLUMN IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

What is that all about, you ask? There was a day, not that long ago (okay, maybe 20 years ago), when I couldn't get through a Photoshop class without someone in the audience getting upset.

"What about journalistic ethics?" this person would shout. "I was taught we couldn't even lighten or sharpen a photo."

Most of us made it through those early days of Photoshop without too much bloodshed, but I still fear the nasty emails I will get for writing this column. Just remember, you've been warned:

## THIS COLUMN IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

I teach a lot of classes in photo editing and page design, so it's essential that I stay up to date on the latest developments in those fields. While preparing for some recent Photoshop classes, Adobe updated the software, which they do regularly. I guess I shouldn't have been surprised that the latest versions (Photoshop 2024 and Photoshop Beta 25.2) contain several tools that allow users to use generative artificial intelligence (AI).

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that can create new content, such as text, images, or video. Generative AI software learns the patterns and structure of their input data and then generates new data with similar characteristics.

Please keep my previous warning in mind as we discuss just a couple of tools in Photoshop that utilize generative AI.

### The Photoshop Generative Fill

The newest versions of Photoshop include a "Contextual Task Bar" that usually sits beneath the open image (it can be moved to other places on the screen or removed altogether). Users are often amazed at the various options available when utilizing the Contextual Task Bar for the first

time. Here are two of the options in the Contextual Task Bar:

**Extending an Image:** Imagine you are utilizing stock art from a provider for an ad or cover of a special section. To your dismay, the art isn't quite wide enough to fit the designated area. In the past, this generally meant increasing the image size then cropping the top or bottom to allow it to fit in the space. With Photoshop's generative AI capabilities, users can now "widen" the image with additional background material.

If you need more trees on the left and right, Photoshop can create more trees. If the photo includes a family standing in front of some buildings in New York, Photoshop can generate more buildings on either (or both) sides of the family.

**Replacing an Area of an Image:** You have a stock image of a teenager running forward to kick a soccer ball. "Wait!" you realize, "I need that to be a football!"

You guessed it. By creating a selection of the soccer ball, going to the Contextual Task Bar, and then entering "football" in the taskbar window,

**Continued on Next Page ►**



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The Generative Fill Tool was used to remove the background and replace it with "New York City."

Photoshop can generate a football where the soccer ball was previously laid.

**I know. I know.**

I can already feel angry emails heading my way. Just remember the warning earlier in this column. I would never suggest it's okay to use AI to generate or change images used in stories or other types of news content. But there are times when Photoshop's generative AI will be useful when designing ads or working with stock art.

Adobe seems to cover the legal basis of generated artwork. This is from the Adobe Generative AI User Guidelines:

*"In general, you may use outputs from generative AI features commercially. However, if Adobe designates in the product or elsewhere that*

*a beta version of a generative AI feature cannot be used commercially, then the generated outputs from that beta feature are for personal use only and cannot be used commercially."*

The guidelines go on to add:

*"If you're not sure whether your content violates the rights of a third party, you may want to reach out to an attorney or consult publicly available reference materials."*



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

**Kevin Slimp, "The News Guru"**

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# Circulation TIPS & INFO

## DMM Readers Digest *By Hillary Carroll*

The Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) is not for the faint of heart. If you've had the 'pleasure' of combing through this behemoth you know the wording is as dense as the manual itself. The volume on Periodicals (DMM 207) is 92 pages long, not exactly light reading. If you struggle with falling asleep at night I recommend giving it a try before bed. I guarantee you'll be out before you hit section three, "Physical Characteristics and Content Eligibility." Like many government documents, I can't help but to think this was written to deter publishers from being able to read and digest its contents, much less implement them.

That's why it helps to work with someone who knows the DMM not just in theory but in practice. I fell into the Periodicals realm and had to learn the rules, regulations, and policies the good old fashioned way. Trust me when I say the

struggle was real. There was a lot of trial and error, error that cost time and money. But eventually I got the hang of it and became well versed in the intricacies and requirements of USPS, particularly when it comes to Periodical mail.

Getting to know the DMM reinforced principles I learned the hard way. It became a tool I used to guide and even coach Post Masters who were unfamiliar with this surprisingly underutilized mail class. Now it's a supplement to the information I share with my clients. It's the foundation I make palatable and digestible. My goal is to enable publishers to use the DMM and postal regulation to their benefit, not their dismay.

My advice is to be mindful not to bite off more than you can chew. If you're new to the DMM, don't try to digest it in a single sitting. And if it becomes overwhelming, ask a Pro for help. We want to see you succeed!

*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



# The Power of Media in Transforming Your Community

by John Newby

Small local communities often face challenges in staying vibrant and connected. In the digital age, the media can be a powerful tool for small communities to transform themselves and become more vibrant. This transformation is not just about economic development but also about fostering a sense of belonging, strengthening social bonds, and preserving local culture. Let's explore how small local communities can effectively utilize various forms of media, both traditional and digital, to achieve these goals.

The media can provide great storytelling that enhances the community identity. The act of storytelling helps residents connect with their past, appreciate their present, and envision what their future might hold. Local media of all types can share their narratives. A great example might be the "Humans of New York" project, started by photographer Brandon Stanton. He uses social media to capture and share the stories of individuals in New York City. This project has not only become a global phenomenon but also demonstrated how simple, heartfelt storytelling can help build a stronger sense of community.

Engaging local news and providing access to accurate and timely information is crucial for any community. Local newspapers, community newsletters, and online news platforms can play a significant role in keeping residents informed about events, local issues, and opportunities for civic engagement. The city of Akron, Ohio, has seen the positive impact of a community-focused news initiative. The Akron Beacon Journal, in partnership with the Knight Foundation,

launched the "Akronist" project, which focuses on local news, issues, and community events. This initiative has helped residents stay engaged with their community and has fostered a sense of pride in Akron.

The media can provide community building and social connectivity. Through digital assets, including social networking platforms and community websites, they have become essential tools for building and strengthening local communities. Online forums and groups can connect residents who share common interests and concerns, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration. Nextdoor is a popular social networking platform designed for neighborhoods and local communities. It allows residents to connect, share information, and collaborate on local issues. Through Nextdoor, residents can organize events, discuss concerns, and help one another.

Local media plays a vital role in supporting local businesses and driving economic development. Local advertisements, reviews, and features can help businesses gain visibility and connect with their target audience.

While not the only way, the "Shop Local" movement has gained traction in many small communities, encouraging residents to support local businesses. Local media outlets, such as newspapers and radio stations, often run special features and advertising campaigns to promote local businesses.

The media can serve as a catalyst for social change and civic engagement. When local issues are brought to the

forefront through newspapers, radio, or digital platforms, residents are more likely to get involved in addressing those issues. The Flint water crisis in Michigan garnered national attention through the media. This spotlight brought resources, volunteers, and government action to address the problem, illustrating how media can be a force for positive change in a community. The media can raise awareness about pressing local issues and inspire residents to take action. Whether it's advocating for better infrastructure, cleaner environments, or more inclusive policies, community engagement can lead to positive transformations.

Small local communities, when working closely with their local media, can leverage the power of media to transform themselves into more vibrant and connected places. Through storytelling, accessible local news, cultural expression, community building, business support, and civic engagement, media can help residents strengthen their sense of identity and belonging. Moreover, it can drive economic development, celebrate local culture, and inspire positive social change.

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