

tip

The Independent Publisher

Pennywise
Putting People First



IFPA 
INDEPENDENT FREE PAPERS OF AMERICA
February 2016



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"...it can be independence forever for those who value it sufficiently... if they give their allegiance to an association such as this one, they will be dedicated to keeping the spirit alive, and they will be doing it by helping each other."

— Victor R. Jose
IFPA Founding Conference
September 20, 1980

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SS Moyie National Historic Site in Kaslo, British Columbia is a great cover for this issue of TIP. The winning combination of fun and talent show in Pennywise.



Doug's Dribble

by
Doug
Fabian



THE SUMMIT REACHED NEW HEIGHTS

It was 4 degrees when I left the airport to travel to the Publishers' Summit in Deerfield Beach, Florida. When I arrived I was greeted by 70 degrees of humid warmth. The palm trees were swaying, the ocean was deep blue, the hotel was perfect. But the best was yet to come.

The "best" was found when we started the 2016 Publishers' Summit. If you haven't ever attended one of these you might wonder, "What do you get when you unite over 30 of the brightest minds in our industry in a venue where ideas flow freely?" You get problems solved. Friendships are solidified. You get ideas that help your bottom line, make you more efficient, and make your job easier—starting immediately.

For example: One question raised was "How do you recruit the best

salespeople?" Gregg Rosenfield of Local Community News in San Antonio, Texas came prepared for that kind of question. He brought a book that discusses that matter, "You Like Them, But... Can They Sell?" After everyone around the table heard about the book he surprised us all by opening a large box and gifting each of us a copy of that book.

Now that's what IFPA is all about—sharing ideas that help each of us improve our publications and our lives. Giving freely of our successes to our fellow members helps everyone.

As the Friday afternoon and Saturday progressed Publishers received more than most of us could consume. Here are a couple more topics that were shared.

Who is using a CRM and which ones? Salesforce.com was used by many of the participants and a new entry Nutshell.com was suggested as a less costly alternative by the

Heizers of the Boca Raton Tribune just down the street from the hotel in Boca Raton, Florida.

What are the best website creation platforms? SiteSwan.com is used by many of the publishers. Karen Buckley of the Valley Breeze in Lincoln, Rhode Island is using Duda.com. When that suggestion was made I saw computers, tablets, and phones all whipped out to search for Duda.com. See what you're missing by not attending the Summit?

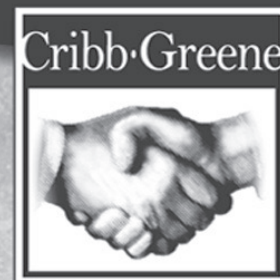
Finally, Art Hall of the Cape May County Herald in Rio Grande, New Jersey showed how he keeps readers interested, involved, and contributing to the publication through a weekly feature called "Spout Off."

Plan now to attend our next Publishers' Summit to be held in Las Vegas, NV on January 27 & 28, 2017. I hope to see you then.

ROCK SOLID TRANSACTION



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Cribb, Greene & Associates is pleased to congratulate Tucson West on the sale of the Marana News, Foothills News, Desert Times and related websites to 10/13 Communications.

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Steel Distribution Boxes

Pennywise Wins by Putting People First

by Bob Munn

Patty Axenroth moved to a strange town in a new country and with, in her words, “Zero typing skills and some rubber cement,” founded a community publishing operation that prospers by “putting people first.”

In 1974, she and some friends abandoned Southern California to cross the Canadian border for what she, even today, calls “the wild west.” Kaslo, B.C. is 10 hours east of Vancouver and 4 hours north of Spokane, WA. Soon, economic realities being what they have always been, she found herself in a town of 1000 people and needing a job. So, she created one.

Back home, publications like the Pennysaver were soaring in popularity. So, with a few paste-up lessons from her father, a publisher of specialty magazines and newsletters, she set about emulating Harte Hanks’ direct mail juggernaut business model in her “slightly smaller” corner of the world. Pennywise was born in 1975.

“I started the publication when I was 25,” Patty recalls. “Whatever I sold in classifieds a week \$25-\$50 became my food allowance.”

Now, that’s an incentive program.



Patty has long contended that, without her staff - this staff, she'd be nothing. They all take shared responsibilities for the successes and failures encountered in the day to day business of running this media operation. They use their staffs opinions, ideas, hobbies and interests to help gauge the state of the world around them. After all, the 16 staff members represent a pretty good cross-section of their area.

Flash forward to today. Pennywise is mailed weekly to 23,000 households with another 2000 in demand distribution. The Pennywise family supplements that foundation with a 3x annually Go and Do Guide, with 50,000 plus distribution and a 20,000 circulation Annual Kaslo Guide. They’ve created a website building business out of thin air, and they are positioned for the future with a unique and creative approach to transition.

Kaslo’s population remains at approximately 1000. However, its quaint village atmosphere and eclectic population make it a destination catering to adventuresome tourists, foodies and people who are attracted to other people who think outside the box.

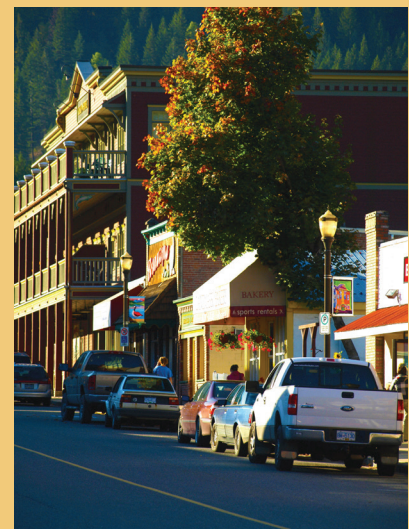
Pennywise continues to prosper in an extremely competitive marketplace. Kaslo, in which she began as the only print publication, has attracted seven competitors, six of which have the same corporate parent (they refer to them as Goliath.)

A close reading of IFPA Publisher Profiles will show us many publication founders who were driven as salespeople, some whose forte was the mechanical side, others with the vision to exploit new tech. Patty’s

genius is, apparently, people.

If you’ve had the opportunity to attend an IFPA event when she brings the crew, you know what I mean. These people work hard, play hard and enjoy life. Patty loves to tell the story of the time they drove as a group to IFPA in Seattle. The guards at the Canadian border were Pennywise readers and knew to be expecting them. Ask her about it!

She didn’t invent the idea of the benefits of an enjoyable, close-knit workplace. But from her desk within the group (no private office), she nurtures a special sense of ownership among her people that inspires astounding performance.





The Most Canadian Picture Ever "The Goalie and the Mountie"

©Rick Wiltse

DIGITAL DAYS

We had the incredible luck this year to be involved with this photo which became an internet sensation... with the CBC.ca dubbing it "The Most Canadian Photo, Ever" Pennywise was instrumental in helping propel the photo onto the world stage. Today, almost a year later, the photo is being sold as a fundraiser for the local arena and Syrian refugees on a website that Pennywise built! kasloarena.ca

~ Karma Halleran Web Manager

Take for example, their approach to building websites for their customers. Karma Halleran, Pennywise General Manager tells the story.

"For quite a few years, I'd observed and admired Dan Buendo's digital progress at the Reminder. As his revenue grew, and he shared his success stories through IFPA, it became the dream at the forefront of our goals.

"Creating websites seemed like our first step toward offering ad agency services. After a number of false starts, we had the answers to some important questions: 'Who will sell the websites?' 'Who will build them?' 'When will we build them?' (with the paper always taking priority).

"Finally, with a nudge from Patty," Karma recalls, "We bit the bullet and started. I took responsibility

for the sales. We dedicated staff to PW Websites and advertised it aggressively.

"The calls are coming in and more than 85% translate into websites," reports the lady with one of the best closing ratios in the industry.

"We've acquired many of these website clients, because they are disgruntled with their original hosts," Karma observes. "And we'll retain them as long as we provide the kind of service people have come to expect from Pennywise."

Patty picks up the story here and reveals the foundation of her philosophy.

"From the beginning, when I realized that people would give everything they had to the success of this business if they felt that they had a real influence on how it was run, I was overjoyed. I was glad to have people share this dream (and be able

to support our families in this small town). I called them true believers. Our customers are accustomed to great service, because our people see Pennywise as a reflection of themselves."

In an earlier profile written by Dwight Bitikofer, Patty described herself as a gardener.

"I run the place like I am a gardener. My job is to keep throwing fertilizer in and let them grow. I listen to all their ideas and move on those which will benefit all of us. Everyone feels like this is their business and they all have a stake in our success.

"If we just depend on what I think, we won't be going very far, very fast,"

Rather than seeing the new digital landscape as a threat, the lady with the green thumb saw it as an opportunity. Then she attacked the challenge with the collective brain power of the Pennywise family.

"Give the employees ownership of the business," she exhorts. "Give them the things they need to make their own decisions. Make the work place fun and family. It's unbelievable how people will respond when they know their voice matters.

"Digital was coming fast," Patty recalls. "The younger people have been thinking digitally from the beginning, so we asked them to get these new ideas rolling."

Warming to the subject, she expands her point, "Over the years we've been fortunate to create a culture into which people are willing to invest their heart and soul. That can happen if people truly believe they have ownership.

"I believe I have an innate skill for

continued on page 8



Even the Town Hall is picturesque in beautiful Kaslo, British Columbia

‘old time publishing.’ A lot of my hunches are in the right direction, but our team’s collaboration is what makes things happen. We’re small, but when people take charge of stuff, when they accept responsibility for the company’s future, magical things can happen.”

Speaking of ‘magical things,’ recently, Pennywise was instrumental in taking what has been dubbed “The Most Canadian Picture Ever” viral. The Goalie and the Mountie is now famous throughout the world and does double duty as prints are sold to benefit their local arena as well as Syrian refugees via a website built by PW Websites.

It wasn’t unusual that the Pennywise approach to the new digital world began with their experience at IFPA. As Patty tells it:

“IFPA has been my mentor and is responsible for so much of our success. The sharing between publications, the information gained from speakers at the conventions, boot camps, everything they do. It’s been that way from my very first meeting, and it was critical in our approach to digital.”

She recalls her first IFPA meeting in St. Louis in the early 1980’s. “The

only reason I could afford to go was that it was in St. Louis. My college roommate lived there, and I could bunk at her place and attend the meetings. It didn’t take long to realize I couldn’t afford not to be there. I can’t thank all the people from IFPA enough for the help I’ve received. I remember when I first meant Vic Jose. He told me the organization was just for publishers like me. I owe so much to his vision of publishers helping publishers.”

She goes on to recall that the whole IFPA dynamic amazed her father, the publisher of specialty magazines and

newsletters who gave her those first paste up lessons. It was unheard of in his professional experience in which publishers viewed each other as competitors and shared nothing. New ideas and best practices were almost proprietary. He told Patty she was very fortunate to have an organization like IFPA.

“I now work 3 days a week but serve mostly as a publisher. I let them solve their own problems so they know how to when I won’t be here any days,” she observed. Our conversation with Patty ended on a discussion of Mobile Apps and the value they might bring her customers in the future. She didn’t sound much like someone who was going to be working “no days” any time soon.

Forty plus years later, Patty Axenroth looks back on a road that ran from Letraset to Compugraphic to Macs and today pursues a digital future. Somewhere along the way, she discarded the rubber cement and found people who could type. But the original independent, innovative spirit of the lady who sold classifieds for her supper burns as brightly as ever in Kaslo.



Kaslo is a small mountain town nested on spectacular Kootenay Lake. The Pennywise, though born from a town of a 1000, is the hub of the West Kootenays, with a circulation of 27,000+ it is the tie that binds city and village throughout.



Anita



Emily



Kendrick



Erika



Heather



Sheila



Julie



Peter



Larissa



Gary



Patty



Judy



Adam



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Savanna



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Graphic Hooks

by
Ellen
Hanrahan



It's been a while since I did an ad comparison. The one I've chosen to re-do consists only of type and I am going to keep it that way. Artwork does not always have to be included in the ad. Remember that we work with visual communications and that John McWade refers to type as the "visible voice." What we must do is to make sure that our emphasis and tone is reflected in the type that we choose. We never look at just one thing... we are always looking at the relationship between things. A little refresher: Graphic design is a practice of creating a visual form using words and/or pictures for the purpose of communication—to be understood and to create value. It has the power to persuade. We provide a service for the customer, a mass message, so to speak, and sometimes it's easy to forget what we do.

THE COMPARISON

The Annual Spring Dance ad was adjusted to fit the space on this page. It ran as a three-column wide, five inch deep ad, so there was quite a bit of space to work with. However, it was a little lost on the page. In this case it didn't stand out enough even though there was plenty of room. While I usually don't use heavy borders in most of the ads that I do, there are exceptions. We have a very nice amount of space for this ad and we can get by using a heavier border to set off that space

and to organize the information better. We also don't have a lot of text for this ad which can be a challenge. Sometimes I find it is easier if I have way more text than I need because then my challenge is just to fit it into the amount of space that's available. If I have plenty of room, it becomes harder because I have to present the info without just making the type bigger.

The typefaces used in both ads are *TF Ardent*, a serif typeface and *Adobe Frutiger*, a sans serif typeface. Type size, placement and groupings were kept pretty much the same. Changes occurred in the border area and use of a stroke and drop shadow on the "Spring Dance" text. Other text in this group was also slightly adjusted. The word "Annual" was reduced and lightened to call more attention to the actual event—the dance. The "and Raffle" was shifted and lightened (same gray as the word "Annual, which is 65%) so as again to give more emphasis to the actual event. The date was brought back to 100% black so it would stand out a little bit more.

Now, however, no matter what type of ad is placed next to our *Spring Dance*, we have a buffer zone to keep information from getting lost and making it more dominant. It goes back to that statement at the beginning. We never look at just one thing... we are always looking at the relationship between things.

My new iMac

Sounds grand... but I am not ready to learn new stuff! Oh wait, I can't use that because this column would then be redundant!

To rephrase, **there is always something to learn...** my new iMac computer arrived at the beginning of December and now I have no idea what's going on! It came preloaded with the new operating system from Apple—*El Capitan*, and I'm still figuring that out. I had issues with outgoing mail which turned into a major search to find out what was wrong (it took a month, but a simple fix once I had the right information!) and am getting used to my "Magic Mouse" and "Magic Keyboard." However, there are **definitely** some cool new features.

So new year, new challenges, new information, maybe even a new look (?). Thank goodness I have my eight pound *El Capitan Missing Manual* from David Pogue! **Until next month!**

PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITY 116 YEARS 1888-2004
IRON RIDGE FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.

Annual
Spring Dance
and Raffle

Saturday, May 8th
Located at Iron Ridge Fire Station

MUSIC BY "ROAD TRIP" 8:30pm until 12:30am

\$20 PER TICKET Raffle ticket admits one free admission to the dance. Drawing 11pm at the Spring Dance May 8, 2004 Iron Ridge Fire Station

CASH PRIZES Grand Prize \$1,000, 2nd prize \$750, 3rd prize \$500, 4th prize \$250, 5th- 9th prize \$100

PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS EQUIPMENT FOR NEW PUMPER

This ad uses only type to get its message across—and there's nothing wrong with that. The challenge is to make it more of a unit and to bring a little more interest in the presentation. In our paper, the three-column ad that was placed next to this one also had a fairly thin border and not a lot of information either. Both ads were pretty weak and easy to overlook—even though there was plenty of room!

PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITY 116 YEARS 1888-2004
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PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS EQUIPMENT FOR NEW PUMPER

The changes that were made in the above ad assure that even if a reversed ad were placed next to this one, it would stand on its own. Sometimes just a few minor changes can bring an ad a little more impact.

Ellen Hanrahan hanrahan.in@att.net ©2016

Uncovering Your Own Secret Of Selling Why YOU Buy!



Think about the last few things you purchased.

They hold the secrets to increasing your sales.

Giving a seminar, I was in a stream-of-consciousness talking about buying motives and why people buy. As usual I was focused on the customer side, the probable purchaser side, the buyer side of the equation. Then out of the blue I said, "Think of something that you just purchased. Why did you buy it?"

All of a sudden a one million watt light bulb went off inside my head. One of those instantaneous AHA messages. I discovered an answer, and it's an answer that everyone can understand.

If you list the last ten things that you purchased you will discover the motives behind your own buying decisions, and at the same time, you will discover the formula for why others buy. Those "others" are your prospects, your potential customers, you know, the ones that you are erroneously trying to "sell."

When you list the ten items, do it on a spreadsheet. In the second column write down whether you needed what you

bought, or just wanted it. In the third column, write down whether you could afford it on the spot, or you went over budget and had to charge it. In the next column, write down how you purchased. Did you go to them, did they come to you, or did you buy it online? If you bought it online you might want to enter what time of day you bought it. Interesting to note that a high percentage of online purchases are made after 8:00 pm.

In the next column, write down whether or not you liked the salesperson (assuming there was one). In the next column, write down the percentage of influence that the salesperson had in completing the sale - one being the low, one hundred being the high.

In the next column, enter your risk factor in making the purchase - one being the low, one hundred being the high. In other words, how much did you fear the purchase, and how much did you fear you were making the right purchase before you bought (usually the higher the purchase, home, car, the more hesitancy).

In the next column, write the word "price" or "value." If you went for price only, write

price. If you went for value, the most, then write value. There's a caution here: only put the word "price" if you went for the lowest price in the category, not the lowest price for the item. In other words, if you bought a BMW you didn't buy price, you bought value regardless of where you bought it.

In the next column, rate your experience by percentage, one being the low and one hundred being the high. One meaning "I'll never come back," and one hundred meaning, "I'll be back, buy again, and tell my friends."

Then in the final column, write a sentence or two about how it happened. The story. If it takes three sentences, make it three. But write enough so that you understand what caused you to make the purchase of the item, and then what caused you to make the purchase from that specific company for that specific product or service.

Now you have enough criteria to identify your own answers. Once you read over the

Continued, page 14

Why You Buy *continued*

spreadsheet you may find that you want to modify a few of them to get closer to your own reality.

Pretty simple so far, huh? Let's take it a little deeper.

When you finished buying were you happy? Did you find yourself saying it was OK, but...? It's important that you note all the "buts." The but's are the obstacle to your purchases AND your sales. Did you learn lessons each time you bought about what you promised yourself you wouldn't do again? Those are the same obstacles to your sales. And were there cases where you selected one vendor over another? Note those reasons because those are the same obstacles to your sales.

Now let's go all the way to the bottom of the ocean. Compare the way you buy to the way you sell. How congruent are they? How compatible are they? Are

you throwing up the same barriers that the people you bought from gave you? Are you missing the same nuances in your selling process that caused you to buy or walk away?

And so now it's time for the ultimate question: Would you buy from yourself? Unfortunately the ultimate answer is: probably not, and the reason is, you haven't modified your selling process to harmonize with the way your prospects buy.

There's a hidden treasure. Of course there is, when ever you go down to the bottom of the ocean, the object is to find the hidden treasure. The hidden treasure will be revealed to you when you go read (or re-read) Acres of Diamonds by Russell H. Conwell. All the sales-answers you need are buried in your own back yard.

You already possess the treasure.

You just haven't discovered it yet.

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books including The Sales Bible, The Little Red Book of Selling, The Little Gold Book of Yes! Attitude, and 21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling. His real-world ideas and content are also available as online courses at www.GitomerVT.com. For information about training and seminars visit www.Gitomer.com or www.GitomerCertifiedAdvisors.com, or email Jeffrey personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

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Facebook Dialogue of Employees Protected

by Patricia Kryde
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Non-union employees of a restaurant/bar were caught venting on Facebook about having to pay extra taxes due to their employer's alleged tax withholding mistakes. The ongoing dialogue addressed the tax issues which four other employees "endorsed." After the employees were discharged by their employer, they made a complaint to the National Labor Relations Board, which found their comments protected.

The employer appealed the decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit, which rejected the employer's assertion that the comments were unprotected because they included alleged obscenities that could be viewed by customers of the bar, such as calling a manager an "asshole." The court of appeals disagreed with the employer's position, and ruled it would result in the chilling of virtually all employee speech online. In addition, the court of appeals affirmed the NLRB's determination that the employer's internet/blogging policy barring "inappropriate discussions" violated the National Labor Relations Act since it was overly broad.

The court of appeals reviewed the Facebook activity giving rise to employee online speech issues. The first was an employee's "like" of another employee's initial status update stating, "Maybe someone should do the owners of [the employer-bar] a favor and buy it from them. They can't even do the tax paperwork correctly!! Now I OWE money...Wtf!!!!" This was followed by another employee's comment made in reference to the manager in charge of accounting: "I owe too. Such an asshole."

The court of appeals reasoned that this was an ongoing dialogue among employees about tax withholding, which the NLRB had concluded was at most one employee's endorsement of the other employee's claim that the employer-bar had erred in tax withholding. The court of appeals ruled that the activity was "concerted" because it involved four current employees and was part of an ongoing sequence of discussions that began in the workplace about the employer-bar's calculation of employee's tax withholding. The court of appeals agreed with the NLRB that the Facebook activity was protected because the discussion concerned workplace complaints about tax liabilities, the employer-bar's tax withholding calculations, and one employee's assertion that she was owed back wages.

The court of appeals considered whether the employees' Facebook activity was so disloyal as to lose the NLRA's protection. The court of appeals reasoned that the comments did not mention the employer-bar's products or services, much less disparage them. The employer failed

to meet its burden to establish that the comments were defamatory since there was no basis that the statements were malicious and untrue.

The court agreed with the employees that the communications were not made to disparage the employer-bar or to undermine its reputation. The Facebook discussion clearly disclosed the ongoing labor dispute over income tax withholdings. Anyone who saw one employee's "like" or another's statement could evaluate the message critically in light of that dispute. Moreover, the other employee's "I owe too" comment was not defamatory or maliciously false, although that employee was not asserting that the employer-bar made an error on her withholdings.

Reprinted from "Comment," a publication of the law firm of King & Ballow, Nashville, TN. Mark Hunt is our consultant with King & Ballow and he can be reached at (615) 726-5497 or mhunt@kingballow.com. The foregoing column is explanatory in nature and is not intended to provide legal advice as to particular situations.

from
King & Ballow



Moby Dick, The Whale Blows

by
Douglas
Fry



I just finished reading the classic by Herman Melville, *Moby Dick, The Whale*. For those of us who have been living under a rock for the past 150 years, Moby Dick is a story about a whale. Nope, it's more than that.

It's about a really nasty, angry, ill-tempered whale. Not just any nasty, angry, ill-tempered whale - this one was white. For a whale, it had to be "Einstein" smart. How does one write an 800+ page book about such a smart, fiendish white whale?

You can write such a book if you have a couple of things going for you. First of all, you have to have a complete disregard for your readers. After reading one chapter that was over 40 pages about how sailors positioned themselves in the upper masts of a whaling ship, I realized Mr. Melville could have written "It was dangerous and uncomfortable in the high masts of a whaling vessel."

Next you have to write the book with a thesaurus next to you replacing every simple word with the most obscure locution available. (See what I did there?) Why would you want to state things simply when you could approach things with magniloquence in mind? Yep, I learned me a couple of new words reading that book.

But the biggest challenge of the book is that nearly all the chapters dedicate themselves to such incredible minutia that the readers eyes become numb from reading. At one point I simply hoped that the whale would come along and destroy the ship, eat the captain, and spout on the crew so that the book would end. But it didn't.

I'm glad I can now say that I read the book. At this point, if you've gotten this far, and not hoped I too would stop writing, you might be asking what this has to do with the world of IFPA?

It's really pretty simple. Look at our publications. Do we commit the same errors? Are the stories we have in our papers offering the reader something interesting to spend time with? Have we ever tried to appear smarter or more eloquent than we really are by ramping up the verbiage or adding words to an article just to make it fill up a news hole?

Let's decide to keep our readers first

in our minds. Let's write so that by reading our editorials, articles, and ads they can gain something worthwhile without breaking out the dictionary, buying new glasses because reading our publication wore out the previous pair, or inducing mass migraines.

I'll try to do the same. The next article you read from me may read like a Dr. Seuss book. But Dr. Seuss never wrote about white whales. I'm glad.

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