

# tip

**The Independent Publisher**

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Vol. XXXIII, No. 8 • June 2015



*"...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

### The Independent Publisher

Published monthly for the benefit of members by Independent Free Newspapers of America\*

#### Publisher

Bob Munn, President

Federal Collective Membership  
Registration No. 1,561,653

#### Managing Editor

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**DEADLINES:** The next issue of The Independent Publisher will be published July 15, 2015. Deadline for all copy is June 15, 2015. Copy will be accepted on a space-available basis and the publisher reserves the right to edit or reject any material.

### Advertising, Editorial & Production

*The Independent Publisher (IFPA)*  
104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401  
(931) 922-4171

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The cover photo was taken on May 1, 2004 in Myrtle Beach, SC of Dave Neuharth of CPF. Boy, he's aged!



# Value-Added

by  
Bob  
Munn



Somewhere, the expression "Value-Added" got a bad reputation. It became a buyer's last gouge before concluding a deal. Often Value-Added can sound hollow and meaningless. This isn't about that. This time, we're talking...

## MORE VALUE FOR IFPA MEMBERS.

It's been your Board's top priority since day one. We want your membership in IFPA to be one of the most valuable assets you have in your success arsenal. In order to find out what is more beneficial to you we inquired and you let us know, loud and clear.

We asked you what you found most valuable about your IFPA experience, and you said, "Idea Sharing and Learning Opportunities."

So, we went looking for ways to get

better at what you already thought we were doing a good job at. As John Foust says, "The biggest room in the house is the room to improve." And we want to continually advance our position in the industry and your ability to compete.

It begins with a "Back to Basics" conference this September in one of our favorite destinations, San Antonio, Texas. Doug Fabian and Eileen Curley set their goal of a conference that presented attendees with 100 Best Ideas In The Industry. We plan to exceed that goal. If you're looking for value, you can start on September 24-26 at the Hyatt Regency in San Antonio.

Not only will you have 100 great ideas presented at the conference, you'll also have plenty of time to interact with the exhibitors, network with your peers, share ideas, and

***Keep your eye peeled for new developments in the area of remote meetings and peer group discussions. IFPA's fundamental value to its members will never change, but your Board will always be looking for new ways to maximize it.***

have opportunities to learn. Often, we learn loads sitting around a table talking with fellow publishers, managers, sales reps, and even IFPA Board members. Since we are joining with TCNA (Texas Community Newspaper Association) don't be surprised if you see wandering Mariachi Bands serenading the attendees. Ten Gallon Hats are optional.

You'll have Friday night out on the Riverwalk. We'll put some money

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Larry Grimes, President



in your pocket and turn you loose to have a good time, eat some great food, relax with your friends, and be ready the next day to learn more.

Your Board is also putting the finishing touches on a Quick Start Training Program for on-boarding new sales professionals. This fundamental approach will supplement each member's traditional indoctrination process with four on-demand training modules designed to assist new sales people as they attempt to scale that formidable initial learning curve.

To further enhance your team's skill training and personal development, we've developed a closer relationship with Jeffrey Gitomer's organization, as noted by his column's first appearance in this issue of TIP. Look on page 9 of this issue for Mr. Gitomer's premier article in our magazine. We have an inside line to one of America's most popular business authors and a speaker who has done 100 speaking presentations per year for the last fifteen years.

Of Gitomer's nine published books. His most successful title, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, has sold more than three million copies worldwide and been translated into 14 languages. The *Red Book* inspired *Time Magazine* to report that "Gitomer has earned his bragging rights..." and has "...turned his blustery style into best-selling books."

IFPA members will be offered an option to access forty years of Gitomer's time tested material in a virtual training format designed for 24/7 access and coach ability. More on that later.

And getting back to that all-important concept of idea sharing. Keep your eyes peeled for new developments in the area of remote meetings and peer group discussions. IFPA's fundamental value to its members will always be of most importance, but your Board will always be looking for new ways to maximize it.

This is approximately 50% of your Board's agenda for its upcoming

meeting in Charlotte, NC. If you have any ideas or thoughts on how we can help you more, creating more value for IFPA members, or simply do our jobs better please let me know. It's all about creating value for our members and growing the organization. Look for more on that in next month's TIP.

Last of all, you have probably noticed the new IFPA logo. We have updated the look of our brand to reflect the value and resilience of the premier free community paper association. We are free and proud of it.

Until next month I hope you continue to add value to our customers, your employees, your families, and your communities.

All the best,

Bob



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# Without Our Industry: No Business Incubators

by  
Douglas  
Fry



In the last issue of TIP magazine I went down memory lane with a newspaper clipping from the local paper showing how I honed my climbing skills on a nearby bank building. That probably wasn't my best idea. But as I worked for the local newspaper I made some very good decisions, learned a ton, and developed interpersonal skills at only 12 years of age.

I delivered the afternoon edition of the "Bremerton Sun" Monday through Saturday. There was no morning edition then and they didn't publish on Sunday. Because of the typical weather pattern outside Seattle, it rains a bit there, I learned to be responsible to my customers. No one told me they wouldn't like wet newspapers but I figured it out pretty quickly. Customer service was

important back then as well.

I learned that every expense takes away from the bottom line. Even small expenses can add up. For example, The Sun offered to sell us carriers enough rubber bands to secure the paper so that it wouldn't blow away in the wind. The cost was \$5 per month for all those rubber bands. I made roughly \$60 per month so that 8.3% rubber band expense was just too high. As a result of me wanting to maximize my income, I learned to fold the paper on itself so that I could throw it on the customers' porch, keep it dry, and keep it from blowing away. The "Tomahawk" was my favorite fold because it looked like a scalene triangle and flew like a rocket.

My customers were happy with dry newspapers each day and I was

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***But as I worked for the local newspaper I made some very good decisions, learned a ton, and developed interpersonal skills at only 12 years of age.***

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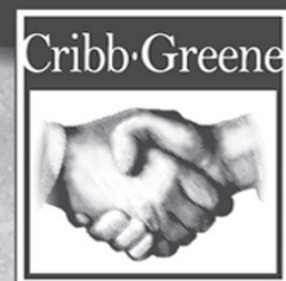
happy with that extra \$5 in my hands each month. But I learned that the sooner I was able to deliver the paper to the door, the happier my customers were. It was a challenge to leave Dewey Junior High, walk to the paper drop off point, load all 120 papers into the bags on my back, and walk the 2.5 miles to deliver the papers all while I folded the papers for their upcoming flight. I had to finish delivering the papers by 5:00 pm each afternoon or my customers would complain.

So, each day I would attempt to get the job done a little faster than the day

## ROCK SOLID TRANSACTION



TUCSON WEST  
PUBLISHING, INC.  
Tucson, Arizona



Phone: 406-579-2925  
[cribb.com](http://cribb.com)

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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before. Some days it was easier as the paper wasn't that heavy. Wednesdays were particularly difficult because "The Bremerton Sun" was full of stuff we miss today: lots of ads, lots of inserts, and lots more pages. Even on the heavy days I tried my best to complete the route by 4:00 pm. I ended up running for a bit, walking for a bit, running again, etc. Eventually I was able to run the entire route with the papers on my back all while folding them like a mad man.

One good result of my land speed records was that I never got any complaints. Even more importantly, I noticed that when I went to collect each month my customers were more willing to add an extra quarter for my efforts. The Sun cost \$2.25 per month and it wasn't unusual for my customers to pull out \$2.50 and tell me to keep the change. I thought I was a Rockefeller.

As I had to collect the funds each month from my customers and pay

The Sun their \$1.75 per customer by the 5th of each month, I learned some useful collection techniques. I typed out 8-up collection notices on my mother's Remington typewriter on a sheet of special paper, copied them on our Mimeograph, cut them into small squares, and inserted the request for payment into the paper around the 25th of each month. Quite often this gentle reminder would result in payments taped to the doors of my customers. This saved me time and allowed me to pay the newspaper before the 5th which resulted in another \$5 per month.

If you don't know what typewriters or mimeograph machines are ask an old person. They can tell you. It may take a while, but they'll get to the point eventually.

Around the holidays I bought the cheapest Christmas cards I could find, thanked my customers for their business and inserted the cards into the paper around the 10th of

December. Again, I found envelopes taped to the door with Christmas cards for their "paper boy" along with a dollar or two. I made more in December on tips than I did delivering the paper.

I delivered "The Bremerton Sun" for three years until I got a job offer at the local department store, oddly enough called "Bremers." Anyway, my point with this article is: where else could a 12 year old kid learn business skills, make mistakes and learn from them, develop himself physically, and expand his network of friends and associates, all while making a little money?

Our industry, as I pointed out last month, can house the memories of our readers. That's a sacred trust we hold with them. We are also a business incubator for those that will take advantage of it. My paper route was the beginning of a long love-affair I have with paper and ink. I hope you have one too.

# BACK TO BASICS!

**Featuring 100 Great Presentations That Will Help  
You Be Even More Successful!**

**SEPTEMBER 24 - 26, 2015**

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

**HYATT REGENCY RIVERWALK**



# Graphic Hooks

by  
Ellen  
Hanrahan



**Once again** ... I was looking through my older files looking for a topic (it seems to be getting more difficult) when I came across the first article I wrote for **The Independent Publisher!** It was June 1993, so I took that as a sign. Of course back then, TIP was black and white, printed and mailed to the members. Then, as now, it was always filled with the most current information for our industry. That was only twenty-three years ago—but look what has happened since then.

Another publication our industry followed was a newsletter called **The Mouser Report**. Charles “Charlie” Mouser, spoke to press associations and businessmen across the country and he was known for his ability to detect business trends far ahead of most. He was considered an authority on newspaper and print advertising. He was Editor and Publisher of this monthly newsletter for the business world. Sadly, he passed away in February, 2009—another voice that will be missed in our industry.

But back to the present, and while that landscape has totally changed, the design stuff stays the same. Maybe that’s why I fell like I keep repeating myself—because I probably do!

The heading on the page was called **Graphic Details**, which is pretty much what I have been about from the beginning. I used the typeface Utopia, which was set 9.6/12.6 in a 10-pica wide column.

Well, I have altered the original typeface, type-size and leading because I apparently have gotten a lot more “wordy” since then—although I kept the 10-pica column. I have also altered some of the info because, well, see “wordy” above and I have also changed my mind about “justified” text.

## My plan, twenty-odd years ago for this design column:

**The concept of design doesn’t change.** Good design is good design... period. But the tools of the trade have been subjected to a radical redesign. The idea of desktop publishing has been embraced by the industry. As more people use the computer, the skill of the designer in the presentation of visual messages has, at times, gotten lost in the transfer.

The changes in technology offer an opportunity for small, independent papers to compete with the “big boys.” Computers and software offer affordable options in the areas of composition and pre-press. Learning the Macintosh computer is less complex and takes far less time to learn than understanding how to use the conventional composition equipment—trust me, I was the **Queen** of “secondary file merge” on the MCS system before I even began to figure out how to define page parameters!

## Looking beyond

A mere four years ago, the computer was a breeze to understand, even my dad was able to talk computer-ese with the best of them. But now,—it’s another story. The technology has rocketed us into a maze

of hardware, software, peripherals and what-not. It’s not that simple anymore, so is it any wonder that the design process somehow got lost?

Now it seems that the Mac (or PC) operator has a lot more responsibility—to become a writer, a designer, a typesetter, a color separator, a trouble-shooter. Where once upon a time there were skilled individuals to handle each of these aspects, the rush of technology has blurred the lines between these fields. That’s the bad news.

The good news is that it has also opened up a whole different, and powerful, set of tools for me to use—and the responsibility to make myself a more informed individual in a number of graphic areas—pretty heady stuff! It takes time, but with each application, I have, in fact, come a long way.

## About Design

Good design comes from the understanding of the building blocks of graphic design and using them appropriately. Designing an ad is simply organizing the information and the graphic material into the most readable and coherent manner possible. The computer is only a tool—a very useful tool—in this

## THE US FLAG IN ADVERTISING

Especially since 9/11, the American flag has been plastered on everything from beer mugs to underwear, and seeing people wearing it or in car commercials has become a daily occurrence. But what many may not know is that the use of the flag in such contexts is expressly forbidden in official US Flag Code.

Yep, wearing the flag as a lapel pin might be fine, but bumper stickers, t-shirts, etc. is definitely not acceptable!

According to the subset of US Code which deals with proper care and use of the American flag, “The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard.”

Additionally, the code, written in the 1920s and adopted in 1942, states, “No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform.”

Although these federal laws are rarely enforced, they technically can be, with the punishment up to the discretion of individual states (or by the federal government, if the offense is committed in Washington, DC).

—and that’s your 4th of July trivia this holiday!

process. It is all too easy to become so involved in the hardware and software available that we forget the message of the ad as we stretch, condense, duplicate, rotate, drop-shadow and do all sorts of “tricks” with the tools at hand.

It is with this in mind, designing with the Mac, and this column, that will allow us to explore the process—sharing tips, tricks and other notes to improve our ads, as well as our technique in the development of effective advertising.

## Now What?

Good question. It is always hard to know where to begin. The basics are always a good starting point—you know, planning, proportion, consistency, contrast, balance, type, etc. If there are some concerns from Mac users, you can always drop me a line and we can work at answering or at least figuring out how to address those concerns. In the meantime, let me show you a little about proportion with text and column widths.

## Proportion

(HERE’S WHERE ITEMS CHANGE)

As you have noticed, the column size I used is 10 picas wide with

type size at 9.6 set on 12.6 leading (now it’s 9.6/10.3... with Utopia, the x-height was shorter). This is to keep the type more in scale with the column width and allow me to get more words on the line (an average reader usually takes in 3–5 words at a time when reading, so this appears to offer a more comfortable reading level).

As a matter of fact, I decided to make the text flush left in order to have a consistency between my word spaces—I was running into too many “rivers” (see sample below (no samples, I figured how to use justified text, yet control word spacing... you can learn a lot in twenty-three years) when the text was justified).

Even though I use the same point size, word spacing in justified text is harder to control (Yes). “Rivers,” or big gaps between words on certain lines happen because the words have to “space out” to fill the line length. This is cumbersome, because word spacing can distract the reader and affect readability.

So let’s continue...

*Until next month...*

Ellen Hanrahan  
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by  
**Jeffrey  
Gitomer**

# Don't Just Drink The Water... Be It!

Ask anyone in New York City why their bagels are the BEST in the world and they'll say, "It's the water!"

Ask anyone in Philadelphia why their cheesesteaks are the BEST in the world, and they will say, "It's the bread." Further questioning one will ask, "Why is the bread so different?" and they will say, "It's the water!"

Water? Really?

Yes, water!

The unique water that's ADDED to the standard ingredients makes the food BEST.

So I'm going to ask you two questions:

What's in your water?

What makes your water different, better, than anyone else's water?

There are 7.5 elements of your water that I will challenge you make you no different than anybody else's water on the planet, and further challenge you that if you decide to improve those elements (your water), you can become the best in the world. Or at least the best in your marketplace.

1. Your attitude water. If you know and understand the classic definition of a positive attitude is, "The way you dedicate yourself to the way you think," then it's obvious that you can change and improve your attitude water by changing your morning routine. Wake up and start reading instead of watching TV. Reading a positive attitude book for ten minutes, highlighting, and taking notes about your thoughts, can begin a whole new attitude mindset that will separate and differentiate you from all of your peers, prospects, and customers.

2. Your belief water. While I have talked about belief for years, I've never said what it would take to build and strengthen your existing

belief process. Invest thirty minutes of your time and make a list of the five parts of belief. You must believe you are the BEST person for the job, have the BEST business and products, that you can differentiate FROM your competitors, and that the customer is better off having purchased from you. If you don't believe that your water is the best, how will you be able to transfer that message to anyone else?

3. Your compelling message and enthusiasm's water. Present a compelling message and you will immediately differentiate yourself from 99.9% of all the salespeople on the planet. These are people who communicate poorly, or simply talk in terms of themselves. By becoming a prepared and enthusiastic presenter, you will be perceived as sparkling water. The opposite of sparkling water is flat water. In France it's, "with gas" or "without gas." Starting to get the message?

4. Your innovative ideas water. When you bring an idea to a customer it shows that you have prepared in terms of them. Your idea is about them and how they win, or how they profit. Once you get in the groove of innovation in creating ideas it will spill over to everything that you do. That's hot water.

5. Your follow-through water. This water is the fulcrum point in the sale. Even if you have already made the sale, your customers expect both delivery and service in order to complete the sale in their mind. You will solve nothing until the customer receives your product or service, loves your product or service, and is completely impressed by the way you stay in touch and follow through.

6. Your relationship building water. Solid value-based relationships lead

to repeat business and referrals. Do I need to say anything else about the importance and the value of this water?

7. Your trustworthiness water. This is slowly aged water. Trustworthiness comes from positive, favorable, consistent, truthful actions taken over time. Trust is not built in a day, it's built day-by-day.

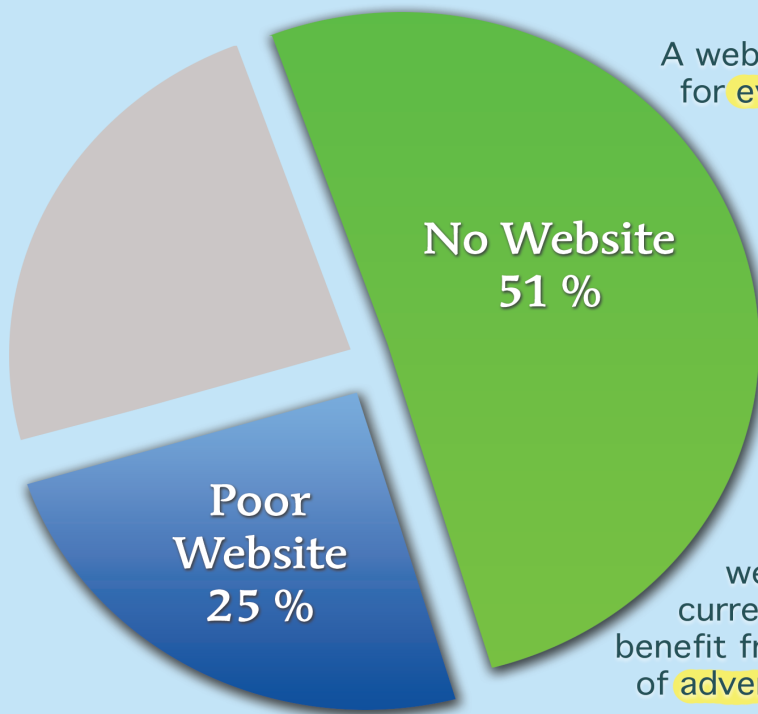
7.5 Your reputation water. Reputation water is the most valuable of them all. It means the rest of your water has all been given and received positively. It means that you have consistently performed to the delight of your customer. And it means that anyone can find you on the Internet and see your positive postings and results. It means that you have proven yourself to your customers and in your marketplace. You can never have too much reputation water. It's my hope that your cup of reputation water runneth over.

BEST PART: When someone asks you why your sales are better than anyone else's, your response can now be, "It's the water!" – Keep 'em guessing, baby. Keep 'em guessing.

*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](http://www.GitomerVT.com). For information about training and seminars visit [www.Gitomer.com](http://www.Gitomer.com) or [www.GitomerCertifiedAdvisors.com](http://www.GitomerCertifiedAdvisors.com), or email Jeffrey personally at [salesman@gitomer.com](mailto:salesman@gitomer.com).*

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# Over 50% of advertisers **NEED** a website... and that goes for **EVERY** market



U.S. Small Businesses

A website has become a necessary, vital tool for **every small business** in America. Experts agree it is perhaps the most powerful marketing tool a business could utilize today. Studies show that all small businesses are **increasing spending** and marketing efforts on their web presence, and soon every business that wants to stay competitive in their market will **NEED an effective website**.

It's hard to believe, but over **50%** of small businesses still do not have a website...and based on many businesses' current websites, at least half would greatly benefit from a re-design. That leaves thousands of **advertisers in your market** in need of a local web designer...will that be **YOU?**

## Built for Publishers

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- ✓ Keep site prices affordable
- ✓ No contracts, no risk
- ✓ Leverage current relationships

## Built for Small Businesses

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# Don't Shoot The Messenger & Don't Bother To Sue Him Either

by Chris Barrett

The U.S. Court of Appeals in New York recently held that under the Communications Decency Act ("CDA"), a web hosting company was shielded from publisher liability for defamatory statements published on a website it hosted. The web hosting company played no role in the creation of the defamatory statements.

In 2002, a union member refused to endorse the union president. The union member was subsequently "blackballed" by leaders of the union. In 2012, the union distributed newsletters containing defamatory statements about the union member, his wife, and his daughter. The newsletters were published on a website that was hosted on the web hosting company's servers. Shortly thereafter, the union member left the union.

The union member and his wife sued the union and the web hosting company for libel. The union member did not allege that the web hosting company took any part in the creation of the defamatory newsletters but instead alleged that the company hosted the website that published

the defamatory newsletters, refused to remove the newsletter from its servers, and refused to investigate the complaints of the union member's wife.

## CDA IMMUNITY

The web hosting company moved for dismissal of all claims asserted against it. The trial court granted the web hosting company's motion and dismissed the claims. The union member then appealed.

The appeals court looked to the text of the CDA which states: "[n]o provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider." The court then noted that because the union member sued the web hosting company for defamatory content that the company did not create, i.e. "information provided by another information content provider," the web hosting company would be immune from defamation liability under the CDA if it was being sued "in its capacity as a provider of an 'interactive computer service.'"

The court then reviewed the applicable statutory definition of "interactive computer service"

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***"[n]o provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider."***

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and looked at the decisions of other courts construing that definition. The appeals court decided that the web hosting company qualified as an interactive computer service provider. The court went on to conclude that the CDA thus shielded the web hosting company from publisher liability.

This decision is good for internet service providers. Given that the appeals court upheld the trial court's decision to dismiss the case at the outset of the legal proceedings, other companies facing similar lawsuits should be able to defeat these lawsuits relatively quickly and efficiently.

*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.*





by  
**Jo-Ann  
Johnson**

## **SPECIAL SECTIONS STRATEGIES EXPAND OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Special sections have long been solid sources of revenue for publications of all sizes — and they continue to offer great value to readers and advertisers alike. For publications in larger markets, the range of possible topics — from traditional bridal and home sections to highly targeted tabs such as “Wellness” and “Green Living” — is endless. For publications in smaller markets, however, special section options can be limited if there are not enough advertisers to support a particular topic or theme.

When full-scale special sections aren’t feasible, there are two alternatives: reduce scale or expand creativity. While smaller-scale, standalone sections are possible, their impact often diminishes along with their page count. In such cases, themed pages featuring brief but focused editorial content and eye-catching images offer opportunities to multiply advertiser impact and attract significant reader attention. Themed pages can mirror

special section topics — pets, local high school sports or lawn and garden — or offer a special focus within those broader categories — pet care, a local high school’s football schedule or a regional planting guide/calendar.

When a small Pennsylvania publication found it difficult to sell two annual “Home” sections, it replaced them with weekly, in-paper “Home” features that run for eight weeks and span two to four pages depending on advertiser support. The weekly features offer similar home- and garden-related content, but longer articles have been replaced by tips and lists accompanied by vibrant graphics.

Many smaller publications have followed another path to special section success. Rather than focusing on themes that appeal to specific advertisers, they produce community-oriented sections that offer businesses, organizations and even individuals opportunities to demonstrate their support and promote their ventures through advertising. Some of the best examples are sections that showcase students, honor volunteers,

explore a region’s history or pay tribute to nonprofit organizations or longstanding local businesses.

A recent section produced by a North Carolina publication sits squarely in the “get creative” category. The 20-page print and online tab is a combination of two 10-page sections that were put together with front to back going in different directions. Hold it one way and the cover reads “Spring Home.” Flip the section over for the other cover, “Lawn & Garden Time.” The two sections meet at the center, where the reader sees type going in both directions. The double section was a huge hit in a small market, where local business owners are eager to increase their exposure and reach, both in print and online. It also enabled the publication to capture substantial new revenue from specialty businesses that tend not to be regular advertisers.

The lowdown? Themed sections and features remain great revenue-generating vehicles for publications of every stripe.

*This article was written by Jo-Ann Johnson of Metro Creative Graphics, Inc.*



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# Don't Cue Print's Swan Song Yet

by  
Debra  
Stratton



## WHY PRINT STILL MATTERS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

by Debra Stratton

In *Words Onscreen: The Fate of Reading in a Digital World*, American University linguist Naomi S. Baron describes a phenomenon I've noted for some time—that younger readers, in Baron's case university students, increasingly prefer print.

While we all can appreciate the convenience and ease of reading online, we also are well aware that reading in the digital world is fraught with distractions, encouraging multi-tasking, skim reading and poor comprehension, according to Baron, an expert on language and technology. Given that backdrop, not surprisingly, the Deloitte Media Consumer study found that 75 percent of respondents said they still prefer to read magazines in

print.

That's a trend we've noted as well in our research of association magazines—we consistently find that professional readers prefer print over digital versions of magazines. They are often frustrated by the constant barrage of email and newsletters and enjoy the convenience and ease of reading offered by their organization's print magazine.

Still, association publishers continually have to battle to maintain print, often pressured by boards and finance officers to convert to go digital-only to save on printing and postage expenses.

Print isn't cheap, but there is some undeniable value that is worth considering:

Print is generally preferred for in-depth reading. While quick news updates are great in

newsletters and other electronic communications, especially when accessible on mobile devices, the printed magazine is preferred for in-depth articles. In Stratton research, 50 percent or more of association members prefer print publications and 30 percent prefer a print-and-digital combination.

For advertising - supported magazines, converting to all-digital may reduce or even eliminate the revenue base. While many association publishers are generating revenues with digital advertising, ad rates are substantially less than print ads, and it's challenging to convince advertisers to pay for digital versions at anything but drastically reduced rates. For many, print is where the revenue resides. And, remember, even in a digital publication, you're still incurring expenses for writing, editing, layout/design, and more,

*continued on page 18*

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— Ted Nessi, WPRI 12, Providence, Rhode Island, July 23, 2014

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by  
Bob Berting

## PROBLEMS WITH POORLY DESIGNED ADS

I once conducted a 2 day sales training program for a chain of papers who were struggling to get more business. They had readers tell them that their ads were hard to read. As a matter of fact, their whole paper was hard to read. After looking over several issues of their paper, I saw the problem—their paper was crammed with reverse type ads—white copy on a dark black background—a sea of black ink everywhere. To make things worse, the ads were crammed full of type from border to border making them difficult to read.

I suggested that they change their ads to eliminate much of the reverse type. I also explained that ads need to be designed so there are units of thought—that each unit of graphic art and copy blocks need white space around them, making them far easier to read. Once these changes were implemented, the paper had a new look that drastically improved their readership. What had happened was the advertising sales staff had slowly



caused the ugly look on a gradual basis. They felt by creating reverse type ads this would make their ads stand out. When their customers saw all the reverse type advertising, they even thought that was the thing to do.

## UGLY ADS IN MANY CASES ARE A PRODUCTION PROCESS

The more ads brought in and run rapidly through the production department, the better. I call this the “sausage grinder mentality”. Unfortunately well-designed ads fall by the wayside.

Many times, quality advertisers resent the look of a paper and its poorly designed ads. In a study by the Readership Institute, it gave the opinion that people will spend more time with a paper if they find the ads interesting and enjoyable to read. Also, editorial content was better read when the paper had quality advertising content.

On the other extreme, there are publications who spend excessive amounts of time designing ads with the hope they’ll somehow win awards in press association ad

*continued on page 19*

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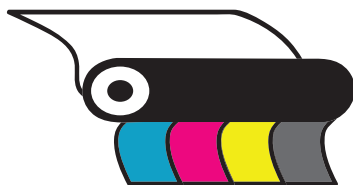


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# Learning From the Past

## *and helping a fellow tech guru in the process*



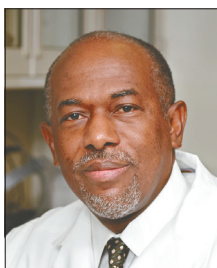
Kevin Slimp  
The News Guru

kevin@kevinslimp.com

I don't know about you, but I'm not much of a sitter. By that, I mean I can sit through speech for a few minutes, but then I usually start to get bored. That's when my mind starts drifting and my body gets squirmy.

That may sound strange, coming from a guy that gives speeches for a living, but it's probably the reason that I usually finish talking a few minutes ahead of schedule. I empathize with the audience.

The exception comes when I hear someone really smart. Funny, I can sit and listen to a brilliant thinker for hours, although it seems people with the most to say generally are the ones who say it in the shortest amount of time.



Dr. James Hildreth

That was the case three days ago, when I heard Dr. James Hildreth, dean of the College of Biological Sciences at the University of California, Davis, a pioneer in HIV and AIDS research, address the graduating Ph.D. and Masters candidates at The University of Arkansas.

Dr. Hildreth spoke for no more than five minutes, but I'll never forget what he said. "You should know," he began, "that most of what you've learned in your time as a student is wrong." He had my attention as he continued, "But that's OK. The most important thing you've learned at this university is how to think."

I couldn't help but think of all the teachers I've had over the years. Just try "helping" a middle school student with homework. When I try to help my children with their math homework, I quickly learn that math has changed and my answers are no longer valid.

Dr. Hildreth is right. The most impor-

tant thing we learn through education and experience is how to think. Accepting information as gospel, just because it comes to us from an "expert" is no more valid than assuming everything we've learned in school is valid.

Maybe we could learn something about newspapers from Dr. Hildreth. Perhaps our teachers have been wrong. Maybe we've been listening to experts when we should have been using our own experience to think about the best ways to move our publications forward.

Of course, I could be wrong.

## 2003 Tech survey offers glimpse into the past

Robyn Gentile, Knoxville, Tennessee, dropped by my office to give me a folder recently. "I thought you might be interested," she said.

Was I ever. It was a survey I had conducted 12 years ago for her press association, to determine what type of technology needs existed among member papers. The following are a few of the findings:

- A majority of 71 percent of their newspapers were Mac based, with 29 percent using PCs for design. Interestingly, that number hasn't changed too much over the years.

- Although InDesign had been around for three years, most papers were still loyal to QuarkXPress (version 4 was most popular), used by 61 percent of respondents. 28 percent used Pagemaker (ask your grandparents about that), while InDesign and Creator were used by a handful of newspapers.

- The most fascinating finding to me: 22 percent of newspapers were still pasting up pages. That's hard to imagine. The majority, 59 percent, were printing pages out to film on an imagesetter.

The survey questioned publishers about training. Most, it seems, favored large training events in central locations and training at press association conventions over smaller, hands-on training located within an hour's drive. Again, interesting.

It was fascinating to look through the

## There were a few surprises in this 2003 newspaper survey

surveys and see names I recognized. Many were publishers who have retired. Others were good friends who have since passed away. Several were young editors who are now publishers, many of whom now serve as board members and chairs of the same association. And some, it was good to see, are still publishing their papers today.

## And what about those bad hard drives?

David Spencer, from Kentucky, emailed in a panic. He wanted to know if I had any advice concerning where to send a hard drive that had bitten the dust.

Fortunately, he didn't need to send it anywhere. I suggested he download Data Rescue 4 (he later told me his computer used Data Rescue 3) to restore the lost data.

Thankfully, it worked. I remember using Data Rescue after Gary Rudy's camera card died a couple of years ago, along with all the pics from the IFPA national convention. I asked Gary to send the card to me and, fortunately, as it did for David, Data Rescue restored the photo files from the camera card onto an external drive.

Find more information concerning Data Rescue (US \$99) at [prosofteng.com](http://prosofteng.com).

# Print Still Matters

so while you may save on printing/postage, you still need significant revenue to cover other costs.

Image and branding are best conveyed in print. When you're trying to build an organization's brand and present a professional image, print publications win the day. And if you circulate your publication to legislators/regulators, member prospects, media, and other influential audiences, print can convey value, image, and tangible benefit more effectively than digital.

Print magazines offer valuable portability for travel. How many times have you heard readers say they read your magazine or journal on planes and trains? It's easy to toss a print publication in a briefcase and read it while commuting when WiFi

isn't an option—or even when it is.

Readability is often improved with print. designers can provide multiple entry points to encourage readership and engage busy professionals. This is not always the case for quick online reads, though it's a nut everyone is still trying to crack.

Digital technology can be clunky. Page-turning replicas of print and other digital options are great for searching archives for particular issues and topics, but most find them awkward to read for longer articles. Until digital catches up and offers truly readable tablet versions, print versions will be preferred by many when it comes to professional reading.

So, by all means, invest in digital to supplement content delivery

and keep innovating to improve the online reader experience, but continue to invest in your print publications as well. Print magazines provide measurable value and benefits for association professionals, conveying a message far beyond the words on the page.

## DEBRA STRATTON

*Stratton is President of Stratton Media Strategies LLC, a firm that has worked with more than 300 associations and other organizations over the past 30 years to provide consultation and custom research designed to maximize their communications and media offerings. Consultations address special issues for ensuring the best mix of platforms and content. She also serves as founder/president of Angerosa Research Foundation, a 501(c)(3) foundation dedicated to advancing association publishing and marketing.*

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contest divisions. These beautiful ads are just that—beautiful ads. They aren't designed to really pull business for the advertiser.

### THE IMPACT ON FUTURE ADVERTISERS

The publication with ugly ads needs to recognize the impact on future advertisers. The new chic restaurant thinking about running in this newspaper wants an upscale image and may go elsewhere for their advertising campaign. This movement can create a domino effect and can be devastating if large chunks of advertisers start rejecting

the idea of advertising in the ugly ad newspaper. Worse, competing media will notice it too and take advantage of the situation.

So if you're worried about declining readership, start looking at your ads—they may be ugly.

*Bob Berting, newspaper marketing consultant, has published his new e-book for sales professionals in the newspaper industry entitled "Advanced Selling Skills For The Advertising Sales Pro". This is a*

*publication for beginning salespeople who can learn advanced selling techniques and experienced salespeople who can sharpen their selling skills. Salespeople can learn more about this publication by using the link [www.adsalespro.com](http://www.adsalespro.com) and see the table of contents as well as reading the complimentary first chapter. Payment of \$19.95 to download the 34 page e-book.*

Bob can be contacted at [bob@bobberting.com](mailto:bob@bobberting.com) or 800-536-5408. He is located at 6330 Woburn Drive, Indianapolis, In 46250.

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