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CONFERENCE ISSUE



NORFOLK 2024

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COMING NEXT MONTH

The June issue of *Publish* will center on the events from the Norfolk ACP Conference. As always, we will also cover the people, information and issues influencing the community publishing industry.

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WELCOME TO THE CONFERENCE ISSUE!



BY MANUEL KARAM

For those of you joining us in person here in Norfolk, I commend your commitment to advancing your business during the very active spring season. I truly believe there is no better way to move your organization forward than to avail yourself of the industry resources that ACP provides in person. There is no substitute for sitting across from a peer or mentor and hearing about the initiatives they've tried, both successful and otherwise. Chances are a simple and unexpected conversation at breakfast could save you countless hours going down the wrong path, or perhaps kick start a new and profitable venture.

To those unable to attend this time, your presence and perspective are missed. As I write this, I'm just returning from the MFCP conference in Mankato, Minnesota. It's apparent there are publications in that region with a positive outlook, investing in their futures by bringing their staff and learning and sharing new ideas with their peers. We are an industry that thrives on collaboration, and my worry is that many publications are going with a "reduce costs and wait it out" strategy. Unfortunately, traditional revenue is generally decreasing over time and costs are set to continue going in the opposite direction. Simply cutting is no longer sustainable. However, there is reason for optimism.

I believe we are on the cusp of a long overdue readership renaissance. The societal dis-

trust of social media and its impact on health- particularly on our children's- is gaining recognition, prompting legal action in some states. Congress is also addressing the national security risks associated with foreign-owned and controlled media. Supporting local businesses has become a point of pride among younger demographics, including the mysterious Gen Z, who are showing a newfound interest in community engagement.

That said, the future of our industry will differ from its golden eras of the past. Over the last two decades, locally owned businesses (our customers) have experienced challenges to their business models and advertising dollars have shifted to alternative strategies. It is our task to figure out new and creative ways to serve those that still need our services. While we as an industry can't change the wind, we can adjust the sails and prosper together.

If you couldn't attend Norfolk, the good news is that ACP is now hosting not one, but two conferences per year to help you keep up with the current pace of change. Our next gathering will be in Phoenix in the fall followed by a sunny retreat in early 2025-a quieter period for many of us. I encourage you to attend and bring fresh ideas to the organization and upcoming conferences. To those in Norfolk, may you return with renewed optimism and innovative outlooks for your businesses. I certainly intend to do the same. ■



BY DOUGLAS FRY

This article is going to be a departure from the usual personal story with an attempt to relate it with a segment of our industry. Instead I want you to think about how you can reach more people at little to no cost via e-newsletters.

We all get e-newsletters on a daily basis. Some are pretty good, others not so much. One e-newsletter that I get that is way above “pretty good” and is more “Great” is from Shane Goodman called the Daily Umbrella. If you want a template of what you should have in your e-newsletter give theirs a look. Since we all need to communicate better with our advertisers and readers let’s look at what makes a good e-newsletter so that ours falls at least in the “pretty good” column.

SPREAD BRAND AWARENESS

A “pretty good” newsletter builds your brand awareness with your subscribers. You help them recognize your brand and associate it in a positive way. However, you should avoid the temptation to simply duplicate what

WHAT MAKES A GREAT E-NEWSLETTER?

you’ve already published in your paper. If you don’t have the personnel to make original content happen you should skip the newsletter, as a poor one can hurt your brand more than it could help it.

KEEP IT SPECIFIC

Poor email newsletters lack focus tending to be cluttered because they try to be all things to all readers. You can reduce the possibility of this happening by restricting each issue of your newsletter to a very specific topic. For example, you could do one on how to advertise or market a business intelligently, or how print and electronic media work together, or what businesses should advertise in a specific month. By being precise in your content you will find that your newsletters will be more focused and more worthwhile for your readers.

REMEMBER 80/20

Most likely, your subscribers didn’t sign up to hear about your publication each and every issue. Instead, try to have 80% of your content being educational and 20% or less about your products, specials, sections, etc.

I like riding my bicycle every day. As a result, I have subscribed to several email newsletters. If I get lots of emails from a company telling me to buy



their bikes but never tell me how I can cycle better or what the latest innovations are I will quickly unsubscribe. Maybe we should change the rule from 80/20 to 90/10: 90% of your content educational and only 10% promotional.

SEGMENT YOUR LIST

When your readers subscribe to your email newsletter you should have lots of different options possible. They should be able to specify how often they receive information from you: daily, weekly, or every other week. Additionally, they need to be able to specify what topics interest them. For your readers you could segment their interests into Automotive, Dining, Real Estate, Home Improvement, Health & Beauty, Financial Topics, Boating, the list is only limited by your products.

With the frequency and content specified ahead of time your subscribers

know exactly what they will receive, how often they will get it and they’ll look forward to your next email.

Have separate newsletters for advertisers and readers. Specifically, you’ll want to segregate the content you send to advertisers from your readers but not necessarily the other way around.

CREATIVE SUBJECT LINES

Even if you’ve created the greatest email newsletter ever, filled with amazing information tailored just for the reader, you’ll never see anyone open the email unless you have a subject line that draws them into your newsletter. Think of the email subject line as the headline that draws the reader into your piece. Be creative, different, fun and engaging with your subject lines. “Boat Show” may bring in some readers but “How To Avoid Tan Lines” may attract even more.

ONLY ONE BIG CALL TO ACTION

The 10% - 20% portion of a great newsletter is a call to action. You want the reader to click on a link to go to an advertiser's website or your own. You'll have multiple features with Calls To Action for each. But don't make them all the same size or have equal prominence. Instead, think of a great display ad. A good ad in your paper has a dominant headline (creative email subject line), engaging ad copy (80/20 Rule), and a prominent piece of artwork or photograph. The ads you run in your paper that get less results are those that contain everything but highlight nothing. It's the same with email newsletters.

MAKE IT EASY TO UNSUBSCRIBE

It almost seems counter-intuitive to help a reader un-

subscribe but it is especially important if you want to keep readers involved in your newsletter. Think of it this way, if a resident in your community calls and asks to no longer receive your publication you take them off your delivery or subscriber list. The reason for this is it saves you money and keeps your publication from getting a bad reputation as junk. It's the same with an email newsletter. Have a link at the bottom of your pieces that allows someone to easily unsubscribe. But before they unsubscribe give them the option to change the frequency of delivery.

With all those areas of focus completed you should have a great e-newsletter that your readers and advertisers look forward to receiving. Sign me up. ■

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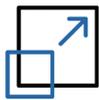
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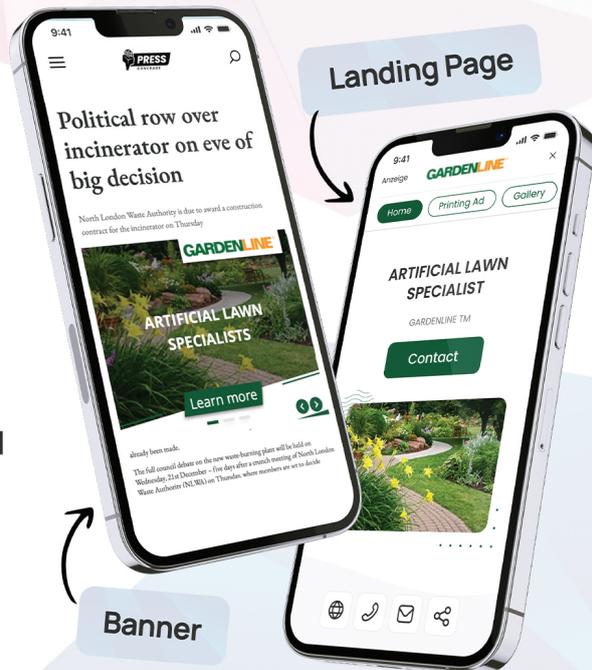


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2023 Charlotte ACP Conference Attendees



BY LOREN COLBURN

I'm going to start this column by rewinding to Saturday, December 30th as I was driving with my wife, Cindy to work remotely for the month of January in Florida. My cell phone rang as we were somewhere in central Pennsylvania and the caller ID said Gladys Van Drie. I couldn't take the call at that moment but told Cindy I really should call Gladys right back as it was unusual for her to call my cell.

Gladys picked up right away and commenced to tell me she had been to the doctors and received confirmation that she had cancer and the outcome was not very bright, but that was not the reason for her call today. She wanted to make sure I knew how much our friendship had meant to her over the years and to thank me for that special bond.

I in turn assured her that the pleasure had been all mine. It was important she knew that her faith in me and continued support over the 40 years I had known her, had often provided the inspiration and guidance needed to navigate a difficult situation if I just focused on hard work and relied on the people around me. That was always Gladys's message – rely on the people around you, they won't let you down. We covered lots of ground on that call

and through many tears, ended the call with a laugh and a message of love and admiration.

In true Gladys' fashion, I knew she was making a number of those calls that day because that's who she was. Always thinking about the other person and knowing exactly what the right thing to do in order to make the most of the human bonds we shared. She impacted so many lives in her travels through this world – in the community paper industry, in every town she ever lived in and with anyone who had a meaningful conversation with her. I'm sure there were many calls and many tears that day.

Yesterday, I got the message that Gladys had passed away the day before. Although it was an incredibly sad moment, thanks to Gladys' thoughtful phone call, it was a moment of no regrets. We had taken the opportunity she initiated to make sure we left nothing unsaid. I knew how much she cared and she knew how much I cared.

My life has been better for having had Gladys in it and I can assure you she traveled many paths leaving a wake of lives who have benefited from her involvement. Gladys is one of the most respected, admired and loved individuals I have had the privilege of getting to know. She was a pioneer among women in business and a champion for any cause that was worth fighting for. Gladys – your impact on this world was not only

NO REGRETS



Barb Powers, Gladys Van Drie and Loren Colburn at the 2019 presentation of the Gladys Van Drie Volunteer Award

profound, you left it so much better off because of your participation.

In all of this – there are a couple strong messages from Gladys that relate to conference. Gladys was a regular conference participant from both when she ran the papers in Ames, Iowa as well as long after she retired in 1992. Thirty years later, she was still coming to conference and taking TLI classes to make sure her learning never stopped. She would tell everyone how the opportunity to learn was the cornerstone to the conference experience as well as to personal growth.

Gladys would also tell you how important the people relationships you build with fellow conference attendees are in strengthening your business and more importantly, in enriching your life. It is an opportunity to connect with people from across a broad geography and cultural back-

ground. These relationships are the ones that become your advisory board, your personal support group and the people that add incredible value to life.

In a day and age where people contacts are reduced more and more all the time – self checkout, self-serve, ATM's, online chats and on and on – there is no replacement to good old fashioned one-on-one conversations. That is why conference is important and that is how we get to experience the exceptional people this industry has to offer, like Gladys Van Drie.

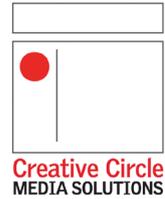
If you embrace any lesson from Gladys – let it be to take every opportunity to learn, to love and to share life's experiences with the people around you. To one of the best communicators, friends and leaders I have crossed paths with, rest in peace and keep believing in, "If it's free, buy it!" ■



ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY PUBLISHERS CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW NORFOLK • 2024

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IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

BY LOREN COLBURN

For those of you Publish readers who are (or did for late readers) experiencing the beauty and historic charm of the Norfolk, Virginia's waterfront, "Thank You". We are excited that you joined us and have taken time from your busy workplace to experience what we are positive will be a rewarding and extremely memorable conference. To all those across the country who couldn't make it to Norfolk, we understand sometimes it is difficult to get away but for your own success and the success of your company – start planning now for Phoenix, Arizona this fall and Mobile, Alabama in 2025.

As we start our voyage this week, we encourage attendees to take it all in. Be sure to capitalize on all the sessions you can fit in, learn a thing or two from our trade show partners, meet some new faces, find a little time to relax, but most importantly bring home a to-do list. Implementing ideas or tactics from any conference is the hard part but rewards never come easy, and success is always achieved by doing the hard work.

ACP's Conference Team has been doing the hard work to put together one great event for our attendees. Throughout the conference you will have the opportunity to listen to enlightening and well-informed presenters. Thursday features an inspiring opening keynote from Meridith Elliot Powell. Meridith will provide us the keys to "Turn Uncertainty to Our Competitive Advantage".

Thursday also serves as industry recognition day. Our Rising Stars program will recognize four new program inductees and honor two participants who have completed a successful three conference participation as a Rising Star. The lunch program will feature the announcement of the ACP Publisher of the Year award as well as the Distinguished Service award

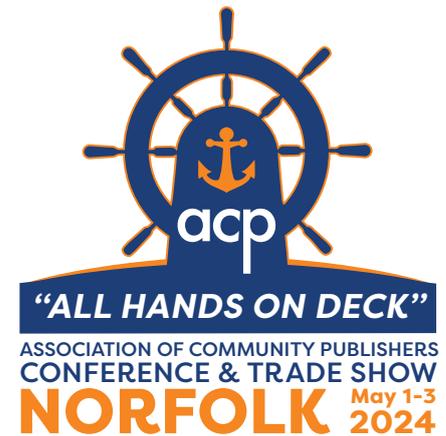
recognizing people who are major contributors within our industry.

Thursday night provides an opportunity for attendees to experience both the best networking event of the year and the charming waterfront atmosphere of Norfolk with a scenic dinner cruise. You'll experience a one-of-a-kind networking opportunity while viewing the activities of the active naval base on the Chesapeake Bay and the scenic waterfront of this historic 400-year-old port city. Relax, take loads of pictures and make lots of new friends!

Friday will continue the slate of leadership, sales and growth idea sessions. Our programs all encourage your participation, input and questions to center in on the needs of our attendees. Please raise your hand to ask some questions or offer some of your own input. Learning is a team event here and we must all participate to ensure the success of the team.

This year we are featuring 4 all new TLI classes. The Leadership Institute classes are conducted by the industry's finest veteran instructors. A special thanks to Rob Zarrilli, Will Thomas and Manuel Karam for sharing their industry expertise with fellow attendees. This industry specific training program continues to provide professional growth for attendees year after year. The closing ceremony will include the awarding of 5 Associate Advertising Executive certificates and 7 Certified Advertising Executive certificates.

The Trade Show also provides two days of attendee exposure to products, services and professionals that can contribute solutions to problems, additional capabilities and an increase to your bottom line! Mix in the fun and excitement of a Silent Auction that benefits the Bill Welsh Foundation in its efforts to provide educational experiences for young professionals. Add to that the money-making opportunities presented



in the annual Idea Exchange and you have one heck of a trip!

All of the events we have put together would not be possible without the hard work of the ACP conference team. The team begins planning over a year ahead with site selection and negotiations, then before long transitions to weekly conference calls to plan and sort through all the details necessary to build a successful conference. Countless hours are contributed, all so ACP can create for its members the best event in the industry.

This year's team consists of Douglas Fry, Cassey Recore, Greg Birkett, Lisa Miller, Scott Greene, Nate Abraham III, Kara Ivison, and Michael Van Stry. If you happen cross paths with these folks during the month, please take some time to say thanks, offer some encouragement, or provide some input for future events.

No successful event can be put together by the work of just a few. To those who have volunteered to help as panelists, have manned the open mic, have provided direction from the registration desk, or have served in any of a number of capacities, we say "Thank You" for your participation and support.

Most importantly we offer our gratitude to the fine people who are the Free Community Publication Industry. Whether you have invested in the opportunities afforded here in Norfolk or not, the people that serve our industry are truly the strength of our industry. By working together as a team, we appreciate the strength available when we experience "all hands on deck" for the good of the industry. Watch Publish for information on all coming events! ■

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12 REASONS YOU SHOULD ATTEND CONFERENCES

BY RICH BROOKS, AGENCY DIRECTOR

There are so many great ways to learn and sharpen your skills these days: you can read blogs, listen to podcasts, watch how-to videos on YouTube, and attend webinars, just to name a few. Why bother with the time and expense of an in-person conference or workshop?

If that's your attitude, then you may be missing out on one of the best opportunities to take your game to the next level. Live events—conferences, workshops, lunch & learns—provide unique learning and career building opportunities that you just can't find anywhere else.

Below you'll find 12 reasons why you should attend live events and consider sending your employees to conferences as well.

SHARPEN THE SAW

While the "sharpen the saw" idea certainly pre-dates Stephen Covey, he lists it as his seventh habit of highly effective people.

The idea is that sometimes you have to take a break from the "work" of your work to sharpen your skills. A dull axe won't cut a tree nearly as effectively as a sharp one.

I always return from a conference with new ideas and approaches that make me more effective and efficient at work.

Don't be the woodcutter hacking away at the tree with a dull ax while your competition cuts it down in half the time with a sharp one.

Or uses a chainsaw she saw demonstrated at a conference.

MEET EXPERTS & INFLUENCERS FACE TO FACE

While not all conferences offer you the opportunity to meet your business idols, your chances are greatly

improved when you're sharing the same space.

Sometimes it's about taking a selfie with someone who's influenced you or sharing a business idea with someone you admire, or making a connection that can lead to finding your next mentor.

I remember at a Social Media Marketing World when I got a few minutes to speak one-on-one to Sally Hogshhead, author of Fascinate and How the World Sees You, and ask her for some feedback on a new business venture I had launched.

That could never have happened from an online success summit.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Social media keeps me connected to my peers who are both local and "from away." However, there's no substitution for meeting someone IRL (in real life).

Good conferences have opportunities for attendees to mix and mingle, form new relationships, and strengthen existing ones. Over coffee, lunch, or cocktails, you may make a connection with the perfect provider or prospect. At a break-out session, you may find yourself sitting next to your next customer or mentor.

Or, if you don't go, maybe your toughest competitor will be sitting in your seat.

NEW TOOLS

Whether there's an expo floor, or just a few tables near the coffee and muffins, companies often have tools to display that we haven't seen yet. Apps that make us faster, less prone to costly mistakes, or give us some other sort of edge.

While undoubtedly these products can be found at their websites, it's great to get a hands-on demonstration or be able to ask questions that are specific to your business struggles from the company itself.

LEARNING IN A NEW SPACE

Remember that scene in Dead Poet's Society when Robin Williams made his students stand on a desk to get a fresh perspective?

Or consider why so many businesses have meetings off site. It's because it's easy to find ourselves in a rut. Sitting in the same chair, in the same office (or cubicle,) or in the same coffee house, can keep us from fresh thinking and new ideas.

Breaking out of the office, sitting in a new space (even if it's a tired old Holiday Inn conference room), can spark us to new approaches that will grow our businesses.

BREAK OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Going hand-in-hand with the previous reason, live events force you to break out of your comfort zone.

It's easy to read a blog post from the privacy of your own office. You won't break a sweat listening to a podcast (unless you're on the treadmill.) You don't have to make small talk while your YouTube video loads up.

While there are those among us who are born networkers, for many of us live events, and other people can be a challenge. But breaking out of our comfort zones is just the type of action we need to take to break out of old ways of thinking that have got us in a rut in our businesses.

If you're absolutely terrified of the idea of going to a conference, bring a wingman (or wingwoman) so you won't feel completely on your own.

CONFERENCE BENEFITS

NEW TIPS AND TACTICS

The problem with the web is we believe that everything is at our fingertips. And maybe it is. But it's an overwhelming amount of data that we often can't crack, or keeps us from the best material. A well run conference will help curate new ideas to help us improve our approach.

I remember watching someone create a Facebook app in front of me at a session just to show what was possible. I remember hearing about YouTube cards for the first time from a presentation by Steve Dotto, and explaining how they would change online videos forever.

I'm sure that information was already somewhere on the web, but the conference helped cut through the clutter to deliver the best content for me possible.

GREATER FOCUS

The flip side of learning new things is relearning classic techniques. A few years ago at Agents of Change, John Lee Dumas talked about the importance of creating an avatar for your business, and how it streamlined his thinking. (You can listen here to an interview I did with John a few weeks later where we dug deeper into this topic.)

Or, at the most recent Social Media Marketing World, hearing how important a mastermind group was to Pat Flynn's success, and how to set one up. (I've since started my own mastermind and just recently joined another.) Napoleon Hill wrote about masterminds in *Think and Grow Rich*, but the concept has been around forever.

However, it wasn't until a series of events, culminating in Pat Flynn's presentation, that I realized that they could help me take my business to the next level.

THE ENERGY OF LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS

There's nothing like being in a room of like-minded people. Other people who are willing to take time away from the office to learn some-

thing new. Other people who want to "better" themselves.

When you sit in a classroom or auditorium, you discover that you're not alone in wanting to improve your skills and bring something back to your office or organization.

That energy is lacking in all online learning channels, regardless of how much chatter there may be around a hashtag.

THE SERENDIPITY OF THE RANDOM WORKSHOP

Some of the best workshops and presentations I've seen have been ones I had no idea about before the conference.

“ Live events—conferences, workshops, lunch & learns—provide unique learning and career building opportunities that you just can't find anywhere else.

At SXSW I attended a workshop on improving your memory. (It didn't take, but I still found it fascinating.) At BlogWorld I attended a session on YouTube only because I was guilted into it. (In my mind, YouTube was for cat videos.) It's not a stretch to say that it changed the way I marketed my business.

In fact, I did my own presentation on YouTube marketing at the following year's Social Media FTW, the conference I put on before Agents of Change.

I never would have sought out those learning opportunities online... they had to be discovered through the serendipity of a live event.

INVEST IN YOURSELF

Perhaps this one is self-evident. Or perhaps we've already covered it in whole or in part above. But leaving

the office and "sharpening the saw" is investing in yourself.

It's admitting that you're worth it. It's admitting that you still have things to learn. That you can get better.

It's an investment in yourself, your career, and even your company. When you purchase that conference ticket and when you walk up to the registration desk, you're saying that you're investing in your own growth.

HAVE FUN!

I'm not sure this is the most important of all these eleven reasons, but I didn't want to leave it off the list. Conferences are fun! Live events with other people are fun! (The introverts reading this may be rolling their eyes or going to their happy places right now.)

I'm not a master networker. I struggle with finding the right way to break into a conversation with people I don't know. But I've gotten better by attending conferences. By sitting at lunch tables with people I don't (yet) know. I've made some amazing connections and even more amazing friends from going to live events.

Don't miss out on these opportunities.

TAKEAWAYS

I get it. Conferences can be expensive. From the conference ticket to the plane ticket, from the meals to the bar tab. And that doesn't even include the time away from the office where you could be doing "work."

However, conferences provide a unique convergence of networking, learning, and fun into a single package. A good conference forces you to grow and challenge yourself.

And if you're the boss, allowing your employees to get out of the office, gain confidence in their ability, and bring fresh ideas back to the business is just an investment in your own company. ■

Original Article:

[https://www.takeflyte.com/](https://www.takeflyte.com/reasons-to-attend-conferences)

[reasons-to-attend-conferences](https://www.takeflyte.com/reasons-to-attend-conferences)

For More Information on Flyte New Media go to: www.takeflyte.com

MEET THE INDUSTRY'S RISING STARS!

CLASS OF 2024

JENN COOKE

- **Age:** 28
- **Publishing Company:** Featured Media/ Genesee Valley Penny Saver
- **Job Title:** Marketing Consultant
- **Job Responsibilities:** Assist current customers with marketing needs as well as grow the area and promote what we have to offer their businesses/marketing needs.

- **Years in the industry:** 1 Year

What do you think the future looks like for the free paper industry?

I think it will remain strong and competitive because it does have an advantage of resonating more with local communities and therefore still holds value to both readers and advertisers.



CAITLIN NEELAND

- **Age:** 30
- **Publishing Company:** Featured Media
- **Job Title:** Graphic Designer
- **Job Responsibilities:** I help support and meet weekly demands at the company. I create various design projects for clients and internal use which include countless print, promotional, digital media, signage, apparel and more.
- **Years in the industry:** 8 Years

What do you think the future looks like for the free paper industry?

The free and regular paper industry is nothing to be messed with and could flourish again just like we have seen with vinyl records make a roaring come back in the music industry. I think more and more people are getting skeptical about the real benefits of social media and turning to alternate or old ways of receiving their information. The way people can trust the information they get, is by the words that come

printed on a piece of paper. Even though it's a free paper the knowledge isn't free. People must do research, have some experience to produce something, and put their hard-earned money into those words.

If someone is going to pay to have their view or story be published onto paper, it better be credible and trustworthy. They are putting their stamp and name on something (that is not erasable ink) that will physically be put out into the world for thousands or millions of people to read. The world will have the whole story in their hands at one time. Whereas the internet, we grab only what we need from articles and stories making what we read a higher chance of being false or skewed.

The social world is saturated with false stories and false advice that it's hard to sift through the noise and pick out the truth. On the internet and social media anyone can produce something false, hide behind it and have millions believe it. I think this will have a big impact on the paper industry down the line.

PAYTON NORTH

- **Age:** 28
- **Publishing Company:** Reminder Publishing
- **Job Title:** Executive Editor
- **Job Responsibilities:** Manage eight weekly newspapers, one daily newspaper, two monthly magazines and countless seasonal special sections. Manage a team of 18 staff writers and editors along with various freelance writers and photographers.
- **Years in the industry:** 7 Years

What do you think the future looks like for the free paper industry?

I believe if businesses who run free papers can continue to be flexible and create innovative ideas to generate funds, there will always be room for free newspapers. At Reminder Publishing, our primary focus will always be our group of eight free weekly newspapers. However, in the past several years we have continued to create new special sections and have started other business ventures – a podcast, for instance – not only to produce additional cash flow, but also to reach new audiences and expose other folks who may not currently read our newspaper to our brand and our work.



RISING STARS



SHELBY PALMER

Age: 30

Publishing Company: The Exchange

Job Title: Graphic Design / Pagination

Job Responsibilities: Graphic Design, Social Media, Pagination & Layout, Email Marketing & Digital Marketing.

Years in the industry: 2 Years

What do you think the future looks like for the free paper industry?

I believe there will always be people who want a physical paper. I also believe that there will always be people who seek to be a part of their community, and free papers help foster that sense of community, that belonging.

CLASS OF 2023

ALEXIA DE LEON

- **Age:** 29
- **Publishing Company:** El Clasificado
- **Job Title:** Digital Marketing Manager
- **Job Responsibilities:** I manage over 100 digital campaigns for business in different industries through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Amazon and more.
- **Years in the industry:** 5 Years

What do you think the future looks like for the free paper industry?

Print continues to be a perfect way to reach those who still pick up a magazine to look for a service or product, and that's exactly why we should continue to find ways to use print as a source to make meaningful and deeper connections.

We all know how digital is taking over the world, but instead of replacing print, we should innovate and combine both print and digital advertising to keep reaching people of all ages.



KAITLIN DONNAN

Age: 30

Publishing Company: Featured Media

Job Title: Proofreader

Job Responsibilities: I proofread and edit copy for ads and products to ensure everything is ready to go to print. I also do some of the content writing for our Home magazine publication.

Years in the industry: 5 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

Getting to know other people in this industry has been a huge plus. I think networking is more important now than ever, and so is meeting others in the field and putting names with faces and real people. You have to be willing to put yourself out there, too.

KARI JURRENS

Age: 37

Publishing Company: New Century Press

Job Title: Media Specialist

Job Responsibilities: Print & Online Media Sales

Years in the industry: 13 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

New perspectives. Each time we meet, just simply hearing different ways others in the industry from other areas are handling things helps to give us new ideas.



MACKENZIE MCGRAIN

• **Age:** 25

• **Publishing Company:** Featured Media

• **Job Title:** Marketing Consultant

• **Job Responsibilities:** Helping current & new clients grow their business with advertising and brand awareness. Establishing and maintaining communicative & beneficial relationships. Producing efficient & effective solutions for our customers.

• **Years in the industry:** 2 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

I've met so many wonderful individuals in the same or alike field as me who bring new & fresh ideas to the table. The Rising Stars program is an amazing way to network with like-minded professionals to further your own career as well as helping ones around you further theirs!



JAYDE VOGELER

- **Age:** 28
- **Publishing Company:** Big Green Umbrella Media
- **Job Title:** Graphic Designer
- **Job Responsibilities:** I create ads for our many publications, spec ads for potential clients, do anything to help out our creative director.
- **Years in the industry:** 2 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

I have been gaining more self confidence through the activities I participate in the Rising Star program has presented me. It's great to see the program gives all of us many opportunities to work for ACP and, in turn, gave me ways to improve myself.

CLASS OF 2022

KARA IVISON

- **Age:** 29
- **Publishing Company:** Featured Media
- **Job Title:** Digital Specialist & Graphic Designer
- **Job Responsibilities:** On the digital side of things, I cover website creation and management, social media, digital campaign creatives, company website management. As well as paginate some of our GVPS editions and one of our HOME Magazines, create ads, manage Printing By Penny Lane online store, email marketing for sales, and email newsletters for subscribers.

- **Years in the industry:** 6 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

I love the network and connection of businesses and people from across the United States. It's intriguing to hear their real-time challenges and successes, giving a source of inspiration and a insights to consider for my own self and business.



CHRISTINE WHITE

- Age:** 36
- Publishing Company:** Featured Media
- Job Title:** Digital Media Strategist
- Job Responsibilities:** I sell digital marketing and print products for new/existing customers.
- Years in the industry:** 5 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

Our monthly meeting discussions help me take a deeper dive into my personal and professional development, along with networking with other rising stars.

CLASS OF 2020

NATHANIEL ABRAHAM III

- **Age:** 29
- **Publishing Company:** Carolina Panorama
- **Job Title:** Photographer and Sales Associate
- **Job Responsibilities:** Photography, Videography and Ad Sales.
- **Years in the industry:** 6 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

The Rising Stars has given me an opportunity to learn and interact with industry peers throughout the country. I have learned much about individual leadership skills and how the free paper industry adapts to the world around it. It has been a priceless source of new ideas and useful knowledge.



CARMEN CAMPBELL

- Age:** 34
- Publishing Company:** Featured Media
- Job Title:** Marketing Strategist
- Job Responsibilities:** Formulate marketing plans to help customers achieve their goals with print ads, digital campaigns, and promotional products.
- Years in the industry:** 10 Years

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being part of the Rising Stars program?

One take away that I have gained is being more confident with speaking in a group setting. When we take turns being the lead speaker in our monthly discussions it helps me prepare and get more comfortable for when I am working with customers of my own.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Peter Bookkah – Article

Adapt Your Mindset to Realize Business Success

By Peter Bookkah

There is an abundance of negativity lately related to papers, local retail, etc. This article does a great job getting you to check where your head is at and some things you can do to adjust and improve.

<https://bookkah.com/mindset-is-everything-adapt-your-mindset-to-realise-business-success/>



Intuit Quickbooks – Article

Unleashing the playful power: 7 ways to attract young talent to your firm

By Nicole Davis

This article offers a great checklist of things you will need to be doing if you want to attract and keep young professionals. The game has changed and there is some excellent tips here.

<https://www.firmofthefuture.com/thought-leadership/attracting-young-talent/>



U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – Small Business Resource Center

Small Business Resource Center

This a site you will want to bookmark for use over and over. They offer comprehensive help with everything about hiring. There is an excellent section with videos that anyone interviewing potential candidates should view.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/employers/small-business>



LinkedIn – Article

How can you effectively network through professional associations?

This article offers 6 quick tips to guide you through making the most of networking through professional associations. All common sense based but thought provoking.

<https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/how-can-you-effectively-network-through-xt6wc>



Newest addition for your “Advertiser Help Page” Listings

The Media Ant – Blog Article

8 Elements of Advertising You Need to Know

By Sanjay Kulkarni

This solid walk through the essential elements of effective advertising is both extensive and thorough. If all advertisers followed this guide – results would definitely improve across the board.

<https://www.themediaant.com/blog/elements-of-advertising/>



INDUSTRY ICON GLADYS VAN DRIE PASSES

Former publisher, long-time association leader and community volunteer Gladys Marie Van Drie passed away March 31, 2024 following a short battle with cancer. She was 87 years old.

Gladys and her twin brother Gerald were born in Martin, South Dakota, May 24, 1936, to Lee and Gladys Allison. Their mother died during childbirth, and with seven older children to raise during a tough economic time, Lee Allison made the difficult decision to give the twins up for adoption, relying on family and friends to raise the rest of his children. At six days old, Rev Gerritt and Johanna Vander Wolde adopted Gladys and Gerald.

Raised mostly in the Midwest, with a brief time spent in Alberta, Canada, the Vander Woldes' made sure the twins were re-united with their siblings as they matured, celebrating with biannual family reunions. Gladys attended Northwestern Academy and Northwestern Junior College in Orange City, Iowa, earning an associate degree in education. She taught in Royal, Iowa and Milford Township, Iowa (near Nevada, Iowa).

In 1958, Gladys married Rudy Van Drie and their union was blessed with two daughters, Karen and Karla.

Gladys and Rudy owned three free-community papers in Ames, Boone and Knoxville, Iowa, and published local real-estate guides. In the 1960s, Rudy ran for public office, with Gladys serving a key role on his campaign committee that helped get him elected as a state representative and later a state senator for Story County, Iowa.

Rudy died suddenly of a heart attack in 1976, and while Gladys wasn't involved in the business prior to his passing, she stepped in and immedi-



Gladys Van Drie

ately took the reins at the papers. She wasted no time nurturing her team, collaborating with vendor partners, and integrating herself in local business issues that saw the papers flourish under her counsel. She owned the state and national award-winning papers for 16 years before selling them to the Des Moines Register.

Gladys believed in giving back to her community and her industry and was a tremendous state and national organization volunteer. Locally, she served as a chairperson for her county's American Heart Association, and on the board of directors and as vice president of the Ames Chamber of Commerce. She was elected to the Ames City Council, and then Iowa Governor Robert Ray appointed her to the board of directors for the Governor's Economic Committee.

As a publishing industry leader, she served as president of the Shopping Guides of Iowa (SGI), now known as Midwest Free Community Papers

(MFCP) and the National Association of Advertising Publishers (NAAP), now known as the Association of Community Publishers (ACP).

The accolades she received for her commitment to community and industry service were many. The 1986 American Heart Association state conference recognized her as Campaign Person of the Year for the largest increase in donations to the heart-health cause. Continuing her commitment to service, the 2008 Rotary District Convention honored her as Outstanding Club President.

A trailblazer in the publishing world, she was recognized for her leadership and commitment to the growth and development of the free-paper publishing industry with ACP's two highest honors, the Distinguished Service Award, and Publisher of the Year.

In 2015, ACP created the Gladys Van Drie Volunteer Award "...bestowed to an individual who demonstrates exceptional service to the association and a level of commitment and dedication that reflects the ideas and passion of Gladys Van Drie."

After selling her papers in 1992, Gladys moved to Monument and later, Estes Park, Colorado, again finding her niche serving as president of Newcomers for the Community of Estes Park, president of the local Rotary Club, trustee of the Estes Park Hospital Board and president of the Antiquarians.

Gladys would like to be remembered as a lifelong learner and someone who spoke out for justice. She loved reading, traveling, camping, antiquing, and setting a beautiful table for family and friends. Family, friends, colleagues, employees, competitors, and neighbors alike will remember her for her enthusiasm for life, thirst

A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE



Gladys Van Drie (center) delivering words of wisdom at Las Vegas conference in 2019.

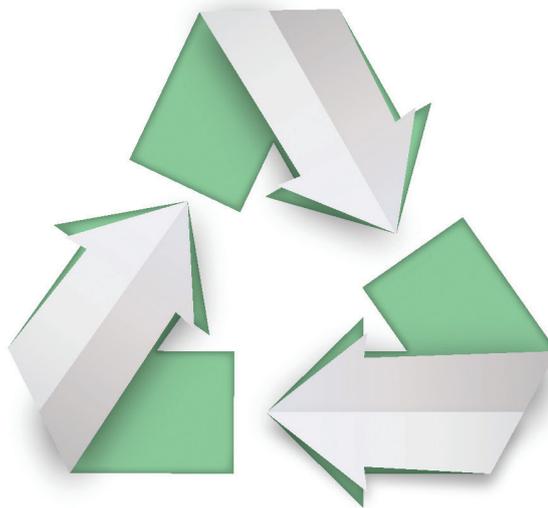
for knowledge, fairness, personal and professional growth, volunteerism, and her abundant hospitality.

She is survived by her daughters Karen and Karla Van Drie, granddaughters Allison and Kelly Goldthorpe (Nick Lindeke), sisters-in-law Marlene and Anna Allison, and many nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents and husband Rudy, she was preceded in death by her twin, Gerald Vander Wolde, and siblings Andrew "Bud," John, Ken, Jim and William Allison, Mitzi Mills and Shirley Ringo.

A Celebration of Life takes place June 8th, 2024 in Estes Park, Colorado. In lieu of flowers, memorials are welcome to Rotary International (www.rotary.org), Crossroads Ministry of Estes Park (www.crossroadsep.org) and the Association of Community Publishers' Rising Star Program (www.communitypublishers.com/rising-stars). ■

PAPER REVOLUTION

In the U.S., over 66% of paper products - like the printed publication you're reading right now - is recycled into new products, one of the highest recycling rates of any material in the country.



Discover the story of paper
www.lovepaperna.org



Sources: American Forest and Paper Association, 2019
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2017

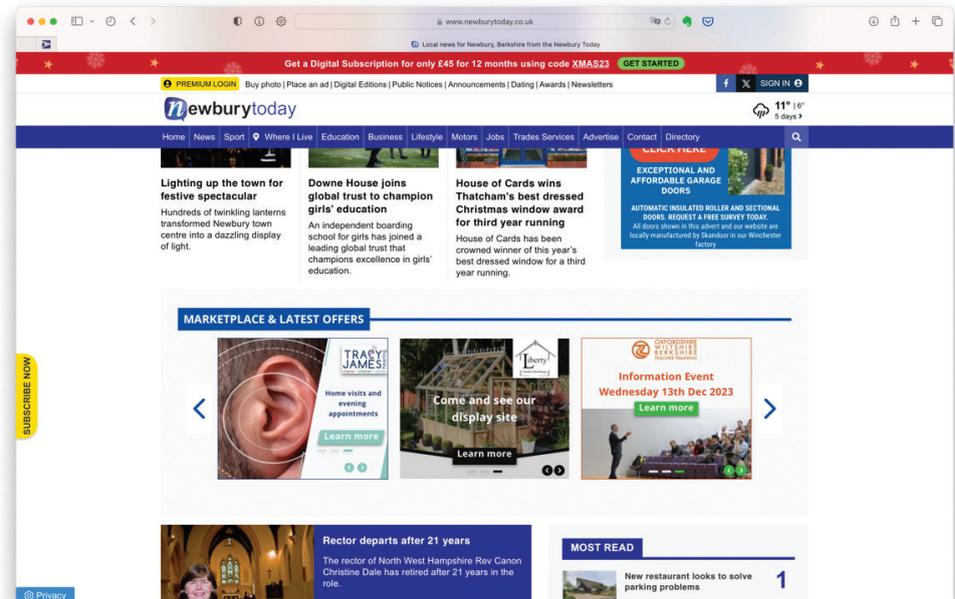
HOW REGIONAL NEWS PUBLISHERS IN EUROPE PROFITABLY SCALE DIGITAL REVENUES USING AI WITH THEIR SMALLER ADVERTISERS

The shift of revenues from print to online still is a major driver for publishers in all countries and on all continents. Ideally with little additional work as possible: For example, PDFs from newspapers are used as e-papers or as the basis for digital subscriptions and displayed on other platforms such as digital kiosks. In advertising this often works more complicated as advertising formats and pricings are fundamentally different.

In Europe, Smartico is on a mission to prove that there is a missing link to connect print and online world and leverage existing sales reps and print advertisers for significant digital regional revenues.

500 newspaper titles in Europe there are working with Smartico. Among the customers are large media companies like Axel Springer, Mediahuis or “Ilfle Media” but also a lot of regional champions like “Somedia” from Switzerland.

With its product “Smart Ads”, the company provides an automatic sales & revenue solution for loyal print advertisers as well as accounts lost in the past. “Smart Ads” completely extracts all data from a print ad of the advertiser or their social media post or profile, enriches it with all images, data and texts from the web, and rebuilds it as a mobile-first carousel ad across all IAB formats. And always includes a landing page that opens in an overlay, has clear call-to-actions and tracks the dwell-time of visitors. This allows for a completely new sales narrative: no CTRs (which local advertisers understands that anyways?) but “attention” in terms of visible time of the banner in front of real



“Smart Ads banderole” on an Ilffe news site named “Marketplace & Latest Offers”

users, landing page visitors, interactions, scroll depth and time on site.

Thomas Kundert is the CEO of Somedia, which bundles weekly newspapers, daily newspapers, online, radio and television and dominates its traditional distribution area in south-eastern Switzerland. Kundert knows the SME landscape in its home market very well, and before he became CEO of the family business, he managed a local promotion company. Somedia introduced Smart Ads in early 2021. Their local weekly newspaper “Pöschtl” served as the pilot newspaper and has a circulation of around 9,000 copies. When Kundert noticed that Smart Ads “worked”, he included all of Somedia’s local weekly newspapers in the Smart Ad program three months later. Altogether, Somedia’s newspaper portfolio includes 18 local and regional weekly and daily newspapers with a total circulation of around 290,000 copies per issue.

Smartico then trained the product managers and media consultants for sales. For Kundert it is important that the sale does not involve any additional work for the sales reps as well as the campaign management. Smartico took care of that by directly booking into the ad manager of Somedia. And by integrating the product very intuitively in the existing print offerings so that they could be sold in one sales process. The reporting dashboards are directly generated by Smartico and then include digital KPIs that are so intuitive that local advertisers immediately can see the value of the digital component of the bundle without having to have separate reporting call.

Ilfle Media Group, an independent multimedia business from the UK with a rich history spanning over 300 years, made a similar experience to introduce “Smart Ads” first in the New Milton, Newbury, and Stratford regions before expanding to

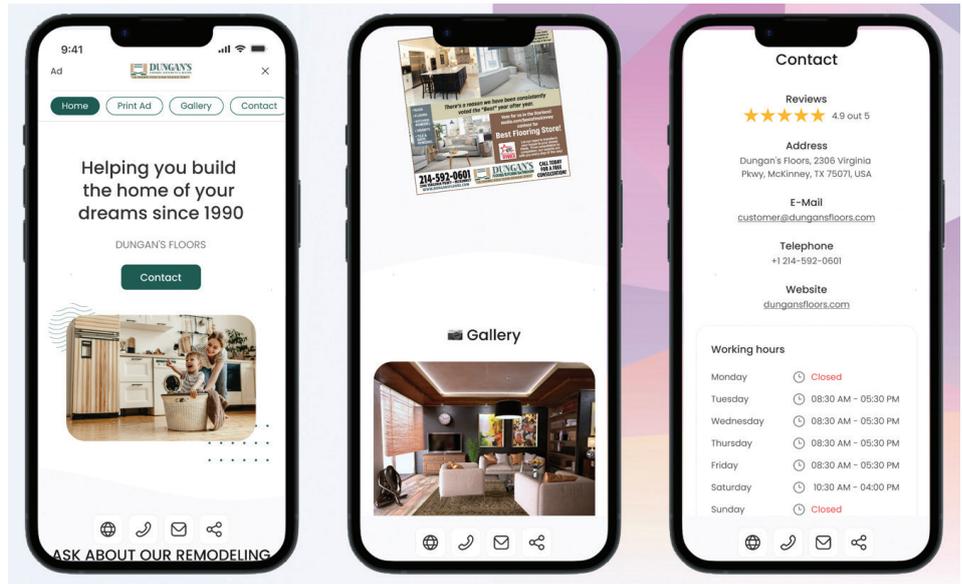
DIGITAL UPDATE

all 38 titles of Iliffe Media Group. The group boasts a combined 1.5 million social media followers and an online audience of millions, serving more than 650,000 newspaper readers and attracting 6,000,000 website visitors.

Ricky Allan, Chief Revenue Officer at Iliffe Media Group agrees "Smart Ads worked exceptionally well for our titles in Newbury, New Milton and Stratford which is why we rolled it out all of our titles including Kent Online, Lincs Online, Suffolk News and Cambridge Independent. The market adoption by sales teams, users and advertisers is great and we reached 100+ new ads per week within 20 days of launching the first title."

Christian Scherbel, CEO of Smartico adds: "The beauty of Smart Ads is the ease of use for readers, sales teams, and the advertisers alike. Everyone deserves great ads and high-quality destination pages that engage users and do not only focus on the mere click. We believe that this offers a great chance for publishers to win back local advertisers from Meta and Google, and we are convinced that "Smart Ads" is exactly the product to succeed with this."

The crux of the matter, as Kundert and Christian Scherbel agree, is that the advertiser must not see the Smart Ad as a price increase, but as an increase in local advertising performance. Kundert: "We also thought long and hard about how to do it. Our experience with surcharges so far has been that as soon as you identify them too much and offer them to the customer as an extra, many people then begin to have doubts." And then the whole thing becomes difficult, expensive and the opt-out rate increases. Kundert wanted to avoid that at all costs, which is why "Smart Ad" is automatically included in the print ad. Then it says on the offer and invoice: "Advertisement including Smart Ad." The services for the advertisers like banner creation, landing page creation, relevant ad impressions with



Integrated instant landing pages for every advertiser

regional targeting as well as the dashboards are then very transparently shown in the sales materials for advertisers.

In numbers Somedia offers "Smart Ad" in three price categories for its local weekly newspapers. Depending on the print format, Kundert bundles the cheapest ads between \$100 and 300 with a Smart Ad for \$39 francs, which runs on the corresponding website for three days. The print ads for \$301 to 800 francs will receive a Smart Ad bundle for \$79.

Somedia sells all ads including Smart Ad. If a customer doesn't want it, they have to actively remove it, which "very rarely happens," says Kundert. And he adds: "Every ad we sell now will be renewed with Smart Ad."

After all, Somedia will achieve solid five-digit sales with Smart Ads in the first year of limited testing and ramp up alone, Thomas Kundert estimates: "Overall, we will probably earn almost \$100,000 more from Smart Ads this first year." Kundert sums it up: "It's fun if we can really scale it now". That means: include more newspaper titles in the Smart Ad program and sell more.

And for Kundert there is something very important: "The effort for us is practically zero." Thomas

Kundert hence concludes as CEO of Somedia: "Every print advertisement that we are now selling will be extended with a Smart Ad."

ABOUT SMARTICO: DIGITAL ADS FOR LOCAL ADVERTISERS AT SCALE

Smartico builds best in class banner ads and landing pages at scale and in budget for more than 500 news publishers around the world. Its distinctive blend of artificial intelligence, human expertise and hands-on sales trainings and rollout support creates new local advertising profits for its publishing partners from Day 1.

Smartico's "Smart Ads" transforms regional advertisements (print, social media, TV, etc) into high-performance display ads with linked landing pages that instantly open in an overlay.

Smartico annually produces hundreds of thousands of "Smart Ads" in a pay-as-you-go pricing model that aligns their success with that of the news publisher.

Ask for your free demo of "Smart Ads" today and start making more money from your local long tail SMB advertisers in digital!

LNP MEDIA GROUP, INC. TO INSTALL SCS'S COMMUNITY ADVERTISING SYSTEM

LNP Media Group, based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania has reached an agreement with SCS to install the Community Advertising System (CAS).

CAS will provide LNP Media Group with an advertising management solution that will add bulletproof accounting and a modern ad tracking system to the automated ad dummying, classified pagination and edito-

rial solutions already provided by SCS. The SCS package includes a classified self-service and marketplace portal and robust business analytics from Zoho.

"This is a real full circle moment for LNP and SCS, as Lancaster Newspapers was the very first SCS customer back in 1983 with Layout-8000," says Phil Curtolo, Vice President of Sales at SCS. "We

added Scoop in 2002 and SCS/ClassPag in 2020, and bringing AdMAX and SCS/Track into the mix will provide new levels of automation to the advertising and business offices at LNP. We're really looking forward to the project and to working with LNP for the next 40 years!"

The installation is scheduled for summer and fall of 2024.

SCS ANNOUNCES NEW FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE

SCS is excited to announce the hiring of Ambrose Cavalier (URL for link: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ambrose-cavalier/>) as an Applications Developer on May 20th, 2024.

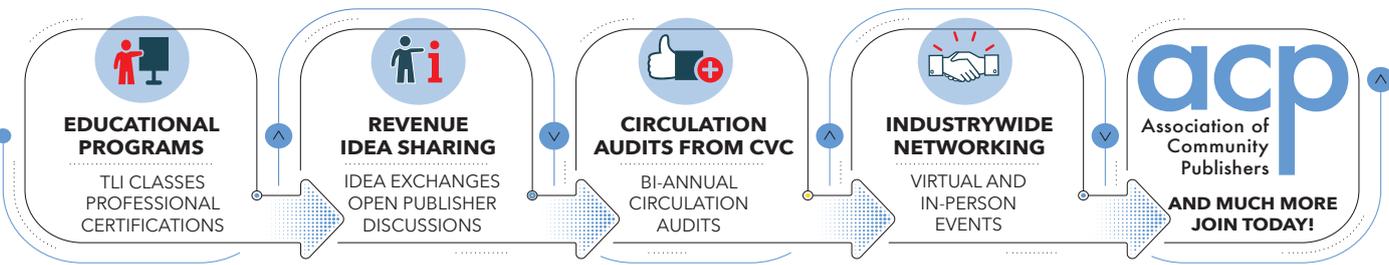
Ambrose will be graduating from Christendom College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Philosophy in May of 2024. He is a 4-time summer intern with the company and will continue to be an integral

part of not just SCS but also SN1, which is the data visualization division of SCS.

"I've really enjoyed working on challenging software projects at SCS during my four summer internships," said Ambrose. "We're doing some very exciting stuff in the new SN1 subdivision, and I'm really looking forward to working full-time with the great team at SCS."



Membership has its benefits - benefits you need!



Association of Community Publishers - 877-203-2327

FIGHTING PARKINSON'S LAW

BY JAMES A. BAKER –
FOUNDER AND CEO, BAKER COMMUNICATIONS
Author of *The Anger Busting Workbook*,
Finalist for Book of the Year, *Foreword Magazine*



There is an oft-quoted rule of time management and productivity that actually started out as a joke. Sometimes referred to as “Parkinson’s Law,” it was first articulated in print by Cyril Parkinson, in the first sentence of a humorous essay published in *The Economist* in 1955. While Parkinson’s primary interest in that article was the expansion of bureaucratic organizations, the version of the rule most people are now familiar with is his observation that, like a gas in a container, “Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.”

This rule doubtless rings true to procrastinators everywhere. If a given task should take about an hour but you have two hours to complete it, somehow it always seems to end up taking two hours. If you have a whole day, it will take all day. If you have ever reached the end of a week and realized that you have only done five hours’ worth of work all week, this is where all that time went! Parkinson’s Law describes a major time management problem that many people contend with daily.

WHY PARKINSON’S LAW WORKS

Parkinson’s Law relies on several very human tendencies. If you have all the time in the world to do something, there is no sense of urgency, and thus no motivation to get the job done quickly. You may put it off, get distracted, pursue sidelines, or dawdle over details. If you have the time, you will take it. There is no reason to get started immediately, to focus completely, or to finish soon. An abundance of time, essentially, gives people an excuse to slack off.

Another factor is that if more time is allocated to complete a task, the

psychological approach to the task increases in complexity. A week-long project is far more daunting than a one-day project, so more time will be spent working out details, making decisions, and polishing the final product. Such a “major” undertaking also creates more stress and associated delays.

By contrast, a scarcity of time produces a sense of urgency, which generates both motivation and focus. As a deadline approaches, it is amazing what can be accomplished in a very short period! The so-called Stock-Sanford Corollary to Parkinson’s Law states that “If you wait until the last minute, it only takes a minute to do.” Just as any task can expand to fill the amount of time allowed, conversely, the amount of effort put into a task can be limited by limiting the allotted time – down to the minimum amount of time that is actually required to complete the task.

The fact is that people tend to give tasks more time than they really need. Sometimes this is to allow for a buffer in case there are problems, but usually it happens because people simply overestimate how long a task takes to complete. Their estimate is “proven” correct when Parkinson’s Law kicks in!

HOW TO FIGHT THE LAW

The key to avoiding out-of-control expansion of work is to create a sense of urgency for yourself. Most of your tasks probably have externally imposed deadlines of one kind or another, but those deadlines may be too liberal to promote efficiency. If Parkinson’s Law is a problem for you or if you have a tendency to procrastinate, you will probably need to set different goals.

One good way to do this is to start each day by identifying your most

important tasks. Try to realistically determine how much time you think it should take to complete each task. Then increase the level of urgency by allocating less time to get it done. Start by reducing the available time by a reasonable amount – perhaps 10%. This will ensure that you work in as efficient and focused a manner as possible for the entire time allotted. Work against this time limit as if you are racing against the clock. You will soon start to get an idea of how good your time estimates are. After you start testing this technique, you may find you can cut your allotted time for many tasks in half!

Another technique for increasing urgency is simply moving up your deadlines. Make it a habit to complete all tasks earlier than they are required to be done. If your boss asks you to complete a task by Friday, have it done by Thursday. If you have two weeks for a given project, set your own deadline for one week. This not only increases your sense of urgency and gets the task done faster, but creates a time cushion for handling problems, making corrections, or fine-tuning. You can also address other tasks in the time between your deadline and the external deadline.

BREAKING THE LAW

Parkinson’s Law is simply an observation about how people tend to do things, not an unbreakable rule. If you are aware of the principles underlying Parkinson’s Law you can experiment with ways to narrow your deadlines and get your work done faster. Be cautious, however, of the line between just enough time and not enough. Keep in mind that the goal is to do a good job in less time, not to sacrifice quality for speed. ■

THE POWER OF RESTRAINT



BY JOHN FOUST
RALEIGH, NC

On an out-of-state trip, I saw a billboard that compelled me to pull off the road to take a closer look. What was so unusual? It had more words than I had ever seen on a billboard – 45 words. “What in the world were they thinking?” I asked myself. “I’m probably the only driver who knows what the billboard says, and that’s because I stopped to count the words.”

The person who designed that sign hadn’t considered what it would look like on the side of that two-lane highway. He or she had created it on a screen or layout pad, with no awareness of the fact that drivers would have only a few seconds to read it. For years, I’ve heard that eight is the maximum word count for a readable billboard. That one had 45.

The billboard needed what a lot of ads need – restraint. Here are three areas that call for that special brand of discipline:

1. THE SALES CALL. This is where it starts. It’s understandable for advertisers to be excited about their products and services, but they shouldn’t be encouraged to put unsubstantiated claims and exaggerations in their ads. Salespeople who are close to closing a sale often have a tendency to accept anything their clients want to run. But this is the time to hold firm and gather the raw material that is needed for an effective ad campaign. First, learn about the client’s audience. Then learn about what is being advertised – with a focus on features and benefits.

2. THE AD COPY. The next step is to translate that information into an idea, and then to transform that idea into convincing words and pictures. Even the best ad concept

in the world will fall flat if it is not put together the right way.

It’s important to use restraint in writing copy. Readers don’t respond favorably to words like “unbelievable” and “fantastic” and “incredible.” They prefer to hear the truth, because that’s what they need to make informed buying decisions.

Specific language works better than generalities. “Save 40 percent on a new widget” is more effective than “save money on a new widget.” “Three-year warranty” is better than “great warranty.” And “one-acre lot” is more descriptive than “large lot.”

3. THE AD DESIGN. A store owner once told me about his philosophy of print advertising. “I think white space is wasted space,” he said. “I want my ads to be filled from corner to corner.” It was no surprise that his ads were bursting at the seams with illustrations and blocks of multiple colors. To make matters worse, he thought that all upper-case type made his copy more important.

Sadly, his ads looked like indecipherable blobs on the page. I don’t think anyone would make the effort to read them.

Poet Robert Browning is famous for writing, “Less is more.” Although architecture later adopted the phrase, it is just as appropriate for this business of advertising. Less is definitely more. ■

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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

Graphic Hooks

By Ellen Hanrahan

hanrahan.ln@att.net © 05/2024

Last month we looked at basic color terms. But there are books on color theory, color usage and the psychology of color and that can be way more than you want to know.

What's more important is the usage of color, but first I will briefly address...

Color Gamuts

A gamut refers to a specific range of colors that can be displayed. Some of the most common gamuts in the creative industry for the web are **sRGB**, **Adobe RGB**, and **DCI-P3**. Each of these refers to a different color range that is suited to various applications (there are also color gamuts that are also specific to printing).

Some are wider, some are smaller, but each is specific in what types of colors they support, so it is important to know general differences and your expected output to choose a proper option. Various software programs will also tell you if you are "out of gamut" in your color choice. I came across a quick primer on color gamuts on the retail **B&H Photo, Video, Audio** website:

<https://www.bhphotovideo.com/explora/photography/tips-and-solutions/color-gamuts-a-quick-primer>

Pantone Matching System

For consistency and uniformity in print, one of the most widely used systems is PMS—the Pantone Matching System when we specify "spot" colors. By standardizing the colors, different manufacturers in different locations can all refer to the Pantone system to make sure colors match without direct contact with one another.

While the CMYK process is a method of printing color by using four inks—cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, the Pantone system's vast array of spot colors used 13 base pigments (15 including white and black) mixed in specified amounts.

The Pantone system also allows for many 'special' colors to be produced such as metallic and fluorescent. Pantone colors are usually described by their allocated number (typically referred to as, for example, 'PMS 130'). PMS colors are almost always used in branding and major corporations specify exactly what their logo color must be, using the Pantone System. A few of the Pantone spot colors...



Using a system like this means all parties know exactly what color is going to be reproduced... and swatch books are available.

Color Usage

Michel Eugène Chevreul (1786-1889) a chemist by trade, tried to produce a systematic approach to seeing colors. In 1839 he published a work that dealt with the "simultaneous contrast" of colors, and contained his famous law (Chevreul's Law): "Two adjacent colors, when seen by the eye, will appear as dissimilar as possible." Let me show you using Pantone 300, a nice medium blue.

The Pantone 300 appears to be a little lighter against the dark background (it also looks to be a little bit larger, but I did not change the size or color of either!). This illusion produces the most obvious example of simultaneous contrast.

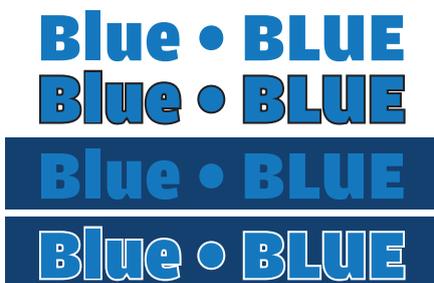


It shows that color placement can have effect on the other colors that surround them.

More Color Usage

Consider the following as some guidelines to remember when you are putting together a print ad or web ad (although these suggestions can be used in any type of design involving color). Here are some takeaways we can use when we work with color:

- ▶ Light colors stand out when placed on a dark background, conversely dark colors work better when contrasted with lighter colors.
 - ▶ White or light colors make all colors more noticeable.
 - ▶ Place complementary colors together and they appear to intensify each other.
 - ▶ Outline colors in black and the color seems to intensify.
 - ▶ Outline dark colors in a thin light color or white and the dark color seems to intensify.
- Bottom line—it's all about the contrast! In the samples below, I have taken type and applied strokes on a light background and on a dark background to show how the contrast intensifies the color with the dark stroke and makes the color "pop" with even a .75 stroke applied. By the way, all type is 26 points...



Color Choice

The color swatches above are just a few of my favorite combinations, which I have broken down into the percentages of the CMYK model. I also included all the percentages of CMYK, even if the percentage was zero.

Most of us print on newsprint (very absorbent, lots of dot gain, colors are not always "crisp"), which means that if you run across a favorite color combination and there isn't very much black, you could probably omit black because "black on newsprint = mud."

The above colors reproduce pretty well on newsprint and I use them quite frequently for my PDF pages as well.

That's why a lot of gray in an ad tends to lack contrast—unless you add white borders or other white relief to add that "pop."

Color Hierarchy

You may create any number of color combinations using the various color gamuts, but it's best to practice restraint. Too many colors in an ad becomes too distracting and focus is lost. It's all about proportions... so what you need to do is pick your dominant color, the others then become accent colors. When working with your main color, consider the audience and the influence certain colors have regarding the color theories.

In all the swatches listed above, you could switch those around and you would get different looks and moods for that information.

Your second color choice, or accent color should be used more sparingly than your dominant color... you don't want the colors competing with each other. You are trying to create a color harmony or balance.

The third color accent should be the one that creates a definite contrast... to call attention to some of the most important information in the ad, so make it bold. Remember contrast?

Final Thoughts

The simplest reason that color gamuts matter is that they tell users how many colors can be displayed and seen. So, a wide color gamut will display more colors than a standard one, for example, leading to more vibrant tones and more realistic imagery.

It also helps you see more closely what the final output will look like, whether that is broadcast, print, or a digital cinema projector. Color can be a major influence in the eyes of the audience.

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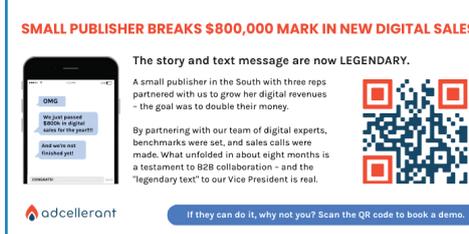
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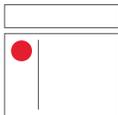
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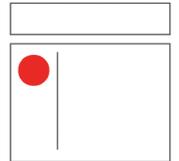


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