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FEBRUARY 2025

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COMING NEXT MONTH

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Michele Jennae

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BY JOYCE FRERICKS –
ACP PRESIDENT

“CRAZY.”

I have been accused of being “out of my mind” a few times — mostly because I live in Minnesota and stay here throughout winter. Today, when I left for work, the thermometer read 23 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

I’ve also heard that being in the publishing industry is “crazy.” Sometimes I do agree it may feel a little crazy, but every profession has its ups and downs.

I have been working at the local newspaper for 25 years. When I started here, we had one newspaper, a shopper and a small niche paper. In those 25 years, we have grown in so many ways. We purchased papers, merged two local papers, changed one to requester and even started a few new publications. We added employees, added circulation, cut circulation, put our entire local publication for free online and then put it behind a paywall and started websites.

We try not to be scared of change at Star Publications because, truthfully, change is the only constant in our business.

One of the things that has helped us most through all of the changes has been our membership with Association of Community Publishers. When we purchased a paper in 2015, I met with a retired publisher from a neighboring community. I had so many questions for her during that one-hour

lunch. She was a wealth of information. One of the most important things she told me was to join IFPA (Independent Free Papers of America), which merged with AFCP in 2020 to create ACP.

Months after my meeting, I called Douglas Fry at IFPA. He invited me to take part in the conference that was in a few months and make a decision about joining after my attendance. I was awestruck at that conference. The attendees didn’t treat each other like competition; they shared sales ideas and advice like there were my business partners. They actually cared if we succeeded.

Following the conference, my head was spinning, and I had a to-do list that was pages long.

Since that first conference in Texas 10 years ago, we have continued to renew our membership every year. The benefits to being a member and going to the conferences and summits have far outweighed the cost of the membership. So much of what Star Publications does today started with information we obtained from ACP sessions and other members. I think my business partners wonder what kind of “crazy” idea I will come back with every time I go to a conference or meeting.

This issue of Publish is about ACP member benefits. ACP has done surveys to find out what is most important to our member-

ship. The answers vary, but the conference and networking are always high on the list. Those have been imperative to us at Star Publications as well. Through the conferences, we have learned about new revenue-generating special sections and have found new vendors for our CRM, a credit card processor, website design software and our newspaper website hosts. We also learned a lot about employee management, and we use a communications platform for our employees at the suggestion of another publisher.

Other benefits that rank high on the list are the circulation audits, sales training and postal discounts.

In 2024, we saved \$5,501.32 in postage due to learning about the marriage mail discount at one of ACP’s conferences. We also saved about \$2,230 from the emerging technology discounts.

ACP has a host of other benefits that will help you in this “crazy” industry we are in. If you aren’t already a member, visit our website at www.communitypublishers.com. If you are a member, you may benefit from visiting the website to see if you are not using any of the current ACP member benefits.

At last check, 2:50 p.m., it is still 17 below. As Billy Joel sang it best, “You may be right. I may be crazy.” ■

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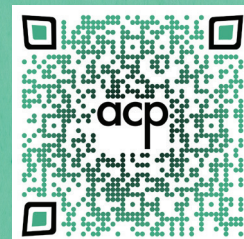


It could be the most profitable decision you make in 2025!

The Association of Community Publishers (ACP) represents community publications from coast to coast, reaching millions of homes across the US and Canada. Our diverse membership ranges from small, independent community publications to major media companies, from subscription based to free distribution, and from weeklies to monthlies. What they have in common is their publications serve local communities.

Our mission at ACP is to *"Help members enhance their viability and strengthen the community publishing industry."*

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* participation in the ADS Network required. All benefits of the Standard membership package included.



BY DOUGLAS FRY

LET ME HEAR FROM YOU

Most of you may know this already: my father was deaf. He wasn't born that way. He didn't suffer a catastrophic event that caused his deafness. His hearing simply got worse and worse until he was finally unattached from the hearing world. It's called nerve loss. Nothing could be done for him except to amplify what others say. I could hear his hearing aids echoing most conversations from about 10 feet. It was that bad.

To illustrate just how bad Dad's hearing was, let me tell you a story. Dad was visiting us for a few days. My son asked me to go to his home about an hour away and install a ceiling fan. He was out of town for a few days and wanted to surprise his wife. We didn't have the alarm code, so when we entered with a key, the burglar alarm went off. It was super loud. So loud I felt my eardrums would burst at any moment. My father simply sat down on the couch and began reading a book. He couldn't hear a thing. The term is "profoundly" deaf. He was.

Growing up, we noticed that he couldn't understand what most people said. For example: "I'm going to need to wear a raincoat today since the weather is so bad." Became something completely different in my dad's ears: "You're going to speed a raincoat rinse your feathers, Dad?" When we would travel by car across the continent during the summer, Dad would have listened to his 6 children expressing our displeasure over just about everything, and when he had enough, he would simply click off his hearing aids. Mom got to continue hearing

our complaints but not Dad. He was blissfully unaware of anything but the sights, no sounds. Ah, memories.

As a teenager, I enjoyed having a little fun at his expense. If his hearing aids were not positioned correctly, he would get feedback, and since they were amplified to rock concert levels, that feedback was LOUD. It sounded like a high-pitched whistle. So, when Dad would lay down on the couch "to catch a few winks" after a hard day teaching calculus to high school students, I went into action. As soon as he closed his eyes, I would mimic that same high-pitched whistle. He would reach up to his ears, adjust his hearing aids, and close his eyes again. I would wait a minute or two and repeat the process. After a few episodes of this, he would look at me, scowl, chuckle, and turn off his hearing aids.

He retired early because he couldn't understand the students any longer. Since he was never sick, he had accrued over two (2) years of paid sick leave and unused vacation time. He and Mom traveled extensively, living in Spain, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic. Dad spoke fluent Spanish but couldn't hear what was said so Mother would translate what others said and use American Sign Language to communicate with him.

I'm telling you this not to get your sympathy or feel badly for Dad. He lived to over 91, by himself after Mom passed, and continued to enjoy life to the very end. The reason I bring him up is because I often feel like my Dad. I want to hear from you. I want to understand what you want from ACP. To serve you better,

I need to know what you want from our meetings, what your challenges are, how we can best assist you. I need and want to hear from you. But most of the time, I only hear deafening silence.

So pick up the phone and let me know what you think of the conferences, leadership summits, and meetings we conduct each month. Tell me what you want addressed at our September 2025 meeting in Mobile, Alabama. What is the most important membership benefit that ACP provides? What would you like us to do that we don't? What are we doing that ticks you off? If you haven't attended a meeting in a while, I'd like to know the reasons so that we can meet your needs better. Do you actually read Publish?

I hope to find out you do read Publish; if not, you won't read this. Perhaps you simply want to call and tell me everything is perfect the way it is. Either way, good or bad, positive or negative, call me. I look forward to hearing from you. If you think I can't hear you there's always email: douglas@communitypublishers.com or 931.446.5239

Thanks. Douglas ■

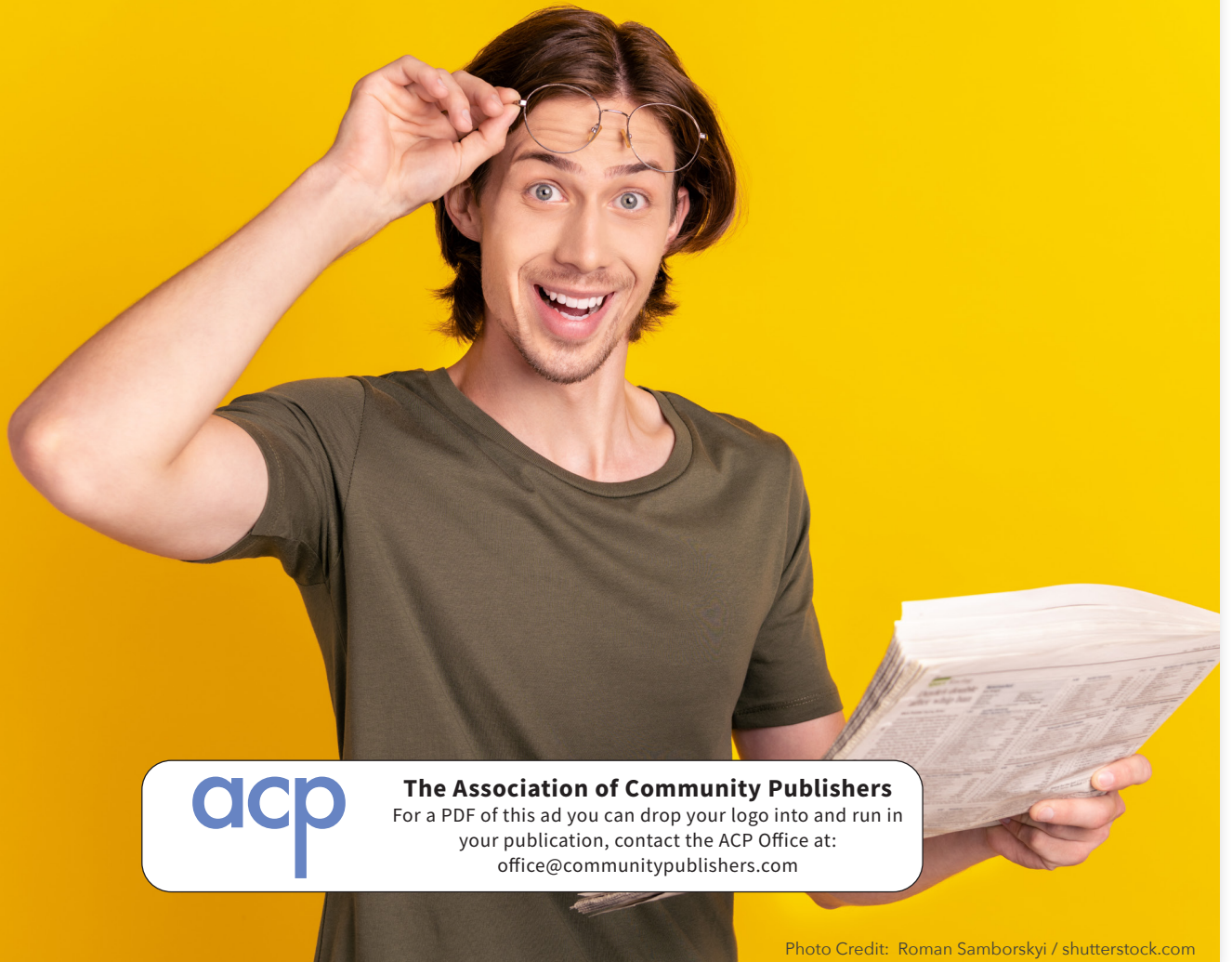


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BY LOREN COLBURN

TIMES ARE CHANGING!



Preparation for last month's 75th Anniversary Issue prompted a reflective walk down memory lane for me. That stroll left me with some sentimental feelings about the industry and the people who built it. I have had the privilege of crossing some extraordinary paths in my 48-year involvement with the association and they have had an incredible impact on my life.

That trip down memory lane also prompted some deeper thoughts on the changes in the industry and the alarming downward shift in the number of traditional community publishing companies that are out there. The more I reflected on it the more it bothered me, until

I took a step back to compare it to some other industries. The reality is, what industry hasn't undergone dramatic change in the last 30 or so years?

Let's look at a couple industries to compare their shift in numbers. The airline industry in 1995 had 20 major carriers across the country and 85 regional, smaller carriers. Today there are 11 major carriers and 38 regional, smaller carriers! That's an alarming and dramatic drop in the number of companies! But upon further review, those carriers in 1995 shared some 492 million domestic travelers while in 2023, there were over 860 million domestic travelers! Air travel didn't decline, it doubled! The industry consolidation was the economic answer to the changing business model of the airline industry. Less pieces to the pie but a whole lot more pie!

How about the grocery business? In 1958, the market share of inde-

pendent grocery stores was 57% of the industry while chain stores got 43%. By 2022, the chain store portion of the retail food industry grew to 72% versus 28% for the shrinking number of independent grocers. A bit more digging into the numbers and you see that the \$26 billion from 1958 (57% of the \$46 billion spent on groceries in 1958) that the independents shared is not as attractive as the \$225 billion (28% of the \$805 billion spent on groceries in 2022) they earned in 2022. Less pieces to the pie but a whole lot more pie!

One more comparison. In the 1950's, there were 230,000 automotive service stations across the country servicing the 52.1 million registered vehicles being driven. By 2022, the number of automotive service and repair businesses had shrunk to 174,200, but they were servicing over 290 million registered vehicles being driven. A 24.3% decline in the number of businesses, but an increase of over 733% in the number of vehicles per business. Less pieces to the pie but a whole lot more pie!

If I take the same approach to our industry, there has been a significant decline in the number of traditional community publications over the last 25 years. That does not mean there is a decline in the people looking for community or consumer information, in fact there are more than ever before. It just means that between printing costs and distribution costs, we need to get more creative in the ways we approach those people. The better we become at reaching people the way they prefer to be reached, the more successful we will become.

That's where ACP can become a great change agent for publishers. By connecting publications together, ACP can facilitate the exchange of ideas, success stories and operational efficiencies between members. This networking benefit remains the single most valuable and effective way to have members helping fellow members to successfully compete for readers in their respective markets. And at the end of the day, it's all about the number of readers each company can connect with.

We include an assortment of member benefits to support participating publications. Circulation audits, the January Spring digital partnership, the educational programs and the annual in-person events are all focused on helping build successful community publishing companies. Networking among members remains the most important component of the membership and the thing that most members point to as the most important benefit.

Yes, the number of community publications may change over time, but the ability to stay viable will be determined by how well we adjust to the changing patterns of readers and consumers of local information. There are more people flying, more people eating, more cars to service and more people looking for information on how to do each of those things better. That's where we come in, the more eyeballs you can attract, the more important your position in the local media hierarchy is something ACP can help you with! So let's work together to impress on markets everywhere... "Print's not dead, it's READ!" ■

Ever been to a newspaper conference and felt out of place?



That won't happen with us!

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75 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

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SEPTEMBER 11-12, 2025

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW – NETWORKING EXTRAVAGANZA!

This annual gathering is the largest trade show in the community publishing industry combined with a conference featuring educational and networking opportunities with industry professionals from around North America. The host city moves around the country to increase participation availability to additional professionals from regional area publications and is typically held in September or October in time for building annual budgets with new ideas.

Is this event a valuable ACP Member Benefit? The best way to explain the ACP Conference and Trade Show value is to let some members who have experienced it first-hand explain it in their own words.

“The Conference is a very productive event packed into 3 days. A short time away to learn and network. You will get ideas and contacts to carry you through the entire year.”

“The Learning Experience is really good. But, the conversations you have with other people in the business that are going through or have overcome the same business experiences and obstacles is really great.”

“It is a chance to get away from your business and gain a new perspective, learn new ideas from speakers, or networking with fellow attendees, a chance to sharpen your saw -- get training and knowledge in new areas of expertise. The fellowship is amazing!”

“This conference is not only packed with continuing education sessions specific to your daily operations, but you'll rub elbows with many of the best minds in our business who are incredibly generous in sharing their knowledge. I would add that it's always a tremendously enjoyable time.”

“This is a must attend conference! Not only do you have a chance to network in a comfortable atmosphere but the education is top notch and relevant.”

“You can generate great revenue making ideas to implement in your own paper from people who are currently proving they work. Everyone who attends has great ideas and they are willing to share!”

This year's conference is coming up September 11-12 in the charming city of Mobile, AL. Experience the southern hospitality of the city that started Mardi Gras while celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the association. This setting will make for the perfect opportunity to relax and

enjoy the company of your fellow participants in the community publishing industry and to bring home that new idea that will help build your next success story. Many members will tell you this is the MOST valuable member benefit ACP has to offer and it has been a cornerstone of their success.

LEADERSHIP RETREATS

ACP's Leadership Retreat is an annual event packed with sessions exclusive to publishers and leaders in our industry. These retreats are held as a more intimate gathering and is limited to a maximum of 50 participants. The smaller gathering allows for a lot of open discussion mixed with topical presentations from a variety of sources.

This event's value is once again best described by attendees of recent leadership retreats asked what they most liked about the event:

The camaraderie! When you get that many publishers in one room, you're bound to come away with something that helps you or your business. OR - better yet - you're able to come to the aid of another publisher and help them with an idea or best practice that they were unaware of.

Interactions with others in a close setting as well as the format of info sharing amongst the group and not solely relied upon by the presenter. Liked the social time and the outing to the ball game which provided good interaction time to talk to others about the day's topics as well as others.

The openness of all the participants and the great questions to everyone at the start & finish. Was impressed with not just a couple people comments, but with everyone's!



ACP MEMBER BENEFITS

Getting new ideas and learning how other publishers operate is extremely important. The other publishers at ACP events are always willing to share.

Watch for the next Leadership Retreat which is planned for early 2026. Publish Magazine will carry the dates and location announcement as soon as plans become finalized.

THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



The Leadership Institute (TLI) is a structured, comprehensive, cost effective sales and leadership training program designed specifically for ACP members and the community publishing industry. TLI debuted at the 2006 ACP Annual Conference in Miami and has delivered industry specific training programs at each annual conference since.

TLI sessions are presented at the ACP Annual Conferences, in periodic virtual sessions, in the On-Demand Training Center and at some of your local and regional association meetings. If you are interested in obtaining some of the training materials to use for staff training, contact the ACP office to arrange access to available materials. The TLI faculty members represent the industry elite who have a significant track record of success, are highly recommended for their knowledge, commitment and exhibit exemplary work ethic. They represent those unique individuals who are ready, willing and able to make a difference in the lives of oth-

ers to help build and facilitate our curriculum and our industry.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

ACP offers professional development programs through The Leadership Institute (TLI) for the community publication industry. Providing member companies with an opportunity to gain industry specific training certificates since the first graduating class in 2009, ACP has awarded 146 Associate Advertising Executive (AAE) certificates and eight Certified Advertising Executive (CAE) certificates.

The AAE certificate requires 15 credits in TLI classes from the class offerings that are presented at ACP's annual conference, ACP Virtual Training Sessions, in-person state and regional events and through the ACP On-Demand virtual training center. The AAE classes are predominantly sales focused and provide a broad base of training in the industry specific sales process culminating with a general sales knowledge test to complete certification.

The CAE certificate is offered to those who have successfully complete their AAE Certificate. They then need to participate in three of the management certificate programs the ACP offers members at least once each year with topics that have included Effective Hands-on Management, Coaching Employees Workshop, Creative Leadership, etc. At least one of these sessions is offered in conjunction with the annual conference and trade show each year.

Professional certifications and certificates by ACP are designed to recognize the highest level of professionalism and growth of dedicated community publication Professionals. Participants are able to document their knowledge in all aspects of media and marketing as well as their commitment to professional development in the publication industry.

POWER SALES UNIVERSITY & ON DEMAND TRAINING CENTER



At ACP we know that training for your staff is critical to the success of your business, so we strive to provide as many educational programs as possible. In addition to The Leadership Institute, ACP offers several other industry specific sales training programs and materials for you and your staff. You'll find a variety of other training materials on the ACP website, most of which are free of charge to ACP members! Many of these programs are available on demand and can be viewed from the comfort of your office at your own pace.

The ACP On Demand Training Center offers 24/7 training that can be completed on an individual basis or in a group setting, depending on your needs. It offers both industry specific sales training from The Leadership Institute (TLI) as well as a world-class, general sales training program for your team, brought to you by Power Sales University, all in one place.

For a more comprehensive look into the On-Demand Training Center, see the article on page 23.

ACP NEW HIRE SALES TRAINING PROGRAM

The eight class sequence available in the Online Learning Center provides a great way to train incoming sales hires in the basic process of advertising sales. This training is presented utilizing the terminology and delivered from the same perspective they will be dealing with out in the selling situation. Stepping them through the sales call from opening to close, they will have a much better understanding of the key elements to successful sales calls.

The Class Sequence Consists of:

- TLI-102 Prospecting
- TLI-104 Opening a Sales Dialogue
- TLI-106 Effective Questioning
- TLI-105 Communicating Through Listening
- TLI-107 Making Recommendations Using Features & Benefits
- TLI-103 Answering the Classic Sales Objections
- TLI-101 Closing the Sale
- TLI-108 Four Essentials of an Effective Advertising Campaign

Take advantage of this class sequence for new hires while utilizing the additional sales training materials available at Power Sales University. This adds the ability to help target specific areas of training or answer specific questions involved in the sales process. These tools can be instrumental in a new salesperson's ultimate success as well as providing a professional sales component to your training program.

All you have to do is go to the On-Demand Training Center now and complete your personal registration. ACP Members in good standing can contact the ACP office to initiate their participation, enabling them to access the entire On-Demand Training Center and be able to complete the initial sequence of core selling classes. This member benefit of ACP is supported by the association in order to assure the highest quality industry specific training and extensive sales training is available to all members.

In addition to the New Hire Training sequence, the On-Demand Training Center also includes 8 additional industry specific TLI classes. These classes help both new hires and seasoned sales professionals keep their selling skills sharpened. Having this training available from your location and whenever you have time and opportunity to train makes this member benefit a cost effective and valuable tool.

INDUSTRY ADVOCACY

The ACP office works hard to monitor events, developments, trends and opportunities that affect members of the community publication industry. Materials costs, USPS changes and discounts, pending legislation that impacts printers and publishers, and so many other important areas of interest all get close attention. Looking back over the last five years, here are just a few of the issues we have worked to keep industry members aware of, up to date on and their voices heard:

Newsprint Tariffs – In response to the proposed tariffs on Canadian newsprint suppliers, ACP endorsed a coalition of printers and publishers called STOPP to oppose the proposed countervailing duties. Through a series of email blasts, legislative contact initiatives and collective industry support, the efforts eventually resulted in the International Trade Commission terminating the duties being applied to uncoated groundwood.

USPS Rate Changes – Our partnership with the Saturation Mailers Coalition helps us monitor changes within the USPS rates, processes and procedures as a critical aspect of many members extensive reliance on USPS delivery for their publications. Keeping members informed as well as coordinating a larger voice for our members is essential to the economic well-being of the industry.

USPS Available Discounts – Coordinating the efforts and materials necessary to take advantage of discounts available with the Integrated Technology Promotion offered by the USPS. By developing an ad targeted at the Mobile Shopping technologies option, members utilizing Marketing Mail can qualify for a 3% discount on their postage through a 6-month promotion period that they select. A new ad program is currently being planned and developed for the 2025 Mobil Shopping option.

Monitoring of Industry Related Legislation – Keeping track of legislation presented on the federal

and state levels that will impact the community publication industry is a complicated task. Federal bills like HR4756 introduced by Congresswoman Claudia Tenney (NY-24) and Suzan DelBene (D-WA) would utilize tax credits to address the decline of local news organizations and support small businesses. State bills like HB-33 in Ohio changing public notification law to allow municipalities to publish notices on their own websites also present concerns to members that are monitored and communicated.

These recent examples are just several of the many ways we represent and connect industry members with the national business world to promote their interests and economic importance within their respective communities.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

ACP realizes the importance and value provided by allowing members to gain recognition on a national level for excellence in performance. This recognition is supplied in a variety of our member benefits and is extended to individuals, publications and member companies. Here are a few of the sources of recognition that provide for member team morale building, affirmation of quality objectives, promotional branding opportunities and individual achievement recognition.

INDIVIDUAL AWARD RECOGNITION

Annually ACP presents three individual awards to industry professionals who have performed at an outstanding level in specific areas of the business. This recognition provides our opportunity to acknowledge their contributions not only to them, but to their companies, their communities and the industry as a whole.

Publisher of the Year Award – ACP's highest honor is bestowed on a publisher who has made significant contributions to their community, their company, the association

ACP MEMBER BENEFITS

and the industry through their outstanding performance and dedication to excellence.

Distinguished Service Award – Awarded for an individual’s consistently high level of outstanding performance throughout their career to enhance ACP and the entire community publication industry. This award recognizes their selfless investment of time, talents, vision and efforts in an effort to benefit others.

ACP Volunteer Award – This award looks to recognize the contributions of an industry volunteer who has given significantly to the betterment of each of our businesses over the years, always without thought to personal gain as did the award’s namesake for so many years. Typically, these award winners are the first to answer the call to duty and repeatedly do so, year after year.

BEST OF THE BEST PUBLICATION AWARDS



International Award Winning Publication

This is your company’s opportunity to get some recognition for all the exceptional efforts that go into producing the highest quality publications. Use your success story and individual awards to promote your company, your staff and your customers. These awards can help boost everything from employee job satisfaction to your company’s reputation in your local market.

With over 35 different award categories to enter, regardless of your publication’s style, you will be

competing against like publications. Everything from editorial material, individual ad designs, cover designs, special sections, promotional materials and digital products can be entered and judged against other entries from across North America.

Award winners are typically announced at the annual fall conference! Each winning publication receives a presentation quality certificate detailing their awards for the current year for display in their office. Many of our winners have special celebrations to honor these accomplishments by their staff and recognize the extraordinary efforts that go into producing a quality publication.

The awards program is open to all ACP members and typically draws over 1,400 entries from a major portion of our membership. The entries are submitted through a specially designed online portal in the spring each year and represent work produced throughout the previous calendar year. For a list of categories and participation rules, download the 2025 Best of the Best Entry Forms available at: <https://www.communitypublishers.com/best-of-the-best>.

Remember – this is the perfect opportunity to... **Reward Your Customers, Reward Your Staff and Reward Yourself!**

PUBLISH MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Our monthly magazine, Publish targets people, companies and events that are making newsworthy contributions to the industry. The articles include informative publication related topics, Member and Associate Member Profiles, coverage of accomplishments and innovations, and other current events updates important to community publishers. The magazine is circulated not just to ACP members, but to an industry wide audience across North America. Publish Magazine provides recognition opportunities for publications to promote accomplishments, associate



partners to promote their products and services to a national audience and the association to put a quality foot forward in promoting community publications.

RISING STARS PROGRAM

The ACP Rising Stars program is designed to honor individuals under the age of 36 who are emerging leaders in the community publishing industry. This ongoing program recognizes up to 7 individuals each year who represent the best of our up-and-coming industry professionals from nominees submitted by member publications. These indi-



ACP MEMBER BENEFITS

viduals exemplify good character, leadership, and professionalism not only at work, but in the communities they serve.

These young professionals demonstrate the promise of and a commitment to impacting their publications as well as the community publication industry in a positive manner through professional achievements. They not only perform their jobs to a high standard, but they also have a commitment to furthering their knowledge and abilities through participation in this national program.

Award recipients are recognized in Publish Magazine, the official publication of ACP and participate in an awards presentation program at the ACP Annual Conference and Trade Show. They are privileged to receive free conference registration, conference meal plans, specialized training sessions and up to \$500 in travel reimbursements as part of their ongoing active participation.

The ACP Rising Stars program does not end with this initial recognition program as Rising Stars are asked to assist the various initiatives of the as-

sociation on an ongoing basis for up to two years as part of their commitment to the program. ACP recognizes that we have much to learn from these talented young people and desires to use their skills to help us shape the industry going forward. In return for this participation in regularly scheduled conference calls and for volunteering their time to assist with ACP initiatives, the association provides additional leadership development training and the opportunity to interact with other young professionals from across the country. ■

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2025 BEST OF THE BEST AWARDS



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**REWARD YOUR CUSTOMERS
REWARD YOUR STAFF
REWARD YOURSELF!**

Enter ACP's 2025 Best of the Best Publication Awards contest and show the rest of the world your best work. Use your winning entries to promote your staff, your advertisers and your national award winning publication! **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!** Entries must be received by March 31, 2025. Forms are available for download from the ACP website, www.communitypublishers.com/awards or email the ACP office for more information.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATING IN A TRADE ASSOCIATION

BY WRIZZLE AI (GPT-4O MINI)

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, the value of connections and collaboration cannot be overstated. One of the most effective ways to build these connections is through participation in a trade association. These organizations not only provide a platform for networking but also play a vital role in promoting industry standards and practices. In this article, we will explore the various benefits of joining a trade association and how they can positively impact your business and local communities.

Networking Opportunities: Building Relationships that Matter

One of the standout advantages of joining a trade association is the networking opportunities it provides. Membership opens doors to a diverse group of professionals within your industry. Trade associations often host events, conferences, and workshops, creating an ideal environment for members to connect with peers, potential clients, and industry leaders. These interactions are crucial for sharing insights, exploring partnerships, and even discovering new markets.

Participating in such networking opportunities fosters trust and camaraderie among members. When professionals come together, they exchange ideas and best practices, leading to enhanced productivity and innovation. Furthermore, these relationships can spill over into local communities. Members often collaborate on projects that benefit both their businesses and the communities in which they operate, strengthening local ties and driving economic growth.

Advocacy and Representation: Amplifying Your Voice

Trade associations serve as powerful advocates for their members, repre-

senting their interests at various levels of government and within the industry. By participating in a trade association, you gain access to collective advocacy efforts that can significantly influence policies affecting your business. Whether it's lobbying for beneficial regulations or addressing industry challenges, being part of a larger organization amplifies your voice.

This advocacy is particularly important in local communities, where the decisions made by policymakers can directly impact your operations. Trade associations work to ensure that the concerns of their members are heard, advocating for fair business practices and support for local enterprises. By lending your voice to these efforts, you contribute to creating a favorable environment for everyone in your industry.

Access to Resources and Education: Staying Ahead of the Curve

Another significant benefit of being involved in a trade association is access to valuable resources and educational opportunities. Many associations provide their members with research reports, industry publications, and training programs designed to keep them informed about the latest trends and developments. This wealth of information helps businesses adapt to changing market dynamics and stay competitive.

Publications in local communities, often produced or supported by trade associations, can be particularly influential. They help disseminate knowledge about industry standards, best practices, and innovations that can drive growth. By participating actively, you can contribute to these publications, sharing your expertise and insights while positioning your-

self as a thought leader within your community.

Moreover, educational events and workshops allow you and your team to develop new skills, enhancing your overall capabilities. In an era where knowledge is power, continuous learning is essential for both personal and professional growth.

Community Engagement: Fostering a Positive Impact

Beyond individual benefits, trade associations also play a critical role in fostering community engagement. Many associations initiate programs aimed at giving back to local communities. This could involve organizing charitable events, sponsoring local initiatives, or participating in workforce development programs. Engaging with the community not only enhances your company's reputation but also builds goodwill.

When businesses participate in community-focused activities, they reinforce their commitment to social responsibility. This, in turn, can lead to increased customer loyalty and trust. Customers today are more discerning; they prefer to support businesses that actively contribute to the well-being of their communities. By aligning your business with a trade association that values local engagement, you enhance your brand image and make a positive impact.

Conclusion: Embrace the Collective Strength

In conclusion, participating in a trade association offers myriad benefits that extend far beyond individual gains. From networking opportunities and advocacy to access to resources and community engagement, the ad-

(continued on page 30)

INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES



Association of Community Publishers – Website

ACP Membership Information

If we have sparked enough curiosity or interest, here is a link to the ACP Membership page on our website. Watch the videos or get more details on our member benefits.

🏠 <https://www.communitypublishers.com/membership>



The Bureaus, Inc. – Article

7 Reasons Why You Should Join An Industry Association

This article reinforces the major areas of value from an active participation in a trade association. It is important to remember that the key to all of the benefits is active participation – it's up to you to make it happen.

🏠 <https://thebureaus.com/7-reasons-why-you-should-join-an-industry-association/>



Employment Enterprises, Inc. – Blog Article

The Top 5 Benefits of Joining an Industry Association

Another look at important aspects of industry trade association participation. Of particular value is number 3, earn industry-specific certifications! We can help you with that at ACP.

🏠 <https://eeihr.com/blog/employment-expert/the-top-5-benefits-of-joining-an-industry-association/>



Our Own Start-up – Article

7 Advantages Of Joining Trade Associations

Easy read stepping through the seven reasons businesses should be involved with their trade association. Nothing new here but makes a great case for calling ACP if you're not a member!

🏠 <https://ourownstartup.com/7-advantages-of-joining-trade-associations/>



Storygize – Posted Article

Eight Tips for Writing an Irresistible Native Ad Headline

This article addresses the importance of the headline to the readership level of native advertising. If you don't read this whole article, at least read through the first tip! 1. Be Concise, "When you have written your headline, you have spent 80 cents of your dollar."

🏠 <https://www.storygize.com/eight-tips-for-writing-an-irresistible-native-ad-headline/>

The Cannon – Article

Your Guide to Business Networking for Entrepreneurs

By Brad True

This article steps through the importance and best practices for business networking. They develop a sound case for networking being a whole lot more than collecting business cards!

🏠 <https://www.thecannon.com/blog/your-guide-to-business-networking-for-entrepreneurs>



Marq – Blog Article

The 5 Design Basics for Making a Magazine Ad

If you're a fan of creativity in advertising, you will love this article. It examines the ad design from colors, fonts, and a whole lot more. It also offers some great illustrations to back up the content.

🏠 <https://www.marq.com/blog/5-design-basics-making-magazine-ad>



American Express – Article

7 Ways to Build a Strong Professional Network

One more plug for the value of networking. This article provides strategies for networking professional events, community service, social media and personal interactions.

🏠 <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/7-ways-to-build-a-strong-network/>



WordStream – Blog Article

I've Designed 100+ Display Ads: Here's What I Learned

By Kate Lindsay

This is an interesting look at 7 specific tips to help increase the effectiveness of display ads. These are practical and well supported tips that every designer should embrace, even the hardest one, "Don't be married to your ideas!"

🏠 <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2019/07/09/ad-design>



Newest addition for your “Advertiser Help Page” Listings

99Designs – Blog Article

15 banner ad design tips to get more clicks

By Karla Lant

This article walks through the specific design needs for banner ads. It covers a lot of ground all the way from size, colors, animations and a great deal more. This should be mandatory reading for anyone working the digital ad word.

🏠 <https://99designs.com/blog/marketing-advertising/14-design-tips-for-more-clickable-banner-ads/>



ACP Member Benefit For Your Employees

Bob Wright Memorial Scholarships

Have your student apply for one of four scholarships!



Bob Wright Memorial Scholarship Requirements:

- Parent, guardian or grandparent must work for a community paper that is a current member of the Association of Community Publishers (ACP).
- Applicant must be a high school graduating senior or current college student.
- Applicant must be attending a 4 year college, vocational trade school or community college.
- Application must be received by April 1, 2025

DOWNLOAD APPLICATION AT:

www.communitypublishers.com/scholarships

ACP'S ON DEMAND TRAINING CENTER

Are you ready to take your sales to the next level? If so, you really need to be taking advantage of this FREE ACP member benefit.

The past few years have been hard on everyone. We understand that in many cases, it is no longer feasible for publishers to bring their sales team to the annual conference or other in-person events for training. ACP has developed a way to bring the training to you! The On Demand Training Center offers 24/7 access to sales training that can be completed on an individual basis or in a group setting, depending on your needs. It offers both industry specific sales training from The Leadership Institute (TLI) as well as a world-class, general sales training program for your team, brought to you by Power Sales University, all in one place.

In partnering with PSU, ACP is able to update and completely refresh the current TLI material, add additional industry specific content through the TLI program and enhance the collection of training videos to increase our online offerings. In addition to the TLI material, we are now able to offer you over 130 interactive sales training modules from the Power Sales University platform. Regardless of prior experience or training, this program guides you through every critical aspect of sales methodology in a short, easily digestible, and actionable way for you to immediately implement in the field the techniques you learn. It will also give you access to a series of videos where the sales trainer has videoed himself on a live sales call.

The PSU material is designed with flexibility in mind so you can either have your sales team work individually at their own pace, or, if you choose, it can be used for training in a team setting, giving you the cues to stop for discussion with your team at certain points. This could come in handy for those who conduct sales meetings on a regular basis. You also have the ability

to assign training to specific users, create teams in the platform, manage users and receive notifications upon completion of assignments for your staff if desired. These are just a few examples of the wide range of tools the new On Demand Training Center will offer. Another great feature is that the PSU modules are short – most of them are less than 20 minutes in length.

As for the TLI side, we have a great training series for new hires or salespeople who are just beginning a sales training program. This is a series of 8 classes with Rob Zarrilli, our TLI Dean, which are very specific to the industry. They run through the basics of the sales process, specifically relating to advertising sales. These TLI training videos are a little bit longer, averaging about an hour each. As we launch the new platform, we will have a few other higher level TLI classes available as well, and we will continue to add to that library over time. Our goal is to add additional industry specific training for a range of other departments including graphics and editorial in the future, also.

Whether you're using the TLI training or the PSU training, you will be sure to find something for everyone. From the salesperson on their first day in the field, to the most seasoned sales professional, no matter what level you are, you will take something away from this training.

As mentioned earlier, this will be a growing library of content as we continue to add material to the site and PSU continues to expand as well. One of the best features of this new member benefit is the convenience that it provides. With short sessions and the flexibility to train at your own pace, these programs can easily fit into anyone's schedule.

In the process of evaluating this program initially, we asked Jane Quairoli of Kapp Advertising Service to give the site a "trial run" for us. Jane serves as an ACP Board Member and also on the Education & Training Committee, so

she has been as close to this project as anyone. Jane and her sales team have been using the site for months now, so we asked Jane to share her overall opinion based on her experience and here is what she had to say:

"I've been through an extensive amount of training in 37+ years at Kapp, but I am so excited about this. I wish I would have had the PSU training modules when I first started. While not industry specific, everything I have viewed can be applied in our industry. I often "rewind" the video to hear a great point over again & have watched a few twice. As for the TLI training class videos, I can't say enough about Rob's TLI courses. I have always enjoyed TLI training. This site is the best of both worlds."

This training benefit is available to all current ACP members in good standing at no cost, saving you thousands of dollars a year. You have nothing to lose! Contact the ACP office at 877.203.2327 to get started today. You have the option of setting up your sales team yourself or we can provide you with a link that you simply email to your staff, and they can follow the process to set themselves up in the system. We will also have training videos available for both managers and salespeople to make it as easy as possible to get started.

We are confident that if you commit to giving the ACP On Demand Training Center a try, it will be well worth your time investment and benefit you and your staff in many ways. ■



Testimonial Video

Link: <https://vimeo.com/766959425/68feb33c4f>

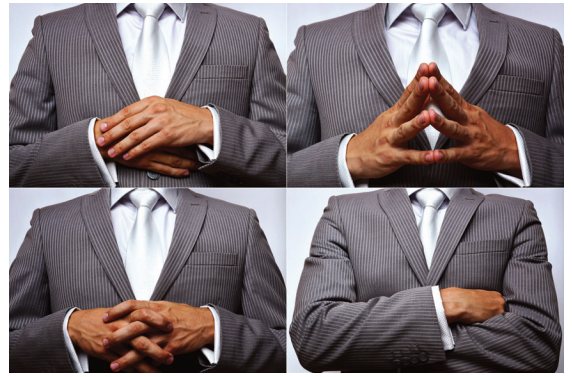
QR Code – Sample Training Video Link:

<https://vimeo.com/762311039/df6dc818ac>



WHO'S BUYING? The Importance of Body Language In Sales

BY JAMES A. BAKER – FOUNDER, BAKER COMMUNICATIONS



There are three components to effective communication: Verbal (the words that are said), Vocal (the tone and delivery) and Visual (body language, gestures, eye contact and facial expression). Studies have found that any lack of alignment between these factors will cause mistrust in the listener, and that they will tend to give the most credence to the visual factor. That is to say, if your words say one thing and your eyes say something else, the customer will believe your eyes.

Most salespeople focus solely on the verbal part of the sales effort, the communication channel over which they have the most conscious understanding and control. Many salespeople lose sales as a result of this focus, because of self-defeating verbal and non-verbal expressions.

In addition, being attentive to a customer's body language and vocal cues will produce valuable insights for the salesperson. A shift in body language or behavior and vocal patterns often signals an interruption in thought processes or a change in attitude.

Recognizing the behavior you are faced with is critical to knowing what to say, when to say it, and how to say it.

RECOGNIZING CUES

A “cue” is a behavior, behavioral pattern, or shift in behavior that reveals a reaction or feeling. Cues can be non-verbal or verbal.

- Non-verbal Cues: Body language, vocal tone, and voice inflection; provide insight into changes in attitude.
- Verbal Cues: Customer statements may signal business needs related to productivity, profitability or

image enhancement. Alternatively, they may signal personal needs or behavioral style.

Here are a few non-verbal cues to watch for, in both yourself and the customer:

PROBLEM CUES

Clearing throat, whistling, perspiring, or any kind of fidgeting with the hands can indicate unease. Watch for tugging or pinching at clothes or skin.

Doodling, drumming, kicking one foot rhythmically with legs crossed, resting head in palms, or staring blankly are signs of distraction or “checking out.”

Frustration or defensiveness may be reflected in short breaths, hands clenched in fists or making “karate chop” gestures, pointing with the index finger, hand running through hair or rubbing the back of the neck, and crossed arms or legs.

If the customer is not looking at you, is drawing away physically, turning sideways to you, looking at you sideways, pointing feet or body towards the exit, and crossing his or her arms, the customer is probably suspicious.

NEUTRAL CUES

Hand-to-face gestures such as chin stroking or playing with eyeglasses, a tilted head, and wandering around can be signs that the customer is seriously evaluating and considering.

A customer who is touching or chewing on a pen, rubbing thumbs together, biting their nails or putting hands in pockets may need reassurance.

POSITIVE CUES

Open hands, open arms, tilted head, and pleasant facial expression

indicate a cooperative, open attitude.

Confidence is reflected in an upright posture, hands behind the back or near chest (on lapels) or thumbs in coat pockets. The expression is cheerful.

An expectant customer may exhibit their anticipation by rubbing palms together, moving closer, or crossing their fingers. You may get a “ready to pounce” impression.

When in agreement, many people will move closer and move as if to touch if not actually touching. Gestures are open and hands may move towards the chest.

A customer who is ready to make a deal may place hands on hips when standing or on mid-thigh when seated, sit on the edge of their seat, grip the edge of the table, and assume a position that suggests a sprinter about to take off from the starting line.

WATCH FOR CUES

Once you have an awareness of your customer's cues, you can more effectively manage the sales process. Most of your customers will demonstrate repeated patterns of verbal and non-verbal cues. A shift in cues can indicate a change in attitude. An effective representative listens and watches actively for these patterns and responds accordingly.

Baker Communications offers leading edge training solutions for sales makers and sales managers that will help you address the goals and achieve the outcomes addressed in this article. For more information about how your organization can achieve immediate and lasting behavior change that will uncover new opportunities, drive revenue, and boost your bottom line, <https://www.bakercommunications.com/selling.html> ■



BY KAITLIN DONNAN

BENEFIT-COST RATIO

Around this time of year, once our resolutions are set in stone—or, let’s be honest, have fizzled out over the last few weeks—we truly start to reevaluate how they benefit us, or perhaps what they cost us.

More often than not, when we think of benefits we think of financial. The cost/risk comes into play, and we wonder, what do I stand to gain from this? A green smoothie at breakfast might be healthier than a second (or third) coffee of the day, but depending on the ratio you might be sacrificing flavor. A membership card at a store sounds like a great idea in theory when you get points for purchases, but not if you only shop there twice a year.

At times, the line between personal and professional benefits blur. In the office you try out a new task and end up with a new skill; you take on a new role and find more stable footing and self-assurance. All because you decided yes.

The Association of Community Publishers offers a plethora of benefits to its members, new and established alike. From the annual conference and trade show, to retreats and connections with vendors and like-minded individuals, to its Rising Stars Program highlighting up and coming professionals.

I know for my own sake, being nominated for the Rising Stars in 2023 was an honor, but then so daunting too: leading monthly discussions? Contributing articles to the as-

sociation’s magazine (hello!)? Attending annual conferences? I’m not one of the managers of my company, so there was certainly a mental hurdle to contend with. Yet my first conference was an amazing experience; as I sat at a table of people in the same boat, I realized oh, this has so much potential. And those monthly discussions? They’re just that: conversations between peers. This organization is a reminder that while we might feel like little fish in a big pond sometimes, this industry really isn’t that small, but we each keep it moving.

Each of us has our own skillset, our own roles within our companies. Our contributions vary, but the heart of what we hope to gain remains the same: we want to learn.

And so, while this issue dives deep into the benefits the ACP offers to its members, I wanted to take a moment to showcase some of the latest Rising Stars, and how they have each benefited in their own ways as well.

For Kari Jurrens (class of 2023), she has found “Making connections with others in our industry across the nation has helped me get new ideas professionally and made friendships personally.” For new Rising Stars, she says, “Be involved. Don’t be afraid to get to know others.”

“The biggest benefit for me has been gaining fresh ideas and perspectives from others in the industry,” says Kara Ivison (class of 2022). “I also really appreciate the conferences as well—connecting with peers and vendors is insightful. Even

though I’m not a decision-maker in the company, it’s valuable to see what is out there and how it can benefit our industry.”

At first, the expectations of the program can be a bit daunting on paper, but she encourages new and fellow nominees with “It’s not hard! I am relatively introverted and was nervous about the monthly chats, but you end up feeling pretty comfortable with everyone and it becomes much more of a resource than a ‘meeting.’”

“Come in with an open mind! I wasn’t sure where I could contribute, but I gained the confidence to bring new ideas and contribute to ACP overall,” Jayde Vogeler (class of 2023) says, who’s also found herself growing her leadership experience and gaining insight on different marketing tactics. “I’ve made connections and met some awesome people and leaders. I’m learning new skills and using my established skills to support ACP. Now, I have an interest in learning more about social media and how to use it more effectively for business.”

Christine White (class of 2022), who graduates from the program this year, cites “Going to the conference has been a huge benefit, from talking to different vendors to the various classes offered. Most important to me is networking with other ACP members and knowing there is a bright future ahead.” She adds, “I’ve gained a lot of insightful information and met some great people along the way!”

RISING STAR

On the opposite end of the spectrum, for newcomer Payton North (class of 2024), the benefits of the Rising Stars have been both personal and professional. “[It was exciting] to be surrounded by so many people in the print industry and [to] learn from them was invaluable; creating friendships along the way was a bonus,” she says. While the 2024 conference marked her first trip where she would know only

one other person there, “I’m thankful to the Rising Stars for broadening my horizons in more ways than one.”

Fellow class of 2024 nominee Caitlin Neeland cites the Rising Stars as an avenue for continued growth and development, and for any potential nominee to “Be a sponge and absorb what you can! This group has a wealth of knowledge amongst its leaders and members.

You never know what you may learn or the new connections you may make, so keep your heart and eyes open.”

From those of us in the Rising Stars, Happy New Year, and may 2025 be a year of growth and productivity! And don’t forget, there are benefits for taking a potential risk—sometimes you just have to say yes, even if it seems a little daunting. ■

Our Mission:

Help members enhance their viability and strengthen the community publishing industry.

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www.communitypublishers.com





BY JOHN FOUST
GREENSBORO, NC

TEN WAYS TO MESS UP AN ONLINE PRESENTATION

These days, ad professionals are conducting more digital presentations than ever before. While there are some similarities with in-person meetings, there are some significant differences. Let's take a quick look at ten of the biggest mistakes in online presentations:

1. PROBLEMS WITH TECHNOLOGY.

"Can you hear me now?" is more than a line from an old television spot; it's a reality of many online conversations. As you plan the presentation, be sure to consider the meeting platform, webcams, and desktop-tablet-phone differences. It's better to address those issues ahead of time than to be surprised when things are underway.

2. UNPROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE.

Even if you're presenting from home or an informal business environment, it's important to look professional. While a business suit is not necessarily required, be sure to look neat. And don't forget to smile.

3. CAMERA MOVEMENT.

My wife had a recent call, in which one of the participants started walking around with his laptop computer. For several minutes, the camera treated everyone to jerky views of his ceiling and kitchen cabinets, all while he was talking. For goodness' sakes, keep the camera in one position.

4. DISTRACTIONS.

We all know it's not good to see someone fumbling with papers during a meeting at a conference table. That's just as bad in an online presentation, because it indicates disorganization. In addition, be sure to clean up your background, so it is simple and free of clutter.

5. HARD-TO-SEE EXHIBITS AND GRAPHICS.

Advance planning is the key, here. If you display ads or charts, prepare carefully so everything will go smoothly. If you hold something up to the camera, make sure it is super-simple and in steady hands.

6. WINGING IT.

There's a sneaky little voice in some salespersons' minds that says, "Hey, you're not meeting in someone else's office. You're in familiar surroundings, and you know so much about your product that you can make the sale just by talking off the cuff." Don't listen to that voice. The only way to be at your best is to prepare and practice.

7. NOT ACKNOWLEDGING EVERYONE.

There is often a tendency to talk to the main contact and pay little attention to others in a meeting. That's always bad manners, whether face-to-face or on a screen.

8. TALKING IN A MONOTONE.

It's not just what you say; it's how you say it. One of the fastest ways to lose attention is to speak in a tone of voice that lacks energy and enthusiasm. Put some excitement in your words.

9. TALKING TOO MUCH.

A remote call is not a license to "talk at" people. Whatever the format, a sales conversation should be a dialogue, not a monologue. Think of ways to encouragement. Ask plenty of questions and respond to their answers with respect.

10. NOT LISTENING BETWEEN THE LINES.

Watch for facial expressions and listen for voice inflections, just like you do in on-site presentations. If you don't, you may miss something which could be a deal maker or deal breaker. ■

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John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training DVDs to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: ✉ john@john-foust.com

HOW TO CRAFT COMPELLING AD COPY HEADLINES THAT CONVERT

BY NICOLETTE LORINCZ

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(This is the first part of a multi-article series to be continued next month)

Imagine scrolling through your social media feed. Dozens of ads fly by, but only a handful grab your attention. What makes you pause and click? Most of the time, it's the headline that does the trick.

The right headline can turn a casual scroller into a curious clicker, and that's the magic we're about to explore.

In this article, we'll break down the art and science of crafting ad copy headlines that not only catch the eye but also drive conversions. You'll find actionable tips, real-world examples, and proven strategies to create ad headlines that truly convert.

Let's get started!

WHAT IS A HEADLINE?

A headline is the first thing people see in your ad. It's the bold, attention-grabbing text that's supposed to entice viewers to stop what they're doing and pay attention. Think of it as the first impression your ad makes. If your headline doesn't resonate, your ad might as well not exist.

WHY HEADLINES MATTER?

In the fast-paced world of online advertising, you have mere seconds to make an impression.

A great headline can be the difference between a potential customer engaging with your ad or scrolling past it. It sets the tone for the rest of your message and can make or break the success of your campaign.

Consider this: 80% of people read headlines, but only 20% will go on to read the rest of your content. This stat alone underscores the importance of

getting your ad headline right.

9 types of ad headlines you should know about

Before you start writing, it helps to know the different headline types that work well in ads. Each type serves a specific purpose and can be tailored to fit your brand's voice and your audience's needs.

Let's dive into nine headline types that have been proven to convert.

1. The question headline

The question headline is designed to pique curiosity by asking a question that the reader wants to be answered. It's engaging because it directly involves the reader.

For example, "Are You Making These Common Marketing Mistakes?" This headline works because it makes the reader think, "What mistakes? Am I making them?"

2. The how-to headline

How-to headlines promise a solution or a benefit, which is why they're so powerful. They tell the reader that by clicking on your ad, they'll learn something valuable.

For instance, "How to Increase Your Email Open Rates by 50%." It's straightforward and offers a clear benefit.

3. The list headline

List headlines are popular because they're easy to read and promise multiple pieces of valuable information.

For example, "10 Ways to Improve Your SEO Today." Readers love lists because they know what to expect and can quickly scan for the information they need.

4. The command headline

A command headline tells the reader what to do in a direct and assertive way. It's often used to drive immediate action.

For example, "Start Your Free Trial Now!" This type of headline is effective because it's clear and leaves no room for hesitation.

5. The testimonial headline

Testimonial headlines use real customer feedback to build trust and credibility. By showcasing what others think of your product or service, you can persuade new customers to give it a try.

An example could be, "See Why 5,000+ Marketers Love Our Tool."

6. The curiosity headline

Curiosity headlines create intrigue by withholding just enough information to make the reader want to learn more.

For instance, "The Secret to Boosting Your Sales (Hint: It's Not What You Think)." This type of headline is effective because it plays on the reader's curiosity, compelling them to click through.

7. The pain point headline

Pain point headlines zero in on a problem the reader is facing and offer a solution. This type of headline works well because it resonates with the reader's frustrations and promises relief.

For example, "Struggling to Stay Organized? Here's the Tool You Need." By addressing a specific pain point, you show the reader that you

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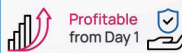
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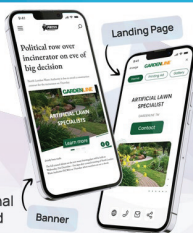


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understand their needs and have the solution they're looking for.

8. The announcement headline

Announcement headlines are used to share big news or introduce something new. They're particularly effective when you have something exciting to share, such as a product launch, a special event, or a significant update.

For instance, "Introducing Our New Summer Collection!" or "We've Just Opened a New Store Near You!" These headlines create a sense of excitement and encourage readers to explore what's new.

9. The emotional headline

Emotional headlines tap into the reader's feelings, whether it's excitement, fear, joy, or empathy. By connecting on an emotional level, these ad headlines can be incredibly powerful.

An example might be, "Finally, a Skincare Product That Loves Your Skin as Much as You Do." Emotional headlines work because they make the reader feel understood, creating a strong connection with your brand and motivating them to take action.

Original source: <https://www.optimonk.com/ad-copy-headlines/> ■

(continuation. Start at on page 19)

vantages are clear. As businesses navigate an increasingly complex world, the collective strength found within trade associations becomes invaluable.

If you're still on the fence about joining one, consider the long-term impact it can have not only on your business but also on the local communities you serve. It's more than just membership; it's about becoming part of a movement that drives progress and fosters collaboration. Embrace the opportunities that await you and watch as your involvement transforms both your business and the communities around you. ■

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