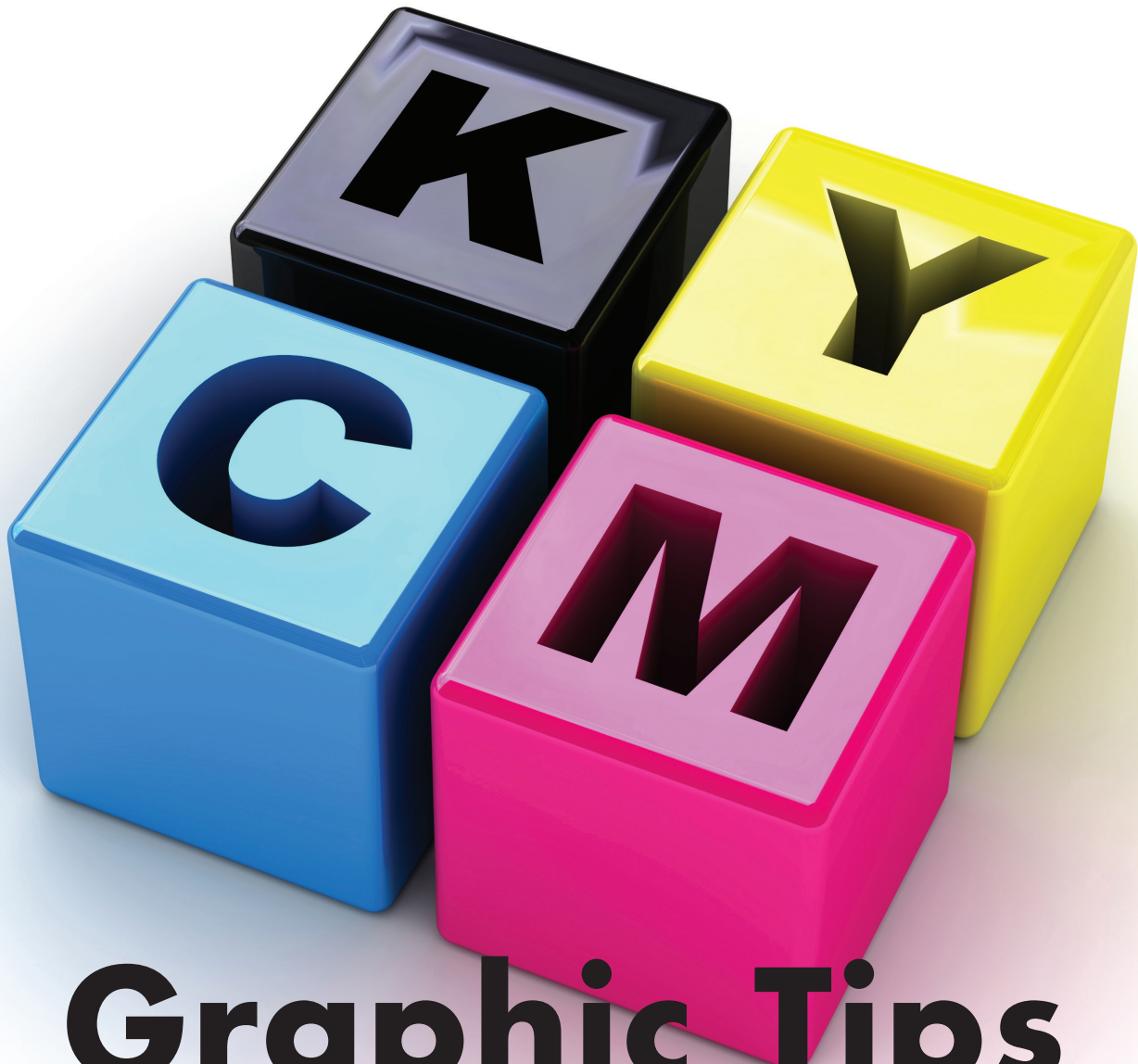


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COMING NEXT MONTH

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ACP CONFERENCE ATTENDEE QUOTES

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

"It provides a unique opportunity to network with others that do what you do, but don't compete in the same market, AND...every problem you are experiencing has already been solved by someone you will meet at conference."



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BY JOYCE FRERICKS

FROM THE TOP

WHY YOU CAN'T MISS THE 2025 ACP CONFERENCE

If you've ever attended an ACP event, you know there's something special about it—but the annual conference and trade show? That's where the real magic happens. Whether you're a longtime member or brand new to the community, here's why attending the 2025 ACP Conference is a game-changer for you and your publication.

UNMATCHED NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Ask any ACP member what they value most, and you'll hear one answer time and again: the networking. While we offer touchpoints throughout the year, nothing compares to the in-person connections made at the annual conference. From structured networking sessions to casual hallway chats, social events, and our always-popular Idea Exchange, this is your chance to engage with peers who face the same challenges and share the same passion as you.

You'll meet publishers, sales leaders, editors, designers, and industry vendors who truly *get it*—the day-to-day work, the big goals, the small wins. These are the people who will become your sounding board, support system, and possibly even collaborators for years to come.

SPEAKER LINEUP THAT DELIVERS

For 2025, we've raised the bar even higher with an expanded slate of featured speakers. This year's

sessions are packed with practical, forward-thinking content. Dive deep into topics like AI for local media, high-impact lead generation, and optimizing your email strategy. Explore the ever-important world of first-party data and how to make it work for *you*.

We've designed sessions for every level—from those just dipping their toes into digital strategy to seasoned pros looking for advanced insights. You'll also experience a hands-on leadership workshop focused on powerful communication techniques, as well as TLI's signature sales training sessions. You won't just leave inspired—you'll leave equipped.

TRADE SHOW: YOUR ONE-STOP RESOURCE HUB

Need new software? Looking for a better printer? Curious about AI tools, design services, or monetization strategies? The ACP Trade Show brings together 25–30 top industry partners so you can explore solutions tailored to your needs—all in one place.

This is your chance to meet the people behind the platforms, ask your questions, compare offerings, and learn about new products. From tech innovations to trusted legacy vendors, the trade show is a goldmine for resources that can transform your workflow and bottom line.

YES, WE HAVE FUN TOO!

We don't just talk about work—we celebrate it. The ACP Conference is known for its creative, inclusive, and flat-out fun atmosphere. This year, we're taking it to the next level with our very own Mardi Gras-style parade, led by a second line band and culminating in a dinner event at the

one-and-only Carnival Museum.

But the festivities don't stop there. Kick things off with a high-energy opening cocktail reception and close things down in style with our farewell mixer. Even the Idea Exchange and trade show wrap-up get a playful twist with friendly competitions, games, and interactive sessions designed to keep you engaged *and* entertained.

STAY A LITTLE LONGER: EXPLORE MOBILE, AL

As if all that weren't enough, let's talk location. Mobile, Alabama—a city rich in history, culture, and Southern charm—is your host for the 2025 conference. It's the birthplace of America's original Mardi Gras and just a short drive from some of the most stunning Gulf Coast beaches. Make it a working vacation and stay an extra day (or two!) to explore the cobblestone streets, local cuisine, art galleries, and waterfront views.

Whether you're wandering through historic districts or soaking in the coastal sunshine, Mobile offers the perfect backdrop for your professional recharge.

BOTTOM LINE?

The ACP Conference isn't just another industry event—it's where community, innovation, and inspiration come together. You'll leave with new ideas, fresh energy, deeper connections, and a renewed love for what you do.

So what are you waiting for? Join us in Mobile. Let's grow together. Let's celebrate local media. And let's have some serious fun while we're at it. Visit communitypublishers.com to register NOW! ■



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BY CASSEY RECORE –
ACP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I can hardly believe three months have passed since my first quarterly update! Time seems to be flying, and no matter who I talk to, everyone seems to feel the same way. For me, this year has been especially reflective as my twins prepare to graduate from high school. I find myself wondering how we got here so quickly and where the years in between went—it feels like just yesterday they were starting kindergarten. By the time you read this, they will have graduated and begun preparing for their next adventures—one heading to college and the other to the U.S. Navy. I'm sure time will begin to move just as quickly for them as they enter the next chapter of "grown-up" life.

It's also hard to believe that it's been four years since AFCP and IFPA merged to become what is now ACP. As many of you know, Douglas Fry stepped into the role of Executive Director for the newly formed association, planning to serve a few more years before retiring. As you've likely heard, the ACP Board of Directors has officially announced Douglas's retirement, effective June 1, 2025.

WOW!

Once again, I find myself asking—how did the time go by so fast?

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Douglas on his well-deserved retirement and thank him for his many contributions to ACP and the industry as a whole. Throughout his years of service, Douglas has positively impacted countless members with his industry knowledge and leadership. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him all the best in this exciting new chapter.

As I step into the role of Executive Director, I'm profoundly aware of the "big shoes" I'm stepping into. It's a true honor to follow in the footsteps of remarkable leaders like Craig McMullin, Loren Colburn, Gary Rudy,

al Conference and Trade Show in Mobile, AL. Over the past several months, we've selected and secured our speakers, built the full TLI line-up, crafted the event schedule, and organized all activities. Registration just opened this week—and before I know it, I'll be boarding a plane to Alabama to get everything set up and welcome you! I'm very excited about this year's program and encourage you all to join us. With dynamic speakers and relevant topics in the fast-evolving worlds of data, AI, and technology, this conference is one you won't want to miss.

At the same time, we've been planning our **Summer Learning Series**—a virtual training collabo-

“ At the same time, we've been planning our Summer Learning Series—a virtual training collaboration with Midwest Free Community Papers. Throughout June, we'll be offering sessions on AI, digital tools, graphics, editorial, and sales. These virtual offerings are a valuable resource, especially for those who can't attend our in-person events.

and Douglas Fry. Over my 15 years with ACP (and previously AFCP), I've had the privilege of learning from many of these incredible individuals, and I carry their guidance and wisdom with me into this next phase. I'm honored to serve our membership and promise to give my very best in this role. Thank you for the outpouring of support and encouragement as we make this transition together.

As I write this, we are deep in the planning stages for the **2025 Annu-**

ration with Midwest Free Community Papers. Throughout June, we'll be offering sessions on AI, digital tools, graphics, editorial, and sales. These virtual offerings are a valuable resource, especially for those who can't attend our in-person events.

Following the training series, we'll be hosting a **virtual presentation to announce the 2025 ACP Best of the Best winners!** Although we originally planned to announce them at the fall conference, feedback from

DIRECTLY SPEAKING

members indicated the wait between entry and announcement was too long. We listened—and decided to share the results sooner. For 2026, we'll realign the award timing to coincide with the conference so we can return to announcing winners in person. Congratulations to all of our 2025 honorees! The entries this year were exceptional—you truly deserve the recognition. I look forward to seeing your work every year!

Beyond events, we continue to focus on enhancing **member benefits**. We recently announced a new partnership with **PopMount**, providing our members with an additional revenue stream and an exclusive increase in revenue share. I encourage you to visit community-publishers.com for more details and to connect with Danielle at PopMount to get started.

We also just announced the **2025 Bob Wright Memorial Scholarship**

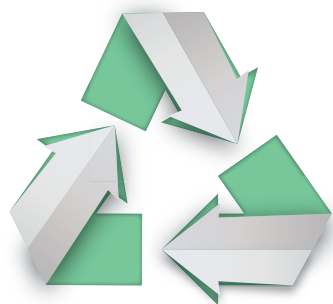
winners, featured in the June issue of *Publish Magazine*. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to **Deb Phillips of The World in Vermont**, who has done a fantastic job overseeing the scholarship program for many years. 2025 marks her final year in that role, and we're incredibly grateful for her dedication. Moving forward, the ACP office will manage the program.

We're also onboarding our **2025 Rising Stars** and can't wait to meet them in person at the conference! The existing Stars have been hard at work evaluating platforms to take our traditional silent auction digital. This exciting update will allow more members to participate, whether attending the conference or not, and we hope it will increase support for the **Bill Welsh Foundation** in 2025 and beyond.

Looking ahead, we've signed the contract for our **2026 Leadership**

Retreat, which will be held in February in Orlando—more information coming soon! We're also planning updates to the **ADS Network** to offer more ad format flexibility, making it more valuable for current members and attractive to potential new ones. Additionally, we're developing **new certification programs** under the education umbrella—stay tuned! And finally, we're bringing back our restructured **roundtable share calls** after the fall conference. They'll still provide open discussion opportunities, but now with a monthly theme or topic to enhance the conversation.

With everything happening, it's a challenge to fit it all into one article! The ACP Board and Committees are constantly working on new projects, initiatives, and member benefits to support our industry. As always, I welcome your feedback and ideas—you know where to find me! ■



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Somebody once said...



**Creativity is intelligence
having fun.**



Albert Einstein



PROPER BACKUP PROCEDURES - IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT COMPUTERS!

BY LOREN COLBURN

I was emailing back and forth with John Foust about articles in Publish today. We will go back and forth about our articles now and then. Part of our e-conversation was about transmitting materials to our office and I requested a “backup” copy go to Cassey (just in case I mess up at some point). Since my head was in the writing mode, it made me think that a column about proper backup procedures might not be a bad idea.

So often when we think about backups, it's related to our computer storage and business documentation. Anyone who has ever crashed a hard drive or lost critical files in error can attest to the cost in both dollars and hours it takes to rebuild lost materials. That supports this top-of-mind awareness and high priority for digital backups in our small business procedures and planning.

What we do forget sometimes is the importance of maintaining a backup plan and practice outside the digital realm. Taking the time to invest in a “what if” plan for every important aspect, person or function of the business may seem like one of those items you would do if you weren't so damn busy, but you're just swamped at the moment. It can easily turn into your next disaster if left unattended. Let's look at some critical aspects of the publication business that you should have a backup plan formalized and ready to implement if need be:

- What is your plan if your printer/pressroom has a disruption and is unable to print your publications come press time?
- Who will back up your job/job functions if you suddenly can't work for an extended period of time?
- Think about your 10 most valuable employees. Who will back up their job/job functions if they suddenly can't work for an extended period of time?
- How will you get your publications out if there is a sudden pandemic forcing 61.5% of your employees to not be able to come into work (don't think that could never happen – May 2020 is not that long ago)?
- If malware shut down your entire computer system at one instant, how would you manage invoicing, ad composition, pagination and customer resource man-

agement? According to a Qualysec.com article “52 Small Business Cyber Attack Statistics for 2025”:

- ✓ 45% of small businesses lack endpoint protection on company devices.
 - ✓ 43% of cyber attacks target small businesses.
 - ✓ 75% of small businesses experienced at least one cyber attack in the past year.
- Look at your 5 most important suppliers (paper, ink, internet, printing plates, etc.), if you lost their supply tomorrow – what is your backup plan.
- Any one of these can send a company down a disastrous path, causing the kind of disruption that can cripple a small business. Depending on the financial strength of the business, it can even deal the fatal blow that ends in closure. We certainly saw that during the pandemic when a significant number of publications did not come out the other side.



Let's start making the required backup plans now where we don't have them. The minutes you spend in preparation will save hours and dollars when the time comes you need them. If you're thinking “we already have those plans formulated”, prioritize the time to dust them off, making sure they are still a sound solutions to the anticipated problem situation. Then schedule out some annual or biennial review points to validate or adjust those plans in this rapidly changing world.

My experience has proven that writing your backup plans down so that they are easy to access, understand and review is the most effective way to keep them. After all, print is the most effective way to retain information in addition to the fact that, **“Print's not dead, it's READ!”** ■

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5 PRO-TIPS FOR MASTERING ADOBE INDESIGN

BY JASON FORREST



We've been using Adobe InDesign, one of the most popular layout and page design tools, for what seems like forever – at least 84 years.

Generally, we use InDesign when creating marketing collateral, including posters, flyers, interactive PDFs, digital magazines, and more.

Over time, we've learned a bunch of simple tips and tricks that have had a big impact on our workflow and product.

Here are the 5 most important pro-tips that we've learned along the way.

HOT KEYS: SPEED UP THE DESIGN PROCESS



Hot keys are keyboard shortcuts for actions that you would otherwise access from the application menu. Learning these hot keys will save you a ton of time, especially for projects with a lot of pages.

Select vs. Direct Select

There's a difference between a frame and the stuff *within* a frame.

You can select the frame by hitting the 'V' key for the select tool, but if you want to select the stuff within a frame, hit the 'A' key for the direct select tool.

Paste in Place

Did you know you can quickly copy an object and paste it in the exact same spot on a different page in your document? It's a game changer.

First, select the object, then hold the 'Command' key and hit the 'C' key in order to copy it.

Once you're on the new page, hold 'Shift' while simultaneously pressing the 'Option', 'Command' and 'V' keys to paste it in place.

Boom.



Preview Mode

InDesign's default view shows a lot of visual information, like margins, columns, and frames.

Hit the 'W' key to toggle Preview Mode to see what your final layout will look like.

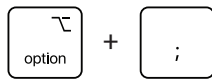


Toggle Guides

If you still want to see some of the building blocks of your layout (like text frames), but you don't want to see anything else, hold

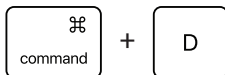
INDESIGN TIPS & TRICKS

the 'Option' key and then hit the Semi-colon (;) key.



Place Image

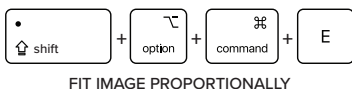
Hold the Command key (or Control in Windows) and press the 'D' key to insert an image into a frame.



Frames and Content

A lot of InDesign is placing images into frames. After you've hit 'Command' + D to place an image, you can:

- Fit an image in a frame proportionally (Shift + Option + Command + E)



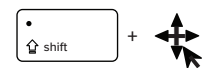
FIT IMAGE PROPORTIONALLY

- Center an image in a frame (Shift + Option + E)



CENTER IMAGE

- Resize an image and the frame it is in proportionally (Shift + Click + Drag)



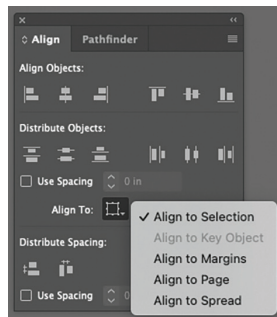
RESIZE PROPORTIONALLY

OBJECT ALIGNMENT: PERFECTLY BALANCED, AS ALL THINGS SHOULD BE

Don't just eyeball your design. Use the Alignment function to easily achieve a clean and perfectly-balanced layout.

Use the Select tool (hit the 'V' key) to select an object (frames, type, etc.) or multiple objects. Choose what you are aligning the frame or frames to: themselves,

the margin, the page, or the whole spread.



Aligning a group of objects together first, and then to the margin or page results, in the most balance.

HIDDEN CHARACTERS: DON'T LET THEM WREAK HAVOC



No, we're not talking about Scooby-Doo style hidden characters. The kind of hidden characters I'm referring to are things like bizarre line breaks and mysterious spacing issues.

When you copy formatted text from outside of InDesign and paste it into a text frame, a whole bunch of hidden characters sneak into your layout.

You can find them by going to 'Type' in the top menu and selecting 'Show Hidden Characters'. Then you'll be able to identify and eliminate all the hidden characters wreaking havoc on your design.

This will also help you fix line and page break issues.

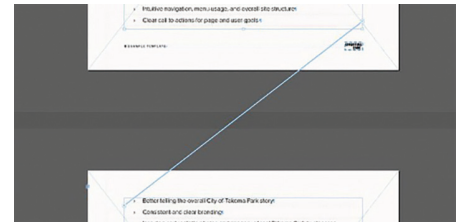
It's either you or them. Don't hesitate. Be merciless.

TEXT THREADS: REVEAL FRAME CONNECTIONS

It's common for a layout to have multiple connected frames of text,

but it can be confusing to keep track of how each frame is connected.

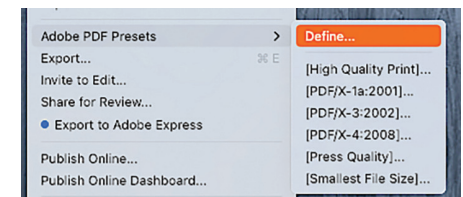
You can reveal the connections between frames by selecting View in the top menu, selecting 'Extras', then 'Show Text Threads'.



EXPORTING PDF FILES: BEST PRACTICES

There are several preset options for exporting PDFs, depending on your needs and requirements:

- For sending PDFs as attachments and viewing online, select 'File', 'Adobe PDF Presets', and '[Smallest File Size]...'
- When you have more wiggle room for larger file sizes, like printing at home or in an office, choose 'File' > 'Adobe PDF Presets' > '[High Quality Print]'
- When you need to send your artwork to a print vendor who specifies everything to be in CMYK color, choose 'File' > 'Adobe PDF Presets' > '[PDF/X-1a:2001]'



These 5 tips and tricks are crucial, but that's just the tip of the iceberg.

If you're interesting in leveraging our full master of Adobe InDesign, let's talk. ■

Original blog article: <https://www.digital.ink/blog/adobe-indesign-tips/>

For more information: <https://www.digital.ink/contact/>



Presented by Guy Tasaka

Local Media 3.0: Transforming Your Publishing Model for the Digital Age

Don't miss this transformative keynote session with media strategist Guy Tasaka!

Are you maximizing your share of your advertisers' total marketing spend? Most local publishers capture only a fraction of what advertisers are actually spending in their markets. Local Media 3.0 isn't about abandoning print—it's about leveraging your existing strengths to capture a larger piece of the digital advertising pie.

In this eye-opening session, you'll discover:

- Why the "AND strategy" (not the "OR strategy") is critical for local media sustainability
- How to use your current print revenue to build new digital revenue streams
- Practical ways to position your publication as a full-service media agency
- Real-world case studies of publishers successfully implementing the 3.0 model

Whether you publish a community shopper, lifestyle magazine, or hybrid model, this session offers a progressive vision for local media that doesn't require abandoning your print foundation. Guy's insights have already helped hundreds of forward-thinking publishers evolve their business models—now it's your turn.



Guy Tasaka

CEO - Tasaka Digital LLC
Portland, OR

Guy Tasaka is an accomplished media professional with a rich history in the evolution of digital publishing. With expertise in research and analytics, strategic planning, product development, and marketing management, Guy stands out as an industry leader, particularly in mobile products, digital subscriptions, and Connected Television (CTV). As the CEO of Tasaka Digital, he has been at the forefront of developing digital content distribution strategies and innovative mobile publishing ecosystems. Recognized as the 2015 Local Media Association's Innovator of the Year, Guy continues to influence the future of local media through his visionary approach and commitment to innovation.



75^{YEARS} ANNIVERSARY

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2025

RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL



Presented by Ross Furukawa

Lead Generation Tactics & First-Party Data: Boosting Local Media Sales

This keynote session will cover will cover:

- Actionable frameworks for contests, newsletters, and local directories
- Low-cost tech tools and platforms
- Case studies of successful community publishers
- Step-by-step guidance on audience segmentation and monetization

The keyntote will be followed by a Q&A workshop with publishers to examine current tactics and advise on simple and actionable goals to implement. Participants will leave with a follow-up playbook containing templates, checklists, and additional resources to implement these strategies right away.



Ross Furukawa

Publisher, SMDP
Santa Monica, CA

Ross Furukawa is a seasoned media entrepreneur and digital marketing strategist with a proven track record of innovating across both traditional and digital publishing environments. Leveraging multi-channel lead generation tactics, AI-driven marketing automation, and integrated tech solutions, he has successfully launched and scaled multiple ventures—from local news platforms and design agencies to comprehensive affiliate networks—delivering measurable ROI and sustainable growth for brands and publications.



75 YEARS **ANNIVERSARY**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2025

RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL



Presented by Lisa and Jay Graves

Your Invitation to the First-Party Party: Digital Publishing & Email

For publishers, first-party data—especially email—is your most valuable asset. In this session, StyleBlueprint shares how their robust email strategy drives audience engagement, boosts advertiser relationships, and enhances content performance across platforms. Learn to blend editorial and marketing content, streamline production with tools like RSS, and use email to power retargeting, social media, SEO, and more. Featuring real-world case studies and actionable metrics, this session offers practical strategies designed for community publishers navigating today's data-driven landscape. Walk away with the tools to unlock email's full potential and strengthen your overall digital strategy.

SPECIAL WORKSHOP SESSION

Putting Your First-Party Email Strategy to Work

You've seen what's possible - now it's time to put it into action. In this hands-on workshop, we'll dive deeper into the tools, tactics, and workflows that small publishers can use to start or scale a winning first-party email strategy. Learn how to segment your email lists for better targeting, create high-performing content blends, and track the KPIs that matter most. We'll walk through real publishing scenarios, helping you leave with a practical action plan tailored to your audience and resources. Whether you're just starting out or looking to optimize your approach, this session will help you move from ideas to implementation - fast. Perfect for publishers who want to understand how AI can complement their current operations without replacing what's already working.

Liza and Jay Graves



Liza Graves

Liza and Jay Graves are the duo behind StyleBlueprint, a digital platform celebrating Southern culture, travel, and local business. Liza, Founder and CEO, launched the site in 2009 to spotlight Southern voices and small businesses, growing it into a nationally recognized, woman-owned brand. Named one of Southern Living's Most Stylish Southerners, she also earned accolades as a top CEO. Jay, COO and EO Nashville president, brings 20+ years in tech and startups, with clients like the NFL and NBC Sports. Together, they champion scalable co-op marketing for under-resourced towns, reaching over three million readers annually with stories that uplift the South.



Jay Graves




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SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2025

RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL



**Celebrate your industry...
Grow your business...
Experience an amazing city!**

Conference
Registration Link



Conference
Brochure Link



Hotel
Registration Link



Start planning your trip today!

Conference Registration: <https://charlie.amberplains.com/fmi/webd/AFCPWebRegistration?homeurl=http://www.communitypublishers.com>

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Hotel Link: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1722453981297&key=GRP&guestreslink2=true&app=resvlink>



75^{YEARS} ANNIVERSARY

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2025

RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL

2025 BEST ^{OF THE} BEST AWARDS

The winners for the 2025 Best of the Best Publication Awards were announced on Thursday, June 26th at a Zoom presentation hosted by the Association of Community Publishers (ACP). This year's competition attracted over 880 entries in 46 different entry classifications. Both the graphics and editorial judging were performed this year by students and faculty from Columbia

State Community College through a combination of virtual and in person sessions. The following are a few of the winner highlights from this year's awards for your review. The full 2025 presentation as well as a complete list of all of this year's award winners is available on the ACP website at: <https://www.communitypublishers.com/awards>

As always, the competition for the top award, the Best of Show

designation, was very competitive but congratulations to Exchange Media from Fayetteville, TN who walked away a clear winner. The Best of Show award is presented to the company who accumulates the most award points in each year's competition! Reminder Publishing, Arcadia News, Big Green Umbrella Media and Featured Media were also in the running for this Best of Show title. ■

BEST OF SHOW FINALISTS

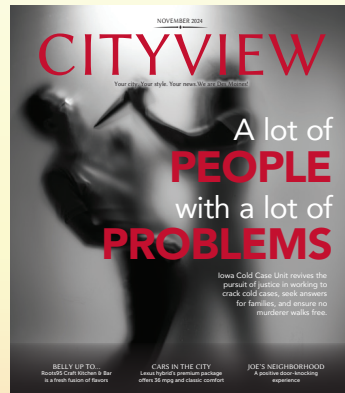
Featured Media

Avon, NY



Big Green Umbrella Media

Johnston, IA



Reminder Publishing

East Longmeadow, MA



Arcadia News

Phoenix, AZ



Exchange Media Group
Fayetteville, TN



2025 BEST OF SHOW WINNER

Media Group
Exchange

BEST OF THE BEST

GENERAL EXCELLENCE - 1st PLACE

0% - 15% Editorial

Over 15% Editorial

Glossy Publications



Featured Media
Genesee Valley
Penny Saver



Big Green
Umbrella Media
Cityview



Exchange Media
Group

1st PLACE

Andrew E. Shapiro Award



Kern County
Family Magazine

GENERAL EXCELLENCE - 2nd PLACE

0% - 15% Editorial

Over 15% Editorial

Glossy Publications



The Exchange



The Shopping News
of Lancaster County



Reminder
Publications

2nd PLACE

Andrew E. Shapiro Award



The Franklin
Shopper

GENERAL EXCELLENCE - 3rd PLACE

0% - 15% Editorial

Over 15% Editorial

Glossy Publications



Fillmore County
Journal



Webster-Kirkwood
Times



Advocate
Media

3rd PLACE

Andrew E. Shapiro Award



Advocate
Media

BEST OF THE BEST

BEST DISPLAY AD WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Black & White
1/4 pg or less



Engle Printing
& Publishing

Black & White
Larger than 1/4 pg



Camrose
Booster

Color Ad
1/4 pg or less



Van Zandt
Newspapers

Color Ad
Larger than 1/4 pg



Featured Media
Home Magazine

BEST FRONT PAGE WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Newsprint - No Ads



Columbia Gorge
News

Newsprint - With Ads



The Coast News

Glossy Stock



Reminder
Publishing

BEST SPECIAL SECTIONS AND PROMOTIONS - 1st PLACE

In-Paper



Camrose
Booster

Special Section



The Franklin
Shopper

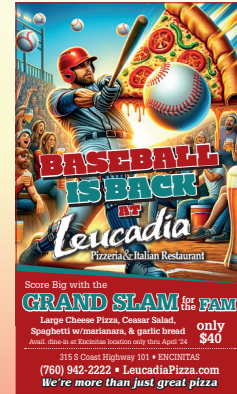
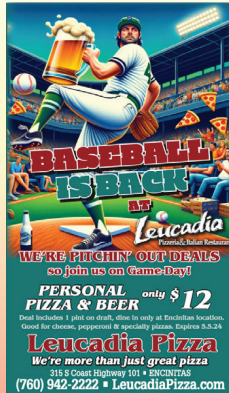
Stand Alone



Van Zandt
Newspapers

BEST OF THE BEST

BEST AD SERIES - 1st PLACE



Coast News Group

BEST DISPLAY AD WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Grocery & Liquor



The Bargain Hunter

Medical, Health & Wellness



Oyster Pointer

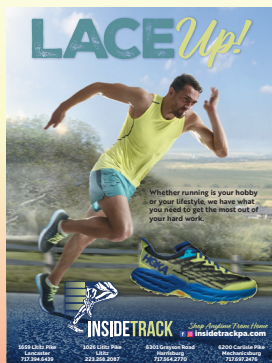
Food & Drink



North of Boston Media Group

BEST DISPLAY AD WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Fitness, Fashion & Beauty



Engle Printing & Publishing

Automotive



Exchange Media Group

Events



The Florida Mariner

BEST OF THE BEST

OTHER CATEGORY WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Best Media Kit



El Clasificado

Most Creative Ad Headline



Oyster Pointer

Best Agency Ad



El Clasificado

Contest Run In Publication



Big Green Umbrella Media - Cityview

BEST PUBLICATION BANNERS

First Place



Second Place



Third Place



BEST USE OF DIGITAL



El Clasificado

SELF PROMOTION WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Self Promotion Classifieds



El Clasificado

Self Promotion Awards



El Clasificado

Self Promotion Own Publications



Exchange Media Group

Self Promotion Community Service



The Shopping News of Lancaster County

SELF PROMOTION WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Self Promotion Classifieds



Reminder Publishing

Self Promotion Awards



Filmore County Journal

Self Promotion Own Publications



Exchange Media Group

Self Promotion Community Service



Filmore County Journal

BEST OF THE BEST

EDITORIAL WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Opinion Article



Big Green Umbrella Media - Cityview

News Article



Webster-Kirkwood Times

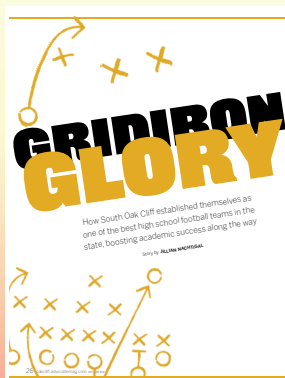
Community Service Article



Arcadia News

EDITORIAL WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Sports Article



Advocate Media

Entertaining Column



Webster-Kirkwood Times

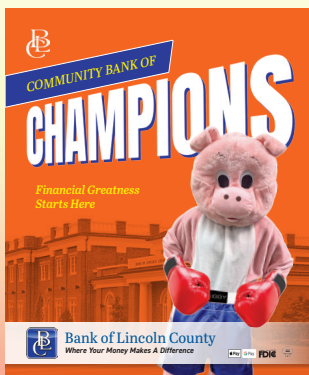
Educational Column



IMessenger Media

OTHER CATEGORY WINNERS - 1st PLACE

Best Use of Art Service



Exchange Media Group

Best Original Photography



Coastal View News

Most Improved Publication



Exchange Media Group

HERE IS SOME ADVICE FROM GRAPHIC ARTISTS WHEN WE ASKED THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

If you could give a fellow graphics person one tip or trick you use to make your job easier, what would that tip or trick be?

SIDNEY KIERSCH – The Lakes News Shopper

When I get stuck and don't know what to do, I like to put away whatever I'm working on for a while, or even until the following day. When I come back to that project, I try to have a fresh outlook on what I'm doing and not feel constrained to what's right in front of me. Simply reminding myself that I am a creative mind and this is my job, knowing I have the freedom to make changes and adjustments rather than putting myself into a bubble is surprisingly helpful. If after all that I still find myself stumped, I seek inspiration from Metro or other local print publications to come up with design elements and trends to utilize for the project.

AMANDA THOOFT – Star Publications

Learn your quick commands in Adobe software, it saves so much time not having to go up to the menu bar and dragging down to each item.

Set up actions in Photoshop, it makes editing photos so quick!

HEATHER JOHNSON – Tollefson Publishing

Use Workspaces! When you are using InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, etc... Set your tools the way that works best for you and SAVE THE WORKSPACE! You'll never be searching for tools in menus and wasting time again. If things get moved or changed at some point you can always reset your workspace and have everything you need back where you want it.

JACENTIA KINSEY – Coastal Breeze News

Learn and establish (when possible), shortcut keys. The more you use them, the more natural it becomes for you to use them and implement them for repetitive task. There are more shortcuts keys than Ctrl+p or Ctrl+c, it's worth taking the time to learn them all.

MARISA SIDLES – The Lakes News Shopper

Keep Folders Organized :)

SHARON SCHWARTZ – The Camrose Booster

A big time saver is to have an ongoing Graphics folder where you collect backgrounds, borders, layouts, headings, starbursts, etc. as you use them for projects. In the future, if you are under a big time crunch, instead of using valuable time searching for art from a graphics site, just grab something you've used before out of your Graphics folder. I have a vast collection of backgrounds, headings, starbursts, etc. that I have used over and over in many different projects and applications throughout the years. Another advantage of keeping graphics on file is that you are getting your money's worth by using the graphics numerous times! ■

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

CANVA - ARTICLE

25 Graphic Design Tips for Non-Designers and Beginners

🏠 <https://www.canva.com/learn/graphic-design-tips-non-designers/>



ADOBE MAX – VIDEO SESSION BY CALLUM MCHUGH

Tips, Tricks, and Secrets Every Illustrator User Should Know - VS301

🏠 <https://www.adobe.com/max/2023/sessions/na-tips-tricks-and-secrets-every-illustrator-user-vs301.html>



REDALKEMI – BLOG ARTICLE

Mastering the Adobe Creative Suite: Tips and Tricks for Graphic Designers

🏠 <https://redalkemi.com/blog/mastering-the-adobe-creative-suite-tips-and-tricks-for-graphic-designers/>



ADOBE – BLOG ARTICLE BY ADOBE GRAPHIC DESIGN TEAM

20 Years of InDesign: The Top 20 Tips & Tricks from Worldwide Evangelist, Terry White

🏠 <https://blog.adobe.com/en/publish/2019/09/03/20-years-of-indesign-top-20-tips-tricks-from-worldwide-evangelist-terry-white>



ENVATOTUTS+ – ARTICLE BY DAISY E.

A to Z of InDesign: Tips, Tricks, & Hacks!

🏠 <https://design.tutsplus.com/articles/a-to-z-of-indesign-tips-tricks-hacks-cms-36385>



DESIGN IS A PART OF SALES, TOO.



BY JAYDE VOGELER –
RISING STAR

My publisher recently told our team a story about a struggling publisher needing guidance after changing their business model. After listening to them, he asked “Are you doing written proposals? Are you creating spec ads?” Answering not as often as they should be, my publisher argued having a physical proposal and a spec ad for the customer brings more value to in-person sales meetings.

This is not the first instance of hearing this kind of situation. A while ago, during our Rising Stars meeting, I asked if they use specs at their businesses. I learned they are not frequently requested to be created. Spec ads are regularly created by our designers to serve as a tool for our sales team when engaging with potential clients.

WHAT IS A SPEC AD?

In our industry, a spec ad, short for speculative advertisement, is a non-committal ad created to showcase ideas for a prospective client.

At Big Green Umbrella Media, spec ads are a big focus for sales reps to utilize in calls. Each sales rep is required to send in two spec ads per week; it is their job to bring

ideas to customers. Spec ads get the customer involved in the process, sparking ideas and creating conversation. Once customers start marking changes on the spec, the ad is sold.

Using spec ads are great for multiple scenarios:

- 1. WHEN CLIENTS DON'T KNOW WHAT TO ADVERTISE.** Use spec work to showcase key areas of their business—like a new product, recent employee recognition, or their commitment to excellent customer service.
- 2. REFRESH AN EXISTING AD.** Some customers pick up the same ad for multiple months and it starts to look outdated. Bringing a refresh to their existing ad can bring excitement back to the ad and for the client. It doesn't have to look like a totally different ad; updating colors, typeface and photos can bring new life to the ad.
- 3. Showcase your designers!** In my experience, ad changes frequently consist of updating photos, replacing body copy or changing a phone number. With spec ads, designers use their creative freedom to showcase their knowledge about design and their unique style.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Designers, I know we are all busy with ads that are due in two days

“Spec ads get the customer involved in the process, sparking ideas and creating conversation. Once customers start marking changes on the spec, the ad is sold.

for press. My advice to keep spec ad building time down:

Research the client – follow their style, find past campaigns they've put out on their social media channels. We don't always have to create brand new copy, headlines, images, etc. to wow them.

ChatGPT – While our creative expertise excels in layout, image selection, and type design, not everyone is able to write engaging headlines or persuasive content. Using ChatGPT to generate ideas for headlines or to rewrite a portion of text found on the prospective client's website to change the tone for a print ad is an easy way to speed up the process.

Lorem ipsum – If unsure what copy to use, utilize dummy text. This isn't a final ad, therefore the client can change the content anytime. What's important is getting the look and feel of the ad for the client to engage with.

Reduce and Reuse – Use past designs! If a spec did not sell and fits the prospective client's style, save time by reusing it.

Sales reps, I know you have a budget to meet and a deadline coming up soon. Designers need your help to create spec ads faster. You can speed up the process by gathering bullet points, sourcing potential photos, and compiling basic information to share with the design team. If you're meeting with a client before requesting a spec ad, ask them what they'd like to highlight.

Spec ads are an invaluable tool in the advertising sales process, serving not only as a creative showcase but also as a conversation starter that helps clients visualize the potential to advertise in print publications. When sales reps and designers collaborate effectively, they can create compelling spec ads that not only capture attention but also drive results, making it an important part of sales strategy. ■



BY JOHN FOUST
GREENSBORO, NC

WHAT MAKES A GOOD HEADLINE?

Imagine the editors of a prestigious news organization sitting around a conference table discussing a breaking story. The story is written and all they need is a headline to convey its importance to readers. Someone says, “I’ve got it. Let’s use one word: ‘Look.’ We can give it more impact by making the two o’s look like eyeballs.” Everyone nods in agreement, and the headline runs.

Sounds ridiculous, doesn’t it? But something similar must be happening in advertising conversations, because ‘Look’ has been a popular headline for years.

Popularity doesn’t equal effectiveness. Even though it’s frequently used, “Look” is one of the worst headlines you’ll ever see. It’s a product of lazy writing. It communicates nothing of value to readers.

A headline deserves more respect than that, because it is the most important part of an ad. Research shows that four out of five readers do not get further than the headline. Unfortunately, this means that only 20 percent of the people who read an ad headline will read any of the body copy.

In other words, headlines have a lot of weight to carry. Pick up any newspaper – or go to any online news site – and you’ll find article headlines that reveal the subjects of those articles. As a result, you can make split second decisions on whether or not to read more.

Doesn’t it make sense that the same should apply to advertising headlines?

The next time you write an ad headline, ask yourself three questions:

1. Does the headline tell readers what the ad is about?

If your ad is selling banking services, say so in the headline. If you are selling kitchen remodeling, say so. If you are promoting furniture, say so. We read at a glance. If readers can’t determine quickly what an ad is about, they’ll skip it completely.

2. Does the headline promise a benefit? There are several types of headlines: (1) those that promise a benefit, (2) those that provide news, and (3) those that surprise readers or arouse curiosity. While each type is capable of winning readership and selling products, benefit headlines have been shown to be the most reliable choice. Just about every buying decision we make is driven by real or perceived benefits. That’s why it’s a good idea to create benefits-oriented advertising – and then put the major benefit front and center in the headline.

3. Is the language believable? Without believable language, our first two questions are not worth answering. Consider a hardware store ad which is headlined, “Fantastic savings on the world’s best lawnmowers.” To answer our first two questions, the ad is about lawnmowers and the benefit is that customers can save money. But the puffery kills the message.

Copywriters should avoid exaggerations and unsubstantiated claims in advertising. No one believes sweeping boasts like “fantastic,” or “superior” or “best ever.”

The right answers to these three questions can put your next ad in the top 20 percent. And you’ll increase your chances of creating an ad that is worth a “look.” ■

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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.

E-mail for information: ✉ john@johnfoust.com

TAILOR THE PRESENTATION TO YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

BY JAMES A. BAKER - FOUNDER AND CEO, BAKER COMMUNICATIONS
AUTHOR, THE ANGER BUSTING WORKBOOK, FINALIST, BOOK OF THE YEAR, FOREWORD MAGAZINE

How do you begin preparing for a presentation? Do you outline your content or pursue supplementary research? Do you start designing graphics for your slides? These are all typical early steps in the preparation process. However, how much thought do you give to the target audience for this presentation, i.e., the key people in that audience that you most want to influence? Do you know who they are? Do you have any idea how to structure your presentation so that it will appeal directly to their needs and interests?

Most of the time, even though a wide variety of people may be IN the audience for our presentation, there is a much smaller group of people -- maybe only one (in the case of some business or board presentations) -- that make up our **TARGET** audience because they are the ones we most want or need to influence. Do you understand how to prepare a preparation that will gain and hold the attention of this audience in a way that will give you the opportunity to have the maximum impact?

Different types of people have different types of listening and decision-making styles. We can break these styles down into a few basic categories, each with its own set of characteristic needs and attitudes.

Some people are hard-driving, CEO types who project an image that is decisive independent, confident, assertive and a little blunt and impatient at times. They are usually bottom-line driven and they don't like to waste time. During a

presentation, this person prefers something:

- Business-like and to the point
- With no time-consuming details
- Containing strong support for any ideas, objectives, and conclusions
- That points out options and their potential benefits
- With well documented evidence and data

Others are enthusiastic, creative, friendly, and communicative; they are people oriented and enjoy group activities. During a presentation, people in this group respond well to:

- A relaxed, personal approach
- Enthusiasm
- Personal interaction
- Positive ideas and responses
- Testimonials and opinions from people he or she respects as being important or successful
- The big picture only-- they will let you work out the details later

Then there are folks who are concerned about details in the extreme. They are generally serious, reserved, accurate, systematic, organized, and cautious. During a presentation, these folks want:

- A more formal presentation
- A slower-paced but steady progression
- A written analysis with documented evidence supporting principles or logic involved

- Details, details, details
- Factual, logical explanations
- Punctuality, precision, and accuracy
- Evidence of expertise
- Unemotional appeals
- Tangibles like charts, graphs, figures
- Clear description of pros and cons

Finally, there are those who are simply supportive, consistent in performance, dependable, folksy, and loyal. They prefer a presentation that:

- Is patient and free of conflict
- Is based on a consensus of opinion
- Is clear about guarantees of outcome and rightness of decision
- Requires a minimum of change
- Provides assurances and guarantees
- Feels personal and which nurtures relationships
- Is low or no pressure
- Is delivered in a relaxed, non-judgmental style

Can you imagine what would happen if you delivered a heavily detailed presentation to a hard-driving CEO type? No matter how thorough, accurate and professional you are, your target audience will stop listening after less than five minutes. What a disaster that would be! Don't just collect the facts; tailor the facts to fit your audience and

(continued on page 30)

Community Publications Business and Service Directory

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Howard Barbanel / 516-860-7440 / Howard@Design2pro.com

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DIGITAL MARKETING

SMALL PUBLISHER BREAKS \$800,000 MARK IN NEW DIGITAL SALES



The story and text message are now LEGENDARY.

A small publisher in the South with three reps partnered with us to grow her digital revenues - the goal was to double their money.

By partnering with our team of digital experts, benchmarks were set, and sales calls were made. What unfolded in about eight months is a testament to B2B collaboration - and the "legendary text" to our Vice President is real.



adcellerant

If they can do it, why not you? Scan the QR code to book a demo.

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PRESENTATION QUICK TIP OF THE MONTH – GIVE YOUR AUDIENCE AT LEAST ONE PIECE OF PAPER

You may have a great opening, powerful content and killer animated graphics, but you will be more effective with your audience if you also give them at least one piece of paper to take home with them. One

reason for this is that some people will find it easier to learn and recall what you are saying if they have something in their hands that is connected to your message. (Some people are kinesthetic learners who just learn better when their hands

are busy.) In addition, having a take home sheet will provide a frame of reference days later when they want to recall what you said, and if what you said was worth saying, they will appreciate this little memory trigger. ■

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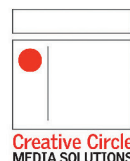
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