

# Publish

AUGUST 2025



## Trade Show Issue

THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY PUBLISHERS

acp



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# Publish

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*Publish* is a monthly publication dedicated to covering the people, events and companies that are the community publishing industry.

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## CONTENT/INDEX

### IN THIS AUGUST ISSUE...

- 7 FROM THE TOP by Joyce Frericks  
**WHAT IF...**
- 9 DIRECTLY SPEAKING by Cassey Recore  
**TAKE A MINUTE**
- 11 PERSPECTIVE by Loren Colburn  
**RETHINKING TRADE SHOWS: A SMARTER WAY TO ENGAGE AND GROW**
- 13 **TRADE SHOW PARTNER PROFILES**
- 17 **STRENGTHENING SUPPLIER & PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS INDUSTRY**
- 19 **ATTENTION BUYERS AND SELLERS: IT NEEDS TO BE ABOUT PROVIDING SOLUTIONS**
- 21 **ACP CONFERENCE DETAILS**
- 26 RISING STARS by Caitlin Neeland  
**THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY MEETS THE SOUL OF THE SOUTH: ACP HEADS TO MOBILE, ALABAMA!**
- 27 AD-LIBS by John Foust  
**DO YOU HAVE AN EIGHT-INCH FRYING PAN**
- 28 MANAGEMENT TRAINING by James A. Baker  
**3 STEPS TO REALISTIC TIME MANAGEMENT**
- 29 **BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY**

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### COMING NEXT MONTH

The September issue of *Publish* will look at the people and events at the ACP Annual Conference and Trade Show in addition to the current events and people shaping our industry.





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## ACP BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS

**ACP Board of Director Nominations for the fall elections is open until August 15, 2025. The positions are for 2-year terms that will commence on January 1, 2026.**

**Positions up for election in this cycle are the six At-Larger Board Member seats on the Board of Directors.**

Any ACP member in good standing is eligible to run for one of the positions but must submit their intention to run in writing by the stated nomination deadline. Nominations should be emailed to [cassey@communitypublishers.com](mailto:cassey@communitypublishers.com) no later than August 15, 2025 and include the following information: Nominee's Name, Member Company, Company Position, Email Address, Mailing Address, and a description of the nominee's qualifications that will be used in the election information sent to members.

*After vetting all candidates to make sure they are employees of members in good standing, the formal candidate announcements will be made September 1, 2025 and in the September issue of Publish. The election process will take place between October 1, 2025 and the end of day October 15, 2025. Election results will be announced no later than November 3, 2025. Any questions related to this upcoming election can be directed to the ACP Office at ☎ 877-203-2327.*





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Print's not dead, it's

**READ™**

Based on national surveys of  
46,054 people conducted by  
Circulation Verification Council  
(CVC):

**72.4% report frequently purchasing products  
or services from ads seen in their community's  
ACP Member publication!**



**The Association of Community Publishers**

For a PDF of this ad you can drop your logo into and run in  
your publication, contact the ACP Office at:  
[office@communitypublishers.com](mailto:office@communitypublishers.com)

Photo Credit: olegius / shutterstock.com





BY JOYCE FRERICKS –  
ACP PRESIDENT

If you are reading this in Publish, that means the Publish team had to use my backup article that was being held in reserve. I will take this opportunity to promote reading the articles in Publish and actually taking the information and putting it into practice. The information is intended to make you think, plan and act in ways that will make your business run smoother or better.

In a prior issue of Publish, Loren Colburn's Perspective was about Proper Backup Procedures – It's not just about computers! He challenged us all to look at maintaining a backup plan outside the normal computer backups we have all become accustomed to. Asking ourselves the "what if" questions about how we will deal with critical tasks when things disrupt our schedules and lives on what seems an increasing basis.

With all the pressures of my business life interlaced with a growing family life, I was challenged to ask "what if" I can't find time to get my article written for Publish in time for sending the publication off to the printer? The backup plan options went in several directions.

1. Drop in the dreaded "This Page Intentionally Left Blank" where

my column normally appears. (Easy, cost effective, but somewhat embarrassing and of not use to our readers.)

2. Drop in a full page ad as a filler. (Easy, cost effective, of some use to readers but confusing if they are looking for my column.)
3. Prepare a column in advance, just in case my business/life gets a bit overwhelming some month. (Apparently like this month.)

So here is my contribution this month, take the time to read Publish each month. There is information that will keep you informed, advice that might help you be better at your job and content designed to keep you up-to-date in this fast chang-

ing community publishing industry. Don't hesitate to drop us a line to let us know what issues or topics you might like us to include in Publish, we welcome your input.

I would also invite you to pass along your printed or digital copy to your staff members to help them stay engaged and moving in the right direction. Better yet, send us their email and we will make sure they get a digital edition copy emailed right to their inbox each month. We are proud of this industry and we want to share that pride with all of you.

Now I need to get back to work because next month I need to write two columns, one for the coming issue and one to replace my backup article! ■

## FROM THE TOP

# WHAT IF...





# **\$99 Trial Membership**

## **First Year Only\***

\$299 Annual Value

# **JOIN US**



## **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."*

**Call today or use this QR Code**  
**877-203-2327**



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



## TAKE A MINUTE



BY CASSEY RECORE

**A**s this issue lands in your mailbox or inbox, I'll be heading to New York City to attend the Affiliate Summit East Conference, joining more than 4,500 attendees and suppliers to explore new marketing opportunities. My goal in attending is to connect with potential partners and uncover ideas that could help generate revenue for ACP.

As many of you know, ACP – and the member benefits we provide – are primarily funded through our ADS Network. Over the years, we've seen a substantial decline in both our network circulation and classified ad sales. We've adapted, reduced costs, and explored alternative revenue streams to keep things moving forward. Like many associations in our industry, we've replaced the traditional paid ads of years past with options such as per-inquiry advertising and pay-per-call or click campaigns. These newer formats have helped supplement our revenue in recent years.

But as leaders, we must always look ahead. And the reality is, we'll eventually need new and diversified revenue sources. So – where do we find them? That question comes up at every board meeting, committee discussion, and strategic planning session. And the truth is, there's no magic answer. That doesn't mean we stop trying. Over the years, we've tested a variety of ideas – from launching our own travel agency to building partnerships with associate members that provide mutual financial benefit. All of these efforts aim to fill the gaps and keep our association strong. But to support our members and our industry long-term, we must continue searching.

Over the past year, I've made it a priority to attend other association events and conferences. This has been hugely beneficial for ACP. We've recruited new members (both publishers and associates), found fresh speakers and relevant content, and expanded our industry presence. In fact, some of the connections I've made in the past year will be participating in our upcoming conference in Mobile, AL.

So when someone I met at a recent event suggested I check out the Affiliate Summit, I decided to take a minute and see what it was all about. And I'm glad I did – because I saw nothing but opportunity.

We'll see how things unfold, and I look forward to sharing more about the conference in an upcoming issue. But my point is this: if I hadn't taken that minute, we might have missed out on valuable ideas or partnerships. And that's something I don't want to risk.

We're all busy. None of us has unlimited time to chase every new possibility. But as September approach-

es, I want to encourage you to take a minute to look at everything we're offering at the ACP Conference in Mobile. Visit our website, flip through the conference brochure, and check out the incredible speakers, timely sessions, hands-on workshops, and our always-popular trade show. Then ask yourself: "Could I be missing something valuable by not attending?" I truly believe the answer will be yes.

### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

We just wrapped up the ACP & MFCP Summer Learning Virtual Training Series. Thank you to Lee Borkowski and MFCP for partnering with ACP to deliver a successful program! If you missed any of the sessions, you can view the recordings on our Virtual Events page on the website.

We also recently concluded the 2025 Best of the Best Contest with a presentation in late June. Congratulations to all the winners - and a special shoutout to Exchange Media Group for earning the **Best of Show** award! Award certificates will be mailed soon and should arrive by late July or early August.





# DIRECTLY SPEAKING

Another exciting update is the launch of our new **ADS Network Distribution Program**, which kicked off in July. The rollout went smoothly, and the ability to select ad types has already received great feedback.

We're also thrilled to welcome two new publishing members to the ACP family:

- **Killeen Daily Herald** (Killeen, TX)
- **TMC Publications** (Minneapolis, MN)

We have a fantastic new member special and a referral program for current members to help you save on dues. Reach out to me if you'd like details on either!

## RIISING STARS & FUND-RAISING NEWS

We're proud to introduce three new participants in this year's **Rising Stars Program**:

- Trevor Romero, EC Hispanic Media
- Evelyn Spence, Coastal View News
- Jacob Dukeman, Engle Printing & Publishing

This program is partially funded by the Bill Welsh Memorial Foundation, and our annual fundraising efforts are in full swing. We're currently collecting donations for our **online silent auction**, which means anyone can participate – whether you're attending the conference or not! Please donate an item today

at: [event.gives/rsauction/items/donateitem](https://event.gives/rsauction/items/donateitem) and watch your email for details on how to bid on the collection of items we receive.

I know it can feel impossible to keep up – trust me, I feel it too. But I'm making a conscious effort to pause and take a minute whenever I can. Whether it's in my professional life or just my day-to-day, I'm trying to notice the things I might otherwise dismiss or overlook.

So I encourage you to do the same: take a minute to reflect, explore, ask questions – or even just breathe. You never know what valuable opportunities you might uncover.

As always, I welcome your feedback, ideas, and suggestions. And I promise – I will take a minute to look them over.

## Audits & Readership Studies for additional publications you own at ACP rates!

Enjoy the same great data and CVC benefits for Bridal, Parenting, 55+ Lifestyle, Home, Business, or Niche Guides that you also publish.

The image shows a sample of a CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL PUBLICATION AUDIT REPORT for 'Family Magazine'. The report includes sections for Audited Media Platforms, CVC Estimated Ed, Total Digital Circulation, Audited Circulation, Distribution and Net Press Averages - Print Edition, Audit Period Summary, and Distribution by Zip Code. It also includes a table for the following products or services if any, do you plan to purchase during the next twelve months?

Product/Service	Yes	No	Other
Newspaper, Book or DVD	0	0	0
New Automobile, Truck or SUV	0	0	0
Used Automobile, Truck or SUV	0	0	0
Furniture / Home Furnishings	0	0	0
Major Home Appliances	0	0	0

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## Somebody once said...

“

The buyer is entitled to a bargain. The seller is entitled to a profit. So there is a fine margin in between where the price is right.

”

**Conrad Hilton**



# RETHINKING TRADE SHOWS: A Smarter Way to Engage and Grow



BY LOREN COLBURN

When someone says “trade show,” what’s the first thing that comes to mind? For many of us, it’s a room full of booths where vendors are trying—sometimes a little too hard—to sell us something we didn’t know we needed (or still don’t think we do). We’ve all been to those chamber-style events where you’re either approached by an overenthusiastic salesperson pushing motorcycle air conditioners... or you’re met with someone who’s doing everything possible to avoid eye contact. Not exactly inspiring.

It’s no wonder “trade show” can sometimes trigger a bit of skepticism.

But here’s the good news: the **ACP Trade Show** at the Annual Conference in Mobile this September offers a completely different experience—one centered around opportunity, solutions, and genuine business improvement. All of this designed with your business in mind.

It really comes down to mindset. Instead of bracing for the hard sell, approach the show as an opportunity to solve real business challenges. What if, instead of expecting someone to twist your arm, you walked in looking for answers? Answers that might streamline your workflow, boost your revenue, or help you offer more to your advertisers.

When you shift your perspective, trade shows stop being about sales pitches and start becoming solution centers.

Of course, like anything worthwhile, you’ll need to do a little prep. The more you know about the companies and offerings at the show, the better you can focus your time and energy. That’s the purpose of this trade show issue of *Publish*—to help you identify which participants might bring real value to your publication. Make a plan. Create a list of vendors you want to talk to. Prioritize the ones who could make a real difference.

**And here’s where being on-site at the ACP Conference and Trade Show really steps up: you’ll have the chance to connect not just with the businesses themselves, but also with other attendees who’ve used their products or services. Ask for references, set up conversations, and hear firsthand what’s working in the real world. Those face-to-face conversations with a peer can be far more insightful than a quick call or email.**

So as you flip through this issue and explore the ACP Associate Members that have already committed to participating in the Mobile trade

show, take a moment to think strategically. Who’s got a tool, service, or insight that can help you do what you do—but better? Even if you’re not attending in person, you can still identify key businesses worth following up with afterward.

At the end of the day, it’s not about buying or selling—it’s about meeting needs. Just as you work hard to serve your advertisers, these businesses are eager to support you and your goals. When you approach the trade show with purpose and curiosity, you might be surprised at the ideas and connections you’ll walk away with. Both buyers and sellers will agree how important it is to support the strength of community publications and take advantage of the fact that, ***“Print’s not dead, it’s READ!”*** ■

## Rethink the Trade Show

*It’s not about being sold to—it’s about discovering what your business needs next.*



**Find solutions.  
Build connections.  
Grow smarter**

Use this year’s ACP Trade Show to unlock real value for your publication.

- ✓ Come with questions—leave with answers
- ✓ Plan ahead for more meaningful conversations
- ✓ Real feedback from real users—right at the event
- ✓ Not just products—problem solvers.



# ACP Trade Show

# Partner Profiles



## JANUARY SPRING

### Platinum Partner

*We are the digital partner you've been searching for.*

At January Spring our niche is niche. We work with niche media companies and agencies at every skill level to transform the way they do digital. We make digital simple.

January Spring will coach you how to:

- Develop multi-channel marketing plans designed to reach your audience across platforms.
- Offer audience-based programs to deliver precision-targeted campaigns.
- Introduce digital-first solutions to attract non-advertisers.
- Retain and grow print advertisers by integrating digital strategies seamlessly.

### WHAT SETS APART?

#### Sales Directors Who Understand Your Industry

Our Sales Directors bring hands-on industry experience and have trained over 10,000 sales professionals, calling on local and regional businesses. They provide personalized one-on-one training and work closely with you to deliver exceptional customer service and measurable results.

#### Decades of Experience in Digital Marketing

We combine years of expertise with a multifaceted approach, layering tactics like geofencing, audience curation, and retargeting to build effective campaigns. We bring a broad perspective and proven strategies to every project.

#### Boutique Service with Big-Agency Impact

As a boutique agency, we deliver hands-on, personalized service backed by the expertise and resources of a larger firm. You'll benefit from a dedicated Account Success team, full visibility into your campaigns with our 24/7 live reporting dashboard, and measurable ROI through tracked website and physical foot traffic conversions. We also invest in a curated network of premium digital vendors—so you don't have to—ensuring quality placements and results without the overhead.

### We'll Handle the Digital—Win the Sale

Focus on closing deals while we manage the digital strategy, delivering the results you need to grow your business. Win the sale. Leave the rest to us.

Exclusive Offer for ACP Partners: Launch your digital strategy with January Spring for just \$199/month for the first 12 months. Let's build a plan that makes digital work for you, reach out to Mac Little (mac@januaryspring.com), January Spring's Business Development Director to get started!

🏠 <https://januaryspring.com/>

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We combine craftsmanship with cutting-edge web printing technology to bring your stories to life with clarity, color, and consistency. Our pressroom is equipped with the industry's best — because quality matters at every turn.

### BINDING: Finish Strong

The final impression is just as important as the first. Our fully equipped bindery ensures your publication is finished with the professional touch it deserves. Whether you need standard stitching or specialty finishing, our solutions are built for both quality and efficiency.

### Our capabilities include:

- Saddle-stitching with signature recognition (up to 8 pockets), inline inkjetting, gate folds, and tip-on/blow-in feeders



# TRADE SHOW PROFILES

- Perfect binding with PUR glue (up to 2" thick / 18 pockets)
- Folding (including double gate folds), cutting, 3 & 5 hole drilling
- Offline tip-on machines and inserting for specialty needs

## MAILING: Smarter Distribution, Faster Delivery

As one of the largest mailers in the region — with a USPS facility right onsite — we process and ship the same day to speed up delivery and tighten in-home date windows. With our mailing services, you get accuracy, efficiency, and measurable cost savings.

### Services include:

- Inkjet addressing, tabbing, polybagging
- Label-aire (up to 4"x4"), simplified mail processing
- NCOA and CASS-certified list management
- Co-mailing and dropshipping to reduce postage costs
- DynaMail for tracking and data visibility

## SHIPPING: Nationwide Reach, Local Care

From our central U.S. location, we move your product quickly and reliably. Our in-house fleet of vehicles, tractor-trailers, and dedicated drivers ensures your publications get where they need to go, when they need to be there. Six days a week, coast to coast.

## FULFILLMENT: The Finishing Touch

For kits, packaging, hand-inserts, and small parcel fulfillment, our specialized team ensures every detail is delivered with care. We tailor our fulfillment services to meet your needs, whether it's for a national campaign or a targeted drop.

More than a printer — we're your partner.

Let's bring your next big idea to life!

**Fulfillment** — An exceptional product requires an exceptional finish. That's why we have a specialized department designed for customer kitting, packaging, hand-inserting and small parcel packaging.

Our central location makes it easy for us to reach clients from coast to coast.



## All In One Insights Gold Partner

All In One Insights helps media brands better understand their audiences and effectively leverage them across their multi-platform brand footprint.

We are focused on providing high quality full-service research and marketing support for niche media brands ... delivering cost-effective support do more to grow your brand.

### All In One Insights provides:

- Custom Reader/User Studies — understand your readers/users better, demonstrate their unique value for advertisers.
- Association/Membership Studies — understand what members value most for effective member acquisition/retention strategies.
- Data Analysis — preparation of executive summaries, highlights and briefings
- Marketing/Ad Sales Support — story development for media kits, sales presentation and PR/promotional materials.

All In One Insights principals have extensive hands-on experience working with well over 300 media brands — across the city, regional, community and niche publishing categories.

🏠 <https://allinoneinsights.com>



## Creative Circle Gold Partner

Our passion is helping support locally and family owned media outlets, entrepreneurs launching new media outlets and groups bringing chain-owned newspapers back to local ownership.

### Digital platform upgrades:

- The industry's first and best pay wall
- Full, dynamic web CMS that is ideal for small publishers
- In-market digital sales blitzes
- Ad server that defeats ad blockers
- Premium Pages, providing wide ranging online content to support subscriptions, sponsorships and branded content
- Paid content platform for obits, celebrations, calendars, weddings, engagements, press releases and branded content
- Self-service, web-centric classifieds
- Single platform subscription management for print and web
- Intelligent Programmatic advertising

# TRADE SHOW PROFILES

## Print and staffing upgrades:

- Print redesigns to rethink print and grow readership and revenue
- Energizing training for newsrooms and ad departments to create more relevant content
- Webmaster services to run your web site for you
- High-end outsourcing to produce magazines, special sections and books
- Print CMS software to help organize and automate print production
- Strategic consulting to tackle your toughest issues
- Emergency help and vacation relief

Creative Circle has helped more than 1,000 publishers on three continents. We've redesigned more than 750 print publications and more than 500 media web sites. We've led training for thousands of journalists in 23 countries.

🏠 <https://creativecirclemedia.com/>



## Metro Creative Graphics

### Gold Partner

Metro Creative Graphics, Inc. is a leading provider of advertising, creative, editorial and sales support resources designed to help media companies boost revenue and streamline production with their print and digital products. Metro is unmatched in serving the needs of today's publishers with ready-to-use spec ads, stock-quality images, copyright-free editorial features, print special sections, themed websites, sales and marketing support, and digital ad development tools. The company's responsiveness and passion for performance has been helping publishers create, sell and profit beyond their business expectations for over a century.

🏠 [www.mcg.metrocreativeconnection.com](http://www.mcg.metrocreativeconnection.com)



## Advantage Newspaper Consultants

### Silver Partner

Advantage Newspaper Consultants (ANC) is a trusted partner for local newspapers, providing expert advertising sales solutions to maximize revenue. With decades of experience, ANC specializes in entertainment guides, magazines, front page notes, digital programs, and total audience programs. Our dedicated team works closely with publishers to develop customized strategies that drive ad sales and audience engagement. By combining industry expertise with

innovative solutions, ANC helps newspapers thrive in an ever-changing media landscape, ensuring long-term success and profitability.

🏠 <https://newspaperconsultants.com/>



## Alternative Newsweekly

### Foundation

### Silver Partner

ANF offers fiscal sponsorship to journalism projects of all sizes and media types for the purposes of increasing public access to high quality local and national reporting by independent news outlets; supporting investigative and enterprise reporting projects and initiatives; and advancing education about the field of journalism and the need for popular support for the craft.

🏠 <https://altnewsfoundation.org/>



## Broadstreet

### Silver Partner

Broadstreet is the ad manager built to keep small businesses spending money with you instead of Google and Meta. Selected as the R&D partner of the year in 2024 by the Local Media Association. Google Ad Manager and Wordpress plugins don't cut it anymore — and your clients agree. Join the growing number of news and magazine publishers who use Broadstreet to deliver exceptional display advertising and sponsored content campaigns.

🏠 <https://broadstreetads.com>



## Circulation Verification Council (CVC)

### Silver Partner

The Circulation Verification Council (CVC) plays a pivotal role in the publishing world by conducting circulation audits and readership studies. CVC's audits provide unbiased and reliable information regarding circulation, readership, and market penetration. These metrics empower publishers to make informed choices about their



## TRADE SHOW PROFILES

publications. Advertisers, in turn, gain insights into the reach and effectiveness of their ad placements.

Circulation audits go beyond mere circulation numbers. They encompass printing, distribution, digital editions, websites, mobile, email, and social media. By auditing these aspects, CVC presents an accurate picture of a publication's audience. This information is invaluable for publishers seeking to understand their position in a competitive landscape.

Beyond circulation, readership studies delve into audience behavior. They can explore how readers engage with content across various platforms. These studies reveal crucial insights: Who reads the publication? How long do they spend with the publication? Which sections are most popular? Such knowledge informs content strategies and ad targeting.

CVC's sales training sessions empower sales staff with compelling information. Armed with data, they can confidently engage with clients. CVC's circulation audits and readership studies are the foundation of an industry that thrives on data, trust, and strategic decision-making.

CVC acts as an impartial third-party. In the battle for circulation and advertising revenue, CVC equips publishers with the numbers they need. Armed with accurate data, publishers can demonstrate their publication's worth to advertisers. Advertisers, in turn, can allocate budgets effectively based on real-world impact.

🏠 <https://www.cvcaudit.com/>

**Cummings**  
Publication Printers Since 1914

**Cummings Printing**  
Silver Partner

Since 1914 Cummings has specialized in the printing of short-run publications. We offer a streamlined pre-press workflow through InSite, multiple heat-set web presses and strategic mailing options like co-mailing and destination drop-shipping. That said, the strength of our company lies with our dedicated employees. We work for you. Clients never get lost in the shuffle. Every job gets the attention it deserves.

As a four-generation, family-owned company with over 100 years of experience in publication printing we know what service is all about. Every day we strive to make sure our clients know that they are never just another account. We value our relationships and it has served us well through the years. We make sure you utilize all the

efficiencies possible and answer any questions you have. That's our job.

Our objective at Cummings Printing has been simple: provide customers with a quality product, delivered on-time and within budget. Although "Quality" may be an overused cliché at some companies, at Cummings it is a way of life. As an ISO 9002 company, Cummings has implemented a quality management system that involves every employee, from customer service through shipping.

If you are not getting this same service from your printing company, please contact Cummings Printing and experience what has made us successful since 1914.

🏠 <https://www.cummingsprinting.com>



**Design2Pro**  
Silver Partner

Design2Pro is the premier off-site design and production solution for all your pre-press graphics needs — editorial pagination and design, print and web ad production and all your marketing, promotional and collateral projects.. We're currently the design hub choice for more than 300 different print and digital newspapers and magazines around the world. We handle everything from fast-paced dailies to high-end high-glossy quarterly magazines and everything in-between including community weeklies, trendy monthlies and local shoppers.

Founded in 2004, Design2Pro is one of the creators, innovators and pioneers of off-site cover-to-cover publication design. Our team of 100+ full-time staff designers and artists can execute nearly anything you can imagine for your publication from attention getting infographics to a total redesign. We are your one-stop shop for all things pre-press and at prices that make your publications more profitable!

**APPROACH:** When you entrust your publication's art, design, layout and composition needs with us you'll have all the benefits of an in-house art department with none of the hassles and liabilities of payroll, taxes, insurance and employee benefits along with employee turnover, unreliability, recruitment, training and supervision. Also you'll be freed from high capital costs for equipment, software and constant upgrade.

**STRATEGY:** You'll gain a lot more profit from your publications because we can design and produce all of your periodicals, advertisements, collateral materials and mobile apps for a fraction of the cost of an in-house staff or traditional graphic firm. We can even help with your website and e-books.

# TRADE SHOW PROFILES

**DEPENDABILITY:** Design2Pro is your cost-effective design solution. We do all of your design work quickly, creatively, accurately and dependably with friendly and highly talented graphic professionals who'll make you look good. We'll meet your deadlines and give you peace of mind all for big savings versus doing this work in-house.

Design2Pro is your game-changing solution in today's incredibly competitive newspaper publishing environment. For more information, visit us in Charlotte or contact Howard Barbanel at [howard@design2pro.com](mailto:howard@design2pro.com). If you are looking for a sample of our work — you are looking at one right now or visit our website at [www.design2pro.com](http://www.design2pro.com) and click on our Portfolio Page tab.

🏠 <https://www.design2pro.com/>



## Mirabel Technologies Silver Partner

Mirabel Technologies is a privately owned, international tech company that provides all-in-one software solutions for businesses. As a former publisher, President Mark McCormick founded Mirabel Technologies in 2003 with the vision to help publishers streamline operations in an ever-changing media environment.

The Newspaper Manager of Mirabel Technologies is the global leader of publishing CRM solutions. Serving more than 25,000+ publications and media companies worldwide, this flexible web-based software app drastically reduces overhead costs and manpower by connecting a world-class customer relationship management platform, a robust sales pipeline opportunities module, an order management system that handles print orders, digital products, programmatic ads, and events. It features the most powerful billing module in the publishing and media industries, a detailed accounts receivable system, and a digital asset management system to manage all of your digital ad trafficking and placement

Since our introduction of the first web-based publishing CRM, The Newspaper Manager, our suite of SaaS products has grown to include DigitalStudio, The Magazine Manager, Flip & Share, Mirabel's Marketing Manager, Clean Your Lists and ChargeBrite.

Each product expands Mirabel Technologies into new industries to provide clean, streamlined solutions to marketing, sales, project management, subscription management, and more.

🏠 <https://www.mirabeltechnologies.com/>



## PopMount Silver Partner

We partner with publications to help drive revenue & sales. As a strategic partner, our commitment goes beyond just financial benefits. Our main goal is to get a head of 3rd party companies stealing your content and benefiting financially. We build a white-labeled ecommerce store that has a range of products such as; awards, plaques photos, articles, reprints, digital badges and more. Anything that is purchased in your store you get up to a 40% revenue share. We also offer up to a 25% wholesale discount.

🏠 [www.popmount.com](http://www.popmount.com)

**Exclusive For ACP Members** – Unlock New Revenue Streams and Operational Efficiencies. As a member of ACP, you gain access to a suite of exclusive benefits designed to boost your bottom line and streamline your operations. For more information go to:

🏠 <https://www.communitypublishers.com/pop-mount-partnership>



Celebrating 50 years in business in 2025, SCS has delivered Innovation, Longevity and Service with advertising, production, newsroom and digital asset management software. Family-owned and employing a staff of U.S.-based developers, sales and support, SCS has long been a trusted vendor for newspapers ranging from small weeklies to corporate groups. Our subscription-based managed service plans provide all the benefits of the software while we take care of the maintenance of our cloud-based and on-premise solutions.

🏠 <https://www.newspapersystems.com/>



## Streamlined Office Solutions Silver Partner

ASK-CRM is a Customer Relationship Management tool developed and designed specifically for the media industry by Robin Smith. He started working in the media industry nearly 30 years ago and has worked with Gannett, Tribune, Hearst Publishing, Lee Enterprises and many independent companies as well. Above all, ASK-CRM is an affordable CRM solution for media companies of all sizes. Stop by and check out how we have integrated the Buyer Intention Survey data from CVC!

🏠 [www.newspapercrm.com](http://www.newspapercrm.com)



# STRENGTHENING SUPPLIER & PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS INDUSTRY

**I**n the world of community publishing, where deadlines are tight, resources are lean, and relationships are everything, improving your connections with suppliers and partner businesses isn't just good practice—it's essential. Whether you're working with printers, freelance creatives, distribution teams, advertisers, or local service providers, strong partnerships fuel your ability to produce, deliver, and grow.

When suppliers and partners feel like part of your team, they become more invested in your success, more responsive in a crunch, and more likely to collaborate with you on new ideas. Here's how community publishers can cultivate those connections—and the benefits they'll gain.

## 1. STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

### See Suppliers & Partners as Part of Your Publication Ecosystem

Think beyond transactional relationships. Your print vendor, layout designer, ad sales rep, and delivery service all play pivotal roles in your success. Treating them as strategic collaborators—not interchangeable service providers—fosters trust, loyalty, and long-term cooperation.

Example: Instead of simply sending specs to your printer, ask for their input on paper stock, finished size or deadlines—they might help you cut costs, find a more economical option or an efficiency to streamline the process.

### Maintain Open, Consistent Communication

- **Keep Everyone in the Loop:** If you're changing your layout cycle, launching a special edition, or adjusting print quantities, make sure your key partners know early.
- **Encourage Honest Feedback:** Ask your printer or ad rep how things could run smoother from their side. You may uncover small process changes that save hours each week.
- **Collaborate Often:** Invite your partners to brainstorm special promotions, co-branded campaigns, or community initiatives.

*According to many successful local publishers, having a strong relationship with your printer can be the difference between making a print deadline or suffering a costly delay.*

### Use Technology to Streamline Workflows

Invest in systems that make collaboration easier:

- Use PRM (Partner Relationship Management) or workflow software to track deadlines, ad specs, submissions, and payments.
- Shared project management tools (like Trello or Google Sheets) can keep you and your partners on the same page and reduce back-and-forth emails.

### Set Clear Expectations—and Reinforce Them

- Outline deliverables and deadlines in writing (even with long-time partners).
- Define file formats, print-ready deadlines, pickup times, or billing cycles so everyone's operating with the same playbook.

*For community publishers, where small hiccups can ripple through the whole production schedule, clarity upfront saves last-minute headaches.*

### Pursue Shared Opportunities

- **Collaborate with local businesses** on sponsored content, event programs, or neighborhood guides.
- **Team up with your printer** to explore new revenue models, such as short-run specialty products or direct-mail inserts.  
*Mutual growth builds loyalty.*

# SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS

*When your success contributes to theirs, everyone wins.*

## Anticipate and Manage Risks

- Identify single points of failure (e.g., one printer or delivery team) and build in backups.
- Develop contingency plans for staffing shortages, supply delays, or delivery disruptions—before you need them.

## 2. BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

- ✓ **Higher Quality Output**  
Better communication with your printer or layout team results in cleaner files, fewer print errors, and more polished publications.
- ✓ **Cost Control and Efficiency**  
Strong vendor relationships often unlock better rates, bundled services,

or flexibility in turnaround times—saving time and money.

- ✓ **On-Time Delivery and Fewer Disruptions**

When your partners feel like part of the team, they're more likely to flag issues early, pull strings when needed, and help you stick to production schedules.

- ✓ **More Innovation and Collaboration**

Local partners can help you brainstorm new special sections, community projects, or bundled advertising packages—bringing fresh value to your readers and advertisers.

- ✓ **Increased Flexibility During Challenges**

Whether it's a sudden supply chain issue, equipment failure, or staff illness, trusted partners are often more willing to step up and help you adapt quickly.

- ✓ **Reputation and Reach**

Reliable partners help you maintain your reputation for quality and consistency—key assets when you rely on community trust and advertiser loyalty.

## IN SUMMARY

For community publications, strong relationships with suppliers and partner businesses can make the difference between surviving and thriving. Whether you're producing a monthly magazine, a weekly shopper, a local newspaper or a digital hybrid, your behind-the-scenes partners are just as critical as your publication's content.

By communicating openly, investing in collaboration, and aligning your goals, you'll not only improve production—you'll build a more resilient, innovative, and connected publication.

Actual quotes from ACP Conference attendees when asked by someone who has not attended an ACP Conference, why they should attend:

“You'll walk away with ideas that are proven successes by fellow industry experts. It's a conference full of people who want to help others succeed. Just a phone call/email away.”

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE  
**2023 CHARLOTTE**  
CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW

“I like the ACP conference because most of the people and publications are facing the same issues as I am, so the content is more focused on our industry and not a general overview.”

“ALL HANDS ON DECK”  
NORFOLK • 2024

“The networking and the roundtable sessions are priceless. With all my years in the industry I always learn something new.”

Growing in the  
**Heartland**  
September 17-18, 2021  
Des Moines, Iowa  
ACP & MFCA Joint Conference & Trade Show

“The comraderie. When you get that many publishers in one room, you're bound to come away with something that helps your business.”

“Together We Rise”  
**PHOENIX**  
LEADERSHIP RETREAT  
SEPT. 12-13, 2024

“Getting new ideas and learning how other publications operate is extremely valuable. The other publishers at ACP events are always willing to share,”

“ALL HANDS ON DECK”  
NORFOLK • 2024

“Most of us are facing the same issues. It gives us a chance to learn how others are dealing/adapting to the changing climate as well as what is working as additional profit streams.”

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE  
**2023 CHARLOTTE**  
CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW



# ATTENTION BUYERS AND SELLERS: It Needs to Be About Providing Solutions!

Whether you are heading to a trade show or dealing with an everyday sales call back home at your office, your perspective toward the upcoming discussion can predetermine the outcome. If you come at it from the mindset that “I don’t want to be sold”, or “I need to close one more sale to hit my number”, you’re most likely not going to get the best outcome the discussion. If you approach it totally focused on securing a solution to a problem, you might be surprised at what is available.

This is actually an important distinction for both buyers and sellers to be able to deal with. Nobody wants to be “sold” something but everybody is looking to solve problems, improve efficiencies and expand capabilities. Buyers need to keep an open mind and sellers need to stay focused on the customer’s needs. For both sides, at the heart of effective sales is a fundamental shift in mindset— from pushing a product to solving a problem. While both approaches aim to close a deal, the experience for the customer, and the long-term outcome for the business, are often drastically different.

### THE CORE DIFFERENCE: INTENT AND PERCEIVED VALUE

"Being sold" often feels transactional. It's about the seller's goals, not the buyer's needs. The focus is typically on showcasing the product, its features, and persuading the customer to make a purchase—sometimes regardless of whether it's the best fit. It can feel one-sided and rushed, emphasizing short-term wins over lasting relationships.

"Providing solutions," however, shifts the spotlight to the customer. It begins with understanding the client's unique situation, challenges, and goals. From there, the conversation becomes collaborative: the seller becomes a trusted advisor, working with the customer to find the best path forward—even if that means suggesting an alternative product, service, or timing.

### DETAILED COMPARISON Perspective of Being Sold

- **Focus:**  
Centered on the product or service

itself, especially features, benefits, and specs—often in a “one-size-fits-all” fashion.

- **Approach:**  
May use high-pressure tactics, pre-scripted pitches, and limited customization. The salesperson controls the conversation and may gloss over customer concerns.
- **Goal:**  
To close the sale as quickly as possible. The emphasis is on meeting quotas, hitting targets, and completing transactions—often at the expense of the customer experience.
- **Customer Perception:**  
The customer may feel manipulated or unheard, leading to buyer's remorse, distrust, or reluctance to engage again in the future.

### Perspective of Providing Solutions

- **Focus:**  
On identifying and addressing the specific pain points, needs, or aspirations of the customer. It's not about

what you sell—it's about what the customer needs.

- **Approach:**  
Uses active listening, thoughtful questioning, and empathy. The conversation is tailored, adaptive, and guided by a desire to help.
- **Goal:**  
To create value for the customer by offering solutions that deliver real results. Success is measured not just in sales, but in customer outcomes and satisfaction.
- **Customer Perception:**  
Customers feel respected, understood, and supported. They see the salesperson as a partner in their success, not just someone trying to hit a target.

### KEY DISTINCTIONS IN PRACTICE During Qualification:

- **Being Sold:** Qualification is surface-level—based on demographics or a checklist of product features.

## BUYERS & SELLERS

- **Providing Solutions:** Qualification is deep—based on discovering the customer's underlying issues and motivations.

### During Presentation:

- **Being Sold:** Focuses heavily on features and hype.
- **Providing Solutions:** Ties features directly to the customer's specific challenges and how they will benefit.

### During Negotiation:

- **Being Sold:** Can feel combative or rigid—pricing and terms are pushed hard.
- **Providing Solutions:** Feels collaborative—focused on value alignment, flexibility, and shared success.

### Post-Sale Relationship:

- **Being Sold:** Ends with the transaction; little follow-up or aftercare.
- **Providing Solutions:** Begins a long-term relationship; follow-up is consistent, and trust grows over time.

### WHAT THIS ALL MEANS FOR BUYERS

As a buyer, don't let the seller's approach get between you and a potential good thing for your business. Stay focused on what your need or problem is and direct the discussion and your questioning toward how the seller's product can fill that need or solve the problem. There might even be times where you feel like you're working harder to justify the sale than the seller is, but remember what Andrew Carnegie said, "any-

thing in life worth having is worth working for!" If you stay focused on what you need, you'll be able to clearly evaluate the effectiveness of this product as a solution.

### WHAT THIS ALL MEANS FOR SELLERS

As a seller, it's important to remember buyers don't want to be "sold"—they want to be understood. When sellers shift their focus to solving real problems instead of just pitching products, trust is built, value is created, and relationships grow stronger. By offering tailored solutions, you stand out from the competition, create long-term customer loyalty, and increase your chances of closing the deal. It's not about pushing a product—it's about proving you can help. Serve first, sell second will always serve you well.

Written by Loren Colburn in conjunction with ChatGPT



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enough time networking?**


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Grow your business...  
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Registration Link



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**Your bottom line will be glad you did.**

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

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**ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW**

**SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2025**

**RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL**

## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

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

Are you capturing your advertisers' full marketing spend? Most local publishers only get a small share. Local Media 3.0 isn't about ditching print—it's about using your strengths to grow digital revenue. This session explores why the "AND strategy" (print and digital) is essential for sustainability. Learn how to turn print revenue into digital growth, position your publication as a full-service media agency, and thrive—whether you publish a shopper, lifestyle magazine, or hybrid. Guy Tasaka's insights have helped hundreds of publishers modernize their models. Now it's your turn to rethink your strategy and claim a bigger piece of the pie.

**Guy Tasaka** is a seasoned media executive with deep expertise in digital publishing, research and analytics, strategic planning, and product development. As CEO of Tasaka Digital, he leads innovation in mobile publishing, digital subscriptions, and Connected TV. He has held leadership roles at Calkins Media and The New York Times, where he helped drive digital transformation. A contributor to *Editor and Publisher Magazine*, Guy shares insights on emerging technologies in media. Named the 2015 Local Media Association's Innovator of the Year, he remains a key voice shaping the future of local media through forward-thinking strategies and innovation.



#### WORKSHOP:

#### AI FOR PUBLISHERS: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Transform your operation with AI tools designed specifically for local publishers!

Artificial intelligence isn't just for major media companies. In this hands-on session, media innovation expert Guy Tasaka breaks down how community and mid-metro publishers can implement AI solutions that drive real results.

##### **You'll learn:**

- Data collection strategies that work even for smaller publishers
- How AI can strengthen your relationships with existing

advertisers

- Practical applications for content creation, audience engagement, and advertising
- Revenue opportunities that AI unlocks for local media companies

This isn't theoretical—it's a brass-tacks look at how publishers like you are using AI tools right now to grow their business. Guy will share a step-by-step implementation approach that respects your current business model while opening new opportunities.

## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

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

- 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

#### WORKSHOP:

#### LEAD GENERATION Q & A

The keynoter 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** 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. Ross is the President of Santa Monica Daily Press





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## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

### 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.

**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.



## WORKSHOP: 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.

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## LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

### Communicating at the Top of Your Game

*Preregistration required with fee.*

If you have ever experienced business communication problems, this interactive session is for you. In this session, we will explore some of the problems in business communication and suggest practical tools to deal with them. As publishers and managers, you are skilled in many aspects of communication. However, you may find yourself grappling with changing communication methods and others' expectations. Moreover, your academic training and work experience may not have fully prepared you for what you are facing in business settings, such as negotiation, working in teams, hiring, firing, and managing employees and freelancers.

**Dr. Jeanne Maes** is a Professor of Management at the Mitchell College of Business and also serves as Ombudsperson at the University of South Alabama. She specializes in organizational communication, negotiation, and alternative dispute resolution. A consultant, certified coach, facilitator, mediator, and executive trainer, she has worked with clients throughout the U.S. and internationally.



**Dr. Jennifer C. Zoghby** serves as Assistant Professor of Management at the Mitchell College of Business at the University of South Alabama. Her research centers on entrepreneurship. She has led several training seminars for local and regional groups, including entrepreneurs and health care executives.





# The Leadership Institute

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS



## TLI 260 - TAKING A WALK IN AN ENTREPRENEUR'S SHOES

**NEW CLASS!** Kara was able to see first-hand just how many steps there are to start a new, small business, having gone through the process herself. She used that experience to create a checklist to help new businesses and to rethink how we can support them, well before advertising comes into play. In this session she'll be sharing ideas for publishers to connect with new, local businesses from day one - even in ways that go well before advertising. **Instructor: Kara Ivson**

## TLI 256 - DIGITAL SALES SUCCESS PART 3

**NEW CLASS!** Building on the foundational concepts from TLI 230 and TLI 254, this course takes your understanding of digital media strategy to the next level. While previous courses focused on identifying what to sell and how to integrate print and digital sales effectively, this class shifts the focus to the structural aspects of digital. You'll explore how to leverage digital tools and strategies to evolve into a full-service media company to position yourself for continued growth. **TLI Instructor: Manuel Karam**

## TLI 221 - LEVERAGING YOUR CVC AUDIT & CVC SALES PROPOSAL TOOL

**NEW CLASS!** Do you use these ACP Member Benefits? Statistics can be a powerful and informative part of an advertising sales presentation if used effectively. Understanding which publishing statistics to incorporate into your sales presentation to keep it interesting and informative but without overwhelming your audience with numbers is the key. The right balance is sure to move your prospect to action. We'll show you how to use these valuable tools to maximize your revenue.

## TLI 220 - MASTERING YOUR RATE CARD: BUILD, PRESENT, AND PROFIT - CHARITY HUFF

**NEW CLASS!** Your rate card isn't just a pricing sheet - it's a strategic tool that can drive revenue, showcase value, and build lasting partnerships. In this session, we'll dive into how to build a compelling rate card that aligns with your offerings and your



market. We'll also explore the best practices for using your rate card in proposals and renewals to ensure you're maximizing every opportunity. Whether you're starting from scratch or looking to refine what you already have, this class will give you actionable tips and real-world examples to make your rate card work harder for you. **TLI Instructor: Charity Huff**

## TLI 261 - HOW TO SELL ADVERTISING IN 2025 UTILIZING AI

**NEW CLASS!** Discover the future of advertising in this game-changing session led by Broadstreet Founder and Publisher Kenny Katzgrau. Kenny will reveal cutting-edge strategies for leveraging AI to boost ad sales and streamline your workflow. Whether you're new to AI or looking to enhance your sales techniques, this session will equip you with actionable insights to stay ahead in the ever-evolving digital advertising landscape.

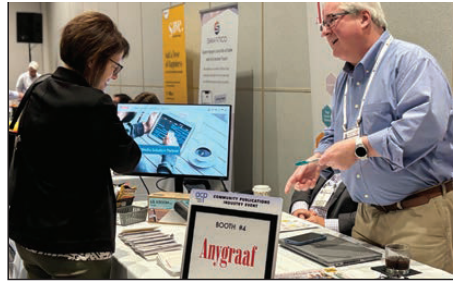
## TLI 114 - INCREASE YOUR SALES & CREATE LONG-TERM CUSTOMERS

In this class, you'll explore proven strategies for selling through long-term contracts, mastering the art of upselling, and creating persuasive proposals that secure commitment and growth. Gain the skills and insights needed to deliver exceptional value and build customer loyalty for the long haul. **TLI Instructor: Jolene Goodman**

**Earn credits toward your professional certifications. All conference classes build required credits for Associate Advertising Executive (AAE) certification and the Leadership Workshop earns credits toward the Certified Advertising Executive (CAE) certification.**







## AUCTION & RAFFLE

New in 2025, the auction has gone digital! This will allow all members, whether you're in attendance or not to participate. All proceeds from the auction will go to the Bill Welsh Foundation which supports educational initiatives for young professionals (such as the Rising Stars) in the Community Publication Industry. **We are always in need of donations so you can find all the details and instructions at [communitypublishers.com](http://communitypublishers.com) and we encourage everyone to bid on the items at the conference as well.** We appreciate your participation and support!

Back by popular demand, the lottery board will be in play at the Mobile conference to benefit the Bill Welsh foundation also! This exciting raffle has been such a huge success at past conferences that we decided to bring it back again in 2025. ACP will purchase \$100 worth of scratch off tickets, and we will sell raffle tickets throughout the conference for one lucky winner to have a chance at winning millions! Winner takes all, so be sure join in on the excitement!

## ALL WORK & NO PLAY - NOT A CHANCE!

### WEDNESDAY EVENING

Join us on Wednesday evening to kick off the conference with a cocktail and get reacquainted with your fellow attendees! Mingle with friends and meet new faces and then pair off into groups to enjoy a nice dinner at one of the many local restaurant options that downtown Mobile has to offer!

### THURSDAY EVENING

On Thursday, we take our Mardi Gras Celebration to the next level! Meet us in the hotel lobby to grab a drink and line up for our parade, complete with a second line band to lead us to the Mardi Gras Museum for an evening of dinner and cocktails and dancing! Help our Krewe crown the King and Queen of the soirée! Unwind and let loose at this one-of-a-kind networking experience you won't find anywhere else! This event can be added to your registration for \$109 per person (alcohol is included).

### FRIDAY EVENING

Come by and join us on the rooftop terrace overlooking downtown Mobile for cocktails to say a final farewell as the conference comes to an end. We have also partnered with the Mobile CVB to provide our group with materials and information on local activities, shopping, dining and more. Visit the registration desk for details.

## TRADE SHOW

The conference also features an exhibit hall where Associate Partners showcase the latest products and services, tailored to the needs of the Community Publishing Industry. We typically have around 25-30 Associate Partners who sponsor our conference and present products and services to those who visit their booths throughout the conference. You'll find anything from printers, software platforms, content services and digital providers to the latest AI tools and more! Let us help you find the best partners the industry has to offer!



## IDEA EXCHANGE

### Masquerade of Minds Idea Exchange

Laissez les bons temps rouler (Let the good times roll) as creativity sets sail in a dazzling parade of innovation! Each idea is a vibrant float in our grand Mardi Gras procession - bold, brilliant, and ready to dazzle the crowd. Whether it's your own brainstorm or a gem you discovered elsewhere, we want them all. This is a celebration of ideas in all their festive glory!

Join us for a lively and spirited showdown where our contestants will strut their stuff down the Idea Avenue, competing in this annual attendee favorite - the latest twist on the 3-Minute Idea Exchange. With beads flying and energy high, each presenter has just three minutes to sway the crowd and earn their vote. The audience becomes the krewe, casting live phone votes to crown the winning captain - who'll not only revel in victory but also lead the way for fellow revelers with a standout idea worth following.

**Prizes fit for royalty await:**

**\$500 for 1st Place**

**\$250 for 2nd Place**

**\$100 for 3rd Place**

From entertainment to insight, this high-energy event is sure to be a conference highlight! And beyond the fanfare, the real treasure lies in the ideas themselves - golden nuggets that could spark new revenue or streamline your operations back home.

So grab your mask, bring your brightest idea, and get ready to march into Mobile with flair - this is one parade you won't want to miss!

**75 YEARS ANNIVERSARY**

**Join us to celebrate the association's seventy-five years of industry service!**

# THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY MEETS THE SOUL OF THE SOUTH: ACP Heads to Mobile, Alabama!



BY CAITLIN NEELAND  
RISING STAR

**W**e are all excited to be traveling down south to the upcoming ACP Conference and Trade Show which will be held in Mobile, Alabama, a vibrant city with a rich history and the distinction of being the birthplace of America's first Mardi Gras.

Set against the charming backdrop of the Gulf Coast, this year's conference promises to deliver more than just a packed schedule of professional development, networking opportunities, and hands-on sessions. It offers an experience—one that blends the dynamic energy of community publishing with the rich culture, warm hospitality, and festive flair that only Mobile can offer.

## WHY MOBILE? WHY NOW?

Mobile is more than a destination—it's a story. Known for its rich history, small-town pride, and, yes, the first-ever Mardi Gras celebration in the U.S. (predating New Orleans!), Mobile is the perfect host for our

members who embody the same sense of tradition, innovation, and local celebration.

This year's conference will feature:

- Workshops and panels led by industry experts and successful publishers.
- Roundtables and networking sessions designed to foster connection and collaboration across our industry.
- And of course, plenty of opportunities to enjoy the city's renowned culinary scene, historic architecture, and festive culture.

“Mobile is more than a destination—it's a story.”

## A FIRST-TIMER'S PERSPECTIVE: FINDING MY PLACE IN COMMUNITY PUBLISHING

As a first-time attendee at the 2024 trade show and conference down in Norfolk, VA, I wasn't sure what to expect—but stepping into a room filled with passionate, like-minded professionals was both energizing and inspiring. From the moment I arrived, I was welcomed with genuine warmth and a sense of belonging. Every conversation, workshop, and networking event pushed me just a

little outside my comfort zone—in the best way possible. I met people who not only shared their insights and experiences, but who also reminded me why local publishing matters. By the end of the conference, I left with new friendships, practical ideas I could take back, and a renewed sense of purpose in this industry we all care so deeply about.

One of the most valuable parts of attending the conference was the chance to absorb as much knowledge as possible. I made it a point to sit in on every talk, panel, and workshop I could. Each session offered something unique—whether it was a new tool, a fresh perspective on an old challenge, or a strategy I hadn't considered before. The beauty of these conferences is that the learning doesn't stop with the sessions themselves; it continues through conversations with fellow attendees, who are always eager to share their experiences. By the end of the event, I felt like a sponge, soaking up insights and ideas.

## BRING YOUR MARDI GRAS SPIRIT!

Whether you're a longtime ACP member or a first-time attendee, this conference is your chance to recharge, refocus, and reignite your passion for community publishing. We'll be learning, sharing, and celebrating in a city that knows a thing or two about tradition, creativity, and community pride.

So, mark your calendars, pack your business cards—and don't forget your beads! Mobile is calling, and ACP is ready to answer. ■



# DO YOU HAVE AN EIGHT-INCH FRYING PAN?



BY JOHN FOUST  
GREENSBORO, NC

There's a story about an old man who was fishing from a pier. He was catching more fish than anyone else, so a crowd gathered to learn his secret. His behavior was unlike anything they had ever seen. Each time he caught a fish, he pulled a tape measure out of his pocket and took a measurement. He put the small fish into his cooler and tossed the big ones back into the ocean.

When one of the onlookers asked about his strange technique, he explained that he kept only the fish that were under eight inches long. "Why are you doing that?" he was asked. He said, "Because my frying pan is eight inches wide."

Imagine that. The old fellow was throwing away the fish that didn't fit his eight-inch frying pan. It didn't occur to him that he could get a bigger frying pan or cut large fish into smaller pieces.

We may laugh at this silly example, but there's a bit of that old fisherman in all of us. It's human nature to resist change. It's no surprise that we have a tendency to discard ideas that don't fit the way we've always done things. We all have eight-inch frying pans in our minds, and sometimes it takes discipline to break down those barriers.

Pablo Picasso once said, "Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction." While there is some debate about what this famous artist actually meant, I think it's safe to say he was talking about the need to let go of former – often stubborn – inclinations to do things in certain ways.

Eight-inch frying pans have no place in a creative profession like advertising. If we discard the ideas that don't fit the way we've always done things, we restrict our thinking and limit our potential. When that happens, we end up in a creative rut – and our advertisers get short-changed.

Abraham Maslow, the noted psychologist and philosopher, said, "If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail." That's another way of saying, "Stop throwing away the big ideas. Instead, get rid of that old, eight-inch frying pan."

To refocus our thinking, it helps to recognize negative reactions we may have toward new ideas. When a new concept comes to mind – and our initial reaction is to measure it and throw it back – we should stop ourselves in our tracks. That's it. Just stop.

This reminds me of the old saying, "The mind is like a parachute. It only works when it's open." Once we open the door to possibilities, new ideas – big ideas – will be more welcome.

There is a lot to gain. In the right environment, the seeds of unrestricted creative thinking can blossom into great advertising.

If you want to measure something, measure campaign results. When you have great advertising, you'll have great results. And when you have great results, you'll create loyal advertisers. ■

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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.*

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# 3 STEPS TO REALISTIC TIME MANAGEMENT

BY JAMES A. BAKER - FOUNDER AND CEO, BAKER COMMUNICATIONS

One of the keys to effective time management is effective planning. Effective planning often depends on your ability to accurately gauge the amount of time required to accomplish a given task, whether that task is to complete a certain phase of a long-term project or to complete a phone call with a client.

Every action takes time. The ability to estimate how much time is an essential skill for truly effective time management. Good estimates will enable you to plan appropriately, allotting the correct amount of time to the tasks on your to-do list.

Most people tend to underestimate the time required to accomplish tasks. A rule of thumb that is sometimes cited is to add 25% to any time estimate in order to correct for this tendency. However, there are ways to make and maintain more accurate time estimates, rather than just accounting for error.

### 1. FIGURE HOW LONG IT REALLY TAKES

Many of your tasks are probably routine things that you do on a daily or weekly basis. If you want to make accurate time estimates for future planning, break out a stopwatch and find out how long these tasks currently take you to complete. Try to avoid “racing against the clock” or feeling pressured; simply do the job the same way you have always done, and write down how long it takes. This will give you a realistic framework for scheduling the same or similar tasks in the future.

Another benefit of timing your daily tasks is that it will improve your general understanding of where your

time goes. Did the task take as long as you thought it would? Longer? How often did you get distracted or sidetracked while performing it? Becoming conscious of your true working speed and of your time wasting habits will make you more aware of opportunities to improve your time management.

If you are trying to determine how long a large project will take, it may be helpful to break it down into steps and estimate the time required for each one. Setting deadlines for each stage will improve your focus and provide you with a realistic end point.

### 2. DON'T LET OTHERS GET YOU OFF TRACK

When you know you only have an hour scheduled for an appointment, make sure that it only takes an hour. Meetings and calls that run long can throw your schedule off for the rest of the day. The best way to do this is to inform those involved that you are on a schedule, tell them how much time you have, and explain that your business needs to be concluded within that time restriction. Whether you are at a lunch, in a personal meeting, or on a phone call, politely but firmly let the other person know how much time you have available.

When others understand that you have a time limit and that you plan to enforce it, they will usually become more focused and avoid wasting your time. Not only can this help you keep to your schedule, it may sometimes result in meetings and calls concluding ahead of schedule, buying you time to handle small incidental tasks before your next scheduled item.

### 3. DON'T OVER-SCHEDULE YOURSELF

Build some flexibility into your schedule to allow for unexpected delays, interruptions, and things that take longer than expected. Remember to include adequate driving time and plan for traffic problems if you are moving between locations. Remember to schedule in breaks and meals, and allow some slack time to handle questions or other interruptions from colleagues.

If at all possible, avoid checking email and social media throughout the day, and block off time on your schedule specifically for handling those items. This will improve your focus and reduce time waste. If you find yourself running ahead of schedule, use the opportunity to take care of small pending tasks or just relax for a moment. Small breaks during the day help clear your mind, reduce fatigue, and keep you at your best.


Use these three strategies to plan a realistic, livable approach to time management. You will become both more productive and less stressed. ■

*Baker Communications offers leading edge time management and personal productivity solutions 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 help your team members consistently achieve their high value goals while eliminating time wasted on interruptions and distractions, go to: <https://www.bakercommunications.com/index.html>*





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