

October **2025** **INFORMER**



**Community
Papers of
Michigan**



Meet Glen Head, Your Newest Board Director

From Executive Director Don Rush

Happy Hauntings this October!

At Community Papers of Michigan's (CPM) September Board of Directors meeting, the board unanimously approved Glen Head as a new Director. Glen joins CPM Board President Marty Bennett (Community Shoppers Guide), Vice President Cindy Gaedert-Gearhart (County Journal), Treasurer Jeff Demers (C&G Newspapers), and directors George Moses (The Marketeer) and Wes Smith (View Newspaper Group) in representing the interests of CPM and Michigan's community paper industry.

Great news, you're probably saying to yourself, but who is Glen?



Glen Head

From CM Life to Publisher: Glen's Journey

Glen started Far Ahead Advertising, Inc., in 1998. He shared, "We publish a weekly direct-mail community newspaper and several seasonal magazines. We create just about anything printed, from business cards and brochures to window decals and packaging."

Their flagship publication, MailMax, is a weekly direct mail publication covering 37,209 homes along the coast of Lake Michigan from Coloma down to Sawyer. It features good news and good deals for Berrien and VanBuren counties, with their office located in Benton Harbor.

Glen's "bug" for community publishing started in college. "I worked at CM Life during my four years at Central Michigan University. After dabbling in radio, optical, and running a consulting firm, I found my way back to newspapers at The Herald-Palladium in St. Joseph, Michigan." He started as an Outside Sales Rep and left six years later as Advertising Sales Manager. "The corporate environment—and my entrepreneurial itch—pushed me to start my own publishing company."

Aside from MailMax, Glen's company publishes:

• **Escape in Southwest Michigan** — the official tourism magazine, published in partnership with Visit Southwest Michigan.

• **In and Around St. Joseph** — a summer tabloid published in partnership with St. Joseph Today.

• **HomeTown Welcome** — a monthly glossy mailer targeting new movers. (Glen partners with Daniel Tollefson on this turnkey program. Connect with Dan at dan@htwprogram.com if you need a newcomer strategy!)

• **LakeLife Inland** — a magazine celebrating the inland lakes of Southwest Michigan.

Navigating Industry Changes

Like most in the industry, Glen's business faces several challenges.

"Rising postage and paper costs are eating into margins," he said in a recent email interview. "Selling ad space is tougher when many business owners believe a couple of social media posts will do the trick. The constant 'print is dead' chorus doesn't help. It took me 15 years to finally land national FSI orders—only to watch them slowly fade away."

The publishing industry has changed since the late 1990s. "Actually, everything! We once paid 'proof runners' to hand-deliver proofs; now it's all email and text. My desk used to be armed with rubber cement and hot wax -- though I haven't touched either in years. That said, I could probably still use some hot wax ... just not for publishing!" he joked, admitting he is "slightly goofy. Okay, maybe more than slightly."

Despite the challenges, the fire to publish remains. "Each week, I get my hands on a fresh copy of MailMax and think: We made this! That feeling of creating something tangible never gets old. Plus, it's nice being recognized out in the community."

Family, Faith, and Community Service

When not working, Glen enjoys a good family life.

"My wife is Shelly—she's also my girlfriend which keeps life exciting. My oldest, Megan, 33, made me a grandpa to Luke and Lyla. Kaitlyn is 29, works with me at MailMax, and just got engaged. My youngest, Bobby, 27, also recently

got engaged. Looks like 2026 will be the Year of Weddings for our family!"

Glen is also President of Renovate Ministries and volunteers as a worship leader at First Church Eau Claire and Celebrate Recovery Benton Heights. He also serves on the board of the Blossomtime Festival, Michigan's oldest and largest multi-community festival.

As a CPM Board Member, he hopes to gain "new ideas from others' successes and share some of the strategies that have worked in our market."

If you get a chance, please reach out to Glen to welcome him to the board!

Revenue and Engagement Ideas for November

While it's only mid-October, there's still time to ponder a couple of revenue and community engagement ideas for November. These two ideas should be easily sold to area merchants.

• **Halloween Photo Feature** (Early November): Halloween (Oct. 31) falls on a Friday this year. Invite parents to send in pictures of their "ghosts and ghoulies" to publish in early November. Group the pictures together on a page or two and sell banner ads along the bottom. Use social media to request photos—have them posted to your site and choose the best for print.

• **Veterans Day Salute** (November 11): Use Veterans Day to generate goodwill and community engagement. Ask the community to send in pictures of their United States Armed Forces veterans. Include names, time served, rank, and branch. Work with local American Legion and Veterans of Foreign War chapters, along with local merchants, for page sponsorships.

Networking Across the State

Publishers and Managers, listen up! If your publication needs to fill a position, let us know. We can share the power of networking across the state.

Also, when you hire or promote an individual, share the good news! Everybody likes good public relations, and it helps build company morale. Send us a brief write-up and photo, and we'll publish it in The Informer. These notices make good fodder for Mom's Scrapbook!

Why Your Sales Team Isn't Hitting Goals and How the 4P Framework Fixes It

Media Sales Coach, Ryan Dohrn



When your sales team consistently falls short of goal, frustration sets in fast. Leaders start pointing at pricing, salespeople blame the market, and everyone feels like they are working harder than ever without seeing results. In reality, the reasons sales teams miss the mark are more predictable than most realize. After decades of working in media sales training and ad sales training, I have found that most problems fit into one of four categories: Product, Price, People, or Process. I call this the 4P Framework. It is the simplest way to diagnose where the real issue lies.

1. Product: Build What Buyers Actually Want

You can have the most talented sales team in the world, but if your product does not meet customer needs, you are pushing a boulder uphill. Too often, companies create products in a vacuum and hope the market responds. A smarter approach is to involve your audience before launch. Use surveys, test groups, or client interviews to gauge interest. This not only validates your product idea but also builds early buy-in. In media sales training, I remind teams that a client-driven product dramatically increases closing rates because it solves a real and acknowledged need.

Action step: Review your current offerings. Did they originate from internal brainstorming, or were customers part of the process? If it was the former, it may be time to revisit and realign.

2. Price: Align with the Market Without Racing to the Bottom

When deals stall, price is the easiest scapegoat. Salespeople will almost always say, "It is too expensive." Underpricing can hurt you just as much as overpricing. A price that feels too cheap can signal poor quality, while one that is too high without justification will scare buyers off. The sweet spot is alignment. Your price needs to reflect your value and the realities of the market.

Think about your last pitch. Did you explain the value of the solution before you shared the number? If not, you are leaving the prospect

to judge your offer solely on cost. In ad sales training, I coach teams to position pricing as the logical outcome of value, not the opening line of a negotiation.

Action step: Compare your pricing against competitors. Ask yourself, "Does my price reflect the unique value we deliver?" If not, it is time to adjust the narrative or the number.

3. People: Passion, Skill, and Accountability

Here is where many sales teams stumble. Do you truly have the right people on the bus? Sales is not just about filling seats. It is about finding individuals with the drive, skill, and passion to sell with conviction. A disengaged salesperson drains momentum and lowers team morale.

In media sales training workshops, I often see managers tolerate underperformance for too long, hoping things will change. Great teams are built on accountability. Sometimes the fix is coaching. Other times, it is making a hard call about whether someone belongs in the role.

Action step: Audit your team. Who brings energy and creativity to every deal? Who consistently blames external factors? Invest in coaching for those willing to grow and be decisive with those holding the team back.

4. Process: Create Flow, Not Friction

Even with the right product, price, and people, a broken process can stall results. Maybe your sales cycle drags on too long. Maybe reps ask endless questions but fail to share success stories. Maybe you are chasing the wrong type of prospect altogether.

The truth is, buyers crave clarity. A strong sales process guides them through the journey with confidence, while a weak one creates confusion and stalls decisions. In ad sales training sessions, I emphasize that process is not about scripts. It is about building repeatable steps that move prospects from interest to "yes" with less friction.

Action step: Map your current sales process from first contact to close. Where do deals tend to stall? Those are your friction points and fixing them could unlock the growth you have been missing.

Bringing the 4Ps Together

Next time your team misses goal, do not default to "the price is too high" or "the market is tough." Instead, walk through the checklist:

- 1. PRODUCT** – Does it meet customer demand?
- 2. PRICE** – Is it aligned with the value and market expectations?
- 3. PEOPLE** – Do you have the right talent and energy?
- 4. PROCESS** – Is your sales journey smooth and effective?

In my experience coaching thousands of professionals through ad sales training and media sales training, most struggles boil down to people and process. But overlooking any one of these four Ps can create bottlenecks that hold you back.

Final Thoughts

Sales will never be easy. If it were, everyone would do it. When you step back and evaluate your product, price, people, and process with honesty, you uncover the real issues and the real opportunities. Align those four elements, and you will not only hit your goals but also build a foundation for lasting success. That is the power of the 4P Framework. It is simple, practical, and effective for any sales team.



Ryan Dohrn is the creator of the 360 Ad Sales Training system and is a globally recognized media revenue consultant. Ryan actively sells print, digital, broadcast, event sponsorships, exhibit space and radio.

Ad-Libs

RELIABILITY MEANS PAYING ATTENTION



BY JOHN FOUST

I remember a billboard on an interstate in North Carolina which caught my eye. It was large 14' x 48' painted sign which promoted a law firm. The headline read, "We help people hit by drunk drivers." Below the headline was a photo of a wrecked car and the name of a local attorney. Advertising folks like us would like the fact that the message was easy to read, because it was in a legible font on a white background.

But the billboard had a problem. The word "by" was covered by an overgrown tree limb on the left side. Instead of reading "We help people hit by drunk drivers," it read, "We help people hit drunk drivers." The missing word changed the message into something entirely different."

Quite a blooper, isn't it? The problem wasn't with the sign itself. Someone should have been responsible for sending someone to check on overhanging limbs. Ideally, the limb

should have been cut before the advertiser noticed.

Thinking of that sign reminds me of the cover of an upscale clothing catalogue my wife showed to me recently. Suellen pointed out that the model in the photograph was wearing a summer-style dress, but it had obviously been photoshopped onto a scene of a European tourist attraction with people wearing winter coats in the background. To make matters worse, the model was wearing stiletto heels on a cobblestone street. To people who pay close attention to such things – like my wife – that was a big mistake. "It hurts their credibility," she said. "The cover gives readers the impression that they don't pay attention to details. It creates a complete mismatch and goes against their established brand image."

I'm sure that both of these examples were produced by professionals, but they somehow lost track of the details. Their mistakes resulted in miscommunication and incongruent images.

These mistakes could have easily been prevented. Just ask Everett,

who manages his newspaper's ad department. "We follow the old carpenter's philosophy to measure twice and cut once," he told me. "In our world, that means we check ads more than once. By the time an ad runs, we like to feel we've done everything to make sure it's correct. The headline has to be right, the copy has to be right and the illustration has to be right. Beyond those obvious things, we double-check phone numbers, name spelling, business locations, email addresses and web addresses."

"There's another saying we take to heart," he said. "'Do it right or do it over.' Even a one-character typo – in something as small as a phone number – can ruin the effectiveness of an ad. If that happens, it costs the paper money to correct the problem and it damages our reputation in that advertiser's eyes. That's a lot to risk."

Everett is right. Whether it's billboards, catalogue covers or this business of newspaper advertising, it's all about reliability. We should keep working on the little things to show advertisers they can count on us.

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By
Mark W.
Rummel
Fenton, MI

Oh, sure — I could share some fascinating ideas about what you (and I) should do to “generate more ad revenue in these hard times.” And they ARE hard times.

But, what time is REALLY here now?

It's **BASEBALL SEASON**, and we're watching our Major League millionaires play their hearts out for honors as the 2025 World Series champions.

Does anything else matter? No.

NEW YORK TIMES best-selling author Joe Posnanski recently wrote a wonderful ode to America's Favorite Pasttime in his book “Why We Love Baseball: A History in 50 Moments.”

And since we're in the middle of it all, here are his “**10 MOST FAMOUS PLAYS**” which remind us again how much fun this game with a round ball and a bat has been for America and the world since at least 1839.

These are Posnanski's choices. Yes, they're subjective, but it is a great reminder of how our great-grandparents, grands and every generation since then has regarded our nation's obsession with Baseball:

1. **Babe Ruth's Called Shot (1932):** Legend says Ruth pointed to center field before hitting a home run there, a legendary act of confidence and skill that embodies his larger-than-life persona.
2. **Willie Mays' “The Catch” (1954):** In the 1954 World Series, Mays made a spectacular, barehanded catch over his head that is still considered one of the greatest defensive plays in baseball history.
3. **Kirk Gibson's 1988 World Series Walk-Off Home Run:** A hobbled Gibson,



- (our former and current Detroit Tiger) who could barely run, hit a dramatic two-run homer in Game 1 of the 1988 World Series to give the Dodgers a win.
4. **David Freese's Walk-Off Home Run (2011):** Freese hit a walk-off home run in Game 6 of the 2011 World Series, forcing a Game 7 and completing one of the most thrilling comebacks in baseball history.
5. **Hank Aaron's 715th Home Run (1974):** Aaron broke Babe Ruth's all-time home run record, a significant and historic moment as he surpassed Ruth's mark of 714 home runs.
6. **Don Larsen's Perfect Game (1956):** In the World Series, Don Larsen threw the only perfect game in World Series history, a rare and remarkable feat.
7. **Bill Wambsgans' Unassisted Triple Play (1920 World Series):** This rare feat involves a single fielder turning all three outs without any assistance, making it one of the most remarkable plays ever.

8. **Reggie Jackson's Three-Home Run Game (1977):** “Mr. October” hit three home runs on three consecutive pitches in the 1977 World Series, a feat of power and performance that cemented his legend.
9. **Cal Ripken Jr.'s Ironman Streak:** While not a single “play,” Ripken breaking Lou Gehrig's consecutive games played record was a legendary moment in baseball history, showcasing his incredible endurance.
10. **Bill Terry's “Homer in the Gloamin’” (1928):** Late in a dramatic game played in low light, Terry's grand slam home run won the game for the New York Giants, a testament to his clutch performance.

What more could we possibly add to this great list. Nothing. Our griefs and challenges will still be here tomorrow. For now — let's just **PLAY BALL!**

Mark lives in Fenton, MI, and has worked on all sides of papers since 1972. Contact him at: MarkWRummel@gmail.com

Where did the time go?

Tips on getting through your day, getting your work done, and not stressing

By Kevin Slimp

While I sit in front of my computer at 1:00 a.m., I ask myself, "Who am I to give anyone advice about time management?"

I suppose you should know a few things before you judge me too quickly. First, I'm most productive after 9:00 p.m., so I schedule my day knowing that. Secondly, I included a lot of tasks in my daily planner (yes, the computer version) for today, and this is the last thing on the list.

From time to time, I speak on the subject of time management. Talking to sales staff often involves managing time to increase ad sales. When leading a class for CEOs, managers, or publishers, I tend to speak about how to get things done without working ourselves to death.

When it comes right down to it, we all have the same amount of time each day. Obviously, things happen to interfere with our plans. Phone calls, never-ending emails and text messages, and unexpected emergencies can throw a wrench in the best-made plans.

When leading a webinar or speaking at a conference about time management, I generally have a to-do list of things to remember when planning. A list like that might include putting long-term events on your calendar first, thinking weeks and months ahead, to be sure you get the most important

tasks done. After that, I'd probably suggest laying out your plans for the next week, again keeping an eye on the overall picture, rather than the hour-to-hour activities. Finally, I recommend making daily plans last and making sure the most critical chores are already on the calendar.

In this column, however, I think I'll just "shoot from the hip" and share some thoughts on how I get through my day and get done what needs to get done, without living in a constant state of stress.

My daily "routine"

Thinking back on my day, it looked something like this:

► **9:30 - 10:00:** I bought and sold some stock, a daily routine for me each morning when the stock market opens.

► **10:00 - 10:45:** Answered emails, phone calls, and texts that came in overnight. I get these out of the way, then don't keep a constant eye on my phone and email the rest of the morning. Studies show that, on average, Americans lose 2.5 hours during the average workday due to these types of interruptions.

► **10:30 - 12:30:** Worked on a design project that was on my calendar. I spent about an hour on the design project (a 170-page book), contacted the writer about changes, and had it finished by



When I was feeling sluggish from so much time in front of the computer, I moved to another room and switched my attention to another project, critiquing a newspaper.

lunch. I finished a little earlier than expected.

► **1:15 - 2:30:** Created two email blitz campaigns and studied the results of our latest marketing efforts. I also contacted a potential customer about a new product. I've found that daily time spent marketing my own products pays off considerably.

► **2:30 - 4:00:** I've learned that I'm most productive at night. That's why I spend the morning on tasks that don't require as much focus. I generally spend my early afternoons dealing with marketing and sales.

Most people don't focus as well after lunch, so I left my office and went to another room to "mark up" an Oregon newspaper whose staff I'll be meeting with later this week. I initially scheduled the work for later this week, but I was feeling sluggish and decided my time would be better spent

going through the newspaper.

► **4:00 - 5:30:** Finished work on a book cover and manuscript and sent the files to the printer. Another project finished ahead of time.

► **8:00 - 12:00:** Redesigning two pages of a newspaper from New York. I'm currently redesigning four newspapers, and I know I can't get behind if they will be finished on schedule. I set aside time each day to redesign pages.

► **1:00 - 1:30:** The last thing on my to-do list today was to write this column.

Leave stress behind

People often ask how I get so much done and why I never seem stressed. The truth is that I've always been good at doing things very quickly. I'm good at making quick decisions.

I don't attend or host meetings, even though I own three companies.

I know that meetings are necessary, but I've learned – in my world – I can get my work done, oversee my businesses, and leave plenty of time for disk golf, volunteer efforts, and dinner with friends, if I don't invest too much time in group meetings. If not having meetings would cause more stress in your world, don't follow my example. I don't expect that what works for me would work for everyone. It's just how I get through my day.

The clock says 1:22 – once again, I'm ahead of schedule – and Microsoft Word tells me I'm at 792 words. It seems my work is finished, at least for today.



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a website

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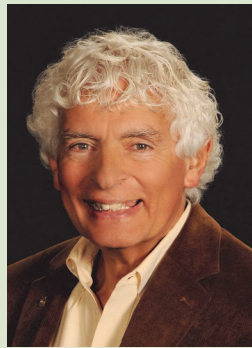
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