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There Were Plenty of Awards, Honors & Recognition!



Charlie Delatorre was named the recipient of the CPF Presidential Award at the recent conference in Orlando.

The current CPF president has the opportunity to name a member who has volunteered his time for the good of this association.

In making the presentation, CPF President Wendy Murray said,
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The Boca Raton Tribune and Publisher Doug Heizer were recipients of the CPF Milton & Bernice Beckerman Award.

The presentation was made by CPF President Wendy Murray at the association’s annual conference held recently in Orlando.

The award is presented to a member paper for community service that
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Tom Germond was also named a recipient of the CPF Milton & Bernice Beckerman award.

The editor of Tampa Bay Newspapers received the award at the CPF annual conference in Orlando.

In making the presentation, CPF President Wendy Murray said, “For the individual we are going to honor, think about this: 88 gallons of blood
Continued on page 8

CPF's Board of Directors & Staff



President
Wendy Murray
Senior Life Magazine
North Ft. Myers
239-707-6722
seniorlifeofflee@aol.com



Vice President
Scott Blonde
Breeze Newspapers
Cape Coral
239-574-1110
sblonde@breezenewspapers.com



Secretary & E.D.
Dave Neuharth
Community Papers of Florida
Bellevue
352-347-4470
DJNeuarth@aol.com



Treasurer
Justo Rey
The Flyer
Miami
305-232-4115
jr@theflyer.com



Director
Tom Adams
Forum Publishing Group
Tamarac
954-574-5373
tadams@sun-sentinel.com



Director
Dan Autrey
Tampa Bay Newspapers
Seminole
727-397-5563
dautrey@tbnweekly.com



Director
Charlie Delatorre
Tower Publications
Gainesville
352-372-5468
charlie@towerpublications.com



Director
Susan Griffin
OPC News
Ponte Vedra Beach
904-285-8831
susan@opcfla.com



Director
Farris Robinson
Hometown News
South Daytona
386-322-5900
frobinson@hometownnewsol.com



Admin. Asst.
Barbara Holmes
Community Papers of Florida
Bellevue
352-347-4470
CPFDisplayAds@aol.com



Mission Statement: To support the success and growth of our members and the community paper industry.



Member Benefits

Your CPF membership provides a multitude of benefits and services that are paid for by the CPF classified network. If you haven't already, you'll want to take advantage of some of the following benefits:

- Audits provided by Circulation Verification Council (CVC).
- Annual Convention.
- A flat fee of \$49 per room per night (which includes the hotel room, lunch, dinner, training sessions by top industry speakers, and outstanding entertainment) for classified network members, according to the Board of Directors' established attendance guidelines. Current guidelines are: For publications that **SELL** network classified ads: Up to 100K circulation, 2 rooms (with 2 persons per room, for a total of 4 attendees); 101-300K, 3 rooms (with a total of 6 attendees); 301-500K, 5 rooms (with a total of 10 attendees); 501-750K, 6 rooms (with a total of 12 attendees); 751K-1 million, 7 rooms (with a total of 14 attendees); and over 1 million circulation, 9 rooms (with a total of 18 attendees). For publications that **only PLACE** (but do not **SELL**) network classified ads: Up to 100K circulation, 1 room (with 2 persons, for a total of 2 attendees); 101-300K, 2 rooms (with 2 persons per room, for a total of 4 attendees); 301-500K, 4 rooms (with a total of 8 attendees); 501-750K, 5 rooms (with a total of 10 attendees); 751K-1 million, 6 rooms (with a total of 12 attendees); and over 1 million circulation, 8 rooms (with a total of 16 attendees).
- Convention Idea Fairs. Earn cash awards. Share ideas. Fantastic opportunities to take home revenue-generating ideas.
- Annual CPF "Awards for Excellence" contest to honor our editorial and graphic service personnel.
- Nationally-recognized convention speakers.

- An opportunity to earn money through CPF's classified network.
- Quarterly CPF newsletters.
- AFCP's Free Paper INK. No cost to members.
- Training seminars provided. No cost.
- Disaster Fund Aid in the event of a hurricane, tornado, or other catastrophic event.
- A successful tax lobby effort, still working for you.
- The Saturation Mailers Coalition, fighting for a positive postal rate, pricing, operation and service environment that benefits free paper publishers that mail.
- Defending our industry against the assaults of government and others that may choose to consider us as second-class citizens.
- Helping publishers in CPF gain their market share of revenue and protecting their interests.
- Promoting the free paper industry. CPF has budgeted funds to promote our industry to our readers and our outstanding value to both advertisers and consumers.
- A great opportunity to work together as a team to make Florida a better place to live!
- The CPF Website with CPF news, including classifieds for the following week; advertising information; links to Member publications and state, regional and national free paper organizations; photos from past conferences; and a list of Member Publications (with audited circulation figures). Visit: www.communitypapersofflora.com



The President's Message

A Quick Conference Recap

– Wendy Murray

If you attended the annual Community Papers of Florida (CPF) conference in Florida, we are sure that you took home some ideas to help add to the bottom line of your papers.

We thank you for taking the time to attend and for sharing your knowledge with your peers.

You will note that in the opening paragraph, I referred to the Community Papers of Florida. At the conference the general membership approved the recommendation to change the association's name to Community Publishers of Florida. (See the related article on page 4 of this newsletter.)

Congratulations to the Presidential Award and the Milton & Bernice Beckerman Award winners. They were all well-deserving winners. (See related articles on page 1 of this newsletter.)

The talent of the members of this association was on display during the "Awards for Excellence" awards presentation. Over 160 plaques were handed out to the deserving winners.

As noted in the State of the Association address, the revenue of this association has dropped dramatically over the past seven years. During the good times we invested funds that are paying most of the current bills. But

we have made drastic cuts – including in the conference budget.

This year's budget for speakers at the conference was zero.

Therefore, we had to rely on volunteers for the sessions and we can't thank them enough.

Dan Autrey (Tampa Bay Newspapers), Justo Rey (The Flyer), David Crawford (SRDS), Angel Leonard (Forum Publishing Group), Melanie Mathewson (Intersect Media Solutions), Charlie Delatorre (Tower Publications), Tim Bingaman (CVC), J.W. Owens (TLI instructor), and Gary Hawken (retired from Flashes Shopping Guide) all stepped up to the podium and led the sessions.

The Caribe Royale Resort was a great place for the conference. As always, their food and service was outstanding. And we are pleased to announce we are going back there for the 2016 annual CPF conference.

For the 2016 conference, we will once again be joined by the Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA) and the Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA).

We look forward to seeing you at the 2016 joint conference. 📍



Dan Autrey
Tampa Bay Newspapers



Justo Rey
The Flyer



David Crawford
SRDS



Angel Leonard
Forum Publishing Group



Melanie Mathewson
Intersect Media Solutions



Charlie Delatorre
Tower Publications



Tim Bingaman
CVC



J.W. Owens
TLI Instructor



Gary Hawken
Retired from Flashes

Announcements



CPF Has a New Name!

The general membership of the Community Papers of Florida (CPF) approved the recommendation of the Board of Directors to change the name of the association.

The name of the association has been changed to: the Community Publishers of Florida (CPF).

The board opted for the change due to declining circulation and revenue over the past six years. During this period, the CPF circulation has dropped from over 6.2 million to just over 4 million.

Lack of response has been given for the loss

of revenue. During this year, CPF has had its share of new network advertisers; but due to less response, the advertisers have not continued to place ads.

The change will open the membership door to online publishers and networks. **INK**

2014 CVC Audit of CPF Publications is Revealing



CVC President Tim Bingaman

The 2014 Circulation Verification Council (CVC) audits of the Community Papers of Florida (CPF) reveals that the circulation of the association continues to fall.

The average net circulation of print editions is 4,033,922.

Direct mail accounts for the lion's share of distribution. Direct mailed numbers are 2,370,424. Carrier delivery numbers are 771,258. Bulk delivery is 566,962.

On a positive note, CVC surveys noted that 74.7 percent of the readers used advertising in member papers to make purchases.

On the digital side, numbers are going up.

With 27 papers participating in the digital/replica editions audit, there were 3,796 average monthly unique visitors.

With 42 papers participating in the website audit, there were 1,155,473 unique visitors.

On Social Media, with four papers participating in the audit, the average Facebook Likes was 6,769 and the average of Twitter followers was 1,165.

With two publications participating, the average E-Newsletter Subscribers was 22,519.

Twelve publications with a combined circulation of 424,798 choose not to participate in the CVC audits. **INK**

Announcements



Updated CPF Circulation

Updated brochures are available in the members-only portion of the CPF website.

Zone 1

4 Corners News Leader Davenport, 28,580*	Coconut Creek Forum Margate, 9,463	Hometown News – Deland Deland, 8,750	Island Reporter, The ** South Pasadena, 25,558	Okeechobee Pennsaver • Okeechobee, 15,000*	Suwanee Democrat 5,421*
Advertiser, The Panama City, 17,536	Coral Springs Forum ** Coral Springs, 35,157	Hometown News – Deltona Deltona, 8,750	Lady Lake Magazine ** The Villages, 13,950	Osceola Nwes Gazette – Saturday Kissimmee, 36,416	Triangle News Leader Mount Dora, 29,493
American Classifieds of Tallahassee Tallahassee, 26,388	Coral Springs Tribune ** Coral Springs, 10,000*	Hometown News – Fort Pierce Fort Pierce, 8,500	Lake Wales News Lake Wales, 4,500*	Osceola News Gazette – Thursday Kissimmee, 44,189	Village Spectator, The ** The Villages, 8,000*
Antique Shoppe, The ** Keystone Heights, 15,000*	Daytona Pennsaver Daytona Beach, 67,700*	Hometown News – Martin County Stuart, 23,425	Lake Worth Forum Lake Worth, 12,335	Pasco Gazette ** Land O'Lakes, 10,266	Wesley Chapel Gazette ** Wesley Chapel, 10,103
Arcadian Arcadia, 1,241*	Deerfield Forum Deerfield Beach, 40,586	Hometown News – Melbourne Melbourne, 11,250	Land O'Lakes Laker Wesley Chapel, 13,775	Pine Island Eagle Saint James City, 7,770	Wesley Chapel Laker Wesley Chapel, 13,863
Beach Beacon Madeira Beach, 13,383	Delray Forum ** Delray Beach, 21,515	Hometown News – New Smyrna Beach / Edgewater Edgewater, 12,800	Largo Leader Largo, 24,281	Pinellas Park Beacon ** Pinellas Park, 19,021	West Boca Forum ** Boca Raton, 20,771
Belleair Bee Clearwater Beach, 12,024	Delray Beach Tribune ** Delray Beach, 10,000*	Hometown News – North Brevard / Merritt Island Merritt Island, 17,300	Lee County Shopper Cape Coral, 56,351	Plantation Forum Plantation, 23,667	West Volusia Pennsaver ** Deltona, 56,900*
Boca Raton Forum ** Boca Raton, 24,740	Eastside Forum ** Fort Lauderdale, 25,904	Hometown News – Ormond Beach Daytona Beach, 20,800	Lehigh Acres Citizen Lehigh Acres, 5,927	Polk County Democrat 4,500*	Westchase Gazette ** Odessa, 9,999
Boca Raton Tribune Boca Raton, 20,000*	Flagler Pennsaver Palm Coast, 37,800*	Hometown News – Palm Bay Melbourne, 10,650	Live Wellington ** Wellington, 31,113	Ponte Vedra Extra Ponte Vedra Beach, 3,250*	Your Voice News & Views – Palm City / Tesoro Palm City, 15,000*
Boynton Forum ** Boynton Beach, 31,224	Florida Living ** 21,000*	Hometown News – Port Orange / South Daytona Port Orange, 14,800	Lutz Gazette ** Lutz, 10,102	Ponte Vedra Recorder Ponte Vedra Beach, 2,452	Your Voice News & Views – St. Lucie West / Port St. Lucie / Tradition St. Lucie West, 16,000*
Caribbean Today ** Miami, 34,087	Florida Mariner • North Port, 11,827	Hometown News – Port Orange / South Daytona Port Orange, 14,800	Lutz News Lutz, 6,960	Seminole Beacon Seminole, 27,711	Zephyrhills Laker Zephyrhills, 7,253
Carrollwood Gazette ** Tampa, 10,142	Fort Meade Leader 1,000*	Hometown News – Port St. Lucie Ft. Pierce, 16,850	New Smyrna Pennsaver New Smyrna Beach, 27,600*	Senior Life Magazine ** North Ft. Myers, 10,000*	
Clay County Leader Orange Park, 6,816	Fort Myers Beach Observer Ft. Myers Beach, 6,935	Hometown News – Sebastian River Sebastian, 8,050	New Tampa Gazette ** Tampa, 10,169	Senior Times ** Gainesville, 27,000*	
Clay Today Orange Park, 3,429	Forum – Margate & Lauderdale, The Margate, 21,771	Hometown News – Suntree / Viera Suntree, 10,900	North Florida Focus 9,600*	Seniors Voice ** Ocala, 10,950	
Clearwater Beacon Clearwater, 25,115	Green Sheet Port Charlotte, 20,000*	Hometown News – The Beaches Melbourne Beach, 9,100	Observer News Ruskin, 42,302	Smart Shopper Venice, 20,000*	
Clermont News Leader Clermont, 36,155*	Hi-Riser Ft. Lauderdale, 13,930	Hometown News – Vero Beach Vero Beach, 15,650	Ocala Downtown ** Ocala, 10,000*	Sunrise/Tamarac Forum ** Sunrise, 23,865	

**Total Circulation:
1,641,406**

Revised: 9-15-15

*Notes:
All figures are audited unless otherwise noted. All ads are placed on the Internet at www.communitypapersof-florida.com.*

** Estimated figures.*

*** Will print most partial run ads.*

• Bi-Weekly publication.

•• Monthly publication.

Zone 2

Includes all the publications in Zone 1 PLUS:

The Flyer (Hillsborough County)
Tampa, 517,149

The Flyer (Pasco-Hernando Counties)
Tampa, 230,760

**Total Circulation:
2,389,315**

Zone 3

Includes all the publications in Zone 1 PLUS:

The Flyer (Broward County)
Miami, 482,819

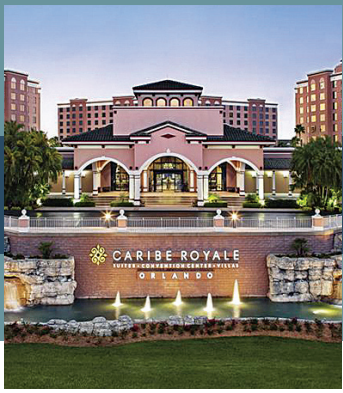
The Flyer (Dade County)
Miami, 744,235

**Total Circulation:
2,868,460**

Zone 4

Includes all the publications in Zones 1, 2 and 3.

**Total Circulation:
3,616,369**



Conference Update

The Annual "Awards for Excellence" Competition

The Observer News & Tampa Bay Newspapers took home top honors.

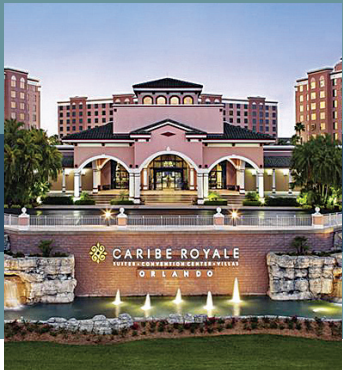
The Observer News publications in the Ruskin area took home the most editorial and graphic awards in the Community Publishers of Florida (CPF) "Awards for Excellence" contest.

The awards were presented at the awards banquet at the Caribe Royale Resort in Orlando during the annual CPF conference.

The Best of Show award went to the Tampa Bay Newspapers for its "Pub Crawl" section. The Flyer, Home-town News and Observer News were each honored with Judge's Choice Awards.

The Observer News picked up 26 awards including nine first place awards. Tampa Bay Newspapers was awarded 22 awards including seven first place honors. The Flyer earned 19 awards including eight first place honors. Forum Publishing Group won 18 awards including five first place honors. The Laker / Lutz News earned 14 awards with seven first place honors. Your Voice News & Views earned 14 awards and five first place honors. The Ponte Vedra Recorder picked up 12 awards and one first place honor. 📌

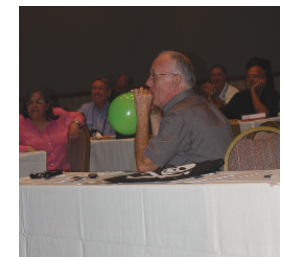




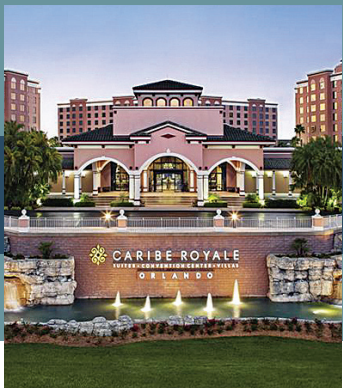
Conference Update

Conference Candids

Arrrrr, we shore had a lotta fun, matey!



Idea Fair moderator Gary Hawken poses with the smiling winners: Dan Autrey, Bill Padoll, Angel Leonard, Rick Keelan and Terry Hart.



Conference Update

There Were Plenty of Awards, Honors & Recognition!

DELATORRE – Continued from page 1

“The recipient of this award today not only has volunteered his time to serve as president, vice president and on the board of directors for a number of years, but his financial contribution to the association and to other free paper associations puts him in an elite class of papers that sell network classified ads.

“In the past we have been blessed with funds that have provided the best in conferences paid by the associations, and provided rebate checks to those that placed the ads – hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“The papers that sold the network ads made this a reality.

“How does \$1 million dollars sound?

“The classified sales staff of Tower Publications in Gainesville, Florida, has done just that. Under the leadership of its owner and publisher, Tower Publications over the years has sold over \$1 million in classifieds for CPF. At this time they continue to be the leader in the number of classified ads sold.

“Thank you, Charlie, and keep selling those ads.

“Please welcome Charlie Delatorre, the 2015 recipient of the CPF Presidential Award.” **INK**

HEIZER – Continued from page 1

benefited a community charity, a fund raising event for a charity, or an employee who provided a community service.

Murray said, “The award we are presenting is to a member paper for organizing and supporting an annual Carousel Toy Drive to collect toys and donations for local children who otherwise would not have the means of receiving gifts for Christmas.

“Five Rotary Clubs were involved in the project, which last year had a record year raising over \$16,000 in cash and toy donations.

“The donations go to Helping Hands, the city’s food pantry and kitchen, and to the Wane Baron Study Center, a youth empowerment facility.

“Please join me in presenting the annual Milton & Bernice Beckerman Award to Doug Heizer and the Boca Raton Tribune.”

The award was named the “Milton & Bernice Beckerman Award” after the Beckermans, long-time members of this association and other free paper associations. For over 25 years they supported CPF as associate members. In 1993 they placed \$15,000 in an investment account for the purpose of this award. **INK**

GERMOND – Continued from page 1

plus hundreds of platelets.

“Since 1983 this employee of the Tampa Bay Newspapers has donated that amount to Blood One.

“In 1983 he started donating blood two to three times per year. In 1993 he started donating platelets about 20 times per year.

“The blood has been used for life saving and for hundreds of medical related needs. Platelets are used mostly for the benefit of chemotherapy patients.

“He also has written numerous articles about those who donate blood, and encourages others to make donations.

“Today’s recipient has served as an award-winning editor of the News Gazette in Osceola, and is the current executive editor of the Tampa Bay Newspapers.

“We are proud to present the 2015 Milton & Bernice Beckerman award to Tom Germond.”

The award is presented to a member paper for community service that benefited a community charity, a fund raising event for a charity, or an employee who provided a community service. **INK**



PaperChain Update

Motivating and Compensating Your Sales Team

— Jim Busch

Some years ago, I had a sales person who simply quit selling. After years of being one of the leaders in my sales group, she suddenly fell to the bottom of the ranking. She still came to work every day and she seemed to be working, but she made fewer and fewer calls and no longer tried to respond to customer objections. I sat down with her to talk about what was wrong. We talked for a while and finally she told me, “I just don’t want to do this anymore!”

She went on to tell me that she went into sales when her sons were in elementary and junior high school. Her objective was to save money for her kid’s education. She gave it all she had until the last of her three boys had earned his master’s degree in engineering at Penn State. I was amazed at her dedication to her sons and her self-discipline which allowed her to keep at a job she actually hated for the better part of two decades. I arranged for her to keep her job for a month, which allowed her time to find a position more to her liking. This story highlights the importance of understanding our sales rep’s personal goals and how to use them to motivate our people to do their best.

Why did the sales person cross the road?

What is it that motivates your sales people to get up in the morning, put on their business clothes and make sales calls? The obvious answer

is money. People work to earn a paycheck; this is especially true of sales people who work on commission. Money is undoubtedly a key component in motivating sales people. A sales person who cannot afford to make ends meet and care for their family cannot be expected to stay motivated for long. This is why it is important to design a sales compensation plan that provides sales people with the opportunity to make a living.

When formulating a sales compensation plan, there are several factors to consider:

- Does the compensation plan allow reps to earn a reasonable living?
- Does the compensation plan allow the company to make a reasonable profit?
- Does the plan reward the rep for doing things that are in alignment with the company’s goals?
- Does the compensation plan motivate the sales person?
- Is the plan manageable?

Before implementing a new compensation plan a manager needs to research the potential earnings of the salespeople. The best way to accomplish this is to use the reps sales history to model the new plan. Look at the sales generated by your team in the previous few years and

compare what they would earn under the new plan. You can use this data to “sell” the new plan to your people. People tend to fear change, so it is important that they understand the new plan and be reassured that the new plan will not hurt them. If your situation is forcing you to cut labor costs it is vital to explain this to your people.

When implementing a plan that results in a de facto pay cut for your people expect, and plan for, turnover in your sales team.

There are many schools of thought on the relative benefits of straight commission, versus salary plus commission or straight salary. I am a strong believer in tying a rep’s earnings to their sales performance. The only downside of a straight commission plan is the “roller coaster” nature of these plans. This makes budgeting their earnings difficult for your sales people, because of the fluctuations in their pay checks.

My company addresses this by using an “average commission plan.” At the end of each quarter, we calculate the average weekly commission earned by each rep during the period. We pay the reps this amount each week during the next period. For example, if a rep averages \$1,000 per week in commissions during January, February and March, they will be paid \$1,000 per week during April, May and June. Their sales during

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

the second quarter will determine the amount they will be paid in July, August and September and so on. The advantage of this program is that the reps know exactly what they will have in their pay envelope each week. Our managers use this plan to motivate the reps by showing what they need to do to achieve their earnings goal for the next quarter.

When crafting a sales compensation plan, it is important to consider the company's sales goals. Commissioned sales people tend to be passionate capitalists; they will do whatever is in their own best interest. The amount of time and energy they put into selling a particular product is directly related to the compensation they receive for selling it. For example, if you set a corporate goal of increasing sales of digital products, your compensation plan should heavily reward sales in this area. My company gives each rep a digital goal and pays them a hefty bonus if they hit their target. You should also consider the difficulty of selling a particular product when building your plan. Like everyone else, sales people will seek out the path of least resistance. If a product is difficult to sell or requires additional paperwork, a rep is more likely to present a product that requires less effort to sell.

One of the hallmarks of an effective sales compensation plan is its simplicity. In the past I worked for a company that used a complex matrix to calculate rep compensation. The "grid" as it was known factored in many variables like customer count, the specific products sold and several other factors. The result was a plan that

Stephen Hawking would have trouble deciphering and did nothing but confuse the reps. Managers began to hate pay days, because they knew they would spend endless hours with an irate rep in their office with accounting on the speaker phone trying to explain why they were paid what they were paid. A good sales compensation plan should be simple. Ideally when a rep walks out of a customer's office with a signed order, they should know exactly what they earned on the sale. A simple plan is also easier for your payroll people to prepare and decreases the likelihood that there will be any mistakes in anyone's pay check.

When I managed a sales team, I would often be seen stopping at Toys "R" Us after work. This was part of my sales motivation program. I believe that one of the most important functions of a front line sales manager is to "personalize" the company's compensation plan to each individual sales person. On a regular basis I would sit down and talk to reps about their personal goals. This was not a discussion of the "numbers" and their position relative to the goal assigned to them by management, which I covered in our regular weekly sit-down. In these meetings we discussed the rep's personal goals, essentially what they would do with the money once they earned it. Once I knew what they were working for, all I needed to do to motivate them was to remind them of what they were working for. My trips to the toy store gave me a way to literally keep their goals in front of them. For example, one rep who was single and still lived at home was saving for a top of the line motorcycle. The next morning when he arrived at the office, he found a detailed

die cast model of a Harley Davidson on his desk. Another rep who was saving up to pay for her dream wedding found a bride and groom cake topper at her work station. Everyone knows the old statement that "When you're up to your butt in alligators, it's hard to remember that the objective is to drain the swamp." It is far too easy to lose sight of a goal when you are wrapped up in the day to day details of selling advertising. My "toys" gave my people a visual reminder of their goals and what they were working toward. I would frequently ask my reps how much they wanted to earn and then engage them in discussion about what it would take to get there. I am a big fan of the "carrot" over the "stick," but this only works if the rep can always see the dangling carrot in front of them and that it's easily in reach, if they just stretch a bit.

All good sales managers know that there are many factors that impact their reps level of motivation. It is important to recognize your reps, keep them informed about their own and the company's progress and to provide them with opportunities to grow professionally and personally. Important as these things are to getting the best out of your people, they will not follow you for very long if they are not properly compensated. The legendary sales trainer, Zig Ziglar, frequently was heard to say, "Money isn't the most important thing in life, but it is reasonably close to oxygen on the 'gotta have it' scale!" Developing a sales compensation plan that is fair to your reps, fair to the company and achieves both the reps and the company's goals will keep your reps motivated and make your job as a manager much, much easier. 🚀



The “News Guru” Speaks

Newspaper Pet Peeves: Readers Weigh in on What Ticks Them Off

– Kevin Slimp

While preparing to lead a webinar for a newspaper association up north last week, I took a survey of newspaper subscribers and nonsubscribers to find out what their biggest pet peeves are about newspapers. After looking over the results, I realized that most of the information is just as valid for free papers as it is for our paid brethren.

So last week, just one day before the webinar, I created a survey about customer service at newspapers and asked Facebook friends, not affiliated with the newspaper industry, to complete the short questionnaire. I hoped maybe 20 or 30 would take the time and give me some fresh, interesting information to use during the webinar.

I was pretty surprised to learn that more than 200 folks had completed the survey over the next few hours and their answers weren't exactly what I expected. Of the respondents, 38 percent reported subscribing to a newspaper, while 62 percent answered that they did not.

Next, I asked subscribers: “What are your biggest pet peeves concerning your newspaper?”

By a large margin, “Not enough local con-

tent” took the prize. A full 38 percent of newspaper subscribers answered that lack of local content was their biggest pet peeve.

OK, that might not have been a huge surprise. However, their response to the second question did shock me. Just under 22 percent of newspaper subscribers answered that “Poor

Their response to the second question did shock me. Just under 22 percent of newspaper subscribers answered that “Poor writing” was their top pet peeve. Honestly, I didn't think poor writing would crack the top five.

writing” was their top pet peeve. Honestly, I didn't think poor writing would crack the top five.

Delivery problems and poor design tied for third, with each receiving 13 percent. Billing and other problems followed in single digits.

And what about people who don't subscribe to a newspaper? “Poor writing” took the top spot with a hefty 37 percent responding that was their top pet peeve.

The number two reason respondents gave for not subscribing to a newspaper was “Not enough local news,” at 27 percent.

Finally, I gained some useful insights from the nonsubscribers which could be used in my customer service webinar. A full 26 percent answered that their main reason for not subscribing was either “Delivery problems” (14 percent) or “Customer service” (12 percent).

When asked about the price of newspapers, 51 percent of nonsubscribers responded that “The price is too high.”

Next week, I'll be working with a daily

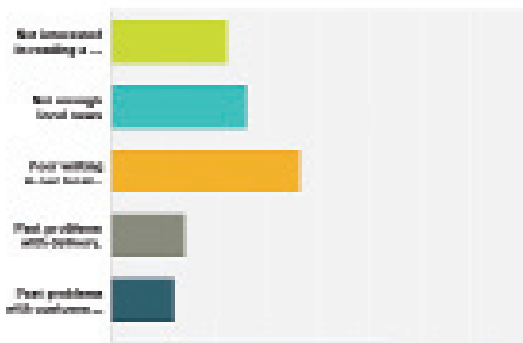
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Continued from page 11

paper in Indiana for a couple of days. What did I learn from this survey that will make me a better consultant for that paper?

First, a large number of subscribers and nonsubscribers feel there is not enough local news in their newspapers. That didn't surprise me and it's been on my checklist.

If you are not subscribing to a newspaper, what is your main reason for not subscribing?



Second, there is more concern over writing than I had suspected. Sure I figured Mrs. Feathers, my high school English teacher, lost sleep over writing quality. But a large percentage of both groups, especially nonsubscribers, seem to feel that poor writing is a major problem with their newspapers.

I will probably stress good design a little more than I have in the past. If 13 percent of readers say their biggest pet peeve with their newspaper is poor design, then it seems like something we should all watch closely.

For paid newspapers, it might not seem like there is a lot we can do when folks feel like the price is too high. But when I look more closely at these numbers, I realize that for a good number of subscribers and nonsubscribers, the price might seem high because they feel like the quality isn't where it should be.

What would I suggest to you? Go through this checklist and see how your paper would score using the classic school grading system, with “A” for excellent, “C” for average and “F” for failing. Rate your paper on the following:

- ___ Local content
- ___ Writing
- ___ Design
- ___ Delivery issues
- ___ Customer Service

How did your paper score? I would suggest that every newspaper should score an “A” if it wants to remain viable in today's marketplace.

Some fixes are easier than others. And obviously, good writing, local content and strong design affect readers of free papers just as in paid papers. Go through this list with your staff and see which area could be addressed most quickly and make a plan. Then begin to create a long-term strategy to guide your newspaper toward an “A” in each of the five areas. 🎯

Survey Comments

Most of the survey respondents left optional comments. Here's some of what they want us to know:

“Our paper used to be the go-to venue for finding out about upcoming events and now I'm forced to tediously search Facebook groups for upcoming events.”

“They simply stopped delivering. I received no bill, no courtesy call. Two weeks after receiving no paper, I received a ‘sales’ call to sell me a new subscription.”

“The Morning Call was once a good paper. Now the writing is bad, the customer service is bad (missed a paper and was on hold forever) and the price is too high for the quality.”

“A lot of news is readily available online, so it's hard to justify a newspaper subscription, especially when people post the most relevant information from the newspaper's page.”

“I hate seeing all the staff cutbacks at the newspaper. A lot of stories don't get covered, or at least covered from a local perspective because of this.”

“I live in a large metropolitan area but the paper I subscribe to is the smaller suburban one.”

“No point in subscribing when I can get it free on the Internet.”



Postal Pieces

A number of reports of interest to mailers & free papers

– Donna Hanbery

In August, the USPS held one of its quarterly Mailers Technical Advisory Council (MTAC) meetings with the mailing industry and posted a number of reports of interest to mailers and free papers that use the Postal Service for distribution. This column is a summary of some of the news of interest, MTAC announcements, and postings in the last month.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

One of the regulatory requirements covering the Postal Service under current law is the requirement to file periodic service performance reports. These reports show whether or not the Postal Service is meeting its service performance targets for individual classes in mail products. The filing of the quarterly service reports can be found on the Postal Service website as well as its required filing with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC).

For another quarter, the Postal Service has failed to meet its service performance standards in many categories of mail including first class, much of standard, and for periodicals and newspapers. This report contained, for the first time, a service performance report on the standard mail product known as EDDM Retail. Previously the EDDM Retail product was included with the aggregate figures for other types of Standard Mail. For the third quarter of the year, the EDDM

Retail service performance report showed that it made its service performance standards for destination entry, two-day standard, delivering 79.02% of the time.

The Standard Mail quarterly report showed, for most postal products, a deterioration of Standard Mail performance over the same period of time last year. But for High Density/saturation flats and parcels, the USPS met its two-day performance standard of 91%.

Industry complaints, and particularly concerns coming from mailers and businesses in more rural areas, about declining service has fueled Congressional criticism of the Postal Services' performance and contributed to the current freeze on the additional closings of processing facilities. The freeze put a hold on this year's planned reductions in facilities that were part of the 2015 network reduction plans of the USPS.

HOUSEHOLD DIARY STUDY

Once again the Postal Service published its annual household diary study showing consumer use and response to the mail. Based on a detailed survey of 5,200 households and mail use, the study is designed to examine mail volumes, types of mail used, and business and consumer response to the mail.

The USPS delivers 45% of the world's mail.

In line with past trends, the volume of pieces delivered by the USPS declined in 2014 with a 1.8% reduction from 2013. The Postal Service delivered a total of 155.4 billion pieces of mail.

As it has in the past, the Postal Service and household diary study points out that the Postal Service depends on users of the mail and postage payers to support its network and universal service obligation. Although the number of pieces has declined each year, the Postal Service continues to expand the number of delivery points it must serve.

As in past years, the number of pieces of First Class correspondence and transactional mail declined. This is in keeping with the electronic diversion of personal communications in transaction mail. In 2004 only 25% of all consumers would pay bills electronically. That number has now increased to 63%.

Advertising mail continues to represent a growing share of the mail – 62% of all household mail was advertising.

From the standpoint of American business, the commitment to direct mail as an advertising medium has remained relatively constant. In spite of the explosion of Internet and electronic media, direct mail continues to hold its own as

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an important piece of any advertisers' mail mix with advertisers spending, year over year, a fairly constant share of 10% – 12% of their advertising budget on advertising mail.

Although direct mail spending on advertising grew modestly by 5.4%, Internet spending continues to be the greatest area of growth, with an increase of over 15%.

The Household Diaries study shows that advertising mail continues to attract the interest and response of consumers. Fifty-seven percent of responders stated that they read advertising mail. A smaller number scanned or paid some attention to the mail. Only 9% of responders stated that they did not read advertising mail. Read rates seem to decline slightly as households report greater quantities of advertising mail received.

A “BRAINY” LOOK AT THE VALUE OF THE MAIL

In recent weeks the Office of Inspector General (OIG) has released a neuromarketing study done under contract with Temple University that evaluated how consumers respond alternatively to hardcopy mail versus digital advertising. The study evaluated the participants' responses to questionnaires, but also measured and tracked eye movement, core biometrics (through sensors placed on fingertips, heart rate, perspiration, motion and breathing) with brain scans revealing how different areas of the brain responded during a specific task or experience.

The participants were exposed to, or inter-

acted with, 40 different physical or digital advertisements. Later the participants were tested on their memory of ad content and their stated preferences and perceived value of the advertised products.

The highlights of the study suggest a more positive, stronger, and lasting response, including a greater desire to respond or “buy” to advertisements delivered in a physical mail piece. Some of these responses or desires were not perceived or acknowledged on a conscious level. Study participants often gave a similar response in questionnaires to the perceived value and interest of digital and physical ad content. But when physiological and neurological response were measured with an MRI to determine areas of the brain that were engaged in responding, it appeared that physical ads generated a stronger emotional response and a longer retention time.

It is anticipated that this study, and further studies that will consider age and demographic impacts of different types of media, will be used for the Postal Service and industry to explore optimal use and combinations of digital and physical media.

2015 PROMOTION REVIEW AND 2016 PREVIEWS

Vice President of New Products and Innovation for the USPS, Gary Reblin, discussed 2015 promotions and potential 2016 promotions at the August MTAC meeting.

2016 promotions are currently under review. The Postal Service anticipates filing its proposed

promotions for approval in early fall. The 2016 promotions are likely to be similar to, and build upon, promotions like those in place in 2015 and continue to support the integration of mail with technology.

It is anticipated that the 2016 promotion calendar will include promotions for First Class mail that are similar to what was offered in 2015. The Postal Service plans to offer two emerging technology proposals that would be available for Standard Mail. With an emerging technology program for augmented reality, NFC, and advances in interactive pieces, and a separate emerging technology promotion that would be available for tactical innovations in mail pieces, the Postal Service is also planning to offer standard mailers a mobile engagement/buy-it-now promotion.

Reblin also discussed a promotion concept that might consider an incentive for mail service providers that rewarded frequency and volume or bringing new business to the Postal Service. In concept, this appears similar to the previous incentives offered for growth of saturation and High Density mail programs. SMC has long advocated incentives or promotions that would help encourage mailers to expand their geographic footprint, or add frequency, via the Postal Service rewarding new business with a discount or incentive.

Time will tell if the 2016 promotion calendar or other incentives propose any rewards for saturation program mailers that promote and bring advertisers to the mail through their shared mail programs. ●



Sales Training

You're replacing someone. Now what?

– John Foust

I was talking to Angela about her early days at her newspaper. “When I moved into this sales job, a lot of clients asked about the person I replaced. Most of them asked innocent questions about how that person was doing. But some of them were nosy and persistent. I figured the best strategy was to stay upbeat.”

It’s a big challenge to step into a new position, whether it’s a result of account reassignments or a matter of replacing someone who has left the newspaper. By being upbeat, Angela was on the right track. People transition in and out of jobs and sales territories all the time – and the new person has some control of how those changes are perceived. Here are three points to keep in mind:

1. **Be positive.** Never say anything negative about the person you’re replacing. “Early on, I decided to avoid saying things that I wouldn’t say if my predecessor were in the room,” Angela said. “There’s nothing to be gained by criticism, even if that person left under negative circumstances.

“It’s smart to prepare some positive comments – things that are true, things you can say with sincerity. For example, you can say something like, ‘I appreciate your concern. Joe developed some ad strategies which got great results for his accounts.’ Or ‘Joe told me how much he enjoyed working with you. I’m sure his old accounts will miss him.’”

2. **Don’t gossip.** It’s human nature for clients to want to hear the details – good as well as bad – of why their former representative is no longer handling their advertising. And it’s natural to want to please their curiosity. That’s why even the most innocent question calls for self-discipline.

“Just because people are curious doesn’t mean I have to answer inappropriate questions,” Angela explained. “I found it helpful to say, ‘I appreciate your interest in Joe, but I wasn’t here at the time, so I really can’t answer your question.’ I kept my comments as neutral as possible.”

Eleanor Roosevelt famously said, “Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.”

Which leads us to the next point.

“Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.”

– Eleanor Roosevelt

3. **Help your clients look forward, not backward.** Advertisers – like consumers – are motivated by self-interest. Change represents a possible threat to what was a predictable relationship with your paper.

Here’s a new beginning. A clean slate. An invitation to discuss ideas.

The first order of business is to reassure your accounts that you have their best interests at heart – and that their marketing is in good hands with your newspaper. “In the beginning it’s all about establishing rapport,” Angela said. “When I had initial conversations with existing accounts, I just tried to get to know them and let them see that I cared about their businesses. And like always, I was on the lookout for potential ideas and promotions.”

“Funny thing about ideas,” she continued. “When you get good ones – ideas that generate business for your advertiser – they’ll stop talking about the good old days.”

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