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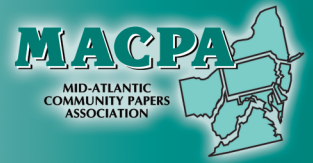


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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



# MACPA Messenger



It's Free Community Paper Month!

What a great way to celebrate with our readers and customers what we do to provide outstanding service to them and to share what's happening in their community.

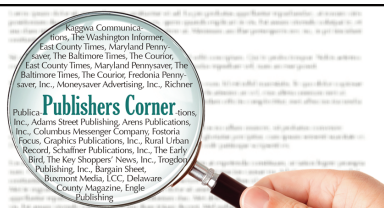
What are you doing to celebrate?

We'd love to hear about it.

On another note, I'd like to welcome Margaret Ehle from the Franklin Shopper, JoyeDell Beers from Weekly Bargain Bulletin, and, back to serve on the board, John Schaffner from The Beacon in Port Clinton, as board members. Margaret served on the MACnet Board in the past as president and brings to us a new energy about how to include digital with your print. You'll be seeing more from Margaret in articles in the newsletter as well as being part of upcoming webinars. JoyeDell has never been on the board in the past but comes from a family who has served on the board in many capacities. JoyeDell brings to the board a fresh new perspective with new ideas. She will be serving as our Entertainment Committee chair for the Conference. We look forward to her involvement on the board. John is a wealth of knowledge and shares with us what is happening in the Western part of the Region. We certainly appreciate his involvement as well.

Each month these new members of the board and our current board members make decisions to provide quality benefits like our publication audits, annual conferences, trainings and webinars for you, your employees and your company. We welcome any of our members to get involved with our committees which include: membership, membership benefits, annual conference, advertising networks, finance, digital, and legislative. If you are interested in helping on any of our committees, please feel free to contact me.

Ron Burke, President  
rburke@washingtoninformer.com



Have your voice heard in our Publisher's Corner section! We are looking for articles of at least 250 words about a service, product or idea that works for your publication! Also, if there are photos to accompany your article, please include them.

Send articles to: [info@macpa.net](mailto:info@macpa.net).

Articles will be used as received and may also be featured on our website in our blog section.

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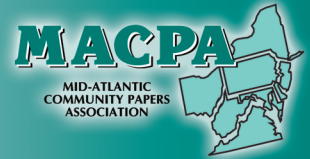
## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Ad, Editorial and Digital Award Postmark Deadline**  
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**A Golden Opportunity To Increase Your Green**

**2017 MACPA Conference**  
**March 17-18, 2017**  
Wyndham Gettysburg  
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# SELLING IS A SERIES OF TESTS



by: Anthony Iannarino

Selling is a series of tests. When you first start selling, you don't intuitively know the answers to these questions. You may not know they are even being asked. Once you have taken the test, you know what the questions are, and you know what the right answers should be.

The first time you take a test, you have no idea what questions to expect. The second time you take a test, having already had a glimpse at the questions, your score should be better than the first time you took that same test. What about the 3rd, 4th, 80th, or 200th time you take that same test?

Sales is a series of tests. There are questions that your prospective clients are asking. You are providing the answers. The questions don't change much. And having already seen them before, you should be getting better at answering the questions.

## **Do I know you?**

For all the changes that have occurred in the world of sales over the last decade and a half, the deep truths have not changed at all. To create and win an opportunity you must be known.

If this is true, and if you have failed this test in the past, you will double down on nurturing your dream clients, even though they are completely cold right now, even though they already have a strategic partner in your space, and even though they are not yet compelled to change.

Eventually, your prospective client is going to ask the question, "Who do we know that can help us with this issue?" Because you know this is the question, you now also know the answer.

## **Can you create value for me?**

One of the fundamental changes in sales is the dramatic increase and the need for business acumen and situational knowledge. It is no longer enough for a salesperson to be able to tout their product or service's features, benefits, and advantages. The Internet already does that.

The question your dream client is asking is, "Who has the ideas and the experience to help us obtain the results we need now?"

Because you know that this is the question, you understand that you need to demonstrate your ability to think like a businessperson in solving your client's challenges. The answer to this question requires that you understand your business, your prospective clients business, and enough about the overall business environment to know what choices they may make and what trade-offs they are going to have to consider.

The answer to this question is proof that you are a peer, not a vendor.

## **Why should I choose you?**

This question also shows up in another form that every salesperson hears from time to time. That question is, "What makes you different?"

A lot of people underestimate the need to create a strong preference for themselves, for their company, and for their solution as they move through their sales cycle. People play the game to play the game and not to win. They don't recognize that how they sell and who they are is part of the value proposition they are asking their prospective client to buy.

To create that preference and to answer the question "Why should I choose you," You need to know how and why you are different, as well as how those differences make a difference for your prospective client.

This question is being asked all the time even if you never hear those words escape your prospect's lips.

## **Do you care about me?**

This question is also being asked all the time whether or not you ever hear your perspective client say these words. Caring is the foundation of trust. People don't often do business with people that they do not trust.

Some people rush their sales process, believing that moving faster will allow them to close deals sooner. Some people mistakenly talk about their needs instead of their dream clients' needs. Many people make the mistake of presenting a solution that doesn't consider what the individual stakeholders who are making the decision need individually and collectively.

*Continued on page 4*

## COMPETING FOR CUSTOMERS

by: John Foust

Years ago, I helped judge an advertising competition for a large agricultural association. By design, all of the judges were outsiders. We evaluated each ad on its merits, without being influenced by inside knowledge of individual advertisers or personalities.

I recently ran across a leftover scoring sheet in my files. There were five scoring areas, with points awarded in each one. Although it was an industry-specific competition, these areas easily apply to all advertising:

**1. Stopping power** (described on the scoresheet as "attention getting ability"): This concept of stopping power is more important than ever. In the old days, we were exposed to about 500 ads per day. But today's number is 5,000 or higher.

It takes a lot to break through that kind of clutter.

**2. Clarity of message** ("is message understandable?"): I once heard a speech by John O'Toole, president of the famous Foote, Cone & Belding advertising agency. After his talk, I chatted with him for a minute or two and asked what he thought was the most important principle of advertising. Without hesitation, he said, "Clarity."

**3. Interest of message** ("does message hold attention of audience?"): Once an ad gets attention, the task is to maintain that attention. The surest way to do that is to appeal to the target audience's interests.

And what are we human beings interested in? Ourselves. There's real truth in the old cliché that we all listen to radio station WII-FM – "What's In It For Me?" Every time we encounter

*Selling is a series continued*

Not spending time with people who have real needs is evidence that you do not care. Not listening or taking into account your prospects fears and concerns is proof that those things are not important to you. Speeding through your sales process to get to "the close" faster gives your prospect the idea that the deal is more about you than about them.

In human relationships, slower is faster.

Selling is a series of tests. When you first start

an advertiser's product or service – even for a split second – we automatically run it through the self-interest filter. If it holds some appeal, we'll give it a few more moments of our time. If not, we'll click, tap or turn to something else.

The key is to know the audience. Marketing textbooks emphasize the value of features and benefits. Along the way, it's smart to narrow the list to those which are most relevant. Features A,B and C may not mean anything to potential buyers, but Feature D might hit the mark.

**4. Believable** ("will audience believe message?"): Although advertisers realize that there is no sale without trust, some of them hurt their chances by resorting to exaggerations and unsubstantiated claims. They lose credibility when they use shallow terms like "unbelievable," "one of a kind" and "best deals in town."

I believe that people often exaggerate when they lack confidence in the truth. Sometimes this means the copywriter has not learned enough about the product and the audience to create a believable campaign. The remedy is to get the right information – and simply put that information into words and pictures.

**5. Tone** ("good taste in keeping with audience"): This is a matter of likeability. People would rather hear, "We understand you, and here's something you'll like" than to hear, "You're making a big mistake if you don't buy from us."

At the end of the day, there's something which can mean more to your advertisers than winning ad contests. And that's winning customers.

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selling, you don't intuitively know the answers to these questions. You may not know they are even being asked. Once you have taken the test, you know what the questions are, and you know what the right answers should be.

What question is continually asked of you for which you still lack a good answer? If you are losing opportunities you believe that you should be winning, you need a better answer to this question.

If you were to look over your losses in the last 12 months, what questions cost you to fail the test?

# NEWSPAPER GROWTH FINALLY GETS NOTICED] WHAT TOOK THEM SO LONG?



## MACPA Messenger

by: Kevin Slinp

A few months back, I had breakfast with the publisher of a very successful community newspaper in Minnesota. As we walked around the restaurant, I was introduced to local residents enjoying their muffins and eggs. At one table, a customer asked what I was doing in their city.

When I explained I was working with the local newspaper, a gentleman spoke up. "Whatever you do, don't mess it up. We love our newspaper."

A few weeks later, while in town working with a community newspaper in South Florida, I found myself in a conversation with the president of the local real estate association. When the conversation turned to my client, he was quick to share some personal thoughts.

"Do you know," he began, "why realtors, auto dealers and other advertisers advertise in the community paper instead of the big daily?"

He had my attention.

"People who live here pick up this paper, see the faces of the writers and say, 'I know him,' or 'I know her.' It makes a real difference. That's why people love this newspaper, and that's why advertisers want their ads in this paper."

Last week, as I arrived at the rental house where I would be living for three days, the owner asked me what brought me to her town. When I told her I was there to work with the local newspaper, a smile hinted at what she was about to say. "We love our paper here. The same family has owned the paper for decades. We are so lucky to have it."

Three days ago, as I sat alone at the Lakewood Supper Club, looking out over a beautiful sunset on Big Stone Lake, which creates the border between South Dakota and Minnesota, the waitress quickly recognized my southern accent.

"What brings you all the way from Tennessee?" she asked.

When I explained that I was in town to work with the local newspaper for two days, I had a new friend.

"We are so lucky to have our paper," Michelle told me. "We love our paper."



**My drive into Ortonville, Minnesota last week reminded me of a lot of places I visit as I work with newspapers across North America.**

I feel like a broken record when I remind people just how well community newspapers are doing across America. As I work with hundreds of papers each year, it's a common theme as publishers talk to me about their individual operations.

I couldn't help but chuckle when I saw a story in Editor & Publisher titled, "Despite 'Doom and Gloom,' Community Newspapers are Growing Stronger" in early June.

Editor & Publisher isn't the only industry journal to take up this mantra. It seems that community papers are "in" again. The column you are reading is carried by industry-related journals and publications on four continents. I often take the opportunity to read what other "experts" are writing in these publications. For years I've read how newspapers must shift their focus away from creating quality products to crunching numbers. Now, it seems, quality is important again.

"Despite 'Doom and Gloom,' Community Newspapers are Growing Stronger" proclaimed the headline. I chuckled because I was reminded of the interview I did with Editor & Publisher just about a year ago for a column titled, "Strategic Innovations Overshadow the Technical," by Eric Schult.

Eric contacted me to discuss the role of technology and centralization at newspapers. It didn't take long for the conversation to shift to the success community newspapers are having without centralizing production. Eric seemed

*Continued on page 6*

surprised when I shared some of my research information indicating locally-owned newspapers are doing quite well. At one point, I mentioned the success of community newspapers might be an important topic for a story. As I remember, Eric agreed.

One of the things I remind clients, whether they are locally-owned community papers or part of larger groups, is to be realistic about what they do. More times than not, newspapers ask me to help improve their products while on-site. That always means that something is going to change. I'm noticing newspapers are more accepting of change these days when confronted with reasonable information.

Last week, I had a discussion with a staff from South Dakota that sounded like a conversation I've had many times. It revolved around grayscale photos on pages. Now and then, I'll work with a group that uses color pictures on grayscale pages, to simplify the conversion of documents from print to online. By placing color photos on the pages, the RIP (the device that controls the creation of plates for the press) can simply convert the images to gray while making the plates, allowing the same files to be uploaded to a website in full color.

While this does simplify the process of converting print pages for the Internet, the issue – as I've explained dozens of times to groups – is the photos will look much better in print when edited and converted to grayscale first.

I know what always follows next. "Yes, but if we place color pictures on the pages, we don't have to create new pages to go online."

That's when I get straight to the point.

"Let me ask you something," I usually begin. "Do you make more money off your digital product or your print product?"

To date, no one has ever answered they make more money from their digital product. Most often, the answer is, "We don't make a profit from our digital newspaper."

"So," I'll ask, "why do you put more effort in making your digital pages look good when all of your profit is in print?"

At this point, I usually see faces begin to light up.

In her story for Editor & Publisher, Sharon Knolle is right: despite the gloom and doom, community papers are growing stronger. I would argue, however, this is not a new phenomenon. Most gloom and doom I've noticed among community newspapers over the past few years has been perceived, not real. It took four or five years, but most community papers I visit – and I visit a lot – realize the "death of newspapers" cry was created primarily by folks who could profit if that turned out to be the case. The reality, as Knolle noted, is community newspapers are growing stronger.

Over the next few weeks, I'll be traveling all over Tennessee, Western Canada, West Virginia and back to the Upper Midwest. I will visit with staffs and hear how much their readers love their papers. Publishers will seek advice concerning software and hardware purchases because, among other things, they realize they have to plan for the future.

In 2008, the dean of a prestigious university school of journalism told me he didn't believe there would be a single printed newspaper left in America within ten years. He still has 17 months to prove me wrong. If the folks at Editor & Publisher are right, it seems a safe bet at least one newspaper will be standing.

**In the September Messenger,  
watch for news about an awesome  
Super Early Bird Contest  
for the upcoming conference!!**



*In 2015, Times Review Media Group worked closely with SCS to achieve what always seems impossible: an*

*automated, paperless workflow from sales reps to graphic designers and everywhere in between. This story recaps the journey in great detail and features insights and lessons learned from the newspaper's perspective.*

Not long ago, *Wired* magazine referred to the elusive goal of a "paperless office" as a "30-year-old pipe dream". But tell that to the Times Review Media Group in Mattituck, Long Island, where the bins and shelving that used to be used to help organize a traditional, paper-based production workflow system were recently set aside for recycling.

Within a few short months, the chain of three weekly newspapers and assorted niche magazines achieved the initiative of "going paperless" – a mission set by its owner, embraced by his staff, and fulfilled through a partnership with Software Consulting Services (SCS), which provided the software and technical expertise to accomplish the feat.

The resulting solution delivers benefits and efficiencies beyond the elimination of paper

shuffling. "The big surprise for me," said Times Review Owner/Publisher Andrew Olsen, "was how large a benefit it represents for all the different departments."

The endeavor began in late February of 2015 with a road trip to SCS's offices in Nazareth, PA, where Olsen and some key employees met with a team of SCS developers and project managers for a presentation. "I keep [a printed copy of] the presentation on my desk," Olsen said. "It keeps reminding me where we were and how far we've come."

The company's starting point will seem all-too-familiar to the vast majority of papers that don't have a modern production workflow management system, like SCS/Track™, or a modern order entry and accounting system, like SCS's AdMAX™. Olsen's company actually had these tools – it had been an SCS customer for more than 10 years – but it hadn't implemented upgrades to SCS's new web-based order entry module, and hadn't taken advantage of many other features that had subsequently been introduced by SCS. "They'd been using our ad tracking system and our advertising system in a somewhat traditional manner," said Kurt Jackson, SCS's vice president and general manager. "That would be an environment that included a lot of paper pushing."

Read the full story at: [bit.ly/SCS\\_Article](http://bit.ly/SCS_Article)



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## Saturation Mailers Coalition

SMC is a coalition of saturation program mailers, including free paper publishers, shared mailers and coupon envelope mailers, who share a common interest in maintaining fair and reasonable postal rates and regulations; law and postal policies that promote a viable, competitive and customer focused Postal Service; and a positive public image and response to mailed print advertising.



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