



INDEPENDENT FREE PAPERS OF AMERICA

June 2017

tip

The Independent Publisher

Express News: First source in their community
page 4

3 Minute Idea Exchange Goes Digital
page 8

I'll See YOU In New York Because...



AUDIT PROMOTION CHECKLIST

All of the services listed below are FREE promotions included with your audit.

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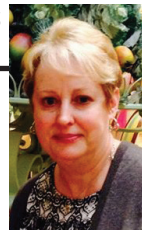
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"...it can be independence forever for those who value it sufficiently... if they give their allegiance to an association such as this one, they will be dedicated to keeping the spirit alive, and they will be doing it by helping each other."

- Victor R. Jose

IFPA Founding Conference
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IFPA goes to New York. Read all the articles in this issue of TIP and find out all the reasons you should attend this history making conference. I'll see YOU in New York because...



Express News is the First Source

by
Cindy Cruz



By Cindy Cruz

After Ken Ubert finished college he went to work for a small paid weekly newspaper as an advertising sales representative. At that time the Germantown area of Milwaukee only had a free shopper and a paid weekly. Ubert saw an opportunity. He conducted research and concluded that he could start a “FREE” weekly newspaper that offered residents in the community comprehensive coverage of community news and provide the advertisers with full saturation delivery.

With a small loan from his dad Ubert started his first newspaper in February 1994 in Washington County. Three months later he started three more papers in neighboring communities. Today Hometown Publications has 11 newspapers covering Washington, Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties. They offer home delivery through mail and carrier along with bulk drop deliveries.

Ubert enjoys providing the community with in-depth local news. “Readers look to our papers to find out what’s happening,” he says. “This industry has so much to offer. I can’t think of another industry where you can provide a service to readers and businesses.”

Hometown Publications goes by their saying “Your first source for local news, advertising, printing”. They focus on bringing readers complete coverage of local news along with helping community businesses develop affordable and comprehensive marketing plans to help grow their businesses.

Ubert attributes the success of his



Express News participates in the Fourth of July Parade.

newspapers to the hard work and dedication of his employees. “They really have pride in their community newspapers, and it shows by the longevity of their tenure at the company,” he adds. “We currently have employees that started back in 1994 still working for our publications.”

He believes that what makes his business unique is the in-depth local community news that readers of all ages want. For their advertisers they don’t just sell ads, they offer marketing plans for their businesses including print, web, mobile, social media, direct mail, video, email and re-direct marketing, so their businesses can get the best ROI on their investment.

Community involvement is also key to their continued success. Their sales representatives are involved with the ambassador programs in the chambers. Ubert serves on the Community Memorial Hospital Foundation and YMCA board. Hometown Publications sponsors many youth sport programs and is involved with the local police

departments unity program and the K-9 golf outing.

They also sponsor the local Toys’ for Tots program and Children’s Hospital annual cancer drive. “Sponsorships give us great exposure and keep our newspapers involved in the communities that we serve, Ubert adds.

Working with and supporting the schools is also important. “We offer the schools a lot of coverage and have school pages in our papers. In a few communities that have journalist programs the students will write articles and will publish them in the papers” he says. Every year they participate in the community scholarship programs where they give out marketing scholarships to high school students. They also participate in career days.

Ubert says there have been many memorable experiences. Some of these include building their facility in 2005 and starting new papers and products. Winning “Business of the Year” two years in a row was quite an



Hometown Publications President Ken Ubert joins Marines to display their collection of Toys for Tots.

honor. Receiving a merit award from the US Marshalls Milwaukee District for the Wisconsin's Most Wanted page (printed in all their publications) helped capture three individuals in one year shows outstanding readership.

Like most community newspapers Hometown Publications has had its challenges. "We had to go to stringers to cover some of the communities. Hiring is always a challenge but we've been able to hire more part-timers. Closing of small businesses is also a challenge for us. We just keep trying to increase our revenue by offering different products and prospecting new business," Ubert says.

They try to come up with a new product or service every year. Ubert says they started back in 2011 with their SMS (Simple Messaging System) stand-alone platform. They bundle a lot of print ads with the SMS ads or add it to their print contracts as added value. They can send the SMS ad out to their database or the advertisers

can send the ad out to their own database which they've collected over the years.

Their biggest growth has been with the new full digital services which allowed them to open new revenue streams and help their advertisers.

Hometown Publications has added app development, website development and hosting, social media management, scrolling app messaging, Geo fencing, zip code targeting, Facebook advertising feeds, and SMS database (zip code zoning), to become a full service digital agency.

"The impact has been huge. It has become its own stand-alone company for the past few years. We sell our digital products nationwide and have many national endorsements from many major industries. A lot of our print customers have become print and digital customers now. We are consistently adding new services every year in the digital world, and

it's really paying off," Ubert adds.

Future plans include continuing to grow the readership base through local coverage of news that matters to the communities they serve. They will continue to use their app website to drive readers to their print publications. Their editorial staff and sales people can take video if they see a news story or are covering an event and will deliver through social media. Hometown Publications is implementing and developing new video versions of all their publications which will include video of certain events and live coverage of high school sports via the web and mobile. They have secured sponsors of this new on-line video version with launch scheduled in July.

In addition to their core publications, they will continue to add more monthly direct mail coupon books in certain areas. Hometown Publications has launched a complete

continued on page 7

Jotted by Jane

by
Jane
Means



As I sat next to the retired editor of our local daily paper at a lunch last month, we quickly agreed the future of newspapers seems better than it has for the past several years. What a great industry!

Even though our IFPA members rarely dabble in hard-core news, we all know we get wrongly lumped with dailies when anyone is describing how “newspapers are failing.” With that thought, it would be to our advantage if the dailies, big and small, were overall more valued.

For several years but particularly during the last two years, hundreds (if not thousands) of fraudulent news sites sprung up all over digital

platforms, making up outrageous tales of greatness or despicable behavior. It’s easy to concoct a made-up story, post it online and merely delete it on a whim. Not the case for printed newspapers!

Being optimistic, I believe people really would prefer actual, factual, honest news reports. I believe our neighbors would really want someone researching and fact checking everything that is doled out to the public. When written by respected journalists, columns many times become the topic of conversation at the local diners – now those are columns I want to read loyally and eagerly pay as I pick-up or even have a subscription. What

a great opportunity, especially for the dailies! A way they could build back their declining prestige.

Fast forward ... this same retired editor and I sat at the same luncheon table last week. He said, “Did you hear the Daily News (our local daily paper) just laid off THREE of their four writers?” What? “Yeah, they are cutting expenses.” Well, so much for them taking advantage of an opportunity!

OK fellow IFPA members -- in many communities such as ours, we remain on our own to restore the value of print, sigh. Even when WE see that the dailies have a huge opportunity, THEY either don’t recognize it

32 Quarterfold
32 Magazine
37 Broadsheet or Tabloid
32 Digest

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Plastic Displays

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or cannot figure out how to use it. Maybe, just maybe, they are so focused on their immediate bottom line and don't foresee a reason to have a long-term plan.

I'm glad Free Community Papers have many reasons to succeed! Now,

more than ever, our fellowship and hallway conversations at conferences can really help each other identify our future strengths and strategic long-term plans. Our communities depend on each of us. Together, we come up with the BEST ideas!

See you in NYC this September,

Jane

Express News concludes...

digital franchise where people can buy into their digital franchise and offer all the digital products they offer to retailers nationwide.

To stay competitive Ubert says it is essential to be able to change with the times, keep progressing and be innovative. "You must deliver the news the way they want it – in both print and digital format. We lead our readers from print to the web," he explains. "The best thing about digital is you can put breaking news on your website at anytime, on any day of the week and then do the full version of the story in print."

Being able to change with the times is also important to advertisers. "People are receiving advertising messages differently. While print is thriving you should also offer many digital packages to drive the print

product. We bundle digital packages in various ways. Web, mobile, social media must be in your arsenal and offered to your advertisers. You'll reach a larger audience that way," Ubert says.



Will the Internet kill your free community paper? Did instant potatoes kill potatoes?

New technologies change many things. But not everything. You may tweet, blog, surf, shop, or search online but you continue to read your free community paper. You just proved it.

Readership of free community papers is now higher than paid daily papers and continues to grow. Rather than being replaced by "instant" media, your local free community paper has become an important part of our neighborhood.

The reason, which sometimes is not heard because of all the noise about the Internet, is pretty obvious: your free community paper does what the Internet doesn't. We promote connections at a local level. Free papers join readers and advertisers in ways digital media don't.

In fact, the local content and power of your free paper makes advertising even more effective. We are the number one medium for driving purchases. That's important in every product category.

Including potatoes.



I'll See YOU In New York City Because

"You get to connect with experienced members of other successful companies! I always come back home with some great money making ideas!"

Rick Heckman
Franklin Shopper, PA



Online 3 Minute Idea Exchange

One of the best ways of learning winning ideas is to attend the 3 Minute Idea Exchange during a conference, like the one we will have in New York in 2017. I know I have heard ideas that I've been able to take home and put to use on Monday following a conference. It's really good stuff.

For the New York Conference we are completely booked with great presentations and speakers. We didn't want anyone to miss out on sharing great ideas with each other. As a result, we developed an online 3 Minute Idea system.

We would like for each of you to take a few minutes and record yourself presenting your award winning 3 minuted idea. If you need help on how to record such a thing using your phone go to FitsBits and watch the video here: <http://tinyurl.com/z2bo6bf>

If you have supporting documents such as pricing sheets, rate cards, supplementary videos or whatever

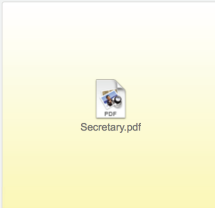
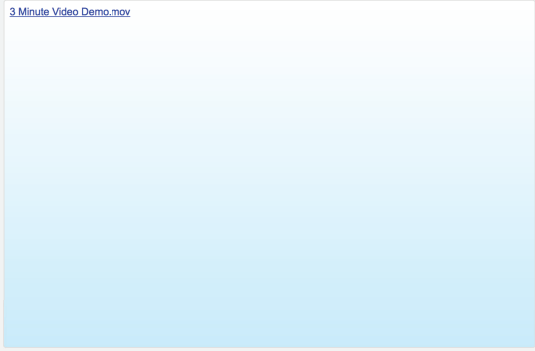

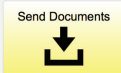


you need to "sell" your great idea, have them ready to upload to the system.

It's pretty simple to use this new system. Just go to: [tinyurl.com.zvucbcj](http://tinyurl.com/zvucbcj). Alright, that isn't really that simple but putting in that web address is the hardest part. Enter your Account Name: IFPA and your Password: ifpa. Click on the 3 Minute Video Ideas button and you're in.

Click on the New Video Idea button and enter your name, email address, publication, and idea name. Then click on the Send Video File button and navigate to the video file you created to show your great idea and upload it to the system. Finally, if you have supporting documentation click on the Send Documents button, navigate to your files and upload them. When you are finished click on the Log Off System button. You can enter as many ideas as you'd like.

The winners will receive \$500, \$300, or \$200! So enter soon and often.

3 Minute Video Ideas

Name	Douglas Fry	3 Minute Video Demo.mov
Email Address	douglas@ifpa.com	
Publication	IFPA Headquarters	
Idea Name	How To Use The System	
		
		
		
		
		

I'll See YOU In New York City Because

I find IFPA conferences the best opportunity to truly connect with fellow members. It's priceless to get to know them especially when I face a crisis, I am totally comfortable asking any of them for help!



Jane Means



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- Newport Centre Mall - 0.2 miles
- PATH station direct to NYC - 3 minute walk
- 3 Major Airports Minutes Away

Graphic Hooks

by
Ellen
Hanrahan



I began working in **InDesign** when I had a bit of trouble re-installing **QuarkXPress** in 2004... and I haven't used any other program since. I am working in the last disc version available, **Adobe InDesign CS 6**, and getting closer to committing to the Cloud version—but still no decision.

There are a lot of features that are so useful, which is why I switched in the first place, but the information world has changed and maybe I need to as well.

In 2004, I was able to do most of the work, text, effects in one program. I have other **Adobe** products, **Photoshop**, **Illustrator**, **Acrobat**, even **Dreamweaver**, but going back and forth was always time-consuming, so why not get as much as I could in the one software program.

Fast forward thirteen years and the **InDesign** program has gotten more powerful, but the one thing I would like to do is create a web page. I did take a **Dreamweaver** course at the technical school, but oh, my gosh, talk about intensive! Anyway, the ability to create a web page through **Adobe Muse** is very compelling.

I also wonder what software and version you readers are using... so drop me a line with that information in the Subject line.

CRASH PROOF?

One of the first times that I used **InDesign** was about the time that we had all these rain and thunderstorms going through our area. Sure enough, the power went down and of course I had not saved anything. But, when I opened the file, everything was there—just as I had left it! **InDesign**, fortunately is smarter than I and saves its own protected file. Save the file however, after you have reopened it.

I have rarely had to start from scratch over the years because the program “crashed.” I won't say never—why tempt the software gods, but programs and operating systems have gotten more stable.

Feather



In this photo, the “feathered edges” were applied directly in the **InDesign** program. The feather width is 4 picas with diffused corners.

EFFECTS: DROP SHADOWS

This was huge for me. As I go through older ads and files, I find many “drop shadows” created in **Photoshop**... many “links” to account for.

There was a plug-in for my **XPress** program that allowed me to create drop shadows almost instantly, but it was not available for **XPress 6** so I had to learn to live without my drop shadows.

InDesign had a built-in feature that allowed me to create drop shadows. I could control opacity, x offset, y offset, blur, etc. So the example below is done right in the program.

Drop Shadow

Today there are so many more options. Under **Object>Effects**, I find *Transparency*, *Drop Shadow*, *Inner Shadow*, *Outer Glow*, *Inner Glow*, *Bevel & Emboss*, *Satin*, as well as *Basic Feather*, *Directional Feather* and *Gradient Feather*... and there are controls for Object, Stroke, Fill and Text.

Inner Shadow
Outer Glow Satin
BEVEL & EMBOSS
Inner Glow

The above are just a few examples. I also have options for blending, position, size, spread and the ability to apply multiple effects to various objects and text—but use restraint!

For more information, I suggest the **InDesign 6 Visual Quickstart Guide** by Sandee Cohen, available at Amazon for about \$25. Chapter 6 has 30+ pages to cover Fills, Strokes and Effects.

ADD A STROKE

I should mention the **InDesign** program also opens a number of my very old **XPress** files—not perfectly, but enough to allow me to create new **InDesign** files from older files or ads.

The “Drop Shadow” example below takes this feature a bit further by adding a stroke to the type without distorting the character. There are features in the **InDesign** program that are very similar to **Adobe Illustrator**. As a matter of fact, some of the shortcut commands that I use in **Adobe Photoshop** are similar in all three of these programs. **Adobe** tries to make sure that the similarities among their programs helps you to work a little more efficiently.

Drop Shadow

By adding a “stroke” to the word, I get a more defined are—and a less “muddy” appearance. Working with newsprint allows for more dot-gain, which you should already know about—and keeps the text cleaner and easier to read.

The Drop Shadow can also be applied to artwork. This is an eps file and I was able to “detect edges” to create a clipping path and then apply the drop shadow to the artwork.

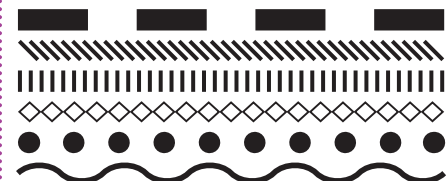


The features in the **InDesign** Program allowed me to work faster and smarter. Learning one program very well was also a lot easier than keeping up with **Photoshop** and **Illustrator** (although there are pros and cons to that scenario as well).

Most often, we had little time in which to create our ads... do your best, but work fast! Now that I have more time, I find I need to know what to work on and maybe that's why I need to look into all the improvements that the **Adobe** programs have made... sigh.

RULES

There are also various rules, double rules, thin and thick, dashed, and dotted as well as a few “specialty” rules. Below are some 8 point rules of dashed, left slant hash, straight hash, white diamond Japanese dots (my favorite), wavy and more, plus you can create your own. Altering the point size will also change the look of the lines.



Some rules work better at a smaller point size. The rules below are at 3 points. Don't forget, I did a couple of articles on rule above and rule below to create patterns and backgrounds... years ago!



FINAL THOUGHTS...

Working faster is a good thing, but working thoughtful makes it better. Doing 99% of my work in one layout program made that happen.

I'm one to say to keep learning, but I have kinda ignored my own advice, recently...

Until next month...

Ellen Hanrahan hanrahan.in@att.net ©2017



Gary's Gallery

To keep you on your toes, TIP (The Independent Publisher) will include several photos from Gary Rudy's vast photo library. Try to identify each person and email those names to Douglas Fry (douglas@ifpa.com)



5 Tech Tools to Grow Your Publishing Business

Publishers continue to face new challenges in the evolving industry of print publishing. However, new technologies are now giving publishers opportunities they never had. Here are a few technologies and services that can help you grow your business in 2017.



SiteSwan

What is it?

Super easy-to-use platform that lets you build beautiful, fully responsive websites for your advertisers and other local businesses.

How can it help you grow?

Open up a brand new revenue stream by offering affordable web design to your clients. Set your own prices and charge an upfront setup fee followed by a monthly service fee. Clients edit their sites themselves using a site editor branded for you. Sales training and marketing material is included, taking the guesswork out of how to sell digital. You even get your own marketing website to promote your services. Less than 50% of businesses have a website...you can change that and make money all at the same time.

How much does it cost: Plans start at \$99/mo
www.siteswan.com

Ideal Directories

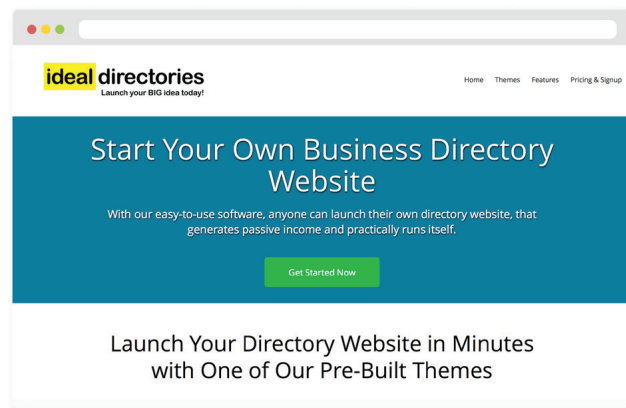
What is it?

Turn-key business directory websites that can be branded for your publication and market. Choose from different directory "themes" including a general business directory, restaurant directory, wedding vendor directory and more.

How can it help you grow?

Offer your advertisers the best of both print and online with a listing on your local directory website. Businesses can even sign up and manage their listing themselves allowing you to generate a monthly revenue stream that is practically hands-off. You can create different pricing plans based on what features you want to offer, and money automatically gets deposited into your bank account.

How much does it cost: Plans start at \$99/mo
www.idealdirectories.com





PageFlip Pro

What is it?

A digital publishing platform that transforms your boring PDF's into high-definition, fully-responsive interactive Page-Flip Digital Editions.

How can it help you grow?

PageFlip Pro allows your readers to view your publication wherever they are. Now featuring a new responsive design for tablet and mobile viewing with lightning fast page load speeds, your website is **always up-to-date** with the latest version of your print publication. It's hands-off for you and advertisers love the added exposure the digital edition offers...plus it's all branded for you. You can also extend the shelf life of special sections. Recent updates to the platform include subscription management and banner ad integration.

How much does it cost: Pricing starts at just \$1 per page (based on volume).

www.pageflippro.com

Exchange Classified Ads Platform

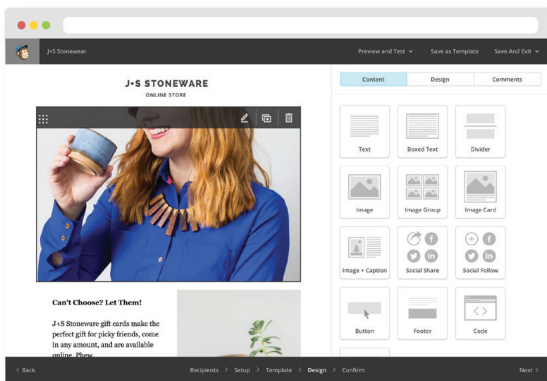
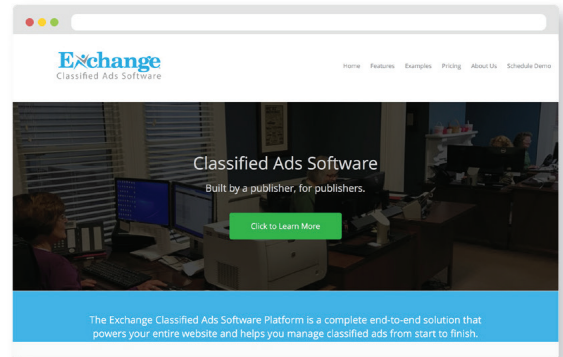
What is it?

An incredibly robust, but simple-to-use software platform that powers your publication's website and classifieds system that can instantly boost classified ad sales.

How can it help you grow?

This system will act like an additional classified salesperson! People who place Classified Ads get reminded to renew their ads before they expire and miss the deadline. Automated upsell opportunities to add a photo to an ad significantly boost average ad cost. Your **staff all have separate logins** to proof incoming ads and customer credit cards are stored for more efficient renewals and re-orders. Save time, boost efficiencies, and put your publication's website & technology on par with major classified websites without making a huge investment.

How much does it cost: Plans starting at \$685/mo
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How much does it cost: Paid plans starting at \$10/mo (based on subscriber list size)

www.mailchimp.com

2017 Fall Conference heads to NYC!

**SEPTEMBER 28 -
OCTOBER 1, 2017**

If you're looking for new ideas to grow your business and solve those problems keeping you up at night then now is the time to reserve your space at the 2017 IFPA Fall Conference! This is the first time in IFPA history we will be heading to the NYC area and with hotel accommodations at just \$189/night it's remarkably affordable.

We have a great lineup of speakers, industry experts and events to help you learn more and have fun! Our sessions include everything from sales to digital and everything in between to answer your questions and to help make sure you walk away with money making ideas.

The Fall Conference & Tradeshow is a great opportunity to get help with your toughest challenges and hear how others ARE finding success in these challenging times.

In order to receive all these benefits you have to actually be there for the conference. You won't gain anything

by not registering today. So, don't put it off any longer. The space available for this conference is limited. Once our room block is full there simply aren't properties that have available rooms nearby.

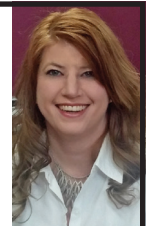
The Jersey City WESTIN is located in the waterfront Financial District with beautiful views of the city and the Newport Marina. Its spacious 429 guest rooms and suites featuring Westins Heavenly Bed and Heavenly Bath, in room refreshment center, coffee makers with free Starbucks coffee and tea, large desk workspace

with FREE internet and 37" LCD televisions. Your hotel is located a half block from the PATH train to take you non-stop to downtown Manhattan in minutes. It is located close to 3 major airports with Newark Liberty International only 12 minutes away. Both valet and self-parking are available and the self park is only \$22 per night. You are located a short subway ride from Times Square, Broadway Theater District, Statue of Liberty, Rockefeller Center, Liberty Park, Ellis Island and EVERYTHING else New York has to offer. For the shopper in you, the hotel is attached to the 3-story Newport Center. This is a huge mall featuring over 140 stores with 4 anchors. It has an 11 screen cinema and restaurants featuring The Cheesecake Factory and Sarku Sushi. All of this with only a three and a half percent sales tax.

I'll See YOU in New York City Because

I will be attending the IFPA New York conference to find my next money making idea, my next money saving idea, and meet the next person that will blow my mind with useful information.

Eileen Curley



WELCOME

IFPA's Newest Members

**The Add Sheet
Columbia, MO**

**ASK-CRM
Hagerstown, PA**



by
Ryan
Dohrn

6 Ways To Show Your Advertisers Some Love

Looking back we see that the month of February brings to the forefront a single day where love is the focus. Valentines Day. Yes, that one-day where we go all out for that one person we love dearly. I would suggest to you that if you wait until February 14 you have missed 11 other months to show your love. Because I am a sales coach and not a life coach, I need to quickly move over to the lovers in your business life. From an ad sales training perspective, what have you done recently to show your advertisers some love? If you don't take care of your advertisers your competitors will! That I can promise you.

Experts tell us it takes five times the money and five times the energy to win a new client. So, what can we do to show our advertisers some love and keep them in a long-term relationship? Let's have some fun on this topic, but also look at some serious ideas to boost your relationships with your advertisers.

HERE ARE 6 WAYS TO SHOW YOUR ADVERTISERS SOME LOVE THIS MONTH AND BEYOND

#1: What about sending hand written love notes? The art of the hand written thank you note has neared extinction. Join me in reviving this age-old sales retention activity. Buy some nice thank you cards and grab a nice pen and get to work. I like to send along a \$5 Starbucks card with my thank you notes too. Is your handwriting poor? Go to Bond.co (not dot com, dot co) They will write your thank you notes for you for \$7.

#2: Who doesn't love to eat? Send

some lovely small edible gifts. I use 1-800-flowers.com to send small tokens of appreciation like popcorn or cookies. A little secret is to buy the service that gives you a free all year shipping pass. This means all of your shipping is covered for the year at one flat rate. There are many non-floral gifts for under \$20.

#3: How about sending non-sales emails of love? On a monthly basis I like to find a great motivational article or Youtube video to share with my clients. I find many on Inc.com under their motivation section. I write a simple email and send them the link. I do NOT mention sales. I simply say, "Hi Bob. I came across this great article and thought I would share it with you. - *insert link* - . Have a great day. - Ryan" In my ad sales training workshops, we spend 45 minutes on this important topic. Why? Because this retention activity truly needs to be a part of your daily sales life.

#4: Introduce your advertisers to experts who will love them too. Set-up meetings for your advertisers with subject matter experts that you know will benefit their business. For example, find a cyber security expert or an SEO expert and work out a deal with these pros where the first consultation is free for your advertisers. Or, you pay for it.

#5: Online educational love-fests. Or, you can call them "webinars" if you want. Educational webinars are a great way to show your clients some love. Arrange for an expert to talk on a webinar about topics that are important to the industry or community you serve. You might event tap some of the subject matter experts from #4 above for these webinars. The topics you choose

are important to draw a crowd. You might even consider using a survey to determine the topics that are important to your advertisers. This is an invitation only type of online event. Those invited can ask questions as well. Don't worry about large numbers of attendees. Keep it intimate and action oriented. Do not over think this retention activity. I use GotoWebinar for this type of activity. GTW is cost effective and I have never one time experienced a technical issue with the service.

#6: How about a fun phone message from the boss? Ok, that might be a stretch. Arrange to have your boss or a member of top brass simply call the advertiser. Even if they get a voicemail the impact is awesome. Advertisers love to hear that the boss cares about them enough to call them. If you make this a monthly activity, the time commitment is fairly minimal yet the impact is monumental. Keep in mind, you will get voice mail 90% of the time.

Many of you will wait for the holidays to show your love. By the time you wait for the Christmas holiday to say "I love you," your competitor has asked them for a date 11 times. The odds of success are in their favor. Show your advertisers some love today! Make these activities a part of your ad sales training program and your advertiser retention program.

Loving your advertisers and having an active retention plan in place is mission critical to your long-term success in the sales business. Those that master the retention game survive a VERY long time in the sales game. Don't wait. Start showing some love today!

USPS ASKS PRC TO "BUST THE CAP"

by Donna Hanbery

In March, 2017, the United States Postal Service, and other interested parties, filed comments with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) in the ten year rate review proceeding. More than 40 separate sets of comments were filed, with most industry submissions taking the position that the last ten years of a rate setting process where rates were limited, across a class basis, to the CPI rate cap had worked well to bring needed predictability and stability to Postal Service pricing and industry stakeholders.

As predicted, the USPS was asking the PRC to eliminate the CPI cap, and establish in its place, a system where the Postal Service could largely set rates the way it likes, with only a very general requirement to provide the industry with some advance guidance on the timing and size of a proposed rate increase and to make its rates "fair and reasonable".

In support of its position, the Postal Service recited its usual list of woes including declining mail volume, the expansion of its delivery point network, with more homes and businesses that need delivery, and the trend that has resulted in fewer pieces of first class mail, the class of mail that has historically provided the most contribution in revenue to the Postal Service.

In support of its arguments, the Postal Service asserted that the PRC had broad authority to change the rate setting mechanism during the ten year review. Elements of the law, like the CPI cap, that other stakeholders have argued are "mandatory", the USPS suggests were only "mandatory"

during the first ten years. Under the Postal Service's reasoning, from now on, "anything goes" as long as it helps the Postal Service achieve financial stability. In examining all of the objectives and factors to be considered under the law, the USPS clearly considers "financial stability" to be number 1. It asserts that all other objectives are dependent on the USPS having sufficient revenues to improve its equity position, to meet operating requirements, and to have liquidity for future changes in the marketing and delivery industry.

As additional support for its arguments, the Postal Service points to foreign postal services, where there is no similar price cap or limit on pricing authority. (Ironically, many other commenters looked to the operations of post offices in other countries to show how poorly nations without a price cap system, or limit on rates, have done in retaining volumes and competitive position with other delivery services.

The Service asserts that it has done what it can to reduce costs, including the expansion of non-career employee usage, delivery route consolidations, and facility and network consolidation. The USPS asks the Commission to not engage in second guessing postal management's business decisions, but to recognize that it has been engaging in honest, and efficient, management practices.

In urging the Commission to eliminate the cap, the Postal Service did not make any specific recommendations, or submit any alternative systems or models for what it would like the PRC to do. Presumably, if the Postal Regulatory

Commissions finds that the system is not obtaining its objectives, and that the cap system can be changed (a topic that will certainly lead to industry battles and potential cases going to the Court of Appeals), there will be additional legal proceedings where the Postal Service, and others, can make comments and submit proposals, economic modeling, and expert testimony.

Some industry insiders have speculated that the PRC could give the Postal Service "some" of what it wants, while still giving the industry the market-based predictability and stability of a system tied to the CPI. One alternative approach, that has been mentioned in connection with the potential rate review, as well as in prior discussions about reform legislation, would be a cap-based system that could limit USPS rate increases to a CPI rate cap with some predetermined, and limited, "plus" number. A limit on increasing rates to CPI plus one percent, or 1.5, or something similar, is a variation of a rate cap system that still would allow higher prices. Questions on how any deviation from a rate cap might be allowed, or limited, or whether prices would still be set on a class basis, or across the network, are all issues that could and would be discussed and litigated in a formal rulemaking proceeding that would take place if the PRC finds that the current system is not meeting the objectives of the 2006 law.

The PRC has consistently stated that it plans to handle the rate review process as expeditiously as possible. It is anticipated that the initial decision in the rate review might be known as early as late spring early summer. The PRC has previously announced that the entire proceeding would be completed sometime by fall, 2017.

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“ The greatest part of being in a SHARE group is engaging my peers. Often, I have questions that nobody in my office can answer. But in my SHARE group, everyone either is or has experienced exactly what I’m dealing with. It’s great to hear so many options and solutions that have never occurred to me. ”

Eric McRoy, VP, AdvAntage News, Alton, IL


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Chess Anyone?

by
Douglas
Fry



I have 8 beautiful, kind, genius-level grandchildren. That's just the way it is. I'm sure yours are likewise endowed.

On two different occasions I had the opportunity to be with my eldest grandchildren, a boy and a girl. They wanted to do something fun but the weather, on both days, was not cooperating. We were stuck inside.

With my grandson I figured we could simply build something with the electronics kit I have. We could build something simple like a photorefractive solar diode collection array, or something like that. However, he wasn't interested since that has been done so many times. Each suggestion I came up with for a fun activity was met with a blank look and "Grandpa! Let's do something that's NOT lame."

One suggestion I made that was not lame was that we play a game of chess. He had never played so I figured that, just maybe, I could beat the 10 year old. After explaining the fundamentals of the game we were exchanging pawns and jousting with our knights.

I was amazed at how quickly he picked up the game and how long he was interested in continuing to play. Fortunately for me, our time together ended before he could trounce me.

On the other instance my granddaughter showed the same interest in learning chess. We played several games over different visits and during the last time together she beat me.

What does this have to do with community papers and IFPA? Well...

I imagine all the people you work with are beautiful, kind, and genius-

level just like my grandchildren. With so much going for them it can be a challenge to come up with a topic for your next company meeting. The topic needs to challenge them, expand their view of things beyond themselves, and assist in critical thinking.

You won't have time to play a game of chess but you might have time to ask them what they want to study to improve their performance. You might be surprised at their suggestions. Give them the opportunity to choose the topic and you won't be disappointed.

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Joe Mathes

Joe Mathes
Delta Publications-Kiel, WI
IFPA Board Member



Court finds employee entitled to trial on retaliation claims

by Joshua Wilson jwilson@kingballow.com

A federal court in Pennsylvania denied an employer's attempt to dismiss employment discrimination and retaliation claims prior to trial and ordered that the terminated employee was entitled to a jury trial. The employee was a public works director and borough engineer who had received good job performance ratings throughout his 30-year career. However, he was terminated shortly after a new borough manger was brought in to replace a former manager.

Employees, including the terminated employee, claimed it was common for the new manager to make comments referring to the terminated employee or his work as "outdated" and "old fashioned." Other employees claimed it was common knowledge that the new manager preferred younger employees. Some employees had alleged that there was a purported plan to replace the older staff with younger employees.

The employee filed his lawsuit under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) for discrimination and retaliation. The employee alleged he was terminated only hours after he submitted a complaint to his boss that the manager was discriminating against him based on his age. The employer moved to dismiss the case, arguing that the employee failed to show that he was replaced by a person sufficiently younger to support an age discrimination claim. The employer offered evidence that the manager took over the employee's job duties immediately after termination then subsequently hired a new employee

that was substantially close in age to the terminated employee (at least five years younger). However, this evidence was not sufficient for the court to dismiss the claims.

The employer also argued that the termination was justified due to the fractured relationship between the employee and the manager. The court noted that this alleged justification was based almost entirely on the manager's own assertions of the fractured relationship between the two. One factor in the employee's favor was that virtually all of his performance reviews over his thirty (30) year career with the employer were favorable and he had never been disciplined prior to his termination.

The court found that there was sufficient evidence to go to trial due to the fact that there was evidence the manager had age-based discriminatory animus towards the employee. Furthermore, the court found that although the employer claimed it was using its business judgment in the making the decision, that fact did not shield it from liability. The employee

from
King & Ballow



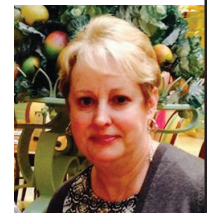
presented sufficient evidence that his age may have played a role in the termination decision, especially when coupled with the animus shown by the manager. The court determined there was sufficient evidence to allow a jury to determine whether age played a role in the decision to terminate the employee.

Regarding the retaliation claim, the court found that the temporal proximity between the employee's age-related complaint about the manager and the termination, which was only hours after he submitted his complaint, was evidence that the employee may have been terminated in retaliation for the complaint. The employer attempted to argue that the decision to terminate the employee had been made prior to his complaints, but the court did not find sufficient evidence to indicate that was true. Furthermore, the employee had presented evidence that the manager told him his job was not in jeopardy three days prior to the complaints of discrimination. Ultimately, the employee presented substantial evidence that the manager's age bias towards him and the fact that he was terminated within a short time frame of his complaints regarding the bias was sufficient to present the claims to a jury.

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"I attend IFPA conferences to network with old friends and make new friends."

Deborah Phillips



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Christian Faith
PUBLISHING

IFPA Board Meeting, Thursday, May 21, 2017

President Jane Means called the meeting to order at 9:00a.m. (EST) Board members present: Eileen Curley, Deborah Phillips, Rick Wamre, Doug Fabian, Dan Buendo, Katie McNabb, Eric McRoy Executive Director: Douglas Fry and Guest: Joe Nicastro Excused: Joe Mathes and Rena Reiser

New York Conference – Joe Nicastro Joe reported that a series of video emails have been sent to promote the upcoming conference. Joe is looking into other ways to promote the conference and encourage registration.

Finances– Deborah Phillips The April financials were emailed prior to the call. Deborah reported that the 2017 budget may need to be revisited at the June Board meeting if CADNET revenue continues to drop significantly below budget.

New Members – Danielle Burnett Ask-CRM was presented for Associate Membership, Dan made a motion to accept, Deborah seconded the motion, all were in favor. Modern Media Concepts of Columbia, MO was presented for Regular Membership. Deborah made a motion to accept the membership of Modern Media Concepts, Dan seconded the motion, all were in favor.

IFPA Sales Training –Rick Wamre Rick reported that the sales training committee recently met and he has reached out to Ryan Dohrn for ideas for future training sessions.

2018 Publishers Summit – Katie McNabb Katie reported that the Summit committee met earlier this week and they will have more to share at the June Board meeting.

2018 Conference – Jane Means Jane reported that Gary Rudy is looking in to possible locations for the 2018 conference as well as potential partnering associations. The Board gave input on the locations currently being considered.

FITS/Vendor Packages – Eric McRoy Eric reported that the FITS committee is in search of more FITS bits and encouraged the Board members to submit videos. Eric also reported that Vendor packages are completed and being shared with prospective vendors for the 2017 conference. We'll have some new vendors at our NYC conference to help members with their publications.

CADNET – Dan Buendo Dan reported that there will be a meeting held on Monday to discuss the future rebate structure.

SHARE Groups – Doug Fabian Doug reported that twelve people attended the most recent sales manager group. Doug also mentioned that he would like receive more Board input on the future of the SHARE groups at the June Board Meeting.

AdSense – Joe Mathes Joe emailed a report prior to the call.

Eric made a motion to adjourn, Dan seconded the motion, all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 am EST.

Recording Secretary Danielle Burnett


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