



# tip

The Independent Publisher

**Manage Your Sales  
Team More Productively**  
**page 4**

**E Newsletters Continue To  
Succeed**  
**page 6**



## AUDIT PROMOTION CHECKLIST

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

When your audit is complete the most important part of your audit process begins! To get the biggest return on your investment, make sure you promote your audit. It's easy, and it's free. Use this checklist to increase revenue today!

- ☒ **DISPLAY THE CVC LOGO** - After your printed audit report has been issued, you can run the CVC logo in your publication, rate card and media kit. Call CVC for more logo promotion ideas.
- ☒ **GET CONFERENCE CALL TRAINING** - Call (800) 262-6392 to schedule training on your CVC audit report and readership study. Training sessions take 30 minutes, and can be scheduled during regular weekly sales meetings.
- ☒ **LET US SEND A LOCAL AUDIT PROMOTION** - Send CVC 10 pre-addressed mailing labels for potential new advertisers in your area. CVC will personalize an audit promotion letter for your publication and send each advertiser a copy of your report. After completing conference call training your sales staff should follow up with the recipients of the letter.
- ☒ **NATIONAL AUDIT PROMOTION** - CVC automatically releases your audit to Standard Rate and Data Service, and hundreds of national media buyers. Make sure you review your SRDS listing regularly and contact national advertisers in your area regularly. Call CVC for more information on national & regional media contacts.
- ☒ **REGIONAL AUDIT PROMOTION** - CVC maintains a database of more than 5,000 advertising agencies nationwide. Use the advertising agency marketing plan in the CVC Sales Handbook to develop profitable relationships with local ad agencies.
- ☒ **CREATE IN-HOUSE AUDIT PROMOTION ADS** - [www.cvcaudit.com](http://www.cvcaudit.com) shows examples of hundreds of promotional ads run by other publishers. Make sure area businesses know why your readers are their potential customers.

If your audit is sponsored by IFPA, MFCP, WCP, CPII, MACPA, FCPNY, CPNE, CPM, SAPA, CPF, or PNAWAN you can have additional publications you own audited at association rates. Save thousands of dollars and call today for your no-obligation quote.



### Need Posters?

CVC's "power" poster is free and looks great in offices, conference rooms and training areas. Make sure your office visitors know about the power of your CVC audit. Order your free poster today by calling (800) 262-6392.

### Higher standards. Better results.

- CVC audits are available at no-cost to most state, regional, and IFPA qualified members. Publications can also fund their own audits and readership studies at affordable rates.
- Need a map? CVC offers additional custom mapping services for publishers and advertisers.
- Own other publications? CVC extends group discounts to publishers with multiple titles.
- CVC audits paid and non-paid print media including newspapers, magazines, shoppers, and niche publications.
- Audit reports include comprehensive readership studies and cover printing, distribution, and circulation verification.

Call today for more information  
800.262.6392.  
[www.cvcaudit.com](http://www.cvcaudit.com)



**FREE  
NADA  
ZIP  
ZILCH  
GRATIS  
COMPLIMENTARY**

All of these audit promotions are included in the cost of your audit.

## OFFICERS FOR 2017-2018

**JANE MEANS**  
President

**Kapp Advertising**  
P.O. Box 840  
Lebanon, PA 17042  
**(717) 273-8127**  
janem@themerchandise.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



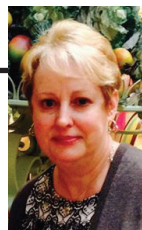
**KATIE MCNABB**  
Vice President

**Exchange Media Group**  
P.O. Box 490  
Fayetteville, TN  
**(931) 433-9737**  
Fax (931) 433-0053  
katie@exchange-inc.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



**DEBORAH PHILLIPS**  
Director of Finance

**The World**  
403 US Rt. 302 Berlin  
Barre, VT 05641  
**(802) 479-2582**  
Fax (802) 479-7916  
dphillips@vt-world.com  
term expires Sept. 2019



**DAN BUENDO**  
Director

**Reminder Publications**  
280 N. Main St.  
E. Longmeadow, MA 01028  
**(413) 525-6661**  
Fax (413) 525-5882  
Dan@TheReminder.com  
term expires Sept. 2019



**EILEEN CURLEY**  
Director

**Hometown Publications**  
23856 Andrew Road  
Plainfield, IL 60585  
**815-436-2431 ext 112**  
ecurley@buglenewspapers.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



**RICK WAMRE**  
Director

**Advocate Community Newspapers**  
6301 Gaston Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75214  
**(214) 560-4212**  
Fax (214) 823-8866  
rwamre@advocatemag.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



**ERIC MCROY**  
Director

**Advantage News**  
235 A East Center Drive  
Alton, IL 62002  
**(618) 463-0612**  
Fax (618) 463-0733  
EricMcRoy@AdVantageNews.com  
term expires Sept. 2019



**JOE MATHES**  
Director

**Tempo**  
P.O. Box 237  
Kiel, WI 53042  
**(920) 894-2828**  
joe@deltapublications.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



**DOUG FABIAN**  
Past President

**The Valley Breeze Newspapers**  
6 Blackstone Valley Place,  
Suite 204  
Lincoln, RI 02865  
**401-334-9555 ext. 141**  
Doug@valleybreeze.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



**JOYCE FRERICKS**  
Sergeant-at-Arms

**Star Publications**  
522 Sinclair Lewis Avenue  
Sauk Centre, MN 56378  
**320-352-6577**  
joyce@saukherald.com  
term expires Sept. 2018



**DANIELLE BURNETT**  
Assistant Director

**CADNET**  
13157 Avocet Street NW  
Coon Rapids, MN 55448  
**(866) 224-8151**  
Fax (866) 864-2051  
danielleburnett-ifpa@live.com



**DOUGLAS FRY**  
Executive Director

**Headquarters**  
104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401  
**(931) 922-4171**  
Fax (888) 450-8329  
douglas@ifpa.com



Vol. XXXVII, No. 1 • January 2018



*"...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  
September 20, 1980

### The Independent Publisher

Published monthly for the benefit of members by Independent Free Newspapers of America\*

#### Publisher

Jane Means, President

Federal Collective Membership  
Registration No. 1,561,653

#### Managing Editor

Douglas Fry  
e-mail: douglas@ifpa.com

**DEADLINES:** The next issue of The Independent Publisher will be published February 15, 2018. Deadline for all copy is January 15, 2018. Copy will be accepted on a space-available basis and the publisher reserves the right to edit or reject any material.

### Advertising, Editorial & Production

*The Independent Publisher (IFPA)*  
104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401  
**(931) 922-4171**

©2017 by Independent Free Papers of America\*. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is prohibited.

This year my new years resolution is to come up with better information to put here in the publisher statement section. Stay tuned.



# 8 Ways Publishers Mismanage Their Sales Teams

by  
Lou  
DeLeon



By Lou DeLeon

Publishers face many challenges that did not even exist 10 years ago. But before chalking up all your revenue woes to Facebook and Google, you need to ask yourself if you're really managing your salespeople properly by hiring smart, pushing them out of their comfort zone, and creating accountability. Maybe it's not the economy, the competition, or the market – maybe it's you.

Here are 8 common statements from publishers that reveal they're not keeping sales on task.

## **WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HIRE MORE SALESPEOPLE.**

Really? Nobody can afford sales people that do not close business, but if a publisher finds a dynamic, motivated seller, hire them. There is always a territory or category to carve out. Hire slow; fire fast. You are not doing a young person any favors by keeping them in a job they are not good at. Hire and motivate your team, and they will pay for themselves.

## **WE ARE NOT CURRENTLY INTERVIEWING FOR SALESPEOPLE.**

Interviewing for salespeople is ongoing. You don't have to interview them for an hour. Keep the channels open. If you are shorthanded and lose a salesperson, you scramble and compromise on the next hire. Thus, the slippery slope of sales doom continues. The publisher is in control with enough salespeople. The team is in control when there are too few

salespeople. Plus, candidates coming into your office keep the current team on their toes.

## **BUSINESS IS OFF, SO WE ARE NOT REPLACING SALESPEOPLE.**

Business will continue to be off as you allow your sales staff to do "less with more" instead of challenging them to do "more with less." Salespeople are not paid to be order-takers; you pay them to close business.

## **WE CAN'T SELL SCHEDULES DURING THE YEAR.**

The days of fall planning are over. Local and regional advertisers work on their advertising all year. Give prospects a reason to buy, and you will close schedules all year. If your prospect will have to pay a penalty to cancel and run with you, adjust their rate to cover that expense. While the majority of business will be posted by the end of January, there is no reason to not to sell schedules all year.

## **WE LET OUR SALESPEOPLE WORK FROM HOME.**

It is hard enough to maintain accountability and challenge the sales team. It's impossible when you don't even know where they are. Team management suffers more from the loss of employee banter, lack of structure, and no feeling of team.

## **OUR SALESPEOPLE GO ON 3-4 CALLS PER WEEK.**

It's not surprising business is off. How about shooting for 15 calls per week? If a salesperson spends an hour

preparing for each call—which they won't—and each call takes an hour—which they don't—the salesperson has used up 30 hours of their 40-hour workweek. That leaves plenty of time for lunch, events and getting a haircut. It is always interesting when a salesperson says they cannot hit their goal and admit only going on 3 or 4 calls a week. It's all a numbers game: phone calls, meetings, closing business.

## **OUR SALESPEOPLE SELL OTHER PUBLICATIONS IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN.**

It is baffling how many publishers allow this. Selling other publications takes away accountability and dilutes your salespeople's focus. Why would a publisher allow salespeople to sell anything but the publication their career depends on? We want salespeople to be dependent on the success of our publication. They have bills to pay and need to sell ads in our core book to pay them.

## **THAT IS A HOUSE ACCOUNT.**

House accounts are demoralizing and show a lack of appreciation of salespeople. A salesperson that closes business is valuable, and taking business from the team hurts morale. Use house accounts as a reward and motivator, but give your salespeople as much of an opportunity to earn money as possible.

*Lou DeLeon, aka the Fractional Publisher is an ad sales consultant. You can reach him at [Lou@whipadvisors.com](mailto:Lou@whipadvisors.com), LinkedIn and on the web site [Whippoorwilladvisors.com](http://Whippoorwilladvisors.com) Article: [pubexec.com](http://pubexec.com)*

**Only 5 Spots Remain!**  
**Register Today**

*JOIN US AT THE*  
**PUBLISHERS**  
**SUMMIT**  
*CLEARWATER BEACH, FLORIDA*

**JANUARY 26 AND 27, 2018**  
**CLEARWATER BEACH HOLIDAY INN**  
**CLEARWATER BEACH, FLORIDA**

**LIMITED AVAILABILITY. Register Today!**  
[www.freepaperconference.com](http://www.freepaperconference.com)



# Digital Publishing: Why Email Newsletters Continue to Succeed for Publications

By: Rob Tormoe

With most things, the late, great David Carr was ahead of the curve.

Take a piece the famed New York Times media columnist wrote back in 2014 about email newsletters, often viewed as an outdated technology that lost its luster in the mad dash to reach readers on social media. While most newspapers were doubling down on outlets like Twitter and Snapchat, Carr correctly pointed out that most of us start our day with email, valuable real-estate that outlets like Politico and Quartz targeted with must-read newsletters that helped them grow into influential online media companies.

“With an email, there is a presumption of connection, of something personal, that makes it a good platform for publishers,” Carr wrote. “Publishers seeking to stick out of the clutter have found both traction and a kind of intimacy in consumers’ inboxes.”

Fast forward to 2017, where Facebook’s constantly-shifting algorithm and Twitter’s depressingly small reach have frustrated editors and readers enough to transform an outdated artifact like the newsletter into the new darling of the media world.

Of course, newsletters are hardly new. The Washington Post has more than 70 newsletters alone, focusing on topics as varied as politics, faith and parenting (they even have a newsletter that features their best comments). The New York Times recently added Smarter Living, a

weekly roundup by editor Tim Herrera featuring advice on how to live a better life, to its large stable of engaging newsletters, and currently boasts more than 13 million email subscriptions, twice the number it had just three years ago.

Large national newspapers like the Post and the Times have both the readers to support multiple newsletters and the staff to curate them. But what does a successful newsletter strategy look like for a local metro newspaper with limited manpower and resources to divvy up over multiple newsroom projects?

Like many newspapers, the Seattle Times had an automated daily morning newsletter that the newsroom spent very little time and effort creating. But after the paper underwent a complete redesign of its website in 2015, editors took the opportunity to revisit its newsletter strategy now that it had undertaken a digital subscription model.

“Our digital subscription growth was significant and we knew registered user growth was important to sustaining that success,” said Kristi Waite, a product manager at the Seattle Times focused on newsletters.

So Waite and her team began a four week experiment to see if readers would respond better to a thoughtfully compiled, hand curated newsletter featuring original writing and unique staff photography, placing a premium on content that would be most engaging for its largely metro readership. For the duration of the experiment, Waite’s

team dug in every weekday morning at 5 a.m. and created a unique, highly engaging newsletter that went out to readers no later than 7:30 a.m.

The result was the “Morning Brief,” which is now created daily by a minimum of eight people and sent out to a little more than 160,000 recipients. By all accounts, the new newsletter has been a hit among readers, boasting an open rate of 32 percent, much higher than the typical open rate of a media newsletter, which according to digital marketing firm Smart Insights hovers around 22 percent. The staff also routinely culls the email list, removing infrequent users that signed-up but never opened the newsletter, which helps to keep the open rate high and the readers engaged.

“Since we’ve launched ‘Morning Brief,’ we have gained a much better understanding of what resonates with our audience, which varies by day of the week and has similar principles of our homepage or A1, a curated perspective from editors,” said Waite.

A recent edition of the “Morning Brief” showcases the variety the newsroom attempts to highlight with each morning edition. The top story features an illustrated look at what cities vying for Amazon’s second headquarters (its first is in Seattle) can expect if Jeff Bezos picks them. In addition to more story links, the newsletter also featured the paper’s top editorial, a brief look at the weather and a moment in Seattle history, in this case the 47th anniversary of the death of native rocker Jimi Hendrix.

**HAMILTON**  
CIRCULATION SUPPLIES  
800-398-2427  
[www.theservicechamps.com](http://www.theservicechamps.com)  
[info@hamiltoncirculation.com](mailto:info@hamiltoncirculation.com)  
Fax - 708-946-3733

**Wire Displays**  
32 Quarterfold  
32 Magazine  
37 Broadsheet or Tabloid  
32 Digest

**Poly Bags**

**Rubber Bands**

**Carrier Bags**  
NEWS  
TIMES

**Plastic Displays**  
SS-7 RT  
SS-6  
SS-8  
SS-5

**Steel Distribution Boxes**  
C-6SD  
ST-91SD  
C-91SD  
C-2003SD

**Tubes and Steel Posts**

In addition to its engaging editorial content, the newsletter also features an in-line advertisement, while a separate weekly newsletter offered by the Seattle Times focused on improving public education is sponsored by Alaska Airlines. But those monetization efforts play second fiddle to a more important business consideration—driving and retaining digital news subscriptions.

“Newsletters are the most efficient digital channel for converting readers to subscribers,” Waite said. “Based on subscriber conversions per visit, SeattleTimes.com visits referred by an email newsletter are 25 times more likely to convert than a visit to our site referred by Facebook.”

As more and more newspapers move behind some form of digital paywall, convincing more readers to become engaged with newsroom content is no small consideration. The

Washington Post calls this strategy the “customer-engagement funnel,” where they use newsletter to convert non-regular readers into devoted followers to read more regular and eventual decide to subscribe to a digital bundle.

Of course, the Seattle Times isn’t the only local metro that has committed resources to reawakening their email newsletter aspirations. If you’re looking for ideas, the San Francisco Chronicle recently hired best-selling author David Downs to launch Green State, a newsletter and vertical focused on cannabis culture and legal marijuana from the Bay Area and beyond. The Philadelphia Inquirer (my day job) recently launched two individually-curated newsletters: one focusing on the city’s food scene, and another covering the intersection of national politics with local culture, appropriately titled “Trumpadelphia.”

Kris Higginson, who took over editing the Seattle Times’ “Morning Brief” newsletter back in February, said the best advice she could offer other editors looking to revamp their own newsletter offerings is to commit strong editors and writers to the project, and assign one person to write through the newsletter early in the morning.

“Analytics are important, but so is tone, to ensure people keep reading and clicking,” Higginson said. “All of our folks have gotten really good at a chatty-yet-concise tone, and it just takes a bit of knitting together in the mornings to make the newsletter an engaging, trustworthy product that readers want to keep opening.”

*Rob Tornoe is a cartoonist and columnist for Editor and Publisher, where he writes about trends in digital media.*

Article: [editorandpublisher.com](http://editorandpublisher.com)

# Jotted by Jane

by  
Jane  
Means



As the holiday season ends, I'd like that extra nice feeling of giving to last throughout this New Year. We've all donated warm coats, hats and mittens. We've purchased toys for all ages to help the U.S. Marine Reserves' Toys for Tots program. We've removed names (from trees) and have purchased gifts for the needed recipients. We've sent checks to our favorite charities. We bought turkeys for those in need. Every time we give, we're the ones who feel better! Why? I think because we know we are actually and directly helping to create a better community.

To make "giving" a priority throughout 2018 is one of our company goals. Since we clearly want to make our communities better, we plan to step up and work on that year 'round.

We've developed a program called

"Sponsored Editorial" – a rather misleading title when you consider the entire plan. This is a program where our company pays for 70% of the cost and a sponsoring advertiser pays 30%. Most topics are created for small sponsor ads – basically a business card size. One ease for us is this program is designed for branding ads that rarely need copy change.

All sorts of topics are sold or available: Military News, Library News, Community Calendar Features, Cooking Corner, Crossword Puzzle, Sudoku, to name a few. But those are topics that intrigue readers; topics that may make our paper better but not necessary make the community better. We clearly needed to take it a step further.

One topic we just developed recently was to promote our 211-information line. What a great feeling it is to know

we are partnering with a local bank to inform the community weekly on how to get oodles of details on all sorts of help whenever they need it 24/7. Another program theme informs readers on how to sign up for free workshops to manage their money regardless of how little they may earn. We're hoping to partner with a bank, credit union, or insurance agent, well any financial expert. Once again, we'll donate 70% of the space and the sponsor handles 30%, and the community receives valuable information to make our community better.

If you are making your community better, I'd love to hear from you as to what you are doing and how it's done. Here's to a wonderful, healthy, charitable and prosperous 2018.

*Jane*

**Like Us On Facebook!** <http://bit.ly/1UiP7qT>  
**Follow Us On Twitter!** [https://twitter.com/\\_IFPA\\_](https://twitter.com/_IFPA_)

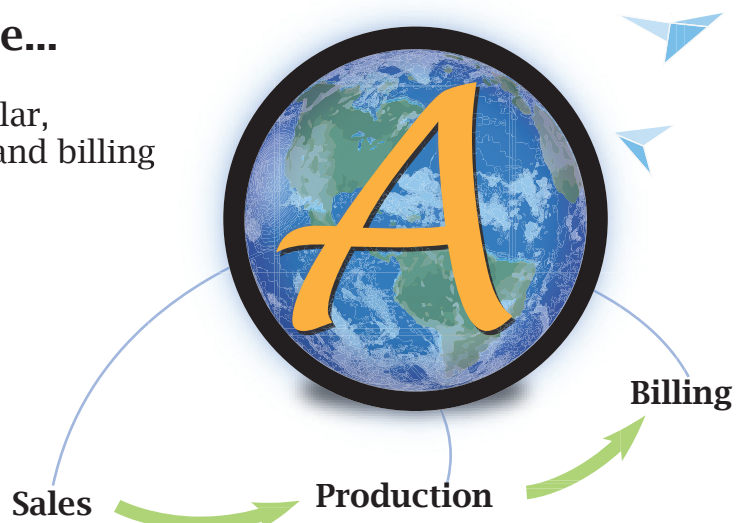
## AccountScout Anywhere...

Software to manage every ad dollar,  
from sales, through production and billing

- Rent or Own
- Cloud or On Premise
- ANY device

303-791-3301

[www.FakeBrains.com](http://www.FakeBrains.com)



*Here's why you need to be in Baltimore...*  
*...it all starts with good ideas!*



CRITICAL BALTIMORE  
CONFERENCE COMPONENTS

*education*

Two certification tracks (both a management and a sales), numerous TLI classes and a broad spectrum of industry specific presentations.



*improvement*

Personal and professional growth; revenue building ideas; performance improving concepts, products and procedures - all designed for community publications.



*networking*

Sharing information with people who understand what you do, why you do it and care deeply about the industry you are in. Joint conference with AFCP and MACPA means more people - more ideas!



## A joint conference and trade show with AFCP and MACPA

For additional information about the conference or either of the limited seating management or sales certificate programs that will be available as part of the Baltimore conference - visit [afcp.org](http://afcp.org) and look at the Key Information Links on the right side of the home page.

Let your ideas shine!

2018  
**Baltimore**  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW  
INNER HARBOR



**May 3-5, 2018**  
**Hyatt Regency Baltimore**  
**ON THE INNER HARBOR**

# Graphic Hooks

by  
Ellen  
Hanrahan



MOST OF THE TIME WE ARE UNDER DEADLINES AND DON'T HAVE TIME TO DO SOMETHING MORE INTERESTING. HOWEVER, SOMETIMES WE CAN TACKLE SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT, LIKE...

## Word Clouds



**Wordalizer** is a word cloud generator for **Adobe InDesign**. It helps extract, edit, and visualize the relevant vocabulary of a document, book, paragraph, then it creates original artwork based on those words in the source text. Other settings let you customize—fonts, colors, layout, etc.

**Wordalizer** was inspired by a famous web service, **Wordle**, created by Jonathan Feinberg. What makes **Wordalizer** valuable to graphic designers is that it leads to a new, visual approach to a fresh InDesign document, that is, high-definition vector artwork that you can still re-scale, modify, and adjust to your needs.

The main dialog of **Wordalizer** is very similar in both Mac OS and Windows. But download the TRY vs. PRO version. You can download a free tryout version of **Wordalizer** at: <http://www.indiscripts.com/blog/public/scripts/WordalizerTry.zip>. It offers all the features of the PRO release, but it will automatically add on the word "Wordalizer" into the artwork.

## Word Clouds

I believe the "word cloud" I created was way back in 2011. Anyway, it was one of the first scripts I had to help me create my word cloud. Because it was **Ad Talk**, I wanted to use as many of the terms that we deal with on a regular basis, so I typed in as many of the words that I thought would work well. And then I ran the **Script** and was prepared to be amazed!

Well, long story short, I was amazed... perhaps I expected too much. There were a variety of controls that I could choose, and I tried a variety of tools. I guess I was expecting to see what I eventually ended up with, but that wasn't actually the case. I wanted the words to fit close to each other and after a while, the only way I was going to get that was to be satisfied with what the script gave me, and then do it the old fashioned way, by "tweaking" the words myself... individually, and making them fit.

To be fair, the script I used was **WordalizerTry.jsx** (6 years ago!), and I should have realized that for the cost (nothing) I was able to **try** to make the word cloud. Or maybe this effect was just too technical for me.

Don't get me wrong, I was pretty happy with the way it turned out. But I would have had a tough time paying me for the time that I spent creating that slide. It's a good thing I work for nothing—but the experience lets me: a) give you a chuckle; and b) let you know that a lot of the effects that we see may actually take longer to create than we think.

I created that **Ad Talk** cover back in 2011 or so, and I decided to see if there had been changes... and there had been. I created this blue word cloud in a fairly short time, and I admit, I did not read the manual that was provided when I downloaded the TRY version (free).

However, it did seem to respond quicker and I was able to make alterations (i.e., change specifications) much easier... maybe I need to actually read the manual.

A website with ideas and samples of some beautiful word clouds is at [www.Wordle.net](http://www.Wordle.net).

Tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes.

Images you create with **Wordalizer** are yours to use as you like. You can print them out, or save them to the **Wordle** gallery to share.



Above: My Word Cloud • Below: Word Cloud web site



## INSPIRATION CORNER

I rarely address the issue of creativity and where do the ideas come from... and there's a very good reason for that. It's really hard! Not everyone "sees" the same way and one person's experiences can have a huge impact of their "visual literacy."

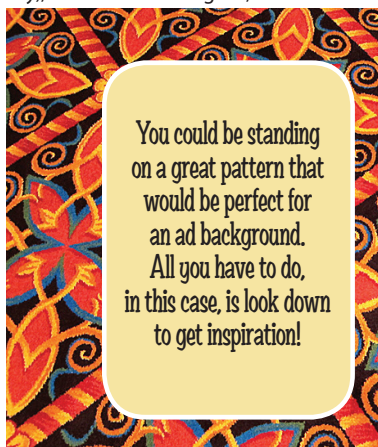
For example, at a Conference I attended (or any exchange of ideas actually), can result in dialogues, interactions and ways to understand a different point of view.

The best answer is to be aware of your surroundings and to keep an open mind.

The border in the sample at the left was actually the carpet at the hotel. It was amazing and I wondered what it would look like in an ad.

Backgrounds can set off a small ad better than just the addition of a thick border, so why not use something distinctive. So look—really look, at your surroundings.

*Until next month!*



I welcome your input and suggestions. I joined the free paper publishing business in the early 80s. I write for IFPA, Community Papers of Michigan...and still learning.  
E-mail: [hanrahan.ln@att.net](mailto:hanrahan.ln@att.net) Ellen Hanrahan ©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](http://www.siteswan.com)

## Ideal Directories

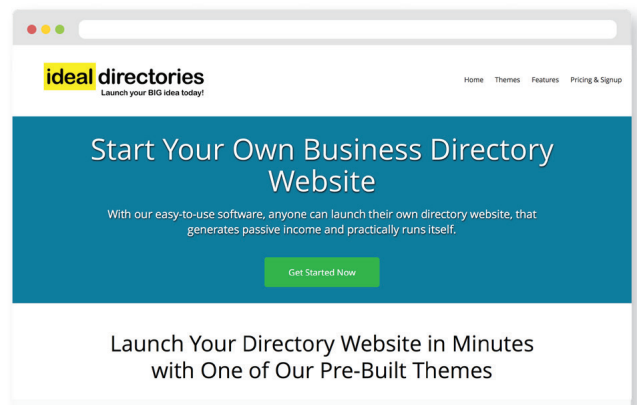
### *What is it?*

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](http://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](http://www.pageflippro.com)

## Exchange Classified Ads Platform

### *What is it?*

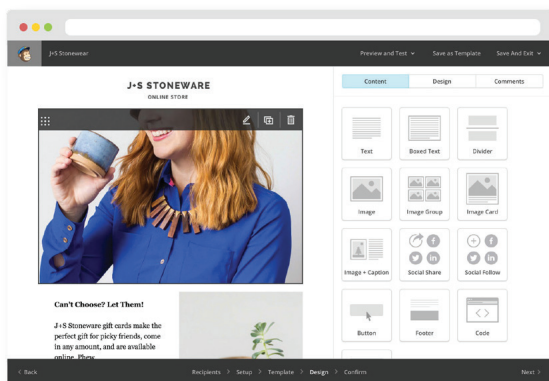
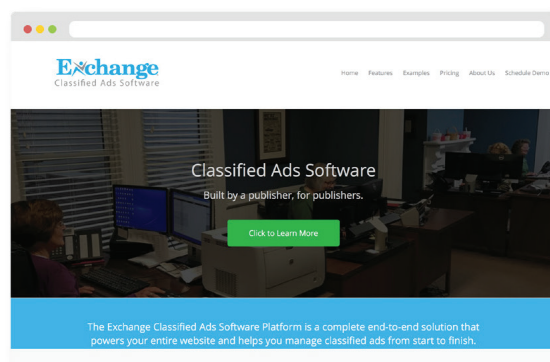
An incredibly robust, but simple-to-use software platform that powers your publication's website and classifieds system that can instantly boost classified ad sales.

### *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

[www.classifiedads.software](http://www.classifiedads.software)



## Mailchimp

### *What is it?*

An easy-to-use email marketing system that lets you send out thousands of emails at once.

### *How can it help you grow?*

With a few clicks you can put together great-looking emails and blast them out to your readers and/or advertisers. Announce the latest Digital Edition is online, or feature a seasonal print promotion. You can even sell sponsorships inside of the email blasts!

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

[www.mailchimp.com](http://www.mailchimp.com)

# Another Pilot/ Instructor Analogy

by  
Douglas  
Fry



I used to pilot small aircraft. When I was taking flight lessons my flight instructor, Phillip, was a young college student. He would instruct me, pre-flight the aircraft, be with me during maneuvers, and afterward taught me how to improve.

When we were done with each flight lesson we would go to my home where we sat at the kitchen table and I tutored him in college math (algebra, trigonometry, and finally calculus). It was a symbiotic relationship. He helped me get my pilot's license and I helped him get his diploma. He has been a good friend for over 30 years because of what we went through together.

This relates to sales managers and sales professionals because there is a symbiotic relationship there too. Let's face it, each wouldn't be nearly as successful without the other. Working together managers and reps are greater than the sum of their individual parts. What is the analogy you ask?

Sales managers have the duty and

responsibility to train their people how to do their jobs better. IFPA can help with this task with the new IFPA Training Academy series. For only \$149 you'll receive 12 months of on demand training you and your staff can benefit from. Finding training materials and subjects is a challenge for all of us, this program helps us with that challenge. With consistent training the "instruction" part of our analogy is taken care of.

Before each flight the pilot in charge walks around the aircraft checking to make sure all components are functioning properly. The pre-flight continues inside the cockpit as each system is checked and double-checked. A physical checklist is used to ensure that all items are working as they should... you can't pull over at 10,000 feet.

What is your checklist before you go out into the field or before you call on a customer? Fresh Breath - check. Materials for the prospect in hand - check. Recall significant events in prospects life to work into conversation - check. Have answers

to previous questions - check. All paperwork completed ready to sign - check. Fresh breath one more time - check and double check. Now you're ready to face the prospect.

Make mental notes about what goes well and what doesn't during the sales call. When you return to the office discuss these items with your sales manager and expect positive direction and feedback.

Sales Managers: always make time to discuss the effectiveness of their "maneuvers." Congratulate the wins and help them prepare better from the losses. Teach them how to improve in a non-judgemental environment. If the conditions for feedback is positive both the manager and the rep improve their respective situations. If it is negative both will feel like it was a waste of time.

Sales managers should instruct, help with pre-flying the sales call, be ready to discuss the maneuvers after the call and learn from what happens. Sales reps just remember you can't pull over at 10,000 feet.



**Like Us On Facebook!**

**<http://bit.ly/1UiP7qT>**

**Follow Us On Twitter!**

**[https://twitter.com/\\_IFPA\\_](https://twitter.com/_IFPA_)**



INDEPENDENT FREE PAPERS OF AMERICA

Learn about conferences,  
webinars, and industry news.





Will the Internet kill your community paper?  
Did instant coffee kill coffee?

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 community papers is now higher than the big papers, and continues to grow. Rather than being replaced by “instant” media, your local 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 community paper does what the Internet doesn't. We promote connections at a local level. Community papers join readers and advertisers in ways digital media don't.

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

Including coffee.

## Community Papers

*Working For You*

# IFPA Board Meeting

## Thursday, December 21, 2017

President Jane Means called the meeting to order at 9:00a.m. (EST)

Board members present: Eileen Curley, Deborah Phillips, Joyce Frericks, Eric McRoy, Joe Mathes, Rick Wamre, Dan Buendo and Doug Fabian Executive Director: Douglas Fry Excused: Katie McNabb

Finances- Deborah Phillips The November financials were emailed prior to the call along with a draft of the 2018 budget. Deborah gave an overview of the current financial state of the organization. Dan made a motion to accept the financial report, Eric seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Publishers Summit - Danielle Burnett The 2018 Publishers Summit is nearly full and the topics and agenda are coming together.

2018 Conference Update - Eric McRoy Eric and Doug shared information about a potential speaker. Deborah made a motion to pay the speaker \$1500 plus travel and accommodations, Dan seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Deborah made a motion to adjourn, Doug seconded the motion, all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 am EST.

*Recording Secretary Danielle Burnett*

# SALES TRAINING SIMPLIFIED



**GO TO:**  
**IFPATrainingAcademy.com**  
**TO SIGN UP**

## **IFPA Training Academy**

*On-Demand Sales Training Geared to Print Publishing Professionals*

Train your entire sales staff for just \$149 – 12 months of unlimited on-demand professional sales training!

Print industry expert Ryan Dohrn leads IFPA's Training Academy with tactical sales training specifically for our industry. No fluff. Just results. Offer 24/7 training for your entire sales team – both beginners and sales pros – for one low price!

Sign up prior to January 31, 2018 and receive a FREE 30-minute personal phone call with Ryan Dohrn to strategize about your business needs

### **Topics included in this 6-hour training:**

- 10 Critical Sales Questions
- Writing Amazing Emails: Tips to Get Advertisers to Respond
- 6 Ways to Sell Web and Digital Like a Boss!
- Why Buy Now: 10 Reasons to Close the Sale TODAY!
- Time Management Mania: Boost productivity 35% in 1 Week!
- Habits of Super-Star Media Sales Executives

Sign up today for this exclusive IFPA offer!

\* IFPA member price. For non-IFPA member publications, price is \$399 with a \$250 rebate if you join IFPA within 45 days of signing up for the IFPA Training Academy.



# Postal Update: Ten Year Rate Recap

## PRC TEN YEAR RATE REVIEW

*What Does it Mean for Mailers?*

On December 1, 2017 Robert Taub, Chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) held a press conference to announce the long awaited decision of the PRC in its ten year rate review of the rate making system that has been in place under the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) since 2006. Although the Commission declined to eliminate the CPI price cap, and to give the Postal Service the unfettered pricing discretion it had been seeking in the review, it found that there were problems with the current system. In finding that changes needed to be made to restore the Postal Service to financial health and to deal with other problems or anomalies in the prior rate making process, the PRC announced the beginning of another regulatory proceeding, a rulemaking proceeding, that would give mailers and stakeholders a chance to propose their own “fixes” or solutions to the problems, and to comment on the proposal advanced by the PRC.

The Decision and rulemaking is in two parts. In a lengthy determination, the PRC examined the rate cap system as it has operated for the past ten years, compared it to prior cost-of-service rate making before PAEA, and proceed to analyze whether or not the current system was working under the objectives and factors set forth in the law.

In general, the PRC made the following findings:

- The CPI rate cap system has worked to achieve the objectives of stable and predictable rates,

with regard to timing and magnitude. But the rate making system had not increased pricing efficiency.

- That the Postal Service was in “poor health.” Although it had generally achieved short term financial stability, it was in poor financial health from the stand point of medium and long term financial stability. The PRC acknowledges that much of this is due to the Great Recession, the emergence of new technologies that hurt Postal Service volumes and revenues, and a unique period of deflation where the ability to raise rates under the CPI cap did not help the Postal Service.

- The current system jeopardizes the Postal Service’s financial health because it is not able to raise the rates of “under water” products that are not covering their attributable costs. For example, the periodical class has historically had attributable costs below the prices that the Postal Service has been able to charge under a rate cap system. Because the cap is applied to all periodicals as a class (and there are no profitable periodicals), the USPS has not been able to raise rates above the CPI for that class to cover costs.

- The Postal Service has not maintained high quality service standards.

Other findings of the PRC of significance included its determination that the plain language of PAEA gave the PRC “broad authority to engage in rulemaking in order to modify or replace the current rate making system. The scope of that authority is limited only by what is necessary to achieve the PAEA’s objectives.” The PRC rejected arguments that it did not have the authority to change the rate cap.

On the more positive side, the PRC largely found that the rate cap system was working to achieve needed mailer concerns of predictability, stability, and that the current system, with a regular, known, cycle or rate adjustments was more efficient and had eliminated many of the administrative burdens, and costs and had improved transparency, than the rate system that existed before PAEA under the costs-of-service rate setting model.

The PRC’s findings and determination runs 270 pages with a detailed examination of the history, and a discussion of each of the factors and objectives under the Act. In spite of finding that the rate cap system is widely supported by mailers and stakeholders and has helped the Postal Service and the industry have a system that all stakeholders seem to believe is considerably better than the prior cost-of-service method, the PRC also finds that the Postal Service’s balance sheet and losses, have grown under the system and “need to be fixed.” Although the PRC repeatedly acknowledges that most of these financial problems are largely due to the optimistic views of Congress in 2006 that volumes would continue to grow, the economy would be stable, and that the Postal Service would have the funds to pay a very aggressive schedule for prefunding Postal Service retiree health costs, the PRC is not willing to ignore those “big numbers” and “big losses.” Notably, the accumulated deficit of the USPS is approximately 59.1 billion and the RHBF requirement accounts for 54.8 billion of that number. Although all the Commissioners seem to lament that Congress has not acted to change the RHBP requirement, or to potentially forgive or reamortize these “losses,” the Commission insists it can’t ignore these numbers and must craft a proposal to improve the Postal Service’s medium and long term financial health.

*continued on page 20*

# EMPLOYEE BENEFIT

from



Your student can apply  
for one of four  
**SCHOLARSHIPS**



***Have your student apply today!***



## **Bob Wright Memorial Scholarship Requirements:**

- Parent, guardian or grandparent must work for a community paper that is a current member of the Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA).
- Applicant must be a high school graduating senior or current college student.
- Applicant must be attending a 4 year college, vocational trade school or community college.
- Application must be received by 3/23/18

**To download application: Visit [www.ifpa.com](http://www.ifpa.com)**

**Click on “Member Benefits” the “Bob Wright Memorial Scholarships”**

# Postal Update

In announcing a proposed rulemaking, the PRC makes it clear that its proposed rule is “a suggestion only.” The rulemaking proceeding launches a 90 day window of time for mailers and stakeholders to comment on the PRC rule or to make their own proposals. At the end of 90 days everyone will have a chance to reply to the submissions of other parties. At the end of the 120 days period, the PRC will then consider its own proposal, and industry and Postal Service comments, before issuing a final rule that would change and make modifications in the present system.

Here is what the PRC is suggesting in its proposed rule:

- Postal Service prices will still be tied to a price cap based on CPI, but the USPS will have the right to charge CPI plus 2 % for each of the next five years for all classes of mail.
- In addition to the 2 % “extra,” the Postal Service could charge an additional 1 % with .75 % tied to certain operational efficiencies, and .25 % tied to improvements in service quality.
- The Postal Service will be required to raise prices for underwater products (like periodicals and some standard flats.) For these products, the Postal Service will be “required” to raise prices an additional 2 % over the allowable price change until prices achieve full cost coverage.
- The USPS will have new restrictions on worksharing passthrough. The USPS should strive to have, as near as possible, 100 percent pass through of actual savings through worksharing. The following limits will be in place, however, subject to a three year grace period for noncompliant passthroughs: Periodicals- 75 - 125 %

of avoided costs; All other classes- 85 - 115 % of avoided costs.

The Commission Decision and Proposed Rule clearly finds that the PRC and industry must be “stuck” with the Postal Service’s bad balance sheet. The PRC declined to follow suggestions made by many commentators that it should not accept as a “given” the big debt on the Postal Service’s balance sheet caused by the unrealistic healthcare funding, or that it should also consider the Postal Service’s undervalued assets like real estate, in determining its financial health. The PRC refused to accept any of those arguments and seems to say “we have to accept the numbers at face value.” After doing this, the PRC decides it “must” give the USPS more flexibility to raise prices high enough to generate sufficient revenue to assure medium and long term financial stability.

At least some of the Commissioners in Supplemental Comments, and in the case of Tony Hammond, a dissent, expressed concern that the “fix” proposed by the PRC might be problematic, but needed to be done because Congress had failed to act on reform. Both Commissioners, Langley and Acton, note that the PRC’s proposed rulemaking was “one approach to regulating market dominant rates,” but invite other interested parties to propose alternate solutions.

Tony Hammond formally dissented with the majority stating “the proposed changes elevate the objective of financial stability above the others.” Hammond writes:

I have concluded that a significant portion of the Postal Service’s financial instability results from an overly aggressive retiree health benefits pre-funding schedule- which

warrants a legislative solution- and from the Postal Service’s decision in 2007 not to pursue the final cost of service rate increase authorized by the PAEA.”

Hammond states he would propose a onetime price increase that raises the Postal Service’s finances to the level needed to ensure stability absent those two factors, while leaving the price cap intact for future rate adjustments. Hammond warns that the changes proposed by the PRC could have a substantial negative impact on volumes.

Given the lengthy time the Commission took to issue this decision, and the conflicting views and uncertainty expressed in some of the individual opinions by three of the four Commissioners, it seems likely that the final order and decision of the Commission on the new rules and system may vary somewhat from what the Commission has proposed.

The initial industry reaction was grim, lamenting that this proposal, although preserving the “rate cap” in principle, would do little to improve USPS efficiency, and was certain to drive the USPS to raise prices to the full extent permitted over the five year period. Several mailers, and association leaders, expressed grave fears that the PRC proposal would do lasting, potentially irreversible damage, to the USPS and the mailing industry.

In the Postal Service’s response to the Decision, Postmaster General, Megan Brennan, stated “the Postal Service agrees with the conclusion of the Postal Regulatory Commission that the current CPI price cap does not work and needs to be changed.” She goes on to state “we are analyzing the Commission’s alternative price cap proposal to determine the extent to which it advances this goal. We continue to believe that any price cap is unnecessary and the rapidly

*continued on page 22*

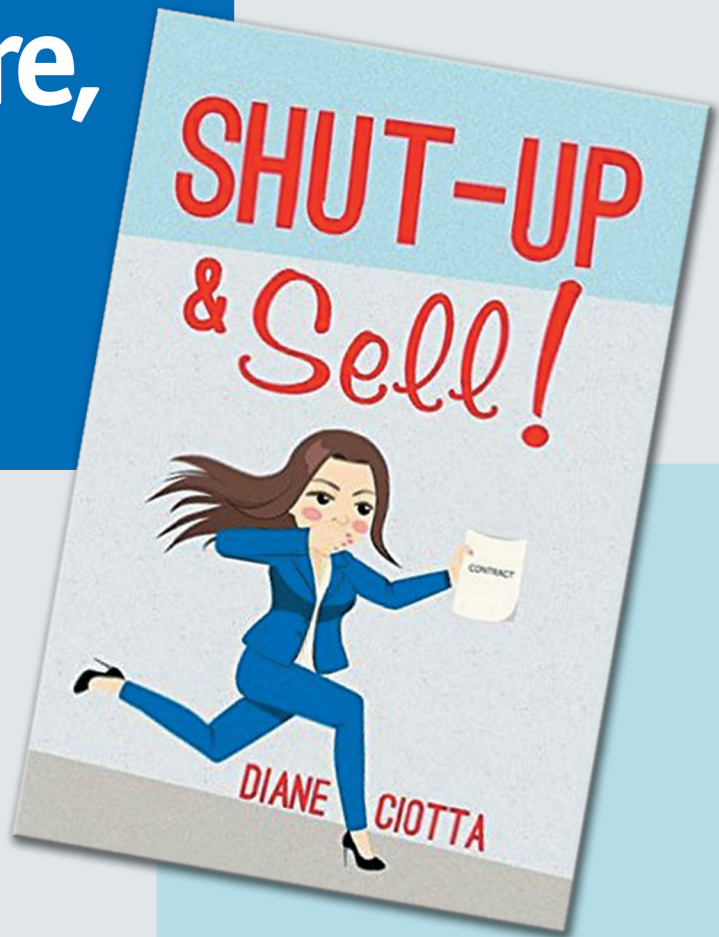
# Talk Less, Listen More, Increase Sales!

"An entertaining and easy read, this book is filled with valuable advice... the author provides entertaining examples of real-life situations that illustrate the power of simply listening to others."

*Amazon Review*



[www.dianeciotta.com](http://www.dianeciotta.com)  
[diane@trainingclassics.com](mailto:diane@trainingclassics.com)  
732-672-7942



Now Available At:

**BARNES & NOBLE**  
BOOKSELLERS

**amazon**

**Apple iTunes**

**INGRAM**

**Indigo**

**McNALLY ROBINSON**  
WWW.MCNALLYROBINSON.COM

**kobo**

**RUSSELL BOOKS**  
USED & NEW  
CARDS • CALENDARS • ANTIQUARIAN

**BAM!**  
BOOKS-A-MILLION

**Spring Arbor**

**cf**  
Christian Faith  
Publishing

# Postal Update

evolving market place.” As of the writing of this article, it is uncertain whether or not any industry parties, or the Postal Service, will appeal the PRC decision or what actions or strategies may be pursued in the Postal Service rule making. The only thing that is certain, is that there will be some widely diverging views and comments in the rule making in the year to come.

Although it is not clear when any new, final, rate making rule may take effect, it seems unlikely that any change in rates will occur before early 2019.

## **WILL THE “CURE” KILL THE PATIENT?**

The PRC found the Postal Service’s position is poor. Although most of the Commissioners and staff of the PRC seem to acknowledge that the “blame” for this problem lies largely with the unworkable retiree healthcare prefunding requirement, the PRC appears to think it is stuck with the cards it and the Postal Service has been dealt. But playing these cards for future rates changes is a dangerous game for mailers and the Postal Service.

You can’t fix a business that is suffering from lack of revenue by charging everyone more than the market will bear. In a good faith effort to “fix” the Postal Service’s poor finances, the PRC is recommending too much too long to help the Postal Service get back to mid-term and long-term financial stability.

Make no mistake about it, this is like a year over year exigency increase that will drive many businesses from continued use of the Postal Service and will exponentially drive the interest of current mailers to seek competitive alternatives for the profitable products the Postal Service wants to keep.

Even Congress, in trying to “make sausage” of competing interests in its discussions of postal reform, was not considering more than a CPI plus 1% mark up for a limited period of time, or a onetime adjustment in rates.

The bottom line of this decision is that it puts an effort to restore the Postal Service’s financial health before all other objectives considered by the PRC. Although the PRC finds

that the rate cap should be preserved, it effectively dismantles the cap for the next five years allowing year over year increases that may significantly outpace or even double the rate of inflation and will, sadly, result in the Postal Service still being saddled with high overhead, Congressional mandated pre-funding requirements that everyone agrees would not have been passed by a Congress with a better crystal ball in 2006, and fewer customers.

**Newspapers • Magazines • Shoppers  
Book Publishing • Directories • Digital Media**

**On-Demand Access to Tenured Professionals  
Meeting Multi-Media Business Challenges  
with Foresight & Precision**

## **APPRAISALS ACCOUNTING BROKERING**

**Proud to be the Expert Media Financial Valuation  
Resource for “FORBES 400 List of America’s  
Richest People” 2017, 2016 and 2015**

**Accounting, Tax, Debt Management, Entity  
Formation, Valuation & Financial Advisory Services**




**The Only Way To Reach a Goal is to Have One!**

**KAMEN & CO. GROUP SERVICES**

**Media Appraisers, Accountants, Advisors & Brokers**

(516) 379-2797 • 626 RXR Plaza, Uniondale, NY 11556  
info@kamengroup.com • www.KamenGroup.com



*We specialize in  
the art of printing!*

Customer Satisfaction  
and Competitive Pricing.

More than Just printers...  
We are Publishers Too!

Keeps Up with the  
Latest Technologies

Your One-Stop  
Print Resource.

Newspapers • Publications • Shoppers • Catalogs  
Magazine • Directories • Coupon Books

College Course Catalogs • Advertising Supplements  
Business and Financial Periodicals • Free Standing Inserts



**Trumbull**  
PRINTING

205 Spring Hill Road  
Trumbull, CT 06611

**203.261.2548**

[www.trumbullprinting.com](http://www.trumbullprinting.com)



104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401

Presorted Standard  
US Postage  
PAID  
Helmer Printing

INDEPENDENT FREE PAPERS OF AMERICA



F-2015  
**Digital Display Rack**

We're the name you've relied on and trusted for years, but we're not resting on a strong past. We're innovating and pushing for a successful future. One where the value of print, the demand for digital, and the need for advertising solutions are met with products, ideas and service you can count on. The Steel City name is defined by reliability. So know that our focus is on providing you with the best tools for today and tomorrow.

**SC STEEL CITY CORP**

[800] 321.0350 • [scity.com](http://scity.com) • [facebook.com/steelcitycorp](https://facebook.com/steelcitycorp)