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Newspaper Dominoes Fall

Industry trends spur publishers to give serious thought about the future of newspapers



Kevin Slimp
The News Guru

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So much to write about, so little space. It's been a whirlwind of a week for me, beginning in Knoxville, Tennessee, where I caught a flight for a "quick trip" to Winnipeg, before heading home for a couple of days, then heading to Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Lincoln, Nebraska.

On Saturday night, as I prepared to make my journey home from Winnipeg, my plans were waylaid by a blizzard which shut down the Minneapolis airport, transforming my two-day visit to Manitoba to five days. With my return flight rescheduled for Wednesday, there was no time to make it home to Tennessee, then back to Sioux Falls, where I was scheduled to meet a client on Thursday morning.

This column is about my trip. Not the weather, although understanding how my schedule was altered plays an important role in understanding what hap-

pened during those 10 days.

At some point in the recent past, I realized I had spoken at 60 of the 63 press associations in North America over the past 20 years. With so many trips to so many places, it's only natural I would become friends with some of the folks I meet along the way. Such was the case during this trip.

What stood out to me during my 10-day journey has been the number of incredibly deep conversations I've had with publishers and government officials in the U.S. and Canada about the importance of what we do at newspapers. They were not superficial conversations. As I visited the legislature of Manitoba (you have time for things like that when you can't leave a country), at the invitation of Greg Nesbitt, a former publisher and member of the legislature, I saw faces I recognized from the audience during their convention banquet on Saturday night.

Visiting with the leader of one of the political parties in Manitoba, we discussed the crucial importance of a free press, and even talked about some recent decisions made across Canada which



I visited with Greg Nesbitt (left), former publisher and member of the Manitoba legislature, and Nebraska publisher, Rob Dump (right), during my journey through Manitoba and the U.S. Midwest in April.



could have disastrous consequences to a free press. He ripped off a piece of paper and gave me his email address and phone number. We plan to keep in touch.

When I eventually made it to Sioux Falls, I was greeted with an overnight storm which measured close to a foot of snow. While most of the city was tucked in their warm homes, I took off to visit newspaper friends in the Sioux Falls area. Once again, our conversations turned serious, sharing concerns about a shortage of newsprint, the effects of venture capitalists on our industry and other matters.

Throughout these discussions, I noticed a common thread. Not a single person seemed panicked about everything happening in our industry. The newsprint shortage is surely temporary. I even connected some friends in the U.S. with paper plants in Canada while I was there. The venture capitalists will eventually fire their last employees, sell their remaining buildings, and get out of the way.

Scenes like we saw in Denver, Chicago, Knoxville, and San Diego over the previous week seemed to energize everyone in the newspaper business, even folks who work at those papers.

In Winnipeg, I met Darrell, who has been starting

papers in small towns in Winnipeg. I connected him with Joey, who has been doing the same thing in Kansas.

In Nebraska, I had a three-hour conversation with Rob Dump, one of my favorite community publishers, as we drove to Lincoln together for the Nebraska Press Association Convention. In Lincoln, the conversation continued as I met with Rob and his wife, Peggy Year, another of my favorite publishers, as we shared our concerns and dreams about our industry for more than three hours.

Here's what I learned during my 10-day trek to Manitoba, South Dakota, and Nebraska. In the 25 years I have been consulting with newspapers, I can't remember a time when there was so much interest in what is happening in our industry among publishers, and so many people who are determined to change course from the pessimism of the past few years to doing whatever it takes to steer our industry in a positive direction.

Like many of you, I believe there is no freedom without a free press. Like many of you, I've got my sights set on a future dedicated to protecting that freedom. Dominoes are falling. I, for one, can't wait to see where they land.



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I never expected more than 10,000 visitors to my new website in early April. Since stateofnewspapers.com premiered April 1, I've heard from national business leaders, publishers, government officials and others deeply interested in issues related to free press.



THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY CONNECTED

POSTAL PRODUCT PEOPLE AT AFCP

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The entire USPS Product Team with responsibility for the type of mail products used by free paper publishers attended, and connected, with publishers and product show vendors at the annual AFCP Conference in Baltimore. As guests of AFCP and MACPA, with Donna Hanbery, Executive Director of the Saturation Mailers Coalition (SMC) as tour guide, the team got a “deep dive” into all things free paper.

Steve Mills, the Product Manager with responsibility for Saturation mail, and the Director, Product Management Mail Services, Elke Reuning-Elliott, made it a commitment and a priority to attend most of the conference sessions Thursday and Friday. Tom Foti, the Executive Director of Product Management and head of the USPS Product department, participated for

much of the day on Thursday, making his stop at AFCP while on route to attend the Postal Forum in San Antonio.

Taking advantage of the trade show break-out sessions, Donna introduced the team to Tim Bingaman at CVC, and the industry education materials produced by Paper Chain, to give a tutorial and oversight on the reach and readership of the free paper industry. While introducing the team at the Thursday Awards Luncheon, Donna credited Foti for his work in the past to help free papers send their mail with an unaddressed option, and applauded the Postal Services’ recent lifting of the breakpoint from 3.3 ounces to 4 ounces as a step in the direction of serving the needs of free papers.

The breakout time was also a great opportunity to network and meet other

publishers, including members of SMC’s Steering Committee, and longtime users of the mail, Carol Toomy, Steve Harrison, and Dan Alexander. Everyone that spoke to the Postal team was impressed by their engagement, and sincere willingness to listen and learn about the industry. On Thursday, Steve and Elke attended two TLI courses. They saw Elaine Buckley demonstrate how to sell the value of mail, including mailed free papers, by its ability to target, saturate, and, in the case of free papers, provide a readership vehicle that connects consumers and advertisers.

The Friday morning SMC/Postal break-out session was well attended with many mail publishers, and publishers that are not currently mailing, coming with questions and in some cases, concerns about their mailings. *(Continued on page 5.)*

THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY CONNECTED

(Continued from page 4)

Elke and Steve were engaged, open and candid with the group. On many issues, Elke and Steve explained that some decisions and dilemmas were matters that needed to be handled on a local Postal level. Several publishers lamented the lack of promotions for 2018. Steve explained that the Postal Service had five promotions cued up and ready to go. But the current lack of an acting, independent, Postal Board of Governors prevented the Postal Service from getting the official approvals if needed to go forward with any special pricing programs. Even annual price adjustments, like an annual rate increase, could not be filed or handled at the present time. Steve explained that the Postal Service's most recent price adjustment had been authorized and planned by an emergency Board Committee that was formed when the last Postal Board Members' term ended over eighteen months ago!

Steve and Elke assured the group that the Postal Service appreciated the value of promotions to its customers, and the way that promotions allowed the USPS and mailers to explore integrated media and advertising solutions. Steve stated that the Postal Service already had promotions in line and under consideration for 2019.

One of the highlights of the SMC/Postal break-out session, and indeed the entire time that the Postal team spent at AFCP, were the many comments were made by publishers and vendors about the high level of engagement, and interest, that the Postal Product team was paying to

each mailer, vendor, and publisher they met. Business cards and contacts were freely exchanged. Steve was at work collecting copies of papers, and taking down questions and concerns for future follow-up actions.

One suggestion that received a positive response from the team and break-out session attendees was the idea of holding a periodic conference call, or occasional webinar, for the Postal Product group, or other postal representatives, to interact more with publishers that were currently mailing, or considering mailing. One sentiment that the team heard again and again was that many publishers would like to mail, or mail more, or go back to the mail, if the Postal Service could just find a way to reward its best customers, that are mailing a regular product, such as a weekly paper, or bimonthly or monthly magazine, with a "better than retail" rate that recognized frequency as a value to the Postal Service. If the Postal Service could design a product or rate category for mailers/publishers that committed to a stated schedule, and a reliable time or window for mail entry (something that helps the Postal Service plan its labor force), and a higher weight allowance, the USPS could attract and keep a lot more publications.

Even publishers with their own home delivery carriers or working with private carrier companies were impressed by the curiosity and courtesies of the Postal participants. Steve and Elke were seeking information on private carrier options, and the benefits that private



carrier delivery could provide to publishers. Conference Award winner Karen Sawicz gave a tutorial about how her home delivery network helped her achieve a guaranteed weekend delivery, and did not result in higher distribution costs, when she had as many as twelve inserts in a paper. But even Karen admitted that she would be interested in trying to mail if the USPS could find that sweet spot that rewarded weekly publications with a guaranteed delivery date window, and a reasonable fixed price, that did not vary greatly with weight.

Before leaving, I had nothing but positive comments and encouragement from Tom, Steve and Elke about the meeting and the opportunity to meet and engage with free papers in the future. The consensus from the Postal Product team was that AFCP stands for "The Association of Friendly, Charming People". After they left, I had nothing but positive feedback and follow-up from the publishers that had attended the SMC/USPS break-out session, and other AFCP members. It is my hope that this Postal/Publisher get together is the beginning of a beautiful friendship, and that the new Saturation Mail Manager becomes many of our members' "new best friend".

GET REAL

THE PRINTED PAPER IS STILL A PUBLISHERS BEST ASSET!



By Peter Wagner
Founder and Publisher,
The N'West Iowa REVIEW

What could you get for your newspaper or shopper if you decided to sell it in today's market?

Publishers could expect to retire comfortably on the proceeds from selling their family publishing company 10 years or more ago.

But that's all changed. I learned recently of a midwestern small-town weekly changing hands for just \$450. Many small hometown newspapers are reportedly being bought for the equivalent of two year's subscription revenue.

What caused such a drastic drop in value of web press publications? More importantly, can the trend be reversed?

My prediction is the printed paper will survive and continue to play an important part in the life of the community it serves for many years. But I'm not sure how the hard copies will be put in the hands of the reader, the future size of the newsprint page,

Don't Sell Your Paper Short

the depth of local coverage or who will be around to buy advertising.

I make my projection on a strong belief that the newsprint publications in a small to medium market will continue to be the strongest leaders in building community and creating consensus. Without a majority of the population's commitment to be a community - and a solid general consensus regarding what is right - a town can quickly disappear.

Newspapers are the cheerleaders, fact-checkers, economic developers and first writers of history in the towns and smaller cities they serve.

But who's responsible for the state of the sad shape of the American newspaper and shopper industry today? Fingers can be pointed in many directions: the cutbacks and changes in chain management, the reduced influence of many press associations, the mystical perception of digital messaging and the lack of commitment from too many family owned publishing companies. As our mothers once warned us, when we point a finger at someone else we also always point one back at ourselves.

THE NEWSPAPER CHAINS

Many chains, looking for faster and greater returns on their investments, are cutting acquired news and ad staffs by 50 percent or more. I was recently told of one expanding group that expects to eliminate all debt from the

purchase of any paper in two years or less.

Still, a wise man once told me "You can't save yourself into success!"



Other even better known national chains are eliminating on-site managers – even already stretched regional publishers – and replacing them with oversight from an office one or two states away.

It's always been my belief the heart of any publication is local leadership with a passion for both the publication and the market. (Continued on page 7.)



Don't Sell Your Paper Short

(Continued from page 6)

National television networks, consolidated radio groups and talking heads exploding on the internet hear about these big market print media changes and report that all publications are failing and ineffective. Even still viable papers thriving in the small communities are judged by the changing national trends.

PRESS ASSOCIATIONS

State and national press associations are also being curtailed by the problem. Many associations, squeezed by the loss of dues payments and annual donations from chain-owned metro papers more dependent on their own resources, are looking for ways to cut costs and find new revenue sources. That usually leads to more association webinars on "how to profit from digital media". New is good, but the association's smaller papers still get the majority of their revenue from their printed publications.

If the present and future belong to the electronic digital publication, why is everyone so concerned with the current newsprint tariff and the sudden shortage of newsprint? We don't need newsprint if we're all going prosper in a digital world.

If I read the Minneapolis Star Tribune's recently published income charts clearly, print advertising revenue and printed publication circulation revenues still make up

more than 60 percent of the company's income.

LOCAL PAPERS

But much of the blame has to be shouldered by the nation's remaining locally owned printed papers. Too many local leadership teams have listened to the cries of Chicken Little that, "The sky is falling."

Rather than expanding their coverage in areas younger readers are interested in - food, local entertainment, grade school and adult sports, local music, theatre and the arts and affordable travel to name a few - they've cut back on staff and resorted to printing less pages or fewer days a week.

Rather than producing additional worthwhile local material, they've become dependent on news releases and in some cases setting stories in larger type to fill more space.

Rather than increasing their photo count and improving their page and ad design, they continue to do things the same old way. The world is changing quickly, and printed papers have to change, too, to survive and prosper.

With competition from countless cable channels, dozens of places to eat and drink the night away and entertainment that beckons 24/7, how can a news and entertainment media

survive by doing less?

What is your newspaper worth? A lot more than you might think if you give it some attention. But you need to tell your important story of how you serve and grow the community to your readers and advertisers regularly. Most important of all, it's time to stop asking if the client has an ad and start selling promotions and packages.

The true value of any newspaper is determined by the current financial success and overall condition of the publishing plant. If you apply your efforts to succeed in your day-to-day business right now, you'll greatly benefit when you choose to sell the paper in the future.

Peter W. Wagner is founder and publisher of the award winning N'West Iowa REVIEW and 13 additional publications. You can receive his free monthly GET REAL newsletter, written exclusively for State Press Associations, by contacting your association manager. To get his free PAPER POWER email newsletter for publishers, editors and sales managers email him at pww@iowainformation.com. The two monthly email newsletters contain information completely different than the monthly Publisher's Auxiliary column and are available without charge or obligation. Wagner can be contacted by emailing pww@iowainformation.com or calling his cell at 712-348-3550.



By Bob Berting
Berting Communications

Simple Ways to Promote Your Publication

A brand is what a customer perceives of a publication. In its most simplistic form, branding is “emotional connections between a newspaper and the market it serves.” Let’s examine ways to promote your publication brand in the marketplace:

Service clubs

Join a Kiwanis, Rotary, Optimist, or Lions Club. The relationships you can build in these organizations is very important. This exposure is a true top of mind awareness experience and can be invaluable to you and your publication. Also go speak to service clubs about your publication. They are looking for speakers and you can’t ask for a better captive audience .

United Way and other charity organizations

Your publication needs to be perceived as a helpful publication that is willing to run United Way articles and ads at no charge. Charity connections are important and

even participating in public TV auctions and fundraising is a high profile activity in your marketplace.

Open House Event

A weekly newspaper decided to have an open house event for their inactives, regulars, and prospects. They decided on a provocative theme “Once a week does it.” Plastic buttons with the theme copy were made and worn by all members of the publication weeks before the open house. The open house happening had the following arrangements:

All personnel wore their button---the setting was a popular hotel with a pool, where the festivities took place---there was live music by a popular trio, champagne punch fountain, and hot hors d’oeuvres.

Invitations went to 200 people and 125 attended. The paper had a colorful display booth and their key personnel were present to give information and answer questions. Most of the expense was traded off. It was wildly successful.

Promotional pointers A progressive newspaper needs a memorable memory hook, a slogan that stirs the imagination and can be put on all mastheads, sales materials, sides of delivery trucks, etc. Advertising specialties are great reminders and the greatest items are ones that can be used in the kitchen of your customer’s homes. They include yardsticks, jar openers, sponges, and magnetic signs that go on refrigerators. Your logo should be on refrigerators in your market area.

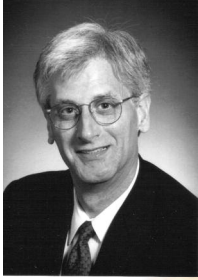
Internet marketing

The big issue is promoting your publication website. You must be patient with expectations. The flow of communication goes from making a prospect a friend, then a customer, and finally a loyal customer who will come back again and again to your website. This process is enhanced by a system of indoctrination, teaching the viewer about your publication, in effect telling the story of your publication.

Final Thought. Create an integrated promotion plan that ties together all the various strategies, marketing vehicles, and objectives into a long range program. Branding pre-sells the product and as such, is a more efficient way to sell things. And finally, remember that branding can mean emotional connections to the marketplace.



Bob has a Tele-Seminar program “Getting New Business and Keeping It.” for print media associations. The 5 consecutive week course covers 5 one hour hot topics: 3 Call Selling /Closing System—Understanding Media Competition—Creating Eye Catching Ads—Working With Hard To Please Customers--Selling Merchant Groups and Ad Agencies. Every association member purchasing the course receives a free Bob Berting e-book for the newspaper industry “Advanced Selling Skills For The Advertising Sales Pro”. State, Regional, or National Association leadership can contact Bob for more information at bob@bobberting.com, Website: www.bobberting.com. Berting Communications is located at 6330 Woburn Drive, Indianapolis In 46250.”



By John Foust
Raleigh, NC



One Way to Avoid the Accidental Sales Jibe

Selling and sailing have a lot in common. Consider the jibe.

A sailboat cannot sail directly into the wind, but it can sail at angles to the wind. The closest point of sail is approximately 45 degrees to the left or right of the wind direction. Turning the bow (the front) of the boat to change direction from one side of the wind to the other is called a tack. That's a common maneuver which is fairly easy to execute.

Things are more complicated when sailing downwind. With the wind directly behind the boat, the mainsail is positioned far to the left or right – sometimes extended to a perpendicular angle. The wind is pushing the boat, the sail is full, and there is a lot of power at play.

A jibe happens when the boat is heading downwind and the wind changes from one side to the other. When the skipper executes a jibe, the wind crosses the stern (the back) and the sail moves to the other side of the boat. That's a long way for a heavy sail to travel. If it doesn't happen gradually, the sail can swing violently and cause a lot of damage. If there is a sudden wind shift – or if the skipper isn't in complete control – the result can be an accidental jibe. In heavy

wind, an accidental jibe can cause serious injuries or break the mast.

“Wind at your back” is a general phrase that means things are going well. It's true that, when sailing downwind, a boat can move smoothly through the water. But experienced skippers know it's important to be careful with turns.

There are times when a sales person sails downwind. The sales conversation is positive and the prospect is showing genuine interest. Then all of a sudden, something puts the entire presentation at risk. At those times, the veteran sales person knows to be on guard for an uncontrolled jibe.

Of all the risky points in a presentation, it's hard to find one riskier than the temptation to criticize the competition. The prospect might say, “I'm also considering radio advertising,” or “Our marketing department is pushing for a different media mix.” If the sales person jumps in with critical comments, he or she can quickly lose control. Responding with criticism is like saying, “You're wrong. I can't believe you would even consider such a lousy advertising choice.” That's a jibe that can do a lot of damage.

One way to deal with this is to make a comparison. Instead of making a negative remark, say something like, “Let's compare our paper to the radio stations in the market. Here's a chart showing each station's audience figures and our readership.”

Just about every sales presentation has opportunities to criticize the competition. That's why it's a good idea to prepare comparisons in advance. We all know that criticism can kill sales and damage client relationships. Relevant comparisons can help advertising prospects make informed decisions.

It all leads to smooth sailing.

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CREDIT LINE

John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com



Michael Angelo Caruso

5 Cool Ideas for Repeat Sales

It almost always costs less to generate a repeat sale than it does to find a new customer. Repeat sales are also wise investment because they increase the likelihood of quality referrals. Here are 5 Cool Ideas for repeat sales.

1. A communication system guarantees the customer's attention.

Stay in the forefront of the customer's mind by establishing a communication system. The system should be consistent, easy to administer and palatable for your customer. Use customer relationship marketing or CRM to keep you on schedule and capture details that will serve the relationship. Whatever system you use, keep track of your customers' hobbies and the names of family members. A database is only as good as the data. Update your software often and back it up.

2. Each subsequent sale should add depth and dimension to the relationship.

Human nature teaches salespeople to

develop a sales routine and stick with it, yet a new approach may be just the ticket for a repeat sale. The first sales might occur because of a telephone call or a series of written messages. The second sale may happen due to customer satisfaction after the first sale. The third sale might occur because you and the prospect discover that you have mutual friends.



3. Always have something new to sell.

When my brothers and I toured the country in a rock band, we learned that music acts seldom go on tour without a new product. A new collection of recorded material, for example, generates a press release for

newspapers and the music trade. The media announces then announces the tour, which is made newsworthy by the release of the new product. Always have an exciting answer to the customer query of "What's new?" Even new information is a new offering.

4. Every customer has a pulse.

How often do they purchase? The sales cycle presses up against the customer's buying cycle and voila! Clever computer companies have passively encouraged customers to buy the latest and greatest by discontinuing service and regulating the availability of replacement parts.

5. Different modes of communication help you sell in different ways.

Use all modes of communication, including personal visits, e-mail, phone calls, outgoing voice-mail messages, your recorded voice mail message, faxes and thank you cards. Write your message on balloons, newspaper articles, postcards and restaurant matchbooks. I once wrote this promotional message on an airline airsickness bag: "You'll be sick if you don't take advantage of this opportunity." *Sincerely, Michael*

Michael Angelo Caruso is one of America's premier keynote speakers. He is known as "the speakers' speaker."

Mr. Caruso teaches presentation skills and is in demand for conventions, conferences, and annual events of all kinds. Michael specializes in working with leaders, salespeople, and the customer service industry. Mr. Caruso has spoken in South America, Africa, Australia, Asia, the Middle East, and 49 of the 50 states. He spends lots of time working and playing in California, Texas, Florida, and New York. Learn more at www.MichaelAngeloCaruso.com

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By Ryan Dohrn
President/Founder,
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Turning “I have no budget” Into A Closed Deal!

“I have no budget,” or, “My budget is allocated for the year,” are the most common objections I hear as a media sales professional. Unlike the vast majority of ad sales coaches out there, I actually sell media every day. What I share is what I do! If you don’t hear this objection at least three times every day, you are either not in media sales or you are not contacting enough clients. Those of us who sell advertising every day get so used to this phrase it is almost laughable. You see the advertiser running ads elsewhere, and yet they claim to be broke.

So, how do we turn this standard objection into a meeting, and then into a closed deal? The answer lies in your ability to quickly reply and change the direction of the conversation. Below are the most common strategies I use when speaking to an advertiser claiming to be, “broke.” Notice I do not end any of these strategies with a, “yes or no,” question. Instead I use a, “dead ending,” on my statement to create an awkward silence. I have written these strategies so they

read like a script from a play. Please also note that they were written with a magazine sale in mind. Radio and TV reps, please translate for your sales calls. I sell radio too.

No Budget Ad Sales Training Strategy Idea #1:

This strategy is used when the advertiser you are calling on has a competitor that is already advertising with you.

Advertiser: “I have no budget.”

You: “I truly feel that your absence from our publication creates a HUGE opportunity for your competition. Are you familiar with Competitor X?”

Advertiser: “Yes.”

You: “Not advertising with us is allowing Competitor X to have 100% share of voice in our magazine. Competitor X has a dominant presence in our media. I have an affordable and unique way to give Competitor X a run for their money.”

Salespeople often ask if this approach is, “ethical.” The answer is yes! It is 100% ethical as long as you never mention the future spending plans or ideas of Competitor X. What Competitor X has done in the past is public record. It is important to note the dead ending to the sentence again. This creates beautiful, awkward silence. Do not end with a statement that allows the advertiser to answer with a yes or a no. Honor the

silence and let them speak next.

No Budget Ad Sales Training Strategy Idea #2:

Advertiser: “My budget is allocated for the year.”

You: “Just to be clear, when you say your budget, you mean your marketing budget?”

Advertiser: “Yes.”

You: “I’m thrilled to hear that you believe in advertising! What if the ideas I am willing to share with you could offer you a potentially greater return on your investment than what you are doing now, or save you money?”

Advertiser: “I’m under contract.”

You: “I understand. I would like to share my ideas with you, and if you find value in them, we can explore that contract issue together.”

It is important to note the dead ending to the sentence again. This creates beautiful, awkward silence. In addition, in today’s competitive media environment, it is uncommon for media companies to hold an unhappy advertiser to their contract. That said, do not get into legal issues with an advertiser about their existing contracts. Instead, encourage the advertiser to ask the other media company about downsizing their commitment, allowing them to have money for you too. *(Continued on page 12.)*

Turning “I have no budget” Into A Closed Deal!

(Continued from page 11)

No Budget Ad Sales Training Strategy Idea #3:

This strategy is most often used when you see a potential advertiser running with another media company.

Advertiser: “My budget is allocated for the year.”

You: “I see you are advertising with media company X. How is that working for you?”

Advertiser: “Great!”

You: “I’m thrilled to hear that you believe in advertising and that you are having great results. We have a very similar, and in some ways better, audience than media company X, and we can deliver your message at a much lower CPM and with a higher frequency. (Or whatever you can do better than media company X).

You clearly need to know what it is that is better about your audience, or what your media company does better than the competition. You cannot be prepared for battle if you do not first know your enemy - right? Again, it is important to note the dead ending to the last sentence. You do not want to end by allowing the advertiser the option of giving you a yes or no reply. Creating silence often allows the advertiser to lead the conversation forward. This takes some practice. Yes, role play it out people!

No Budget Ad Sales Training Strategy Idea #4:

Advertiser: “I have no budget.”

You: “I have three companies just like you advertising with us, and they are

seeing some great results.”

Advertiser: “I truly have no budget.”

You: “Is marketing a part of company strategy at all?”

Advertiser: “Yes, but the boss wants me to find things to do that are free.”

You: “Wow, that makes your job really tough! I would love to share some ideas with you and marry them to some type of return-on-investment worksheet. Of course, I cannot promise you results, but based on the other companies like yours that are thrilled with us, I think I can help you create an affordable marketing plan that your boss will approve.”

Again, it is important to note the dead ending to the sentence. Why have I mentioned this so often? The reason is that most salespeople do not use awkward silences to their advantage. It is a, “trained,” action, not a natural way to end a sentence. You want to avoid ending statements with phrases like ... Do you understand? Do you feel me? Right? Does that make sense? What do you think?

Media sales friends, this is the most common objection I hear every day! I sell media just like you. Those that are prepared are those that excel in advertising sales.

The recipe to being prepared is one part bravery, and two parts practice. I have said it a thousand times ... professional salespeople practice - amateurs wing it. Get out there and give these strategies a try. Remember, if selling ads was easy, everyone would be doing it.

-Ryan

Keep up to date with Ryan’s ad sales training advice on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/brainswell/>
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Because of the nature of our business, we do not always have control over the content of the ads we create. Each graphic artist also has their own skill set, so let's take a look at some...

Variations

Ad Talk

with Ellen Hanrahan

I told you last month that I had purchased **Adobe Creative Cloud** and that I was transitioning between the two programs. Well, that didn't work so well... I kept getting confused! On a good day, I can "forget" what I am doing, so I decided to just jump in and start working with the "cloud" version. For the most part it's been good, but there are sooooo many additional features that, at times, I do get a little off track. At least I am learning while doing, however, I should probably take advantage of the tutorials and information on "What's New" that Adobe has provided— but not right now, I have work to do!

CHANGE IS NOT ALWAYS THAT EASY

Once upon a time, I was one of the judges that helped evaluate the advertising submitted to the **Wisconsin Community Papers** annual competition. I had written about this in other publications throughout the years and the comments that I could use were pretty much the same year-after-year

It really is hard to change your way of doing things without the proper feedback, so until we can come up with a way to address some of the basic design fundamentals and inform the participants, it looks as if the same issues will continue to crop up... I hope I can help with my comments in these articles.

I know how it goes. It is very difficult to "teach yourself..." I'm doing that now! There are no software "upgrade schools." Web sites with videos and training are available, but c'mon, how often do you use them?

It's really nice to get instant feedback when I try something new. And I know there isn't a lot of time at work to actually find out what's new in each new upgrade. So work with me as I "explore" the **Adobe Cloud**.

WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?

This month, let's take a look at the evolution of a 2x2. The top one is the only one that is different and that is a more seasonal approach to selling the service (it is also the "oldest" of the ads). The original graphic designer used artwork to "decorate" the ad— as I've stated, artwork needs to be integrated and contribute to the message. Otherwise for the other three, there are slight variations in the type size, spacing and positioning of the content.

I was never fond of the rope border, but I didn't want to make a drastic change, so when I updated the ad, I softened the contrast a bit. I usually try to stay away from gradients, because on newsprint, the gradient tends to bleed (that's dot gain) a little too much. Third ad from top has addition of color.

The bugs were also a little too cute and I was looking to make this a bit more of a serious problem. I used a font from the **P22 Type Foundry** called "Insectile" that gave me a variety of slightly more real bugs (additional segments for that creepy bug on the bottom can be used).

The bottom two ads never ran, but I am showing you the evolution and thought process in working with this small space ad.

In the top three ads there are lots of little graphics... but what if we did just one large attention-getting graphic. And what if I highlighted "a problem" by making it stand out in a different way then by making the text just bolder. I changed the typeface for the bugs so that "a problem" was more pronounced.

By putting the large ant on a green rectangle emphasizing "a problem," I was able to visually tie the thought of a bug/problem together in a more succinct manner. Besides, I really like the way that the ant legs help point to the problem critters and also point to the name of the company that can help save you from them.

It is easy in our business to just make changes from the previous rendition without actually thinking about the message. One large graphic can also provide more emphasis than a lot of little bitty art. This ad would be just as effective in black and white. So a different perspective is sometimes all you need to improve the effectiveness of the message. There is no one right way to present the information, but there are always better ways of using that same space.

The top two ads actually ran in our paper at various times. The bottom two ads are more of an exploration of what could be done using pretty much the same content and would work well without the color.

The top ad also has too many changes in font sizes and types which adds to a more cluttered and less unified look and feel to the content.



**Wasps · Bees · Hornets
a problem?**

TAZMAN Pest Control
Bill Johansson, CERTIFIED APPLICATOR
General Pest Control—Specialty: Bees, Wasps, Hornets
262-555-5555



**Ants · Beetles · Centipedes · Mice
Spiders · Silverfish · Cockroaches, etc.
a problem?**

TAZMAN Pest Control
Dale Christianson • CERTIFIED APPLICATOR
General Pest Control—Specialty: Bees, Wasps, Hornets
262-555-5555



**Ants · Beetles · Centipedes · Mice
Spiders · Silverfish · Cockroaches, etc.
a problem?**

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...Until next month!

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