



tip

The Independent Publisher

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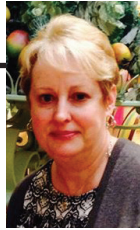
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Lebanon, PA 17042
(717) 273-8127
janem@themerchandise.com
term expires Sept. 2018

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. 2018

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

JOE NICASTRO
Director



New View Media Group
5 Vistra Drive
Flanders, NJ 07836
973/252-9889
Fax 240/332-7489
joe@mjmediallc.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

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

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

— Victor R. Jose
IFPA Founding Conference
September 20, 1980

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"Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes."

Oscar Wilde



AFCP Publisher of the Year: Glenn Fetzner

Dan Buendo, IFPA Board Member and past president, presented the AFCP Publisher of the Year Award to fellow member at the recent AFCP conference in Baltimore.

One of the highest honors AFCP can bestow on a participating member is the Publisher of the Year Award. It is presented as recognition for representing the industry and the association at the highest level through their efforts and company operations. It is my honor as recipient of last year's award, to be able to present the award this year.

This year's award winner has served over 25 years in the free community paper industry as a second generation participant. He has built his publications from the ground up through hard work, commitment to his products and investment in his staff.

Let's look at the products first. Through the years the product has evolved and grown into one of the leading publications in the highly competitive Florida market. The current publications are award winning, 4 color gloss magazines that range in size up to 140 pages and are direct mailed to over 200,000 homes in Florida's Treasure Coast. The publications posted a 25% revenue growth for the 4th quart of 2017 and are poised for a 20% increase in 2018. Pretty Impressive!

Now let's look at how this year's winner treats his team to be able to build those kind of gains. His commitment to training and staff

development is second to none – averaging over 10 conference participants in each of the last 5 conferences, the highest number of TLI participants of any member company in AFCP and a strong believer in on-site professional development for his staff.

In addition to his commitment to development of his staff, here is a comment from one of his team members –

“In September of 2017 South Florida was just one of the area's hit by hurricane Irma devastating the Florida Keys. As the daily warnings became statewide, our publisher made it his personal mission to release every

employee 5 days well ahead of the storm, ensuring that each and every staff member had time to prepare well in advance, from either boarding up our homes to coordinating a safe place with or without family, including the time needed to leave the state as many did. We were very Blessed as we were spared the worst of the storm. Our publisher and management team contacted each and every staff member to check on each person's safety and well-being. This is just one of many testaments of kindness, respect and leadership our publisher demonstrates not only his staff, but to his community.”

We applaud this year's Publisher of the Year on his commitment to his product, to his staff and to his community. Please join me in congratulating the 2018 AFCP Publisher of the Year from Ocean Media Solutions – GLEN FETZNER!



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Support Legislation To Halt Newsprint Tariffs



Editorial from the Peoria Journal Star

Tariffs should be done in a smart, thoughtful manner with the goal of helping the largest number of companies possible.

That's not what has happened since temporary tariffs were placed earlier this year on newsprint from Canada. One small company in Washington state has reaped benefits while wounding every newspaper in the United States — including this one.

The tariffs started in January after North Pacific Paper Company, owned by a New York-based hedge fund, whined to the feds that Canadian newsprint companies had unfair advantages over those in the United States and it was hurting its business. It's far from true: The International Trade Commission found that only 4.6 percent of Canadian newsprint enters the Pacific Northwest where NORPAC is located.

Yet the Commerce Department responded to NORPAC's complaint by slapping tariffs on newsprint coming from Canada. It increased the cost again by 22 percent in March after it concluded that one Canadian-based company was underselling newsprint by that much less. Decisions about whether the tariffs will become permanent are expected in August and September.

NORPAC has been able to hire a few dozen people since the tariffs were put in place while newspapers

have had to make tough decisions as to how to offset the increased cost of newsprint. The tariffs have so far added 30 percent to the cost of newsprint for GateHouse Illinois, which publishes the Peoria Journal Star, Springfield's State Journal-Register, Lincoln Courier, Rockford Register Star and 30 other dailies and weeklies throughout the state.

Like any company facing unexpected expenses we've had to make tough decisions, like reducing the number of pages in our print editions or eliminating certain features. It's likely we will have to make more of those types of decisions if these tariffs remain. We must either raise more revenue or make other adjustments. Neither is a prospect that benefits readers or furthers the mission of informing our community.

It's encouraging that a bipartisan group of 10 U.S. senators have introduced the Protecting Rational Incentives in Newsprint Trade Act. The PRINT Act would suspend the tariffs imposed in recent months while requiring the Commerce Department to review the economic health of the printing and publishing industries. We hope that in advocating for this measure they also educate the public about why so many newspapers look north for their newsprint.

Newsprint producers in the U.S. have been hurting financially for decades — not because of unfair

prices from Canada but because there has been a 75 percent decline in the demand for newsprint since 2000 as news has migrated to digital platforms. Some U.S. companies stopped making newsprint while others switched production to more profitable items, like the cardboard needed to ship the millions of products people order online. Canada is the largest exporter of newsprint in the world. Even if the five paper mills in the U.S. that produce newsprint operated at full capacity, it still would only be able to provide 60 percent of the demand for it in America.

No newspaper is perfect. Yet we remain steadfastly committed to our top priority: Providing the balanced reporting on local issues that our readers need to make informed decisions.

So we ask this tough question: Why should a tariff remain in place to benefit one small paper mill at the expense of so many other businesses across county? NORPAC employs a few hundred people. The printers, publishers, paper suppliers and distributors that represent mainly small businesses throughout America employ more than 600,000.

Our readers need us to stay informed. We ask them — you — to ask Illinois' senators, Democrats Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, to sign on as sponsors and advocates for this measure too.

CALL TO ACTION: TELL CONGRESS TO HELP STOP TARIFFS ON NEWSPRINT

One newsprint manufacturer, named NORPAC, has filed petitions asking the government to assess tariffs on Canadian imports of uncoated groundwood, which includes newsprint used by newspapers, book publishers, and printers who serve a wide range of businesses and citizens in local communities. It has been opposed by others in the paper industry because they know tariffs will harm their customers and the demand for paper will decrease.

The Department of Commerce has assessed preliminary newsprint tariffs, which range as high as 32 percent. These tariffs are already being collected at the U.S./Canadian border, and printers and publishers are already feeling the pinch with higher prices and disruptions in supply. Local newspapers, printers, and book and directory publishers cannot absorb these costs. This will lead to less jobs and less news and information distributed in local communities. Ironically, it will also mean less demand for newsprint - and fewer customers for the US newsprint producers who the

government is trying to protect. Essentially nobody wins.

Get involved today and contact Congress to reject these tariffs to protect US jobs!

Please feel free to use the message below. We have formatted a letter you can send to a member of Congress. This is essential with pushing forward this campaign and demanding action to be taken. You can alter the message if you would like. Either way, please express your opinion to end these tariffs and its negative impact to our jobs, economy, and of course, the newsprint industries!

END TARIFFS ON NEWSPRINT TODAY!

I urge you to get involved with an important issue that has dramatically impacted not only our community, but our nation's entire economy. The Department of Commerce recently announced countervailing and anti-dumping duties on Canadian imports of newsprint that ranges as high 32 percent. These duties cannot be absorbed by newspapers and printers, and most likely, will lead

to higher prices for readers and businesses, incurring a loss of jobs in the printing and publishing industry at the local level.

This issue started when one newsprint mill in the State of Washington, who is owned by a New York hedge fund, filed petitions for tariffs. The rest of the paper industry opposes the petitions because they know that these tariffs will cause damage to newspapers and printers, and will ultimately reduce the demand for newsprint.

I understand that the trade case is at a critical phase at the International Trade Commission, and that Members of Congress can express their concerns by submitting comments to the ITC on the impact of these tariffs on constituents. I respectfully request that you let the ITC know that this newsprint trade case will cause unintended consequences that will harm our economy and local community, and should be rejected.

Thank you for your consideration of my views.

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Karen Sawicz: AFCP Volunteer Award

This organization has been able to accomplish some amazing things over the years. The key ingredient to almost every one of those accomplishments has been the volunteers who have given freely of their time, their talents and their energy to the betterment of others. The Association of Free Community Papers is pleased to announce the fourth recipient of the...The Gladys Van Drie Volunteer Award.

We are fortunate to have Gladys here again for today's presentation and would like to invite her to come up to assist in the presentation of this year's award.

Without volunteers, our association as well as all the associations that our industry has been built around would be in a much different place – one that would not be able to provide for its members as we do today. The Gladys Van Drie Award looks to recognize the contributions of a volunteer who has given significantly to the betterment of each of our businesses over the years, always without thought to personal gain.

This year's recipient has embodied

that description repeatedly over the years and has contributed greatly to the long term success and accomplishments of AFCP for more than 20 years.

They started their journey into the publishing industry as a young person helping out with the family publishing business. Eventually taking over the reigns of the now 71 year old publication, she has diversified the company with digital and specialty advertising in addition to the solid 20,000 circulation print publication.

Her involvement on the AFCP Board began as a representative for FCPNY when Loren Colburn transitioned to the Executive Committee in the late 90's. She has performed in all the key conference committee chairs, including Conference Chair for the 2009 Myrtle Beach Conference. She has actively participated in a broad range of AFCP committees and has chaired the INK Committee for a number of years.

In 2010 she once again had Loren Colburn's back as she jumped into the Secretary/Treasurer's role when he transitioned to Executive Director.



It exemplifies her "whatever you need me to do" attitude when it comes to helping AFCP, FCPNY or any publisher who is in need of some help.

This year's award winner has established themselves as a trusted, respected and ever present volunteer for the association as well as the free publication industry and has repeatedly demonstrate the devotion and efforts worthy of the Gladys Van Drie Volunteer Award...

Please join me in congratulating this year's recipient – Karen Sawicz!



Like Us On Facebook!

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INDEPENDENT FREE PAPERS OF AMERICA

Learn about conferences,
webinars, and industry news.



They Came, They Saw, They Connected

THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY CONNECTED POSTAL PRODUCT PEOPLE AT AFCP

*By Donna Hanbery Executive Director,
SMC*

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.

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

Continues on page 10

Postal Connections

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.”

Wire Displays

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Plastic Displays

Steel Distribution Boxes



Gary's Gallery

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



5 Tech Tools to Grow Your Publishing Business

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



SiteSwan

What is it?

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

How can it help you grow?

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

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

Ideal Directories

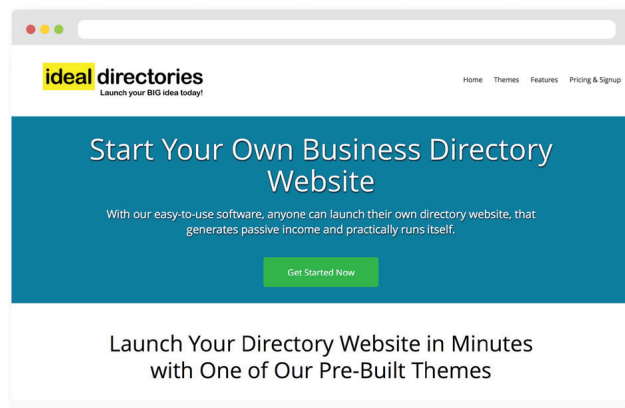
What is it?

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

How can it help you grow?

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

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





PageFlip Pro

What is it?

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

How can it help you grow?

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

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

www.pageflippro.com

Exchange Classified Ads Platform

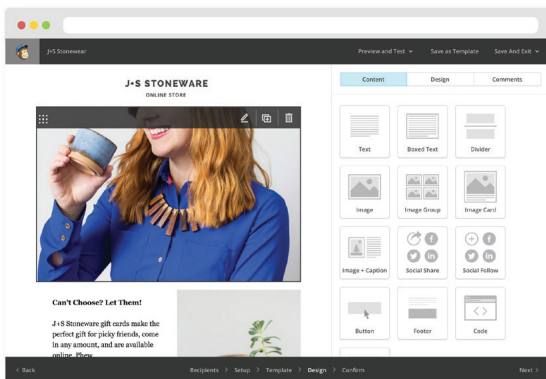
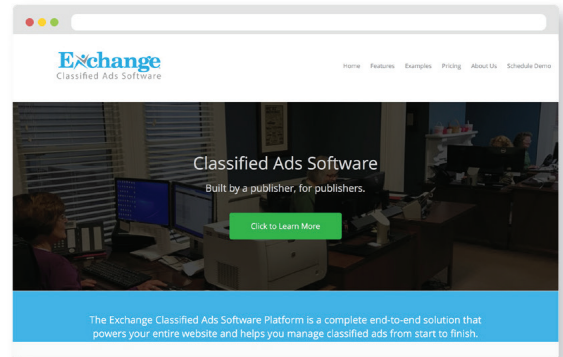
What is it?

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

How can it help you grow?

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

How much does it cost: Plans starting at \$685/mo
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

Graphic Hooks

OK, no longer working in InDesign CS6... and not totally by choice! I got too confused by switching between programs, so had to decide to go all in or go crazy. I chose to go all in—seemed the sensible move and I didn't need any more confusing moments in my life! While most of the *InDesign* program has stayed the same, there are so many more options and effects available. Good news, my *InDesign CC* files can be saved in an InDesign Markup Language (*IDML*) which can be opened in *Adobe CS4* or later, so there is a bit of a safety net!

Last month I finished my article in *Adobe CC* because I couldn't access the Color Themes (ex-Kuler panel). So it was a start...

Break Up the Space!

The three 2x2 ads in this top section ran in our papers. They have been altered slightly—size is 103% (all of the ads on this page) and numbers changed. Even a small ad space can benefit from making the most of that space. Each ad is distinctive and can hold their own on a page. Yet, none of these ads is the “typical” horizontal format (see bottom section for example). Artwork or an interesting approach to a headline is found in all three. Space is unified, type is used effectively without adding any extra “clutter.”

No matter how small an area, there are ways to create attention while keeping the message clear.

Depending on text, each of the following ads has another layer (darker background) to highlight the important text. See the bottom section for an explanation of how it can be done.



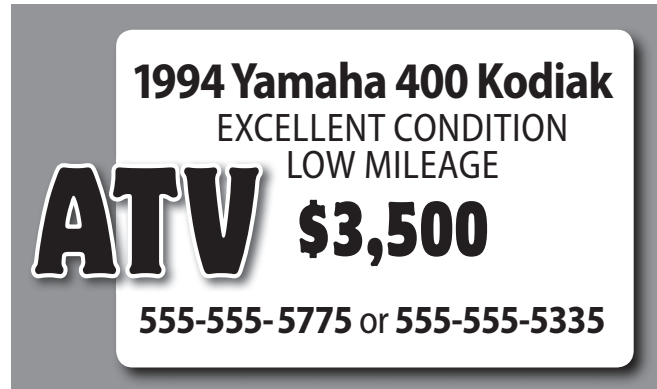
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Easter Services

Maundy Thursday Service of the Cross in Fellowship Hall with Holy Communion 7:00pm

Easter Sunday Breakfast 9am · Family Worship with Holy Communion 10:15am

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REVEREND EDWARD FREESE
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Easter Services

Sunday Worship 10:30am
Sunday School during Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ
Pastor Tom Launius
228 West State Street · Hartford · 555-555-5215

No Ad too Small...

The ad above is typical of what I call a “horizontal” format—start at the top, text is centered and bold type to call attention to important information. Compare that to the ad in the next column. But wait, you say, the information is not exactly the same! Agreed, but next month I will redo the above ad to more closely resemble the revamped ad using the same information.

One of the biggest problems with the above ad is the use of bold and regular typefaces, size changes and even the choice of the font is a problem because of the thick and thin serifs. Choosing typefaces for smaller ads can make a big difference in the readability—as well as legibility—of the infor-

mation presented. A good habit to get into is to go through your publication and see how the ads look on the pages. Do they stand out or do they fade into the background? Is it effective? Organized?

The ad above does not have the same information as the original, but we can achieve the same feel and impact by making a few, relatively minor changes and I will be able to go into more detail next month. I may even add a few variations. In the meantime, I will continue to explore “the Cloud.”

 **Until next month...**

Ellen Hanrahan hanrahan.in@att.net ©2018

Plan To Attend Fall Leadership Summit

Everyone is motivated by different things. No matter what drives you, you'll find lots of reasons to attend the IFPA Leadership Summit on September 28 & 29, 2018 in Philadelphia.

1- Save Time: The Summit is a two day slug-fest of great, time saving ideas. Even the agenda saves you time. There is only one track to attend. What could be simpler?

2- Save or Make Money: Saturday afternoon we'll have two hours of 5 Minute Money Makers, sure-fire ways to make and save \$.

3- Overcome Fears: The internet is the Boogie Man everyone fears.

But you shouldn't. On Friday Ron Reason will work with us showing how to design our publications (not our websites) to attract readers, get results for our advertisers, and make more income.

4- Feel Pleasure: This is a tougher one. Really? Feel Pleasure? Yep! From Friday mornings "Getting To Know You" hosted by Doug Fabian, to the Beer & Pretzel Run that evening, you're bound to get a little tingly.

5- Avoid Pain: Making uniformed decisions can be a real pain. The most informed voice in the industry is Tim Bingaman. On Saturday morning he'll help us avoid painful decisions by showing us the Best of the Industry.

You will profit from you attending the IFPA Leadership Summit in these ways and more. The IFPA board of directors is so committed to helping you be more productive and profitable they have decided to pay half the cost of the summit for the first 50 people that register. So for those people the cost is only \$399. This low rate includes two nights at the hotel, meals, breaks and the fabled Beer & Pretzel Run.

After the first 50 people register the cost for the IFPA Leadership Summit will be \$798, space available. If you wait, you might not save time, make money, overcome fears, feel pleasure, or avoid pain. Register today.

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Craig S. McMullin

Distinguished Service Award – 2018

by Dan Alexander

Dan Alexander, publisher of Denton Publications in Elizabethtown, NY, PaperChain Chairman, and IFPA member presented AFCP's Craig S. McMullin Distinguished Service Award at the recent AFCP Conference in Baltimore.

"As last year's recipient of the Craig S. McMullin Distinguished Service Award – it is my privilege and honor to be able to present this year's award.

"This year's recipient is one of those people who quietly goes about the business of making things better for everyone. This person came onto the AFCP scene six years ago and has quickly become the cornerstone of many of the AFCP initiatives. His commitment to focusing on progress and improvements that benefit our membership and our industry is second to none. His determination to take on the challenges presented to him, regardless of their complexity or time requirements has earned him the respect of everyone he comes into contact with.

"This individual has served as AFCP's 2016 Best of the Best Awards chairman, 2017 Conference Trade Show chairman and currently serves as chair of this year's 2018 Annual Conference. He has brought a participation level and enthusiasm to each of these roles that has been the foundation for improvements to the programs and the process and lead to increased benefits to our membership.

"The person has also chaired the AFCP Membership committee for the past two years with a focus on member benefits and member growth. He has been instrumental in bringing about the partnership with the Online Media Campus to expand educational resources for AFCP members. His coordination with our Alternative Revenue Committee's efforts to add the ZipRecruiter employment ad offering for AFCP's member's employment ad packages was a critical component of getting that program off the ground.

"In addition to his duties with AFCP, Trevor has been an active participant with the Minnesota Free Paper Association over the years. When it merged into Midwest Free Community Papers in 2014, he became an active board member of MFCP and is currently serving as their president. His quiet, focused participation has been a welcome addition to all of these groups.

"In closing, this individual is the epitome of the volunteer who gives freely of his time, talents and efforts without any consideration of "what's in it for me". That selfless approach to his efforts may not make him the most recognizable person in this industry, but it certainly makes him one of the most respected and appreciated. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in celebration of this year's Craig S. McMullin Distinguished Service Award winner – TREVOR SLETTE."



IFPA Training Academy



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Print industry expert Ryan Dorhn 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!

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Sign up prior to Feb. 28, 2018, and receive a FREE 30-minute personal phone call with Ryan Dorhn to strategize about your business needs.

Sign up today for this exclusive IFPA offer at IFPAtestingacademy.com

Topics included in this 6-session training program:

- 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

* 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.

Don't Sell Your Paper Short

by
Peter Wagner



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, 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.

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 advertiser 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.



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We're the Front Desk, Not the Shipping Department

by
Shep Hyken



by Shep Hyken

The short version of my story is this: At a recent conference, the client gave their speakers a gift – a backpack filled with swag that included fancy water bottles, fleece pull-overs and more. This wonderful gift was a little large to fit in my suitcase, so I decided to box it up and mail it to my office. As I was heading to the FedEx office, one of my fellow speaker-buddies told me he took his to the front desk of the hotel where they conveniently accommodated his request to ship the gift to his home. I decided to do the same, but my experience was the antithesis of his.

Just like my buddy, I took my gift to the front desk. When I asked about having it shipped to my office, the gentleman behind the counter said, “We’re the front desk, not the shipping department.”

At first, I thought he was joking, but when it was obvious that he wasn’t, I was shocked by his answer. It turns out he was very serious about not wanting to take the package. I explained that my friend had been there earlier that day, and whoever it was working at the front desk took care of him. He finally acquiesced and said, “Okay, I’ll take the package and hold it for when someone from our shipping and receiving department comes in later, but I won’t be responsible if it’s lost or stolen.”

With that comment about his lack of responsibility, I put on my best smile and told him that I didn’t want him to have to worry about the package and that I’d find a different way to ship it home. I calmly walked away and decided to try again later.

The next morning I gave it another try. I approached the front desk where a young and enthusiastic employee greeted me with a smile. She listened to my request and responded, “I’m new here, but I know we do this all of the time. Wait here for just a moment.” In less than two minutes she was back and asked me to write down the shipping details. She took the package and told me she would text me the shipping information. About fifteen minutes later she texted me a picture of the shipping label.

This is a classic example of a lack of consistency, which comes from a lack of training. I had a chance to talk to the hotel manager about what happened. He was horrified at what I experienced. He assured me that this is a common request, and he would have plenty to talk about at the next team meeting.

Too many times I’ve asked a customer support rep a question and didn’t like the answer. So, I politely ended the call and called back to see if a different employee would give me the same answer. I’m amazed at how many times I get different answers. So, which one is the correct answer? For the customer, it’s the one they like the best.



If this is happening in your organization, it’s time to put a stop to it. Inconsistent answers lead to customer confusion and a lack of confidence. And, without confidence, you can’t have trust. Customers need to know when there are problems or they have questions that they are dealing with knowledgeable and smart people. I preach customer service and soft skills training. But, this is all about the facts. This is about employees knowing their product and sharing consistent information. Anything less and customers may move on.

Shep Hyken is a customer service expert, keynote speaker, and New York Times bestselling business author. For information, contact 314-692-2200 or www.hyken.com. For information on The Customer Focus™ customer service training programs, go to www.thecustomerfocus.com. Follow on Twitter: @Hyken

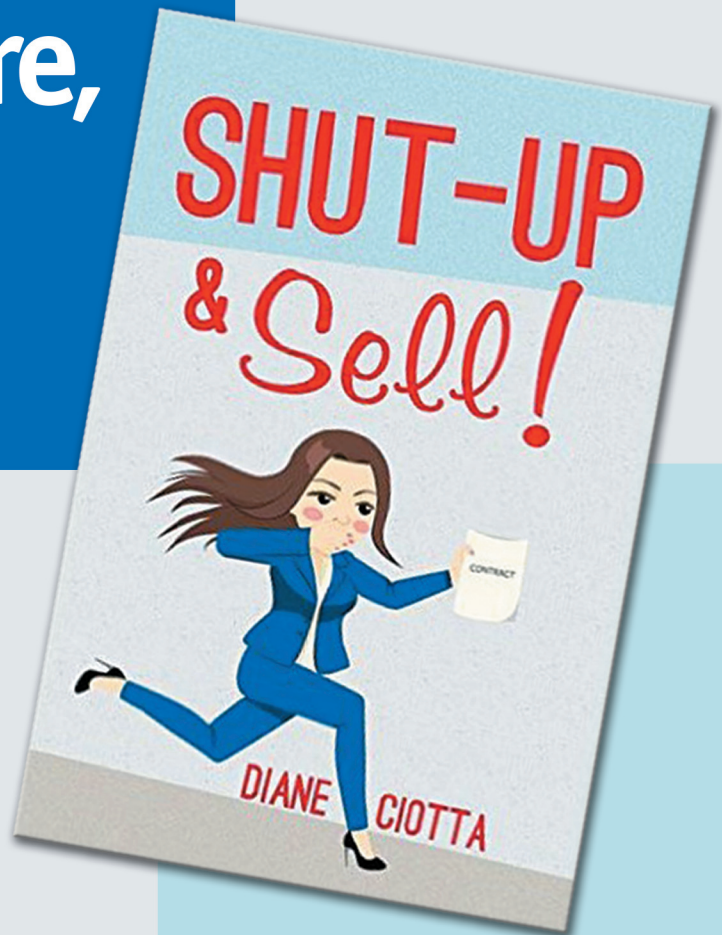
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IFPA Minutes

**IFPA BOARD MEETING,
THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2018**

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

SHARE Group – Douglas Fry: Douglas reported that the group met yesterday and they had an all time high attendance. Douglas said he and Doug are evaluating whether or not it would be beneficial to record and share the sessions.

Finances– Deborah Phillips: The April financials were emailed prior to the call. Deborah reported that the cash position has improved due to an increase in CADNET sales and

management of expenses. Joe made a motion to accept the financial report, Dan seconded the motion, all in favor

September Event – Douglas Fry: Douglas reported that brochures for the event will go out soon and registrations are coming in.

CADNET – Dan Buendo: Dan reported that CADNET sales have improved in the first quarter.

IFPA Training — Rick Wamre: Rick reported that he is putting together details for an additional upcoming training; this one with Diane Ciotta. Douglas is preparing a step-by-step easy to follow log on for all members who have purchased the Ryan Dorhn training sessions.

IFPA Website – Jane Means: Joe Nicastro volunteered to help Dan regularly review and update the website content.

Nominating Committee – Deborah Phillips: Deborah gave a brief overview of the nominating committee report she will be presenting at the June Board meeting.

Deborah made a motion to adjourn, Dan seconded the motion, all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am EST.


Recording Secretary Danielle Burnett

-  Sales
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