

December 2016  
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# THE LOUISIANA PRESS

—★ **LPA** ★—

Louisiana Press Association

## Calendar

### December 2016

**2:** Webinar - Learning the Basics of Web Design Using Adobe Muse

**8:** Webinar - Getting People to pick up your paper

**9:** Webinar - Selling Strategically: How to Manage Your Time and Territory

**15:** Webinar - Clean Up Your Copy

**15:** Webinar - Adobe Illustrator for new users

### January 2017

**11:** Webinar - Designing a better newspaper

**12:** Webinar - Sales by the numbers

**25:** Board Meeting - Bossier City

For more information on upcoming events please visit: [www.LaPress.com](http://www.LaPress.com)

### The LPA Mission

To unite Louisiana newspapers as a cooperative association which creates and fosters an economic, political and legal environment where newspapers can compete and flourish as providers of information and information services.



## An alternative to the “marked copy”

As you may know, the Postal Service recently implemented an alternative process to the requirement that you “mark up” the advertising in every issue you publish. This alternative was accomplished thanks to the hard work over a period of time by the National Newspaper Association and particularly its postal committee chairman, Max Heath.

Here is a letter that Heath wrote to NNA members:

“Many (NNA) members have written to thank NNA for its work in getting the “marked copy” rule changed for Periodicals mailers. We know quite a few of you are considering whether you want to make the change.

“I wanted to let you know that this alternate process is about to be opened to the “world.” That means magazines, newsletters and other types of publications that may use Periodicals permits may soon flood the USPS help desk with requests to make a change. We have about another week for NNA members to beta-test this new process before it goes public. This was a consideration granted to NNA by the USPS Business Mail Entry people, and we were grateful for the head start.

“The alternate process will still be available after this week. It may just take longer to get it set up, with many other

► See **ALTERNATIVE**, page 5A

## Judge Suspends Rule Expanding Overtime

A federal judge in Texas issued a nationwide injunction on November 22 against an Obama administration regulation expanding by millions the number of workers who would be eligible for time-and-a-half overtime pay.

The regulation was scheduled to take effect on Dec. 1. It would raise the salary limit below which workers automatically qualified for overtime pay to \$47,476 from \$23,660.

The judge, Amos L. Mazzant III of the Eastern District of Texas, ruled that the Obama administration had exceeded its authority by raising the overtime salary limit so significantly. The ruling was hailed by business groups who argued the new rules would be costly and result in fewer hours for workers.

The Labor Department said it

“strongly disagreed” with the decision and was “considering all of our legal options,” raising the possibility of an appeal in the waning days of the Obama administration. Ross Eisenbrey of the Economic Policy Institute, whose writings on the subject helped shape the administration’s regulation, called the ruling “a disappointment to millions of workers who are forced to work long hours with no extra compensation.”

While the injunction is only a temporary measure that suspends the regulation until the judge can issue a ruling on the merits, many said the judge’s language indicated he was likely to strike down the regulation.

“We are, assuming that this

► See **OVERTIME**, page 5A

**EDITORIAL:** Good Sources Make Good Stories 1B

**LEGAL NEWS:** Newspaper’s First Amendment Defense Guttled 1C

**ADVERTISING:** Tune in to the competition 1D

—★**LPA**★—

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## 404 Europe St.

This is the time of year we always want to pause and say thanks to our members. With all the stories about fake news sites, it's imperative that our member newspapers continue to be a strong factual voice in the communities they serve. Factual news is becoming hard to come by.

The other morning I watched a story on CNN concerning some facet of president-elect Donald Trump's future presidency. Then I switched to Fox News. The spin on the story was the exact opposite of what had been on CNN. I don't recall specifically the subject matter, but I drank my morning coffee wondering what the truth was. How could a story, based on the same facts, be reported so differently?

Last night and this morning, I had noted on Tiger Droppings Off Topic site, a long-thread about the fires in the Smokey Mountains near Gatlinburg. Last evening, I started flipping channels to find news about it. Nada. Nothing on CNN and Fox ... just more about the presidential election. This morning CNN was running a trailer on the bottom of the screen, but I didn't catch any reporting on it. A local talk radio show was discussing the seriousness of the fires as I drove to work and I gathered from that conversation that the Weather Channel was reporting on it. Unbelievable.

Media outlets need to get back to reporting news and be



**BY PAM MITCHELL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

less like a suspect blog on the internet.

Several of our community member newspapers have told me in recent days that they are devoting their time and energies to making the printed product, stronger and better. The rural papers have defined their audience and know what those readers want. They want their community covered and covered well. They want photos, they want stories about good things in the community and they want a watchful eye kept on government.

After Thanksgiving dinner, our family sat down and went through the preprints in the Thanksgiving editions of our local newspapers. We did not run to our electronic tablets to peruse that hefty stack. The guys were so enamored with the gun ads, they ran off to shop at Bass Pro. The women continued shopping from the comfort of the couch and lounge chairs. So Monday at Press Club lunch, I did a little informal survey,

## 404 Europe: Continued...

From Page 2A

I asked my tablemates, "How many of you went online to look at the preprints and how many of you read the copies inserted in the newspaper. To a person, they pulled out the preprints from the Thanksgiving edition. And some, ran off to shop, coupons in hand. Based on this group, the shopping going on in the Baton Rouge area wasn't so much for gifts but to replace items for family members lost in the flooding, like pillows, new bedding, and household items.

Speaking of flooding, member publishers received a letter in the past few days explaining the new procedure on the former dues requirement to send 2 copies of the newspaper to LPA. Just send one to LPA and one to the new clipping service.

The severe flooding in the Baton Rouge area caused our long-time associate member, Metro Clippings, to permanently close its doors. The clipping operation is being taken on by Magnolia Clippings in Mississippi which is the preferred clipping service used by several nearby states.

To facilitate the change and with the blessing of the LPA Executive Board, we are entering into a partnership arrangement with Magnolia Clippings that is utilized by other state press associations in adjacent states.

The current dues requirement in addition to the monetary component is that two complimentary copies of your newspaper/publication be sent

to the LPA office.

With the advent of more and more electronic tear-sheeting opportunities we have determined that LPA can meet its hardcopy obligations with one copy of your newspaper/publication. We are requesting that you send the other copy to:

Magnolia Clipping Service  
298 Commerce Park Drive,  
Suite A  
Ridgeland, MS 39157-2237

In addition to clipping news stories about our members that are of interest, the service also helps us monitor participation in the Tourism Cooperative Endeavor as well as serve other clients.

It is very important that you instruct your circulation managers of the change. LPA staff will be responsible for being sure the newspapers/publications are being sent to Mississippi as required. (We will be monitoring receipt of a single copy at LPA as well). We will receive a royalty for our work.

It is our understanding that your current paid subscription to Metro Clippings has been transferred or is being forwarded to Magnolia Clippings. The Magnolia plan is to simply let that subscription expire, so for a short period they will be receiving two copies of your newspaper.

To reiterate, instead of two complimentary copies to LPA as currently required, please send one copy to LPA and one copy

to Magnolia Clipping. Please ask your circulation manager to e-mail [mitch@lapress.com](mailto:mitch@lapress.com) to advise her that the change has been made. Thank you.

one copy to:  
Louisiana Press Association  
404 Europe St.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

one copy to:  
Magnolia Clipping Service  
298 Commerce Park Drive,  
Suite A  
Ridgeland, MS 39157-2237

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Louisiana Press Association

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## PERSONALITY PROFILE

**1. Name and describe your first job:** I began working for The Farmer in August 1971 as the front office receptionist accounts receivable bookkeeper. Working up front, I met many interesting, including former governor Edwin Edwards and state legislators Jessie McLain and Sixty Rayburn.

**2. Name and describe your primary mentor:** My mentor, after my father, was Vera Hardman, the longtime general manager of the paper She taught me to be proud of our newspaper, to take pride in my work and do my best job possible.

**3. What are your favorite things about your job?** My favorite part of my job is meeting new people throughout the community. I enjoy taking someone's idea for an ad and putting it into a print format.

**4. What is your favorite part of the newspaper?** My favorite part of the newspaper is the delight people get out of seeing their "good news" printed in the local paper.

**5. What are your outside interests?** My outside interest is showing antique cars with my fiancé, Joe Doran. We own cars from the 30's, 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's and we take part in shows in many states. This year we went on the Hot Rod Magazine Power Tour, which began in Gonzales, then to Texas to Baytown, Austin, and Dallas, Texas, then to Oklahoma City, Okla., then to Wichita and Kansas City, Kansas. I also volunteer every year to organize the Covington Lions Club Annual Car Show in April to raise money for local children to attend the Lions Club Handicapped Camp in the summer. To be able to allow a handicapped child to go to camp free is worth all the work to me.

**6. What would you do if you couldn't work in the newspaper industry?** If I couldn't work for a newspaper, it would have to be somewhere that I could interact with lots of different people.



Celebrating 4th of July in the Madisonville Parade with Brenda Willis and Brilley Doran in the 1953 Chevy Belair 2-door hardtop

### Brenda Willis

**Newspaper:** The St. Tammany Farmer (Covington)

**Title:** Advertising Representative

**Family:** I have a son, Hardy Byrd, Jr.; a daughter-in-law, Kim Byrd; two grandsons, Christian and Trenton Byrd; a granddaughter-in-law, Sarah Byrd; and two great-grand children, Trenton Billiot and Josie Byrd.

**7. What is the main benefit you derive from LPA membership?** LPA membership has given me the opportunity to attend workshops on advertising, which have made me better at my job.

**8. What do you see as LPA's biggest challenge?** I see the biggest challenge for LPA is the future and the changing format of newspapers. Technology grows everyday, and LPA will have to keep up the good work!

## Alternative: An alternative to the “marked copy”

From Page 1A

publications making a request.

“We’ve heard from a few people that making this change doesn’t save much time, given that you’re going to the post office every day to get mail. You’ll still reclaim some hours just by not having to mark up each page. You’ll still need to figure out your advertising percentage if your software doesn’t do that for you.

“Where you’ll see the difference is when you convert your newspaper to electronic documentation. Then, removing the bother of having to physically mark up each page and take it to the post office will make more sense. If you’re not moving toward electronic documentation for filing your weekly/daily postage statements, I hope you’re considering it. Taking this leap really will save you time over the

long run. More important, it is going to be the key to our ability to track reliable mail service.

“The Postal Service has updated the documents you’ll need to understand and comply with the new alternate marked copy rule. It will be on the website with this letter. Please let the Postal Committee know about your experience if you try to use the new process.”

NNA

## Overtime: Judge suspends rule expanding overtime

preliminary injunction holds and there isn’t an appeal or some other thing that disrupts it, done with this regulation,” said Marc Freedman, executive director of labor law policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which had challenged the rule.

The fate of the regulation had already been thrown into question by the election of Donald J. Trump as president two weeks ago. Mr. Trump has promised to reverse many regulations approved during the Obama administration, and the Republican Congress has generally criticized the scope of the expansion of overtime eligibility.

Still, because undoing the regulation could have required a months- or yearslong rule-making process similar to the one that produced it, the new overtime limit appeared likely to survive in some form. Some business lobbyists had anticipated a legislative compromise that phased in the new limit over a longer period of time and eliminated an automatic increase in the limit every three years.

The injunction would appear to make such a reprieve far less likely, although the question remains whether the Trump administration will seek a legislative deal that would raise the salary limit above the \$23,660 that has prevailed since 2004, but below the Obama

administration’s preferred level.

“There’s no question that this decision changes a number of different points of leverage over the future of the rule,” said David French, senior vice president for government relations at the National Retail Federation, which opposed the new rule. Mr. French added, however, that his group and many other business organizations were open to some increase in the limit.

“We’re 12 years past the last update,” he said.

Supporters of the regulation have observed that the politics of essentially withdrawing a planned salary increase from many workers could prove complicated for an incoming president elected on a message of improving workers’ economic circumstances.

Further complicating the picture is the fact that many large employers have already raised the pay of some employees over the new \$47,476 limit, concluding that it would be more cost-effective than paying them overtime. It is rare for employers to reverse such pay increases, making large employers potentially sympathetic to an overtime compromise that would effectively extend the salary increase to some of their smaller rivals.

The ruling arose from a case filed by a coalition of 21 states, who argued

that the administration had exceeded its statutory authority in raising the overtime salary limit so significantly. A large number of business groups filed a similar lawsuit, and the suits were later consolidated.

In his ruling, Judge Mazzant, whom President Obama appointed, agreed with that logic and appeared to go even further, suggesting that the administration lacked the authority even to establish a salary limit — which the Labor Department has raised repeatedly since Congress enacted the underlying legislation in 1938.

“The court’s decision suggests that the Department of Labor has no authority whatsoever to regulate a salary minimum,” said Allan S. Bloom, of the law firm Proskauer Rose. (Judge Mazzant pointed out in a footnote that he was not commenting generally on the legality of establishing a salary limit, however, only the particular increase that the plaintiffs had challenged.)

In a statement, the Labor Department defended how the rule was created.

“The department’s overtime rule is the result of a comprehensive, inclusive rule-making process, and we remain confident in the legality of all aspects of the rule,” the statement said.

New York Times

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## CONTINUING EDUCATION

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# Take advantage of these upcoming webinars

For more information and to register, visit [lapress.com](http://lapress.com)



## Selling Strategically: How to Manage Your Time and Territory

Friday, December 9  
1:00 – 2:00 p.m. CDT  
Registration Fee \$35.00

How to Manage Your Time and Territory

- Do you have too much work and not enough time in the day to get it done?
- Do you find yourself changing the date on your to-do-list?
- Are you doing more driving than selling?

If you answered yes to these questions, then this practical, real-life situational seminar is for you!

We will help you clarify your territory goals as well as you own, start the goal setting process from the end to the beginning, prioritize what is really important vs. what someone else thinks is “ASAP”. You will learn how to get the most out of your weeks and days, organize your work environment, deal with interruptions, and the people that stop by to say “hi” and never seem to leave.

Learning objectives for the day :

- Clarify objectives and plan for results
- Set up your goals and priorities
- How to have more time for prospecting
- Eliminate the time-wasters in your life
- How to say “no”
- How to use technology to achieve results
- Respond rather than react
- Reduce the stress in your life

### Meet the Presenter...

Tim Smith has been in the training and development field for more than 28 years and has worked in the newspaper and print industry for more than 10 years. He started out in circulation and was promoted to a supervisory role in production due to his work ethic and results. He also has worked on the sales side of the business, again being promoted to sales manager due to his results, repeat business and ability to develop new business. Smith has delivered tailored training programs on management skills, customer service and sales to the newspaper industry for more than 10 years. He has helped several publications develop customer service models and increase sales through a more consistent consultative sales process with both outside display and inside classified salespeople.

## Clean Up Your Copy

Thursday, December 15  
1:00 – 2:00 p.m. CDT  
Registration Fee: \$35.00

AP style — it’s the industry standard, and an ever-evolving set of rules that journalists need to understand and follow. Amber Krosel, a member of the American Copy Editors Society, will get you caught up on recent changes to the stylebook, as well as old standards that routinely trip up reporters and editors.

### Meet the Presenter...

Amber Krosel is director of community content for GateHouse Media’s Center for News & Design in Austin, Texas. Her team processes community-based content for more than 160 newspapers, all in AP Style and covering everything from calendar briefs to rewriting news releases, editing columns and typing up police blotter. Krosel is a member of the American Copy Editors Society and has a master’s degree in public affairs reporting from the University of Illinois Springfield, in addition to reporting and news editing experience with daily and weekly newspapers across Illinois.

## Helpful Hints

Webinars are conducted by a presenter showing slides. The slides will appear through your Internet browser and the audio will be presented through the phone.

Each registration receives one webinar connection link.

After registering for a webinar, you will receive a receipt by email, as well as a second email with the log-in and call-in information. The subject line of the second email will read “Meeting Confirmation.”

If you have not received the email with the webinar access information, be sure to check your spam mail folder as it may have been held up there.

If you need assistance with registration or logging in the day of the webinar, please contact:

Ryan Rohlf  
515.244.2145

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## CONTINUING EDUCATION

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# Take advantage of these upcoming webinars

Presented by Kevin Slimp



We are excited to announce Ed Henninger, Tim Smith and other top newspaper trainers will be joining Kevin Slimp to lead webinars at [newspaperacademy.com](http://newspaperacademy.com) in January. We're drawing newspaper professionals from all over the U.S. and Canada to our classes. At the bottom of this email, you will find a list of recorded videos available for viewing as well.

Association members can enjoy a 20 percent discount to live Webinars by registering at:

<http://newspaperacademy.com/association>

### Upcoming Webinars:

#### **Dec 2: 10 a.m. Central**

#### **Learning the Basics of Web Design Using Adobe Muse**

\$49 (\$39 with association discount) 45 Minutes <http://newspaperacademy.com/association>

If you have Adobe Creative Cloud, you have Muse. If you have Muse, you have the best app available for website design. If you can design a page in InDesign, you can design a website in Adobe Muse. And guess what ... Adobe hosts your sites created in Muse at no additional cost. That's right ... it comes with your cloud subscription. Who knew? Don't miss this one.

#### **Dec 8: 10 a.m. Central**

#### **Getting People to Pick Up Your Paper**

\$39 (\$32 with association discount) 35 Minutes <http://newspaperacademy.com/association>

This webinar was so popular two weeks ago that I will be offering it again. We look at my recent research, focus groups and more to determine what it takes to get people to pick up your paper. The response to this class was incredible.

#### **Dec 15: 10 a.m. Central**

#### **Adobe Illustrator for New Users: The Basics of Design in Illustrator**

\$49 (\$39 with association discount) 55 Minutes <http://newspaperacademy.com/association>

This class is for those of you who have always wanted to learn Illustrator, but just haven't had the time to learn it. It's good for any version of the application from CS3 to CC.

#### **Jan 11: 2 p.m. Central**

#### **Ed Henninger: Designing a Better Newspaper**

\$49 (\$39 with discount) 45 Minutes  
(registration for this class begins Dec 1)

#### **Jan 12: 2 p.m. Central**

#### **Tim Smith: Sales by the Numbers**

\$49 (\$39 with association discount) 50 Minutes <http://newspaperacademy.com/association>

Tim Smith is as good as it gets when it comes to training newspaper sales staffs. Don't miss this opportunity. This class is offered on Thursday afternoon and Tuesday morning to accommodate tight schedules. Pick the one that works best for you.

### Recorded Webinars Available to View Anytime

Find a list of all recorded training in the "Video Training" menu at [newspaperacademy.com](http://newspaperacademy.com).

#### **Growing Your Newspaper: Getting People to Pick Up Your Paper**

(Kevin Slimp) 38 Minutes

<http://newspaperacademy.com/video-training-growing-papers/>

#### **Photo Editing: Making Your Pics Pop Off the Page**

(Kevin Slimp) 48 Minutes

<http://newspaperacademy.com/video-training-photoshop-pop-off-page/>

#### **Learning to Use the InCopy/InDesign Editorial Workflow**

(Kevin Slimp) 88 Minutes

<http://newspaperacademy.com/video-training-incopy-1/>

#### **Page & Ad Design Tips for Newspapers**

(Kevin Slimp) 38 Minutes

<http://newspaperacademy.com/video-training-page-ad-design-tips/>

#### **InDesign Basics for New Newspaper Users**

(Kevin Slimp) 78 Minutes

<http://newspaperacademy.com/video-training-b...design->

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## PEOPLE & PLACES

Longtime advertising sales representative **Anna McVea** has retired from the Weekly Citizen (Gonzales). She has been at the newspaper since 1990.

Daily Star (Hammond) general manager **Michelle Gallo** has announced three recent personnel developments: **Stanley Davis** has been named director of The Daily Star's circulation department; Catherine Massawe has joined the staff of The Daily Star as a district manager in the circulation department; Advertising Coordinator **Robbi Giannobile** has reached her 48th year with the newspaper.

**David D'Aquin**, a veteran Louisiana TV reporter, anchor and news director, has been

named Video Director for the USA Today Network's Gulf Region, headquartered at The Daily Advertiser (Lafayette).

The Sabine Index (Many) is celebrating its 137th year of publication.

**Greg Burton**, a carrier for The Advocate was recently delivering newspapers to a convenience store when he noticed a fire inside the store and was able to flag down a police officer who was able to put out the blaze with a fire extinguisher in his patrol car.

The Banner-Democrat (Lake Providence) is currently in its 129th year in operation, making it the oldest business in East Carroll Parish.

# -30-

**Richard Bontempo**, a long-time employee of The Times-Picayune, died July 20. He was 75.

**Marian Braud**, long-time Weekly-News (Marksville) columnist, died August 17. She was 91.

**Henry Delahunt Jr.**, a former employee of the Shreveport Journal, died June 2. He was 83.

**Julie Josephine Hausey Goff**, a retiree of The Advocate, died July 4. She was 96.

**Melvin Stevens Pressley Jr.**, a former employee of The American Press (Lake Charles), died June 1. He was 88.

**Evelyn Short**, former executive secretary at The Advocate, died June 30. She was 87.

**William R. Smolkin**, a former reporter for The Times-Picayune, died July 27. He was 93.

**Jacquelyn Sandifer Strange**, a former columnist at The Daily News (Bogalusa), died June 3. She was 79.

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**Jenn Bertematti**

IT & Product Development Director  
Harris Enterprises



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**December is...**

- National Impaired Driving Prevention Month
- National Write a Business Plan Month
- Safe Toys and gifts Month
- 2 National Salesperson's Day
- Special Educators Day
- 3 International Day of Persons With Disabilities
- 5-9 Cookie Exchange Week
- 6 National Miners Day
- National Pawnbrokers Day
- 7 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 9 Official Lost and Found Day
- 10 Human Rights Day
- 10-17 Human Rights Week
- 14-28 Halcyon Days
- 15 Bill of Rights Day
- Cat Herders Day
- 16 Underdog Day
- 17 Wright Brothers Day
- 19 Meeting of the Electors
- 21 Celebrate
- Short Fiction Day
- Humbug Day
- Yule
- 24 Chanukah Begins
- Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas
- 26 Boxing Day
- National Whiner's Day
- 29 Tick Tock Day
- 30 No Interruptions Day
- 31 New Year's Eve

**Good sources make good stories**

Spot news, beat reporting and features are only as good as the sources a writer has to back them up.

Sources tell the story, provide the facts, verify the facts, give detail to enrich the telling, provide context, explain complex subject matter and ensure people are who they say they are.

As a rule, any well-written story should have at least two sources three make it even better. However, more important than knowing how many sources to have in a story is recognizing as a reporter that every story needs solid sources.

This is where a few good principles of journalism can be helpful to remember: Get the facts (and verify them), report all sides of the story, and do no harm. Good sources will help a reporter accomplish all of these and will help the writer tell a better, more well-informed story.

We've all been burned on stories where the information we were given was wrong, or, even worse, the story wasn't true. Phony illnesses, fraudulent fundraisers, publicity seekers, family squabbles, most editors at a small daily or weekly have



seen it all come through their doors.

◆ **Illnesses** — Editors can't avoid stories about dying children and strange ailments, but we can make sure the information is accurate. Verify the person is sick by calling his or her doctor and asking the doctor to give general information about the disease's symptoms and treatments. A doctor can't give out specific patient information, but you'll find out if the person is being treated.

◆ **Spot news/cops** — On the scene of a drug bust or checking the jail docket, verify the information. Names, charges, street names and other pertinent information should be verified with a source that can provide the details to the story, not just vague facts that may be incorrect. The jail

# Why we must write more concisely

It's almost impossible to go a day without new statistics illustrating how our audience is quickly shifting to mobile devices.

The Census Bureau says almost half the U.S. population 15 and older has a smartphone. The Pew Research Center puts it even higher, 56 percent. A significant number say they use their phone as the main way to get online.

But we still do too much writing as if the reader will lean back with "the paper" in an easy chair. We have to change. Even our "print" writing will benefit.

People using mobile devices consume information in short bursts as time allows. They aren't thrilled with ledes and paragraphs that sprawl over two or three small screens.

Raju Narisetti, a former reporter who oversaw digital strategy at both The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post, recalls a Post story on corruption in Alaska. It had the great anecdotal lead, solid nut graf, great detail. Only it took seven smartphone screens to get to the nut and 46 to finish.

"You have to start pivoting from creating just content to creating a great experience and creating different experiences on different devices. And it's hard," he told the Nieman Journalism Lab.

But it often can mean just sharpening a lead's focus, like this one:

A Colorado man who may be linked to the slaying of Colorado's

state prison chief died from gunshot wounds received in a shootout with Texas police, law enforcement officials said Friday.

Most people will correctly conclude that a shootout means he was shot. And the story quickly explains he was shot by police. So

**Most people will correctly conclude that a shootout means he was shot.**

tighten it from 31 to 25 words:

A Colorado man possibly linked to the slaying of that state's prison chief died after a shootout with Texas police, law enforcement officials said Friday.

Sometimes we can't shorten that much, but we can bring the focus firmly atop that first screen:

New public documents reveal that government concerns over the potential of a catastrophic failure of the Jocassee Dam flooding the Oconee Nuclear Station downstream stretch back more than three decades.

I think the point for most people will be that it's been more than 30 years (why the journalese "three decades"). And we can drop "downstream," taking 30 words to 26:

For more than 30 years, government officials have feared catastrophic failure of the Jocassee Dam could flood the Oconee Nuclear Station,



BY DOUG FISHER

according to newly released documents.

The next paragraph illustrates how we're also prone to pile clauses and thoughts into one sentence. Let's use the period more. Not only does it give readers a breather, it also allows some "responsive" Web designs to break the graf, depending on the screen size:

The documents – once held back for security reasons but released recently by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission under the Freedom of Information Act – also illustrate a protracted and jagged path to nuclear regulators' demands today that the station's owner, Duke Energy, do more to protect against the threat.

Slightly reworked, with the focus again moved to the top:

The documents show a protracted and jagged path to current regulators' demands that Oconee's owner, Duke Energy, do more to protect against the threat. They had been withheld for

# Typefaces to Toss

SOME TYPEFACES are just downright strange. Like Curlz. I just can't bring myself to believe that someone was serious about designing that one.

And there's Dom Casual. And Hobo. And (of course!) Comic Sans.

You never...ever...use any of those typefaces. Right?

Ah...but I'll bet some of you are still using Times. Or Helvetica. Maybe New Century Schoolbook. Or Franklin Gothic. If so, you really need to toss those and find something else.

Here's a list of 20 typefaces (actually, 16 typefaces and 4 complete groups) I'd toss, along with a few words why:

**Arial:** Basically, it's a

Helvetica (more in a moment) knockoff. Looks like a genuine simulated imitation faux Helvetica.

**Avant Garde:** Designed in the 1960s. That was more than 50 years ago. Not so avant garde now.

**Brush Script:** No one ever writes like that.

**Chancery:** Is there any place in your newspaper where Chancery is appropriate?

**Comic Sans:** The target of a lot of jokes. Deservedly so.

**Curlz:** Seriously?

**Dom Casual:** I can't even think of a schoolroom poster where this would make sense to use.

**Helvetica:** A darling of



BY ED HENNINGER

designers for decades. But it has been soooo overused. It's a dead horse. Stop beating it.

**Hobo:** A cousin of Dom Casual...and just as silly.

**Franklin Gothic:** Designers jumped on this typeface in the 80s as an attractive alternative to Helvetica. Then they rode this horse 'til it, too, collapsed and died.

**Mistral:** It's different. Too different.

**New Century Schoolbook:** Easy to read for text but too round and takes up too much space. There are better choices.

**Papyrus:** Designers of menus and movie posters wore this typeface out within a year or two. It's cliché.

**Souvenir:** Floppy, insipid.

**Times:** Still a darling of many publishers. But Times (and, yes, Times New Roman) is timeworn. And there are many

Curlz

Helvetica

Franklin Gothic

New Century Schoolbook

Times

# Beware of misplaced words

As I sit here writing this, I wonder what other people are doing, on Thanksgiving Eve.

You ... you noticed, didn't you? That time element at the end is ambiguous.

What does it mean? And is that comma necessary?

Depends.

Am I "writing this ... on Thanksgiving Eve"? Or am I wondering "what people will do on Thanksgiving Eve"?

Ah, Thanksgiving, that most American of holidays (if we ignore the 4th of July, Presidents Day, Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, VE Day, VJ Day and my birthday) also is the topic of Today's Stretched Metaphor: the sentence as Thanksgiving Day dinner.

When we put words together in what we call a sentence – subject, verb, object, et al. – we are arranging the dinner seating arrangement of the large family. Subject and verb (mom and dad) are side-by-side, but what about the others?

Well, if we just kind of mash them all together (like the potatoes), yeah, that'll work, but it also may place Uncle Mort right next to Aunt Millie, and the two of them haven't spoken since the 1954 World Series.

So we're more careful than that. The best move is to place Uncle Mort next to your nephew's cute blond girlfriend (Morty loves to flirt, and the

frightened, overwhelmed girlfriend is nice to everyone), and Aunt Millie next to cousin Rick, who can listen endlessly to anyone, provided he can reach the wine bottle.

**When the time element is placed sloppily, we writers show we're not really paying attention.**

Sentences should not be mere collections of words that pass along information; they should be painstakingly composed so as to be both clear and thought-provoking.

Here's one I saw recently: "The students were in Paris to study art when the terrorists attacked."

Almost certainly, readers will know what that sentence means. But just as my lead sentence has that pesky comma, the "students were ..." sentence has a flaw of placement.

"... (T)o study art when the terrorists attacked" can be interpreted to mean that the students timed their art-study trip to coincide with the terrorists' attacks. Of course, every reader with any logical awareness will dismiss that possibility as folly and grasp the sentence's intended meaning.

But why should we accept a flawed sentence when simply moving one element – "Um, excuse me, Uncle Mort, would



BY JIM STASIOWSKI

you mind changing places?" – solves the problem and makes us look at least competent?

"When the terrorists attacked, the students were in Paris to study art."

The guideline: A time element ("When the terrorists attacked ...") almost always modifies a verb. By placing a verb, "to study," between "were" and "When the terrorists attacked," we remove the intended direct connection between the time element and "were."

When the time element is placed sloppily, we writers show we're not really paying attention. Whenever possible, place the time element directly before or after the verb or subject-verb combination.

Here's another Mort-Millie faux pas: "He is accused of beating two playmates up."

Again, the meaning is clear. No reader is going to think that "He" so pummeled the playmates that they went "up,"

## Sources: Good sources make good stories

From Page 1B

docket may say check fraud, but the actual charge may be uttering forgery. Get it right.

- ◆ City boards, county supervisors, school boards, etc. — Be wary of budget figures, cost estimates and other financial information tossed out during meetings by officials or the public.
- ◆ People — including some officials, I have found—have a tendency to round figures during discussions. The mayor may say the cost for a new police car is \$35,000 during a meeting, when the actual cost is \$35,367. Look at cost reports and budgets for yourself, and ask the person who prepared

them to answer questions. You'll need the quote from the mayor about why taxes are going up, but the person who prepared the budget can answer specific line item questions.

- ◆ Letters to the editor — We've all been burned on this one. Take the time to call the letter writer, ask him or her questions, look him or her up in the phone book, verify his or her street address.
- ◆ Fund-raisers — For every do-gooder holding a fundraiser for a family who lost their home in a fire, there's a scam artist looking for any angle to bilk people out of their money. We require anyone soliciting funds for medical expenses, fires, and other fund-raisers to establish

a bank account in the name of the person in need, and we then verify it with a bank employee.

Births and obituaries — Sadly, family squabbles and grudges can spill over into the pages of the newspaper with false paternity claims in a birth announcement or in phony death notices. For birth announcements, we require the announcements come from the parents of the child, and that the father sign the announcement in person and show a photo ID if the parents are unmarried. Similarly, we get obituaries directly from funeral homes to verify the death and to ensure the notice appears according to the wishes of the family.

NNA Great Ideas

## Henninger: Typefaces to Toss

From Page 1B

better choices for text.

**Trajan:** Another typeface done in by designers of Hollywood movie titles and posters. Very classic and very overused.

**Blackletter type:** Yes, it's still OK to use Olde Englishe for your nameplate. Nowhere else.

**Dingbat fonts:** Why clutter your system with junk?

**Grunge fonts:** Can we puhleeze stop with the angst?

**Typewriter fonts:** Oh, please. It's the 21st Century!

Some of you will disagree, especially about Helvetica and Times. That's OK. It's still your newspaper.

Some of you may think there

are other typefaces that need to be on the "toss list." Email me at [edh@henningerconsulting.com](mailto:edh@henningerconsulting.com) and I'll do a follow-up.

ED HENNINGER is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of Henninger Consulting. Offering comprehensive newspaper design services including redesigns, workshops, staff training and evaluations. E-mail: [edh@henningerconsulting.com](mailto:edh@henningerconsulting.com). On the web: [www.henningerconsulting.com](http://www.henningerconsulting.com). Phone: 803-327-3322.

## FREE DESIGN EVALUATION

Ed Henninger offers design evaluations—at no charge and with no obligation - to readers of this column. For more information, check the FREEBIE page on Ed's webs site: [www.henningerconsulting.com](http://www.henningerconsulting.com)



## Stasiowski: Beware of misplaced words

From Page 4B

as in ascended into mid-air.

But “beat up,” like “hold on,” is a combination known as a verb (“beat”) and its tail (“up.”)

Whenever possible, we unite verb and tail, so “... of beating up two playmates” is preferable.

Here’s a Mort-Millie that has become epidemic: separating an antecedent and its pronoun. A simple example: “The City Council passed the law in Detroit that eliminates stop-and-frisk by police.”

The pronoun “that” takes the antecedent “law,” but a careless reader could read: “... Detroit that eliminates ... .”

So, no harm, no foul there; again, readers understand. But why not merely rearrange: “The Detroit City Council passed the

law that eliminates ...”?

But the misplacement gets a lot worse when several words intervene, as in: “Malone’s foundation donated money to the beleaguered museum that allowed the doors to stay open when the payroll cash ran out.”

See the ambiguity? Was it the “money ... that allowed the doors to stay open,” or the “... museum that allowed the doors to stay open”? Considering how the sentence ended, it seems the former was intended, but the placement of “that” in front of “museum” creates an ambiguity. Better: “... foundation donated money that allowed the beleaguered museum’s doors to stay open ... .”

There is always a way to rearrange a sentence’s elements.

So let’s do that with this column’s opening sentence: As I sit here writing this on Thanksgiving eve, I wonder what other people are doing. It’s slightly clearer, which is a worthwhile goal.

**THE FINAL WORD:** If I told you the past tense of “pay” was “payed,” you’d assume I had abandoned all principles of literacy.

Not so fast. Yes, “They paid their rent on time” still is correct, but when we’re writing about gradually letting out rope or cable, we would write, “They carefully payed out the rescue line.”

Writing coach Jim Stasiowski, retired managing editor of the Rapid City Journal, welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872, or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.

## Fisher: Why we must write more concisely

From Page 2B

security reasons but were released recently by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission under the Freedom of Information Act.

You can probably find numerous examples in your paper and on your website. If you want an idea of how things will look on

a small screen, you can use online tools like responsinator.com or quirkttools.com/screenfly.

Those who say long-form is dead forget the Internet can deliver those narratives to customers willing to pay for them just as easily as it can deliver mobile-focused formats. But we probably will end up having to

write multiple versions. Sadly, it comes at a time when editors, who would be the ones to add value doing this, are being cut.

Doug Fisher, a former AP news editor, teaches journalism at the University of South Carolina and can be reached at [dfisher@sc.edu](mailto:dfisher@sc.edu) or 803-777-3315. Past issues of Common Sense Journalism can be found at <http://www.jour.sc.edu/news/csj/index.html>.

### Legal Questions?

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Is the school board meeting in a closed session?

Is the mayor giving you the runaround?

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the Law-Guide via the Members Only Page

## Newspaper's First Amendment defense gutted

The Chicago Sun-Times obtained the birth date, height, weight, and hair and eye color for each of five Chicago police officers from the Illinois Secretary of State's motor vehicle records, and published the information in a story alleging that the Chicago police had mishandled a homicide investigation. In the controversial column, the newspaper claimed that all five of the officers looked similar to a homicide suspect, who happened to be the nephew of Mayor Richard Daley. The newspaper further claimed the officers were purposefully used in a single lineup alongside the suspect in order to prevent the witness from making a positive identification. The newspaper published pictures of all of the officers along with their personal information to support its claims of a mishandled investigation.

### Officers file suit, newspaper appeals

The officers all sued the newspaper in the United States District Court in Chicago, alleging that it had violated a federal statute, the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA), by obtaining and publishing their personal information. The newspaper responded by filing a motion to dismiss the officers' lawsuit on the

▶ See DEFENSE, page 2C

## Retired cop alleges defamation over articles

A retired policeman filed a complaint against The New York Post, and others, for articles following the plaintiff's participation in a podcast. A federal court dismissed the allegations of defamation because the cop's complaint failed to state a proper claim of defamation.

### Background

The policeman joined the New York Police Department over twenty years ago. He claims he fully disclosed all information about himself to the NYPD. After years on the force, he sustained a workplace injury requiring him to retire from the NYPD; he was then approved for a retirement pension. Upon retirement, the cop became very politically active and held press conferences and community discussions to lobby for police reform, specifically, his efforts related to police interactions with "communities of color."

The cop appeared on a weekly podcast, wherein he discussed his childhood and growing up in Queens, New York. He also discussed his involvement with a youth gang, which included dealing crack cocaine, attempted murder and a friendship he had with a criminal convicted of killing an NYPD officer. The purpose of the discussion was to focus on how people can change, and his past did not define his future.

Following the podcast, The New York Post printed an article about the cop and included his photograph with the caption "THUG COP." The article was entitled "A retired

cop's shocking life of drugs and crime." A second article followed, entitled "Gangsta cop proud to be an infamous Post cover boy," and explained the plaintiff received a six-figure disability pension.

After The Post published the two articles, the cop's firearms were seized and his "good guy" status was revoked, meaning that the City attempted to de-certify him and discontinue his disability retirement pension for alleged fraud. The cop filed a claim alleging the Post published defamatory statements about him, resulting in damage to his reputation. Specifically, he claimed the caption "THUG COP" in the articles constituted defamation.

### Defamation

Under New York law, defamation is the injury to one's reputation either by written or oral expression. A defamatory statement is one that exposes an individual to public hatred, shame, obloquy, contumely, ridicule, etc., or induces an evil opinion of one in the minds of right-thinking persons. In order to establish a case for defamation, the claimant must show (1) a false and defamatory statement of and concerning him; (2) publication to a third party; (3) fault on the part of the defendant and (4) injury to the claimant. Opinions are protected under New York law, and a defendant will not be held liable for simply expressing an opinion of another person, however unreasonable the opinion may be.

The Post argued that words

▶ See DEFAMATION, page 2C

## Defamation: Retired cop alleges defamation over articles

From Page 1C

like “thug” and “gangsta” are non-actionable because they are statements of opinions, but even if those words were deemed not opinions, The Post argued they are truthful based on the cop’s criminal

past. The court found those words are expressions of opinion and therefore cannot be defamatory.

With regard to the titles of the published articles, the court examined the articles and determined that the statements at issue are not reasonably susceptible

of implying the cop was involved in any criminal activity while he was employed as an officer for the NYPD. The articles are clear that the criminal activity occurred before he became an officer. As a result, the court dismissed the complaint.

First Amendment COMMENT

## Defense: Newspaper’s First amendment defense gutted

From Page 1C

grounds that (1) the information the newspaper obtained and published was not the type of personal information protected by the federal statute, and (2) the federal statute’s prohibition on obtaining and publishing personal information from motor vehicle records violates the First Amendment. The district court denied the newspaper’s motion, and the newspaper appealed to the Court of Appeals.

The appellate court agreed with the district court and found (1) the information the newspaper had obtained and published was protected personal information under the DPPA, and (2) the newspaper had no constitutional right to obtain or publish the information. As a result, the appellate court held that the newspaper had violated the DPPA and affirmed the district court’s denial of the newspaper’s motion to dismiss.

### Is there life after appeal

After the appellate court’s ruling, the officers argued the appellate court opinion left nothing more to be decided. Therefore, they asked that the case be dismissed. The district

court dismissed the entire case with one narrow exception: whether the newspaper’s actions in obtaining the officer’s personal information was protected by the First Amendment.

At the time the newspaper obtained the officers’ personal information, the Chicago police department had already, in the opinion of the Illinois Attorney General, violated the Illinois Freedom of Information Act by failing to timely turn over photographs of the individuals in the suspect lineup. The district court found this significant be cause, in its view, the court of appeals “may well in fact recognize a ‘balancing’ test so that under certain circumstances the press would be allowed to obtain personal information while investigating a matter of public significance and the invasion of privacy [is] not particularly great.”

The district court distinguished the newspaper’s possible lawfulness in obtaining the information from publishing the information by noting that, at the time of publication, the newspaper in fact had the photographs of all of the officers. Therefore, it considered publishing the officer’s personal information cumulative to the

photographs the newspaper also published, so publishing the personal information was not itself constitutionally protected.

This ruling means the officer’s case will proceed subject to the newspaper’s First Amendment defense.

### Thoughts going forward

This case is a significant loss for journalists because it allowed the news media to be punished for publishing truthful information that was lawfully obtained. Although this particular case appears to be a significant loss for journalists, there are potential positive implications.

Journalists may have a tool to hold government agencies’ feet to the fire in meeting their Freedom of Information Act obligations. If government agencies are not timely in meeting their FOIA obligations, journalists may be constitutionally protected by using other means to obtain information if it is needed to report on a matter of public significance. In addition, if equivalent or cumulative information is not later obtained via the FOIA request, journalists may even be constitutionally protected in publishing that information.

First Amendment COMMENT



## January is...

Be Kind to Food Servers Month  
 Book Blitz Month  
 Get Organized Month  
 International Brain Teaser Month  
 International Creativity Month  
 National Clean Up Your  
 Computer Month  
 National Glaucoma  
 Awareness Month  
 National Hot Tea Month  
 National Mentoring Month  
 National Radon Action Month  
 National Skating Month  
 National Stalking  
 Awareness Month  
 National Volunteer  
 Blood Donor Month  
 Oatmeal Month  
 Teen Driving Awareness Month  
 1-7 Diet Resolution Week  
 1 New Year's Day  
 4 Trivia Day  
 World Braille Day  
 6 Twelfth Night  
 7 International  
 Programmers' Day  
 9 National Clean  
 Off Your Desk Day  
 12 National Hot Tea Day  
 16-20 Healthy Weight Week  
 16 Martin Luther King Day  
 Religious Freedom Day  
 20 Inauguration Day  
 22-29 Clean Out  
 Your Inbox Week  
 23 National Handwriting Day  
 National Pie Day  
 24 National Compliment Day  
 28 Data Privacy Day  
 29 Curmudgeons Day  
 World Leprosy Day

## Tune in to the competition

Employees of the Herald & Review in Decatur, Ill., (39,765, Monday– Saturday; 41,249, Sunday) were paid to listen to the radio - and they helped their paper snare some important advertising from the competition at the same time.

As part of the internal “Listen and Win!” radio contest, the paper asked employees to listen to the radio and write down any ads they heard. The employees and their family members could fill out a form that included information on the advertiser, what station the ad ran on, what time the ad ran and what offer was made.

Once the employee had 10 ads on the form, he or she submitted the form to the publisher’s secretary. Once a week, the paper randomly drew a winner and gave that person \$100. Each form filled out gave employees an additional shot at winning the cash prize. In the most productive week, the paper collected 100 forms from staffers.

“We got participation from everyone - the newsroom, circulation, you name it - and some people went crazy, putting in four, five, six sheets a week,” says Kristi Grooms, advertising director. “We had a lot of people put in one or two forms a week. We even had the graphics staff



sitting there while they were working, listening to the radio and writing ads down!”

Held last year, the contest was promoted in the paper’s internal employee newsletter. “Watch for your winning name in the paper to collect your prize and watch for our progress!” the newsletter urged its staff. The paper also got word out about its contest through the building’s voice mail phone system. The contest ran for a couple of months.

“It was explained that radio stations can just look at your paper every day and have a prospect list, but we don’t have a tangible thing to see what they’re doing,” Grooms says. “We explained to employees

► See **COMPETITION**, page 2D

# Confessions of a media buyer

I have owned an advertising agency for longer than I can remember. As a media buyer, I have had presentations from every conceivable media outlet in the market. As you probably know, ad agency media buyers are extremely busy people. They evaluate thousands of print and electronic media and listen to hundreds of presentations. However, for salespeople who represent publications that are not dominant or significant in their markets, it may be difficult to get an appointment.

## Know Who To Contact

To get on the media schedule, it's important to know who to contact at the ad agency. For the advertising salesperson, two groups are important: the media department and the account services department. While 85 percent of your time should be spent with the media department, because it does the actual planning and analysis, the account services department should be kept informed about your publication because it has the day-to-day contact with the client. If your publication is appropriate for several clients at the same agency, you'll have to meet with the media and account personnel on each account.

## Out Of Sight, Out Of Mind

This saying is especially true with a corporate or ad agency media buyer. When you are not persistent enough, or allow yourself to be intimidated, you fall into a comfortable rut

syndrome, ease off or take a passive approach. The usual thinking is "Well I gave it a good try but they don't understand the importance of our publication" or "They are completely oblivious to our existence—sometimes I wonder about our image."

## Indoctrination of the media buyer

Although it is not applicable in my case, advertising salespeople quickly recognize the fact that many media buyers are people in their early to mid-20s who went to college and studied advertising, marketing and public relations, but never understood the importance of a community newspaper. They were indoctrinated to think that mass print media, radio, TV and billboards were the target mediums to consider. Because of that situation, it is obvious that a persistent effort is required to reach the subconscious mind of the media buyer and persuade him or her to strongly consider your publication. I want to emphasize that you must be persistent with the media buyer—show why you should be in his or her marketing plans. Send him or her issues of your paper and flyers about special promotions, take ideas to him or her, be creative, ask the buyer to lunch, make concrete proposals. Above all, be nice, be friendly, be courteous.



## What does your image look like?

Think about the image you are projecting. What does your business card look like? How about your media kit? Don't ever think your media kit is not important. As a media buyer, I want to carefully study each publication and all the facets of why I should do business with them. The only way I can do this efficiently is to have a well organized media kit from you. I want to know about your audit information and testimonials from satisfied customers. The advertising salesperson who tries to sell me strictly with emotional appeals and no logic or facts is not going to win points with me. There is a trend among some sales training experts to insist a media kit is not necessary; that all that is needed are carefully selected magic-bullet phrases and the media buyer will be swayed to buy and

► See BUYER page 5D

# Revealing your market's best kept secret

Psst. Your market has a secret.

You already know it. Your market secret? Your newspaper and your newspaper's web site work. Individually or collectively, your newspaper and your newspaper's web site create awareness and generate sales results.

Why is it a secret? Why might so few people in your market know that your newspaper and your newspaper's web promote action and work? Could it be that you and your staff forgot to tell them? Are you telling the same circle of friends, contacts, and advertisers over and over again?

During these challenging economic times, when business is tough to get, are you, your staff and your entire newspaper ( ... they're ALL part of your marketing team) promoting, marketing AND talking about your newspaper and your newspaper's web site and the action, response and results they generate? What's missing in your media and marketing package, both in print and online? Could it be testimonials? Both reader testimonials and advertiser testimonials?

Testimonials?!? What's a testimonial? Simply put, it is a certificate of qualifications, value or a recommendation or something given to show esteem, admiration, or gratitude.

Have you given your readers

(the local school superintendent, police officer, minister, Chamber of Commerce member) the

## A testimonial for your paper in your paper?

opportunity to share with others the VALUE your newspaper and your newspaper's web site bring to your community? Have you given your current advertisers, your best accounts, the opportunity to give you, your newspaper and your newspaper's web site a RECOMMENDATION?

Have you given your community, both advertisers and readers, the opportunity to express their ADMIRATION and GRATITUDE for the important community resource your newspaper and your newspaper's web site is to your community?



BY CHUCK NAU

If not, ask them! They'll be flattered, and their enthusiastic response may surprise you!

But when do you ask? As soon as you or your staff become aware of a favorable reader comment ( ... in a Letter to the Editor?) or when the success of a particular ad is shared with you. Tell your reader or advertiser that their comments are valuable to you, your paper, your newspaper's web site and the community (...because they are!). Tell them that you do not want their thoughts to be lost or

▶ See NAU, page 6D

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## Buyer: Confessions of a media buyer

From Page 2D

commit to years of advertising. This is not real-world thinking.

### 3 things a media buyer wants to know

Let's talk about the realities that a media buyer wants to deal with as far as the advertising salesperson is concerned:

- ◆ They want to trust and believe the salesperson. Will the salesperson always follow up on every statement that promises action? Are they knowledgeable? Are they creative?
- ◆ Do they have a well planned and executed advertising program? If your

publication is to be the major player in their media mix, you must have a realistic and comprehensive plan for them.

◆ Confidence in the publication is essential. If the media buyer is going to agree to a long range program they can't have lingering doubts about the professionalism of the salesperson, the publication's penetration in the market, readership, and response factors. They must have continual reassurance and updates on these points.

Finally, you can't push the process of creativity. There might be several meetings to go over concepts and to thoroughly understand what the media

buyer's needs are. Patience will usually win out and the happy ending is a strong and comprehensive ad program in your publication.

Bob Berting is a professional speaker, newspaper sales trainer, e-book author, and publishing marketing consultant. His sales record in the newspaper business is impressive. For 15 years, he averaged two cold contracts a week, sold 20 shopping centers on yearly contacts, which tripled the publication's sales volume, and rarely sold a contract that was less than 52 weeks or 1,000 inches during a year. He has conducted more than 1,500 seminars for newspaper staffs, their customers, and state press associations. He conducts tele-seminars with topics that are customized for the newspaper industry. Ask for testimonials from happy tele-seminar customers. Bob's website is [www.bobberting.com](http://www.bobberting.com). He can be reached at 800-536-5408 or [bob@bobberting.com](mailto:bob@bobberting.com).

## Competition: Tune in to the competition

From Page 1D

that we want customers to spend money right away - that we could make a difference with these advertisers, rather than have them waste money (on radio advertising)."

Using the employee-collected data, the paper's advertising staff compiled a list of prospective advertisers and went out to pitch sales to them. At the same time, the paper held workshops for sales reps on selling against the competition. A month-long blitz brought it \$100,000 in new advertising. A significant number of the new clients came from the radio contest.

"We targeted radio because

that's where a lot of our local dollars are," Grooms says. "Not all of the new ads were from our prospect list, but quite a few were."

The employee newsletter kept people posted on how much new advertising revenue was sold as a result of the employees' hard work.

"We had feedback so people knew they were helping," Grooms says.

The ads turned in came from a healthy cross-section of different radio stations, Grooms says.

"That's another little thing we shared with the salespeople - that this represents just a snippet of the market," Grooms says. "This

was just a small representation and you could look and see how many radio stations were out there. They were from towns surrounding us. It just really magnified the fragmentation we talk about in advertising."

In all, the paper gave away about \$1,000 in prize money to employees, who also earned the satisfaction of knowing they helped take on radio competition and raise money for the paper.

"It was just a challenge of who we were going to go after and how we were going to find out where their ads came from," Grooms says. "It's always better when you have teamwork."

Big Ideas

## NAU: Revealing Your Market's Best Kept Secret

From Page 4D

forgotten.

Assist your readers or advertisers in crafting a well written and complimentary (to both of you) testimonial. Typically, it may be a brief three or four sentences on their letterhead or over their signatures. Present them with a framed final version to display in their place of business or office, overlaid on an image of your masthead or front page. Ask your publisher for a hand written note of thanks to slip into the outside of the frame. Deliver your framed testimonial in person with other members of your staff or key executives.

Once you have your testimonial in hand, market it and promote it to the utmost. First and foremost, design an appealing and professional format for your testimonials. Typically, this has been a newspaper ad featuring selected quotes from the testimonial plus a photo of the individuals providing the quote. If appropriate, a photo of their place of business can also be used.

However, something is missing in the typical in-paper testimonial ad. Have you ever seen a testimonial ad for an automobile that does not feature the actual automobile product?

Is your newspaper or your newspaper's web site, the product the testimonial is all about, featured? But don't just drop it in the testimonial - put

it in the hands of the individual giving the testimonial. Help those seeing your testimonial envision how your newspaper or your newspaper's web site played a key role in the growth and success of this local community business. Help those seeing your testimonial envision how your product, your newspaper and your newspaper's web site, play an important role in this reader's life in your community.

But let's go for back for a moment. A testimonial for your paper in your paper? A testimonial for your paper's web site on your newspaper's web site? Are we preaching to the choir? That's not all bad, but it may be limiting your exposure.

Make your testimonials a key ingredient in your marketing or media package. Select some of your best testimonials and add them to your rate card, special section calendar, reader profile, and market information. As you collect a variety of testimonials, reproduce them with a photo and abbreviated quotes and compile a series of them (reader and advertiser) on an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet and include it in all your marketing and promotional efforts.

As you frame your testimonials and present them to your advertisers and readers for their places of business, office or home, do the same for your newspaper. Display your newspaper and newspaper web site's testimonials throughout

your newspaper. Share them with your visitors and with your vendors. Familiarize your newspaper coworkers with your testimonials. Hang them in a variety of places within your newspaper's facilities ... in the cafeteria or break room, the newsroom, various conference rooms, the advertising and online areas, circulation and home delivery areas. Don't forget your own lobby amongst your news and editorial awards. Month after month rotate them, adding new ones and retiring others.

Last but not least, keep your testimonials alive, current, and visible. Each and every day remind those around you that your newspaper and its web site are awareness generating, results producing resources in your community!

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Chuck Nau of Murray & Nau, Inc. is a Seattle area based publishing consultant and sales and management trainer. He has been a speaker for and conducted advertising, marketing, management and sales training workshops with newspapers, niche publishers, publishing groups and press associations, throughout North America. Comments and questions are welcome and may be directed to Chuck via email: [murnau@nwlinc.com](mailto:murnau@nwlinc.com). or at (425) 603 - 0984



# How to handle unspoken objections

Brandon is an advertising manager who wants his team to be prepared for all sales situations. “We spend a lot of time on sales strategy,” he said, “because that helps us cut down on unexpected surprises. To use a baseball comparison, we want to be able to hit the curveball.

“As any sales person will tell you, the most common curveball is an objection,” Brandon explained. “Most prospects have some kind of objection, even if they don’t say it out loud. Unspoken objections can be real sales killers. You’re sailing along thinking everything is going fine, then at the end of the conversation the prospect says, ‘I’ll think about it and let you know.’ That creates a real predicament for a sales person.

“There’s an old saying that silence is golden, but that’s not true in selling,” Brandon said. “Sometimes it’s your job to verbalize what the prospect is thinking. If you don’t, the objection that is lurking below the surface may never come to light. I disagree with the idea that you can’t answer an objection you don’t hear. An unspoken objection can sink your presentation just as fast as one that is shouted.

Brandon explained that the key is to be prepared to weave answers to objections into the presentation. The good news is that most objections are predictable. If a sales person has done his or her homework, there’s no reason to be surprised to hear a question about price,

readership statistics, ad position or production.

“Take price, for example,” he said. “A prospect may be embarrassed to say, ‘I don’t think I can afford to advertise in your paper.’ You can address

**Most prospects have some kind of objection, even if they don’t say it out loud.**

that by bringing up the objection yourself, then reassuring them that it’s natural to be concerned about price. I encourage our team to say something like, ‘Some advertisers wonder about the affordability of advertising in our paper.’ Or ‘People often ask how our rates compare to other media outlets.’ Or ‘You may be wondering how this could fit your ad budget.’ Then they answer the objection just like they would if the prospect brought it up.”

This is a variation of the old Feel-Felt-Found formula, which says, “I understand how you feel about price. Other advertisers have felt the same way. And they found benefits such as...” The difference here is that the sales person brings up the topic. But as Brandon cautions, don’t use the words “feel,” “felt” or “found.” That formula has been around so long – and those words have been misused by so many sales people – that they can make prospects think they are being manipulated.



**Ad-libs**  
BY JOHN FOUST

“Some prospects actually seem relieved when a difficult objection is mentioned by the sales person,” he said. “I’ve seen them nod their heads and say, ‘Yeah, I was thinking about that.’ In a sense, it clears the air and makes them more receptive in the rest of the conversation.”

In other words, your prospects probably won’t object when you mention their unspoken objections.

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John Foust has trained 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](mailto:john@johnfoust.com)

**Without advertising,  
a terrible thing  
happens...**

**NOTHING.**

# Know When to Fold Them



*When does holding on to older software and hardware become detrimental?*

While in Minnesota last week, I had an assignment similar to assignments I've had many times during the past 20 years: to spend a day with a small community newspaper group, meet with the management and staff individually, then propose two optional plans with the same goal in mind.

The goal was to improve the editorial and production workflow, thereby improving the quality of the publication and efficiency of the operation. Sounds simple enough, and having completed similar assignments hundreds of times before, I felt up to the task.

Every newspaper is different, so I keep their particular needs in mind when offering advice. This group is in a process that many of us find ourselves in: determining whether to tweak the current workflow using the tools available, or to upgrade hardware and software throughout the organization to achieve monumental jumps in efficiency.

I understand the dilemma. Having owned several publications in the past, plus a couple of companies right now, I know what it's like to

make upfront expenditures in order to see longterm gains.

Perhaps you are in the same dilemma. Should I purchase new hardware and upgrade software at the same time, or will everything be OK if we upgrade software on our current machines? Would my staff be more efficient with training or is it a waste of time? If I train them too much, will they run off and find a higher paying job somewhere else?

The questions go on. What about camera raw? Will it improve my product or just slow down my workflow? Am I spending enough time on my digital products or am I possibly spending too much time on them?

Speaking of staff, do I have too many or too few? Are they organized in the most efficient manner? Should we create our website in-house or use an outside vendor? The questions could go on forever. It's enough to bring on a panic attack.

Don't panic. Let me suggest a few things to think about when faced with similar questions. Let us consider hardware and software today and I will discuss other issues



BY KEVIN SLIMP

in upcoming columns.

**Q** Is my hardware too old? Is it all going to come crashing down?

**A** Hardware is a delicate issue. One of the quickest ways to improve efficiency is to improve the tools we use. Why do you think Amazon is always investing in new robots and distribution methods? However, hardware isn't cheap and no one wants to waste money.

I would suggest newspapers look over their current hardware and ask a few questions. How old are my computers? If you are working on machines more than six years old, chances are they are

## Slimp: Know When To Fold Them

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getting pretty slow and produce all kinds of delays. I've noticed six years is kind of a magic point for computers. Yes, Macs can last forever, but like anything else they slow down in time. And Windows-based machines slow down more quickly than Macs. It's just a fact of life.

I have four computers I primarily use in my work. One is an eight-year-old iMac. It still works and is fine for word processing and less intensive processes. But, I notice lately that it even slows down during simple tasks like checking email. I wouldn't dare waste my time trying to crank out pages on that computer. Sure I could do it, but it would take three times as long as creating the same pages on my two-year old iMac.

**Q What can I do to get the most of my current hardware?**

**A** If hardware is slowing down your workflow but new computers aren't in the budget, one of the easiest ways to get more from your machine is to maximize its RAM memory. RAM isn't expensive these days and I've seen machines double or even triple in speed by upgrading their current RAM to higher levels. Most computers can hold 8 to 16 gb of RAM. Check to see how much your machines currently have and how much they can hold, and make an investment (usually under \$100) to maximize the memory in each machine.

**Q Is my software too old? Do I really need to pay**

**a monthly fee to keep from falling too far behind?**

**A** Maybe, maybe not. Approximately a third of the newspapers I visit are using the most recent design software. If you're an Adobe user, that means the Creative Cloud version, which requires a monthly subscription.

Does this mean you're behind the curve if you have older software? Again, maybe or maybe not. I don't work for Adobe or Quark, so I have no reason to mislead you.

You don't have to have the latest version of InDesign or Quark to be efficient. I have three versions of Adobe's software on the machine I'm using right now: CS5, CS6 and CC. I've noticed no big difference in speed between CS6 and CC. That's also the case on other machines I use. So if your staff is using CS6 software, speed probably isn't an issue. If it is, you should check the RAM memory, as mentioned earlier. You may want to upgrade to Creative Cloud for other reasons but speed probably isn't one of them.

You might even be OK with Adobe CS5 or 5.5. If things seem to be moving along nicely and you are getting your ads and pages out in a timely manner, you might be safe for now. I wouldn't plan to use CS5 for several more years, but your operation won't come crashing down in the near future due to software issues.

However, if you are using really old software like CS or CS2 (even CS3), your days are numbered. One day in the not-to-distant future you



might walk in to learn no one can get their pages out. Even if that weren't a possibility - and it is - it's taking at least twice as long as it should to get your product out the door using old software. CS3 was released just under ten years ago. Not many of us are driving the same cars we were in 2007. And if we are (I've had mine five years), we're probably thinking about upgrading to a newer model.

It's interesting we often update our cars before updating the things that provide our financial security. We forget that time is money. If it takes twice as long to get an issue designed due to old software and computers, the amount of time it would take to recoup the cost of new equipment is minimal.

As I tell my clients, I'll be home in a couple of days. So do what you think is best. But if it were my decision, I wouldn't wait too long before upgrading any older software and hardware.

Kevin Slimp is director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology and technology guru. Read past columns at [kevinslimp.com](http://kevinslimp.com). Newspapers can sign up to spend an hour with Kevin during live webinars at [braincast.biz](http://braincast.biz).