



Use your skills to rebrand and reposition the newspaper industry

The Relevance Project

A coordinated promotion and marketing campaign designed to reposition and rebrand press association ad services and the newspapers they represent and position them for relevance in a digitally focused world

February 17, 2020

The Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) seeks an outstanding individual with extensive newspaper experience. He or she must be a masterful communicator and external facing leader with the ability to coordinate a movement harnessing the collective reach of 9600 newspapers throughout the United States and Canada, to create a uniform voice delivering important messaging about the unique and essential roles that newspapers and the press associations that support them, play.

Founded in 1923, NAM is a coalition of state, provincial, regional and national North American trade associations serving the newspaper industry.

Reporting to a seven-member board of directors, the project director will be responsible for coordinating the development and execution of the various marketing, promotion, communication, fundraising, and editorial components of the Relevance Project.

The project director will be considered an independent contractor; as such, any individual retained in the position will be required to enter into an independent contractor agreement with NAM, and the individual will be responsible for all income related taxes and benefits. The project director could be an individual, an ad agency or a PR firm. The anticipated duration of the project director position is 2 – 3 years, with terms and goals to be renegotiated annually.

Statements of Proposal will be received until 3:00 pm Saturday, March 14, 2020.

Proposals should be sent electronically via email to NAM Clerk Layne Bruce at:

lbruce@mspress.org

While electronic communication is preferred, documents may also be sent to Layne Bruce, Mississippi Press Association, 371 Edgewood Terrace, Jackson, Mississippi 39206

Mission Statement:

The Relevance Project is a joint effort of newspaper associations throughout the US and Canada. Its purpose is to corral the assets of press association-owned advertising placement services and the assets of community newspapers and position them for relevance in a digitally focused world.

State press associations and the newspapers they represent share a common problem: they no longer matter in the same powerful way we once did. Both have lost their unique roles and relevance in the marketplace.

Five subcommittees of the Relevance Project have developed a robust implementation plan.

A marketing and promotions committee is developing a multi-dimensional campaign with lots of arms and legs, the various elements of which will be distributed to press association-owned ad services and separately, to newspapers, in bite-size, ready to use packages.

The editorial development committee recognizes that relevance is the paramount driver of news consumption. This committee is developing a multi-pronged approach to reasserting community newspapers as the reliable community forum- the primary and most trusted providers of local news and information – the promoters and moderators of community engagement and conversations about government, commerce, education, sports, the environment, and of course, ordinary citizens.

A website will be developed to house, archive and distribute all materials related to the project.

NAM will engage the services of a project director to manage the implementation of the project.

A fundraising committee has been appointed to raise money to fund the project director position and the implementation of the project's activities, events and communications.

Specific goals of the Relevance Project:

- **Reposition state press association-owned advertising placement services** — Integrate specific messaging into sales collateral materials, websites, sales training, sales calls, client presentations, and social media
- **Reposition newspapers**
 - Delineate problems to be addressed (declining readership and revenue, diminished personnel resources, lost digital opportunities, isolation, staff morale)
 - Delineate opportunities to be developed (increasing readership, new newsroom efficiencies, increased collaboration, greater innovation, staff training, HR materials)

- Establish a communication plan: define the plan, establish a timeline, unveil in a series of regional forums, identify how we measure success
- Create broad editorial support for audience education: emphasize newspapers' role in democracy; give context to today's news; build trust; brand credibility; foster community conversations; become essential to readers' lives; emphasize hyper-local content
- Incorporate community forum message architecture into news stories, editorials, HR packets, speakers' bureaus, events, niche products, and social media

A primary duty of the project director will be the timely coordination, production and distribution of relevant materials in bite-sized pieces, and strong communications to newspaper publishers to get alignment and buy-in from 9600 newspapers throughout North America.

The anticipated start date for the position is May 1, 2020.

Questions about the project director position should be addressed to Relevance Project committee chair Michelle Rea, mkrea@nynewspapers.com.

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