

# NewsBeat

Published by the New York Press Association  
on behalf of New York's Community Newspapers

**December 2015**

**NYFA**

## INSIDE:

- *Internship program needs your support*
- *Why print still deserves the spotlight*
- *Six mantras for newspaper sales reps*
- *Why Google and gang don't like your web site*



*happy*

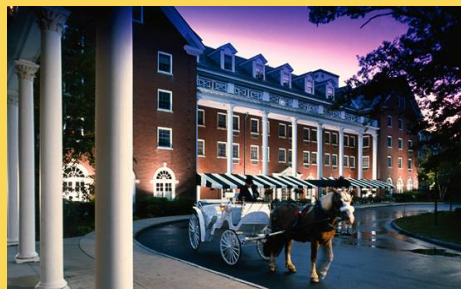


**HOLIDAYS**



**CLIP & SAVE****Mark your calendar**

**NYPA Better Newspaper Contest Deadline,**  
Tuesday, January 12, 2016



**Thursday, April 7, 2016**  
NYPA/NYPS Boards of Directors Meetings  
NYPA Foundation Board of Directors Meeting  
Gideon Putnam Hotel, Saratoga Springs, NY

**Friday & Saturday,**  
**April 8 & 9, 2016**  
NYPA Spring Convention and Tradeshow  
Gideon Putnam Hotel, Saratoga Springs, NY



**Thursday, September 15, 2016**  
NYPA/NYPS Boards of Directors Meetings  
NYPA Foundation Board of Directors Meeting  
Omni Parker House  
60 School Street, Boston, MA

**Friday & Saturday,**  
**September 16 & 17, 2016**  
NYPA Fall Convention  
Omni Parker House  
60 School Street, Boston, MA

**Friday, November 11, 2016**  
NYPA/NYPS Board of Directors Meetings  
NYPA Foundation Board of Directors Meeting  
Straus News, 333 Seventh Ave. (6th flr.), NYC

**NYPA**By DAVID TYLER — *President, NYPA Board of Directors*

## Intern program needs support from association members

For several years now, my company, Eagle Newspapers, has had the good fortune to participate in the New York Press Association summer internship program. To suggest that the program has been successful would be understating its impact. Essentially, Eagle, and about 20 other companies from across the state, have benefited from the work of a fresh-faced, full-time employee, for 10 weeks during the summer. These students often keep in touch, and many have gone into careers in journalism, either here or in other companies.

When you read the comments from the interns, you realize the value of the program, both to the students and to the papers.

"This internship has been undoubtedly the most rewarding, inspiring, and enriching experience I've ever had," said Rochester Institute of Technology student Jenn Marsh, who interned at the Glens Falls Post Star. "I set out to have a career and now I've begun that career, thanks to NYPA and the Post Star." Her thoughts are echoed by all the interns. Most commented on how they were immediately thrown into the deep end and realized they could swim.

The internships are funded by NYPA's charitable arm, the NYPA Foundation, whose mission it is to expand and strengthen journalism across the state. What began as a smaller program in 1996 has, through its own success, grown into a program that now funds approximately 20 interns each summer. The interns receive a \$2,500 stipend for their work, and all the costs of their employment are borne on the Foundation — to include any payroll taxes and worker's compensation insurance.

Over the past 19 years, 210 students have gotten their first real-world journalism experience through these internships. The benefits are plentiful, both to these young people who cut their teeth in newsrooms across the state, and the newspapers that are able to expand their coverage during the summer, or send a reporter on a well-deserved week of vacation knowing that the beat will be covered. The cost to the Foundation — over \$600,000 over the life of the program — is well justified in the eyes of the NYPA board.

But the Foundation's coffers are not limitless.

For a couple of years now, we have known that the Foundation has been systematically spending down its reserves, primarily on the internships. The program costs more than \$60,000 per year, and without any real form of income, the Foundation continues to creep closer to the point when it will no longer be able to fund the program.

So we've made a couple of modest attempts to extend the life of the intern program.

In March, publishers from across the state brought local beer or wine or spirits from their corner of New York to be auctioned off at the Spring Convention. I overspent on a case of beer that Walter Sanchez of the Queens Ledger brought up from a brewery in Queens. It was worth every penny. In addition to being a lot of fun, the auction brought in a few thousand dollars for the internship program.

And just a couple days ago, as of this writing, NYPA launched a Go Fund Me campaign. As publishers you can help, either by making a donation yourself or by sharing news of the campaign in your publications and on social media. If you haven't received notification of the campaign in your email, please visit <https://www.gofundme.com/NYPAFoundation>.

The other change the board has made is to ask publishers who take part in the program to have some skin in the game. This coming year, NYPA will send an invoice for \$500 to each publisher who is granted a summer intern. This fee is less than 20 percent of the cost of the intern, and is a small price to pay for 10 weeks of service from a bright budding journalist.

The Foundation board has determined that the intern program is valuable not only to member newspapers, but also to the mission of sustaining journalism across the state. I think New York's publishers would agree, and I hope you'll get behind our efforts to extend the life of this program for many years to come.

**NewsBeat**

A NEWSLETTER FOR NEW YORK'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS  
Published by the New York Press Association  
621 Columbia Street Ext., Suite 100, Cohoes, NY 12047  
518.464.6483 • 518.464.6489 fax • [www.nynewspapers.com](http://www.nynewspapers.com)  
Executive Editor — Michelle K. Rea    Layout & Design — Rich Hotaling

By the Editors of MEDIA LIFE

# What we know about newspapers

## They are not dead. They're not dying. They'll be reborn, again.

**H**e's a wry old newspaperman, speaking in the dark humor of wry old newspapermen.

"You can love a newspaper, kid, but it will never love you back."

He's speaking of his first and truest love, of course, but it's also a rueful foreboding of what he and so many others knew to be true. Newspapers were dying.

He had point. Papers were folding across the country, taken down by a new medium that was all that people were talking about.

When was he speaking?

A smart guess would be 2009. That year more than 100 newspapers shut down across America, and 10,000 newspaper jobs were cut, victims of the crashing economy and steep drops in newspaper ad revenues.

It was not 2009.

It was 50 years ago, a half-century ago.

Indeed, papers were then folding across the country. Cities that had five or six dailies now had three or just two, even. Brooklyn had lost its beloved Eagle. New York's august Herald Tribune, rival to The New York Times, would soon close.

The new medium so loathed by the wry old newspaperman was television. The internet was not yet imagined.

As it turned out, the wry old newspaperman was dead wrong.

Newspapers were not dying. They were being reborn.

The coming decade, the '70s, may have been their finest decade ever.

The Washington Post broke the Watergate scandal. The Post and Times published the Pentagon Papers. Otis Chandler, having turned his family's Los Angeles Times into a first-rate paper, bought up papers across the country — Baltimore, Hartford, Denver, Dallas — with the aim of turning them into first-rate papers, too. Bright young talents flooded into newsrooms, stirred by the idealism of the '60s. Alternative weeklies launched across the country.

So much for what wry old newspapermen think.

Welcome to Media Life's new series "Reinventing the American Newspaper."

This series is based on several notions held by Media Life's editors from years of covering newspapers. The series will explore and test these notions over the coming months, and they are certainly all open to challenge, as in any discussion.

### Notion 1:

Newspapers are not dead. They are not dying. They are ripe for reinvention, and they will be reinvented.

### Notion 2:

For whatever damage has been done to newspapers by the internet, far worse damage has been done by mismanagement, incompetence, short-sightedness, greed, thick-headedness and a shocking inability of newspapers to learn vital lessons from their mistakes.

### Notion 3:

The internet did not do in newspapers. Newspapers were in trouble long before. The internet just poked a hole, allowing the money to flow out.

### Notion 4:

What really did in newspapers was the great killer of all markets — monopoly. That came long before the internet.

As consolidation continued into the '80s, more and more cities became one-newspaper towns. That meant the end of competition, and with it the end of risk-taking, of innovation. Frustrated, smart people left. Money men moved in, and the money flowed out. Profit margins soared.

The trouble came in the last decade when the digital revolution reintroduced competition to local markets.

Newspapers did not know how to sell against other media.

They still aren't very good at it. That is at the heart of their struggle. That is their struggle.

### Notion 5:

Print is not dead, and the print newspaper is not dead.

The printed newspaper may indeed seem antiquated, but it has one key advantage: visibility. It's wherever you are, on your desk, in your briefcase, on the coffee table. It insists, look at me, pay attention.

It says look at me, pay attention, even as you are throwing it in the trash.

No digital medium commands such attention. It can't. It's in a box.

The real question for newspapers is whether the economic model works. The answer is yes, it can and does.

Newspapers may be an expensive medium and old-fashioned to boot, but at the end of the day newspapers can still deliver the return on investment advertisers are looking for.

If an advertiser can spend \$1 and gets back 25 cents, that's a good deal. It's a better deal than spending 10 cents on digital and getting back a penny. Cheaper does not mean better.

It's up to newspapers to believe in and sell the value of their medium to advertisers.

### Notion 6:

Some papers are doing it right, and many of them are small. They've stuck by their communities, reporting honestly and well on all local matters and serving the needs of small advertisers.

That loyalty has paid off. While these papers were hit by the economic downturn, they've weathered the digital onslaught far better than larger papers.

### Notion 7:

Editorial matters a whole lot. The newspaper industry has largely forgotten that. People look to newspapers for reporting of the sort radio and TV do not provide. They quit subscribing when they don't find it.

All great newspapers are written for their readers, and it has always been so. The reinvented American newspaper will be all about quality editorial. Editors will figure out new, smarter and more creative ways to cover their communities.

### Notion 8:

Newspapers are special. They're different from all other media. They hold a special place in American society, public life, culture and history. We expect more of them, even with all their failings.

We don't care who owns TV networks. They are just names. We care a lot about who owns our newspapers.

Newspapers may change dramatically, but this fundamental aspect of newspapers will not change, and any discussion of newspapers and their future has to accept their uniqueness.

By BENJAMIN NULLIN

# How The New Yorker grew its digital audience by focusing on quality

**T**he New Yorker's mascot, Eustace Tilley, rendered in emoji by Fred Benenson. (via Flickr)

It has been more than a year since The New Yorker took down its paywall and triggered a frenzied run on its archives. Slate and others compiled lists of The New Yorker's greatest hits, encouraging readers to take in the magazine's ruminative nonfiction before the paywall came back up. The whole enterprise savored of an everything-must-go fire sale and less like a bid to build a broad subscriber base.

But when the paywall came up five months later, something strange happened. The New Yorker saw its traffic rise abruptly, with readers flocking to the site and subscribing at a fevered pace. Looking back on the readership spike in March, NewYorker.com editor Nicholas Thompson Nieman Lab the aftershocks of the so-called "Summer of Free" were unexpected.

"It wasn't a massive increase in readers between July and November. There was an increase, but there wasn't a massive increase," Thompson told Nieman Lab. "What's weird is we launched the paywall, and then there was a massive increase."

The magazine's latest numbers indicate that the sudden glut of pageviews wasn't a fluke. On Monday, The New Yorker announced its Web traffic is up 25 percent compared to the previous year. Readers are shelling out \$12 for a 12-week online subscription, too. Subscriptions to NewYorker.com are up 61 percent compared to 2014, an indicator that the magazine's year-old metered paywall has proved effective.

No single factor accounts for The New Yorker's online readership boost, Thompson told Poynter. In recent months, The New Yorker has tried several different approaches to lure a wider audience to its website without resorting to tactics that might dilute the quality of its content: growing its copy desk to speed up the Web publishing process, adjusting its social media strategy and optimizing its stories for discovery by search engines like Google.

"The main strategy for growing audience is to publish more, better stories," Thompson said. "The most encouraging thing we found is that the stories we're prouder of, the stories we put more effort into, attract more readers."

A centerpiece of this strategy is to hold down the number of items the magazine publishes online daily in order to ensure that the items that do go up meet the magazine's standards, Thompson said. By emphasizing quality over quantity, the magazine hopes to build loyalty to The New Yorker's brand and induce habitual website visitors to share its content, thereby attracting new readers.

After some experimentation, The New Yorker has settled on publishing 15 new items to the website per day. This number is subject to the ebb and flow of content, but Thompson says it's not likely to increase dramatically as the magazine's audience grows. Thompson has also realized that readers visit the site regularly to read stories from their favorite writers, so The New Yorker is including more daily content from the magazine's stable of regular contributors in an attempt to build byline recognition.

"Loyalty to particular writers matters a lot," Thompson said. "The people who are familiar with bylines are more likely to subscribe."

Strategic use of social media has also been key to growing the website's audience, Thompson said. As with most outlets, Facebook is one of the primary traffic drivers for The New Yorker. But the magazine has diversified its social media presence, establishing accounts on LinkedIn, Pinterest and Google+ in an attempt to find a wider audience for The New Yorker's content.

Just as important, Thompson says, is paying careful attention to when stories are promoted on social media. One of the website's most popular stories in recent months is nearly 70 years old: "Hiroshima," John Hersey's chronicle of the dropping of the atomic

bomb on the Japanese city of the same name. First published in The New Yorker in 1946, the story found new life in August when The New Yorker digitized the article and promoted it in time for the 70th anniversary of the explosion. Since it was republished this summer, readers have spent more than two million minutes reading the new, online version of "Hiroshima" on NewYorker.com — a figure that breaks down to nearly five years in aggregate time.

"We put it out on social and it just went crazy," Thompson said.

Thompson attributes some of the The New Yorker's digital success to an investment in expanding the magazine's copy editing staff. Since August, The New Yorker has hired two copy editors, growing the desk to six staffers. Before joining The New Yorker, copy editors are tested for fastidiousness and fluency to make sure breaking news items are timely, clean and accurate.

All of this, of course, is proceeding apace while The New Yorker's weekly print magazine is being produced. In order to maximize distribution of the magazine's longer features, NewYorker.com staffers stagger their promotion on social media to ensure they don't all show up in a reader's Twitter or Facebook feed at once.

Ultimately, Thompson says, subscribers and traffic hinge both on maintaining a website with fresh, quality content every day.

"What you want to do is you want The New Yorker site to be a destination," Thompson said. "To the extent that you can have people coming back every day to see something fresh and exciting on the homepage, the better."

By DAVID MURPHY

# Programmatic needs to deliver on its relevance promise

**Though there have been higher engagement rates for advertisements across all standard formats, response rates still hover around 1% as an industry standard. That won't cut it in this age of ad-blocking.**

**R**elevance is everything in advertising. If I'm interested in golf but not in tennis, then it doesn't take a rocket scientist to work out that I'm more likely to click on an advertisement for a golf holiday than I am for a tennis holiday.

In essence, this is where the real appeal of programmatic advertising lies. In the programmatic world — or at least the real-time bidding, auction part of it — it matters not where the ad appears, only that it's the place your target consumer happens to be at the precise moment it's served, whether that's the Daily Telegraph Web site or an ad-funded game on his smartphone.

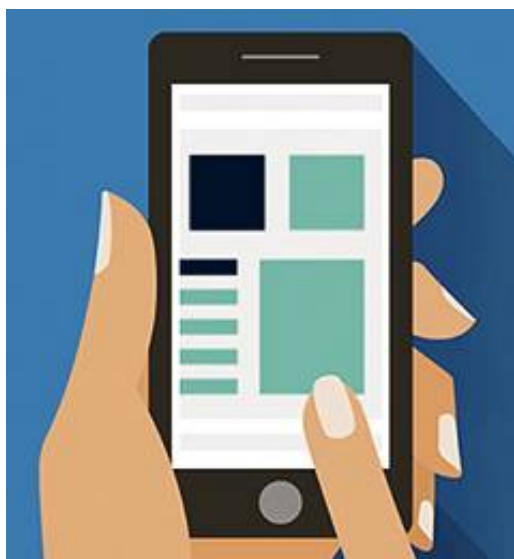
(The other strain of programmatic, private marketplaces, which is growing in popularity, is more akin to traditional advertising in that the advertiser can choose where its ad will appear, even though the inventory is traded programmatically.)

In theory, then, given publisher concerns about the growing number of consumers opting to deploy ad-blocking software, programmatic looks like the answer to their prayers because of its promise of serving up ads that are more relevant to the people who see them.

And if they're more relevant, of course, there's more chance those people will click on them, so everyone's happy — advertiser, publisher, and most importantly, of course, the consumer.

And yet, maybe I'm in the minority. I can't honestly recall the last time I saw a relevant ad on my phone or, indeed, my laptop. I exclude retargeting ads from this analysis.

Clearly, if I've looked at a set of golf clubs online, I would expect to be retargeted with ads for those same clubs. Indeed, in my experience of retargeting, I'd expect to see the ads for the golf clubs for many weeks, or even months, after I've bought them.



I put this point to Andy Chandler, UK managing director for programmatic video advertising firm Virool a few days ago. He was speaking in a panel debate on programmatic, and in one of his answers, he had said he was fed up with seeing ads for Match.com on his phone, so I brought this topic to light.

“Programmatic has been around long enough now, surely,” I said. “Why can’t I remember seeing a single relevant ad on my phone?”

His answer was that I only remember the irrelevant ads, and no doubt I had seen some relevant, well-targeted ads on my phone. The fact they were so relevant made them at the same time un-noteworthy. As for the irrelevant ones, he said, it’s just a question of time. We are just at the start of brands beginning to exploit the power of programmatic, so things will improve.

I follow his logic, though I still maintain I am not routinely hit with relevant ads on mobile or on desktop, and I doubt I am alone in this respect.

A few days ago, a release dropped in my inbox from mobile advertising firm Centra, which confirmed my suspicions. Celtra is a good, solid company, whose tech is used by a lot of big agencies to produce rich media ads that should be much more engaging than the standard, static banner.

The report showed higher ad engagement rates in Q3 2015 across all standard formats. Banners saw a 14% increase in engagement rates, while interstitials were up 8%. So far, so good. When you get to the actual numbers, however, things don’t look quite so healthy.

The engagement rate for expandable banners was 0.87%. For the standard banner, it was 1.14%. And for Celtra’s “Reveal Banner” ad unit, the engagement rate was 1.75%.

It takes me back to the days when I used to report on the direct mail industry, where a response rate of 1% was considered a success. So 99 out of every 100 people who receive your expensively created direct mail pack throw it in the bin (recycling hopefully), and that’s a success.

This is where we are at right now with mobile advertising. If a 1% response rate is the industry standard, then the standard, in my mind, is way too low.

If the answer to ad blocking really is more engaging, more relevant, better targeted ads, then the ad industry had better start creating them. Because based on these figures, we’re a long way off it.

*Author/Contact: David Murphy is editor and founder of Mobile Marketing magazine in London, England. He may be reached at david.murphy@mobilemarketingmagazine.com. This post is part of the Mobile Strategies blog at INMA.org.*

— Reprinted from INMA

By ERICA SWEENEY

# Real pay wall value may lie in data

**Publishers initially adopted pay walls and paid content strategies to establish value for their products and open up a much-needed new digital revenue stream. Since then, many have tweaked their individual models to better fit their markets, and some are also coming to realize there may be another layer of value and revenue to be mined from pay walls: the consumer data they collect from them.**

At first, publishers built pay walls to keep revenue from leaking away. As it turns out, they may be much more valuable for the data they've helped to collect.

Over the years, many publishers have added pay walls as a way of establishing value to their content, and in the process discovered that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to creating an efficient pay wall that works for their market. Now that publishers are a few years into their paid content systems, they are realizing that, while there is money to be made, the revenue is often incremental and that value also lies in the data that can be collected from subscribers via pay walls.

The next challenge is understanding and using this data effectively. The data that publishers obtain from their pay wall subscribers is hugely valuable, says Kelly Leach, CEO of Piano Media, which recently acquired Press+. The company works with about 70 publishing companies in 16 countries and about 500 websites.

"Learning more about their audience and what content is so valued by consumers such that it prompts them to pay for access is quite useful information," she says. "The data that is collected can inform a range of activities including advertising targeting, subscription-offer pricing and configuration, the merchandising of digital subscriptions and even decisions about how to allocate limited resources to create content."

Establishing a value on content is essential for newspapers, says Marc Wilson, CEO and general manager of TownNews, a cloud-based software for publishers. The company works with more than 1,600 media outlets.

Beyond the increased revenue, Wilson says emerging technology allows publishers to gather data about readers simply by tracking when, where and how the readers use the Web and mobile sites. Demographic details — age, gender and interests — can be obtained through print and online subscriptions, online registration, newsletter sign-ups and participation in polls, contests or deals.

"Some publishers are doing a good job, but many aren't fully maximizing the information that's available to them," Wilson says. "It's one more step in the transition into digital."

He says the demographic data can help publishers tailor and recommend specific content, which could increase subscriptions and the value of content.

Plus, understanding subscribers' habits is an essential component of advertising proposals, as a way of attracting new advertisers and sustaining existing ones, says Rich Forsgren, director of audience development strategy and technology at the *Erie Times-News*.

"You can go back to your advertisers and say 'this is your audience,'" he says, explaining that subscriber data shows advertisers who the content reaches and what readers want, which allows advertisers to identify and target specific audiences. This helps them maximize their investments, encouraging larger or more frequent ad buys in the future.

Advertisers are willing to pay more to know their audience, Wilson explains. Because there is so much online advertising inventory available, publishers can obtain higher cost-per-thousand rates by segmenting their ad inventory using the data collected.

"If publishers can tell advertisers specifics (age, gender or interests), they can and do receive higher ad rates," he says. "This is true for both locally sold and national programmatic rates."

The data gathered via pay walls can also be used to target content to readers and personalize experiences, says Peter Marsh, VP of product marketing at NewsCycle Solutions. He explains that there's a growing awareness among publishers of the value of subscription data.

Subscriber data from pay walls can serve as an authentication tool, assuring advertisers that people, rather than bots, are viewing their ads, he explains.

## Pay wall specifications

Over the past few years, Marsh says pay wall technology has become more sophisticated in integrating with newspapers' existing circulation and content management systems. The technology also allows for flexibility in defining pay wall specifics.

Newspapers set up their pay walls or pay meters in a variety of ways, usually based on size, location and level of competition. Hard pay walls require a paid subscription to access any content. Pay meters allow readers to access a set number of stories a month before being asked to subscribe.

Many newspapers bundle print and digital subscriptions, and also offer digital-only access. Content management vendors and publishers say that day passes are becoming an increasingly popular option.

## Experimenting in Erie

The *Erie Times-News* in Erie, Pa., went live with a pay meter on its portal site GoErie.com in October 2013 after about a year and a half of testing and planning, says Rich Forsgren, the paper's director of audience development strategy and technology.

The 126-year-old newspaper is family run, and is the only daily newspaper in the area, Forsgren explains. Its print circulation is 40,000 daily and 55,000 on Sunday.

GoErie.com features content from the print edition and online-only blogs. It receives about 60 million page views and 5.5 million unique visitors per year. When the pay meter was first put in place, he says there was a reduction in page views, but it has bounced back.

The site uses NewsCycle's platform and has had its meter set at 15 articles per 30-day period before requiring a monthly subscription of \$9.95. About 600 users are pure-play digital; the goal is 2,400.

Forsgren says they're realizing the meter is too high. The site recently relaunched as a responsive design, and the meter will be reduced to 10 with digital subscriptions at 99 cents for the first four months and then \$4.95 a month. The paper also plans to offer day passes in the future.

Print subscribers of the *Erie Times-News* were offered complete access to GoErie.com, but Forsgren says only about 20% registered. So, by implementing the pay meter, they have discovered that digital-only subscribers are a new, unique audience, he says.

Forsgren declined to say how much the *Erie Times-News* spends on its pay wall system, but says it is a "blunt investment" to identify users. Not investing in understanding audiences sets publishers up for failure, he says.

"There's a fear that print is going away, and that digital would make print decline faster because it was cheaper," he says. "Many thought pay meters would save the circulation decline, but it hasn't stopped the loss of print subscribers. [Publishers must] set value for something they're giving away for free. They'd never give the paper away for free."

Like the *Erie Times-News*, the *Rutland Herald* in Vermont does not have much competition in its area, but took a different approach in implementing its pay wall in October 2010. The goal was to establish a value to content and equality for print and digital.

The *Rutland Herald* and its sister publication, the *Barre Montpelier Times Argus*, have hard pay walls, using Clickshare's software, says Rob Mitchell, editor and online manager. Breaking news, letters and obituaries remain free.

Subscriptions are \$4.29 a week for a print-digital bundle, \$3.49 for digital only and a \$1 day pass, with bundles of five, 10 or 20 available.

The *Herald's* print circulation is about 10,500 and the *Times Argus's* is 5,500. Combined, they have about 45,800 online users. In the first year of the pay wall, online users dropped 40%-45%, but it's now at about 95% of what it was before the pay wall, Mitchell says.

Mitchell says his company pays \$1,000 for pay wall software and 3.9% of subscriptions. So far, revenue from the pay wall has been in the low seven digits. "It's not been revolutionary, but it has been a difference maker," he says.

While he says user data has been an unexpected benefit of the pay wall, Mitchell admits that they have not made much use of it. "We want to proceed carefully on how to track and treat customers," he says.

## Revenue prospects and misconceptions

By December 2012, the McClatchy Co. had an established pay meter across its newspapers, says Chris Hendricks, the company's VP of interactive media.

Using Press+, McClatchy papers offer subscriptions ranging from \$6.95 to \$9.95 a month. Across all of its 29 daily papers, desktop meters are set at five articles per month, and mobile devices are set at 15, Hendricks explains.

Hendricks declined to say how much McClatchy spends on its pay wall systems, but says subscriptions via pay meters added \$30 million to the company in 2013, the first full year of companywide implementation. He says that it has been "highly profitable" and not disruptive to print volume, digital audiences or advertising. Instead, the company has been able to capitalize on its most loyal users.

"The meters take a look at audiences and patterns and create a win-win," he says. "We went to a pay wall for a practical standpoint: revenue. We believe customers will pay for value."

Hendricks says the concepts of pay walls tended to "spook" publishers in the beginning because many incorrectly believed there was a one-size-fits-all approach. Publishers also incorrectly believed that pay walls would save the industry, he says.

"A big misconception is that simply metering your current content is the solution for paid content," says David Arkin, VP of content and audience at GateHouse Media, which also uses Press+ software for its pay meters.

"We believe and are developing a strategy to place premium content behind the meter, providing more incentive to those who want full access to all the local content we produce. The other misperception is that if you meter your content you are going to lose a lot of page views."

Arkin says when GateHouse implemented pay meters at its daily papers, there was a 5%-7% loss in online traffic, along with ad impression revenue. Desktop meters are currently set at five to 15 articles per month, and mobile are set at 10. Subscription rates range depending on the individual paper. He declined to say how much the pay wall system costs the company.

"It's a complicated metric because the industry is seeing audience transitioning from desktop to mobile at the same time," he says.

## Finding the path to premium

Understanding Web traffic — unique visitors and page views — along with how many of those visitors are hitting the pay wall allows publishers to make the best decisions about the number of free articles to provide without negatively impacting traffic, he explains.

"The trend continues to be experimentation — changing meter levels, hard-walling some content, adding premium club-like incentives to pay for content and trying to get paid through survey services," he says.

"The industry has not solved this yet, but will find a balance that makes sense. The industry will be successful in getting people to pay for content, but the greatest value — and revenue — will come to companies that figure out how to create content that truly is premium."

Arkin says a pay wall is not a "magic bullet." While it helps grow revenue, most importantly it reinforces value of content. (He declined to share how much revenue the company has generated from pay meters.) This year, he says GateHouse is focused on data collection and management.

Piano Media's Leach says pay walls do not impact a site's casual visitor and a majority of Web traffic never triggers the pay wall. Instead, it targets the most loyal consumers, and the ability to gather information on these individuals and use it to publishers' advantage is the next big step.

She says revenue generated from digital subscriptions varies based on type and setup of pay walls, pricing, content, how compelling digital products are and if there is an integrated strategy for print and digital products.

"I have yet to meet a publisher that isn't pleased to be generating the incremental digital revenue and to diversify their digital revenue beyond just advertising," she says.

But, the key with pay walls remains developing a strategy that takes into account a newspaper's content and audience.

"There was a great rush six, seven years ago to publish everything we produce online, and free and open to all," Arkin says. "That helped build audience, but we are still building a model — with advertising, the meter and other programs — that can sustain the newsrooms needed to produce quality local content for print and Web. Again, developing premium layers, experiences and values is going to be critical to driving a successful digital subscription strategy."

By MATT DERIENZO

# Reader engagement and relationships with communities are key

The Web disrupted print. Mobile disrupted the Web. Dominant social media and tech platforms are threatening the very idea of media brands as a consumer destination. Easy access to free content eroded subscription revenue. And now the last big source of money supporting journalism is threatened, as the concept of advertising itself is disrupted.

There's a common thread through almost every major upheaval publishers have faced over the past 10 years. The digital transformation was not primarily a change from paper to screen, but a fundamental shift of power from brands to individuals.

In 2008, Craigslist helped people find what they were looking for and sell stuff they didn't want, better and less expensively than newspaper classifieds. And so classifieds vanished.

In 2015, the recommendation of a friend on social media, search engines and smart recommendation algorithms point them to the goods and services they need, so why wouldn't they install an ad blocker to avoid the barrage of publishers' increasingly desperate and intrusive display ads?

By 2020, one thing is certain: technology will have exponentially advanced that empowerment of the individual. Media outlets who did not focus on user experience, engagement, customer service and relationships will be left behind.

## The audience is your lifeline

Reader engagement has moved from buzzword to lasting focus in many newsrooms. But the publishers on the other side of the building are running circulation departments with outsourced customer service that can barely fulfill a simple subscription request or answer a question. They're presenting websites that are slow, laden with intrusive and deceptive advertising that don't work on mobile. And their strategy for reader revenue is a bundled-with-print paywall in which barely anyone pays for digital-only access. The traditional print readers who don't cancel get a big rate increase but never log in for access beyond the paywall, either.

"They are taking their audience and their community for granted. They're not showing them the respect they deserve," said Robert Hernandez, a professor at the Annenberg School of Journalism at the University of Southern California. "...There's got to be a better way. There are other ways."

The industry urgently needs innovation in advertising, Hernandez said, and that will require getting past "elitist church and state" dogma. Revenue and editorial staff (and developers, and designers) need to sit down and talk about how to serve the audience's needs through both advertising and journalism.

When "advertising is done right, you're helping someone," he said, and tricking people through advertisements that look like articles but aren't labeled transparently isn't doing it right.

He said the advertising side needs developers, "creative storytellers" and user experience experts.

And similar to newsroom staff, ad sales reps need to develop relationships with the communities advertisers are trying to reach, not just the advertisers themselves. Are publishers really serving their community or an advertiser well when their answer is to make the ad bigger, take over the home page, move the ad around the page so it's hard to avoid, make the "close" button really hard to find?

"Let's betray that relationship with the person who is coming to us for information," is the message, Hernandez said, and the rise of ad blocking technology is "a symptom of how bad we are with our design and our customer service."

"I think we know what's coming: Readers shifting to mobile, growing expectation for video, outcomes-based selling, non-display revenue, deeper engagement with audiences on significantly improved multi-media display to produce increased loyalty," said Todd Benoit, publisher of the Bangor (Maine) Daily News.

"I think the upcoming shift already can be seen in the growth of native content, which five years from now will look like a crude form of deeper audience engagement and will move the industry away from

display and toward information services. Social platforms are already well down this road, and newspapers will follow. Membership is one way to express this, but the key will be using data to more accurately deliver useful information to readers and consumers at the right point of their journey through a topic, product or service."

Damon Kiesow, head of mobile initiatives at McClatchy newspapers' interactive division, said, "It really comes down to focusing on the audience."

"Their expectations are being set by a hundred or a thousand other media experiences they have on a daily basis," he continued, "and the non-news experiences they consume on the same devices."

"Crappy user experiences cannot change fast enough," said Steve Buttry, former head of editorial innovation at Digital First Media who now oversees student media at Louisiana State University. "Print customer service departments can't start a subscription or deliver a paper for a customer who didn't get one. Websites load slowly or block the reader from the story she clicked on and intended to read."

John Robinson, former editor of the News & Record in Greensboro, N.C., said he wishes he had learned more from "the Amazons and the Googles and the eBays" when he was leading a newsroom, "to understand that the real value to customers was being reliable, easy to use, quick and delivering relevant results."

"Newspapers continue to have terrible customer service problems. They continue to cover things that readers really don't want or need," he said. "... (And) hearing a reader say, 'I don't go to your site because it's too much trouble,' should scare the bejeezus out of you."

"If people have a stronger relationship with a news organization, they are more likely to pay for that relationship," said Buttry. "More important (because other sources of revenue are more important than subscriptions), if a news organization develops strong relations with the community through effective

engagement, people will spend more attention on the existing (and new) products. Wherever we are headed with content or revenue strategy, the attention and relationships that develop from effective engagement will be the foundation upon which we build our future.”

Hernandez and others see opportunity — and soon, perhaps, necessity — to move beyond the Paywall 1.0 concept of “pay up to keep reading” toward more public media-style memberships.

And which would you rather have? An enthusiastic community of readers who cherish your product and the experience of your brand so much they voluntarily give you money and proudly put bumper stickers on their cars? Or someone who hates your paywall, installed an ad blocker because of your website and would rather go to the dentist than call customer service?

Melody Kramer, a 2015 Nieman fellow at Harvard who studied new models for public media memberships, sees opportunity for newspapers, especially if they can look beyond short-term cash transactions.

“I think there are opportunities for legacy publications to create communities around their content. I also believe there are opportunities... to create loyalty and inspire people to contribute — through in-kind donations which may save the publication money,” she said.

Kramer suggests enlisting readers more aggressively in moderating online story comments, and categorizing and tagging archival content — things that could improve the product, save the expense of staff time and build a community of readers who feel like they are “part” of the effort rather than just customers.

And membership programs show more promise than paywalls, perhaps, in gleaning information about who your audience is and what it needs.

“I think there’s a badly needed role that applies equally to content and revenue,” said Benoit. “If we are going to inspire loyalty, we need staff members who spend their time looking at audience needs through direct encounters, surveys, analytics, etc., and fulfilling them. This is different from taking action based on occasional or regular marketing surveys. It’s a day-to-day process that allows the newspaper to respond quickly to audience or client interests.

“I think of this role as audience management, and it’s very service oriented. Does a region need to understand more about a school budget? The audience manager gathers, synthesizes, analyzes and presents the information in the most useful way possible. Maybe they add original reporting, maybe not. Does an advertising client need support in analyzing the drop-off in their purchase funnel? We need to have someone on staff who can walk through it with the client and identify opportunities.”

### Finding the future

Publishers have a long way to go in simply holding on to and serving existing customers. Reaching millennials and the generation that will come after them will require different thinking.

“Their experience of news is already fundamentally different than their eldest counterparts,” said Jesse Holcomb of Pew Research Center. “Whether publishers and editors can reinvent news for a new generation, that may very well involve going back to square one and questioning all of the assumptions about the news norms and routines that have been so established and engrained for decades.”

“We put these blinders on about what news is and how to create it and what it should look like and what it means to the community. If we’re not covering that stuff, we’re not covering their lives, and we’re becoming increasingly distant in relevance for them,” McClatchy’s Kiesow said. “This isn’t hard to fix. All you have to do is first admit you have a problem. The second step is to start talking to your audience, and not just people who are your current audience. We’re already over-serving our current audience. And what we’re doing is risking the entirety of our new potential audience.”

That’s a big enough challenge for tech and digital startups who are establishing a workplace culture from scratch.

There’s an elephant in the room for legacy media organizations — a workforce beleaguered by years of no raises, benefit cuts, furloughs, industry turmoil head trash and the ever-looming threat of layoffs and buyouts.

“Businesses have abandoned the implicit compact with employees that said: ‘Work hard. Excel at craft. Together we’ll prosper.’ Today, work ethic and

high performance may just as easily earn a layoff as a laurel. Media CEOs delude themselves if they think they can operate this way and still enjoy the loyalty of staff,” said Jill Geisler, a professor at Loyola University and author of the book, “Work Happy: What Great Bosses Know.”

Geisler said that most newspaper employees aren’t “loyal to the company, but rather to journalism and to their immediate supervisors — provided those managers are good.” And the managers who are good at reducing “the inevitable stress that comes from feeling like trapeze artists flying non-stop without a net,” those who focus on the “human side” of management: “communication, conflict resolution, collaboration and motivation,” should be seen as invaluable by media CEOs.

“Companies and managers are so disrespectful to ourselves...to the craft,” USC’s Hernandez said, and it’s squandered a workforce that would be happy to give their all for low pay because they feel a higher calling. “It’s the culture. It’s the boss. It’s not all about money.”

He believes it’s time to “let digital people lead,” and to motivate rank-and-file employees by giving them the room to experiment and innovate and the safe place to fail along the way.

“The Washington Post has a breath of fresh air right now because it has an owner who comes from digital culture...he’s asking people to innovate and iterate,” Hernandez said.

“You’ve been fantastic running print or TV, but you’re not qualified to run digital,” is the tough message he believes some publishers and ad directors need to hear.

“If I could go back with a magic wand, starting in 1990, 1992, 1995, every time you lay off two copy editors, you should hire one developer,” Kiesow said. “We’re really understaffed in some organizations, especially at the local level, in people who can do data journalism on the front end, and handle the back end stuff with making the CMS serve the newsroom and journalism, and to create new workflows in video, metrics.”

— Reprinted from *Editor and Publisher*

By LUCIA MOSES

# Facebook's traffic to top publishers fell 32 percent since January

While Facebook makes headlines for cooking up new initiatives with publishers, the actual traffic it's sending those publishers has fallen sharply.

Referral traffic (desktop + mobile) to the top 30 Facebook publishers (as defined by their reliance on Facebook) plunged 32 percent from January to October, according to SimpleReach, a distribution analytics company. The more reliant the publisher on Facebook, the bigger the hit: Among the top 10, the drop was a steeper 42.7 percent.

Those results line up with those from social traffic tracker SimilarWeb, which looked at the 50 biggest publishers in Facebook from January to September. It found that The Huffington Post's Facebook traffic fell 60.1 percent, to 16 million. Fox News' dropped 48.2 percent to 4.3 million. BuzzFeed's Facebook visits fell 40.8 percent to 23.7 million. Across all 50, the biggest drop in traffic in the period took place from January to February, when publishers' Facebook traffic fell an average of 75 percent. There was a smaller but also significant drop from March to April.

(The SimilarWeb figures are desktop only, which doesn't tell the full story as many publishers are getting upwards of 50 percent of their traffic on mobile devices. However, desktop is significant because it's still where most publishers make the lion's share of their revenue.)

It's hard to pinpoint why publishers' Facebook traffic has declined, much less get publishers to talk on the record about the subject. They say Facebook doesn't communicate directly with them about their traffic fluctuations, and it's hard to isolate publishers' own actions from things Facebook does that might affect traffic performance. What worked six months ago to drive shares doesn't necessarily work today. A publisher might dial up or down the number of articles it publishes in its feed, which could affect results. One publisher, speaking anonymously, said users are doing more of their Facebook article sharing via text or email, which would cut into its Facebook referral traffic.

But the most common theory is that as Facebook has been trying to keep users in its ecosystem, it's encouraged publishers to upload their articles and videos directly to the social network, whether it's video or its Instant Articles feature that began rolling out in May. That means fewer traditional links in news feeds that take people back to publisher sites. Facebook said recently that those Instant Articles are getting shared more than publishers' regular links.

The data seems to serve as a cautionary tale for publishers that have hitched their wagon to Facebook, only to get hit when the social giant's traffic firehose slows to a trickle. While Facebook is letting publishers keep all the revenue from ads they sell on their Instant Articles, Facebook can change the rules at any time; and there's no clear path for publishers to monetize native video. (Facebook began testing video ads with half a dozen publishers over the summer, with publishers getting 45 percent of the revenue, but isn't letting publishers sell video ads themselves yet.)

Getting users to spend more time in its app isn't the only way Facebook can benefit from its push to get publishers to upload content directly. Publishers that see their referral traffic fall are in some cases spending more with Facebook to promote their content to make up for the organic traffic loss, industry watchers said. "For certain publishers, it's a significant driver of traffic," SimilarWeb head of content Moshe Alexenberg said. "So they have to adjust — they have no choice."

Another theory for the decline is that a recent Facebook algorithm change favored more user content in the feed at the expense of publisher content. In its earnings call last week, Facebook said it's been trying to spur users to post more as they've have gotten more passive.

In a statement, Facebook denied it's sending less traffic to publishers overall:

"Over the past two years, we've seen referral traffic to publishers from Facebook grow significantly, nearly across the board. As the number of posts to Facebook has increased substantially over the past few months, there has been a corresponding increase in the amount of potential posts to show any one person, which impacts reach. In this newly competitive landscape, we're seeing results vary by publisher: some are experiencing continued growth in referral traffic while others have seen declines. On the whole, referrals to the top 1,000 publishers are at the same level today as they were in January." That data includes outbound Instant Article clicks, though.

Jared Grusd, CEO of The Huffington Post, said he believes the era of Facebook being the dominant referral source for publishers is eroding as the social network has pushed publishers to upload content directly to the app, as Snapchat has, too. "They themselves have started to dial down the referral knob," he said.

The problem is that audience measurement tools haven't caught up to the trend, which makes it hard for publishers to fully take advantage of their audience with advertisers.

"The way many companies and marketers look at traditional metrics is becoming somewhat anachronistic because they measure one slice of the equation," Grusd said. "The tools haven't caught up to where the behavior is. But even though there's uncertainty, if we can deliver on our editorial pillars, the rest will take care of itself. We can possibly build an even bigger audience, and data sets will follow, and so will monetization. Publishers won't accept an ecosystem where those things don't exist and all the platforms know that."

— Reprinted from Digiday

By GEORGE N. ROOT III

# Why local publishers top national newspapers for advertisers



If advertising is a game of numbers, then it would make sense that national newspaper advertising would hold more clout than local or regional advertising. But everything is not always what it seems. Apparently, nearly 50 percent of people who read local, regional and national newspapers are more inclined to respond to local and regional advertising than they are the national ads. Newspaper publishers all over the world are trying to figure out why, and use regional advertising to reach a bigger audience.

## Follow Mr. Buffett

Sometimes all you need to do to understand a business trend is find out what Warren Buffett is doing and duplicate that. In 2014, Warren Buffett offered to pay \$142 million in cash and add another \$400 million in guaranteed loans to Media General to buy 63 of its local and regional newspapers at a time when investing in newspapers was seen as an unstable idea. But now that local and regional newspapers are starting to see improvements, it is

easier to see what the Oracle of Omaha saw in the local and regional newspaper business.

## Building a local reputation

But why are newspaper readers more likely to respond to a local or regional ad than a national one? After all, The Guardian points out that advertisers that utilized local and regional advertising were 20 percent more likely to be seen as reliable and trustworthy to consumers. So why are people so interested in what local and regional newspaper advertisers have to say?

According to Chron.com, the key is that local and regional advertisers are considered to be from the areas where the advertising is seen, and that allows these companies to develop a strong local reputation with consumers. Local and regional newspapers can capitalize on that feeling of trust by making sure that they sell plenty of advertising space to local and regional businesses.



Use your leverage as a local news source to increase your advertising revenue.

## Enhance your local advertising

Now is the time for local and regional newspaper publishers to track their advertising and measure its effectiveness versus national newspaper advertising. When it comes time to present your case to the businesses in your area, the fact that nearly half of the consumers who read your newspaper prefer local and regional advertising to national ads should convince those businesses to invest in your newspaper and not a national one.

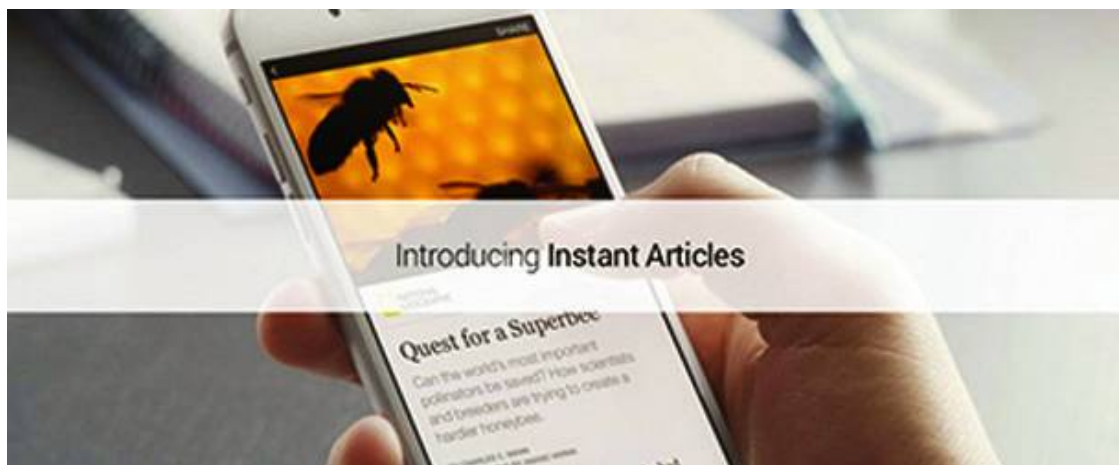
There will always be a market for national newspapers at the local and regional level, but the presence of national publications in a marketplace should not intimidate the newspapers that have been there for decades. When it comes to trusting advertisers, local and regional consumers prefer the advertising they see in local and regional newspapers as opposed to what shows up in national newspapers. By leveraging the trust factor for local and regional advertising to consumers, local and regional newspapers can grab a big chunk of that advertising revenue that was meant for the national publications.

*George N Root III is a professional freelance writer who has expertise in topics such as Internet marketing, business, advertising, and personal finance.*

— Reprinted from RealMatch

By CHUCK BLEVINS

# Why Google and gang don't like your web site



Google, Facebook, and Apple are not happy with your mobile Web site. It's too slow. It doesn't look very good. And it's costing them — and you — users and money.

They are betting their ecosystems offer a better fix than our own. And they don't want to wait for the media and advertising industries to correct things themselves.

Facebook is making moves to address mobile performance — though mostly in their favour — with Instant Articles. Instant Articles launched publicly in late October after a short trial with The Atlantic, The New York Times, and others. It “displays stories as much as 10 times faster than conventional mobile browsers, while also providing the kind of fluid, high-quality experience, and interactivity people expect,” says Facebook.

Also, Facebook can sell ads into them (at a 30% cut) if the publisher agrees. Importantly, this content lives only in Facebook.

Instant articles do provide a superior experience for Facebook app users — and for Facebook. It's less clear how much the publishers will benefit, even with a 70% share of ad revenue.

As Matthew Ingram notes in Fortune, “... Facebook doesn't really care about the revenue from ads around news content (although I expect most partners will take the 70% deal, if not now then later, because Facebook is better at selling ads). What Facebook wants is to deepen and strengthen its hold on users.”

Google obviously doesn't benefit if Facebook or Apple pull news content inside their walls, so pushing changes on the free Web is sensible. That response is Google's open-source Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP)

Project — a framework to optimise Web pages for speed through simpler HTML, lessened reliance on JavaScript, and use of open-source libraries.

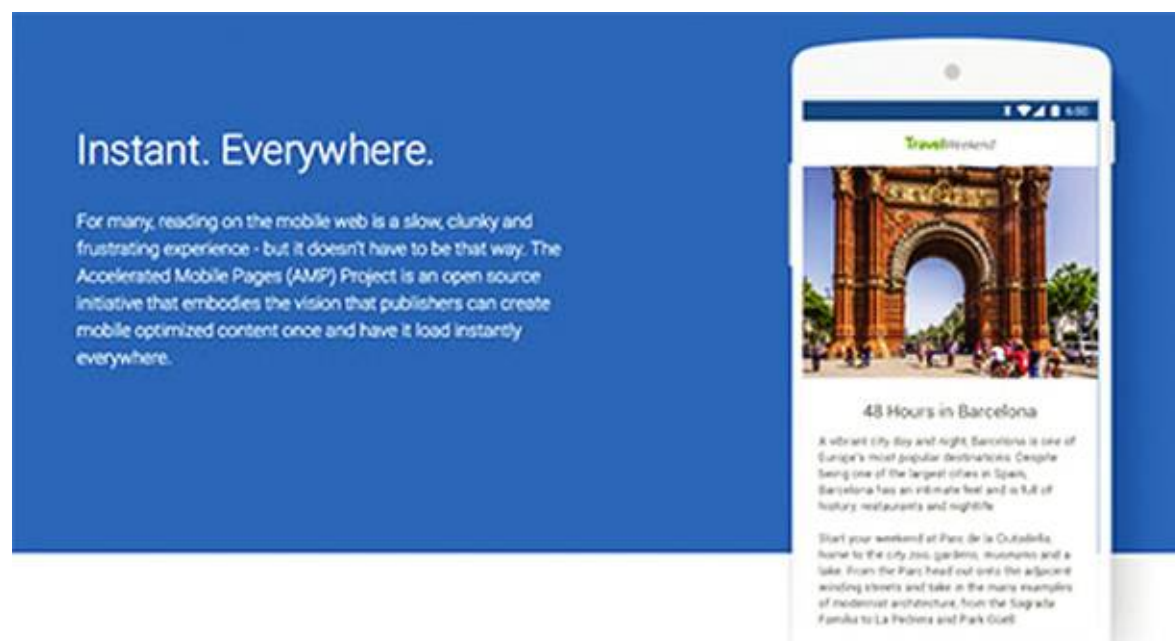
It's a work in progress, but the search giant is soliciting industry feedback and participation with its development.

Google has been making waves by banging the Web performance drum for some time. As with Facebook, the efforts are about improving the environment for Google's own core businesses, as much of its other efforts have been — like Google Fiber and the mobile friendly algorithm.

“Mobilegeddon” this past spring sent publisher scrambling to align with the release of Google's mobile-friendly algorithm, which uses more than 200 factors to determine if a site is mobile-friendly and impacts placement on search results.

Targeted as a factor are prestitials that cover sites Web pages with notices to download the native app (but not general advertisements). Any site displaying one is not mobile-friendly.

Facebook, Google, and Apple spin their moves as being about good user experience and



By JESSIE SAMPSON

more capable monetisation. “Every time a Web page takes too long to load, they lose a reader – and the opportunity to earn revenue through advertising or subscriptions,” says Google’s Webmaster Blog.

Google, Facebook, and Apple can certainly fix things for us by moving us in with them. Unfortunately, their long-term goals aren’t our long-term goals.

But they are right.

Whether or not you decide to partner in Instant Articles and/or adopt AMP, you must improve your own performance. Many sites, like The Washington Post have realised the consequences of overloaded third-party and advertising network tags, and bloated templates dragging down load times and harming ad views.

The news media company cleaned up its code and streamlined the site by “... looking at every element on its pages, eliminating redundancies and ditching features that readers didn’t use, such as some of its recirculation widgets,” reports Digiday. This reduced its perceived load time by 85%.

The Interactive Advertising Bureau also has recognised the digital advertising industry’s responsibility to improve performance and win back consumer trust (as most publishers have no control over how fast or well third-party advertising performs).

The IAB just launched its LEAN ads programme, stating: “We messed up. As technologists tasked with delivering content and services to users, we lost track of the user experience.”

Facebook, Google, and Apple may not share our objectives or our best interests — but they do share the same experiential requirements for customers and their needs: The right information in the right context at the right time.

We can learn a lot by what they ask of their partners and what they do for their customers to meet those requirements — and applying it to our businesses. Recognising the necessity of performance is one we should take to heart.

# Why print news still deserves the spotlight

**D**espite a changing media landscape, print newspapers offer a sense of clarity and command a particularly high degree of engagement. On the days that people read their newspapers, they spend an average of 70 minutes with them. Another bonus: print advertising is free of ad-blocking.

In recent weeks, there seems to have been a renewed appreciation of the power of print to engage readers, influence opinions, and provide a favorable context for advertisers.

It’s the content, context, and influence of newspapers that make them stand out in the digitally driven, clickbait-consuming frenzy that is today’s news landscape.

Amongst all the noise, the verified journalism of newspapers provides a sense of clarity and assuredness while commanding high levels of engagement. It’s quite a challenge to multi-task when reading a newspaper, and the latest TouchPoints6 data shows that, on the days they read them, people spend an average of 70 minutes with their newspaper. That’s good news for newspapers and advertisers alike.

Writing for Media Week recently, James Wildman, Trinity Mirror Solution’s chief revenue officer, articulated these attributes perfectly and

rallied against what he describes as “printism” — an unreasoned dislike, hostility, or antagonism toward, or discrimination against, print that isn’t based on reason or actual experience of the print medium.

“There are few — if any — media that can demand the sales attention of their audience in a trusted brand environment, provide a space and context where commercial messages are actively enjoyed, and genuinely influence the way people think and behave” he wrote. “Our readers know it is special, and it is time we remind ourselves of that too. Millions of people read a physical newspaper, so my message to the media industry is: Don’t be a printism pariah.”

Suffice to say, print’s still got it.

As The Mail on Sunday’s Geordie Greig put it at Shift North: “Newspapers are addictive. If I had to invent a form that could be something that could be thrown away, something that could be preserved, something that could be folded, could even be ironed, something that is easy to sell, something that is cheap, something that if kept for a long time can be valuable, something that could be passed along, printable, holdable, foldable, and disposable, how could one invent it? It is the genius of the newspaper.”

— Reprinted from INMA



**Avoid Post-Holiday Panic and Stress!**

**Start preparing your Better Newspaper Contest entries NOW!!**

Entry form and rules available at [nynewspapers.com](http://nynewspapers.com) — just click on the icon on the top right corner of the home page.

**Deadline is January 12th!**

**Questions? Contact Rich or Jill at NYPA:**  
[rkh0t@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rkh0t@nycap.rr.com) or [jill@nynewspapers.com](mailto:jill@nynewspapers.com)

By the Editors of MEDIA LIFE

# Six mantras for newspaper sales reps

## Selling ads is hard work. These tips from buyers should help.

### “Let me tell you who reads my newspaper.”

You may be selling ad space in your newspaper, but the advertiser is buying your readership, and your readership is your greatest single asset on a sales call.

Newspapers are the medium of choice of people who matter in any community: These people own businesses, own homes, pay taxes, vote and have children in school. Those are the people advertisers most want to reach. You can't know too much about those people. The more you know, the better you'll be at selling them.

### “My newspaper can boost your sales. I can prove it.”

Listen to a digital sales rep and you'll hear a stream of numbers. Are the numbers any good? Who's to say, but they serve to explain the major reason digital is exploding and newspapers are suffering.

Advertisers want and expect data on what they can expect of their ad dollars, but few newspapers have the research to prove their publications can deliver.

Worse, they simply don't sell advertising that way. The irony is that driving sales is the one thing newspapers are particularly good at (see chart, below).

So get the research going. Get testimonials where you can. Make the argument.

### “I'm a believer. I believe in my paper, I believe in newspapers.”

Selling newspaper advertising these days has to be heart-breaking. So many think newspapers are dying or already dead, and what advertiser wants to invest in a publication that's on the verge of extinction?

But you have to believe. If you don't believe, you'll sell fewer ads. You'll also do deals you shouldn't, giving in to cockamamie demands. You can become a believer by mastering mantras one and two: Know your reader and be able to prove advertising in your newspaper can deliver.

### “I can sell against anyone. Bring it on.”

The old newspaper days were great. You were the one paper in a one-newspaper town. Media was a silo business; each silo had its slice of media dollars it could call its own.

Digital came along and blew the silos down. Now everyone competes for every scrap of business.

To sell in this new environment, you need to know your paper but you also need a deep understanding of your competitors' strengths and weaknesses. All have weaknesses.

Catalog all the arguments against newspaper advertising and marshal arguments knocking down each.

Put yourself in the position of the advertiser facing five choices. How does he choose? How do you help him choose? By understanding all five choices.

### “Yes, I know what's in my paper because I read every page of it.”

The worst thing a rep can do on a sales call is flub a simple question about the paper. It looks dumb. You come off as not caring, and in front of someone who you want to invest ad dollars.

Assume the person you are selling to reads the paper every day and has for years.

You need to read the paper every day and be able to discuss what's in. You the rep are likely that advertiser's one human link to the paper. You are, in his or her mind, the publisher, editor, favorite columnist, despised columnist and delivery boy, all wrapped into one. Their engagement in your paper is a blessing. Put it to work for you.

### “I will stay ahead of the curve of change in media.”

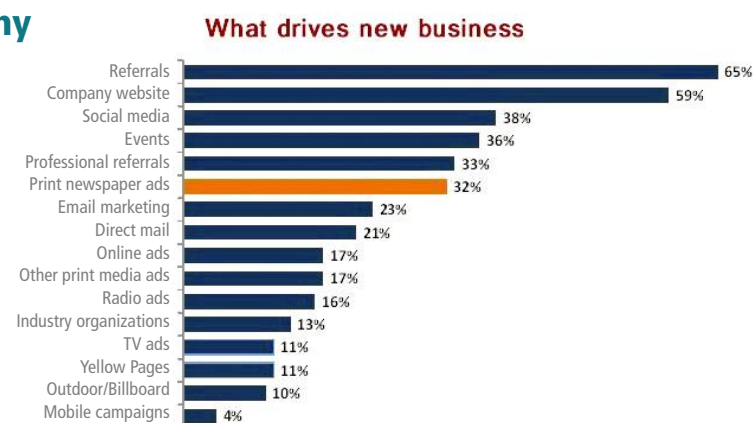
What is true one day may not be true the next, and vice versa. Such is the nature of change. For all the forecasting done in media, the sad fact is we are invariably taken by surprise by the biggest developments. Who anticipated social media? Or Google even?

Newspapers have had a rough slog this past decade or so. But that could change tomorrow, or next Thursday, or Jan. 1, the result of this or that development in the media marketplace.

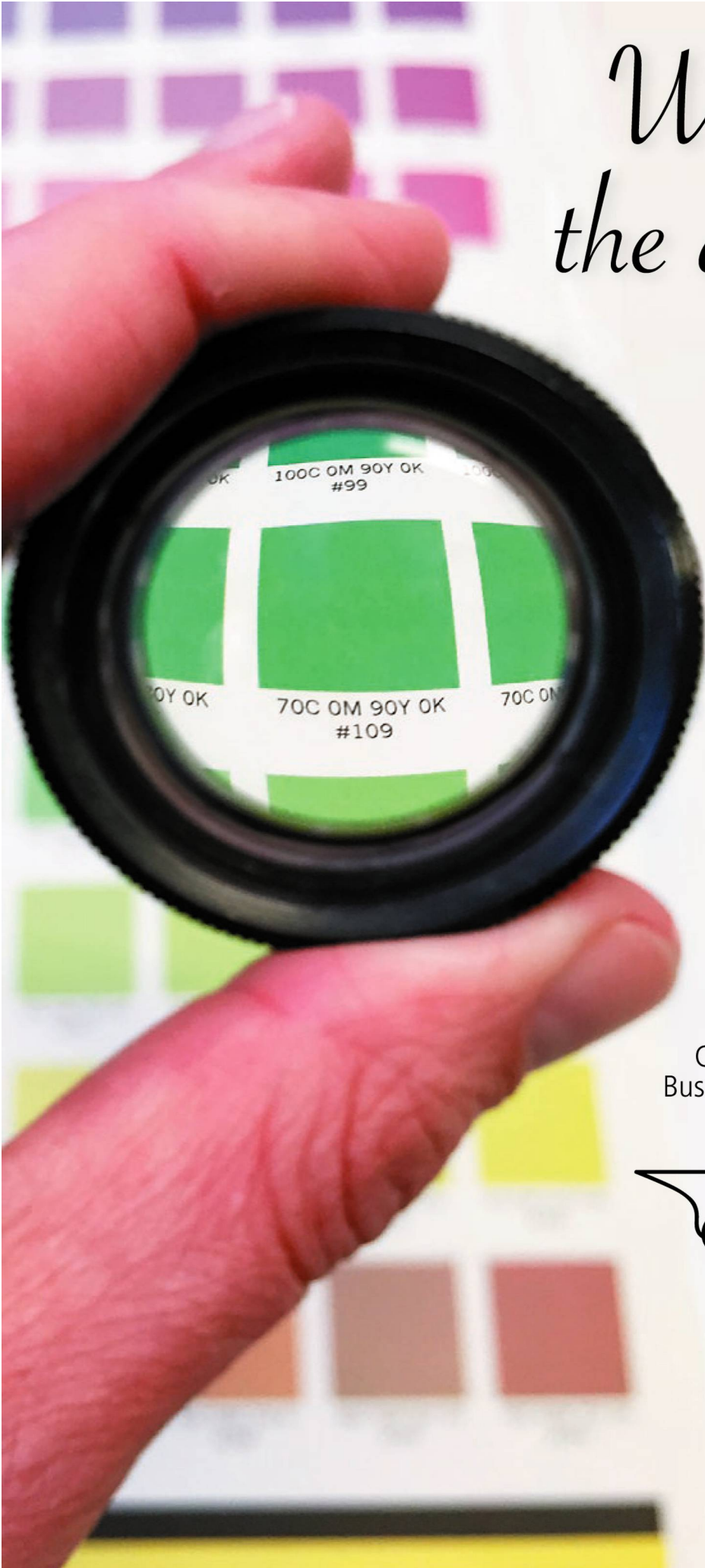
You need to know about it in order to sell with it.

The only way you are going to know about it if you closely follow not just newspapers but all media: radio, TV, out of home, direct mail and of course all things digital.

So stay tuned in.



Credit: Borrell Associates



*We specialize in  
the art of printing!*

Customer Satisfaction  
and Competitive Pricing.

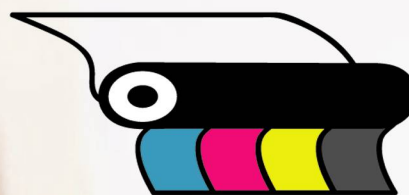
More than Just printers...  
We are Publishers Too!

Keeps Up with the  
Latest Technologies

Your One-Stop  
Print Resource.

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

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



**Trumbull**  
PRINTING

205 Spring Hill Road  
Trumbull, CT 06611

**203.261.2548**

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

By HARVEY MACKAY

# Invest mightily for the best returns of life

I've had this little gem tucked away for many years, and I refer to it from time to time to remind myself of what's really important. I've searched for the source, which I haven't been able to find, because I'd like to thank the author for these wonderful lessons.

Here are the original thoughts, followed by my impressions.

- **The most destructive habit:** Worry.
- **The greatest joy:** Giving.
- **The greatest loss:** Loss of self-respect.
- **The most satisfying work:** Helping others.
- **The ugliest personality trait:** Selfishness.
- **The most endangered species:** Dedicated leaders.
- **Our greatest natural resource:** Our youth.
- **The greatest "shot in the arm":** Encouragement.
- **The greatest problem to overcome:** Fear.
- **The most effective sleeping pill:** Peace of mind.
- **The most crippling disease:** Excuses.
- **The most powerful force in life:** Love.
- **The most incredible computer:** The brain.
- **The worst thing to be without:** Hope.
- **The deadliest weapon:** The tongue.
- **The two most power-filled words:** I can.
- **The greatest asset:** Faith.
- **The most worthless emotion:** Self-pity.
- **The most beautiful attire:** A smile.
- **The most prized possession:** Integrity.
- **The most contagious spirit:** Enthusiasm.



ulcers, nervous disorders and all sorts of other conditions. Worry can destroy your peace of mind. The best remedy? Remember tomorrow is a new day, full of promise.

**Giving/helping others** — These two go hand-in-hand. You are always in a position to give, just as you can always help someone. Never pass up an opportunity to share what you have. Dedicated leaders understand that they have tremendous power to help those they lead by setting a solid example and demonstrating the highest standards.

**Selfishness** — The old quote says it all: "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit." An offshoot of selfishness is self-pity, which no one should waste time on anyway. Perhaps the worst effect is loss of self-respect.

Self-respect is what motivates you to be the best you can be. And in turn, you can motivate others to be their best.

Encouragement is oxygen to the soul. People appreciate recognition, encouragement and praise. Offering encouragement based on a person's character or actions inspires them to perform in such a manner that invites additional praise. Be careful not to let the tongue undo the positive effects of encouragement. Use it for good.

First, let's talk about worry. Did you know this word is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word that means to strangle or to choke? People do literally worry themselves to death — or heart disease, high blood pressure,

**Fear** — Every crisis we face is multiplied when we act out of fear. When we fear something, we empower it. If we refuse to concede to our fear, there is nothing to fear.

**Excuses** — We all make excuses from time to time. However, the day you stop making them is the day you will move up in the world.

Hope is what gets many of us through our worst days. Hope is believing that every cloud has a silver lining, and when that cloud rains, it makes things grow. A perfect partner is faith, for without faith, hope is meaningless. Love completes this trio. Real power comes through when you love someone or something, whether it's a career or a cause.

A smile improves your looks. I learned years ago that one of the most powerful things you can do to have influence over others is to smile at them. It should be standard equipment for all people.

**Integrity** — either you have it or you don't. Doing the right thing is never the wrong thing to do.

Enthusiasm is the spark that ignites our lives. It's one of the most important attributes to success. It also leads to the confidence required for achievement.

Pass as much encouragement as possible to our youth, the people who will inherit this world. I am constantly encouraged by the dreams and aspirations of the young people I mentor, and I want them to pass their experiences to future generations.

Finally, the brain. What a gift we have with our brain. Unlike your computer, it may not perform rapid-fire, complex calculations. But attached to the heart, it can make better decisions and produce infinitely better results.

Mackay's Moral: If you want life's best, see to it that life gets your best.

— Reprinted from *Times Union*

By DAWN McCullan

## Are Facebook, Twitter really interested in partnering with news media companies?

**T**ours of Facebook and Twitter on INMA's recent Silicon Valley Study Tour left participants with as many questions as answers. What are the revenue sharing prospects? How does the Instant Articles feature benefit publishers? How do digital subscription models work with these platforms? Executives from News Corp and ABP weigh in.

*Editor's note: The INMA Silicon Valley Study Tour spent five days touring 14 companies with 34 news media executives from around the world.*

"They were looking at us more like clients ... rather than as equal partners," says tour participant Aritra Sarkar, vice president of strategy at India's ABP.

Troubling, to be sure, as are the sketchy details on revenue sharing.

"What those platforms need to do is be a lot clearer about how their revenue share is going to work," says Nathaniel Bane, head of digital at News Corp Australia. "They need to demonstrate very quickly to publishers that they can actually create new revenue streams for publishers around their content."

Are there pros to the news media industry? Or do Facebook and Twitter take the biggest share of the engagement and revenue gains?



— Reprinted from INMA

## Cuomo vetoes newspaper carrier measure; Teamsters cheer

**T**eamsters Joint Council 16 on Monday praised Gov. Andrew Cuomo's veto of a measure that would have excluded some newspaper carriers from certain aspects of the state's labor laws such as unemployment, minimum wage and workers' compensation.

"Governor Cuomo is once again standing up for New York's working families. This veto protects New York's best-in-the-nation safeguards for commercial drivers against being misclassified as independent contractors," said Teamsters Joint Council 16 President George Miranda.

The measure, backed by Assembly Majority Leader Joe Morelle and Republican Sen. George Amedore, would have codified Department of Labor regulations for independent contractors at newspapers, as long as they meet a multi-faceted test.

"This bill sets forth a common sense test, consistent with the current guidelines and with federal standards, by which newspapers, delivery persons and agency staff will be able to easily determine an individual's employment status," the bills sponsors wrote in a memo. "Codifying the guidelines issued by the Department of Labor will foster the distribution of news to New York State

residents widely, easily, and affordably while providing delivery persons with the freedom to engage in a form of small business or self-employment that affords them the freedom from constraints of traditional employment requirements."

The bill was backed by the publisher of the Rochester newspaper, the Democrat and Chronicle, who wrote to Cuomo earlier in the year urging him to back the measure.

"Preserving the affordable distribution of printed newspapers saves Teamster jobs in pressrooms, as many Pressrooms are represented by the Graphic Communications Conference of the Teamsters," publisher Michael Kane wrote.

But the teamsters argued the measure was a way around adhering to the state's labor laws.

"The ink was barely dry on Commercial Goods Transportation Fair Play Act before anti-worker forces began trying to add loopholes," Miranda said. "Employee misclassification is a growing problem across the country, but New York continues to set the standard for protecting workers from this practice. Governor Cuomo has sent a clear message to the business community and the legislature that no industry will get an exemption from these protections for commercial drivers."

***"A good newspaper is a nation talking to itself."***

— Arthur Miller (1915-2005) 1915, American Dramatist

By TONDA F. RUSH — *Chief Executive Officer and general counsel, NNA*

# Valassis special postal deal off the table

WASHINGTON — The long struggle between the newspaper industry and Valassis Inc., over the direct mail company's special postage discounts from the U.S. Postal Service appears to have ended with a whimper. In November, Valassis filed a report saying it had carried out no mailings eligible for the special discount. It announced it had paid an agreed \$100,000 penalty to USPS last September.

The tension between newspapers and its long-time insert customer began in April 2012 when the Postal Service requested a special contract rate for Valassis that was designed to pull advertising inserts out of Sunday newspapers and into a new weekend Valassis direct mail package. If the program had launched and successfully mailed 1 million qualifying mail pieces, Valassis could have earned a 22 percent to 34 percent Standard Mail postage discount.

The newspaper industry fought the proposal, even taking it to the U.S. Court of Appeals. But in the end, the market ruled.

Valassis announced it had launched programs in May 2013 in Atlanta, Phoenix and Washington. It reported mailing 2 million pieces in 2013, but that these were not qualifying pieces under the rules of the contract agreement.

There were no mailings in 2014 or 2015. NNA President Chip Hutcheson, publisher of the Princeton (KY) Times-Leader, said the \$100,000 fine was a fitting end to an unfortunate chapter.

"We want to think of this whole experience as an episode of recession fever at the Postal Service. They were facing grim markets, as we all were, and USPS was grasping at straws. The fever ignited this idea of picking winners and

losers in the advertising marketplace for the sake of maybe getting in some new mail volume. We at NNA didn't think it would work, and it didn't. So USPS got \$100,000, and spent unreported thousands in lawyers and analysts' time.

The newspaper industry and Valassis spent heavily to advance their various viewpoints. And in the end, there was no new mail. Newspapers were undoubtedly hurt in those test markets and Valassis couldn't come up with the advertisers.

"There is a moral to this story that every parent knows: don't play favorites in the family. No good comes of it. We are glad this chapter is over and we intend to continue to work with Valassis to develop its markets and with USPS to improve the mail. Money is tight. We need to plant our seeds where they can grow."

# NY AG's office asks for newspapers help with foreclosure rescue scam

**T**he Attorney General's office reached out to NYPA, the New York News Publishers Association, and the New York State Broadcasters Association to ask for help educating consumers about an escalating scam being perpetrated by individuals and groups offering fraudulent foreclosure rescue services.

Foreclosure rescue scammers offer homeowners much-needed loan modification in exchange for a fee. Some attempt to trick the homeowner into signing over the title to their home or making monthly mortgage payments to the scammer rather than the actual mortgage holder. While the methods vary, the end result is the same: victims lose significant sums of money while ending up at further risk of losing their homes.

Scammers operate in areas with high levels of foreclosure activity. Foreclosure rescue scams disproportionately impact minority homeowners and older homeowners.

Many homeowners lack and awareness of foreclosure rescue scams, how to avoid them, and where to go for assistance.

The good news is that legitimate help from skilled professionals at non-profit community based organizations is available to New Yorkers at risk of foreclosure — and it is free.

Newspapers can help by writing local stories about the incidence of foreclosure rescue scams in the communities they cover, and by being vigilant about not accepting advertising from scammers.

New York State Law requires that the following language and information be included in any marketing materials of advertisements produced by foreclosure rescue entities:

"In New York State, housing counselors who are approved by the U.S. Dept of Housing & Urban Development or the NYS Dept of Financial Services may provide the same or similar services as a distressed property consultant, at no charge. A list of approved housing counselors can be found on the NYS Dept of Financial Services website. You should consider consulting an attorney or a government approved housing counselor before signing any legal document concerning a distressed property consultant."

By BRYAN BOYHAN

# Cuba: a nation in transformation

Like many schemes, our plan to visit Cuba was hatched on a golf course.

Joe Shaw, the executive editor of the Press News Group in Southampton, and I were playing a round one warm afternoon this past summer, shortly after the U.S. had re-opened diplomatic relations with Cuba and John Kerry raised the American flag for the first time in more than 50 years at the American embassy there. I mentioned Cuba — Havana in particular — had been on my bucket list, and Joe thought it would be good to get there before it turned into the Las Vegas of the Caribbean.

I knew very little about the island; but it loomed large in my imagination. I was in fourth and fifth grade during the Cuban missile crisis and the Bay of Pigs; young, but I vividly remember the anxiety in my parents' voices and the drills we practiced in class, kneeling in line in the halls and tucking our heads against the wall in case the bombs were to rain down on Marion Street Elementary School.

But there was its storied past also, the Hollywood stars who played in the hotels and casinos, the gangsters who plotted and the political intrigue of the revolution itself. Hemingway and the island bars and fishing for marlin. The Old Man and the Sea. Rum and cigars.

Joe emailed me days later and wondered if NYPA would be interested in organizing a trip to Cuba. Instead of he and I and our wives going, wouldn't it be more interesting if a planeload of journalists from New York went down to see a country on the verge — before the changes that appear sure to come alter the island forever. What would we learn?

I made the suggestion to an enthusiastic Michelle Rea who in turn brought in Garry Pierre-Pierre to investigate what the logistics might be. Within about two weeks a rough plan had been put together and by the fall convention in September they had a proposal to put in front of the membership. About two dozen of us signed up, with journalists coming from the East End of Long Island to Buffalo.

“... like the parable of the blind men who encounter an elephant and offer very different accounts depending on which part of it they touch, Cuba remains a unique and mysterious animal — one shrouded in extremes and contradictions,” wrote Annette Hinkle in her account of the trip for *The Express* the week we returned.

Cuba turned out to be all of that.

It is a desperately poor country, its economy crushed by Communism, yet it is one of the most literate nations on the planet, and one which has an enviable medical system. There are crumbling, post-revolution apartments just down the highway from enormous, new luxury resorts that line beautiful beaches.

Cubans are free to travel, but few can afford the plane ticket out. The roads are filled with beautifully restored classic American cars, but many of the working class line the highways twice a day to hitchhike to and from their jobs.

There are two forms of currency and (at least) two economies, with workers trying to get close to the stream of tourist dollars entering the country. Despite the poverty,



there remains a spirit of entrepreneurship. The owner of a cab can make more money than both of his parents, who are doctors. There is a brisk black market where one box of cigars can bring more than a typical Cuban earns in a month — or two.

Despite the challenges and obvious hardships, there is a great pride in Cuban culture. Music is everywhere: in the streets, in bars and restaurants, and musicians play all day, wherever and whenever they can. While it became clear to us that you don't go to Cuba for the food, there is an expanding — and, apparently, improving — scene where privately-owned restaurants (many of which are formerly — or even currently — private homes) are welcoming diners to eat locally caught lobster and chicken and pork dishes. And in many cases dinners are served on china with silverware by waiters in white shirts and black ties who deliver linen napkins with tongs to each individual diner. It's a nod to very formal Spanish traditions, even though the restaurant — or *paladar* — may be at the end of a dirt road or in the renovated garage of a Cuban house.

We took the opportunity to see a nation in transformation, and I think it's rare to witness first hand the beginning of what likely will be a sea change for a place like Cuba. We learned that those changes have already begun, and if the U.S. continues to loosen restrictions on commerce with Cuba, the Cuban people — and those who visit the island — can expect to see a much different place in the next several years. I for one would lobby for a return trip. The beaches are warm, the daiquiris cold and the traveling company a pleasure.

— Bryan Boyhan is the Immediate Past President of the NYPA and publisher emeritus of the Sag Harbor Express



By JOSEPH SHAW

# Bracing for the storm

## A visit to Cuba reveals a country ready for change

**H**urricanes, our tour guide Mercedes was explaining, are certainly a concern for the island nation of Cuba — but, in fact, named storms are often welcomed. Despite the potential damage, they bring much-needed precipitation to the dry Caribbean island, helping to irrigate the farm fields so crucial to the country's economy.

A tiny fact, but one that seemed more and more compelling as a metaphor for what we found on a visit, in early November, as part of a journalistic mission to Cuba. Organized through the New York Press Association, the adventure sent community journalists from throughout the state to experience Cuba at a time when a storm of change is brewing just 90 miles away. The Press attended, as did members of The Sag Harbor Express, and some two dozen other publishers, editors and photographers from daily and weekly newspapers in New York State.

The NYPA trip had been sanctioned by federal officials, who clearly want to nudge along the thawing of relations between the two countries. The trip was bookended by the October 28 vote by the United Nations to condemn the U.S. embargo of Cuba — a vote of 191-2, with only the United States and Israel voting no. On our return, the headlines reported that a plan to close the U.S. prison in Guantanamo Bay, long a source of friction between the two nations, was expected to move forward swiftly.

Change is rolling forward with great momentum, and seems to be gathering speed: Even in Cuba, most everyone spoke openly about the pending normalization of relations between the two countries, long enemies.

At least the governments have been — one thing I discovered is that the Cuban people, seemingly without exception, harbor no ill will whatsoever toward American visitors for the impact of the half-century-long embargo. They were, uniformly, thrilled to see us, eager to talk with us, and ready to welcome more of us. Some of it was clearly self-preservation: the money that would accompany American tourism, along with an



end to the trade embargo, has the potential to change lives. But there was a sincere fellowship as well: Cubans, we were told over and over again, have friends and family in America, and so the connection is a personal one already, despite the many attempts to block it.

I hesitated to write about the trip, because what can I really offer? I spent a week in Cuba, mostly on a peninsula loaded with international resort hotels, and a town, Varadero, that is largely driven by tourism. Two days were spent in the beautiful city of Havana, wandering its streets as tourists do in any other major city. We interacted with many Cubans, who were unfailingly friendly and willing to talk.

But it's fair to say that a week as a sanctioned visitor offers only a tiny glimpse at what

people kept calling "the real Cuba." That's partly by design: One striking discovery is just how much the government of Cuba has effectively changed the way people think, so that oppression can fade to the background, where it lurks as an existential threat. You don't have to threaten people, after all, when the very thought of crossing certain boundaries has been slowly eroded by 50 years of censorship.

Take, for example, the conversation we had with a 25-year-old Cuban journalist. She reminded me very much of a Press reporter: young, eager, talented, smart. Her full-time job at a government-owned newspaper — a gig that is part of her mandatory service, required of all Cuban citizens — pays her the equivalent of \$30 a month, a figure I repeatedly heard as an average salary for all kinds of workers, including doctors, nurses, professionals of all stripes. She also freelances for an independent magazine, published by a man in Miami, Florida, and distributed throughout Cuba; she makes as much writing two articles for the magazine as she does in a month at the newspaper.

She was candid, to a point. But it quickly became clear that "journalist" in Cuba is a very different job. Did she fear being jailed for her writing, as other journalists have been in a country that the Committee To Protect Journalists calls "the most restricted climate for press freedom in the Americas"? No, she replied, not really. She would be more worried about losing her job; she mentioned that a colleague



Photos by Dana Shaw

suggested she begin using an assumed name for her independent work.

Does she rock the boat in her magazine work? A blank look was the reply. It wouldn't really occur to her to be critical of the government — an effective demonstration of how censorship becomes self-censorship over time. We mused that taking on the government was a perk to the job in America, the fun part. "But do you really think it brings about any change?" she asked, with a touch of incredulity. When we replied that we certainly believe our work has an impact, you could see a tiny flame flicker in her eyes. It was a new concept to her.

It's crucial that those tiny flames are fanned: Cuba is one of the most literate, educated countries on the planet, the result of a socialist system that has emphasized education, but the people have been isolated for so long. The internet remains a fleeting glimpse of the world for most. Cubans are smart, but they are largely uninformed. It's up to young journalists, like the one we met, to change that, in a climate where the free press has been brutally silenced for decades.

The bigger lesson was economic. Cuba hums with construction: swanky new hotels in the tourist areas, condos in other places, infrastructure elsewhere. Canadian and European tourists are crucial, but they won't hold a candle to the invasion of American tourists if the embargo is lifted. Cuba wants to be ready — but it very clearly is not. Cruise ships and airliners will dump visitors in like locusts. They will bring money, but they will demand services at a rate no country can provide.

Will the new money reach "the real Cuba," where even doctors compete for coveted spots waiting tables at the resorts to support their \$30-a-month stipend? The need is immense, as most working Cubans live in near poverty, and only the black market is available to anyone with entrepreneurial skills. Perhaps, if the changes continue, "the real Cuba" will reap the rewards, more freedom will be demanded, and capitalism will win another round.

But it was clear from our visit that the future is far from certain. On our last night, a storm was well offshore, throwing brilliant cloud-to-cloud lighting and darkening the horizon. It was coming in fast, bringing plenty of refreshing rain to help things grow. But who knows what else it would bring.

— Joseph Shaw, a resident of Hampton Bays, is executive editor of the Press News Group in Southampton.

By ANNETTE HINKLE — *Editor, The Sag Harbor Express*

# A visit to Cuba

**N**inety miles. That's roughly the distance between Sag Harbor and the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, and it's all that separates the United States from Cuba.

Ninety miles — but it could just as easily be 9,000.

Half a decade of sour relations with the United States makes Cuba perhaps the last place on earth where Coca Cola doesn't exist. And while there is a McDonalds — just one — it lies within the confines of the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay.

But that may be about to change.

A year ago, President Obama announced plans to normalize relations with Cuba. As part of the thaw, this past summer the long shuttered U.S. embassy in Havana reopened and in recent months travel restrictions have been relaxed for Americans looking to visit the country.

So last week, a group of community journalists, myself included along with other East Enders, traveled to Cuba with the New York State Press Association to discover this place for ourselves. During our time there, we visited beaches, sugar plantations and the Bay of Pigs. We saw small towns and spent a night in Havana where evidence of the city's revitalization is everywhere.

But like the parable of the blind men who encounter an elephant and offer very different accounts depending on which part of it they touch, Cuba remains a unique and mysterious animal — one shrouded in extremes and contradictions. In February a group of Pierson students will also visit Cuba, and what they find there will depend on where they go.

Stay in a five star resort on the 20km long Varadero Peninsula two hours east of Havana, and you will have one experience. Venture away from the resorts and into nearby towns where the employees of those resorts live, like Santa Marta, Matanzas and C-rdenas (home of Cuban poster boy Elian Gonzalez), and you get a much different, and far more real, picture of Cuba.

Even getting straight answers to the most direct question can be difficult, which is why asking as many people as possible in as many ways as possible is the best technique for arriving at some version of the truth. Among them is the fact that Cubans no longer need state permission to travel abroad. But with the average Cuban making



just \$20 a month (there's a separate currency for locals and tourists) saving \$100 to obtain a passport is nearly impossible, as is buying a plane ticket, unless a wealthy relative living abroad can provide the fare.

But Cubans with access to tourists and their CUCs (Cuban Convertible Pesos which are pegged to the U.S. dollar), are learning capitalism at the street level through wheeling and dealing while their compatriots in the countryside still survive on a salary based on the national peso (or CUP) which is worth one twenty-fifth of the CUC.

That dual economy is now defining the place and this is a society beginning to see extremes. As more Cubans gain access to the Internet and understand how to profit from the tourist economy, will Cuba's socialist ideals remain intact or will this become a society defined by the haves and the have-nots?

It's a question many Cubans themselves are asking.

"Many people still believe blindly in what the government says because they receive free education and medical care," said one woman I met during my visit. "Quality of life has increased for some, but \$18 to \$20 is the average salary for most. They can live on that. They are happy because life is simple. They have no opportunity to see the outside world, but it's enough."

"Other people go out and see the world," she continued, before adding, "The Chinese have a saying that when you go out of your land, horizons spread, and in my opinion, as long as people don't have a way to travel it will stay the way it is."

That may be some people's dream and as stuck in time as Cuba is with its 1950s cars and old mobster-era bars where you can hang out with statues of

Hemingway and drink daiquiris and mojitos that haven't changed in half a century, change is, nonetheless, inevitable and evidence of its arrival, for better and for worse, is everywhere you look in Havana.

Perhaps the change is starkest along the Malecón, Havana's famous 8 km long seawall which looks north across the Strait of Florida and where Cubans gather nightly to socialize and escape the heat of the day. Across the boulevard facing the sea is a long stretch of colonial style buildings chock full of beaux art architectural details, covered vaulted porticos and massive double height windows.

Abandoned long ago, nothing beyond the beautiful façade remains — no walls, no floors, no history and no memory. The empty shells serve as a metaphor to what's been lost, but also represent the potential of what might be gained. As I look at my own reflection in the bus window, I can't help but see my dual role as both the salvation and the demise of this most unique place. If U.S./Cuba relations continue to improve in the years ahead, as the Cuban people fervently hope they do, what will happen when American developers move in and have their way with the place?

Despite their decrepit state, looking at the beauty of these crumbled facades through the window of an air conditioned tour bus is heartbreaking. You can already see 10 years down the road when the place is vibrant with high end restaurants and nightclubs beckoning eager travelers from the United States who will spend their money and live the high life in a city once infamous for that kind of thing. Already, the darkness is punctuated every few blocks by a single hip looking eatery that is attracting the younger generation of Cubans.

This is a generation that has no memory or interest in the cold wars of old men and dead men. Cubans today are ready to move on, and when you stop and talk with a young person in Havana and tell them you're from New York, their eyes light up as they talk about the cousins in America they have never met.

I ask my woman friend if, after 50 years of the U.S. embargo, some people in Cuba harbor hostility toward the Americans.

"Even as young children, we were not taught to hate Americans," she explained. "We know the American people have nothing to do with the government position. If foreign policy changes, Cuba will develop faster. It's a good opportunity for American companies and Cubans."

"The world is changing, and we are as well."

By ROGER HANNIGAN GILSON

# Hudson Register-Star celebrating 230 years in print

HUDSON — The Register-Star turned 230 this year, making it the second-oldest paper still in print in the nation.

A few months older than the Poughkeepsie Journal, the paper has gone through many incarnations since being founded as The Hudson Gazette on April 7, 1785 by Ashbel Stoddard and Charles Webster.

The two newspapermen started their careers at the nation's oldest newspaper still in print, the Hartford Courant, then known as the Connecticut Courant.

Stoddard, only in his early 20s, first established a book store and print shop on the corner of Third Street and Warren Street in Hudson.

The duo got their daily news by sending a post rider to Litchfield, Connecticut, a major stop on the Post Road from Boston to New York City. Three times a week, news also came to them by sloop or stagecoach from Albany and New York City.

The newspaper was printed weekly and a subscription cost 12 shillings — or about \$3 per year.

A fire, reported in The Gazette as the city's first major conflagration, destroyed the newspaper's offices, leading to the creation of Hudson's first fire outfit.

Hudson residents rallied to raise funds for the paper, which continued publication without interruption, but the introduction of local papers The Balance, The Bee and The Wasp led to a fall in subscriptions.

The Gazette was purchased by Ezra Sampson and Harry Croswell, of The Balance, in 1803, who merged the two papers and discontinued publication of The Gazette.

Stoddard wrote an obituary for his creation in The Bee, which read, "DIED. In this city, on Tuesday last, Miss Hudson Gazette, daughter of Mr. Ashbel Stoddard, in her 19th year of age."

He needled a rival start-up in the obituary, saying many of the paper's former admirers "jumped ship 'to the wheedling strumpet of the name Balance.'"

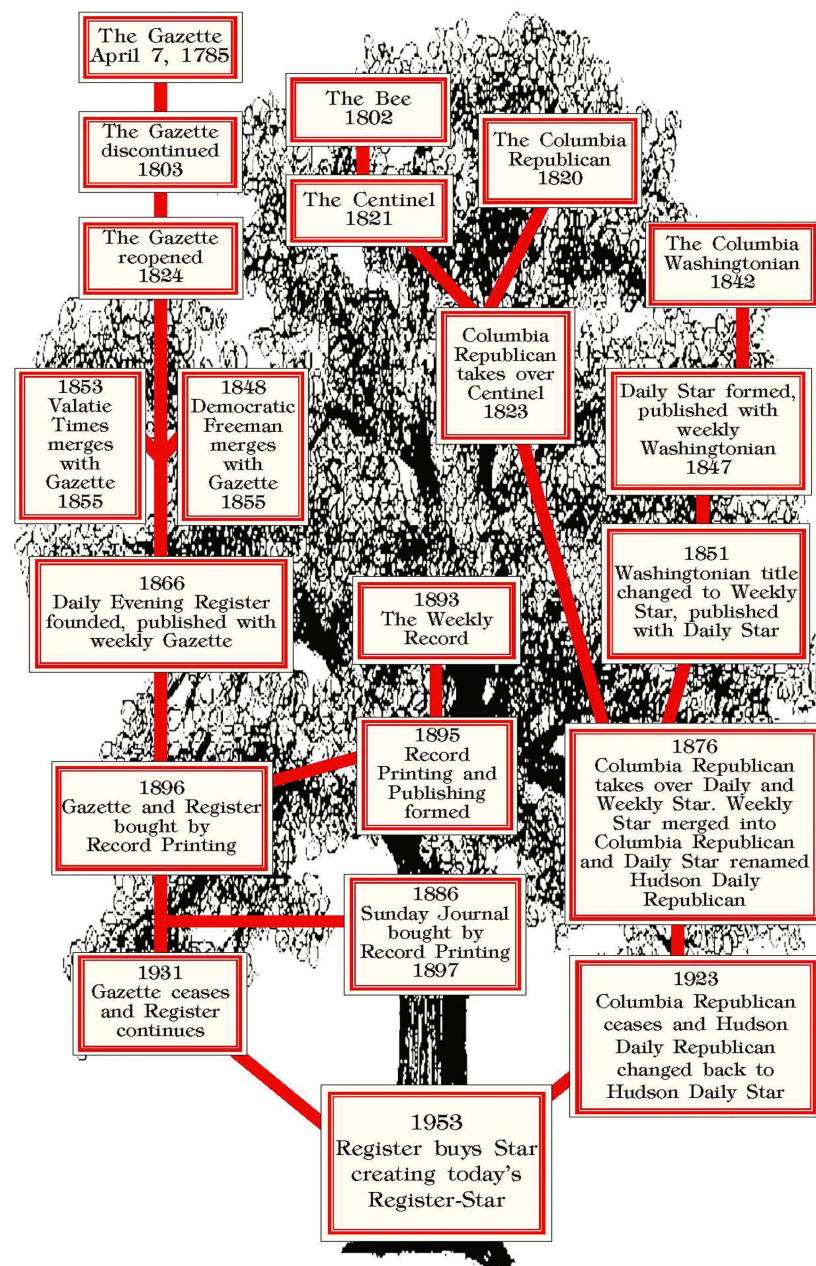
The paper was revived in 1824 when a group of civic-minded citizens, including Hudson's then-mayor, raised \$500 to purchase the Gazette's old equipment and launch a paper supporting the policies of the Democratic Party.

M. Parker Williams, the owner of the Gazette beginning in 1861, moved the offices to the corner of Fourth Street and Warren Street, where the paper was produced until moving to the corner of Green and State streets in 2012.

He founded the Hudson Daily Register in 1866, an evening newspaper also supporting the Democratic Party.

In 1952, The Register bought another local paper, The Star, and the two merged their names to create the current name for the paper.

New, larger presses were built in 1985 in Hudson, but were shut down and printing was moved to Catskill in 1997 when The Register-Star was bought by the Johnson Newspaper Corporation, which already owned the Catskill paper.



## The history of the Register-Star newspaper

Mark Vinciguerra, the Register-Star's current publisher, said the paper has expanded in recent years, developing into a multi-platform news provider.

"The way we tell stories is new," Vinciguerra said, "You've got the ability to use a little bit of everything to tell the story... it's not the same old one dimensional product."

Vinciguerra, who formerly worked as the audience development director for the Albany Times-Union, said circulation has risen and social media engagement has skyrocketed in the last two years, so now more than 20,000 people follow the paper on social media.

He said his vision of the Register-Star is modeled after town squares in ancient Greece.

"The [townspeople] would go to the town square and gather and pass around the news of the day... I want to be that place," Vinciguerra said.

— Reprinted from *The Register-Star*

## Leonard A. Weisbeck, Sr. , “a real gentleman,” died December 3rd

**L**eonard A. Weisbeck Sr., 93, died Thursday, December 3, 2015.

He was a lifelong resident of Alden, a graduate of St. John the Baptist School and a 1940 graduate of Alden High School, where he served as class president.

Leonard was the owner of the Alden Advertiser. He entered into partnership with his father in 1948 and then purchased the Alden Advertiser in 1959 when his father retired after 27 years as publisher.



Leonard married Elizabeth Deitz February 9, 1946.

He sold the business to his son, Leonard Jr., in 2000 and remained editor until his death.

He served in the Navy as a Radar Operator in WWII and returned to Alden after his honorable discharge.

His professional affiliations included New York Press Association, National Newspaper Association and the Society of Professional Journalists. He served on the board of directors of the New York Press Association and the former Western New York Offset Press.

Leonard is survived by 8 children: Linda (Ron Carroll) Weisbeck, Leonard “Lee” (Vikki), Jean, Robert (Lisa), Gregory, Lori (Dale) Gramza, Chris (Janet), Susanne (Michael) Galbraith, and fifteen grandchildren.

## Allan Louis Gaul, Mid Hudson Times, died October 29th

**A**llan Louis Gaul, 79, died on Thursday, Oct. 29, 2015, surrounded by his loving family

A 27-year resident of the Hudson Valley, Allan was born on Aug. 12, 1936 in Omaha, Nebraska to Myra Laird and Ira (Lou) Gaul. After graduating from Benson High School in 1954, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and served in a number of unpleasant places from 1954 to 1958.

Allan moved to Yakima, Washington, where he worked as assistant managing editor at the Yakima Herald-Republic; he was hired as managing editor at



the Gloucester County Times in Woodbury, New Jersey; and, he worked as the night sports editor at The News Journal in Wilmington, Delaware.

He became executive editor at the Telegraph Herald in Dubuque, Iowa and city editor at The Shreveport Journal, in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Allan arrived to New York, in 1988, going to work as news editor for the Times Herald Record in Middletown. He then served as executive editor for the Register-Star in Hudson and The Daily Mail in Catskill.

He was bestowed the New York News Publishers Newspaper Association award of excellence for “Distinguished Editorial Writing.”

He retired at 65, returned for a short stint on the copy desk at the Times Herald Record and came to the Mid Hudson Times as assistant editor, what he described as his “retirement job.”

He leaves behind his loving wife Donna, daughter Michelle Carmine, grandsons John Jenerose Jr. and Jacob Maraday, sons-in-law Jerald Carmine, John Jenerose Sr. and Jason Maraday, and extended family. He is pre-deceased by his daughter Hope Maraday and parents Myra and Ira Gaul.

# NYPA internship program celebrates 20th anniversary

Launched in 1996, the NYPA Foundation’s paid summer internship program was established to invest in the future of community journalism by offering paid summer internships to outstanding students. During the past 20 years the Foundation has invested more than \$600,000 to fund 210 internships.

Our intention then, was the same as it is now: to introduce outstanding students to potential careers in community journalism. Two decades into this amazing program, a large number of intern alumni have pursued careers in journalism and we have invited several of them to be guests at NYPA’s spring convention next April, where they will share the stories of their career trajectory.

The students aren’t the only beneficiaries — interns provide much needed staffing during busy summer vacation periods.

In its 20th year, the internship program continues to provide remarkable work experiences for interns and a tangible impact on the future of journalism.

## Will you help us to ensure the future of this important program?

There are several ways you can support NYPA’s internship program. You may elect to add the amount to your dues payment, or make your contribution on via the link “GoFundMe” on our site at [nynewspapers.com](http://nynewspapers.com).

800.245.9278, x5324 • [creativeoutlet.com](http://creativeoutlet.com)

# CHANGE.

Who benefits the most?



ALL departments will benefit from our streamlined services where everything you need is at your fingertips.

- Production.
- Marketing.
- Editorial.
- Social.
- Sales.
- Classifieds.
- Digital.

Who benefits the MOST?  
**Your customers.**

Creative Outlet

# CASH IN

## on TV Magazine Ad Revenue with ANC!



**ADVANTAGE**  
NEWSPAPER CONSULTANTS

Email: [info@newspaperconsultants.com](mailto:info@newspaperconsultants.com) | Phone: 910-323-0349 | [www.newspaperconsultants.com](http://www.newspaperconsultants.com)

# Want to make some easy money?

**Encourage your sales staff to sell into NYPS’s statewide classified advertising network (NYSCAN).**

It’s easy and your newspaper keeps 60% of every sale (a great deal!). NYPS has produced a short training video to show your staff how easy it is to upsell existing clients into the network.

Go to [nynewspapers.com](http://nynewspapers.com) and click on the icon on the home page. You can also download the network media kits from the website. Start today! Don’t leave this easy money on the table!!



**NYPS**  
[www.nynewspapers.com](http://www.nynewspapers.com)

Questions? Call or email Laurel to learn how your newspaper can make money selling network ads.  
**518-464-6483** or [ljacon@nynewspapers.com](mailto:ljacon@nynewspapers.com)

This issue of ‘NewBeat’ was printed by



**Trumbull**  
PRINTING

New York Press Association  
621 Columbia Street Ext., Suite 100  
Cohoes, NY 12047  
[www.nynewspapers.com](http://www.nynewspapers.com)