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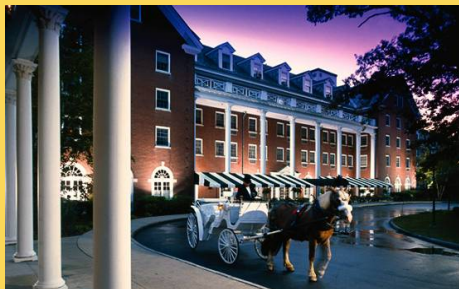**Newspaper Spring Training**
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By DAVID TYLER — *President, NYPA Board of Directors*

Youngsters provide hope for journalism's future

With wide eyes, the high school freshman looked at me and I asked him the question that I had asked all the other kids last week at Career Day at one of our local high schools.

"What made you walk into a room to learn about the profession of journalism?"

"I love to write, but I'm really thinking about being a photojournalist," he said.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because I really want to tell the story," was his response.

A total of 21 kids came to my sessions on journalism. Some were there because they were required to go to something, but most were there because there is still a romantic passion among kids for reporting. They knew about Ferguson and Dannemora as well as some of our larger local stories. They were able to picture themselves there, asking the questions, writing the copy, shooting the photos, telling the stories.

Many who joined me wrote for the student newspaper. They love the experience, as well as the recognition they receive when their friends see their names in print. One girl told me she had been in my newspaper twice. "Me too," another chimed in. "My grandmother sent in a photo of me at a figure skating competition."

I told them that one of our most important roles is to provide recognition for the extraordinary people in our somewhat ordinary community. We talked about the phrase "refrigerator journalism" and they laughed because some of their own pictures on yellowing newsprint were held tight by magnets to their refrigerator doors.

I left feeling good about the future and the possibilities that exist for these kids. There's no question that the profession and options available to them will continue to evolve. But it's good to see a group of bright kids "who really want to tell the story." It gives me hope that our industry will be in good hands in the future.

Convention deadline nears

It's the best bargain in professional development, and it's coming up quickly.

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I believe this year will mark my 20th year attending the New York Press Association Spring Convention. In each of the previous 19, I've returned home inspired by the work of publishers from across the state, reinvigorated by the energy and ideas of the speakers, and awed by the dedication of NYPA's management and staff.

The deadline is approaching quickly, so don't miss out!

Renowned labor attorney to speak at NYPA convention about new overtime pay rules

Nicholas D'Ambrosio, one of the top rated employment and labor attorneys in New York, will discuss the new wage and hour and overtime rules the Department of Labor is expected to issue this summer. D'Ambrosio will speak at 10:45 am Friday, April 8th at the Gideon Putnam Hotel and Conference Center in Saratoga Springs.

It is anticipated that the new labor rules will bring on a pile of overtime lawsuits in 2016. The federal rule changes, which are expected to be implemented in July, could create a "perfect storm."

The DOL is expected to raise the eligibility ceiling for overtime pay from its current $23,660 annually to as high as $50,440. That's a tremendous leap for employers to make in one year.

Excerpted below is some information on the proposed regulations and the exemptions for professional employees. For more information and clarification, please join us for this important session at NYPA's spring convention April 8th and 9th in Saratoga.

Wage and Hour Division

Fact Sheet: Proposed Rulemaking to Update the Regulations Defining and Delimiting the Exemptions for "White Collar" and Professional Employees

The Department is proposing to update the regulations governing which executive, administrative, and professional employees (white collar workers) are entitled to the Fair Labor Standards Act's minimum wage and overtime pay protections. The Department last updated these regulations in 2004, and the current salary threshold for exemption is $455 per week ($23,660 per year). *With this proposed rule, the Department seeks to update the salary level required for exemption to ensure that the FLSA's intended overtime protections are fully implemented, and to simplify the identification of nonexempt employees, thus making the executive, administrative and professional employee exemption easier for employers and workers to understand and apply.*

Key Provisions of the Proposed Rule

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) focuses primarily on updating the salary and compensation levels needed for white collar workers to be exempt. Specifically, the Department proposes to:

1. set the standard salary level at the 40th percentile of weekly earnings for full-time salaried workers ($921 per week, or $47,892 annually);

2. increase the total annual compensation requirement needed to exempt highly compensated employees (HCEs) to the annualized value of the 90th percentile of weekly earnings of full-time salaried workers ($122,148 annually); and

3. establish a mechanism for automatically updating the salary and compensation levels going forward to ensure that they will continue to provide a useful and effective test for exemption.

The Department's proposal to set the standard salary level at the 40th percentile of weekly earnings for full-time salaried workers represents the most appropriate line of demarcation between exempt and nonexempt employees. This salary level minimizes the risk that employees legally entitled to overtime will be subject to misclassification based solely on the salaries they receive, without excluding from exemption an unacceptably high number of employees who meet the duties test. *As proposed, this would raise the salary threshold from $455 a week (the equivalent of $23,660 a year) to about $970 a week ($50,440 a year) in 2016.*

The Department is also proposing to automatically update the standard salary and HCE total annual compensation requirements to ensure that they remain meaningful tests for distinguishing between bona fide executive, administrative, and professional workers who are not entitled to overtime and overtime-protected white collar workers. Experience has shown that the salary level test is an effective measure of exempt status only if it is up to date.

In addition, the Department discusses the current duties test and solicits suggestions for additional occupation examples and requests comments on the current requirements. Similarly, the Department seeks comment on the possibility of including nondiscretionary bonuses to satisfy a portion of the standard salary requirement. The Department is not proposing specific regulatory changes on either of these issues.

Background

Since 1940, the Department's regulations have generally required each of three tests to be met for one of the FLSA's white collar exemptions to apply: (1) the employee must be paid a predetermined and fixed salary that is not subject to reduction because of variations in the quality or quantity of work performed; (2) the amount of salary paid must meet a minimum specified amount; and (3) the employee's job duties must primarily involve executive, administrative, or professional duties as defined by the regulations.

Certain highly compensated employees are exempt from the overtime pay requirement if they are paid total annual compensation of at least $100,000 (which must include at least $455 per week paid on a salary or fee basis) and if they customarily and regularly perform at least one of the exempt duties or responsibilities of an executive, administrative, or professional employee identified in the standard tests for exemption.

Professional Employee Overtime Exemption Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Both federal law (Fair Labor Standards Act or FLSA) and state law (New York Minimum Wage Act and applicable regulations) generally require the payment of overtime wages for work performed after 40 hours per week. The FLSA and the State Minimum Wage Act exempt employees working in a bona fide professional capacity from the overtime pay requirements. If the criteria of the New York State exception match those in the FLSA, this Department usually applies the criteria consistently with the FLSA, its regulations, and interpretations issued by the U.S. Department of Labor.

To qualify for the Professional employee exemption, the job must meet these two requirements:

The employee's primary duty consists of the performance of work that:

§ Requires knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study, as distinguished from o A general academic education o An apprenticeship o Training in the performance of routine mental, manual, or physical processes or

§ Is original and creative in a recognized field of artistic endeavor, and produces a result that depends primarily on the invention, imagination, or talent of the employee The employee's work: ? Requires the consistent exercise of

Renowned labor attorney to speak at NYPA convention about new overtime pay rules — *(con't.)*

discretion and judgment in its performance

§ Is predominantly intellectual and varied in character (as opposed to routine mental, manual, mechanical or physical work)

§ Is of such a character that the output produced or the result accomplished cannot be standardized in relation to a given period of time What does "primary duty" mean? "Primary duty" has been interpreted to mean the principal, main, major, or most important duty that the employee performs. A determination of an employee's primary duty on all the facts in each case, with the major emphasis on the overall character of the employee's job. What does "exercise of discretion and judgment" mean? In general, the exercise of discretion and judgment involves both of the following:

§ The comparison and evaluation of possible courses of conduct

§ Acting or making a decision after considering the possibilities In general, such an employee must have the authority to make an independent choice, free from immediate direction or supervision. Factors to consider include (but are not limited to):

- Does the employee formulate, affect, interpret, or implement policies or practices?

- Does the employee carry out major assignments in conducting the business?

- Does the employee's work affect business operations to a substantial degree?

- Can the employee commit the employer in matters that have significant financial impact?

- Does the employee have authority to waive or deviate from established policies and procedures without prior approval? If an employee's decisions are revised or reversed after review, it does not mean that the employee is not exercising discretion and independent judgment. The exercise of discretion and independent judgment must be more than the use of skill in applying well-established techniques, procedures or specific standards described in manuals or other sources.

What is a "field of science or learning"?

Fields of science or learning include:

§ Law § Medicine § Theology § Accounting § Actuarial computation § Engineering § Architecture § Teaching § Various types of physical, chemical, and biological sciences § Pharmacy § Other occupations that have a recognized professional status and are distinguishable from the mechanical arts or skilled trades, where the knowledge could be of a fairly advanced type, but is not in a field of science or learning.

What is a "prolonged course" of instruction? The best evidence of meeting this requirement is having the appropriate academic degree for entry into the profession, typically acquired at the college level.

However, the word "customarily" in the regulation permits other employees in such professions to meet this requirement if they meet all of the following requirements:

§ Attained advanced knowledge through a combination of work experience and intellectual instruction

§ Have substantially the same knowledge level as other employees who have acquired an academic degree

§ Perform substantially the same work as those employees What is a "recognized field of artistic endeavor"? A recognized field of artistic endeavor is a field of work where the results cannot be produced by a person endowed with general manual or intellectual ability and training, but which depend primarily on the invention, imagination, or talent of the employee.

By DAVID CHAVERN — *President & CEO, NAA*

Department of Labor's overtime rules will unintentionally harm employees

In June, the Department of Labor (DOL) proposed increasing the salaries test used to determine if an employee is eligible for overtime from the current threshold of $23,660 to $50,440 annually. This means that employees – such as managers, supervisors and other professionals who are exempt under the Federal Labor Standards Act – would need their annual salaries elevated to $50,440 or be treated as hourly employees that are eligible for overtime. This proposal, which more than doubles the current standard, would set the salary threshold at a level that is nearly $10,000 and $15,000 higher than what is mandated by the state laws in California and New York – states where the cost-of-living is relatively high compared to the rest of the country. What works in New York City or San Francisco doesn't necessarily work in Rapid City, South Dakota or Ames, Iowa.

Let me be clear, the current salaries test – which hasn't changed since 2004 – should be increased. But, addressing a decade of inaction with an immediate 102 percent increase in the salary threshold will result in unintended consequences that will ultimately hurt current employees.

A recent survey of NAA member newspapers found that the newspaper industry would have to spend more than $130 million annually to raise the salaries of exempt employees.

Such a drastic and sudden increase in the salary threshold also would significantly and unfavorably impact our local retail advertising customers. According to the National Retail Federation, retailers would experience a $745 million impact with more than two million employees affected.

Given the well-documented financial challenges of our industry, many newspapers will not be able to meet the new standard. According to the NAA survey, most newspapers said that they would either have to replace full-time employees with those working part-time or convert current exempt employees to an hourly wage. The unintended consequence of the proposed rule is that employees would see a reduction in benefits and workplace flexibility and would be required to fill out timesheets. This is particularly challenging for journalists who need flexibility to cover news stories in their communities that are not constrained by timetables. No journalist wants to be pulled back from a story. The potential impact on local journalism is real. According to the aforementioned survey, 46 percent of the newspapers surveyed said that the proposed salary requirements would force cuts to newsroom staff. If this becomes a reality, it would reduce the journalistic resources needed to keep local communities informed.

A change to current salary threshold is welcomed and supported if it can, in fact, sustainably meet the needs of both the employees and businesses. A rule that is reasonable will encourage businesses to raise salary levels. But a rule that goes too far, too fast, will simply force businesses to restructure operations to avoid unsustainable costs. This will hurt existing employees.

Congress should encourage the Obama Administration to recalibrate this rule into one that is practicable, particularly in light of continued headwinds in our nation's economy.

— Reprinted from Newspaper Association of American

By RICHARD WHITMAN

Marketers still spending wildly on social but only 11.9% can prove ROI

We all know that the entire marketing world consists of a bunch of lemmings who, despite any facts to the contrary, will follow each other off the proverbial cliff to certain death no matter how much data slaps them in the face.

A recent CMO Survey from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, the AMA and Deloitte found social media spending accounts for 10.9% of marketing budgets and is expected to increase to 20.9% in five years. Just 5.6% of budget was allocated to social in 2009.

Despite these predicted increases, the same study revealed that just 11.5% of marketers can prove positive ROI on their social efforts.

Of this complete lack of ability to prove ROI, Fuqua Professor and Director of the CMO Survey Christine Moorman said, "If companies really want to get the biggest bang out of social, it has to be better connected with the rest of marketing. Social media should be aligned to support marketing and they should be linked back to social."

Well, duh. But it continues to amaze how many brands and agencies still run wildly towards the likes of Snapchat, Periscope, Peach and whatever the hell comes along next without the slightest concern for how these platforms affect the bottom line.

— Reprinted from MediaPost

By MADALINA CIOBANU

The role of project managers in the newsroom at FT and WSJ

How can project management help news outlets improve their workflow and manage their time and resources better?

Credit: Image from Pixabay

The traditional layout of newsrooms has undergone numerous changes, first to reflect the transition to digital, then to cater to the increasing popularity of mobile and more recently, the rise of distributed.

Some teams such as developers and product managers, who might not have worked directly alongside journalists and editors before, have also moved into the newsroom to make the process of building new initiatives more efficient.

At *The Wall Street Journal*, the role of a product manager or developer will sometimes overlap with that of a project manager, Katharine Bailey, the outlet's head of news products, told Journalism.co.uk in a recent podcast.

"The product person is really thinking about why we are doing that specific thing and then defining the requirements around it."

"Frequently, that person wears both hats, but a project manager is making sure that the project is executed smoothly on time, within budget, from beginning to end," she explained.

Bailey's team started working alongside the editorial team in May 2015, in order to "bring a 360 view of our products into the newsroom."

'Seeing a project or product through its life-cycle'

If a journalist has an idea for a new article page, or they want to cover a certain topic differently in terms of formats and technologies, the team's task is building individual products or features to achieve that.

"Basically, what we do is see a project or product through its life-cycle. "

That involves determining whether you are going to do it, comparing it to other similar initiatives available on the market, building it, putting it out there and then assessing how it's performing, reporting that back to the newsroom and determining how you want to enhance it or develop a similar project in the future."

Bailey said the best way to find out whether a product or project manager is needed for a particular initiative is knowing if that element or capability can be reused in the future for other experiments.

If a story requires a one-off infographic to illustrate the data better, that would be created by the graphics team. But if it contains a function to quickly share information from it, for example, the product team would build it if required.

> **It's a big deal to even call something a project in the newsroom, separate it and say that it's not just the general course of news production**
> *— Katharine Bailey, Wall Street Journal*

Each reusable design is collected into the Journal's style guide, a set of guidelines that developers, editors or other members of the organization can use in the future to request or build similar products for their toolbox.

The editors are involved in the development process every step of the way, said Bailey, from helping the team understand the personality of a new section, for example, to deciding whether any existing model can be used or what a new one should encompass.

"They are part of the conversation the whole way through, from defining a product, to helping us design it, vetting it and actually use it through the CMS to produce content for it."

For example, to cover the US election, several teams including editors, product people and developers worked together to come up with the different features needed across the website and mobile apps before they went into production.

For newsrooms that don't have project or product managers, but where the editorial and development team collaborate directly, Bailey said it's possible to implement some workflow changes to get people to think in that direction.

"It's a big deal to even call something a project in the newsroom, separate it and say that it's not just the general course of news production."

"So a curriculum can be established to help people understand what is being built and why, such as developing a 'requirements' document and a set of milestones to help people decide what is going to make a project successful once it's done."

"Ultimately, news is our number one product and the experience around it and how you proliferate it is vital."

The difference between an editor and a project manager

At the Financial Times, special projects editor Robin Kwong recently moved into a project management role, after having spent time with the paper as a reporter, technology editor and interactive data journalist.

He said this is an advantage because he already has an insight into how different teams and individuals work within the organization.

The tasks and aims of a project manager differ from those of an editor, he argued, who might be familiar with part of the process on the production side, but who mostly focus on the best way to tell the story from an editorial perspective.

For Wearables at Work series produced by the FT last year, Kwong, who was on the interactive team at the time, ended up taking on both the role of project manager and editor. He started off by taking notes for himself to record all the steps in the process, before he realized that "it was a broader problem for the whole newsroom".

"I was thinking 'would this be the best way to tell the story', but I also needed to make sure that we were keeping track of metrics, for example, as we were testing this hypothesis of whether making our reporting process transparent achieved more engagement as a result."

"At the end of the day, how would you know the answer if you hadn't set out to do that from the beginning, keeping track of metrics and setting targets?"

There is no set formula for knowing when a newsroom initiative, whether it's a single article, a series or a cross-platform story, requires project management. But according to Kwong, there are two good indicators of when something is becoming too complex to be handled only by the reporter and a few other people.

really ambitious piece or series of journalism, or a case when you're completely shooting in the dark and trying something for the first time

— *Kwong, Financial Times*

"We are organized into different desks, and if a project or a story lives just within one of those, it's generally manageable, but once it starts crossing two or three, that's a sign. "

"For example, if one day you have a global news story, the second day you assess the corporate impact of that in another piece, and then you end with a big magazine feature, that's a situation where you might want a project manager," he said.

The second indicator is experimenting with a new format, approach or technology. This goes beyond just trying something out without knowing if it will succeed or fail, to a core purpose of knowing what you are hoping to achieve and how to measure it.

"You also need to be able to learn something from it, and ideally impart that to the rest of the newsroom, so you've suddenly added a whole new set of requirements to what you're doing, which becomes more than just an editor trying to make sure the story is told in the best way possible."

"If you start thinking about all the different ways in which you could research, present and tell a story and also how you would then distribute and promote it, it's actually a really complicated process, which sometimes spans more than a dozen people."

"My job is to help reduce or manage the complexity of producing either a really ambitious piece or series of journalism, or a case when you're completely shooting in the dark and trying something for the first time."

My job is to help reduce or manage the complexity of producing either a

By JEFF SONDERMAN

How to integrate product management in your organization

P articularly for "legacy" news organizations, like newspapers, that have evolved and calcified an organizational structure from an earlier era, it can be challenging to find the right fit for product management.

Product people cross a lot of traditional silos — their responsibilities involve editorial strategy, business and revenue success, marketing and subscriptions, and technology. In an organization where those were separate departments, product managers will have to build some bridges and break down some walls to get things done right.

The participants at our thought leader summit surfaced several good points of advice about how to help product people work effectively across the entire organization.

Create cross-functional teams.

When taking on a redesign of a website, launching a print section, or developing a new mobile app — your news organization has many internal stakeholders to involve. Your challenge is to have broad involvement, so the end result is on target, but not to bog down with too many people involved in every decision. Summit participants said that teams with representation from all types of stakeholders can be effective at getting this done. When doing this, two things are particularly important: 1) Delegates to the team should have authority to make decisions, not having to go back to their department for signoff on everything, and 2) Team members need to put the project and the users first, not defend their department's turf. "You want everybody to be fiercely loyal to the team and to the [user's] problem that you're trying to solve," said Ben French, vice president of product at The New York Times. "That loyalty is often in great contradiction to loyalty to their department."

"It helps greatly for the product people to have frequent, casual contact with the newsroom. This creates familiarity, trust and understanding — the basis for collaborating and succeeding on big projects down the road."

Link product managers to the newsroom.

Editorial independence is an important value in newsrooms, and journalists may be wary or at least confused about what a product manager is up to. Several people at our summit said it helps greatly for

the product people to have frequent, casual contact with the newsroom. This creates familiarity, trust and understanding — the basis for collaborating and succeeding on big projects down the road.

"You really can't underestimate the value of having the product team sitting with the newsroom," said Jennifer Hicks, executive digital editor of The Wall Street Journal. "Physical proximity is extremely important. You pick up things, you hear things, you learn things — new ideas, new problems, new solutions. So we've done that at the Journal."

"I'm in the Time & Life building, we are literally maybe 30 floors, and I think every group I work with is on a different floor, and you have to take different elevator banks — it takes 10 minutes to get from place to place," said Aleksander Mielczarek, senior product manager for Time Digital. "We're actually moving to the Freedom Tower site, and we (print, digital, product, business development, etc.) are all on the same floor. Big, open-concept. I cannot tell you the excitement both teams have around that."

Breana Jones, digital product manager at Fox News Channel, explained how valuable it has been for her to simply be present in daily news meetings, to overhear what is being covered and even anticipate product-related needs that could tell a story better for readers.

Develop and share "user stories" with the staff.

One challenge for product managers is to help the reporters, editors, producers, marketers, and others carrying out the day-to-day activities of news align their work with the grand product strategy. One way to do this is, first use research to understand and define key segments of your audience, and then to project those abstract ideas onto fictional personas with a specific faces and names. This way the education beat reporter can think of "Sally the Soccer Mom" and her short list of concerns, passions, and news habits, when deciding how to cover the local school district today. The personas align the day-to-day news decisions with the user needs and behaviors that your news product is trying to satisfy.

"By making sure everyone knows whenever a suggestion that came from editorial was actually implemented, it helps to prove that your tech team is actually listening and responding."

Encourage staff to suggest product insights by crediting those who do so.

When BuzzFeed launches a new product or feature sparked by a staffer's idea, its announcement credits the people who originally suggested it, said Chris Tindal, senior product lead at BuzzFeed. He explained: "Usually that means an email from a product manager to all of editorial saying something like 'The headline fields of the CMS are now expandable for when you put a lot of text in there. This was the great idea of [editor's name], and was implemented by [developer's name].'" This improves relationships and future communication between editorial people and tech people. "A lot of the time people feel like their suggestions won't be listened to or acted upon," Tindal said. "By making sure everyone knows whenever a suggestion that came from editorial was actually implemented, it helps to prove that your tech team is actually listening and responding."

Great product managers distribute the "why" not just the "what."

Another way to say this is, product managers should resist the temptation to see themselves as Steve Jobs, a "solo genius" model where one person takes in all the information, forms the grand strategy in their own head, and issues directives across the organization.

That model has several weaknesses, explained Matt LeMay, a veteran product manager for several technology and media companies who gave a keynote talk at our summit.

For one, there was only one Steve Jobs and you are not him. Your attempt to play the solo genius will likely fail, be divisive, or at least miss the opportunity to tie together insight and energy across the organization. For another, the solo genius becomes a bottleneck for decision making — where progress is slowed while everyone in the organization has to wait for confirmation or direction from the solo genius.

"The entire organization is more innovative and nimble if the product manager focuses on evangelizing and educating everyone not just 'what' to do, but 'why.'"

But most importantly, the entire organization is more innovative and nimble if the product manager focuses on evangelizing and educating everyone not just "what" to do, but "why." Sharing the strategy, the roadmap, the plan and the rationale, empowers everyone to carry it out better and to add their own quick decisions and creative flourishes around the edges.

Lauren Shea, product director at the Boston Globe, added that it's not the role of the product manager to define the vision, but rather to propose and integrate ideas. Control shouldn't rest with one person.

By MELODY KRAMER

Looking to reinvent your storytelling? Look to civic hackers for inspiration

The city of Miami has a detailed map, created by its downtown development authority, where anyone can see planned and proposed real estate development projects in the city.

I learned about Miami's map while attending Open Data Day, an annual international event that's held in dozens of cities around the globe. In each, people come together to brainstorm how to tell stories, create Web applications and create visualizations using public, open data.

While attending Open Data Day, I saw many examples of what I consider great local, civic journalism — work that gathered data, processed it and then told a story that would help people better understand their local community or government. I also saw many opportunities for journalists to fill in gaps, tell more nuanced stories using the uncovered datasets and collaborate with a community of technologists who may benefit from the context and storytelling skills that journalists have.

If you're looking for story ideas or have a data story idea but not the coding skills to tell it, I highly recommend attending a meeting from your local civic hacking group. Many such groups have the technical chops to sift through any dataset but not the skills to tell the story correctly — or know what story is the right one to tell.

I also recommend looking through some of the projects I learned about this weekend, many of which may be useful in your newsroom or spark new ideas in your work.

Citygram is a notifications platform that sends people in 10 cities across the country information about foreclosures, building permits, crime reports and ongoing construction projects. The platform hooks into a city's open data platform and then texts people when there's an incident in their geographic area.

Foodborne Chicago uses the city's Open311 system to directly submit incidents of food poisoning to the Chicago Department of Public Health. Users found out about the site through a Twitter bot that identified words like "food poisoning" that were located in or near Chicago. Project staff from Foodborne Chicago then followed up, directing Twitter users to share incidents through the website. In the first 10 months after the project was launched, 133 food establishments received health inspections — 20 percent had at least one critical violation.

Open Data in Philadlephia is the city's open data portal that contains over 200 datasets from the city. It features a discussion board that allows anyone to ask a question and receive a quick response from the city. I see Philadelphia's site as a model, and one you can show to your town or city as an example of what can be done. (Also useful? These guidelines on how cities can release and identify high -quality datasets and these guideleines on what an open data portal should have. They're a good starting point for asking your local city or town to release similar data.)

The city of Boston is piloting a new website that's also instructive for journalists. What I like about it is how user-centric the site is, how it's separated into topics so that people don't have to sift through multiple layers to find the information they need and how it instantly helps journalists know what people in Boston want to know more about. Writing a story in Boston? A lot of people want to know about owning a home and moving to Boston.

Want to see how an online repository of state law should look? Start with Virgina. The state's legal website provides raw data, is easy to navigate and easily lets developers build tools or sites on top of it.

Jeremy Merrill, a developer at The New York Times, recently created a display that shows which planes are flying over his house using data extracted from a program that listens to radio systems transmitted by planes during flight. (You can also search for your airport API on GitHub: here's one for Syracuse.)

Open Data Policing NC shows all public records related to traffic stops in North Carolina since 2002. The site also shows the racial and ethnic demographics of people stopped, searched and subjected to force. (North Carolina is the first state in the country to have an open data site for policing.)

Looking for a story idea and live in San Jose, California? The Github page for civic coders in San Jose lists project ideas (all of which would make excellent reporting projects.)

The city of South Bend, Indiana has a call-in system for gathering, sharing, and understanding community feedback.

All of these projects can be adapted for your community; they can also lead to story ideas within your own community. I also see opportunities for newsrooms to showcase projects like these, particularly if your outlet doesn't have a data visualization team.

Ask yourself: Is there a way to embed or showcase the local projects that are uncovering data and showcasing them? Are there ways for more people to get involved in making these projects if a news organization spotlights them? The possibilities for collaboration and overlap are endless.

— Reprinted by Poynter.org

By MATT DeRIENZO

Industry insight: Local sports coverage needs to adapt to the modern newsroom

The importance of high school sports coverage is local newspaper gospel. For decades, circulation directors and publishers have talked about how much parents and grandparents want to see those names in the paper, and how communities rally around the local football team.

We never knew exactly how much the sports department contributed to overall readership, but if canceling the bridge column or Funky Winkerbean generates 100 angry phone calls, it was assumed that cutting back on local sports would be nuclear war.

Three things are changing that: the decline of print, the need for extreme newsroom expense cuts across the industry, and access to detailed, story-by-story online readership metrics.

Maybe the cachet of youth sports for newspapers was rooted in the medium of print. Just as the photo reprint business has declined with the popularity of photo albums that reside on phones and Facebook, maybe clipping out the box score of your daughter's basketball game is a thing of the past.

But anecdotally, anyway, it seems like sports has been less severely impacted by staff cuts than other newsroom departments. That's going to change in 2016, if it hasn't already, because there's not much else left to cut.

Which brings us to number three. If publishers are cutting sports reporters at a lesser rate than news, why? Is it a sacred cow based on that old conventional wisdom? Are we looking at easily available metrics on what kind of stories generate how much audience, the staff time that goes into those stories, and how that's being monetized?

What would local newspaper sports coverage look like on its very own profit and loss statement?

In this light, the idea of having a reporter spend four hours covering a high school lacrosse game that is of potential interest to about 200 people max seems ludicrous.

Game stories, at all, seem impossibly inefficient, especially considering the biggest fans are at the game anyway, or following along with some other parent's livestream or in-game tweets.

And even at peak staffing, what local sports department whose coverage area included 10 local high schools, with both boys' and girls' teams for three or four major sports in a season, was ever able to provide anything but cherry picking game coverage anyway?

The same issues apply to coverage of college sports, with the exception of bigtime Division 1 football and basketball programs that have regional, statewide or even national audiences. In fact, there's probably less local interest in a Division 3 college baseball team than the local high school football team, because parents and grandparents aren't as likely to live in the market.

Consider how important photography is to game coverage, and how big a hit photography staffing has taken at newspapers. And factor in competition from small online sites run by fans or hobbyists, schools producing their own media around sports coverage, and fans following the action on social media.

None of this means local sports is any less popular in your community, however, which still seems to whisper, if not shout, "opportunity." There are still those local auto dealers who want to sponsor high school sports coverage.

The answer isn't as simple as "more feature stories." Sure, there are exceptions, but really, how interesting are 16-year-old high school athletes who've barely had life experiences or athletic careers to talk about?

"More enterprise" reporting in high school sports coverage is great, and should be exhausted, but after you do the concussion series, the metal bat issue and artificial turf, it can feel like a stretch.

In adjusting to this shift in local sports audience habits, and a significant present and/or future reduction in resources, we should focus on adding value and context to the ecosystem of information that has emerged without us.

The mantra for modern coverage of local sports should be "technology, curation and analysis." There are more and more platforms being launched to facilitate the crowdsourcing of game scores, photos and commentary. There is much to be gained in acting as the facilitator of a community of readers who are passionate about a team or league and surfacing the best of their contributions and conversations. And there's an unlimited appetite for team power rankings, playoff previews, league leaders and plays of the week.

In some respects, sports has been disrupted from an audience and business perspective more than any other aspect of local news, and that's why you see, in pockets, some of the industry's most innovative thinking. The antiquity elsewhere is becoming harder to ignore.

Matt DeRienzo is a newsroom consultant and a former editor and publisher with Digital First Media. He teaches journalism at Quinnipiac University and the University of New Haven in Connecticut, and is interim executive director of LION Publishers, a trade organization that represents local independent online news publishers.

— *Reprinted from Editor and Publisher*

By ERIK SASS

Half of newspaper readers are print only

While it's easy for marketers to get wrapped up in the fast-changing world of digital media, as *The Boston Globe*'s embarrassing home delivery woes recently highlighted, a lot of consumers still rely on traditional media, including print.

Roughly half of newspaper readers said they read only they print edition of their local newspaper, according to data cited by the Pew Research Center.

Pew surveyed consumers in three different midsized urban areas — Denver, Macon, Georgia, and Sioux City, Iowa — about their news consumption habits. Despite their geographic, social and economic differences, in each place a similar proportion of newspaper readers said they read only the print version of their local newspaper: 46% in Denver, 48% in Macon and 53% in Sioux City.

Pew found that print-only readers tended to be older, with a lower level of education and in a lower income bracket than newspaper readers who consume at least some digital content, although the relative proportions vary considerably by region.

In Denver, 39% have never been to college, compared to 17% of digital readers, while the respective figures are 59% and 48% in Macon and 52% and 41% in Sioux City. The proportion who have an income of under $30,000 a year was 28% among print-only readers in Denver, compared to 20% of digital readers; the respective figures were 53% and 44% in Macon and roughly even in Sioux City.

Turning to age cohorts, 26% of print-only readers in Denver were 65 or older, compared to 9% of digital readers. The respective figures were 27% and 9% in Macon, and 29% and 8% in Sioux City.

The overall figures, showing about half of readers consuming only print content, are roughly in line with a national survey that found 56% of readers have contact with only print newspaper content.

— Reprinted from MediaPost

By JEFF SONDERMAN

Making the leap from editorial to product thinking

Many of the people performing product management roles in news organizations have moved over from traditional editorial roles. That shift requires some changes in mindset and work habits, as they find producing daily news content is a quite different responsibility from managing the long-term growth and usability of the product. Several of the people at our summit who have made this transition described the key differences you need to be prepared for.

Seeing news as a "product."

We described this in the overview section as well. Most people at legacy media organizations tended to think of "news" as just the articles or video packages they produce day-to-day. Product managers have to think about the whole experience of the user — what they should get from that news and how they want to consume it.

Product management moves at a different speed than news.

News decisions and activities happen by the day or minute, noted Jennifer Hicks, the executive digital editor of the Wall Street Journal. Taking on a product management role required her to take a longer term view, setting priorities and decisions about how the serve the audience over time.

Product people need to be more data-driven and analytical.

News is often created by collecting anecdotes, speculating about "trends," and applying subjective news judgment. But in a product management role, you are usually required (and rightly so) to base your decisions on rigorous research and data, noted Eric Ulken, executive director of digital strategy at the Philadelphia Media Network. To be an effective advocate for the needs of users, you need to defend positions and theories with data.

By BENJAMIN NULLIN

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

The 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 VICKI KRUEGER

Solutions journalism in every newsroom

Solutions journalism offers rigorous and compelling coverage about responses to social problems — not simply reporting about a problem. One way to start with this approach is knowing where to look for solutions.

Peer-reviewed academic papers:

Randomized controlled trials, case studies and literature reviews can help you uncover what is working in different spheres. Try Google Scholar or the PLoS One library.

Academic experts:

Once you've identified key studies of the issues, contact the authors of relevant academic papers. Find out what events define their fields, what cutting-edge research papers to explore and which academic stars to follow.

Large data sets:

Data sets (for example, the Global Burden of Disease report) can help pinpoint the places and institutions that are having the most success with common problems. Is something happening there that could be replicated elsewhere?

People involved in implementation:

One distinction between solutions journalism and traditional journalism is the emphasis on the how. Talk to the people who know not only what is happening but the nitty-gritty details of how it's done. Keep in mind that your sources have an interest in claiming success, so tune your skepticism radar.

Your own expertise:

If you have a beat or are drawn to a specific topic, build a network of contacts. They can tell you about innovative responses under way and introduce you to the people behind them.

Your own life:

If you are having trouble vetting after-school options in your town, it's likely that others are struggling as well. Are there cities that have responded to this issue? Solutions journalism isn't just about responses to problems that other people face. Some of the most successful solutions-oriented stories are grounded in personal experiences.

— Reprinted from Poynter.org

Language of the image: Ethics for visual media

Photographs and visual images tend to generate heated debates in media organizations. Is the photograph or the video image too graphic to publish? Will it bring a public outcry if it is used on the evening news, a website, mobile device or the front page of the newspaper?

The Poynter Institute has devised this checklist for ethical decision-making in photojournalism.

Questions to ask before you take a photo or record or videotape:

- Am I invading someone's privacy? If so, is it for an appropriate reason?
- Is this a private moment of pain and suffering that needs to be seen by our readers/viewers?
- Am I shooting at a distance that is not obtrusive or potentially revictimizing individuals?
- Am I acting with compassion and sensitivity?

Questions to ask before publication/broadcast:

- Do I need more information about facts or context?
- What is the news value of the photograph?
- What is the motivation for publishing the photograph or using video image?
- What are the ethical and legal concerns?
- Who will be offended? Does such offense outweigh the value of presenting the image?
- What are the possible consequences of using the photograph?
- How would I react if I were in the photograph?
- Are there any alternative ways to present the information to minimize harm while still telling the story in a clear way?
- Will we be able to justify our actions?

— Reprinted from Poynter.org

By ROY PETER CLARK

Seven questions every editor should ask the writer

I have done a lot of coaching and editing in my career, but I have never, since the college literary magazine, been THE editor. But I often imagine that I am. So let's say that I am assigned to become a coaching editor at a make-believe enterprise called the Calusa News. We are covering a community on the west coast of Florida, and I will direct the work of, say, ten writers and reporters.

The first thing I would do – before I read or edited a single story – is interview each writer. This turns out to be a surprisingly rare event. I remember chatting with one veteran reporter at a newspaper who told me, "I've been here for more than 30 years, and you are the first person who asked me about how I work."

Recently, I read a magazine article about "36 Questions that Lead to Love." The questions -- such as "For what in your life do you feel most grateful?" -- are designed to create intimacy, even among strangers. The idea, according to Daniel Jones of the New York Times, "is that mutual vulnerability fosters closeness."

With that as a wild analogy, I have developed a list of questions designed to build professional collaboration between a writer and an editor. After asking these questions to hundreds of writers, I have confidence that the answers provided by the writer can guide a coaching editor on how best to help the writer over time. Here are the questions in the normal order that I ask them:

1. Do you consider yourself a confident or an anxious writer? On a scale from 1 to 10, with one being anxious and ten being confident, where would you place yourself as a writer?

2. Based on the answer to number one: What are some of the things that make you confident (or anxious)?

3. Do you consider yourself a slow or a fast writer? On a scale from 1 to 10, with one being slow and ten being fast, where would you place yourself as a writer?

4. Based on the answer to number three: What are some of the things that make you slow (or fast)? Or: When are some of the times when you are slow (or fast)?

5. Some writers describe themselves as planners, while others plunge right in to the writing. Would you consider yourself a planner or a plunger? Do you work from any kind of a plan?

6. Based on the answer to number five: If you work from any kind of a plan, what does that plan look like?

7. Many writers say they need to write a strong lead before they can progress in the story. Others say that can "discover" their lead through the process of writing. How do you think about your lead from the time you are reporting and throughout the process?

There are many other questions to ask, of course, but these seven almost always create remarkable results. I once asked them to a feature writer at a big news organization. She volunteered to discuss her work in front of a group of editors, a couple who had worked closely with her over time. I don't have an exact record of my interview with her, but her responses were eccentric and memorable.

When I asked her the question about whether she was fast or slow, she answered that it depended upon her ability to find a certain kind of quote. I think she called it her "golden quote." She would interview her main source or most prominent character hoping that person would say something that would capture the essence of that person's character or enterprise. In her process, she would place the quote as a kind of anchor about one third of the way down into the story. Her lead, then, would build up to the quote. Everything in the body of the story would flow from the quote. But she had to find that quote.

When she left the meeting, the editors began to ask me questions about the writer. If I were her coach or editor, how would I try to help her? There was no ambiguity in my response: "Well I wouldn't bother to ask her about her lead? I'd ask her if she found her golden quote."

I don't mean to imply that the editor should always accept as immutable the habits of a particular writer. If, for example, the search for the golden quote slowed the writer down to the point where she was missing deadlines, we might have another conversation about creating a more nimble process. But if the quality of the work was outstanding – as it was – and the work is in on time, those perceived idiosyncrasies should be reinterpreted as strengths.

Coaching editors have a responsibility to learn the working methods of writers and reporters. A process interview is only the first step. Whatever is learned from such conversations should be tested against direct observation of a writer's working methods. Subsequent conversations — sometimes called "long coaching" — can focus on different aspects of the work.

It probably makes sense that the writer should also interview the editor about that person's values, habits, preferences and working methods. We'll leave those questions for another day.

— Reprinted from Poynter.org

By VICKI KRUEGER

The Language of Coaching

Every editor must learn to fix stories, but fixing is not the same as coaching. Coaching is the human side of editing. It serves the reader by making the story and the writer better at the same time.

Here are some key differences between coaching and fixing:

- The editor coaches the writer but fixes the story.
- The editor coaches throughout the process but fixes on deadline.
- Coaching develops the writer. Fixing gets the story published.
- Coaching builds confidence. Fixing undercuts the writer.
- Coaching builds on strengths. Fixing focuses on weaknesses.
- Coaching unites writer and editor. Fixing divides them.
- The coach shares control. The fixer takes control.

— Taken from "The Language of Coaching," a self-directed course by Poynter's Roy Peter Clark at Poynter NewsU.

By ANJANETTE DELGADO

# Feeding the morning habit to increase web traffic

Feeding a habit is much easier than breaking one.

Consider the morning news habit. We wake up, reach for our smartphones before even getting out of bed, and check to see what's happening in the world. Whereas once that was a printed newspaper or morning TV, now it's push alerts, Facebook posts, Twitter feeds and destination news sites. The technology has changed, but our habit remains.

News organizations working to attract and keep audiences (that's pretty much all of us, right?) can increase their traffic overall by publishing for the morning habit — posting stories ahead of the spike.

A few years ago I was the editor of Gannett's Salinas Californian newsroom. One of my first steps in our digital transformation was to build a Post and Readership Comparison chart, which showed when readers were on our site and when we published. The trend was dramatic — we published just as everyone was leaving. Very little of what was on our site for the morning news habit — the 8 a.m. spike — was new; most had been written the afternoon before on a print deadline.

When reporters saw the chart they started asking questions, then thinking, then planning what they could publish ahead of the morning spike. Some rearranged their work hours. Sunita Vijayan, who was then our courts reporter, decided she'd come to work earlier, publish a couple of quick posts about what court cases she'd be covering that

We're publishing too late in the day
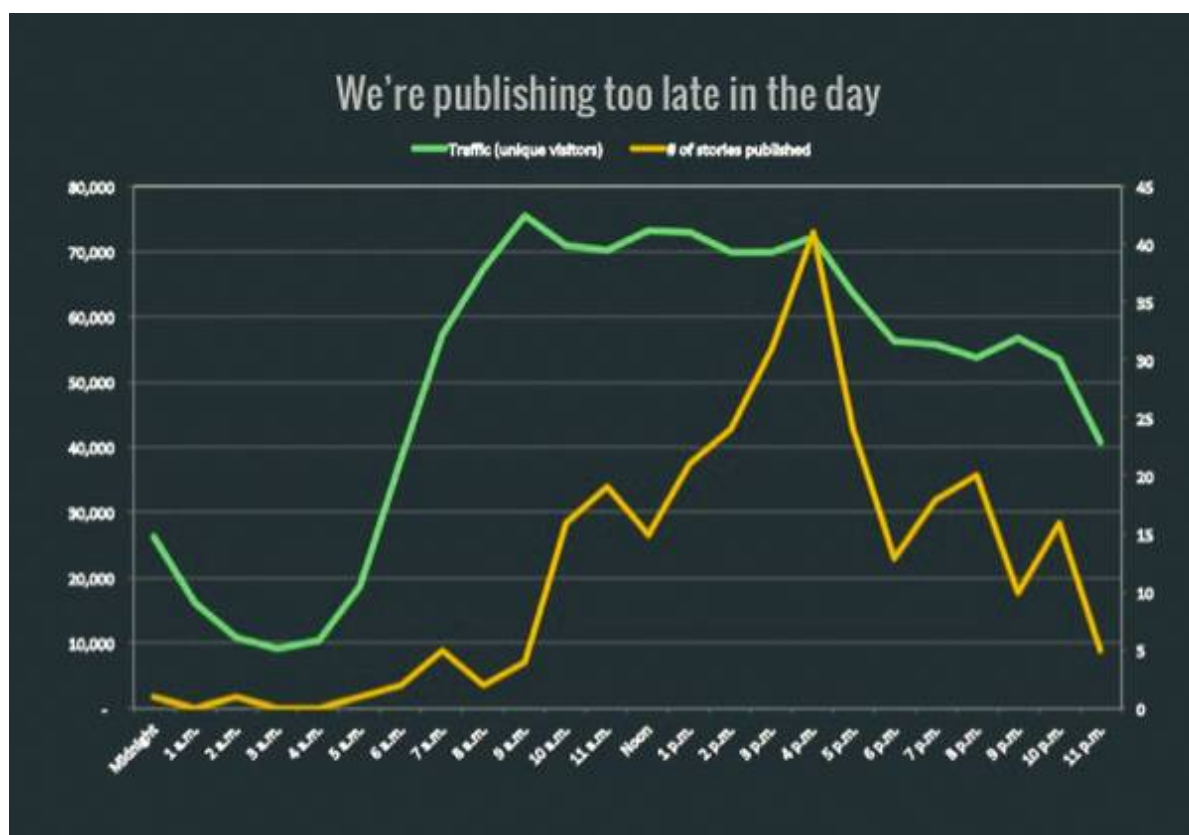
day, and include a note to readers to check back later for updates. "Early and often."

"In less than two years we doubled our web traffic. At a time when everyone's web traffic was rising, we grew much faster than the industry average."

I've used this Post and Readership Comparison chart in a couple of newsrooms since then, and each time it inspires a change in how we publish and leads to an increase in traffic.

Now, what does your traffic pattern look like? Learn your spikes — mobile, desktop and social media — and test this idea to see

if it works for you. And even more than increasing traffic (page views), does it intensify your stickiness (return visits, average time spent per person)? Stickiness leads to loyalty, to subscribers, donors, members and brand ambassadors — whatever your long-term goal.

Big, breaking news drives traffic regardless of time of day and shouldn't be held, but for everything else there's a spike waiting to be explored.

— This post was originally published on the
USC Annenberg's Media Impact Project site.
It is republished here with permission.

By GEORGE SLEFO

IAB Creates Guide for Publishers to Combat Ad Blocking

Organization Describes Six Tactics Including Paying the Ad Blockers

I n an effort to thwart the ever-increasing use of ad blocking software, the Interactive Advertising Bureau's tech lab has released a guide for publishers groping to respond.

Among the six potential tactics described: paying ad blocking companies to whitelist a site, revenue sharing with readers, and "ad reinsertion," a method where publishers shoehorn advertisements onto their websites even when visitors show up running blockers.

"While each tactic will likely be found inappropriate by some, providing insight into the breadth of actions available was deemed valuable, especially paired with guidance on the risks and benefits associated with each," the IAB wrote in its guide.

Indeed, the IAB does not make any specific recommendations of the six options, but it does offer its opinion on which might be the most effective, namely, making a "D.E.A.L" with the consumer to turn off ad blocking software in exchange for content.

Here D.E.A.L stands for detecting ad blocking, explaining the value exchange, asking for changed behavior and then lifting restrictions.

"We know that users are looking for choice and we have to respect that," said Scott Cunningham, senior VP-technology and ad operations at the IAB. "So let's offer them a choice, let's make them a D.E.A.L."

The deal approach resembles Forbes' move in December, when the publisher asked its audience to turn off ad blocking software in exchange for access to its content. "Forbes and the Washington Post and a number of different companies have been experimenting," Mr. Cunningham said. "Now, we know more about user tolerances in these types of things when it comes to ad blocking rates."

D.E.A.L. AS EXPLAINED BY THE IAB

- **D**etect ad blocking, in order to initiate a conversation
- **E**xplain the value exchange that advertising enables
- **A**sk for changed behavior in order to maintain an equitable exchange
- **L**ift restrictions or limit access in response to consumer choice

The IAB also ran down pros and cons, from its perspective, on each of the six tactics it describes: The six tactics are Access Denial, Tiered Experience, Payment From Visitors, Ad Reinsertion, Payment to Ad Blocker Companies and Payment to Visitors, or revenue sharing.

Regarding paying ad blocking companies, the IAB says, "Payment and inclusion into some ad blocker whitelists may motivate users to migrate to more stringent ad blockers that do not allow any whitelisting, damaging the industry more overall." At the same time, paying ad blocking companies could also allow a publisher to "gain access to an audience using ad blockers."

"Our stance at the tech lab is to provide transparency of what the options are out there; we want to look at the situation from both sides," Mr. Cunningham said. "It doesn't mean we are endorsing paying ad blocking companies by any means, but we want to indicate the tactics that are happening within the industry. I think it was important for us to do our due diligence as much as possible."

D.E.A.L's goal is to give consumers an understanding of how ad blocking affects the free-content value exchange, Mr. Cunningham said.

Back in October, Mr. Cunningham penned an open letter on behalf of the IAB telling content providers and others, "We messed up."

"We build advertising technology to optimize publishers' yield of marketing budgets that had eroded after the last recession," Mr. Cunningham wrote. "Looking back now, our scraping of dimes may have cost us dollars in consumer loyalty."

The open letter was also the introduction of IAB principles it dubbed L.E.A.N., for Light, Encrypted, Ad Choice Supported and Non-Invasive. L.E.A.N. is also the IAB's latest technical standard for the global digital advertising supply chain.

"If we're going to make a deal with the customer, and that's what this is really about, making a deal, we obviously want to offer a L.E.A.N user experience in order for us to make that D.E.A.L," Mr. Cunningham said. "This guide really documents and crystallizes a lot of different options without making a recommendation on one or the other."

By GREG STERLING

Survey: 62 Percent of SMBs don't know whether their marketing works

Top area of digital investment continues to be "my website."

The majority of small businesses (SMBs) in the US have fewer than four employees. They struggle to match increasingly complex and fragmented consumer behavior with their marketing — though they often understand what they should be doing at a conceptual level.

A new survey of 1,000 US SMBs, from InfusionSoft and LeadPages, largely reaffirms what other surveys have shown about the gap between SMB intentions and their ability to execute. It also reflects a fundamental challenge for SMBs in understanding "what's working."

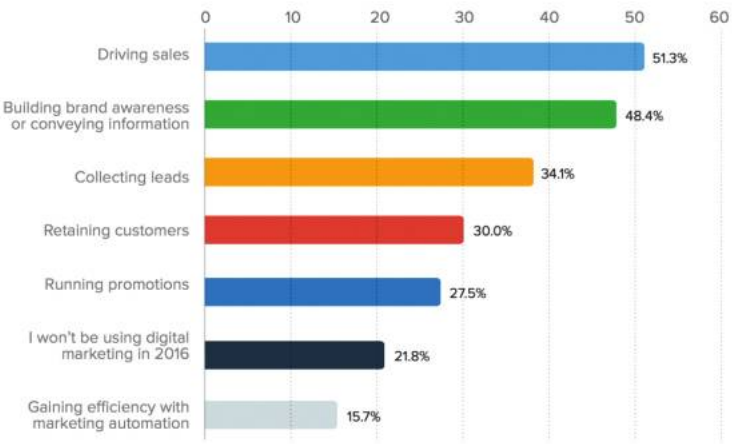| Goal	Percentage
Driving sales	51.3%
Building brand awareness or conveying information	48.4%
Collecting leads	34.1%
Retaining customers	30.0%
Running promotions	27.5%
I won't be using digital marketing in 2016	21.8%
Gaining efficiency with marketing automation	15.7%

Fig. 1

If you are planning to use digital marketing in your business in 2016, what will be your primary goals?

According to the survey, the top SMB marketing objective was driving sales. That's no surprise and is consistent with lots of SMB survey findings. I want to point out in the chart above the amazing finding that almost 22 percent said they wouldn't be using digital marketing at all.

The top two areas of intended marketing investment for 2016 were "my website" and "digital advertising and social media." This question is too broad. However, it's a recognition of the importance of digital marketing generally and social media in particular.

Fig. 2

In 2016, which marketing channels (if any) do you expect to budget more for?
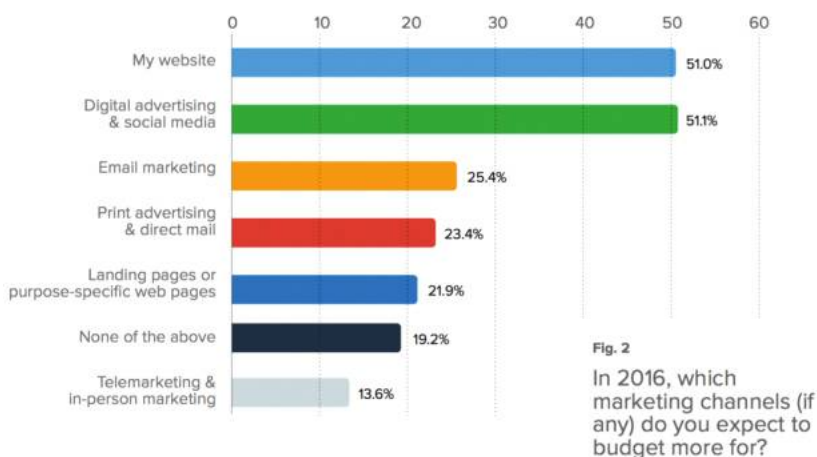
The top response to the question, "What kind of marketing channels do you [currently] use?" was "Websites." There wasn't a significant difference between the current channels used and intended 2016 investments.

Who actually carries out marketing for these SMBs? Roughly half said they did personally, and the other half said they had dedicated personnel, either in-house or with an outside contractor or agency.
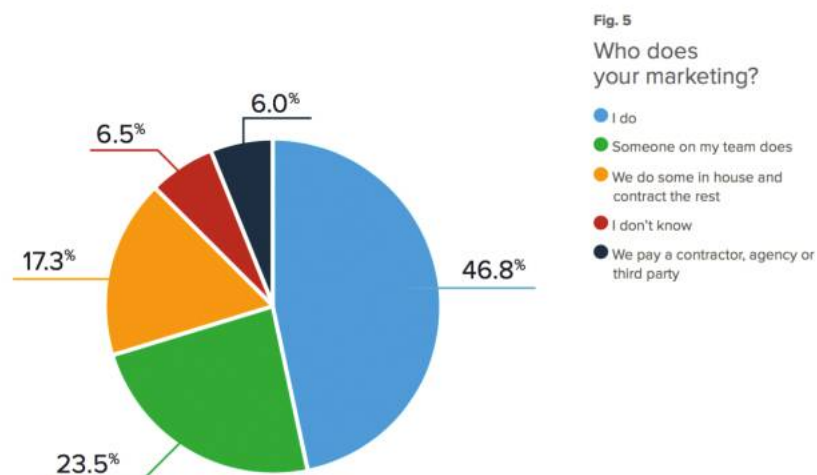
The most fascinating finding of the survey, again reflecting pre-existing data, is the challenge that SMBs face in recognizing which efforts are "working." Only a minority of these respondents believed their marketing was effective; a larger group (62 percent) said it wasn't or they didn't know.

It's staggering that almost half said they didn't know.

Fig. 4

Are your marketing efforts effective?

- Yes
- No
- I Don't Know
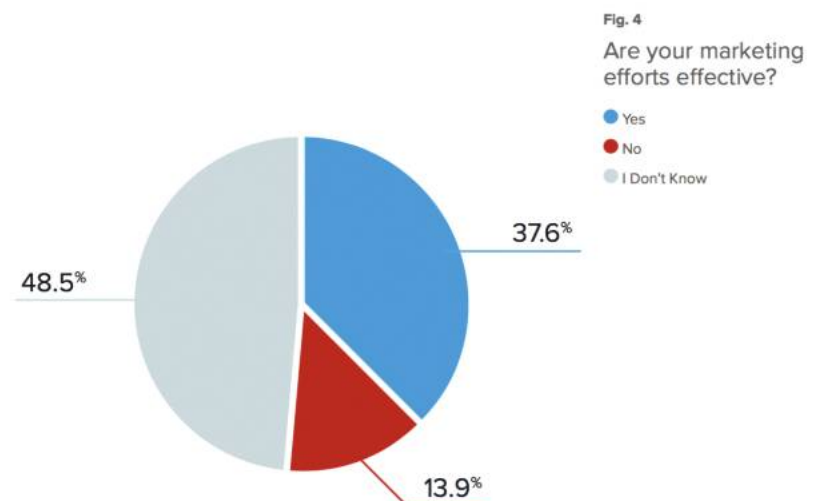
The SMB market has no shortage of vendors and "solutions providers" seeking to help them carry out digital marketing in one form or another. All these folks use analytics or have dashboards that show ROI in one form or another (though it may not be convincing).

The challenge for these providers is winning the trust of business owners and proving value. Indeed, a 2015 UK-based survey from Bing and agency Latitude White found that less than 20 percent of SMB respondents trust their SEO or PPC firms.

— Reprinted from MarketingLand.com

Fig. 5

Who does your marketing?

- I do
- Someone on my team does
- We do some in house and contract the rest
- I don't know
- We pay a contractor, agency or third party

Reallocating Resources Delivers Big ROI

"At times you have to wonder, notwithstanding all the interest in entertainment, if there's some misallocation of resources. People ask us, 'Can news organizations afford investigative reporting?' It's odd because when you go to these red carpet events, you look around at all the press there, and you can only come to the conclusion that yes, news organizations can."

—Marty Baron, executive editor, *The Washington Post*, was editor of *The Boston Globe*, whose 2001 investigation of pedophile priests is depicted in "*Spotlight*," the 2016 Best Picture Oscar winner

Medical Marijuana Advertising

The NYS Department of Health has promulgated regulations governing the use of medical marijuana. The regulations spell out permissible language to be used in advertising — the specifics are detailed below. Note the NYS DOH regulations require pre-approval of the content and design of any ads before they run. NYPA recommends that newspapers consider implementing a policy that requires that the advertiser provide a copy of the DOH's approval of the ad before the newspaper accepts and publishes the ad.

Complicating things a bit more, the United States Postal Service has issued several memorandums advising newspapers that if a mail piece contains ads for marijuana, that mail piece is non-mailable.

Marijuana is listed in the federal Controlled Substance Act, which prohibits advertising in newspapers, magazines, handbills and other publications. But, there's a twist: the USPS has no authority to stop mailers if their publications contain marijuana ads. Local postal officials lack the authority to make a determination on their own about whether a parcel is mailable or non-mailable.

A new postal policy directs postmasters to send a report to the US Postal Inspection Service, which is the law enforcement arm of the USPS. In theory, the matter would be then turned over to law enforcement for prosecution, although it is unclear what kind of crime would be prosecuted. Federal authorities have generally not cracked down on marijuana sales in states where it is legalized.

That said, the policy means that pot ads are off limits to newspapers that use the USPS to deliver their newspapers. The policy also prohibits direct mail companies from mailing pieces advertising marijuana.

So, should newspapers feel safe publishing marijuana ads? Members of Congress have stated publicly that the legal interpretation from the USPS is outdated and uncompromising. As with most of our dealings with the USPS, things are complicated, confusing, and contradictory.

§1004.16 Medical marihuana marketing and advertising by registered organizations (d) All advertisements, regardless of form, for approved medical marihuana products that make a statement relating to effectiveness, side effects, consequences, and contraindications shall present a true and accurate statement of such information. (e) An advertisement does not satisfy the requirement that it presents a "true and accurate statement" of information relating to effectiveness, side effects, consequences, and contraindications if it fails to present a fair balance between information relating to effectiveness, side effects, consequences, and contraindications in that the information relating to effectiveness is presented in greater scope, depth, or detail than is the information relating to side effects, consequences and contraindications, taking into account all implementing factors such as typography, layout, contrast, headlines, paragraphing, white space, and any other techniques apt to achieve emphasis. (f) An advertisement is false, lacking in fair balance, or otherwise misleading if it: (1) contains a representation or suggestion that one marihuana brand or form is better, more effective, useful in a broader range of conditions or patients or safer than other drugs or 76 treatments including other marihuana brands or forms, unless such a claim has been demonstrated by substantial scientific or clinical experience; (2) Contains favorable information or opinions about a marihuana product previously regarded as valid but which have been rendered invalid by contrary and more credible recent information; (3) Uses a quote or paraphrase out of context or without citing conflicting information from the same source, to convey a false or misleading idea; (4) Uses a study on persons without a debilitating medical condition without disclosing that the subjects were not suffering from a debilitating medical condition; (5) Uses data favorable to a marihuana product derived from patients treated with a different product or dosages different from those recommended in New York State; (6) Contains favorable information or conclusions from a study that is inadequate in design, scope, or conduct to furnish significant support for such information or conclusions; or (7) Fails to provide adequate emphasis for the fact that two or more facing pages are part of the same advertisement when only one page contains information relating to side effects, consequences and contraindications. 77 (g) False or misleading information in any part of the advertisement shall not be corrected by the inclusion of a true statement in another distinct part of the advertisement. (h) An advertisement for any approved medical marihuana product shall not contain: (1) any statement that is false or misleading; (2) any statement that falsely disparages a competitor's products; (3) any statement, design, or representation, picture or illustration that is obscene or indecent; (4) any statement, design, representation, picture or illustration that encourages or represents the use of marihuana for a condition other than a serious condition as defined in subdivision seven of section thirty-three hundred sixty of the public health law; (5) any statement, design, representation, picture or illustration that encourages or represents the recreational use of marihuana; (6) any statement, design, representation, picture or illustration related to the safety or efficacy of marihuana, unless supported by substantial evidence or substantial clinical data; 78 (7) any statement, design, representation, picture or illustration portraying anyone under the age of 18, objects suggestive of the presence of anyone under the age of 18, or containing the use of a figure, symbol or language that is customarily associated with anyone under the age of 18; (8) any offer of a prize, award or inducement to a certified patient, designated caregiver or practitioner related to the purchase of marihuana or a certification for the use of marihuana; or (9) any statement that indicates or implies that the product or entity in the advertisement has been approved or endorsed by the commissioner, department, New York State or any person or entity associated with New York State provided that this shall not preclude a factual statement that an entity is a registered organization. (i) Any advertisement for an approved medical marihuana product shall be submitted to the department at least 30 business days prior to the public dissemination of the advertisement. (j) The submitter of the advertisement shall provide the following information to the department in addition to the advertisement itself: (1) A cover letter that: (i) provides the following subject line: Medical marihuana advertisement review package for a proposed advertisement; 79 (ii) provides a brief description of the format and expected distribution of the proposed advertisement; and (iii) provides the submitter's name, title, address, telephone number, fax number, and email address; (2) an annotated summary of the proposed advertisement showing every claim being made in the advertisement and which references support for each claim; (3) verification that a person identified in an advertisement as an actual patient or health care practitioner is an actual patient or health care practitioner and not a model or actor; (4) verification that a spokesperson who is represented as an actual patient is indeed an actual patient; (5) verification that an official translation of a foreign language advertisement is accurate; (6) annotated references to support disease or epidemiology information, cross-referenced to the advertisement summary; and (7) a final copy of the advertisement, including a video where applicable, in a format acceptable to the department. 80 (k) Advertising packages that are missing any of the elements in subdivision (j) of this section, or that fail to follow the specific instructions for submissions, shall be considered incomplete. If the department receives an incomplete package, it shall so notify the submitter.

By ROGER FIDLER

News organizations getting significant boost from phablets

Large-screen smartphone owners between the ages of 25 and 34 are the most frequent news consumers

Smartphones
5 inches or less

Phablets
Between 5–7 inches

Tablets
7 inches and above
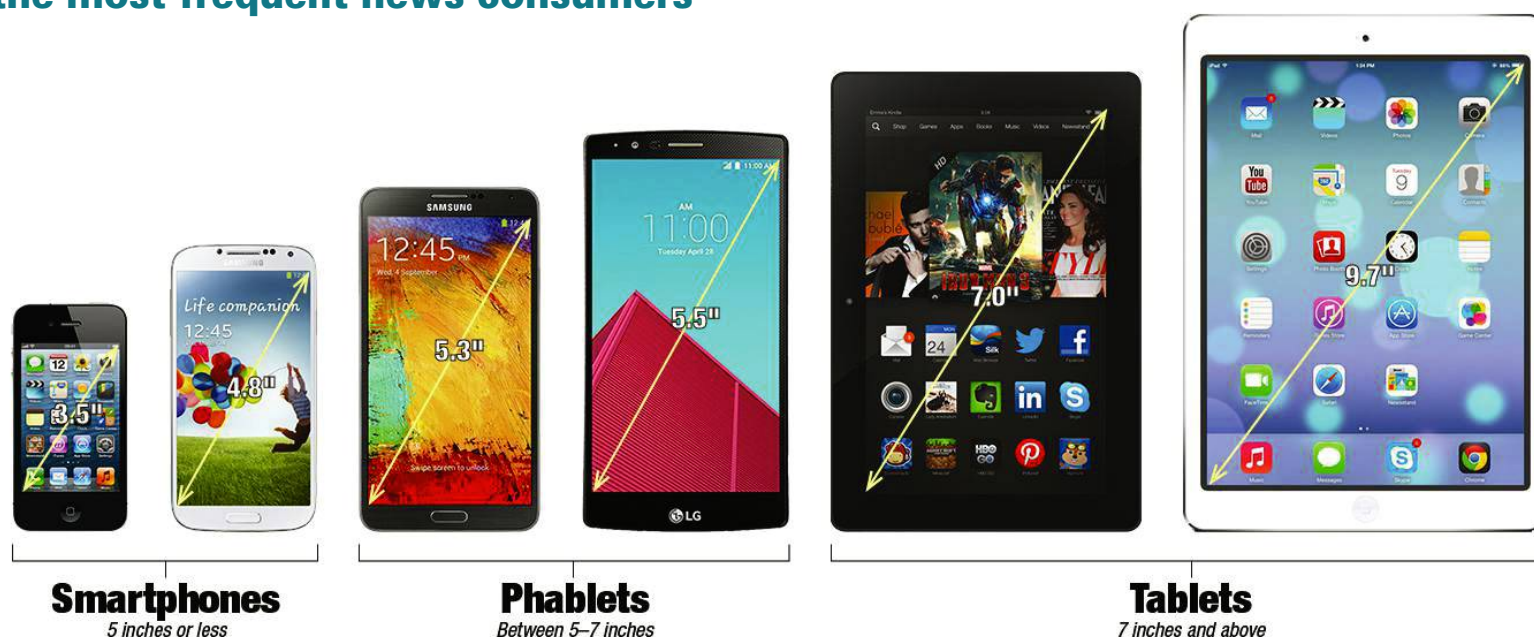
U.S. adults who have a phablet — a smartphone with a 5- to 7-inch screen — are much more likely to use it for consuming news than those who have a standard-size smartphone, according to the latest Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI) mobile media poll.

Nearly half (47 percent) of all phablet owners said they "Frequently" or "Very Frequently" consumed online news stories from news organizations such as newspapers and TV stations in the seven days prior to taking the survey. That was more than twice the percentage found for all standard smartphone owners (23 percent).

Of particular significance to news organizations trying to reach younger audiences with their digital content, nearly 7 in 10 (69 percent) phablet owners between the ages of 25 and 34 said they consumed news on their phablet "Frequently" or "Very Frequently" in the past week, and 81 percent said they spent more than 20 minutes on a typical day consuming news on their phablet. One-third (33 percent) said they spent more than an hour.

While larger screens have made smartphones somewhat more tablet-like for reading and watching videos, phablets do not appear to be tablet killers as some pundits have suggested. More than half (53 percent) of phablet owners and about 4 in 10 (39 percent) of standard smartphone owners had tablets.

When smartphone owners who also had tablets were asked about their use of tablets after acquiring a phablet, more than half (54 percent) said their usage was about the same. About one-third (31 percent) said they were using their tablet less than before and 15 percent said they were using their tablet more. In a follow-up question about their use of tablets in the seven days prior to participating in the survey, only 7 percent of phablet owners said they had not used their tablet versus 12 percent of standard smartphone owners.

Phablet owners overall spent significantly more time consuming news on their smartphones and tablets – if they had one – than standard smartphone owners. More than half (52 percent) of all phablet owners said they spent more than 20 minutes on a typical day consuming news on their smartphone. Fifty-eight

percent of phablet owners who had tablets said they spent more than 20 minutes consuming news on their tablet. About one-third (34 percent) of standard smartphone owners said they spent more than 20 minutes consuming news on their smartphones. Among standard smartphone owners who had tablets, 44 percent said they spent more than 20 minutes consuming news on their tablet.

This survey was conducted for RJI in June 2015 by Ipsos, one of the world's largest independent market research companies. It included 1,001 adults from all 50 states who owned smartphones. About 4 in 10 participants (41 percent) indicated they had a large-screen smartphone (phablet). Tablets were used by 53 percent of phablet owners and 39 percent of standard smartphone owners. Personal computers (desktop or laptop) were used by 69 percent of phablet owners and 73 percent of standard smartphone owners.

—Reprinted from Reynolds Journalism Institue

By TONDA RUSH

Public Notices should stay in newspapers

A character identified in "The Big Short" movie only as the "Tattooed Renter" protests the unfairness in the world when he learns that he is about to be booted out of his home because the landlord has not paid the mortgage.

"Man, I paid my rent," he cries.

Would that matter when the sheriff came around? Not one bit. When the mortgage defaults, the banks want the keys.

The memory of millions booted to the curb after the crash of Lehman Brothers has faded into memory for many. It is barely even an issue in the Presidential debates. Then along came the movie, to remind us a lot that went wrong then could still go wrong.

Dodd Frank made some reforms. But if the mortgage isn't paid, Tattooed still loses his home.

That is one reason why transparency in foreclosures makes sense. And why Virginia newspapers are protesting a move in the Virginia legislature to pull a curtain of obscurity around foreclosures. SB 560, patroned by Willliamsburg senator Thomas Normant, Jr., would make foreclosures obscure.

The bill would end the practice of putting a notice in the newspaper when a foreclosure is about to occur. Instead, a small ad could run in the newspaper, pointing to a Circuit Court website. If a reader wants to know more, that reader has to surf.

What do foreclosure notices do? They give the public a window into what is otherwise a closed legal process. Although in Virginia foreclosures can occur in public lawsuits, more often lenders require a borrower to write the courts out of the process as a condition of getting the mortgage. A trustee for the mortgage holder can force and execute a foreclosure sale after a default. Virginia has one of the shortest required foreclosure periods in the nation. Some states permit up to 1,000 days to give residents a maximum opportunity to keep their homes after a bank declares a default. Virginia's process can be about a fourth of that.

The public notice is an important part of a scary process that can end with the family goods on the curb.

It gives residents time to assemble help to redeem the property.

It provides notice beyond the required letter to the borrower. In Tattooed's case, the landlord probably got the letter, but the renter was clueless.

Landlord could be pocketing the rent but not paying the mortgage. A public notice gives Tattooed or some watchful friend of Tattooed a clue about the impending sale.

If the foreclosure happens, greater notice would give more buyers a chance to find out about the sale. When a foreclosed house sells, the proceeds go to retire the costs of the foreclosure, to pay back taxes and the lender and then, only if there is money left over, does any money go to the homeowner.

More buyers create a greater chance that the homeowner walks away with at least some equity.

The notice introduces some transparency into a closed system. Consumer groups, neighbors, scholars and historians who care about what goes on in this arcane world of securitized lending get a window — a small window, but still a window.

But no one reads printed newspapers any more, some will say. Shouldn't these things be on line?

First, they're wrong. Most people who consume newspaper news read it in print. So said the Pew Research Center this month. (You are probably one of them right now.) For those who want public notices on websites, the newspapers that run them in print put them online if they have websites and most do. There is more to public notice than publishing. The printed notice is kept and archived, so when a dispute comes up years later, the authentic notice can be found. Unlike the fickle digital world, print doesn't change.

Yes, but the newspapers just want the revenue, the patrons will say. True, that. Newspapers do need revenue if they are going to cover the news. But the circuit court website isn't free. It has to be built, maintained, archived and authenticated when the notices are needed for evidence. Whether the newspapers can do the notice more cheaply than the courts is a question to answer after an honest study of the court site and all of its real costs – including marketing its links — are counted.

One thing is for sure. You just read this commentary. And I'll bet you haven't been on the Circuit Court website all day.

Mortgage lenders have a point. When they lend money and it isn't paid back, they have to free up that property so they can put the money back into circulation — even if the loan is immediately sold into secondary markets, as most are. Someone somewhere has money tied up in that property. Not all the defaults in "The Big Short" were by innocents. Loads of people took out loans during that period that they well knew they couldn't afford. The foreclosure process is a regrettable but necessary tool to keep the loan markets fluid.

Obscurity, however, is also regrettable and completely unnecessary. Court websites are for lawyers. People who want to know what is going on look at the newspaper.

— Tonda Rush is co-director of the Public Notice Resource Center.

By the Editors of MEDIA LIFE

Inserts: Hanging on in the digital age

Spending rebounded after a brief decline early in the recession

Inserts — the circulars that come in newspapers, such as the big coupon books on Sundays – are the media equivalent of mean girls.

A lot of media people have complaints about them. Yet they remain popular.

What are the complaints? They're expensive and they don't deliver a big enough return on investment.

A study by Omnicom last year found inserts have the second-lowest ROI for any major media, about half that of radio and television.

But they're important to newspapers, which is why the pricing remains high and papers push them so hard. They account for up to half of local newspapers' profits, with the decline of other advertising, classifieds and circulation.

"FSIs remain relatively stable. In fact, they still represent about 90 percent of coupons distributed," says Dan Kitrell, vice president of account solutions at Kantar Media's Marx.

Ad spending on inserts was down 9 percent during the first nine months of 2015. Prior to that, save a brief drop eight years ago, it's been down slightly or stable.

In 2014, spending fell 2.8 percent, but it was up 3.4 percent in 2013.

"Back in 2008 we were seeing a slow decline of FSIs [free standing inserts], then the economy tanked and FSIs popped," Kitrell says, because people were suddenly interested in coupons and saving money.

"That will probably keep them relevant for several years to come."

Though digital has gained in many areas over print, inserts have maintained surprising relevance. Research from Nielsen Scarborough says 37 percent of adults over age 18 read the circulars in newspapers.

And Market Track, a market intelligence firm, says three-quarters of shoppers peruse circulars for deals during the critical back-to-school shopping period.

So while they're costly, they remain in the media mix.

"One of the things that's unique about FSIs is they reach 70 million people on a given Sunday, and those people often engage with them when writing shopping lists," Kitrell says.

Still, there are indications that in the future, FSIs' popularity could decline because of the potential threat from digital and their high cost. There are clear alternatives to FSIs, including direct mail, mobile coupons and websites devoted entirely to delivering coupons.

The number of pages of inserts declined 8.1 percent last year, to 186 billion, according to Marx data. The number of coupons on those pages was up very slightly, by 0.2 percent, which Marx attributes to more efficient use of space on pages.

The number of non-food coupons rose 3.3 percent in 2015, and the number of coupons redeemed in that category has increased the past four years.

However, while health care and packaged goods have bumped up their insert activity, major retailers have cut back on their pages, such as Walmart and Target.

Walmart reduced pages by a third, while Target was down by a quarter. Alas for those advertisers looking to reduce costs, there's not much to be done about the expense of inserts.

"There are handling and redemption costs. And there's also security cost. You're actually printing money–the distributors spend a lot of time making sure the right number of vehicles go to the right number of newspapers," Kitrell says.

"Since it is essentially printing money, there are financial controls in place, which adds to the cost of the medium as well."

— Reprinted from Media Life

Store	% Change in pages 2015 vs. 2014
Walmart	-33.4%
Target	-25.2%
Walgreens	-38.4%
Dollar General	26.1%
Family Dollar	-40.6
CVS Pharmacy	23.7%
Kroger (banner)	-14.6%
Safeway	-53.0%
Publix	1.8%
Rite Aid	3.4%

Source: Kantar Media

job bank

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