



Merry Christmas
& Happy Holidays

from your friends at the
Alabama Press Association

High High

Andrea

Felicia
Broad

Jailyn
Megan

AlaPressa

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2018

Important Dates

APA Media Awards
Editorial Contest Open
December 20

2019 APA Media
Summit
February 8
Renaissance Marriott
Montgomery, AL

2019 APA Summer
Convention
June 27-29
Perdido Beach Resort

Online Media Campus

[Gaining Digital Readers Without
Sacrificing Print](#)

Presenter: Summer Moore
(Aired Dec. 13. Click link to
access the archived webinar)

January 10

[Classified 2019: Your Biggest
Challenges & Freshest
Opportunities](#)

Presenter: Janet DeGeorge

APA sells office building in Birmingham

Reynolds Journalism Institute taking
applications for 2019 fellowships

Bryce named editor of the Opelika Observer

Wigfield named managing editor

Beaty named Times Journal managing editor

Evans named managing editor of the Valley
Times-News

A Newspaper Tree

Flomaton Hurricanes

Alabama newspapers represented at three-state
Rural Tourism Conference

Southern Circulation Managers Association to
hold conference in Chattanooga



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APA sells office building in Birmingham

The Alabama Press Association Journalism Foundation has sold the building in Homewood that has housed the APA office since 1994.

“Over the years, we have been approached several times about selling,” APA Executive Director Felicia Mason said. “The building sits on a corner lot on busy Hwy. 31 in the Homewood and Vestavia areas of Birmingham, which is a highly visible location. When we were approached in April, the Foundation board decided the market was good and the time was right to consider an offer.”

The building was purchased as an investment for the Foundation to fund the grants, scholarships

and internships awarded each year. APA and ANAS rented the second floor and the first floor was leased to an outside company, currently Advanced Weight Loss.

Mason says it has been a great investment for the Foundation. “The building was purchased for \$365,000 26 years ago, and sold for \$835,000. The expenses associated with owning an aging building, however, were on the rise and the proceeds from the sale can be used to generate the cash needed to continue the work of the Foundation.”

APA will move in April and will lease office space for the near future.

Reminder: APA Media Awards Editorial Contest

After hearing from our members regarding the best timeline allowing for compilation and entries, the contest will be open for entries on December 20, 2018 (see email and website for 2019 rules beginning 5 p.m., December 19).

APA is calling for judges (a requirement to enter the AMA contest) for our 2019 contest partner, the Illinois Press Association. The judging will be assigned in early February, 2019 and be due March 11, 2019. Visit <http://ilpress.formstack.com/forms/ipajudge2019> to

sign up as a judge in either editorial or advertising categories. Thank you to those newspapers who have signed up!



Apply now for a 2019 Reynolds Journalism Institute Fellowship

The current class of fellows at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute is busy improving VR news and advertising, giving middle American high school students a voice in journalism, developing a playbook to cover disasters and using innovative techniques to reach Spanish-

speaking immigrants. Among other things!

What projects to improve journalism and democracy will top their agenda in 2019 and 2020? That depends, in large part, on you.

RJI continued on page 3

RJI

continued from page 2

RJI is now taking applications for their next group of fellows, looking to advance new products, services, ideas and storytelling techniques with funding, mentoring, testing and promotion.

One of those projects could be

yours. [Click or visit here](https://rjifellowships.smapply.io/) to pitch your idea: <https://rjifellowships.smapply.io/>

RJI offers three types of fellowships. Residential fellows earn \$80,000 and spend eight months at the Missouri School of Journalism. Want to work from your home base? They offer \$20,000 non-residential fellowships. Newsrooms and civil society organizations can

apply for institutional fellowships that offer \$20,000 stipends. All three options include additional funds for travel, technical development and marketing.

The application deadline is Jan. 31. A semi-final group will be selected in February, interviewing the most promising applicants in March, and winners will be chosen in early spring of 2019.

Wigfield named managing editor

Jimmy Wigfield, who has 43 years of experience at newspapers in Alabama, has been named the managing editor of The Alexander City Outlook and its affiliated weekly newspapers owned by Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc.

Wigfield, 57, a native of Bayou La Batre, Alabama, succeeds Mitch Sneed, who was killed in an automobile accident in July. "We are very fortunate to have a person of Jimmy's background and education at Tallapoosa Publish-



ers Inc.," President/Publisher Steve Baker said. "As we continue to enhance the newspaper, we needed someone with Jimmy's experience and steady hand."

Wigfield began working for newspapers at age 13, when he began writing for the Mobile County News. Afterward, he embarked on a 32-year career as a sportswriter, columnist and editor with the Mobile Press-Register. When the Press-Register was downsized along with The Birmingham News and Huntsville Times in 2012, Wig-

field became editor of the weekly Call News in Citronelle, where he served three years. The Call News was named the most improved newspaper in the state in its class in 2013, Wigfield's first year as editor.

Wigfield has won numerous Associated Press and Alabama Press Association honors, including the APA's Story of the Year in 2014, and winning the AP's top deadline writing award for the state in 1991. While serving as the assistant sports editor of the Press-Register, Wigfield helped supervise sections that were honored as the top 10 in the nation by the Associated Press Sports Editors.

Evans named managing editor of the Valley Times-News

Daniel Evans has been named managing editor of The Valley Times-News in Lanett.

Evans began his work with The Times-News in October, and lives with his family in nearby LaGrange, where he also serves as the managing editor for The LaGrange Daily

News.

Evans, a native of Woodstock, Alabama, has worked as the managing editor of The LaGrange Daily News since May of 2017, and will retain his responsibilities in LaGrange as he assumes new duties in Lanett. Both newspapers are

part of the Boone Newspapers, Inc. (BNI) organization of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Evans and his wife, Alyssa, are both graduates of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and have a 1-year-old daughter, Autumn.

Gamble pays off for Flomaton paper

Tri-City Ledger Publisher Joe Thomas had a hunch: the Flomaton Hurricanes were going to win a state title. So, when the game was over, the fans and players were able to pick up a copy of the paper with the front-page headline exclaiming STATE CHAMPS. The one-page piece was printed the day BEFORE the game.



Thomas says he got the idea from former Tuscaloosa News Publisher Jim Rainey, who had a similar piece available after Alabama won a national championship a few years ago. "I just took a gamble," Thomas said. "When Flomaton intercepted a pass with 5 minutes to go in the game and a two score lead, I knew my gamble had paid off."

He sold the back

page to the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, who also got a full page in the tab the paper published the following week, with a recap of the game and the season.

"My only complaint is that I didn't print enough," Thomas said. "I printed 1,500 and left 500 back in Flomaton. They were all gone quickly. Convenience stores put them up in their windows and even the local television news stations had fans holding up the paper."

"Something like this makes you appreciate the print addition of a paper. You can't do that online."

A Newspaper Tree

The Advertiser-Gleam in Gunterville had a unique creation for the Gunterville Museum's Festival of Trees, an exhibit of Christmas trees by community organizations that takes place every December at the Museum.

The Gleam Tree was made entirely of Advertiser-Gleam newspapers, with red balls and a Santa hat rounding out the décor. It was a unique way to promote both recycling and the newspaper itself and was the brainchild of the Gleam's Elizabeth Summers and Christine Hammers.

A folding ladder wrapped in chicken wire formed the framework for the tree, with the newspapers then stuffed in the holes of the wire. Hammers' husband Dan, a retired newspaperman himself, helped stuff the papers.

"We got some unusual looks from our neighbors as we were setting it up," Summers said. But once it came together, it drew rave reviews from museum visitors during the opening night festivities of the festival. Many said it was the best-looking tree there.



Alabama newspapers represented at three state Rural Tourism Conference

Tourism is big business in Alabama, and most states. Getting heads-in-beds is really the goal. APA's ad service has recognized this for years, and has been working with several tourism organizations around the state, and courting other large and small tourism groups across the Southeast promoting our member newspapers and our Network Programs to help them bring people to their events from outside their area.

Leigh Leigh Tortorici attended the Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee Rural Tourism conference in Gadsden, Alabama, on Oct. 22-24, where she manned a booth for the Alabama Press Association. She said, "It was great to have an opportunity to meet tourism organizations from several states at once, and talk about what our members have to offer. I feel like these smaller rural groups need more help with marketing than the ones from the larger metro areas. They have tighter budgets and lots of lo-

cal events and festivals that could bring people from further away if they know about our services."

She was able to talk about the



Print and Digital Ad networks, individual ad placement, preprint options, and the 35+ beautiful and hyper-local magazines that our newspapers are producing as some of the many services we can help plan.

APA currently works with the Alabama Bicentennial Commission,

Gulf Shores/Orange Beach Tourism, Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association, and several others. Tortorici said, "We will continue to pursue this category of business on behalf of our members. These organizations need the help, and ads in our newspapers can draw people to their events. It's a win-win!"

APA raffled off a themed "travel bag." It included a bag for the beach, a throw for the mountains, an APA keychain for a road trip, and most importantly a free press release distributed statewide.

If you have a local tourism group or popular festival in your area, don't forget to tell them about the Newspaper Network. Your newspaper keeps HALF of every ad you sell into the Print Network. It is extremely cost-effective with massive reach, and can also be bought by the north, central, or south region of the state. Contact any of our salespeople at APA if you need more details.



TownNews.com
Online solutions. Bottom-line results.

Beaty named Times Journal managing editor

The Fort Payne Times-Journal has named Kayla Beaty as managing editor.

Beaty, who worked previously as a staff reporter and then director of DeKalb Living magazine, replaced

Bradley Roberts on Oct. 8.

Beaty is a native of Ider and a standout basketball player at Ider High School. She played college basketball at Auburn University Montgomery, Gadsden State Com-

munity College and Martin Methodist in Pulaski, Tennessee. She graduated from Martin Methodist in 2015 with a bachelor of arts degree in English.

Bryce named editor of The Opelika Observer

In a celebration of The Opelika Observer's 10th anniversary, Morgan Bryce was named editor of the newspaper. Bryce had previously

served as associate editor.

Bryce began at The Observer in 2016 as an intern while in school at Auburn University. He joined the

paper fulltime as a staff writer upon graduating with a bachelor's degree in journalism that same year. He was promoted to associate editor in 2017.

Briefs

The Greenville Advocate and the Demopolis Times are no longer publishing their Saturday editions. Both papers will be weekly newspapers. Also, The Greenville Advocate is no longer publishing The Butler County News, the free publication that mostly covered the southern part of Butler County.

Former Tuscaloosa News Publisher **Jim Rainey** has started a new company in the Tuscaloosa area – Fresh Coat Painters of Tuscaloosa.

The company offers residential

and commercial painting services including interior and exterior painting, deck sealing and staining, pressure washing, wallpaper removal and other services related to protective coverage application.

Fresh Coat Painters will cover Tuscaloosa, Northport, Hoover, Pelham, Bessemer and surrounding areas.

Rainey says his company offers a 3-3-3 customer service pledge. Calls will be answered by a live person within three rings, a quote will be delivered within three days and the job

will start within three weeks. Fresh Coat Painters has a national partnership with Sherwin-Williams.

The Cullman Tribune announced recently a new series aimed at getting citizens more involved with the community.

Carol Berry, a lifelong citizen of Cullman, will showcase a local organization or individual and give an overview of their services and activities. Carol says her hope is to motivate citizens to get up, get out, and get involved.

People

Rick Lanier and **Robert Noles** have joined the staff at The Opelika Observer. Lanier is a retired U. S. Navy warrant officer and a graduate of Opelika High School. He will cover local area sports.

Noles has been a freelance photographer at the paper since 2009 and joins the staff full time. He will be a photo journalist and a staff writer. He is retired from the City of Opelika.

Dustin Duncan has joined the staff at The Valley Times-News in Lannett as a reporter.

Duncan is a native of Peoria, Ill., and a graduate of the University of Illinois with a journalism degree. He has worked previously as a reporter for The Southern Illinoisian in Carbondale, Ill.

He and his wife recently relocated to Alabama when his wife accepted a position at Auburn Univer-

sity where she teaches English and literature.

Tiffany Patterson has joined the staff at Greenville Newspapers as the marketing coordinator. She is a native of Alabaster.

Patterson worked for six years in customer service and accounting at UAB Hospital in Birmingham.

She and her husband have two children, Kollin, 13, and Hannah, 11.

Deaths

John Alwyn Burgess, former owner of The Opp News, died Nov. 2. He was 79.

He attended public schools in Opp and graduated from Auburn University in 1961.

Burgess won several awards for his writing talents during his time as editor and publisher of The Opp News. He enjoyed teaching his love of the outdoors to Boy Scouts by serving as Scout Master of Troop 25.

John enjoyed hunting, fishing, making arrowheads, singing Hank Williams songs, and spending time with his family and friends.

He was elected president of the Alabama Newspaper Advertising Service in 1972, after serving many years on the board and on many committees of the Alabama Press Association.

Burgess is survived by his wife of 58 years, Virginia Burgess of Opp;

sons, David Burgess (Jeanne) of Missouri, Bob Burgess of Opp, and Thomas Burgess (Shannon) of Missouri; daughter, Beverly Burgess of Ocala, Florida; grandchildren, Ty, Marissa, Savannah, Ali & Jace; and sister, Bobbie Goldstein of Virginia.

Burgess continued his love of education in death by donating his body to the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in Mobile, Alabama.

Industry

Southern Circulation Managers Association to hold conference in Chattanooga

The SCMA/MACMA conference will be held April 4-6, 2019, at the Read House Hotel in Chattanooga.

There will be breakout sessions for revenue growth, audience growth, expense cuts, and cross department programs. In addition to several speakers/presenters, two legal professionals will attend and present, (available for questions) and after-hours events for your networking pleasure.

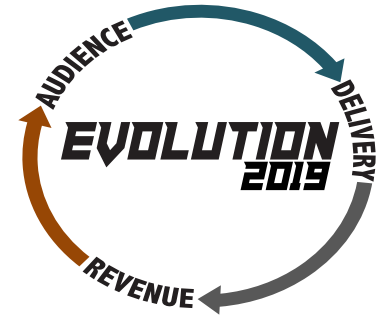
There is always the great "Hot Ideas" breakfast available for everyone to pass along their ideas that have been successful in the last two years.

There will be more marketing information coming in the near future. We hope you will be able to attend and learn something new to take back with you.

Please send your good ideas to Mike Floyd (mfloyd@cdispatch.com) to be included in a notebook of all ideas for everyone to receive at the conference.

The conference is very reasonable. Only \$65 per year to be a member of SCMA and the conference fee is only \$145 (a 25% savings) if you sign up before Feb. 15, 2019 and then only \$195 afterward, up until the conference in April.

MACMA/SCMA Presents...



Link for registering:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-macmascma-conference-tickets-52282694948>

Help save the print newspaper requirement for temporary job listings

The Department of Labor (DOL) issued a notice proposing regulatory revisions to its labor certification program. They want to change the way employers inform United States workers about agriculture and non-agricultural temporary jobs – a requirement they must meet before offering those jobs to nonimmigrant foreign workers under the H-2A and H-2B visa programs. The DOL is proposing to eliminate a requirement that employers notify U.S. workers of available positions through an advertisement in Sunday newspapers of general circulation, "in the area of intended employment," and replace it with an electronic job posting.

The government's proposal overlooks the fact that newspapers have long been, and remain today, the primary way in which many millions of U.S. workers receive information, including notices of job opportunities. Further, the government ignores what is common practice today – newspapers routinely arrange for wider distribution of print recruitment ads beyond the Sunday printed edition

by posting the same ads on their websites, social media pages and on third-party partner sites such as Monster, CareerBuilder and Recruitmentology.com. The newspaper, in effect, serves as a local agency to ensure the broadest delivery of recruitment ads within an area of intended employment.



The Alliance is baffled that a federal agency that was created to put the American worker first is proposing to abandon a proven and trusted medium that reaches more than 130 million adults a week – one that is the only means for some U.S. workers to have access to job information.

On Dec. 10, the Alliance filed comments on the Department of Labor's proposal. In the meantime, you can promote the Sunday print requirement and tell the government to protect the American worker by running this op-ed below by Alliance President and CEO David Chavern in your newspaper. You can download a copy of the op-ed here.

Print newspapers are still the primary way that tens of millions of Americans receive information about their communities and the world. They are also the way that many people find out about job opportunities. While we assume that everyone has an internet connection, the fact is that many areas of the country have limited or no internet service. According to the Federal Communications Commission, nearly 40 percent of Americans living in rural areas lack access to fixed broadband internet. Without their local newspapers providing the information and job listings they need, they would be at an extreme disadvantage.

listings continued on page 7

listings

continued from page 6

But if the Department of Labor (DOL) has its way, these communities may soon be out of luck. On November 8, the DOL proposed to change the way temporary job openings are shared with potential workers. Currently, employers are required by law to notify U.S. workers of these openings through publishing the listings in local newspapers. However, the DOL says it now believes publishing the listings on “widely viewed” websites, instead of in print newspapers, would be sufficient, and is therefore proposing removing the print requirement and moving to digital-only listings.

The purpose of the existing policy is to ensure that job oppor-

tunities are made known to U.S. workers before they can be offered to foreign workers. By publishing announcements in the print newspaper, employers are able to reach an extremely wide audience, both geographically and in income level. Sunday newspapers – the main sources of print job listings – reach roughly 34 million adults in the U.S., according to the Pew Center for Excellence in Journalism. In many cases, newspaper publishers also publish the job listings on their websites and social media channels, as well as employment websites such as Monster.com and CareerBuilder, with whom newspapers have partnerships. The newspaper, in effect, serves as a local agency to ensure the broadest distribution of recruitment ads. If the Department of Labor ends the print

requirement, it will be much more difficult for people who need jobs to find them.

Without the print requirement, job seekers will not only have a harder time finding job listings in their local newspapers, but online as well. By maintaining the print requirement and adding a digital requirement, the DOL will ensure the widest possible distribution of an ad so U.S. citizens can learn of employment opportunities.

The proposed alternative of simply posting an ad on a website would make it too easy for employers to just “check the box” and bypass available U.S. workers. If the Department of Labor truly wants to support its mission to serve American job seekers, it should require both print and digital distribution of recruitment ads.

Help Wanted

Account Executive-Troy, AL

Troy Publications Inc., an award-winning media company Alabama, has an immediate need for an account executive to fill a sales position in an established territory. This position will have a strong focus on prospecting and new business development. Our account executives: Are team players with a strong work ethic. Have a consultative, in-person selling skillset. Are able to sell across different media platforms. Maintain a high level of sales activity each day. Manage accounts from start to finish. Have excellent verbal and written communication skills and solid computer skills. Are organized and trainable. Are goal-oriented and driven to exceed personal and company goals.

Based in Pike County, Troy Publications publishes a five-day newspaper, a lifestyle magazine and a variety of niche publications, as well as on digital and social media platforms. Our community is home to Troy University and a growing, diversified economic and retail base. We’re located less than an hour south of Montgomery; about two hours from the Florida panhandle; and less than three hours from Atlanta.

Compensation plan includes base weekly salary, aggressive commission and bonus plan, health/dental insurance, 401(k), paid life and disability insurance, retirement plan, and paid holidays and sick leave. No phone calls, faxes or walk-ins, please. Qualified applicants will be contacted directly for interviews. Email Publisher Stacy Graning at stacy.graning@troymessenger.com.

Opelika-Auburn News-Press Operator


The Opelika-Auburn News has an immediate opening an experienced press operator for a seven day a week publication. Work includes nights and weekends and wages will be based on experience. The

Opelika-Auburn News is a BH Media newspaper located near Auburn University. Must have good mechanical ability; Job Skills: Must be capable of performing physical tasks for at least eight hours per shift. Involves standing for long periods of time with repetitive lifting, pushing and pulling of heavy materials (up to 75 lbs). Must also be capable of repetitive climbing, stooping and bending; Hearing, eyesight (including ability to see colors), ability to understand and follow instructions, follow safety rules and work in a safe manner around moving equipment are required. Minimum Education: High school graduate or equivalent. Company benefits including medical, dental, vision, paid vacation, and 401K. Pre-employment drug and background screen required. EOE/M/F/MV; you may apply online at www.bhmginc.com.

General Assignment Reporter-Selma, AL

The Selma Times-Journal, an award-winning daily newspaper in west central Alabama, has an immediate opening for an general assignment reporter to report on a variety of beats including county/city government, cops/courts, features and more. The position offers an excellent opportunity for advancement within our parent company, Boone Newspapers, Inc. The successful candidate must be organized, have an optimistic personality, enjoy meeting new people and understand what makes a community newspaper important to its readers. They must also enjoy small town life, getting involved in the community they serve while practicing true community journalism. Interested candidates should send resume, cover letter, references, work samples and salary requirements to Will Whaley, Managing Editor, The Selma Times-Journal at whaley@selmatimesjournal.com.

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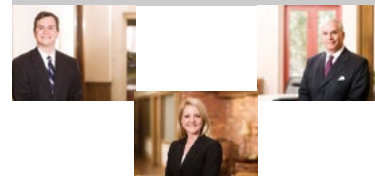
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A rule of the Supreme Court of Alabama requires the following:
 No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

When it comes to being the best, there are no shortcuts.



by Brad English
APA

We're always looking for a shortcut, an easier and faster way of doing things. We can blame it on technology, laziness, or in my case – lack of patience.

On my way in to the office the other morning, I listened as a caller to one of the local talk shows expressed a concern about technology's impact on his job. Seems he feels he will soon be without one. And, no, he doesn't work for a newspaper. He's a truck driver.

There are nearly 5 million truck drivers in the U.S. And apparently, there's a movement to expand the self-driving car technology to the trucking industry. A few short years ago, self-driving truck start-up Otto teamed with Anheuser-Busch to successfully deliver a semi-tractor full of beer from Fort Collins, through Denver and on to southern Colorado. It was a 120-mile trip, and the human driver left his seat to watch most of the action from his sleeper berth in the back. Don't know about you, but the prospect of seeing an eighteen-wheeler passing me with no one in the front seat is a little unnerving.

Even Christmas is not unafflicted by the shortcuts. For \$29.88 you can get your very own "Star Shower laser light show" (as seen on TV!), available at your local Walmart. The product's description reads "thousands of dazzling stars illuminate your landscape and home in seconds. No more rickety, unsafe ladders to deal with and no more broken bulbs from tangled strands of lights."

Shortcuts. Do you find your sales team using them? Well of

course. Email is the first shortcut that comes into play. There are 2.4 million emails sent every second. Every second. So think about that for a minute (or the time in which 144 million emails will be sent.) It's easy to see how an email sent to a client will be quickly deleted, forgotten, or both. I remember back in the day, dropping a sales kit in the mail and waiting for a call back was only slightly more effective as today's practice of sending an introductory email and expecting an immediate response. Email can be a useful tool, I just wonder if our sales reps overuse email at the expense of good old-fashioned

est? If no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? I'd like to offer that an initial sales call with no follow-up isn't likely to cause much of a "commotion" - to use a word my dad was fond of saying. Only 2% of sales are made on the first call. Yet 80% of first-time calls never receive a call back. Why is that? Maybe it's easy to stop after that first "no." Consider the following:

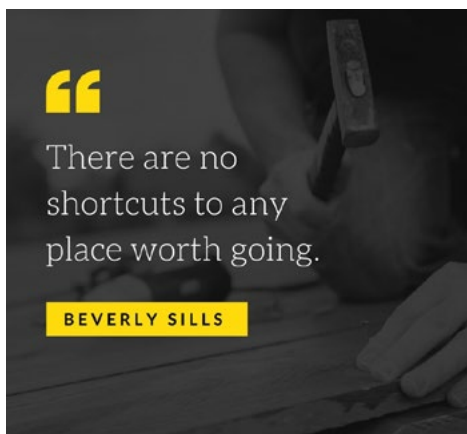
- 44% of sales people give up after one "no"
- 22% give up after two "nos"
- 14% give up after three "nos"
- 12% give up after four "nos"

That tells you that 92% of sales people give up after four "nos." And yet we have heard time and time again that most prospects take at least five calls or touches before they are sold. That's why in most industries, eight percent of the sales reps account for eighty percent of the sales. Eight percent. That's a pretty exclusive club.

We took a drive through the neighborhood the other night, looking at the Christmas decorations. I counted seven of those Walmart specials – the "star shower laser light show." It's a decorator's shortcut. They don't look too terribly bad, but just knowing there were no lights to untangle or the rickety ladder on which to risk one's life makes it seem much cheaper than it's \$29.88 price tag.

There's no short-cut to success in sales. And while getting in front of a prospect isn't getting any easier, it's more important than ever. So this Christmas, let's hope Santa brings all of us a renewed sense of spirit and determination. Let's hope 2019 finds many more of us in the group of eight percent.

Brad English is advertising manager for APA. He can be reached at 205.871.7737 or email him at brad@alabamapress.org



face-to-face meetings. Nothing, and I do mean nothing, is more effective than sitting across from a prospect to gauge his verbal and non-verbal reaction to a sales pitch.

And speaking of mail, when's the last time you received a letter or note in the mail? In 1990, 268,000,000,000 letters were sent via the USPS. In 2014, that number had dropped to nearly half that - 141,000,000,000. So if you're having a tough time getting a response from an email, sending a good old-fashioned letter may be an option.

Remember the age-old question about the tree falling in the for-

Turning your design around



by Ed
Henninger

Sometimes a design just goes stale. Over the course of even just a few years, inconsistencies creep in, color use gets out of hand, odd typefaces appear. Stuff happens.

But you can turn that around. You can bring a crisp, clean, compelling look to the tired face of your newspaper.

Here are ten steps to guide you:

1. **CLEAN UP** the nameplate. Look for those elements that have crept in, like Facebook and Twitter logos, your web address, a UPC code. All of those items can go elsewhere.

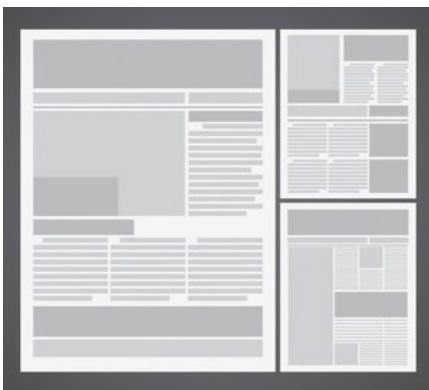
2. **GO TO** flush left for your text type. Flush left body copy helps open up the look of the page and allows you to insert elements like head-and-shoulders photos without creating poor letter spacing and word spacing adjacent to those elements.

3. **IMPROVE** typography throughout. Make sure you're using a quality text font. I continue to recommend Nimrod, but there may be others already on your system, like Utopia or Georgia. If you're still using Times for your text, you can do much better. How about headlines? Are you using a display face that has impact? Is it comfortable? Does it give your newspaper a sense of tradition and credibility? If not, look for something new.

4. **SEGMENT** your stories. With very few exceptions, any long story can be broken into three or four shorter pieces to create a more attractive package. Readers prefer stories of no more than 15 inches. You can do that!

5. **USE INFOBOXES** and by-the-numbers boxes. These are guaranteed "hooks" to get readers into a package. They're a quick list of facts and interesting information that will draw readers in. Once they go through an infobox, readers will be much more likely to give the entire package a full read.

6. **CONTROL** color use. Get rid of tint blocks behind stories. Throw out color boxes. There are better ways to bring visual interest to a package, like photos, head-and-shoulder shots, infoboxes, charts, maps... Rid your paper of weak colors like pure cyan and magenta.



7. **MAKE DEADLINE.** Deadlines aren't a design issue? Wrong! If, for example, your writers and editors don't get the content and visual items to a designer in time, then that designer has to scramble. Yes, I understand that at many newspapers the writer, editor and designer are the same person. Still, even that one person needs to make writing deadline as a writer, editing deadline as an editor — and design deadline as a designer. If you don't give enough time to the design, you'll have a page that's filled...not designed.

8. **TRAIN** staff. Don't have anyone on your staff who has a rudimentary understanding of the basics of news design? Then the

odds are your design just won't get any better. A writer isn't a designer, just like a mechanic isn't an electrician. They're different skills and they require different ways of thinking. Look for training sessions from your state press association. Perhaps a webinar will help. Check newspaperacademy.com for one.

9. **CREATE** a long-term planning process. Once you've been part of long-term planning, you'll never go back. And your design will improve exponentially. The long-term process allows you to plan months ahead for those events that are a normal part of readers' lives, like Christmas. Mother's Day. First day of school. Start thinking and planning for these three months ahead of time. This gives you the time you need to decide how you want to approach a package focused on that event — and enough time to give it a compelling look. Long-term planning is one of the major differences between a newspaper that is assembled...and a newspaper that's designed.

10. **CREATE** a design style guide. Without a style guide, anyone on staff can feel free to do as he or she likes with the design. There are no rules, no guidelines to keep the design on track. There's nothing keeping your design from slipping into confusion. Those clients of mine who have kept their design under control have done so because they created — and stick to — a design style guide.

If your design has gone stale, if it's not where you'd like it to be, these ten steps are the road to a turnaround.

ED HENNINGER is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of Henninger Consulting. Want a free evaluation of your newspaper's design? Just contact Ed: edh@henningerconsulting.com

What advertisers care about



*Ad-libs
by John Foust*

Back in my ad agency days, I learned a big lesson about what to do – and what not to do – in a sales presentation.

I was sitting in the office of the owner of a construction business, ready to show him that I was the right person to handle his advertising account. I had been referred to him by a mutual acquaintance at a much larger ad agency, an agency that was pursuing only much larger accounts.

At that point in my young advertising career, my sales presentations consisted mostly of showing samples of my work and evaluating the state of a prospect's current ads. So I opened the portfolio book of ads I had created for other clients and proceeded to describe the strategy behind each ad. After a few pages, this prospect stopped me cold in my tracks. He said, "I don't care what you've done for other people. All I care about is what you

can do for me."

All of us have experienced events that were turning points. Meeting our future spouse. Finding a new job. A conversation with a favorite teacher or coach.

WII-FM has been a sales cliché for years. It's an acronym for everyone's favorite radio station: "What's in it for me?" That acronym came to life for me that day – in a comment that became a turning point in the way I conducted business presentations. Of course, he was one hundred percent correct. Why in the world should he sit there and listen to me talking about me, when all he cared about was himself and his business? Thank goodness, I was able to shift gears and ask about his business situation and his marketing goals. And thank goodness he threw caution to the wind and gave an assignment to me.

I'll always be grateful to that direct – but exceedingly wise – advertiser for teaching me an important lesson. As it turned out, the assignment was an audition. I handled his company's ad account for 24 years. Over time, I realized that he was not being intentionally rude that day. His phi-

losophy was, "Give me the information I need to make a decision and do it quickly."

Sometimes I joke that his words should be posted in advertising departments: "I don't care what you've done for other people. All I care about is what you can do for me." That cuts right to the core of a sales presentation. It's not about the sales person or the sales person's product. It's about the customer.

There's nothing earthshakingly new about all of this. Every time a sales person prepares for an appointment, he should simply ask himself, "How can I make this presentation revolve around the prospect's needs?" And every time a sales person displays samples of ads, she should ask herself, "What's relevant about these ads? How can I relate the characteristics of these samples to the goals of this specific advertiser?"

Do these things and stay in step with your advertisers.

John Foust conducts training programs for newspaper advertising professionals. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com

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