March 20, 2019



Volume 36 Issue 11

CALENDAR of EVENTS

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Money Beyond Money Thursday, March 28

Media Generational Strategies: What Drives Your Consumers? Thursday, April 18

MEETINGS

INA, INF & INA Services Co. Boards Friday, April 26

Iowa Newspaper Association Bulletin

www.INAnews.com

Grow circulation with mail sampling, and sell extra advertising as a bonus

BY MAX HEALTH LANDMARK COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS LLC

n increase in calls and emails on sampling questions in recent weeks and months caused me to update this topic on the value of sending sample copies to nonsubscribers using your 10% in-county "sampling" entitlement.

The nonsubscriber rules in the Domestic Mail Manual are there to allow you to promote your newspaper to nonsubscribers and grow your mail delivery. Too many papers fail to use this tactic.

Print subscriptions now compete with our own websites, electronic subscriptions, and other free news and information sites. Some readers of free shoppers with news think it's the newspaper. It's no exaggeration to say that we have to work much harder to grow, or just stay even, in paid subscribers these days.

Some papers have had success sampling a route or two at a time for 2-4 issues. Others choose to sample an entire ZIP code or the entire county. But either way, sampling addressed pieces to 90% of the active residential addresses, or 75% of all addresses, on in-county routes earns you a low 3.5-cent Saturation piece price. That compares to a 6.8-cent piece price for Basic (6-124 pieces per route) in-county mail, saving you nearly half of the per-copy piece price.

You can also mail unaddressed Saturation so long as

100% of Active Residential or Total Active deliveries are provided copies. See below.

Include a good offer to subscribe or renew in each sample copy. For those worried about offending current subscribers, make the offer two-tiered, with a higher discount level for new subscribers, and another, lower one for renewals. A single-sheet flyer with coupon pulls more response than ROP ads.

The more in-county subscriber copies you can build and retain, the greater your sampling privilege is to sample at in-county rates in the future, without paying outside-county rates for nonsubscriber copies sent above the 10% rule.

REVIEW OF POSTAL SAMPLING RULES

Domestic Mail Manual 207.7.9.3 specifies that incounty eligible newspapers can mail 10% of the in-county subscriber copies in a calendar year to nonsubscribers using the low in-county rates. To estimate your entitlement, add the Subscriber Copies column, lines A1/A2 of your 3541 Postage Statement. Multiply times the number of issues in a year, and take 10% of that.

For example, a weekly with 3,500 average incounty mail subscriber copies can send 18,200 copies to nonsubscribers at in-county rates ($3,500 \times 52 = 182,000 \times .10 = 18,200$) in a year. Double that for a twice-weekly. A 5-day mailed daily earns 91,000 non-subscriber copies at in-county rates under that formula.

You may use the "simplified address" of "Residential GROW CIRCULATION - cont. on page 2

Take the INA Member Questionnaire for a chance to win \$100 gift card

s part of our most recent strategic planning session, INA staff was tasked with "Getting to know the membership (Census/Demographic survey)" -among the tasks include conducting a membership-wide survey and publishing the results. The questionnaire is a way for our Iowa Newspaper Association members to learn about each other and share information for the betterment of the industry. **We encourage all publishers to participate, as** more responses will lead to more useful results.

For participating in this survey, you will receive a free copy of the report, and be entered into a drawing for a \$100 Visa Gift Card. Visit <u>https://www.surveymonkey.</u> <u>com/r/9PPRR6D</u> to start the survey. It should only take you 5 minutes. Aggregate results will be shared in upcoming Bulletins.

The Iowa Newspaper Association's mission is to advocate the continued importance of thriving newspaper enterprises in Iowa dedicated to the First Amendment and to provide guidance to members and direction to the association's two related boards.

GROW CIRCULATION - cont. from page 1

Customer" (DMM 602.3.1.b) when sampling rural or city routes. Some software vendors provide electronic CDS (Computerized Delivery Sequence) files giving all addresses in a ZIP.

Newspapers are not required to duplicate subscriber copies when using simplified address saturation mail, nor when mailing addressed copies to nonsubscribers. Also, when sampling infrequently, a single issue can mail more non-subscriber copies than subscriber copies. (See Customer Support Ruling PS-228 at Postal Explorer web site.) Simplified address copies do not technically count as subscriber copies.

But remember that a newspaper cannot consistently mail more than 50% of its total distribution free. Those wishing to sample above the 10% in-county rate ceiling pay regular carrier-route prices of 15 cents for Saturation on Line C33 of the 3541, plus 12.6 cents per advertising pound and 9.3 cents non-advertising pound at DDU lines B1 and B14 when entered at DDUs (delivery offices).

The copies should be co-mingled as part of the regular issue, and not a separate mailing. Both pound prices are lower than when I last wrote this in July 2010, and now compare favorably to the 16-cent DDU pound price In-county.

USPS provides a Periodicals Nonsubscriber Percentage Calculator at Postal Explorer (http://pe.usps.gov). Click on Postal Links in the upper left of the blue vertical toolbar, then scroll to the last item in that section for the Excel spreadsheet. This helps you track your In-County price eligibility and know when to switch to Regular prices when needed.

Requester rules are identical, allowing 10% more copies to nonrequesters to try to grow the requested total or reach more of the market. Only requested copies earn In-County price.

ALWAYS PROMOTE SUBSCRIPTIONS!

Remember, you should always have at least a one-column ad (think vertical coupon) in every issue of your newspaper and shopper, if you have one. And when space permits, larger ads or single-copy inserts are ideal, especially when a big news story ensures purchases of single copies by people who are not "regulars."

GROW ADVERTISING WHEN YOU SAMPLE

You can also grow ad revenue when sampling your entire market at once. Your market may be an entire county, or the primary ZIPs inside the county that you serve. With advertising slow in this weak economy, you need to provide your advertisers and potential advertisers a reason to spend their scarce dollars. What better way than to provide them total-market coverage in a paid news product?

Some papers have known this for years, and built both circulation and advertising with monthly sampling, often tied to the issue nearest the start of a new month when government paychecks are in the hands of residents on fixed incomes. While sampling this often usually results in several issues mailed at outside-county Saturation price, it can still pay off if revenue growth is strong enough.

A newspaper group that has made sampling for revenue growth a primary goal has seen papers increase more than 100% in per-issue ad dollars, with many papers up 50-70%. An average for one month of those sampling averaged over 30% increases. Variables include the depth of economic difficulty locally, the commitment and execution by sales reps, and the date picked, such as seasonal or local retail occasions.

Some newspapers bump ad rates higher, while others offer local merchants the opportunity to reach every household at existing rates. Some with shoppers allow the sample to replace an issue of the shopper, saving Standard Mail postage as well.

Max Health, NNA postal committee, is a postal consultant for Landmark Community Newspapers LLC, and NNA members. Email maxheath@lcni.com.

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The case for an 'About' page on news websites

BY KELLY MCBRIDE

VICE PRESIDENT, THE POYNTER INSTITUTE

There are a lot of difficult and complicated problems in journalism these days, including how to sustain it. But there is one easy problem that every news organization could solve with a moderate amount of effort.

Yet, this problem goes untended due to ignorance or arrogance.

All news sites need an About page. Most news sites do not have a place online where they tell the public who they are, what they do and what they promise. For most newsrooms this is an oversight that has been neglected for too long.

As a profession, we agonize over the lack of perceived value for what we do. I cannot tell you the number of times I've heard a journalist suggest that journalism needs a PR campaign. Journalists feel like they devote an enormous amount of energy explaining to the public why their work is important. And certainly if you listen to public radio or saw The Washington Post Super Bowl ad or notice a local campaign to garner newspaper subscriptions, there's a lot of talk about why journalism matters.

It could be that our own perceptions exaggerate our effort, or perhaps that energy is spent in the wrong place. Because when an audience member approaches a media web site, in most cases he or she cannot find even the most basic information about who is behind the site and why it exists.

"Journalists are working hard to explain what they offer and why they are valuable and why you should believe them," said Joy Mayer, director of Trusting News, a project devoted to researching audience trust and training news organizations in best practices. "The About page is a basic way to say, 'Here's why we are valuable, why we are important.""

There are some notable exceptions, mostly start-ups and nonprofits. Start-ups usually have an About page, because when you create something new, you have to tell people what it is. And non-profits usually have an About page because they ask people for money.

NPR has a whole about section, including dozens of links to information about the company's finances, how to connect, and how to request a correction. (The only flaw I see is that readers must navigate to the bottom of the home page to find it.)

The Texas Tribune has a pretty robust About page as well (also tucked away at the bottom of

the home page).

My favorite About page is ProPublica's, primarily because you find it in the main navigation bar, where most readers have been trained to look for it.

We journalists bemoan the lack of news literacy among the public. When the experts, like my colleagues over at MediaWise, teach teenagers to evaluate information, one of the first things we tell them is to know where the information is coming from.

"People are talking about transparency and media literacy. The first thing my teenagers learned is to know where are you getting your news," Mayer said. "If there's no About page, that's a sign that they are not willing to be transparent about who they are."

With some local news websites, it's not even clear what geographic area they aspire to cover, Mayer noted.

Creating an About page would help with internal processes as well, including onboarding new employees and making ethical decisions.

As I work with journalists to both solve specific ethics problems and to develop codes of ethics that work in today's publishing environment, I return to the same question: How does the audience know what you are and what you do?

IT'S ALL ABOUT TRANSPARENCY

While I try to avoid applying marketing terms to journalism, the concept of brand promise is appropriate here. Everything you do as a journalist — from your ethics to your story choices — grows from your promise to the audience.

What do you aspire to do? Why does your newsroom exist? Who do you serve?

These questions are not difficult to answer. I can walk into almost any newsroom, pose these questions and get a relatively similar answer from everyone from the executive in charge to the intern filling in on vacation slots. But if the answers to those questions were part of the fabric of your product, embedded in the bones of your navigation so that your audience could readily find it whenever they need it, your newsroom would be stronger.

It begs the question: If everyone internally knows the answers to these questions, why not make them obvious and accessible to the audience? To create an About page requires three elements that are sometimes in short supply.

1. Executive consensus. The leadership team must come together to spend some time creating an About page.

- 2. Good design. It's not helpful if it's just a big block of text.
- 3. The development team. Any time you alter your navigation, you need some of those precious hours from the programmers.

Here's a step-by-step guide for making this happen.

- Make a list of everyone on the executive team who would need to approve the About page.
- Get one person on that list excited about this project who will carry it through. He or she is your champion.
- Get a small (no more than four people, including your champion) committee together to write a draft.
- Decide what questions your About page should address. I suggest you answer these questions:
 - Why does our news organization exist?
 - What stories do we cover?
 - From what point of view do we approach our work?
 - How do we correct our mistakes?
 - Who owns us?
 - How are we funded?
 - What are the best ways for the audience to interact with us?
 - What do we currently need from our audience?
- Write a draft.
- Have your champion move it through your executive group, where it will be modified.
- Design it.
- Have the programmers put it in an obvious spot in your central navigation, so your readers can always see it.
- Publish it.
- Draw attention to it. Do an AMA. Hold an open house. Have this be the next installment of your ongoing conversation with your audience.
- Designate a journalist to review the material every quarter. When it needs be updated, go back to step one.

When I ask leaders of news organizations why they don't have an About page, their answers fall into two categories: It's either an oversight or arrogance.

An oversight is easy to understand with legacy news organizations that existed before the **ABOUT PAGE** - cont. on page 4



 The first day of spring is called the vernal equinox. What does that stand for you ask? 'Vernal' is Latin for spring while 'equinox' is Latin for 'equal night'.
 VOLUME 36 · MARCH 20, 2019 · ISSUE NO. 11 / 3



<u>IN THIS ISSUE..</u>

- Money Beyond Money
- Media Generational Strategies: What Drives Your Consumers?

View and submit ads on the Internet at www.INAnews. com. Students and professionals may also submit their resumés for online viewing.

There is no charge for most of these ads. They are a free service to INA active (newspaper) members only. The name of the newspaper in the ad must be the same as published in the current INA Directory.

If you are trying to help an employee relocate, please send us the ad information on your letterhead, rather than having the employee write us. We will not run ads for persons living in a member's town without first clearing the ad with the publisher.

Please have copy to the INA office no later than noon on Monday. The INA will make the determination of whether an ad qualifies for free or paid publication. If payment for an ad is not enclosed with the ad, the INA will require payment in advance before the ad will be published.

published. Ads for products or services which could be marketed for a profit may be published for a fee of \$10 per insertion, paid in advance, with a 40-word maximum. Recruitment (help wanted) ads for positions in states other than Iowa may be published for a fee of \$25 per insertion, with a 100-word maximum. For more information contact Cicely. Cordon at

For more information, contact Cicely Gordon at cgordon@inanews.com.

ABOUT PAGE - cont. from page 3

internet. Devoting space on a news broadcast or a printed paper would have been superfluous. As we transitioned to a digital space, it wasn't clear at first how the audience would change. But that was a long time ago and it is clear now that About pages are critical pieces of information for the audience.

Arrogance is a tougher problem. Some news executives believe that everyone knows exactly who they are and what they do. I

HELP WANTED

ADVERTISING MANAGER. The Marshall

Independent, a Monday-Saturday publication, is hiring an advertising manager. This position is responsible for management of the advertising department while serving as a member of the leadership team. Duties include:

- Training, managing sales representatives;

Establishing sales goals and ensuring sure they are met;

 Assisting reps in developing, selling print and digital campaigns;

- Direct selling to accounts;

 Working with the publisher to develop new revenue ideas;

Completing administrative tasks and reports as required.

This position includes a generous salary as well as commission, along with a full benefits package. To apply, send a resume and cover letter to gorear@marshallindependent.com. 0327

EDUCATION & BUSINESS REPORTER. The Ottumwa Courier is seeking a reporter to cover education and business, fast-paced beats that generate award-winning stories. The full-time position reports to the managing editor. We're looking for someone who is enthusiastic and would rather be out working a story than working a desk. Two to three years' experience is preferred, but ambitious new reporters will be considered. The successful applicant will be willing to dive in headfirst, work well in a close-knit newsroom, and have a clean driving record. Send a resume and writing samples to Managing Editor Matt Milner at mmilner@ ottumwacourier.com. 0327

NEWS EDITOR. Mid-America Publishing and Printing a leader in community newspapers and custom printing in lowa is seeking a fulltime news editor for The Pioneer Enterprise based in Rockwell and the Sheffield Press located in Sheffield. The successful candidate will work on both papers, possess creative writing skills, be able to shoot photos and video and be able to manage social media platforms. Should have an affinity for feature stories and ability to interview plus investigate news of all types in and around Cerro Gordo and Franklin Counties. Column writing proficiency a huge plus. Above average communication skills, the ability to meet deadlines and flexibility in scheduling also required. Competitive benefits include health, dental and vision insurance, paid time off; vacation accrual; 401K w/match; collaborative working environment with family owned company. Great opportunity to network with professionals from 23 similar publications as well. Call Pam DeVries at 641-486-2585 Ext 118 for more details today! 0410

FOR SALE

Considering a sale of your newspaper but not sure where to start? Iowa's newest

- media broker, Scenic Trail Media Brokers, LLC, is here to help you. Scenic Trail Media Brokers will work with you in every step of the process to properly market your newspaper to help you attract the right buyer for your property. We'll work with you until the final closing to make sure you get top dollar. Call Ryan Harvey today at 515-689-1151 or reach him by email at scenictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com for more information.
- lowa weekly newspaper for sale; excellent community; city, school, county legals, gross around \$200K. 40 year owner seeking to slow down. Contact Northeast lowa, lowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, lowa 50309. Contact: lowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, lowa.
- Two weekly newspapers, including one in county seat community. Progressive communities. City, county, school legals. Located in southwest Iowa. Contact: Weekly Newspapers, Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, Iowa.
- Profitable group of three small weekly newspapers for sale in South Dakota, two in Black Hills. If interested write to: S.D. Newspapers c/o lowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, IA 50309.
- **NEW!** Profitable weekly newspaper for sale in Winfield, IA. Covers 4 communities/3 school districts. If interested contact: robin.therme@gmail.com.
- **IN NEED OF NEW LISTINGS.** This could be the right time to sell! *Appraisals-Consultations-Brokerage services* Your full service broker, News Brokerage of Iowa, dtappnewsbrokerageofiowa@gmail.com, 319-350-2770.

can emphatically guarantee that this belief is misplaced, for even the most famous news organizations. If you run into this sort of arrogance, or if you yourself are guilty of it, ask this question: Are we happy with our the current size of our audience, or would we like to grow it? If you are looking for growth, you most likely want to tell people why they should trust you.

We at Poynter believe so deeply in the need for an About page that as part of our work at the Craig Newmark Center for Ethics and Leadership, we will guide three deserving newsrooms in the process of creating one. Email us at ethics@poynter.org and tell us why we should select your newsroom. We're looking for a variety of newsroom types that are serious about strengthening their relationship with their audience, and a signal from your CEO that he or she is open to the idea.

Kelly McBride is Vice President of the Poynter Institute. Follow her on Twitter at @kellymcb.





Thursday, March 28 1-2 p.m. CST

IN THIS WEBINAR...

Finding new revenue streams -- the real money beyond the "marketing budget" -in an industry undergoing rapid disruption can seem overwhelming. This insightful webinar will demystify the traditional sales process from selling print and digital to non-traditional in your local market. The presenter will provide tips and ready-for-market ideas that you can implement in your weekly or daily immediately from the perspective of a fundraiser. Hint: It isn't about selling – it's about helping businesses and decision makers follow their own interests, express their values and advance their own aspirations. To grow your newspaper's market share and capture unbudgeted dollars, your work is about emotional fulfillment. In the words of the 1930s communications guru Dale Carnegie, "You'll have more fun and success when you stop trying to get what you want and start helping other people get what they want."

Follow us:

Online Media Campus



OnlineMediaCamp

Registration fee: FREE · Deadline: March 25

THE PRESENTER...

Zack Ahrens_{Zack} Ahrens spent nearly 20 years



in the newspaper industry serving as president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, president and publisher at the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, Ark., and vice president of sales for GateHouse Media's Ohio units. Ahrens began his career in 2000 at the York News-Times and served as publisher

of several weeklies in Nebraska before moving to Lee Enterprises in 2006 as advertising director for a Nebraska daily. He later worked as advertising and digital media director for the Grand Forks Herald. Ahrens has been rated as a top presenter, serving as a keynote speaker at the 2012 Mega-Conference, presenter at numerous press conventions, live trainer and webinar speaker.



REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.ONLINEMEDIACAMPUS.COM

Online Media Campus is brought to you by Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and Iowa Newspaper Foundation





YES! Sign me up for the Money Beyond Money webinar Thursday, March 28.

Registration fee: free to Iowa Newspaper Association members

Find out more at www.onlinemediacampus.com or contact Erica Wipperling at 515-422-9052 or ewipperling@inanews.com.

Registration deadline: March 25

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EMAIL to		com or REGISTER ONLINE at (COM

RECEIPT OF REGISTRATION:

You will receive log-in instructions 48-hours prior to the webinar you've registered for. If you have questions, please contact Erica Wipperling at ewipperling@inanews.com or 515-422-9052.



An Iowa Newspaper Foundation webinar...

MEDIA GENERATIONAL STRATEGIES: WHAT DRIVES YOUR CONSUMERS?

Thursday, April 18 1-2 p.m. CST

Online Media Campus

IN THIS WEBINAR...

Can your products hit a bulls-eye with each generation you choose to target: Millennials, GenX, Boomers, Silents? How is generational strategy different from demographic strategy? In this webinar we will discuss two fundamental truths to explain the dramatic differences amongst the generations and the need for all newspapers to understand those differences.

Truth #1: Between birth and our early 20s, we form most of the core values and beliefs that we'll embrace our entire lives.

Truth #2: The experiences and teachings of our Formative Years mold our core values that guide our consumer decisions.

Chuck Underwood helps you understand the unique values and attitudes that drive each generation's unique consumer, career, and lifestyle decisions.





Registration fee: FREE · Deadline: April 15

THE PRESENTER... Chuck Underwood



As the founder and principal of Ohiobased The Generational Imperative, Inc., a generational business consultancy, Chuck Underwood trains American business, government, education, religion, and all other sectors in a full list of generational strategies. Three decades of research and front-line application with an

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A-List of clients. His 2018 book, "America's Generation in the Workplace, Marketplace and Living Room," is the most comprehensive presentation of generational business strategies ever published.

Underwood spent his earlier career in the mass media of radio and television, first as an award-winning broadcast journalist and national sports play-by-play announcer, and then as a creator and producer of original programming.

ONLINEMEDIACAMPUS

REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.ONLINEMEDIACAMPUS.COM

Online Media Campus is brought to you by Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and Iowa Newspaper Foundation





YES! Sign me up for the *Media Generational Strategies: What Drives Your Consumers?* webinar Thursday, April 18.

Registration fee: free to Iowa Newspaper Association members

Find out more at www.onlinemediacampus.com or contact Erica Wipperling at 515-422-9052 or ewipperling@inanews.com.

Registration deadline: April 15

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You will receive log-in instructions 48-hours prior to the webinar you've registered for. If you have questions, please contact Erica Wipperling at ewipperling@inanews.com or 515-422-9052.