

# PaperChain Video Presentation: a FAQ moderator's guide

I am here today to present you with the PaperChain brand. I'm affiliated with PaperChain through my own free paper, the \_\_\_\_\_, and we are proud to be a PaperChain member publication.

## What is PaperChain?

PaperChain is simply the marketing arm of local, free community papers like \_\_\_\_ (your local free paper here) \_\_\_\_\_. Much like the Milk Processors Board represents dairy farmers all over the U.S. with their "Got Milk?" campaign, the non-profit PaperChain Board represents free community papers from all across the country. You may see the PaperChain logo in a paper in your town – it's like the Good Housekeeping Seal of the free paper industry.

## Why and How did PaperChain get started?

Why is it important that free papers join together under one marketing umbrella like PaperChain? After all, \_\_\_\_ (your local free paper) \_\_\_\_ hardly needs national advertising like the "Got Milk?" campaign, right? Actually, they really do. Quality free papers like \_\_\_\_ (your local free paper) \_\_\_\_ do need national attention and quality measurements for many reasons. Here are just a few:

**Free papers carried some negative perceptions.** Quality papers work hard to maintain high standards in advertising and circulation, yet in a given market may find themselves compared to a free publication of lesser standards. You know the papers I mean – ones that don't maintain current editorial or advertising information or, worse, don't distribute the numbers of papers they claim (and charge advertisers for). Since PaperChain membership requires standards in advertising and, especially, audited circulation, the PaperChain brand on a free paper gives its readers and advertisers the confidence to trust the information within its pages.

**Free papers have often been maligned by other media companies for their lack of measurable data.** These media types specifically targeted free papers' circulation by stating that free papers couldn't prove their coverage power since they had no "paid circulation numbers" or "Nielsen ratings" to prove that advertising messages were being read and acted upon. With the fruition of Circulation Audits of free papers, those distri-

bution claims can now be confirmed by independent third-party audits. Since Circulation Audits are required from all PaperChain member papers, smaller free papers can now stand up to the big media hogs and rightfully stake their claim as legitimate advertising venues in their communities. In fact, community papers often have stronger readership and receivership numbers than the daily newspapers in their markets, and their PaperChain audits can prove it.

**National retailers have not historically supported local papers.** National retail chain stores are becoming more prevalent in markets across the country as they drive smaller retailers out of business, yet they often refuse to buy advertising in the publications that are most-read by local buyers – the free community papers. PaperChain marketing and research is helping to improve the status of free papers in the eyes of retail media buyers and advertising agencies by delivering the data and statistical info they need to make a fully-informed decisions about any given market in the country. Then buying space in PaperChain publications gets their important advertising information to the right person – the local shopper who loyally reads the paper every week. And that buy also delivers local income to your friends and neighbors who are employed in the free community paper industry.

The video I'm going to show you speaks further to the mission, membership, leadership, and strategic partners of PaperChain as well as our non-profit support. I hope you enjoy it and I'll be happy to take questions after the show.

**SHOW 12-minute PaperChain DVD presentation...**

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **Why does the PaperChain brand matter to readers?**

Since PaperChain membership requires standards in advertising and, especially, audited circulation, the PaperChain brand on a free paper gives its readers and advertisers the confidence to trust the information within its pages.

## **What is a Circulation Audit?**

In a Circulation Audit, an independent auditing firm comes in to a market and verifies the circulation claims of a publication in three ways: the auditors physically check the scope and accuracy of the distribution records and paperwork in the office, the auditors go out and audit actual routes by following carriers and confirming drops and by verifying distribution with homeowners and store location managers, and they also perform a research survey by phoning a large representative sample of households in the entire distribution market area to ensure that they are both receiving and reading the publication – they even survey respondents' future buying intentions to provide even more in-depth research for our publishers and advertisers.

## **What kind of papers belong to PaperChain?**

PaperChain members are all kinds of free papers like weekly shoppers and classified papers, daily and weekly community newspapers, even entertainment guides and niche magazines. The key factor is that these publications are free to our readers –paid daily newspapers and/or paid magazines do not qualify for PaperChain membership.

## **Why can't paid publications belong to PaperChain?**

Paid publications already have long-established marketing arms that have supported their efforts for many years. For example, a version of the Newspaper Association of America started way back in 1887! With a headstart like that they have successfully lobbied both the public and our government on the importance of paid publications and their rights. Indeed, they have many special protections like tax breaks and solicitation exemptions that many free papers do not enjoy. PaperChain is designed specifically to help these smaller free papers compete fairly with larger media like paid newspapers.

## **How many papers are in PaperChain?**

Over 2,300 papers with a combined circulation of over 60 million are already part of PaperChain! That's more audited circulation than all paid newspapers combined. There are well over 3,000 community papers in North America so we still have plenty of room for growth.

## **How do readers get PaperChain papers?**

Most PaperChain community papers are home-delivered by courier, are mailed directly to the homes or are delivered to demand-distribution racks - there's no wasteful overruns or newsstand uncertainties. There are PaperChain publications in markets both large and small all across the nation.

## **Do people actually read free papers?**

Yes, the papers are very well-liked by their communities. 97% of community papers are received by households every week and over 77.1% of those papers are read. These are outstanding media statistics and are higher than paid daily newspaper numbers.

## **Why does the “Media’s Missing Link” positioning statement mean?**

The statement is aimed exclusively at advertisers and media buyers, those very parties whose decisions are most vital to the success of PaperChain. In addition to tying in the “chain” motif, “Media’s Missing Link” tells media specialists that PaperChain supplies the vital elements that may have been missing in our industry: audits, service, a unified voice, national circulation, etc.

## **Thank you!**

Thank you all so much for your time and attention, and your interest in PaperChain. We know that PaperChain publications are working hard to serve their communities with editorial and advertising information that is vital to the local exchange of ideas and monies amongst its citizens. We are gratified to have your support for the continuation of independent local providers like PaperChain publications!