

February 2022



in this issue >>>

President's Corner- Don't Wait to be Great!
From the Office- Are You Ready for Some Great Ideas?
Member News- Daily Habits of Highly Successful Salespeople
MVP's at Work- Self-care is Essential
Kevin Slimp- Updating Your Paper
John Foust – Cut Down on Exclamation Points
Bob Berting – “Proposing An Advertising Business Marriage”
Ryan Dohrn – Are You Looking to Close More Sales?
Press Release

President's Corner



Don't Wait to be Great!

The MFCP Spring Conference is March 3rd and 4th at the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center in Ames, Iowa. We've got a well-rounded training schedule with top notch speakers and panelists.

We are starting with a Circulation Summit that will cover carrier, rack and postal delivery systems. Network with other publications and get new ideas to enhance your distribution.

Sales and media veteran, Ryan Dorn, is back with advanced selling workshops. Ryan will help your sales team get more meetings and increase their closing ratio. He is an MFCP favorite and always has great take-a-ways to increase sales.

For graphics we have digital handyman, Russell Viers. Russell will cover what's new in the industry and will show you tools that will help you get the "grunt" work done faster. Find out how InDesign can automate many daily tasks. Uncovering time in your day will allow you to be more creative than you have ever been.

Check out the conference details at MFCP.org and see what else is planned. Pre-game happy HOURS, 3-minute idea exchange and a surprise conference kickoff.

For a full schedule of events please download our documents at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fv4c8foeabazv1s/AAAsRAjx1q4pPgVCocOWVBoaa?dl=0>

Take action and sign up today!

To complete your conference registration please go

to <https://bravo.amberplains.com/fmi/webd?homeurl=http://www.mfcp.org#mfcp>

If you have any issues with your login or password just reach out to our office: director@mfcp.org

And, hurry! Our room block closes February 18th!

Don't wait to be great!!

Julia Thompson

From the office



3-Minute Idea Exchange.... Are You Ready For Some Great Ideas?

Lee Borkowski

If you and your team are looking for some great ideas, I guarantee that we will have them at the upcoming conference. In her column Julia talks about all of the sessions that we have planned. If you look over the schedule you will see we definitely have something for everyone.

One of the sessions I enjoy the most is the 3-minute Idea Exchange. It's being held this year on Friday at 3PM. Entrants will have 3-minutes to pitch their idea to the attendees. Then we'll vote. The person with the highest number of votes will win \$100 cash money! 2nd place will receive \$75 and the third-place finisher will receive \$50.

I'd encourage everyone that attends to present an idea. It doesn't have to be a 100% original idea (heck, they rarely are)! Just present an idea you've taken and made work in your market. The rest of us will likely take your idea, tweak it just a bit and run it in our local market. Everything that's old becomes new again.

Networking, idea gathering and learning, it's what conference is all about. Now let's add winning to your list of conference take-aways!

If you're planning to sign up for the 3-minute idea exchange you can do so via email - or at the registration desk at conference. director@mfcf.org

See you in Ames!

Member News

The article below was sent to us by Brad Hicks. He felt it was well worth the time to read and that other MFCP members might enjoy it as well. We agree!! Take the time to read through this one....you'll be glad you did!

Top-Shelf Tip No. 13:

"If you don't change your approach, then you will never change your results."

Jim Rohn

Daily Habits Of Highly Successful Salespeople

When you look at high achievers in any field, you'll probably find they adhere to some particular routines. Elite athletes, for example, may follow a strict exercise regimen or eat specific foods that help them perform their best. The most successful salespeople are no different. Those at the top of their game follow some daily habits that help them stay focused and crush their goals.

Marc Wayshak, a sales strategist and founder of Sales Insights Labs, has outlined some of these superstar sales habits. We discuss his thoughts in this issue of *Promotional Consultant Today*.

Focus on money-making activities. Highly successful salespeople don't get bogged down with tasks unrelated to sales. They outsource and streamline what they can. For example, instead of going back and forth with prospects trying to book a call, they automate the process with tools like Calendly. Wayshak says that removing all the non-sales activities from your day is the first key to building high-performance habits. Sticking to this commitment will make you more money, plain and simple, he says.

Say "yes" selectively. Most salespeople want to say "yes" and make people happy. However, every time you say "yes," you're giving people your valuable time. The most successful sales professionals have learned to be highly selective in saying "yes." If you want to please everyone who asks something of you, break this habit, recommends Wayshak. Guard your time and say "no" more often.

Use tech to leverage your time. In addition to streamlining your calendar, you can also use tech tools with your emails. Wayshak points out that for every email you send, you can either manually type it or you can leverage cold email automation with high levels of personalization. Another example is using a power dialer instead of manually dialing each call. This technology allows you to make up to 90 dials an hour, he adds.

Make calls early in the day. According to Wayshak, most sales professionals start calling about 10 am. However, this is when everyone else is beginning their calls. If you start at the same time as everyone else, you're just going to blend in. That's why he suggests making calls when you first arrive at the office or start your day. It shows a strong mental game to get started right away, Wayshak says, and your high-level prospects are typically less busy at 7 am than at 10 am.

Always ask for introductions. Wayshak points out that introductions are among the best ways to meet prospects. When you work with a happy client, ask that client for an introduction to other potential customers. Making it a daily habit to ask for introductions can help you get more high-quality leads and ultimately close more sales.

Even small habits matter. From starting your day earlier to asking for more introductions, there are many actions you can take that can help you improve as a sales professional. Experts say it can take anywhere from 21 to 30 days to form a new habit, and it may take two months or longer

for that habit to stick. Consider challenging yourself to form one of the habits above and see where it takes you this year.

Compiled by Audrey Sellers

Source: [Marc Wayshak](#) is a sales strategist and founder of Sales Insights Lab. He is also the author of three bestselling books.

MVP'S At Work

Self-care is Essential

by Carrie Fowler

At our January MVP meeting we discussed how important self-care was to our work lives. We all had different techniques that helped us get through our stressful weeks and kept us “zen” and focused on our work.

“Hectic” doesn’t even begin to describe our work lives. The newspaper business is all about deadlines and constantly doing the next thing on the list. We all know that burnout is real and can happen when you aren't paying attention. It's important to take time out of each week to spend on yourself.

This doesn’t mean that you have to do anything crazy or super intense. It can be something as simple as ordering your favorite coffee from your favorite coffee shop and taking the extra five minutes to not only enjoy it, but to sip it and savor every last drop. You could spend fifteen minutes at your desk doing yoga or stretches, or just simply focus on your breathing. You could even take some time and walk around your building. The focus isn't on what the activity is, but rather on actually taking the time to focus on yourself to discover what you need most at that moment

What can you do that will impact you and make your day and your work better? There are some days when I have to take five minutes just to breathe because that's what I need that day, but there are other days when I need to stretch. It is those days that I need to get out of my desk and move.

Find time to be present for yourself. Find something that will help you be the best version of you. Helping yourself find peace will not only help your work attitude but also impact your attitude with those around you.

Kevin Slimp



Updating Your Paper

Tips to make your paper attract more readers

Lost
or Buying a Home

Kevin Slimp
kevin@kevinslimp.com

Redesigns. They've been on my mind a lot lately.

When Ed Henninger, the undisputed guru of newspaper and magazine design, decided to retire three years ago (I never really thought he was serious), we had several conversations about his decision. I'll never forget when he told me he was "done."

"I'm closing down my website. I'm getting rid of my Adobe software subscription. I'm going to give my large page printer to you. When I retire, I'm not looking back."

I asked who would take his place. "They're all yours," he said.

Like a lot of you, I stay busy. Most of my workdays begin around 9:00 a.m. and end between 2:00 and 4:00 a.m. During those hours, I'm overseeing my businesses, leading webinars several days most weeks, and trying - when I can - to help longtime newspaper clients. It's 10:30 p.m. right now, and I have several hours of work ahead of me.

I guess I shouldn't be surprised that redesigns are on the minds of many publishers. I'm hearing from a lot of my community newspaper friends that business is good. They know that a redesign has the potential to make business better.

My phone has been ringing...a lot. I just finished a redesign of the Standard Banner, Jefferson City, Tennessee, and I've agreed to do a couple of redesigns at newspapers on the northern and southern borders of the U.S. over the next few months. I guess, like Ed predicted, I've become his heir apparent, whether I have the time or not. With that in mind, let me make some suggestions on ways you can improve your newspaper's design right now, without waiting to do a total redesign.

Hold a meeting of the full newspaper staff and brainstorm ways to improve your paper. What parts of the paper are your readers' favorites? Which regular features could be removed without anyone noticing? What needs to be added?

Look at your current design. Unless you've recently done a redesign, there's a good chance that the pages look outdated. Readers don't have to be design experts to know when something is outdated. The subconscious does a great job of reminding them. What needs to be changed right away? What outdated design elements are causing potential readers to put down your paper before reading a word?

Hold a focus group made up of readers and non-readers of your paper to learn what changes people in your community think should be made to improve the design and content of the paper.

Make incremental changes to the paper. Yes, newspapers should redesign their pages every five years, at a minimum. However, gradual changes can be made to update and improve the design along the way. Look for design elements that are outdated and fonts that were outdated ten years ago. What colors are you using? Are they outdated (yes, colors go in and out of style)? Are you keeping your ad design up to date, or do your ads look the same as they did ten years ago?

These suggestions are just the tip of the iceberg, but doing just these things will go a long way toward improving the way people perceive your newspaper, and when they perceive it positively, readership will increase, along with ad revenue.

I've come to learn that one thing is almost certain: When a newspaper does a major redesign, increased readership and ad revenue will follow. I regularly hear from clients who tell me their readership and revenue have increased significantly since their redesigns. It happens enough that I've learned it's not a coincidence.

My Latest Late-Night Phone Call

Just now, while writing this column, my phone rang. It was Hank, a longtime publisher in Kentucky. I like Hank, so I was happy to take his call.

He didn't take any time to get on topic. "I am so tired of reading (a newspaper industry) Magazine and reading that newspapers are dead. It's just not true, and I'm so tired of reading that print is dead."

I told Hank I understood and that we've been hearing that for more than 20 years. "Don't let it get to you" was my best advice.

Then he added, "My revenue was up \$40,000 in 2021. It's just not true that printed newspapers are dying."

I assured Hank that I regularly get similar calls and messages from publishers, and it's true that newspapers are not dying. I also assured him that most publishers I've visited with lately about the subject have told me their papers are doing quite well.

We visited about Hank's health and our crazy late-night work schedules. I ended the conversation by saying, "I might mention our conversation in my column."

He answered, "That's fine."

Believe what you want. From where I'm sitting, most community newspapers are doing just fine.

Let's see. That's 800 words in 35 minutes. My work, for the moment, is done.

Kevin Slimp has been a popular consultant and speaker in the newspaper industry since developing the PDF remote printing method in 1994. His upcoming webinars on design, circulation, and software can be found at newspaperacademy.com.

Kevin Slimp is former director of The University of Tennessee Newspaper Institute and founder of NewspaperAcademy.com.

Ad-Libs



Cut Down on Exclamation Marks

John Foust, Raleigh, NC

Lately I have noticed a disturbing trend in print and online advertising: the overuse of exclamation marks. They're all over the place. Interestingly, no grammar book I have ever seen has suggested using more exclamation marks – or exclamation points – as some people call them. All the guides say they should be limited.

Maybe some ad writers are pulled into the abyss by overly zealous advertisers who think of their businesses in terms of superlatives. After all, exclamation marks seem to fit with words like “unbelievable,” “fantastic” and “incredible.”

Not long ago, I saw a half-page, four-color ad for a home remodeling company. Of the 18 phrases and sentences in the ad, 14 of them ended with exclamation marks. That had to be some kind of record.

Of course, a well-placed exclamation mark is legitimate punctuation. But like your favorite dessert, it's not smart to have too much at one sitting – especially when it comes to advertising. In my opinion, emails and texts are in a different category. In those informal environments, it makes sense to add exclamation marks to phrases like “Congratulations,” “Well done,” and “Wow.” (Or for Shakespeare types, “Hark!”)

If your advertisers are addicted to exclamation marks, here are some points to consider:

1. The excitement should come from the message, not from the punctuation. Here are some bullet-point features from a description of a winter parka. Watch what happens when we add exclamation points: “Down insulation provides additional warmth! Polyester shell resists wind and rain! Adjustable insulated hood! Internal pocket with zipper! Elastic cuffs! Available in six colors! Machine wash and dry!”

Do the exclamation marks add anything to the message? No. In fact, they distract readers by breaking the flow of the copy. And along the way, they cause the advertiser's credibility to decline a notch or two.

After all, can everything about that parka be that dramatic? Can everything be worth shouting? Probably not.

2. Exclamation marks can create confusion. An exclamation mark often looks like an additional typographical character that has been tacked to the end of a word or number. Remember, we read at a glance. An exclamation mark can look like a lower-case “l” at the end of a word and as a number “1” at the end of a number. An “!” can make \$39 look like \$391. In worst-case situations, advertisers who use multiple exclamation marks risk making items that sell for a few dollars look like they cost thousands. That kind of typographic mischief doesn’t send a clear message to readers.

3. Overuse of exclamation marks can be the sign of an amateur. Like superlatives, exclamation marks can be poor substitutes for strong, compelling language.

Do a little research. Take a look at national ads. Read through professionally written articles in newspapers, magazines and web sites. They use few – or no – exclamation marks.

This is not to say that exclamation marks should be banned completely. I just think we should be more careful with them.

(c) Copyright 2021 by John Foust. All rights reserved.

John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com

Bob Berting



”Proposing An Advertising Business Marriage”

Bob Berting,
Berting Communications

For the advertising salesperson, their customer is thinking a buying decision usually means a decision to enter into a long term relationship with them and their publication. It is much like an “advertising business marriage”. Before the customer decides to buy, he can take you or leave you. He or she doesn’t need your publication. But when your customer does finally make a decision to buy from you, and gives you money for your advertising service they can become dependent on you. And since they probably have had bad buying experiences in the past, they can become very uneasy and uncertain about getting into this kind of dependency relationship again.

Your promises must be fulfilled

What if you let the customer down? What if your advertising doesn’t work as promised? What if you don’t service the account as you promised? You can’t sell a long range program and then get complacent. The ad sales professional never loses their attention to detail and accuracy just because a new account is sold. These are real dilemmas that go through the mind of every customer when it comes time to make that critical buying decision.

Concentrate on the relationship

Because of the mixture of print, digital, and social media today, the relationship can sometimes be more than the product. The customer doesn’t know how your publication will function or how he or she will be treated after they have given you their money. So in reality, the customer’s decision is based on how they can trust and believe you.

Building a solid trust

Here is the important bottom line to this article and worthy of a lot of thought. In many cases the quality of your relationship with the customer is the competitive advantage that enables you to edge out your competition. The quality of the trust bond that exists between you and the customer can be so strong that no other competitor can get between you and that customer.

Bob Berting's new e-book #4 for advertising salespeople

Bob is the author of 4 best-selling e-books for the newspaper industry Bob's newest e-book "**Smart Customer Connections For Advertising Salespeople**" is a publication that is very relative and helpful for print media salespeople dealing with their customers in today's CoronaVirus atmosphere. You can order any of Bob's books on his website: www.bobberting.com.

Read Bob's e-books and discover how his vast experience and know-how can help you achieve much more business for you and your publication. You'll greatly benefit from the wisdom of one of America's top advertising sales experts.

Bob is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher marketing consultant, and leading columnist in many national and regional newspaper trade association publications. He is the President of Berting Communications and can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408.



Are You Looking to Close More Sales?

Ryan Dohrn

Are you looking to close more sales? Then you'll want to give this podcast a listen.

In it Ryan Dohrn talks about closing 35% more sales with recommendation based selling.

<https://360adsales.com/ad-sales-training-podcast/>

Listen to Ryan's ad sales podcast, [Ad Sales Nation](#), on [iTunes](#) or on [Soundcloud](#). Keep up to date with Ryan's ad sales training advice on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/RyanDohrnLIVE>

Ryan Dohrn is an award-winning [ad sales training coach](#), a nationally recognized [internet sales consultant](#), and an international [motivational speaker](#). He is the author of the best-selling ad sales book, *Selling Backwards*. Ryan is the President and founder of Brain Swell Media and 360 Ad Sales Training, a boutique [ad sales training](#) and [sales coaching](#) firm with a detailed focus on ad sales training, internet consulting, and media revenue generation. Ryan is also the Publisher of *Sales Training World*.

<https://360adsales.com/category/ad-sales-training-blog/>

Press Release

Midwest-based Community Newspaper Group implements Layout-8000 in the cloud from SCS

Community Newspaper Group is the latest newspaper group to select Layout-8000 from SCS. Headquartered in Frankfort, IL, the company is running Layout-8000 in the cloud to place ads and distribute dummies for all of its publications, including the Finger Lakes Times and the Olean Times Herald in New York and the Courier Express and Bradford Era in Pennsylvania.

“After a careful review of our needs we found that Layout-8000 matched up very well,” according to Pat Patterson, Executive Vice President & Group Publisher. “As we have rolled out the product across our locations, we have been very happy.”

“Layout-8000 provides CMG with a standardized ad dummieing platform for its network of daily and weekly newspapers,” sales Phil Curtolo, Director of Sales at SCS. “There are considerable savings to be had when the same platform can be used across a company, as we’ve seen with groups like Lee Enterprises and Gannett.”

About Community Media Group:

Community Media Group is a privately held multimedia company that owns and operates daily and weekly newspapers, shoppers and other print distribution products in six states. In addition to newspapers, CMG also owns and operates a radio station and a full-service digital agency, Community Media Digital. You can learn more at www.communitymediagroup.com.

About SCS:

SCS offers an extensive line of publishing-related applications, including Layout-8000™. More than 300 sites producing over 2,000 publications in 10 countries in 5 languages use SCS mission-critical software every day. SCS is privately owned by Kurt Jackson. You can learn more at www.newspapersystems.com.

