

PAPERCLIPS

MFCP the official newsletter of Midwest Free Community Papers
midwest free community papers

in this issue >>>

President's Corner- Thankful, Grateful, Blessed

From the Office- 2024... Just Around the Corner

MVPS at Work- The Importance of Sharing Ideas

Kevin Slimp- New Tools in Photoshop Elicit Warning

John Foust – Ad Lessons from a Wall Poster

Ryan Dohrn- Make an Inferior Product Superior



**2024 MFCP Ad Award Contest
Start stockpiling those winners!**

Deadline is January 12, 2024

[Click here for rules and categories!](#)

President's Corner



Joyce Frericks

Thankful, Grateful, Blessed

Thanksgiving is just a few weeks away, and it already has me thinking of all the people I am thankful for. In my personal life, God has blessed me with a wonderful husband, four great adult children, a couple of sons-in-law, the sweetest granddaughter and a grandson on the way. I love being a grandma! I've also been blessed with great friends and confidants.

In my business life, God has blessed me with a great mentor, business partners and awesome employees. I have said many times — and stand by it — that we have the best employees at Star Publications. We're not perfect, but we make great teams and strive to help each other grow and get better every day.

Star Publications is also blessed to be part of two great organizations: MFCP and ACP. In 2013, Star Publications joined the Minnesota Free Paper Association. I was just getting to know the people when Minnesota joined with Midwest Free Community Papers in 2015. I felt at home almost instantly.

The members at the first MFCP meeting I went to in summer 2015 shared things they had been doing at their papers and ideas for special sections. I was blown away by how open everyone was and how they were committed to every publication succeeding. The people at that meeting were there for every manager/publisher there — not just for themselves.

After belonging to MFCP for a few years, I had a question at a MFCP meeting that no one knew the answer to. They pointed me in the direction of a retired publisher in Central Minnesota. I had lunch with her a few weeks later, and she pointed me to IFPA — Independent Free Papers of America. She said look them up and give them a call. She was confident they would be helpful to our business, and she was so right!

IFPA is now joined with AFCP (Association of Free Community Papers) to make up ACP (Association of Community Publishers). Our experience with IFPA and ACP has been the same as MFCP — everyone shares and is dedicated to helping the members succeed.

I'm very thankful for the organizations that we have been part of for the last 10 years, but I am even more thankful for all the people I've met and who have become friends. The employees, boards and members at both organizations are top notch and committed leaders. All of you make the ever-changing publishing industry easier to navigate, and I'm very thankful for every one of you!

Joyce



Lee Borkowski

2024 – Just Around the Corner

Time to mark your calendars!

We're headed into the end of the year at warp speed. There are a few dates I want to make sure you are aware of.

- **January 1, 2024 – As of this date all postal reports must be submitted to the post office electronically.** If you're not already doing so there are a few things you need to do to make this happen. Peter Schultz of Woodard Printing Services and I are both willing to help you. All you need to do is ask. And, all that we ask is that you make the transition prior to December 8th. This gives a few weeks to make sure everything is working correctly and should result in less stress overall. If you choose to wait till the 2nd of January to get started, I can't guarantee that your papers will mail that week. So, please, let me know now if you need help.
- **April 4th and 5th, 2024 – these are the dates for our spring conference.** Our theme this year is Mission Possible! And, we're going to offer training that helps everyone in their quest to have the best, most profitable publication in their market. We're meeting in Mankato, Minnesota at the Hilton Garden Inn and Mayo Clinic Conference center. Room rates are great at just \$129 per night. So, if you are still in the budgeting process, please build that cost in. We'd love to have you and your teams join us.
- **July 18th and 19th, 2024 – these are the dates for our Summer Managers meeting.** We're planning to meet at the Isle Casino Hotel in Waterloo. Room rates are \$110. For those that are planning to bring their families there is a fabulous waterpark that you may want to take in. Watch future emails for more details.

That's all I have to share with you today for 2024 but rest assured there will be more training and networking opportunities throughout the year as well.

As we head into the Thanksgiving holiday, please know just how grateful Sue and I are for the opportunity to serve you and for the friendships we've made. MFCP is a wonderful organization and we're both proud to be associated with all of you!

Lee

MVPS at Work



By Nancy Powell
Production Manager, Dairy Star, Sauk Centre, MN

The Importance of Sharing Ideas

As a graphic designer, I'm always looking for ideas, inspiration and better ways of accomplishing my tasks. Whether it be webinars, videos, conferences or even during my monthly MVP meetings, I'm always trying to absorb as much information as I can.

We all look for ideas in one way or another, but do we remember to look to our coworkers?

Some of the best ideas we've come up with over the years have come from employees that maybe don't even work on the same publication or the same department. If you're not checking with your coworkers for ideas, you are missing out.

First, the more people brainstorming and sharing knowledge, the more success will be achieved. The ideas will be more diverse and there will be more likelihood of success if everyone is working towards the same goal. There will also be the opportunity to see ideas from different perspectives and could ultimately make your ideas stronger.

We recently held a t-shirt design contest, of which, anyone from any department could enter. We received a great number of ideas to choose from, and it showcased some amazing talents of employees that would not have had the opportunity to contribute, had we not opened up the ideas company-wide.

Second, sharing ideas as a group also showcases everyone's talents and skills. Knowing everyone's strengths can be helpful when delegating tasks or giving guidance when needed. Getting outside your own head can also boost your creativity, and also deepen your own knowledge. It can also leave the opportunity to correct any gaps of knowledge.

Recently, I was asked a technical question about our graphic design software by someone on our team. While answering the question, I realized what I thought was common knowledge, was not known by the rest of the team. Spending a few minutes sharing that knowledge with the team will now save each one of the designers time as well as expand the knowledge of the entire team.

Sharing ideas builds team work, builds skills, builds knowledge, can improve morale and adds an extra layer of support for everyone on the team. The next time you're stuck and need a solution, don't forget to ask your coworkers.

Kevin Slimp



Kevin Slimp
kevin@kevinslimp.com

New Tools in Photoshop Elicit Warning

*Latest versions of Photoshop include
use of artificial intelligence*

By now, you would think I've learned not to write things that will get me in trouble. So, before I write another word, I'm inserting a warning label:

THIS COLUMN IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

What is that all about, you ask? There was a day, not that long ago (okay, maybe 20 years ago), when I couldn't get through a Photoshop class without someone in the audience getting upset.

"What about journalistic ethics?" this person would shout. "I was taught we couldn't even lighten or sharpen a photo."

Most of us made it through those early days of Photoshop without too much bloodshed, but I still fear the nasty emails I will get for writing this column. Just remember, you've been warned:

THIS COLUMN IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

I teach a lot of classes in photo editing and page design, so it's essential that I stay up to date on the latest developments in those fields. While preparing for some recent Photoshop classes, Adobe updated the software, which they do regularly. I guess I shouldn't have been surprised that the latest versions (Photoshop 2024 and Photoshop Beta 25.2) contain several tools that allow users to use generative artificial intelligence (AI).

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that can create new content, such as text, images, or video. Generative AI software learns the patterns and structure of their input data and then generates new data with similar characteristics.

Please keep my previous warning in mind as we discuss just a couple of tools in Photoshop that utilize generative AI.

The Photoshop Generative Fill

The newest versions of Photoshop include a “Contextual Task Bar” that usually sits beneath the open image (it can be moved to other places on the screen or removed altogether). Users are often amazed at the various options available when utilizing the Contextual Task Bar for the first time. Here are two of the options in the Contextual Task Bar:

Extending an Image: Imagine you are utilizing stock art from a provider for an ad or cover of a special section. To your dismay, the art isn’t quite wide enough to fit the designated area. In the past, this generally meant increasing the image size then cropping the top or bottom to allow it to fit in the space. With Photoshop’s generative AI capabilities, users can now “widen” the image with additional background material. If you need more trees on the left and right, Photoshop can create more trees. If the photo includes a family standing in front of some buildings in New York, Photoshop can generate more buildings on either (or both) sides of the family.

Replacing an Area of an Image

You have a stock image of a teenager running forward to kick a soccer ball. “Wait!” you realize, “I need that to be a football!”

You guessed it. By creating a selection of the soccer ball, going to the Contextual Task Bar, and then entering “football” in the taskbar window, Photoshop can generate a football where the soccer ball was previously laid.

I know. I know.

I can already feel angry emails heading my way. Just remember the warning earlier in this column. I would never suggest it’s okay to use AI to generate or change images used in stories or other types of news content. But there are times when Photoshop’s generative AI will be useful when designing ads or working with stock art.

Adobe seems to cover the legal basis of generated artwork. This is from the Adobe Generative AI User Guidelines:

“In general, you may use outputs from generative AI features commercially. However, if Adobe designates in the product or elsewhere that a beta version of a generative AI feature cannot be used commercially, then the generated outputs from that beta feature are for personal use only and cannot be used commercially.”

The guidelines go on to add:

“If you’re not sure whether your content violates the rights of a third party, you may want to reach out to an attorney or consult publicly available reference materials.”

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



Ad Lessons from a Wall Poster

John Foust, Greensboro, NC

I remember going to the ophthalmologist a few years ago for my regular eye checkup. In the exam room, there was a large poster on the wall which featured a number of photographs of the same view of New York City from the water. The top left photo showed the unenhanced view, and after that, each one demonstrated what the view would look like with various eye disorders – nearsightedness, farsightedness, cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, etc.

It was a powerful message, because it gave the doctor a way to explain important facts at a glance. It enabled patients to see things through the eyes of people with specific eye conditions. It showed – in the most graphic way – what was happening with their vision.

As I looked at the poster, I couldn't help but think about this business of advertising and the importance of seeing things from others' perspective. It goes beyond seeing things from our clients' perspective. We have to see things from all of their customers' points of view. And perhaps most challenging of all, we need to help each one of our clients see things from their consumers' perspective.

David Droga, who founded the Droga5 global advertising agency, said, "I really believe in the power of advertising...the power of advertising that's in sync with what consumers want." The key is in the words "in sync," which is a shortened way to say "synchronized." In the old war movies, the grizzled old officers would say, "Okay, everybody, let's synchronize our watches." In other words: Before we get to the drop zone, let's all set our time at 0500 hours.

Successful advertising executives like David Droga have a deep respect for the importance of seeing things from the other person's point of view. They are constantly asking questions, probing for information, learning about other people and their needs and ideas. And they carefully consider demographic and psychographic research (much of which is available to newspaper advertising departments).

I've heard that some ad copywriters even picture a person representing a client's target audience sitting in a chair in their office. The idea is to talk to that person about the product, then use it as a springboard for consumer-centered copy. How does the target consumer talk? What words resonate? What product offers can generate interest? It's a way to individualize and humanize a large group of people. It's a way to get in sync.

When you're in sync, you forget about yourself and concentrate on the other person. Like the famous saying, "Knowledge is power." How else are you going to have a feel for how Client A is likely to respond to a new campaign idea? How is Target Audience B likely to react to Offer C? And how much does Advertising Manager D rely on input from the company owner?

The bottom line is that those who see things from the other person's point of view will sell more ads and create better ads than those who don't.

(c) Copyright 2023 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. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com

Ryan Dohrn



Make an Inferior Product Superior

This month Ryan shows you how you can be the differentiating factor in a sale.

Your attitude about the quality of your product can be a recipe for disaster and he explains just how easily you can make an inferior product superior.

It might be as easy as finding 3 aspects about your product like better color, deliverability, or production time that makes it sellable.

He encourages you to be the better salesperson. A superior product is an easy sell but an inferior product requires the skills of a top salesperson.

Check out the link below for more tips.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEY82PY952c>

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 Train-