

LocalMediaToday

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INNOVATE | EDUCATE | INSPIRE

Mega-Conference convenes next month in New Orleans

Sessions on Revenue, Audience, Engagement Headline Agenda

If there is a single event to rev your engines for 2013, it's next month's Key Executives Mega-Conference, co-presented by Local Media Association, Inland Press Association and the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association. These three preeminent groups representing local media companies have banded together to assemble a high yield, satisfaction guaranteed program that will deliver targeted intelligence for those charged with strategizing and leading local media groups. The conference runs February 17-20 in New Orleans, Louisiana and now is the time to make your plans to attend.

"This program will deliver the very best foundation for local media executives to start 2013," said LMA President Nancy Lane. "We and our industry counterparts have worked hard to put together a program that is meaningful for local media companies and there is a lot of meat in this agenda. Between the sessions, the exhibit hall with our R&D partners and

The Details

Key Executives Mega-Conference

The Roosevelt Hotel
New Orleans, Louisiana
February 17-20, 2013
Registration:

\$695 by January 15;
\$795 thereafter
Room rate: \$199+ tax

The 2013 Key Executives Mega-Conference is presented jointly by Local Media Association, Inland Press Association and Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and brings together the best thought-leaders tackling the hottest trends in the industry today for increasing revenue, audience and engagement. Program information and registration details available at: <http://www.mega-conference.com/>



among industry peers, I believe there is no better conference investment our members can make to get the New Year started on the best possible foot."

The Program

Among other notable speakers, International News Media Association's Earl Wilkinson and Deseret Digital's Eric Bright will take the stage to share their well respected insight on key topics for 2013.



Earl Wilkinson

Eric Bright is Vice President of E-Commerce for Deseret Digital and will draw on his successful experience with marketplace e-commerce products to address the latest in this arena. In his session on **Emerging Opportunity: E-Commerce Strategies**, he'll talk about how Deseret Digital continues to put 'disruptive innovation' to work for them and will address their consumer-focused strategy to really understand what customers wanted on a wide variety of products. The result of this strategy has yielded a new focus at Deseret: an e-commerce approach that ripped up old models and resulted in new launches in many categories including cars, obits, jobs, deals, rentals & more. Bright will get into these details, and then some, including how their new platforms defy conventional "legacy" thinking in many ways.

The session on **Launching a Digital Services Agency: What it can do for you – and your customers** will continue the dialogue and education about this

“I believe there is no better conference investment our members can make to get the New Year started on the best possible foot.”

—LMA President Nancy Lane

Earl Wilkinson, INMA Executive Director, will tackle the **Newsmedia Outlook for 2013** and present key findings from INMA's highly anticipated annual report including areas best for local media to target for maximum growth and opportunities. The flipside, areas to not overinvest energy and time, will also be candidly discussed.



Eric Bright

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

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Local Media Today is published in print and digitally by the Local Media Association, the only non-profit trade association in North America that specifically represents the needs and interests of local newspaper and media companies, their multi-media publishing entities and other community based affiliations.

With a tagline of *Innovate. Educate. Inspire* LMA provides leadership for its members and support for their endeavors including their pursuits of journalistic excellence, sales and marketing expertise, audience development, community-centric initiatives and leadership values through the ongoing development and dissemination of powerful, innovative and valuable resources.

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Q & A with...



Preston Gibson, center, with teammates Karen Dickinson, Advertising Manager and Steve Dunwoody, Media Manager.

PRESTON GIBSON

Director of Development, Cape May County Herald (NJ)

Old: Press Releases New: Sponsored Content

Q I want to explore your ‘sponsored content’ initiative but first things first. Can you give us a thumbnail of your company, market and competitive landscape?

A We are an independently-owned media company. Our flagship publication is the *Herald* – a free-issue, bulk-drop weekly, sustaining an average circulation of 32,000. *CapeMayCountyHerald.com* averages over 100,000 visitors and 250,000 visits monthly. About 70 percent of our online traffic is local; about half of our local visitors are web-unique; about 20 percent of total traffic is non-local with strong local interests. Cape May County is a Jersey Shore market; so, our population of almost 100,000 swells to more than 500,000 during the summer. The *Herald's* summer circulation is 60 percent more than the winter circulation. We are the leading local media company serving Cape May County, but there is plenty of competition from a regional daily, various hyper-local community publications and tourist publications, along with many niche websites and other digital and broadcast entities.

Q And, please share your professional pathway to your role as Director of Development.

A In 2001, while serving as Training Officer at the Coast Guard's boot camp in Cape May, I hit the 20-year service mark. I was looking for a career change; my family was looking for some stability; and the *Herald* was looking for someone to help chart a course through the digital-disruption storms then looming on the horizon. Here I am.

Q A little more than a year ago you started a ‘sponsored content’ program that ties to press releases. Tell us about the impetus for this initiative.

A Of course, we've customarily published press releases and event promotions, for our advertisers and as a community service. In

one form or another, such press releases have traditionally comprised much of the content of our paper. Often treated as “filler,” these releases were typically not published online. There was a fair amount of work involved in publishing these releases – and a lot of rework and waste, as PR “blasts” to multiple staff members would often result in redundant effort and redundant insertions; also, many releases were formatted for print but left unused – and all for no revenue.

Meanwhile, we've seen the studies telling us, and as we are painfully aware, many SMBs are spending less on traditional advertising. We know we must deliver non-traditional marketing solutions. Some areas of growth for us have involved programs offering a combination of ads and advertorial. So, we started thinking, press releases, managed in a non-traditional way, might constitute part of the “non-traditional marketing” we need to deliver.

Then, as to drive the point home, our editor attended a large public organization's press conference where the public relations director announced that, in the prior year, the organization had generated over \$4 million in advertising equivalency with press releases. The PR director also touted some strengths of press release articles relative to conventional advertising, including SEO benefits and a better format for delivering detailed messages.

We decided to overhaul our approach to press releases: stop publishing low-value releases, streamline release processing, publish releases online as well as in print, and selectively require payment for release publication.

To help justify applying a charge for something we had delivered for free, we wanted to bolster the value of what we are delivering and made this a multi-media offering, as most of our programs now are. The press releases we choose to publish are first published online, then selectively reverse-published to the print edition. If the subject of the release is an event, a calendar listing is also created, which appears online and in print. We have not yet incorporated social media, but we expect to do so.

Q Common practice is an entity e-mails a press release and news organizations do with it what they so choose. Take us through the mechanics of your program please.

A The *Herald's* “Newsdesk” is the clearing-house for all incoming press releases. This is the advertised “access point” for community submissions, and we reinforce this access point for those who routinely submit press releases to us. With some exceptions, all releases received by other staff members are relayed to Newsdesk. While this process creates redundant submissions at Newsdesk, it curtails redundant processing throughout our organization.

Newsdesk performs triage on the submissions, deleting some, posting some, and relaying some for further consideration – including

OLD: PRESS RELEASES, PAGE 12

Assessing 'Local Media'

It's a new year and with it comes the opportunity to define who we are and what we want to be. Or need to be.

As an association that prides itself on being innovative and responsive to both our members and a changing media culture, LMA is facing a big decision on membership. In short, should a printed newspaper still be a requirement for joining?

The leadership of LMA has pursued a methodical and thoughtful approach on this topic. I'm proud of both the decision to examine this complicated decision and the steps we've taken to garner input.

A formal bylaws committee has spent much of the past year gathering legal and market data. We've researched the steps taken by our association counterparts. We've asked ourselves some tough questions:

GARETH CHARTER



Chairman
LMA Board of Directors

"Who do we risk alienating by opening up our membership?"

"What do we risk by not opening up our membership?"

"Why would a media company that does not print a newspaper want to join our association? What do we offer them?"

I'd like to ask each of you reading this to step back and look at LMA as a business that must serve a market and fulfill a need. With just that hat on for a moment, what would you do regarding membership? Narrow the focus and proudly stand on ground marked with a thin printed page? Declare that some group must be for this?

Or do you see a growing "local media" covering local news,

LocalMedia association

providing local information, coalescing local markets ... without the use of a printing press? Do you know what associations and groups they are forming, or what strengths of collaboration they are searching for and finding? Do you think we better do that before someone else does?

And if you take the LMA hat off and wear the one that's marked by just your business, do you stand in the middle of all of this change and ask "who's going to help me navigate this?" Or "what are other companies doing about all of this?"

Our decision to change our name last year certainly signaled an intention to at least better define the business our existing members were already in, and drop both a geographic and market moniker that didn't reflect our current membership. We're not all in America,

and we're not all in the suburbs. But the change from Suburban Newspapers of America to Local Media Association did not imply some predetermination to change our membership, as some suspected. It invited and facilitated the necessary examination. That review, at least in its first incarnation, is approaching a conclusion.

We need to make decisions. Many involved already have in their own minds and the process of a board decision is picking up speed. We welcome all feedback on this topic. If you have a strong feeling about this, or even just a question, please reach out to me or any other director or staff member. All of our contact information is listed inside this publication.

A new year with new challenges and opportunities is here. Best wishes to all for success and good health.

Strategic Planning Underway Member Input Wanted

The all-volunteer Local Media Association Board of Directors is conducting a two-day strategic planning session in mid-January to set priorities for the next 12-18 months and all members are urged to provide feedback on issues they'd like to see added to the list of discussion points. Your

views are important and should be directed to LMA President Nancy Lane at nancy.lane@localmedia.org.

Current top priorities for the association include The Media Sales Certification Program which assists local media companies with fundamental and advanced training for advertising sales reps and managers (see details on page 7 about this important offering); and, The Local Media Innovation Alliance, an offshoot of the LMA Foundation, which scans the horizon and identifies emerging and sustainable trends for local media companies to consider. LMIA produces a monthly, in-depth report on these topics and makes them available by annual subscription or on an a la carte basis.

Lane reiterated her desire to hear from members at the annual business meeting held during the Fall Conference in Atlanta. She also reported that the association remains strong financially and will exceed the 2012 budget. Despite the economy and related cutbacks, LMA remains profitable and has not had to touch the long-term reserves during the recession.



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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR SPOTLIGHT

NON-DAILIES BELOW 10,000 CIRCULATION

In last month’s issue, we unveiled the elite group of twenty newspapers who took honors in the coveted 2012 Newspaper of The Year contest. Starting with this issue, we will spotlight each of the winners including what the judges had to say about them.

FIRST UP IS CLASS A, representing non-daily newspapers with circulation below 10,000. Special thanks to the Donald W.Reynolds Journalism Institute, Missouri School of Journalism, Columbia, MO for judging this contest and to Newspaper Toolbox for hosting the online contest entry platform.



1ST PLACE

The Taos News

Taos, NM
The New Mexican, Inc., The Santa Fe New Mexican

Judges Comments:

Local news is big news in Taos, as is local business and the local arts scene. If it’s happening in and around Taos, you’ll find it in the first section and in the sports section of The Taos News. The packaging and presentation are clean, straightforward, easy to follow. Headlines are easy to find and read and the modular layout aids in flow through the paper. Perhaps the most spectacular success for a small market publication, the advertising is stunning, attractive, inviting. It’s a pleasure to turn the pages and discover wonderful content and advertising. Community weeklies in general, and The Taos News in particular, have a lot to be proud of, as they continue to improve to meet community needs.

Editors Comment:

On behalf of The Taos News’ hardworking staff, I thank the Local Media Association for giving us this recognition. For the past 53 years, our paper’s coverage of Northern New Mexico has set a high standard for community news. The newspaper’s entire team strives to put out the best possible product, whether it’s the weekly edition, the website or its numerous special sections.

-Joan Livingston, Managing Editor



2ND PLACE

Hutchinson Leader

Hutchinson, MN
Red Wing Publishing

Judges Comments:

The Leader offers comprehensive community coverage from local government to prep sports to listings of community events. Economic challenges are big news, but so are local success stories, features and profiles. It appears that editors have the freedom to give each edition its own individual look: Page One and section covers appear unique, a refreshing surprise edition

to edition, ensuring you’re not picking up last week’s paper. Headlines pop off the pages and abundant white space encourages a comfortable, leisure read.

Editors Comment:

Winning this award is a reflection of the community we serve. Hutchinson is a vibrant, growing community and readers expect top-notch coverage of what’s happening here. Our staff conscientiously strives to meet that challenge.

-Doug Hanneman, Editor



3RD PLACE

Half Moon Bay Review

Half Moon Bay, CA
Wick Communications Company

Judges Comments:

The setting may be idyllic Pacific Coast, but the news is anything but soft. Hard looks at development, charges of official misconduct, and rate increases fulfill the watchdog function while the second section covers community affairs, sports and arts. Layout and presentation are extremely well organized with a classic use of typography. Advertising is clean, easy to read, and colorful.

Editors Comment:

The Half Moon Bay Review is a special place. The town has had a rough go of it for the past several years and the newspaper is one of the institutions that holds things together. Because it is entirely local and produced with a lot of love, people depend on it not only for accurate information but their own scrapbooks. We benefit mightily from our geography. The beauty of the San Mateo County coast attracts talented people and allows for stunning photography and really interesting stories.

-Clay Lambert, Editor

Honorable Mention



Riverdale Press

Bronx, NY
Richner Communications, Inc.

Judges Comments:

While there’s the usual community listings, events and features, The Riverdale Press

excels at its news coverage: shootings, fires, teacher-student encounters, suspicions of ticket fixing and community uproar about a competing newspaper. A robust editorial/opinion page keep the action going. Headlines stand out and the text is easy to read.

Editors Comment:

Ours is a group effort and I’m proud of the work our team produces week after week. Our staff approach their jobs with a commitment to journalism and to the community they serve in a way that always shines through to the readers.

-Kate Pastor, Editor



Litchfield County Times

Torrington, CT
Housatonic Publication Company
Journal Register Company/Digital First Media

Judges Comments:

The design and packaging allows the paper to deliver a lot of local headlines and news on Page One and throughout the paper. The local ads are clean, usually uncluttered, attractive and easy to read.

Editors Comments:

Even as countytimes.com has become a trusted source for live continuous coverage of breaking news and more in northwest Connecticut and beyond, the print edition of The Litchfield County Times---and our monthly LCT magazine and glossy quarterly Passport magazine---remains a highly valued weekly “journal” of news, arts and culture for a discerning audience. Digital and print have aligned in a perfect balance.

-Doug Clement, Editor

Disruptive Innovation Benefits Local Media Association Members

Disruptive innovators have been wreaking havoc on our business models for some time now. At Local Media Association, we view ourselves as the disruptive innovator in the media association world.

We decided more than five years ago that our members deserved to get certain benefits included with their membership fee for free. And so we started to offer educational and training webinars to LMA members as part of their benefit package. That program has grown from a dozen in year one to more than 30 last year. Other associations charge \$75 on average so for LMA members that sign up 30 people, the value is \$2,250 (oftentimes more than the cost of dues).

In 2012 we took the concept to the next level and added a two-day virtual sales conference. The first half-day was dedicated to sales and the second half-day to sales management. We brought in top sales and management trainers from all over North America to conduct this valuable program.

We also added a number of free research and industry reports such as the recent Groupon report (a seven-page report that outlines the key takeaways from my recent half-day visit to their corporate headquarters in Chicago. For a free copy, email me at nancy.lane@localmedia.org).

In tough economic times, companies scrutinize every expense. We don't want our members to view us as a line item but rather as a valuable resource that more than pays for itself.

For 2013, we will conduct at least as many free educational webinars as we did in 2012. We will expand the virtual sales conference by adding a third day devoted to social media revenue opportunities. And we will issue even more research reports and white papers.

There are many other ways that LMA members can use us. All of us on the team stand ready to help you grow your business in any way that we can. In 2012, we took hundreds of calls from members that needed personal help and we assisted in countless ways with things like major account contacts, helping to fill open management positions, revenue



NANCY LANE
President • LMA

“Remember that we are here as a valuable resource to help you grow your business. And we will continue to find ways to be the disruptive innovator in our niche.”

growth ideas and identifying contacts for specific help in areas such as pay wall success, launching digital agency services and much more. Whatever it is that you are trying to accomplish, always remember that a call to Pete Conti, Al Cupo or me is a quick way to gather good intelligence and information. The hiring of Pete Conti, the former Borrell Associates VP, brings even more depth to the team especially on the digital side.

Just yesterday I heard from two members – one wanting to know what other weeklies/small dailies were having success with pay walls and the other was looking to fill a publisher position. I was able to help both of them in less than five minutes.

As we start the new year, please remember that we are here as a valuable resource to help you grow your business. And we will continue to find ways to be the disruptive innovator in our niche. As always, contact me with your ideas to make your LMA membership even more valuable.

John Humenik to Take Over as Chairman of the Board for Local Media Association This Month

The Local Media Association board of directors is pleased to announce that John M. Humenik, president and publisher of the Arizona Daily Star (Tucson), will become the chairman of the board effective this month. Humenik served as board chair from September 2009 through September 2010. He replaces Gareth Charter who has left his position at Holden Landmark but will remain active in the association as chair of the marketing committee and as a director on the Local Media Foundation board.

According to Charter, “I’m excited about the new direction of my day-to-day work, while saddened though, understanding that the bylaws of LMA cause me to relinquish the Chairman’s role. I truly love this association and everything that it stands for, and I wish John and the board well and look forward to staying involved in a different capacity.” “We want to thank both John and Gareth for their tremendous service to our organization,” said Nancy Lane, president of Local Media Association, “both have made significant contributions to LMA over the years and will continue to do so.” Humenik will lead the board strategic planning session this month that will set the course for the year as well as the coming years.

“This is a critical time in our association’s history as we work hard to help our members grow their business and make progress in the digital transition,” said Jon K. Rust, immediate past chair of the LMA board, “we are thrilled that both John Humenik and Gareth Charter will be part of the leadership of LMA and the Foundation for the next few years.”

John Humenik is reached at jhumenik@azstarnet.com.



John Humenik

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Mega-Conference convenes next month in New Orleans

CONTINUED FROM COVER

fast emerging new business model being adopted by local media companies large and small. Ask any ad rep what their Main Street merchants yearn for and you'll likely hear the lament that they are in dire need of a central service to help them navigate the new world order of multimedia marketing. In this session, you'll hear how newspaper companies are successfully growing revenue and customer base by offering hyper-local digital agency services that includes social media, SEO, mobile and more. You've got the brand, the talent, the feet on the street and the trust of your local SMB's – learn how to put your assets to work for you in this sustainable new business opportunity.

Learning what's new in the R&D segment of our industry is another vital aspect of leading a media company and this conference, in addition to offering a trade show level exhibit hall, will also offer a **Buzz Session: Rapid-Fire Revenue-Generating Case Studies**. In it, our industry research and development partners will showcase how their products and services are being used by newspapers to grow revenue or improve operations.

Much More

Numerous other sessions will tackle initiatives and intelligence including:

Using Email & Social to Connect with Readers and Make Money

Learn how to strengthen reader relationships, improve circulation retention and generate sales revenue through email, social and database marketing.

Senior Executive Roundtable

Dynamic industry leaders will tell it like it is and what they believe needs to happen in the industry. Candid, direct, and on point discussion will help shape your thinking and strategic development plans.

Print Innovations

This session will focus on the print product and will feature innovative examples from North America. For most local media companies, print still represents 90% or more of their total revenue – maximize your impact and your revenue!

Weekly/Small Newspapers Roundtable Discussions

Moderated Idea exchange and discussion on topics specifically focused on weekly and smaller daily papers.

Double the Profit from Your TMC

With all the focus on declining HH



Kelly Wirges is shown here presenting at LMA's Classified Multimedia Conference late last year. Her session was lauded by attendees as one of the best. "(Kelly) gave me many ideas that I can take home, implement immediately, and I know it will result in not only more revenue for my company, but a better experience for our customers," said Suzanne Stevenson of Placer Community Newspapers (CA).

penetration, digital and the fall of classifieds it was easy to miss the fact that TMCs went from being delivered to 30% of the homes in the market to 70%. Problem is they have not been repositioned strategically and tactically. Attendees will leave this session with a new appreciation of how to strengthen their programs and specific ways to double their profitability. Presenter Jim Hart, Partner with DM for Newspapers, will give special emphasis on the strategy behind creating a high volume Print and Deliver program to increase and diversify your preprint business. Remember, diversifying your revenue base is the one way to fend off competitors in this increasingly competitive space.

Leading Through Change

It is an understatement to say that leading and managing is challenging in today's competitive, complex and changing environment. Creating a high performance ad sales team takes different skill sets than it did just a few years ago. This session, led by Kelly Wirges of ProMax Training & Consulting, will identify the focus and mission of top-performing leaders and companies. It will provide guidance on ensuring goals are met, people are motivated and creating a work environment that is both rewarding and enjoyable.

Hip to be Square: The modular advantage

Is your traditional rate card holding down your revenue? That's what the Times-Georgian in Carrollton, Ga., discovered after adopting a simplified modular model. Presenter Leonard Woolsey, Publisher of the Times-Georgian and Group Publisher of Paxton Media and among E&P's 10

Newspapers That Do it Right!, will share the heartening bottom-line results: increased revenue and happier advertisers and salespeople

Audience Development: The content story, the revenue side

Now that newspapers see their readers as audiences, not a circulation number, innovative step are being taken to nurture that audience with strategies that focus on increasing engagement or launching new products to grow revenue or some combination of the two. This session features senior executives with deep experience in these various approaches.

What's New in Paid Content

The Year of Paid Content – which media pundits had fixed as 2010 – arrived a couple of years late, but it's clearly here. Big chains have pledged to implement some kind of paid content model at all their newspapers, and soon. So what paid model is right for your newspapers? And if your company has already walled off or metered at least some content, what tweaks – or radical reconstruction – could be undertaken to maximize revenue and reader engagement?

The Columbus Dispatch's New Format: The shape of things to come?

The Columbus Dispatch has just hit the streets with its new three-around, or 3V, compact format, a development that is being closely watched by the entire industry. This format is no tweaking of its old broadsheet. Instead, it has been designed to give a magazine feel with modular layout and bold colors. Folding out to about the size of an iPad, the new Dispatch is positioned as a reader-friendly compact that will appeal to all ages of readers. Phil Pikelnny, CMO, Dispatch Printing Company, will share details.



Phil Pikelnny

Selling Digital: What does it take? Who does it take?

Newspapers have cycled through a variety of approaches to sales since the Internet first arrived as a media force. But what's really needed is a systematic approach to make and close sales effectively.

Modern Newsrooms for the Digital Age

What's the best design and implementation strategies for a newsroom producing copies across print, digital, video and mobile platforms?

R&D PARTNERS WANTED

EXHIBITS & SPONSORS

The Key Executive's Mega-Conference held next month in New Orleans offers numerous Exhibit & Sponsor opportunities for the Research & Development arm of the local media industry. This conference, co-presented by Local Media Association, Inland Press Association and the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association attracts key executives, a.k.a. decision makers, from across North America. Expect a strong showing – last year's event attracted nearly 500 attendees.

This is an excellent opportunity to demo your services and boost your brand among the industry's elite.

R&D BUZZ SESSION

A new 60-minute R&D BUZZ SESSION has been added to the offerings which provides a maximum of 12 exhibitors and sponsors to showcase products and services. Buzz Session participants will present four-minute case studies to demonstrate how their product/service generates new revenue, saves money, cuts costs or improves operating efficiency. It's a fantastic opportunity to broadcast your message and invite publishers to visit your exhibit space. To be on the Buzz Session, you need to register quickly. Only the first 12 who register with the Buzz Session option can reserve a place on the program and this session will fill up quickly.

Reserve your space right away to guarantee your preferences for the upcoming show! Full details are found at www.mega-conference.com or you can contact LMA's Al Cupo at al.cupo@localmedia.org

Mobile? SEO? Print? Online? Augmented Reality? Social Media?

Your Ad Clients Need Educated Reps

Brand new Media Sales Certification Training program will unveil early in 2013



It's never been more important. Local media advertising reps need to be on top of their game when it comes to advising local businesses on how to tackle the dizzying array of choices in the advertising, marketing and branding choices of the moment.

Help is on the way. And quickly.

Local Media Association members have made it clear that they need to keep their sales reps well ahead of the curve, and the competition, and that reliable, industry specific training is a critical component of this mandate. Time and again, LMA has heard the call – expertly conducted, affordable and accessible training is a high priority and it needs to be applicable to both neophytes and veterans in the face of the rapidly evolving multimedia universe that is today's reality.

With this imperative in mind, LMA's new Sales & Marketing Director Pete Conti, who joined the organization just last month from Borrell Associates, has been charged with developing a restructured and up-to-date Media Sales Certification training program as his #1 task. As this issue goes to press, Conti is hard at work developing the first in a series of brand new online training modules that will be delivered in a user-friendly, online learning management system (LMS).

The vision for this program includes the development of multiple online training modules, each dealing with a different aspect of media sales and sales management in the digital age and each including the most current research and resources.

First Up – Print & Digital Sales Fundamentals

With a targeted delivery date of early 2013, the first of these industry specific online training courses will tackle print and digital sales fundamentals in which every media rep should be expertly versed.

Intended for account executives with all levels of sales experience, the *Media Sales Certification Module #1--Multi-Media Sales Fundamentals* will cover topics like Digital Marketing, Buyer/Seller Process, Communication

Skills, Selling Solutions, Overcoming Objections and Closing Skills. The program will be delivered by way of an easy to use online learning management system and trainees will access the LMS at their own pace with the ability to stop and start the sessions, or replay them as often as needed to maximize comprehension of the material.

Each of the nine or so sessions in the *Media Sales Certification Module #1--Multi-Media Sales Fundamentals* will go deep into the session topic. For instance, in the Prospecting session trainees will learn about market research (including current data on spending by category and market size), developing a sales plan, making initial and follow up contact, developing the pipeline, the value of targeting, networking opportunities and territory management.

In the Selling a Solution session, the lessons will include sales presentation how to's, integrated marketing tips, the agency approach, features & benefits, and value selling.

Monitoring & Certification

This will be a no-nonsense training program and the LMS will enable managers to follow the progress of the reps undergoing the training curriculum. The training will conclude with an automated "test" to certify the students understanding and retention of the material, and once again, managers can keep a watchful eye of this scoring result. Reps receiving a 90% or better outcome will receive an accomplishment certificate recognizing their successful completion of the program.

What To Expect

Driving this program is LMA Sales & Marketing Director Pete Conti. In his new role at LMA he brings tremendous experience to draw on and to propel the program to new heights. Most recently, he was a consultant with Borrell Associates, an esteemed leader in local media advertising, where he frequently worked in training account executives to sell digital advertising along with conducting digital marketing seminars for small businesses. His touch on this training will yield 'graduates' with greater proficiency in media sales and sponsoring media companies can expect increased revenue share as a result.

Conti said, "We are focusing on actionable content that will help account executives improve their digital advertising selling skills. Learning how

to sell multi-media in an integrated fashion is paramount. I've been on both sides of the playing field here, as a buyer of advertising, and as a seller, and these are techniques that will increase the sales performance of any team."

“We are focusing on actionable content that will help account executives improve their digital advertising selling skills.”

The Media Sales Certification training program is a top priority for 2013 and Module #1 is expected to release early this year.

The courses will be economically priced and will include introductory, members-only pricing for LMA members. Tuition discounts will be available for multiple registrations from the same company.

Details will be widely announced via

e-mail and in next month's issue of this newsletter.

Up Next

Two additional modules are already planned.

Following closely on the heels of the Media Sales Certification Module #1, Multi-Media Sales Fundamentals, will be Module #2, Advanced Digital Sales Certification and Module #3, Management Sales Certification.

As the name implies, Advanced Digital Sales Certification Module #2 will take students well past basic Web ads and will tackle newer and emerging practices like social media and mobile advertising.

Module #3, Management Sales Certification will have a curriculum geared to sales team leadership and will teach managers the most effective methods for growing revenue and share of market through leadership and coaching. Expect sessions like setting a leadership strategy, team building, how to manage different performance levels, recruitment techniques and tools, effective sales meeting approaches and creating effective coaching plans for each member of the team.

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2012: Year in Review

BY DEB SHAW

The year 2012 saw many events and occurrences on the LMA calendar and from time to time, it's worthwhile to stop and assess all that the organization and its members have accomplished. Let's take a look back and note the major steps that LMA, its members and our industry have taken over the past 12 months.

JANUARY

A significant milestone occurred – after a proud forty year legacy, Suburban Newspapers of America changed its name to Local Media Association. The change was recommended by a committee (including the SNA board of directors and the SNA marketing committee) that represented nearly 30 member companies and concluded an intense five month process that included an enormous amount of healthy debate. Members voted on the recommendation and supported the change by a ratio of 5:1. The new name is “simple, self-explanatory, and direct. It puts local first – just like we do as media organizations,” said Jon K. Rust, Co-President of Rust Communications and then Chairman of the Board for SNA.

LocalMedia
association

The LMA Board gathers for a two day, all work/no play strategic planning session. In member news, GateHouse Media unveiled a new organizational structure to streamline and accelerate digital growth; Doug Phares became the President of Sandusky Newspapers; Chuck Lyons retired and Karen Acton replaced him as Chief Executive at Post-Newsweek Media.

FEBRUARY

LMA President Nancy Lane calls attention to the Local Media Innovation Alliance's Digital Ad Agency Report and says “Adding agency services may very well be the best opportunity for 2012 and beyond.” Her prognostication proves to be true. Many members have since seized this opportunity and, to serve the many media companies who are embracing this strategy, LMA is now publishing a second part to its original report.

The Local Media Foundation applies for and is awarded a McCormick Foundation grant that will give 20 journalism scholarships for specialized training on the effects of the recession on mental health. An application plan is drafted to select the journalists who will participate in this all-expense paid Specialized Reporting Institute training.

The LMA Board unveils the priorities set during the January strategic planning session – among them, improved member services including sales certification training, a commitment to embark on a 2012 Innovation Mission and to share the lessons learned, meaningful partnerships with other trade associations and an expanded set of benefits for associate members.

LMA, along with partners Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and Inland Press Association, convenes the Key Executives Mega-Conference in Texas. Hundreds of media execs gather; LMA President Nancy Lane and VP/Operations Al Cupo begin the process of disseminating intelligence from this conference via ‘Live From’ posts on LMA's website and tweeting incessantly.

MARCH

The West Coast Innovation Mission is announced and visits are planned at a diverse mix of media and technology companies including Google.

The Local Community Website Contest gets underway. Recognizing excellence in numerous categories like best local community initiative, best site architecture, and best reader interactivity, the contest also serves as a catalyst to learn and share best practices among members.

LMA releases its Daily Deals report containing more than a dozen examples and particulars of Deals success stories at local media companies. The report also dives into new emerging trends in this space including the ‘Deals Mall’ concept.



APRIL

LMA announces the results of its Editorial Excellence Contest. Among other winners, Carol Stark of The Joplin Globe (MO) and Kate Pastor of The Riverdale Press (NY) are named Editors of the Year in the daily and non-daily categories respectively.

Intelligence from the Key Executives Mega-Conference is shared in spades with in-depth reports published in Local Media Today on events marketing, the evolving paid & metered subscription models, and top takeaways from numerous attendees.

A Call for Entries is made for journalists to vie for twenty all-expense paid scholarships to attend the Specialized Reporting Institute training underwritten by a grant given to the Local Media Foundation by the McCormick Foundation.

In member news, Betty Carr of Metroland Media and former Chairman of the SNA Board, announces her retirement.



Editor of the Year
Kate Pastor

MAY

The Local Revenue Summit, an LMA sponsored event in partnership with The Blinder Group, convenes in Tampa, Florida. Over 100 LMA members participate in this electrifying, fast paced, it's all about the money' gathering. For the benefit of the members who were unable to attend, real time feeds are posted to the LMA website and follow up reports are planned.

The West Coast Innovation Mission is taken. An intentionally small group of participants spend the last week of the month visiting several companies including Google, Fisher Communications, AT&T Interactive and Black Press plus have interaction with representatives from The World Association of Newspapers, The McClatchy Group and Digital First Media. LMA members are alerted to watch the website for ‘Live From’ reports and to be on the lookout for a wealth of information to follow the conclusion of this important study tour.

Plans are announced for the Fall Publishers' and Advertising Directors' Conference in Atlanta and invitations are sent to media buyers to participate in the highly coveted one-on-one meetings with LMA members that are a hallmark of this gathering.

Following up on one of the items identified in the January strategic planning meeting involving LMA Board members, LMA announces partnerships with Colorado Press Association and California Newspaper Publishers Association. “LMA recognizes the value of collaboration and we are thrilled that they have extended their outstanding resources to our membership,” said Samantha Johnston, Executive Director of Colorado Press Association.

The annual Local Advertising & Promotions Contest gets underway.

In member news, Gloria Fletcher becomes President at Sound Publishing in Washington.

JUNE

ClassifiedAvenue.net debuts and all LMA members are invited to join, at absolutely no cost. This new website was developed in partnership with AdPerfect with the purpose of providing local publications a North American wide platform to offer their local, regional and national advertisers. Members have the ability to digitally expand their footprint and reach. A major asset of ClassifiedAvenue.net is the ability to drive all searches back to the local publisher's website.

LMA President Nancy Lane and Local Media Foundation Board Chairman Steve Parker share details from the The World Association of Newspapers (WAN-IFRA) study tour they took in April. During the tour, Lane presented a report to participants about the trends in the digital agency services space being undertaken by many North American media companies. She and Parker visited 15 companies in four European countries as part of the WAN-IFRA weeklong study mission. 'Live from' reports were posted on LMA's website; it's announced that a follow up report with key findings will be shared with LMA members.

In member news, Digital First Media announces twelve new community newsroom projects. Building on the success of The Newsroom Café at The Register Citizen (CT), these projects are focused on heightening reader involvement and engagement.

Relating to the McCormick grant received by the Local Media Foundation, twenty Specialized Reporting Training scholarship winners are announced.

JULY

LMA convenes its first ever virtual conference. Over 200 members take advantage of this offering and hear professional speakers address advertising sales and sales management topics. This high value agenda with no registration fees or travel costs is free for LMA members.

The prestigious Newspaper of the Year contest gets underway. Only a handful of newspapers will be selected in this very competitive contest.

In-depth Innovation Mission perspectives are shared by participants in a multi-page spread in Local Media Today. 'Growing Business in our Own Backyard', 'The Big Boys are Nipping at our Heels for Partnerships' and 'Content and Revenue are Not Inextricably Linked' are just a few of the headlines.

In member news, Texas Community Newspapers acquires several East Texas newspapers from ASP Westward; Chris White is named publisher at The Repository (OH); Gerald Delaney joins Schurz Communications as the new publisher for their California Group.

AUGUST

The Local Community Website Contest results are unveiled. Ken Pearson of Metroland Media's Durham Division takes the Innovator of the Year award for his use of social media.



Innovator of the Year
Ken Pearson

Three revenue-themed gatherings are announced for November. Two one-day summits, Daily Deals and Digital Agencies, and the Classified Multimedia Conference will all convene in Chicago.

Skye Kinkade, a reporter at the Mount Shasta (CA) area newspapers, files a lengthy report on her experience at the Specialized Reporting Institute journalism training she received as a result of a Local Media Foundation scholarship, thanks to a grant from the McCormick Foundation. She reports that each of the participants came out of the SRI with concrete ideas for implementing fresh projects in their own newsroom. "Though the Institute concentrated on how the economic crisis has impacted mental health, journalists gained new perspectives on a variety of topics, and left enthusiastic to get started," said Kinkade.

In member news, Rick O'Connor is named President and CEO of Black Press.

SEPTEMBER

LMA convenes its Annual Fall Publishers' & Advertising Directors' Conference in Atlanta. Huge attendance, chock full exhibit hall, superior speakers, and VIP media buyers are part and parcel of this gathering.

LMA members ratify the recommended bylaws changes. Most of the changes that were recommended involved replacing outdated language and also changing language to reflect the new name of Local Media Association (from Suburban Newspapers of America) which was adopted on the first of the year. The biggest and most exciting change of the bylaws revisions was the creation of a new class of membership called R&D partners (Research & Development Partners). This class provides a higher level option for those that provide goods and services to the industry.

A new slate of officers to the LMA Board of Directors is elected at the annual business meeting conducted during the Fall Conference. Five new faces join the all volunteer Board of Directors – Roy Biondi, This Week Community Newspapers; Henry Bird, Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc.; Matt Coen, Second Street, Inc.; Mark Poss, Red Wing Publishing, Inc.; Kim Wilson, The South Bend Tribune.

Betty Carr receives The Dean Lesher Award, LMA's highest individual honor recognizing achievement, excellence and community involvement during one's newspaper career.

OCTOBER

The 2012 Innovation Mission Report is published. LMA members are able to obtain this in-depth summary, covering significant intelligence gleaned during the intense week long study tour at several West Coast media and technology companies, at a modest price. Seats at a correlating webinar are included.



Ad Director of the Year
Karen Pletsch

Karen Pletsch is recognized for taking top honors as Advertising Director of the Year in LMA's Advertising & Promotions Contest. Universally lauded by her team as an inspirational and hard working leader, she was recognized for the tremendous success she has achieved since rebuilding her team in 2011. Revenue gains in both print and digital advertising, up 3.5% and 42% respectively, have resulted through the first seven months of 2012.

In member news, Bret McKeand becomes president of Independent Newsmedia, Inc. in Arizona.

NOVEMBER

LMA urges all members to reinvigorate their bottom line in 2013 by using the seriously useful monthly reports published by the Local Media Innovation Alliance. In-depth white papers with case studies, how to guides and best practice summaries cover a different topic each month. Published so far in 2012 are reports on: Digital Agency, Open Source Software, So-Lo-Mo Strategies, Event Marketing, Reseller Report, Monetizing Facebook, 360 Selling Strategy; Mobile Strategies; Daily Deals – Best Practices & Emerging Strategies; Emerging Content Strategies.

LMA President Nancy Lane and Board member Brandon Erlacher spend a half-day visiting Groupon world headquarters in Chicago. A free report detailing important insights gleaned from this meeting is offered to all members.

LMA convenes three meetings, all at the same location in Chicago. Two one-day summits, Deals and Digital Agencies, and the Classified Multimedia Conference offer specialized agendas that drill deep into best practices, emerging trends and specific action plans for attendees to take home and put to work in local markets.

The Local Media Foundation launches its annual giving campaign. All donations are used to fund the important work of this charitable arm of Local Media Association. Signature undertakings are the annual Innovation Mission and the Local Media Innovation Alliance.

DECEMBER

After an exhaustive recruitment effort, super smart and very likable Peter Conti joins LMA as its new Sales & Marketing Director. Nearly 70 applicants were considered for the spot. Conti comes to LMA from Borrell Associates where he most recently served as Executive Vice President.

The 2013 Key Executives Mega-Conference is announced. Getting underway on February 17 in New Orleans, this gathering is the result of a partnership between Local Media Association, Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and Inland Press Association.

With much fanfare and lots of high fives in just a handful of newsrooms across North America, The Newspaper of The Year honors are recognized. Only twenty publications are selected in this contest judged by the faculty at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute, Missouri School of Journalism.

In member news, CNHI launches a new online initiative. The Indiana Exchange enables a group of newspapers in the state to band together and offers consumers a single website to browse and list classified ads from throughout the state.

Certified Audit of Circulations becomes a subsidiary of Audit Bureau of Circulation; in a tandem move, ABC changes its name to Alliance for Audited Media.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The New Year is upon us and so too is that new desk calendar wide open and waiting for marking up! There are several major Local Media Association events scheduled for 2013 that you'll want to note.

KEY EXECUTIVES MEGA CONFERENCE

February 17 - 20, 2013
The Roosevelt Hotel
New Orleans

Room rate: \$199 plus tax

The 2013 Key Executives Mega-Conference was developed jointly by Local Media Association, Inland Press Association and Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and brings together the best thought-leaders tackling the hottest trends in the industry today for increasing revenue, audience and engagement. Program information and registration details available at: www.mega-conference.com/

AMERICA EAST TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS CONFERENCE

April 8 – 10, 2013
Hershey Lodge & Convention Center, Hershey, PA

Look for details about special LMA programming during this important trade event held annually in central Pennsylvania.

LOCAL MEDIA ASSOCIATION / BLINDER GROUP REVENUE SUMMIT

May 15 – 17, 2013
Crowne Plaza Avenue
Chicago Downtown

Room rate: \$149 plus tax
The Blinder Group and Local Media Association are working together for the fourth straight year to develop this summit focused exclusively on growing revenue. As in 2012, this Revenue Summit will bring together the best case studies from throughout North America to showcase new and innovative

revenue streams. This summit is designed to include best practices from a diverse mix of local media companies regardless of platform.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR OUR WEST COAST MEMBERS.

LMA is partnering with California Newspaper Publishers Association and the Blinder Group for a Revenue Summit in late April.

CNPA/LMA/Blinder Group
Revenue Summit
April 24 -27, 2013
Sheraton Universal Hotel,
Universal City, CA

FALL PUBLISHERS' & ADVERTISING DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE

September 17- 20, 2013
Sheraton St. Louis City Center
Room rate: \$119 plus tax

This is one of Local Media Association's largest conferences of the year and always provides excellent revenue-producing ideas. Major advertisers take this opportunity to speak with our members in both group sessions and in one-on-one meetings regarding their advertising strategies. Concurrent sessions are offered allowing both the publisher and advertising director to choose

meetings that relate specifically to their needs. Complete details will be available on the LMA website in 2013.

DIGITAL AGENCY SUMMIT & CLASSIFIED MULTIMEDIA CONFERENCE

November 6 – 8, 2013
Sheraton Chicago O'Hare
Room rate: \$155 plus tax

New in 2012, the Digital Agency Summit was a big success and based on feedback from program participants has been expanded and scheduled again for 2013. This conference will cover the hottest trends and success stories in this rapidly emerging space. Many of the sessions will be presented in case study format by senior executives that are charged with growing and developing digital agency services at their companies. The summit will specifically address the different structures that are being pursued in addition to lessons learned and best practices.

The **Classified Multimedia Conference** is a must-attend for anyone charged with growing classified revenue. As in the past, this conference will focus on using all of the tools of multimedia to grow this segment of our business.

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PETER CONTI
Sales & Marketing Director • LMA

This is my inaugural column as a staff member of LMA. After more than 11 years as a consultant with Borrell Associates, I have crossed over to the other side. (I know, it usually works in reverse.) But after working with LMA for most of those years I realized that this would be a great opportunity to work on a daily basis with many of the people I enjoy so much within an industry that I find exciting, lively and challenging.

My role as sales and marketing director will cover many areas within LMA but I'll also lend my experience to writing and making presentations about relevant local media topics. Please don't hesitate to email me if you think a certain subject merits attention or discussion.

Having been privy to hundreds of local news organization both online and in traditional media over the last decade, I can tell you that not all organizations are alike. In addition, lots of associations seek to band together large parcels of similar organizations. In fact, many of you are a member of more than one. There are state press associations, and broadcast associations, and then the larger associations such as WAN-IFRA, NNA, NAA, NAB, Inland, AAN and SNPA.

I have made presentations for every one of these larger associations and many of the state associations. My messages usually contained an outsider's viewpoint that could be blunt. I speak from experience: My entrepreneurial background is filled with observations of disruptive innovation in action.

I started work out of college as a general manager of one of the first video chains in the country, located in Washington, D.C. It was a nascent industry that disrupted movie theaters and I participated in the formation of the industry's trade association and in the ensuing battles

over copyright and tax issues that abounded.

By the late '80s, I had left that to start my own chain of CD-only stores. I even sold CDs on the Internet beginning in 1990 (on a bulletin board, remember those?). After selling these stores (before the onslaught of file downloading laid this industry to waste), I helped launch a 1,000-store mall online and then segued into starting up the city-site Richmond.com for Landmark Communications in 1997.

Landmark owned a weekly publication in Richmond; the Richmond giant, Media General, owned the local daily paper and its website. But we took MG on and beat them for three years as MG floundered around the Web searching for the right formula. Even as late as 2011, MG still hadn't come to grips with the changing landscape brought on by the Internet: not that this is a unique thing in the industry. It is no secret that many newspapers are unable to face innovation and embrace it.

Likewise, many of the industry associations seek to protect their constituents from the realities of disruptive innovation. Back in 2004, I was persona non grata after a large association presentation suggesting newspapers get their own brokerage license as a way of procuring listings and as a means to selling fee-based realty services. The association did not want to hear that they needed a new business model. Nor did they want to hear that Borrell Associates forecast a decline in real estate advertising in print, that it was not cyclical, and that it was not coming back. Of course, this is not what the crowd wanted to hear either. It would upset the balance of business and force newspapers to face the future head-on with the reality that the business was going to change in a way that would decidedly decimate current lines of revenue. Their reaction left me thinking that this association was of no service to its members.

However, there was an oasis in the media desert of critical awareness. In 2003, I made a presentation for what was then Suburban Newspapers of America. Their views of rippling revenue lines, disruptive solutions and the need to embrace change were distinctly different from the others. They openly discussed change, they understood that the business was going to look a lot different in 10 years and most importantly, did not bury their collective heads in the sand and try to ignore the facts and shield their members from such.

The LMA mission is to be the "leading resource for local news and information providers seeking innovation, education and inspiration." This may be the most modest mission statement ever. For years, under the guidance of remarkable board members and staff, LMA has pushed the envelope for its members. It brings to the table a diversity of opinion and a challenge of the familiar. This is a reality-based association that seeks to inform and educate its members. You only need to look at the list of services and conference topics to realize that this is a group poised to take on challenge and innovation.

No other association in this industry even comes close. That is why I am thrilled to be here and I hope that my skills and experience will only continue to advance the mission of LMA. Call, text, email or Skype me if you have an idea!

peter.conti@localmedia.org

Cell: 804.852.5663

Skype: digitscd

HOW DO YOUR PLANS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR 2013 STACK UP AGAINST OTHER NEWSPAPERS?

All LMA members were invited to participate in a Products and Plans for 2013 Survey last month and in return for a few minutes of their time, participants will receive the outcome PowerPoint presentation from sponsor Borrell Associates. One lucky participant will also be receiving an iPad!

Meanwhile, results from two previous surveys, the *Summer 2012 Mobile Adoption* and the *"Where do Customers Come From?" -- Conversion and Attribution Surveys*, are available to LMA members at no charge. Request them by e-mailing LMA headquarters at hq@localmedia.org.

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▶▶ Q&A: PRESTON GIBSON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

most promotional releases. These promotional releases are routed to our inbound sales staff, for paid events, or our outbound sales staff, for other promotional releases. A salesperson then contacts the sending organization to solicit paid promotion.

While the conversion rate on these leads has not been extremely high – inbound sales reports about 10%, any sale is revenue we would not have had otherwise. In many cases, processing promotional releases this way has generated new display advertising.

Q Is this only reactive to a press release submission?

A At this point, it is mostly reactive – either to a press release submission or to a specific request for promotion which doesn't translate into a display advertising sale – as in a price objection, where this program can be used as a “fall back” sale. However, the program was used rather extensively during the recent election cycle. For larger campaign promotion packages, we included a limited number and size of press releases. Most of these campaigns ended up purchasing upsized or additional releases. Some candidates with

smaller budgets purchased releases alone. I recall reading in Local Media Today that Rust Communications takes a similar approach with political campaign letters. That seemed validating: Hey, if Jon's doing it, it's probably a good thing!

Q How does this program operate when your newsroom is actively covering the same event? Do you still list events for free in an Entertainment Calendar or something similar?

A Our newsroom makes coverage decisions without regard to any advertising consideration. So, newsroom coverage may provide unpaid promotion for an event, but an event sponsor can't count on that coverage, and they can't control the content of that coverage.

We still publish any event – even a commercial event – as a basic calendar listing, online and in print, at no charge. Also, if someone is sponsoring an event as a community service, without charge, to the public, then we generally publish further event information at no charge – also as a community service. However, if the event sponsor is seeking to generate revenue from the event, and they are asking us to help them generate more revenue by promoting

the event, we presume it is reasonable to expect some degree of payment for this promotion.

Q Can you give us some insight into rate structure? Overall revenue trends? Growth potential?

A The \$10 rate is for a “featured” calendar listing – in print and online. Press release articles are priced on a graduated scale, starting at \$50 for up to 200 words. We offer a 50-percent non-profit discount. So, a non-profit organization can get 200 words published for \$25.

However, given that we are now getting paid for work we used to do for free, and that much of this is coming from people who would not otherwise place any advertising with us at all, the rates are okay, at least for now.

Presently, our average “earned rate” for sponsored content is about 25 percent of what we would expect to get for the same space as display advertising – not so wonderful. However, given that we are now getting paid for work we used to do for free, and that much of this is coming from people who would not otherwise place any advertising with us at all, the rates are okay, at least for now. As the program gains traction – internally and externally – we expect to crank up the rates a bit, to better support the work involved and to better reflect the value being delivered, across various media channels.

Our revenue-per-sale is now running about twice what it was a year ago – an encouraging trend, giving us confidence in the value of the program to both our advertisers and our staff.

Q What kinds of feedback, or perhaps pushback, are you hearing from the general press release community?

A Internally, there was some initial pushback – from sales folks gain-

ing work, from editorial folks losing work and from paginators worried about having less filler copy. As new workflows took shape and some new revenue rolled in, these objections have subsided – mostly.

Externally, some who sent us releases “only because it was free” have complained. They have come to either accept the free promotion we continue to offer for events or scale the promotion to meet their budget. Folks who really value promotion acknowledge this is still a real bargain.

Q Hindsight being 20-20, what do you know now that you wish you knew when you started this program? And, please share some of the evolutionary aspects of it.

A To help support shared understanding, our Media Manager created a little handbook for us. Sometimes it seems like a lot of work for this fledgling program; however, we anticipate meaningful growth, and we are already enjoying some new revenue and many indirect benefits from the initiative.

Q Finally, let's shift gears. You and your colleagues have been front-runners in many innovative undertakings so while I've got you on the hook, I'd love to hear about what's on your horizon on the moment. Got an up and coming best practice or 'light bulb' idea that's percolating?

A Deb, I'll take this opportunity to plug the Local Media Innovation Alliance. Our rapidly changing media landscape makes it easier than ever to identify great things to do, but harder than ever to choose what to do. Economic pressures make it especially important to choose wisely. It is wonderful to have LMIA scanning the landscape for us, filtering best opportunities, then providing insight on how to exploit those opportunities.

Mobile has been a recurring theme in several of the LMIA reports and webinars; so, it's not really a “light bulb.” However, with 30 percent of our digital audience now connecting to us via mobile devices – and that share is growing rapidly, we are necessarily giving mobile more and more attention. In 2012, we offered some mobile-specific advertising solutions which worked very well for a few clients. We will expand that offering in the coming year. We will also re-launch our website in 2013, and we're taking a mobile-centric development approach. Generally speaking, any digital initiative needs to work for mobile. Desktop-oriented solutions aren't always friendly to mobile devices, but if something works for mobile, it probably works for desktop too. We are training ourselves to begin with mobile in mind for all digital work.

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Member Benefit: Educational Webinars

Keep your calendars open and ready to mark for numerous educational webinars that will be coming your way in 2013. Full of actionable lessons, most of these events are free to LMA members and represent an extremely valuable aspect of your membership. Here's a rundown of what you can expect early in the year. Advance notice via blast e-mails will confirm dates and provide easy online registration links.

Free Member Webinar LEARNING FACEBOOK AND TWITTER - SOCIAL MEDIA WORKSHOP #1

Planned Date:

Thursday, January 10, 3 PM ET

Designed for newspapers that need a basic "how to" training, this webinar will cover how to get started and will also provide an overview of all of the new tools that have been released by both social media platforms.

Innovative Media Alliance Webinar UNCOVERING LOCAL SEARCH TRENDS

Planned Date:

Thursday, January 24, 3 PM ET

This webinar will provide you with updates on local search trends, statistics and sales strategies to keep you ahead of your competition and in the driver's seat with your customers.

Free Member Webinar THE POWER OF 5

Planned Date:

Thursday, January 31, 3 PM ET

This webinar will present the Power of 5 -- a well-defined sales metrics designed for outside and inside sales teams. The Power of 5 takes a step-by-step approach to prospecting, product development, selling against competition, goal setting and performance evaluation.

Free Member Webinar LEVERAGING LINKEDIN FOR PROFESSIONAL AND ADVERTISER USE SOCIAL MEDIA WORKSHOP #2

Planned Date:

Thursday, February 7, 3 PM ET

Learn how to complete or develop your LinkedIn profile, prospect for new clients, participate in groups, adjust your settings and maximize your searches on LinkedIn. Also, how to utilize all of LinkedIn's users' tools to develop company pages that will give your organization (or advertising client) a powerful online presence.



Free Member Webinar SELL SMARTS: LOCAL MEDIA ASSOCIATION'S NEW SALES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Planned Date:

Tuesday, February 12, 3 PM ET

The Local Media Association's Sales Certification Program has been re-launched to provide the sales training and accountability necessary to build a successful digital-sales team. Designed with actionable content this program will boost your ad-sales revenue and this webinar will provide an overview of the course, its modules, and explain how you can access this program from anywhere at any time.

Free Member Webinar THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL AGENCIES: NEW CASE STUDIES

Planned Date:

Thursday, February 14, 3 PM ET

Digital agencies continue to be developed by media companies of all sizes as a way of offering local businesses the products and services they need to effectively market themselves. This webinar will take a close look at how some early adopters of the digital agency model have evolved to meet the needs of the SMBs in their market.

Innovative Media Alliance Webinar EMAIL MARKETING: PART 1 – GETTING STARTED

Planned Date:

Thursday, February 28, 3 PM ET

Email marketing delivers the highest rate of return of any direct marketing channel and is the perfect way to stop losing your customers to competitors. Learn how your company can take advantage of this tried and true platform. If you've wanted to start an email marketing program, take advantage of the first half of this webinar to learn about steps you can take to get your program off the ground quickly.

MISS A WEBINAR? Access archived recordings at www.localmedia.org.

Member News:

Anschutz Corp. Buys Colorado Springs Gazette

The Anschutz Corp.'s Clarity Media Group has purchased The Gazette (CO) from Freedom Communications Inc.

Ryan McKibben, CEO of Clarity Media Group, will serve as chairman of The Gazette. One of his first decisions was to retain Dan Steever as president and publisher.

Dirks, Van Essen & Murray, a newspaper merger and acquisition firm in Santa Fe, New Mexico, represented Freedom Communications in the transaction. Terms were not disclosed.

GateHouse Media Continues Expansion of Online Private Ad Exchange

GateHouse Media has added 15 publishers to its private ad exchange, Adhance Media. The private ad exchange now comprises more than 500 local, hyper-local and major city newspapers and broadcast sites nationwide including Schurz, Morris

Communications, The Seattle Times, CNHI, The Ogden Newspapers, Inc. and The Columbus Dispatch.

New Paper Starting In Virginia

A new weekly community newspaper and website will launch in Prince William County and Manassas in early 2013. The new products will be published by Northern Virginia Media Services, which publishes *Leesburg Today* and *Ashburn Today*, as well as weekly newspapers and websites in Fairfax and Arlington counties.

Digital First Media Expanding Real-Time Social Media Wire

Digital First Media is expanding their Social Media Wire, the real-time delivery of local and topical social media, news and video posts in an audience-facing newswire format.

Digital First Media's Social Media Wire was developed in concert with Crowdnews, the Dutch technology company specializing in delivering content from the social Web that matches a site's original content.

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classifiedavenue update:

DEANNA LEWIS



Director of Sales
LMA Staff

Happy New Year! 2012 went as planned for Classified Avenue. Although the classified category as whole is not as strong as it once was, we are finding steady ground. Our loyal advertisers report they are receiving the sales leads they need from your publications to continue their Classified Avenue advertising schedules.

The end of 2012 saw a huge increase in our 2x2 network. Are you participating in our 2x2 network? 50% of our revenue goes back to participating newspapers. For the last 2 months of 2012, we had a 1x2 Satellite ad and two 2x2 education ads. We are hoping all three will continue into 2013. If you want more information on becoming a 2x2 network participant, please contact me.

Classifiedavenue.net is a priority for 2013. Our goal is to add more newspapers to this aggregated website and increase ad revenues and exposure to our partner newspapers.

If you have any questions on any of our networks, please don't hesitate to contact me. Meanwhile, here's wishing you and yours a healthy and happy New Year.

The Check Is In the Mail!

Classified Avenue shares revenue with participating newspapers periodically and the fourth quarter rebates are being processed as we take this issue to press.

C.A. participants who met the December 28 tearsheet deadline can expect to receive their checks early in 2013.

If you are not yet a member of Classified Avenue, you should definitely consider joining this no-cost classified avenue network. Participation could not be easier and every additional C.A. member expands the network and reach for advertisers.

Contact Deanna Lewis at deanna.lewis@localmedia.org or 888-486-2466 for more information.

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ALLIANCE FOR	<i>GOLD STANDARD AUDITS</i>
ALLIANCE FOR	<i>MEDIA INTELLIGENCE</i>
ALLIANCE FOR	<i>whatever's next</i>

WE'VE CHANGED OUR NAME. NOT WHAT WE STAND FOR.

The Audit Bureau of Circulations is now the Alliance for Audited Media. An alliance for informed decisions, more intelligent data, and industry professionals who know smart media is audited media. It's all about publishers, advertisers, and agencies coming together to bring accountability and confidence to the new world of media. To find out what the Alliance for Audited Media can do for you, visit auditedmedia.com/TheNewABC

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