

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION e-Newsletter

Ask an Attorney

The Texas Legislative Session: bills for journalists to love and hate



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As the Texas legislative session begins building steam, many bills have already been filed that are of interest to journalists and news organizations. Pending legislation addresses the ability to gather news and attempts to move public notice to government websites. In the past, the Haynes and Boone media group has worked diligently to fight laws that would interfere with reporting on matters of public concern or reduce transparency about governmental functions. This session will see a continuation of these efforts.

Bills relating to newsgathering

The Public Information Act is a quintessential tool for reporters. After some government officials began conducting official business on private devices, the Legislature in 2013 passed a law clarifying that even private emails are subject to the Public Information Act if they discuss public business. Nevertheless, some government agencies found

a new way to avoid public scrutiny, by claiming the agency could not mandate production of electronic communications housed on private devices over which they did not have custody and control. This session, look for a bill to address this loophole.

A Senate bill that has already been filed, SB 308, would require that records of police departments at private colleges and university be subject to the Public Information Act. The impetus for this bill comes from an incident that occurred at Rice University, in which police officers beat a suspected bicycle thief, and the beating was captured on video. When the media made Public Information Act requests related to the incident, the Rice University Police Department refused to provide the video. Despite the police officers having been commissioned by the State with full police power, the Department claimed it was not subject to the Public Information Act because they were housed at a private university. Sen. John Whitmire,



D-Houston, who is the sponsor of SB 308, was reportedly infuriated by the refusal and was quoted in the Houston Chronicle as saying “if they think they don’t take taxpayer money: One, watch what I do to their budget, and two, watch what I do to their police department.”

In response to an increase in incidents where police officers arrest and harass people for doing nothing more than taking pictures—a vexing problem for journalists—HB 1035, sponsored by Rep. Eric Johnson, make clear that filming and recording a police officer does not constitute interference with police. The bill also clarifies that the crime of failure to obey a lawful order cannot be applied to “an order or direction to cease filming, recording, photographing, documenting, or observing a peace officer while the officer is engaged in the performance of official duties.” Finally, the bill makes it a crime for law enforcement officers to delete or destroy audio, photographic or video recordings without the written consent of the owner. In 2014 an Austin federal court held that a private citizen has the constitutional right to record police officers performing their official duties in public. The ruling came after the Austin police department claimed that the right to photograph or videotape police was “not recognized as a constitutional right.”

► **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

► FROM PAGE 1

Public notice under attack

Despite the November census report finding that several Texas cities, including Laredo, McAllen, Brownsville, Waco and Texarkana, are among the worst in the nation for adoption of internet use, this session of the Legislature has already seen a bumper crop of efforts to move public notice away from independent accountability by being published in a newspaper and on its website and moved to government only websites with no verifiability or archiving by a third party. Two bills that have been filed, HB139

and HB 814 (companion bill, SB392) would allow government entities to satisfy certain public notice requirements by publishing notice on their own internet websites instead of in a newspaper of general circulation. A third bill, HB1019, would require newspapers qualified to accept public notice to have an online-only option, at a price cap of \$25, and would permit government entities to exercise the online-only option to fulfill the public notice requirement.

Attorneys from Haynes and Boone will be working on behalf of journalists and news organizations on these matters, and we will report our progress throughout the session.

Texas Better Newspaper Contest

DEADLINE: THURSDAY, MARCH 26

ENTER AT WWW.BETTERNEWSPAPERCONTEST.COM

This year, the Maryland/Delaware/D.C. Press Association will be judging our Better Newspaper Contest. Entries may be uploaded until Thursday, March 26.

As a reminder, if you are submitting an entry in the General Excellence Routine Special Section, Blue Moon Special Section or Community Service categories, use www.issuu.com to create an e-reader of your publication. Do not upload large, multi-page files, as

this slows down processing. Also, you may need to combine files and reduce the size of your final PDF.

Simply upload your pages to Issuu and a unique URL will be created that can be added to your online contest entry and will take the judge directly to your content on www.issuu.com.

[A pamphlet explaining in greater depth about continuing with the digital format that was implemented last year is available here.](#)

TEXAS PRESS E-NEWSLETTER

Texas Press Association
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ALL DIGITAL!

[Download the entry instructions by clicking here](#)

JUDGING INSTRUCTIONS

Here is a list of instructions provided by the Maryland/Delaware/D.C. Press Association on specifications for its Better Newspaper Contest.

Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Press Association
(MDDC)

60 West Street, Suite 107

Annapolis, MD 21401

Contact: Jennifer Thornberry,

Membership Services Coordinator

Phone: 855-721-6332 ext. 2 or 410-295-1581, Fax: 855-721-6332

Email: jthornberry@mddcpress.com

Electronic Judging Instructions

Thank you for agreeing to judge the MDDC Press Association's 2014 Editorial Contest.

1. The deadline to complete judging is Monday, March 2.
2. Go to <http://betterbnc.com>
3. Below Are you a judge?, click Login Here.
4. Under Contests drop-down list, select 2014 MDDC Editorial Contest
5. Enter your email address.
6. In the password box, enter the temporary password: mddcjudge (lower-case).
7. Click Login.
8. During your first login, click View Official Judging Instructions button to read the contest rules.
9. You can view your assigned competitions from the Judges home page and click on Assignments.
10. To view the entries within a competition, click on the competition name, then click on then click on an entry's thumbnail image(s) to view each of them for review. In the case of a hard-copy tearsheet entry, review the hard-copy instead.
11. Once you have reviewed all parts to an entry (e.g. multiple attachments, web addresses, comments, etc.), you can give the entry a preliminary rating from 0-10 in the "How would you rate this entry?" bar near the top of the page, which will help you sort the entries when you are ready to choose winners.
12. If you wish, you can add confidential entry comments (viewable only to yourself) in the Private Note box in the lower right side of the entry page.
13. When you have completed all review steps, click Done Reviewing This Entry at the bottom right of the page. This will help you keep track of which entries you have already reviewed for the competition you are currently evaluating.
14. When you are ready to select winners, simply view the first handful of entries in the Reviewed Entries box, as these are automatically sorted in descending order, based on the preliminary ratings you assigned during your review process. In other words, the first reviewed entries you see will be the highest scores, decreasing down to the lowest score you gave for the last entries listed.
15. Once you know which entries you want to award 1st/2nd/3rd (Alternate) places to, simply drag and drop the thumbnail images for those entries in the corresponding Winners boxes at the bottom of the page. If you feel there are insufficient entries in the category you

VOLUNTEER

**to judge the MDDC
Press Association**

BETTER NEWSPAPER

CONTEST

**CLICK HERE TO
SIGN UP**

The Better Newspaper Contest swap is a great opportunity to share in ideas between two state press associations.

The Maryland/Delaware/D.C Press Association Better Newspaper Contest is currently seeking judges.

All entries will be judged via the Better Newspaper Contest website
www.betternewspaper-contest.com

may award only a 1st place if the quality of the work does not justify awarding both a 1st and 2nd.

16. There is no honorable mention award. We also ask that you do not award any ties.

17. Please add a comment for the first place winner only in the box directly below the first place thumbnail.

18. Once you have completed the judging process for a competition, click Finalize Judgment to save your decision.

Feel free to work as a team to judge any categories with a large number of entries.

Publishers: plan to attend NNA Leadership Summit



Randy Keck

TPA Vice President
Publisher
The Community
News, Aledo

I'm writing to invite my fellow publishers to attend the National Newspaper Association Leadership Summit, March

18-19 in Washington, DC.

The event begins with an Insider's Tour of the National Postal Museum <<http://postalmuseum.si.edu/>> on Wednesday.

On Thursday, we will receive briefings on issues facing newspapers at the national level from 8-10 a.m., and then have an opportunity to visit with our congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. Thursday evening will be dinner with ABC News Senior Washington Correspondent Jeff Zeleny.

Room rate at the Crystal City Marriott is \$184 per night, and registration for

the conference is \$180 for NNA members (\$225 for non-members) up to Feb. 23, when rates increase.

Thanks for your attention!

CALENDAR

Feb. 1 - March 2, 2015:

Judge the MDDC Press Association Newspaper Contest

Feb. 5 - March 26, 2015:

Enter the 2015 Texas Better Newspaper Contest

Feb. 19, 2015:

LAC Meeting in Austin
Scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

March 12, 2015:

LAC Conference Call
Scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

March 15-21, 2015:

Sunshine Week - Open government is good government

March 18-19, 2015:

NNA Leadership Summit, Washington D.C.

March 26, 2015:

LAC Meeting in Austin
Scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

March 26, 2015:

Deadline to enter the Texas Better Newspaper Contest.
Enter at www.betternewspaper-contest.com

April 9-11, 2015:

North and East Texas Press Association Annual Convention, Denton

April 16-18, 2015:

South Texas Press Association Annual Convention, Port Royal Ocean Resort, Port Aransas

April 23-25, 2015:

Panhandle Press Association Annual Convention, Holiday Inn West, Amarillo

May 14-16, 2015:

Texas Gulf Coast Press Association Annual Convention, Holiday Inn, Galveston

How Much Of Your Advertising Revenue Can You Afford to Give Up?

Your advertisers may soon be unable to deduct their full ad expense.

Uncle Sam wants to slash the long-standing deduction to RAISE ADVERTISERS' TAXES EVEN HIGHER! Cutting advertising expense deductibility is now on the table in both the House and Senate. Advertising is the economic engine that drives local economies. More government intervention will hurt YOUR pocketbook. Thousands of communities across America could be harmed. Advertising should continue to be a fully deductible business expense!

JOIN the battle against ADVERTISING TAXES

The NNA We Believe in Newspapers Leadership Summit
March 18-19, 2015 - Washington DC

Enjoy dinner March 19 at the National Press Club with the NNA Foundation News Fellows.

Registration details at www.nnaweb.org.

Newspapers will continue to provide more collaboration, engagement and content in 2015



Caroline Little

President and
CEO, Newspaper
Association of
America

The past twelve months have been an invigorating time for the newspaper media business. The next twelve are shaping up to be even better.

In 2014, the newspaper industry overflowed with new ideas, technologies and content. Our industry developed better ways to reach readers and give them more of what they want – more stories, more engagement, more personalized information, and more content on their preferred platforms. The future of the newspaper media industry is across all platforms, from print to digital to mobile.

For example, our colleagues across the industry boldly experimented with technologies such as Google Glass, drones and automated technology to enhance reporting and developed new forms of interactive stories. Thanks to a wealth of information about digital news consumption, we are able to analyze data to personalize content, identify trends and create better products for both consumers and advertisers. Newspapers' digital content audience rose to 166 million unique adult visitors in October – a record high.

The segment of readers accessing content exclusively on mobile exploded by 85 percent last year, according to comScore, and we expect that trend to continue. This growth offered new insight into our readers. In fact, the fastest growth for mobile content came from women ages 18-24 and men ages 25-34. Cutting-edge technology, immediate information and engaging social media content are important to these readers, and each of those things will be a key component of publishers' strategies in the next year.

It's now time to build on this success

and move forward with exciting initiatives to better serve and inform our communities. Here are three ways the industry will accomplish that objective:

More collaboration

Sometimes all it takes is a creative idea. I believe that next year, we will see more partnerships between newspaper media and new start-ups, collaborating to bring news and information to readers by whatever method they choose to engage.

In 2014, NAA launched the Accelerator Pitch Program as a way to directly connect winning start-ups with industry executives at our annual NAA mediaXchange conference. I was delighted to find so many entrepreneurs focused on the newspaper media space, with fresh visions for maximizing our content, interacting with readers and leveraging appropriate new technology. We are hosting the competition again in March at NAA mediaXchange 2015 in Nashville. The event will lead to a new wave of ideas and partnerships as we work together to serve our readers.

More engagement

One way to deepen engagement with local communities and offer something unique to loyal readers is to create and host specialty events. This has already proven immensely popular for newspapers such as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and Denver Post. It is likely that more newspapers will engage in these across the country.

For the reader, engagement can involve giving them access to cooking demonstrations online when the food section is especially well-read. It can mean hosting bridal expos to feature the best local businesses; offering panels on key, local topics with recognized community experts; or holding a music festival for those who turn first to entertainment information. These types of unique and targeted events foster a deeper engagement with readers, while

having a positive impact on the community at large.

More content

The Boston Globe recently launched an expanded, stand-alone business section, recognizing the tremendous corporate and entrepreneurial growth in the region. Similarly, the Dallas Morning News will offer its third luxury lifestyle magazine in 2015, leveraging journalists' insights and storytelling strengths to discuss home designs, furnishings and elegant living in North Texas. The Omaha World-Herald has expanded its digital offerings with niche websites, aimed at popular categories in Nebraska such as high school sports and the outdoors.

These are all examples of publishers understanding their readers and community, and offering more of what they like – whether that is more local news coverage, unique videos or expanded content. It's about customizing offerings to each reader and finding new ways to offer more of what matters to the community.

More is the best word to describe what I expect from the newspaper industry in 2015. We have changed how people view newspaper media, and are doing even more. With technology, journalism and media engagement rapidly evolving, so does the business structure that supports those efforts.

We enter 2015 with more ways to build on the successes of 2014. I have every reason to believe these actions will pay off for our readers, our advertisers and our industry.



Learn more at
<http://www.naa.org/>

9, not nine, ways to use numbers in headlines



John
Foust

Whether on a printed page, monitor or mobile device, the headline is the most important part of an ad.

It tells the reader what the ad is about. With the blink of an eye, he or she decides whether it's worth the effort to keep reading.

Numbers can help you create compelling headlines, as long as they are specific and relevant. Here are a few examples. Note that these numbers are expressed as digits, not words:

1. "Only 6 townhomes left." Using a specific number, rather than saying "they're going fast," communicates proof of scarcity. As sales increase, the countdown should continue. You can also use this technique to indicate time: "Only 8 days left."

2. "Save \$1,000 on new carpet." A specific dollar amount is easier to visualize than "a lot." It's worth mentioning that this headline works better with a verb

("save") than with a passive phrase like, "\$1,000 discount on new carpet."

3. "Save 25 percent on Merino wool sweaters." This is a variation of the dollar tactic in the carpet headline. The difference is that a percentage indicates proportion. Of course, the body copy should indicate the dollar amounts of the 25 percent.

4. "According to XYZ Survey, we rank number 1 in parts availability." If this kind of headline isn't supported by evidence, it won't have an ounce of credibility.

I remember a car dealer who ran ads claiming to be "number one." Not surprisingly, other dealers countered with claims that they were number one. The problem was that it was a blanket statement, with no facts to back it up.

5. "4 out of 5 dentists recommend..." This line was made famous by a brand of sugar-free chewing gum. Before you use this kind of testimonial evidence, make sure you are quoting a legitimate survey.

6. "1,500 widgets sold so far this year." Years ago, this tactic was used by McDonald's. Right there on the golden arches sign was the message "Over 240 billion sold." It was a big joke to say you were so hungry that you were going to make the number change.

Other examples of quantity-headlines include, "We've sold 26 homes in the past 3 months;" "Last year, we helped 3,425 students pass their college entrance exams;" and "Since we opened our doors, we've paved over 1,000 miles of driveways."

7. "5 ways to cut your electric bill." This headline promises important information about a specific problem. It would certainly get the attention of anyone wanting to reduce energy costs.

8. "In your area, there is a house break-in every 32 minutes." Here's an example of a headline that creates a sense of urgency. Again, make sure the advertiser – in this case a home security company – uses verifiable figures.

9. "28 years of dry cleaning experience." This headline equates years with expertise. Another way to sell experience is to add the number of working years of the people who work there: "Our staff has 191 years of experience."

John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com (c) Copyright 2015 by John Foust. All rights reserved.

Advance claims digital ad growth will outpace print declines in 2015

by Rick Edmonds

Originally published Jan. 6 on Poynter

Advance Publications' much debated five-year-old strategy of discontinuing some days of daily print editions to devote added resources to digital is poised to achieve a critical crossover point in 2015: digital advertising gains will exceed print newspaper ad losses, the company claims.

In a bi-annual letter to employees today, Advance Local President Randy Siegel, writes:

Our local sales and marketing teams have leveraged their entrepreneurial abilities and expansive digital knowl-

edge to prove they can grow digital ad revenue faster than we're losing print ad revenue. In 2015, our local leadership teams plan to generate higher total ad revenue in every one of our markets, reversing a longstanding trend of decline. I asked Siegel by e-mail whether he was including national advertising in that calculation, and he said yes. That would make for an even more noteworthy achievement since regional newspapers have typically been suffering deep losses in print national, in the range of 15 to 20 percent for the last several years.

The better digital sales and 2015 prospects mirror digital audience growth,

said Siegel. The Advance Local sites have averaged 55 percent traffic gains year-to-year as measured by comScore, he wrote. Two of the more recent conversions to the company's digital emphasis — Cleveland.com and SILive.com (Staten Island) — more than doubled their audiences year-to-year in November, he added.

Since Advance is privately-held by the Newhouse family, it does not disclose revenue and earnings figures in dollars, as is required of publicly-traded counterparts like Gannett or The New York Times Co. Generally the industry has

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

► FROM PAGE 6

been reporting progress year-to-year in plugging print ad shortfalls with digital ad growth, higher circulation revenues and other revenue streams like digital marketing services or events.

However based on results through three quarters, 2014 is expected to show total revenue at most companies and the entire industry down again — a significant negative to investors even at companies with a strong story of operating profit margins and innovation.

Other newspaper/digital companies may also be able to achieve revenue growth in 2015, though to my knowledge, Advance is first to make that promise.

There's an important qualifier. Siegel's letter makes no mention of circulation revenue. Advance's main websites are all free — hence no digital subscriptions or print + digital revenue gains.

And with the lesser frequency of publication (or in some markets cuts in home delivery days), Advance doesn't have the same leverage for print or bundled

subscription price increases as most of the rest of the industry. So it did not benefit from the successive 5 percent industry increases in circulation revenue recorded in 2012 and 2013 (2014 totals are not yet available).

On the other hand, Advance has been clear about its strategic goals since it began revamping and emphasizing websites while reducing print at Ann Arbor and other Michigan properties in 2009. The bet was that digital ad revenues could grow from a small base, and that print declines were irreversible.

Advance has been proven right on both points. And in theory, it now has leaner operations well-positioned for growth into the future. More expense cuts are coming, Siegel's letter says:

It's clear we're on the right path to building sustainable, thriving media organizations. But this journey will take a little longer and be a little harder than we originally anticipated, which is why we continue to need to recalibrate our expenses

The Advance way provoked a wave of protests from journalists and local read-

ers when it cut frequency of the New Orleans Times Picayune and made NOLA.com its lead news product. The Advocate, based in Baton-Rouge has launched a daily New Orleans edition, and an old-fashioned newspaper war is in progress — with fresh shots being fired as the New Year begins.

The changes have now been introduced in all of Advance's 25 markets. None drew the same level of resistance as in New Orleans, but journalists and some citizens in Cleveland and Portland have complained of mass dismissals of print veterans with a few hired back and others replaced by younger staffers on the expanded websites.

NOLA.com and the others Advance sites post frequent news updates in a blog-like format through the day, rarely holding stories for the print paper.

Few companies have followed Advance's lead to date, but many industry analysts think print frequency cutbacks may be coming, especially if the strategy is a demonstrable financial success.

How to produce value and revenue with digital video

BY KATHRYN KROSS

Originally published on Feb. 2 at American Press Institute

Digital video has become a market imperative — something every publisher must understand and do well, regardless of one's history.

Consider three statistics:

More than 62 billion videos were viewed online in December 2014, according to data measurement company comScore.

Digital video advertising continues to skyrocket, up 56% in 2014 to reach \$5.96 billion, according to eMarketer. Cisco projects that video will account

for 79 percent of all consumer internet traffic in 2018, up from 66 percent in 2013.

David Plotz, former editor of Slate Magazine, says video is now "a necessary condition for almost any brand advertiser we're working with."

This "necessary condition," however, is not so easily achieved, even for those whose professional roots lie in visual journalism. Like every new medium that's come before, digital video is unique and evolving. It shapes technology and is shaped by technology. We're learning as we go.

This Strategy Study collects the thoughts of some of the best journal-

ists and executives working in digital video today. It is the result of dozens of interviews and hundreds of hours of research culminating with a day-long Thought Leader Summit hosted by the American Press Institute. More than 50 editors, producers, reporters and managers gathered at NPR's headquarters in Washington, D.C. to share their insights and experience.

This covers four main areas and concludes with a checklist for publishers - click the following links to read more:

- [Understanding the digital video economy](#)
- [Knowing, growing and measuring audience](#)
- [Good video content: What's working, what isn't](#)
- [Building the organizational capacity for video](#)

56%

was the growth rate of digital video advertising in 2014, according to eMarketer 🐦

UPCOMING AWARDS

Fred Hartman Excellence in Sportswriting Award

DEADLINE: APRIL 24, 5 P.M. - This year, the contest is open to any journalist currently employed with a Texas newspaper over 10,000 in circulation.

The Fred Hartman Excellence in Sportswriting Award, sponsored by Hartman Newspapers L.P., gives an opportunity for Texas sportswriters to claim \$1,000 and the title of best sportswriter in Texas.

With Hartman recently being inducted into the Texas Newspaper Foundation Hall of Fame, this award becomes a little bit more special. Hartman became a newspaper owner later in his career,

but he never lost his passion for sportswriting.

Each year the contest alternates between two fixed circulation breaks: over 10,000 and under 10,000. If you currently work for a Texas newspaper over 10,000 in circulation, submit digital tear sheets of five of your best sports stories originally published during the calendar year 2014.

All entries must be e-mailed or trans-

ferred via a file sharing service (like Google Docs or Dropbox) 5 p.m. on Friday, April 24. Multiple sportswriters from the same paper may enter, but all contest entries must be submitted by an editor or publisher.

The winner will be announced at TPA's annual newspaper contest awards ceremony at the TPA Newspaper Leadership Retreat, Westin at the Domain in Austin on June 20.

Frank W. Mayborn Award for Community Leadership

DEADLINE: APRIL 24, 5 P.M.

The Frank W. Mayborn Award for Community Leadership is awarded annually to a publisher or newspaper executive who showed great dedication to his or her community during the past year.

Sue Mayborn, publisher of the Temple Daily Telegram and Killeen Daily Herald, established this former TDNA award in 1992 to honor the commendable leadership and service demonstrated by her late husband, Frank W. Mayborn.

The candidate should be current (not

necessarily spanning the candidate's lifetime). The nominee should also have exhibited exemplary leadership to his or her community (city, state or nation), but that which reflected credit upon the newspaper business.

Nominations must be submitted in writing and should include biographical information, as well as supporting documents explaining qualifications.

There are no limitations regarding the length of information submitted, but conciseness and clarity are encouraged.

The newspaper executive chosen by the selection committee will be awarded a plaque and will name a Texas college or university of his or her choice to receive a scholarship award of \$3,000. School officials will then select an outstanding full-time student journalist to receive the scholarship award.

The deadline for submitting is Friday, April 24 at 5 p.m. The winner will be announced at TPA's annual newspaper contest awards ceremony at the TPA Newspaper Leadership Retreat, Westin at the Domain in Austin on June 20.

Golden 50

DEADLINE: APRIL 24

TPA's Golden 50 Award honors men and women who have displayed exemplary service and selfless contributions to journalism for 50 or more years.

The association presented the first Golden 50 Award in 1963. Recipients will be honored at the TPA Annual Awards Luncheon on Saturday, June 20, 2015 in Austin.

To nominate an industry veteran [download the nomination form](#) and return it to TPA Executive Director Mike Hodges by April 24, 2015.





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JOB BANK

The TPA Job Bank is updated as positions become available. The Job Bank is a free service for all TPA members and job seekers. Listings will remain on the Job Bank for 30 days or until notified to remove. E-mail job listings to: jobbank@texaspress.com or fax to 512-477-6759. Questions? Call 512-477-6755.

EDITOR, Mathis, TX - Beeville Publishing Co., Inc. has an opening for a full-time editor of the Mathis News, a weekly serving the Mathis and Lake Corpus Christi region of South Texas. Applicants should have experience in community news gathering, photography and page design. To apply, send resume with writing/photo/layout samples and three professional references to jobs@endeavorsky.com. 02/13/2015

WRITER, Sealy, TX - The Sealy News is looking for a sports and entertainment writer and photographer to cover Sealy ISD athletics and other sports, plus regional entertainments. This is a part-time/stringer position. If you know your sports and are good with a camera, please contact Managing Editor Joe Southern at editor@sealynews.com. 02/12/2015

REPORTER, Center, TX - The Center Light and Champion semi-weekly newspaper in the East Texas Pineywoods region is seeking a full-time reporter to cover community news and events, write stories, and take pictures. We are part of Granite Publications, a group that prefers to recruit from within meaning your job with us could be the first step toward the future you've always wanted. Please e-mail a resume, cover letter, and salary requirements to leon@granitepub.com. Please feel free to visit www.lightandchampion.com or visit the newspaper's Facebook fan page to read up on what's been happening in your new hometown. 02/10/2015

PAGE DESIGNER, Taylor, TX - Granite Publications in Taylor has an opening for newspaper page designers. Ideal candidates will be familiar with newspaper layout, AP style and InDesign. Our department lays out newspapers all over the state so the people we

need are attentive to details, able to meet deadlines and enjoy working with people. Design experience or journalism education preferred. This job will have odd hours. It is not a telecommuting position. We offer health and dental benefits, paid vacation and a friendly, supportive workplace. Must pass a drug test and a criminal background check. Send resumes to tia@granitepub.com. 02/10/2014

MANAGING EDITOR, Columbus, TX - The Colorado County Citizen is seeking a managing editor who can be a leader in both the newsroom and in the community. The successful applicant will directly be responsible for the editorial product - from planning to production - as well as managing our full-time reporter and one sports stringer. You must have had at least two years of experience at a community newspaper or in the newspaper business! If you're interested in this position, please respond to this ad before someone else does. We are part of Granite Publications, a group that prefers to recruit from within and that means your job with us could be the first step toward the future you've always wanted. Please e-mail a resume, cover letter, and salary requirements to publisher@coloradocountycitizen.com. 02/09/2015

REPORTER, Lytle, TX - The Leader News, located just minutes from San Antonio, has an immediate opening for a general assignments reporter. This is a full-time position covering stories on everything from board/commission meetings to features on the county fair. Photography skills a plus, but will train the right person. Perfect for the recent grad, this job will teach you journalism from the ground up and expose you to the best of community journalism. Please send two clips and a resume to spencernatalie@sbcglobal.net. 02/05/2015

MANAGING EDITOR, San Marcos, TX - Exciting opportunity to take the editorial leadership position in small daily newspaper in the booming Central Texas area. Duties include working with seven person full-time editorial staffers

to produce a great local newspaper and continue growing the paid circulation of the newspaper. San Marcos has been named the fastest growing city in the U.S with a population over 50,000 for two consecutive years, so the opportunity to build the newspapers print and digital readership are limitless. Candidate should have a college degree and a minimum of three years experience working in a similar publication. Broad based journalism skills are a must and photography and layout skills will be a big extra. Send resume to dmoore@sanmarcosrecord.com and include contact information. 02/03/2015

COPY EDITOR/PAGE DESIGNER, Victoria, TX - Victoria Advocate seeks copy editor/page designer. Copy editor/page designer wanted for our Delivery Desk, which emphasizes both print and online packaging. Desired abilities; coloring outside the lines with your design; staying inside them with your copy editing; experience with digital presentation; and a passion for storytelling. We are a 27,000-circulation daily in south Texas about 30 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. This is budgeted as an entry-level position. To join our team, send your resume;, work samples and cover letter to the Victoria Advocate, attention Managing Editor/Visuals Charles Apple, at either capple@vicad.com or mail to 311 E. Constitution St., Victoria, TX 77901. 01/28/2015

EDITOR, Graford/Graham, TX - Graham Newspapers, Inc., has an immediate opening for a full-time editor of the Lake Country Sun. We are looking for a comprehensive journalist who cares deeply about community news and sports as well as enterprise content. To apply, send a resume of your work and academic experiences along with a letter sufficient enough in length to illustrate your writing abilities. Forward your application to Robb Krecklow, vice president and group publisher of Graham Newspapers at publisher@grahamleader.com. The Lake Country Sun is part of Graham Newspapers, Inc., a division of Digital First Media. Graham Newspapers Inc. is an equal opportunity employer. 01/27/2015

Public Notices Belong in Newspapers



from

Your Local Newspaper
and



The point of public notice is to get information out in an accessible medium where people can trust its authenticity and look back at it later to make sure the law and process were followed. The Internet is not yet up to the challenge.

People simply do not look at government websites.

According to the most recent data available by the Pew Research Center, only 13% of adult Internet users visit a local, state or federal government website on a typical day. The Census Bureau finds that 30% of Americans do not use the Internet at all, even though half of these people have a computer in their home.



Government websites are not free.

Even for established government websites, personnel need to be available to update and maintain content. Additionally, money must be spent to pay for electricity and bandwidth to run the site as well as costs for IT and security personnel required to monitor against any problems. During the 2013 shutdown of the federal government, many agency websites, as well as social media accounts and other online communication systems, were taken down “due to the lapse in federal government funding.” When that happens, the entire history of transactions can be lost.

Newspapers and their websites offer the best of both worlds: the agility of the Internet and the authenticity, high readership and trustworthiness of print. Newspaper public notices are the tried and true method of informing the public. That is where the public expects to find notices.

People read newspapers, in print and online. Recent studies show that the public still turns to newspapers for news and information. Eight in 10 (80%) of U.S. adults who are online access newspaper digital content in a typical month. In America's smaller communities, 78% of people say they rely on community newspapers for local news and information.

Government websites are not user friendly.

Often these websites are convoluted and uninformative. Visitors to the site often go for a singular purpose and do not browse around for additional information. Further, many citizens, especially those in rural communities, cannot use electronic resources to complete many government transactions that would often bring someone to a government website, such as tax returns.



Government websites can also just disappear. The touted Obama administration site recovery.gov, for example, was set up to enable citizens to track federal recovery dollars. But the agency has terminated a contract that supports the site and will itself be shuttered soon. The website will vanish.



Government websites are prone to attack by hackers. It is not a question of if, but rather a question of when information will be compromised. Examples

of government websites that have fallen victim to hackers are abundant at the federal, state and local level. The vulnerability of government websites is further compromised by the inability to recover quickly if disaster strikes. A study

by MeriTalk finds that only 8% of federal IT executives could recover 100% of their data in the event of a catastrophe.



Due process requires effective notice to be placed in an independent source.

An independent authority is necessary to protect the legitimacy of the

notice and to keep the public informed. Government notices provide transparency about how a government is spending taxpayer dollars and ensure credibility, which will be greatly diminished if the government is posting information about its activities only on its own government website, where experts say readership is very low.

Authentication of electronic documents is still in its infancy.

Even with current advances in technology, it is difficult to authenticate a notice on a website in a cost-effective manner. All levels of government, including the judiciary and the legislatures, have struggled with this issue because authentication technology—like public keys or digital signatures—is costly and hard to maintain. Legislators and elections officials acknowledged that e-Voting cannot yet be a reality because of a lack of knowledge and comfort about the software options available. Public notice faces identical challenges. But the printed page avoids these problems.

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By the Numbers

How are newspapers doing right now?



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There's no doubt that it is convention season. The crowds have been large and enthusiastic. In just a few weeks I've been from Nashville, Tennessee to Bloomington, Minnesota and Columbus, Ohio to Edmonton, Alberta.

There are more publishers waiting to catch me after keynotes lately. When the last workshop is done, there are bigger lines wanting to talk. And what's the question I get asked most often? "How can I get my hands on the results of your latest publisher survey?"

Your wait is up. Well, part of it is. You might remember that I conducted a survey of 614 publishers throughout the U.S. and Canada back in October. The results were quite interesting. Mostly, though, they led to more questions.

In late January, I sent out Survey II. So far, after two weeks, more than 300 newspaper executives have responded to the survey. Most are publishers. The results are fascinating to a guy who loves numbers.

In future columns, I'll share some of my thoughts on the meanings of these numbers. For now, let's take a look at some of the more interesting results.

Respondents are from papers of all types. They pretty much fit the industry profile in North America. Several publishers of metros completed the survey, as did publishers of mid and small dailies. The largest number of respondents, as you might guess, were from weekly newspapers. That makes sense, since the majority of newspapers are weekly.

A paid newspaper is the primary product of 80 percent of respondents, and 20 percent indicated their primary products were free papers. These were broken down into free newspapers and shoppers. About one-fourth of the free papers classified themselves as "shoppers."

In future columns, I plan to break the

results down in more detail, by size, type, etc. For this column, I will stick with the overall results.

In general, newspaper advertising revenue seems to have dropped a little, but not much. Advertising revenue has decreased for 44 percent of respondents, with most of those indicating it has decreased "a little, but not drastically."

Advertising revenue has remained "relatively steady" for 26 percent of respondents over the past three years, while 30 percent report their ad revenue has increased.

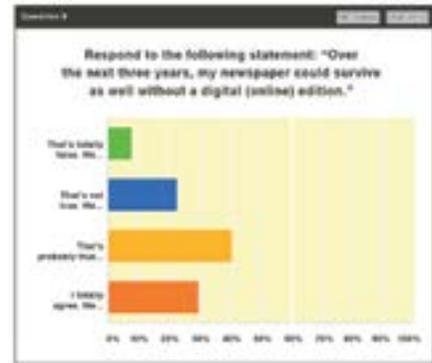
Over the past year, however, the number who say their ad revenue has decreased is much closer to those who indicate their revenue has increased. It's almost an even split between decreased, remained steady and increased.

According to 99 percent of respondents, print revenue is the key to profitability, while 9 percent added that, while print is the greatest source of revenue, digital sources make up a significant part of their revenue. 90 percent responded that digital revenue was "negligible."

It gets a little confusing in the next question. When asked to respond to the statement: "Over the next three years, my newspaper could survive as well without a digital (online) edition," 70 percent said that was a true statement. While, in the previous question, only 9 percent indicated they get a significant share of their revenue from digital, 30 percent answered they would lose "a lot of revenue," if they didn't have a digital edition. Confusing, but true. We'll look into that in more detail in a later column.

There's no doubt what the major source of revenue is at most newspapers. Without a print edition, 99 percent of respondents said they didn't believe they could make it. For further emphasis, 82 percent went so far as to answer, "That's crazy. We'd never make it without a print edition."

When asked where the most revenue is generated on the digital platform, 21 percent respondents answered "up-selling print ads to our digital side." Revenue from ads sold on



the digital platform only has been the most advantageous for 14 percent of respondents, while another 11 percent answered, "Bundling print and digital subscriptions." Alternately, 29 percent indicated that they have a digital presence, but do not generate any revenue from it, and 14 percent answered that they do not have a digital presence.

We asked questions related to profitability. Responses from 90 percent of executives indicated that their newspapers are profitable and 55 percent added that they foresee profitability well into the future. Four percent reported record profits over the "past year or two."

That gives you some indication of the pulse of newspaper executives at the moment. While I only discussed roughly one-fifth of the survey questions in this brief treatise, I plan to share more in future columns.

How can information like this affect your newspaper? While with a client in Virginia last week, I was asked for thoughts concerning future changes being discussed at their paper. I asked if they would like to look over the results of this survey, which they did.

Afterwards, the publisher told me, "That is so helpful. I think we'll hold off on some of the changes we were planning."

More information will come, but I've more than used my 800 words for this column.

Kevin is scheduled to speak at 12 conventions and to visit more than 20 newspapers in early 2015. To learn how you can bring Kevin to work with your staff, contact him at: kevin@kevinslimp.com

