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TOOLS OFFERED TO HELP FIGHT POSTAL RATE HIKE

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SELLING AD FREQUENCY BY JOHN FOUST

411 SOUTH VICTORY
LITTLE ROCK AR 72201



ARKANSAS

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SERVING PRESS and STATE SINCE 1873



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD | Dr. Joel Gambill, chairman of the journalism and printing department at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, left, receives the Distinguished Service Award at the APA Honors Reception June 25 at the Tri-State Convention in Tunica, Miss. APA immediate past president, **Roy Ockert Jr.**, editor of *The Sun* in Jonesboro and a long-time friend of Dr. Gambill's, presented the award on behalf of APA members. Dr. Gambill retires at the end of July after 40 years as a journalism educator.

APS requests ad rate cards

As it prepares to convert records to a new computer program, Arkansas Press Services, Inc. (APS) is requesting current advertising rate cards from all members of the Arkansas Press Association. The information is vital to APS' ongoing efforts to secure new advertising revenue for the state's newspapers.

Members are urged to send a copy of their rate cards to **Rebecca McGraw**, APS media planner and buyer, via email: rebecca@arkansaspress.org. Copies can be faxed to 501.374.7509. For more information contact McGraw at the APA headquarters in Little Rock by email or by phone: 501.374.1500.

NNA research underlines value of print advertising, part two

Last week, several details of the recent National Newspaper Association (NNA) Pulse of America survey were reported here, utilizing two presumptions: the consensus that 94 percent of newspaper subscribers read the classified ads and that the findings would be illustrated using a model town or community/market area that has 10,000 adults. From those assumptions, the following extrapolation: more than 8,000 read the local community newspaper each week. From that foundation the first quarter 2010 survey reveals that retailers can use newspaper advertising to pull in out-of-market consumers.

The latest NNA Pulse of America research also indicates that 94 percent of those readers read the classified ads in their local paper: that's 7,520 local adults reading the classified ads. And 25 percent said they placed a classified ad in the paper in the past year: 2,000 local classi-

fied ads. And 40 percent of those sold the item: 800 items. Another 42 percent reported they received many calls and were satisfied with the response to their ad.

The survey also asked out-of market consumers where they planned to shop for beauty and spas; arts and entertainment; active life (sports and recreation); events (parties, holidays, etc.); education; hotel and travel; pets and animals; real estate; restaurants; types or categories of businesses they expect to shop; nightlife; professional services.

Continuing with the example of a market with 10,000 adults, served by a community newspaper, readers responded that they planned to purchase the following in the next 12 months (partial list):

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important dates

September 13-15

Arkansas Recycling Coalition 20th Conference and Trade Show, Little Rock

September 30-October 3

NNA Convention, Omaha Hilton and Qwest Center, Omaha, Neb.

November 4-5

ArkLaMiss Circulation Conference, Vicksburg, Miss.

January 31, 2011

Better Newspaper Advertising Contest Entry Deadline

March 17-18, 2011

APA Advertising Conference

July 21-23, 2011

APA SuperConvention, Hot Springs, Ark.



Tom Larimer's Potpourri

Interesting news coming out of Illinois last week regarding public notices in the Land of Lincoln:

Illinois Governor **Pat Quinn** signed into law a bill that would require newspapers that accept legal notices to upload the notices to a statewide website collectively owned by the newspapers of Illinois beginning in December 2010. The Illinois Press Association sponsored the legislation.

Presently about 80 percent of Illinois' newspapers already upload to PublicNoticeIllinois.com, a website owned and administered by the Illinois Press Association.

APA has for the past couple of years operated www.publicnotices-ar.com, a site for member newspapers to aggregate their public notices. Presently about 70 percent of APA member newspapers are posting notices to the site, which is searchable in a number of ways.

Actions taken such as the new law in Illinois are certainly preferable to legislation allowing public notices to be posted online instead of in newspapers. There's plenty of that sort of legislation floating around across the country.

While the news in Illinois is very positive for newspapers, the news in other states varies dramatically. Take New Jersey where at least three different pieces of legislation would allow government agencies and individuals to post public notices on the Internet rather than in newspapers.

There are other examples. New Jersey just happens to be the latest bad one.

When such legislation has come up here at home, we've had a lot of success defeating the notion of allowing the posting of public notices on websites instead of in newspapers by arguing that public notices are already posted online, on the APA site, and for nothing.

It's important, however, for that argument to maintain validity to have most or all APA newspapers who publish public notices also posting their notices to the www.publicnotices-ar.com website, accessible from APA's site through the use of the "Legal/Public Notices Online" button. The 70 percent number presently doing so is solid representation, but it could certainly be better. My concern is that those who are not posting don't perceive the threat to public notices that newspapers in other areas of the country are facing. Some are losing them. It can happen.

Public notices represent revenue for newspapers. In some cases, they represent a lot of revenue. My view is that they represent revenue newspapers can ill afford to lose especially at this time of economic difficulty and challenges.

The Illinois legislation may well become the standard for other states to follow, and I'll admit I would certainly prefer it to other possible legislation that would allow the posting of public notices directly to the Internet bypassing newspapers altogether.

If you're not presently posting your public notices to the APA website please consider doing so. It sure does help us when we have to make the argument against direct Internet posting of public notices by those who now pay newspapers to publish them.

A story in this *Arkansas Publisher Weekly* details what newspapers can do to help in the fight against the proposed postal rate increase scheduled for January. The higher rates would raise some Periodicals rates as

much as 8 percent, but also includes an increase in first class mail postage.

I would certainly recommend APA newspapers engage in the fight to help stop these proposed postal rate increases. We can do so without added expense and the effort, if successful, would certainly be worth a great deal to Periodicals class mailers.

Please take a few minutes and look over the "tools" provided by the National Newspaper Association for newspapers to use in fighting the increases, and a few more minutes to get involved.

We often think of ourselves as alone in the fight against postal rate increases and the USPS proposal to end Saturday mail delivery. Of course we are not. That's especially true when the USPS proposes increases in the First Class postal rate, which it presently is doing. Anyone who mails a letter will be adversely affected by that.

Other groups, however, are just as motivated against the USPS plan to hike rates in January 2011. Among them is the Direct Marketing Association, a group whose members depend heavily on the USPS for delivery and who would be hugely impacted by the proposed rate increase, also. There are others, too. Like the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association that believes discontinuing the Saturday mail service will negatively affect customers whose prescriptions are mail-delivered.

Most opposing the proposed rate increases see it for what it is: the USPS diverting the burden of its mismanagement and lack of efficiency onto the consumers who use their services. Most also agree that some increases are inevitable. Everything goes up.

However, what the USPS is proposing is punitive, especially for those entering Periodicals Class mail at a time when most are already strapped in their efforts to stay in business.

While promoting the proposed rate increases, I see nothing coming from the USPS in the way of planned reform in their operations or anything that resembles an effort to become more efficient in the handling of mail, in their salary and benefits structure, or anything else that would lead us to believe they've seen that the problem is one more of too much expenses and not just one of not enough revenue.

That's just not been the culture of the USPS. It's more about having enough revenue to operate rather than becoming more efficient on the expense side of the ledger. The same could, in fairness, be said for most of our Federal government.

Some of those opposing the USPS change proposals suggest that they and their members would be forced to look for other delivery options if the rates are increased and the service decreased. Newspapers would likely be among them.

Someone should remind the USPS that it's business 101 that you don't grow your business by raising rates and running off huge segments of your customer base.

Or maybe someone just needs to remind the USPS who their customers are. Chances are good someone will think of that. But will the USPS hear?

Have a great week!

Newspaper blogs faced with offensive comments

Anonymity is apparently an empowering thing, and it seems to give license to some blog participants and those posting comments to news stories to make nasty, even offensive comments. Newspapers across the nation that host blogs or allow comments to articles are coming to realize that and are faced with finding ways to counter rude, even racist and homophobic remarks posted to their blogs.

Margaret Sullivan, news editor for *The Buffalo (N.Y.) News* reports one such incidence of an anonymous poster making offensive comments to a blog operated by her newspaper.

"I hate what you people, and by that I mean blacks, are doing to the city," wrote one participant, commenting on a news story, before launching into a laundry list of stereotypical complaints against said "blacks." The post and others like it prompted the *News* to suspend anonymous user comments.

"It is the ability to remain anonymous that encourages people to say whatever they want ... when people are required to give their names, our thinking is that they'll think twice," said Sullivan. She admitted that the new policy, to be implemented August 2, will not be foolproof, that some blog participants might get through the screening process, but that she believed that it would prevent many of the inflammatory comments.

The new policy is registration, requiring all who wish to comment on news stories to submit their names, cities of residence and phone numbers.

Other newspapers that allow comments to news stories or host blogs are taking similar actions to cull offensive remarks. Some are even requiring that would be participants submit credit card numbers and/or charging nominal one-time fees for the privilege of commenting and interacting with others on their Web sites.

Many have weighed in against these proposed measures, arguing that the question of anonymity is only one factor in offensive online behavior and that the proposed and implemented registration procedures will mostly quell debate and stifle participation.

It is a counterbalancing concern more and more newspapers will have to face as they increasingly implement interactive features on their websites.

research *continued from front page*

70 percent or 5,600 plan to purchase women's apparel

62 percent or 4,960 expect to purchase women's shoes

54 percent or 4,320 expect to purchase men's apparel

51 percent or 4,080 plan to buy bedding flow-ers

43 percent or 3,440 expect to buy fertilizer

42 percent 3,360 plan to purchase cosmetics

40 percent 3,200 expect to purchase eyewear

36 percent 2,880 plan to buy bark dust or mulch

28 percent or 2,240 plan to purchase hand-bags

27 percent or 2,160 expect to change or shop for auto insurance

21 percent or 1,680 expect to buy a cell phone

21 percent or 1,680 expect to buy a flat screen television

19 percent or 1,520 expect to buy laptop computers

16 percent or 1,280 expect to change or shop for a cell phone provider

14 percent or 1,120 expect to change or shop for medical or health insurance

14 percent or 1,120 plan to change or shop for homeowners' insurance

13 percent or 1,040 plan to change or shop for an Internet service provider

12 percent or 960 plan to change or shop for a cable service provider

11 percent or 880 expect to change or shop for life insurance

Based on those numbers, questions arise for

newspaper sales management and staff, all important to answer:

How does the advertiser or potential advertiser plan to keep his or her customers, keep them from switching to a competitor or to purchasing the product or service out of market? They have to maintain and communicate their value proposition over competitors and out-of-market providers.

If the advertiser or potential advertiser seeks to grow his or her business, how can he or she best win customers away from competitors or lure them back from out-of-market sellers? They have to create or re-establish their value proposition over competitors and out-of-market providers.

If the products or services your readers are buying are not available in the local market, are you demonstrating this to potential advertisers out of your market? Use this data to entice out-of-market sellers to advertise in your newspaper or on your website.

Does a single television station, radio station, website, billboard or cable or satellite channel reach 80 percent or 8,000 of adults in your market each week? If not, how many television stations, how many radio stations, how many websites, how many billboards, how many cable or satellite channels would they have to buy to reach those 8,000 adults?

And how many ads at which times of day or night would they have to buy to reach those 8,000 adults?

And if prime time or drive time is the answer, how high are those rates and how long can they watch, glance at or listen to that ad? Find and refer back to that ad?

[To be continued in next week's issue.]

Tools Offered to Help Fight Postal Rate Hike

The National Newspaper Association opposes efforts of the United States Postal Service to impose a steep postage rate increase in January. The proposed levels are far above inflation: about 8 percent for Periodicals; and over 5 percent for most other mail.

NNA invites newspapers to join the Affordable Mail Alliance, formed by NNA and other mailers.

Here are tools you can use to oppose the increase.

1. Write NNA at NNAWashington@nna.org and say you want to join the Affordable Mail Alliance. Your name will be added to a growing list of American companies that believe major rate increases are bad business in a challenged economy. We will send you updates from time to time on our progress in fighting the increase.

2. Go to www.prc.gov and tell the Postal Regulatory Commission you oppose this increase, and why.

3. Visit the local offices of your Members of Congress and speak with the director of that office about this increase. Make sure your Senators and Representatives know your views.

4. Make sure the Washington, DC, Congressional Offices know your views as well by visiting the websites at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.

5. Write a hard-hitting editorial so your readers will be aware of this issue. You can visit www.affordablemailalliance.org. Or you can use this editorial sample and tailor it to your editorial needs.

For more information, contact Tonda Rush at NNA's Washington office: Tonda@nna.org.

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Mike Gauldin

Michale Glen Gauldin, 55, died July 22 at his home in Burke after a battle with brain cancer. A native of Mena, he was raised in Foreman. He served in the U.S. Army as a public affairs specialist in Colorado and Europe before graduating in 1981 with a degree in journalism from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. He went on to serve as press secretary to then Governor Bill Clinton and joined Clinton's Presidential Administration, serving as director of public and consumer affairs for the Department of Energy from 1993 to 1995, followed by six years as communications director for the Department of the Interior. Having previously worked with the *Springdale Morning News*, Gauldin then went to work as a freelance commercial artist and cartoonist with several newspapers among his clients. He contributed cover artwork for two editions of the *Arkansas Freedom of Information Handbook*, sponsored in part by the Arkansas Press Association, and developed editorial cartoons for the Arkansas Sunshine Week promotional package.

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W.C. Swaffar

W.C. Swaffar, 80, died June 28 at his home in Guy. A graduate of Conway High School, he attended Arkansas State Teachers College (now the University of Central Arkansas). He was employed by the Conway Printing Company/*Log Cabin Democrat*, Conway, for several years, later becoming manager of Graphic Communications, a Little Rock printing company. He also operated a typesetting company in Little Rock with branches in Shreveport, La., and Jackson, Miss. Swaffar served in the Army National Guard and was called for active duty during the Central High Crisis in 1957.

Send news of staff changes or additions at your newspaper to: **Tres Williams** (tres@arkansaspress.org) or **Brian Fellone** (brian@arkansaspress.org).



Selling ad frequency

BY JOHN FOUST, RALEIGH, NC

I was talking to Vic about the challenges of selling frequency. "In today's economy, advertisers are looking for ways to trim costs," he said. "Frequency is one of the first places they look. No matter how many ads they have run within the past year—a hundred or a dozen—they are putting everything under the microscope."

Vic explained that his position as sales manager puts him on the front lines with his ad staff. "The thing I emphasize is that all of our newspaper's clients are trying to justify frequency, whether they bring up the subject or not. This means that we'd better be prepared to address the issue."

It all comes down to this: Why is it better to run more, not fewer, ads? And how can we show penny-pinching decision makers that the money they spend on more advertising will pay big dividends?

Here are two reasons to advertise as frequently as possible:

1. **Daily market changes.** "Years ago, I heard about Dan Gaynor's thin market concept, and that changed the way I see the role of advertising," Vic said. "About half the time, a typical consumer makes the decision to shop and buy on the same day. At first that was hard to believe, but when I looked at my family's buying habits, I realized that it's true."

"What this means is that the market for any given product is small in the short term and large in the long term. In other words, if you're advertising tires today, your message will be relevant primarily to those people who are thinking about

tires today. If you want to reach the entire market for tires, you have to advertise all year. Otherwise, you'll miss most of your prospects."

2. **Top-of-mind-awareness.** "In addition," Vic said, "businesses have to advertise consistently in order to break through the clutter in the marketplace."

Vic is right. I used to quote research which showed that the average consumer is exposed to 2,000 selling messages every day. But in recent years, the numbers have climbed much higher; some estimates put the number closer to 5,000 commercial messages per day. No matter how you slice and dice the figures, that's a lot. And all of those messages are competing for consumers' attention.

How many commercial images are in your field of vision at this moment? Probably too many to count. Look around your office and you'll see logos and slogans on pens, pencils, computer screens, mouse pads, coffee mugs, and the papers on your desk.

I may not be in the market to buy a new home today. But when I do enter the market, I will naturally think of companies that come to mind quickly. How do they become familiar? By keeping their names and their selling messages in front of me all year long. Familiarity creates top-of-mind-awareness.

Frequency is more than a word on a newspaper's rate card. It's a solid advertising strategy to generate more customers.

E-mail John Foust for information about ad training: jfoust@mindspring.com.

IRJCI accepting nominations for Gish Award

The Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues (IRJCI), an associate member of the Arkansas Press Association, has recently announced that it is accepting nominations for the 2010 Gish Award. The Award recognizes exemplary rural journalists who provide positive examples for others in their industry. It is named for the Gish Family, who has published *The Mountain Eagle* in Whitesburg, Ky., for more than 51 years.

The Ezzell Family of *The Canadian Record*, a weekly newspaper in Canadian, Texas, won the award in 2007, and the 2008 Gish Award went to James E. Prince III and Stanley Dearman, current and former publishers of *The Neshoba Democrat*, a weekly newspaper in Philadelphia, Miss.

IRJCI is seeking nominations for the upcoming award. Nominators should send detailed letters to Director **Al Cross** at the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, explaining how their nominees show the kind of exemplary courage, tenacity and integrity that the Gishes demonstrated in their rigorous pursuit of rural journalism. "Documentation does not have to accompany the nomination," said Cross, "but is helpful in choosing finalists." Nominations should be addressed to: Al Cross; Director, Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues; 122 Grehan Journalism Building, University of Kentucky; Lexington, KY 40506-0042.