

# news clips

## Len Pizzey says so long

By Martha Perkins  
Haliburton County Echo

**T**he week after week after week deadlines. The computer meltdowns. The stresses of trying to make your business grow in an economy that's becoming more competitive. The continual need to make decisions with far-reaching consequences.

There's a lot to tire you out in the newspaper business. But it's those same things that have made Len Pizzey thrive as one of the most successful small-town publishers in Ontario.

After 29 years of making sure all deadlines are met, all decisions are made, and all strategies for managing change are in place, Pizzey retired from the newspaper business Nov. 30.

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**Chili'n for a good cause**

**Travis Hooper, sales manager for The Wallaceburg News, won the bragging rights for best overall chili, as selected by a panel of judges, during the United Way Chili cookoff in Wallaceburg in November. The event raised more than \$1,500 for the local United Way campaign through entrance fees, a 50/50 draw, an auction and ticket sales.**

## Networks to go online

**T**he OCNA Ontario Network Classified ads are going online as of January 9, 2006. This value-added feature will provide an Internet presence for the advertisers running their word ads in more than 185 community newspapers each week.

Available at [www.networkclassified.org](http://www.networkclassified.org), Web surfers will be able to access the site from links on community newspaper Web sites using a static Network Classifieds Online icon. OCNA will update the ads each week.

This important revenue-generating program for your association sold more than \$1.5 million worth of classified ads in 2005, of which more than \$800,000 was sold into other provincial association programs. Participating newspapers will see a return of approximately \$350,000 for their support.

## Staff changes at OCNA

**C**ongratulations to OCNA's Director of Financial Systems Shelley Ford who has accepted a position with a large legal firm in Toronto in the capacity of Accounting Manager. She leaves OCNA on January 12, 2006 after seven years with the association.

She has also served as General Manager of the Community Newspaper Reciprocal Insurance Exchange.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working with these organizations and I have a lot of respect and admiration for the committed group of people with whom I have had the pleasure of working alongside," said Ford.

"Shelley has been a valued member of our management team, and although we will miss her, we are excited about the challenges ahead for her," said OCNA Executive Director Bill Laidlaw.

# Pizzey's near north life revolved around papers

*Continued from Page 1*

He ended his newspaper career as the publisher of the Haliburton County Echo, Minden Times and Bancroft This Week.

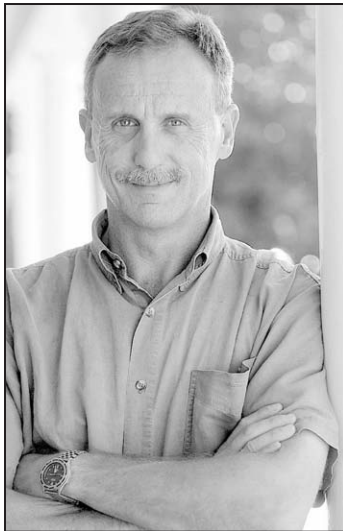
"What I like about the newspaper business is that it challenges you in many ways," he said. "You constantly have to exercise your judgement. You make dozens of decisions every day, all of which require knowledge and thought.

"It's also a highly creative business – you create a product to an absolute deadline and you do it from your mind, and, I think, from your heart, too. It's satisfying because you can produce something you hold in your hands and feel proud of, notwithstanding the limitations we're always aware of..."

"The way these newspapers have been accepted by and honoured by the other people in the industry is a huge source of satisfaction as I look back on the years of building the business. But what I'll miss the most is the daily interaction with the people who have been part of my life for all these years, and also the constant challenges. You either thrive on them or they exhaust you. I find them more tiring but at the same time they're invigorating. I'm uncertain about how I'll feel about retirement."

Then he laughs. "But most people who are already retired say, 'You'll get over it.'"

Owning a newspaper was not one of Pizzey's aspirations when he graduated from the



**Len Pizzey**

University of Western Ontario with a Master of Arts in English literature.

Not wanting to be a high school teacher, he was stuck in limbo between university and career. It was 1976. He leapt at the chance to be a reporter at a small town paper in Seaforth.

The editor was Susan McLean; her father, Andy, was the owner and publisher.

For the first few weeks he wrote his stories by hand. In a fortuitous move, Pizzey became the paper's editor part-way through his first year when Susan McLean went on maternity leave. He loved the added responsibility – and didn't want to give it up when McLean came back.

Luckily, he heard John Zylstra, the owner of the Haliburton Echo since 1973, was looking for an editor. "I'd never been here before," Pizzey says of the drive up for his

***"You create a product to an absolute deadline and you do it from your mind, and, I think, from your heart, too. It's satisfying because you can produce something you hold in your hands and feel proud of."***

interview. "It was a bleak January Saturday in 1978 and I was amazed there could be a paper in a town with a one-block main street. I had the interview with John and went and had coffee at the Kozy Corner and not long afterward he told me I had the job."

The Echo's office was in the basement of the building that houses the Bank of Commerce.

There was one person in Haliburton who was going to become an important fixture in Pizzey's life. Kit Koehler was the head of girls phys. ed. at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

Kit visited not once, but twice before making her intentions known: "Kit was the ladies' president of the curling club and asked me to go to the year-end banquet. I assumed she was asking me to cover it as a reporter, but I soon discov-

ered she was asking me to accompany her as a date."

The banquet was in the spring of 1978 and Len and Kit were to host a special dinner of their own in June of 1979 when they were married at Haliburton United Church.

"It took me many years to decide that this was going to be home and that I was going to make a career out of the newspaper," he says. "Kit didn't want to leave the county. That was difficult for me because I was ambitious."

Zylstra's finances ran out in the late 1970s, leaving Pizzey as editor of a paper owned by a group of local business people. But by lending the paper money, in 1985 Pizzey would acquire one-sixth ownership. Not long after, with help, he figured out a way to finance the outright purchase of the paper, and went about hiring additional staff and upgrading the paper's technology.

The paper continued to grow, both with new publications, including the handy large print phonebook, and with the purchase of the Minden Times in November 2001.

In August 2004, he sold the two papers to Osprey Media Group. It will be strange to read the Echo and the Times as simply a Haliburtonian interested in what's going on around him. But while he will no longer be playing an active role in meeting those deadlines, deadlines, deadlines, he'll always feel the papers are a part of him.

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# Industry active in 2005

**A**s 2005 quickly draws to a close, we reflect on the changes in the Ontario community newspaper marketplace this past year. It has been a very active year for publishers buying and selling their titles in the province. The summary below shows that 37 member newspapers changed hands in 2005, which represents 12 per cent of OCNA's membership.

## Papers Changing Hands (Excluding Family Succession)

- 1999: 19 member newspapers changed hands (7% of members)
- 2000: 24 newspapers changed hands (9% members)
- 2001: 5 newspapers changed hands (2%)
- 2002: 2 newspapers changed hands (1%)
- 2003: 28 papers changed hands (10%) all corporately purchased
- 2004: 16 papers changed hands (5%)
- 2005: 37 papers changed hands (12%)
  - Metroland/Torstar purchased 28 independent titles (18 from Runge)
  - Osprey purchased three independent titles
  - Sun Media purchased two independent title
  - Two independents purchased four other independent titles

OCNA's membership (as seen in the chart below) now has 44 per cent of newspaper titles owned by 89 independent publishers with 128 newspapers. This compares to our four corporate members who publish 161 titles which is 56 per cent of the OCNA members.

Independent titles represent 28 per cent of OCNA's first edition circulation, coming in at 1,177,511 copies per week. Many of which are the smaller circulation, paid distribution newspapers in rural Ontario. This compares to 72 per cent for the corporately-owned newspaper titles with a first edition circulation of 3,010,765.

But aside from the numbers, there are also the people who make our industry what it is. This year sees the retirement of professionals like Bracebridge's **Ted Britton**, Haliburton's **Len Pizzey**, Meaford's **Rod Brebner**, Listowel's **Marion Duke**, Humber College's **Tina Ivany**, Glencoe's **Brian VanderKwaak**, London's **Gord Hume**, and the soon-to-retire **Elizabeth Rice Aben** in Huntsville. Their leadership and contributions have helped pave the way for others as the industry continues to grow and flourish.

Your association looks forward to serving you in 2006.

	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05(Nov)
a. Independent owners with 1 paper	97	96	86	82	79	83	79	75	68
b. Independent owners with 2-5 papers	29	23	26	24	23	22	22	25	20
c. Independent owners with up to 12 papers	05	06	03	01	02	02	03	02	01
i. Total independent owners	131	125	115	107	104	107	104	102	89
ii. Number independent titles			163	135	122	155	147	157	128
d. Corporate groups	06	04	04	04	04	05	04	04	04
iii. Number of corporate titles			101	122	135	117	106	118	161
e. Total owners			119	111	106	112	108	106	93
f. Total titles	263	266	264	257	257	272	263	274	289



**Giving back.** The Kincardine News held a coat drive this holiday season, resulting in more than 50 coats. About 30 women's and children's coats were given to the Women's House of Bruce County women's shelter, while another 20 coats were being donated to the local clothes hamper program. Liz Small, Kincardine News advertising representative, shows off some of the donations.

## Dates to Remember 2006

- **January 2006:** Mary Knowles Award winner announced
- **January 25-26:** OCNA board meeting
- **February 14:** BNC and General Excellence finalists announced
- **March 31-April 1:** OCNA Spring Convention, Toronto Airport Renaissance Hotel

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**Christmas time at OCNA.** To celebrate the holidays OCNA's staff gathered for a lovely Christmas lunch at the Hamilton Club. The afternoon featured a gourmet quality meal, the traditional secret Santa and lots of holiday cheer. Pictured around the dining table are (from bottom left) Anne Lannan, Lucia Shepherd, Shelley Ford, Minna Schmidt, Lynn Fenton, Carolyn Press, Sean Lind, Bill Laidlaw, Nancy Burman, Gordon Cameron, Karen Shardlow, Carol Lebert, Laraine Hall, Ian Youseman and Jessie Rushton. **From all of the Staff at OCNA Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**



## Points of reference: Goal-setting and achievement

By Chuck Nau  
Murray & Nau, Inc.

**H**ow am I doing? Where would you like my focus to be, in ROP or preprints or the Internet? What do we hope to accomplish, in respect to our changing customer base or softening market economy? Are these and similar questions being repeatedly asked by your sales staff? No matter the size or the experience of your staff, your people will want to know how they're doing, where they stand. Are they doing well?

How can you tell when and how it needs to be better?

- **Where Are You?** Identify what you have on hand, today. Carefully review your sales staff, assessing their strengths, weaknesses and various talents in relation to your current market positions. What support systems are in place, both within the sales department and within the entire newspaper? What rate programs and products currently exist? Which of them are growing? Which are shrinking? What are your newspaper's strongest selling points? What's your competitive advantage? What do you do better than other media in your market?

- **Where Do You Want To Be?** What are your newspaper's sales objectives, both short term and long term? What opportunities, threats, or obstacles lie in your path? How do you envision further developing your newspaper? New rate programs? New products? Is there another segment of the population or market you would like to reach? Identify what is missing between where you are and where you want to be.

- **What Needs to Happen?** What must occur to move you from where you are to

where you want to be? Moving your publishing cycle from monthly to weekly? Selling that single largest retailer into your newspaper? Launching a new TMC product? Establishing a quarterly sales training program? Will enhancing available resources generate the results desired? Making a part-time sales support position full time? Or do new resources and support systems need to be implemented? What benchmarks need to be put in place to identify desired outcomes and results that move you toward your short term or long term goals?

- **Measure and Reward.** Are your benchmarks clearly defined as measurements for attaining or not attaining your sales objectives?

Are they challenging but not impossible? Are they fair? Has your sales staff had some input? Be careful not to clutter your measurements of success with unimportant parameters. Will monthly revenue goals, special section lineage goals, or quarterly team achievements be your sales benchmark, or should you develop other criteria? Are you measuring what you want to accomplish?

Likewise, are you rewarding your sales staff on desired outcomes (95 per cent or better goal attainment) in a timely and consistent fashion? Do your rewards allow for continued growth and achievement (sell more, earn more)? Do your rewards also take into account excellent customer service, reduced sales adjustments, new creative ideas/strategies, and individual personal career growth in addition to revenue goal attainment?

- **Eyes To See, Ears To Hear.** Do you continue to fine tune, enhance and develop your resources? Do you encourage your sales staff to ask their customers how they and your newspaper can fine tune, enhance

and grow to meet their needs and those of your market? Are you asking your staff what needs to be done to enhance your success, both internally (systems and environment) and externally (training, sales tools, resources)? Do you continually observe the way your goals are achieved in order to prepare for forming new goals and objectives, so you can continue the process of growth and development at your newspaper in the future?

- **Give Honest Feedback.** Tell your sales staff how they are doing, sharing equally in success and failure, on a timely and consistent basis. Communicate so they can understand where you are, where you want to be and how you are going to get there. Encourage and support them as you implement mid-course corrections to keep on target. Support an open dialogue for ideas, suggestions, and observations.

Your sales staff needs appropriate, carefully considered benchmarks to measure their achievement, thereby giving them an opportunity to make adjustment to their sales efforts quickly and responsibly by themselves or with assistance from their manager. Setting appropriate, well-thought out points of reference enables you to measure sales staff performance and the progress being made towards the achievement of those goals. Clear and well-developed benchmarks help you and your staff stay focused on the big picture and on track and on time to achieve it.

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*Chuck Nau of Murray & Nau, Inc. is a publishing consultant and sales trainer with more than twenty years of corporate media sales, marketing, and management experience. Contact him at e-mail: [murnau@nwlink.com](mailto:murnau@nwlink.com)*

# New editing software for photographers



By Kevin Slimp  
Institute of Newspaper  
Technology

**O**ur friends at Apple Lowly Apprentice Production have

been coming up with good ideas for years. I call them friends because they create products that make the designer's life a lot easier at prices that don't break the bank. Quark users have appreciated XPert Tools Pro, ShadowCaster and other Xtensions for some time. InDesign users have become addicted to special effects made possible with ALAP's InEffects. I'm going to let you in on a secret: ALAP has a lot of additional tools in their arsenal.

## InTools

InTools is a set of powerful InDesign plug-ins meant to expedite a few of the most common publishing tasks. InTools includes six plug-ins:

1. InStarburst: Provides a quick method for creating and customizing starbursts, that are completely editable. Even without InStarburst, InDesign users can create terrific starbursts. With InStarburst, you'll be able to create even more complex starbursts in seconds. Users will enjoy the luxury of creating starbursts with sharp edges, rounded edges, smooth edges, twists and more.

2. InPathfinder: Combines selected objects into single objects to create compound shapes.

3. InItemMarks: Provides a quick and easy method for creating custom crop marks and registration marks for individual objects on pages.

4. InPrint: I love this one. In Print allows the user to select an area of the page to export as an eps, tif or other file format. In addition, the same area of an InDesign page can be sent directly to print.

5. InNudge: Allows the user to interactively adjust the position and rotation of objects and pictures by means of an intuitive palette.

6. InModify: Provides a single dialogue box for modifying the attributes of a selected object or group. Options to modify size, placement, stroke, angle, fill, text wrap and more are available through a single dialog window.

These six tools combine to form InTools. Available on both Mac and Windows platforms, InTools retails for \$199 (CAN) and is available at [www.alap.com](http://www.alap.com). In Australia, visit [www.xclusive.com.au](http://www.xclusive.com.au).

## Imposer Pro

Imposer Pro is a plug-in for InDesign (an Xtension for QuarkXPress) that imposes pages into printer flats. Six sheet types are available, including 2-up, 4-up, 8-up, 2-up consecutive, 4-up consecutive, and 8-up consecutive. Imposer Pro also includes four binding types (saddle stitch, perfect bound, stacked, and none) and five imposition types (standard, work & turn, work & tumble, split web, and sheet wise).

Imposer Pro's roots can be traced to 1998, when ALAP released Imposer. Four years later, Imposer Pro became available for Quark users. The initial release of Imposer Pro for InDesign was in 2003, followed by Imposer Pro for Acrobat two years later. In November 2005, ALAP updated Imposer Pro for InDesign to version 1.1.3.

At a single-user price of \$479 (CAN), Imposer Pro is less expensive than most other imposition applications, and it's very

easy to use. You can download a fully-functional demo of Imposer Pro and InTools at [www.alap.com](http://www.alap.com).

## Apple Announces Editing Software for Professional Photographers

Adobe, watch out! Here comes Apple with its own photo editing application. Announced in late November, Aperture is built to lure the professional photographer with powerful image editing tools. I received a note from a colleague at Apple this week to fill me in concerning the new release. Rob Schoeben, Apple's vice-president of Applications Marketing, said, "Aperture is to professional photography what Final Cut Pro is to filmmaking."

Built with the RAW file format in mind, Aperture promises a quicker workflow when working with these files. "Until now, RAW files have taken so long to work with," said Heinz Kluetmeir, renowned sports photographer. "What amazed me about Aperture is that you can work directly with RAW files. I suspect that I'm going to stop shooting JPEGs."

According to an Apple press release, unique compare and select tools in Aperture allow photographers to easily sift through massive photo projects and quickly identify their final selections. Aperture automatically groups sequences of photos into easy-to-manage Stacks based on the time interval between exposures.

In an industry first, Aperture allows photographers to navigate through entire projects in a full-screen workspace that can be extended to span multiple displays. The extended workspace tiles multiple images side-by-side for a faster, easier compare and select. With Aperture's Loupe magnifying tool, the user can be examine images in fine detail without having to zoom and pan across large files.

RAW images are maintained natively throughout Aperture without any intermediate conversion process and can be

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# Assembly-line doesn't work in newsroom



By Jim Stasiowski  
Writing Coach

**W**hen I grow weary of having a job that requires me to think so much, I wonder if I would enjoy being on an assembly line, earning my pay by doing rote, menial actions all day long.

Then reality strikes like a rattlesnake, swiftly and pitilessly.

Recently, a friend who runs a manufacturing company lamented to me that his backlog of orders was so huge, he was not sure he would meet all of his deadlines. As a person without any technical skills, I felt safe in saying, "Geez, I'd like to help you, but I'm not really good at anything."

Sensing he had found a chump, he said, "If you really want to help, I have some simple jobs you could do that would save us time and might help us finish our work."

Cornered, I decided to test my theory that I would thrive on the assembly line.

Boy, was I wrong.

Now, don't be misled into thinking the work was the modern equivalent of endlessly pounding spikes in the constructing of the transcontinental railroad.

First of all, I worked part-time for only three days. Second, the work was in moderately pleasant surroundings, that is, the room in which I worked wasn't filthy or sweaty, and the noise of the machinery was more of a humming than a grinding. Third, no one counted on me to do anything too responsible. I was the callow freshman on campus, minus the beanie.

And I want to emphasize the people who work there daily are not the stereotypically mindless assembly-line drones.

They were diligent, motivated, even meticulous in their attempts to do good work. I noticed when they could have cut corners, they did not. Furthermore, they regularly came up with innovative ways to solve problems.

## Punching clock not for writers

However – and these are the three sobering parts of my experience – I stopped working when the clock hit a precise time; I was stuck in that room all day; and I worked not for a person, but for a piece of paper.

Here's why I found those three elements sobering:

**The clock:** I'm a writer. I write all the time. No clock governs my work. Even when I'm not at my computer, even when I'm not interviewing, I'm writing in my head.

But the people who work for my friend are working only when they are at their machines. When the clock says, "Eat lunch," or, "Take a break," or, "Go home," they produce nothing.

I love writing all the time. As Joseph Conrad, the novelist, once said, "I wrote each of my novels so I could stop thinking about it."

**The room:** To help manufacture the product my friend's company makes, I had to stay in one place. I could not roam. When I left that room, I ceased to be productive.

Newspaper reporters do their best work when they move around, when they look at different options, when they see new sights, meet new people or ponder new ideas. They're like the quarterback in football; they have a goal (score a touchdown), but they're free to call any number of plays, to go left or right, to back up and pass, to run straight ahead or even to zigzag.

**The piece of paper:** From wherever I

stood in that room, I could see a stack of yellow papers. They were the orders we were labouring to fill.

That stack dictated what we did, when we did it, when we were finished. As long as even one yellow paper was there, we had work to do. And someone always was adding yet another yellow paper to the stack. We did precisely what those yellow papers dictated.

In the newsroom, we all swear we are working for that mythical deity, The Reader. In reality, we, too, work for a piece of paper. We call it the budget.

For every edition, every newsroom comes up with a budget, a listing of the stories that will fill all those columns. Theoretically, the budget works for us, helping us to organize.

But in reality, we end up working for that budget. If the budget says Reporter A is going to produce 17 inches about the sewage-treatment plant, then The Reader, by God, will get 17 inches, even if those inches are more sewage than treatment.

Many of us have an idealized vision of what we should be doing. We remember walking into newsrooms brimming with excitement over the adventure of putting together a newspaper. In that vision, we cheerfully killed bad but budgeted stories in favour of better ones.

Today's newsrooms are too much like the room I spent three days working in: People intend to do well, they try hard, but they are riveted to their work stations, and they produce stories by rote rather than by exploration.

All of us love to write. If we want to keep writing for newspapers, we need to stop producing stories and start discovering them.

*Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at 410 247-4600 or write to 5812 Heron Drive, Baltimore, Md. 21227*

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## Aperture aims to assist professional photographers

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retouched using a suite of adjustment tools designed especially for photographers. Aperture's nondestructive image processing engine never alters a single pixel of original photos, so photographers have the power and flexibility to modify or delete changes at any point in the workflow.

As Aperture allows users to create multiple versions of a single image without duplicating files, photographers can experiment without risk of overwriting the master

image or using large amounts of hard drive space. Aperture images can also be launched directly into Adobe Photoshop for compositing and layer effects.

I'm always glad to see a new option for newspapers. In the coming months, we'll take a closer look at Aperture and see how it handles in a newspaper workflow. Know this: Aperture is not for the vintage computer. Minimum requirements include a 1.8 GHz G5 or a 1.25 GHz Powerbook running OS 10.4.3. MSRP is \$599 (CAN).



## Water Cooler

- After serving as deputy mayor in his hometown for the past five years, under two different mayors, **Dennis Smyk**, editor/publisher of the **Ignace Driftwood**, has been appointed to the top post. Smyk first got involved in municipal politics in 1971 and has been involved in six terms since that time.
- The **LaSalle Post** has a new editor: **Bob Stewart** of Windsor. Stewart, who has worked as a reporter and photographer with the Windsor Star, left journalism temporarily to develop a novel. His poetry has been published extensively in Canada, the United States and Britain. In 2004, he received an Ontario Arts Council grant for continued work on the novel.
- **The Hornepayne Jackfish Journal** is going to newsprint! What this means to readers is an eight-page paper every week, better quality and more pictures, and a more professional appearance. The first issue will be printed Jan. 3, 2006.
- The **Brock Citizen** newspaper and its office took on a new look this month. The Citizen came out with a new look, with a blue-and-burgundy banner and new fonts with an easier-to-read format. The same week, the office moved from Beaverton to a brighter, renovated home in the village of Cannington. Both towns are within the newspaper's coverage area on the east shore of Lake Scugog. The search for a new home led to a spot across the street from the Brock Township office. The landlord even built an inside wall as a replica of the former Cannington Gleaner office – one of the predecessors that merged into the Brock Citizen several years ago.
- **Cambrian College** is introducing five new programs that will provide students with the education needed to launch successful careers and employers with graduates who are equipped with the knowledge and skills for today's jobs. The new programs have a September 2006 start date and include a one-year graduate certificate in Broadcast-New Media. For information, contact Bill Radunsky, program coordinator, at [waradunsky@cambrianc.on.ca](mailto:waradunsky@cambrianc.on.ca).

send updates to [newsclips@ocna.org](mailto:newsclips@ocna.org)

## CLASSIFIEDS

### The Backyard Astronomer Brings The Stars Down To Earth

Written for anyone with a sense of curiosity, **The Backyard Astronomer**, will turn on the light bulb inside your head and put a smile on your face. Author and amateur astronomer, John Crossen, brings a lively and informative writing style to a subject which he enjoys passionately. And his enthusiasm shows in an intriguing array of articles that entertain readers and score big as the universe on the "wow-meter." Updated weekly, they are available in half-page or quarter-page sizes. The handy PDF formats are an easy "plug-in" to your existing newspaper layout. And at just \$5.00 per article, they're also an easy "plug-in" to your budget. Who says a local weekly newspaper can't cover the cosmos? Certainly not **The Backyard Astronomer**.

For samples in pdf format, contact: [sconolly@lakefieldherald.com](mailto:sconolly@lakefieldherald.com)

### Zip disks available

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### Columns available online

Looking for regular or semi-regular columnists for your newspaper? Check out the OCNA web site. Columnists William Thomas, Eric Dowd, and John Maclean upload their column for your use at a nominal charge. John Maclean is a veteran observer in the Parliamentary Press Gallery. Go to <http://members.ocna.org> and go to the Syndicated Works folder.

### Spaghetti for Breakfast

by Catherine Cunningham is an award-winning humour column loved by readers of all ages is available for syndication at only \$7.00 per column. To receive a promotional package call 705-440-6771 or e-mail [spaghettiforbreakfast@rogers.com](mailto:spaghettiforbreakfast@rogers.com) Previously published columns can be viewed on-line at <http://www.simcoe.com/sc/alliston/column/v-scv2/> Laughter is now on the menu. Order your weekly serving of Spaghetti for Breakfast today!

**For our archive of Best Practice Bulletins, Ontario Press Service releases and other useful information please visit OCNA's Members Intranet site <http://members.ocna.org>**

# The power of the sales rep bearing spec layouts

By **Bob Berting**

Berting Communications

**E**ven with today's amazing technology, there remains a classic, time-worn problem. How are the advertising materials organized and communicated between the client, the salesperson and the graphic artist? More importantly, how are spec layouts presented back to the client? The answer: usually not well organized. But to solve the problem, let's take a few steps back.

## Salesperson's Role

The salesperson has to become a trusted advisor to the client and have the ability not only to get the client involved in the planning and content of the ads, but to demonstrate that he or she is a marketing pro who knows layout and design, can write good copy, knows type faces, and can sell long range campaigns. It is obvious this type of salesperson has to have these skills or be trained by the sales manager to develop these skills. The optimal word here is control. The salesperson has to take charge of the situation and work with the client... similar to an advertising agency approach. One of the major problems in newspaper advertising is the customer thinks they know more than the salesperson calling on them. Again, the salesperson has to establish himself or herself as an expert and a trusted advisor. Even a new salesperson who has been properly trained can be perceived as someone the customer can trust while being guided toward meaningful advertising programs.

## Organization of Rough Layout

The contents have to be organized so the client can see and approve the format. This format includes selection of headlines, artwork, suggested copy, and overall ad design. The idea is to also find the customer's personalized beliefs and goals (CPBG), and work them into the ad ideas.

This can be done by including their head shot to personalize the ads, featuring employees in ads, special goal/ belief messages pledging quality, dependability, etc.

## The Next Critical Action

The final action is to explain that you want to tell the story of their business in your publication, (this will give you an edge over competition), but you need to know the reasons people come to the customer, what benefits they are receiving. You will then take this information and build an ad campaign with the different reasons becoming the headings of the ads, along with the CPBG points, which can be in a feature copy box. An objection may arise that the customer wants to run special promotions as headings from time to time. That's fine, as long as the ad campaign reverts back to the 'story of the business' strategy.

The next step is to tell the customer you are bringing a campaign kickoff ad layout (never call it a spec layout) or two to three sample ads depicting the start of a campaign. It is important the customer fully agrees to this and gives permission to do so. Objections might arise which could delay the creative process but that's OK; it's better to know them now than after the time and expense of doing the layouts.

## The next step – the layout artist

Keep in mind you as the salesperson know what image is to be projected, what goals of the customer are to be targeted, and how the campaign is to flow. Any rough layouts done with the customer are given to the layout artist, incorporating all the critical aspects of discussions with the customer. The artist proceeds to develop a kick off ad for the campaign or a series of ads to give a feeling of the campaign flow. It is important that you and the artist carefully go over the layouts before taking them to the customer, making sure the proper image is being projected.

## Layout Presentation to The Customer

The spec layouts are ready. In some cases they might be mounted to give a more professional look. The customer is called and informed the layouts are done and the appointment is set to show them.

Obviously, there is a plan which will present the advertising program customized to the customer's needs. It is important that the layouts are shown first before the plan, which ties in with the adage 'Sell with emotion and justify with facts.' It is very important to show how the layouts tell the story of their business, designed for quick readership and utilize any CPBG. The reader's scanning pattern for the ads is defined so that the customer understands every attention has been given to this critical aspect.

## Protecting Your Creativity

All creative spec layouts and artwork are protected under copyright laws, .The idea is copyrighted the 'instant it is expressed in a tangible form.' This means the customer can't take your ideas and hand them to your media competition without your permission.

Some publications even have a stamped form on their spec layouts which the customer signs to show they understand the creativity being shown to them is copyrighted. There are also publications that clearly state on their rate card: Advertising layout and copy prepared by paid employees of this newspaper are the property of this newspaper and cannot be reproduced in other media without the expressed consent of the publisher.

## The Happy Ending

If all the groundwork has been laid by the account salesperson, if the spec layouts really sizzle, and if the customer has complete trust and belief in the newspaper as the key player in their media mix ... they will buy the advertising plan and authorize the spec layouts to be converted into a strong advertising campaign.

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