



**Community
Newspapers
Association**
British Columbia & Yukon

The BCYCNA Update

The Community Newspaper Newsletter

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Industry News

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Pretty in Print

Federal and provincial government advertisers are leading a renewed interest in weekly newspapers

BY DANNY KUCHARSKY

Are you ready for some action? A little three-on-three action?" starts the show. No, it's not some sleazy late-night advertorial for a phone sex line. Rather it's a video of a weekly talk show about local sports news available on the website of Lighthouse Publishing (lighthouse.ns.ca), publisher of two community newspapers on Nova Scotia's South Shore, the Bridgewater Bulletin and Lighthouse Progress Enterprise.

Proof that titillation will likely be in short supply comes early in a recent episode of the show, dubbed "3 on 3," when we're informed by host Steve Tanner that one of the gabfest's three regulars is absent because "last we heard he was up to his neck in poopy diapers."

The show is sponsored by Boston Pizza and is taped in the restaurant's Bridgewater location.

It's not the only videocast available from Lighthouse. There's also an entertainment news guide called The Hype, news show The Wrap, and Show & Sell Showcase, a look at homes for sale.

The video initiative is

"probably a model for everyone to look at" for community newspapers, says Greg Duncan, executive director of the Quebec Community Newspapers Association. The Lighthouse website also sells subscriptions to its newspapers and online edition, with password-only features available to online subscribers.

The site shows that community newspapers can use technology, not only to interest local readers and sell additional advertising, but to capitalize on ex-pat readers, says Duncan. "They can bring people home via technology and they can charge for it. People who have left their birthplace are often interested in home. People don't want to wait two weeks for a newspaper via Canada Post. Online is the answer." Back in the hard copy world, there are some encouraging signs that at least a few major advertisers are starting to pay greater attention to community newspapers. For example, the federal government ad spend in community newspapers almost tripled in 2005, according to the Canadian Community Newspapers Association (CCNA), in a year in which overall government ad spending



decreased. Mainline federal departments (which do not include agencies such as Elections Canada or Crown corporations) spent 17.7% of their total investments—almost a three-fold increase from previous years when community newspapers received an estimated 6% of the government's spending dollars, the CCNA says. As of Dec. 14, 2005, various federal departments spent \$2.5 million in community newspapers.

In British Columbia, the government is running a four-week supplement in all B.C. weeklies to promote tourism within the province. It's a toned-down version of a pitch made by the Powell River Peak and the BCYCNA - the community newspaper association for British Columbia and Yukon - for a coffee-table book that would promote tourism, with proceeds going to a literacy fund. "This campaign is a great one for community newspapers, as weeklies are truly the only print medium that can effectively reach all the various communities throughout the province

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What Lunch Hour?



Ask any television news producer about his or her “lunch hour,” and you’ll get laughed at. When we teach the Poynter “Producing Newscasts” seminars, we almost have to force the participants to go to lunch. They are apparently like the majority of [North] Americans, who do not know a lunch hour.

KFC (the chicken people) surveyed more than a thousand adults and found that when it comes to eating lunch, workers concentrate on other things:

- 62.7 percent of workers consider the 60-minute lunch hour the biggest myth in office life.
- 57.9 percent eat lunch at their desk while continuing to work.
- 55.6 percent multitask during lunch (28.9 percent eat and run errands, 26.7 percent eat and e-mail or shop online).
- 51.8 percent take 30 minutes or less for lunch.
- 21.9 percent eat at a restaurant or other eatery.
- 20.2 percent eat in the company cafeteria.

Reprinted from PoynterOnline - Al's Morning Meeting - Tuesday, June 13, 2006.

Pretty in Print... CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

to promote travel within the province,” says Crystal MacLaren, director of brand management at Community Media Canada in Toronto. Some big-name marketers, who usually spend their advertising money elsewhere, have recently turned to community newspapers. The La Senza lingerie chain has been running four-colour ads in Quebec weeklies that wouldn't be out of place in glossy fashion magazines. Bayer is using the papers to offer free Ascensia blood glucose meters, and Quebec's dairy promotion group, the Fédération des producteurs de lait du Québec, recently made its first foray into the world of weeklies. With the text “Choisissez un cheddar authentique, 100% d'ici,” (choose an authentic

cheddar, 100% from here), the ad touted Quebec-made regional cheddars and promoted the website laitequitable.ca, which carries the message that “uncontrolled” imports of subsidized milk ingredients are harming Canadian dairy producers. The ad ran in 66 of the province's best-performing weeklies for two weeks, in late April and early May. Preliminary research on the ad's effectiveness by Ipsos Descarie found “exceptional performance,” says Nicole Dubé, director of advertising and promotions at the dairy promotion group. Recall was 32% compared to a norm of 15%, appreciation was 73%, understanding was 74% and spontaneous attribution to Quebec cheese was 49%. “That's extraordinary,”

says Dubé. “I think we underestimate that media.” Marketers, she notes, “have our prejudices. It's always more prestigious to go into electronic, television, radio, Internet. We think it shows better how dynamic we are. Weeklies are seen as being as old as the earth.” And when you talk to creatives, they always prefer electronic ads to print ads, she says. But weeklies have pluses that shouldn't be scoffed at, she adds, ranging from a better shelf life than dailies in the regions, to print quality that has improved greatly in recent years. “It's the first time I've used weeklies and it won't be the last,” says Dubé, noting Quebec dairy producers will use weeklies to promote cream in September.



Reprinted
from Poynter

Online, Friday, June 23 edition
From the workbench of Roy Peter Clark

At times, it helps to think of writing as carpentry. That way, writers and editors can work from a plan and use tools stored on their workbench. You can borrow a writing tool at any time. And here's a secret: Unlike hammers, chisels, and rakes, writing tools never have to be returned. They can be cleaned, sharpened, and passed on.

These are tools and not rules. They work outside the realm of right and wrong, and inside the world of cause and effect. You will find many examples of good writing that seem to "violate" the general advice described here.

It will not help to apply these tools at once, just as aspiring golfers swing and miss if they try to remember the 30 or so different elements of an effective golf swing.

You will become handy with these tools over time. You will begin to recognize their use in the stories you read. You will see chances to apply them when you revise your own work. Eventually, they will become part of your flow, natural and automatic.

You are already using many of these tools without knowing it. It is impossible to speak, write, or read without them. But now these tools have names, so you can begin to talk about them in different ways. As your critical vocabulary grows, your writing will improve.

With that as both introduction and promise, let us begin.

WRITING TOOL #1 – BRANCH TO THE RIGHT

Begin sentences with subjects and verbs, letting subordinate elements branch to the right. Even a long, long sentence can be clear and powerful when the subject and verb make meaning early.

FIFTY WRITING TOOLS FROM THE POYNTER INSTITUTE

To use this tool, imagine each sentence you write printed on an infinitely wide piece of paper. In English, a sentence stretches from left to right. Now imagine this: A reporter writes a lead sentence with subject and verb at the beginning, followed by other subordinate elements, creating what scholars call a "right-branching sentence." I just created one. Subject and verb of the main clause join on the left ("A reporter writes") while all other elements branch off to the right. Here's another right-branching sentence, written by Lydia Polgreen as the lead of a news story in *The New York Times*:

Rebels seized control of Cap Haitien, Haiti's second largest city, on Sunday, meeting little resistance as hundreds of residents cheered, burned the police station, plundered food from port warehouses and looted the airport, which was quickly closed. Police officers and armed supporters of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide fled.

That first sentence is 37 words long and rippling with action. The sentence is so full, in fact, that it threatens to fly apart like some overheated engine. But the writer keeps control by creating meaning in the first three words: "Rebels seized control..." Think of that main clause as the locomotive that pulls all the cars that follow.

Master writers can craft page after page of sentences written in this structure. Consider this passage by John Steinbeck from "Cannery Row," describing the routine of a marine scientist named Doc:

He didn't need a clock. He had been working in a tidal pattern so long that he could feel a tide change in his sleep. In the dawn he awakened, looked out through the windshield, and saw that the water was already retreating down the bouldery flat. He drank some hot coffee, ate three sandwiches, and had a quart of beer.

The tide goes out imperceptibly. The boulders show and seem to rise up and the ocean recedes leaving little pools, leaving wet

weed and moss and sponge, iridescence and brown and blue and China red. On the bottoms lie the incredible refuse of the sea, shells broken and chipped and bits of skeleton, claws, the whole sea bottom a fantastic cemetery on which the living scamper and scramble.

In each sentence, Steinbeck places subject and verb at or near the beginning. Clarity and narrative energy flow through the passage, as one sentence builds upon another. And he avoids monotonous structure by varying the length of his sentences. Subject and verb often get separated in prose, usually because we want to tell the reader something about the subject before we get to the verb. When we do this, even for good reasons, we risk confusing the reader:

A bill that would exclude tax income from the assessed value of new homes from the state education funding formula could mean a loss of revenue for Chesapeake County schools.

Eighteen words separate the subject "bill" from its weak verb "could mean," a fatal flaw that turns what could be an important civic story into gibberish. If the writer wants to create suspense, or build tension, or make the reader wait and wonder, or join a journey of discovery, or hold on for dear life, she can save the verb until the end.

Workshop:

- Read through an edition of *The New York Times* with a pencil. Mark the location of subjects and verbs.
- Do the same with a collection of your own stories.
- Do the same with a draft of a story you're working on now.
- The next time you struggle with a sentence, see if you can rewrite it by placing subject and verb at the beginning.

When looking for the right artwork, just ask



Kevin Slimp

Institute of Newspaper Technology

When I take a break between sessions at a convention, it's not unusual for a software representative to attack ... I mean approach me to share information about a product or upgrade. Such was the case in Miami a few weeks ago when Jill Addy, Senior Vice President at MultiAd, approached me about their custom artwork feature. At first, I feigned interest. Then, as she showed me what they were up to, I realized MultiAd was on to something.

AdBuilder, a division of MultiAd, is an online service that provides clip-art, stock photos, spec ads and other materials to newspapers on a subscription basis. I'm not sure how many customers they have, but it seems like somewhere between a third and half of the newspapers I visit subscribe to AdBuilder.

I've always liked materials from AdBuilder and Metro Creative Graphics, another artwork service used by a lot of newspapers. Both vendors have had a lot in common over the years. In the "olden days," newspapers primarily received their material from these providers on disk. As time moved on, both developed online access to their materials. Both services offer products at such great prices, I've often recommended that newspapers subscribe to both of them. OK. Back to the story.

So Jill Addy approaches me and tells me I've got to see a new feature from AdBuilder. She takes me to the AdBuilder home page (AdBuilder.com) and clicks



This artwork was created for use by The Inter-Mountain in Elkins, WV by AdBuilder.

on a link titled, "We'll Create It for You." Doing so brings up a form that allows users to input their names, addresses, etc., along with an area to describe the type of artwork needed.

I turned to Jill and asked, "You mean AdBuilder will create custom artwork for your customers?" Following her affirmative reply, I asked the obvious follow up question, "How much?"

That's when the conversation turned from somewhat interesting to, "I can't believe that," interesting. It turns out that subscribers to AdBuilder pay nothing for custom artwork. That's right. Nada, nilch, nothing. One reason I found this so hard to believe is that back in the "old days," when I



owned a graphic design firm, I used to pay anywhere from a few hundred dollars to a thousand dollars for a custom art design. To think I could get it at no additional fee is pretty impressive.

Finally I asked, "How long does it take?" I figured a few weeks or so would be a good response. The answer almost floored me. "Five days is the normal turnaround."

Last week, I decided to test the folks at AdBuilder. I have an AdBuilder account, so I simply logged in at AdBuilder.com and entered my password. On the home page is the link titled, "We'll Create It for You." I clicked on the link, completed an online form and described the type

of artwork I wanted. I described a piece of art, full color, that included two newspaper designers working on their computers at deadline. In addition, I asked for a publisher pushing them to get the paper out. Yesterday, I received an email from the art department at AdBuilder. Attached were two EPS files, one each in color and grayscale. It was exactly what I had asked for.

I contacted Natalie Giroux, AdBuilder's Syndicated Product Manager, and asked how they can offer this type of service so quickly. I learned that Natalie works with 12 staff members, including artists, designers and two copywriters. All art requests are completed in-house. I was surprised to learn that they normally receive only 20 to 30 custom requests per week (I have a feeling that number will increase after this column is released). Requests include cartoons, realistic images and some spec ads. They advertise a five-day turnaround for art requests, but most artwork is delivered to the client within two days.

I was very surprised to learn that AdBuilder has offered this service for more than two years. After getting such a great response from AdBuilder, I contacted Metro Creative Graphics to see if they offer anything similar to their customers. After visiting with Lisa Regina at Metro, I learned that Metro also creates custom artwork for its clients.

Metro has a service called "You Tell Us," which allows subscribers to write for artwork they haven't found on the Metro Web site. After receiving a request, Metro routes the information to their Customer Relations Department, where a search is done to find if any existing artwork meets the criteria. If not, the information is passed on to Metro's planning team for inclusion in upcoming



This artwork was created for use by The News-Star in Monroe, LA by AdBuilder.

offerings.

Lisa added that

if a request is urgent, the planning team doesn't wait to include the artwork in an upcoming release. They will create custom artwork, usually within a few days, and send it back to the customer via email. Metro subscribers pay no additional fee for custom artwork.

To learn more about AdBuilder and Metro Creative Graphics, visit their Web sites at AdBuilder.com or MetroCreativeGraphics.com. For more information concerning custom artwork, contact Natalie Giroux (AdBuilder) at ngiroux@ad-builder.com or Lisa Regina (Metro) at lregina@metro-email.com.



Join Kevin, along with the biggest names in graphics training, for the Institute of Newspaper Technology. This annual event takes place on campus at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tenn. October 12-14, 2006. For more information, visit:

www.newspaperinstitute.com

To read Kevin's past columns, visit:

www.kevinslimp.com



Industry News

A new member in the BCYCNA

The BCYCNA is pleased to welcome our 106th member, The Creston Valley Advance. Part of the Glacier group, the Advance has a circulation of 3,600 and reaches the southern Kootenay region of Creston, from Riondel to Yatik.

Share your talent with 700+ papers

Special edition of The Publisher focuses on syndicated content

Reprinted from The Publisher Friday, June 23, 2006

The August edition of The Publisher will showcase some of the best content at CCNA member papers. This is an opportunity for talented writers, columnists, and artists to advertise their services to publishers across Canada. Don't miss out: book space now.

These special rates are available to any CCNA member who would like to advertise their content to other members.

Ad sizes are generous and offer plenty of space for sample material, contact and syndication information, and recommendations from other newspapers.

This edition of The Publisher will become a reference for publishers for the coming year. Make sure that industry

leaders know about your content.

Download the attached PDF for rates and deadlines.

Biz Pix helps with local search advertising

Biz Pix has developed a local-search-advertising application that will provide newspaper owners a turnkey solution that is easily integrated into their website properties while complimenting their current offline advertising products. The Biz Pix Objective: to establish a local centric marketing network made up of complimentary local newspaper and other media properties who share the Biz Pix local-search-advertising engine as a platform that ties in consumer access and subscriptions to each partner's local content while supporting and promoting a unified online local-search-advertising model across each city/town, region and province in Canada.

Biz Pix will offer this solution free to community newspaper partners with no set-up or licensing fees.

The Biz Pix solution will allow established community newspapers to quickly build local search traffic, create the potential for online advertising revenues and deliver a value-added solution to their web properties, attracting more consumers, enhance local media content and keep users

on their website longer. Local newspapers are positioned to capture a significant share of what is becoming a multi-billion dollar online local-search-advertising market. Community newspapers are known and trusted by local consumers and advertisers, and most operate website properties that can provide the perfect platform for effective local search-based-advertising. For more information, visit their website at www.bizpix.ca

Staff Changes at the BCYCNA

You'll be hearing a new voice when you call the BCYCNA office. We're very pleased to have summer student Katie Schaeffers on board with us for the next few months. Katie has been doing a great job with the community classifieds over the last few weeks, and will continue taking care of the classifieds as well as press release distribution, database sales, and general inquiries about the BCYCNA, right through to September. (Kerry Burgess will be off for the rest of July, returning as Kerry Slater after a walk down the aisle...!) Katie can be reached at classifieds@bccommunitynews.com or 1-866-669-9222.



BCYCNA UPDATE

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