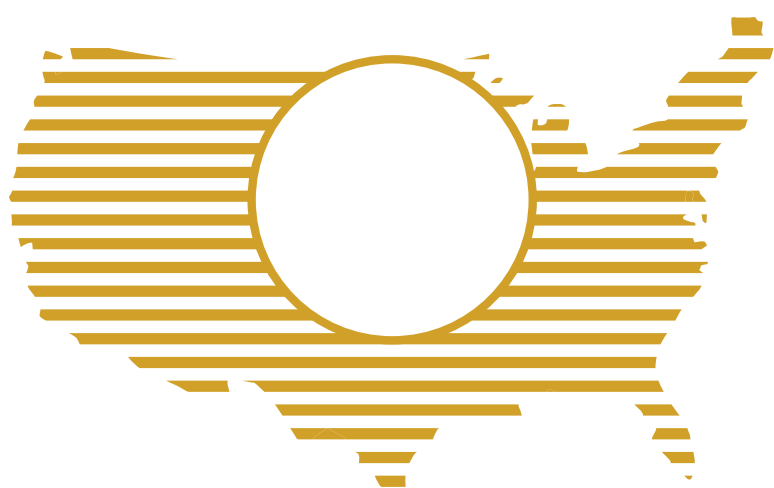




MCP

midwest community publications

Friendly Faces, Powerful Connections

For more than 70 years, Midwest Community Publications has been helping community publishers succeed through the power of connection, collaboration, and shared resources. With over 85 member publications reaching more than 1.45 million households across the Midwest, MCP provides valuable networking, training, advertising opportunities, free content, industry insights, and business support that help publishers grow revenue, strengthen operations, and stay competitive in an ever-changing media landscape.

**There has never been
a better time to join.**

With expanded eligibility and a growing mix of print, digital, and hybrid publishers, the association provides access to industry knowledge, professional relationships, and resources designed to help community media organizations innovate, compete, and grow.



From the Office

Founded in 1955, our association has long existed to support free paper publishers across the Midwest. While our industry has evolved dramatically over the decades, our purpose has remained remarkably consistent: to help our members grow their businesses, strengthen their communities, and connect with others who understand the unique challenges and opportunities of local publishing.

For many years, we were widely recognized as “the shopper group,” and that legacy remains an important part of who we are. But today, our membership reflects a much broader publishing landscape. Alongside shopper publications, our association now includes newspapers, magazines, niche publications, and other community-based media organizations serving audiences in print, digital, and hybrid formats. That diversity is one of our greatest strengths. It allows us to learn from one another, share ideas, and adapt together as the media industry continues to change.

This past year marked one of the most significant moments in our association’s history.

At our annual meeting in Cedar Falls, members voted to approve important bylaw changes that officially expand membership eligibility to include paid and digital-only publications. This decision reflects both the realities of today’s publishing environment and our commitment to ensuring the long-term strength of the association. As advertising dollars continue to spread across multiple platforms and the number of traditional publications declines, it is essential that we evolve alongside the industry we serve.

These changes are about much more than membership categories. They represent a renewed vision for the future of community publishing.

Publishers today are operating in an increasingly hybrid, multimedia environment. Many of our members are building websites, launching newsletters, partnering with digital providers, utilizing AI tools, and expanding the ways they connect with readers and advertisers. Through resources like the iPromote platform and the shared knowledge within our network, the association remains committed to helping members compete, innovate, and grow in this changing landscape.

By welcoming a broader range of publishers into our organization, we strengthen not only our membership base, but also the collective expertise and opportunities available to all members. New voices bring new ideas, new strategies, and new perspectives that will help all of us navigate the future more successfully together.

The bylaw changes also paved the way for another important transition: our association’s new name. Beginning July 1, 2026, Midwest Free Com-



Cory Regnier
Executive Director

munity Papers will be doing business as Midwest Community Publications. This new identity better reflects who we are today and who we aspire to serve moving forward. While our name is changing, our mission is not. We remain dedicated to supporting community publishers, fostering professional connections, and helping members succeed in an evolving industry.

I’m excited about where we are headed. The publishing industry will continue to evolve, but community-based media remains essential. Local publishers inform communities, support local businesses, preserve local identity, and create meaningful connections that larger media organizations often cannot replicate. Our association exists to ensure those publishers continue to have the resources, relationships, and support they need to thrive.

Thank you for your continued membership, engagement, and belief in this organization. I look forward to building this next chapter together.

Need to reach us?

Phone:
MCP Office: 888-899-6327
Cory Work Cell: 218-507-9058

Email:
director@mfcpc.org or office@mfcpc.org

Mail:
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P.O. Box 28
Nevis, MN 56467



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joyce@saukherald.com

Board members are elected to serve a three-year term. Officers are appointed by the board of directors.

We currently have seats open on the board. If you or someone in your office would like to join, please reach out to the executive director or any current board member.

PAST PRESIDENTS

A. K. Fox
Des Moines, IA
1955

John W Hall
Spencer, IA
1968-69

George (Sid) Blair
Anamosa, IA
1980-81

Greg Birkett
Dubuque, IA
1991-92

Rich Paulsen
Creston, IA
2002-03

Peggy Loveless
Cresco, IA
2016-17

Elmer Vermeer
Sioux Center, IA
1957

William D Champion
Marion, IA
1969-70

Tim Lighter
Algona, IA
1981-82

Gary Dudley
Rockwell City, IA
1992-93

Greg Kytola
Adel, IA
2003-04

Trevor Slette
Windom, MN
2017-19

Dwaine Lighter
Algona, IA
1958

Harvey Pluim
Orange City, IA
1970-71

Gordon Schrader Jr
Marshalltown, IA
1982-83

Brian Gay
Rockford, IL
1993-94

John Loveless
Cresco, IA
2004-05

Lisa Miller
Moorhead, MN
2019-21

Joe Sklenar
Audubon, IA
1959

Mrs. James Crosby
Des Moines, IA
1971-72

Gene Hall
Spencer, IA
1983-84

Don Gimberline
Sioux City, IA
1994-95

Shane Goodman
Des Moines, IA
2006-07

Julia Thompson
Albert Lea, MN
2021-22

John Holmes
Whiting, IA
1960

Roland Dudden
Vinton, IA
1972-73

Keith Aldrich
Pella, IA
1984-85

Pete Looney
Cedar Rapids, IA
1995-96

Robin Noth
Sparta, WI
2007-08

Joyce Frericks
Sauk Centre, MN
2023-24

Boyd Loveless
Wesley, IA
1962

George Hladky
Indianola, IA
1973-74

Belinda Nelson
Marion, IA
1985-86

Joni Worden
Belmond, IA
1996-97

Linda Hawk
Mason City, IA
2008-10

Mike Kolbe
Harlan, IA
2024-25

Jerry Hofstad
Emmetsburg, IA
1963

Gordon Schrader Sr.
Newton, IA
1974-75

Mark D Griggs
Atlantic, IA
1986-87

Jack Mathews
Grinnell, IA
1997-98

Julie Hermesen
Norfolk, NE
2010-11

Lisa Miller
Rock Rapids, IA
2025-26

Corwin Dudley
Rockwell City, IA
1964

Rudy Van Drie
Ames, IA
1974-76

Grant Case
Sheldon, IA
1987-88

Robb Harmon
Yankton, SD
1998-99

Claudia Lovin
Boone, IA
2011-12

Vince Giannoble
Des Moines, IA
1965

Ron Phelps
Mason City, IA
1977-78

Larry Waage
Belmond, IA
1988-89

Peter Gardner
Belmond, IA
1999-2000

Joel Klaasen
Hillsboro, KS
2012-13

Rudy Van Drie
Ames, IA
1966-67

John Arnold
Centerville, IA
1978-79

Bob Hulstein
Orange City, IA
1989-90

Deb Weigel
Dyersville, IA
2000-01

Kelly Coy
Mankato, MN
2013-14

Andy Phillips
Sioux City, NE
1967-68

Gladys Van Drie
Ames, IA
1979-80

Michelle Case
Le Mars, IA
1990-91

Mona Garwood
Cedar Rapids, IA
2001-02

Steve Fisher
Dubuque, IA
2014-16

Member Benefits

Membership in MCP is designed to help community publishers, sales professionals, and media organizations grow stronger, more profitable, and more connected. In an ever-changing media landscape, having access to trusted industry resources, professional training, networking opportunities, and revenue-building programs is more important than ever. MCP provides members with the tools, education, and support needed to strengthen operations, increase profits, and stay competitive.

From advertising programs and readership audits to conferences, training sessions, and networking events, MCP offers valuable opportunities for learning, collaboration, and growth. Members consistently share that the ideas, relationships, and resources they gain through MCP more than pay for the cost of membership.

2x2 Ad Program

An advertising program that helps generate additional revenue through coordinated ad placement in member publications.

3-Minute Idea Exchange

A fast-paced networking and brainstorming opportunity where members can share successful ideas, sales strategies, and operational tips with peers across the industry.

Ad Awards Competition

Annual competition recognizing excellence in graphic design and editorial content. Publications compete in more than 60 categories, providing recognition and inspiration for creative achievement.

CVC / Free Readership Audit

Member publications qualify for a professional readership audit through CVC, one of the industry’s premier providers of circulation and readership data. These audits help members better understand their audience and strengthen advertiser confidence.

Digital Ad Sales

Provides members with resources, tools, and education focused on growing digital ad revenue and improving digital sales strategies.

Fall Sales Training (via Zoom)

Seasonal virtual sales training sessions designed to sharpen sales skills, introduce new techniques, and provide actionable strategies for increasing revenue.

MCN Ad Sales

A collaborative advertising sales network that helps members expand classified advertising reach and revenue opportunities through shared participation.

MDN Ad Sales

Another valuable display ad network designed to increase sales opportunities and create broader exposure by being able to sell into other member publications.

Members Helping Members

An outreach support initiative where members can connect with peers for advice, guidance, problem-solving, and shared expertise.

Membership Directory and Interactive Map

An easy-to-use resource that helps members connect with fellow publishers, media professionals, and organizations throughout the region.

Paperclips

Monthly newsletter that keeps members informed about industry updates, upcoming events, training opportunities, and member news.

Political Advertising

Provides guidance, resources, and support for navigating political advertising opportunities and regulations during election seasons.

Publisher Roundtables

Interactive discussions where publishers can exchange ideas, discuss industry challenges, and collaborate on solutions in a peer-driven environment.

Sales Proposal Tool

A customizable sales system developed from CVC audit data, helping members create stronger, data-driven proposals for clients.

Special Section Exchange

A shared drive where members can browse through ideas from others, and adapt, customize, and build upon it for their own purposes.

Spring Conference

A major annual event featuring educational sessions, industry speakers, networking opportunities, and professional development for members.

Summer Manager’s Summit

A leadership-focused event designed specifically for managers and decision-makers, offering advanced discussions on operations, leadership, sales, and growth strategies.

**BUT WAIT,
THERE’S MORE!**

Industry Advancement

MCP advocates for the strength and future of community publications at the state, regional, and national levels, ensuring the voice and value of local media continues to be recognized.

Increased Profits and Business Growth

MCP helps members identify opportunities for growth, improve operations, strengthen advertising sales, and ultimately increase profitability.

Fun and Community

MCP believes strong professional relationships matter. Members benefit not only from educational and business opportunities, but also from the camaraderie, friendships, and enjoyable experiences built through events and networking.

MCP membership is more than just access to programs and events—it is an investment in growth, collaboration, and long-term success. By taking advantage of the many member benefits available, organizations can improve profitability, strengthen industry knowledge, expand professional networks, and stay ahead in a rapidly evolving media environment. MCP is committed to helping its members succeed, and the more these resources are utilized, the greater the value membership provides.



**IN-PERSON
ROUNDTABLE
DISCUSSIONS** provide valuable opportunities to exchange ideas, solve challenges, and learn from others who share similar roles and experiences.

Cedar Falls 2026

AN IMPROMPTU GATHERING between sessions shows why in-person events are a great way to network and get your questions answered from the pros.



The Power of U

Publishers from across the Midwest gathered in Cedar Falls, Iowa, April 16-17 for the 2026 MCP Conference, centered around the theme, “The Power of U.”

The annual awards ceremony recognized excellence in editorial and ad design while celebrating the outstanding work being produced across the region. The conference also offered valuable learning and networking opportunities, including the tailgate reception, roundtable discussions, breakout sessions and the ever popular 3-Minute Idea Exchange.

From educational sessions and industry discussions to networking and recognition, the 2026 MCP Conference delivered on its goal of helping members learn, connect and return home inspired.



FINDING YOUR “WHY” was an important part of the opening keynote speech. The members in attendance can be seen here with their eyes shut and hands over their hearts as they reflect on the reasons they do what they do.



RYAN DOHRN, keynote speaker and sales coach, reinforced the conference theme, “The Power of U”, by reminding attendees that their greatest competitive advantage is themselves.



A GROUP OF MCP members head out on the town after the opening night tailgate reception.



GRAPHIC DESIGNER OF THE YEAR was awarded to Carrie Hendricks of the Buchanan County Shopper, who also works across multiple other publications.



THE UNSUNG HERO award was given to Jennifer Nelson from the Tollefson Publishing. Jennifer wears many hats as office assistant, circulation manager and most recently taking on the role of copy editor as well.



LEEANNE BOKOWSKI (left) accepts the award for Distinguished Service presented to her and Sue Pilla. Lee and Sue have been a huge part of the association, including serving as executive director and office manager.



RYAN DOHRN presents his tried and true sales techniques in one of his breakout sessions during the 2026 annual conference.



CVC Audits

In today's competitive media environment, credibility matters. Advertisers want proof that their marketing dollars are reaching real readers, real households, and real consumers. That's exactly why a CVC audit has become one of the most valuable tools a publication can have.

The Circulation Verification Council (CVC) provides independent, third-party audits that verify circulation, distribution, digital reach, readership, and audience engagement. Rather than relying on estimates or assumptions, publishers with a CVC audit can present advertisers with verified data backed by one of the industry's leading audit organizations.

A CVC audit does much more than simply validate circulation numbers. It demonstrates transparency, professionalism, and accountability. In a marketplace where advertisers are increasingly cautious about where they spend their budgets, audited data helps publications stand out from competitors who may only provide unaudited claims.

One of the biggest advantages of a CVC audit is the readership study. These studies provide valuable demographic and purchasing behavior information that advertisers want to see. Publishers can show not only how many people receive their publication, but also who those readers are, how long they spend with the publication, and how often they respond to advertising.

Another important benefit is the marketing support that comes with the audit process. CVC provides promotional materials, sales training webinars, advertiser outreach assistance, sample ads, logos, media buyer promotions, and national audit distribution to media directories and agencies. Publications are encouraged to actively market their audited status because the true value of the audit comes from using the data in advertising sales presentations and marketing campaigns.

For MCP members, the benefits go even further. Members now have access to the MCP CVC Sales Proposal Tool, which allows publishers to create professional sales proposals using their own verified CVC audit data. This gives sales teams a powerful way to customize presentations for local advertisers using real circulation, readership, demographic, and market penetration information directly from their audit reports.

The proposal tool helps transform audit data into a practical sales resource. Instead of simply handing an advertiser an audit report, publishers can build compelling presentations that clearly demonstrate audience reach, buying power, intent to buy, and advertising value within their market.

A CVC audit also reinforces the long-term strength of community pub-



CVC PRESIDENT/CEO Tim Bingaman addresses the members of MCP about how to read, understand and leverage the power of the audits. He made it clear that readership is still very consistent across the association membership.

lishing. Independent verification gives advertisers confidence, helps publications compete against larger digital platforms, and supports stronger advertising relationships built on trust and accountability.

In short, a CVC audit is more than a report. It is a sales tool, a credibility builder, a marketing advantage, and a competitive edge.

For publications looking to strengthen advertiser confidence and maximize revenue opportunities, audited data is essential and in most cases is included free of charge to you as part of your membership dues.

Unlock Deeper Audience Insights with CVC Multi-Source Surveys

A smarter, modern way to understand your readers.

Publishers nationwide are gaining clearer, more actionable audience data through CVC's multi-source studies.

Our online surveys reach readers through your publication, website, social media, and email—capturing a fuller picture of who engages with your content.

Online studies can include 5 custom questions at no additional cost.



OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES

314-966-7711

cvcaudit.com

Digital Sales Platform



JENNA UNASH from iPromote recently gave a demonstration of the new AI-powered video creation tool. Now in a matter of seconds, clients can have a polished, professional 30-second video which previously would have taken time and know-how.

For most publishers, digital advertising is not a replacement for print, it's a powerful companion. Combining print and digital advertising gives clients a more complete marketing strategy, extending their reach beyond the page and into the online spaces where consumers spend their time every day. Print builds credibility and local brand recognition, while digital advertising reinforces messaging through search, social media, websites, mobile apps, and video platforms.

By offering both print and digital solutions together, publishers can strengthen client relationships, deliver better results, and create additional revenue opportunities instead of leaving marketing dollars on the table. Integrated campaigns help advertisers stay visible across multiple channels while positioning publishers as full-service marketing partners in an increasingly digital world.

That's why MCP partners with iPromote to make digital advertising incredibly easy and cost effective for businesses of all sizes. The iPromote platform simplifies campaign creation, audience targeting, ad placement, and performance tracking all within one streamlined system.

This partnership allows MCP members to access enterprise-level digital advertising tools without the complexity or high costs often associated with digital marketing. Businesses can confidently launch professional campaigns across web, mobile, video, search, and social platforms while receiving guidance every step of the way.

Together, MCP and iPromote help businesses expand their reach, grow brand awareness, and connect with customers where they are.

Member Meetups

One of the greatest benefits of MCP membership is the opportunity to connect, learn, and grow alongside fellow media professionals through our Member Meetups. Whether held in a classroom setting at conferences or virtually via monthly Zoom calls, these sessions provide members with fresh ideas, practical training, and valuable networking opportunities that consistently prove worthwhile.

Last year's meetups covered a wide range of timely and relevant topics, including postal roundtables, real estate, classified front office training, summer trainings with ACP, a CVC training series, sales discussions led by Ryan Dohrn, and special section roundtables. The diversity of topics reflects the evolving needs of our members and the media industry as a whole.

Member Meetups are designed to be collaborative and member-driven. MCP members are encouraged to suggest future topics, share challenges they are facing, and participate in as many sessions as possible. These meetups are an excellent way to gain practical insights, exchange ideas with peers, and stay ahead in a rapidly changing industry.

Looking ahead, upcoming meetups will include digital sales trainings, a summer AI learning series, and a holiday special section meetup. No matter your role or experience level, there is always something valuable to take away from these conversations and trainings.

You can find some upcoming sessions and dates on the inside back page of this guide.



RUSS SWART AND OTHERS listen intently at an in-person roundtable event in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The annual spring conference is a great way to get together and really find out what others are dealing with and brainstorming ways to solve problems everyone is facing.

MVPs

The MCP Most Valued Professional (MVP) Program is all about recognizing the next generation of leaders in the free paper industry. Designed for rising professionals age 40 and under, this prestigious program shines a spotlight on individuals who are making an impact not just in their workplaces, but in their communities as well.

Each year, up to five standout professionals are selected for their leadership, professionalism, strong character, and commitment to growth. MVPs are people who go above and beyond, constantly looking for ways to improve their publications, strengthen the industry, and develop their own skills along the way.

But this isn't just an award, it's an opportunity. Winners receive recognition in Paperclips, the official MCP newsletter, plus complimentary registration and hotel accommodations for the annual MCP Conference. That means networking, industry insights, leadership training, and valuable connections with some of the best minds in the business.

The benefits continue long after the conference ends. MVPs become part of an ongoing leadership initiative where they can help shape the future of the association, collaborate on industry projects, and gain access to even more professional development opportunities over the next two years.

For ambitious professionals looking to grow their careers, build industry connections, and be recognized as one of the industry's brightest emerging leaders, the MCP MVP Program is an incredible opportunity to step forward and stand out.



THE MVPs BROKE AWAY from the 2026 annual conference in Cedar Falls, Iowa to attend their own team building opportunity at the Escapology escape room. The group pictured here broke out with twenty minutes left to spare.

If you know a young professional within your company who would be a strong fit for this program, please watch for nomination forms to be released in November for consideration for the 2027 induction.

Paperclips

Want to stay informed about the latest happenings at MCP and across the publishing industry? Paperclips, MCP's official monthly newsletter, delivers valuable content directly to your inbox each month. Readers will find association news and updates, current sales specials, upcoming events, and insightful columns from respected industry professionals including Kevin Slimp, John Foust, Ryan Dohrn, and other experts in sales, graphics, publishing, and more.

Paperclips also serves as an important source for industry updates and provides associate members with opportunities to stay top of mind with publishers throughout the region. Beginning in July 2026, readers can look

forward to a refreshed design and enhanced reading experience.

If you are not already receiving Paperclips, be sure to sign up by scanning the QR code. Current and past issues are also available on the MCP website.



Ryan Dohrn
Billion-Dollar Sales Coach



Kevin Slimp
News Guru



John Foust
Dale Carnegie Training

Midwest Ad Networks

For MCP members, advertising is not limited to selling single-paper placements or managing complex, time-consuming campaigns. MCP offers three powerful ad network programs designed to increase revenue, expand reach, and make selling ads simpler for local sales teams and more effective for advertisers.

These programs give businesses access to some of the most widely read community publications across the Midwest, while giving members easy, streamlined ways to sell and fulfill campaigns.

Midwest Classifieds Network (MCN)

The Midwest Classifieds Network is the foundation of MCP's advertising reach. It delivers combined circulation of more than 1.45 million readers across eight states, including Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota.

Advertisers can choose:

- **All Zones (\$249/week) for maximum regional reach**
- **Or targeted zones such as Minnesota, Iowa, East of I-35, or West of I-35 for more focused campaigns**

This network is ideal for 30-word classified ads, making it a cost-effective option for businesses that want broad exposure without the complexity of managing multiple placements. With strong readership across rural and suburban markets, MCN continues to be one of the most reliable ways to connect local businesses with local customers.

Midwest 2x2 Display Ad Network

The Midwest 2x2 Display Ad Network offers a simple, affordable way for advertisers to gain high-impact visibility across more than 70 newspapers in eight states, reaching a combined circulation of over 840,000.

At just \$600 per week, this 3" x 2" (2x2) display ad format delivers wide regional coverage at a fraction of the cost of placing individual ads in each publication.

This network is especially effective for advertisers promoting: resorts, festivals, fairs, attractions, tourism-related businesses, public awareness campaigns, farm equipment, auctions, and specialty products.

For businesses that rely on broad exposure and visual impact, the 2x2 network offers strong value and efficiency.

MCP Network Agency Advertising

Beyond standardized networks, MCP also offers a full-service network advertising program designed to take the burden off both member publications and advertisers.

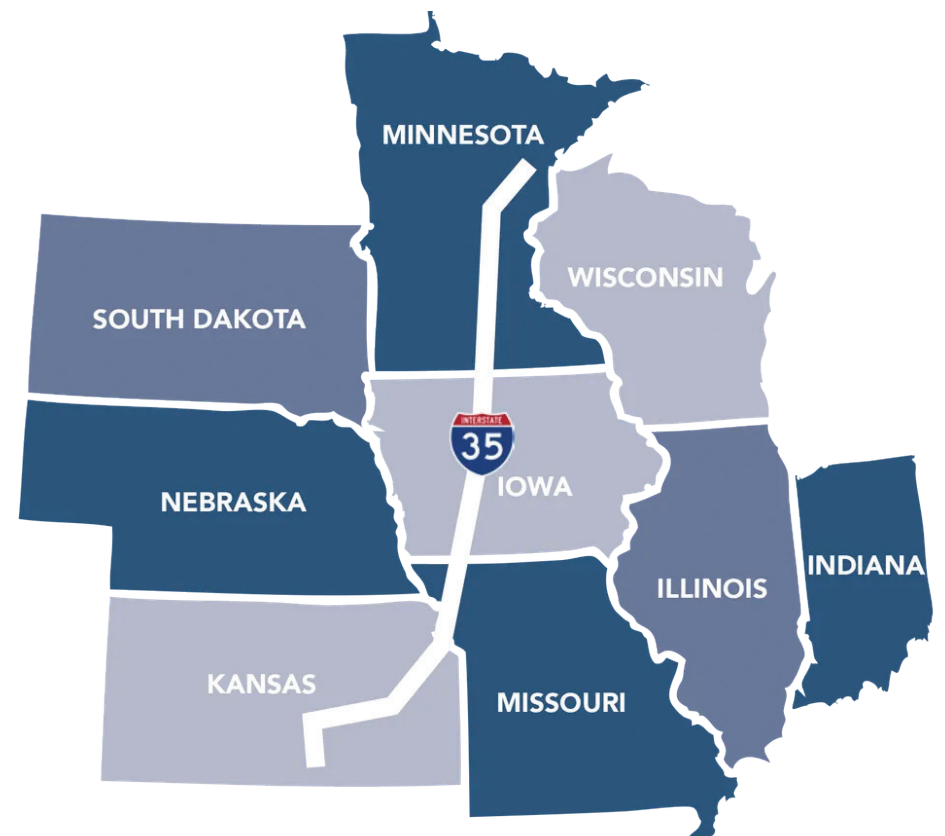
Through this program, MCP handles the entire process from quoting and placement to fulfillment and invoicing. Advertisers simply choose their preferred markets, submit their ad, and MCP manages the rest.

This program is valuable for agencies and businesses that want:

- **One point of contact**
- **One invoice and payment**
- **Strategic placement support across multiple publications**
- **Assistance with targeting and publication selection**

If a desired publication is not currently part of the network, MCP will work to establish a relationship and expand coverage whenever possible.

For MCP members, these programs are more than just ad products, they are revenue drivers. They simplify the selling process, increase average order value, and give sales teams powerful tools to compete in a fragmented advertising market.



For advertisers, the value is equally strong. Instead of managing multiple contracts and relationships, they gain access to large-scale regional reach through trusted local publications, often at reduced cost compared to buying individual placements.

Current Promotions

Right now, MCP is offering several major incentives that make it an especially strong time for advertisers to invest:

- **30-word classified ads are half price**
- **2x2 display ads are buy one, get one free**
- **Free MCN ad for first-time advertisers with purchase of a 2x2 display ad**

These promotions lower the barrier to entry while encouraging advertisers to try broader campaigns across the network benefiting both clients and member publications.

Selling and running network advertising is also one of the association's most important sources of revenue beyond membership dues. The income generated through these ad programs helps sustain day-to-day operations while also allowing MCP to reinvest back into the association. That reinvestment supports ongoing improvements, expanded services, and the development of new offerings that benefit all members. In this way, every ad sold not only helps local advertisers reach customers, but also strengthens the overall network and ensures MCP can continue growing and delivering value across all participating publications.

In today's competitive media landscape, simplicity, reach, and affordability matter more than ever. MCP's three network advertising programs deliver all three, giving members easier ways to sell and giving advertisers stronger results across a trusted regional media network.

Learn more about MCP Network Advertising by scanning the QR code to the right or by contacting the office or a MCN/MDN committee member found toward the back of the guide.



Current Ad Sale Promos

MCN Classified Ads can make you money!

Advertising at HALF PRICE makes it EASIER THAN EVER!

The following industries reach circulation beyond your local paper's boundaries—in many cases attracting people from all over the Midwest!



AUCTIONS

HELP WANTED

EQUIPMENT—FARM & COMMERCIAL. Tractors, skid steers, farm land, livestock, etc.

COMMUNITY EVENTS. Examples include street fairs, festivals, fundraisers, coin shows, gun shows, etc. which typically have specific dates on the ads.

ADVERTISING FOR TOURISM. From Chambers of Commerce or Tourism Bureaus promoting Tourism.

VEHICLE SALES. Cars, trucks, ATVs, RVs, campers and collectible vehicles.

ANTIQUES. Individuals, stores or events.

This promotion ends on December 31, 2026.

Advertising through the Midwest Community Publications (MCP) network is a **simple, cost-effective** way to **reach a widespread audience.**

Increase your bottom line with MCP's

HALF PRICE PROMO!

Buy 30 words or less for:

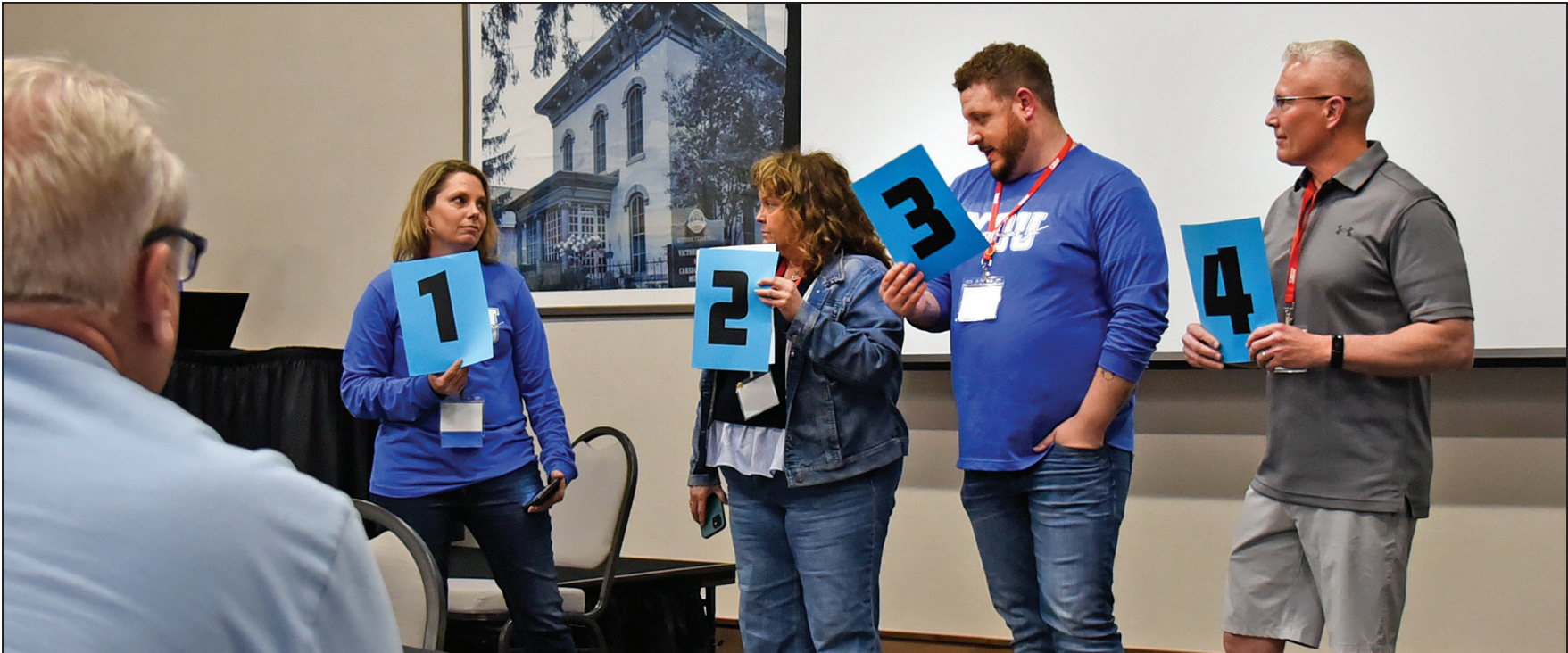
ALL MIDWEST ZONES:
Reg. \$249 **SALE \$125**

IOWA ONLY (or) EAST or WEST ZONES:
Reg. \$169 **SALE \$85**

MINNESOTA ONLY:
Reg. \$115 **SALE \$58**

In all Midwest: Over 85 papers with a circulation over 1.45 million weekly
In Iowa: Over 40 papers with circulation over 720,000 weekly
East or West Zones: Over 40 papers with circulation over 700,000 weekly
In Minnesota: Over 20 papers with circulation over 335,000 weekly

THE FINAL FOUR size each other up as the membership votes on who delivered the best idea at the 2026 3-Minute Idea Exchange in Cedar Falls, Iowa. All the ideas were great and ranged from an Amish directory to an online holiday gift guide to yard signs for America's 250th anniversary.



Current Ad Sale Promos

**Midwest
2x2 Display Ads**
can make you money!

**BUY ONE,
GET ONE FREE**
makes it
EASIER THAN EVER!

The following industries can reach circulation well beyond your local paper's boundaries—in many cases attracting people from all over the Midwest!



AUCTIONS



HELP WANTED



EQUIPMENT—FARM & COMMERCIAL. Tractors, skid steers, farm land, livestock, etc.



COMMUNITY EVENTS. Examples include street fairs, festivals, fundraisers, coin shows, gun shows, etc. which typically have specific dates on the ads.



ADVERTISING FOR TOURISM. From Chambers of Commerce or Tourism Bureaus promoting Tourism.



VEHICLE SALES. Cars, trucks, ATVs, RVs, campers and collectible vehicles.



ANTIQUES. Individuals, stores or events.

This promotion ends on December 31, 2026.

Increase your
bottom line with MCP's

**BUY ONE
GET ONE
PROMO!**

Get a FREE 2x2 Ad
with the Purchase of a 2x2 Ad!

Reg.
up to \$600

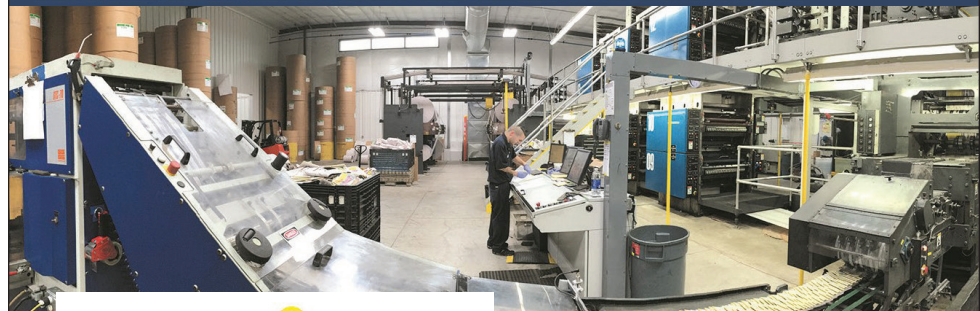
BOGO SALE
(up to \$600 value)

OVER 70 PAPERS IN 8 STATES: combined circulation over 840,000
*Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska,
South Dakota, Wisconsin*

Advertising through the Midwest
Community Publications (MFCP) network is a
simple, cost-effective way to
reach a widespread audience.

PRINTING PUBLICATIONS OF ALL SIZES IN THE MIDWEST

We don't make headlines...



WHITE & WOLF
WEB OFFSET & DIGITAL PRINTERS

...we print them

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— John Draper, Pipestone Publishing

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Association Awards

Each year, the MCP Awards shine a spotlight on the outstanding work being produced by community publishers throughout the Midwest. The annual competition recognizes excellence in both graphic design and editorial achievement, giving publications the opportunity to showcase their very best work from the previous year.

The competition is divided into two primary divisions, Graphic Design and Editorial, and features more than 60 individual classes. Entries range from innovative advertising campaigns and creative layouts to compelling writing and impactful storytelling. Together, these awards celebrate the talent, creativity, and dedication that drive community publications forward.

While the competition honors exceptional work on the page, MCP also recognizes the individuals whose contributions elevate the entire industry through special awards such as Graphic Designer of the Year, Unsung Hero, and the President's Memorial Award for Distinguished Service.

The MCP Awards are more than a competition though; they are a celebration of the people, creativity, and commitment that keep community publications thriving.

You can already download the competition rules and entry form for 2027 now by scanning this QR code:



THESE ARE JUST TWO of many examples of ad award winners. Star Shopper took home a General Excellence award, and Sidney Kiersch won for the Ad Creation Contest.



Committees

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee oversees MCP's annual advertising competition, manages award submissions, and coordinates nominations for additional association awards and recognition programs.

- Lisa Miller (Chair)
- Peggy Loveless
- Joyce Frericks

Bylaw Committee

The Bylaw Committee reviews the association's bylaws and recommends updates or revisions to ensure they remain relevant.

- Greg Birkett (Chair)

Conference Committee

The Conference Committee scouts locations, plans events, coordinates lodging, and develops programming for MCP's in-person conferences and gatherings.

- Lisa Miller (Chair)
- Greg Birkett

- Carrie Vander Weerd
- Ashley Huisman

Digital Committee

The Digital Committee explores new technologies, products, and digital opportunities that can help the association increase revenue and improve services.

- Greg Birkett (Chair)
- John Adams
- Rachel Sajban
- Christopher Hall

Engagement Committee

The Engagement Committee focuses on member recruitment, retention, and involvement. The committee works to strengthen connections with current members while identifying opportunities to attract new members to MCP.

- Luke Perry (Chair)
- Nancy Powell
- Sarah Young
- Trevor Slette
- Mindy Carter

MCN/MDN Committee

Advertising sales are a vital source of funding for the association. Through the Midwest Classified Network (MCN) and Midwest Display Network (MDN), this committee develops strategies and programs that help members sell more advertising, increase revenue, and simplify the sales process.

- Joyce Frericks (Chair)
- Peggy Loveless
- Julia Thompson
- Desiree Whalen
- Aaron Burns
- Julia Merten

MVP Committee

The Most Valuable Professionals (MVP) Committee focuses on engaging younger professionals in the industry. The committee develops opportunities for networking, professional development, and long-term involvement in MCP.

- Cory Regnier (Chair)
- Kari Jurens

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee identifies and recruits engaged, qualified members to serve on the MCP Board of Directors and as association officers.

- Greg Birkett (Chair)
- Lisa Miller
- Carrie Vander Weerd

Get Involved

MCP committees are always looking for dedicated members who want to help shape the future of the association. You do not need to serve on the Board of Directors to participate on a committee. What matters most is a willingness to contribute, follow through on commitments, and actively participate in committee activities.

If you are interested in helping strengthen MCP, consider joining a committee today by reaching out to any of the committee members or board members.

Membership

Membership in MCP is designed for publishers who are actively engaged in the work of community-focused publishing and who want to be part of a broader network supporting the future of local media.

Traditionally, membership has been open to publishers of free distribution newspapers published at least 12 times per year. These publications must also maintain editorial balance, with no more than 75% of content focused on a single topic or category of interest. This ensures that member publications reflect the broad, community-oriented nature of the industry.

However, recent bylaw updates have expanded eligibility to include paid publications and digital-only publications, recognizing that today’s media environment no longer fits a single format. This change reflects the growing reality that publishing now spans print, online platforms, newsletters, and hybrid models.

To join, applicants must be prepared to demonstrate their active publishing operations and submit a standard set of materials, including:

- **A completed membership application**
- **Participation agreements for MCP network programs**
- **A signed code of ethics**
- **Two recent copies of the publication (or digital access if applicable)**
- **Payment of annual membership dues**

Members are also expected to maintain transparency by providing annual reporting on circulation, rates, and distribution areas, along with ongoing submission of issues or digital access to MCP.

Joining MCP is not just about meeting eligibility requirements—it is about becoming part of a network that is evolving alongside the publishing industry.

By joining, publishers gain access to:

- **A stronger professional network of community publishers**
- **Shared resources and industry knowledge**
- **Collaborative advertising and network opportunities**
- **Practical tools and platforms that support growth and innovation**

Perhaps most importantly, membership strengthens the collective future of community publishing. As new publishers join and bring new ideas, formats, and strategies, the entire network benefits. Growth in membership doesn’t just expand the organization; it deepens its expertise and resilience.

MCP’s expanded membership model reflects a simple truth: Publishing is changing, but its core mission remains the same—connecting communities through trusted, relevant information.

Whether print, digital, free distribution, or paid circulation, eligible publishers who join MCP become part of a forward-looking organization committed to strengthening the industry as a whole.

For publishers considering membership, do you feel prepared to tackle the new frontier of publishing alone? Or, could you use a little help from friends?

Associate Members

Associate memberships are available at several levels and include additional benefits and acknowledgement opportunities throughout the year.

ASSOCIATE	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
• \$200 Annual • Membership Directory Listing • 1/8 Page Ad in Paperclips • Website Listing Top of Mind Included in your associate member dues are multiple opportunities to be seen by the people who need your services most.	• \$300 Annual • Membership Directory Listing • 1/8 Page Ad in Membership Directory • 1/4 Page Ad in Paperclips • Website Listing • Recognition at Each Conference Thank you for supporting MCP!	• \$500 Annual • Membership Directory Listing • 1/4 Page Ad in Membership Directory • 1/2 Page Ad in Paperclips • Website Listing • Recognition at Each Conference • Sponsorship of Cocktail Party • Access to our Digital Ad Placement Platform	• \$1,000 Annual • Membership Directory Listing • Full Page Ad in Membership Directory • Full Page Ad in Paperclips • Website Listing • Recognition at Each Conference • Sponsorship of Cocktail Party • Sponsorship of Awards Luncheon • Access to our Digital Ad Placement Platform

GOLD MEMBERS: Newspaper CRM. **SILVER MEMBERS:** Circulation Verification Council. **BRONZE MEMBERS:** Media Bids, White Wolf Printers, Woodward Printing, Quadd.ai. **ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:** Kansas Publishing, Helmer Printing, iPromote, Make it Personal Promotional Products, Saturation Mailers Coalition, Metro Creative, Hometown Mobile.

Member Dues

Expanded Opportunities, Greater Flexibility, and More Value

Why We Updated the Membership Structure

MCP has grown and evolved alongside the community publication industry. As member organizations expand their products, publication schedules, and business models, we recognized that our membership structure needed to evolve as well.

The new dues model was designed with three goals in mind:

- **More Publications Are Now Eligible for Membership**

Historically, some publications did not fit neatly within MCP’s membership requirements. Under the updated structure, we have expanded eligibility so that more community publications can participate and benefit from everything MCP offers.

Whether a publication is weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, there is now a clearer path to membership and participation.

- **Easier for Existing Members to Add Publications**

Many current members operate multiple publications under one company umbrella. In the past, adding additional publications was not always straightforward or cost-effective.

The new tiered membership structure makes it easier and more affordable to bring additional publications into MCP so they can participate in advertising networks, receive readership audits, attend events, and take advantage of member resources.

- **Aligning Dues with Participation and Benefits**

The updated structure recognizes the value that participating publications bring to member advertising programs while creating a fair and sustainable dues model for all members.

Publications that actively participate in MCP’s advertising networks help strengthen opportunities for the entire membership, and the dues structure reflects that collaborative commitment.

The Value of MCP Membership

Membership dues are far more than a fee; they are an investment in revenue growth, professional development, and business success. In fact, many members find that the value of MCP benefits exceeds the cost of membership many times over.

Your membership includes:

Revenue-Generating Opportunities

- MCN Ad Sales Network
- MDN Display Ad Sales Network
- 2x2 Ad Program
- Digital Ad Sales Resources
- Political Advertising Resources
- Sales Proposal Tool

Audience & Market Intelligence

- Complimentary CVC Readership Audit (where applicable)
- Data-driven audience insights
- Advertiser confidence tools

Professional Development

- Spring Conference
- Summer Manager’s Summit
- Fall Sales Training
- Publisher Roundtables
- 3-Minute Idea Exchange

Collaboration & Networking

- Members Helping Members
- Membership Directory and Interactive Map
- Special Section Exchange
- Peer-to-peer problem solving and idea sharing

Recognition & Industry Leadership

- Ad Awards Competition
- Industry Advocacy and Advancement
- Representation for community publications at state, regional, and national levels

Information & Communication

- Monthly Paperclips Newsletter
- Industry updates and member news

A Stronger Community

One of the most valuable benefits of MCP membership cannot be measured on a balance sheet: the relationships.

Members consistently tell us that the connections, friendships, support, and collaborative spirit within MCP help them solve problems faster, discover new opportunities, and enjoy being part of an organization that understands the unique challenges and opportunities facing community publishers.

A Membership That Pays for Itself

When you consider the cost of professional readership audits, conference registration, sales training, networking opportunities, advertising programs, advocacy efforts, and business development resources, MCP membership represents an exceptional value.

For many members, a single advertising opportunity, new sales strategy, readership insight, or business connection generated through MCP can offset the annual cost of membership.

Our goal is simple: provide members with tools, resources, relationships, and opportunities that help strengthen local publications and improve business performance year after year.

SINGLE PUBLICATION MEMBERSHIP

Weekly - running MCN AND 2x2 ads	\$325
Weekly - running MCN OR 2x2 ads	\$425
Bi-weekly or Monthly - running MCN AND 2x2 ads	\$425
Bi-weekly or Monthly - running MCN OR 2x2 ads	\$475
Any Frequency - does not run ads	\$625

MULTIPLE PUBLICATION OPTIONS

TIER 1 (2 publications)	
Must run ads - 1 audit, Add a single pub	\$100
TIER 2 (3 to 5 publications)	
Must run ads - up to 3 audits.....	\$1,200
TIER 3 (5 to 10 publications)	
Must run ads - up to 5 audits.....	\$2,000
Additional audits.....	\$300

Upcoming Events

Summer AI Series Continues

Whether you're looking to save time, increase productivity, improve your digital presence, or simply understand the technology everyone is talking about, these sessions will provide valuable insights you can apply immediately.

Wednesday, July 15 | 1:00 p.m.

Two AI Projects You Can Implement Today

This hands-on session will showcase two practical AI projects that can be implemented right away to improve productivity and streamline every-day tasks. We'll cover:

- **Simple AI-powered workflows that save time**
- **Tools that can automate repetitive work**
- **Real-world examples of AI in action**
- **Step-by-step guidance for getting started**

Wednesday, August 12 | 1:00 p.m.

The Latest & Greatest in AI: What It Means for You

The AI landscape is evolving at an incredible pace. This session will provide an overview of the newest trends, tools, and breakthroughs shaping the industry, including:

- **Emerging AI technologies**
- **New tools and platforms gaining traction**
- **Industry trends to watch**
- **Opportunities and challenges for businesses**

Digital Training Events

Wednesday, June 24 | 10:00 a.m.

Digital Platform Information Session

Learn about the iPromote digital platform and discover the tools, resources, and opportunities available to help you sell digital advertising. This session is ideal for new users or anyone looking for a refresher on available features.

Wednesday, July 22 | 10:00 a.m.

Digital Platform Walkthrough

Take a deeper dive into the iPromote platform with a guided walk-through. Participants will take a potential client's information and build a campaign from the ground up while learning how to navigate key features, update information, utilize available resources, and make the most of the platform's capabilities.

Holiday Special Sections Idea Exchange

Thursday, September 17 | 10:00 a.m.

Planning for holiday publications and special sections begins early. Join fellow members for a collaborative brainstorming session focused on:

- **Seasonal content ideas**
- **Successful special section concepts**
- **Creative approaches for engaging readers and sponsors**
- **Bring your ideas, share best practices, and leave with fresh inspiration for your upcoming holiday projects.**

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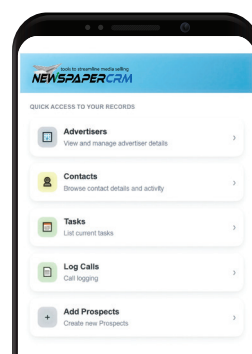
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"Since adopting NewspaperCRM last summer, we discover a new time-saving feature every single week. Support is second to none — Robin is always ready to jump on a call and help. The mass email tool has been a game-changer. Our Home for the Holidays campaign alone helped us sell two additional pages of ads compared to the previous year, reaching clients who had not participated before. Six months in, the efficiency and revenue gains were impossible to ignore. We went from a 12-month to a 60-month subscription without hesitation. Simply put — this CRM works!"

John Adams, Owner/Publisher
The Lakes News Shopper

Reach Out And Schedule Your Demo Today!



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