



the newsletter of
the Minnesota
Magazine &
Publications
Association

Mark Your Calendar

MMPA Member
Roundtable: Editors
October 20, 2004

MMPA Member
Roundtable: Production
November 17, 2004

MMPA Member
Roundtable: Publishers
December 8, 2004

MMPA Member
Roundtable: Circulation
December 15, 2004
See page 2 for more details

MMPA Excellence Awards
Location: The Metropolitan
5418 Wayzata Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN
6:00-9:00 pm
November 11, 2004

Deadline for MMPA's
December/January issue
November 15, 2004



volume 4 | issue 8
October 2004

Today My Membership Paid For Itself

by Ellington Miller Bandel | editor, Rochester Women

As the old saying goes: you get out of membership what you put in. On September 23, I decided to *put in*. I spent a vacation day to attend the Brady & Paul magazine critique workshop to find out just how my magazine stacks up. Less than an hour in, I knew my MMPA membership would pay for itself this day.

John Brady and Greg Paul have been "magazine doctors" since 1984. They have brought new life to several existing magazines and have helped launch many others. They spoke to an MMPA audience of 130 to help us rediscover our own magazine missions.

For long-time magazine folks it was a great publishing refresher course in who and what to think about, when to think about it, and how to save a few bucks along the way. For first-time magazine staffers, like me, it was a crash course in the things that matter.

Here are a selection of topics Brady and Paul covered:

Ebony & Ivory. They began by discussing the interconnected nature of editing and design, reminding us that every decision must help communicate the magazine's message. "We can never leave the reader out of certain decisions," Paul said. "In magazines, you write for an audience of one. A magazine is a very intimate thing. It's a relationship between you and the reader."

Drop in on readers. One of the best ways to collect feedback about your publication is to make a few phone calls to readers each week, said Brady. Collect feedback one by one, and you'll keep the reader coming back.

The last page. Make it surprising, quirky, funny. Use an effective columnist, insert a quiz, or create an impressive visual. Just don't use it for the advertisers index. Think of your last page as the "dessert" of the publication, and strive to leave readers with a good taste in their mouths.

Pay attention to reader circles:

In every publication, there is an inner circle of readers—that faithful majority who renew their subscriptions year after year. They'll tell you if they loved the shrimp recipe you included last month or if you took a wrong turn with the new columnist. You can survey them and collect a fair amount of research on their age, gender and income.



John Brady and Greg Paul speak to attendees

But there is a smaller, outer circle of readers who are new or read your magazine only sometimes. They represent the growth ring—your future readers. You should consciously charm them whenever possible. How do you do it? Brady offered three ways:

- 1 Appeal to entry-level readers. Think young, and keep it fresh.
- 2 Help them feel "part of the club" with sidebars and background info that your regular readers might already know. The regulars will likely skip the information, but the newbies will appreciate the orientation.
- 3 Develop a distinctive editorial look regularly. Redesign every two to three years to refresh. Show them you're changing creatively.

Critiquing Minnesota Magazines

Some of us were brave enough to volunteer our titles for public critique, and Brady and Paul spent a great deal of time making examples of them (and other identifiable titles), sharing pet peeves (such as line length over 54 characters, cover photos that grossly overlap the logo, and reverse type) and ideas (such as reinforcing the logo in the table of contents and using "you" to talk to the reader in the cover lines). They also emphasized the importance of helping readers find the cover story using consistent words to describe it in cover lines, the table of contents and the story title. They showed a few shameful examples of publications that used utterly different descriptions en route to the cover story or buried the



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upcoming events

New Location for MMPA Roundtables

Upcoming Roundtable Discussions will be held at the NEW MMPA Headquarters (Ewald Consulting) located at:

1000 Westgate Drive, Suite 252
St. Paul, Minnesota 55114
Phone: (651) 290-6281

All will be held 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

October 20: Editors

Galynn Nordstrom, IFAI editorial director, will facilitate the fourth Editorial Roundtable of the year. The primary discussion topic will be "the nuts and bolts of good writing and editing," including how to generate new ways of covering the same topic(s); how to write good interview questions; and using sidebars and companion pieces to increase depth of coverage. Please bring samples of your publications and illustrative articles to punctuate the conversation. We'll also select a facilitator for the 2005 Editorial Roundtables (held quarterly in 2004), and pick a date and topic(s) for the next discussion.

November 17: Production

The next Production Roundtable will focus on color management. Guest speakers (from the MMPA membership) will present their color expertise as it pertains to the print production arena.

December 8: Publishers

MMPA board member Mary Hennessy reports that at the last Publishers Roundtable, "conversation was free-wheeling and enthusiastic." Next time, topics will include copyright issues, start-ups and acquisitions. Bring your ideas and join the fun!

December 15: Circulation

Those attending the next MMPA Circulation Roundtable are encouraged to bring samples of subscription promotions from various sources: direct mail, magazine inserts/outserts, web and email promotions, conference promotions, etc. We will present case histories and discuss what works in our various markets.

Both controlled and paid circulation managers are encouraged to attend this roundtable discussion, when we'll all have an opportunity to learn and share.

MMPA Launches \$40 Million Effort to Promote Magazine Advertising

The Magazine Publishers of America (MPA) said it will spend \$40 million over the next three years to convince advertising agencies that magazines are a good buy.

The initiative's goal is to reassert the strength of magazines' role in marketing plans based on recent studies into readers' and advertisers' behavior, according to a release from the MPA. It marks the first time that the magazine industry has worked together on a

large-scale, multi-year marketing effort, the MPA reported.

Fallon New York has been hired by the MPA. It will emphasize magazines' powerful connection to readers at a time when advertisers seek solutions that go beyond traditional mass reach and CPMs (Cost per thousand).

"Communicating that magazines deliver a unique combination of reach and engagement will catapult magazines to

Greg Paul gives one-on-one magazine consultation to attendees



Brady & Paul Review continued from page 1

all-important article in the table of contents without any flashing lights to point readers to it. (We gasped appropriately).

By the end of the day, we had seen dozens of dos and don'ts and enough examples to make us feel a bit like magazine doctors ourselves. There were a few times when I got that uncomfortable “Oops, my magazine did that” feeling, and other times when I sighed with a “thank goodness we don't do THAT.” And I bet many of my colleagues did too.

What an excellent opportunity to step back and see our work through the eyes of professional readers. For all of us who attended the workshop, our own readers will soon have MMPA to thank for a worthwhile day away from the office.

Lists and more lists. The duo gave us loads of tidbits to take to the office and use immediately. Here's one of those lists:

Ten Tips for Pull Quotes:

1. They precede appearance in story text.
2. They appear in same chronological order as text.
3. One per page.
4. 10-20 words.
5. Two to four lines.
6. Use with a visual element.
7. Use quotation marks only when the speaker is quoted directly.
8. Use them on the top half of the page.
9. Never reveal the story's closer.
10. Plan them in editing, not as layout fillers.

How Brady & Paul Changed My Life and My Publication, too

by Nancy Weingartner | *Managing editor, Franchise Times*

It appears that one of the smartest decisions I've made as managing editor of Franchise Times is to check the box on the Brady & Paul mini-critique submission form stating: Please don't share comments at seminar. For interested publishers, Brady and Paul did individual reviews of magazines and then shared their commentary (or not) with the larger group.

The magazine doctors made a valiant effort to find something to compliment my magazine via their little yellow sticky notes scattered throughout our pages, but for the most part we've got a long way to go to get to *Real Simple* status. We are, in their opinion, a newspaper masquerading as a magazine.

Some of it isn't our fault. Really. We are an industry pub that has loud, colorful ads that scream out to potential franchisees. Since advertisers pay to have their ads up front and touching editorial, we don't always have the luxury of having lots of ad-free pages to design.

But, on the other hand, there are lots of ideas we can incorporate from the critique and seminar to make our publication more professional. It took a couple of glasses of wine to come to this conclusion, but I think we're going to be a better magazine.

I'm just grateful that we get to do it in the privacy of our own offices.

Here are some of the weaknesses they pointed out and how we plan to correct them:

1. Better art for the cover and better cover lines. Pre-Brady & Paul we wrote cover lines at the last minute. Post-Brady & Paul we'll be putting much more thought and design time into them. As far as the art, I'll have to make a better effort at explaining to photographers in other cities what we're looking for so we'll get a cover shot that can be enhanced with lots of words instead of competing with cover lines.

2. Table of Contents page: We've been using it as a laundry list of stories by pretty much just duplicating the story headlines with page numbers. Again, this was a last minute task. Now, we'll write a “sales pitch” for the main stories and do a better job of making it a roadmap to the magazine contents.

3. The last page: We didn't have one. I know, I know, big oversight. It's definitely going to be more work for me, but I like the idea of being the parting shot, the mint on the pillow, the last one to turn off the lights when the party's over.

I admit, though, I feel like that old joke: “In spite of what happened, Mrs. Lincoln, how did you like the play?”

OK, so we'll have to take a little time to lick our wounds, but I think the big message here is that everyone can be better. While sipping my glasses of wine last night and thumbing through the multitude of magazines I have at home, I discovered that some major titles are breaking the Brady & Paul rules, too. Tsk, tsk: If they only knew what I now know.

Goings-On

Grand View Media Buys Ehlert's Sportsman's Group

Grand View Media Group has purchased Ehlert Publishing's Sportsman's Group, including 84,000-circulation *Bowhunting World* and 11,000-circulation *Archery Business*. While he wouldn't reveal specific revenue figures, Grand View general manager and vice president Eddie Lee Rider Jr. says the acquisition will boost Grand View's topline revenue by 30 percent.

Birmingham, AL-based Grand View will retain current staffs for the former Ehlert titles and the titles will continue to be published in Minneapolis. The deal also includes the Black's Annual Buyer's Directories, which target shotgunners and fly fisherman. DeSilva & Phillips handled.

Ehlert sold the titles to focus on its motorized recreation magazines while Grand View is looking to be a more prominent player in the outdoor category.

"About six months ago we met with several of the New York media bankers and asked them to keep us in mind for acquisitions they might be handling," says Rider.

Primedia Ag Magazines Partner with Mycogen Seeds

Primedia Business Magazines & Media, a leading targeted media company, announced an eight-month partnership with Mycogen Seeds to provide farmers with a multimedia Trendspotting information series. The Trendspotting series will identify emerging trends in the grain corn, silage corn and sunflower industries. Spotting these changes will help growers adjust to a rapidly evolving marketplace and remain competitive.

One part of the integrated media program is a series of Trendspotting articles that will appear in *Farm Industry News*, *The Corn and Soybean Digest*, *Hay & Forage Grower* publications and media alliances with *Hoard's Dairyman* magazine. Another part of the program is a series of e-mail newsletters sent to targeted growers. The e-newsletters will detail timely news items about emerging trends.

In addition, www.trendspotting.biz web site and DTN satellite systems will serve as a resource center for all Trendspotting articles and e-newsletters. Growers also may post questions on the web site regarding crop production. Selected questions will be answered by agronomy experts.

Corn growers registering for the e-newsletter will have a chance to win a trip for two to South America in January, 2005. Trendspotting seminars will be available at industry events like World Dairy Expo and Commodity Classic.

Share Your News!

If you'd like your organization's announcements listed in MMPA's Goings On, please send them via email to lauriep@ewald.com

Magazine Founder's Expert Guide to Girl Talk

Effective communication with adolescent girls can be daunting, yet this is a crucial time to develop meaningful connections. Nancy Gruver, founder of the award-winning magazine, *New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams*, is now the author of *HOW TO SAY IT TO GIRLS: Communicating with Your Growing Daughter* (Prentice Hall Press, October 2004, \$15.95), the newest book in the popular "How to Say It" series.

Gruver, a prominent expert on girls' adolescence, has developed an essential guide for parents, caregivers, teachers, and everyone who has an adolescent girl in his or her life.

She supplies them with strategies to making each conversation count, encouraging good communication to help them grow into confident, mature and independent women.



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Paper — A Changing Market

by Joe Mangine | Brown Printing Company



What's the best way to buy paper? Plan, plan, plan.

It may seem like common sense, but it's also sound advice. Whether you need standard papers or commodity grades where no current excess capacity exists, all mills will tell you the same thing: Plan ahead to avoid disappointing your clients.

When supply is short and demand is high, such as the conditions we are experiencing now, it is a safe assumption that paper prices will rise. We already have seen one price increase this year, and industry experts agree that there will be another increase before the end of the year.

Nonetheless, paper prices are still at an all-time low. In some cases, prices are lower than they were 20 years ago. Cost reductions have been passed along to consumers. But beware of the imminent price increase – don't lock yourself in with any quotes until you are sure of the paper price.

Stockpiling isn't the answer. Resist the temptation to build inventories to counteract price increases and market tightness. When paper is stockpiled in the supply chain, creating a so-called “bubble,” the overall market constricts and eventually collapses. It takes only a two percent swing to make a difference between a loose and tight market. The increased print activity we are seeing currently makes pundits confident that the current market strength is demand-driven rather than an inventory bubble. We all know what can happen when a bubble bursts.

Most mills expect the “no excess capacity” (or allocation) status to influence and spill over into 2005. We all know that the economy is improving slowly, which makes it hard to believe there could be an allocation on certain paper grades. Shouldn't we all just hold our breath until the economy recovers? Unfortunately, breath-holding has caused some mills to close and others to stop investing in new mill operations, which has constrained the overall paper-manufacturing capacity in the U.S. Consequently, a small increase in demand can have a large effect on paper availability. Large orders of commodity grades take longer to fill. Currently, several mills are on allocation for offset rolls and other commodity grades.

The assigned allocation is based on a merchant's previous monthly purchases and assumes all machines at all mills are working to their full capacity. Note that if one machine goes

down for a few days, this allocation schedule can be turned upside down.

What about offshore sheets? Due to a weaker dollar, some European and Asian mills would rather sell their paper closer to home. This is why, according to the American Forest & Paper Association based in Washington DC, coated paper imports were down 9.3 percent in Q1 2004 compared to the previous year.

Be patient. Tempting as it may be to buy paper solely on price, don't overlook product quality, service and relationships. If you are looking for the light at the end of the tunnel, you'll have to look a little longer. However, printers who have a strong relationship with their merchants and mills will have a clearer sense of what's happening in the paper market. Maintain a dialogue and build a solid relationship. The more your merchant knows about you, the more he or she can help.

MPA continued from page 2

a place where they're universally recognized for their worth in increasing ROI (return on investment),” said Nina Link, president of the MPA. “At a time when consumers reject ads that interrupt, research shows that readers value advertising as part of their magazine experience. This is resulting in a profound shift in the way the advertising industry thinks about magazines.”

A multi-industry group called the Magazine Marketing Coalition will lead the effort. It includes more than two dozen executives from MPA member companies and industries that work closely with magazines. Jack Kliger, president and CEO of Hachette Filipacchi Media U.S. and vice chairman of the MPA board, will lead the coalition.

“The coalition has been formed because, while we do a good job promoting individual titles, magazines as a category are underpromoted,” said Kliger.

Additional information about the initiative and advertising campaign will be announced at the American Magazine Conference slated for Oct. 24-27 in Boca Raton, FL.

Plan to Be There: A Primer for the Excellence Awards

by *Drew Siqveland* | Consumer Marketing Specialist, Llewellyn

As the weather begins to cool off, we are reminded of the approach of the annual MMPA Excellence Awards. The Metropolitan, located off I-394 at 5418 Wayzata Boulevard, just west of Minneapolis, is hosting the celebration again this year, and the sharp appeal of last year's event promises to carry over to the evening of November 11. In its eighth rendition, the 2004 awards drew more than 600 submissions from a diverse collection of publications. Whose publications will win this year's awards?

The banquet will commence at 6 p.m., and attendees will have the opportunity to view the contending pieces before the new winners are announced. The esteemed spectrum of candidates will highlight just how tough the job is for the judges, who are drawn from local academic institutions, publishing companies, advertising and public relations firms.

Three awards are offered in each category: Gold, Silver and Bronze. Judges may present one, two or all three in each category. Contributing sponsors follow a similar designation, depending on their level of contribution. Their much appreciated supports helps give the ceremony a distinct style, making for a gala you won't want to miss.

Big winners from last year's event included *Minnesota Monthly*, MSP Communications and Lake Superior Port Cities Inc.

The Greg Carey Leadership Award was presented to Mary Hennessey, publisher at Industrial Fabrics Association International. This award is presented to an individual who exemplifies the leadership of Greg Carey, a past MMPA president and driving force in the creation of the annual Excellence Awards.

North American Membership Group received the Innovator Award. This award recognizes companies that successfully establish a new concept in the magazine publishing business.

While the anticipation builds over who will be passed the torch for categories like Overall Excellence, the event is also a valuable opportunity to meet with the growing number of MMPA members and contributors.

Bear witness to the latest developments in publishing standards and mingle with like-minded companies that give the Minnesota publishing industry its stellar reputation within the national market. The MMPA Excellence Awards work to uphold and improve upon that elite reputation with cooperative class, reflected in the burgeoning membership of quality publications.

This year, the awards promise to be even more impressive than in the past. So mark your calendars, collect your resources and join ranks with other leaders in the publishing industry. You are sure to enjoy the collective quality of the MMPA Excellence Awards.

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: Wayne Pletcher

> *Minnesota Technology Inc., publisher of Minnesota Technology, has been through major changes during the past year or so. MTI transformed itself from a state government agency to a private, non-profit organization. Changes have included major changes in funding and leadership. President & CEO Wayne Pletcher explains MTI's evolving focus and discusses its aggressive plans to help small- and medium-sized Minnesota companies.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Wayne Pletcher brings more than three decades of experience in technology and manufacturing to his new role as president and Chief Executive Officer of Minnesota Technology Inc. A long-time executive with 3M, Pletcher joined MTI in December, 2003 to help the organization reshape itself as a private nonprofit.

Q. What prompted you to join MTI?

A. For the last five or six years, I had been 3M's representative to several technology organizations. I believed that my contributions had been significant, and I wanted to do more. So when this job opened, I decided it was something I should do. MTI has done such good things in the past; it just had to continue operations. I thought if I could provide any help to make that happen, it would be a good thing.

Q. How has MTI changed since you came aboard?

A. Due to some major public funding reductions in 2003, MTI is about one-third the size it was a year ago. As a result we are defining and refining the businesses within which we expect to operate. We have individual department goals, MTI goals, and objectives in place for fiscal year 2005. We also have training programs in the planning stages, and I believe that, based on everything that has happened to the organization, the morale is better than it has been in the past and it continues to improve. That said, a lot of things are similar about the organization too. Most important is that we have a public service charter, which is to help small businesses be successful.

Q. Traditionally, MTI has worked with manufacturing companies and those located outside of the Twin Cities. Do you anticipate any change in that focus?

A. We will maintain that focus, yet our charter is to help companies in the state of Minnesota— and it's important to remember that 80 percent of the companies in Minnesota are

located in the metro area— that's going to be very important to our future. And, we still have nine offices located in Greater Minnesota. So, we will be able to do both of these things— address the whole state without losing our focus on Greater Minnesota.

Q. Your background is with a large company. What can smaller firms learn from large companies such as 3M— and what can the 3Ms of Minnesota learn from its smaller firms?

A. There are things larger companies do that can be adapted for smaller ones. These large companies tend to standardize business and technology processes early. Small companies don't immediately think about doing that, and maybe they do not have the resources to do that, but the earlier they start developing standard operating processes, the better chance they have of success. This is in part what we offer. How do you do business planning? What's the process for getting a new product to market? On the other side, I think small companies have a lot to offer big companies. We are just beginning a study to look at the use of smaller Minnesota companies as suppliers to large companies. We want to see at what level they are being used and how we can help build those relationships, because small firms are the ones that create jobs. They are the ones that become the next 3M.

Q. Are you enjoying working with MTI so far?

A. I am. We have our challenges, yet I think we can do this. We've gotten great support from everybody and we really appreciate that. MTI has a long history of providing excellent service to small- and medium-sized companies. We believe our formidable ties with the public and private sectors create a winning solution for our capacity to help companies improve and grow.

Make a Contribution!

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lauriep@ewald.com.

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