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delivered



**Our Strategies for Fighting the  
Smalltown Revenue Battle**



**CherryRoad**  
media

# 1. Stay True to the Basics

## We do business in 83 markets across 18 states

- Plenty of differences between our markets
- Also, plenty of similarities
- Our various small, rural markets often have much the same expectations of us
  - Graduation sections, high school sports previews
  - County fairs, local festivals
  - Etc.
- We still embrace special sections
- Our communities expect them from us
- That said ...
  - Focused on hyper local
  - No car care sections, generic/canned copy
  - Local pieces written by our local reporters



## 2. Expand Niche Products

### Working diligently to grow magazine efforts

- For us, that comes with a focus on internal control
- Purchased a glossy print operation January 1<sup>st</sup>
- Finalizing distribution network that will allow us to haul across most of our network
- Retained a core designer group to do this work
  
- Our footprints lend themselves to regionalized efforts
  - Regional lifestyle magazines
  - Regional travel magazines
  
- Our scale facilitates larger reach opportunities using our own products as the vehicle
  - Tourism sites on the Great Lakes, in Utah, etc.
  - Agriculture across the Great Plains



## 2. Expand Niche Products

### Our school mag effort might be our most creative

- We didn't create it ...
- We purchased a set of properties partially to acquire it
- We partner directly with school districts
- 2x to 4x frequency magazines
- Saturation distribution
- Direct communication vehicle for the districts
- Districts provide content, pay for postage
- We sell/keep ad revenue, do design work and printing
- Started the year with a dozen districts
- Working now to expand to other regions
- Attending school administrator conferences to open up new opportunities



# 3. Accelerate Data Collection

## Another example of our focus on internal control

- Built own contesting and promotional platform
- Using that platform to expand our efforts
  
- “Best of ...” promotions and events
  - Small paper’s largest opportunity to interact with both customers and consumers
  - Running a program everywhere possible
  - Aggregating markets when it makes sense
  - Adding events scaled to market size
  
- Contesting and Promotions
  - Handful of enterprise-wide efforts
  - Exponential growth of market-specific programs
  - “Bundle a contest into every contract”



## 4. Grow DMS and Extension

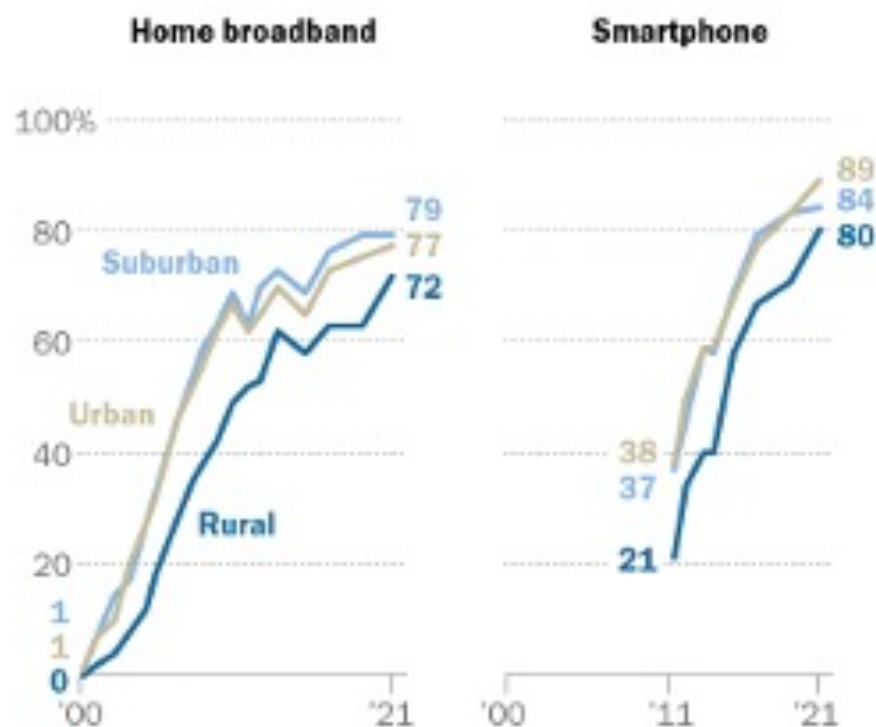
We see a lot of small market papers that are not committed to this critical task

- No or poorly functioning websites
- No DMS and extension offerings
- Or at least no commitment to sales of same

**“Nobody has broadband out here”**

- Digital gap between Urban/Suburban and Rural is closing quickly
  - In 2011, smartphone ownership was 80% higher in Urban than Rural markets (38% vs. 21%)
  - Today, the gap is 9 points and 11% and narrowing
- Small, local businesses in our communities have this idea they don't need sophisticated digital solutions
- 80% of their customers are on their phones all day long
- We must be the catalyst for change here

% of U.S. adults who say they have or own the following



Source: Survey conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.

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