



NEWS INDUSTRY
MEGA-CONFERENCE
PHOENIX, AZ ★ **APRIL 14-16, 2024**
www.mega-conference.com
Presented by America's Newspapers

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Subject to change

Sunday, April 14

- 1:30 p.m. **REGISTRATION DESK OPENS**
- 5:30-6:30 p.m. **WELCOME RECEPTION IN THE TOWN SQUARE – Valley of the Sun DE**
Sponsored by Kodak



Monday, April 15

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. **BREAKFAST IN THE TOWN SQUARE**
Sponsored by Compulse
- 8:30 a.m. **General Session – Valley of the Sun ABC**
WELCOME TO ARIZONA AND MEGA-CONFERENCE
Francis Wick, President, Wick Communications, and Greg Burton, VP of News and Executive Editor, The Arizona Republic
- 8:45 a.m. **KEYNOTE ADDRESS – Valley of the Sun ABC**
Six Ways Supporting Local Journalism May Reduce Fine Lines & Wrinkles
Mi-Ai Parrish, Managing Director, ASU Media Enterprise, CEO and Founder, MAP Strategies Group
- 9:15 a.m. **The AI Impact on Local News – Valley of the Sun ABC**
AI is impacting the local news environment at a rapid speed. It's not just about content; it's also changing the way sales and operations will be run. **Jeremy Gilbert, Professor and Knight Chair in Digital Media Strategy at Medill, Northwestern University**



9:50 a.m.

COFFEE BREAK IN THE TOWN SQUARE

10:20 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Current Trends in Lead-to-Cash: People, Process and Platforms – Valley of the Sun ABC

The Lead-to-Cash cycle is one of a media company's most critical and complex processes, yet executives rarely pay any real attention to it. It is simply the collection of all activities — from receiving an order through processing it and getting paid — that relate to making a sale and realizing the revenues from it. In this session, we'll talk about some of today's most popular Lead-to-Cash solutions and the best practices that drive efficient operations across lead management, sales enablement, order processing, finance operations and enterprise reporting. Our panel will include real-life examples from publishers and their partners who help make it all happen.

Moderated by Christopher Prinos, Founder and CEO of Indigo Trigger, with: Brooke Zapata, SVP Sales Enablement, Gannett; Daryl Kern, Head of Global Pre Sales, Lineup Systems, Ltd; and Shalonda Lewis, Dir. Of Operations-Shared Services, Tribune Publishing Company

AI is for More Than Content! Using AI to Enhance Operations – Ahwatukee

While the focus in the media world has been on how AI can impact content, new AI-driven applications are being introduced every day that enhance other areas of the operation. This session will introduce how AI is being used to find efficiencies in distribution, operations, HR and more with real-world examples from inside and outside the media industry. **With Rachel See, Senior Counsel, Seyfarth Shaw, LLP**

11 a.m.

Break to switch sessions

11:15 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Digital Product Development: Building a Lasting Book of Business – Valley of the Sun ABC

This session delves into the strategic approaches for creating and nurturing a sustainable book of business through digital products and offerings. We will explore the critical decision-making process between leveraging external vendors and internal development (in housing), evaluating their impacts on scalability, cost-effectiveness and innovation. **Robert Young, GM, Advertising, The Advocate, NOLA, and Melissa Sheehan, CRO, AdCellerant**

AI and the Future of Local Newspapers: How One Newspaper Group is Leveraging AI to Expand Hyperlocal Reach, Enhance Reader Engagement and Unlock New Advertising Opportunities – Ahwatukee

In 2024, Trib Total Media is exploring how to harness the power of AI, couple it with their core competencies, and come up with a strategy to address the fundamental challenges facing their business. Guiding imperatives were hyper-local audience development, improved engagement, accessing new advertisers, new revenue

opportunities and little to no new headcount. An endeavor that could create enormous implications for the future of their 18 printed newspapers and 35 hyper-local news sites. **Moderated by Landon Morales, COO, OwnLocal, with: Matt Miller, CRO of TTM, and Joe Lawrence, General Counsel of TTM and CEO of MeSearch**

11:45 a.m.

LUNCH IN THE TOWN SQUARE

Sponsored by SCS



12:45 p.m.

SOLUTIONS ROUNDTABLES – Valley of the Sun ABC

This fast-paced session provides attendees with the opportunity to meet in a no-pressure, small group environment with a variety of companies that will provide overviews of how their products tackle some of today's challenges. This popular session — open only to newspaper attendees and the table hosts — will provide valuable information to develop strategic plans. [See details about the Roundtable hosts and topics here](#)

2:30 p.m.

BREAK IN THE TOWN SQUARE

3 p.m.

General Session – Valley of the Sun ABC

The Business of Growing Audience

With third-party cookies crumbling and the social media landscape softening, it's never been a more important time to own your own audience. This session delves into the business case for engagement and how to build a healthy funnel with first-party data no matter the size of your operation. Learn valuable strategies in audience development to connect communities, enhance readership and build the business. **With Josh Awtry, Senior Vice President / Audience Development, Newsweek**

3:40 p.m.

Break to switch sessions

3:50 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Three Executive Takes & Takeaways on Uncovering & Developing All-Star Teams – Valley of the Sun ABC

Best practices for finding and keeping great people. We'll tap into how media companies are recruiting, growing and incentivizing sales talent and executives. You'll leave with inspirational stories, useful tools and simple best practices.

Moderated by Kelly Outlaw, CFO, Community Impact, with: Tess Coverman, VP, Sales & Marketing, Community Impact; and John Garrett, Founder and CEO, Community Impact

Politics 2024: Chaos or Clarity? – Ahwatukee

Politics will dominate the media landscape at the national, state and local levels for the rest of the year. Here's how one newsroom in a swing state with highly competitive races plans to engage audiences by showcasing truth, fostering trust and delivering clarity. Former President Donald Trump tried to flip the result of the presidential race in Arizona in 2020 and the effects of that challenge linger.

Moderated by Kathleen Tulumello, News Director, The Arizona Republic, with four additional panelists from The Arizona Republic: Stacey Barchenger, State Politics Reporter; Ron Hansen, National Politics Reporter; Sasha Hupka, County and Elections Reporter; and Pat Poblete, State Politics and Issues Editor

4:30 p.m.

General Session – Valley of the Sun ABC
Measuring Local Newspaper Ad Effectiveness

America's Newspapers and Coda Ventures unveil the results of the 2024 Local Newspaper Ad Effectiveness Study. Learn how local newspaper ads stack up against the competition across a wide variety of retail segments. **With Greg Watson, CMO, America's Newspapers; Marianne Grogan, President, Coda Ventures; and Dee Evans, VP of Sales and Business Development, Advantage Newspaper Consultants**

4:45 p.m.

Putting Local in Local Sales – Valley of the Sun ABC

This will be a fast-paced panel discussion with three industry leaders focusing on where their local sales success is coming from and how you can adopt their ideas into your local operation, today. **Moderated by Mike Blinder, publisher, Editor & Publisher Magazine, with: Lee Bachlet, COO, CherryRoad Media; Allen Jones, President, Local Sales, Gannett | USA TODAY Network; and Mike Martoccia, VP, Digital Sales/Marketing, Adams Publishing Group**

5:20 p.m.

Sessions End

5:30-6:30 p.m.

RECEPTION IN THE TOWN SQUARE
Sponsored by Gannett

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Tuesday, April 16

7:30-8:30 a.m.

BREAKFAST IN THE TOWN SQUARE
Sponsored by Indigo Trigger

**INDIGO
TRIGGER**

8:30 a.m.

General Session – Valley of the Sun ABC
Introduced by Chris Kline, President and CEO, Arizona Media Association

America's Newspapers Update on the Community News and Small Business Support Act

Learn about America's Newspapers' latest advocacy efforts to protect local journalism, what the future holds for legislation and how publishers can get

involved to help protect local journalism. **Dean Ridings, CEO, America's Newspapers**

Advocating for Passage of the Journalism Competition & Preservation Act (JCPA) & other relevant legislation

Learn about the latest advocacy efforts in support of the Journalism Competition & Preservation Act (JCPA) and other important legislation to protect local journalism. **Danielle Coffey, CEO, News/Media Alliance**

Other America's Newspapers Legislative Activity

Speakers to be announced

9:15 a.m.

Innovative Strategies for Revenue Growth

Our panel of revenue all-stars will detail the strategies, technologies and best practices that empower their organizations to make data-driven revenue generation a reality. This includes print, digital, direct mail or whatever it takes to grow your audience, your markets and your profits. We also will discuss sales training strategies, motivation and incentivizing to make it all happen. **Moderated by Sara Willard, Partner, GW Media Group, with: Chris Stegman, CRO, The Salt Lake Tribune; Sara Hardison, Digital Director, Ogden Newspapers; and Keira Nothhaft, VP Product Innovation, Gannett | USA TODAY Network**

10 a.m.

COFFEE BREAK IN THE TOWN SQUARE

10:30 a.m.

General Session – Valley of the Sun ABC

Strategic Philanthropy

This session will discuss how philanthropic partnerships can be utilized to meet the coverage needs of local communities. Discover innovative approaches to community engagement and support through strategic philanthropy. **With Greg Burton, Executive Editor, The Arizona Republic; Laura McBride, Senior Program Officer, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust; Stacy Sullivan, Director of Local Philanthropic Partnerships, USA TODAY Network | Gannett; and Andrea Whitsett, Director, Morrison Institute on Public Policy, Arizona State University**

11:15 a.m.

Subscriber Revenue and Retention

Building reader revenue continues to be at the forefront of every organization's strategic plan. This session will focus on how to involve the total operation to engage new audiences and retain existing readers. Our panelists will share proven strategies as well as the innovations they are employing to creatively attract new audiences while keeping current readers actively engaged. **Moderated by Aaron Kotarek, SVP, Audience & Operations, Oahu Publications, Inc., with: Esther Maina, VP, Audience Development & Marketing, Adams Publishing Group; Traci Bauer, VP, Print/Digital Content, Adams Publishing Group; and Claire Linney, Director of Digital Subscriber Acquisition, McClatchy**

Noon

LUNCH IN THE TOWN SQUARE

1 p.m.

General Session – Valley of the Sun ABC

Mega-Conference Idea Exchanges

These always popular sessions wrap-up the Mega-Conference! Connect with your colleagues and exchange your best ideas in revenue, content, digital and more. These discussions are open to all conference attendees.

2:30 p.m.

Mega-Conference Concludes

Special thanks to our conference sponsors!

 <p>TOWN SQUARE PREMIUM SPONSOR - COFFEE BAR</p> <p>AdCellerant is an award-winning tech-enabled services company that brings Madison Avenue-level digital marketing solutions to Main Street businesses. MORE</p>	 <p>POCKET PROGRAM SPONSOR</p> <p>We are passionate about helping newspapers find innovative ways to measure how their brand delivers to consumers that advertisers are interested in reaching. MORE</p>	 <p>MONDAY BREAKFAST SPONSOR</p> <p>Our single-solution platform combines sales enablement, order management, fulfillment and analytics into one consolidated solution. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Lineup helps media companies reduce costs, optimize performance and grow ad revenue with its cloud-based media sales solution Adpoint. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Our reputation for excellence has made us one of the most trusted web printers in the United States. MORE</p>
 <p>NOTEPAD SPONSOR</p> <p>Dirks, Van Essen & April is the leading merger and acquisition firm in the U.S. newspaper industry and its top authority on transactions and valuations. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN CONFERENCE FOYER</p> <p>Our social media platform is dedicated to revitalizing traditional connections and fostering a culture of care, kindness, mutual respect and trust. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>ConQuest software to drive measurable results. Create digital promotions that grow your database, qualify leads and generate revenue. MORE</p>	 <p>TOWN SQUARE PREMIUM SPONSOR - WINE</p> <p>Our powerful targeting technology & O&O option gives you the power to reach your ideal audience. Reaching your precise audience has never been easier. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>EKCS supports media companies to solve creative production challenges and improve production efficiencies. Our 45+ staff works as your extended team. MORE</p>
 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Don't let lean resources & staff turnover get in the way of attaining revenue goals. We'll help your team close annual, contracted revenue with focus. MORE</p>	 <p>SPOT-ON ADS PRECISE POLITICAL PLACEMENT ROUNDTABLE AND INTERNET SPONSOR</p> <p>Spot-On is a media buyer for political and advocacy efforts. Its new Pinpoint Permission automates the direct buying process for buyers and sellers. MORE</p>	 <p>SUNDAY EVENING RECEPTION SPONSOR</p> <p>Kodak is a leading global manufacturer focused on commercial print and advanced materials & chemicals. Visit kodak.com or follow on Twitter @Kodak. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Best Of Bidding, Event Listings and Ticketing platforms – providing publishers with turn-key content, engaged audiences and revenue streams. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Our content monetization platform offers pay walls, dynamic paywalls, voluntary contributions, memberships, events, registrations and streaming. MORE</p>
 <p>TOWN SQUARE PREMIUM SPONSOR - BAKE SHOPPE</p> <p>Legacy.com and Publish proudly deliver millions in revenue to our media partners. Discover why eight out of 10 publishers trust our intake platforms. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Elevate your digital campaigns with our cutting-edge promotions platform! Get better tools, better customer support and more revenue with Audience.io. MORE</p>	 <p>TOWN SQUARE PREMIUM SPONSOR - BEER PUB</p> <p>Launch deeply engaging mobile apps, print replica editions, and beautifully curated digital archives in no time with zero fuss. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Tecnavia is a 360° service provider offering web metering, native news apps, website design and hosting, and our next-generation digital replica. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Column is the first collaborative public notice platform helping journalists, governments and legal services work together to inform their communities. MORE</p>
 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Let us help you maximize profits and scalability by streamlining content creation, asset management, multi-channel distribution & product innovation. MORE</p>	 <p>REGISTRATION DESK SPONSOR</p> <p>The mission of the Arizona Media Association is to future-proof Arizona local media and protect its critical role in community connection. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>As content syndication specialists, we distribute beloved comics such as Blondie, Beetle Bailey & more, as well as columns, editorial cartoons & puzzles. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>We can help you upgrade your print products, content or advertising and our dynamic CMS can take your website to the next level of engagement & revenue. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE, ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR AND TOTE BAG SPONSOR</p> <p>Monster extends recruitment solutions to newspapers with a strategy that offers sales, marketing & technology solutions for incremental revenue. MORE</p>
 <p>MONDAY LUNCH SPONSOR</p> <p>SOS provides media companies of all sizes with innovative, world-class software for advertising, production, editorial and digital asset management. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>PageSuite delivers market leading ePaper and app solutions to newspapers across the globe. MORE</p>	 <p>BADGE AND LANYARD SPONSOR</p> <p>AMR, Publishers Credit Card fee elimination leader! Over 220 publishers already eliminated processing fees on our award-winning Cash Discount Program. MORE</p>	 <p>TOWN SQUARE COASTERS SPONSOR</p> <p>Proud partner to news media publishers by providing advertising, creative and editorial solutions designed to help them create, sell and profit. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Empower your teams and delight your customers. We provide contact center software solutions with industry-leading choice and flexibility. MORE</p>
 <p>TUESDAY BREAKFAST SPONSOR</p> <p>INDIGO TRIGGER provides strategic consulting, business process improvement and system implementation services for media companies. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Jobcase helps media companies reclaim recruitment revenue with innovative products that yield exceptional employer outcomes. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>NERUS Strategies can help you captivate your audience, keep them engaged and, most importantly, generate recurring revenue with innovative approaches. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Smart Media Solutions: Content, advertising, audience, automation and AI. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>The Newspaper Manager is a publishing CRM that dramatically reduces overhead costs by connecting sales, production & accounts receivable in one package. MORE</p>
 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>We provide strategic, practical legal counsel to client companies and legal teams of all sizes. Let us serve your changing business and legal needs. MORE</p>	 <p>EXHIBITOR IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Quintype is a leading AI-powered digital newsroom growth platform that empowers publishers to create, distribute and monetize their content. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Kid Scoop believes kids want to learn and that learning is fun! Our educational activity pages teach and entertain. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Trusted by more than 3,200 publishers globally, OwnLocal is the leading provider of SMB-focused digital advertising solutions for local publishers. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Our digital screen network helps community newspapers scope their ad offerings and enable significant and sustainable revenue growth. MORE</p>
 <p>MONDAY EVENING RECEPTION</p> <p>Our portfolio includes hundreds of brands that deliver Pulitzer Prize-winning journalism, compelling content, events, experiences & digital solutions. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>Newzware the best performance value for: Circulation, Display, Classified, Registration, Ad Layout, Ad Tracking & Editorial – either SaaS or self-hosted. MORE</p>	 <p>ROUNDTABLE SPONSOR</p> <p>We provide "Best Of" solutions that focus on generating revenue and optimizing operations. Programs are available in self- or full-service models. MORE</p>	 <p>GENERAL SPONSOR</p> <p>FT Strategies is a consultancy that helps media organizations drive sustainable growth and increase using AI, technology and data. MORE</p>	 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Learn why more than 1,800 publications use Interlink to save postage and improve delivery. at www.illw.com. MORE</p>
 <p>ENGAGEMENT TABLE IN TOWN SQUARE</p> <p>Newsroom resources are limited. Local stories are endless. With our automated content products you can provide coverage where previously there was none. MORE</p>	 <p>TOWN SQUARE PREMIUM SPONSOR - WHISKEY BAR</p> <p>Our integrated digital publishing solutions power some of the most distinguished newsrooms in the industry. Learn how we can help you thrive. MORE</p>			