PARENTING MEDIA ASSOCIATION

CHICAGO

NOVEMBER 5-6, 2026

ANNUAL CONFERENCE



THURS, NOVEMBER 5

8-10:00AM **Board of Directors Meeting**

10:30AM **Registration Opens**

11:15AM **Opening Remarks, the PMA Board of Directors**

11:30AM-12PM
[SALES]

Whiteboard Brainstorm

A roundtable discussion on what's working, what's challenging and where you see sales success in 2027. **Moderated by** *Jeni Mann, Mid-Atlantic Media*

[EDITORIAL]

Group Therapy

A brainstorming session for what's working, what's not working and what's on your mind. **Moderated by** *Amy Foreman, Family Resource Group and Jennifer Bryerton, Charlottesville Family*

12-1PM **Welcome Back Lunch**

1-2PM
[GROUP]

Driving Revenue and Readership through Branded Content

In this dynamic session, Shannon Kinney who leads The Branded Content Project for Local Media Association and Local Media Consortium (brandedcontentproject.com), you'll learn why you should consider Branded Content to fuel revenue and readership at your publication. We will also share findings and statistics from our nationwide survey of advertisers in 2025 on revenue potential, current spending, and the dozen categories to target that are spending more than $1Billion per year in the category. You'll see best practices from peers, get a step by step on how to implement how to position it on your site, your magazine, social channels, and e-newsletters to maximize results for your clients, and tips on how to sell this exciting offering. **Speaker:** *Shannon Kinney, Dream Local*

2-2:15PM **Refreshment Break/Network with Exhibitors**

2:15-3:15PM
[SALES]

From Efficiency to Dominance: Advanced AI Tactics for Modern Sales

Many media sales professionals are already using AI — but they're using it the same way everyone else is. This session goes beyond surface-level prompts and basic automation to show how top-performing reps and teams are leveraging AI as a strategic sales advantage, not a productivity hack. You'll learn how to use AI to see deals earlier than competitors, personalize outreach at scale without sounding robotic, run better discovery, anticipate objections, and

shape deals before buyers do, create a sales advantage with AI as your thinking partner, and see post-call intelligence (what you missed by AI did not)! This is a 201-level session designed for users who already understand the basics and want to turn AI into a real competitive edge — not just another tool in the stack.
Speaker: *Shannon Kinney, Dream Local*

2:15-2:45PM
[EDITORIAL]

Leaning Into Schools, Hospitals, Wellness Partnerships
A roundtable discussion on growing partnerships and covering education, health and wellness. **Moderated by** *Elena Epstein, L.A. Parent*

2:45-3:15PM
[EDITORIAL]

Roundtable: Fresh Spins
A roundtable discussion on how to add a "fresh spin" on longstanding topics like "screen time," "teen mental health," "maternal mental load," etc. **Moderated by** *Amy Foreman, Family Resource Group*

3:15-3:30PM **Refreshment Break/Network with Exhibitors**

3:30-4PM **AI in Action: Local Publisher Case Study**
Hear how Midwest Parenting has harnessed the power of AI to streamline everything, including:
Newsletters: Turning article and event links into formatted newsletters, with saved instructions for each publication's style and voice.
Article writing and updating: Using AI to help write high-quality articles in our house style that sound natural and like us.
Publisher Reports: A reporting site that brings website and Facebook stats together and makes it easier to pull advertiser reports.
Pagination + Email and admin to streamline daily tasks
Facebook analysis and post ideas: Looking at post performance to figure out what's working, then using that to help with topics, headlines and wording for future posts.
Speaker: *Wendy Hasser, Midwest Parenting*

4-4:45PM
[SALES]

Marketing and Media Kits
A roundtable discussion on how to position products, media kits and marketing materials so the pitch does not overwhelm clients. Please bring printed copies of marketing collateral, media kits, promos, etc. to share with the group. **Moderated by** *Jasmin Thankachen, Seattle's Child and Laura Powell, Atlanta Parent*

[EDITORIAL]

Hyperlocal Content
Hear case studies on how PMA members are moving away from the kind of content that AI is covering everywhere across the Internet, to a more localized plan to drive engagement and why it matters to show up at local community events. **Speaker:** *David Arkin, David Arkin Consulting*

5-6PM **Opening Reception**

FRI, NOVEMBER 6

8-9:00AM **Group Breakfast**

9-10AM
[GROUP] **Best Ideas**
Submit your best ideas for revenue, editorial, branded content, social media, events and audience development from the last year and leave this session with a takeaway to bring home to your team!
Moderated by *Steff Liston-Holtrop, 'Hood Magazine*

10-10:15AM **Refreshment Break/Network with Exhibitors**

10:15-11AM
[SALES] **Leading High Performance Sales Teams**
In this session, veteran media executive Eric Mayberry, formerly of Lee Enterprises, will share practical leadership strategies for building and sustaining high-performing sales teams. From communication plans that clearly define messaging and expectations to the authentic conversations that shape strong sales cultures, Mayberry will outline approaches leaders can implement immediately. Attendees will gain practical insights they can apply right away to improve performance, strengthen communication and accountability, and change the culture within their sales organizations. **Speakers:** *Eric Mayberry, Smart Tech Digital Agency*

[EDITORIAL] **Newsletter Trends to Watch**
How publishers are using newsletters to increase engagement, reactivate subscribers, grow first-party audiences and generate revenue through sponsorships, contests and premium offerings.
Speaker: *David Arkin, David Arkin Consulting*

11-11:15AM **Refreshment Break/Network with Exhibitors**

11:15AM-12PM
[SALES] **The Foolproof Sales Equation**
From one of the greatest sales trainers in media, this method helps your sales reps: 1) Uncover critical information in the needs conversation; 2) Build credibility in the sales process; and 3) Guarantee they get the sale 80% of the time — or identify specifically why they didn't. **Speaker:** *Eric Mayberry, Smart Tech Digital Agency*

[EDITORIAL] **Rethinking Your Editorial Calendar**
How to rethink your editorial calendar to help drive your digital products. **Speaker:** *David Arkin, David Arkin Consulting*

12-1:00PM **Group Lunch**

1-2PM
[GROUP]

Beyond the Blank Page: How AI Makes Media Companies More Valuable (Not Less)

The flood of low-quality AI content is actually making credible, trusted publications MORE valuable, not less. The opportunity isn't to compete with the robots, it's to use AI to do the boring stuff faster so your teams can focus on what humans do best: build trust, tell real stories, and serve your communities.

Speaker: *Scott McIntosh, Digital Treehouse*

2-2:15PM

Break

2:15-2:45PM
[GROUP]

Running Successful Contests

Find out how to make the most of your Parents' Choice and/or Best Of ballot as well as photo contest ideas with strategies for increasing revenue on the ballot, in the issue, at your event, via email and more! **Speaker:** *Lauren Hurlock, City Spark*

[SMALL PUBLISHERS GROUP]

Meet Up

Small publishers group meet up to discuss what's working, what's not working and what's next. **Moderated by** *Jane MacNealy of Southwest Florida Family and Andrea Breznay, Monterey Bay Parent*

3:15-4PM
[GROUP]

The Editorial-Sales Dance

A group discussion on how editorial and sales deparments interact, cooperate and ideate. Are they meeting regularly? Do sales teams read the stories, follow and engage with social? Does editorial understand the sales landscape? **Moderated by** *Ron Epstein, L.A. Parent and Jim Schneider, Island Parent*

How to Vibe Code for Visionary Leaders and Publishers in 45 Minutes

Vibe coding isn't for the nerds anymore. Every leader who intends to have a strategic advantage in 2026 and beyond should understand this radically empowering skill set, which removes many of the time, capital, and staffing barriers that previously prevented them from executing on their ideal vision. An entire category of previously un touchable "high impact, high effort" moves is becoming high impact and low effort. Vibe coding can help leaders see and realize visions for their companies that would previously have been too costly or time-consuming to even consider in strategic planning. In this session, Kenny Katzgrau will show how the same tools Silicon Valley innovators are using are now available to leaders and their teams, and demonstrate how to use them live. **Speaker:** *Kenny Katzgrau, Broadstreet*

6-6:30PM

Awards Cocktail Reception

6:30-9PM

Awards Banquet and Presentation

SPEAKERS



DAVID ARKIN of David Arkin Consulting provides fractional digital audience and revenue leadership, branded and organic content strategies and creation and tech stack guidance for media companies. In his 25-year career, David Arkin has built a wealth of experience serving as a reporter, editor, director, consultant and executive for newspapers, magazines, television stations, media associations and news start-ups. He has developed high-quality content and built transformative digital strategies that led to significant audience growth, new revenue streams, and improved processes and technology for family-owned companies, brands and large media organizations. A nationally recognized audience leader, David has led content for some of the country's largest news organizations and even built his own media business from scratch. He has been named the Digital News Innovator of the Year by the Local Media Association, led numerous newsrooms to national journalism awards and has served on national industry boards like the Associated Press Media Editors and the Local Media Association Foundation Board.



WENDY HASSER is the Chief Digital Officer at Midwest Parenting Publications and has been keeping up with the rapidly changing digital world for over 12 years. As a self-taught millennial, Wendy has cultivated her expertise through trial and error, continuously refining her digital strategies to keep pace with the ever-evolving digital landscape. Her expert Googling skills enable her to stay ahead of changing digital trends and effectively implement new ideas. Drawing on her firsthand experience as a mother of two, Wendy deeply understands the key PMA audience, enabling her to develop content that truly resonates with modern parents.



LAUREN HURLOCK is the Head of Client Success at CitySpark, where she helps clients drive revenue and simplify the work behind events and promotions. She specializes in building strategies that maximize platform value while freeing up time for busy teams. Previously as Web Editor for the *Charleston City Paper*, she led Best of Charleston, broke sales records, and created high-performing, award-winning, content around events and breaking news. She brings a practical, results-driven approach to helping media professionals turn audience engagement into growth.



KENNY KATZGRAU is the publisher of RedBankGreen and creator of Broadstreet, a company that serves hundreds of small, independent publishers fighting for the spirit of their community. Once an engineer at Mozilla and Yahoo, he fell into publishing and took up the torch of helping RedBankGreen, an 18-year-old hyperlocal news outlet, stand for 100 years. He's here to help other publishers stand for 100 years too.



SHANNON KINNEY is a seasoned startup founder and executive with more than 30 years of experience in digital marketing. She has been at the forefront of digital transformation for media companies since 1995. With deep experience in sales, marketing, online product development and leadership, Dream Local Digital is her third nationally-scaled digital marketing solution company. She founded the company in 2009 "to bring the power of online marketing to small and medium sized businesses". She has helped more than 75,000 small and medium sized businesses and media companies through her work with Dream Local Digital. She spent many years on the Local Media Foundation and Local Media Association boards and currently is the lead for their Branded Content Project. She also writes a monthly column on sales for *Editor & Publisher* magazine.



ERIC MAYBERRY is the president of SmartTech Digital, an agency specializing in transforming businesses' digital messaging and footprint. He has led highly successful news and sales organizations while also serving as a segment host on CareerBuilder TV and as the creator, producer, and host of *FoodieTV* and *Lincoln Cooks*. He launched London's first-ever hospitality and foodservice technology trade show, HOSTEC, and co-launched the first-ever podcast by an American newspaper in 2005, *PhillyFeed*, earning recognition from *The Wall Street Journal* and NPR. Eric has played and coached on multiple Ivy League Championship football teams and was honored as Business Leader of the Year by the Urban League of Philadelphia. His podcast, *The Hope Show* (YouTube), focuses on helping listeners find truth and clarity in everyday challenges.



SCOTT MCINTOSH is President of DigitalTreehouse, a digital marketing agency based in Franklin, Tennessee, now focused on helping businesses harness AI for real-world efficiency gains. With 15+ years in digital marketing and SEO, including managing newsletter growth for more than 200 brands in publishing, Scott brings a unique perspective on how AI can strengthen, not replace, trusted media organizations. Before his marketing career, Scott served eight years as a Naval Aviation Officer with the U.S. Navy. He holds a BSBA from UNC Chapel Hill and an MBA from Lipscomb University. Scott is the author of a book on SEO and publishes *SmartOwner*, a daily newsletter helping business owners cut through the AI hype and find practical applications that actually work.

THANK YOU

MEETING SPONSORS

Publication Printers corp.

Opening Reception Sponsor

BROADSTREET
REDEFINE STANDARD

Sales Track Sponsor

BRIDGE

WiFi Sponsor

DAVID ARKIN
CONSULTING

Editorial Track Sponsor