

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The man is on the left, wearing a white shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a white shirt. The background is bright and out of focus.

HOW TO REACH
**Affluent
Micro-
Influencers**

*And why it's important
right now*



ABUNDANT
BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

A RESEARCH CURATION
BY MEG SMIT,
PUBLISHER

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PART I: ADAPTING YOUR MARKETING DURING & AFTER COVID-19



When A Recession Comes, Don't Stop Advertising

Often times when a recession happens, businesses, fearful of declining revenue, begin to cut back in various areas, including their ad spending. Nonetheless, there have been a number of studies going back nearly one century that point out the advantages of maintaining or even increasing ad budgets during a weaker economy. Those advertisers that maintained or grew their ad spending increased sales and market share during the recession and afterwards. As a popular adage says, "When times are good you should advertise. When times are bad you must advertise."¹

Experts Recommend...

Spend more than your market share - There is ample evidence that maintaining SOV (share of voice) at or above SOM (share of market) will result in longer-term improvement in profitability.

Cut the right costs - Review your budgeting and rebalance it strategically for growth and efficiency, while cutting non-essential areas. That means increasing support for marketing, R&D, and new product development.

Invest in new ways to reach your audience - We are seeing increased "cocooning" as people avoid socializing due to the virus and this is resulting in a shift to receiving marketing messages in one's home rather than on billboards and on car radios.²

Our private, neighborhood publications arrive monthly into the mailboxes of the affluent neighborhoods in our community and have an 89.4% Open Rate. They are also revisited on average 5.5x's per month allowing our Sponsors to repeat their message and include two touch geo-targeted digital marketing to reach the same clients. We are in the business of living rooms, not billboards. [Click here](#) to learn about Sponsorship.

1. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bradadgate/2019/09/05/when-a-recession-comes-dont-stop-advertising/#626fc4d74608>

2. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/avidan/2020/03/05/how-to-adapt-marketing-to-a-possible-slowdown-in-an-economy-shaped-by-the-coronavirus/#3243f94d7254>

THRIVING AND GROWING IN ANY ENVIRONMENT

WHEN IT COMES TO ADVERTISING, THE TOUGHEST QUESTION IS NOT “IF” YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO ADVERTISE, BUT “HOW” TO REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF YOUR INDUSTRY.

In an economic downturn, business owners are forced to make difficult decisions. For many, this difficulty arises from the belief that what the world is experiencing now is unprecedented, that the future is unpredictable. Thankfully, there is nearly a century of data that can alleviate some of these fears and help companies see the upside in a downturn.

A Harvard Business Review study published in 1927 showed that companies who continued to advertise during the 1923 economic downturn came out 20% ahead of where they were before the recession.¹ Meanwhile, companies that reduced advertising remained in the recession at 7% below their 1920 levels. From the 1940s to '90s, the results remain consistent, including McGraw-Hill Research data on 600 B2B companies that showed an impressive 256% growth in sales after aggressive advertising through the 1980s economic dip.²

More recently, the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) found that in the 2008 recession, brands that “went dark” (stopped advertising and communicating with consumers for one year) suffered considerable financial consequences for six months or more and took five years to recover and return to their normal profits. Companies that cut their ad budgets in half for one year took three years to recover.³



1 Vaile, Roland S. Harvard Business Review. April 1927.

2 Advertising Specialty Institute. “Advertising in a Recession.” The Number That Matters. ASI/33020. 2009.

3 Institute of Practitioners in Advertising. “Long term case history.” Data2Decisions. 2015.4 Razeghi, Andrew J. “Innovating through Recession.” Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. 2008.

HERE'S HOW TO MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES IN AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN:

1 Listen to the market, then modify your message. In turbulent times, market needs do not disappear. In fact, they increase and are largely unmet. Listen to your customers, identify their needs and adjust your product or service to meet them.¹

3 Show your loyalty to customers. Emerge as a leader in your community by becoming increasingly visible and dependable. Now more than ever, consumers wish to be heard and are seeking brands in which to place their trust.²

2 Prioritize the longterm. As the above studies show, the benefits of remaining present for your consumers extend well beyond the time of economic difficulty. Long term branding remains as important as ever; maintain the integrity and quality of your product or service to continue building lasting relationships with consumers.

4 Rely on trusted forms of engagement with your target audience. Trust and familiarity are key in moments of general uncertainty, so people gravitate toward mediums they enjoy reading. Likewise, consumers seeking reliable news reach for printed content: 71% of people in a 2,131-person study chose print content as a source of deep understanding and trust.³

The results of the past 100 years cannot be ignored: brands that remain present for their consumers don't just survive difficult economic times, they can thrive. By listening to your market, embracing long-term strategy and basing advertising on loyalty and trust, businesses can see results for years to come. Our [private, neighborhood magazines](#) highlight local experts in their field monthly and deliver their content directly into the mailbox, mobile devices and desktops of affluent homeowners. [Click here](#) to learn about Sponsorship.



Sourced from Best Version Media Newsletter

1 Recesson." Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. 2008.

2 Misener, Jim. "Recession Reinvention: 5 Ways to Find the Upside in a Downturn." AdAge. 09 October 2018.

3 Two Sides North America. "Print and Paper in a Digital World: Key Findings From the U.S. Survey." 2017.

HERE'S HOW TO REMARKET YOUR BUSINESS, REFOCUS YOUR BRAND AND RETARGET YOUR AUDIENCE



“

A dream does not become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination, and hard work.





“

“I was asked what I thought about the recession. I thought about it and decided not to take part.

*~ Sam Walton,
founder, Wal-Mart*



RECONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE.

Sometimes, quality content can be overlooked if your target is too broad or if your business is simply generating too much content. Find your niche and retarget your audience to maximize the potential of your content reaching your prospective consumers. Then, create quality, easy-to-understand content.

REVISIT PRINT MEDIA.

To reach a clearly defined target audience, print is still effective and was voted the most trusted source “when making a purchase decision.”² Right now, if you’re looking for that niche audience and hoping to build trust with your consumer base, it might be time to reconsider print ads and content.

RENEW YOUR BRAND STRATEGY.

After this pandemic, business owners aren’t the only ones setting big goals or hoping for newfound success; consumers are, too. According to Scoop Studios, your brand and content strategy is built on positioning your products or services as the solution for each stage of your consumer’s journey.³ By creating this kind of content, you are reinforcing your brand and your position as a trusted expert in your field.

CONTINUE CREATING QUALITY CONTENT.

According to a Kapost survey, 70% of marketers said that they are creating more or “significantly more” content than ever before.¹ Stand out from your competitors by creating genuinely helpful, unique content for your potential consumers.

Our private, neighborhood magazine Expert Contributors have upgraded sponsorships that leverage:

Micro-targeted Print Media

Geo-targeted Digital Marketing

Content Marketing

Social Media in Print

[Click here](#) to learn about Sponsorship.

BRANDS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER in a meaningful way

“*If people believe they share values with a company, they will stay loyal to the brand.*”
~ Howard Schultz, CEO Starbucks

Especially now, businesses have the opportunity to connect with consumers and their communities in a relevant way. At a time when people are seeking reconnection, empathy and positivity, brands are able to evolve their messaging to Bring People Together – a strategy that is predicted to outlast these unprecedented circumstances.

The branding trends that emerge during times of adversity are likely to have staying power. By establishing your business as a source of strength, support and comforting knowledge in our private neighborhood magazines, you can show our neighbors that you are deeply invested in our community and beyond. [Click here to learn about Sponsorship.](#)



Build trust with educational articles showing your expertise



Micro and geo-target your audience to be affluent influential neighborhoods



Use social media in print and online to increase impressions and memorability

HERE'S HOW TO EVOLVE YOUR MESSAGE IN A MEANINGFUL WAY:

embrace shared experiences

Everyone in the country is experiencing the same shift in reality, and communities will emerge stronger and more closely connected than before. Be a part of the solution and help “fan the flames of positivity” in your area.

magnify your brand's purpose

Focus on the value that you continue to offer consumers in difficult times, especially relating to the importance of home, comfort and togetherness in relation to your products and services. Consider reaching your audience through informative content to help them learn new skills, remain connected and stay positive.¹

aim to do good for your neighbors

Show your support for those who may be struggling and become a pillar of strength for your community. Consumers are turning to familiar, trusted businesses for hope and guidance, so let them know you are here for them.

set an example with your brand culture

Consumers are gravitating toward people who genuinely help people; how you treat your employees speaks volumes, so let it be heard. As Dara Treseder, CMO of Carbon, shares: “If brand reflects culture and culture reflects brand, in this time it’s really important how that brand becomes expressed... through actions the company is taking to support the workforce.”²



Sourced from Best Version Media Newsletter
1 Pasquarelli, Adrienne. “Five Consumer Trends That Will Endure After COVID-19, and What They Mean for Marketers.” www.adage.com. 06 April 2020.

2 Swant, Marty. “How Top Marketers are Navigating Advertising and Management During COVID-19.” www.forbes.com. 07 April 2020.

MEANINGFUL MEDIA

Researchers are avidly working to discover what makes content more “meaningful”—and therefore more effective—in conveying a lasting message. Thanks to research by Neuro-Insight, we know that mail results in the highest brain response.¹ Mail scored as 49% more memorable than email and 35% more memorable than social media. Furthermore, print media is 35% more engaging than email and 35% more so than social media advertising.²

Also, when it comes to digital communication, one could argue that the content that goes “viral” is actually more entertaining than enlightening. As Kalev Leetaru of Forbes theorizes, “a thoughtful [social media] post written by an expert in the field in clinical and concise language... is unlikely to gain many readers”.² This lack of enlightenment (so to speak) in social media can make it difficult for businesses to connect with target audiences in a meaningful way.

By comparison, memorable print content can help you stand out as the go-to representative of your field.



HERE'S HOW

When it comes to print media, there are no ad blockers and no character counts. So, initiate the conversation you really want to have with prospective consumers. Be concise, professional and direct.

BE CONFIDENT

By presenting knowledge of your field in a confident, powerful manner, you can become memorable for the right reasons. You don't have to use statements about being "the best" to show that you are confident; instead, give readers insights that only you know about your field. Leave them with small takeaways they aren't getting anywhere else.

ENTERTAIN AND ENLIGHTEN

Whereas social media may lead with entertainment only, print content and ads can lead with both. Entertaining ads and headlines can grab attention, but enlightenment leaves a lasting impression. By genuinely helping readers solve a common problem in your field, you can present yourself as a trusted, reliable expert in the community.

Viral content may get widespread attention, but meaningful content can establish lasting relationships with consumers. By enlightening potential consumers with credible insights, lasting impressions and genuine care, you can stand out from all the so-called entertaining distractions.



Our private, neighborhood magazines provide the opportunity to build a relationship each month with our readers through frequent and consistent community branding, content marketing and print + digital micro-targeted content.



PART 2: THE VALUE OF MICRO-TARGETING AFFLUENT CONSUMERS

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“The most important aspect of marketing to the affluent is building trust and that comes from relationships and being known for providing the best service” - Jon Yedwabnik CEO of Opulent Jewelers.

hit your target market

Let's face it: marketing can be difficult. You want to spend your hard-earned marketing budget on something worthwhile and, above all, profitable for your business. A lot of businesses gravitate toward digital social media for their first (and often only) attempt at marketing. However, a recent study by the Data & Marketing Association shows that, while 77% of marketers are using digital social media, only 48% of businesses claim to see any trace of return on investment.¹



PHOTO BY BLU IRON PHOTOGRAPHY

Best Version Media

The Conrads
LONG TIME RESIDENTS AND LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS

Photo by Hannah Monney

The Bauknight Family
It's Your Life, Make It an Adventure

Best Version Media

Hannah Monney Photography

Becoming a part of the 48% that sees ROI through digital social media can be difficult. It requires time, effort, skill and mostly luck. The first, most crucial step of any marketing plan is to determine who your target audience is and how you can reach them. **If micro-influencers aren't part of your target market, you may want to rethink that, read on to discover why!**

On digital social media, your posts are shared seemingly at random, and your scope becomes increasingly broad, causing you to potentially lose sight of your target market. As a business owner, you are likely looking to target an affluent audience that can afford your products or services and become loyal consumers.

Thanks to research by Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), we know that advertising's effectiveness is controlled first by the consumer's needs and then by their financial ability to buy. In their research, RIT identified magazines as the advertising medium that most prompted consumers to buy products.¹

Research about hyperlocal micro-targeted magazines that use social media in print reinforce RIT's findings. **75% of advertisers say that they are equal to or better than any other form of advertising.** Digital social media, a distant second, is preferred by only 15% of advertisers. All other forms of advertising came in at under 9%.²

Advertising in print magazines will get you in front of your target audience, but strategic engagement is key. According to the Content Marketing Institute, the best way to reap the benefits of content marketing is to be featured in magazines like ours which are **"highly targeted publications with two point geo-targeted digital layers that can position your business as a top expert on subject matter that your audience cares about."**³

Sourced from Best Version Media Newsletter

1 Sorce, Patricia and Dewitz, Adam. The Case for Print Media Advertising in the Internet Age. RIT Scholar Works, No. PICRM-2006-02.

2 L.E.K. Consulting, LLC. L.E.K. survey and analysis. Fall 2017.

3 McCrary, Annette. "How Print Magazines Can Contribute to Your Content Marketing Plan." Content Marketing Institute.

www.contentmarketinginstitute.com.

BE AT THE TOP OF YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS' MINDS

Marketing dollars are among the most important in any business's budget. According to research noted in Journal of Marketing, sustained advertising results in increased profits and sales response.¹ On the other hand, short-term advertising does not yield consistent changes in profits. What is sustained advertising? It's a long-term marketing campaign that maintains your brand's distinct image and presence within your target audience. Sustained advertising continues month after month, building recognition and trust in your brand through repetition. Sponsors in our private, neighborhood magazines reap the benefits of consistent, reliable, top-of-mind marketing.

“

"The team I work for, Profile by Sanford, is an expert contributor in the publication. Shortly after the first issue we had a customer come in because she saw our article! I believe it was within one week. Off to a great start! Also, Meg and her team a great to work with." Current Sponsor, Applewood Living & Golden Living



HERE'S HOW...

SHARPEN YOUR EDGE OVER LARGE NATIONAL CHAINS

You have the advantage of living in the community you serve. People trust the business professionals they read about month after month. In Economic Science Series, research shows that print media is still the most used means of mass communication.¹ What better way to stand out from the national chains than through a hyperlocal print publication?

ONE-UP YOUR COMPETITION

Chances are, your hard times occur at the same time for your direct competitors. While they're cutting their marketing funds, amp up yours. Suddenly, your prospective customers will stop seeing your competitors' ads and start seeing only yours.

RAISE YOUR COMPANY PROFILE IN YOUR MARKET

By getting your advertisement in front of potential customers every month, you build familiarity through repetition. In a recent study by Economic Science Series, researchers find that the more often your ad reaches consumers, the clearer and more effective your message will be.¹

MARKETING IS NOT A ONE-TIME DEAL

Though readers may not need your services this month, by the time they receive the magazine next month, you could be just who they're looking for.



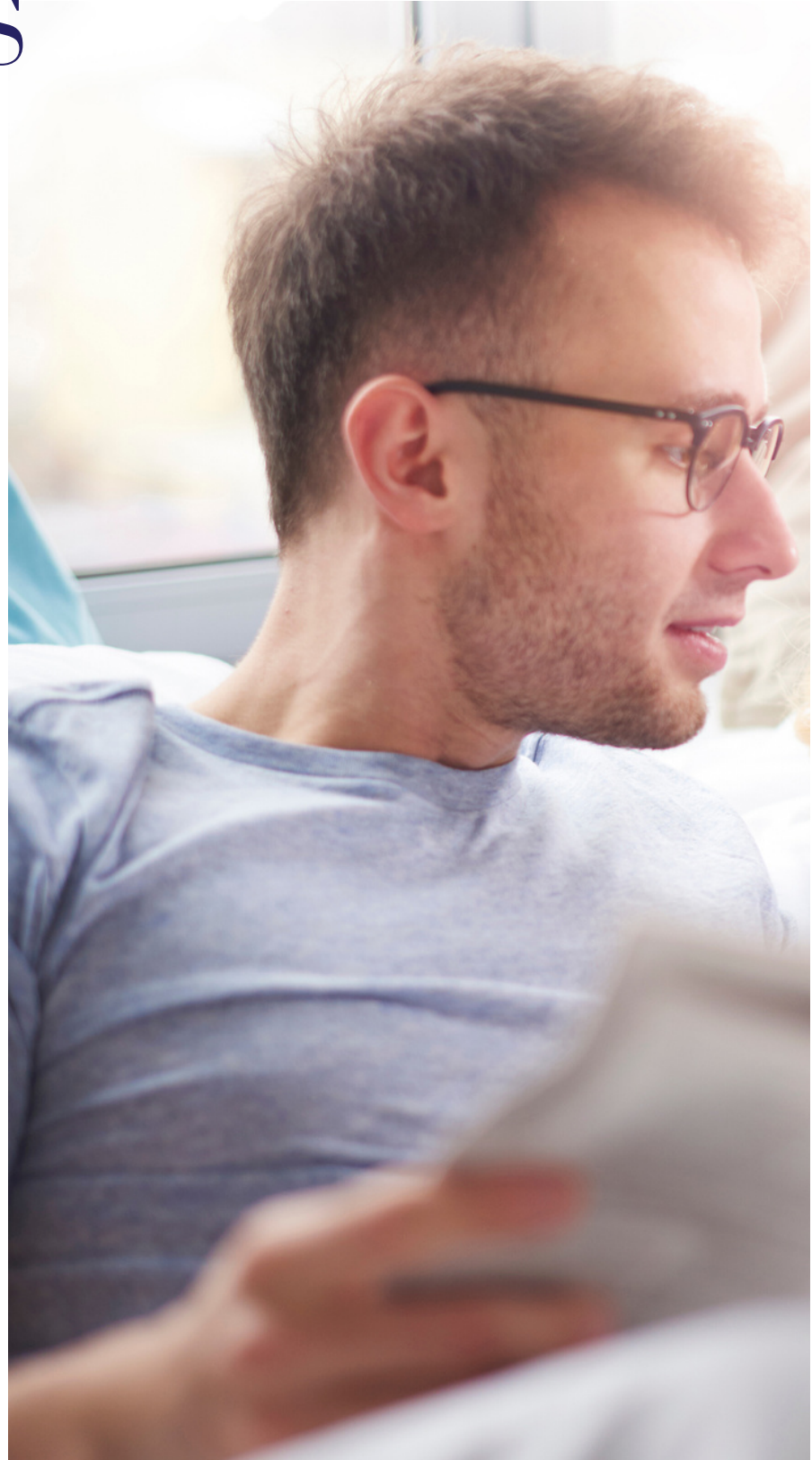
“Always remember: a brand is the most valuable piece of real estate in the world; a corner of someone's mind.” - John Hegarty, Hegarty on Advertising

ACHIEVING TOP OF MIND AWARENESS WITH AFFLUENT MICRO- INFLUENCERS

You have a business that you've worked hard to establish in your community. You have a product or service that you are proud of. The next step is crucial: you're ready to build awareness of your brand.

TOMA is "the state of the mind of the customers that allows them to have a particular brand name on the tip of their tongue and can indicate being aware of that particular brand."¹ As brand awareness increases, so does the number of potential customers; as your brand is embedded in the minds of consumers, conversion rates can improve as well.

TOMA is Most Effective in the Minds of Affluent Micro-Influencers



THE READERS OF OUR PRIVATE, NEIGHBORHOOD MAGAZINES ARE MICRO-INFLUENCERS



Influencer Marketing is about finding someone with an audience who's willing to share the love about your product. Influencers are usually thought of as celebrities and social media influencers with large followings. These are known as macro-influencers and they are very expensive which makes them out of reach for small to medium businesses.

MICRO-INFLUENCERS ARE MORE ACCESSIBLE

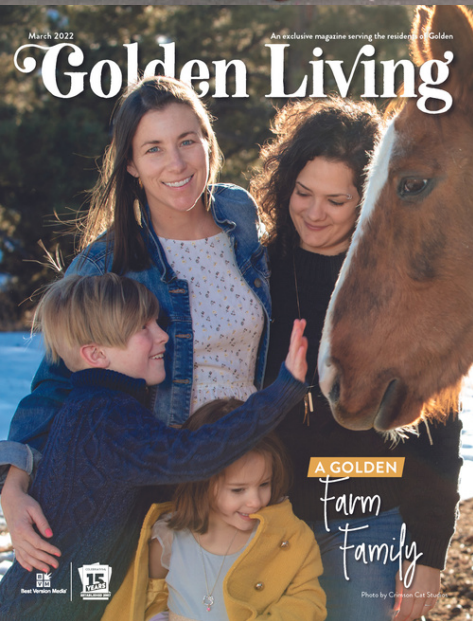
They are regular people who hold their own influence, only over a smaller crowd. Research tells us that because micro-influencers have a much more compact, targeted audience marketing to them is much more useful when you're actually selling something.¹

Many of the affluent homeowners who receive our magazines are micro-influencers. They live in these big homes for a reason. They are community leaders and business owners themselves. They sit on boards, lead community groups and are engaged in the media about their community. They are excellent referral sources because of the influence they hold over their audiences in our communities. They make their opinions known.

“

"I like to find out what events are going on in the neighborhood and learn more about the community I live in through Applewood Living Magazine."
Local Resident

HOW PRINT MEDIA KEEPS YOU TOP OF MIND



Many business owners try a few different advertising methods only to realize the inevitable: when advertising your business, there is no single magic technique to be successful instantly. Why is it so difficult to track the effectiveness of advertising when we have all this cutting-edge technology at our fingertips at all hours of the day?

In fact, the emergence of technology has only hindered our ability to track the effectiveness of advertising strategies. Gone are the days of getting solid data by simply asking consumers how they heard about your product or service. Various data now spreads across several platforms, rendering accuracy nearly impossible.¹

When consumers want to learn more about your business, the internet does the work for them. So your main goal should be increasing visibility to your qualified market in the first place. Here's how to stay top-of-mind for your target audience:

“

“Applewood Living is such a great, local publication. Our company Forestry Tree Care is an Expert Contributor for the magazine and we have received so many great new clients as a result. We appreciate the platform to let our community truly get to know us. Shout out to Meg for hearing all of our questions and making the process so easy!” - Current Sponsor, Applewood Living & Golden Living

increase recall ability and move from your prospects' short-term to long- term memory

Printed materials convey value; 70% of consumers say that it is mail rather than email that makes them feel appreciated and gives them an overall better impression of the company that sent it.¹ Readers are more likely to see your product or service as valuable when holding a tangible medium (like a magazine!) rather than clicking past an ad on the internet.

stay persistent and consistent, then repeat

When compared to email and social media advertising, printed content results in the highest brain response. It is 49% more memorable than email and 35% more memorable than social media.² By continuing to see your brand associated with educational content in a trustworthy and memorable format (print), you can see the effectiveness of print media thanks to direct communication with prospective clients.

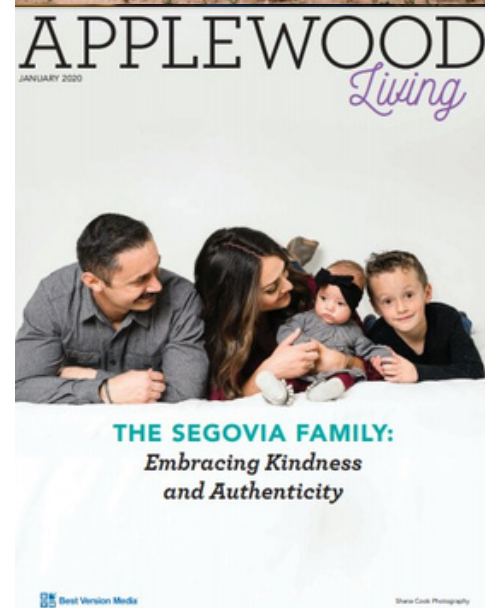
create educational content regularly

This initiates a conversation with prospective consumers, getting them comfortable with your advice before they even enter your business. By providing them with insight and advice they aren't getting elsewhere, your brand becomes associated with relevant, accurate knowledge in your area.

Successful branding is not instantaneous, but that also means it is not fleeting. Dig in, take the time to reach and engage with quality prospects, and it will be no secret where you could receive your greatest ROI.



"As a resident of Applewood, I love that we have our own magazine where we can share our passions, support each other as a community, and learn more about each other! My family had so much fun being a featured family in the April issue, such a joy to work with all the hard working people who put this together! Looking forward to all the upcoming issues and content on Facebook too." Local Resident



Is Your Marketing on Target?



Our private, neighborhood magazines are monthly, private micro-targeted publications branded by, for, and about the neighbors of Applewood and Golden. We are in the business of living rooms, not billboards. The micro-influencers who receive our publications use them to learn about the best businesses in the area.

[Click here to apply for Sponsorship](#)



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