



Association of Community Publishers  
*75th Anniversary*

# Conference & Trade Show

September 10 - 12, 2025  
Renaissance Mobile Riverview  
Plaza Hotel



*Laissez les bons  
temps rouler!  
Let the good  
times roll!*



It is my distinct pleasure to invite you to the 2025 ACP Conference & Trade Show and our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The conference will take place this year in the historic and culturally rich city of **Mobile, Alabama** - the birthplace of America's Mardi Gras and a vibrant hub of Southern hospitality.

Our conference will be hosted at the elegant **Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel**, ideally situated along the **Mobile River** and right in the heart of the city's charming downtown district. With such an impressive property offered at a special conference rate of only **\$175 per night**, it will be the perfect setting for our annual gathering.

The 2025 conference promises to be an engaging and dynamic experience. You'll have the opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, meet the next generation of Rising Stars, and discover how our valued trade show partners can support your success.

The Conference Planning Committee has been working diligently to craft a thoughtful and enriching agenda. From educational sessions to valuable networking events, every element is designed to help you, and your team grow and thrive.

One exciting change to our typical format this year, is rather than having just one keynote speaker, we have 3! And each speaker will also present a coordinating "workshop" session bringing you multiple important topics and a higher level of expertise!

We are pleased to offer this year's **Leadership Certificate Program**, titled: **"Communicating at the Top of Your Game"** Guided by University of

South Alabama Professors, Dr. Jeanne Maes and Dr. Jennifer C. Zoghby of the Mitchell College of Business. If you have ever experienced business communication problems, this interactive session is for you! They will explore some of the problems in business communication and suggest practical tools to deal with them.

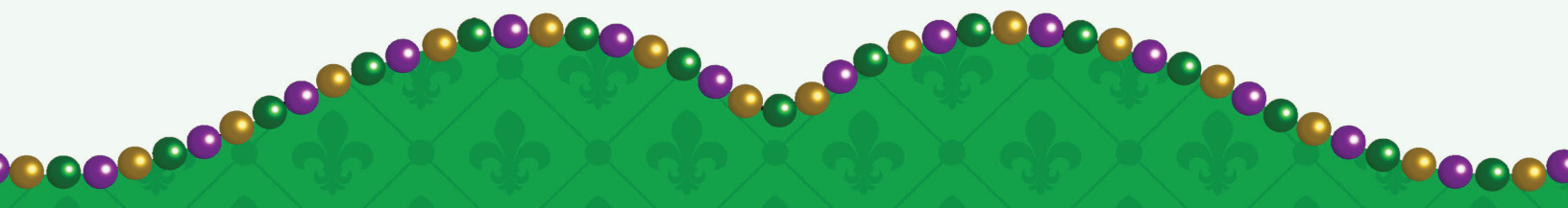


Attendees can also look forward to **six TLI classes**, including 4 brand new titles and several "visiting professors" to bring fresh content to the TLI sales track.

A highlight of the week will be our **Thursday evening networking event**, a true Mardi Gras party experience! March with us in our very own ACP parade to the Mardi Gras Museum, where we'll have cocktails, dinner and dancing and you'll help us crown a king and queen!

We recognize the time and resources you invest in attending this event, and we are committed to making your experience as valuable and rewarding as possible. We sincerely hope you will join us in **Mobile, Alabama** for what is sure to be a memorable and impactful conference. So grab your masks and get ready to let the good times roll!

*—Manuel Karam, 2025 Conference Chair*



## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

### Local Media 3.0: Transforming Your Publishing Model for the Digital Age

Are you capturing your advertisers' full marketing spend? Most local publishers only get a small share. Local Media 3.0 isn't about ditching print—it's about using your strengths to grow digital revenue. This session explores why the "AND strategy" (print and digital) is essential for sustainability. Learn how to turn print revenue into digital growth, position your publication as a full-service media agency, and thrive—whether you publish a shopper, lifestyle magazine, or hybrid. Guy Tasaka's insights have helped hundreds of publishers modernize their models. Now it's your turn to rethink your strategy and claim a bigger piece of the pie.

**Guy Tasaka** is a seasoned media executive with deep expertise in digital publishing, research and analytics, strategic planning, and product development. As CEO of *Tasaka Digital*, he leads innovation in mobile publishing, digital subscriptions, and Connected TV. He has held leadership roles at *Calkins Media* and *The New York Times*, where he helped drive digital transformation. A contributor to *Editor and Publisher Magazine*, Guy shares insights on emerging technologies in media. Named the 2015 Local Media Association's Innovator of the Year, he remains a key voice shaping the future of local media through forward-thinking strategies and innovation.



#### WORKSHOP:

#### AI FOR PUBLISHERS: PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Transform your operation with AI tools designed specifically for local publishers!

Artificial intelligence isn't just for major media companies. In this hands-on session, media innovation expert Guy Tasaka breaks down how community and mid-metro publishers can implement AI solutions that drive real results.

##### You'll learn:

- Data collection strategies that work even for smaller publishers
- How AI can strengthen your relationships with existing

advertisers

- Practical applications for content creation, audience engagement, and advertising
- Revenue opportunities that AI unlocks for local media companies

This isn't theoretical—it's a brass-tacks look at how publishers like you are using AI tools right now to grow their business. Guy will share a step-by-step implementation approach that respects your current business model while opening new opportunities.

## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

### Lead Generation Tactics and First-Party Data: Boosting Local Media Sales

- Actionable frameworks for contests, newsletters, and local directories
- Low-cost tech tools and platforms
- Case studies of successful community publishers
- Step-by-step guidance on audience segmentation and monetization

#### WORKSHOP:

#### LEAD GENERATION Q & A

The keynote will be followed by a Q&A workshop with publishers to examine current tactics and advise on simple and actionable goals to implement.

Participants will leave with a follow-up playbook containing templates, checklists, and additional resources to implement these strategies right away.

**Ross Furukawa** is a seasoned media entrepreneur and digital marketing strategist with a proven track record of innovating across both traditional and digital publishing environments. Leveraging multi-channel lead generation tactics, AI-driven marketing automation, and integrated tech solutions, he has successfully launched and scaled multiple ventures—from local news platforms and design agencies to comprehensive affiliate networks—delivering measurable ROI and sustainable growth for brands and publications. Ross is the President of Santa Monica Daily Press



## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE

### Your Invitation to the First-Party Party: Digital Publishing & Email

For publishers, first-party data—especially email—is your most valuable asset. In this session, StyleBlueprint shares how their robust email strategy drives audience engagement, boosts advertiser relationships, and enhances content performance across platforms. Learn to blend editorial and marketing content, streamline production with tools like RSS, and use email to power retargeting, social media, SEO, and more. Featuring real-world case studies and actionable metrics, this session offers practical strategies designed for community publishers navigating today's data-driven landscape. Walk away with the tools to unlock email's full potential and strengthen your overall digital strategy.

*Liza and Jay Graves are the duo behind StyleBlueprint, a digital platform celebrating Southern culture, travel, and local business. Liza, Founder and CEO, launched the site in 2009 to spotlight Southern voices and small businesses, growing it into a nationally recognized, woman-owned brand. Named one of Southern Living's Most Stylish Southerners, she also earned accolades as a top CEO. Jay, COO and EO Nashville president, brings 20+ years in tech and startups, with clients like the NFL and NBC Sports. Together, they champion scalable co-op marketing for under-resourced towns, reaching over three million readers annually with stories that uplift the South.*



## WORKSHOP: PUTTING YOUR FIRST-PARTY EMAIL STRATEGY TO WORK

You've seen what's possible - now it's time to put it into action. In this hands-on workshop, we'll dive deeper into the tools, tactics, and workflows that small publishers can use to start or scale a winning first-party email strategy. Learn how to segment your email lists for better targeting, create high-performing content blends, and track the KPIs that matter most. We'll walk through real publishing scenarios,

helping you leave with a practical action plan tailored to your audience and resources. Whether you're just starting out or looking to optimize your approach, this session will help you move from ideas to implementation - fast.

Perfect for publishers who want to understand how AI can complement their current operations without replacing what's already working.

## LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

### Communicating at the Top of Your Game

*Preregistration required with fee.*

If you have ever experienced business communication problems, this interactive session is for you. In this session, we will explore some of the problems in business communication and suggest practical tools to deal with them. As publishers and managers, you are skilled in many aspects of communication. However, you may find yourself grappling with changing communication methods and others' expectations. Moreover, your academic training and work experience may not have fully prepared you for what you are facing in business settings, such as negotiation, working in teams, hiring, firing, and managing employees and freelancers.

*Dr. Jeanne Maes is a Professor of Management at the Mitchell College of Business and also serves as Ombudsperson at the University of South Alabama. She specializes in organizational communication, negotiation, and alternative dispute resolution. A consultant, certified coach, facilitator, mediator, and executive trainer, she has worked with clients throughout the U.S. and internationally.*



*Dr. Jennifer C. Zoghby serves as Assistant Professor of Management at the Mitchell College of Business at the University of South Alabama. Her research centers on entrepreneurship. She has led several training seminars for local and regional groups, including entrepreneurs and health care executives.*





# The Leadership Institute

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS



## TLI 260 - TAKING A WALK IN AN ENTREPRENEUR'S SHOES

**NEW CLASS!** Kara was able to see first-hand just how many steps there are to start a new, small businesses, having gone through the process herself. She used that experience to create a checklist to help new businesses and to rethink how we can support them, well before advertising comes into play. In this session she'll be sharing ideas for publishers to connect with new, local businesses from day one - even in ways that go well before advertising. **Instructor: Kara Ivson**

## TLI 256 - DIGITAL SALES SUCCESS PART 3

**NEW CLASS!** Building on the foundational concepts from TLI 230 and TLI 254, this course takes your understanding of digital media strategy to the next level. While previous courses focused on identifying what to sell and how to integrate print and digital sales effectively, this class shifts the focus to the structural aspects of digital. You'll explore how to leverage digital tools and strategies to evolve into a full-service media company to position yourself for continued growth. **TLI Instructor: Manuel Karam**

## TLI 221 - LEVERAGING YOUR CVC AUDIT & CVC SALES PROPOSAL TOOL

**NEW CLASS!** Do you use these ACP Member Benefits? Statistics can be a powerful and informative part of an advertising sales presentation if used effectively. Understanding which publishing statistics to incorporate into your sales presentation to keep it interesting and informative but without overwhelming your audience with numbers is the key. The right balance is sure to move your prospect to action. We'll show you how to use these valuable tools to maximize your revenue.

## TLI 220 - MASTERING YOUR RATE CARD: BUILD, PRESENT, AND PROFIT - CHARITY HUFF

**NEW CLASS!** Your rate card isn't just a pricing sheet - it's a strategic tool that can drive revenue, showcase value, and build lasting partnerships. In this session, we'll dive into how to build a compelling rate card that aligns with your offerings and your



market. We'll also explore the best practices for using your rate card in proposals and renewals to ensure you're maximizing every opportunity. Whether you're starting from scratch or looking to refine what you already have, this class will give you actionable tips and real-world examples to make your rate card work harder for you. **TLI Instructor: Charity Huff**

## TLI 114 - INCREASE YOUR SALES & CREATE LONG-TERM CUSTOMERS

In this class, you'll explore proven strategies for selling through long-term contracts, mastering the art of upselling, and creating persuasive proposals that secure commitment and growth. Gain the skills and insights needed to deliver exceptional value and build customer loyalty for the long haul. **TLI Instructor: Jolene Goodman**

## TLI 109 - TIME AND TERRITORY MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE

Boost your productivity and optimize your sales approach with practical strategies for managing your time and territory. This session identifies common time-wasting pitfalls and explores the Three Ps of effective management—Planning, Prioritizing, and Persistence. Learn 28 proven tips to streamline your workflow and participate in hands-on exercises, including a time log review, to sharpen your skills, achieve your goals with greater efficiency and make more sales. **TLI Instructor: Jolene Goodman**





# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## WEDNESDAY • SEPTEMBER 10

9:30 AM	Registration Opens
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Mobile Sites Tour*
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Leadership Certificate Program*
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Rising Stars Orientation Meeting
6:15 PM - 7:30 PM	Welcome Reception
Evening:	Enjoy Mobile!

## THURSDAY • SEPTEMBER 11

7:30 AM	Registration Open
7:45 - 8:45 AM	Peer Group Breakfast Roundtables
8:45 - 9:20 AM	Welcome & Keynote with Guy Tasaka
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Coffee & Speed Networking
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Recognition Lunch - Industry Awards
1:00 PM - 2:10 PM	Breakout Sessions: <i>Sales Track: TLI Classes (2 to choose from)</i> <i>Leadership Track: Workshop with Guy Tasaka</i> <i>Trade Show Open</i>
2:15 PM - 3:00 PM	Coffee & Vendor Interaction Session
2:15 PM - 3:15 PM	Rising Stars Special Session
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM	Idea Exchange Mardi Gras Style
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Keynote with Ross Furukawa
6:30 PM - 9:30 PM	Mardi Gras Parade & Celebration*

## FRIDAY • SEPTEMBER 12

7:30 AM	Registration Open
8:00 - 9:00 AM	Breakfast
7:45 - 8:45 AM	January Spring Breakfast Roundtable
9:00 AM - 10:10 AM	Breakout Sessions: <i>Sales Track: TLI Classes (2 to choose from)</i> <i>Leadership Track: Workshop with Ross Furukawa</i> <i>Trade Show Open</i>
10:10 AM - 11:00 AM	Coffee & Vendor Interaction
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Keynote with Liza & Jay Graves
12:15 PM - 1:15 PM	Lunch & TLI Graduation
1:15 PM - 2:25 PM	Breakout Sessions: <i>Sales Track: TLI Class</i> <i>Leadership Track: Innovation Session &amp; Open Forum</i> <i>Trade Show Open</i>
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Trade Show Activity & Drawings
3:30 PM	Silent Auction Officially Closes
3:30 PM - 4:40 PM	Breakout Sessions: <i>Sales Track: TLI Class</i> <i>Leadership Track: Workshop with Liza &amp; Jay Graves</i>
4:45 PM - 5:30 PM	Closing Presentations
5:30 PM	Rooftop Reception

*This schedule is subject to change.*

*\*Optional sessions/events at an additional cost.*



## AUCTION & RAFFLE

New in 2025, the auction has gone digital! This will allow all members, whether you're in attendance or not to participate. All proceeds from the auction will go to the Bill Welsh Foundation which supports educational initiatives for young professionals (such as the Rising Stars) in the Community Publication Industry. **We are always in need of donations so you can find all the details and instructions at [communitypublishers.com](http://communitypublishers.com) and we encourage everyone to bid on the items at the conference as well.** We appreciate your participation and support!

Back by popular demand, the lottery board will be in play at the Mobile conference to benefit the Bill Welsh foundation also! This exciting raffle has been such a huge success at past conferences that we decided to bring it back again in 2025. ACP will purchase \$100 worth of scratch off tickets, and we will sell raffle tickets throughout the conference for one lucky winner to have a chance at winning millions! Winner takes all, so be sure join in on the excitement!

## ALL WORK & NO PLAY - NOT A CHANCE!

### WEDNESDAY EVENING

Join us on Wednesday evening to kick off the conference with a cocktail and get reacquainted with your fellow attendees! Mingle with friends and meet new faces and then pair off into groups to enjoy a nice dinner at one of the many local restaurant options that downtown Mobile has to offer!

### THURSDAY EVENING

On Thursday, we take our Mardi Gras Celebration to the next level! Meet us in the hotel lobby to grab a drink and line up for our parade, complete with a second line band to lead us to the Mardi Gras Museum for an evening of dinner and cocktails and dancing! Help our Krewe crown the King and Queen of the soiree! Unwind and let loose at this one-of-a-kind networking experience you won't find anywhere else! This event can be added to your registration for \$109 per person (alcohol is included).

### FRIDAY EVENING

Come by and join us on the rooftop terrace overlooking downtown Mobile for cocktails to say a final farewell as the conference comes to an end. We have also partnered with the Mobile CVB to provide our group with materials and information on local activities, shopping, dining and more. Visit the registration desk for details.

## TRADE SHOW

The conference also features an exhibit hall where Associate Partners showcase the latest products and services, tailored to the needs of the Community Publishing Industry. We typically have around 25-30 Associate Partners who sponsor our conference and present products and services to those who visit their booths throughout the conference. You'll find anything from printers, software platforms, content services and digital providers to the latest AI tools and more! Let us help you find the best partners the industry has to offer!



## IDEA EXCHANGE

### Masquerade of Minds Idea Exchange

Laissez les bons temps rouler (Let the good times roll) as creativity sets sail in a dazzling parade of innovation! Each idea is a vibrant float in our grand Mardi Gras procession - bold, brilliant, and ready to dazzle the crowd. Whether it's your own brainstorm or a gem you discovered elsewhere, we want them all. This is a celebration of ideas in all their festive glory!

Join us for a lively and spirited showdown where our contestants will strut their stuff down the Idea Avenue, competing in this annual attendee favorite - the latest twist on the 3-Minute Idea Exchange. With beads flying and energy high, each presenter has just three minutes to sway the crowd and earn their vote.

The audience becomes the krewe, casting live phone votes to crown the winning captain - who'll not only revel in victory but also lead the way for fellow revelers with a standout idea worth following.

#### Prizes fit for royalty await:

**\$500 for 1st Place**

**\$250 for 2nd Place**

**\$100 for 3rd Place**

From entertainment to insight, this high-energy event is sure to be a conference highlight! And beyond the fanfare, the real treasure lies in the ideas themselves - golden nuggets that could spark new revenue or streamline your operations back home.

So grab your mask, bring your brightest idea, and get ready to march into Mobile with flair - this is one parade you won't want to miss!

ATTENDEE TYPE	ATTENDEE FEE	GUEST FEE	RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL
ACP Member Publications <b>FIRST Attendee</b> per company	\$199 per person Up to 8/1/25 ---- \$299 per person After 8/1/25	\$249 per person (meals only - no sessions)	\$175.00 Per Night + taxes Reservations: 800-468-3571 Group: Association of Community Publishers
ACP Member Publications <b>Additional Attendees</b> per company	<b>75th Anniversary Special</b> ---- \$75 per person Up to 8/1/25	\$249 per person (meals only - no sessions)	\$175.00 Per Night + taxes Reservations: 800-468-3571 Group: Association of Community Publishers
Non-Member Publications	\$599 per person	\$249 per person (meals only - no sessions)	\$175.00 Per Night + taxes Reservations: 800-468-3571 Group: Association of Community Publishers

## BOOK YOUR ROOM!



You must contact the Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel to book your hotel reservations directly. If you are planning to take advantage of the reduced room rates offered to ACP attendees, you **MUST** follow these instructions:

**All hotel reservations must be made directly with the Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel by calling the hotel directly at (800) 468-3571 and using code: Association of Community Publishers, or you may book by using the link in the QR code below.**

To receive the group rate, you must state that you are a part of the ACP group or provide the code. **All reservations must be received by 8/8/2025** and must be guaranteed with a credit card. Any cancellations or changes are the responsibility of the attendee and must be made directly with the hotel. Please contact the ACP office with questions.

### CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:



**Non-Member Rate:** \$599  
**Member Rate:** \$199 (before 8/1/25)  
\$75 each additional company attendee  
**Guest Fee:** \$249

Leadership Workshop: \$89  
T-shirts: \$20  
Mardi Gras Party Networking Dinner: \$109

### HOTEL BOOKINGS:



Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel  
Room Rate: \$175  
Reservations: 800-468-3571

Group Code:  
Association of Community Publishers

Reserve by 8/8/25

## WELCOME TO MOBILE!

Mobile, Alabama is a vibrant port city on the Southern coast, known as the birthplace of Mardi Gras, with the first celebration held in 1703 predating New Orleans. Rich in French, Spanish, and British history, Mobile blends Southern charm with coastal culture, offering historic districts, antebellum architecture, and a thriving arts scene. The city comes alive during Mardi Gras season with family-friendly parades, mystic societies, and traditional moon pie throws. Its waterfront feature attractions like the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park and access to eco-adventures in the

Mobile-Tensaw Delta make it a special place. With delicious seafood, lively festivals, and deep cultural roots, Mobile is a uniquely charming Southern gem.



RESTAURANTS



THINGS TO DO



NIGHTLIFE