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## YOU CAN PUT MONEY IN YOUR POCKET! WITH THE CLASSIFIED AND DISPLAY ADVERTISING NETWORKS

Here is everything you need to know to let Network Advertising bring revenue to your paper!

### What are Advertising Networks?

The Advertising Networks are owned by Association members which allow MDDC to include their newspapers in a multi-state advertising vehicle that is marketed as a one-order, one price, advertising package. This package provides advertisers coverage across Maryland, Delaware and D.C. with minimal administrative effort. There is a network specifically for classified line ads and another for two inch by two-column display advertising. Revenue from the networks is divided between the participating newspapers and the Association.

### Why should my paper participate?

The networks were designed to be more than just a revenue source for the Association. The networks are a tool each paper can use to improve its own stature within its community. When your sales staff can offer statewide coverage to suitable advertisers, your paper will stand out as an expanded-value resource. In addition, many participants find added credibility for their paper in greater advertising content, and typically, *the revenue shares for participating in the networks offset the cost of MDDC membership for almost every single newspaper!*

### How does my paper earn revenue?

There are two ways. The first is a participation rebate. A portion of the ad cost is put into a pool that is distributed to participants at fiscal-year-end – 25% for classified, 50% for 2x2. This money is paid out in two ways: first is a flat participation award of \$150 for display, \$200 for classified. Then each paper receives an additional percentage of the pool based on its percentage of the combined circulation for a given network. Another way for revenue is direct sale commissions-for an ad sold into the network, a paper may keep 50% of CAN and 25% of 2x2 ad cost.

### Doesn't this mean giving away space?

Not really. It's true that payment for the space is not tendered prior to the ads running in the paper (unless your paper sells the ad and collects the payment). However the space is still generating revenue for your paper. In the 2004 disbursements, classified revenue shares averaged \$89.05 per thousand circulation and display revenue shares averaged \$57.18. In 2004, a 5,000-circulation paper paid approximately \$324 for MDDC membership, but earned back \$645 and \$435 for its participation in the classified and display networks respectively.

### Where do the ads come from?

Besides any that your paper might sell into the network, ads are taken directly by MDDC from advertisers that have heard about the networks, other statewide networks (there are more than forty across the nation), agencies and other member papers. The revenue from all of these sources is shared with the participating papers.

### Will the ads be screened for content?

Yes, MDDC screens all ads before submitting them into the networks. MDDC's Standards for Acceptance are based on the consensus of our members' standards and also reflect federal laws regarding discrimination, truth-in-advertising, etc. In the case of ads for adoption, some business opportunities, employment information and some other 'marginal' topics, MDDC does not categorically reject these ads, but we caution advertisers that acceptance by papers may be limited. Before accepting any ads in these categories, advertisers are highly scrutinized. MDDC requires proof of licensure or certification, verifies these details with proper authorities, and investigates business references with the Better Business Bureau, the Federal Trade Commission and other authorities as well. Ads that do not meet these standards are not accepted. The only ads that are prohibited outright are public and legal notices.

### May we reject ads?

A selling-feature for the networks is that our ads are estimated to run in 95% of the participating papers. This allows papers a small margin for the rejection of ads that might be disqualified by their own standards. If a paper's rejection rate exceeds 10%, MDDC should be informed promptly so the standards can be re-evaluated.

### How are ads categorized?

MDDC assures that ad classification will be reasonable. The right to re-classify an ad is reserved for all papers. For example, if *painters* is not an available category, the ad can be placed under *home improvement* instead. MDDC will follow advertiser requests for certain categories but will not accommodate any categorization that is misleading. Papers are responsible for upholding this standard as well. MDDC also requests that papers incorporate network ads in the actual classified section, but this is optional.

## WE CAN PUT MONEY IN YOUR POCKET! — *Continued*

<b>Is proof of publication required?</b>	As a general rule, no. In order to keep the cost of the program attractively low, the overhead must be kept to a minimum. A cover sheet will be provided with each distribution to the network to serve as a means for indicating acceptance and must be signed and returned to MDDC promptly. This will suffice unless an advertiser requests further proof. In such cases, it is MDDC's policy to provide <i>one</i> tear sheet or an MDDC affidavit upon written request. Affidavits from participating papers will only be requested as a last resort. However, MDDC performs random audits of network participation. For this purpose, MDDC might subscribe to your paper, or your paper might be asked to provide tear sheets, affidavits or whole publications two or three times each fiscal year.
<b>How and when do we get the ads?</b>	If your paper sells an ad into the network, contact MDDC to arrange providing the ad copy for distribution. The network coordinator will assemble all of the ads from the various sources and distribute them to all participating papers. When a paper commits to the network, it identifies a point of contact to whom the ads will be sent via either email or fax. The ads are sent at the close of business on the deadline day: Tuesday for the 2x2 network, Wednesday for the classified network. Ads are also posted on MDDC's Web site by noon of the day after deadline.
<b>What if an advertiser wants a refund?</b>	MDDC tries to keep advertiser's expectations reasonable. So an advertiser should never be surprised if their ad's rejection rate is high. If an advertiser makes an informed decision about running an ad, there should never be grounds for a refund. However, if MDDC has committed an error that materially affects the potential response to an ad, MDDC may issue a refund at the discretion of the ad director. But at no time will the liability incurred by MDDC or participating newspapers exceed the amount of money paid for the cost of the ad.
<b>How does the paper pay MDDC for an ad it sold?</b>	In keeping with the goal of low overhead, MDDC does not invoice. And since there is no billing between participating papers and MDDC, your paper should first collect prepayment from the advertiser. The paper can then remit payment to MDDC, less it's 50% commission for CAN, 25% for 2x2. MDDC requests that payment be remitted weekly or by end of the month at the latest so that receivables are not left open longer than thirty days.
<b>When do the ads get published?</b>	MDDC sends the ads out the week prior to the date requested by the advertiser. MDDC considers the ad week to be Monday to Sunday. Daily publications may choose the specific day of the week, but are requested to set and keep the day consistent to facilitate auditing. Weekly publications should place the ad in the one weekly issue; bi-weekly and monthly publications should compile unique ads and run them in the next subsequent issue.
<b>How are ads formatted?</b>	Display advertising should be sent to MDDC electronically (e-mail) in PDF format. If this is not feasible, then three original print-outs of the ad on bright white paper (un-creased) should be mailed to MDDC. For classified ads, any textual highlights the advertiser requests (bold letters, capitalization, etc.) will be indicated in the copy sent to the networks, but each paper may follow its own guidelines.
<b>How much do the ads cost?</b>	In the Classified Network, a 25-word ad costs \$495. Each additional word is \$8. In the Display Network, a 2x2 ad is \$1,450 per week. We also accept a 2x4 (double the height of a 2x2) for \$2,900. MDDC also offers various benefits or discounts to volume advertisers. Check with the network coordinator for details on current promotions.
<b>How are words counted?</b>	All words preceded and followed by a space are counted as one word, including email addresses, web sites and phone numbers. Three symbols (ampersands, etc.) are allowed for free. Abbreviations and hyphenations must be customary or reasonable. Exaggerated use of these devices to pad ad copy will not be accommodated.
<b>When is the deadline?</b>	For display advertising, all materials must be received in the MDDC office by noon on Tuesday preceding the run week. For classified advertising, all materials must be received by noon on Wednesday preceding the run week. For advertisers placing direct with MDDC, this includes payment by money order, official check or credit card.
<b>How long does the program run?</b>	The fiscal year for the display network is May to April; for the classified network it is December to November. However, papers may join at any time. To optimize benefits and ease administration, MDDC requests that papers stay on for at least a 12-month trial. The commitment is self-renewing. Papers may withdraw at any time by providing 30-day written notice of intent.
<b>Are there any weeks MDDC does not run the network?</b>	No. MDDC accepts and places ads for every week of the year. And because of the method of distribution, MDDC is not able to exclude papers on weeks they are not publishing. If your paper receives ads intended for a holiday on which it does not publish, simply indicate so on the acceptance form that accompanies all network distributions and fax it to MDDC. Your paper should run the ads in the next subsequent issue.
<b>How does a paper enroll?</b>	MDDC requests that all newspapers under a given publisher participate. This simplifies the audit and disbursement processes. And the process is very simple. Just contact MDDC. Your paper will receive a commitment form that collects all the information needed to enroll. Use the form to indicate how each paper elects to receive ads, to name a point-of-contact for receiving the ads, and to identify the person responsible for overseeing your paper's cooperation. MDDC should be informed if any of the information provided on the form changes.

**Questions?**

**Contact MDDC's Advertising Networks Director Alan Hay for assistance. Call 410-721-4000 x15.**