

March 28, 2025

MAINE TRUST

— for Local News —

How our team increased
branded content revenue
3-fold in 2024



Timeline

2014: Native advertising sales started

2019: Selected for Branded Content Project Cohort

2020: Formation of the Content Studio now METLN Content Studio

2023: Acquired by NTLN and evaluation of revenue.



2023 ---> 2024

While planning our 2024 budget, we identified 3 major revenue “tracks” for 2024:

- Audience Extension

- Event Sponsorships

and...

- **Branded Content**

End of 2024

Increased our branded content revenue 3x YOY (2023 – 2024)

Beat our 2024 goal by 143%

Have already booked 37% to our 2025 budget

Custom Branded Content Strategy: Identifying the Team



METLN

CONTENT STUDIO

VP, Business Development --> **Advises the team**
Allison McCann

Marketing Projects --> **Content Marketing Manager**
Molly Adams

Director of Creative Services --> **Art Direction**
Melissa Pritchard

Director of Business Development --> **Project Manager**
Mackenzie Gregory

Additionally:
Web & interactive designers
David Tripp, Jake Laws

Graphic designers
Ted Duguay, Hannah Clark

Copywriters
Natalie Haberman Ladd
Nancy Fickett

Project coordination
Molly Yakas-Follen

Trafficking & reporting
EJ Fechenda, Debbie Pearce

Media consultants
Our sales team!

2024

Branded content was going to be a focus in 2024, but what did we need?

Identify the
team and our
custom value
proposition

Define
our
process

Create easy to
understand
packages
(custom was the enemy)

Create our
media kit
+ sales materials

Training
Roadshow and
Roadshow pt. 2!

The background of the slide features a vibrant, abstract artwork with swirling patterns in shades of green, teal, and orange. Overlaid on this is a semi-transparent white rectangular box containing the text and logo. The logo consists of a black square with the word 'METLN' in white, followed by the words 'CONTENT STUDIO' in a dark grey sans-serif font.

METLN CONTENT STUDIO

You have a **STORY**. We can help you **SHARE** it.

The **METLN Content Studio** is a full-service content creation team, focusing on brand storytelling and distribution to our wide-reaching multi-media platforms.

We specialize in helping local businesses share their unique point-of-view through informative stories that enhance & inform users' daily lives and inspire them to act.

Our award-winning content studio can create custom packages, scalable for all budgets, to help your business stand out in an authentic way.

Let us put the **POWER** of **OUR AUDIENCES** in Maine and beyond to work for you.

2024

Easy to understand packages (content vs. distribution)

What distribution methods did we already have, what did we want, and what would be the best solutions for our partners?

BRONZE: provided content, native O&O distribution + social

SILVER: METLN produced content, native O&O distribution + social

GOLD: METLN produced content, O&O + native programmatic
+ social distribution

PLATINUM: METLN produced content, native, display,
& high impact SOV O&O + email newsletters + native programmatic
+ social distribution

Content creation services...

- Partner provided vs. What's included in our "content production services"

METLN Content Production package:

- Research, writing, and 2 rounds of copy editing
- Use of stock images

Additional:

- Freelance photography
- Logo/brand work
- HTML custom web template design
- Custom template design for print

2024

What did we need to go-to-market?

Media kit

Package rate sheets

Custom proposal template

EXAMPLES



BRANDED CONTENT PACKAGES

YOU HAVE A STORY. WE CAN HELP YOU SHARE IT.
Visit metln.org/content for more information about our content studio = capabilities.

These pre-built packages offer you options for provided and METLN studio created content + good, better, & best methods for distribution. However, custom packages can (and should) be made available upon further discussion of your project. Speak with your media consultant to discuss the scope of your project and for a custom quote.

	3-PECE	6-PECE	12-PECE
BRONZE PACKAGE, per content piece assets:	\$1,750	\$7,500	\$15,000
Provided content with 1 round of editing			
100,000 native impressions on O&O websites			
Inclusion in homepage partner well			
Content hosting on our website + aggregate page of all your content			
1 tagged Facebook post			
SILVER PACKAGE, per content piece assets:	\$4,950	\$9,300	\$18,600
Production Package (writing + 2 rounds of editing)			
100,000 native impressions on O&O websites			
Inclusion in homepage partner well			
Content hosting on our website + aggregate page of all your content			
1 tagged Facebook post			

See page two for additional package pricing

Courtney Spencer courtney@metln.org | 207.791.1444

MAINE TRUST — for Local News — metln.org

metln.org/metln-content-studio

MAINE TRUST
— for Local News —

HOME ABOUT US PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT US

METLN CONTENT STUDIO

You have a STORY.
We can help you SHARE it.

WHO WE ARE OUR AUDIENCE + ENGAGEMENT OUR CAPABILITIES + SERVICES WHO WE WORK WITH CONTACT US

WHO WE ARE

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Our award-winning content studio can create custom packages, available for all budgets, to help your business

2024

What was our process? How did we keep organized?

"OK! I sold it!" Now what?

Developing project plans and internal/ external creative consults

Project management tools

Billing: how to flag revenue as branded content

Reporting: what data did we want to share and how?

2024

Working with our newsroom colleagues

All branded content layouts in print and online were created with and approved by our executive and managing editors

Layouts fall in line with best practices, similar to other major news organizations

Created an internal process for editing provided pieces before publishing

We share guidelines for client provided content

We reserve the right to refuse any advertising and have rejected some sponsored content campaigns for various reasons

Examples

Portland Press Herald Homes

HOMES

Monday, September 16, 2024 • Maine Real Estate • SECTION 4

REAL ESTATE & Open Home Listings | Home design & maintenance

ADVERTISING: 555-767-1234

DAVID'S PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

7 Ocean View, Scarborough • \$795,000

David's Property of the Week is a beautiful, modern home with a large lot and a great location. It features a large open floor plan, a gourmet kitchen, and a finished basement. The home is in excellent condition and is a must-see for anyone looking for a new home in Scarborough.

Call David at 555-767-1234 for more information.

Premier Property | Served by LandVest Inc.

LandVest | **CHRISTIE'S**

Landmark West End home steeped in Portland history has distinct, rich details

710 West End Street, Portland

\$2.76 million

6 bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms, 5,830 sq ft

This historic home is a true gem, featuring a large lot, a gourmet kitchen, and a finished basement. The home is in excellent condition and is a must-see for anyone looking for a new home in Portland.

Call David at 555-767-1234 for more information.

KOHLER | **POWER POINT**

KOHLER | POWER POINT

KOHLER | POWER POINT

SPONSORED CONTENT

FEATURED HOME

SPONSORED BY TWO RANDELLO GROUP

RE/MAX Shoreline

Move-in ready home right by the beach has privacy and plenty of space

7 HEMLOCK CIRCLE, SCARBOROUGH

\$650,000

4 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, 1,980 sq ft

This home is a true gem, featuring a large lot, a gourmet kitchen, and a finished basement. The home is in excellent condition and is a must-see for anyone looking for a new home in Scarborough.

Call David at 555-767-1234 for more information.

Turn down Black Point Road off Route 1 in Scarborough and you begin a short, scenic drive toward the shore that can take you to Plover Neck, Ferry Beach and Scarborough Beach State Park. Soon after you begin, you'll cross the Eastern Trail, a multi-use path that runs about the miles across town, and after that, the entrance to the Wonnado Neck neighborhood, where you will find this spacious, move-in ready home. Make the journey yourself to an open house this Sunday, Mar. 23 from 1-3 p.m.

Enter a wood-lined mudroom from the attached, two-car garage, and then the house, where you'll find a half-bath and laundry room. Inside, the whole home has been maintained with care, including the kitchen, a warm space with tile floor, maple cabinets and updated appliances. On one side it opens to a living room with brick fireplace and to the other, a dining room with a wood stove. Completing the four-square style layout is an additional sitting room where the staircase opens. Upstairs, the hardwood floors continue through all four bedrooms. The primary bedroom has an en-suite laundry room with shower.

This is a private lot, abutting conservation land, and as the temperatures warm up, you can spend early evening grilling on the back deck, then step into the sprawling screened porch to lounge. There's also a hot tub that will convey with the property. For more entertainment, the neighborhood association has an outdoor pool, tennis courts and playground.

Close to all of Scarborough's services, schools, Interstate 295 and some of Southern Maine's most beautiful landscapes, this is a listing that should make you a little closer.

7 Hemlock Circle is listed by Tom and Julia Randello who say, "We love where we live." Call them at 207-630-1857 or scarielandellogroup@gmail.com.

Portland Press Herald

Real Estate

New luxury subdivision in Cumberland is now open for sales

80-90 Harris Road, Cumberland | Land starting at \$415,000 + build packages starting at \$1.5 million

Sponsored by the Homes at Coastal Pines

The Homes at Coastal Pines will be just nine residences in an unparalleled location

1.22- to 1.33 acre lots: custom build standards include 10-foot ceilings, gas fireplaces, and attached two- or three-car garages

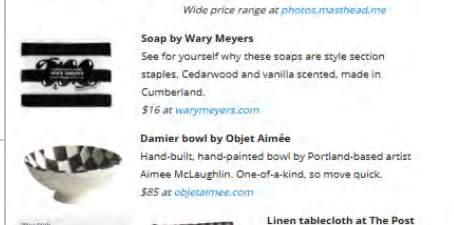
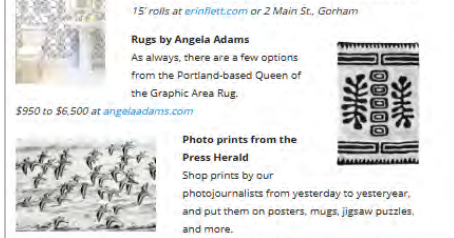
See specs, listing info and photos at the Coastal Pines website

Located in beautiful southern Maine, the Homes at Coastal Pines are Cumberland's newest luxury subdivision. With lots ranging from 1.22 to 1.33 acres for just nine new homes, this neighborhood will be private, refined and surrounded by nature, as each lot abuts over 14 acres of open space with winding streets and trails.

This development is the first of its kind for real estate broker Jessie Pinkham Demers and investor Bernard William, Principal and Director of Go Nest LLC, where he manages a portfolio of over 175 properties. Developing a neighborhood like this had been a goal of theirs separately and when this location became available, they joined forces and went to work. 96 Harris Road was previously the home of Nelson Haynes, who achieved national notoriety becoming the first in the country to issue a reverse mortgage at Deering Savings Bank in 1961.

Examples

Portland Press Herald Homes, cont.



WINDOW SHOPPING

CRYSTAL DOORKNOB FROM NOSTALGIC WAREHOUSE

A faceted crystal knob on a Victorian long plate with embellishments and fluted edges is the stuff of romance novels and golden days gone by. Eight and a quarter inch high by two- and three-quarter inches wide.

\$209.25
available in seven finishes
nostalgicwarehouse.com

"SEA GLASS" PULL BY RUBBISH REVIVAL

Crafted from recycled glass and mounted on a chrome footplate, these dreamy little knobs come in a variety of colors. A break-off, cut-to-fit screw is included. Approx. one inch diameter by one and a quarter inch high.

\$9.50 each, available in five colors
rubbishrevival.com

MID-CENTURY MODERN MIX FROM ROUS HARDWARE

Made from aluminum alloy, these geometric designs are ergonomic, compact and made in the USA. Mix and match between nine colors and seven shapes for full funkiness.

\$15 each
roushardware.com

TEAK DOOR HANDLES BY WOOD CEYLON

These responsibly sourced, upcycled-rustic, statement handles are ideal for interior barn doors, stable cabinets and sliding glass. 17 inches tall and three inches deep.

\$152 each, available in four stains and metal attachments
woodceylon.com

DOOR HANDLES FROM FORTY HILLS FORGE

Using materials of "steel, wax, and fire," each Canadian-forged handle with unique, organic textures was made with a carbon neutral process. Approx. seven to eight inches long with four-inch hole mounts.

\$37 for a set of two
etsy.com/shop/FortyHillsForge

These items were independently sourced and selected for feature by METLN Content Studio staff. Please contact the retailer for most up-to-date pricing and availability.

Examples

Modern Pest

[17° Forecast](#)
[Latest](#)
[ePapers](#)
[Newspaper Archives](#)

Sponsored

"And stay out!" How to keep mice from ever returning to your home.

If you've evicted your mice, you can never let them back in. Here's how.

Posted

Sept 19, 2024

Updated

July 10, 2024

SPONSORED BY MODERN PEST SERVICES

3 min read

Font size +

Share Print

A real mouse would definitely get through these dungeon bars, so make sure you use copper or steel mesh when you seal up exterior holes and cracks. @stapersona

The war against mice in the house can be exasperating. You can't help but come to know your enemy during the many battles you might fight over the years, because eradicating them from the premises requires understanding their behavior. For example:

- They can scamper at 7.5 miles per hour, quickly evading sight or capture. Along with setting track records, they contaminate eating surfaces and leave droppings every place they go.
- They have a high metabolism, requiring them to constantly search for food.
- Like all rodents, their teeth never stop growing. They simply must destroy what they can get their incisors on.
- One mouse attracts more mice with pheromones, body language, and ultrasounds to share information about food, danger and romance. Males court females with an ultrasonic love song.

[17° Forecast](#)
[Latest](#)
[ePapers](#)
[Newspaper Archives](#)

SPONSORED CONTENT BY MODERN PEST SERVICES

Coexisting with critters: how to assess a small mammal threat level in Maine

If you have an unsuspected vertebrate visitor, removal can be quick and painless for all parties. Unless it's a bat.

Maine's warmer climate makes it "tick season" more often than not

Tick vigilance is a three-season activity that's worth the time and effort.

Treat the cause, not the symptom: two simple ways to keep mosquitoes away from your yard

You can try retail sprays, citronella candles or bug-capping devices, but they all treat the symptoms not the root cause of why they're hanging around.

Hotel, motel, historic inn, bed bugs don't care what your stay is rated—they're checking in

Bed bugs don't discriminate against who they bite, where they bite them, and how they get around. Inspecting your own home is easy, but you need a little extra caution while on vacation.

Be careful when removing bees: our environment depends on it

Distinguishing bees from wasps and calling the right removal service will keep you on Mother Earth's nice list.

Got ants? Learn more about your formic foes before finally stomping them out.

Get to know the two kinds of ants most likely to invade your home in Maine.

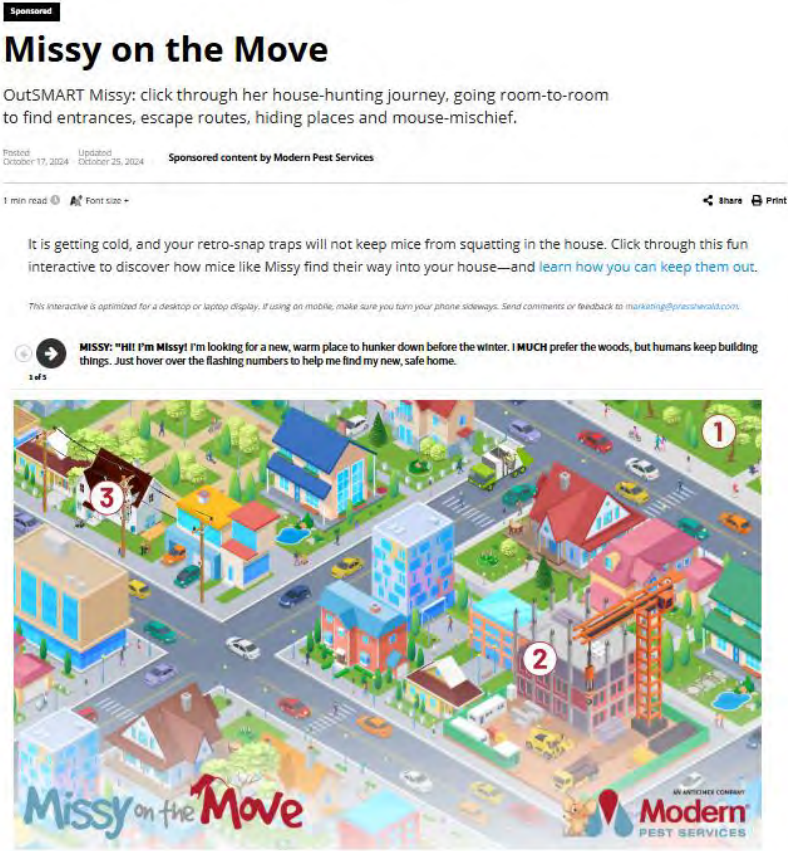
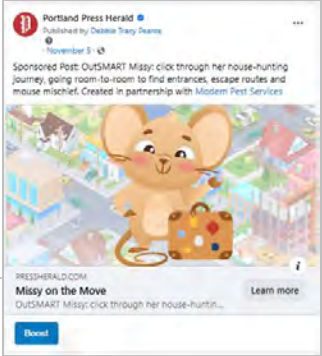
"And stay out!" How to keep mice from ever returning to your home.

If you've evicted your mice, you can never let them back in. Here's how.

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Examples

Modern Pest



RELATED ***
Modern Pest extracts much more than mice.

Examples

Maine Department of Education

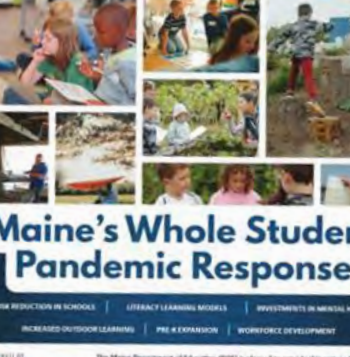


Turning Crisis into Care: A Look at Maine Investments in Student and Educator Mental Health

Federal funding has helped schools invest in new programs to support students' and teachers' emotional well-being in the short and long term.

[See more »](#)

Sponsor: Maine Department of Education



SPONSORED SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO ANNUAL 'BEST FOR LOCAL NEWS' PUBLICATIONS | NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2024

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Maine Department of Education

Maine's Whole Student Pandemic Response

WIDA REDUCTION IN SCHOOLS | LITERACY LEARNING GOALS | INVESTMENTS IN MENTAL HEALTH

INCREASED OUTDOOR LEARNING | PRE-K EXPANSION | WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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Maine Department of Education

The Maine Department of Education (DOE) is pleased to provide this series of informational articles as an opportunity for the public to learn more about how federal emergency relief funding was used to support students and educators in Maine public schools.

The website also provided an overview of the Department's efforts to support students and educators in Maine public schools.

For more information, please visit the website: <https://www.maine.gov/education>

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Maine Department of Education



How outdoor education is benefitting students in the Pine Tree State

As the COVID-19 pandemic has taken its toll on the education system, many schools have turned to outdoor education as a way to keep students engaged and learning. In the Pine Tree State, outdoor education is becoming increasingly popular, and for good reason. It offers a variety of benefits for students, including improved academic performance, better social skills, and increased physical activity.

Outdoor education can help students develop a love for learning and a sense of responsibility for the environment. It can also help them develop important life skills, such as problem-solving, teamwork, and communication. In addition, outdoor education can help students stay active and healthy, which is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are many ways to incorporate outdoor education into the classroom. Some schools use field trips to local parks or nature centers. Others use outdoor classrooms or greenhouses. Some schools even have outdoor education programs that focus on specific subjects, such as science or history.

Whether you're a teacher or a parent, there are many ways to help your child develop a love for outdoor education. By encouraging your child to spend time in nature, you can help them develop important life skills and a sense of responsibility for the environment.

By the numbers Outdoor education programs are becoming more popular in the Pine Tree State. In 2019, there were over 100 outdoor education programs in Maine, up from just 50 in 2010. This growth is due to a variety of factors, including increased awareness of the benefits of outdoor education and the availability of more outdoor education programs.

Key facts Outdoor education programs can help students develop a variety of skills, including academic performance, social skills, and physical activity. In a study conducted by the University of Maine, students who participated in outdoor education programs showed improved academic performance, better social skills, and increased physical activity. This is true for students of all ages and backgrounds.

Takeaway Outdoor education is a valuable tool for helping students develop important life skills and a love for learning. By incorporating outdoor education into the classroom, teachers can help their students stay engaged and learning, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

MAINE EDUCATORS SHARE THEIR EXCITEMENT FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

From building new connections with students to exciting learning opportunities, teachers across Maine have many reasons to look forward to the beginning of the school year.

[READ THE ARTICLE](#)



Maine
Department of
Education

Examples

John T. Gorman Foundation

Moving Families Forward

Two-generation program in Bangor helps families in public housing build economic mobility and greater well-being

BY THE NUMBERS

Over the last five years...



308

families have participated in the program

45%

of participants have **increased their incomes**

\$23,524

is the average increase in annual household income



69


families **ceased receiving cash welfare** assistance due to their increase in income




20

families – representing 31% of program graduates – have been able to move from public housing into home ownership

Building BRIGHTER Futures



Advancing strategies to ensure Maine children and their families thrive




SPONSORED CONTENT


By many measures, Maine children face greater challenges to their well-being than their peers in other states. But there is a way to change this trajectory.

Kids do best when the people who care for them are able to provide what they need to succeed. A wave of innovative new programs are tapping into this connection to strengthen families and address these troubling trends. What they have in common is taking a two-generation approach to meet the needs of kids and their caregivers simultaneously.


The John T. Gorman Foundation believes the stories of these programs and the differences they are making in people's lives are worth telling. They hold valuable lessons for the organizations, decision makers, and communities that are working to support the success of the next generation. This series will take a deeper dive into the challenges that Maine children and their families face, as well as the promising two-generation partnerships that are giving them a chance of a brighter future.



Two-generation approach helping families thrive in Bangor



Healthy families, thriving children: Countering adversity with a two-generation approach



For Maine kids facing adversity, there is cause for optimism

Examples

Evergreen Credit Union



Examples


Blue Rock Industries

Rock your world and stare at stunning stone countertops from Blue Rock Industries

The right slab of granite can provide a psychedelic experience.

Photos by Ryan Polke

Hi, Are you on the internet right now? Well, bet you could use a break. Take a scroll down this rock wall.





What looks like the surface of a distant moon above is actually Kelvingrove Quartz by Cambria. Quartz is made from natural stone, pigments and binders. It's a popular choice because of its durability.



This freshly frozen pond is another piece of quartzite.



SponsoredHomes

Easy upgrades for your kitchen and bathroom this fall and winter

From heated countertops to a DIY shower renovation, these two products can make every day a little more luxurious.

Posted October 24, 2024Updated October 24, 2024Sponsored by Blue Rock Industries

3 min readFont size +SharePrint



At less than half an inch thick, Weesell panels can go right over existing tile. A typical DIY installation can be done in a few hours, or a licensed contractor can be hired to complete the job.

The most used rooms in the home, kitchens and bathrooms, can be exciting to renovate – but can also be expensive. As rooms that should be designed to withstand moisture and messes, the cost of waterproof surfaces, plumbing re-routes and new appliances can really add up.

Yet for those who are ready for a rewarding renovation (but the budget is not),

METLN | 19

- Finance, Banks, CUs, Mortgage lending
- Arts & Entertainment (guaranteed coverage)
- Non-profits & Advocacy
- Government Agencies
- Professional Services (HVAC! Community Solar)
- Higher Education
- Health & Medical (Insurance, Hospitals, Specialty Care)
- Real Estate

Real Estate

Sponsored

100,000 Acres and Counting: How family forest owners are stepping up to fight climate change

With groundbreaking science, tailored support and \$24 million in incentives, the Family Forest Carbon Program is setting a new standard for sustainable forestry and carbon sequestration.

Published November 22, 2024 Sponsored content provided by American Forest Foundation

3 min read [Fore close +](#) [Share](#) [Print](#)

Sponsored

Sound the alarm: Millennials and Gen Z are at risk for early hearing loss

powered headphones and high-decibel sound systems, no longer a simple sign of aging.

Reported by Brenier's Hearing & Optics

[View](#) [Print](#)

HOMES

Building dreams is **OUR** REALTY business.

REAL ESTATE | Open House Today | Home Office & Satellite

DAVID'S PROPERTIES OF THE PACIFIC



Home Office: 10000 S. Harbor Blvd., Suite 100, Newport Beach, CA 92660
Satellite: 10000 S. Harbor Blvd., Suite 100, Newport Beach, CA 92660
Phone: (949) 440-1100
Website: davidshomes.com

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Town & Shore Real Estate: Professional, Trusted, Experienced.

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2024 BY THE NUMBERS
 #1
 REAL ESTATE AGENT
 IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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 (949) 440-1100
 davidshomes.com

In our first year, David & Shari have been a central force in the real estate industry, and we're proud to be the most successful real estate team in the Pacific Northwest.

The unique approach, open communication, honesty, and integrity that we bring to the table is what sets us apart. We are a team of professionals who are committed to providing the best service possible to our clients.

Through a team of the best and most talented, we are able to provide the best service possible to our clients. We are a team of professionals who are committed to providing the best service possible to our clients.



This image shows a preview of an article. At the top, there is a blue banner with the word 'Sponsored' in white. Below this, the article title 'From hesitation to innovation: how Maine businesses are overcoming AI fears' is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Underneath the title, a short paragraph reads: 'Fears about cost, complexity and unknown risks can hold back small businesses, but artificial intelligence tools are simpler and more affordable than many think.' Below the paragraph, it says 'From: January 14,' followed by 'Sponsored content provided by The Endurance Group'. At the bottom left, it indicates '3 min read' with a clock icon and the 'AI' logo. At the bottom right, there are icons for 'Share' and 'Print'.

[illegible]

Identify what you're already doing and go from there

Go for grants!

Time management – trial by error

Never be afraid to attend a newsroom training

Communication is everything

Revisit what's working and edit packages, process accordingly

1. Though Branded Content could be part of solving every advertiser's needs, not every advertiser is ready to take on Branded Content.
2. Set a deadline, then double it.
3. The creative team is part of the sales team, and vice versa.



Thank you

MAINE TRUST
— for Local News —

Questions?