



NEW ENGLAND NEWSPAPER & PRESS ASSOCIATION

CONNECTING | EDUCATING | ADVOCATING

2026 Revenue Excellence Awards

ENTRY PACKAGE

**IF IT
WORKED,
ENTER IT.**

Recognizing the ideas,
people and programs
that drive stronger
news organizations
and stronger
communities.



IDEAS.
INNOVATION.
AUDIENCES.
REVENUE.
COMMUNITY IMPACT.

*Celebrating what
works for a stronger
tomorrow.*

PEOPLE | PLATFORMS | POSSIBILITIES

*Local News.
A Stronger Tomorrow.*

Welcome to the Revenue Excellence Awards

This division has been redesigned to reflect how news organizations generate revenue and increase audience today. The competition still celebrates exceptional advertising, but it now also recognizes digital marketing, audience growth, client success, events, reader revenue, partnerships, new products, fundraising, business innovation and the people behind that work.

The goal is simple: if your organization tried something that worked - for your business, your audience or your advertisers - there should be a place to enter it.

IF IT WORKED, ENTER IT.

Don't just look through your files for a pretty ad. Think about what your team accomplished this year: a client problem you solved, a product you launched, a campaign that grew audience, an event that made money, or a new idea that strengthened the business.

What is new

- Reframed around four areas: Advertising Excellence, Sections & Publications, Audience Growth and Revenue Innovation.
- Expanded recognition for digital advertising, integrated campaigns, marketing services and branded content.
- New emphasis on measurable client results, reader revenue, partnerships and new product development.
- New individual and team recognition, including Salesperson of the Year and Revenue Team of the Year.
- Events are now one category for in-person, virtual and hybrid programs.
- Entrants are encouraged to provide brief context and results so judges can understand why the work mattered.

At a glance

Contest year	August 1, 2025 - July 31, 2026
Who may enter	NENPA member news organizations in good standing
Entry portal	www.newspapercontest.com/nenpa Association code: NENPA
Entry deadline	Friday, October 30, 2026
Entry fees	\$25 publication entry fee, plus \$22 per entry. The \$25 publication fee is paid only once if entering multiple professional divisions.
Questions	L.Conway@nenpa.com

Quick Start: How to Enter

1. Choose your strongest work

Start with the result, not the category list. What advertising, campaign, event, partnership, product or strategy are you proudest of?

2. Pick the best-fit category

Use the category descriptions in this guide. Some work may be eligible in more than one category when it demonstrates different strengths.

3. Gather the work

Prepare PDFs, screenshots, URLs, campaign examples, event materials or other supporting pieces that let the judges see what you did.

4. Add context

For campaigns, programs, events and revenue initiatives, include a brief statement explaining the challenge or opportunity, goals, strategy, execution and results.

5. Show results when you can

Useful metrics include revenue generated, revenue growth, audience growth, retention, attendance, engagement, advertiser performance or other evidence of impact.

6. Upload and submit

Enter through the contest portal www.newspapercontest.com/nenpa register for the 2026 contest using the **Association code: NENPA**. Then you can begin submitting entries.

Please note: the portal is wiped clean each year so, even if you have entered in the past, you must register on the portal.

HELP THE JUDGES UNDERSTAND YOUR ENTRY

For campaigns, programs, events, and revenue initiatives, include a brief supporting statement explaining the challenge or opportunity, goals, strategy, execution, and results. Include relevant metrics whenever available. Supporting materials may include PDFs, URLs, screenshots, promotional materials, data and client testimonials. Financial results are provided to assist contest judges in evaluating the entry and do not need to be part of public-facing promotional materials.

2026 REVENUE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

GENERAL ENTRY GUIDELINES

CHOOSE YOUR STRONGEST WORK

Start with what worked. Consider your best advertising, client campaigns, audience-growth efforts, events, partnerships, new products and revenue initiatives from the contest year.

PICK THE BEST-FIT CATEGORY

Read the category description carefully and choose the category that best reflects what makes the entry exceptional. The same work may be entered in more than one category when it demonstrates different strengths.

GIVE JUDGES CONTEXT

For campaigns, events and revenue initiatives, briefly explain the goal, strategy, execution and results. Keep it concise and focus on what judges need to understand the entry.

SHOW RESULTS WHEN YOU CAN

Include meaningful results such as revenue or percentage growth, audience growth, retention, attendance, engagement, advertiser performance or other measures of success. *Exact financial figures are not required when the information is proprietary.*

INCLUDE SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Depending on the category, entries may include PDFs, tearsheets, screenshots, URLs, campaign examples, promotional materials, photos, video, testimonials or other materials that help judges evaluate the work.

MAKE DIGITAL WORK ACCESSIBLE

Use screenshots when online content may change or expire. Check all links before submitting and make sure judges can access materials without a login or special permission.

SHARING GREAT IDEAS

NENPA may feature ideas, campaigns and other work submitted to the Revenue Excellence Awards in a future Great Ideas publication designed to share successful strategies with member organizations across New England. Any exact financial figures, confidential business information or other proprietary information included with an entry will be removed before the work is published or shared.

CHECK BEFORE YOU SUBMIT

Make sure your files are readable and in the correct order, include all required materials, and verify entry titles, organization names and individual credits.

A SIMPLE FORMULA FOR A STRONG ENTRY

What was the opportunity? → What did you do? → What happened? → Why did it matter?

DON'T ASSUME AN IDEA IS TOO SMALL TO ENTER.

A creative solution that made a meaningful difference for your organization, audience or advertiser is exactly the kind of work the Revenue Excellence Awards are designed to recognize.

2026 REVENUE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. Competition year

Work produced or published between August 1, 2025 and July 31, 2026 is eligible. An initiative or campaign that began before the start date but continued into the contest year may be entered in its entirety when the eligible-period work is a meaningful part of the entry.

2. Eligibility

NENPA member news organizations in good standing are eligible. Please ensure membership dues are current before entering.

3. Newspaper groups

A group may enter work that appeared in more than one of its publications only once. When work appeared across publications in different classes, use the class of the publication with the highest applicable circulation.

4. Entry classes

Professional entries will use the contest classifications established by NENPA for the 2026 competition. Final classifications should be confirmed in the contest portal before entry.

5. Individual entries

Individuals whose work appeared in a NENPA member publication may submit eligible work if the publication has not already submitted that same work.

6. Fees and deadline

Entries must be uploaded by Friday, October 30, 2026. An overall competition entry fee of \$25 per publication is required, plus \$22 for each entry. If a publication enters multiple professional divisions, the \$25 publication entry fee is paid only once. NENPA will generate and send an invoice after the contest deadline.

IMPORTANT DEADLINE NOTICE: Entries must be submitted by Friday, October 30, 2026. Please plan accordingly.

7. Insufficient entries

If too few entries are received in a category or class, NENPA reserves the right to combine classes, cancel a category and/or adjust the number of awards presented.

8. Original work

Advertising entries must be prepared by the submitting news organization. Previously prepared artwork or other components may be used when the advertisement or campaign is written, composed or substantially developed by the submitting organization.

9. Number of entries

There is no general limit on the number of entries per category unless a category description states otherwise.

10. Awards

Awards are presented in the name specified in the entry. Individual recognition categories require the nominee information and supporting materials described in this guide.

Category Lineup

ADVERTISING EXCELLENCE

- Local Display Ad - Black & White or Color
- Small Space Advertising Excellence
- Best Local Retail Campaign
- Best Holiday/Seasonal Advertising
- Themed Multiple Advertiser Page(s)
- Advertiser Campaign
- Best Digital Advertising Campaign
- Best Integrated Advertising Campaign
- Best Sponsored Content Project
- Best Local Business Transformation
- Best Marketing Services Campaign

SECTIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- Special Section / Advertising Supplement
- Niche Publication
- Pure Ad Niche Publication

AUDIENCE GROWTH

- Best Sales Presentation
- Audience Growth Campaign
- Subscriber Retention Program
- Events

REVENUE INNOVATION

- Revenue Partnership & Collaboration
- Best Revenue Growth Initiative
- Best Membership or Reader Revenue Initiative
- Fundraising Strategy
- Business Innovation
- Best New Product Launch

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

- Best Ad Designer
- Salesperson of the Year
- Advertising Director/Manager of the Year
- Revenue Team of the Year
- Advertising General Excellence

Categories and Criteria

Advertising Excellence

Local Display Ad - Black & White or Color

Recognizes an outstanding locally produced print advertisement created for an advertiser. Black-and-white and color ads are eligible.

Submit: A tearsheet or PDF showing the advertisement as it appeared.

Judges will consider: Concept, copy, layout and design, typography, artwork, use of color where applicable, originality and overall effectiveness.

Small Space Advertising Excellence

Recognizes exceptional creativity and effectiveness within a limited print space. Entries must be 10 inches or smaller.

Submit: A tearsheet or PDF showing the advertisement as it appeared.

Judges will consider: How effectively the entry uses limited space through concept, copy, typography, design, visual impact and clarity of message.

Best Local Retail Campaign

Recognizes an outstanding campaign developed for a local advertiser or business. Eligible clients may include retailers, restaurants, automotive, real estate, healthcare, financial services, tourism, entertainment or other locally based businesses. Print and/or digital components are eligible.

Submit: Representative campaign examples plus a brief description of goals, strategy and results.

Judges will consider: Creativity, execution, effectiveness, consistency and value delivered to the advertiser.

Best Holiday/Seasonal Advertising

Recognizes an outstanding paid advertisement or campaign built around a holiday, season or annual occasion. No house ads.

Submit: The advertisement or representative campaign pieces.

Judges will consider: Originality, creativity, design, copy, visual appeal and effectiveness.

Themed Multiple Advertiser Page(s)

Recognizes a print or digital presentation that brings multiple advertisers together around one theme, event, community, shopping area or occasion.

Submit: The complete page(s) or digital presentation.

Judges will consider: Originality, design, organization, audience and advertiser appeal, and overall effectiveness.

Advertiser Campaign

Recognizes an outstanding campaign developed for a single advertiser. A campaign must include at least three advertisements from the contest year and may span print, digital or multiple platforms.

Submit: At least three campaign advertisements. A short context statement is encouraged.

Judges will consider: Content, design, impact, originality and development of a strong, consistent theme or value proposition.

Best Digital Advertising Campaign

Recognizes an outstanding digital advertising campaign developed for a client. Eligible components may include display, email, newsletters, social media, search, streaming, geotargeting/geofencing, sponsored digital products or other digital advertising.

Submit: Representative campaign examples, a brief explanation of objectives and strategy, and available evidence of results.

Judges will consider: Concept, execution, use of digital capabilities, originality and effectiveness.

Best Integrated Advertising Campaign

Recognizes an exceptional campaign for a single advertiser that strategically integrates multiple platforms, such as print, website, email, newsletters, social media, video, audio or events. Entries should demonstrate how the various platforms were strategically coordinated to reinforce the campaign's message and achieve the advertiser's objectives.

Submit: Representative examples plus a brief explanation of objectives, how the platforms worked together and results.

Judges will consider: Strategy, creativity, integration, execution and effectiveness.

Best Sponsored Content Project

Recognizes outstanding branded or sponsored content created for an advertiser, sponsor or partner. Eligible work may include articles, special projects, video, podcasts, newsletters, social media or other custom content. Sponsored content should be clearly distinguished from independent editorial journalism.

Submit: The finished work plus a brief description of client objectives and available results.

Judges will consider: Quality, creativity, audience value, execution, transparency and effectiveness for the client.

Best Local Business Transformation

Recognizes a campaign, strategy or combination of services that produced meaningful results for a local business.

Submit: A brief case study describing the client challenge, solution and results. Performance data or an advertiser testimonial is encouraged.

Judges will consider: Creativity, strategy, execution and demonstrated impact on the client business.

Best Marketing Services Campaign

Recognizes outstanding client work beyond traditional advertising. Eligible services may include website development, search marketing, social media management, email marketing, video production, branding, reputation management or other agency-style services.

Submit: Representative work plus a brief description of client goals, services provided and results.

Judges will consider: Strategy, creativity, execution and effectiveness.

Sections & Publications

Special Section / Advertising Supplement

Recognizes an outstanding special section or advertising supplement developed around a particular topic, audience, season or event. Print and digital products are eligible and may include advertising, editorial or sponsored content.

Submit: The complete section or supplement. A brief description of the concept and results is encouraged.

Judges will consider: Concept, originality, content and advertising presentation, design, advertiser participation, audience appeal and overall effectiveness.

Niche Publication

Recognizes a print or digital publication created for a specific audience or interest and distributed separately from the organization's primary news product. Examples include magazines, tourism guides, community guides and directories.

Submit: The publication plus a brief description of target audience, frequency/distribution, business model and results.

Judges will consider: Content, presentation, audience value, uniqueness and revenue performance.

Pure Ad Niche Publication

Recognizes a specialty product created primarily to connect advertisers with a targeted audience. Examples include shopping guides, coupon products, directories and marketplaces.

Submit: The publication plus a brief description of strategy, audience, distribution and revenue results.

Judges will consider: Usefulness, originality, presentation, advertiser value and profitability.

Audience Growth

Best Sales Presentation

Recognizes an outstanding tool used to communicate the value of a news organization's advertising, sponsorship or marketing opportunities.

Submit: A media kit, proposal, presentation, sales deck, video or other sales material.

Judges will consider: Clarity, creativity, professionalism, persuasive value and effectiveness in positioning the organization and its products.

Audience Growth Campaign

Recognizes an innovative and effective effort to attract new readers, subscribers, members or users to print or digital products.

Submit: Campaign examples plus a brief description of goals, strategy and results.

Judges will consider: Originality, execution and demonstrated audience growth.

Subscriber Retention Program

Recognizes an effective initiative designed to strengthen subscriber relationships and improve retention. Eligible initiatives may include onboarding, loyalty programs, pricing strategies, communications, rewards, bundling or other retention efforts.

Submit: A brief description of the program and available evidence of results.

Judges will consider: Creativity, execution and demonstrated impact on retention.

Events

Recognizes an outstanding event or event series produced or co-produced by the news organization that generated revenue and/or strengthened audience relationships. In-person, virtual and hybrid events are eligible.

Submit: A brief description of the event, objectives and audience, plus promotional materials and available results such as attendance, sponsorships and revenue.

Judges will consider: Originality, strategic value, execution, audience impact and financial results.

Revenue Innovation

Revenue Partnership & Collaboration

Recognizes an innovative partnership or collaboration that created new or increased revenue opportunities while delivering value to participating organizations and/or audiences.

Submit: A brief description of the partnership, each partner's role, strategy and results.

Judges will consider: Creativity, collaboration, sustainability and revenue impact.

Best Revenue Growth Initiative

Recognizes an initiative that successfully generated new or increased revenue. Eligible programs may involve advertising, digital products, events, sponsorships, marketing services, subscriptions, distribution or other strategies.

Submit: A brief description outlining the opportunity or challenge, strategy, implementation and results.

Judges will consider: Originality, scope, execution and incremental revenue generated.

Best Membership or Reader Revenue Initiative

Recognizes an innovative effort to generate direct financial support from readers through subscriptions, memberships, donations, sustaining memberships, premium products or other strategies.

Submit: A brief description of the strategy, implementation and results.

Judges will consider: Originality, audience response, revenue generated and long-term sustainability.

Fundraising Strategy

Recognizes an effective philanthropic fundraising initiative supporting journalism or a news organization. Eligible efforts may include individual giving, major gifts, foundation support, grants, matching campaigns or other philanthropic strategies.

Submit: A description of the strategy and available results.

Judges will consider: Originality, scope, revenue generated, execution and sustainability.

Business Innovation

Recognizes an innovative approach to improving the business of local journalism, including a new business model, technology, workflow, operational strategy or creative solution to a financial or organizational challenge.

Submit: A brief description of the challenge or opportunity, innovation implemented and results, plus supporting materials as appropriate.

Judges will consider: Originality, scope, effectiveness and potential for replication by other news organizations.

Best New Product Launch

Recognizes the successful launch of a new revenue-producing product or service during the contest year. Eligible entries may include newsletters, magazines, directories, events, podcasts, digital products, marketplaces, services or other new offerings.

Submit: Examples of the product plus a brief description of the opportunity, target audience, launch strategy, business model and results.

Judges will consider: Originality, execution, audience response, revenue potential and sustainability.

Special Recognition

Best Ad Designer

Recognizes an outstanding advertising designer whose body of work demonstrates creativity, versatility and an ability to communicate advertiser messages effectively.

Submit: A portfolio of six examples created during the contest year representing a variety of clients and/or advertising types.

Judges will consider: Creativity, design, versatility, visual communication and overall effectiveness.

Salesperson of the Year

Recognizes an exceptional advertising, marketing or revenue professional who demonstrates outstanding sales performance, creativity, client service and commitment to helping customers succeed.

Submit: A nomination letter describing accomplishments during the contest year, including examples of revenue growth, new accounts, client success, innovative sales strategies or other measurable achievements. Supporting materials and client testimonials may be included.

Judges will consider: Sales performance, creativity, client service, initiative, results and contribution to the organization.

Advertising Director/Manager of the Year

Recognizes an exceptional advertising or revenue leader who demonstrates outstanding leadership, innovation and business performance while helping clients and the news organization succeed.

Submit: A nomination letter detailing accomplishments during the contest year, including measurable results where available.

Judges will consider: Revenue performance, innovation, leadership, staff development, client success and new business strategies.

Revenue Team of the Year

Recognizes an outstanding team whose collaboration, creativity and performance made a significant contribution to the financial success of its news organization. Teams may include advertising, sales, marketing, audience, events, digital services or other revenue-related staff.

Submit: A nomination describing the team's accomplishments, innovation, collaboration and measurable results during the contest year.

Judges will consider: Teamwork, creativity, execution, measurable impact and contribution to organizational success.

Advertising General Excellence

Recognizes overall excellence in a news organization's advertising, marketing, and revenue work across platforms.

Submit: Two issues from the contest year from different months, the organization's website URL, and representative examples of relevant digital advertising or marketing products.

Judges will consider: Quality and variety of advertising, locally produced creative work, digital execution, presentation, innovation and overall effectiveness.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the same work be entered in more than one category?

Yes, when the work legitimately demonstrates different strengths or meets the criteria for multiple categories. Tailor the supporting statement to the category being judged.

Do I have to disclose exact revenue figures?

Provide enough information for judges to evaluate success. Exact figures are helpful when appropriate, but percentage growth, ranges or other meaningful performance indicators may be used when proprietary concerns make exact figures impractical.

Can digital-only work be entered?

Yes. Several categories are designed specifically for digital work, and many others accept print, digital or integrated entries.

What counts as an integrated campaign?

A campaign in which multiple platforms work together strategically around one advertiser, message or objective - for example print plus email, social and digital display.

What is the difference between Advertiser Campaign and Best Integrated Advertising Campaign?

Advertiser Campaign recognizes a strong campaign for one client and requires at least three ads. Integrated Campaign specifically rewards the strategic use of multiple platforms working together.

What is the difference between Best Local Business Transformation and Best Marketing Services Campaign?

Local Business Transformation focuses on the measurable impact on the client. Marketing Services focuses on the quality and effectiveness of services beyond traditional advertising.

What is the difference between Business Innovation and Best New Product Launch?

Business Innovation can recognize an internal process, technology, workflow, business model or operational solution. New Product Launch recognizes a new revenue-producing product or service brought to market.

Can an event be entered if revenue was not its only goal?

Yes. Events may be entered when they generate revenue and/or meaningfully strengthen audience relationships. Explain the event's objectives and results.

Who should enter?

Publishers, advertising and revenue leaders, sales staff, designers, audience teams, marketing staff, event teams and anyone responsible for work that fits the categories are encouraged to participate.

WHAT WORKED FOR YOU?

If it worked, enter it.

Whether your success came from a beautifully designed ad, a creative client solution, a new event, an audience-growth strategy, a partnership or an entirely new source of revenue, there is a place for it in the Revenue Excellence Awards.

CELEBRATE IT. SHARE IT. ENTER IT.

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2026



www.newspapercontest.com/nenpa | Association code: NENPA

Questions: L.Conway@nenpa.com

2026 NENPA Revenue Excellence Entry Planner

What worked for your advertisers, audiences or business this year? If it worked, enter it.

\$25 publication fee • \$22 per entry • Publication fee paid once across professional divisions

ADVERTISING EXCELLENCE

- ☐ Local Display Ad - Black & White or Color: _____
- ☐ Small Space Advertising Excellence: _____
- ☐ Best Local Retail Campaign: _____
- ☐ Best Holiday/Seasonal Advertising: _____
- ☐ Themed Multiple Advertiser Page(s): _____
- ☐ Advertiser Campaign: _____
- ☐ Best Digital Advertising Campaign: _____
- ☐ Best Integrated Advertising Campaign: _____
- ☐ Best Sponsored Content Project: _____
- ☐ Best Local Business Transformation: _____
- ☐ Best Marketing Services Campaign: _____

SECTIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- ☐ Special Section / Advertising Supplement: _____
- ☐ Niche Publication: _____
- ☐ Pure Ad Niche Publication: _____

AUDIENCE GROWTH

- ☐ Best Sales Presentation: _____
- ☐ Audience Growth Campaign: _____
- ☐ Subscriber Retention Program: _____
- ☐ Events: _____

REVENUE INNOVATION

- ☐ Revenue Partnership & Collaboration: _____
- ☐ Best Revenue Growth Initiative: _____
- ☐ Best Membership or Reader Revenue Initiative: _____
- ☐ Fundraising Strategy: _____
- ☐ Business Innovation: _____
- ☐ Best New Product Launch: _____

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

- ☐ Best Ad Designer: _____
- ☐ Salesperson of the Year: _____
- ☐ Advertising Director/Manager of the Year: _____
- ☐ Revenue Team of the Year: _____
- ☐ Advertising General Excellence: _____

Quick team check: standout ad or campaign? client success? special publication? audience or retention gain? event? new revenue idea? exceptional colleague or team?

For campaigns and initiatives, gather examples plus a short note on goals, strategy and results.

Entry deadline: Friday, October 30, 2026 • www.newspapercontest.com/nenpa • Association code: NENPA

