

Clay
2024

CONNECTIONS

YOUR NETWORKING BUSINESS GUIDE



CLAY TODAY



NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to the first edition of "Clay Connections"

The Power of Small Businesses in Our Community

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In the tapestry of community life, small businesses are the vibrant threads that bind us together. Beyond brick-and-mortar storefronts, these enterprises are the pulse of our neighborhoods, fostering economic resilience and nurturing unique identities. Small businesses don't just create jobs; they create connections, becoming gathering places where neighbors share stories and build a sense of belonging. Their strength lies in adaptability, tailoring services to local needs and contributing to the cultural tapestry of the area. Choosing to support a local business is an investment in the community's prosperity, as dollars circulate within, creating a positive ripple effect. During challenging times, these businesses often stand resilient, anchoring the community and pulling through together. With philanthropy and community engagement, they go beyond commerce, actively contributing to the well-being of their surroundings. Small businesses are not just storefronts; they're the heartbeat of a thriving, interconnected community.

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An advertisement for Patricia Davis, an interior designer. The top left corner features a yellow banner with the text "Solve Acrylic & Physical Home - A Different Kind of Place". The main image shows a modern living room with a yellow armchair, a dark wood console table, and a large potted plant. The bottom of the ad has a yellow banner with the text "Patricia Davis 904-395-1860 | 904-480-3719".

Pay it forward: *Local businesses can help each other*



The power of small businesses is immense. However, starting a small business is no easy venture. The financial resource *Fortunly* states that roughly 22 percent of small businesses will fail in their first year of operation. Thirty percent fail because they run out of cash. One of the ways a small business can do better is to utilize the support of other local businesses.

Business owners often conduct market research to identify who their competition is and to determine if there is room in the market for their products or services. It's just as important for established business owners to keep up with the who's who in the business community, as doing so can pave the way for collaborative efforts that benefit all local businesses. Here are some ways small business owners can support one another.

- Offer reassurance: Simply knowing they are not alone can help a small business owner survive. Owning a business can be stressful, and having another person acknowledge that it's alright to feel overwhelmed at times can be the spark owners need to press on.
- Share opportunities: A business owner who discovers a resource or an opportunity that worked for him or her, or even one that didn't work but may for another, can pass on the information to another small business owner. It's not about driving others down, but lifting them up.
- Cross-promotion: Business owners can show support by promoting other businesses in their communities. Make a bulletin board (either in-person or online) of other local business cards to recommend. This exhibits your community spirit and builds camaraderie. Use every opportunity to refer complementary businesses. For example, a local pet shop may recommend a pet groomer or veterinarian.
- Organize networking events: Whether it's done through a local Chamber of Commerce or individual efforts, small business owners can spearhead events that get other business owners together to network and share ideas. These meetings can be informal to help others let off steam at the same time.
- Volunteer and donate: Small businesses can meet other business owners, but also become more involved in their communities through volunteer events. Partner with charities or other local businesses to promote philanthropic efforts. School supply giveaways, beach sweeps, community park refurbishments, or even supporting efforts to clean trash from Main Street are great ways to get involved.

Small business owners willing to work together can collectively improve their communities, which should benefit everyone's bottom line.

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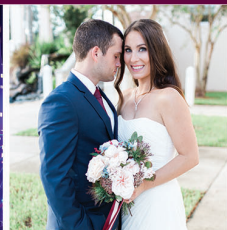
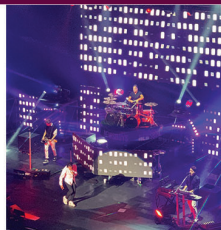
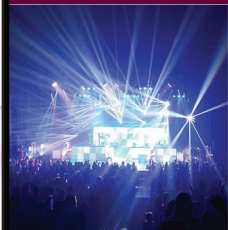


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People frequently ask us for the latest newspaper industry statistics highlighting readership information and newspaper advertising trends and we are always eager to share the good news. Newspaper industry trends indicate that newspaper readership is robust, and newspaper advertising statistics continue to show that newspapers reach the educated and affluent audience that advertisers want to reach. Clay Today, focusing on local news content is among strong local newspapers that shows these trends.

Newsreader Readership is Impressive!

The most recent newspaper industry trends confirm that newspapers have a large and loyal base of readers.

- More than 124 million U.S. adults, or more than 6 out of 10, read newspaper media each week
- Fifty-eight percent of adults aged 18-34, and more than 6 in 10 adults aged 35+, read a newspaper
- Seventy percent of households with income above \$100K are newspaper readers
- 63 million adults access newspaper content on their smartphone or tablet

Newspaper Advertising Makes the Cash Register Ring

Newspaper advertising trends indicate that newspapers are THE place to invest your advertising dollars! Newspapers and their integrated products reach an educated and affluent audience who are avid shoppers. Check out these newspaper advertising statistics.

- Nine out of ten newspaper readers (91%) report that they take action after reading or looking at inserts
- Eight in ten (79%) of newspaper readers took action as a result of reading a newspaper ad in the past 30 days
- Seven in ten adults 18 and older cite the newspaper as their preferred source for coupons
- 82% of all consumers use the print coupons they receive in the newspaper
- Consumers find newspapers the best medium for bringing sales to their attention
- Advertising in Newspapers Cause Readers to Act: The Top 10 Consumer Actions Taken
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 2. Visit the advertiser's website
 3. Have a more favorable opinion about the advertiser
 4. Save the ad for future reference
 5. Recommend the product or service to someone
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Sources: ¹2018 Release 2Nielsen Scarborough Report. Copyright 2019 Scarborough Research. All rights reserved. ²Coda/Triad Newspaper Insert Study, ³NAA How America Shops and Spends, ⁴2K16 Valassis Coupon Intelligence Report, ⁵Triad Newspaper Ad Effectiveness Service