

Memphis Editor Admits Fed Ex Sponsorship Idea a Mistake

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By Joe Strupp

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NEW YORK Editor Chris Peck of the Memphis Commercial Appeal says the paper ventured into "treacherous ground" when it considered having Federal Express sponsor a six-part series that will likely include reporting on the cargo company. But he stressed that no deal was ever finalized, and the sponsorship fell through after editors opposed it.

"I went to our publisher and said we have probably gone half a step more than we should have gone on this project," Peck told E P Thursday. "It is treacherous ground when you start talking about having an advertiser in a section that has them in the reporting."

At issue is the pending series "Memphis and the World," set to run over six Sundays starting in November with stories about how the Tennessee city has linked to other parts of the globe.

The series came about at the same time the paper has sought new approaches to advertising, including finding sponsors for specific columns and coverage areas. In a September memo to staff, Peck used the phrase "monetizing content" to explain the idea of selling around news and content.

He also cited other examples of the paper linking specific advertisers to coverage, including those tied to Elvis Week and a popular real state column, "Done Deals."

"What we were trying to do is figure out some ways to build revenue and to craft a new kind of business model for journalism," Peck said. "We need to find ways for good journalism to be supported." He stressed that in each of the previous examples, no promises for content control were ever made, or requested, with advertisers.

Citing the deal with a local developer who has been sponsoring "Done Deals," Peck said, "We told him, 'You realize you don't get editorial control or more mentions than anyone else.' The advertiser was very good in that case."

So when the "Memphis and the World" project began, the paper sought to find a sponsor for it with some kind of connection. At first, Northwest Airlines, which has a Memphis hub, was considered, but a deal never came about. Then, advertising salespeople pursued Fed Ex, which is based in Memphis.

"They never offered Fed Ex or anyone any oversight or control," Peck said. "The issue became one of creating a false impression that there is a connection there between independent reporting and having an advertiser in there that is part of the reporting."

As the advertising pursuit continued and reporting for the story occurred, Peck said the top reporter and editor on the project were concerned that Fed Ex could be seen as a conflict since the company would likely appear in the series.

The concerns sparked meetings between advertising and editorial staffers, and even a petition opposing the idea, which sparked a staff meeting on Wednesday. The alt-weekly Memphis Flyer weighed in with a story Wednesday that stated editors had contacted the Poynter Institute for advice and that the controversy was "sending a shockwave through the newsroom."

In the end, Peck said the paper decided the series would run as a special section without advertising. "The point that is important is you want to make sure the value of independent journalism carries forward," Peck said. "At the same time, you have to be open to the discussion and the effort to try to figure out different ways to support that journalism."

The editor defended tying related ads to stories, citing as an example the regular practice on entertainment pages. "Think about the times you see a movie review on one page and turn the page and there is an advertisement for the movie," he said.

Peck said future sponsorships are probable, but said they would not likely be attached to what he termed "high-end pieces of journalism." He also said

that editorial staffers must be involved in such discussions.

"It is crucial that editorial be at the table," he said. "We have value and perspective that needs to be at the discussion."

My story is very complicated. Me and my girlfriend is in the understanding of the game. `To come from the game now. He is a very naive very simple girls. He and I together in the time of our city school. A year on such contacts. `Now he graduated in the home.` How do I? We are truly in love, in this six months pregnant, he would take three. Have fought two. `Now he also smashed the child crying` We also small it may `he` I was only 20 years old 21. His mother did not know he pregnancy. Even one do not know. New Year s when he and I argue and breaking up. `I went to find him and his family well, I was not sensible it` big New Year s I did not like to buy, his mother may not my impression. Later this I find him I hope he could we come back, but he did not come back with me, he told me over the telephone that his mother went to see my family not his family. As what he said to my home. I think that also it. I said to my family after this thing, I girlfriend in the trial of his mother `but his mother did not speech, but said I agree with your` but I know that his mother hearts do not agree with the `we chat on QQ is afraid his mother saw his mother to` angry `` I really do not know how do ` Brother sister to me `points okay? Now this child, I also did not play the `how?n

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In a little trouble, you less than legal age for marriage, children or destroyed good, but bearing in mind: We can not be in the future is not prepared to have children when pregnant, which particularly hurt women, she may even be difficult future fertility! Since his parents accept that you have, whether it is not really , it should try to change his parents on your impression.

About the Author

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Nevertheless, there are several basic principles when it comes to good website design. To make your plastic surgery website as successful. Be careful whose advice you buy, but, be patient with those who supply it. Advice is a form of nostalgia, dispensing it is a way of fishing. This collection contains good and bad advice from a variety of sources. You be the judge of which is which. The two collections of Proverbs. Parenting advice and good parenting tips, articles on parenting, parents and children, list of parenting websites, child guidance information.

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