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## Stop the blame and adopt SNAP for better results

*By Frank Bourlon*

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These days it is more and more difficult to attract advertising, especially national advertising.

One helpful tool for newspapers seeking national advertising is to get SNAP certified.

Last month I worked with a newspaper that was going through the SNAP (Specifications for Newsprint Advertising Production) certification, and I was amazed at how much this paper's print quality improved.

I've always known how important it was to be SNAP certified, but didn't fully realize how far off the mark a newspaper can be before reaching the goal.

How does that happen? Sometimes press operators are blamed because they aren't able to set ink on the press or because the press is not being maintained well enough.

The press operator may blame it on management because management doesn't want to spend the money needed to keep the press maintained.

### **No more finger pointing**

Wherever the blame lies is immaterial. What is important is that if the press isn't being maintained properly, then the

newspaper's ability to sell advertising can be severely compromised, especially in a competitive market.

Managers have to understand the problems that might be affecting their production departments. Sometimes the manager need only ask the right questions in order to understand why print quality problems occur.

I know this sounds simplistic, but in many situations in which I've been involved, some print and production managers may not necessarily understand how their operation works.

These managers may have been promoted from other areas of the newspaper, and heading production is not something for which they've necessarily been trained. While these people may have done an outstanding job in their former positions, they might not have a grasp for production. Bottom line? The production department suffers as a result.

You can't fix something you don't understand.

## **Important role**

Here is where SNAP certification plays an important role. The money spent raises the educational and professional level of all the individuals involved in the certification process.

It's a definite learning experience that will pay dividends to the newspaper. Even if you don't attract additional advertising, you will be able to reduce waste and improve your print quality, with the result that you'll reduce credit issues for poorly printed ads.


Do you have the right stuff to become SNAP certified?

You must be committed to outstanding print quality. You have to be meticulous. You have to be a problem solver. You have to be able to overcome resistance. You have to be ready for change.

Most of all, you have to be committed to become SNAP certified no matter the obstacle. You can do it. All you have to do is follow the simple instruction sheets that are provided with the SNAP certification packet and make sure your press is in good mechanical condition.

To get more information about SNAP, visit [www.naa.org](http://www.naa.org).

If you don't understand any part of the instruction sheet or have questions about performing the test, the SNAP committee is ready to answer your questions.



Do you have the right stuff? Then prove it to your readers and your advertisers.

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