

What OOH Media Company Principals Are Saying

March 6, 2017



My Turn

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Thank you, OAAA principals, for sharing your honest thoughts with senior staff, in our recent telephone interviews.

Here are 10 take-aways from owners and top executives at more than 75 OOH media companies, large and small. This valuable input, via one-on-one interviews:

- Helps guide OAAA
- Elicits great ideas (along with constructive criticism)
- Inoculates against the enemies of trade associations: distance and assumption about what's important

Ten Points from OOH Media Company Principals

1. Protecting the industry in Washington is vital, but we also want help at the state and local level

Myron Laible was in Nashville, TN, February 21-22 to help plan legislative strategy regarding fair treatment of billboards (relocation and compensation).

When city planners in Colorado tried to exploit a recent Supreme Court ruling to hurt billboards, [OAAA's Myron Laible jumped in to help](#).

Can we help you at the state or local level, with regulatory challenges? Reach out to Myron and Kerry Yoakum at mlaible@oaaa.org or kyoakum@oaaa.org.

2. We want help with local sales

OAAA's Steve Nicklin will visit 100 agencies this year – again – promoting the vast capabilities of OOH.

After pitching Lavelle Strategy Group in Scranton, PA, on February 15, Steve said, "This agency was very engaged and enthusiastic about OOH." Lavelle manages OOH for banks, retailers, schools, hospitals, cell providers, political campaigns, and the National Cowgirl Museum. After the presentation, Lavelle tweeted "We loved discussing innovative, out of home advertising solutions today."

Where will Steve be next? [Check the 2017 road show calendar here](#) to see where he'll meet with agencies and local OOH media company sales teams. Or contact him directly at snicklin@oaaa.org.

3. We want relevant information

Specifically:

- We appreciate the OAAA Legal Report
- Make the website easy to navigate
- Help us understand how to access OAAA resources
- Deliver information in new ways

I share daily news with 3,000+ Twitter followers and 9,000+ LinkedIn contacts. Send me your news, and I will help to promote it.

Wade Leslie of West Virginia Outdoor and other principals want more videos. On March 1-2, OAAA was in Phoenix producing a video on how to measure digital billboard light.

Natalie Kessler of Kessler Outdoor mentioned she spends a lot of time in her car and would enjoy listening to OAAA insights as she drives. All OAAA webinar recordings can be accessed via smart phones or tablets, to be viewed and/or heard while on the go.

Check out the [February 16 webinar about 2017 OOH trends](#), or the [March 1 webinar on how to find OAAA resources](#).

4. More tech services and education are welcome

In Wichita, Doug Robertson of Atomic Enterprises developed a buying program called Fliphound, to simplify the buying-selling process. Software like this, and other innovative platforms are being developed by OAAA member companies, to improve the overall OOH experience for advertisers and agencies.

Media company principals are interested in advances in data collection and analysis. This includes software for making OOH transactions easier and emerging opportunities available through programmatic software.

OAAA has expanded services to tech companies, including a new online [Tech Hub](#), webinars to showcase new technologies, and new resources at the OAAA\Geopath National Convention + Expo including the Tech Hive within the Expo and tech workshops.

5. Dues fairness is important

On November 2, 2016, OAAA's Board assigned an ad hoc group to examine the OAAA dues structure and make recommendations to OAAA's Executive Committee. The ad hoc group includes John Barrett of Barrett Outdoor Communications, Vince Miller of DDI Media, and Debra Thompson of Cleveland Outdoor Advertising. A new plan for 2018 will go to the OAAA Board of Directors for approval later this year.

6. Digital OOH drives revenue

Digital OOH conversions and installations are driving revenue across the OOH spectrum: billboards, street furniture, transit, and place-based.

Billboard companies applaud OAAA for defending digital billboards in court (Scenic America's attack on

digital billboards is pending at the US Supreme Court). On March 8-9, OAAA's Kerry Yoakum will be in Ohio helping Lind Media regarding a proposed digital conversion. If you need help with digital billboard conversions, get in touch with Kerry at kyoakum@oaaa.org.

7. We want OAAA involvement and collaboration

Several principals said they'd like to be more involved with OAAA at the committee and governance level (invitations are pending.) Furthermore, OAAA does not operate in a vacuum. Principals appreciate OAAA's always-fast responsiveness, expect value for their dues, and want OAAA to collaborate with other groups.

OAAA's Myron Laible and Kerry Yoakum work closely with the on-premise group, the International Sign Association (ISA). Stephen Freitas consults with Barry Frye of the Digital Place-based Advertising Association (DPAA). I spoke with Chris Cowlbeck of Independent Billboard Operators (IBO) about common ground, and will be hosting a meeting next week with Rich Ventura of the Digital Signage Federation (DSF).

8. Safety is top of mind

OOH media companies are worried about new regulations issued in the final days of the Obama Administration, affecting billboard climbers. OAAA members, large and small, expect OAAA to explain these complex new rules and also advocate effectively on behalf of the industry to assure that regulations are reasonable. The industry is proud of its safety record.

9. Independent operators are vital to industry health

When the new federal safety rule surfaced, our industry communicated with the chairwoman of the US House committee that deals with labor issues (Rep. Virginia Foxx, R-NC). The entire industry benefitted when an independent operator in Winston-Salem helped deliver our message.

[The 2017 OAAA\Geopath National Convention + Expo](#) has many features designed for independent operators, including an afternoon seminar just for them (how to develop digital billboard sites, adding cell antennae to billboards, OOH sales tools, and networking).

10. Industry revenue is up overall, but not everywhere

Overall, the OOH industry grew 3.1 percent in 2016 for a total of \$7.6 billion.

Business was strong in New York City and Los Angeles, but a downturn hurt the economy in North Dakota and other pockets around the country.

I love to hear from you – what do you find most valuable at OAAA, how can we offer more support, and on which major issues should we focus? Contact me at nfletcher@oaaa.org or call me at (202) 833-5566.