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The Evolution of Media Link – Celebrating 20 Years

Part I

**By Natalie Linville-Mass*



Twenty years ago, PalmPilot in hand, I was bringing Gendron Advertising to life in the Union Arcade building in downtown Davenport.

It was a month after 9/11, and commercials were not airing because of the 24-hour news coverage of the aftermath. Saturday Night Live was pushed back for about three weeks because they could not pull together a show after this kind of tragedy. Even the

Emmys were postponed for about a month because no one felt good about celebrating during this time. Businesses felt unsteady about advertising and about what this meant for their business and our community.

Everything was chaotic and everyone was essentially waiting for the other shoe to drop. Needless to say, this was not the best time to start an advertising agency, but my personal circumstances dictated that this was the right time for me to try.

In 2001, digital advertising was not a thing, and having a website was a bonus, not an absolute.

My Nielsen and Arbitron ratings were contained in a literal book, and the newest advancement in the field was that cable was starting to pick up ratings. This meant the duopoly, Strata and SmartPlus, needed to figure out how to handle cable programming in their software.

At the time, I was licensed with SmartPlus, so I had to look up the ratings by program. This made it difficult to see which shows had good ratings, because you could not look at the big picture. In addition, a module did not exist for publications, phone books or outdoor, so those buys needed to be produced by

hand in Excel. Yes, I said phone books! Back then, most businesses dedicated part of their budget to phone books, because they were the only tool you could use to find phone numbers for people and businesses.



Blackberries and Palm Pilots were the modes you used to get in touch with people and stay organized. If you needed to call someone, you used your landline.



As we mentioned in an earlier post, our first office got its start in the Union Arcade building with a corner spot on the fifth floor. The space had an individual office for me, an area for my assistant, a place to meet with customers and an alcove for storage. It was a great setting for our first place, with lots of windows, which is a big deal to me. We could open them to let in fresh air, so long as we were mindful of the pigeons threatening to fly through the office.

The staff was so welcoming and there was something uplifting about working in an area with so much activity. Unfortunately, there were also parking meters. This forced folks to continuously look at the clock to make sure they did not get a ticket when they were meeting with us at our office.

In May 2006, Gendron Advertising became Media Link.

I wanted this business to grow. I also wanted to make sure anyone who worked with me could take ownership in their work, which can be hard to do with someone else's name on the business. We also took advantage of the many older homes we are lucky to have in this area and moved our business to our current location at 1902 17th Street in Rock Island.



Our move gave us the freedom to make the building our own, but it took a lot of work. The home we purchased was built in 1874, so we had to update the plumbing and electrical while reimagining the space as a true office.

This space has transformed over the years. We still have some updates to make, but

we have no parking meters, everyone can see their cars, everyone can see outside and it is a home. So, it is truly a comfortable place to work.

It is crazy to think about how much has changed over the past twenty years within the field of marketing and in how we communicate.

This evolution is far from over. Our crew continues to learn as each new technology and communications company emerges. Who knows what the next 20 years will bring?

The Evolution of Media Link Part I



Spread the Word!

Marketing Coordinator Position (Part-time) at Media Link

The Marketing Coordinator position coordinates established Media Link clients' advertising efforts, maintains proper office workflows, and contributes to digital campaign management. The marketing coordinator position may earn additional commission by generating and managing Media Link Software® (MLS) client accounts.

Primary duties include:

- Be the welcoming and professional first impression of the Media Link team.
- Ensure established office procedures are maintained.
- Prepare proposed advertising schedules for broadcast, digital, print, outdoor, and specialty buys in Media Link Software®.
- Reconcile affidavits/invoices in Media Link Software® and address issues.
- Stay informed about marketing trends and best practices.
- Develop and update presentations assigned to you for client meetings and projects.

As an added opportunity to earn commission:

- Research, contact, and follow-up on leads for our Media Link Software® (MLS).
- Manage established and new MLS accounts.

Requirements

- Some working knowledge of media buying.
- Demonstrated written and verbal communication skills.

- Desire to sell and working knowledge of the sales process.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Pro-active learner and curious about the emerging world of advertising and marketing.
- Working knowledge of paid digital and organic social media.
- Google Certified a plus, but not required.
- College degree in the field of communications.

Benefits

- Base hourly rate
- Commission
- Gas stipend
- Seminar stipend for continued education.

Please email resume and cover letter to natalie@medialinkinc.com.



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The Media Link team wishes you a great rest of your week!

Natalie, Adrian, Brad, Laura, and Linda

