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Times Leader taps CityXpress for classifieds

N&T Staff Report

The Times Leader in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., recently upgraded its existing classified site with CityXpress Corp.'s eMarketplaceXpress software to increase its foothold in the local online market.

The app allows the newspaper to create stand-alone classified marketplaces with features that include multiple photos, enhanced displays, forums and a comparison-shopping feature based on RSS feeds from other classified providers.

"We needed a simple, easy-to-use classified Web site for our readers and one that would enable us to grow by offering different packages both paid and free," said Kathy Schwartz, vice president of audience and new product development for Wilkes-Barre Publishing.

Making the move

Last November, Schwartz began looking to move the former Knight Ridder paper from Knight Ridder Digital's Catalyst software to an easier-to-use classified system.

"The classified ad manager and sales representatives all told me the Catalyst system was too hard to use for both readers and advertisers," she said.

The biggest complaint she received was that advertisers could not manage ads placed online and had less local control over the system. The new app allows the paper to be meet advertisers' real-time demands.

Competitive advantage

The new classified system from CityXpress will help the paper compete against three local broadcast stations, another daily paper, Craigslist and eBay.

The paper uses a ppi front-end classified system and additional software from Gabriels Technology Solutions for its automotive listings.

In three weeks of operation after its Jan. 2 launch, the Times Leader posted about 717 ads from 94 registered users, Schwartz said.

“In the first eight days, we had nearly 40 people register and place ads,” she said.

Schwartz said that eMarketplaceXpress’ menu of self-service features will help the paper boost its online ad revenues.

“We think the revenue will increase over time as our volume grows and more readers use the service to shop locally,” she said.

The Yorkshire Post of Leeds, England, also upgraded its classified system with eMarketplaceXpress. The paper markets its BuyandSellToday.co.uk as an extension of its print classifieds.