

Innovation Award



KEY
EXECUTIVES

Mega- Conference

Solutions, Success Stories
and New Ideas

Newspaper or company name: GateHouse Live

Address: 1160 N Town Center Dr #330

City: Las Vegas

State: NV

ZIP: 89144

Entry submitted by: Sarah Bass

Title: Operations Director

Email address: SBass@gatehousemedia.com

Phone: 225-975-7166

GATHEHOUSE LIVE CREATES NEW REVENUE CHANNELS

What new product(s) or approaches have you introduced in the past 3 years that is/are making a significant difference in your business model today or is expected to significantly alter your business model in the near future? In addition to a description of your products or approaches, please provide links to showcase examples. If you would prefer to mail 10 printed samples, email cindy@snpa.org for the mailing address. (300 words or less, suggested)

In 2015, GateHouse Media generated less than \$1 million dollars in event-related revenue. GateHouse Live was rolled-out in 2016 and grew that revenue to \$8 million the first year. GateHouse Live ended 2018 with over \$42 million in revenue and over \$18 million in EBITDA. 2019 projections are well over \$60 million in revenue. The core GateHouse Live team has had literally no turnover and boasts a 5/5 ranking on Glassdoor.

GateHouse Live has effectively leveraged our event creation platforms with our promotions platforms to generate revenue, engage audiences, and gain new advertisers.

Our four primary categories of events are EXPOS (Men's, Women's, Senior's, Family's, etc.); AWARDS (High School Sports, Community's Choice, Community Heroes, etc.); RACES (Obstacle Courses, Marathons, Half-Marathons, 10Ks, etc); and MUSIC (Concerts, Tours, Festivals, etc.) Each category serves unique audiences while leveraging and fostering impactful community engagement. Regardless of market size, these events educate, entertain and inspire significant audiences.

Our Offerings

GateHouse Live is an event production company specializing in delivering world-class events for the media industry and the communities they serve.

We constantly strive to exceed expectations, create unforgettable memories, and generate new revenue streams while leveraging our reputable and institutional brands.

Our events inspire pride and progressive innovation throughout the ever-changing media industry, while still relying on core newspaper strengths – our ability to create content, attract audiences, and bring powerful meaning to the lives of others.

We are the industry leader in event production and execution from coast to coast with well over 100 newspapers using our event and promotion models.

Strategy From branding to building budgets, GateHouse Live can help any market concept and develop their event. We have many years of experience and can recommend when, where and why events make the most sense.

Sales Selling events is very different from selling other advertising platforms, GateHouse Live prides it's self in its ability to teach local sales staffs the difference. We assist with building lead lists, developing sponsorship sales packages, materials and presentations, as well as making sales calls with our markets or handling the sales efforts completely on our own for certain signature events.

Branding Our creative services team works with each event team on logo conception, design and establishing branding guidelines. We also design all event collateral, advertisements, and other marketing materials with modern, popular appeal.

Marketing Event logistics, such as booking venues, securing speakers, and finding the best partners for catering, decoration and production are all specialty areas of the GateHouse Live. We handle all event logistics and operations from start to finish.

Execution Flawless execution is what we strive for at GateHouse Live. High-level attention to detail, smooth sailing behind the scenes, and an excellent experience for front end customers are standard expectations associated with GateHouse Live produced events.

Tools We are able to scale quickly by leveraging our models and not re-inventing the wheel when it comes to major event planning tools – budgets, timelines, checklists, etc.

LINKS TO OUR EVENT BRAND SAMPLES AND SOME VIDEOS

https://www.dropbox.com/s/xla56vwbkp43rki/GHL_SelfPromo%28Short%29.mp4?dl=0

<http://gatehouselive.com/events/>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5D-OFb1-raldt8t_Tqmo5Q/videos?sort=dd&shelf_id=0&view=0

GATEHOUSE LIVE IS NON-CORE REVENUE *our core revenue is events.

Have you diversified your revenue in other ways beyond print and digital, such as events or agency services (PR work, logo development, competitive media placement, etc.)?

Yes

No

If yes, what percentage of your total advertising revenue comes from these streams? 5% and growing

What do you expect it to be in three years? \$120 million +

Please provide any additional details or comments that you would like the judges to consider (300 words or less, suggested).

News media companies have been aggressively seeking new and unique sources of revenue over the years as traditional offering continue to struggle under the pressure of local and national competition.

Our models have served as guideposts for our entire industry and our peers in broadcasting as well.

Not only have we made a significant impact on GateHouse but on the industry as a whole.

The team at GateHouse Live has leveraged our proven concepts to make this non-core revenue stream significant, successful, and profitable in markets all over the nation.

GATEHOUSE LIVE IS AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Please describe any innovative audience approaches your company has taken that has allowed your company to reach more readers, new audience segments (for example: Millennials, sports fanatics, etc.) or improve subscriber engagement. How has this impacted subscriptions, open rates, social shares or total audience? (300 words or less, suggested)

In 2018 GateHouse Live had well over 600,000 total event attendees, with many GateHouse Live events having top-10 trending social media tags for the night.

GateHouse Live's success can be largely attributed to its ability to leverage core assets, build audiences, while monetizing data. Local media companies are uniquely positioned to effectively generate local event revenue through leveraging their existing multi-audience delivery vehicles (print, online, niche publications) to promote local events tailored towards specific audiences. For example, events like:

- Kidz Expo provide engagement with non-traditional newspaper audiences;
- Life Expo leverage loyal newspaper reader;
- Best of Preps strengthens the sports audience.

Many local media companies do not have the numbers in staff or years of experience to pull off successful local events, which is why events are often perceived as not being worth the effort. That's where we come in! GateHouse Live brings a proven process for creating and implementing successful events as well as an experienced staff to assist local publications in event implementation.

GateHouse Live's ability to analyse local media's audience has been key in wooing sponsors, advertisers and partners in markets all over the nation. This proven process has helped local publications work more efficiently to implement successful local events, generate new revenue, *and* serve the unique needs of the community.

GATEHOUSE LIVE LEVERAGES NEW SALES & MARKETING APPROACHES

Which of the following applies most to you?

We have trained all sales executives how to sell digital products.

We have a separate staff to sell digital and/or new initiatives.

We have specialized people who sell the complicated stuff and help the rest of the staff sell our new and/or digital product mix.

Please describe any innovative sales and marketing approaches you have taken that have helped your company improve the trajectory of your revenue (300 words or less, suggested)

Sales

GateHouse Live has a team of sales experts (considered the best in the industry) with years of knowledge and experience and a proven process for tapping into local event marketing advertising potential. Selling events is very different from selling other advertising platforms, and GateHouse Live prides itself in its ability to teach sales staffs the difference. We assist with building lead lists, developing sponsorship sales packages, materials and presentations, as well as making sales calls with our markets. Our sales support can range from mild to heavy depending on the event. Most all events have 100% sponsor renewals as well.

Marketing

Event logistics, such as booking venues, securing speakers, and finding the best partners for catering, decoration and production are all specialty areas of the GateHouse Live. We help each market with all event logistics and operations from start to finish. GateHouse Live's approach to marketing has a proven record of success and has helped improve the trajectory of revenue in markets all over the nation.

GATEHOUSE LIVE IS AN ORGANIZATIONAL & COMPANY CULTURE TRANSFORMATION AS WELL

Please describe how your company has changed its organizational structure, work environment and/or rewards to encourage innovation. (300 words or less suggested)

GateHouse Live is a little different than most companies within the media industry. We have changed our organizational structure, but are mostly responsible for helping other markets change their structure to a more healthy and productive one. The energy of GateHouse Live is contagious within our company, our local properties, the communities we serve and our industry.

At a time when our industry is under attack and many of our trends are going in the wrong direction, the GateHouse Live success story has motivated big and small staffs across the country. We regularly hear of all the positives that come from our visits to markets and the events we produce. Publishers often tell us of the residual morale boost impacting performance for months.

The key has been seeking out individuals for our team who care about our mission to continue to exceed expectations in being the industry leader in event production and execution across the nation, while also having the ability to balance and thrive in a slightly abnormal and ever-changing work environment.

The incentive for our team lies within the connections we make within each new community we enter, and getting to witness the profound influence events have on energizing local staffs and producing pride both with staff and throughout the community. There are few greater rewards than being able to step into a market and know you're making a difference—and we know this for a fact. The responses we get from publishers, employees, and communities all over the nation are overwhelming.

In a world full of turbulence, it is always a joyous occasion to be able to witness hundreds and thousands of people from all walks of life come together to enjoy the same event and not care about

their differences or disagreements. In those moments, we are all one, we become the definition of community. Once our new employees get a taste of what we're actually doing and see everything come to fruition – that's work becomes more than just a job or a paycheck. It becomes a passion for excellence and making sure what we do continues to prosper.

So, how do we ensure our employees continue to thrive in their work environment?

Well, we trust our employees' knowledge, experience, and work ethic. The numbers and rapid success speak for themselves. GateHouse Live uses and encourages a combination work environment philosophies to help encourage happy and healthy employees and work lives:

1. Unity-Focused Environment
 - a. Unity-focused environments value the importance of permitting employees to operate as individuals while still being focused on the success of the team. GateHouse Live executes hundreds of events a year, all with very different and specific goals. This environment encourages employees to work together in their own unique way, while at the same time expecting employees to individually hold themselves accountable the quality of their work.
2. Individual-Focused Environment
 - a. Gatehouse Live believes and respects the fact that every individual is different. An individual-focused workplace allow employees the flexibility to customize their own work style. Basically, we focus more on the quality of work rather than where, how, or how long it takes to get the work done.
3. Skeptic-Free Environment
 - a. GateHouse Live is evolving and growing constantly, so brainstorming ideas and solutions to problems is a regular occurrence. In a skeptic-free environment, ideas are presented and questioned in a way of how the new idea could work better than what currently exists, verses why the idea will not work. This creates a judgement free environment and encourages employees to think outside of the box.
4. Honest Feedback Environment
 - a. This environment encourages communication. Event production and execution is extremely high-paced, which often means we cannot afford the time it takes or the mistakes that can be made as a result of passivity. An Honest Feedback Environment encourages open communication without fear of repercussions. This philosophy requires a significant amount of trust in employees to use reason and logic to communicate honestly and effectively when addressing issues or suggesting solutions to problems. When employees trust each other to give, listen and act of this feedback, everyone has an opportunity to improve.

We also celebrate our successes and have lots of laughs and fun. See what some of our employees say about our culture here...

https://www.glassdoor.com/Reviews/GateHouse-Live-Chattanooga-Reviews-EI_IE2230417.0,14_IL.15,26_IM164.htm