

DEFINITION:

cooper-a-tion

noun

"the process of working together to the same end."

What does cooperation mean in business?

Voluntary arrangement in which two or more entities engage in a mutually beneficial exchange where resources are used to accomplish a common goal.

DEFINITION:

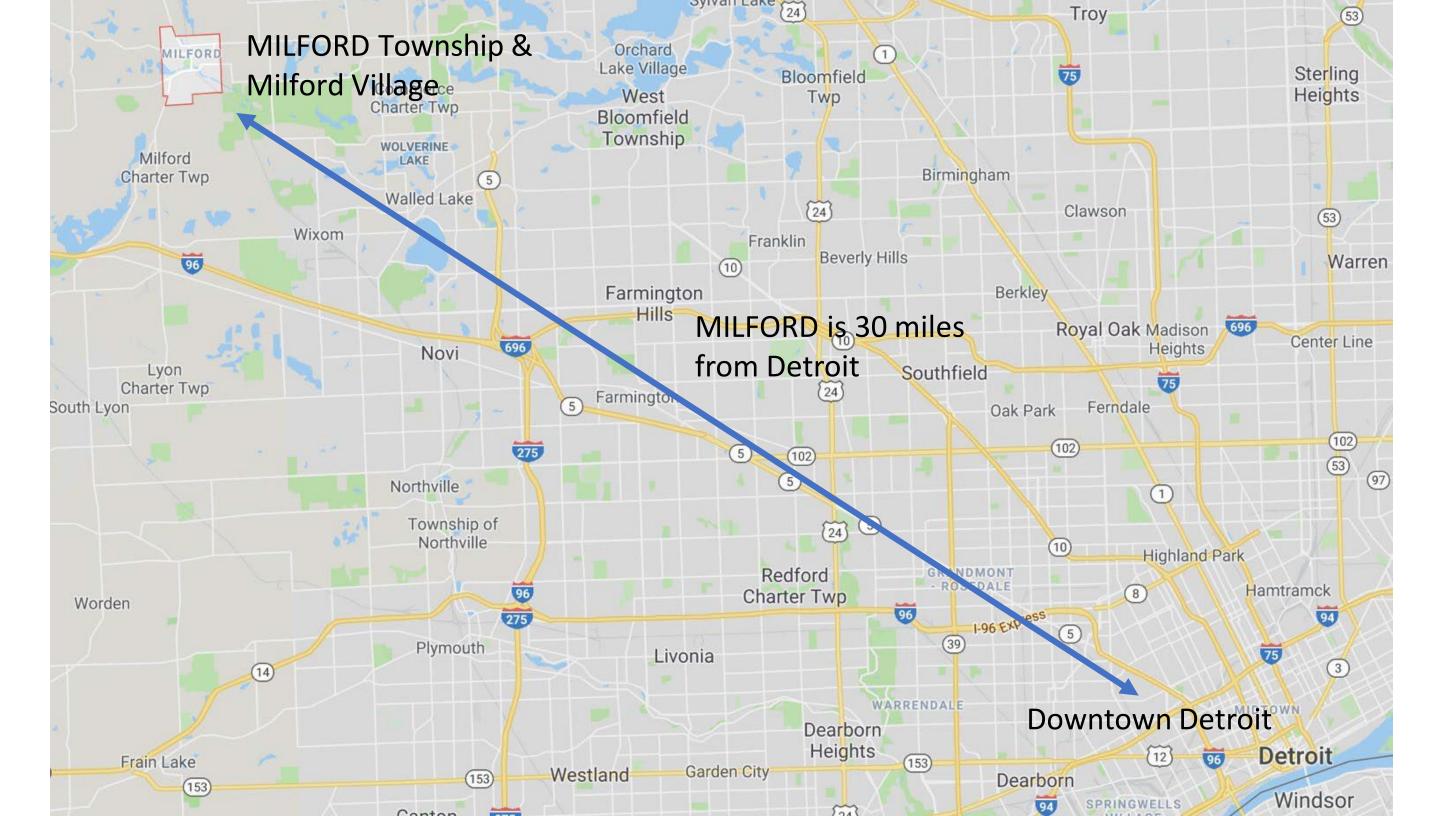
in·flu·enc·er

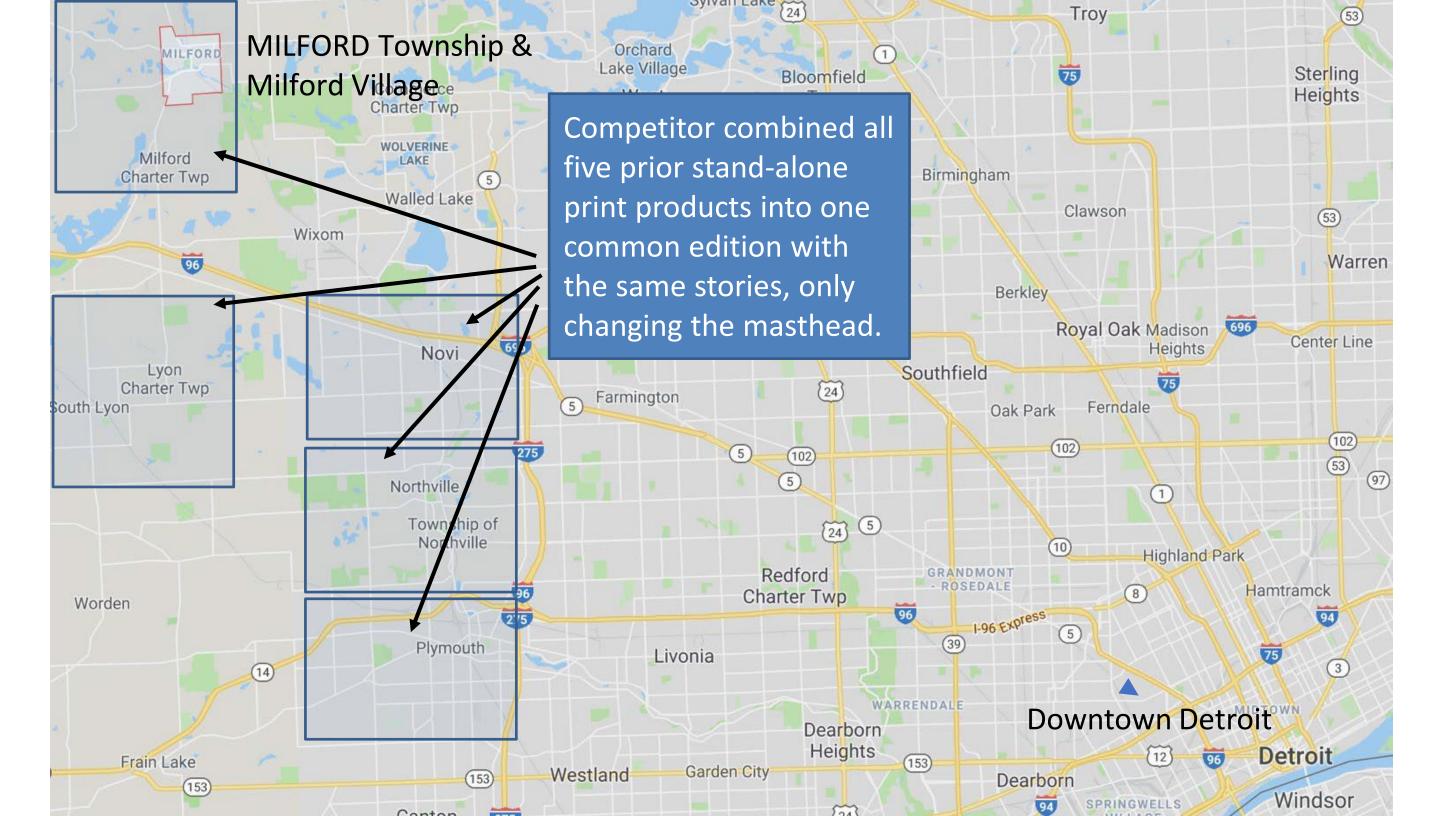
noun

"one who exerts influence: a person who inspires or guides the actions of others."

What does "influencer" mean in our business?

Leveraging the relationships and connections of the influencer to enhance a project for our benefit (and the benefit of the influencer).





Milford Key DEMOGRAPHICS



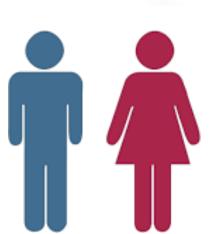
Affluent: Average HH Income: \$106,894.

Average individual income: \$69,795.



Educated: 79% of adults 25+ have at

least 2 years of college.



Average Age: Females: 47 Males: 54

INITIAL INQUIRY

March 2018 (month #1)

PROBLEM:



Loss of a the communities newspaper (from the perspective of key influencers and residents. The feeling of abandonment.

The Milford Chamber of Commerce leadership board felt the community no longer had a local paper. The existing Milford paper simply was not Milford focused anymore. The large corporate publisher had merged 5 suburban weeklies into one edition, with the only difference being the respective mastheads. The corporately owned paper was a subscription based model that had declined from 5,000 subscriptions in 2014 to only 1,400 copies in January 2018.

Prominent business owners and residents wanted something better.

REQUEST by the Milford Chamber Board:

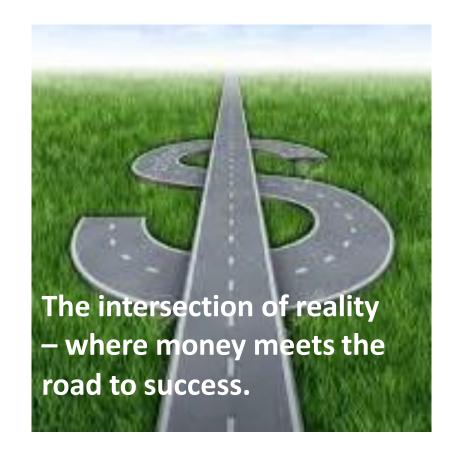
Will The Spinal Column Newsweekly start an edition specifically for Milford, and mail it to all 9,000 Milford residents?

They asked:
What will it take to make it happen?

GETTING SERIOUS

April 2018 (month #2)

The KEY QUESTIONS presented back to the Chamber Board:



- 1). Would Milford businesses advertise in a new Milford only community newspaper when most didn't advertise at all?
- **2).** If the business community could be convinced to advertise, would they see their investment as a benefit or a donation? Would they commit to a full year or more to sustain "their" paper.

The Chamber and Milford's leaders truly desired to have their own local newspaper – which meant businesses needed to INVEST in the project. Our team referred to the potential advertisers as "stakeholders."

The Chamber knew their involvement was needed to make the project successful. We knew that, too.

Synergies and COOPERATION began to happen.



VISION and WORKING A PLAN

May, June, July & August 2018 (months #3 - 7)

A majority of Milford / Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce board members are local business owners.

The **INFLUENCERS** needed to play a part in the selling process.



POSITIVE FEEDBACK

The <u>first group</u> of business decision-makers we contacted were those who already advertised in our other editions and we whom we had good relationships with.

These positive business owners were the minority in the beginning.



MORE 'YES' – but not fully committed

The <u>second group</u> were those we had called on before, but had only placed an occasional ad in our other editions.

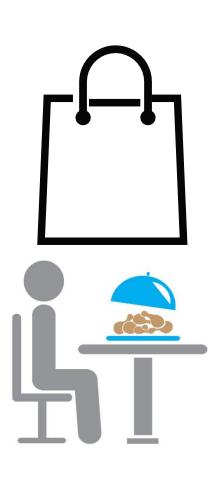
The common response we received from this group was, "What's in it for me", but they were at least open to listening. After learning about the potential Spinal Column Newsweekly

Milford edition, we got more commitments, but fewer than anticipated. We felt this group agreed to advertise for a few issues to do "What's best for Milford."



What the business owners that gave a silent or no-interested response we REALLY SAYING:

"We don't need to advertise because people come to our town because it's the cool place to shop and dine in western Oakland County".





FINAL SPRINT

October 2018 (month #8)

On October 16 we were still short of the needed goal by about 20%. The "go or no go" date was one week away in order to produce a November edition. Yet a sizeable number of businesses were still undecided about committing to advertise.

We kept getting these two responses:

"I don't need to advertise."

"I want to see the first few issues."

So together, we made one last push.



Although ad revenue was still not at goal, the decision was made on October 25, 2018 to move forward with the launch!





Inaugural issue was published November 15, 2018.

- 8,100 mailed distribution
- 16 broadsheetpages.
- \$14,840 in revenue.

Welcome story









VETERAN'S DAY IN THE HURON VALLEY > PR MHS BASKETBALL TEAM READIES FOR NEW SEASON > P13

The Spinal Column

Voters changes to lower tax rate

Milford village council Newest council member is retired DPS worker

Maxwell elected to

The Big Reveal and Dinner's On Us kick off the downtown Milford holiday seasor









First year revenue Was \$159,000.



Thank you.

For more information or questions, contact:

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