



For Immediate Release

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## **SmallTownPapers, Inc. Creates Online BNC**

### **Press associations move to streamline annual contests**

Seattle, WA – November, 2009 – SmallTownPapers, Inc. is pleased to announce the release of its new online contest platform which allows press associations to move their Better Newspaper Contest (BNC) online. The integrated contest platform, dubbed the “Better BNC”, streamlines the entire BNC process: newspapers quickly and easily upload entries as PDFs, judges review and evaluate entries online, and the contest administrator manages the entire process from their desktop.

Traditionally BNC contests are run with physical tear sheets submitted as entries which are logged in, sorted and verified by staff. Eventually the entries are shipped out to judges who then physically read each entry from the tear sheet. Judges then report their decisions back to the association staff.

“The digital platform was created because representatives from press associations told me they were looking for ways to more easily run their BNCs and, more importantly, reduce costs,” said SmallTownPapers founder Paul Jeffko. “This platform simplifies the process for everyone involved – it just makes sense to move the BNC online.”

Eight state newspaper press associations and SPJ Region X are currently using the SmallTownPapers online contest platform including Washington Newspaper Publishers Association (WNPA) which first moved its contest online three years ago.

“With the online database, time spent sorting and processing entries was significantly reduced, our shipping costs were lowered since we had fewer entries to package and ship, and judging online eliminated the costs and staff time associated with hosting a full day of judging at a hotel,” explained WNPA general manager Bill Will.

The idea of changing to an ‘all-PDF’ contest might seem daunting at first. But newspapers quickly realize that having their own online account keeps things organized and makes entering the BNC faster. For those newspapers without access to their entries in PDF format, SmallTownPapers can scan printed tear sheets. The platform can also be used as a management tool for those associations who want to transition to ‘all-digital’ over time.

The time-saving, online contest platform is being lauded by both newspapers and judges. Port Orchard (WA) Independent publisher Mike Schiro explains, “It was fun and fast, the forms printed great and looked so much better than my terrible handwriting... many more entries to come.” Judge Dr. Bill Hickman from the University of Central Oklahoma appreciated the convenience, “I’ve finished

judging my five categories in the newspaper contest. I liked doing this online...I'd do it again in a heartbeat."

For its third annual online BNC for WNPA, SmallTownPapers has launched an all new version of the digital contest application (2.0) with new features including customizable web pages reflecting the associations own brand, logo, rules and other materials. Entries can be made in various file formats such as PDF, JPEG, and text, or a URL web address for web entries. The centralized database holds all contest information, all of the entries and data are backed up daily and the contest archive remains available after the contest completion. Visit the website at [www.betternewspapercontest.com](http://www.betternewspapercontest.com).

#### **About BetterNewspaperContest.com**

Working with press associations who wanted to streamline their antiquated process of running a manual "Better Newspaper Contest," SmallTownPapers developed the first all-digital online contest application where newspapers enter their articles as PDF files and judges review online from their own desktop. The BNC contest administrator can now deploy and manage the entire process online from the BNC Administrative Console. Visit [www.betternewspapercontest.com](http://www.betternewspapercontest.com) for more information.

#### **About SmallTownPapers**

SmallTownPapers is a leading solution provider for publishers of America's 5000 small market newspapers. Working with publishers nationwide, the Seattle-based company digitally preserves current and archive editions and provides searchable online access to the newspapers. Additionally, SmallTownPapers provides millions of news consumers across the country with access to real-time news and information from small town America. Today, more than 350 newspapers from 46 states can be accessed and searched through SmallTownPapers. The archive, containing editions dating as far back as the 1800's, continues to grow as publishers discover SmallTownPapers in their search for comprehensive digital archive solutions. [www.smalltownpapers.com](http://www.smalltownpapers.com).