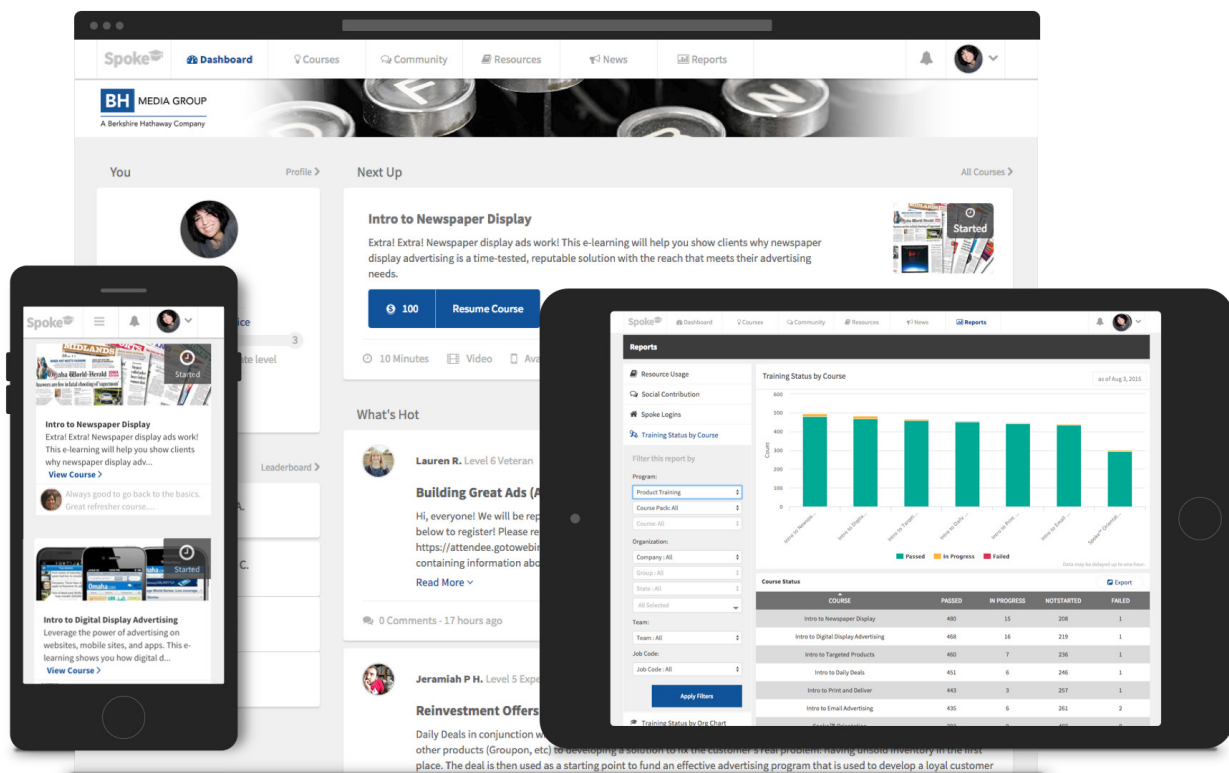


BH MEDIA GROUP TEAMS WITH UNBOXED TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE A NEW CULTURE OF LEARNING

BH Media was a rapidly growing organization with a need for formal, streamlined, and company-wide training that could be measured and linked to business and professional growth. Through a partnership with Unboxed Technology, they got the whole package: a custom-created sales methodology, product training, and leadership training, all ready to launch in Spoke—a super-simple, web-based social learning platform.



BACKSTORY

BH Media is a Berkshire Hathaway company all about community. With 30 daily and over 70 weekly newspapers—including the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, the *Winston-Salem Journal*, the *Tulsa World* and the *Omaha World-Herald*—they use digital, print, and progressive media solutions to inform and engage readers in their own communities across the nation.

OPPORTUNITY

As BH Media acquired a significant number of papers throughout the country, competing processes as well as different cultures, communities, readership, and reach significantly impacted sales. They knew their long-term success depended on providing their busy sales professionals with a simple way to share best practices and sharpen their skills.

BH Media began an exhaustive search and conducted many interviews for the right vendor. “Not only were we looking for training content, but also a way to deliver content,” said Angela Brauer, then Director of Sales and Development.

Ultimately they chose Unboxed for that very reason: the ability to develop a cohesive sales methodology, customized training, and a learning platform to host the new content.

According to Brauer, she and Thom Kastrup, Chief Revenue Officer, knew they were in good hands with Unboxed. They received great advice on what the program should focus on, how the training should roll out, and how trainers should deliver the content.

PARTNERSHIP

With Unboxed’s innovative approach to online learning, expertise in sales training, and ability to create content that brings it all to life, BH Media found their new partner.

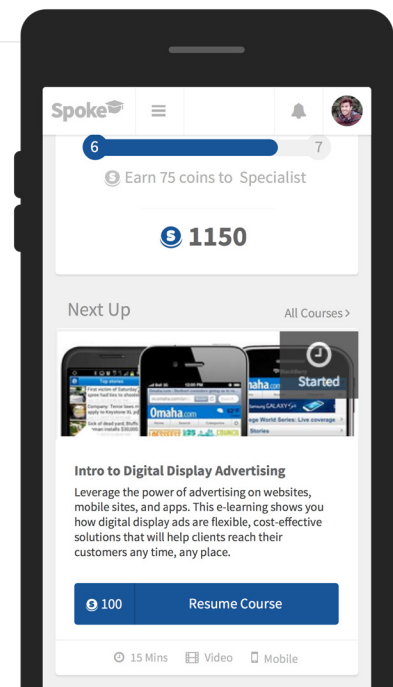
Unboxed started a discovery process for the program by conducting ride-alongs in multiple markets and worked with a cross-company team of over 30 ad sales experts, managers, and market leaders to build content that specifically addressed sales professionals’ needs.

The development of the new program proved to be more than a typical client-vendor relationship. “I feel like we were colleagues and coworkers,” Brauer said. “It was a really good fit. And having content development experts was important to the success of the program.”

SOLUTION

What resulted was a new sales methodology that defines stages in the sales process (the Great Sales Behaviors) and identifies target areas that drive increased sales for both sales professionals and their respective papers. Program objectives were aimed at prospecting more to increase sales activity, acquire more clients, generate high ad revenue per client, build total revenue, and reduce client churn.

In addition to the sales methodology, Unboxed developed a series of product training eLearnings and training for managers to better coach, support, reinforce, and practice the Great Sales Behaviors with their team. To tie it all together, all the content launched in Spoke, allowing learners to tap into online training materials, engage with other sales professionals, and share best practices in the community.



This new training marked the beginning of a culture of learning for BH Media, one that highlighted the investment the company had in their sales professionals. The content changed the way sales teams sell to their clients and taught them how to better care for their customers and sustain long-term relationships with them.

Over the last few years, the company has acquired multiple newspapers that at one time were all separate businesses. They each had unique processes, but now Unboxed is bringing it all together—a profound feat for what Brauer once described as “one three-year-old company made up of a bunch of 100-year-old companies.”

And with Spoke, the company now uses online training to enhance talent acquisition and onboard new hires. Sales professionals communicate across markets and share best practices with colleagues. They can even use Spoke alongside existing sales tools such as Salesforce and Chatter to tie training and community to customer relationship management.

RESULTS

The program has been in place for over a year. A survey taken from training sessions spanning BH Media markets across the country and hundreds of participants demonstrated near-unanimous satisfaction with the new sales training and course materials:

- 98% agreed and strongly agreed that the content was immediately useful and applicable within the following 30 days after the training.
- 99% agreed and strongly agreed that the course materials were helpful and met the intended objectives of the training.
- 98% agreed and strongly agreed when asked if they would recommend the course to others.

Participants freely offered additional feedback about the training:

- “The best onboarding training I’ve ever seen.” (Hickory, NC)
- “Although I’ve been selling advertising for several years, I learned [so] much useful information that [I’ve] already incorporated into my daily activities.” (Bryan-College Station, TX)
- “This was one of the most comprehensive classes I have had in any industry. More relevant to our daily jobs than any other training session.” (Kearney, NE)

Since the initial rollout, BH Media and Unboxed Technology continue to develop new content, witness an increase in cross-market alignment, and expand the use of Spoke’s social component.

“We were thrilled with the outcome,” Brauer said. “With great new content in Spoke, we now have a program we can build upon and use for many years. We don’t have to send our people away to another company for training. They’re trained by us.”