

Industry Wins Court Battle... But What Else Do I Get?

November 6 ,2017



My Turn

By Nancy Fletcher
President and CEO
OAAA

Digital billboards account for \$1 of every \$7 of out of home (OOH) industry revenue. Like many “new” products in the marketplace, digital billboards have been tested. Scenic America litigated digital billboards, all the way to the US Supreme Court. [They lost](#). One OOH industry principal, who is also an attorney, described that fight as another “critical battle for survival.”

OAAA – whose mission is to protect, promote, and advance out of home advertising – was honored to defend the industry in court. As we savor this victory for digital billboards, we know that OAAA members’ interests and needs are varied.

Respecting that premise, I collected unvarnished explanations of OAAA-membership value, from a dozen independent industry voices across the country:

OOH Positioning

With 35 years in the OOH business, Kevin Gleason has seen huge changes in media, with more on the way. OAAA’s industry positioning work “helps us tell our constituency who we are and what we stand for, and in today’s media world, that’s important,” says Gleason, CEO of Adams + Fairway Outdoor Advertising. [Review the new OOH positioning here](#).

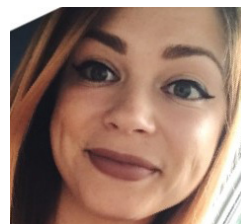


Gleason

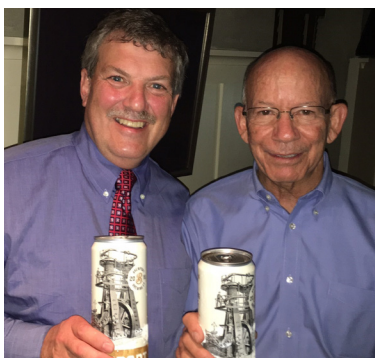
Sales Promotion

Tara Battersby supports the sales team at Fairway Outdoor Advertising in Raleigh, NC. She wants the latest proof points, comparisons to other media, and research.

It’s important to Tara and the industry’s sales force that OAAA’s Steve Nicklin is on the road meeting with agencies (100 a year). When well-traveled-Steve was in Raleigh, he visited Tara and her sales colleagues at Fairway, sharing a [presentation](#) “I won’t soon forget,” she told OAAA.



Battersby



Barrett (left) shares his craft brew with Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR).

Political Involvement

From West Haven, CT, John Barrett, Barrett Outdoor Communications, says “you can’t stay in business today without political involvement. OAAA keeps me up to date and connected with the issues and the key players.” For Barrett, OAAA is also a bridge to expertise, trends, and new technologies.

Worker Safety

Chris Zukin of Meadow Outdoor Advertising, based in Oregon, believes good safety is good business. But the rules change.

“I’m glad OAAA pays attention to OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Administration), to help us understand compliance,” he said.



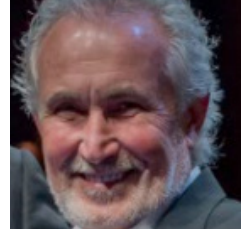
Zukin

[Register here for a no-fee webinar on November 29 on new rules from OSHA.](#) Zukin will share his expertise, along with Jim Poage of Formetco and Chuck Wigger of Lamar Advertising Company.

Taxation

In New Jersey, Don Avjean, OUTFRONT Media, remembers when Governor Jim McGreevey slapped a 6 percent gross receipts tax on billboards. The governor wanted to show his distance from the industry after two aides were snared in a billboard-permitting controversy.

Avjean recalls that billboard companies in New Jersey and OAAA worked together to convince the state to phase out this punitive, constitutionally suspect tax. What does it mean to get rid of this unfair tax? Some \$5 million a year for billboard operators in New Jersey, says Avjean.



Avjean

“Insurance”

Vince Miller, DDI Media, St. Louis, MO, says OAAA is a form of insurance.

Seventeen years ago, a united billboard industry defeated a draconian ballot initiative in Missouri to ban new billboards and remove existing ones (Proposition A). The industry victory in Missouri dampened interest in ballot initiatives elsewhere.



Miller

Unity

It would be difficult to find someone more competitive than Jim McLaughlin, Link Media Outdoor, but Jim values a unified position “when we’re dealing with items that affect all owners such as the First Amendment and takings.”

Unity is a priority for Kevin Gleason as well. He puts it this way: “The OOH industry will always be stronger with one voice, distilled from the thoughts of many member companies, and OAAA represents that voice.”



McLaughlin

Just Compensation Protection

In 1978, OAAA convinced Congress to clarify that amortization is not just compensation when government removes billboards. Since then, the industry has repeatedly defeated attempts to undermine just compensation.

Building on the federal law, all states now have protection against uncompensated government removal of billboards. This industry achievement – a tribute to persistence – took 20+ years to accomplish.



Reagan

“Protection against uncompensated seizure provides the foundation for billboard value,” says former OAAA Chairman Bill Reagan of Reagan Outdoor Advertising in Salt Lake City, UT.

Info + Spotlight

Pat O’Donnell, YESCO Outdoor Media, makes a similar point, “OAAA keeps us informed of industry threats to our outdoor advertising assets” while also “illuminating the economic value and service we provide to the communities we operate in.”



O'Donnell

Central Source for Industry Information

Mark Boidman, Peter J. Solomon Company, understands the importance of accurate industry information and looks to OAAA as the prime source for OOH industry revenue reporting. He says, “Advertising revenue reports historically

designated the OOH medium in the 'other' category, if OOH was mentioned at all. Now OAAA is a central source for this information and is cited by research organizations and news outlets, including recently by *The New York Times*."

Partnerships

In Cincinnati, OH, Mike Norton, Norton Outdoor Advertising, was among the first billboard operators to help law enforcement by putting wanted fugitives on billboards nearly a decade ago.

On Tuesday (November 7, 2017), the head of the criminal division of the FBI will speak at the OAAA Board meeting, to thank the industry for partnering with police agencies to empower the public.

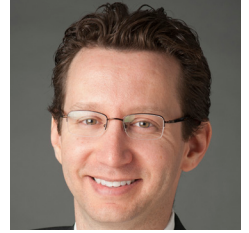
Other OAAA-sponsored partnerships have promoted great American art (2014), national parks (2015-16), voter registration (2016), and National Geographic's Photo Ark campaign to protect vulnerable animals (2017).

"Photo Ark," says Norton, "is yet another collaboration with unlikely supporters."

Summary

Debbie Thompson, Cleveland Outdoor Advertising, connects the dots: "If there is an issue – good or bad – OAAA will be there to defend, protect, and advocate for our industry. We count on OAAA to be our eyes, ears, and our conscience."

I know there are many other reasons, big and small, why companies join and support OAAA. I'd love to hear your reasons, and to share them with industry peers. Contact me at nfletcher@oaaa.org.



Norton



Norton



Thompson