

PROOF POINTS OF SMALL & LOCAL BUSINESS IMPACT

Next gen leaders helping local businesses grow

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The credibility of the Fellows comes from their:

1. Passion for developing new digital skills through the Peake Applied Learning & Teaching methodology.
2. Use of detailed worksteps with each client backed up by the guidance of their coaches.
3. Commitment to the success of each business.

Fellows come in with strong experience in personal social media use. Peake trains the Fellows to apply those skills to help businesses grow through social media-based outreach & engagement, customized based on the market category of each business. A welding shop wants a different growth strategy than a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) firm. By demonstrating value on outreach & engagement, the Fellow earns the credibility to jumpstart progress on the other business tracks cybersecurity, ecommerce, and cloud operations.

Fellows have created measurable growth within the Central Massachusetts region around the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce. The region ranges from urban to rural, affluent to economically hard-pressed.

1. Community Connection Drives 400% More Web Traffic Point of View, the leading African American community newspaper in the region, is headquartered only 11 miles away from the Quaboag Hills Chamber, but the Chamber and the Point of View had never connected in person or online.



Attorneys Marjorie and Frederick Hurst, founding Editor and Publisher of the *African American Point of View* newspaper. Source: *Point of View*

“Our Community Connection Campaign goal is to add enough value that we

*double revenues from our largest advertisers. As a first phase, the training with our Fellow has already helped drive **4-5 times more traffic to our website.**”*

— Frederick Hurst, *Point of View* Co-Founder and Publisher

“Social media is the next generation of our community presence as a change agent. But if it were not for our Fellow, we would not have gotten our social media off the ground,

*and we would not have known the step-by-step best practices on each channel. Now we are active on four different channels in a disciplined process that we trained on and improved with our **Fellow’s help every month.**”*

— Marie Zanazanian, *Point of View* Production Manager

The Peake Fellowship sees one of its roles as strengthening the Community Commerce innovation between an area’s local businesses and its higher ed institutions. Rick and Marjorie Hurst have been pioneers on Applied Learning & Teaching based on their own experiences with local vocational-technical schools specializing in applied learning: Springfield Technical High School and Springfield High School of Commerce respectively. Rick Hurst co-led a workshop with his Fellowship Support Team on next generation community leadership with the Springfield campus of Cambridge College which has become the experiential learning division of Bay Path University. Both *Point of View* and Cambridge College bring a heralded commitment to serving the African American community. The Cambridge College students, who are 57% students of color, were energized by what they learned from Rick Hurst as an Applied Learning Partner based on the *Point of View’s* commitment to a digital transformation of the newspaper’s community role with a Fellow’s help.

The session was co-led with another Applied Learning Partner, Cambridge College President Emerita Deborah Jackson. As graduates of Howard and Hampton Universities, Publisher Hurst and President Jackson share the Fellowship’s priority on recruiting candidates who can make a difference in the communities where they grew up or studied after graduating from Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges & Universities (TCUs), Regional Colleges & Universities, and National Colleges & Universities.

2. Outreach & Engagement Increases Revenue 19%



Elaine Boone, CEO of PTS Trucking, Trailer, and Construction Equipment Supply—named New England Family-owned Business of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Elaine publicly thanked her Fellow whom she brought to the event as part of the PTS team and included on the cover of the company's digital catalog.
Source: PTS

Less than a mile from the Quaboag Hills chamber office stands PTS Trucking, Trailer, and Construction Equipment Supply. Elaine Boone, the firm's CEO, leads the trucking equipment company that her mother-in-law founded. PTS is one of the oldest female-owned truck accessory firms in the United States.

“With the Fellows Service training, we exceeded our previous fiscal year’s revenue by 19 percent. Our Fellows' social media expertise was the critical ‘missing component’ to our long-term plan. In the years ahead, the Fellows Service will continue to play a vital role for PTS as we pioneer new growth.”

— **Elaine Boone, PTS Trucking CEO**

Elaine started working with their company’s Fellow after meeting at the chamber. “Soon after, we noticed how outreach started to propel our growth strategy. We got measurable improvements in our branding and marketing with customers and vendors.”

3. Social Score Improves from 16% to 86%

In nearby Belchertown, Massachusetts, Fellows served another Quaboag Hills Chamber member, the 150-year-old company Bell & Hudson Insurance. This family-owned, 16-person firm is well known in the area for personalized service. Bell & Hudson faces national competition that spends more than a billion dollars per year on advertising. In response, Bell & Hudson wanted to highlight their local connection by combining their outreach & engagement campaigns with community partners to multiply their joint impact.

Bell & Hudson former President, Jim Phaneuf, asked his son, the firm’s current President, Matt Phaneuf, to work with a Fellow to strengthen the firm’s presence on the major social media platforms and develop joint promotions with local businesses and nonprofits.

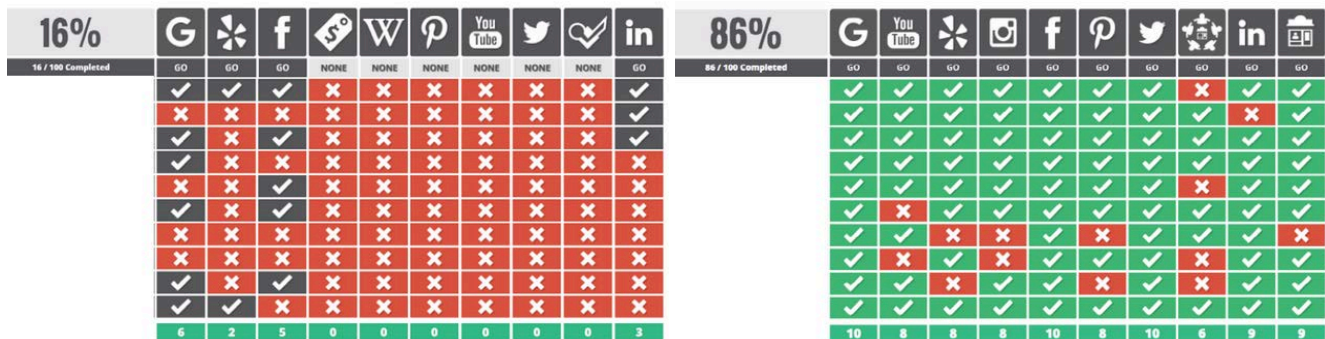


Matt Phaneuf, President of family-owned Bell & Hudson Insurance
Source: Bell and Hudson Insurance

*"I consider myself pretty strong on social media. But there are so many social media Social Score systems and the changes are so constant, that I decided I needed some help. **Training with Fellows has made a big difference for how far we have progressed, and how fast.**"*

— **Matt Phaneuf, Bell & Hudson Insurance President**

Bell & Hudson’s overall Social Score—which measures a company’s outreach against 100 best practices—gradually rose from 16 percent to 86 percent. Matt also contracted the Fellowship’s Social Media Support Team to update the company’s website for mobile phone integration. Once Bell & Hudson achieved these first goals of search engine optimization and community engagement, Matt enlisted his Fellow’s help to begin a Community Connection Campaign that integrated social media advertising. Matt also expanded the Fellows Service support for growth through Bell & Hudson’s branch office 17 miles away.



Social Score Progress by Bell & Hudson Insurance reflects the 16 best practices (top) used by the firm when they began with their first year’s Fellow. By expanding to an ongoing 86 best practices (bottom). The firm has continually grown through web-based operations alongside support from the succeeding 9 years of Fellows.
Source: Peake Fellowship

4. 130+ Year Old Business with 50% New Service Growth Goal

One of Bell & Hudson’s customers is longtime chamber member Noonan Energy. The 130-year-old heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) company is run by its fifth generation CEO Ted Noonan. On the 100th anniversary of the firm, which began as a horse-drawn ice delivery service, Ted’s father printed a four-page spread in the newspaper. For the 125th anniversary and beyond, Ted led a Community Connection Campaign through social media to celebrate and propel the business forward.

His Fellow recommended that the content be produced by the staff, but Ted knew that would not happen quickly enough because of their workloads. So until his team was trained and could carve out time to create the content themselves, the Fellowship Operations Center provided Noonan Energy with a daily editorial calendar and HVAC-specific postings that were valued by Noonan’s community.

*“Our first goal from social media is community building. But as a quantifiable impact, **we aim to increase our number of home energy audits by 50 percent this year. That drives big value for our customers and all kinds of new business for us.**”*

— Ted Noonan, CEO of Noonan Energy



Multiple generations leading Noonan Energy.
Source: Noonan Energy

5. Outreach increases attendance at events by 30%

Half a mile from Noonan Energy’s Amherst location stands the **Emily Dickinson Museum**, family home of the renowned poet that receives thousands of visits from around the world each year. Executive Director Jane Wald worked with a Fellow to promote upcoming events at the museum across the major social media platforms, resulting in a 30% increase in attendance, including national and international visitors.



Jane Wald, Emily Dickinson Museum Executive Director
Source: Michael S. Gordon, *Springfield Republican*

*“We were really struggling with how to assert a social media presence and how to tie that into an overall public relations plan. My original Fellow and the one who followed her the next year have been a tremendous help. It was like turning on a light switch in a dark room. Beyond the qualitative benefits of working with the Fellows, we have noticed extraordinary quantitative benefits of our growing community on social media. In one year, we tracked a **30 percent increase in people attending our events, and a 22.4 percent increase of unique visitors to our website.**”*

— **Jane Wald, Emily Dickinson Museum Executive Director**

6. Growing Revenue 24% as a Bridge to Online Sales

Another high profile proof point is a nearby iconic barbecue joint, **B.T.’s Smokehouse**, which draws customers from across the country. Founder Brian Treitman is a social media power user. A Fellow worked closely with B.T.’s staff to achieve a perfect 100 percent Social Score. B.T.’s Smokehouse now has more than 30,000 followers on Facebook alone, and hundreds of those online community members share Brian’s posts about B.T.’s daily.



Brian Treitman, B.T.’s Smokehouse Founder.
Source: B.T.’s Smokehouse

*“Social media is our only form of marketing. I use my Fellow as an educational partner in my social media process which adds a discipline and cadence to my campaigns. **Together with the Fellows Service we have doubled our Facebook followers over the last 12 months, and our revenue over last year increased by 24 percent as a direct result of social media.**”*

— **Brian Treitman, B.T.’s Smokehouse Founder**

Brian heard about the Fellowship from Alexandra McNitt, Executive Director of the Chamber of Central Mass South, located a few steps away from B.T.'s in their town of Sturbridge. Brian also got a thumbs up about the Fellowship from the leader of a local advertising firm who sits with him on the chamber's board. The advertising executive described the Fellows Service as a cost-effective way for a small & local business to begin an outreach & engagement initiative, and then to hire a more senior marketing professional when needed.

During the COVID pandemic, Brian pioneered ways for social media to keep his business and employees growing through online ordering and deliveries for area health workers. Locally, Brian joined his Fellow in recording online chamber best practice tips as a training for other members of the chamber who could learn from B.T.'s response to the challenge of the pandemic. Nationally, Brian has begun development of a Private Group for collaboration on the Fellowship Platform among other regional barbecue leaders.



Alexandra McNitt, Executive Director of the Chamber of Central Mass South.
Source: Worcester Telegram

“The value proposition from Fellows is a ‘no-brainer’. *The members get their own chamber-based advisor—a skilled and personable professional—who methodically, step-by-step, trains the business owners and their staff. As the chamber, we even elected a Fellow to our board, and she became the youngest board member in our history.”*

— Alexandra McNitt, Chamber of Central Mass South Executive Director

7. Geographic Expansion Allows for 50% Net Profit Growth

Fellows often work with business partners (e.g., marketing firms or cybersecurity service providers). A precision manufacturer, Lampin Corporation in Uxbridge, Massachusetts relied on each Fellow to support its outreach & engagement in conjunction with Lampin's advertising firm. Bill DiBenedetto, Lampin's then President, heard about the Fellowship program from Jeannie Hebert, CEO of the Blackstone Valley Chamber, where Bill served on the chamber's board. Bill and his successors as President, Robin LeClaire, and now John Biagioni, meet with their Fellow once a month to address prioritized worksteps, and check in as needed between meetings for ad-hoc questions. At each monthly session, they set the goals for Lampin's measurable business results.



Bill DiBenedetto President of precision manufacturer, Lampin Corporation.
Source: Lampin Corporation

*"The Fellowship Program helped Lampin complete our first fiscal year together with **22 percent growth in revenue, 15 percent growth in business from new clients,***

***and well over 50 percent growth in net profit.** We extended that growth each year **winning new clients like SpaceX** with the help of digital outreach & engagement."*

— **Bill DiBenedetto, Lampin President** on passing the torch to Lampin's new President.