

# CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

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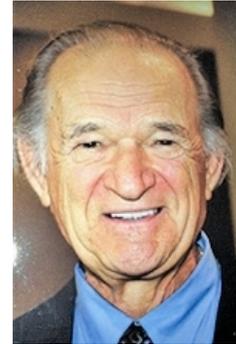
Originally Published: February 06, 2014 1:29 PM Modified: February 11, 2014 9:46 PM

## We got it wrong: Valassis founder alive and well and investing in innovation

Crain's Detroit Business prides itself on getting the story right.

But when we get it wrong, we sometimes do it in a big way.

Such was the case in our Jan. 13 print edition when we reported on the pending sale of Livonia-based **Valassis Communications Inc.** to San Antonio-based **Harland Clarke Holdings Corp.** The story referred to the company founder as "the late George Valassis."



George Valassis

But founder George Valassis, nearing his 85th birthday, is very much alive, maintaining homes in Clarkston and Manalapan, Fla., and fending off condolence calls to his wife of 20 years, Sandra.

Crain's corrected the error on Jan. 14 in the online version of the story and ran a print correction on Jan. 20. But in the age of the Internet, errors of fact can take on a life of their own.

Valassis said the original Crain's story had been picked up by several bloggers, who have kept the story of his demise alive, prompting additional condolence calls to his wife into February.

Valassis says he keeps a low profile but, with his wife, is a major contributor to the **University of Michigan**, where they have endowed three professorships in the urology department of the medical school.

"I have had nine cancer operations; I'm a survivor," he told Crain's.

Valassis graduated from UM with a degree in business and engineering.

Once dubbed the "king of coupons," he continues to invest in innovative products and ideas.

One of the latest is **Advanced Power Control Solutions LLC**, with offices in Paradise Valley, Ariz., and Erie, Pa. The company has created a retrofit system to allow coal-fired power plants to burn a mixture of natural gas and coal, a solution to both reduce emissions and help plants meet stringent federal environmental standards.

"Our first installation, by the end of this year, will be in Arizona, in a power plant owned by a major utility company," said Valassis, a principal in the company. "It will save the generating plants hundreds of millions of dollars, while drastically reducing harmful emissions."

APCS won the grand prize in the 2013 Big Idea Business Plan contest and the 2013 Innovation award convened by the **Ben Franklin Technology Partners**, a state-sponsored initiative in Pennsylvania.

APCS plans to create a presence in Michigan this year and start actively promoting the company technology to utilities, said

Michael Boumansour, who lives in Clarkston and is the company's executive vice president and COO.

APCS's advisory board includes three others with Michigan connections:

- George Sharp, executive director of investor relations, **Ford Motor Co.**
- Len Middleton, lecturer in strategy and entrepreneurship at the **University of Michigan's Ross School of Business.**
- Norm Clarke, **Clarke Advisors**, Carefree, Ariz., and formerly of **Windstone Capital Partners Inc.**, Scottsdale, Ariz., and a **Michigan State University** graduate with an MBA from **Wayne State University.**