

REPRO REPORT



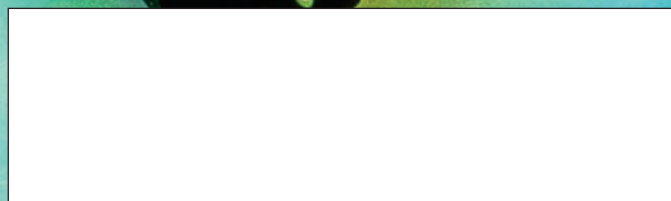
Volume 24
January/February
2005

*IRgA Convention
& Trade Show
Schedule and Forms Inside*

Riding Out a Year of Mergers and Acquisitions

**ONLINE JOSTLING –
CIN, iSqFt and Reprographics**

**Global Unit Pricing:
A Compass, Not a Map**





Online Plan Room technology— The gateway to business growth

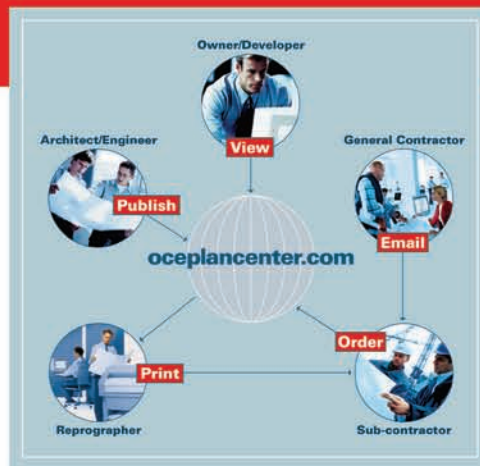
BY JOYCE VIRNICH
VP Marketing, Océ North America, Inc.

As a reprographer, you can expand your business by making your customers more productive. They need to produce plans faster, better and less expensively.

If you can't do that for them, you risk them taking their business elsewhere. You're faced with mounting pressures to:

- **Meet client deadlines** for ordering, printing and distribution of plans and specs
- **Stay competitive** by attracting new business from larger companies and broader geographies
- **Grow revenues** by offering innovative new ways to make your clients' jobs easier

Don't risk losing business. Be the first to set the trend for technological innovation. If your clients are straying elsewhere because they're limited by traditional, paper-based processes required to manage and distribute plans, it may be time to expand your digital capabilities with an online plan room system.



Grow with an Online Plan Room

Experience the growth made possible by online plan room technology. As an authorized host of digital plan rooms, such as those provided by Océ Plan Center software, you'll open the digital gateway to your AEC customers as well as project owners, contractors, subcontractors and suppliers. You'll be providing a real-time, web-based system that authorized clients can use to safely and securely view and order plans online. You'll help your clients quickly exchange the latest document revisions between project teams. You'll streamline their bid submittals. You'll put up-to-the-minute control where it belongs—in the hands of the AEC user.

Online Plan Room solutions from Océ...

- **Accelerate workflow** Give an expanded client base 24x7 access to the most current plan revisions and the tools to order directly from you online
- **Forge new territory** Because the internet knows no bounds, serve customers coast to coast... and attract larger firms requiring more sophisticated solutions
- **Stimulate income** Add more value while offering new charge-back services such as client access to plan rooms and fees for archive management
- **Protect critical data** Reap the benefits of an optimized, high-security data center for just a fraction of the cost of replicating these services in-house.

Find out how you can improve your process of plan distribution today. Visit www.oceplancenter.com to learn more about an Océ Plan Center online plan room, or call 800-714-4427.

/// The Océ Plan Center software brought MBC to the forefront of our industry, giving our clients a complete state-of-the-art solution for management and distribution of plans and specifications. By leveraging the power of the internet, they have 24/7 access to, and total control over, their documents. This gives us the competitive edge we need to keep growing. ///

Bill Berg, President
MBC Precision Imaging



Features

6 Online Jostling – CIN, iSqFt and Reprographics

By Navina Waterman

Many construction companies are using online plan rooms, such as CIN and iSqFt. Here's what you need to know about them.



14 Riding Out a Year of Mergers and Acquisitions

By Andrea May

Mergers and acquisitions are changing the industry. How will you compete?



24 Global Unit Pricing – A Compass, Not a Map

By Bill Schaberg

Global unit pricing is an important ratio for tracking trends in your shop. Learn how to get the most from it.



Convention Preview

IRgA's 79th Annual Convention & Trade Show is coming to Caesars Palace in Las Vegas on May 11-13, 2005. Look for the schedule of events, housing information and registration forms starting on page 16.

In This Issue

- 4 President's Perspective
- 9 Human Resources
- 10 Hoek's Corner
- 12 Repronomics
- 29 Print I.T.

- 30 In The News
- 32 Association Highlights
- 34 Product Innovations
- 37 Classified Ads
- 38 End of the Roll

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Top 10 Reasons to Attend This Year's Convention



Chuck Gremillion
President
2004-05

The International Reprographic Association's 79th Annual Convention & Tradeshow will occur May 11-13, 2005, at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. This is our industry's showcase event, and it promises to be our best ever. I intend to make the case in this column why *all* reprographers and suppliers should attend—borrowing from David Letterman with my Top 10 reasons not to miss this event.

10. **Caesars Palace**—This newly renovated, world-famous Las Vegas icon is absolutely spectacular. From its three beautiful swimming pools, to its magnificent casino, to its Celine Dion Theater (she will be there during our stay, so order your tickets now), to its own shopping mall, Caesars is worth the trip on its own.
9. **Las Vegas**—A city of unmatched entertainment where one can see acts such as the aforementioned Ms. Dion to Danny Gans (maybe the hottest show in Vegas) to Cirque du Soleil's "O," just to scratch the surface. And that does not include the sights of Vegas: The Mirage Hotel's Volcano, Bellagio's Water Show, The Venetian's re-creation of the city of Venice and the incredible light show that is "The Strip."
8. **See old friends and make new ones**—This is a dynamic industry composed of some fascinating people from all over the world. You'll have great chance to make some friends for life.
7. **Network with your peers**—Maybe the single most important reason to attend the IRgA convention. Where else can you discuss the hottest industry topics such as which online plan room software to purchase, which wide-format

printer/plotter has the best maintenance package or what impact non-traditional competition will have on the marketplace?

6. **Main Stage speakers**—Our opening speaker is chairman and CEO of American Reprographics Company, Sathy Chandramohan. Mohan, one of the brightest minds in the reprographics industry, will open our educational program on Thursday morning with an address guaranteed to pique everyone's interest: *Is There a "Perfect Storm" Brewing on the Reprographic Front?* Our capstone speaker at lunch on Friday will be Richard Teerlink, former CEO of Harley-Davidson Motor Company, who will tell us all how he and his team transformed a struggling motorcycle manufacturer into a brand so powerful that mild-mannered baby boomers wait in line to pay list price for a Harley and tattoo the logo onto their bodies. These two speakers may be worth the price of admission!
5. **Our best golf tournament yet**—Vegas and golf go hand in hand. This year's tournament is being played at Stallion Mountain (www.stallionmountain.com) and is generously underwritten by Contex. Join us as we play one of Las Vegas' finest desert golf courses, just 10-15 minutes from Caesars Palace. Golf includes an eye-opener breakfast, buffet-style lunch, transportation and prizes.
4. **Social events with more networking and fun**—Based on feedback from past convention attendees, this year's convention will not have a President's Dinner Dance. Instead, we'll have an early evening cocktail and networking reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres on each of the three nights,

allowing all to take advantage of the Vegas nightlife. Additionally, there will be optional tours on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to different places of interest in Las Vegas and the surrounding area.

3. **See the latest and greatest at the trade show**—By popular demand this year's trade show will begin each day at noon, no longer conflicting with the morning educational programming. Our industry's vendors will demonstrate leading-edge technology all under one roof. Don't forget the "show specials"—some of the best deals on equipment, products and software can typically be made at this once-a-year event.
2. **The educational programs**—Some of the best and brightest minds in reprographics will be making these presentations and/or participating on these panels. Come hear them and learn from their experience. See the program schedule on page 18.
1. **Our changing industry**—With new non-traditional competitors moving into our marketplace, the rapid adoption of increasingly robust online plan rooms and the domino effect that these changes are having, there has never been a more important time to convene with your peers. And what better place to do so than the 79th Annual International Reprographic Association Convention & Trade Show at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, May 11-13, 2005? I truly hope to see all of you there. It promises to be an event not to be missed. ●

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Find out how two of the biggest names in reprographics can help you meet the demands of your market and grow your business toward a profitable future. Join us for an intensive one-day look into the power, the people and the technology that are driving the industry today.

TOUR DATES AND LOCATIONS

January 28 Walnut Creek, CA

February 22 New York, NY

February 23 Pittsburg, PA

February 24 Jacksonville, FL

March 4 Seattle, WA

March 15 Chicago, IL

March 16 St. Louis, MO

March 17 Houston, TX

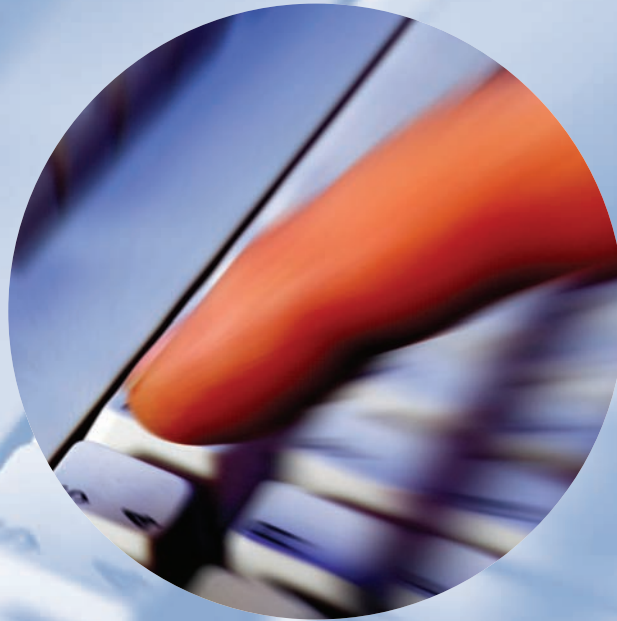
March 18 Birmingham, AL

**To reserve your seat today, call 925-945-7296,
or sign up at www.peirgroup.com/tour or www.planwell.com/tour**

ONLINE JOSTLING

CIN, iSqFt and Reprographics

By Navina Waterman



“We will reduce your reprographic costs!” This is an unequivocal emphasis of plan rooms sold and/or hosted by companies outside the reprographics industry.

On CIN’s website, this quote is attributed to an anonymous subcontractor: “I have four full-time estimators who together bid an average of 750 projects a year. Two years ago my reprographics budget was over twenty grand. Last year I got on CIN... and saved more than \$18,000...”

The following quote is from an iSqFt demo, reportedly made by one of their clients: “I’ve identified two projects in the past year where we’ve saved our clients in excess of 100k just in reprographics and shipping charges.”


Should this scare you? Maybe...but maybe not. At least it should make you sit up and take stock of the situation. Almost every type of business is becoming more reliant on digital information. The paperless office is not just around the corner, but the way businesses use paper is definitely changing. Are you a purveyor of paper? Printing? Information? Information management? How you define your business should determine how you react to these changes.

The traditional plan room is definitely in transition. Instead of printing a large number of sets and checking them out to subs for take-offs and bidding, online plan rooms often give general contractors (GCs) an avenue to bid jobs without printing full sets of drawings or possibly not printing any drawings at all. As one reprographer states, “If a sub wants to bid, he can just access the drawing he wants and only print that drawing or only view that drawing, whereas in the past he might have ordered a full set.”

Some non-traditional online plan rooms are coming into use by many construction companies across the country. Two such plan rooms are iSqFt and CIN.

iSqFt

iSqFt (www.isqft.com) is a product of Construction Software Technologies Inc. (CST) based in Cincinnati, Ohio. They were recently selected by Inc. magazine as one of the 500 fastest-growing private companies in America. In a press release, their CEO Dave Conway stated, “Our revenue has doubled for four consecutive years and will also double again this year as customers continue to realize value in the services we provide. Our selection to this list verifies that Web-based services are rapidly becoming mainstream business tools in the construction industry.”



iSqFt has a strategic partnership with the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), and according to Craig Jolley, director of marketing, their primary emphasis is on the bid phase of projects. This differs from others such as Buzzsaw, for instance, which contain collaboration tools for the design phase of a project. Earlier this year they acquired both BidFax and BuildPoint, which consolidates their position in bid solicitation software.

iSqFt uses an ASP model. Plans are sent to Cincinnati in either digital or paper form. Drawings are scanned and iSqFt personnel “tweak” them and post them as TIFFs into the appropriate projects. Turnaround time is approximately 24–48 hours for the files/drawings to be returned to the owner and process completed.

They have two primary products. One is the Internet Plan Room (IPR) aimed at subs and suppliers. An IPR is often hosted in conjunction with AGC or other partners in individual markets. Public competitively-bid jobs are posted in the IPRs, and subs pay a subscription fee to gain access to the project information they contain. Essentially, this is an online version of what the Dodge Plan Rooms have traditionally provided. Dodge (McGraw-Hill) now also provides online services for public projects.

The second iSqFt product, Private Construction Office (PCO), is oriented toward general contractors. The PCO is paid for by the GC, who controls access on a project-by-project basis and can issue Invitation to Bids (ITBs) either by fax or by e-mail. Subs pay nothing to access projects to which they are invited. iSqFt also provides basic online estimating take-off tools for measuring area, dimensions, and some counting functions.

One of the advantages mentioned for a GC is the ability to tell when a sub sees what. An example used during a demonstration was that a GC had been able to avoid a \$30,000 change order charge because he could prove that the sub had received and seen the change at a specific time.

iSqFt also sells wide-format HP printers to GCs and subs. Their software makes it easy for subs to choose and print either full-size or half-size prints from the projects. In a survey they conducted, 45% of their users print to their own printers. They also report that 29 million blueprint pages were downloaded or viewed from their system last year.

iSqFt has an impressive list of contractors as clients, including: Fluor; Parsons; Messer; The Robins & Morton Group; Trident; Duke; and Weitz.

CIN

The Construction Information Network (CIN) has operated physical plan rooms since 1956, so has in-depth experience with the bid phase of the building life cycle. It is no surprise then that their online software focuses on this aspect—coordination and communications between general contractors, architects, engineers, subcontractors, and suppliers during the bid phase.

They also operate within an ASP model. Plans in either digital or paper format are first sent to their central office in the Denver area and posted by CIN personnel to the appropriate projects. GCs pay a subscription fee to host a

Are you a purveyor of paper? Printing? Information? Information management? How you define your business should determine how you react to these changes.

private plan room. Part of the value for a GC is the ability to track who has accessed which documents when. Subs pay a subscription fee to access public jobs and any private jobs to which they have been invited. As part of their service, CIN also provides ITB and take-off tools for estimating.

Their Web site (www.cnsx.com) uses an interesting analogy: “How does CIN work? Like your TV. There are ‘broadcasters’ called channel hosts (general contractors, public plan rooms, architects and repetitive builders) that need to distribute information to the people they work with. There are subscribers that need the information to bid and perform the work. Like cable, there are channels on CIN, subscribers can subscribe to as many channels as they need. CIN is designed to provide all the information needed for a project...”

CIN’s distinguishing characteristic is an emphasis on local connections with local GCs. They have local physical plan rooms in the markets they serve—currently in Colorado, New Mexico, Dallas/Ft. Worth and Houston. They have been quite successful at signing up large GCs in the markets they enter, which then forces the subs to also subscribe. CIN also plans to expand into Southern California (Los Angeles and San Diego) and Las Vegas in the near future.

continued on page 8

What This Means to You

How do these online products affect the traditional reprographer? One reprographer says, "I think it's a good thing. It forces us to look at our industry. You can't fear change. You must figure out how to adapt." Our world is changing. Our customers' world is changing. What services can we provide for our clients?

In many cases, reprographers are able to offer comparable online tools for their customers. Reprographers' plan rooms also tend to include tools for later in the building process—building, as-builts, archiving. Look carefully at the processes used by online products. ASP models have positives and negatives. Can clients be served more efficiently? Are there more timely ways of meeting needs? Reprographers are finding that tools to integrate their business with their customer's business have become essential. If a customer does choose to use a competitive online product for a certain aspect of their work, are there complementary services that you can offer?

In some instances, online companies have made agreements with brick-and-mortar reprographics companies in order to provide scanning, printing or other traditional services at the local level. Some reprographers feel that by carefully managing contracts, this can be a positive situation resulting in extra work and additional exposure to potential clients they might not otherwise see. Others are strongly opposed to doing business with online companies for fear that they will simply be shooting themselves in the foot. What happens if the online business switches models in mid-stream or wants the reprographer to provide services for free?

At the least, with online plan rooms the printing tends to become less efficient, with an increasing number of "onesies and twosies." On the other hand, the cost of the printing done is often simply being pushed down. Rather than the GC paying for it, the subs are now often responsible. Because of the inefficiencies in

printing smaller quantities, reprographers are often forced to charge more for it. In some cases, non-traditional competitors are reportedly offering printing at or below cost. If they make enough money on another aspect of their business, this may be possible for a while, but eventually the laws of economics are bound to catch up.

With the increasing availability of relatively low-cost high-speed printing equipment, many of our customers can do their own printing. Some of them think it will decrease their expenses, and for some it may actually do so. But most do not have expertise in document management and distribution and this "do it ourselves" attitude can backfire. They forget about the time, labor costs, consumables and maintenance that go along with owning and operating equipment. Who pays for the output also becomes a major issue. If your customer decreases his cost to produce prints by 40% and at the same time his income from the printing as reimbursable drops to zero, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that he is not coming out ahead. The equipment and FM markets are not going away anytime soon.

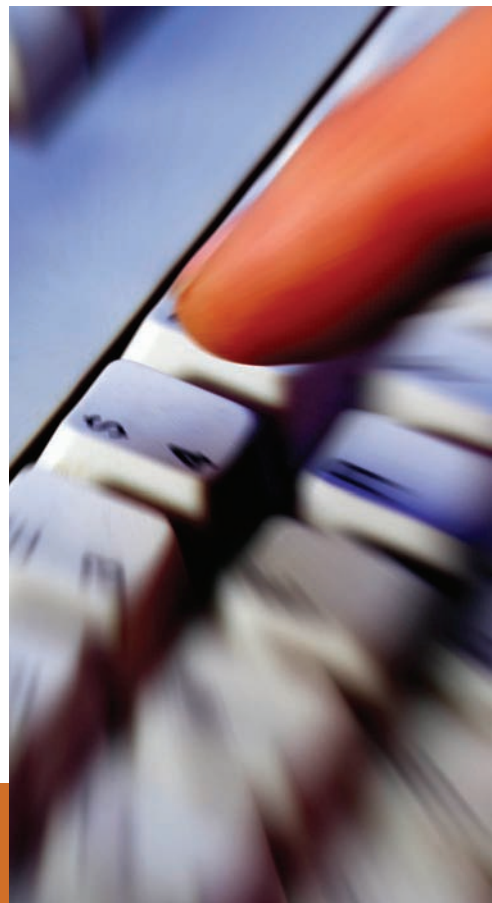
One question to keep in mind is what might happen with an online service if it were to be purchased by a major nationwide brick-and-mortar business. Would this make it more or less of a threat to the traditional reprographics business? It might expand market penetration, but the new owners might also be less inclined to expand outside their own area of expertise.

Your customers are interested in increasing their productivity and decreasing their expenses, just as you are. If you can provide services to save your customers' time and make them more efficient, you are helping them decrease their expenses. If you are not providing the services they need or perceive as a need, you can be fairly certain that someone else out there in the business world will be stepping up to supply them.

As another reprographer states: "In general, I would like to think that we large, long-term, traditional reprographers will be around much longer. [This is] not the first threat to our business and will not be the last. We have to keep giving incredible customer service and always offer complete solutions to our customers."

Technology can provide competitive advantage. Technology can help companies react intelligently to quickly shifting markets—and to an economy in which competition can come from any sector. But ultimately there is always a human side to business—the relationships. Finally it comes back to the same questions: What is your business? How well do you know your clients and their needs? Exactly what are your relationships? The answers can be challenging. ●

Navina Waterman managed a reprographic shop for several years in the 1980s, held various technology and marketing positions with ReproCAD for 10 years and has been an independent reprographics consultant for the past four years. She can be reached at navina@earthlink.net.



The Real Overtime Issue

By Debra Thompson

The recent release of the new overtime rules stirred up a tempest in a teapot. Now that the furor has settled down, it is becoming clear that the real result of the new rules is that more workers will be classified as non-exempt and entitled to overtime. The new rule has affected many businesses—in order to demonstrate compliance, business owners and managers have had to reexamine the duties and responsibilities of their employees and determine if they are exempt or non-exempt from the overtime rules set by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

To ensure that all of your employees are properly classified, start with some basics. The vision and mission of the company define the nature of what has to be accomplished. In order to do that there must be an infrastructure in place that defines the functions and the hierarchical relationships of the people who perform the functions. The functions in turn need to be articulated clearly in the form of job descriptions that spell out the duties and the responsibilities of the entire staff. This information is what needs to be assessed using the criteria for determining exempt or non-exempt status.

Consternation over the new overtime rules resulted from a fear that more people would be classified as exempt, thereby eliminating their opportunity for overtime. In practice, however, it appears that companies made a conscientious study of their people and their functions have moved more people into the non-exempt category, thereby making them eligible for overtime pay.

The FLSA dates back to 1938, and it has always contained guidelines for overtime exemptions. For example, the FLSA originally exempted “white-collar” jobs: certain executives, administrative, professional and outside sales workers. The new rules clarify that this exemption generally applies when an employee is paid on a salary basis of no less than \$455 per week and performs work that meets one of the following requirements:

- It is directly related to the management of his or her employer’s business;
- It is directly related to the general business operations of his or her employer or the employer’s clients;
- It requires specialized academic training for entry into a professional field;
- It is in the computer field;
- It is making sales away from his or her employer’s place of business;
- It is a recognized field of artistic or creative endeavor.

Section 541.3(a) of the new rules states that exemptions do not apply to manual laborers or other “blue-collar” workers who perform work involving repetitive operations with their hands, physical skill and energy. For example, non-management production line employees and non-management employees in maintenance construction and similar occupations such as carpenters, electricians, mechanics, iron workers, craftsmen, operating engineers, longshoremen, construction workers and laborers have always been and will continue to be entitled to overtime pay.

The FLSA provides minimum standards that may be exceeded but cannot be waived or reduced. Employers must comply with all state laws providing additional worker protection (a higher minimum wage, for example), and the FLSA does not preclude employers from entering into collective bargaining agreements providing higher wages than the statutory minimum, a shorter workweek or a higher overtime premium (double time, for example). There is nothing in the rules which preclude an employer from paying overtime even if the employer is exempt under the rules.

It is also important to note that many states impose overtime rules that are more stringent than the Federal rules, and those state rules will prevail. For example, four states—California, Colorado, Hawaii and Oregon—have statutes that supersede the Federal

regulations. Fourteen other states have laws that affect the way employers classify certain job positions: Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The Department of Labor believes the new rules are more enforceable, and they will be examining companies to see if they are avoiding paying overtime. In 2003, the department collected \$182 million from companies that didn’t pay overtime; expect them to get more aggressive in enforcing the rules.

As you plan for 2005, take the time to explore your infrastructure. Analyze each job function to ensure that you have identified all of the duties and responsibilities that the job requires. Make an honest determination of whether it is exempt or non-exempt work. In most cases our employees are paid hourly, are subject to the FLSA and are governed by State and Federal laws for minimum wage and overtime.

If you have employees that you have previously classified as exempt, make sure that they meet the new criteria for minimum salary, managerial responsibilities or true outside sales. If they do not, you must reclassify them as non-exempt and comply with the rules for hours worked and overtime pay. Questions? Check out the DOL’s Web sites—www.dol.gov/fairpay and www.dol.gov/elaws/overtime.htm. ●

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Paradigm Shift Means...

By Doug Hoek

This article is the first in a three-part series on the future of reprographics.



Doug Hoek

“Man must rise above the earth—to the top of the atmosphere and beyond—for only thus will he understand the world in which he lives.”

Socrates

There can be no argument that information technology has had a huge impact on our businesses, our economy, and our way of life, most of it for the better. By almost all definitions I.T. must be considered very successful.

New technologies that are global in scope are catalysts for paradigm shifts, and paradigm shift means everything changes—not just the things that are favorable or enjoyable or profitable or comfortable.

But successful new technologies by their very nature are highly disruptive and often create disorder and confusion as by-products. Successful new technologies displace entrenched technologies while disrupting, if not destroying, the existing status quo; the more successful the new technology, the more dramatic the change.

When looking back from a distance of a few years, the changes caused by new technologies generally seem smooth and orderly. For instance, look at the introduction of the automobile a little over 100 years ago, and the associated development of the assembly line a few years later. Most of us studied those events in grade school because they were exciting, interesting and

emphasized the impact and importance of progress. And those events were presented as illustrations of smooth and delightful transitions in which everyone benefited.

But, for a moment, let's consider the upheaval they caused. New technologies that are global in scope are catalysts for paradigm shifts, and *paradigm shift* means everything changes—not just the things that are favorable or enjoyable or profitable or comfortable. Everything. Whole businesses and entire industries were rendered useless as horsepower displaced horse power.

Think of the people who made harnesses, buggies and buggy whips in the early 20th Century. The blacksmiths and buggy manufacturers were forced to recognize that everything was changing, and if they did not change with it they would endure the consequences.

In the words of Socrates, they had to be able to rise above the earth—rise above the status quo, and the existing economic and social structure—to understand the new world into which they were being drawn whether they liked it or not. They had to recognize that there was no diverting, no detouring and no delaying the forces of a paradigm shift—those forces are irresistible.

The forces of the current paradigm shift are no less formidable. Everything in and surrounding reprographics is changing whether we like it or not. And, the wisdom of Socrates is no less poignant.

Paradigm shift means everything changes.

There is a paradigm shift changing everything having to do with reprographics. Some of those changes will be enjoyable, some otherwise. Some of those changes will be profitable, some otherwise. Some of

those changes will be favorable, some otherwise. Some of those changes will be disruptive and cause fear, anxiety, and doubt. Some will reduce opportunity. Some will create new opportunity.

None of those changes, however, can be delayed, diffused or derailed. There is no slowing or stopping the advancement of technology and the associated tsunami of change that sweeps in as part of its storm surge.

Many of the tsunami's changes are already evident, and some of them have even become part of the new status quo. For example, there are very few analog ammonia printers remaining in the industry; they have been replaced by the new technological printers that use toner and process bits. The Internet is fast replacing cars and trucks as the pick-up vehicle of choice. Digital and online services are becoming commonplace. And, the plan rooms of yesteryear that filled thousands of square feet of floor space with five-drawer flat files are converting to environmentally controlled computer rooms housing servers with terabyte hard drives.

However, it seems to me that many strategically significant changes fostered by our tsunami are not yet evident. And, they will not come into clearer focus for some time. We must see more than what is apparent today.

The “Construction Information Business”

There are many strategically important changes being spawned by the IT paradigm shift that we should be keenly interested in: First, our customer base will most likely change to subcontractors and suppliers because in the final analysis they are the consumers and users of construction information. For the 35 years that I have worked in

reprographics, architects, engineers, surveyors and general contractors have been the core of the customer base. Beginning in the early 1990s with the introduction of digital color copy devices that base broadened slightly, but for the most part it is still tethered tightly to A/E/C.

In the past we printed hundreds of sets of blueprints for subs and suppliers but it was always at the instruction of architects, engineers or general contractors. Now subs and suppliers will begin ordering their own information; not all of it will be in paper form, and they will seldom order complete sets.

Second, as the subs become the core of our customer base, what will become of the A/E/C market? It seems to me they stand a good chance of becoming tomorrow's vendors as we come to the realization that we are no longer in the blueprint business but are in the "construction information business." And, the primary inventory item for a "construction information store" is the information created and manufactured by A/E/C clients.

In the future they will tend to place fewer orders with our shops, and their custom of "giving" us their originals to be reproduced and distributed will change. The chances are good that we will contract with them for their content; we will enter a bidding contest with other firms that need that same inventory.

Third, as suggested above, we are entering a different business, a different industry; a new industry, an exciting industry abundant with opportunity.

Fourth, as we begin to recognize and understand this new business it will become increasingly evident that our major competitors are changing. Currently reprographers compete with other reprographers. But, as the tsunami of change sweeps over us we will recognize other companies

that also depend upon construction information are our new and important competitors.

Currently there is one other related industry that depends upon construction information, the construction news industry. Construction news firms have fulfilled numerous roles within the construction industry for years: publishing periodic reports and newsletters mentioning important project facts and statistics; announcing and broadcasting new projects; publishing and distributing new project information; and maintaining and managing public plan rooms to facilitate the availability of project documentation for the general public.

More than likely there are three to five construction news businesses located in most metropolitan areas. Some of the more recognizable names are: FWDodge or McGraw-Hill, Construction Data, Reed, Construction Information Network, iSqFt, and the local Builders Exchanges. In addition to those there are many professional organizations evaluating the new business opportunity including: AGC, ABC, AIA, etc.

All of those are worthy and formidable competitors. Each has its own set of strengths and weaknesses, and they are all eyeing this new emerging construction information industry. And, because they, like we, are all under the spell and influence of the same paradigm shift there will be no diffusing or derailing them, whether we like it or not.

Having now identified the initial four strategic changes being forged by the IT paradigm shift, we might begin to recognize the fifth change which could be the most critical and challenging.

For a moment let's speculate about the impact the changes just mentioned might have on our traditionally lucrative print-for-pay revenue model.

First, subs and suppliers will order fewer and fewer prints. Seldom, if ever, are they likely to order complete sets, and with increasing frequency they will opt for digital files rather than paper copies.

Second, architects and engineers will realize that their original drawings (files) can generate revenue for them through "click charge arrangements" each time one of their files is downloaded over the Internet. They will begin selling their files; we will begin purchasing them as inventory.

Third, the construction news businesses, in my estimation, are likely to destroy any remaining price stability in the print-for-pay market because printing paper copies is not an important part of their business model. In many instances they will be likely to farm it out to avoid having to bother with it at all.

And finally, the emerging construction information industry will inherently recognize that it is construction information that has value and generates revenue, not prints.

The fifth change then is that our beloved print-for-pay revenue model is on its last legs. That does not mean that prints are dead, but it does mean that the volume of prints will be so reduced that print revenue will no longer generate enough dollars to sustain a shop, or an industry.

This can not be surprising. Successful new technologies are disruptive by nature, they displace the existing economic and social structure, and they disrupt, if not destroy, the existing status quo.

But, they also provide tremendous opportunity for those who can "rise above the earth—to the top of the atmosphere and beyond ..." ●

Doug Hoek is the president of Veenstra Reproductions in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Building Your Retirement Plan Safely

By Brett Scully

I worked on Wall Street for six years, and I've been following New York Attorney General Elliot Spitzer's continuing probes into the seamy side of finance. The one that really burns me up is the mutual fund scandal, where bigwigs were literally stealing our money in everyday mutual funds, including two that we had in our company's 401(k) plan. The details of the rampant theft made me so mad that I called our 401(k) adviser and asked to go get rid of all the mutual funds we had run by humans! At first

When shopping for funds, the magnitude of options almost becomes too overwhelming. Everyone's always trying to beat the indexes. Well, why not just buy the indexes?

he wasn't sure what I was saying, and almost got a little uneasy, until I further defined my goal, which is to be "index only" from now on.

When we finally got our advisers in for a sit-down, they continued to pitch high-priced expense funds managed by humans. I let them know that I don't like superstar fund managers because they could easily leave the company, and some inexperienced 27-year-old may start making "bets" that affect my financial future. I also didn't like the high cost of paying for the superstars that only beat the market every other year. I finally convinced my advisers by

giving them two basic edicts: Our new plan must be cheap and computer-driven. When they finally understood my needs, they had only one answer—Vanguard Index Funds.

As they started showing me the expense ratios and performance, I had found the answer to our retirement needs. When shopping for funds, the magnitude of options almost becomes too overwhelming. Everyone's always trying to beat the indexes. Well, why not just buy the indexes? Then you never have to worry about losing to them. The most basic index around, as well as being the largest mutual fund in existence today, is the Vanguard Index Fund that mimics the Standard and Poor's 500 (S+P 500). With this fund, you are truly "buying the market." If you go home at the end of the day, and Peter Jennings says that the S+P 500 was up one percent, you are also up one percent.

But, you can't just have one fund in the plan, even if it is as well diversified as the Vanguard S+P 500 fund. Balance the offerings to the differing age levels of the participants. For instance, employees in their 20s and 30s should be almost exclusively in stocks, but for those in their 50s and 60s, a mix of bond and money market funds becomes necessary. Placing a money market fund in the plan is usually pretty easy, like picking a bank to hold a savings account. Nowadays, those types of funds pay annual returns in the area of 1%. The expense ratios of these funds are usually around 10 basis points, or about a tenth of 1%. You will have to check with your advisors to make sure that this is only invested in AAA short-term investments.

The next basic area to cover is bonds. Bonds are longer-term versions of

money markets. Lehman Brothers has indexes based on holdings of one-to-three-year horizons and four-to-seven-year horizons. Mutual fund companies also mimic these indexes, where computer programs rebalance the funds. These funds also tend to be "cheap" on expenses, because a computer doesn't need an \$800,000-a-year salary and \$60 steaks washed down with Château Latour.

So far we have our basic holdings, a money market fund, two bond funds and the S+P 500 index fund. We need to add some more stocks to get this plan rolling. So, we will now add the "steroid" effect—the NASDAQ 100 index, which allows the plan to get high growth potential while being protected by the make-up of the fund. The NASDAQ boots out the firms that go belly-up.

We have covered most of the bases on a diversified structure that needs a little tweaking to go live. From here we added a Dow Industrial Average fund, made up of the top 30 companies in America, as well as the Russell 2000 Index, which broadens the scope to invest in the top 2000 public companies in America. We also spiced up the offering with Index funds based on the Morgan Stanley (MSCI) European and Asian indexes, widely followed by the investing world for adding a "worldly" flavor to the portfolio.

The whole 401(k)-retirement stuff can be a big pain. But as I said, computers are unlikely to give in to greed and steal your money. ●

Brett Scully is CEO of eBlueprint Holdings of Cleveland, Ohio. You can reach Scully at bscully@eblueprint.com.

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Riding Out a Year of Mergers and Acquisitions

By Andrea May

Competitors change rapidly in a converging market. Mergers and acquisitions are shrinking the number of competitors but increasing their size. When FedEx acquired Kinko's last year, IRgA members began talking to each other about what it might mean.

According to Charlie Corr, group director of the Norwell, Mass., market research firm InfoTrends/CAP Ventures, marketplace changes will result in a fundamental transformation of the graphic arts' industry. He told attendees of the recent Printimage Print Owners Boot Camp in Chicago they must coexist or compete with larger firms and some national chains. He predicts 2005 will be an above-average year for mergers and acquisitions because of improvements in the capital markets.

"What is driving growth? Mergers and acquisitions," Corr asserts. "Maybe I am only buying their customer list, maybe I am buying their business, but I am growing through acquisition."

In a joint WhatTheyThink.com/CAP Ventures survey, 29% of print-for-pay

providers reported plans to grow through mergers and acquisitions within three years. Of that sample group, 70% were offset and digital commercial printers, 14% were digital print specialists and 6% were quick printers.

How to Compete

A national presence isn't necessary to compete. Corr recommends providing a broad portfolio of products and services to expand, or at least maintain, your current share of customers' annual print budgets.

"This is one thing to ask about your own customers: What's your share of their spending?" asks Corr. "What other revenue could you get from them? [FedEx] Kinko's is focusing on gaining a greater percentage of customers' print budget. They are moving into wide format, do office stationary and focus on market collateral."

He views expanding your product and services portfolio as both an aggressive play and defensive move. Small businesses can probably extend into new product or service lines quicker

and cheaper than larger firms. Even so, you can't always justify the cost for investing in new print production capacity and capabilities. This is when partnerships come into play.

At times the strength of your relationship with a loyal customer will push you into outsourcing a service. Doing whatever it takes to keep customers coming back is good defense. It can be the perfect arrangement and, if you're lucky, can even net a higher profit margin than providing the service in-house.

However, it exposes you to the potential fallout that can occur when your customer cannot live with the price, service or quality the other provider offers, which may differ substantially from your own business practices. When this happens, your very reason for outsourcing—customer relations—backfires due to the resulting negative customer experience. A word of caution: Pick your partnerships carefully.

A WhatTheyThink.com/CAP Ventures survey of 197 print buyers found that 63% of buyers were okay



with the practice of outsourcing; however, 37% of buyers are price shoppers. Most likely because a savings of 10% or less was significant enough for large print customers to award a job to the lowest bidder according to the survey.

A Higher-Priced Revenue Model

Despite price pressure, Corr acknowledges that becoming the low bidder is not how you're likely to compete against large firms and national retail chains. One strength of big businesses is parlaying the cost savings derived from economies of scale into more competitive pricing. In addition to this hurdle, digital technology has higher fixed costs and becomes obsolete much faster than the Diazo production machines of the past. As a result, higher prices are necessary to recapture lost profitability on print output.

The IRgA publication "Strategies for Successful Transition in the Digital Era," effectively argues the rationale for a higher priced revenue model (IRgA 1997, p. 6):

We can't presume to make up low price with higher volume because volume will not increase. The technology [digital technology] is simply designed to produce the pie more efficiently. If your total market generates 1,000,000 square feet of reprographic product sales today, consider that volume a cap, subject to reduction occasioned by the efficiencies afforded by digital technology. Therefore, maintaining higher, prices will be the only way to exceed the new break even given static market volumes.

But consumers aren't willing to pay more for traditional print output, especially since they can purchase a computer and digital output device and do their own short-run printing. Increasing prices is not always possible—often just maintaining prices is a small victory. Still, you need to be constantly asking yourself, "What value can I provide to justify higher pricing?" The answer often lies within opportunities to manage customers'

data in services like online plan rooms, scanning, distribution, and digital library storage and retrieval. High-value services like these will slow the price erosion and hopefully increase the volume of services you provide to a customer.

Competitive Advantages

Reprographers' foothold in the market is not likely to be overwhelmed by the expanding influence of national chains. Rather, the print volume decline is leading IRgA member companies to leverage their expertise in growing markets. This may involve repositioning as generalists that

offering a slightly better deal only to push some away because of inconsistent delivery.

"It comes down to a relationship with your service provider," says Michael Shaw, president of Central Blueprint Corp. in Great Neck, New York, and IRgA vice president. "People need to have trust in the ability to deliver goods—the first time, every time. Customers buy goods and services from people they like or from whom they have had a positive experience. Many of these national chains are somewhat franchised in their operations, and the ability to maintain consistency is a major hurdle, which



Becoming the low bidder is not how you're likely to compete against large firms and national retail chains.

provide a broad portfolio of products and services to a range of customers in different market segments.

Corr maintains that having an established community presence, strong customer relationships and exceptional customer service are all competitive advantages over national chains. While another FedEx/Kinko's may open its doors in the old neighborhood, a repro shop tends to be entrenched in the local business community. Both will be courting customers, but where long-term clients of the repro shop place their trust in the manger-owner and a staff of skilled image professionals, the counter help at a national chain will be staffed by a stream of ever changing hourly workers. Repro shops stake their long-standing reputations on quality; national chains pull in customers by

trips them up. On a national scale, chains must overcome the impersonal, at times, sterile relationship that consumers are expected to endure."

Regardless how big competitors become through mergers and acquisitions, you can size them up with a quiet confidence. Experience assures you this round of reinvention will be just as successful as the last. A profession that has stood the test of time, a winning personal track record and the collective knowledge of IRgA peers is hard for the next big thing to erase. ●

Formerly the managing editor of REPRO REPORT, Andrea May is a freelance writer who earned a journalism degree from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. She can be reached at amayirga@aol.com.



IRgA 79TH ANNUAL
convention and trade show

IRgA 
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May 11-13, 2005 • Caesars Palace Las Vegas • Las Vegas, Nevada

For more information visit www.irga.com



May 11– 13, 2005 Caesars Palace Las Vegas Las Vegas, Nev.

The pace of change is fast and furious, especially in the digital age. Nowhere is that change more apparent than in the reprographics industry. To keep up with the pace of change it is imperative that you stay connected and informed, and there is no better place to connect with reprographers and industry suppliers than IRgA 2005.

IRgA's 79th Annual Convention and Trade Show puts you in touch, business-to-business, peer-to-peer and buyer-to-supplier with the leaders in our industry to discuss how to work on your business instead of work in it. The conference also provides this year's largest venue for meeting with industry suppliers and seeing the latest technical innovations first hand.

Gain...

...firsthand knowledge and experience from technical sessions presented by experts in their field.

...access to the latest products and services available to enhance your company's performance at the trade show.

...contacts and re-establish connections as you interact with peers to find out how they are handling the latest challenges

Who Should Attend?

If you are in the business of wide- or small-format digital printing, the International Reprographic Association's Annual Convention and Trade Show can provide you with a unique opportunity. Obtain tremendous marketing and business development opportunities via access to a digital printing industry cross-section that no other trade event or organization can provide.

Since the early 1900s, the reprographics industry has served a wide variety of industries and markets with an even wider array of services and technology. IRgA convention attendees are best known for their expertise in the following areas:

- Wide-Format Engineering Output
- Wide-Format Color Graphics
- Small-Format Digital Printing
- Laminating and Finishing
- Scanning and Archiving Capabilities
- Digital File Management
- Facilities Management

Register online at www.irga.com

President's Message



The reprographic industry continues to grow and change. Advances in technology are changing the way our customers work and changing the services that they require from us to succeed. As an

industry, learning how to adapt to this change is a challenge that we must address and one of the best ways to plan for this change is through the power of face-to-face interaction with industry peers available only at IRgA 2005.

IRgA's 79th Annual Convention and Trade Show gives you access to the best minds in the industry. Relate with your colleagues business-to-business, peer-to-peer, buyer-to-supplier and learn how to keep your business successful. You'll see the latest technical innovations first-hand and have the opportunity to share your challenges and wisdom with others who walk in your shoes.

A solid line-up of educational speakers will serve as the springboard for discussion. Keynote speakers include Richard Teerlink, the man who resurrected the revered motorcycle brand Harley-Davidson, and Sathy "Mohan" Chandramohan speaking on the topic, "Is There a Perfect Storm Brewing on the Reprographic Front?"

In addition, we've planned three days of industry-specific sessions to help you manage, market and grow your operations.

In an industry where the only constant is change you need to keep moving or be left behind. Make your move today by registering for an exceptional, educational opportunity at the IRgA Annual Convention and Trade Show.

Regards,

Chuck Gremillion
IRgA President
A&E – The Graphics Complex
Houston, Texas

IRgA Schedule at a Glance



Wednesday, May 11

8:00
Golf Tournament*

9:00 – 2:00
Companion Tour 1: Hoover
Dam Tour *

5:00 – 7:00
Exhibit Opening
Cocktail Reception

Thursday, May 12

8:00 – 8:30
IRgA Business Session
Chuck Gremillion
(A&E – The Graphics Complex)

8:30 – 10:00
Opening Speaker
Is There a “Perfect Storm”
Brewing on the
ReprographicsFront?
S. Mohan Chandramohan (ARC)

9:00 – 2:00
Companion Tour 2: Deluxe
City Tour*

10:00 – 10:30
Coffee Break

10:30 – 12:00
Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Session #1
Selling FMs
Stan Jernigan
(The Mentor Group)

Session #2
PANEL DISCUSSION
& OPEN FORUM:
Facing Powerful Competition
from CIN & iSqFt
Kevin Rowe
(Western Blue Print Co.)
Rock Gremillion
(A&E – The Graphics Complex)
Greg Howard
(Lawton Reprographics)
Dan Stephens
(Georgia Blue)

Session #3
Understanding Your
Financial Statement
Brett Scully
(eBlueprint Companies)

12:00 – 1:00
Exhibit Hall Lunch

12:00 – 5:00
Exhibits Open

6:30 – 7:30
Networking Reception

Friday, May 13

8:00 – 9:30
Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Session #4
Sales Compensation Packages
& Incentives
Dave Fellman
(Dave Fellman Associates)

Session #5
PANEL DISCUSSION
& OPEN FORUM:
Revising Your Workflow From
Analog to Digital
Curtis Metz
(A&E – The Graphics Complex)
Vince Pingel
(Western Blue)

Session #6
Selling Outside the Box: Large
and Small Format Color
Reg Garner
(Orlando Reprographics)
Rick Porter
(Blair Graphics)

9:00 – 2:00
Companion Tour 3: Madame
Toussaud’s/Mirage Secret
Gardens*

9:30 – 10:00
Coffee Break

10:00 – 11:30
Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Session #7:
Marketing with Meaning:
Taking the Fuzz Out of
“Warm & Fuzzy”
Navina Waterman (ReproScene)

Session #8:
PANEL DISCUSSION
& OPEN FORUM:
Charging for Digital Services
Chuck Hayes (OCB)
Kent Long (Thomas
Reprographics)
Bob Roperti (Jiffy Reprographics)

Session #9:
PANEL DISCUSSION
& OPEN FORUM:
Selling and Servicing
Equipment
Gary Wilbur (R.S. Knapp)
Dan Bruich (Dieterich Post)
Steven Mueller (Blueprints, Inc.)

12:00 – 1:30
Closing Speaker
How to Build a Brand
Richard Teerlink
(former CEO of
Harley-Davidson)

1:30 – 5:00
Exhibits Open

6:00 – 7:30
Networking Reception

All speakers and topics are tentative and subject to change.

*Separate registration fees apply.

IRgA Educational Program 2005

Thursday, May 12

8:00 – 8:30

IRgA Business Session
Chuck Gremillion
(A&E – The Graphics Complex)

- Welcome to Las Vegas
- Election of Officers

8:30 – 10:00

Opening Speaker
Is There a “Perfect Storm”
Brewing on the
Reprographics Front?
S. Mohan Chandramohan (ARC)

Mohan will provide a perspective and a context for the educational sessions that follow by explaining his view of the current status of our industry. The book and the movie, *The Perfect Storm*, describe the convergence of three powerful storms into one overpowering force of nature. Is the reprographics industry about to experience a “perfect storm” of its own?

Sponsored by KIP and Océ

10:30 – 12:00

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Session #1
Selling FMs
Stan Jernigan
(The Mentor Group)

This session will emphasize the importance of FMs to the ongoing success of our industry and then to provide concrete information on how to go about entering and being successful in selling FMs in your local market.

Session #2

PANEL DISCUSSION
& OPEN FORUM:
Facing Powerful Competition
from CIN & iSqFt

Kevin Rowe
(Western Blue Print Co.)
Rock Gremillion
(A&E – The Graphics Complex)
Greg Howard
(Lawton Reprographics)
Dan Stephens
(Georgia Blue)

The panel hopes to make attendees aware of some powerful new competitors that have entered our marketplace. They will discuss the challenges these new competitors have introduced into their local markets and how they have responded to those challenges.

Session #3
Understanding Your
Financial Statement
Brett Scully
(eBlueprint Companies)

Shop owner and *REPRO REPORT*'s *ReproNomics* columnist Brett Scully will provide some insight into how you can better understand your financial statement and use that knowledge to improve the management of your company in a number of ways.

Friday, May 13

8:00 – 9:30

Concurrent Breakout Sessions
Sales Compensation Packages
& Incentives

Dave Fellman
(Dave Fellman Associates)

This session will offer creative ideas on how to reformulate compensation packages for sales people along with some interesting suggestions for incentivizing the sales team.

Session #5
PANEL DISCUSSION
& OPEN FORUM:
Revising Your Workflow From
Analog to Digital
Curtis Metz
(A&E – The Graphics Complex)
Vince Pingel
(Western Blue)

“Rethink” the work flow procedures you are using in your shop to ensure that you are maximizing your productivity in the new digital environment.

Session #6
Selling Outside the Box:
Large and Small
Format Color
Reg Garner
(Orlando Reprographics)
Rick Porter
(Blair Graphics)

Explore ways to “increase the size of the pie” in your local markets by branching out more aggressively into color printing. This will be followed by concrete examples of how to charge and how to deal with customer objections.

IRgA Educational Program 2005

Friday, May 13 cont.

10:00 – 11:30
Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Session #7:
Marketing with Meaning: Taking the Fuzz Out of “Warm & Fuzzy”
Navina Waterman (ReproScene)

Learn some down-to-earth information on how a repro firm can successfully go about marketing itself within its local markets.

Session #8:
PANEL DISCUSSION & OPEN FORUM: Charging for Digital Services
Chuck Hayes (OCB)
Kent Long (Thomas Reprographics)
Bob Roperti (Jiffy Reprographics)

This panel will discuss the importance of shifting your revenue model so that a significant portion is generated by charging for digital services. Panel members will also give solid examples for knowing how to charge and how to handle customer objections.

Session #9:
PANEL DISCUSSION & OPEN FORUM: Selling and Servicing Equipment
Gary Wilbur (R.S. Knapp)
Dan Bruich (Dieterich Post)
Steven Mueller (Blueprints, Inc.)

The purpose of this session is to explain some of the issues, problems and solutions that arise when you become involved in selling and servicing equipment.



12:00 – 1:30
Keynote Luncheon
Closing Speaker
Reinventing The Enterprise
Richard Teerlink

Who but Richard Teerlink could be a greater authority on this subject? Through his experience of pulling Harley-Davidson from business extinction to new business explosion, Teerlink details the principles, innovations and creative responses that were responsible for Harley-Davidson's miraculous turnaround. Think about this in the company you're working for:

Am I doing something that will cause

people to want to have our company logo on their heart and soul?
 When was the last time you felt that strongly about anything?

Sponsored by KIP and Océ

Trade Show Exhibitors

As of January 6, 2005

Calculated Industries	KIP	Technesis, Inc.
CONTEX Scanning Technology	Michlin Products Corporation	Technical Image Products
Cylix, Inc.	MV Software Company	Unibind, Inc.
Digital ES, Inc.	Océ North America, Inc.	Universal Blueprint Paper Company
Drytac Corporation	Paradigm Imaging Group	Valley Supplies Inc
Foster Manufacturing Company	Repromax	XEROX
GBC	Safco Products Company	
Image Products of California	Sepialine, Inc.	

To exhibit contact Nicole Boland at 312/673-5828



Tours

Wednesday, May 11, 2005

Hoover Dam Tour 9:00am - 2:00pm

Travel to Boulder City and visit a well kept secret—the Historic Boulder Dam Hotel and Museum. Utilizing 3-D interactive exhibits, the Boulder Dam Hotel and Museum tells the human story of one of the 20th Century's greatest construction projects—Hoover Dam.

Learn what life was like working on a project so massive and was the largest of its kind ever undertaken. More impressive is that it was undertaken during the height of the Depression, was finished early and under budget.

Following the informative presentation enjoy a light lunch at Matteo's before departing for the Hoover Dam Tour. Be sure to browse through the craft and gift shops featuring a local artist's gallery.

Tour Price:
\$95.00 per person

Tour Includes:

- Private roundtrip transportation with bottled water
- Uniformed guide
- Tour of the Boulder Dam Hotel & Museum
- Lunch at Matteo's
- Admission to Hoover Dam
- Tour Minimum: 20

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Deluxe City Tour 9:00am - 2:00pm

Board a Luxury Motorcoach for a get-acquainted tour of the Entertainment Capital of the World. Travel down The Strip and get a view of the numerous casinos that make Las Vegas the gaming capital of the world.

Along with the history of Las Vegas, your tour guide will relate what it is like to live in Las Vegas, and share a few good stories.

Venture down to the Fremont Street Experience where musical show and over 2.1 million lights entertain in the evening hours. Travel down wedding chapel row, and then visit The Old Mormon Fort, the first established Las Vegas settlement, where you can really soak in the Old Las Vegas.

The Fashion Show Mall is our next stop. You will enjoy lunch at Mariposa at Neiman Marcus and then enjoy shopping the many stores that are located at this three-story mall located right on The Strip. Staying past our departure time is an option, with return transportation at your own expense.

Tour Price:
\$ 130.00 per person

Tour Includes:

- Private round trip transportation with bottled water
- Uniformed guide
- Lunch
- Museum Fees
- Tour Minimum: 20

Friday, May 13, 2005

Madame Tussaud's "Celebrity Encounter" 9:00am - 2:00pm

A showcase of over 100 legendary and contemporary superstars from sports, TV, film and the glitzy world of entertainment—all masterfully portrayed in wax. For more than 200 years Madame Tussaud's has entertained and amazed people of all ages, and this is your chance to get up close and personal.

Revisit Las Vegas Legends and enjoy a performance by those celebrated entertainers who made Vegas, Vegas. All the Vegas legends are here—Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Siegfried & Roy and more. The Spirit of America Room—the newest addition to the museum—has a most patriotic theme.

The tour also gives you a behind the scenes look at how the wax figurines are made.

Mirage Secret Gardens

Make your way to Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden where you can see the famous white tigers along with panthers, leopards and a four-ton Thai elephant in their own environments, modeled after their natural habitats.

In the Dolphin Habitat, four connected pools contain an artificial coral reef system and sandy bottom, which replicates the dolphins' natural environment. Visit The Mirage's 20,000-gallon indoor, saltwater aquarium filled with more than 1,000 coral-reef animals such as angelfish, puffer fish, tangs, sharks and other exotic sea creatures.

Tour Price:
\$130.00 per person

Tour Includes:

- Private roundtrip transportation
- Admission Fees
- Uniformed guide
- Lunch at the Venetian Resort Hotel & Casino
- Tour Minimum: 20

Tours are based on minimum participation. Program elements are subject to modification as required due to unforeseen circumstances.

Register online at www.irga.com

Hotel & Golf Tournament Information



Hotel Accommodations

Discounted rooms have been arranged at Caesars Palace. Please call them directly at 702/731-7110 or 800/634-6001 for room reservations. Reference the IRgA to receive your discounted rate of \$189 (plus applicable taxes) per night (single or double occupancy). Reservations should be made prior to March 31, 2005. Reservations made after this date are subject to space and rate availability.

Deposit/Payment

Reservations must be made by March 31, 2005 in order to secure group rate pricing. Reservations will require a one night's deposit (plus tax) by check or credit card for each room reserved. Credit cards will be processed at the time the reservation is made.

Hotel Cancellation

Should you need to cancel your hotel reservation, please be sure to do so 72 hours prior to arrival in order to avoid incurring a penalty no-show fee of one night's stay. In the event that you cancel your reservation after the hotel's cancellation deadline (72 hours prior to arrival) or you fail to show-up on your specified check-in date, your deposit of one night's stay will not be refunded.

Air Travel

The IRgA's travel coordinator, Apollo Travel, has negotiated special discounts to Las Vegas during this convention. As an attendee, you will receive discounts on airlines and car rentals that have been specifically negotiated for the IRgA. To book your travel today, call 866/880-6483, or for international callers, +312/236-3939. Reservation lines are open Monday through Friday from 6am-8pm CST. You can also e-mail Apollo Travel at travel@travelpollo.com. To receive your discounted rate, be sure to mention the IRgA convention. Apollo Travel will proactively research airfares on all airline carriers to ensure that they offer the lowest available fares.

IRgA Golf Tournament

Wednesday, May 11

Stallion Mountain Country Club

7:00 – Continental Breakfast

8:00 – Tee Time

Cost: \$195 before March 2;
\$245 after

Join us for our annual golf tournament, a highlight of each year's convention!

This year's event will be held at Stallion Mountain Country Club, a private, three-course facility just minutes from the Las Vegas Strip. With the Nevada Mountains in the distance, this stunning course boasts graceful fairways and challenging bunkers and water features. The course, designed by Jeff Brauer and senior tour golfer Jim Colbert, was built in the 1980s, then expanded and renovated in the late 1990s.

Transportation will be provided from Caesars Palace to Stallion Mountain. Continental breakfast provided before tee time. Luncheon buffet provided afterwards.

The 2005 IRgA Golf Tournament is sponsored by CONTEX Scanning Technology.





Attendee Registration Form

(For additional registrants, please make copies of this form. Forms must be received by April 29, 2005. After April 29, 2005, you must register on-site.)

REGISTRANT INFORMATION (Please type or print):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
 First Name preferred on badge (if different from above): _____
 Company Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Country: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____
 E-mail: _____

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- Select your buying influence.
 - Final Decision A)
 - Recommend B)
 - Specify C)
 - No Role D)
- What is your annual budget for reprographic equipment and supplies?
 - \$0 - \$99,999 A)
 - \$100,000 - \$249,999 B)
 - \$250,000 - \$499,999 C)
 - \$500,000 + D)
- What is your job title?
 - Executive/CEO/CFO A)
 - Vice President B)
 - Director C)
 - Manager D)
 - Purchasing Agent E)
 - Consultant F)
 - Specifier G)
 - Other H)
 - If Other (please specify) _____
- What products and services would you like to see at IRGA?
 - Wide-Format Engineering Output A)
 - Wide-Format Color Graphics B)
 - Small-Format Digital Printing C)
 - Laminating and Finishing D)
 - Scanning and Archiving E)
 - Digital File Management F)
 - Facilities Management G)
 - Other _____
- Are you a first time attendee?
 - Yes A) No B)

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES

Full Convention (includes All Sessions, Evening Receptions, Keynote Lunch, Exhibits)

	Early bird Registration (on or before 3/2/05)	Registration (on or before 4/29/05)	Registration (after 4/29/05)
Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$649 (101)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$749 (104)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$849 (107)
Additional Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$599 (102)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$699 (105)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$799 (108)
Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$799 (103)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$899 (106)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$999 (109)

One Day (select one day only)

Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250 (201)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$275 (203)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300 (205)
Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300 (202)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$325 (204)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$350 (206)

Select day you wish to attend:

- Thursday (OT). Includes Thursday sessions, exhibits and lunch*
 Friday (OF). Includes Friday sessions, exhibits and Keynote lunch**

*Does NOT include Thursday's Networking Reception

**Does NOT include Friday's Networking Reception

Subtotal

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Check MasterCard VISA American Express

Check/Credit Card number: _____ Exp. Date _____

Name as it appears on card: _____

Signature: _____

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If, due to a disability, you have any special needs, please detail your requirements: _____

Cancellation Policy: All cancellations must be received in writing. Requests for cancellations before March 25, 2005 will be subject to a \$100 Processing fee. No refunds will be issued after March 25, 2005.

REGISTRATION OPTIONS

Fax Number (with credit card information): 312-494-3015

Mail (with check or money order in US funds): IRGA – Registration, 5471 Paysphere Circle, Chicago, IL 60674

CONVENTION SOCIAL EVENTS

(1 ticket for each event is included with Full Convention. Enter number of additional tickets needed.)

	On or before 3/2/05	After 3/2/05
Exhibit Opening Cocktail Reception		
Wednesday	___ x \$100 (400)	___ x \$125 (404)
Thursday Networking Reception		
Thursday	___ x \$75 (401)	___ x \$100 (405)
Keynote Lunch		
Friday	___ x \$75 (402)	___ x \$100 (406)
Friday Networking Reception		
Friday	___ x \$125 (403)	___ x \$125 (403)
Convention Social Events Subtotal		<input type="text"/>

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

(not included in Convention Registration Fees)

	On or before 3/2/05	After 3/2/05
Golf Tournament		
Wednesday, 8:00 am	___ x \$195 (500)	___ x \$245 (504)
(Handicap = _____)		(Handicap = _____)
Optional Tour - Hoover Dam		
Wednesday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm	___ x \$95 (501)	___ x \$95 (501)
Optional Tour - Las Vegas City Tour/Lunch		
Thursday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm	___ x \$130 (502)	___ x \$130 (502)
Friday Companion Program - Wax Museum/Lunch		
Friday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm	___ x \$130 (503)	___ x \$130 (503)
Companion Name		_____
Optional Activities Subtotal		<input type="text"/>

Subtotal: CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES: _____

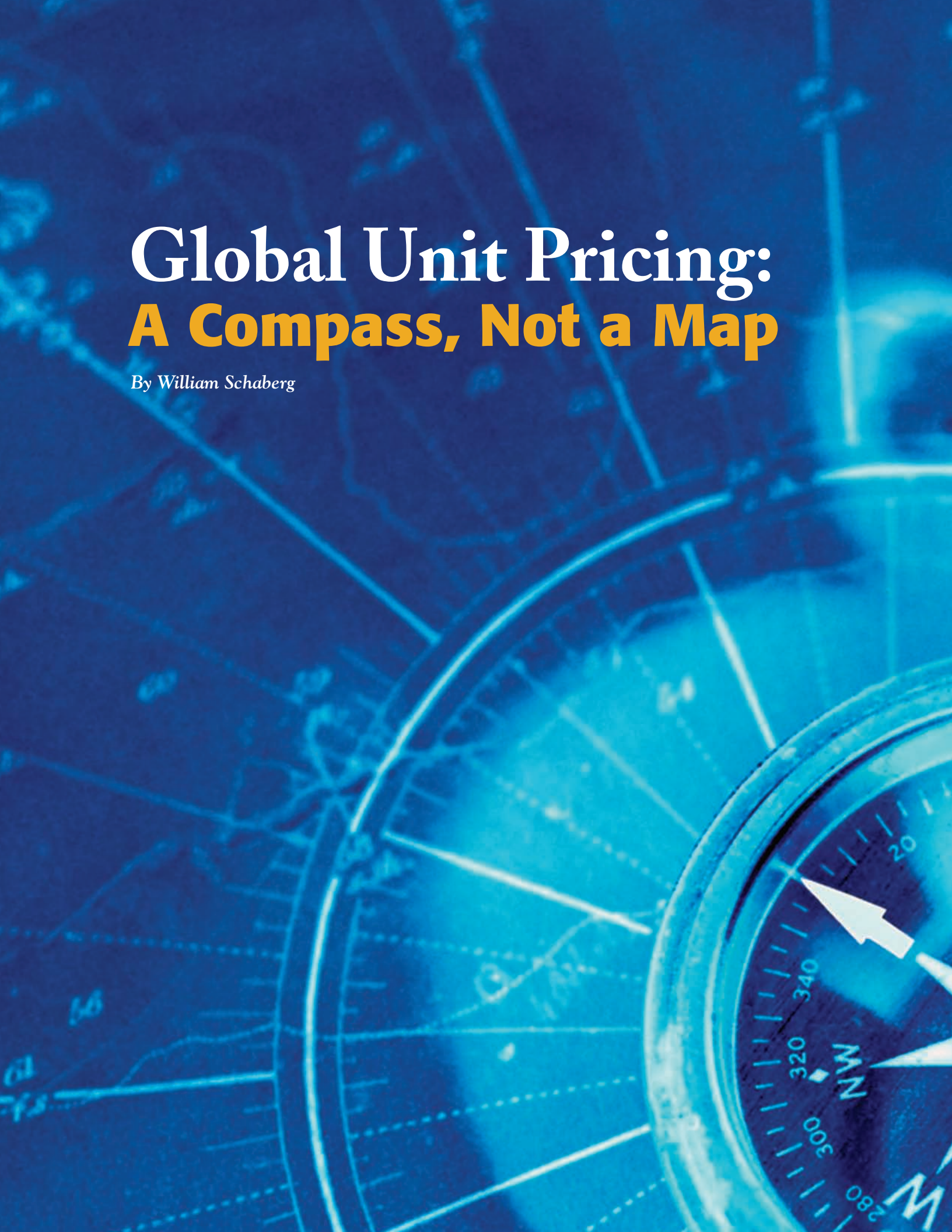
Subtotal: CONVENTION SOCIAL EVENTS: _____

Subtotal: OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES: _____

TOTAL:

Global Unit Pricing: **A Compass, Not a Map**

By William Schaberg



Wouldn't it be great to find a map showing you exactly how you could generate more profits from your business? Unfortunately, there is no single treasure map for discovering extra cash in your company, but there are a number of compasses that can point you in the right direction—if only you take the time to understand what they are telling you and then put that information to use.

In my previous articles, I tried to explain two of these compasses—DSO (days sales outstanding, see *REPRO REPORT* issue 4, 2004) and DSI (days sales in inventory, see *REPRO REPORT* issue 5, 2004). Both of these financial ratios are extremely valuable tools for pointing you in the right direction so that you can recapture more of the elusive profits that your company produces.

In general, all of these financial ratios are important not in themselves but because they serve as indicators of where your business is going. They act as a compass to show you the direction you are traveling. With ratios, it's not the number that's important, it's the trend. If your DSO or DSI is going in the right direction, then you know that your efforts are working and producing the desired results—more money in your checkbook.

Charting and then paying attention to business trends is what will set your management style apart from the “seat of the pants” method of running a company. Once again, the mantra of any well-run business must be “If you don't measure it, you can't manage it.”

Another ratio that is worth measuring in a repro shop these days is global unit pricing (GUP). The GUP tells you the average price-per-square-foot (or unit) that you are charging today. By tracking and comparing this number on a month-to-month basis, you can easily determine whether your prices in each department—but most especially in large-format black & white printing—are eroding or increasing. Your GUP is valuable because it underlines and clarifies the trends in your business, thereby providing you with a sharper vision for how you should properly respond to the changing marketplace.





Whatever accounting software package you are using, it should be able to provide you with the total number of square feet billed by the type of print and with the corresponding amount of money charged for those square feet. When doing this GUP calculation, be sure to include all prints billed (including FMs) and to factor in any month-end or other discounts that might be offered to clients. Divide the total square feet into the amount to get your GUP, which on large-format black & white is typically between eight and 20 cents.

While the GUP calculation has been used most often for looking at large-format black & white pricing, it can also be a valuable tool for understanding how your local market and your shop's pricing are changing in small-format black & white and in color. Many shops do four calculations: one each for large- and small-format black & white and for large- and small-format color.

The first month you do this calculation for large-format black & white, what you get is an interesting number. "Oh, so that's how much we charge for plain paper!" But as you

continue to calculate the ratio each month, you begin to compile a personal database on how your business is doing. Is our overall price trending up or down? What factors might have influenced that up-tick this month—did we do a good job of upselling on that new project? Or did our number go down because we were forced to bid so cheaply on that big new job?

Spotting Trends

Whatever external forces might be affecting your pricing, they will be clearly reflected in the trends that your numbers reveal. And knowing what that impact is in the short term (monthly) provides you with the opportunity to respond that much more quickly to changes as they happen in your business and in your marketplace.

While the GUP is always an interesting and important number, it was especially valuable for the reprographics industry as we were

making the transition from blueline to plain paper. Before that revolution, repro shops uniformly charged premium prices for sepias, vellums and mylars—all of which completely disappeared when plain paper became the norm.

The question was, "How can I recoup the lost profits that I used to get from those premium products?" One proposed solution was to add up all of the square footage that you had billed before the digital conversion and then divide it into the total revenues generated by that printing, which provided the average price per square foot for all of your large-format printing. Many shops then used this GUP calculation to target the price of their plain paper printing (frequently including "first outs" and other revenue enhancers) to deliver an average per-square-foot selling price that was comparable to what they had received from their traditional ways of doing business.

While GUP wasn't the only factor in calculating your success in converting to plain paper—digital printing also produced a number of savings in labor that influenced the equation—it was extremely helpful in pointing people in the right direction when faced with questions regarding pricing in the new plain-paper world.

Now that most shops have completely converted to plain paper, GUP is no less important an indicator of how well your business is doing. "Are the prices that I am getting for large-format printing in my shop going up or down?" is as valid and important a question today as it was during the transition to digital. It can tell if you are pricing yourself lower than in the past—in other words, working harder for less money. If this proves to be the case, GUP provides you with a concrete target to shoot for and a solid measurement on a month-to-month basis of whether your efforts to increase pricing are successful or not.

However, global unit pricing has become—and will continue to be—less critical as the digital revolution in reprographics moves into the next phase.

As online plan rooms become more and more accepted in the construction industry, the patterns and generally accepted procedures for distributing information will necessarily change. One consequence that many people have noted in the past few months is the fact that providing online construction information has reduced the number of sets of prints needed to bid a job. Subcontractors can now go to a Web site, look at the project and decide to bid based on what they see there—i.e., before they look at any hard-copy prints.

Given this scenario, your GUP could remain solid or even go up every month but that would not mean that your business was doing well if the total square footage that you were printing each month was dropping significantly.

With this new reality in our business landscape, another financial ratio

becomes important—the percentage of business that you generate from digital service charges.

Most reprographers have discovered that scanning, indexing, posting and maintaining construction information on the Web is a labor-intensive job, and they have begun to charge for these services. While some have attempted to build these costs into their per-square-foot pricing, that model will prove to be seriously flawed if overall square footage declines significantly. Therefore, many shops that have become deeply involved with online plan rooms have realized that it is critical for them to be able to directly charge for these services—not just to cover their expenses but also to generate enough additional income and profits to replace projected lost print revenues.

At this stage there seems to be as many digital services price lists as there are repro shops. While we cannot discuss pricing, we all should be charging SOMETHING for digital services provided. Here is just one suggested list of services that you could charge your customers for in a plan room environment:

- Plans
- Scanning
- Posting Thumbnails
- Indexing Sheet Description
- Project Setup
- Planholder List Maintenance
- Custom Package Creation
- Deposit Check Handling
- Retrieval ("Cherry picking")
- Digital Stamp
- Watermark
- Digital Copy—Tiff File
- File Transfer to CD
- Copies of CDs
- Up To 5mb E-File Transmission
- Up To 10mb E-File Transmission
- Each additional 10mb Transmission

Specifications

- Scanning (81/2" x 11")
- Scanning (11" x 17")
- Spec Posting by Division or Section

The problem seems to be that this sort of revenue model is so alien to both our own staff (especially our sales staff) and to our customers that it will

be an uphill battle to have this new model of revenue generation adopted with any success.

But, again, if you don't measure it, you can't manage it, so what would the measure for success be with charging for digital services? As mentioned above, one way to track your transition to a digital services revenue model would be to track the percentage of money you collect for digital services out of your total sales.

Whatever your percentage of digital sales, to manage that percentage, you need to set a realistic target goal and then come up with realizable, incremental steps for reaching that goal.

GUP can tell if you are pricing yourself lower than in the past—in other words, working harder for less money.

One goal proposed has been 15% of sales generated by digital services. How close are you to that number today? How can you get from where you are to that number tomorrow? How much progress can you make in one quarter? In one year? In three years?

Each shop needs to decide what a realistic target goal is and then pursue that goal aggressively. If, in fact, print revenues will be declining, it is essential that we find ways to replace that revenue—and charging for digital services seems to be the most logical choice. ●

Bill Schaberg has been in the reprographics industry for the past 35 years and is currently the vice president of corporate development at American Reprographics Company. Schaberg is a member of the REPRO REPORT Editorial Advisory Committee and can be reached at bills@e-arc.com.





SEE YOU IN
LAS VEGAS!

**International Reprographic Association
79th Annual Convention & Trade Show**



May 11-13, 2005
Caesar's Palace
Las Vegas



Visit www.irga.com about this event and all IRGA has to offer.

A Database Primer for Repro Shops

By John Marquardt

There are a million little Excel spreadsheets in repro shops storing phone numbers, delivery vehicles, employees, inventory, etc.—all things that Excel is not good at doing.

I know, I know...it sure is easy to store information in Excel; when you open it up, you're presented with an organized blank slate. You can put column headings and data anywhere you please yet remain structured, and to a human who is evaluating your spreadsheet-as-a-database, it might make perfect sense. So many people store information in Excel spreadsheets in attempt to use Excel as a database that Microsoft has bolted all kinds of database-like tools and functions onto it with less than stellar results. *Lame.*

This is like taping a tack-hammer to a screwdriver and being surprised when you can't drive in a six-inch nail. It's even more irritating when you consider that many people who have Excel probably have a perfectly good database in their toolkit right next to Excel in the MS Office program group—MS Access.

MS Access is certainly better at being a database than Excel, and it's *only* a little harder to step into. It's a worthy venture to learn some very basic relational database terminology and concepts. Access makes it very easy to begin making a really useful database immediately. If you know where to look you can even use it to instantly store and view data just like you're used to in Excel (smartly called "Create table by entering data"), the difference being you will have a tidy migration path when things inevitably get more complex. (Access screen shots to walk you through the process are posted at www.offblue.com.)

Access is basically a free-form sandbox where your ideas can be tested and

tried concurrent with the creation of tables (basic database elements), forms (user interface elements) and reports (print-outs from aggregating data and performing calculated operations on data in your tables). There is no "compiling," and programming errors can be addressed as they come up. Also, the visual nature of Access for creating relationships and forms means that what you draw on the screen is what your users will see.

Access has limitations, and although Microsoft provides a means to use Access databases in Web applications, I wouldn't recommend it for anything critical in your business for multi-user environments. Mercifully, Microsoft provides a great migration tool, the Upsizing Wizard, which allows you to easily migrate to Microsoft's SQL server, a powerful database engine which can be used with the Access forms you created or in massive Web applications.

You can even use those same easy-to-use MS Access tools to prototype your application's tables and then move into a very inexpensive and even free open-source infrastructure like the MySQL database and PHP dynamic Web pages.

DBTools Software (www.dbtools.com.br) provides a great database management tool with a very useful freeware component allowing you to manage MySQL databases and even migrate from an Access database to MySQL. If you have an MS Access database that you wish were on the Web, this tool and a little bit of PHP programming can get you there fast.

Here's a repro-specific example: Imagine a repro shop that maintains a list of bidders for their GC clients. Maybe this repro shop keeps track of who is bidding, who has plans, who has addenda, etc., by keeping this information in an Excel spreadsheet.

One possible migration plan would be to import the Excel spreadsheet and massage the data slightly to make relational tables in MS Access. Create the forms for your employees and reports for your clients with the visual tools in Access. When you have things tweaked and have a layout that works for you, it would be fairly easy to create a MySQL database with PHP Web pages as a front-end to give your clients access to real-time information about bidders and plan-holders and even provide a method for bidders to

MS Access is certainly better at being a database than Excel, and it's only a little harder to step into.

maintain their own information themselves—all on the Web! The real cost of something like this depends largely on the labor to get to this point, but the ongoing cost would be something like \$30 per month for a shared-hosting server on a pretty fat pipe with MySQL and PHP support.

If you would like a free recommendation on a migration path for your spreadsheet to a relational database, send e-mail to john@offblue.com, and I'll take a crack at it. ●

Formerly the I.T. manager for Engineering Repro Systems in Minneapolis, John Marquardt is an industry speaker and educator. You can reach him at john@offblue.com.

QUICK VIEW

Companies in
the News:

Colortrac, Ltd.

eBlueprint

Fine Toner Corp.

Graphic
Enterprises, Inc.

InfoTrends/
CAP Ventures

Océ

Paradigm
Imaging Group

Reprographic
Technologies

Specialty
Toner Corp.

Study Predicts Wide-Format Solvent Inkjet Growth

A new study by InfoTrends/CAP Ventures predicts rapid growth in the low-end market for wide-format solvent inkjet printing, thanks to lower-cost equipment that has allowed nontraditional print service providers to enter the market.

The introduction of several environmentally friendly, wide-format, solvent-based inkjet printers has enabled repro shops, photo labs to quick-printers to produce large outdoor graphics. The new systems are affordable and allow printing on uncoated media. InfoTrends/CAP Ventures believes these new low-end units will drive growth in the solvent inkjet market for the next three to five years.

The complete study, *Wide Format Solvent Inkjet Market Forecast: 2003 – 2008*, is available for \$4,995 from www.capv.com. For more information about the report or to buy a copy, contact Alison Hipp at 781/616-2100, ext. 126 or alison_hipp@capv.com.

Graphic Enterprises and Colortrac Team Up

Graphic Enterprises Inc., (GEI) a Visual Edge Technology Company, has formed a strategic alliance with Colortrac, Ltd. GEI will now be the exclusive distributor of Colortrac's SmartLF scanner line.

"On behalf of all of Graphic Enterprise's 220 experienced professionals across North America, we are honored to be awarded this assignment and pleased to introduce this very affordable, groundbreaking scanner technology to our expanding customer base," said Mark Lewis, GEI's president and CEO.

Fine Toner Revives Specialty Toner Lines

Fairfield, N.J.-based Fine Toner Corporation has begun manufacturing the electrostatic toner products formerly made by Specialty Toner Corporation (STC). STC closed its doors in 2004 after 18 years.

Products being re-introduced to the market include electrostatic dye-sub, UV and high saturation liquid toners. Fine Toner will be using STC's former manufacturing facilities and has kept many of the company's key personnel in quality control, production and shipping as well as its plant manager.

Thomas Reprographics acquires Cline Graphics

Effective December 1, 2004, Cline Graphics will operate as Cline Graphics - A division of Thomas Reprographics. The company will be relocating in Houston by February 2005. Cline Graphics provides fleet graphics including truck sides, vehicle wraps and bus graphics installed nationwide. The three previous partners will all remain with the company. Bill Cline will remain as manager of the operation, his twin brother George will continue to run production and David Scardino will remain as a salesperson. This acquisition will further broaden the capabilities of Thomas Reprographics as these services are now offered through any of their twenty-six locations throughout Texas, Arizona and Minnesota.

Jiffy Reprographics Receives Business of the Year Award

Jiffy Reprographics of Clearwater, Fla., received the Business of the Year Award in the medium business classification (revenues less than five million) at the Annual Business of the Year Awards Reception, held at Ruth Eckerd Hall on November 4th.

Jiffy Reprographics is a digital color graphics and printing center that specializes in the production and distribution of construction documents. The firm has recently expanded operations in the Tampa Bay market to accommodate scanning and electronic document management services.

PEiR Group Holds Annual Executive Conference

The PEiR Group (Profit & Education in Reprographics) recently held its sixth conference, the third specifically for the executives of its 45 member companies.

The conference agenda was heavily oriented toward education and addressed a wide range of topics including color, customer management, and a comparison of accounting systems for the reprographics industry, as well as visits to each of the redundant technology centers that develop and support PlanWell online planrooms.

The PEiR Group's next conference will be held on the Web. The upcoming "Conference in a Can" will address technical issues in reprography, but do so in a series of online presentations, live Web demonstrations and WebEx online conferences.

Contex Wins Outstanding Industrial Hardware Manufacturer Award

Contex Scanning Technology has won *ComputerWorld Magazine's* Sovereign Prize as the best Danish manufacturer in the category of "Industrial Hardware Manufacturer." Contex is the manufacturer with the largest installed population worldwide of wide-format color and monochrome scanners as well as expert developers of advanced scanning and copying software for these products.

NEWS BITS

**In Memoriam:
Fawdrey Molt**

T-Square Reprographics founder Fawdrey Molt passed away on Dec. 13 at the age of 88.

Fawdrey was a long time member of the IRgA, attending the IRgA Convention and Trade Show every year until he retired and sold the company in 1978. He served as president of the Southeastern Reprographics Association (SRA) in 1956. Fawdrey was one of the old time "Blueprinters" who was very active in the industry. He will be missed

eBlueprint's Ziegler One of "40 Under 40"

Crain's Cleveland Business recently named eBlueprint president Andrew Ziegler to its "40 Under 40" list, an annual compendium of the top young leaders in the region's business community. eBlueprint is part of Cleveland's Lakeside Blueprint.

Ziegler has been with the company for 20 years, starting as a Lakeside delivery driver when he was 18. He worked his way up through management ranks, landing the job of president in 2001.

According to the article, Ziegler plans to stay with the company for another decade or so, and then he plans to help the less fortunate. "After I leave here, I want to do something to help others. I don't know what that means yet; I haven't planned that far ahead yet, but probably something like Habitat for Humanity," Mr. Ziegler said.

Hanson Promoted at Paradigm

Costa Mesa, Calif.-based Paradigm Imaging Group has appointed Eric Hanson to regional sales manager for the Eastern United States.

Hanson previously served as Eastern region inside sales manager at Paradigm, a large-format scanning solutions company. Prior to joining Paradigm's team, Eric spent two years as Director of Color Graphics for Print O Stat. Hanson also held sales positions at Amiable Technologies and Colorgate.

Océ Appoints Four New Managers

Océ recently announced the promotions of four new senior vice presidents.



Dennis F. Riordan, senior vice president and chief financial officer of Océ-USA Holding, will be responsible for all aspects of

the company's administrative activities including banking, treasury, insurance, taxation, financial reporting, management information systems, operations, and real estate for the operating companies in North America. He joined the company in 1997.



Michael A. Scordino, senior vice president, general counsel and secretary of Océ-USA Holding, also serves as secretary

and counsel to the boards of directors of Océ's operating companies in North America. He came to the company through the Siemens Nixdorf Printing Systems acquisition in 1996.



Daniel Krzesinski is the new senior vice president, service for Océ North America. He will be responsible for the combined

service organization for all of Océ North America, supporting both the Digital Document Systems and Wide Format Printing Systems divisions.



William E. Mayer, senior vice president, human resources of Océ-USA Holding, will direct human resources functions of Océ North

America. He has been with the company since 1989.

Reprographic Technologies Opens New Branch

Reprographic Technologies (RT) recently opened its eighth location. The new 3,000-square-foot branch in Lanham, Md., adds to the company's presence in the Washington, D.C., Virginia and Baltimore region. RT has also moved its Alexandria, Va., office to a larger office space in Arlington, Va.

SAVE THE DATES!

**IRgA 80th Convention and Trade Show
May 17-20, 2006**

Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.

**IRgA 81st Convention and Trade Show
May 9-12, 2007**

Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center
Dallas, Texas

Mounting & Laminating Seminars Back for 2005

The IRgA is offering our popular mounting and laminating seminars for the tenth year beginning this March (see sidebar for dates). The training is open to both experienced and novice operators who are interested in integrating theory with hands-on training in the latest technologies and techniques. After last year's successful program, Drytac Corp. and GBC will once again host and administer the sessions.

For those who have little mounting and laminating experience or who need a refresher course, the first day of the seminar begins with basic training and tips. Those who already have some basic knowledge will benefit from the more challenging second day, which concentrates on more advanced troubleshooting and special applications training.

Class size is limited to 10 participants to ensure personalized attention. The full seminar will cover:

- Benefits of mounting and laminating: cold, heatset, thermal,
- An overview of all the equipment controls and proper maintenance,
- A review of the different types of mounting adhesives, laminating films, and substrates that are available,
- Advice on selecting the correct materials for a job and the variables that affect the application,
- Preparation of media prior to laminating,
- Specialty applications.

The IRgA will be offering two additional seminars this year, in Seattle and Dallas. With more locations, we hope to better serve organizations that otherwise would be unable to attend the training.

For more information, or to find out more about how to register for the courses, visit www.irga.com.

The 2005 Mounting & Laminating seminar schedule:

March 17-18.....	Drytac \ Richmond, Va.
April 14-15.....	Drytac \ Los Angeles, Calif.
April 14-15.....	GBC \ De Forest, Wisc.
May 19-20.....	Drytac \ Chicago, Ill.
May 26-27.....	Drytac \ Toronto, Canada
August 11-12.....	GBC \ De Forest, Wisc.
August 18-19.....	Drytac \ Seattle, Wash.
October 13-14.....	Drytac \ Dallas, Texas
November 10-11.....	GBC \ De Forest, Wisc.

Download Industry Journals FREE

IRgA members can now download the IRgA Industry Journals, each a \$99 value, **FREE** at www.irga.com in the Member Network—Publication Download Center:

Vol. 1: Business Strategies

Vol. 2: Facilities Management

Vol. 3: Small Format Imaging

Vol. 4: Large Format Technology – soon to be released in 2005!

Non-members

Visit the IRgA Bookstore at www.irga.com or call 800.833.4742 to order your copy today!

IRgA Issues Call for Volunteers

You can make a difference in the IRgA by volunteering to serve on one of a number of committees. Together, committees develop and recommend policy, provide advice on programs and services, and assist in creating a rewarding and valuable member experience.

Some of the new leadership opportunities include:

Vendor Relations Committee. Reprographics industry suppliers will help the IRgA improve communications with the vendor community, create closer relationships with reprographers and enhance the experience of exhibiting at the trade show.

Membership Committee. Among the IRgA's top priorities is to stabilize and then grow the membership to develop a stronger

industry association. Help the association retain its current members, and participate in the strategy to recruit new member companies into the association.

Branding Task Force. A major initiative of the IRgA is to brand the reprographics industry to reprographics customers. While this will be an ongoing project, the purpose of this task force is to explore the important first steps in a massive branding effort, including gaining feedback and buy-in from industry members and possibly working with a branding expert to move the process forward.

If you'd like to make a contribution of your time and talent and be part of a unique and positive community of member-leaders, e-mail sbova@irga.com. ●

Web Site Redesign Offers More Features

Beginning February 1, 2005, www.irga.com will have a new look. As part of the IRgA's commitment to better serving the industry, the Web site is undergoing some changes. In addition to a new look and feel, the site will contain:

- An enhanced online Membership Directory,
- An industry calendar of events,
- More up-to-date news and information,
- Online polls,
- And more!

Be sure to log on to www.irga.com often to see what's new and find out the latest in reprographics news and events!

Upcoming Reprographic Conventions

IRgA Annual Convention & Trade Show

May 11-13, 2005

Caesars Palace
Las Vegas, Nev.

Contact: 800/833-4742
www.irga.com

Central Reprographic Association

September 29 - October 1, 2005

Marriott Lincolnshire
Lincolnshire, Ill.

Contact: Shirley Zawoyski
shirleyzawoyski@sbcglobal.net

Western Reprographic Association

October 5-11, 2005

Sheraton Maui Kaanapali Beach
Maui, Hawaii

Contact: Monica Estrada
monica@piasc.org

Eastern Regional Reprographic Association

October 6-9, 2005

Hyatt Harborside
Boston, Mass.

Contact: Kim Clements
kjc@johnsonimaging.com

Southeastern Reprographic Association

November 3-5, 2005

The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa
Asheville, S.C.

Contact: Forrest Kenley II
forrestjr@aerepro.com

QUICK VIEW

Companies in Product Innovations:

ColorSpan

FLEXcon

GBC

InteliCoat Technologies

Mimaki

Océ

Quality Media & Laminating Solutions

Rose Displays, Inc

Staedtler Inkjet

Valley Supplies, Inc.

Western Graphtec

Xerox Corp.

New Printers from ColorSpan

MacDermid ColorSpan has launched two new wide-format printers: the DisplayMaker 98SX "ElonGator" and the DisplayMaker 72UVR.

The ElonGator, based on the company's Gator DisplayMaker 72S printer, features CMYK piezo solvent inkjet printing for media up to 98" wide. The printer uses SolaChrome-HR inks and features 16 piezo Micro-Quad self-cleaning printheads.

Users can attach optional roller tables to the printer to accommodate rigid sheets up to 60" x 98" and up to .025" thick. Suggested list price is \$69,995.

ColorSpan's other new release is its DisplayMaker 72UVR, the company's first UV-curable inkjet production printer. The 72"-wide printer uses four-color UV-curable SolaChrome UV pigmented inks. Inks are cured instantly by UV lamps mounted to the printhead assembly.

The 72UVR can print on rolled or rigid materials up to 0.25" thick and features a print speed of 400 sq. ft./hr. in "billboard-quality" mode and 200 sq. ft./hr. in "production-quality" mode. Outdoor durability is rated at two to three years, depending on application. The \$74,995 list price includes on-site training and installation.

For more information, visit: www.colors span.com.

Wider Laminates for Trade Show Graphics

Quality Media & Laminating Solutions has released its Hardguard laminates in 61" widths. Hardguard Diamond is a 6-mil, nonreflective, textured laminate, and Hardguard 10m Light Stopper is 100% opaque laminate with light-blocking foil between its adhesive layers.

See www.qmls.com for more information.

Six New Scanners from Western Graphtec

Western Graphtec has released three new series of new wide-format scanners, with a standard and advanced model in each series. Users who buy the standard model can switch to the Pro version with a cost-effective upgrade.

The CS600 and CS500 Series are 42", 24-bit, full-color scanners designed for processing photographs, complex maps and AEC/ CAD drawings. The CS600 that can scan rigid originals up to 0.8" thick. The CS600 features a hands-free automatic thickness control function. The CS500 can process flexible material up to 0.06" thick.

The IS200 series offers 42", 8-bit monochrome scanning.

Standard models feature resolutions up to 800 dpi; the Pro models offer a high-quality scanning mode with resolutions up to 4800 dpi. The Pro models also have a high-speed scanning mode with up to 40% faster throughput than standard models at comparable resolution settings.

The scanners all offer maximum scanning speeds of 9 ips (monochrome) and 3 ips (8-bit, 24-bit color) when scanning at 400 dpi. They all feature 600 dpi optical resolution and use Contact Image Sensor technology instead of CCD scanning. In addition, CS600/CS500 Series scanners are compatible with the new industry standard sRGB color space.

See www.scantopia.com for more information.

New Media from InteliCoat

InteliCoat Technologies has expanded its Magic line of large-format media for solvent ink jet printers.

Magic SBL-7, a 7-mil universal backlit polyester film, is designed to be printed on its front surface. SBL-7 works for both reflective and backlit displays, features a bright white

printing surface and a water-resistant coating with maximum ink density. The film is geared for short-run, indoor or outdoor backlit signage.

Magic GFIOPI40PSA is a 140-gsm poster paper backed with a permanent, pressure-sensitive adhesive. This media is latex-saturated with a smooth surface, a lustre finish and outdoor durability. SBL-7 and GFIOPI40PSA are available in rolls up to 54" wide.

Magic DMPDQU-GPSA and DMPDQU-LPSA are resin-coated, adhesive-backed pressure-sensitive photobase papers designed for indoor mounted applications. They feature a microporous coating that dries instantly on most water-based, thermal and piezo inkjet printers. The permanent adhesive coatings allow for easy application to smooth, flat and indoor mounting surfaces. DMPDQU-GPSA and DMPDQU-LPSA are available in rolls up to 50" wide.

For more information or a free sample roll, see at www.magicinkjet.com.

Océ Introduces Plotter/Copier for Low-Volume Market

The new Océ TDS300, a large-format black and white digital copy and plot system, was designed for lower volume AEC organizations and smaller workgroups within large enterprises. The system is well suited for companies that typically copy and print up to 30 D-sized drawings per day.

The TDS300 features one-touch copying of up to 99 copies from each scanned original. The system also offers Océ's Radiant Fusing technology, which requires no warm-up time. Users can reduce and enlarge prints from 25 to 400 percent in one step.

The Océ TDS300 offers fast file processing and can print nearly three D-sized drawings per minute. Océ's Power Logic controller and print drivers ensure a constant, high print speed for almost any kind of

document with no delays when using different print modes – allowing more work to be produced in a typical day. The Océ Image Logic feature can sharpen text and images, which can make copies look better than difficult originals.

The toner-based printer is more economical than inkjet, with a 600-dpi print engine for laser-quality output. More information is available at www.oceusa.com.

Mimaki Adds New Printer

Mimaki USA's new 30" JV3-75SP11 is a lower-cost wide-format solvent inkjet printer. The four-head JV3-75SP11 was designed to print on inexpensive untreated vinyl media at speeds up to 478 sq. ft./hr. at 360 x 360 dpi and photo-quality print modes up to 1440 x 1440 dpi. The printer serves the sign, banner and silkscreen markets and uses piezo inks that can last up to three years outdoors with no lamination.

The printer's other features include: four- (CMYK) or six-color (CMYKLCm) print modes; select use of JV3 Standard Solvent, or the new JV3 Mild Solvent 2 ink; an automatic roll take-up device; enhanced intelligent heater; optional drying fan; improved platen component for smoother media handling; automatic cleaning features selectable head heights of 2 mm or 3 mm; and high speed IEEE1394 firewire ports. The printer comes packaged with the CG-75 FX "electric eye" cutter.

More information available at www.mimakiusa.com.

FLEXcon's New Vehicle Wraps

BUSart OV 400 is a Viacom Outdoor Approved overlaminating vinyl from FLEXcon, part of the company's Full Bus/Train Wrap System. The product is designed for use with FLEXcon's SEETHRU-SIGN White/Black Flex and White/Black Flex TC perforated one-way window films, in bus/train and other vehicle wraps.

The 3.5-mil clear, flexible overlaminate features increased conformability, which resists tunneling and cracking. BUSart OV 400 prevents dust and water from collecting in perforations, maintaining clear vision through the window and extending the life of the graphic. It is coated with a super-clear, permanent, pressure-sensitive acrylic adhesive. Visit www.FLEXcon.com for more details.

GBC SignMaker Laminators

GBC's new 25" and 44" SignMaker laminators are designed for entry-level sign producers. These laminators can run top-heat applications such as AccuShield, GBC's ultra-thin coating for vinyl inkjet media.

The GBC SignMaker 25 laminates, coats and mounts prints up to 25" wide, while the GBC SignMaker 44 handles prints up to 43" wide. The

laminators use a front unwind roller to apply AccuShield or pressure-sensitive films. With AccuShield applications, the separator bar and rollers separate the release liner from the media to create a finished graphic with no additional trimming.

Both laminators were developed to offer more efficient, economical results for signs, posters, banners, litigation graphics and POP display graphics. They are also well-suited to run GBC's printable laminate, SecurFilm.

See www.gbc.com for more information.

continued on page 36

**Financial Performance:
How Do You Compare?**

First-ever detailed analysis in the reprographic industry!

More than 70 participants reported financial data from sales, expenses and profits to create the Operating Ratio Study. This compilation provides a benchmark against which individual companies can compare:

- Profit & Loss Analyses
- Balance Sheet Analyses
- Valuable ratios, aging AR, inventory turnover, profitability worksheets and more!

Visit the IRGA Bookstore at www.irga.com or call 800.833.4742 to order your copy today!

Wide-Format Xerox Supplies

Xerox Corp. has introduced a line of more than 30 wide-format paper and specialty media, specifically designed to work with the new Xerox 8160 and 8142 Wide Format Color printers. The new media include photo papers, films, banners, canvas, and presentation and poster papers.

The new supply products are available in a wide variety of weights, finishes and sizes from 36" to 60" roll widths. Xerox Supplies has created an Applications Guide to help customers find the right media for their projects. The guide is available at www.xerox.com/supplies.

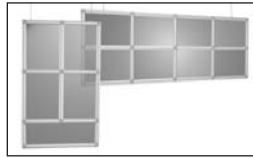
Staedtler Lumocolor Piezo Inks

Staedtler Inkjet's new Lumocolor series of water-based inks for piezo printers have the lightfast properties and durability of solvent-based inks, but without the environmental problems such as workplace ventilation and waste disposal. Supported printers include the Mimaki JV2/JV4, the Mutoh R6100/8100/Falcon and the Roland FJ/HiFi/Pro.

Lumocolor inks can be printed on a variety of substrates, including PVC film, plotter film, paper, textiles, glass, plywood, vinyl and polypropylene. The inks contain heat-sensitive binders, which allow the ink to be sealed to difficult materials such as polypropylene. The printing process does not depend on a chemical reaction with the substrate (which is the case with solvent-based inks).

Lumocolor inks are available in the U.S. and Canada through Staedtler's distributor, CGS Publishing Technologies International, www.cgsusa.com.

Rose Displays AnoFrame



Rose Displays, Ltd., has announced the new AnoFrame

MultiSystem. The AnoFrame is cut to the customer's specifications, and frames can be linked using Rose Displays' proprietary connectors, creating custom display panels of virtually any size. AnoFrames are both top- and side-loading, so graphics can be changed in seconds without disassembling the display.

Rose Displays offers accessories including MultiClips or Cable Clips for hanging panels; window mounts with black, white or clear caps; suction cups; wall mounting or slatwall hangers; and bottom frame holders made of galvanized steel.

Stock finishes are clear or black anodized aluminum. Custom colors and finishes are also available. Connectors are available in black or silver.

For more information, call 1-800-631-9707 or visit www.rosedisplays.com.

Lower-Cost Wide-Format Toners

Valley Supplies, Inc.'s new low-cost line of CopymatUSA toners are designed to be compatible with Océ wide-format printers. Valley Supplies offers same-day shipping throughout the world, and guarantees the toners will meet or exceed OEM specifications.

CopymatUSA toners were specifically developed for use in the Océ 7050, 7055, 9300, 9400, 9600, TDS400, TDS600. For more information, visit www.copymatusa.com. ●

Digital Document Capabilities: Business Asset or Growing Liability?

In Managing Large-Format Digital Files, author John T. Phillips, of Information Technology Decisions, discusses electronic document management, one of the central issues facing the industry. Topics include:

- Defining digital files as business records
- Digital asset management
- Technology and industry change
- Managing for the next century

Visit the IRgA Bookstore at www.irga.com or call 800.833.4742 to order your copy today!

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Merchandise Mart

Océ 9476 plotter/ copier in "scan to print and plot" configuration. Large quantity, available for immediate delivery. Good meters. Coming off Océ service, each unit has Océ "service letter." These are great machines for sale to end-users or expansion of FM operations. Call Tom McNew at DIGITAL ES 800/749-1138 or mcnew@digital-es.com.

Digital ES has the industry's largest inventory of used wide-format copiers, printers and plotters. All major manufacturers' machines in stock. Available as full refurb or "as is where is," from our dock or delivered and installed, 20 years plus in the business. We speak your language. Call us 800/749-1138 or mcnew@digital-es.com.

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We repair **Skrebba staplers**. (factory authorized service agency) Model 23, 117 and all current models. Contact Zack & Associates Inc., 847/462-1460 or FAX 847/462-1580.

CLC 5100 w/Z7000 Fiery RIP! Only 10 months old. Call JP Teti, 800/357-3776; jpteti@triangleart.com

Opportunities

Midwest blueprint firm interested in **acquisitions or investments** from 50% to 100% in blueprint and related companies with sales of \$3 million to \$6 million. Looking for mostly financial and strategic planning involvement in ventures. Will pay cash/annuity for operationally strong firms in any financial condition. Contact Brett Scully, Lakeside Blueprint, at 216/281-1234; e-mail: bscully@eblueprint.com.

National Reprographics Inc. is looking for **acquisitions** within the reprographic and digital color industries. Interested in well-managed firms of any size located in larger metropolitan markets. Contact Doug Magid at doug@nrinet.com or (212) 366-7063.

Positions Available

Georgia Blue Imaging, a 94-year-old Reprographics company with 5 metro Atlanta locations is looking for **sales professionals** to call on existing and new accounts. We are a full service company and specialize in plan room services. Your experience in the Reprographics Industry is a must. Please e-mail your resume to bhofels@gablue.com.

Progressive Atlanta based reseller of high level Reprographics systems is seeking top **executive sales person** with a proven track record in software sales. Base salary plus very attractive commission plan offered. Benefits include health & dental plans, 401k, two weeks vacation plus five days sick leave. Some national travel required. Candidate must be a self-starter and able to embrace the company's very strong customer satisfaction and loyalty pursuit. Email resume to ejj@bmsatlanta.com.

Exciting Improvements Made to Convention and Trade Show Format



Steve Bova, CAE
Executive Director

If the IRgA were a car, you could say that its engine is being overhauled. Over the years, from wear and tear, an engine loses its performance – even with an occasional tune-up. The same goes for conventions and trade shows, especially considering the changes affecting the meetings industry the past several years.

The new IRgA Convention and Trade Show will debut May 11–13 in Las Vegas, Nevada, with an increased focus on education, networking and the overall convention experience. You can say this is not your father's Oldsmobile!

2005 Convention Chair, Mike Carter, Lynn Imaging, Lexington, KY and Program Chair Bill Schaberg, American Reprographics Company, Glendale, CA, with input from President Chuck Gremillion, A&E – The Graphics Complex, Houston, TX and the IRgA staff, have worked

diligently to assemble the new parts to your convention. Here's a summary of the major upgrades:

Wednesday Golf Tournament receives boost in sponsorship. Thanks to a generous commitment from Contex, Inc., and the leadership of Golf Chair Bob Margolis, the IRgA Golf Tournament will be held at a premier Las Vegas course. In addition to an eye opener coffee networking gathering and a sit-down lunch and awards ceremony, the event promises more prizes for golfers.

More exhibitor participation. The food and beverage portion of the welcoming reception held on the trade show floor is being expanded to include exhibitors, and exhibitors are being encouraged to attend the educational sessions.

No overlap between educational program and trade show hours! The educational program will begin Thursday morning with an opening general session, followed by hands-on educational workshops the remainder of the morning. Trade show hours will follow in the afternoon, beginning with lunch on the trade show floor. Friday will begin with breakout sessions in the morning, followed by a capstone professional speaker on the subject of branding at lunch.

Condensed, focused trade show hours. The trade show will be held in the afternoon both Thursday and Friday, with more ways to engage exhibitors and attendees.

More networking opportunities. Last year's attendees spoke loud and clear on their evaluation forms and with their feet! In response to the need for additional networking opportunities, there will be eye-opener networking sessions before the educational program begins each morning, and networking receptions will be held in favor of the traditional President's Dinner and dance.

More time to explore Las Vegas! Attendees have also indicated they would like to have more time to explore the city and its attractions. Everyone knows there is plenty to do in Las Vegas! The IRgA social functions will conclude early enough so that participants can explore Vegas on their own or in a group.

Ultimately, the upgrades will provide for a better overall convention experience for both exhibitors and reprographers – one in which you will want to return year after year. Registration for the 2005 Convention and Trade Show in Las Vegas opens in January. Be sure to reserve your spot to take the new IRgA for a test drive! ●



Check Out the Convention Preview!

Turn to pages 16-23 to find out what's coming up at this year's IRgA Convention and Trade Show, including:

- A schedule of events
- Information on our education program, panels and speakers
- A list of exhibitors in our Trade Show
- Hotel and travel information, including discounts for attendees
- Details for the annual golf tournament as well as the sightseeing tours in and around Las Vegas
- Your complete registration form

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