

REPRO REPORT

IRgA

Volume 26
July/August 2007

Convention Highlights

A recap of the 81st Annual IRgA Convention & Trade Show



How Do I Choose?

Taking the Offense Against Offset

It Won't Print!





Building Information Modeling— Integrate Your Digital Services

By Sal Sheikh, *VP Marketing*
Océ Wide Format Printing Division

Getting the right documents to the right people on time is not an easy task. It's one of the reasons why many projects are delayed. Project owners' concerns reveal several opportunities for improving document processes throughout the building life cycle¹:

- 54% of project owners believe the quality of design and construction documents has declined due to the demand for increased project delivery speed;
- In 47% of the projects, more time was needed to prepare construction documents than planned;
- 71% of owners find as-built drawings a significant challenge during the operational phase.

Building Information Modeling (BIM) will address some of these issues. Ten or fifteen years from now, perhaps all members in a building project will have immediate access to a central BIM database where they can create their own construction documents. Until then, digital plan rooms and online project collaboration tools are intermediate steps to a fully integrated BIM. And even then, digital plan rooms and online project collaboration will still continue to be used on many projects.

Be Your Customers' Print and Archiving Button

On the path to a fully integrated BIM, the digital exchange of information will increase. More and more end users of information will determine exactly what they want to have printed directly from their online project collaboration space, digital plan room or CAD application. The result will be an increase in the number of jobs that arrive in

a reprographer's shop, but a decrease in the size of each job. At the same time, the need for speed will continue to increase. Many reprographers are restructuring their workflow to create a new, streamlined approach to their production, facilitated by the separation of printing and scanning operations, to enable them to handle the growth in smaller jobs. In this way, workload can be more easily balanced across all available equipment and hardware utilization can increase.

There is also an opportunity to provide additional digital services to owners and general contractors by offering archiving services for as-built drawings. The BIM model is not likely to meet all record retention requirements by itself. With an as-built archive service, reprographers can secure the printing volume that takes place during a building's maintenance and operational phase—and enhance the value of their client/reprographer partnership.

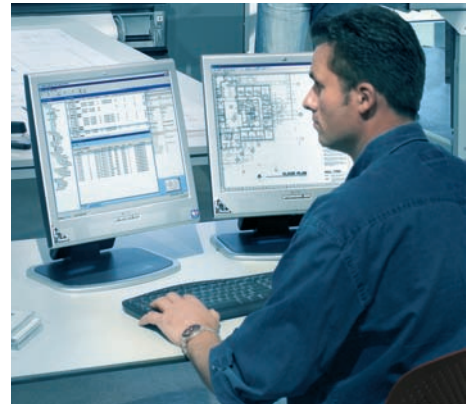
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Océ offers true end-to-end integrated solutions to help reprographers secure printing volumes and expand their offerings in digital services. The benefits of these integrated solutions are:

- **Allow customers to save time preparing construction documents:** Océ Client Tools™ software is a free collection of batch file processing and printing utilities that can be seamlessly integrated into a customer's work environment. It will save customers valuable time when creating their document sets.
- **Grow your business:** Customers can use free Océ Client Tools software to print their files either locally or directly to their repro shop. This new digital workflow makes it easy for customers to do business with you and will help grow your print volumes.

■ Increase the speed of delivery:

Océ Repro Desk® Professional software receives print and archiving orders from different sources, including Océ Client Tools software. Various print automation and workflow features allow reprographers to speed up the production process to better serve their customers.



- **Archive as-built drawings:** Using Océ Repro Desk Professional's Document Center functionality, as-built drawings can be archived in a well-structured way for easy retrieval and reprinting without loss of information. This digital service can expand a reprographer's business with owners and general contractors.

To find out more about how Océ can enhance the integration of digital services in your shop, visit www.océusa.com/reprodeskprofessional for information on Océ Client Tools software and new Océ Repro Desk Professional software, or call 800-714-4427.

¹ Source: CMAA/FMI, 2003 Owner Survey Results



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How Do I Choose?

Upgrading technology involves gathering knowledge, networking with peers, and hands-on testing

By Ed Avis

When you bought that Bruning diazo printer in 1969, did you call up your buddy in the next town and ask him what he liked? Or did you test drive it at an IRgA trade show?



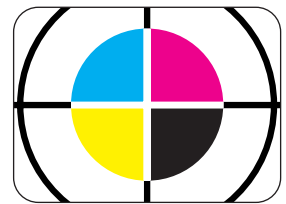
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Taking the Offense Against Offset

High-speed, small-format digital color presses can help you bite into another market

By Ed Avis

A reprographics shop printing picture books? Exactly.



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Convention Highlights

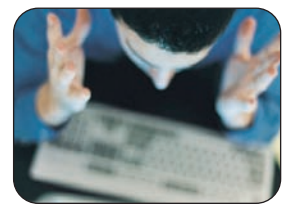
The IRgA and its members experienced another successful Annual Convention & Trade Show. The association would like to thank all those who attended and contributed to the event.

It Won't Print!

How to Find Long-Term Solutions to Avoid a Common Problem

By Navina Waterman

Every repro shop has experienced the pain of dealing with files that simply won't print...or won't print "right," according to the expectations of your customer. So how do you deal with this issue? And do you charge your customer to deal with it? Is there a light at the end of the tunnel?



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Tall Tales: IRgA's Success isn't a Fish Story



Mike Carter
President
2006-2007

The following article is an edited excerpt of President Mike Carter's comments at the IRgA's 2007 Convention & Trade Show.

I love to fish. Last June, when the Convention Committee met in Dallas to plan the IRgA Convention, I was committed to put on the IRgA's first annual bass fishing tournament. After looking into the logistics and hearing that there just aren't enough fish to carry on a tournament, we gave up on the idea.

In January, I was watching ESPN's Bassmasters show. They were holding the Busch Shootout for the top B.A.S.S. professionals on a surprise lake. Lake Grapevine at the Gaylord Texan! We can equate Lake Grapevine to the IRgA—a real good secret.

Good fishermen don't reveal their best spots. The word will get out, and when it does, all fishermen will want to go there and get in on the action. A lot of us understand how valuable and important it is to be a member of the IRgA, but some still don't. We must all continue to try to get the word out.

Before I took office last August, IRgA Executive Director Steve Bova asked me what my legacy was going to be and how he and the IRgA staff could help me to achieve my goals. I felt the IRgA needed to enhance its membership value proposition and begin to convince the industry that the association was something they needed to be a part of.

We would do this though improved communication and focus on expanding our educational vision. We have a solid strategic plan in place. The long-term proof is in your continuing support and faith in our ability to deliver.

What is great about the IRgA Board today is that we function as a cohesive team.

Dan Stephens has done a wonderful job as treasurer, securing another banner year financially for the IRgA, and working with the staff to ensure that the board receives financial statements on a monthly basis.

Mike Cully, with no financial oversight, served independently as chair of the Audit Committee.

John Cronin led the educational vision, along with Woodie Rush and an Education Committee, that has met monthly via conference call. The result so far—and it's just the beginning—is quarterly Webinars delivered free to IRgA members.

Chuck Hayes led the Membership Committee, along with Earl Buchmann, Michael Shaw and Rush. Our membership numbers have increased this year after decreasing each year since 1999.

The board recently approved a revised membership structure (see page 6).

Bob Roperti and Kip Young spearheaded a project to develop a more robust Web site where our customers—particularly those in the construction business—will have access to our member companies. They are also reviewing options on how the association can communicate through various media such as discussion forums and blogs.

The Digital Services Committee continued its work under the leadership of Chuck Gremillion and six others. The committee will be unveiling more information on this subject in the coming months.

Bryan Thomas and Gary Wilbur deserve accolades for producing a record-breaking convention and trade show. When we met last year to begin our planning, each of us had some reservations about Dallas, following Las Vegas and Orlando.

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Continued on page 25



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 - *News Digest* e-newsletter
 - IRgA Membership Directory
 - Online Discussion Forum
- Mounting & Laminating Seminars
 - Salary Survey
 - Property/Casualty Insurance
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**A discount to attend the 82nd Annual IRgA Convention
and Trade Show – May 14-16 in Las Vegas, NV**

Visit <http://w3.irga.com/RR/member> to take advantage of these
great membership benefits or to learn more.

IRgA Simplifies Membership Dues Structure

Becoming an IRgA member company just got easier.

In May, the IRgA Board of Directors approved a new membership structure.

The new structure allows a reprographics company—and all of its locations under the same name—to be represented and benefit from membership with a single dues amount based on the total number of employees within their company.

The objectives that the new structure accomplishes are:

1. **Inclusiveness.** For the IRgA to represent the entire industry, it is important to maximize industry participation by allowing for all reprographic companies—and all of their locations—to be members. The former structure required a separate membership for each metropolitan area in which a company location resided. Owners had to decide which locations they would include as members, which resulted in confusion. The new structure accepts all branch

locations regardless of geographic location. All company employees are IRgA members.

2. **Fairness and consistency.** Under the former structure, smaller companies outside of a metropolitan area, felt unwelcomed. Under the new structure, companies anywhere may participate and pay a dues level commensurate with the size of their company.
3. **Viability.** The new structure takes into consideration the long-term interests of the IRgA. It enables the association to adapt to the changing reprographics environment currently flush with mergers and acquisitions.
4. **Simplicity.** Are you a reprographics company? How many locations do you have? How many total people do you employ? It's that simple.

How It Will Work

Under the new structure, each member company will identify its Headquarters Location to serve as the Primary Member Location and Key

Contact. Each Branch Location will also have a Key Contact.

Upon joining or renewing IRgA membership, the Primary Member Contact will be asked to verify or include all company location information on record with the IRgA and assign a Key Contact for each location. Having key contacts will allow the IRgA to communicate effectively with its member companies and all of their locations.

One of the objectives of the “new IRgA” is to drive value throughout the entire company—to all levels of employees. It is a true corporate membership.

The IRgA membership grew in 2006-07 for the first time in eight years. With a solid value proposition and plan in place, the IRgA is poised for continued growth and maximum industry representation in the future.

Contact IRgA headquarters at 800/833-4742 if you have any questions about the new membership structure.

Register Now for 2007 Mounting and Laminating Seminars

The IRgA is offering our popular mounting and laminating seminars for the 12th year. 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. Drytac Corp. will once again host and administer the sessions. Class size is limited to 10 participants to ensure personalized attention.

The two-day seminar includes:

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

Seminar Dates: August 9-10 Chicago, Illinois
October 18-19 Concord, Ontario, Canada

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

Upcoming Regional Conventions

Central Reprographic Association

Sept. 13-15

Hyatt Regency Minneapolis
Minneapolis, Minn.

Contact: Tracy Albinson

Phone: 952/884-3581

E-mail: tracya@imagetechservices.com

Western Reprographic Association

Sept. 20-23

W Hotel Seattle
Seattle, Wash.

Contact: Mike Shemilt

Phone: 250/385-9786

E-mail: mshemilt@islandblue.com

Eastern Regional Reprographic Association

Oct. 31 - Nov. 2

Galt House Hotel & Suites
Louisville, Ky.

Contact: Silvia Dugan

Phone: 717/854-7821

E-mail: sdugan@printostat.com

Southeastern Reprographic Association

Oct. 31 - Nov. 2

Galt House Hotel & Suites
Louisville, Ky.

Contact: Glenn Norvell

Phone: 859/255-1021

E-mail: norvell@lynnimaging.com

IRgA Webinars Offered Free for Members

In 2006, the IRgA successfully launched its new Webinar program, and 2007 promises even more opportunities to strengthen your business and educate your staff.

The Webinar is a live interactive Web conference, hosted by an industry expert on a specific topic. Registration includes one telephone connection at one location, one Internet connection and an unlimited number of participants from your organization. All participants must register in order to receive login/dial-in information.

2007 Scheduled Topics

Sept. 12, 2007 – Operational Efficiency

Dec. 5, 2007 – Sales Force Management

Webinars are free to IRgA Members; \$99 for non-members. For more information about the upcoming Webinars, contact the IRgA at 800/833-4742.

Committee Volunteers Still Needed for 2007-08

The IRgA is looking for a few good men and women to serve the association in its expanded committee structure. Several members have come forth recently to serve the association, and we have put them to work. The IRgA has expanded the Education and Digital Services committees to include more member volunteers. As we prepare for our 2007-08 committee year, which began Aug. 1, we're looking to expand our committee structure to include more member volunteers on other committees.

Visit www.irga.com/about/committees.cfm for a list and description of standing committees. If you are interested in serving on an IRgA committee in 2007-08 and have not indicated your interest, please send an e-mail to Steve Bova at sbova@irga.com.

Xerox Receives the National Medal of Technology

Xerox Corporation was selected to receive the U.S. National Medal of Technology, recognizing more than 50 years of innovation in marking, materials, electronics, communications and software that created the modern reprographics, electronic printing and print on demand industries. Xerox representatives received the award July 27 at the White House.

The National Medal of Technology is the highest honor awarded by the President of the United States to America's leading innovators. The medal is given to individuals, teams and/or companies/divisions for their outstanding contributions to the nation's economic, environmental and social well-being through the development and commercialization of technology products, processes and concepts; technological innovation; and development of the nation's technological manpower.

The purpose of the National Medal of Technology is to recognize those that made lasting contributions to America's competitiveness, standard of living and quality of life through technological innovation. It also recognizes those that made substantial contributions to strengthening the nation's technological workforce. By highlighting the national importance of technological innovation, the Medal also seeks to inspire future generations of Americans to prepare for and pursue technical careers to keep the United States at the forefront of global technology and economic leadership.

The National Medal of Technology Evaluation Committee reviews and evaluates all nominations for the Medal of Technology. The committee makes its recommendations for medal candidates to the Secretary of Commerce, who in turn makes recommendations to the President for final selection.

Xerox joins an illustrious group of past individuals and corporations including IBM, Bell Labs, DuPont and Dow Chemical.

CRA's 2007 Annual Convention and Tradeshow Focuses on 'Foundations for Success'

The Central Reprographic Association 2007 Annual Convention and Tradeshow – Minneapolis, Minn., Sept. 13-15 – will boast five educational sessions and a sales training workshop. All of the events will deal with major items of interest to the large format printing industry.

Presenters are Rick Farrell, Tangent Knowledge Systems; Phil Magenheimer, IDEAL.com; Sallie Voyles, Training for Success and a panel discussion on customer's changing needs and expectations from a customer's perspective. Guest speaker Dave St. Peter, president of the Minnesota Twins Baseball Team, will discuss building a baseball stadium from an owner's perspective.

There will be more than 40 booths at the trade show exhibits featuring major machine manufacturers, the latest services and products for the reprographic industry. Planned social events offer opportunities for networking with reprographers from 18 states.

Saturday night's Minnesota Twins vs. Detroit Tigers baseball game will bring the convention to a close. The CRA Convention's theme is "Foundations for Success."

Convention registration materials are available on the CRA Web site – www.cra1.org. Please call 630/351-2202 to request a convention registration mailing.

SRA ERRA 2007 Joint Convention and Trade Show is a 'Race'

The Southeastern Reprographic Association (SRA) is hosting members from the Eastern Regional Reprographic Association (ERRA) at its 2007 annual convention in Louisville, Ky., Oct. 31 – Nov. 2.

The convention features Vince Lombardi, Jr., as the keynote speaker and offers four, high-impact educational programs designed to help reprographers improve revenue streams in a changing industry. The presenters will offer expertise on the most requested topics of interest to reprographers and are all well-known leaders from within the reprographic community.

Educational topics include "Charging For Things Other Than Printing," "BIM – What Does It Mean To The Reprographer?," "Operational Efficiency/Workflow" and "Proper Training: Understanding and Managing Your Sales Force."

Trade show exhibit space is sold out to more than 35 nationally known suppliers featuring machines, software, media and other vital products for the reprographic industry. Planned social events offer opportunities for networking with reprographers from 21 states. Activities include an outing to Churchill Downs (a day at the races). New this year is the live SRA Charity Auction, which will benefit the Wounded Warrior Project.

Visit the SRA Web site, www.serepro.com for convention information and registration materials. Or, contact Shirley Zawoyski at 630/351-2202 for additional information.

Do you have news? **REPRO REPORT** wants to hear from you! Send updates about your awards, acquisitions, personnel or new locations to Dennis Coyle, managing editor, dcoyle@irga.com.

News Bits

Blueprint Paper Goes Green

In an effort to further the green movement, a Denver reprographics company will begin offering printing services on recycled paper.

eBlueprint's new service will give architects, engineers, general contractors, builders and developers the ability to order construction documents and specifications on paper with 30 percent recycled content. Customers also can order recycled paper for in-house printing and plotting.

As a result of its sustainable practices, eBlueprint reduced its paper consumption by 60 percent in three years and has reduced its

delivery fleet by 30 percent within the past year.

Earl Buchmann Joins Seiko I Infotech



Seiko I Infotech-Americas announced Earl Buchmann as the newest member of its sales

management team.

Buchmann comes to Seiko with a breadth of reprographic experience, (30-year industry veteran), holding numerous management positions at companies such as Xerox, Toshiba America and, most recently, Kyocera Mita.

Pat Ryan, general manager of Seiko I Infotech-Americas, said, "We are excited to have Earl join our team. "With his expertise in channel management and business development, we look forward to Earl's help in accelerating the growth of our Teriostar Business across the United States."

Seiko I Infotech Inc. is a leading company in wide-format printing technology and is a subsidiary company of Seiko Instruments, Inc. (SII), headquartered in Chiba, Japan.

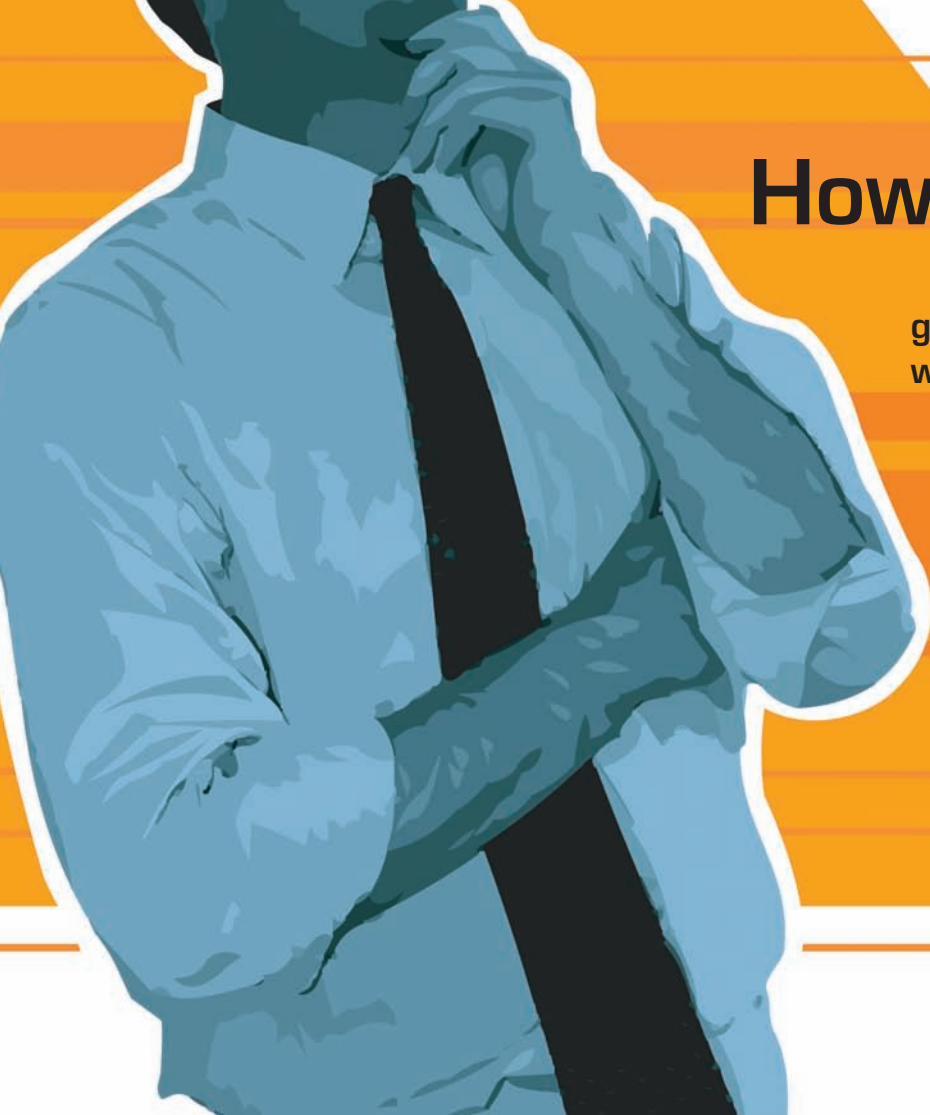
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How Do I Choose?

Upgrading technology involves gathering knowledge, networking with peers, and hands-on testing

By Ed Avis



When you bought that Bruning diazo printer in 1969, did you call up your buddy in the next town and ask him what he liked? Or did you test drive it at an IRgA trade show? Or read about it in *Plan & Print*?

All of those methods—gathering info from peers, testing equipment and reading magazine reviews—still play a role in smart buying decisions. But the methods and sources of information have greatly improved.

IRgA, ReproMAX, PiER, the Reprographic Services Association and other reprographics organizations now use online forums, structured equipment testing, and educational seminars to learn about new technology and share that info with members.

It all adds up to having the information you need to make a smart purchase.

“Networking with other firms, such as at networking events sponsored by IRgA, helps to narrow the field on technology

investments. I place more confidence in these investment decisions when we’ve networked with other successful firms that use the same products,” says Bob Roperti, owner of Jiffy Reprographics in Clearwater, Florida.

Peer knowledge not the only issue

While getting information from other reprographers may be your best tool when choosing new equipment, other sources of information also play a role.

For example, many reprographers count on publications such as *Larry Hunt’s High Speed Copy News* and *Larry Hunt’s Color Copy News* to get detailed information on equipment before buying. These newsletters provide a lot of “street” prices of equipment, information on supplies costs, letters from readers who have gotten good deals on equipment, etc.

Trade magazines, including *REPRO REPORT*, of course, also offer product information that helps buyers sort out

manufacturers’ claims. For example, read the article on high-speed color copiers on page 12 of this month’s issue.

Web sites, both from the vendors and from publications, are also decent sources of information. They’re often biased—and of course vendor Web sites focus on their own products only—but the Web is loaded with valuable general information that can help a buyer make the right choice.

Beyond information

Other factors—such as existing relationships to vendors and experiences with their products—also play a role in product purchase decisions.

For example, when Rikki Gerson-Parry, president and CEO of Universal Reprographics in Los Angeles, wanted to get into high-speed, small-format digital color, she didn’t evaluate the half dozen products on the market. She went straight to Xerox, her vendor of choice.

"We already had Xerox color equipment, and we've just been moving up the scale with them," Gerson-Parry says. "We've always been very happy with Xerox products."

Try it out

Naturally, technology decisions usually entail an actual try-out of the equipment in question.

Vendors are generally happy to let potential buyers test equipment. Getting your hands on a copier, running some jobs, changing the toner, trying the different settings, etc., all help buyers make smart choices.

Trade shows are a great place to do this. Vendor exhibits at the IRgA convention, regional reprographics conventions and conventions of other associations are loaded with vendors begging potential buyers to try out their gear. Buyers need to beware of trade-show hype, of course, but trade shows are a great place to try many machines at one location.

"It's just like buying a car. If you go in with no idea what you need, the salesperson has a great ability to affect your decision," says Tanner Bechtel, director of technology and marketing at ReproMAX. "If you go in with lots of information, you'll make more profitable decisions."

Bechtel says some of the best technology doesn't catch on, simply because it doesn't get evaluated and supported by the right people. "So if we find a technology we believe in, we stand behind it and...get the momentum started."

How do they do it?

The organizations differ in how they evaluate technology and disseminate the information to members.

IRgA disseminates tech information at its annual conventions and other meetings and through *REPRO REPORT*. IRgA members also frequently use the association's e-mail forum to discuss new technologies. And the conversations with other IRgA members, either formal discussions at meetings or informal

phone calls, are a vital source of information for many members.

At the Reprographic Services Association (RSA), a standing technology committee checks out new technologies and products, and gives a heads-up to members when something interesting comes up.

"New ideas and opportunities that arise from the committee's activity, and are deemed promising and worthy of further evaluation, are presented to members," says Larry Morken, director of sales and marketing for RSA.

Sometimes the RSA forms ad-hoc committees of members to dig deeper into certain technology, Morken says. They check out manufacturers' claims, test drive the equipment, evaluate costs, etc., and then let other RSA members know what the deal is.

The RSA, which has 147 member firms and is headquartered in Westminster, Colo., spreads the information gleaned by the technology committees at its shareholder and educational meetings, which are held throughout the year.

ReproMAX also does a lot of product testing for its members.

"We try to do as much testing as we can," Bechtel says. "We use our leverage and size to get vendors to come out and work directly with one of our members onsite. Then we use that as a case study."

Once those members test the equipment, they share the information with other ReproMAX members through their educational conferences and online forums.

"Probably one of the greatest benefits of ReproMAX are our secure forums," Bechtel says. "Members are able to ask questions of other members and get confidential answers."

ReproMAX represents about 350 repro locations, and it is headquartered in Chesterfield, Mo.

PiER, which stands for Profits and Education in Reprographics, also disseminates tech information from members.

PiER, which has 160 member firms representing 280 locations, features ongoing online forums on a variety of tech topics that members can log into for info. And, like the other groups mentioned here, PiER disseminates information at meetings.

In the end, the key to a smart buying decision is combining knowledge, vendor reputation and hands-on testing.

"In May I invited all the interested members to Chicago for a two-day school that Oce is holding," explains Shaun Meany, PiER's executive director. "The meeting shows Oce equipment and competitors' equipment, and lets them test it, run jobs on it, etc."

Some of the organizations take it a step further and even help develop products.

ReproMAX, for example, co-developed a construction information management application with McGraw-Hill Construction. Bechtel said he did an eight-city tour to train sales staff at ReproMAX member companies to represent the program, called ReproMAX PDM.

RSA has its version of document management system, too, called the PlanCommand System. And PiER offers its members access to PlanWell, an online document storage system developed by American Reprographics Corp., which is the sponsoring organization behind PiER.

In the end, the key to a smart buying decision is combining knowledge, vendor reputation and hands-on testing.

"The opportunities to meet with industry experts, vendors and reprographic professionals from all the affinity groups...gives us greater understanding of best practices, trends and technologies, allowing buying decisions to be based on objective criteria rather than merely a hunch," says Michael Shaw, president of Central Blue Print in Great Neck, N.Y. ●

Ed Avis is a freelance writer in Oak Park, Ill.



Taking the Offense Against ffset

High-speed, small-format digital color presses can help you bite into another market

By Ed Avis

Did your teenager bring home a student picture book from school this spring, filled with the smiling faces of her classmates? If you live near Los Angeles, that saddle-stitched, glossy booklet may have been produced by Universal Reprographics, Los Angeles, Calif.

A reprographics shop printing picture books? Exactly.

Projects like that fall precisely into a new category of work Universal has discovered: the quality and trim size of jobs produced on an offset press, but without the giant press runs. And, sometimes, with information changing on each page.

Universal tapped this niche two years ago when it installed a Xerox iGen small-format, high-speed digital press.

“The niche for this machine is a good amount of originals and a smaller amount of copies,” says Rikki Gerson-Parry, president and CEO of Universal Reprographics. “For example, 50 originals and 100 copies—that’s a good job for this machine.”

A regular offset printer wouldn’t touch that job, because the make-ready would cost way more than the job is worth. But digital presses can handle this work profitably because the

make-ready doesn’t involve creating plates or adjusting ink levels: It’s all computerized, just like your digital engineering copier.

These digital, small-format presses, which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, are made by Xerox, Hewlett-Packard, Océ and Kodak. The quality these presses produce is outstanding. For most applications, the customer won’t be able to tell the difference between a digitally printed item and a regular offset printed item.

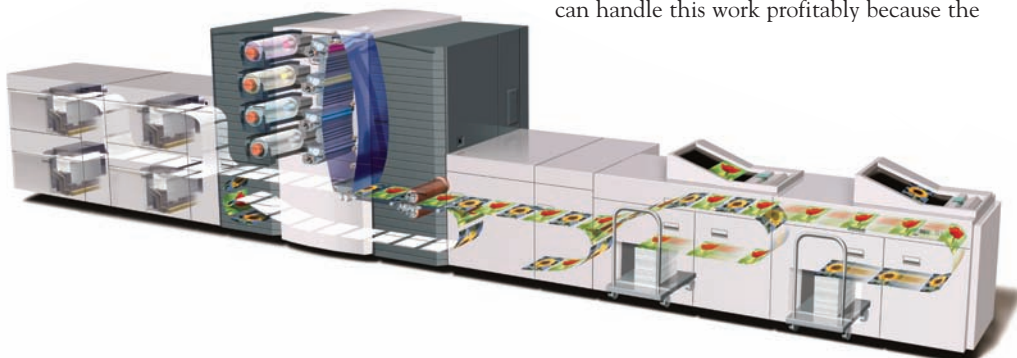
These presses print in process color or black only. Some of them whip out up to 200 pages or more per minute, and handle a variety of paper stocks. Some are actually offset presses using digital technology to automate the process; others are toner-based. What unites all the products in this category is that they have digital front ends. (See more product details in the sidebar.)

Pros and Cons

Digital presses have a number of advantages.

First, they get your shop into new markets. If you’ve envied the brochure printing your competing small print shop does, now you can match it. And you can probably do it more easily than they can because you’re not dealing with a regular four-color press. The digital presses can do process color, but it’s all contained in the machine—you’re not messing with four separate rollers like a four-color offset press.

And you’ve got some other advantages over that offset person. First, you can affordably print shorter runs, as Gerson-Parry points out. A lot of originals and short runs are killers for offset because they need to do the make-ready for each original. Not so with a digital press. You can produce 25 copies of a 100-page





annual report affordably—that project could never be done well on a regular offset press.

Another major advantage you have over typical offset is the ability to incorporate variable data into the print run.

What does this mean? It means if your customer wants to send 1,000 flyers to 1,000 different customers, you can incorporate each customer's name into her own flyer! You've seen these kinds of documents many times—imagine the “junk” mail you get with your name already printed on the enclosed letter. Variable data printing doesn't have to be that crude, though; you could print posters for a chain of grocery stores that varies the price of tomatoes depending on the going price at a given store. Of course, this involves some smart software, good, clean data and a knowledgeable operator.

Now, there are some issues you'll need to deal with if you get the digital press.

Foremost, you need to properly train your operator.

“It was a huge learning curve,” Gerson-Perry says. Her staff spent two weeks learning how to operate the press, one week of which was at a Xerox training facility and the other week onsite. The training allowed the workers to become certified, so they can now make minor repairs and routine maintenance on the machine without calling Xerox service.

The second big issue is finding the right markets. Since you'll be investing six figures into this machine, you better have enough work—or hope to get enough—to make it pay for itself.

Gerson-Perry says Universal Blueprint has succeeded in this regard largely by relying on print brokers to find work for its press. The brokers have customers well beyond Universal's normal market, such as the schools mentioned above. Universal's own salespeople also promote the services. The firm has found a good market printing medium-run quantities of four-color, 14" x 20" posters for local shopping malls.

“You need a lot of volume to go with that machine,” Gerson-Perry says. “It's expensive.”

Maintaining a digital press is another issue that demands attention. Like any sophisticated piece of equipment, this one needs proper, well trained care. Gerson-Perry says the iGen requires the “average” amount of service a piece of equipment like that normally needs. “I don't have any complaints. Xerox service is very good.”

Supplies costs need to be considered, too. Even if the machine you get has an offset printer in its heart, you still won't be using buckets of regular offset ink. Each machine has its own ink or toner requirements. Paper also may be an issue, though the variety of paper available for digital presses has expanded. ●

Ed Avis is a freelance writer in Oak Park, Illinois.

Availability: You Have Options

Here's a rundown of the small-format digital presses:

Xerox

The Xerox iGen comes in two models. The iGen3 90 has a max output speed of 5,400 pages per hour, in either color or black only. The iGen2 110 can print up to 7,200 pages per hour. Both models have a 30,000-sheet capacity, and you can add a roll feeder for another 50,000 sheets. It can print pages as small as 7" x 7", up to 14.33" x 20.5." The extra-length option increases that to 22.5."

The iGen uses Xerox's SmartPress Imaging technology, which transfers the image to the paper in one pass. The machine can be controlled by the Xerox DocuSP Color Controller, or third-party controllers from Creo or EFI.

www.xerox.com

Océ

Océ's digital color press offerings include the VarioPrint line. These machines really fly, producing up to 15,000 prints per hour. A key feature of the VarioPrint is the ability to print both sides of the paper simultaneously, which obviously accelerates the printer's speed. They also feature 12 feed trays, making paper selection and changing simple. www.oce.com

HP

The HP Indigo Press 5000 produces 4,000 four-color pages, 8,000 two-color pages, or 16,000 monochrome pages per hour. This press differs from the Xerox iGen and Océ VarioPrint in that it's actually an offset press contained in a digital system (it doesn't use regular printer inks, but the inks

are liquid). The liquid inks give it the ability to emulate regular offset presses. You can add special colors and effects with the press' 5-, 6- and 7-color inking station configurations. It creates prints with a max size of 12.1" x 17.7." www.hp.com/go/graphic-arts

Kodak

Kodak produces a variety of digital presses. The Nexpress line of small-format, digital color presses. The Nexpress 2500 cranks out 2,500 8.5" x 11," single-sided, four-color sheets per hour. It can be upgraded to 3,000 sheets per hour. It can come in a five-color configuration, which allows for a wider color gamut and spot color application. Kodak also makes digital offset presses, such as the DirectPress 5634, and high-speed, small-format inkjet presses, such as the Versamark VT3000.

www.graphics.kodak.com

All of these presses have their strengths. As with any new technology—especially one that's going to cost a significant amount of money—take the time to get your hands on the machine before you invest.

If you do make the plunge, remember that marketing your new services will be essential to your success.

For one shop that dove in, the decision seems right: “We're definitely moving in the right direction,” says Universal's Gerson-Perry. “We've doubled our output in the two years we've had the machine. We've surpassed our goals.”



★ Convention Highlights



The IRgA Experiences Another Successful Annual Convention and Trade Show



Michael Shaw, president, Central Blue Print, Great Neck, N.Y.



John Cronin, president & CEO, PLP Digital Systems, Arlington, Va.

The IRgA appreciates the service of Michael Shaw (left), president, Central Blue Print; and John Cronin, president and CEO, PLP Digital Systems. Their terms on the board of directors expired in July. Shaw served as past president, and Cronin served as a vendor director.

The International Reprographic Association (IRgA) is proud to report its 81st Annual Convention and Trade Show as a major success.

Nearly 1,000 registrants traveled to the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Dallas, May 9-11, to partake in the industry's largest gathering of reprographers.

The combination of the sold-out trade show, robust educational offerings, various networking opportunities and

enjoyable social event helped make this year's event top last year's numbers.

Executive Director Steve Bova, CAE, said the event came together just as expected.

"Many IRgA board members and volunteer members worked diligently with staff to coordinate a world-class event that was highly valuable and enjoyable," Bova said. "On behalf of the entire IRgA community, I want to thank everyone involved in the process."

One of the main attractions at the convention was the trade show that showcased innovative technologies, products and services in wide- and small-format digital printing. More than 60 exhibitors packed the floor. In the past four years alone, the trade show floor size has increased nearly 40 percent in floor size.

Aside from the trade show, attendees were able to participate an exceptional educational lineup spearheaded by Program Chair Gary Wilbur. When not inside learning about cutting-edge technologies from the trade show, listening to industry experts or enjoy networking events, many attendees hit the links at the Cowboys Golf Club.

In fact, 102 golfers participated in the annual tournament with hole sponsorship and mulligan sales going to the IRgA Educational Foundation.

In addition to an overall successful event, Bova was especially impressed with the number of first-time attendees. This year, nearly 100 new attendees registered for the annual meeting and trade show.

"There are many great things to say about the annual convention, but I was really impressed that we had nearly 100 first-time attendees," Bova said. "This speaks volumes about the annual convention and IRgA in general. We have a solid reputation within the industry. Industry professionals, both new and veteran, continue to join our association; they continue to attend our events."

The IRgA is already ramping up for the 82nd Annual Convention and Trade show, which will be held May 14-16, 2008, at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. Continue to watch for specialized mailings and e-mails highlighting convention updates. Members can also visit IRgA's Web site, www.irga.com, for more information.

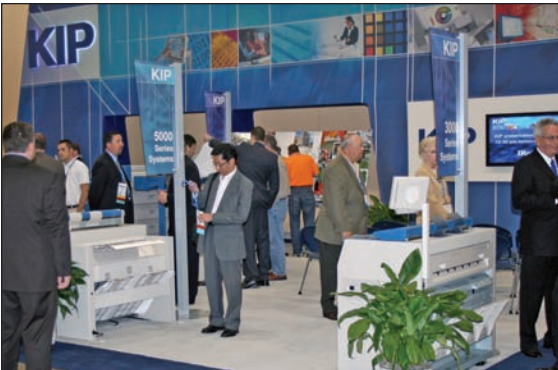
CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

The IRgA would like to thank the following exhibitors who help the IRgA Trade Show 38 percent in floor size over the past four years. This year, more than 60 exhibitors packed the floor to show the latest and greatest in reprographics technology, products and services.

9800 Service Inc	Planwell
Air Fast	PLP Digital Systems
Alameda Company	Precision Paper
Alden And Broden	Printer Presence by Digital IMS
Alvin & Co.	Promark Technology
American Reprographics Company (ARC)	Quality Media & Laminating
Avanti	Ratio America
BERTL	Ratio Entwick
Business Management Software	Reece Supply
Calculated Industries	Reprographic Services Association
Canon USA, Inc.	Reprographic Technology
Contex Scanning Technology	ReproMAX
Cylix, Inc.	Ricoh Americas Corporation
Digital Es	Ricoh Corporation
Digital Graphics	Seiko Infotech
Drytac	Sepialine
Drytac Canada Inc	Showcare
Eastern Regional Reprographic Association	Spicer Corporation/Printer Corporation
Edistribution	Tameran Graphic Systems, Inc.
GBC	Techesis, Inc
GEI Wide Format	Technical Image Products
GreatAmerica Leasing	TechParts, Inc.
IDEAL.COM	The PEiR Group
Image Products of California	The Staubach Company
KIP America	Thoroughbred Software
Michlin Products Corp	TST/Impreso Inc.
M.V. Software	Universal Media Solutions
Nashua Corporation	Valley Supplies, Inc.
National Azon	Wells Fargo Insurance Services
Nukote	Wide Format Imaging Magazine
Océ Canada	Xerox Corporation
Océ North America, Inc.	
Paradigm Imaging Group	
Pinnacle Infotech Inc	



The IRgA Trade Show has grown 38 percent in floor size over the past four years. This year, more than 60 exhibitors packed the floor to show the latest and greatest in reprographics technology, products and services.



Reprographers take advantage of the opportunity to connect with industry suppliers in one location at the IRgA's 81st Annual Convention & Trade Show.



IRgA members and exhibitor took advantage of an intimate tradeshow setting to network and take about new products and services.



The IRgA Trade Show gave exhibitors an opportunity to show reprographers firsthand what their products can do.

★ Convention Highlights



Curtis Thornton of Thomas Reprographics compares the reprographics industry to the music industry and its shift from records to digital media during a session delivered by members of the IRgA Digital Services Committee. Seated at the table (left to right) are Tony Militano, Carbon Copy Digital; Betsy Kahn, Copycat Print Shop; Chuck Gremillion, III, A&E – The Graphics Complex, a Division of Thomas Reprographics; and Casey Simpson, MBC Precision Imaging.



Mike Carter, president & COO, Lynn Imaging, Lexington, Ky. and IRgA's 2006-07 president, addresses IRgA members during the convention.



IRgA would like to introduce its 2007-08 board of directors. Back row, left to right: Steven Bova, Woodie Rush, Dan Stephens, Bryan Thomas, Patrick Chapuis, Robert Roperti and Kip Young. Front row: Earl Buchmann, Mike Cully, Mike Carter, Chuck Hayes, Casey Simpson and Gary Wilbur.



Reprographers and industry vendors network at the all-industry closing cocktail reception at the Gaylord Texan, capping an intensive week of learning and sharing the best practices in the reprographics industry.



Gary Wilbur, Mike Cully, Bryan Thomas and Earl Buchmann welcome attendees to the trade show floor.



Roger and Reg Garner stand with their Reprographics Shop of the Year Award, which was presented by *Wide Format Imaging Magazine*.



From left to right: Dan Akers, consultant and professional speaker; Steve Bova, IRGA executive director; Chuck Gremillion, session moderator; and Fred Akers, Hall of Fame college football coach.



Shelby Marshall and Amanda Schoonover also enjoy the IRGA trade show floor.

★ Convention Highlights

CONVENTION & TRADE SHOW SPONSORS

The IRgA would like to express our utmost appreciation to the following sponsors who made this convention possible.



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Doyle Cryer (left), SCP; a representative from ERS; Nathan Ponder, Cybercopy; and John Cronin, PLP Digital Systems, enjoy their time at the annual golf tournament.



Jay Maggenheim (far left), Malcolm Lane, John Nelson and Steve Blair were among 102 golfers to enjoy the annual tournament.



Mike Cully (above), president, Air Graphics and incoming IRgA Secretary/Treasurer, enjoys a moment at the golf tournament.



Pat Gremillion (left), Steve Cheek and Bryan Thomas pose while Mike Cully tees up in the background.



Motivational speaker Dan Akers addressed the IRgA crowd and provided a little extra encouragement to the group.



It's not all business at the Annual IRgA Convention & Trade Show. Kim Stephens (left), Dottie Carter and Theresa Norvell have fun while an Elvis impersonator sings in the background.



Gary Wilbur (left), R.S. Knapp/Napco and IRgA director; stands with Michael Carter, president of Lynn Imaging and president of IRgA. Wilbur was also the program chair of the 81st Annual IRgA Convention & Trade Show.



IRgA exhibitors show attendees exactly what makes their products innovative.



Bill Schaberg (left), American Reprographics Co. (ARC), and Charles G. Hackworth, Hackworth Reprographics Inc., were winners of this year's Bukovsky Award.



It Won't Print!

How to find long-term solutions to avoid a common problem

By Navina Waterman

Every repro shop has experienced the pain of dealing with files that simply won't print...or won't print "right," according to the expectations of your customer. So how do you deal with this issue? And do you charge your customer to deal with it? Is there a light at the end of the tunnel?

Sorry, no magic-bullet solution appears on the immediate horizon, at least in part because the solution is an ever-changing target. Every time a new version of any software appears, a new round of challenges arises.

The vendors who create RIPs and printer drivers are equally caught in the middle. It seems that no matter how much they try to prepare for changes in software, a timing gap almost always remains between software release and subsequent seamless processing of files. This is not unique to our industry. When Vista, Microsoft's new operating system, was released, AutoCAD could not run on

it. If two industry giants failed to prevent such a gaffe, it is perhaps unreasonable to expect smaller entities to do so.

Those vendors that do the best job at creating smooth version transitions do enjoy a competitive advantage. Of course, if they are successful four out of five times, it is human nature to notice the one exception, rather than the four successes. Likewise, those reprographers that make it easy for their customers to seamlessly submit files also enjoy a competitive advantage. And customers still notice the failures, so quick solutions are critical.

Improving Work Flow, Quality Control

Being creative by necessity, reprographers continually find workarounds for many issues as they arise. But before we take a look at some of these solutions, let's consider an even more proactive approach. When one reprographics firm followed

re-dos over a period of time, they were surprised to find that only 10 percent of problems were caused by technology glitches or limitations, only 10 percent caused directly by customer mistakes, and 20 percent caused by the sales department. The whopping majority were production errors which could easily have been prevented.

This would indicate that reprographers should be able to drastically reduce problems by implementing work flow and quality control improvements. One of methods for doing this is to create a system of personal accountability. Avoid a system based on recriminations, and make sure you have a way to reward jobs well done.

The second proactive approach involves customer education. Almost all reprographers have preferred file formats and preferred methods for receiving files from their customers. For most, this is dictated by the printers and RIPs being used.

How are you conveying this information to your customers? Only a few reprographers seem to have good teaching methods and materials to explain to customers how best to create and submit files. Even though files come from a myriad of programs, readily available “cheat sheets” covering the basics could alleviate many routine problems. Post directions on your Web site, add to deliveries or create leave-behinds for your sales people.

Customers may or may not follow your instructions, but simply having data sheets available also provides an easy way to explain why a charge for file manipulation is necessary. There are many ways to charge for digital file processing, typically hourly or per file, but some compensation for the extra time required is necessary. If you don't charge, you provide no incentive for your customer to improve.

That being said, we can take a look at how some repro shops are dealing with specific file issues.

DWF

As Autodesk promotes its DWF format, reprographers are increasingly receiving DWF files. When a DWF file is created, plot characteristics such as paper size, rotation, scale and pen assignments are specified, as well as other properties such as the resolution, format, background color and inclusion of layer information such as visibility, line types and line weights.

Some DWF aspects that have created print difficulties:

- 1) Any layers that are not visible in the DWG file are not included when the DWF file is created;
- 2) If a True Type font is used but not included in the DWF, a different font may be used to print, which can create visual anomalies. Text may overlap other objects or it may just plain look bad. Similar problems occur if different versions of a font with exactly the same name are used;
- 3) Line weights and fills have sometimes rendered incorrectly;

- 4) Some objects set up as transparent have printed as opaque;
- 5) As with other file formats, a change in dpi changes file size, and customers can create huge files by setting the resolution too high;
- 6) If background color is set to something other than white, the result can be grey in a black and white plot;
- 7) File case: Named views in DWFs can be exactly the same except for capitalization (i.e., CadPlot and CADPLOT); and
- 8) Raster images are stored in the DWF file as JPEG images and their quality depends on resolution.

Some of these problems, such as font issues, setting dpi, and background colors are clearly a matter of customer education. The better job you do at educating them, the fewer problems you will see. As always, vigilance is required on the part of those processing the files in order to spot problems as soon as possible.

The latest drivers from PLP PlotWorks, KIP Powerprint and Océ Repro Desk have fixed many other issues with line weights, fill patterns, transparency, and file case (i.e. CadPlot is now recognized as distinct from CADPLOT). When a problem appears, it is always a good idea to first check that you have the latest version of the print drivers.

Since DWF is essentially the drawing compressed into a wrapper with information about the file, if a compatibility issue arises sometimes it is possible to extract the drawing using a Zip program such as WinZip and remove extraneous information which may be causing problems for the RIP. Caution must be taken in deconstructing in this manner since relevant information such as scaling and fonts might be lost in the process.

Layer visibility in DWF files can be a tricky issue. While it might seem logical to ask the customer to simply recreate a troublesome DWF, often he is a third party without access to the original DWG file. When a customer complains his print is missing

information, the first thing to do is to look at the DWF and see if it is there. But which tool do you use to look at it? If possible make sure you and the customer are looking with the exact same version of Design Review at the exact same version of the DWF...tactfully of course.

The repro shop typically has many more tools available than the customer. In one recent case, a troubleshooter explained he first opened a problem file using Autodesk's Design Review, then a newer version of Design Review, then ARC's Metaprint, then Cadzation's Acroplot, then Océ Publisher all to no avail.

Sometimes there is no option but to go back to the client for a different file. Every repro shop should have guidelines in place outlining just how much effort you are willing to make to satisfy your customers-and how much that effort should cost the customer.

PDF

First, if your clients try to create PDFs directly out of Autodesk, numerous problems will likely appear in the resulting PDFs. Autodesk clearly did not throw its best resources into this aspect of AutoCAD-understandable enough when you consider they clearly want users to share DWFs, not PDFs. The basic problems with PDFs created using Autodesk's driver include very large file size, rasterized thickened fonts and images shifting or disappearing altogether. If your clients want to create good PDFs from AutoCAD, suggest they use AcroPlot or Bluebeam for full-featured DWG-to-PDF conversions. A free program, Cute PDF also reportedly creates a decent printable PDF.

With PDFs, just because a file is viewable, customers don't understand that it is not necessarily printable. This can sometimes be the result of a resolution issue but more typically a problem in the way the file is set up. With hundreds of programs all creating their own PDFs it is no wonder that the results vary widely-some are simply more successful than others.

Continued on page 22

All reprographers report seeing bloated PDFs that require inordinate amounts of processing time. Other specific problems can include dropped out images, comments that don't print, shifted objects and lo-res images.

One company resolved many issues simply by asking customers to always flatten layers. They also find that if a PDF is created as version 5.0 compliant, fewer issues are encountered. Some shops open problem files in Acrobat Pro and re-save using the correct settings and/or a previous version. Others convert problem PDFs to a TIFF using an Adobe program such as Acrobat Pro, Photoshop or InDesign before printing.

One reprographer reports keeping an older version of Ghostscript available because sometimes PDFs created from older versions of software actually

process better through it than the newest Ghostscript. When problems occur on one machine, sometimes printing on a different one will resolve the issue. Several companies report that they have standardized on using Cadzation's Acroplot, which has helped considerably with consistency and speed. Pitstop and Quite Imposing are two other products mentioned that can be used to manipulate PDFs, although these are more common in dealing with color files.

General Issues

The most common file problems seen by repro shops include missing links (fonts, images, xrefs, etc.), incorrect size, fine lines dropping out on prints and inconsistent grey scales, especially in half sizes. For missing information, you can only contact the customer to

receive the proper files. Sizing, fine lines and grey scale problems are generally fixed through customer education.

Autodesk DWG files continue to have some specific issues, again mostly to be resolved through education but sometimes by file manipulations. For instance DWGs must be set up in paper space instead of layout space in order to print properly. Use of the correct pen palettes can also be critical. One company uses a free file converter for DWG and DWF files from Anydmg, which resolves some issues.

In general, use of vendor client tools speed file processing. This requires some, but not a substantial amount of setup/familiarization time for the customer but the result is generally quick and accurate printing. Many reprographers have also mentioned Cadzation's Acroplot as a batch processing software that can be integrated into other vendor products and has helped them in dealing with many problems associated with DWGs, DWFs and PDFs. File processing time and resulting file sizes are substantially reduced using this product.

In case you are getting comfortable with current file formats, new versions are soon to appear. A new format-DWFX (based on Microsoft's XPS format)-is now being introduced. DWFX will be viewable from Vista-based PCs without the need to download a viewer from Autodesk.

Adobe has also announced it will be developing an XML version of PDF and they are also working to incorporate a 3D file format, PRC, into their product line.

Yes, both Autodesk and Adobe changes will undoubtedly come with a whole new set of printing issues. Look at it as a challenge, but also an opportunity. ●

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 five years. She can be reached at Navina@earthlink.net.

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Employees and Stock Ownership

By Brett Scully

Probably one of more interesting exercises our company investigated was the employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) as defined by the US Department of Labor.

There are a few different versions of how the ESOPs work, depending on the amount of stock and control the owner is willing to relinquish over time. The long and short of how and why to implement depends a lot on the culture of the firm, and the ability of the succeeding employees in the program to make enough money running the business to basically pay the owner for his shares over time.

One of the biggest risks in an ESOP is that the employees cannot effectively run the business, thereby possibly making the owner come back to the firm to right the ship, delaying the retirement plan. Because the government is aware of this probable occurrence, they “pay” the owner for the risk by giving monetary breaks to the “new” company, by almost eliminating the federal taxes through the ability to write off the interest on the employee loans, but more importantly, the firm can also write off the principle paid for the shares.

Other non-financial considerations to consider are the voluminous paperwork involved in the administration of the ESOP. Accounting, legal and other administrative costs can sometimes be in the tens of thousands of dollars per year, possibly more the larger the firm. Another drawback to the ESOP is its inflexibility on who can receive shares at the firm. Slight variations are allowed for length of service at the firm and such. But, basically, if someone has been the firm for a certain amount of time, they are eligible for the shares. That means if you have a knucklehead at the firm but he has been there for three years, he will end up receiving this benefit even though you know it will not benefit the firm.

I guess that was the biggest reason I dislike the ESOP. I would love to give an incentive to our people, but some people are just never going to change their ways as far as attitude, etc. However, with an ESOP, you cannot pick and choose who you think would really benefit from the program. Another drawback to the program is the ability to pay off the exiting or retiring employees. A lot of due-diligence must be done and actuarial work studied to make sure the firm cannot forecast the outflow of cash during future years of the program.

Another way to give an incentive to your best staff is to draft stock options based on the current value of the firm, which is an exercise in itself, valuation-wise. With the stock option program, because it is privately designed vs. publicly designed, a firm can dedicate the resources of stock to the best, not just those at the firm a certain amount of time. So if you have an ESOP and a great “up-and-comer” at the firm, and he has only been there two years, you can offer him options without the concern of having to offer these same share options to someone at the firm 10 years.

Another benefit that can be realized with a stock option program is the accompanying non-competition agreement that goes with the options. This is a natural for the optioned, because the consideration for the non-compete are the shares themselves. This is kind of like being a kid a spitting in your hand and then shaking. Quid pro quo. The firm insures itself with a dedicated staff, and the staff dedicates itself to the firm.

Stock options can be designed quite simply, or very elaborately. At eBlueprint, we stuck with simplicity in our plan; we wrote what are called “cliff-vested” options able to be exercised in the year 2010. The price of the options was based on the ballpark market value estimate on the value of our firm.

As an example, let’s say ABC Company had \$2 million in revenue and made about \$250,000 in “adjusted” EBITDA per year. This firm could establish a stock option program to maybe three or so people at the firm. The value can be estimated by a few metrics, maybe 4x EBITDA, or half-sales. In the case above, the firm would be valued at about \$1 million, which is the same number by both metrics described above.

Because of the scope of this topic, I will continue this article in my next column, where we will overview how to establish a “strike price” for the share options...

Because of the option program, the firm may want to redesign the share structure also, eliminate any control issues. This can be done by setting up two classes of stock—one voting set of shares and another set of non-voting shares that can be used in the stock option program. In the instance above, the firm could have 90,000 non-voting shares, and 10,000 non-voting shares. There will be no control issues ever because voting shares are not used for the programs.

Because of the scope of this topic, I will continue this article in my next column, where we will overview how to establish a “strike price” for the share options, as well as how to have the employees “finance” the shares, and finally the benefit to the employees after the shares are paid for and the firm is sold or is continuing on independently and distributing a share of the earnings to the program participants. ●

Brett Scully is the chief risk officer of administration of eBlueprint Holdings in Cleveland, Ohio.

Technology and Time Travel

By John Marquardt

Regarding technology, as reprographers we deal with three major categories of customer: architects, general contractors, and subcontractors. Of course there are all kinds of variations on that structure—CMs, design/build, etc...But if we're talking about adoption of technology, those categories are convenient. Generally speaking, each of these major players have different components of construction technology that they are concerned about and other, more supporting roles will have lagged adoption timelines.

Reprographers have a unique role in this market because we are forced to straddle the new whiz-bang stuff coming down the pipe that architects throw at us and yet distill this information into something a sub can use.

Reprographers have a unique role in this market because we are forced to straddle the new whiz-bang stuff coming down the pipe that architects throw at us and yet distill this information into something a sub can use.

In fact, you could accurately say that we are a conduit for information that must exist on several technological levels at once. At any given time, information for a building will exist as an advanced CAD file with all kinds of smarts built into it and simultaneously as a piece of paper that hasn't really changed since ancient Egypt.

Because of this, the stepped and lagged adoption of new technologies effects reprographers on several fronts. We're

time-travelers really, between three groups. There is one group of people who have a lot of computers and software and in general leverage all of the available technology from 2005 or so (architects). They work with another group that has big machinery and good logistical skills, but their technology is from 1955 or so (GCs). Then the GCs use a group of people from around 1850 or thereabouts (subs). This is where you imagine a man in a suit handing a USB flash-drive to someone holding a hammer—we're going to have to get involved if a building is going up.

Look at something like CAD. Architects glommed onto this technology pretty fast, and I would say were fully ensconced in its use in the late '80s to mid-90s. Around this time, we as reprographers were forced to deal with it and I think our adoption timeline was fairly well locked in with architects as we replaced our old blueprint machines with high-speed plotters and scanners.

We stopped selling drafting tables and vellum but we never stopped selling paper to GCs and subs—not yet anyways. It trickles down for the most part, and the GCs have lagged behind the architects technologically, but they are coming into their own in the last five years or so. The subs still can't really deal with CAD files. Oh sure, they get CDs from the GCs, but they get them printed. The online take-off tools are so complex that they pretty much require a skill set that subs just don't have and won't nurture. There might be a generational effect, as sub's businesses are handed off to their sons and daughters, but before that can happen, their tools and technology have to catch up.

In short, my feeling is that the technological advances will outpace the generational effect, and it won't matter (the sky opens up, light beams stream down from the heavens, an

angelic choir sings, and the book of BIM falls out). In the interim though, we are left to straddle those very different worlds and travel in time (or more accurately to exist in multiple time-lines at once—there's a good Star Trek reference in there somewhere.)

And so it is with the Web—the problem is that the Web is a pretty unforgiving tool for our subcontractor friends. We have technology that keeps up with the expectations of architects and GCs with our plan rooms and FTP sites and invitation-to-bid technologies. Those two groups are pretty far along the tech path and have expectations that have matured along with the Web—mostly anti-virus technology, OS-patching, good e-mail habits, networking protection, and in general how to use the tool properly. Subs...not so much. I think we sort of leave them to figure it out when in reality we should be mentoring them along as we have with the other technologies.

It's important that all customer service reps know how to configure a browser so that it works well with your online tools and can help a sub complete these tasks. As Internet Explorer came under attack in the last few years, Microsoft changed its default behavior to be pretty draconian and locked down. In doing so they created a whole new category of cryptic warnings and dialog boxes. If someone hits your Web site and their browser's settings are paranoid enough, it may not work right, and they might even think your program has a bug.

Use attachments sensibly—for example, don't send a sub a self-extracting archive. It varies by set up, but most of the time they're going to be unable to even save it and run it since the paranoia over harmful e-mail attachments has made it so that you can't receive an EXE as an attachment unless you know how to edit the Windows registry. If you don't know what HKEY_LOCALMACHINE is,

I can guarantee your subcontractor customers don't. Also don't send huge files in e-mail attachments—upload the file and send a link.

Be aware of what is actually a networking error and what is a firewall configuration issue. A lot of these guys in their paranoia will have all kinds of stuff installed, in some cases redundantly, so get to know your way around the major brands like Norton, McAfee, etc., as these companies tend to bundle firewall and network security applications with their antivirus offers.

Along those same lines, they might be running a spam-filtering program in

addition to their e-mail client's junk-mail filter, so the chance of important e-mail never making it into their inbox is compounded. Your customer service reps should know the lingo and be able to walk a customer through removing your domain from their many and varied spam traps and junk-mail filters.

Find out who the major sources for broadband are in your region and investigate them. These companies will often use a set of standard tools, and as mentioned previously knowing how to configure them can be helpful, but also you are probably going to be someone a sub listens to when you

recommend a broadband provider—find a good one and recommend them often. At this point, it should be an easy sell to get someone on broadband. Friends don't let friends use AOL.

Of course some subs will leave us all in the dust with their technological adoption, but at this point they are extremely rare, and it falls to reprographers to continue in our time-traveling ways. ●

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

Tall Tales: IRgA's Success Isn't a Fish Story

Continued from page 4

One of our goals, however, was to elevate the event from one dependent upon a vacation destination to one where the education program, networking opportunities and quality of the trade show would be the main reason why reprographers would want to attend. I think we succeeded.

The Golf Tournament, led by **Bill Thomas**, was sold out. We had 104 participants and were able to preserve the quality of the event. It was a great outing that raised \$10,000 for the IRgA Educational Foundation—a fund that has been dormant for a number of years.

The Convention & Trade Show truly has become an industry-wide event. The regional associations, trade press, our vendors and affinity organizations including ARC/The PEiR Group, ReproMAX, RSA and independent reprographers from throughout the country and around the globe all came in force.

My ultimate goal this year was to continue to reunite the reprographics

industry. The IRgA Board has been extremely focused on this goal for a number of years, and I believe that we have made great strides in this area.

None of our accomplishments would have been possible without the meaningful contributions of those who have served in this organization before me—our past committee members, past directors and past presidents.

I also want to say thanks to our IRgA staff from SmithBucklin. They have played a large role in improving the IRgA Convention and the association as a whole.

I am grateful for all of my colleagues at Lynn Imaging to whom I owe a debt of gratitude, especially J.L. Lynn, Glenn Norvell and my partner for life, my wonderful wife, Dottie.

I would be remiss without saying what an honor it has been to serve this great industry as your president. I feel pride in a year of incredible commitment and am pleased with our progress. It's all about the people and

the relationships that we have with each other, whether it be reprographers, vendors or staff.

Honestly, the success we have achieved would not have been possible if the industry did not rally behind us. Let's all be like a true friend who is a good fisherman and bring our friends and colleagues to the perfect, sometimes secret spot—the IRgA.

Allow me to conclude my term as your president by applauding you, our members, for having faith in me as your president and in the IRgA as your association.

We can all share something in common—pride in our industry and pride in the IRgA. ●

Mike Carter is president and chief operating officer of Lynn Imaging in Lexington, Kentucky. He can be reached at (859)255-1021 or mccarter@lynnimaging.com.

QUICK VIEW

Companies in Product Innovations:

Drytac

FLEXcon

LexJet

Newport Corp.

New Wave Technologies

Océ

Omicron Laserage Laserprodukte GmbH

Paradigm Imaging Group

Press-sense

Spicer

Reprographic-Related Products Debut at LASER 2007

Products representing the entire spectrum of light measurement were on display at LASER 2007, which was held June 18-21 in Munich, Germany. The event brought together more than 1,000 exhibiting companies of all sizes, from established market leaders to the latest startup ventures

Newport Corp., Irvine, Calif., demonstrated its new single-mode 100-W and 200-W continuous wave (CW) fiber lasers, the first fiber lasers from the company's new Fiber Laser Business Group. The lasers have a wide range of industrial, materials processing and graphics applications, such as laser cutting of metal and non-metal materials, laser spot and seam welding of thin metal, and bonding and welding of plastics. They offer advantages in reprographics and printing applications, the company said, and are ideal for photovoltaic manufacturing applications including solar cell singulation, isolation, scribing and structuring. For more information about the company's product line, visit www.newport.com.

Omicron Laserage Laserprodukte GmbH, Rodgau, Germany, introduced several new products at LASER 2007, including new generation of multiline gas lasers for microscopy, flow cytometry, reprography and holography. For more information about the company's product line, visit www.lasersystem.de.

For more information about LASER 2007, visit www.world-of-photonics.net/en/laser/start.

Océ and Press-sense Extend Partnership

Océ and Press-sense announced that the two companies extended their successful partnership to include the distribution by Océ of the Press-sense Omnium Business Flow Automation solution. Combining Océ professional services, business consulting and implementation experience with Press-sense Omnium results in a very robust, customer-centric solution engineered specifically for larger and mid-sized businesses.

Many of these printers have already made a significant investment in digital production printing. Press-sense Omnium will enable these owners to make more informed decisions and plans that positively impact their business by giving access to accurate information in real-time.

The Press-sense Omnium will be tightly integrated with the Océ PRISMA line of workflow solutions via JDF/JMF. Océ PRISMAweb, Océ PRISMAaudit, Océ PRISMAproduction and Océ PRISMAatellite have already been successfully integrated in customer sites. The combination of Océ's output management systems, Océ PRISMAproduction and Océ PRISMAatellite with Press-sense Omnium allow customers to further streamline digital print production, by automated print scheduling, print preparation and print ticketing, all based on JDF/JMF.

Océ PRISMAweb provides print environments with a print-specific e-Ordering system, that in combination with Press-sense's Omnium customer relationship module envelops the entire spectrum of customer driven interactions. And, Océ PRISMAaudit working with Press-sense Omnium will ensure 100 percent integrity of print, tracking everything from quote, to order, to single pages printed and finished. Effectively, Océ PRISMAaudit together with Press-sense Omnium form a true Automated Document Factory.

For more information about Press-sense, distribution channels and their offerings, please visit www.press-sense.com.

Spicer Releases Imagination 8.1 with VISTA Support

Spicer Corporation, the leading developer of document productivity solutions, announced the release of Imagination 8.1.

With Spicer Imagination, users can efficiently scan, review, mark up and print hundreds of office documents, CAD drawings and model formats. Imagination's diverse applications, including engineering drawing review,

format conversion, redaction of confidential information and document archiving, are used globally in manufacturing, government, utilities, insurance, financial services and reprographics markets.

Office and technical users from cross-functional disciplines and extended enterprise locations benefit from Imagination 8.1's online document productivity enhancements, including:

- Spicer markups saved in PDF'
- Industry leading new scanner toolkit support for HP, Cannon, Epson and Fujitsu; and
- Imagination browser plug-in for FireFox.

Imagination 8.1 also increases Spicer's strong foundation in engineering with these new supported formats:

- Autodesk AutoCAD 2007 & 2008 DWG;
- Autodesk Inventor 11 2D & 3D;
- SolidWorks 2007 2D & 3D;
- PTC Pro/Engineer V16 to Wildfire 3 - 3D;
- TIFF Compression Scheme 7; and
- Multi-page SVG & SVGZ.

Imagination is available for Windows 2000, Windows Server 2003, Windows XP and Windows Vista. Imagination's flexible pricing model provides options for fixed, enterprise and OEM licensing.

For more information, visit the company Web site at www.SPICER.com, call 519/748.2462, or send e-mail to info@spicer.com.

FLEXcon ICC Profiles Now Available at LexJet's Web Site

LexJet and FLEXcon announced the availability of free ICC profiles for FLEXcon's line of imaging products for wide-format digital printing technologies from LexJet at www.lexjet.com. The profiles were painstakingly designed and produced to ensure seamless color calibration and ease of use for an endless variety of solvent, low-solvent and UV-curable wide-format printing applications.

continued on page 28



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IRgA Annual Convention
& Trade Show

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IRgA
2008

Continued from page 26

Printers profiled for the FLEXcon materials include the HP 9000, Mimaki JV3 160SP, Mimaki JV3 75SPII, Mutoh Falcon II Outdoor, Mutoh Toucan LT, Roland SOLJET SC-545, Roland VersaCamm SP300v and Seiko CP64s.

Each profile is also optimized for use with the Flexi, Onyx, Wasatch and Roland VersaWorks RIPs, ensuring a perfect match from RIP to printer to material. The profiles are located at LexJet's ICC profile page (www.lexjet.com/lexjet/profiles_list.asp) and are easily downloaded through a simple, three-step process.

At the ICC Profiles page, click on FLEXcon Profiles, click on the material profile you'd like to download, choose the printer and inkset combination you use, click on the appropriate RIP and then download the profile for the resolution you would prefer.

Many of FLEXcon's products are CBS Outdoor Approved and Clear Channel Approved and used by FLEXcon-certified PDAA installers. FLEXcon products are available from LexJet distribution centers across the United States for fast, economical delivery. They can be ordered through LexJet's highly trained and knowledgeable staff of personally assigned account specialists.

Paradigm Imaging Group Signs Distribution Agreement with NewWave Technologies

Paradigm Imaging Group announced that it entered a distribution agreement with NewWave Technologies, a nationally recognized award winning distributor of document imaging, automated data storage and CD/DVD duplication products and services.

This new partnership will allow NewWave Technologies to add the Graphtec SK200C large format scanner and the SP200W scanner printer combo to its product offering. The SP200W copy system combines two large format, high productivity Graphtec devices, the SK200 36" scanner and the new MasterJet JW220 24" printer.

Graphtec America is also enthusiastic about the new distribution agreement that was reached between Paradigm Imaging and NewWave Technologies, Inc. According to Wayne A Suraci, vice president of Marketing for Graphtec America, Inc., the new distribution arrangement will bring Graphtec's latest product offering in the large format copy category to a myriad of users that depend on NewWave for document imaging solutions. Graphtec products will add versatility and new solutions to the already impressive list of products and services supplied to NewWave customers.

MasterJet JW220 Printer

The MasterJet JW220 printer is a 24" wide, four-color thermal inkjet printer. It contains two print heads, a dedicated black, with a nozzle configuration of 320x2 lines and a CMY print head with a nozzle configuration of 160x3. The JW220 prints a D-size black and white copy in approximately 60 seconds and a D-size color copy in 270 seconds.

Scanning Arts Software

The Scanning Arts software for the SP200W provides an easy-to-use full-featured interface required for a broad range of projects. The large control buttons on its main control screen are designed to provide a feel and functionality similar to that of an office copier and is fully compatible with touch-panel monitors. The system software performs a variety of functions including scanning, printing and copying. Scanning Arts provides optimized default settings for a variety of original document types including maps, drawings, blueprints, photos and posters, thereby providing touch-of-a-button operation for many projects.

SK200C 36" Scanner

The SK200C scanner offers 600 dpi optical resolution with black and white, grayscale and full-color capability. It scans technical drawings, blueprints and maps to a high standard and offers superior image accuracy, stitching quality and needs little or no

calibration. Scan speeds of the SK200C are three-inches per second in black and white and 0.75 inches per second in color. Graphtec scanners utilize state-of-the-art CIS technology for higher reliability, faster capture speeds and lower technology costs.

At 54 pounds, the SK200 is the lightest, smallest and most transportable large format scanner and sits snugly within one compact, space-saving desktop footprint. Its small size makes it the most suitable large format scanner for use in small office environments.

The SK200C scanner is supplied with Paradigm Imaging's imageFLOW software for quick and easy scanning, copying and printing. The imageFLOW interface has a "copier like" control interface and is compatible with touch screen monitors. Under the imageFLOW interface resides an advanced RIP engine that supports over 550 printers, includes over 325 ICC profiles and can print postscript files. The SK200C also includes a TWAIN compatible driver.

SP200W Desktop Multi-Function System

The Graphtec SP200W addresses a new market segment of end users who require an affordable, large format scanning, printing and copy solution in a compact desktop configuration. The Graphtec SP200W measures only 48" wide by 18" high and 24" deep at a price of only \$10,995. The Graphtec SP200W system provides fast, reliable and effective large format image capture for the most discerning and demanding users in the CAD, AEC & GIS industry. The SP200W includes:

- A Graphtec SK200 36" scanner;
- A Graphtec JW220 24" color printer;
- Scanning Arts scanning, printing and copying software;
- TWAIN Driver; and
- One-year on-site service in USA and Canada.

Unlike more traditional CCD (charge-coupled device) scanners, The Graphtec 36" SK200 scanner incorporates CIS (Contact Image Sensor) technology that has no lenses,

lights or mirrors. It also allows the scanner to be used within a few seconds of power-on (some CCD scanners have a warm up time of several minutes). The SK200 uses the same CIS technology that has made Graphtec IS and CS scanners the most popular CIS devices in the United States. Scan resolution can be set from 100 to 600 dpi true optical resolution and up to 1200 dpi interpolated. The SK200 scanning speeds are up to five-inches per second in black and white and 1.5 inches per second in color.

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In response to customer requests for the brightest possible trade show graphics substrate designed to significantly differentiate one booth


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Partnered with a LexJet Coex PreLume backer, the result is the highest-definition, brightest white possible in a printed graphic. LexJet Clear w/ PreLume HD is durable and cost efficient and features a textured, scratch-resistant, glare-reducing surface that will build repeat and word-of-mouth business.

LexJet Clear w/ PreLume HD is available in standard roll widths, from 18 in. to 50 in., and 60 ft. and 100 ft. roll lengths. It is compatible with aqueous inkjet printer platforms, including HP and Epson, and is ready to ship from one of LexJet's nationwide distribution centers. It is backed by LexJet's customer service, product support and warranty.

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Do you have a new product ready to hit the market? Please send all new product information to Dennis Coyle, managing editor, dcoyle@irga.com.



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Reprographic MGRS. Leading Reprographics Company in the Tampa Bay Area is currently seeking **qualified candidates for color, Digital Services and Management** positions. Fax resume attention Chris Charles 813.221.2094 or E-Mail flrepro@flrepro.com.

A traditional bricks and mortar company that provides document management services to the construction industry is looking for an **executive to manage its On Site Services** (Facilities Management) operations in Southern California. The worldwide construction industry is about \$3.4 trillion and is in desperate need of more reliable, customer centric, On Site Services, also known as Facilities Management, alternative in our area. This company is investing heavily in personnel, equipment and technology to bring new products and service to market to compliment its traditional services. We are looking for someone that can manage sales and operations in this highly competitive market. Experience in top-to-top sales, planning, staffing and launching a new business model is required.

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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.

Opportunities

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.

Midwest blueprint firm interested in **acquisitions or investments** from 50% to 100% in blueprint and related companies in the Cleveland, Akron, Denver and South Florida markets with firm sales in the range of \$3 million to \$6 million. Will pay cash strong firms in any financial condition. Contact Brett Scully, Lakeside Blueprint, at 216/281-1234; email: bscully@blueprint.com.

For sale a full service reprographics firm established in 1964 grossing between \$400K and \$600K annually in beautiful Corpus Christi, Texas. Financing available to qualified buyers. Contact Joe Watson – (361)882-5575.

A Clear Mind can Improve Your Golf Game and Business



Steve Bova, CAE
Executive Director

Tom Kite is a successful pro golfer who, in 1984, began to work with Dr. Bob Rotella when Rotella was director of sports psychology at the University of Virginia. After a few months working with Rotella on the mental part of golf, in addition to having a swing coach, Kite began to refer his sports psychologist to other golfers on the tour. A few of his fellow competitors asked Kite why he wanted to help them to get better.

The way Kite viewed it, there was enough money in the PGA for everyone to have a sufficient piece of the earnings pie. By helping his competition, they would be helping Kite to improve his game. The bar for all pro golfers was raised.

If those of us within the industry do not work together to raise our own bar, someone else will. Then, what will be the consequences?

Kite realized that the real competitors were not the other golfers, but rather the course and the game itself. The same can be said for the reprographics business. For years, the “industry pie” has been large enough for competitive businesses in this industry to succeed. For just nearly as long, the IRgA existed to help raise the bar for the entire industry.

If you subscribe to Kite’s thinking, the reprographer down the street is not your ultimate competition. A greater risk exists of not helping

fellow industry members to succeed. This is not to suggest that you share your business secrets. However, if those of us within the industry do not work together to raise our own bar, someone else will. Then, what will be the consequences?

What drives most entrepreneurs is the motor within. The best people in any vocation realize that if they win the battle within themselves, they have reached their potential. The reprographer who can look back at the most recent lost bid and say, “I did everything I could to win the business,” should have no regrets. There are lessons learned which will make that person a better reprographer – and better prepared the next time. As competitors improve their games, it should motivate you to improve yours.

“It distresses me when I run into players, usually lesser players, who think it’s smart to use gamesmanship to throw off opponents in competitive tournaments. They’re always pointing to water hazards or swing flaws,” says Rotella in his book, *Golf Is Not a Game of Perfect*. “Such players must be treated as unfortunate distractions, like a slow foursome in front or the greenskeeper’s lawn mower roaring across the fairway. A golfer simply has to put them out of his mind, get on with his routine and tend to his business.”

People as Rotella describes are amateurs who risk foregoing one of the greatest joys of the business: the friendships with fellow reprographers. Cherish your competitors. It’s better for them, better for you and better for the industry.

If you don’t buy into this philosophy, then perhaps you’ll agree that you should keep your friends close and

your enemies closer. It’s impossible to know what the competition, or the rest of the industry, is doing if your eyes are focused exclusively on your shop and your local market. Those who monitor their competition have a distinct advantage over those who do not.

Finally, in business as in golf, no two days are the same. Your biggest competitor could become your future partner. A competitor that is more technologically advanced today may not always have that edge. That’s why they play the game! And that’s why you go to work every day.

In sports, the best players are those who are the first to the practice field and the last to leave. It should come as no surprise that the most successful businesses in the reprographics industry are members of the IRgA and attend the Annual Convention. It’s a fact in any industry that the most active organizations are also the most successful.

Aug. 1 is the beginning of IRgA’s new membership year. The IRgA’s goal is to make it attractive and beneficial for every reprographics shop to be a member. If you missed the article that describes the new dues structure, turn to page 6.

When Bob Rotella started his career as a sports psychologist, he was speaking to a roomful of skeptical golfers, including Sam Snead. He was warned that Snead would immediately shoot down everything he had to say. Rotella was not surprised when the first hand up at the conclusion of his remarks was Snead’s, who simply said, “I hate to think how many U.S. Opens I would have won if I had heard someone a long time ago say some of the things you just said.” ●

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- Significant cost savings by reducing the running cost of your wide format graphics operations
- Cartridges are fully interchangeable with OEM cartridges and print heads
- No wasted ink & media = no conversion costs
- Excellent performance and reliability
- Fade resistance comparable to OEM
- Custom ICC profiles not required for most printing jobs—simply continue using your current profiles
- Reliable, consistent operation that maintains accurate indication of remaining ink
- Simply insert cartridges and start printing!



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Hewlett-Packard DesignJet* 1000/1050
Pigment Replacement Cartridges



Replaces HP 80-Series Ink Cartridge



Machine Compatibilities

Hewlett-Packard * DesignJet:
1050 / 1050c / 1050c Plus / 1055 /
1055cm / 1055cm Plus / 1000 Series

Hewlett-Packard DesignJet* 5000/5500
Dye Replacement Cartridges



Replaces HP 81-Series Ink Cartridge



Machine Compatibilities

Hewlett-Packard * DesignJet:
5000ps; 5000; 5500ps; 5500

Hewlett-Packard DesignJet* 5000/5500
Pigment Replacement Cartridges



Replaces HP 83-Series Ink Cartridge



Machine Compatibilities

Hewlett-Packard * DesignJet: 5000ps
UV; 5000 UV; 5500ps UV; 5500 UV

*Hewlett-Packard, DesignJet, HP, and 80, 81 & 83 are registered and/or unregistered trademarks of Hewlett-Packard Company which has not sponsored or approved this product.

Modular, Integrated Production System

The KIP 5000 is an innovative new digital imaging system designed to provide a combination of peak demand productivity and superior image quality. Two or four roll KIP 5000 systems are available in four main configurations to suit the needs of the most demanding printing and imaging environments.

A space saving single footprint system, the KIP 5000 features an integrated touch screen operator panel which provides simple operations for everything from walk-up job queue management to monochrome & color copying and scanning when integrated with an inkjet printer.

For information on the KIP 5000 or to find an authorized KIP dealer, please contact KIP at (800) 252-6793, or visit www.kipamerica.com

KIP 5000

Monochrome Print System

Monochrome Print & Copy System

Monochrome Print, Copy & Scan System

Monochrome and Color Print, Copy and Scan System

