

REPRO REPORT



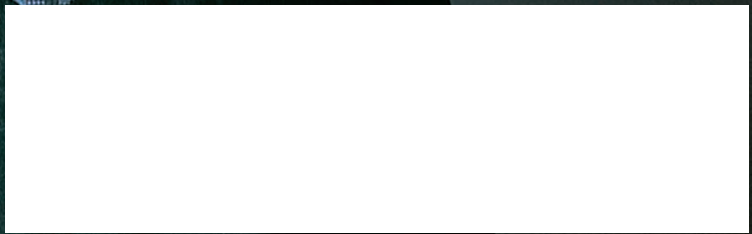
Volume 27, Issue 2
March/April 2008

A large photograph of a man in a white dress shirt and a blue patterned tie. He is holding a magnifying glass over a tiny man in a dark suit who is standing on the man's open palm. The tiny man has his hands on his hips and is looking up at the magnifying glass. The background is a solid teal color.

Small Shops, Big Customers. No Problem.

**Operation Ratios: How Well
Does Your Operation Work?**

**Buying Time: Best Practices
for Hardware Purchases**





Green Business is Good Business



Printing for Professionals

Your AEC clients realize they have a social responsibility to use resources wisely. Research shows that over 85% of the AEC community participates in green building activities. The ultimate goal is to be sustainable and incorporate green design/build practices into a product with a long life, great performance, reasonable cost, reduced energy usage, and a healthy environment. Océ wide format printers can help play a part in achieving this goal.

Thousands of square feet of media are printed during the design and construction of a building. While inevitable, this can be accomplished in an environmentally responsible manner. Following are some of the ways that Océ Eco Design technology, as used in the Océ TDS450, Océ TDS600, and Océ TDS700, distinguishes itself from conventional technologies.

Ozone

The ozone restrictions set by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration are 0.10 parts per million (ppm). The average maximum ozone emission of Océ Eco Design large format printing systems is between 0.001 and 0.005 ppm. This is about one-tenth the ozone emissions of conventional printing technologies. These ozone emissions do not increase during the entire lifetime of the Océ Eco Design product, even if the ozone filters are never replaced.

Compliance with standards

Océ is one of the first companies to be RoHS compliant. The Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive became effective in Europe in July 2006 and in California in January 2007. RoHS is aimed at protecting both human health and the environment by placing limits on the use of hazardous materials in new electrical and electronic equipment.

Heat and energy

Océ Eco Design large format printing systems use a technology called Radiant Fusing, which offers the fastest cold-to-start print time available. This time-saving technology eliminates warm-up time, guaranteeing high-quality printing starts as soon as the printer receives a job. Additionally, since there are no pressure rollers to heat as with other print technologies, Océ Radiant Fusing products maintain a low operating temperature. These printers automatically go into sleep mode when not in use and have earned the ENERGY STAR® designation from the U.S. Department of Energy. Océ Radiant Fusing consumes significantly less measurable electricity compared to conventional printing technologies, which also reduces energy costs.

Océ wants to help you and your AEC clients build green — even for the drawing documentation used in the process! For more information on how Océ solutions can help you and your clients operate in an environmentally friendly way, please call 800-714-4427, or visit www.oceusa.com/sustainability.

Printing for Professionals 

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Your FM sites have something to say.

Hear them, with job accounting software from Sepialine.

Cost recovery is the heart and soul of your on-site FM business. Sepialine's range of products and services are designed for AEC and reprographics to track expenses quickly and easily. Sepialine's range of products and services are designed for FM and AEC professionals to track expenses elegantly, easily and painlessly.

For service providers like you, there's **FM Server™**: our new secure online service for transmitting, aggregating and working with your tracking data in a single web-accessible place.

Our tamper-proof **Print Tracking** holds customers accountable without holding printing hostage, making for happy customers. Our **Copy Tracking** bucks conventional thinking by asking the user only one question instead of many, reducing the headache of walkup tracking. For nearly everything else, there's **Integration** that makes our software the most connected of its kind.

Find out how we can help your on-site FM program by visiting www.sepialine.com or call **(800) 404-9558**.

REPRO REPORT



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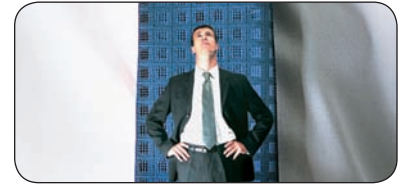
Features

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Operating Ratios: How Well Does Your Operation Work?

By Andrea May

One reprographic firm earns 3.5 percent profit on \$6 million in sales while in contrast another earns 18.4 percent! These figures reveal the profitability chasm between the top and bottom third of reprographic firms surveyed within the *IRGA's 2006 Operating Ratio Study*.



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Small Shops, Big Customers. No Problem.

By Ed Avis

Reprographics shops don't get much smaller than Avon Reprographics. How small is Avon Reprographics? It is truly a "mom-and-pop" shop — owners Jane and Jim Scales are the only employees.



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Best Practices for Hardware Purchases

By Scott Cullen

Look before you lease. That's probably the best advice a repro shop owner can get before acquiring any piece of hardware.



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IRGA President Sees His Term Come to a Close; Keeps Eye on the Future

By Dennis Coyle

Bryan Thomas still smiles every time someone asks him how he started his career. "With a paintbrush, opaquing film negatives," he says. Thomas has come a long way since the summer when he was 13 years old. Now, he is president of his family's third-generation business — Thomas Reprographics — and is nearing the end of his term as president of the IRGA.

Readers: We have learned that, due to a label processing error by the printer, some copies of the January/February *Repro Report* arrived at the correct addresses without the addressee names. If you did not receive your January/February issue, you can download a copy at www.irga.com/repro_report/JanFeb.PDF. If you have questions or concerns, please e-mail Managing Editor Dennis Coyle at dcoyle@irga.com.

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It's your future, not theirs. Take control.

You're in control of your business when you use PLP's visionary solutions. With vendor independence and open architecture, you're free to take advantage of powerful new technology as it emerges. Choose the best of what's available, and make it all work together seamlessly.

Use our newest solutions to get real-time intelligence on the status of jobs or asset utilization from your Web browser. Apply this intelligence to take immediate action to improve performance at any location.

Our other tried and true solutions enable you to integrate devices from different manufacturers and eliminate bottlenecks associated with file formats that are proprietary or difficult to manage.

Unparalleled service gets you up and running quickly—and keeps you going. And you're not tied down to long-term contracts. In fact, our unique Investment Protection Policy lets you apply the cost of some of our solutions towards upgrades.

Change is happening faster and faster. Make your business more agile by tearing down the barriers to growth. PLP helps you increase customer satisfaction, achieve the competitive edge and improve your profitability.

Take control of your business.

Maximizing Your Convention and Trade Show ROI



Bryan Thomas
President
2007-2008

With the 82nd IRgA Annual Convention & Trade Show just a couple of weeks away, it is time to put some effort into pre-planning your schedule and priorities for Las Vegas. That is assuming that you are planning to attend. If not, I have only one thing to say: No matter how large or small your business may be, the benefits of attending the Convention and Trade Show far outweigh any reason not to attend. It was designed with your needs and requests in mind.

Now, I would like to share a few tips that I have learned through the years to be beneficial in getting the most out of my convention experiences.

No matter how large or small your business may be, the benefits of attending the Convention & Trade Show far outweigh any reason not to attend.

Registration

First, study the pre-convention program to determine who from your organization should attend. For instance, this year's educational program has a sales-focused educational track. Are there people in your organization who should be experiencing it?

Second, stay at the hotel arranged by the convention planners. It takes too much time to travel back and forth, wasting valuable networking time. Besides, the IRgA makes a huge commitment in meeting space to accommodate our needs and must promise sleeping rooms in return for that space.

Pre-Planning

First, discuss with those not attending to find out what they would like for you to investigate for them. If

you have multiple people from your organization attending, don't have everyone attend the same educational programs; divide and conquer. However, make sure you reconvene at the end of the day to discuss notes.

Next, and most important for me, purchase a small note pad or note cards that you can carry with you and slip into your pocket. These are invaluable for jotting down those ideas that come to you while visiting with someone over coffee, in the elevator, on the trade show floor or even through that brainstorm that comes to you in the middle of the night after a couple of drinks and a day packed full of industry-related conversation.

Upon Arrival

Get a lay of the land; don't wait until the first morning to hunt down the location of that education session that you had your eyes on in the program.

Networking

Use coffee breaks to network, not as time for your Blackberry fix (you can do that later.)

By the way, this is a really hard one for me. Schedule time to read e-mail and return phone calls. Networking time can be short and you don't want to miss out. It is very likely that networking is one of the top three reasons you took the time to attend in the first place.

If you are new to the IRgA, don't be afraid to introduce yourself. This group, I am proud to say, is a warm and welcoming one. If you are still having a hard time, look for someone on the IRgA Board (we are all wearing extra ribbons on our badges) to get things rolling for you.

Education

Buy the CDs of the sessions that you missed and then actually listen to them. Import them to your iPod or

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Continued on page 19

What happens after I give them my business?

Is there a standard?

Can I talk to the people who run the company?

Who actually owns the software code?

What are their businesses practices like?

Was this product made for my business?

decision

Will this company be there in the future?

What are my guarantees?

Is this company as committed as I am?

Who runs this company?

Is there an old-boy network?

Is a handshake all there is? Will they show me their books?

a standard?

**When you ask questions about your business partners,
are you getting the right answers?**

Your success depends on hard work, a clear vision of the future, and who you do business with. The people and products you choose to work with need to be there day in, day out, with real solutions, and honest answers.

When it comes to your software company, ask the tough questions. See if you get the answers you deserve.
Then come see us. We'll be at IRgA Las Vegas May 13th - 17th.

ARC and PlanWell. Real people, real resources, real answers.



Mounting and Laminating Training Seminar for Operators

The IRgA, in conjunction with Drytac Corporation, is continuing its popular and affordable Mounting and Laminating Training Seminars.

Now in its 13th year, this popular two-day program for equipment operators integrates theory with actual hands-on training, progressively providing the fundamentals of mounting and laminating technology and techniques. While day one is a great refresher, day two concentrates on more advanced troubleshooting and special applications training. Class size is limited to 10 participants to ensure personalized attention.

The seminar will cover:

- 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 and media and substrates that are available;
- Advice on selecting the correct materials for a job;
- Preparation of media prior to laminating; and
- Specialty applications.

There will also be time available for your specific questions.

2008 Dates and Locations:

- May 1-2, Toronto, Canada; and
- Sept. 18-19, Santa Fe Springs, Calif.

Cost: Full Two-Day Session:

- \$149 for IRgA members; and
- \$229 for non-members.

Session Registration

Since each session is limited to a maximum of 10 participants, no more than two individuals per company may register for the same session. Attendees will be responsible for the cost of their travel, hotel accommodations and all extras. A block of rooms will be held for participants in each city. Additional information on transportation options, hotel rooms and directions will be provided to all registrants by the respective training company.

The seminar fee includes:

- All training materials;
- Transfer from the designated hotel to the training facility; and
- Continental breakfast and lunch on training days.

Reservations are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Because of the limited class size, these sessions sell out early. Please contact the IRgA offices for current seminar availability at 800/833-4742 or e-mail info@irga.com. ●

Fourth Quarter '07 IRgA/Baird Research Study Results

As a benefit of your company's membership in the IRgA, the association is pleased to share the results of the Fourth Quarter 2007 Reprographers Survey. The survey was conducted independently for the IRgA by the Research Group within Robert W. Baird Company.

The results are available in the members-only section of www.irga.com.

Snapshot of the Results

The Q4 2007 Reprographers Survey featured responses from 75 IRgA member companies. Key findings include:

- Q4 business was below expectations; and
- Revenue decreased 1.2 percent on average during the quarter; by comparison, revenue increased by 1.3 percent in 3rd quarter 2007

For more survey results about the future, list price trends, digital services activity and non-residential construction information, visit www.irga.com.

If you do not know your login or password, please call the IRgA Headquarters toll-free at 800/833-4742 and our friendly staff will assist you.

The IRgA's partnership with Baird allows IRgA members to benefit from receiving fresh, quarterly industry research on business trends within our industry. We would like to thank those companies that participated in the study, and encourage all member companies, through their key membership contacts, to participate in future studies. The Q1 2008 Survey was conducted in April and will be available in May. ●

Obituary

Michael Wayne Pittenger

Feb. 23, 1952, – Feb. 19, 2008



Michael Wayne Pittenger died in his home on Feb. 19 of a heart attack.

Michael, 55, was a prominent businessman in blueprint and large-format printing. He spent many years working with his father, J.H. Pittenger Jr. at Arrow Products, Inc. and founded Focus Digital during the innovative and formative years of the large-format print industry.

Pittenger was widely recognized for his leadership in the industry and was a former president of the Southeastern Reprographic Association and former board member of the International Reprographic Association.

Pittenger was a native of Tennessee and spent much of his life in the south. He is survived by his daughter Christy Brewer, mother Ruby Haralson, stepfather James "Moe" Haralson, sisters Karen Pittenger and Lynn Hartsough; Yvette C. Nash, Daltina C. Harrison, Yvonne C. Noel, and Victor Callahan; grandchildren Hailey, Mason, Abby and Carson Brewer, and his inseparable companion, Shadow.

A memorial service was held Sunday, Feb. 24 at the Harpeth Hills Funeral Home & Memory Gardens in Nashville, Tenn. ●

The IRgA Webinar Series Continues

The IRgA continues its commitment to offer members a variety of educational opportunities, including its recently updated Webinar series.

As an active IRgA member company, you and your colleagues have free access to these quarterly Webinars, which present practical information from industry insiders.

Registration is free and open to all members of the IRgA. In addition, your membership grants you access to the following archived Webinars:

- *Improving Performance through Operations Innovation*
- *Operational Efficiency: How to Become More Efficient*
- *PDF Technology and Trends in the Construction Industry*
- *Managing Complex AEC Designs with Autodesk DWF*
- *Update on Operational Efficiency*

The archive is available at www.irga.com, under the Publications and Education navigation bar. The IRgA will distribute more details regarding the following Webinars in the upcoming months:

- July: *Tips for your Sales Force*
- October: *Going Green*

If you have any questions, please contact Tricia Wisneski at 312/673-4904 or e-mail twisneski@irga.com. ●

Regional Chapter Update

Schedule of Events

Central Reprographic Association (CRA)

Sept. 10-13
The Millennium Hotel
St. Louis, Mo.

Contact: Shirley Zawoyski
630/351-2202
shirleyzawoyski@sbcglobal.net

Western Reprographics Association (WRA)

Oct. 2-7
Westin Puerto Vallarta
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

Contact: Paul McKee
480/833-3912
paulm@scottblue.com

Eastern Regional Reprographic Association (ERRA)

Nov. 12-14
Hilton Daytona Beach Resort
Daytona Beach, Fla.

Contact: Shirley Zawoyski
630/351-2202
shirleyzawoyski@sbcglobal.net

Southeastern Reprographic Association (SRA)

Nov. 12-14
Hilton Daytona Beach Resort
Daytona Beach, Fla.

Contact: Linda Maynard
407/679-4700
linda@artsystemsfl.com

Contact: Shirley Zawoyski
630/351-2202
shirleyzawoyski@sbcglobal.net



The IRgA Hosts 82nd Annual Convention & Trade Show in Las Vegas

The International Reprographic Association (IRgA) presents its 82nd Annual Convention & Trade Show, May 13-15, among the glitz and glamour of the Paris Las Vegas Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev.

The largest annual gathering of reprographers in the world, the Annual Convention includes an educational program presented by industry experts, a trade show displaying the most innovative products and plenty of opportunities for attendees to network and relax.

One Day Early, Same Great Value

The Annual Convention & Trade Show will be held one day earlier than in previous years, kicking off on Tuesday, May 13, and wrapping up on Thursday, May 15. Please take note of this change when confirming your travel plans to Vegas.

Visit the IRgA Web site to Download the 2008 Advance Program

The IRgA welcomes members and non-members to download the advance program to view a detailed description of the three-day event.

IRgA Announces New Sales-Focused Sessions

The IRgA recently announced a new sales-focused educational track at the Annual Convention. In addition to the traditional owner executive-level education, the new sales-focused track will offer sessions targeted to sales teams in the reprographics industry.

The sales-focused educational sessions include:

- The Construction Life Cycle.
- The Construction Technology Playing Field.
- Solution Selling: Is it for Everyone?
- Selling Reprographic Services into a BIM Environment.
- Future of the Reprographic Industry.

The IRgA offers reduced registration rates for companies that send multiple members to the Annual Convention, a great way to bring you sales team to Las Vegas and save.

Visit www.irga.com for details and complete descriptions of sessions.

Trade Show to Showcase Cutting-Edge Products & Services

The IRgA Trade Show gives attendees access to top industry providers, showcasing leading solutions and cutting-edge technologies. New products on the horizon will be displayed, as well as insight from industry leaders – critical elements to succeeding in the reprographics industry. See page 10 for a list of confirmed exhibitors.





IRgA Touts Its Exceptional Keynote Speakers



Famed Consultant to Present 'Measuring Customer Loyalty'

Fred Reichheld, named one of the top 25 consultants in the world by Consulting Magazine, will serve as a keynote speaker at the IRgA Convention in Las Vegas.

Widely recognized as one of the world's leading authorities on business loyalty, Reichheld helps clients achieve superior results through improvements in customer, employee and investor loyalty. His pioneering work has quantified the linkage between loyalty, profits and growth.

Now through the IRgA, attendees can learn how to apply these findings and develop a loyal customer base that will boost business.

Visit www.irga.com to read an excerpt of Reichheld's latest book.



Expert to Address 'Economic Trends in Commercial Real Estate and Construction'

The headlines are full of daunting words that would make anyone reliant on the building industry worried. There are no doubt problems caused by the subprime mortgage crisis, but all is not doom and gloom.

Nationwide fundamentals in the commercial building market are still strong. Certain regions of the country are still performing well.

Find out what this means for you and your business as expert Robert Falese provides his innovative insights at the IRgA Annual Convention.

Falese, an authority on trends in the commercial real estate and construction financing sectors, will give greater understanding on how our nation got into this situation, what is really happening in the markets and what the near and long term future holds in the commercial and industrial construction space.

He will also highlight national and regional trends in today's markets.



Architectural Designer Explains 'What Building Green Means to the Reprographics Industry'

Marybeth Shaw, an architectural designer and principle of Shaw-Jelveh Design, LLC, will provide insight and real world experience on how companies can better market green products and services to the industry.

Shaw has helped the U.S. Green Building Council, the World Green Building Council and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, as well as several commercial finishes companies that market to the A&D community, to implement green design in their communications: in print, online and in environmental graphics and signage.

For more detailed information regarding any of the keynote speakers, please visit the IRgA Web site – www.irga.com.

Tuesday, May 13

- 7:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast at TPC Las Vegas (golf participants only)
- 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. . . . IRgA 2008 Convention Registration Open
- 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. . . . Annual Golf Tournament and Awards Luncheon
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. . . . Opening Keynote Session
- 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. . . . Exhibit Hall Opening Cocktail Reception

Wednesday, May 14

- 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. . . . IRgA 2008 Convention Registration Open
- 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. . . . Opening General Session/Bukousky Awards & Morning Coffee
- 9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. . . . Networking Break
- 9:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. . . . Concurrent Educational Sessions
- 11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. . . . Networking Break
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. . . . Concurrent Educational Sessions
- 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. . . . Lunch in Exhibit Hall
- 12:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. . . . Exhibit Hall Open
- 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. . . . Evening Networking Reception

Thursday, May 15

- 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. . . . IRgA 2008 Convention Registration Open
- 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. . . . Keynote Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. . . . Closing Keynote & Annual Business Meeting
- 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. . . . Exhibit Hall Open
- 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. . . . Lunch in Exhibit Hall
- 1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. . . . Concurrent Educational Sessions
- 2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. . . . Networking Break
- 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. . . . Concurrent Educational Sessions
- 3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. . . . Networking Break
- 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. . . . Concurrent Educational Sessions
- 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. . . . All-Industry Networking Reception

Schedule subject to change.



IRgA Members Set to Enjoy the Links at TPC Canyons Las Vegas

The IRgA 82nd Annual Convention & Trade Show is known for its education sessions, networking events and dynamic exhibitor show. In addition, it is also known for excellent golf.

The host of this year's annual golf tournament on May 13 is the TPC Canyons Las Vegas.

The 12-year-old course, which has hosted the Senior PGA Tour's Las Vegas Classic in past years, sits north of the bustling city of Las Vegas and south of dramatic mountainous views.

Golf Tournament Schedule – Tuesday, May 13

- 6:30 a.m. Shuttle begins from Paris Las Vegas Hotel
- 7:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast/Tournament Registration
- 7:50 a.m. Welcome & Rules (golfers in carts)
- 8:00 a.m. Shotgun Start

After the conclusion of the tournament, there will be a luncheon and awards presentation, followed by transportation back to the Paris Las Vegas Hotel.

All golfers must be registered IRgA Convention & Trade Show attendees. Registration for the IRgA Golf Tournament is available only through convention registration. A \$250 early bird registration fee is available until May 2. After that date, registration is \$300 per golfer. Registration includes greens fees, transportation, continental breakfast, buffet luncheon and prizes. The premier sponsor is Contex.

TPC Las Vegas has been called “desert elegance.” There could be a no more apt description of the par-71, 7,063-yard golf course that offers a stern test of golfing skills along with stunning vistas.

Lush green parcels of manicured turf are woven throughout a rugged tapestry of arroyos, barrancas and other natural features in the southern Nevada desert. While the course meanders over several hundred acres, it has only 110 acres of irrigated land — another plus in the realm of environmental conservation and wildlife preservation.

2008 IRgA Exhibitors (As of 3/31)

Air - Fast	Pinnacle Infotech
Alden & Broden Corp.	PLP Digital Systems
ARC	Precision Paper Co.
Bertl	PrinterPresence by Firespring
Blue Book, The	Promark Technology
Business Management Software	RB Converting
Calculated Industries	Regional Reprographic Assoc.
Canon USA, Inc.	Pavilion
Contex	Reprographic Services Association
Cylix, Inc.	ReproMAX
Dietzgen, a division of Nashua	Ricoh Americas Corporation
DIGITAL ES	Seiko Infotech
Drytac	Sepialine
eDistribution	Spicer Corporation
ES-TE Folding Systems	Spinnerdog, Inc.
GBC	Spiral Binding
GreatAmerica Leasing	Super Brush, LLC
Hewlett-Packard Company	Tameran Graphic Systems, Inc.
Image Products of California	TechParts, Inc.
KIP	Tekgraf Corp
Mutoh	Thoroughbred Software
MV Software	Universal Media Solutions
National Azon	Valley Supplies
Nukote	Visual Imaging Products
Océ North America, Inc.	Wide-Format Imaging Magazine
Paradigm	Xerox

The IRgA Appreciates its Annual Convention & Trade Show Sponsors

The IRgA sincerely appreciates the companies that have shown their support of the association by offering various sponsorships for the IRgA Annual Convention & Trade Show.

2008 IRgA Sponsors (As of 3/31)





LAS VEGAS

2008

Bringing the industry together to share cutting-edge expertise, technology practices and cost effective solutions for print and digital services.

IRgA Annual Convention
& Trade Show

May 13-15, 2008
Paris Las Vegas Hotel

IRgA
2008



Attendee Registration Form

(For additional registrants, please make copies of this form. Forms must be received by May 2, 2008. After May 2, 2008, you must register on-site.)

REGISTRANT INFORMATION (Please type or print):

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

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- 1) Select your buying influence.
 Final Decision
 Recommend
 Specify
 No Role
- 2) What is your annual budget for reprographic equipment and supplies?
 \$0 - \$99,999
 \$100,000 - \$249,999
 \$250,000 - \$499,999
 \$500,000+
- 3) What is your job title?
 Executive/CEO/CFO
 Vice President
 Director
 Manager
 Purchasing Agent
 Consultant
 Specifier
 Other
 If Other (please specify) _____
- 4) What products and services would you like to see?
 Wide-Format Engineering Output
 Wide-Format Color Graphics
 Small-Format Digital Printing
 Laminating and Finishing
 Scanning and Archiving
 Digital File Management
 Facilities Management
 Other _____
 All of the Above
- 5) Are you a first time attendee?
 Yes No
- 6) Please list other associations/industry groups to which your company belongs (please check all that apply):
 PEIR Group
 ReproMax
 U.S. Reprographics Network
 RSA
 ARC
 Independent/None

1. CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES			
Full Convention (Includes All Sessions, Evening Receptions, Keynote Breakfast and Exhibits)			
Full Convention	Early-bird Registration (on or before 3/28/08)	Registration (on or before 5/2/08)	Registration (after 5/2/08)
Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$699	<input type="checkbox"/> \$799	<input type="checkbox"/> \$899
2nd Additional Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$599	<input type="checkbox"/> \$699	<input type="checkbox"/> \$799
3rd Additional Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$449	<input type="checkbox"/> \$549	<input type="checkbox"/> \$649
Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,099	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,199
One Day (select one day only)			
Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$275	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300
Additional Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$225	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$275
Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$350	<input type="checkbox"/> \$375	<input type="checkbox"/> \$400
Select day you wish to attend:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday (OT). Includes Wednesday Keynote Breakfast, Sessions, Exhibits, Exhibit Hall Lunch and Reception.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday (OF). Includes Thursday Sessions, Exhibits, Exhibit Hall Lunch and Reception.			
Two Day (Wednesday and Thursday)			
Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$600	<input type="checkbox"/> \$650	<input type="checkbox"/> \$700
Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$800	<input type="checkbox"/> \$900	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000
			Subtotal: <input type="text"/>

2. CONVENTION SOCIAL EVENTS		
(1 ticket for each event is included with Full Convention. Enter number of additional tickets needed.)		
	On or before 5/2/08	After 5/2/08
Exhibit Opening Cocktail Reception Tuesday	___ x \$100	___ x \$125
Wednesday Networking Reception Wednesday	___ x \$75	___ x \$100
Keynote Breakfast Thursday	___ x \$25	___ x \$50
Companion Program (includes Tuesday and Wednesday Receptions)	___ x \$150	___ x \$175
Companion Name: _____		
Convention Social Events Subtotal:		<input type="text"/>

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Check MasterCard VISA American Express
 Check/Credit Card number: _____ Exp. Date _____
 Name as it appears on card: _____
 Cardholder's Signature: _____

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

Cancellation Policy: All cancellations must be received in writing. Requests for cancellations before April 18, 2008 will be subject to a \$100 processing fee. No refunds will be issued after April 18, 2008. Substitutions can be made at any time.

HOW TO REGISTER
 By Fax (with credit card information): 905-479-9297
 By Mail (with check or money order in US funds): IRgA – Registration, 5471 Paysphere Circle, Chicago, IL 60674
 Online at www.irga.com (credit card information required)
 Questions? Call 800-833-4742

3. GOLF OUTING (not included in Convention Registration Fees)		
Golf Tournament Tuesday, (May 13, 6:30 a.m.)		
	On or before 5/2/08	After 5/2/08
	___ \$250	___ \$300
(select one) <input type="checkbox"/> Vendor <input type="checkbox"/> Reprographer		
(select one) <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
Handicap = _____		
Golf Rental will be paid at the course club.		
Rental Information*		
Club Rental: <input type="checkbox"/> Right <input type="checkbox"/> Left <input type="checkbox"/> Not needed (payment must be made upon pick-up)		
Golf Outing Subtotal (not including rental):		<input type="text"/>
*Rental information must be received by Wednesday, April 25th.		

Subtotal: CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES: _____
 Subtotal: CONVENTION SOCIAL EVENTS: _____
 Subtotal: GOLF OUTING: _____
TOTAL: _____
THANK YOU!

Please tell us how you heard about the IRgA 2008 Convention & Trade Show. Enter the source code (found on your mailing label, advertisement, e-mail or promotional piece): _____

Roland DGA Corporation Recognized for Outstanding Business Achievements



Roland DGA Corporation was recognized by Microsoft with a 2008 Microsoft Dynamics

Customer Excellence Award for excellence in Distribution Industry Leadership and was honored by Microsoft executives at an awards luncheon March 12 at Convergence 2008, the premier Microsoft Dynamics user conference.

The 2008 Customer Excellence Awards, which are presented in 12 categories, recognize and celebrate Microsoft Dynamics customers that have achieved notable accomplishments using Microsoft Dynamics solutions.

Roland DGA Corporation was recognized for its strong commitment to Distribution Industry Leadership by achieving its goal to move from multiple paper-based processes to a single, completely automated process for warranty claims processing.

Established in 1997, the Customer Excellence Awards, formerly named Pinnacle Awards, are awarded each year at the Convergence user conferences in the US and Europe. Microsoft Dynamics customers, partners and team members submit nominations. Judging teams for each of the categories rated nominees on creativity, vision, and business benefits. Top winners from each category were then reviewed by a panel of six Microsoft executive judges for final approval. As part of that final review all winners were chosen along with the customer who deserved the Overall Excellence Award.

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of financial, customer relationship and supply chain management solutions that help businesses work more effectively.

NUR Macroprinters to Sell its Business to HP

NUR Macroprinters Ltd., a leading supplier of wide-format inkjet production printers for the printing industry, recently announced it has signed a definitive agreement with Hewlett Packard Company (HP) under which HP will acquire substantially all the assets of NUR for \$117.5 in cash on a cash free and debt free basis.

Under the terms of the agreement, HP will pay \$117.5 million in cash to NUR, of which \$14.5 million will be held in an indemnity escrow account (\$9.5 million for 18 months and \$5 million for 24 months). NUR will retain approximately \$5.5 million in cash and will use approximately \$20.8 million of the proceeds to repay NUR's loans to its lender banks. NUR has also retained several additional liabilities and is evaluating the tax consequences of the transaction.

Closing of the transaction is subject to certain regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions. The transaction is intended to be completed as soon as all required approvals have been obtained.

NUR has approximately 72.7 million shares issued. In addition, NUR has 54.4 million outstanding warrants and options convertible into shares that if fully exercised will add approximately \$24.5 million in cash to the company.

Xerox Earns Certification from Leading Environmental Organizations; Tough Paper Sourcing Guidelines Preserve Forests

As part of its commitment to preserve biodiversity through responsible forest management and to provide customers with "greener" paper choices, Xerox Corporation earned "chain of custody" certification from both the Forest Stewardship Council and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification. These certifications confirm that Xerox paper products carrying the FSC or PEFC logo have been manufactured using raw materials harvested from certified sources, controlled wood sources or post-consumer reclaimed sources. FSC- and PEFC-certified products can be tracked from harvest through distribution.

Both FSC and PEFC are independent, non-profit organizations that support sustainable forestry through rigorous forest management standards and chain-of-production monitoring.

Xerox covers the greatest geographic area of any certified paper supplier, with nearly 80 FSC and PEFC accredited distribution centers across 17 countries, and is among the first companies to achieve certification based on the FSC's new international multi-site standards.

Colortrac appoints Kevin Zheng to QA Manager

Colortrac Ltd, the British developer and manufacturer of SmartLF wide-format scanners and image acquisition software solutions, recently appointed Kevin Zheng as Quality Assurance Manager at Colortrac Imaging Systems (SuZhou) Ltd, their Chinese subsidiary.

Zheng, a graduate of Lanzhou University of Science and Technology, brings nine years' professional experience in quality assurance to his new position. Before joining Colortrac, Kevin held a variety of quality management, inspection and standardization engineering positions, including three years as Quality Manager with UL-CCIC Co Ltd, a joint venture of Underwriters Laboratories, USA, the independent product safety certifier, and four years as Quality Supervisor with Philips Domestic Appliances (Suzhou) Co. Ltd.

Since Zheng's appointment, Colortrac Imaging Systems has made significant gains in addressing key quality assurance issues. With the recently received ISO 9001 Surveillance Audit and Factory Inspections from the Production Certification Organization Colortrac Imaging System's Quality Assurance program is up and running. It recently passed the ISO14001 Audit and expects to receive an ISO14001-compliance certificate soon.

Continued on page 14

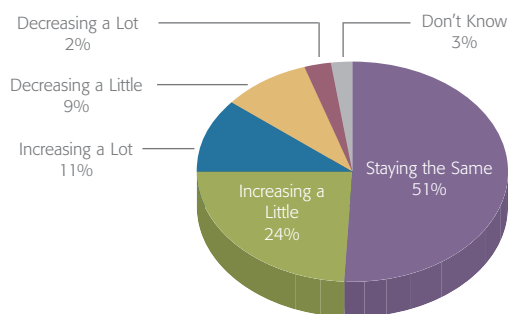
Continued from page 13

Creatives' Wide-Format Projects Continue To Grow

In Winter 2007/2008, 50 percent of graphic design and production firms that work on wide-format output projects said that their wide-format projects are "staying the same," while 24 percent said they are "increasing a little" and 11 percent said they are "increasing a lot." Only 11 percent said they were decreasing either "a little" or "a lot."

Elsewhere in our survey, we found that designers do not see wide-format projects as a sales opportunity – that is, as a profit center. And yet, as we highlighted in this space last month, two-thirds of them do in fact work on wide-format projects. In many cases, those projects are little more than reformatting a Quark file and sending it off to a sign shop. It's a low-mark-up project and thus not seen as a profit center. But in the grand scheme of advertising and marketing, wide-format – and outdoor – graphics are an essential element. As we said last month, we also found that creative shops tend not to have those projects output by their commercial printer.

Excerpted from the Industry Measure Special Report: "Creative Forecast 2008," January 2008.



A/E Graphics Goes Green

A/E Graphics, with Wisconsin locations in Milwaukee, Brookfield and Mequon, recently switched its operating standards for its digital print machines to run on totally recycled products, both large and small format. The move is a first for southeastern Wisconsin printers and the owners of A/E Graphics are hoping that other printing companies will soon follow their lead.

Research indicates that one ton of recycled paper saves 4,000 KWH of energy, 7,000 gallons of water and 17 trees. The paper also is acid free and contains 30 percent consumer waste. Plus for large print formats, the paper cores, which hold the paper, are made from 100 percent recycled corrugated containers.

The company is also enacting new recycling initiatives. Last year alone, they recycled more than 7,000 cardboard cores and 14,000 plastic plus ends from production paper rolls. They have started using UV inks rather than toxic solvent based inks for their outdoor sign production, and they have retired their ammonia based blueprint products.

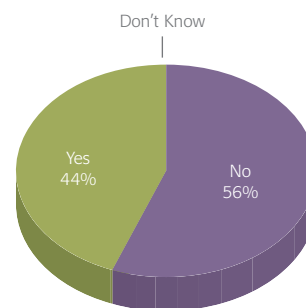
Less Than Half of Commercial Print Providers own a Wide-Format Printer

In Fall 2007, we found that less one one-half (44 percent) of all print and prepress companies surveyed own at least one wide-format color printer, while 56 percent do not.

We also found in the current Printing survey that only 31 percent of those shops that do own a wide-format printer use it for producing or selling wide-format output jobs for clients (42 percent use it for making proofs, and 27 percent say they use it/them for both purposes).

And yet, in the Design & Production surveys, two-thirds of creative companies do work on wide-format projects for clients, but the majority of them have those jobs output at a specialty wide-format shop and not their commercial printer – even though most of these wide-format projects are parts of larger campaigns that have a commercial printing component. Can – or should – commercial printers place an emphasis on wide-format printing? Perhaps...but, as our survey also found, substrates and finishing options are key elements of a successful wide-format output strategy.

Excerpted from the Industry Measure Printing #26, Fall 2007.



The Industry Measure Releases its Annual Printing Industry Forecast

The Industry Measure released its special report, "Printing Forecast 2008: The Industry Measure Perspective on the Challenges and Opportunities for the Printing Industry in the Next 12 Months and Beyond," The Industry Measure's annual look at the year ahead for printers, their clients and their suppliers.

Report highlights...

- In Fall 2007, 28 percent of commercial printers said business conditions for the past 12 months had been "excellent," better than they had been in the 12 months before that;
- In Fall 2007, 27 percent of commercial printers expect business conditions in the next 12 months to be "excellent," or better than they had been in the past 12 months;
- In Fall 2007, 41 percent of all print and prepress establishments surveyed said that "broadening digital printing services" was a top sales opportunity for the next 12 months;

The Industry Measure can be reached on the Web (www.theindustrymeasure.com), via email (info@theindustrymeasure.com) or toll-free by phone at 866/873-6310.

Operating Ratios:

How Well Does Your Operation Work?

By Andrea May

Consider: One reprographic firm earns 3.5 percent profit (owner's compensation) on \$6 million in sales while in contrast another earns 18.4 percent! These figures reveal the profitability chasm between the top and bottom third of reprographic firms surveyed within the IRgA's 2006 Operating Ratio Study.

The study identifies the distinguishing characteristics of industry profit leaders and offers a useful one-page, profitability worksheet. Sensible advice about analyzing labor costs, overhead expenses and overall profitability in relation to sales volume can be found throughout the study. For starters, here are three recommendations to heed that can have a significant effect on your profitability this year.

Recommendation 1: Reduce Cost of Goods

The explanation for the profit paradox outlined earlier lies in the variable Costs of Goods. The mix of sales was similar among the most to least profitable firms the IRgA surveyed but the cost percentage differences determined profitability.

The Expenses – Top 33% | The Expenses – The Bottom 33% table (see Figure 1) clearly shows that Cost of Goods is the most important expense to lower.

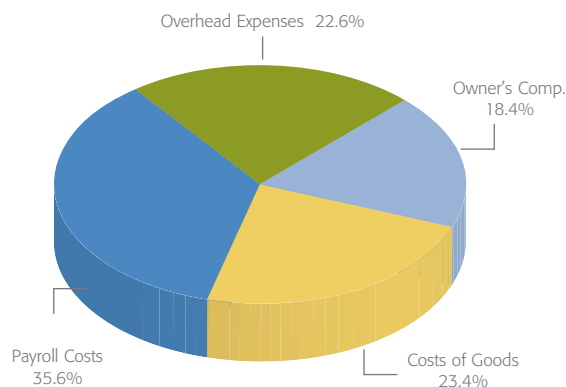
To control costs, create 2008–2009 goals to:

- Increase sales from large format BW printing and copying; and
- Review your profit margins on merchandise and equipment sales and establish some rules.

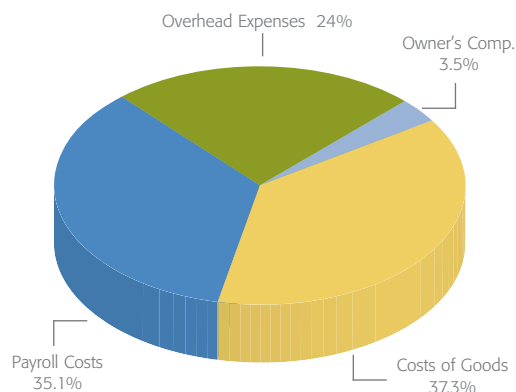
More than half of the annual sales for the most profitable companies came from large-format BW printing and copying. Just as important, firms with no more than 8 percent merchandise and equipment sales realized profits (owner's compensation) of \$932, 409 or 15.72 percent on sales of \$5,932,183.

"I believe this makes sense since most IRgA shops are designed to have equipment, personnel and overhead to handle a manufacturing type process," writes printing industry expert Larry Hunt, who authored the executive summary contained within the study. "This manufacturing process typically has a very high gross profit percentage,

Expenses – The Top 33%



Expenses – The Bottom 33%



Expenses: The Top vs. the Bottom – Note that the top 33% of companies, in terms of profitability, reported profits (owner's compensation) four times greater than those in the bottom 33%. Interestingly, while the sales of both the groups were relatively close to each other (approx. \$6 million), the cost of goods percentages reported by each varied dramatically.

Continued on page 15

IN THE WORLD OF LARGE-FORMAT PRINTING

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which allows for the many variable costs necessary to produce the product and still leave a good profit. Merchandise sales and 'other sales' tend to have a much lower gross profit percentage and yet these companies often still have many of the costs associated with a manufacturing process."

Illuminating the cost relationship, merchandise and equipment sales had an average cost of goods factor of 68.8 percent for the low profit reporting firms. Despite the fact that this group had a lower payroll cost percentage and a much lower cost of overhead, their Net Owner's Compensation was \$433,510 or 7.55 percent on a sales volume of \$5.7 million, which is comparable to the profit leaders.

The point: "The ability to control and lower a company's cost of goods seems to be the single most important ratio when it comes to profitability in the reprographics industry," according to the study.

Recommendation 2: Improve Employee Performance

Profits Per Employee (PPE) goes hand in hand with Sales Per Employee (SPE) in analyzing the complex relationship between staffing and profitability.

IRgA found, in an alarming shift from the results of its 2003/2004 Operating Ratio Study, that the least profitable 2006 reporting firms suffered a net loss per employee of \$860. This figure backslides from a net profit per employee of \$3,513 just two years earlier. By regularly tracking PPE, you can proactively work to increase productivity.

PPE is calculated using the following four figures:

- Total Gross Sales;
- Net Owner's Compensation;
- Fair Owner Salary;
- Net Profit; and
- Number of Full-Time Employees (excluding working owner).

$$\text{PPE} = \frac{\text{Net Profit}}{\text{\# of Full-Time Employees (exclude owner)}}$$

For example:

A. Total Gross Sales	=	\$1,000,000
B. Net Owner's Compensation	=	\$160,000
C. Fair Owner Salary (\$14,000 + 4 percent of A)	=	\$54,000
D. Net Profit (B-C)	=	\$106,000
E. Average 2005 Full-Time Employees (excluding working owner)	=	40.1

$$\text{PPE} = \frac{\$106,000}{40.1} = \$2,643$$

On the other hand, comparing your company's SPE against industry benchmarks will make you think twice before cutting or capping salaries to boost profits. The most profitable firms paid higher salaries as a result of being large enough scale operations to require supervisory staff and because of the retention of seasoned employees.

In the most recent IRgA survey, profit leaders were able to pay higher salaries, to the tune of \$4,669 more per employee, than the group of least profitable firms. Yet this increased expense did not alter the payroll costs as a percentage of sales ratio; holding stay in the 26-30 percent range for the most productive firms. This is good news for helping you retain an experienced, reliable work force and reason enough to calculate your company's SPE.

There is another incentive too. One firm produced \$6 million in sales with 45 personnel but a firm with a lower SPE employed utilized 10 more people to produce the same work, according to survey results.

Here's how to figure SPE:

$$\text{SPE} = \frac{\text{Total Gross Sales}}{\text{\# of Full-Time Employees (include owner)}}$$

The Sales per Employee table (see Figure 2) will help you rank your company's SPE against industry peers. SPE can vary significantly based on size of company, single or multiple shop operation, type of sales, usage of outside sales personnel and level of profitability.

If you don't like how your SPE is tracking, keep in mind that staff productivity is not entirely a matter of skill set and work ethic. Hunt points out within the study that SPE is complicated by such underlying factors as:

- Type of work (how labor intensive is the work?);
- Price (discounts reduce SPE); and
- Equipment performance (efficiency increases productivity).

The bottom line: increase both PPE and SPE operating ratios as fast as or faster than the rate of industry growth to safeguard profitability.

Recommendation 3: Stay On Top of Accounts Receivable

The last and easiest recommendation to put to practice is vigilant management of credit sales. Let this be your firm's newest mantra: all credit sales paid within 45 days. At the 60-day mark, it is increasingly unlikely payment will ever be received.

A troubling trend: "Based on the overall current [assets compared to current liabilities] ratio of 1.43, it appears that this industry has dropped dramatically from generally accepted levels of liquidity," concludes Hunt within the study. "A common guideline for many businesses is a current ratio of about 2.0, which hopefully allows for enough cash to cover current debt. If your current ratio is significantly below 2.0, I would strongly urge you to address this situation now."

Aging of accounts receivable, or days of Credit Sales Outstanding is calculated using the following four figures as:

- Average Annual Sales;
- Annual Credit Sales;
- Daily Credit Sales; and
- Average Accounts Receivable Balance.

Days of Credit Sales Outstanding =
Average Accounts Receivable Balance
Daily Credit Sales

For example, using the Fiscal 2005 All Firms averages:

A. Average Annual Sales	=	\$5,304,412
B. Annual Credit Sales (Estimate 85 percent)	=	\$4,508,750
C. Daily Credit Sales (B/365 days)	=	\$12,353
D. Average 2005 Accounts Receivable Balance (All Companies)	=	\$657,436

Days of Credit Sales Outstanding =
\$657,436 = 53 Days
\$12,353

Action Item: Calculate your days of credit sales outstanding. Create a plan of attack to reduce amount owed you if payments are not routinely received within 45 days.

The point: "The ability to control and lower a company's cost of goods seems to be the single most important ratio when it comes to profitability in the reprographics industry," according to the study.

The answer of 53.0 Days of Credit Sales Outstanding means that the average invoice takes approximately 53 days before payment is received.

If you have not yet read the 2006 Operating Ratio Study, it's not too late to benefit from the leasing payments analysis and industry healthcare and payroll employee cost benchmarks. The stated goal of the study publishers was to produce, "a benchmarking tool for planning, evaluating and directing [reprographic business] financial activities."

The study, IRGA's second, succeeds and your business can too as a result. Visit www.irga.com for more details. ●

Andrea May is a freelance writer in Lombard, Ill., who earned a Journalism degree from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

Maximizing Your Convention & Trade Show ROI

Continued from page 4

listen to them in your car to and from work. Share them with all the people who couldn't attend. It is the least expensive education you can provide your employees. That is, except for the IRGA Webinars, which are free to IRGA member companies.

Trade Show

Walking the trade show floor can be a daunting task. It can take some preparation to identify the location of the vendors on your pre-show hit list. Also, make sure that you take the time to see what the other vendors at the show have to offer. That is, after all, why you are there — to learn something new. If you can't determine what a vendor provides just by looking at their booth, feel free to use my standard line: "So, what do you guys do?"

Post-trip

The real value of any conference or trade show is in what you do with the information that you bring home with you. So, review all your notes and fill in the gaps of information that will exist because you took your notes on the fly. Then consolidate your notes and share with your employees back home and make sure you actually do something with all that new knowledge. That is when your individual return on investment can truly be measured.

If you weren't planning to attend but you're now convinced, it's not too late! You can always show up to Vegas and register onsite. I hope this helps make your IRGA Las Vegas experience just the smallest bit more rewarding. I look forward to seeing you there. ●



Small Shops, Big Customers. No Problem.

'Mom-and-Pop' Shops Leverage their Resources to Serve Large Clients.

By Ed Avis

Reprographics shops don't get much smaller than Avon Reprographics. How small is Avon Reprographics? It is truly a "mom-and-pop" shop — owners Jane and Jim Scales are the only employees.

Avon Reprographics was founded seven years ago in Avon, Ind., a town of about 10,000 people, five miles west of Indianapolis. It is a bedroom community, not the kind of place many large reprographics firms choose to locate.

With Indianapolis just minutes down the road, you might think Avon can't compete with the big-city reprographics shops. After all, why would a large A/E/C firm send work to tiny Avon when there are plenty shops right in Indianapolis? Even Jane Scales wonders about that sometimes.

"I marvel at the clients we get," she exclaims. "We get lots of big clients."

Avon Reprographics succeeds in landing big clients with a three-part strategy: The shop cultivates an appearance of capability, it partners with other shops when it needs to and it provides amazing, personal, high-quality service.

"Service has been our game," Scales says. "We've not gotten our big accounts easily — we stay late to do whatever has to be done."

Cultivating the Image

Marcia Layton Turner, author of *The Unofficial Guide to Marketing Your Small Business* (Wiley, 2006), says small businesses like Avon Reprographics should start their pursuit of large clients by creating a highly professional image that doesn't betray the small size of the firm.

"The perception of how large or small a company is can easily be impacted by skilled marketing," Layton Turner says. "So the first thing smaller companies want to do is hire a professional graphic designer, preferably someone who works with larger companies and can emulate a corporate look. It is amazing what a professional logo, letterhead, business card and Web site can do for a company's image and reputation."

Another essential step in creating the right look is solid Web site. A good, professionally designed Web site can go a long way towards making potential customers think a shop is larger than it really is.

For instance, Avon's Web site looks like most large firms' sites: it's clean and easily navigated, has thorough listings of the firm's capabilities, offers a sign-up for the company's e-mail newsletter, and, in general, has the same bells and whistles as any shop has.

"There really is no such thing as a small shop today now that web sites are the face of a business," says Jeff Lippincott, an attorney and accountant who counsels small businesses through Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE). "Web sites and the Internet have leveled the playing field. The Web site for a huge company and a small company can only have one home page, and that home page is the same size for every web site."

Below are some other tips from Lippincott and Layton Turner about cultivating the right image.

Testimonials: Both advisors say testimonials from current clients go a long way towards convincing potential clients that a small firm can do the job. Ask your favorite clients for a few words you can put on your site and other marketing material. You can even write it

for them and then get their approval. The point behind the testimonials is to show others that you have already done this work, and done it well.

“The biggest thing a corporate buyer is concerned about is giving a project to a smaller firm and receiving a poor deliverable,” Layton Turner says. “Anything you can do to quell those fears will go a long way toward earning his or her business.”

Along with testimonials, include a list of clients and/or major projects you’ve done. That will show potential clients the scope of your client base.

Sound Big: When you write your Web site and other marketing copy, use language that reinforces the idea that you can do the same work as any large shop. For example, don’t write “I’ll do this work...” Instead use “we.”

“In any marketing copy, suggest that there are several workers available to assist customers,” Layton Turner says.

At Avon Reprographics, the Web site refers to the firm as Avon Reprographics Center, implying substantial size. And the word “team” is used to show that the company is not just Jane.

Expert Image: In your marketing efforts, emphasize your expertise rather than your size. No one has a problem working with a small firm if they believe that firm is the best at what it does.

One way to cultivate the expert image is to join organizations and clubs that other executives frequent, and/or become a speaker there, Lippincott suggests. If you give workshops or seminars on imaging, document archiving, or other topics that would interest general business people, you will be perceived as the expert on that topic. Don’t make your speech a long sales pitch, however. Instead, offer expert advice on preserving documents, saving money on printing, etc. The idea that you’re the expert on this topic will get across.

The Advantage of Being Small

Once you’ve convinced your clients that you can handle their work despite your size, show them that being small can often be a real advantage.

“In larger companies there are levels of authority and skill, so when major customers work with smaller firms, they may be pleasantly surprised to discover that they’re working with senior-level execs, rather than new hires,” says Layton Turner.

At Avon, every client works with Jane or Jim, so there are no “layers” of decision makers between the clients and owners. “They know I have a real close connection with my clients,” Scales says. “We try to make it a real friendly atmosphere here.”

Besides close relationships with clients, another advantage of being small is flexibility. Does a client need extra-long terms for a special project? A small shop owner doesn’t need to “check with higher authorities.” If he trusts the client, he can make the decision on the spot. Is a client asking you deliver something 20 miles beyond your normal delivery zone? A small shop owner doesn’t need to get “approval;” she can make the call right then and there.

Being small sometimes means a shop has to specialize. Use that to your advantage – a client will understand if you can’t do everything, as long as what you do, you do well.

Avon Reprographics, for example, doesn’t have an electronic planroom. They do take work over e-mail all day long, and for most clients that’s fine. The prints they produce are top notch and always on time...even if they didn’t come into the shop via a planroom.

“We’re not playing with the big boys,” Scales says. “We’ve created a niche.”

After You Land the Big Client...

OK, you’ve successfully landed the big client and impressed him with your personal attention to his needs. Now the rubber meets the road. You need to show him that you can do work of the same quality – or better – than Giant Repro Mega Center down the road.

A key part of doing this may be to partner with other firms in your area. Avon Reprographics, for example, doesn’t do large-format color work in-house. It’s simply more than the small firm wants to deal with. But it offers those services to clients, and can do them

extremely well, because the Scales have a relationship with a color repro firm in Indianapolis. When color jobs come in, they’re zipped down the road and expertly executed – all behind the scenes.

Another essential part about meeting your customers’ expectations is to set those expectations correctly. A small reprographics firm owner may be willing to stay late to finish an important job – and that’s a giant advantage – but no matter how late he stays, he won’t be able to laminate a hundred posters if he doesn’t have a laminator! Make it clear what you can do and do it well.

Of course, a key part of pleasing customers is having great customer service. That’s where a small shop can sometimes have a true advantage. At Avon, the Scales personally deal with every customer. They answer the calls, respond to e-mails, correct problems. Remember, your big clients will expect you to have at least as good customer service as Giant Repro Mega Center, even if your customer service department is just you.

And speaking of customer service, keeping big clients also means keeping in touch with them even when there isn’t a problem or a project underway. Meet regularly with the reps, and, if possible, with the firm president or owner. Make sure your work is pleasing them.

“Schedule a quarterly review meeting with higher-ups to learn how to better meet their needs,” Layton Turner suggests. “Or invite your key contact and his or her boss to lunch every couple of months to check in.”

A small shop landing a large client can be a beautiful thing, both for the shop and the client. The keys to doing that are cultivating the right image, taking advantage of your small size when possible, producing the same quality work as the large firms, and providing amazing, personal customer service.

“We’ve stayed small on purpose,” Scales says. But being small doesn’t mean a shop, like Avon Reprographics, can’t have giant success. ●

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

Buying Time: Best Practices for Hardware Purchases

By Scott Cullen



Look before you lease. That's probably the best advice a repro shop owner can get before acquiring any piece of hardware. That advice applies not just to the particulars of the lease, but when deciding whether or not to lease or buy, or when deciding which hardware vendor to do business with.

Lease or Buy?

ImageTech Services in Bloomington, Minn. provides a full range of reprographic services. It also sells equipment and supplies and provides technical support. CEO Tracy Albinson is bullish on buying. "I personally believe buying is the way to go," maintains Albinson. But for some shops, she concedes that leasing is a viable option. "For a lot of people leasing is a real good thing to do, but you need to look at your long term if you're doing leasing," notes Albinson. Leasing makes sense, she says, if the equipment you're leasing is likely to last the term of the lease and not become obsolete.

That's Larry Hunt's contention too. Hunt, editor of Larry Hunt's Color Copy News and Larry Hunt's High Speed Copy News, acknowledges that leasing is a complex issue and that there are lots of pieces to the puzzle.

Hunt says that the decision to lease or buy depends on a number of factors, including the availability of excess cash to buy the equipment outright, availability of a good line of bank credit, and how quickly you like to turn over new equipment.

"If your company has a good line of bank financing available, you can probably get money at 7 to 8 percent," he says. "If you have cash in the company or in a personal account

available to loan to the company, you can typically get 5 percent interest on that money."

He goes on to explain that if your decision to lease vs. buy is based strictly on the cost of money, then the first choice should be to use company or personal funds at a cost of about 5 percent.

"Next best would be bank financing at about 7 to 8 percent, followed by leasing at a cost of 11 to 12 percent," notes Hunt. "But, the cost of money is not the only factor involved in making the lease vs. buy decision. There are possible tax consequences, which will need to be discussed with your accountant."

"If I were going to lease something, I'd want to do the shortest term possible, especially in those areas where the technology is changing dramatically," contends Hunt. An obvious example is small-format color. "I'd do a three-year lease versus a five-year lease because the cost of that equipment continues to go down and the quality continues to go up, and you don't want to be stuck with something for five years when the technology passed you buy 2½ years ago," says Hunt.

On the other hand, small-format black-and-white technology isn't changing as rapidly even though prices have come down somewhat during the past five years. "So I would feel more comfortable with a four-year lease on a black-and-white machine," opines Hunt.

Another important factor revolves around your schedule for upgrading to new technology. "If you are always ready to move to new technology within 36 months and hate the thought of having to dispose of a used machine, then getting a 36-month lease could be the right answer for you," states Hunt.

The Path of Lease Resistance

One would think that folks in the reprographics industry would be much more astute when acquiring hardware, but that's not what Hunt has seen. He reviews about 20 to 30 quotes a month from his subscribers, some of whom are IRgA members, and 60 to 70 percent of those quotes often contain nothing more than the name of the product, the length of the lease and how much it's going to cost the subscriber per month.

"There's no other information whatsoever," laments Hunt. "They don't even know what accessories are included in the [lease amount]."

In addition to knowing the price of the equipment and what accessories are included, it's also important to know the service and supplies costs per copy. Without this information, it's difficult to tell what you're paying for the equipment or what the interest rate really is.

According to Hunt, leases are typically 11 percent give or take, but they can

run 13, 14 or 15 percent on occasions and you can't know that unless you know the purchase price you're paying and the lease factor involved in determining that lease payment.

Again, Hunt cautions against five-year leases, which he says are more beneficial to the vendor than the buyer.

"Vendors like to trap you in a five-year lease because the interest rates are typically a little more than on a three-year lease."

This makes it easier for vendors to sell the buyer a more expensive machine initially and then when it becomes obsolete in 36, 48 or 60 months, they try to upgrade them to the newer machine. But beware. "They'll say that we're going to forgive the 12, 18 months you owe on your current machine, but what they really do in one way shape or form is that they bury the \$15,000 you owe on the old lease in the new contract."

How can a repro shop owner avoid getting caught up in all of this? "First of all you shouldn't sign more than a three-year lease," states Hunt. "A lot of people want to go to the new toy and they just disregard the fact that it's going to cost them X number of dollars more per month to go to the new product."

Yet Hunt maintains that those who have signed a four or five-year lease, can still upgrade sooner rather than later if they understand the numbers. "If you can break down all the numbers and show the vendor that they're sticking you for \$15,000 or so you might be able to negotiate \$4,000 to \$7,000 of that \$15,000 out of there."

The Most Common Mistake

Now that we've got a better understanding about leasing issues, let's backtrack a moment to purchasing issues.

Talking to Hunt, it's surprising to hear that repro shop owners tend to make some of the same mistakes over and over again. The most common problem is buying a bigger machine than needed as vendors try to sell

them the top of the line even if it doesn't meet their needs.

"Vendors will try to get them to buy a Cadillac to drive to the grocery store," maintains Hunt.

As an example, he says it's not unusual for a shop owner to be looking at a 50-ppm color copier for \$40,000 that might average 35,000 copies a month.

In addition to knowing the price of the equipment and what accessories are included, it's also important to know the service and supplies costs per copy.

"I'll talk to the guy and he doesn't have copy one yet and is just getting into the color copier business and they're hoping in the first year they might do 5,000 color copies a month," says Hunt. "I can't tell them if it has the right or wrong features for them, but I can tell them it's the absolute wrong machine."

Under buying is another problem. "There are occasions where they're actually doing 20,000 or 25,000 copies a month and are looking at a machine that will really only do 15,000 or 20,000 copies a month," says Hunt.

One of the first things Hunt tries to do when talking to anybody looking to buy equipment is figure out if it's the right size product and the right capability product for their needs, for now and the next three, four or five years assuming they're going to lease.

Tricks of the Trade Associations

Depending on the association, repro shops may enjoy some buying power associated with membership. ImageTech, Bloomington, Minn., is a member of ReproMax and that's been beneficial to Tracy Albinson. She leverages that organization's buying power from time to time.

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"That gives you a real nice base for a negotiation," says Albinson. But she cautions that when a vendor makes a deal with a trade organization a lot of times that's their best deal, and that's the best deal you're going to get.

There's lots of truth in the old saw, "knowledge is power," and the more you have the better chance of getting the best price whether you're buying or leasing

Hunt also sees value in taking advantage of the purchasing power of a trade association although those types of deals depend on the association and whether or not they have a relationship with a given manufacturer.

For example, the National Association of Quick Printers (NAQP) has national contracts with some of the major vendors on certain products.

"In those situations, you may be able to get a \$3,000-\$4,000 discount," says Hunt. He also notes that in the quick-print industry, some 20 percent of shops belong to franchises may benefit from even stronger discount programs from certain vendors.

Albinson also uses her relationship with ReproMax to talk to other members of the ReproMax family about what kind of equipment they've purchased or what kind of deals they've been able to negotiate with vendors.

"That's one method for researching what is a reasonable price to pay," states Albinson.

Because ImageTech sells wide-format Xerox equipment, it can purchase at dealer costs. "That's our best [option] because that's going to be the best price," says Albinson. "If you're buying something that you don't sell yourself, talking with colleagues around the

industry or using a resource like [Hunt] are probably the two most important things you can do."

For equipment that ImageTech doesn't acquire at wholesale prices, Albinson purchases from local dealers or a manufacturer's direct branch. For a recent acquisition of a small-format black and white machine, Albinson got the best price for the machine and service from Canon direct. But that isn't always the case, nor is price the sole factor in determining where to buy. One of the reasons for that decision was that Canon had several techs in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., market.

"You have to know your local dealers and have to know their reliability for service because purchasing a machine is a one-time deal, but the service goes on forever," says Albinson. "In a smaller marketplace where a manufacturer doesn't have an office, I'd always go with the place that has a service provider in town for quicker response and more accountability."

Pricing and Service

Both Hunt and Albinson recommend getting multiple quotes, or to put it less delicately, playing one vendor against another. The options may be limited in smaller markets to those manufacturers who sell in that market, but it is one strategy for getting the best price or a fair price.

But what constitutes a fair price? Hunt notes that in many industries, a good discount from list prices runs between 10 percent and 20 percent. With copiers, discounts sometimes range between 40 and 50 percent off list price. "The non-negotiator is often not aware of this and will settle for little or no discount, or be happy with a 10 or 20 percent discount and think they did a good job," says Hunt

Meanwhile, the tough negotiator will be aware of these discounts or will find out what these discounts should be through Hunt, associations or other astute buyers and begin negotiating from there.

Steve Chen, president of C&L Printing in Chicago, a company he

founded four years ago, has been in the reprographics industry for more than three decades. His shop has Océ and Canon large- and small-format color and black-and-white devices. All were purchased, rather than leased. "I already have an idea of what [a machine] costs before I start negotiating with the salesman for the better price," says Chen. "We never lease, that's how I negotiate a better price."

Chen says that he's determined to be in the business for the long run and feels that the price is always higher when leasing, plus he doesn't want to be bothered with monthly payments. "So I invest my money on the machine," he says.

Hunt recommends keeping up with the street prices on any models you're interested in. "If you are not aware of current 'street' prices, you could be offered a 20 percent discount from list, on a new model, and still be paying 10 percent to 20 percent more than the going rates."

Also, when negotiating the equipment for a good purchase price, make sure you don't end up paying higher than normal price for service and supplies.

"It often only takes a small difference in service and supplies pricing to make up for a significant difference in purchase price," says Hunt. "For example, if you are running 200,000 copies per month, a \$.001 (1 mill) per copy difference in charges for service and supplies will equate to an additional cost of \$200 per month."

By saving .001 in service costs, Hunt says a buyer could afford to pay \$5,000 or \$6,000 more in equipment price and still end up with a better deal.

There's plenty of room for improvement throughout the reprographics industry when it comes to hardware purchasing practices. There's lots of truth in the old saw, "knowledge is power," and the more you have the better chance of getting the best price whether you're buying or leasing. ●

Scott Cullen has been writing about imaging technology and equipment buying issues since 1986.





IRgA President Sees His Term Come to a Close; Keeps Eye on the Future

Bryan Thomas' Career Started with a Paint Brush; Now He's President of Thomas Reprographics.

By Dennis Coyle

Bryan Thomas still smiles every time someone asks him how he started his career in the reprographics industry. "With a paintbrush, opaquing film negatives," he says without hesitating.

Thomas has come a long way since the summer when he was 13 years old. Now, he is president of his family's third-generation business – Thomas Reprographics – and is nearing the end of his term as president of the IRgA.

"I'm extremely blessed to be able to continue as third generation management of my family's business," Thomas says. "I feel equally proud to have been a part of the IRgA. It's an essential association, and it has been a pleasure to work with so many of my industry peers and friends."

Thomas has been in the business for 26 years and has enjoyed every minute of it. At times, it's been a challenge but Thomas had a competitive advantage. His father, Bill, took him to his first IRgA convention when he was just 2 years old. Bryan decided to explore other options, as would most young children, but he finally returned to the IRgA in the '90s and has not missed a meeting since attending the 1992 convention.

Thomas has a long and proud history in the reprographics business.

In 1956, his grandfather, B.J. Thomas, founded Thomas Blueprint in Dallas. B.J. retired in 1974 and handed the company to his son – Bill. Under Bill's leadership, the company changed its name to Thomas Reprographics to better represent the changing industry.

In 1994, Thomas took his first major role in the company; he managed the company's San Francisco division for two years and then another two years as vice president in Dallas. In 1998, he was named president and Bill transitioned to chairman of the board.



The family connection didn't end there. In 1997, Bryan's sister, Brianna, joined the team as marketing director. In 1999, Brianna married Kent Long, Thomas Reprographics' regional manager in Dallas.

Aside from exciting family happenings, the company was also on the move as it neared the new millennium.

In the mid '90s, Thomas Reprographics began heavily investing in its facility management services as another means to expand its business.

Since 1956, Thomas Reprographics has expanded to include multiple locations in Texas — Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, Houston and San Antonio — as well as Phoenix, Ariz.; Tucson, Ariz.; Minneapolis, Minn.; St. Cloud, Minn.; Miami, Fla.; Orlando, Fla.; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; and West Palm Beach, Fla.

Thomas Reprographics celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006. The Thomas family hopes to maintain the level of service they have offered during the past 50 years by keeping abreast of the growing and multi-faceted graphic industry and continued expansion.

In addition, the company takes pride in being a family business in times of consolidation and rapid change in our industry. Thomas has a long road ahead of him, he and his wife, Beth, have two sons that are a long way from company management age. They are Beckett, 3, and Bowen, 11 months.

Thomas Shares His Thoughts with *REPRO REPORT*

Thomas took time away from his busy schedule to chat with *REPRO REPORT*. He mentions amusing tidbits from his past as well his thoughts on the future of the IRgA and the reprographics industry.

RR: You have a lot of experience in the reprographics industry. How did you get started?

BT: With a paintbrush, opaquing film negatives. Seriously, though, I did start that way in the summer I was 13 years old. Eventually, I spent some time in nearly every job/position within the Dallas group of locations. But, when I finished with my MBA at SMU in 1994, I moved to San Francisco to run our facility there. That provided me with some much-needed experience away from the Dallas management core.

RR: How has the industry changed since you started?



Bryan Thomas, president of Thomas Reprographics, attended his first IRgA Annual Convention when he was 2 years old but didn't become president until last year's meeting. Although his term will end at this year's convention, he's confident he'll attend many more IRgA events.

BT: Actually, when I started in 1982, we still did not have a single computer in the company. It wasn't until the next year that we bought an IBM XT for our accounting office. Now, nothing in the organization can run without a computer. Of course, I strongly believe the processes still need to be solid. Without good procedures, no amount of digital automation can be of benefit.

RR: Reprographics isn't an easy industry; what are some of the more difficult aspects of the job?

BT: My biggest challenge today is working to balance a strategy to diversify our product mix while pushing hard for growth in digital services revenue all while achieving acceptable overall organic growth.

RR: As president of the IRgA, what do you see as the long-term goals of the association?

BT: I believe they are three-fold. First, the IRgA will continue to support the changing revenue model of its membership. Second, it will work to realize real value for the membership from the IRgA branding campaign. Lastly, it has to remain viable, meaningful and unbiased in an ever-consolidating industry.

RR: How have you leveraged the association to help your career and your company?

BT: The ideas that have come from industry relationships spurred by the IRgA are innumerable and their value is immeasurable. Like any association, you get out of it what you put into it.

RR: The future is uncertain but how can the IRgA help its members evolve with the times?

BT: I believe that a common concern among reprographic owners today is how to communicate and educate our employees on the changes taking place in the industry. The IRgA can assist here by continuing programs such as the quarterly Webinars that reach the grassroots level of member companies. ●

Use Your Web site to Shine Brighter than Your Competition

As I mentioned in my last column, the Web is quite possibly the first experience that your customers and prospects will have with your company. Even with established customers, it may be the most frequent way of interacting with them.

You should think of your Web site as your top salesperson who can deliver the best possible message about your company.

Your marketing material, Web included, is the most effective place for your brand to come shining through a sea of ordinary looking material in the marketplace. Your opportunity is to show your customers and prospects things about your business with your marketing materials. You can show them that doing business with you is better than doing business with your competitors. It's absolutely a must to give your customers good reasons to do business with your firm. Only until you achieve this, can price become a secondary factor to quality and service.

You can do much of that with your Web site. Let's talk about what makes a Web site great. What's the difference between a Web site that you visit and click away from in three seconds and one that captures your interest for several minutes? The difference is visual appeal and relevant content. If your Web site has those two critical keys, you will capture the attention of your visitors.

Creating a great Web site does not happen by accident, and it does not happen overnight. The foundational building blocks of a great Web site must be carefully chosen before any design, layout or copywriting begins.

The underlying strategic work that goes into the most successful Web sites is never visible to the casual viewer, but it's that magic bullet that makes all the difference. It's the strategy that separates the sites that get passed by from the ones that don't. When

a Web site projects begin with a strategic session, it's a challenge for the designers and strategic thinkers that you have hired to discover those nuggets of information that are in every enterprise, and make them sing louder and brighter than they ever did before.

Strategic sessions allow your vendor to identify several key components that must go into every Web site project. They must create an accurate site map for the upcoming Web site, and an accurate timeline for production. Resources such as time and content from your side are also identified in this process, as are needs for photography and content in general. Content management tools are also scoped out here.

Finally, this process allows the vendor, to accurately quote the client (you) a price to design, write, build and program their new Web site.

A typical strategic session begins with the stakeholders from the client side and the creative talent from the design side. A meeting should take about two hours and go through a series of questions and conversations carefully designed to bring out all of the pertinent information needed to deeply understand your needs as a client. These sessions are most effective out of your shop, away from the distractions of your own work environment. Think about having these sessions in the morning, when energy is at its highest and the stress of the day had not drained one's will to live.

When the session is complete, the "heavy lifting" begins for your Web designer. They need to begin to assemble all of the input that they

learned from you into digestible information that will eventually shape the overall look and feel of the Web site. They will create wireframe pages that will identify what content goes where. Usually there is also some competitive research to identify what competitors are in the marketplace and how they are doing with their Internet presence. Look for gaps in the marketplace to fill and creative ways to be sure that your Web site stands above the others.

The end result is a document that is the blueprint for the Web site. Every beam, nut and bolt is in here. With this document, you can be confident that your needs have been met, your participation in the process has been



Bob Margolis
Columnist

Your marketing material, Web included, is the most effective place for your brand to come shining through a sea of ordinary looking material in the marketplace.

identified and you have a realistic timeline for the work as well as the total price that everything will cost. This process takes a little more work up front but pays big returns on the back end by delivering exactly what you need as quickly as possible. The strategy behind Web sites should save any necessity to go back and re-do pages that you don't like or your vendor did not understand what you really needed to accomplish.

Next time, we'll explore more of the actual process of Web site design. ●

Bob Margolis is the vice president of Business Development for Fathom in Hartford, Conn. Fathom is an interactive, brand strategy and graphic design firm. Margolis is a past president of the IRgA, and for nearly three decades was in the reprographics business at Crest Graphics in Farmington, Conn. Feel free to contact Margolis at bobm@fathom.net or visit www.fathom.net.

Recycling: It's More Than Just Scrap Paper



Ed Avis
Columnist

Everybody knows recycling stuff is an essential part of environmental awareness. But like most parts of your business, you can do recycling to the minimum – a bin of scrap paper that gets picked up each week – or you can do it to the max! Innovative shop owners will realize that a broad recycling program can be a great competitive advantage.

Let's start with the basics – paper. You probably already recycle your own scrap paper, and it probably gets picked up by your municipal waste hauler. If you're not doing that yet or if your municipality doesn't offer recycling pick up, your first step will be to find a local recycling service.

Recyclable paper is a commodity these days, and waste haulers make money selling it. With a few minutes on the Web or the phone you should be able to locate a local paper recycler who will take your scrap.

What paper can you recycle? There are different grades of recyclable paper, with clean office paper – often called “mixed office waste” – near the top of the list. Your scrap prints, trimmings and other shop waste counts in this category. So does any scrap from your business office. Your paper cores and cardboard boxes fall into a different recyclable category, and your waste hauler may ask you to put them in a separate bin. Paper that is heavily coated – such as glossy inkjet paper for color imaging – can be difficult to recycle, so again, your waste hauler may ask you to separate from the other paper. It all depends on how advanced the recycler is.

What you should definitely leave out of that bin is food-related paper, such as soiled paper plates, dirty paper towels, pizza boxes, etc. Some sophisticated recyclers take food-soiled paper, but it's turned into compost along with food scraps, not recycled paper. In any case, don't put it in with the regular paper or the recycler will have to remove it.

Beyond Your Own

OK, so you're set up for paper recycling in your shop. But that's just the start. Now turn your recycling program into a competitive advantage by offering to pick up your clients' scrap paper.

You probably already have delivery drivers going to their offices frequently – send a flyer or e-mail out announcing that your drivers will haul out their waste paper, too. This can be old prints that are stacked up in a closet, excess sets they don't need or paper from their office. Don't forget the ancillary stuff, like the cardboard tubes from spent rolls and the piles of unneeded spec books. Bring it all back to your shop and load it into your recycling bin.

Your clients will appreciate the service – who can't use more empty closet space? And, if you are able to get enough volume, you may be able to find a waste hauler who will actually pay for your scrap paper. After all, high school clubs have held fund-raising paper drives for decades, so you know there's money in scrap paper. Check with your local waste haulers and see what the deal is. If they don't have a deal now, explain what kind of volume you can offer and see if you can strike a deal. They're making money by selling the paper, so there's no reason you shouldn't have piece of the pie.

The key to a successful program like this is marketing. You have to let your clients know that you'll take their scrap, and you have to make it easy for them. Announce the program with flyers, have your sales staff explain it, send out an e-mail, have your delivery drivers ask for the scrap.

Remember, this isn't just so you can bring in more recycling, it's so you can offer another service to your clients. If they come to appreciate this service, it will make it that much harder for them to switch blueprinters.

Beyond Paper

Now that your infrastructure is set up, maximize your program by including electronics. Yes, most electronics these days are recyclable. And your clients – architects, engineers, ad agencies – are all electronics-intensive businesses. They're probably faced with disposing of a dozen old computers, monitors, scanners, faxes, phones and other assorted electronic junk every year. They know they can't throw most of this junk into the dumpster, because of the potential for deadly chemicals to leech out. Make their lives easy by hauling it away for them!

A great resource in setting up an electronics recycling program is the Electronics Recycling Foundation, www.electronicrecycling.org. A key part of that Web site is a state-by-state listing of recycling programs, at www.eiae.org/index.php. See what's available in your area, explain your idea and see what kind of arrangements can be made.

Remember, like the paper program, this is ultimately a service you're providing to your clients. It gives them one more reason to be your client instead of your competitor's client.

Your recycling program, whether it's just paper or includes electronics, should be a key part of your new green initiative.

Think deep about how you can expand it. Soon you'll be enjoying the satisfaction of seeing tons of scrap kept out of the landfill, and the profits flowing from happy clients who are glad to be free of their old prints and obsolete electronics. ●

Ed Avis is the author of the Green Reprographics Manual and wants to hear your green success stories. E-mail him at edavis@marionstreetpress.com.

Océ Introduces New Thick Original, Large-Format Color Scanner

Océ announced the availability of the Océ TCS4XT color scanner, which supports rigid and thick originals up to 0.6" thick while retaining all the functionality of the current Océ TC4 scanner.

Similar to the Océ TC4 scanner, the Océ TCS4XT high-quality scanner supports monochrome and full color scanning in one easy-to-use system. The TCS4XT scans documents at 600 dpi at over 16' per minute in black & white and at an exact 1:1 ratio without any user intervention. To support thick original scanning, the Océ TCS4XT scanner features a flat 10" feeding table in front of the scanner; a flat, retractable 30" receiving table in the rear of the scanner; and a lever in the scanner top cover to allow adjustments for originals thicker than 0.12".

The Océ TCS4XT easily captures information from thick originals, like applications involving mounted maps or legal booklets, for immediate copying, electronic distribution and archiving. This new scanner is available for use as part of the Océ TDS450, the Océ TDS700 and the Océ TCS500 multifunction systems.

LexJet Introduces Printable Privacy Window Films

LexJet Décor & Privacy Window Films allow large-format print shops with low-solvent, solvent, and UV-curable printers to expand their product offering with current customers and tap into the profitable décor market.

The new SUV-compatible window film line includes LexJet Glacier Window Film, LexJet Rice Paper Window Film, and LexJet Velvet Window Film. Each film was specially-developed based on customer requests for a window imaging solution that can be used in a wide range of environments, from residential to high-end commercial, retail, and corporate décor.

The films allow light to pass through, but the texture of each provides privacy and a unique effect, from a three-dimensional stained glass look to a pebbled matte texture.

Each film is available in 24 in. x 10 ft. and 48 in. x 40 ft. roll sizes.

LexJet Glacier is a 17-mil textured film that's ideal for creating a stained glass effect.

It has a deep, textured surface with smooth edges for a classic, historic look. LexJet Rice Paper is a 5-mil film that replicates traditional rice paper and brings it into the digital age.

LexJet Velvet is a 6-mil film with a textured matte surface that creates a stunning and unique look for a variety of window applications.

The Rice Paper and Velvet Window Films are more conservative options that are excellent choices for corporate and retail environments, adding style and interest to any graphics or décor project.

LexJet Décor & Privacy Window Films are part of LexJet's Décor Line, which also includes fine art and photographic reproduction papers, fabric, wallcoverings, and wall mural media.

The new window films are available for next-day delivery in most of the Continental U.S. from one of LexJet's nationwide distribution centers. As with all LexJet products, LexJet Décor & Privacy Window Films come with a 30-day money-back guarantee.

Canon Showcases New Large Format and Production Printing Solutions

Canon USA, Inc. introduced the new imagePRESS C6000VP and imagePRESS C6000 digital presses and imagePROGRAF iPF720 and iPF605 wide-format printers.

In addition, the company previewed a new imagePRESS black-and-white digital production printing platform.

imagePRESS C6000VP/C6000 Digital Presses

Building upon the success of its revolutionary imagePRESS C7000VP digital press, Canon expanded its line of digital presses with the introduction of the imagePRESS C6000VP and imagePRESS C6000. The imagePRESS C6000VP is capable of printing images up to 1200 X 1200 dots-per-inch (dpi) resolution with a level of quality that rivals offset printing, while maintaining its engine speed of 60 letter-sized pages-per-minute (ppm) regardless of media weight. The new imagePRESS C6000 provides entry level production environments a level of quality, speed and versatility never before available at such an attractive price point, making this press the best value in the market.

imagePRESS Black-and-White Digital Production Press Platform

Following the launch of the imagePRESS line of color digital presses, Canon USA provided a preview of a new imagePRESS black-and-white production platform that is expected to be unveiled later this year. This new platform will deliver a level of quality and performance that will enable production environments to improve and expand their black-and-white offerings.

imagePROGRAF iPF 720 and iPF 605 Large-Format Printers

Expanding its line of wide-format offerings, Canon introduced two new imagePROGRAF wide-format printers designed for Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Architecture, Engineering and Construction (AEC) applications, as well as entry-level users in general office environments. Positioned as the company's flagship model in its line of wide-format printers, the new 36-inch imagePROGRAF iPF720 incorporates a built-in 80GB hard drive ideal for medium to large workgroup users who need to print large files or sets of files from multiple workstations. ●

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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Positions Available

NGI, a fast growing provider of reprographics and digital imaging solutions in the southeast needs **production management, digital imaging technicians, customer service** and **sales** personnel for our expanding organization. This is a great opportunity for the right people to join one of the most dynamic teams in the industry. All applicants must be highly motivated, possess excellent communication skills and enjoy working in a fast paced environment. NGI offers competitive pay with incentive compensation, health/life/dental insurance, 401k, paid vacation and more. Reply to NGIresume@tampabay.rr.com and reference *REPRO REPORT* in the subject line. EOE/DFWP.

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.

C2 Reprographics is five years old and has achieved the distinction of being the fastest growing reprographics supplier in Southern California. You will be joining a winning management team of professionals dedicated to offering superior solutions to our customers. We offer tremendous opportunity for growth in all areas, both professionally and personally. Our benefits and compensation packages are competitive.

Please send your resume and salary requirements to hr@C2repro.com. Alternatively, you may call 714/545-2743, extention 1206 with any questions.

Color and Digital Specialist: an expanding houston based company is looking for a qualified individual for leadership role in our color and digital services department. Graphics experience needed. Please email resume to bchristy@triangletexas.com.

Advertising Information:

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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.

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Maximize Your IRgA Membership – You’ll be Happier!



Steve Bova, CAE
Executive Director

If you’re a regular *News Digest* reader, you might know that the IRgA often says that its members are among the most successful reprographics companies and suppliers in the industry. Now there’s proof! A research study produced by the William E. Smith Institute for Association Research reviewed the relationship between association membership, member income and job satisfaction.

The study is titled, *Where the Winners Meet: Why Happier, More Successful People Gravitate Toward Associations*. “Overall, it is clear that association members are more successful, on average, than non-members. According to the 2004 General Social Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, they earn more, like their jobs better and are even happier people.”

The data further supports the notion that associations like the IRgA can create value for today’s employers. “Exposing high-value employees to the positive ‘winning’ atmosphere of their association will encourage higher morale,” the study reports. Thus, shouldn’t it be in the best interest of every reprographics industry company to encourage their high-value employees to participate in the IRgA?

It is clear that association members are more successful, on average, than non-members.

A Conventional Approach

Spring is the time of year when reprographers and vendors are most focused on the IRgA, as the Annual Convention & Trade Show takes place. It’s the one time each year that the entire industry gathers in one place to network, receive high level education and conduct

business. Most member companies attend the convention, and the new registration structure allows for greater participation from deeper within the companies. With registration on site, it’s never too late to register.

The IRgA’s Value Menu

The IRgA has worked hard the past few years to develop meaningful value beyond the Annual Convention, so member companies can derive a return on investment throughout the year. Some of the work that has been done lately reflects the commitment to be a year-round resource to the industry:

A Brand New Identity. The IRgA’s new logo and tagline were unveiled earlier this year, as was a Branding Toolkit to help reprographers position their companies to construction industry customers. As part of the rollout, the IRgA conducted a readership survey and will use the information gleaned from the survey to introduce a redesigned *REPRO REPORT* and *News Digest* this summer. A new look for the Web site is also underway, with improved navigation and more tools to connect the reprographics and AEC industries.

IRgA/Baird Reprographics Industry Economic Reports were introduced as a member-only benefit in 2007. Every member company is asked to respond to the very brief quarterly surveys; the results provide a big picture snapshot of the previous quarter activity as well as the anticipated business direction for the next quarter.

Quarterly Webinars are offered free to member companies and their employees. Did you miss the Jan. 16 or April 9 Webinar series on operating efficiency? A full audio and accompanying PowerPoint slides are available on the members-only section of www.irga.com along with all previous educational webinars. Extend

the value of the IRgA throughout your company by encouraging your employees to login and participate. All they’ll need to do, if they are not currently listed with the IRgA, is contact the headquarters office and get added to the database.

The 2008 IRgA Membership Directory will be mailed to the key contact at each member company. A limited supply of additional copies is available at the IRgA office. For real-time information, you can access the online version of the member directory on the Web site.

BERTL’s MegaNet Service is available to IRgA members 24/7. The service provides information on industry equipment, research reports and industry trends. This service alone is a \$995 annual value to members.

Research Reports, including the 2008 Compensation & Benefits Study are underway. The comprehensive report, organized by region and company size, will be available this summer – in time for companies to budget for 2009. The last such industry study was conducted in 2002. Another important research report is the Operating Ratio Study. The 2006 report provides useful information to benchmark against your company’s performance. The study is conducted every three years.

Of course, there’s *REPRO REPORT*, other industry-specific publications and much more within the IRgA. There is a lot happening within the association right now, and our success can only be as great as your participation. Make sure you engage in your industry trade association and participate in the IRgA throughout the year. Chances are, you’ll be happier and more successful! ●

You know where to reach me at – call 800/833-4742 or e-mail sbova@irga.com.

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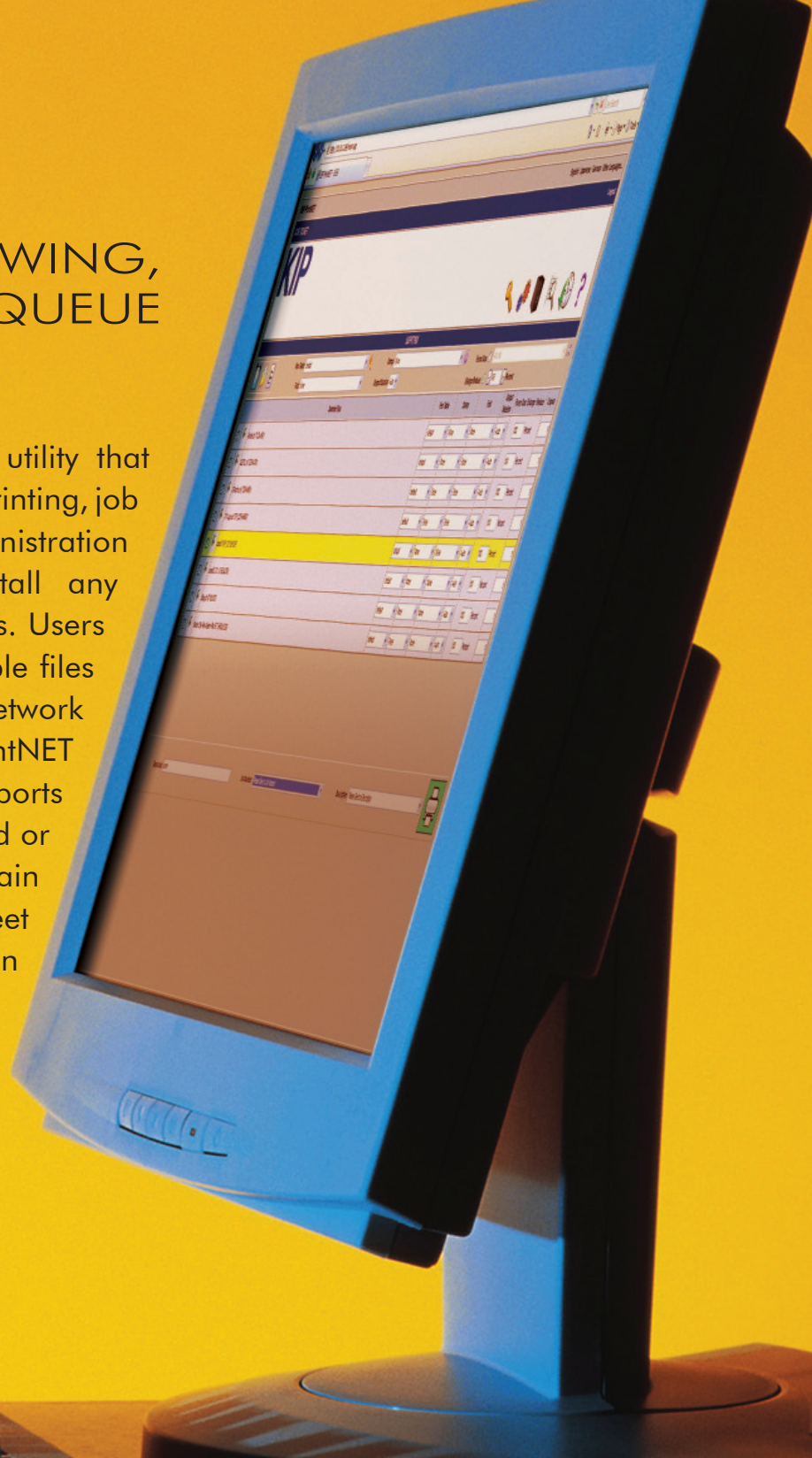
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