

PIASC WEEKLY UPDATE

Printing Industries Association, Inc. of *Southern California*

November 7, 2005

The Buyer's Job

You're calling the purchasing agent or the print buyer. Think about their job—isn't it to get the lowest price? Should it be surprising that we feel that they're not straight with us? A really good buyer will prey upon the rep's fear of the competition and of losing the order, will sell the rep on the concept that they're a growth account and establishing a relationship will pay big dividends in the future telling the rep that they like them and would love to work with them if only the price was right. The effect of this is turn our rep into a "mole" working against the interest of our firm. This need not happen if we're learned enough about the client to have a value story and we have found a real decision maker, not the purchasing agent, to tell it to.

Medicare Part D

If you are approaching or over 65, you've heard of this—the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit which will arrive January 1st. For starters, everyone who is over 65 has just received a 100 page perfect bound book from the Government explaining this simple benefit—this alone was a GPO order in excess of 25 million copies. Eligible persons will now have the choice of which private-sector plan they wish to join. The real direct mail barrage begins. Medicare alone has a \$300 million budget to educate seniors about Part D. Who said that print was dead!

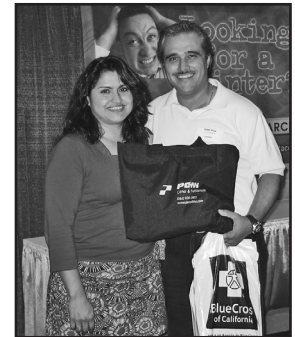
Inflation May Be Back

We've enjoyed a long period of price stability, with the real prices of many of our inputs even declining. This may be coming to an end. If you enter into any price agreements beyond the thirty or sixty day life of a quotation, you should give yourself the flexibility in these to reflect external change like paper cost increases.

Getting Guarantees

Update of a few issues ago pointed out the value of getting personal guarantees from clients. The obvious question is: how can I get the client to sign them? Clearly, the person who already owes you the money won't sign a guarantee. The time to ask for it is at the start of a new relationship—not from every new client but particularly those who are startups with no track record. Of course these are the situations where you are also probably looking for partial advance payment, but the guarantee is available for the asking because the client needs the extension of credit. Don't forget

Print buyers attending the recent LBA Expo win a bag, a polo shirt, calculator and other goodies at the PIASC booth after playing the Print-Access Game. Eddie Rojas of Penn Litho donated the bags. Luis Padilla of Western Badge and Trophy also donated magnetic calendars, which attracted many visitors to the PIASC booth. Our mission: to promote our members through PrintAccess.



that they must be a separate document and not incorporated in your credit application or proposal. If you need help with this, call Dolphe Marcus at Ext 261.

Comfort Matters

A Cornell University study looked at data entry positions and found productivity highest at 77 degrees. A drop in the temperature to 68 degrees caused a sharp loss in productivity and an increase in the error rate. The point is that the quantity and quality of work is very sensitive to the human operators. Thus, the work environment is more important in prepress jobs than in the pressroom or bindery where the process is more machine driven.

Ask The Buyer...

Some interesting questions you might try asking the print buyer to learn where they're coming from are:

- If I can give you the results you want within your budget can I count on the job?
- What is going to happen if my price is not the lowest?
- If I don't think I can be the lowest, should I be quoting on this job?

And if you're really tough and you're not getting any work after a serious attempt:

- When I'm not getting work it means one of two things—there is someone else making the decision or I'm not providing the solutions that you're looking for. Can you tell me which one it is here?

Thought for the Week

Never let yesterday use up too much of today.

Dear Brad...

Why can binding the content pages of a book grain short be a problem? Brad Evans of the PIA/GATF Technical Hotline (412) 259-1784 said: Cellulose fiber when exposed to moisture will swell across the fiber not the length of the fiber. This growth will cause the pages to grow parallel to the spine resulting in the pages breaking away from the spine.

More Creative Thinking

September 2, 2005, in EEOC vs. National Education, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the reasonable woman standard applied in sexual harassment discrimination claims involving abusive conduct by a male interim assistant executive director towards female employees even where no sexual content existed. The male employee frequently screamed at female employees in a loud and profane manner, with little or no provocation, shook his fist at them, stood behind an employee as she worked and lunged across the table at another. The actions and words were not sexual or gender based and did not imply a sexual or gender meaning or content normally required in a sexual harassment or discrimination complaint. The behavior created fear in the female employees, caused them to cry, become panicked or feel physically threatened, avoid contact with the male director, call the police or as one woman did, resign. The male director on occasion acted the same way towards male employees, and outside one incident where a male em-

ployee became frightened, the men did not express the same fear of the manager and dealt with the behavior with banter. The court ruled since the manager's behavior "affected" women differently in either a qualitative and/or a quantitative way more than men it resulted in a disparate treatment of women and was sex discrimination. The best way for a company to avoid liability is to adopt written policies prohibiting abusive or bullying behavior or language and enforce the policy with discipline or when appropriate, termination of employment.

Color Matching

Bruce Tietz, a PIA/GATF technical consultant, says that if you are having problems with obtaining the correct color during your make readies, you should consider that it may be caused by poor plate processing or inaccurate plate exposure. In either case, if you have imaged the plate with a PIA/GATF or URGA plate control device you would have been able to stop those plates prior to press. Yes, you will need to inspect the plate scale. This is easily done by using a plate reader. There are many plate readers on the market like Beta, Gretag-Macbeth, Ihara, and X-Rite to name a few. If you do not have a plate reader, you could inspect with a magnifier. These tools and your eyes will help you send only correctly exposed and processed plates to your pressroom. The time saved in make ready will soon be enough to buy or pay for that plate reader.

PIASC's Pick of the Week



On-Demand and Digital Printing Primer, Second Edition

by Howard M. Fenton

An introduction to the digital and on-demand printing processes explores transitions in printing (including equipment, mass customization, automation, and e-commerce), sales and marketing digital services, digital front ends, and file preparation.

**PIASC Members \$20.00 ea*.
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