

PIASC WEEKLY UPDATE

Printing Industries Association, Inc. of *Southern California*

May 8, 2006

Rat Race Escape

One of the things that makes life less than pleasant is the process of being ground down on price by clients whose life is built around getting a lower quote.

The fact is that relationships built around giving clients quotes on projects that they present to you and two or three others inevitably lead to price being the only issue. Of course, you can survive in this box by trying to be the low cost producer but the most likely result is becoming the low profit producer. Becoming a one-stop shop helps you escape and that's why the hottest thing around is mailing/fulfillment a/k/a distribution. But as soon as all of your competitors adopt this strategy, its ability to differentiate you may not be very great. However, there are a lot of other things your clients use that you could provide that would integrate with your printed product. Virtually all of them have web sites—many poorly designed and ineffective. You have (or can have) the graphics tools to address this as well as their images so this is an interesting possibility for line extension. With respect to images, every client (even small ones) has a collection of images that they use in promotional and business documents. They are usually stored in inconsistent formats on various hard drives and thus are hard to use. That's where your capability for digital asset management comes in. If you use the software that's now available to store and manage their images, you're providing a valuable service that naturally flows into print produced in your shop. Finally, we've all seen client material which is a waste of money because of poor design—usually a failure of typography. Again, we can provide a resource in this area that will help the client produce material that will give them value for money. In the arena of distribution, the key issue is not getting the mailing out right but sending it to the right list. We can develop expertise to help the client with list selection, creation and clean-up that will provide a real payoff. What's the bottom line? If we have capabilities like these and work with clients at this level, it's no longer a matter of being low bidder but of value delivered. Also, once a client is integrated with us, changing to a competitor is ugly for them to contemplate.

Growing Paper

If you're in for another novel idea, try the Grow-A-Note product from Green Field Paper Co. in San Diego. They offer wedding invitations that are not only printed on

Ralph Beas, Graphic Arts Instructor at San Fernando High School, has been selected as the 2006 Educator of the Year. He will receive the prestigious Simich Award—named after well-known GATF educator Jack Simich—at the Student Assembly and Academic Competition on May 12 during PrintFest at the Long Beach Convention Center. Over the past twenty-five years, Beas has worked his way through the ranks, so to speak, in both working in the industry and teaching graphic arts. Through his hard work, the printing technology program at San Fernando is considered one of the premier graphic arts training centers in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area. Congratulations, Ralph Beas.



recycled paper and printed with soy inks but the paper is embedded with wildflower seeds. The recipient can then plant the invitation and the flowers are a reminder of the event.

Chinese Printing

The Chinese are working on penetrating the U.S. print market in areas where the disadvantage of distance is not an issue.

The price can be very right and the quality is usually acceptable. Before doing business clients need to think through: what are the conditions of sale, what happens if there is a dispute (do I have to go to court in China?), if the job is to go by ocean in a container—what about the effect of temperature extremes, how are proofs and OKs to be handled, etc.? Of course, if everything falls into place without a hitch, there's no problem with any of this, but we all know the propensity of large projects to suffer derailments.

It's Only Money

We understand that the Los Angeles DWP in 2004-05 spent \$1 Million telling its customers that its water was safe to drink while at the same time spending almost \$90,000 buying bottled water for its employees—such is the wisdom of bureaucrats. Given that almost all water systems in the U.S. deliver safe water (including that from the DWP), it's a modern miracle that consumers have been persuaded to pay premium prices for it—such is the power of marketing.

Thought for the Week

If everything seems under control, you're just not going fast enough... Mario Andretti

Dear Brad...

How long does it take for an ink to be completely dry? Brad Evans of the PIA/GATF Technical Hotline (412) 259-1784 said: Drying oils like linseed oil, china-wood oil, or soybean oil react with oxygen in the air. In the presence of a drier, the reaction forms molecular chains that grow in three dimensions. As they grow longer, the flow of the ink becomes less and less until, after several hours, the ink resists smearing when rubbed; it is functionally dry, but this process can last as long as 24 to 48 hours.

Matching Film

If CTP plates are to match filmbased products, the midtone (50%) will measure 54% as well. A CTP plate that is 'linear' (a 50% = 50%) on plate will print much 'sharper' in the midtones and will have difficulty matching the Pantone - Solid to Process guide for any values near 40-50-60%. (Pantone is a registered trademark of the Pantone Corporation.)

Information Theft

The Securities and Exchanges Commission (SEC) has charged two Quad/Graphics employees and two Goldman Sachs employees in connection with a scheme to profit from information in the publication Business Week before it mailed. Obviously, such an event does not build a great client relationship and doubtless lawsuits are in the offing. While your firm may not print infor-

mation which could lead to illicit stock trading profits, it may have access to client mail lists, pricing, new product launches not to mention redeemable coupons and game cards, the improper use of which would be ugly indeed. You need to have a clearly worded policy on client information and materials along with appropriate precautions to protect it.

Plates From Film

Dan Remaley, process control manager for PIA/GATF, says that when making conventional plates from film, every plate should have a UGRA plate control wedge in the (non-printing) plate-bend area of each plate. We can evaluate a correctly made plate by measuring the "microlines" of the plate scale. A correctly exposed plate should have a "resolved" 6-8 microline area. Therefore all highlight and midtone (50%) values will be represented correctly on the plate. Under and over-exposed, (2-4 micron) and over, (10-12 micron) exposed plates will be missing highlight dots or have over exposed mid-tones (50%), respectively. We can also use a plate reader. A correctly exposed plate will measure around 54% in the midtone (50%).

For Sale

Canon 950 color copier, meter 62749, \$995, located in Chatsworth, B/W Copier, Kodak 235, \$200. Call Maria at (818) 772-7545.

Specialty packaging manufacturer, 1 million+ annual sales, \$300,000 equipment, no debt, freeway close to the 5, 118, 210, 405, owner wants to retire, sell \$750,000, serious inquiries only please. Call Bob at (888) 367-2365.

PIASC's Pick of the Week



**Binding, Finishing, & Mailing:
The Final Word, Second Edition**

by T.J. Tedesco, Dave Clossey
and Jean-Marie Hershey

Designed to help printing professionals make useful recommendations to their customers, this book takes readers through a comprehensive exploration of the world of binding, finishing and mail preparation, providing a wealth of information for people performing a variety of functions at graphic arts companies.

**PIASC Members \$75.00 ea*.
Non-Members \$99.00 ea*.**

*Prices do not include tax and shipping.

To purchase your copy, visit www.gain.net/store.

Address:

**5800 South Eastern Avenue, #400
P.O. Box 910936
Los Angeles, CA 90091-0936**

Telephone Number:

(323) 728-9500
or **808-9990** for area codes: 213, 310, 562, 619, 714, 818, & 951

Web Site:

<http://www.piasc.org>

Print Access Site:

<http://www.printaccess.com/piasc>

**Printing
Industries
Association
of Southern
California**

Fax numbers:

**Association (323) 724-2327
Insurance Agency (323) 728-0483
Credit Union (323) 722-8927
Benefit Trust (323) 722-7386
Collection Service (323) 724-2368**



Affiliated with
Printing Industries
of America, Inc.

