

What You Need to Know about Graphics Industry Peer Groups

If you're not already participating in a graphics industry peer group, this could be the "secret sauce" you need to reach your goals in 2019 and beyond. Here's what you need to know...

What is a graphics industry peer group?

A graphics industry peer group is a group of executives from graphics industry companies of similar sizes that do not compete geographically. Designed to help executives learn from each other, group members share knowledge, advice and ideas.

What's the benefit of an industry peer group versus other peer groups?

Other peer groups consist of executives of companies in a wide range of industries. Although these companies generally are of similar size and in the same geographic area, they often limit membership to one company per industry.

Denny Shorett, President of Crown Connect, has been participating in peer groups for over two decades. Rob Miller, COO/CFO of Castle Press, has

been participating for around 15 years. Both started in groups that were not industry-specific before switching to PIA-sanctioned groups. And both have seen that one of the biggest benefits of an industry-specific group is that, as Denny puts it, "we're all speaking the same language."

Talking about his experience in a general group, Rob says, "There was enough difficulty understanding others' type of business that it sometimes got in the way. Or advice wasn't helpful because it wouldn't work in our industry."

"In an industry-specific group you get a lot more clarity quicker," Denny adds. "You don't have to try to see how you apply something to your business, be-

cause it's already being applied in a similar business."

Does PIA sponsor peer groups?

Yes and no. While PIA does not run peer groups, it does "play matchmaker" to help groups form, and matches PIA members with existing groups that have openings for new members.

How are these PIA-sanctioned peer groups structured?

While each group is different, the groups that Denny and Rob belong to each have six to 12 members from printing companies located across the country. These groups meet two to three times a year. They start with dinner on day one, meet

for a full day on day two, and then do a half-day session on day three.

"We all take turns hosting," Rob shares, "and start our full-day session with a tour of the host's plant. Seeing how others are doing things is surprisingly eye-opening."

"Our group meets in different parts of the country," Denny states, "depending on what we might want to look at. We may meet in Georgia and visit the Heidelberg plant to see the latest technology. Or we may meet at a member's plant and tour that facility."

Both groups start with a pre-set agenda based on members' current priorities and concerns, and both have chosen to hire professional meeting facilitators to keep things on track.

"It's very intense," Denny observes. "We send each other financials and an outline before the meeting. Then we each have 20 to 45 minutes to give a presentation to the group, sharing what we're doing. Maybe we're doing something different with personnel, adding a service, buying equipment, struggling with something. We'll talk about it and

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BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Market Results, Not Processes

When creating your firm's marketing materials, you probably already know about the importance of focusing on the benefits—and not just the features—of your services. As the saying goes, "sell the sizzle, not the steak." Part of focusing on the benefits is recognizing that your processes are essentially "features." Processes are great, but what people really care about is results, the "what's in it for me?" factor.

To illustrate what happens when you focus on processes, let's look at some extreme examples. If you're running a printing business, do you think the following would be a good theme for your next marketing campaign?

Get 4 Colors of Ink Applied to Paper in the Pattern of Your Choice

What kind of response do you think a pool cleaning service would get if they ran an ad with the following headline?

Invite a Total Stranger into Your Backyard to Brush, Vacuum and Dump Chemicals into Your Pool

How about the following offer for a marriage therapist's services?

Get 12 Weekly Sessions of Emotionally Difficult Discussions for just \$1,449!

Or this attention-grabbing idea for a mortgage broker:

Let Us Bombard You with Personal Questions and Never-Ending Paperwork

While these headlines are so surprising

that they might get noticed, they probably would not result in a lot of sales. Why? Because they're focused on processes, not results. Although your potential clients might be interested in learning more about your processes at some point before they make their purchase decision, it's not likely to be the main thing that interests them. What they really want to know is this: what results can they expect to receive if they sign on the dotted line? And if there is something unique and special about your processes, how will this impact them? Why should they care?

You've Got to Show the Value

By focusing on the results or benefits, you show people the value of choosing to work with you. Prospects need to see your offering as the answer to an essential need that they have. They need you to spell this out for them clearly, as you cannot count on them to figure it out themselves.

In the examples above, the pool cleaner's message should focus on how their service results in a sparkling clean pool. The marriage therapist will (hopefully!) result in a renewed connection with your spouse and a successful/happy marriage. The mortgage broker can help you save money on your monthly mortgage, and/or give you the ability to purchase the home of your dreams. And the printer needs to tout the results that they provide.

By showcasing results you show the value, which will help motivate prospective customers to buy from you rather than someone else.

Source: Plumtree Marketing Inc., www.PlumtreeMarketingInc.com

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION NEWS

PRINTING United 2019

What is PRINTING United?

The printing industry is buzzing about the convergence of technologies and capabilities, the blending and blurring of market segments and specialties. These aren't trends — they're market drivers and they're changing your world faster than you can say "I'm in printing."

PRINTING United is a brand-new trade show event focused on the opportunities this convergence presents. Your PRINTING United experience will include an expansive and comprehensive display of printing technologies and supplies, education, programming and services to take your business to the next level.

Join us on October 23-25, 2019, in Dallas, Texas for the best opportunity to experience the latest in printing technologies.

Who's Going to be There?

PRINTING United will attract attendees from market segments including garment, graphics, packaging, commercial and industrial printing.

Industry-leading suppliers are already lining up to exhibit at this premier edi-

tion of PRINTING United including:

EFI, Fujifilm, Kodak, Komori, MBO, Ricoh, Screen and Xeikon.

Why Should I Go?

Today's convergence of technologies and capabilities is inspiring printers to expand the products and services they offer — and it's happening quickly. This means new competition as well as new opportunities for growth.

With a dynamic show floor, education, programming and services, PRINTING United will present a broad vision of these opportunities under one roof as well as the means for printers to expand their businesses. Our goal is to give you the tools you need to present your customers with the best possible solutions for their businesses.

What Do I Need to Know?

Here's the bottom line: PRINTING United will convey all the components of an integrated solution to satisfy virtually any client need.

This isn't any ordinary event. PRINTING United is brand-new and co-produced by the Specialty Graphic Imaging

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GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

Frivolous Proposition 65 Litigation

Baseless Proposition 65 litigation unjustly burdens companies that do business in California. The originally well-intentioned law, enacted in 1986, is now one of the plaintiffs' bar's favorite tools to exploit.

Under Prop. 65, businesses are required to place ominous warning signs on products where tests reveal the slightest, non-threatening trace of any of more than 900 listed chemicals that state environmental regulators deem carcinogenic or otherwise toxic.

A troublesome part of the law allows private citizens, advocacy groups and attorneys to sue on behalf of the state and collect a portion of the civil fees, creating an incentive for the plaintiffs' bar to create these types of lawsuits.

Each year, attorneys send thousands of notices to companies threatening Prop. 65 litigation and demanding a settlement. A search of notices on the California Attorney General's website shows that the number of these threatened lawsuits has tripled over the last decade. Food and beverage companies are among the prime targets.

According to the California Attorney General's website, businesses settled 688 Prop. 65 actions in 2017 totaling \$25,767,500. Three-quarters of this money, \$19,486,362, went to the

attorneys who brought the lawsuits to cover their fees and costs. Just 24 advocacy groups, law firms and individuals were behind this litigation.

Another significant problem with Prop. 65 litigation is that companies' products are considered harmful until proven not to be.

After nearly a decade of litigation, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Elihu Berle ruled in March that companies which sell coffee, like Starbucks, failed to show that coffee does not cause cancer; therefore, they must place cancer warnings on lattes and post warnings in their stores. After the state Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the California agency that oversees Prop. 65 warnings, proposed exempting coffee from cancer warnings in August, plaintiffs' lawyers sued the State of California, too.

Source: CalChamber, www.calchamber.com



Upcoming Events

Leadership & Sales Challenge: Half-Day Conference

January 29, 2019, Santa Ana
1:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Leadership impact is a double-edged sword. Great leadership ability produces great company results. Poor leadership ability produces a multitude of organizational problems. How is your leadership measuring up? Join us for this interactive leadership and sales challenge conference, where we will discuss ways to improve your teams' morale and performance.

Topics Include:

- How to Manage Sales People OR Yourself without a Sales Manager
- The Behavioral Demands of the Sales Position: How to Minimize the Risk
- Surrounding Yourself with a Team of High Performers
- And more

To register contact Emily Holguin, 323.728.9500, emily@piasc.org.



Call for Entries: Print Excellence Awards Competition

February 22, 2019, no later than
4:00 pm, PIASC Offices

Let your VIBRANT INNOVATIONS shine bright this year! With the advancements in marketing and print technologies over the last several years, there's no doubt that this competition will bring the best innovation, creativity and quality printing ever seen. Therefore, choose your top-quality printed samples and start submitting it to the 2019 Print Excellence Awards. You'll have the opportunity to separate your company from others in Southern California, all seeking for the highest honor in print. A Print Excellence Award is not only one of the most powerful promotional tools your business can have, it also provides bragging rights for your clients, your employees and your company.

Questions? Contact Maribel Campos, 323.728.9500, maribel@piasc.org.



FEATURE ARTICLE

Graphics Industry Peer Groups

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ask for input.”

Likewise, Rob’s group starts by providing updates over dinner on the first night. After the plant tour the next day, they review what they’ve seen and offer suggestions regarding blind spots the host may have with their company. Then they dig into pre-planned topics, usually hitting about six strategic issues fairly deeply. On the final morning they complete any undiscussed items, and/or revisit some issues they didn’t fully cover the day before.

What are the benefits of participating in a graphics industry peer group?

Rob and Denny have found that the benefits include the opportunity to...

- **Learn alternative ways of doing things** – Hearing how others are solving problems in different ways can be very beneficial.
- **Get invaluable advice** – Learn from others’ experiences and mistakes and avoid reinventing (or re-breaking) the

wheel.

• **Have a sounding board** – An industry peer group can become an informal Advisory Board filled with knowledgeable, unbiased executives who aren’t afraid to be blatantly honest.

• **Gain accountability** – “Ours is not just a ‘feel good’ group,” Denny says. “It’s more of a ‘keep your feet to the fire’

group. This is a reality check.”

• **Help others** – “It’s neat to be part of something where we can try to help people who have hit a rough patch,” Rob points out.

• **Make friends** – “As a business owner, social life can be sacrificed,” Rob admits. “I’ve enjoyed getting to know these people and becoming friends.”

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How do you join a PIA-sanctioned peer group?

Fill out and submit the form at <http://bit.ly/PIA-PeerGroup>.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Pre-Order Your 2019 Labor Law Posters Now

It’s a New Year, and that means it’s time for new labor law posters. Many regulations have been updated or introduced in California for 2019. Maintaining compliance is key. Because the new regulations make your 2018 posters obsolete, if you don’t replace these with the “latest and greatest” posters for 2019 your business will not be in compliance.

Important things to know:

- The updated California State & Federal 2019 posters include important revisions to the California Minimum Wage Notice and the Discrimination Notice.
- The mandatory IWC #1 and IWC #4 posters have both been updated. The new 2019 version will replace the 2017 version.
- Depending on your operations, your company may also be required to display additional notices, such as forklift safety, fire extinguisher use, safe lifting and/or blood borne pathogens.
- Also available are posters on sexual harassment prevention, code of safe practices, fire aid/choking/CPR, California fair housing, California human trafficking, HIPAA, Workers Compensation fraud, and more.

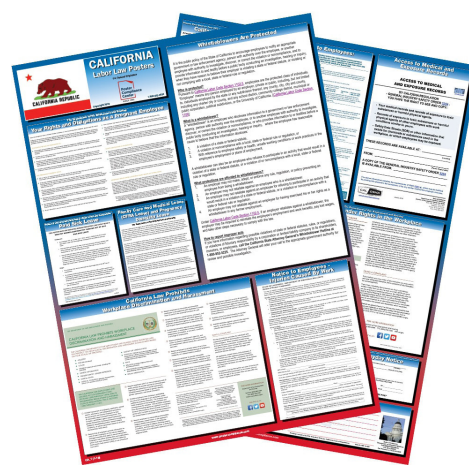
Avoid fines and penalties by pre-ordering your posters. Posters will be printed and shipped once the state

approves all updates.

PIASC is excited to be able to save our members nearly 25% vs. 2018 prices and offer both the California State posters and the Federal posters at a combined price of \$18.50. All other posters have also gone down in price.

To download the order form log in to the Members section of www.PIASC.org. You’ll find the form under Human Resources/Labor Law Poster Order Form.

Questions about what posters you need? Contact Cheryl Chong, PIASC’s Director, Human Resources, at 323.728.9500, Ext. 218



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION NEWS

PRINTING United 2019

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Association (SGIA) and NAPCO Media — a powerhouse partnership. SGIA has a tradition of trade show excellence and its SGIA Expo consistently attracts the largest array of technology available at any trade show in the print community. PRINTING United will attract attendees from market segments including garment, graphics, packaging, commercial, industrial printing and in-plant.

NAPCO strengthens that reach with a deep history and market penetration into

markets including commercial, packaging and in-plant printers. Its strong presence in the brand and marketing community means PRINTING United will represent the cycle of print throughout the entire supply chain.

Visit <http://www.printingunited.com> for more information.

CONTACT US

Address:
5800 S. Eastern Avenue, Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90040
P.O. Box 910936
Los Angeles, CA 90091
Phone: 323.728.9500
www.piasc.org

Key Contacts

- Lou Caron, President
Ext. 274, lou@piasc.org
- Dennis Bernstein, Commercial Insurance
Ext. 222, dennis@piasc.org
- Evie Bañaga, Employee Benefits
Ext. 224, evie@piasc.org
- Kristy Villanueva, Member Services
Ext. 215, kristy@piasc.org
- Cheryl Chong, Human Resources
Ext. 218, cheryl@piasc.org
- Irv Selman, Voluntary Insurance
Ext. 249, irv@piasc.org

Other Industry Events 2019

1/23/19	AIGA LA Spark: Block Party	Highland Park, CA		www.losangeles.aiga.org
1/29/19	ThinkLA: How to Focus in a Distracting World	West Los Angeles, CA	jacqueline@thinkla.org	310-876-0650 x239
1/30/19	ThinkLA: Connections & Cocktails	The Nickel Mine, Los Angeles	olivia@thinkla.org	310-876-0650
2/1/19	AIGA Creative Mornings OC: Surreal	Irvine, CA		www.orangecounty.aiga.org
2/17/19	Workshops with Jen Farrell of Starshaped Press	International Printing Museum, Carson	info@printmuseum.com	www.printmuseum.org
4/4/19 - 4/9/19	2019 AIGA Design Conference	Pasadena, CA		www.orangecounty.aiga.org
10/23/19 - 10/25/19	PRINTING United	Dallas, Texas		www.printingunited.com

PIASC Events Calendar

- JAN. 22**
Webinar: Top 10 Don'ts When Conducting Background Checks
10:00 am - 11:00 am, PST
At a computer near you
Details: www.piasc.org/events
Contact: Emily Holguin, Ext. 262, emily@piasc.org
- JAN. 29**
Leadership & Sales Challenge
1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Santa Ana, California
Details: www.piasc.org/events
Contact: Emily Holguin, Ext. 262, emily@piasc.org
- JAN. 30**
Webinar: Labor Law Updates for 2019
10:30 am - 11:30 am, PDT
At a computer near you
Details: www.piasc.org/events
Contact: Emily Holguin, Ext. 262, emily@piasc.org

- JAN. 31**
Webinar: Learning and the Future of Work
11:00 am - 12:00 pm, PDT
At a computer near you
Details: www.piasc.org/events
Contact: Emily Holguin, Ext. 262, emily@piasc.org
- FEB. 22**
Call for Entries Deadline: Print Excellence Awards
No later than 4:00 pm
PIASC Offices
Details: www.piasc.org/printexcellence
Contact: Maribel Campos, Ext. 210, maribel@piasc.org

For full list of workshops and virtual classes, please visit www.piasc.org/training.