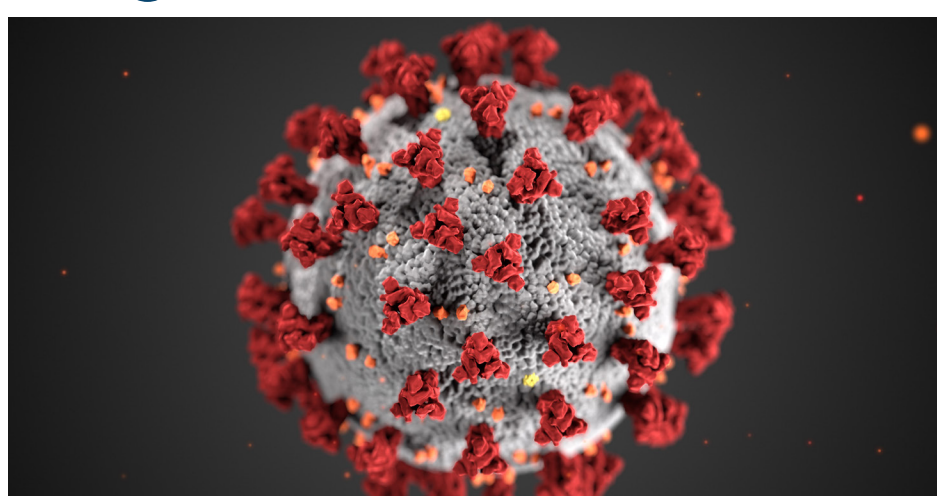


Response to Surge of COVID-19 Cases

The current times are chaotic at best. Between the ever-changing “guidance” of the CARES Act and follow-on bills and the ups and downs of the health challenges that we face in California, you can only wonder about where things stand. I have been silent for a few weeks because it has felt that there is so much news that adding to it would only create confusion. However, after receiving a number of phone calls over the last week or so I feel compelled to offer some thoughts.

If you had any question about the COVID-19 surge, our members are experiencing it. Many member companies have called to let us know that one or more of their employees have tested positive. We have heard of cases where an employee tested positive and within days, others also tested positive or, worse, began to experience symptoms. The Los Angeles Times recently ran an article about a truck driver who had been doing everything right. Then he went to a birthday party where another attendee who had tested positive chose



to attend anyway, got COVID-19 from this person and died. This story caused me to really worry about our work environment. My fear is that as the surge grows, the restrictions could return to a level very close to the previous shelter-in-place orders.

As a former auditor who spent years working for an international public accounting firm, I admit that I am a pessimist at heart. In the Association offices, I have challenged our manage-

ment team to prepare for another shelter-in-place order. When the first round came we, like many of our members, scrambled to figure out what to do. The goal I recently gave to our managers is to prepare now. We must adapt to the new norm which, in our case, includes remote working and a heightened concern over social distancing. Not only am I concerned about our ability as an Association to serve our members’ needs, I, like so many of our owners, lose sleep

Message from PIASC President Lou Caron

at night worried about my team members and their families.

My recommendation to you and your team is to be prepared. Take some time to do a “post-mortem” (for lack of better words) on your experiences of the last couple of months. Consider:

- What has worked to date?
- What has not worked?
- What can you control?
- What will just have to be accepted because it is outside of your control?

One thing that we occasionally get asked is whether printing is considered an essential business. As noted in past alerts, the simple answer is “maybe but not necessarily.” We were successful in getting printing recognized at the State level. We have an agreement with the LA City Attorney’s Office that effectively acknowledges printing as an essential business. We also have worked extensively with Los Angeles County to the point where we believe that, when needed, we will be successful in gaining this

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HUMAN RESOURCES

Free Online Anti-Sexual Harassment Training Now Available

California law requires all employers of five or more employees to provide one hour of sexual harassment and abusive conduct prevention training to nonsupervisory employees and two hours of this training to supervisors and managers once every two years. The law requires the training to include practical examples of harassment based on gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.

The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) has now released free online training that meets this requirement for non-supervisory employees, at <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/shpt/>. The training is currently available in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese and Tagalog. Participants will be able to save or print a certificate of completion, which you can retain to satisfy California’s record-keeping requirements.

Coming soon (supposedly by July 30): The training for supervisors and managers.

TECHNICAL & TECHNOLOGY

Our technical experts from the Center for Technology and Research discuss common production problems and issues. The Center for Technology and Research helps members with environmental, health and safety concerns; consulting and on-site technical assistance; and technology training.

Q. I heard of a printing competitor that received an enforcement letter about unlicensed software. Who is behind that and how do I protect myself from a similar fate?

A. The Business Software Alliance (BSA) is the compliance and enforcement arm for Adobe, Microsoft and other software vendors. Its enforcement actions typically stem from tips by disgruntled employees. After an investigation to confirm that a company is probably in violation, BSA’s attorney sends a letter requesting that the company provides the results of a software self-audit. At that point it’s wise to get an attorney involved. To avoid being a BSA target like your competitor, make sure that your network is completely free of unlicensed software. We recommend that you run a comprehensive software audit on all workstations, laptops, PDAs and other software-dependent equipment and purchase licenses if gaps exist. You should retain all proofs of purchase for licenses.

Answers to Some COVID-19-Related HR FAQs

Can an employee refuse to return to work when recalled solely because they want to remain on unemployment?

No. This would disqualify them for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program.

The unintended consequence of the Federal government’s decision to provide an additional \$600 per week in unemployment benefits during the pandemic-related shutdowns is that many workers have little incentive to return to work. However, they cannot use the relatively high unemployment payments as a reason to refuse a return-to-work offer.

If this situation arises, send your employees clear written return-to-work offers, and then notify the Unemployment Insurance Office of any rejected offers to rehire that are based solely on a desire to remain on unemployment.

Of course, as we have written about



before (see <https://bit.ly/previous-HRarticle>), if an employee has a documented medical condition they can request an accommodation, and if they have COVID-19-related childcare problems they can request FMLA leave.

Can an employee refuse to wear a face covering?

As of this writing California is currently under a mandatory face covering order.

If the refusal is based on a legitimate medical, then yes, the employee can refuse to wear a face covering.

Otherwise, if you have implemented a COVID-19 return-to-work protocol that includes a requirement for all employees to wear face coverings, whether or not the mandate is still in place, an employee cannot refuse simply because they don’t like wearing face coverings, think it is unnecessary, consider it an infringement of their personal liberties, etc. In this situation the employee can be disciplined or even terminated for continued non-compliance.

NATIONAL NEWS

PRINTING United Digital Experience Unveiled

PRINTING United recently announced the decision to transition from an in-person event in Atlanta to a comprehensive digital platform. The show company today provides an update on its plans to present four power-packed weeks of hosted global programming and new product unveilings across PRINTING United Month this October, beginning October 5 and running through the week of October 26.

“The PRINTING United Digital Experience provides a unique opportunity to bring those highly anticipated product launches and engagements to the printing community at large, both from an exhibitor and attendee standpoint,” says Mark J. Subers, President of PRINTING United. “Our expert team has worked diligently to build a unique digital model to ensure that all market segments have a front row seat to this powerful, guided event, to further enhance opportunities for engagement and interaction.”

This series of community-based, content-rich Insight Days will deliver a program like no other. A new series will kick off each week highlighting a different community focus: apparel, commercial, digital textile, graphics/wide-format, in-plant, industrial, mailing/fulfillment and packaging. In this new format, the printing industry will together experience a variety of highly-focused hosted tracks and exclusive ways in which vendors and customers can interact.

“The energy and enthusiasm we’ve received from our partners as they learn more about the new PRINTING United Digital Experience platform is profound,” says Ford Bowers, President and CEO, PRINTING United Alliance. “While we are disappointed not to be able to convene in person this year, we are committed to delivering on our promise to bring the latest in technology, education and innovation to our industry in 2020. While the event will take shape differently than originally planned, it will undoubtedly serve as intended to our vast audiences nevertheless.”

“The printing industry greatly needed this event to go on this year, both from a sales perspective and for peer engagement in general,” says Marco Boer, Vice President, IT Strategies. “PRINTING United’s convergent roots allows for a seamless transition to this exceptional online platform, one of which we are proud to support. Our team appreciates the opportunity and limelight to share in experiencing the newest technology that companies in our industry have worked so hard to bring to market and waited all year to debut.”

Further detailed information on this new event will be announced and made available on printingunited.com in the coming weeks. For PRINTING United Digital Experience sponsorship opportunities, please contact Jack Noonan, Vice President of Business Development, PRINTING United Alliance: jnoonan@printing.org.

 [Download & print individual articles at bit.ly/NN-07-20-20](https://bit.ly/NN-07-20-20)

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

5 Ways to Lower your Credit Card Processing Fees



Pocket More of your Profits

Would you like to see your monthly credit card processing bill get lower? There are plenty of ways to reach that goal. Although your bill includes items such as assessment fees and authorization cost, the most common offenders are actually your credit card processing fees. Though they may not seem like much by themselves, these fees can add up to a hefty amount.

The reality is that credit card processing expenses aren’t something you can avoid. What you can—and should—do is lower them as much as you can. Here are five ways to do that:

1. Set Up Your Account the Right Way

By setting up your account properly from the start, you can avoid many mistakes that can lead to higher credit card processing fees in the

future. Pay particular attention to business type, transaction type and transaction frequency. Your terminal can affect the fees as well, so consider reducing processing fees by processing transactions within 24 hours.

2. Reduce the Risk of Fraud

If you pose a high-security risk as a merchant, your processing fees will be higher as well. The best way to reduce the risk of credit card fraud is to swipe as many credit cards as you can. With new technology such as cell phone swipers, you don’t have an excuse not to do it. Keep in mind that Visa and MasterCard set their rates based on fraud risk.

3. Negotiate with Credit Card Processors

In negotiations with processors, your main goal is to present yourself as a merchant that adds value. You can do that by leveraging your transaction volume. With enough transactions, the vendor will be more interested in your business. With some luck, they’ll be able to lower their overhead in certain areas, which makes it more likely they’ll lower your rates in return.

4. Use an Address Verification Service

An address verification service (AVS) is

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FEATURE ARTICLE

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recognition. This is not to diminish or suggest we are blind to other counties, but all the advice we have received is that success with LA County will leverage to success with the other counties. At the Association level we continue to monitor and prepare for the effort required to support all of our members, wherever they may be located.

In closing, I want to share some information that you might not see in the media. I am a member of the finance committee of a relatively large group that manages a few hospitals in eastern Los Angeles County. The following are some excerpts from the CEO's daily newsletters. I share these with you because I think they are much more fo-

cused and enlightening than what I have seen in the media:

July 8, 2020

"...a few words about the more than 4,000 new COVID-19 cases reported Tuesday by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. It's the largest single-day number of cases by the agency, which includes a back log of 2,000 cases from July 2-5. Almost 2,000 of those infected are hospitalized—27% of those in intensive care. Any way you cut it, the numbers are up and Los Angeles County is now the new epicenter for COVID-19 in California."

"...a conversation with Mark Ghaly, MD, the California Secretary of Health & Human Services, who told me on Tuesday that his agency is planning for a 400% increase statewide in COVID-19 hospitalizations in the next month, many of those in Southern California."

July 9, 2020

"More than three months into the pandemic, we have a much better idea how to treat infected patients, which pharmaceuticals to use, and how best to balance their needs against those of our non-COVID-19 patients."

We can each have different opinions

about the data but, based on what I am learning from our group, the rate of hospitalizations is growing rapidly. It is not hard to imagine another surge resulting from the July 4th holidays. While all of this is threatening, we now have the time to consider how we can adapt and prepare. Hopefully our plans will never be needed but I recommend it could be time well spent.

As always, the PIASC team continues to work to support our membership. We wish everyone the best of health as we navigate through this crisis.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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a system that can verify the cardholder's billing address. This is an excellent tool in fighting fraud, especially when it comes to limiting chargebacks in ecommerce. Visa and MasterCard both support AVS, and Visa even provides lower interchange rates if merchants perform an AVS check on their transactions.

5. Consult with Experts

If you want to gain a better understanding of card processing, contact an expert. Working with a professional can help you navigate the sometimes-confusing world of credit card processing, and help you make the best arrangement for your particular business. For example, did you know that all credit card processors buy their rates from Visa, Discover and MasterCard for the same price? This allows them to resell these rates to different businesses at the same fee. Being aware of insider information like this can help you gain an edge with vendors.

If you would like to learn more about lowering your credit card processing expenses or would like to receive a processing review, please get in touch with one of the team members at PIASC partner MONA Solutions, at 805-418-7595.

GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

Accessing Current DOL and EPA Guidance Documents

Five Federal agencies have now implemented Executive Order 13891, which directed agencies to review their guidance documents and make those that are still in effect easily accessible online. Any guidance document not included in an agency's website database is now deemed rescinded.

Be aware that in most cases (i.e. except as authorized by law or as incorporated into a contract), guidance documents are just that—guidance. They lack the force and effect of law.

The Department of Labor's new database of active guidance documents can be found at <https://www.dol.gov/guidance>.

The Environmental Protection Agency's new database of active guidance documents can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/guidance>.

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