

Future Workforce

Supply chain issues abound. While the immediate focus is on the paper shortage, the other crisis is the labor supply chain.

Supply chains only work to the extent that there are no kinks in the chain. In the case of labor, not only is there a shortage of raw material (potential workers), but there is also an erosion of manufacturing (e.g., printing and other graphic communication) educational programs.

The number of printing programs is declining

In the pre-pandemic years, the number of printing programs were in decline due to lack of interest and budget. We have been unsuccessful in attempts to reverse this trend. It appears that the latest casualty is the well-known graphic communications program at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. How can we expect administrators to fund programs, at any level, if there are no

bodies in seats? Clearly, if we do not find a remedy, our fate is predetermined.

It is up to us to attract people to the industry

So, what are we to do? The key is attracting people, the first link in the chain. We have to get beyond and ahead of such things as merely offering scholarships, because while they certainly help students already interested in the industry as a career, they are only as good as there are interested people. The problem is that we are not attracting enough “interested” people.

On one hand, trade associations, like ours, need to fulfill our charter to promote the industry. We do not need to tell the industry about its great value. We need to address the public, young and old, and explain just how essential printing is to their daily lives. Let’s face it, we actually had to convince government officials that the same people that they



were relying on to print ballots were essential businesses.

What are you doing to reach out to your local high schools?

The biggest shortage is in entry-level candidates. These young people are going to originate from our high schools. To make an impact, printers

have to proactively create local outreach activities. How many high schools and career technical education programs are in your local area? How many know you exist? How many counselors know the industry exists? After all, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics does not.

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BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

The Ubiquity of Optima

There’s a typeface whose name you might not know, but once you’ve become familiar with it, you’ll begin to see it everywhere. I’m talking about Optima!

The origins of Optima

Optima is a sans-serif typeface that was created by the famous type designer Hermann Zapf for the D. Stempel AG type foundry in 1958. Though it has no serifs, Optima manages to imply them by the way the characters narrow down in the middle and swell as they ascend and descend. In developing the typeface, Zapf said that he was inspired by lettering he saw on gravestones at the Santa Croce church in Florence, Italy.

Figure 1: Gravestone at Opera di Santa Croce (Florence, Italy)



In 2002, Zapf worked with Linotype GmbH type director Akira Kobayashi to redesign Optima. The resulting font family is called Optima Nova.

Given its attractiveness and versatility, it’s no surprise that quite a few fonts mimic Optima. Some of the more common ones that you might come across include Bitstream’s Zapf Humanist, URW’s Classico and Mint Type’s Orchidea Pro.

Identifying Optima

Figure 2: Optima Nova

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!?!&

If you look closely at Figure 2 above, you will start to see some of Optima Nova’s characteristic features—which are quite similar to the original Optima. The lines of the capital C and S each end in the hint of a serif. The same holds true of their lowercase companions. Notice how the vertical lines of the capital E and F are thick compared to their horizontal components. Look closely at the capital I and lower case I and note how they bend inward in a little in the middle, as do many of the other vertical strokes.

The capital G stands out for the way that it finishes; there is no horizontal bar on it. The capital letter horizontal strokes are generally thinner than the verticals, but look closely at the M, N, V and W and note their distinctive thin/thick or thick/thin alternation. The entire lowercase letter set has the same inward bend on the tall verticals as the capital I. This is most easily seen in the lower case b, d, h, k and l.

As you look for Optima and its variants on signage and logos, the quickest giveaways are in the capital E, capital G and capital I. And once you start looking for it, you won’t have to look very far.

Well-known uses of Optima

Now that you have Optima’s characteristics in mind, I guarantee you’ll see it frequently on signs the next time you’re out for a drive or a walk. In my hometown, it’s the typeface chosen by the orthodontist and a real estate agent. At my church, Optima is on the plaques thanking those who donated bells for the bell choir. When I turn on my television to watch international soccer matches, the Qatar Airways logo (featuring the Optima font) is frequently displayed along the sidelines. Qatar Airways liked the sleek look of Optima and thought that its shape harmonized well with the horns of its logo’s Arabian oryx.

Figure 3: Qatar Airways Logo



Out on the road, you may notice that the automobile companies Aston Martin and Jaguar use Optima. Oddly though, the logo for Kia’s Optima does not use the Optima font. In Washington, DC, Maya Lin chose Optima for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The Opera di Santa Croce website quite logically uses Optima, given that Hermann Zapf found his original inspiration there.

Figure 4: Aston Martin and Jaguar Logos



At home, turn over that pot or pan. If you own any Farberware cookware, Optima will be looking right at you. Stay in a hotel and chances are you will see Optima somewhere, though Optima’s influence seems to be waning a little... as demonstrated by Marriott’s decision to update its Springhill Suites logo. It should also be noted that Jaguar gave up on Optima in 2012.

Figure 5: Old (Left) and New (Right) Springhill Suites Logos



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HUMAN RESOURCES

Can You Do Reference Checks Just for Certain Roles?

Yes, as long as you’re not discriminating based on protected classes or characteristics, you can conduct reference checks for certain roles but not others. For example, you may decide that supervisory roles or positions with access to sensitive information warrant this additional step during the hiring process. As with any reference check, don’t forget to get the candidate’s permission first.

That said, some employers like to have consistent practices across the board to reduce the risk of a discrimination claim. Employees can file claims based simply on the appearance of discrimination, and employers may be held liable even if they didn’t intend to discriminate.

In this case, doing (or not doing) reference checks for all roles would be the most risk-averse approach.

If you would like to check references only for certain employee groups, you should consider whether your policies and practices are disproportionately affecting employees who share a protected characteristic (race, sex, age over 40, etc.). If candidates who were rejected after a reference check were all or mostly the same gender, for instance, you’d want to be sure that the reference checks were both a business necessity and that there was no other policy you could implement that would have less of an impact on the protected group.

Source: HR|BIZZ



NATIONAL NEWS

Workforce Development Summit Gaining Industry Attention

Americas Print Show (APS22) is hosting the first ever Workforce Development Summit for the print industry. Drawing national attention from sponsors and exhibitors, the Summit is designed to help employers make the cultural shifts needed to attract the future workforce, as well as educate candidates on career opportunities in the print industry and connect them with potential employers.

The APS22 Summit outreach program has connected with regional colleges, universities and trade schools to engage students in the event. Students have been invited to participate in Summit career-building activities, including networking, workshops, education sessions, resume/interview skill development and candidate interviews throughout the event’s three days.

Highlights of the Summit include:

- **Workforce Development Summit Lunch and Panel Discussion** – August 17 at 12:00 pm. APS22 and the Summit sponsors will host a lunch and panel discussion. This will be a diverse and honest exchange about the challenges and culture

shifts needed to attract students and a broader group of individuals to the industry.

- **Workforce Development Area** – August 18 at 10:00 am. Students will meet face-to-face with representatives from companies at the show. There will be over 200,000 square feet of show floor for students, educators and their families to learn more about the many opportunities in the printing industry.
- **Hopkins Printing Tour** – August 18 at 1:00 pm. Students are invited to participate in a tour of a local printing plant. Transportation to and from the show will be provided.

There is no fee to attend

Students and others interested in the Workforce Development Summit can attend for free, including registration for any of the educational sessions available to APS22 attendees. Transportation stipends are available for high school and college-age students.

To register, visit <https://bit.ly/2022apsregistration>.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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The bottom line

In his 1990 book, Anatomy of a Typeface, author Alexander Lawson writes that Zapf preferred Optima over all of his other typefaces. (Think how this must have disappointed poor Palatino!) Later, though, he noted that “a father should not have a favorite among his daughters.” This is very true, and should be kept in mind by graphic designers with the point being that even a masterful type design like Optima can be overused.

I’ll close with some recommendations and a couple of cautionary tales:

- **Don’t be boring with fonts!** You may have old favorites that you return to again and again, but keep an open mind and stay on the lookout for new and innovative fonts.
- **Support the type design community.** Buy the work of today’s type designers.

- **If you want to be playful, be careful!** Please don’t use Comic Sans—not just because it has become a meme, but because the original versions had atrocious letterspacing. Instead, look into fonts like Bubble Gum Sans, Cartoonist Hand or Sketchnote. Bear in mind you’ll need to buy them (See Bullet 2).
- **Type design matters!** You may think that the general public doesn’t care much about type design, but even NBC’s Saturday Night Live got into the mix with a sketch about Papyrus starring Ryan Gosling (which you can view at bit.ly/PapyrusNL)

Here’s one final recommendation...if you’re looking for a game to play with the kids while on vacation or when taking a trip into the city, searching for the Optima font is a much better teaching experience than “I Spy.”

Provided by Canon



FEATURE

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If you believe in the industry, “Go tell it on the mountain!” Find the graphic art teachers. Invite them and their students to tour the plant to see how their creation comes to life. We have to challenge and excite students to envision their creation as a package, display or brochure. Fine arts are hung on a wall or displayed in small settings seen by small numbers. Conversely, the product of the printing industry is seen by large communities creating sensory impact. But here I am preaching to industry.

Get your employees involved

Print is not dead! It is a bit dormant, waiting to spring to life. There is a story to be told, but it has to be told to the “uninitiated.” I have found employees to be great storytellers. Most take pride in what they do and, when given the chance, blossom in front of small crowds. Many have worked in the shadows and enjoy the chance to shine. Their energy is addictive.

How many printers survey their employees to find out the names of the high schools in their community? How many ask these employees if they have children enrolled in a high school with a graphic arts program? Do they have a career day? Would they be interested in a tour? This is really a grassroots effort that requires some time but not large amounts of money.

In today’s world, we provide multichannel marketing to our customers to help them attract their customers. It is time that we, trade associations and printers, use the same marketing techniques to attract our “desired” customer ... next generation workers.

Let future workers know that print is high-tech

The ammunition to promote the industry is in your hallways and buildings and on your production floor. It is high time to seek audiences. Print is all around us. We need to build public awareness of its value in order to build attraction. We need to demonstrate that printing is not the archaic ink-under-the-fingernails process it was decades ago; it’s a high-tech business.

Strangely, print is not obvious even though it surrounds us in almost everything we do. Let’s help make it more obvious. Let’s help students and parents imagine a world without print, and then challenge them to ensure that doesn’t happen!

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5 Ways to Attract More Clients

One of the biggest challenges that businesses face is attracting clients. Once you’ve identified your target audience, you’ll need to work hard to get them in your business’ door.

Here are five things you can do to attract more clients:

Be unique – Stand out from the crowd. Solve a problem no one else does, or solve it in a way that no one else can. Determine your unique selling proposition – the reason why people should do business with you – and then use it to your advantage!

Develop a compelling marketing message – When prospects visit your website or view your marketing literature the first few words they see will determine whether they keep reading or move on to something else. The right message will unlock the doors to new business. With an “off-target” message your marketing materials will be working against you instead of for you – a situation no business can afford.

Get the word out – Tell the world about your business and what you have to offer. Create a marketing plan that includes a mix of various marketing activities and then work it consistently throughout the year. Attracting clients takes time and effort, so cast as wide a net as possible.

Exceed expectations – Two of the best sources of business are referrals and repeat orders from previous clients. Earn both by exceeding expectations in every aspect of your business. People talk. Give them reasons to say good things about you.

Stay one step ahead – The world is constantly changing, and you need to change with it. Keep up with trends in your industry. Look for new ways you can help your clients. Stay ahead of your competitors. Become the “go to” person or company in your field, and keep clients coming your way.

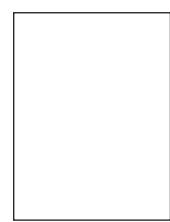
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Want to place a classified ad? Contact Kristy Villanueva at 323.728.9500, Ext. 215, kristy@piasc.org.



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PIASC Events Calendar

JUL 14	Pricing Strategy Seminar Thursday July 14 Online, 10:00 am PT https://www.piasc.org/events
JUL 21	PIASC Colorado Golf Tournament Thursday July 21 Littleton, Colorado https://contact@3Mavl.4H
JUL 27	Recruitment, Retention Webinar Monday July 27 Online, 9:30-10:30 am PT https://www.piasc.org/events
AUG 17-19	America's Print Show 2022 Wednesday-Friday, August 17-19 Columbus, OH www.americaspriintshow22.com
SEP 13	Labelexpo Americas 2022 Tuesday-Thursday, September 13-15 Chicago, IL www.labelexpo-americas.com
OCT 22	LA Printers Fair Saturday-Sunday October 22-23 Carson, CA www.printmuseum.org/los-angeles-printers-fair

For full list of events, please visit www.piasc.org/events

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