

ENSURING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PRINTING MUSEUM



If you have not yet visited the International Printing Museum in Carson, California, we highly recommend you make plans to do so! In addition to holding the nation's largest collection of antique printing equipment, vintage type and other related artifacts, this absolute gem of a museum is also the site of a 4,600 square foot Book Arts Institute teaching lab.

The museum's mission

As Founding Curator and Executive Director Mark Barbour states, the mission of the International Printing Museum is "to preserve the heritage of printing through the collection, display and use of its artifacts, dedicating our resources to the purpose of learning."

What this means is that the museum is not just a big building filled with static old machines. Over the past 37 years Mark and his small staff have developed unique programs that use the collection to bring the history of printing and books to life, including telling the story of how innovations in printing helped shape the modern world.

A growing endowment

Mark is very happy to report that over the past five years the museum's endowment-level support has grown from close to zero to the equivalent of an approximately \$6.5 million endowment. Large gifts have come from three benefactors, each of which used a different approach to supporting the museum:

- **Permanent funding source** – Since 2020 the museum has been receiving an annual grant from the Miki Young Charitable Trust, which left a \$12 million estate to the benefit of five charities (including the International Printing Museum) in perpetuity.
- **Endowment** – In 2022 the museum received a \$3 million endowment from the Windgate Foundation. Now valued at \$3.5 million, this much-appreciated gift produces \$120,000 per year in income.
- **Real estate** – In 2023 the museum received a house in San Rafael, California from a supporter's estate. This property is currently being rented out, bringing the museum about \$45,000 a year in tax-free income.

"WE'RE NOT DONE DREAMING! WE'VE GONE SO FAR BEYOND THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF WHAT A PRINTING MUSEUM IS, BUT WE'RE CERTAINLY NOT FINISHED."

-Mark Barbour

Long-term support like this is what will enable the museum to survive and thrive well into the future by providing annual operating funds. While the programs themselves also bring in income, this type of endowment-level funding provides much-needed breathing room.

Mark's ultimate goal is to grow the museum's endowment-level support to \$15 to \$20 million. This would cover all of the museum's current \$600,000 per year operating costs plus allow the museum to hire additional staff and expand its offerings.

An outside impact

Today the museum's wide-ranging programming serves multiple communities. All in all, about 20,000 to 25,000 people directly engage with the museum each year, either at its facility or in the field. This is in addition to those who access the museum's extensive online video library (available at www.youtube.com/@InternationalPrintingMuseum) or see its equipment used as props in movies or television shows.

The Printing Museum's ongoing programs include:

- **Events for the public** – Throughout the year the museum hosts fun events that attract the general public, including the Los Angeles Printers Fair, an Independence Day Celebration, Krazy Krafts Day for kids and much more.
- **"Hollywood" rentals** – Items from the collection are regularly rented out for use as props in TV shows, movies and commercials, such as HBO's recent show, "The Gilded Age." Each year Mark is involved with two or three productions, including consulting as a technical advisor on set to ensure the scenes are accurate.
- **History curriculum-based field trips for younger students** – For example, "Franklin's Colonial Tour" uses the story of Ben Franklin – whose involvement with printing began when he was just 11 years old – to introduce elementary school students to the invisible world of printing.
- **Tours for older students** – Programs for high school and college students are extremely hands-on, including printing on the presses, making paper and learning about graphics and typography.
- **Museum on Wheels** – Using a 12-foot trailer, the museum brings Ben Franklin's printing shop to over 100 elementary school campuses throughout California and Arizona each year.
- **Ben Franklin Virtual Field Trip** – This new pre-recorded online version of the museum's popular Ben Franklin Tour will enable the museum to reach fifth grade students nationwide.
- **Merit badge workshops** – Each year over 600 Scouts from across the country come to the museum to work on graphic arts, paper and book arts merit badges.
- **Book Arts Institute** – Each week participants (primarily adults) are on site to enjoy classes on various book and paper arts, learning about everything from letterpress and typography to paper making, paper marbling, book binding and screen printing. "We are developing one of the largest teaching facilities for this emerging art form in the Western U.S.," Mark notes.

What additional support can mean for the Printing Museum

"We're not done dreaming!" Mark exclaims. "We've gone so far beyond the general concept of what a printing museum is, but we're certainly not finished. There is so much more potential here!"

While the gifts highlighted in this article were all very large, Mark wants supporters to understand that small gifts – whether through your estate planning or now while you're alive to see the impact of your generosity – are also very much appreciated and needed.

If you would like to make a donation, you can do so on the museum's website at printmuseum.org/donate, or you can reach Mark directly at 714-529-1832 or mark@printmuseum.org.

HUMAN RESOURCES

HR QUESTIONS ROUNDUP

How can we develop shift schedules that keep productivity and morale high?

As demand fluctuates, many printing companies are rethinking how they schedule their workforce. PIA members have shared that adding additional shifts, such as a third shift or split weekend coverage, has helped maintain output without overworking the team. Success seems to hinge on regular feedback from staff, as well as incorporating shift incentives for shifts that are less desirable, or rotating schedules to provide preferred days off on some weeks in order to balance shifts.

Keeping morale high starts with giving employees a sense of control and fairness when it comes to their time. Small input in their preferred hours can improve retention and day-to-day productivity.

In addition to structure and communication, flexibility has become a major differentiator in attracting and retaining skilled production workers. Some companies have started offering scheduling models that blend fixed and floating shifts, allowing employees to swap or adjust hours through a managed system without disrupting operations. Others are piloting staggered start times to reduce bottlenecks during shift changes and accommodate individual needs.

These approaches not only help companies stay nimble in the face of last-minute orders or labor shortages, they also send a strong message: We value your time, and we're willing to evolve to meet the realities of today's workforce.

What are some tips for managing overtime and burnout during peak print seasons?

Whether it's Q4 or a big seasonal push, the pressure on printing operations can skyrocket. This often leads to overtime and, unfortunately, burnout. PIA members that plan early and train their teams across roles tend to weather busy periods better. Proactive planning is essential to eliminate burnout and encourage a positive workplace environment, even during busy periods.

Some organizations create a forecast of peak seasons months in advance, not only from a production standpoint but also from a staffing and wellness perspective. Hiring temporary workers, cross-training existing staff and improving work-flow efficiencies can all help reduce reliance on extended overtime.

Another effective approach is to increase transparency about expectations ahead of time. Letting employees know what's coming allows them to prepare mentally and personally. Several members have shared success in hosting quick pre-

season meetings to outline production goals, scheduling needs and employee support resources.

Workload balancing is another key strategy. If you have team members with specialized skills that are in high demand during peak periods, such as press operators or bindery staff, look for ways to redistribute less technical tasks or offer assistance through floating support staff. This not only reduces fatigue but shows respect for the critical work those employees are doing under pressure.

Peak season is a test of both your production plan and your culture. The more care you show your people during the most demanding times, the more loyalty and resilience you'll earn in return.

What should we do to build a positive culture on the production floor?

A strong culture isn't just about policies; it's about how people feel day to day. For many PIA members, common tensions arise around things like phone use, ear pods and inconsistent break times. Addressing these challenges starts with setting clear expectations, communicating policies openly and being consistent in how they're enforced.

At the same time, allowing some flexibility where appropriate can go a long way. Allowing controlled use of music, accommodating personal needs during long shifts or empowering line leaders to manage break schedules locally can create a more respectful and responsive environment and improve morale.

Recognition and community building are just as important. Celebrating team wins, offering small perks during high-pressure periods or simply acknowledging individual contributions regularly can make a big difference. A positive production floor culture helps improve safety, productivity and employee retention – and it usually starts with leadership showing up, listening and modeling the values they want to see.

Source: Jinji HR, <https://jinjihr.com>



UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS’ BUYING PROCESS

Customers don't just go out and buy. Buying is a process, and in its simplest form, it goes something like this:

- First your customers must recognize that they have a problem (“I’m thirsty”).
- Then they search for information about how to solve this problem (“Where’s the nearest soda machine?”).
- They might evaluate alternatives (“Maybe I’d rather have coffee”).
- Finally, they’ll make a decision (“Forget it – I’ll just head to the drinking fountain and have some water”).

How do your customers make their buying decisions?

If you’ve never thought about how your customers make their buying decisions, now’s a good time to start. Why? Because this information can be key to creating a truly successful sales process – and the effective marketing materials you’ll need to drive it.

For example, if you know that potential customers want to know exactly what equipment your printing business has and its specific capabilities, you can ensure that this information is easily found on your website.

In general, you should try to find out...

Process: What is your customers’ typical buying process?

Depending on your business, customers might obtain purchasing pre-approval, do research, get bids, seek referrals, get financing, etc.

How many people are involved in the buying decision? At what point in the process do these other people enter the picture?

Information needs: What information do your customers typically need in order to make a buying decision?

Do they understand how your company can solve their problems or improve their lives? Are they looking for price information? How about reviews from previous customers? Do you need to provide a thorough explanation of how your service works? Will your money-back guarantee put them at ease?

Motivation: What motivates people to buy the products or services that you offer instead of doing nothing?

What problems can be solved by making this purchase? How pressing are these problems? A person who is looking for the nearest Urgent Care Center to treat a broken leg will be much more motivated to make a purchase than someone who is

talking to a door-to-door magazine salesperson.

Before you can convince potential customers that your widget is the best one out there, you first need to convince them that buying a widget is a better decision than not buying anything at all.

Conclusion

Studying your customers’ typical buying process can give you valuable information for your sales and marketing programs.



GIVING BACK



What has your business done for your community lately? Many business owners do a lot to give back to their communities on a personal level, but then fail to recognize the benefits of giving back on the business level.

Yes, giving back has its own rewards. Beyond that, it can also be used to create positive publicity for your business, because people like to do business with companies that are committed to making a positive difference in the world. It’s no surprise that so many organizations include “giving” as a formal part of their marketing plans. Although charity begins at home, it certainly doesn’t have to end there!

While many large corporations have formal programs to give back to the community in a big way (such as Target, which gives away millions of dollars each week), your company can make an impact on a much more modest budget.

The options are endless

There are many ways that your business can give back to your community. Here are 15 ideas:

- 1
- DONATE YOUR EXCESS INVENTORY to PIA’s annual Surplus Drive.
- 2
- COLLECT FOOD for a local food bank, with a drop-off box in your store or office.
- 3
- PROVIDE PRO BONO SERVICES to charitable organizations in need.
- 4
- PLANT TREES in a local park to demonstrate your commitment to the environment and “going green.”
- 5
- ORGANIZE A NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP with a trash pick up or graffiti removal day.
- 6
- HOST A BLOOD DRIVE for the Red Cross or a local hospital.
- 7
- SPONSOR A CHILDREN’S SPORTS TEAM such as Little League or AYSO.
- 8
- SPEAK AT A CAREER DAY at a local school.
- 9
- BUY LOCALLY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE in order to support local businesses.
- 10
- SPONSOR A LOCAL EVENT such as a marathon, fair or concert.
- 11
- PUT A COLLECTION JAR ON THE COUNTER and then deliver the donations to your designated charity.
- 12
- HOST COMMUNITY-BUILDING EVENTS AT YOUR FACILITY, such as fundraisers, local performances, community game nights or neighborhood mixers.
- 13
- GIVE EMPLOYEES PAID VOLUNTEER TIME so that they can do good while “on the clock.”
- 14
- MATCH DONATIONS to a charity that is a good fit for your business’ mission and values.
- 15
- COLLECT HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR LOCAL CHILDREN and then deliver them as a team.

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/CEO
Ext. 274
lou@piasc.org

KATHY SCHMIDT
Director, Insurance Services
Ext. 223
kathy.schmidt@piascins.com

EVIE BAÑAGA
Employee Benefits
Ext. 224
evie@pibt.org

KRISTY VILLANUEVA
Member Services
Ext. 215
kristy@piasc.org

SUSAN LEVI
Human Resources
piasc@jinjhr.com

EVENTSCALENDAR

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

PACK EXPO LAS VEGAS
September 29 – 30, 2025
Las Vegas, NV
<https://www.packexpolasvegas.com/>

CAL POLY CAREER DAY
OCTOBER 8 – 9, 2025
San Luis Obispo, CA
To register contact Kristy Villanueva at
kristy@piasc.org

SAVE THE DATE
AMERICA'S PRINT AWARDS
October 16, 2025
www.youtube.com/@americasprintawards

SAVE THE DATE
R.A.I.S.E. SURPLUS DRIVE
October 30 – 31, 2025
9:00 AM – 2:00PM PT
Anaheim, CA

SPOTLIGHT EVENT

SURPLUS SALE & WAYZGOOSE CELEBRATION
Saturday, August 16, 2025
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM PT
International Printing Museum
Carson, CA
bit.ly/AUG16EVENT

A large selection of letterpress equipment, wood and metal type, cuts, supplies, printing presses and more will be available for sale. In addition, the museum will be presenting special letterpress demonstrations, typecasting and more for all attendees.

THIS IN ISSUE:

- HUMAN RESOURCES:
HR QUESTIONS ROUNDUP
- FEATURE:
ENSURING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PRINTING MUSEUM
- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT:
GIVING BACK
- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT:
UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS' BUYING PROCESS

Services for Graphic Communications
5800 S. Eastern Ave., #400
Los Angeles, CA 90040

NEWS
JULY 28, 2025 | ISSUE 186

