Second Annual Vision 3 Summit Returns to High Praise

The vision of an industry-wide, executive-level education and networking event became a reality, once again, as the second annual Vision 3 Summit conference was held February 19-22, 2012 at the Marco Island Marriott in Marco Island, Florida. Themed “Focus Your Vision on Transformation and Growth,” this year’s conference was again jointly produced by NPES The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies (NPES); the National Association for Printing Leadership (NAPL); and, Printing Industries of America.

This year’s mixed-format program featured nationally known business authorities and print industry experts; Washington, D.C.’s most authoritative political pundit; informative industry panel discussions; and hot-topic concurrent sessions that included—by past attendee request—the new-for-2012 Luncheon Peer Exchange Roundtable Forums. Additionally, both NAPL and NPES held their individual board of directors meetings in conjunction with the conference.

Designed specifically for company owners and executives, the two-and-a-half day event provided a distinctly management-level approach to address the industry’s biggest challenges. During and after the program, participants rated the information and discussions “relevant, timely and spot on,” “overall the best conference of the year,” and noted as particularly useful the meeting materials available online for download following the program.

This year’s conference was far from your standard management program. It covered an array of topics delivered in a variety of formats to ensure that participants would come away from every session having learned something applicable to their own businesses. As such, it included inspiring daily keynote presentations, interactive sessions led by subject-matter experts, lively panel discussions covering real-life business examples—and more. The result was a conference that was both practical and visionary which presented, as one participant stated, “invaluable content for any business manager/owner to guide the direction of your business in this changing industry.”

Because the Vision 3 Summit was a joint effort of the industry’s top three associations, attendees benefited from a mix of insights they normally would not receive at other gatherings. “As our industry continues to change and evolve, executives need a forum where they can gain the very latest information and share insights among their peers,” observed NPES President Ralph Nanni. “The Vision 3 Summit is a rare opportunity that brings...”
chairman’s perspective

It’s a Digital Printing Revolution: Customers Lead the Charge!

Chris Payne
NPES Chairman

“With the advent of technologies like Kodak’s digital printing solutions, digital printing has reached a level where it’s beautiful, and not recognizable as digital printing, per se—it’s just great printing.”  —Stona Fitch, Concord Free Press

This lofty comment echoes the high praise that marketers from Kodak, Hewlett-Packard, Xerox and others in our industry will be trumpeting from their stands at drupa in about a month. But what’s impressive about this statement is that, rather than coming from a demonstrator, sell sheet or Web site of a digital print products vendor, it comes from a user of the technology—and a writer and publisher, no less!

Stona Fitch, multibook author and founder of Concord Free Press in Concord, Massachusetts, (www.concord-freepress.com) knows a good bit about revolutions—whether the Boston Tea Party type, or what he sees taking place in book publishing these days. “The publishing industry is in an incredible period of transition,” says Fitch, and he credits digital publishing and printing capabilities as the driving force. Publishing industry naysayers lament a bleak and not-too-distant future where all works, great and small, will be distributed electronically, with ink, paper and bindings doomed to go the way of the buggy whip. “Not so,” according to Fitch. “A lot of people are going to become publishers because they can. They’re empowered by these tools, and because of them they’re able to produce really beautiful books at any volume, cost-effectively.” Imagine that. The publishing industry is growing because of digital printing technology. That is revolutionary!

Four years ago, high-speed digital printing was being shown at drupa as a technology demonstration. Standing next to hand-built digital presses that had more attendants than the Queen, our best showmen made all sorts of claims about these submarine-length monsters having “the speed and quality of offset, the promise of truly variable printing, run lengths from one to one million with no waste”—and of course it would all be cost-effective. The Holy Grail had been found, and Nirvana seemed to be right around the corner. But due in part to the harsh realities of a stubborn global economy, taking the leap across the chasm to land on the digital high ground (that is, to invest in a digital press), has required an extra dose of courage. Yet those who have made the leap are reaping the rewards through growing numbers of satisfied customers who see great value in the products that their print partners deliver—and, as a result, these early adopters are now considerably ahead of their competitors.

Challenging economic times have required everyone who makes and sells products to re-examine their businesses from top to bottom, and marketing spending (as usual) has been a target for reduction and justification like never before. Shrewd print providers have teamed with their customers to introduce digital printing capabilities that have come online at a perfect time in many ways. With data-mining, micro targeting and customer segmentation tools becoming more powerful than ever before, marketers are harnessing the full potential and power of digital printing to produce high-quality, personalized communications that can be tracked, measured and improved in record time.

There are virtually no limits on the creativity of the design process as a result of the flexibility of digital presses. Much of the end-to-end work from concept to execution is being done for them by their print providers, who have moved up the value chain to become key partners in the marketing mix as a result of the flexibility and capabilities they offer through digital printing. Even traditional printers can get in the game while leveraging their investment in offset. They can instantly bring high-quality personalization to offset print jobs simply by adding a digital inkjet imprinting system onto their offset press.

“We act as a marketing resource,” states Dave Fenske, of Fenske Media Corporation, (www.fenskemedia.com). “We’re a true partner in planning the goals of a project before it even begins.” With extensive digital capabilities that allow customer work to be managed across a vast selection of substrates and features, Fenske Media has migrated their customers from the “pretty and shiny” benefits of traditional offset printing to a higher plateau, “where variable data printing takes those attributes and adds to them the intricacy of data and the opportunity to measure results.” This kind of service has been made possible by digital printing, and it has allowed print providers to find new sources of revenue and new ways of delivering value. Their customers are joining the revolution by looking for more ways to use print, from packaging to statements to direct mail. And don’t forget the book, magazine and newspaper publishers too. As Stona Fitch puts it, “It’s a great time to be a writer.” One could say it’s a revolutionary time.
NPES Chairman Chris Payne (r) welcomes attendees and guests to the Vision 3 Summit Dinner—the perfect ending to another productive day of education and networking.

Presenter Kevin Keane, President of the International Association of Printing House Craftsmen, challenged attendees to push forward with a fresh approach to offering and selling an expanded range of print-integrated services.

Keynoter Dr. Jeffrey Rosensweig (c), Director of the Global Perspectives Program, Goizueta Business School of Emory University, shared an insightful analysis of the global economic influences and domestic trends impacting our industry, and remained afterwards for individual Q&A with Ulrik Nygaard, President and CEO, Baumfolder Corporation (l) and others.

Before the afternoon concurrent sessions begin, Vision 3 Summit attendees Michael Fornadel, President, Good Printers, Inc. and Laura Lawton-Forsyth, Chair, Printing Industries of America and President, Lawton Printing, Inc. enjoy a networking break.

Rick Burdick, Vice President of Sales, xpedx (c) engages in one of the many networking breaks throughout the Vision 3 Summit, where attendees from among NPES, NAPL, and Printing Industries of America agree, “the great networking” was a key benefit of participating in this year’s event.

Jim Tepper, President, PINE, (l) and industry peers share in the friendly camaraderie, impressive collaborative power, and active engagement among the printers and vendors at the conference.

As attendees gather together on the last day of the conference to exchange insights from the productive and successful Vision 3 Summit, they share plans to attend next year’s event, March 10-13, 2013, Tucson, Arizona.
Emotional Intelligence: WHAT EVERY BUSINESS LEADER MUST LEARN, AND WHY IT’S CRITICAL FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION’S SUCCESS

By Carl Henry, Principal, Carl Henry Associates

As a business leader, you’ve done everything you can think of to hire the right team. The credentials are excellent. The references are outstanding. The personality testing leads you to believe that each candidate is perfectly suited to his or her job.

Yet, the brilliant managerial hire doesn’t seem to be managing all that well and there is a lot of turnover. The zealous and driven sales person you thought would be amazing and would turn things around is doing just that… in the wrong direction. The smart and competent manager seems to be having trouble with an admittedly heavy, but one that you think is manageable, workload.

So what went wrong? Simply put, you hired your team based on all the right criteria: personality, technical expertise, industry knowledge and skill set. What you weren’t able to assess, was their Emotional Intelligence: their ability to manage their emotions with skill in any given situation, often referred to as ‘soft skills.’

Traditionally a cooler head prevails in business. The context is slightly different, but who can forget the first line of the inimitable poem “If,” by Rudyard Kipling: “If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs…” Nowadays, one quite often hears people in the office jokingly say things like: “Just Shoot Me!” or “I’m on the ledge and I’ll jump!” I also recall the scene in the movie Network, where the character played by actor Peter Finch screams out, “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it anymore!”

These types of situations arise out of a lack of understanding more than anything. The emotional balance has been disturbed in some way and the result is stress and chaos. For cooler heads to prevail there must be emotional understanding at all levels in an organization. The supervisor must understand to some degree the pressures placed on their employees that can lead to overload, disagreement, misunderstanding and even anger. The resulting lack of respect becomes even more damaging. A supervisor who understands how his employees feel and function will know whether an employee is suited to a particular task or responsibility, and will comprehend individual limits and make adjustments accordingly. With a technical expertise, the difference is more obvious. You would not hire a car mechanic to do your taxes or, vice versa, have your accountant fix your car.

Screening for emotional intelligence doesn’t negate your current skills testing and evaluation practices, it lets you go beyond the obvious labels to discover whether, for example, your customer care supervisor will have the right kind of empathetic abilities to deal with difficult customers, yet not let the often impossible job lead him or her to despair or callousness.

For future hiring practices, you can easily adopt a screening assessment for emotional intelligence. But for your current leadership team, you must all understand the role that emotions play in our everyday interactions with each other and how they can affect business decisions at every level. We need to recognize our emotions, the emotions of others and how to harness them in the most appropriate way to run the business successfully. Some people are less sensitive than others, and yet others can be over-emotional in their decision-making. Furthermore, we need to learn how to work with others and manage their and our own emotions.

There are many examples of how emotional intelligence has helped improve businesses. Companies that have increased profits and production, by simply ensuring that staff are in the most-appropriate role for their emotional competencies as well as their technical expertise.

In my presentation at the NAPL/NPES Executive Briefings in May and June, I will share with you four secrets for directing your entire team’s positive emotional energy to: improve staff morale and motivation, maximize effective communication, boost individual and company productivity, and increase customer satisfaction and sales.
Printing and Publishing Market in Russia Sees Growth

NEW OPPORTUNITIES OPENING UP IN THE REGION

By Leonid Shakhm unders, NPES (USA) Market Representative in Russia and Eurasia and Alexei Ivanenko, MindShift Partners Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Despite Russia’s past economic difficulties and its oil and gas dependence, the economy is growing and offers an attractive business market for companies of varying sizes and from a wide gamut of industries. In contrast to many mature western markets, Russia’s printing and publishing industry is growing at a rate of 10 to 11 percent a year, with business expansion opportunities for printers and technology vendors alike.

Most industry executives seeking to expand globally consider Russia a huge market with great opportunities, but by pursuing them from a ‘traditional perspective,’ they achieve less than the desired results. But it’s not just a ‘global business’ conundrum, since Russian companies experience problems doing business here as well.

You may ask, “Why are such huge market opportunities in Russia that should provide positive profit outcomes so often stymied?” As development consultants with more than 25 years in the printing and publishing industries helping companies to build their businesses in Russia, our team came to one simple conclusion: the key is ‘learning how to do local right.’

Actually, perceived obstacles such as logistics, customs, laws, taxes, etc. are relatively easily resolved, either with the help of a Russian partner or on your own. But, understanding the local decision-making process, now that’s the real challenge!

What seemingly should be simple—estimating market potential, creating targets and forecasts, finding the right partner, getting promises and achieving agreements, defining and executing marketing activities, selling your product, making investments—is not so seamless because, by and large, Russian businessmen have not developed the competencies to compete on the higher strategic levels according to western business practices. The learning curve is extended because this “business intel” is just being learned, so presently the decision-making process is more intuitive than rational.

Consider this, before 2008 there was really no competition in the Russian market. Printers considered the technology the real differentiator; press performance and the vendor’s brand name were the key drivers of success and strategic investment decisions.

With the economic recession of 2008, and since, the printing industry in Russia has endured very hard times. Printers experienced an excess of production capacity at a time of suddenly reduced demand and, for the first time, were faced with real market competition. This—combined with the shift to the Internet, new media and digital printing—has led to printers, distributors and dealers in Russia beginning to change their ‘traditional’ way of doing business.

What potential customers really need is a consultant or sales team they feel comfortable with to show them a different approach for outmaneuvering the competition that will develop their local business faster. You can provide them with guidance in these three key areas:

- Know your product or service and how it meets the customer’s needs ‘locally.’
- Know your customer and identify what they really need to build their business ‘locally.’
- Show the value of your product or solution to the customer in a way they will understand from a local perspective to build the necessary level of trust into the sales channel. This will help determine how to align sales methods with the local decision-making process.

These guidelines will help you as you develop your individual business model and will allow you to operate directly, through your own sales office, agent or dealer network. Depending on your chosen strategy and anticipated return on investment, you will be able to arm your sales force with the right knowledge, tools and skills to achieve success.

First, to gauge the real market potential for your company and product, you’ll need to align the market data with your sales capacity. By investing more time and effort at the beginning, the risks and potential costs will be significantly less. As Jason Fried stated in his book, ReWork, “A business without a path to profit isn’t a business, it’s a hobby.”

Several major players already have offices in Russia, including Xerox, Kodak, Sun Chemical, DuPont, Canon, Konica-Minolta, Heidelberg, X-Rite, InfoPrint Solutions/Ricoh, HP and others. Following the example of RR Donnelley, which announced plans to establish a plant in Russia, more U.S. printers, including small and mid-size businesses, will open print facilities in Russia.

In December 2011, Russia became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which will help to eliminate many barriers. Now is the best time to enter the Russian and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) markets since in a year or two, this window of opportunity may well diminish as more companies enter the market.

The American Technology Print Center (ATPC) in Moscow was established in 2003 to help NPES members and representatives from other American companies come to Russia and Eurasian countries. While 2012 looks to be an important year for the printing and publishing industry in Europe, the center has already helped more than 30 American manufacturers and Russian distributors connect.

Now is a good time to develop a business in Russia and Eurasia as opportunities continue to open up for U.S. companies in the Russian market.

“Now is a good time to develop a business in Russia and Eurasia as opportunities continue to open up for U.S. companies in the Russian market.”
PRIMIR Announces 2012 Executive Committee

The Print Industries Market Information and Research Organization (PRIMIR) recently named its 2012 Executive Committee officers and members.

Eric Frank, Vice President of Marketing, KBA North America, Inc. was elected chairman. A graduate of Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Mr. Frank has more than 25 years of printing industry experience and is active in a number of industry associations.

Frances Cicogna, Manager of Product Marketing for Canon U.S.A., Inc., was named vice chairperson. Ms. Cicogna, with a 20-year career in the industry, previously held positions with Mitsubishi Imaging, Inc. and Agfa.

Other officers include William K. “Kip” Smythe, Vice President, Global Programs, NPES, who serves as the group’s president, and Jacqueline M. Bland, Managing Director of PRIMIR, who serves as the secretary of the Executive Committee.

Continuing members of the PRIMIR Executive Committee include: Andrew Gordon, 48HourPrint.com; Ludmila Gushina, Marketing Analyst, Sun Chemical Corporation; Gavin Jordan-Smith, VP, Production Workflow & Solutions LOB, Xerox Corporation; Mary Lee Schneider, President, Digital Solutions & Chief Technology Officer, RR Donnelley; and, Jennifer Young, Director of Marketing Services, Verso Paper Corp.

The PRIMIR Executive Committee, responsible for oversight of all aspects of the organization, is charged with balancing the needs of all interest areas within the membership of PRIMIR and NPES in the selection of research topics for the coming year.

For more information about PRIMIR, member benefits or upcoming research, contact Jackie Bland, PRIMIR Managing Director at e-mail: j bland@primir.org, or phone: 703/ 264-7200. Visit PRIMIR online at: www.primir.org.

Eric Frank

Trade Mission to Colombia and Brazil

SEPTEMBER 15-23
DEADLINE: August 1, 2012

The Latin American printing industry has experienced a period of growth and stability over the last 6 years. Despite the global financial crisis of 2009, an impressive recovery took place in 2010. Plus, in Brazil, trade mission participants will take in the Trends of Print Latin America conference for a hands-on local viewpoint of technical and market information and the very latest trends in the graphic communications industry worldwide. Join us in visiting two power printing nations!

HERE’S WHAT AN NPES TRADE MISSION CAN DO FOR YOU!

DELIVER a source of cost-effective primary market research
SERVE as a market-entry strategy for companies
EDUCATE export-ready companies to the realities of doing business in foreign countries
OFFER access to sources of experiential knowledge
FACILITATE dialogue between local firms, promising customers, or joint-venture partners
ASSIST in building relationships with foreign buyers and/or investors

For more information, contact Pernilla Jonsson, NPES Assistant Director-International Trade at phone: 703/264-7200 or e-mail: pjonsson@npes.org. We encourage you to apply for a visa as soon as possible. For Colombia visa information contact your local Colombian consulate. For Brazil visa information visit: www.travisa.com or your local Brazilian consulate.

Booth Space for NPES Members at drupa

Does your company still need booth space at drupa? Good news—some booths have opened up in the U.S. Pavilion.

For complete information contact:

Eva Rowe
312/781-5180
erowe@mdna.com
The Graphic Arts Education and Research Foundation (GAERF) announces the launch of the GAERF 2012 Student Design Competition, themed “Why Hire Me?” This fourth annual contest challenges participants to demonstrate their creativity and skill by creating a marketing campaign that positions themselves as the ideal candidate for a career they select in the graphic communications industry.

Each student will create a campaign to sell themselves in their selected career by developing an overall message, with text and graphics, designed to outdistance the competition and make their candidacy compelling to a potential employer.

The competition is open to all students attending secondary or post-secondary institutions in the continental United States who are studying in a graphic communications/printing, advertising, graphic design or interactive media program. Entries selected by GAERF will be judged by a panel of industry professionals.

First-place winners and their instructors will receive a two-day, all-inclusive paid trip to attend GRAPH EXPO in Chicago, IL. The winning students will receive an award of $2,000 presented during GRAPH EXPO’s Career Awareness Day, Wednesday, October 10, 2012. Second-place winners will be awarded $1,500, and the third-place winners will receive $1,000.

“GAERF is proud to continue its commitment to supporting education initiatives by encouraging creativity and self-expression in students through the art of design and production,” said GAERF President Ralph Nappi. “This competition will serve to recognize our best and brightest students, as well as the significant commitment of their instructors.”

For complete information about the GAERF 2012 Student Design Competition visit: www.graphicCOMMCentral.org or contact Eileen Cassidy, GAERF Director, at phone: 703/264-7200 or e-mail: ecassidy@npes.org.

The chart compiled from UCC data provided herein by Equipment Data Associates (EDA), shows up-to-date UCC (see definition below chart) activity for all printing equipment. Although UCC filings are a combination of new equipment sales, used equipment sales and re-financings of existing placements, they are still a strong indicator of market activity.

New equipment filings dropped significantly from 473 units in December 2011 to 278 units in January 2012, yet despite this drop, 2012 levels were slightly ahead of January 2011 levels. Used equipment filings continue to trend down compared to 2011 levels as January 2012 was down 20% from comparable 2011 levels. This information is extracted directly from EDA’s comprehensive database of nearly 30,000 records for purchasers of printing equipment.

For more information, or to join the free NPES Market Data program, contact NPES Assistant Director, Rekha Ratnam, at phone: 703/264-7200 or e-mail: rratnam@npes.org. For specific information about the market intelligence services offered by EDA, contact Mauricio Jurin at phone: 704/845-1099 or e-mail: mjurin@edadata.com.

A Uniform Commercial Code Form 1 (UCC–1) filing is a financing statement required by law to be filed with the state to show that one party (usually a lender) has a security interest in another party’s (usually a borrower’s) personal property, and most frequently relates to the commercial financing of capital equipment through a lending institution. UCC data is filed everyday throughout the U.S. Each UCC data filing statement has three components: the borrower, the lender, and what the borrower purchased, including make, model and serial number. Once the data is filed, EDA’s more than 50 employees manually review each filing to identify and correctly classify the transactions of printing equipment. What results is a robust database that offers subscribers continually updated information on exactly who is buying or leasing what pieces of equipment.
GAERF Ink Oil Studies Save Printers Over $80 Million

It’s a fact, empirical data developed by GAERF-sponsored environmental research projects conducted in the early-to-mid 1990s are estimated to have saved printers over $80 million in air emission compliance costs over the two decades since the studies were commissioned.

Funded by contributions from the Graphic Arts Show Company (GASC), the Graphic Arts Education and Research Foundation (GAERF) responded to the graphic communications industry’s need to substantiate the retention of petroleum ink oil in printed material during the printing and storage of sheet-fed lithographic prints and non-heatset web offset newsprint. This came in the aftermath of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, at a time when states were reviewing all sources of emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and fugitive sources of industrial emissions were under increased scrutiny.

The sheet-fed study, completed in 1992, verified that only 7% (with a margin of error of +/-4%) of the ink oil was lost in printing, with virtually no significant loss during storage. The non-heatset web project, completed in 1996, demonstrated that only 3.8% (+/- 3.4%) of ink oil was lost in printing on virgin newsprint, and less than .5% (+/- 3.5%) was lost in printing on recycled newssprint. And no evidence of ink oil loss was detected from either recycled or virgin newssprint during the first 20 hours after printing.

These results provided very valuable empirical data to support the 95% ink oil retention factor contained in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Control Techniques Guideline (CTG) for Offset Lithography. The EPA reported these results to the various states that were developing state implementation plans under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

The practical effect of this research is that thousands of printers have each been able to avoid thousands of dollars of needless air emissions permit costs."

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The studies were conducted by Battelle Laboratories, Columbus, Ohio, overseen by a special industry technical advisory committee chaired by Dr. Thomas Fadner, and managed for GAERF by Mark J. Nuzzaco, NPES Government Affairs Director. The Newspaper Association of America and Dow Jones Inc. collaborated with GAERF on the non-heatset web project.

For more information contact NPES Government Affairs Director Mark J. Nuzzaco at phone: 703/264-7235 or e-mail: mnuzzaco@npes.org. ●