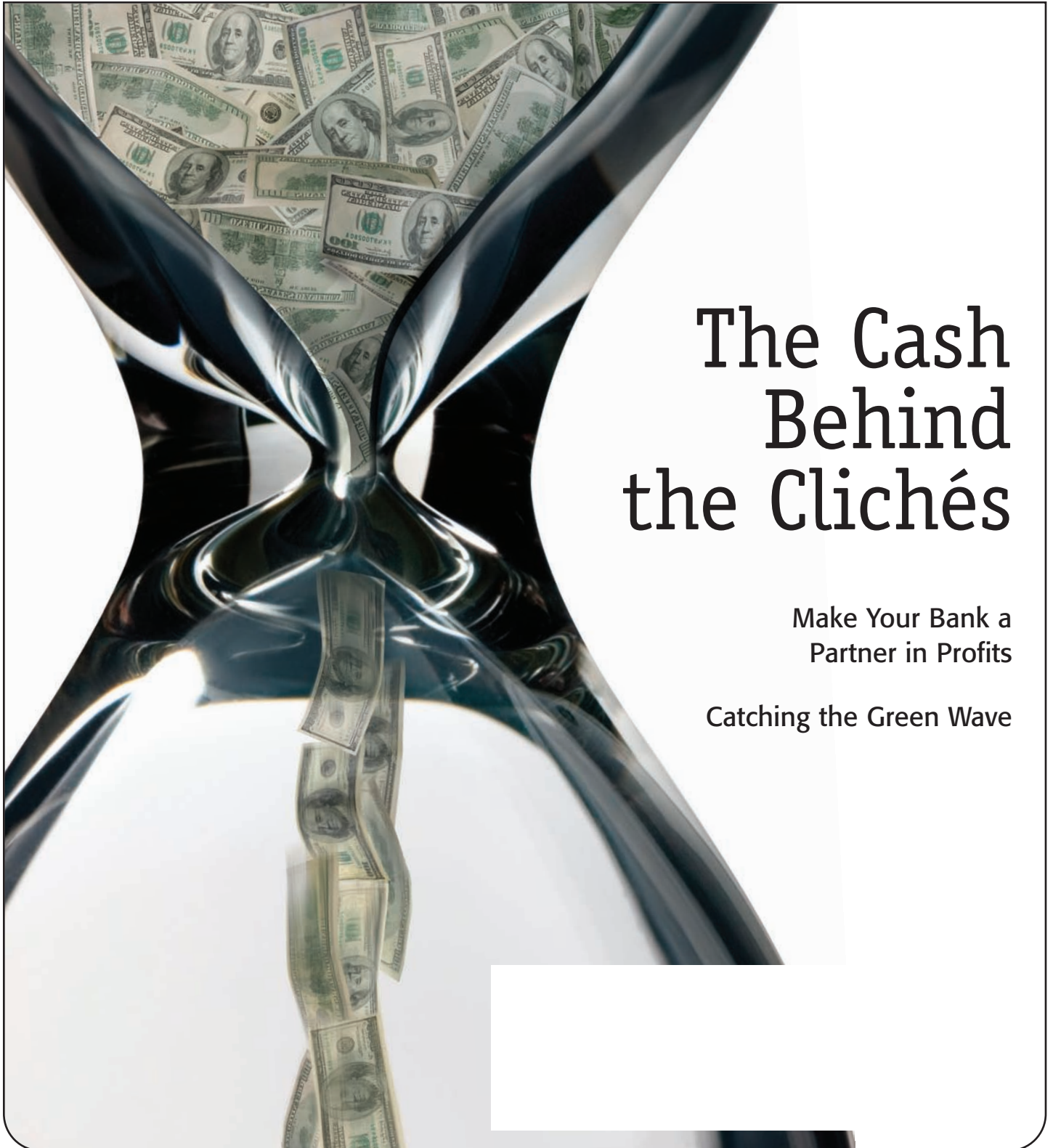


# REPRO REPORT

IRgA

Volume 26  
September/October 2007



## The Cash Behind the Clichés

Make Your Bank a  
Partner in Profits

Catching the Green Wave



# Building Information Modeling— Grow Your Business with On-Site Services

By Sal Sheikh, *VP Marketing*  
*Océ Wide Format Printing Division*

Your customers in the building industry are adopting digital technologies to improve the exchange of project information. Online project collaboration and digital plan rooms—and eventually Building Information Models—will be the main repositories for information sharing. More and more end users are determining for themselves where and what they want to have printed. Reprographers can expand their business by making it easy for their customers to:

- Compose print jobs for on-site printing and print outsourcing;
- Track printing cost for project cost control and reimbursement;
- Get print jobs finished instantly to speed up project cycles;
- Fulfill their printing needs in both monochrome and color.

Expand the footprint of your business and enter your customers' buildings with on-site services.

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Research shows that you can more easily grow your business with a customer once you are providing services on-site. That's one of the reasons for the significant growth we see in this market. The IRgA Operating Ratio Study shows that reprographers are already earning over 20% of their revenues from on-site services. What you need to succeed are

(1) a good understanding of your customers' needs and (2) a partner that can provide you with a wide range of flexible and reliable solutions accompanied by the right financial and support services.

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### ■ Be your customers' print button:

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### The Cash Behind the Clichés

Your repro firm can prosper by paying heed to some old sayings.

By Ed Avis

You've heard the sayings. "Time is money." "A penny saved is a penny earned." "You have to spend money to make money." These are all clichés, sure, but behind those clichés hide some cash-filled truths.



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### Catching the Green Wave

The reprographics shop of the future will be environmentally savvy.

By Ed Avis

Don't worry; this article isn't about hugging trees and saving the whales. Most reprographics shop owners are in business to make a living, not make a statement. But here's the deal: By being environmentally savvy, reprographics shops can make more money.



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### Make Your Bank a Partner in Profits

Cultivating a personal banker pays rich dividends.

By Phillip M. Perry

Say the word "bank" and most of us picture an imposing building with a bunch of faceless tellers. For a successful reprographics business, though, a bank is more than a place to deposit receipts and cash checks.



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## A Clear Path to the Future



Bryan Thomas  
President  
2007-2008

Bryan Thomas is president of Thomas Reprographics in Richardson, Texas. He can be reached at 972/231-7227 or [bryan@thomasrepro.com](mailto:bryan@thomasrepro.com).

When I was elected to the IRgA executive committee four years ago, I thought it would be difficult to maintain a solid strategy with a management team that experiences a leadership change every year. My talented and dedicated predecessors and several volunteers took care of this issue. They developed a strategic plan that, in my own words, can be boiled down to three top priorities:

1. A continually improving Annual IRgA Convention & Trade Show;
2. A full-year of relevant and meaningful educational opportunities that reaches all levels of member companies; and
3. A long-term initiative to brand our industry to the architectural, engineering and construction (AEC) community.

*Well, your association is still committed to providing unbiased, all-inclusive industry education during and outside of the annual convention.*

### Continuous Convention Improvement

According to attendee evaluations from the last several IRgA annual conventions, we have significantly improved the convention experience, and the association will continue to mold the experience to fit the industry's needs as they arise.

### Yearlong Education

The idea of yearlong education is not new; it is just an area that we have

periodically underperformed. Twenty-eight years ago, I sat in the opening general session and watched my father, Bill, give a speech as the outgoing president of the International Repro Graphic Blueprint Association (IRGBA). Wondering how things may have changed over the years, I asked him a question that I knew he would be able to answer in detail. "Can you recall your top priority for the association in 1979?" Of course, after he finished laughing at my confidence in his memory, he was able to retrieve some valuable input from his mental archives.

He told me his top priority was making education available to the industry throughout the entire year. He said that during his presidency, industry techniques were changing and the IRGBA was the only resource for bringing the information to the masses.

Well, your association is still committed to providing unbiased, all-inclusive industry education during and outside of the annual convention. Just as we will continue to mold your convention experience to fit current needs, we will mold educational content and delivery mechanisms. Technologies such as Webinars allow us to break new ground. These will continue to be our main vehicle for taking education to the grassroots level in the reprographics world, and we will rely on each of you, through periodic educational needs assessments, to tell us what content you want to see. You are our customer, and we are listening.

Other items in the pipeline include new educational programs that will supplement our already successful mounting and laminating seminars, as well as an updated industry compensation survey and an ongoing industry trend and outlook report.

*Continued on page 19*

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IRgA Annual Convention  
& Trade Show

May 14-16, 2008

**IRgA**  
2008

# Industry Advocates Convince Adobe to Remove Controversial Print Link

By Steve Bova, CAE, executive director of the IRgA

Earlier this summer, FedEx Kinko's and Adobe announced that Adobe Reader 8.1 and Adobe Acrobat software would feature a connection to FedEx Kinko's Print Online functionality, allowing users to send documents for output to any FedEx Kinko's Office and Print Center in the US. Both products integrated a "Send to FedEx Kinko's" command option within the File Menu as well as a button on the main toolbar, setting off a maelstrom of controversy within the print community which has long supported and worked with Adobe.

The relationship between Adobe and the print community ultimately proved too valuable to Adobe, who recently announced that the FedEx Kinko's button will be removed from some of its current programs and

all future releases and is also offering instructions on its web site to disable the function from existing programs.

Just over two weeks after Adobe's announcement, leaders among the print community, representing thousands of printing and graphics companies, made their concerns known to Adobe leaders. The IRgA issued a breaking news story in the July issue of *News Digest*, addressing the impact that Adobe's business move was having on its own member companies and sharing some of the thoughts and opinions about this issue from its membership. See the IRgA's response below.

Adobe CEO Bruce Chizen met with several printing executives on July 17, at Adobe's offices in San Francisco, Calif. Among the chief concerns and criticisms of the print

community made known to Adobe were the same points brought forth by IRgA member companies, that:

- Aligning with only one provider as a means of offering these efficiencies gives FedEx Kinko's an unfair competitive advantage over its competitors and betrays the relationships that other print companies have with Adobe; and
- Many of our member companies have actively promoted the use of Adobe Acrobat products – and a PDF workflow – with their clients. It's a mistake for them to overlook our industry as an important customer and business partner.

Johnny Loiacono, Adobe senior vice president of the Creative Solutions Business Unit, also released a letter, responding that Adobe's intention was not to exclude or alienate print partners or inhouse print service providers but simply to create a more seamless process for customers who already print with FedEx Kinko's.

For now, the storm clouds have parted, and it is back to business as usual. Still, it leaves many questions unanswered about the changing nature of the industry and about the evolving competition that faces the print community and the IRgA's member companies.

As the leading association representing the reprographics industry, the IRgA welcomes your feedback on what we can do to respond to issues like these in the future and how to better address the increasingly complex needs of our membership.

As always, on behalf of the IRgA Board of Directors, I look forward to your input so the IRgA can deliver more value to you and your company. Please e-mail [info@irga.com](mailto:info@irga.com), or you may contact me directly at [sbova@irga.com](mailto:sbova@irga.com). ●

## Adobe Partners with FedEx Kinko's, the IRgA Responds

*Note: The below letter is the IRgA's official response to recently announced but retracted partnership between Adobe Systems Inc. and FedEx Kinko's.*

In early June, FedEx Kinko's and Adobe announced that Adobe Reader 8.1 and Adobe Acrobat software would feature a connection to FedEx Kinko's Print Online functionality, allowing users to send documents for output to any FedEx Kinko's Office and Print Center in the US. Both products have integrated a "Send to FedEx Kinko's" command option within the File Menu as well as a button on the main toolbar.

The IRgA has received some conflicting comments:

### Point:

- Aligning with only one provider as a means of offering these efficiencies gives FedEx Kinko's an unfair competitive advantage over its competitors.
- Many of our member companies have actively promoted the use of Adobe Acrobat products – and a PDF workflow – with their clients. It's a mistake for them to overlook our industry as an important customer.

### Counterpoint:

- Reprographers should see the opportunities instead of the threats, and think in terms of the existing relationships with our customers and what compels them to trust us.
- It's a free market economy and is indicative of where the industry is going. That's why reprographers need to buy into the concept of branding their unique expertise and capabilities to their customers. Competition has and always will be present. It's time we raise our own bar and deal at a higher professional level.



## Reprographers Gain Free Subscription to BERTL MegaNet Services

The IRgA has entered into an agreement with BERTL where all reprographics company members will receive access to the BERTL MegaNet service – an annual value of \$995 – for FREE. Members of the vendor community are not eligible to receive this free service.

BERTL is a research company that publishes a library of evaluation reports, comparative analyses and workflow solutions on copiers, printers, MFPs, production and workgroup scanners, wide-format devices, fax machines and color production equipment devices. The research reports and ratings are undertaken at BERTL's expense for the benefit of its worldwide subscriber base.

IRgA reprographer members will gain exclusive access to all BERTL services through one secure MegaNet log in. Members may use this service to evaluate digital imaging equipment and compare competitive devices. Members can access the new benefit from the members-only section of the IRgA Web site.

MegaNet provides access to a databank of product analysis reports, strategic guides, and specifications databases for the workgroup, production, and color market segments.

As part of the service, reprographer members will also get iTchat online magazine, which offers in-depth feature articles and interviews examining the digital imaging marketplace and solutions.

## Last 2007 Mounting & Laminating Seminar Offered in Canada

The IRgA, in conjunction with Drytac Corporation, is offering its last Mounting & Laminating Training Seminar of the year in Concord, Ontario, Canada, Oct. 18-19.

To register online, visit [www.irga.com/publications/mounting\\_laminating.cfm](http://www.irga.com/publications/mounting_laminating.cfm). For a PDF brochure and registration form available for download, visit [www.irga.com/publications/irga\\_m\\_1\\_hirez.pdf](http://www.irga.com/publications/irga_m_1_hirez.pdf).

## SRA and ERRA to Hold Joint Annual Convention

The Southeastern Reprographic Association (SRA), in conjunction with the Eastern Regional Reprographic Association (ERRA), will host its 2007 Annual Convention in Louisville, Ky., on Oct. 31-Nov. 2.

The convention features Vince Lombardi, Jr., as the keynote speaker and offers four, high-impact educational programs designed to help reprographers improve revenue streams in a changing industry. The presenters will offer expertise on the most requested topics of interest to reprographers and are all well-known leaders from within the reprographic community.

Educational topics include "Charging for Things Other Than Printing," "BIM – What Does It Mean To The Reprographer?," "Operational Efficiency/Workflow" and "Proper Training: Understanding and Managing Your Sales Force."

Trade show exhibit space is sold out to more than 35 nationally known suppliers that will be featuring machines, software, media and other vital products for the reprographic industry. Planned social events offer opportunities for networking with reprographers from 21 states. Activities include an outing to Churchill Downs. New this year is the live SRA Charity Auction, which will benefit the Wounded Warrior Project.

Visit the SRA Web site, [www.serepro.com](http://www.serepro.com), for convention information and registration materials. Contact Shirley Zawoyski at 630/351.2202 for additional information.

## Committee Volunteers Still Needed for 2007-08

The IRgA is looking for a few good men and women to serve the association in its expanded committee structure. Several members have come forth recently to serve the association, and we have put them to work. The IRgA has expanded the Education and Digital Services committees to include more member volunteers. As we prepare for our 2007-08 committee year, which began Aug. 1, we're looking to expand our committee structure to include more member volunteers on other committees.

Visit [www.irga.com/about/committees.cfm](http://www.irga.com/about/committees.cfm) for a list and description of standing committees. If you are interested in serving on an IRgA committee in 2007-08 and have not indicated your interest, please send an e-mail to Steve Bova at [sbova@irga.com](mailto:sbova@irga.com).

## Employees from an IRgA Member Win \$61.5 Million Powerball Jackpot

A group of current and former employees of Nukote International, a business in Bardstown, Ky., claimed a \$61.5 million Powerball jackpot prize. The cash option for the jackpot is \$28.5 million.



The story starts with a group of Nukote employees who pitched in \$1 a week for an office pool for the past nine years. The person in charge of the pool who buys the tickets usually makes photocopies of them for the employees at the office. However, some members of the pool have recently left Nukote. Several of them paid in advance to stay in the pool, and the pool's numbers were e-mailed to them prior to each drawing.

Nukote International, an IRgA member, is a global leader in imaging supplies. The company, which is headquartered in Rochester, N.Y., provides a complete line of high-quality, affordable and environmentally friendly products for more than 30,000 imaging devices.

The winning ticket was sold on Sept. 24 in Bardstown at the 5 Star Food Mart. The ticket was a quick-pick, which meant the numbers were generated by computer and not selected by the player. The winning numbers were 25, 27, 31, 44 and 54 with a Powerball of 8.

The \$61.5 million jackpot, the sixth highest in Kentucky Lottery history, is the first Powerball jackpot won in Kentucky since July of 2003.

## Two Printing Companies Win the Gold Ink Awards

Printing Impressions and Publishing Executive magazines, sponsors of The Gold Ink Awards, announced two awards given jointly to xpedx and Cincinnati-based marketing strategy firm Kucia and Associates for excellence in print production quality and graphics.

Representatives from xpedx and Kucia and Associates received the awards at The Gold Ink Awards ceremony on Sept. 10 at Graph Expo 2007 in Chicago.

The competition, now in its 20th year, received more than 1,500 entrees in 50 categories submitted by printing professionals throughout North America. Awards are based on design and print production excellence. Criteria include difficulty of the job, appropriateness of paper used, uniqueness of finishing techniques, print quality and overall impression and aesthetic impact.

## Roland Employees Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity

Employees of Irvine, Calif.-based Roland DGA Corporation recently teamed with Habitat for Humanity of Orange County to help construct much needed affordable housing for local families.

The two-day company-sponsored volunteer project took place in August at Habitat's Fullerton, California job site, involving 28 employees from Roland's accounting, information systems, marketing and product management departments for both the Color Products and Advanced Solutions Divisions.

During the project, Roland employees assisted with plumbing and underground electrical installations, as well as various preparations required to install dry wall and attach roof trusses. Roland employees served along with the home owners who are required to contribute 500 hours of "sweat equity" to receive a home.



From left to right: Roland DGA Corporation employees Cindy Cao and Dede Logemann work together to reinforce an interior wall.

## News Bits

### Jane Hicks Joins Paradigm Imaging Group

Paradigm Imaging Group, Costa Mesa, Calif., a leading large format scanning and printing solutions company, announced the addition of Jane Hicks as a new member of the sales solution team.

Hicks will serve in the position of service contract sales. Hicks is a veteran of the large format scanning and printing industry and has many years of experience in various management positions.

Hicks has more than 18 years of experience in the industry. Her most recent position was with Graphtec America where she held various management positions in customer service and marketing. She also managed service contracts while at Ikon Office Solutions.

Paradigm Imaging Group is a large format solutions provider whose expertise extends from scanning and printing products to imaging systems integration, software development and product distribution.

### Ink2Image Launches Inaugural Web site



Ink2Image, a Glenview, Ill.-based distributor of digital inks, media, bulk-feed systems and related products to the photography and fine arts industries, has published its inaugural Web site at [ink2image.com](http://ink2image.com). Ink2Image is the exclusive North American distributor of Nazdar's LYSON branded products for the photography and fine arts markets.

Ink2Image.com was designed for simple navigation. It includes detailed product and pricing information, dealer listings and support information. New products are featured prominently on the home page, facilitating user access to breaking inkjet imaging technology.

### Institute Develops Thermochemical Nanolithography

Georgia Institute of Technology created a technique called Thermochemical Nanolithography that heats up polymer film with a silicon tip to make hydrophobic molecules hydrophilic. The process is said to be at least 10,000 times faster than currently used dip-pen nanolithography.

### Xerox Unit Acquires Marbaugh Reprographics

Global Imaging Systems, a fully owned subsidiary of Xerox Corp, announced that it acquired Indianapolis-based Marbaugh Reprographics Supply Company Inc for an undisclosed amount.

Marbaugh Reprographics Supply currently provides sales and service of Oce and Xerox copiers, besides offering scanning, printing and reprographics services, Global Imaging mentioned. Marbaugh Reprographics Supply will offer a wider range of Xerox products after the acquisition and its former co-owner Brad Clough will continue as vice president and general manager. Global Imaging was acquired by Xerox for \$1.5 billion in May this year.

### New Printing Process Prototype Makes 60 Nanometers and 100,000 dpi Possible

GraphicsArtsOnline reports that researches from IBM's Zurich Research Lab and Switzerland's ETH Zurich science and technology university developed a printing process prototype that arranges particles as small as 60 nanometers, yielding 100,000 dpi.

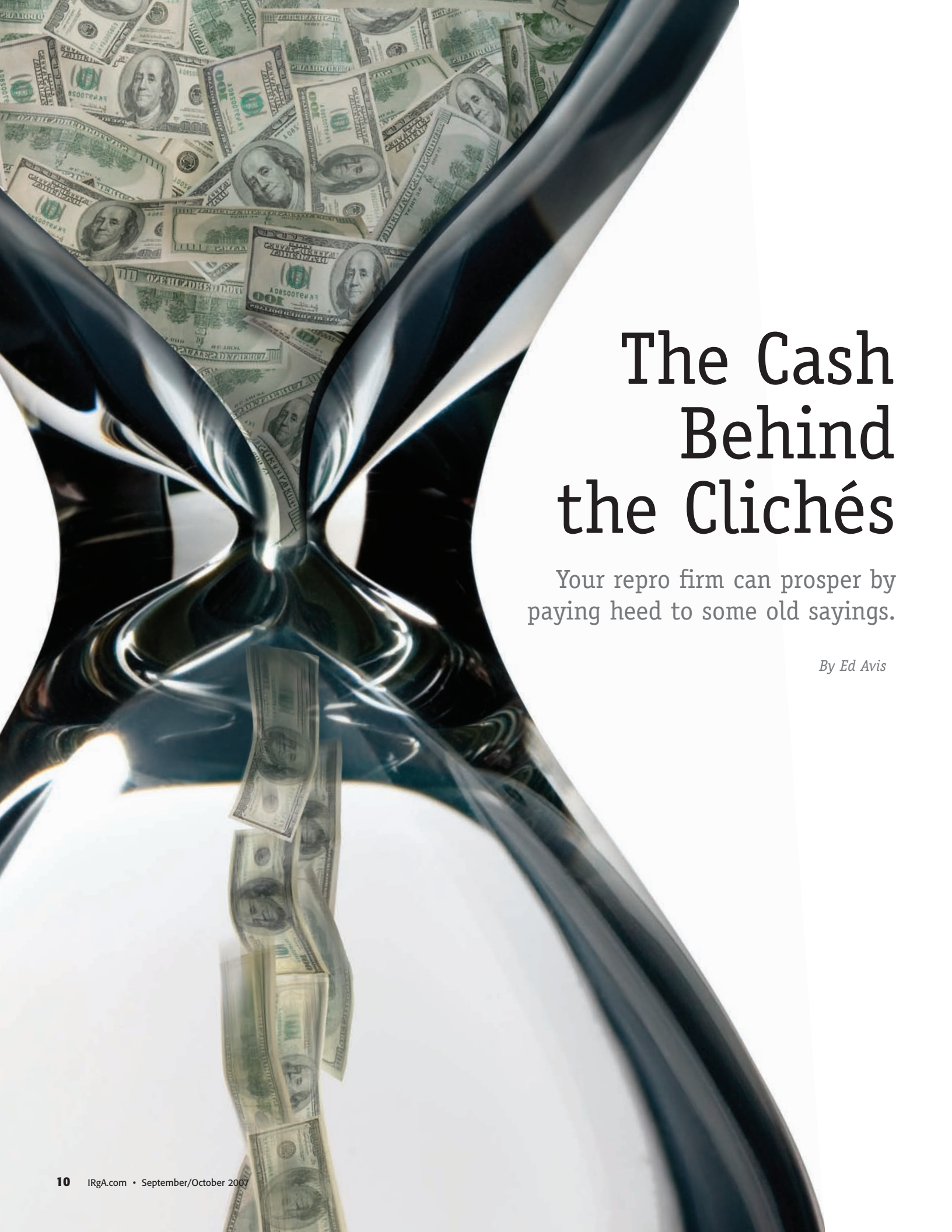
### International Paper's xpedx Business Completes Acquisition of Central Lewmar

International Paper (NYSE: IP) has completed the acquisition of Central Lewmar LLC, one of the largest privately held paper and packaging distributors in the United States, from Philadelphia-based private equity firm Chrysalis Capital Partners, Inc. On Aug. 13, the company announced it had signed an agreement to acquire Central Lewmar for approximately \$185 million.

International Paper's distribution business, xpedx, will operate Central Lewmar as a business unit within its multiple brand strategy. xpedx is one of North America's largest business-to-business distributors.

The acquisition supports the xpedx strategy to strengthen its distribution business in North America and will further enhance the company's position in the distribution solutions market.

Do you have news? **REPRO REPORT** wants to hear from you! Send updates about your awards, acquisitions, personnel or new locations to Dennis Coyle, managing editor, [dcoyle@irga.com](mailto:dcoyle@irga.com).



# The Cash Behind the Clichés

Your repro firm can prosper by paying heed to some old sayings.

*By Ed Avis*

**Y**ou've heard the sayings. "Time is money." "A penny saved is a penny earned." "You have to spend money to make money."

These are all clichés, sure, but behind those clichés hide some cash-filled truths. Smart reprographics shop owners know that heeding those old sayings, and applying them to their businesses, can pay off.

### **Cliché 1: Time is Money**

Here's the fundamental truth behind that saying: A dollar today is worth more than a dollar tomorrow. Why? A dollar today can be put to work for you, it can earn interest, it can be invested, it can be used to pay employees or bills or shareholders. A dollar coming tomorrow, or some time in the future, can't be used for any of those things. It's just a promise, a hope.

If you do a lot of cash sales – like Kinko's does – you're getting your money the moment you do the work. Beautiful! But if you're like most reprographics shops, your cash business is small compared to the amount of work done on credit (that is, work you're sending invoices out on).

There's an important financial ratio that banks use when they're trying to determine your creditworthiness. It's called the Days Sales Outstanding Ratio. This ratio shows the bank how quickly your invoices turn into dollars. The formula is (Accounts Receivable/ Total Credit Sales) X Days (in the period you're measuring, generally 365 days, one year).

Let's say the accounts receivable from XYZ Blueprint's balance sheet on Dec. 31, 2006, is \$100,000, and the total credit sales for 2006, from their income statement, is \$600,000. Using the formula:

$$\text{DSO} = (\$100,000/\$600,000) \times 365 \text{ days} = 60.83$$

This means it takes XYZ an average of 60 days to collect on its invoices. The company's normal terms are probably 30 days, so its customers are paying 30 days late.

So what, you say? They eventually get their money, right? Not really. If every

one of XYZ's suppliers let the company pay in 60 days without penalty, it wouldn't matter that XYZ's clients pay in 60. But most of its suppliers – and certainly not the employees – won't let the company wait that long. Some want cash. Others want their money in 30 days, most well before 60 days.

This means that XYZ is putting money out to pay its bills BEFORE it has collected the money needed to pay those bills. How does it do this? By borrowing money, of course. Maybe it's not coming from a bank – money that is taken from cash reserves, or the owner's wallet or credit cards. Regardless, it all costs money to use. In each case, XYZ will pay interest – or lose interest it could have earned – on that money.

Let's say XYZ has an operating line of credit at 6 percent from the bank. This means that every month the company is paying 1/2 of 1 percent of the total of any outstanding balance on the line of credit.

We saw from the balance sheet that XYZ made \$600,000 of sales on credit. If the firm's normal profit is about 10 percent, the company will earn a \$60,000 profit on those sales, right? Wait a minute. In order to produce that \$600,000 in sales, they needed \$540,000 (they have a 10 percent profit margin, remember?). Where did that cash come from? From the line of credit. Since the money is coming in an average of 60 days after the sale is made and XYZ is paying its own bills in an average of 30 days, the company needs to borrow each one of those dollars for 30 days. XYZ is paying 6 percent annual interest on that – or 1/2 percent per 30 days. So that \$540,000 costs them \$27,000 in interest.

Suddenly that \$60,000 in profit shrinks to \$33,000 in profit. Ouch! All because XYZ's customers pay slowly.

So, time really is money. The cliché is proven.

The question becomes, then, how can you get your clients to pay faster? It starts with an attitude that every single day counts. Each day a bill is not paid, you are paying interest on that money. Anything you can do to speed

up a payment, even by a day or two, puts money in your pocket.

Imagine if XYZ Blueprint persuaded enough of its customers to pay their bills a few days quicker than the Days Sales Outstanding ratio went from 60 days to 45 days. Suddenly XYZ would only have to pay \$13,500 in interest, and the firm's profit would jump by that amount. Not too shabby!

Here are some ideas to get your customers to pay more quickly:

#### **1.) Learn their rhythms and personnel and policies.**

Do they pay bills every other Friday? Then make sure your invoice is there the day before. Do they want three copies of each invoice sent to Jane Doe in accounting? Well, if you send one copy to John Doe in personnel instead, and it takes him a day to hand it over to Jane, and Jane takes another day to make the copies she needs, your bill will probably get paid two days later than it would have otherwise.

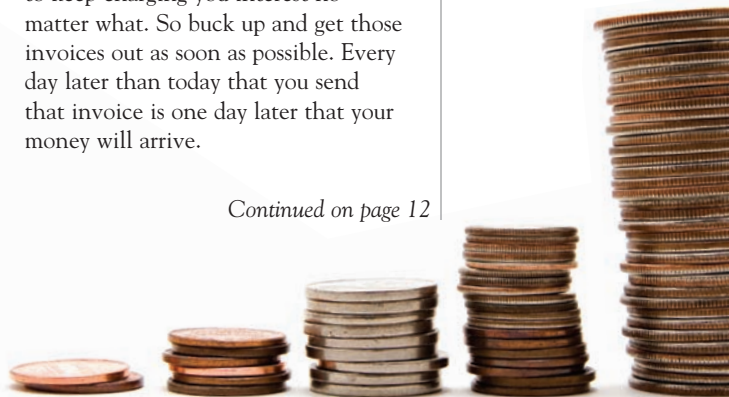
When you set up a new account, immediately ask who should get the invoice, what format they like, what address they want you to use, etc. Keep in mind, too, that some companies look for excuses to pay bills late. Don't give them easy excuses like using the wrong billing address!

Do they like to pay by credit card? Make it easy by putting a credit card acceptance form on each invoice. Better yet, persuade your clients to put a card on file, and automatically charge it the very day a sale is made.

#### **2.) Send invoices immediately.**

Are you tired at the end of the day? Well, the bank isn't, and it is going to keep charging you interest no matter what. So buck up and get those invoices out as soon as possible. Every day later than today that you send that invoice is one day later that your money will arrive.

*Continued on page 12*



**3.) Consider offering your customers an incentive to pay quickly.**

A good example is a pre-payment discount or a 2 percent discount if they pay within 10 days. You need to do your own math to decide whether giving the 2 percent discount is worth it, but if someone who normally pays in 30 starts paying in 10, that's nearly three extra weeks you have that money in hand. If someone who normally pays in 60 starts paying in 10, yahoo!



*Actually, a penny saved is a dime earned! That's right, if you're making a 10 percent margin, and you save one penny somehow, that's the equivalent of having made a 10 cent sale.*

Here's an interesting bit of math you can use to convince your clients that the 2 percent/10 day deal is good for them. If they don't pay in 10 days, they are paying the equivalent of 36 percent interest on the money. How's that? Well, if they don't pay in 10, they're keeping their money an extra 20 days. For that privilege, they're paying 2 percent of the total bill. There are 18 20-day segments in a year, so if you extrapolated that 2 percent over the whole year, it would be 18 times 2 percent equals 36 percent.

**4.) Be persistent about collections.**

Here's another cliché at work: The squeaky wheel gets the grease. At SBD Reprographics in South Bend and Merrillville, Ind., they use a rigid schedule to remind clients about overdue bills.

"At 60 days we send out our first letter, with a smiley face on it," explains Dan Nicksic, SBD's director of operations. "At 90 days we call on the phone. And at 120 days we send a registered letter, without any smileys."

After that, the bill goes to a collector. Nicksic says only one in 300 invoices ends up in collection and about half of those eventually pay up.

The key to making a collections system work is consistent timing, Nicksic says.

"If you're on the schedule it works a lot better. That has to be automatic. You'll have exceptions here and there, such as for customers you see every day. But you have to be on a tight schedule for most of them," he says.

**Cliché 2: A Penny Saved is a Penny Earned**

Actually, a penny saved is a dime earned! That's right, if you're making a 10 percent margin, and you save one penny somehow, that's the equivalent of having made a 10 cent sale.

The key thing to remember about saving money is that money not spent goes right to the bottom line. You're probably more excited when someone orders \$1,000 worth of prints than when you find \$100 worth of savings somewhere. But in the end, they're equal transactions from a financial standpoint, because the \$1,000 sale is going to require \$900 worth of labor, materials and overhead to get done.

Some tips for saving dough:

**1.) Ask your employees for ideas, and then give them a cut of the savings.**

Your employees are on the front lines of production, sales, customer service, etc. They're probably better able to see wasteful practices than you are. Tell them for every idea they submit that saves money, you'll give them half the savings for the first month or two.

**2.) Look beyond the obvious.**

Obvious savings can be found in cutting hours, finding a cheaper courier or refilling toner cartridges. Less obvious savings might be in energy costs – can you replace incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescents, or trade in your delivery truck for a hybrid car, or turn down the air conditioning or heat? Or what about offering comp time to employees

instead of overtime pay? Or finding a waste hauler who will take your recyclables for free? Dig deep.

**3.) Don't overlook the small stuff.**

Just like every day counts when you're sending out invoices, every dollar counts when you're cutting costs. It might save you just a quarter roll of laminating film a day to gang up your laminating jobs, but that's more than a roll a week. Turning off the ignition in your delivery vehicle when it's stopped at a client's office might save just 50 cents of gas per day, but that's \$150 a year. Find 20 small things like that, and you've added \$3,000 to your bottom line.

Brett Scully, chairman of eBlueprint in Cleveland, Ohio, says they recently dug deep into their books and discovered some surprising savings. For example, they learned they spend \$8,000 a year having their carpets cleaned in their seven locations. That in itself was no big deal – the shocker was that some stores were paying twice as much per carpet as other stores, even though they were all using the same cleaning company.

They also discovered that they were paying to have 15 carpets in their main location cleaned during the summer, even though they could easily get away with having just five cleaned.

"We changed those things and saved \$4,000," Scully says. "We're still digging, and it's amazing what we've found."

**Cliché 3: You Have to Spend Money to Make Money**

OK, so this sounds like it contradicts cliché 2, and it does. But the point here is that sometimes spending a little money that seems unnecessary at first actually pays off in the long run.

Two examples:

**1) Technology.**

Maybe today most of your work still comes in through the front door, but it's likely your competitor has an online job submission system. If you think spending money on something like that is wasteful, you might find yourself on the sidelines.

The reprographics industry is loaded with success stories of people who invested early in technology and beat their competitors – consider the shops that first invested in xerographic copiers, color inkjet printers or mounting/laminating equipment. These shops took a leap, but many of them lead the industry now.

**2) Marketing.**

This is a terribly tempting area to ignore, because the results from advertising and marketing are usually hard to quantify. But you've probably heard this saying, "What happens when you don't advertise? Nothing." You don't want nothing to happen; you want customers coming in the door. You can have the best

equipment, personnel and prices in the market, but if no one knows about them, you'll soon be out of business.

Spending wisely on marketing is the key, and to do that you need to try to measure the success of the marketing methods you use. Start asking your customers how they heard about your shop – Yellow Pages? newspaper ad? word of mouth? website? Keep track of which of these works and which don't, and then invest more money in those that do.

Just like in saving money, look beyond the obvious in your marketing plan. Try holding a wine and cheese party for your clients – current and potential – when you develop a new service or

hire a new manager. It might cost \$300 in wine and snacks, but it's a great way to develop future business. Or try sponsoring an event, or a local baseball team, or a charity. And definitely send press releases to the newspaper whenever you do anything interesting.

Money spent on marketing, done well, is money well spent.

These tips won't suddenly make your repro shop successful, but hopefully they'll bring in a few more dollars and help you hold on to them a bit longer. ●

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*Ed Avis is a freelance business writer in Oak Park, Ill. He welcomes your input at edavis@marionstreetpress.com.*

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# Catching the Green Wave

The reprographics shop of the future will be environmentally savvy.

*By Ed Avis*





*Note: Ed Avis founded Modern Reprographics magazine and writes often about how green issues affect reprographics. This article is the first of an ongoing series focusing on green issues related to the reprographics community.*

Don't worry; this article isn't about hugging trees and saving the whales. Most reprographics shop owners are in business to make a living, not make a statement. But here's the deal: By being environmentally savvy, reprographics shops can make more money.

Reprographics is flying under the radar of most green advocates. When Al Gore talks about the world getting hotter, he doesn't blame wasteful blueprinters. Green Peace isn't picketing in front of reprographics shops. No one is going to force you to be green.

But I'm willing to bet that your shop will become green in the next five years. Some repro shops will go green solely because the owner thinks it's the right thing to do, but most will do it because of a combination of environmental awareness and smart business.

If your shop is like most, architects are your biggest customers. Architects have this thing going called Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, LEED for short. You've probably heard of it. LEED is a massive set of guidelines that direct architects, builders, developers, etc., in making buildings that are environmentally sound, use less energy, and create a healthy work and living environment. The program is run by the U.S. Green Building Council, a non-profit, non-governmental group that advocates green building.

Creating a building that meets LEED specifications is a big deal. It takes a lot of time and energy, but the resulting buildings are highly desirable.

So, your biggest clients are on the cusp of the green wave. They love the green, probably more than any other profession.

Don't you see the competitive advantage to doing something that your biggest clients like?

I recently interviewed Rod Bice, owner of Engineering Supply & Imaging in Holland, Mich., who decided in late winter that he wanted to go green in a big way. He found a solid supplier of recycled xerographic bond—National Azon—started recycling his waste more efficiently, and generally made an effort to be green. This wasn't easy – he had to stock a whole new set of SKUs, he had to market his greenness, and he had to pay attention to a new aspect of business that he didn't worry about before.

But it's already paying off. He told me that his architecture clients are delighted to learn he's offering recycled bond.

He recently bid out the imaging work on a large pharmaceutical plant. The other shops bidding on the project came in lower, and he was told he wasn't in the running. He said, "Fine, but by the way, I can do this on recycled paper." Guess what? They told him to rebid it recycled, and he was suddenly back in the running for the job.

This shop isn't the only green repro shop in the country, but it's one of the few. And for now, it's the only one in his market. So he's snapping up the work from clients who care about the environment.

Now, offering recycled paper is not the only way to be green. And, as a matter of fact, printing engineering documents on recycled paper is not even mentioned in the LEED specs.

What else can a shop do to be green? I spoke to another reprographics shop owner who wanted a competitive edge and, seeing how big green is, decided to start a recycling program for his clients. Now when he makes deliveries, he also picks up the waste paper his AEC clients have piled up for him. He brings it back to his shop, and once a week a recycler picks up the whole heap from him. It doesn't cost him a penny — and in fact it might make a little money if he gets his volume up high enough — and his clients love having the stuff hauled away.

Other green ideas: Use recycled everything, from paper to toner cartridges to equipment parts. Adopt more energy efficiency in your office, from turning down the thermostat in winter to using more compact fluorescent lights. Switch your delivery vehicles to alternative fuel. Train your salespeople to sell more double-sided prints. Recycle the cores on your spent rolls of paper. The ideas are truly endless.

*Some repro shops will go green solely because the owner thinks it's the right thing to do, but most will do it because of a combination of environmental awareness and smart business.*

Are you wondering where your next competitive edge will be coming from? Green might be the answer. Or maybe it will be the answer for your competitor. Can you afford to wait and see?

Future articles on green topics will discuss these issues more in depth. Look for articles about:

- The sources and quality of large-format bond with recycled content, and the LEED issues surrounding it.
- Making "green" an integral part of how you do business, and how this can help you find and retain great employees.
- Marketing your greenness in clever ways, to the AEC community and others who care about green.
- Developing recycling programs for your shop and your clients, for paper, toner and inkjet cartridges, computer equipment, and other materials.
- What LEED is, why it's important to the AEC community, and how you can profit from being LEED-savvy. ●

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*Ed Avis is writing The Green Reprographics Handbook. He welcomes your input at [edavis@marionstreetpress.com](mailto:edavis@marionstreetpress.com).*



# Make Your Bank a Partner in Profits

## *Cultivating a personal banker pays rich dividends.*

By Phillip M. Perry

Say the word “bank” and most of us picture an imposing building with a bunch of faceless tellers. For a successful reprographics business, though, a bank is more than a place to deposit receipts and cash checks. Indeed, if money is the lifeblood of your shop, your bank is the beating heart that will keep you healthy and vigorous in good times and bad.

Many banks used to prefer to work with large corporations. Their services and fee structures were geared to companies with millions in cash flow. They served the small business market out of necessity. Now, however, banks see the value of courting small businesses. They have developed programs and account options now cater to clients like independent reprographers.

“Banking today goes far beyond its traditional role as a source of loans,” says Marilyn J. Holt, principal of Holt Capital, a Seattle-based investment advisory firm. “A good banker is involved with all of the movements of your money and will guide you into the best financial programs so you get the most return on your funds.”

Even more, says Holt: Good bankers will save you money in service fees, assess the credit worthiness of your prospective customers, and advise you on your business health based on your cash flow, balance sheets, assets, receivables and payables. They will also be the knights in shining armor that facilitate transactions critical to your success. For example, they can arrange for fast wire transfers to fund serendipitous buys. At a higher level they can finance your purchase of a competitor when the opportunity arises.

Finally, bankers can enhance your business opportunities by capitalizing on their personal contacts. “Bankers are plugged into the community whether that be of the business or geographic kind,” says Mary Adams, principal of Trek Consulting, Winchester, Mass. “They can be great sources of contacts.”

### **Get Personal**

So bankers are great. All you have to do is call them and ask for the service you want, right?

Wrong. To get the job done you need to lay the groundwork by cultivating a personal relationship with your banker, who needs to know and trust you before offering services. “Banking is a people thing,” says Holt. “Like so many other aspects of business it thrives on human interaction. Companies start trending in the wrong direction when they think all they have to do is sell product and not talk to anybody.”

Of course, getting up close and personal with your banker takes some work. Remember that a banker has hundreds of customers, so don’t wait for your banker to call you. “It’s important to be proactive,” says John McQuaig, managing partner of McQuaig & Welk, the Wenatchee, Wash., based management consulting firm. “That alone will put you ahead of 90 percent of the banker’s customers.” Make a real effort to heighten your profile by presenting your banker with a clear vision and business plan as well as updates on your financial status and of changes in your business and industry.

## Choose Your Partner

But wait: What bank do you pick? How about that huge national corporate bank in the big building downtown? After all, it has a small business department. Or maybe that community bank with a corner branch. Those people must know your town pretty well.

Fact is, either might do the job. "It's not so much the size of the bank that's important, but rather the size and nature of the client it targets," says Holt. "First, you want to pick a bank that specializes in small business. Second, you want one familiar with your industry. Finally, you want to be sure to get the basket of services you need."

It can be advantageous to bundle as many services into one financial institution as possible. This will save you overhead since you will not have to juggle reports from various sources. And a bank will value you as a customer more highly if you are utilizing their services in addition to their low margin lending activity.

Draw up a short list of likely prospects by chatting with other business owners. What banks are they using and how do they feel about the services provided? You can also get leads from bank representatives who attend your area's business round tables and networking events.

Once you have two or three likely candidates visit the small business banking department of each and assess the quality of their operations and the basket of services they offer. Look at these areas:

- Client profile. Every bank has a favored business customer profile in terms of size and nature. "For a good relationship you need to conform to your bank's management philosophy," says Adams. "Sometimes people call this 'sitting inside the box.' The idea is that you have to sit inside the box or bank doesn't like you. This is reality." Some banks cater to large corporations and shunt aside smaller operations. Others have vigorous, enthusiastic small business departments which may target manufacturing, distribution or retail clients. Is there a spot for you in the bank's target picture?
- Appearance. How well is the bank physically maintained? "If the small business department looks as if they fired everyone and has empty chairs and empty desks, ask what happened," suggests Holt. "The disarray may indicate the section is on the way out."
- Enthusiasm. Representatives should be eager to convince you they want your business and should give you their direct telephone numbers.
- Stability. How long has your representative been at the bank and in the small business department? While you're at it, ask about the longevity of the other representatives. If the bank is changing people every three months, that's a red flag. On the other hand some degree of turnover is likely so you want to make sure the bank has an organized way of transferring clients to new representatives. Holt suggests asking "If you leave, what happens?" Then see how self-assured they are as they describe the process.

- Clues about future direction. Caution! Banks often undergo changes in terms of their favored client categories. Be alert for statements that the bank is reassessing its customer base or undergoing a merger. Either event can result in some clients being cold-shouldered or having credit lines frozen.

## Choose Your Partner

Choosing the right bank is not enough. You also must be proactive in interviewing and selecting a personal banker. "You need to realize that the teller is not your banker," says Holt. "Don't be fooled by the 'merchant teller' sign over the window that's not their business banking section. That is just someone who can use a coin counter and process credit card receipts."

*"First, you want to pick a bank that specializes in small business. Second, you want one familiar with your industry. Finally, you want to be sure to get the basket of services you need."*

In contrast, a personal banker will take a real interest in your business and know your operation inside and out. That can translate into real benefits. First, when it comes time to borrow money you will get the red carpet treatment. Second, you will benefit from ongoing analysis of your cash flows and asset levels.

Finally, a personal banker will give you a "heads up" when changes are afoot. For example, you will get an advance warning when your banker is about to leave. That happens often in many small business banking departments where representatives are transient. "These departments are often filled with younger people earning their MBA's," says Holt. "After doing back office work they have moved into this area for two or three years. Other times these individuals are bankers who are spending the last few years of their career and they really love small business."

In either case, says Holt, you want to make sure you are told when your banker is about to leave and you want a warm hand off to the replacement. Without this comfortable transition your carefully built relationship can collapse like a house of cards. That can be dangerous when a new personal banker does not understand your business and restricts your credit at a time when you may need it most.

## Communicate Well

As with any good relationship, you want to share your thoughts with your banking partner. "Trouble arises when there is a lack of forthright communication, and therefore misunderstanding, between banker and client," says McQuaig.

*Continued on page 18*

“You want to be upfront and candid with your banker. ‘Transparency’ would be a good word. Remember that your banker is not someone to be scared of.”

Develop a clear vision and a fairly simple business plan then talk about them with your banker. “If you want to triple sales in the next five years your banker should know that,” says McQuaig. “Then you can determine what your financing will need to be.”

Good communication takes several forms. First is your business information packet with financial reports in whatever form the bank wants, delivered monthly or quarterly. Ask what a good report looks like and what your banker expects in terms of details. Second is the conversation about your individual business goals and how that fits into the larger picture of changes underway in your industry. Third is early notice of the inevitable “hiccups” that occur and can affect your financials and your bank relationship.

That last item is particularly important. “When a problem arises you typically have two conflicting goals,” says Adams. “You probably want to inform your banker as quickly as possible so you are not bringing old news. However, you do not want to arrive with a problem absent a solution.” You don’t want to leave it up to the banker to develop a solution and take it to management. “This can be bad for two reasons,” says Adams. “First, the solution may not be the right one for your business. Second, the fact they have to think through the problem will make you look like a less worthy borrower.”

Bad things, of course, do happen to good businesses. While from time to time you will need to present an unexpected problem and suggested solution to your banker, for the most part you should avoid surprises.

“Any surprise is bad for a banker,” cautions Adams. “Even if it’s a good surprise bankers worry that if they were surprised by something good they could be surprised next time by something bad.”

### **Listen for Changes**

Keep your ear to the ground by reading regional business papers for news of your bank. Are new executives being installed? Any merger rumors flying? If your answer is “yes” to either, your business risk is substantially increased. Try to find out if the new executives are bringing along a new set of priorities and a new philosophy in terms of favored customer size and specialty. If they can’t see you in their picture you may find yourself gradually eased out and ignored in terms of services and favorable pricing.

If a merger is in the works you should be even more alarmed. “If you get word that your bank is being bought

make sure you are not drawn down on your revolving line of credit and be careful you understand your draw down cycles,” warns Holt. “If you look like an undesirable client in the eyes of the new bankers you can be put into bankruptcy when they freeze your credit.”

### **Take Action**

It’s risky to let your bank relationship slide. Just having a “go to” person for your money is reason enough to attend to your banking relationship. “Money is the blood in the veins of your business,” says Holt. “If you don’t have someone watching what is going on and working with you, you can get into trouble quickly.”

Above all, recognize that your banker is your ally, friend and partner. “Bankers are very much like pets that require care and feeding,” says McQuaig. “If you don’t take care of them they won’t be there when you need them. . . and you never quite know when that will be.” ●

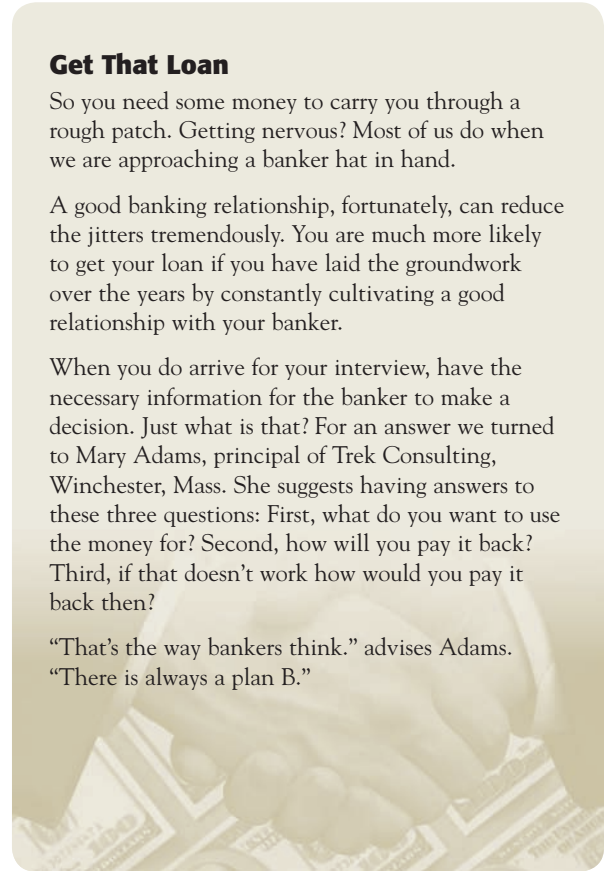
### **Get That Loan**

So you need some money to carry you through a rough patch. Getting nervous? Most of us do when we are approaching a banker hat in hand.

A good banking relationship, fortunately, can reduce the jitters tremendously. You are much more likely to get your loan if you have laid the groundwork over the years by constantly cultivating a good relationship with your banker.

When you do arrive for your interview, have the necessary information for the banker to make a decision. Just what is that? For an answer we turned to Mary Adams, principal of Trek Consulting, Winchester, Mass. She suggests having answers to these three questions: First, what do you want to use the money for? Second, how will you pay it back? Third, if that doesn’t work how would you pay it back then?

“That’s the way bankers think,” advises Adams. “There is always a plan B.”



# A Clear Path to the Future

Continued from page 19

## Branding Ourselves to the AEC Community

The results of our pre-branding surveys show that our customers are very familiar with where we are going but not nearly as familiar with where we are headed. This told me that I should probably head back to the archives for a little research. I found a relevant quote from none other than my father in an old issue of *Plan and Print* magazine, proving that our industry has been dealing with many of the same issues and perceptions for a very long time.

Referring to Pin Graphics in the article, Bill made the statement, "It can change the scope of our business – it involves more technology and more equipment. Instead of just being a print making service for architects, we can become consultants."

This was somewhat amazing to me that 28 years later, we as reprographic companies were working to position ourselves yet again as something other than just a print provider. Today, we all must work hard to prove the value of what our knowledge of the construction document process does for our customers. Whether it is our well-trained and knowledgeable employees or the construction document management solution in which we have invested, we want a return on that investment. The IRgA, through its branding efforts, is in an excellent position to help us move closer to our goal. The industry must be unified in its effort to convey this branding message to our customers, and the IRgA will be developing communication plans and channels for this purpose.

## Making it Happen

All of this truly relies on your continued support of the IRgA and participation in its activities. This year, the list of individuals volunteering for board positions and

committee roles was five fold that of previous years. For that, I express a sincere thank you! The area where we need additional assistance is in membership. We can accomplish this by communicating our goals better to the industry. Your board spends many days each year advancing the members' collective interests, putting their own self-interests on hold during that time. For that, I say thank you to each of them for their efforts. I challenge all of you, if only for a few minutes each year, to take off your company hat, put on your association hat and tell the IRgA story to someone out of the know. As a group, we can make a huge difference.

Some people have asked me, why are you so passionate about the success

of the IRgA? Or, with your busy schedule, why are you committing this extra time away from your growing family? The answer is direct and true: The reprographics industry is in my blood. It has been part of my personal, family and business life for as long as I can remember. I hold it dear to my heart as it, and its members, have contributed to shaping my individual character and values. Just knowing that makes me smile. I look forward to serving you as the 2007-08 president of the International Reprographic Association! ●

*Bryan Thomas is president of Thomas Reprographics in Richardson, Texas. He can be reached at 972/231-7227 or bryan@thomasrepro.com.*

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# DWF for Reprographers

By John Marquardt

**F**ile formats have always been a specialization for Reprographers – as a group, we’re really pretty good with them.

I suppose its mostly because our clients do not place the proper importance on selecting a format-standard. We have to correct various format-related problems to match the client’s wishes. Every client uses something different, and we are expected to jump back and forth effortlessly between TIFF, HPGL, DWG, etc...very often on the same plot job. DGNs from civil engineers; DWGs from architects; TIFFs from GCs; PDFs from interior designers.

*The more we know about (DWF’s) internal structure and maintain our curiosity about its capabilities, the better our organizations can use it and maybe more importantly, the more credibility we gain with our customers.*

Even the most common formats can be a challenge. I’m sure everyone who is reading this column has run into PDFs that they couldn’t process or at least too forever to process.

But for all our knowledge, the internal workings of a file are generally a mystery. Oh sure, every CSR knows the difference between raster and vector and which one of those a TIFF is, but they probably do not know the difference between compression types or have the experience or tool-set to find out what the Tags are inside that Tagged Image File Format.

I think we’ll find people know even less about the internals of the DWF format (originally Drawing Web Format, now Design Web Format). As a recent and more advanced format, it has the advantage of hindsight in its development so it is advanced and our interactions with it are abstracted even further than usual as a result.

For instance, just as an experiment, go around your office to the people who use DWFs the most and ask them if it’s a Vector or a Raster format. Ultimately, this is a trick question because, in reality, DWF is not really even an image format! It’s what we generally call a wrapper. The actual image content is inside this wrapper somewhere and for the most part any kind of data can be put in a DWF, even a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet which has nothing to do with images or graphics.

A DWF is really just a ZIP file with a pre-determined and consistent structure. Literally, you can open a DWF in WinZip (or rename it \*.zip and open it with the Windows extraction program) and navigate through the structure, see the raster, vector, and XML elements, etc.

The DWF/ZIP has an XML file called a Manifest that is stored in the root of the ZIP as manifest.xml. Among other things, this tells whatever is viewing the DWF what version it is, what program created it, and so on. It also acts as a table of contents to describe the locations of other data inside the wrapper, including 2D and 3D graphical elements, thumbnails stored as PNGs, etc.

There are also folders inside the wrapper that contain the actual images,

thumbnails and plotting information. Maybe one of the best features about DWF, though, isn’t the format itself, but rather the tools Autodesk has built around it. Specifically, Autodesk DWF Viewer, DWF SDK, and more notably Autodesk Freewheel (<http://freewheel.autodesk.com>) that is a Web-based DWF viewer that you can use without installing anything, just view your DWF on their Web page.

What’s even cooler is that you can deploy Freewheel on your own site and there are some mash-ups out there using Freewheel. A decent one to play with to demonstrate the power of Freewheel is CADoogle. It’s a screwed up name, I know, but you can enter a search term and this site will find and display any matching DWF in the Freewheel Web viewer. They even provide the HTML you would need to display any matching DWFs directly within any Web page. They also have RSS feeds and a mobile version. By itself, I know this is only so useful, but it might get the wheels turning about mash-ups or other services you could offer your customers.

DWF is one of the most flexible and powerful construction document formats currently out there, and its ability to store content in just about any form means that Autodesk has a nearly unlimited potential to extend the format. The more we know about its internal structure and maintain our curiosity about its capabilities, the better our organizations can use it and maybe more importantly, the more credibility we gain with our customers. ●

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*Formerly the IT manager for Engineering Repro Systems in Minneapolis, Minn., John Marquardt is an industry speaker and educator. You can reach him at [John@offblue.com](mailto:John@offblue.com).*

**FLEXcon's 70/30 Perforated Window Film Now Available from LexJet**

LexJet and FLEXcon have teamed up to offer FLEXcon's SEETHRU-SIGN STSWBF7030, a 7 mil printable white/black vinyl with a 70/30 perforation pattern. The 70/30 perforation is ideal when more print image is desired and less viewing from the outside looking in is preferred.

The 70/30 perforation pattern provides the ability to print high-resolution images and fine text for both wide-format and small-format applications. It is compatible with UV-curable, solvent, and low-solvent inkjet printers (excluding drum solvent inkjet printers), as well as UV and solvent screen printers.

SEETHRU-SIGN STSWBF7030 is now available and shipping from LexJet's nationwide network of distribution centers. Offered in 53-in. widths and roll lengths of 30 ft., 150 ft. and 300 ft., it can be ordered through LexJet's highly trained and knowledgeable staff of personally-assigned account specialists.

**GEI WideFormat to Distribute Seiko I Infotech Teriostars**

GEI WideFormat Solutions, a Visual Edge Technology Company, announced that it has received its first order of the Seiko I Infotech Teriostar family of LED products and has immediately started fulfilling orders to authorized GEI dealers. Seiko I Infotech-Americas and GEI have signed a strategic agreement whereby GEI will become an authorized distributor for this popular line of products throughout North America.

**ImageOne Impact Release Mobile Media Rack**

ImageOne Impact released the Heavy Duty Mobile Media Storage System (MR12). It can hold up to 12 two-inch core media rolls. It has all steel construction and a silver-vein powder coated finish with super extra heavy duty nylon casters for easy movement. It comes in a shipper friendly knocked-down format ready for easy, on-site assembly.

**Mark Bric Rolls Out the Big Fabric**

Mark Bric Display Corporation's Big Fabric is designed as part of the best-selling SnapUp line of products, this easy-to-use large display is designed specifically for wide-format fabrics that stay attached to the frame during set-up and breakdown.

The ultra-light Big Fabric is available in six, eight and 10-foot widths, opening to nearly 8 feet tall, and is available as components and accessories or complete with top-quality dye-sub fabric. The recommended fabric uses a dye sublimation process for vibrant colors with less glare, great washability and fewer wrinkles than most competitive products.

**Economy Pop Up Trade Show Booth From Drytac**



Drytac announced that its new Economy Pop Up Trade Show Exhibit is now available. Recommended for trade shows, conferences and similar events, the Economy Pop Up is based on a self-locking frame that sets up onsite in a matter of minutes. The lightweight aluminum system is engineered for stability and offers a solid framework for display graphics. The magnetic channel bars are pre-connected and clip securely to the tough nylon hubs. Graphics attach easily via magnetic strips.

Drytac is a manufacturer and distributor of mounting, laminating, framing and finishing materials, as well as finishing equipment, laminators, hot presses and accessories. The display division offers an extensive range of banner stands, portable displays and specialty exhibits. For more information, visit [www.drytac.com](http://www.drytac.com).

**Ricoh Launches Transaction Link Application for Sage Mas 90, Mas 200 Accounting Services**

Ricoh Americas Corporation recently introduced Ricoh Transaction Link, a document storage solution for accounting services. Targeted for small- to medium-sized businesses, Transaction Link enables users to streamline financial document processing while increasing productivity and compliance with regulatory requirements. Transaction Link currently supports Sage MAS 90 and MAS 200 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems and can be used with Ricoh's multifunctional products (MFPs) to easily integrate paper into workflow.

Transaction Link offers document management capabilities to enable quick and reliable search and retrieval. The solution provides reporting tools such as a missing document report for internal and external audit compliance to minimize the time employees must spend combing through paper files. The middleware is easy-to-install and can be deployed immediately since it is designed to integrate with existing business systems. Users can quickly master the program as it relies on familiar interfaces and commands of current accounting systems and Ricoh MFPs. Transaction Link optimizes document security by seamlessly utilizing existing Sage Software network credentials.

Sage MAS 90 and MAS 200 ERP systems are critical to the successful implementation of Transaction Link. The software offers solutions to aid in accounting, distribution, manufacturing and e-business management processes. Additionally, the Sage MAS 200 software acts as a client/server platform to efficiently distribute and support data integrity.

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### Océ Partners with DocuFORM to Introduce Océ VPConvert Software

Océ recently announced a strategic partnership with DocuFORM GmbH, a global provider of data conversion solutions. As a result of the alliance, Océ can offer customers the benefits of Océ VPconvert™, software designed to help them convert Variable Data Intelligent PostScript Printware (VIPI) data formats into industry-standard Postscript® language and PDF formats.

With new Océ VPconvert software, customers are no longer limited to a single workflow vendor – they are free to choose workflow options independent of the origin of the data stream.

The VIPI format is a page description language and data merge application based on PostScript language and used to migrate line printer applications to PostScript output, enabling the separation of variable and static parts of printed pages to produce personalized documents. However, for years, print shops have wrestled with the challenges of manually coding VIPI commands and programming VIPI jobs for production printing and publishing applications.

Océ VPconvert software transforms native, line and database mode VIPI print files seamlessly into PostScript and PDF formats, while maintaining all job ticket data. With this plug-and-play solution, users can directly print VIPI data streams without having to reprogram or rewrite the original VIPI application. As a result, customers who work with VIPI files no longer need to undertake expensive application redesign efforts to convert the files into another format.

Océ VPconvert software for Windows is scheduled for general availability in October 2007. Océ VPconvert software as an integrated component of Océ PRISMAproduction software is scheduled for general availability in February 2008.

### IDEAL Introduces Scanning System3



IDEAL.com introduces its Scanning System3. This system, which functions as a color copier, also enables network printing and facilitates internet collaboration of drawings. The system starts with any 36" or 42" IDEAL/Contex scanner model (system price depends upon scanner model chosen) and includes IDEAL's recently announced SFP353 adjustable scanner stand, JETimageNET scan to print software and a subscription to MyArchiveCenter.com, IDEAL's hosted online archiving and collaboration solution.

The SFP353 enables a 36" or 42" IDEAL/Contex large format scanner to "piggy-back" over a large-format printer to transform the scanner and printer into a "single-foot print" solution for scan-to-print and quick copy applications. The SFP353 stand is compatible with HP, Canon, Epson and other large format printers. It adjusts from 32" to 53" high and may be used as a traditional stand-alone scanner stand as well as the raised "piggy-back" format.

JETimageNET scan to print software can be used as copy software to send directly to the local printer, and it can also send scans to remote printers on the network, as well as scanning to file for archiving purposes. JETimageNET supports both color and black and white copying and scanning, with fast high-quality color-matched copies.

MyArchiveCenter.com offers a low-cost way to archive and back-up files as well as a fast and easy way to share and collaborate on drawings in a Level 3 secure environment. Server-side thin client ensures fast view of large scanned files on any internet browser.

The Scanning System3 is available through IDEAL's extensive dealer network.

### New Océ ColorStream 10000 Offers Exceptional Color Quality

Océ announced the worldwide debut of the Océ ColorStream 10000 continuous feed, full-color digital press at GRAPH EXPO. Developed specifically for the Graphic Arts market, the new Océ ColorStream 10000 press delivers full-process color with the quality levels required to meet virtually every color requirement.

Demonstrating Océ digital color leadership, the 172 images per minute (ipm) Océ ColorStream 10000 press can power through over 5 million full-color, letter-size images a month, making it one of the world's fastest toner-based full color presses. The heavy-duty continuous feed capacity can easily absorb the volume of multiple cut-sheet color printers. As a result, operations can consolidate their resources into fewer but more productive color devices with higher quality. With monochrome jobs running at 852 ipm and jobs that mix color and monochrome pages, the duty cycle goes even higher, providing the flexibility customers require.

The toner-based Océ ColorStream 10000 is designed to deliver the high quality color that Graphic Arts professionals expect. Further value comes from built-in Océ GraphicArts dot modulation for brilliantly sharp reproduction of both black and white and color images. Applications are enriched with crisp graphics and smooth gradations for line art, illustrations and photos. The imaging technique changes the dot size to achieve precise Graphic Arts quality. For completely controllable, customizable black and white output, Océ FlexiDark technology allows optical density to be adjusted according to the requirements of the application, while maintaining even coverage and perfect consistency. The tight continuous feed paper web ensures total media control and excellent registration on every printed document.

Early shipments of the Océ ColorStream 10000 are expected in the first quarter of 2008.



**Ricoh Introduces New Unit Dedicated To Production Printing**

Ricoh Americas Corporation recently announced the establishment of its Production Printing Business Group (PPBG), at GRAPH EXPO, which was held in Chicago in early September. PPBG was created to specifically focus on the unique, customer-driven requirements of data center, in-plant and graphic arts environments.

During the past several years, Ricoh has been preparing to enter the production printing market. Now, with a dedicated direct sales team, channel operations, and solutions engineers working to define, build, implement and support production solutions, customers have a new alternative as they evaluate vendor

offerings. A portfolio of proven, and evolving monochrome and color products, and best-in-class alliance partners enables PPBG to meet demands of production printing and publishing customers.

The development of PPBG began with the acquisition of Lanier in 2001, bringing with it an established direct sales and service organization. In 2004, Ricoh purchased Hitachi Printing Solutions, and its high-duty cycle, cut-sheet and continuous-feed manufacturing facilities. PPBG has built on the infrastructure of these acquisitions to establish a new organization focused on production printing. In conjunction with the recently formed InfoPrint Solutions Company, a Ricoh/IBM joint venture, Ricoh is positioned to provide customers with the broadest range

of solutions and services in the production printing market. PPBG will take an application-focused approach to the market, based on environment and industry. Understanding the unique requirements of production applications, leveraging evolving Ricoh and partner solutions and focusing on service excellence will be key leverage points for the new business group.

**3324 Aquajet Gandinnovations**

Gandinnovations introduced its first three-meter wide dye sub printer using specially in-house formulated, water-based dye sublimation inks that allows printing direct to any polyester base fabric and achieve vibrant colors that pop out. Special built-in infrared heaters allow the colors to pop out with no need for extra equipment for curing.

*Continued on page 24*

**MFP... Easy As 1-2-3!**

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**2 Pick a Printer and Put It Here**



Dell 3.0 Ghz HT Server Includes Upgraded Colortrac Software Package

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The Jet 3324 Aquajet features 24 Spectra water-based print heads available in six-color, 600-dpi resolution giving ultra real images that can compete with any high resolution printer in the market yet giving production speeds over 100 sqm./hr.

The Jeti 3324 Aquajet is fully equipped with an in-line retro fixation system that ensures dramatic colors and clean graphics on Polyester based fabrics, either knitted or woven, this process guarantees the prints are ready for wind-up.

**PIT Launches CH Series K Roll-to-Roll Printing Machine**

The latest innovation from PIT, the CH series K, is aimed at the roll-to-roll printer market, offering a new option for buyers looking for a high-speed, high-quality machine with flexible widths (1.8, 2.6 and 3.3 meters).

PIT CH series K features an arc shaped print bed which minimizes snagging of the print heads whilst maintaining a print head distance of 0.5 to 1.0 mm reducing displacement error of ink droplets.

Designed to have the best performance/price ratio in the market, the two-ton machine can be easily upgraded to 12 print heads with same day dispatch for spare parts if required.

Stable, high precision feeding is achieved using a high torque friction roller with an error parameter of less than 0.05 percent making it suitable for long images that require seaming. The solid structure of the machine ensure low mechanical deformation keeping parallels close to original standard over long operational periods.

Unique to the Jeti 3324 Aquajet is an integrated air cutter/slitter system made up of three high temperature-slitting units attached on the rewind rollers that allow you to slit and seal the fabric to the finished required sizes. To avoid any fumes the Jeti 3324 Aquajet has a built in venting system, and a separate Air Cleaning Unit included with the printer. The beveled media rollers make sure all types of fabrics are centered on the printer at all time for accurate print quality and registration.

The Industrial fabric unwinds system with tension and edge position control, and end-of-roll detection minimizes operator intervention and facilitates printing of a wide variety of fabrics. The rewind system is designed to accept industry standard 75 mm (three inch) tube cores.

**Gandinnovations Debuts Jeti New Roland SOLJET PRO III Wide-Format Printers Offer Speed, Image Quality**



Roland DGA Corporation recently introduced high-performance SOLJET PRO III eco-solvent inkjet printers in 74," 64" and 54" models.

The new 74" XJ-740, 64" XJ-640 and 54" XJ-540 are Roland's fastest SOLJETs to date, combining exceptional print speeds with photorealistic 1440 x 1440 dots per inch image quality for the ultimate in six-color CMYK+LcLm digital printing.

The XJ series features scratch-resistant ECO-SOL MAX ink, the industry's best-selling ink for durable graphics applications. ECO-SOL MAX offers a wide gamut and dense, rich colors for superior print quality and durability. It comes in six colors (CMYK+LcLm) and supports a full range of coated and uncoated media from vinyl and banner to backlit film, canvas and mesh.

For optimum performance, the XJ series offers a host of features that both automate and expedite the production process. To support high-speed unattended printing, the XJ series comes equipped with an integrated tri-heater system and optional dryer/blower unit that accelerate the ink drying process. These can be used in tandem with the XJ's advanced heavy-duty media feed and automated take-up system for flawless prints at even the highest print speeds.

Its automated maintenance minimizes ink usage, labor and downtime and eliminates the need for daily cleanings, further increasing productivity.

**FLEXcon Adds to REFLECTAmark Series**

FLEXcon introduced the newest additions to its REFLECTAmark Series.

REFLECTAmark FMG is a fleet marking grade glass bead coated reflective cast vinyl film that offers seven-year outdoor durability. It is suitable for reflective vehicle graphic applications that require conformability and permanence. REFLECTAmark PG is a promotional grade glass bead coated reflective polyester film that offers two-year outdoor durability. It is ideal for use with long-range bar code scanning, durable reflective stickers, emblems, promotional labels or short-term safety signs.

FLEXcon's REFLECTAmark product line comprises a versatile series that meets the ever-increasing market for reflective films to address safety in low light environments. The products feature industry-proven glass bead coated reflective technology.

All REFLECTAmark products offer excellent chemical and scratch resistance, and come with a high-performance permanent adhesive that bonds well to ABS, low surface energy plastics, aluminum and stainless steel surfaces.

REFLECTAmark FMG and PG join two others in the series: an engineering grade (EG) acrylic film that offers seven-year durability for long-term outdoor safety signs, and a safety grade (SG) acrylic film that offers two-year outdoor durability ideal for short-term outdoor safety signage and promotional labels.

The new REFLECTAmark White FMG (WFMG) and REFLECTAmark White FMG Sheet (WFMGS) are fleet marking grade 4.5 mil reflective glass bead coated cast vinyl films coated with a high-performance permanent pressure-sensitive acrylic adhesive, and backed with either a 50-pound kraft roll liner or a 90-pound logo imprinted layflat sheet liner.

FMG products are printable via solvent inkjet, UV inkjet and conventional print technologies.

The new REFLECTAmark White PG (WPG) and REFLECTAmark White PG Sheet (WPGS) are promotional grade 4.5 mil reflective glass bead coated polyester films, coated with a high-performance permanent pressure-sensitive acrylic adhesive and backed with either a 50-pound kraft roll liner or a 90-pound layflat sheet liner that is imprinted with the REFLECTAmark logo. PG products are printable via resin thermal transfer ribbon and conventional print technologies.

**GMG Releases Driver for HP Z3100 Printer**

GMG released a GMG ColorProof driver for the HP DesignJet Z3100 printer. In doing so, users can take advantage of all the benefits of an internal spectrophotometer, along with an expanded color gamut.

The HP DesignJet Z3100 digital inkjet printer is designed to create proofs

with 12 color units: light versions of CMYK, traditional MYK, RGB, a light black (grey) and a gloss enhancer. With these 12 units and the GMG ColorProof system, the user is able to print a much wider gamut of colors than the traditional four-color system. For example, spot color, Hexachrome and Opaltone color gamuts are reproduced much truer.

GMG ColorProof is able to operate the HP DesignJet Z3100 — with its internal spectrophotometer — much like the HP DesignJet Z2100. Thus, solutions such as GMG ProofControl unbundled and the GMG Remote Calibration Wizard can be implemented with the HP DesignJet Z3100 printer.

GMG ProofControl unbundled, is a complete proof verification system, allowing automatic monitoring and recalibration of the printer, ensuring

that every proof leaving the printer is a high-quality GMG contract proof. With the help of the internal spectrophotometer, every proof on the HP DesignJet Z3100 can be automatically verified. GMG Remote Calibration Wizard is an easy-to-use remote calibration tool for GMG ColorProof that supports wizard-based calibration and recalibration of printers at remote proofing sites, without purchasing or installing the ColorProof application themselves. The free, standalone application allows a remote printer to be calibrated with the help of a host ColorProof system automatically, without any user intervention. ●

Do you have a new product ready to hit the market? Please send all new product information to Dennis Coyle, managing editor, [dcoyle@irga.com](mailto:dcoyle@irga.com).



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## Positions Available

**NGI**, a fast growing provider of reprographics and digital imaging solutions in the southeast needs **production management, digital imaging technicians, customer service** and **sales** personnel for our expanding organization. This is a great opportunity for the right people to join one of the most dynamic teams in the industry. All applicants must be highly motivated, possess excellent communication skills and enjoy working in a fast paced environment. NGI offers competitive pay with incentive compensation, health/life/dental insurance, 401k, paid vacation and more. Reply to [NGIresume@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:NGIresume@tampabay.rr.com) and reference *REPRO REPORT* in the subject line. EOE/DFWP.

A traditional bricks and mortar company that provides document management services to the construction industry is looking for an **executive to manage its On Site Services** (Facilities Management) operations in Southern California. The worldwide construction industry is about \$3.4 trillion and is in desperate need of more reliable, customer centric, On Site Services, also known as Facilities Management, alternative in our area. This company is investing heavily in personnel, equipment and technology to bring new products and service to market to compliment its traditional services. We are looking for someone that can manage sales and operations in this highly competitive market. Experience in top-to-top sales, planning, staffing and launching a new business model is required.

C2 Reprographics is five years old and as achieved the distinction of being the fastest growing reprographics supplier in Southern California. You will be joining a winning management team of professionals dedicated to offering superior solutions to our customers. We offer tremendous opportunity for growth in all areas, both professionally and personally. Our benefits and compensation packages are competitive.

Please send your resume and salary requirements to [hr@C2repro.com](mailto:hr@C2repro.com). Alternatively, you may call 714-545-2743, extention 1206 with any questions.

**Reprographic MGRS.** Leading Reprographics Company in the Tampa Bay Area is currently seeking **qualified candidates for color, Digital Services and Management** positions. Fax resume attention Chris Charles 813.221.2094 or E-Mail [flrepro@flrepro.com](mailto:flrepro@flrepro.com).

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## Opportunities

National Reprographics Inc. is looking for **acquisitions** within the reprographic and digital color industries. Interested in well-managed firms of any size located in larger metropolitan markets. Contact Doug Magid at [doug@nrinet.com](mailto:doug@nrinet.com) or (212) 366-7063.

Midwest blueprint firm interested in **acquisitions or investments** from 50% to 100% in blueprint and related companies in the Cleveland, Akron, Denver and South Florida markets with firm sales in the range of \$3 million to \$6 million. Will pay cash strong firms in any financial condition. Contact Brett Scully, Lakeside Blueprint, at 216/281-1234; email: [bscully@blueprint.com](mailto:bscully@blueprint.com).

**For sale** a full service reprographics firm established in 1964 grossing between \$400K and \$600K annually in beautiful Corpus Christi, Texas. Financing available to qualified buyers. Contact Joe Watson – (361) 882-5575.

**For sale** Océ TDS 810 Scanner and Controller/Monitor/Cabinet and document stacker. Excellent Condition. \$30,000. Contact Bob – Florida (800) 780-7377.

# The Making of an IRgA Annual Convention...

A behind-the-scenes look and answers to your questions.



Steve Bova, CAE  
Executive Director

I am thrilled to share with you some good news for all reprographics industry members, in the form of enhancements to the 2008 Annual Convention & Trade Show.

## Truly an Industry Event

The IRgA Convention & Trade Show is truly an entire industry event. In addition to the many business opportunities surrounding the IRgA, several other organizations, including affinity groups and vendors, “piggyback” to the IRgA. It is in all of our best interests to “co-locate” and pack more economic punch with the host hotel and city. Together, we bring more clout!

While in the past the IRgA attempted to accommodate everyone’s needs, serving as a “middleman” in the process, moving forward, each group will have more direct contact with the hotel, and the IRgA will continue to ensure that the integrity of its event remains intact.

## Not Broke but Fixed

Based on feedback that was received from more than 30 percent of convention attendees, the Convention Committee has made the following adjustments to continue to improve your convention experience:

- **Another Golf Treat.** Learning that people like to play a nice golf course, the IRgA is in negotiations with a top, PGA-level course where, regardless of ability, golfers can pretend they’re on tour for a day.
- **Education on (good) steroids.** In 2006, the IRgA enhanced its education program, and the feedback validated that the program was much improved. All but one session received a 4.0 or better rating, and the one that did not received a 3.9 on a scale of 5.0. There were 11 educational opportunities in 2007; your 2008 committee has enhanced

the educational offering to 16 sessions, with the following format:

- o General session Wednesday afternoon.
- o Breakfast and general session Thursday morning, followed by two sets of three breakout sessions. (Note: There are always comments about having to choose between sessions. With just over 1,000 attendees, we must offer sufficient sessions to include all participants. Besides, having choices is good!)
- o Friday morning general session (breakfast on your own) and breakouts in the afternoon – a total of three time slots and seven education sessions

- **Networking Galore.** We’ve kept the opening exhibit cocktail reception intact, the Thursday reception will not have a band (I promise – there’s a story behind this), and the Friday all-industry reception will be expanded to 90 minutes and be held poolside.
- **Exhibits.** The Friday keynote luncheon has been moved to Thursday morning to give Bukovsky Award recipients more time to be recognized; there will be two lunches served in the exhibit hall, providing more opportunity to convene where business is conducted.

## The Cost/Value Proposition

Some ask, “Why does the IRgA Convention cost so much to attend?” In comparison to trade organizations across all industries, the IRgA registration fee actually sits in the bottom third. Your supplier partners help to defray the costs through the trade show and sponsorship; in fact, attendee registration costs do not cover the full convention expenses. In a word, running such a meeting is EXPENSIVE!

As an example, it is actually cheaper to buy your own breakfast than for

the IRgA to offer a continental breakfast, as properties charge about \$25 per head (plus tax, plus 20 percent gratuity). To have enough space under one roof, with all the amenities, comes with a cost. Coffee, for example, is \$65 a gallon – or \$3.61 a cup. And you thought Starbucks was expensive!

## There is a Solution!

The IRgA is holding costs to the level where reprographers tell us they can afford to attend. Additionally, the committee announces a new pricing structure.

One strategy is to attract executives as well as managers to the IRgA – to drive value deeper into the reprographics businesses. The education program has tracks for multiple participants, and the registration options have been revised to offer:

- A \$100 discount off full registration to the second registrant from the same company name;
- A \$250 discount *per person* off each additional registration from the same company name; and
- Any company interested in bringing 10 or more total participants should contact the IRgA office for special pricing.

It is in everyone’s best interests to have as many reprographers and vendors in attendance. It truly is *OUR* industry event and we want you there!

I have attempted to describe the high-level changes and enhancements your Convention Committee has addressed based on your feedback. For more detail, refer to the convention page on the Web site ([www.irga.com](http://www.irga.com)) for a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page. We do listen and try our best to accommodate the needs of the industry. With your continued buy-in, we look forward to smashing all records in 2008! ●

# Wide Format Ink Jet Cartridges

Valley Supplies wide format ink supplies produce premium quality color graphic images, clear text and sharp lines to satisfy even the most sophisticated user. Our products provide exceptional image density, durability and resolution.

## Features

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- Proprietary, auto-resetting chip
- Re-use of OEM air seal and ink containment components to ensure high quality and functionality

## Benefits

- Significant cost savings by reducing the running cost of your wide format graphics operations
- Cartridges are fully interchangeable with OEM cartridges and print heads
- No wasted ink & media = no conversion costs
- Excellent performance and reliability
- Fade resistance comparable to OEM
- Custom ICC profiles not required for most printing jobs—simply continue using your current profiles
- Reliable, consistent operation that maintains accurate indication of remaining ink
- Simply insert cartridges and start printing!



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Hewlett-Packard DesignJet\* 1000/1050  
Pigment Replacement Cartridges



Replaces HP 80-Series Ink Cartridge



### Machine Compatibilities

Hewlett-Packard \* DesignJet:  
1050 / 1050c / 1050c Plus / 1055 /  
1055cm / 1055cm Plus / 1000 Series

Hewlett-Packard DesignJet\* 5000/5500  
Dye Replacement Cartridges



Replaces HP 81-Series Ink Cartridge



### Machine Compatibilities

Hewlett-Packard \* DesignJet:  
5000ps; 5000; 5500ps; 5500

Hewlett-Packard DesignJet\* 5000/5500  
Pigment Replacement Cartridges



Replaces HP 83-Series Ink Cartridge



### Machine Compatibilities

Hewlett-Packard \* DesignJet: 5000ps  
UV; 5000 UV; 5500ps UV; 5500 UV

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# Modular, Integrated Production System

The KIP 5000 is an innovative new digital imaging system designed to provide a combination of peak demand productivity and superior image quality. Two or four roll KIP 5000 systems are available in four main configurations to suit the needs of the most demanding printing and imaging environments.

A space saving single footprint system, the KIP 5000 features an integrated touch screen operator panel which provides simple operations for everything from walk-up job queue management to monochrome & color copying and scanning when integrated with an inkjet printer.

For information on the KIP 5000 or to find an authorized KIP dealer, please contact KIP at (800) 252-6793, or visit [www.kipamerica.com](http://www.kipamerica.com)

# KIP 5000

Monochrome Print System

Monochrome Print & Copy System

Monochrome Print, Copy & Scan System

Monochrome and Color Print, Copy and Scan System

