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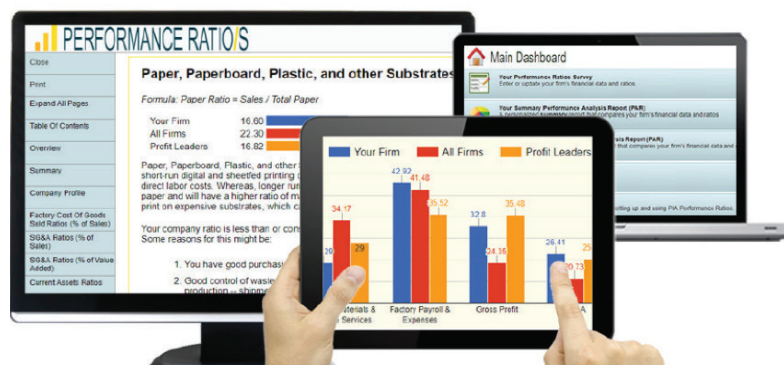
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Maximizing the Potential of the Printer-Finisher Relationship

Bob Beaupre

Owner,
New England Ultimate Finishing, Inc.

“There is a jewel of an opportunity in the heart of our industry.”

Printing and finishing (specialty decorative embellishments—laminations, stampings, coatings, and other converting) companies, working together, can enjoy substantially profitable business with the high-end printing that is still part of many marketing communications packages.

One of the most productive—and necessary—tasks I undertake as a managing director of New England Ultimate Finishing (Holyoke, MA) is to present hands-on, interactive sales opportunity seminars at a printer partner’s place of business.

Why? Certainly not to blow my own horn or enact a commercial about my company, but rather to enable the entire team to maximize the profit potential of the relationship (which is huge) and minimize the obstacles that may occur without the knowledge and communication needed (which can ruin a whole day).

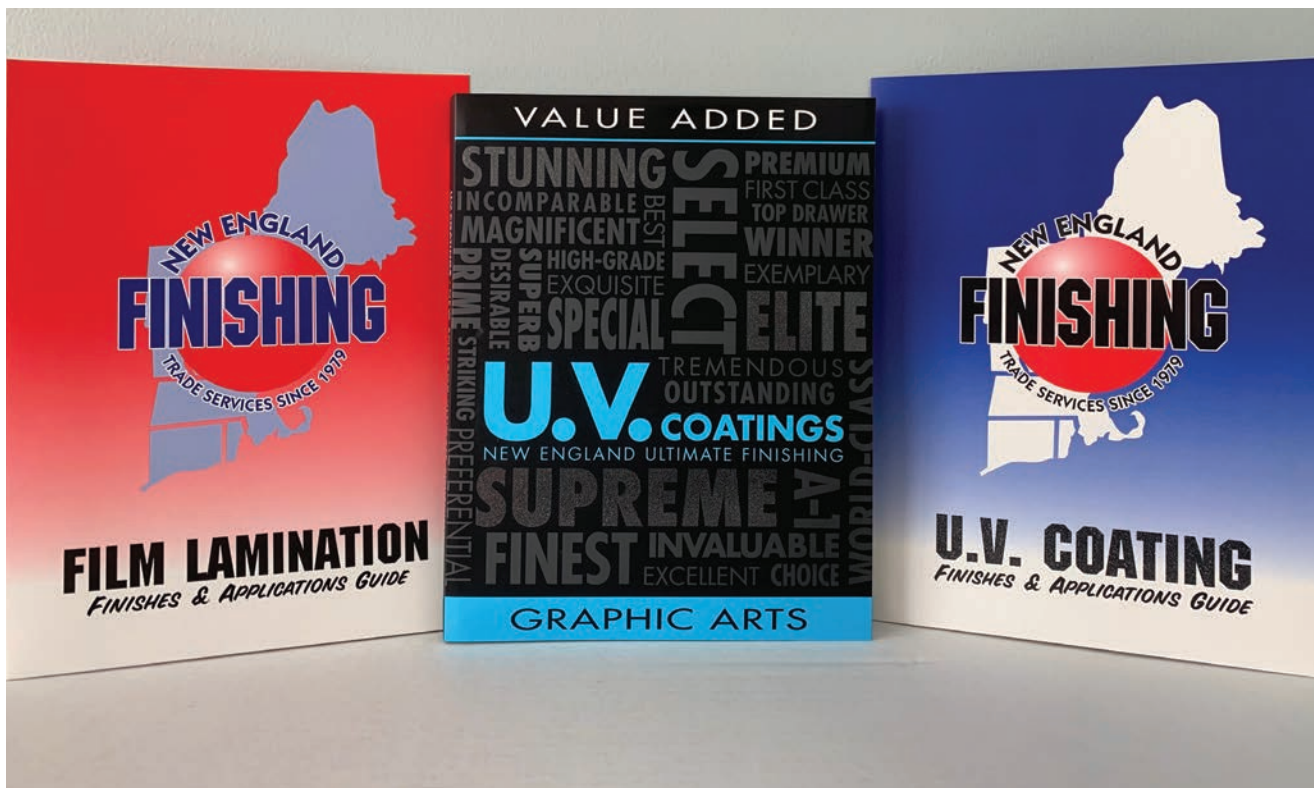
I used the words “partner” and “team” in the above paragraphs. Those words can be overused so often that we become numb to them and pass them off as meaningless clichés. But nowhere are those words more suitable to the dynamics of the situation than when describing the printer-finisher relationship.

Can you think of another example (in any industry) similar to this: an expensive, value-laden work product, often measured in tons, is designed, created, and partially manufactured in one place and then physically leaves that plant or shop to travel to another separate business.

It is then worked on, adding crucial elements, and finds its way back—on time, in excellent shape, and altered as required—to the project originator for final completion and shipping to the end user. Detailed two-way knowledge and precise communication is mandatory for this process to succeed, to say nothing of extraordinary trust and teamwork... yet this is precisely what printers and their finisher vendors accomplish day in and day out.

And all of this has to happen in a competitive war zone, with impossible deadlines and no-hiccups-allowed scenarios. The seminars we hold aim to blunt the sharp edges—what do we need to know about the ink and paper coming at us, and how can we make sure nothing gets in the way of our processes when the job arrives?

Often these are seemingly simple specs to understand but surprisingly hard to ensure. For example, most one-side film laminating machines require ½” of clean paper (no ink, varnish, or aqueous) all around the four sides to allow clean separation and adequate image covering. With only a relatively small percentage of jobs going out to a finisher for laminating, how can we together ensure that a special blanket is cut for the aqueous coating pulling away from those edges vs. a perfectly good existing blanket being used that covers right up to the edge? For most jobs this would be fine and would be the smart thing to do cost-wise... but not when it stops production at the finishing house due to lamination pulling up at the snapping point. Another preventable disaster: offset powder is a printer’s best



LEFT TO RIGHT: Film Lamination folder, Benny Winner UV Coating samples guide, UV Coating folder: samples, intercompany technical knowledge, and sales/promotion basics discussed thoroughly at printer-finisher seminars.

friend and the amount applied—mostly invisible to the naked eye in any case—is most often dependent on the ink coverage. But not when a high gloss coating of UV is going on next! That invisible powder suddenly becomes a sandpaper finish where one is not wanted, requiring another trip through the press to dust the sheets. So review of these and other technical aspects greatly improves the strength of the team and smooths out the challenges we face together.

More importantly, however, is the chance at these team meetings to focus on the sales and profit opportunities the printer-finisher partnership can bring to life. For much of the printing still being done, the reason it is still being done is that it cannot be digitally presented on a flat screen. By design, it is meant to be a physical object, beautifully printed, colorful, textured, sparkling, sophisticated, and all the other features that can only be achieved through printing with decoration and embellishment.

Printer salespeople, planners, and customer service reps cannot be expected to automatically know and completely understand how these embellishments work and what they can do. They need training, they need to see hands-on samples, and they need lots of questions answered. They need to be armed with the rationale for these extras—foil stamping and embossing, spot UV coatings, textured and glitter coatings, film laminations of various glosses and hues, creative die-cuts and gloss/matte combinations. They need samples and sales kits to present to designers and creative directors across their territories.

What an eye-opener it has been for many printer salespeople to see the interest these print embellishments and decorations arouse in graphic designers as they look over these samples with an eager eye. Designers have often not even seen UV coating before—believe it or not—and it takes a printer salesperson to show them and to command the team that can produce results like

this; that printer salesperson will be remembered for this kind of service.

The penultimate place where this knowledge, communication, and teamwork will find its reward is at the graphic designer level and the creative team that will initiate and build these embellishments within their campaign, making print a requirement of the marketing package...ensuring that a print component will be added.

And it is the printer-finisher team with the best true partnership, one consisting of mutual trust, knowledge, communication, and mutually designed sales strategies, that will win these high-end jobs and therefore stay ahead in this tough marketplace.



Knowledge-sharing, communication, and mutually planned and executed goals are nowhere more important than between printers and the print finishing companies who serve them. There is a bright future for those printer-finisher partnership teams who can maximize this awesome potential.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Beaupre is the owner and sales manager of New England Finishing, Inc., located in Holyoke, MA. Founded in 1979, under Bob's leadership NEUF has developed into the premier source of finishing services in New England, thriving and surviving through the industry's ups and downs. His career has been firmly rooted in creating, developing, maintaining, and maximizing profitable strategic partnerships with his printer customers. NEUF won a Premier Print Award in 2019 for the Spot UV Coatings Special Effects sample booklet they created for printer salespeople and graphic designers.



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New USPS Services Make Mail More Appealing—and Profitable—for Printers

David Lewis

President,
SnailWorks, LLC

Ignore rumors to the contrary—direct mail remains a unique and indispensable direct marketing channel. The United States Postal Service still delivers more than 149 billion pieces of mail a year, and USPS Marketing Mail volume continues to hold steady. Bottom line: there is still a lot of mail out there, and it remains an important product for printers.

The challenge for printers and mailers is how to keep—and grow—their share of it and how to boost margins.

Of course, the technology of producing mail is changing all the time as new digital presses become the workhorses of direct mail production. But the USPS is adding new technology as well that can impact response rates and influence how print buyers interact with their print and mail vendors. Understanding and leveraging these postal technologies can help you succeed in selling more mail and building margins.

Informed Visibility® and Informed Delivery® are two new programs that help give you and your customers better control over mail and a means of linking direct mail to the web. Commerce may live on the web, but driving consumers to the web is often the mission of the mail.

Informed Visibility lets mailers know when every piece of mail is being delivered. Mail delivery, particularly for marketing mail, can be unpredictable, but Informed Visibility tracks mail each step of the way, sending

scan information back to the mailer as the mail travels through the postal system. Every letter carrier wears a GPS device that can let you know what time the mail was delivered.

Once you know when the mail is being delivered, your customers can coordinate other marketing channels with their mail. Some may send a coordinated email that arrives the same day the mail is delivered. You can even have web ads appear when prospects are browsing the web. Others may create a telemarketing call list each day, letting their call centers know whom they should call. Mail synchronized with additional channels simply gets better results—and higher response rates. Informed Visibility makes that coordination easy and precise.

Informed Delivery is a newer and even more unique program aimed at consumers, and the USPS has been enrolling consumers in this program for more than two years. Once enrolled, subscribers will get an email every day that shows them free preview images of what is going to be in their mailbox that day. These images are lifted from letter sorting equipment that processes and sorts the mail, but so far can only provide black and white images. Mailers can replace those images with a full-color image (their “Representative Image”) and add another image (a clickable button called the “Ride-Along Ad”) that consumers can click to be taken directly to the advertiser’s web page—before they’ve even gotten the mail piece! Together these extra consumer touches

can boost mail response rates and support an advertiser's online marketing, which is essential in today's marketplace.

Consumers love Informed Delivery. The Postal Service already has more than 19 million subscribers as of September 2019 and expects more than 22 million subscribers by the end of the year, with a goal of 40 million for the end of 2020.

Both of these services are free from the USPS but are not necessarily easy to use; these programs provide mostly raw data that needs a lot of processing. Most print and mail service providers count on a third-party provider to help process a river of raw data into usable reports and to navigate the postal issues involved with these programs. Printers and mailers can add to their margins by marking up these services—advertisers can easily see the value.

For a printer offering mailing services, providing advanced services can be a great way of differentiating yourself from your competitors. Direct mail advertisers are always looking for a way to be in better control of their mailings and of boosting response rates. Informed Delivery and Informed Visibility may just be the tools they need to do that.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dave Lewis is the president of SnailWorks, a web-based multi-channel marketing provider. He has been active in the mailing industry for more than 30 years and serves on numerous Postal Service MTAC (Mailers Technical Advisory Committee) work and user groups. You can reach Dave at dlewis@SnailWorks.com.

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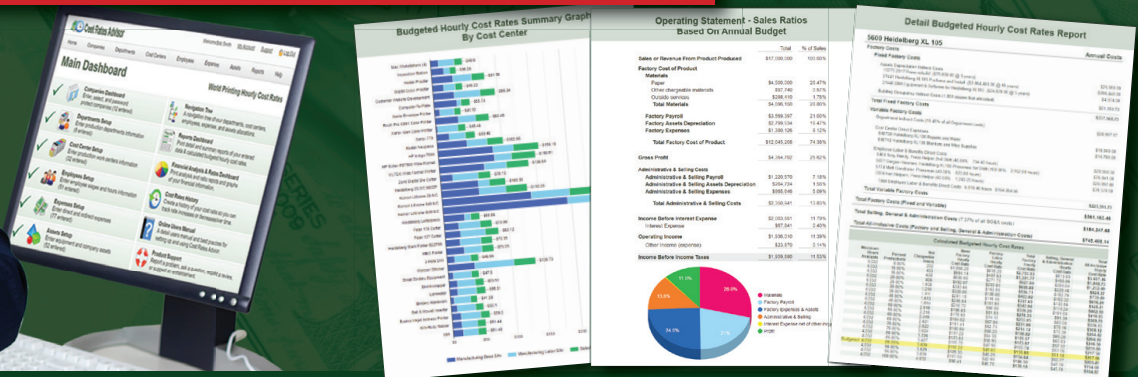
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COLOR20 Conference: Get the Answers Here

Joseph Marin

Vice President,
Education and Training
Printing Industries of America

Entering its 24th year, the COLOR20 Conference **January 11–14, 2020, in San Diego, CA** is the industry conference when it comes to all aspects of color in production workflow. COLOR20 has evolved tremendously over the last two decades—starting in 1996 as the Digital Color Conference, then morphing to the Color Management Conference in 1999—and today as the COLOR20 Conference.

The COLOR20 speakers and sessions were carefully selected for creatives, brand professionals, photographers, production specialists, and color management experts. COLOR20 is where you'll find an incredible community of color experts and uncover tactics, technologies, and secrets to success. Presented by Printing Industries of America (PIA) and Specialty Graphic Imaging Association (SGIA), COLOR20 features over 50 sessions and is organized in four tracks:

- **Print & Production**
- **Brand & Design**
- **Standards, Research, & Case Studies**
- **Color Tools**

This year's theme, **Get the Answers Here**, is a nod to 39 of the most respected and knowledgeable color experts in the industry. All who attend are guaranteed to get the best insights, the best practices, and the best answers to any and all color questions. Discover strategies, tactics, technology, and even a few secrets about finding success in color. COLOR20 is an incredible community of speakers, suppliers, and attendees—all who live and breathe the subject.

The keynote lineup this year is led by Frans Lanting, James Hillman, Scott Lucas, Jason Troutman, and Cecile van der Harten. Frans Lanting, world-renowned *National Geographic* photographer, will share how he interprets color in the natural world for his iconic imagery. James Hillman, president and CEO of Mossberg & Company, will provide insights and practical examples on how to improve printer-brand relations. Scott Lucas, CEO of Sterling Brands, will explore the role of color in defining a brand, connecting with consumers, and delivering a consistent brand experience. Jason Troutman, principle brand designer for 3M, will provide a designer's perspective on proper roles, communication, and expectations for printers and brand owners. Finally, Cecile van der Harten, head of the image department for the Rijksmuseum located in Amsterdam, will discuss image capture for fine art and historic artifacts for preservation and future uses.

If that's not enough, attendees who register also can attend one of two free pre-conference sessions! Choose from Color Management Fundamentals presented by Don Hutcheson, color management pioneer and inventor of the G7® methodology, or Fine Art Reproduction: The Ultimate Color Challenge presented by Brian Lawler, professor at CalPoly.

COLOR20

get the answers here

Past attendees consistently rave—COLOR is the perfect space to discuss the challenges of color management, help set the stage for future discoveries and standards development, and network with your industry peers.

“Provides the best color knowledge to a diverse group—Amazing event!”

“I always learn something new—and the bonus is the networking opportunities with attendees, vendors, and speakers.”

“Great sessions with the best industry giants sharing their stories, holding my interest, and leaving me wanting more!”

COLOR20 will help you take your employees’ color knowledge and your company’s capabilities to the next level! Learn more about the conference by visiting the website at www.printing.org/color.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MET Fine Printers

Sarah Sudar

Copywriter,
Printing Industries of America

Vancouver's MET Fine Printers has faced "one hell of a year," says Bob Faulkner, executive vice president. Last year, the head office and main plant burned to the ground, literally, but the company didn't let a fire destroy its future. Their team became resourceful and resilient, continuing to operate the business without a physical plant in Vancouver and taking time to strategically build a new state-of-the-art facility that opened in September of 2019.

MET was started by George Kallas in 1977 as a stationery printer with three employees. With a background in sales and marketing, Kallas had an affinity for the graphic arts and grew the business, purchasing one of Vancouver's first six-color presses in 1986. In the late 1990s, the company was the first in Canada to install an eight-color UV press. With this new technology, it took some time to get clients to understand the environmental and quality benefits, but they were able to dominate the market for five to eight years before the competition realized they had to install the same type of equipment.

Even though George Kallas is semi-retired, he's still extremely involved in the future of MET and is always excited to see a finished piece of great print. He even has a private collection of all of the pieces MET has produced over the past 40 years.

"He loves seeing a piece of paper go through a machine and come out with beautiful color on it," says Faulkner. "It's in his blood."

MET is now run by his son, Nikos Kallas, and has over 200 employees. Over the years, the MET team has built its brand to become a boutique printer focused on high-end collateral printing with a wide array of clients





who are interested in investing in unique printing and direct mailing, such as extremely complex mailings going to highly targeted markets. MET has deep roots in the advertising industry, with creative directors always challenging their printing capabilities and asking “What if?” MET’s response has always been, “If you can dream it, we can produce it.”

In Vancouver, the economy for a number of years has been driven by real estate development. People are spending \$2–4 million on a condo, so direct mail has to be extremely impactful and targeted—for example, custom envelopes that are embossed and foiled with an impactful printed piece inside have a real presence and make a connection with the intended audience.

MET currently offers a leading marketing-on-demand solution that helps companies centralize their marketing materials in a custom, private digital storefront. There they can automate a variety of marketing, creative, fulfillment, and distribution processes using an integrated web-based marketing portal.

With print-on-demand, it is not unusual in western Canada to work with clients who are targeting specific demographics. MET’s real-estate clients’ audiences are diverse, so there is huge sensitivity to the production of making sure translations are done correctly. Each year, the company is doubling sections of their business, and print-on-demand is producing big growth. Print is alive.

“There’s an emotional connection to it—you pick it up, it’s embossed, you touch it, there’s a reveal, there’s a pop-up, there’s engagement,” says Faulkner.

As noted, last April, MET faced a crisis. Their main plant burned to the ground, but that didn’t stop their growth. Business is up 35 percent during the last year due to the established brand that has been created. Faulkner says the day after the fire, clients were still sending in files to be printed and not one of them asked where and how the jobs would get done.

Over the years, MET has developed excellent relationships with high-end printers throughout North America and temporarily partnered for production of their work. MET’s Calgary production facility and team

also stepped up to the challenge and took on a lot more capacity to ensure client requests were fulfilled.

“Every one of the partnerships has been great,” says Nikos Kallas. “We are lucky to have developed the network of skill that we now have at hand.”

Not only did MET provide work to these partners, but the company also increased capacity in these companies by adding MET’s highly skilled workforce to the mix, giving them opportunities to work with equipment they may not have been exposed to before.

“Overall, it’s been a bad news/good news story,” says Faulkner.

Loss of the main plant has allowed MET to redesign a brand-new facility from the ground up, one block away

from the original plant on a piece of property that George Kallas had already owned. Starting over again gave the company a chance to examine itself—to determine where the business is going in the future and to install specialty equipment in those areas that are showing great promise. One area of focus is hybrid UV printing, or presses with all the benefit of an offset printing press along with the benefits of variable digital technology. It’s extremely high-end printing, all software-driven, printed on demand in mid-size format.

“Our team has really bonded during this challenging time and is stronger and more cohesive than ever. I am grateful for it.” says Nikos Kallas.

Even through the fire, MET has come out on top with a re-energized outlook on the future.



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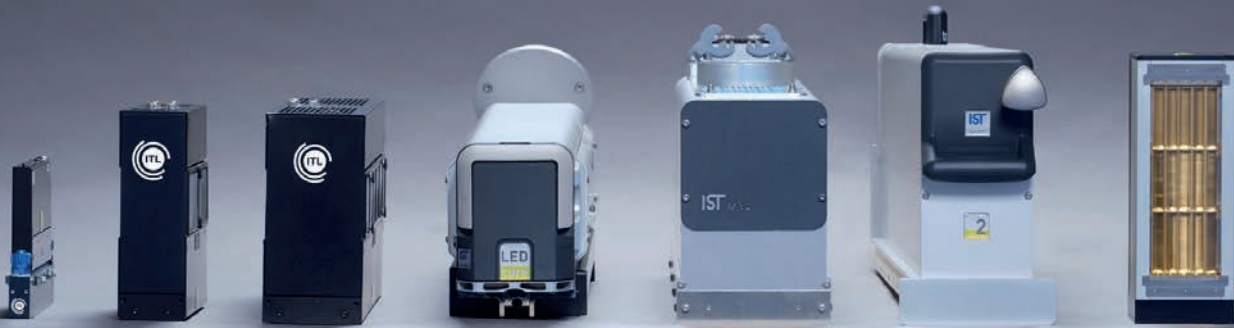


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An Update on Postal Reform

Lisbeth Lyons, · Vice President · Government & External Affairs



As Congress returns from its annual summer recess, the remaining days on the legislative calendar are short, but policy challenges—particularly in postal reform—loom long. Printing Industries of America is founder and a leading member of the

Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service (C21), which represents the entire business supply channel in the mailing economy and is the key lobbying force on Capitol Hill advocating the passage of postal reform legislation. The major postal unions and C21 are aligned in efforts to support legislation, and while the alliance of industry and labor is particularly strong, efforts that looked promising in the beginning of the 116th Congress have stalled. Below are key talking points from C21 on why passage of postal reform legislation is critical to the printing industry:

- The already daunting financial threat to the Postal Service is growing. USPS has defaulted on some \$43 billion in required retiree health prefunding and normal costs, its mail volume has resumed a decline of 3–4 percent, and it had only 57 days of liquidity available as of the end of its third quarter 2019. Now, the declining mail segment (market dominant) of the system, still indispensable to keeping USPS self-funded as it receives no taxpayer monies, potentially faces a huge rate increase later this year.
- The proposed increases to market dominant rates will propel mail out of the system. The Postal Regulatory Commission has proposed increases that will range from 28–43 percent over five years. The

stamp price would increase to 70 cents, and other mail prices would increase proportionately. This is unaffordable and will force mailers to abandon physical mail in favor of electronic alternatives, decreasing the availability of products and services to rural citizens, seniors, and other vulnerable populations lacking internet access.

- HR 2382, the USPS Fairness Act of 2019, provides a major step toward a solution. This bipartisan bill, cosponsored by more than 200 Members of Congress, simply would repeal the onerous and unique 100-percent prefunding requirement. It would cause USPS to follow private sector best practices by paying for retiree health care as you go and prefunding when affordable.
- Absent retiree prefunding, USPS would have been in the black each of the past six years. Found by the Postal Regulatory Commission to be far and away the largest liability on the USPS balance sheet, the absence of prefunding would have left USPS in the black over the past six years instead of awash in red ink.
- HR 2382 would require no taxpayer funds. USPS currently receives no taxpayer funds and this bill would not provide any, giving the USPS a fighting chance to remain self-sustaining.

PIA member companies with a business stake in the mailing industry are strongly encouraged to reach out NOW to their U.S. Representatives to urge a speedy legislative solution to stabilize the USPS and bring certainty to mailing customers. To have your voice be heard, **call the office of the U.S. Representative in whose district your facility is located** and identify yourself as a business constituent.

Below are suggested talking points that can be customized to best reflect your company's concerns:

- I am (title) of (company name), which is a (user/service provider/supplier) dependent upon a stable, efficient, affordable postal system. My company does (business line) and employs X number of people. We are located in (town) in your district.
- I'm calling to urgently ask the Congress(wo)man to support and cosponsor HR 2382, the USPS Fairness Act of 2019, a bill with well more than 200 bipartisan cosponsors that deserves the Congress(wo)man's support.

- The Postal Service is the linchpin of an industry that generates \$1.4 trillion in sales annually and supports 7.5 million jobs. But the Postal Service is in deep financial trouble, in large part due to an obligation imposed by Congress to prefund that has cost it tens of billions of dollars.
- No taxpayer dollars support USPS and we believe it is right to keep it that way—if we can.
- In short, repeal would cause the application of private sector best practices to USPS: pay retirees health care as you go and prefund only when you can afford it.

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DIRECT MAIL



from Millennials and Gen Z

If you think direct mail has no place in our digital world, think again! Check out these stats and tips on direct mail and the next generation of consumers, millennials and Gen Z:

Millennials are expected to account for **30%** of retail sales in the United States by **2020**

When it comes to mail...

84%
of millennials
look through it

87%
enjoy
receiving it

40%

of millennials read direct mail thoroughly, compared to only 18% of non-millennials.

Reaching millennials with direct mail:

- Create a sensory experience using sound, textures and even scent.
- Personalize your mail to appeal to the recipient's preferences, like placing the recipient's name in the artwork of the mailer.
- Show the values of your company through direct mail, including your socially conscious efforts using statistics or facts.

Zoomers population is expected to reach **2.6 billion** by 2020

Multi-taskers

want brands to integrate digital and print channels.

Reaching Gen Z with direct mail:

- Create a striking mailpiece, deliver a focused, authentic message, and use real customers in photos.
- Combine direct mail with digital channels. Incorporate personalized URLs, CTAs to social channels, and links to interactive materials.
- Offer value and incentives to improve in-store experiences. Provide in-store vouchers or freebies.

84% trust a company more if they use actual customers in their ads.



Value Seekers

44 percent of Gen Z expect ads to be targeted and relevant

44%



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Boxes and Branding: Are you Subscribed to the Idea?

Maggie Aupperlee
Copywriter,
Printing Industries of America

The newest trend in retail isn't brick and mortar storefronts or ecommerce. The next big thing? subscription boxes. The subscription box market is exploding, and that means big potential for the print and graphics industry.

What is a Subscription Box?

Simply put, a subscription box is a box of products sent to your home on a regular basis (monthly, weekly, quarterly, or at the interval of your choosing). The products range from clothing to pet food to meal kits and everything in between.

The types of subscription boxes are as varied as the products inside. Companies like Chewy (pets) and Dollar Shave Club (shaving supplies) offer regular deliveries of customer-selected products. Others, like Birchbox and Stitch Fix (beauty and fashion), provide customers with an element of surprise. After opting in to the service, customers know they will be receiving a product, but they don't know what will be in the package until it arrives at their doorstep. Meal kit delivery services like Blue Apron and Freshly can be ordered or canceled on demand for weekly meals delivered directly to the customer.

Industry Growth

According to the Subscription Trade Association, there were 3,500 subscription box services as of October 2018 (a 40% increase from March 2017). A study done by McKinsey & Company reported that the subscription ecommerce market grew from \$57 million in 2011 to \$2.6 billion in 2016. That's an increase of over \$2.5 billion in just five years.

It isn't just niche businesses getting in on the subscription action, though. Retailers like Amazon, Target, and Walmart all offer "subscribe and save" options to their customers. Users receive a discount when they sign up for regular deliveries of select items, from household goods to health and beauty products.

A perhaps initially unforeseen growth area in the subscription box trend is the rise of "unboxing" videos. These videos, typically on YouTube, feature consumers unboxing, or opening, their subscription boxes. This elevates the profile of subscription boxes even higher, providing free advertising and more growth for the companies.



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The popularity of the unboxing video drives home the importance of a well-designed mailer. The star of the video isn't just showing off the products inside; videos typically begin with an examination of the mailer box itself. Subscription box companies can use this to their advantage through consistent branding and well-designed packaging. The mailer is the first thing subscribers see, providing a great opportunity for graphics and print embellishments.

Of course, as your mom always said—it's what's on the inside that counts. And inside subscription boxes are plenty of opportunities for print. Subscription boxes are often accompanied by printed inserts with product explanations, advertisements for other companies, or simply a note to the customer. Well-designed, thoughtful inserts help subscription boxes stand out from the pack.

Subscription boxes are all about the experience for customers, perhaps sometimes more than the products themselves. A personal, customized experience is important for keeping customers engaged (and subscribed)—in fact, 28% of respondents in a survey by *USA Today* said they like a customized experience. Customizable printing solutions go hand in hand with customizable products.

With growth rates of 3,000% over the last three years, the subscription box industry isn't going anywhere anytime soon. This growth provides an amazing opportunity for the print and graphics industry to be a part of the next wave of retail purchasing.



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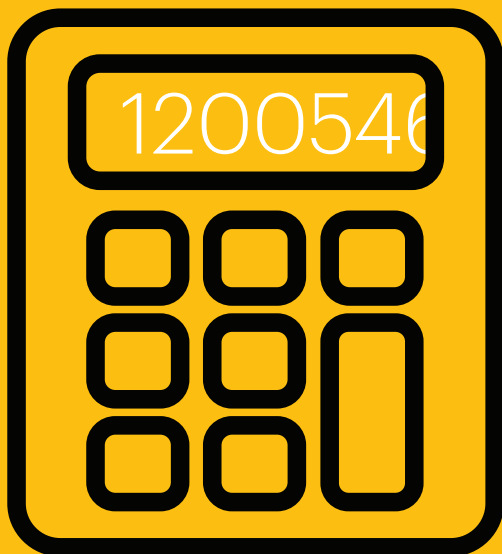
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Q&A

with Gary Matchinsky,
Owner of BCT Southwest

As a wholesale printer for other printers in the southwest, BCT has implemented over 1,200 web-to-print solutions for their clients and customers with a software system called go ePower. We sat down with BCT Southwest owner and president Gary Matchinsky to learn more about these solutions and how they can help a printer.

PIA: What are the biggest benefits of a web-to-print offering?

GM: Web-to-print is a good way to manage your business. One of the biggest benefits is that it obviously cuts down on remakes. The accuracy of your projects goes way up, because the users are inputting their own information.

Web-to-print solutions also cut down on front-of-house expenses. The user puts their information right into the platform, which flows right into the MIS and to the press. A lot of the prepress expenses are minimized. Once you spend the money up front for the software, you're done.

I'd say 62% of our orders are now flowing through go ePower. It manages the sales account, and all information about orders is easily accessible. Reorders are easier because we have everything right there. You pull up the order, make the changes, and go. Instead of having filing cabinets full of different orders, everything is right there in the system. It helps you become more efficient on the back end, for years to come.

PIA: What are some of the challenges?

GM: There is an up-front cost to setting up web-to-print. There can also be some hesitation or resistance

to change. Even if you had another web-to-print service and change your platform, there can also be some hesitation. People like to open a bookmark on their browser and not have to put in their username and password again or learn the new system.

PIA: What are some of the technological considerations for implementing web-to-print?

GM: First of all, look for a platform that already works with FedEx or UPS and has good interfaces with them. That way all shipping and tracking numbers can be auto-populated, removing some of the manual work.

The second thing is to make sure the system you're choosing has robust merchant services relationships, whether that's outsourcing or third-party partners or something else. It can be a pain to set those up and maintain them yourself, but if you can find a procurement system that prioritizes their merchant services, that's a big deal. With credit card processing, if you can control the data instead of the processing company, that's very beneficial. If you have the ability to go out and get a quote every couple of years, that flexibility helps. For instance, we process six million credit cards every year, so shaving off a quarter of a percent is a big deal. You can get hamstrung to companies like this where it's so painful to switch that you never switch.

Third, make sure your API works with complicated systems. Make sure you have some past references of people using their API to ensure that it works. Be sure the API integration with your MIS system is what you need.

PIA: How did your customers and their customers react to the change?

GM: There was some hesitation and resistance to change. Then they realized it would be easier for them. It has a great interface, has great curb appeal, and is user friendly. It's also a nice tool for print brokers to use. They can take a demo of a website and use it as a sales tool. It doesn't cost them anything and it separates them from the pack.

PIA: Any parting advice?

GM: If you are a wholesale printer, charge for each implementation of the software. Sit down with your team and recognize the value of the service, but also realize it's a value add for you to get in there and close deals.

Also, you can't have just one person who knows how to use the system. You have to make sure there are redundancies. Get a lot of people trained to use it. Use it as a sales tool; it's a great tool.

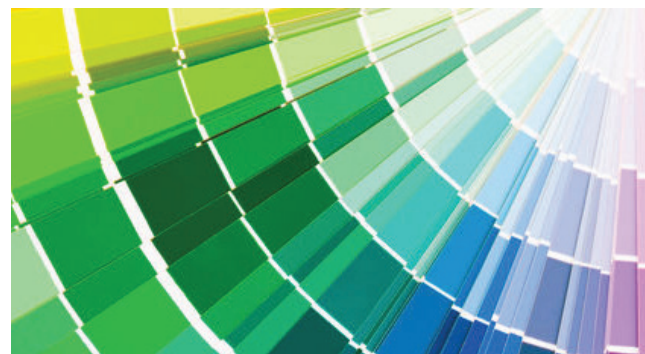
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