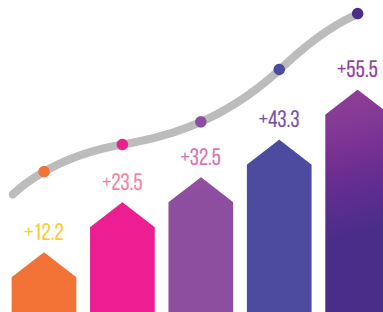


# SIGNATURE

ENGAGE. EXPLORE. ENERGIZE. EXCEL.

## USE FINANCIAL BENCHMARKS TO IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS!

About eight years into my first printing business, things were going well. We were growing at about 25% a year, adding new equipment and quality members to our team, and we had just moved into a great building. Our profits were good, but they could have been better. Our “good” performance led me to look at industry financial benchmarks, seeking ways to improve and become one of the top performers.



After analyzing related financial benchmarks, I set up a meeting with our management team, about five leaders. In that meeting, I wrote our financial benchmarks and those from the industry on the board. After explaining what those numbers meant, I looked at our leadership team and asked, “What do we need to do?” After a few moments of thinking, they said, “We need to do this, this, and this.” They were all nodding, agreeing with each other’s points. After that, they got up, walked out of the room, and did what they proposed ... they did it! And these weren’t easy things to do; it involved moving some folks around, changing some shifts, and parting ways with a couple of employees. That put us on a path to substantial performance improvement. After that experience, I continued using financial benchmarks in that business and the two others I led.

**“However, it’s interesting that other research indicates that only a few small business leaders analyze their financial data using ratios and benchmarks.”**

My experience shared above is supported by the printing industry research we conducted in 2016 and again in 2022. Both studies found a strong relationship between financial analysis and financial performance. However, it’s interesting that other research indicates that only a few small business leaders analyze their financial data using ratios and benchmarks. It’s also interesting that with the advancements we’ve seen in accounting technology, it appears the proportion of small business leaders who analyze financials has not grown over recent decades.

My experience and research prompted a desire to provide printing association members with financial benchmarks that would help build a strategy for improving performance and developing a competitive advantage.



**This year's Neographics Celebration was a huge hit!** (see pages 8-13).



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## TEN WAYS TO SAVE WITH PACKSIZE

By using the On Demand Packaging® system, companies eliminate all the empty space inside their packaging. On demand packaging means less corrugated, less void filler, and a smaller impact on the environment. PIA members save \$11,000 with waived equipment fee.

### 1. USE LESS CORRUGATED:

By using smaller boxes, on demand packaging users significantly reduce their corrugated cardboard spend.

### 2. MINIMIZE VOID FILL

The smallest possible box means there's a reduced need for non-recyclable void fillers, eliminating up to 50 percent used.

### 3. REDUCE BOX MANAGEMENT

Companies that use packaging on demand don't need to worry about managing a large box inventory.

### 4. OPTIMIZE WAREHOUSE SPACE

By eliminating a large box inventory, companies can free up valuable warehouse space. Store products instead of boxes.

### 5. MINIMIZE DAMAGES

Damage to your products often occur when they jostle around inside the carton. Eliminating that empty space has been proven to greatly reduce damages.

### 6. REDUCE INFRASTRUCTURE

Right-sized boxes mean you get more bang for your buck from existing infrastructure. More boxes can fit in a truck, a conveyor, or any other part of your supply chain.

### 7. INCREASE THROUGHPUT

When companies are able to create any sized box at any time, orders can be turned around quicker by eliminating box size guesswork.

### 8. REDUCE SHIPPING COSTS

Major shipping companies charge for packages based on weight and size; it's more important than ever to minimize your box sizes.

### 9. INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY

Packsize customers use less corrugated and filler material, while also improving their shipping activities. This results in less trees cut, less landfills filled, and cleaner air for all.

### 10. INCREASE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Your customers don't want to have to throw away oversized boxes and the copious amounts of void filler sent with them. Smaller boxes reduce damages and improve your customers' brand experience.

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**COVER CONTINUED**

● **Financial numbers tell a “story.”**

- Where are we now?
- What trends are present?
- Are the trends consistent with the path we desire?
- In what areas should we change to improve?

● **Here are examples of benefits financial benchmarking can provide:**

- Improve efficiency... do more with less.
- Increase sustainability... mitigate business threats.
- Focus on the right problems... should we focus on selling more or attacking costs?
- Make your business attractive to investors and lenders.
- Improve owner return... that’s your return!
- Improve profits and cash... what you take home!

**"It is possible that higher-performing printing companies are achieving “economies of scale” – producing more from their investment in equipment and/or building."**

We conducted our first financial benchmarking survey this past spring (2023). Below, I provide key takeaways from our study, but I strongly encourage you to read our study and start developing the process of using this performance-enhancing tool annually.

**Key Takeaways**

Below I provide the differences we found between high-performing printing firms and all printing firms. What causes these differences? ... we don’t know! But we provide some possibilities.

● **High-performing firms spend less on “total materials and outside services.”**

- When this happens, more revenue transitions to profit after “in-house” costs, such as wages, building expenses, and others, are paid. That has a positive effect on the bottom line.
- Higher-performing printing firms may charge higher prices, resulting from an effective estimating/pricing approach.
- Higher pricing may result from printing firms identifying their target market and the value they provide for those customers... they are providing a value for which customers will pay more.
- Related to the point below, higher-performing printing firms may provide services that complement their printed product, such as logistics, fulfillment, marketing consulting, website design, design, photography, and others.

● **High performers spend less on “total factory costs.”**

- Certainly, this could result from a focus – a culture – producing more efficiency and less waste.
- It is possible that higher-performing printing companies are achieving “economies of scale” – producing more from their investment in equipment and/or building. That may result from less “downtime,” operating multiple shifts, or increasing revenue without expanding production capacity.
- Interestingly, we found that higher-performing printing firms incurred a bit more depreciation expense. Higher performers may invest in new equipment or automation.

● **High performers incur less “administrative costs.”**

- Possible reasons include the following: staff members taking on multiple roles, increasing revenue without increasing admin staff, applying technology to replace manual tasks, or higher-quality admin staff members.

● **High performers spent more on “total sales and marketing costs.”**

- I will say this differently; they “invest” more in sales and marketing. From other research we’ve done in our industry, it appears that marketing planning is vital to generating a return for an investment in sales and marketing. Marketing planning involves the following: identifying your target market, determining and delivering a value that is important to your target market, and having an effective plan for connecting with your target market.

● **Providing related services enhances financial performance.**

- If done right! That includes choosing the right related services to provide (a few are mentioned above) and producing them effectively and efficiently. We’ve seen multiple printing companies do this well, and we’ve seen multiple printing companies fail at this. But if done right, it helps!

*Continued on page 5*

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**5 MYTHS IN SALES****FIVE SALES FRUSTRATIONS**

By Bill Farquharson, The Sales Vault



Over the course of my many, many sales conversations, I hear reps and owners express a lot of frustration. If you believe them, everyone else is a Rock Star sales rep who is currently killing it while they are suffering, alone, and almost certain to fail completely. Allow me to dispel the five myths I hear most frequently:

**1. “Everyone else can remember names except me”**— Let me tell you something, this is a universal issue we all share, regardless of whether you are in sales. My best hope for remembering a name is to repeat it back to someone immediately and then use it again in the first seconds of a conversation, or in this case, an introduction:

**Allison:** “Bill, I’d like you to meet Linnea.”

**Me:** “Pleased to meet you, Linnea. Tell me, Linnea, how do you know Allison?”

There. Now I’ve heard it three times in 30 seconds. That increases the odds the name “Linnea” is resident on one of my brain cells.

**2. “Everyone’s sales are going great except mine”**—Nnnnope! Other reps or owners might tell you their sales are up, but take it from someone who’s had this conversation for decades, for every one person who is killing it, there is one who is in the sales doldrums.

**3. “Sales comes easily to everyone else but me”**— Oh, so you think others just walk in and walk out with an order? Don’t believe the stories you hear of sales bravado. Reps who tell boastful this-is-how-I-closed-a-huge-order also tell their kids tales of walking to and from school uphill both ways. Everyone is the hero in their own story. No one’s sales come easy. We are all struggling to succeed.

**4. “I am the only one who’s physically and mentally drained”** — There has been a lot of attention paid to mental health of late and that is a good thing. Ask someone, “How are things going?” and you are much more likely to hear a truthful answer — “To be honest, I’m not 100%.”

There is a great scene in the movie Phenomenon where John Travolta is apologizing to his best friend, played by Forrest Whitaker, and says, “I’m going through something” to which Whitaker replies, “Everyone is going through something.”

**5. “My company sucks and there is something else better out there”**—You start at a company and everything is awesome. Soon, you start to see the flaws. Eventually, it is inevitable to think, “I wish I worked elsewhere. It is better there.” The thing is, though, it’s not. That company has blemishes, too. So does that one. And that one. Listen, if you don’t like your job, do something about it. If it is extreme, go ahead and quit. Otherwise, control what you can control, shut up, and sell.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of sales people work on an island—we’re either the only sales rep, or a selling owner doubling as the sales force. Thoughts like these creep in and it is hard to keep them out.

My advice is to stay focused on the selling activities. Make it your goal to finish every day having done your job. Do the right activities and the results will follow.

**Sales Vault members meet via Zoom 3x a week, helping to dispel self-defeating myths like these. PGCA members receive a discount on the Sales Vault subscription. Visit [salesvault.pro/partners](https://salesvault.pro/partners) for more information.**

**COVER CONTINUED**

● **It appears that higher performers manage cash better – “days in inventory,” “days in accounts receivable,” and “days in accounts payable.”**

- As mentioned above, in other printing industry studies we’ve found a strong relationship between financial analysis and performance. Those findings reinforce what we saw in this study ...higher performers better manage cash.
- Better cash management prepares your company for surprises by building a war chest. Also, cash management can help you see coming problems before they surprise you. There are good cash management details and suggestions in our report.



- There are winners in our industry. Use financial benchmarks to help move your firm into that chorus!

We hope these key takeaways prompt good thinking for you and your leadership team. There is much, much more in our report... a lot more numbers and explanation of how to calculate and use those numbers. Furthermore, our report provides numbers for various industry segments. We would have liked to have provided more information related to industry segments, but we needed more survey participants. Hopefully, you will see value in our report and participate in next spring’s PIPI – Financial Benchmarking Study. If you have any questions or suggestions, please email me at [ralph.williams@mtsu.edu](mailto:ralph.williams@mtsu.edu).

● **There are high performers in our industry, and they ROCK!**

- We were astounded by some of the EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization) and ROA (Return-on-Assets) we found among high performers!
- Average EBITDA of about 19% and average ROA of 34.5% among high performers. And these weren’t the product of a few outliers.

**About the Author:** For over twenty-five years, Dr. Ralph Williams has worked in the printing industry, serving as president of three companies (holding an ownership stake in two). Ralph then worked as a consultant for several printing firms. He earned a doctorate in Business Administration from the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University. Ralph is actively engaged in printing industry associations – conducting industry research, writing articles and speaking at association events.

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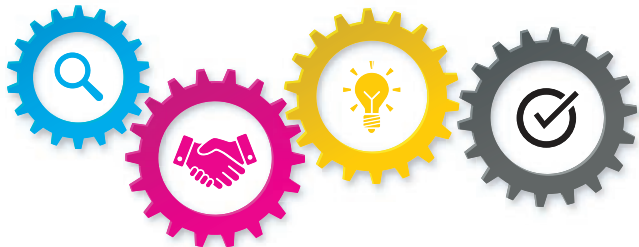
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# HR Academy: Essential Training for Managers & Supervisors

Six Monthly, 60 to 90-minute webinars  
from November 16, 2023 to April 25, 2024



## Program Description

In response to our membership's request for more effective and convenient supervisor training opportunities, the PCGA is pleased to announce that the Association will be offering a series of six 60 to 90 minute webinars on managing employees effectively while complying with employment laws. Association Counsel Nick Fiorenza and Mike Dodd of the Ferrara Fiorenza Law Firm will present these programs.

## HR Academy Objectives

The program's goals are to teach managers and supervisors effective human resource management skills which maximize organizational success and minimize the risk of employment related litigation. Ultimately, it is our objective to provide the participating companies with a roadmap for not only complying with complex statutory, administrative, and judicial regulations, but also to demonstrate how their employees can thrive in such an environment.



### Session

# 1

## Keeping Supervisors on the Right Side of Workplace Law

📅 **November 16, 2023; 10:30 am - 12 Noon**

It is often difficult for managers and supervisors to appreciate that the workplace is regulated unlike any other social setting. Conduct and speech accepted and even encouraged outside of work can be a minefield of potential legal pitfalls during the workday. This class will offer your supervisors a baseline understanding of the workplace as a legal arena so they can spot and avoid the most common trouble spots.

### Learning objectives include:

- Understanding that the "supervisor is the employer" for most employment purposes;
- Learning the practical meaning of and implications surrounding anti-discrimination laws;
- Appreciating the possibility and ramifications of personal liability;
- Learning the most common employment laws they encounter daily – often without knowing it; and
- Learning powerful lessons of applying principles of "Real" and "Legal" fairness at work.

### Session

# 2

## How to be an Effective Leader in your Company

📅 **January 9, 2024; 10:30 am - 12 Noon**

Whether they realize it or not, your supervisors are leaders of your business. Effective management today requires so much more than core technical knowledge. Today's workforce has changed dramatically, and effective management demands an appreciation of this leadership role. Many supervisors are promoted into supervisory positions from production positions. All too often, these supervisors have difficulty transitioning from "friend" to supervisor. This session will help participants: (1) acquire a set of leadership skills that will increase their ability to lead and influence others more effectively, and (2) enhance their ability to prepare for important one-on-one discussions at work, based on an assessment of the tasks and relationships involved.

Session  
**3**

### Employment Documentation (Finally) Done Right!

February 15, 2024; 10:30 am - 12 Noon

Forms and templates simply don't work. For years supervisors have heard HR managers' – and lawyers – mantra of "document, document, document." Yet, many times, a supervisor's documentation in an employment dispute does more harm than good. Understandably preoccupied with getting their jobs "out the door", few know how to do it right. This session will offer your supervisors powerful techniques to capture the essence of employee performance and conduct issues so often lost on even the best supervisors.

**Trainees will learn:**

- All communication – writing, text, video and more – formal and informal is "documentation", whether we want it to be or not;
- How to create documentation that will justify employment actions when reviewed by auditors, investigators or judges; and ...
- How to avoid creating negative documentation, i.e., documentation that "can be used against you in a court of law".

Session  
**4**

### What You Need to Know about Managing Disability Related Absences

March 7, 2024; 10:30 am - 12 Noon

Few issues cause more confusion and frustration than the uncertainties of long-term absences. Supervisors are often unaware of the legal protections at play and of the effective tools they can employ to manage extended time away from work proactively and appropriately. This session addresses the potential conflicts caused by overlapping federal and state laws concerning employee leaves of absence, i.e., the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the State workers' compensation laws, and other time off statutes. It presents managers with both a practical guide to complying with these statutes, and helps identify issues related to disability absences, and the avoidance of the legal pitfalls associated with this important aspect of human resource management. Learn to successfully comply with these complex and overlapping laws.

Session  
**5**

### Eliminating the Root Causes of Employment Discrimination and Harassment

April 11, 2024; 10:30 am - 12 Noon

Discrimination and harassment lawsuits continue to cost employers dearly and have a profoundly adverse impact on our workplaces. This session will set aside the ever-increasing list of "dos and don'ts" that characterize most discrimination/harassment workshops today. Employees are either unable or unwilling to internalize this list or otherwise apply the principles presented. The fact that complaints of discrimination and harassment are on the rise is, in part, an indication that traditional training has failed. This workshop focuses on the root causes of these complaints and how to eliminate them. We offer the proven best practices for protecting your company from discrimination/harassment claims.

Session  
**6**

### Turning Around the Non-Performing Employee (or Turning Them Loose)

April 25, 2024; 10:30 am - 12 Noon

Truly essential training for all supervisors, this program will offer the key skills necessary to effectively manage the non-performer. Participants will be instructed on: (1) how to recognize the difference between a training problem and a motivation problem; (2) how to motivate employees; and (3) how to perform legally defensible progressive discipline, up to and including discharge. The program will address important aspects of conducting an effective investigation of employee conduct as well as review the legally sound and practical techniques for documenting the process.

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**HR Academy Pricing:** *PGCA members receive a significant discount on this training and a further discount is available when registering for multiple sessions.*

**Association members:**

- Single session:** \$149.00 per connection
- 2 sessions @** \$129.00 per connection
- 3+ sessions @** \$109.00 per connection

**Non-members:**

- Single session:** \$219.00 per connection
- 2 sessions @** \$199.00 per connection
- 3+ sessions @** \$179.00 per connection

**Select Each Session:**

- Nov. 16, 2023**
- Feb. 15, 2024**
- Apr. 11, 2024**
- Jan. 9, 2024**
- Mar. 7, 2024**
- Apr. 25, 2024**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Visit [printcommunications.org/events/](https://printcommunications.org/events/)

- **PGCA Holiday Party**  
December 7, 2023  
The Terrace, Buffalo, NY
- **PGCA HR Conference**  
May 2 & 3, 2024  
Turning Stone, Verona, NY
- **Americas Print Show**  
May 8-9, 2024  
Huntington Convention Center  
Cleveland, OH

## WEBINARS

- **Environmental Hazards of Printer Towels**  
November 8, 2023 | 2:00 pm
- **Short Attention Span Webinar — Building Trust**  
November 9, 2023 | 11:30 am
- **Avoiding the Most Common Overtime Classification Mistakes**  
Nov. 7, 2023 & Dec. 5, 2023 | 10:30 am
- **HR Academy Essential Training for Managers & Supervisors**  
Six Monthly webinars  
November 16, 2023 – April 25, 2024

Visit [printcommunications.org](https://printcommunications.org) to access:

**PGCA Online Safety Webinars:**  
17 webinars on mandatory and recommended safety training topics.

**Print University Webinars:**  
60+ webinars on print industry fundamentals.



## NEOGRAPHICS 2023 CELEBRATION

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR 2023 NEOGRAPHICS AWARD WINNERS!

On October 5th, close to 200 members of the NY, NJ, PA, and DE Print community gathered together at the Cescaphe Ballroom in Philadelphia for the NEOGRAPHICS "Print Rocks the 80's" Awards celebration.

As attendees entered the gates of the Cescaphe Ballroom, they were transported into the totally tubular decade of the 1980's! Colorful Wayfarer sunglasses and Rubik's Cubes were everywhere, 80's hits were blasting from the boomboxes, and a heavily modified plastic Joan Rivers greeted all on the red carpet! All the winning entries were displayed in a retro arcade where guests challenged each other to see who could capture the highest score in Pacman, Galaxia, and Donkey Kong!

Our guests enjoyed 80's themed cocktails such as the bright fuchsia "Cyndi Lauper" and the strong Manhattan-inspired "Billy Idol". The Cescaphe, as always, did not disappoint, providing a wide variety of food during the cocktail hour and the dinner buffet that was sure to please every palate.



The Awards dinner was kicked off by a blast from the past, leg-warmers-wearing, big-haired, Aquanet-armed, PGCA Co-President Melissa Jones, who welcomed everyone in traditional Valley Girl fashion. Then special guest impersonator, Linda Axelrod as Joan Rivers, asked the audience, "Can We Talk?" and proceeded to explain life and its tribulations through eyes heavily lined with Botox and Juvederm injections. The audience was engaged, and sometimes razzed, by Rivers, but all in good fun.

Special guest speaker, Eric Vessels of WhatTheyThink fame, gave beatbox lessons reminiscent of Run-D.M.C.'s "My Adidas" and proved that the rhythm of the Print Nation continues to beat on no matter what decade it is.

Over 100 awards were presented to amazing printers in the NY, NJ, PA and DE region for their excellence in our craft. The Standard Group of Reading & Lititz, PA, took home the coveted POWER of PRINT trophy for their amazing piece, "Brearley School Bulletin" with Team Hatteras trailing closely behind as they were awarded 1st Runner up for their beautiful packaging piece, "Peter Thomas Roth Blue Hydrate Influencer Kit". SureFold of Philadelphia, PA, snatched up the People's Choice award for their stunning entry, "Google Gala Menu Folder with Inserts". Alcom Printing Group, Brenneman Printing, PDC Graphics, Diamond Packaging, Zenger Group, The Anstadt Company, Hatteras, Intellicor, DMR/INNVOKE, WestRock, and Millersville University and CTC of Lackawanna County students all won Best of Category awards.

We hope to see you next year at NEOGRAPHICS! Remember, PGCA Members receive one free entry and winning a NEOGRAPHICS award is a great way to demonstrate your company's excellence in PRINT!

Melissa Jones, PGCA Co-President





▲ Melissa Jones, PGCA, Jeff Hale and Brian Francis, Fort Nassau Graphics, Joan Rivers Impersonator (Linda Axelrod)



▲ Glenn Mertz, Danielle Mertz, Sarah Ohanesian, Greg Ohanesian, Jessica Ohanesian, The Wordtech Group, getting into the 80's vibe



▲ Eric Vessels, WhatTheyThink, getting his groove on



▲ Kaitlin Rocco, Bill Alpaugh, Arissa Dickison, Amanda Tarsia, Kylie Corso, Morgan Sprengel, Joe Placa, Savannah Scarpulla, Michele Mulvey from Hatteras





▲ People's Choice award winner, Scott Norris (Prisco), Mike Shafer, Allen Geiser, Krista Dougherty, Mike Duffy from Surefold and Todd LaPresti (Canon)



▲ Steve Stankavage (PGCA), presents SquareOne with the EHS Excellence Award, Robert Powell, Axel Gomez, Edwin Muralles, Sabrina Walter, Andy Biernat (GKG), Beth Carroll, Amber Lawrence, Isaiah Louis, Christina Notarfrancesco, Sarah Armstrong & Ross Kraft (GKG), Anthony Deford, Square One



▲ Power of Print award winner, Jeff Pintof, Andrea Keller, The Standard Group



▲ Mark McElvaney (Case Paper), Doug Miller of Zenger Group



▲ Kitty Fallows (Heidelberg), Rebecca Rinella-Hayden of CTC of Lackwanna County, Susan Gatto (Heidelberg)



▲ Jim Simpkins, Barbara Ganci, Dune Grass Publishing



▲ Jim Rosenthal, Dave Snyder (ITU AbsorbTech), John Rosenthal, Nick Falgiano (ITU AbsorbTech), Tom Monteleone, PDC Graphics



▲ Mark Snyder, Reagan Steinberg, Sydney Hargrove (Millersville University)



▲ Steve Ritter, Alyson Bauerle, Don Eichman, Judy Bauerle, Bronson Bandasack, Maria Kennedy, Paul Sicinski from Alcom Printing Group



▲ Joe Walsh, Krista Fawber, Kelly Xydis, Paul Brandt, Kathy Hoffman, Jeff Tyler from Westrock



▲ Neo guests ended the night with a rousing singalong!



▲ Joel North, Kevin Menden (FujiFilm), Sheron Shank, Fred Heinkel (FujiFilm), Chris Houtz, Andrea Keller, Erich Mogel, Keegan Worley, Thomas Best (APPI Energy), Ashlyn Maynard, Andy Hoffman, from The Standard Group

## NEOGRAPHICS AWARDS NIGHT AND MEMBER AWARDS



▲ Mike Potemra, Tia Bradley, Julia Farmer and Terri Bridgwater, Intellicor



▲ Ian Harker from DMR Graphics



▲ PGCA Chairmen Adam Avrick and Jim Rosenthal talk with Eric Vessels from WhatTheyThink



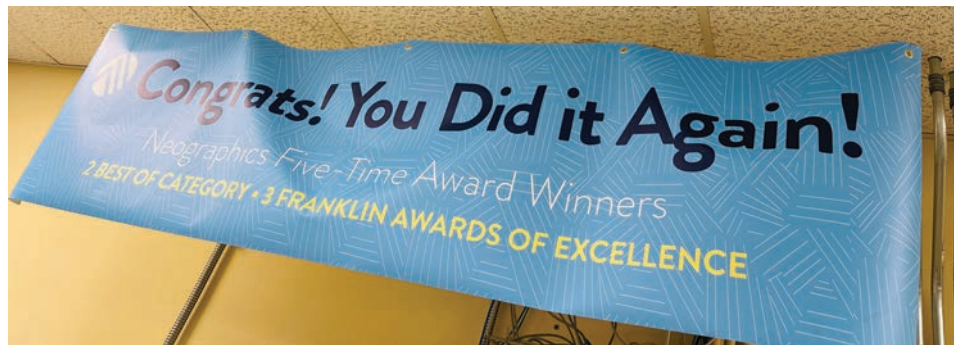
▲ Hatteras crew with their NEO trophies from over the years, in their Tinton Falls, NJ facility



▲ Alcom displays their numerous awards in their lobby in Harleysville, PA



▲ (Photos Above) The Standard Group displays their array of NEO awards from this and previous years in their Lititz, PA facility



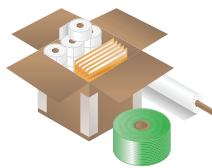
◀ A banner hangs in The Anstadt Company's facility in York, PA, congratulating their staff on five Neo awards

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## NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT

### GCSF CARRIES ON CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE OUR NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT

By Patrick Henry, Liberty or Death Communications

More than 20 years ago, a few good friends of the industry gathered in a borrowed conference room at a Manhattan printing firm with a clear purpose in mind.

They knew that higher education in graphic communications is expensive. They also understood that for many students, finding the money to pay for it can turn into a distracting preoccupation.



Recipients of GCSF scholarships and grants appeared with members of its Board of Directors at this year's scholarship awards ceremony in NYC.

That made their goal to relieve some of the financial pressure so that the focal point of students' lives could be their academic endeavors, not anxiety about tuition bills. A number of print-focused scholarship funds already existed, but they weren't being actively managed – putting the money beyond the reach of the deserving students who needed it.

The friends – all working without resources other than their own, and on their own time – took the idle funds under their administrative wing and started a campaign of outreach to student applicants, schools, and donors.

The first grants under the renewed effort were made in 2002. From that back-of-the-envelope beginning arose the Graphic Communications Scholarship Foundation (GCSF), which continues to be one of the industry's most noteworthy sources of funding for professional education.

#### All-Volunteer Approach

GCSF, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation, is special among printing industry scholarship funds in being established and operated entirely by uncompensated volunteers. The Foundation does all of its own fundraising and manages its business affairs without an external support staff.

One hundred percent of the money that GCSF collects is given to students of graphic communications – there are no deductions for salaries, overhead or management expenses.

To date, GCSF has contributed over \$1.4 million to the cause of print industry education in scholarships presented to more than 350 students. GCSF scholarship awardees have pursued their studies at the School of Visual Arts, Rochester Institute of Technology, Pratt Institute, Parsons the New School for Design, and Rhode Island School of Design, among others.

Many are repeat recipients. Students who qualify for their first grants in freshman year can go on applying for them throughout the course of their four-year degrees and graduate studies programs. The Foundation's selection committee determines eligibility by evaluating applicants' test scores, grade point averages, portfolios, and other criteria.

GCSF also makes grants to institutions that teach graphic communications or promote it as a medium for people to use. This year, for example, funding went to the Department of Communication Design at New York City College of Technology; and to Women's Press Collective, a Bronx-based organization that teaches community groups how to print in support of the causes they espouse.

### Mentorship and Training

Scholarships and grants aren't GCSF's only initiatives on behalf of graphics education. The Foundation also operates a mentoring program that pairs students with veteran members of the industry for guided, hands-on learning experiences in real-world business settings.

Mentoring includes one-on-one coaching, workplace assignments, plant tours, participation at trade shows and events, and other activities designed to streamline students' entry into the industry. In this way, they gain both the practical knowledge and the personal confidence they will need for success in their chosen fields.

Expert, professional-level training in Adobe prepress software, provided free of charge to students, rounds out GCSF's

menu of educational offerings to the next generation of the industry's workforce.

Throughout its history, the Foundation has drawn the financial assistance it provides from individual donors, corporate sponsors, and its own fundraising events.



The generous supporters of education include printing companies, technology suppliers, publishers, trade associations, and industry members who have endowed grants in the names of people they wish to memorialize.

The Advertising Production Club of New York (APC-NYC), an industry sister-organization with a similar focus on education and training, has contributed significantly to GCSF's scholarship fund over the past five years. APC-NYC has also collaborated with GCSF on numerous industry events benefiting graphics professionals and students aspiring to join the workforce.

To learn more about GCSF, visit <https://gcsfny.org>. Those who would like to get personally involved with the work it does can contact John Aaron, the Foundation's President, at (917) 861-9110 or by e-mail at [johnlaron2000@aol.com](mailto:johnlaron2000@aol.com).

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## IN MEMORIAM

We were saddened to hear the news of the passing of Bob Kosineski, founder of Benchmark Printing in Schenectady, NY. Mr. Kosineski, a resident of Amsterdam, NY and Delray Beach, FL, died on March 23, 2023 at the age of 80.

In 1985, he established Benchmark Printing and was soon joined by his sons Robert Jr. and Brian, who continue operating the business. He also owned and ran the Amsterdam Recorder for several years. He was a proud member of the Amsterdam Municipal Golf Commission, as well as the Bigelow Weaver Association.

Bob was well known for his generosity to the community with kindness of heart and a lust for life. He was a master of lawn games, a lifelong Yankees fan, a Disney devotee and avid golfer.

In addition to his sons, Robert Jr. and Brian, Bob is survived by his wife Pauline, four grandchildren, three sisters-in-law and a multitude of family and friends. Our sincere condolences to the Kosineski family and the Benchmark Printing community.



[www.printcommunications.org](http://www.printcommunications.org)

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We've written about that "crazy" customer with the over-reaching demands (quality, price, service) and the strains it puts on your production and sales team. Yet, why do some print providers gravitate to these types of customers? Too frequently, it's the company, which is in dire straits and needs the sales, but there are some firms who can make these types of customers a successful part of their business model. Are they crazy too?

First, they've taken the time to actively study the customer and have met with a broad range of the client's decision makers to understand the underlying forces which makes the customer "crazy." They then find ways to guide (manage) the process so that their production resources can match up with those demands. The second factor is having a "yes, we can make it happen," attitude from the front office to the shipping department. If your personnel don't have a strong "make it happen" attitude, demanding clients will rupture the organization. Last, but not least, is making sure that the contribution levels of the work (as a whole) will meet the print provider's financial model. It's easier said than done, but there are many firms in our industry who have made a success of dealing with "crazy" clients.

**About the Authors:** quoins2pixels is written by Bob Lindgren and Joe Polanco. As a value-added service of PGCA, they are available to expand on these articles, or aid with projects. Bob can be reached at (818) 219-3855 and Joe at jspolanco49@gmail.com.



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