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PRINT & GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION: Your Regional Resource Providing Business Support Services and Connections

As 2024 draws to a close, we wanted to recap the issues, events and activities that Print & Graphic Communication Association has been working on throughout the year, on behalf of our membership.

As you know, PGCA has a wealth of services and benefits available to our members, and we are constantly adding new ones to help our members grow and enrich their businesses. Don't hesitate to reach out to the PGCA team if you have any questions, concerns or challenges of any kind!

Highlights from 2024:

- **PGCA prevails on proposed New York State ban on black printing ink containing carbon black.** In the spring, Tim Freeman spearheaded the campaign against this proposed legislation that would have been devastating to the packaging and label business in New York State. Melissa Jones recently gave testimony to the New Jersey legislature on the proposed ban in that state.
- In September, PGCA announced that the **Printing & Graphics Association MidAtlantic (PGAMA) has officially joined PGCA.** With this strategic unification, PGCA expands its influence and offers PGAMA members an enhanced array of services while preserving PGAMA's rich history and legacy. PGCA welcomed two staff members, Debbie Woolbright and Mike Vares, formerly with PGAMA.
- **PGCA's Environmental, Health & Safety program,** staffed by Steve Stankavage, Director of EHS, had a very busy year assisting members with safety and environmental audits and reporting, fielding regulatory questions, conducting training programs and advising members on environmental and safety reporting.
- Held the **22nd Annual Human Resources & Employment Law Solutions Conference** in May at Turning Stone, with nearly 150 HR professionals in attendance. This event is highly regarded as the premier HR conference in the region. Mark your calendar for May 1 & 2, 2025 for next year's conference.
- Held a number of other **in-person events across our territory,** including three golf outings, four Topgolf events, three holiday parties, three Women in Print luncheons, two Printers & Pints events, a Cocktails & Connections event, and a luncheon for the Power of the Printed Word Project.



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 call: (856) 308-2851
 visit: printcommunications.org/member-discounts/

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Visit printcommunications.org

→ 22nd Annual Human Resources & Employment Law Solutions Conference

Turning Stone Resort, Verona, NY
May 1 & 2, 2025

WEBINARS

→ AI Sales Accelerator: Close More Details with Cutting-Edge Techniques

4 Session Virtual Training Program With Linda Bishop, Thought Transformation

- ☐ Session 1: Jan. 9, 2025 | 1:00 pm
- ☐ Session 2: Jan. 16, 2025 | 1:00 pm
- ☐ Session 3: Jan. 23, 2025 | 1:00 pm
- ☐ Session 4: Jan. 30, 2025 | 1:00 pm

→ Monthly Briefs with Kelly Mallozzi, SuccessinPrint

- ☐ Breaking through Buyer Noise with Personalization (Marketing Brief)
January 2, 2025 | 1:30 pm
- ☐ Future-Proofing Manufacturing: Bridging the Skills Gap and Building Resilient Workforces (Company Culture Brief)
January 9, 2025 | 1:30 pm
- ☐ Winning in 2025: Navigating Shifting Buyer Behavior, AI, and the Future of Sales (Sales Brief)
January 16, 2025 | 1:30 pm

→ HR Academy (See page 10)

- ☐ Session 4: January 14, 2025
10:30 am – 12:30 pm
- ☐ Session 5: February 25, 2025
10:30 am – 11:45 am
- ☐ Session 6: March 25, 2025
10:30 am – 11:30 am

→ Exploring Printing Association Benefits

Presented by Dr. Ralph Williams, Professor, Jones School of Business, Middle Tennessee State University
January 15, 2025 | 1:30 pm

→ PGCA Safety Training Webinars

Visit printcommunications.org

COVER CONTINUED

- **Webinars were held on essential topics** including the Basic Finance for Managers series, the continuing HR Academy series, Virtual Town Hall with Nick Fiorenza, Breakfast with OSHA webinar, Mail Design Consultant Certification Course, various webinars featuring Kelly Mallozzi and Master Class Webinars with Debbie Nicholson.
- Offered an extensive array of **Member Discount programs** offering big savings to members on Workers' Compensation and other essential business insurance, printer towels, UPS shipping, credit cards and more (see page 2).
- PGCA members regularly accessed the **Print University online training** covering print fundamentals that can be used for onboarding new employees or further educating current employees.

PGCA is working on setting up a full schedule of events for next year. Make it a point in 2025 to engage with PGCA and your fellow members at in person or virtual events!

Our best wishes for a Happy Holiday and a prosperous and healthy New Year!



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SEASON'S GREETINGS

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO MAKE THE PGCA HOLIDAY CARD!

This is the fourth year that PGCA has printed their holiday card on the Vandercook 4 letterpress at Book Arts in downtown Buffalo.

If you're not familiar with Book Arts, their facility is a welcoming space dedicated to supporting makers and fostering a deeper appreciation of the transformative power of print and book arts through hands-on creation, education, and exhibition.

Our thanks go to Rosemary Williams, Education Director at Book Arts, who helped Kim Tuzzo and Caroline Wawrzyniec with the concept and final design of this year's cards. Rosemary's patience and artistic sensibility is invaluable to creating a memorable design.

This year, members got involved in the printing process, by taking their turn cranking the press at the PGCA Christmas Party held on December 4th at Book Arts. Steve Zenger, Zenger Group and former PIA Chairman and Andy Biernat, Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy, among other partygoers, took a turn creating a one of kind work of art.



Steve Zenger, Zenger Group (left) and Andy Biernat, Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy (GKG), show off their printed holiday cards.



Rosemary Williams, Book Arts, demonstrates letterpress printing to Alec Rocha, Zenger Group (left) and Andy Biernat, GKG.

Now to get these beautiful cards into the hands of our members! Envelopes with a seasonal greeting were donated by Shipman Printing Solutions, located in Sanborn, NY. Our thanks to Mike Fiore at Shipman for taking care of all of PGCA's envelope needs.

Finally, the stamps used on the envelopes were printed by PGCA member Ashton-Potter Security Printers, located in Williamsville, NY. Daryl DeMont at Ashton Potter explained that if you see P1111 printed on the selvage of a booklet of stamps, that indicates the stamps were printed at Ashton Potter. The stamp nerds at PGCA were pretty excited to use the stamps printed by a member!

If you were on PGCA's "nice" list this year, look for one of our holiday cards in your mailbox! Next year, consider creating your own work of art at Book Arts, whether it's a holiday card, a poster or other original art. Go to wnybookarts.org and check out their schedule of classes.



Stamps printed by Buffalo area member Ashton Potter Security Printers on envelopes printed by Shipman Printing, Sanborn, NY, a PGCA Sponsor.



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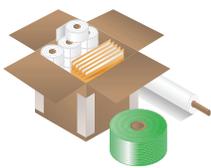
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PGCA HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

PGCA HOLIDAY PARTIES

Printers in Western New York celebrated at the PGCA Holiday Party held in early December at Book Arts. Attendees enjoyed magic by Mike Seege, refreshing cocktails and dinner buffet and the company of their colleagues in the industry.

Guests enjoyed visiting the working letterpress equipment at Book Arts and tried their hand at printing this year's PGCA holiday card (see article on page 4). Many former PIA Chairmen and Board members were in attendance, including Patrick Ryan, Modern Press, Albany, NY, PIA Chairman 2013-2015, Steve Zenger, Zenger Group, Tonawanda, NY, PIA Chairman, 2006-2009, and Kathie Hartmans, Quality Bindery, Buffalo, NY, PIA Chairwoman, 2019-2022.



Lft to Rt: Joe Zenger, Zenger Group, PIA Director, Doug Bolling, xpedx, (retired), PIA Director, Nick Fiorenza, Ferrara Fiorenza, Association Counsel, Kathie Hartmans, Quality Bindery Services, PIA Chairwoman, Tim Freeman, PGCA Co-President, Steve Zenger, Zenger Group, PIA Chairman, Pat Ryan, Modern Press, PIA Chairman.



Patrick Ryan, Modern Press, former PIA Chairman, and his daughter Katrina Ryan, enjoy amazing magic by Mike Seege.



PGCA MEMBERS CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY'S



Mike Seege firing up the crowd with his famous flaming wallet.



Lft to Rt: Barb Zenger, Michelle Miranda, Chris Zenger, Joe Zenger, Zenger Group, checking out the press equipment.

Holiday Party Sponsors



VIRGINIA



VA Party: On the right, Greg Falkenstein, Prisco, talks with Mike Cardoza, Worth Higgins.



At the Virginia Holiday Cocktail evening, some of the partygoers include Adam Silver, Worth Higgins, Stephanie Hoy, Direct Mail Solutions, Susan Caldwell, GMG Envirosafe, and Tim Freeman talking with Phil Repass of MCS.

MARYLAND



Photo above: The crowd at the Maryland party.



Lisa Miyasaki (left), Ironmark and Lauren Renz, GPA.



COCKTAILS & CONNECTIONS IN BALTIMORE

PGCA MEMBERS GET TOGETHER

Local members attended the Cocktails & Connections event held near Baltimore, Maryland on November 20th. The first board meeting was held that afternoon with new Board members from PGAMA joining the PGCA Board. Board members were introduced to new PGCA staff members Debbie Woolbright and Mike Vares.



Lft to Rt: Dan Pandoli, Unipak, PGCA Vice Chair, Mike Vares, PGCA staff, Barry Walsh, Konica Minolta and Jim Barlow, Mail Systems Management Consultants.



Lft to Rt: Glen Boehmer, Sentinel Innovation, incoming PGCA Chairman, Keegan Worley, The Standard Group, PGCA Board Member, Patrick Rafferty, Staples.



Lft to Rt: Kemper Matt, Dupli Envelope & Graphics, PGCA Board member, Keith Miller, Strategic Factory, Dwight Vicks, Vicks, PGCA Board member, Nick Fiorenza, Association Counsel, Adam Avrick, DDI-INK, PGCA Co-Chairman.



Lft to Rt: Derek Smoot and Hayden Gaeng, Peabody Press, Melissa Jones, PGCA.

The Man, the Myth, The Legend...

TIM FREEMAN CELEBRATES 40 YEARS WITH ASSOCIATION

In December of 1984, Tim Freeman was hired as Vice President by Printing Industries Association of New York State, by then PIA President, Nick Fiorenza. Tim was a graduate of LeMoyne College and had worked in human resources for several manufacturing firms. In 1984, PIA of NYS's territory consisted of upstate New York and Erie, PA.

In 1988, Nick Fiorenza left the Association to form his own law firm and Tim Freeman was appointed President. Working with 19 PIA Chairmen over the years, helming PIA during the acquisition of the Metro NYC territory, the Covid-19 crisis, successfully merging with GAA in 2023 and just recently acquiring the PGAMA territory, Tim has maintained PIA's financially secure position.

Along the way, Tim became known for his calm, friendly and positive demeanor and his willingness to go the extra mile for any member in need. If you call him at the office, Tim will always listen to your crisis of the day and if he doesn't know how to help you, he will find someone who could.

Some highlights from Tim's tenure at PIA/PGCA:

- **Spearheaded the PIA/PGCA Worker's Compensation Safety Group** and engineered the change of the group manager to Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy, during the early days of the Covid-19 crisis, which ensured the success of the Safety Group and the ability to continue its status as the most economical provider of Worker's Comp coverage for printers in New York State.
- **Tim wrote many grants over the years**, to conduct a study of Canadian print markets, to provide on-site safety training at no charge (annual grants over a 10+ year period) and a grant to run "Total Quality Management" training.
- **PIA purchased an office condominium in 1998** at their current location in Amherst, NY which has provided an economical home for Association's administrative offices for over 25 years.
- **Held a highly regarded Human Resources Conference** at Turning Stone, in conjunction with Association Counsel, Ferrara Fiorenza PC, which continues next spring with its' 22nd annual conference on May 1 & 2, 2025.
- **Held the Franklin Event annually in New York City** since 2007 (with Martha Stewart as the Franklin Award recipient, 550 guests and 49 corporate sponsors), which honored industry luminaries and celebrities and was regarded as the premier industry event for printers and vendors.



■ **Tim's advocacy on behalf of the industry** over the years has included campaigns against the "I Love NY" travel guide being printed in Canada, successfully opposing NYS efforts to amend sales tax law to make the sale of direct mail printing a taxable transaction, and efforts opposing NYSID, an organization receiving preferential treatment for NYS printing contracts. Most recently, Tim and the Association prevailed against bills in NYS and NJ, which proposed a ban on carbon black, the essential ingredient in printing ink.

■ **In 2015, PIA began a partnership with Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy (GKG)**, to provide strategic risk assessments to members. This relationship has proved invaluable to members as the GKG team works tirelessly to find the best solutions for your business.

■ **Tim planned countless successful events throughout our territory**, from management conferences, informal cocktail & connections gatherings, golf outings, as well as virtual webinars on topics of critical importance to members such as HR issues, safety updates, leadership training, etc.

■ **Starting with Joel Lee, Church Bulletins of Buffalo, Tim worked with 19 different Chairman of the Board**, including two Chairwomen, reporting on the Association's status on a quarterly basis at over 160 board meetings over the years, and keeping the Association on excellent financial footing.

Leading the Association through three territory expansions, four different Association names, Tim always had a steady hand and a calm disposition.

Tim's anniversary was celebrated at the recent PGCA Board meeting in Baltimore and also at the Buffalo Christmas Party. Along with other gifts, he was presented with a letterpress printed certificate honoring the anniversary which contained words that describe Tim, such as diplomatic, dynamic, empathetic, eternal optimist, unflappable, resilient, insightful, industry champion.

If Tim is not hard at work at the Association office, you can find him cheering on the Bills in Orchard Park, traveling to meet members in one of the seven states in PGCA's territory or pursuing his love of travelling the world and jumping off cliffs in Switzerland.

Little did Tim know in 1984 that four decades later, he would still be leading the Association. Lucky for PGCA and our members!

Thank you, Tim, for leading the Association for 40 years and all of your efforts to better the industry, guiding the association through epic industry changes, keeping the services relevant and meaningful and helping members, past and present, to run their businesses successfully. Don't stop now, the industry still needs you!



1



2



Tim Freeman was presented with a letterpress printed certificate honoring his 40 years with PIA/PGCA at the PGCA Board Meeting held in Baltimore, MD in November.

Leading the Print Industry Past and Present with a Smile!



3



Luis Villa, Atlantic Tomorrow's Office, PGCA Board member with Mariano Rivera, Hall of Fame Pitcher, 2023 Franklin Award for Distinguished Service Recipient, and Tim Freeman.



MIKE GROLL/Bufalo News
Timothy Freeman, left, president of the Printing and Imaging Association of New York State, and Raymond A. Bubar, president of Boncraft Printing in Orchard Park, are allies in a trade fight.

1. Golfing with PIA Chairmen: left to right, Joe Bellucci, PIA, Chris Pape, Monroe Litho, Steve Zenger, Zenger Group, Tony Pettrone, Cohber Press, Jerry Hace, Gooding Co., Inc. Tim Freeman.
2. Former PIA Chairmen at the open house for PIA's office condominium in 1998, left to right, Dick Remley, Albion Color, Tim Freeman, Tony Pettrone, Cohber Press, Frank Shipman, Shipman Printing, Ray Bubar, Boncraft Printing.
3. Tim cliff jumping in Switzerland.



Members lobbying in Washington, DC: left to right, Rich Barbara, PIA, Adam Avrick, Design Distributors, Steve Zenger, Zenger Group, Tim Freeman, PIA, Robert Tapella (25th Public Printer of the United States), Vicki Keenan, PIA, retired.

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HR Academy: Essential Training for Managers & Supervisors

60 to 90-minute webinars | Jan. 14, 2025
Feb. 25, 2025 and March 25, 2025

THE NEXT WEBINAR IN THE SERIES IS: What You Need to Know about Managing Disability Related Absences



January 14, 2025; 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

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.

This is a comprehensive 2-hour program that provides real-life solutions for employers dealing with excessive employee absenteeism. Attendees will learn how to have a system-wide, proactive approach to absences. Registrants will receive a link to the recording following the broadcast to allow more time to watch it.

The HR Academy series was created to teach managers and supervisors effective HR management skills to improve their day-to-day interaction with employees and minimize the risk of employment-related litigation.



The remaining sessions in the series are:

Session 5

Eliminating the Root Causes of Employment Discrimination and Harassment

February 25, 2025; 10:30 am - 11:45 am

Session 6

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

March 25, 2025; 10:30 am - 11:30 am

PGCA members receive a significant discount on the series, with a further discount offered when signing up for multiple webinars. Visit printcommunications.org/events for more information and to register.



FERRARA FIORENZA PC



EMPOWER STUDENTS

WESTERN NEW YORK MEMBERS PRINT POCKET CONSTITUTIONS

As we first reported over the summer, PGCA has partnered with the Bill of Rights Institute (BRI) on an inspiring project to enhance civic education and promote patriotism among our youth.

This partnership revolves around the creation and distribution of pocket-sized Constitutions. The booklets will include the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.

Buffalo member BNP Empowered Print has stepped up to donate 25,000 copies of the pocket Constitutions in what would be the largest contribution of in-kind services to date by a print service provider. Tom Majerski, President, and the crew at BNP donated paper and printing for the pocket Constitutions, which will be distributed to 250 high schools across New York State. Tom says he plans to run the booklets digitally, noting that their compact page flat size (7 x 5-in.) makes them very cost effective to impose and print.

Kathie Hartmans and the crew at Quality Bindery Services, also in Buffalo, is providing the finishing and shipping to the high school classes. Other members of Print & Graphic Communications Association, including Case Paper, Compu-Mail, Dupli Envelope & Printing, NB Bookbinding, PDC Graphics, Sentinel Innovation and The Standard Group, have donated a total of over \$5,000 to date, to cover mailing costs of the national project.

In Majerski's view, the extreme polarization of today's politics, biased news reporting, and the spread of disinformation make it urgent for printers to counter with time-honored truths, especially where young people are concerned.

"I think it's critical and almost our obligation to provide students with the documents that our Founding Fathers intended for this nation," he says. "These documents are critical to the principles



Pocket Constitution covers in process at BNP Empowered Print in Buffalo. The back cover features logos from BNP and Quality Bindery who produced the booklets and inside cover shows companies who made donations to the project.

of our country. It's logical and fitting that our industry plays a role in this. Print was so instrumental in disseminating these ideas."

"Print is believable," Majerski adds. "This is another great reason why we should be doing these types of things."*

This is an ongoing project so donations of printing and bindery services, paper and ink and cash contributions to support postage and distribution costs are always welcome.

All donations are tax-deductible. Supporting companies may choose to include their logo on the back of each pocket Constitution as well as information about careers in the printing industry.

Download printing specs at printcommunications.org/advocacy. Contact Tim Freeman at tim@printcommunications.org or (716) 691-3211 or Justin Goldstein, Director, Corporate Relations, Bill of Rights Institute at justin@mybri.org or call (412) 266-2098 to offer your help.

*Quotes originally from "Printers Rally to Cause of Sharing America's Founding Documents with Students", by Patrick Henry, which ran in the October 2024

SARATOGA SPRING WATER BOTTLES GET PANTONE COLOR NAME

Saratoga Spring Water's cobalt blue glass bottles have an official name, designated by the color company Pantone.

Saratoga Spring Water, a company with roots going back to 1872, was first sold in light blue glass bottles because the material was widely available and affordable. Over the years, it shifted to bottling in clear glass and green glass, introducing the cobalt blue bottle in 1996.



“There was a lot of discussion on how to capture the essence of that striking blue color and to honor the process our glass manufacturer has in place to ensure that every bottle of Saratoga Spring Water has the same exact hue,” said Brittany Aitken, senior brand manager of Saratoga Spring Water, which is bottled in the city. “Ultimately, we agreed that ‘Saratoga Signature Blue’ was perfect — this distinct hue is singularly a Saratoga Spring Water experience, and our Pantone name reflects that.”

Pantone, which recently named “Mocha Mousse” the Color of the Year for 2025, is known for its alphanumeric color-matching system, used by designers and manufacturers around the globe. The system includes thousands of colors and a relatively small portion of those have names. Saratoga Signature Blue is now one of them.

— As reported in the Daily Herald, Schenectady, NY



WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

This is an often-asked question a CEO/Owner asks themselves. Growth is a necessity of any company, but uncontrolled or undirected growth is dangerous. Before the going-forward question can be answered, one must look to history.

Who are my customers? Who are the profitable customers? What markets are served by these customers? What types of products do we produce for these profitable customers? Which of these products are profitable? Once we can answer these questions, we can then start looking forward, and it starts with our customers.

Where are these customers headed? Are they in mature or growing markets? Are there products we produce, and they're not buying from us? Are there products they buy, but we don't produce? Are there other similar customers and/or markets we don't serve who are potential customers? There are dozens of other questions we can ask, but we start by mapping our existing world and then see where the potential sales exist.

Once this mapping is accomplished, we can begin the strategic planning, which leads to more questions. Equipment. Technology. Personnel. While this seems to be an extremely complex task, given our dynamic industry, it's this type of strategic planning that provides success.

IT'S ALSO ABOUT FILLING UP THE PAIL

In the prior articles, we spoke about how our firm must focus on our customer and matching their needs with our capabilities, but we must remember that most print providers are also manufacturers. Unlike a sales organization (print management company/broker), we must create a printed product.

Our plant management must be focused on maximum utilization (producing sellable product every hour of the available day) and expanding capacity (additional shifts and/or equipment/technology). We can no longer live in the days that production must match how the job was quoted, which is how many MIS applications are built. There will be times when running a job on a digital press rather than an offset press (or visa versa) will allow us to meet deadlines or expand our capacity. We cannot let the cost sheet limit our ability to meet customer demands or expand our capacity. Yes, if we were to run our offset jobs on digital equipment on a regular basis, this may not be as profitable, but if it allows us to have more throughput and create more sales (contribution), that may not be a bad decision.

An analogy used by an old industry veteran was that every day/month/year, a company has a pail to fill. The pail represents fixed and direct costs (paper, click costs, labor, supplies, etc.). It's the sales team's job to produce the water and management's job to make sure the size of the pail is constant. Once the pail is full, any additional water (value added sales) overflows the bucket and creates profit.

About the Author: quoins2pixels is written by Joe Polanco. The author has spent decades in the printing industry, and held various management positions within the industry. As a value-added service of Print & Graphic Communications Association. Joe is available to expand on these articles, or aid with projects. Contact Joe at jspolanco49@gmail.com.

PGCA STAFF IS HERE TO HELP

Reach out to your PGCA staff with questions about your membership, a new "Member Ask a Member" query, or any other way we can assist you with making your business more successful.



COVERING KEY INDUSTRY TOPICS

Submit confidential questions to info@printcommunications.org

PGCA SAFETY GROUP MEMBERS RECEIVE DIVIDENDS

If you are a member of the PGCA Workers' Compensation Safety Group, the post office recently delivered a dividend check to you for the 2023-24 policy year. Dividend checks, 30% of discounted premium, averaged \$6,247.87 with the largest dividend check totaling \$73,835.30. Thanks to our Safety Group Manager, Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy, our members are enjoying record dividends!

The PGCA Workers' Compensation Safety Group continues to be the best way for printers to purchase NYS Workers' Compensation coverage.



The upfront discount (maximum 32.5% on April 1, 2025), combined with the consistent cash dividends and "best in class" services from Safety Group Manager Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy, delivers a quality program to participating members.

It's a No-Brainer! Find out how you can save

PGCA members who recently joined the Safety Group include Vicks Printing & Distribution, Yorkville, NY, TLF Graphics, Rochester, NY and PJ Green, Utica, NY. Visit printcommunications.org/insurance-nyswc to complete a no-obligation quote form or contact PGCA at info@printcommunications.org or Andy, Ross or Sarah at GKG (see contact information below).



NYS Workers' Compensation Safety Group by the Numbers



- (Up to) 62.5% annual savings
- 70+ PGCA members in the group
- 30% dividend checks for last policy year averaged \$6,247.87
- Save more than your dues investment
- Upfront discount of 32.5% at renewal for qualifying group members

"The premium savings far exceeds the cost of our membership. I highly recommend the GKG/PGCA team to other companies looking to grow and thrive like ours."

— **Ron LeBlanc,**

Vice President Finance/Partner
TLF Graphics, Rochester, New York

Contact PGCA at info@printcommunications.org or (716) 691-3211 to find out how you can save.

Contact Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy:

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PRINT LIVES! WANT PROOF? JUST CHECK YOUR MAILBOX THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

By Rick Kogan, Chicago Tribune, from Bo Sacks email newsletter

Long mourned as dying, or given up for dead, print is still kicking.

This is not the desperate daydream of a person clinging to the ink-on-paper world — I do use a computer, I do have an iPhone, I do know what Bluesky is — but rather a revelation based on recent observations.

It was only a few months ago that I agreeably wandered around the 22,000 square feet of City News Cafe, at 4018 N. Cicero Ave. It has been there for decades, a paradise of print as represented by about 4,500 magazines (and a few newspapers and books), colorfully lining shelves and attracting people from many miles away.

I talked for a while with the store's owner, Joe Angelastri, who also owns the smaller but nevertheless magazine-packed Chicago-Main Newsstand in Evanston (both open seven days a week, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.).

"I really don't think people will tire of reading in the traditional ways," he said. "I still have confidence in ink on paper."



Direct mail must be physically handled and that creates a bond and makes it more likely that a potential customer will engage with it.

So do many others and some examples are the print catalogs that have been jamming your mailboxes over this holiday season. There are many theories offered to explain why this is happening.

Unlike digital ads that can be blocked or skipped or easily ignored, direct mail must be physically handled and that creates a bond and makes it more likely that a potential customer will engage with it.

Digital fatigue has set in, making many consumers increasingly eager for physical experiences that allow them to disconnect from screens.

With so much competition in the digital space, it's harder than ever for brands to stand out and break through the "noise." Print is able to help build stronger, more personal connections and also — quite important it seems to me — tap into a sense of tradition and nostalgia.

An irony is that one company that has jumped into the print world is the outfit that started the e-commerce revolution. In 2018, Amazon started sending out print toy catalogs when Toys "R" Us stores closed.

Many other companies are into the print rebirth. Such is the case with the clothing company J. Crew, which stopped printing catalogs in 2017 but is back this year with a new fall catalog. Brendon Babenzien, men's creative director at J. Crew, explained it to Esquire magazine (published six times yearly with a print circulation of about 620,000) recently, saying "I had been longing for the catalog for a long time. The catalog is this physical thing that really gives a little more gravity to the images and the clothes.

And the timing is really good, essentially, because we do live in the digital age. It feels like now's a really nice time to see something different."

Another business giant is also in the print game. Costco delivers 15.4 million copies of its Costco Connection monthly to its "executive" members who pay double the yearly membership fee of \$65 for the magazine and other perks. Another 300,000 are distributed through Costco warehouses.

It started in magazine form in 1997 and is a gathering of photos and stories focused on the dizzying wide array of products sold at the stores, from toilet paper to pasta sauce, coffins, saunas, gold bars and even life insurance. But it is also peppered with practical news and features, all professionally written, and recent issues have included recipes, advice on a number of topics and troubles, travel stories and an interview with actor Mark Harmon. And more. It is extremely popular, its monthly 140-or-so pages, and has featured on its covers such stars as Oprah Winfrey, Bruce Springsteen and Tom Hanks. Jimmy Kimmel is such a fan that he recently told the New York Times, "A lot of people want to be on the cover of Vogue or Rolling Stone. For me, it's The Costco Connection."

But still, this is only the third largest magazine by print circulation, behind AARP: The Magazine (published bi-monthly) and The AARP Bulletin (10 issues a year), both publications of the American Association of Retired Persons and have circulations of 22.39 million and 22.08 million, respectively. And quite respectable too, given that such venerable print magazines have more modest

circulations, for instance, Reader's Digest (2.71 million) or People (2.55 million).

The AARP magazines offer all manner of practical stories about medical breakthroughs, financial advice, and various news and entertainments to its mostly gray-haired audience. It also has such cover stars as Robert DeNiro, Jon Bon Jovi, Brooke Shields and Samuel L. Jackson, who at 75 tells the magazine, "I pay attention to my body because I've had things happen to it. I have to work at being flexible. ... I use Pilates on a mat with exercise bands and a Pilates reformer machine."

Most of the top 10 print magazines modestly increased circulation in the last year and perhaps that's a good sign. Like many people, I often feel overwhelmed by social media and numbed by its flood of information. Interesting to note that the Oxford University Press, the publisher of the Oxford English Dictionary, has just chosen "brain rot" as its 2024 Word of the Year, which seems to address online activity when they define it as "supposed deterioration of a person's mental or intellectual state, especially viewed as a result of overconsumption of material considered to be trivial or unchallenging."

I hope you are not now dreaming of a future with newsstands sprouting on city corners. That will never happen. Print may be undergoing a health spurt — Life magazine, one of the most famous and popular magazines in history, died in 2008 but is scheduled for a comeback next year — but the ever-rising costs of printing and shipping (i.e. delivery) will eventually bring the end. **Until then though, somewhere the ghost of Gutenberg is smiling.**

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COMMUNICATION STYLES

PROSPECTING BIAS

By Bill Farquharson, Sales Vault

My sales process back when I started selling began with an introductory letter. What followed were phone calls, an email, and even a handwritten postcard. It was multiple touches stretched out over a 4-week time period.

And it worked...until it didn't. Why? Because people change.

Somewhere along the way, the phone stopped being used to make phone calls. Younger buyers shunned talking and with it, checking their voice mail. The world got colder, and people lost the skill of interpersonal communication. Texting became a primary form of sharing and getting information. Attention spans dropped to a few seconds. It became okay not to return a phone call.

And don't get me started on common courtesies.

Personally, I still like phone calls. I see texts as a nuisance. I love getting US mail but get overwhelmed with email. I'm okay with people connecting with me on LinkedIn, but

don't you dare go from "Thanks for accepting my request" to "... and let me tell you what I can sell you" without at least buying me a drink first.

But because I have preferences, I have bias as well. I like things the way I like things. And I find myself prospecting the way I like to be prospecting to.

And so do you.

You are likely selling to yourself. You are choosing a path you'd approve of if you were the prospect. But you might also be ignoring the communication styles of those who are not like you, and therefore, missing out.

Don't let your own prospecting bias get in the way. Accept the fact that everyone buys differently and work different mediums and messages into the mix.

If this bonehead can change, so can you.

And something else you can do: You can grow your sales by joining The Sales Vault. Learn how to engage AI to electrify your sales process at SalesVault.pro/partners or call Bill Farquharson at (781) 934-7036.



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