

SIGNATURE

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A fourth-generation firm that has partnered with PGCA and its predecessor groups for more than 20 years, GKG is an insurance brokerage that does more – much more – than write policies for the kinds of commercial coverage that printing businesses need in order to operate.

GILROY KERNAN & GILROY: EXPERT BUSINESS INSURERS, TRUSTED STRATEGIC ADVISORS

By Patrick Henry, Liberty or Death Communications

As Larry Gilroy likes to say, the best insurance claim is the one that never happens. But sometimes, they do.

“You don't know the value of insurance until you need it,” muses Dwight Vicks, recalling the near-catastrophic way he found out exactly how valuable it can be.

Fire in a Blizzard — Vicks Printing + Distribution, Yorkville, NY

It's hard to imagine a worse stroke of luck for a printing company than a plant fire in the middle of a blizzard, but that is what happened at Vicks Printing & Distribution of Yorkville, NY one evening in March 2018. Flames and smoke from a burning compressor triggered a sprinkler system that showered 10,000 gallons of water onto, among other things, a four-unit heatset press on the production floor.



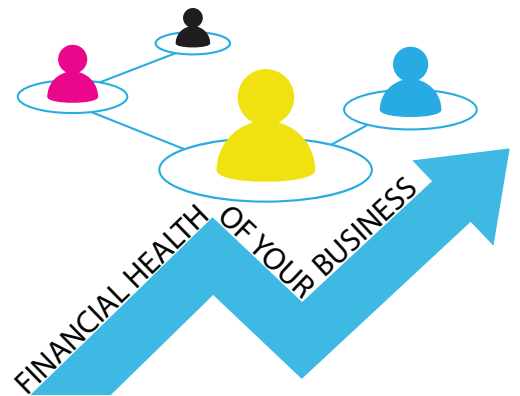
No one was hurt, and the building was saved. But Vicks, the company's President, says he knew in an instant that the press would not be recoverable. What he didn't know was how tricky recovering fair and equitable compensation from his insurance carrier would prove to be.

In a disaster scenario of this type, says Vicks, “one of the things the insurance company will do is very quickly say, we'll write you a check for X and we'll get it to you next week. And when you're going through something like that, that's very appealing.”

His First Instinct

“Larry was my first call,” Vicks remembers. “Larry” is Lawrence T. Gilroy III, Chief Executive Officer, Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy (GKG), the preferred provider of insurance coverage, risk management guidance, and employee benefits services to the members of PGCA.

GKG engaged a well-known insurance adjuster to assess the damage while the insurance company turned to “a less reputable firm” for an appraisal that did not reflect an accurate replacement cost value for the ruined press. Vicks says that when it was learned what the payment on the claim would be, “Larry and the



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COVER CONTINUED

adjuster went back to the insurance company and said, no, that's wholly inadequate."

Vicks credits Gilroy's relationship with senior executives of the carrier as the key to obtaining a payment that was three times the size of their original offer. "He fought for a fair settlement," Vicks says. "I would say that his actions helped save my business."

The proceeds enabled Vicks to replace the heatset web with a production inkjet press and a finishing system – an investment he says he would not have been able to make without Gilroy's "proactive, aggressive, and successful" efforts on his company's behalf.

A fourth-generation firm that recently celebrated its 121st anniversary, GKG has partnered with PGCA and its predecessor groups for more than 20 years. GKG is an insurance brokerage that does more – much more – than write policies for the kinds of commercial coverage that printing businesses need in order to operate.

Its team of insurance professionals also engage with clients to help them build the concept of risk management into almost every aspect of their strategic planning.



The big risk for many members of the association has to do with being able not only to survive, but finding ways to thrive."

Risk with a Capital R

"We like to talk about risk with a capital R, and a lot of times that's not necessarily the client's insured risk," Gilroy says. "The big risk for many members of the association has to do with being able not only to survive, but finding ways to thrive."

Gilroy acknowledges that when it comes to insurable risk – the kind addressed by coverages such as liability and workers' compensation – most business owners don't fully understand where they are vulnerable and what they need to do to protect themselves.

"They're focused on running a business. They're not focused on the insurable risk, but that's where we can help them," he says.

The other part of Gilroy's message to GKG's policyholders is that their coverage does more than compensate them for loss. It can also be a key indicator of the financial health of their businesses.

"Sometimes people look at insurance as sort of a line item, as something that can't be much of a differentiator," he says. "But if you take workers' comp, let's call somebody that's paying \$100,000 a year the average risk. The best in class risk might be paying less than \$50,000 a year, and somebody who's not doing so well might be paying over \$150,000."

All else being equal among the companies, the degree of difference that separates the best in class risk from the others is "a real competitive advantage," according to Gilroy.



Many employers are working with "antiquated" insurance policies that don't cover workplace contingencies that have arisen in recent years."

Beware 'Antiquated' Coverage

Reaping the rewards of insurance begins with securing the right kinds of coverage – a task easier said than done for most business owners.

Andrew Biernat, GKG Vice President & Strategic Business Advisor, notes that many employers are working with "antiquated" insurance policies that don't cover workplace contingencies that have arisen in recent years: for instance, cybercrime.

Others need coverage that protects them in handling the sensitive data of clients like banks and healthcare institutions. A rising number of claims involving harassment and discrimination has opened up another area of liability for employers.

"Many times we find printers have either tremendous gaps in their coverage, or they just don't understand those risks," Biernat says. "Our job is to educate them to where they can protect themselves from inherent risks, but also to enhance what they have so that they can get a better ROI of productivity and reduced insurance costs."



Business owners have a risk-related brand that the insurance marketplace pays close attention to."

A Business's Other 'Brand'

Along the same lines, Gilroy reminds business owners that in the same way they have a brand perception for quality and service among their customers, they have a risk-related brand that the insurance marketplace pays close attention to.

"If you have a history of high losses, it's going to be different than if you have a history of no losses," he explains. "We work on helping people improve their brand, and part of that is leveraging our brand. We've got a reputation with these insurance companies of bringing quality risks in."

Pricing in the insurance world is both objective and subjective, Gilroy advises. "If you can be best in class and we can tell that story, you're going to have better pricing than your competition."

Crafting the kinds of stories that insurance underwriters like to hear is a specialty of GKG, which uses a proprietary audit process to help clients understand how they measure up against others in terms of risk management and insurability.

Sarah Armstrong, GKG Strategic Business Advisor, says that by benchmarking the risks, coverages, and costs of the 140 print clients that the firm serves, "we know printers like no other insurance agents out there."

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COVER CONTINUED

Undergoing the audit process gives individual clients “a real life snapshot of where they stand against their peers. From that, we’re able to create a roadmap and a strategic plan to address those risks based off the scoring.”



“Today we see more claims in the area of cybercrime than we do in almost anything else. It’s not just the Fortune 500s who are getting hit.”

Mind the Gaps

In this way, GKG can identify gaps in coverage around activities such as fulfillment, where the printer stores customer property on its premises. Sometimes, says Armstrong, the printer’s insurance coverage applies only to its own assets, as in the case of a client storing \$2 million worth of customer inventory that was excluded by the language of the policy.

In many plants, the most serious gap may be the one that is the least well recognized. This is the growing menace of cybercrime – an insurable risk that’s as real as any other hazard of operating a printing company.

“Today we see more claims in the area of cybercrime than we do in almost anything else,” Gilroy says. “It’s not just the Fortune 500s who are getting hit. We have mom-and-pops to midsize businesses getting hit every single week.” Coverage has evolved to the point where insurance underwriters want to know that their clients have best practices in place to shield themselves from computerized theft and mayhem.

“Everybody needs cyber insurance,” agrees Armstrong. “If we were to rebuild any printer’s insurance portfolio, we would make sure that cyber was in there. We’d almost start with it.”

‘The Reputational Part’

“Some of the biggest claims that we’ve seen have been with traditional printers who are getting hit with ransom and getting actually locked out and unable to perform their operations anymore,” Armstrong says. When a company is victimized in this way, the damage done isn’t just financial – there’s also what she calls “the reputational part.”

She says a conversation with a business owner revealed that “the one thing he said that kept him up at night was the fact that he would have to go and tell all of his clients that this happened. It’s a risk for all printers.”

Ross Kraft, GKG Vice President and Strategies Business Advisor, advises that having a formalized disaster plan in place is an “extra credit gold star” in the eyes of insurance underwriters.

“The insurance carriers are more likely to offer premium discounts to companies that can resume operations after a disaster more quickly,” he explains. “They recognize that these folks are probably in compliance with best practices and regulations. It reduces their exposure, which can not only improve efficiencies when a disaster occurs, but reduce premium costs.”

NYS Safety Group — \$50 Million Saved

Another way that GKG encourages gold-star performance is by operating one of three printing-related Safety Groups within the New York State Insurance Fund (NYSIF), a non-profit New York State agency that provides workers’ compensation, disability, and paid family leave benefits. Safety Group 514 members pool their insurance premiums and work together to improve safety and limit injuries.

According to Kraft, Safety Group 514 offers “unique upfront discounts and back-end dividends” to the 80 PGCA members taking part in it. “There isn’t another program that can compete financially from a cost perspective with the program that we have in place right now,” he says. “It is literally the best performing workers’ comp program in New York State for printers that qualify.”

Biernat adds that one of the group’s aims is to encourage other printers to improve their workers’ comp performance so that they too can become eligible for membership. He says that over the life of the program, its top performers have saved over \$50 million in premium costs. GKG intends to build similar programs outside New York for the benefit of printers in all the states that PGCA now represents.

Gilroy says that when his firm talks about turning risk into opportunity, the conversation is about more than insurance alone. It also focuses on trying to help clients succeed with advisory services such as disaster planning, human resources management, succession, strategic planning, safety, and OSHA compliance.

Printers who have long-standing relationships with GKG know just how game-changing their expertise as insurance providers and business advisors can be.

Quite a Jolt — Perfect Communications, Moorestown, NJ

About five years ago, Joe Olivo, President of Perfect Communications in Moorestown, NJ, got an unpleasant surprise when his longtime



insurance provider informed him that he was looking at a 50% increase in health insurance costs for his employees.

“The biggest problem was that we were in the small business market,” says Olivo, adding that all his provider could come up with as a substitute was “a very scaled down plan with a very, very high deductible.”

At the suggestion of a fellow association member, Olivo met with Kraft and Armstrong of GKG. Almost immediately, things began to change for the better.

An alternative insurance product they recommended “gave us some breathing room for that year,” Olivo says. After that, by purchasing through a group insurance exchange, “we were able to get insurance to our employees with a modest price increase as opposed to a 50% price increase. That was a very big thing.”

Olivo says that with GKG’s help, Perfect Communications now protects its employees with the kind of insurance coverage that’s typically available only to much larger companies. This spans everything from health and disability to life, vision, dental and even pet insurance – the same as if his 100-person company were a Fortune 500 firm.



When GKG offered (us) “something totally out of the box that no other provider had offered us, that said, this is the kind of company I want to partner with.”


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Best Western Premier, Harrisburg, PA

→ **PGCA HR Conference****May 7 & 8, 2026**Turning Stone Resort Casino,
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WEBINARS

→ **Understanding EPR and Its Impact on your Business****October 9, 2025 | 2:00 pm**→ **Mailpiece Design****Recertification Class**

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COVER CONTINUED

“

Because of their due diligence and planning, they have saved us a lot of money. They really do present a good, forward-thinking plan and assessment of what to do best for the future.”

Bonus for Recruitment

He adds that the benefit goes beyond providing comprehensive coverage. “We’re very, very competitive now with the product we’ve offered, to the point where I believe it’s helped us both retain and attract new employees that we would not have been able to have done,” Olivo declares.

Olivo salutes the GKG team for offering his company “creative solutions in different ways than the typical group insurance.” When GKG offered him (us) “something totally out of the box that no other provider had offered us, that said, this is the kind of company I want to partner with.”

He calls it a far cry from dealing with insurance brokers who merely go through the annual motions of renewing coverage, leaving the client unaware that better alternatives exist.

In recent years, Perfect Communications has doubled the size of its staff to include employees working remotely in 11 different states. Through the exchange that GKG connected the company with, Olivo not only insures them all but also sees to it that their payroll and tax processing, HR administration, and regulatory compliance are fully taken care of.

“There’s no way we could have done that in house solely without having some sort of help,” Olivo says. He’s also happy with his decision to place all of the company’s 401(k) assets into PGCA’s Print and Graphics Retirement Plan, administered for the association by GKG.

Partners in Planning — TLF Graphics, Rochester, NY

Ron LeBlanc, Vice President Finance of TLF Graphics Inc. in Rochester, NY, says the relationship with GKG came about 10 years ago at a time when other resources he was using were “faltering.” Besides brokering most of TLF’s insurance coverage, the firm has taken a lead role in guiding TLF’s strategic direction as well.



“Because of their due diligence and planning, they have saved us a lot of money,” LeBlanc declares. “They are very good at putting together a planning strategy,” such as the updated 2025-2026 business model that the GKG team has helped TLF to craft. “They really do present a good, forward-thinking plan and assessment of what to do best for the future,” LeBlanc says.

Among the internal support activities that GKG has helped TLF Graphics to set up are a system for onboarding new employees; wellness programs such as smoking cessation, blood pressure monitoring, and onsite flu vaccinations; and employee communications. LeBlanc says the firm also does a good job of keeping TLF posted on OSHA compliance and other legal and regulatory matters that affect the company.

LeBlanc admires the style as well as the substance of the assistance that TLF Graphics receives from GKG.

“Everyone on their team is extremely responsive,” he says. “There’s never just one point of contact. They work as a team, and it’s a welcome relief for me that there’s that team to deal with for TLF. It works very well to the advantage of the employees and for us as business owners.”

'Vendors Don't Always Behave That Way'

According to Vicks, one of the many ways in which GKG differentiates itself "is that they just don't sell insurance." The firm's annual meetings with him for strategic planning go "above and beyond a role that one would normally expect from an insurance agent."

Vicks has been buying all the insurance his business needs from Larry Gilroy for more than 30 years. He says that Gilroy, an old neighbor of his, consistently "puts our interest first" – even to the point of once encouraging him to take a step that would cost GKG a stream of revenue.

It happened when Gilroy advised the company it could save money by self-insuring its health coverage instead of continuing to pay premiums for a policy purchased through GKG. Vicks says that in view of the loss a decision like this would mean for the insurance provider, "if you're a real business partner like Larry, it's not surprising, but that's rare. Vendors don't always behave that way."

After several years of self-insuring, Vicks reverted to his original insurance plan with GKG. But the experience gave him the true measure of the organization and the person he was dealing with.

"The company he has built is phenomenal. I'm in awe of what he has done," says Vicks. "He advocates for our industry. New York State is not an easy state to do business with, particularly when it comes to workers' comp insurance. He goes to Albany and really fights for fair policies, what's equitable both for the person that's hurt as well as the companies."

"He's so committed, but he also is one of the most altruistic people I know," says Vicks of Gilroy's many civic-minded volunteer activi-

ties in his community. "And he does it without fanfare. He does it without expecting claim or credit. He just is one of these guys that does what he thinks is right and is not worried about getting credit for it."

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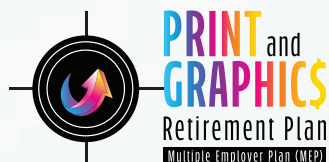
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HR Hot Topics



HR HOT TOPICS

By Nick Fiorenza, Association Counsel, Ferrara Fiorenza PC

Legal Standard for “Reverse Discrimination” Cases

One of the significant employment law developments we reported on at this year’s Human Resources and Employment Law Conference concerned the way courts address allegations of “reverse discrimination”. That is, the legal standards which apply to a member of a majority group – an individual not in any legally protected class – who claims that they suffered different treatment in the workplace. At the time of the conference the US Supreme Court had heard, but not yet decided, the case of *Ames v. Ohio Dep’t of Youth Services*, a case that would clarify this very issue.

The fact is that “reverse discrimination” always violated Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act. But, in a number of federal court districts in the country, cases brought by individuals in the majority group were analyzed differently from those involving minority plaintiffs. These courts applied a legal test known as the “background circumstances” doctrine. This means that for a discrimination case to move forward, an individual had to demonstrate that there was some particular factual circumstance(s) indicating that an employer was discriminating against the employee. Some context in addition to different workplace treatment needed to be shown.

Background Circumstances Doctrine Challenged

It was this legal doctrine that was recently challenged by Marlean Ames. Ames, a heterosexual woman, enjoyed a successful career at the Ohio Department of Youth Services, including a significant promotion in 2014. A few years later she applied for another promotion. She not only failed to receive it but was instead demoted to her original job at the agency. In her place, the employer hired a gay man for the job Ames had applied for. Ames sued, claiming gender and sexual orientation discrimination – both violative of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

Applying the background circumstances doctrine, a District Court in Ohio granted summary judgment in favor of the employer – refusing to allow Ames’ claim to even move forward. This court ruled that Ames was unable to demonstrate background circumstances to support the “suspicion” that she was discriminated against. The Court reasoned that it is the “unusual employer who discriminates against the majority.”

US Supreme Court Rules for Ames

Earlier this month the US Supreme Court rejected the background circumstances test and reversed the lower court. The case was argued in February 2025, and at the conference we reported that, based on transcripts of the argument and questions raised by certain of the justices, it appeared Ames would be successful. While this turned out to be the case, we did not anticipate that the Court’s decision would be unanimous. Taking the wording of Title VII at face value, the Court noted that the law “draws no distinctions between majority group plaintiffs and minority group plaintiffs”. Further, there was no legal basis to create special rules of evidence which applied only to majority plaintiffs.

Implications for Employers

Shortly after the decision, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, an agency undergoing significant change in the current administration, issued a statement praising the decision. Significantly, it linked the decision to the administration’s numerous efforts to terminate DEI initiatives. Acting EEOC Chair Andrea Lucas noted that, by definition, DEI initiatives create a discriminatory environment for majority plaintiffs.

The ultimate impact of the Ames decision is yet to unfold. Many, if not most, discrimination cases arise under state law. From a practical standpoint numerous state anti-discrimination agencies will continue to closely scrutinize reverse discrimination cases. Still, employers would be wise to analyze significant employment decisions not just from the lens of potential discrimination against minority plaintiffs, but with the Ames ruling in mind as well. Decisions involving promotions, reductions in force, discipline and discharge and others are now open to more scrutiny than ever.

Help regarding such decisions is always available through the PGCA Employment Law and Human Resources services program. Contact the Association office or Association Counsel Nick Fiorenza directly with questions.

About the Author: Nick Fiorenza, Association Counsel, is a partner with Ferrara Fiorenza PC. Nick has dedicated his law practice to labor relations and employment law. He has served as the Association Counsel for our members for many years, assisting printers with a myriad of employment-related topics. Contact Nick at (315) 437-7600 or njfiorenza@ferrarafirm.com if you need assistance on an HR related matter.

HR Hot Topics Continued ...

Still Don't Have an Artificial Intelligence Policy?

The HR conference, for the last several years, stressed the need to address the ever-expanding use of AI. Both in our personal lives and in a multitude of work settings, use of AI, for many, is becoming a daily activity. Like any other new technology or production tool, the upsides of AI capability are contrasted by significant pitfalls. These include bad or incomplete data, flawed or incomplete analysis, unintended release of confidential or proprietary information and/or the unintentional and even unknown violation of copyrights and trademarks.

Within this context it is useful to consider five good reasons to develop an AI policy for your business.

1. Reinforce Employee Accountability

It's a given that AI can increase creativity, production and employee satisfaction and engagement. Still, even when AI tools assist with work, employees remain responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and appropriateness of the final product. A well drafted AI Use policy:

- Prevents blame-shifting to AI tools when errors occur.
- Reinforces that AI cannot replace human judgment in regulated or safety-sensitive tasks.

2. Protect Company Data

Every bit of data input into AI tools (like ChatGPT, image generators, or data scrapers) has the potential of revealing your confidential, proprietary, or customer data to the world (and your competitors). Employees looking to efficiently solve work problems are often inclined to share specifics of company operations. Your AI policy will:

- Define what can and cannot be input into AI platforms.
- Protects trade secrets, client lists, and sensitive internal data from being exposed.

3. Minimize Legal and Compliance Risks

It's a (legal) jungle out there. The unregulated use of AI platforms can result in copyright violations, discrimination claims, or violations of the many industry-specific regulations (e.g., healthcare, finance, advertising). Draft an AI use policy that:

- Helps employees avoid using AI in ways that produce biased or plagiarized content.
- Bakes in a compliance commitment for privacy laws and emerging AI-specific regulations.

4. Protect Your Brand

It is hard enough to protect the look, tone and professional image desired for your company when you control communications. Giving the task over to AI is looking for trouble. Draft an AI use policy that:

- Requires human review and approval before public-facing content is released.
- Ensures consistency in tone, branding, and ethical standards.



5. Mentor, Guide and Train Your Employees

AI can be – is – a powerful business tool. It makes no sense to turn the tool loose without setting clear boundaries and helping employees understand how to use it appropriately and ethically. Your policy will:

- Encourage exploration while setting boundaries.
- Foster a culture of learning and responsibility around AI use.
- Control what platforms will be used and installed on your electronic systems.

DRAFT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY

There are many ways to go about crafting an effective policy that accomplishes the above and more.

And while we are generally not fans of samples, templates, and “cut and paste” policies,

Nick Fiorenza has developed a draft to get you started. Contact PGCA at info@printcommunications.org to request a copy of the draft Artificial Intelligence Policy.

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PA & NJ GOLF RECAP

TOPGOLF EVENTS A HIT IN PA AND NJ

PGCA members gathered in King of Prussia, PA and Mount Laurel, NJ to enjoy some high tech golf, food and drink and camaraderie. We even had the littlest Topgolfer, the son of Chris Buoni at Perfect Communications, trying out his skills and the Mount Laurel event! Our last Topgolf of the year is November 20th in Edison, NJ.

Mount Laurel Topgolf



Charlie Olivo (left), Perfect Communications
with his colleagues



Chris Buoni, Perfect Communi-
cations, with his son Nicholas



Melissa Jones (left), PGCA
with Sarah Armstrong,
Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy



King of Prussia Topgolf



A crowd of golfers checks
their scores



Kyle Kopp (left), Northern Machine Works, with Ross Kraft, Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy

NEW MEMBER SERVICES

SOC 2 REPORTING, CYBERSECURITY CONSULTING, INTERNAL CONTROLS COMPLIANCE AND MORE!

PGCA is proud to partner with Pinna Consulting LLC, a trusted CPA firm specializing in IT security, system and organizational controls (SOC) reporting, risk assessment, vulnerability scans and more.

This partnership offers PGCA members a variety of services at PGCA member pricing: including:

- ✓ SOC 1/SOC 2 engagements including readiness assessment
- ✓ Risk assessment and network vulnerability scans
- ✓ HIPAA, ISO, PCI-DSS framework alignment
- ✓ Cybersecurity policy development & training
- ✓ Incident response planning
- ✓ SOX compliance

As data privacy and cybersecurity demands grow, more customers are requiring their vendors to certify to some sort of framework, making SOC reports essential for organizations to demonstrate the effectiveness of their internal controls.

PGCA member benefits with Pinna Consulting LLC:

- ✓ Tailored support for SOC 1/SOC 2 processes
- ✓ Years of experience with printing, mailing and fulfillment companies
- ✓ Guidance through every step of the SOC 2 process
- ✓ Discounted pricing for PGCA members



Contact Michael Pinna, Pinna Consulting LLC at (908) 456-4340, mike@pinnallc.com or visit www.pinnallc.com for more information.

In Memoriam: Ted Hansen

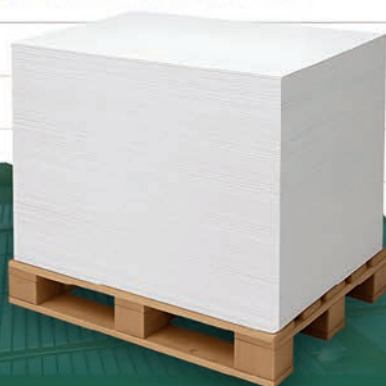
PGCA was saddened to learn of the death of Ted Hansen, Hansen & Hansen Quality Printers, Syracuse, NY, on August 15th, after a brief illness.



Ted joined PIA in 1996 and soon after joined the Board of Directors. Ted later served as Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chairman. After high school, he served in the U.S. Air Force and later continued his studies at the Martin J. Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University, obtaining his bachelor's degree in management accounting. He was working as the CFO at Hansen & Hansen, his family business, at the time of his passing. Those who knew Ted recall his quiet loyalty to the Association and also his love of golf. He was a regular at the upstate New York golf outing and in fact was scheduled to play at the latest outing in July until he became ill. We will miss you Ted and remember you often on the golf course!



GENERIC PAPER FOR STANDOUT BUSINESSES



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NEW MEMBER SERVICES

EPR EDUCATION & CONSULTING WITH
DIVERSION STRATEGIESUnderstanding EPR and its Impact
on your Business

Webinar on Oct. 9th at 2:00 pm

We're excited to announce a new partnership between the Print & Graphic Communications Association and Diversion Strategies, a leading consulting firm specializing in recycling, packaging, and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) compliance.

As new EPR laws roll out across the U.S., many businesses are facing complex and often confusing compliance requirements. Through this partnership, PGCA members now have access to exclusive services, resources, and discounts designed to simplify compliance and help your business plan for the future.

Why This Matters: EPR laws will impact packaging, labeling, and recycling obligations across multiple states. Whether you need clarity on exemptions, a compliance plan, or strategic support, Diversion Strategies provides expert guidance to help you stay ahead.

Learn more about this service by attending an information webinar, "Understanding EPR and Its Impact on your Business", to be held on October 9th at 2:00 pm. Visit printcommunications.org/events to register. You can also learn more about these services at <https://diversionstrategies.com/epr/>

We encourage you to take advantage of this valuable new PGCA member benefit and ensure your business is prepared for EPR now and into the future.

DIVERSION
STRATEGIES

MARYLAND CRAB FEAST

PGCA MEMBERS GET CRACKIN' AT MARYLAND CRAB FEAST



PGCA members and their guests enjoyed a gorgeous evening at Kurtz's Beach for the Annual Crab Feast held on September 11th. Attendees enjoyed games, live DJ, crabs (of course), open bar and full buffet. Everyone received a Crab Feast T-shirt, to help soak up all the crab juices! Thank you to our Premier sponsor, MCS, Gold sponsor Canon and the rest of the sponsors who generously supported the event. Our thanks to PGCA staff Mike Vares and Debbie Woolbright who worked so hard to make the event a success.



Above: Thank you to all our sponsors for making PGCA's Crab Feast a success!

- 1) Crowd enjoying the feast and drinks.
- 2) Left to right, Tim Freeman, PGCA, with Adam Silver, PGCA Board member, Worth Higgins and Andy Biernat, Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy (GKG).
- 3) Bill Fawns with Mount Vernon Printing competes in the corn hole tournament with Bill Sukovich, a guest with the GKG crew.

NEW MEMBER SERVICES

YOUR FREE GIRLS WHO PRINT MEMBERSHIP IS WAITING!

Thanks to PGCA's commitment to your career and business success, every PGCA member now has a free membership to Girls Who Print (GWP), the largest global network of women in print and now a nonprofit organization with a member platform and programs that empower, educate, and connect the industry. Contact PGCA at info@printcommunications.org for the exclusive code, then register for your free membership online at girlswhoprint.org.

Everyone is welcome to join. Women, men, students, all who believe in the power of print and that the people who make it happen all have a place here, and a path to career success.

GWP membership gives you access to educational webinars, professional development workshops, mentorship opportunities, networking events, career resources, and leadership support. You will also be part of a global community where you can share ideas, ask questions, and collaborate with people who share your passion for print.



This partnership between PGCA and Girls Who Print is about more than adding a benefit to your membership. It is about providing tools, resources, and fostering relationships that can help you thrive in our evolving industry. Whether you want to learn something new, connect with other professionals, become a mentor and/or mentee, and feel more supported in your career, Girls Who Print offers a place to make it happen.

We look forward to welcoming you to the GWP community. Let's learn, connect, and succeed together. Contact PGCA at info@printcommunications.org for the exclusive code and get your free membership today!

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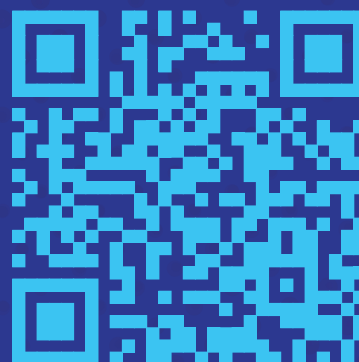
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YOUR STORY, YOUR STAGE: GROWING WITH YOUR OWNED CHANNELS

By Kelly Mallozzi,
Principal, SuccessinPrint
and Vice President and
Program Director,
Girls Who Print



Change happens fast in marketing, especially for printers and graphic communications pros. Algorithms change. Audience tastes shift. Tech evolves overnight. If you're relying too much on rented space like paid ads or third-party listings, you're leaving growth on the table. The secret to staying relevant? Maximize those owned channels: every website, newsletter, blog, or social media page that's fully in your control.

Let's be honest: too many companies treat channels like LinkedIn as an afterthought. It's time to flip the script. When you own the platform, you control the message, the timing, and the conversation. That's real leverage.

Why Owned Channels Work

Marketing budgets are always tight. Owned channels stretch every dollar. They're measurable and let you build real connections. Paid ads can get you traffic, but a well-run company newsletter or LinkedIn page builds loyalty. If you're posting just to fill space, rethink your strategy. Turn your feed into a story hub and watch engagement climb.

Make Storytelling Your Superpower

People remember stories, not pitches. When you can tell a prospective client about a real client you helped in a real way, that's powerful. When you share those wins, you show prospects, and even your existing clients, why print still stands out in the digital age. Tell the stories behind your shop, your staff, and your proudest projects. Make your content real. Make it human.

Reach Tomorrow's Talent Today

Here's the thing: printing needs new blood. The next generation is out there, and you need to meet them where they already spend their time. Host a contest.

Share trivia. Build bridges with schools and educators. When you use owned digital spaces to highlight community and careers, recruitment gets easier. The industry needs more voices. Invite them in. Welcome them. Mean it.

Personalization Builds Growth That Lasts

Your channels are your lab for personalized marketing, so use them. Tailor your messaging to fit customer personas, preferences, and buying habits. The best growth comes when you balance chasing new leads with nurturing your top clients. Retention is just as important as acquisition.

Where to Start—Right Now

- Take a hard look at your owned channels. What's working, what's stale?
- Set a content calendar and stick to it.
- Repurpose smart content. Push it across all your platforms.
- Split your focus between keeping current customers happy and bringing in new ones.

In a world overloaded with digital noise, owned channels are where real growth happens for print and graphics firms. **Take control. Tell strong stories. Invest in relationships. Build your future right from the channels you own.**

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Webinars start at 1:30 pm
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WHY SHOULD I DO BUSINESS WITH YOU?

When you or your sales team have made a call on a prospect, was this a question you received? Did you have an answer? Was it more than “we have great pricing,” or “we have great service”?

In an industry which is very homogeneous, communicating differentiation to a customer or prospect is important for our success. So, where do we start? How about an in-depth customer survey? Take your top 20 customers and have them complete a written survey and follow it up with a 1:1 meeting. Who better to answer the question than the folks who are already doing business with you? While the answers may be very diverse, there will be a theme which can help develop (or reinforce) a company brand. Now a message can be developed, as well as reinforced throughout the company, of “why I should do business with you?”



About the Author: quoin2pixels 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 PGCA, Joe is available to expand on these articles, or aid with projects. Contact Joe at jspolanco49@gmail.com.

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