

October 2026



Paper's Circular Economy Is Already Working, But Every Segment Has a Role to Play

The conversation around paper recycling is often misframed. Ask most people how sustainable paper is, and they will point to recycling bins and certification logos.

A Hidden Question in Family Business Succession: *What Motivates Your Successor?*

"What motivates my child to lead our business?" Or, in other words, "Why is the potential successor interested in the leadership position?"

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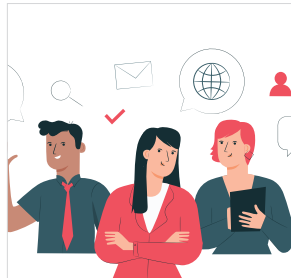
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Paper's Circular Economy Is Already Working, But Every Segment Has a Role to Play



The paper industry has a circular economy story that most of manufacturing would envy. But telling that story accurately requires understanding how the system actually works—segment by segment, grade by grade—and being honest about where the weak points are.”

**By Jules VanSant,
Executive Director, Two
Sides North America**

The conversation around paper recycling is often misframed. Ask most people how sustainable paper is, and they will point to recycling bins and certification logos. Ask a paper manufacturer the same question, and they will point to their “broke system,” the internal loop that sends off-quality material directly back into production before it ever leaves the mill. Those two answers describe very different parts of the same system, and the gap between them is where real progress is being lost.

The paper industry has a circular economy story that most of manufacturing would envy. But telling that story accurately requires understanding how the system actually works—segment by segment, grade by grade—and being honest about where the weak points are.

The Mill: Recycling Starts Before the Product Ships

Paper manufacturers do not wait for consumers to recycle. Recycling is embedded in the production process itself.



In any paper mill, material that does not meet quality specifications; trim waste, off-grade production runs, and broke from the paper machine goes directly back into the fiber furnish to make new paper. This is pre-consumer waste recycling, and it is not a sustainability initiative. It is standard operating procedure. Mills have run this way for generations because reprocessing off-quality fiber retains valuable raw material, and it is simply more efficient and cost-effective than disposing of it. The result is a manufacturing environment where internal fiber recovery is close to total.

For paper manufacturers, the recycling conversation is not about whether to do it. It is already done. The more pressing challenge is the quality and availability of post-consumer recycled fiber coming back into the system from outside the mill gate.

The Downcycling Cascade: How Fiber Moves Through the System

Understanding paper recycling requires understanding downcycling; the structured, grade-by-grade progression through which fiber is recovered and reused as it degrades with each processing cycle.



A skid of white uncoated trim waste from a printing operation is a high-value commodity.”

It works like this: High-quality white office paper and premium uncoated printing grades represent the top of the fiber quality ladder. When collected clean and sorted properly, this material can be mixed with fresh fiber and made into new printing and writing papers or used as a fiber source for coated magazine and catalog grades. That keeps high-quality fiber in high-value applications for as long as possible.

Once that fiber has been through the cycle a few times, it moves down the ladder. Magazine and catalog paper, recovered after use, contributes to recycled paperboard—the substrate for folding cartons, retail packaging and linerboard, or corrugated medium—the boxes that move freight through the supply chain. That same fiber, processed again, supports the production of tissue or egg cartons, where strength is less essential. At each step, fiber that would otherwise go to waste finds a productive application at the appropriate quality level.

Eventually, after an average of five to seven processing cycles (the actual number can vary depending on the end-use application), paper fibers weaken to the point where they can no longer bond together

and do not have enough strength to be made into new paper. This is not a failure of recycling. It is a physical constraint that makes fresh fiber an essential input, not a symbol of environmental irresponsibility, but the raw material that keeps the entire recycled fiber system functioning.

The cascade only works if every link in the chain is doing its job. When it breaks down due to contamination, poor sorting, or inadequate collection, fiber that could have been used for more useful applications ends up in a landfill instead.

Printers and Converters: The Sorting Opportunities

For commercial printers, envelope converters, packaging producers, and finishing operations, the recycling conversation typically starts and ends with whether they have a recycling bin on the floor. That is not enough.

The paper that comes off a press, bindery or converting line has real value, but only if it arrives at the recycler sorted, clean, and correctly identified. A skid of white uncoated trim waste from a printing operation

is a high-value commodity. That same material mixed with coated makeready sheets, adhesive-contaminated substrate, or foil-laminated waste can be a problem load that may be downgraded or rejected.

Every operation that generates paper waste needs to think seriously about source separation.

That means identifying the grades being generated at each stage of production, establishing separate collection streams for distinct paper types, and working with haulers and recyclers who understand the difference between commodity-grade recovered

Continued on page 6

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fiber and mixed waste. It also means training production staff to keep those streams clean, because contamination almost always happens at the point of generation, not at the recycling facility.

Pre-consumer waste from printing and converting operations is among the highest-quality recovered fiber in the system. Treating it carelessly is not just an environmental issue, it is potentially leaving money on the table.

Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) Clean Fiber Is a Supply Chain Issue

On the collection and processing side, the availability of clean, regionally sourced recycled fiber can be a genuine constraint for paper manufacturers. Mills that want to increase recycled content in their products are limited not only by what consumers and businesses put in the bin, but by what arrives at the loading dock sorted, graded, and usable.

MRFs play a critical role in this system's infrastructure, and the investments they make—or don't make—directly affect what manufacturers can do with recovered fiber. Sorting technology that separates office paper from mixed paper, coated from uncoated, or contaminated from clean material determines whether a bale is used in a high-value application, downgraded into a less demanding one or sent to the landfill.

Regional fiber availability matters too. Transportation costs and carbon footprint both favor local sourcing, but local sourcing only works if local collection systems are producing material that meets manufacturer specifications.

Added complications include differences between public and private collection, sorting, and investment, all of which vary from city to city and state to state. Recovery facilities that invest in process quality, capacity, and transparency about material grades can help make the entire downstream system more efficient and more sustainable.

Economics, Policy, and the Cost of Getting It Right

The demand for recycled fiber is real, but it is cost-driven. When recycled fiber is price-competitive with virgin pulp, manufacturers use it. When pulp markets shift, so does the economics of recycled content. That dynamic underscores a broader reality: a functioning paper recycling system is not the product of good intentions. It is the result of clean collection, stable markets, and sustained investment in processing infrastructure—three conditions that have to work in concert and that no single segment of the value chain can deliver alone.

The paper industry has understood this for decades. Recovery rate goals were established in the 1990s, and the results are measurable: the U.S. paper recycling rate has more than doubled since then, making it one of the most successful material recovery systems in the country.

That progress is now operating against a more complicated policy backdrop. Several states have enacted Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation, shifting recycling costs from local governments to producers. Implementation remains uneven—fee structures vary by product type, compliance requirements differ state to state, and legal challenges are

actively contesting provisions in several markets. The outcome of those challenges will influence how collection infrastructure is funded and who bears the cost of keeping the system running.

Closing the Loop Requires a Shared Commitment

Paper's circular economy is not theoretical. It is operational, running continuously across thousands of facilities, with fiber flowing through the cascade from premium grades down to corrugated and back into new production. The pre-consumer loop at the mill level works. The downcycling system works when it has clean, well-sorted, cost-effective inputs.

What the system needs from every segment is accountability for the part of the loop that segment controls. Mills handle their internal waste. Printers

and converters need to handle theirs with discipline, not just good intentions. Recovery facilities need to invest in the infrastructure that makes recovered fiber genuinely useful to manufacturers, not just technically collected.

The paper industry is not waiting for a circular economy. It is already operating one. The question is whether every participant in the value chain is doing their part to help keep it running.

About the Author: Jules Van Sant is the Executive Director of Two Sides North America. Two Sides NA's goal is to dispel common environmental misconceptions and to inspire and inform businesses and consumers with engaging, factual information about the environmental sustainability and value of print, paper and paper-based packaging. Visit twosidesna.org. ■

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Member News



Innvoke named 2026 Innovator of the Year

Innvoke was named one of four Innovators of the Year by Printing Impressions in their September magazine. "Innvoke stands out because they made a strategic bet that most printing companies avoid: Instead of trying to be everything to everyone from a single location with a single technology stack, they built a portfolio of specialist companies and let each operation do what it does best," said Pat McGrew of McGrew-Group, in her nomination.

While the company itself lists Cranbury, NJ as its base of operations, it also has locations in Pennsylvania and Georgia - each one a strategic acquisition that brought a unique set of capabilities and people to the mix.

Jay Ziegler, president and operating partner, notes that Innvoke was created and grew through a series of strategic acquisitions that paid close attention to the culture and the people, not just the equipment.

"We've got a very strong culture, a lot of veterans on our staff, and people who really want to go the extra mile for our customers," Jay notes. "We also have a baseline model of trying to find a way to say 'yes'. So we've got a lot of mix-and-match equipment and people

skills under our three roofs, and, we really focus on finding out what the customer wants and then [we match] our people and equipment capabilities to deliver for them at high quality with almost always short lead times. That requires your people to have a service mindset and be innovative about their approach to the opportunities." Congratulations to Jay and everyone at Innvoke!

Alcom Printing Group Acquires PDQ Print Center

Alcom Printing Group, Inc., a full-service commercial printing, direct mail, fulfillment and marketing services provider, recently announced its acquisition of PDQ Print Center, a respected print-on-demand and fulfillment company serving clients throughout Northeastern PA and beyond.



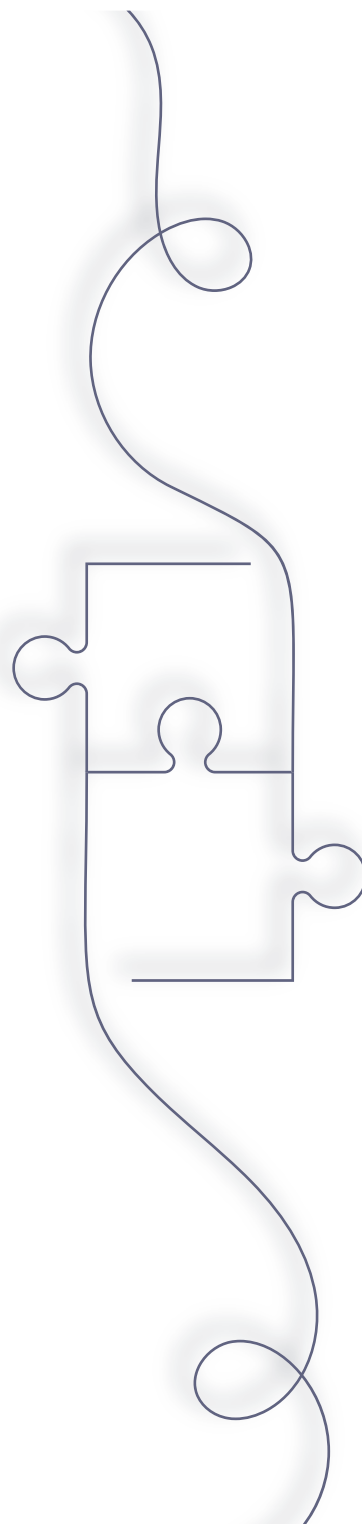
"PDQ has built an outstanding reputation by taking great care of its clients and creating a culture centered on service," said Don Eichman, CEO of Alcom Printing Group. "This acquisition is about building upon that foundation. We are excited to welcome the PDQ team to Alcom and provide them with the additional tools, technology

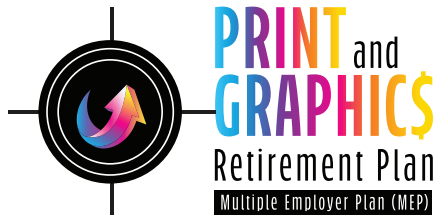
and support needed to serve their clients in even more ways."

The relationship between Alcom and PDQ was strengthened by Shaun M. Daney, Alcom's Chief Sales and Marketing Officer. Daney returned to the printing industry in 2024, joining PDQ during its acquisition of Corcoran Printing.

"As someone with deep personal and professional roots in Northeastern Pennsylvania, I am incredibly excited about what this means for our clients, our employees and the region," said Daney, who also serves as a partner and board member at Alcom. "PDQ has built something special. Our responsibility is to protect what has made the company successful while adding the capabilities and support that will help its clients and employees thrive. Together, we will continue to lead with 'YES' and deliver the first-class service our clients and partners deserve."

The acquisition expands Alcom's presence in Northeastern Pennsylvania, a region where the company already maintains strong client, business and community relationships. Congratulations to Alcom and PDQ! ■





A 401(k) Built for the Print Industry

“

The seamless management of the plan and the support provided by the GKG team have truly exceeded my expectations.”

Leonard Nangle,
Controller, Precise
Continental, Harrison,
New Jersey

By Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy (GKG), PGCA's Strategic Insurance Partner

Offering a strong retirement benefit can help employers attract and retain skilled employees. However, administering a 401(k) can also bring added costs, paperwork, compliance requirements and fiduciary responsibilities.

If administrative responsibility already feels overwhelming, PGCA members have another option: **the Print & Graphics Retirement Plan**, a multiple employer plan (MEP) that's designed to bring print employers together under one larger retirement plan structure. The plan is designed to help offer a competitive employee benefit while simplifying administrative work by shifting many day-to-day responsibilities that come with operating a 401(k) program to the MEP sponsor and professional services team.

For a print employer already balancing production, workforce needs, customer deadlines and the demands of running a business, that can make a meaningful difference.

Less Time Managing the Plan

Through the Print & Graphics Retirement Plan, many responsibilities can be handled at the plan level, including:

- employee eligibility tracking
- distribution processing
- compliance and nondiscrimination testing
- annual reporting

- investment selection and monitoring, participant communications
- enrollment and education

Two particularly notable advantages for participating employers are **no individual annual plan audit** and **no individual Form 5500 filing**. Those requirements are handled through the broader plan rather than separately by each employer.

For businesses accustomed to managing those responsibilities independently, that can reduce both administrative work and the amount of internal time devoted to the plan each year.

Shared Structure Without a One-Size-Fits-All Plan

Joining a larger plan doesn't mean giving up the features that matter to your organization.

Participating employers can retain flexibility around several aspects of plan design, including features such as safe harbor and Roth provisions, eligibility requirements and employer matching formulas. Employers also receive reporting based on their own employee population.

The value of the MEP model comes from sharing infrastructure and professional support while still allowing employers to build a benefit appropriate for their workforce.

Support With Fiduciary Responsibilities

Retirement plans come with fiduciary responsibilities that shouldn't be overlooked. Participation in an MEP does not eliminate

an employer's fiduciary obligations entirely, but certain fiduciary functions can be delegated to professional plan administrators, helping reduce some of the responsibility that would otherwise sit directly with the employer.

What it can do is provide employers with additional professional support and oversight instead of asking them to navigate every aspect of the plan independently.

A Benefit for Employees & Employers

Ultimately, a retirement plan should do two things well: help employees prepare for their futures and make sense for the business offering it.

The Print & Graphics Retirement Plan gives PGCA members the opportunity to look at both sides of that equation. Employees gain access to a retirement benefit supported by participant education, communications, tools and resources. Employers can reduce

the time and complexity involved in administering a plan and potentially see cost savings through pooled plan assets compared with operating a single-employer plan.

If your business already offers a 401(k), that doesn't mean you need to make a change. But it may be worth asking: **Could we provide a strong retirement benefit in a simpler, more efficient way?**

As a PGCA member, you have access to a retirement plan specifically created to bring employers in the print and graphic communications industry together. ■

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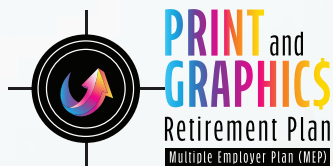


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Print and Graphics Retirement Plan



- Minimize fiduciary liability
- Lower 401(k) cost
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- Reduced administrative time

"This plan has been a game-changer for our business. The collective power of the Association's pooled resources not only allowed for the strongest fiduciary protections available but also led to reduced costs for our business and employees. I'm proud to be a part of this forward-thinking initiative and would highly recommend it."

— **Leonard Nangle**, Controller,
Precise Continental, Harrison, New Jersey



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A Hidden Question in Family Business Succession:

What Motivates Your Successor?

By Dr. Ralph Williams and Dr. Kristin Shanine, Professors of Management, Jones College of Business, Middle Tennessee State University

Well... you became the owner of your printing business about 20 years ago. And since then, although challenges surfaced, things have gone well. You've led the company through growth and good performance. As you step back and take a breath, you think, "What's next? Is it time for me to think about stepping away?"

During that thought process, your child, who has worked at your business for a few years, comes to mind. **"Is my child an appropriate, suitable, and capable leader to take my place?"** That question opens the curtain to a plethora of additional questions, such as:

- Does your child have an appropriate education?
- Does your child have enough business experience?
- Is your child respected in your business?
- Does your child have the needed traits and attributes to lead your business?
- Is the time needed to transition your child into your position doable?"

All those questions, and more, are relevant.

But here's one question that family business leaders rarely consider when thinking about their child as a potential successor: "What motivates my child to lead our business?" Or, in other words, "Why is the potential successor interested in the leadership position?" My eyes were opened to this question while teaching a family business course in our college of business. Our solid textbook, *Managing the Family Business*:

Theory and Practice by Thomas Zellweger, proposed four bases for successor motivation: affective commitment, normative commitment, calculative commitment, and imperative commitment, which are discussed below:

► **Affective commitment**

- The potential successor *"wants to"* pursue a career in the family firm and contribute to the family business. This is the most desirable career opportunity for the potential successor, as they have a passion for continuing their family's business and enhancing its performance. Their career interests are aligned with leading their family firm.

► **Normative commitment**

- The potential successor feels *"obligated"* to stay with the firm and accommodate the family. Staying with their family business is something they *"should do"* for their family's best interests. This might relate to family norms or legacy. "This is about my family."

► **Calculative commitment**

- The potential successor's perceived value of an ownership stake in the family business, and the potential opportunity costs lost from leaving the family firm, makes moving to something else look less promising. Based on their evaluation of the potential personal gains, they *"have to"* stay with the family firm to capture the potential returns. This may also



connect with salary expectations and the inability to secure higher wages at another firm. The potential successor thinks, "I could get a good position with another firm, but staying with the family firm produces the best return for me."

► **Imperative commitment**

- The potential successor sees their family firm as a career safe haven. They *"need to"* stay with their family business because they couldn't find anything on the job market. This reflects self-doubt, as the potential successor may think, "I am really not good enough to get a job somewhere else."

I discussed these different motivators with the owner of a family construction business who is considering his son as a potential successor. He said, "One other thought I don't see (in the motivators described above), one that I have considered to be reality in other family businesses, is a sense of entitlement, which may or may not have actually been earned or even qualified for. Not one we like to consider as it often spells disaster." In other words, a potential successor may think, "I *deserve* to lead the family business." If a potential successor seeks the leadership position because they feel entitled, they might not invest enough

effort in managing the business and, most importantly, may not lead well.

Obviously, *affective commitment* (i.e., a deep desire and passion to stay in the family business and lead it to success) is the most powerful motivator for a potential successor and results in a smoother, more collaborative leadership transition, as well as greater successor resilience. However, *normative commitment*, a family obligation, also has positive effects, such as a passion for doing what is best for the family, for the family business's founders, or for maintaining the family business's strong community reputation and brand. Those passions may subsequently prompt *affective commitment*.

For family business leaders, the big message when considering potential successors is to focus on their motivation, along with other questions that surface. Don't merely assume they are holding *affective commitment*. A successor's motivation strongly drives their future behaviors and effort.

How can you lead successors toward, or deepen, their *affective commitment*? First, assess what motivates the successor to work for the business now and enter the leadership role. This might include observing the potential successor's daily active engagement in your family business. For example, Do you see passion for the business in the potential successor? Do you see the potential successor "caring" for the business, at a level where they step up beyond expectations? Does the potential successor contribute to the business's performance? Is the potential successor a positive emotional force inside the business?

Also, take actions to build the potential successor's *affective commitment*. When you see any of the elements mentioned above (including active engagement in the business, a passion for the business, caring for the business, stepping up beyond expectations, or other constructive actions), provide your potential successor with solid positive reinforcement! Tell them you like what they did...and thank them.

Consider having personal chats with the potential successor about the business. Scheduling a breakfast or lunch together, maybe once a month, may show your potential successor that you are interested in them. I see leaders of family printing businesses who are too busy or assume their potential successor is motivated to move up, so they don't connect with them often or deeply. Have candid, ongoing discussions about the business's current situation, its future path, challenges, and the successor's path forward.

I recently heard an interesting sermon from the book of Proverbs about parents "disciplining" their children. In today's world of parenting, we seem to have a negative connotation of "disciplining" children. We see it as correcting, pointing out bad actions, telling them to "stop." However, "disciplining" goes beyond pointing out bad actions. It also includes discussing why that wasn't a good move, how to do better, and doing so with a teaching/development tone. TEACH and LEAD your potential successor to lead. And build *affective commitment*! ■



The advertisement features a background image of two people, a man and a woman, smiling and looking at a tablet together in an office setting. Overlaid on this is the Atlantic logo in blue and black. Below the logo is the headline "WHY SETTLE FOR ORDINARY?" in large, bold, black capital letters, followed by the sub-headline "EXPERIENCE THE NEXT GENERATION OF PRODUCTION PERFORMANCE" in smaller, blue and black capital letters. A blue swoosh underline is positioned below the sub-headline. In the bottom left corner, the text "SHARP BP-1200S" is written in large, bold, red capital letters, with "SIX-COLOR PRESS SERIES" in smaller, black capital letters underneath. Below this, the text "Contact us to explore the Industry-leading 6-color printing technology" is written in blue. Further down, the contact information for Luis Villa is listed: "Luis Villa", "lvilla@tomorrowsoffice.com", and "646-831-1934". On the right side of the advertisement, a large, detailed image of the Sharp BP-1200S six-color press is shown. At the bottom center, the website "www.tomorrowsoffice.com" is displayed in white lowercase letters.

Atlantic

WHY SETTLE FOR ORDINARY?

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Upcoming Events



Dec.

May

■ WATCH YOUR EMAIL FOR DETAILS ON OTHER REGIONAL HOLIDAY PARTIES

BUFFALO CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 9, 2026 | 6 pm

The Terrace, Buffalo, NY

PGCA HR CONFERENCE

May 6 & 7, 2027

Turning Stone Resort Casino, Verona, NY

■ EMERGING LEADERS WORKSHOP

3-part workshop

November 3, 10, 17, 2026 | 11:30 am to 3:00 pm

This three-part virtual workshop series is designed to equip emerging leaders with actionable tools that drive innovation, operational excellence, and customer impact, as well as the confidence to lead effectively in today's evolving workplace.

Sign up for all three workshops or the classes individually

Nov. 3 **Developing New Managers –**

From Contributor to Leader

Nov. 10 **Change Management –**

Navigating Uncertainty with Confidence

Nov. 17 **Teamwork and Team Building –**

Creating Cohesive, High-Performing Teams

■ BEYOND THE PRESS: DIVERSIFYING OFFERINGS

November 4, 2026 | 1:00 pm

Expanding beyond traditional printing is creating opportunities for growth and gaining profit. In this webinar, Dr. Ralph Williams, Professor of Management at Middle Tennessee State University will discuss how printing companies are diversifying into Non-Printing Products & Services, how to decide what non-printing products/services to add and more.

■ USPS MTAC RECAP & PEAK SEASON UPDATE

November 4, 2026 | 11:00 am

Tom Carroll, PMO Director, Matrix Imaging and PGCA's correspondent to the USPS Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC), will share highlights from the latest MTAC discussions and insights on the upcoming holiday mailing season. Tom will offer a practical perspective on postal developments and their implications for your business and customers.

Visit www.printcommunications.org/events for more details on these events and to register.

Webinars

■ WEBINARS WITH KELLY MALLOZZI

MARKETING BRIEF

November 5, 2026 | 1:30 pm

The Engagement Equation

A Smarter Social Content Strategy for B2B: Discover how print companies can use a balanced social content mix to strengthen visibility, build customer connection, and spark meaningful B2B engagement. We'll explore the right role for industry insight, member stories, education, events, and promotion—so every post supports credibility, community, and measurable business value.

CULTURE BRIEF

November 12, 2026 | 1:30 pm

Stop Rewarding the Rescue

Building a Culture That Doesn't Depend on Heroes: Extraordinary effort deserves appreciation, but shouldn't become the everyday expectation. This culture brief explores how print companies can move beyond celebrating last-minute saves to recognize prevention, planning, and collaboration. Learn how leaders can support shared responsibility, reduce dependence on individual heroes, and build a culture where smooth operations earn recognition, too.

What If Your Team Could Quote Faster, Catch More Errors, and Onboard Jobs With Less Friction?

If your estimating process still relies heavily on manual data entry, tribal knowledge, and chasing down missing specs — you already know how much time and money that costs. Missed details lead to pricing outliers. Slow quotes lose jobs. Workflow bottlenecks back everything up. AI is changing all of that. This Print University course shows you exactly how. PGCA members access 100+ Print University courses in

the members only section on printcommunications.org.

New Print University Course: AI Toolset Round-up — Job Onboarding & Estimating

Industry experts **Ryan McAbee** and **Pat McGrew** take a practical, hands-on look at the AI tools that are actively transforming how print shops handle two of their most time-sensitive processes — job onboarding and estimating.

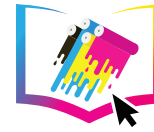
This isn't theory. This is real-world application built specifically for print service providers like you.

Here's what you'll take away:

- How AI tools can dramatically reduce manual data entry during job onboarding — freeing your team to focus on what matters

- Ways to improve quote speed without sacrificing the accuracy your customers depend on
- How AI helps identify missing specs before they become costly mid-job surprises
- Techniques for spotting pricing outliers that could be quietly eroding your margins
- How to pinpoint and address the workflow bottlenecks holding your operation back
- A smart approach to auditing your current workflows before layering in automation
- How to properly validate vendor AI features — so you know what actually works and what's just marketing
- Best practices for training your staff before rolling out automation on mission-critical systems like your MIS, estimating tools, and production processes

The bottom line: AI won't replace your team — but it will make them faster, sharper, and more profitable. This course gives you the roadmap to get there responsibly and effectively.



PGCA PRINT UNIVERSITY
ONLINE LEARNING

As always, this course is waiting for you right now - fully on demand, no scheduling required. Watch it when it works for you, pause when life happens, and come back whenever you're ready. Contact PGCA at info@printcommunications.org or (716) 691-3211 for assistance with login credentials. ■



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Written EHS Plan—Getting and Staying on the Road



Steve Stankavage,
Director of Environmental, Health & Safety,
PGCA

Greetings Safety Fans! Many printing companies have asked PGCA how to perfect their EHS programs. If you have attended my “Road to Safety” presentation and heard how companies tend to evolve in their EHS progression towards continuous improvement, you’ve heard about where companies tend to go off the rails. Today I want to introduce you to a tool you can use to put you back on track.

So how do you know you’re off the road?

- Are you doing everything in your power to avoid regulatory inspections? Off the road.

- Are you throwing money at safety incentives and every manor of PPE to entice your employees to be safe? Off the road.
- Are you adding “safety specific” steps or programs to operations without evaluating the necessity or effect on the operation? Off the road.
- Are you adding checklists, safety committees, tiger team responsibilities to personnel beyond their current responsibilities? Off the road.
- Are you not sure what to do next?

Fear not, that’s what PGCA is here for!

First realization: Safety’s only purpose is to ensure every employee goes home the way they entered – with all their fingers and toes.

Second realization: Production is King! It’s what we are all here for. Moreover, safety does not exist without production! If you are not producing, employees can’t be injured. However, if you are producing in a manner where your employees are being injured, you are NOT producing correctly! This is the biggest problem many do not understand.

Production is production, right? Wrong! There’s production and then there is SAFE production. Many of us know how to produce.

Many of us know how to cut down a tree, but how many know how to cut down a tree without taking out the house, the car, or ourselves? Remember it’s not just about production, but how to keep all your fingers in doing so. So, focus on what you KNOW – production; and make your production safe. This is where an EHS program comes in.

So, what is an EHS program? Essentially, it’s a written program about how your company ensures the health and safety of your employees and the environment.

Right about this point I get a lot of raised eyebrows from company owners, followed by statements like: “We already have one.” “That would take a lot of trees.” and “For what?”. Yeah, many of you do have EHS programs. Yeah, many of you sort of follow it. And yeah, many of them are worthless because you skipped over the most important step. The EHS program is a road map. It’s not only the steps you took to develop your safety programs, but also a road map for other managers to follow when they don’t know what to do to improve production or if production fails, i.e. an employee gets injured.

So, what’s included in a written EHS program?

Your EHS policy. Which pretty much everyone has and calls their EHS program. It’s basically your EHS mission/commitment statement signed by the owner(s), but that’s only the first page. There’s a lot more to this program. This section includes the company’s goals and objectives.

Responsibilities of management and the employees and their minimum performance standards towards protecting the employees, contractors, visitors, and the environment from harm and who’s the overall person in charge of safety at your location.

Disciplinary and corrective actions that will be taken should anyone or thing be found in violation of the mission statement.

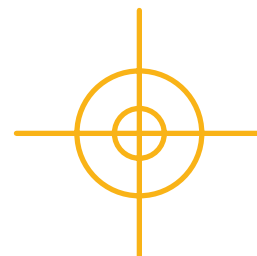
The “HOW” of the program. This part is the real body of the program and the part many companies skip. It follows four basic elements:

1. ANALYZE – IDENTIFY the production hazards (how?)

- We identified employee job functions (job descriptions – what are we asking them to do)
- We performed job hazard analyses. Each step of what



Focus on what you **KNOW** – production; and make your production safe. This is where an EHS program comes in. ”



we are asking our employees to do to perform each task (what hazards do they face or can create performing it incorrectly).

- Performed OSHA 300 log analysis for trends (how and results)
- Performed air and noise monitoring (who, how and results)
- Performed chemical hazard identifying (through SDS sheets and how we asked to employees to use them).
- Performed machine guarding analysis (how close do the employees get to moving parts)
- We conduct monthly inspection/walkthroughs (who, what, when, how – results are handled how?)

2. REMOVE – MITIGATE – CONTROL the hazards

- We installed the following physical barriers/controls/procedures to control hazards, chemical storage methods, compartmentalizing.
- We have developed the following safety rules based on the job hazard analysis.
- We developed the following specialized function safety rules
- We developed the following

written programs (hazcom, hearing conservation, LOTO, work procedures).

- We require the following personal protective equipment (for and when)
- Established a Safety Committee to relate how the functions are working (who, when, how long, what function, responsibilities)
- First aid responders: HAZMAT teams, fire brigades, spill response methods (who, what, when, how, responsibilities)
- Emergency Action Plan

3. EDUCATE – TRAIN – COMMUNICATE on the hazards of production AND on the hazards of not doing it correctly (who, what, when, how, frequency)

- Senior management is required to (speak/train/be educated on)
- Mid-Management is required to (speak/train/be educated on)
- Supervisors are required to (speak/train/be educated on)
- Employees are required to (be educated on)

- Specialized job functions are required to (train/be educated on) (first aid, hazmat, fire brigade)
- Safety committee members are required to (train/speak/meet/be educated on)

4. RE-EVALUATION – RE-INSPECTION (who, what, when, how, results communicated how, actions handled how)

- Senior management will review...
- Mid-management will review...
- Supervisors will review...
- Safety administrator will review...

As you can see it should cover everything your company does in the realm of production. The more detailed you go, the clearer your company's vision will be leading to understanding the hazards of your production and easier tracking methods. More detail DOES NOT always lead to more responsibilities that need to be tracked, but it should lead to a change of thought in HOW you produce.

If you want your company to be a true world-class safety leader, I suggest you get as detailed as you can because then you almost have to streamline it and enlist

more personnel for support, which leads to more “buy-in” and a stronger driving force for change. The EHS program will be a mandatory reality if you really understand and stay on the “Road to Safety” by improving and analyzing your production methods.

It is also a very strong indicator to OSHA that your company does have a strong safety program just by showing you have a road map for safety improvement. I've told many members, it's not a matter of “if” you'll be inspected by OSHA, it's a matter of “when.” If you can provide this document to an inspector (whose job is to determine if you have a safety program and whether or not it is working) it will send a message loud and clear – WE CARE.

As always, Steve Stankavage and PGCA are here to help. PGCA's Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) Department is ready to assist your company in navigating through the regulations, interpretations and guidance documents that make up the realm of environmental and safety compliance. We can provide you with realistic, practical and economical solutions to your issues. Contact Steve Stankavage at ssankavage@printcommunications.org or (570) 579-6497. ■



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Get to Know PGCA Staff: Tim Freeman

Four decades ago, Tim Freeman joined the Association as Vice President and took over the Presidency in 1988. Working with 19 PIA Chairmen over the years, helping the



Association through countless industry changes, the Covid-19 crisis, three territory expansions and four different Association names, 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 reach out to Tim, he 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.

Tim has worked tirelessly over the years advocating for the industry, most recently prevailing against bills in NYS and NJ which proposed a ban on carbon black, the essential ingredient in printing ink and working to extend the sales tax exemption on printed products in Virginia.

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 traveling the world and jumping off cliffs in Switzerland.

Contact Tim Freeman at (716) 691-3211 or tim@printcommunications.org. ■



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Idle Cash

Cash is the life blood of your business—when you don't have it you're dead. The key to building it is prompt billing, fast identification of problems and settlement rather than fighting. On the other side of the ledger, creating a systematic and consistent payment policy – payment in 45 or 60 days – will maximize cash flow if your suppliers can count on it.



Once you have cash keeping it in the bank and getting nothing for it is a lost opportunity. Money market funds (Vanguard, etc.) are paying around 2.5% – 3.8% and are fully liquid providing access to your money on a next day basis.

Are You Working Overtime?

If not, you probably have too many people on the payroll. Amazingly, time and one-half saves money! The simple reason is that work volume varies from day to day because you don't produce anything until a customer wants it, and

then they want it yesterday. In our world of print, if we are just working an eight-hour day, it's not uncommon to take the full shift to do seven hours of work without even being conscious of it—that's called Parkinson's Law.

Reducing the number of employees protects you from Parkinson's Law and saves the costs of having additional employees along with the cost of benefits—holidays, vacations, insurance, etc. It's not uncommon for companies in our industry to schedule 10-15% overtime on a regular basis. The result is the flexibility to meet customer demands along with avoiding the challenge of finding skilled employees. It's also a win for the remaining employees as they're now taking home more money every payday.

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 PGCA, Joe is available to expand on these articles, or aid with projects. Contact Joe at jspolanco49@gmail.com. ■

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