



PICA Scanner

January/February 2021

**THE PRINTING INDUSTRY
OF THE CAROLINAS, INC.**

* * * * *
Promoting the Industry...
Focused on Member Success!

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Economic and Industry Growth Expected in 2021

By David Wilaj, Economist, PRINTING United Alliance



As we near the end of a year filled with so much uncertainty, there is a sense of optimism in the air as answers are beginning to materialize. We can now begin to plan from a policy standpoint as it is now clear who will be leading our country for the next four years. A vaccine has been developed and is in the early stages of distribution with initial reports indicating that most of the population should receive their dose by midyear. News on both of these fronts led to an increase in investor sentiment and a boost in stocks which could sometimes be used as a leading indicator for economic growth.

While it is undeniable that when 2020 comes to an end we will see that both the economy and the print industry contracted overall throughout the year, early signs point to swift and solid growth in 2021.

Print Industry Outlook

Because print serves such a wide variety of industries, many printers' fortunes have mirrored their clients'. Those who provided print products or services for things like packaged food and pharmaceuticals saw prosperity throughout the year since those types of products flew off the shelves. On the other side of the coin, printers who serve the event and travel space were burdened by nationwide shutdowns and saw historically low sales numbers. Many who were in this unfortunate situation managed to pivot into producing COVID-related products such as PPE or virus signage. In fact, 78.9% of printers produced at least some sort of COVID-related product throughout the year according to the latest COVID-19 Print Business Indicators Research by PrUA/NAPCO Research. While these sales helped keep many businesses afloat, the margins were typically smaller and bottom lines suffered.

Overall, early projections from PrUA suggest that the industry contracted between 15% and 18% this year. While the industry was certainly set back because of virus-related shutdowns, it does appear growth may be right around the corner. As portions of our economy reopen at varying rates, sales should recover quite nicely. Initial estimates from PrUA indicate that print will grow between 2.5% and 4% in 2021. If it does reach the higher end of that projection, it would be the largest increase within the past 6 years.

Continued on Pages 4&5 

Our Purpose

Promoting the Industry – Focused on Member Success!

Our Vision

Advocate • Educate
Inform • Lead

Our Mission

To promote the common interest of the printing industry; and to help our members prosper, both individually and collectively, through fellowship, education and cooperative action.

Chairman's Letter

LOOK FORWARD, NOT BACK

As we celebrated the holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Covid crisis was still all around us. In spite of the difficulties, we can choose to be thankful for what we have. As a nation, we have been through a lot; Covid, election uncertainties, the cancellation of events and activities, meeting on Zoom instead of in person – the list goes on and on. The bright side – I hope – is that we have found time to be with our families more. As a small business owner, my work often seems to engulf a tremendous amount of time and keeps me away from my family. I'm thankful that during this time I've been able to be at home more.

As we embark on a new year, still full of many uncertainties, we need to focus on the marketing of our businesses even more than before. The landscape is different in some respects, but much the same in others. This is not the time to be pessimistic, but rather to channel our optimism into positive results. Even when it seems bleak, we need to keep in our minds the positives that are hidden in the struggle.

Keep being involved in all that PICA and PRINTING United Alliance have to offer. Start gathering your potential award prospects for the upcoming PICA Awards banquet. We are hopeful that we will be able to gather at a live event in March. I know there is still a lot of uncertainty about whether this first quarter of 2021 will get us back to normal, but one can hope.

I hope and pray that everyone had a wonderful Christmas, and that you enjoyed time together with family and were able to take a breath and focus on what was truly important. I've missed seeing everyone. Keep pressing on, and don't be discouraged. We've got this.



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As we embark on a new year, still full of many uncertainties, we need to focus on the marketing of our businesses even more than before.

5 Questions with Matt Wilson of PMG

When Print Management Group, Charlotte, was in the market for a larger facility, and they got the opportunity to expand their operational space by 25,000 square feet, they didn't let a global pandemic stand in the way of progress.

Matt Wilson, President of Print Management Group, took a few minutes to talk with PICA about pulling off a plant relocation/buildout in one of the most challenging years on record.



Q1: Why move during a pandemic?

"We didn't pick the pandemic; it picked all of us," Wilson said. "The relocation was long overdue and, once we were committed, we just put our heads down and pushed through it. The pandemic is certainly no one's first choice but, as the saying goes, *This too shall pass.*"

Q2: How did you complete the move and, at the same time, manage to keep everyone safe?

"Keeping everyone safe is always a top priority in any business, but especially in manufacturing. Keeping up with the evolving guidance from the CDC and others was, and still is, challenging. We simply drank in all the information coming at us and applied it as best we could. As for social distancing, I feel that print manufacturing naturally provides for this. Not so much in the office setting, but certainly in production. We also provided masks and hand sanitizer to all employees and encouraged their use."

Q3: What role did the PMG team play in the relocation?

"If there was a benefit to the pandemic, it would be that a lighter workload freed up resources to devote to the relocation. Many employees contributed in ways that would not have been an option under normal circumstances. Some painted the new offices, our maintenance staff put up new baseboard moldings and bathroom fixtures, and many employees helped with the physical moving of both equipment and office furnishings."

Q4: How did this shared experience impact your company culture?

"I think there is a stronger sense of pride that was born out of their personal contribution to the new plant. Most people value more the things that they personally contribute to. Also, I think most people that are attracted to printing and manufacturing in general have a sense of pride for working with their hands and seeing the physical manifestation of their work. Being able to say *I worked on that* or *I helped build that* is a powerful thing for morale."

Q5: As the business leader, how did you hold it all together during the transition?

"On a personal level, it was very stressful trying to manage the oversight of a new plant buildout and relocation along with all the government/pandemic issues coming at us. My faith in God and my wife, Shelly, are the main reasons that I could rise to the challenge. I would also add that there were times when the new plant also served as a great distraction from the broader fear and anxiety of the times."

If you'd like more information about Print Management Group and their facility at 425 E. Arrowhead Drive, Charlotte, you can contact Matt Wilson at (704) 684-6340, or check out their website at www.printmgt.biz.

Early Economic Indicators Point to

The index of leading business indicators in the latest version of the COVID-19 Print Business Indicators Research also signals that print recovery may be just around the corner. The leading index tracks trends in work-on-hand, quote activity, production payroll hours, and business confidence. A reading over 50.0 suggests activity will be picking up from current levels, while a reading below 50.0 means the opposite. At 53.6, the index now exceeds 50.0 for the first time since the research began last April. The index of current business indicators (tracks sales, production, employment, prices, and profitability) remains below 50.0 at 46.7, but could soon rise above the critical point if the leading indicators continue to trend upward. A reading above 50.0 here would mean that actual business activity is increasing from current levels throughout the industry.

PrUA Members can download the full version of COVID-19 Print Business Indicator Research report at www.sgia.org/resources/research/covid19-print-business-indicators, while a free executive summary of the report can be downloaded at https://piworld.tradepub.com/free/w_prin25/. The next iteration of the report is scheduled to be released in January and will give a better understanding of how print business and confidence is trending as we head into the new year.

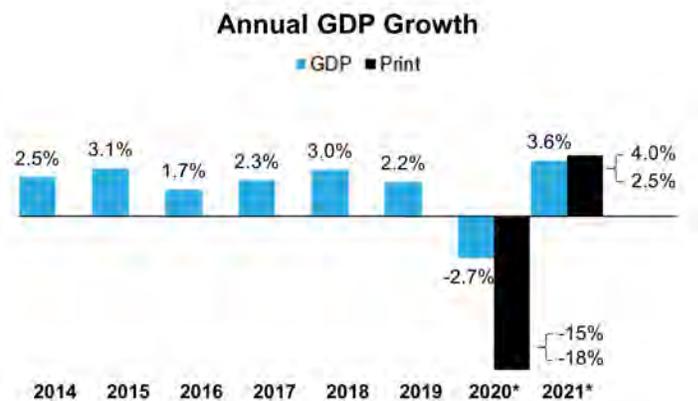
U.S. Economic Outlook

As mentioned before, print's extensive footprint will cause the industry to recover in tandem with the overall economy. According to the latest *Wall Street Journal Economic Forecasting Survey*, the economy will have contracted by 2.7% when 2020 comes to an end, the first contraction since 2009 and the worst since 1946. The same group also suggests that this trough will be short lived, as growth will materialize in 2021 at a rate of about 3.6%. While this rise may not seem extravagant, it would be the highest since 2004 and suggests that nearly \$748 billion would be added back into the economy next year.

Individual industry recovery will likely occur at varying paces. Some will see immediate boosts from pent-up

demand, while others like those in the event, travel, entertainment, and hospitality spaces will lag until people are both allowed and feel comfortable gathering in large groups once again.

The speed of recovery may also depend on whether or not there is continued aid for small businesses throughout the country. The first round of stimulus, particularly the availability of business loans through the Paycheck Protection Program helped to keep doors open and employees on the payroll. If print positions can be retained, then businesses will not have to worry about the extra steps of re-hiring when demand picks back up. Lawmakers continue to debate the amount and distribution plans for a second stimulus package, and any development on this front would surely increase business confidence moving forward. As of now, initial plans suggest that the second aid package would include more than \$900 billion in total aid with more than \$288 billion being allocated to small businesses by way of the PPP and other similar programs. Initial plans lack another \$1,200 stimulus check for citizens, which could stymie some of the pent-up consumer demand that is lingering.



2020 and 2021 numbers are based on projections from the *Wall Street Journal Economic Forecasting Survey* and *PRINTING United Alliance*.

Preparing for a Post-COVID World

Focusing on survival is certainly the main concern for printers at the moment, but in order to avoid falling behind when the economy fully reopens, it is integral to begin thinking about the post-COVID world. The most

recent COVID-19 Print Business Indicators Research indicates that more than 86% of companies have begun their planning process, but there are some that are still lagging in this sense. Below are a few suggestions for what to think about moving forward.

- Pursue expansion opportunities – The truth is, firms will shutter and may not return to the market once this pandemic has been resolved. While this is unfortunate for these firms and their employees, an opportunity to acquire new clients can present itself. Do your research and see if these clients can fit into your portfolio. Also, consider that portions of struggling companies may be put up for sale, so see if an acquisition can help you increase your capacity or expand into a new market. Things like equipment and employees may also be able to be acquired from these shuttered firms.
- Have a plan to pivot back from PPE and other COVID-related products – The market for these products will eventually dry up and you must be able to quickly divert production back to normal. Keep lines of communication open between you and your old clients and try to understand what their timelines look like. Also, utilize new relationships created from producing COVID-products and see if your original product mix could fit their needs.
- Understand market shifts and be able to adjust to a new world – Working from home and virtual selling will certainly be part of the new normal. Prepare your sales staff for a world where in-person meetings are limited and develop your ecommerce capabilities to keep up with the competition.

Potential Policy Changes

A shift in leadership is typically accompanied by a slew of policy changes and the Biden administration will be no different. The following are potential changes that have been discussed on the campaign trail:

- The implementation of a \$15 minimum wage.
- An increase in the corporate tax rate from 21% to 28%. Although higher than what we have seen

during the Trump administration, it is still lower than any rate since 1940.

- “Made in America” tax credits that incentivize “restoring production, revitalizing existing closed or closing facilities, retooling facilities to advance manufacturing employment, or expanding manufacturing payroll.” This plan also includes a surtax on foreign subsidiary sales to U.S. customers and discourages firms from relocating their headquarters in other jurisdictions to avoid taxes.
- Increased facilitation of union organization as well as improving legal protections for U.S. workers.
- Prioritization of environmental protections that can have regulatory effects on emissions, types of materials used, etc.
- USPS aid and the promise to not pursue privatizing the organization. This will likely include a major cash infusion to the program as well as ending certain pension funding requirements that can free up cash for organizational investment, improvement, and modernization.

For a more detailed look into some of these potential policy changes, please see my latest *Analyst Insight* article for Printing Impressions at www.piworld.com/post/potential-policy-changes-following-2020-elections/.

2020 was an unpredictable year which left many people on their heels. As we move into a new year and the dust settles, it appears that growth and greater visibility are on the horizon. 2021 can be a prosperous year if firms are able to return to what they know best and if they plan accordingly.

Sources: Percent change in commercial printing shipments: *Annual Survey of Manufactures, U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-19, and PRINTING United Alliance, 2020-21 projections.* Percent change in GDP: *Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2015-19, and The Wall Street Journal Economic Forecasting Survey consensus, 2020-21.*

Communicating During a Crisis



During the coronavirus crisis, business as usual has come to a complete halt. It's been business as unusual.

After all, these are difficult days. During this pandemic, our priorities have shifted to taking care of ourselves and our loved one, our friends and our family, our colleagues and our neighbors.

Our work is important, but our lives are at stake.

How do you communicate to your customers and prospects? What do you say? What do you do?

The first step to take is to pause all your existing advertising and marketing messages until you've had a chance to review them and determine if they are still relevant in during these difficult days. Chances are, they need to be shelved for the time being and replaced by entirely new messages that are more reflective of the times.

This is not the time to be selling aggressively, if you're even going to be selling at all. This is the time to show the human side of your business. This is the time to ask your audience what you can do for them, not tell them what they can do for you.

Demonstrate your empathy. Show your concern. Tell them that you have their backs. Put yourself in their shoes. Everyone is struggling. Everyone is scrambling. No one wants to be on the receiving end of sales pitches now.

That doesn't mean you can't increase the value of your business during this difficult time. So don't disappear from sight. Quite the contrary. Using social media, online meeting platforms, chat services, text, email, direct mail and, yes, the good, old-fashioned telephone, show up on a regular basis just to say hello and ask people how they are doing today.

Anything you can do to help others – especially those less fortunate than you – will be greatly appreciated these days. Everybody would appreciate a hand.

Everybody would like to contribute to the solution themselves, too. Maybe you can start a fundraising campaign to support those on the front lines. Perhaps you can collaborate with your followers and fans to provide free services and expertise to people who are less fortunate than others.

Put yourself in your audience's shoes. What would you want to hear from your organization if you were them? Can you give any products and services away? Can you offer a substantial discount on what you have to offer? Can you educate, entertain, or enlighten those on the receiving end of your messages in a timely, relevant fashion? You can certainly lend them your ear.

Respond promptly to their questions and comments. Give them the benefit of the doubt if they have a problem with anything having to do with your company. Make sure to acknowledge what's going on in the world. But don't dwell on it. Maintain a positive, uplifting tone of voice, but don't be tone-deaf and completely ignore the gravity of this public health crisis.

Now is the time to be as authentic, transparent, and immediate as possible in your communications. That is always the case in times of crises and disasters, only this time it's even more so. We've never seen anything like this pandemic.

Near the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak, I began talking about the emerging crisis on social media. It has been the primary focus of all my videos, which I have been doing regularly for years, since March 13. That day, I recorded my message from Copley Square in Boston, talking about how important it was for brands and businesses to show that they were aware of the worsening health situation in their advertising and marketing campaigns. I applauded CVS for responding so quickly in offering to deliver all prescribed medications to its customers for free.

Just a couple days later, back in Boston with my wife, Barbara, I shot a quick video along the Harbor Walk about social distance and social media, reminding people that, "During this time of keeping a social distance from one another, we can use social media to not just stay in touch, but to stay healthy, too."

The next message I delivered on video was to members of the American Marketing Association Boston. As president of the chapter, I wanted to make sure our audience knew that we were following the guidelines put out by the CDC and other healthcare officials, cancelling all future in-person events until further notice and planning some virtual events instead.

Those were just three of the well more than a dozen messages I've recorded on video since the early days of this pandemic.

I have also had conversations via Zoom for both my podcast and YouTube channel with industry professionals such as Avidia Bank's Katelin Cwieka, Rapport International's Wendy Pease and social media consultant, Meaghan Edelstein, each time around focusing on marketing during the pandemic.

I have tried to be relevant and timely in everything I have published on social media since the onset of the coronavirus crisis without going overboard. Business has gone on, sure, but it has not been business as usual. I still talk about marketing and social media. I still teach marketing to college students. I still create and share content on behalf of my clients. But I don't forget to acknowledge the seriousness of what's going in this world more often than not.

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55th Annual PICA Awards Celebrate Printing in the Carolinas

The Covid-19 pandemic challenged our industry in ways we never imagined. It forced many businesses to grow and change, creating a transformation of goods, services, and relationships. Everything looks different than it did this time last year and, while it has been rough, we still have a lot to celebrate. There's a vaccine on the horizon, and the government acknowledged what we already knew: **PRINT IS ESSENTIAL.**

The **55th Annual PICA Awards** will be here before we know it, and the time-honored rules still apply. Your entries must have been printed or reprinted between January 1 and December 31, 2020. **Entries are due by January 15, 2021** and will be judged January 28-30, 2021.

*Your entries may look a little different than in past years, and that's okay. The PICA Awards are judged on **PRINT QUALITY – not design.***

PICA and your Vendor Partners know how hard you have worked, and we want to reward your continued pursuit of excellence, **so we're bringing back TWO FREE ENTRIES for member companies.**



Join us on March 13, 2021, at the Embassy Suites in Concord for the 55th Annual PICA Awards Banquet. We look forward to celebrating your accomplishments!

PICA and PINE Jointly Present First Virtual Fall Conference

The Printing Industry of the Carolinas (PICA) and Printing Industries of New England (PINE) joined forces and resources November 9-13, 2020 to produce the first virtual Fall Conference for both affiliates.

"We're anxious to get back to in-person events, but the flexibility of our virtual event was a plus for members," Carrie Epps, PICA VP of Member Services, said. "I was pleased and impressed with the quality of the speakers and their programs."

PINE President Christine Hagopian agreed. "The lasting effects of the pandemic caused us to cancel our traditional Fall Conference and pivot to a virtual one. While not ideal, the upside was that it allowed for more attendance from the various management layers within each member's company."

Program topics included team dynamics, online business growth, workflow automation, business expansion strategies,

prospecting in pandemic conditions, and using organic and paid social media to sell print.

Programming was delivered via Zoom, and presented in short blocks centered on the lunch hour to minimize workplace interruption. Member companies were able to purchase access to group and individual logins, enabling them to include their entire workforce, both onsite and remote. More than 60 member companies took advantage of this virtual opportunity to educate their teams and invest in the future of their businesses.

PINE and PICA would like to thank presenters Wayne Lynn, Ron Rosenberg, Shawn Osborn, David Pitts, Deborah Corn, and Bob Cargill. Recordings of the Fall Virtual Conference are available for purchase, both individually by session and as a group. For more information, please contact PICA at (704) 357-1150.

PICA Foundation Golf Classic Funds the Future

The PICA Foundation Educational Endowment was established in 1988 to help ensure the continuation of a highly skilled work force for our ever-changing industry. The foundation provides scholarships and grants to support graphic arts degree programs at institutions of higher learning in North and South Carolina. Since the PICA Foundation's inception, we have assisted more than 788 students with scholarships or financial support totaling over \$620,000. The PICA Foundation funds the Education Endowment through events like the annual Golf Classic, which will be held April 21, 2021.

"On behalf of the PICA Foundation trustees, I want to thank everyone who has supported and participated in our annual Golf Tournaments. The funds raised have

allowed the PICA Foundation to provide over \$44,800 in additional support for graphic student scholarships, teacher support, and industry career awareness activities in North and South Carolina," PICA Foundation President Ralph Belk, Jr. said. "We are excited and hopeful that we will be able to return to the links this coming spring for a fun filled day and to continue to support education for our industry. You may have received our annual fundraising letter in the mail. We have pledges of up to \$13,000 in matching funds, so any amount you send will be doubled. Once again, your support of the PICA Foundation goes right back to supporting graphics education and students in these programs."

Olde Sycamore Golf Plantation
7500 Olde Sycamore Drive • Mint Hill, NC 28227

SAVE THE DATE

9th Annual PICA Foundation Golf Classic
Wednesday, April 21, 2021
www.oldsycamoregolf.com



The PICA Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Over the past 35 years, the PICA Foundation has proudly awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships to Graphic Communications students at select colleges across the Carolinas.



ENJOY A FUN AFTERNOON
OF GOLF AND PRIZES, NETWORK
WITH PEERS, AND SUPPORT THE
FUTURE OF THE PRINTING INDUSTRY.

Tournament Details

- \$500 per foursome OR \$150 per player
- 1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start • Captain's Choice
- Practice greens and driving range available

Proceeds will fund PICA Foundation programs
and scholarships in the Carolinas.

**DON'T MISS OUT! CALL PICA AT
(704) 357-1150 OR (800) 849-7422
TO REGISTER TODAY.**

Wes Westmoreland Talks Politics in the Carolinas



PICA invited former PICA board member and North Carolina Senator Wes Westmoreland to share his views on the post-election political climate in North and South Carolina. Here's what he had to say:

We began 2020 with a robust economy and an impeachment. We are ending the year with businesses suffering, the most expensive and intense presidential election in memory, an historic voter turnout, and now allegations of fraud and the potential of yet another shutdown. The Seattle 'CHOP Zone' takeover seems like a distant memory and 'news' outlets on both sides have become nothing more than commentaries parading as news, furthering the intensity we saw leading up to November 3.

There were two really big issues in the presidential race, COVID and Donald Trump. Except that his was the name on the ballot, Biden seemed almost as irrelevant as a debate moderator, spending a great deal of time in his basement while Trump drew thousands to rallies around the nation, and drove supporters while annoying opponents with his Tweets. The full outcome of a presumed Biden win won't be known until sometime after the runoff election for the two Georgia Senate seats on January 5, which will ultimately determine the direction of the country for the next two years.

Biden has made it clear that he will roll-back as much of the past four years as possible by executive order, but it's not likely that he will be able to do much more than that unless the Senate flips. Democrats lost quite a few seats in the House, and Republicans did much better than was projected in the Senate. There were no coattails for Biden, and no mandate for progressives. Given history, it is likely that Biden will lose seats in the House, and possibly control in 2022. It remains to be seen if COVID relief becomes any easier post-election.

In the Carolinas, Lindsay Graham and Thom Tillis won reelection to the Senate – both of whom were considered vulnerable at the very least, though Tillis' opponent likely texted his way out of the win. Graham easily won, and SC Republicans gained seats in both houses of the General Assembly. SC remains a very red state, and likely will be for some time.

With emergency television press conferences each week since March and nearly ten times the financing of his opponent, Roy Cooper was simply too much for Dan Forest to overcome in the NC Governor's race. Nevertheless, in spite of several open seats, the breakdown of the balance of the Council of State remains as it was, a 6-3 advantage for the GOP. Republicans also won every state-wide judicial race, increased the majority in

the House and maintained the majority in the Senate – in spite of newly drawn districts intended to favor Democrats. Governor Cooper may perceive a mandate on his shut-down, but there is very little else he can claim. However, without veto-proof majorities in the General Assembly, budget negotiations will remain difficult in NC.

Lessons learned? Print matters, polling doesn't. Voting by mail is here to stay. Early voting, whether by mail or in person, continues to challenge campaigns to start earlier and hit with more and better-targeted drops. All of this is good news for our industry on the whole, however capturing the work in-state will continue to be difficult for the average printer. Watch for climate to become a topic of discussion that may actually find some traction in Washington. While always a mixed bag, our industry should be in a better position than many others.

From a business standpoint, NC is likely to continue a one-size-fits-all approach to COVID, while SC will continue to yield to local governments. It doesn't seem likely that either Governor's approach will be challenged in a significant way.

These two approaches offer an interesting contrast, but one clear and significant lesson. Regardless of personal preference, the government continues to grow in size and scope to control even more of our business and our lives. Our industry and businesses will continue to face significant changes over the next year.

Eight years ago, President Obama famously said, "Elections have consequences." As we have seen throughout this year, they most certainly do. It is up to us to find a way to live with the consequences of this election, good or bad.

Wes Westmoreland founded Westmoreland Printers, Inc. in Shelby, NC in 1999, and has been actively involved in politics since he was 12 years old, earning a degree in Political Science from Gardner-Webb University in 1988. Westmoreland was appointed to the North Carolina Senate by Governor Beverly Perdue to fill the unexpired term of North Carolina Senator Debbie Clary in 2012.

Westmoreland is a founding board member of Pinnacle Classical Academy, a college preparatory charter school in Cleveland County. A former member of the PICA board, Westmoreland serves as a trustee of Cleveland Community College, the Executive Board of the North Carolina Association of Community College Trustees, and member of the Rural Infrastructure Authority for the NC Department of Commerce. Westmoreland is co-host of a locally produced political talk show.

Michael Makin to Depart PRINTING United Alliance



PRINTING United Alliance recently announced that Michael Makin, who served as EVP since the merger of SGIA and Printing Industries of America (PIA), would depart on January 1 after a successful transition of the combined organizations. On May 1, SGIA and PIA officially merged to become the largest, most comprehensive printing and graphic arts association in the country. As former president and CEO of PIA, Makin was instrumental in the unification.

Makin has served in leadership roles in the printing industry worldwide since 1995, where he served as president and CEO of the Canadian Printing Industries Association, followed by his tenure with PIA in 2001. He has championed many successful initiatives and transitions, including representing the industry in important legislation and regulatory victories. His vision and commitment in his role in the SGIA and PIA merger was greatly valued.

“We are extremely grateful to Michael for not only his years of service to our industry and the membership of PIA, and for representing the industry from international venues to the halls of Congress, but most recently for his embrace of the vision of PRINTING United Alliance and a coming together of the industry in body and spirit,” said Ford Bowers, president and CEO, PRINTING United Alliance. “Without Michael, this would not have happened, and we are all better off for his taking the opportunity to bring two significant organizations together. We are certain he will contribute to whatever he puts his mind to, whatever that might be. Our well-wishes go with him and we look forward to hearing of his continued success.

“I have enjoyed traversing this vital journey of the SGIA and PIA merger in being involved in helping make the transition a smooth one,” said Makin. “I have been in the printing industry a very long time and am thrilled with the direction that Ford and the Alliance are taking the association. The plans that the Alliance has to serve and lead this great industry are exciting and I wish the team nothing but the best.”

Zeikon Appoints Jetrix for Digital Demand in Mexico

Jetrix Soluciones Gráficas has been appointed **Zeikon's** new dealer in Mexico. Established in 2008, the company has seen 12 years of successful business growth in the packaging and labels markets. Based in Mexico City, Jetrix is contracted to supply and support Zeikon's full range of products for the Commercial and Label & Packaging sectors and cover all market requirements in the area. Mexico is a growing market for Zeikon in Latin America and, with more than 20 systems already in place, Jetrix can now respond to the noticeable surge in demand from printers and converters looking for innovative digital solutions and new revenue streams. “We plan to invest in and grow our packaging business while remaining steadfast in our commitment to provide valued customers with best-in-class paper, print, wide format and facility supplies products and solutions, as well as envelopes from our state-of-the-art converting operation,” stated Mitchell. “That commitment includes expanding our wide format media and equipment offering and services to printers, sign shops and end users. We're incredibly excited about what's ahead for Mac Papers and Packaging.”

ITU AbsorbTech Celebrates 90 Years

ITU AbsorbTech recently celebrated their 90th year in the industrial laundry and environmental services business. If you need help with shop towels, absorbents, uniforms and more, contact Regional Sales Manager Scott Smith at (864) 269-4574, Ext. 228 or ssmith@ituabsorbtech.com.

HP Inc. Announces Agreement with Shutterfly

Shutterfly (Fort Mill) and **HP Inc.** recently announced an agreement for Shutterfly to purchase more than 60 new Indigo digital presses. Included in the transaction will be B2-sized HP Indigo 100k digital presses, along with HP Indigo 12000 digital presses and other web-fed photo presses. The installations will be spread across Shutterfly's four manufacturing locations.

Mac Papers + Packaging Announces Senior Leadership Promotions

Mac Papers and Packaging, one of the largest paper and packaging distributors in the Southeast U.S., recently announced the promotion of several senior leaders across its business segments.



Executive Vice President, Paper, **Craig Boortz**, who currently oversees the company's paper business segment, has been given the additional responsibility of regional management for all of the company's distribution centers. Accordingly, all distribution center general managers now report directly to Boortz. Also reporting to Boortz is Mac Papers and Packaging veteran **Carter Whiddon**, who has been named Vice President, Inside Sales, a newly created role that reflects the company's dedicated focus on outstanding customer service.



"Craig's enduring commitment to Mac Papers and Packaging spans 28 years," stated President and COO Rick Mitchell. "His proven leadership, industry knowledge and business skills have served Craig well, and we're confident that he will excel in the expanded role. As Craig is quick to point out, working with a team of seasoned and skilled senior distribution center managers will go a long way toward ensuring excellent results."



Chris McCabe has been named Executive Vice President, Packaging. McCabe joined the company in August 2014 as Vice President of Packaging, bringing a wealth of industry experience. Over the past six years, McCabe has led the development of a comprehensive offering of packaging materials, equipment, and services and solutions, including kitting, design, customized programs for companies with complex packaging challenges, and single-source packaging programs for multi-location companies. McCabe also established the company's exclusive Castle® packaging brand.

"Chris's strategic vision, business acumen, effective leadership style and ability to recruit experienced talent have been instrumental in establishing packaging as a core part of our business," stated Mitchell. "Our commitment to invest in and grow the packaging business is reflected in the

addition of '+ Packaging' to our corporate identity. I have complete confidence that Chris and the experienced team of packaging professionals he leads will continue to grow all aspects of packaging for the company."



Ash Weekley has been promoted to Vice President, Wide Format & Graphics, and will now report directly to Mitchell. Since joining the wide format team as business development manager in 2017, Weekley has positioned Mac Papers and Packaging as a preferred distribution partner to well-known wide format equipment manufacturers and media brands. Weekley established the company's Argent® wide format media brand and led the development of the re-imagined Wide Format IDEA Center™.

"With Ash's hard work and wide format know-how, Mac Papers and Packaging has become recognized in a short time as a respected full-service supplier to the wide format industry," stated Mitchell. "I'm confident that Ash and the impressive team of experts he has assembled will continue to be successful in further expanding our wide format media and equipment offering to printers, sign shops and end users."

Scott Sipkovsky has been named Vice President and General Manager of Mac Papers Envelope Converters (MPEC). After serving as Controller at MPEC for 20 years, Sipkovsky was named Director of Operations of the business in August 2019.

"Scott has been instrumental in achieving operational improvements that have continued to position MPEC as an industry leader in quality," stated Mitchell. "Providing top-notch customer service and reliable on-time delivery is also extremely important to us, and we're confident that we'll continue realizing both under Scott's proven leadership."

Condolences

To **Shannon Allison Smith** (Brown's Bindery) and family on the recent passing of her husband, Rusty Smith.

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Industry Calendar

2021

January 2021

1: PICA Offices Closed
for New Year's Day

15: PICA Awards Entry Deadline

28-30: PICA Awards Judging

March 2021

13: PICA Awards Banquet
Embassy Suites Golf Resort & Spa
Concord, NC

April 2021

21: PICA Foundation Golf Classic