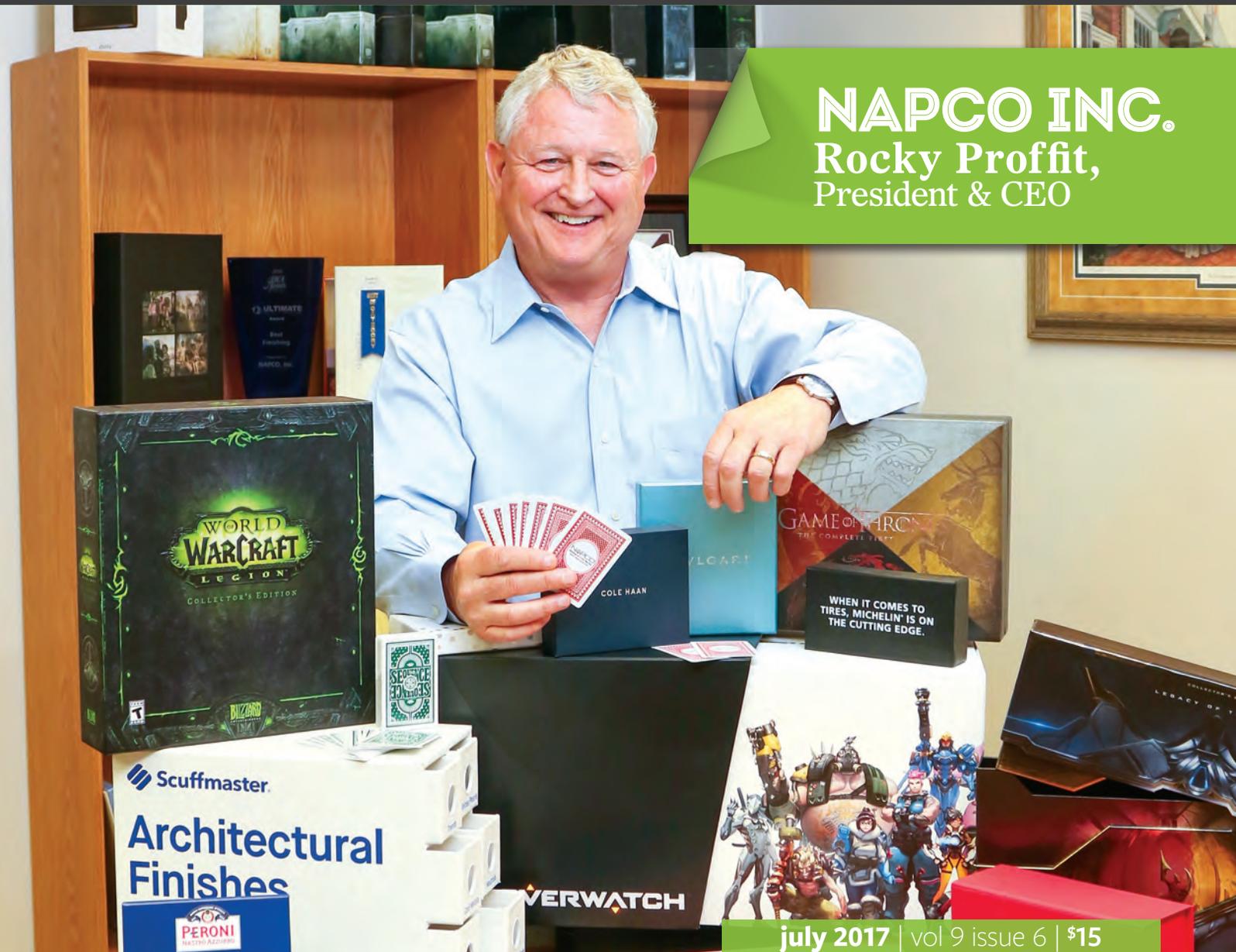


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THE MAGAZINE

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President & CEO



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- 2 Inkjet Ready! Preparing Members for Production Inkjet**
- 10 10 Things You Need to Know About Industrial Print**

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# MAG THE MAGAZINE

**July 2017 | Volume 9, Issue 6**

**The Magazine**—ISSN: 1947-4164  
 Editor: Joe Deemer  
 Publisher: Jenn Strang

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*Most of the world's best printers will tell you printing isn't a game. But for NAPCO, printing materials for games has made them one of the hottest printers in the U.S. Read their story on page 4.*

## What's Hot

**2 Inkjet Ready! Preparing Members for Production Inkjet**  
 James A. Workman, *Printing Industries of America*

## Q&A

**6 2016 Schaeffer Award Winner**  
 Robert Fricke, *Corporate EHS Director, CAI, INC*

## Technology

**8 3D Print Manufacturing: Adoption Is Faster than Anticipated**  
 David Regan, *Semper International*

**10 10 Things You Need to Know about Industrial Print**  
 Toni McQuilken, *Printing News*

**12 8 Reasons Direct Mail Is Critical in B2B Marketing**  
 Heidi Tolliver-Walker

**14 Print 17: Bringing Innovations that Will Transform Our Industry**  
 Sherry MacDonald, *Graphic Arts Show Company*

## Solutions

**16 Social Media: Ongoing Rules of Engagement**  
 Jules Van Sant, *Pacific Printing Industries Association*

# Inkjet Ready!

## Preparing Members for Production Inkjet

By James A. Workman, Vice President, Technology and Research, Printing Industries of America

WHAT'S HOT



The next wave in print technology is beginning to sweep across the industry as high-speed inkjet technology options multiply. Presses are being ordered and installed by commercial printers who are accumulating experience of the marketing and operational benefits

and challenges. On August 9–10, printing companies that are curious about what role inkjet may play in their future will be able to see and hear from these pioneering users—and do it without ever leaving their office.

### Getting Harder to Ignore

Starting about six years ago, the buzz around production inkjet became progressively louder, driven by the combination of speeds approaching offset and “every page is unique” versatility. The first production inkjet devices had limited substrate options, and early adopters were primarily in the business of book or transactional printing.

But the new class of production inkjet devices transcends many of those limitations, and executives at commercial printing companies are now wondering whether and when they should invest in production inkjet technology.

Inkjet Ready! is a virtual two-day conference (12 noon to 5 p.m. Eastern Standard times) that explores the issues of investing in and using high-speed inkjet. Attendees will be able to log in, watch, and listen to video tours and live panel discussions over the course of nine sessions. The low-cost event will be

recorded, so attendees will not miss any insights into the burgeoning world of high-volume inkjet printing. The nine sessions will cover a wide range of topics, all germane to making a wise investment decision and effective use of an inkjet press:

- Applications and Adoption Rates
- Investing in High-Speed Inkjet: What you Need to Know
- Calculating Ownership Costs and ROI
- Evaluating Technology and Format Choices
- Substrates and Ink
- Finishing Work
- Operational Considerations
- Transitioning Work to Your New Inkjet Press
- Enhancing Print with Inkjet

### Answers for Frequently Asked Questions

Inkjet Ready! attempts to answer the myriad of questions printing executives have. Among the questions that will be addressed include:

- How do you determine the costs of ownership and the return on investment?
- What is the compelling reason to make such a significant financial investment?
- What features are most important in choosing a particular model/manufacturer?
- How much will you be constrained by the type of paper you can use?
- To what extent will there be colors you can't match on press?
- Does in-line or near-line finishing make the most sense?
- What skills and knowledge need to be developed to effectively operate an inkjet press?

The Magazine

2

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## LEARN MORE

More information on content and registration is available online at: [www.inkjetready.com](http://www.inkjetready.com)

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- Is inkjet work truly more profitable than work on offset or other digital presses?
- Why customers are willing to pay a premium for digitally enhanced products?
- How much ramp-up time is needed for both operations and marketing?

The conference is being supported by many of the best known industry suppliers: Fujifilm North America, HP, Komori America, Konica Minolta, Ricoh, Scodix, and Xerox.

The program is divided into several hour-long segments each day. The truly unique aspect is the company videos being produced to give attendees the vicarious experience of touring seven different printing companies and seeing how they've integrated inkjet into their workflows and production operations.

Attendees will hear executives talk about what they've learned through experience that they wished they had known up front. The video locations include:

- Admail West (Sacramento, CA)
- Allied (Ferndale, MI)
- Bennett Graphics (Tucker, GA)
- Cohber (Rochester, NY)
- Heeter Direct (Canonsburg, PA)
- Henry Wurst (Kansas City, MO)
- Wright Printing (Omaha, NE)

Shopping for an inkjet press can be confusing due to unfamiliar technical jargon, difficult-to-understand specs, and the challenge of comparing color reproduction. Inkjet Ready! lets you find out what other companies have learned about the process—what is important and what isn't.

Each segment will be led by a well-known industry consultant, first providing an overview of the topic and then moderating

a panel discussion of printers. Already committed to participate are David Zwang, Noel Ward, Ray Hartman, and Joe Polanco.

Attendees need nothing more than a computer, phone or speakers, and an Internet connection to participate. They also gain access to the recordings of all sessions plus additional resources at the Inkjet Ready! website.



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# NAPCO

## Doing Business Beyond the Box



By Kayleigh Cray, Marketing Production Manager, Printing Industries of America

SPOTLIGHT



**ROCKY PROFFIT**  
NAPCO CEO

When thinking of new ways to do business, people often tell you to “think outside of the box.” But for one Sparta, North Carolina specialty packaging company, even that was too limiting for what they had in mind.

Headed by CEO Rocky Proffit, NAPCO started doing business in January

of 1977 as a rigid packaging and POP manufacturing company. From the beginning, Proffit always knew he wanted to explore niches of the print and packaging industry; he found exactly what he was searching for by venturing into the world of gaming and entertainment. In 1980, NAPCO received the first order for a game board. The project was for 5,000 three-panel boards (all produced by hand of course). By the mid-80s, NAPCO landed deals for popular family games such as Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary, and Scattergories for the U.S. and Europe.

### Games and Competition: How to Win

Just like any business in the competitive world of graphic communications, Proffit and his team went through hard times. In the late 90s, NAPCO began losing many bids to competitors in China. After business decreased by more than 30%, Proffit understood something new had to be done. “In order to beat our competition, we had to develop a can-do attitude and the willingness to do whatever was necessary to meet our customers’ needs. We had to find new markets where design, quick turnaround, and quality were important,” said Proffit. Based on this realization, NAPCO delved even further into the entertainment, surfaces, cosmetic, numismatic, and gaming markets—a decision that has led the company to great success even to this day.

Digging deeper into niches certainly isn’t the easiest (or cheapest) strategic move. But to turn the business around and instill a sense of pride in the NAPCO team, Proffit began making big investments in equipment that could bring business back into the robust North Carolina shop. For example, the installation of the Rollem MKII SlipStream card slitting system enabled NAPCO to compete for business once again in board games and the gaming industry.

The state-of-the-art, high-speed slitting and card collating system that resides in the shop produces casino-quality playing card decks, trading cards, and game cards. The machine can slit and trim (bi-directionally), collate, stack, round-corner, box, and wrap inline. The automated process of the machine yields 2,200 decks per hour, or up to 250,000 individual cards with a +/- 0.1-mm margin of accuracy, sheet after sheet. “The MKII enhanced our ability to offer turnkey solutions for the gaming industry. This purchase, combined with our in-house structural



The Magazine

4

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7.2017



*Some examples of boxes and products created by NAPCO.*

design, high-speed automated game board, and box lines provides our customers speed to market for product launches and peak period delivery,” explained Proffit.

### **Paving the Way for Additional Products**

By successfully adapting new equipment, NAPCO has made many strides for the better—including becoming the largest manufacturer of coin storage albums and folders for the numismatic market in the United States. “We have one of the best research and development groups in the industry and we are very effective at taking customers’ ideas and designing creative solutions to fit their needs and budgets. Because of our unique experience, many times we will offer an alternative solution that will achieve their packaging needs and be more cost-effective. Our customers look to us to be very flexible, creative, and quick to address their needs, and we believe that has been critical in helping to bring business back.”

The whole experience shaped NAPCO’s three most important goals: offer cost-effective, high-quality solutions that meet customer needs and expectations; treat all constituents with honesty, courtesy, and respect; and become a significant corporate benefactor in the community. Now, representatives at NAPCO use their processes and capabilities to quickly develop structural solutions and provide clients printed production-quality samples for approval prior to manufacturing—essentially making the company a one-stop shop from design to completion in the world of packaging.

In earlier years, NAPCO’s competitors had better equipment and resources—pressuring the North Carolina team to be more innovative, flexible, and creative. The resulting collaborative effort continued to be nurtured and exists at a very high level today. With the help of a management team that believes in the history, mission, and core values of the company, Proffit has been able to foster an environment that motivates employees to perform at the highest level. “Our employees know that if something doesn’t look right on the manufacturing line, they can stop production to make whatever changes need to be made,” said Proffit. “The company is committed to truly doing the right thing—always!”

### **What’s Next?**

As for the future of NAPCO, Proffit and his team have a very aggressive growth plan over the next four to five years. They believe that maintaining their core mission and goals will help them attract and retain customers, employees, and key business partners in the coming years. “We believe the sky is the limit,” said Proffit. “We intend to be a leader in our industry by providing the highest level of service and quality to our customers.” If the last 40 years is any indicator, NAPCO shouldn’t have any problem reaching their goals if they continue to do business “beyond the box.”

*NAPCO is an award-winning custom manufacturer of rigid paperboard products and presentation packaging offering one-stop solutions with rapid product turnaround and prompt delivery. To learn more about NAPCO, visit [napcousa.com](http://napcousa.com).*

# 2016 PIA Schaeffer Award Winner

Robert Fricke, Corporate EHS Director, CAI, INC

Q&A



*The William D. Schaeffer Award recognizes an individual's focus on advancing environmental awareness and action in the graphic communications industry. CAI, INC's Robert Fricke earned the 2016 honor thanks in large part to a career spent championing sustainable solutions for graphic communications companies across the country.*

*Perhaps Fricke's greatest contribution to the industry has been his work in the creation of a Massachusetts Environmental Results Program (ERP), the first ever program of its kind, which reduces the regulatory burden for printing operations. This program has served as the model for similar programs in other states.*

**PIA: Tell us about your background. When did you get involved in the printing industry? What is your formal education and experience with the printing industry?**

**R.F.:** I landed my first printing client in 1985. Soon thereafter, I started working on a number of environmental projects for Dow Jones, publisher and printer of *The Wall Street Journal* and *Barron's*. Dow Jones was considered the premier company for its safety record by the rest of the industry. My experience at Dow Jones became my calling card for other media companies.

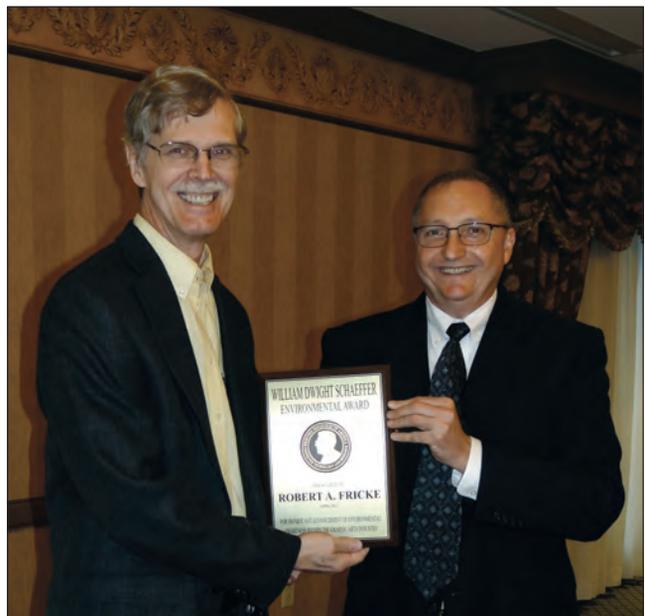
I have a master's degree in chemical oceanography. My chemistry background has helped me understand the environmental and safety issues that have coincided with the technology changes in the industry for the last 30 years.

**PIA: What do you enjoy the most about working with printing operations?**

**R.F.:** I have enjoyed seeing several technological changes before they became commonplace in the printing industry. I saw direct-to-plate prepress in the mid-1980s, direct-to-press and wide-format inkjet printing in the early 1990s, and 3D printing in 2005.

**PIA: Can you tell us one particular situation where you were able to help a printing company with an EHS problem?**

**R.F.:** My biggest challenge with one printing client was to get them from nothing into substantial EHS compliance. That means that if they are inspected for environmental or safety compliance, they are unlikely to be found in violation of the top ten EHS program violations. In this particular situation, it took me more than three years working with the



*Robert Fricke (left) was presented the 2016 William D. Schaeffer Award at the Printing Industries of America Spring Administrative Meetings by Gary Jones, assistant vice president, EHS Affairs, Printing Industries of America.*

The Magazine

6

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OF AMERICA

7.2017

client to get them into substantial compliance. Fortunately, they weren't inspected until after this effort. The payoff—one OSHA violation for \$300.

**PIA:** You have done a lot of work with state agencies and the EPA. What has been the greatest challenge and reward in working with them?

**R.F.:** I have learned that regulators are people working jobs just like you and me. You have to treat them that way. They are not "jackbooted thugs" as noted by one printer at a conference I once attended. They may stretch the regulations from time to time, but you can push them back in a respectful way. Those times I have walked alongside an inspector at a client's facility, I always show them respect. In return, I generally can get lower penalties for violations by cooperating and showing speedy corrective action.

**PIA:** What makes the Massachusetts Environmental Results Program innovative, and how has it become such a success?

**R.F.:** The Printer ERP program was the first in the nation to combine educational outreach, annual compliance certification, and performance standards in lieu of permits. Instead of requiring the regulated community of printers to read complex regulations, hire consultants, and get permits, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) chose an innovative approach to assign upfront agency resources to set standards, tell printers how to comply, and require them to certify compliance with those standards annually. This significantly reduced agency resource allocation long term and raised the industry's compliance participation rate to the highest level in the country.

Having participated in the original ad hoc group to pilot this project as the Printers Partnership, sit on the committee to write the agency standards, and then finally write the printer's compliance guide, for me, has been an opportunity of a lifetime.

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Read more about the William D. Schaeffer Award, including nomination criteria and previous honorees. Visit: <http://prnt.in/schaeffer>

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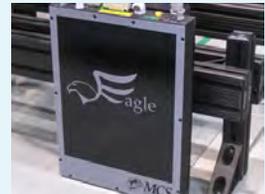


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# 3D Print Manufacturing

## Adoption Is Faster than Anticipated

By David Regan, CEO, Semper International



In March 2016, I wrote an article on how 3D printing would impact the world. The feedback from that article was mixed. Some readers thought the 3D print advancements the article explained would not happen for decades. Others were so intrigued they wanted to know how

to incorporate this technology into their business sooner rather than later.

The March 2016 article described a future where recycling 3D products occurred immediately after use and the raw material was utilized to create another 3D item. Also, it looked at how 3D print technology would impact society in general and business in particular.

### 3D Print and the Clothing Industry

Last year, the fashion world played around with designing and producing 3D printed clothes for their top-end lines. Expensive pieces manufactured in small batches lend themselves to accretive technologies.

Recently, a more mainstream implementation of 3D print in fashion was put on display by high-end retailer Ministry of Supply at its posh Boston location. The clothing retailer is touting its custom 3D Print-Knit blazers made right in the Boston store. The 3D Print-Knit process at Ministry of Supply is streamlined and modern. This is not mass manufacturing but instead custom orders produced in the store.

### Athletic Shoe Giant Leveraging 3D Print

3D print in fashion and business officially moved up to the big leagues when Adidas announced it would mass produce a 3D-printed shoe in 2018. The global

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## LEARN MORE

Catch up and read David's previous article on 3D printing: "How 3D Printing Will Change Everything," first published in March, 2016.

<http://prnt.in/DavidRegan3D>

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athletic shoe company will be able to make batches of its custom Futurecraft shoes much faster with the help of 3D print technology. For Adidas, it's not just about manufacturing efficiency, as they are working to develop a better shoe design.

It's a big leap for many companies to think about integrating 3D print into their everyday operations. A lot of businesses may be unsure how the technology can effectively impact the various facets of their production process.

### Caterpillar: An Implementation Example

Caterpillar, a global manufacturing giant, has successfully added 3D printers to its research and development department and manufacturing process. Caterpillar's 3D implementation process was recently detailed on Engineering.com as a prudent model to follow while allowing for modifications based on your business size.

**Preproduction.** Caterpillar's engineers use desktop 3D printers for early iterations and designs before any advanced manufacturing begins. Before the desktop 3D printers were installed, company engineers utilized stereolithography machines in their rapid prototype lab. Now instead of going to the lab, engineers have the ability to make models at their own desks.

**Manufacturing.** Start small. This was the mantra Caterpillar said was key when adding 3D printers



*These are exciting times for an industry that once provided "news fit to print" and has now expanded to provide "shoes print to fit."*

to their manufacturing process. The mantra can be applied to the number of machines purchased or to the training programs needed for employees to get up to speed on the new technology.

Over time, Caterpillar provided their employees with 3D printer training summits. The education and camaraderie among the company's 3D print employees has blossomed since the technology was first introduced. Caterpillar holds 3D design competitions on a regular basis and encourages employees to participate.

**Development.** 3D print is having a positive impact on Caterpillar's significant aftermarket business—making new parts for equipment that is several years old—and its costs in time and labor. With their 3D printers, Caterpillar is looking to scan some of their inventory in order to better support their aftermarket products that need parts after decades in the field. Then, when

an aftermarket order is needed, employees can refer to the 3D scan and print out the parts requested.

3D print technology is enabling Caterpillar's products to be made in less time and at a cheaper cost. The industrial printers work so efficiently that they saved the company \$160,000 on a project producing track links.

### **Conclusion**

Caterpillar is only one corporate example of how 3D print will be the next technological business revolution. The large companies have started the trend and it will spread to companies of all sizes with different applications for the technology.

*Do you want to know more about 3D printing in business? Or do you need 3D print employees? Contact Semper today at [always@semperllc.com](mailto:always@semperllc.com).*

# 10 Things You Need to Know About Industrial Print

By Toni McQuilken, Editor, Printing News

TECHNOLOGY



*This article originally appeared in the April 2017 issue of Printing News and is reprinted with their permission.*

Industrial print is still new, but it's evolving rapidly. To help you decide if it's time to embrace this new "industrial revolution,"

we've assembled the following 10 factoids for your review.

## 1. Define the Market

In the simplest terms, industrial print is using print technologies in the process of manufacturing. Unlike traditional approaches, which put ink on paper or print onto already completed materials—think golf balls, pens, etc.—industrial print is done right on the manufacturing line. So instead of a print shop getting a shipment of golf balls for logo printing, the logos would be printed on them as they move through the manufacturing line and they would come out already branded and ready to go.

But that's not the only way to look at it. It can also refer to the process of printing on anything and doing it in very large quantities. The third way the term can be defined is how it is going to be used:

- **Decorative.** Printing on ceramics, glass, wood, textiles, etc.
- **Functional.** Printed electronics, displays, solar panels, or 3D printed prototypes.

## 2. What It Means for You

To move into this category, it means thinking beyond paper. "For the most part, the graphic communications and packaging segments print on paper—albeit on thousands of different stocks, weights, and finishes,

as well as corrugated, flexible packaging, and cartons," says Terry Taber, chief technical officer and senior vice president, Kodak. "For industrial printing, one of the biggest considerations is the move into a very diverse category of substrates."

## 3. Think Fabrics and Textiles

Interior designers, corporate planners, and furniture designers are exploring being able to customize the prints and patterns of everything from couches to curtains. As that segment continues to grow, consumer offerings allowing people to custom design their own furniture and fabrics will take off as well.

To meet that demand, shops will need to invest in equipment that can handle printing on these types of applications in small batches along with the ability to do longer, continuous runs—even long, variable runs as demand picks up.

## 4. Investing in Equipment

Many digital presses have the ability to print on a much wider range of substrates than the majority of printers are taking advantage of. Current inkjet head technology has been modified to work with textiles, ceramics, wallpaper, and more. This technology also forms the base of most 3D printing applications, which is another area of industrial print still in its infancy. As manufacturers perfect the technology and lower costs, it will become a major force in the print industry.

Using the current equipment to test the waters and see what might be possible—and what customers your shop might be able to win by expanding offerings—is a great way to start. But expect to invest in equipment that is designed for these types of applications once you get up and running and pass a certain threshold.

That goes for more than hardware. The current workflows and tools will work fine as you explore

The Magazine

10

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the category and how you want to grow. In time, you will likely want to invest in solutions that are tailor-made for your specific applications. In the short term, especially for shops that want to “test the waters,” one of the best opportunities is custom wallpaper. It is similar to printing on paper, and it opens the door to other applications such as textiles and packaging.

## 5. Opportunities Abound

This is not a short-term game. “Much of the opportunity in the industrial printing category is longer-term and will require new technologies and infrastructure modifications or new builds to take full advantage of the evolving business models,” cautions Taber.

One of the best ways to get involved in this space is to start talking to technology providers. Partner with them early and gain access to the new technologies as they are developed and also help shape them by offering real-world examples of what you want to do.

## 6. InPrint Show

If you want to investigate more about industrial print, there may be no better event to attend than the InPrint USA Show. Building on the success of the European InPrint show, the recent 2017 U.S. exhibition provided access to technology that solves the complex problems facing the packaging, decorative, automotive, additive manufacturing, and 3D industries in the U.S. This was the first time the show hit our shores. Learn more about the 2017 show—and about the next 2019 event—at [www.inprintshow.com/usa](http://www.inprintshow.com/usa).

## 7. Finding Dollars in Décor

“Decoration is a significant part of any industrial process but particularly important when a product has to perform both a functional and decorative role,” says Marcus Timson, co-founder of InPrint.

Nearly 75% of respondents to InPrint’s Décor Survey felt the décor segments with the most potential for inkjet technology are walls, wallpaper, and pictures—including print on glass, plastics, and other surfaces. Nearly 55% felt flooring, especially wood laminate and LVT (luxury vinyl tiles), had high potential.

Within sectors such as ceramics, inkjet has virtually replaced analog processes. Within the wider décor

market, 75% believe inkjet will not replace analog but rather create its own value by performing a role that analog processes can’t.

## 8. Playing a Large Role in Packaging

Another hot industrial-print segment is packaging. In a recent survey produced by I.T. Strategies for InPrint USA, 74% of respondents felt that the packaging sector has the greatest amount of expected growth in 2017. Highlights from the survey include:

- Nearly 50% believe that inkjet will play a larger role in packaging within the next 2-5 years.
- Ink chemistry remains the biggest challenge for new applications with inkjet.
- Flexible packaging, labels, and direct-to-shape packaging segments have the most potential to invest and adopt industrial inkjet solutions.
- Almost 32% feel flexibility and speed offer the most value for packaging.

## 9. Strong Prospects for Growth

The North American market for industrial digital or production represents about 30% of the global market, reports InPrint USA, while Europe represents a slightly larger share at around 34%.

The most important value propositions for digital industrial print are cost reduction, faster response, and creation of new market opportunities. Growth expectations for industrial analog print are estimated to follow a 2% annual inflationary growth rate. For digital inkjet, expected growth is considerably higher—9% annually on average across all applications.

## 10. Embracing the Evolution

Industrial print means a lot of things to a lot of people. As we indicated earlier, it’s still evolving—but more variable projects across much longer runs and produced on an ever-growing range of substrates and objects is the future of the space. It isn’t going to be right for every shop—but for those who believe it might make sense to add these services to their product mix, it could be a huge growth opportunity, both in the short and long term.

# 8 Reasons Direct Mail Is Critical in B2B Marketing

By Heidi Tolliver-Walker, Industry Analyst



Day in and day out, your customers are bombarded with false messaging that direct mail is dead. The reality is that direct mail remains critical. Here are eight reasons why.

**1. Direct mail doesn't require opt-in.** You don't have to get recipients'

permission to send direct mail. Unlike email and text messaging, people don't have to opt in. Even if a customer does not subscribe or unsubscribes from your email list, you can still reach them with direct mail (This is why you should always get physical addresses from those on your email lists!).

**2. Direct mail doesn't get caught in the spam filter.**

"Yes, it may be skimmed by a gate keeper," notes Roger Buck, former director of marketing for The Flesh Company. "However, the odds are still much better—and it doesn't contain a virus."

**3. Direct mail remains effective long after it hits the desk.** Think of it like consumers taping things to their refrigerator. "We've had people tell us that they had one of our mailings sitting on their desks for months," notes Andre Palko, president of Technifold USA. "Although they didn't act immediately, we remained top of mind until they were ready to act. You don't get that kind of staying power—or attention—with email."

**4. It is still effective even when the target recipient has moved on from the company.** If you send an email to someone who's no longer there, it bounces. If you send a postcard, the new person in that job sees it—and you've just introduced yourself as a vendor.

**5. Direct mail doesn't have the competition.** Email is an effective tool, but we are overwhelmed by it. This is true of consumers but even more true of businesses. Larry Bradley, owner of Proforma Sunbelt Graphics, writes, "The overwhelming volume of email received at work is a huge hurdle for legitimate email marketers. It's hard to separate the junk from the legitimate email. As a result, a huge percentage of email sent to businesses is never read."

**6. Certain offers just won't get traction by email.** There is a reason businesses are more likely to get lending offers in the mail. B2B decision makers trust direct mail more than email, especially for high-value products and services. Mailers can also include a wide variety of trust-building content not possible (or reasonable) to include in email. Yes, you can provide links, but with direct mail, you get that content in front of them in a tangible way right out of the gate.

**7. Direct mail can reach high-level decision-makers that email can't.** There are only so many things you can do to make email look more important. Direct mail offers options like kits, dimensional mail, and unique packaging options that get past gatekeepers. "They are not only fun, but they get opened!" Palko says. While these mailings may have higher price tags, they can also get near 100% open rates. When you're trying to reach the C-Suite, what's that worth?

**8. Direct mail drives social media and online marketing.** Folks claim you don't need direct mail because you have social media and mobile marketing. But how do those social media and mobile marketing relationships get captured in the first place? Very often, it's print! Saying that you only need social and mobile but not print is akin to saying that when buying a house you only need the upper stories but not the foundation.

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# PRINT 17

## Bringing Innovations that will Transform Our Industry

By Sherry MacDonald, Director, Event Marketing, Graphic Arts Show Company

SOLUTIONS



Every year, top equipment manufacturers gather at GRAPH EXPO or PRINT to showcase revolutionary products and techniques that will impact our industry. This year PRINT 17, held September 10-14 at Chicago's McCormick Place—is *the* place to see them all.

PRINT 17 will showcase the newest, most innovative, and most comprehensive exhibition of technologies and software in North America. The live equipment demonstrations and the new product introductions will highlight why print is a critical component of any marketing or communications program. Your success hinges on knowing the latest trends. No other industry event brings as many printers, equipment manufacturers, and graphic communications professionals together. Here is an overview what you will find:

- Sales and Order Entry
- Prepress and Premedia
- Color Management and Quality Control
- Variable, Transactional, and Multi-Channel
- Pressroom: Analog Presses
- Pressroom: Digital Presses
- Pressroom: Wide-Format
- Post-press and In-line Finishing
- Imprinting, Mailing, Shipping, and Fulfillment
- Management Systems

### The “MUST SEE ’EMS”

These awards provide a roadmap to visit the most exciting new products. Each year, an anonymous panel of industry experts rates the latest products. As you enter

the floor, pick up a printed guide to all the MUST SEE 'EMS honorees to guide you to this year's most compelling technologies and products.

### The Learning Experience

PRINT 17 presents more than 50 sessions on topics ranging from design/creative process, packaging, marketing, growth strategies, and emerging technologies. These programs analyze new methods to increase ROI from knowledgeable presenters on compelling topics, beginning with our trends and technology pre-show conference, OUTLOOK 17.

Our new FREE “Distinguished Leader” keynote sessions will feature renowned leaders sharing unique experiences. Hear from Tod Szewczyk of Leo Burnett on “The Future of People, Technology and Advertising,” and Michael Chase of St. Joseph Communications on “Print in a Digital World 2018 Trend Report.”

### Network with Colleagues and Partners

The connections you make with colleagues, potential partners, and vendors will lead to lasting friendships—making a significant impact on your success. PRINT 17 offers many opportunities to introduce yourself, share, and learn throughout the event as the premier venue for networking within the printing, publishing, and graphics community.

New this year, we will host CELEBRATE PRINT! Our Party with a Purpose to benefit Family Rescue, one of the largest domestic violence agencies in Illinois. Join us for a night to remember at House of Blues Chicago, and rock to the famous Chicago eighties band Sixteen Candles while you dance and donate!

To learn more, visit [www.Print2017.com](http://www.Print2017.com).

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14

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# Social Media: Ongoing Rules of Engagement

By Jules Van Sant, Executive Director, Pacific Printing Industries Association



Last month I shared my enthusiasm about the need and opportunity for those in the print/visual communications industry to be engaged in the world of social media. To ignore it is a missed opportunity, putting your brand and market messaging at risk.

## It Already Affects Your Decisions

How? In a time when we all engage on one or multiple devices to communicate, research, and purchase, consider how you make your buying decisions. Do you check out product ratings, even if you went to a store to purchase? When deciding to dine out, do you check Yelp? Hiring a house painter, plumber, or going on a trip? Do stars, comments, and photos assist with your final decision?

## It Affects Your Customers' Decisions, Too

I keep hearing that today's "print" buyers are multi-tasking, less educated about the production process, and more interested in quickly finding the right provider. It's likely they're researching you, your company, and brand before having a meaningful engagement. They check your website, which may or may not have current information. If you list social media channels, they check those to understand your current products and services, your culture, and what others are saying about you. If they checked right now, would they see the real you?

In today's world of ratings and reviews, a simple, well-managed presence is important in the short and long run. It should be a key part of your overall

marketing plan. Create, modify, revisit, and repeat often with your key staff, sales, and customer service personnel to ensure the message going out is what you want clients to hear.

Here are some guidelines to follow as you build your online presence:

- *Consistency is key to creating a brand message.* Posting every three years or six months doesn't cut it. At least twice a month (if not twice per week) gives you the opportunity to reinforce your company's forward-facing voice.
- *It's about conversation, not just a bulletin board or brochure.* Today's consumers look for authenticity. Canned posts and no follow-up responses quickly minimize the positive impact and remove the human element from the interaction.
- *Professional vs. personal is the elephant in the room.* Managing and monitoring regularly from the top down, along with a company social media policy, eliminates potential issues. It's not a one-and-done strategy. You can reap solid results when populating culture, capability, and company information from a few key internal contributors.
- *Positivity wins the day!* Buyers not only want a great outcome from your production capabilities but a solid experience to pay forward and return to. Use case studies on the effectiveness of print, show outcomes of your amazing projects, fun events, and interesting facts.

New followers and "likes" indicate you are on people's radar. Reciprocate. Thank them for connecting and invite them to your other channels and website.

Finally, if you start the process, *post it!* #word



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