

# Facility Tour Guide

## *Showcase Your Facility and Build Relationships*

### **Why Conduct a Facility Tour?**

Elected officials from the U.S. Congress to the local level use printed materials in their own campaigns and elections: yard signs, banners, direct mail, voter guides, and more. But do they know to what extent Print Powers America? Do they know that printing, packaging, and graphic communications generate \$165 billion of economic activity annually and employ 800,000 workers nationwide? Likely not. Have they bought into common misperceptions regarding print's relevancy and environmental impact? Possibly. Is hosting a facility tour of your company a key way to educate lawmakers on the state of the industry, correct myths about print, and promote exciting technologies driving the industry's future? Definitely.

Conducting facility visits for elected officials at any level of government—local, state, or federal—is an important way to build relationships for your company and increase support for a pro-growth, pro-business, pro-print agenda. Likewise, they provide excellent opportunities for lawmakers to meet with their constituents, hear the success stories and the struggles that you face, and see firsthand how their policies work in real life. Facility tours educate lawmakers on the importance of the printing and graphic communications community and its impact on the American economy and workforce.

A successful facility tour can:

- Broaden a lawmaker's perspective on diverse industry products manufactured in their home states, legislative districts, and municipalities
  - Give your lawmaker greater insight into the environmental and workplace safety best practices and forward-looking technologies utilized by the industry
  - Provide an opportunity for your lawmaker to meet voting constituents in a pro-print, pro-business environment
  - Put a real-life "face" on legislative and regulatory policies by demonstrating how your employees and customers would be affected by them
  - Show your lawmaker the breadth and depth of the printing industry goes way beyond campaigns and election material
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The definition of elected officials covers a wide variety of individuals, from those elected to local city or county councils, mayor's, or county executive's offices to those who represent your community in state legislatures and Governor's offices all the way to those who serve as members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate in Washington, D.C. It is important that lawmakers at every level of government understand why your business is important to their communities. Policy, rules, and legislation happen at every level, and many of those elected locally will continue their careers at the state and federal level, bringing their experience and awareness with them as they move from one rung of the political ladder to the next.

Facility tours can also provide excellent public relations for your company. Conducting a facility tour ensures elected officials will remember your role in your community and your hospitality. This guide will help you plan, prepare for, and conduct a successful facility tour and ensure that your experience is as effective as possible. You will find a simple yet thorough checklist to follow, enabling your tour to run as smoothly as possible.

As a member of Printing Industries of America, the Government Affairs team is here to help you with the process. Should you have any questions or need assistance along the way, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Buka, Advocacy Program Specialist, at 412-259-1708 or email us at [printpowersamerica@printing.org](mailto:printpowersamerica@printing.org). Together, we can deliver the advocacy message loud and clear that Print Powers America.

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## Facility Tour Checklist

### SETTING UP THE PLANT TOUR

- Decide who to invite
- Send the invitation
- Coordinate length of event with lawmaker's staff (30– 60 minutes)
- Inform employees of visit

### ORGANIZING THE PLANT TOUR

- Determine the format of the event (Q&A? Management roundtable? Tour only?)
- Decide who will greet the legislator and participate in the tour
- Determine what equipment, areas, and operations the legislator will see during the visit; prepare a tour map
- Determine required safety equipment
- Establish a welcome/departure area for the legislator
- Craft lawmaker introduction
- Allow lawmaker the opportunity to address your staff either before or after the tour
- Create name badges for guest(s) and staff
- Assign someone to photograph tour
- Research lawmaker's biography
- Review Print Powers America advocacy agenda, info sheets, and industry economic data
- Write out questions you wish to ask the lawmaker

### PREPARING DISPLAYS/LITERATURE

- Prepare and display welcome banner or printed products unique to your company—make a big first impression!
- Determine product display, if applicable
- Gather company literature and background materials

- Assemble a Print Powers America facility tour information folder as a takeaway for lawmaker and staff

### PREPARING FOR ARRIVAL

- Confirm arrival time
- Provide directions to the plant
- Determine what machinery will be in operation
- Welcome guest(s) on arrival

### CONDUCTING THE TOUR

- Provide safety equipment to tour guests, if applicable
- Show lawmaker how your production line works
- Let your visitors be active participants
- Mention any prepared Print Powers America talking points during the tour

### FOLLOWING UP AFTER THE TOUR

- Send thank-you note to lawmaker
- Thank your own staff
- Provide photos and press release to local media, if desired
- Post tour photo on social media (clear with lawmaker staff first)
- Share any media publicity about the tour with lawmaker staff
- Continue to communicate with the lawmaker post-event
- Tell PIA about the tour using the hashtag #PrintPowersAmerica!

## Setting Up the Facility Tour

### Decide Who to Invite

- Members of Congress/congressional staff
- State representatives and senators/staff
- City or county councils and other locally elected officials/staff

### Timeline and Timing

- Begin planning the facility tour one to two months in advance.
- Assign someone on your staff to serve as the facility tour point of contact/event manager.
- Extend the invitation at least one month prior to the proposed date(s).
- The ideal time to schedule a tour for a member of Congress is during Print Powers America Week (September 30–October 4) or during a recess period. In addition to formal recesses, members of Congress are most likely to be in their home districts on Mondays and Fridays. Ideal times will vary for state lawmakers based on in-session dates. Municipal lawmakers generally have the most flexible schedules.
- Utilize the Print Powers America Facility Tour Planning Sheet (*See pages 16-17*).

### Extending the Invitation

To invite an elected official, call the local or regional staff office to invite him/her to visit your facility on their next visit to the district or state. Be prepared with some possible dates and times, but be flexible according to the official's schedule. Request an email address of the appropriate scheduling contact. You will most likely be asked to follow up with a letter to the legislator and staff explaining who you are and what you would like to showcase. Include directions to the facility as well as a requested amount of time for the visit. The tour itself should last approximately 30–60 minutes. Lawmakers and their staff are extremely busy and receive many requests, so don't be discouraged if you do not get a response right away. If a week goes by without a response, follow up with a phone call to ensure they received the invitation. Continue to reach out until you are able to get an answer. Once a date and time have been determined, confirm in writing. Be prepared for last-minute schedule changes. Is the official unavailable, but willing to send a staff member in his/her place? That's fantastic and you shouldn't be disappointed, especially if this is your first time reaching out. Staff play a critical role in helping members gather information and sometimes have deeper policy knowledge. (*See page 18 for a Sample Invitation Letter.*) **Please share your letter of invitation with PIA Government Affairs or your PIA affiliate so that we can echo your invitation.**

## **Involving Your Employees**

Share the news with employees of the lawmaker's planned visit. Make them comfortable by noting this is not a political campaign event, but an opportunity for the elected official to see your company and its economic contributions in action. Encourage employees to interact with the lawmaker by preparing them to talk about their experience working at your company and why it is important to them.

## **Organizing the Facility Tour**

### **Determine the Format of the Event**

The general format of a facility tour should include the following:

- Greeting and welcoming the lawmaker, including a brief overview of your company. This can be done informally at a reception area or with refreshments in a conference room or office.
- A tour of key operations, equipment, and product(s).
- A closing meeting/wrap-up with refreshments. This is an opportunity for the elected official to address staff and take questions from staff (if this has been pre-arranged) or by gathering key management employees in a conference room to discuss two or three key legislative issues.
- A photo opportunity with executives, employees, and an “action shot” during the tour.

### **Decide Who Will Greet the Lawmaker and Participate in the Tour**

The president/CEO, facility manager, or top personnel usually welcome the lawmaker as this is a business visit similar to that of other business stakeholders. Don't be concerned about matching tour participants with party affiliation of the lawmaker. After all, your intent is to develop a good rapport with public officials who may influence the future of your company and your industry regardless of their political affiliation. If you have an employee of the month/year program, a workplace activities committee, or would like to provide special recognition to long-serving employees, including them in the welcome is a nice touch. Throughout the tour, be sure to introduce employees along the way. This is great opportunity for positive workplace morale, teamwork, and taking pride in one's work.

### **Craft Lawmaker Introduction**

If the lawmaker is speaking to employees as a group, decide who will provide the introductory remarks; write and print a copy for the day of the event. Keep it brief and stick to biographical facts. If the lawmaker is meeting with management in a roundtable setting before or after the tour, a formal introduction is not needed. In this small group format, be sure to go around the table and ask each individual to introduce himself/herself.

### **Establish a Welcome/Departure Area for the Lawmaker**

Determine how you want the entrance to your facility to appear when your guest arrives and which room or area will be best for talking with your staff as a group (if that has been pre-arranged). The welcome area is a great chance for a big first impression of your company and the

industry. Everyone loves to see his or her name in print! Utilize your unique printing/graphics equipment to create welcome banners or personalized print pieces. PIA members have created VDP pieces and even life-size printed stand ups to greet lawmakers. Get creative! Be sure to share your wow-factor welcome pieces on social media with the hashtag #PrintPowersAmerica.

### **Allow the Lawmaker the Opportunity to Address Your Staff either Before or After the Tour**

This should be pre-arranged with the lawmaker's staff at the time you schedule and confirm the tour. Some lawmakers enjoy addressing a group of employees, while others prefer talking to employees one-on-one as they walk throughout the tour. If needed, set up a podium and microphone (if necessary) and arrange seating (if necessary). Determine if refreshments will be served.

### **Create Name Badges for Guest and Staff**

Name badges are a must for your facility tour. Create name badges for your lawmaker and any staff who accompanies him or her, as well as employees of your facility. Have extras on hand in case you need them.

### **Determine What Equipment, Areas, and Operations the Legislator Will See on the Visit**

Determine what you hope to cover during the facility tour, including processes, equipment, operations, and products. Put strategic thought into this decision as there is limited time in your plant for the lawmaker. Consider the following:

- Where can you tie in a comment or discussion on legislative challenges or concerns with a tour of your operations? Is your company heavily into direct mail that would be impacted by postal reform legislation? If so, show off your mailing operations and provide data on volume. Are you a trailblazer in recycling? Be sure to include sustainability practices as a tour focus. Have you purchased a new press recently or are you looking to expand? Highlight the machine and talk about the tax policy implications of your capital investment.
- How can you highlight the end products? Often, the "Aha!" moment for a lawmaker comes when he or she connects the dots between your production facility and the customer's product. Whether it's a national brand name or a local merchant or publication, be sure to "show and tell" the product to the lawmaker. Displaying products your company has printed for local sports teams, schools, events, or restaurants are always a great way to bring a hometown connection to your tour.



- Which machine would be appropriate for the lawmaker to run? How can you let him or her be a more active participant in the tour? “Doing” is a great way of learning and connecting, and lawmakers often welcome the opportunity to work side by side with employees. Action shots make for great photo opportunities, too!

### **Determine Required Safety Equipment**

If your tour requires it, determine what safety equipment will be needed. These items may include construction helmets, goggles, gloves, earplugs, etc. Rope off any potentially hazardous areas.

### **Assign Someone to Photograph the Tour**

Have an assigned photographer walk the tour to take pictures of your lawmaker’s visit. These photos are excellent opportunities to publicize the event and for the lawmaker to remember the visit. Be sure to take a CEO/president and lawmaker photo, a group photo if space allows, and tour photos, too.

### **Research Lawmaker’s Background**

Research your guest’s biographical, political, business, social, educational, and legislative background and voting record to identify areas of common interest. Find out what committees and subcommittees your lawmaker is on and try to match your comments on legislative challenges or opportunities with his or her policy areas of interest. PIA is happy to provide this information to you; please don’t hesitate to contact us.

### **Review Print Powers America Advocacy Agenda and Information Sheets**

This is a prime issue-education opportunity and PIA will have you well prepared. Review PIA’s one-page Advocacy Agenda and information sheets on various issues and messages on the ways print powers the economy, environment, and more. Access the Print Powers America economic data sheet for your state, featuring key data points on employment, shipments volume, and number of print establishments. All of the PIA/Print Powers America materials are suitable to be used as handouts for the visiting lawmaker. Don’t be afraid to respectfully share your personal stories and examples of how government regulations/policies impact the industry and your business, employees, and customers.

## **Preparing Displays/Literature**

### **Determine Product Display, If Applicable**

Proudly display your printed products for the lawmaker to see. A special exhibit, promotional materials, and company literature will enhance the visit. Remember, seeing an easily recognizable final printed product is a terrific way for the lawmaker to connect the dots as to how your company powers the economy and how the industry supports the economic success of other industries, too.

### **Share Print Powers America Materials**

The aforementioned Print Powers America advocacy and industry information sheets are appropriate to share with the visiting lawmaker and staff in a takeaway folder. Be sure to print and assemble the folder ahead of time and provide a copy for each guest. Include your business card. Take advantage of the Print Powers America materials provided to you, or print your own from the files provided by PIA. Proudly promote the industry along with your company.

## **Preparing for Arrival**

### **Confirm Arrival Time/Provide Directions to Facility**

Reach out to the lawmaker's staff contact one day prior to the scheduled tour to confirm the arrival time. It is not unusual for schedules to change or times to be modified shortly before the tour. Ensure your lawmaker knows what entrance to use; reserve a parking space for him or her. Be sure that the legislator and his or her staff have a name and number of a person at your company to contact in case of an emergency.

### **Determine What Machinery Will Be in Operation**

This is important, especially if you plan to highlight or show a particular piece of machinery during the tour. It also helps determine where you will chat during the tour, as equipment can be very loud.

### **Welcome Guests Upon Arrival**

Greet officials at a designated area. In the event of rain, provide an umbrella if possible. Hand out name badges. Provide the legislator with a company one-pager on who you are, what you produce, and a brief history of your company.

## Conducting the Tour

### Provide Safety Equipment to Tour Guests, If Applicable

Provide your lawmaker with any items necessary for a tour, such as ear plugs, safety vest, etc.

### Show Lawmaker How Your Production Line Works

Show your guest how your machinery works, the processes involved, what new technologies are being used, what classic manufacturing techniques have been retained, and your workers' overall productivity. Pepper your comments with data points on volume to help stress the size and scope of your operation.

### Let Your Visitor Be an Active Participant

If feasible and keeping safety in mind, remember to offer lawmakers the chance to do something "physical," such as shake hands, run a machine, examine a product, or look at a computer screen during production. Again, these are prime photo opportunities.

### Mention Any Print Powers America Talking Points During the Tour

Your company and the printing industry have an important story to tell, so prepare specific answers to expected questions, particularly about your company's impact on your lawmaker's district/state. Utilizing the Print Powers America talking points, customize the points to your own company in the following ways:

**Print Powers...Opportunity:** Discuss how the facility has improved and contributed to the state, district, or city. Inform lawmakers about your company's history, including total investment in facilities and equipment. Discuss the impact that legislation (both positive and negative) has on your company. Discuss the number of people employed in your company and in others around the state or country; labor unions represented in your plant; and worker health, safety, and training programs. Discuss the wages and the types and value of employee benefits.

**Print Powers...Renewal:** Discuss any energy-saving measures and environmental efforts. Take a moment to highlight any environmental stewardship awards or recognition earned by your company. Be sure to emphasize that paper is a renewable resource and show off any unique "smart" packaging or other sustainable inputs and substrates.

**Print Powers...Education:** Discuss any products you manufacture that contribute to education: K-12 learning, consumer or financial education, civic education, or lifelong learning. If your company supports local schools with donations or partners with a community college or vocational school, highlight those facts. Discuss the need for continued

career and technical education programs to educate the next generation of printing industry workers.

**Print Powers...Innovation:** Discuss how you have integrated technology and e-commerce with your print/packaging business. Lawmakers often see print as a legacy industry and are unaware of the digital transformation at many plants. Similarly, they may mistakenly see technology as a threat to your business; dispel this myth by highlighting print as part of an overall communications mix. Show off your newest “whiz bang” equipment and technologies and give a concrete example of a business line or product that embodies the vibrant future of print.

**Print Powers...Community:** Does your company participate in community charities? Do you donate in-kind print materials to support local sports teams, places of worship, community fundraising, or festivals? Tell the legislator about your active role as a good corporate citizen.

## Following Up After the Tour

A plant tour enhances the mutual understanding between you and your lawmaker. To make certain that he or she remembers your company and facts about the industry, follow-up efforts are important.

### **Thank Your Employees**

Follow up with your employees by thanking them for representing your company and educating their lawmaker.

### **Send Thank You Note to Lawmaker**

Write a thank-you note reiterating any key issues discussed during the tour. Invite the lawmaker to return at any time or to feel welcome to contact you if he or she is curious as to how future policy debates may impact the printing industry or manufacturing industry as a whole. *(See page 19 for a Sample Thank You Letter.)*

### **Provide Photos and Press Release to Local Media**

If desired, provide local media with photos and a brief overview of the visit. It is always good to inform the lawmaker's staff that you intend to share his or her visit with the media. Be sure to let the lawmaker's staff know that the press release will simply highlight the visit and not include any candid conversation or off-the-record comments. *(See page 20 for a Sample Press Release.)*

### **Share the Tour on Social Media**

Post a brief "Thank you to Lawmaker Doe for visiting..." blurb on social media channels and include a photo. Be sure to use the hashtag: #PrintPowersAmerica to help generate industry buzz.

### **Send Photos to the Lawmaker's Office**

Many times photos you send will appear in a constituent newsletter, and often they will wind up on the lawmaker's office wall or website, so be sure to share them with his or her staff contact. Emailed photos are acceptable and often preferred. Also, provide the lawmaker's office with your company newsletter, if you have one, and other local publicity the visit generated.

### **Continue to Communicate with the Lawmaker Post-event**

The facility tour represents a beginning or renewal of a two-way dialogue between your company as a business constituent and your lawmaker. Voice your position on legislation. Track how your legislator votes on future legislation. Express your thanks when he or she votes in favor of your positions and let them know when he or she doesn't. Reiterate your offer to act as a sounding board on policy ideas.

### **Tell Printing Industries of America About the Tour**

Help PIA continue to advocate successfully on your behalf and on behalf of the industry by informing us of your lawmaker tour. Feel welcome to refer any policy questions or requested follow-up to PIA's Government Affairs Department or to your PIA affiliate. Please share photos or social media posts with PIA. Most importantly, complete the online Print Powers America Facility Visit Report Form. Thank you!

## Facility Tour Planning Sheet

Name of Host Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person for Company? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Lawmaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Congressional/State/Local District: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person for Lawmaker? \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Facility Location(s) for the Tour: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Staff Participating: \_\_\_\_\_

Legislative Issues Discussed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parking Needed? \_\_\_\_\_

Parking Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Arrival Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeted by Whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Roundtable or Remarks? \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments Planned? \_\_\_\_\_

Print Powers America Handouts Used: \_\_\_\_\_



Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_

Contacted PIA Government Affairs/Affiliate: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted online Facility Visit Report Form to PIA: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Invitation and Thank You Letter

*The below letters are drafted for those elected to federal office. However, the same general language can be used for state and local elected officials. Always use your company stationery or your company logo for an e-mail. Letters of invitation should be sent by e-mail due to security protocol that delays mail delivery on Capitol Hill and in some state legislative offices. Thank you letters may be sent via postal mail or e-mail.*

### Sample Invitation

[Date]

The Honorable John/Jane Doe  
United States House of Representatives/United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515/20510

Dear Representative/Senator Doe:

I am writing to invite you to visit [Company Name] in [Name of Town, Name of State]. As a member of Printing Industries of America, we encourage every member of Congress to tour printing and packaging plants in their district for the opportunity to meet and greet their constituents and to learn first-hand how the diverse graphic communications industry works to power the economy in our community, state, and nation.

[Insert information describing your company in two to three sentences. You may want to include your company's history, a description of the operation, products, and the number of employees.]

This facility tour is an informal opportunity for you to see our plant and speak candidly with our employees. The format usually calls for a brief roundtable with the management team, a plant tour, and a photo opportunity. If you wish, we can also arrange for an optional open discussion with our employees (including a question and comment period). We expect the entire event to take no more than 60 minutes.

**Specifically, we invite you to visit our facility during Print Powers America Week 2019 (September 30–October 4).** We are happy to work with your staff to schedule your preferred time on one of these dates. Of course, should you not be able to visit during this week, the invitation is extended to an alternative date that better accommodates your schedule.

We sincerely hope you will accept our invitation to visit us. Please let me know at your earliest convenience if you can join us during Print Powers America Week 2019 (September 30–October 4). Feel welcome to call or e-mail me directly at [Phone] or [E-mail]. Thank you and I look forward to hosting you in the near future.

Sincerely,

[CEO Name]

## Sample Thank You Letter

[Date]

The Honorable John/Jane Doe  
United States House of Representatives/United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515/20510

Dear Representative/Senator Doe:

Thank you for taking the time to visit [COMPANY NAME] during your recess last week. We hope that our tour helped to make clear how the print and graphic communications industry drives the nation's economy and workforce, promotes environmental stewardship, and is looking to the future using new technology and constant innovation.

[MORE DETAILS ON VISIT OR MORE DETAILS THAT YOU PROMISED]

We appreciate your willingness to discuss the impacts of laws and regulations affecting the printing industry and the challenges ahead. Should you wish to discuss these issue more broadly, please don't hesitate to contact our trade association, Printing Industries of America, at their Washington, D.C. office (202-627-6924).

We sincerely hope that we can be a resource to you and your staff. Please let us know if you have any questions, and thank you again for visiting [NAME OF COMPANY].

Sincerely,

[CEO NAME]

## Sample Press Release

*The press release should be on company letterhead. Send press release to press contacts immediately following the visit.*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

**Media contact: [Insert Name]  
[Insert Phone], [Insert Email]**

### **REPRESENTATIVE JANE/JOHN DOE VISITS [INSERT COMPANY NAME]** *Congresswoman/Congressman Sees Firsthand How Print Powers America*

CITY, ST — Today, Representative Jane/John Doe (R-Maine) toured [insert company name], to see firsthand the significant economic impact of print, packaging and graphic communications on [insert city name], the state and the nation. During the site visit, led by President/CEO [insert name], the Congresswoman/Congressman witnessed printing processes up close, met with industry executives and employees, and learned about the challenges, innovations and opportunities for print and paper in today's multi-media world.

The Congresswoman's/Congressman's visit was part of Print Powers America Week, a celebration of all things print, sponsored by Printing Industries of America (PIA).

"It was a pleasure to host Congresswoman/Congressman Doe at our facility today," commented President/CEO [insert name]. "We thank her/him for taking the time to visit and appreciate her/his willingness to learn first-hand about all the ways that 'Print Powers America' and hope it is useful to her/him when she/he returns to Washington, D.C."

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#### **[About Company Name]**

*[Insert company boilerplate including website]*

#### **About Printing Industries of America**

*Printing Industries of America is the largest national trade association dedicated to graphic communications with more than 6,000 member companies throughout North America. PIA, along with its local affiliated associations, delivers services and products that enhance the knowledge, growth, and profitability of members through advocacy, research, education, and networking. For more information, visit [www.printing.org](http://www.printing.org).*