

# SIGNATURE

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## FRANKLIN AWARD RECIPIENTS PROFILED, TO BE HONORED AT FRANKLIN EVENT

**For over 60 years, the metro New York graphic communications industry has come together to honor a variety of national leaders through presentation of the Franklin Award for Distinguished Service, the highest honor given to an individual by the graphic communications community.** The tradition continues on November 17, 2021 when two printing industry icons, Thomas Quinlan (2020) and Michael Duggal (2021), will be honored for their contributions and presence in our industry.

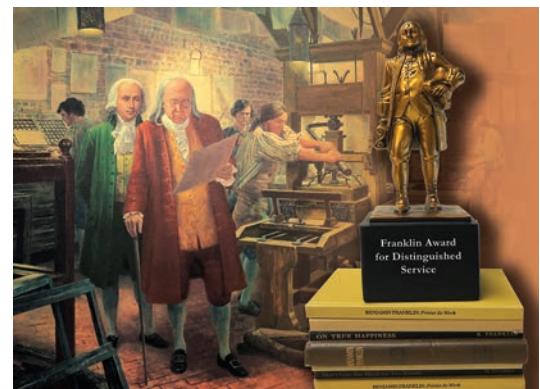
The Franklin Award has been presented to renowned political, business, journalism, and communications leaders, for their outstanding achievements and contributions to American society. Past recipients have included US Presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower, former Mayor of NYC Michael Bloomberg, publisher Malcolm Forbes and television anchor Walter Cronkite.

The award, named for Benjamin Franklin, a printer by trade, will be presented to Messrs. Duggal and Quinlan at the 68th Annual Franklin Event on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 (6:00 p.m.) at Club 101, 101 Park Avenue in New York City.

All too often, in all industries, leaders are recognized for their contributions but many observers often do not have a true picture of how significant their accomplishments have been. PIA, through our Print Drives America Foundation, recently commissioned full articles on Mr. Quinlan and Mr. Duggal, written by Patrick Henry, Liberty or Death Communications.

In his profile, **Tom Quinlan**, former CEO of LSC Communications and R.R. Donnelley & Sons, reflects on his journey from his early career in financial services to the highest level in the commercial printing industry. **Michael Duggal**, CEO of Duggal Visual Solutions, talks about how he built the company into one of the largest imaging service providers in the nation.

Join us in honoring the Franklin Award recipients in November. Visit [PIAlliance.org/2021\\_franklin\\_event](http://PIAlliance.org/2021_franklin_event) for sponsorship details.



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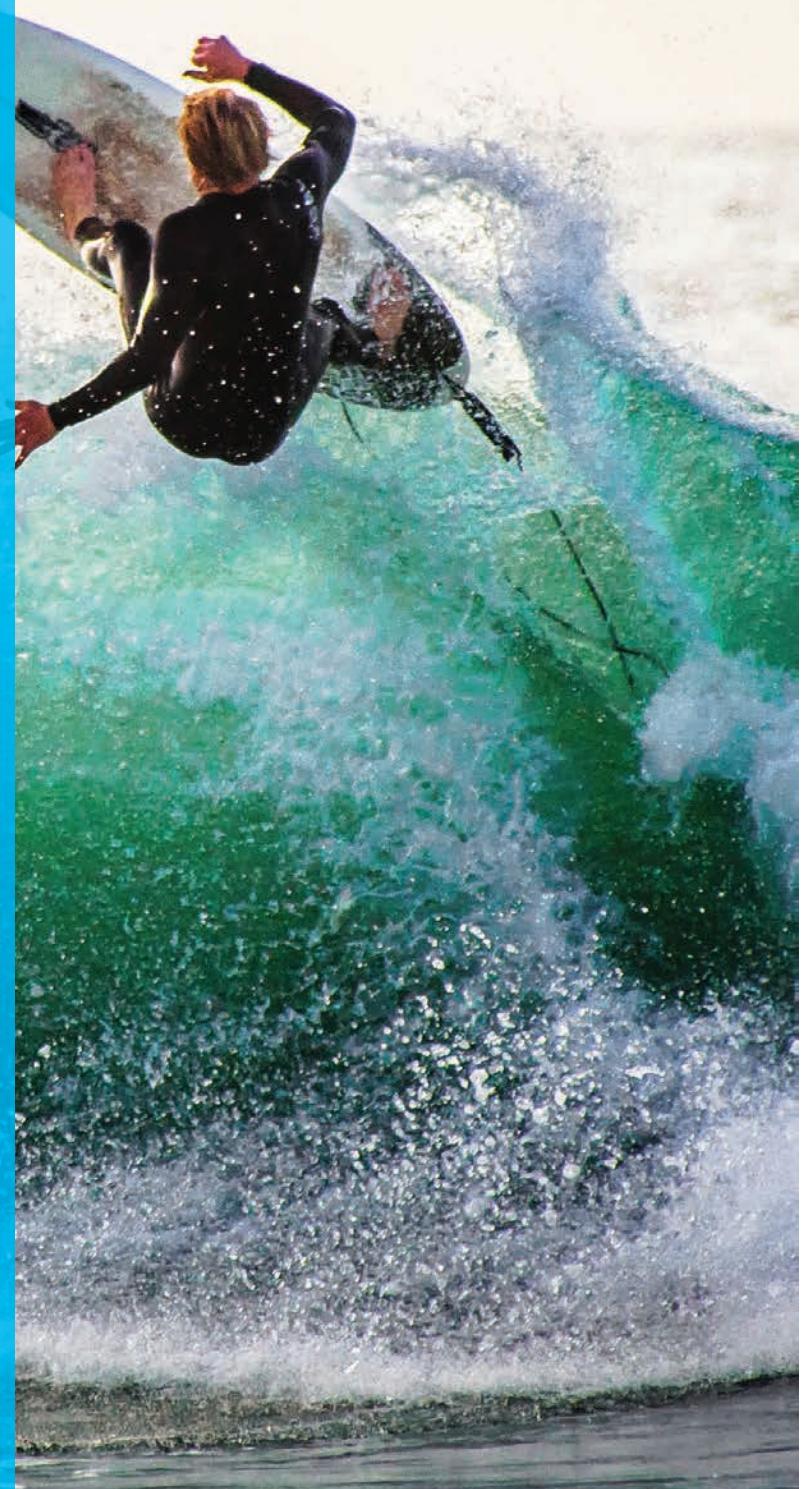
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## FRANKLIN EVENT AWARD RECIPIENTS PROFILED

### FRANKLIN HONOREE TOM QUINLAN LOOKS BACK AT HIS DAYS IN THE INDUSTRY'S LOFTIEST C-SUITES

By Patrick Henry, Liberty or Death Comm.

No previous recipient of the Print Drives America Franklin Award for Distinguished Service has climbed to greater heights in the commercial printing industry than Thomas J. Quinlan III, the 2020 honoree.

Quinlan most recently was chairman, president, and CEO of LSC Communications, a \$3.5 billion company formed in 2016 as an independent spin-off from R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co. He had served since 2007 as the president and CEO of R.R. Donnelley, then the largest provider of printing and communication business services in the world. Quinlan also held various C-level positions with Moore Wallace and World Color Press as well as finance positions with Marsh McLennan and Kidder Peabody.

On the occasion of his receipt of the Franklin Award, which he and 2021 honoree Michael Duggal (Duggal Visual Solutions) will accept at the 68th Annual Print Drives America Franklin Event in New York City on November 17th, we asked Quinlan to reflect on his time in the industry and the changes he has seen in the nature of the printing business over the years.

#### Please talk about your early days in the industry: where you broke in, how the arc of your career got started.

I was fortunate. I had worked in financial services companies including Kidder Peabody, an investment banking firm on Wall Street. Then I went to Marsh McLennan. KKR, a private equity investor, had a portfolio company called World Color Press that was looking for a treasurer. So I went over to interview with a gentleman who I heard had a rough reputation: Bob Burton (*Robert G. Burton Sr., then CEO of World Color Press – Ed.*). Bob hired me, and that was where I first got involved in printing.

I got there at the end of 1993. It was the best thing that happened to me, being involved with Bob. He was going to build the company up from where it was. He said he was going to consolidate the industry, and he did both. He also put together a heck of a team, people who to me were the tops not only in the print industry, but in any industry.



**THOMAS J. QUINLAN**  
former CEO of LSC Communications  
and RR Donnelley & Sons

#### 2020 Recipient, Franklin Award for Distinguished Service

I had a great opportunity to learn about the industry and being a leader. As long as you delivered, Bob would give you more responsibility. I followed him to Moore, and from there, Moore acquired Wallace Computer Services (*to form Moore Wallace in 2003 – Ed.*).

In 2004, R.R. Donnelley acquired Moore Wallace and the Moore Wallace management team. There, I got to be CFO and COO, and was given the opportunity in 2007 to take the helm of R.R. Donnelley.

I was 44 years old, so it was quite an opportunity, quite a responsibility. And I had a great team, surrounded by fantastic people. We took care of our customers, we took care of our vendors, we tried to take care of all of our stakeholders. But at the same time, we were taking the company in a different direction, because of all that was taking place from a digital standpoint.

**As the president and CEO of what was then America's largest printing company, you oversaw some of the most significant business acquisitions in the industry's**

**history. Do you think that the industry has the same kind of dynamism and energy today?**

Obviously, there are fewer multibillion dollar players, because of consolidation and divestments made from within those companies. But the energy is still there, and you still have R.R. Donnelley and Quad. LSC is owned by Atlas Holding Company. There are some other big players out there, like Cenveo and CJK Group. Every day, the industry continues to have people in it who are striving to evolve with the times from a technology standpoint.

**You have also witnessed tremendous technological change in the industry. Which of these technological advances do you see as the most far-reaching, and why?**

Honestly, I would say "Steve Jobs." When he developed the iPhone, that's when everything changed. We have some great equipment in this industry that can produce amazing products at amazing speeds, but Steve Jobs creating the iPhone is to me where we saw the biggest technological change for the printing industry.

Content didn't have to be in physical form, because of the iPhone. As a result of that, social media developed, different types of devices developed. Everything with ink on paper was now easily transported over to electronic form.

What it did to the magazine industry, the catalog industry, the direct mail industry, the book industry, and the financial industry really opened the floodgates to moving from the physical world to the electronic world. The mobility of it, and the ease with which you could go ahead and deliver content to your fingertips, was to me putting the transformation pretty much on steroids, and it just took off.

**In a 2015 interview with Mark Michelson of *Printing Impressions*, you stated that "print is the doorway to digital, and digital is the doorway to print." As people continue to increase the amount of time they spend in social media and other non-print channels,**



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## FRANKLIN HONOREES CONTINUED

### do you think that the “doorway” relationship still exists?

I do, but the doorway I spoke of back then was this huge, monstrous doorway that millions of people would fit into at once. And now, each one of us has our own doorway. The doorway becomes specialized, and becomes unique for each of us, because of the way technology is. I know what you like, I know what you want to have, I know what your habits are, what your likes and dislikes are. So that doorway now becomes laser-like focused on the individual, as opposed to the masses.

Mass printing has really taken a sharp hit, but the individualization of the content, because of technology, allows me to market to you, or to talk to you, on an individualized basis. That doorway has become a lot smaller, but there are a lot more doors than there were back then.

### How has the COVID-19 pandemic changed the demand for print? What kinds of printed communications will people be using more of, and less of, in a post-COVID world?

Especially for us in the United States, I don't know whether it's COVID or the political climate. But I do think there is something to physical content where the author's name is associated with the content – it's not some made-up tagline name for social media. There's a truth to it, or a validation of the content. Therefore, I do think that because of the divisions within the country, as people down in Washington, D.C. start to look at all these social media companies, there's an opportunity for physical content, i.e., printed content, to come back.

Not because of COVID, but because of the need to know who is saying what, and why they are saying it. At least we could have what I would call an honest debate on whatever the topic is, as opposed to now, where accountability is hidden.

If you were advising someone who wanted to launch a printing business, what key pieces of advice would you have to offer? What is essential for success in the print marketplace as it exists today?

I would say, have customers who have printed product that people really enjoy, really want, look forward to, can't wait for it to hit the mailbox. I think customers are the key to any industry, the same as in ours. If you have a printing business – not labels, not containers or packaging, but printing – you've got to have something that people just can't wait to see. Even with all the multichannel distribution networks that are out there today, you can't start a business if you do not have customers with products that people want to see.

AARP is a good example. People look forward to receiving the AARP magazine, and it's a population that is growing. Things along those lines, where it's sort of a Cracker Jack prize in your mailbox. Sometimes it's a good surprise, sometimes it's a bad surprise, but you always look forward to receiving things in the mail. I don't think that same excitement exists anymore.

The industry continues to struggle with hiring and retention. In your opinion, what is the answer to attracting the kinds of talent that printing businesses need?

Today, you can crew one of these football-field sized printing presses with three people – it's not as if you need scores of people. Honestly, I think we need more automation on the back end. More automation on the back end will alleviate a number of things from a negative margin standpoint, and also will take the pressure off trying to get people.

Because in the warehouse, our industry is not competing against other printing companies. We're competing with Amazon, UPS, FedEx. In my mind, the more automation we can do in this industry, the better the industry will be.

**What do you regard as the highest of high points of your long and distinguished career in the printing industry?**

I like to keep score, and I like at the end of the day to know that we delivered for customers. You know, no one in the printing industry does widgets. You don't get the same page count. Files don't come in on time. The process is an amazing one. The fact that we took care of our customers, whether they were publishing customers, book publishers, direct mail, or financial, we got their products out to where they needed to be on time, in the highest quality.

And, I always wanted people to leave the plant the way they walked in. We could fix a lot of things in business, but we couldn't fix when people got hurt. Having those plant managers and line supervisors making sure everybody left the facility after that shift with the same number of fingers they had when they went in, and didn't get hurt, and we got the products out the way they should be. That's what it's all about; it's taking care of the customers and the employees.

**What was your reaction upon learning that you had been selected to receive the 2020 Print Drives America Franklin Award for Distinguished Service?**

My huge, heartfelt thanks to the Award Committee, and to Steve Drew of LSC for the nomination. That is an amazing award. When you look at the list of prior recipients, I'm overwhelmed that my name is going to be a part of this group. What a great honor to be bestowed upon; I'm just very grateful.



## MICHAEL DUGGAL ON PURSUING SUCCESS: “IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING, YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE THE BEST”

By Patrick Henry, Liberty or Death Comm.

“I try to do the right things the right way each day.” This simple precept, inherited from his father, has guided Michael Duggal from his challenging early days in the industry to the extraordinary achievements that have earned him the 2021 Print Drives America Franklin Award for Distinguished Service. Mr. Duggal and 2020 honoree Thomas J. Quinlan III will accept their awards at the 68th Annual Print Drives America Franklin Event in New York City on November 17th.

Duggal is CEO of Duggal Visual Solutions, one of the country's premier providers of graphic imaging services. Under his leadership, the company has built an unparalleled reputation for technological capability and creative excellence. It has also attracted national attention for its extraordinary response to the COVID-19 pandemic in New York City, where it transformed itself on short notice into a mass manufacturer of protective gear.

The company, named a Best-in-Class Innovator by *Printing Impressions* last year, traces its origins to the photo lab that the honoree's father, Baldev Duggal, opened in Manhattan's Chelsea district in 1961.

“I was exposed to the industry at a very young age through my father,” his son recalls. “You'd go in with your dad in the morning, and you'd go home at night, so you'd be there all day, and that would be a pretty regular occurrence, because we were a pretty small business when we were growing up. I also saw what it meant to run a small business – bright and early, late at night, to work through the things that all small business owners have to work through.”

### A Call from Home

As an adult, Duggal didn't proceed directly into management of the family enterprise, having moved away from New York to pursue opportunities in other

industries. He returned to his roots in 1995 after an appeal from his father, who was dealing with health issues and the pressures of running a conventional imaging business in a rapidly changing market for visual services.

“He basically told me that the financial part of running the business was killing him, and he needed me to come up and help,” Duggal says. “So I had to leave my job in Virginia, break my lease, and then head on up to New York City to help get the finances in order.”



**MICHAEL DUGGAL**  
CEO of Duggal Visual Solutions

### 2021 Recipient, Franklin Award for Distinguished Service

By this point, the company had entered Chapter 11 bankruptcy and was struggling to establish a new identity after many years of being the New York metropolitan area's premier photo lab. Film was rapidly disappearing from graphic production, and as a result, says Duggal, “the business was now facing the transition that so many companies did not successfully navigate.”

Once Duggal had stabilized its finances, the company emerged from bankruptcy and began to see growth as a more digitally focused operation. In 2002, after steering the company through a recession in the late 1990s, the bursting of the dot-com bubble in 2000, and the 9/11 disaster the year after that, Duggal took over as CEO and began accelerating its transition to the digital side.

“We did it on our terms,” he emphasizes. “We didn't wait for things to completely stop before we stopped doing them. We moved away from a lot of conventional photographic services earlier on, so that

*Continued on page 6*

## MICHAEL DUGGAL (CONTINUED)

we could focus on what would be the future. And so we were early adopters of a lot of technology."

Through it all, Duggal never forgot his father's admonition to excel. "It was his focus on, if you're going to do something, you might as well be the best," he says. "To have the best quality – to be relentless in that pursuit."

### Nothing but the Best

This explains why Duggal Visual Solutions' commitment to adopting new printing and imaging technologies is key to its business strategy. "We always want to offer our customers the best possible solution to their needs," Duggal says. "We never want someone to have to go to someone else and get something better than us. We want to bring innovation to our customers, as opposed to having them force our hand."

"We were the first company with a drum scanner back in the day," he remarks. That was just the beginning of a campaign of technology investment that has made the company one of the country's most multi-capable providers of printing and graphics services, adept at virtually every method of translating visual imagery into physical or digital form.

An equipment list doesn't tell the whole story of any company, but the inventory at Duggal Visual Solutions demonstrates just how serious the company is about always being out in front with the best.

Among its industry-leading acquisitions are the country's first HP Indigo 12000 B2-format digital press, which later became the first of its type to be upgraded with HP's resolution-doubling HD imaging system. The company also hosted the U.S. debut of the Durst Rho 500R grand-format (16' wide) UV inkjet printer. Last year brought news that Duggal Visual Solutions had become the first provider anywhere in the world to install an HD Landa S10 Nanographic press.

Today the company's highly diversified production capabilities are spread across nine facilities: two on the West Coast

and seven on the East Coast, including its manufacturing headquarters in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. At these sites, says Duggal, "we always try to find through technology and process the better way to do something, and we search that out, because our focus is always on being the best first, not just making the most money."

### Vision vs. Bean-Counting

However, he adds that capital expenditure on this scale is not for the faint-hearted – or for the short-sighted.

"Sometimes our relentless investment and high-quality control standards hurt us financially," he acknowledges. "But, doing great work is our passion. We're a creative company staffed by creative and resourceful people, not a private-equity-run or a publicly owned company where they have a quarter-to-quarter mindset."

"We have a long-term vision, and I feel our future is more secure when we're the best at something, as opposed to just a focus on profitability alone. I believe that by putting our customers first, in the long term the positive results for us will follow."

"Obviously, you need to perform financially well to survive, but there are some companies where that becomes the only end, and I think that organizationally, those companies start to suffer," Duggal observes. "Short-term, they can be successful, but long-term, they'll suffer reputationally."

Another spur to excellence comes from meeting the high expectations of the company's A-list clientele, which includes luxury retailers, museums, galleries, sports leagues, event venues, and corporations around the world. Sixteen of Interbrand's top 25 Best Global Brands are on the customer list, according to Duggal.

"These companies are tops in their fields, and they want to work with someone who's top in their field," he explains. "It becomes a natural partnership in that way. In the best customer relationships, you actually push each other. The customer pushes us, and we push them by expos-

ing them to new technology, or them having new demands that we had never considered before."

"We get better by working with the best," Duggal declares.

### Pivot to PPE

Duggal Visual Solutions became famous in 2020 for doing some of its best work not on behalf of clients, but for healthcare workers and other first responders on the front lines of New York City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With its city under lockdown, and its regular volume of orders nearly dried up, the company pivoted in just five days to manufacturing personal protective equipment (PPE): face shields and other essential items that the city so desperately needed.

Over time, millions of pieces were delivered, and Duggal credits the success of the effort to the heroism of his staff.

"Last year, there was a point when PPE manufacturing was virtually the only thing we were producing," he says. "This was the height of it, in early March through April in New York at the most difficult time, when there were so many deaths. For people to come in and work during those difficult times at their own personal risk, to help others, was something so inspiring. I'm so glad and honored to be part of that with the team."

"I can still draw inspiration from that today, to know what we're capable of, that we're made of tough stuff," Duggal says. To know that when crisis calls, we're not only capable of answering, but willing to answer."

In his view, the graphic communications industry will have some adjusting to do as the threat of COVID-19 recedes. "I think that the market for visuals definitely shifted with the pandemic," he states. "Particularly hard hit areas were around events. We did a lot of work around pop-up stores, events, and trade shows, and with so much of that disappearing, it really impacted business."

## The Challenge of Challenges

He predicts that some of it will come back, and that opportunities will be there for print service providers that are prepared to act on them. This means adapting to what he calls the most significant change he has seen in the industry during the 26 years he has spent in it: "incredibly short turnaround times" driven by last-minute purchasing decisions and compressed time-to-market requirements.

"The amount of time you get to complete a project continues to shrink every year, and I think COVID even accelerated that," Duggal says, adding that the dealing with the pressure will be equally challenging for smaller providers that don't have the resources and for larger firms that don't have the flexibility.

He concedes that operating in the new normal won't be easy even for a business as well equipped and versatile as Duggal Visual Solutions. "It's been more uneven than I would like, from month to month and week to week. Your ability to forecast has definitely been impaired. I think it's going to take another six months to a year for some of it to shake out."

His plan for the interim reflects the same managerial values that have kept the company intact and growing throughout all of its ups and downs. "We're constantly looking to get more efficient in the meantime," Duggal says, "because the challenges are going to come, and it might be a different challenge next year. So we have to be ready by being the best we can be, the most efficient we can be."

Something else he intends to stay focused on is engagement: with customers, with the creative community that the company serves, and with the metro area schools that incubate both potential future customers and potential future employees. Outreach to these groups was curtailed by COVID-19, but Duggal expects it to resume as restrictions continue to lift.

He's convinced that the more people know about what graphic production

consists of, the better use they will be able to make of everything it can do for them.

## It's All about Output

"When people are being creative without understanding the next steps, what's possible, they're being creative with one hand tied behind their back," Duggal explains. "What they see when they do it in Photoshop, that's only part of it. There are so many things you can do on the output level that enhance it – techniques, treatments, and processes that will allow you to do things beyond looking at the static image or the layout that you have in your file."

Spreading that kind of knowledge also breeds relationships for Duggal Visual Solutions, the company's CEO believes. "Anyone who communicates visually is going to need a graphics company to help them. There is always going to be a need for some level of helping people to communicate visually, and we want to be their solution for that. If we're experts at what we do, there'll be a demand."

Duggal describes himself as "incredibly honored" to be selected for the 2021 Print Drives America Franklin Award for Distinguished Service, a tribute that has been paid to former U.S. presidents, captains of industry, and other national celebrities. Characteristically, however, he declines to claim the honor as belonging only to him.

## In Short, 'I Love It'

The honoree says he has dedicated himself to the industry "because I love it. To have it recognized with this award is something that was really gratifying, to have our work for the community during COVID recognized."

"And that's not just me being recognized, it's recognizing my team," he hastens to add. "While I might be the recipient, I'm also being the recipient on behalf of an incredible group of people who I'm honored to work with each day. It is comforting to see those efforts get recognized."

Truly a right thing to say, said the right way, by an awardee who stands behind every word.

PRINT DRIVES AMERICA FOUNDATION

*Presents the 68th Annual*

## FRANKLIN EVENT

Wednesday, November 17, 2021, 6 pm  
Club 101, 101 Park Avenue, New York, NY

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### FRANKLIN HONOREES ...

*Two Iconic Honorees ... 2021 and 2020*

Because of the pandemic pause, the Franklin Award will be presented to two individuals, **Michael Duggal**, CEO of Duggal Visual Solutions (2021 recipient) and **Thomas Quinlan**, former CEO of LSC Communications and RR Donnelley & Sons (2020 recipient).

## SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

Contact Kim Tuzzo at Printing Industries Alliance at (716) 691-3211 or [ktuzzo@PIAlliance.org](mailto:ktuzzo@PIAlliance.org) or visit [pialliance.org/2021\\_franklin\\_event/](http://pialliance.org/2021_franklin_event/).

# SIGNATURE

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING PIA  
MEMBERS AT THESE EVENTS.

### → November 17, 2021

68th Annual Franklin Event  
Club 101, New York, NY

## VIRTUAL EVENTS

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## FAILING TO GET THE ORDER ...

## MAYBE WE SHOULD RECHECK OUR HOUR RATES...

As budget hour rates (BHR) are central to your estimating system and your pricing is determined by it, it's natural to think that you should check to be sure they're right. It's not that difficult of a spread sheeting exercise. But, before you start crunching numbers, you should give some serious thought as to what "right" means. If you define it as a process of finding the "cost" of doing a job in your plant, the answer is extremely dependent on how you choose to allocate overhead (factory, equipment and front office) and even more on how many hours you plan to operate. The cost of the press in a three-shift operation is less than half of its cost in a single shift one. It's important to realize that "cost" defined in this way is not a hard number like the cost of a skid of paper, but the product of a set of assumptions about allocating overhead and most importantly, hours of operation, which may or may not match what actually will happen.



Finally, you should consider the use of the numbers that your system will produce. For most printers, the primary use is to determine pricing—the quote is a function of the estimate which is a function of the materials (usually with mark-ups) and BHRs times the number of hours projected to do the work. The anomaly of this approach is that it ignores the customer who will have to write the check. A customer has no interest in how much you believe your press costs you to run. They are very interested in the value that the project will confer on them and what they believe that they would pay for it from an acceptable alternate supplier. Of course, you tend not to think much about "value" but you do think a lot about alternate suppliers "competitors."

If you quote \$1,000 and the order goes to someone else, you grumble about competitors "who don't know their costs" and move on. However, the competitor with a three-shift operation might be quite happy with their \$900 price. The reality is that very likely the \$1,000 job only really involved the expenditure of around \$600 (paper, buy-outs, factory wages and commissions), leaving you with \$400 to pay for the overhead and ultimately produce profits. Had you sold it at \$900, you would have got \$300, but you didn't, so you got zero.

Having failed to get the order, you are now a little further from fully utilizing your plant, which is moving in the wrong direction—away from full utilization. Therefore, your pricing system can't be locked into an unmoving utilization assumption but should help you move to full utilization. Does that mean that you must lower all of your prices? Of course not! Many of your customers are paying your existing prices and you don't

want to change that. Indeed, if you almost always get the order, that's a signal that you're leaving money on the table. Your path to full utilization is through the customers who are not giving you orders now, but who have work in reasonable quantities that fits your operation—those are the people that your pricing system must target.

You originally thought that your BHRs should better reflect "reality." Before you start filling spreadsheets with numbers, you should reflect that if the numbers are going to be lower, they may cause you to leave even more money on the table with solid customers but not enough to get more doors opened. If the numbers get higher, you may pick up some dollars left on the table but walk away from more sales. The only solution is, key your pricing to individual customers as some will pay more and others less. Your objective should be to get as much as there is to get, but get the order—that's reality!

Want to learn how to match prices to customers and get those orders? Give us a call.



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## THE 2021 WAGE + BENEFIT SURVEY IS HERE!

The 2021 Wage + Benefit Survey is a joint project of regional print affiliates across the US. Data was collected in the summer of 2021 from nearly 500 companies. This year's survey includes data from COVID-19 related operating questions.

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PIA members who did not participate in the survey may purchase the survey results for \$150 (discounted for a limited time from the normal \$250 price). Non-members may purchase the results for \$750.

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## COMMUNICATE WITH CUSTOMERS

### TIPS FOR NAVIGATING TODAY'S ALLOCATED PAPER MARKET

By Damien Bradley, Sr. Vice President – Spicers | Print and Wide Format

As I discussed in my last column ("What's Up with Paper Supply?"), current inventories of all paper products remain low ... and the supply imbalance is expected to persist well into, if not throughout all of 2022.

Which means that just as demand for print has picked up, printers nationwide (and the paper vendors that serve them!) are scrambling to get the paper they need to fill their print orders.

What can you do to keep your customers happy and successfully navigate through this challenge? Here are some tips:

#### Set appropriate expectations

It's vitally important that you communicate with your customers. Be sure they're aware of what's happening in the paper market and the challenges that all printers are facing. Now is not the time to be promising them the moon. Instead, explain that paper is in such short supply that some varieties and grades are simply not available in the time frame required or in the sizes, basis weights and quantities that they need.

Plus, let your customers know that paper prices continue to rise. If you give a customer a quote now for a job that will run in the future, there's a good chance that the paper price will increase by the time the order comes in. Keep this in mind as you're setting expectations as well as when you're estimating the job.

#### Communicate with your vendors

More than ever, you need to stay close to your key paper vendors. Update them about your future needs for any key jobs that you are expecting to receive in the future.

Let your vendors continue to add value in the relationship! As part of this communication process, use your paper vendors as a resource for information on these unprecedented market conditions that you can share with your customers and ask them to help you find alternatives to the products you're looking for.

#### Give your customers options

If a particular paper is unavailable, don't just present your customers with this bad news—offer solutions.

Offering solutions requires you to be flexible (and convince your customers to be flexible, too). A key here is to work closely with your customers to understand the use and purpose of the printed pieces.

If the first choice of paper isn't available, would it make more sense to consider either a premium or more economical grade? How will changing the paper affect your customer's overall budget for the project? Are there changes you can recommend that they can make to the design based on the available substrates, to ensure the job will run well on your equipment?





For example...

**Consider alternative paper grades.** If commodity offset paper isn't available, can you move up to a higher quality opaque grade? If the customer asked for an unavailable commodity coated sheet, would it make sense to try to offer a premium coated sheet? If 70 pound paper is out of stock, would it be better for this job to move up to 80 pounds or to a lighter 60 pound basis weight? For a coated board job, if you can't get SBS board, would a laminated board work for the project?

**Consider running the job differently.** Based on the paper products that are available, you may need to be flexible in your approach to how you print the job. For example, based on the available sheet size can something that is usually run four up be done two up? Depending on your equipment, can you switch the job from offset to digital, or vice versa?

This advice applies to finishes, too. If a job calls for a gloss stock but there is no gloss stock to be had, can you buy a dull stock and apply a gloss varnish on it instead?

**Consider custom converting.** Some paper merchants have custom converting capabilities. If the standard size sheets you've always used are not available, check to see if they have rolls that can be converted to the size you need. Keep in mind, you may need to meet minimum order quantities.

#### There's always a solution

Times like these are when your distributor's sales reps prove their value to you ... and you prove your value to your customers. Solutions exist if we all remain flexible and patient. It's up to you and your vendor partners to identify these solutions. We're all in this together.

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## GOT TOXIC EMPLOYEE(S)?

### WORK-RELATED BEHAVIOR IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

By Joseph P. Truncale, Ph.D., CAE

As if being in business needed to be any more demanding, post-pandemic issues seem to include a shortage of (or at least a delay in receiving) needed materials from the supply chain and, perhaps even more challenging, the need for and absence of skilled workers.

There are many theories related to the latter. Enhanced unemployment benefits, employees who have grown accustomed to working remotely and have little or no desire to return to the workplace, and the general sense that job opportunities are plentiful are contributing factors bringing a new level of "employee empowerment." How can business leaders respond to these changing dynamics? And are work-related standards likely to slip as employers dare not do anything that might alienate members of the workforce?



I read with interest an article in the *Wall Street Journal* by Sharon Terlep titled "The Benefits of a No-Jerks Rule". The piece details the remarkable turnaround at Newell Brands. Led by CEO Ravi Saligram, who took the reins at Newell in 2019, a tone was set when he presented to the company's world-wide workforce a slide which read: No "Jerks" (Saligram used a different, more colorful word than "jerks", one commonly reserved for rude drivers, for example). Employees took great notice of course, but there was more to it than a simple matter of getting their attention.

Saligram put in place an aggressive debt reduction program and focused on increasing sales of some of Newell's more noteworthy brands including Sharpie markers and Yankee Candles. No surprise there. However, it is his attention and dedication to changing the passive/defensive culture at Newell that is most often cited by stakeholders as the primary reason for the turnaround.

I was once asked at a leadership seminar for the key to attracting and retaining superior talent. "Don't hire jerks" was my reply. That got a quick laugh but a serious and robust discussion on the topic ensued. Is your hiring process robust enough to spot "jerks" (especially talented "jerks")? One way to help accomplish this is to have several people interview the candidate, in small groups and one on one. Eventually, the fact that the person is a "jerk" will usually come through. They can't help it; they're such "jerks!"



And what about those on the current employee roster? I once offered this comment to a group of senior executives "there's probably someone on your payroll right now who shouldn't be, and you know it." The room grew uncomfortably silent.

So, how will the challenge of finding and attracting qualified, talented workers affect organizations and their culture? One thing is for sure. Organizational leaders will need to establish and communicate standards of performance and behavior while balancing the need for creativity and flexibility in how work gets done.

And here is some good news. High performers value high standards and are likely to turn away from organizations that allow less than acceptable effort and behavior.

**About the Author:** Joseph P. Truncale, Ph.D., CAE, is the Founder and Principal of Alexander Joseph Associates, a privately held consultancy specializing in executive business advisory services with clients throughout the graphic communications industry.

Joe spent 30 years with NAPL, including 11 years as President and CEO. He is an adjunct professor at NYU teaching graduate courses in Executive Leadership; Financial Management and Analysis; Finance for Marketing Decisions; and Leadership: The C Suite Perspective. He may be reached at Joe@ajstrategy.com or (201) 394-8160.

## KODAK LAUNCHES REBATE PROGRAM WITH COLLABORATIVE OF PRINT AFFILIATES

Kodak is announcing an exclusive rebate program in partnership with the regional print affiliates, the largest collaborative of not-for-profit regional print trade associations. The program will provide members of the regional affiliates, including Printing Industries Alliance, with cost savings when purchasing a variety of Kodak printing solutions.

"As a longtime supporter of the Print Affiliates across the U.S., we're proud to offer this opportunity for printing companies to save money while optimizing their operations with industry-leading printing solutions," said Jeff Zellmer, Vice President of Global Sales & Strategy at Eastman Kodak Company.

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## TONY JACKSON, CEO, PANTHER GRAPHICS, FEATURED IN ROCHESTER NEWS REPORT



Tony Jackson uses football parlance when he talks about the challenges of keeping a Black business going in 2021.

"Most people who bid on a client, they walk into the room, it's first and 10," said Jackson, the 62-year-old founder and CEO of PIA member Panther Graphics and co-owner of Panther Solutions in Rochester [Tony also serves on the PIA Board of Directors]. "But every time I take those same meetings," he smiles, "it's fourth and inches. Fourth and inches."

Factories like Jackson's on Central Avenue, a gateway to Rochester's northeast, are getting harder to find in the cities across New York. Panther Graphics has put people to work for 30 years, ever since Jackson decided to open it and have his office look onto the neighborhood where he grew up.

He can point across the street to an old R.C. Shaheen outlet and recall his backyard games of football with the boys from the neighborhood. The kinship he has here motivates him to provide for those who live here, like two one-time Iraqi soldiers who just moved into the neighborhood as they begin a new life in America.

"That's what you do when you're from Rochester. You work in your own community," he said.

Jackson learned the fine print of manufacturing at a landmark Rochester business, forged in activism and corporate citizenship; a place a few blocks from his childhood home.

The FIGHTON factory opened in the late 1960s in response to Rochester's race riots of 1964. It was an opportunity that arrived in just as turbulent a time in the city's history as it saw a year ago, when a social justice movement following the death of Daniel Prude, shook the city.

Partnerships give Black-owned businesses like Panther Graphics the juice they need to close small deals and approach big companies.

"I'm a \$2 million CEO and I'm negotiating with a \$40 million CEO," Jackson said. "I need some help."

Where Eltrex first trained Jackson in manufacturing, now George Scharr and Flower City Corporation collaborate. The two operations formed a new venture, Panther Solutions. Jackson's knowledge of manufacturing and the printing business grew with Flower City's help.



"Everybody's so busy all the time," said Scharr, CEO of PIA member Flower City Corporation [and Treasurer, PIA Board of Directors]. "Sometimes it gets hard to figure out what you can do for the community."

Their 16-year partnership leads orders to Jackson's presses. A Wegmans label run rolling off the Panther production line in late September was a Flower City contract.



"When it comes to light that you can do something to really help people, share your experience with what they're trying to do," Scharr said.

But nothing's guaranteed. One major local company ended its business with Panther this summer via email, the kind of communication in which committed partners tend not to engage.

Josh Cummings is Jackson's protégé. He sees the challenges Black business people like Jackson face from a whole different point of view.

"A lot of places talk a good game. But there's no action," Cummings said. "It never gets down to the final level of implementation."

Relationship building is what Rochester's presumptive next mayor is doing in his unprecedented six-month run up to taking over city hall. Malik Evans will have more than \$200 million in newly arriving federal aid with which to invest in the neighborhoods where his city's greatest challenges lie.



"So in order for us to get to a space where we are really, really proving economic opportunity, especially for African Americans, we got to kick it up to the next level," said Jackson.

Jackson originally named his company as a tribute to the Black Panther Party, which was a symbol of Black power during the times Eltrex was born. At that next level, Jackson believes home-grown talent will make the difference.

Most of the brainpower behind Rochester's Black-owned businesses over the years has come from women and men who came from other places.

Jackson tries to break that cycle with nearly every Panther personnel decision.

"That's how I got here," he said. "One of the models at Eltrex that I came away with was allowing folks to have an opportunity that they would not have normally had the opportunity to do."

And where will that come from? Jackson just hired a young man who had never been in a printing shop before. He didn't know if he could do it. A week later, he was running a line on one of the factory's most expensive machines, taking his own step to rebuilding Rochester.

"In most cases," Jackson said, "the people are already there."

**Source:** Jim Aroune, SpectrumNews1

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