

SIGNATURE

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STEVE ZENGER, FORMER PIA CHAIRMAN, INDUCTED INTO THE 2021 *PRINTING IMPRESSIONS*/RIT PRINTING INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME

Printing Industries Alliance is proud to congratulate Steve Zenger on his induction into the Printing Industry Hall of Fame. Steve is a former Chairman of PIA, fierce Association advocate, long time member and constant presence at PIA events. The following is an excerpt from the article that recently appeared in *Printing Impressions* magazine.

"If anybody's going to put me out of business, it had better be me." These words go a long way towards encapsulating Stephen Zenger, CEO of Zenger Group, and a 2021 *Printing Impressions*/RIT Printing Industry Hall of Fame inductee. In his years at the helm of Zenger Group, Zenger's strategic mind and eye for the next crucial technology have played a significant role in taking the business from strength to even greater strength over the past few decades.

Founded by his father and brother as a local storefront print shop in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1980, the family-owned commercial printing enterprise now boasts a nationwide customer base and currently operates three plants in the Buffalo area. They include a main direct mail printing operation running digital and offset presses and a full bindery; a union print shop that also operates offset, and small-format digital output devices, and an embedded bindery; plus a third operation, a retail copy shop in downtown Buffalo.

Zenger is the second youngest of seven siblings, two of whom, Joseph and John, are Stephen's co-owners in the business, with another two brothers, David and Thomas, also working at Zenger Group. For many, this may be a hair-raising prospect — how does one balance running a growing and adapting printing concern while navigating the viewpoints and sensibilities of relatives? Far from an additional challenge, Zenger views it as one of the company's great strengths, with each family member bringing an essential element to the smooth and successful running of the business.

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Tim Freeman, PIA President, with Steve Zenger at Chelsea Piers in New York, NY



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COVER CONTINUED

"I come from a family of seven children," Zenger explains. "Through all these years, we've always had a nice division of labor in the family. In the business partnership, I have a brother who's a finance and numbers guy, I have a brother who's a relationship and plant guy, and I was always the technology and strategy piece of the pie. That combination has served us well."

Keeping Family Business on Track

Joseph Zenger, Zenger Group's CFO and Steve Zenger's brother, agrees that a harmonious relationship between the siblings has played a significant part in the success of the business over the years, but credits Steve's diplomacy skills as a key factor.

"With a large family and many of us working in the business, our dynamic is being able to all work together and do it successfully. Stephen has the right kind of personality to help make that happen. My father chose him as CEO because of his personality; he has a very engaging personality and a very even-headed demeanor. Imagine how hard it is with even one or two siblings in the business, when you have five or six like we have, it's even harder to mesh all those personalities together and make everybody's needs work. Steve has been a big part of that."

Zenger's mediation skills aren't just recognized within the family. According to Jerry Hace, a longtime colleague and friend of Zenger's (and also former PIA Chairman) who's now retired from the printing industry, "Steve is great at achieving consensus. I'm sure that can be difficult in a family business with several siblings. They stay focused on technology trends and customer demands, and he has the ability to implement new technologies seamlessly. As an entrepreneur, he has a special ability to see and use technology, and he implements it to meet customers' needs, especially in an emerging digital world."

Emphasis on Technology Adoption

Zenger's affinity for technology has been important to Zenger Group's growth and continued prosperity. "Smart. Print. Now." is more than a tagline, it's embedded



Smart. Print. Now.

in the company culture. "We've always pushed to be at the leading edge of print production technologies," Zenger explains. "With "Smart. Print. Now." smart is probably the most important part. It's about doing innovative things with technology, and sometimes stretching us into work that isn't necessarily what would be considered printing industry work."

"Sometimes it's database work, sometimes it's cloud computing, sometimes it's security; it can be a number of different things, and that is what has set us apart and made us so successful over the years," he adds. "The company has grown from those two employees in 1980 and that one, small retail shop to where we are today — 130 employees working in 140,000 sq. ft. of production spaces — largely because of that kind of focus on technology and innovation."

Tim Freeman, president of Printing Industries Alliance, caught sight of this particular trait early on. "I've always considered Steve as a visionary in the industry," Freeman says. "Some of the things I've seen him do with the company have been very astute. He has a keen understanding of technology." Freeman's and Zenger's

relationship goes back to when Zenger graduated from college, as the family business was a member of the association.

Freeman sums up the innovative mindset that has served the Zenger's so well with a fitting anecdote: "Here's one of the stories that I tell about Steve (and have told so many times he'll probably be mad if he sees it in print again!): When he graduated from college, his company was one of the first companies in that area to adopt desktop publishing using Apple computers. We had a group of older, more established offset printing firms, somewhere around the late 1980s, and I remember going to meetings with these guys, and they just couldn't believe that somebody would actually think they could set type on a computer. They were scoffing about quality and saying, 'How could this ever impact our businesses?' Those companies are out of business now, and Steve has built his company into one of the largest printers in the country."

Witnessing the Desktop Publishing Era

Of course, fresh from graduating from college in 1987, Zenger was fairly incognizant of the sea-change occurring in the industry at that time. Far from seeming ground-breaking, it was all he knew.

"If you look at what was happening in that timeframe, there was an utter revolution happening in the industry," Zenger reflects. "You were converting the production processes, particularly in prepress, from photo typesetting, mechanical art production, cameras, and so on, to digital desktop electronic publishing technologies. But for a kid coming out of college in 1987, there was nothing unnatural about it."

The realization that technological change is inevitable has delivered some valuable lessons that has added courage and confidence to Zenger's innate aptitude for technology and strategy. Zenger continues: "If there's a technology that scares me or that puzzles me, it's a flag for me to pay attention. That belief has served me well over the years."

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HERE'S TO YOU STEVE! CONGRATULATIONS!

That philosophy has paid dividends, and is in accordance with Zenger's previously referenced mantra, "If anybody is going to put me out of business, it had better be me." He provides a timely example: "A couple of years ago, we installed two very state-of-the-art Konica Minolta KM-1 inkjet presses. They have significantly impacted our conventional offset printing demand. So we've got conventional Heidelberg presses and digital inkjet presses, and in some cases we're eating our own young. If anybody's going to put me out of business, it better be me, because if this inkjet technology supplants a half-size, conventional offset press, either I'm going to do that and have control over it, or somebody else will do it to me."

Recognizing the Value of Involvement

"Trade association relationships have been very valuable to our team over the years because you see what's coming down the pike and, again, if it scares you, you keep looking deeper. Attending trade shows, reading trade magazines, talking to vendors, talking to industry colleagues — that is how we get our insights."

Zenger is without doubt an immense advocate for associations and supporting the work they do for the industry. He has served as a longtime board member and former chairman of the Printing Industries Alliance (PIA). Freeman reflects on Zenger's commitment to paying it forward: "As competitive as the industry is, he's always been very open to sharing operational and other ideas that a lot of companies probably wouldn't have shared."

Joseph Zenger echoes this characterization of his brother, adding: "Steve has spent a lot of time working for the benefit of the industry as a whole. He has been very active in associations both on the state, as well as national levels. Printing has become a completely different business in the past 20 years, so it's a testament to people like Steve who try to help other companies navigate."



At Franklin Event in 2016 when Steve Zenger received the Luminaire Award, left to right: David Zenger, Colleen Murphy, John Zenger, Joe Zenger, Julie Zenger, Steve Zenger, Tom Zenger, Rosemary Lojacono and Alec Rocha

"We're all very proud of him," John Zenger agrees. "He's contributed his time and knowledge to the betterment of the entire industry. That's the way our company works; we want other businesses, including our competitors, to thrive as well."

Read the full article at pialliance.org/blog/

LETTER FROM PIA

A FEW WORDS ABOUT STEVE FROM PIA

As President of Printing Industries Alliance, it is always great to see a colleague from the industry, someone you know has made a significant contribution that has reaped benefits far beyond their company, be recognized in a national forum.

I have had the pleasure of working with many individuals that fit this mold. However, I would be hard pressed to think of someone more deserving than Steve Zenger, President of the Zenger Group in Buffalo, New York.

Steve was recently honored as a 2021 *Printing Impressions*/RIT Printing Industry Hall of Fame inductee; recognition that is so deserved for someone like Steve, who has had such an influence in our industry.

Steve's industry accomplishments and accolades are well documented and can be read in the *Printing Impressions* announcement, with excerpts shown in the cover article. As you will readily see, his accomplishments are many and his accolades well deserved.

What is well known to his colleagues and friends but difficult to convey in an article is the empathy and engagement that Steve conveys in his interactions. From employees, industry colleagues, and business associates, to association and community connections, and family, Steve's ability to listen, relate, share ideas, and contribute sage advice are attributes that are recognized by all.

Printing Industries Alliance has been fortunate to have had a long succession of volunteer leaders that have made contributions to whatever success, member

engagement, and financial independence we, as an organization, have been able to achieve.

Steve's tenure as a volunteer leader coincided with a major territorial expansion that facilitated our opportunity to connect with printing business owners and managers on a much broader geographic scale. The "right man at the right time," Steve's ability to understand the cultural issues and tailor the organizational strategy was instrumental to the success that was achieved.

Please take a minute to join me in thanking Steve, the Zenger family, and the Zenger Group staff for their support of the industry and involvement in Printing Industries Alliance.

Very truly yours,

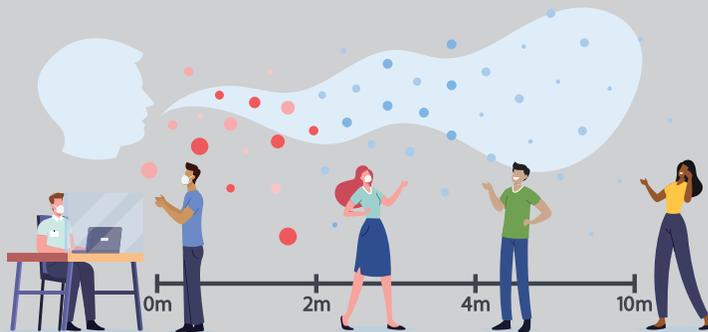
Timothy Freeman
President



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HERO ACT AIRBORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASE DESIGNATION ANNOUNCED



New York State Governor Kathy Hochul issued a Labor Day news release designating COVID-19 as an Airborne Infectious Disease under New York State's HERO Act. The Governor announced that the Commissioner of Health has designated COVID-19 a highly contagious communicable disease that presents a serious risk of harm to the public health under New York State's HERO Act.

This designation immediately triggers the obligation of New York State employers to implement the workplace safety plans which they were required to draft and adopt in readiness for this development. The NY HERO Act mandated extensive new workplace health and safety protections in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The resurgence of the disease has now prompted this designation. Under the law, all employers are required to adopt a workplace safety plan and implement it for all airborne infectious diseases designated by the New York State Department of Health. The State has prepared its own model plans for use under the Act. Employers are also free to develop their own plans which meet or exceed those State standards. Visit PIAlliance.org/blog/ to view previous reports. State resources including model plans are available at: <https://dol.ny.gov/ny-hero-act>.

Clients with questions concerning the HERO Act, the new designation, or plan requirements should contact: Mike Dodd at mldodd@ferrarafirm.com or Nick Fiorenza at njfiorenza@ferrarafirm.com.



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FOREVER A FRIEND OF THE INDUSTRY...

PRINTING INDUSTRIES ALLIANCE INTERVIEWS PATRICK HENRY

Tim Freeman and Kim Tuzzo at Printing Industries Alliance sat down with the recently retired Patrick Henry on Zoom over the summer, to discuss his long career as a printing industry journalist and his reflections on the industry. Or you could say Pat interviewed himself while we watched and listened!



Tim Freeman: Hi Pat, thanks for allowing us to “flip the table” and interview you! We have admired your career for many years.

Kim Tuzzo: Tim and I are curious how your interest in journalism began and how you learned the trade.

Patrick Henry: Well, to begin at the beginning, I grew up in a home that was always full of newspapers and magazines. At that time, there were more periodicals like that than there are now. So, I guess my exposure to periodical publishing was almost from the beginning. I think I knew from a pretty early age that I would somehow make my living writing, had no clear sense of how that would unfold, but it was just something I kind of knew instinctively from when I was a kid. This began to take shape when I worked on my college newspaper. I went to Queens College here in Queens, and we had a weekly and then a twice weekly newspaper called the Phoenix. I was quite active with that. Later, I went on to be a police reporter, a stringer for a daily newspaper called the Long Island Press, which is long gone. But, that was my first exposure to daily journalism.

Kim Tuzzo: So, you didn't have any printing background, before answering an ad for a job, reporting on printing?

Patrick Henry: Yeah. I can say, I got my job through *The New York Times*, when *The New York Times* was filled with classified ads. This was before online recruiting existed. I answered an ad placed by the then owners and publishers of *Printing News*. I went to them in 1984, and eventually became managing editor of that publication. It wasn't true that I had no prior printing experience. I had worked for a couple of trade associations in other industries, insurance, primarily. I was an editorial coordinator and had dealt somewhat with printers on publishing newsletters, annual reports and a few other things. So, I did have a little bit of exposure to printing, but not all that much. I learned by doing, ever since joining *Printing News*, and continue to do that today.

Again, it's an ongoing education. As you well know, there's always something new going on in this industry. It just doesn't stop. We may not get the exposure in the outside world that we would like, but this is an industry on the move, technologically. Business models are changing, but it's here. It's here to stay and still fascinating to keep tabs on.

Notable People in the Industry

Tim Freeman: You must have run into some pretty incredible people in your career. Who stands out in your memory?

Patrick Henry: Tim, we'd need the rest of the day and a good part of another to do justice to everybody. I've identified a few. In mentioning a few names, I regret not being able to mention others, but I would have to say among my fellow journalists, people like Roger Ynostroza, Mark Michelson, who continues to be editor in chief of *Printing Impressions*, others like Andy Tribute, Cary Sherburne. And, I have to say, sadly the late

Katherine O'Brien. I've had some amazing peers, and as a matter of fact, I hesitate even to call them my peers because I admire their ability so much.

Among printers, so many I've had the privilege to interview and to interact with over the years. I think of Joe Davis of Consolidated Graphics, our own Tom Staib of DWS Printing Associates, Joel Quadracci, Quad Graphics, Jesse Williamson of Williamson Printing. And again, so many others could be mentioned. If we wanted to talk about vendors, certainly people like Benny Landa, Jeff Jacobson, Bernhard Schreier, Ursula Burns. Again, these are the people who stand for a lot of other memorable people that I've encountered in my career.

Memorable Industry Events

Tim Freeman: What are some of the most memorable events that you witnessed, in terms of technology or business trends?

Patrick Henry: Oh, this is where you really have to stretch your memory and just choose a few representative samples. I do remember the Seybold conferences in Boston and San Francisco while they were on, where I learned firsthand about the digitization of print, those were tremendous events. I have to say, as I think any other journalists would, the first time I saw an Indigo, a variable digital press in operation at Graph Expo, I guess was 1993. It had debuted at IPEX in Britain, if I'm correct, the year before, but that certainly was a watershed event in technology.

I've had the opportunity to visit press manufacturing plants in Germany, Israel, Japan, other places; those were always revelations. Unfortunately, the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center have to be remembered. We're coming up on the 20th anniversary of that in a couple of weeks.* I had come back from the Print show in Chicago the day before, to close an issue of the publication I was working on. Our immediate objective was to find out how printers below Canal Street in Manhattan were affected and how they

would survive that. So, that was a sad and tumultuous event, those are among the standouts.

Industry Mentors, Education

Patrick Henry: I think the next question was, whom do I consider mentors? I really want to emphasize that every printer and vendor representative, every trade association executive I've ever interviewed has been a teacher and a mentor to me. I've been a pupil who's had an almost unlimited master class in printing and graphic communications technology. People have just been so generous with their knowledge. Considering that in most cases, these were cold calls, people whom I had never spoken with before. They didn't know me personally, they may have been acquainted with a publication I was writing for, but there was never any hesitancy, never any reticence on their part. If I know anything at all about the printing industry, printing technology, it's because of that generosity. I just would like to thank all of those people, first.

I also, in particular, think of as mentors, Al Greco and Bonnie Blake. They were the educators who introduced me to teaching, which I think is your next question. I served as an adjunct professor, adjunct lecturer in graduate programs at New York University, starting in 1987, and continued, almost without a break, through 2016. Al Greco recruited me for the first course that I taught. He wanted to put together a course on trade magazine editing. I did that for a couple of years, we added publishing and a few other things. This morphed into graphic communications technology in the early 1990s. Bonnie Blake was in charge of that program and it was under her guidance that I developed into an educator. I also was able to teach undergraduate courses at New York City College of Technology. The NYU program unfortunately no longer exists. I think there are some graphic communications courses still taught at New York City Tech. So, I look back with a lot of fondness on my teaching experience, and was glad to get that.

Tim Freeman: Sounds like you really liked doing the teaching aspect.

Patrick Henry: Well, Tim, it's some of the hardest work that I've ever done. As a matter of fact, I can say, it probably required at least as much labor, if not more than anything I did in journalism. Putting together a curriculum and a rubric and presenting it effectively, it's just very, very difficult. It has to be highly structured. It has to be very comprehensive. Needless to say, the information has to be valuable. But, that was a challenge that I found fulfilling. There were times, frankly, when I did not do all that well. When you're uncertain of your material, when you are not presenting it correctly ... you're on a stage, and this may be the wrong way to look at it, but there's a performance aspect to it.

And, if you're losing your audience, you can tell right away. And then, you do what you can to get things back on track. Now, again, that represented only a small part of the experience, but I'm just trying to give you an idea of how difficult it could be. But, I am proud of having done it, I guess that's the best way to say it.

On His Famous Name

Tim Freeman: So, something I wanted to ask you for almost as long as I've known you, what was it like growing up with such a famous historical name? I bet you were the favorite of all your history teachers.

Patrick Henry: Tim, you may be surprised to know that it didn't get me quite as much attention as you might imagine. I didn't get a lot of needling or ribbing from other kids about it. Kids address themselves by last name in school, their given name tends to be dropped. It was recognized, but nobody really made a big thing about it. Although, I have always thought that name looks good in a byline.

Kim Tuzzo: Oh yeah, that's a great one.

(*See PIA Special Edition with Pat's article on the 20th Anniversary.)

Patrick Henry: Yeah, that's been an asset to me. I have no ancestral ties to the original. Some people know who he is, fewer today than before, but he still resonates. I appreciate the question.

Future Plans

Patrick Henry: Your next question is the hardest one, plans for the future. I'm still trying to get used to the idea of waking up in the morning without looming deadlines. I still have a few freelance editorial projects that I'm doing, so I'm not entirely without deadlines, but the daily burden isn't there, more of my time belongs to me than used to. So, that's taking a bit of adjustment. Again, I will continue to do freelance editorial work. I can't see myself ever entirely retiring from the printing industry. I mean, it just interests me too much, but I certainly will carve out time for personal interests.

Attracting Youth to Printing

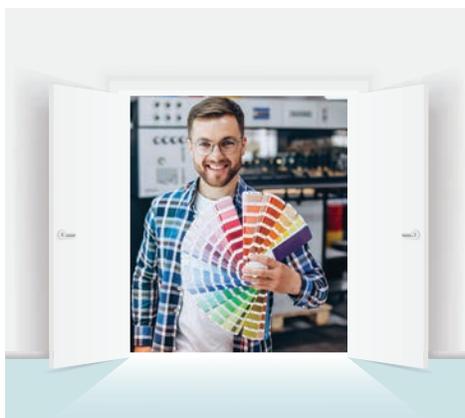
Kim Tuzzo: Any ideas on how printing companies can attract people to the industry in general, especially younger kids coming out of high school.

Patrick Henry: Well, as you both know, this is a question that has been asked since day one. It was one of the earliest assignments I had for *Printing News*, but there's never been an entirely satisfactory answer. One of the last assignments I did for *Printing Impressions*, prior to retirement was to write a series of profiles about young people we called "Rising Stars." They were in their twenties and thirties, but had well established careers in the printing industry.

One of the people I interviewed, he was doing quite well, but he said he had to find his own way into the industry. He was never the target of any outreach, nobody ever came to him. To his credit, he sought out his own opportunity. But, I think that encapsulates the problem. Talented young people need to be hearing directly from the printing industry, and that of course is the age old question, "How do you do it?" The way that has always seemed to work best as far as I've been able to tell is, just open plant doors and bring them in.

Plant Tours Work!

When I was teaching at NYU and at City Tech, I was able to arrange a number of visits for my student groups to local printers. Printers can be very generous with their time. Not easy for a printer to carve out a half an hour or an hour out of a production schedule to lead a bunch



of young students and their professor around, but they did that, and you could see lights go on. They always went on for me, whenever I've had the opportunity to visit a printing plant and watch the printing being manufactured.

You can do that, if you have kids of your own who are in high school, or maybe first couple of years of college, they know other people. They may be taking classes in related subjects, just bring a few people in, let them get a first look. If you can forge any sort of relationships with guidance counselors, with people advising students on recruitment, just say, "Look, we'd like to open the doors, let people come in, see the possibilities for themselves." Again, once those lights come on ... Now, that's not going to guarantee an avalanche of eligible employees, but career paths will start to form. And if they form within the confines of your plant, you have a good chance of recruiting those people. I hope that answer make sense.

Tim Freeman: Yeah, definitely. One or two people offering a tour aren't going to make much difference, but if 100, 200, 1,000 or 2,000 companies do it, it might create a flow.

Patrick Henry: And, they don't necessarily need to be large groups, but if you can handle 10 to 12 people, bring them in. I remember we did this at Seybert Nicholas, they were on the west side of Manhattan. We had maybe 10 or 15 people, went into the conference room, they provided coffee and donuts. The students heard a brief overview of the company, what they do, kinds of printing they produce. And we did a plant tour, from start to finish, from prepress through to the press departments to finishing and shipping. I don't think it took an hour to do in its entirety, but students loved it. They said "Finally, I get it."

But, until you get into a printing plant, until you can see it, until you can feel, and until you can smell it, frankly, it just doesn't become real. But, that's the teachable moment. The teachable moment occurs inside the plant.

Tim Freeman: That's a great experience for kids. Learning is such a visual thing, if you bring people in, there's a lot to look at, it's not uninteresting.

Patrick Henry: No, it isn't. Again, it's complex machinery. And again, you can see, if you spend a little bit of time in the prep department, you can see people making pages on the screen, and then you get an idea of how that data you're seeing on the screen turns into a plate. You may be able to see a plate being mounted on a press, that press starts up, you see the sheets coming out at the delivery and they're taken into a bindery. You may see the guillotine cutter, there may be a saddle stitcher. Again, it's going to vary from plant to plant, but they will get a sense of the process, that's impossible to get in any other way.

When I was first trying to build up my understanding of all of this, I mean, I read the *Pocket Pal* from start to finish, other textbooks, and they're very, very helpful, but that's abstract. Now, abstract knowledge is important, but the practical exposure is really what makes the difference.

Future of Trade Shows

Tim Freeman: Sure. On another subject, one of the trends that we've seen over the past 10 years is, these big national manufacturers and vendors developing their own training facilities, HP down in Georgia, Canon down in Florida.

It's really impacted the trade shows. We're wondering what your thoughts are about the future of the big national trade shows, as opposed to companies doing things on their own.

Patrick Henry: Well, I think that they can and should be complementary. The vendors create their training centers, and I've seen some of them and they're wonderful. I mean, just wonderfully equipped and staffed with expert people. These facilities are created mainly for customers and prospective customers. Trade shows, national trade shows are for everyone. You can have a big tent and you can have a small tent. I think it's important for vendors to educate their own customers. But, I think it's important for printers and for vendors as well, just to come together in some sort of a national context to see what it all looks like in one place. And, goodness knows, that has been difficult, if not impossible to do over the last couple of years. It's starting to come back, and there may be obstacles to overcome, but I don't think the industry can do without some sort of a national coming together. That's a lot more easily talked about than done, but I think if the industry needs it, the industry is going to find a way to do it.

Tim Freeman: That's a good point.

Patrick Henry: And, an important one. Again, going back as far as we do, to me, it's literally impossible to imagine the industry without a national trade show. I mean, I've just gone to so many of them, as we all have, I just can't see things working without them. But, like everything else, it may take a different form than what we're used to. It may run a different course, but we'll have to see.

Final Thoughts

Tim Freeman: Anything else you'd like to add?

Patrick Henry: Tim, really not much, except, I probably can't express how fortunate I consider myself to have been able to do the things that I've done. I mean, I had no fixed career path coming out of college. I had a broken period of college enrollment, went to school for three years and frankly, didn't do all that well. I won't say I was flunking out, but I was just not distinguishing myself academically, so I left and I did some time in the military, and that probably grew me up a little bit. Came out and finished an undergraduate degree, but still no fixed career path, with the exception of that knowledge that I would earn my daily bread as a writer. Somehow, a few things opened up, one thing led to another, and I think I'm pretty pleased. I hope I don't sound smug saying this, I don't mean to.

Tim Freeman: Oh, not at all.

Patrick Henry: I'm pleased with the direction it all took. But, I want to emphasize, it would not have been possible without the generosity and support of everyone I've encountered in the printing industry. Printers are the salt of the earth. I've never met a stuffed shirt. I've never met anyone I just couldn't inherently and instinctively trust, and that's been a privilege. I probably can close on that note.

Tim Freeman: Very good. Thank you for everything you've done for us through the years, too. Hope to see you around, in print and at events!

* See PIA Special Edition with Pat's article on the 20th Anniversary of 9/11

For a copy of the 9/11 Special Edition contact Kim Tuzzo at (716) 691-3211 or ktuzzo@PIAlliance.org



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GEN-Z EMPLOYEE RETENTION

HOW TO WIN A GOLD MEDAL FOR COMPANY CULTURE

By Deborah Corn, Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse, Print Media Centr

If you watched any of the "2020" Olympics you may have drawn the same conclusion that I did... the world has really changed. I am not referring to adjusting for Covid, I am speaking about humans – more specifically humans in their mid 20's and younger ... Gen-Z.

For 17 days the Gen-Z athletes showed us raw emotion, spoke up regarding social activism and mental health, and their feelings along with their athletic ability were on full display. It was also fascinating to watch these athletes of any given sport supporting each other as a community. They weren't there as competitors at the Olympics, someone would win today, someone would win tomorrow. They were all just happy to be there with their friends and be part of the experience.

As a Gen-Xer, I watched the games in horror. WHERE was the killer's instinct? WHY wasn't winning everything – at the Olympics no less? Two athletes agreed to SHARE a gold medal instead of fight to the death??? WHAT WAS GOING ON??

I did a few breathing exercises and came to the realization that the Olympics were providing a master class in Gen-Z whispering. My time on the couch inspired these thoughts to share about teamwork and compassion. Company Culture is a top priority for this group, and we NEED them to work with us and ensure there is a literal future for print.

Building the Team

Everyone has a part to play in the success of a team. Make sure all members understand how their part contributes to the whole, and especially to the win. Underappreciated employees won't be self-motivated to step up, but they may be motivated to step out and find another job.

Celebrating Along the Way

After almost every play, no matter if it resulted in a point, the volleyball players huddle up and hug and share "good job" pats as athletes often do. It's motivating. It says we are a unit and while we don't always win, we are in this together, and everyone in this huddle did their part to contribute to our performance. YAY! Consider a weekly employee shout-out and for bigger contributions a bigger reward. Whatever works for you.

Checking In

Mental health is not something most Gen-Xers grew up discussing. We were taught to suck it up and keep it moving. That is no longer workable. No matter what age, Covid has added stress, grief, and fear to our personal and professional lives. Check in with employees, co-workers, and friends and investigate your options for providing or referring help if needed. Gen-Z is not afraid to say they need help, but offering it and letting them know it's available if they need it makes them feel comfortable. That is key to Gen-Z employee retention.

Championing a Cause

The Gen-Z athletes took unprecedented public stands on Team uniforms this year. Bikini bottoms and revealing leotards with specific requirements for how they fit are mandated uniforms for women, while men have free choice within 'shorts and a T-shirt' to develop their uniforms. This was BIG NEWS. The objectification of female athletes was not going to be tolerated. Unfortunately, the Olympic Committee fined the women who covered

themselves up as a response. That did not deter the athletes from protesting by wearing unitards and speaking about the situation. Does your company take a stand on social issues? Support your community? Charities? Gen-Z wants to feel good about being part of a team that gives back to the world. They rally together through causes. Including the causes you support in job descriptions would be something to consider.

Running the Race

While watching some of the running, cycling, and rowing events there were times when I found it hard to figure out who was leading the race. With track and field, they stagger start. The indoor bike racers can lap the pack, and the rowers always appear to be going forward and backward at the same time.

What I took away from this was literal – stay in your lane. It doesn't matter what is happening next to you or in front of you or behind you. All the training is done, your team has provided support

along the way, now it's about execution and finishing strong – not winning.

I know. It's hard for me to swallow, too. Gen-Xer's are win-focused. But then I remembered for every quote about winning there is one about the importance of how you play the game. That is what counts now; it's the key to attracting Gen-Z and cultivating a company culture that is worthy of a gold medal.

Deborah Corn is the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse™ at Print Media Center, a PrintBuyerologist™, industry speaker and blogger, host of Podcasts from The Printerverse, the cultivator of Print Production Professionals, the #1 print group on LinkedIn, Girl #1 at GirlsWhoPrint, host of #PrintChat every Wednesday at 4 PM ET on Twitter, the founder of International Print Day and the founder of #ProjectPeacock.



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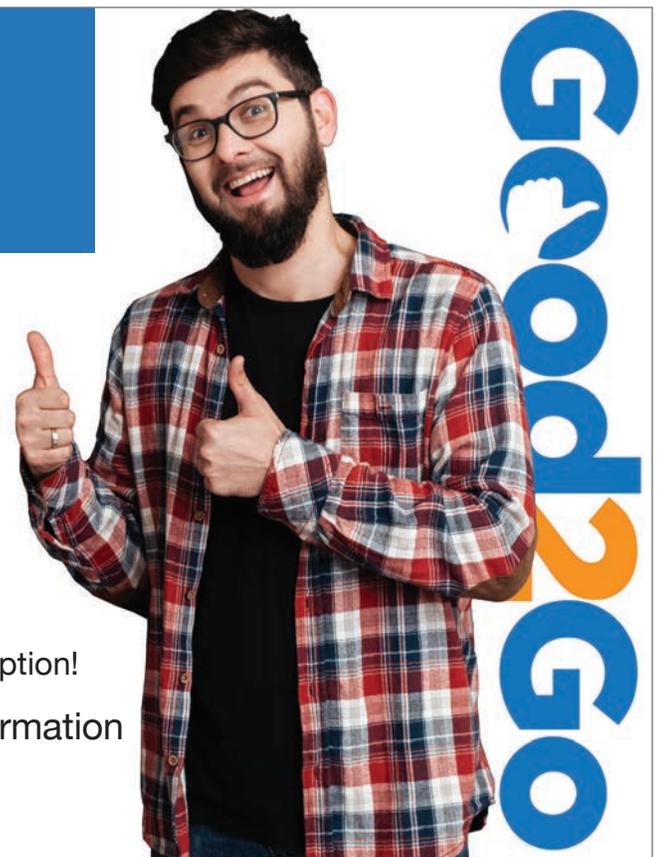
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PRIORITIZING WELL-BEING**6 BENEFITS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYEES**

Attracting and retaining employees is a constant struggle for organizations of any size, but it's particularly so for small businesses. With smaller teams, employers need to hold onto talent whenever possible. And that can be a challenge, especially when resources are scarce as they are currently amid the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

That's why it's critical for small employers to tailor their benefits offerings in a way that attracts and retains the most employees. One of the best ways to start this process is by surveying existing and potential employees. Employers can ask workers what types of benefits would interest them the most, then use that data to inform benefits decisions.

While each workforce will have unique needs and interests, there are some commonalities seen among small business employees. This article outlines six of the most popular benefits that small businesses are using to attract and retain employees.

1. Health Insurance

Health insurance is consistently one of the most desired benefits among small business employees. That may be because health care is so expensive and is unaffordable without employer-sponsored insurance. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, having good health coverage is more critical than ever. This provides employers with an opportunity. By offering generous health benefits, employers can compete for top talent. In fact, doubling down on health insurance might be a better option for some employers than adding other ancillary benefits that employees don't need or want.

2. Leave Benefits

The ability to take time away from work is an important consideration for employees. And, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, employees may have more caregiving responsibilities than they had before—making scheduling flexibility all the more important. Leave benefits will vary by workplace, but they typically include paid time off (PTO), vacation days and sick time. These types of leave usually come with specific use requirements. For employers looking to attract and retain employees, expanding these benefits could be a great leverage tool. This may include allowing faster PTO accrual, providing more sick days or allowing for flexible scheduling.

3. Performance Bonuses

Employees want to be recognized for their hard work. Failing to do so can lower morale and affect retention. Introducing performance bonuses as an employee benefit can be a way to combat this. Performance bonuses will vary, but the general idea is to compensate employees in some way for a job well done. How this looks in practice will depend on the employer. For instance, employees might receive incentives such as gift cards, cash, additional PTO or other perks, depending on their achievement. However, before implementing such bonuses, employers should ensure compliance with any applicable workplace laws regarding employee compensation.

4. Retirement Planning

Financial security is very important to employees, and that sentiment grows as employees near retirement age. It's also top of mind for those struggling financially thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees invest their time and energy into their work. As a tradeoff, many employees want their employers to invest in their retirements in return for years of service. Offering a 401(k) with contribution matching can be a

powerful attraction and retention tool, as it demonstrates an employer's investment in their workers in the long term.

5. Professional Development

Employees may leave a workplace simply because they want other opportunities or need more of a challenge, rather than being driven solely by compensation. Additionally, surveys suggest employees have been putting off job changes during the COVID-19 pandemic, meaning a wave of turnover may be coming soon. Employers may want to think proactively about ways to keep employees around.

In other words, when it comes to top performers, employers should be reluctant to let these employees go. That's where professional development comes in. Generally, this involves cross-training employees on other positions or otherwise preparing them to take on additional responsibilities. This helps provide the employee with more growth opportunities while still keeping them within the business. Offering such development opportunities also signals to prospective employees that a workplace has upward mobility and is willing to help

workers along with their career pathing goals—two factors that can weigh heavily in recruiting conversations.

... ignoring wellness initiatives may be interpreted as ignoring overall health—something employers obviously want to avoid.

6. Wellness Benefits

Wellness is a hot topic these days, and employees are looking more and more for employers who take wellness seriously. This can be especially true in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, where health consequences are interwoven with everyday decisions. In fact, through the lens of the pandemic, ignoring wellness initiatives may be interpreted as ignoring overall health—something employers obviously want to avoid.

Different workplaces will offer different wellness benefits, but the purpose of

any of them is generally to increase employees' overall well-being. For instance, benefits may include mental health counseling, health breakroom snacks, gym memberships, fitness trackers, yoga sessions or other perks. When it comes down to it, employees want to feel like their employers care about them as individuals. This means prioritizing well-being.

Conclusion

Knowing which employee benefits to offer as attraction and retention tools isn't always easy. One of the best places to start is by surveying current and prospective employees, as the offerings are meant for them. Beyond that, the perks listed in this article have been shown to be popular among employees—making them a viable option to try as well.

However, these benefits aren't an employers' only option to help attract and retain employees. Reach out to PIA insurance partner Gilroy, Kernan & Gilroy today to learn more about these perks and other potential incentives. Contact Sarah Armstrong, Strategic Risk Manager, at (315) 624-2964 or saraha@gkgrisk.com.

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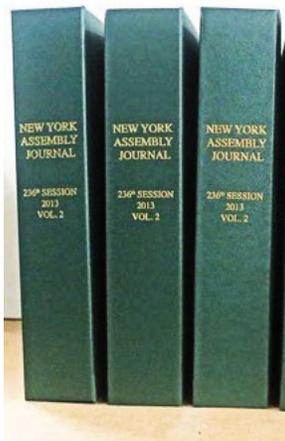
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PIA Board Member Ralph Salerno, Keller Bros. & Miller gets Steve Zenger's autograph on the *Printing Impressions* issue, at the Raymond A. Bubar Classic Golf Outing in July.

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By Kathi Rowzie, President,
Two Sides North America

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Continued on page 16

NEOGRAPHICS

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Two Sides includes members, large and small, from across the graphic communications and paper-based packaging value chain. We are an independent, non-profit organization funded solely by membership dues, which start at just \$250 annually.

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