

PIA LAUNCHES NEW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



It's no secret that the graphic communications industry is struggling to bring the next generation into the fold. In fact, if you look at the average printing company, the majority of employees are over 50 years old. What will happen as these people retire? It's a serious problem that PIA is taking very seriously.

To promote the excellent career options that our industry offers, we are excited to announce the launch of our new Workforce Development Committee. This Committee will be making a coordinated effort to get the word out that print is not only very much alive – it is an exciting, varied and increasingly technical field with many opportunities.

Chris Feryn of Premier Press is chairing this Committee, which includes representatives from PIA, printing companies, printing industry suppliers, Scottsdale Community College, and the Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation (PGSF).

Our big goal: Get the word out

"Our overriding goal," Chris shares, "is to get connected to high schools, skill centers, colleges and universities in all of the areas that PIA serves, in order to get the word out to students and their parents that our industry offers many interesting, viable career paths. Today 'graphic communications' means so much more than just printing fliers! We also print branded merchandise, signage, packaging, displays and so much more. We're using e-commerce sites to get orders, embracing digital workflows and using cutting-edge technology. It's an interesting and evolving field."



How we'll do it: Tactics

The Workforce Development Committee plans to take a multi-prong approach. Planned tactics include:

- **Give plant tours** – Get students, teachers and parents into our facilities to get an introduction to the type of work that we do and types of jobs we offer.
- **Exhibit at career fairs** – Show up at school career fairs, to ensure that our industry is on the radar of students, parents and educators.
- **Host career days** – For example, PIA has been heavily involved with the Career Day at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo for some time now. This could be expanded to other colleges as well.
- **Build connections** – This tactic encompasses everything from joining community college advisory boards to making it a point to speak with teachers and administrators while we're at career fairs to building a database of educators in all the areas we serve.
- **Host competitions** – This includes both design competitions for graphic arts students and skills competitions for students who are in printing

programs. "Plus," says Chris, "we are planning to bring the winners of some of these competitions to the annual Graphics Night in the Los Angeles area to network with industry executives and view the winning entries from the annual Print Excellence Awards competition. This can really open their eyes to the breadth of things we produce as an industry."

- **Raise money for scholarship programs** – This includes the scholarships supported by PIA's R.A.I.S.E. Foundation, the Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation and more. While many of these programs are focused on community college or university students, some also provide scholarships for workers who are making career changes.
- **Encourage internship programs** – These would typically be paid summer internships in which the student is given the opportunity to work in a variety of areas within the organization over the course of the internship.
- **Create a one-stop website** – The concept is to have a convenient resource where students, parents and educators can access information about tours, career fairs, contests, internships, scholarships, etc., all in one spot.
- **Regularly reach out to educators** – Once we create a database we plan to have an ongoing email campaign that will highlight upcoming events and opportunities, showcase cool print projects that PIA members have produced, and more.

The beauty of all of this is that many of these tactics provide opportunities for cross-promotion. For example, when we're at career fairs we can build relationships with teachers and administrators, set up plant tours and provide scholarship application information. When we get a graphic arts class in for a plant tour we can talk about all of the other career opportunities we offer as well, from project management to procurement to operating equipment.

How you can help

While the Workforce Development Committee will be spearheading the efforts, there are many ways you can help make this a success. You can:

- **Offer to host plant tours and/or attend career fairs.** Contact Cathy Skoglund at cathy@piasc.org to be added to our geography-based database of companies we can call when these opportunities arise.
- **Share any contacts you have** for educators in your area who teach graphic design or other relevant courses.
- **Donate to the scholarship funds**, such as during "paddle raises" and 50/50 raffles at PIA-sponsored events.
- **Include our youth and educators in everything you do!**

Plus, of course, if you have any additional ideas for how we can get the next generation excited about career opportunities in our industry, please let us know!

...IF YOU LOOK AT THE AVERAGE PRINTING COMPANY, THE MAJORITY OF EMPLOYEES ARE OVER 50 YEARS OLD. WHAT WILL HAPPEN AS THESE PEOPLE RETIRE?

GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

ON OUR RADAR

Proposed regulations and other issues that we're following:

- **Businesses sue state over SB 399** – The new law, which went into effect on January 1, 2025, prohibits businesses from requiring employees to attend meetings at which employers discuss their stance on "religious or political matters," including unionization. Businesses, led by the California Chamber of Commerce and the California Restaurant Association, argue that the law violates their First Amendment rights and conflicts with federal labor laws. Stay tuned!

Approved regulations and other issues that we've been following:

- **ACA reporting and administrative burden reduced** – The Affordable Care Act (ACA) reporting requirements are undergoing significant changes in 2025 that simplify the reporting process for employers and reduce administrative burdens. To learn more, see the article at bit.ly/ACA-improvements2025.

- **New required poster available** – California's Family Care & Medical Leave and Pregnancy Disability Leave poster has been updated. You can download the new poster at bit.ly/CFRA-leave-poster.

- **Proving FLSA overtime exemptions** – On January 15 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that to prove that an employee is exempt from the overtime and minimum wage provisions of the Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA), an employer only needs to provide a "preponderance" of evidence. The more stringent standard of "clear and convincing" evidence does not need to be met. For more information, see bit.ly/FLSAovertime-exemptions.

- **Relationship between FMLA and state leave programs** – The Department of Labor (DOL) has issued new guidance clarifying that leave taken under state paid family leave programs may run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. To learn more, see bit.ly/FMLA-state-leave.

MEMBER BENEFITS

PRINTACCESS

What's a great way to get found by buyers who are actively looking for a provider like you? Keep your listing on PrintAccess up to date! PrintAccess is the largest electronic directory of graphic communications companies in the U.S. With over 5,000 Google-friendly listings, this is the go-to source for buyers nationwide.

Your listing is included as part of your PIA membership, and can be updated at any time by logging in at www.PrintAccess.com (your email is the email on file at PIA, and the password is your PIA account number). If you need assistance, contact Brenda Ruiz at 323.728.9500 ext. 262.



BILL'S SHORT ATTENTION SPAN SALES TIPS: THAT TERRIFYING NETWORKING EVENT CONVERSATION



There you are, an adult standing with a coffee/beer/glass of wine but feeling like it's 8th grade and everyone has a date but you. You are at a networking event having flashbacks: The boys are on one side of the gym and the girls are on the other. You feel that awkwardness as you shift your weight from side to side.

After a while, you simply leave. Another blown opportunity to mingle, all because you couldn't overcome your fear and start a random conversation. After all, how many chances do you get to practice this kind of thing?

Actually....quite a few.

What got me thinking about this was a conversation I had in November. I was in New Orleans. From the hotel lobby, I stepped into the elevator, joining two other business travelers. Seeing my height and assuming I was a basketball player, one of the men asked, "Who'd you play for?"

And off we went on a chat that ended on the 19th floor when he got out.

There's a natural networker practicing his craft. He even said to me, "It's a question I ask every tall person I encounter. A conversation always ensues."

Think about that situation. What did he have to lose? Nothing. At worst, how long did he have to engage? Seconds. What did he learn? In this case, not everyone who is tall played basketball. Some of us were swimmers.

You are fifth in line at Starbucks. Talk to someone.

You are waiting for an Uber. Talk to someone.

You are shopping. Talk to someone.

My kids used to roll their eyes when we went anywhere because I was always talking up anyone around me. For me, it came naturally (plus, I loved horrifying my daughters).

You have multiple opportunities a day to develop this skill, and develop it you must if you want to get over your fear of talking to strangers.

Do it well and your sales and relationships will blossom. Screw it up and you'll only feel stupid for a few seconds.

Start talking.

Source: Bill Farquharson, *The Sales Vault*, <https://SalesVault.Pro>

NATIONAL NEWS

Trade shows offer excellent opportunities to connect with peers, forge or maintain business relationships, and get educated about the latest technologies and trends. Here are three upcoming events that you may want to put on your calendar:

UPCOMING TRADE SHOWS

PRINT UV 2025 CONFERENCE

March 10-12, 2025
Las Vegas, NV
www.PrintUV.com

The Print UV Conference is the premier all-in-one conference event for leaders in the global UV printing industry, and the only conference dedicated to UV and LED UV printing. If you're looking to accelerate your profits in this dynamic and fast-changing print market, you won't want to miss this learning and networking opportunity. Speakers, topics and panels will cover the gamut from business to technical topics.

TAGA NEXTGEN CONFERENCE

March 25-28, 2025
Boulder, CO
<https://taga.org/conference>

Hosted by the Technical Association of the Graphic Arts (TAGA), this conference provides a forum for sharing and disseminating theoretical, functional and practical information on current and emerging technologies for graphic arts print production and related processes. The sessions will contain a mixture of the latest research papers, with a special emphasis on sustainability, packaging, printed electronics, automation and best practices.

PRINTING UNITED EXPO

October 22-24, 2025
Orlando, FL
www.PrintingUnited.com

Billed as the "most dynamic and comprehensive printing event in the world," PRINTING United Expo is the only place where the entire print industry comes together under one roof. Each community within the industry is represented on the show floor through exhibits, education and demos, including Apparel Decoration; Commercial & Publishing; Functional/Industrial; Graphic Installers; Graphics/Wide-Format; In-Plant; Labels & Packaging; Mailing, Shipping & Fulfillment; and Promotional. Connect with others face-to-face, see new products and learn from industry experts.

CLASSIFIED

LOOKING FOR:
Wide Format Inkjet Printer 24" for educational High School Program. Donations can go through PIA's R.A.I.S.E. Foundation. Contact Kristy Villanueva, kristy@piasc.org.

LOOKING FOR:
Washout booth for educational High School program. The program has received a screen printer and is looking for a donation, which can go through PIA's R.A.I.S.E. Foundation. Contact Kristy Villanueva, kristy@piasc.org.

LOOKING FOR:
Halm Super Jet 2 or 4 Colors Envelope Press.
Please Contact Bill Rivera at brivera@thedotcorp.com or (949) 422-8330.

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EVENTS CALENDAR

For full list of events, please visit www.piasc.org/events

PRINT UV 2025 CONFERENCE
Monday, March 10, 2025 –
Wednesday March 12, 2025
Las Vegas, NV
www.PrintUV.com

TAGA: NEXTGEN CONFERENCE
Tuesday, March 25, 2025 –
Friday, March 28, 2025
Boulder, CO
<https://taga.org/conference>

SAVE THE DATE GRAPHICS NIGHT
May 29, 2025
Disney's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa
Anaheim, CA

SAVE THE DATE PRINTING UNITED EXPO
October 22 – 24, 2025
Orlando, FL
www.PrintingUnited.com

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SPOTLIGHT EVENT

WEBINAR: NAVIGATING AI-DRIVEN CYBER THREATS

Wednesday, March 11, 2025
11:00AM – 12:00PM PDT
bit.ly/NavigateAIThreats

When it comes to protecting your business from cyber threats, you need to be aware that regulations, risks and best practices are all evolving. This webinar covers what you need to know about how cybercriminals are using AI, the new AI-related security requirements that you need to meet, how AI can be used to strengthen your defenses, and more.