



JUNE 2011

TALK

CEO CORNER

Let's promote the use of PIFSA members

DURING PIFSA's centenary celebrations, emphasis is being placed on several 'building blocks' receiving the attention of PIFSA's national and regional executive/management committees.

One is highlighting, in the minds of buyers and consumers of printed matter, the benefit of using the services of PIFSA members in preference to companies which have refused to become members. Achieving this will need a dual approach.

Firstly, it's essential for PIFSA to emphasise the advantages of using its members who

- support ethical business practices and adhere to a Code of Practice. (The Code is a public document available on the PIFSA website. The Northern Chamber has already had copies printed, framed and delivered to members for display in their reception areas);
- adhere to practices that minimise adverse ecological impact in the production process, particularly relating to energy use, ecologically-friendly inks, minimal chemical use, and safe disposal of effluent;
- provide skills development opportunities, not only to existing employees but more especially to work seekers, to try to reduce the high rate of unemployment and the huge skills shortages from which the country suffers; and
- comply with all laws and regulations applicable to business in general and to the printing and packaging sector in particular.

The second step is to identify PIFSA members wherever possible. Action has been taken within the Central (including Free State) and Northern Chambers to provide members with decals for display on delivery vehicles, identifying them as PIFSA members. These steps are soon to be replicated within the Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape & Border Chambers.

In addition, a soon-to-be-released publication, for national distribution to all print buyers in Southern Africa as a directory of printing and packaging manufacturers, will identify those that are PIFSA members by having the PIFSA logo prominently displayed in their advertising.

It's a sad fact that many companies deliberately refuse to join PIFSA as they don't want to be bound by the constraints, listed as advantages above, which they see as cost factors. Instead, they make additional profits by not embracing these responsibilities, knowing full well that they raise competitors' cost thresholds.

It's time for ethical and responsible PIFSA members to stand together to take advantage of their proud 100-year history.



Patrick Lacy, CEO

Around the Block

IN its ongoing quest to serve the interests of members, PIFSA KZN Chamber offers:

- Advice concerning restructuring of companies, the sale of businesses, labour relations in general, interpretation of the various Acts related to employment, as well as employee performance and disciplinary matters.
- The facilitation of Statutory Training requirements related to Safety, First Aid and Fire Fighting.
- Generic training programmes.
- Technical training including Trade Theory Training for apprentices (TT Blocks), as well as in-house technical training such as Flexographic Machine Minding and Guillotine Operation.

KZN students rewarded



▲ The KZN Chamber recently held an awards ceremony for students who successfully completed the Estimating for Printing 2010 programme. This demanding course runs from February to November each year, with students attending lectures one evening/week. Successful students celebrate with lecturer Alan Hay (far right).

KZN to hold centenary celebrations

PIFSA KZN Chamber is celebrating the Federation's centenary on September 8.

The party takes the form of a gala dinner, with a comedy act adding spice to the evening.

Members will be contacted shortly with full details.

LABOUR LAW

Spotlight on labour law – the polygraph test

OFTEN referred to as a lie detector test, the polygraph is used to verify whether a person is telling the truth.

There's no specific legislation governing a polygraph, but it's against the South African constitution to force a person to undergo this type of test so it must be undertaken voluntarily. Additionally, a suitably qualified polygraphist should ensure that the line of questioning is legally permissible.

Typically a polygraph is used to investigate a specific incident where an employee is suspected of being involved. It's also used to combat dishonesty among employees who are in positions of trust, for instance when a business involves secure operations, such as security printing.

Polygraph results must be maintained by duly authorised individuals, and are usually presented as supporting evidence related to a particular incident. When results are presented at a disciplinary hearing, or at the CCMA, evidence should be presented by a qualified polygraphist, regarded as an expert witness.

However, the results of a polygraph test cannot be used to prove that an employee is guilty of any particular charge.

[Source: CCMA]

BORDER CHAMBER NEWS

New Border president

AT the Border Chamber's recent AGM, held at the DAILY DISPATCH offices in East London – attended by PIFSA CEO, Patrick Lacy, and director of the KZN Chamber, Geoff Warren – Chris van Heerden of the DAILY DISPATCH was elected and sworn in as the new Border Chamber president.

Outgoing president Karuna Harry of Harry's Printers was thanked for her efforts in heading up the Chamber's affairs over the past year.

Services are provided to the Border Chamber by secretary, Sharonne Dewing, and KZN director, Geoff Warren.

In the past year a wide range of training has been offered to members, and further training programmes will be available to members during 2011.

Members requiring assistance are encouraged to contact Sharonne Dewing on 043 7022123 or Geoff Warren on 083 6267768.



Lessons to learn – past and future

EXPERTS worldwide are predicting a diverse future for the many printing disciplines. Some make calculated guesses based on research and industry feedback, but their varied findings make it difficult to predict the fortunes of this evolving industry, of which we are a part.

Because South Africa's consumer base is much smaller than, for instance, Europe or the US, we may not follow the same market trends. We're aware that digital printing is widely accepted as an integral part of a printer's portfolio because of its ease of operation, speed, cost benefits, short runs, quality, and more, but there's still a great divide versus long-run operating costs. Almost every printing press manufacturer offers a digital press of one kind or another; be it on-press digital imaging, waterless offset, inkjet or laser printing, etc. Traditional presses, with or without digital automation added, are still in high demand. Letterpress is still being used in a number of forms and lithographic printing is far from dying.

Traditional lithographically produced folding carton packaging has suffered great losses to the flexographic printing sector (specifically flexible packaging), although many products are still packed in cartons which remain more stackable, safe and transportable than their flexible counterparts. Shelf appeal sells a product, and that's why good colour rendition has become vitally important. The quality and speed of flexographic printing has advanced greatly over the last two decades and it's often difficult for print experts to tell the difference between some high-resolution flexo and litho printing.

The screen printing sector has also lost ground against digital printing. Many products that were traditionally screen printed can now be produced digitally so many print businesses have embraced this technology. Outdoor medium- and large-format advertising is now created exclusively on digital inkjet and

laser printing units. Even some newspapers have experienced a move to digital printing, although larger newspaper printers still rely mainly on web offset presses.

Many IT innovations are emerging as a result of the e-book evolution and many students now have an 'office' in their pockets. However, paper is still the preferred medium for studying and referencing.

For cost efficiency, high-volume packaged products are being imported. This has caused several folding carton and corrugated carton converters to diversify and become more innovative. Demand for brand authenticity, product security and fraud protection have necessitated improved security and tracking features that can be incorporated in most old and new printing processes. These include overt and covert features in paper, inks, foils and finishing.



So what have we learnt from all of this?

Change shapes the future and we must have open minds at all times and stay abreast of technological developments. We need to learn from these changes and cease doing things the way our predecessors did. We have to take notice of younger generations, their trends, tendencies and their brilliant understanding and ability to embrace things that didn't previously exist. This may be the opinion of an industry veteran, but the need to remain economically viable and profitable hasn't changed; in fact it has increased tenfold; and so has the cost thereof.

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