



Greetings

All the year-end celebrations are over - it's heads down and on with the work

There is certainly a feeling of optimism within the industry with many companies doing all they can to diversify and add to their bottom line. Change is certainly a challenge but print businesses have to adapt in order to take advantage of any opportunities available. The BAPC can certainly assist and all you need to do is make contact.

During February the BAPC will be announcing the award winners namely:-

- Business of the year
- Environmental printer of the year
- Supplier of the year

It will be obvious all these successful companies are doing something different and out of the ordinary. Keep your eyes open for the announcement. The BAPC is indebted to the sponsors of the awards, namely Ricoh and Two Sides

Hopefully you will enjoy this issue of the Bulletin and should you have any comments simply make contact - this is your publication!.

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Message from Mike



Keep in touch

I don't know about anyone else but since the return to work in January, following the Christmas break, I have experienced an upturn in business. It may just be that my business has been lucky but I doubt that was the reason. I believe that it is as a result of my efforts during the last few months of 2017.

During that period, I made a concerted effort to keep in touch with customers and when meeting with them I tried to demonstrate ways in which we could help their business and improve their relationship with their customers. I am delighted that my efforts appear to be paying off and am determined to maintain close contact with those who support my business.

Part of my strategy was to avoid simply asking to quote on work in hand, or to suggest that we might be able to handle on a more economic basis work that they were placing with other printers. I concentrated on discussing with them their plans for the future and discussed with them how, through print, we have helped other companies attract more business.

Funnily enough the business I received was not connected with their aspirations but was in fact print they were placing elsewhere. I believe that the reason behind this was that I demonstrated to them that we were genuinely trying to help them and they seem to like our caring attitude. It just proves that there is more than one way to "skin a cat."

My experience has convinced me to ensure that we keep in close touch with customers and spend as much time as we can talking about their business and not just chasing quotes.

Mike

Mike Moradian is CEO Print Express, London & Deputy Chair, BAPC

Business News

Proposals to extend pensions auto-enrolment to younger workers

The government has announced proposals to extend pensions auto enrolment to include younger workers and to amend the way in which contributions are calculated.

According to the press release: under auto enrolment, employers are required to automatically enrol all eligible workers (generally employees) into a workplace pension scheme and pay a minimum contribution into their pension. Employees do, however, have the right to opt out of auto enrolment.

Currently workers who are aged between 22 and the State Pension Age with earnings of £10,000 per annum are eligible to be auto enrolled. Younger employees and those who do not meet the minimum income requirement can opt to make pension contributions.

The government plan to reduce the lower age limit to 18 by the mid 2020's, in order to encourage younger workers to get into *'the habit of saving'*.

David Gaulke, Work and Pensions Secretary said:

'We are committed to enabling more people to save while they are working, so that they can enjoy greater financial security when they retire. We know the world of work is changing, so it is only right that pension saving does too. This ambitious package will see more people than ever before helped onto the path towards building a secure retirement.'

Mike Cherry, National Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), stated:

'Requiring employers to contribute from the first pound of earnings will mean that, by 2019, hundreds of thousands of small employers will have to pay up to £180 more per employee each year. For employers in certain sectors, such as care and hospitality where margins are tight, this will really add up.'

Debit and credit card payments

New rules from Europe affects those who pay by credit and debit cards. Suppliers are no longer allowed to impose a surcharge for payments by these methods.

Payment of tax

A further alteration is in respect of taxes. HMRC has stopped accepting payments by credit or debit cards for tax bills. Payments should be made via direct debit, or BACS, or CHAPS. It is not now possible to pay by cheque.

Words from Alec Sharples



How easy can we make it ...?

Just recently I was running a little exercise to see how we could solve a knotty little problem which I was trying to unpick. And when I say easy, I mean super easy.

So, with that thought in mind I thought I'd start posing some questions to my wiser other-half. They weren't difficult, just short and to the point. I wasn't anticipating a very enthusiastic response and my expectations were, shall we say, met.

What had gone wrong, I asked myself? Had I not articulated my question correctly or what? Well, if that approach hadn't worked then another tack was surely required.

So rather than ask the question head-on, as in "*what should we do differently?*" I decided to look outside our industry for inspiration. And the new question was "*What could Amazon do differently ...?*"

The difference was amazing. Because now I got a whole host of great answers which, with a little lateral thinking could be applied to our own situation.

In doing so, this little exercise reinforced, yet again, how important it is to change our viewpoint whenever we are trying to challenge entrenched thinking. Even if you don't realise that's what it is at the time.

If we keep asking ourselves the same old questions it would be daft to expect to be coming up with new answers. Because most of the time it just won't happen.

So, next time you feel like you're bashing your head against a brick wall it's time well spent look outside your industry for some answers.

On that thought ...

Have fun and till next time.

Alec

Alec Sharples is CEO of Fineline Printing

A Brand-New Identity for Antalis' Ever-Expanding Academy



Having grown at an unprecedented rate since its 2012 inception, Antalis has introduced a brand-new identity for its popular Academy training facility – transitioning from the 'Digital Academy' to the 'Antalis Academy' – in order to more accurately reflect the expanding breadth of education on offer.

Now in its sixth year, the Academy was originally conceived to provide an internal resource for employees seeking to upskill in digital media. Due to popular demand, the facility was subsequently opened up to customers, quickly becoming a Centre of Excellence for digital print advice and training through the provision of best practice, practical workshops and access to industry experts.

Fast forward 30 courses and over 1,000 attendees later, and the Academy has now expanded far beyond just digital media to include a host of new workshops that cover business skills such as social media training and sales techniques in response to customer demand. The result is the ultimate training resource for any print business; and, in turn, the rationale behind a brand-new name.

Giles Bristow, digital support manager at the Antalis Academy, comments: *“Since the very beginning, the Academy, being the first training resource of its kind in our sector, has attracted a huge following as more and more customers have sought to upskill and expand their offering into new areas in digital print and associated applications. In recent months, however, we have seen a shift in demand from those looking to diversify their skill-set even further and are therefore now providing workshops that offer wider business skills.*

“As such, we have decided to rebrand our training facility to the ‘Antalis Academy’ in order to more adequately reflect our broadening offer. For us, it’s an incredibly exciting time to be in the industry, with an abundance of opportunities which go beyond just digital media to include cross-selling, diversification and specialist applications – and the Antalis Academy is a vehicle to help printers, sign-makers, agencies and brands alike to take advantage of this.”

The rebrand came into effect on 15th January 2018 and will be reflected in all marketing and promotional collateral going forward, as well as the newly rebranded Antalis Academy webpages on the business' Digital2Business website and the main Antalis website.

To coincide with the move, the Antalis Academy is seeking to widen its reach through a series of informative, expert webinars, the first of which is due to take place early March covering key business skills.

Hot on the success of last year, the Academy team will also be running a series of breakfast seminars throughout 2018, designed to offer brands, agencies, printers, sign-

makers and trade organisations the opportunity to learn and, importantly, be part of topical discussion. The first of these, which will take place on Wednesday 24th January (2018), will feature high profile speakers, Steve Lister from Konica Minolta Marketing and Martyn Eustace from the Two Sides organisation, who will focus on different aspects of sustainability.

While the brand identity may be new, Antalis will, of course, continue in its commitment to providing customers with first-class training, choosing from over 30 different courses – all led by independent experts. More so, as the Antalis Academy continues to evolve and expand, customers can look forward to numerous new developments to come over the next year.

Giles concludes: *“We’re incredibly excited about this next chapter for the Antalis Academy and look forward to continuing to make a positive and progressive impact in helping customers to hone, expand and diversify their business in the years to come.”*

To find out about this year’s programme of workshops visit or for further information please visit www.digital2business.co.uk/antalis-academy.

Tips from Nigel Toplis



Referrals –

a key component of your marketing mix

Many have heard me say on more than one occasion that there are only THREE ways to get in front of a prospect/customer – networking, making an appointment and **asking for referrals**.

Let's be honest about it – **WE ARE JUST NOT VERY GOOD AT ASKING!**

I remember a print business owner saying to me that she would not ask her contact for another contact because she didn't want to upset him. Amazing!!

Word of mouth is the most powerful form of marketing. In a highly competitive marketplace, people trust the opinions of friends, family and associates first – think of the number of times you have purchased something on the recommendation of someone else.

The ultimate aim of word of mouth marketing is to turn your customers into advocates, so they become part of your sales force - but this can take a lot of time and energy to achieve.

In the meantime, there is plenty you can do to generate referrals, the most important activity is to pro-actively network and **ASK!**

Who to ask:

- Existing customers
- Suppliers
- Friends and family
- Colleagues
- Contacts and associates

When asking for referrals it is important that you make it as easy as possible for people to give you a contact name, so be specific. Keep it simple be simple and direct and don't

ask your contact to work too hard. “Do you know George in HR? Could you introduce me on the way out?” is much more likely to get a positive response.

There are two main routes you can take when asking for a referral:

Internal – seeking contacts from within an organisation you already have contact with. This could be gaining the name of a colleague or information of a department that also has a requirement for your product or service.

External – gaining referrals outside of an organisation. The majority of people you know will have business contact within their own industry and most likely outside of it too – they can be yours just for the asking.

Preparation and planning are key to successfully gaining referrals. Study the network of contacts you have and map internally and externally the prospective contacts each individual may have. Like networking, make sure you have a purpose and **set targets** for obtaining a specific number of referrals each month.

Once you have gained a referral make sure you respond swiftly with direct contact in the form of an email or telephone call. All referrals should also be incorporated into your direct marketing activities and receive regular contact to build awareness of you and your brand.

Finally, say ‘thank you’!

Nigel

Nigel Toplis is CEO of The Bardon Group

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Paper Industry Welcomes New Apprentices

Under the Government's review of future apprenticeships programmes, and following the development of a new Apprenticeship standard in Papermaking, Essity Trafford Park Mill in Manchester opened its doors to the first intake of new apprentices representing eight paper mills from across the UK.

With an industry steeped in history and tradition, but with an ageing workforce, this next generation of 'budding' Papermakers will embark on a three-year programme which will test their technical knowledge and practical and academic skills to the limit. The industry is constantly evolving and young, talented people are an essential part in its future success. The Papermaking Apprenticeship Programme, developed by industry experts in partnership with Unite the Union and support from The Printing Charity, is aimed at helping young people learn a unique skill, in a progressive manufacturing industry.

Jim Lang, UK Operations Director, Consumer Goods, at Essity said: *"I started out as an apprentice here in the 1990s, so I can speak from personal experience that apprenticeships are a fantastic opportunity from which to develop a career. It's great to see a papermaking apprenticeship on offer under the new apprenticeship standards, as this can only help raise the quality of skills within the industry."* *"We are pleased to be able to host one of the block training events at our Trafford Park Mill. When visiting different companies or sites within the industry, as the papermakers are doing as part of their course, I always learn something or see something I didn't expect, so hopefully the apprentices learning can benefit further with this approach"* During the course of the programme, each apprentice will attend three weeks per year of in-depth technical training, delivered by Dr Steve Mann and will cover the science of papermaking, fibres, water and chemical additives, and wet and dry end processes. Classroom training is supported by practical on the job experience on a daily basis within a paper mill environment.

Speaking about their new chosen career, Alex, one of three apprentices at Weidmann Paper Mill, Otley said: *"I am really enjoying the apprenticeship experience, learning different aspects of the job and working with everyone."*

Janet Marshall, Chairperson for the Paper Industry Trailblazer committee, said: *"It's great to see that all of the hard work that has been put into developing this Apprenticeship programme finally coming to fruition, and these apprentices will be the springboard to encourage other young people to join this exciting industry."* In February the apprentices will continue their training at the historic Frogmore Paper Mill in Hemel Hempstead.

For further information contact Emma Punchard on 01793 889609 or email epunchard@paper.org.uk.



BAD DEBTS: Carillion and Jamie Oliver Italian Restaurants hit the print industry

The shock waves caused by the demise of the construction company Carillion are being felt across the country as tens of thousands of companies, sole traders, self-employed and sub-contractors have been left high and dry.

And the Jamie Oliver Italian Restaurants entering into administration has also left many unsecured creditors such as printers and sign-makers without payment. Some of affected include ABC Imaging UK, KD Media publishing, KK Balers, Harper Collins Publishers and Haymarket Media.

Ian Carrott of ICSM the print credit intelligence people says: *“If you have been caught out by Carillion’s liquidation the one thing you will want to do is to never allow it to happen again. To get advanced warning of potentially bad news about a client who is experiencing financial problems is gold dust. And that’s where ICSM come in. As a members’ organisation we flag up who is in trouble, who may be affected by a customer in trouble or who is about to hit the buffers.”*

He adds: *“A household name like Jamie Oliver can have a hypnotic effect on a supplier. It will tempt them to extend credit in the belief the client is too big to fail. However, this is not true as the Jamie Oliver situation and the collapse of Carillion show. The simple answer is to keep to the terms of your trading terms and conditions and not to allow extra credit as appears to have happened here.”*

LAZARUS DEBT COLLECTORS: They’re back and trying to rip you off

They are back: the Lazarus debt collectors who fleece unsuspecting clients who believe they will recoup bad debts. The conmen go through the Official Receiver’s lists of creditors owed money when a company goes bust and then approach a creditor to

promise they can recover all their money – for a fee. And some of those hit are printers and sign-makers with reports of their activities coming from members of the print credit outfit ICSM.

“It’s when you are most likely to make a mistake,” says ICSM’s Ian Carrott. “You’ve just been taken for a few thousand by a customer who has gone bust and you’d like to at least like to get a few hundred back but the time and costs make you stop. Then you get a call from a debt collecting firm who say they can recover all of your lost cash as they can legally go after the directors of the defunct firm. All you have to do is to pay them £500 up front and you’ll soon have most of your bad debt back. It sounds too good to be true. And of course it is.”

ICSM has already had calls from members saying they’ve been approached by phoney debt collectors. Carrott continues: *“The Lazarus Debt Collector (as I call them) may quote section 214 of the Insolvency Act, which deals with Wrongful Trading and which states that any director of a company that allows that company to continue trading whilst knowing that it is insolvent may be guilty of wrongful trading. Furthermore, that such a director could be held liable for the debts incurred by that company during the period of wrongful trading.*

“They may seek to convince you that no director can possibly be unaware of the state of their business prior to calling a Meeting of Creditors - or even to the appointment of a Receiver or Administrator - and therefore that they can be accused of wrongful trading and made personally to pay the debt due to you.

“Most likely they will have stumbled across your name on a creditors’ list of a failed company and will know that you have been hit. They will make an educated guess from the size of your business in relation to your loss how serious the situation is for you.”

The print industry is especially vulnerable at the moment as the internet has made rogue traders a haven of anonymity and many printers are being hit by bad debts. ICSM advises its members on how to prevent bad debts in the print industry for an annual fee that’s less than a tank of diesel.

Ian Carrott says: *“The simplest way is to ask them for a copy of the contract to pass to your solicitor for perusal prior to any signing. Another way to discourage them is to tell them that you do not believe in paying in advance for Debt Collection Services. Most reputable debt collection agencies work on a ‘No Collection - No Commission Fee’ basis and still manage to make a living!*

“Try asking them for third-party references - they will most likely invoke a confidentiality clause, which is bunkum! No creditor would object to giving a reference of efficiency to an enquirer - unless, of course, they had been stung! Don’t be afraid to show them the door - you are entitled to refuse their services - and without giving a reason.”

CREDIT INTELLIGENCE Members’ shared information gives an early warning of problem customers

One of the best ways to prevent bad debts is to know in advance which companies and individuals have a bad record in settling accounts. ICSM keep members up to date with heads ups on new culprits who spin out payment over months, and firms which are known to be privately in financial trouble.

Ian Carrott of ICSM says: *“For the cost of less than a week’s shopping micro firms can get 12 months of information on who to avoid and free advice on credit management to ensure they remain solvent. If you get caught chasing up a late payer that eventually turns into a bad debt you waste time, money and spend sleepless nights worrying about*

it. Our members vouch by the information they receive and say the annual fee is fantastic value for money as it saves many a bad debt."

ICSM also stress that firms known to pay late can range in size and reputation – from smaller start-ups to household names – if you are in the know you won't get caught.

For information on ICSM visit www.icsmcredit.com or call 0844 854 1850.

About ICSM

ICSM is a printing industry membership group who share information about companies that are in trouble. It allows members to avoid potentially bad business through advanced intelligence gathered by its own members. Unlike some credit reference agencies and banks the information is up to date and is not generated by computers but through word of mouth.

Looking forward...

Date(s) - 28th February - 1st March 2018

Event - **Packaging Innovations**

Venue - NEC, Birmingham

Details - <http://www.easyfairs.com/packaging-innovations-birmingham-2018/packaging-innovations-birmingham-2018/>

Date(s) - 7th - 8th March 2018

Event - **PrintWeek Live**

Venue - Ericsson Exhibition Hall, Wasps Arena, Coventry

Details - www.printweeklive.com

Date(s) - 24th - 26th April 2018

Event - **Sign & Digital Exhibition**

Venue - NEC Birmingham

Details - www.signuk.com

Date - 21st June 2018

Event - **Print Design & Marketing Awards**

Venue - Silver Srturgeon, River Thames

Details - www.paperandprint.com

Date(s) - 18th - 20th September 2018

Event - **The Print Show**

Venue - NEC, Birmingham

Details - www.theprintshow.co.uk

Date - 15th November 2018

Event - **Digital Printer Awards**

Venue - Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square London W1

Details - www.paperandprint.com

Finally... Hopefully, you found the content of this Bulletin useful, if you have an item you would like included in a future issue simply e-mail it to info@bapc.co.uk

Finally, finally... A further reminder that next issue of this newsletter will contain details of the winners of the BAPC awards

And finally, finally.... Two giants in our industry announce a merger. Xerox will now become within an enlarged Fuji Xerox organisation. Fujifilm will hold a majority stake in the new enterprise. No doubt more will be revealed in the coming weeks.