

1 of 1 DOCUMENT

Graphic Arts MONTHLY

Graphic Arts Monthly

December 1, 2006

Digital Smart Factory: How Smart?

BYLINE: By Kevin Cooper.

Kevin Cooper, who teaches graphic arts at his alma mater, Cal Poly, had an 18-year manufacturing management career with RR Donnelley and Microsoft.

SECTION: COLUMNS; BestTrack; Pg. 16

LENGTH: 561 words

Print is moving quickly from content reproduction to content managing and repurposing. Being adept at management and data manipulation-either customer content or information related to customer content-is a key competency that printers will need to develop and nurture to survive.

January 16-18 will see the 2007 Digital Smart Factory Forum in Orlando: a three-day event presented by the Research & Engineer Council of NAPL and devoted to understanding what the future holds for the industry, with a focus on workflow, CIM, CIP4 and JDF. The forum kicks off in Daytona Beach, FL, with a tour of Direct Mail Express, an integrated marketing company employing 550.

Each day includes a keynote presentation, the first by Barb Pellow, formerly of Kodak and now managing partner of Pellow and Partners. She will discuss the smart factory's bridge from traditional to digital, and what one can learn from the other.

In a similar vein, the next day's keynote offers information on how traditional printers can utilize the smart factory when switching to digital print.

The final keynote will feature Joe Novak, director of technology at Williamson Printing, Dallas, a winner of last year's CIPPI Award, who will speak on technology tools used in end-to-end JDF workflow.

Also, Zarik Megerdichian, president of 4 Over, Inc., Glendale, CA, will give a day-one, presentation sharing how his firm benefited from focusing on specialized manufacturing expertise, such as leveraging the Internet, workflow technologies and pressroom equipment.

The forum's other speakers include: Chuck Gehman, conference co-chair and director product marketing, EFI; Mark Bohman, PhD, VP research and technology, PIA/GATF; and Tim Daisy, conference co-chair and regional manager of business workflow products, Kodak. Many speakers will be accompanied by panelists and moderators representing the print industry.

Defining the future

Movement into ancillary services (fulfillment, distribution, subscription models and other evolving business offerings) requires competency in data management-including the system methodology to move data from, and between, production equipment seamlessly, as well as moving production data into management information systems, allowing better decisions around improving the business.

Many companies are touting their efforts at building the Digital Smart Factory. I've had the opportunity to see a couple of these personally, and they clearly are smarter factories than traditional printers.

But many also are works in process, with steps still needing development. It takes time to achieve the reality of an integrated digital workflow with full, two-way communication between production equipment and the overall MIS system.

For those who want the future defined, the printers taking the Digital Smart Factory approach are doing it for you. Those using technology to drive waste out of their processes are smart. (See related story on p.40.)

Print must lower its cost basis to stay competitive. Extra steps, extra time and extra costs must be identified and eliminated. Information must flow freely and quickly throughout organizations, allowing firms to react with speed and flexibility. This is the future of print leaders.

Kevin Cooper, who teaches graphic arts at his alma mater, Cal Poly, had an 18-year manufacturing management career with RR Donnelley and Microsoft.

LOAD-DATE: December 18, 2006

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine