

Aug. 6, 2013  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Harvey R. Levenson  
805-756-6151; [hlevenso@calpoly.edu](mailto:hlevenso@calpoly.edu)

### Cal Poly Partners with Exopack to Explore Packaging Innovation

SAN LUIS OBISPO — The Cal Poly Graphic Communication Institute (GrCI) hosted an executive forum on July 24, 2013, that brought together some of the world’s leading corporations to discuss issues and explore innovations in competitive packaging.

The forum, titled “Innovation in Marketing through Packaging Technology,” was sponsored by Exopack, a leading service provider in the flexible packaging industry. Participants at the event represented many of Exopack’s largest customers, key members of the Exopack executive team, and faculty from Cal Poly’s Graphic Communication and Industrial Technology departments.

Carl Joachim, Cal Poly GrCI associate and expert in digital printing, worked with Exopack to develop the forum, which was built around one over-arching theme: the intersection between brand marketing, packaging and emerging trends in graphic communication technology.

“In working with converters such as Exopack, it’s becoming increasingly clear there is a need to bring together key players in the value chain and to leverage emerging graphic communication technology in packaging’s role in the marketing mix,” Joachim said. “Our objective at Cal Poly was to bring in speakers with deep-rooted experience in packaging and academia to generate discussion and customer insights to help Exopack evolve its offerings.”

Cal Poly faculty presented research and forecasts for packaging innovation in three primary areas: print processes, including flexo, digital and 3-D; electronically enabled packaging with topics such as augmented reality and near-field communication; and a consumer’s point of view on the role of packaging in the marketing mix. The university’s packaging program faculty focused on marketing issues related to the design of package forms and graphics; the specifications of materials and machinery; the evaluation of package systems; and planning and coordinating packaging requirements.

Specific topics covered included micro-market segmentation leading to SKU (Stock Keeping Unit) proliferation; time to market; promotional packaging; brand and consumer interaction enabled by the rapid increase in smartphone adoption; and the role of the package in marketing. Also discussed were QR codes and other applications that enable the consumer to interact with packaging, including near-field communication, augmented reality, printed electronics, and digital printing.

GrCI director Harvey Levenson recognizes the role of packaging in commerce today and prospects for the future. “The need for creative and competitive packaging has grown because of new digital media, and this will continue in the future,” he said. “We have resources and programs to prepare people to enter this field and to provide training and development opportunities for professionals already engaged in packaging.”

The partnership between Cal Poly and Exopack proved to be beneficial for both parties. Jack Knott, president and chief executive officer of Exopack, said, “Cal Poly developed the perfect approach to help us educate our customers and create a highly engaging discussion. This was truly a creative learning event for all of us, and we’ll look for ways to expand the program in the future so that all Exopack customers can become part of this educational process.”

#### Links

- Graphic Communication Institute: [www.grci.calpoly.edu](http://www.grci.calpoly.edu)
- Graphic Communication Department: <http://www.grc.calpoly.edu/>
- Industrial Technologies Department: <http://www.cob.calpoly.edu/academic/industrial-technology/>
- College of Liberal Arts: <http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/>
- Exopack: <http://www.exopack.com/>

#### About the Graphic Communication Institute and Graphic Communication Department at Cal Poly

The Graphic Communication Institute at Cal Poly (GrCI) ([www.grci.calpoly.edu](http://www.grci.calpoly.edu)) provides services for industry, including research, testing, product evaluations, consulting, training, seminars, workshops, conferences and publishing. The GrCI is part of Cal Poly’s Graphic Communication Department ([www.grc.calpoly.edu](http://www.grc.calpoly.edu)), which offers one of the largest and best-known programs of its kind in the U.S. Nationally accredited, the department includes concentrations in graphic communication management, Web and digital media, design reproduction technology, graphics for packaging, and individualized study. The department is strongly supported by industry with grants, endowments, equipment, supplies and software. The GrCI uses the department’s more than 33,000 square feet of modern laboratories for its research, testing and training programs.  
Contact: Graphic Communication Department Chair Ken Macro, 805-756-1108

#### About the Cal Poly Industrial Technology Department Packaging Program

Cal Poly’s Packaging Program, part of the university’s Industrial Technology Department (<http://www.cob.calpoly.edu/academic/industrial-technology/>), prepares packaging professionals for positions ranging from highly technical research and development to purchasing, production, sales and management. The program builds skills in the design of package forms and graphics, the specifications of materials and machinery, the evaluation of package systems, as well as in planning and coordinating packaging requirements, packaging issues and their impact on the industry.

#### About Exopack

Managing 19 production facilities strategically positioned across North America, the United Kingdom, Lebanon and China, plus a global network of alliance partners, Exopack is an established leader in the development, manufacture, and sourcing of flexible packaging and coatings solutions for various consumer and industrial end-use markets. Exopack Holdings SARL manages 63 plants across North America, Europe, the Middle East and China and is the sixth largest flexible/rigid packaging company in the world. For more information, visit [www.exopack.com](http://www.exopack.com).

###

