

CEO Corner

The future of training

THE initial investigation into a possible training model for the packaging and printing industries has nearly been completed by McManus Consultancy and feedback has been given to various Chamber Executive Committees.

Although further input is necessary, the recommendation broadly is that PIFSA should act as a facilitation and accreditation or standards-setting body, and not necessarily a provider of training. In addition, a broad-based Training Steering Committee should be established to implement the new dispensation.

At the same time, MAPPP SETA is now proposing the establishment of an 'Assessment Agency or Body' which will be 'independent of MAPPP SETA, Training Providers and industry'. The objective of this Assessment Agency is apparently to provide phase four assessment for apprentices. Phases one, two and three will be the responsibility of training providers (a proposal which was made by both the Cross Media Training Centre and PIFSA previously). In addition, MAPPP SETA is establishing 'Advisory Committees' for its sub-sectors, including one for Packaging and one for Printing. These Advisory Committees do not have the powers that a SETA Chamber would have.

The two surveys recently undertaken within our industries have both confirmed the overwhelming majority view of our members that MAPPP SETA has so far failed to address or meet our industries' skills development needs in any way.

As members know, PIFSA has applied to move the printing and packaging industries under the auspices of MERSETA, which is an industrially-based SETA that administers a large number of apprenticeships. MERSETA has offered to establish a Chamber for our industries.

President Zuma's new administration has also notified the country of its decision to move SETAs away from the Department of Labour and into the Department of Higher Education under Minister Blade Nzimande. We are not certain at this point how (or even whether) this will affect the SETA re-establishment process.

Against this background, PIFSA continues to facilitate the provision of TT blocks to apprentices in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Cape Town. In Gauteng alone, 49 students are currently attending TT3, and students are already registering for the TT1 block which commences on 6 July.

We are keeping to our undertaking to maintain the current system until a new system is developed and agreed.



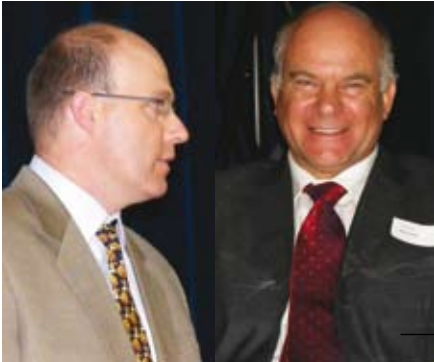
Chris Sykes, CEO



Central Chamber News

Good attendance at 94th AGM

THE Central Chamber's 94th Annual General Meeting took place in April at the Cross Media Training Centre, Honeydew, attended by 170 people, of whom 160 stayed on for the Chamber's annual dinner.



Mike Bath (left) and David Baker (right) were elected the Central Chamber's president and treasurer at the recent AGM.

As part of the AGM proceedings, the following were elected as this year's office bearers: Mike Bath, Goldfields Press (president); David Baker, Multiprint Litho (treasurer); Andre Smit, Beeld Nasionale Pers; John Latter, Britepak; Charles de Beer, Caxton; Wiseman Madinane, Gillmich; Don Lewis, Lithotech; Andrew Read, Lithotech (alternate); Stewart Butler, Masterpack; Deon Joubert, Merpak Envelopes; Kevin Mortimer, Mortimer Offset; Aaron Ntshangase, Nampak; and Neil de Greef, Screenline.

Certificates for the successful completion of the 2008 estimating course were awarded to Lennon Appalsamy, Sharlane van Vuuren, Mapula Tladi, Angeline Gutuza, Jan Mogotlane, Donovan Roscoe and Frederick Maritz.



The Beith Award – comprising a floating trophy and a R500 cash prize – went to Patricia Venter (pictured above), Cross Media's best 2008 Electronic Origination Student.

Dave Haldane, MD of Antalis SA, presented framed certificates to the following students

who had successfully completed the 2008 Antalis Management Development Programme conducted at the Gordon Institute of Business Science: Alex Lessing, Gustav Nel, Nelson Mondile, Justin Crole, Trynorce Mahlangu, Mike Aucamp, Masego Balopi, Aine Williamson, Lucy Neves, Terence Basson, Marc Casais, Matthew Allercott, Alex Rodger, Chris Daniels, Garth Harrup, Michael Erasmus, Tania Bester, Wayne Stevens, Omowumi Juliana Olukilede, Carolyn Shabangu, Mark Davis, Renè Digovitch, Babatola Joseph Olukilede and Chris Lever.

Registration for the 2009 course to be conducted on July 23, 24 and 25 is now open and Dave Haldane urged employers to use the opportunity of the economic slowdown to improve their skilled pool.

Rounding out the AGM proceedings, Alex Lessing (pictured right), top student on this course in 2008, with an overall score of 90%, shared her thoughts on how she had benefited from participation in the programme.

Following the AGM, a cocktail function was hosted by ABSA Bank who also sponsored wine and soft drinks during the dinner.



As a grand finale, the after-dinner speaker (sponsored by Antalis), was Dr Roelof Botha (pictured left), a chartered accountant and professional economist, who told members audience why, in his view, the current economic crisis was not to be feared and why it would have a far lower impact and for a shorter time in South Africa than in the rest of the world. He advised members to prepare for the boom to follow!



The Central Chamber's Colin de Jager and Pat Lacy enjoyed the dinner, with wine sponsored by ABSA Bank.

KZN Chamber News

Long-term membership awards

THE KwaZulu-Natal Chamber held its Annual General Meeting in March at the Westville Country Club.

One feature of the AGM was the presentation of certificates to those companies who have been members of the KZN Chamber for ten years and more. On hand to present the certificates was PIFSA's CEO, Chris Sykes.



Ian Short of Print in Time and Bilal Vawda of Azania Box Manufacturers received certificates marking 10 years' membership of the KZN Chamber.



Kishan Singh of Nampak's Divfood Durban plant and Roy Sodhoo of CE Stewart & Co received recognition of their companies' 25-year membership of the KZN Chamber.

Apprentice Trade Theory Studies



Apprentices are busy with their TT3 Trade Theory blocks in KwaZulu-Natal. Seen here are TT3 apprentices together with lecturers Graham Sperring (Lithography), Allen Arderne (Packaging) and Stuart Schaffer (Flexography Rotary Re-reeling).

Estimating for Printers



The KwaZulu-Natal Chamber continues to offer Estimating for Printers as a one-year course. Eight students successfully completed the 2008 course and received their certificates at an awards function held recently at the Chamber's offices. Twelve students have registered for the 2009 course and have completed their mid-year examinations.

PCA contributes to Paarl Print support fund

THE Printing Craftsmans Association (PCA) shares a strong sense of solidarity with the Western Cape's vibrant printing fraternity.

As a token of its support, the PCA has donated R2 000 to Paarl Print's Family Support Fund following the devastating fire in April and the tragic loss of numerous employees.

Says PCA president, Ken Leid: 'We are sure that this fund will receive widespread support from the greater printing and packaging industry and we wish Paarl Print everything of the best in re-establishing the company to its former glory.'



Focus on your strengths for profit and the future

THE Printing Industries of America (PIA)'s executive team members have been reporting on conference highlights on their new website. The conference entitled *Offset and Beyond* was held recently in Las Vegas. Here are a few excerpts (and some good advice) from these reports.

What do you do? If your answer is 'I am just a printer', you're unlikely to be in business much longer in these turbulent times. 'Making the transformation from printer to marketing communications provider' was the topic covered by Bruce Biegel, MD of the Winterberry Group, who provided an overview of the advertising market, noting that advertising spend in different markets segments was down up to 8%. Chief marketing officers are now under extreme pressure in these difficult economic times and are being measured by their effectiveness. According to Bruce Biegel, 'To be a marketing communications provider you need to know where the money is when meeting with potential customers.'

He then interviewed two printers – Matthew Graham, chief strategy officer of Direct Group (DG), and Bret Olszewski, VP president of marketing for K/P Corporation – who energised the audience with info on how they transformed their companies from being 'just printers' to being able to meet the evolving needs of their customers by providing a wide range of communications methods. To the question 'Why did your company change from product-centric to marketing services?' Bret Olszewski replied, 'It was grow or die ... and change was necessary to provide more value to our customers.' Matthew Graham explained how his company grew via acquisition by adding fulfilment, response management, analytics and data services. Both discussed how their customers required them to do multichannel marketing with system integration using their (the customers') data.

An important element of their companies' respective changes was the transformation of the sales force from selling products and services to a consultative, solution-selling approach.

Beyond printing, there are additional revenue opportunities in postpress and in-line finishing. Profitable ideas were everywhere following intriguing presentations by Ronen Cohen, VP, marketing, Kodak Ink Jet Printing Systems Division; John Gaspari, VP, manufacturing, SPC (Specialty Print Communications); and Adam LeFebvre, president, SPC. Both John Gaspari and Adam LeFebvre offered a point-counterpoint discussion on the factors you need to consider when determining if you should do your finishing in-line or off-line. With in-line you have a one-stop process, skilled labour, long runs, complete control and one-time on press. With off-line labour costs are higher, you have shorter runs, more uptime, and lower cost to modify or expand the project. Said Adam LeFebvre, 'Off-line is the wave of the future because it is more flexible, modular and some products just do not belong in-line.' John Gaspari emphasised that deciding factors were labour costs, quality required, speed of finishing required, waste and machine loading.

For more information visit www.printing.org or contact Erich Kuhl ekuhl@pifsa.org.



Your PIFSA Regional Contact details:

BORDER CHAMBER

Sharonne Dewing

Tel: 043 7022123

Fax: 043 7435156

E-mail: sharonne@dispatch.co.za

CAPE CHAMBER

Ken Leid

Tel: 021 5951367

Fax: 021 5951376

E-mail: cape-chamber@pifsa.org

CENTRAL CHAMBER

Pat Lacy

Tel: 011 6993044

Fax: 011 6993042

E-mail: nickyc@pifsa.org

EAST CAPE CHAMBER

National Office

Tel: 011 6993000

Fax: 011 6993010

E-mail: lmoralee@pifsa.org

FREE STATE and NORTHERN CAPE CHAMBER

W Hauptfleish

Tel: 058 4812105-7

Fax: 058 4814267

E-mail: admin@oranje.co.za

KWAZULU-NATAL CHAMBER

Geoff Warren

Tel: 031 7058744

Fax: 031 7054408

E-mail: kzn-chamber@pifsa.org

NORTHERN CHAMBER

Lana Human

Tel: 087 8053675

Fax: 012 6871317 or 086 6275175

E-mail: northern-chamber@pifsa.org

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