

CEO Corner

PIFSA Services

IT'S largely unknown that PIFSA staff become involved in a variety of projects and 'behind-the-scenes' activities for the overall benefit of the industry.

In many instances, benefits arising from such projects aren't channelled only towards PIFSA members – successful results cause rain to fall on the fields of both those who fund such activities and those who merely take, without making any contribution at all.

One such activity is the success achieved by PIFSA (admittedly, with the close collaboration of some prominent member companies and a firm of attorneys) in convincing the Department of Trade & Industry to reduce and, in some cases, eliminate tariff protection on paper and other materials and spares used in the wider industry.

However, a project that does not draw a huge amount of attention, despite the vigorous activities of PIFSA staff, is the work done within the SA Book Development Council (SABDC), and the successes achieved over the years. In a recent report to the PIFSA Management Committee, the following statistics were revealed:

- 28% of PIFSA members print books of some kind;
- 26% print magazines; and
- 7,5% print newspapers.

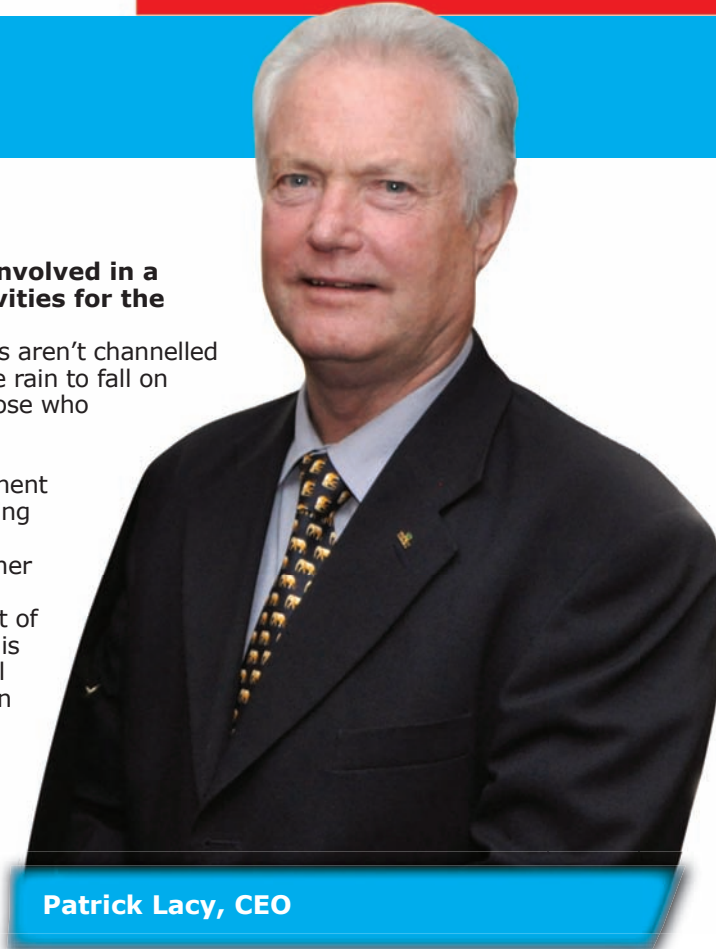
It's accepted that not all these members are dedicated to producing only those final products, but the production of books, magazines and newspapers forms a part of their total commercial offerings.

It's also estimated by ReadSA that a 10% increase in literacy within the South African population could result in almost a 100% increase in demand for printed matter, especially within these three categories.

Over the years, the collective efforts of the SABDC have resulted in a better understanding and appreciation of the printing sector by various government departments, which have consequently given moral and financial support to projects initiated by the Council – including PIFSA.

It has taken some years to compile comparable figures relating to the origin of books written by South African authors and this has always been a contentious issue. However, we have now been able to glean the following statistics:

- 30,6% of trade books over the last five years were produced locally with the balance imported, either through local agencies or as direct imports.
- Sales have grown from R870-million in 2004 to R1 240-million in 2008.
- 93,9% of educational books were locally produced and sales have increased from R1 150-million in 2004 to R2 066-million in 2008.
- 54,9% of South Africa's academic books were published locally and the balance imported. In 2004, turnover was R413-million, which increased to R653-million in 2008. This represents an overall turnover increase of 62,7% over four years or an average of 15,6%/annum. Obviously, this is partly the result of inflation and price increases but sales volumes (number of books sold) increased by 31,3% over this period.
- Turnover of imported products increased by 37,3%, while turnover of local products increased by 77,5% and overall the market share of local product increased from 63,3% to 69%.



Patrick Lacy, CEO



In an attempt to retain book printing within South Africa, PIFSA, through the SABDC, has stressed during meetings with the Department of Education that the local economy must be supported with resulting job creation and other benefits. We have received an assurance from the Department that all tenders specify that local materials and production are a prerequisite. On discovering that some regional departments were not following these procedures – using brokers or agents rather than dealing directly with printers – this matter was taken up with both the National Department of Education and with regional governments.

Turning to other efforts, PIFSA supports a National Book Week during September, in conjunction with the Department of Arts & Culture. Printers wishing to add support by providing sponsorships, static displays, workshops

or presentations can contact Erich Kühl at PIFSA's national office.

In addition, PIFSA has successfully made input into the National Book Policy, ensuring that provision is made for incentives for local production. This should apply to the entire printing industry, not just book printers, and the Department of Finance will be included in this initiative in order to attempt to establish the implementation of suitable incentives.

Lastly, advocacy within government ministries and departments, libraries, schools, etc, has provided a much-improved understanding of the importance of literacy, reading and the use of books for all purposes – not just education, which cannot function without them – but also for leisure and relaxation.

PIFSA's work goes on.

Don't fear folding with synthetics

PIFSA has been granted permission to reproduce this interesting article by Trish Witkowski from the PaperSpecs website (March 2010).

SYNTHETIC papers are practical, durable and well suited to many types of print products, including maps, menus, children's books, tags, cookbooks, manuals, signage, posters and more.

However, the question is 'How do they fold?'

If synthetic papers are generally plastic-based, do they perform like fibre-based papers in the bindery? Do they require special equipment, settings, or handling?

I figured it might be a good idea to find out, since nobody likes surprises in the production stage of the job – especially the expensive kind.

I contacted representatives from several reputable synthetic paper manufacturers to get the skinny on synthetics in the bindery. Overall, I was pleased with what I learned. Here's a brief overview.

Static is the enemy of synthetics – but it's easy to defeat

One of the most common issues a printer faces when folding synthetic paper is the generation of static caused by friction, increased temperature and decreased humidity.

The problem can be alleviated in several simple ways, one of which is to increase humidity in the bindery. Hanging tinsel or dryer sheets on specific areas of the folding machine can work, and so can the use of ionized air or static string.

Static could be an issue at some point in the job, but it won't be a showstopper. However, do your research – several brands offer special characteristics and features to combat

static, for example Polyart incorporates an antistatic in its clay coating, and Teslin's silica-based filler boasts an inherent static dissipative nature.

Synthetics can have a grain (or not)

Most synthetic papers are stretched biaxially (along two axes) in the manufacturing process creating different directional properties that could be thought of as grain. This, by no means, has the same dramatic impact as fibre-based grain does.

Other synthetic papers claim no 'grain' direction at all.

What does this mean for folding purposes? Generally speaking, synthetic papers can be folded and scored either way without the normal grain-related issues that fibre-based papers encounter. In some situations with multiple folds, it may be recommended to fold with the synthetic paper's 'grain' direction for the highest quality result.

Score 'em as you would a fibre-based sheet

Much like fibre-based paper, the weight of the sheet affects the quality of the fold. Thinner gauges of synthetic paper do not need to be scored when folded, but heavier gauges do. Where's the cut-off? All synthetics are different – ask the manufacturer for suggestions.

Regarding scoring methods, an offline score, as opposed to scoring while on press, is

considered by the manufacturers surveyed to offer the best result and the most flexibility. As with fibre-based paper, the ridge of the score should be on the inside of the fold.

Preliminary testing saves time and money

Since synthetic papers cost more than fibre-based papers, it's smart to do some testing in advance of the live job to ensure success, and to minimise waste. Because of its plastic composition, some synthetics can have a strong memory, which can make it difficult to stay folded; accordions in particular can expand and become problematical.

Air trapping is another potential issue to watch for. Folding dummies are recommended to identify potential problems with air trapping, right angle folds, memory issues, weight choice and to test for static.

As with any project, communication at the earliest stages of the job is the best way to avoid expensive mistakes. Such forward thinking provides an opportunity to run tests before the job hits the shop.

Don't shy away from the die (or other finishing processes)

In general, synthetics can be embossed, die-cut, foil stamped, laminated, glued, perforated, slit, etc. One critical consideration is how heat plays a role in finishing processes. This makes sense – if the paper is plastic-based, then maybe hot melt glue isn't the best solution (unless you're going for that

wavy, textural look). Temperature of dies and machine speeds should be tested and considered. All manufacturers mentioned that maintenance of extremely sharp die-cut tooling is critical for a quality cut on a synthetic paper.

Synthetics are not one and the same

This is not really on the topic of folding, but it needs to be said. If anyone thinks plastic paper is plastic paper, they're wrong. Synthetics are all different, and each has unique qualities and technologies to offer.

Look around before making your choice, and then fold away!

About the author

Trish Witkowski is chief folding fanatic at the online folding community (www.foldfactory.com). PaperSpecs (www.paperspecs.com) is the first independent and comprehensive web-based paper selection tool and the site is specifically designed to help paper specifiers find the paper that meets their project's sustainability goals, creative vision and process requirements. PaperSpecs currently features more than 4 300 papers from over 70 mills. PaperSpecs members have access to this powerful database as well as the ability to order sample sheets and the latest swatch books and mill promotions.

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Let's talk VAT

For those who wonder whether VAT can be claimed on insurance, the good news is that it can! DERYN GARZ explains how.

INSURANCE is an expense incurred in the normal running of a business. However, it's important to understand that we must separate short-term insurance from long-term insurance.

Short-term insurance is regarded as a normal standard-rated supply and, therefore, input VAT can be claimed.

Just as you may claim the 14% input VAT, you must remember that your payout on a claim includes 14% VAT and this must be declared as output VAT. This would only apply if your insurer pays you out in cash. If the insurer replaces goods, VAT does not come into the equation.

Long-term insurance is considered an exempt financial service and, therefore, no VAT may be claimed. The 'plus' side of long-term insurance is that if it is arranged through an agent or broker, you're entitled to claim the input VAT on the fee or commission charged.

An interesting point – SARS considers any excess relating to an insurance claim is VAT inclusive even though VAT law is silent on this point.

In our next issue, we'll discuss international VAT claims.

[Extracts from the Practical VAT Handbook]



drupa 2012: Registration now open

THE magic moment is here! Exhibitors from around the world can now register for drupa 2012 . The printed exhibitor invitation has been mailed and the digital registration form is available at www.drupa.com.

The new online registration form is switched to 'hot' until October 31, 2010. After that participation in drupa 2012 will be available via a waiting list.

The online registration tool was hardly switched on before the stand reservations began to flow in, showing how important drupa is for the print media, publishing and

converting sectors. drupa is maintaining its role as the industry flagship – leading the way and establishing confidence during a difficult phase of economic upheaval. What will count tomorrow – new trends and technologies for the era of media convergence – is the topic of discussion at drupa. Anyone who wishes to benefit from this transition must be there in 2012, say the organisers.

drupa 2012 is starting with a restructured nomenclature, with the addition of categories called Paper & Substrates, Inks & Consumables, and Components & Infrastructure.

Training ongoing at PIFSA

THE Printing Industries Federation of South Africa (PIFSA) continues to offer apprentices Technical Theoretical training in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, as well as a number of practical courses to increase efficiency in the workplace.

Timetable for TT Blocks Second Semester

Technical Theoretical Module 1

Starts: July 12

Ends: August 6

Exams: August 10, 11, 12

Technical Theoretical Module 2

Starts: August 23

Ends: September 17

Exams: September 20, 21, 22

Technical Theoretical Module 3

Starts: October 11

Ends: November 5

Exams: November 8, 9, 10

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Other Courses

KwaZulu-Natal Chamber offers courses in Supervisory Leadership Development, Professional Minute Taking, Fire Fighting, Health & Safety, Disciplinary Hearings, Telephone Technique & Front Office Skills, and Introduction to Printing (ID2).

Central Chamber provides courses in Disciplinary & Grievance Codes & Procedures, Estimating for Printers, Labour Relations, Supervisory Training, Telephone Technique & Front Office Skills, and Introduction to Printing (ID2).

For dates, check the Chamber pages on the PIFSA website.

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