



November, 2002



NORTH CENTRAL REPROGRAPHICS ASSOCIATION

**PRESIDENT SPEAKS...**

**C**entral **R**eprographic **A**ssociation

*emerges from 2002 Convention*

An historic meeting was held in September at the beautiful Abbey Resort on Lake Geneva, WI. The NCRA and MSRA held a joint convention and trade show. At separate meetings each association voted to pursue a course of action to combine the two associations into the new **Central Reprographic Association**. The spirit of cooperation and good will was present in the creation of this new Association. All the legal requirements and official changes should be completed by February of 2003.

In addition, the convention was a great success. The attendance was especially good, with reprographers coming for the educational sessions, the exhibits and to meet with other reprographers. The 2002 Combined Convention will go down in the record books as one of the best attended in the history of the NCRA. A total of 39 exhibitors filled the exhibit hall to capacity offering their products and services to the attendees. The educational programs built around the theme **“E-Reprography and Your Bottom Line”** were excellent. These sessions included "Managing IT in a Repro Shop" presented by John Marquardt, "What the Construction Industry Expects from Reprographers" presented by Brian Wasserman, "How to Get More Profits from your Repro Shop" presented by Bob Knappage and "The Future of E-Reprography" presented by Doug Hoek. Thank you to all the presenters for your excellent programs.

The location was beautiful with the Abbey located on the shores of Lake Geneva. The food and accommodations were wonderful. The Friday night dinner and Annual Charity Auction were a great success. The auction raised a record of \$5,800.00 for the Alzheimer Association. Thanks to everyone who donated items and to those who bid on them. Saturday's dinner with entertainment from the improv group Comedy Sportz had everyone laughing long after the evening ended.

A special thank you goes to our Past President, Steve Zawoyski, for his hard work and leadership during 2002. Also a great big thank you to Shirley Zawoyski our Administrative Assistant who makes our lives much easier with her hard work.

See you in St. Louis next year.

Ralph Wasik, President



***Celebrating 50 years of service to the community.***

*Rapids Reproductions, Inc. Cedar Rapids, IA evolved from a company called Standard Blueprint of Iowa, based in Omaha and owned by Dick and Don Swanson back in 1952.*

*President Ralph Wasik, (current NCRA President) remembers when his father (also Ralph Wasik and a Past President of the NCRA) started working there as sales manager in 1963, finally purchasing the company from Swanson in 1974 and renaming it Rapids Reproductions, Inc. In the early years the company copied blueprints and sold drafting tables, and elbow drafting machines. Now that work can be done using computer software like AutoCAD and Auto Architect products in the Rapids Reproductions' dealership line today.*

*“We’re experts in large-size things” says President Ralph Wasik, “and we can support our clients either way – outsourcing, or selling the equipment so you can do it yourself.”*

*While the original company was launched as a provider of blueprinting and photographic services, it later expanded into other areas, according to the needs of its clients. The expansion included design equipment and supplies for architects, engineers and contractors.*

*“We’ve evolved from pencils and tables to software, digital printers and scanners,” says Ralph, adding that Rapids' clients range from large to small companies to ordinary consumers. Today Rapid Reproductions serves the architectural, environmental, corporate and legal arenas with equal professionalism, quick turn-around and quality.*

## ***Welcome to new board members*** The following were elected to serve on the 2003 Board of Directors

**Lisa Tipps** is the owner of **Dynamic Reprographics** in Austin, TX. She became involved in the reprographics business as a way to support herself while still in college at the University of Texas, where she graduated with a degree in German Literature. Over the years she has done everything there is to do at Dynamic, from sweeping the floor to delivering a rush job to implementing and directing the new online plan room. She feels fortunate to work in a business with such good people. In addition to her work with the Mid-South Reprographics Association for the past three years; she also serves on the board of a wonderful Austin organization for 'at promise' youth called American Youthworks, where kids do service learning by working on park trails and building low income houses while finishing their high school diplomas.

**Pat Gremillion** is Vice President of Sales & Marketing for **A&E-The Graphics Complex** in Houston, TX. He graduated from the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas with a double major in Economics and Business Administration. He grew up in the reprographics business. Pat was a contributor in the IRgA's Industry Journal, Volume One: Business Strategies and authored the article "Developing an Effective Sales & Marketing Strategy". Pat was also a contributing panelist at the IRgA convention in 2002 and presented, along with Paul Rabin of BPS in San Francisco, "Marketing Reprographics in the E-economy". He has served as membership director of the Mid South Reprographics Association in 2002.

**Phil Hudson** is President of **Hudson Blueprint** in Wichita Falls, TX. He grew up in the repro business his father started in 1959. After high school, he went on to complete an undergraduate degree in Physics from Midwestern State University and then received a scholarship to Southern Methodist University where he completed a Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering. After college he went to work for PPG Industries in one of their plate glass plants as a project engineer designing and maintaining electronic control systems. He came back to the business in 1982 after his father became ill and was unable to continue. He is currently serving as chairman of the CAD advisory committee for a local junior college, and served on the Board of Directors for the Mid-South Reprographic Association for four years.

**Andrew Ziegler** is President of **Lakeside Blueprint**, Cleveland, OH. While attending Ohio University, he started working at Lakeside and worked his way up to Branch Managers positions. While managing the downtown location, Andrew's dedication and commitment resulted in tremendous long term growth in sales and customers. He was Vice President of Operations since 1998 and has been the driving force for the redevelopment of Lakeside's manual workflow processes to their current digital web-based management system. He is currently a member of The Alternative Board, a group who discusses business strategies, customer service, employee relationship and creative problem solving. He is looking forward to serving on the NCRA board as an opportunity for further professional growth.

***A COMPLETE LIST OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS CAN BE FOUND POSTED ON [www.ncra1.com](http://www.ncra1.com)***

**NOMINATIONS NEEDED**- WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD FOLKS TO JOIN AS BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2003 AND 2004. Please contact Steve Zawoyski at [imidmr@enteract.com](mailto:imidmr@enteract.com) or call 630-351-2202 for more information.

### ***Thanks for your extra effort...***

**KENT TUCKER**- Organized the Show Planner for the trade show

**RICHARD SCOTT**- Organized Sponsorship for the golf outing

**GREGG BORCHARDT**- Organized and ran the Golf Outing

**CONNIE MAXWELL**- Organized the tradeshow "Star Card" program

The following are retiring board members.

**GARY MARQUARDT**- Retiring in 2002, serving 2 years on the Board of Directors. Organized an exceptional educational program for 2002.

Thanks you all for giving of the most precious commodities we have - **YOUR TIME & ENERGY**. Your dedication and effort is greatly appreciated by the membership and fellow board members.

### ***Membership Directories***

The NCRA Membership Directories will be mailed to members in November. Thanks to **Tracy Albinson** of **Albinson Reprographics** for the fine printing job of the membership directories, conference booklets and the Newsletters this past year.

### ***NCRA E NEWS***

Help the NCRA go completely digital for the newsletter. Send your e mail address to us at [Shirley.Zawoyski@ncra1.com](mailto:Shirley.Zawoyski@ncra1.com) so we can add you to our digital database. The **NCRA E NEWS** is published four to five times a year with informative information to the members of the association.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW- 2003 CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW  
SEPTEMBER 18-20 AT THE MILLENIUM HOTEL IN ST. LOUIS, MO.**

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## EXHIBITORS CORNER

The 2002 NCRA/MSRA Conference and Trade Show have been completed and by all accounts can be labeled a success. For those who participated in the trade show, I offer a heartfelt Thank You. Exhibitor Survey responses are currently being requested so that we may improve on this years show. Results of this survey will be published in a later issue of the newsletter. Booth space reservations for the 2003 Trade show are being accepte now. Sign up today to guarantee your space.

The NCRA/MSRA boards would like to thank the following vendors for their support of the association and convention and ask that the members support these vendors in their daily business activities. In addition several **exhibitors (in bold type)** donated door prizes. Thank you all for your generous support of the convention activities.

Jeff Sproat,  
2003 Vendor Director

**Azon Corporation** \*  
701 Azon Road  
Johnson City, NY 13790  
607-798-8573

Big Systems, Inc.  
12599 W. Lancaster Avenue  
Butler, Wi 53007  
262-790-1010

**Cylix, Inc.** \*  
4445 Riverside Drive  
Lilburn, GA 30247  
770-978-8948

**Dietzgen, a division of Nashua** \*  
1218 West Northwest Hwy  
Palatine, IL 60067  
800-473-1200

**DIGITAL ES**  
PO Box 14469  
Oklahoma City, OK 73113  
405-749-6777

**Direct Data, Inc.** \*  
8664 Olive Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63132  
314-567-4002

**Drytac Corporation** \*  
5383 Glen Alden Drive  
Richmond, VA 123231  
804-222-3094

**FDC Corporation**  
360 Bonnie Lane  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009  
847-437-3990

**GBC Films Group**  
712 W. Winthrop  
Addison, IL 60101  
630-543-7100

**Ilford Imaging USA, Inc** \*  
555 Busse Road  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007  
847-437-2860

**Image Products of CA.** \*  
1890 N Main Street  
Orange, CA 92865  
714-282-5678

Informative Graphics  
7006 E Bell Road, Suite 207  
Phoenix, AZ 85022  
602-971-6061

**KIP America.** \*\*  
425 N Martingale Road  
Schaumburg, IL 60173  
847-706-3334

Kyocera Mita America Inc.  
225 Sand Road  
Fairfield, NJ 07004  
973-882-6011

**Michlin Products Corp.** \*  
10501 Haggerty Street  
Dearborn, MI 48126  
313-846-5700

Millennium Leasing & Financial Srv  
1901 Butterfield Rd, Suite 600  
Downers Grove, IL 60515  
630-810-4840

**Modern Reprographics**  
445 Broad Hollow Rd  
Melville, NY 11747  
800-308-6397

**MultiMedia Converting, Inc.**  
2906 Congressman Lane  
Dallas, TX 75220  
800-936-9386

**MV Software Company** \*  
651 N. Rochester Road  
Clawson, MI 48017  
248-583-4110

**National Coatings, Inc.** \*  
6545 St. Antoine  
Detroit, MI 48202  
800-325-5939

**OCE-USA Imaging Supplies** \*  
1800 Bruning DriveWest  
Itasca, IL 60143  
800-445-3526

**OCE-USA WFPS** \*  
5450 N. Cumberland Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60656  
800-877-6232

Paradigm Imaging Group  
1590 Metro Drive, Suite 116  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626  
714-432-7226

PlanLink.biz  
31 Olympia Ave  
Woburn, MA 01801  
800-448-6002

PLP Digital Systems  
6060 E Thomas Road  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
480-949-7568

PrimeLine Reprographics  
20475 Woodingham  
Detroit, MI 48221  
313-342-1300

Print Suite, Distributed by A&E  
4235 Richmond Ave  
Houston, TX 77027  
713-579-2081

**Ricoh Corp.** \*\*\*

Safco Products Co

Spicer Corporation

**5 Dedride Place**  
**West Coldwell, NJ 07006**  
**973-882-5237**

9300 W Research Center Road  
New Hope, MN 55428  
763-536-6700

221 McIntyre Drive  
Kitchener, ONT N2R 1G1  
519-748-2462

Superior Fomeboards Corp  
2700 W Grand Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60612  
773-278-9200

Synnex Information Technologies  
39 Pelham Ridge Drive  
Greenville, SC 29615  
864-289-4095

Technical Image Products, Inc  
1250 Pratt Boulevard  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007  
847-593-0500

**TechParts, Inc. \***  
1401 E Ball Road, Suite A  
Anaheim, CA 92805  
800-914-1090

Thoroughbred Software Int'l, Inc.  
285 Davidson Avenue, Suite 302  
Somerset, NJ 08873  
800-988-3536

Trim USA, Inc.  
3105 Big Oaks Drive  
Tobaccoville, NC 27050  
336-983-22775

TST/Impreso, Inc  
PO Box 506  
Coppell, TX 75019  
972-462-0100

**US Reprographics Network**  
1808 Main Street  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
816-842-7881

Xerox Engineering Systems  
2301 West 22<sup>nd</sup> St, Suite 209  
Oak Brook, IL 60523  
630-572-9630

Universal Blue Print Paper Company \*  
327 Bryan Ave  
Fort Worth, TX 76104  
817-429-3988

**\* These companies generously supported the Golf outing**

**SPECIAL THANKS to RICOH CORPORATION** who sponsored all four of the par three holes and the "Hole in One" activities. Pictures from the golf outing, courtesy of **Dennis Casey of Ricoh Corporation** and convention activities courtesy of **Kent Tucker of Image Products of CA** will be posted on the web site [www.ncra1.com](http://www.ncra1.com).

## **Education Session Review**

**EDUCATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS:** Each year we survey the attendees of the Educational sessions on the quality and content of the sessions. Here is a recap of the results. A more detailed report is posted on the web site [www.ncra1.com](http://www.ncra1.com) under "2002 Convention Review".

1. 73% responded Highly or Very Highly that "...the information presented was pertinent to their current business."
2. 62% responded Highly or Very Highly that "... the sessions caused them to consider taking action or making changes in their business that you otherwise might not have considered."
3. 88% responded Highly or Very Highly that "... they felt the speaker had enough time."
4. 87% responded Highly or Very Highly that "... the NCRA present more sessions on the same subjects or related subjects in the future."

2002 Educational Sessions were outstanding and the attendees considered they to be highly informative. People that attended the sessions are now in a far better position to meet the challenges associated with E-Reprography. As a service to our members, the next newsletters will include a recap of the presentations. This issue highlights John Marquardt's presentation...

## **Managing IT in a Repro Shop**

Executives don't generally have a good working knowledge of IT, they remain skeptical about the effectiveness of a solution (sometimes even after it's in place), and unless they've seen a profound ROI on a particular IT solution, they are skittish about IT expenditures in the future. There are some good reasons for this; computer and IT costs remain high (although the power and effectiveness of the solutions increases, the initial price of most IT solutions induces 'sticker-shock' even in Repro shop owners and managers accustomed to spending \$100,000+ on a piece of repro equipment). IT is also difficult to account for. For instance what part of the cost of a monochrome plot is the new RAID array you just purchased? That said IT can lead to great cost savings from efficiency and labor replacement if used effectively. Before we get to that there are some 'mandatory money sinks' that are a lot like insurance; you hate to spend money on it, but if you don't...something like 'bad luck' or informal practices can lead to great monetary losses.

### **Mandatory Money Sinks**

**Facilities** – It's extremely important to have your network infrastructure as centralized as possible. Cooling, power, physical security, and standard practices are much easier, and in the long run cheaper if you have your infrastructure centralized as much as possible.

**Fault Tolerance** – Storage Backup and Power Backup are often overlooked and probably the two more critical issues surrounding IT. Have a good backup policy and procedure and follow it. Have a written recover plan and test it. Look into some type of uninterruptible power-supply and line-conditioner and use it to the fullest i.e. make sure your servers are aware of the UPS system and monitor it for transient power interruption and full on outages allowing your servers to react by notifying a system administrator and also shutting down gracefully if unattended.

**Security** – Have a quality Firewall. If you can't afford the more sophisticated software or appliance firewalls, consider Linux or a simpler, cheaper appliance. Anything is better than nothing; in any case don't be scant on your firewall. Stay up to date on OS and software patches. Most hackers/crackers take advantage of holes or unintended weaknesses and bugs. Be aware of potential issues with new technologies, for instance 802.11b wireless networking can give you a false sense of security with its WEP implementation – which has been cracked. A lot of these can be plugged by simply staying up to date. Get a quality anti-virus. If possible something enterprise oriented. Physical access to your IT infrastructure should be limited to key, trustworthy personnel wherever possible. This keeps the more innocent and accidental problems from happening e.g. the cleaning personnel accidentally pull the power plug with the vacuum cleaner. Also more maliciously a single person with a floppy disk or CD can take down your entire network, your servers, your Internet connection, your routers, your backups...basically your entire infrastructure. Physical security is very important, and if you're not concerned about it, most of the other things you spend money on like a firewall, anti-virus and backup software is wasted.

**Staying Legal** – More and more software companies are trying to recover profits from economic problems by going after software piracy. Understand the license agreement on all the software you buy and stay on top of it. Appoint a person to keep track of license usage through audits. This will keep you legal, but also save you money by not over-purchasing software.

**IT Staff**

Good hardware, software, and policies are useless without people. Sufficed to say, you need some type of dedicated IT person to deal with technical issues. Here are some levels of dedicated IT personnel, the reason you need them, appropriate levels of training to expect, and appropriate expectations for hiring.

Level of IT Staffer	Example tasks	Appropriate Training	Expectations
In-house "Techie" (this might be your plot station operator, the secretary, or the warehouse guy who builds PCs in his spare time)	Safely restart a locked up PC, change resolutions, install software and drivers, create Excel/Word Macros – any daily mini-IT-crisis that flair up.	Application based seminars (Word, Excel, or Windows) or Vendor based seminars (accounting application or plotting software)	Presumably you already have these people, all that is required is that they show some aptitude and basic problem solving ability.
Full-time IT staffer (this could be someone with training, or someone with practical knowledge)	Fully ensconced in IT issues – this person stays on top of anti-virus programs and updating definitions, security holes, anticipates issues before they become problems, good resource for Sales and Service groups on technical issues with clients but probably doesn't deal with clients directly.	Training courses in networking, macro-writing and programming where appropriate, help desk, tech support and standard PC repair classes – be aware you might be training them right out of your company – consider a training 'payback' period	Written and working tests on common tasks around your shop – finding, manipulating files, installing drivers, connecting to network drives and printers, burning a CD etc...
MCSE/CNE – Microsoft Certified Network Engineer/Certified Novell Engineer or Network Engineer depending on who you talk to. (these are people who have chosen IT as a career and have taken training and passed tests created by industry groups or corporations certifying them to work on their systems)	Establish and create written security policies, install and manage FTP, web servers and databases, install and manage a firewall, create complex user profiles for various employee groups, setup and maintain networks, backups, and UPS, setup routers etc...	These people already have a lot of pricey training, but you will need to update their training periodically which can be expensive. Investigate the training and upkeep costs in determining the need for these positions.	Again more practical tests, like installing the OS and connecting to a network, setup a DHCP server, create user profiles, create a RAID array, name the OSI layers, in-depth knowledge of tcp/ip and routing. Take some questions from the MCSE or CNE exams and see how they do
Consultants (similar to MCSE/CNE staffers, but they are brought in on an 'as-needed' basis – this can be either cheaper or more expensive depending on your situation so choose wisely)	Same projects as the MCSE/CNE from above, but often more detailed knowledge – for instance an MCSE might have experience with the operation of a Cisco router, but a consultant might be more aware of peculiarities between models and even have a Cisco certification in addition to the MCSE.	Consultants are generally highly trained and kept up to date on the latest iteration of software and hardware – this all varies of course with the quality of the Consultancy.	Choose a Consultancy with a lot of backup – if the consultant you usually get is sick or on vacation when a crisis hits, you don't want to be left out in the cold. Check out their procedures and see how formalized they are. Take advantage of 'blocks of time' deals where appropriate.

Obviously there is some crossover in all of these levels of IT person. A Full-time IT staffer might have some abilities to do what an MCSE might do, but the formal education of the MCSE will generally lead to less trial and error than the untrained IT staffer. Also, use consultants effectively; ask if they will spot-train your staff on upkeep of systems they install or maintain, ask if they support remote administration and is there a price break for that, try and use standard practices and have good clean and *updated* documentation to make the consultants job easier and faster and therefore cheaper for you.

### **What drives your technology?**

#### **Technology for the sake of Technology** - Bad, Bad, Bad!!

*Architects/Engineers* who say ‘wouldn’t it be neat if...<insert expensive and useless technology here>’. Deal with these issues at a higher level i.e. talk to the customer’s finance people (controller, purchaser, CFO, whatever they have) and talk about what this might do to their plot cost and what the roll-out time and training periods will be like – is it still something they want to do? Techies and Salespeople are more willing to comply blindly with off-the-cuff client remarks and requests. Where technology is concerned, get them to form a habit of saying “that’s a great idea on the surface, let me talk to some other people about it and get back to you”. That said, end-users can be a great resource for improving technology solutions, but they should be collaborators and contributors, not the originators typically.

*Salespeople* are also guilty of this. Get a handle on their requests to your IT people lest your IT people spend time on something that might not be in your plan. Also run ideas your salespeople come up with past your IT people and maybe even your consultants...maybe they did this and have some practical experience that will help you make a decision.

#### **Reactionary** – Can be bad, can be good.

*Your Competition* comes up with something and so you are forced to jump on the bandwagon. There’s not much you can do to avoid this if your clients are gung-ho about it. Come up with something better that does the same thing but cheaper or has an added feature.

*Consultants/IT staff* – it’s important to have staff you can trust and who have a history with you for suggesting things that work into your long-term plans and that are DOABLE. IT people come up with all kinds of ideas on how to make something better, faster, cheaper (well two out a three ain’t bad)...go slow, take baby steps at first to see if they really know what they are talking about.

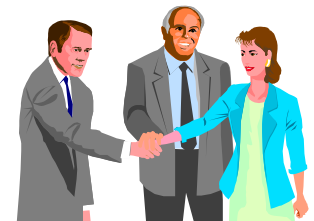
#### **Visionary** - Good

*The President or shop manager* come up with an idea. These are the things that drive your technology that you want more of. These are the ground-breaking ideas either in your market or your industry that save you money, make you more profitable, and therefore your customers can’t live without you. Unfortunately these are also the ideas that are hardest to come up with. They are also the hardest for competition to combat, making them an ‘also ran’.

*Audit yourself and determine what is driving your tech. Are you happy with that?*

## ***VOLUNTEERISM HAS ITS REWARDS!***

Participation is one form of activity; volunteering is quite another. Anyone who has ever made the commitment to volunteer their time and energy to a worthwhile cause knows that they ultimately receive more than they give. So it is with the NCRA. Topping the list of benefits or rewards is without question the number of people that you meet. More importantly, working with other volunteers towards a single goal forms a bond that transcends the occasional phone call or chance meeting at a convention.



Get active Now! The NCRA is transitioning to be the CRA. The future is bright for our Association and we look forward to welcoming new members. We invite anyone who wants more from the Association, to volunteer as a committee or board member. Volunteering is easy! We will match your skills and interest with a position that gives each volunteer an opportunity to participate at their own pace. So don’t be bashful, this is an opportunity to expand your horizons and become part of something that will improve your whole being. For more information on volunteering call Steve Zawoyksi at 630-351-2202. GO AHEAD and make that phone call that will lead to expanding your horizons and relationships with the reprographic profession.

The end...