



Center for Paper Business and Industry Studies

Newsletter of the Center for Paper Business and Industry Studies
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Management Development Course Enrollment on Track

Enrollment in the CPBIS-PIMA professional development course, *Management Development for Enhanced Performance*, is on track to produce a class size that will provide ample opportunity for learning through peer-to-peer contact, while at the same time allowing one-on-one interaction with members of the faculty of one of the nation's leading business schools, as well as with renowned paper industry practitioners. The course will be offered at the Global Learning and Conference Center at Technology square on the Georgia Tech campus, in Atlanta, GA, May 9-13.

The syllabus includes topics ranging from leadership and change management to managing customer relations and improving capital effectiveness, all within a paper industry context. Participants in previous offerings have had high praise for both the content and the faculty.

Anyone interested in joining those taking advantage of this unique opportunity for professional development can obtain detailed information at http://www.cpbis.gatech.edu/conted/management/management_main.htm. It is also possible to register for the course by visiting this Web site or by calling Ms. Charley Burney at CPBIS, 404-894-1488.

Providing Paper Industry Information via the Web

*by Emmanuel Lafond, Internet Applications
Manager, CPBIS*

Like the rest of the CPBIS staff, I devote a significant part of my time to the Center's advancement, despite

having major responsibilities outside of CPBIS. (In my case, the "day job" is research and development in the area of sensors and paper physics at IPST.) At CPBIS, I work with a webmaster and a Georgia Tech graduate student to maintain and continuously improve our Web site (<http://cpbis.gatech.edu/>) and the paper industry databases ("Web tools") accessible by users of the site.

CPBIS Web Tools

Of the CPBIS Web tools, the first to be developed was for the research project, *Price Behavior in the Pulp and Paper Industry*. It exhibits 20-year price trends for several paper and pulp grades, more detailed, recent five-year trends, several on-line models for forecasting inventories and sales, and related, useful information. It is accessed via the link, www.cpbis.gatech.edu/price.

The *Mills Online* tool, accessed via the link www.cpbis.gatech.edu/millsonline, was originally developed in response to a specific need of the CPBIS project, *An External Benefits Study of Black Liquor Gasification*, managed by Michael Farmer and Scott Siquefield. The need was to raise awareness of the opportunities offered by black liquor gasification among local community representatives throughout the U.S. and to solicit their participation in the project. This objective was quickly achieved. We then had the idea of using the framework of the database to provide more detailed information about U.S. pulp and paper mills and their products. The tool was launched in June 2004 and we now average about 1,000 visitors per month.

The latest addition to our collection of Web tools is an on-line, free-access, searchable bibliographic database of references related to pulp and paper,

www.cpbis.gatech.edu/biblio, with a leaning toward business issues shared by the paper industry and other industries. This reflects our membership in the family of Sloan Industry centers.

The Web tools are regularly maintained and updated, and we will be adding a fourth one later this year. In addition, the Web site will undergo a major redesign to make paper industry data and news more easily accessible to our main groups of users: pulp and paper industry personnel, CPBIS researchers and the community at large.

Like many others, I believe that reliable and easily accessible information leads to better business decisions. The Enron, WorldCom, and Nortel scandals, just to cite a few, are proof that unbiased, verifiable, and accurate information is a prerequisite for good decisions by both business practitioners and the general public. To me, CPBIS, because of its deep roots in the academic world, is ideally placed to be a neutral and unbiased observer of the pulp and paper industry.

New Research on Printing Papers

A multidisciplinary, cross-institutional project involving researchers at two Sloan industry centers and three universities will put printing paper performance under the microscope. CPBIS, together with the Sloan Printing Industry Center at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) will contribute funding and other resources to the project, which aims to address critical competitiveness issues at the interface of the printing and paper industries.

Printing and writing papers make up the largest segment of U.S. paper and board production, while graphics packaging and newsprint account for a large part of the remainder. Essentially all of the higher end products of the paper industry have key product quality criteria directly linked to the requirements of the printing industry. The importance of understanding these quality criteria and their relationship to fiber and paper properties is underlined by the fact that the printing industry is undergoing a transition from traditional processes to digital printing processes. Furthermore, the digital processes and their associated equipment are developing rapidly in ways that place new demands on paper quality. This need, together with the availability of the combined resources of the printing and paper industry centers, set the stage for the conception and approval of the project.

In the process of crafting their proposal, the researchers immediately recognized the importance of going directly to the customer, the printing

industry, to learn about quality requirements. This is where two prime resources of the RIT center come into play – a database of nearly 200 printing companies and the excellent relationships and rapport that RIT has with those companies, as well as with device manufacturers. The study will capitalize on these resources by undertaking a comprehensive phone survey of printers and interviews of a number of device manufacturers. The result will be a large body of information on technical deficiencies in papers currently used for digital printing, likely future needs, constraints placed on digital printer design by paper properties, and other customer needs relating to paper characteristics.

Researchers at IPST and the University of Florida will use the resulting information on desired paper characteristics, together with existing knowledge that relates paper characteristics to fiber types and properties, to assess the feasibility of using biotechnology to achieve the needed changes in fiber properties. In addition, existing forest and mill simulation models will be enhanced to enable their use for economic analysis of potential change scenarios.

Another part of the study, which aims to create new insights into the inner workings of the digital printing industry, will enable better estimates of future demand for printing papers. Researchers at the Georgia Tech School of Economics will analyze incentives and barriers to entry and estimate the profitability of the digital printing industry.

For more information on this project, contact the principal investigators: David White (IPST at Georgia Tech, david.white@ipst.gatech.edu), Minjae Song (Georgia Tech School of Economics, minjae.song@econ.gatech.edu), Mary Anne Evans (RIT School of Print Media, maeppr@rit.edu) and Gary Peter (U. of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation, gfpeter@ufl.edu).

Upcoming Events

CPBIS - PIMA Online Professional Development Course. April 20: “Press Section Cleaning and Conditioning;” May 4: “Press Section Monitoring and Guiding.” Both at 11:00am-12:30pm EDT. See <http://www.pimaweb.org/training/webcasts.html>

Management Development Course. May 9-13, CPBIS. See <http://www.cpbis.gatech.edu/mgtdev>

IPST/CPBIS TechnoBusiness Forum 2005. Sept. 19-20, Atlanta. Details forthcoming. ■