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The Paperless Office - Just a Dream?

AIIM, a global community of information professionals, has just released a report on research it has done to assess the degree to which the so-called “paperless office” has become a reality and, in more detail, to measure the success of paper elimination projects. The report, titled “The Paper Free Office – Dream or Reality?” is the result of a web-based survey of 477 organizations, excluding responses from organizations with less than 10 employees and suppliers of ECM (enterprise content management) products or services.

The report describes the benefits of going paperless (reduction of storage space, improved sharability and searchability, speed of response, and speed of data availability) but it also acknowledges that the consumption of paper is decreasing in only 35% of the organizations surveyed and that paper consumption is stable or increasing in approximately 57% of the largest organizations (those with more than 5000 employees) and 62% of the medium-sized organizations (those with between 500 and 5000 employees). Most (77%) respondents print at least one copy of invoices received in digital form.

The full report can be downloaded at <http://www.aiim.org/Research/Industry-Watch/Paper-Free-Capture-2012>

Two Sides

Two Sides (<http://www.twosides.us/twosidesUS-home#page=Latest-5>) is an international non-profit organization created to promote the responsible production, use, and sustainability of print and paper. It recently launched its U.S. web site, which appears to be a valuable resource for those who would make the case for the paper industry’s environmental record being much more favorable than many believe. For example, one of the site’s pages, “Myths and Facts,” lists and effectively rebuts some commonly heard

misconceptions, such as “Making paper destroys forests.” The facts, as stated by Two Sides:

- The U.S. paper industry promotes sustainable forestry and depends on sustainable forest growth to provide a reliable supply of wood fiber. Paper manufacturers do this by encouraging forest sustainability through their purchase and use of certified wood fiber and by promoting sustainable forest management policies and practices at home and around the globe.
- And by providing a dependable market for responsibly grown fiber, the paper industry encourages landowners to continue managing their forestland instead of selling it for development or other non-forest uses.
- In the United States, we grow more trees than we harvest. The amount of U.S. forestland has remained essentially the same for the last 100 years at about 750 million acres, even though the U.S. population tripled during the same period. - *U.S. Forest Service*
- The income landowners receive for trees grown on their land encourages them to maintain, renew and manage this valuable resource sustainably. This is an especially important consideration in places facing economic pressures to convert forestland to non-forest uses. - *World Business Council for Sustainable Development*
- While total forestland area in the U.S. has been relatively stable over the last century, a net loss of 20 million acres (2.7%) is projected between 2000 and 2050. Most of that loss will be caused by development. - *U.S. Forest Service*

Recent Forestweb/Industry Intelligence Headlines

Forestweb and its sister company, Industry Intelligence, publish daily and weekly news reports tracking recent developments in and around the paper and forest products industries. Subscription information is at

<http://www.forestweb.com/Corporate/index.cfm>

Below is a small sampling of recent headlines, together with brief synopses.

February 12

M-real opens new R&D center in Äänekoski, Finland, to support paperboard packaging innovation, including introduction of new raw materials such as microfibrillated cellulose

The new R&D centre will commence operations in February.

English country estate establishes commercial operation to supply woodchips to biomass boilers; manager says Barningham Park's woodlands are 'a big asset' that will grow with rising oil prices

The Barningham Park Estate also converted the heating system for its main house and office buildings to biomass technology.

British Columbia's forest sector may be headed for post-beetle 'golden era' -- or not; province's chief forester more cautious than Interfor's over opportunities for 'miracle resource' in climate change mitigation

A 2006 projection that the beetle would kill 80% of pine by 2013 has not been fully realized, although new models still forecast major damage to 61% of the susceptible pine by 2021.

FPIInnovations unveils new structure to its 550 employees in Canada; CEO says research and development remains at organization's 'heart and soul' but new business tools have been added

The CEO said the collaborative research approach was no longer sufficient to help them support their members and partners in pursuit of their new goals.

K-C to abandon pulp production with permanent closure of its pulp and tissue mill in Everett, Washington, by end of March, marking first time in 140 years that K-C will no longer make its own pulp

According to the Minneapolis Star Tribune, about 700 workers will lose their jobs.

February 5

UPM to invest €150M in biorefinery at Lappeenranta, Finland, producing 100,000 tonnes/year of biodiesel on industrial scale from crude tall oil; construction to begin summer 2012, completed 2014

The demand for biofuels is expected to grow by approximately 7% a year in the EU.

Global demand for torrefied biomass could exceed 70 million tonnes/year by 2020, as it displaces coal and potentially some conventional untreated biomass and wood pellets, finds new Hawkins Wright report

Torrefied fuels have the potential to displace coal in largely unmodified utility-scale power plants at high co-firing percentages and at minimal capital cost to the generator. They carry about 40% more energy (by volume) than conventional wood pellets and more than three times that of wood chips.

Domtar to sell long-idled pulp mill and sawmilling assets in Lebel-sur-Quévillon, Québec, to Fortress Paper for nominal sum of C\$1; operation to be converted to dissolving pulp, Domtar to sell initial output of NBSK

The manufacturing operations at the pulp mill ceased in November 2005 due to unfavorable economic conditions

January 29

Domtar acquires Attends Healthcare, European manufacturer of adult incontinence care products, from Rutland Partners for €180M; acquisition consolidates ownership of Attends brand on both sides of Atlantic

Domtar CEO says demand for incontinence care products in Europe is strong.

CelluForce inaugurates its C\$36M NanoCrystalline Cellulose demonstration plant at Domtar's pulp, paper mill in Windsor, Quebec; company aims to reach one tonne/day production rate in 2012

Nanocrystalline cellulose (NCC) is an advanced material derived from wood fiber. Natural, renewable, recyclable, compostable and bio-degradable, it can reduce damage caused by wear and can be incorporated into systems to make light reflective structures tunable from ultraviolet to infrared.

Södra begins dissolving pulp production at its Mörrum, Sweden, pulp mill; full operation to provide 170,000 tonnes/year

A definitive decision on a second textile pulp line at Södra will be made in 2012.

January 22

China's one-child policy is resulting in labor shortages, giving workers leverage to demand higher wages; manufacturing wages per hour increased 63.1% in real terms from 2005-2010

Rising living standards, greater demand for urban office jobs, a shrinking labor pool and increasing wages are all factors that may stunt manufacturing expansion in China.

Greenpeace co-founder-turned critic Moore kicks off 2012 Truck Loggers' Assn. convention in Victoria, British Columbia, with scathing attack on green building movement that favors 'hippy-dippy things' but not wood

Moore said Greenpeace and similar organizations oppose logging, and have influenced green building standards in North America to exclude construction lumber from their list of renewable materials.

Statistics Corner: Employment Recovery

Figure 1 below shows the precipitous drop in paper industry employment of production workers that occurred during the recent recession, and the ensuing recovery. Although the number of workers has not increased in recent months, the rate of job loss has slowed dramatically.

Figure 2 shows the corresponding data for employment of administrative and clerical workers. In this case, the picture is brighter; employment has increased substantially since the beginning of 2011. ■

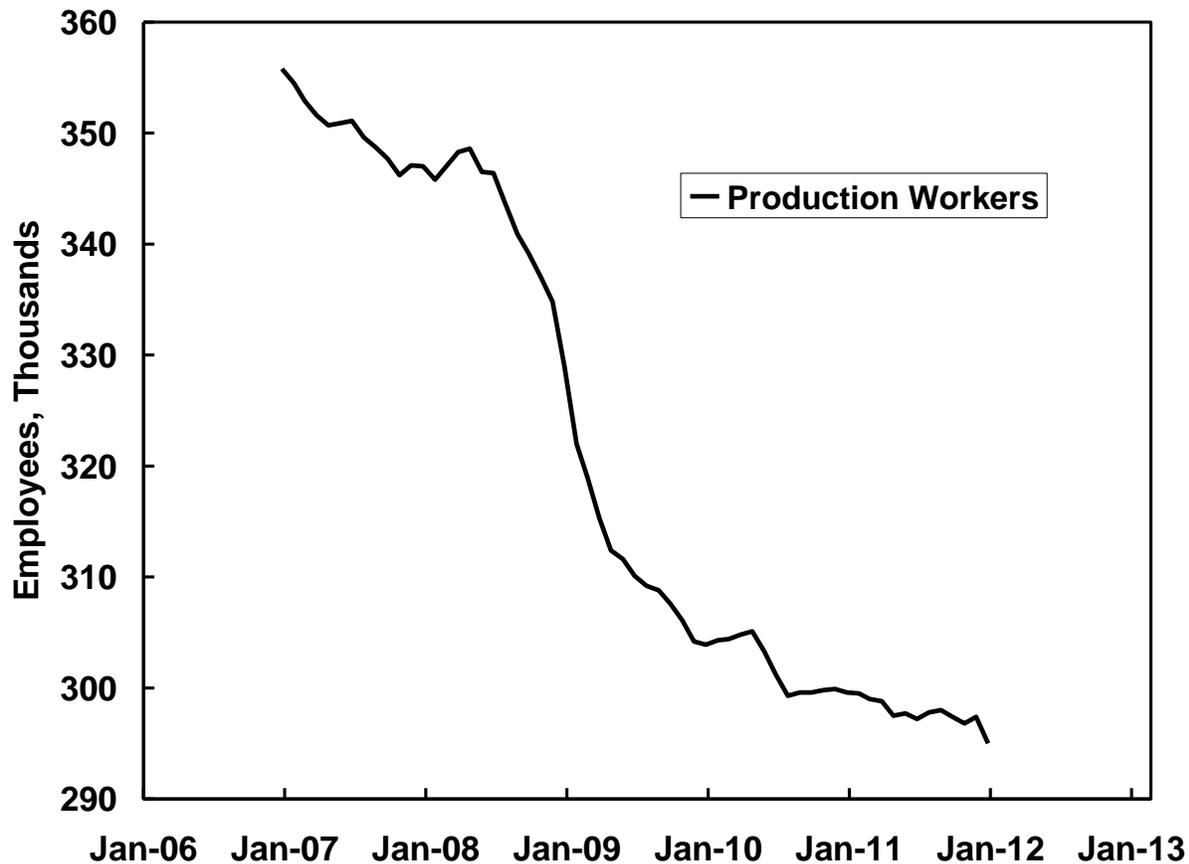


Figure 1. Paper Industry Employment of Production Workers (*Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

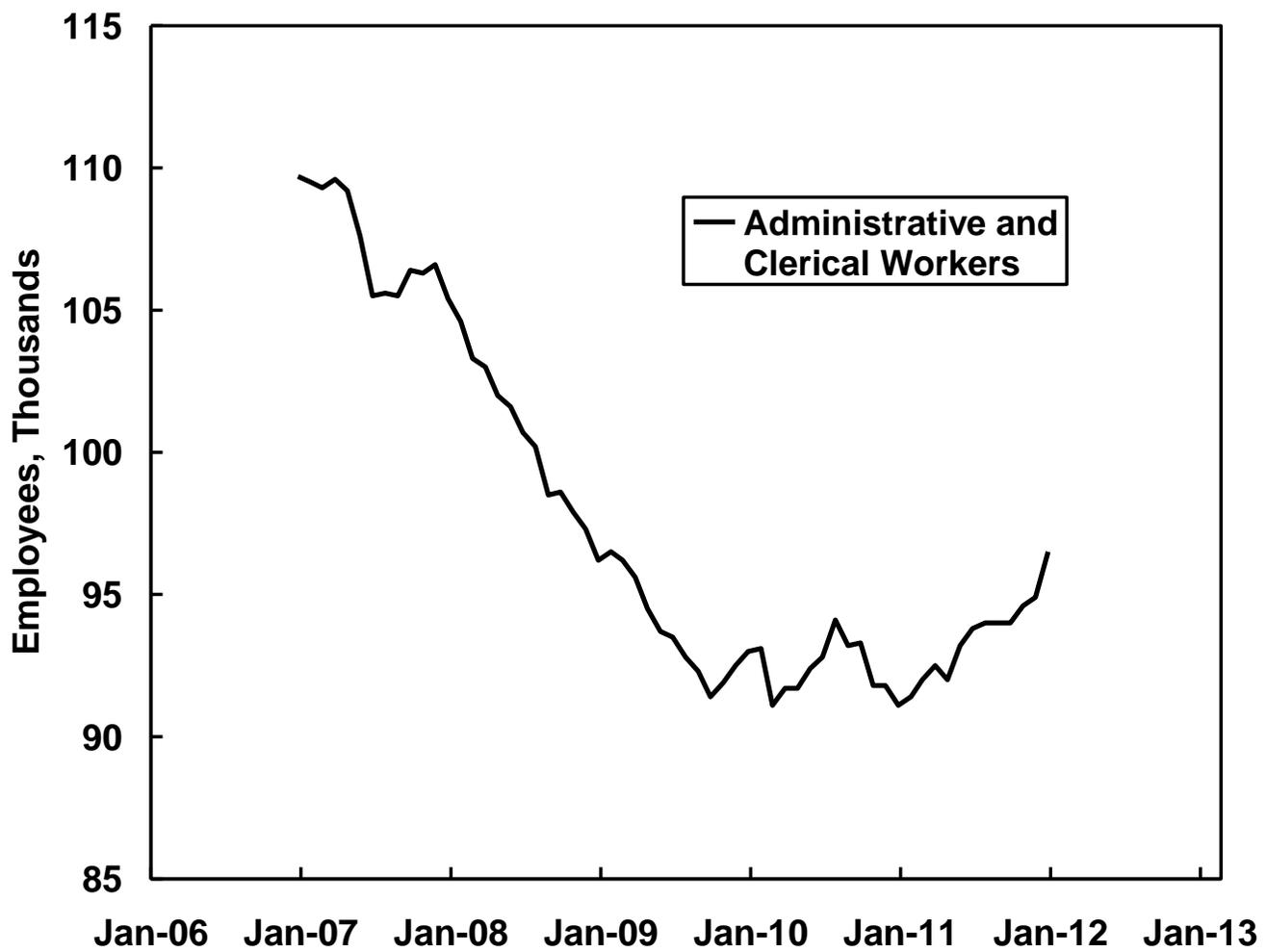


Figure 2. Paper Industry Employment of Administrative Workers (*Bureau of Labor Statistics*)