



Center for Paper Business and Industry Studies

Newsletter of the Center for Paper Business and Industry Studies

A Sloan Foundation Industry Center ♦500 Tenth Street ♦Atlanta GA 30318 ♦<http://PaperStudies.org/>

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Launching Research

At this time last year, we were preparing a proposal to the Sloan Foundation for the creation of what is now the Center for Paper Business Industry Studies. A critical component of that proposal, and one of the reasons for its success, was a draft research program. It comprised descriptions of 21 projects in five theme areas: globalization, enterprise effectiveness, workplace transformation, and community. This effort had twofold significance – it engendered faculty enthusiasm for the center and for the paper industry as a research arena, and the proposed projects were “on target,” assuring the people at Sloan that we understood their aspirations for the Center’s research.

Shortly after the Sloan funding was granted, we put into action a plan for a research program built on the foundation of the original 21 project proposals. We invited the authors of the original 21 to flesh out and re-submit their ideas, and put in place a peer review and selection procedure. A total of 18 teams responded, initiating a difficult selection process that ultimately resulted in the choice of seven projects for immediate funding:

Workplace Transformation and Human Resources in the Pulp and Paper Industry: How do mill work place environments need to change for better organizational performance?

Commercialization of Forest Biotechnology: Economic Targets for Enhanced Global Competitiveness of the U.S. Pulp and Paper Industry – What are the most economically rewarding ways to use genetics to develop trees that

will yield products with specific combinations of desirable properties?

Price Behavior in the Pulp and Paper Industry - What causes prices to move and why? How can we develop new forecasting tools and elasticity equations?

Policy, Organization and Innovation in the American Pulp and Paper Industry since 1914 - Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Problems - What can we learn from our historical record of successes and failures that is applicable to contemporary management challenges?

Key Issues Affecting Configuration and Management of Globally Efficient Supply Chains – What are the impacts of macro issues like exchange rates, national policies, tariffs, trade barriers and international trade policies on global supply chains?

A Study of the MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Operations) Supply Chain for Pulp and Paper Mills -What are the key features of the mill core maintenance and operations portion of the overall production supply chain?

Integrated Environmental and Economic Performance Monitoring of a Paper Manufacturing Operation – How can mills be run to simultaneously achieve economic and environmental objectives in the best possible way?

These projects comprise the inaugural CPBIS research program. In a few weeks, we will have taken care of the final administrative details and the program will be fully underway. You can expect to hear more in the near future.

The ROC

Vital to the research function of the CPBIS is a dedicated group known to us as “the ROC.” This is the Research Operations Committee, made up of delegates representing the industry, IPST and Georgia Tech. Their duties are many and varied: evaluating and selecting submissions for funding; monitoring the ongoing work of funded projects; selecting special projects that arise between funding cycles; arranging access to research sites; and helping to disseminate the findings of Center research.

The group is chaired by Steve Vallas, our Associate Director for Research. The voting members are Stephany East (AF&PA), Bob Moran (Bowater), Keith Romig (PACE), Larry Jacobs (Georgia Tech), Pat McCarthy (Georgia Tech), Gary Baum (IPST) and Tom McDonough (CPBIS/IPST). Non-voting members are Steve, Gus Giebelhaus, Jim McNutt and Vinod Singhal. We are most grateful to all of them for the many hours they put in to arrive at the final selection of projects, and for the commitment they have made to helping ensure the relevance and effectiveness of CPBIS research.

(A slightly less visible, but equally important group is made up of our external peer reviewers. We sincerely thank them for volunteering their time and for their thoughtful assessments.)

The Other Eleven

If you’ve been reading carefully, you’ve noticed that, of the 18 project proposals submitted, only seven are listed for immediate funding. This is not to say we’ve abandoned the other 11, all of which were well crafted and needs-based. Although the amount of money currently available does not allow us to immediately select more projects, we remain committed to assisting the principal investigators in their efforts to secure future funding, either from CPBIS or other appropriate sources.

Our First Intern

Congratulations to Erik Lystad, who was awarded a CPBIS Summer Internship for a study of supply chains, and thanks to Accenture, for hosting the internship. Erik is a 2001 graduate of the IPST M.S. program. He has been admitted to the Ph.D. program of Georgia Tech’s DuPree College of Management. ■