

# PressLines

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## Time to Get On Board with CoMail

Mailing costs are unquestionably the greatest challenge in the printing and publishing industry. With postage costs generally exceeding creative and production costs combined, catalogers and magazine publishers are still reeling from harsh double-digit postage hikes that emerged from the last rate case. Now the industry faces another increase, though comparatively modest, on May 12.

### What to do?

No question some organizations are choosing to mail less, with year-to-date catalog mailings down approximately 13 percent providing a shining example. Many catalogers and publishers are also electing to cut dimensions, specify lighter or less expensive papers, reduce page counts and improve targeting. While these steps might be warranted, most risk making the printed materials less appealing. When you are depending on your print materials to drive revenue, the "less is more" theory might not apply.

### Along Comes CoMail

The process of combining two or more titles into a single mailstream is actually nothing new. But, the restrictions of inline systems previously kept many catalogers and publishers from participating. Now the

emergence of new offline CoMail technologies, along with changing postal regulations, is enabling more mailers to enjoy greater postage savings.

There are still some restrictions associated with CoMail, but one of its best attributes is saving money without requiring a major change in the piece's construction. Offline co-mailing systems are more flexible, generally

accepting dimensional ranges such as 7-3/4" to 8-3/4" x 10" to 10-7/8" for standard-size catalogs and magazines. CoMail thickness requirements are liberal as well, with many systems having a 1/2" maximum.

You'll also have to conform to an addressing window and the use of inkjet addressing while foregoing polybagging and inside inkjet addressing. Other than that, it's business as usual.

Offline systems allow for more participation flexibility, but you need to be aware that missing the designated time window for your pool due to any scheduling delays means the mailing goes without you. Your alternatives then are to either mail solo or wait for the next pool.

### Get a CAPS Account

One final CoMail requirement is setting up a Centralized Account Processing System (CAPS) account. This is a USPS program that allows mailers to pay for postage electronically through one central location, regardless of the number or location of postal permits they may have or the class of mail used. It is a convenient, cost-effective way to manage



**CoMail Mechanics**

For those who like to know how things work, CoMail combines the circulations of a pool of catalog or magazine titles being produced within a common timeframe into a single, presorted-mailing list. A sophisticated, off-line collating system feeds each title based on the respective sortation order. By combining multiple titles into one mailstream, more mail can be put onto pallets to qualify for drop shipping discounts. The resulting finer sortation also generates even greater savings through postal worksharing discounts.

postal money and is a requirement for participating in CoMail programs.

Mailers have the option to set up their own CAPS account and mailing permit or use Ripon Printers. Permit charges are \$350 (\$175 application fee plus \$175 annual permit fee). Postage payment for this permit must be linked to a CAPS Debit account. Besides the cost savings, one

advantage of using Ripon's account is we can still mail from our facility if the mailing cannot CoMail for schedule or other reasons.

**So What Are the Savings?**

We hate to say, "It depends," but that happens to be the truth. For starters, CoMail works best for flatsized catalogs and magazines that

have circulations of 20,000 to 75,000. Lists from 5,000 to 200,000 may benefit, though not likely to the same degree.

Here's a real-life example from Kitchen Krafts, Inc., a direct merchant of hard-to-find cooking tools, ingredients and supplies for creative cooks. The company experienced a \$1,500, or 10 percent, net savings from CoMail with a catalog having a piece weight of 3.02 ounces and circulation of 40,000. This is how the various mailing options compared:

- \$15,000 – Postage if mailed entirely from Ripon Printers' facility
- \$14,850 – Postage if mailed with BMC drops
- \$13,500 – Postage with CoMail

The catalog also hit the all-important in-home dates and savings will grow as the co-mailing pool increases in size. While the mailing timeframe for CoMail is a few days longer, time is often made up through greater amounts of mail being drop shipped closer to the final destination point.

**Taking the Next Step**

The best way to determine your savings is to have Ripon Printers provide a free, no-obligation analysis of your list. We will then be able to present a savings estimate based upon typical CoMail scenarios. Contact your Ripon Printers representative or send an e-mail request to [sales@riponprinters.com](mailto:sales@riponprinters.com).

**RIPON**

**Ripon Launches Online Seminar Program**

Looking for practical information about production-related tasks and major industry trends? Short on time? Ripon Printers now offers high-quality, online seminars covering a variety of timely topics. Fast-paced, one-hour sessions – accessible from the convenience of your desktop – provide valuable information that will help you do your job better and easier.

Our first seminar, "Creating Bulletproof PDFs," featured Ripon Printers' Customer Education Specialist Jason Hauman and attracted more than 100 participants. The online seminar program is part of **Ripon Printers' Graphic Arts Connection** which brings print professionals together in an educational environment where they can explore the latest print technologies, concepts and trends.

Watch for announcements of upcoming online seminars. **RIPON**

**Tired of Sharing Your Copy of PressLines?**

Your colleagues can have their own free subscription to **PressLines** by signing up at [www.riponprinters.com/forms/presslines\\_subscribe.htm](http://www.riponprinters.com/forms/presslines_subscribe.htm). We'll add them to the mailing list so that everyone can have a fresh-off-the press copy – no waiting and no coffee stains. They can also request our e-mail communications program, which consists of **ePressLines**, a twice-monthly electronic publication featuring valuable information for print marketers, as well as occasional e-mail announcements of Ripon Printers' online seminars and other educational services. **RIPON**

# Accountability

A few weeks ago we had a business consultant talk to us about teams and leadership. One of the concepts that really hit home to me was there are only three reasons why something doesn't get done. Either you didn't know what to do, you didn't know how to do it or it wasn't important enough to you. (Actually, my brother came up with a fourth reason – you die! – but hopefully that's not the problem.)

When the reason is that “it wasn't important enough to you,” that doesn't necessarily mean that it wasn't important to you. Instead, chances are something was more important to you that superseded the task. For example, assume an employee didn't complete an assignment because he was taking care of a customer. In most cases, taking care of a customer is more important than most assignments, so while the assignment might have been important, taking care of the customer was even more critical.



Andy Lyke

I got thinking about this when someone asked if I had read an article that was given to me a day or two before. Normally, in a case like this my response is “I didn't have time.” In reality however, the answer, to myself, at least should have been “it wasn't important enough to me.” Now, square that with time taken to watch TV or do pleasure reading, and all of a sudden doing those types of activities seem pretty shallow when there is work to be done. However, there is nothing shallow about needing “downtime” to relax and

recreate. Certainly spending time with family is important, as is taking care of our physical health by sleeping, eating and hopefully getting some exercise.

I tried using this philosophy when talking with someone at a school board meeting this week. I noted to her that since she wasn't at an informational meeting that the issue must not have been important enough to her. Needless to say, that conversation went south in a hurry! (I ended up calling her the next day to apologize.) However, I will use this way of looking at accountability and work with it with my staff.

In the end, life is full of choices. How important is one assignment compared to something else? Rather than say “I didn't have time,” I'm going to have to admit more often that “it wasn't important enough to me.” **RIPON**

## It's a good thing we know printing... not numbers!

In the last issue, we introduced you to our on-site ExpressCare medical clinic. Staffed by a nurse practitioner from Ripon Medical Center (RMC), ExpressCare is open 10 hours each week in time slots to address the schedules of all three shifts. Our numbers from the first 11 months were not quite right.

To correct the record, 189 employees accessed ExpressCare services in 2007 which works out to 59 percent of our staff. There was an average of three visits per employee during the year. We estimate we avoided 505 off-site office visits and a net dollars savings of \$11,575 – a 33 percent return on investment. **RIPON**

### On the Road Again...

*Stop by and visit us in person!*

#### ACCM Show

Booth 622  
May 19 - 21  
Orlando, Fla.

#### BEA (BookExpo America)

Booth 558  
May 29 – June 1  
Los Angeles, Calif.

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### We begin the 2008 contest season with a bang

**W**e are pleased to announce the results from two print competitions – one statewide, the other throughout North America.

**I**n its 24th year, the **Web Offset Association (WOA) Print Competition** recognizes exceptional achievement in print throughout North America. More than 400 entries in 32 categories were judged.

In the 2008 competition, we earned one first, five seconds and one third place awards.

- Heatset printing/coated stock/ 1, 2 or 3 colors – a first and a second.
- Coldset printing/newsprint/ 1, 2 or 3 colors – a second and a third.
- Heatset printing/uncoated stock/ 1, 2 or 3 colors – second.
- Coldset printing/uncoated other than newsprint/ 1, 2 or 3 colors – second.
- Magazines/uncoated – second.

**T**he **Graphics Excellence Awards**, sponsored by the Printing Industries of Wisconsin, is a competition that promotes excellence in print communications and recognizes companies and individuals who create the best in print media. In the eighth year of this competition, 1,107 pieces from Wisconsin printing and graphic arts firms were entered.

Sixteen of our entries were recognized.

Of the 12 awards in the four **web press printing** categories, we garnered one first, two seconds and two thirds. We also earned two awards each in the **directories & source books** and **programs - 4 or more colors** categories.

We earned a **Badger – Best of Category** in the **web press printing/coated stock - 1, 2 or 3 colors** category. The University of Arizona Press Fall 2007 catalog earned the Badger as well as the first place in the WOA contest.

A layflat handbook produced on our Müller Martini Bolero perfect binder earned a third place in the **other special finishing techniques** category. **RIPON**

