Looking Toward the Future—
60 Years and Counting

As we look to March we are getting excited about celebrating 60 years of TAGA history. This year’s annual conference will be held in San Francisco, California on March 16–19, 2008. I look forward to renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. It is the event to not only understand where the industry and technology is going but also be able to form new research ideas. This year’s theme is “Looking Toward the Future.”

While we look forward we can’t help to look back to see how we have done over the past 60 years. When the original founders of The Technical Association of the Lithographic Industry (TALI), met on April 16, 1948 they formed an association “to advance the science and technology of the lithographic and related industries.” In 1951 the name was changed to The Technical Association of the Graphic Arts (TAGA) and with that change began a change in purpose. The new goal of the organization was to advance the science and technology of all graphic arts processes, old and new, opening up the membership to all branches of the graphic arts. The Board of Directors of TAGA felt that the broadening scope of the organization would open up new possibilities for service to members and to the industry. Today we look to the future with revitalized strength in our past success. We move forward and adapt to the changes in the industry and challenges of the economy that affect us all. When asked what his view of TAGA’s purpose was, Dr. Tony Stanton said, “TAGA fills a unique niche in the graphics community by providing technical education without commercialism or ulterior motives. TAGA exists to serve its members, bringing together researchers from all over the world from a diverse set of disciplines all related to graphic media. It allows these groups to interact and to exchange ideas and perspective in mutually beneficial ways.” We continue to grow and we continue to change. Happy 60th anniversary TAGA. Congratulations on 60 years of education, growth, and adaptability. Join me in San Francisco, California to toast to TAGA’s accomplishments on March 16–19, 2008.

Dr. Mark Bohan, TAGA Managing Director
Dear Colleague,

Please allow me to add my voice to the chorus that is urging you to attend the 60th anniversary Annual Technical Conference of TAGA in San Francisco from March 16–19. The venue alone, Fisherman’s Wharf, is an enticing draw, and, when you add one of the strongest technical programs in recent years, it becomes a compelling event. If you are able to join us, do not miss the keynote session on Sunday afternoon. We will be addressed by four top experts in cutting edge fields. Digital workflow, electrophotographic printing, color management, and holographic data storage are the topics being addressed by Guy Gecht (EFI), Hadi Mahabadi (Xerox), William Li (Kodak/ICC), and Lambertus Hesselink (Stanford), respectively. Check the Conference at a Glance for the speaking schedule and plan to join us afterward for a welcoming reception that will provide opportunity to talk one-on-one with these experts.

The two days that follow will build on the momentum of the keynote session. We have had a surplus of worthy abstracts from TAGA members wishing to present technical papers. This has caused some tough decisions to be made, but it has resulted in a technical program that is uniform and strong. It has also resulted in a significantly upgraded poster paper collection. There will be more poster papers this year, and we have rethought the presentation logistics to make them more accessible to the participants. In addition, we are adding a new tutorial track on Monday and Tuesday afternoons to run concurrently with the papers sessions. These tutorial tracks will provide high-level technical background information for those wishing to catch up on various cutting-edge issues. Monday will conclude with the latest installment in the very popular technical focus sessions.

There will be an awards banquet rounding things out on Tuesday evening which will combine the bestowing of awards with a celebration of 60 years of TAGA. It is my sincere wish that you will be able to celebrate the long history of this unique organization with us.

Dr. Anthony Stanton, TAGA President
We are often asked what goes on at the TAGA offices during a normal day of business so we want to take this opportunity to give everyone an update on the staff and our activities on behalf of TAGA. This past summer we welcomed our newest staff member Hallie Barcalow, research coordinator at PIA/GATF, to fill the post of TAGA administrator. She comes to us from Akron, Ohio with a strong journalism background and experience in the newspaper industry. Hallie was indoctrinated into TAGA very quickly helping stuff the 2007 Proceedings as her very first task on her first day in the building. It was no small task to stuff, label, sort, and mail 450 books to various countries all over the world, but she took to it with vigor and jumped right in.

We’re all busy preparing for the conference, and Hallie has been busy most recently preparing for membership renewals. With the upcoming conference in March we’re focused on the details of the program and making sure that instructions handed down from the board are getting completed and we’re off and running with the content and programming for this year’s conference. We look forward to seeing all of the members at the conference and are here to answer any questions that you might have in the meantime. To better assist you with your TAGA questions, please see the information below for specific requests.

Membership dues, invoices for books, paper requests, and general administration of TAGA
Contact: Hallie Barcalow, TAGA Administrator
Phone: 412-259-1706
Email: hbarcalow@piagatf.org

Conference details, speaker contact, visa letters, programming questions, hotel questions
Contact: Gwen Martin, TAGA Conference Manager
Phone: 412-259-1713
Email: gmartin@piagatf.org

Board member contact, press contact, management
Contact: Mark Bohan, TAGA Managing Director
Phone: 412-259-1782
Email: mbohan@piagatf.org
With the 60th anniversary of the association just around the corner, there was no time like the present for the staff to take a look back at where TAGA has been. There was just one minor problem—much of the documented history that comes with 60 years as an active organization was hidden away in a Rochester storage facility, having never made its way to TAGA’s new Pittsburgh office.

But no more. Since October, everything TAGA is back under one roof thanks to board member Eric Neumann and Eric Cathie of PIA/GATF’s Research Department. The two Eric’s made the trek to New York and back in a rent-a-truck to retrieve the records and memorabilia of TAGA’s past and unite them with the files of TAGA’s present.

Ten pallets full of weathered and worn boxes stuffed with decades of documents, back issue proceedings, and plenty of history were unloaded into the PIA/GATF warehouse in Sewickley, awaiting a day-long search and sort by the TAGA office team.

Beneath the layer of dust left after several years in storage were scores of archives including award recipient biographies and photographs, completed membership applications, financial documents and ledgers, brochures with former TAGA logos, board election ballots, previous conference handbooks, and even Tag-A-TAGA member promotional mugs!

After sifting through the clutter of outdated letterhead and defunct bank deposit slips and filling more than a few recycle bins, the “good stuff” remained and found itself out of storage and into the office to be easily accessed when needed.

The next job to tackle was TAGA’s collection of Proceedings. Dating back to 1949, nearly all years have been accounted for and inventoried, ranging from one copy to more than 200, and are packed and ready to ship. You may purchase back issues of the Proceedings at a drastically discounted rate at www.taga.org or at the 2008 Annual Technical Conference in San Francisco where they will be shipped directly to your address as soon as we get back to the TAGA office.

At the end of the day, though covered in dust from head to toe, the office staff was refreshed and energized because of what they found. Taking a look back at where TAGA has been makes where it’s headed all the more exciting, and we look forward to collecting the next 60 years of history!
TAGA Student Chapters

The purpose of the TAGA student chapters is to:

- Acquaint future industry leaders with the science and research involved in technological developments in the graphic arts.
- Encourage students to pursue careers in the scientific and research areas of the graphic arts.
- Encourage research and scholarship in the graphic arts.
- Encourage dialogue among student scholars about technical issues impacting the graphic arts and those issues of future importance.
- Provide students an opportunity to publish and present their work by presenting research, writing technical papers, and producing a student technical publication.

Currently Active TAGA Student Chapters

- Appalachian State University
- Cal Poly State University
- Clemson University
- Eastern Illinois University
- French Engineering School of Paper and Printing (EFPG)
- Illinois State University
- Linköping University
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Ryerson University
- University of Wisconsin-Stout
- Waukesha County Technical College
- Western Michigan University

We would like to provide continuing updates on the student TAGA chapters; Chapter presidents should send updates to the TAGA office at taga@piagatf.org.

Student Chapter questions and information

Contact: Eric Neumann, TAGA Student Education Committee Chair
Phone: 412-259-1819
Email: eneumann@piagatf.org
The Helmut Kipphan Student Cup

This past year the Cal Poly chapter earned the right to display the Helmut Kipphan Student Cup as the winners of the 2007 Student Publication Competition. The cup was sent to the school with engraved plaques that lists all of the previous winners of the competition. When asked how having the cup at Cal Poly makes the students feel, Dr. Harvey Levenson, student advisor, said, “The Helmut Kipphan student award cup is an everyday reminder at Cal Poly of the significance of this award. It is displayed prominently in the Cal Poly Graphic Communication Department office for all students and visitors to see when they come in. While we receive many awards for our graphic communication achievements at Cal Poly, the TAGA cup has its own ‘place of honor.’ It is an inspiration to all of our students to engage in research and scholarly pursuits beyond the classroom, and to participate in activities that support and advance our great profession—the graphic communication profession.”

Past winners of the Helmut Kipphan Student Cup:

1993 - Cal Poly
1994 - Clemson
1995 - Clemson
1996 - RIT
1997 - Clemson
1998 - Clemson
1999 - Clemson
2000 - Clemson
2001 - RIT
2002 - RIT
2003 - RIT
2004 - RIT
2005 - RIT
2006 - RIT
2007 - Cal Poly

Student Competition Deadlines

- **Helmut Kipphan Student Publication Competition**—February 29, 2008 (Deadline to submit papers to be considered for the Technical Writing criteria. Failure to do so will affect eligibility for the Grand Prize and Special Recognition for Technical Writing Awards.) A minimum of 200 books need to be available at the conference.
- **Dusty Rhodes Graduate Student Paper Competition**—February 1, 2008 (Manuscript)
- **Harvey Levenson Undergraduate Student Paper Competition**—February 1, 2008 (Manuscript)
- **TAGA Student Poster Paper Exhibition**—February 1, 2008 (Title, Abstract, Letter of Recommendation)

Student competitions are open to all Student TAGA members. Student submissions must be e-mailed to taga@piagatf.org. Questions call Hallie Barcalow at 412-259-1706.
INTERVIEW

with Eric Neumann, Research Manager at PIA/GATF and the new TAGA Student/Education Committee Chair

TAGA: Eric can you tell me a little bit about yourself and your history with TAGA?

Eric Neumann: I have been a member of TAGA since 1989 when I was a student at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. I served as the chapter's president in my last year there. When I continued my education at RIT, I also continued as a student member, this time as a graduate student. When I graduated from RIT and took a faculty position, I was asked by the chapter to serve as a faculty advisor, which I was more than happy to do. I was lucky enough to be able to continue my involvement with TAGA and the students even as I entered the corporate workforce. In 2003 I joined the TAGA board of directors and this past year was appointed chair of the student/education committee.

TAGA: How does it feel to be the student chair after joining TAGA as a student many years ago?

Neumann: It is truly an honor to be able to represent and be an advocate for the students of TAGA. Because I have never lapsed in my attendance at the TAGA meetings since 1991 it has become part of my annual routine. To not attend the conference or the Student Chapter meetings at the conference would feel very odd to me. I will continue to commit myself tirelessly to the student chapters and represent the interests of the students on the Board of Directors.

TAGA: As a student, what inspired you most about TAGA?

Neumann: TAGA is a very interactive club on most campuses, in many schools it is one of the few ways that a member can become part of research, production, and marketing team—it is the real world in microcosm. I have been amazed to see the quality of students, their research, and the design of their journals improve year after year. The hours of sweat and tears spent working on some truly fantastic printed journals show the dedication and pride of the students that produce them.

TAGA: What have been your fondest memories of TAGA?

Neumann: The fond memories have changed over the years. Early on as a student, it was the chance to interact with students from other great universities across the country and the world. As I began to enter the workforce, I quickly realized the incredible power of networking with some of the top researchers and decision makers in our industry. Today, I am on the other side, and I enjoy seeing the interaction of the next generation of students with other schools and industry professionals just as I did many years ago.

TAGA: Do many students continue their TAGA membership after graduation?

Neumann: The percentages are unfortunately pretty low, however some have stayed with the organization since graduation, and a handful have even made it to the Board of Directors, including the current TAGA President, Tony Stanton.

TAGA: What are your goals for the students now that you are the student committee chair?

Neumann: It is unfortunate that so few student TAGA members continue on as regular TAGA members after their graduation despite the wonderful technical and networking resources that TAGA affords them. I would like to work to improve the level of student retention after graduation. To do this, I need the help of the most dedicated students to let myself (and the rest of the Student/Education Committee) know what TAGA can do for them that would justify the value of remaining a member.

TAGA: What advice can you give to student members who will be graduating soon?

Neumann: I would like to remind our current (and soon to be graduating) students that they can continue to reap the benefits of their student level membership for up to two years after graduation, which means they can renew at the student rate for another two years and attend the Annual Technical Conference at the student rate. In addition, in 2007 another benefit was approved by the Board of Directors to encourage continued membership: In the two years after graduation, any student member may offer a complimentary full (individual level) membership to a co-worker at their new employer AND receive a complimentary membership for themselves (that’s two free memberships, and a great way to promote the benefits of TAGA within your new company, not to mention make some points with your new boss). And please don’t forget to update your address and new company information with the TAGA office. As soon as you have any new contact information email TAGA@piagatf.org.
Have you looked for one of your TAGA Proceedings books recently and found you have lost it? Did you perhaps miss a conference or never bought the Proceedings for a particular year? Are you looking to complete your collection?

We are happy to announce the launch of the TAGA Bookstore. Because of the new found inventory of books from the storage facility in Rochester, 2008 is the year to get the books you are missing. See the table below for a list of the purchase prices of the books from TAGA's 60-year history. Buy books in multiples and save on shipping.

**TAGA BOOK SALE**

**Single Papers**
  - TAGA Member $10.00  Non-Member $20.00
  - TAGA Member $15.00  Non-Member $30.00

**Digital Proceedings (Anthology)**
- 1975–2005 DVD-ROM 30-year Anthology
  - TAGA Member $975.00  Non-Member $975.00

**Digital Proceedings (Single year)**
- 2001–2007 CD-ROM Proceedings w/Abstracts
  - TAGA Member $75.00  Non-Member $150.00

**Printed Proceedings (Single year)**
- 1949–2002 Printed Complete Proceedings
  - TAGA Member $10.00  Non-Member $20.00
- 1994–1994 Printed Abstract Index
  - TAGA Member $10.00  Non-Member $20.00

**Overstock Proceedings on SALE**
- 2006 Abstracts ONLY (no CD-ROM)
  - TAGA Member $10.00  Non-Member $20.00
- 2004 Abstracts ONLY (no CD-ROM)
  - TAGA Member $10.00  Non-Member $20.00
- 2003 CD-ROM Proceedings w/ Abstracts
  - TAGA Member $50.00  Non-Member $100.00
- 2001/2002 CD-ROM Proceedings (CD only)
  - TAGA Member $25.00  Non-Member $50.00
- 2002 Printed Complete Proceedings
  - TAGA Member $5.00  Non-Member $10.00
- 2001 Printed Complete Proceedings
  - TAGA Member $5.00  Non-Member $10.00

These books contain the history of the printing industry and are a ready source of graphic arts R&D from 1949 to the present. Note that volumes prior to 2003 are case bound containing text and black-and-white illustrations. The 2001 and 2002 issues also include a CD-ROM containing full-color versions of papers. Special pricing is available to TAGA Members on back issues of the Proceedings and copies of individual papers, non-members and libraries may purchase at the listed non-member prices.

To purchase books download the PDF order form from www.taga.org or contact taga@piagatf.org.

**Other TAGA Products**

**TAGA Journal of Graphic Technology**
The TAGA Journal is a peer-reviewed journal designed to meet the needs of the global professional graphic applications industries and to bring together the multi-disciplinary community in further development of printing as a manufacturing process. The TAGA Journal embraces the fundamental science and technology, application and technology transfer, and the generic problems and experience associated with the management and implementation of graphic applications. For more information go to www.tagajournal.org.

For questions regarding submission of papers, email mbohan@piagatf.org

**TAGA Proceedings**
TAGA members and student conference attendees receive a copy of the TAGA Proceedings, a soft cover, bound book containing extended abstracts and a CD-ROM of the papers presented at the Conference with paid TAGA membership. Non-members have to purchase the proceedings at full price. Back issues of the Proceedings are available for purchase at www.taga.org.

**Searchable 30-Year Anthology of TAGA Proceedings**
You’ve heard about it, and now we have it. You can purchase one for yourself, your organization, your university’s library. The searchable anthology of the TAGA Proceedings date back to 1975 going through year 2005. Available on DVD with PDFs of the white papers. The DVD has keyword search engine capability. These are available through the TAGA Bookstore and will also be available at the conference. Cost is USD $975.
Now is the time to renew your membership for 2008 so that you can take advantage of the discounted TAGA conference member rates. In this anniversary year, it’s great to be a TAGA member! We thank you for your support in the past and encourage you to renew your membership today to take advantage of all TAGA has to offer for the next 12 months.

**As a 2008 TAGA member, you receive:**

- 2008 TAGA Proceedings—a perfect-bound book of executive summaries (abstracts) of all the papers presented at the annual conference with a CD-ROM of full papers, color images, and complete proceedings.
- Free subscription to the TAGA e-newsletter.
- Discounts on back issues of the TAGA Proceedings. To order, visit the TAGA Bookstore at www.taga.org.
- Access to other valuable resources on the www.taga.org website.
- Opportunity to utilize the peer-reviewed TAGA Journal of Graphic Communications.

And as always, a valuable network for your professional activities. TAGA unites researchers from all over the world from a diverse set of disciplines related to graphic media. It is a source for learning, keeping abreast of advances in the industry, and testing and developing new ideas. To continue your affiliation with TAGA and all the resources it provides, now is the time to renew! We look forward to sharing another year with you!

**Membership Prices**

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If you are interested in becoming a member or corporate sponsor of TAGA, please contact Hallie Barcalow, TAGA administrator, at 412-259-1706 or taga@piagatf.org for more information.
COLOR CONCEPTS
COLOR QUALITY LIMITS—ARE WE THERE YET?
by Gary G. Field

THE QUESTION

“Are we now at the point where no further improvement in color reproduction quality is possible?” was the question asked by Richard E. Maurer of Eastman Kodak. The setting was the Color Workshop session of a TAGA conference during the mid 1980s.

Typically, TAGA’s Color Workshop started with a general discussion of topics for possible future exploration. Maurer’s somewhat heretical topic was not chosen; scientists and engineers were, after all, employed to invent and improve processes. The question was, and still is, an important one. If further improvements in aspects of quality are unlikely, or even unnecessary, then research investments should be redirected. So, where are we relative to color reproduction quality limits?

INKS and SUBSTRATES

Over the years, many TAGA Color Workshop discussions focused upon the concept of “better” inks. This usually meant the development of pigments with spectral absorption properties closer to a theoretical ideal. Progress was tracked by industry surveys, and experimental color reproductions were made with fluorescent pigments.

In time, however, the surveys revealed that, although purer pigments (e.g., rhodamine magentas) were available, the industry usually preferred less expensive and less pure alternatives. Fluorescent pigments, furthermore, tended to be somewhat fugitive and posed some printability and runnability problems.

Substrates were, and are, available in a variety of brightnesses, shades of white, and a range of surface characteristics. Whiter and brighter substrates are hardly necessary, given the current high values of these properties.

In short, the optical properties of substrates and printed ink films seem to be quite satisfactory for the vast majority of printed matter. The use of extra inks beyond the usual four process colors satisfies those occasions when exceptionally high fidelity color is required.

PRINTING PROCESSES

The process performance issue concerns ink transfer efficiency and image structure. In general, advancements in press engineering (especially for flexography) has produced incremental printing fidelity improvements, but the characteristics of each process remains:

- Screen Printing. Allows, by far, the printing of the thickest ink film of any process. Between-color drying produces perfect ink trap and high Dmax. The mesh support system for the printing stencil, however, limits halftone screen resolution.

- Gravure. The cell structure permits variable thickness ink transfer which, when combined with between-unit drying, provides excellent color gamut and high Dmax. Gravure screen resolution is high, but the sideways diffusion of ink into the substrate serves to soften the image somewhat. Incomplete ink transfer from cells can produce unevenness or a kind of graininess in smooth, even tonal areas.

- Lithography. The offset principle keeps printed ink film thickness low, and wet-on-wet printing results in less-than-perfect ink trap. Like the other non-gravure processes, halftone screen-induced proportionality failure degrades lighter tones. So, gamut and Dmax are reduced, but gamut expansion via the use of five, six, or more colors (like the chromolithography of the 19th century) is not uncommon and is no longer prohibitively expensive. Lithography’s exceptional resolution of fine detail is certainly sufficient to satisfy the most demanding pictorial reproduction requirements. Smooth tonal reproduction is also another well-known hallmark of the lithographic process.
• Flexography. Very good color gamut and Dmax, but the relief halftone image carrier limits resolution and contributes to some loss of smoothness. The sideways diffusion of inks into the substrate can also reduce resolution.

• Electrophotographic. The perfect image transfer possible with this process produces excellent color gamut and Dmax. The relatively coarse resolution, however, limits fine detail reproduction, and toner clumping sometimes affects the smoothness of flat, even tonal areas. The use of light extra colors, for the ink jet printing version of this process, overcomes graininess problems and improves the gamut of lighter tones that are slightly degraded by proportionality failure effects.

Processes have their distinctive color quality characteristics that have to be balanced with the economic and production speed requirements that also are critical factors in the printing business. These strategic issues were addressed in a previous column.

Drying between colors is one obvious way to improve lithographic color printing quality, but otherwise, little change in the color gamut or image structure aspects of printed images is likely. Incremental improvements in the image definition aspects of electrophotographic processes is quite possible.

PREPRESS IMAGING

For years, the primary focus of much prepress research was focused upon the color correction manipulations required to compensate for the “non ideal” absorptions of printing ink pigments. Color scanners made it possible to accomplish this objective in a speedy, economical manner while allowing great control of the kinds and degrees of correction or adjustment. The introduction of consistent and accurate color monitors has effectively solved the remaining color adjustment aspects of prepress. The use of direct screening scanners also improved image sharpness relative to the prior multi stage color separation, masking, and screening process.

The digitization of prepress images did create some quality-related concerns (vignettes, fine-detail resolution), but most could be circumvented by operator control. The stochastic screening techniques of the early 1990s eliminated more as a concern and therefore made it possible to use any (and many) supplementary gamut-enhancing inks. This was a major development, especially for the offset lithography printing business.

The stochastic screens also produced high resolution images, but sometimes generated graininess in smooth, even tonal areas. Hybrid conventional and stochastic screens have helped minimize this problem as have the use of 250–300 lpi conventional screens.

In short, the color manipulation, image sharpness, resolution, and graininess mostly controlled during the prepress stages offer all that is needed for optimum reproduction. My 1996 TAGA paper explores this conclusion in more detail.

THE ANSWER

“Yes” is almost certainly the answer to the question of whether color reproduction quality has reached its zenith. The very best reproductions, as represented by the winning entries in the “best printing” competitions conducted by trade associations and other organizations will, of course, require the use of special skills, but they are unlikely to be constrained by technical feasibility or quality threshold limitations.

An expanded definition of printing quality was provided in a previous essay. Such factors as delivery speed, value, customer service, and creative manipulation, among others, are perceived “qualities” that customers seek. Research efforts will continue to address these issues more so than the color and image quality aspects of printed images. Those problems have been essentially solved.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gary G. Field is an Accredited Senior Imaging Scientist and Emeritus Professor at the California Polytechnic State University.
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March 16–19, 2008
Sheraton Fisherman’s Wharf Hotel
San Francisco, California, United States

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