

# ideal Perspectives

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## Reflecting back on 40 YEARS

In the printing industry, companies are often known by their flagship press. No one knows about your 36" cutter, folder or binder, but your clients, your competitors and your vendors will soon know you have a 1-color 15" or a 4-color 40" press. Ideal started with an old 1-color 30" Harris offset press. Is there any significance attached to that fact? In our case there sure was.

Quite coincidentally, at the time we were considering acquiring a little storefront printing business on West Broadway, an acquaintance of ours was a print buyer for the Winona Watkins Company. It just so happened he had an order to place for a 1C 128-page 6x9" cookbook. Go figure! Sixteen pages up on a 23x29" sheet, times four – a perfect fit for a 30" press! Remarkably, we had perhaps the largest job we would see for a year or more; and we didn't even own the place! We shall never discount the wisdom of medium- and long-term planning, but many times just making a good decision based on what you know today can be the best decision you will ever make.

When considering the milestones we have enjoyed and shared at Ideal, we may reflect on the addition of major equipment purchases, and rightfully so. We can only imagine what our company would have been without a 6-color press, stitcher trimmer, or even our computer-to-plate technology. Our best decisions may have been our moves into digital printing through the acquisition of Riverpoint; then mailing services through the acquisition of CMS.

We can't list major events at Ideal without mentioning our building (built in 1999), which is now half as old as our business. Often we overlook the significance of planning, but that was not the case with our building. Those engaged and occupying specific departments had something to say about the size, layout and how it should be designed. Twenty years later, we seldom hear about what we should have done differently. Can anyone not agree we have the best building on Williams Hill?

Many business owners, when asked what makes their company good, will admit "it's the people." That is the safest and best response. After 40 years, Ideal has had good times and also difficult ones. But if asked today what makes Ideal the good company we are, we would not ponder long. "It *IS* the people."

When we expound on the value of people, we are often talking about relationships. Those one-time events when someone does exactly the right thing and moves on, we may appreciate it, but give it very little further thought. What we don't forget are those 10, 20 and 30+ year relationships that have truly built Ideal into the solid, reputable company it is today. And lest we forget, there are the many lasting relationships between Ideal's people and our customers and vendors. We treasure them all.



Howard and Rhoda Siewert, circa 1980s



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## “Power of Print” Star Award

Ideal wins Best of Category – Cards



(Above) Back: Andy Olson, Dale Yant, Wendy Bergstrom, Francisco Cardona. Front: Cassandra Stump (Stephanie and Dale's daughter), Stephanie Yant, Joan Siewert-Cardona, Lana Siewert-Olson



Francisco Cardona and Joan Siewert-Cardona

holiday season without bending. The card was printed digitally on a heavyweight felt paper. At Ideal's Annual Meeting on May 23, Stephanie presented the framed original watercolor to management as a thank you for over 40 years of continuous employment!



The annual Printing Industry Midwest “Power of Print” Star Awards ceremony was held April 25 at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Minneapolis. Ideal was honored to receive a Star Award for Best of Cards Category!

The 2018 Ideal Christmas card was based on an original watercolor by **Stephanie Yant** in our Electronic Prepress Department. She started developing the folding/diecut concept last summer, and then painted the artwork to fit the folded piece. The intent was to be able to have a card that would be sturdy enough to display during the



Dale and Stephanie Yant with daughter Cassandra Stump

## Harnessing the rapidly-changing volatility of Paper Price Increases

With the advent of the internet, plus other factors, the paper industry has been thrust into turmoil. Due to major paper mills across the country closing, plus the rising cost of raw materials in which to make pulp, the paper industry is seeing major across-the-board increases in prices.

➤ **Why is this happening?** Paper demand has diminished over the past two decades due to more digital delivery methods. Paper mills have been reluctant to invest in expensive production equipment and often deciding to instead close indefinitely.

Freight costs, fewer over-the-road drivers, increased paper demand in

China (now the world's biggest and fastest-growing consumer of pulp), plus, closer to home, Canadian-imposed tariffs on U.S.-made paper product exports have also led to inflation of the packaging market. With these shifts in raw material prices and the loss of capacity, the few remaining mills finally have the power they need to increase prices to end users.

Beginning back in early 2017, pulp prices began to increase exponentially by nearly 25%. Chemicals used in the production have seen far larger increases, sometimes as much as 600% just



in the past few years. Weather has also been a factor – in 2017 alone, hurricanes forced 18 mills across the country to close or halt production. Now, with the more recent closure of several mills, most of the coated sheet market is now controlled by fewer than five players. Today's paper market does not currently have the capacity to support current demands, which drastically can affect availability and lead times. Unfortunately, single-stream recycling has resulted in

contaminated paper that is no longer usable as pulp.

Compounding the supply problems, back in 2017 the Department of Transportation

instituted new rules requiring electronic logging devices to record consecutive driver hours. While the initial intent was to improve driver safety, the reduction in hours had unintended consequences of also reducing overall delivery capacity, which increased costs.

Increased demand for direct marketing and packaging markets have also tightened the supply market. This gives paper producers incentive to increase prices.

➤ **Now what?** So far, 2019 does not appear to be slowing the ongoing price increases. As a result, we anticipate that paper costs will continue to rise, and could potentially lead to necessitating longer lead times, especially for custom sheets.



## Forty years of defining values

### One Printer's Perspective

Oh my goodness! Forty years in the printing business! For sure that would be more than enough time to “get our act together” or to “know all there is to know” or to know enough “to do the right thing” or to “get rid of the dead wood,” etc. I would agree. If we have been constantly improving for 40 years, we should be doing everything perfectly by now. Well, surprise, surprise! Our leaders did a little self-analysis and much to everyone's dismay, we discovered we are not perfect – and actually our bottom line through this past April confirms this.

So, with a little assistance from an outside business management fella, we have determined we have not always lived up to what we have recently defined as Ideal's “core values.” With due respect to our outside adviser, the five core values we settled upon are just good, solid, common sense qualities that we perhaps thought we had been abiding by all along. And, for the most part, I think that is true. It is also the case that the five values we determined should define us are not so significantly more meaningful than the 15 or so others, such as, “no job too small” or “lift others up,” that we bypassed to concentrate on the following five, which are now to be considered Ideal's five core values. They are all good, and with the added emphasis they will receive, there will likely be numerous occasions when those involved in this self-improvement exercise will be

reminding each other that their actions observed might not quite measure up to the high standards our newly defined core values call for. That should be a good thing!

To our employees, whenever you see one of your fellow workers not behaving so well, feel free to suggest how their actions or reactions measure up against our newly defined core values:

### The Ideal Family Core Values

- 1 Display Positive Energy.** Make work fun. We are passionate about printing.
- 2 We Serve The Customer.** The customer's wishes come first. Make the extra effort.
- 3 Assume Positive Intentions.** Always assume the other party's intentions are good.
- 4 Be Easy To Work With.** Be friendly, responsive, knowledgeable, flexible.
- 5 Display Good Character.** Operate with integrity and strive to do the right thing.

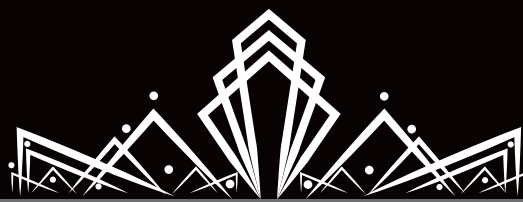
We intend to take these values seriously, but also to have some fun with them, such as you might have when reminding someone they fell a little short – as well as commending someone when they did the right thing.

Thanks for your time.

Howard Siewert



# CHEERS



# 40 YEARS



IDEAL is proud to have celebrated its 40th year in business on February 16, which happened to be EXACTLY 40 years after we opened our doors! We decided to up the bar by having a Great Gatsby-themed party at the historic Saint Paul Athletic Club. Our employees and their guests enjoyed an evening of dinner and drinks, followed by a few long-time employees telling funny stories from yesteryear. Casino night then began, allowing gamblers to bid at the tables with their "funny money" chips. Afterwards, those who still had chips remaining were able to bid on fabulous door prizes generously donated by many of our long-time loyal vendors. Candid shots taken throughout the evening are featured below!



## PHOTO BOOTH FUN!





# Noteworthy Events

## Ideal is proud recipient of Twin Cities Business 2018 Family Business Award



Ideal owners **Andy Olson**, **Joan Siewert-Cardona**, **Lana Siewert-Olson**, **Rhoda Siewert**, **Howard Siewert** and **Francisco Cardona**

In November 2018, we were deeply honored to be a recipient of *Twin Cities Business's* (TCB) 2018 Family Business Award. Each year, TCB recognizes family-owned and operated businesses across the state of Minnesota who have shown willingness to adapt to keep their business growing, thriving, and relevant, and who have shown outstanding commitments to their families, their employees, customers, and communities.

We were one of five honorees across the state who represented an array of industries, from retail to food service to manufacturing. We couldn't be more thrilled to be a part of this group of amazing family-owned businesses.

As part of the honor, TCB created a short profile video of Ideal Printers and wrote a feature in the November 2018 issue of *Twin Cities Business Magazine* – which you can access using the QR code or link below. We feel like this video does a great job of capturing who we are at Ideal Printers, and our ongoing commitment to our customers and our employees.

In addition to TCB's profile of us, we were also presented with the award on November 1, 2018 at the 2018 Minnesota Family Business Awards ceremony at the Hilton Minneapolis. Andy Olson (COO/Partner) gave a wonderful acceptance speech about the importance of working with each other respectfully, and how this reflects on the company and the corporate culture at Ideal Printers.

We want to thank Erich Hanson (Founder/CEO of August Ash) for nominating us for this award, and also the nomination committee, comprised of Tom Hubler (owner, Hubler for Business Families), Jessica Manivasager (shareholder, Fredrikson & Byron), Paddy McNeely (chairman and CEO, Meritex Enterprises), Ritch Sorenson (professor, University of St. Thomas), Erin Steckler (VP of Business Banking, Old National Bank), and the TCB staff for selecting us as a winner. We're very grateful for this honor!

To read the entire article and to view the video, see <http://tcbmag.com/honors/articles/2018/2018-minnesota-family-business-awards/ideal-printers> or access it by the QR code provided here.



# Ideal Annual Meeting 2019



This year's 2019 award winners are L to R: **Dave Dean**, **Mona Schomas**, **Chris Lewis**, **Dave Siewert**, **Francisco Cardona**, **Andy Olson**, **Michele Gerhke**, **Kevin Wolfley** and **Maria Angeles**.  
Not pictured: **Abdul Wako**

**Michele Gerhke**, Digital Department, won this year's Team Player of the Year award



Owner **Lana Siewert-Olson** congratulates sales rep **Mona Schomas** on being one of the "Million Dollar Sales Club" award winners



**Howard Siewert** congratulates pressman **Chris Lewis** for 35 years of service



**Francisco Cardona**, Ideal owner and V.P. of IT, has been with Ideal for 20 years



L to R: Owner **Joan Siewert-Cardona** gives service awards to **Kurt Burkebille**, machine bindery (15 years); **Abdul Wako**, mailing department (5 years); **Kevin Wolfley**, sales (5 years); and **Don Peck**, digital department (5 years)



## Digital Department Updates...

We are pleased to announce the addition of two brand new Ricoh PRO C9210 Graphic Arts Series color sheet-fed digital presses. These installations were the first within the state of Minnesota. The automation provided by the C9210 doubled the capabilities and capacity of our digital pressroom, while maintaining existing staffing levels. Our migration away from our previous equipment and toward Ricoh's C9210 was centered around our commitment to uncompromised quality, as we felt the new presses increased the overall quality of more demanding digital color projects, including four-color variable data applications. They also use an oil-less toner, which also gives us more flexibility with the stocks/substrates that we can run, with expansive media support, including synthetic and label applications.

### Features:

- Color controls that allow us to customize Pantone and special client colors
- Photo-like image reproduction with 2400 x 4800 dpi resolution
- Built-in Image Calibration System that automatically detects color density fluctuations
- Increased consistent image quality from better toner lay-down
- Built in paper catalog that provides specific paper details and maintains rated speeds regardless of weight
- Increased speed – from 110 ppm to 135 ppm
- Shared data, providing consistent color and quality across all pages, where both printers are utilized during a larger run





**ideal**  
PRINTERS

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Newly refreshed...

**idealprint.com**

**I**DEAL is pleased to announce the unveiling of its new corporate website, fully redesigned and rebuilt from scratch by one of our newest employees and family member, **Dustin Burkhart**, who started back in March. He also will be working with mail list data processing.



Dustin majored in communications/public relations at Kentucky's

Asbury University, discovering he had a knack for graphics and web design. In 2010, he moved to Minneapolis to work for Venture Expeditions, honing his graphic design skills. He has since worked in RE/MAX Results' internal IT department, further developing his web design skills, then at Code42 Software, where he did troubleshooting and diagnosed issues with their data security software.

*Ideal Perspectives* is printed on a 5-color Komori conventional press on 100# McCoy Silk Text with matte aqueous coating.

**We are Ideal.**

**We will work harder**

**than anyone to make**

**you look good.**

