



## NGPA's 33rd Annual Conference - New Orleans, Louisiana

### See Change, Hear Customers Respond, Taste Success!

Mark Egeling, Segment Marketing Director for Kodak's Graphic Communications Group Americas Region opened the National Government Publishing Association's 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference on Monday, October 26, 2009, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Mark has over 18 years of sales and marketing experience in the commercial print industry. Currently, Mark is responsible for expanding Kodak's digital printing and solutions business within the Data Print and Photo segments.



Mark's comments focused delegates on the need to see changes in the industry, to hear what the customers are saying and thinking and then to respond to the customer's needs. Should you be able to do those three things, Mark predicts that you will then taste success. The theme for the presentation tied very closely to the conference theme, "Experience Louisiana – See – Hear and Taste."

In 1975 Kodak invented the digital camera. That invention brought monumental changes to the company in the years to follow. Today, more than 60% of Kodak employees have been with the company less than 4 years. The company has successfully moved from a film company to a digital company.

Mark encouraged NGPA delegates to utilize social media for product placement and also to utilize web activities to move their marketing programs forward. Rather than use a "snapshot" campaign he encouraged them to move to a "streaming" campaign for branding and product placement.



He challenged delegates to engage their customers, to educate them, to excite them and then they will begin to evangelize your operation. Kodak utilizes a number of social medias to do these things. They use Twitter to send out positive messages as well as for responding to negative comments that circulate through the network. He asked delegates to consider what the Rate of Return on Ignoring (RRI) your customer base would yield. If you think Twitter is just a place for kids, think again. According to Mark, 41.7 percent of all those utilizing Twitter today are between the ages of 35 and 49. Dell reports recently that it gained \$3 million in sales that directly relate to their Twitter campaign. Twitter currently has 35 million users. Facebook has 200 million users and there are currently 15.5 active blogs. In fact, Kodak has a full-time staff position whose title is Chief Blogger.

Mark suggests that government in-plants can use these social networks and other creative marketing strategies to move their marketing scheme from the "Eyeballs to Ears" method to the "Hearts and Minds" method. He asked attendees to consider the methods they are currently using and could possibly use to keep their products and services front-of-mind with their customers. He also challenged them to find out what the customers are thinking about your business.

Government in-plants should consider moving to a new mindset about their operations. Mark suggested they move from evaluating dots to evaluating digits. In other words, government in-plants should be considering what outcomes their products produced for the company, rather than how fast the press rolls and how many imprints you can produce every minute.

1. Mark introduced three key questions to delegates and asked them to go back home and implement communication strategies to address the questions:
2. "How easy is it for customers to get information from my website?" He suggested taking the time to visit your company's website and pretend to be a customer looking for a service.
3. "Why do we publicize our speeds and feeds rather than provide more customer-oriented information?" Mark visited three government in-plant websites and demonstrated how we often talk about capacity and capability but never address the importance of these things to the customer.
4. "Is my in-plant's information engaging and interesting?" If not, he suggests that in-plants begin thinking about the WIIFM factor. That's the "What's In It For Me" factors. As an example, in-plants could talk to the customer about the ways faster presses can allow the customer the flexibility of extending deadlines and faster turn-around.

In summary, Mark suggested that government in-plants increase their customer interaction through surveys, customer councils and project follow-up. Data obtained from these interactions can provide valuable information about ways you can improve your marketing strategies. He encouraged delegates to use U-Tube, Twitter and other social networks to get the word out. Talk about new products and use examples from happy customers. Use them to notify your customer base about the realized benefits of using your services. He encouraged attendees to see the changes in the industry, hear what the customers are saying and thinking, and then respond to their needs.



Chef Michael and NGPA President Richard Beto cook up a fine dinner for the 33rd annual conference delegates at the New Orleans School of Cooking. "Stir don't poke" was a common directive from the chef.

