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Russ Newton

SVP Manufacturing, Tribune Publishing



N&T: What are “the Innovators” doing differently to lead/coach baby boomers and millennials alike?

I recently took over as GM at a new company for Hearst called Bay Area Production Services.

The company (Transcontinental Printing) we took over was printing the San Francisco Chronicle. The first thing I noticed was how young the vast majority of employees were. Seventy percent are under the age of 35. Anyone who’s running a newspaper production plant has undoubtedly had to reduce the size of their operation over the past 12 to 15 years. And while buyouts were used in some cases, the across-the-board layoffs many of us had to do led to reducing by seniority.

Leading a much younger workforce today has different challenges. Most of the millennial employees here really want more time off to pursue their passions, whatever they may be. One adjustment we were able to make to meet that need was making use of 10- and 12- hour schedules with odd start and off times to allow employees to have more days off and shorter commute times

by starting and ending shifts at low traffic-flow times. Living in the South Bay area is expensive and a mess with traffic. By using these schedules, we give our employees more options for days off and travel time to work.

N&T: How are you employing today’s formal coaching methodologies to empower your team?

We use front line supervisors as “Champions” of different processes. We have Champions for ink, plates, rollers, packaging supplies, etc. The Champions are meeting directly with suppliers, testing products and negotiating prices. This pushes the decision-making deep down into the organization and the Champions are encouraged to use employees in their process. They have to present to the senior team when they wish to make a change. But the suggestions are almost always approved. This serves a dual purpose for us. First, it pushes the decision-making down closer to the folks that are dealing with the reality of daily production. I know as a young press man, I had to run a press with complications caused by a poor vendor for one of the many key suppliers that it takes to run the press. The people making the decision often would make the choice on price. When our Champions suggest a higher cost vendor, they almost always prove to us the wisdom of the decision. Fewer stops or better quality quickly make

the higher priced product cost effective.

N&T: What has been your most effective cost savings solution (workforce excluded)?

We work with four employee press crews working 12 hours a day covering two presses. With 18 total employees, we cover 24 hours a day, four days a week and 12 hours a day the rest of the week and all vacations. Any work we can fit in the schedule doesn’t cost us any pressroom labor. And if we land another seven-day-a-week newspaper, we only have to add three employees in the pressroom to make that work.

N&T: The industry as a whole is involved in a daily battle, from aging equipment to revenue challenges. How could ING 2019 benefit folks in the industry?

They will have the chance to take with leaders from virtually every newspaper chain out there who have dealt with these challenges and can share with them the pros and cons of each idea. Some papers have added color capacity through used equipment, some papers run collect to reduce packages and improve deadlines for more sections, some papers have outsourced to operations with more current equipment. There are many more examples of good ideas for the attendees of ING 2019 to consider. ▲

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William H. May, Jr.

Operations Executive



N&T: What are “the Innovators” doing differently to lead/coach baby boomers and millennials alike?

I believe the greatest responsibility of a leader is to be able to affirm that I have done my part and met my obligation first. When I first think of this, traditional wisdom jumps to the staunch management phrases like communicate, bring clarity, set strategy — goals — and tactics.

Before I can ever go there, I must first challenge myself to do these things in the best, most advanced and open mindset possible. This means I must dedicate time to my own learning, believing fully that “You can’t give what you don’t have.” I’m completely convinced, as leaders, it is the kiss of death to believe what we have done in the past will suffice in the future — or even tomorrow morning!

Personally, I have tried to improve my own awareness and truly understand what is important to others. What is it that creates feelings of motivation, encouragement and commitment across a wide and varied group of people?

My hope is to be part of an evolving and developing leadership group that is able to incorporate concepts of empathy, connection, playfulness and capitalizing on chaos into our vocabulary along with the favorites of accountable, responsible and dependable. To me, regardless of your generation, these are all things we want or we are good at doing. I also believe there can be a migration to appropriately incorporate all of these into our working cultures together. When we do this in the right way I believe it can absolutely un-cork creativity, instill resilience and unfold an appreciation for one another, positioning us so we can better take on a multitude of challenges together.

N&T: How are you employing today’s formal coaching methodologies to empower your team?

In my 1:1 meetings with direct reports, they lead the discussion and educate me on their initiatives and plans. The table is somewhat turned so that my primary role is to listen for clarity of purpose and alignment with our goals. I also ask questions to uncover opportunities or reveal logic to reason through a puzzling challenge. It is a much more give and receive experience where they share with me the things they believe to be the highest priority or where they need the most support.

Among the roles I cover, I try to bring and maintain alignment on our overall goals. I secure and help to prioritize or allocate resources. And lastly, I want to protect and safeguard.

Protect and safeguard may sound a little “different,” so to be clear: I encourage robust risk taking! Calculated, cautious, calculated again but nonetheless — risk taking. I believe leaders are able to be somewhat abandoned in their approach to problem solving when they know someone has not only reasoned through the risk with them, but also if things “don’t go so great,” we’ve established safety valves and plan Bs — together. I believe this builds trust, encourages ownership and ultimately confidence in their own abilities and judgment.

N&T: What has been your most effective cost savings solution (workforce excluded)?

It goes back in time quite a way, but it was an initiative focused on waste, quality, safety and attendance. Based on performance against specific goals, employees were awarded “points” in these various categories. Points were ambiguous in value but could be redeemed for prizes such as golf clubs, watches and even patio furniture if you were strong willed enough to save up over a period of time. The program was actually funded from the savings generated by reducing downtime, squashing waste and improving our safety record, ultimately reducing insurance premiums.

N&T: The industry as a whole is involved in a daily battle, from aging equipment to revenue challenges. How could ING 2019 benefit folks in the industry?

As we are more and more challenged for capital investment, understanding the granular details of calculating ROI that can get projects approved.

Bring me a vendor that is willing to talk about “CRAZY” ways to finance capital investment, i.e. install the equipment that will save me operating dollars and take quarterly payments as the savings are realized.

What more can capital investment do besides reduce operating/salary expense, generate revenue, address obsolescence and maintain compliance/regulatory requirements.

Tell me how to manage talent acquisition and retention. What can I give employees beyond salary dollars? Is the new employee a hybrid of talent and if so, what is the best makeup?. ▲

Tom Travis

VP Production & Distribution
Sports Information Group



N&T: How does the annual ING meeting enable/empower you?

Currently, my company owns no print sites. At the ING conference, I often discuss with folks in attendance subcontract print opportunities and/or shipping opportunities more than anything else, since that is the world in which I operate. I also look for print and shipping referrals from the suppliers. If I hear of an idea at the ING Conference presentations that I want fleshed out, I will try to have a conversation with the speaker or someone from the speaker’s company to get more information.

Attending the ING conference puts all real-time thinking, and often cutting-edge information, right at your fingertips, availing face-to-face conversations with folks having actual experience with new processes and ideas.

If applicable, I can take these ideas back to our subcontractors and direct them to the presentation on the ING website. Anything that improves operations for our subcontractors has a direct, positive impact on my company.

With regard to working at a publishing company, I pay close attention to ING conference presentations that facilitate a publisher’s journey to paring down to its core competencies. All of this enables/empowers me to make a difference at my company. ▲

Todd Socia

Senior Vice President - Print Products & Services

The New York Times



N&T: What are “the Innovators” doing differently to lead/coach baby boomers and millennials alike?

The Times is committed to fostering a diverse staff and inclusive workplace for everyone — baby boomers and millennials alike. Our best-in-class global mentorship program facilitates cross generational coaching by matching employees to mentors and mentees of different departments, backgrounds, and age groups. The relationships built between mentors and mentees often continue past the formal culmination of the program, with both mentors and mentees saying that they have learned from each other. Additionally, a segment of The Times' Leadership Training focuses

specifically on managing different work styles of teams that contain Baby boomers, millennials, and employees from Gen x and Gen z.

N&T: How are you employing today's formal coaching methodologies to empower your team?

Employees at The Times are provided with a variety of coaching options. Our Talent & Inclusion (Human Resources) department offers private sessions twice a week dedicated to career advice and coaching via the Talent Open Door program. The sessions are run by our Talent & Inclusion partners and sometimes feature external career coaches and Times executives. The

Times also trains managers on tools to coach their teams effectively in our Leadership Training program. Additionally, we collaborate with a variety of external vendors to provide customized one-on-one coaching to high potential employees.

N&T: What has been your most effective cost savings solution (workforce excluded)?

Over the past several years our continued focus on optimizing our national print site footprint and our transportation and distribution logistics has resulted in sizable savings. With 27 national print sites, over 350 home delivery markets and well over 800 transportations and distribution vendors, we are continually working with our partners to drive efficiencies and improve service. That said, all decisions made are viewed through the lens of our subscribers and the service levels that they expect and deserve.

N&T: The industry as a whole is involved in a daily battle, from aging equipment to revenue challenges. How could ING 2019 benefit folks in the industry?

The industry is clearly facing strong headwinds and the challenges are many. ING is one of the last operations-focused newspaper conferences that still remains. I have been attending the ING conference for close to 30 years and I have been on the ING board for more than 20 years. I know that over those years I have come away with some great ideas and invaluable contacts that we have been able to leverage in our operation. ING is also a great networking event where attendees have the opportunity to meet and interact with senior industry leaders from both the newspaper and vendor side. This year we will once again have a truly compelling agenda with great keynote speakers and topically pertinent presentations from our expert speakers and panelists. I am confident that there will be plenty of takeaways from this year's conference that will more than justify attending. ▲

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APTech's Long: PRINT 19 is future-focused

► NEWS & TECH STAFF REPORT

News & Tech caught up with Thayer Long, the president of the Association for PRINT Technologies, about what it takes to succeed in the print industry today and the upcoming PRINT 19 conference, to be held Oct. 3–5 at Chicago's McCormick Place.



News & Tech: What's new with the Association for PRINT Technologies?

Long: In short, everything. Unfortunately, there are still far too many companies who are fooling themselves that it's business as usual or trying to go back in time. There are also too many companies who are so afraid of losing what they've got, they are only focused on themselves and don't want to play in the sandbox with others. Well, good luck. We're seeing that the companies that are continuing to do well are the ones coming up with innovative products designed to meet the needs of their customers. They are also very open to sharing, because it takes more than just a piece of equipment and good business practices to succeed today. Creating a success formula

is really tough, and not one that can be easily replicated. Even with all the right ingredients at your disposal and a great cake recipe, it still may come out tasting like garbage.

For APTech, we are working to move the print industry towards the future and as a result we are refocusing our products and services. Last year we launched LeadingPRINT, a magazine for entrepreneurs who are focused on the future. The success of the magazine and the conversations that it has generated is a great lead-in to the next service that we're going to be offering, which is an online community forum called APTech Connect. With so many opportunities available to our industry, this community of entrepreneurs needs a place to collaborate and needs a place to cut through all the BS.

This new online community is like having a peer group available to you 24/7. It is designed and built to drive engagement across all areas of the print industry. And that means everyone — manufacturers, printers, designers, creatives and all who have a connection to print.

APTech Connect is for the innovators and idea generators and those who want to be associated with them and it's free for both APTech members and non-members.

We expect that the discussions on the forum will be frank, honest and to quote a favorite board member of mine, we plan to "poke the bear" at all times.

News & Tech: What can you tell us about PRINT 19?

Long: PRINT 19 isn't going to be all things to all people. And we don't expect or pretend that it is. It isn't for the survivalists — those who remember and lament when print/PRINT (and they mean both!) was as large as (fill in the blank). It's not for people who think that a piece of machinery is going to solve their declining revenue. It's definitely not for the hordes looking to invade the next vertical only to start another race to the bottom.

PRINT 19 is for those that agree that there is no better time to be in the print industry. It's an event for those who are broad-minded risk takers and those looking to write a new chapter for the print industry. Chicago is the place to get you on the path to building a bright and relevant future.

News & Tech: So why should members of the newspaper industry come to the show?

Long: PRINT 19 is designed to tempt those who want to construct a better product for print consumers. Newspapers have been facing many challenges, and let's be honest, some newspaper printing will probably never come back nor should it, yet does mean it's a goner? Of course not. Our keynote, Nicholas Thompson, editor-in-chief of Wired Magazine, will talk about "The Wired Future: Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Privacy, Social Media, Truth, Tech Companies, and More" and still Wired produces a printed magazine because the physical experience is still very relevant. So those people who are in the newspaper segment should come to PRINT and engage and collaborate with those in other verticals who have very similar challenges and see how we can address them in a collaborative way.

News & Tech: Historically, APTech has been an advocate for postal reform. Are there any updates you can share about what's happening?

Long: Yes, we are still advocating for postal reform, which of course affects everyone in the print industry, including newspapers. This is an issue that we recommend that everyone become familiar with. On April 30, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing on the financial condition of the Postal Service and the need for postal reform. Many groups from within the print industry were involved including postal management and the postal unions. Joel Quadracci, president and CEO of Quad, represented the print industry and gave testimony. I suggest that reviewing the committee's website is a great place to get more details of the hearing and to learn about the issues that impact us all.

But I'll also say let's be real, postal reform by itself is not a strategy for industry success. Let's get entrepreneurial: How can we innovate and develop print products that aren't even around today? If we put equal energy into that as an industry as we do with postal reform, I think we'd be better off. ▲