

Private sector looking to new Public Printer for workflow increase

Op-ed by William Gindlesperger, founder, chairman and CEO of e-LYNXX Corporation

Recently President Obama nominated William Boarman to be the 26th Public Printer of the United States. The Public Printer serves as CEO of the U. S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Mr. Boarman is a vice president of the Communications Workers of America and president of the union's Printing, Publishing & Media Workers Sector.

During his U.S. Senate confirmation hearing, Mr. Boarman testified that he intends to maintain the GPO procurement operation. We believe he will. Mr. Boarman is a sophisticated and well referenced professional business person - even though his business has been unions. This does not make him a potentially bad candidate for the job of Public Printer. Prior Public Printers have also been supportive of the GPO in-plant production operation and of its unions and, yet, have boosted procurement initiatives.

Where the challenge lies is in a different place. This is a subject seldom discussed or clearly understood. It is waivers. Waivers are issued by the GPO and its governing body, the Congressional Joint Committee on Printing. These waivers allow federal executive agencies to handle their own printing in-house rather than to submit their printing to the GPO in compliance with the legal requirements of Title 44 of the U.S. Code.

The federal government is a multi-trillion dollar operation. Yet, only about 1 billion dollars total in printing is produced or procured by GPO. Estimates have been made over the years as to how many billions of dollars escape GPO. No one really knows, because no one has kept close control over waivers, or, for that matter, has a full list of all of the waivers granted. One estimate is that there are over 25,000 federal in-house printing plants doing upwards of \$20 billion in printing. Think what GPO control over this printing could do for the federal government, the tax payers, the GPO (and its underwater budget), and, very importantly for all of us in the printing industry. If there is less than \$100 billion now being produced in the commercial printing market, add in \$20 billion in federal work and bingo - tens of thousands of private sector printing jobs would be saved or created – union and non-union workers – enough perhaps for the White House to crow about.

If Mr. Boarman is confirmed and becomes the Public Printer, he will face a complex problem not of his making. The GPO, like the U.S. Postal Service, is losing big money. The difference is that the U.S. Postal Service falls under the Executive Branch and appropriations to underwrite its operational costs can be buried in a massive budget. The GPO, on the other hand, is a Congressional (not Executive) agency. Monies appropriated to underwrite GPO operational shortfalls are reflected as increasing costs of the Congress itself. Increasing Congressional costs is not a message Senators and Congressmen want to send to the voters back home.

So, where is Mr. Boarman going to look for cuts in costs? We guess it will not be through negotiation with GPO union employees for a reduction in labor rates. We believe Mr. Boarman will have only one bite at this apple. Everyone wins if he is successful in driving more work to fill downtime in the GPO in-plant production operation while, at the same time, dramatically increasing income from the GPO cash cow – called procurement. This new printing work is readily available through the cancellation of waivers. It also reduces Executive agency costs, while getting these agencies out of the printing business, which is not where they belong nor is it where their core competencies reside.

Mr. Boarman has a relationship with the White House and with the present majority party in Congress. He is well positioned to get something done. I would urge my fellow printers, regardless of their political affiliation or union feelings, to support Mr. Boarman with the hope and understanding that Mr. Boarman will partner with the printing industry, as he has partnered over many years with the unions, and by his serving as a bridge, we can together bring success to all involved.

About the Author

William Gindlesperger is a nationally recognized entrepreneur, inventor, author and consultant in print and procurement. He founded ABC Advisors and its successor, e-LYNXX Corporation, in 1975. Under Mr. Gindlesperger's leadership the firm has grown to become North America's procurement authority. Print buyers and suppliers alike have benefited from his insight and innovation.

Mr. Gindlesperger has directed major in-plant studies in both the private and public sectors and is highly regarded for his knowledge, advice and work on behalf of firms in matters pertaining to the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). He has testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration regarding government print and procurement policy. He also has worked directly with numerous Congressional and Senatorial members and staff and has advised Congress on the development, operations and future of GPO print procurement and the federal print program in general.



He was a founder and chairman of Printing Industries of America's (PIA) PrintPAC (political action committee) and has been recognized for his contributions to PIA and services to the printing industry. He was inducted into PIA's Ben Franklin Honor Society of print industry leaders in 2009 for his lifetime contributions to the print industry. *Supply & Demand Chain Executive* honored Mr. Gindlesperger by including him in its 2010 listing of the most influential leaders in the supply and procurement profession.

Mr. Gindlesperger invented the methodology that optimizes cost reduction in the procurement of specification-defined goods and services. He has been granted two separate business method patents by the U.S. Patent Office, first for the competitive procurement of print and then for the competitive procurement of all customized and specification-defined goods and services.

Under Mr. Gindlesperger's leadership, e-LYNXX has grown into the leading print management and procurement licensing firm in North America. e-LYNXX has been exclusively endorsed by Printing Industries of America (PIA) and has been named one of the top 100 procurement firms in North America by *Supply & Demand Chain Executive* magazine.

His firm handles more than 200 on-going consulting assignments at any given time. Among its contracts is one with Educational & Institutional Cooperative Purchasing to assist colleges, universities and other institutions nationwide with procurement and print-spend management.

A native of Chambersburg, Pa., Mr. Gindlesperger is a graduate of Dickinson College.

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