



2020 REVIEW

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2020 REVIEW BY: ALEXIS MARSH

With so many people thrilled to put 2020 behind them, Empire Screen Printing is excited to reflect on everything we accomplished throughout the year. While the nation faces civil unrest, global pandemic, and political division, Empire was setting the stage for change in the print industry. Our employees worked tirelessly to pack three years worth of projects into the past 12 months. Empire is thankful for their extraordinary efforts and the commitment they put into improving the product, process, service, and themselves.

Empire kicked off a major makeover for our roll-to-roll department, turning the area into a show room for our newly designed equipment. At the forefront of this change, we converted our Aquaflex flexographic press curing system from mercury vapor to LED.

The next step was decommissioning our Patriot press and eliminating the UV oven. Relocating the existing equipment allowed us to give the room a much-needed face-lift, with changes to the interior walls, lighting, and duct work. The freshly-prepped space provided the perfect destination to enter the final programming stages of our roll-to-roll prototype two-color press. Once the press was in place, it was off to the races. Jobs began to flow to the press, giving us the means to perfect the machine capabilities. At Empire, sustainability plays an important role in our improvement process. Product manufactured using this press will decrease waste and improve lead time.

(Continued on page 4)



WINTER SLIP/FALL PREVENTION BY: AMY BETTIS

It's cold. All you want to do is get to someplace warm. You race to/from the door seconds before your shift begins/ends. Your foot slips in the puddle of slush melting inside the entrance, or outside on a patch of ice hidden by snow. Flat on your back, you wonder how this happened. A small patch of ice on the stairs, a puddle on the floor, or snow on the sidewalk can take you down. Use extra caution to keep on your feet this winter.



- Don't hurry when conditions are likely to be snowy and slippery. Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination. That's good advice whether you are on your own foot or driving your car.
- Wear slip-resistant footwear appropriate for the weather. Leather-soled shoes and high-heeled shoes are especially hazardous in winter.
- Practice good housekeeping habits. Clean up small spills immediately. Mark bigger ones with a warning sign while you advise the maintenance department of the problem.
- Keep skid-resistant door mats near entrances. Stomp off accumulated ice and snow from your shoes before entering a building.
- Anticipate hazards as you are walking. When you come to a corner, slow down. If you think a surface might be slippery, take short, sure steps instead of longer strides. WALK LIKE A PENGUIN!
- Make sure you can see over the top of parcels you are carrying while you walk. Try to keep one hand free to use handrails on stairways.



SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAFETY COORDINATOR

Keith Cook.....R&D

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kathy Vaughan.....HR
 Amy Bettis.....Small Value Stream Supervisor
 Nancy Gilbertson.....Customer Service
 Curtis Johnson.....I.T.
 Tom Donaldson.....Digital Supervisor
 Theresa Antony.....Small Value Stream Operator
 Shane Hulburt.....Doming Supervisor
 Bob Fischer.....Small Value Stream Operator



- Keep at least one hand on the car frame or grab bar when getting in and out of vehicle so you can catch yourself if you start to slip.
- Try to avoid climbing ladders in cold weather. The rungs could be covered with clear ice. If you must climb a ladder, examine it carefully, have a spotter, and proceed with caution.
- Keep pathways at work and home clear of snow and ice. If possible, turn on extra lights at night to illuminate the area.
- Pay particular attention when you are walking after dark. Remember that drivers will have a difficult time seeing you, so be sure to wear light colored/reflective clothing and watch out for vehicles.
- Sometimes, even though you have tried to be careful, you will fall. Don't move until you are certain you haven't broken any bones.

GREEN TIER PARTICIPATION BY: JENNIFER SCHLOESSER

Empire has been a Green Tier participant since 2013. In 2012, we created our sustainability policy and have made sustainability part of our business initiative over the last eight years. As a Green Tier member, we work to live by our commitments outlined in our sustainability policy and have an established Environmental Management System, which has been audited both internally and externally.

The guidelines put forth by the Wisconsin Green Tier program hold us accountable and provide validation for our efforts. Our proudest achievement is developing and implementing UV LED ink curing technology for screen printing. As the pioneering company for this technology, we have shared this with our industry. Green Tier provides a third-party platform for us to share this message and build awareness.

Today, 85% of our manufacturing uses UV LED technology and has earned us over 20 different awards, stemming from our drive to being a sustainable company. Marketing our brand using the WI Green Tier logo is an added benefit, and we take great pride to be a leading manufacturer in the state of Wisconsin.



See page 6 for a review of the Sustainability Policy.



GREEN COMMITTEE

Jennifer Schloesser.....	Creative Director
Amy Bettis.....	Small Value Stream Supervisor
Cathy Buttell.....	Project Manager
Keith Cook.....	R&D
Jeff Gierok.....	Electrical Technician



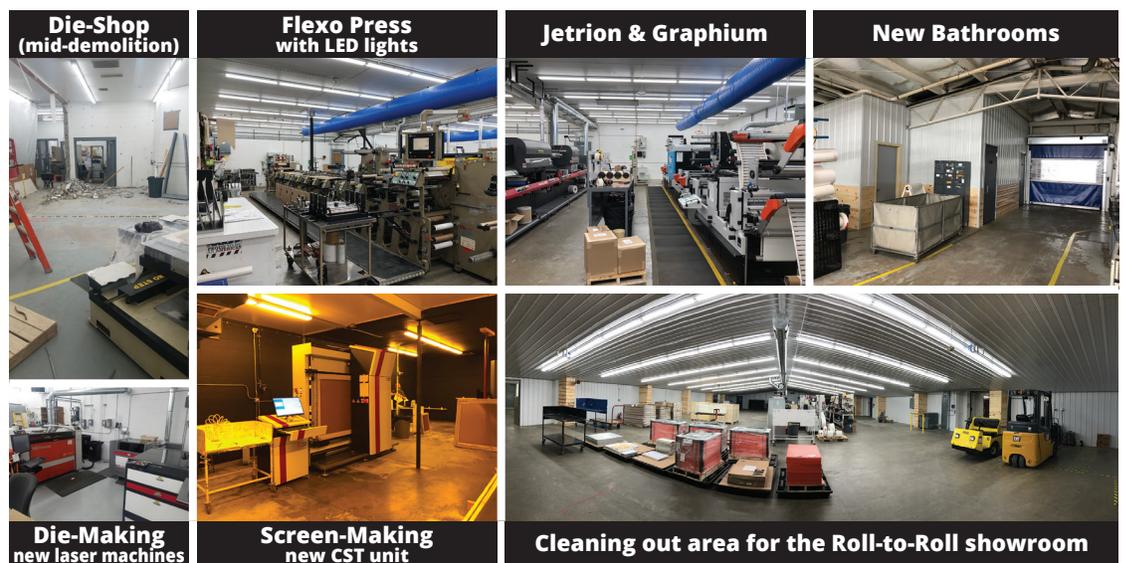
2020 REVIEW *(CONTINUED)*

By adding presses to our facility, Empire had to find a way to improve the internal processes to supply those machines. After much evaluation, we added a Dane screen washing unit to our screen making department. The addition of this equipment enabled the area employees to make adjustments to the physical environment and work flow. The wash unit allows us to use recycled water within the system and creates a more efficient work flow. The screen making department did not stop with one improvement—they raised the bar by adding a CST imaging unit and eliminating the existing aging equipment.

Throughout 2020, a common theme emerged: supply chain breakdown became more frequent and unavoidable. Empire looked for ways to strengthen our services where customers were feeling pinch points. One service improvement included merging our laser cutting and die-making department. This project involved the redesign of our die-making area, moving our current laser, and the purchase of two additional laser presses. Our maintenance staff was all-hands-on-deck to bring to life the vision our die-making team had for this integration of departments. In the end we have a department which is able to produce additional product and provided our employees more cross-training options.

Our service solution did not stop at die-making/laser cutting. We also added to our digital cutting capabilities with the purchase of a Zünd router and software upgrades to our in-house i-cutting presses. This router increases our capacity, giving us a much-needed reduction in lead times. The software upgrade makes it possible to use one standard file, providing flexibility to load level saving time and increasing turn-around speeds.

All of these improvements are possible with our highly-motivated employees. Due to the pandemic, we had to make drastic changes to schedules and work hours to reduce exposure risks to our entire organization. Despite multiple hurdles and reduced staff access, our employees remained positive and driven to ensure Empire's ability to continue to service essential businesses throughout the nation. They proudly participated in producing products that impact our front-line workers and they did all this with a passion to keep our community strong. Thank you to every Empire employee. You strive to make things great!





Empire’s focus is providing our customers with products and services that produce sustainable results and business practices. Through our relentless pursuit of customer satisfaction we will grow Empire’s customer base and strengthen our company. We will strive to improve our process by listening to our customers, collaborating with our business partners and developing our people through education and training. Our employees will be empowered to continually make improvements to the process, their work environment and themselves. We will develop production methods that implement sustainable environmental, health and safety (EHS) practices into all aspects of our operations. We are committed to doing this through the following principles:

- We commit to being compliant with all applicable EHS and labor regulations (Federal and State). We will continue to implement programs and procedures in accordance with these requirements.
- We pledge to look for new opportunities and innovations that will help enhance and improve our sustainability program beyond regulatory compliance. We will strive to incorporate activities and procedures that will reduce our impact on the environment as well as improving the quality of health and wellness of the employees. We will measure our progress through regular audits and annual reviews.
- Empire will implement procedures to target prevention of activities, services or products that may cause harm to human health, safety, or the environment. These procedures will be designed to affect Empire &/or the surrounding community.
 - » The health and safety of our Employees shall always be top priority.”
 - » We will continue to implement sustainable print methods with equipment that uses UV LED curing technology. This will eliminate ozone emissions and lower energy consumption.
 - » We will monitor our equipment, our heating/cooling elements, water and air quality, and our facility through preventative maintenance. This will ensure that everything is running safely and efficiently.
 - » We are committed to implementing a recycling program to help reduce our solid waste removal.
- We will communicate our sustainability commitment to our employees, vendors, customers and community through educational training and marketing. We will encourage their input on meeting our goals and improving our procedures.


John W. Freismuth, President

March 31, 2012
(Updated February 02, 2021)





PARTNERS IN PRINTING EXPO 2021 BY: DOUG BILLINGS

There is an old proverb that says, “We look ahead by looking behind.” After ten years, the Partners in Printing Expo story is one that is deeply entrenched in networking, education, and the building of thousands of long-lasting relationships with others in the printing industry.

Many of the conversations this event has facilitated have been catalysts to partnerships, connections, or inspirations to who and what you see today. We want that story to flourish into the future. A story of print education, promotion of the industry and its suppliers, unique networking opportunities, illustrating environment stewardship, and leaving a legacy for future generations.

We are committed to helping sustain our community. It is a community of industry professionals committed to generous redistribution of relationships, resources, education, and insight. It is what we have been, both the contributors towards and the recipient of, for over a decade.

The year 2021 brings some exciting new and improved elements to the expo. We welcome the Partners in Printing 3M Cup charitable celebrity golf tournament. This year, all proceeds from the event will benefit the La Crosse Children’s Museum, which has been severely hurt due to the pandemic.

Along with many of our popular events, we’re introducing the Tattoos and Tailgates Concert Series. This is a new and exciting networking addition to the 2021 expo. It will feature three national acts and is open to the public. The concert grounds will feature industry providers which will allow us to highlight and share with the local community the rich printing heritage in Wisconsin and the United States.

Moving forward, we will still provide the most unique trade event in the industry as well as a platform for giving back the resources, education, networking, and inspiration to help the industry thrive for years to come. We all contribute to the success or failure of the printing industry and, ultimately, to our own prosperity.



DOUBLING DOWN ON MARKETING BY: JENNIFER SCHLOESSER

Over the last few months, many of you liked or shared our daily social media posts about Empire Screen Printing. Maybe you're thinking, "What's going on?" You're seeing more and more information posted.

We started working with an outside public relations agency called MGR Communications in October 2020. We believe building our brand and making it visible is a strategic plan to place Empire as a leader in our industry. Hiring MGR provides this service so that we can double down on our marketing, putting a full-time emphasis on building our online brand.



With MGR's 30 years of experience and their media relations, they provide the link to help Empire capture market share and grow our business. They do this by capitalizing on every press opportunity through product announcements, editorial interviews, trade show coverage, featured articles, and social media.

Relevant press appearances and social media posts are purchasing tools to reach our target audience. This grows our online web traffic and optimizes our SEO (search engine optimization) results. We're utilizing our social media platforms in a more effective manner, with daily social media blasts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Posting more often drives traffic to our website. Using hashtags and industry publications help build relationships with the press and increase the likelihood editors will publish our content.

We're working closely with the team at MGR, providing them with our next targeted campaign information. They write and prepare the content, and we approve and/or provide edits and photos prior to publishing. Over the last few months, we've seen an uptick in page impressions and engaged followers on our social media sites.

Since starting with MGR, Empire has been published 15 times in online publications, such as Wide-Format Impressions, What They Think?, Label+ Narrow Web, and Printing News, to name a few.

Marketing is a key function of our business and is a continuous cycle to build Empire's brand. Together with MGR, we are developing a successful, sustainable plan for future growth. When you see an article or a social media post, keep liking, sharing, and commenting. Your engagement helps push our message to a wider audience and puts us on the path to success.

About MGR Communications:

Founded in 1989, MGR Communications is one of the nation's leading business-to-business strategic communications agencies. They have a strong track record of success, having represented everything from startups to Fortune 100 companies for over 30 years. Their decades of experience in the communications business allow them to achieve unparalleled results for their client companies. MGR is dedicated to the growth of your business.





Hey...we're published!

November 20, 2020

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Empire Screen Printing Delivers Superior Graphic Impact for Sporting Goods Customers

Empire Screen Printing, a leading manufacturer of screen printed



- FACEBOOK
- TWITTER
- LINKEDIN
- EMAIL
- COMMENTS

BREAKING NEWS

Empire Screen Printing launches durable labels

Empire labels are designed to perform well outdoors and can withstand the same tough conditions as the tools and equipment themselves.



Posted in | Materials Science

Empire Screen Printing Leads in Sustainable Production With UV LED Ink Curing Technology

[Download PDF Copy](#) [View Supplier Profile](#) [Request Quote](#)

From Empire Screen Printing

Empire Screen Printing, a nationally recognized manufacturer of high-quality screen printed products, leads the industry in environmentally-friendly UV LED ink curing technology it has pioneered over the past decade. Empire works with suppliers throughout the industry to transition from traditional inks and mercury UV-cured inks with a more sustainable



HALLOWEEN BY: ELLEN KLUG

Halloween was a little different for Empire this past year, but we were still able to have raffle prizes and a costume contest for all employees. Each raffle prize consisted of a bag of candy and a \$20 gift card. The costume contest had four categories for voting—the winner of each category won \$25.



Steve Vinson
Rhonda Peterson

Lori Taube
Allie Pedrin

Jamin Bishofsky
Scott Gates

Mike Herold
Jason Koopman



Most Creative

Scariest



Overall Favorite

Funniest



- Most Creative:** Kevin Mason • COVID Citizen • 1st Shift • Kammann
- Scariest:** Karina Richards • Pizza Zombie • 1st Shift • Large Value Stream
- Funniest:** Steve Lechnir • Crazy Ink Tech • 2nd Shift • Ink Department
- Overall Favorite:** Ana Mueller • Fox "E" • 2nd Shift • Ink Department



JIM & CINDY'S HELPING HANDS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Each year, Jim Brush, owner of Empire Screen Printing, and his wife Cindy give away \$250 to ten Empire employees who are in need. The recipients of the \$250 are nominated by fellow employees or themselves. Nominations are reviewed by upper management, and the gifts are handed out anonymously. This is the seventh year of Jim and Cindy's Helping Hands for the Holidays.

CMN HOLIDAY CARDS BY: ELLEN KLUG

This past fall, Empire gathered the information, designed, and printed the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) holiday cards. Normally we would invite the CMN heroes to see their cards being produced, but this year, we had to change things up. We were unable to host the heroes and their families due to health and safety concerns from the global pandemic. Cards were available for purchase around the tri-state area. A video about the making of the cards can be found on the Community Involvement page of our website.

Emerson Small



Alexander Kramer



Cara McArthur



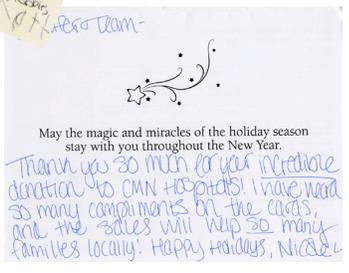
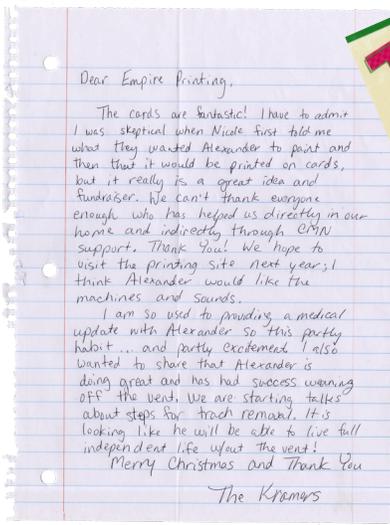
Matt Fredrick



Mackenzie Peterson



Give Today. gundersenhealth.org/heroes



HOLIDAY "PARTY" BY: ELLEN KLUG

Due to COVID-19, our holiday party was more quiet this year. Luckily, we were still able to celebrate as a company. On Thursday, December 17, Empire provided a socially distanced lunch to all employees—pizza from Marcos! There were also prizes that were randomly raffled off, and every employee who didn't win a raffle prize received \$10 cash.

\$20 WINNERS

Brad Ames	3rd shift	Kammann
Robert Sanders	2nd shift	Large Value Stream
Trish Lastofka	1st shift	Flexo
Charles Hills	1st shift	Large Value Stream

\$50 WINNERS

Dee Norling	1st shift	Account Manager
Moly Yang	1st shift	Digital
Brock Eckert	1st shift	Large Value Stream
Ron Tilson	1st shift	Auto Emp

\$100 WINNERS

Crystal Monn	2nd shift	Small Value Stream
Allie Pedrin	1st shift	Account Manager
Jory Thorson	2nd shift	Shipping
Paul Fanning	2nd shift	Kammann

AIR FRYER

Traci Low	2nd shift	Digital
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KEURIG

Sara Erickson	1st shift	Stockcutting
Liz Mullens	1st shift	Engineering
Nick Wolfe	1st shift	Screenmaking

PORTABLE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Andy Kiedrowski	1st shift	Large Value Stream
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50" ROKU TV

Steve Vinson	1st shift	Large Value Stream
Amelia Otteson	1st shift	Large Value Stream
Dave Collins	2nd shift	Flexo
Rob Wellnitz		

MONSTER SPEAKER

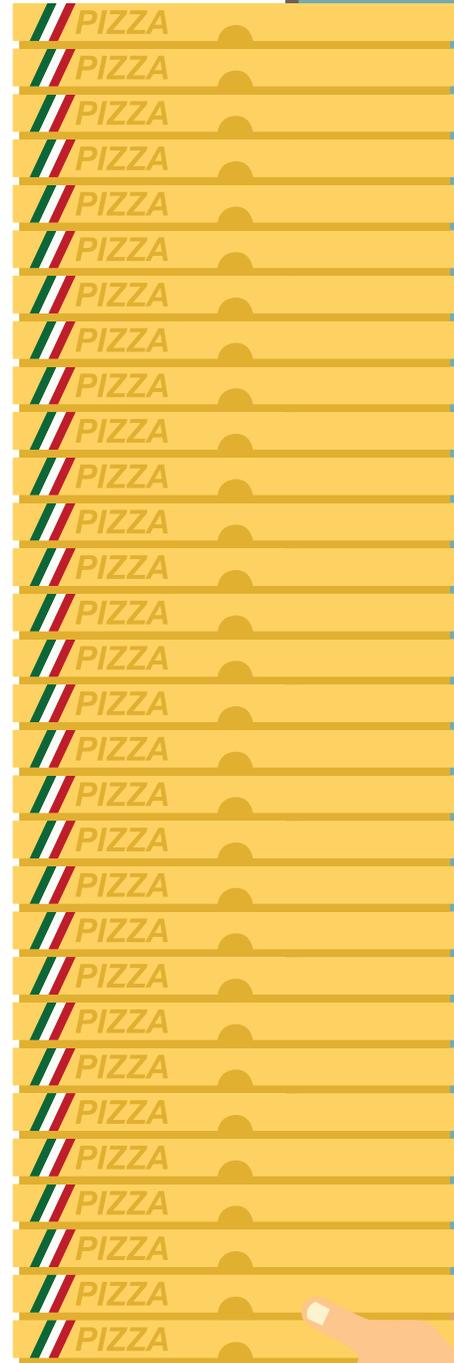
Scott Gates	3rd shift	Supervisor
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X-BOX ONE

Tony Carpenter	2nd shift	Small Value Stream
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65" ROKU TV

Kong Vue	2nd shift	Large Value Stream
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EMPIRE SCREEN PRINTING



ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER

Jim Weber.....35 years
 Keith Cook.....29 years
 Roman Kamrowski.....26 years
 Dawn McGrath.....26 years
 Marcia McFarlane.....23 years
 Candy Amann.....20 years
 Theresa Antony.....16 years
 Jon Schubert.....14 years
 Kevin Gerstenberger.....14 years
 Christine Kendhammer....13 years
 Rick Auterson.....12 years
 Bonita Anderson.....11 years
 Dustin Maule.....8 years
 Jason Koopman.....6 years
 Todd Lejeune.....5 years
 Francis Schmitz.....3 years
 Ana Mueller.....3 years
 Dawn Bentzen.....2 years
 Josh Walske.....2 years
 Annie Wolfe.....2 years
 Tyler Jenson.....1 year
 Mike Wakeen.....1 year

DECEMBER

Kathy Vaughan.....32 years
 Dave Collins.....26 years
 Steve Johnson.....25 years
 Rita Howe.....24 years

Steve Vinson.....21 years
 Eric Coleman.....16 years
 Kathy Inglett.....15 years
 Jay Yehle.....15 years
 Pamela Eddy.....2 years
 Chris Gengler.....1 year

JANUARY

Steve Nelson.....34 years
 Randy Hoff.....32 years
 Fred Baures.....28 years
 Chris Mikunda.....23 years
 Jennifer Schloesser.....21 years
 Mai Khang.....14 years
 Eric Wienkes.....13 years
 Nick Wolfe.....11 years
 Allie Pedrin.....10 years
 Rick Burg.....7 years
 Steve Limpert.....4 years
 Carol Tollefson.....3 years
 Emily Syring.....3 years
 Cody Volden.....3 years
 Anita Valley.....3 years
 Lisa Lehrke.....1 year
 See Moau.....1 year
 Jessica Fournier.....1 year

NEW EMPLOYEES

Karl Schultz
 Samantha Fuselier
 Christopher Wangen
 Joshua Collins
 Savannah Myers
 Melisa White-Perren
 Zachary Ahnefeld
 Kyle Kostohryz
 Shane Tuma
 Amber Carter
 Brad Powell
 Christine Granum
 Sarah Krick
 Shawn Goede
 Michael Hayter
 Vicki Huber
 Lewis Moen
 Phillip True
 Jacob Kane
 Brian Lund
 Sam Manly
 Gordon Roble
 Brian Clark
 Elijah Hagen
 Zack Zielke
 Aspen Johnson

Deadline for the next
 newsletter: 04/30/2021



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