



A Publication of the Mid South Sign Association

February 2015

THE MID SOUTH MESSENGER



WORKING TOGETHER

INTERNATIONAL

A Message from MSSA President, Jason Cicalla

MSSA Members,

MSSA has gained great momentum in the last few meetings in terms of involvement, creativity, and bringing our ideas to fruition. As President, I encourage everyone to get involved with a committee and capitalize on the new and exciting things happening in this association. Your experience as an MSSA member is in your hands and my hope is that you will choose to participate and make the most of this opportunity. By maximizing participation in our committees, MSSA will continue to become a more well rounded and innovative association, as every member offers their own unique perspective and skill set. Please join me in continuing to improve an association that is dedicated to giving back to its members.

2015 is poised to be a great year for MSSA! MSSA is a financially strong association which commands a high level of respect within the industry. In the upcoming year we will continue to advance MSSA by updating bylaws, policy, and procedures, as well as make decisions to ensure our continued strong financial success. I have a deep appreciation for this association which has done so much for me. By working as a team, the association has an opportunity to accomplish great things. *Please join me in making a commitment to this board and this association*.

Please plan to attend our winter conference March 13-14th in Monroe, LA and definitely don't miss the Annual Meeting and Tradeshow in Murfreesboro, Tennessee July 23-25th.

Please contact myself or Karen Warr (901-452-6444) if you would like to get involved in a committee. (Conventions & Meetings Committee, Education Committee, Membership



Committee, Marketing Committee and Scholarship Committee)

Also, feel free to reach out to me with comments, questions, or concerns.

Happy New Year, Jason Cicalla cell 205-394-0563 jason.cicalla@watchfiresigns.com



March 13-14, 2015 Monroe, LA

Just over a year ago, the MSSA Convention Committee had a special idea. What started as a brainstorming session, resulted in the creation of MSSA's "Sneak Peek" Event; an opportunity for sign companies and manufacturers to present the latest and greatest in the industry. The idea was new and exciting and was introduced during our March 2014 'New Ideas, New Possibilities' Conference in Bentonville, Arkansas.

As sign industry pioneers, MSSA decided to continue this event during this year's March conference in Monroe, Louisiana with host company Scott Powerline and Equipment. But, why settle on offering only one new event / topic? The MSSA Education Committee has chosen the following conference seminar topics:

- Do You Experience Public Speaking Anxiety?
- Check-Up, with a Crane Truck Inspection List.
- Manufacturing Best Practices Materials working together.
- "Sneak Peek" of New 2015 Sign Industry Products

With the conference location being in West Monroe, Louisiana, the home of television's popular TV show, Duck Dynasty, MSSA had to take advantage of this location! Therefore, a trip to Willie's Duck Diner is planned for Friday evening.

It's MSSA's call to keep moving forward and never settle in exposing its members to new event venues and education.

See you in Monroe!



March 13 - 14, 2015 Schedule of Events

Friday, March 13th

Hilton Garden Inn - West Monroe, LA

12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

SEMINAR: DO YOU EXPERIENCE PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY?

Presented by Lori Anderson Open to registrants

Giving confident presentations can help grow your business, but does the thought of speaking before a city council or planning board give you weak knees? Would you rather poke your eyes out with a stick than speak publicly? Do you wish to fine tune your speaking skills to make the best possible impression? If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, this session is just for you.

Lori Anderson is the President & CEO for the International Sign Association (ISA). Prior to joining ISA in 2004, Lori was the Strategic Planning and Industry Relations Officer for the Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc. (SPI) in Washington, DC for 14 years, and a legislative aide for the former Congressman and Senator Byron Dorgan.

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

SNEAK PEEK OF NEW SIGN INDUSTRY PRODUCTS

Open to registrants

Looking for ways to stay ahead of (or 'sneak past') your competition? MSSA is offering YOU an opportunity to see sign industry products being introduced in 2015--possibly before they are officially available during ISA Expo!

Join MSSA and view presentations by fifteen merchants on their latest and greatest for 2015!

5:45 pm - 8:30 pm

WILLIE'S DUCK DINER

Transportation provided - Cost \$30/person

Join MSSA for Friday dinner at Willies' Duck Diner as we pay homage to the Duck Dynasty TV show. As you are aware, when in Rome... Homemade southern cooking at its best!

Saturday, March 14th

Scott Powerline and Utility Equipment, LA

8:00 am - 8:45 am

SEMINAR: CHECK-UP WITH CRANE TRUCK INSPECTION LIST

Presented by Scott Howell Open to registrants

The crane is the one of the most important and most expensive pieces of equipment used by the sign industry. During this seminar, a qualified service technician will discuss the importance of using a crane inspection check list prior to turning on its engine.

Seminar Takeaways:

- 1. Proper set-up and leveling techniques.
- 2. Accurate safety operation of the crane (various safety situations will be demonstrated).
- 3. Platform orientation and operation of crane lifting principles and techniques.
- 4. A crane truck inspection check list form will be provided to assist you in developing a program tailored for your company.

Scott Howell has worked with heavy equipment for twenty years and is the recipient of several John Deere certifications. In his prior life, Scott served as a sonar technician on a navy submarine for six years.

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9:00 am - 12:00 pm

SEMINAR: MANUFACTURING BEST PRACTICES - MATERIALS WORKING TOGETHER

Presented by representatives from 3M Commercial Solutions Division, SignComp, SloanLED Open to registrants

Better understand how your signs' can depth, style of LED, and vinyl dramatically affects your signs' costs and performance. Adjusting your choices of vinyl and can depth can have a positive or negative effect on the final product depending on the choices made.

Seminar Takeaways:

- 1. How the depth of a can makes a difference in the number of LED's required.
- 2. A sign's color vividness depends on using the correct vinyl for LED's.
- 3. How to get light constancy by the correct placement of LED's.

Noon

Lunch provided by Graphic Solutions Group

Registration: Conference Attendee @ \$50 Friday Dinner @ Willie's Diner \$30

Consider a donation to The Steve Metheny Scholarship Foundation

To register with MSSA, please visit www.midsouthsign.org or call 901-752-6444

Hotel Accommodations:

Hilton Garden Inn West Monroe

400 Mane St, West Monroe, LA 71291 Reservations: 1-318-398-0653

Reference: MSSA Rate: \$114

Deadline: February 25, 2015

Saturday Location:

Scott Powerline and Utility Equipment

3018 Harvester Drive, Monroe, LA 71203

Please Note: Friday functions are scheduled at the Hilton Garden Inn West Monroe, LA with Saturday functions occurring at Scott Powerline and Utility Equipment, Monroe, LA.



Make 2015 a Success!

Consider the following New Year's Resolutions:

- Attend at least one MSSA meeting
- Like and post on MSSA's Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/midsouthsign
- Read a business or motivational book
- Participate in continuing education; educate yourself about the sign industry
- · Serve on an MSSA committee
- Download and read the Mid-South Messenger
- Be more efficient with day-to-day tasks
- Relax and take time for yourself



2015 MSSA Board of Directors

Mid-South Sign Association announces the 2015 Board of Directors which comprises of representatives from four of six areas of MSSA membership: Sign Companies (9), Product Manufacturers (3), Supply Distributors (2), and Related Organizations (1).

Officers

Jason Cicalla, President
Darlene Thomas, President Elect
Ray Wilson, Immediate Past President
Casey O'Quinn, Secretary/Treasurer

Directors

Ricky Armstrong, Alabama
Perry Oldner, Arkansas
Randall Fontenot, Louisiana
Mark Tramontana, Mississippi
Bill Reason, Tennessee
Shane Metheny, At Large Director I
CharlieBlanchard, At Large Director II
Mike Lev, Additional States
Bert Guinee, Product Manufacturers
Sean Schultz, Supply Distributors
Cal Holt, Past Presidents Director
Karen Warr, MSSA Executive Director

The Mid-South Sign Association would like to thank outgoing President Ray Wilson for his leadership and continued support of this association.

MSSA would like to thank the outgoing Board of Directors whose terms expired at the end of 2014: Ellis Bradshaw, Harold Miller, Wade Wright, Greg Denzinger, and Robert Davis.

MSSA also recognizes MSSA members Mark Granberry, Michael Hage, Dave Miller, and David Watson for serving on the ISA Board of Directors and Mandy Wisner who is serving on the Affiliated Association Steering Committee.

We thank them all for their friendship, membership, trust, and support.





Registration for the 2015 ISA International Sign Expo is now open!

Are you ready for Vegas? We are!

MSSA and the International Sign Association are pleased to invite you to get a jump start on planning for the ISA International Sign Expo 2015, April 8-11 in Las Vegas.

The ISA Sign Expo showcases the ENTIRE industry all in one event! At every corner, sign and visual communications professionals can explore the leading products and innovations in the industry. Wide-format and 3-D printers, channel letters, neon, architectural signage, and digital sign systems will all be on display. The Dynamic Digital Park will include educational seminars with exhibitors offering solutions for traditional sign companies that want to explore digital signage as a new business opportunity.



Popular educational events—like a day devoted to rapidly expanding digital signage and a series of courses aimed at project management—also are on tap. The current exhibitor list is already online and being updated continually. And most importantly, registration is open!

Come to Play. Come to Win. No other place but Vegas could hold a sign show like the ISA Sign Expo. Register today to experience four days of incredible camaraderie, business, and fun. What happens in Vegas will change your business!

Register now to take advantage of some great MSSA-member exclusive discounts:

- As a local sign company member of MSSA, use your unique Affiliated Association registration code MSSA15 to receive a 50% discount on Education if you register for Sign Expo Education by the early-bird date of February 28 (ISA Education only no sessions put on by SEGD); receive a 25% discount if registering on or after March 1. http://www.signexpo.org
- MSSA's Affiliated Association registration code MSSA15 also will provide FREE Trade Show entry! http://www.signexpo.org
- Looking for the hotel where most MSSA members will be staying? For optimal networking opportunities, MSSA is requesting that members consider making their hotel reservations at MSSA's Official Hotel, Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. MSSA's unique hotel reservation link is: http://goo.gl/Mb6Gcj





What is a Backer Panel?

By John Baylis Marketing Director, Direct Sign Wholesale

Backer Panel Definition

A backer panel is an optional channel letter sign feature that can help to optimize the appearance of your customer's channel letter sign. These structures are also known as backing boards, backer plates, or simply, backers.

A backer panel is basically a flat structure mounted behind the sign letters - like a picture frame. Panels are typically painted a color that is selected to display the sign most favorably.

Despite the name "backer panel", these structures are not necessarily rectangular. Backer panels can be custom designed and manufactured to differing shapes and colors.

For example, this front/back lit letter set has a custom shape backer panel: ->

Backer panels may be utilized with any channel letter type. A common application is to support reverse lit letters (as these boards can provide an ideal halo reflection surface), but they are also specified for front-lit and front-lit/back-lit letter signs.



Common Panel Design and Purposes

The primary purpose of a backer panel is to provide a strong contrasting background color for a sign. For example, a channel letter set can be far more effective when it is mounted on a surface which provides a higher degree of letter and/or halo contrast than the actual building facade surface. A well chosen backing board can substantially increase the overall conspicuity of a letter set.

A second (and related) backer panel purpose is to cover a problematic building façade. For example, if a building has a multicolored interlaced brick facade, the contrast and exposure of the sign may be compromised by the varying façade colors. A backer panel can eliminate this problem.

Note the clean appearance of the raceway-mounted backer panel in this photo:

An additional panel purpose is to cover (or hide) a raceway mount, as the panel in this T-Mobile sign does. Some letter sign designs may be slightly compromised by the appearance of a raceway mount, even when the raceway has been painted to blend in with the facade. Mounting the backer panel (and letters) to a raceway reduces the potentially compromised sign appearance.



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Construction Materials and Paint

Backer panels are typically constructed of aluminum. This material provides a compelling set of advantages – light weight, high tensile strength, and strong corrosion resistance.

Backer panels are typically painted a custom color to optimize both the sign appearance and the contrast to the building façade.

Cost Considerations

The added cost of a backer panel depends on the project and letter size. A panel cut from a single 4' x 8' aluminum sheet will add less to a project's cost than a design requiring multiple sheets (or a larger sheet like a 5' x 10').

Custom Panel Appearance Options

Custom paint colors are not the only way to enhance the effectiveness of a backer panel. A panel may also receive vinyl applications for additional sign effectiveness. Here is an example:

This board was not only cut to a custom shape – it also had vinyl applied to the upper panel area to provide an additional aesthetic appeal and image enhancement.

Another design idea is to combine a backer panel with a reverse logo box. This layout can provide an excellent day/night effectiveness combination. This Smashburger sign is a good example:





One final backer panel design consideration - reverse lit channel letters should not be mounted to a glossy backing panel surface. Doing so generates a sort of "mirror image" on the panel and the actual LED modules (and sign wiring) may be seen in the sign reflection. Obviously, this is undesirable. It is much better to use a matte or satin finish when mounting reverse lit letters to a backer panel.

In conclusion, backer panels can be an important and effective component of an effective channel letter sign design. They can provide a forceful addition to a sign's visibility and exposure.





A Look Back: Understanding Technological Innovation and its Impact on the Sign Industry

By Bert Guinee Miratec Systems, Inc.

The past 30 years have been a time of great technological change in the sign industry. These technological improvements have sparked increased competition in the marketplace. Now, sign companies have had to broaden their "comfort zones" out of necessity, and for many this is not a challenge, but for others it's monumental. Successful sign manufacturers today, I believe, see themselves in the business of visual communications rather than from the narrow viewpoint of sign manufacturing.

A sign company's willingness to adapt to these technological changes within the industry often foreshadows the viability of that company's future in the marketplace. The sign industry is truly technology driven and some of the greatest evolutions in the sign industry have occurred in the area of materials and manufacturing technologies.

We first turn the clock back to 1923 when the neon tube was introduced into the American marketplace by the French inventor, Georges Claude. This was, perhaps, the first true revolution in sign manufacturing that the U.S. had ever seen.

The neon tube was the first replacement for the incandescent lamp, the means by which signs had been illuminated prior to neon's introduction when most signs were manufactured using porcelain enamel and gooseneck lamps. Today, neon continues to be used, although, in very different applications than sign lighting. We still see exposed neon used in signage although to a much lesser extent than historically. As a result, a relatively small number of sign manufacturers today have in-house neon tube bending operations; for the most part, neon is outsourced.

The next major technological change was the introduction of plastics following W.W. II. Although plastic materials had been invented as far back as the late 30's, there was no material available for anything other than the war effort until the late 40's or early 50's.

Seeking new applications for their products, plastics manufacturers, such as Rohm and Haas, saw the sign industry as an excellent opportunity. Sign manufacturers readily adopted the product as a less expensive way to build a better quality sign. Signs that are internally illuminated with fluorescent lamps still represent a common method of sign construction today.

Flexible materials, first introduced by 3M, arrived in the industry in the 70's. Today, plastic, in its many different forms and flexible materials are the most common sign facing materials used by sign manufacturers.

The 70's saw another major revolution in the sign industry with the arrival of the computer. One of its first applications was in the front office of MelWeb, a Florida sign company, when they installed not only the computers but also the requisite software to gather more data about their accounting as well as their manufacturing operation than ever before.

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Soon computers were introduced to the manufacturing environment, a move that would become as significant to our industry as had the introduction of neon.

In 1983, Gerber Scientific introduced the Gerber III vinyl cutting device at the NESA Convention. That product and its successor, IVB, spread across the nation like wildfire. Soon to follow were a number of cutting machines used on the plant floor for metals, woods and plastics. The sign industry was truly coming of age!

Uniform knife cut pressure sensitive vinyl films for application to almost any surface gave the sign manufacturer tremendous latitude, lower cost and significantly improved quality of production. This was certainly the case with the introduction of computerization into sign company operation.

Soon, Adobe and others introduced graphic design software that provided for extraordinary design freedom. Photoshop® and Illustrator®, just two of those software products, are still in widespread use in our industry today.

Regrettably, these changes caused a reduction in the need for sign painters and creative artists working on the drawing boards of sign company art departments. As companies begin to automate their production processes the result is oftentimes a reduction in the labor input into manufacturing.

Then, in the early 1990's companies, like Vutek introduced the first of many digital printers for the production of billboards. Just imagine, in a few short years the thousands of billboards that were being hand painted in studios all over the U.S. were now being printed in a matter of minutes. The total transition, nationwide, from paint to print occurred in less than 3 or 4 years!

Soon, digital printing technology, albeit in a much improved format, was being introduced for the production of on-premise sign faces. Today it's possible for companies to deliver near magazine quality print production with outstanding exterior durability at competitive pricing to the electrical sign industry. Designers working for sign manufacturers now have total design freedom that allows them and their employers to gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace through the use of creative design.

No single technology has enhanced the value of exterior visual communications more than the advent of electronics. Time-o-Matic, now Watchfire®, has been a leader in this technology and has experienced outstanding growth as sign manufacturers all over America have incorporated electronics into their final product. Even if we believe that the most significant role of the on-premise sign is identification, one can't deny the incredible power of electronics to enhance its advertising value.

The most recent major product introduction into our industry has been the L.E.D. As a light source they're being widely used in channel letters in lieu of neon. And it's increasingly common to see their use in sign cabinets as well. Unfortunately, this further contributes to the demise of the neon tube bender. So, here we have a crescendo of sign lighting from incandescent to neon to fluorescent to L.E.D.

Who knows what the future might hold??

Taken as a whole, all of these technological changes have had a major impact on our industry. Shakespeare once said, "The past is prologue". So, what does the future hold for those of us in this exciting industry?

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Mid South Messenger - February 2015

Sign companies must be willing to adapt to the increasing communication demands of businesses. Providing various options for signage, L.E.D, illuminated flexible faces, vinyl applications, etc., retailers are no longer confined by a lack of options when deciding how to display business, to the marketplace.

Sign companies need to train their people talk about signage not only as a means of identifying a place of business, but also as a means of advertising it. One thing you can be sure of is that if we don't learn this language our products will become commodities, and if we allow that to happen, social media will "eat our lunch!" With the wide variety of signage options available, thanks to technological advances, we have no excuse for not being able to provide a wide array of offerings to our clients.

None of us would dispute the idea that signs are critical to a successful business. Many national retail companies include the need for adequate signage in their real estate models. Signage is so important that these companies will not buy a piece of real estate if adequate signage is not possible.

One of the challenges ahead is to find ways to encourage the planning community to become advocates rather than adversaries. We have the ammunition; the research is clear and the need is evident.

The on-premise display is the first and most often repeated impression that a consumer has of a retailer and that impression is enormously enhanced with the use of modern electronics. Research has shown that consumers have fairly regular driving patterns. By this I mean that we tend to drive back and forth to work using the same routes; we drive to the supermarket along the same streets; we drive our children to school or soccer the same way most of the time. As a result we're exposed to the advertising message on an on-premise display repeatedly over the course of the messages life.

This is not unlike seeing the same ad time and time again in the newspaper, on TV or wherever, but with one very major difference...when we see the ad on TV we're not in a position to act upon it. But in the case of the on-premise display we certainly can and do so immediately.

In research circles this is referred to as creating "top of the mind" awareness or what is often described as "tiny little footprints on the surface of the mind". Because we're exposed to the on-premise signs advertising message repeatedly, those footprints become embedded in our memories. In fact, many psychologists would say that "share of mind" approximates and often equals "share of market"; further evidencing the advertising power of the on-premise display, enhanced by modern electronics.

I believe these are exciting, extraordinary times for those in the onset of their careers. The future is incredibly bright. I can't begin to imagine the technologies that will evolve in the next fifty years but I believe they'll be mind boggling!





Members Supporting Members

At MSSA, we understand and appreciate the investment of time and money from all of our member companies. As a matter of principal, MSSA member companies do everything they can to conduct business within the membership of the association because MSSA understands it cannot succeed without the success of its member companies. The following product manufacturers, engineers, and suppliers have agreed, by registering as 2015 MSSA members, to support MSSA in 2015. Please consider the following companies as you conduct business in 2015. A current membership list is available for viewing by visiting www.midsouthsign.org or for questions regarding a company's MSSA membership, contact MSSA for clarification (901) 452–6444.



3M Commercial Graphics Division Admiral Wholesale Sign Components

AgiLight, Inc.

Akzo Nobel Coatings

Allanson Lighting Components

Altec Industries Arlon Graphics, LLC BDB Enterprises, Inc. Bayer MaterialScience Bitro Group, Inc.

Cincinnati Sign Supplies Cooley Sign & Digital Products Cornerstone Engineering

Curbell Plastics, Inc Custom Foam Fabricators Custom Products Corp

Daktronics, Inc.

Descant Awning and Sign Company

Direct Sign Wholesale Eastern Metal Supply EBSCO Signs & Displays EGL Company, Inc.

Elliott Equipment Company Elrod Engineering, LLC

Facecrafters

faces

FDC Graphic Films, Inc. France Power Solutions GE Lighting Solutions

Gemini, Inc.

Gerber Scientific Products Graphic Solutions Group

Grimco, Inc. Gulf Signs, LLC

Hartco

Hendrick Manufacturing

Herring Sales Hiscall, Inc. Hybroco Sales, Inc. Indy Imaging Inc.

Johnson Sales Company/Jasper Plastics

Solutions
KeyedIn Solutions
LED Craft, Inc
LetterFab, LLC
LINK Engineering LLC
LORD Corporation
Matthews Paint
M-D Metalsource
MET Laboratories
Michael Brady Inc.
Mid-South Machine

Mikos / Kampakis Insurance Service

Miratec Systems, Inc.
Mr. Plastic, Inc.
MultiCam Inc.
MYCO, INC
N. Glantz & Son
Next LED Signs
Nova Polymers, Inc.
Optec Displays
Orafol Americas
Palram Americas

Phoenix Metals Company Piedmont Plastics, Inc.

Plaskolite, Inc. Principal LED Reece Supply Co S & F Custom Sign Corp SABIC Polymershapes

Saginaw Pipe

Scott Powerline & Utility Equipment

Scotts Sign System

Sherwin-Williams Automotive Finishes

Sign & Digital Graphics Sign Builders, Inc. Sign Fab, Inc. SignComp Signdrafting, LLC SloanLED

Southern Stud Weld Steel Art Company

Sullaway Engineering, Inc.

The Ross Group ThinkSIGN, Inc.

Thompson Engineering Services, LLC

Trinity Products
Tubelite Company, Inc.
US LED, Ltd.
USAwning Network
Utility Equipment Service

Vantage LED Ventex Technology

Voltarc

Watchfire Signs by Time-O-Matic World Wide Sign Systems

Wrisco

YESCO Electronics Z3 Graphics, Inc. Zlight Technology, LLC



Breaking Down Architectural Signage Opportunities

The International Sign Association has been working extensively with the architectural signage community over the past few years – providing research on urban wayfinding, typography, and the correlation between economic behavior and downtown signage. We work closely with design firms, branding agencies, and downtown developers to promote our members and create new business opportunities. We are adding to this substantive research with a compelling infographic of the opportunities in architectural signage.

What percentage of a sign shop's business is in architectural signage? How many sign companies have design talent in-house? And where are the growth opportunities when it comes to working with other professionals on architectural signage projects? These are just some of the questions we've answered in this vibrant new infographic.

In some cases, the relationship between a sign manufacturer and an architect, designer, or facilities manager may be close, particularly if the sign shop works in certain sectors. For others, it remains an untapped opportunity. To learn more about building opportunities in digital signage, check out our infographic at http://www.signs.org/resources/relatedresources. aspx#architectural. You can also contact ISA's Director of Strategic Initiatives at 703.778.8095 or email at sapna.budev@signs.org.

Sign Careers Pique Interest from Tech Educators

Working with career and technical educators is crucial to ensuring the sign and visual communications industry has the skilled workforce it needs to expand and maintain its place as one of the fastest growing industries in the world.

ISA recently participated in the Association for Career and Technical Education's (ACTE) inaugural Career Pavilion hosted during its annual conference in Nashville, Tennessee. ISA connected with administrators, educators, and career guidance professionals. Through this event, ISA shared the many exciting and diverse job opportunities that exist within the sign and visual communications industry. ISA also discussed effective strategies to engage students and help them translate what they're learning in the classroom to real-life work experience. One of those strategies is connecting educators with member companies so that students can get an up-close look at what kind of career paths our industry has to offer.

If you'd like more information about ISA's workforce development efforts, contact ISA's Director of Workforce Development Alison Kent at alison.kent@signs.org or at 703.836.4012 ext. 152.

New Research Forecasts Market Trends

The latest installment of the ISA Sign Industry Market Monitor is out with new research that will help your businesses grow. This comprehensive research tool provides a forecast on future trends and upcoming market shifts by key segments in the sign industry. The ISA Sign Industry Market Monitor is sponsored by the National Association of Sign Supply Distributors (NASSD). ISA, in partnership with IHS and Vandiver Associates, is utilizing market size, sales data and key business drivers for endmarkets, and distribution channels of the sign industry to provide a quarterly Market Monitor and Index to ISA members.

The key industry segments that are currently included are large format printing, electric signage, way finding signage, and dynamic digital signage. This research can be accessed at http://www.signs.org/Resources/ISASignIndustryMarketMonitor.aspx. If you have any questions regarding the latest research, please contact Glenn Feder at glenn.feder@signs.org or (703) 548-7389.

Working to Save Your Business Money

How much is bureaucratic red tape from Washington DC costing your sign company? The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) has issued a new report that shows the macroeconomic impact of federal regulations on our nation's manufacturers. The results, which can be found at http://www.nam.org/Data-and-Reports/Cost-of-Federal-Regulations/Federal-Regulation-Full-Study.pdf reveal that the financial burden of federal regulations falls disproportionately on America's small manufacturers, especially those with fewer than 50 employees. This includes the vast majority of sign companies. These small manufacturers incur regulatory costs of \$34,671 per employee per year, which is more than three times the cost borne by the average U.S. company.

This new data confirms why ISA works with other like-minded organizations in Washington DC – to reduce the regulatory costs on the sign and visual communications industry. ISA recently joined with NAM and dozens of other associations urging Congress to act to make permanent the tax provisions that benefited manufacturers and expired at the end of 2013. ISA believes that "failure to extend these provisions is a tax increase" which will "inject instability and uncertainty into the economy." ISA also works to enact regulatory reform, some of which has passed the U.S. House of Representatives, only to meet a dead-end in the U.S. Senate.

How ISA Advocates in 30,000 Jurisdictions

The International Sign Association works in communities all over the country – big and small – to ensure that sign codes everywhere are fair and business-friendly. It's no easy task. And our efforts were recently highlighted in Connectivity, CQ Roll Call's blog for association, non-profit and advocacy professionals.

In the article, David Hickey, ISA's Vice President of Government Relations, gives readers behind-the-scenes insight into what it's like to advocate in the thousands of local jurisdictions where signs are regulated. City councils, zoning boards, and transportation departments – ISA works on all levels to make certain that the voices of sign and visual communications companies and small businesses are heard loud and clear.

"It's not about turning every borough and village into Las Vegas," our Lori Anderson, ISA's President and CEO, told Connectivity. One of ISA's biggest goals is to educate communities about the value of good signage. Anderson says understanding codes, working at all levels of government, and backing vital research projects are all part of ISA's advocacy plan.

To learn more about the challenges sign and visual communications businesses face in communities around the U.S., read the full article in Connectivity at http://connectivity.cqrollcall.com/how-to-advocate-in-30000-local-jurisdictions/



As a matter of principle, MSSA member companies do everything they can to conduct business within the membership of the association because MSSA understands it cannot succeed without the success of its member companies.



Looking for a new career in the Sign Industry?

Looking for a better job in Signs? Need qualified sign people? Ready to hire? Visit www.SignCareers.com MSSA's sign employment resource.



MSSA and Mikos/Kampakis INSURANCE PROGRAM

MSSA and Mikos/Kampakis Insurance Service have partnered to ensure that you have an opportunity to deal with a team of insurance professionals geared toward providing insurance at a competitive price in a very timely fashion.



The purpose of "The Steve Metheny Scholarship Foundation" is to provide financial awards to employees or dependent children of employees of Mid South Sign Association member firms. It is the desire of MSSA to promote excellence in our industry by encouraging the young, bright, and talented to further their education.







WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD A STRONGER INDUSTRY

ISA Sign Expo 2015 is the best place to connect with fellow Mid South Sign Association members and the entire sign and visual communications industry.



A key benefit of membership in your affiliated association is ISA Sign Expo. And here are some of the great members-only discounts you receive when you use code MSSA15 to register for the show:

EDUCATION DISCOUNT

As a local sign company member of MSSA, use your unique Affiliated
Association registration code MSSA15 and you will receive a 50% discount
if you register for ISA Sign Expo education by the early-bird date of
February 28; a 25% discount if registering after February 28.

FREE TRADE SHOW PASS

 MSSA's Affiliated Association registration code MSSA15 will also provide free trade show entry. Visit signexpo.org/MSSAReg to register.

EXCLUSIVE HOTELS

Looking for the hotel where most MSSA members will be staying? For the best
networking opportunities, MSSA recommends that members consider making
their hotel reservations at one of the ISA Sign Expo official hotels. MSSA's
hotel reservation unique link is signexpo.org/MSSAHotel.

EVERY REGISTRATION COUNTS

Attending ISA Sign Expo helps support your Affiliate Association and all the benefits you receive from them.

SIGNEXPO.ORG/MSSA

Education & Networking: April 8–11 • Trade Show: April 9–11 Mandalay Bay Convention Center • Las Vegas, Nevada

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES, JUST FOR YOU

With four days of non-stop opportunities, you and your team can immerse yourselves in events tailored to your sign and visual communications company's needs.

Meet, greet and network with the people who can change your business.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9-SATURDAY, APRIL 11

MEET UP AT THE HUB

Don't forget to stop by The Hub, Booth 5574, to meet with your Affiliated Association representative and take part in valuable giveaways and events.

NEW! LOUNGE & LEARN

Need a place to relax and recharge? Want to follow up with a speaker from an education session and get your questions answered from industry experts? The Lounge & Learn, located right on the trade show floor, is the perfect spot to host informal meetings and gatherings with fellow attendees and speakers.

PRINT APPLICATION CENTER

Visit the Print Application Center for live demos and hands-on solutions using unique applications. Stop by for complimentary education sessions by exhibitors.

DYNAMIC DIGITAL PARK

Interested in learning what digital signage can do for your business, or ready to expand your digital offerings? The Dynamic Digital Park features exhibitors from leading technology companies, ready to help you navigate the digital marketplace. See the latest products first-hand and take part in learning opportunities available to all attendees for FREE!

AFFILIATED ASSOCIATIONS MEMBER PARTY

THURSDAY | APRIL 9

Join fellow members of ISA Affiliated Associations at this exclusive event. Open only to members, this is your chance to make valuable connections with other sign and visual communications professionals in your state, region and beyond.

ISA NETWORKING RECEPTION FOR NATIONAL & CUSTOM SIGN COMPANIES

FRIDAY | APRIL 10

Don't miss the opportunity to build relationships and establish profitable partnerships with national sign companies.

"For custom sign companies, like myself, it's a great opportunity to see new products that are out. There's events, meet & greets with national companies, putting faces to names — not only suppliers, but companies we've talked to over the phone or emailed. It's a great networking tool." **Chad VanEffen, Signs by Crannie**



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Hilton Garden Inn West Monroe • Deadline: February 25, 2015 • 318-398-0653

MSSA Registration: www.midsouthsign.org