

Alvin Griffin & Lee Sperl Attain CGCM Status

Alvin B. Griffin, the director of the Graphic Production Center at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in Charlotte, NC, has achieved certification as a Certified Graphic Communication Manager (CGCM) from the IPMA.



With 32 years of in-plant graphic arts experience, Griffin currently directs the efforts of the printing facility for the nation's fourth largest urban school system. As director, he oversees the production of over more than 4,000 projects annually (50 million pieces) with an estimated value of \$2.3 million. His in-plant operation holds the distinction of being the first k-12 production facility in the nation to install an iGen3 in their all-digital high volume in-plant. (To view a fact sheet on their in-plant, visit IPMA's member resource section.)

Although Griffin already held decades of hands-on experience, he chose to take the extra step and obtain IPMA certification. "I have always been an in-plant guy and have realized the tremendous power in validation. As a long standing member of IPMA, I have admired those members who were certified in their respective areas and felt it was time to validate my years of experience. The IPMA certification is highly regarded in our industry; it indicates a well-rounded, professional printer."

Griffin found the examination process to be challenging, but well worth the effort. "I had learned the examination was extensive, so I prepared extensively. IPMA provided a study guide that I reviewed for an hour per day for 6 months. Without the study guide I'm not sure I would have been successful passing the exam. Was the exam tough? Yes. Was it fair? Yes. Would I recommend that my peers pursue the certification? Yes, because it is the best way to validate all of the knowledge we have gained during our careers. I can't wait to add the CGCM designation to my business card."

Lee J. Sperl, manager of Document and Publishing Solutions for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota in Eagan have attained the credential of distinction as a Certified Graphic Communications Manager (CGCM) from IPMA. Sperl, who has been with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota since 2000, was promoted to the position of manager in 2001.



He shares, "I've been involved with printing forever. I have been an operator on many types of equipment, worked at several in-plants, served as the purchaser for a large commercial printing company twice and held a print managerial position.

"After talking with a CGCM recipient from last year (Dan Cowan), I decided it was now or never to put my experience to the test." He found the exam to be challenging. "I wasn't sure if I had prepared satisfactorily. I had hoped to complete reviews of a few more reference books prior to testing, but I was pleasantly surprised when I was informed that I had successfully passed. Now I wish I'd have attempted the CGCM certification when I first qualified years ago." Sperl emphasizes, "Certification is a great way to demonstrate to leadership that their Print and Mail professionals are passionate about doing a great job for the organization."