



## Trusted as a 3M Preferred Converter



### FEATURED ARTICLE

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## 3M RECOGNIZES EMPIRE AS A PREFERRED CONVERTER

Empire has been recognized by 3M, a prominent American multinational conglomerate that applies science in collaborative ways to improve lives daily, as a **Preferred Converter**. After being a **Select Converter** for many years, Empire is honored now to receive 3M’s highest level of recognition. Empire’s continuous growth in OEM markets has led to this unique printer and material supplier relationship. This partnership in process improvement means customers can receive custom solutions to meet their specialized labeling needs.

“It is an honor to promote Empire Screen Printing from a Select Converter to a Preferred Converter,” says Chase Luebker, Account Representative and Converter Markets Specialist at 3M. “With their continued focus on sustainability, leading-edge technologies, and process improvement, Empire is a great example of what it means to be part of this elite group. We appreciate the continued partnership with 3M and are excited to grow together in the future.”

3M’s legacy of innovation drives continual improvement of adhesive technologies. By combining powerful tools with the technical support provided by 3M, customers can quickly find products that meet their precise requirements. Empire and 3M look forward to continuing their strategic partnership and growing their relationship by working hand-in-hand to provide customers with effective solutions that meet their needs.



## HOUSEKEEPING IN THE WORKPLACE The Insurance Center

Housekeeping in the workplace? Yes, but it is much more than just sweeping up or taking out the trash at the end of the day. Housekeeping includes a variety of duties that contribute to keeping our workspace clean and safe.

To be sure, general cleanliness is very important and we need to do all we can to keep our work areas clean and orderly. As we review the following topics, please consider where these issues may be a concern and what we need to do or change to maintain good housekeeping practices.

**KEEP WALKWAYS CLEAR** | It is fundamental that aisles and passageways remain clean and orderly throughout the work area. This means we need to be aware of things that are stored in aisles or areas where people walk.

- » Never store pallets or other material in passageways; keep them clear at all times, and stack containers and materials so they are stable and cannot slide or collapse.
- » Pallets and four-wheeled carts should not be stored on end as they could easily tip. These pieces of equipment are unstable, and must always be stored flat or on all four wheels.
- » Watch where combustible materials are stored – they should never be in front of electrical panels.
- » Nothing should be blocking sprinklers, fire exits or fire extinguishers.

We should also make a point to immediately pick up debris like strapping, stretch wrap and broken pieces of pallets that might collect in aisles. Anything else that might become a tripping hazard, like cords, wires, loose flooring or trash, needs to be taken care of immediately.

**SPILL & LEAKS** | Spills and equipment leaks are a normal occurrence, and that's OK. Of course, when you notice a spill, your first step should be to find its source and fix it. Always check a chemical's safety data sheet (SDS) before touching it.

**STAYING SAFE WITH EQUIPMENT** | Remember that material handling equipment like forklifts, cranes, and hoists are designed to move weights that are generally bigger and heavier than people. Not paying attention to when and where



## SAFETY COMMITTEE

### SAFETY COORDINATOR

Keith Cook ..... R & D

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Theresa Antony .....SVS Operator	Shane Hulburt.....Doming Supervisor
Gavin Burr .....LVS	Curtis Johnson.....I.T.
Jay Cochran .....Maintenance Mgr.	Jamie Sanders..... HR
Tom Donaldson.....Digital Manager	Tanya Thompson..... AutoEmp
Bob Fischer .....SVS Operator	Kathy Vaughan..... HR
Nancy Gilbertson ..... Customer Service	Mike Wakeen.....Director of Mfg.

## HOUSEKEEPING IN THE WORKPLACE (continued)

material handling equipment is being used can result in injuries. Yes, operators of all material handling equipment must watch out for others and operate in safe locations, but we all are responsible for looking out when this equipment is around.

Aisles and passageways where material handling equipment is being used are designed to provide sufficient clear space, but your attentiveness is always very necessary. Get in the habit of looking around at intersections to see if traffic is approaching. If you approach a piece of material handling equipment, you might have the right of way, but that doesn't automatically make your way right. Always look both ways.

**WORKING ON PLATFORMS** | Working platforms are any areas where people need to stand to perform their work. This might be on the floor, on a ramp or on an elevated platform. Regardless of the type of platform, it is important that all working platforms are set up in such a way that they do not contribute to slips, trips or falls. Any working platform that is more than four feet off the ground or an adjacent platform must be guarded with a standard railing and toe board.

**PREVENTING SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS** | Slips, trips and falls are always listed within the top five types of injuries that occur in the workplace and at home. Falls are classified as tumbles from the same level (tripping over something), or tumbles from differing heights (falling down stairs). If we concentrate on good housekeeping, we can prevent these types of injuries.

There should never be anything stored in passageways because that creates a significant trip hazard. It is also important to ensure walkways are free of spilled materials such as water, oils, etc. All of these materials contribute to trip hazards.



## 5S: EMPIRE'S HOUSEKEEPING PHILOSOPHY



At Empire, our housekeeping falls under our **5S Philosophy**. Not only does this help each department stay organized and efficient, it also ensures a safe work environment.

5S is part of the **Lean Manufacturing methodology**, designed to build an optimal working environment, both physically and mentally.

### The Five Pillars of 5S are:

- **SORT** (organize) ..... Eliminate unnecessary items not needed for production
- **SET IN ORDER** (orderliness) ..... A place for everything and everything in its place
- **SHINE** (cleanliness) ..... Cleaning your area and find ways to stay organized
- **STANDARDIZE** (adherence) ..... Maintain and monitor the 1st three categories
- **SUSTAIN** (self-discipline) ..... Stick to the rules



**2021-22 EMS ANNUAL REPORT** Cathy Buttell

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, our **2021-2022 EMS Annual Report**, which is required in order to maintain our Green Tier 1 certification, was approved by the Wisconsin DNR.

This annual report marked the first year a **business index** was implemented. In the past, when we documented our energy and waste metrics, we didn't take into account our production output, so data was not necessarily as precise as it could be. Empire chose **Impressions** as our business index.

Impressions refer to a single sheet or repeat length (if on a roll) of material that is used to produce the product. The number of impressions per job determines the set quantity needed to complete the order. This number also includes the setup material, so impressions measure the total throughput of our product. The new metric is a significant improvement as we look at the numbers based on the entire company rather than individual equipment or areas. This indicator supports increases and decreases in company performance, establishing a bigger picture of the company's sustainable efforts.

Our 2022 EMS Annual Report can be viewed on [Empire's website \(Go Green/EMS\)](#).

**SPRING CLEANING AT EMPIRE**

In celebration of **Earth Week**, Empire continued the tradition of outdoor spring cleaning. Although Mother Nature packed in a week of snow, rain, and low temperatures, which delayed our clean up by a week, we were able to get out on a bright 75° spring day. Empire also provided cupcakes for everyone.

Representing Customer Service, Art department, SVS and LVS screen print, HR, Digital printing, IT, and R&D, this group collected 37 pounds of waste.



**GREEN COMMITTEE**

- Jennifer Schloesser..... Creative Director
- Cathy Buttell ..... Project Manager
- Keith Cook..... R&D
- Jeff Gierok ..... Electrical Technician

**TWI TRAINING** Alexis Marsh

What is the importance of training in the workplace?

Training leads to better processes and business growth. In today's ever-changing marketplace, the importance of job training has never been greater. This is why several managers and supervisors at Empire participated in a TWI Job Instruction re-training at the beginning of March 2023.



**“Training within Industry” (TWI)** is a structured training program that was developed in the United States during World War II to quickly train workers in essential manufacturing skills. The program was initially designed to support the war effort, but it has since been adapted and expanded to other industries and countries.

TWI training offers several benefits to organizations that adopt it. Standardized training empowers employees to look for improvement in the process and share their ideas for change. Overall, TWI can help organizations improve the skills and knowledge of their employees, which leads to increased productivity, better quality, and improved employee engagement and retention.

Empire has been working with the fundamentals of TWI training for years. To ensure our training stays current with continuous improvement efforts, it was important to make sure our leaders were aligned with the job instruction process. Through this process, managers and supervisors are able to review departmental job breakdowns and employee training records. These reviews give employees the opportunity to learn additional skills and roles they have interest in.

Leading the training, Rick Auterson worked through the basic concepts and helped remove any over-processing which can creep into training practices. Using the given concepts, the group helped each member work through an existing instruction. This team evaluated Empire's training record process, came up with a modification to the existing standard and took steps to implement the change.

According to Shane Hulbert (Doming Supervisor), using the TWI method is an easy way to train. Tom Donaldson (Digital Supervisor) stated, “The benefit of writing the [job] breakdown makes training easier. It also helps with the creation of the Work Instruction. The simplistic nature makes training easier for the trainer and trainee.”



**PEACE PUPPIES & HUMMERS** Jennifer Schloesser

In January, we did some early spring cleaning and came across these adorable peace puppies and rockin' hummers left over from Jim Brush's **World Peace Foundation**.

We were fortunate to find some local non-profit organizations for donation. Former employee, Amy Bettis, took some for the **Boy Scouts of America Gateway Area Council** and the remaining went to the **Northside Elementary Neighborhood Center**.

Together, these great non-profits are using them as prizes throughout the year at events. Jim would be proud knowing that these wonderful toys are putting smiles on children's faces.



L-R: Julie Nelson (Community School Coordinator, Northside Elementary School), Cindy Brush (owner, Empire Screen Printing), Amy Bettis (Development Director, The Boy Scouts of America Gateway Area Council)



**Prepared. For Life.™**

For more information on the **Boy Scouts of America Gateway Area Council**, visit <https://www.gatewayscouting.org/>

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LA CROSSE**



For more information on **Northside Elementary**, visit <https://www.lacrosseschools.org/northside/>

**EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION**

To celebrate **Employee Appreciation Day** on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, employees were given the opportunity to nominate another employee they appreciated, along with the reasons why. Slips were handed in, and the three employees with the most nominations would receive \$100.00. This year there were a total of five winners due to a 3-way tie for 3<sup>rd</sup> place.



- \$100..... **Jake Hulburt**
- \$100..... **Ben Bakken**
- \$34 each..... **David Hulburt, Vanessa Fox, and Nancy Gilbertson**

Congratulations to the winners and all those nominated by your fellow employees.

**MARCH MADNESS WINNERS**

Congratulations to our March Madness winners:

- 1st Place..... **Nancy Gilbertson**
- 2nd Place..... **Kevin Gerstenberger**
- 3rd Place..... **David Hulburt**

Thank you to all those who participated!!





# UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 25th-27th, 2023

Empire's Partners  
in Printing Expo

Empire Calendar Contest Theme:  
*Forgotten Treasures*  
Look for more information to come



## ANNIVERSARIES

### JANUARY

Steve Nelson ..... 36 years  
Randy Hoff ..... 34 years  
Chris Mikunda ..... 25 years  
Jen Schloesser ..... 23 years  
Mai Khang ..... 16 years  
Eric Wienkes ..... 15 years  
Richard Burg ..... 9 years  
Steve Limpert ..... 6 years  
Carol Tollefson ..... 5 years  
Emily Syring ..... 5 years  
Cody Volden ..... 5 years  
Phillip Treu ..... 2 years  
Shane Harter ..... 1 year  
Miranda Klema ..... 1 year  
Sarah Haskins ..... 1 year  
Kayla Selberg ..... 1 year

### FEBRUARY

John Freismuth ..... 31 years  
Shane Hulburt ..... 29 years  
Guy Gregerson ..... 27 years  
Angie Severson ..... 19 years  
Stacie Boisen ..... 16 years  
Dan Poff ..... 14 years  
Georgina "GiGi"  
Cundy-Lalande ..... 5 years

## ANNIVERSARIES

### FEBRUARY

Heather Reinsvold ..... 3 years  
Andrea Bell ..... 2 years  
Lakota Standing Bear ..... 2 years  
Evan Heintz ..... 2 years  
Rita Howe ..... 1 year  
Hannah Knudson ..... 1 year  
Justin Gabel ..... 1 year

### MARCH

James Schweinefus ..... 52 years  
Clark Martin ..... 34 years  
Sherri Vinson ..... 30 years  
Jeff Gierok ..... 30 years  
Dan Metz ..... 30 years  
Jessica Kamrowski ..... 27 years  
Petra Vogel ..... 26 years  
Vanessa Fox ..... 22 years  
Andy Kiedrowski ..... 17 years  
Alexis Marsh ..... 9 years  
Walter Staff ..... 8 years  
Chad Hoesley ..... 8 years  
Cassandra Rehfuss ..... 6 years  
Crystal Monn ..... 4 years  
Jared Ball ..... 3 years  
Sarah Sauers ..... 1 year  
Caida Alland ..... 1 year

## ANNIVERSARIES

### APRIL

Troy Stockers ..... 33 years  
Kevin Mason ..... 31 years  
Randy Lemke ..... 31 years  
Jennifer Ledman ..... 30 years  
William Feyen ..... 25 years  
John Johnson ..... 23 years  
Rhonda Peterson ..... 16 years  
Rebecca Wurzel ..... 13 years  
Teri Herold ..... 13 years  
Curtis Johnson ..... 13 years  
Richard (Anthony) McDowell ..... 13 years  
James Owsley ..... 6 years  
Patricia Wells ..... 4 years  
Jory Stall ..... 4 years  
Gregory Peterson ..... 4 years  
Paula Price ..... 4 years  
Sharon Ronnie ..... 2 years  
Eric Olson ..... 1 year

## NEW EMPLOYEES

Madison Sylvester  
Egan Shanley

Deadline for the next  
newsletter: **08-18-2023**



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