



CPISC • CSIC

people in print

# MAKING AN IMPRESSION

CPISC Research Framework



2007-2010

Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council



## INTRODUCTION

**T**he Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council (CPISC) provides a national forum for collaboration on human resource and workforce development issues within the printing and graphic communications industry. Incorporated in April 2006, CPISC's mission is to identify and implement strategies to address skills development and learning within the sector. Our overall goal is to improve the quality of the sector's labour force.

The guiding principle within CPISC is partnership. We bring together employers, employees, unions, education and government to develop innovative approaches to skills development for the current and future workforce of this technology-based industry. The intent of CPISC is not to duplicate what exists but to build on what is currently being done and to develop on a national basis the programs and services that will meet the human resource development needs of the industry as a whole.

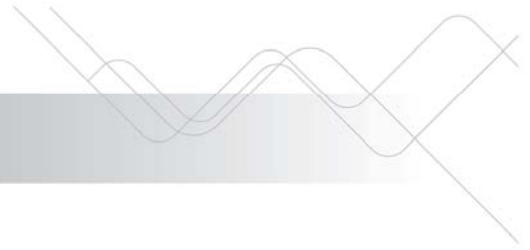
The printing and graphic communications industry is Canada's longest established and most widely dispersed information technology-based manufacturing industry. With 8,600 establishments, it is the largest manufacturing industry in the country in terms of number of establishments. By employing more than 113,000 men and women, it is the fourth largest manufacturing employer in the nation.

It is a very diverse industry. The industry includes printing and pre-press establishments, bindery operations and allied industries such as packaging and equipment manufacturers. The printing and graphic communications industry is dominated by small firms, with 75% of companies employing fewer than 20 people. Industry establishments range from large production operations with more than 300 employees to smaller establishments with less than 10 employees. Less than 3% employ more than 100 people.

In 2004, the GDP in Printing and Related Support Activities was \$5.7 billion. In 2006, the printing and graphic communications industry's employees produced nearly \$11.5 billion worth of shipments. It is a highly competitive industry that is responsive to changing market realities and a continuously evolving workplace. This is reflected in the amount of re-structuring the industry has undergone in recent years involving significant changes in the total number and size of plants.

## BACKGROUND

**T**he past two decades have been characterized by rapid changes in technology, increasing global competitiveness and the restructuring of business practices. The printing and graphic communications industry has embraced changes in information technology. This has resulted in a constant need to upgrade and retrain the current workforce while ensuring that bright, motivated young people are attracted to the industry. All workers – current, new and potential – need to have opportunities to acquire the high level of skills they will need to succeed in the future.



Jobs within the printing and graphic communications industry fall into the following production process areas.

**Pre-press** – Pre-press includes preparing digital and traditional material for the press, according to customer’s specifications. Traditionally, pre-press occupations included scanner and camera operators and film strippers – we used to talk about proofing the blues, going to film and preparing a camera-ready version. However, digital technologies and increased customer participation in pre-press activities have blurred previous traditional classifications. Responsibilities now include revisions and corrections of customer files, digital creation of type, page layout, scanning, imposition, colour separation, film and plate preparation and digital asset management. The majority of the work performed during the pre-press process requires highly sophisticated software.

**Press** – Press involves the actual printing of the document on a sheet-fed or web offset press. A sheet-fed press is just what the name implies – sheets of paper being fed into a printing press. Web presses operate with rolls of paper rather than single sheets – for example, newspapers are usually printed on web presses. This process area includes press operation and troubleshooting. Employees install and adjust plates, prepare blankets and cylinders, select and mix inks, run the press, monitor print quality and press performance, troubleshoot problems, ensure a safe operating environment and perform preventive maintenance on presses. As well, two other press systems – flexographic printing and digital printing – are rapidly growing areas that warrant particular attention.

**Finishing and bindery** – Finishing, bindery and distribution are the final steps in the production process. They include the assembly of finished products for the customer or consumer. Employees collate and bind printed sheets, perform finishing operations such as drilling, embossing and laminating, and prepare the final product for mailing and distribution. This process area now frequently includes the creation of a website that can host catalogues, databases and even e-commerce. As such, aside from the traditional occupations involved in finishing and binding a document together, this area now also includes a rapidly growing graphic communications component.

In addition, there are a number of jobs that support the production processes. **Production support** occupations include customer service and sales representatives, estimators, production managers and schedulers, and plant supervisors, as well as accounting and office staff, mechanics, electricians and material handlers.

The three production process areas and the production support area are each highly complex and integrated, and vary widely with the size of the company, types of presses, range of job titles and production output.



## BROAD CONCEPT

**A**s a new sector council, the potential scope of activity is vast. The CPISC Board of Directors identified **three priority areas of activity**:

- Standards – Work in partnership with industry stakeholders to address skills development issues through the creation of skill standards and profiles and the provision of relevant tools and resources
- Decision-making – Provide a national forum for collaboration among all stakeholders and the creation of tools and services pertaining to human resource and workforce development issues
- Training and career pathways – Improve the image of the industry as a career destination through outreach activities and better communication of education/training and work opportunities to both potential employees and those already employed in the sector.

In order to meet immediate and future industry workforce needs in each of these priority areas, CPISC will develop a suite of tools and services to help employers manage and assess their current and future workforce development needs and employees and future/potential employees determine their development needs.

## THREE-YEAR PLAN

**O**utlined below is the CPISC Research Framework, which sets out the Council's activities from April 2007 to March 2010.


### BUILDING BLOCKS

In order to function effectively and to meet the needs of the sector, CPISC requires certain fundamental components in each of its three priority areas. They constitute the Building Blocks for all subsequent work, programs and services to be undertaken by CPISC.

For 2007-2008, much of CPISC's work will focus on:

- Skill standards and profiles – essential, core and operating skill standards that set out what a person should know and be able to do to complete specific activities, as a basis for developing profiles of key occupations
- Labour market information – up-to-date statistical and anecdotal information about the printing industry as well as a technology roadmap, as a basis for decision-making
- Education and training – a review of existing education and training programs and providers, with a view to compiling a compendium of the range of training options, as a first step in identifying training gaps and determining strategies to fill these gaps.

Skill standards, labour market information and a review of education and training programs – together – constitute the foundation of any future work. For example, it is not possible to effectively recruit new



employees or to train existing employees until clear skill standards have been developed that describe and define what an employee should know and be able to do. Until CPISC has solid, accurate, up-to-date information about the printing and graphic communications industry, it will not be possible to respond effectively to needs. Having a clear sense of the type and scope of existing education and training programs will enable CPISC to identify gaps and work with the industry and the education sector to determine strategies for filling these gaps.

### TOOLS AND SERVICES

Using the Building Blocks as a foundation, CPISC will develop a set of tools and services geared to the specific needs of a range of audiences: employers, current and potential employees, educators and the general public.

Beginning in 2008, CPISC intends to use the skill standards, the labour market information and the review of training programs as a springboard to develop, for example:

#### *Priority Area # 1 – Standards*

- A review of certification and apprenticeship processes and models
- Development of a national standards recognition program

#### *Priority Area # 2 – Decision-making*

- Technology roadmap implementation and updating
- Ongoing labour market information gathering and analysis
- Case studies on selected topics


#### *Priority Area # 3 – Training and career pathways*

- A training needs assessment report, identifying gaps and strategies for filling these gaps with programs that meet the industry's particular needs
- A training needs assessment tool to help current and potential employees establish career pathways and provide employers with a useful performance assessment tool
- An accreditation program and accreditation guide for educational institutions and training providers
- An introduction to graphic communications course
- A learning and career pathways tool for students, educators and employers
- A virtual tour of a printing facility, highlighting the various processes, functions, and occupations
- *A day in the life* – profiles of process areas or selected occupations

As well, webinars, conferences and special events on topics related to each of the priority areas will be organized for employers, employees and educators. The attached table outlines CPISC's plan over the next three years.

### CPISC Three-year Plan

2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
<b>Priority # 1: Standards</b>		
Essential and Core Skill Standards for Printing Industry	Pre-press Skill Standards and Profiles	Production Support Skill Standards and Profiles
Press Skill Standards and Profiles	Finishing and Bindery Skill Standards and Profiles	
	Review of certification and apprenticeship training models	
		Development of a National Standards Recognition Program
Webinars, conferences and special events		
<b>Priority # 2: Decision-Making</b>		
Labour market information		
Technology Roadmap for Printing and Graphic Communications Sector	Implementation of Technology Roadmap	
		Case studies on selected topics
Webinars, conferences and special events		
<b>Priority # 3: Training and career pathways</b>		
<i>Seeing yourself in Print</i> – brochure on careers in the printing and graphic communications industry		
Generic PowerPoint presentation on the printing and graphic communications industry careers		
Review of training programs and providers and development of Compendium	Training needs assessment	Training needs assessment tool
		Accreditation Program and Guide
		Introduction to graphic communications course
	<i>A World of Print</i> – virtual tour of print facility	
		Learning and Career Planning Tool
	<i>A-Day-in-the-Life</i> – profiles	
Webinars, conferences and special events		

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The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.