



March 14, 2022

An Open Letter to the Paper Manufacturing and Distribution Community

It is no secret that our national economy is suffering due to a variety of supply chain issues. This complex problem is a major hindrance to the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the long-term health of the United States economy. The auto industry is plagued by a shortage of computer chips limiting the availability of new vehicles. Lumber shortages have dramatically increased the cost of new home construction. Other items that seem to encounter periodic shortages include pool chlorine, coins, various food items, etc.

As you know, the printing, graphic communications and mailing industry is experiencing supply chain difficulties of our own, in the form of a frustrating shortage of printing papers. Our members are concerned with the uncertainty surrounding the shortage and how it's impacting their businesses and customers. In many areas of the country, the demand for our members services is strong – but they're having to delay or turn away business due to the paper shortage.

When this all is behind us, prices for most things will stabilize and people will go back to buying cars and building homes. The looming threat for both of our industries is whether customers will further embrace electronic communications and move on from print entirely even when the supply crisis improves. The print and paper communities must quickly and effectively work together to protect against this scenario.

The regional print industry affiliates co-signing this letter are calling on our friends and business partners in the paper manufacturing and distribution community to help our members – your customers – mitigate the impact of this crisis. We acknowledge that the paper industry is challenged too and that there are many complex factors contributing to the paper shortage. While we weather this crisis together, our members need accurate, consistent information from the paper industry to set expectations with their customers and plan accordingly for the weeks and months ahead. We ask that the paper industry speak with a unified voice as much as possible. Please avoid speculation about timing and inventory without evidence to support your estimates. At the same time, prioritize the sharing of reliable intelligence with the print community. Feel free to do so through your nearest state or regional print industry affiliate.

For our part, we encourage our members to project and plan ahead as much as possible, while continuing to show patience, professionalism, and grace in working with their partners in the paper industry during this very challenging time.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to solve this crisis.



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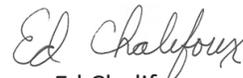
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