

2023 NAPIM Fall Technical Conference – Back in Full Swing

Opening Session

The 46th NAPIM Fall Technical Conference returned to the Oak Brook Hilton in Oak Brook, IL September 12-14, 2023. This year's conference proved to be an exceptionally exciting and dynamic event with great attendance.

The 2023 Technical Conference planning committee restructured the conference to a more technically focused, print process driven agenda. The committee plans additional schedule and program changes for the 2024 conference.

Opening Session Tuesday September 12, 2023

The conference opened Tuesday afternoon September 12, 2023, with keynote speaker Jeff Wettersten of Karstedt Partners. Jeff provided a detailed presentation focusing on critical technical and market factors affecting packaging converters. Ron Osborn of Mars Wrigley followed Jeff. Ron presented the brand owners perspective on the importance of supply chain communication for assuring food packaging safety. Ron emphasized the role and responsibilities of the supply chain in assuring that food packaging is safe and compliant with national and international regulations. Ciaran Little of Smithers Pira followed Osborn with a presentation discussing current and future impacts of sustainability initiatives on U.S. package printing.

Ending Tuesday's plenary session was the popular Supplier Showcases. Five printing ink raw materials suppliers (BYK, PCBL, CHT, BASF and Clariant) presented 10-minute, rapid fire, fact filled presentations covering the latest, technical developments in raw materials for printing ink formulations.



(l-r Ciaran Little - Smithers, Mouhcine Kahnouni - Clariant, Paul Abosch - PCBL, Ron Osborn – Mars Wrigley, Jeff Wettersten – Karstedt Partners, Regina Escandon - BASF, Bruce Berglund – CHT, Dhara Metla – BYK, Russ Szadowski – INX International)

A well-attended reception with vendor tabletop exhibits closed the opening day of the 2023 Fall Technical Conference.

Wednesday September 13, 2023

Wednesday, September 13th offered a full day of graphic arts/printing ink focused technical and regulatory presentations. Highlights included: Suzanne Hartigan's (American Chemistry Council) discussion on the effects on the printing and printing ink industries of the implementation of the new Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). Transitioning to the technical perspective – Aaron Hootkin (Enercon) outlined the importance of dyne measurements in corona treating polymeric substrates. Walter Chmura (Koenig & Bauer) gave a detailed overview of digitization technology in offset presses. Tony Donato (GAA/AIMCAL) closed the morning session with an in-depth analysis of the state of the gravure printing market.

Opening Wednesday's afternoon session was 2023 Lawter Lecture Series Award winner Faulkner P. Custer (BASF). Custer presented the results of a research project on water-borne emulsions and vapor barrier applications. Volker Spaeth provided a technical approach to carbon foot printing of wax emulsions for printing. Covering the economic side was Kevin Swift (ICIS). Kevin offered a current economic outlook for printing inks and the specialty organic chemicals markets. Charles Granger closed (University of Wisconsin) the afternoon session outlining an active research project from the U of WI Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering designed to improve recycling of printed films.

2023 Awards Dinner Wednesday September 13, 2023

The Wednesday night Awards Dinner was an exciting event with three, prestigious industry awards being presented. Russ Szadowski (INX International), Technical Board President, served as the evening's master of ceremony, with comments also provided by NAPIM President Geoff Peters, of Wikoff Color Corporation.

2023 Lawter Lecture Series

Custer P. Faulkner was presented with the 2023 Lawter Lecture Series award and cash prize by Gene Cassidy (Lawter).



(l-r Russ Szadowski – INX International, Custer P. Faulkner – BASF, Geoff Peters – Wikoff Color, Gene Cassidy - Lawter)

2023 Technical Associate Member Award

Tom Gwizdalski (Resolute Oil) was the recipient of the 2023 Technical Association Member Service Award.



(l-r Geoff Peters – Wikoff Color, Tom Gwizdalski – Resolute Oil, Russ Szadowski – INX International)

2023 Technical Achievement Award

Glenn Webster (Sun Chemical) was awarded the 2023 Technical Achievement Award.



(l-r Geoff Peters – Wikoff Color, Glenn Webster – Sun Chemical, Russ Szadowski – INX International)

Thursday September 14, 2023

The closing session of the 2023 Fall Technical Conference included cutting edge technical, regulatory and sustainability focused presentations. Terry Clayton (Summit Analytical) opened the morning session with a realistic, practical view of the analog to digital conversion process for industrial inkjet printing. Katie Bond (Keller and Heckman) offered practical advice for complying with regulations applying to commercial product “green” claims. Kai Yang (Evonik) discussed the applicable technical standards and processes necessary for developing and documenting sustainable printing ink raw materials. Natasha Banke (INX International) closed the 2023 Fall Conference with a presentation focused on the analytical approaches to, and necessary equipment for, solving ink and printing related problems.

Audience Reaction

The post conference survey returned very positive results with over 70% of the attendees indicating they would attend a future NAPIM Fall Technical Conference and nearly 85% of the attendees rating this year’s event as very good to excellent. Charles Granger’s (University of Wisconsin) presentation on “Printed Film Substrate Reclamation” was rated by many as the standout presentation of this year’s event although all of this year’s presentations received a majority good to excellent rating. Look for more information soon on some exciting changes to this event for 2024 and thank you to everyone who attended.

For more information on NAPIM or its benefits and service, visit napim.org.