[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:01] NT: Does your printing needs some passion?

[0:00:04] DD: Your design some dynamic dimension?

[0:00:08] DC: Are you stuck in a CMYK rut?

[0:00:10] DD: I'm David Drucker, founder, and CEO of Highresolution Printing and Packaging.

[0:00:17] NT: I'm Noel Tocci, founder of Tocci Made, Bespoke Print Consulting.

[0:00:20] DC: Now, I'm Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Welcome to Making it with Print, the podcast that takes a deep dive into the conception, creation, and production of amazing printed products.

[0:00:34] DD: If you can dream it –

[0:00:34] NT: You can make it.

[EPISODE]

[0:00:37] DC: Hey everybody, welcome to Podcast From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. And we are here with the Making it with Print Podcast. Yay, we're back. Everybody clap. I was telling David and Noel before I pushed record that I didn't realize how much I missed speaking to them until they all popped up on my Zoom screen. So, hello, gentlemen.

[0:01:04] DD: Good evening. Glad to be back.

[0:01:05] NT: Hello. Yes, great to see you guys.

[0:01:09] DC: Okay, and we'll do the who's David, who's Noel thing, so everyone knows which one of you are speaking, since the timbre of your voice is very similar. So, we have been on a little hiatus because everyone has been extremely, extremely busy. We're going to take our three topics, as we've been doing. But first, I want to give a shout-out to David Drucker, who is keynoting at the Amplify Roadshow tomorrow in Philadelphia. I mean, this podcast will be out after it's over. But maybe just talk a little bit about your organization and the event and they can catch the next one.

[0:01:51] DD: Yes. Amplify Roadshow is a group of different associations come together to talk about embellishments in the industry. I mean, that's a perfect topic for me, because I have years and years of experiments that I've done, and lessons that I've learned, and I think it would just be a great forum to be able to, once again, pull my samples out, share them with everybody. And hopefully, there's a great amount of feedback and lessons learned.

[0:02:20] DC: Excellent. Well, Noel and I both wish you luck, although you do not need it. Okay, so everyone has contributed a topic for tonight, and the first topic is customer files. Should printers fix them for free? Noel, we must start with you.

[0:02:45] NT: Boy. So, that's a loaded question. Whether anybody tells you or not, when a plant gets files, and you do repeat business for a client, that client's files get very quickly evaluated as to, "Wow, I love working with those guys. Their files are perfect or they're not." And they don't want to say anything, because they want to service the client.

But processing those files sometimes takes a lot of extra time, and believe it or not, generally, you're going to not pay more, but yes, you might pay more because everybody's afraid to say anything. So, before I answer the question directly, what I found, I've done this a couple of times, and it has been – I mean, I worked with people for a long time, big groups of people. In a big organization, you might have seven or eight designers, so your files are coming from all over the place. More importantly, those files might have been like a giant annual report or a giant book, five or six different people may have worked on the same files.

So, when they release, unless they've got a really good preflight team, and I like to talk to them before you release these files. So, what I did with this one team a long time ago, and I've done it

now repeatedly, is go, "You know what we're going to do? Because we had issues with the files, and we fix them, and it was easy on the bill in the end." I'm going to get to a point here. So, this is what we're going to do. We're going to get you to the printer, we're going to take three or four designers at a time, and we're going to take these files all over again, and you're going to sit down. They're going to literally walk in the door and hand them to pre-press. He's waiting. And you're going to watch what happens to those files when they come in.

How do they get repositioned, reworked? What happens? And it's to a person, and I've done this a million times now. Their eyes open, and they go, "Wow, do you know many people just didn't know?" And these are people that know how to produce files, but the problem is, everybody comes in and says something different to them. But until they understand, "Oh, you're going to do that? Oh, that needs to be on a separate layer. Oh, wait, the PMS, especially in light of what's going on with Pantone and Adobe" it is so enlightening. I have had letters written to me going, "This is amazing. We just never knew. No one took us behind the curtain." And the guy and the operator just laughs. I don't understand why this is a big deal. And then they watch the flow, right? So, it goes into that guy, and he has to prepare it, to rip it to play, so to prove, so whatever he's going to do, and it's amazing.

So, with good customers, the answer is to the question and the longest-winded way, which I'm good for, but he has to be good at something is, I kind of know. So, that kind of a change, if the files come in, and they're, I don't know, it's a black and white text, but someone left it as CMYK type. With it, we'll call it out and we'll fix it. And I generally for a good client, will not charge for that. But what we like to do is educate so that they, not only for me but whoever they release their files to, they do it in a way that's very efficient.

I really don't charge for a lot of changes. If you're doing a 200-page book and there are five pages and they're simple changes, we don't want you touching the doc again, because we may have gone in and we would have, and profiled every photo, I don't want another InDesign doc, because I've already linked all of the colors and it's just type changes. So, we might make those. We would charge for that, but that's not very expensive. So, I like it to be a lesson, I guess. Or sometimes, there's such a mess, we might say, "Timeout. You need to do this and that. I need, for the foil stamp, I need vector art and no, teal blue in a shade doesn't work. I need 100% vector." And if you walk them through it, give them a chance to re-release those files.

Because I think the lesson is better than – I mean, what are you going to charge them? What is it, $175? You do a $10,000 job, you're going to send them a bill for $165? Are you going to give them the gift that lasts forever, helping them release it to you in a way that is productive, and it's going to work? So, that's kind of my long-winded answer. Is that kind of what – that's kind of what you meant, right? I mean, AAs are AA's, right? You swap out five pictures, you change all the type, well, that's a chargeable thing. But I'm going to tell you, if you take five people, their files won't all be done the same. And particularly now there aren't as many people that design for print, they designed for web, and that is a real scary difference. Not scary, I shouldn't say that.

[0:07:15] DC: Oh, no. It's scary. It's definitely scary.

[0:07:17] NT: Yes. I mean, you got to be careful, because you want to go, "Hey, open your window. I'm going to throw these files back in." But you can't. You just got to go. "Okay." But then it becomes are they willing to understand?

[0:07:30] DC: Yes, but Noel, that's not the question here.

[0:07:33] NT: Yes, because if it's not me, it's going to be someone else who's not as nice. They're going to take your files. And the worst part is, they may misinterpret your files and do something you don't want instead of – you know what I mean?

[0:07:45] DC: I know what you mean, but I mean –

[0:07:47] NT: I'd rather educate, right?

[0:07:50] DC: But you don't own the printing business. You don't own the press. You're not –

[0:07:54] NT: No, but it won't get that part.

[0:07:56] DC: Well, I think that that's a very important clarification to make right now, as you're not a printer, right? I mean, technically.

[0:08:06] NT: Yes, but although I got to be really careful here. I don't redo a lot of jobs. If something's not right, you come to me, you're going to get it right. If we never see each other again, if I lose a lot of money redoing something, because, "I just don't like it." Hardly, my career have ever been in those situations. I'm kind of in one now.

[0:08:26] DC: Right. But I'm just saying that in this situation, you are actually a buffer point before the files go to a printer. So, it's up to you, whether it's your money. It's not the printers' money, it's your money, it's your time, unless you're using a pre-press person, or you go into the printer. I'm just saying, it's not built into the estimate., it's not – I mean –

[0:08:52] NT: It's 100%.

[0:08:53] DC: Okay. So, I'm going to be very, very defensive for printers here.

[0:08:58] NT: Well, you brought something really important. I get some of the best pricing there is anywhere and I tell you why. Because what I put in is extraordinarily buttoned up. I know exactly what I want. I provide the materials.

[0:09:08] DC: And because you're dealing with the bullshit upfront and you're buffering from them.

[0:09:11] NT: Yes, I am. I use one of the best production people I've ever met, and I have a designer on staff. And I go, "Before I put these 300 pages in pre-press, look at these files with me." I mean, I know enough to be dangerous, right? Let's go through them and pretend we're – and you're right. I put perfect files into a print shop. I was kind of talking about someone –

[0:09:29] DC: Correct. So, you're deciding whether or not you want to charge and the money comes out of your –

[0:09:35] NT: Well, I can charge more, and I won't get trusted, and I don't get as good of work. If they go, "His files are always" – all the shoulders go down. And what I want is, "Oh, we love working with them." And then they all try and push a little hard. You're 100% right.

[0:09:49] DC: All right. Well, I hear what you're saying and there is a – I don't believe it's necessarily a yes or no answer in the situation. But I just wanted to make it very clear for everybody where you were in the food chain here.

[0:10:00] NT: Yes, yes. I'm sorry.

[0:10:02] DC: No. There's nothing to be sorry about –

[0:10:03] NT: I was trying to give advice to a designer, but –

[0:10:06] DC: It is great advice, but I'm just saying that you're not a printer. When they estimate jobs, they estimate them based on minimum time and best time

[0:10:18] NT: And do it like I am a printer, and that's because I make sure the files they get are really buttoned up.

[0:10:24] DC: Correct. Like you said, you will get preferred treatment in any way, shape, or form because they know that you can spend less human time looking on your job. David, should printers fix files for free? How do you handle that? You're also in the buffer stage of this? Yes?

[0:10:43] DD: Well. The best thing to do, and I 100% agree with Noel about educating your client. But you have to understand that designers are not just doing print design, they're doing all different designs, and especially one that's doing web. Web is the big thing. You have a lot of younger clients that are sending you files. So, the first thing I would do is I would sample one of their files or a few pages of their files, and that way, we can actually know where the downfalls are, and then give them an option.

We can say, "Hey, this is the way it looks. We have an option that we can fix it at $175 an hour. Very generous. Or we can give it back to you and help you work through it." Now, working through it is going to cost Noel and myself time, because you have to go through it, and you have to spend time with this person, and you have to review and look, and make sure that's right, and then you bring it back over. If it's a small job. If I'm doing a hang tag. If I'm doing a

mailer, the chances are that I'm not going to charge because it's very easy and we're all in it to make this the best it can be.

But if I'm going to get a catalog that's 60 pages, 100 pages, there's a lot of fault in there. There's going to be a lot of fault in there. There's only one way that you can actually test this by getting the full files, going through it, and then there has to be a charge because there's printer's time, pre-press time, my time. And the one thing that people don't want to pay for is putting it on press, and seeing that there's an error that was overlooked. And then waiting for new plates and bringing in paper, and then going back and redoing it.

So, it's very important to have a dollar amount associated with that, so we all know what that is. I totally understand that if you're redoing a job every year, you get the same run, that the files are set up similarly, but I don't think you can trust that either. I think there are a lot of hands getting involved with it and files do change. I don't care how locked up that file is. Files do change. When I'm all done, I'll take the files, put them together, and I'll hand them back to the client. It doesn't mean that their computer is going to read it the way a pre-press's computer is going to read it, and there might be a new flow or changes that are within there.

I have to keep my options open. Because the last thing I want to do is drain any kind of profit in fixing other people's issues. And I think that once you state that, it wakens everybody to focus, not just throw it at the printer.

[MESSAGE]

[0:13:43] DD: Are you a frustrated creative and want a print partner that takes an artisan approach? Do you want to be inspired with techniques that will enhance your next printed, or packaging production? Or are you a printer that has unique abilities and need a liaison to enhance your exposure? I'm David Drucker, owner of Highresolution Printing. I am an independent creative consultant with access to every printing technology out there. I work hand in hand with creatives and printers, creating projects that are complex, require meticulous detail and precision from concept to completion. Want to see what I mean? Go to guruofprinting.com and get inspired.

[EPISODE CONTINUES]

[0:14:27] DC: So, in the situation, speaking for printers, or speaking for, maybe even, suggestions for you guys as well. I'm going to just approach this on a way that we can address this in some manner, right? Because everything you're saying is completely correct about printers are not going to get files that are correct, and they're getting them from Canva, they're getting them from online design tools, and they're getting them from people who have never output to a press in their entire lives, right? You can try to educate them, I'm not saying you shouldn't, but you're going to be in a, like, Fred Flintstone car with your feet going a million miles an hour doing that.

So, here's my suggestion. For new customers, you set the rules right then in there. If there is a – I'd like to say a threshold, like three strikes, you're out. Two times, we'll do it. From the third time on, you're paying, and here is the cost per hour, and we'll be happy to give you an estimate of how many hours it might take to fix it. For your current clients, give them a deadline, when this is going to take effect. So, it's November now, it's too close to January to say next year. I don't believe that. I would go March. I would go to March. After March, if we have to fix your files, we're going to do it. But here's the hourly rate for us to do it and we will provide you an estimate for what that is. And caveat this in the estimates.

Cost for pre-press time is not additional cost, because there's already some costs built in. Additional costs for pre-press time is not built into this estimate and here's the conditions under where it will start ticking the boxes.

Now, every client and you guys know there are some people, just leave them alone. Don't get in their face. Don't ask them to fix files. Just keep fixing it. Whatever you're doing, it's not worth it unless you want to not have them anymore. If it's going to be a thing. It shouldn't be that many. You should be able to talk to everybody, but in the situations that you can't, look at all the time you freed up and profits you're making now on fixing files, in order for the pre-press people to deal with some people.

Just two other things, if you don't mind. A great thing to do is to tell the designers that they could buy their own flight check programs or online, and just say, "Hey, run it through this and it'll flag

like the most immediate issues, that should be relatively simple to fix. If you get stuck on something crazy, send us the report" and at least you give them a head start. So, that's something that they can invest in, on their end.

The second thing is that you guys, with bringing somebody in, or printers, should – and I don't like to say should but in this situation, I'm going to say should instead of could – hold a monthly lunch and learn design class, where you invite your designers, your pre-press people, the production people from the average, whoever the hell it is, and you have a topic and you start with the lowest hanging fruit. What are the mistakes most of those people are making in the room to begin with?

The last thing I want to say about it is that how to videos on a website are the simplest things. How to save a PDF. I know the Adobe people, and I go up to them all the time. And I'm like, "Why are there 16 freaking save a PDF things in my PDF?" I'm like, "I have no idea which one I'm supposed to use." Everyone always says, "Just use the last number on there." I'm like, "Then, why are all the other numbers there? Why does one say press quality?" I mean, there were things that really could be simply explained. I know outlining fonts is usually a problem, low-res art. I mean, you could get rid of all those low-hanging fruit people who have not designed for print with very simple tutorials. And by the way, not necessarily a pre-press person on those videos.

I mean, if they have the right temperament, but you don't want like an IT person on there. You definitely want it to be a peer-to-peer conversation. So, if your pre-press person is also like a little creative. Fantastic, you might have a great person on hand. If not, look at who's been giving you great files and say, "Hey, you want to make some videos with us? We'll trade you some print. Maybe there's some money we could pay you?" Because at the end of the day, if the files use less human time, everybody makes more money, except, and the business end of this. Thoughts before we go to our next topic?

[0:19:41] NT: Yes, really quick. I will say because I work as a consultant, I get brought in very early. And one of the things we talk about is if it's a complicated job, and there's foil, and there's bindery issues, and things have to be laid out a certain way. We go through, "Hey, Noel, sit down with us. Talk with the designers. Tell us how you want the files. How do you want the foil

layer? How are we dealing with a PMS that's going to reproduce as CMYK? How are we labeling?" So, we go through that.

But I think you said something very important as a printer. Those little I know printers who've done they call it, I don't know, print college or whatever, you get 10, 15 people in, it's a chance for them to see your shop, because they never know exactly what you do. So, it's an idea that you can think, "Oh, wow, I just knew you for this." So, you get that bonus. But you also get a captive audience who will be willing to help themselves make the jobs better. I mean, because it's coming back on me.

Because at my level, when I get brought in, if I don't talk to them, and tell them how to give us the stuff, they don't want to hear it. They're like, "You work with the designers. Tell them what you need. Don't take it in and tell me there's a problem. That's what you're here for." But if you work in a consultative manner, at every level, as a print salesman, as a print rep, and again, for the 50 millionth time, it's what I've said in the past, it's what I call, everybody does a post-mortem when something goes wrong. Do a pre-mortem, right? If there's such a thing. "Hey, we're not dead yet. Maybe we should talk about what won't kill us." And the files are a big deal.

Then, you might work out how it works. But I agree. Printers shouldn't be afraid of that, to put it back on them, in a polite way and teach them. At my level, again, I'm expected that if I didn't show them how to put the files together, that's on you Noel, because that's what you're here for. You're the expert.

But the other thing is, then we can do, David and I can do the things we do that are in another level. But if you start with something that's a mess, you're having enough trouble just getting it through production. But if you really want to excel, if you see work that looks better than someone else's, every step of that way, and files are a big part of that was done to a tee.

[0:21:46] DC: Yes. David?

[0:21:48] DD: I think, the game plan on that, that's crucial. I mean, that's going to save you so much time, it's going to save them so much money, lay your groundwork out, it makes everything flow faster. If there are changes or AAs that need to be done, then after. They're not

as difficult. They're easier to digest. It's rare now that I don't know what's coming to me before it comes to me. That's for any printer out there. You have sales reps out there that are passing it forward, and they don't actually know what's going on. But let's say that that sales rep did dig in a little bit, give themselves some more education. Now, you're getting more involved with the client. Now, you have a better relationship with them. Now, there's a higher level of trust. That's what we've developed over –

[0:22:41] NT: And that's what they should – that should be the – I mean, we're different from each other. But we should be the role models for where you want to go, right? You get trusted. You get trusted. I get trusted and the sales rep can build that trust, because then they're going to get more work. It just makes more sense to me. You're right. Just bringing it in and talking to the owners and going, "Can you do this?" I said I could do it. You've already gone awry.

[0:23:03] DC: Okay. When we come back, we're going to talk about who's your Michael?

[MESSAGE]

[0:23:09] NT: Hi, I'm Noel Tocci, founder of Tocci Made. The printing industry has changed quite a bit, and I've learned a lot since I joined my brother's small, but mighty printing company in Newark, New Jersey, back in 1980. Over the years, while focusing primarily in the design and creative communities, I've come to understand and believe wholeheartedly that powerful, effective, and impactful print communication always lives at the intersection of great design, appropriate materials, and thoughtfully curated execution. Making beautiful work is a journey from concept, or idea, to desired result, Tocci Made is here to help you find your way and create work that is not only effective but something you can be proud of. Head to toccimade.com and find out how we can help.

[EPISODE CONTINUES]

[0:23:55] DC: Welcome back, everybody. Okay. David Drucker, who is your Michael? Explain the origin of that question, please.

[0:24:05] DD: I was asked to write an article for PostPress Magazine. I've never written before on that level, and I began to just dig into my history, and talk about where my successes are. And it brought back a memory of working with one of my die cutters. And this is going back to '86, '87. I was 27 at the time. I think the gentleman who Michael was maybe about 25, and we we're really cutting our teeth into doing higher-end work.

I began to speak with him about a job that was coming in, and he had pulled in a couple of his pressmen. The dialogue that we had changed the specs on the job and what we could offer the client. And because of that dialogue, it inspired me to continue these conversations. So, he's my Michael in the industry. He's the one who really helped to set the path of the way I would go and seek new suppliers.

Now, we have talked about this, maybe in our first or second podcast, and we had discussed creating partnerships and strong partnerships. And this was just the beginning of that. It really didn't dawn on me, as to the beginning of me creating my partnerships, until I began to write the article. I think the article came out in July, or August, if anyone can pick it up, that would be great.

But working with Michael, it has been 30 years. Even if I didn't use his resources, maybe because of abilities or, the size of a pattern, maybe they couldn't get the right materials together for me. I, at least, was able to get direction and think for myself then after, as to how I wanted to proceed with the production. I let everybody out there know. Designers, creatives to printers, printers to creatives, about creating those very, very strong partnerships.

The dialogues, whether it has to do with, as I said, a production that you're doing with them, or not, there's at least somebody is pulling something from their past, that's going to be useful. You never know when that's going to trigger an idea. You know it when you have those "aha" moments, "Ah, we just did it. We got there." I think is probably the most important of dealing with any new resource is to establish your relationship with a person. I mean, how many times have we done work with our vendors, and the person we were dealing with is no longer there? It becomes a completely different experience. Or, on the other end working with a client, and the person that we built a relationship with for such a long time is no longer in that position. Then,

you're kind of starting over, but you also are well educated to taking them within the palm of your hands and guiding them to where they have to go.

So, I just felt it was really important. It's only a fraction of a paragraph where I mentioned this. But as I talk about it more and more, it becomes so much more meaningful to anybody's relationship in the industry.

[0:27:49] DC: Noel, do you have a Michael?

[0:27:51] NT: I have. Yes, I do have a Michael or two. My Michael is over the years has more of the kind of person that I met within the manufacturing process. My first Michael, I think was you may know the name, there's a guy named Bernie Sanders. He's been dead for a number of years now. But he invented Notch. He was 93 when he died, I think. When I got in the business in 1981, someone said, I said, "I got to know about bookbinding." They sent me to Varick Street to send or bindery, and him and his brother, and this guy met me in the doorway, Bernie, and he was already probably 75 or something. He started throwing books and yelling, "Kid, you follow me." And very quickly, "No, you can't do that."

Fast forward 25 years, he ended up at a binder I use, and I go, "Bernie, it's you." This guy taught me so much about everything, and he did everything the old-fashioned way. But what I took from it was more about process. I mean, you talk about mistakes. I don't want to waste your time talking about. And then, it leads me to my next one, which is from the other side, a client. A famous designer Massimo Vignelli. So, I lived in the design world, we became very, very good friends. And about five years into my relationship, he said to me one day, "Noel." I go, "Listen, I'm going to put the binder on the phone. We got to talk." He goes, "Well, who's the bindery?" I go, "Bernie." He goes, "Bernie?" Bernie picks up the phone. Massimo goes, "Bernie, you are alive?" He goes, "Bernie did a book for me years ago." He goes, "And I hadn't seen him in 20 years. I was so mad. I had to get on a plane to Italy and he bombed the book. And I got on the plane and they put it in the bottom of the plane."

Long story short, he was making a motion with his hand, and that motion was when he got to Italy and open the book, the pages fell out because the glue froze on the plane and this is in the seventies. But Massimo would actually taught me more about myself. He would say, "We need

someone like Noel." He said, "I do not tell you how to print. You do not tell me how to design." And there was that trust given to me and that freedom to do that because I had learned.

The other one, and they're not names, but I spent early in my career, I couldn't compete with guys in New York. "Oh, Tocci, you're a crazy one to do that." And they were all sitting in a restaurant, drinking, and eating after 1pm in the afternoon, and making five times money I did. I would go and press for three or four days, it would turn into five. I'd have to buy clothes. I'd be in the Midwest, and I would have some fun. But I would go back to the plant and I would – so, how do you make a plate? In these days, it was photomechanical. Climb on a press. I was interested in it, and I met people, and I was fascinated like David loves embellishments. My thing is ink on paper. Just screaming high level. And then I loved uncoated paper. In those days, people thought you were out of your mind, because before computers into play.

But what I learned was, in pre-press, I met guys that were photographers. So, doing quad tones and all of that kind of stuff. That's about conversions. It's about pre-press. It's not about ink on paper. But my point is without droning on, I always found someone in a plant that I respected the heck out of, that knew more about one specific part of the process than anyone I've ever met. I would want to just sit for hours. You're waiting, the press is down, it's late at night, and just talk to me. Tell me more. Why? Why? What that did is – so those were kind of my Michaels, there were many that took the time to tell me what they knew, and I tried to dovetail that into what I was trying to do.

So, I love your story, David. But for me, it was like, I'm always looking around for this, not necessarily the smartest guy in the room. And you can never tell by looking because sometimes they're the weirdest guy in the room, but they got all the knowledge. And then, you got to be friendly and you got to build a relationship because you want to be able to say, "Well, why?" Without making them hit you in the head with a plate or something. But those are my Michaels. And I'm nothing without them. Yes, I did the work. But I'm telling you, you have to search and find them, and you find like David described that rapport, and you learn something probably almost on every interaction. Right, David? And you put that in the toolkit and forward you go.

[0:32:06] DD: I had a production with Bernie, and it's the first that I had met him. And I walked into and I think they were in little ferry.

[0:32:17] NT: He joined Ely at the end of his career.

[0:32:18] DD: I sat down with him and I had no idea who he was. He came out of his little office there and I said, "I've always used new papers. I've always push new papers." At this point, [inaudible 0:32:30] come out, plastic like, and then Touché came out. Touché was really difficult to work with. It was difficult in the fact that it didn't necessarily take stamping well. You had to, at times, I had to stamp white first and then stamp my pigment on top of that in order to get that. But we were binding a catalog with Touché. Bernie sat me down.

[0:32:58] NT: He's screaming?

[0:33:00] DD: He never spoke to me ever. He's like, "I've never used this before. It's really expensive. It's not going to work with the machinery well. I have to figure it out." And I think it was maybe about a week later, he said, "Okay, this is how you're going to do it." And he told me and he set me up the right way. We were extremely successful with that. I still have the catalogs here.

[0:33:23] NT: He knew his stuff.

[0:33:24] DD: Oh, he did.

[0:33:24] DC: I can't believe you just said Touché. That was the only time in my life I ever screamed stop the presses. I was using to Touché suede tech, it was called. It was suede paper.

[0:33:34] NT: You can't even breathe on it. Everything scratches it.

[0:33:37] DC: Noel, let me tell you something.

[0:33:40] NT: I'm doing the job now.

[0:33:41] DC: I was waking up art directors and creative directors at 3am in the morning in a panic calling – there was place called Williamson Printing in Texas.

[0:33:52] NT: Oh, they're good printer.

[0:33:53] DC: They've closed.

[0:33:55] NT: Oh, they pioneered UV.

[0:33:58] DC: I can't even tell you. I mean it was the worst experience of my life. So, thanks for bringing that up. And as a matter of fact, I blame the printer for it. Of course, as the customer, because why did they let me use it for – by the way, it was a catalog for the Caribbean. What is the most important thing? That you see the water. I mean, this paper sucked in the ink. It looked modeled. It was horrendous, but the account people, of course are like, "Just don't worry." They ended up telling the client that's the technique that they wanted to go for, like an antique beach wash look. They just spun it like an advertising agency does and the client loved it. But meanwhile, 3am in the morning, I didn't like sleep for a week after that.

I have actually had an interesting argument about this with printers who are like, we collaborate, we help people, and then they don't end up printing with us, and we've helped them print with somebody else. All I'm going to say about that is, I get it if you do it 20 times, and the person doesn't print with you. But all those other times, there's a reason that they didn't. I mean, I could always tell you that there was a reason why I couldn't print with that printer, and I never forgot who helped me. And when I moved to new agencies, I brought those vendors with me.

So, even though I couldn't print with them, they were still helpful. They still taught me things. There was one printer I used to call to figure out because I was afraid to ask anybody how to spec my jobs. And I developed a relationship with my printer, who taught me how to do all of that. And whether or not I was printing with them, he would help me come up with those sizes and everything I needed for it to make sense to a production artist. I think that that is really important that if you find a Michael, they are a precious commodity treat. Treat them with respect and when you can, do the right thing.

Also, before we get off this section, I just want to say that we will put a link to David's article in the show notes for everybody, so you'll be able to find that there. Okay, when we come back for printspiration section.

[MESSAGE]

[0:36:21] DC: Like what you hear? Leave us a comment. Click a few stars, share this episode, and please subscribe to the show. Are you interested in being the guest and sharing your information with our active and growing global audience? Podcasts are trending as a potent direct marketing and educational channel for brands and businesses who want to provide portable content for customers and consumers. Visit printmediacentr.com, click on podcasts, and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper.

[EPISODE CONTINUES]

[0:36:54] DC: Welcome back, everybody. Okay, this might be my favorite section of the podcast. What has provided printspiration since our last podcast. I've got a long list. But let's start with David.

[0:37:11] DD: I mean, it's been a long time since we've had our last meeting, and there have been so many productions that have gone in and out, and build, and such. But we're talking about embellishments. And I began to look at some of the older pieces that I've done, where I've silkscreened on fancy papers, and it creates a beautiful contrast.

For instance, I had recently done a presentation folder, which is a navy, metallic paper, and I silkscreened pink PMS on it. And the silkscreen is a wonderful contrast and sits right on top of the surface. So, I began to show that more and more to help inspire our clients, to maybe go into a direction of some more of the old world. And it's a quest. It's not going to happen right away. I'll see it come back to me in the next year or so. But I'm looking more into the old deep, emboss, sculpture embosses, what we call embellishments, engravings, fine line engravings. I've done so many productions with digital foils and such and I've experimented with that, and I've talked about let's do some beautiful thin line screens and see what we can get out of it. If it works, it works. If it doesn't, it doesn't.

But now, I'm really getting back into promoting some of the old world. I find with that, it's very, very interesting in having that conversation, and showing those samples. I went out and I took a 220-pound [inaudible 0:39:07] and I double-mounted. Now, it's 440. And I did such a deep, deep

stamp in it, and I began to just send those out. And the response that I got is greater than other promotions that I had done in the last few years.

So, I think it's simplistic. I'm going to take a step back on that as well. I had once done an AB test with QR codes. This is years ago. This is when it was just starting up. And the AB test is I bought a mailing list. I did variable printing. "Hey Joe, scan the QR code and get a free t-shirt." And the other one was just a hot stamp QR code, which brought up the information. Now, the first one, which had Joe's name on it, when they scanned it, everything was already filled out for him. All he had to do is hit the button. But in the hot stamp, they had to fill out all the information themselves and it wasn't variable. So, it wasn't directed to anybody's attention. It just was an artisanal piece of printing. We got a 3% higher response on the hot stamp than we did on the variable. And that told me, you really have to dig into the techniques that people just have removed themselves from.

So, that's been my inspiration over the last few months and I'm looking forward to it reaping the rewards.

[0:40:42] DC: Excellent. Noel?

[0:40:43] NT: That's interesting. I've done kind of the same. But because I love income paper so much, and I've been looking back at things I've done. And we did them for a reason. Way back, even though we printed really, really well, beautiful photography or some beautiful art, we're able to do things even push them further by putting ink on paper. We can print more correctly with the advent of technology.

So, what I've started to do is I have, fortunate enough, to have a lot of clients who are artists and photographers and will give me assets, and give me some things and I play. I've done when you're going to see. I did something that Nina is going to distribute on. Then, I go, "What doesn't make sense? Let's take this gorgeous image and let's put it on Tech Weave and let's really push it. And then let's also put something on Stipple. But then we'll put it on –"

So, I began to push the envelope and do things that don't belong together. But they kind of do. And the reason they don't is because, "Well, you can't do that. Well, why can't you do that?" We

can do things so well now. So, I begun to play with substrates and beautiful images, and I printed it, at my own expense, I put production notes on them and I'll do one image on three different papers or four different ways. I'll do black and whites that way. I'll do them as six color.

Then, what really has inspired me when someone says, I'm not even going to name the names. Some of the most famous jewelry people, they know me forever. "No, you got to be uncoated paper on this and that." And that makes me nuts. So, I go in and I do it at a 200-line screen and I do a skeletal black, and then they're diamonds on an uncoated paper. Then, I get so upset. I almost said, pissed off. Sorry. I don't even like white paper. I go to a vellum finish. And doing what can work but no one thinks should work. And you know what happens every time? Someone grabs it, and they go, "But it's beautiful." But it shouldn't be. Things are possible. And it's very much like David said, it comes from the past. What couldn't I do that I can do now and I shouldn't do, and why shouldn't I do it?

But I do it because I want to make stuff, like David said. I do that too. And I give it to people, and they go, "What's this?" I go, "Why did you do this?" Because I just did. I wanted to and it's for me. I think it's great because I think it inspires – I'm inspired to do it and it inspires people to think a little outside the box and make something right. It doesn't have to cost more to make different choices, maybe that can work, but we're so busy with it now. "Oh, that's shiny. Should be on uncoated paper. That should be here. That should be that way." It's what David said, "Well, why would you do with that thick?" And David is like, "Why wouldn't I? What's better than 400 pounds? What's better than 400 pounds with 200 pounds of deboss, half of it."

That's the inspiration. The inspiration is to create more inspiration, but to use the inspiration from the past, to use the available tools that we didn't have a long time ago to just push it, and why not? Sometimes you make stuff for people and it's what they want, it's not what you want, and it's like, why can't I make what I want? I mean, I don't like to throw good money after bad, but having cool stuff is cool.

[0:43:49] DC: Speaking of cool stuff, I have a new toy to tell you guys about.

[0:43:56] NT: What is it?

[0:43:57] DC: It is a product that has now been bought by Roland DG which is a company, and it is now called DG Dimense. To everybody, I will put a link in the show notes. Now, I found this company at an industry event, me and the guys that we did. The Printer Chat Podcast. Jamie the printer starts texting me. He's like, "You got to go see this wallpaper." I'm like, "I'm busy Jamie. Freaking wallpaper." He's like, "No. You have to go see this wallpaper", and he was freaking out about it so much that he couldn't explain it and I happen to decide to go see it. So, Will the printer was also at the show. So, Will the printer, and I go traipsing over and we see this thing.

And what it is, is a device that somehow chemicals react to the paper, and it foams up in certain areas – foams, foams up in certain areas and creates texture, like you cannot imagine. And people do ridiculously creative things with it. Even in their own booth, they printed out these giant wall panels that were textured, and when you touch them, it's like foam. It's like rubbery. They were like taking black paint on cloth and just creating art, making it look distressed. Nobody knew what it was called. They would just like – did you see the Medusa? Did you see the Medusa? Because one of their displays was a Medusa.

So, if I can tell you, now that Roland has bought them, they were a company out of Eastern Europe, and Roland has bought them now, and they are going to start, obviously, distributing them all over the world. They already had a bunch of customers. But I am waiting for someone I know to get one, and I'm begging Roland because they're my friends. I'm like, "Please, please let me come, let me come and go and play with one. I'm begging you. I want to make something out of it."

So, all I kept thinking when I've seen it is they're focused on the big things you can do with it, like wallpaper, or textured walls, or displays, or anything like that. They're not really focused on using a cutter and cutting things out, and making small things out of big things with this technology. Now, I don't know if that's because the heat from the cut thing might interact with the technology. I'm not sure. I don't know enough about the technology, because that's not my area. My area is, "Oh my god, this is the coolest thing I've ever seen." Then, I went to the press event where they were launching it, and I happen to have given this company a unicorn award, because it was so unique the last time I saw it, and we'll put a link to that in the show notes as well, so everyone can watch this very short video that shows the technology in action.

While I was there, they said, "Wait to see the glitter machine tomorrow." And I was like, "What?" I didn't even know they had a glitter machine. So, they have a press that puts freaking glitter down on sheets. Yes, everyone's question is, isn't it a little messy? Now, they have like a blanket, some sort of blanket under the press. But I'm telling you, if someone opens the door on one end, and the door on the other end, it's going to be like frozen in that. Shall we build a snowman? So, I don't really know how they get that part under control. But it is by far the coolest technology, and if it kicks in, you don't even need to add shiny stuff to it necessarily. It becomes its own thing. It's just incredible. I'll make sure I send you guys the videos so you can see it. But everybody should go to DG Dimense, and I'm sure, we'll have the link in the show notes from when to click onto. But it's for sure, it's something that I'm not – it's almost like the first time I saw a Scodix and I was like, "What is this? What is this?"

[0:48:32] NT: Are there any of them around yet?

[0:48:35] DC: I believe there are, but I don't know where and they are stepping it up now because now they're part of Roland. So, that's where the DG comes from.

[0:48:46] NT: That's roll on the press, not roll on the paper company.

[0:48:49] DC: Correct. Roland, the press makers. They're Roland DGA for America, or DG for the global unit.

[0:48:57] NT: Right. This European company.

[0:48:57] DC: Yes, I mean, absolutely, by far, the most incredible thing. Like I said, the examples I've seen are really retail-focused. They haven't unleashed it on the creative community yet. No one's pushed it yet. They show the most sellable commercial samples which would sell in two seconds to any high-end restaurant hotel. I mean, they will always try to make me a distributor, because I'm so crazy about it. I'm like, I could sell 25 of these and I probably could, I swear to God, because you just have to know the right people with the right customers to begin with. But everyone should look into it. I'm rambling on about it now. Okay.

[0:49:40] DD: Sounds amazing.

[0:49:41] DC: It was really great seeing you guys again. I look forward to our next podcast. David, good luck with your keynote tomorrow. Noel, can't wait till next time I see you, maybe in Florida even. Until next time, everybody. Print long and prosper.

[OUTRO]

[0:50:01] DC: Thanks for listening to Podcasts From the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through printmediacentr.com. We'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

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Mentioned in This Episode:

'Digital Embellishments Provide Budget-Friendly Experimenting': https://postpressmag.com/articles/2023/digital-embellishments-provide-budget-friendly-experimenting/

Amplify Roadshow: https://amplifyroadshow-phil.rsvpify.com/

DG Dimense: https://www.dgdimense.com/

Video Link:

David Drucker on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-drucker-b1b5946/

Highresolution Printing and Packaging: https://high-res.com/

Noel Tocci on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/noeltocci/

Tocci Made: https://toccimade.com/

Deborah Corn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/

Print Media Centr: https://printmediacentr.com

Project Peacock: https://ProjectPeacock.TV

Girls Who Print: https://girlswhoprint.net

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