

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:03] DC:** Girls Who Print provides women in print and graphic communications with information, resources, events, and mentorship to help them navigate their careers and the industry. As the largest independent network of women in print, our global mission is to unify the women who lead, change, inspire, and empower. Creating visibility and sharing stories from the fierce fabulous females of print as we pave a path to success together.

I'm Deborah Corn, girl number one at Girls Who Print and the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse at Print Media Centr. Welcome to the Girls Who Print Podcast. Empower long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW]

**[00:00:49] DC:** Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. More specifically today, we are recording an episode of the Girls Who Print Podcast, and I am really excited to introduce our guest to you. They are from Millcraft. Millcraft is a wholesale distributor of paper, luxury brand packaging, envelopes, and shipping materials, including boxers and mailers, banners, and sign materials. They sell related equipment and more.

Founded in 1920, Millcraft is a fourth-generation privately-held family company. They proudly represent hundreds of manufacturers and have specialists in nearly every aspect of the supply chain. These specialists ensure that you are sourcing the right materials, that they fit with your applications, that they help convey your brand and projects in the right way, and that they effectively and efficiently meet your procurement goals. When you have questions, Millcraft has answers. Just ask.

That is what I plan to do on this podcast, as I welcome three of Millcraft's specialists to the program. We have Candace Soward, Terri Price-Deep, and Emily Simon. Hello, ladies. Welcome to the program and thank you so much, first of all, to you and to Millcraft for another year of sponsoring Girls Who Print and all of our endeavors.

**[00:02:22] CS:** Happy to do so. Thank you.

**[00:02:23] TPD:** Thank you.

**[00:02:23] ES:** Thank you.

**[00:02:25] DC:** Yay. Okay, let's take it one by one. Candace, can you please tell everybody a bit more about you and what you do at Millcraft?

**[00:02:35] CS:** I am 23 years in the industry now, which I am reluctantly saying that, because of my age now but excited to have gained the knowledge for the last two decades. I've been with Millcraft since 2014. I'm an account manager in sales and obsessed with paper. I call myself the paper dork. I get very excited to be a part of projects and just see them come to life because that allows me to not only to be in sales but also be creative at the same time and wear that creative hat and be a part of a story someone's telling.

**[00:03:15] DC:** I think I might be a dork for you now. I love paper dork. Hashtag paper dork. Terri Price-Deep, not a stranger to Girls Who Print. You have been in our group and a helpful resource over the years. Thank you so much for that. Can you tell everybody what you do at Millcraft and a little more about you please?

**[00:03:34] TPD:** Well, I think I have the most fun job at Millcraft, although Emily and Candace might disagree with that. But I work with corporate end users, advertising agencies, and creative people basically either to put programs together, pricing programs, or to specify products. A lot of times, I'll get involved on the ideation stage at an advertising agency when they're first going to launch a pitch, right? I think it's a lot of fun, it's a lot of creativity, and I have a passion for it.

My career has stemmed from printing, agency work, and paper. I get to put all of those skills together in one package in this role at Millcraft. I've been with Millcraft about seven years, but I've been in the industry longer than Candace.

**[00:04:27] CS:** Thanks, Terri.

**[00:04:29] DC:** Thank you. Working in advertising agencies, there was just that lovely time where we're like, "The paper rep is coming. The paper rep is coming." I mean, it was like a celebration. But it was always a mill. It was never a merchant. Now that the paper mills don't really have spec reps anymore or people that go around and visit, I'm really happy that someone has taken up that mantle.

There was – I can't even tell you how many things we learned from swatch books, the new technique that come out. The first time I saw just black paper with a spot varnish on it was in a swatch book. You learn about the specialty finishings that could go on certain papers. Even better, you can see exactly what it looks like because it's on the paper. I just wanted to say thank you for continuing to help people realize that paper is a design element as much as it is a technology, and it's really important.

**[00:05:30] CS:** I always think that paper is your other dimension. It's like the third dimension. If you think about it in the beginning and let it be a part of your story, it brings it to life. You can really make it dimensional. When you were referring to finishes, it just made me think about a catalog that was printed for a Thai manufacturing company, a really luxurious brand. They did it on linen, and the catalog was on, and they went to very particular clients. Not everyone has the budget to push out a thousand catalogs on linen, so when you're targeting. But you had the experience that you were feeling the tie, and I think that really separated what they were doing and then elevated their brand.

**[00:06:15] DC:** A hundred percent. I mean, even to your point, paper was sometimes the first thing we went to because we were saving the stock. We needed the right client to come along that would let us use it or could afford it or was looking to do something different. In my swatch cabin – my cabinet that I had, my paper cabinet, I would have a section. A lot of times – I guess we can talk about brands here. French Paper was always up there. We loved getting those swatch books and they were very creative with all that stuff.

Some of the specialty papers, we just waited for the right clients to come along, and we would start with the paper and build –

**[00:06:59] CS:** Right. To tell your story.

**[00:07:01] DC:** Okay. Yes, exactly. This is what we want to use. Then we would have to work with our printers to make sure that we were creating the files that could work on the paper. Terri, you want to add to that?

**[00:07:13] TPD:** Yes. I think, too, that – I teach a class for graphic design students, and it's basically paper as part of your design. It's always surprising to me, and I guess it shouldn't be after all this time that they're just thinking about white paper. They're just thinking about whatever the printer wants to suggest. It's like try to empower them that they have decisions, right? It can be more than that dimension on your screen and be tangible and tactile and all the things we love about paper. It's really fun just to open those young minds and have them embrace it. A lot of times, I'll just pack up my car with all these samples. I'll arrive at the school. They're like, "We get to keep this?" I'm like, "Yes. Yes, you do."

**[00:08:06] DC:** Yes. You're like a little paper fairy dropping off gifts.

**[00:08:09] TPD:** I like that.

**[00:08:11] DC:** Yes.

**[00:08:11] TPD:** Hashtag paper fairy.

**[00:08:13] DC:** Paper dork, paper fairy. Now, we need one for you, Emily Simon, who's also on this podcast. Emily Simon won the Girls Who Print Rising Star. It wasn't last year. It was the year before, right, Emily? It was last –

**[00:08:25] ES:** It was last year, 2023. Yes.

**[00:08:26] DC:** Oh, it was last year. 2023. I just – you've been around so long. I figured we gave it to you before that. You came into our community a couple years ago and really took full

advantage of our mentoring program, and participating in the LinkedIn group, and participating on our online events. All of us recognized how committed you were to making investments in yourself, which is the overarching theme here. Before we get to that, can you tell everybody a little more about you and make them understand why we gave you the Rising Star Award?

**[00:09:05] ES:** Sure, thanks. I've been with Millcraft four years now. I've been out in the industry about 14. At Millcraft, I actually got to choose my title. So I'm a print specialist, which I love. I studied graphic and printing science at Western and held some very broad diverse roles in industry. I get to kind of tie all the things I learned over the past decade into what I'm doing at Millcraft. I not only sell paper and substrates, but I also sell printing equipment, so our Inkjet Technology Solutions. I started specializing in the apparel side of that, so direct to garment and direct to film.

As Millcraft has changed and grown I now get to work with Mimaki wide format. We have Duplo finishing and bindery and some Colex routers and plotters. It's really exciting for me because I'm constantly learning something every day. I find it fun to learn about the technologies and then kind of match up the customers to the solutions that we might have to be able to help. That's the best part is just having the conversation with the customer and then being like, "Oh, I might have a solution. Let me go look it up. Let me go find it for you." It's been fun, and I'm enjoying my time at Millcraft.

In regards to the Girls Who Print group as well, I have a mentor at an ad agency in Texas. We meet every other week and have been for over three years now. We kind of help each other. I get to learn things about the ad industry from her. Really just being a part of the Girls Who Print group fills my cup and gets me excited and more passionate to do my day-to-day job. I'm grateful for the group. Thank you.

**[00:10:59] DC:** Shout out to Helena. She's the best.

**[00:11:01] ES:** She is.

**[00:11:02] DC:** She really is. I'm glad that you mentioned that because this year, the United Nations theme for International Women's Day was invest in women, and Girls Who Print has taken that on as a theme for 2024. We celebrated Print HERstory Month all throughout March. We asked women to fill out a Q&A about the professional and personal investments they have made and in their professional development and personal development. I want to ask each of you that question as well. What investments have you made in your professional development? Terri, let's start with you.

**[00:11:43] TPD:** Great. I'm a reading junkie, and maybe it's my love of typography. But I read all kinds of trade publications. I don't shy away from webinars. I talk to our print customers on a regular basis. If I hear that they have new technologies, I go ask and try to get a tour, so I have an understanding of it because I'm better at my job if I understand the technology that the paper's printing on, right? I'm a big proponent of getting out there and soaking up all of that knowledge as technology changes so rapidly.

[BREAK]

**[00:12:22] DC:** Print Media Centr provides printspiration and resources to our vast network of global print and marketing professionals. Whether you are an industry supplier, print service provider, print customer, or consultant, we have you covered by providing resources and strategies that enable business marketing and creative success, reporting from global events, these podcasts, Project Peacock TV, and an array of community-lifting initiatives. We also work with OEMs, suppliers, industry organizations, and event producers. Helping you connect and engage with our vast audience and achieve success with your sales, marketing, and conference endeavors. Visit Print Media Centr and connect with the Printerverse. Links in the show notes. Print long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW RESUMED]

**[00:13:17] DC:** Just to expand on that a little more, what types of books are you reading, marketing books? If people are listening, in other words, you're offering advice to people. How did you get to where you are? What were the investments you made? Did you take any

continuing education classes? Everything you said makes total sense, but everybody out there doesn't have access to the same things you do. You know what I mean?

**[00:13:40] TPD:** Well, I – all the print trade publications, I definitely subscribe to all of those and email newsletters and that type of thing. As far as books, I do read a lot of marketing books. I always have. It's just part of my nature. I really did learn from the ground up because I started out – I sold copiers out of college in Indiana, and I sold a copier to a printer. Then the printer offered me a job. I was in printing most of my early career and then got an opportunity to work at agencies after that. I have taken all of that knowledge and been able to build upon that.

I do really rely on like-minded industry professionals. I take book recommendations from printer sales reps and the like. I mean, I could certainly send you a list of things that I think are great reads for people in our industry. I'd be happy to do that.

**[00:14:41] DC:** Terri's book club. Yes.

**[00:14:42] TPD:** Yes. I would love to have a book club actually. I think that would be awesome.

**[00:14:47] DC:** Excellent. Okay, Emily. What investments have you made in your professional development?

**[00:14:53] ES:** For me, I've been pretty active in the groups in the Metro Detroit area. I'm in Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. I participate in the Detroit Craftsmen's Club, Printing House Craftsmen's Club, and the Graphic Media Alliance after hours, outside of regular business hours. Just really kind of learning who the printers are, what they're producing, and kind of the game in this region. I feel like that's one way I've been investing. Then, also, too, just continuously learning more about the inkjet solutions that we offer at Millcraft. That will benefit me no matter where I go.

**[00:15:36] DC:** Right. When you're looking for information to help people out there who might be looking for information about inkjet, where do you look when you're going to try to learn something?

**[00:15:47] ES:** I just ask internally. We have a lot of people at Millcraft who have much more tenure than I do. So if I don't know, I know somebody that knows. Or I know somebody that might know who knows. I try to encourage my customers to do the same to me by asking them questions and letting them know like, "Hey, I can find the answers for you. I might not know, but I have 60 sales reps who have – all have 30-plus years 'experience, and I can email the group and maybe find you an answer." It's been fun.

**[00:16:22] TPD:** I will add to that. Being a distributor, we have not only paper mills but the manufacturers for the equipment. There's a lot of knowledge base that we can lean on to get answers from. There's just materials, webinars, all the things they do to train us so that we can sell their equipment or sell their paper. We have at our fingertips. That's a great resource as well.

**[00:16:46] DC:** Yes. I mean, I also hear the overarching thing is networking and making sure that you have relationships with the right people in your company that you know who knows what and that you have developed some sort of rapport that you can ask them questions. Because every time you ask them a question, it's their time, right? It's their energy. Yes, you're all in one company. You have the same goal. But not everybody is as open to those things as everybody else, so you have to create almost your own little knowledge circle in your own company. I'm glad you have so many resources.

Go ahead, Terri. You have something else to add?

**[00:17:21] TPD:** Well, I wanted to add, too, that Emily's spot on. Our sales group, there's a lot of history, right? They are so willing to help the younger people. We all learn from it, too. When Emily asked a question, it's like, oh, I can't wait until I have the answer because I don't know that, right? We definitely copy everyone on the sales team when we do ask something internally so that we can make sure when it comes up for you, you're going to know the resource, right? I'll take one example that comes up all the time is seed paper, right? Everybody is interested in it. Nobody wants to use it.



**[00:18:01] DC:** I've used it but only with letterpress printing.

**[00:18:04] TPD:** Letterpress. There is some digital, but it's still – it can crush the seeds, right? So when those weird oddball things come up, we're all like, “Yes, where do I get that,” right? It's just great. It's great that we – and we have a lot of young people coming in, so I think it's really important to have that.

**[00:18:24] ES:** Yes. I really – to Terri's point, Millcraft's slogan is just ask, and I really feel like that is also internally as well as externally. It's great for the young sales reps in the company. We mean it when we say just ask.

**[00:18:40] DC:** Excellent. Okay, Candace. What investments have you made in your professional development?

**[00:18:47] CS:** I have really recently for the past couple of years been targeting putting myself into more educational programs or groups. I joined the Postal Council, so I could learn more about mail and how the post office works. I could be that sort of resource for my client, and they could think of me as an expert. What better way to learn than to be a part of it? I got to tour the post office and all the cool things that they allowed me to do being a part of this group; post events and discussions and panels from the envelope manufacturers, all the way down to maybe it's the direct mail client. But in between, the mail houses and just the pain points along the way and then also the creativity behind it. I joined CreativeMornings.

Terri, speaking about mentors, she has been an amazing lovely mentor to me and got me involved in some design groups and allowed me to go with her to these universities to give discussions about what we do and applying that in design with the graphic designers. I found that to be so fruitful to be a part of that and the eagerness for the folks that signed up because this was a voluntary class the one I got to go to with her. Everyone there signed up. It was in the evening. To have a full classroom was really exciting to see the next generation of folks coming into our industry and what they're interested in and what they're doing.

Then this year, I signed up to attend the Inkjet Summit. So different things like that I have been targeting each year just to make sure I'm hitting certain growth segments. In order to do that, I feel like I need to be a part of that discussion.

**[00:20:48] DC:** I love that so much. Making investments to make yourself a more valuable resource to your customers and clients. Anyone who might just ask, Millcraft is a valuable use of time. I just love that that is your path here. Of course, it helps you be more knowledgeable and make more sales, and do everything that you need to do to earn your money at Millcraft. But more so, I know I could go to you and ask a question or that you'll be able to advise and preempt a potential disaster or from going to those Postal Council meetings –

I mean, printers mostly know when the postage is going to increase. The post office is not exactly secret about it, but not everybody tells their customers. That knowledge doesn't always get to the end users who are buying direct mail. So being able to say, “Look, we know you as a paper rep. We know that you're going to do these mailings, that you're doing these mailings for your customers. I see your orders. I know what you're ordering. Let's try to do it a little earlier. We could save them some money.” You could even be a resource for printers like that, so I absolutely love it. Emily, you wanted to add to that?

**[00:22:10] ES:** Yes. I just think there's a lot to be said about showing face at these events. I'm at the Craftsmen's Club at Detroit. Candace is at the PCC. I know Terri does a lot of educational events. When you show face there, then people think of you as a resource. Maybe they know what the postal promotions are, but they want you to dig into it or something like that. Or maybe they know who the folks are in Detroit that print this, but they want to know who the best one would be. Well, they see you at the event, so they know that you have an idea of what's going on. Showing face and showing up to things has a lot of value.

**[00:22:46] DC:** Yes. I could not agree more. Also, investment, it also applies to a business and its future. Since I even started doing Print Media Centr, Millcraft has transformed. You were a strict paper merchant when I first met you. Was it Millcraft Paper? There was even a paper at the end of your company name. Now, you have condensed it to Millcraft and opened up a range of products and services besides paper that Emily will get to in a moment.

First, I want to talk about the investments that Millcraft has made to help printers and print customers learn about and achieve their sustainability goals. I know that's a big question, but paper is squarely in the middle of this conversation, although sometimes I like to say to other people they've already figured it out. It's everything you're adding to it that's actually causing the problem. But to your most excellent points, you still have to be aware of all of that and make the correct recommendations and provide the correct information. It must be correct. Let me start with Candace.

**[00:24:04] CS:** Well, and first, I've always liked to remind folks because, especially in our industry and being in sales of paper, one of the most notorious things are like, "You're cutting down trees." I grew up in Western Kentucky, an ex-farmer's daughter. It's a crop. There are certain types of trees that you need. So just like a farmer, each year, when he harvests his crop, he has to replant that crop.

**[00:24:33] DC:** Or she, Candace.

**[00:24:34] CS:** Or. Yes, correct. Or she because my mama was out there with my dad. I know how to drive a tractor. Yes, so absolutely. But you have to replant that in order to continue your future with whatever, whether it's corn, soybeans, or trees. That is a myth that I feel like you're cutting down the forest. Things like that are not happening. Then secondly, as far as our investment into sustainability and educating, just I do a monthly series right now, and I partnered with Neenah last month. We went to a larger agency, and that was her whole message was sustainability. Obviously, it focused on the Neenah products but how they could continue that through the cycle of their company and what to look for.

Also, I'd like to note, just our industry as a whole is greener because almost everything you're touching is recyclable, that we're all offering in our industry. Your mail is recyclable. You can't recycle an email. Most of these things are recyclable, as far as the tangible paper products that you're getting in your mailbox or your packaging, the boxes, and things like that. I also like to just remind people that it's not like a battery or electronic that's going to a landfill, and it's going to sit there for the next who knows. We don't even know really how long that will take to

decompose and if ever. But we're just making an effort all the way around to just educate, and that's what I've been focusing on. I'm doing a monthly series of education.

[BREAK]

**[00:26:32] DC:** Calling all fierce fabulous females. Girls Who Print is waiting for you, and our global mission to help empower and connect the women of print is stronger than ever. Join our 10,000-member and growing women-only LinkedIn group. Connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Celebrate Girls Who Print Day and find out who wins our Annual Girly Award. Join our ongoing initiatives, online events, in-person conferences, and global mentoring program. Visit Girls Who Print for information on how to get involved and get empowered. Links in the show notes.

[INTERVIEW RESUMED]

**[00:27:12] DC:** That is one of the advantages of having a resource that is a – I'm still going to refer to you as a paper merchant. I hope that that's okay.

**[00:27:22] TPD:** No, we like that. We like that.

**[00:27:24] DC:** Okay. Because you know all the mills that you represent, what they're doing, what the makeup of their paper is. You will be able to recommend the right paper or substrate based upon the needs of that customer or that brand at that moment. It might not need to be super sustainable. You know what I'm saying. There's different levels of things. I appreciate the wide view that paper merchants have of everything that's going on in the marketplace. Terri, I want to turn this question to you as well about sustainability goals.

**[00:28:02] TPD:** Yes. We adopted the FSC certification early on, and we've kept up all of those certifications along the way. One thing that I do specifically is we have a special program for higher education. We have some discount programs with some of our mills for higher ed. One of the things that's important to most of those organizations is sustainability, right? That's a message that I talk about with most of those groups on an ongoing basis because you can do a

lot. You don't have to just use recycled paper because a lot of people don't understand that paper is sustainable, whether or not it has virgin fiber in it, right? Whether or not it has recycled fiber in it.

We definitely preach that. We use paper cups in the building. We have the blue trash cans. We do our fair share of recycling, of course, because we've got a lot of paper in the warehouse. Sometimes, something falls, and it's displayed, and we're going to put that back, right? There are programs that we've been involved in in the past where we do closed-loop recycling with our mills. We're taking the paper waste from an organization, sending it to a recycling center. The recycling center sends it to that mill. That mill makes paper specifically for that end user for their brochures or product, whatever it is.

It's a fun topic to talk about. We have a whole committee at Millcraft that is like a sustainability team. It's always on the forefront of what we're thinking about.

**[00:29:42] CS:** I think as we've been building our new buildings, Terri, and your new building, our new building in Louisville, we went the extra mile to make, for sure, that all the lights aren't on in the warehouse. That things automatically come on as you walk to – just different ways to save energy, too, because when you're trying to light a 100,000-square-foot warehouse, and if there's no one on that part of the building, why are you using that energy? Things like that that we've done to even make our spaces green. I think that is really an extra commitment to our message as well.

**[00:30:20] ES:** Yes. That's messaging that we have, too, coming from the top down about our trucks moving forward, having them be more sustainable, and things like that. We're not there yet, but we're working towards it. Additionally, I want to add a point to the mills and paper being sustainable is that from what I've heard, in the seventies, I think that paper mills had a pretty bad rep. I wasn't alive then. I don't know. But from what I see and what I've heard and learned is that most of the paper mills now, 100% of their water is recycled. It doesn't go into rivers or anything like that.

Two, with paper manufacturing, sure, we're using trees, but we make sure that we replant trees in our industry. It's not like cattle grazing fields like that where they're not necessarily replanting the trees. We make sure that we replant the trees and regrow those forests sustainably. I would just encourage anybody who thinks that paper is not good for the planet to question that and really look into it.

**[00:31:25] CS:** I've been following. Emily, I think that you do, too, and Terri, for sure, Two Sides. There's Two Sides North America. There's lots of great information that I get from that group. You can follow them online, and their daily message is to support the print industry and to kind of dissolve these myths that everyone has about sustainability in print. We all get the email. Number one thing, don't print this email. Save a tree.

**[00:31:58] DC:** From printing companies and manufacturers in the printing industry, from organizations in the printing industry. I can't even tell you. It's crazy.

**[00:32:10] ES:** I think there's a little bit of confusion there because if you think about it with our screens and our phones and our computers that we're continually having to update and get new products. Well, those heavy metals, we can't ever replant those or go find those. It's much harder to recycle those. Whereas with paper, even if it doesn't go recycled back into a tree, it's going to biodegrade much quicker, and it's better on the brains. It's more tactile and neurological. We remember something more when we take it out of our mailbox and look at it versus when it's that little ad on the side of the computer screen. I just think that there's a balance, and it's not one or the other. It's both, and we just have to work together.

**[00:32:49] DC:** I agree with that. I want to throw this out there as a little hmm moment, right? Why isn't anybody upset about wooden desks or boats, wooden boats? Why is only the problem about harvesting trees around paper and not about all the products out in the world? Oh, you're upset about harvesting trees. Then don't sit in a wooden chair. What do you – people don't even realize that a lot of paper is made by the byproduct of all of that industry as well. But do you see any, save the environment, don't sit in this chair?

I mean, there is some reason why paper has become the villain of this, but paper is – the trees that are planted to make paper are softwood. They really can't be used for much else. The other

trees that are harder woods, like I said, the wood chips or the product or whatever, they pulp it down. They make paper. So even in that whole process, paper is still the better option than the boat or the chair or the desk that my microphone is sitting on right now. I'm sorry. I just never understand why the lumber industry is going to Home Depot. Why is there nobody freaking out about all the wood that's on the shelves? I mean, it's not really a discussion point, but I brought it up. I don't know if anybody wants to make a comment on it or I should just move on.

**[00:34:23] TPD:** I will say that I do believe that years ago, when the rainforest was being depleted in Asia, right? That's when we started –

**[00:34:32] DC:** Brazil. Brazil is when we got all upset.

**[00:34:34] TPD:** Brazil, right.

**[00:34:35] DC:** Right, yes.

**[00:34:37] TPD:** I feel like that's when it all started. It kind of was like, “Oh.” That it was the paper industry.

**[00:34:42] DC:** But were they chopping down the Amazon to make paper or desks? Desks.

**[00:34:46] TPD:** No. Correct.

**[00:34:48] DC:** Okay, go ahead.

**[00:34:49] TPD:** It wasn't for paper.

**[00:34:50] DC:** I'm just saying. But, Terri, I'm sorry. Please.

**[00:34:53] TPD:** No, no, no, no. I just feel like it stemmed from that. Then there was people jumped on it. The reason people want you to not have your bill come as paper is because it's

cheaper for them. It's cheaper for them not to print, right? But there still is a lot of US citizens who want to have a paper trail, right? I still want to get that bill in the mail. I do.

**[00:35:19] DC:** I get it. But why isn't anybody going after the chair they're sitting on or the desk that they're signing, reading their statements on? Emily?

**[00:35:27] ES:** Well, so I think that's interesting because I feel like it's kind of come full circle. You look at these big brand owners now, like the Mars and the candy companies out in Chicago, where they're looking at instead of packaging in plastic, now they want to package in paperboard. It's just interesting to see that come full circle and see how people's perceptions change.

**[00:35:50] DC:** But are they sitting on wooden chairs, working at wooden desks is still my question. Why isn't anybody after the desk people? I just think that somebody has a better lobby than us. Or I don't know what is going on, but it is all related, and I never hear anything. There's no protests going outside of Home Depot or Lowe's or anything like that. There's more "dead trees" on those shelves than there are in my house at the moment, for example. Okay.

**[00:36:21] ES:** Yes, it's fair. It's fair.

**[00:36:23] DC:** It's just – I'm not a conspiracy theorist, but something is going on there. Okay, let's turn this back to something a little more productive. Emily, you mentioned before that you are actually part of the expansion of Millcraft's products and services. You are specifically working around wide format and apparel printing, if I'm correct. Can you talk a little bit more about why Millcraft made the investment in that and how you are helping?

**[00:36:53] ES:** Yes. As a young rep or a young person in industry coming in, that's one thing that is really attractive to me about Millcraft. We are looking at the industry and seeing where our customers need to go, where they can go to open new verticals and get new streams of revenue. We're really trying to be ahead of the curve to be a partner with them in that. So we started about nine years ago, I think, in the wide-format space, partnering with Mimaki. Then



about three years ago, we opened our apparel division, so direct-to-garment and direct-to-film printers. We sell the Epson DTGs and the Mimaki DTFs. That's a branding-type vertical.

I just – it's a good outlook for me to see Millcraft investing in other areas that our customers might be investing in because then I see longevity within the company, and I get to learn every day something new, which is also fun.

**[00:37:54] TPD:** I think that Millcraft has understood for a while that we needed to have diversification in our products. Being a distributor, we can do that, right? During COVID, we pivoted and sold PPE, right? We had resources because we're a distribution center to bring in masks and hand sanitizers. We went to work, right? It's just as we see our customers grow and try to anticipate what their needs are going to be, then we pivot to bring those things in, whether that's equipment or interesting substrates on the packaging side. But we're trying to basically – I think the way to look at us is any printable substrate, we can source it. Then equipment on the both DTG and wide-format side with the vendors that we are – I guess we do the finishing, too, now. That's new to us –

**[00:38:50] ES:** Yes, finishing as well. Yes, finishing as well. Actually, we've kind of had a little internal rebranding. We're Inkjet Technology Solutions now, not just in wide format. So we're also selling Epson Aqueous printers. Really, if you can think of it, just ask us and we'll find a way or find you who to go to.

**[00:39:10] TPD:** Just ask. There it is again.

**[00:39:12] ES:** Yes.

**[00:39:13] DC:** Candace, did you want to add something to that?

**[00:39:15] CS:** Well, and again, educating ourselves where we see our customers moving toward, and how they're growing, and how they're going to continue to be viable in this industry, and what they need to do to take care of their clients. Referring to what Emily said on the Inkjet solutions, with several of my clients in my footprint, as they have grown from maybe being an offset printer and now they're investing into the high-speed inkjet technology because as that

technology has grown, I mean, the things that are coming off of it are so beautiful, and it's fast. It's fast.

Offset printing, which I'm obsessed with and I love and I appreciate and it's such a trade. It's such a craftsman. There are fewer –

**[00:40:07] DC:** Craftsperson.

**[00:40:09] CS:** Oh, craftsperson. There's fewer of those people available who have that knowledge. Now, you had to kind of grow the industry where a wider base of folks could come in and handle that technology and that machinery and just being able to educate yourself, so you are the right person for your client. You know what they can put on that piece of equipment. The ink will hold to the paper and come on the other side. They'll have the job and the right color and brand for their client and their message that they're trying to convey.

[BREAK]

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[INTERVIEW RESUMED]

**[00:41:26] DC:** By the way, I know that you're not saying craftsmen specifically referring to the gentlemen out there. I catch myself doing it as well. So when I interject, it's also to remind myself to be a little more open with who can do these jobs these days. That is actually a great time for us to move to the last question that I wanted to discuss with you. I mentioned in the beginning that March is Women's History Month. Six years ago, I took that and created an Initiative for Girls Who Print called Print HERstory Month, where we put out a Q&A that is open

to every woman in the industry to fill out. If they fill it out, we create a blog post and an image with them that they could share on their social media channels, and we share through our social media channels in order to create visibility for all the fierce fabulous females in the industry who are often overlooked, not put on trade show covers, not invited to event stages, and certainly not equally represented or sometimes represented at all in corporations, in management teams, in C-suites, and of that nature.

This year, as I also mentioned, the theme was invest in women. The last question I asked in the Q&A was how can the print and paper industries invest in women. More importantly, why should they? Candace, let's start with you.

**[00:43:00] CS:** Well, first of all, just having a seat at the table, just getting that opportunity sometimes, just to be a part of the discussion, to be a part of the panel, to have that invitation. I feel we're not always given the invitation or looked upon as the experts. Just with all of us women here today, all four of us, the education that we have, the experience that we have in our industry, I mean, we can kick some boys 'butts with what we know.

Just having that chance to showcase our knowledge and pass that on and mentoring it to other folks to be thought of, to say, "Hey, we would like to invest in you, to send you to the Inkjet Summit. We would like to invest with you to pay for you to go to the National Postal Meeting. We would like to invest in you to go to the Print Alliance in the South or the North, wherever you are in the country." Just someone looking upon you and making you feel worthy enough to be invited and get that investment in you, and just having the courage to ask.

I have decided recently that our motto is just ask. I'm asking. If I hear of events going on, I am asking. I'm emailing someone. All they can say is, "No, I'm in sales." People tell me no all day long. So right now, hit me with a no. I'm going to ask you again until I'll wear you down.

**[00:44:33] DC:** Right. Well, that is where the empower long and prosper comes in. I let it go a couple times. But in my head, when you said, "Allow us a seat at the table," instead of fight, claw, scream. Not scream but make your seat at the table. Push the chairs over and squish your chair in there. But that's what I feel that you're doing by saying, "Hey, send me to this. Put me in,

coach. Send me to this event. I can be more valuable to this company if you make me a more valuable resource to our customers.” I love that. Terri?

**[00:45:08] TPD:** Well, I wanted to elaborate on what Candace said about the seat at the table. I think the more diverse group you have at the table, the more diverse your perspectives. I think that really generates creativity. We are a fairly inclusive company. I mean, we were female-owned up until a couple of years ago when Travis's mom decided to retire. We do have upper management, and middle management salespeople who are female. So I feel like Millcraft, we're very lucky that we do have people we reach out to.

I think there's an unwritten girl code at Millcraft. You guys tell me if I'm wrong, but we tend to call each other, right? I know Candace and I do that on a regular basis. I know Emily and I have reached out to each other before. But I think that's important. I think girls have to lift girls up in this industry. Because I've been around a while, I do think it's getting better. I see more female salespeople on the printer side than I ever did before. We certainly are making a point to hire young women in our salesforce as well. I just wanted to put that out there.

**[00:46:23] DC:** Thank you so much. Well, it's important. Emily?

**[00:46:26] ES:** Yes. I mean, I love what both Terri and Candace have said, and I agree with them. I think having a seat at that table. Millcraft I feel like does a really good job of supporting that. Two, then letting folks know like, “Hey, I heard about this conference. This would be really good for you to come to. You should ask.” Not holding those opportunities just for yourself but sharing them to get other people involved as well.

Maybe this is my bias, but I feel like women are a little bit better at that than men can be. Yes, it really kind of goes back to what I was saying earlier about just showing up. There's so much value in showing up, and I think it's the same thing here at the conferences, at the trade shows. Just keep showing up, even in the face of maybe some behavior you don't like or some push back. Don't let that hinder you and just push forward through it because I feel like that's the only option.

**[00:47:24] DC:** Terri, final thoughts?

**[00:47:26] TPD:** I do think we as women do need to speak up more. I feel like when those situations happen where someone is being creepy, we need to point out that they're being creepy, right? I've been in this industry a long time, and I think that in the past, you're just like, "Oh, I couldn't possibly say something." You have to stand up for yourself in the industry when those kind of things happen. Like I said, I don't think it happens as often. But I know Emily and I went to a conference together, and we were overlooked when we asked questions in a group full of men. It was not our company. It was a vendor. But we had legitimate questions and knowledge and input. It was not acceptable, and we've got to speak up when that happens.

**[00:48:17] ES:** What I'd say to that, too, Terri, is in that specific instance, I had some of the male reps in our company coming up to me afterward. "Are you okay? Do you need me to say anything?" I think that it's noticed across the board when people are like that.

**[00:48:37] CS:** Inappropriate.

**[00:48:38] ES:** Inappropriate. Thank you. Yes.

**[00:48:43] CS:** I love just the reminder that you gave me even today during our talk about I have a tendency in my Southern ways to this politeness where you said fight. Sometimes, I try to make my moves a little bit quieter, but I'm finding my voice being surrounded by like-minded women. You guys are empowering me, and that means so much to me.

**[00:49:09] DC:** I'm sure you will find your balance, Candace. As we move along, it is super important. At least you're speaking up for yourself. Now, it's just a matter of fine-tuning. I just want to thank you all so much for sharing your time and your knowledge with everybody. I'm going to put links in the show notes to all of Millcraft's resources for ways of connecting with Candace, Terri, and Emily, and everything else you want to know. Maybe even a reading list from Terri. Until next time, everybody. Thank you so much. Empower long and prosper.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[00:49:47] 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](http://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.

[END]

### **Mentioned in This Episode:**

Website: <https://millcraft.com/>

Blog: <https://blog.millcraft.com/>

Newsletter Sign Up: <https://millcraft.com/newsletter-sign-up/>

Two Sides North America: <https://twosidesna.org>

Got Questions? Reach out to: [justask@millcraft.com](mailto:justask@millcraft.com)

Terri Price-Deep: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/terri-price-deep-1b2b8b3/>

### **Terri's Reading List**

You are a Badass: Jen Sincero

Hug Your Customers: Jack Mitchell

The Gift of Influence: Tom Spaulding

The Pivot Year: Brianna West

The Likeability Trap: Alicia Menendez

Candace Soward: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/candace-soward-52546510/>

Emily Simon: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/simonemily/>

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

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drupa Next Age (drupa DNA): [https://www.drupa.com/en/Program/Forums/drupa\\_next\\_age](https://www.drupa.com/en/Program/Forums/drupa_next_age)