International Circle Conference at DRUPA on
"Better anticipation of future skills - Towards a stronger partnership between education and industry"

Learn and Work in Media Industry – Challenges for the Graphic-Media Higher Education Institutes

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What I was asked to present:

"… One of the greatest challenges is to adapt and upgrade the skills portfolio of print/media professionals. Some recent reports urge education and industry to better cooperate to better anticipate future skills. Findings and recommendations of some reports. What is expected from higher education?..."

General trends – Graphic/media education

Graphic arts and media education has been evolving in the last two decades mainly with adaptation and restructuring of curricula, courses and modules throughout the entire spectrum of the education levels.

This was the case in almost all European countries and this process is still going on.

However, the challenges that arise nowadays seem to require new strategies for graphic arts education and training, including policies for competence evaluation and certification, job profiles description and adaptation of people in new knowledge.

Driving forces

Convergence of technologies (Media, Printing, IT, content and information management, mobile technologies).

Merging of previously separated professions and competences.

Internationalization of industry, business, trade and services.

As a result:

A need for reorientation of education and training in the graphic arts - media field.

We need to think in a different way, but:

In which way, how and towards which direction?

Issues to be considered:

Developments and trends in the graphic/media sector –
How do we proceed? (Lessons to be learnt from Drupa 2012 for
example: Cloud computing and management, Augmented reality,
Book-on-demand processes, Digital packaging printing, Web-to-
print and print-to web, etc. etc)

However:

- New requirements for "soft" skills – abandon the technical print education? (EGIN Annual conference Athens, April 2012**)**

- "RMIT University will close its International Centre of Graphic Technology (ICGT), one of Australia's most reputable print schools, within the next two years, with administrators saying the centre is no longer viable" **(**http://i-grafix.com/index.php/news/australia/Page-8.html, April 2012)

A future-oriented challenge:

The biggest challenge is the *future of reading* and the further relationship – competition – convergence, among print - digital – mobile media.

Issues to be considered (cont):

- Which competencies (for such an evolving environment)?

- What about "old" problems not solved yet? (Skills shortages ageing of employees etc.)

- Flexible forms of work, new working structures (Flexicurity??)

- The future of work (EGIN annual conference - Athens April 2012)

- Follow up the "2010 Socially responsible restructuring project" at national level and European level (Intergraf).

Other general trends and developments to be considered:

- Restructuring Forum - Sectors' New Skills for New Jobs" (Brussels 2009, 2010) - Reports on "Investing in the Future of Jobs and Skills. Scenarios, implications and options in anticipation of future skills and knowledge needs for the Printing   and Publishing Sector.

- Restructuring of production and services in Europe (Cedefop study on "Adult learning in the workplace: skill development to promote innovation in enterprises – Workshop on *Innovation and learning in enterprises,* Thessaloniki Greece, November 2011)

- New approaches for curriculum development and assessment structures – need for revision (Cedefop, Thessaloniki, April 2012)

- Setting-up of a European skills and jobs council enabling the European social partners to better monitor the development of the sector by anticipating changes of skills and jobs and to exchange best practices (Intergraf, 2012).

Trends in education and training for the graphic arts and media sector both at sub-degree and higher education levels

- Graphic arts and media is strongly influenced by the IT-ICT and the mobile communication sectors

- Graphic arts education and training is formed by various learning applications including formal education and training, further training, on the job-training and individual learning.

- Strong differences among EU countries

- The interaction between continuing training and initial training deserves special attention. There is a growing tendency to establish interconnections.

- The set of skills required for competence in graphic arts and media education and training at sub-degree level comprises three main skill-groups:

  - Graphic arts and media skills,
  - ICT skills,
  - Social - soft skills

- Increasing application of the cross-media publishing concepts, where production processes and management strategies are formed towards the common production and processing of print and electronic media (and nowadays for mobile media).

- Graphic arts and media production is oriented towards full digital workflows.

- Emergence of new professions in the media industry.

- A particular feature is the inter-disciplinary teamwork-based nature of the work, with combination of technical and creative skills and, occasionally, with business skills that cut across traditional professions and training systems.

- Many of the new jobs created in the sector require hybrid skills, which are not yet well provided by existing bodies and institutions.

- Information technology (IT) is impacting on occupations at all levels in the print and graphic communications sector, changing both the nature of the production process itself, and communications across and outside the business.

- There is a lack of clearly defined standards as well as of common descriptions of qualification profiles in the graphic arts and media sector.

- Requirements for definition of job profiles and professions, validation of knowledge and experience, certification of qualifications (for example the EGF framework), which need to be specifically addressed for the graphic arts and media sector.

Tasks for the higher graphic-media education institutes - for all of us:

- New ways to think and act!

- Partners – stakeholders - key sector players should actively participate

- EU, other authorities and governmental bodies should create space for the sector's voice at Europe, national and regional levels

- Forms of cooperation - What could be new?

Some proposals - ideas for action for the Higher / tertiary Graphic media education institutes:

- Initiatives for restructuring and anticipation of change including innovation in work and learning in the sector

- Match learning with restructuring, innovation and learning in enterprises

- More involvement at all levels of graphic media education

Some proposals - ideas for action for the Higher / tertiary Graphic media education institutes (cont):

- Consider flexible pathways for continuous - blended learning

- Act towards creating mobility structures by removing the barriers for education, and training between levels, countries, fields of expertise formal and informal learning

- Consider a holistic strategy for Human Capital Development for the sector (Politis PhD, KTH Stockholm 2004).

Comments by Dr. Anastasios E. Politis, Expert - Participant at the Workshop Sector Printing & Publishing (Graphic Arts and Media) - Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG Social Dialogue, Social Rights) 24 January 2009:

"... further actions should be undertaken by sectors' experts teams at EU level, for a more in-depth and accurate analysis of skills and competences".

"... Each sector should underdake the responsibility for the holistic development of the sector – that means people, companies, entrepreneurs, students, etc., etc".

"... A set of activities and measures to be taken can be implemented by the sector's team of experts, such as:

- The image of the sector.
- The effort to offer efficient initial, continuous and further training and education.
- The need to recruit young people to work in the sector.
- The need to secure the working places.
- The need for quality of employment and the working environment.
- The need to secure that older – traditional workers will keep their employment...."

"... New structure(s) for the management of change, restructuring policies and introduce innovation in learning needs to be formed

Such a structure (for example a body of experts for each sector) should be established in a form of long-lasting, structured and efficient cooperation among the sector's stakeholders at European level.

The stakeholders of the sector should then participate in this new structure with a new form of common activities, based on a concrete plan..."

"... Who should participate?

Intergraf, UNI – Europa Grafical, EGIN, IARIGAI, International Circle, Experts of the sector, ..., ..., ...

This team should carry out the responsibility to create, operate and apply the strategy and run the activities in the long-term. Those involved should be committed to work efficiently for this purpose. And finally, the European Commision should support such actions thoroughly..."

Now we have the sector's councils!

Let's take advantage of this, use it a a step forward and proceed towards this new policy.

In my opinion we need to work proactively towards the further strengthening of the voice of the sector at Europe level

A first concrete step: Formation of a council with the participation of our organizations namely:

International Circle, IARIGAI, EGIN, Integraf, UNI-Europa, etc. etc.

Lets take the initiative to work together!

Thank you for your attention!

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