

Bulletin

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Idealliance Remembers George Leyda



George Leyda
1936-2017

The industry recently lost “a good friend, colleague, and leader,” in George W. Leyda, a pioneer in printing color standards, who died on May 23rd at the age of 81.

George Leyda served in leadership capacities in the early days of standards development while with the 3M Corporation and as founder of his consulting company, ColorInfo Technology. With a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from the University of California at Los

Angeles, George helped spur the development and adoption of the first SWOP® standard, laying the foundation for so much of what has followed, including GRACoL® and G7®.

He was one of the key godfathers for the Graphic Communications Association’s SPECTRUM conference in the 1980s, bringing the industry, advertising agencies, and publishers together to discuss technical issues. Later in life, he founded the Leyda Camp, an annual invitation-only gathering of the who’s who in technology and leadership in graphic communications, which served as an incubator for a generation of new ideas and technologies.

“The efforts George put into the creation of standards and specifications, promoting education and the sharing of information, played a significant role in moving the print industry forward,” said Idealliance President and Chief Executive Officer David Steinhardt. “The industry has lost a good friend, colleague, and leader. Idealliance extends condolences to his wife, Betty Jo, and his family.”

Family Business

Leyda grew up in Blasdell, N.Y., where his family operated the Leyda Printing & Stationery Company, publisher of the *Erie County Herald* newspaper. After high school he attended Pressman’s Home Printing School near Rogersville, Tenn., then enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he became a linguist, gaining fluency in Russian and German and serving in Austria and Germany.

Following his military service, he enrolled in UCLA as a physics major and married Betty Jo. He was recalled into the Army for a second tour of duty, then returned to study again at UCLA and work at a local printing company. Upon graduation, Leyda was offered a job in Minnesota working for 3M in its printing technology division, offering a perfect combination of his physics degree and printing technical background.

At 3M he played an integral role in the development of color quality control standards applicable to large commercial printers and was a featured speaker at many professional conferences. Retiring from 3M in 2003, he continued consulting with his ColorInfo Technology company and hosting his annual seminars with industry professionals.

“I recall one instance where I was a little upset about the state of the industry and the knowledge base. I asked George how he kept on giving,” said one of the industry professionals Leyda mentored. “He smiled and said there are still people to teach. We cracked open another beer while he provided me the incentive to push harder. RIP, George, and know that your legacy will live on for many years to come.”

‘Long-Term Dedication’

In presenting Leyda with the IDEA Award at the 2001 Spectrum Conference, Steinhardt cited his “long-term dedication to the education and advancement of the entire graphic communications community.” The award noted that Leyda coined the term GRACoL—General Requirements for Applications of Commercial offset Lithography—and trained GRACoL trainers around the country.

A member Idealliance’s former Print Properties Committee for many years, he was active in programs that helped to define and promote quality control in the printing industry, including TAGA, SWOP, CGATS, ANSI IT2.28, and SNAP.

Leyda is survived by his wife of 55 years, Betty Jo, three children, and six grandchildren. Idealliance is preparing a Remembrance of George Leyda stories and sayings. To contribute your reminiscences, contact David Steinhardt at dsteinhardt@idealliance.org.