

Keynote Speakers Share Insider Info on Conference

By Kevin Craine – for the 2005 AIIM/ON DEMAND Official Conference Newspaper

This year's AIIM ON DEMAND Conference boasts a new location, an exciting conference program, and a variety of educational sessions, special events and roundtable discussions. The keynote lectures are sure to be conference favorites. Each presenter has a unique take on the state of our industry.

- Gary Kusin, president and CEO of FedEx Kinko's
- Clayton Christensen, professor of business administration at Harvard
- Daniel Carp, chairman and CEO of Eastman Kodak
- Brian Roberts, chairman and CEO of Comcast
- Kamar Aulakh, president and CEO of Quark

In his lecture on Tuesday, FedEx Kinko's chief executive, Gary Kusin, will unveil a new approach called "Information Logistics." According to Kusin the era of information logistics is urgently approaching. "Now is the time to take action in order to seize this new world order for our industry," says Kusin.

Eastman Kodak's Daniel Carp agrees that the document industry is experiencing an extreme makeover. "Conference attendees are living the transformation sweeping the industry," says Carp. "I will discuss market transformations at a macro level, and the opportunities they present."

Kamar Aulakh from Quark will examine several factors changing the industry. "Collaboration is key," says Aulakh. "The secret is rooted in having digital asset management systems and workflow automation tools so that you don't have to baby-sit documents as they move through the production flow." Aulakh stresses another trend: Multi-channel publishing. "Content providers must deliver information not only to the mailbox and the news stand, but also to email, PDA's and cell phones."

Comcast CEO, Brian Roberts, predicts that information delivery will enter the world of on demand television. "As we move into an all-digital Internet-powered world," says Roberts; "consumers will demand to see what they want, when they want it, on television." Roberts will discuss how video on demand will present many opportunities as we experience a fundamental shift in television viewing paradigm.

Perhaps the most controversial keynote this year will be delivered by Harvard professor Clayton Christensen. "I've spent my career studying what kills successful companies," says Christensen. "I will explain that it is actually the 'paradigms of good management' that sow the seeds of every company's demise." Christensen will present some surprising research findings in his lecture. He asserts, for example, that listening to customers and focusing investments on opportunities that offer the highest rate of return actually cause companies to fail.

Thanks to these keynoters, conference attendees will understand factors that drive success or failure in our industry. Kusin advises that in order to uncover new frontiers in our industry we must take a step back and examine what is going on in the world around us. "We must improve how we distribute information and become more flexible and more innovative," says Kusin. "We must manage the total flow of digital and physical information that moves with every business process."

Christensen agrees: "When a technology or service begins to become a commodity the piece of value added that you have historically provided moves to an adjacent state in the value added chain. Today, in many applications, printing disappears and is replaced by the digital transmission of information."

According to Carp, success or failure is going to be determined by how effectively companies use the technologies that are transforming the industry. “We are now experiencing the second wave of adoption of document imaging,” says Carp. “Small and medium enterprises are embracing these technologies more than ever before.”

With increasing digitization, Aulakh stresses the need for flexible standards. “As we move into the digital era, publishers need to work within a set of standards. Dictating workflow to users is not an option.” Aulakh sees JDF, PPML and XML-based content as promising standards that will help professionals avoid unnecessary rework. “These benefit both designers and printers so they can get the most out of their day and schedule their workloads accordingly.”

Ultimately, according to Kusin, documents will be just one element in the dynamic flow of information that moves whenever, wherever and however it is needed. “I believe that today the on demand industry is on the threshold of a new business model that will drive future growth, profitability, efficiencies and customer satisfaction like no other time in our industry.”

Roberts spies change on the horizon as well. “The ‘convergence’ between television and the personal computer is finally here.” Carp foresees that the pace of change will continue to accelerate. “The industry will continue to move to a hybrid production environment with traditional and digital technologies converging.” Aulakh says that while around the world print volumes are increasing; it is incumbent on all content providers to be flexible in how they provide data. “We can’t ignore the growing number of customers who prefer their data digitally.”

Professor Christensen wraps up his perspective this way: “When technological innovation comes into an industry it always creates net-new growth. The leaders in the industry tend to view this as a threat whereas the entrants view it as an opportunity.”

How can you take advantage of this opportunity while avoiding the pitfalls? One place to start is by attending the sessions for all of these expert keynote presenters. You are sure to start thinking and planning for the future – a future where marketers will continue to demand more value from graphic communications providers, printers will expand their roles and provide more services, and the industry as a whole will leverage the power of digital technologies.

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