

EXCELLENCE IN MANAGEMENT

This award is for excellence in the management of an in-house mail operation that stands alone, or is combined with related services such as print, copy, courier, or receiving. The person making the nomination must explain why this candidate's operation meets these high standards. The candidate should have experience in management or supervision and be a NACUMS member in good standing.

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1. Cost savings and/or avoidance: Describe operational improvements the candidate has implemented that resulted in a significant reduction in expenses, or in avoiding cost increases for their school.

Penn State University's Multimedia and Print Center (MPC) continuously looks for ways to add value and save campus departments' time and money with process improvements. One recent endeavor within our mail services unit, under the management of Abbas Badani, involved the University's Admissions department. Admissions mails 78 different versions of information and enrollment offer packets, mailing approximately 4,000 – 8,000 packets daily between November and February. These packets can contain several different personalized pieces (variable data print) along with several generic pieces dependent upon the information being provided. Historically, these mailings were produced using multiple systems and hand inserted into an envelope and mailed out.

Mr. Badani, together with MPC's employees, University IT, Admissions, and various vendors, developed a custom proprietary digital front end solution and combined it with available hardware to automate this process. The automated process can pull the data from university systems to generate personalized letters of variable length and page count, clean the address information, print on a digital engine, and insert with other appropriate static material in a custom designed window envelope that has a cover sheet with the address. This process has a high degree of automation and has reduced the cycle time between the initial electronic offer/inquiry and the printed material arriving at the student's home from 2-3 weeks to the time it takes for first class mail since packages are printed and mailed out on the same day.

This process has set a new standard in the higher education space for student contact. The university has been able to bridge the gap between electronic communication and the personal touch offered through print and mail into a single cohesive continuous cycle where the print and mail act as a reinforcement to build a full communication experience in one seamless cycle without any lag time. In addition, after full implementation, Undergraduate Admissions will have realized cost savings in excess of \$100,000 between labor, postage, and materials.

2. Management Practice: Describe how the candidate has made a significant operational improvement which merits national attention and /or established a program which is a model others have used to set up their own mail operations.

MPC just won the USPS Eastern Region Award for Digital Innovation. The award will be presented by the Postmaster General at the National Postal Forum in Baltimore on May 24, 2017. By developing close relationships between print, mail, customer, and procurement, the unit has been able to develop custom workflows and solutions for direct mail. As a result, direct mail which used to be all outsourced is now over 40% of the business. Amongst other accolades, a piece produced by MPC won the first place for a cross media publication at the recently concluded ACUP conference (Association of College and University Printers).

The Mail-Print-Procurement partnership implemented at Penn State through the Print Portal, a software solution designed by Abbas Badani to leverage the institutional buying capacity for print and mail, has been featured at various national conferences and has been adapted in various forms by academic universities as well as state print and mail operations.

MPC was one of the early implementers of the IMPB barcode as well as seamless entry and the implementation program model was presented at the ACUP conference and Merging Print and Mail was presented at the IPMA conference.

Recently MPC just hosted an open house for its customers to reintroduce all the services offered to existing customers as well as introduce the unit to new customers. The open house was featured in Higher Education related magazine publications as well as through online media. The open house was sponsored by multiple vendors including the US Postal Service who provided demonstrations, handouts and material, and gifts for giveaways and prize drawings.

Most recently Mr. Badani has added a new service offered at MPC which will generate revenue without any cost. Starting in April of this year, MPC became a Passport Acceptance Facility for the U.S. Department of State. The purposes of adding this service are to provide services that are student centric, add revenue while remaining cost neutral, and to improve the foot traffic and overall visibility of the operation to the larger Penn State community including the leadership.

All these efforts and programs are examples of how operational improvement, university mission, and customer engagement can tie together to produce overall success, revenue growth, and increased value to the parent institution.

3. Personal Growth: The candidate has demonstrated professional development, either a new level of education or a certification that has made them a better manager.

In the last 5 years, Abbas Badani has completed his MDP and EMCM certifications through USPS. He completed his CASP certification last year, (Certified Auxiliary Service Professional), which is the highest certification offered by NACAS (National Association of College Auxiliary Services)

4. Other: Please describe a trait of the person you are recommending which would show excellence in operations.

All of this would mean little if Abbas Badani did not strive to provide a team-oriented work unit. The advancements achieved at MPC are all through staff initiatives and engagement and by paying close attention to developing a work place that puts staff front and center in every decision while addressing employee and customer concerns and/or needs. These achievements have been accomplished while

continuing to run a very flat team based organization with a single layer of management by driving ownership to the individual employee level.

The organization is managed in a very transparent manner with full and open access to information to all team members, an open door policy, involvement of all impacted staff members in decisions regarding the unit, and continuously striving to build a customer focused culture so that every employee feels directly connected to the people they serve and the institution they work for.

Nomination submitted by: Stephanie Guglielmi