



Office & School Furniture



*Tim Klebe
President*



*Linda Lester
Vice President*

Over the years, K-Log has grown from a small family operation focused on Chicagoland to a company with 30 employees selling to customers in every state. They sell educational and office furniture, primarily to public agencies and organizations, via catalog and the internet.

K-Log was incorporated by the current CEO, Tim Klebe, and his father in 1984. The family has deep ties to Zion. Additionally, the proximity to Chicago – and Milwaukee – offers a lot of advantages in terms of infrastructure, workforce, and potential customers (and vendors). “As a catalog retailer, we can operate almost anywhere, so we’ve been happy to remain where our roots are,” Linda Lester, Vice President, says.

Over the years, K-Log has grown from a small family operation focused on Chicagoland to a company with 30 employees selling to customers in every state. They sell educational and office furniture, primarily to public agencies and organizations, via catalog and the internet. “We currently represent over 100 manufacturers and list over 14,000 products, and mail millions of printed catalogs per year,” Linda says. “We hold contracts with Federal, state, and local governments as well as an increasing number of purchasing co-operatives.”

As vice president, Linda dips her toes into a lot of pools. She oversees the company’s day-to-day operations, varying from personnel to accounting to government contracts. “I also maintain and update our homegrown, in-house enterprise system, which has been built up over 20+ years to support the way we do business, and I’m the primary point of contact with outside groups such as trade associations and government agencies,” she says. “In the last couple of years, she has also become active in the American Catalog Mailers Association

Meet Our Staff

(ACMA), an industry trade association lobbying Congress to reform the interstate sales tax landscape.”

Just like almost every other business, K-Log has had an unusual year due to the pandemic. They adapted to working remotely fairly quickly with hard work and diligence from their team. “It was well into the summer (traditionally our busy season) before business started to pick up again,” Linda continues. “Things are slowly returning to a version of “normal” as more and more school systems reopen for in-person learning. For us, the PPP loan program did exactly as it was intended to do – allowed us to keep everyone on the payroll through the ups and downs of this turbulent year.”

As if the last year’s challenges were not enough, K-Log is currently facing two huge external issues. The most immediate involves changes to US Postal Service rates. The latest proposed increases in postal rates will effectively make catalogs too expensive to mail and could drive many companies out of business.

The second issue revolves around collecting and remitting sales taxes outside of Illinois. Two years ago, the Supreme Court’s Wayfair decision enabled states to require sellers outside their borders to collect and remit sales taxes on goods sold into their state. Since K-Log sells nationwide, they now collect in 44 states and the District of Columbia. “The issue is hugely complex,” Linda comments. “There are more than 12,000 taxing jurisdictions across the nation, thousands of different rates and tax bases, and a bewildering array of reporting and record-keeping requirements. K-Log has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars and thousands of man-hours on software, subscriptions, programming, and consulting to become (we hope) compliant.

Linda and K-Log can’t spend their time lobbying for these types of issues, as they need to run their businesses. “We delegate these issues to the Illinois Chamber of Commerce to fight for us,” Linda says. “On issues like healthcare, Covid-relief, and sales tax issues, we look to the Chamber to provide guidance and the information we need to stay in business. We need people like the staff at the Chamber to represent companies like K-Log. This is one reason why it is important for us and to be a member of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce.”

- Combined work experience of our staff: 233 years, for an average of 9 years per employee.
- Our employees have a combined 41 children. We even have multiple generations from the same family working here together.
- Our office is along the Illinois/Wisconsin border. 86% of us are Chicago Bears fans, while 14% are Green Bay Packers fans. Go Bears!

