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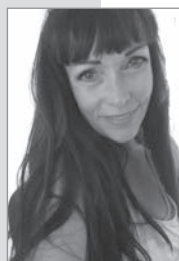
Do you offer something a little bit special? Is that what's going to help you remain competitive? If so, you'll be eager to read the features in this issue on special effects, and on the substrates that allow you to provide so many of the 'wow' factor applications that digital inkjet print has become synonymous with. Or has it? We on the inside know the myriad possibilities, but do all your clients - and potential clients - the ones yet to give you business because they have no idea that you hold the key to unlocking the ideas in their imagination.

We started our Think Bigger campaign years ago now, to help educate the creative community about digital inkjet print possibilities and expand the demand. Many PSPs and suppliers to the sector have also recognised that need and yes, as a result we're seeing demand grow in what were once tiny novel markets and many a print company has diversified its offering and customer base in the decade since I became Image Reports editor. But where will wide-format be in another ten years? Will it have more women for a start? That's the Zeitgeist topic this issue. Another hot one is Web-to-print. On p25 you can read why crowdfunding a new Web-to-personalised print service is such a strategic focus for YourPrintPartner founder Stuart Maclaren. And on p20 Matic Media founder Richard McCombe too talks about in-house W2P development and how that is impacting the company.

Speaking of software, what do you know about i4.0? I ask because on 10 October Fespa UK is hosting the conference 'The Future of Print i4.0'. But will you be there? Image Reports' Widthwise Survey - conducted among 151 of the UK and Ireland's large-format PSPs - showed that only five of them had invested in i4.0 in 2017. Those who hadn't were asked if they would be doing so in 2018. The answer? A big fat 0. So, what's going on? Turn to p22 to see what Peter Kiddell has to say on the topic, surely a key to business survival.

Then again, when it comes to competitiveness James Fear of Taylor Bloxham believes "selling print is not a great way forward for PSPs." Turn to p33 to find out why he thinks that's the case and what the alternative is. Let me know if you agree or not!

Editor
LESLEY SIMPSON
LESLEY.SIMPSON@IMAGEREPORTSMAG.CO.UK
TEL: 01932 707173



From Top:
Lesley Simpson
Alex Gold
Tania King
Wayne Darroch
Carl Archer



Editor: Lesley Simpson
lesley.simpson@imagereportsmag.co.uk

Production Manager: Alex Gold

Design: Tania King

Publisher: Wayne Darroch
wayned@sjpbusinessmedia.com

Advertising Manager: Carl Archer
carl.archer@imagereportsmag.co.uk
Tel: 07723 079928

www.imagereportsmag.co.uk

SJP Business Media,
2nd Floor, 123 Cannon Street,
London, EC4N 5AU

For circulation enquiries contact:

SJP Business Media
Unit K, Venture House
one Lane, Newbury, R14 5SH

Tel: 01635 879361

Fax: 01635 868594

Email: imagereports@circdata.com

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Guy Gecht to step down as EFI CEO

Longtime EFI CEO Guy Gecht is stepping down from the role. Gecht - who will make the move once his successor is named - will remain a director and work with the new CEO for a smooth transition.

"EFI has never been better positioned for continued growth and success," said Gecht. "I think this makes it the right time, after 19 years as CEO of this company, for me to hand the reins to the next leader. I will stay fully focused on leading the outstanding EFI team during the search period, and will assist in ensuring a smooth transition once the new CEO is in place."

EFI chairman Gill Cogan said of Gecht's decision: "Together with his team, Guy transformed EFI from a single product line and OEM business model to a diverse, worldwide leader driving the transition from analogue to on-demand digital imaging in industries that touch our lives every day. He led the expansion into productivity software and industrial inkjet, which drove EFI's rapid growth to over \$1bn in annual revenues. Guy is only EFI's third CEO in its 30-year history, which has brought a stability that the board truly appreciates."

The news came as EFI posted results for the second quarter of 2018. Revenue for the period ended 30 June reached \$261.1m, up 6% compared to second quarter 2017 (\$247m). For the six months ended 30 June, 2018, EFI reported revenue of \$500.9m, up 5% year-over-year compared to \$475.7m for the same period in 2017.

Fespa UK to run 'The Future of Print i4.0' conference

Fespa UK association will run a conference entitled 'The Future of Print i4.0' on 10 October 2018 at the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC), Coventry. The intention is for the event to address the challenges and propose strategies for PSPs to respond positively to technological developments.

Proceedings will start with a group guided tour of the MTC facilities, followed by introductions by Fespa UK director Peter Kiddell and MTC senior business development manager Nigel Knapp ahead of presentations by speakers from Optimus, Esko, Dufaylite and insights from a number of MTC specialists.

The day costs £75 for members and £175 for non-members. Packages with accommodation are available.

Turn to p22 for the Talking Point feature on i4.0

New Durst doubles Leach's print capacity at Huddersfield production site

Leach has doubled the print capacity of its 30,000m² Huddersfield site with a new Durst Rhotex 325.

The £500,000 investment is the company's first major investment since it was acquired French-owned Chargeurs in the spring. It means Leach can now achieve a 500m² per hour print rate.

"As demand from the retail, exhibition and heritage sectors continues to rise, we are



passionate about being able to help more clients, as quickly as we can, without any detriment to quality," said MD James Lavin. "The addition of this equipment means that we now have technology capable of satisfying virtually any print brief."

At 6.5m wide x 4.5m deep, the Durst Rhotex 325 produces graphics up to 3m wide and of any length and joins other Durst machines at Leach - the company having hit the headlines in March 2016 when it bought the UK's first Durst Rho 512R for UV ink printing graphics up to 5m wide.

Lavin said of the new printer: "This is a dual-purpose system which can alternate between direct-to-textile and transfer printing, meaning maximum flexibility for our busy team moving forwards."

"We've also revised some of our wider factory layout in readiness and have achieved further operational efficiencies as a result - this is crucial as we prepare for additional growth."

Zund UK gets new MD

Zund UK has a new MD. Nicki Kay has taken up the position vacated by Stuart Cole, who stepped down earlier this year due to ill health. She said her initial focus "will be the successful integration of Zund UK's global ERP and CRM systems to bolster its customer service excellence - an area I'm particularly committed to."

Kay's previous roles include MD of a UK manufacturer and distributor of electro-mechanical components and enclosures - where she was instrumental in growing the company from a small OEM-focused distributor to a global multi-channel business.

DIS flexes its muscle with Virgin Active contract

Wolverhampton-based DIS has won its biggest ever contract - with Virgin active - helping it move from its existing £2.5m turnover to £5m annual sales by 2021. The company, which has become the official supplier of graphics and signage for all of Virgin's 46 gyms and health clubs across the UK, is currently recruiting four more people to its team of 18 to help it manage the volume of work created by the contract.

"This is a milestone moment for DIS and reinforces our reputation for providing print and branding solutions for some of the biggest brands across the world," said Mark Bradley, who founded DIS in 1997. "We were invited to take part in a comprehensive tender against competitors five times our size, but Virgin Active was impressed with our track record, our creativity, quality and ability to handle everything from initial design and fulfilment, through to installation by our own in-house team."

DIS has several large-format Vutek printers and a 3D studio.

Astley on total staff development drive

Astley is using money from the European Social Funding Agency to help it develop every member of its 135 strong workforce.

Delivered by 3P Training, and in partnership with Gateshead College, the programme enables the employees, working as part of cross-functional teams, to gain a better understanding of Kaizen, visual management and 5S.

As well as the company-wide learning initiatives, leadership training has been undertaken by those in a supervisory role focusing on team leading principles and managing effective teams.

Gavin Redhead, commercial director at Astley, said: "In a company like ours there are many departments and we really wanted staff to have a chance to learn more about disciplines outside of their own skillset."

Hybrid Services announces the Mimaki TS55-1800

New from Mimaki is the TS55-1800 - a digital heat transfer sublimation printer designed to bring high-end features to entry- and mid-level markets.

The new model prints at a resolution of 480 x 600dpi with a high ink density using one-pass printing at 140m²/h. In addition, the Mimaki Advanced Pass System (MAPS4) improves the quality of two-pass printing by eliminating banding.

One of the key features of the TS55-1800 is the option of a Mini Jumbo Roll unit that can continuously feed 2,500 linear meters of heat transfer paper to the printer. Mini Jumbo Rolls of Mimaki Vision Jet-X transfer paper, supplied by Neenah Coldenhove, will be offered as a package deal with the TS55-1800.

Future of inkjet looking bright according to Smithers Pira report

The global market for inkjet printing will grow at a rate of 9.4% year-on-year and will be worth \$109bn in 2023 according to 'The Future of Inkjet Printing to 2023', a new market report from Smithers Pira. This contrasts with the general outlook for the print industry where growth is occurring at 0.8% annually.

The report provides data (by value and volume) and analysis across 11 end-use applications, over 30 national markets and five print equipment types. It states that in 2018 the total value of inkjet printing in graphics and packaging applications will reach \$69.6bn, with a total print volume equivalent to 749bn A4 prints. This volume will consume 103,700 tonnes of ink, with the end-users spending \$8.7bn, while the market for new inkjet equipment will be \$3.6bn.

The report's author, Dr Sean Smyth, said: "The economics and reliability of inkjet are consistently

improving as a result of heavy investment in printing heads, machinery, inks and drying systems, associated software and, increasingly, substrates. There is strong growth across most of these disparate activities because the non-impact process is very flexible and capable of printing at high-quality and speed.

According to Smithers Pira, while advertising will continue to be the largest end-use application across 2018-2023, the most rapid growth will come from wider use of inkjet in packaging, books and commercial printing. Beyond these core applications developers are exploring inkjet to open new market applications, many of which will require integrating the inkjet process with robotics aligning with the wider Industry 4.0 trend.

Rallying cry from Print Scotland

The Scottish print industry is in the process of being offshored according to Iain Robertson, director and vice-president of Print Scotland.

A statement issued in his name said: It is not edifying - in fact, it is deeply unsettling - to see a once strong and dynamic Scottish industry in a state of apprehension, not to say fear, about its future. But that is the pass at which we have arrived as Scotland's print industry, which employs between 4,000 and 6,000 people, waits to see if it is about lose its biggest client at the stroke of a pen - a pen wielded, ironically, by the Scottish Government.

The signs are not good, and the upshot of what is happening in the sector could be that work for public bodies - the most important income stream in the business - will become, and remain, out of the reach of all but the biggest of Scottish printers.

It is a course of action which flies in the face of

the Government's oft-stated intention to share the public sector cake more equitably.

The focus of the industry's concern is the new Print and Associated Services (PAS) Framework Agreement which is due to come into effect in March next year. It covers the print needs of some 53 public bodies.

There has, as yet, been no feedback from a consultation by Scottish Procurement on whether this vital agreement should be structured as a single supplier or a multi-supplier portfolio and in fact the stated deadline date for information on this, the 17 August, has passed without comment.

The industry is unanimously in favour of a multi-supplier approach, since the alternative would create, in effect, a monopoly.

Full statement at: <http://bit.ly/2MJaU9K>

Brett Martin greens up its energy supply

Media manufacturer Brett Martin is now getting a quarter of its energy from renewable sources. The Northern Ireland-based company has started supplementing energy supplied by its own onsite wind turbine with electricity from a solar installation funded and developed by Lightsource BP.

Lightsource BP financed, completed and now operates a 6.42MWp solar installation near Belfast, which is hard-wired directly into Brett Martin's facility just over a mile away. The installation has an output power capacity of 6.42MWp (Megawatts-peak) - enough clean solar energy to power the equivalent of over 1,600 homes, providing approximately 14% of the centre's annual electricity demand. The solar installation, built on over 35 acres of locally-owned farmland, provides an estimated saving of 2,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year, equal to taking nearly 1,000 cars off the road.

Brett Martin MD Laurence Martin, said: "Brett Martin is experiencing a period of significant growth and development recording an uplift in turnover of £17m to £152.4m since last year and a headcount increase of 138 in the same period. Our core activity of processing plastics is very energy intensive and with energy costs in Northern Ireland at around 25% more than the European average, initiatives like this are critical to help us maintain our competitive edge in a global marketplace where 50% of our sales are exported. We were one of the first local manufacturers to install a wind turbine in 2011, now delivering 11% of our energy costs. The partnership with Lightsource now more than doubles our renewable footprint and also highlights our commitment to environmentally sensitive manufacturing practice."

Stackawraps introduces 3D Panoramic Posters



Stackawraps is presenting a product described as "incredible posters that just come to life". The company's Panoramic Posters take an image, zoom in on a chosen section and create a 3D pop-out highlight of that area within the rest of the flat print. Sizes (of the full poster) vary from 750mm - 3m in height.

The posters are flat packed, lightweight and can be suspended or wall mounted or integrated into lightboxes or free-standing displays.

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- CSL Digital gets new UK sales manager
- Taylor Bloxham receives colour quality certification



PRINTWEAR & PROMOTION LIVE! 2019: INSPIRING GARMENT DECORATORS FOR 30 YEARS

The countdown to Printwear & Promotion LIVE!'s 30th anniversary is on - and visitor registration is now open for the UK garment decoration industry's biggest ever event.

PRINTWEAR & PROMOTION LIVE!

20-22 January 2019
Halls 17 & 18
NEC Birmingham
www.printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk

The only exhibition dedicated to the UK garment decoration industry, the show aims to inspire its visitors, providing a vibrant, dynamic and interactive event with workshops, seminars, advice from industry experts and on stand demonstrations.

Following the successful switch to January dates this year, which saw a record number of 5,650 individual visitors from over 3,500 businesses in attendance, the show will again take place in Halls 17 & 18 at the NEC Birmingham in January – starting on Sunday, January 20 running through to Tuesday, January 22.

Tony Gardner, the show's director, said: "The switch to January enabled many to attend who previously, due to their workload in February, had been unable to do so, while exhibitors had the benefit of showcasing their latest products to the market a month earlier. As a result we have seen a further increase in demand for stand space, thus the 2019 show will be the 9th consecutive year that the show has increased in size!"

As usual the show will be a launch pad for new equipment and with major suppliers and distributors

exhibiting, including Xpres, Graftyp, Roland DG there will be plenty of kit to see in action!

Garment decoration tips and small business advice will be available from two seminar suites, the Screen Print Workshop returns, while the Fashion Show and a new feature area for 2019, the Skate Ramp, will showcase garments in action!

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

Registering couldn't be easier. Just head to www.printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk and fill in a quick form. You will then receive an email containing your unique visitor barcode, which when scanned at one of the self-service terminals at the registration area will print out your visitor badge. Once this is printed you are then free to enjoy all that the show has to offer!

Registering in advance saves you time on the day of your visit, allowing you to make the most of your time at the exhibition. As the show grows year on year, there is even more to see and to absorb.

While you're online why not explore the website and find out more about your favourite exhibitors and about the vibrant feature areas the show has available to you.

FEATURE AREAS

New for 2019, the Skate Ramp promises to deliver an adrenaline-filled display of the latest printwear styles.

Sponsored by PAG Leisurewear, the distributor has chosen to celebrate its 50th anniversary with a skate and BMX team performing live at the show.

The skaters will be performing a variety of tricks and stunts throughout the duration of the show while wearing clothes from high end brands including American Apparel, Gildan, Myrtle Beach and Independent Trading Company, which was founded to custom manufacture for skate and surf brands.

Michael Hanreck at PAG Leisurewear said: "50 years is a big deal! And we were keen to come back to the show to celebrate. As our customers know, we like to be different and the skate team and display area should be something else! We are so pleased the P&P LIVE! team have let us run with the idea."

Also providing an energetic display of printwear styles is the Fashion Show, sponsored by Regatta Professional. Catwalk displays will take place three times a day and will showcase 2019 sportswear, workwear and leisurewear styles from brands such as Just Cool by AWDiS, Fruit of the Loom and United Brands of Scandinavia. Make sure you head over to see the dancers in action.

Making a return for 2019 is the vast array of educational opportunities designed to help you in the day-to-day running of your own business. Topics in the Screen Print Workshop will appeal to both novice and expert printers alike, with live demonstrations taking place throughout the three days. There will also be an all new line-up of speakers and topics across two seminar suites – The Decoration Advice Suite and The Knowledge Centre. The seminar programme is an excellent source of free inspiration, advice and education, with every area of printwear production covered.

Also returning for 2019 is the ever-popular Bag & Headwear Decoration Advice stand, sponsored by BagBase and Beechfield Original Headwear. If you have any queries relating to the decoration of bags or headwear then this stand is a must-visit.

The team of experts will be on hand to help you through the minefield of complex fabrics to elaborate designs and tricky techniques. Screen printing, embroidery, transfer printing, you name it the team has all of the insider knowledge.

MAKE SURE YOU'RE THERE

A one-stop-shop for printwear professionals, as well as those looking to enter the market, Printwear & Promotion LIVE! is the industry's annual meeting place and networking event.

There will be around 150 stands from all sectors of the garment and product decoration market, including around 60 clothing brands, distributors and all of the major decoration equipment and accessory suppliers covering direct to garment, sublimation, transfer and screen printing and embroidery.

The positive vibe around the show continues to spread with several first time exhibitors booking

stands and a number of others returning to the show, with many showcasing new equipment and new garment lines.

Visit the Printwear & Promotion LIVE! 30th anniversary show and be inspired – register online today!

www.printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk



CAUSE AND EFFECT

AS PRINT SERVICE PROVIDERS SEEK TO WOW CLIENTS, SIMON CREASY ASKS KIT MANUFACTURERS ABOUT SPECIAL EFFECTS POSSIBILITIES.

All PSPs are looking for an edge - for that little something extra that makes them stand out from the competition. The problem is that this 'x factor' normally carries a price tag. It often requires investment in a new piece of kit for instance - something that allows PSPs to offer more embellishments in-house say. Thankfully that situation is starting to change. More wide-format printer manufacturers are talking about the range of effects that can be achieved inline. So what's now possible in terms of special effects on the current range of wide-format printers, and what innovations are coming down the line?

The increasing number of effects achievable on machines ties into the growing trend of customers asking for more flexibility from their printers, according

*Top: Mimaki, Braille toilet sign
Bottom: Agfa Elevated Printing*



to Phil McMullin, sales manager of Epson UK. "Basically we are trying to broaden what can be printed on our products," he says. "Anyone investing in a printer these days for £170,000 wants to know they can print as much as possible in terms of the number of different applications on that one machine."

Take the example of Mimaki's range of LED UV flatbed and roll-to-roll printers. The manufacturer offers an expansive array of special effects options thanks to the combination of the "unique characteristics of the ink" and the manner in which it can be printed, explains Brett Newman, chief operations manager at UK distributor Hybrid.

"Acceptance and popularity of UV ink technology means it's never been easier to add special creative effects onto print," says Newman. "From producing multiple layered files to spot varnish finishes, the limitations lie in the imagination rather than the hardware. Whether this is created on a small-format flatbed, a printer/cutter such as the new UCJV Series or even at a grand scale on the 8x4ft and larger production flatbed machines, similar concepts and workflows apply and the creative - and, for the printer, revenue generating opportunities are endless."

Simon Landau, head of sales EMEA at PrintFactory, says the increased demand for technologies that make special effects easier to achieve is being driven by the desire to give customers greater choice and a more tailored service.

Landau says a "multitude of special effects" can be created using the PrintFactory Editor, but the most popular effects are those produced with white ink.

"White ink can be used to back-up designs on clear film, bringing out highlights on dark substrates and masking white areas on metallic. These are becoming more popular as a result of greater accessibility to white ink and white ink printers, which has made creating these effects much less labour and time intensive," he points out. "Other effects, such as lenticular, 3D raised image printing on a flatbed for a more textured result and gloss spot varnish are also being used more often, but at a lesser pace due to the technical and environmental conditions required to produce a high standard of finish."

LIKE THE WORLD,
PRINT
IS NO LONGER FLAT

A BIG PART OF OUR CUSTOMER BASE SPEND 10-15% OF THEIR WEEK DEVELOPING UNIQUE AND NEW APPLICATIONS

White inks are also a big area of focus for EFI, but the company has taken what's possible to the next level with the introduction of new layering technology, according to Mike Wozny, senior product manager at EFI.

"White has been available for about 15 years, but with our layering technology we can take a cosmetic ad selling lipstick, for example, and do something with layering and the use of white to emphasize the lipstick on the model's face so that it pops out on the graphic. This is done all inline - one time through the press," he explains.

The same technology can be used to create flexible advertising applications. "With our layering technology we can produce a graphic that's backlit so when the light is switched on you have one graphic - a sun for example - and then when the light is switched off the sun turns into the moon and it's dark," says Wozny. "From an advertising perspective this gives you double the revenue in the same advertising space because you can have two different graphics there."

He adds that is also possible to produce metallics on the company's printers. This is an area Epson also highlights on its Surecolor S80600 machines. On these printers you can put in white or metallic inks as and when you need them, says McMullin, adding: "That's gone down really well with customers because generally there are not many jobs where metallic is designed in, so when you need to use it you want to be able to just pop the metallic ink into the machine."

While McMullin agrees that metallics have been around for some time, the big difference now from Epson's perspective is the quality of the metallics that PSPs are able to produce on the company's printers and the "reliability of the printers handling that metallic ink, which is quite difficult to handle without nozzle blocking. The ability to put metallic ink into the machine when you need it also reduce the cost because typically it's been resident in the machine full time and ends up in your waste bottle," says McMullin.

Effects are also an important area for Canon and its wide-format Arizona range. Wayne Barlow, head of graphics and communications at Canon UK, says: "A few years ago we started to develop something where we could facilitate multi layer printing in one easy operation. This means you can build up layers of ink automatically rather than it being a very manual process, which required customers to stop and raise carriage so they didn't get head strikes."

At Fespa the company launched Océ Touchstone, a solution that enables Océ Arizona users to print



Océ Touchstone



Agfa Backlit



Agfa Varnish lenticular



*Mimaki - DSC0880
altered CMYK*

multiple layers, resulting in printed effects that mimic textured surfaces, embossing, metallic accents and raised lettering. Barlow says this texturing effect can be used to create prototypes by interior designers or architects. End users from these business sectors in particular are driving greater levels of innovation from manufacturers. But these aren't the only sectors driving change, according to Hybrid's Newman.

"Trends in personalisation and decor are the primary drivers of demand but there are practical applications as well, such as Braille, signage and packaging proofs for the visually impaired and creating sensory enhancing products," he says.

Steve Collins, product marketing and channel manager Agfa UK/Eire, concurs. He says the company's machines offer a wide range of effects, such as backlit, lenticular, one way vision and 3D elevated printing.

"Customers today are looking for more creative and diverse ways of getting the maximum potential from their UV press investment," he says. "With the introduction of leading edge LED curing technologies combined with the accurate positioning and control of the placement of the ink droplets with software such as Agfa's Asanti, customers are now able to fuel their imagination beyond what was possible several

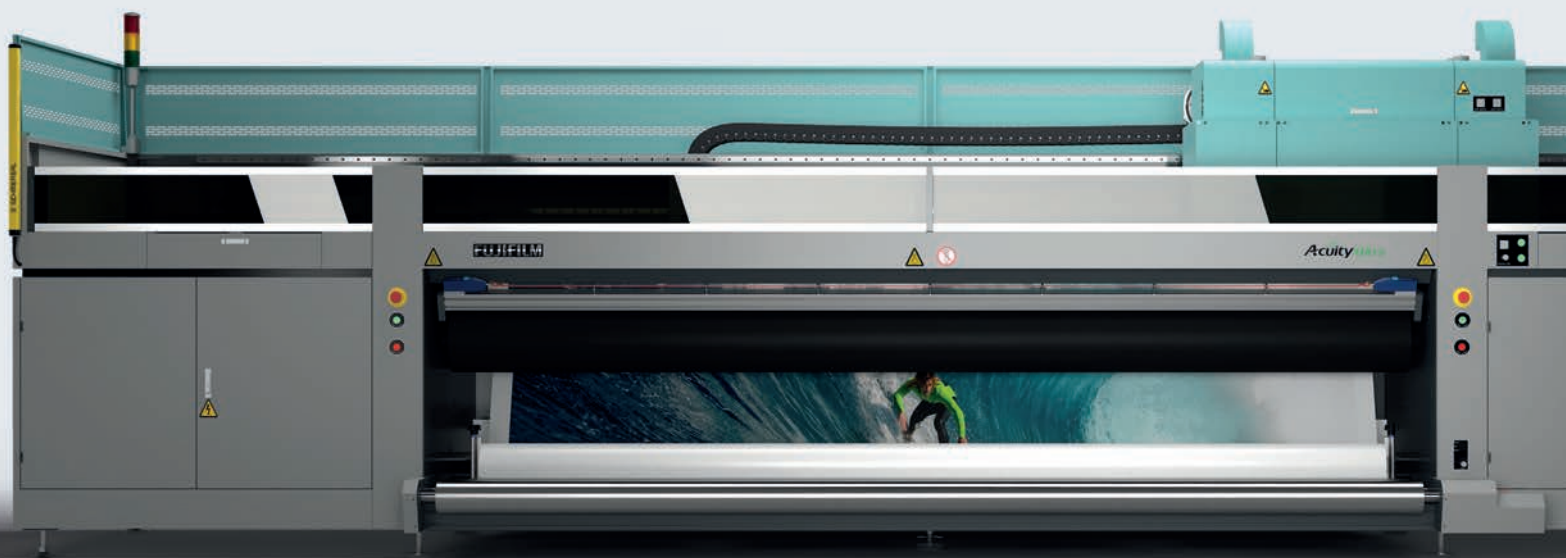
years ago. Particularly in the areas of interior design and backlit applications which allows for the maximum impact for companies striving for something different than the norm."

Indeed, Newman thinks the potential opportunities surrounding the development of new effects on wide-format printers are endless. "Like the world, print is no longer flat," he says. "As a technology, these techniques are enabling printers to diversify, become more profitable and they assist customer retention. It'll become ever more widespread as demand continues to grow, committing manufacturers to respond with further development."

Wozny agrees, adding the opportunities to create print that truly stands out are huge, with customers driving further NPD and innovation from manufacturers.

"In terms of the market we serve they're asking for more things to be done on our printers each and every year - more applications and a wider range of stuff," he says. "A big part of our customer base spend 10-15% of their week developing unique and new applications. PSPs are always looking for new products and services to differentiate themselves from the competition and we work with our customers quite often to help them develop applications, so it's a two-way thing."

McMullin says developing new effects is also a big



Acuity Ultra

IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE WE SEE MORE FORWARD-THINKING PSPS TAKE UP SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR JOBS SUCH AS POSTERS, BILLBOARDS AND EVEN BUILDING WRAPS

area of focus for Epson, although he believes that sometimes their importance is over stated. "We found that at first everybody thought the idea of metallic ink was fantastic - 'oh great I want that' - but when they actually installed the unit they discovered they're only doing one job every three months, so the pragmatic reality is 'I don't really want it in the machine costing me money when I'm not actually got a job generating me some revenue', which is why we allow people to put the ink cartridge in and take it out as and when they want to use it.

"People think special effects are top of the list, but when it comes down to it, if they analyse their jobs on a monthly basis they're [effects jobs] very few and far between. It's the humdrum bread and butter humdrum

stuff that pays the bills - special effects are the nice to have thrills, the cherry on the top."

While impressive in their own right effects achievable inline pale when compared with some of the more cutting edge stuff some PSPs are exploring, such as integrating technology like RFID tags or NFC into printed collateral. This push to offer customers value-added print is the direction the market is ultimately heading in, so the more effects PSPs can produce in-house the greater value they can derive for themselves. As for where future trends in wide-format effects are likely to develop, if you're looking for clues you need look no further than the rest of the print sector, according to Landau.

"Once we see a trend take hold in the print industry, it's not normally long before it moves into wide-format," he says. "If we compare how white ink was used six to seven years ago to its widespread use today, I think we can expect the effects space to evolve in a similar way - especially as technology advances. It won't be long before we see more forward-thinking PSPs take up special effects for jobs such as posters, billboards and even building wraps. Ultimately, as more PSPs learn what is possible with the technology we have today, we can expect to see effects becoming even more popular."



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A novel use of Squid film

cheaper material has proven very profitable for margins, large volumes, and mass consumption. The use of plastic, however, gets more scrutinised by the day, increasingly pushing the print industry to 'go green'. Incredible progress has been made in inks and printing technology, but what about the substrates?

"Disruption never comes from within. The same goes for print - the print media manufacturers won't disrupt inkjet/ large-format printing - but smart newcomers looking to respond to market demands will.

"As part of a textile producer [Lampe Textiles], we're in regular contact with designers, both high-brow and mass creators. And lately, their craving has been for authenticity and green media solutions. The world pressures us to resort to affordable, authentic solutions that are both green and sustainable. Real glass, wood, granite - but with a dash of personalisation, tailored to each home for example. If you ask me, the next disruption in inkjet printable material will be about plastic-lookalike substrates making way for new, authentic and printable materials. Repurposing green substrates will leave a smaller ecological footprint. The tailoring inkjet print can provide, will help meet the personalisation trend."

David Hunter, sales manager at Soyang Europe is not quite so bold, but he does agree that "recyclability is an issue the whole industry needs to look at," adding: "Customers are demanding greener solutions. PVC is getting bad PR again so we have to start looking for alternatives. Polyethylene is a greener option - and cheap - but once you put ink onto it how do you get it off to make it recyclable? And then there's the consideration that it's often not the most aesthetically pleasing either. So there is a big focus from substrate suppliers on developing good-looking, well-priced products that can be printed to meet the increasing demand for 'wow' graphics that also meet environmental demands."

"For a long time, PVC-free materials have been seen as inferior in quality to PVC banner materials, and thus only attractive to companies that have projects where environmental aspects are the most important factors. It's a massive credibility boost to PSPs who are actively promoting eco-friendly products, and opens up a whole new customer base of those who traditionally didn't order banner due to its limitations on recyclability," adds Kieran Dallow, marketing manager at Innotech,

Hunter flags up flooring as a growth area when it comes to substrates and where printable self-adhesive offerings for application onto carpets for instance is seeing an expanding range of options. "And demand is growing for higher-end projects that require five-year guarantees etc., so we'll definitely see more products coming out that meet that criteria," he says.

As you might expect given all the noise surrounding inkjet printable textiles, this is another area Hunter earmarks for continued media development. "The retail market in particular has really woken up to the benefits of tension fabric systems in-store. They can renew the graphics quickly, cheaply and easily, and if they're illuminated they look really great and catch the eye."

And that's what most customers want after all - something

IT'S **NICE** THAT

REMEMBER ALL THE PUBLICITY LIFEART RECEIVED BY MAKING COFFINS OUT OF A PATENTED COMPOSITE MATERIAL THAT CAN BE BURIED BUT IS DESIGNED TO BURN EFFECTIVELY TOO, SO YOU CAN REALLY PERSONALISE YOUR LAST JOURNEY? WELL, THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER ATTENTION GRABBING MATERIALS OUT THERE. HERE'S A ROUND-UP OF THE NEWEST.

"Stop faking authenticity, start reinventing it." That's the message from Johan Bonner, general manager, Squid, who believes a craving from the marketplace for environmentally friendly personalised print is starting to prompt PSPs to discover a new array of substrates that will ultimately help them develop their customer spread. He explains: "Print technology has become so good it has tricked us into almost believing plastic can be wood, granite, fabric, wool, you name it. Printing on

THE NEXT DISRUPTION IN INKJET PRINTABLE MATERIAL WILL BE ABOUT PLASTIC-LOOKALIKE SUBSTRATES MAKING WAY FOR NEW, AUTHENTIC AND PRINTABLE MATERIALS

attention grabbing - especially in retail. Chris Green, channel head for visual communications at Antalis UK puts it well: "Today's consumers are seeking a stand-out shopping experience from their high street and retail centres and we are witnessing a significant shift from a focus on the transactional experience to the sensory experience. Using inkjet print techniques on innovative media and substrates can deliver standout graphics - from walls, windows, floors and ceilings - in myriad 2D and 3D applications. Advances in technology means we can create unique textured surfaces and even scented prints. Light in particular has been shown to influence shoppers and it is in this area that PSPs can really add value. Techniques such as 'night and day printing', creating tactile 3D images from building layers of ink and also lenticular printing can be extremely effective."

Steve Yarbrough, Drytac product support specialist, points to another growth sector - window graphics. "The right design, installed correctly using specialised materials, can make a bold and vibrant statement. It's a thriving market for graphics companies and designers.

So, what inkjet printable substrates have been brought to market over the last year or so that can help you make your mark?

Avery Dennison

Among the latest materials from Avery Dennison is a PVC-free wrap film designed to cover a vast range of different applications, including textured surfaces like brick and concrete. Easy Apply RS adhesive technology ensures simple air-egress, repositionability and slideability. It can be printed latex, UV and solvent/eco-solvent.

Continental Grafix



Made by Continental Grafix and available in the UK via Mayday Graphic Products, FatFloor can be used on almost every surface, and because it doesn't have any adhesive it is reusable. The product is highly unusual in that it can be rolled and squeezed and within 24 hours it looks flat again. The transparent material is for reverse printing (image reverse and then one layer white), helping with durability - of up to three years. The structured front gives a very good slip resistance (certificate R10). It can be laid on the ground or used with the company's CarpetTape to stick it down.



Johan Bonner, general manager, Squid

Drytac

Three products from Drytac are relatively new to market: Polar Burst, ViziPrint Illuminate, and the slightly older SpotOn Floor 200.

Polar Burst is a 3.7mil printable, ultra-reflective satin, self-adhesive PVC film, compatible with UV and latex wide-format printing. This incredibly light-reflective film features a removable grey acrylic adhesive protected by a siliconised PET release liner and is available in roll widths of up to 1270mm.

ViziPrint Illuminate is a 4 mil translucent matte PET film that uses a mechanical bond to adhere to smooth, flat surfaces. Designed for window graphics, it is reverse printable, compatible with latex and UV printing technologies, and is available in roll widths of up to 1524mm. The medium has a bright white base colour which diffuses light to create vibrant graphics with a wide colour gamut.

SpotOn Floor 200 is an embossed printable white matte PVC film for short-term, indoor floor graphics and can be easily applied to multiple flooring surfaces including floor or ceramic tiles, sealed wood or concrete, waxed vinyl etc. without the need for over-lamination.

Folex



Manufactured in Germany WowTack S CL is distributed in the UK by Folex UK and through its dealers/distributors/merchants, many of which are private label. This is a clear polyester film with highly transparent ink receiving layer and a clear removable acrylic based adhesive for use in glass decoration where the requirement is for a 'direct print' look - graphics can be applied dry and removed with no residue. The medium can be solvent, eco solvent, latex and UV printed. It comes in a 1370mm width and 20m length.

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MEDIA



HARDWARE



TRAINING



INNOVATION



SUSTAINABILITY

Guandong

Guandong has added new floor graphic media to its range, including materials that can be applied to rugs and carpets. These include print&walk for short-life communications for events and promotions through to Mak Flooring which has non-slip surface (R13) making it suitable for stairs, wet pavements and humid surfaces. The materials are available in a sample folder.

InkTec



Frosted Etch Silicone Adhesive Window Film is a reverse print translucent 175mic film with repositionable silicone adhesive for use with solvent, eco-solvent, latex and UV inks. It can also be used as a reverse print self-adhesive backlit film and comes in 914mm, 1067mm, 1270mm and 1524mm widths.

Innotech Digital

Innotech Digital has recently expanded its Envirotech PVC-free range of wide-format materials to include a heavy duty mesh, blackout, banner and self-adhesive vinyls.



The heavy duty mesh banner is designed for covering fences, scaffolding or used for stadium banners and events. The coated polyesters in grey-back, white-back and blue-back are suitable for wall coverings and roll-up banners due to their stay-flat properties. There is also a PVC-free coated polyester banner with fire retardant B1 rating and available in 260gsm and 300gsm weights. The Envirotech banner fabrics can be hemmed with high frequency welding when recyclability is an important factor.

Kernow

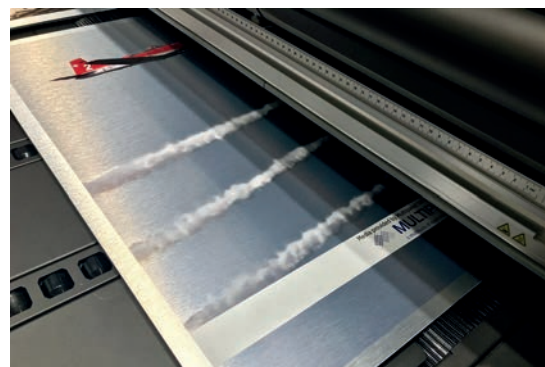
KernowJet AdHere is a PVC-free, repositionable medium that will accept solvent, UV curable and latex inks. Its very slightly textured finish is scuff resistant and low reflection. It is available in white in a 1372mm width.



Also new is KernowJet Klearwipe, a long-term hard coat clear dry erase PVC-free lamination film and worth mentioning here because it allows any smooth surface to be turned into a dry-erase board when it's applied to a print as it can be used with whiteboard, blackboard and chalkboard writing materials. It can also be used as an anti-graffiti film.

Perspex

Perspex Distribution has improved its aluminium composite offering with the announcement that its brushed aluminium Alupanel is now produced with a five-year external warranty. All Alupanel products are manufactured with A5005 alloy for enhanced corrosion resistance.



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* Rigid or semi-rigid graphics applied with magnetic tape or Velcro and tension fabric graphics applied with an edge beading into a channel.

Soyang

Soyang Europe distributes a foil-based medium called AlumiGraphics, which comes in four different finishes for wall and floor graphics. One of the key benefits is that it can be applied using a roller (rather than a heat gun) onto heavily textured or rough surfaces. The materials are PVC-free and can be printed with solvent, eco-solvent, UV and latex ink. There's no need to laminate

Spandex

IP 2574 Reflective Film has an outstanding level of retroreflection it has to be said. Manufactured by ImagePerfect, it is compatible with eco solvent, solvent, UV and latex inks and comes in 380mm and 1220mm widths on roll lengths of 10m, 25m and 50m.

Squid

Squid is a patented self-adhesive transparent textile for the decoration of windows and other glass surfaces. It was developed for the interior design market when the owner of mother company Lampe Textiles was looking for a semi-permanent privacy solution for his son's room at university. The medium - suitable for UV printing and eco-solvent (latex due soon) - is 100% polyester, woven, antibacterial and fire-retardant (M1/B1). The solvent-free acrylic glue is two-layered so it can be used in humid surroundings. It is temperature and pressure-sensitive as well as UV resistant. It is available in five colours and comes in rolls of 1.3m x 50m.

William Smith

Developed for and sold solely by William Smith, Vion Graphic Film Series is available with high tack adhesive for applying to low energy surfaces, such



**David Hunter, sales manager
at Soyang Europe**

RECYCLABILITY
IS AN ISSUE THE
WHOLE INDUSTRY
NEEDS TO LOOK AT

as emulsion painted walls, wood, polypropylene and polyethylene (plastic) walls etc.

VP5100 is a 75 micron, white, polymeric calendered film with a permanent pressure-sensitive adhesive and an outdoor durability of five years. The film can be used with latex, solvent, eco-solvent and UV inks and is available in 1524mm and 1370mm wide rolls.

VP3000 is an 80-micron, monomeric calendered film with three-year durability. It features a clear, solvent-based pressure sensitive adhesive and comes with a 140gsm double-sided PE coated liner. It too can be used with solvent, eco-solvent, UV and latex print systems, and is available in 1520mm and 1370mm wide rolls.

PRINTER TURNED SUPPLIER

Fabric printer Standfast and Barracks, part of the British furnishings group Walter Greenbank, has trademarked a direct-to-fabric Greentex pigment printed collection called Ecofast which will be formally launched at Heimtextil in January 2019.

The company - which has two Durst Alpha 190 systems running One-Step Greentex P ink - hopes the technology will enable it to open up market opportunities in areas such as contract, apparel and roller-blinds.

Standfast and Barracks produces more than 150,000 yards of printed fabric per month - until five years ago all done by conventional printing. Digital production now accounts for more than half the business revenues at the company and it expects it to reach 60% by the start of next year. Export is a focus and is in line to account for 20% of sales - half of which is to the USA - by the end of 2018.

Less than three years since a flood closed the factory for more than four months, MD Stephen Thomas, said: "Our order books are definitely growing and we are actively encouraging our customers to do more digital printing. Digital gives unlimited opportunities and colour variations with the ability to develop new application and products and continue to develop our business."





THIS SCOTTISH PSP HAS APPLIED EIGHT YEARS OF R&D TO A WEB-TO-PRINT SOFTWARE THAT IS TRANSFORMING ITS BUSINESS MODEL. COULD IT BE SOMETHING MANUFACTURERS TAKE ON BOARD AND BEGIN TO SELL TO OTHER PRINTERS IN THE SECTOR?

You might recognise the name Matic Media - we've covered the company before because it has been somewhat adventurous in its Web-to-print (W2P) services development. Now the Glasgow-based PSP is switching up its offering and changing its business model in the face of challenging times, and W2P is right at the heart of the change.

Owned and operated by three brothers - Richard (MD), Adrian (sales director) and Robert, (operations director) - Matic Media has always been very focussed on using technology to streamline processes and drive efficiencies at the operation, which boasts 11 large-format printers with flatbed and roll-to-roll up to 3.2m capabilities. But now its launching an online service using internally developed bespoke software that it expects to make a significant change to how it does business.

"We had 13 local authorities buying from us. We understood how public sector procurement worked but centralised contracts in the Scottish Government has made it challenging over the last 18 months," says Adrian, explaining that public sector tenders have become less frequent in recent years as cut-backs have bitten across the UK, with Scotland feeling the impact perhaps a little later than in the rest of the UK. This situation, coupled with Brexit uncertainty, has in the McCombe brothers' eyes created a delay in private sector projects being signed off, which in turn has frustrated their growth plans.

Cue www.GraphicWarehouse.co.uk - the company's new online offering that provides more than 300 standardised products that are completely scaleable in size. The site offer instant pricing, proofing, editing, delivery dates and shipping calculators. And it's all very controllable - key because it was lack of control of projects, together with increasing costs of overhead and the lack of tender opportunities in a market sector it was familiar with, that prompted its development.

"Site surveys, measuring, Living Wage, pensions, installations, re-works and snagging are areas we have seen our costs escalating," says Richard. "As projects increase in size clients' expectations seem to be becoming more unrealistic, so we wanted to create a business that we could control while reducing waste and improving customer service."

W2P was an obvious focus. Matic Media has many years of experience in W2P for large-format products, and was one of the early suppliers to discount deal sites like Groupon during their boom. But each product the company developed seemed to be a flash in the pan, like photo canvases - Matic Media manufactured 300,000 unique photo canvases for 200,000 unique customers using its W2P software which powered www.photoartwarehouse.co.uk. It then used its W2P software as the backbone of www.WooWooNails.co.uk, a website that allowed customers to design their own self-adhesive stickers and create designs for finger and toe nails to match fashion accessories. Again, the site had a short-lived heyday but, crucially, the development of the W2P software has led the brothers to a position where they can apply product specifications to hundreds of outputs with total in-house control over the print and finishing quality.

When I ask what Richard means exactly by "control" he explains that the cost of reworks, site surveys, installations, out-of-hours work, on-site failures have become beyond frustrating. "I have met so many other signage manufacturers in the last 18 months as I on-board clients to GraphicWarehouse and they all have the same problems. Human error, bad processes and quality issues are a daily occurrence because everything is different - a different wall, floor, stand, shop front, venue..."

The team at Matic Media realised their strength was not tackling the unknown on a daily basis but large-format print production - and software development. "Control" to their minds is focussing on what they are good at, and working with partners where necessary - so Matic Media has relationships with installers etc.

Richard says the directors agreed to grow online sales from 10% of Matic Media's turnover to almost half their turnover in the 12 months to June 2018. "Unfortunately this has backfilled a loss of revenue rather than being an increase," sighs Richard. "However, we plan to open the GraphicWarehouse website to existing customers - reskinning it [<http://edinburgh.maticmedia.co.uk>] to simplify the order process so separate stakeholders within larger organisations can all benefit from our online ordering process - which integrates with our accounting software, permitting credit availability and uploading purchase orders."

Richard McCombe

Managing Director

MATIC MEDIA



Matic Media has found a space in the market where it hopes to improve its margin by processing more simple printed products and reducing the amount of projects that have additional labour costs (eg. site surveys, templating, on-site visits, installations and snagging). As Richard points out: "We do not have the same margin selling to trade customers - that is a fact - but when you take the cost of project management, pre-production (artwork) and installation the margin is actually better." He goes on to explain that as the sales revenue continues to increase the overhead of the staffing cost will not increase proportionally, and indeed economies of scale are already being felt.

The business has also reduced its need to pre-flight and proof all jobs manually as almost all artwork is now processed through a module of their GraphicWarehouse. Using this system either Matic Media's customer service team or the client can create a quote, generate a template if needed, upload artwork, pre-flight, proof and send to the print queue in as little as 60 seconds [<https://graphicwarehouse.co.uk/online-proofing.html>]. This is supported by a customer service team that deal with online chat, telephone and email support until clients feel comfortable processing jobs independently 24/7, 365 days per year. Delivery times are calculated to account for holidays and capacity as each product is mapped to stock, ink, machine, finishing process, packaging and then reading and writing to carriers' delivery software through their API's.

Richard says Matic Media has made attempts to find printer and software manufacturers who could utilise this software to sell more machines or ink. "We think the benefits of simplifying the ordering process which automatically creates the job ticket, specifying ins, stock, printer, finishing processes offers a value proposition of any wide-format printer sales organisation.

"We had quite lengthy discussions with a leading large-format printer manufacturer but I think we failed to convince them that the future is not about software that will support visualisation," says McCombe, pointing out that to his mind visualisation of a product in-situ can easily be achieved by anyone with basic Photoshop skills, and that the need to see a roll-up banner in full rotation 3D imagery is not something that is needed on an hour-by-hour basis.

SOFTWARE
THAT WILL
QUOTE, CREATE
TEMPLATES
FOR BESPOKE
JOBS, UPLOAD
ARTWORK AND
PREFLIGHT IN
REAL TIME - THE
COMMERCIAL
LITHO AND
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DIGITAL SERVICE
PROVIDERS ARE
ALREADY YEARS
AHEAD WITH
THIS

"Visualisation of wallpaper projects look great in 3D but how often are we going to use these applications? And this is becoming easier with software like Sketchup that has established huge support forum memberships. But software that will quote, create templates for bespoke jobs, upload artwork and preflight in real time - sending the approved artwork directly to a print queue with all the works instructions - does not just save hours but days with less labour and better communication between the client and service provider. What's more, the commercial litho and small-format digital service providers are already years ahead with this," he says.

Richard firmly believes the future is in end-to-end workflow from client-side electronic device to delivery of the manufactured bespoke product. "There is nothing commercially available that does this," he says.

By developing its own software Matic Media hopes to drive efficiencies and also gain access to a larger potential market. Via its W2P portal Richard believes the business is no longer geographically restricted but can comfortably service the UK and begin to develop in European testbeds like Ireland.

So will Matic Media turn into a purely online provider? Richard thinks not. "We still want and need to service our existing customers in a geographically economically viable market, but being based in Scotland makes it difficult for us to complete throughout the UK. We can't be competitive carrying out installations in the South East where there is a higher concentration of work but also competition - but, we can compete with goods that require supply only."

And to what extent does the company now consider itself a software developer? "The R&D behind what we have achieved comes from a deep understanding of selling large-format print products. For instance, we have first-hand experience in dealing with a range of problems found with distance selling, so we have identified carriers who will deal with 'dirty freight' - anything longer than 1.5m - and API's to allow instant communication for calculating shipping costs of larger items etc.," says Richard.

"We have ironed out issues and added 100's of customisable products to GraphicWarehouse. We are keen to find partners that would like to share this experience with their own network and take this to the next level where our industry can compete with the big guns who will have the budgets to develop their own solutions and push out the smaller PSPs."



Peter Kiddell...

On 10 October Fespa UK is hosting the conference 'The Future of Print i4.0' at the Manufacturing Technology Centre in Coventry. But who will be there, and should you be? Image Reports' own Widthwise Survey - conducted among 151 of the UK and Ireland's large-format PSPs at the start of this year - showed that only 5 of them had invested in i4.0 technology over the last 12 months. Those who hadn't were asked if they would be doing so in 2018. The answer? A big fat 0. So, what's going on? I spoke with Peter Kiddell - recently retired Fespa UK Association director - for his take.

By Lesley Simpson

First of all Peter, let me say it's great to see that the association is running this 'Future of Print i4.0 conference' and not only educating the market but stimulating debate. But you've seen our Widthwise figures. To be blunt, how many do you expect to turn up, and how many of them do you expect to be large-format digital printers?

Well first off let me say this is an extremely interesting and important topic. And talking about it is all the more crucial when you consider the Widthwise survey figures and people's understanding and potential use or adoption of i4.0 techniques and technologies - the numbers are disastrously low. But I really don't think we can blame the print service providers [PSPs] for that, because I don't think that - at this stage - they see the relevance.

At the conference we have a restriction on numbers to 60 people. It was that or 300 and we didn't want to commit to the latter! In August we had 28 bookings and I think that with our promotion of the event we will fill the places. The profile of those who have preregistered so far are senior directors of print companies, the majority from the wide-forma area. We made it clear that this is a conference for top people, because if junior members attend the message just won't get through.

So why has the association decided to look at this topic at this particular moment in time? Is it because Fespa show exhibitors are trying to promote i4.0 technologies now, ahead of Fespa 2019?

No. It's because we in Fespa UK Association believe it's time for the discussion. We recognise that there's resistance to i4.0 - as Widthwise shows - and I don't think it's because people are apathetic but because they do not have a proper understanding of it. I'm an engineer and I do understand how important this is and know that we can't just sit back and let it happen. We need to engage

Given that the print sector prides itself on using cutting edge digital technology, do you find it odd that it seems slower than many other industries in jumping into i4.0?

Yes, and as a member association it's important that we flag up to them what we see as important developments - and i4.0 is certainly that. The more we talk to the real exponents of i4.0 the clearer it becomes that it is something that can't be ignored.

Do you think the actual term 'Industry 4.0' is a problem? Do you think people understand what it means?

I think it is an issue. At the moment it's a bit like when mobile phones first came out. I bought one and put it in the boot of the car. At the moment it's a bit like that - people are piddling around the edges because they don't truly understand what the effects of i4.0 will be - of artificial intelligence, of working in the cloud etc. This industry is well educated on the use of digital technologies in terms of production and the use of MIS etc, but i4.0 is about joining the whole supply chain - getting devices talking to each other, to suppliers, to customers, for a seamless flow of work through a facility. If you don't do that you're not going to be getting the business. It's like saying you're not going to use the Internet because it's disruptive - if you take that attitude you will suffer.

So do we need a better descriptive of what i4.0 actually is?

Yes - but what should we call it? We have the term now so it's about educating people about what it means. When conference attendees visit the MTC [Manufacturing Technology Centre] they are going to be gobsmacked, because we're not just going to be talking about i4.0 but showing it. We're going to be showing how virtual reality works so they can see how their print facility looks before they've put in a new piece of equipment and after they've done so - without physically installing anything they can see how it will perform within their workspace. They're going to be able to track their production digitally as well as actually. They're going to see elements of production controlled by artificial intelligence.

These are huge changes, and the thing is, the print



...retired director,
Fespa UK

sector - the wide-format sector in particular - has a good knowledge already of IT and digital technology so they should be able to move towards i4.0 very smoothly and effectively.

Do you think the print sector has a problem in that it tends to see technological development through the eyes of the kit manufacturers supplying it, rather than taking a wider view?

Absolutely. There's too much focus on the next bit on kit coming along. I'd have thought it a better strategy to look at what you want to achieve as a business and look across the whole technological landscape to see how to develop your operation.

So who is on your speaker panel for the conference, and why have you chosen them? Do you think they are best placed to tell PSPs how they should be futureproofing their businesses via i4.0?

It would have been very easy to go out and say to the MTC, 'we want people to tell us about i4.0', but we have deliberately brought in as speakers people who are long-term suppliers to the print sector to talk about automation as part of i4.0. We have also made sure we have some very forward looking people speaking who are printers, and of course we've taken the opportunity of having people from the MTC speak too.

For instance, we have Nigel Knapp from the MTC, who runs a group that works with SME's to help them improve their production techniques and digital communications so they are ready for i4.0. One of our members has already been working with him and that member [and president of Fespa UK] - Tony Moscrop of Dufaylite - will speak too.

Anyway, Nigel will kick off explaining what i4.0 is all about, then we have Steve Richardson of Optimus which, as you know, is into MIS and other forms of digital process guidance and he's going to be talking about how existing structures fit in the i4.0 package and how things are likely to change.

At this point, let's be clear - none of the speakers will

be delivering a sales pitch - it's not about that at all. If they start doing so they'll be shut down! It's about delivering education on the topic - that's what we're after.

Following on from Steve will be two very interesting guys - David Atchinson and Russell Weller from Esko. Russell will talk about where Esko sees i4.0 going and David has been in print nearly as long as me, with his own business and working at various outfits so he's very experienced, and he has done a lot of work automating systems. He knows what a printer needs and he's done it!

I've already mentioned Tony Moscrop, and he's an engineer. His business has been very successful but he couldn't keep up with the volume being demanded by the market, so the MTC have looked at his facility and enabled him to drive it forward using new technologies. I don't want to give too much away, but he's looking at completely changing the way he manufactures and supplies his product to the market - so that will be a very interesting insight.

Then we come to Dr Lina Huertas, a chief technologist for digital manufacturing at the MTC and a lady who really understands where we are going with i4.0 technologies. I'm sure she's not going to pull any punches and will be telling some of the people in the room that unless they do x and y they could be in difficulty.

And we'll end with Tomas Novais, a technology transformation advisor at the MTC. So it will be interesting to see if they all share similar visions.

What overarching message do you hope the conference will get across - and what if it fails?

We need to recognise that we are not an industry apart - and that there are bodies that can help us get to grips with a changing technological future. The MTC is there to help us for instance. It is quite remarkable and you have to really see it to understand how good it is. They are really clued up, are passionate about what they do and talk in a language that business people can understand. When I first there I knew I was seeing the future, and that I had to tell others in our industry about it. We can't afford to fail in getting to grips with i4.0, it's as simple as that.

THE MORE WE
TALK TO THE REAL
EXPONENTS OF
I4.0 THE CLEARER
IT BECOMES THAT
IT IS SOMETHING
THAT CAN'T BE
IGNORED



MEET THE GAME CHANGER – THE JETRIX LXIR320!

TIMES HAVE CHANGED.
NO LONGER ARE SUPER-
WIDE PRINTERS ONLY FOR
THOSE WITH SIGNIFICANT
BUDGETS TO SPEND
ON KIT. INSTEAD THIS
NEWCOMER IS SHAKING
IT UP AND OPENING UP
THE MARKET.

Great! But what does that actually mean if you're interested in going down this route but have not yet entered into the realm of large format printing? And what should you be thinking about? The speed, quality, productivity and lifetime cost are all critical as the demand for large scale printing shows no signs of abating. However, what was once only supplied by the elite can now be achieved by the many.

Low running costs and initial budget outlay, balanced with efficiency and versatility is king.

Accessibility to leading technology is leading to falling prices as new brands enter the market. The rising awareness of large format print means more and more customers are seeking these sorts of print solutions. The knock-on effects are that the kit is becoming attainable with medium sized businesses being able to invest. Bearing this in mind the new JETRIX LXIR320 roll to roll digital LED-UV printer from InkTec is ideally positioned to meet all of these requirements. The JETRIX brand has been going from strength to strength since its inception in 2008. Based in South Korea its foundation on strong engineering and stringent quality control means InkTec is now widely recognised for its innovation, service support and most importantly value.

MAKING SURE SPEED AND PRODUCTIVITY DOES STACK UP

Looking at the appeal of the 3.2m JETRIX LXIR320, aside from its economic cost compared to others in the market place it really does stack up in terms of speed and productivity. With production printing of 90sqm/hr which shifts to 60sqm/hr when in quality mode, plus the ability to print up to three rolls of media at a time, this printer really can deliver on its promises. Perfect for large scale production on both coated and

uncoated media, such as PVC, flex, fabric banner, backlit banner for indoor and outdoor signage it can easily print on thicknesses up to 5mm (compared to the majority out there which are generally limited to 1mm media thickness). The Konica Minolta print heads ensures the JETRIX LXIR320 produces quality, photo realistic printing and can print up to 2160 dpi maximum resolution. And the specially formulated LED ink is available in a six-colour configuration plus white. To add to its versatility it can be ordered with either single or double heads and in fact can be easily upgraded from the single options as productivity demands increase.

BUT, DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT!

Look at what Pierre Pheiffer at Xtreme Signs in Ireland says about their JETRIX LXIR320 and what it is delivering:

"What a piece of kit! Its speed, the quality and the variety of media it prints on have far surpassed our expectations. The excellent fine detail and vibrant colours are significantly superior to what we had before even when we are running it for 16 hours plus a day. As a result, our capacity and the opportunities we can now offer have increased substantially from what we were previously doing. In fact we already are recognising a 400% increase in productivity. It's a fantastic printer and actually prints more like a machine that cost £200k!"

So if you are in the market for an entry level super wide printer that really can do the business, then why not book a demonstration to see the JETRIX LXIR320 in action for yourself.

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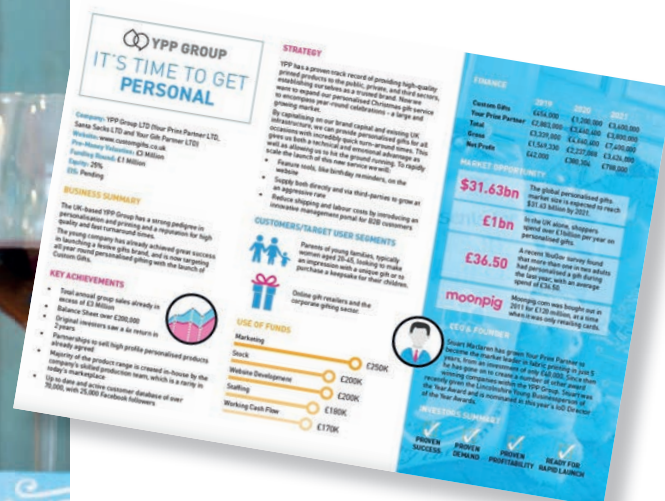
[INVESTOR DECK]

OUR MISSION IS TO BECOME THE LEADER IN THE £1BN+ UK PERSONALISED GIFTS MARKET

Custom Gifts

The YPP Group, parent company of Your Print Partner and a leading name in the UK large-format print sector, is launching CustomGifts.co.uk.

Custom Gifts will supply year-round personalised printed gifts with late ordering and next-day delivery.



MAKING IT PERSONAL

YES, YOURPRINTPARTNER IS EXTENDING ITS WEB-TO-PRINT MODEL TO CASH IN ON THE HUGE PERSONALISED PRINT PRODUCTS MARKET. SHOULD YOU BE DOING LIKEWISE?

Deloitte estimates the personalised gift market will grow to \$31.63bn globally by 2021, with 71% of customers willing to pay a premium for personalised items. In the UK alone shoppers spend £1bn a year on personalised gifts.

Not one to let opportunities like this pass him by, YourPrintPartner (YPP) young gun founder and chief, Stuart Maclaren - who's still not 30! - wants a piece of that action, and has been crowdfunding a new online portal to get him in on the personalised print market sooner rather than later. At the time of writing he had raised around £50,000 of a £500,000 target and was confident of meeting his requirements to get CustomGifts.co.uk up and running this month (October 2018).

The crowdfunding literature clearly sets out Maclaren's vision for the new venture, which is expected to significantly bolster YPP's £2.3m turnover - and profit. By next year YPP's main business is expected to turnover close to £2.9m and CustomGifts.co.uk a just under £460,000. By 2021 they're expected to have pretty much leveled out - YPP brining in £3.8m and CustomGifts.co.uk £.6m. What's more, the joint net profit, expected to be £42,000 in 2019 is anticipated to jump to £788,000 two years later.

You can see why Maclaren - recently given the Lincolnshire Young Businessperson of the Year Award and nominated in this year's IoD Director of the Year Awards - is keen on extending the company's Web-to-print (W2P) model.

The move comes on the back of a 200% growth in YPP's online personalised Santa Sacks business launched in 2015. Its in-house design team created an original range of festive present sack that could be customised with a name or personal message, using

WE WILL
OFFER 3,000
PRODUCT LINES,
INCLUDING
MANY FROM
LICENSED
BRANDS

the company's existing digital print kit. More than 12,000 orders were processed that Christmas and more than 15,000 followers flocked to the company's Facebook page.

A year later YPP incorporated other personalised products into the Santa Sacks range - the upshot being an approach by television shopping channel QVC to market its personalised products. Given a three-minute slot on air it sold more than 600 units and saw a significant spike in site traffic.

In 2017 the Lincolnshire-based company built on its public profile by taking a 510m² store in Meadowhall Shopping Centre so shoppers could see its personalised products 'in the flesh', and it made sure it had a presence at Christmas shows across the country. It also put effort into building a network of social media influencers, and last Christmas targeted a marketing campaign at UK lifestyle bloggers, receiving a large number of positive reviews and endorsements.

The profile building exercises have paid off. Now YPP has an active customer database of over 70,000, with 25,000 Facebook followers, which it expects to bolster its entry into the online personalised gift market.

As Maclaren points out: "We already have the infrastructure to create high-quality personalised products with late ordering and next-day delivery. Now we plan to use our proven marketing approach to tap into the £1bn UK personalised gift market. We will offer 3,000 product lines, including many from licensed brands."

The Lincolnshire-based soft-signage specialist has partnered with a number of other print providers to fulfill CustomGifts.co.uk orders beyond its own capability, and Maclaren says: "There will be a route for PSPs to get involved with the service and diversify their own offering."

However you decide to play the personalised print game, perhaps now is the time to make it your own.

Get better

Employee wellbeing is paramount to reducing absenteeism. So why do so many SMEs fail to turn this simple concept into action? Through years of experience, Wellbeing People know that employers of all sizes can reduce sickness absence, maintain and encourage a healthy workforce and show a positive return on any money invested in wellbeing. Here's how.

HAVE A
THINK ABOUT
RUNNING
MENTAL
HEALTH
WORKSHOPS
AND
PROGRAMMES

HAVE YOU GOT A HEALTHY ATTITUDE TO EMPLOYEE WELLBEING? JUSTINE CLARABUT AT WELLBEING PEOPLE EXPLAINS WHY PROPER CONSIDERATION NOW CAN PREVENT PROBLEMS LATER ON.

1.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Help employees to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing by encouraging each individual to understand what they can do to improve their quality of life. We can't (and nor should we) force people to do things but what we can do is 'signpost' best practice and create an environment where employees can understand their health in more detail, in both the long and short term, and understand that small actions now are an investment in their future wellbeing.

2.

CALCULATE THE TRUE COST OF ABSENCE

Wellbeing in the workplace is where self preservation of employers and employees overlap. We ensure that our premises, equipment, cars and technology etc are fully supported, either by insurance policies, maintenance contracts or guarantees. But too few companies take the same view of their most valuable asset - their staff. When you do some simple sums - add up the true cost of sickness absences, the cost of recruiting and training staff, the cost of lost production and the cost of the time spent by HR, supervisors and managers on personal and health issues of staff - it can all become quite costly. The potential return you could gain through investing in your employees will become clear once you have those figures.

3.

INVEST IN A WELLBEING STRATEGY

A small investment, when done correctly, can have a large impact on absences and pay dividends in your business. Creating an effective health and wellbeing strategy will demonstrate care and commitment to your employees and may reduce the amount of effort and resources required. Get management buy-in, decide what wellbeing services and products you wish to invest in, find providers to deliver, create a committee or body of champions within your organisation to discuss what works through employee feedback, and put systems in place to monitor the plan's success (or failure!). An effective health and wellbeing strategy will also ensure that your employee benefits' budget is spent productively.

4.

HEALTH CHECK YOUR STAFF

Have you thought about employee health screening? It seems obvious to say these will help to identify potential risks to the health and wellbeing of individual members of staff, but not all SMEs consider them. However, such screening ensures that the journey from initial engagement to final outcome maximises the potential to improve an individual's health and wellbeing by identifying the need and marrying it up to an appropriate intervention - creating an individual approach to helping staff achieve measurable outcomes.

soon

5.

RUN A HEALTH FAIR

A health fair is an event which aims to educate people to make positive choices around their own health and wellbeing through engaging in physical activities, health screenings, relaxation sessions and informative workshops.

Research shows that having a health fair at work can help reduce employee absenteeism, improve work performance, increase job satisfaction and achieve a positive return on investment. Running a health fair not only looks after your employees but generates positive exposure for your company or organisation. Health Fairs are increasingly being brought to the forefront of corporate strategic initiatives as they show a good return on investment (ROI) with the additional benefit of health insurance savings

6.

ENCOURAGE HYDRATION AND HEALTHY EATING

We know that de-hydration affects our whole bodies and particularly impairs our concentration. It contributes to that lethargic, mid-afternoon 'energy dip' that we then feed with a chocolate bar or similar that helps give a boost in the very short term but doesn't really solve the problem. So encourage your staff to have an extra cup of water a day - it costs virtually nothing and can have an immediate effect.

This new drinking habit though, needs support - whether by way of Pee Charts which graphically illustrate when we are de-hydrated (we have one on every staff loo wall); encouraging hydrated meetings with bottles or jugs of water on the table; installing a water dispenser in the office to make fresh water readily available - it all helps push employees to stay hydrated.

Promoting healthy eating habits at work can really make a huge difference too. So often workplaces are full of snacks high in sugar and fat that don't offer a sustained energy release! Make fresh fruit available - it encourages staff to eat well and helps to them feel valued.

Research has shown that healthy employees can be up to 20% more productive due to increased energy levels, and over the longer term, employees who eat more fruit will have less illnesses and absence from work.

7.

GOT AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME?

In an ideal world you want your employees to turn up to work every day and get on with their jobs, but you know that issues can prey on minds, impacting their productivity, quality of output and morale. Many organisations are not equipped to deal with employees that are, for example, experiencing relationship issues, bereavement, mental health issues (which affect one-in-four of us), addictions or financial worries. These need not be detrimental to the running and profitability of your company if processes and support are in place.

Having somebody away from their work for a day or two or sitting in work pre-occupied with something from their personal life can dramatically affect their productivity. Providing a professional support service that your employees can use 24 hours a day can give them the tools to deal with issues that may arise in their personal lives, which will help them, not just stay healthy and happy, but productive for longer.

Such a support service can be available to all your employees for as little as £1 a month per employee, a figure that compares favourably to the cost of having somebody out of the workplace for a day or the time and energy that would be spent internally on issues that you might not have the right skill set to address.

8.

THE MIND MATTERS

Mental health is a hot topic right now but how seriously do you take it? Have a think about running mental health workshops and programmes - a great way to raise awareness and designed to help the employee as well as the employer. Learning something new is often the catalyst to making change - workshops will educate and inspire employees to make positive lifestyle choices.

HEALTH FAIRS ARE INCREASINGLY BEING BROUGHT TO THE FOREFRONT OF CORPORATE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AS THEY SHOW A GOOD RETURN ON INVESTMENT

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ECOVATE: INSPIRING GREENER ACTIONS?

SHOULD 'SUSTAINABILITY' BE REPLACED WITH ANOTHER WORD - AND WOULD IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO HOW ENVIRONMENTALLY PROACTIVE YOU'D BE? WALTER HALE HYPOTHESIZES...

"My client's don't care about sustainability." It's a remark made - and heard - often enough by advertising agencies, marketers and print service providers. Yet can it really be true? After all, even arms manufacturers have taken to warning us that "lead in ammunition can do harm to the environment".

It's more likely that some clients do care about it, but not that much. Some clients - especially consumer-facing ones - care very much. Some are driven by inner conviction, others see it as something their customers expect. And some care in a muddled way - like the multinational drinks giant that decided not to use print to support a particular promotional tour, on environmental grounds, but ended up supplying DVDs instead. You find a similar range of response among print service providers. Some pay lip service but the companies that have been certified as part of the Sustainable Green Printing Partnership in the US cannot be faulted for their commitment. That said, the SGPP is probably not growing as fast as many expected to.

You find a similarly mixed response to sustainability among the public. One survey in the US found that while 62% of consumers believed in climate change, only 59% claimed to understand what 'sustainability' meant, and 76% said it sounded 'expensive'. The confusion is understandable. Much of the responsibility for saving the planet seems to have fallen to us - and how much water we put in our kettles to make a cuppa. In comparison, the public remains unconvinced that business is doing its bit. (Which it needs to do - industrial emissions of carbon dioxide were at a record high last year.) That disconnect can only encourage cynicism and make it harder for humanity to focus on the relatively important task of saving the planet.

For some, the word 'sustainability' itself is part of the problem for it can be ambiguous - though we are trying to make the planet 'sustainable', we are not trying to 'sustain' a status quo that will fry it!

As Peggy Liu, the founder of the Joint US-China Collaboration on Clean Energy (JUCCCE), said, when she declared that "sustainability is dead", environmentalism

ONLY 59%
CLAIMED TO
UNDERSTAND
WHAT
'SUSTAINABILITY'
MEANT, AND
76% SAID IT
SOUNDED
'EXPENSIVE'

desperately needs to "move from gloom to hope". With wildfires ranging in various parts of the world, Arctic ice melting and floods seemingly now an annual occurrence even in Britain, there doesn't seem to be a lot of hope around. The incremental, less visually exciting, steps to a greener world are often overlooked as organisations, in a sincere effort to wake us all up before it's too late, bombard us with apocalyptic scenarios that one leading environmentalist calls "eco-porn".

James Bartlett, of the Bartlett Development Planning Unit at the University of Central London, says: "The language should be buried and replaced. To just 'sustain' will always fail to capture people's imagination, just like 'remain'." He recommends something more inspirational and positive, such as 'ecovate', combining 'ecology' and 'innovate'. Bartlett isn't saying changing the word alone will make the difference, but it could help, he says, stimulate new thinking about old ways. He cites one example of CO2 waste from an Australian coal-powered plant being used to fuel an energy company's production of biogas.

Yet Holly Hagerman, who runs a marketing agency dedicated to environmental businesses, says that a greater change is called for. "Like most people, I'm tired of the guilt trip, I'm tired of environmentalism being a political label, and I'm tired of the finger pointing and the promises of a fiery apocalypse."

Although climate change deniers have played their part in politicising the issue, Hagerman has a point when she says: "It's time to stop polarising between those who 'care' for the environment and those who are 'destroying' it. Truth is we're all, in small and big ways, having an impact on the environment. So let's acknowledge the problem, identify what's standing in our way and take one step to change it."

That might sound simplistic, but Hagerman's summary does sound a bit more uplifting than 'sustainability'. For many companies, including print service providers, going truly green is not quick or easy. It takes method, resource and patience. And, to be done properly - and continuously - it has to be done with joy, zeal and hope.



a. Big and bold

Vomela, one of the biggest printers in the US, has created the largest printed graphic in the company's history. Vomela was tasked with wrapping 3M's headquarters in the Twin Cities as part of the company's multi-year corporate advertising campaign, simple referred to as 'Wonder.' The 1,858m² vinyl graphic took up 100 hours of printing time on an HP Latex 3600 printer, plus laminating, cutting, boxing and shipping. To create a seamless colour fade on a variety of surfaces, Vomela colour-matched with sections of the building. It wrapped windows with perforated films to allow for natural light to get through.

b. Making it look kids' play

Digipress printed these novel blinds for The Coop nursery. Cute.

c. Scaling creative heights

ImageCo Visual Imaging is showcasing its large-format print capabilities at its own HQ in Leeds with this graphic. The ground was covered with Udeco Crystal Floor, which has a printable, clear media print side and crystal textured anti-slip top surface. The walls were decorated with CMYUK Utack. a thin and woven self-adhesive polyester fabric.

d. Onto a winner

Spectrum Sign and Display marked its 20th year producing/installing signage and graphics for the Aintree Grand National with some lovely output, which this year included those for 220m of temporary bars across the course.

e. A house-sized logo

When Reliance Medical moved its four buildings in Congleton all under one roof in Kidsgrove it asked Signs Express (Stoke) to provide branding for its 2,322m² warehouse, including a 80m² logo and text on the side of the building.

f. Sweet charity

Drytac donated its ViziPrint Impress media to help Minneapolis based charity Courageous HeArts create this window display for its youth workshop.





a.



b.



d.



e.



e.

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CROSSING THE LINE

SO YOU'RE A 'SOLUTIONS PROVIDER'. REALLY? EVEN IF IT MEANS REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF PRINT YOU DO FOR A CUSTOMER - AND USING OTHER COMPANIES TO DELIVER PARTS OF A PROJECT IF IT'S BETTER FOR THEM? TAYLOR BLOXHAM HAS A TEAM THAT WILL DO JUST THAT. HERE'S HOW IT EXPECTS TO GROW BUSINESS FROM THE APPROACH.

"Selling print is not a great way forward for PSPs."

So says James Fear, who left his old company when a new press meant his consultative approach to building business went out of the window and he was required to revert to "selling capacity".

"I had seen that having teams of people who could talk intelligently to creatives - not just sales reps trying to flog print - could pay dividends. I knew the methodology worked," stresses Fear, who in the summer of 2017 took the idea to Taylor Bloxham CEO Robert Lockwood, "having talked to many print businesses about developing strategic sector specific teams because I believe business building needs to be by vertical sector rather than by print capability."

The upshot was that in October 2017 Fear was tasked with leading a team of people within Taylor Bloxham to promote "joined-up marketing communications thinking within the education and membership sectors to help their collateral budget work harder for them." And of course to help TB develop its business in those areas - both sectors Fear knows of old and where he recognises opportunity.

Currently the Taylor Bloxham group has a £33m+ turnover and comprises TB Print (£15m turnover), FastAnt (£3m), Mailbox (£4.5m) and large-format arm Instore (£11m). "Our 2020 vision is for my team to deliver an extra £5m of revenue annually," says Fear, who makes the key point: "The thing to understand is that it's not all about print".

"As a group we have all sorts of capabilities, and we will work with other partners where necessary to provide solutions clients really need and can benefit from," stresses Fear, pointing out that: "What's key is to have people who can go in and explain all the options. To be able to speak their language and convince them that what you're suggesting are the best fit-for-purpose solutions. It's about being able to show them that you can add-value, and getting them to trust in that."

To that end Fear's cross-group strategic team includes a marketing manager who knows the education sector well, a business development manager who is a direct mail specialist from within Mailbox, a storage/fulfilment specialist from FastAnt, a cross-discipline graduate account director - and at the time of writing, the search was on for someone with the right large-format experience. In addition he thinks he'll need perhaps another four account directors in his team - and a graduate training programme is just starting to ensure that at least one is trained up internally.

"The intention is that the graduate will spend three-months in each of Taylor Bloxham's subsidiaries to gain



Team leader James Fear

TBG had a stand at the memcom awards, where it proved its credentials by also being a headline sponsor, dressing the venue and creating the awards.



A CONSULTATIVE
APPROACH IS
OFTEN ABOUT
PRINTING LESS
AND THINKING
BROADER

the broad knowledge they'll require to operate effectively in this team - which is about long-term vision and return. Investment to date in building the team is in excess of six figures so it's a real commitment by Taylor Bloxham to walk the talk," says Fear.

He reckons the people he brings on board now are more likely to be from a creative or marketing background than from print production, and he is aware that to reach the people they are targeting "we need to look and sound less old school". Indeed, Taylor Bloxham is undergoing something of a branding transformation as it realigns itself "as a facilities management company rather than be seen as a printer, which is more in line with what the group is now all about," says Fear, adding: "We need to be seen as 'creative' in terms of business development, not just in terms of the visuals we produce."

The cross-group, vertical market promotional team under Fear's jurisdiction has no intention of targeting as many educational and membership clients as possible - only those with £100,000 to spend. "We don't want 55 universities and hundreds of membership outfits on our books. We want a handful of each that we can work with in a properly consultative way. We have a target list of those we'd like to work with because we think we can really bring something to the party," says Fear. "We want to be able to talk to them and say 'spend £50,000 less on printing prospectuses and put the money instead into creating a wow factor entrance in time for open days instead because you'll get a better return on your investment by doing that'. It's about educating people about the possibilities."

WIDTHWISE 2018

WINNERS

Image Reports sends big congratulations – as well as Amazon vouchers – to the lucky winners of this year's Widthwise draw of survey respondents. They are...



Tony Bates

Fast Graphics

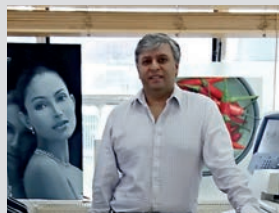
"Image Reports has its finger of the pulse of our industry with the Widthwise Survey playing a large part. As a recipient of this important information I feel it is important to give something back by taking part."



Pete and Marina Higgs

A2Z Sign & Print

"As we live and work in Cornwall we read Image Reports so we can keep up to date with what's going on in the print industry."



Sunil Mistry

Excelsior Graphic Designers

"Image Reports brings inspiration to our industry, showing what creative people can achieve. Widthwise is VITAL. As a creative it allows us to air an opinion on the way the industry should move, and also see how far we can stretch the boundaries of design and print."



Stephen Hardy

Prosign Print & Display

"I look forward to receiving my copy of image Reports every month - it represents the industry very well, it is extremely informative and maybe even offers an alternative view on various subjects. I read this magazine front to back every single month and I especially look forward to reading the results from the survey each year! Running a business like ours can be challenging and as a single business owner I find the information that this survey provides invaluable to helping me make the right business choices!"



Darren Connell

Electro - Tech Colour

"Reading Image Reports helps keep me updated with new products and provides the latest information on the print industry. This is vital when looking at media and print applications for our clients."

The Widthwise 2019 survey will kick-off in January. If you have any sector-wide questions you'd like to see included, please email the editor: lesley.simpson@imagereportsmag.co.uk



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"Respect, integrity, communication, excellence."

These were the official core values of Enron, one of the most fraudulent businesses ever formed. I thought of that the other day when the sales director came in saying that it was about time we had a new mission statement.

I half-agreed with him but the other half of me was already dreading the confusion to come, a confusion that could only be exacerbated by Google Drive. A great thing Google Drive - documents can be shared easily and several people can work on them simultaneously. Most of the time that's good, but when it comes to trying to define a mission statement it leads to anarchy. Our designer started creating the document only to discover that our sales director was semi-continuously changing everything.

Worse still, as he was mostly out of the office, he was changing stuff remotely, often while killing time over a Costa coffee at a motorway service station. In the end, I had to become a Google Drive dictator - blocking a few people, including him, from making changes directly. (My PA, sensing my frustration, showed me how to do that.)

For light relief, I found a mission statement generator online which produced: "Our vision is to authoritatively restore unique opportunities." That is, of course, nonsense but no more nonsensical than some of the pretentious efforts I have discovered. One marketing agency defines its purpose as "murdering mediocrity". Which is funny and memorable but slightly deceptive - they're not murdering mediocrity as a service to the community are they? They're using the slogan to capture customers so they can make money.

The best question we discussed during the process was suggested by a consultant: "If your company didn't exist, would anyone notice?" That silenced everyone. From the fidgeting and coughing around the table, I sensed that some of my colleagues had doubts.

I then suggested "Respect, integrity, communication, excellence". That got quite a few nods but the sales director gave me a funny look and said: "Haven't I heard that before?" When I fessed up, he groaned. As you read this, our mission statement, much like Mole Graphics, is very much work in progress.

STREET

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|---|--|--|---|
| When? 10 October, 2018 | When? 27 - 19 March, 2019 | When? 2 - 4 April, 2019 | When? 14 - 17 May, 2019 |
| Where? The Manufacturing Technology Centre, Coventry. | Where? Encore by Wynn Resort, Las Vegas | Where? NEC, Birmingham | Where? Messe Munich |
| Cost? £75 for members and £175 for non-members. Packages with accommodation are available. | Cost? \$1,545pp. Early-bird fee is \$1,445pp before 31 December 2018. | Cost? Free for trade visitors | Cost? TBA |
| Who will be there? This event aims to address the challenges of i4.0 and propose strategies for PSPs to respond positively to technological developments. Proceedings will start with a group guided tour of the MTC facilities, followed by introductions by Fespa UK director Peter Kiddell and MTC senior business development manager Nigel Knapp ahead of presentations by speakers from Optimus, Esko, Dufaylite and insights from a number of MTC specialists. | Who will be there? This will be the 12th Print UV conference, with dive deep info on core UV processes with experts from multiple fields and case studies from successful UV printers. | Who will be there? A bit early to say but no doubt there'll be a decent number of large-format digital print orientated suppliers. | Who will be there? Most of the key players in the digital inkjet space plus those in the non-print orientated European Sign Expo running alongside. |
| Should you go? Yes | Should you go? A good shout if you want to better understand trends driving the growth of UV printing, hear how industry leaders have developed proprietary offerings, learn about advances in inks, coatings and equipment, oh, and network - but bear in mind it will be mostly with those in North American UV printing market. The rating below reflects the distance of the show - not its content! | Should you go? As a UK-based show it's worth attending, though exhibitors tend to keep major launches for the following Fespa event. | Should you go? Again, yes as I remains the main European show for the large-format digital print community. |
| Rating 9/10 | Rating 6/10 | Rating 8/10 | Rating 10/10 |

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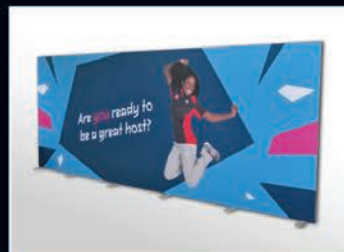


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OVER TO YOU...

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What's having the greatest impact on your business at the moment?

Proactivity, social media (Insta in particular) posting videos of jobs running, sharing knowledge.

Where do you see the greatest wide-format opportunities?

For us specifically we see the construction industry as a market we can grow, but as whole, the diversity of applications that wide-format can offer is the greatest opportunity in itself.

What would make your day-to-day operations easier?

We are implementing a more focussed production process to what we do, splitting our time by processes and not on a job-by-job basis.

Your favourite bit of kit is..?

Our Mimaki CJV150. It has made what we already do easier and continues to open more opportunities.

What's the best bit of business advice you've been given?

Don't be scared to try...

What are you most proud of achieving?

A growing awareness of ImageOn and the quality service we offer!

What lesson does the wide-format sector need to learn?

To embrace combined working processes - that wide-format isn't always the only option, but by bringing wide-format together with other manufacturing can enhance opportunities with customers.



VITAL STATISTICS

BUSINESS SOFTWARE AND SERVICES PROVIDER ADVANCED HAS ISSUED A REPORT THAT REVEALS SME LEADERS ARE CLOSE TO REACHING BOILING POINT. IN THE RESEARCH - WHICH QUIZZED OVER 500 OWNERS AND SENIOR DECISION MAKERS IN SMES ACROSS THE UK - ONE-IN-FIVE ADMITTED TO FEELING UNDER PRESSURE ALL THE TIME, AND 65% SAID THEY EITHER DON'T SWITCH OFF OR REALLY STRUGGLE TO SWITCH OFF.

ASKED IF THEY WERE GIVEN 60 MINUTES BACK A DAY, JUST 9% SAID THEY WOULD SPEND IT ON WORK AND GROWING THEIR BUSINESS. 36% WOULD PREFER TO RECONNECT WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS, 34% WOULD TAKE SOME TIME TO BE MORE ACTIVE, AND 22% WOULD INVEST IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

66%

have **STRESS BUSTING RITUALS**, with 33% performing deep breathing exercises and 12% reciting positive affirmations. 10% practice laughing and smiling.

53%

would **TAKE TIME OUT** from their job due to stress

48%

blamed **LACK OF TIME** as a key source of their work pressure

30%

would consider **COUNSELLING SUPPORT** if they felt under pressure

19%

would seek **MEDICAL HELP** if under pressure



Women in wide-format

WELL, WHERE ARE THEY? WHEN IT GETS TO DIRECTOR LEVEL, WOMEN ARE FEW IN THIS SECTOR. BUT IS THAT CHANGING?

In a world where we are being scrutinised for every decision we make based on gender bias how conscious are we of this when we are recruiting from within? Naturally, one may think, very conscious, yet in a male dominated industry are female employees who have the skills and attributes to do a 'man's job' still being overlooked?

Have a think. How many women are working on your strategic team? How many women have you employed in leadership positions? How many women have you encouraged to take the next step in to a leading role in your business?

When a position as head of exhibitions and events opened up at Oasis the company took the obvious route and looked within for someone to fill the role. Less obvious perhaps was its decision - to promote Stacey Bearne, who had been an employee for eight years.

"As the first female manager at Oasis, outside of the leadership team, in a traditionally male-oriented industry, I feel proud to work for a company that recognises its workforce's skills regardless of gender. This of course should be the case for all women in the workplace but sadly it is not always the case," recognises Bearne.

Having begun her career in a sign making and Adobe Illustrator role - which projected her in to the world of large-format graphic production - Bearne has risen through the ranks at Oasis, taking on larger and larger clients, project-managing award winning agencies and holding their hands through prestigious and ambitious events all over the world. Her roles within the company have exposed her to the mechanics of the large-format print sector as

I FEEL PROUD
TO WORK FOR A
COMPANY THAT
RECOGNISES ITS
WORKFORCE'S
SKILLS
REGARDLESS
OF GENDER

she has worked closely with the production team where she smashed through gender barriers to learn about printing processes. Now she manages a team of five who contribute an impressive lion's share of the company turnover and has a remit to grow the already successful department by focusing on gaining a stronghold in the outdoor events market.

Bearne's key goal is to increase sales of exhibition graphics and printed materials in line with the company's overall vision of offering a full service solution for clients. With some tough going financial goals to meet and a two-year target of reaching £4m turnover for her side of the business she knows she has her work cut out.

To reach her targets Bearne and her team will work closely with the marketing department to develop new relationships with agencies specialising outdoor events, and with the R&D department to push the boundaries in terms of event graphics.

Operations director, Andy Delpech, who manages recruitment for Oasis, says: "Promoting Stacey was about harnessing a skill set that can take the business further. Gender plays no part in a decision. Good people are just that - people."

Simon Osborne, Oasis MD, adds: "At Oasis we focus on our master craftsmen, which very much includes women! If we see the right skill set we nurture and retain it and help that person bring success to their own career and to the business. We are really excited to have Stacey take the helm of our fastest growing department."

Is it time to reconsider how - and where - women fit into your business?



GRAPHICS • DISPLAYS • EXHIBITIONS

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Weblook | Finishing



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Weblook | Sign & display systems



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Weblook / Media



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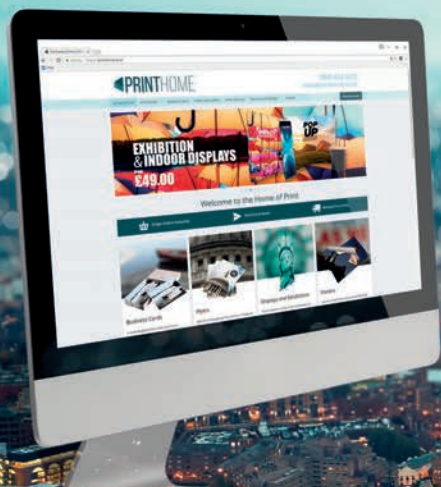
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Receive and process orders from your website/storefront

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Your customers can calculate a price on any of your printed materials at a bespoke size

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Change the look and feel of your website: colours, fonts, backgrounds and more

Emails

Customers are automatically sent branded emails to keep them up-to-date

Customers

Allow your customers their own login access and account management

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Send orders to whichever supplier you like, on a case-by-case basis. There's no contract lock-in

Manage products

Add any product you like. Create your own or import from a supplier

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Customise a page's meta-data and content allowing you to optimise search engine results. We automatically apply structured data markup to all products

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Customise images used on your site from our provided library. Add your own images to the library for use on your site only

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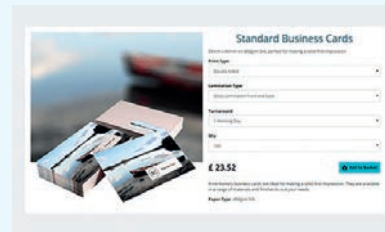
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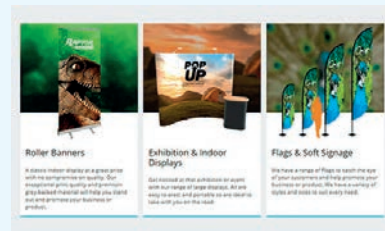
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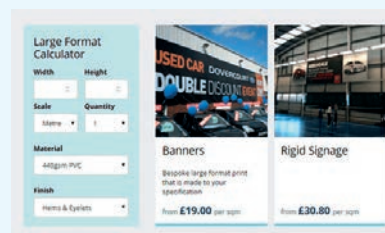
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Sell super-wide materials, with access to
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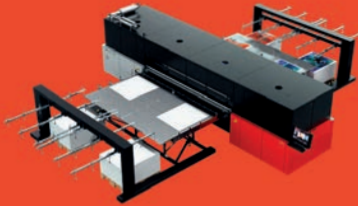
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Jeti Ceres RTR3200 LED



Avinci DX3200



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Acorta 3120



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