

IMAGE REPORTS

ISSUE 1 • VOLUME 28 • FEBRUARY / MARCH 2020

MORE SIGN AND GRAPHICS BUSINESSES CHOSE DYSS IN 2019

DYSS: Your best choice in digital cutters

Fespa Global 2020

All you need to know
to get show ready

Can you dematerialise?

And should you?

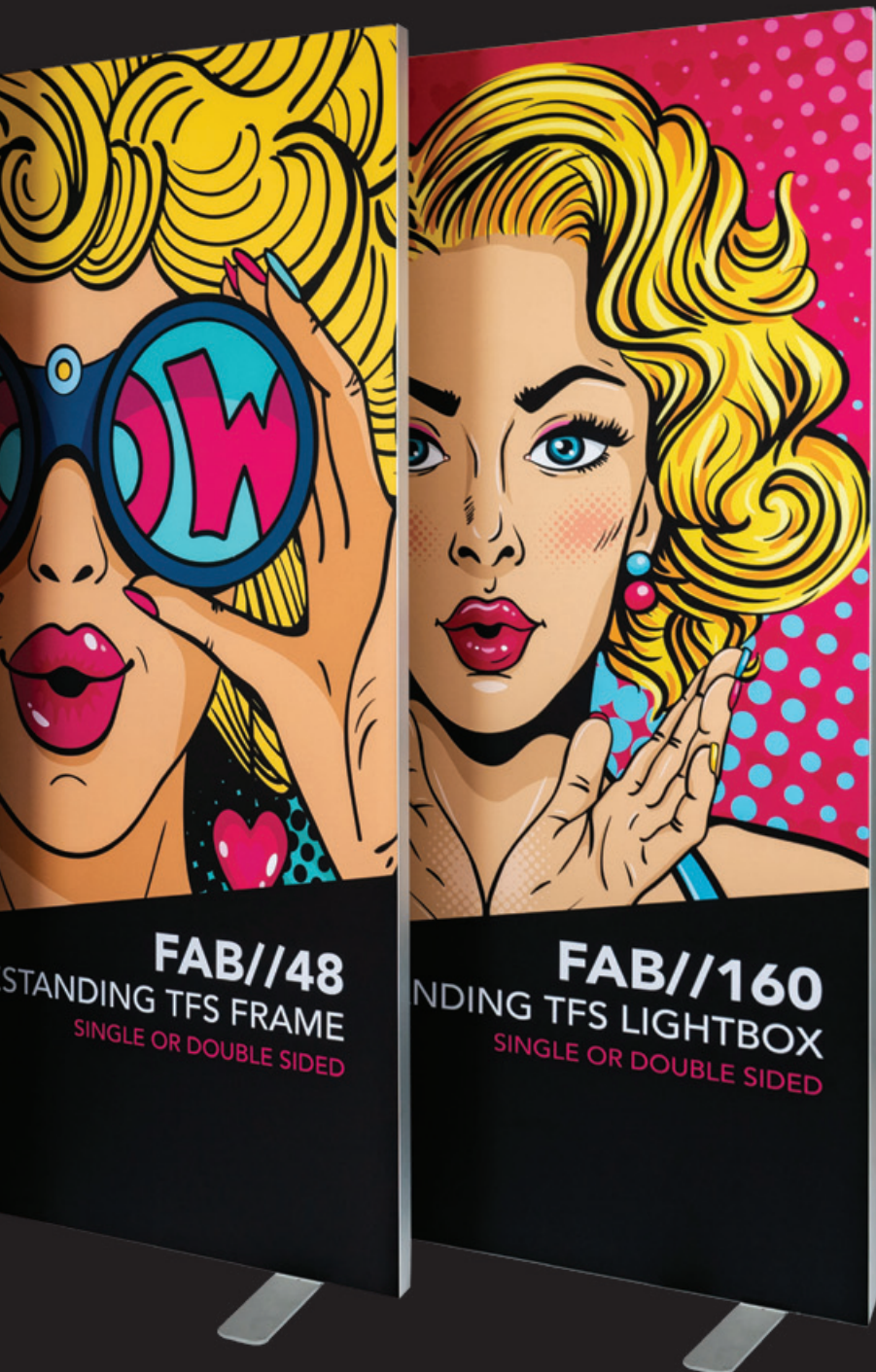
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THE COLOUR OF MONEY...AND MORALS

How long have we been talking about the potential to make money from 'green' products and from leveraging environmental services and credentials in his sector? Since I became editor over a decade ago certainly. Yet - as our annual Widthwise surveys have flagged up - over the years there's always been a debate as to whether this is achievable in practice or not, and therefore worth bothering with. Now, it seems, the argument to green-up your business, as well as its offerings, is not so much financial as moral.

We're yet to analyse the findings of this year's Widthwise poll, but I predict - given what I'm hearing from print chiefs - that the data will reflect that. One print chief in particular, Leach MD James Lavin, is "calling upon others across the print sector to adjust their environmental mindsets". Read his thoughts on p29.

The 'Environment' slot this issue is taken up with a piece looking into the theory of 'dematerialisation' and how reducing our environmental footprints can lead us into a brighter ecological future. And on p27 read how sustainability has been the driver behind the PanaWraps development that is bringing in ever more PSP partners from across the globe. You'll also find environmental issues raised within the various technical articles.

Now, dare I mention air miles, and the prospect of flying to Madrid for Fespa Global 2020? Turn to p12 for reasons why you should get there - however you can!



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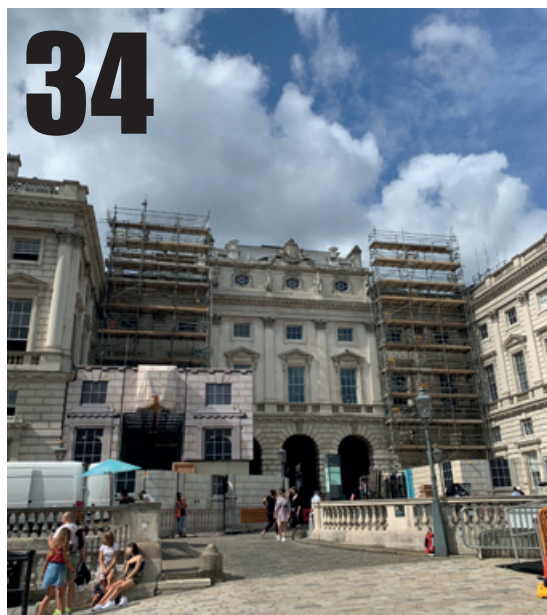
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Antalis extends carbon offsetting scheme to all

Antalis UK has announced that all materials within its papers, packaging and visual communications ranges can now be carbon offset.

Working with Forest Carbon and World Land Trust, Antalis is able to calculate the kilograms of carbon emissions it takes to procure any material type -including plastics, aluminium composite material and nylon. These carbon credits can be purchased by customers to support the creation of new UK woodlands (via Forest Carbon and the Antalis Woodlands) or to preserve global forests (via Forest Carbon in South America or a World Land Trust project in Vietnam). Customers also have the choice to support a blend of all three options.

Durst restructures textile division

Durst has restructured its industrial textile printing segment and put Dr Stefan Kappaun in charge. As segment manager textile printing Kappaun has responsibility for the strategic direction in home textiles, clothing and accessories, and will act as the link to the large-format segment, which takes over soft signage and fabrics in the Durst portfolio.

Kappaun - who also heads the ink business for all segments as executive vice president inks and fluids - said: "The digital textile printing market is fragmented. While new, non-industry service providers often already have digital know-how but less textile experience, the traditional manufacturers are masters of textile finishing, but not all analogue processing steps can be transferred directly to digital textile printing. Durst has a comprehensive ecosystem to serve the different requirements and to support customers in the digital transformation."

In his role as segment manager textile printing Kappaun succeeds Martin Winkler, who will take on the role of global sales manager textile printing. Martin Oberparleitner, is the new junior product manager textile printing. New sales and service structures are also being implemented.

All change for 2020 awards schemes

The ISA-UK (formerly the BSGA) is starting new awards scheme. The first ISA-UK Sign and Print Awards will take place this autumn. Meanwhile, The British Sign Awards - previously run under the auspices of ISA UK/BSGA - will this year run under an independent banner.

ISA-UK director David Catanach said of its decision to launch its own awards scheme: "Over the past 18 months the association has gone through a period of significant change and growth, including establishing an exciting partnership with the International Sign Association based in the US. As we continue to evolve and maintain our commitment to serving the needs of our members and the wider sign and print industry,

the time is right to make some major changes to our awards."

Another new awards scheme is also slated for the autumn. Towards the end of 2019 Fespa UK Association announced that it, in association with Vism, would be running the UK Graphic Awards back-to-back with a new Thrive in Print conference for wide-format printing business managers and owners. That will take place on Tuesday 15 September 2020 at Oulton Hall in Leeds.

The theme of for the awards is 'Be Bold' and the 12 categories have been designed to showcase the best in creativity and impact of projects across sectors including live events and exhibitions, retail graphics, roll outs, experiential, interiors, and museums/galleries.

Canon partners with OneVision to up printer productivity

Canon Production Printing has partnered with pre-press software specialist OneVision to provide operational efficiencies for PSPs using the Colorado and Arizona printers.

Michele Tuscano, vice president large format graphics, Canon EMEA, said: "Our large-format printers are getting faster so customers need a workflow solution to keep up with these increased speeds without compromising on quality. OneVision's Wide Format Automation Suite provides the solution. Customers can now automate production, grow their print volumes and increase profits. OneVision also represents a new opportunity for our partner channel."

German large-format PSPs posterXXL and Siepro KG are already working with the system and report that prepress time has decreased and that print-ready files have minimised human error and speeded up turnaround times.

The OneVision software automatically picks up job data, creates print files and checks them against 130 different error criteria, automatically correcting errors identified. Colour management is also optimised. Automated nesting and data normalisation remove the complexity of handling files, speeding up Rip and print time. The software also automatically generates cut line PDFs for finishing efficiency.

Service Graphics extends reach via acquisition and partnership

Service Graphics has become an approved manufacturing partner for PanaWraps, a system developed by StackaWraps that converts flat artwork into 3D graphics. The move precedes Service Graphics' recent acquisition of Brentford-based Octink and of Image Factory Retail Graphics in Chippenham.

The PanaWrapping service is being rolled out across SG manufacturing sites.

In relation to the acquisitions Octink's management team, led by CEO Will Tyler, will continue to manage the 90 people business, whose focus within the construction sector gives

Service Graphics Display significant market share in what is a new market sector.

At Image Factory its managing director Terry Smith and management team will continue to run the mainly POP/POS business that employs 60 people.

Martin Hutchings, managing director Service Graphics Display, said: "Our strategy is to grow our business through acquisition and with organic sales. We are targeting companies that offer entry to new markets or can increase market share within existing markets." Service Graphics now has near 700 people and revenues of £80m.



GWG releases sign and display sector specific spec

The Ghent Workgroup (GWG) has released a specification for the sign and display sector. The new specification incorporates the notion of viewing distance and scaling factor - allowing for one specification, but addressing the differences in printing techniques within typical sign and display jobs.

"We started working on the new sign and display specification quite a while ago," said David van Driessche, executive director of the GWG and chief technology officer at Four Pees. "Because this new specification has to cover a very broad market, and as a result is more challenging for preflight vendors to address, we even released a public beta version a few months ago. We now believe the specification is ready for prime time."

Peter Kleinheider, co-chair of the specification subcommittee that developed the new specification, added: "After the release of the public beta we already started implementing the sign and display specification with a first customer. Having support for wide gamut colours and the concept of scaling factor made its implementation in this web shop completely straightforward. This new specification will make the delivery of PDF files for sign and display much easier and bring much-needed standardisation to the market segment."

New GMG Academy courses

Multi-day workshops have been added to GMG Academy's offering for 2020.

The new additions are: 'Digital Printing - Process Control and Profiling', which will take place on 24-26 March and is aimed at those who have either already introduced digital printing or who would like to implement it in their day-to-day work; 'Colour Management and Standardisation' on 29 September - 1 October, which will cover basic knowledge on colour, proofing and standardisation in the printing industry; and 'Packaging - From Design to Print' on 10-12 November.

Customised workshops will also be on offer in 2020, as will free half-hourly webinars - to be held every two months in English as well as German.

Former Xaar CEO joins EFI as CTO

Former Xaar CEO Dr Douglas Edwards has become EFI's chief technology officer (CTO). Edwards - who was also chairman of Xaar 3D, Xaar's 3D venture with Stratasy - replaces longtime technology leader Ghilad Dzieszietnik, who recently retired from EFI after nearly 25 years, the last 14 as CTO.

Before joining Xaar in 2015 Edwards was president of Kodak's Digital Printing and Enterprise Business with responsibility for flexo packaging, functional printing, electrophotographic solutions, commercial and consumer inkjet solutions with combined revenues of around \$800m. Prior to that, Edwards ran Kodak's prepress solutions business, with revenues of \$1.5bn. He joined Kodak from Kodak Polychrome Graphics (KPG), a 50/50 joint venture between Eastman Kodak and Sun Chemical Corporation, where he was vice president of R&D. He has also held R&D

leadership roles with International Paper, Zeneca Specialties and Ilford Photographic in the UK.

"Doug possesses one of the best technological backgrounds in our industry, and combines technology with demonstrated business accomplishments," said EFI chairman and CEO Jeff Jacobson. "I had the pleasure of working closely with Doug - when I was the CEO of KPG, as well as when I was the COO of Kodak's Graphic Communications business - and I cannot think of a better person in our industry to lead EFI's strategic and technology developments."

Edwards, who is based in EFI's Manchester, NH facility, said: "EFI was a customer of mine while with Xaar, and I am very aware of the unique opportunity EFI has now to further develop a portfolio that includes many of the world's leading digital inkjet and print workflow solutions."

Graphtec GB brings out CE7000 series

Graphtec GB has replaced its CE6000 cutting plotter with the CE7000 series that has larger size options.

The CE7000 is available in models providing media cutting widths of 484, 712, 1,372 and 1,626mm. The CE7000 also features Version 8 of Graphtec's proprietary ARMS system for long-length (up to 5m) tracking and optimum cutting accuracy. Other features include a digital servo drive system and graphic backlit LCD control panel, plus a range of standard and optional accessories (including super-steel 0.9mm cutting blades and fibre-tip pens) and a choice of machine operating modes to accommodate different types and thicknesses of material.

The CE7000 is supplied as standard with Graphtec's own-brand design and production software comprising Graphtec Pro Studio for Windows and Graphtec Studio for Mac applications, together with the optional Cutting Master 4 program.

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- EFI launches Vutek D series printers
- Hexis to run two wrap events at SDUK 2020
- BPIF and APS offer new insurance service
- CMYUK takes on dye-sub products from Beaver Paper
- PSPs asked to identify Print Futures Awards nominees
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- New Siegwark customer ink blending centre opens
- InkTec brings out SubliNova G7 dye-sub ink
- New wrap films from Spandex
- Epson chief reaffirms commitment to decarbonisation
- i-Sub appointed Blackman and White distributor
- OKI Europe gets new MD
- GWG offers 'try us out' option
- Roland brings out desktop eco-solvent printer
- New member services introduced by Fespa UK
- Hybrid announces Gold warranty on selected Mimaki machines
- Ricoh Europe's Tim Taylor moves to new global post
- Xaar appoints new chief finance officer and extends test service
- ESMA to run textile print training event
- John Mark takes fifth HP Latex 1500
- DCS brings in new president and CEO

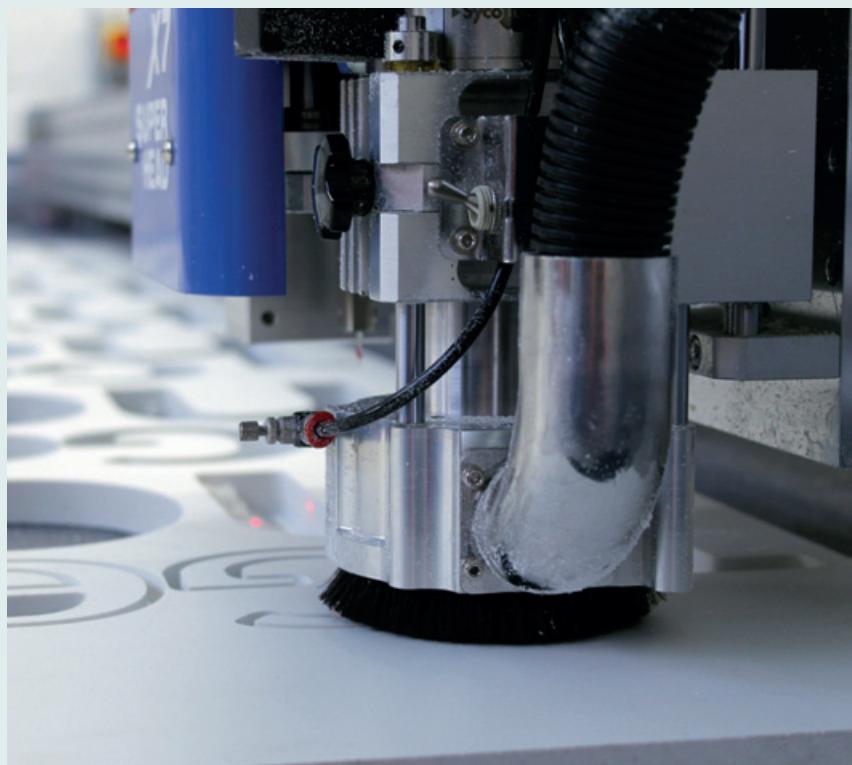
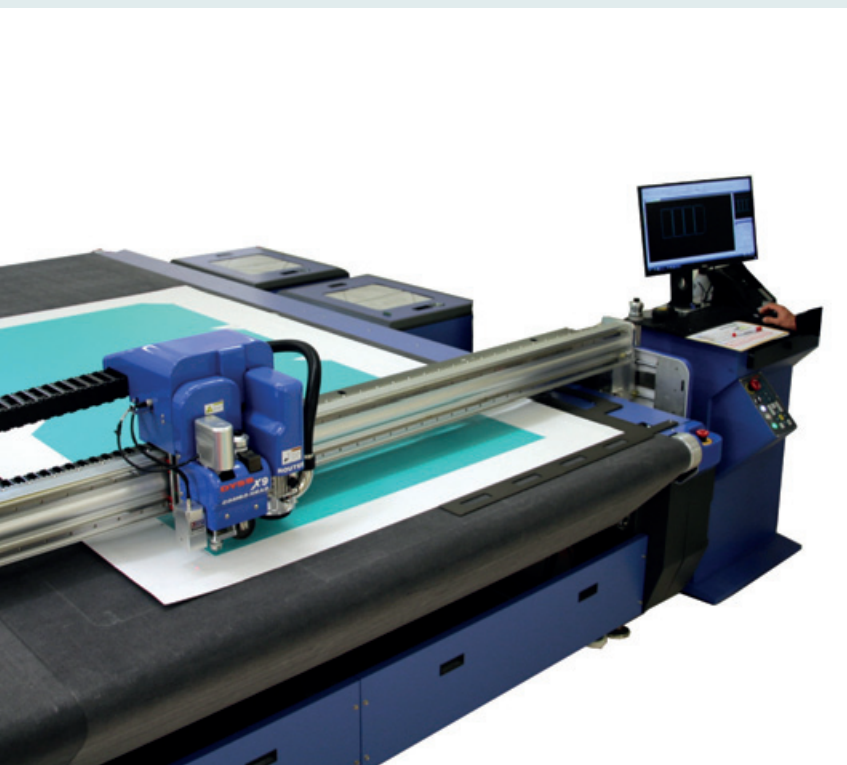


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MORE SIGN AND GRAPHICS BUSINESSES CHOOSE DYSS IN 2019

UK SALES OF THE DYSS MODELS, SUPPLIED BY AG/CAD LIMITED, HAS CONTINUED TO INCREASE IN THE PRINT, SIGN AND GRAPHICS SECTORS.

A combination of superlative performance, high quality engineering and market-beating prices have helped the DYSS X9, X7 and X5 become the machines to reckon with when it comes to choosing a digital cutter for your print, sign and graphics business.

UK sales of the DYSS models, supplied by AG/CAD Limited, has continued to increase in the Print, Sign and Graphics sectors, but also across a variety of other markets including Packaging, POS/POP Display, as well as more specialised applications.

Sales of the newest model, the DYSS X9 have been particularly strong. The X9 has been designed for applications where production speed is paramount. The X9 has an innovative and revolutionary motion control system that gives ultimate power and performance, while retaining control and accuracy even on the finest detail. Blistering maximum linear speeds of over 120m/min and acceleration getting towards 2G mean you won't find a faster digital cutter capable of knife cutting and routing.

With all our DYSS tables, for increased productivity, various automation features are available. With options from a simple offload area where the operator can strip cut parts safely while the machine continues the next job, to semi-automated sheet feeding, through to a completely automated feeder and unloader that can process a full stack of sheets. An integrated tool calibration sensor accurately measures cutter protrusion

making sure you are cutting to the correct depth every time. This helps avoid costly mistakes caused by cutting too deeply using an uncalibrated tool.

Some installs in the signs and graphics sector:

Manchester Printers has brought all of its cutting in-house after investing £100,000 in a Dyss X7-1624C conveyerised digital cutter. manually in-house, according to managing director Gavin Page.

"We were putting work out and it was taking at least two to three days to get everything back, so this was a time and cost-saving exercise," he said.

"It has also opened up massive new avenues that we've only found out in the few weeks we've had it, including show cards, folding boxboard and Dibond."

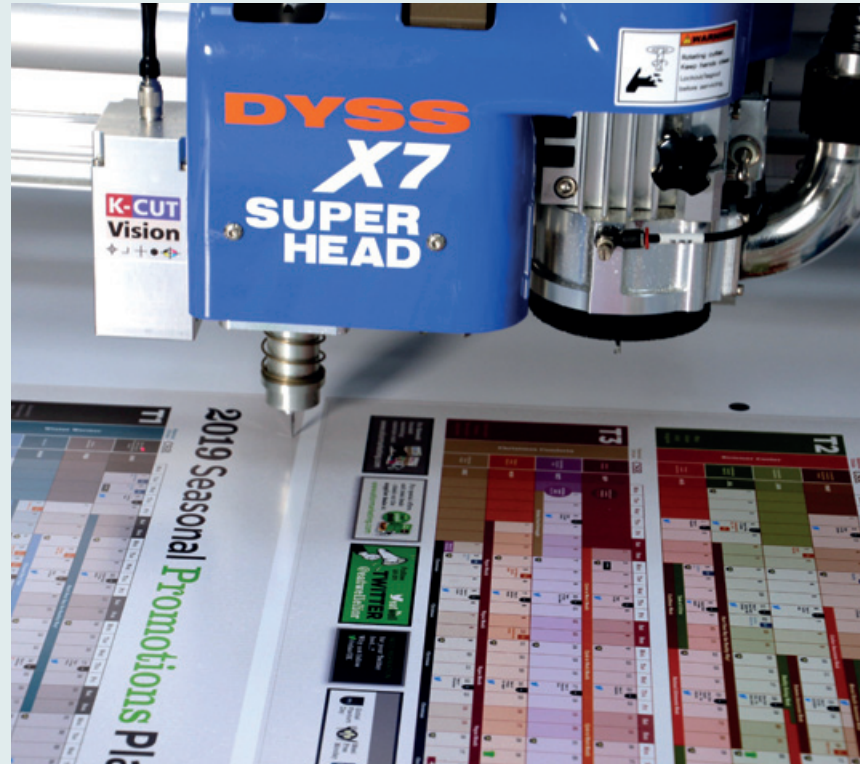
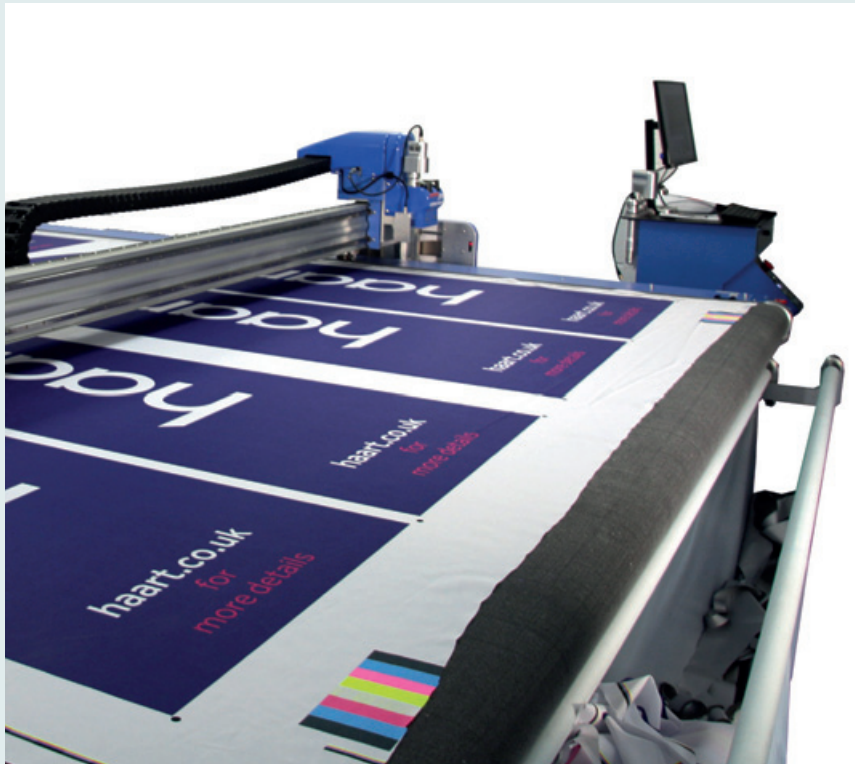
"We can now leave a 50m roll running overnight on our Mimaki printers, whether its grey back or PVC roller banners, load that on the Dyss when we come in the next morning and let it run and cut out until a new roll is required to go on the end of it."

He added: "We've got two people in the cutting department and that's freed up one person for several hours a day to do other things in the business. In terms of time saving it's a no brainer."

The company also considered alternatives including the Esko Kongsberg X20 and the Dyss X5, as well as options from Mimaki and Summa, but felt that the X7 best suited its requirements.

Castleford based CSD Print Ltd purchased three new printers and installed a DYSS X7-1630C digital cutting table. Prior to the introduction of the DYSS, CSD Print Ltd were limited to hand cutting simple geometrical shapes or using a guillotine or plotter, whilst larger quantity projects required the specifying of external die cutting.

Since installing the DYSS, the manual cutting requirement of three full-time staff has been eradicated – allowing CSD Print to allocate staff resources to other tasks. Furthermore, subcontract cutting costs have been eliminated, as has the requirement for



platens and die-cutting. The acquisition of the DYSS X7-1630C has been well justified with the machine running upward of 14 hours a day and a significant diversification into new markets.

To emphasise the savings created by the DYSS, Mr Richardson says: "On average, we are printing and cutting up to 30 rolls every month and in very busy periods, the fluctuation can see us print up to 10 rolls a day. Typically, a 30 to 50m roll would take two staff more than 3 hours to cut, the DYSS completes a roll in less than 30 minutes. Furthermore, we can set the DYSS up and it will cut over 200 metres of printed roll product overnight – giving us a huge saving. We also took on a project that required the cutting of 300 8 by 4 foot Foamex sheets recently. This is simply a job we couldn't do; and we would have turned away without the DYSS machine."

Since its inception in 1995, Print On in Cheshire has evolved from a high-street photocopy shop to a digital print-on-demand company producing everything from posters and signage through to pop-up banners, stationery, die cut boxes, PoS displays, FSDUs, acrylic boards and general large format print and finishing.

In 2015, the business invested in a flatbed printer to expand its large format capabilities and enter new market segments. Managing director, Alex Oldfield said "Without a cutting machine we often had to turn work away or have it cut externally. Additionally, a percentage of the work that we could hand cut required geometries and shapes that were extremely challenging. We looked at the digital cutter options and as soon as I saw the DYSS machines from AG/CAD at a trade show, I knew it was the machine our business needed."

Print On opted for the DYSS X7-1624C with the Super Head configuration for the flexibility afforded by the routing spindle and the additional 2 tool slots which can accept a range of quick-change knife tools and creasing tools.

The business is currently split 50/50 between

small and large format work and the DYSS has made an impact on both facets of the business. "As an example of the benefits, we have previously been contracted to print and cut 1000 A3 sheets - by cutting 20 parts per large sheet by hand, this labour intensive work would take a member of staff up to 4-5 days. With the DYSS, this work can now be completed in less than a day."

Mr Oldfield concluded "We are delighted with the benefits and opportunities that are now open to us with the DYSS machine. It seems the longer we have the machine, the more we are recognising the cost reductions and market potential."

Glasgow Creative were established in 1998, and have been supplying print, design and signs to the business community ever since. They've grown and developed over the years adding more and more services with time. Part of this growth has included the acquisition of a DYSS X7-1630, fitted with a conveyor to allow for automation, and also the processing of jobs far longer than the table's physical size.

They use their X7 to process a huge range of sign materials including acrylic, di-bond, aluminium, foamex and more.

AG/CAD Sales Director Andrew Boulton says "The digital cutter market is highly competitive, but the keen pricing, the build quality of the DYSS cutters, and the unsurpassed quality of finish it is possible to achieve is making it the DYSS range the cutter of choice for many customers. Once seen the advantages of the DYSS and KASEMAKE system are crystal clear."

We can show you the full capability of the DYSS/ KASEMAKE system and how it can help you in your current sign and graphics business, and also help you diversify into other markets, if desired or needed. We have a choice of DYSS machines ready to process your own materials for demonstration at our dedicated showroom in Cheshire."

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MADRID IN MARCH?

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO, GET BOOKING YOUR FLIGHTS FOR FESPA GLOBAL 2020. HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE SHOW.

According to Fespa CEO Neil Felton, Fespa Global 2020 is the “key destination for speciality printers.” ‘Ah, well, he would say that’ you’ll be thinking. But think a bit more and you realise that this is more than the usual pre-show “you a must attend, it’s a fab event” comment - it really reflects the fact that Fespa is developing the show to attract a wider swathe of visitors. It’s to be expected of course - exhibitors realise that inkjet offers huge scope and they want to get its capability in front of potential new buyers. So, the 2020 event sees new ‘attractions’ - not all of which are aimed squarely at the readers of this magazine, but nevertheless, it pays to take notice of what’s happening in the wider world of inkjet print.

18,000 visitors are expected at Fespa Global 2020 - 60-70% from outside host country Spain - but it’s hard to second guess how many will come from beyond the realms of ‘professional print graphics’. Much is being made of show features such as Sportswear Pro and Print Make Wear, intended to court those who may not otherwise attend a print trade event, so we’ll see. These special features also boost exhibitor numbers - now standing at around 700. And Fespa says they reflect the findings of its own Print Census research - a new round of which will be launching at this year’s show, with findings slated for 2021.

So what can you expect from Fespa Global 2020 beyond the new launches and technical updates we’ve come to expect - and which we’ll flag up in ‘News’ on the Image Reports homepage and in our twice weekly enewsbulletins as detail comes in.

Lets kick off with the new features already mentioned above as part of that programme to attract new visitors. The new co-located Sportswear Pro is aimed at those in the sportswear manufacturing industry looking at on-demand, customised sportswear production so we won’t dwell on that, other than to flag-up the fact

FESPA GLOBAL 2020

- Where:** IFEMA Exhibition Centre, Madrid, Spain
- When:** 24 - 27 March 2020
- Times:** 10am - 7pm, Tuesday - Thursday
10am - 4pm, Friday
- Cost:** Free with promotional codes (such as FESM204) or 40 Euro online, 70 Euro at the door



that Fespa’s Print Make Wear feature will act as link - physically as well as thematically - between the two.

Print Make Wear will recreate a live end-to-end production process for sports garments, starting with colour utilising CAD/CAM, design and prepress, production workflows, grading and nesting, progressing to printing, drying, cutting, sewing, welding and embellishment, culminating in packing and retail display. Two workflows will run side by side. The first one will exhibit direct-to-garment (DTG) printing onto blank sportswear and leisure garments - the second will be dedicated to roll-to-roll printing.

A programme of guided tours, led by Fespa’s textile ambassador Debbie McKeegan, will run and can be booked in advance via <https://www.fespaglobalprintexpo.com/features/print-make-wear/print-make-wear-tours>. There will also be a series of ‘Experts in Conversation’ sessions.

Textiles will also be a prominent feature within the now established but constantly evolving Printeriors showcase of digitally printed interior décor applications. Jasper Goodall is the creative mind behind the designs for both Print Make Wear and Printeriors (located between halls 3 and 5) and you’ll find a botanical theme running across the features. Unfortunately, at the time of going to press, Fespa could not say which PSPs would be involved in the actual print.



TREND THEATRE TIMETABLE

24 MARCH

11.30 - Noon

Workflow: Automation Saving Money

Noon - 12.30

Colour Management: Hydra Profiling and PrintStandardizer

12.30 - 1

The Future of Textile Printing: Local Production for Local Markets

1 - 2

In the Flow or On the Run: Is the Digital Printing Industry a Good Place to Work

2 - 2.30

Digital Printing in Decorative Applications

2.30 - 3

Adding Texture and Extra Dimension to UV Printing

3 - 3.30

Smart Industrial Printing

3.30 - 4

Measuring and Calculating Colour Differences

4 - 4.30

Exploring the Trends and Future of Self-Adhesive Vinyl

4.30 - 5

Sponsor Session

5 - 6

Fespa Espana Sessions

25 MARCH

11 - 11.30

Designer Perspective: Digital Print Technology in Luxury Fashion

11.30 - Noon

Packaging Displays: Colour Digital Print for Corrugated

Noon - 12.30

Digital Corrugated

12.30 - 1

A deep Journey into the Colour Gamut Calculation of your Printer

1 - 2

Times They Are A-changing

2 - 2.30

Wide Format Forecast: Trends and Innovation

2.30 - 3

Textile/Sublimation Trends in the Sign and Graphics Sector

3 - 3.30

DTG Printing: Markets, Applications and Costs

3.30 - 4

Supplies Market Trends

4 - 4.30

The 3 C's for your Success: Creative, Cool, Commercial

4.30 - 5

Sponsor Session

5 - 6

Fespa Espana Sessions

26 MARCH

11 - 11.30

Setting Industry Standards: How MagnaColours are Helping to Futureproof the Industry

11.30 - Noon

The Future of Textile Printing: Local Production for Local Markets

Noon - 12.30

Workflow: Automation Saving Money

12.30 - 1

Digital Printing in Decorative Applications

1 - 2

A Big Step for Mankind: What are the Next Technological Leaps in Digital Printing?

2 - 2.30

PSD: Creating Colour Confidence and extended colour Gamut

2.30 - 3

Colour Management: Device Profiling

3 - 3.30

New Techniques to Eliminate In-lot Shade Variation when Printing Textiles with inkjet

3.30 - 4

Supplies Market Trends

4 - 4.30

Personalised Photoproducts: Where Emotion Comes Alive

4.30 - 5

Sponsor Session

5 - 6

Fespa Espana Sessions

27 MARCH

11 - 11.30

How to Maintain Perfect Printhead Operation and Print Quality

11.30 - Noon

Packaging and Displays: Colour Digital Print for Corrugated

Noon - 12.30

Wide Format Forecast: Trends and Innovation

12.30 - 1

Textile/Sublimation Trends in the Sign and Graphics Sector

1 - 2

Sustainability: Who Pays?

2 - 2.30

PSD: Creating Colour Confidence and extended colour Gamut

2.30 - 3.30

Fespa Espana Sessions

2020 is the second time Fespa will run Colour LAB, a walk-through showcase of colour management technologies and live demonstrations. Again there are guided tours - of which there are four in total (not all run every day) and which each last around 45 minutes. You can book at: <https://www.fespaglobalprintexpo.com/features/colour-lab/colour-lab-tours>

It's also worth going online ahead of your visit to scope out the free Trend Theatre seminars/panel discussions. There's an outline timetable in the panel within this article, but fuller details are on the show website, and from previous experience it's worth plotting your choices ahead of the show.

There are a couple more 'highlights' to note - the World Wrap Masters, Fespa Awards - and the co-located non-print focused European Sign Expo in particular.



No doubt you know the score by now on these, but as a swift reminder, the Wrap Masters sees wrappers compete live in the show arena, while the Fespa Awards aims to showcase and celebrate the best of speciality print via an exhibition and gala awards night. Fespa UK Association, in collaboration with Vism, is running a separate awards scheme this year because it feels wide-format digital inkjet could benefit from a scheme directed more specifically to the sector's output. UK/Ireland companies have nevertheless been shortlisted for this year's Fespa Awards. So best of luck to McGowans, Harwood King Printmakers, BOB01325, ATADesigns and Digital Plus, the last three in the new Printeriors section. And good luck to you too in navigating what promises to be a busy Fespa 2020.

IN FASHION

DYE-SUB IS HAVING A CATWALK MOMENT. IF YOU'RE GOING TO ANY OF THIS YEAR'S PRINT SHOWS YOU CAN EXPECT THESE PRINTERS TO BE IN THE SPOTLIGHT AS MANUFACTURERS SEEK TO BENEFIT FROM THE RISE IN FAST FASHION AMONG OTHER APPLICATIONS. SIMON CREASY BRINGS YOU UP TO SPEED ON DEVELOPMENTS.

One of the industry sectors that has found itself abruptly thrust into the spotlight over the last 12 months or so thanks to the Extinction Rebellion movement and wider consumer awareness of the climate crisis, is fashion. More specifically 'fast fashion'. By their very nature the trends that these fast fashion retailers are trying to tap into are transitory and they go out of fashion as quickly as they have come in.

The practice of rapidly producing huge volumes of inexpensive clothing that is typically manufactured thousands of miles away from the market in which these products will ultimately be sold in response to these transitory trends runs counter to the pervading consumer sentiment surrounding sustainability.

It is not a good look for an industry that is a significant contributor to climate change. Annually, the fashion sector produces 20% of global wastewater - dyeing textiles is the second largest polluter of water globally - and 20% of global carbon emissions - more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined.

So it is little wonder that the fashion industry has slowly but surely started to green-up its act. A major beneficiary of this shift in sentiment and more eco-conscious strategy is the dye-sublimation print market. Fashion retailers still want to rapidly produce their products in response to trends, but they want the capacity to manufacture them closer to home - thus cutting down on aircraft and shipping emissions - using more environmentally friendly techniques. Step forward large-format digital dye-sublimation printers.

The step change in attitude was visible for everyone to see at the Heimtextil exhibition held in Frankfurt last month (January). The overarching theme of the show was sustainability with 'green pioneers' in the textile industry

ADVANCES
MADE AS PART
OF INDUSTRY
4.0 MEAN THAT
CUSTOMERS CAN
RELY ON SHORTER
TURNAROUND
TIMES AND
GREATER
PRODUCTIVITY.

given a platform to showcase their wares.

According to industry sources, demand for dye-sublimation print has steadily been on the rise for the last few years, but the fashion industry in particular is really fuelling its current and future growth trajectory.

"On a global basis we believe the textile market is going to continue to grow thanks in part to the focus on the fashion market for being fairly environmentally unfriendly," says Phil McMullin, UK sales manager, pro graphics, at Epson UK. "One of the ways they can improve their impact on the environment is to produce more stuff locally in the market where it is going to be sold and the only way you can do that is through digital print really. The traditional way of producing 8,000 units in China and then shipping it back to Europe is not going to work any longer so digital print is going to continue to grow in the UK and Europe as re-shoring gathers pace."

Fashion may be one of the big dye-sublimation growth areas at the moment, but Michael Lewis, channel account manager at HP, says that decor, on demand production and personalisation are also all boosting the growth of digital textile print.

"The digitally printed textiles market is experiencing double-digit annual growth, forecast to reach \$5.5bn by 2023, according to research by Smithers Pira," reflects Lewis. "At Heimtextil it was exciting to see the industry's reaction to new and innovative applications made possible in interior design with HP's digital printing technology."

The big focus for his company in this particular space at the moment is the HP Stitch S series, which includes the Stitch S1000, a super-wide dye sublimation printer that launched at Fespa last year. He says the 3.2m machine brings a "new level of innovation to high



The HP Stitch S1000 brings a "new level of innovation to high production companies"



The Epson SC-F9400 has been primarily developed for the high volume printing of clothing, textiles and soft signage

production companies” offering fast speeds, high uptime and unattended shifts.

“HP’s expansion into the textiles industry demonstrates our commitment to making digital printing accessible to all,” says Lewis. “The super wide HP Stitch S1000 removes major complexities from dye-sublimation printing, with industry leading technology and high-quality prints at unrivalled speed. The HP Stitch S1000 unlocks the power of colour for production environments through smart technology.”

Meanwhile, Epson is busy promoting the three latest models that have been added to its growing portfolio of dye-sublimation printers. Towards the end of last year Epson launched the 24in-wide SureColor SC-F500 that McMullin says can be used for anything from textile sampling through to the personalisation of mouse mats. The machine is targeted at small businesses in particular and according to Epson offers “fast turnaround times, reliability and a low total cost of ownership”. McMullin adds “the SureColor SC-F500 has really only just started shipping so it is still early days, but we are expecting great things”.

The company also announced the launch of two 64in dye-sublimation printers last year - the SureColor SC-F9400H and the SC-F9400. According to McMullin, the printers have been primarily developed for the fast, high volume printing of clothing, textiles and soft signage, in addition to other merchandise. The SC-F9400H also has the option of printing fluorescent yellow and pink, to allow users to service the sportswear and workwear market. A demo unit recently arrived at Epson’s Hemel Hempstead office and McMullin expects the machines to start shipping in the near future.

Another new machine is Mimaki’s Tx300P-1800 MkII hybrid digital textile printer that offers direct to textile and transfer capabilities and was unveiled at the ITMA exhibition held in Barcelona last year.

“As we head into 2020, we anticipate seeing the new Tx300P-1800 MkII printer hit the UK and Irish markets during the spring where we predict it having a substantial impact thanks to its breadth of capability,” says Brett Newman, chief operations manager at Hybrid Services, Mimaki’s UK and Ireland distributor. “Market demand

for flexibility - both in industry and within education - is substantial and the new Mimaki is a direct response to this requirement.”

Newman explains that the MkII, which is an evolution of the Mimaki TX300P-1800 direct to textile model, offers printers “enhanced versatility in terms of fabrics, applications and targeted markets”, and gives smaller print service providers and colleges and universities the opportunity to provide a full range of textile printing applications with just one system.

“Lowering the barriers to entry and delivering a highly flexible solution is core to this new hybrid model,” continues Newman. “There are also opportunities for larger setups to benefit from its ‘buddy’ capability, providing broad flexibility and strong production volumes for ‘non-standard’ output without interrupting high speed digital production systems.”

He says that the introduction of the new hybrid machine was driven by market demand for “quick turnaround, flexible production of short runs of high quality textile print”. These factors were also taken into consideration at HP when it started working on the creation of the Stitch portfolio.

“One key area where we are seeing customer demand is the drive for greater automation,” says HP’s Lewis. “Advances made as part of ‘industry 4.0’ mean that customers can rely on shorter turnaround times and greater productivity. Our approach to dye-sublimation printing takes this into account, with our HP Stitch S1000 offering fully automatic maintenance, which ensures optimal image quality without user intervention, while saving time with easy media loading and unloading by a single operator.”

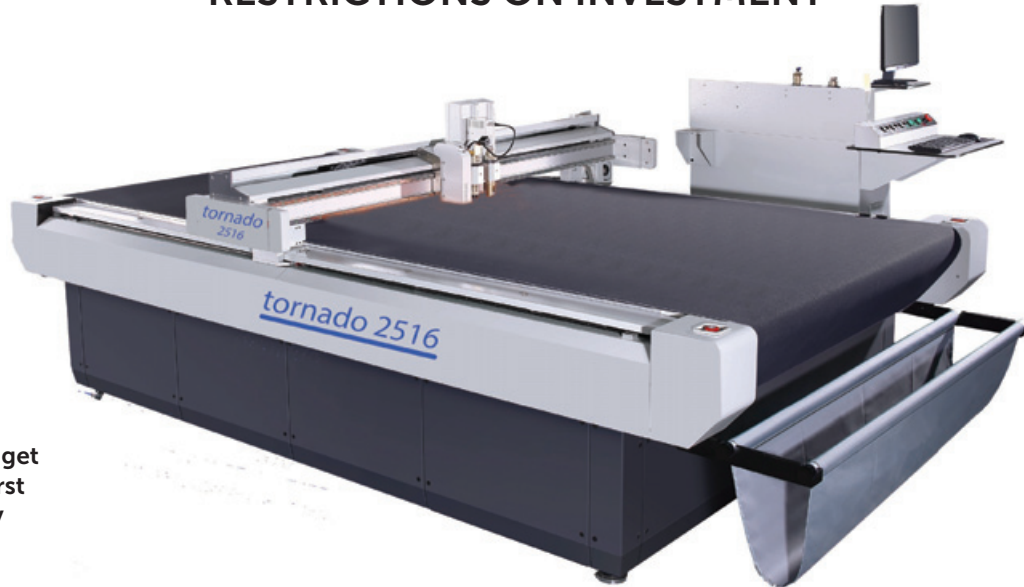
McMullin anticipates the factors Lewis outlines will continue to determine the shape of future dye-sublimation NPD brought forward by equipment manufacturers over the coming months, with Epson poised to unleash more

The Mimaki Tx300P-1800 MkII is expected to hit the UK/Irish markets in the spring



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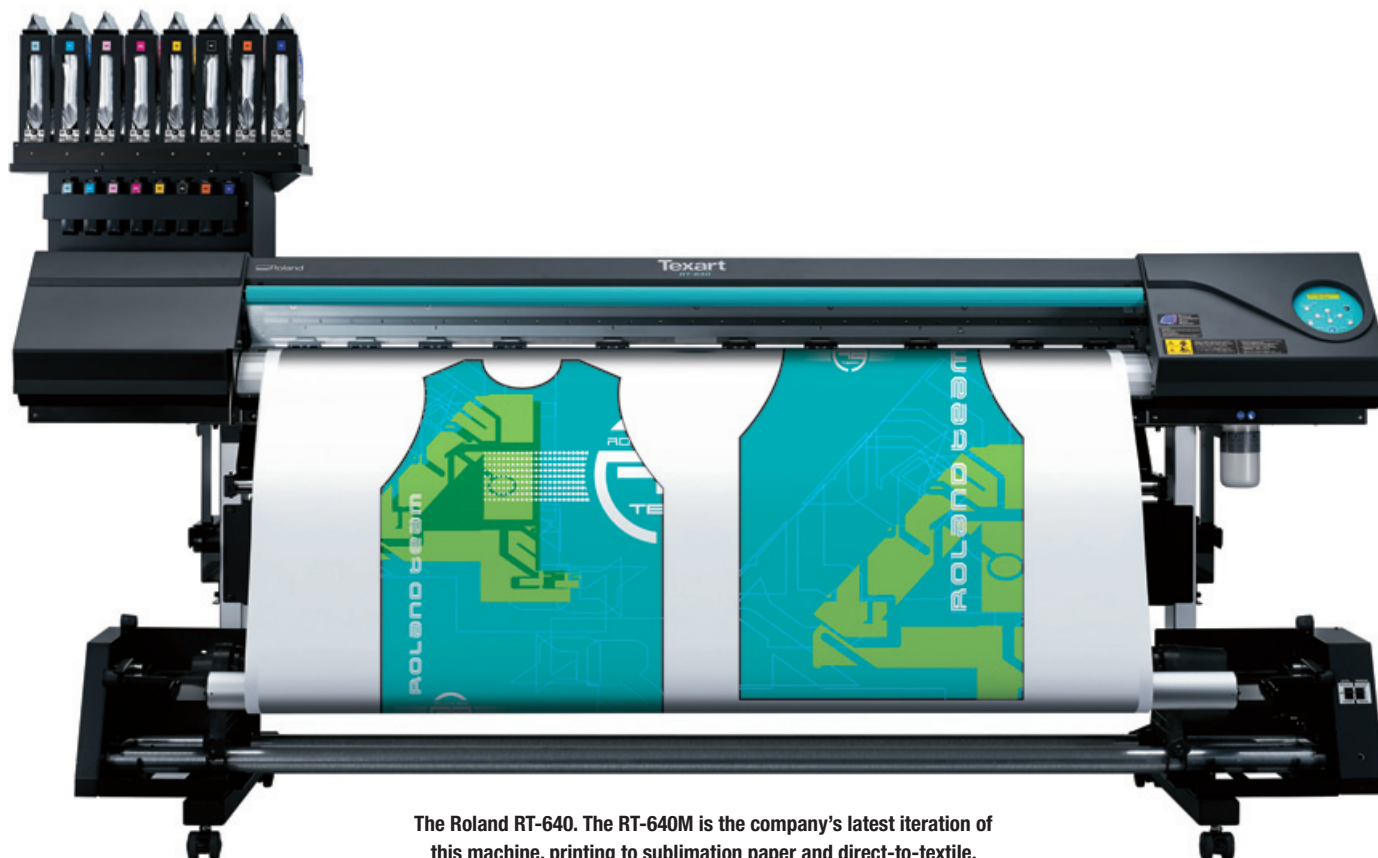
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The Roland RT-640. The RT-640M is the company's latest iteration of this machine, printing to sublimation paper and direct-to-textile.

products in time for a big reveal at Drupa.

But while McMullin remains bullish about the future outlook for the digital dye-sublimation market thanks to the growing use of these presses by home furnishing brands and fashion houses who are looking to boost their environmental credentials, he says there are some lingering issues that may well hold back future growth of the sector.

"One of the skillsets lacking in the UK at the moment is on the finishing side," says McMullin. "While it is relatively easy to bring print back to the UK [as part of a reshoring drive] if you understand colour and design, what is proving more challenging when we talk to people in the textile industry is finding people with the requisite finishing skills. As a result, people are having to train up seamstresses, for example. Also if you are making personalised furniture you need upholstery skills and not a lot of people can do that either, so that is where the skills gap is at the moment."

Where there definitely isn't a gap is in the wide range of dye-sublimation equipment on offer at the moment. Epson intends to continue to flex up and down offering dye-sublimation machines of differing sizes that build on the company's established technology to ensure the portfolio offers a model that meets all user's needs.

It is a philosophy shared by Roland DG, which is currently marketing the RT-640 and the XT-640 dye-sublimation printers - the company's latest development is the RT-640M, which allows for printing both onto sublimation paper and direct-to-textile.

"Although it is by no means a new technology, research and development in dye-sublimation continues to uncover new opportunities," says Paul Kerins, marketing content executive at Roland DG. "New materials are constantly being added to an already

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extensive range which expands the possibilities for developing new applications. Again, with the benefits of these digital methods, product designers are finding innovative ways to incorporate dye-sub technology in their manufacturing processes."

He adds that although things like branded mugs and promotional goods still form the backbone of most dye-sublimation businesses, the emerging textile markets offer plenty of scope for future growth.

"We've noted a significant rise in popularity for interior décor products in recent years," says Kerins. "In this market, there is a demand for bespoke items as customers' design tastes become more and more individualised. There's growth too in the retail and hospitality sectors with companies seeking to brand every element of the customer experience. In both these cases, dye-sub businesses can produce bespoke curtains, upholstery, tablecloths, cushions and soft signage."

The latest generation of dye-sublimation printers are opening up new markets to a wider range of print houses, as more and more business recognise the benefits of switching from traditional printing techniques to digital printing. As competition in the market intensifies Kerins believes this will fuel even greater take-up of dye sublimation technology in the future.

"As their competitors benefit from the additional speed and flexibility of digital printing, there is a lot of pressure on our customers to adapt to the faster pace in the market today," says Kerins. "Although a demand exists for products crafted using traditional methods like screenprinting, in most cases the end-customer is more concerned with the final product than the method used to produce it. For the most part, it makes business sense to invest in digital equipment even if it's just in addition to a predominantly traditional workflow."

UP FOR A **PACKAGE DEAL?**

ARE TECHNOLOGY BUNDLES ALL THEY'RE MADE OUT TO BE? HERE'S WHAT A NUMBER OF THE SECTOR'S SUPPLIERS HAD TO SAY ON THE TOPIC.

Everyone wants a great deal. So what's the best way to get one? Package deals are there for the taking when it comes to investment in new production technology, so is that the best option for you - or for your supplier?

Let's be clear from the off - if you have money to spend, any savvy supplier will try and get you to spend it with them, many by offering 'bundles' of products at 'competitive' prices. These may be off-the-shelf or bespoke tailored packages. They may be formed from one manufacturer's product portfolio or from across a range of technology providers. Indeed, CMYUK MD Robin East says 'bundling' accounts for around 30% of its sales. Josero sales and marketing director Steve Collins goes as far as saying most of its offerings are package deals. So what's the big attraction - just price?

"There is generally a price advantage," says East. "Manufacturers will quite often give a single price for all these bundled accessories, which will be a significant discount than buying them individually.

"So, with Esko Kongsberg digital cutting tables for example, our Esko manager Nick Reed built the X-24 starter bundle. That's not a bundle anymore (we've changed it - back then it was specifically inclusive of a number of tools - a business in a box all for £90k and you wouldn't need anything else), but it shows that when you do this type of thing, you'll tend to find that

the manufacturers give you a collected volume based discount on the additional parts, so everyone down the food chain benefits from it," outlines East.

He adds: "Within the pyramid of UK print production companies there's a huge variation of capacity and application requirements. We have been careful to select a portfolio of versatile equipment, but versatile products have a vast range of sometimes complex and additional components that help them create solutions for specific applications. As an experienced equipment provider we understand how to group those components for specific market solutions. Our gift is also being able to understand and interpret the differing needs of all the company groups working within the pyramid.

In clarification East says: "A bundle is really about delivering a collective specification that we know fits a certain type of person, or a certain kind of business. Bundling is all about having a good supplier who understands where to start in terms of specifications. A good supplier understands what the customer wants. When someone comes to buy a cutting table for example, they genuinely wouldn't build the specification of what they want themselves. We have highly experienced people who help with that.

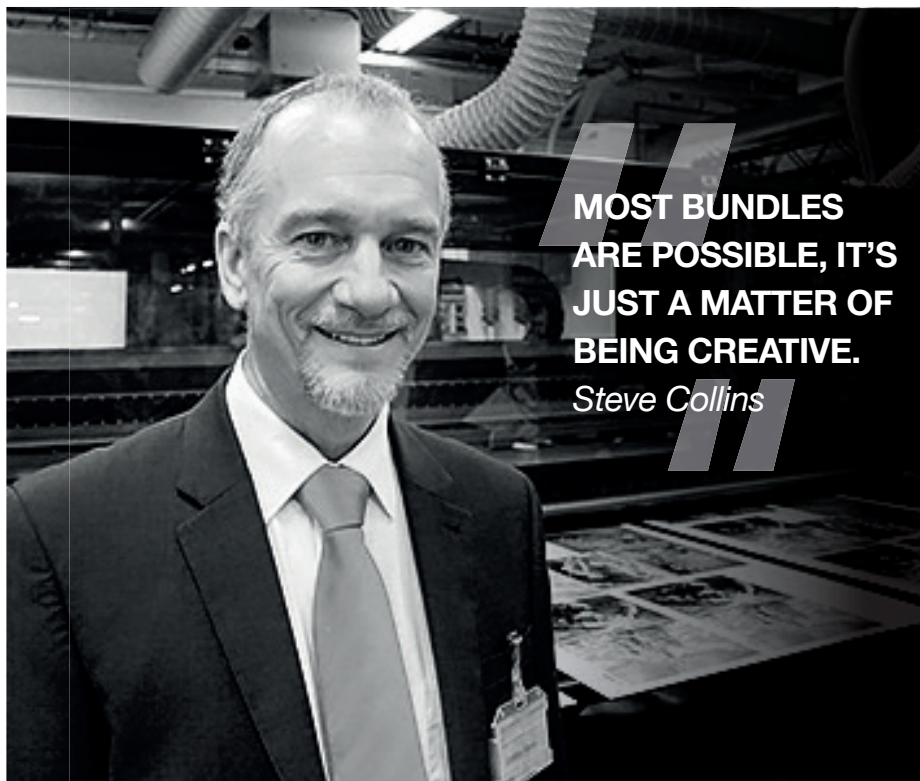
"With a lot of equipment you tend to find there are multiple accessories available. Customers might know some of these accessories well, but they wouldn't know how to create what we call a 'build'. We can create a specification that's inclusive of all the parts and additions that they need, and we'll just bundle that into a template offering.

"We definitely do quite a bit of bundling with Esko. Everybody that is buying a digital cutting table will need a drag knife and they will need a router. You can bundle a set of tools and a build quite effectively on that, but then the customer might say, 'Oh by the way we cut two inch thick polyester foam as well as we make protective boxes for cameras'.

"It's a good place to start with a bundle because fundamentally you know that that there is a tool set that customers are definitely going to need, and so you'll bundle those. With our EFI territory as well, we know that there are core things common to all so we'll bundle those."

At Josero Collins points out that a 'bundle' may be "a printer and software, printer/cutter and software, printer/cutter/laminator and software. As we are an official service provider for our suppliers, we are able to include competitive extended warranties and on-going maintenance contracts with our bundles too. Market knowledge, product knowledge and experience of which products complement each other is key to offering the right customer the right bundle."





solution from a single brand, it works out better value for customers to purchase a package such as a JV300 Plus printer and CG-FXII Plus cutter, making a substantial saving when compared to purchasing them separately,” says Newman.

He adds: “Cost can influence why customers opt for a combination package but it’s not always the case. The ability to choose a particular workflow or method of production that creates efficiencies is often the deciding factor. One such example is when we package the Mimaki 3DFF-222 3D printer along with a Mimaki UJF-MkII LED UV printer with the primary benefit being the ability to produce jigs in-house for custom printing.

In the wide-format space Newman says the most popular bundle is the Mimaki JV300-Plus with a Mimaki CG-FXII Plus cutter and a Mimaki LA-160 laminator - “the ultimate high production package for any sign, graphics and display supplier”.

“Everyone wants a cheaper price but does not want the loss of quality and usability, and there is point where this is not possible,” sums up John Draycott, marketing manager at ArtSystems. “Our product teams work with the manufacturers and resellers, and feedback market requests. But put simply, all bundles lead with a value/ use ratio. In the end the user needs to make a decision as to the best split. We’d never recommend a bundle to a reseller that did not meet to needs of the user.

“In our sector right now the bundles in demand tend to be for an entry-level roll-fed cutter with printer. We also have a growing requirement for grand-format bespoke bundles, driven by HP Latex R series with Summa F series.

“The user has to decide what really matters, the upfront cost or the longer term value created by the investment and how quick he can realise that. If a reseller ensures good service and support but costs more, does this work out better than a cheaper bundle?

So has he noticed any specific trend? “Typically new start-up companies will favour a bundle as they are starting from scratch and buying several products at one time is attractive when buying from one supplier and keeping the finance under one roof. But everyone’s up for a deal if buying multiple products and there is ample room to do this, especially at the higher end of the product range.

“Software is a big focus these days as customers need to save hours in the day and increase production. Textile printing bundles are becoming of more interest too. A prime example of an off-the-shelf bundle would be the Mimaki print-and-cut bundle, with or without a laminator, but we work with other options too. Most bundles are possible, it’s just a matter of being creative. And, customers want piece of mind knowing they are well looked after by a trusted service provider for their on-going service and support requirements as well as initial purchase.”

Brett Newman, chief operations manager a Hybrid Services - Mimaki’s exclusive distributor for the UK and Ireland, adds: “Yes! It’s all about offering a choice. Mimaki packages are available throughout the UK and Ireland through Hybrid’s authorised reseller partners, and are attractive to customers of all types and sizes. Be it an entry level solvent printer coupled with a matching cutter or a direct to textile Mimaki TX300 printer with matching Rimslow finishing equipment, we encounter companies with varying requirements for whom we can offer a perfectly matched solution.”

So coming back to cost, what does he say to those who think companies may only recommend ‘bundles’ that makes them the most money? “It’s often the case that thanks to Mimaki’s breadth of technology and the opportunity for our reseller partners to offer a



What technical issues do you still need resolving?



Russell Wilson

Head of operations, Leach



John Mark Watson

Managing director, John Mark

As a wide-format print provider what technical development/s (anywhere across your business) would make your life easier - and why?

If we could have auto colour profiling, and the ability to add metallic inks to the printers, this would help us with our current challenges. Also, if there were any camera systems that could 'auto inspect' graphics (material going in and print coming out) this would be a great advantage.

Outside of these, time and quality are our main focus and any services which could keep us at the front of the race here would be advantageous.

Getting our printers to run at faster speeds would enable us to increase our output and reduce lead times. Currently the printers only operate on CMYK colour and we would like to see the development of other inks, such as whites and metallics.

Do you think you'll see manufacturers/developers meeting this/these need/s in 2020 - why/why not?

I am aware that some print manufacturers are now integrating colour profiling or colour matching within new kit. Retro fit kits might be a little more challenging in 2020 due to the variation of printers, Rip systems that are out there currently.

I am also aware there are very limited metallic inks and printers out there at the moment - I cannot see that our printers will have this as a retro fit option in 2020.

Camera quality inspection can see coming in 2020. The cost of the technology is now lower than ever, and data systems can be trained very quickly now, so this could be very real for 2020.

The best way to increase speed of the printers would be to have a static printhead, however, you would need a massive amount of individual printheads within the main bulk head to be able to print at the varying widths required for wallpaper printing. At present, there are printers in the market that do employ this design, but they cannot print at the same quality as our current latex printers.

Regarding different inks, hopefully we will see further development in this area during 2020, as there are already some printers being used for different areas of printing that are now using them.

Are there technological irritants you think will never be resolved?

100% true colour consistency will always be a moving target due to all the differences with the substrates, ambient temperature and humidity. Very slight variations in ink along with artwork variances mean eliminating colour variation is not achievable in my eyes - although, it will always improve.

We are very fortunate with the working relationship we have with our printer manufacturer, and we work very closely with them. As such, and through previous experience, I cannot see any technological issues that cannot be resolved.

Are you attending any of the print trade shows this year - and if so, what are you hoping to see in terms of technological advances?

We always try to attend Fespa, and will be looking for quality and customer improvement tools. We wouldn't look to invest in printers or computer systems at an exhibition, as we invest heavily (time and money) in these relationships. But anything else that could help would be considered.

2020 is a big year for print exhibitions - Fespa and Drupa. I will attend at least one of these, if not both to see if there are any innovative concepts coming out. If I can see any developments regarding increased colours or speed then this will be of interest.

Do you think manufacturers/suppliers do enough to help you futureproof your investments in new technology?

Yes and no. Investment is generally large in large-format printing, therefore no decision is going to be quick, or 100% certain and some sales reps don't see the long game. This is generally the reason why we have such mature relationships with our current suppliers as they are moving forward at a good pace and will often develop their kit to meet our requirements in terms of new techniques, materials, speeds and quality improvements. In our field we are happy with options and availability.

The benefit for us is that we do work very closely with the manufacturer to help them develop what is required. Also, many of the small advancements can be added/amended to our printers to keep them up to date with the latest products in the industry.

Do you do any/much in-house technological development within your own company - if so, what?

We have a dedicated team on R&D. This is mostly related to product development (working materials and print together), mainly on our illuminated and non-illuminated tension frames.

For us, as a company, printing of the wallcovering is just the first step in the process, we still have to trim and finish the product to make a roll of wallpaper that we can send out to our clients. We require specialised machinery to complete the full process and as the wallpaper market changes constantly - we have to make changes to our equipment to be able to fulfil our customers' requirements and specification.

We hear plenty from manufacturers on where large-format inkjet technology is going. But are they putting R&D spend in the areas where you want to see development? Are there irritants that still need eradicating?



Andy Wilson

Managing director, PressOn

I think there could be more transparency about what environmental impact inks and materials generate. We are getting approached more and more for products that have lower environmental impact and quite often it's quite challenging to find paperwork to back up claims.

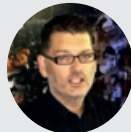
The recycling and waste removal community are happy to take the waste but are less keen to produce audit trails to show the journey of the product after the material has been removed. It seems that lower environmental impact is OK apparently if it's only in landfill for 200 years instead of 1000. I would like to see better information available from 2020 on what we can do as an industry to help with environmental pressures.

Maybe I'm going out on a limb here but technically I think we are in the best place we have ever been. These days we have excellent colour management software, machines that are affordable and reliable and given how mature the digital print market is there is a lot of knowledge out there that can be referenced when you do encounter an issue. I would say we are actually in a golden age.

We have not recently, and have no plans to in the future attend any print shows. Our focus for printed material now lies firmly in the HP Latex camp, finishing remains with Kongsberg and Flexa, if there are any particular advances I'm sure they will be in touch.

Futureproofing technology is always going to be challenging for a supplier or PSP, but how futureproof do you want to be? I think we are at the cutting edge of tech - we are seeing print machines that are still capable and running after six-plus years which, in digital, is no mean feat. Finishing kit has seen in excess of ten years. I think the onus must be on the purchaser doing their own due diligence rather than any supplier offering futureproof guarantees.

Lately most of our technical development has been in marketing. That might sound odd but getting our message out there is technically challenging in an ever changing social media landscape. We are constantly looking for ways to get our case studies and reference material out into the marketplace. Another area of development has been our MIS system, we have recently invested in more features to help us categorise our client list more, again to assist with the marketing analysis.



Richard McCombe

Managing director, Matic Media

We have developed our own W2P platform powering our online trade service GraphicWarehouse because we could not find anything on the market that would work across the whole business and be adaptable. We built this in-house because at the time we could find nothing that could deliver clients' artwork directly to the Rip queue and automatically print for over 400 products we had standardised. This links to our accounting software, marketing CRM, dispatch and is about to link to scheduling.

There seems to be a lack of understanding from the manufacturers on what is going on at grassroots level. How many years have we seen their push for wallcoverings, blinds, and most recently, soft furnishings, but what about the bit about making your business more efficient - reducing wastes like nesting, time, labour, receiving artwork files, that are correct or being able to fix it quickly... plus automated invoicing?

One of the problems is standardisation - there's such a mix of kit and consumables. In our business there are at least 25,000 combinations, so who in the industry could actually write the recipes with all the ingredients to make the delicious creations that form large-format printed products to match everyone's offerings?

Our three directors will attend Sign UK and Fespa but we all have different agendas covering machinery that will make us efficient, software and new ideas or products to sell. We have tried a few times to seek partners to support the development of our own software and the trade shows are always a good platform to build relationships but quite often the right people are not on hand.

Recently we were advised that our HP Designjet L26500's were about to become obsolete with the discontinuation of ink, printheads and parts. We have four of these machines and they work perfectly but the notice left us in a very uncomfortable position. We spread load over these machines by leaving the same stock in the printer, reducing waste and setup time - because our software can deliver the print file from the clients' computers to our printers in as little as 60 seconds from anywhere in the world with all the digital cutting and eyeletting marks automatically on the print file. Now, you can get remanufactured printheads and third-party inks but instead we decided to purchase a Canon Colorado as we felt there was nothing else in that market space to support our requirements.

Yes, we do a lot - see above or check out GraphicWarehouse to see the front-end in action!

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Nicole Spencer

Nicole Spencer, operations director at trade house RMC Digital Print in Hull, became president of the Fespa UK Association last autumn - the first woman to do so. In the run up to Fespa Global 2020 we met up to discuss her plans for an association in transition.

By Lesley Simpson

Fespa UK has a reputation for being a bit of an old boys' club. It now has three key females - yourself as president, Carol Swift as MD and Suzi Wilkinson as a director. Do you think that will intrinsically change things?

My feelings on that are that Fespa UK is an association offering something for everyone in the print sector and that it has been built on strong leadership so far. So there's a good foundation for the future. We are potentially getting some new board members too, which may or may not be female! I don't think having more women at the top of the association fundamentally changes anything, but I think it will help - in terms of potentially attracting other women into Fespa UK and into the industry, and in that we are well represented at board meetings now.

Sometimes, when people say 'old boys' club' they think in terms of stuff going on behind the scenes, like backhanders etc. - which isn't the case at Fespa UK - but one of the key benefits of being a member is that we do help each other out. Maybe there's a print job that someone can't handle so they may pass on the lead to someone they know who can. Or maybe they just ask each other if they can share their knowledge and experience. At RMC, as Fespa UK members, we've found that invaluable at times.

On becoming MD of the association Carole said expanding the association's membership was a key goal - is it still, and do you think your appointment as president will have an impact on that?

Actually, originally we [RMC] went to quite a lot of Fespa Global events, but no-one ever really asked us about being a member of Fespa UK Association. Then I went to one of its UK events and was asked if we were members, I said no and we were encouraged to join. Since we did that, over four years ago now, we have really used our membership - it's been great, so I really want to push for more to join.

At the moment membership sits at around 90. We expect to bring some people in and lose some - but the people we tend to lose are the ones who don't really engage.

The split of membership is about even in terms of printers and suppliers. For the past year the focus has

really been on trying to get more printers involved and that's what I personally would like to see happen. For RMC sharing print knowledge has been really good, so that's why we'd like to see more active participants from within the printer community.

Also, we [RMC] have had machines issues, and by firstly speaking with Fespa UK board members, and then other association members, we've realised that others have similar issues, something that has given us back-up when speaking with our supplier - because we can categorically say, we know we're not the only one with the problem. I don't think we'd be getting the issue resolved as quickly without that back-up.

On your appointment as Fespa UK president you said a key goal would be "diversifying and expanding the range of insight and support we offer to our members". How is that manifesting itself?

The membership used to be very screenprint heavy, because that's where the association came from. So now that's changing - we have people from signage, prototype packaging etc. And now we're targeting different sectors within the industry - the intention is to keep the membership speciality print, but within a wider context. Top of our priorities is growing the membership with active, engaged and engaging companies who will participate.

Instead of saying 'come and be a Fespa UK member' we're finding it's better to put on events that attract would-be members in the first place, and then have a conversation about them joining.

Also, in my role as president, I'd like to speak with current members and ask 'what is it that we are not offering you that you'd like to see us offering?' Carol and Suzi did a lot of member visits in 2019 and in 2020 we'll definitely be having more of those conversations - making sure we know what members really want rather than guessing and putting on events no-one is really interested in attending.

Financial support for some Fespa UK Association projects comes from Fespa Global as part of its 'Profit



President, Fespa
UK Association

for Purpose' remit. What projects is it funding this year, and what other projects do you hope it will support in the near future?

In terms of events and their funding, as I mentioned, we want respond to what members really want, and also put on things that will attract those who may not otherwise have thought of joining Fespa UK. So, we ran a textiles event in 2018 and 2019 for instance. We'll do it again, probably in 2021 to give people a bit of a breather. We normally try and get a couple sponsors on board for the various events, so we can self-fund as far as possible.

Not all association projects receive Fespa Global funding - it did not receive funding for its corrugated show for instance. However, Fespa UK was the top association out of all the 37 associations, at the GA in Lyon when it came to asking for funding for our projects, and it has been top for the last several years. But, we can only run so many events each year as there are only four members of staff at Fespa UK. We would love to grow the team and offer more events but we don't have the membership at present to be able to do this.

At Fespa Global in Madrid this year we are looking to host a UK members gathering to which they will encouraged to bring their clients too. We are talking to a couple of our members who would like to sponsor the event and bring along their clients, so it should be busy with lots of networking opportunities. We are currently looking at a roof top bar venue that looks out over the Madrid Skyline, where we will host a drinks reception and an informal meal. At the main show event the association will host members on the Club Fespa stand too.

The association, in partnership with Vism, has got project approval to launch the UK Graphic Awards this year, celebrating the achievements of the wide-format graphics printing and installation industry, and Thrive in Print, a brand new conference dedicated to informing and educating wide format printing business managers and owners.

Sustainability is a big issue, and one that's close to your own heart. Can you tell us how you think Fespa UK can

help the wide-format print community work toward a more environmentally sustainable future?

We are certainly happy to have conversations with anyone who wants help or advice in this area and point them in the right direction. We haven't got a formal link to A Plastic Planet yet, but Nick [Kirby] at Swanline has done a lot of work with them and has introduced FAPS UK to them so watch this space for developments there too.

What other issues are members flagging up to you - and how is Fespa UK addressing those?

Members don't tend to flag things up! So many companies join associations and then don't use them to any effect. Hopefully, from doing more of a business focussed conference this year things will start being highlighted - whereas the events we've done in the past tend to have been on pre-determined issues/sectors.

This sector does not have a strong, cohesive voice. Do you see that as a mission Fespa UK should take on? As its president is that a role you see yourself taking on?

Well we are involved with the GMPA [The Graphics and Print Media Alliance - comprising trade associations representing companies operating in the graphics and print media industry supply chain] but it's not really doing anything. They still have regular meetings but I've not been so I can't comment further on that.

Potentially, Fespa UK could be a voice for the sector, but again, you need the members - or input from others in the sector - to know what the feelings are etc. It comes down to having a bigger, more responsive, active membership.

A lot of people are wary of being a part of an association, speaking to an association, or to other print companies, in case their ideas are stolen... it is difficult. I am happy to speak on behalf of members, but I have to know what they want. Perhaps one of the reasons people don't join associations is that they don't feel they do enough to represent them, but it's chicken and egg - you have to know what they want from you to be able to deliver it.

I AM HAPPY TO
SPEAK ON BEHALF
OF MEMBERS, BUT
I HAVE TO KNOW
WHAT THEY WANT



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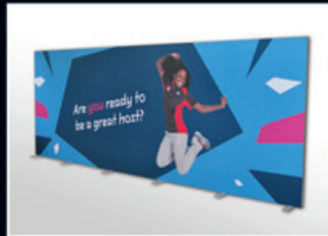
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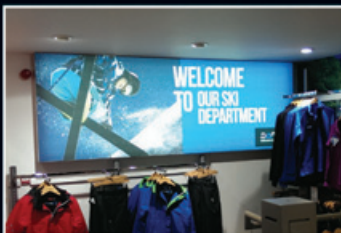


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“WE ARE DOUBLING UP OUR CREATIVE CAPACITY FOR THIS YEAR’S INFLUX OF NEW GLOBAL PARTNERS.”

ON STREAM FOR GROWTH

THE PANAWRAP GLOBAL LICENSING PROGRAMME IS BUBBLING UP VERY NICELY FOR ITS DEVELOPER. SO SHOULD YOU BE DRINKING FROM THAT FOUNTAIN?

Under six months ago StackaWraps launched an international licensing programme for its novel, and patent-pending, PanaWrap 3D print offering. Since then 19 licenses have been taken out - six in the UK, five in mainland Europe, five in the USA, one in Canada, one in Japan and one in Australia. The company says there are many more in the pipeline, including one huge international leading print and packaging company with a long-established global manufacturing network that will see PanaWrapping proliferating in the print marketing industry on a colossal scale in 2020.

“We are doubling up our creative capacity for this year’s influx of new global partners. I can’t say too much at this time, but we are ecstatic to be making alliances with some of the biggest international players in the game,” enthuses commercial director for PanaWrapping International, Richard Horne.

So what’s the big attraction for PSPs in joining the ranks of global partners for what is certainly an eye-catching 3D product? First, you need to understand what

PanaWrapping is – a technique developed to convert 2D images into curved three-dimensional products, of any size, without stretch or distortion of the original image. Thus you can replicate a 6ft photorealistic soda stream bottle for instance - exactly what the first Canadian partner has done. It is now in direct talks with Soda Stream to roll out similar campaigns globally. In the US, the first order to use PanaWrapping was a high-profile Super Bowl campaign for Pepsi. Now live in over 2000 Walmart outlets, and with additional high-profile orders in production, StackaWraps says PanaWrapping will bring in over \$1m in revenue via its US debut.

This 3D alternative to traditional special builds is manufactured using recycled and recyclable material and shipped out flat-packed for the lowest possible carbon footprint, a real point of attraction to brands toeing the environmental line.

PanaWrap partner PSPs must have good sustainability credentials and be able to supply high resolution flat art files compatible with the specialist software developed for this unique 3D technique. How the process works is that flat art files are converted by the PanaWrap team into a series of panels incorporating a lock and tab system called the Master Files. These files are sent back to the PSP ‘ready-to-go’ and printed onto sustainable cardstock, then cut out using CNC or die cutting equipment. The cut panels fold neatly together to create a push-out model - using an inter-locking tab system that secures the panels in place to create a 3D product replica from a flat-packed, sustainable card display.

The models can be made to virtually any size - PSPs/clients just size the Master Files and select the preferred scaling per application. Further copies can then be produced under license to PanaWraps.

“Our business model is simple. We charge partner PSPs a subsidised cost for producing the Master Files, followed by a sliding scale commission when the order goes live. Imagine, instead of presenting a flat printed display, like your competition, add photorealistic, 3D PanaWrapping, and increase your profit margins by literally adding a sheet of sustainable card stock,” says Horne.

“We are so excited about 2020,” says Natasha Leigh, CO of PanaWraps’ and co-founder of parent company StackaWraps. “International licensing enables us to evolve our PanaWrapping system globally and will help keep our print innovations above the competition in 3D for efficiency, sustainability and high impact branding.

“Sustainability has been the driver of this latest development by our team and we are so proud to be able to contribute to anything that can help improve the print industry’s green credentials and reduce carbon footprints. This is something we are continuing to work on with our global partners.”

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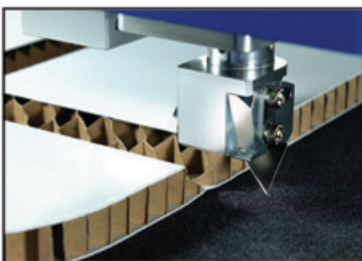
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DO AS WE DO

THIS IS THE RALLYING CALL OF LEACH MD JAMES LAVIN. READ ON AND YOU'LL FIND OUT WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT...

Do as we do. Not often you hear that message from a company managing director to competitors. But Leach MD James Lavin is taking the novel stance from what he sees as a moral duty as well as one of commercial sense.

"A year ago, at the start of 2019, Leach commissioned a survey that focused on the various high street challenges being experienced by retailers. A major discovery was that environmental considerations are now one of the main priorities for this sector when it comes to selecting suppliers, including graphic display providers.

"And this green conscience seems to be an emerging trend across the business community and wider public in general. Horrific news stories such as the current fires in Australia, constant eco protesting, the plight of young Greta Thunberg, and the popularity of programmes such as 'Blue Planet', all combine to place climate and wider sustainability issues on the radar of the masses. Consequently, there has never been such a keen eye on companies to make changes and 'do their bit' for sustainability.

"This certainly highlights the need for all those in the supply chain - from printers and manufacturers to installation and fit out teams - to be fully aware of clients' environmental expectations at all stages of their working relationships. Whether factoring in eco considerations when first conceptualising a product or simply offering more planet-friendly solutions when pitching for work, it's clear to see that this green agenda is not going to disappear any time soon.

"Reacting to the current climate and moving with the times is a vital way to ensure marketplace longevity, and Leach certainly isn't afraid to keep up with new trends and technologies. And being in business for over a century is testament to the fact that such a customer-centric approach pays off.

"As a provider of extensive graphic display equipment for a range of visitor centres and public spaces, Leach is fully aware of the high level of moral responsibility on its shoulders. That's why we've always had this 'eco' conscience, with products incorporating LED lights for energy efficiency, changeable graphics to promote reusability, and lightweight - even rollable - solutions, to reduce transport costs.

"In recent times however - aware of the growing environmental credentials that companies are expected to uphold - Leach has taken a step further, inviting customers to participate in a series of 'innovation forums'. These open debate sessions allow clients to put forward their concerns and requirements for future products, and - as a customer-focused business - this has



LEACH IS CALLING
UPON OTHERS
ACROSS THE
PRINT SECTOR
TO ADJUST THEIR
ENVIRONMENTAL
MINDSETS

helped Leach to work with these organisations to shape ongoing R&D.

"The latest outcome of these collaborations is 12 months and £100,000 of investment into next-generation graphic display solutions with even greater green-performance, as we urge others to follow suit and adopt a stronger eco-stance in 2020.

"In addition to any corporate moral responsibilities felt, the likelihood is that, during this new decade, customers will increasingly opt for more environmentally-friendly options available to them, given the choice. So, making the decision to 'go green' is also a strategic one for companies to adopt. Failing to make these advances - such as offering products which reduce carbon impact with no detriment on product quality, and integrating the use of sustainable materials into production methods - is very risky indeed.

"Presently, the team at Leach is working on enabling the availability of a recyclable alternative to every single product in the current range and, where this is not possible, offering a PVC-free option instead - which is easier to recycle and therefore still a 'healthier' choice.

"During this new decade - where we all hope to see a stop if not even some reversal of the negative effects on the environment, so that there is hope for future generations - Leach is calling upon others across the print sector to adjust their environmental mindsets too, amidst the mounting pressures for companies to do more to protect the planet. The future is bright...if we all get on board."

How to get creative

Every company would like to be more creative, which is why there is no shortage of books offering advice on the topic. Yet too many managing directors aren't sure how to ignite the creative spark in their businesses. But in a rapidly changing, digitally driven, economy we need to get used to the idea that 'no normal' is the 'new normal' and behave accordingly.

WHAT IS CREATIVITY - AND HOW DO YOU APPLY THE CONCEPT TO YOUR BUSINESS? WHATEVER IT MEANS, IT'S BOUND TO TAKE YOU OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE, WHICH IS PERHAPS WHY IT GETS IGNORED. HERE WALTER HALE HELPS YOU FOCUS ON THE TOPIC THAT COULD BE KEY TO YOUR COMPANY'S CONTINUED SUCCESS.

1.

DON'T PRE-JUDGE

Many bosses believe their staff aren't creative enough. Their well-intentioned attempts to change that often founder on the same rock: the fact that they start the process by defining the outcome they desire. Clearly, creativity has to be focused on a goal but that doesn't need to be narrowly defined. It could be as simple - and as broad - as: what do our customers want that we are not doing already? An even better question might be: what don't they want?

The implication that you have already reached your conclusion is bound to demotivate staff, reduce momentum and deter creativity. Better to tell staff you have an open mind - even if you haven't.

2.

WHAT PRECONCEPTIONS?

Forget your preconceptions about your company, the outside world and how the outside world sees you.

I have worked with many organisations, of many sizes, in many sectors and many countries that recognise they have a creativity crisis - and there is one common factor which makes it much harder for them to rectify this. If I was a scientist or a French engineer (see next tip), I would call this Hale's Law - every organisation finds it nearly impossible to truly understand how the market sees them.

This is partly about behaviour - too much time in the office rather than in the market - but it is also about legacy ("But we've always done it like this"), hierarchy (a surprisingly influential factor even in smaller businesses), the stories we collectively tell ourselves that define our image of our company and, on occasion, strategic blindness (I've worked with businesses where managers say it is easier to pretend they can change the market than to try to change company policy). As a consequence, we are liable to miss potentially lucrative opportunities by playing safe, developing incremental innovations that look creative to us - because we can see the changes we have had to make as a business to enable them - but are barely noticed by the outside world.

Here we could learn something from the giant consumer companies, such as L'Oreal, that are investing heavily in what they call 'social listening'. The beauty of 'social listening' is you don't have to spend millions to do it. It can also provide the raw data to help challenge entrenched internal assumptions about what customers want and help to reveal what is really happening in the marketplace.

3.

CREATIVITY IS NOT A TEAM EFFORT ...

You may have never heard of Maximilien Ringelmann but his research could help your business become creative. The French engineer observed that the larger the number of people involved in a particular task, the lower the productivity per head, a phenomenon we now call 'the Ringelmann effect'. He outlined two reasons for this: firstly, that some group members would be tempted to sit back and let others drive the process, behaviour categorised as 'social loafing'; and secondly, that coordinating the group inevitably led to inefficiency and waste. Luckily for the hotel industry, which has made gazillions out of renting rooms for corporate brainstorming sessions, Ringelmann's research has not been widely publicised. Managers who think creativity can be brainstormed should think again. After all, Ringelmann's studies effectively just prove the old adage about too many cooks spoiling the broth.

4.

... BUT NEITHER IS IT THE PRESERVE OF THE LONE GENIUS

Traditionally, John Lennon has been regarded as the most creative Beatle. There are several reasons for this. One is that Lennon told us this was the case. Another is that he fits the stereotype of nonconformist genius defined by the likes of Da Vinci, Einstein and, more recently, Jobs. He also did not live long enough to sully his own myth, as McCartney did with such inconsequential ditties as the 'Frog Chorus', 'Ebony And Ivory' and 'Mull Of Kintyre'. Yet the album that is widely regarded as the Beatles' artistic peak, 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band', was driven by McCartney.

As the concept - and the production - became more ambitious, Lennon was occasionally moved to protest that he was just a Teddy Boy. He was being slightly disingenuous - 'Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds' and 'A Day In The Life' were primarily his work, and he collaborated with McCartney on 'With A Little Help From My Friends' - but he wasn't the creative genius behind the project, McCartney was. The subsequent careers of the most famous songwriting partners in popular music also seem to suggest that they were at their creative best together. Nothing they wrote separately - not even Lennon's 'Imagine' - would change the world as radically as their Beatles music did. 'Sgt. Pepper' proves two things: sometimes, two geniuses are better than one, and that genius might not conform to our expectations.

5.

BE PREPARED TO BREAK THE RULES

W. Somerset Maugham was one of the most disciplined authors of all-time. He wrote from 9am till noon every day - even Christmas Day - and, even if he felt he was in full flow, always stopped after three hours. He found that regimen useful in part because it helped him confront the uncertainty at the centre of his art. As he ruefully observed once: "There are three rules for writing a novel. Unfortunately, nobody knows what they are." There are more than three rules about creativity. Unfortunately, no one can quite agree on what they are. We do know there are some things that impede creativity: bureaucratic turf wars, arcane internal processes, a reductive focus on best practice of questionable relevance (eg "why can't be like Apple?") and internal meddling.

Josh Valman, a consultant who advises large companies, says that many innovations die of interference. "The most effective approach is often to give a project the green light, give the team their independence, and a budget that shows you have faith in the project reaching the next stage and that you trust the people involved not to spend the money on office furniture."

IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY, FIRST INCREASINGLY BEATS BEST. NEW IDEAS SHOULD REACH THE MARKET, IN SOME FORM OR OTHER, WITHIN THREE TO SIX MONTHS

6.

ITERATION IS BETTER THAN PROCRASTINATION

You can spend time and resource refining forecasts for your new idea or doing the umpteenth bit of market research to assuage doubts (or cover everyone's asses) or you could just put it out there and see what happens - maybe testing it with a select customer or two. In the digital economy, first increasingly beats best. New ideas should reach the market, in some form or other, within three to six months. That way, even if the innovation fails, you can move on quickly - and possibly more cheaply - to the next one.

7.

BEHAVING LIKE JIM TROTT DOES NOT STIMULATE CREATIVITY ...

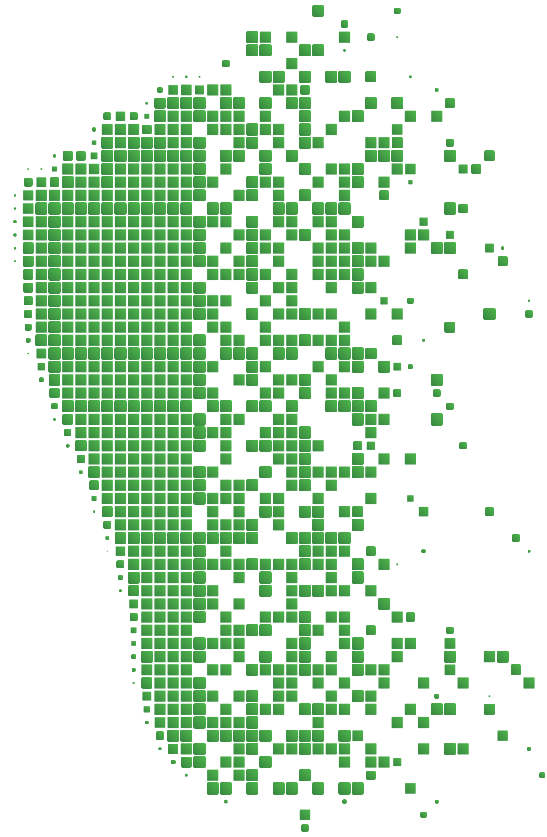
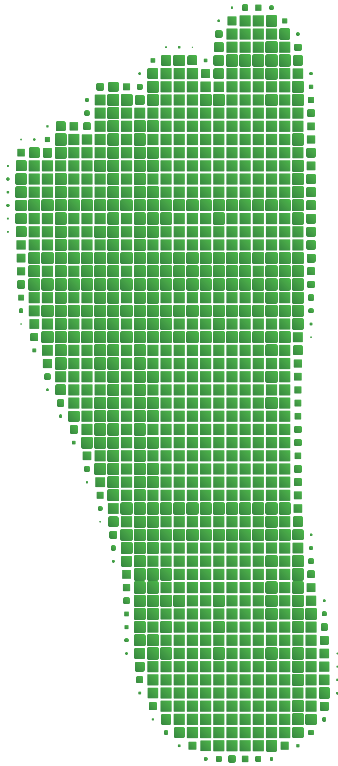
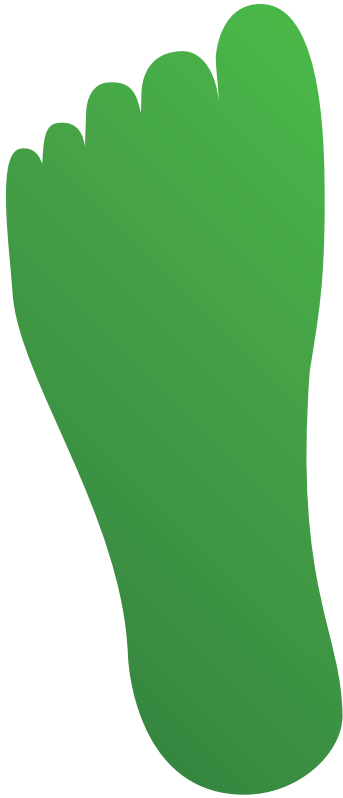
One of the funniest recurring gags in 'The Vicar Of Dibley' is the way parish councillor Jim Trott, likened to a lecherous, hairy troll by one unkind critic, begins almost every sentence "No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no" before stopping to catch breath and saying "Yes!". Yet in business, too many managers who talk the talk about creativity behave almost exactly like Trott. The difference being that they never eventually gasp "Yes!"

Many innovations are killed by micromanagers who, considering a new concept as if it were the finished article, think far too literally and ignore the bigger picture. You don't have to accept every new idea but you need to give them the time and space to develop. Even if your knee jerk impulse is right - and the idea is bad - the way you manage the process will set a precedent that may stifle better ideas to come.

8.

... YET GIVING PEOPLE SPACE TO BE PICASSO DOES

The uncomfortable truth about creativity is that it makes many of us uncomfortable. It's not something we can readily quantify or judge and it makes us take risks. It is often harder to calculate the risk of missing an opportunity than it is to figure out the costs associated with trying to seize one. And whatever directors say about not playing the blame game, the risks to the sponsor of a failed innovation are significant. There is also the uncomfortable yet undeniable fact that some of the most creative people behave like petulant children. Yet their apparent disregard for conventional wisdom is actually a strength, not a weakness. As Picasso said once: "It took me four years to paint like Raphael but a lifetime to paint like a child."



CAN YOU DEMATERIALISE?

WE'RE NOT TALKING SCI-FI HERE, BUT A CONSIDERED WAY OF REDUCING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT TO TAKE US INTO A BRIGHTER ECOLOGICAL FUTURE. WALTER HALE EXPLORES THE THEORY CHALLENGING THE MINDSET THAT THERE IS NOTHING ANY OF US CAN DO TO AVERT AN ENVIRONMENTAL APOCALYPSE.

Making more bits from fewer atoms. That is how Andre McAfee, a scientist at MIT Sloan University, believes we can combat climate change. Although the environmental alarm is regularly sounded by such august bodies as the World Economic Forum and the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, McAfee argues that we can still avert catastrophe by using technology, raising public awareness, acting with optimism and turning to efficient chickens.

How exactly, you are probably wondering, are chickens efficient? Five years ago, environmental scientist Jesse H. Ausubel calculated that if farm animals were vehicles, chickens got about 60 miles per gallon, pigs 40 miles and cattle 12 miles. If Ausubel is right, every time a

shopper decides to buy a chicken breast rather than a beef burger it is a small victory for planet Earth.

We live in an age when anyone can prove anything with statistics yet Ausubel's point, echoed by McAfee, is that we can change our behaviour - indeed, in many aspects of our life, we already have - and that the more doom-laden forecasts, which some campaigners refer to as "enviroporn" do not factor in that possibility.

Nor do the doomsday scenarios make allowance for technological progress. For millions of people, one reasonably compact smartphone has replaced the alarm clock, torch, DVDs and CDs (and, for that matter, CD and DVD players). A shift to a circular economy - 'take, make and repurpose' as opposed to 'take, make and dispose' - in such sectors as aluminium, cement, plastics and steel

could, one credible estimate suggests, could halve Europe's emissions by 2050.

The Ausubel/McAfee theory, known as 'dematerialisation', has been criticised by some who argue that more dramatic action will be required to save the planet and others who fear that the narrative will lull us into a false sense of security. To be clear, Ausubel and McAfee are absolutely not saying that we can become complacent about climate change. They are just challenging the mindset, which can be unintentionally reinforced by the media coverage of successive extreme weather events such as the wildfires in Australia, that there is nothing any of us can do to avert an environmental apocalypse.

McAfee certainly has a point when he argues that we tend to overlook the good stuff we are already doing. The 'good stuff' includes the fact that America's petroleum consumption per capita peaked decades ago, that farmers have more than quadrupled the corn they produce per acre of food since 1930 and that plastic use per capita peaked in 1990. As the scandalous level of plastic pollution in our oceans proves, we are still paying for our past sins and will be paying for them for decades to come. Yet at the same time, between 1900 and 2010, a study of 100 commodities by Ausubel and his colleagues found that 36 had peaked in terms of absolute use, 53 had peaked relative to the size of the economy and only 11 were still growing both in terms of absolute use and relative to the economy. Luckily for us - and our environment - one of those 11 was chicken.

The central, and encouraging point here, Ausubel suggests, is that we have shown that we can decouple human productivity from resource use. Remember the forecast that, at some point in the near but unspecified future, the world would run out of oil? In 1914, the US Mining Bureau predicted that oil would run out by 1924. Governments and thinkers have since forecast that this would happen in 1952, 1963, 1990 and 2010.

What is actually happening is that we are not running out of oil per se but we are running out of easily accessible oil that is cheap to extract. The industry is turning to more unconventional - for which read more expensive - methods, which will inevitably raise the price of oil, but also provide an incentive for us to buy hybrid vehicles, electric vehicles, bicycles or not own a vehicle at all and rely on a mobility service such as Uber. As the Saudi oil minister Sheikh Ahmed Zaha Yamani famously put it: "The stone age came to an end, but not for lack of stones, and the oil age will end, but not for lack of oil." Given that 17 of the 20 companies recently identified by 'The Guardian' as being responsible for one-third of all carbon emissions are in the oil and gas industry, the end of the oil age cannot come soon enough.

IF IT DOES MORE OF
THE GOOD STUFF IT
IS ALREADY DOING,
THE WIDE-FORMAT
SECTOR WILL PLAY
ITS PART IN THE
'DEMATERIALIZATION'
OF THE GLOBAL
ECONOMY.

Sceptics point out that America - which has been much less protective of the environment during Donald Trump's presidency - does not represent the whole world. Most of the world's most polluted cities, for example, are in China and India. Ausubel agrees but says that the US has traditionally acted as a harbinger of trends to come and that as China and India develop they will follow a similar path when it comes to resource use. Indeed, enlightened self-interest has already persuaded the Chinese government to act - notably by reducing the country's reliance on coal in a drive to cut air pollution. A recent study by the University of Gothenburg concluded that the connection between pollution and economic growth in China has been weakening since 1995. Even so - and this is where some critics question the 'dematerialisation' theory - the economic superpower now emits as much CO2 as the US and Europe combined.

And yet, as Ausubel said in a 2015 lecture: "American use of almost everything except information seems to be peaking, not because our resources are exhausted but because consumers changed their consumption and producers changed production."

You can see this effect starting to gather momentum in the wide-format sector, with an increasing number of print service providers looking to change their production methods to reduce their use of PVC vinyl (by, for example, printing on tension fabric systems), embrace water-based inks, buy electric vehicles, consume less energy and recycle more of their waste.

Image Reports' 2019 Widthwise survey found that just under one in three large-format PSPs in the UK/Ireland are investing to measure - and/or reduce - their carbon footprint. It'll be interesting what the findings of the 2020 survey are. Some providers are being encouraged to act by clients who are anxious to measure the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions but many are changing their ways out of the sincere conviction that this is simply the right thing to do.

Wide-format print will not become a carbon neutral industry overnight - although a few companies are showing the way, suppliers and clients could do more to help - but if it does more of the good stuff it is already doing, the sector will play its part in the 'dematerialisation' of the global economy.

There were so many extreme weather events in 2019 - from super-typhoons in Japan to deadly fires in Australia and devastating floods in northern England, Venice and East Africa - that it is easy to assume that climate change is irreversible and conclude that, therefore, anything we do as individuals, either privately or in business, will make no difference. But McAfee doesn't believe the war on climate change is lost. If we add what Abraham Lincoln called "the fuel of self-interest to the fire of genius", it is not too late, he argues, to avert an apocalyptic global catastrophe. Let's hope he's right.



a. PPM on location

Project Print Management (PPM) has completed a building wrap at Somerset House in London. As Film4 runs events in the courtyard of Somerset House PPM was asked to produce a facade building wrap to disguise two unsightly scaffolding structures supporting a temporary roof over renovation works. In response it used library images for the graphics, printed on its 5m-wide UV printer onto Verseidag mesh PVC banner material, which was then installed by PPM's specialist rope access team onto a scaffolding sub-frame.

b. Animal magic

Signs Express Chester has delivered various works for Chester Zoo, which is phasing out PVC-based signage after signing up to a plastic reduction scheme. To meet 'greener' demands the PSP sourced Terra Banner and EcoStick from Soyang Europe for the latest job.

c. A job with real Kudos

Special events company Kudos is responsible for transforming the ballroom at Mayfair's Claridges hotel in London into an Italian Palazzo for a Greek couple's wedding. It used Pongs DirecTex Softimage Contrast, supplied by CMYUK, to create 360 degree Venetian vistas within the space for the big day.

d. New door opens for Ashley House

Ashley House Printing Company is Exeter is responsible for delivering three key interior décor elements for exclusive new-build Sanctuary House in Devon, its first private interior design project. Using scans of original artwork, it adapted the images to create large wall graphics that were applied to Linvisible doors and surrounding wall areas to create contemporary art features.

e. Being exhibitionist

Minprint and MAD Creative have created two stunning exhibition spaces at The Ulster Museum. They have produced eye-popping work for the 'The Art of Selling Songs' and 'Vice Versa' exhibitions using Papergraphics Digimura-1 one-piece wallcovering was the way to go.



b.



c.



d.



e.



DIGGING BELOW THE SURFACE WITH **INDUSTRY MOLE**

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I finally have 2020 vision. So, unfortunately, does everyone else, this being the year after 2019 and before 2021. At Mole Graphics, it's hard to know what this year will bring. There are some certainties - the Olympics will happen in Tokyo, there will be a presidential election in America and a troublesome minority of customers will demand free reprints of jobs they signed off on only to realise later that they had made a mistake. Sometimes you want to ask: how hard is it to use the correct version of your logo? And if you have so many logos you can't distinguish between them, maybe you don't need so many.

My sales director is always telling me off for moaning about customers. He's just come back fresh - or, to be more accurate, slightly less stale - from a conference where an inspirational speaker warned against such bitching, saying "Do not poison that well!" Ted repeated this mantra to me and looked slightly disappointed when I failed to write it down on a Post-It note and stick it on the wall.

Like many customers, I fervently hope that 2020

will be less excruciating than 2019. It's not that I am looking for any specific social, political or economic development - though lower corporate taxes would be nice - I just want to feel that the world is, at least partially, regaining its sanity. I'm not alone in that. One of my customers, signing off for Christmas, ended the call saying: "This year has been completely bonkers".

I don't usually make new year's resolutions but I began 2020 with a mild digital detox. Less time wasted anxiously scrutinising the iPhone - and only going on social media when Mole Graphics has something intriguing to tell its select, devoted and largely silent followers on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Mrs Mole reckons this new regime will be good for my blood pressure and she is probably right.

The one mantra I have written on a Post-It and stuck on my desk is a quote from an Austrian lawyer called Karl Gombich: "Everyone is as clever as they are, minus how clever they think they are. This leaves a lot of people with a negative score."

EVENTS

FESPA GLOBAL 2020	SIGN AND DIGITAL 2020	DRUPA 2020	THE PRINT SHOW
When? 24 - 27 March, 2020	When? 28 - 30 April, 2020	When? 16 - 26 June, 2020	When? 27 - 29 September, 2020
Where? IFEMA Exhibition Centre, Madrid, Spain	Where? NEC, Birmingham	Where? Dusseldorf Messe, Germany	Where? NEC, Birmingham
Cost? TBA	Cost? Free for trade visitors.	Cost? TBA	Cost? TBA
Who will be there? This is the biggie for large-format, so expect most of the manufacturers/suppliers to be there.	Who will be there? Too early to talk about the exhibitor line-up, and as it is sandwiched between Fespa Global and Drupa you may not see the same amount of large-format exhibitors as in other years	Who will be there? Good question! We need to wait until closer to the event to see which companies of relevance to large-format will be exhibiting. It's likely that those who do so will have already launched any new products at the preceding Fespa Global 2020	Who will be there? The organiser puts the onus on this being a UK specific show that doesn't over-extend itself, so best check out the exhibitor list closer to the time - there's usually a broad range of manufacturers and suppliers exhibiting.
Should you go? Oh yes!	Should you go? Given this is the UK show most orientated towards this sector - though the plans are to broaden its appeal - it's probably still worth a look-see	Should you go? Depends what you want from attending. If you want to see new large-format kit and you've attended Fespa Global 2020, you'll probably not see many more introductions. If you want to see how the industry as a whole is progressing, then it's a big tick	Should you go? If you want to see a smattering of all different types of print wares in one easy reach location.
Rating 10/10	Rating 7/10	Rating 9/10	Rating 5/10

OVER TO YOU...

RICHARD CLARK, OWNER, RACCOON
WWW.RACCOON.CO.UK

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

Towards the end of 2019, the Brexit debate and General Election definitely caused a slow down and hesitance in business. That has now passed and 2020 started with a high level of new business enquiries so we are optimistic for this year. Other than that, general negatives are the increase in H&S requirements and red tape in general, the transient workforce that the UK now has, especially in the South East, and the upward pressure on wages when looking to recruit quality staff.

Where do you see the greatest wide-format opportunities?

For us, the greatest opportunities lie within the integration of large-format print into a more rounded, project led offering. This might be a promotional campaign, a brand launch or sports event where we are provided not only print but other key services.

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

A more educated customer base with a greater understanding of the amount of time it takes to produce their work - and with an understanding of what information we require to be able to deliver to their requirements.

Your favourite bit of kit is..?

Our Zund cutting table - we couldn't live without it!

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

Cash is king - keep an eye on your cashflow.

What are you most proud of achieving?

All of the amazing visual works we have completed over the past 25 years within this industry.

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

We all need to work out how to connect to our clients in a more streamlined, automated way. At the moment it is too manual and time consuming. Again, client education is the key. But it's easier said than done.



VITAL STATISTICS

GLOBAL ADVERTISERS WILL INCREASE AD SPEND BY 4.3% THIS YEAR BUT THE COMMERCIAL AUDIENCES SUPPLIED BY MEDIA OWNERS WILL SHRINK BY 1.6%, FUELLING A 6.1% INCREASE IN MEDIA PRICES ACCORDING TO ZENITH'S NEW 'ADVERTISING EXPENDITURE FORECASTS'.

ADVERTISING EXPENDITURE HAS GROWN BY 5.1% ON AVERAGE SINCE 2010. HOWEVER, TRADITIONAL MASS AUDIENCES ARE SHRINKING - FIRST PRINT, AND NOW TELEVISION IN KEY MARKETS. THE SUPPLY OF COMMERCIAL AUDIENCES HAS SHRUNK BY 1.3% A YEAR ON AVERAGE SINCE 2010, ACCORDING TO THE ZENITH RESEARCH, WHILE MEDIA INFLATION HAS AVERAGED 6.5% A YEAR.

\$39.1bn

The US is still leading global ad spend growth. The US ad market is forecast to grow by \$39.1bn between 2019 and 2022.

\$10.3bn

China's ad spend is second in the ad spend growth table between 2019 and 2022, followed by India, which will grow by \$4.3bn in the period.

16.6%

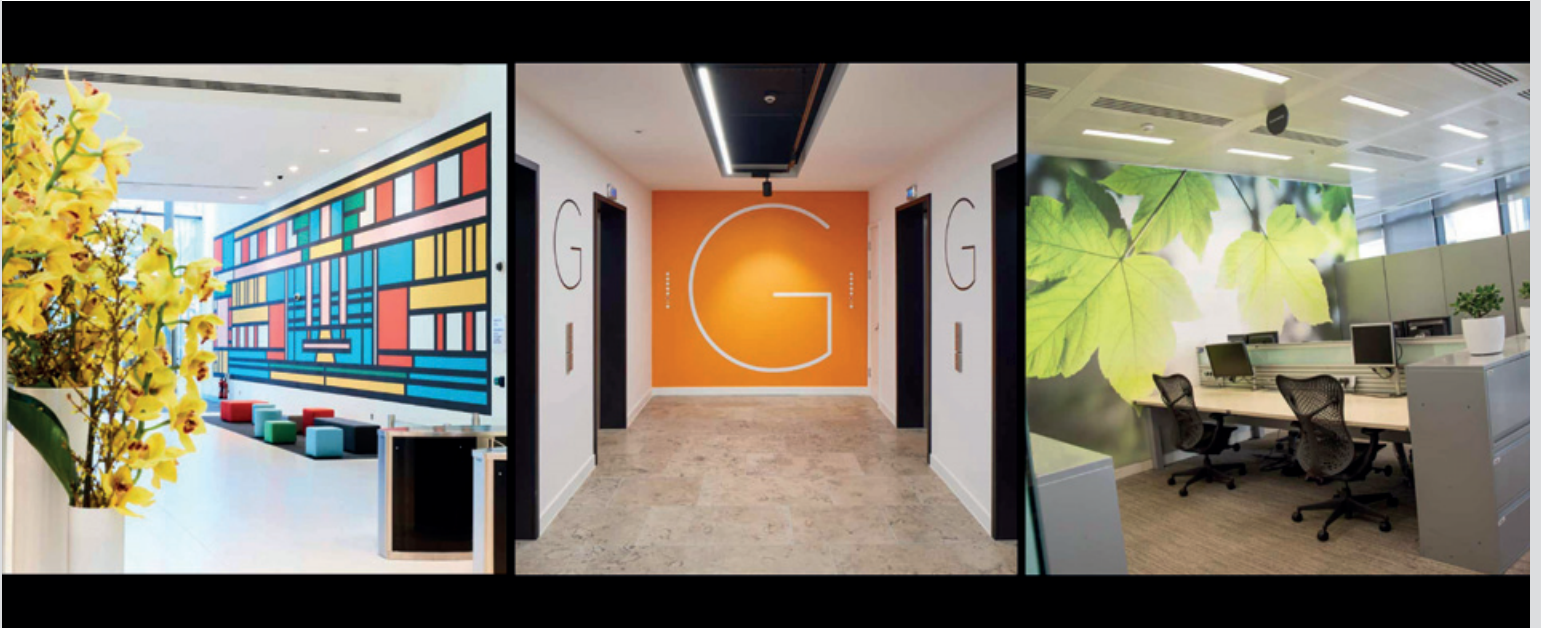
Online video will remain the fastest-growing channel between 2019 and 2022, growing by 16.6% a year on average.

13.8%

Social media will see a 13.8% a year on average growth in the period, followed by cinema with 11.5% annual growth.

4.5%

Newspaper ad spend will shrink by 4.5% a year to 2022, and magazines will shrink by 8.1% a year.



Is a disaster waiting to happen?

SIGNBOX IS CALLING ON THE INDUSTRY TO RAISE THE BAR AND ADHERE TO HIGHER STANDARDS WHEN IT COMES TO INSTALLING PRINTED WALLCOVERINGS. HERE'S WHY.

With PSPs increasingly entering the interiors market more needs to be done to ensure they adopt the correct standards according to Signbox business development director Steve Senior.

“What many PSPs and installers don't realise is that they are responsible for ensuring that the products they print - and that are then installed for wallcovering use - are compliant with building regulations. Everyone within the supply chain shares in that responsibility” says Senior, pointing out: “We often see projects awarded to competitors where we can clearly see that the products used are not fit for purpose, and even more concerning, may not follow the correct regulations for wallcovering installations.”

That experience has prompted the company - working in close collaboration on the issue with Papergraphics - to call for better awareness and understanding among its peers, contractors and stakeholders in the design and build process.

So what should you be paying attention to? First up, wallcoverings come under the Construction Product Regulations EN 15102:2007+A1:2011 and must conform to the Building Regulations Approved Document B 'Fire Safety'. This means they need to be fire rated to EN13501-1 (Euroclass) standard, when printed and installed.

To achieve the correct fire rating, EN 13501, the wallcovering has to undergo specific independent testing, which assesses the product performance in relation to smoke release, flame spread and flaming droplets produced.

Senior explains: “The testing process deals with the wallcovering product itself - which can be tested either

printed, or unprinted (something to look out for), the surface substrate that the products is adhered to, and the specific adhesive product used, to produce an overall performance rating. It's the complete system that is tested and fire rated.

“We see contractors competing for projects we are bidding for, specifying and using products that may have a different fire rating, but these aren't necessarily correct for using on wall installations... The product that competitors install may be fire rated correctly but once this product is printed, paste applied and then installed, it is possible that the fire rating may fall foul of the requirements that the client may have expected. Many projects specify the fire rating for the wall covering but simply adding print will invalidate this rating.

“Signbox uses Papergraphics' Digimura and Muramour wallcoverings, as the entire range achieves the required Euroclass EN 13501 fire rating standard, even when printed, and are all CE certified with a Declaration of Performance, making them suitable for use in domestic, commercial and public interiors.”

Essentially, the key thing to look for is the CE Declaration of Performance (which relates to its reaction to fire (RtF); heavy metals; formaldehyde and vinyl chloride monomers. “But be careful” Senior continues, “as Papergraphics pointed out to us that a replica of a CE mark logo has been in circulation and stands for 'Chinese Export'.

So what about the UK leaving the EU? The answer is that nothing will change. The ISO / EN standard may revert back to BS but will remain the same standard.

Standards have not fundamentally changed but recent events around fire safety and standards have highlighted that it's not the product safety standard only that matters - it is the application. With PSPs increasingly entering the interiors market they need to adopt the correct standards that have always been adhered to by interiors companies and traditional wallpaper manufacturers.

“We'd like to see more PSPs joining in our call for the printing industry to set the bar high for standards to be adhered to at specification level through to install. We would also be happy for anyone to contact us to clarify any of the points about installation and the standards for different products,” concludes Senior.

MANY PROJECTS SPECIFY THE FIRE RATING FOR THE WALL COVERING BUT SIMPLY ADDING PRINT WILL INVALIDATE THIS RATING



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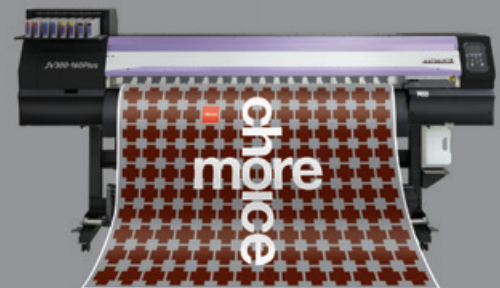
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