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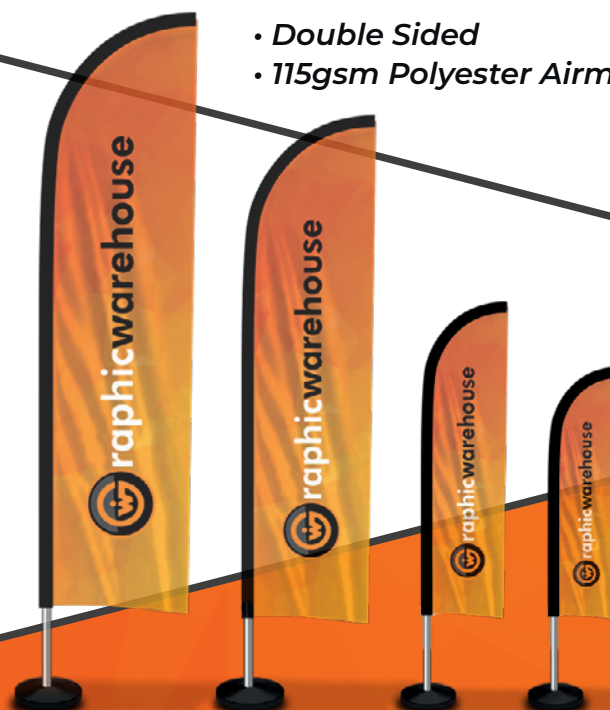


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Copy Shop News (CSN), since May 1998.

Sharing best practice through both print and digital media, QPP
magazine is in front of 36,000 quick print pros each month.

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in frontline printing, including news, views, new products and
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Shops, On-Street Instant Printers, In-House Print Room Managers,
FM and Conventional printers specialising in On-Demand,
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Businesses, Sign Suppliers and CAD Bureaus.

Welcome

>>>> Fast forward in February >>>>



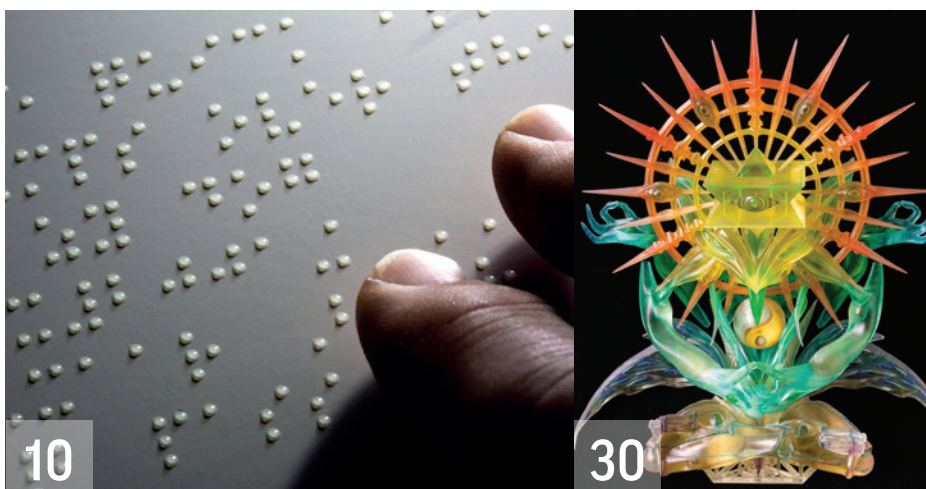
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New Year properly.

Play cupid to their Valentine's plans and get busy with your
own promotions to lead by example.

Love is in the air on page 20. Spread the love with new I love
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Keep up to date with regular visits to the QPP
website and of course the home of print blogs. www.BestBlogsInPrint.co.uk

Peter, get print-ready now, Foulkes
www.QuickPrintPro.co.uk



4 News In Print

Hot news in print for quick print pros

8 New Products

What's new to print and finish with?

14 Martin Christie

Digital Imaging Lead – Colourfast

16 PIP People In Print

Top print peeps on the move

18 P&P Live! and Sign & Digital

Two must visit events for printers

20 Valentine's In Print

More I love print products

22 Paper Chase

The Philosophy Of White

24 Showtime

FESPA expands event portfolio

26 Green Issues

CSR Conscious Suppliers

28 New Profit Centre

Best practice shared

32 Finda Product / Supplier

QPP preferred suppliers in print

34 Readers Scribes

Your jokes in print.



New Horizon iCE StitchLiner Mark IV at Platinum Print

Platinum Print has continued its investment in high performance, automated technology with the installation of a Horizon iCE StitchLiner Mark IV saddle stitching system from IFS.

The Harrogate based design, print, signage, and direct mail specialist chose the latest generation solution to replace its long serving Horizon StitchLiner 5500. The move follows recent investments including a RICOH Pro™ C9500 toner press (replacing a C9200 used for direct mail), an Autobond B1 double sided laminator, a Polar N 115 high speed guillotine, a Bacciotini Pitstop Oxo creaser/folder, and an ATS MSX 420 bander.

The new StitchLiner Mark IV will support production from the company's HP Indigo 12000 and streamline the delivery of short run booklets. Equipped with three six station high pile VAC-L600H collators (18 stations), it can produce booklets up to A4 landscape and up to 72 pages.

Anthony Wyvill, Managing Director, says: "The new system replaces our older StitchLiner 5500. Because it had been so reliable, we knew we could trust Horizon's build quality. The ability to produce A4 landscape booklets was also a major advantage. Previously, we could only complete these on our Muller Martini or by hand which is time consuming for short runs."

He adds: "This investment allows us to complete work more efficiently and with confidence. It



strengthens our on demand, short run, fast turnaround workflow improving quality and cost effectiveness."

"While the previous StitchLiner offered a good level of automation, the Mark IV takes this much further. The enhancements deliver clear advantages that support highly efficient and economical production."

The Horizon iCE StitchLiner Mark IV achieves high quality booklet production at speeds of up to 6,000 booklets per hour. It is equipped with iCE LINK that uses cloud technology to automate workflow from upstream to post-press. It provides access to an intuitive, easy to use dashboard that reports real time production analysis for

improved efficiency and profitability, remote update capabilities and scheduled maintenance resulting in less downtime. The information is accessible via smartphone, tablet or desktop PC and the software is designed for integration with MIS systems.

The transition to the new system has been seamless. Anthony comments:

"Our previous StitchLiner was running right up until the day it left. The new system has been in place for a few weeks and is performing extremely well. Our team adapted quickly because the operation is familiar, and even new operators found it very intuitive."

www.ifsl.uk.com

Ricoh Pro printers striking livery in Telford

Ricoh Europe recently used Drytac's Polar Grip polymeric self-adhesive vinyl to transform the look of two of its leading machines at its European Customer Experience Centre in central England.

Ricoh is very much focused on its clients and providing solutions that meet the ever changing demands of the wider market. As part of this approach, Ricoh regularly invites partners and clients to its European Customer Experience Centre, located in Telford in the leafy Shropshire region.

Visitors can view a range of Ricoh machines in action and see up close the quality of print they can achieve working with this technology. Recently, the communications team elected to take this a step further and decorate several machines to not only help catch the eye of visitors but also to showcase what is possible with Ricoh printers.

Ricoh's various printer models have an avatar, with the idea of the wraps to reflect this name. For the recent wraps, Ricoh chose to decorate its RICOH Pro™ Z75, which is known as the Dragon, and the RICOH Pro™ VC80000, which carries



the avatar of Harpy Eagle.

Ricoh selected Drytac Polar Grip as the material for both printer wraps. Polar Grip is a polymeric self-adhesive PVC film that offers up to seven years' indoor durability when paired with a matching laminate. The high bond grey adhesive of the film allows users to apply graphics to a wide range of surfaces such as metal, plastic, wood, glass and brick.

For added durability and safety, Ricoh paired Polar Grip with Interlam Emerytex Pro, a pressure sensitive over laminating film featuring a matte pebble texture, seven year indoor and outdoor

longevity, and multiple fire, slip, and FDA certifications.

"We selected Polar Grip because the paint job on both the Ricoh Pro Z75 and Ricoh Pro VC80000 have a textured finish, so wanted to be sure of a good adhesion of the vinyl," said Shane Barrett, Pre-Sales Manager, Inkjet Solutions, EMEA High Speed Inkjet and Large Format Print at Ricoh Europe Graphic Communications.

The striking designs were printed in-house by the Ricoh Europe team on a RICOH Pro™ L5100e latex large format printer before being applied to the two machines. Both wraps were installed ahead of the manufacturer's Print Evolution Live event which took place at the end of last year.

"The print quality on Polar Grip was perfect using a generic PVC profile on our Pro L5100e and fed through the printer without any issues with perfect tiling and panel alignment for the installers," Shane said. "The initial reaction internally and from visiting clients was that it looks very impressive. And thanks to the support from Drytac, we were able to find the correct products for this impressive application."

www.drytac.com



Healeys second HEIDELBERG Versafire 115 LP

After installing a new Versafire LV with Prinect DFE in March 2025, Healeys returned to HEIDELBERG for a second Versafire. This time, they opted for the Versafire 115 LP, to replace an end of contract digital press and to complement the earlier Versafire LV.

This new investment marks another milestone in the long and successful partnership between Healeys and HEIDELBERG, built over the past forty years. Healeys already owns and operates a Speedmaster XL75, Prinect ProMan workflow, Polar Guillotines, and a Ti52 Stahlfolder. They also rely on HEIDELBERG consumables and maintenance services, further deepening this relationship.

"Having run a HEIDELBERG XL75 and Prinect software within our prepress setting for many years, we felt that HEIDELBERG would be a natural choice to run the digital department efficiently and to automate some prepress functions. Another reason for our choice was the exceptional quality of print delivered by the LP. We have chosen the high caliper kit to enable production up to 800 micron – we print at 650 micron currently, and the LP will run this stock faster than previously. This capability will also enable us to address the needs of a wider audience," says Managing Director Philip Dodd.

The Versafire LV can produce up to 3,180 A3 sheets per hour and supports a wide array of substrates, including materials up to 470gsm. It complements Healey's existing litho press, allowing the company to provide a more dynamic, hybrid print service, processing high volume orders with quick turnaround times. The system's integration with Prinect enables Healeys to optimise workflows, reduce setup times, and streamline job management.

"Our team has been very positive regarding the enhanced quality over the previous machine and the increased caliper capabilities. Customers will especially benefit from the quality improvement as well as the commonality between the Versafire LP and LV installed earlier. Since the quality is as near to our litho press as is possible, we feel it will be a significant advantage for our



From left, Chris Woodward and Gary Owens Press Operators

customers," says Dodd.

HEIDELBERG and Healeys have been partners for over forty years, making this new acquisition a logical choice. Philip Dodd often tells the story of how, as he was taking over the business from his father, he saw the first Speedmaster 52 in HEIDELBERG's showroom. He ordered it, announcing to his staff that he had seen the future of the business. He went on to order several Speedmaster 52s, including the UK's first Anicolor, before replacing them all with a new XL75 back in 2013.

HEIDELBERG is proud to have partnered with Healeys, over the past four decades, HEIDELBERG has demonstrated its ability to empower businesses of this size and scale with ongoing support and cutting edge technology.

Healeys Printers is a commercial printing company based in Ipswich offering advanced litho and digital printing, large format graphics (like banners and pop-ups), and cross media solutions.



They specialise in high quality marketing materials, fine art catalogues, and luxury brand collateral, and are known for their technical expertise in finishes, colour consistency, and collaborative work with creative agencies across diverse sectors.

www.heidelberg.com

If you don't want to feel old, look away now...

Here are a few significant brands and licenced products who celebrate significant anniversaries in 2026. Can you guess how old they are?

Thanks to Preseli for kicking off 2026 sharing our thirst for brands.

- UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON: 200 years
- ZSL the charity that runs London and Whipsnade Zoos: 200 years
- MERCEDES BENZ: 100 years
- HARIBO: 100 years
- WINNIE THE POOH: 100 years

- SONY: 80 years
- The NBA: 80 years
- DENNIS THE MENACE -75 years
- MASTERCARD: 60 years
- STAR TREK- 60 years
- APPLE: 50 years
- THE BODY SHOP: 50 years
- SONIC THE HEDGEHOG: 35 years
- POKEMON: 30 years
- Preseli have been connecting brands for over 30 years.

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Blog of the Month – investing in a brand's soul

Top Bloggers Rights this month go to Mickael Minot, Brand Owner Director at James Cropper.

One of his blogs, "Investing in a brands soul", has been showcased on Quick Print Pro's Best Blogs In Print website.

The stats add up to Mickael Minot being awarded the print industry top blogger of the month accolade.



INVESTING IN A BRAND'S SOUL

By Mickael Minot,
Brand Owner Director
at James Cropper

THE MODERN ECONOMY DEMANDS A LOT OF PAPER

It's a material that we ask to carry a lot, both literally and metaphorically. When you need to send important information, you use paper documents. When you need

to protect heavy or fragile items, you can pack them in heavyweight boxes made of corrugated board. And, on a deeper level, paper also carries the dyes, pigments, and messages that bring brands to life in their packaging, labels, and marketing collateral.

In the right hands, though, paper can be more than just a medium. It can be part of the message in itself – one that consumers can reach out and touch for themselves as part of a true multi-sensory experience. This sensorial quality means paper can also possess many intangible qualities that can be just as important. And like anything important, this 'soul' is worth investing in.

BRAND STORIES MADE TANGIBLE

For many of the world's leading

brands in sectors like luxury, beauty, and lifestyle, this hard to describe yet instantly recognisable quality is something that is earned through decades of heritage. It is central to their appeal, but it can't be bought. Instead, it stems from a reputation for quality and craftsmanship.

The packaging used to protect and market these products must reflect this craftsmanship, and that includes the materials it is made from. In paper, each sheet tells a story through the way its fibres weave together, its pigmentation, and its finish, translating a brand's values from abstract concept into something real. Packaging doesn't just tell, it shows.

For example, paper made from recycled fibre often has its own unique look and feel that marks it out from virgin paper. Paper fibres

are imbued with a sort of memory that is immediately obvious to the touch, giving recycled paper a rustic, authentic texture. It reflects the circular journey that the material has been on before, eventually landing in the consumer's hands. Maybe it was once a notebook, a coffee cup, an item of clothing – at James Cropper, our Fibre Blend Upcycled Technology includes used denim fibres – or maybe just another piece of packaging. But, crucially, that history will be passed on to the consumer as soon as they touch a piece of recycled paper material. When used in the right application, this can give packaging an invaluable authenticity, but it needs to be accounted for in the product design.

Continued here: www.bestblogs.inprint.co.uk/blog/investing-in-a-brand-s-soul

The Magic Transfer Company (GB) Limited – EOT Transition

The Magic Transfer Company (GB) Ltd (trading as TheMagicTouch) in November 2025 completed the transition to an Employee Ownership Trust (EOT).

Founded in St. Albans back in 1992, the company pioneered the digital image transfer technology evolving from a retail unit and warehouse into market leaders through innovation and strategic partnerships. The product portfolio has evolved from the original coated toner transfer papers to now include heat presses, plotters, sublimation, HTV, digital printers and the latest DTF transfer technology and consumable supplies.

For founders Jim and Alison Nicol (brother and sister) transferring ownership to employees was the ideal strategy, safeguarding the company's culture and future. Jim Nicol commented "Over the coming years Alison will reduce her work schedule, but I intend to continue to help the business and train management for many years to come. The world of personalisation has only just begun!"

Carl Newbury (General Manager) and Paul Meade (Head of Technical) have both been appointed directors having each worked for the company for over 30 years. Mark Rossi (Head of Sales) has joined the board of the Trust together with Alison Nicol.

Jim Nicol added "The creation of the EOT was



From left: Jim Nicol, Paul Meade, Alison Nicol, Carl Newbury and Mark Rossi

the only decision to make, having traded for so long and built a strong business from the efforts of our dedicated staff and our loyal customers who together have been on this exciting journey. Management buyouts are fine but normally involve individuals having to raise funds to ensure their stake in the business moving forwards, but the EOT template does not require any of that."

The company was advised by EOT experts, Avondale Corporate Ltd, who dealt with feasibility analysis, valuation, HMRC clearance, legal structuring, trustee setup, and employee communication. The EOT transition secures the company's legacy, rewards its loyal team, and positions it for future stability and planned growth.

The company are preparing for their attendance at Printwear & Promotion 2026 with some fantastic and innovative product introductions.

www.themagictouch.co.uk

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Heidelberg UK brings scented print to life

HEIDELBERG UK has announced a new collaboration with **Celessence™**, the global pioneer in microencapsulation technology. This partnership is set to revolutionise the way brands and marketers engage consumers through print. It can help add an unexpected sensory dimension: scent.

"Scent creates memories," says Grant Anderson, Head of Consumables at Heidelberg UK. "We're delighted to partner with Celessence to offer printers and brands the ability to enhance printed products in a truly engaging, multisensory way."

Suzanne Powell, CEO at Celessence Technologies said "Scent in print has the ability to completely change the way in which consumers react to printed media, and we are delighted to be in partnership with Heidelberg."

Using Celessence's encapsulated fragrance technology, scent can now be embedded directly into printed materials. When touched, these microcapsules release fragrance, making printed pieces not only seen and felt – now, they can also be smelled.

Celessence technology is suitable for versatile print applications. It's compatible with a range of printing methods, including lithographic presses (for inline application via coaters);



screen printing (available in air dry or UV formats); and flexographic printing (ideal for packaging and labels).

Their Ultra Coat product – a 30% capsule and 70% blend formulation – can be mixed on-site and applied economically via coating units. This allows for a heavier film weight compared to traditional dry offset products, delivering a stronger sensory experience.

Celessence is proven across industries as they have worked with a global network of printers to enhance products with the dimension of smell. That includes books and magazines, packaging



and labels, jigsaw puzzles, and POS (Point of Sale) materials.

The flexibility of their product range supports both small, bespoke print runs and large scale commercial applications. Their UV-compatible solution even enables printing on synthetic

surfaces that repel water based varnishes.

The best part is that Celessence meets all current environmental standards and regulations and is REACH-exempt. It has also received Level 3 ZDHC certification and is Oekotex-compliant, meeting the requirements for two significant accreditations in the world of textiles. To add to this, all fragrances used by Celessence are IFRA-certified.

Celessence technology has already been adopted by multiple high profile global brands. With this collaboration, HEIDELBERG UK aims to empower its clients to break through the digital noise and create memorable print experiences that spark emotional connections.

www.Heidelberg.com

New DTM CLP2200e colour label printer

DTM Print has announced the launch of its new **DTM CLP2200e Colour Label Printer**. The **DTM CLP2200e** has been developed to provide **high flexibility, easy system integration and reliable performance for professional colour label production**.

A major highlight of this new printer is its broad ink compatibility. The DTM CLP2200e supports dye ink, pigment ink or mixed ink configurations, for example dye-based colour inks in combination with pigment black. This enables users to choose between vivid colour output or enhanced durability depending on the label application.

In addition, it features four separate ink cartridges for cyan, magenta, yellow and black combined with a user replaceable printhead, a concept already proven with the LX2000e Colour Label Printer. This configuration allows users to adapt ink usage and maintenance to their specific production requirements while keeping operating costs under control.

Designed with industrial use in mind, the DTM CLP2200e comes in a compact metal case that can be easily integrated into production lines or space critical environments. Connectivity options include USB 2.0, Ethernet and a 24 V PLC interface, allowing straightforward integration into automated systems.

For reliable media handling and simplified



maintenance, the printer offers a flat label feed path as well as modular access points for cleaning and service. An external label supply feed for larger roll outer diameters increases the productivity. Operation and status monitoring are managed via the DTM CLP2200e Toolbox software and an integrated display on the printer.

"We're glad that true black is back at DTM Print," says Lea König, Product Manager of DTM Print. "With four large ink tanks we can offer a competitive cost per label while staying as flexible as possible with dye ink for superior quality prints and pigment ink for UV resistant labels. Add to that the multiple connection options, along with 210 mm (8.25") print width and you've got everything most companies would ever need. With DTM CLP2200e, there are only benefits and no compromises."

To meet the typical applications including

product labels for beverages, speciality and gourmet foods, gardening, cosmetics, chemical, GHS or supplement labels, DTM Print has developed several media modes, compatible with all different surfaces of the Genuine DTM Label Stock, which brings out the best of this label printer in terms of durability and print quality. DTM CLP2200e is also ideal for private labelling, test marketing, pre-press proofing and retail labelling.

Printer drivers are included for Windows along with BarTender UltraLite DTM Edition and NiceLabel Free DTM Edition Software to create label designs, add barcodes, QR codes and serialisation. Most other popular graphic design programs for Windows can be used to design and print labels.

The DTM CLP2200e Colour Label Printer is priced at € 3,595 (MSRP) and will be available from DTM Print or through authorised DTM Print partners in Europe, Middle East and Africa in February 2026.

DTM Print offers customers a three-year warranty for DTM CLP2200e units within the EU, UK and EFTA countries after registering the product on the company website (register.dtm-print.eu). For maximum protection and minimum down times, the DTM Print Warranty Solutions are a great addition.

www.dtm-print.eu



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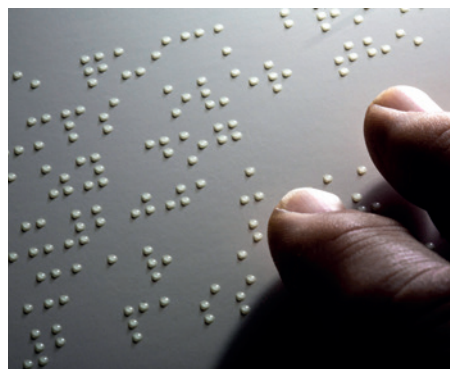
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Xaar launches braille inkjet printing

Taking stage at Labelexpo Asia in Shanghai and Packaging Europe's Digital Print for Packaging (DPP) Conference in Berlin, Xaar showcased how digital inkjet and its Versatex Printbar is a powerful tool for packaging embellishment and accessibility.

Central to both sessions was Xaar's newly launched whitepaper, titled 'Implementing braille printing in labelling and packaging with Xaar's Versatex printbar', which provides a detailed look at how effective braille printing is enabled by the latest digital inkjet technology.

In Berlin, Neil Cook presenting at DPP, offered an in depth look at how high build varnish embellishment can support variable data printing for blind and partially sighted users. Neil highlighted the opportunity that digital inkjet provides for accessible packaging, an area where legislation, brand expectations and consumer needs are becoming increasingly aligned. He explained how inkjet can apply tactile features with more precision and consistency than analogue methods and emphasised the importance of printhead technologies that handle high viscosity and particle rich varnish formulations with ease.



"Accessible packaging is moving from a niche requirement to an essential part of the brand experience. High build varnish delivered through inkjet provides the accuracy and consistency needed for tactile features while still supporting variable data," said Neil. "It allows converters to meet both creative and regulatory demands in a single process and demonstrates how digital print can have a meaningful impact on the everyday lives of consumers."

At Labelexpo Asia, Shawn Feng outlined the challenges converters face when integrating digital capability into analogue lines and showed how the Versatex Printbar provides a ready to

use modular solution that reduces development time and cost. From high opacity whites to tactile varnish effects and compliant braille printing, Shawn highlighted the versatility of the platform and its ability to help converters access fast growing premium label markets.

"Converters want to add more value without adding more complexity and that is exactly where digital inkjet is proving its strength. With Versatex we are showing how embellishment and braille can be achieved more flexibly and with far greater control," said Shawn. "It gives manufacturers a practical way to adopt digital without disrupting their existing workflow and opens the door to premium effects that brands are increasingly asking for."

The Versatex printbar solves the challenge of producing braille that is both highly readable and fast to print, offering two dedicated modes tailored to different production needs. In High-Build mode, it delivers dot heights of 200µm, rated most comfortable by blind readers, at up to 19m/min, ensuring crisp, well shaped cells with precise spacing for optimal fingertip recognition.

Download the full whitepaper.

www.xaar.com/campaigns/braille-campaign

New brand for print lovers

CFH Docmail Ltd, a long-established provider of print and multichannel communication services, has announced the launch of www.PrintLover.com, a new print shop designed to deliver high-quality, sustainable print through a modern, intuitive and visually distinctive digital platform.

Print Lover has been developed to meet growing demand for reliable, premium print products that combine ease of ordering with the assurance of professional production standards. While the brand introduces a fresh identity and customer-facing experience, all operations, production and customer support are delivered by CFH's experienced in-house teams, drawing on nearly five decades of print expertise.

The launch represents a strategic extension of CFH's capabilities, translating its heritage across lithographic and digital print into a focused online store for businesses, print brokers, marketing teams and creative agencies.

Print Lover offers a curated range of professionally produced print products, including business cards, leaflets, booklets, posters and folded materials. The platform has been designed to simplify the ordering process, enabling customers to upload artwork easily, customise specifications, and access responsive, knowledgeable support throughout the print journey.

Supporting the platform is a distinctive visual identity that sets Print Lover apart in



the online print market. Its pop art-inspired branding brings colour, energy and personality to the website experience, reflecting a confident celebration of print.

Customers benefit from the same high standards that reflect CFH's work across regulated and high-volume environments, including secure data handling and tightly controlled production workflows.

Sustainability is embedded throughout the offering, with FSC® certified paper stocks, ISO 14001-accredited environmental management and tree planting initiatives delivered through Treefo.

CFH Group CEO Bill McFedries comments "Print Lover delivers a modern, intuitive and

visually distinctive digital platform to purchase premium print products, built on trusted and proven processes. By combining ease of ordering with assured professional production, strong sustainability credentials and excellent customer service, we're excited about the opportunity to grow the Print Lover brand."

Launched in 2026, Print Lover is a UK-based online print brand from CFH Docmail Ltd, built on nearly 50 years of trusted print expertise. Delivering professionally produced print through a modern digital platform, the brand combines excellent product quality, a streamlined interface and commitment to sustainability.

www.PrintLover.com

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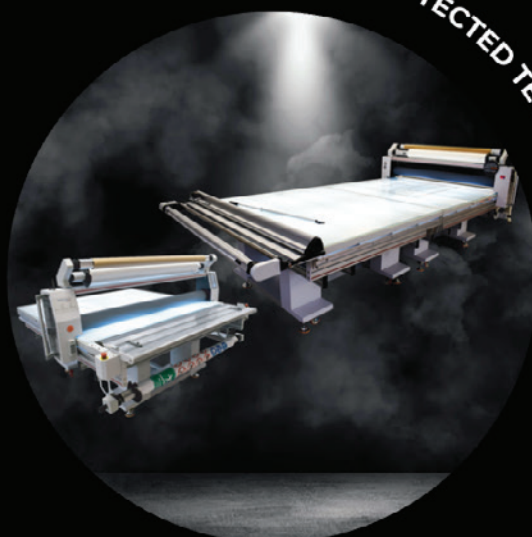
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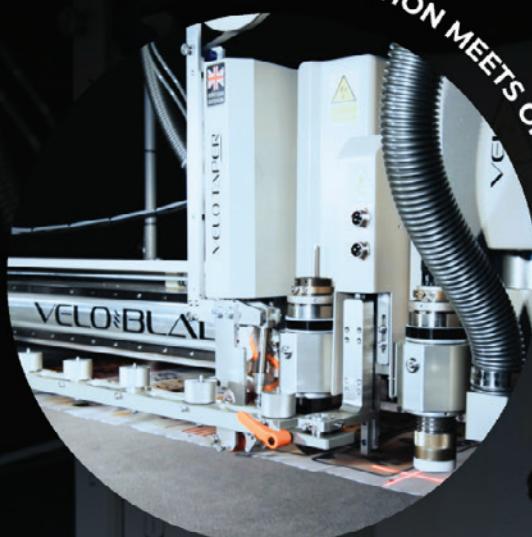


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Roland powers wine trade customisation

The UK drinks sector is evolving at pace, and personalisation now sits at the heart of that transformation. The drinkware category alone is forecast to grow by around 6% annually through to 2031, fuelled by rising demand for premium, high quality products that reflect individual identity. At the same time, branded barware and promotional accessories are undergoing their own shift, with drinks brands seeking more distinctive, design led items to stand out in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

For suppliers, the result is mounting pressure: faster turnaround times, sharper branding, and greater creative flexibility. For The Waiter's Friend Company, a UK specialist in European made wine tools and premium barware, this moment became an opportunity. The company found the catalyst for its next stage of growth in the Roland DG MO-240 flatbed printer, transforming its production model and unlocking a new era of high impact, high margin customisation.

From third party printing to in-house control

The Waiter's Friend has spent decades supplying corkscrews, champagne stoppers, ice buckets and accessories to UK wine merchants, distributors and hospitality clients. For years, all custom branding was outsourced to pad printers in the UK and Italy – a dependable but increasingly restrictive model.

"The company has been around for 30 years," General Manager, Alistair Coulthurst says. "But when the business changed ownership a few



years ago, it became obvious that relying solely on third party pad printing was holding us back. Lead times of two to three weeks just are not viable in today's market."

Investing in the Roland DG MO-240 marked a decisive strategic shift, giving the team the freedom to take full control of their customisation workflow. Powered by the high productivity

MO Series technology – engineered to print up to 1.4 times faster than comparable models – the business quickly saw transformation. The machine's staggered print heads, powerful curing lamps and expanded bed size deliver speeds of up to 2.39 m²/h in standard mode, enabling faster turnaround without compromising print quality.

White ink prints twice as fast as previous generation devices, and the ability to lay down thicker gloss layers has further increased output efficiency. Combined with streamlined setup processes and flexible jig changes, the team can now move effortlessly between different product types.

After a year of running the MO-240, the results speak for themselves. Production is faster, workflows are more controlled, and the business can react in real time to customer demand – something impossible under the previous outsourcing model.

"We brought all of our corkscrew printing in-house," Alistair explains. "It allowed us to increase margins, cut lead times to around a week, and gain far more freedom in colour choices and production schedules."

With multi-layer printing and the ability to handle a wide range of substrates, the company has unlocked a new level of responsiveness and creativity – giving them a clear competitive advantage and a production process built for modern market expectations.

rolanddg.eu

New PVC free SpotOn SynTac from Premier

Leading the charge on sustainable paper and display materials, Premier is now the exclusive provider (within the British Isles) of two outstanding, PVC free adhesive products that are making waves in the global print media market.

True to the unique adhesive science developed by print media and protective film giant Drytac, the SpotOn SynTac range now comprises an improved white matt version and an all new clear gloss product, both suitable for window and wall applications.

Coated on one side with a distinctive dot pattern pressure sensitive polyacrylate adherent, execution on smooth surfaces is bubble free, and it can be removed quickly and cleanly if done within 12 months.

Produced using polypropylene film, this non PVC solution requires no tools and is the ideal medium for



a wide range of short term displays. It is also compatible with latex and UV printing processes.

Aside from its ingenuity, SpotOn SynTac contains no chlorine, plasticisers or heavy metals and, due to its lightness, requires less energy to produce. Despite offering stability and rigidity, it also generates lower emissions during disposal, making it a green alternative that's setting the bar.

Brad West, Premier's Wide Format Media Director (UK & Ireland), made the following statement:

"Premier is excited to introduce SpotOn SynTac to the market. As a PVC free, self-adhesive film, it combines high performance and sustainability, providing printers with a reliable solution while upholding their environmental responsibility. Being the exclusive UK and Ireland distributor, the



company is perfectly positioned to support our customers with expert advice, local service, and ready access to this innovative product."

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Model shown, Mimaki CJV200-160. Prices exclude VAT, delivery, install and training. Ink pack required.
Offers subject to availability and may be withdrawn at any time. See website for all offer T&Cs. E&OE.

You pay your money, but may not have a choice

We left 2025 with a bit of a cliffhanger, tipping on the edge of a whole new working environment influenced, if not dominated by AI. **Martin Christie** explores how Artificial Intelligence has become the definitive buzzword of this quarter of the 21st century, to the extent that launching any product without it as a prefix or suffix risks appearing outdated, if not completely redundant.

It has always been so. Once upon a time, the name digital promised progress and modernity long before it became tainted as something that couldn't be repaired or updated when the software passed its sell-by date.

Any advance in technology has equal measures of benefit and cost — often only realised in the long rather than the short term. At the moment, opinions seem evenly divided.

Personally, my position is both positive and negative. As a photographer, I took on the challenge of digital photography without rejecting the appreciation of traditional film. That progress led me to get more involved with printing than simply dabbling in the darkroom. From desktop to large format, the inkjet process gave me a much closer understanding of how electronic imaging translated colour and detail, leading not only to a second career in direct print, but also to a much greater knowledge of how a modern camera interpreted the world.

And that last effect is important as my relationship with film — despite 25 years working with it — has never been to consider it magical in itself as many still do. It was always an optical mirage, brought to reality by a chemical reaction. Any magic was in the eye of the individual photographer, who used that stored potential to create something special, often quite unique, not immediately visible to the naked eye.

Back in the days of film, proper photographers were few and far between. Even enthusiastic amateurs would only shoot a few dozen rolls a year — hardly a couple of hundred images in total. That was the practical and affordable limit of the technology of the day. This meant a steep learning curve to reach professional or creative standards simply because it needed time behind the viewfinder to achieve results beyond a lucky one-off.

The early days of digital were perplexing,

as no one had any prior experience, and although many more people could capture images, the shared experiences only seemed to confirm that the process was much more random and unpredictable. It was convenient, but chaotic in its output. This is why some simply condemned it as a novelty, and others, new to the system, simply gave up, as it couldn't reproduce the magic wand effect that had been promised.

This was all very unfair, as in comparison, film had had over 150 years of development, and I'm sure the early Victorian experiments suffered just as many frustrating failures trying to make sense of the mysterious method of image transfer. The major difference is that once the process had been more or less understood and the materials perfected, any improvements were mostly incremental. Films could last for years long after their sell-by date, and mechanical cameras, like my 40-year-old Nikon, were still perfectly serviceable, with or without batteries.

SHIFTING PARADIGMS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Digital devices, on the other hand, and the software that goes with them date very rapidly, as we have learned to our cost. That is in the nature of the technology, which expands exponentially — that is, in every direction all at the same time, like some expanding universe. AI in this context is just another big bang along the way, not the final solution. It's a process, not a product, and love it or loathe it, that process will progress relentlessly in the background of many of the things we work with.

That is why it is important to have at least a basic understanding of how it works to anticipate unexpected consequences. AI is not just a faster computer programme; it's a smarter way to exploit far more digital information

than previously possible to achieve unprecedented results. But the unexpected element is itself the possible flaw in the process. Almost everyone wants things faster and better. But be careful what you wish for, as they say.

As a long-term Photoshop user, I have, in some small way, been helping Adobe develop its own AI over the last decade, so I guess I'm partly responsible for wanting tools that transformed images so much better than the painful manual operations of years gone by. Compared to some of the early versions, the modern PS control panel is as different from that of a 1920s Model T Ford as a modern Formula One car. It still steers the vehicle, but the computing calculations and the possibilities are beyond comparison.

I often use the example of driving as it's something that demands a significant amount of essential human skills — direction, anticipation and control — over a machine. Even those promoting driverless vehicles, with computer sensors controlling these actions, accept that there may be times of crisis or uncertainty when a human must intervene. But that is precisely the reason for caution about an entirely autonomous process: how is a person, increasingly detached from learning practical solutions, prepared for the unexpected?

Serendipity is the discovery of something valuable by chance rather than expectation, and is part of very human learning and the accumulation of experience. A chance discovery remembered may later trigger a lightbulb moment, providing a solution. Our brain cells are capable of thinking outside the box. I'm not sure whether AI, or at least the way it is being employed, is quite as flexible. Hopefully, I'll be proved wrong, but it does seem that many of those championing it as a one-stop solution have limited experience with it or have not explored possible alternatives.

The last option is very much the case with Photoshop because, unlike some much-promoted alternatives that have gone full-blown artificial creation, Adobe still gives you choices. And there's a very good reason for this, as, along with many major updates from last year, you may now have generative credits docked from your account. This may have slipped under the radar of many users, as the marketing hype of all the new features didn't actually point out that you would have to pay for some of them as part of your current subscription fee.

Most importantly, some of them cost a lot more than others, and while that has a

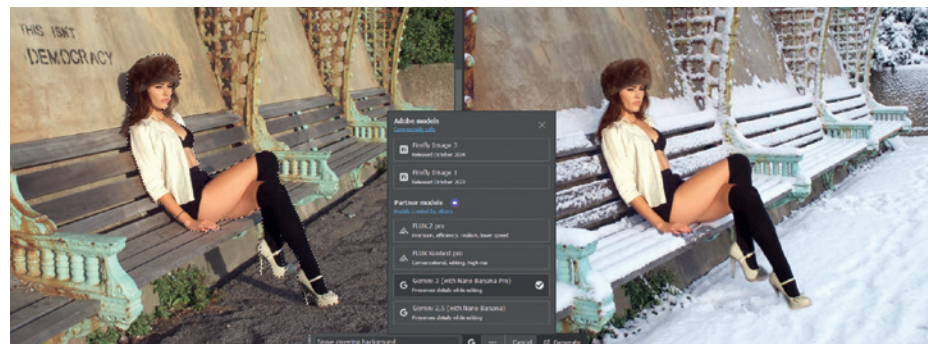


certain logic given the computing power involved, it doesn't necessarily reflect the quality or accuracy of the results. So it isn't actually a case of you get what you pay for — in some cases, you don't have a choice. Even if you don't like it, you don't get your credits back.

You are probably already aware that for some time, you have had the option of using so-called cloud-based computing online rather than your own processor. This is because Adobe's data banks have much greater resources than your average desktop, but calling upon them may make you liable to additional charges. It's a matter of checking the hidden detail, and it's not entirely clear-cut.

A good number of AI features that have been established in PS over recent years, like Content Aware, Selection Masks and the like, do not use any credits. This is because they essentially sample existing pixels and reassemble them. When an action starts with the word Generative, however, this is where the penalty clause may kick in, because you are asking AI to create something entirely new, even if it's based on something that already exists. Confused? Well, there's more because Adobe has recently added some partner programmes from already established AI platforms.

Their own Firefly versions, developed from 2023, have been supplemented with Flux and Gemini with Nano Banano. Even though they vary, I have no idea who comes up with the names when a more descriptive choice would be more appropriate. I find all these options in the contextual task bar when you make a selection. But you have to dig deeper to find out the price tag, and that's the rub, because there's no guarantee that a higher debit count will produce commensurate

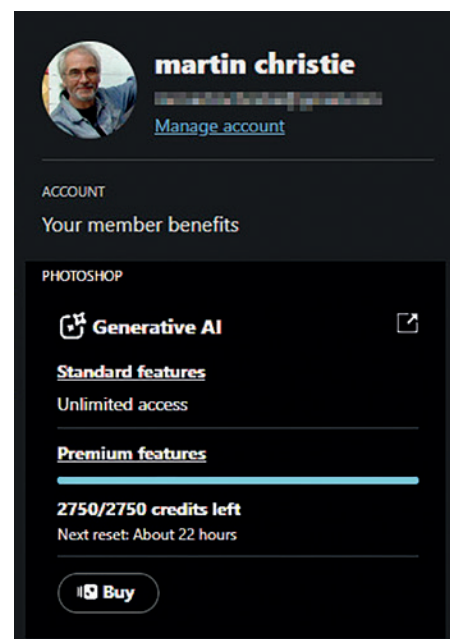


results. In fact, the opposite may well be the case, as relying on machine imagination often has hilarious results.

THE COST OF PROGRESS AND HUMAN CHOICE

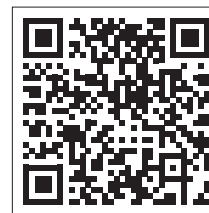
The output will depend on the input, and as I can't cover every possible scenario here. I can point you to a couple of excellent visual guides online below. You can switch the AI assistant off altogether, or even set it to autopilot so it uses it only at its own discretion. And it may be that having a couple of thousand credits at your disposal, a couple of extra ones won't be a loss — but some actions may use 40 times that. When some users increasingly turn to AI as a first call rather than a last resort, this can become an issue if that choice has to be repeated many times to achieve a goal. You can buy new credits if you use up the credits in your account, depending on your Creative Cloud plan. You can check your balance in your app profile; it provides a monthly breakdown.

And it's worth monitoring your usage to see how dependent you are on them, rather than on any alternative. They don't roll over like a savings account. They reset every month, so it's use them or lose them. You won't have any in the bank if you get a busy month.



Generative credits are applicable in both Photoshop and Lightroom, so it is worth getting up to speed on them, especially since there are other tools in both that don't use them and may do a better job with more human insight. They also just make a tiny difference to the growing burden of industrial-scale data transfer worldwide. ■

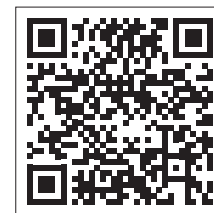
Aaron Nace has a really useful podcast.



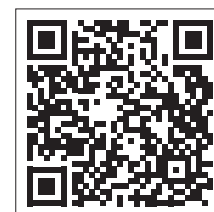
In the interest of balance, here is Adobe's point of view



How to find your Adobe credit score



And for the alternative voice on everything AI, my favourite Aussie.



Peter Saak to lead Canon Integrated Printing & Services



Peter brings strong leadership and extensive B2B customer knowledge having held several senior roles across Canon's regional sales organisations including B2B Country Director for Canon Eurasia, Managing

Director for Canon Central & Eastern Europe and Canon Austria.

Effective as of the beginning of 2026, the

appointment follows the announcement that Hiro Imamura, previous Executive Vice President, Digital Printing & Solutions, has returned to Canon Inc. headquarters to take up a new role within the Printing Group. During his five year tenure, Hiro was instrumental in leading Canon EMEA's market share growth for workspace printing technology and solutions and growth of its production print business.

"I am confident that Peter's extensive B2B experience, customer knowledge and strong leadership across many of our EMEA markets

will drive the success of our Integrated Printing & Services Group," said Sam Yoshida, President & CEO, Canon Europe, Middle East & Africa. "I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to Hiro for his outstanding contributions and leadership, which have been pivotal in developing our printing business."

Commenting on his appointment, Peter Saak said, "I am honoured to lead the newly renamed Integrated Printing & Services Group. Our goal is to build on the incredible foundation that exists, continuing to combine our innovative technology with solutions and applications that meet the evolving needs of our customers and partners. I look forward to working with the team to drive future growth and reinforce our position as a market leader."

www.canon.co.uk

Soyang wishes Tim Egerton a happy retirement

A much loved member of the Soyang team, Tim has worked as Sales Manager since joining the company back in June 2012. During this time, Tim has played an integral role in the business's evolution into a leading provider of high quality media and hardware solutions.

Earlier this year, Tim was given the tough diagnosis of onset Parkinson's and was advised by doctors to take time for himself and his family. However, never to be deterred, Tim soon took the opportunity to participate in 'Ride the Trossachs', a cycle event across the stunning Scottish Highlands, raising valuable funds for charity in the process.

Looking ahead to his retirement, Tim plans to take part in another cycling event next year, again in



Scotland, as well as enjoy some much earned rest and relaxation.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working at Soyang Europe," Tim said. "I never imagined I would visit Soyang Technologies in China in the first year with the company. It was fascinating not only to see firsthand

the manufacturing processes but also to meet my colleagues at Soyang Technologies.

"In the 13 years I have been with the company, it is quite something to see how it has gone from strength to strength. The success of the business, I am sure, will continue long into the future.

"I would like to especially thank [Soyang Group CEO] Mark Mashiter, who has given me unwavering support throughout my time at Soyang. I would also like to thank all my colleagues at Soyang Europe and Soyang Technologies, as well as the numerous customers that have made this time so special."

Mark Mashiter added: "Tim joined Soyang at the very start of our textile journey and has

played a pivotal role in shaping our success. His deep textile expertise, commitment, and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in supporting our customers and strengthening our partnership with the Soyang factory.

"Tim's knowledge and professionalism have left a lasting mark on the business, and he will be greatly missed by colleagues both in the UK and China.

"Although we are obviously sad to see Tim depart, he leaves with our very best wishes. Tim is tremendously popular not only within the Soyang team but also with our customers. We very much hope Tim enjoys his much deserved retirement!"

www.soyang.co.uk

Andrew Smith new Kyocera MD



Kyocera Document Solutions UK Group has announced the appointment of Andrew Smith as Managing Director and General Manager. Smith, formerly

Chief Information & Strategy Officer, will lead the Group, including Annodata and MCL, as it continues its evolution and next phase of growth.

With deep expertise across print, ICT, and cybersecurity, Smith brings a unique blend of technical and commercial acumen with a profound understanding of Kyocera's heritage.

Over several years, he has successfully transformed the company's managed service offering and was instrumental in the incubation of Kyocera Cyber from 2023 to its launch in 2025, a division he will continue to champion in his new role.

Smith said: "It is a privilege to lead Kyocera into this next chapter. My focus is on ensuring our managed services remain rooted in genuine customer value, delivered in close collaboration with our talented team and channel partners. As we move into 2026, we will double down on our heritage of innovation, forging new value in our core print market while aggressively scaling our IT and cybersecurity capabilities. With a

strengthened leadership team and renewed momentum in our channel strategy, Kyocera is uniquely positioned to serve the market."

STRENGTHENING THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

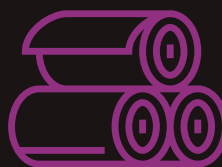
In addition to Smith's appointment, Steve Doust has been named Group Sales Director (Direct Sales), while Suki Purewal takes on the role of Group Service & Operations Director. These appointments follow the return of Pete Lunn as Indirect Sales Lead in November 2025, solidifying a leadership team built for Kyocera's growth strategy for 2026 and beyond.

www.kyocerads-group.co.uk

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Printwear & Promotion LIVE! co-location with Sign & Digital UK

Although each show will maintain its own identity with separate registration and show entrances, inside the crossover will be seamless, with visitors able to walk freely between the two exhibitions! Both exhibitions will take place from Sunday, February 22 to Tuesday, February 24.



The doors for Printwear & Promotion LIVE! and Sign & Digital UK will open on Sunday 22nd February, where the garment decoration industry will gather once again for a vivacious and interactive exhibition.

There is an exciting lineup at 'The Knowledge Centre', specially curated to deliver informative and thought provoking sessions. Experts will speak on a range of topics providing business and marketing advice relevant to printers and garment decorators.

Returning this year, is Instagram and marketing expert Estelle Keeber, who will reveal three powerful ways to attract your dream clients in 2026. This is a must attend session for those looking to boost their viability and grow their business through Instagram.

Also returning is Andy Rogers of Stahls' UK, with 'How to market with no marketing department'. Kevin Jarvis from DecoNetwork will demonstrate how decoration businesses can eliminate manual handoffs and reduce daily administrative burden through intelligent automation.

Other speakers at 'The Knowledge Centre' this year will include Colin Sinclair McDermott aka The Online Printing Coach, Rob Goleniowski of Roland DG, Phil Oakley of OnPoint Supply Services and Alex Liggett, owner of The Vinyl Guys.

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! also provides free to attend sessions at 'The Decoration Advice Suite' a brilliant source of free information, covering all areas of the garment decoration industry. Sessions in both seminar suites run across all three days of the exhibition. Seats will fill up fast, so visitors are advised to arrive early to guarantee a space.

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! is the annual exhibition for the UK garment decoration industry held at the NEC in Birmingham. It is a one stop shop for quick print professionals (screen, transfer and digital), embroiderers, retailers and promotional product distributors.

www.printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk

<https://printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk/a-z-exhibitor-list/>

ALL SET TO GO FOR SIGN & DIGITAL UK 2026

New for this year at SDUK is 'The Sign Makers Village' in partnership with the BSGA. The five zones on the Village will feature: sign writing and gilding demonstrations, courtesy of Perry Signs, architectural and window wrapping demonstrations in conjunction with CVI Group, The Sign Makers Workshops

hosted by Paul Hughes of Sign Making Tools, as well as the BSGA central hub, that will host forums and seminars with involvement from several key industry partners and influencers.

In addition to The Sign Makers Village, The Knowledge Centre will have sessions presented by industry experts, covering topics on business advice, marketing, and social media.

The show offers visitors an exceptional opportunity to expand their knowledge and gain valuable insight into the sign, digital printing, and garment decoration industries.

PRINTWEAR & PROMOTION LIVE! 2026

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! 2026 is welcoming an exciting mix of first-time exhibitors and returning exhibitors, ready to share fresh ideas and standout products across the decorated garment and promotional product sectors. From new embroidery innovations to the latest in screen printing, visitors can expect plenty of inspiration and new launches.

With both debut and returning exhibitors under one roof, P&P LIVE! 2026 is set to be a must visit event. The show runs from Sunday, February 22 to Tuesday, February 24 February 2026 at the NEC Birmingham. The full list of new exhibitors include:

CraftyJet — A UK brand dedicated to making direct-to-film (DTF) printing accessible, compact, and affordable for hobbyists and small businesses.

DTF Lab — Provides high quality DTF transfers on a very quick turnaround.

Heathrow Embroidery Machines — Specialises in the sales, servicing, and support of commercial embroidery machines across the UK.

Metamark (UK) — Designs, manufactures and supplies materials for the sign and allied graphics industries around the world.

MiRiCal Emblems — Specialises in the manufacture of heat-applied transfers and emblems for the laundry, workwear, safety wear, and sportswear industries.

Pima Blanks — A premium blank apparel brand combining Supima cotton, the world's finest fibre, with European craftsmanship.

Two Tone Studios — A leading garment decoration facility based in the East Midlands, backed by over 60 years of combined experience in apparel manufacturing and embellishment.

Another standout newcomer is Two Tone Studios, a leading

garment decoration facility based in the East Midlands, backed by over 60 years of combined experience in apparel manufacturing and embellishment. Director, Hossein Mazahar, shared their reasoning to exhibit: “P&P LIVE! is the leading industry publication and a recognised event organiser, it provides the ideal platform for us to showcase our capabilities and connect with key decision makers across the apparel and decoration sector.”

Visitors can expect a true surge of innovation at this year's event, with an impressive line-up of first time exhibitors and a range of first look product debuts set to shape the future of the decorated garment and promotional sector. From cutting edge decoration techniques and advanced machinery demonstrations to expert led guidance on workflow optimisation and brand elevation, the show promises invaluable insight for decorators at every stage of their journey.

RETURNING EXHIBITORS

Quick Print Pros will recognise several exhibitors returning to the show after a break to raise the bar for a great show experience. You can expect to see familiar names returning to P&P LIVE! 2026 such as:

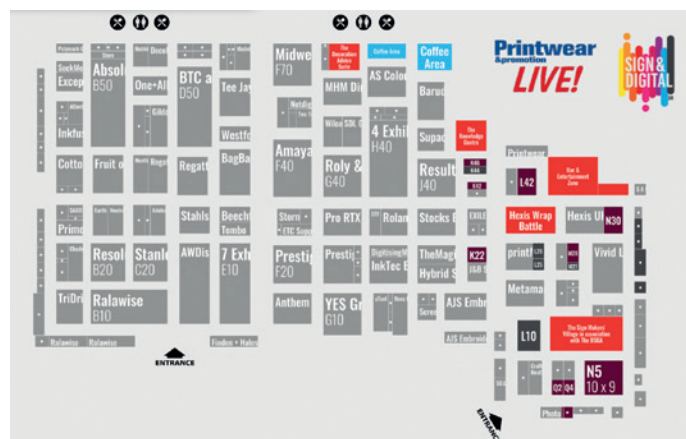
Embroidery Machine Sales — Sells, installs, and supports commercial and industrial embroidery machines.

Hybrid Services — Exclusive distributor for Mimaki in the UK and Ireland, supplying and supporting the complete range of digital printing and cutting solutions from the Japanese manufacturer.

InkTec Europe — A leading manufacturer of high quality DTF (direct-to-film) and UV-DTF printing solutions for the garment customisation market.

PenCarrie — One of the UK's leading B2B wholesale clothing and accessory distributors.

Result Clothing — A UK based brand that specialises in high quality, durable clothing for outdoor, corporate, and promotional markets,



Sabur Digital — One of the UK's leading suppliers of large format printing equipment and consumables, specialising in innovative solutions for the textile, signage, and industrial printing markets.

Screen Print World — A UK based supplier of screen printing equipment, consumables, and support.

Supacolour UK — A premium heat transfer manufacturer driven by a passionate team of 75+.

Returning exhibitor, Hybrid Services' sales director, Andy Gregory shared insight in to why the company have chosen to return to P&P LIVE! in 2026: “Printwear & Promotion LIVE! is a key event for Hybrid. It brings together the exact type of businesses that can benefit from Mimaki's technologies; companies looking to diversify, enhance quality, and expand their product offering. Our focused presence at the show allows us to demonstrate how Mimaki hardware can open new revenue opportunities and create long term value for print and embroidery specialists alike.”

REGISTER NOW FOR FAST-TRACK ENTRY!

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! 2026: <https://printwear2026.smartreg.co.uk/Visitors/Visitors/Register?promoid=qpp>

Sign & Digital UK 2026: <https://signdigital2026.smartreg.co.uk/>

HYBRID SERVICES FOCUSED MIMAKI TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

Hybrid Services will exhibit at Printwear & Promotion Live! 2026, marking its first dedicated presence at the exhibition for several years. While the company has long exhibited at Sign & Digital UK, its return to Printwear as a standalone event reflects the continued convergence of garment decoration, promotional products, personalisation, print and signage – and the changing demands of customers operating across these sectors.

Direct to Film printing remains a core production method for garment decorators, and the attractively priced Mimaki TxF Series will feature on the Hybrid stand as a proven, production ready solution. Alongside this, the UK and Ireland distributor will showcase the new Mimaki UJV300DTF-75 UV DTF printer, which enables high quality, durable full colour graphics to be applied to a wide range of promotional items and hard surfaces. UV DTF is attracting growing interest from



businesses looking to extend decoration beyond textiles without fundamentally changing their existing workflows.

Dye sublimation printing will also form a key part of the stand. The new Mimaki TS200-1600 will be shown as an accessible entry point into sportswear, textile decoration, rigid objects and soft signage. The system reflects increasing demand for dependable, manageable dye sublimation solutions that deliver consistent print quality without unnecessary complexity.

With Sign & Digital UK now co-located with Printwear & Promotion Live!, Hybrid Services will also highlight the overlap between garment decoration and sign and graphics production. The Mimaki CJV200-75 solvent printer/cutter will be on display, supporting heat transfer vinyl production for garments alongside stickers, banners and point of sale applications. For many businesses, this type of versatility is becoming an important factor in future investment decisions.

Andy Gregory, Sales Director at Hybrid Services, comments: “Printwear & Promotion Live! provides an excellent opportunity for informed, practical discussions about where this sector is heading and how different technologies can support sustainable business growth. Our aim is to give visitors the chance to see the equipment, applications and workflows in person and have open conversations about what might be right for their business.”

Hybrid Services looks forward to welcoming visitors to stand J20 at Printwear & Promotion Live! 2026 in Birmingham this February.

www.hybridservices.co.uk

We Love Print at Hybrid Services

The "I Love Print" theme is an apt reminder of why print continues to thrive in an increasingly digital world. At Hybrid, as Mimaki's distributor for the UK and Ireland, we understand that print is valued not just for how it looks, but for how easily it can be adapted, repurposed and sold across a wide range of applications. And that versatility is a central focus for our stand at Printwear & Promotion Live! this February.

Using the I Love Print graphic as a single creative starting point, our emphasis was on showing how one design can translate seamlessly across multiple products that reflect today's on-demand buying habits. We started by producing a shaped self-adhesive sticker on the Mimaki CJV200-75 solvent printer/cutter, applied here to a diary but equally suited to countless other surfaces. Stickers remain a powerful, low cost product with broad appeal, particularly in short run and personalised environments and can be as frivolous or practical in their design as required – from 'I Love Print' stickers to barcode product decals and safety warning labels.



The design was then carried into garment decoration, produced on a t-shirt using the Mimaki TxF300-75 DTF printer. DTF continues to gain print on demand traction thanks to its flexibility, minimal setup and ability to serve both promotional and retail-style orders.

Beyond textiles, the artwork was then applied to a phone case using the new Mimaki UJV300DTF-75, demonstrating how UV DTF can unlock new opportunities in promotional and decorative hard goods. The final application



sees the design transferred onto a mousemat using the TS200-1600 dye sublimation printer, highlighting the crossover potential into giftware and accessories.

Collectively, these examples reflect a broader point. Diversification does not require a complete change in direction, but a considered expansion of capability. For copyshops and print on demand providers, investing in adaptable print technology allows a single creative idea to generate multiple revenue streams – a theme that will be explored in greater depth at Printwear & Promotion Live! on Hybrid's stand (J20) this February. We look forward to seeing you there!

www.hybridservices.co.uk

Nova Chrome Valentine's Day gift ideas



More print personalisation potential from our Quick Print Pro preferred supplier Nova Chrome UK, regularly praised for their profitable dye sublimation supplies and equipment.

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into keepsakes, capture hearts, and make this Valentine's Day your most profitable yet. Explore their full

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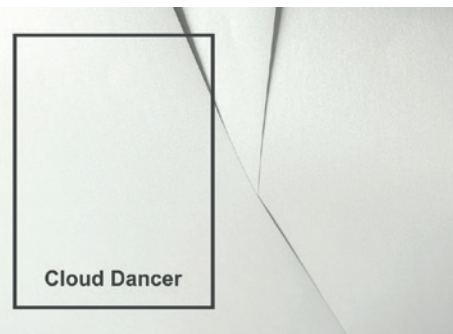
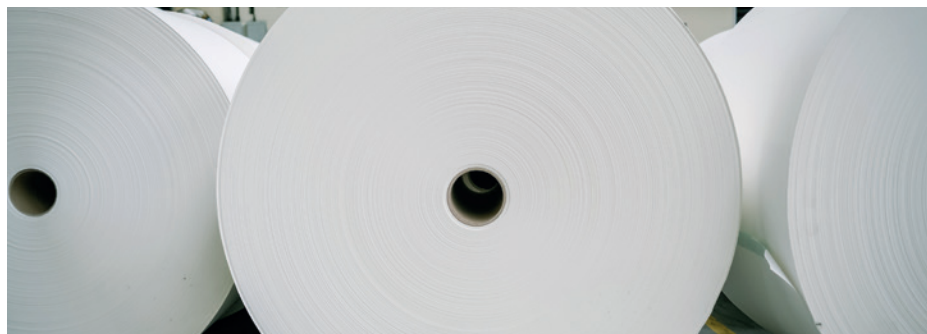
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The philosophy of white

White has always been more than a colour; it is the quiet space between thought and form, the light filled pause where the eye rests and the mind find clarity.

Today, in a world buzzing with distraction, white takes on renewed significance. Pantone's selection of PANTONE 11-4201 Cloud Dancer as the Colour of the Year 2026 celebrates this very essence — a lofty, aerated white that whispers calm and serenity into a frenetic society.

At James Cropper, the historic British papermaker, white is not just a conceptual ideal — it is a craft, a product, and a philosophy. Like a blank sheet of paper, white invites reflection, contemplation, and the freedom to explore new ideas, offering a gentle exhale amid the clatter of modern life. In design, white is both subtle and commanding, a paradox of restraint and presence. Ice white on paper, soft cream, or a silken neutral all tell different stories, each defined by reflection, opacity, and the interplay of material and light. In this sense, white is living; it shifts with perspective, echoing the promise of Cloud Dancer to open a space for creativity, contemplation, and connection.

THE CHALLENGE OF TRUE WHITE

White. It seems simple, unassuming, even obvious. Yet, in the world of paper, achieving the perfect white is anything but straightforward. "That's the bit from a technical point of view. I'm not sure that it's exactly that simple," says Mark Starrs, immediately hinting at the complexities behind what many take for granted.

Achieving a white that feels perfectly poised is a craft of patience, precision, and understanding, much like Cloud Dancer itself — a gentle, ethereal signal of balance, focus, and the creative potential of starting anew.

At the heart of the discussion lies a deceptively simple question: what is a true

white? White is virtually an entire colour palette in and of itself. When dealing with colour formulation, minute differences in the formula can make a huge difference to the final product. The difference between a cool, bluish white and a warm, more orange white might sound subtle, but it's immediately apparent to the human eye which is highly sensitive to changes in brightness.

WHITE AS MEANING

In other words, white is not just a technical challenge; it carries meaning. Traditionally linked with purity, calmness, and neutrality, white is often chosen in design to create a clean, uplifting effect. "Usually white is linked to clinical, but it can also be pure. White's more uplifting than grey, but still neutral and a good base," Starrs observes. Trends in design, psychology, and consumer perception all play a subtle role in why white is chosen. "There's a limited scope with whites... when does a white stop being white? When does it become cream, or even violet?"

The subtle psychology of colour also factors into trend spotting. "It's quite interesting because while you're looking at trends, I don't think we've seen a surge in new whites at the lab scale, but packaging wise, using a white sheet with a little logo can look really clean. Maybe neutral, calm, uplifting — that's part of why designers pick it."

This can have a huge impact on the psychological effect imparted by the end product. Cold white is clean and medical, but go too far, and it looks harsh and uninviting. Warmer whites are inviting and professional, but again, go too far and the end result looks murky, distorting the

other colours that surround it. As ever, clarity of intent is absolutely vital.

NOT SO BLACK AND WHITE

"That's one of the reasons when we think about whites... what is a true white?" Starrs continues. The answer is layered. A pure, natural white often leans yellow, closer to the inherent hue of the pulp. "If we're being specific about ice white, it's more like a neutral white — not a blue bright white," he clarifies, explaining that Coloursource Ice White achieves a subtle balance.

This is important when considering the application of the paper, and the white colouring it carries. The paper needs to offer a precise printing surface that can present printed colours exactly as intended. For packaging, colours need to be eye catching and in line with the brand's identity, so white needs to enable the creation of a vivid colour that leaps off the shelf. Books and stationery, on the other hand, need to focus on legibility and reader comfort, demanding muted, warmer whites.

Achieving this balance for every application is where innovative papercraft demonstrates its true value.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE HUE

"We use Tappi Brightness to evaluate the brightness of the pulp that we use. This ensures that we are using the best quality pulp and helps build a strong base product," Starrs explains.

If pulp is considered on its own, it is naturally slightly yellow in hue, while at the other extreme, photocopier paper often appears violet or blue. "We can make a variety of whites in between — redder, less blue, more yellow, brighter — and these are controlled by careful control of our papermaking chemistry."

Continue reading at:
www.bestblogsinprint.co.uk/blog/the-philosophy-of-white



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Neil Felton, FESPA CEO, Awarded Girls Who Print Ally Award



FESPA CEO, Neil Felton has been awarded the 2025 Girls Who Print Ally Award for his leadership of the FESPA Foundation, an initiative that was launched earlier this year to demonstrate 'Print For Good'. The FESPA Foundation galvanises exhibiting companies at its exhibitions to produce printed educational resources for schools across South Africa and other underserved communities. The Girls Who Print Ally

Award recognises Felton for leveraging the power of print to create a positive impact and safer learning environments in underserved communities — all while inspiring the global print community.

Led by Deborah Corn, Girls Who Print (GWP) is a non-profit organisation that supports the advancement of female careers in the print and graphic communications industries. Through educational initiatives, mentorship and networking, GWP promotes a more equitable and forward thinking print community. Girls Who Print continues to serve as a respected voice for progress, inclusion and professional achievement across the sector.

FESPA partnered with Girls Who Print — to highlight its support of the organisation and diversity across print — at FESPA Global Print Expo 2025, in May, at the Messe Berlin, Germany. During the event, GWP led a series of speaker sessions at the SmartHub conference, as well as a lunch. GWP's conference sessions and lunch invited FESPA visitors to hear from female leaders across the print industry, and share their knowledge and own experiences when kickstarting a career in a traditionally male dominated field.

Neil Felton says: "I'm truly honoured

to receive the 2025 Girls Who Print Ally Award. We (the FESPA team) were delighted to initiate a partnership with Deborah Corn this year, and to us, this is just the beginning. Girls Who Print is a truly inspirational organisation and we look forward to seeing what is in store for our relationship in the future. This is more than just an award, it's global recognition for the FESPA Foundation and I am proud to be accepting this on behalf of everyone who has supported us on our journey. Thank you."

Deborah Corn, Executive Director of Girls Who Print, comments: "Our mission to support women in print throughout their careers will continue in 2026. The ARC and Print University strengthen this mission by expanding our access to experts, education, skill building, mentorship, and professional development. Membership and sponsorship contributions are essential to powering our mission, expanding our offerings, and strengthening our global community. We deeply appreciate the companies that support our work and look forward to welcoming many more in the coming year."

www.fespa.com/en/about/fespa-foundation

FESPA EXPANDS EVENT PORTFOLIO WITH TWO NEW BRAND LAUNCHES

FESPA is growing its event portfolio with two new launches — Corrugated and Textile — both of which will debut at FESPA 2026 from 19-22 May 2026 in Barcelona.

Corrugated is a joint venture between FESPA and packaging specialist Brunton Publications. It will provide a dedicated platform for manufacturers of corrugated cardboard packaging and display solutions to meet suppliers of materials, machinery, workflow software and other technologies.

The new Textile event builds on FESPA's long heritage in screen and digital garment printing, spotlighting the technologies and materials shaping textile and garment production.

The events will take place alongside the flagship FESPA Global Print Expo 2026, creating a mega event that brings together five

FESPA

co-located events under one roof: FESPA Global Print Expo, European Sign Expo, Personalisation Experience, Corrugated and Textile.

The new event launches bring to life FESPA's forward looking strategy, FESPA Future, which highlights how FESPA is investing to stimulate business growth for its evolving communities. FESPA's expanded event line-up demonstrates its active commitment to serving diverse vertical markets across the speciality print sector, offering platforms for knowledge sharing and education, and creating more value for visitors and exhibitors.

Neil Felton, CEO, FESPA, comments: "FESPA has a positive track record of identifying areas of growth potential for our community and providing an environment where they can discover and understand the possible impact on their own businesses. With the launch of Textile and Corrugated alongside our established print, signage and personalisation events, we're creating a single destination where connected business communities can explore a multitude of opportunities. In Barcelona, FESPA 2026 will be bigger, stronger and even more diverse, further solidifying FESPA as the leading global event and knowledge sharing platform for all aspects of specialty print."

For more information about FESPA 2026, visit: <https://www.fespaglobalprintexpo.com/>
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Papergraphics £1 million sustainability investment

Papergraphics Ltd, a supplier of large format printing solutions, has announced a £1 million programme of sustainability initiatives.

Michelle Dellow, Product Manager and Sustainability Lead at Papergraphics, explains, "Our sustainability efforts are motivated by the need to mitigate against rising operational costs, the desire to minimise environmental impact, and the critical need to meet customer expectations for environmental responsibility. We are prioritising tangible action to ensure that what we are claiming is visible and measurable."

She continues, "We also acknowledge the challenges of some products, such as self-adhesive vinyls, which are not yet fully recyclable or environmentally friendly. However, Papergraphics is committed to working towards improving these situations while making a substantial impact in other operational areas."

Powering operations with solar

A key initiative involves installing solar panels across the company's headquarters' roof in Crawley. Over 648 panels were fitted in a month long project, which is set to reduce energy costs significantly. The system can generate up to 266,700 kWh annually, which is enough to power more than 100 average British homes. This clean energy will be used mainly for Papergraphics' day to day office requirements and the company's electric vehicle fleet of nine new electric and five plug in hybrid vehicles. Any surplus energy will



be supplied to the National Grid.

Michelle adds, "Six on-site electric vehicle chargers have been installed for staff and guests, and home charging options are available for employees with company vehicles. This shift will reduce the company's carbon footprint and help to enhance air quality in our local area."

Final electrical installations are underway, with the official switch on confirmed for Friday 28 November 2025.

Winning with waste management

Papergraphics processes hundreds of media rolls daily, either converting them to specific roll sizes or delivering them to customers across the UK and Europe. Packaging materials alone contribute to large amounts of plastic and other difficult to recycle waste that previously ended up in landfill.

To address this, the company has invested in three balers, two for plastic and one for cardboard. The plastic balers are very easy

to use and have already drastically reduced waste by compacting many forms of packaging plastic, including bubble wrap previously destined for landfill.

"This reduction in waste collections cuts emissions and allows Papergraphics to reinvest savings into further sustainability projects. In just six months, we have recycled nearly four tonnes of plastic and over 15 tonnes of cardboard, diverting around 1,900 bin bags of waste from landfill," says Michelle.

Michelle concludes, "This is a long term project the whole company is behind. We are so proud to have made some significant investments in important areas of the business that will help us be a better and more environmentally conscious organisation. There is a lot more still to do, but we are working hard to make sure every project delivers measurable improvements to our operational well being."

www.paper-graphics.com

Two Sides highly commended for sustainability at IPIA recognising excellence awards

Two Sides has announced that it was Highly Commended in the Sustainability Advocate 2025 category at the IPIA Recognising Excellence Awards 2025.

The award, presented by Ed Hudson and sponsored by Morgana Systems, part of the Plockmatic Group, recognises organisations and individuals making an outstanding contribution to sustainability leadership within the print and communications industry.

The judges praised Two Sides for its clear commitment to transparency, integrity and evidence based communication, particularly in its ongoing work to tackle greenwashing and misinformation around the environmental impact of print, paper and paper based packaging.

In their nomination, the judges



highlighted how Two Sides plays a vital role in ensuring sustainability claims are honest, accurate and credible, helping to protect both consumers and the reputation of the print industry. Special recognition was given to Managing Director of Two Sides, Jonathan Tame, for his presentation at the IPIA Annual Conference, which delivered insight, clarity and inspiration to industry professionals, reinforcing the importance of responsible

communication.

Two Sides' work focuses on challenging common myths about paper through robust data, trusted sources and clear messaging. Its campaigns, educational resources and fact sheets support brands, printers, publishers, and consumers in making informed choices about the media they use, while reinforcing paper's role as a renewable, recyclable and essential communication medium.

Commenting on the recognition, Two Sides said:

"We are extremely proud to be highly commended as Sustainability Advocate 2025. This recognition reflects the passion, professionalism, and commitment of our team and our members, who continue to support honest communication and champion the true environmental

story of print and paper."

Two Sides would like to thank the IPIA, the judging panel, Morgana Systems and the wider industry for this recognition and remains committed to advocating for transparency, responsible communication and a more sustainable future for print and paper.

Collaboration remains central to the Two Sides approach. By working closely with industry partners across the supply chain, Two Sides has helped create a strong, unified voice for an industry that is too often misunderstood in sustainability debates.

To find out more about Two Sides and the benefits of becoming a member, visit

www.twosides.info/become-a-member



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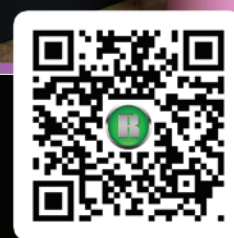
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New Personalised Print Gifts Store



Epson and the Human Milk Foundation Relaunch HMFGifts.com with Star Editions Partnership, expanding product range and Print Innovation.

Epson and its charity partner, the Human Milk Foundation (HMF), have announced the relaunch of their online gift store, HMFGifts.com, following a new collaboration with leading UK print wholesaler Star Editions. The updated platform offers an enhanced shopping experience, a broader product range, and showcases Epson's advanced print technologies – highlighting the environmental and supply chain benefits of on-demand printing in the UK.

Originally launched in May 2022, HMFGifts.com was created to raise vital funds for the Human Milk Foundation by selling gifts printed using Epson technology. Every purchase supports HMF's mission to provide donor human milk to premature and sick babies in hospital neonatal

units and families at home across England and Wales. Much like donated blood, donor human milk can help save lives.

By printing only what is needed, when it's needed, using Epson's digital textile printers, HMFGifts.com demonstrates the advantages of quick turnaround, controlled stock management, and a sustainable production model compared to overseas analogue printing. This approach also enables personalisation – something not feasible with outsourced production.

The products featured on HMFGifts.com feature designs based around the components of human milk, such as Oxytocin and Prolactin, the charity's emblem the snowdrop flower (also known as the 'milk flower') and themes of kindness, love and family. These designs have been created by students from Hertfordshire's Longdean Academy and graphic designer Emily Culpeper.

WITH STAR EDITIONS NOW ONBOARD, THE STORE OFFERS

- A completely redesigned website for easier navigation and an improved customer experience.
- An expanded product range, including baby grows, baby blankets, bibs, fridge magnets, water bottles, keyrings, snow globes, and more.
- Personalised gifts, adding extra value for customers.
- Diverse print processes, with items produced using Epson's Monna Lisa direct-to-fabric printers, alongside Epson dye-sublimation printers.

Flic Webster, Human Milk Foundation, commented: "We are delighted that through the relaunch of the HMF gift shop, we can now offer a greater range of beautiful, personalised products for babies and families, all of which are printed sustainably on demand in the UK using Epson's fantastic printing technology. The funds raised from every gift purchased enable us to provide donor human milk to tiny babies in need, helping save lives. We are so grateful to our charity partner Epson UK and Star Editions for making this possible, and excited to see the transformation of HMF Gifts through this wonderful partnership."

Phil McMullin, Head of Commercial & Industrial Printing at Epson UK, added: "This partnership with Star Editions marks an exciting step forward. HMFGifts.com is a perfect case study for demonstrating the benefits of on-demand printing while raising funds and awareness for our valued charity partner, the Human Milk Foundation. By combining Epson's cutting-edge print solutions with Star Editions' expertise in wholesale production and personalised gifting, we're able to offer high-quality products that make a real difference for families supported by the Human Milk Foundation."

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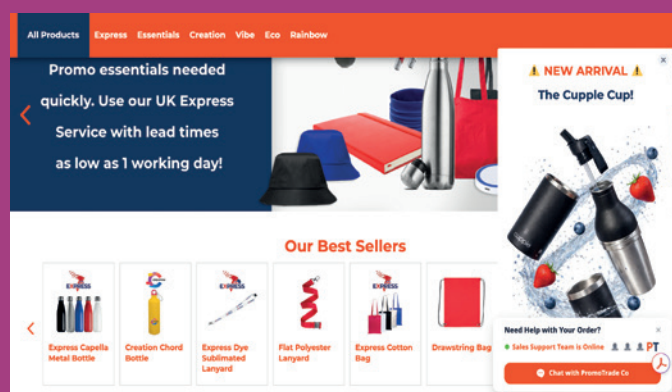
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Artist “humanoise” on how 3D printing became his creative collaborator



Post digital artist humanoise (Taketo Kobayashi) utilises Mimaki's full colour 3D printing technology to push the physical boundaries of his transformative artwork. Following his first exhibition in Amsterdam ("Digital G-O-D"), he shares how 3D printing became central to his creative process.

When did you start incorporating 3D printing technology into your artistic practice?

I grew up building robots out of empty cardboard boxes, so when I started using CG software, it just felt like a natural extension of what

I was already doing. I'd actually known about 3D printing since the '90s, but back then the cost of owning and operating one was very high. The first time I 3D printed my own artwork was in 2011 for an art collaboration project – XSENSE, developed and produced with artist Sense – where I used a nylon SLS printer at the Tokyo Metropolitan Industrial Technology Research Institute. Seeing the 3D data I'd only seen on screen suddenly take a physical form, was, and still is, an incredible feeling.

I began using Mimaki's 3D printer almost by lucky coincidence. Back in

2017, shortly after Mimaki released the 3DUJ-553, the company was planning an 3D art exhibition called 'Ultra Modelers' in Osaka. I was invited to join as one of the artists and ended up helping to organise the show as well.

What makes 3D printing such an exciting and unique tool for experimental creatives like yourself?

In traditional sculpture, you're always negotiating with the material – how it behaves and how to work with it using the tools you have. With 3D printing, especially when you're designing it in CG software, you're almost entirely freed from physical limitations, creating forms that would be nearly impossible to make by hand or with traditional tools. For example, hollow structures with complex internal geometries, or pieces made up of thousands or even millions of tiny components.

Of course, once you actually print the piece, gravity and material strength come back into the equation as you still need to think about structure, wall thickness, supports, and so on, but the design phase is much freer. I've found 3D printing helps to push forward both our creativity and our way of thinking as artists.

Can you walk us through your creative process when working with 3D printing?

Every 3D printer has its own quirks and strengths, so understanding those characteristics and using them to their full potential is vital, and I treat it as a collaborator in the artistic process, rather than just a tool. When I create high end art pieces, especially ones with complex textures or full colour, I use Mimaki's full colour 3D printers. The 3DUJ-553, used together with Mimaki's Pure Clear Ink, is especially effective for creating the clear and transparent elements that define many of my works.

That being said, I often collaborate with companies who specialise in 3D printing, as their expertise can help me further leverage the technology in creative, unexpected ways. Their generous support is a major motivator for me to keep creating and pushing boundaries, not just for myself, but to showcase what these tools can do.

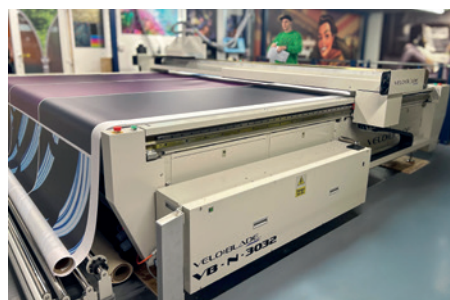
There are more questions and answers continued here: www.bestblogs.inprint.co.uk/blog/artist-humanoise-on-how-3d-printing-become-his-creative-collaborator

First Veloblade Nexus 3032 in Ireland at Xtreme Signs & Graphics

Dublin based large format printing business Xtreme Signs & Graphics recently became the first company in Ireland to purchase a Veloblade Nexus 3032, taking delivery of the machine from Soyang Hardware to expand its in-house cutting capabilities.

Active for more than 17 years, Xtreme Signs & Graphics offers a full range of trade services including exhibition fabrics, dye-sublimation and UV printing on various materials for indoor and outdoor use. The company's evolution from its early beginnings in safety signage to becoming a leader in large format print has been supported by a focus on embracing new technology.

It was this approach that led the company to invest in a Veloblade Nexus 3032, a large format digital die cutting machine developed by Vivid Laminating Technologies. Featuring a cutting area of 3,000 x 3,200mm, the machine allows users to work with stocks up to 25mm thick, including key materials such as Dibond, MDF and acrylic,



alongside numerous fabrics.

Offering a top cutting speed of 1,500mm/s, the device also boasts other features such as automatic cut depth setting and an automatic tool changer, both of which increase the overall operating speed and make the operator's job much easier.

Xtreme purchased the new device from Soyang Hardware, an approved distribution partner of Vivid Laminating Technologies. The Soyang team installed the machine at Xtreme's specialist facility

in Dublin in late summer.

"Our rapid growth in fabric printing created a new challenge: manual cutting couldn't keep up with demand," said Roisin Hennessy, co-owner of Xtreme Signs & Graphics. "To streamline workflow and boost productivity, we decided to automate the cutting process. After reviewing multiple options, we partnered with Soyang and Vivid and selected the Veloblade Nexus as our next cutting solution investment.

"It made perfect sense as the next step in our growth process to keep up with increasing demand for large format print. Our machine was installed at the end of the summer, which was perfect timing for us, coming into the busy exhibition season."

While the new machine has only been in place for a few months, Roisin and the Xtreme team have already seen a marked improvement in production, with the Veloblade Nexus 3032 having been put to work across a wide variety of applications.

"Working with Soyang and Vivid has been fantastic. Their support has been exceptional, and we're eager to continue building on our success together in the future."

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Something to share?

HAPPY VALENTINES

What did the Valentine's Day card say to the stamp? Stick with me and you'll go places

What do farmers give their wives on Valentine's Day? Hogs and kisses!

What did the painter say to her boyfriend? "I love you with all my art!"

What do single people call Valentine's Day? Happy Independence Day

Why did the pig give his girlfriend a box of sweets? It was Valenswine's Day!

Do skunks celebrate Valentine's Day? Sure, they're very scent-imental!

NEW WAY TO PLAY SHOPS

Two kids were deciding what game to play.

One said, "Let's play printers!"

"Good idea," said the other. "You be the printer who works in the shop, and I'll be the customer that thinks he knows more."

A DUCK AND A CHICKEN

A duck is standing next to a busy road, cars zooming past while he waits for a break in traffic.

A chicken walks up to him and says, "Don't do it, man. You'll never hear the end of it."

ONE TO ONE

"I usually meet my girlfriend at 12:59."

"Why is that?"

"Because I like that one to one time."

SHOWTIME HOTEL

The Real Meaning of Hotel slogans

Old world charm.....	No bath
Options galore	Nothing is included in the itinerary
No extra fees	No extras
Nominal fee	Outrageous charge
Standard	Sub-standard
Deluxe	Standard
Superior	One free shower cap
Cosy	Small
All the amenities	Two free shower caps
Plush.....	Top and bottom sheets

OLD MONEY

A 60 year old millionaire is getting married and throws a big wedding reception. His friends are quite jealous and in a quiet moment one of them asks him how he landed such a hot 23 year old beauty.

"Simple," grins the millionaire, "I lied about my age."

His friends are really amazed and ask him how much he said.

"Well," he replied, "I said I was 87!"

EDUCATIONAL BUDGET

Did you hear about the banker who was recently arrested for embezzling £100,000 to pay for his daughter's university education?

As the policeman, who also had a daughter in university, was leading him away in handcuffs, he said to the banker, "I have just one question for you. Where were you going to get the rest of the money?"

A LESSON FROM CONSULTANTS

Last week, we took some friends to a restaurant, 'Must Wine Bar' in Manchester, and I noticed that the waitress who took our order carried a spoon in her shirt pocket.

It seemed a little strange. When the other waiter brought our water and utensils, I observed that he also had a spoon in his shirt pocket.

Then I looked around and saw that all the staff had spoons in their pockets. When the waiter came back to serve our meal I enquired, 'Why the spoon?'

'Well,' he explained, 'the restaurant's owner hired a consulting firm to revamp all our processes. After several months of analysis, they concluded that the spoon was the most frequently dropped utensil. It represents a drop frequency of approximately three spoons per table per hour.'

If our personnel are better prepared, we can reduce the number of trips back to the kitchen and save 15 man-hours per shift.'

As luck would have it, I dropped my spoon

and he replaced it with his spare. 'I'll get another spoon next time I go to the kitchen instead of making an extra trip to get it right now.'

I was impressed.

I also noticed that there was a string hanging out of the waiter's fly.

Looking around, I saw that all the waiters had the same string hanging from their flies. So, before he walked off, I asked the waiter, 'Excuse me, but can you tell me why you have that string right there?'

"Oh, certainly! Then he lowered his voice.

'Not everyone is so observant. That consulting firm I mentioned also learned that we can save time in the toilet.'

By tying this string to the tip of our you-know-what, we can pull it out without touching it and eliminate the need to wash our hands, shortening the time spent in the restroom by 76.39%.

I asked quietly, 'After you get it out, how do you put it back?'

'Well,' he whispered, 'I don't know about the others, but I use the spoon.'

SALES SPEAK

A salesman walks into a shoe store and tries on a pair of shoes. "How do they feel?" asks the salesclerk.

"Well they feel a bit tight," replies the man.

The assistant promptly bends down and has a look at the shoes and at the man's feet. "Try pulling the tongue out," the clerk says.

"Well, theyth sthlll feelth a bith tighth."

DOCTOR, DOCTOR

The patient runs into his psychiatrist's office and says, "Doc, I think I'm a tepee, no I think I'm a wigwam, no I think I'm a tepee, no I think I'm a wigwam, no I think I'm a tepee, no I think I'm a wigwam, no I think I'm a tepee, no I think I'm a wigwam!"

The psychiatrist looks at him and says, "Relax, you're just too tents!"

Email your jokes to: editor@QuickPrintPro.co.uk



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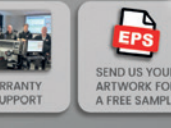
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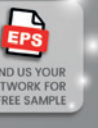
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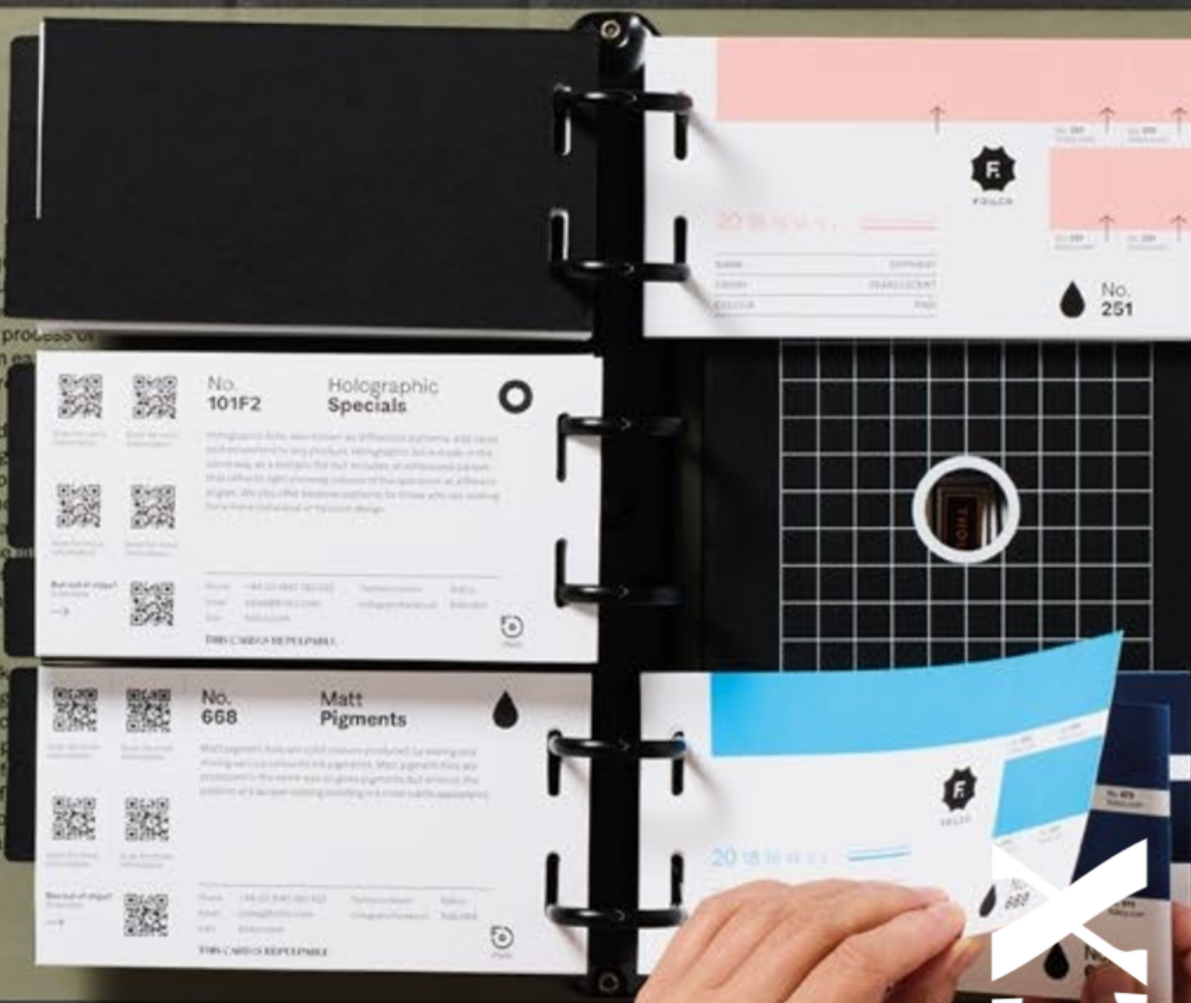
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INDEX