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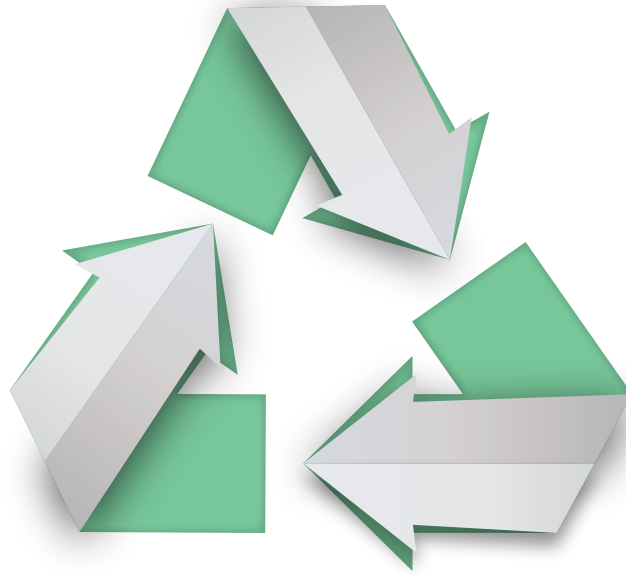


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QPP is an independent publication and not affiliated with any manufacturers or suppliers. QPP celebrates publishing the professional print trade's favourite magazine, formerly known as Copy Shop News (CSN), since May 1998.

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

Each day the live web version is updated with the hottest stories in frontline printing, including news, views, new products and suppliers information.

Avid readers include Digital Printers, Commercial Printers, Copy Shops, On-Street Instant Printers, In-House Print Room Managers, FM and Conventional printers specialising in On-Demand, Short Run, Variable Printing, CRDs (Corporate Reprographic Departments), PSPs (Print Service Providers), Graphic Arts Businesses, Sign Suppliers and CAD Bureaus.

# Welcome 2025 Print Predictions Best Blogs



Preview where print is going in 2025 with your industry gurus on page 16.

Register now for Printwear & Promotion and Sign & Digital UK 2025 on page 24. Co-Locating Exhibitions – a must visit for professional printers, sign makers, garment printers, textile print and print merchandise service providers.

Check out the Christmas spread on pages 18-19.

Between your festive eating, drinking and merriment keep up to date on our beloved industry where print is perpetual.

[www.QuickPrintPro.co.uk](http://www.QuickPrintPro.co.uk)

Peter 'Stand out print, with all the trimmings' Foulkes



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## Ashwyk's Perfect Horizon Investment

Ashwyk has energised production with investment in a Horizon BQ-270V single clamp perfect binder from Intelligent Finishing Systems (IFS).

The Essex operation combines traditional methods of production, such as a Heidelberg platen that foils and embosses, with cutting edge Indigo 7900 digital printing technology. It works with a broad client range including schools, design agencies and brands.

Managing Director Joe de Wykerslooth explains the investment decision: "We were outsourcing our perfect binding and wanted to bring it in house to improve turnaround times and our competitiveness. We evaluated other pieces of kit and the Horizon system looked to be the best. We also spoke to other people in the industry and they all said it was a good machine.



"As we are now just starting out with perfect binding in house we are looking to build it up. We can be faster and more creative. One area it will make a big impact is in proofs. Before we were creating loose examples and the customer had

to trust the final look. Now we can create a proof that will look exactly the same as the completed job. We can also create samples, adding foiling and embossing, for a very high end result. It is a winner for us." The Horizon BQ-270V single clamp

perfect binder offers high quality perfect binding and on demand production of variable thickness books. It includes an automated, sensor activated digital caliper system which measures book block thickness and automatically transfers this data to the binder for quick, automated set-up for books of different thicknesses. It features a large 10.4" intelligent colour touchscreen, job programming, and a compact configuration.

Joe hopes the investment will also open up new doors: "I am also in charge of sales and I think being able to complete perfect bound books to a very high quality is going to open doors, start fresh conversations and enable us to target new markets. It will energise the business with the ability to offer cost effective stunning results on a wide range of short run print.

[www.ifs.uk.com](http://www.ifs.uk.com)

## BakPac Installs Second HP Indigo 200K Press

BakPac, the flexible packaging division of Baker Labels, has announced the installation of its (and the UK's) second HP Indigo 200K digital press, further solidifying its role as a leader in digitally printed flexible packaging. This investment bolsters BakPac's production capacity, ensuring faster, high quality solutions for customers across the UK and Europe. In line with its two year, £5 million + investment strategy, BakPac will install a third Galaxy Packtech pouch converter, bringing its total to four. Two additional pouch converters are expected in early 2025.

Since its founding, Baker Labels has championed independence and adaptability, qualities that remain core to BakPac's rapid expansion. As other label and packaging providers consolidate into larger corporations, BakPac leverages its agility as a family business to invest quickly in advanced technologies, ensuring it meets the evolving needs of its diverse clientele.

"Remaining family owned and



independent enables us to make fast, strategic decisions, like adding the second HP Indigo 200K and multiple Galaxy converters," said Steve Baker, Managing Director of Baker Labels. "These investments reflect our focus on supporting our customers with the highest quality products and shortest industry lead times, all while preserving the personal, customer focused ethos that has driven our success for decades."

This installation also

underscores BakPac's confidence in HP technology, following the successful deployment of the UK's first Indigo 200K earlier this year.

Darren Godfrey, HP Account Manager for BakPac, commented on the continued partnership, saying, "We are incredibly proud that BakPac has chosen HP Indigo again for this next stage of their expansion. To have earned the trust of such a dynamic, forward thinking business means a lot to HP, and we're thrilled to support

BakPac's on-going success with the power and reliability of the HP Indigo 200K."

Enhancing Customer Experience and Market Reach

With expanded capacity from the HP Indigo 200K, BakPac is set to better meet the needs of brands requiring quick, high quality, and customised packaging. This investment allows BakPac to compete in a broader market by offering digitally printed solutions that were traditionally limited to larger scale production, now available in flexible runs.

For customers, the benefits are immediate: high quality packaging, reduced lead times, and the flexibility to customise at scale. With advanced energy efficiency, increased print consistency, and environmentally friendly production, the press is a cornerstone of BakPac's sustainable growth strategy.

"The second HP Indigo 200K gives us the flexibility and capacity to provide solutions to a wider range of clients," Baker added.

[www.bakpac.co.uk](http://www.bakpac.co.uk)

# Five Into One – Print On revolutionises with Impala

The North West based business has installed a swissQprint Impala to transform its large format operations, replacing five printers with just one machine.

As part of its evaluation, Managing Director Alex Oldfield travelled to swissQprint's UK and Switzerland HQs. He was introduced to the team, saw the printers in action Print On has been delivering high quality, award winning print in small and large format for over 30 years. Customers include retailers like Matalan, Superdrug, Pets at Home and Lakeland. With large format print increasingly important, the company undertook a review of the latest machines to enhance its product offering and operational efficiencies and was impressed by the Impala's quality, flexibility, and efficiency across a variety of materials and print tasks. Print On then made its largest machine investment to date.

## DRIVING PRODUCTION EFFICIENCIES

The new Impala was installed on 21st October 2024 and is already revolutionising the business's manufacturing workflow. Large format print is being handled with ease and the 2.5x2 m flatbed has integrated well with the existing finishing equipment. This has enabled Print On to replace



five of its previous large format machines, significantly simplifying production for the operators and freeing up factory space.

The Impala's 180m<sup>2</sup>/h productivity is also five times faster than the printers it has replaced, increasing print output from just the one machine. Additionally, moving to a single printer with the latest technology is driving significant energy savings and sustainability improvements. Print On also estimates that it will see savings through swissQprint's competitive consumable and ink supplies, reducing the total cost of ownership.

## A COMPETITIVE EDGE

"To be competitive in such a tough industry, we're always looking for ways to improve what we do," said Alex. "The Impala is revolutionising our

large format production processes, helping every aspect of our workload. We're delighted with its impact even in this short time and, alongside the advancements in workflow, are already enhancing the products we provide to customers."

Product innovation on display

Print On's Impala has a five colour configuration of CMYK plus white and the roll to roll option. This enables the team to bid on new work that was previously outside its capabilities. The modular printer is also able to grow whenever Print On's needs change, adding to the flexibility and future proofing the investment made by the business.

Clients are being invited to experience the Impala's print quality and innovations first hand during an open week at Print On's Cheadle site on 19th-21st November. The machine will be in full operation, showcasing its capabilities across a wide variety of substrates.

Ian Maxfield, Regional Sales Manager at swissQprint, concluded: "It's been a delight to see how Print On is using the Impala to achieve so many operational and product benefits. From simplifying workflow to offering the latest in high impact large format print, I am confident they will maximise the many opportunities now available to them."

[www.swissqprint.co.uk](http://www.swissqprint.co.uk)

# IPIA foster industry growth

The IPIA remains dedicated to fostering industry growth and strengthening connections among members and guests through its highly regarded events held throughout the year. By offering engaging, affordable, and educational experiences – like the upcoming Recognising Excellence event – the IPIA continues its mission.

Recognising Excellence will take place on December 3rd at the Crowne Plaza, Stratford Upon Avon. It is situated close to a wide range of local beauty spots, sites of historic interest and the beautiful town of Shakespearean legend. The day kicks off with an Expo and Networking Lunch, followed by a Gala Dinner and Awards night, giving plenty of opportunity for attendees to make connections, whilst enjoying a fun filled and educational day.

Chair of the IPIA's Events Subcommittee, John Morley (Worldwide Channel Partner Sales Director at eProductivity Software), discusses the value in attending Recognising Excellence: "The Expo offers attendees an invaluable wealth of information and education, equipping them with essential insights into the latest developments in print and media technology to fuel their growth or expansion goals. Taking time to work on your business – rather than just in it – can be a powerful step forward.

"Additionally, the Networking Lunch creates an

opportunity for attendees to connect directly with potential clients and partners from all parts of the supply chain, paving the way for new business and meaningful relationships.

"For those interested in extending their experience into the evening, the programme includes fantastic food, live entertainment, a celebration of our industry and the individual contributions made to support it."

## FORGE NEW CONNECTIONS

The Expo and Business Networking Hub runs from 11:00 to 15:00, with a pause for the Networking Lunch, ensuring guests can continue to make new connections whilst learning about the latest technology, media and services in the industry.

There will be more than 22 print technology and media exhibitors to engage with, with a series of interactive experiences across the stands. The IPIA Stamp Draw competition will also return, where attendees can collect a stamp from each exhibitor and be in for a chance to win up to £450 and free IPIA Membership for one year.

The event will also see current IPIA Chair, Charles Rogers of Portland Media, stepping into the role of President, while Alasdair Browne of Abbot Print, the current Vice Chair, will assume the position of Chair for the next two years.

Charles has been pivotal in bolstering the IPIA's reputation within the industry, remarking: "It's been an incredible honour to serve as Chair of the IPIA these past two years, facing the challenges and exciting transformations within our industry head-on.

"I couldn't imagine a better way to celebrate this journey than at Recognising Excellence, which truly embodies the spirit of our association. This event brings the industry together in a powerful way and highlights just how much the IPIA has grown in its impact and reach. I'm looking forward to marking this milestone with our members and celebrating all that we've accomplished together."

## KICK BACK AND RELAX

The IPIA Gala Dinner begins at 19:00 with a Champagne Reception, followed by a three course meal and drinks before the Recognising Excellence Award winners are announced at 21:00.

Keeping the excitement going, the IPIA's renowned 'Stand-up Bingo' will kick off, raising funds for The Printing Charity, followed by live music from the celebrated band 'The Arcadias' to bring the dance floor to life.

For more information contact: Brendan Perring  
Brendan@ipia.org.uk 0796 962 8839

[www.ipia.org.uk](http://www.ipia.org.uk)

# Xerox partner with Aston Martin Aramco F1

**Aston Martin Aramco Formula OneTeam has announced Xerox, a leader in office technology and solutions, as the team's Official Global Partner.**

Just as Aston Martin Formula One team relentlessly pursues peak performance on the track, Xerox empowers businesses to accelerate their digital transformation journey with cutting edge solutions. Together, they are shaping a new future—where agility meets innovation, and businesses achieve excellence at the speed of F1.

Commencing in 2025, the multi-year partnership between Xerox and Aston Martin Aramco will unite two innovators dedicated to speed, precision, and efficiency. Xerox, at the forefront of both digital and physical technologies, is renowned for its expertise in printing, scanning, and copying, alongside cutting edge workplace digital and IT services.

Aston Martin Aramco builds,



tests, and enhances its cars and race day logistics in the state of the art AMR Technology Campus at Silverstone.. Xerox will work with the team to support its digital technology functions both on and off the racetrack through the following areas:

**Managed Print Services:** Xerox will print critical "overlays" for the team, which will be used to provide telemetry data for each driver across a single lap and overlaying one driver against the other to enable

them to see their relative lap times.

**Augmented Reality:** Xerox and Aston Martin Aramco are exploring the use of Augmented Reality for Remote Assistance at track and in the team's upcoming wind tunnel.

**Marketing Insights:** With data gathering incorporated into Xerox technology, Aston Martin Aramco can receive data-backed marketing insight directly from Xerox solutions.

Xerox branding will first be visible on the AMR24 at the Las Vegas Grand Prix..

Jefferson Slack, Managing Director of Commercial, Aston Martin Aramco Formula One Team said: "Xerox has long been a leader in innovation, and this partnership brings together two brands that thrive on precision and efficiency. We are excited to work with Xerox and leverage their expertise to enhance our team's digital operations. As we push the boundaries of performance, this partnership will drive us forward."

Deena LaMarque Piquion, Chief Growth and Disruption Officer, Xerox said: "Just as Aston Martin Formula One team relentlessly pursues peak performance on the track, Xerox empowers businesses to accelerate their digital transformation journey with cutting edge solutions. Together, we are shaping a new future—where agility meets innovation, and businesses achieve excellence at the speed of F1."

[www.xerox.co.uk](http://www.xerox.co.uk)

## Signs Express Gloucester hails Drytac Retac

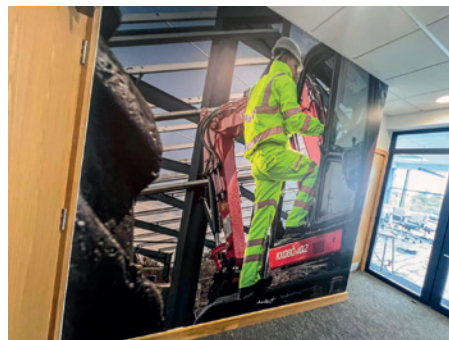
**Signs Express Gloucester has praised the performance of Drytac ReTac Textures in a recent interior graphics project, revealing that the embossed wallcovering film allowed them to achieve outstanding results.**

A diversified sign making business, Signs Express Gloucester forms part of the wider Signs Express franchise network, working with a range of customers in the local area on all manner of signage, graphics and related projects.

On a recent project, Signs Express Gloucester was tasked with creating a set of eye catching graphics for use inside a customer's office building. The design was a mixture of black and white and colourful images, with the stand out elements being the fluorescent green and orange of workers' high-vis safety jackets and uniforms.

Identifying the need for a material that would perform well across these two elements, Signs Express Gloucester elected to work with Drytac's ReTac Textures, specifically with the sand finish to help enhance the imagery.

ReTac Textures is a polymeric self-adhesive vinyl that is ideal for customers wanting to create eye catching graphics in home, business, retail and display environments. The product features an



ultra-removable adhesive backing, meaning it can be easily removed and repositioned during installation. Printable on eco-solvent, UV and latex printers, it is available in sand, linen, canvas, and woodgrain finishes.

Signs Express Gloucester printed the series of graphics in-house on its Epson SureColor SC-S80600 before installing the completed pieces at the customer's office building.

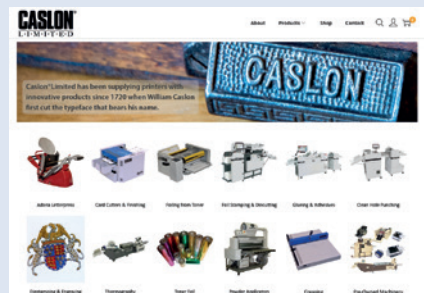
"We chose to work with ReTac Textures as we wanted to achieve high quality images and produce vibrant colours," said Lee Villiers, Centre Manager at Signs Express Gloucester. "The end result was simply outstanding.

"As the material is so easy to work with, we did not encounter any challenges during the printing or installation of the piece. It was all very straight forward for our team, both on site at our facility and when installing the final product on location.

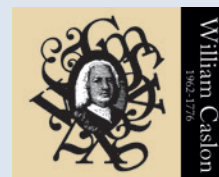
"The customer gave us great feedback and was very pleased with the installation."

[www.drytac.com](http://www.drytac.com)

## QPP PREFERRED SUPPLIER OF THE MONTH – CASLON



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# It's Nearly Time

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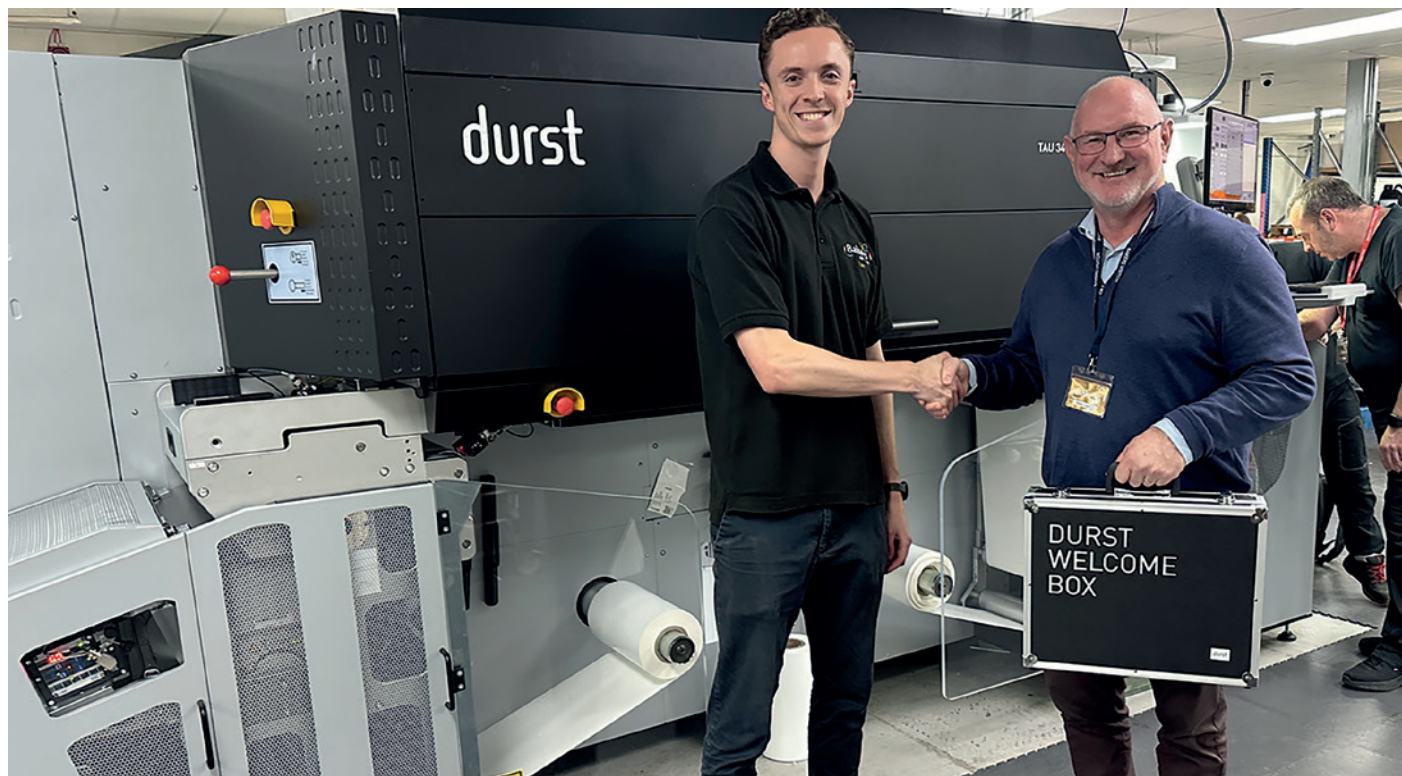
## We're Here to Help This Festive Season

Mariah's annual defrost has begun, and much like her, all we want for Christmas is for you to be successful this festive period. That's why we've launched our new Christmas Hub, packed with festive blogs, seasonal products, and a **FREE marketing toolkit**.

Scan the QR code or go to [www.route1print.co.uk/christmas-hub](http://www.route1print.co.uk/christmas-hub) to get started.



# Baker Labels Install Durst Tau RSC 340 LED



**Baker Labels has once again demonstrated its commitment to innovation with the installation of the Durst Tau RSC 340 LED. This installation makes Baker Labels the first UK company to adopt this model of the state of the art press. The investment reinforces Baker Labels' dedication to delivering cutting edge, high quality printing solutions while expanding production capabilities.**

Baker Labels has been a trusted, high quality professional label supplier for over 50 years. They're proud to have maintained their independent, family run business status in a climate where similar label producers have been absorbed into larger groups. Being committed to continual reinvestment in new innovations and technologies has ensured they have remained relevant, valuable suppliers to their customers.

## KEY TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE DURST TAU RSC 340 LED:

The productivity of the press running at 80m/min, the robustness and the quality of print at a native resolution of 1200dpi were key to the investment with Durst Group. The press features "best in class" Fuji Samba print heads providing 1200 x 1200 dpi and running speeds of 80m/min CMYK – 52m/min CMYKW.

When asked for his thoughts on being the first UK company to install this version of the press, and with a Hawk AI unit to be added to the press in the coming weeks Tom Baker said,

"If we're going to do something, we will do it properly! Getting the full RSC with LED curing and the Hawk AI unit to develop is an exciting

challenge for us as a team and should keep us busy for a while. It's exciting to see what will be possible and start pushing the boundaries of such an innovative product."

## IMPACT ON PRODUCTION AT BAKER LABELS: ENHANCED PRODUCTIVITY

With the Durst they believe they can achieve the best quality in less time than the machine they are replacing. Their target is to ensure they remain at the forefront of the label printing industry using the best quality kit. In this way, they will maintain their customers' confidence in Bakers as a supplier.

Jamie Godson, Bakers' Technical Manager said, "It was clear to me from a very early stage that the TAU 340 RSC was a well engineered press. It has impressed at every stage of the investment process from initial sampling, press demos right through to the install and will no doubt have a huge impact on our productivity and lead times. The running speeds of 80 and 52 m/min are an obvious benefit, but the TAU has plenty of other tricks up its sleeve to enhance our uptime. LED curing reduces downtime during start/stops and extremely consistent head densities across the web, coupled with our internal colour management software, has shown a dramatic improvement on the consistency of repeat orders without having to "tweak on press".

With a thinner ink laydown than what we have previously experienced, the TAU 340 RSC is capable of producing high quality tonal images and fine text, whilst still retaining the robustness and impact of traditional inkjet print."

## REDUCING WASTE AND IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability was a key factor when deciding to go with the Durst. They are the only suppliers in the labels industry to offer a full LED press with native 1200dpi. Full LED curing instead of UV will reduce the energy used in production. In addition, more accurate set-ups and calibrations will reduce material wastage. These two factors will reduce the total impact of Bakers' operation and so improve their green credentials.

Baker Labels' Focus on Innovation: This investment shows Bakers' commitment to offering customers the highest quality across the board. They have made a lot of noise in the packaging world recently with the investments of two HP Indigo 200k presses and Galaxy Packtech pouch makers, but Baker Labels is still a growing part of the company that they continue to invest in.

## BAKERS ONGOING GROWTH STRATEGY AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE

This press installation is part of a broader two year, £2 million investment in growth and advanced technologies for the company. In the last 14 months Bakers has acquired and additional HP Indigo 6k press for their label division; three Galaxy Packtech pouch converters and two HP Indigo 200K digital presses and additional factory premises for their flexible packaging division, BakPac. Two more Galaxy presses are planned for 2025.

[www.bakerlabels.co.uk](http://www.bakerlabels.co.uk) • [www.bakpac.co.uk](http://www.bakpac.co.uk)





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# New RICOH Pro™ VC40000 Webfed Inkjet Press



**The latest version of the RICOH Pro VC40000 technology platform empowers printers to meet faster turnaround deadlines and deliver increased throughput for monochrome applications, while driving down costs. It can run up to 180 m/min at full 600 x 600 dpi print quality.**

There are two ink set options – dye, which is most commonly used for transactional printing, and mono pigment, which is ideally suited to book printing. The mono dye version can also run at

225 m/min with 600 x 300 dpi print quality.

Its configuration flexibility includes duplex, simplex, and dual simplex capabilities. Complex and intensive production processes can be automated in demanding print environments with Ricoh's Process Driven Automation powered by Ricoh Process Director to streamline production processes.

Sander Sondaal, Director, Commercial Print Sales, Ricoh Europe Graphic Communications, says: "Ricoh has worked closely with our

transactional and book printing clients to understand their needs and develop the most effective solution to meet today's demand for fast turnaround times and high mono print image quality. The platform produces crisp, clear prints, at incredible speeds, and offers attractive operating, service, and capital acquisition costs for an excellent price/productivity ratio."

The RICOH Pro VC40000 mono webfed inkjet press platform is available now in EMEA.

[www.ricoh.com](http://www.ricoh.com)

## Xerox launch Digital Presses



**The New Xerox Primelink C9265/C9275/C9281 printers include advanced features that offer greater flexibility and customisation, adapting to the needs of production and in-house operations.**

A new ground device family with a new toner formulation, like that of the Xerox Iridesse Production Press, and a completely redesigned LED system featuring 10-bit processing and 2400x2400 imaging delivering fine detail, smooth colour transitions and exceptional colour accuracy, with speeds of 65 to 81 pages per minute.

Custom media catalogues allow for optimal settings for a wide range of sizes from A6 to SRA3 and weights from 52gsm-400gsm, including envelopes, embossed, linen and textured papers, banners up to

1300mm, synthetics and labels. Combined with production class feeding and finishing features, the new series offers versatility and sustainability, reducing material waste through advanced automation.

Kevin O'Donnell, Production Marketing Manager UK, Ireland and the Nordics at Xerox, comments: "Our customers are looking for quality, versatility and affordability in light production printing. These new Xerox presses punch above their weight in features and capabilities. The new Xerox Primelink C92xx Series has been designed to help them cope with a changing market and maximise their return on investment. In today's competitive environment, businesses need comprehensive and sustainable printing solutions, and our new models meet this need."

The PrimeLink C9200 Series supports the latest Fiery FS600 platform and LLC print servers and integrates into Xerox's end-to-end production printing ecosystem, which includes tools for sustainability and waste reduction:

The printers feature a ten inch touchscreen that simplifies printing, scanning and copying, and offers direct access to the Xerox ConnectKey platform's cloud and productivity apps. By integrating cloud apps and services, ConnectKey offers an intuitive user experience, mobile and cloud connectivity, total security, and instant access to value added services.

The new series of printers is available for order now.

[www.dwsl.co.uk/sheet-cat/production-printers-and-digital-presses-en](http://www.dwsl.co.uk/sheet-cat/production-printers-and-digital-presses-en)

# MANY ROUTES ONE DESTINATION



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# New eTEC AIR Bubble Board for sustainable print

Premier has announced the exclusive launch of the eTEC AIR Bubble Board, a game changing product in the display graphics sheet media range. As a premier choice for polypropylene bubble boards, this cutting edge material offers unmatched performance, durability, and sustainability, making it the go to solution for signs, displays, and more.

“eTEC AIR Bubble Board features a white bubble core that provides superior stability and rigidity, while its smooth, bright white print surfaces ensure vibrant and accurate prints. Treated for long term outdoor durability, the board supports both screen and UV flatbed printing, making it versatile for a variety of uses, including signage, point-of-sale displays, and exhibition panels.”

“We are proud to introduce the eTEC AIR Bubble Board to our portfolio,” said Steve Jones, Director of Display Sheets and Thermoplastics (UK & Ireland). “This innovative product not only



delivers superior print quality and performance but also addresses the growing demand for environmentally responsible materials. With its exceptional durability, versatility, and sustainability credentials, the eTEC AIR Bubble Board is set to become a benchmark in the display graphics industry.”

Key Features of eTEC AIR Bubble Board:

- **Excellent Rigidity:** The board's polypropylene core ensures maximum stability and light weight for easy handling.

- **Long Term Durability:** UV-treated for extended outdoor use and built to withstand harsh elements, including chemicals, water, and extreme weather.
- **Sustainability:** Made in Europe, PVC-free, fully recyclable through the FESPA waste accreditation scheme and eligible for carbon capture.
- **Easy Fabrication:** The bright white satin surfaces offer a smooth, easy to print area, compatible with UV inks, for stunning visual results.

With its combination of eco-friendly materials, durability, and print quality, eTEC AIR Bubble Board sets a new standard for the industry.

Learn more about eTEC AIR Bubble Board, request a sample, or contact your local sales branch.

**For more information on Premier and its latest product launches, visit [www.paper.co.uk](http://www.paper.co.uk)**

## Pyramid Display launch Briteline self-adhesive media



Briteline self-adhesive Inkjet vinyl is crafted for wide ranging applications and compatible with a broad spectrum of inkjet printers, ensuring ease of use across platforms. The vinyl's high quality surface guarantees vibrant, sharp, and lasting prints, while its various adhesive backings allow for straightforward application on various surfaces. Engineered to be both weather resistant and durable, the vinyl holds up in diverse environmental conditions, ensuring signs remain eye catching over time when used in conjunction with Briteline lamination films.

“We know that signage and POS producers want a vinyl product that is reliable, affordable, and versatile. Our new Briteline self-adhesive inkjet vinyl is designed to meet these needs, allowing print professionals to create high-quality, durable signage without straining their budget,” said Neil McCarthy, Head of Sales & Marketing at Pyramid Display Materials. “We are excited to offer this product at a price point that gives our customers a competitive edge in the market.”

Briteline self-adhesive medias are available to order from any of Pyramid's five strategically placed branches across the U.K. or 24/7 from Pyramid's Web Store.

[www.pyramid-display.co.uk](http://www.pyramid-display.co.uk)

## RALEGH INSTALLS LASERCOMB CUTTING TABLE

Lincolnshire-based Ralegh has installed a new Waterjet Cutting System WCS from Friedheim International. Ralegh is a UK manufacturer of laser cut flatbed and rotary cutting dies and is an established industry leader in corrugated sectors. Formed in 1979, with over 50 employees and a long standing reputation, Ralegh pride themselves on their quality products and excellent customer service.

The latest addition to their portfolio of die manufacturing equipment is the Lasercomb Waterjet Cutting System that Lasercomb has upgraded to suit Ralegh's individual needs. It joins other Lasercomb cutting tables from years past. With a clear commitment to continual investment in the latest and best technology, Ralegh continues to offer the highest quality products and a fast order turnaround.

The WCS water jet system cuts materials from 1mm to 50mm in height with a non-abrasive water jet, using up to 4,000 bar. The machine is especially designed to produce ejector material for dies. As such it produces a perfect and accurately contoured rubber coating at a high rate of productivity.

The user interface and its strict structure guides the user through the application of the parameters of the process data in a simplified procedure. Intuitive software and databases ensure proper configuration as well as fast, efficient production.

Lasercomb is internationally known as an innovative provider and supplier of system solutions for both the die making and the packing industry. The company – which already brought a practice oriented laser cutting plant onto market in 1973 – concentrates itself particularly on development and fabrication of user related software and hardware solutions for producers of packing made of solid and corrugated cardboard as well as for cutting die manufacturers. Friedheim International has been exclusive distributor in the UK for Lasercomb's technology for over 25 years.

[www.friedheim.co.uk](http://www.friedheim.co.uk)



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# A Matter of Hobson's Choice

According to many keyboard pundits, there are plenty of alternatives to Adobe Photoshop, so as promised last month, **Martin Christie** thought he would save you some brain strain and check them out for you to see how many would actually be suitable for a print-on-demand environment.

**H**obson's Choice is based on a legend that appears to have lots of suitable options but, in reality, has virtually none. But without spoiling the plot and revealing the exact conclusion of this review, it's still worth exploring the choices.

My discussion point from last month was whether we in our particular industry are still well served by Adobe, considering most of us will have been subscribers to its bank account, and thus its success, for over a decade. As software seems to be directed even more into an artificial online world, the need to create hard copy seems rather neglected compared to generating novelty at the tap of a button.

Adobe has had to react to the popularity of AI — the buzzword of the decade — in order to combat the many upstarts competing for its core market and its complacency in spending so long as the dominant force in digital manipulation has been severely shaken. However, its reaction to marketing demand may be at the expense of progress in other important areas.

The decline of print in a digital world was predicted twenty years ago, but we are still here and plan to be for some time yet. In a fast-moving environment where customers expect to be served faster and better, we need all the help we can get in problem-solving and generally sorting the issues that bombard us daily. The main ones being whether a file is suitable or prepared for print — something the average consumer will have no idea about.

A lot of online print services use pre-flight checkers through their website, and I've recently had a good look at a quite sophisticated one provided by Artworker (<https://artworker.com>), as well as some helpful chats with one of their specialists. But the problem with any automated scrutiny is that as long as it ticks all the boxes and has the right number of pixels for the dimensions, the correct colour profile, and sufficient bleed, it is likely to be approved even if it is a complete dog's dinner. It may ease the email traffic and take the pressure off the relentless back and forth of questions and answers, which can cause delays and often errors. It does put the onus back on the customer to get things right, but as we know, an important part of our service is taking the pain out of what smug people now like to call 'the experience'.

One of the most frequent questions of course is how big an image will blow up to, and that is not a mathematical question but one of human judgement. Then you have customers who don't bother to read or reply to their email messages and still turn up at the counter expecting something to be ready. And so often, there is just simple human error when they message or call to change what they originally



ordered when they had already stressed it was urgent. It may be their fault if it's already printed, but it's not a comfortable position to debate face-to-face at the counter.

## DIGITAL DILEMMAS

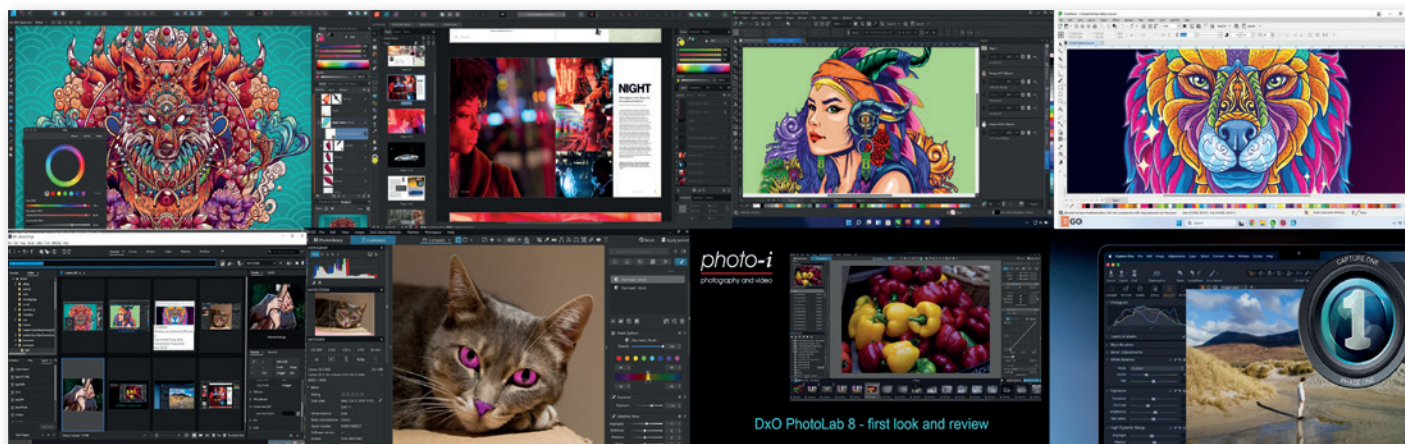
A further issue is prioritising customers at the counter, which was fine with hard copy or even with an email sent with a prior warning, but an increasing trend is arriving customers waiting at the point of contact before starting to organise all the files on their phones and then sending them, one by one, in separate emails. No electronic wizard can cope with human nature other than a patient shop worker!

There is one piece of software that is probably more useful than most others in this daily challenge, and the beauty is that it's absolutely free. You can download Adobe Bridge without a subscription or purchase of any other Adobe products and use it in conjunction with any other software. You can use it to check content, organise files and folders, and output multipage PDFs. How useful is that? There are a number of improvements that would make Bridge more useful, but presumably, Adobe are not really interested in updating it; otherwise, you wouldn't spend any money on their other products. And this is at the heart of the issue. If there was a program that worked a bit like Bridge but could also edit and print files, it would be a perfect match. Bridge acts as a go-between for all the other Adobe programs, and it needs to do so because not one of them can do everything you may need to do — create, design, layout etc.

The nearest serious contender is probably Corel Draw. It was once very popular with designers as a vector-based programme with photo editing abilities, unlike the other way around, like Photoshop.

The problem is, like Photoshop, it has grown fat and full of tools, many actually duplicated, so the workspace looks daunting, and though you can try it free for 15 days, that's not really long enough to give it a fair assessment. I used to use Corel Draw back in the day, but returning to its current iteration proved taxing. The full suite has everything you need for professional use, but if you are migrating from Adobe, the unfamiliar environment may be frustrating.

Corel offers a pretty good photographic option in Paint Shop Pro, which is much more user-friendly and certainly very affordable. It does most of the things you can do in Photoshop at a budget price. The downside is that there



is currently no version for MacOS.

There are a whole host of photo editing titles from the basic to the sophisticated, but I'm not even considering the more entry-level versions or those included in operating systems like Windows Paint as they don't even begin to address the multi-task needs of process, place and print that are our daily grind.

## BALANCING POWER AND SIMPLICITY

Many of the top-end image manipulation applications are almost entirely aimed at expert photographers who patiently want to fine-tune their images, and printing is just a necessary accessory, not an essential process.

Most photo apps use similar workspaces for either Photoshop or Adobe Lightroom, making a transition from either easier and avoiding a massive learning curve. But as they are intended for use with mostly top-end camera images, many of the more intricate features, like denoise, lens correction, HDR and geometric distortion, may be surplus to requirements in place of some good, intuitive exposure and colour adjustment. Several are very good at some functions but less able in others. This is essentially the problem with the Adobe collection and why you must have all of them for a complete design, modification and production solution.

I've had a look at Topaz, Dxo PhotoLab, Capture One, and Luminar in the limited time available on trial offers. While they all come highly recommended by experienced users, there are limitations for software predominantly aimed at RGB output. Some file types, for example, may not be recognised.

The advantage of Adobe's regular updates, which may be annoying at times, is that the applications are kept up to date with capture devices and file types, like the HEIC, which is a high-quality compression file produced by Apple iPhone cameras. The downside, of

course, is increasing demands on memory capacity and graphics display as you don't have the choice of picking and mixing which features to install. So it's a benefit you may be paying a high price for both the software itself and the need to upgrade computer hardware to run it, or at least paying more than you need. While the conclusion may be that there is no current alternative to the Adobe offering, it's quite possible that you may not need it on all your devices if some of the other options function just as well most of the time. After all, if you can create PDFs from Bridge and print from basic Acrobat Reader at no extra cost, a simpler, user-friendly photo editor may be more than adequate rather than all the whistles and bells of the Creative Cloud.

Choosing one may be easier than you think. At first glance, it may look as if there are too many to choose from, but you can soon prune them down if you avoid all the ones that major AI tools and any web-based connectivity in their sales pitch. You don't need any of that nonsense — just basic functionality. Keeping it simple will mean it's easier to train new members of staff who may not be familiar with digital files, and avoiding too much computer direction will mean maintaining at least some human control and accountability over the process.

One option stands out, and that is Affinity, which has three essential apps, Design, Photo, and Publish, which cover the three main Adobe software for artwork, pixel and vector output. The first two can work independently; the third works fairly seamlessly to produce desktop RGB and CMYK print publishing. Available for Windows and Mac OS, any of the three can open and edit PDFs, which is the important thing, but with all of them you have all the boxes ticked. Affinity has obviously put a lot of thought into their collection in that the individual parts are complementary and the interface user-friendly.

Having recently been taken over by emerging software giant Canva, it is currently being backed by some very tempting prices as well as generous terms of trial period, so well worth a look at, and perhaps take advantage of before the marketing men and bean counters decide the deal is too cheap as at the moment you can buy all three for the price of just one of the others. However, Canva uses the RGB colour model by default.

Personally, I've bought and been using Designer 2 for my own use on some fiddly jobs that straddle PS and InDesign — mixing lots of pictures and text. Photoshop is obviously not designed for more than basic text, and InDesign is clumsy at arranging lots of pictures — especially for me, as I don't use it very often.

Affinity mix pixel and vector files seamlessly. It makes resizing pictures, changing text and fonts simple, but still with complete manual control, which I feel is important.

Computer intelligence should take the hard work out of editing, but it still should be challenging and creative, otherwise it will all become extremely tedious and demotivating. Taking the thinking out of any productive process may appear to be efficient, but it's not very rewarding and, in the longer term, will result in poor performance as workers will be less able to problem-solve.

The Adobe dilemma is that while it is the most capable and comprehensive editing suite, it is by its nature extremely complex and not particularly user-friendly in operation, so users tend to be specialists in one application or another rather than master all of them as originally intended, or as now expected. So, the conclusion of not a particularly in-depth study is that while there is no real choice for high-end workflow, there is space for more simple tools for some of the lesser day-to-day tasks, easier to use, and faster to train. <https://affinity.serif.com> (Other software is available).

# Wes Small joins Liyu UK to spearhead growth



**Liyu UK has announced the appointment of Wes Small as its new UK National Sales Manager. With over 12 years of experience in the wide format printing industry, Wes brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the role, having held senior sales positions at EFI, CMYUK, and Agfa.**

Eddie Tucker, Managing Director of Liyu UK, commented, "Appointing someone with Wes' experience and track record is exactly what Liyu UK needs as we look to develop our presence in the UK further. The industry is becoming

increasingly aware of the quality, value, and breadth of our product range, which has resulted in rapid sales growth. Wes has the knowledge and skills to build on this momentum and take us to the next level."

Wes Small has been appointed to leverage his expertise to drive Liyu UK's growth and build its market presence. "Liyu's potential in the UK market is huge," he said. "My main role is to build strong relationships with customers and partners and to develop our market awareness, perception, and reputation."

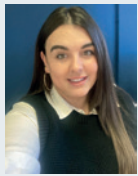
Wes' introduction to Liyu included seeing the machines in action at the recent Viscom international trade fair for visual communication

in Milan. Liyu is particularly strong in the Italian market, with more than 250 installations making it a market leader there.

"I am very excited about what can be achieved with Liyu UK," Wes continued. "I saw at Viscom the sheer quality of the products and the impressive technological advances continually being developed. We have an incredibly comprehensive range of products, meaning we can offer entry level machines for companies looking to break into digital printing for the first time, all the way up to machines capable of printing 900m<sup>2</sup>/hr. We can offer a solution for every kind of print service provider."

[www.liyu-uk.com](http://www.liyu-uk.com) • [wes@liyu-uk.com](mailto:wes@liyu-uk.com)

## SARAH HALL NEW INKTEK CONSUMABLES SALES MANAGER



**InkTec has announced the promotion of Sarah Hall to the position of Consumables Sales Manager. In her expanded role, Sarah will lead sales and management efforts for inks, media, and the DTF and UV-DTF product lines across the UK and Europe, aligning with InkTec's strategic growth and market expansion goals.**

With over 14 years at InkTec, Sarah has progressed through various roles, developing from administrative positions into leadership. Her extensive industry expertise and commitment to customer service has made her a valued resource for clients. In this new role, she will not only continue to be a primary contact for many of InkTec's customers but will also focus on building new relationships to broaden the company's presence in the market.

Commenting on the promotion, Joey Kim, Managing Director of InkTec Europe, said, "Sarah's promotion reflects InkTec's commitment to strategic growth and comes at an ideal time as we continue to advance our operations. Her experience and dedication are critical as we enter this next phase."

Sarah's promotion comes amidst several recent strategic team changes within InkTec Europe, marking a period of growth and innovation for the company as it strengthens its position as a premier manufacturer and supplier of large format printers, media, and inks in the UK and Europe.

Reflecting on her promotion, Sarah added, "These past few years have been exciting with the launch of numerous new ink and consumable products, including our extensive range of DTF and UV-DTF solutions. My primary focus will be to steer this momentum, foster our existing partnerships, and create new opportunities for growth."

[www.inktec-europe.com](http://www.inktec-europe.com)

## GIRLS WHO PRINT DAY 2024 CONFERENCE: CELEBRATING #GIRLPOWER!

Girls Who Print invited women in the printing industry, students, and allies to join the 12th annual Girls



**GIRLS WHO PRINT**  
[girlswhoprint.net](http://girlswhoprint.net)

**Who Print Day 2024, a free virtual conference celebrating resilience, innovation, and empowerment under the theme #GirlPower.**

Attendees heard from panellists and presenters on career growth, work life balance, leadership, story selling, creating your path, and more. The event included details for the new membership programme and industry partnerships, updates from Girls Who Print EMEA and Africa, and a live, virtual tour of the Canon Solutions America Customer Innovation Centre in Boca Raton, Florida.

"Girls Who Print continues to grow and gain worldwide recognition and influence," said Deborah Corn, Girl #1 at Girls Who Print and the Intergalactic Ambassador to The Printerverse at Print Media Centr. "With more than 11,000 members in our network, this year is all about recognising, embracing, and igniting our #GirlPower to manifest our life and career goals and proactively contribute to industry growth through mentorship and leadership."

Attendees were invited to fuel #GirlPower ... EMPOWER LONG AND PROSPER!

About Girls Who Print: Now in its 15th year, Girls Who Print provides women in print and graphic communications with information and resources to help them navigate the industry and their careers. With a focus on mentorship, community building, and open knowledge sharing, Girls Who Print is the largest independent network of women in print and continues to grow through regional groups, industry partnerships, and a new membership programme.

**Connect with the Girls Who Print Community at [www.girlswhoprint.net](http://www.girlswhoprint.net)**

## 2025 PRINT PREDICTIONS BLOGS

Preview where print is going in 2025 with these industry gurus:



**A CONTINUED RISE IN POPULARITY OF FABRIC PRINTING**  
Scott Conway, director of Venture Banners.

[www.bestblogsintprint.co.uk/blog/venture-banners-2025-predictions](http://www.bestblogsintprint.co.uk/blog/venture-banners-2025-predictions)



**HOW INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION WILL UNLOCK GROWTH**  
Haim Levit, SVP & Division President, HP Industrial Print.

[www.bestblogsintprint.co.uk/blog/how-intelligent-automation-will-unlock-growth-in-the-commercial-printing-landscape](http://www.bestblogsintprint.co.uk/blog/how-intelligent-automation-will-unlock-growth-in-the-commercial-printing-landscape)



**VB MEDIA COMMENTS FOR 2025 PREDICTIONS FEATURES**  
Gavin De Boos, Director, VB Media.

[www.bestblogsintprint.co.uk/blog/vb-media-comments-for-2025-predictions-features](http://www.bestblogsintprint.co.uk/blog/vb-media-comments-for-2025-predictions-features)



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**Christmas Novelty Stress Ball:** Squeeze away stress with the Christmas Novelty Stress Ball. A playful yet practical gift that brings joy and ease to your seasonal promotions. Leadtime: five working days and MOQ: 50 units

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**Christmas Stocking:** Classic red and white felt stocking, perfect for festive decor. Customisable branding available to add a warm and simple touch to holiday promotions. Leadtime: five working days with MOQ: 50 units

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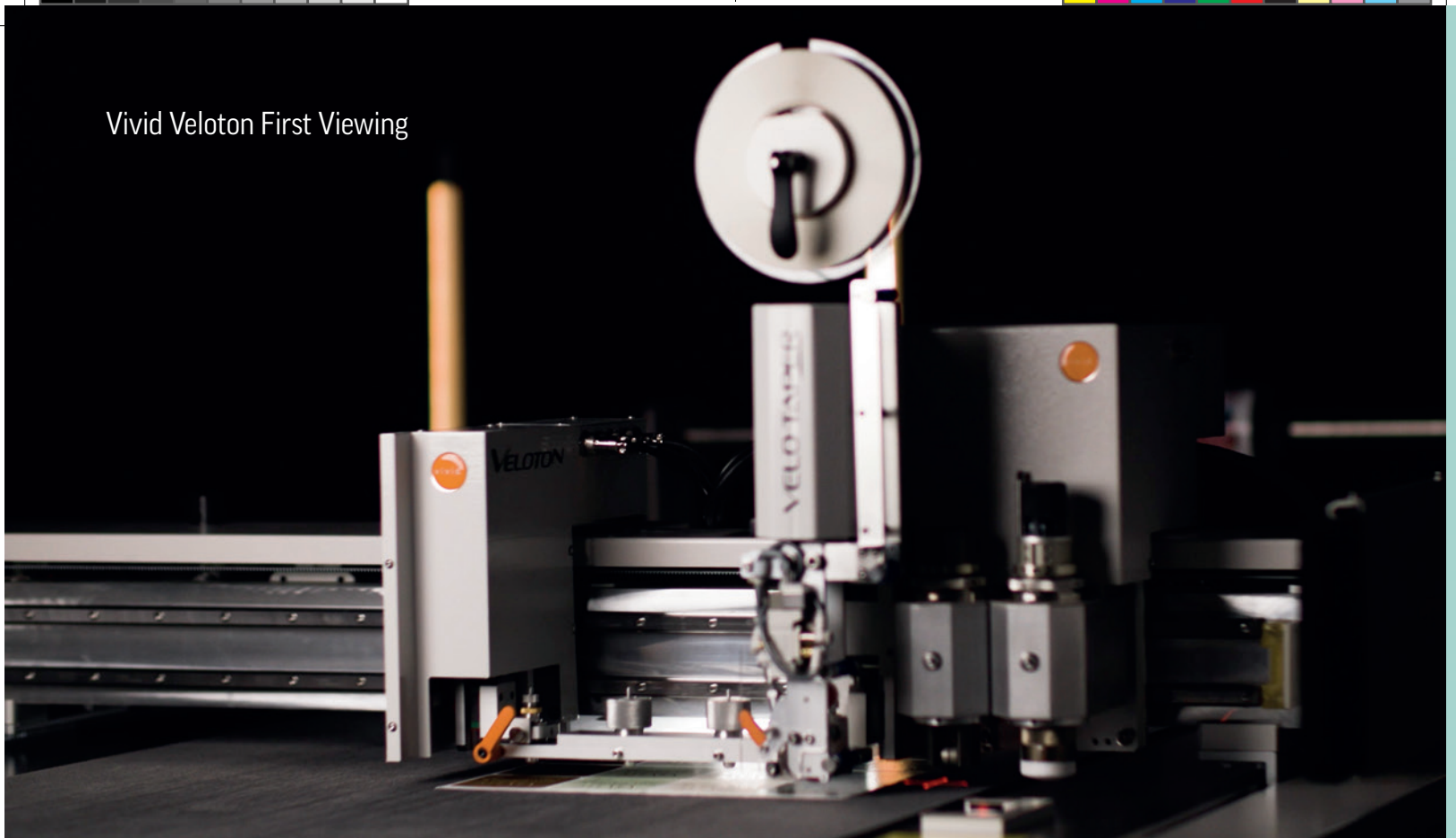
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## Vivid Veloton First Viewing



# Vivid Unveils 'Veloton'

The latest innovation now available on the Veloblade Nexus.

**V**eloton is set to revolutionise your cutting process by increasing speeds up to ten times faster than traditional cutting methods. This innovative breakthrough significantly expands digital cutting capabilities, providing businesses of all sizes with the tools they need to enhance efficiency and productivity across their operations. Whether you are a small business looking to scale or a large enterprise seeking to optimise production, Veloton brings powerful advancements that make your cutting tasks faster and more precise.

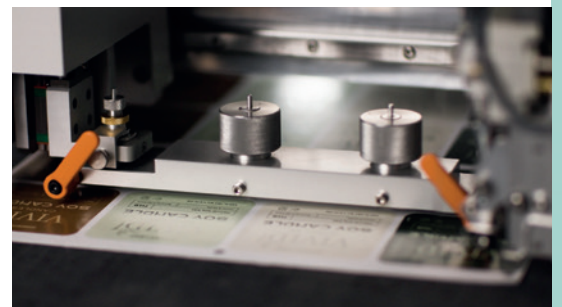
The most compelling reasons to invest in Veloton is its ability to cut multiple items in a single pass. With this system, you no longer need to waste time cutting one item at a time. Instead, Veloton enables you to cut several items simultaneously, reducing production time while maintaining high standards of quality and precision. This feature allows you to scale your production output without compromising on the accuracy and finish that your customers expect.

At the heart of the Veloton system is a patented, interchangeable technology designed to turbocharge your cutting speed through multiple aligned cutting heads. This system is customisable to suit your specific requirements, with cutting

heads available in a variety of sizes to accommodate different materials and cutting specifications, kiss cutting and through cutting is available. There is also an automatic skew correction feature that adjusts to any project. This versatility ensures that Veloton can be adapted to a wide range of industries and applications. What's more, Veloton is now compatible with both the VeloBlade Volta and Nexus models, providing even more flexibility for users of these existing systems.

Furthermore, Veloton enhances digital cutting capabilities for both roll fed and sheet fed materials. Whether you are working with large rolls of material or smaller, pre-cut sheets, Veloton provides a reliable and efficient solution that significantly improves the cutting process. This enhanced efficiency translates into greater productivity and lower operational costs, making Veloton an excellent investment for businesses of all sizes, from small enterprises to large manufacturers.

Developed and manufactured by Vivid Laminating Technologies, Veloton represents the latest in cutting edge innovation. As a company committed to providing the best in digital cutting technology, Vivid has once again raised the bar with this groundbreaking solution. Lewis Evans, Director at Vivid Laminating



Technologies, shared his excitement about the new system, stating, "This patented technology is a game changer and one of the highlights of the year. Not only will it appeal to new users, but Veloton can also be retrofitted to any existing Veloblade machines, including the Volta and Nexus systems. This flexibility ensures that businesses already using our equipment can benefit from this innovative solution without needing to invest in completely new machinery."

In conclusion, Veloton is a powerful tool that transforms the way businesses approach digital cutting. Its ability to increase cutting speeds, reduce production time, and improve overall efficiency makes it an essential addition to any business looking to stay competitive in today's fast paced market. With Veloton, you can take your cutting process to the next level and unlock new levels of productivity.

[www.vivid-online.com](http://www.vivid-online.com)

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# Packaging experts chart future path at Esko Forum

Packaging and label industry experts focus on the future at second annual Esko Forum where Innovation, AI, and Sustainability took centre stage

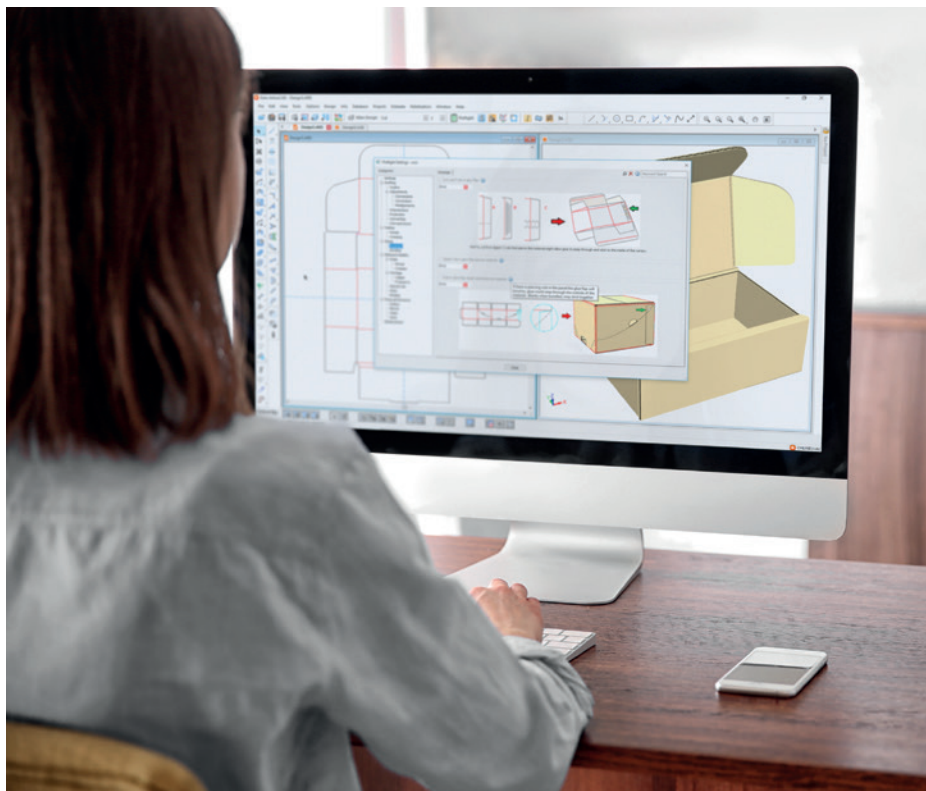
**P**ackaging converters, suppliers and technology developers converged on the UK recently to hear from leading sector experts and discuss the future success of the global packaging industry at the second Esko Packaging & Label Forum.

Held at Loughborough University's prestigious Science and Enterprise Park, the two day event saw nearly 100 packaging professionals from across the industry engage in detailed analysis, discussion sessions and training while hearing from a broad range of industry leaders and speakers.

"The world around us is continually changing," said Jan De Roeck, Esko Director of Marketing, Industry Relations & Strategy. "In order to make our businesses thrive we need to continually adapt — and that means looking to the future."

Across two days, more than 25 different sessions addressed everything from current market dynamics, new technological innovations and key takeaways from drupa 2024, through to hugely detailed examinations of colour management in the context of sustainability and how new job onboarding is streamlining upstream processes. Sessions also included speakers from education institutions discussing the importance of attracting and training future generations of workers in the sector, as well as industry experts discussing the very latest developments in Artificial Intelligence in the context of packaging production.

"We expanded the content programme for this Packaging & Label Forum, the second to be held in the UK, and it was heartening to have provided this platform for so many customers, partners and suppliers to congregate and share their experience, concerns and opinions on the issues that are driving our industry,"



Jan De Roeck, Esko Director of Marketing, Industry Relations & Strategy

said Jan. "With more breakout sessions, presentations and detailed discussion groups than before, we ensured the event gave attendees the opportunity to closely examine and identify the specific areas that are vital to their own business success."

The event also gave attendees a chance to experience Esko's Innovation Lab, which was unveiled at the drupa global expo in Dusseldorf earlier this year. The Innovation Lab experts previewed prototype solutions that are at advanced

stages of development, including a new AI-assisted decision making tool for upstream packaging project specifications.

"The event was a huge success in terms of spotlighting some of the amazing innovations that are already helping accelerate go to market for packaged goods, and how converter businesses are continuing their digital transformation journey in order to meet the ever changing demands of today," said Jan. "What's more, the forum gave attendees a platform where they could discuss new strategies for growth, to discover tools to drive productivity and even meet potential new partners for exciting collaborations."

"As the global packaging supply chain continues to face challenges, it is crucial that experts and professionals from across the industry come together at events like this to help shape the future of label and packaging production," he said.

The 2024 Packaging and Label Forum was organized by Esko in association with partners including Asahi Kasei, Bobst, CERM, Flint Group, HP, Maxcess, Tharstern and The Grey Elephant. ■ [www.esko.com](http://www.esko.com)

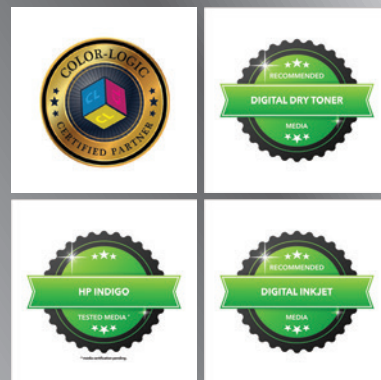


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# Printwear & Promotion and Sign & Digital UK: register now

Co-Locating Exhibitions – a must-visit for professional printers, sign makers, garment printers, textile print and print merchandise service providers.



## PRINTWEAR & PROMOTION

Garment and product decorators are invited to join the in crowd and register to attend the UK's only dedicated exhibition for the garment decoration industry.

P&P LIVE! 2025 is on track to be their biggest event since COVID. At present over 115 stands have been booked and more than 90% of stand space has been sold.

They will welcome back several brands and suppliers, who are returning after an absence, including Fruit of the Loom, Russell Europe, Gildan, Stormtech and Absolute Apparel. First time exhibitors for 2025 include Stedman, Flexfit Yupoong and Build Your Brand.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! is renowned as the place to see new product launches for the very first time in the UK. Exhibitors choose to use the exhibition as a platform to showcase and demonstrate their latest innovations to a wide, engaged and relevant audience. Expect to see new products from the likes of Roland DG, YES Group and Midwest Machinery, among others.

Next year's two seminar suites will once again feature presentations from Stahls' UK, Estelle Keeber, David Sharp and Resolute, with topics across the three days ranging from marketing advice to tips and tricks to boost your garment decoration skillset. The sessions are designed to cater for all levels of experience and provide the

knowhow needed to succeed in 2025. The timetables will be announced in January.

With over 115 stands already on the floor plan, there will so much to explore and discover in 2025.

## TWO SHOWS, ONE LOCATION

In 2024, Printwear & Promotion LIVE! co-located with Sign & Digital UK for the very first time, presenting an unmissable opportunity for both garment decorators and sign makers.

This year's co-location with Sign & Digital UK was a resounding success with more than half (57.1%) of respondents to a post show survey saying they found the co-location beneficial. There is definitely a real synergy between the two events.

In 2025, SDUK will take place next door in Hall 19, with exhibitors such as Epson, CMYUK, printMAX and Quality Print Services, sure to appeal to visitors to P&P LIVE! Likewise with P&P LIVE!, SDUK is renowned as a hotbed of new product launches and there will be much to discover for visitors in the market to purchase.

With more than 150 stands to explore in both Halls 19 and 20, all of this presents the exhibition as the place to visit in 2025 to keep abreast of what's new and to stay ahead of the competition.

Visitors will find all of the latest news on the exhibition on the show's dedicated website, as well as on social media. Join in the conversation using the hashtag #pandplive2025.

**PrintwearLIVE!**  
&promotion HALL 20, NEC, BIRMINGHAM, 23-25 FEBRUARY 2025

**SIGN & DIGITAL UK**  
HALL 19, NEC, BIRMINGHAM, 23-25 FEBRUARY 2025

Registering online grants visitors entry to both exhibitions, without the need to register twice. So, save the dates, and don't miss the biggest event in recent years!

To register visit the website  
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## SIGN & DIGITAL UK

SDUK is renowned as the place to see new product launches for the very first time in the UK. Exhibitors choose to use the exhibition as a platform to showcase and demonstrate their latest innovations to a wide, engaged and relevant audience. Expect to see new products from the likes of Roland DG, Epson and Vivid Laminating Technologies, among others.

Both The Sign Studio and The Explains Lounge are back for 2025, where visitors can expect to receive the same knowledgeable advice and tips from experts from across the industry. The sessions are designed to cater for all levels of experience and provide the knowhow needed to succeed in 2025. The timetables will be announced in January.

## HEXIS WRAP BATTLE IS BACK!

The Hexis Wrap Battle is marking 2025 as the year of its return to SDUK! This premier event in the vehicle wrapping world will showcase the skills, creativity, and craftsmanship of top wrappers as they compete live for the title of Wrap Battle Champion.

The Hexis Wrap Battle 2025 promises an electrifying experience for spectators and competitors alike, with three days of intense competition featuring the latest Hexis products, including cutting edge materials from the Hexis Skintac and Bodyfence lines. Participants will face timed challenges that test their precision, speed, and technique as they apply premium vinyl to challenging vehicle surfaces under the watchful eye of a panel of expert judges.

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# Data Copy and City to Sea partner for initiative

Data Copy brand, as a member of 1% for the Planet, commits one percent of its revenue to the environmental charity, and this year partners with City to Sea as part of this initiative. 1% for the Planet is a global network that connects businesses and environmental organisations dedicated to supporting the health of our planet. City to Sea campaigns for change, with a focus on rethinking plastic use and waste. Data Copy contribution helps to support and run these actions.

Plastic pollution is a growing global issue with up to 12 million tonnes of plastic entering our oceans every year. The Data Copy brand recognises the urgent need to tackle this problem at its source. That's why they've chosen to support City to Sea, an environmental charity dedicated to preventing plastic pollution at source. City to Sea is on a mission to make refill and reuse accessible for everyone, by developing upstream solutions to single use. Their vision is a world where reuse is second nature for everyone and our oceans are free from plastic. The charity's work spans on the ground community action, lobbying governments for policy changes, and creating impactful content that inspires people to make more sustainable choices. Further details can be found at [www.citytosea.org.uk](http://www.citytosea.org.uk)

Papers Product Manager at Antalis, Paul Savill, comments: "We're delighted that Data Copy



is supporting City to Sea this year through its 1% for the Planet commitment. Creating better awareness of the impacts caused by plastic pollution in our seas and waterways is critical to ensuring that positive action is taken and that plastic pollution at its source is stopped. Together with City to Sea, we can make a difference."

Evolving with the Times: Meeting Growing Demand for Eco-Responsible Paper

As the demand for inkjet printing continues to

grow, the importance of using a sustainable paper alternative has never been greater. Data Copy is continually committed to excel its performance credentials to deliver brilliant results on laser and inkjet devices. With the inclusion of Colorlok technology, it now offers even quicker drying times, brighter colours, and bolder blacks—without the risk of smudging.

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## TWO SIDES CAMPAIGN REPORTS RISING GREENWASH

Two Sides has challenged over 2,800 organisations found to be communicating greenwashing messages to their customers, resulting in more than 1,260 organisations removing or changing misleading anti-paper statements.

Economic pressures continue to drive many cases of greenwashing with numerous organisations that have previously relied on paper for customer communication shifting their customers from traditional paper based services to digital platforms to cut costs. This transition is often accompanied by misleading and unsubstantiated environmental marketing claims like "Go Green - Go Paperless" or "Choose e-billing and help save a tree," - but this is misleading and greenwashing.

Consumer preferences are being ignored in the push to digital communications. Data from the 2023 Two Sides 'Trend Tracker' report revealed that 55% of European consumers believe that companies' environmental arguments for switching to digital are misleading and are primarily about reducing company

Two Sides Anti-Greenwash Campaign  
Over 1,260 Organisations Removed  
Misleading Anti-Paper Statements

costs. Additionally, the research shows that 76% of consumers want the option to choose and do not want to be forced over to digital communications.

As corporate sustainability gains attention, other sectors like tissue and paper based packaging are also facing greenwashing, with products being misleadingly marketed as more sustainable. These claims often cite various environmental reasons, such as the use of new or alternative fibre sources but are frequently unsubstantiated.

Two Sides Europe Managing Director Jonathan Tame says, "These greenwash claims not only breach established environmental marketing regulations but also harm an industry with a well established and continually improving

environmental track record. Far from 'saving trees,' a healthy market for forest products, such as paper, encourages the long term growth of forests through sustainable forest management. Many of the organisations we challenge are surprised to learn that European forests have been expanding by the equivalent of 1,500 football pitches every day."

Globally, Two Sides has engaged over 2,800 organisations making misleading claims about paper. In Europe alone, 811 companies, including South West Water, New Look, BMW Financial Services and Deutsche Bank, have removed or changed these statements

"It remains vital that these misleading messages are challenged to ensure that the industry's great environmental record is acknowledged and to protect the livelihoods of thousands of people who work in the forest, paper, packaging and print sectors from the impact of opportunistic and deceptive greenwash marketing," Tame said.

**Please send any instances of greenwash by email to: [greenwash@twosides.info](mailto:greenwash@twosides.info)**

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# Flawless Prints with PermaPROtect Canvas Varnish



Looking for perfect results when applying canvas varnish? PermaJet's latest article breaks down the essential steps to ensure a smooth, even finish every time. From prepping your artwork to applying the right varnish coat, these tips will help protect and enhance your prints.

## WHAT IS PERMAPROTECT?

PermaPROtect varnish provides essential protection for inkjet canvases, preventing dirt, fingerprints, and UV fading. Its non-yellowing, water resistant formula enhances colour saturation, improves black density, and expands colour gamut. It preserves artwork for over 85 years, preventing canvas cracking while offering vibrant, long lasting results.

## VIDEO TUTORIAL WITH HALO PRINT & FRAME

In addition to the article, PermaJet offers a how-to video tutorial in



collaboration with Halo Print & Frame, guiding viewers through the varnishing process. This resource equips framers and print labs with essential knowledge to preserve and enhance their canvas artworks, accompanied by a comparison of three varnishing options to help users choose the best fit for their specific needs.

For more information on achieving perfect canvas prints with PermaPROtect Canvas Varnish, visit PermaJet's support page. [www.permajet.com/support/how-to-get-the-best-results-from-permaprotect-canvas-varnish](http://www.permajet.com/support/how-to-get-the-best-results-from-permaprotect-canvas-varnish)  
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## SMART CRAFTS SUPPLIES NEW DTF AND UV-DTF

Smart Crafts Supplies, a rapidly growing business specialising in bespoke, laser cut acrylic and personalised craft supplies, has taken a major step forward by adopting cutting edge DTF and UV-DTF printing technology from InkTec. With the recent installation of a 30cm DTF Printer, Oven and Shaker, alongside a 30cm UV-DTF Printer, Smart Crafts Supplies is set to expand its product offerings and enhance its service to the crafting community.

Founded four years ago, Smart Crafts Supplies quickly gained recognition for its quality products and bespoke designs. Building on its success, the company diversified to include high quality craft blanks, supporting a thriving community of business to business clients. The addition of InkTec's DTF and UV-DTF solutions is the latest milestone in the company's journey to meet growing demand and increase production capabilities. By integrating InkTec's advanced DTF printers, inks, powder, and films into their processes, Smart Crafts Supplies now offers an expanded design range.

"As a relatively new business, it's crucial for us to invest in high quality equipment that supports long term growth," said Phillip Bradford, Managing Partner of Smart Crafts Supplies. "InkTec's DTF and UV-DTF solutions were the clear choice for us. The durability, print quality, and compact design of their DTF Shaker were standout features, allowing us to integrate these printers seamlessly into our operations and establish reliable revenue streams."

Bradford added that InkTec's support team has been instrumental in ensuring smooth installation and training, further reinforcing the company's confidence in their new equipment. Smart Crafts Supplies is now able to manage every step of production - from design and cutting to supply - under one roof, giving them full control over quality and turnaround times.

The move also highlights a trend of businesses adopting DTF technology to diversify and strengthen their service offerings. According to Sarah Hall, Consumable Sales Manager at InkTec, "Smart Crafts Supplies is a fantastic example of how companies can leverage both DTF and UV-DTF technology



to build a robust, adaptable business model. We're seeing a wide range of companies using our products, from those already established in personalised printing to those exploring new revenue streams."

InkTec's DTF and UV-DTF ranges include compact printers with 60cm or 30cm print widths, as well as compatible films, inks, and DTF powder, all designed for easy integration into existing operations. As Smart Crafts Supplies continues to grow, they aim to set a new standard for quality and affordability in the craft supply industry, positioning themselves as a one-stop shop for unique, high-quality custom products.

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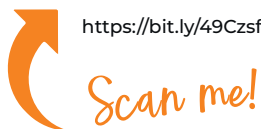
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# Liquid Lens' Website Unlocks Doming Technology

Liquid Lens has nearly three decades of experience perfecting doming technology and resin products. The company has expanded its global reach with a new e-commerce website, [www.liquid-lens.com](http://www.liquid-lens.com), designed to enable accurate and seamless product selection and purchasing.

Founded in 1998 by Managing Director Steve Hastie, Liquid Lens has become synonymous with high quality doming solutions. Its commitment to innovation and customer support has established Liquid Lens as the go-to resource for businesses investing in domed resin products.

Doming is a process that applies a polyurethane resin layer to a printed item, creating a durable, three dimensional finish. This simple and inexpensive process enhances the visual impact of products such as labels, logos, badges, promotional items, decals and signs, making them resistant to scratching, fading and weather.

Steve Hastie says, "We've seen many developments since starting the business and are continually finding new applications for resin



doming. From labels to art pieces, promotional materials to gel number plates, we provide and support all the equipment and consumables necessary to achieve stunning results. One thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to quality in our products and service."

## NEW E-COMMERCE SITE LAUNCH

Liquid Lens has expanded its reach by launching a new e-commerce platform to capitalise on the broad versatility of domed labels and resin applications. This online store provides convenient access to domed label machinery, consumables, and resin cartridges. Customers can further enhance their business potential

by accessing Liquid Lens' expertise, technical training and support.

The site's clear layout allows customers to choose the correct doming supplies to meet their needs. It also includes examples of potential uses for doming kits to further diversify production. Companies can now easily browse the full range of doming machinery, resins, and consumables online and replenish stocks.

Andy Huxley, Technical Manager of Liquid Lens, says, "The site opens new possibilities for international clients, helping them to explore the full potential of resin doming for their business. It simplifies purchasing and provides comprehensive information on various doming solutions."

"Nobody knows resin doming like we do," adds Steve. "We have been perfecting this technology for nearly thirty years. If you are in the business of doming, we're the guys to talk to."

For more information or a sample pack, please contact Andy Huxley [andy@liquid-lens.com](mailto:andy@liquid-lens.com) [www.liquid-lens.com](http://www.liquid-lens.com)

## CHRISTMAS HOSPITALITY GUIDE

Refresh your POS signage for the festive period to ensure you make the best impression possible. This handy guide will help you maximise your selling potential and make the most of this peak time

Your customers need to make sure that their main menus are accessible, and that any promotions, specials boards and other important messages are clear to customers from the moment they step foot on the premises to when they sit down at their table.

**Pavement Signs** – Adding a pavement sign outside your business is a simple yet cost effective way of increasing footfall and advertising your Christmas deals.

**Snap Frames** – Update snap frames regularly with an easy and quick to use front opening mechanism. Ideal for advertising Christmas menus and parties in advance.

**Chalkboards** – Upgrade to wooden POS displays to bring a natural rustic touch to your company. Chalkboards are quick and easy to update and clean, making them perfect for Christmas offers.

**Poster and Menu Holders** – Tabletop poster holders placed by tills, customer tables or bar tops can have a great impact for festive offers. They're a great way of letting customers know what they have available and at what price.

**Retailers' Guide To Christmas** – There's a reason that the Christmas period is known as the 'Golden Quarter' in retail. This peak season is the ideal time to really enhance your sales figures for the year. Of course, just being in business isn't enough though – you need to stand out against your competitors and do everything you can to turn heads and convert customers.

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- **Shine Brightly with Stahls' Soft Metallic HTV** – This Heat Transfer Vinyl will give you a shiny foiled look with a super soft finish and feel. Increase product variety without compromising on quality this festive season. Available in 15 colours.

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# Something to share?

## MY GIRLFRIEND ISN'T TALKING TO ME

My girlfriend isn't talking to me because apparently, I ruined her birthday. I'm not sure how I did that – I didn't even know it was her birthday!

## I TOLD YOU SO

Worrying works. 90% of the things I worry about never happen!

## TRUE LOVE

"Darling, I just called to tell you how awesome you are. You really are the love of my life..."

"Sir, I'm sorry, this is a brewery!"

"Oh, I know..."

## CHRISTMAS JOKES

Kick Christmas off with these crackers...

Why's Santa so good at Karate? Because he's got a black belt!

What happened to the man who stole an advent calendar? He got 28 days!

How do snowmen get around? By riding an icicle.

What's the best Christmas present in the world? A broken drum, you just can't beat it!

## HUSBAND AND WIFE ARE SHOPPING...

A husband and wife went shopping together just before Christmas. The wife quickly noticed that her husband was missing and because they had a lot to do she called him on his mobile.

After the husband picked up the phone his wife said, "Where are you, you know we have lots to do!"

He said "You remember the jewellers we went into about ten years ago, and you fell in love with that diamond necklace? I could not afford it at the time and I said that one day I would get it for you?"

Little tears started to flow down her cheeks and she got all choked up and said "Yes, I do remember that shop!!!" she replied.

"Well I am in the wine bar next door to that.

## NEW YEAR'S JOKES

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.

My New Year's resolution is to see my cup half-full, preferably with rum, gin, or vodka.

What do you call someone named Stephen on Dec. 31? New Year's Steve!

What do cows say on Jan. 1? "Happy Moo Year!"

What's the worst part of jogging on New Year's Eve? The ice falling out of your drink!

What was Dr. Frankenstein's New Year's resolution? To make new friends.

What does a ghost say on Dec. 31?

"Happy Boo Year!"

What is the snowman's New Year's resolution? To chill out more.

Knock knock! Who's there? Abby. Abby who? Abby New Year!

Knock knock! Who's there? Razor. Razor who? Razor glass and toast to a happy new year.

## NEW YEARS EVE ONE LINERS

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other. It's about having a good year!

New Years Eve is the only acceptable time to wear body glitter without being mistaken for a stripper.

My New Year's resolution is to stop hanging out with people who ask me about my New Year's resolutions.

This New Year's I resolve to be less awesome since that is really the only thing I do in excess.

## MORE SEASONAL SENTENCES

A man who had too much to drink decides to walk home on New Year's Eve. A policeman stopped the man and asked where he was going. "I'm on my way to a lecture," the man replied. The cop scoffed, "Who gives lectures on New Year's Eve?" The man answered: "My wife."

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

Where can you find comedians on New Year's Eve? Waiting on the punchline.

Why are there so many vampires out on New Year's Eve? For Old Fangs Time.

What do you say when bidding farewell on Dec. 31? "See you next year!"

I made a New Year's resolution to stop procrastinating, but I'm going to wait until next year to start.

Where can you practice multiplication tables on New Year's Eve? Times Square.

Why should you stand on just your left foot during the New Year's Eve countdown? So you start the New Year with your right foot forward.

What food should you avoid on New Year's? Firecrackers.

What New Year's resolution guarantees success? Making a resolution to break your resolution.

What does a caterpillar do on Jan. 1? Turns over a new leaf.

Did you hear about the guy who started fixing breakfast at midnight on Dec. 31? He wanted to make a New Year's toast!

Do you have a date for New Year's Eve? I do! It's December 31st!

Why should you never celebrate New Year's Eve like a New Yorker? They always drop the ball!

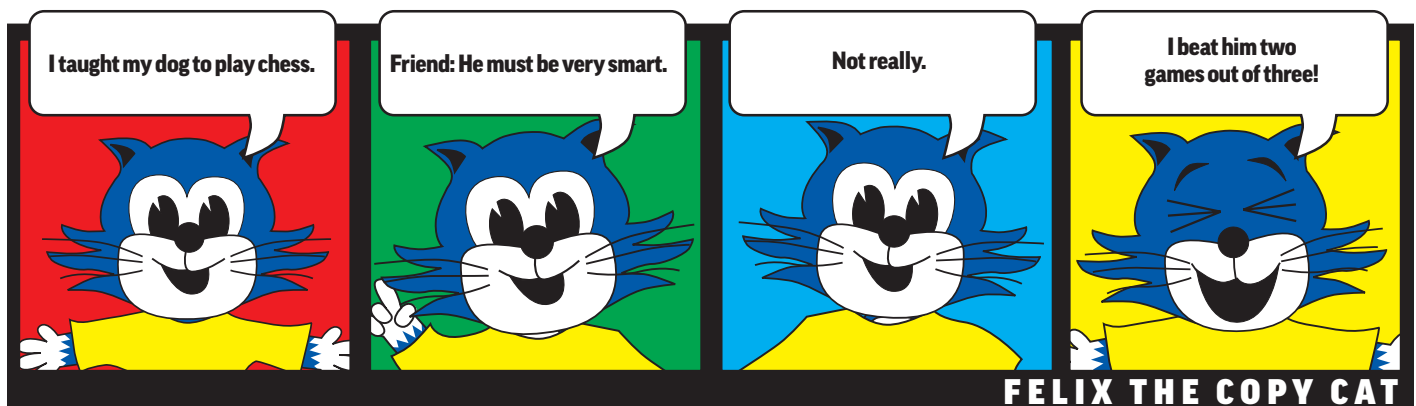
Do you know why people drink champagne on New Year's Eve? It tastes incredibubble!

Why does Elsa love to celebrate the New Year with sky lanterns? Because she loves to let things go!

Did you hear about the salesman who lost 100 pounds last year? He forgot to cancel his gym membership after giving up on his New Year's resolution to work out more.

Why should you watch the New Year's Eve fireworks show to figure out your resolutions? The display is always ins-pyro-ing!

Why are soccer players the worst at following through with their New Year's resolutions? Because they always seem to be running away from their goals!



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