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INDULGE IN THE PROCESS



Index is a unique tool showcasing our extensive range of foils with the ability to make the process of selecting them easier and more considerate.

Each of the index cards has been designed to advise you of our capabilities and potential for each foil. They showcase various areas, finer details, and type works with various sizes.

In order to make the selection straightforward, we have placed each pigment and specification in easily identifiable groups. Every foil is given a descriptive and memorable name.



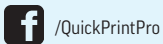
Introducing INDEX - the new way to specify foil. Containing over 200 Foilco products; view decorative foils like never before. Designed with printers, specifiers, creatives, and brands in mind. INDEX is the most versatile specification tool ever created and is available now via the QR code. **#createdtoinspire / foilco.com**

INDEX



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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 Oktoberfest in Print



QPP loves to share best practice in print.
 Peter, Prost, Foulkes

Dust off your Bavarian attire, try on your lederhosen and dirndl and you will be on the right tracht.

Preparation is everything, including your print shop marketing for this fast flowing event. Think beer banners, Munich inspired menus, first round flyers, tippie t-shirts, Prost posters and other promotion in print products. Send samples now to your local and other peoples locals too.

To all you QPP roving reporters, please send in your events, plant purchases, print team success, anniversaries, training milestones, charity activities and supplier referrals.



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Bluetree installs UK's first IGS Cobalt SP800

International Graphic Supplies (IGS), a Monmouthshire based machinery supplier, has announced that Bluetree, the UK based online printer, has become the first in the country to install the new IGS Cobalt SP800 single pass printer. This significant investment is expected to transform Bluetree's production capabilities for the packaging and point of sale (POS) markets. The Cobalt SP800, which utilises HP FI1000 industrial printheads, promises to deliver unprecedented speed and efficiency.

The Cobalt SP800 is a digital printing solution that eliminates the need for expensive plates or engravings, enabling packaging companies to save money and easily switch between designs for both one off jobs and large scale production runs. The result is a much faster time to market and improved profitability.

"We are incredibly excited to welcome the IGS Cobalt SP800 to our Rotherham site," said Mark Young, Managing Director at Bluetree Group. "This installation is a key part of our ongoing investment in the latest technology to meet the evolving needs of our customers. The Cobalt SP800's speed and quality will not only enhance our production capabilities but also allow us to offer more innovative and cost effective solutions to our clients."

The Cobalt SP800 boasts a speed of up to 30 metres per minute and can produce over 5,000 corrugated boxes per hour. With a maximum material size of 800mm x 2500mm and a maximum image size of 594mm x 2500mm, its infrared sensors ensure accurate printing on various sizes and shapes, guaranteeing exceptional quality with every run.

The machine uses eco-friendly, water based inks that are free from VOCs and other toxic chemicals, aligning with Bluetree's commitment to environmental responsibility. With a low printing cost of as little as £0.02 per square metre, the Cobalt SP800 is expected to improve productivity and provide a quick return on investment.

The partnership with IGS is a testament to Bluetree Group's dedication to staying at



From left, Mark and Peter with the Cobalt SP800

the forefront of the print industry. The new printer, with its Harlequin Rip interface, is fully integrated into Bluetree's advanced workflow, ensuring a seamless transition and immediate impact on production.

"It is a pleasure to partner with the Bluetree Group, a company that shares our vision for innovation in the print sector," comments Peter Flynn, Managing Director at IGS. "The Cobalt SP800 is a perfect fit for their operation, and we are confident it will help them continue to grow and lead the market."

We are also looking forward to demonstrating

the machine's live capabilities at The Print Show where we will officially launch our new variable data software. This powerful new tool integrates seamlessly with the Harlequin RIP, empowering our customers to create personalised, high impact print campaigns faster and more efficiently than ever before."

In partnership with DPS, IGS will be exhibiting at The Print Show at the NEC, Birmingham, on Stand P362. Attendees will have an opportunity to see the Cobalt SP800 in action and learn more about the new variable data software.

www.igs-digital.com

FIVE IDEAS FOR SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN PRINT

People working in print know that it is a technologically advanced industry offering a vast variety of job roles where young people building a career can, and do, thrive.

We also know that this message doesn't often make it outside our industry networks in the way it needs to, encouraging young people to investigate industry careers.

So, what does encourage young people to consider a career in our sector and, once there, remain in it?

The Printing Charity spoke to the Rising Star Alumni to get some answers. These answers have provided five straightforward ideas for print businesses to consider helping attract, and nurture, the industry's future leaders.

Scan/click the QR code to download your own copy of Five Ideas to help businesses support print's emerging talent info@theprintingcharity.org.uk www.theprintingcharity.org.uk



Stephen Austin streamlines automation with new Canon Colorstream 8160 and Varioprint iX3200

Stephen Austin, which was established in 1768 in Hertford, England and delivers world class printing, packaging and distribution services for high stakes examinations, has recently invested in Canon's ColorStream 8160 digital colour press and varioPRINT iX3200 digital inkjet press. These new investments have enabled the business to replace legacy print equipment and improve quality, productivity and flexibility for the next phase of its digital transformation journey.

With over 70 years of expertise, Stephen Austin is trusted by awarding organisations, governments and Ministries of Education all over the world, distributing more than 100 million assessments to over 160 countries every year. The company also has a well established relationship with Canon, having first worked together over 15 years ago to ensure continuous innovation for its customer base.

Following years of steady growth, Stephen Austin recently purchased commercial printer Hertford Offset. The company now prioritises maintaining high standards of excellence and efficiency across



both its commercial and secure printing operations. Canon's cutting edge production and commercial print technology made it the obvious choice to support the next phase of its automation journey.

Canon's varioPRINT iX3200 has essentially condensed four machines into one at Stephen Austin, revolutionising the commercial printing business experience. Its sheetfed inkjet technology offers ultra-fast production speeds of 9120 SRA3 duplex images per hour, high uptime (over 90%) with automated efficiencies, and minimal labour involvement. The investment has replaced existing end of life devices and, critically, brought with it improved performance and product range. This, in turn, allows Stephen Austin to absorb growing customer

demand across the examination and commercial markets.

Further accelerating Stephen Austin's digital transformation, Canon's ColorStream 8160 is built with automation at its core, minimising the need for hands-on support to achieve high quality output – fast. With speeds of up to 200 metres per minute, high resolutions up to 1200 x 1200 dpi and low operational costs, this investment was an easy decision for the business.

With the varioPRINT iX3200 and ColorStream 8160, sustainability isn't optional – it's a priority at every stage of the product life cycle. With low power consumption and minimal waste, these devices align with Stephen Austin's wider sustainability goals. Additionally,

the water based polymer pigment inks of the varioPRINT iX3200 are engineered for superior de-inkability, for easier to recycle output.

Kevin Strachan, Operations Director at Stephen Austin & Hertford Offset, comments: "At the core of our business is delivering products and services that not only meet but exceed our customers' expectations. Our most recent investments in Canon's cutting edge printing technology will empower our automation led workflow and enable us to continue to provide the high-quality products and services our clients expect."

Stuart Rising, Head of Graphic Arts at Canon UK & Ireland adds: "We highly value our long standing partnership with Stephen Austin and are excited to support this next phase of its digital transformation journey. At Canon, we prioritise delivering the best results for our customers by considering their specific needs. For Stephen Austin, this meant taking its high standards of quality, accuracy and productivity to the next level, offering ongoing innovation to future proof the business."

www.stephenaustin.co.uk

TIME TO GET READY FOR OKTOBERFEST IN PRINT



Welcome to the Oktoberfest

Dust off your Bavarian attire, try on your lederhosen and dirndl and you will be on

the right tracht.

Preparation is everything, including your print shop marketing for this fast flowing event. Think beer banners, Munich inspired menus, first round flyers, tipples t-shirts, Prost posters and other promotion in print products. Send samples now to your local and other peoples locals too.

The festival of the City of Munich. In 2025, the 190th Oktoberfest will take place from September 20 to October 5 on the Theresienwiese.

All information about the largest folk festival in the world www.oktoberfest.de/en

For those of you that plan well ahead here are the publishing dates to see out the year and start the next.

Send in your events, plant purchases, print team success, anniversaries, training milestones,

QPP Publishing Schedule 2025 / 2026

Print Issues	Copy Deadline	Publishing Dates
October	16th September	1st October
November	20th October	1st November
Dec/January 2026	17th November	1st December
February	20th January	1st February
March	17th February	1st March
April	17th March	1st April
May	21st April	1st May
June	19th May	1st June
July/August	16th June	1st July
September	18th August	1st September
October	15th September	1st October
November	20th October	1st November
Dec/January 2027	17th November	1st December

charity activities and supplier referrals. QPP loves to share best practice in print.

QPP is available online and on your desk.

Regards, Peter

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Hybrid and Premier Digital Textiles invite décor and textile printers to experience Mimaki's TRAPIS Technology first-hand



Exclusive UK and Ireland Mimaki distributor, Hybrid Services is welcoming textile printers and converters to a dedicated hands-on event this October, offering the chance to experience the new Mimaki TRAPIS (Transfer Pigment System) in action. Delivered in partnership with Premier Digital Textiles, the TRAPIS & More: Mimaki Textile Sessions event will be held at Hybrid's showroom in Crewe on Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th October 2025.

Attendees are invited to submit their own designs and fabric prior to the event. Their files will then be printed using TRAPIS, providing a valuable opportunity to assess the print quality, ease of use and commercial potential of the technology using real-world inputs.

Mimaki TRAPIS is designed to simplify and streamline textile production. The system enables printing to a wide range of textiles, including natural fibres, synthetics and blends. With a straightforward workflow, minimal setup, and no need for steaming or washing, TRAPIS offers an

accessible and sustainable pigment print solution that reduces waste and speeds up production.

In addition to seeing TRAPIS in action, guests will be able to explore a range of the latest Mimaki textile printing technology, including the recently launched Tx330-1800 hybrid direct to fabric / dye sublimation printer. Premier Digital Textiles will also be on hand to discuss new materials and provide samples of its latest printable fabrics.

Location: Hybrid Services, No.3 Gateway, Crewe, CW1 6YY
Dates: Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th October 2025

Sessions: Morning or afternoon (pre-booking required)

Spaces are limited and early registration is recommended. Once registered, attendees will receive instructions for uploading artwork and sending their chosen fabric ahead of the event.

Register online at: www.hybridservices.co.uk/textile-sessions

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Konica Minolta unveils the AccurioJet 30000

Konica Minolta has unveiled the the AccurioJet 30000 digital UV inkjet press. The new B2+ press takes colour capabilities, production stability and media handling to new heights, providing unlimited creative applications with greater levels of productivity and efficiency.

The AccurioJet 30000 is part of Konica Minolta's growing digital UV inkjet range and follows in the footsteps of its hugely successful AccurioJet KM-1e series, that has been installed at more than 350 sites around the world. The new press features an advanced printhead design featuring Konica Minolta's patented Dot Freeze Technology. Its proprietary edge processing technology delivers sharp text quality, true 1200 x 1200 dpi resolution, and an exceptionally wide colour gamut to provide unlimited creative applications.

The AccurioJet 30000 is capable of producing 3,000 sheets per hour (sph) with automatic duplex printing, without ink drying delays. It prints on paper thicknesses of 0.06 to 0.6mm, on an unprecedented variety of specialty media including heavy textured stock, canvas, metallics, translucent stock, packaging board and plastics. This makes the press perfect for a diverse range of applications such as printing restaurant menus without lamination, maps, figures, and outdoor displays, as well as backlit posters, signage, packaging, tags, desk calendars, direct mail, photo



albums and more.

Higher definition mode delivers improved granularity, and a new HM201 printhead optimises substrate wiring, ensuring uniformity and temperature control. Enhanced RIP performance leverages the latest CPU and memory configurations, eliminating delays with PreRIP processing. New media sensors and a spectrophotometer maintain continuous image quality with automatic in-run corrections, while bundles of inter-colour mist catchers reduce maintenance time. An upgraded inkjet manager system integrates easily with existing offset workflows, and an inline interface accommodates third party finishing devices.

The AccurioJet 30000 is largely operator

serviceable and is supported by new remote support services.

Jon Hiscock, Head of Production & Industrial Print at Konica Minolta Business Solutions (UK) Ltd, commented, "We are excited to unveil the AccurioJet 30000 as the latest edition to our AccurioJet range, which offers the same paper processing stability as an offset printer but with the considerable flexibility benefits of a digital press in terms of functionality, automation, variable data printing and workflow management. By adding new features and functionality, the AccurioJet 30000 is perfect for ensuring print businesses can deliver the highest quality even on longer runs."

www.konicaminolta.co.uk

Mutoh EMEA introduces new XPJ-1682SR DS Pro 64" dye sublimation printer

When Industrial Performance Meets Precision – Mutoh Europe announces the launch of the XPJ-1682SR DS Pro, a 64" (1625 mm) wide dual head dye sublimation printer engineered for high speed, precision driven textile and soft signage production.

Built on Mutoh's trusted XpertJet platform and manufactured in Japan, the XPJ-1682SR DS Pro integrates two AccuFine HD 3200-nozzle print heads in a staggered setup, delivering class leading drop placement accuracy at production speeds up to 86 m²/h.

Tailored for sublimation transfer workflows, the printer supports up to eight colour channels (including dual CMYK) and features all of Mutoh's smart automation tools such as DropMaster2, FeedMaster, Nozzle Area Select, and Media Tracker ensuring reliable, uninterrupted performances

across different paper types and roll lengths.

Integrating Mutoh's i-screen weaving algorithm for minimal banding, the new sublimation printer is equipped with multi-stage pressure rollers to allow for flexible media handling. The XPJ-1682SR DS Pro is offered with motorised take up systems (40 kg or 100 kg) offering effortless media handling tuned to the production needs.

Designed for Mutoh's DS4 ProFlex inks, the XPJ1682SR DS Pro guarantees high repetition, colour critical production such as sportswear, interior textiles, and promotional items, with proven reliability in industrial environments.

Printer – Key highlights

- 64" dye-sublimation printer with 2 AccuFine HD print heads
- Eight ink channel flexibility: 2x4 CMYK with DS4



ProFlex Production speeds from 11 to 86 m²/h

- i-screen, DropMaster2, FeedMaster, Media Tracker automation tools
- Integrated heating: PreHeat, Fixer, Dryer
- Motorised take-up options: 40 kg and 100 kg
- Designed for DS4 ProFlex ink in 1L degassed pouches

The XPJ-1682SR DS Pro will be

available during summer 2025 across the EMEA region through Mutoh's certified distributor network. Certification process for DS4 ProFlex under ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX is currently ongoing.

For more information about the XPJ-1682SR DS Pro and DS4 ProFlex ink, visit: www.mutoh.eu
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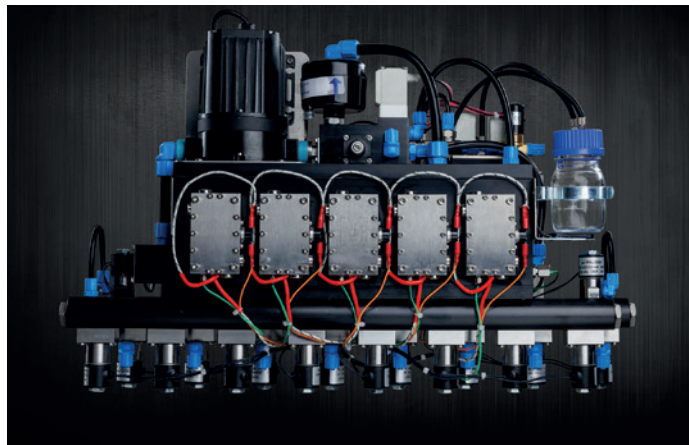
Morgan
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Megnajet expands Jetsource product range

Megnajet has expanded its high volume JetSource product range with the development of a new fluid management system, specifically designed for even wider multi-printhead inkjet applications.

To address the demands of OEMs and integrators for large volume, high duty applications, the new JetSource HFR features a two litre fluid volume and an increased number of printhead inlets and outlets to maximise productivity. The ability to deliver a continuous supply of fluid makes the JetSource HFR ideal for any high productivity, high duty printing, including label, web, roll-to-roll and scanning applications.

Following the launch of Megnajet's JetSource Core system in 2023, which accommodates up to five independent fluid paths – the JetSource HFR can support six to eight, making it ideal for users



with bar-based systems or wider application requirements for up to four litres of recirculation.

With over 900 watts of heating power, the JetSource HFR quickly reaches the desired temperature, ensuring fast startups. Its dual heating and sensing features ensure

precise temperature regulation for consistent, high quality printing regardless of duty cycle and its bar-level internal bypass mode allows for the full fluid volume to be recirculated and heated throughout the full system. Maintaining reliability, the new system provides

precise pressure stabilisation and fast response to changes in print duty. This is achieved with the venturi meniscus control used across the JetSource range, ensuring consistency when ejecting large volumes of fluid.

The launch of Megnajet's JetSource Core and the new JetSource HFR fluid management system allows OEMs to harness the benefits of high-productivity printheads and printbar-based architecture.

Mike Seal, General Manager at Megnajet, stated: "We developed the JetSource HFR to address our customers' needs for precise fluid control and conditioning for high productivity applications.

"This therefore enables OEMs to focus on their core operations, without having to invest time and resources in developing their own systems."

www.megnajet.com

Vivid unveil Matrix 'Foillabel' and Veloton at Label Expo in Barcelona

Vivid Laminating Technologies launched their latest innovation, the Matrix 'Foillabel' and Veloton, at this year's Label Expo in Barcelona.

The new Matrix reel-to-reel digital foiling system makes premium label embellishment more accessible for all label printers.

The Veloton solution dramatically increases cutting speeds on positioned multiple cuts, making your production up to ten times faster. This advancement extends the digital cutting capabilities of both roll and cut sheet, making it even more efficient and productive for businesses of all scales.

Building on the proven success of the Matrix range, the new Matrix 'Foillabel' introduces the ability to foil and laminate reel-to-reel and efficiently take up waste from label stock. These new capabilities make it easier than ever for digital printers to add premium metallic finishes and special effects to label substrates, without the high costs

traditionally associated with foiling.

"With the launch of Matrix 'Foillabel', we're opening the door for digital printers of all sizes to embrace label foiling," commented Gavin Ward, Technical Director at Vivid. "The system brings together the flexibility and quality the Matrix is known for, with reel-to-reel finishing that streamlines workflows, making label enhancement more affordable and accessible than ever before."

The system includes Matrix Metallic technology to ensure most label stocks will be foillable, including textured material.

The Matrix 'Foillabel' has been designed with ease of use, setup takes less than 5 minutes, and changing over foil colours is fast and simple, ensuring minimal downtime and maximum productivity.

At Label Expo Barcelona, visitors watched live demonstrations of the Matrix 'Foillabel' in action, showcasing how easily digital foiling



can elevate labels with metallic effects and enhanced shelf appeal. The Matrix 'Foillabel' was also running in conjunction with the VeloBlade Volta, further highlighting

the synergy between Vivid's finishing solutions.

Alongside this launch, Vivid showcased the Veloblade Volta with the Veloton (10 x faster label cutting) and Velotaper, the ZipCore Packaging Suite, as well as the Matrix Metallic and Omniflow Feeder – further demonstrating the company's commitment to delivering cutting-edge finishing solutions for labels, packaging, and beyond.

This launch reinforced Vivid's mission to equip companies with innovative technology that adds value, increases profitability, and helps brands stand out in competitive markets.

www.vivid-online.com

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Two new flatbed printers from swissQprint



swissQprint is introducing two new flatbed models tailored to users with high quality requirements and small to medium production volumes. Topi 5 and Oryx 5 are the new models completing the Generation 5 line-up that was launched to acclaim in January 2025.

The two differently sized models are available right now: Topi 5 is a 3.2×2 m flatbed printer capable of producing up to 126 m²/h. Oryx 5 is its 2.5 m wide counterpart with an output of up to 114 m²/h, 26 percent more than the Oryx 4 predecessor model. Both machines facilitate maximum versatility – not least thanks to a roll to roll option – and are highly precise.

“With the new, harmonized overall range, we have a tailor-made solution for every size of business, with Topi and Oryx being aimed at users with high quality standards and small to medium print volumes,” says Carmen Eicher, Chief of



Sales and Marketing Officer at swissQprint. For those with higher-volume needs, the Swiss manufacturer offers the Impala, Nyala and Kudu flatbed models with outputs up to 341 m²/h.

ALL THE BENEFITS OF THE 5TH GENERATION

“Aside from their lower productivity and price points, Topi and Oryx are identical to the other 5th generation models and offer a whole range of competitive advantages,” explains Carmen Eicher. All feature 10 freely configurable colour channels for maximum versatility, for example by using neon, orange, varnish or

primer. Precision and print quality are also top-notch, with a maximum resolution of 1350 dpi. swissQprint has built the flatbed Generation 5 on a whole new foundation, with features such as

state-of-the-art linear drives that deliver utmost precision and speed.

MODULAR AND RELIABLE

All swissQprint flatbed printers have a varied range of add-on options. These allow users to build their printer modularly according to needs or expand it later: with the roll to roll and dual roll options, the oversize board option for rigid media up to 4 metres long, or the collector paper option that eliminates clean-up work for operators who regularly do full bleed printing. Besides this, swissQprint offers various ink sets for differing purposes. Colour channels too can be retrofitted or converted in the field.

Long-standing customers can confirm: “swissQprint machines have always had a working life in excess of a decade and keep on delivering incredibly reliable service even at an advanced age.” swissQprint underpins this reliability with a 36 month factory warranty – on every model, in every configuration.

+41 71 727 05 05 • office@swissqprint.com
www.swissqprint.com

New Digidelta high performance decal bubble-free

Digidelta, a specialist manufacturer of digital printing, decoration, visual communication, and textile materials, has announced the global availability of Decal Bubble-Free, an innovative solution designed for easy use across high performance applications.

Developed in-house by the hugely knowledgeable and experienced team at Digidelta, Decal Bubble-Free is an adhesive vinyl with air escape technology. Here, air escapes from under the material when it is being applied, allowing for a much faster and cleaner installation, resulting in a far higher quality final finish than with other products available on the market.

With a superior and easier installation process, this helps customers cut out mistakes that often lead to issues such as costly reprints or time consuming re-installs. As such, users will not only see a huge improvement in the quality of applications but also much faster installations and overall cost savings, which in turn will allow them to turn a higher profit on each project.

Crucially, this advanced product offers significant advantages over traditional wet application. With traditional vinyl, users must work with several ancillary tools such as spray bottles, squeegees and cloths in order to install the printed piece. However, with Decal Bubble-Free, users simply place it in position on the surface and squeegee over the top to ensure it is properly stuck down, before sitting back and admiring their work.



For more clarity on these benefits over traditional wet application, Digidelta has produced a helpful video, showcasing how Decal Bubble-Free performs against a standard permanent adhesive during installation. Scan/click QR code to view video.

WATCH NOW



DIVERSE COLLECTION

Key to Decal Bubble-Free is that the solution is available in four different formats to suit the needs of individual customers and the requirements of the project in question. The cutting edge product can be supplied in Polymeric Vinyl, Monomeric Vinyl, Glass Decor and PVC-Free film formats, with each offering its own advantages for different applications.

Polymeric Vinyl BF (Bubble-free) allows users to create eye catching, long term applications for their clients, enabling them to present any message in any location. Double sided, Polymeric Vinyl BF does not require waving, meaning no waste between print jobs, while no curling



makes it incredibly easy to cut and laminate. Add in that its high tack UV adhesive is solvent free, this makes the solution an environmentally friendly option for users.

Next, Monomeric Vinyl BF is similar in helping users create stunning pieces for customers across a range of markets. Suited to shorter term applications on flat surfaces, it features many of the same, leading attributes as its sister product, with its easy handling and installation being the key benefits for customers, allowing them to save both time and costs on production.

Meanwhile, Glass Décor BF is the ideal solution for decorating glass or glazed surfaces, both indoors and outdoors, providing a translucent and elegant finish. Suitable for plotter cutting and printing, and offering high resistance to weathering and wear, this innovative material can be used to create stunning decoration on windows and surfaces across environments such as retail, offices and schools.

For the contact details of your local supplier, please visit www.decal-adhesive.com www.digidelta.pt/en

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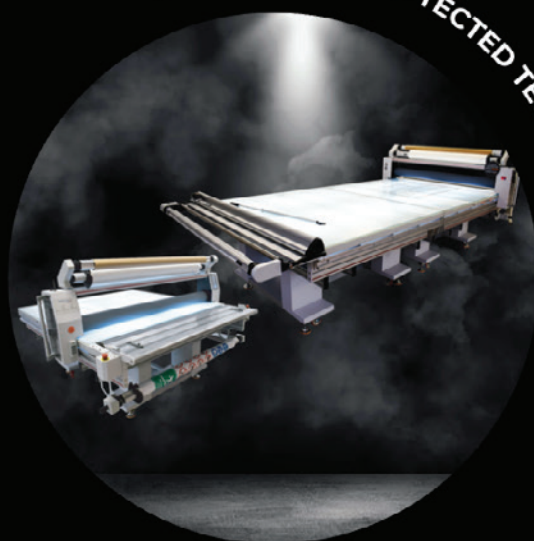
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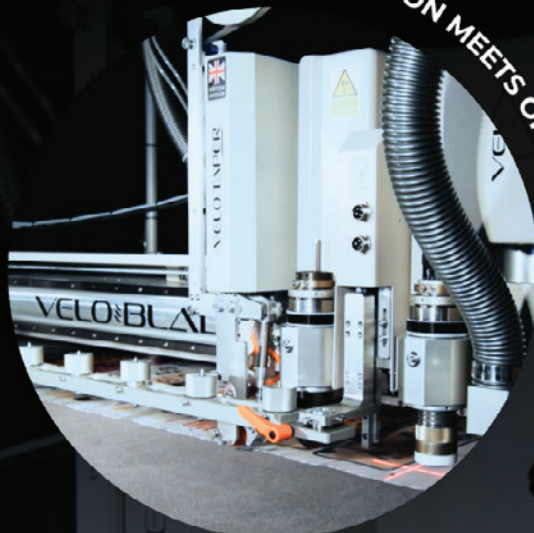


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Keeping your eye on the ball

In an exploration of the fascinating intersection of nature, technology, and art, **Martin Christie** delves into the surprising connections between giraffe patterns and artificial intelligence, illustrating how AI's ability to "see" and analyse visual data is revolutionising conservation efforts and transforming digital image editing, explores the history of digital printing, detailing the ongoing challenges faced by an industry grappling with a plethora of file types and formats.



The giraffe is a remarkable animal. Its long neck, stretched by the evolution of generations, has enabled it to reach those tasty morsels at the top of trees, out of reach of each of those more vertically challenged beasts. That feature makes it easier to single out from other animal herds on the African plains. A less prominent individual feature is its distinctive markings. These are apparently completely unique to the individual. No two are alike, and apart from the effects of growth, they do not change from birth to death, enabling them, along with sound and smell, to distinguish each other from the crowd.

This is no doubt the case with many species, as a genetic identification, but would only be recognisable to the human eye if the observer were spending a lot of time becoming familiar with particular animals. Of course, we all know this because we would instantly recognise our own pet cat or dog amongst a pack of similar quadrupeds. The reason I mention the giraffe is that I recently learned

its survival rate is being improved by the application of artificial intelligence's remarkable abilities. Instead of having to fit tracking devices, which involves stress and risk to the animal, thousands of digital snapshots can now be taken and compared to quickly check migration patterns, survival rates, and the like. A process that would have taken weeks or months to complete manually can now be accomplished in seconds, enabling conservationists to respond in real time.

I always enjoy picking up random facts like that because there is often a relevant crossover example in other areas. It occurred to me that AI would make short work of those 'spot the difference' picture games that once were very popular on the printed page, and would task the daily commuters passing the time on the tube journey into work. On the other hand, I think it would find the 'spot the ball' competition that used to grace the football pages rather more challenging because it contains a much more random judgment of the trajectory of a spherical object

when kicked. If it were always in the predictable place, for example, the goalkeeper would always catch it.

Of course, AI could methodically search the pixels to discover which ones had been doctored, but then that would really take the fun out of it. Besides being a brilliant picture editor, knowing that would simply increase the sampling area to obscure the original source. Understanding how AI works and anticipating its methodology is key to making it work for you, rather than making you a helpless victim. It will only really help you if you give it a lot of help because you are the only one who knows exactly what you want.

UNDERSTANDING THE PIXELS

A common task, for example, is piecing together several sections of a larger scanned original to produce a seamless copy of the original size. This was always done manually on the computer by using layers and exploiting the alternate levels of transparency to align the parts, or by using the Difference mode to match the

pixels. Doing it visually, the eye will naturally look for straight lines, so you will tend to get those straight bits right first and worry about the fiddly bits later, even if you have to use an eraser or clone brush to touch up bits that didn't quite match.

There was always an issue if the parts were not scanned exactly straight, or there was some optical or colour distortion.

Now that Adobe, along with other image software, offers us a more sophisticated Photomerge, it's essential to understand that, because of its working mechanism, the 'fiddly bits' are just as important as the others that may be more significant. And while it will do a fantastic job very quickly with very complicated puzzles, there will be, just now and then, some odd items added where it has just decided to do so.

In order to be safe, you need to give the programme as much help as you can and give it as much accurate information as possible, rather than just enough. Instead of scanning an original in two parts, for example, scan it in at least three, so the pieces have a generous amount of overlap. In manual days, having more sections made it more difficult and time-consuming. For the computer, it is just the opposite. Information overload is no problem for an electronic brain because it's not distracted by the visual impact of apparently conflicting items. It can see the wood as well as the trees, using an old analogy.

For a similar reason, it is essential to understand the individual components of a digital image, specifically the pixels, before delving too deeply into the realm of AI enhancement. The widespread use of the word 'upscaling' and fanciful images of what a miracle could be possible have somewhat clouded the fundamental issues and further raised people's expectations of what is possible.

From the very beginning of digital capture, there were always claims to have created the magic bullet — a tool that would make any pixel picture as large as you like. And ever since, there have been miserable disappointments.

As a photographer who transitioned from film, I struggled to understand why a 35mm image could be projected onto a giant cinema screen without an apparent loss of quality, but an electronic one could hardly reach A4 size without deteriorating.

Eventually, I got my head around it. Still, it has been a continuing journey, and the reality is that, however clever the software, it still relies on the quality of the information it is fed.

BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO OLD PHOTOS

What has made the difference in recent years is, obviously, AI and its ability to extend and replicate pixels rather than just rubber-stamp them. There are several fairly good programmes now available, including online ones, but they are an extra purchase and often only work on one image at a time.

Suppose you have Adobe Lightroom in your package. In that case, it now features a new Super Resolution tool that works on most pixel files and can be applied to multiple files simultaneously, making it both fast and, in testing, extremely effective.

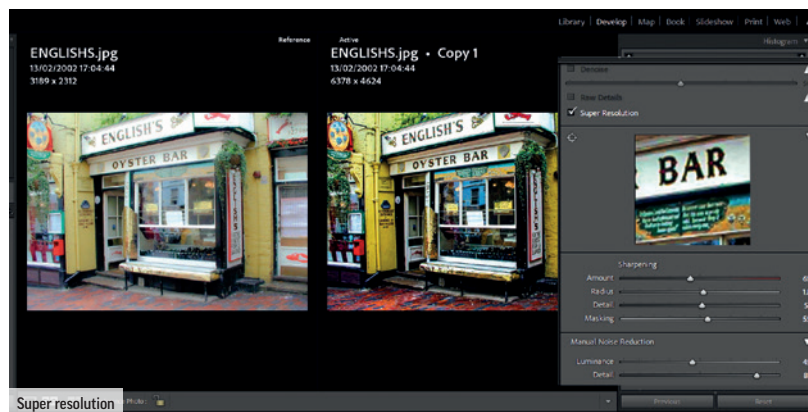
My digital camera adventure began more than 20 years ago, so I have images dating back to when 6MP was considered top spec, even for a DSLR. Frustratingly, some of them are pretty good, except that their quality falls short of modern-day standards. The problem has been that trying to enhance them has always resulted in either losing sharpness or increasing contrast, neither of which is acceptable, especially with people. I'm pleasantly surprised to find that the new LR Super Resolution manages to do a very good restoration job, and I can now browse through old archive folders that I thought were doomed for eternity.

It works best on original files — not ones that have already been edited and butchered by early attempts in Photoshop, which we thought were so cool back then, much like Steps and Westlife, to name a few bad ideas that didn't last the test of time.

Unfortunately, with badly bruised and hastily saved JPEGs, there is no going back. Fortunately, when Lightroom was introduced, it saved many priceless archives by sparing the originals and only doctoring a copy. In the days of film, you saved your priceless negatives and only played with the disposable prints. The principle is the same.

So, Super Resolution, unlike the original Enhance process, is tucked away in the Develop module alongside a related AI denoise/RAW detail option, which is better suited for files that are already of a higher resolution. Super resolution doubles the pixels in a linear pattern, so a 1000x1000 pixel image becomes 2000x2000. It's as simple as that, and it manages to do so without increasing the electrical interference of noise, which has been the Achilles' heel of similar options so far.

How it does it is far beyond me, but the enlargement processes are starting to compete with



the flexibility of film.

At an A4/A3 level, phone images, which are the common source of images these days, can be printed with reasonable quality with a minimum of fuss, saving the awkward moments at the counter when customers study the results on a device they have spent a lot of money on.

They are only ever going to blame your printer, not their original mobile purchase. At the same time, small exposure and colour adjustments can be made and synced with a series of similar images. Just do the enlargement first, then you've got more meat to work with.

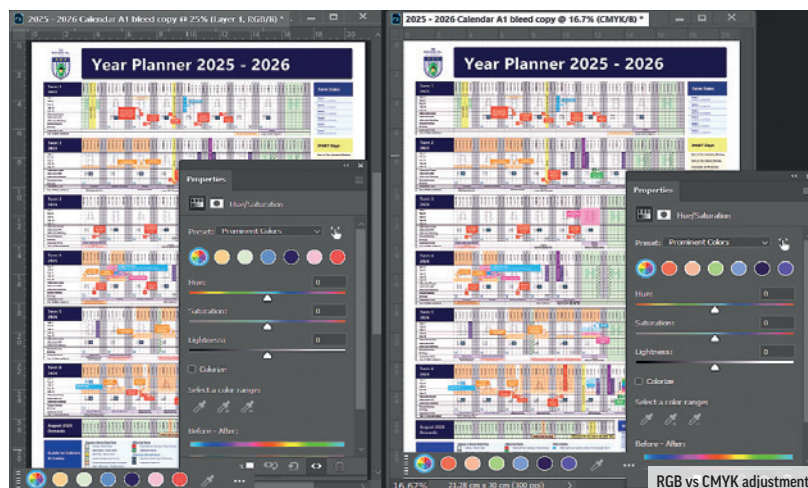
COLOUR AND PRINT

Super Res also works well with low-res graphic files — the type you often get attached to flyers and business cards. The customer has long lost the original, and recreating it would be costly. Simply doubling the size while retaining integrity can make all the difference in print.

Another new feature I have been praising in recent columns is the Adjust Colour option in the Contextual Taskbar. This is where AI actually aids human perception, as it determines the six dominant colours in any image and isolates them to make adjustments. This means even a basic understanding of Photoshop can make necessary colour corrections for print. More experienced users can combine the feature with masks and layers to enable fine-tuning if the job requires it.

Something I recently discovered about this tool, which was not mentioned in Adobe's promotion, is that it supports both CMYK and RGB colour modes. As I have long recommended working in RGB as the native colour space for everything apart from subtractive printing, this makes any final conversion much simpler, as you can place two images side by side and adjust particular colours accordingly.

As I have often complained, as printers, we have been somewhat forgotten in the rush to promote purely visual media, so it's no surprise to me that our boxes don't often get ticked by the marketing department. However, the bonus balls are still there, even if you have to dig deep to find them beneath the promotional gloss, so I will continue to try to find them for you. ■



Mickael Minot new James Cropper Brand Owner Director



British master papermaker James Cropper Paper & Packaging has announced the appointment of Mickael Minot as Brand Owner Director, a newly created role that positions the company for accelerated growth in the luxury packaging sector.

With over 16 years of international experience and an MBA from EDHEC Business School, Mickael has collaborated with leading fashion, beauty, and spirits brands across 80 markets, delivering packaging solutions that marry

aesthetics, performance, and environmental integrity. Mickael, based in Boulogne-Billancourt, will spearhead James Cropper's global brand owner partnerships, guiding multidisciplinary teams to deliver bold colour, market leading craft, and sustainable innovation at scale.

"James Cropper has been a benchmark for luxury packaging throughout my career," says Mickael. "When this opportunity arose, it immediately felt like the perfect next chapter. Paper is unique as a luxury material because it engages two of our primary senses - sight and touch. The moment your hand feels soft,

carefully crafted paper, the luxury experience has already begun."

James Cropper has engineered hundreds of thousands of bespoke colour formulations. This achievement showcases the scale, precision, and creative depth of one of the UK's most advanced Colour Labs. The company continues to offer both tailored and ready to use colour solutions, backed by decades of expertise and state of the art capability.

"Colour expertise is at the heart of what we do," he adds. "Our Colour Lab has developed hundreds of thousands of unique colour formulations. When it comes to iconic colours, close enough simply isn't. Our clients, some of the world's most renowned luxury brands, demand precision – a red that's unmistakably theirs, not merely almost."

www.jamescropper.com

Leadership change in Durst Group's Business

Durst Group has appointed Johann Strozzege as Director Global Sales Graphics. Strozzege succeeds Christian Harder, who has served as Chief Sales Officer (CSO) with overall sales responsibility for all business units of Durst Group since 2021 and who also headed the Business Unit Graphics. With the official handover to Johann Strozzege, an important step has been taken in the strategic development of the global sales organisation.

"In recent months, I had the privilege of mentoring Johann. Our long standing and successful collaboration in the Ceramic Printing segment has shown me early on that he has the strategic instinct and leadership skills to further expand our market share in Graphics," explains Christian Harder, Chief Sales Officer of Durst Group. "This move allows me to focus even more strongly on group wide strategic topics in the future – and to prepare the next growth steps together with our business units."

STRONG LEADERSHIP – STRATEGIC FOCUS

With this new appointment, Durst Group is strengthening its leadership structure in a key business area and laying the foundation for sustainable international growth. The company's management sees this as a clear signal of continuity, customer focus, and future security:



Image shows Johann Strozzege flanked by Christian Harder (left) and Christoph Gamper at the Durst HQ in Brixen

"With Johann Strozzege, we are bringing an experienced manager with a strategic compass to the top. My thanks go to Christian Harder – for his strong commitment and for actively shaping this transition. We do not fill leadership roles based on status but on substance and future viability – for our customers and the sustainable success of Durst Group," says Christoph Gamper, CEO and co-owner of Durst Group.

www.durst-group.com

ANTALIS INVESTS IN TWO STRATEGIC APPOINTMENTS

Antalis Packaging continues to demonstrate its commitment to growth and excellence in the packaging sector with the appointment of two experienced professionals to key commercial roles.



Ben Baskeyfield joined Antalis as Business Development Manager. In this newly created role, Ben will focus on driving new business across the UK as part of the national team. With hands on experience in general packaging since late 2023 and a prior background in the timber pallet industry spanning over four years, Ben brings a practical, consultative approach to business development.

"I can assist customers in unlocking real value through their packaging supply," says Ben. "My goal is to work closely with businesses to understand their needs and deliver solutions that bring long term benefits."



Sean McNamee National Account Manager has over five years' experience in managing large blue chip accounts. Sean offers a strong commercial mindset and a proven track record in value added, solutions based sales.

"I bring a fresh perspective to my existing customers and a commitment to helping them improve operational efficiency," says Sean. "By

applying a consultative sales approach, I aim to help large customers optimise their packaging operations and achieve measurable results."

Kim Allen, Head of Business Development for Packaging at Antalis, commented: "Antalis Packaging's extensive range of packaging materials and machinery enables customers to improve the efficiency and sustainability of their packaging operations through reliability of supply and new product innovations. We're investing in our future by expanding the team with experienced, customer focused professionals, bringing in talented individuals like Ben and Sean.

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Less than 90 print days before Christmas, Time to lead by example with your own business opening hours flyers, personalised cards, calendars and more to show off your wares and encourage your customers to join in. Nothing wrong with making a few more beer

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Over the next three months we will be sharing our print trade suppliers recommendations on these pages and you are invited to join in the spirit with your Christmas pressie tips.

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The T-Shirt Guy partnership with Snuggle

In the fast-paced world of garment decoration and textile printing, few companies have navigated the industry's challenges with the same resilience and adaptability as The T-Shirt Guy. What began as a small hustle in Leicester has evolved into a respected, vertically integrated fashion supplier – powered by customer dedication, strategic growth, and a key partnership with digital print experts Snuggle.



FROM SPARE ROOM TO SCALABLE OPERATION

The journey started modestly. After a career setback, Rob Booth, now widely known as “The T-Shirt Guy”, found opportunity knocking in the form of door to door sales. He began selling uniforms around Leicester’s industrial estates, sourcing blank garments and adding personalised embroidery or prints.

Early success came not just from determination, but from Rob’s intuitive understanding of the market. He built a reputation for delivering exactly what customers wanted, quickly and reliably. That reputation would eventually become the foundation of the brand itself.

“Our reputation is built on trust, quality, and delivery,” says Rob. “We pride ourselves on being consistent, approachable, and fast.”

Even before The T-Shirt Guy had a formal name, the nickname “the t-shirt guy” was circulating among customers, a nod to Rob’s hands-on, personal service. It was a natural transition from informal brand recognition to an official identity that stood for speed, reliability, and creative capability.

FAST GROWTH FUELLED BY INTEGRITY

One of the company’s early defining moments was winning a 25,000 piece order, an ambitious leap for a small operation. Rob met the challenge by partnering with a factory and ensuring fast payment terms, often well ahead of the industry standard.



This practice earned the trust of suppliers and partners alike and established The T-Shirt Guy Ltd as a business that kept its promises. This reputation soon opened doors to major clients such as Next, ASOS, River Island, and Urban Outfitters - brands that value not only quality and speed, but ethical standards.

RIISING TO INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

Recognising the need for operational balance, Rob formed a 50/50 partnership with Shailen Parmar. This structure ensured equal focus on production and sales, allowing the company to grow without sacrificing quality or customer service.

INNOVATION AND DESIGN LED DIFFERENTIATION

The company’s strength lies not just in manufacturing but in its ability to quickly translate fashion trends into commercial product. With a sharp eye for style, the team has brought garments like Gildan workwear into high street relevance, often well before wider market adoption.

Their approach has shifted from volume to value. While production once peaked at 70,000 garments per week, the business now focuses on smaller, more complex orders, producing around 35,000 pieces weekly with a 65 strong workforce. This reflects the evolving demands of the fashion world: smaller batches, quicker turnarounds, and more bespoke offerings.

To meet this shift, they’ve invested in digital printing technologies such as the Brother GTX system. These tools are ideal for small, multi-colour runs and rapid prototyping, particularly for new retailers or emerging “bedroom

brands.” But digital printing brings unique challenges, including space, skill, and time requirements.

STRENGTH IN PARTNERSHIP: SNUGGLE

That’s where Snuggle comes in. A trusted partner in digital printing, Snuggle provides a reliable extension of The T-Shirt Guy’s in-house capabilities.

“The quality was just there from day one,” says Rob.

Snuggle’s role is more than technical, they’re a strategic ally. Their fast, accurate fulfilment has made it possible to meet demanding deadlines for big events like Glastonbury and limited edition product drops that require precision and speed.

“Trust, speed, and price,” Rob says. “That’s what Snuggle brings.”

Unlike other suppliers, Snuggle operates with integrity, never attempting to bypass or poach clients. This rare quality has made them a preferred partner in a competitive and sometimes cutthroat market.

“Snuggle gives us peace of mind,” Rob adds. “We know the print’s going to arrive on time, and that it’s going to be right. They’ve taken pressure off our team and let us focus on serving our customers.”

And while other providers rely on automated portals and faceless chatbot support, Snuggle offers real people, ready to pick up the phone and talk through urgent issues when timing is critical.

A BLUEPRINT FOR MODERN MANUFACTURING

The story of The T-Shirt Guy is one of adaptability, customer first thinking, and purposeful collaboration. By investing in ethical practices, design innovation, and strategic partnerships, the company has positioned itself at the forefront of a changing industry.

The T-Shirt Guy: 0116 246 4222
www.thetshirtguy.co.uk
Snuggle: 0333 456 3333.
www.snuggle.co.uk

Konica Minolta unveiled next generation AccurioLabel prototype

With digital label production expanding at record speed, Konica Minolta revealed the first details of its new AccurioLabel Prototype, a system designed to push automation and productivity to new heights while addressing key industry challenges.

Building on the proven success of the AccurioLabel 230, Konica Minolta's Prototype is positioned as the ideal solution for mid range digital label production. It introduces an optional Intelligent Quality Optimiser (IQ) that simplifies workflows, enables longer print runs of up to 1,600 linear metres, and ensures colour registration accuracy even at full speed (23.4m/min). Print resolution has also been raised to 1200 x 2400 dpi, offering sharper, more vibrant output.

Visitors to LabelExpo Europe held at Fira Gran Via, Barcelona,



saw it alongside Konica Minolta's full portfolio of digital label and packaging workflow solutions, showcased in partnership with MGI Digital Technology.

Other highlights included the AccurioLabel 230 (CMYK) for providers transitioning volumes from conventional to digital, the AccurioLabel 400 (CMYK + White), and MGI's JETvarnish 3D Web 400

for digital embellishment. Also featured were the MGI Octopus Web for hybrid digital cutting and finishing, and the GM DC350Mini Basic for semi-rotary die-cutting and lamination.

This year also marks a decade since Konica Minolta entered the label market, during which time more than 1,700 presses have been installed worldwide.

Toshi Uemura, Executive Officer and Head of Industrial Print at Konica Minolta Europe, commented, "We are at the forefront of digital label production, which offers exciting opportunities for print service providers. Today's unveiling of our new AccurioLabel Prototype marks another milestone, building on the AccurioLabel 230's success and delivering even greater automation, speed, and quality."

He added, "Konica Minolta's mission is to enable better communication and society through the power of digital printing. By working closely with our customers, we help them overcome challenges ranging from shorter lead times and smaller job volumes to the shortage of skilled operators and environmental concerns."

www.konicaminolta.co.uk

Global debut for new Mimaki TS200-1600 dye sublimation printer

Mimaki's exclusive UK and Ireland distributor, Hybrid Services announced the launch of the new TS200-1600, the Japanese manufacturer's latest sublimation transfer inkjet printer, which made its international debut at The Sign Show at the NEC in Birmingham.

Building on the success of Mimaki's 200 platform, the new TS200-1600 delivers fast production speeds, high quality and versatile applications at an affordable price point, making it an ideal solution for small shops, start-ups, and businesses looking to expand into customised goods and short run textile production.

Powered by the same core technology behind Mimaki's 330 Series, the TS200-1600 ensures smoother gradients, vivid colours, and outstanding accuracy without compromising on speed. Its extended eight colour ink set includes the addition of orange and violet inks for richer tones and improved colour gamut, as well as newly developed fluorescent pink and yellow inks for vibrant, eye catching applications, such as sportswear, custom promotional items, home décor and soft signage.

The printer runs on Mimaki's OEKO-TEX® ECO-PASSPORT certified Sb411 inks, ensuring

high density prints that are both durable and environmentally responsible. The certification allows print providers to meet sustainability requirements demanded by global textile brands and eco-conscious consumers.

To maximise uptime and reduce waste, the TS200-1600 incorporates 2L degassed ink packs that prevent air bubbles and ensure consistent print quality. The improved ink supply system also simplifies maintenance while maintaining reliable performance. Combined with Mimaki's user friendly RasterLink7 RIP software and PICT, Mimaki's free cloud based monitoring tool, users can streamline print management and production processes.

"The TS200-1600 represents the next step in our entry level dye sublimation line," comments Arjen Evertse, Director Sales at Mimaki Europe. "It brings professional level quality and colour brilliance to customers entering the dye sublimation market, while offering a user friendly, cost efficient solution for short runs, proofing, and personalised applications. With its eco-friendly inks and Mimaki's core technologies, it also supports a more sustainable production process."

Sales Director at Hybrid, Andy Gregory



comments, "Launching the new Mimaki TS200-1600 at The Sign Show gave visitors the opportunity to see first hand how dye sublimation could open new revenue streams for their business. As an entry level solution, the TS200 makes it easier than ever for companies to take that next step and diversify their offering."

With its compact footprint, environmentally friendly and safe inks, and support for a wide range of polyester fabrics and coated substrates, the TS200-1600 is positioned as an accessible yet powerful solution for businesses aiming to capture new opportunities within rigid substrate applications for custom goods and gifts, as well as in the on-demand textile market. n

www.hybridservices.co.uk

Antalis Launches 2U Silk And 2U Digital Silk



Antalis has announced the launch of 2U Silk and 2U Digital Silk, two high-performance coated papers designed to meet the evolving demands of commercial printers. With an Antalis Green Star System rating of 4, both products combine premium quality with strong environmental credentials, making them ideal for sustainable printed communications.

As part of Antalis' expanding portfolio of environmentally responsible coated papers, 2U Silk and 2U Digital Silk are engineered to deliver outstanding print performance while supporting sustainability goals. They offer exceptional print clarity and high definition precision, producing crisp detail and vibrant colours that enhance the

visual impact of printed materials.

2U Silk is available in a broad range of weights from 115gsm to 400gsm across SRA1, SRA2 and B1 formats. It provides excellent opacity across all grammages and a double sided, smooth coated surface that ensures optimal image reproduction.

2U Digital Silk is optimised for both dry toner and liquid toner laser printers, offering flawless runnability at all production speeds. It is available in weights from 115gsm to 400gsm and in SRA3 and B2+ digital press compatible sizes.

In addition to their technical benefits, both papers are FSC Mix Credit Certified, ensuring that

they are responsibly sourced and meet stringent environmental standards.

Print clarity is exceptional, with high definition output that enables precise detail, while colour fidelity is accurate, delivering professional grade results. Even on lighter grammages, opacity remains high, maintaining the visual integrity and readability of printed content.

Category Manager at Antalis, Ben Cahill, comments: "2U Silk and 2U Digital Silk are both very impressive, coated papers. With excellent environmental credentials, they're a great option for printers and their clients looking to produce printed communications sustainably."

www.antalis.co.uk

Print Matters! Consumers Prefer Paper

Despite the ongoing rise of digital platforms, NEW research shows that consumers continue to place high value on print media, particularly when it comes to comprehension, trust and learning. The latest Two Sides Trend Tracker 2025 survey, one of the print and paper industry's largest and most comprehensive studies, reveals a consistent and resilient appreciation for print in everyday life.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought major disruption to print media, reshaping how consumers interacted with news and printed content. Whilst the digital world may offer convenience, the survey highlights that the preference for reading in print has recovered since the pandemic and is the preferred format for books, magazines and important documents. In fact, 65% of European consumers prefer printed books, recovering from 53% in 2021. Magazines in print 48%, up from 35% in 2021 and printed product catalogues 33%, up from 21%.

Print is still preferred where it matters most. When it comes to essential communications like medical information, financial statements and legal documents, consumers consistently choose

print over digital for its security, clarity, reliability and permanence:

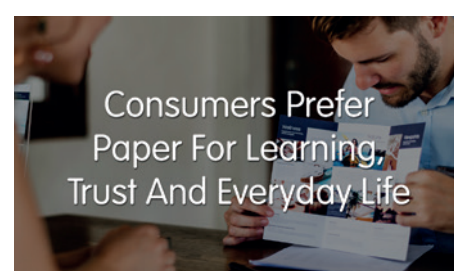
- **47% prefer medical leaflets and instructions in print**
- **27% still favour receiving printed bills and statements**
- **36% prefer printed information from doctors and hospitals**
- **76% want the right to choose and not be pushed down a digital only route**

"This year's findings reflect an improved stable consumer mindset. While digital tools are valuable, people increasingly recognise the unique strengths of print, especially where comprehension, memory, and trust are critical." Says Jonathan Tame, Managing Director of Two Sides Europe.

PRINT'S ROLE IN LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING

Beyond everyday documents, print continues to play a vital role in education and news consumption. The survey found that:

- **58% believe students learn better using printed materials than digital**



- **45% say they understand news better in print than online**
- **49% are concerned about the loss of printed newspapers**

In an age of constant screen time, consumers are showing a growing desire to unplug and reconnect with the tangible. Print offers a physical experience that digital simply can't replicate - no pop-ups, no distractions, just a more immersive and calming way to consume information.

A headline summary containing some of the key findings is publicly available to view and download here: <https://twosides.info/trend-tracker-2025>
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P&P LIVE! and Sign & Digital UK return in February 2026

Mark your calendars for a key date in the print and visual communications calendar, as the UK's longest-running trade shows, **Printwear & Promotion LIVE!** and **Sign & Digital UK**, confirm their return to the NEC in February 2026. This dynamic dual exhibition is set to be bigger and bolder than ever, bringing together the best in blank garments, embroidery, signage, and wide-format print in one unmissable event for creative professionals.

The organisers of the UK's longest running trade shows for garment decoration, promotional products, visual communications and the signs sector are excited to confirm the dates of the 2026 exhibitions

Printwear & Promotion LIVE! and Sign & Digital return to the NEC in February 2026, taking over Halls 6 and 8. The dual exhibition is set to be bigger, bolder, and more inspiring than ever, bringing together the best in blank garments, embroidery, signage and print.

Whether you're a seasoned professional or a creative innovator looking for fresh ideas, the NEC will be the place to discover cutting edge technology, connect with top suppliers, and get inspired by the future of visual branding and digital displays.

Expect live demonstrations, exclusive product launches, inspiring talks from industry leaders, and countless opportunities to network and do business face-to-face.

Event director, Tony Gardner, said: "Printwear & Promotion LIVE! and Sign & Digital are the must attend

PrintwearLIVE!
 &promotion HALLS 6 & 8, NEC, BIRMINGHAM, 22-24 FEBRUARY 2026

SIGN & DIGITAL UK
HALL 6, NEC, BIRMINGHAM, 22-24 FEBRUARY 2026

events of the year for promotional print service suppliers — a place where ideas, technology, and creativity collide. 2026 is shaping up to be another unmissable exhibition."

February 2026 will see Sign & Digital UK co-locate with Printwear & Promotion LIVE! for the third time.

This co-location brings together the full spectrum of visual communication, from branded clothing and embroidery, to signage, wide format print, display and digital graphics. Visitors will benefit from two vibrant show floors, interactive demos, and expert insights — all in one place, with one registration.

Event director, Tony Gardner, continues: "This collaboration delivers incredible value for visitors and exhibitors alike,



reflecting the natural crossover between decorated garments and the wider print and signage markets. The feedback from our previous joint events was incredibly positive. Together, we're creating a dynamic space for innovation, learning, and connection across creative industries."

With the two leading exhibitions taking place in adjoining halls, visitors will once again be able to seamlessly move between both for an enhanced experience. With over 190 stands and more than 7,000 visitors at the 2025 co-located shows, the same is anticipated in February when both SDUK and P&P LIVE! return to the NEC for another unmissable three days.

These must attend exhibitions promise to ignite the quick print pro industry with the latest in signage, print, display, décor and design.

More details about this must visit event will be announced in QPP over the coming months as more exhibitors join the line up, so stay tuned! ■ www.printwearandpromotionlive.co.uk www.signuk.com



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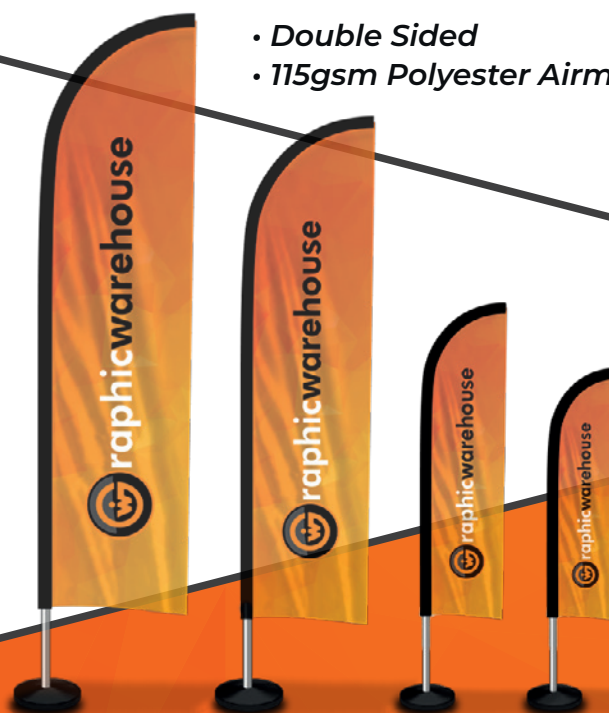


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Zebra goes green

Yorkshire-based print specialist, Zebra Print Group, has taken a significant step towards a greener future with the installation of 88 solar panels at its Yorkshire headquarters, marking a major investment in renewable energy as it looks to cut carbon emissions and strengthen its eco-credentials.

The JA Solar panels, installed by The E-Merge Group, are expected to generate 48MWh of clean energy annually, covering around 45 per cent of the business' total energy needs. This will offset 9.4 tonnes of carbon emissions every year and deliver cost savings of approximately £14,000 – equating to a 50 per cent reduction in annual energy bills.

The investment, which carries a projected return on investment of just 3.3 years, is part of Zebra Print Group's ongoing commitment to sustainability and reducing its scope 1 emissions.

Samantha Overton, managing director at Zebra Print Group, said: "At Zebra Print Group, we're proud to be taking meaningful steps toward a more sustainable future. The installation of the solar panels marks a significant milestone in our commitment to reducing our environmental



impact and operating more responsibly.

"As a business that thrives on innovation and forward-thinking, investing in renewable energy was a natural progression and one that aligns with both our company values and the expectations of our clients. It's not just about reducing costs; it's about doing what's right for our planet and future generations."

Zebra Print Group's move into solar follows several other green initiatives, including the introduction of electric vehicles into its fleet, a cartridge return programme in partnership with

Xerox and ink recycling. The business is also a registered partner of the Woodland Trust's carbon capture scheme.

Marc Haley, co-founder of The E-Merge Group, who delivered the installation, commented: "Working with Zebra Print Group on this solar installation has been a fantastic collaboration. It's great to see a forward-thinking company making such a tangible investment in renewable energy and setting an example within the print industry."

www.zebraprintgroup.co.uk

Consumers want the choice for paper over digital



The Two Sides Trend Tracker is a biennial global survey and one of the most comprehensive studies into consumer perceptions of print, paper, and paper based packaging. In its latest edition, the research gathered responses from 12,400 consumers across 17 countries, including South America, the United States, South Africa and Europe, offering valuable insights into global attitudes towards paper-based and digital communication.

PAPER VS DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Across Europe, a growing number of organisations are encouraging customers to transition from paper to digital communications, often citing environmental benefits. However, many of these claims lack evidence and fall under the definition of greenwashing – the use of misleading environmental messaging to justify

cost saving decisions.

The Trend Tracker survey reveals that 56% of European consumers recognise the primary motivation for service providers switching their customer communications to digital is to reduce costs, not to help the environment, an increase from 49% in 2021. Furthermore, 65% believe they should not be charged more for choosing paper bills or statements, a figure that has risen steadily from 54% in 2021.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY AND ITS CHALLENGES

As digital communication becomes increasingly dominant, concerns about its long term impact are growing. The Trend Tracker results reveal unease and growing concern among consumers around issues such as data security, digital fatigue, and the potential health risks associated with screen overuse.

- 57% of respondents worry that personal information held digitally is vulnerable to hacking, theft, or loss (55% in 2021).
- 50% feel they spend too much time on digital devices (49% in 2021).
- 48% are concerned about potential health impacts from excessive screen time (46% in 2021).

There is also a widespread assumption that digital communication is more environmentally friendly.

However, the environmental footprint

of digital infrastructure is significant and often underestimated. The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector was responsible for 4-6% of global electricity use in 2020, contributing to more than 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions. With rising digital demand, this footprint is expected to grow substantially over the next decade.

THE ROLE OF PRINT IN A BALANCED MEDIA LANDSCAPE

"Print and digital each play an important role, and rather than competing, they should be seen as complementary channels," says Jonathan Tame, Managing Director of Two Sides Europe. "What's crucial is that consumers are not misled into thinking digital is inherently better for the environment than paper. That's why Two Sides actively challenges organisations that use unverified and misleading claims, such as 'Go Green, Go Paperless', to push digital only communications. These messages not only mislead consumers, but they also unfairly damage a European industry that supports 640,000 jobs (105,000 in the UK) and over 112,000 businesses (7,400 based in the UK)."

An executive summary of the Trend Tracker Survey 2025 was published in June and is available to industry stakeholders upon request. Visit www.twosides.info/trend-tracker-2025 to register your interest in receiving this summary. www.twosides.info



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Epson addition to TMT DTF Portfolio

The Magic Touch has confirmed their appointment as official resellers of the first Epson direct to film (DTF) printer, the compact SureColour G6000.

The long awaited high performance printer features a unique space saving design with front loading media design capable of printing up to 90cm (35.4 inches) wide, with an automated maintenance system and a fabric printhead wiper cleaning system.

Having pioneered the introduction of DTF to the UK market back in 2021 this additional option compliments the existing DTF portfolio currently supplied and supported by the company ensuring both existing and new customers opt for the right solution to meet the current and future expectations.

The new DTF printer has many notable



features including a PrecisionCore Micro TFP printhead with Nozzle Verification Technology (exclusive to Epson) helps to minimise downtime in production, together with large

capacity sealed ink pack system featuring new UltraChrome DF inks for vibrant colours and bright white. The inks are Oeko-Tex Eco Passport certified, CPSIA-compliant and non-toxic. The package also includes advanced production print software – Fiery Digital Factory DTF Epson Edition.

Complete with Epson on-site service, support, and extended warranty available upon request.

The printer will be demonstrated at the forthcoming Print & Stitch events (Croydon, Solihull, Swindon, Barnsley) hosted throughout September and October. For further information, samples or to arrange a demonstration at their Dunstable headquarters contact

sales@themagictouch.co.uk
www.themagictouch.co.uk

Colour Psychology – Think before you print

Colour psychology leverages the unconscious associations people have with colours to influence emotions, perception, and purchasing decisions, with each colour carrying distinct meanings and evoking specific feelings.

For example, blue communicates trust and stability for financial brands, red creates urgency and stimulates appetite, and green represents nature, health, and prosperity. Choosing the right colours can significantly impact brand recognition, customer impressions, and brand appeal by shaping a brand's desired message.

Here's a breakdown of favourite

colours and their typical marketing associations: Red: Associated with passion, energy, and power, but also danger and aggression. It creates urgency and can increase appetite, making it popular in fast food marketing.

Blue: Evokes feelings of trust, security, loyalty, and reliability. It's commonly used by financial institutions, tech companies, and healthcare brands to appear dependable.

Green: Symbolises nature, health, growth, and tranquillity. It is used to represent environmental friendliness, health, and financial stability.

Yellow: Represents happiness,

optimism, warmth, and cheerfulness. It can be effective for grabbing attention but should be used carefully to avoid negative associations like fear or anxiety.

Orange: Conveys warmth, enthusiasm, confidence, and creativity. It's a youthful and energetic colour, often used by brands for a friendly and stimulating effect.

Purple: Associated with royalty, luxury, wisdom, and imagination. It can convey class and sophistication but also excess or extravagance.

Black: Communicates sophistication, power, elegance, and authority. It's effective in luxury branding and for conveying a

strong, elegant presence.

White: Signifies purity, simplicity, cleanliness, and a modern aesthetic. It often conveys a sense of innocence or spaciousness.

NEW BUSINESS BEST PRACTICE

To best catch your customers corporate colours, send out some samples of printed products that are on brand. They will love the attention.

Further Reading And Research In Print

www.QuickPrintPro.co.uk
www.BestBlogsInPrint.co.uk
www.PrintTradeExpo.co.uk

THANKS FOR SHARING...

Fellow quick print pros frequently share their research with QPP and it is our pleasure to pass this on as a print professional referral.

Our remit is to share best practice in print with recommendations for suppliers always welcome. Product and print process demonstrations are essential before we invest, including YouTube videos.

Jamie Reader at Granthams has recently posted a new video demonstrating the Roland UV Printer/Cutter on their YouTube channel, showing each step

from turning on the Printer to applying the vinyl.

- **UV Print Cut & Install – Roland TrueVIS LG-640 Printer / Cutter (Start to Finish Workflow & Review)**

More videos are shared showing some of the new graphics printed in the Granthams showroom.

- **UV Printing and Board Mounting | Mimaki UCVJ330 UV Printer / Cutter with White Ink & Laminator**



- **Demo Room Transformation with the Mimaki JFX600-2513 Flatbed Printer | Printed Foamex Panel**
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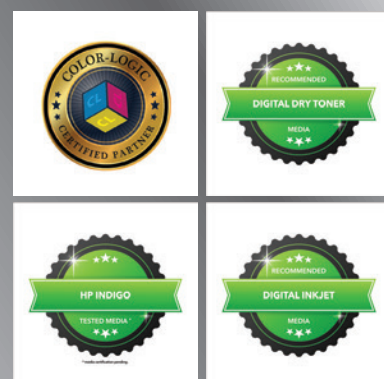


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Signs Express Bristol hits the gym with Drytac

Diversified sign making business Signs Express Bristol used Drytac SpotOn White monomeric PVC film to produce an impressive set of window graphics to support Luxe Fitness with the opening of a new gym in Birmingham

Part of the Sign Express franchise network, which includes more than 60 locations around the UK, Signs Express Bristol works with clients across a range of applications and projects such as vehicle wrapping, interior and exterior signage, exhibition displays and promotional banners.

The company recently linked up with Luxe Fitness, a gym operator based in Bristol, on a project for its new facility that will launch in Birmingham later this year. This focused on window graphics to promote the opening of the new gym.

Luxe Fitness is a long term client of Signs Express Bristol, with the two companies having collaborated on similar projects in the past. However, the Birmingham installation presented several additional challenges, primarily that the graphics needed to be installed while renovation work was ongoing and could be removed easily once work was completed. "Luxe Fitness moved into a site at a new, high end building, of which they secured the ground two floors," said Jake Jenkins, Office Manager of Signs Express Bristol. "We were charged with providing temporary window coverings to hide all the works going on internally but that could also be taken off with very little cleaning effort. This meant sourcing a material that was going to be externally rated, temporary and simple to install."

After speaking with Premier, the exclusive Drytac stockist in the UK and Ireland, SpotOn White was quickly identified as the ideal solution. Featuring an innovative dot pattern adhesive, the vinyl is easy to apply to walls, windows, glass, and other smooth surfaces, opening its use for



short term graphics across environments such as retail, trade shows and office spaces.

"The main selling factors for us were the external rating and the removability," Jake said. "Not many temporary dotted vinyls come rated for external use with the same removability qualities as SpotOn White."

The striking graphics were printed by Super Wide Digital, a specialist trade only wide format print company that Sign Express Bristol often works with, using HP Latex technology. The expert team at Sign Express Bristol then installed the graphics on-location in Birmingham, much to the delight of the customer.

"The Luxe Fitness team was over the moon with the smooth, sleek print and natural matte finish," Jake said. "They commented on the speed of our installation and the fact we managed to save half a day on a three day project, purely because of how easy the material was to use."

"The support from Drytac was also great. Steve Payne, Product Specialist at Drytac stopped by our unit, which is local to the factory, and we went through the material in depth before placing our order. This really put my mind at ease using a new product to us on such a large scale project."

www.drytac.com

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HP Ink Cartridges.....Resolution GB
Incentive Marketing.....PrintOn
Indexes.....Duraweld
Inkjet Consumables for LFP.....Perfect Colours
Konica Minolta.....ASL Group
Kyocera.....ASL Group
Labels.....Calf Hey
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Labels – digital plain.....Ashgrove Trading
Labels – sheets/rolls.....Ashgrove Trading
Labels (Flat Sheet).....Sovereign
Laminating Machines and Supplies, all types.....Elmstok
Laminator Pouches & Supplies.....Vivid
Labels and stickers.....Baker Labels
Large Format Printers.....Stanford Marsh
Large Format Scanners.....Stanford Marsh
Large Format MFP Solutions.....Stanford Marsh
Large Format Printers from HP.....Perfect Colours
Large Format Printers from HP.....Stanford Marsh
Leaflets.....Flexpress
Magazine Design.....The Magazine Production Company
Magazine Production.....The Magazine Production Company
Magazine Printing.....The Magazine Production Company
Marketing Solutions.....Xerox
Mimaki.....Granthams Graphic Technology
Mimaki.....Your Print Specialist
Multifunction Devices.....OKI Europe
Mugs.....NovaChrome UK
NCR Books.....NCR Pads Ltd
NCR Pads.....NCR Pads Ltd
NCR Sets.....NCR Pads Ltd
Newsletter Design.....The Magazine Production Company
Paper – digital synthetic.....Ashgrove Trading
Paper Drills & Punches.....Elmstok
Paper Rolls & Media Supplies (A1 and A0).....Resolution GB
Paper Supplies.....Océ Imaging Supplies
Paper Supplies.....Premier Paper
Pencils.....Pen Warehouse

Pens.....Pen Warehouse
Perfect Binders.....CJB Print Equipment
Photo Production Printers.....Canon
Plastic Pockets and Wallets.....Duraweld
Polypropylene Boxes.....Duraweld
PosterJet Software.....Perfect Colours
Presentation Folders.....Flexpress
Presentation Packaging (Printed).....Duraweld
Print Finishing Equipment.....Caslon
Printer Support Contracts.....Resolution GB
Printing Systems.....OKI Europe
Raffle Tickets.....Raffle Tickets Direct
Receipt Books.....Abbot Print
Recycled Media.....Premier Paper
Register Sets.....Abbot Print
Retail POS.....Route1 Print
Ricoh.....ASL Group
Ring Binders.....Vivid
Ring Binders.....Duraweld
Roland.....Granthams Graphic Technology
Roland.....Your Print Specialist
Roll Laminating Machines.....FDS Solutions
Sawgrass.....NovaChrome UK
Screen Printing.....Sovereign
Screen Printing Labels.....Baker Labels
Seasonal Print.....Flexpress
Security Labels.....Calf Hey
Self Adhesive Labels.....Calf Hey
Self Adhesive Pockets.....Duraweld
Sensory Coaters.....CJB Print Equipment

Shredding Machines – Document Shredders, all types.....Elmstok
Signs (Printed).....Sovereign
Software.....Digital Office Group
Speciality Papers.....GFSmith
Stickers and labels, rolls, sheets or singles.....Baker Labels
Sublimation Blanks.....NovaChrome UK
Sublimation Solutions.....The Magic Touch
Tearproof/Waterproof Paper.....Ashgrove Trading
Thermographic Equipment and Supplied.....Caslon
Tickets.....Raffle Tickets Direct
Trade Printing.....Route1 Print
Transfer Paper.....The Magic Touch
Unbranded Samples.....Route1 Print
Velobind/Surebind Machines.....FDS Solutions
Vinyl Labels.....Calf Hey
Vivid EasyMount.....Your Print Specialist
Wedding Stationery Stock.....GFSmith
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Wide Format Printers.....Canon
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Workflow Solutions.....Xerox
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Xerox Digital Press.....Xeretec
Xerox Digital Printing Press Portfolio.....Xerox
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YPIP.....ASL Group

Something to share?

HALLOWEEN

- The zombie thinks this is the best thing since sliced head.
- My costume is eerie-sistible.
- Let's get this party startled!
- I sure do love your pumpkin spice latte.
- Let's carve out time for pumpkin decorating.
- It's the most wonderful time of the fear.
- It's time for check your horror-scope.
- Honey, I only have pumpkin pies for you.
- Now that's dead-ication.
- Live. Laugh. Scare.
- Time to pumpkin spice things up.
- Taking a trip to the pun-kin patch!

OKTOBERFEST

- I promise you; these aren't the wurst.
- A balanced diet is a beer in each hand...
- Partying it up at brew-tiful Oktoberfest!
- Hopped on my second beer and started getting some déjà brew...
- Having the most un-beer-lievable Oktoberfest!
- At this point, you should just call me Brew-no Mars.
- Having a Kegs-xcellent time at Oktoberfest.
- It's a Pitcher-perfect day here at Oktoberfest!

PROST PROSE

A nuclear physicist is drinking at Oktoberfest. He approaches the bar and calls over a barman. The barman asks what he would like, and the physicist raises one finger and says, "Ein Stein".

MORE PUNS PER PINT

I've been eating so much sausage and cheese that my clothes barely fit me anymore. You can say it's really the Wurst Käse scenario.

Sorry, I'm at Oktoberfest right now – alcohol you later.

They often say you should replace the word "problem" with opportunity, so I guess at Oktoberfest, you can really say I have a drinking opportunity.

Oktoberfest done and dusted. I'm a Slur-vivor!

Nobody comes beer-tween me and a good time. Warning: Objects may be closer than they a-beer.

At Oktoberfest, it's pretty important to keep up abeer-ances.

At Oktoberfest, we don't believe in group hugs – we believe in group chugs.

Just enjoying the beer necessities.

Enjoying the sweet taste of li-beer-ation here at Oktoberfest!

Oktoberfest is the best time ever, beer none.

Beers and pretzels at 10am,... what's the Wurst that can happen?

Drinking beer by the litre is indeed a heavy beer-den, but I'm coping okay.

ORNAMENTAL BEER MUGS ARE OFTEN KNOWN AS "STEINS"

Drinking so many beers, you could call me Albert Ein-Stein.

♪My thirstiness is killing me, and I... I must confess, I still beer-lieve. (Still beer-lieve!) When my hand's empty, I lose my mind... Give me a Stein, hit me baby one more time. ♪

♪Just stop your crying, it's a Stein of the times...♪

The best part about Oktoberfest? Promoting cross-cultural underSteinding.

First Instagram Prost of the Oktoberfest season! Here's a photo of me as a consummate Prost-fessional.

Oktoberfest has absolutely moved me to cheers. I got drunk aProstimately five beers ago.

PRETZEL-RELATED OKTOBERFEST PUNS AND INSTAGRAM CAPTIONS

Feeling a little Knotty for Oktoberfest!

Why did the lederhosen go to school? To be a smarty pants.

You think you dough it all? Pretzel logic dictates otherwise.

Why did the pretzel go to the party? It heard it would be a knot to miss.

What do you call a pretzel's dance party? A twist-off. Pretzels at Oktoberfest are knot just for show.

AUTUMN SHORTS – Q & A

Why was the strawberry sad? His mum was in a jam!

What beverage does a tree drink the most? Root beer!

What happens when you tell an egg a joke? It cracks up.

How does the sun like its eggs? Sunny side up.

Why wasn't the killer whale in a band? Because it was in the orca-stra.

Why was the fish swimming by himself? It dropped out of school.

Where do maths teachers go on vacation? Times Square.

How did the seagull call his mum? On the shell phone.

Why did the teacher dive into the pool? To test the water.

GHOST PUNS

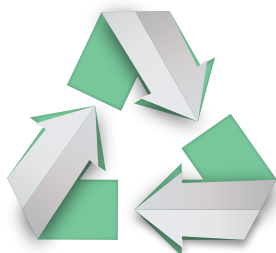
- The ghostess with the mostest.
- Ghouls just want to have fun
- Why did the ghost cross the road? Because it was a poultry-geist.
- Shake your boo-ty!
- If you've got it, haunt it.
- Haunting my exes.
- Hey boo-tiful.

VAMPIRE PUNS

- Love at first bite.
- Fangs for the memories.
- I'm a pain in the neck.
- So long, sucker.
- It's in my blood.
- You make me batty.
- I have an account at the blood bank.
- Have a fang-tastic Halloween.
- You're just my (blood) type.
- I know some vampire puns, but they all suck.
- I'm looking for my necks victim.
- Join my fang club!
- Vampires hate peaches, but they love neck-tarines.



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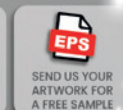
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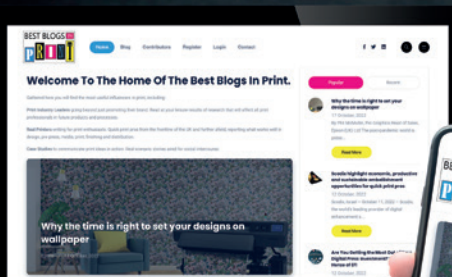
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