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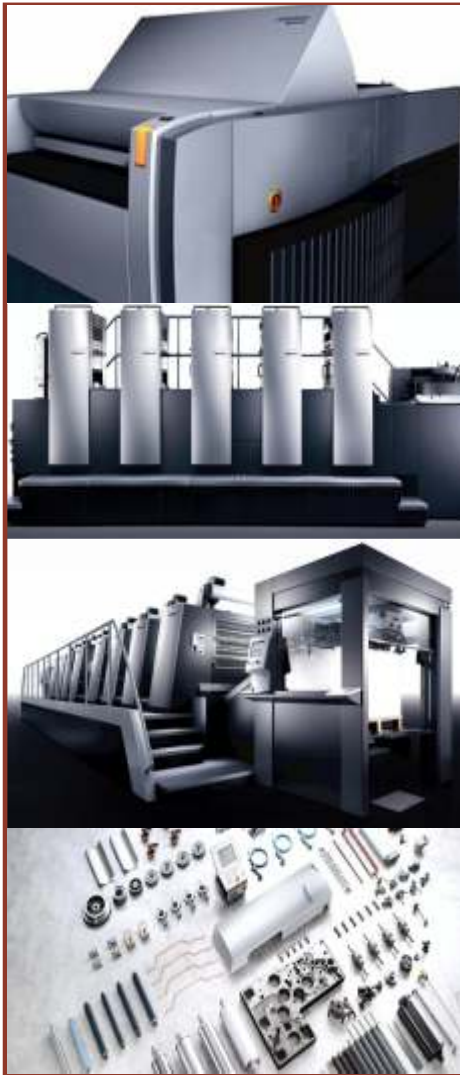


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Cover Story on page - 22



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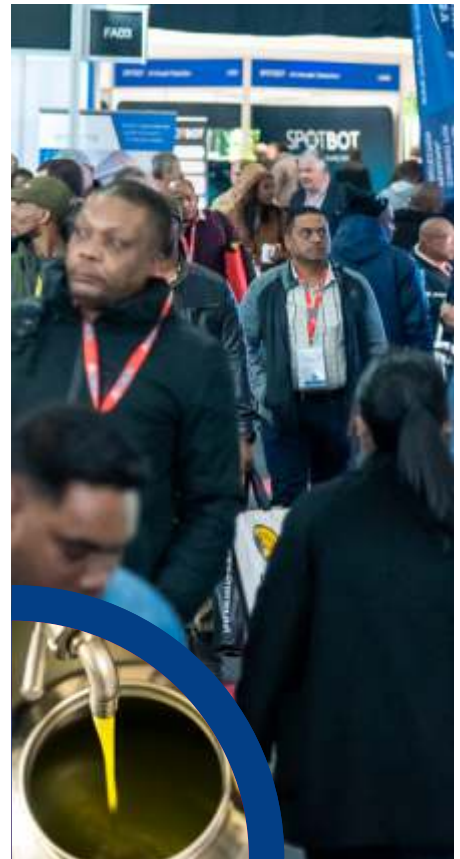
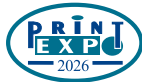
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Index



DON'T STOP BUT KEEP PRESSING, BUILD MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS, AND CREATE LASTING AND INVARIABLE IMPACT
Page 9 >>



RANDOMSOFT OPENS NEW OFFICE
Page 10 >>



TWO AWARDS FOR MONTGOMERY GROUP AFRICA AS THE EXHIBITIONS SECTOR CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE
Page 16 >>



INNOVATION, AUTOMATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN WEST AFRICA
Page 18 >>



PRINT DESIGN 2026: NAVIGATING CONVERGING CONSTRAINTS
Page 26 >>



CARBON BALANCING IN PACKAGING: BEYOND BOOKS AND PUBLISHING
Page 32 >>



THE POWER OF EXPERIENTIAL PRINT: HOW TACTILE AND MULTI-SENSORY ELEMENTS ADD VALUE TO PRINTED PRODUCTS
Page 34 >>



THE PRINTER'S GUIDE TO THE SHORT-RUN LABEL MARKET
Page 38 >>

How to reach us

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- We believe and accept that these principles and code of ethics form the basis of public trust and confidence.
- We pursue our objective through self-regulated systems of professional code of conduct under an independent body that serves the interest of the journalism profession and the society.
- WHERE To Print subscribe to the Ombudsman mechanism established by the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria, supported by other stakeholders, to meditate complaints against the press on ethical conduct and recommend redress.

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To Readers

By Joju Adekanbi | publisher@wheretoprintmagazine.com | 0803 862 9114

**DON'T STOP BUT KEEP PRESSING,
BUILD MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS,
AND CREATE LASTING AND
INVALUABLE IMPACT**

I observe that as we enter 2026, the landscape has been defined by the **PLUTO** framework: Polarized, Liquid, Unilateral, Tense, and Omni-relational. Hence, high-stakes uncertainty is not just a disruption - it is our constant reality. These uncertainties stem from **Geopolitical and Trade Disruption** (rising Governments' protectionism & tariffs that lead to higher operating costs and supply chain reconfigurations, etc.) to **Economic Volatility** (headline inflation, high cost of living that puts pressure on profit margins), and from **Technology and AI Integration** (where companies struggle to transition from experimentation to measurable Return on Investment - ROI - bearing in mind significant operational, security, legal, and reputational risks).

These unpredictabilities also arise from **Operational and Supply Chain Pressures** (as a result of aging infrastructure, persistent shortages in skilled labour, and increasing wage pressures), and **Sustainability and Social Responsibility** issues (arising from environmental, social, and governance - ESG - compliance to adoption of responsible frameworks designed to ensure ethical, sustainable business operations regulations). All these interconnected challenges make uncertainty become the operating

norm rather than an exception.

That is why this **101st edition** has been carefully curated to help readers navigate some of these challenges, as our **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLES** provide expert analysis offering clear, actionable solutions. Before that, check out the latest developments in the print and allied industries that happened within the last two months in Nigeria and around the world, presented in **PRINT IMPACT AROUND NIGERIA** (from page 10) and others - **PRINT IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD** (from page 12).

To begin with, the **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** on pages 16 and 17 titled: **TWO AWARDS FOR MONTGOMERY GROUP AFRICA AS THE EXHIBITIONS SECTOR CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE**, presents the exciting news of **Montgomery Group Africa** being recognised with two **Excellence in Marketing** awards at the **Association of African Exhibition Organisers (AAXO) ROAR Awards**.

Aptly captioned: **INNOVATION,**



AUTOMATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN WEST AFRICA is the next **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** on pages 18 and 19 that examines how a large and youthful consumer base economy like Nigeria is

Continued on page 10 >>

FLEX

Frontlit/Glossy/Matt
Backlit, Mesh, Reflective Flex

SAV

Self Adhesive, Vinyl [Sav]
Clear Sav, Vehicle Branding Sav
Reflective Sav, Window Graphics
Photo Glossy Paper & Backlit Film
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From page 9 >>

driving demand across food and beverage, personal care, pharmaceuticals, and e-commerce, and how **PROPAK West Africa 2026** has been positioned as the region's No. 1 platform for players to scale capacity, improve efficiency, and meet evolving regulatory and sustainability requirements.

And to provide a focused marketplace for manufacturers, technology suppliers, and industry professionals, **AgroPro Africa 2028** was launched as a dedicated trade platform serving Africa's food, beverage, pulp, and paper processing industries. **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** on pages 20 and 21 shows how **INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS WELCOME THE LAUNCH OF AGROPRO AFRICA 2028**.

From **CARBON BALANCING IN PACKAGING: BEYOND**

BOOKS AND PUBLISHING (pages 32 and 33) to **THE POWER OF EXPERIENTIAL PRINT: HOW TACTILE AND MULTI-SENSORY ELEMENTS**

ADD VALUE TO PRINTED PRODUCTS (pages 34 and 36) and from **THE PRINTER'S GUIDE TO THE SHORT-RUN LABEL MARKET** (pages 38 and 39) to **IS THE FUTURE OF PRINT TEMPORARY? REDEFINING INK WITH GROWINK** (pages 40 and 41), all the **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLES** in this lucid edition, as noted earlier, have been carefully curated from leading industry experts' analysis and offer clear, actionable solutions for navigating today's complex print and allied business environments.

Finally, the **COVER STORY**, adapted from the **drupa blog (www.drupa.com)**, exposes a variety of forces that influence design decisions long before colour, typography, or imagery are considered. To fully understand design and print trends in 2026, check these

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forces out on pages 26, 27, 28, and 29 in the piece titled: **PRINT DESIGN 2026: NAVIGATING CONVERGING CONSTRAINTS.**

Before you finish reading this special issue, I believe that your perception will be redirected from merely seeing the uncertainties to being positively impacted to align and engage with the innumerable opportunities in the industry. Until next

edition, please continue to be grateful; don't stop but keep pressing, build meaningful relationships, and create lasting and invaluable impact.

Take care and continue to do good!



Print impact around Nigeria Stories by Precious Ajuonuma & Joju Adekanbi

RANDOMSOFT OPENS NEW OFFICE



Trusted partner in the printing and packaging industry, **Randomsoft LTD** has opened a brand-new, turnkey space with modern technology to drive businesses in

the industry forward. According to the Chief Executive Officer, **Kunle Ogunjobi**, while welcoming well-wishers during the opening ceremony, the new office, located in the capital of Lagos

State, Nigeria's commercial nerve centre, is more than just a new location; "it signals a renewed commitment to operational excellence, innovation, and sustainable growth. As

we step into this new phase, our focus remains clear: delivering high-value solutions, deepening partnerships, and contributing meaningfully to the advancement of the printing and technology ecosystem in Nigeria and across West Africa".

Among several others, Randomsoft LTD represents leading international manufacturers, including: **Dantex (UK)** – Digital & flexo solutions, **Digibook (Italy)** – On-demand book production and book finishing, **Systemfs (Taiwan)** – Document finishing solutions, **Tesa** – Leader in mounting tapes, and **Randomsoft UK LTD**, a member of **VIP Systems (Germany)**.

NIBF HOLDS 13 TO 15, MAY 2026



From **Wednesday 13 to Friday 15, 2026** the silver jubilee edition of **Nigeria International Book Fair (NIBF)** will hold at **Wole Soyinka Centre for Culture and Creative Arts** (formerly National Theatre) in Iganmu - Lagos, Nigeria.

With the theme: **Education for All: Closing the Gap on Nigeria's Out-of-School Children**, this year's NIBF will bring together publishers, authors, booksellers, librarians, printers, and book lovers from

around the world under one roof to proffer practical and action-based solutions on dealing with the issues of out-of-school children.

As the country's premier book exhibition, NIBF is Nigeria's gateway to the global book trade and literary exchange. For more information, visit: www.nibfng.org

Continued on page 11 >>



PUNCH MD JOINS BOARD OF WORLD EDITORS FORUM

Adeyeye Joseph, Editor-in-Chief and Managing Director of **PUNCH Nigeria**, has been appointed to the Board of the **World Editors Forum**, the global network of newsroom leaders within **WAN-IFRA**, the World Association of News Publishers.

In a press statement by the World Editors Forum, the body notes Adeyeye's leadership strides in media, digital, and development organisations that combine commercial sustainability with measurable public-interest impact. "We are delighted to welcome Adeyeye to the board. He brings valuable experience and perspective from a region of the world that is often underrepresented in our discussions," said **David Walmsley**, Editor-in-Chief of The Globe and Mail and President of the World Editors Forum.

"PUNCH has long been a trusted voice in the Nigerian media landscape, and we are thrilled to welcome Adeyeye Joseph to the World Editors Forum board. His insights and expertise will be invaluable in helping the World Editors Forum better serve the needs of editors and publishers around the world," said **Stig Kirk Ørskov**, CEO of WAN-IFRA.

Joseph leads Punch Newspapers, Nigeria's leading print and digital media group. Earlier in his career, he served as Editor of The PUNCH and Saturday PUNCH, overseeing award-winning investigative journalism and shaping widely read editorial sections, earning him a two-time Nigeria Editor of the Year. Alongside his work, he is a member of the Chartered Institute of Directors (MIoD), the Nigerian Guild of Editors, and leads PUNCH Media Foundation, which designs and manages journalism and development programmes addressing major public-interest challenges. Through partnerships with international institutions, foundations, and NGOs, the foundation has mobilised more than \$5 million in funding to support journalism, public health communication, and civic accountability initiatives. He holds a BSc in Accounting from Obafemi Awolowo University and an MSc in Digital Journalism from Middlesex University, and has completed executive programmes at Cranfield School of Management and Lagos Business School. He is currently completing a PhD in Media on the impact of digital disruption on public-interest journalism.

WAN-IFRA is the World Association of News Publishers whose mission is to protect the rights of journalists and publishers around the world to operate independent media by providing members with expertise and services to innovate and prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in society. With formal representative status at the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe, it derives its authority from its global network of leading news publishing companies and technology entrepreneurs, and its legitimacy from its 80 national association members representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries. For more information, visit: www.wan-ifra.org



AYOYO PRINTS MD BECOMES KAMPA CHAIRMAN



Timothy Ayo Ojo, the Managing Director/ Chief Executive of **Ayojo Prints Production Nigeria Company** (Ayojo Prints for short), has been inaugurated as the Chairman of **Kaduna Master Printers Association (KAMPA)** in Kaduna, North-West Nigeria.

Equally awarded the KAMPA Peace Ambassador for his excellent display of peaceful tolerance during the KAMPA elections, the elated print entrepreneur has promised to strengthen the association's partnerships to reposition it for sustainable growth. While assuring members that his administration would prioritise improved service delivery and address insecurity challenges affecting business activities within the state, in conjunction with relevant authorities, he also promised to deepen mutually beneficial engagements with relevant stakeholders to support the entire printing ecosystem within the State and beyond. **WHERE To Print** brings you images from the investiture ceremony:



Print Impact

Around the World

BOBST LAUNCHES PACKAGING FORWARD TO ENGAGE THE NEXT GENERATION OF PACKAGING PROFESSIONALS ■ BOBST

Bobst North America will host **Packaging Forward**, a new industry summit designed to bring together emerging professionals across the folding carton and corrugated packaging sectors. The event will take place on **May 19** at the **Bobst Atlanta Competence Center**.



Packaging Forward is focused on the future of the packaging industry — bringing together early-career professionals, industry experts, and technology leaders to explore how innovation, collaboration, and new ideas are shaping the next generation of packaging production. It will provide participants with direct exposure to the technologies, workflows, and leadership perspectives driving the industry forward. Through a combination of presentations, discussions, and hands-on demonstrations, attendees will gain insight into how packaging companies are evolving to meet new expectations around efficiency, sustainability, and digitalization.

The programme will feature industry leaders from across the packaging ecosystem, including converters, associations, technology partners, and academic institutions. Sessions will address key industry topics, including automation, workforce development, sustainability in packaging design, and the role of emerging leaders in shaping the future of the industry.

The event will take place inside the BOBST Atlanta Competence Center, allowing attendees to experience live demonstrations of packaging production technologies and gain a deeper understanding of modern converting workflows.

“Packaging Forward is about creating space for the next generation of industry professionals to connect, learn, and see where packaging technology is headed,” said **Katie Graham**, Regional Marketing & Communications Manager at BOBST North America. “The packaging industry is evolving quickly, and investing in the people who will lead the next chapter is critical.”

Last but not least, there will be plenty of opportunities to network with peers and industry leaders, as well as discussions designed to encourage cross-company collaboration and new perspectives on the future of packaging manufacturing.

Packaging Forward reflects BOBST’s broader commitment to industry education, workforce development, and building stronger connections across the packaging community. Industry professionals interested in attending can learn more and register at: <https://go.bobst.com/packagingforward2026>

PRINTING UNITED ALLIANCE ELEVATES LEADERSHIP TO POWER NEXT PHASE OF GROWTH AND INNOVATION



PRINTING United Alliance, the most comprehensive member-based printing and graphic arts association in North America, has announced key leadership updates within the organization as part of its continued evolution to support long-term growth and service to the global printing industry. The new leadership appointments are:

Chris Lyons - to step into the role of **Group President**, where he will oversee sales across Alliance media brands and events.

Denise M. Gustavson - appointed as **Vice President of Editorial and Content Strategy** in recognition of her ongoing and expanding role in editorial content and strategy across Alliance media outlets and brands.

Josh Carruth - to take on expanded leadership responsibilities, including oversight of **PRINTING United Expo** operations as **EVP Expositions**, in addition to membership.

“These leadership advancements reflect the strength of our team and our commitment to promoting from within,” said **Ford Bowers**, CEO, PRINTING United Alliance. “We are confident in the experience, vision, and continuity Chris, Josh, and Denise bring, in addition to our more than 100 other professionals on staff, as we continue to serve our members and the industry at the highest level.”

Chris Lyons – Group President

Lyons has been an innovative and dedicated industry executive, having run many of the industry’s top media and event brands and having launched numerous others, while having served in key executive roles at Scholastic Children’s Books and Kodak.



“I’m honored to step into this role and continue working closely with our partners to

deliver even more meaningful value across our complete portfolio,” said Chris Lyons, Group President. “There is tremendous momentum across the Alliance, and I’m excited to help build on our past success while delivering on many of the new and exciting initiatives we are bringing to market.”

Denise M. Gustavson – Vice President of Editorial & Content Strategy

A recognized voice in the printing industry, Gustavson began her career in 1998 and brings more than 28 years of experience. She also serves as a professional advisor for the Women in Print Alliance and is a frequent speaker on industry trends, technology, and business growth.



“The Alliance has more touchpoints with this

industry than most organizations — media, education, events, research,” said Denise M. Gustavson, Vice President of Editorial and Content Strategy. “The industry trusts us across all of those channels, and my job is to make sure we’re earning that trust on the content side — being precise about what we cover, who we serve, and why it matters.”

Josh Carruth – EVP, Expositions

Carruth brings more than two decades of experience in event strategy, media, and community development. Since joining the Alliance in 2021, he has played a key role in expanding engagement and strengthening the industry community and now leads Expo strategy and cross-functional teams for PRINTING United Expo.



“PRINTING United Expo is the defining platform for the industry, and I’m proud to step into this expanded role at a time when the momentum behind this event continues to build, driven by years of execution, vision, and meaningful results,” said Josh Carruth, EVP, Expositions. “This show is a direct reflection of the industry, and that industry is evolving, resilient, and strong. With an exceptional team behind it, we’re focused on delivering real value to attendees and building a stronger industry community, strengthening the entire ecosystem, and creating even greater opportunity for our exhibitors and partners.”

PRINTING United Expo 2026 takes place **September 23 to 25** in **Las Vegas** and is slated to be the premier event in North America this fall with even

Continued on page 14 >>

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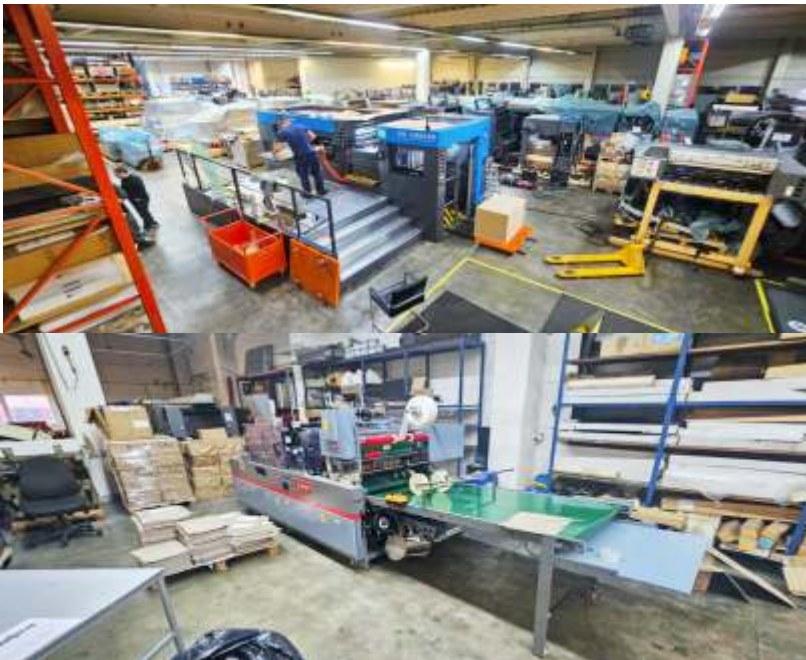
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 Model: 304 P HOB
 Manufacturer: Roland
 Year of manufacture: 2000
 Serial No.: 28764 B
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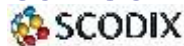
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SCODIX LAUNCHES WORLD'S FIRST DIGITAL EMBELLISHMENT SOLUTION FOR CORRUGATED AND RIGID SUBSTRATES



Scodix, the global leader in digital print embellishment, has announced the launch of the **Scodix Ultra 7000 SHD**. This first-of-its-kind digital embellishment press is engineered specifically for rigid and corrugated substrates, marking the first time the market can apply high-definition tactile finishes directly to heavy-duty media.

The launch of the Scodix Ultra 7000 SHD marks a strategic expansion into the Signage & Display and Corrugated Packaging sectors for Scodix. This new capability allows printers and converters to apply premium tactile effects to a diverse range of substrates, including Dibond, acrylic, Forex, foam board, corrugated board, and more. The U7000 SHD is also compatible with all current Scodix-supported substrates, including coated and uncoated sheets of diverse media weights. This flexibility allows printers and converters to expand their service offerings, access new markets, and increase profit margins through high-value digital print embellishment.

As brands increasingly demand "premiumization" to stand out in crowded retail environments, the need for tactile, high-impact finishes has never been greater. Until now, embellishing rigid materials was almost impossible and extremely labour-intensive. The Scodix Ultra 7000 SHD eliminates those barriers, offering:

- High-Value Applications: Opens new revenue streams in POS/POP displays, luxury corrugated packaging, and high-end corporate graphics.
- Sustainable Production Efficiency: Removes screen printing and metal dies from the embellishment process, minimizing setup waste while enabling agile short-run production.

Alongside the Scodix Ultra 7000 SHD, Scodix also releases a new software embellishment visualization tool that allows users to generate hyper-realistic previews of how their complex embellishments will look and feel on a finished piece. It's a powerful sales engine for Scodix customers, replacing abstract concepts with immersive digital prototypes that make the value of premium textures and foils instantly undeniable to their clients.

"The Scodix Ultra 7000 SHD represents a definitive milestone in our mission to digitize embellishment for every segment of the print industry," says **Eli Grinberg**, Scodix CEO and co-founder. "We are creating a new category by bringing our SHD embellishment technology to rigid substrates, and we are empowering printers to enter high-margin markets that were previously unreachable, proving once again that Scodix leads where others follow."

Moti Vaknin, VP Sales for EMEA and Global Channels, adds: "The feedback from our initial pipeline has been extraordinary. Large-format producers and corrugated converters have been searching for a way to differentiate in a sea of flat colour printing. The Ultra 7000 SHD provides the 'wow factor' that brands crave, integrated into a digital workflow that meets the speed and agility requirements of the modern market."

'Corrugated' @ FESPA launch demonstrations

Scodix will officially unveil the Ultra 7000 SHD at 'Corrugated' at its Booth 3-A151 during **FESPA Global Print Expo**, from **May 19 – 22** at the Fira de Barcelona in Spain. Attendees are invited to experience live demonstrations of the press, showcasing high-definition finishes on a variety of rigid materials.

SAKURAI INTRODUCES DIRECT DRIVE MS-120DDS



© The MS-120DDS delivers high precision, high efficiency, and easy operation.

Global manufacturer of screen and offset printing presses, **Sakurai** has launched a new Direct Drive Servo Series (DDS Series) cylinder screen press, the 49-inch **MS-120DDS**.

While the new MS-120DDS eliminates gears and sprockets for drive control, with each part driven by a servomotor, its fully automated DDS is ideal for extremely accurate screen printing applications such as large-size packaging, graphic overlays, membrane switches, and integrated circuit panels. Hence, the labour-saving MS-120DDS delivers consistently high quality, regardless of the experience of the operator.

New features of MS-120DDS include a large LCD touchscreen panel to control clearance gaps, squeegee pressure, and a stroke length presetting mechanism for sheet size and plate positioning, plus a remote access function to simplify operation and maintenance. There is also Sakurai's exclusive CCD optical camera registration system, which checks register marks for sheet alignment while a second camera presets screen positions. The MS-120DDS accepts sheets up to 31" x 49 1/4". Sakurai's Direct Drive Series also includes the high precision MS-80DDS, which accepts sheets up to 21 3/4 x 31 5/8" and operates at a higher running speed of 3,000 IPH.

FLINT GROUP REBRANDS AND COMMITS TO THE PACKAGING INDUSTRY



Flint Group, a global leader in inks, coatings, digital printing equipment, and service solutions for packaging, has announced its rebrand to **Flint Group Packaging Solutions**. This rebrand reflects an important step in the company's strategic evolution, reinforcing its commitment to the growing and diverse packaging sector.

Pepyn Dinandt, CEO of Flint Group Packaging Solutions, said: "We are seeing a market evolution across substrates, packaging formats, and coatings to enhance recyclability while replacing complex structures. As a true platform supplier, we are committed to leading with innovation, sustainability, and service, delivering solutions that meet the needs of packaging printers and brand owners today and in the future."

"We have evolved into a solutions-driven organisation committed to packaging, shaped by the expertise and dedication of our global teams. We have the scale, portfolio, and technical expertise to navigate the dynamic landscape of packaging and grow alongside our customers. Our future lies in the attractive packaging market with its high exposure to resilient, growing consumer sectors. Flint Group Packaging Solutions is well-positioned to lead the way."

Supported by a robust service and solutions value proposition, the global

Continued on page 15 >>

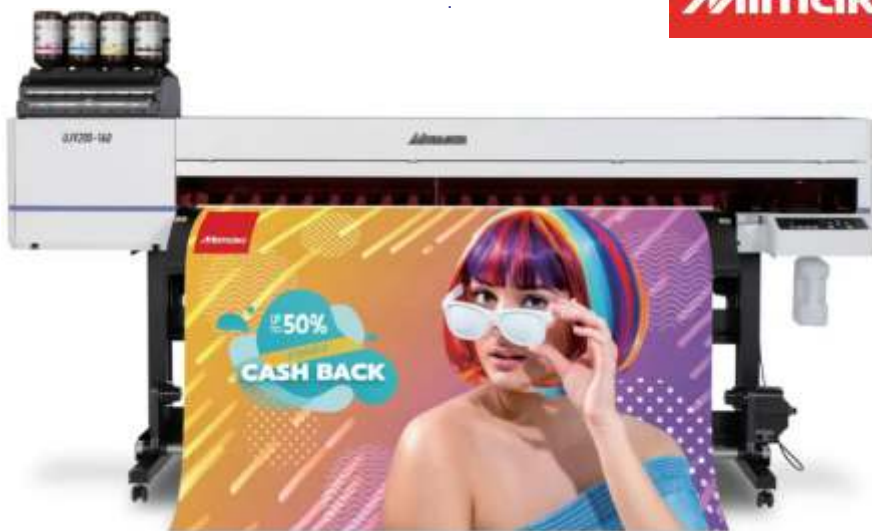
Print Impact Around the World

business operates through five business segments – Flexible Packaging, Paper & Board, Narrow Web, Sheetfed Offset, and Flint Group Digital Xeikon. These businesses deliver sustainable inks and coatings, tailored solutions, innovative digital print consumables, and digital engines that meet the evolving market demands for sustainable, regulatory-compliant, efficient packaging production. Flint Group's DAY® Transfer Media business remains a dependable supplier of high-performance print consumables, and its Varn® Chemicals business remains a trusted partner for Sheetfed and Flexo printers worldwide. Flint Group Web Offset continues to support customers with proven Heatset and News Inks solutions, underpinned by dedicated service and technical support.

The rebrand includes a new logo and a modernised visual identity honouring the company's heritage while

reflecting its priority to focus firmly on the packaging sector and to grow organically or through strategic acquisitions. Its new brand signifies agility, speed, and focus on packaging solutions. Dinandt concluded: "Although our story began in publication printing, our strategic journey reflects a future firmly committed to integrated solutions for a full range of packaging applications. The Flint Group Packaging Solutions transformation stands as a testament to our agility, our people, our investment power, and our shared ambition to drive a more sustainable and innovative future for packaging. As the industry evolves, we are ready to evolve with it. Importantly, we remain committed to partnering with our customers to deliver inks, a growing coatings portfolio, services, and equipment solutions that they can rely on. Our company purpose remains strong – We Bring Colour to the World."

MIMAKI BRINGS VERSATILE, HIGH-QUALITY UV PRINTING TO FESPA 2026 WITH NEW UJV200 SERIES



Leading manufacturer of industrial inkjet printers and cutting plotters, **Mimaki Europe**, has announced the launch of the **UJV200** (UJV200-160 and UJV200-130), a new UV roll-to-roll printer that will be showcased in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) regions for the first time at **FESPA Global Print Expo 2026** in Barcelona (Hall 3, Stand D95).

Designed to enable faster turnaround times and support for high-quality, accessible UV printing, targeting applications like signage and graphics, the New UJV200 UV printer combines high image quality, ease of use, and media versatility in an accessible solution.

"With the UJV200, we are bringing together three key elements our customers are looking for today: consistent high image quality, ease of use, and the flexibility of UV printing", comments **Arjen Evertse**, Director Sales, Mimaki Europe. "This combination allows print service providers to expand into new applications, work across a wider range of media and respond faster and confidently to customer demands, without adding complexity to their operations."

Efficient Printing for Bold Applications

Powered by a market-proven print engine derived from Mimaki's flagship 330 Series, the UJV200 Series delivers smooth gradients, sharp text, and uniform solid colours with minimal graininess. This ensures consistent, high-quality results across applications where precision and visual clarity are essential, such as retail graphics, wayfinding signage, and technical displays. For optimal ease of use, the printer features an enhanced Dot Adjustment System (DAS2), enabling automatic image

quality adjustment with significantly reduced setup time and media consumption. The system operates effectively across transparent and coloured media, ensuring consistent output quality, regardless of operator experience, and helping to streamline production processes.

Leveraging UV technology, the UJV200 utilises instant ink curing, allowing prints to be handled, finished, and installed immediately after production. This supports faster turnaround times, helping print service providers to respond quickly to time-sensitive jobs. In addition, the low-temperature curing process allows printing on a wide variety of substrates, including heat-sensitive materials, further expanding application possibilities. The UV curing process also leads to more energy-efficient production by eliminating the need for pre- and post-heating required by heat-based technologies, while Mimaki's ELS-170 UV inks are formulated without SVHC and CMR substances.

The inclusion of white and clear inks supports up to three-layer printing, ideal for applications that deliver visual impact within a functional design. From window graphics and backlit displays to labels and decorative elements, the UJV200 allows users to explore new creative opportunities and deliver higher-value output. Arjen Evertse added: "Our focus is not only on performance, but on enabling our customers to grow. The UJV200 has been designed to support both established print businesses and those looking to expand into UV, offering a reliable and flexible solution that adapts to different production environments."



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TWO AWARDS FOR MONTGOMERY GROUP AFRICA AS THE EXHIBITIONS SECTOR CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE



Jubilant Montgomery Group Africa Team at AAXO/ ROAR Awards in Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa. Images Courtesy: Montgomery Group Africa

Montgomery Group Africa has been recognised with two **Excellence in Marketing** awards at the **Association of African Exhibition Organisers (AAXO) ROAR Awards**, held on **26 March 2026** at the **Sandton Convention Centre**, where organisers and industry peers gathered to celebrate achievements across the exhibitions sector. **WHERE To Print magazine** reports:

Now in its seventh edition, the event was hosted under the theme **The Ubuntu Legacy: Building Community, Celebrating Excellence**, reflecting a shared focus on collaboration, impact, and industry advancement.

Montgomery Group Africa received recognition for two of its exhibitions. **PROPAK Africa** won the award for **Exceptional Marketing Excellence** in the category **Best Trade Exhibition over 6000m²**, and **PROPAK West Africa** received the **Excellence in Marketing** award in the category **Best Trade Exhibition under 6000m²**. The awards recognise marketing campaigns that demonstrate outstanding strategic thinking, creativity, and measurable impact.



Continued on page 17 >>



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"We are truly grateful to AAXO for this recognition," says **Mark Anderson**, Portfolio Director at **Montgomery Group Africa** and the lead for both of these exhibitions. "It was an inspiring evening and a valuable opportunity to celebrate alongside industry peers and acknowledge the exceptional work being delivered across the sector."

The Excellence in Marketing awards highlight the performance of Montgomery Group Africa's marketing team, whose campaigns focused on integrated, multi-channel strategies designed to strengthen audience engagement and deliver measurable results. By incorporating new tools and platforms, the campaigns supported visitor growth, increased media engagement, and enhanced overall event experiences.

According to Anderson, the approach reflects an ongoing focus on evolving exhibition marketing. "Our marketing team continues to refine how we connect with audiences, combining data-driven insights with creative execution to deliver campaigns that are both effective and relevant in a changing landscape."

Looking ahead, Montgomery Group Africa anticipates a strong year of exhibitions and industry engagement. One of its top industry dedicated shows, **Hostex**, which recently marked its **40th anniversary edition**, recorded a **16.5% increase in visitors**

compared to **2024**, alongside **exhibitor growth of over 60%**, signalling renewed momentum across the sector.

The company is also preparing to launch **RE+ South Africa** in **June**, alongside co-located events **Securex**, **A-OSH Expo**, **Facilities Management**, and **Fireexpo**, further expanding its portfolio of industry platforms.

Later in the year, **Electra Mining Africa** will return in September at the **Expo Centre** in Johannesburg, while **PROPAK Cape** will take place in **Cape Town** in **October**, bringing together stakeholders across the packaging, plastics, printing, labelling, and food processing industries. In addition, **AgroPro Africa 2028** (read more about this newly launched event on pages 20 and 21) will provide a dedicated platform for Africa's food, beverage, and pulp and paper processing sectors.

"As a business, we are looking forward to building on this momentum," adds **Gary Corin**, Montgomery Group Africa's Managing Director. "These awards are an important acknowledgement of the work being done by our teams, and they reinforce our commitment to delivering exhibitions that create value for our industries."

For more information, visit www.montgomerygroup.com/africa



INNOVATION, AUTOMATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN WEST AFRICA



An aerial view of a section of Hall 1 during last year's PROPAK West Africa.

Nigeria remains one of Africa's most dynamic economic hubs, with a large and youthful consumer base driving demand across food and beverage, personal care, pharmaceuticals, and e-commerce. In this **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** extracted from the official press release by **Montgomery Group Africa, WHERE To Print magazine** examines how this demand is placing increasing pressure on packaging, processing, and printing industries, and how **PROPAK West Africa 2026** has been positioned as the region's No. 1 platform for players to scale capacity, improve efficiency, and meet evolving regulatory and sustainability requirements.

Despite growing local capacity, Nigeria continues to rely heavily on imported packaging and processing technology. This reliance reflects both the strength of domestic demand and the significant opportunities that exist for localisation, technology transfer, and regional manufacturing development.

At the same time, industrial businesses are operating in an environment shaped by supply chain disruption, currency volatility, and evolving regulatory requirements. Capital equipment investments must now deliver not only output, but efficiency, resilience, and measurable return.

In sectors such as packaging, plastics, labelling, print, and food processing – where machinery purchases represent long-term strategic commitments - the ability to assess equipment performance firsthand and engage directly with technical

specialists plays an important role in purchasing decisions.

Against this backdrop, **PROPAK West Africa** returns to the **Landmark Centre** in Lagos, Nigeria, from **8 to 10 September**, uniting stakeholders from packaging, plastics, print, labelling, and food processing in a single, cross-sector environment. It provides an opportunity to compare machinery, materials, services, and integrated systems in one place.

“Capital equipment and industrial technology purchases typically involve multiple decision-makers – from plant managers and engineers to procurement and finance teams,” says **Mark Anderson**, Portfolio Director at **Montgomery Group Africa**, organisers of the show. “PROPAK West Africa creates a neutral space where stakeholders can evaluate solutions, ask technical questions, and understand their long-term value.”

Continued on page 18 >>



PROPAK West Africa enables direct engagement between technology suppliers and regional manufacturers in a cross-sector environment.



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5. Participation in Business, Setup, Design etc competition with funding.
6. Evening Dinner with Investor/Mentor.
8. Booth Camp/ Boat Cruise exclusivity .

MENTORS' / INVESTORS' BENEFITS

1. Pool of talents to choose from/employ.
2. Great companies to invest in.
3. Free - Reseach/ feasibility studies/ statistics of industry to aid print business purchase decisions.



Across the exhibition floor, more than **250 exhibitors** will present developments spanning smart packaging technologies, automation systems, advanced plastics manufacturing, digital and flexographic print innovations, and intelligent labelling solutions. Increasingly, the focus is on combining performance with sustainability – from recyclable and recycled-content materials to packaging designs that reduce material usage without compromising strength or functionality. Energy-efficient machinery, integrated production systems, and traceability technologies aimed at reducing waste and improving compliance will also feature prominently across food, beverage, pharmaceutical, and personal care applications.

The show's co-located conference programme further strengthens the exhibition's relevance. With more than **50 industry experts** contributing insights, sessions will explore regulatory developments, sustainable materials, smart manufacturing trends, automation adoption, and regional trade

integration. This strategic context provides decision-makers with a broader perspective beyond product specifications alone.

As West Africa continues its push toward industrialisation and value addition, collaboration across packaging, plastics, processing, and print will remain essential. Platforms that combine a technology showcase with knowledge exchange can play a practical role in accelerating capability development and supporting long-term competitiveness.

Mark your calendar now as **PROPAK West Africa** takes place at the **Landmark Centre** in Lagos, Nigeria, from **8 to 10 September 2026**.

For further information, visit www.propakwestafrica.com or contact the Marketing Department, Montgomery Group Africa, Tel: **+27 (0) 11 835 1565** or email: SEMarketing@montgomerygroup.com

PROPAK
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INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS WELCOME THE LAUNCH OF AGROPRO AFRICA 2028



Excited Montgomery Group Africa Team at the AgroPro launch in Johannesburg, South Africa. Images Courtesy: Montgomery Group Africa

AgroPro Africa 2028 has been officially launched as a dedicated trade platform serving Africa's food, beverage, pulp, and paper processing industries. In this **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** extracted from the **Montgomery Group Africa** official press release, **WHERE To Print magazine** reports how the exhibition will provide a focused marketplace for manufacturers, technology suppliers, and industry professionals in the sectors, thereby meeting the growing demand for advanced processing technologies, sustainable production solutions, and stronger regional supply chains:

Co-located with **PROPAK Africa** - one of Africa's long-established packaging, plastics, printing, and labelling shows, **AgroPro Africa** aims to advance industrial capacity, facilitate business growth, and support innovation across the continent's processing value chain.

Food and beverage processing and pulp and paper processing are two of the most influential sectors driving Africa's industrial development. The food and beverage industry - one of the continent's largest and most rapidly expanding manufacturing sectors - plays a vital role in supporting food security, rural livelihoods, and economic resilience. For instance, in South Africa as well as other African countries, it's a well-established value chain that transforms raw agricultural outputs into high-quality products for both domestic consumption and export, creating jobs and stimulating investment across farming, manufacturing, logistics, and retail.

Pulp and paper processing holds equally strategic importance, supplying essential packaging, tissue, hygiene, and fibre-based products that support daily life and broader industrial activity. As Africa moves toward more sustainable, circular economies, the sector is increasingly providing renewable alternatives to plastics while driving innovation in recycling and fibre-based solutions. South Africa's mature pulp and paper industry contributes significantly to

employment and export revenue, while supporting key downstream sectors including agro-processing, printing, and consumer goods.

Together, these industries form a cornerstone of Africa's manufacturing landscape. They boost competitiveness, encourage technology adoption, and strengthen supply chains, positioning the continent for greater industrialisation and sustainable economic growth.

"AgroPro Africa brings together the full value chain encompassing raw materials, primary processing, secondary processing, packaging and labelling, logistics and distribution, waste management and sustainability, as well as research and development, technology and innovation, and consulting and industry services," says **Joshua Low**, Commercial Director Africa at **Montgomery Group Africa**, organisers of the show.

"The expo offers a powerful growth platform for suppliers, manufacturers, processors, and service providers across the agro-processing value chain. Exhibitors can connect with key players in one of South Africa's largest and fastest-growing industries, while visitors gain exclusive access to cutting-edge agro-processing technologies from leading international and local suppliers.



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The expo offers a powerful growth platform for suppliers, manufacturers, processors, and service providers across the agro-processing value chain.

"Whether seeking new technologies, investment opportunities, supply contracts, or insights into the latest market trends, food producers, supermarkets, hospitality buyers, packaging professionals, paper converters, and sustainability-driven industries will find it all at AgroPro Africa 2028. Attendees will also benefit from unmatched networking opportunities across the sector, while attending seminar workshops, witnessing live product demonstrations and launches, and engaging with industry leaders."

Co-located with **PROPAK Africa**, Africa's largest packaging, plastics, printing, and labelling show with over 40 years of success, **AgroPro Africa** will take place from **7 to 10 March 2028** at the **Expo Centre** in Nasrec, Johannesburg, South Africa.

For more information, visit www.propakafrika.co.za
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 **AGROPRO**
AFRICA 2028

 **PROPAK**
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PACKAGING - PROCESSING - PRINTING - PLASTICS

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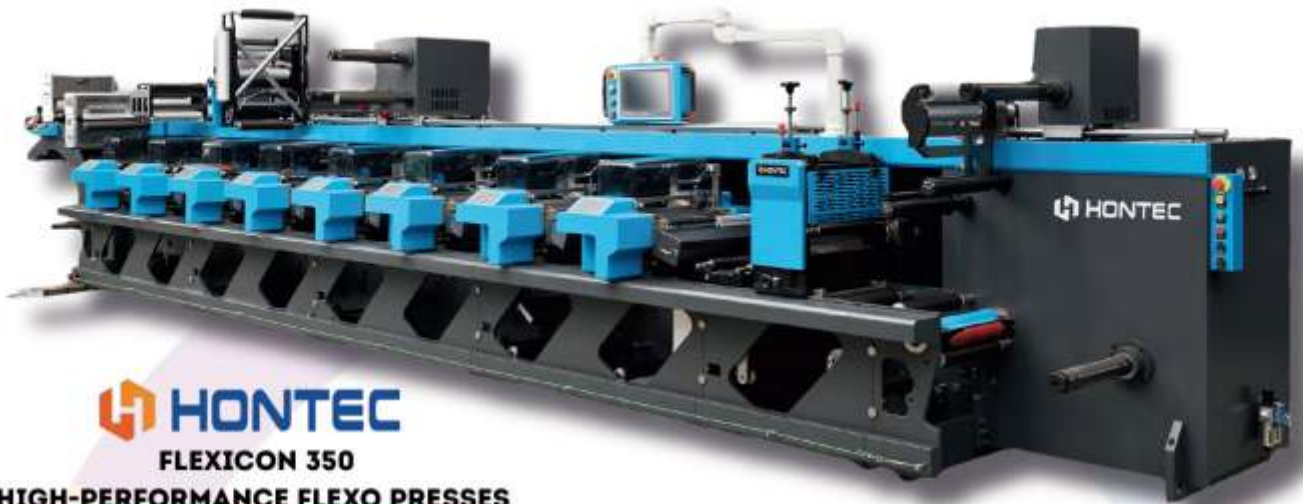
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Around the World

DOMINO LAUNCHES Cx-SERIES FOR HIGH-RESOLUTION INKJET PRINTING WITH OIL-BASED INK FOR ACCESSIBLE, SUSTAINABLE CODING




Cx150i

-Compact, high-resolution printer for large area coding on porous and non-porous surfaces

To unlock the power of high-resolution inkjet printing on special materials, a global expert in advanced variable data printing solutions, **Domino Printing Sciences (Domino)**, has launched the **Cx-Series** range: **Domino Cx150i** and **Domino Cx350i**.



Cx350i

-Large Character Inkjet Printer for Printing on Boxes and Construction Materials

As a compact, high-resolution direct-to-box piezo inkjet printer designed to provide manufacturers with a sustainable alternative to traditional box-coding solutions, the **Cx150i** is aimed at secondary packaging in food, beverage, and general manufacturing businesses, where operational simplicity, footprint, and budget are key considerations. The printer delivers premium print quality and robust industrial performance at an accessible price point.



Using non-toxic, non-hazardous vegetable-oil-based ink, the Cx150i helps manufacturers cut waste, enhance recyclability, and reduce environmental impact. In addition, its direct-to-box printing capability eliminates adhesive labels, backing liners, and excess consumables, offering a cleaner, more sustainable approach to secondary packaging.

The **Cx350i** is a high-resolution inkjet printer for printing large character/large format code content, designed with a strong focus on print quality. Utilising the latest generation of Piezo Ink Jet (PIJ) technology, it can produce high contrast GS1-compliant 1D and 2D barcodes, graphics and logos, text using true-type fonts (including real-time data), and machine-readable codes – in any size and combination.

PIJ is a drop-on-demand (DOD) technology, meaning that no ink or other materials are consumed by the printer when it's not printing. Coupled with a unique combination of settings relating to ink usage, it is designed to support your business goals relating to running costs, productivity, and environmental responsibility (sustainability). Printing with the Domino Cx-Series can help you tackle some of your environmental challenges through:

- Non-toxic, non-hazardous vegetable oil-based inks
- UV-curable inks, with low organic compound (VOC) content
- Flexible ink usage settings
- No label waste
- No factory air is needed



DRUPA LAUNCHES 'DRUPA INSIGHTS' DIGITAL PLATFORM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PRINTING UNITED ALLIANCE



Just weeks after the opening of exhibitor registration, the world's leading trade fair for Printing Solutions, **drupa**, is expanding its information offering with continuous market and future analyses for the international print and packaging industry with the launch of a new digital knowledge platform, 'drupa insights'.

As the global print and packaging industry navigates a critical period of rapid transformation, the necessity for sustainable, highly efficient, and

Continued on page 30 >>



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Landmark Centre
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11%

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PRINT DESIGN 2026: NAVIGATING CONVERGING CONSTRAINTS



Discussing print design trends in 2026 solely in terms of visual style overlooks the bigger picture. Contemporary print is not defined by a single aesthetic movement, but by a variety of forces that influence design decisions long before colour, typography, or imagery are considered. In this **COVER STORY**, adapted from the **drupa blog** (www.drupa.com), discover how these forces interact to fully understand design and print trends in 2026:

Designers have always worked within constraints, such as budgets, deadlines, production capabilities, and client requirements, which have shaped creative work for decades. The difference in 2026 is not the existence of constraints, but their unprecedented convergence, codification, and enforcement.

Sustainability is no longer just an aspiration; it is a legal requirement. Accessibility isn't optional; it is expected. Automation defines what is economically viable. These forces don't arrive individually; they compound and interact, creating a design environment in which multiple constraint systems must be resolved simultaneously before aesthetics can be considered.

Print design has therefore shifted from working around occasional limitations to operating within permanent, interconnected frameworks. To understand trends for 2026, it is necessary to understand how these constraint systems overlap, conflict, and ultimately shape what is possible.

THREE LAYERS SHAPING PRINT DESIGN IN 2026

These layers do not operate sequentially; they are porous and continuously interdependent. Foundational constraints set boundaries, systematic approaches provide scalable structure, and expressive choices create emotional impact. However, all three areas influence each other: expression must respect foundations, systems enable certain types of expression while limiting others, and foundational choices often stem from systematic or expressive objectives.

LAYER 1: Foundations, the non-negotiables: Materials, sustainability, accessibility, data, and compliance. These set the boundaries within which all design happens.

LAYER 2: Systems, how design scales and repeats: Typography-led identities, modular layouts, automation-ready structures, variant management. This layer determines whether the design works once or works reliably across hundreds of executions.

LAYER 3: Expression, how it feels, and differentiates: Tactility, craft signals, colour, imagery, and interaction. These elements



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Continued on page 27 >>



PRINT DESIGN 2026: NAVIGATING CONVERGING CONSTRAINTS

create emotion and brand distinction—within, and sometimes pushing against, the constraints and structures defined by Layers 1 and 2.

Some trends span multiple layers. This overlap is natural and demonstrates how the layers interact in practice.

The key insight is that trends in 2026 are not competing aesthetic movements. They are tools that operate at different depths of the design stack, and the most successful print designs strategically deploy tools from all three layers in coordination.

With this framework in mind, here are twelve trends that will shape print design in 2026, organised by the layer on which they have the strongest impact.

12 TRENDS FROM LAYERS 1, 2, 3 THAT WILL SHAPE DESIGNS IN 2026:

1. SUSTAINABLE-BY-DEFAULT DESIGN (materials & construction drive the look)



In 2026, sustainability isn't just about achieving a 'green look'; it's a set of constraints that shape the design process from the outset. The stock, coatings, adhesives, inks, and number of components will increasingly determine what can be achieved visually. The result is often a more 'material-honest' appearance: fewer complex composites, more natural finishes, and design choices that avoid creating recycling problems. This sits in **Layer 1**, because it defines the playing field for everything else. Your layout, finishing, and colour decisions must work within these materials and end-of-life requirements.

2. ACCESSIBILITY-FIRST PRINT (legibility + usability become premium signals)

Accessibility is no longer just a bonus; it's expected. Can people quickly read, understand, and use this printed piece under real conditions, such as poor lighting, hurried shopping, ageing eyes, and language barriers? This requires a clearer hierarchy, stronger contrast, and typography



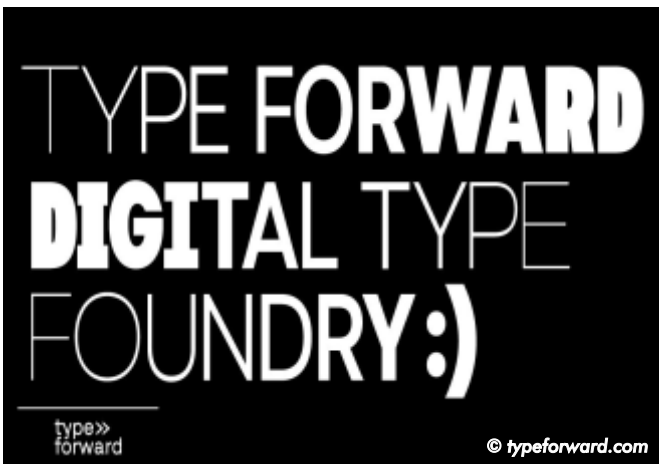
that prioritises comprehension over decorative subtlety. It often also includes tactile cues and a more intuitive grouping of information. This belongs in **Layer 1**, because it establishes the minimum standard – if the hierarchy fails, the design fails, regardless of how attractive the visuals are. In practice, accessibility improves the quality of print design as a whole.

3. SMART PACKAGING + DIGITAL PRODUCT PASSPORT READINESS (print becomes a data gateway)



Print is evolving from a closed surface to a gateway to product information. QR codes, NFC, and linked content are increasingly supporting transparency with regard to origin, ingredients, repair, compliance, authenticity, and updates. The 'need to carry data reliably' is a **Layer 1** requirement because it affects what must appear on the product packaging and how it must function. However, ensuring consistency across formats, including placement rules, scan UX, routing logic, and version control, turns it into a **Layer 2** requirement. This system must be able to scale across Stock Keeping Units (SKUs), markets, and campaign variants without compromising the brand or usability.

4. TYPE-FORWARD DESIGN (typography becomes the identity engine)



Typography is no longer just part of the supporting cast; it has become the primary visual tool for brands. This can involve using oversized type, creating a bold hierarchy, and using expressive letterforms. This approach is particularly effective in packaging and brand collateral, as it reduces reliance on imagery. The reason it's **Layer 2** is scalability: type systems can adapt across SKUs, languages, editions, and formats while remaining recognisable. The accessibility expectations of **Layer 1** often reinforce this shift, because legible, type-forward hierarchy performs better in real-world conditions. By 2026, strong typography will not only be a design feature, but also an operating system for print identity.

Continued on page 28 >>



PRINT DESIGN 2026: NAVIGATING CONVERGING CONSTRAINTS

5. SHELF-AS-STAGE / MODULAR DESIGN SYSTEMS (display drama)



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Design is increasingly happening at the level of the lineup, rather than the individual item. Packs are designed to align, stack, and form a larger visual statement in retail displays and social media images, creating patterns that connect, colour blocks that build a wall, characters that complement each other, or SKUs that create a mural effect. This is **Layer 2**, because it concerns structure, rules, and repeatability. It changes how you define 'the design': not a label, but a consistent modular system with adjacency logic and production discipline, especially with regard to colour management.

6. LIMITED-EDITION DROPS + SCALABLE PERSONALIZATION (short runs as strategy)

Short-run printing and personalisation are shifting from 'special projects' to an ongoing strategy. Brands use limited editions, regional variants, seasonal releases, serialised



© png

packs, event-specific runs, and personalised direct mail to remain culturally relevant without undertaking major changes. This is **Layer 2**, because it requires rule-based design, including templates, variable zones, language/version logic, and systems that can generate multiple outputs while maintaining consistency. By 2026, designers will be expected to create 'families of outcomes', rather than single artefacts, because variation itself will become the marketing engine.

7. AUTOMATION + 'DESIGN AS DATA' (workflow-driven aesthetics)



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Automation, AI-assisted prepress, and tighter production workflows are shaping how print is produced. This includes template-first approaches, strict file management, defined zones, predictable layering, and quality control-friendly effects. While this does not dictate a single aesthetic, it does change what is practical, repeatable, and scalable, which indirectly influences the look of print in 2026. It sits in **Layer 2** because it concerns systems and workflow architecture; however, it extends into **Layer 1** when tolerances, compliance checks, and production constraints become 'hard requirements'. In short, the workflow will increasingly become part of the design in 2026.

8. GAMIFIED UNBOXING + INTERACTIVE PRINT MECHANICS



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Packaging and premium print are increasingly designed to create an interactive experience, with features such as reveal mechanics, hidden messages, scratch layers, UV surprises, inserts, punch-outs, and 'unlock' moments via QR/NFC. When executed well, they create delight and encourage repeat engagement; when executed poorly, they become gimmicky and wasteful. The 'experience' aspect is **Layer 3** because it concerns emotion and behaviour. However, it usually requires **Layer 2** planning, such as repeatable die lines, consistent placement rules, and a system that can scale across runs and variants.

9. TACTILE REBELLION (texture, relief, finish as anti-screen advantage)

Print's superpower is its physicality, and 2026 embraces this with embossing and debossing, raised varnish, textured paper, matte-gloss contrasts, and tactile details that add value and cannot be overlooked. Importantly, the most effective



designs aren't just about adding effects, but creating one intentional sensory moment, supported by clean composition. This is primarily **Layer 3**, because it's about experience and differentiation. However, it is constrained by **Layer 1** realities – some finishes complicate recycling, or increase cost and complexity – so facility must be designed in a way that still fits within sustainability and production constraints.

Continued on page 29 >>



PRINT DESIGN 2026: NAVIGATING CONVERGING CONSTRAINTS

10. 'ANTI-AI CRAFT' (human, imperfect, analogue-coded aesthetics)

As AI-driven visuals become more commonplace, brands are looking for 'human signals': designs that feel handcrafted rather than generated. In print, this often takes the form of collages, hand marks, halftone textures, Risograph cues, imperfect edges, visible overprinting, or purposeful grain – crafted imperfection with control. The aim is not to look cheap, but to look uniquely handmade. This trend sits in **Layer 3** because it is a stylistic and cultural response – an aesthetic that adds authenticity and distinctiveness. It can be applied to many systems (type-led, modular, or variant-heavy) without altering the fundamental constraints.



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11. CINEMATIC PHOTOGRAPHY + PIXEL LANGUAGE (print as a camera-native medium)



Print design is increasingly influenced by editorial and film styles, incorporating bold photography, dramatic cropping, high contrast, and imagery that translates well to motion and camera capture. Alongside this sits a 'pixel language': grain, scan-like artefacts, halftone/pixel references, and capture aesthetics that link print to digital culture, yet still feel tactile and premium. This trend is **Layer 3**, because it is primarily a choice of visual language – how you want the piece to feel culturally and emotionally. It is particularly effective for brands that want to appear contemporary, media-savvy, and highly shareable.

12. DOPAMINE COLOUR (joyful palettes with intentional clarity)



Bright, mood-lifting colours are no longer just a youth trend; they are becoming a strategic tool for brands to appear optimistic and human, even in categories that used to be muted or clinical. The challenge lies in maintaining energy without causing chaos. This is why this is **Layer 3** (emotion and expression), but it depends heavily on **Layers 1 and 2**: accessibility-driven contrast and hierarchy, plus robust systems that control where colour is used and how it is scaled across variants. In 2026, the winning approach is often 'joy + structure': expressive colour palettes combined with disciplined typography and layout.

SO WHAT NOW?

For designers and brands, this means shifting the focus from 'what's trending?' to 'which layers need attention?'. For example, a sustainable material choice (**Layer 1**) could lead to a tactile strategy (**Layer 3**), or a modular system (**Layer 2**) could enable personalisation that wasn't previously economically viable. The trends don't compete. They stack.

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This **COVER STORY** is culled from the **drupa blog** to inspire and help you improve your print purchase decisions on the latest technologies, innovations, and trends in the print and packaging industry. Get ready to be inspired at **drupa 2028** in **Düsseldorf, Germany**, from **9 to 17 May**. For more information, visit www.drupa.com

Print Impact Around the World



ethically sound operational practices has never been more pressing. The newly established platform equips businesses with the essential data required to remain competitive while mitigating environmental impact.

Developed in strategic cooperation with **Alliance Insights**, the research division of the **PRINTING United Alliance**, this innovative platform is designed to provide industry professionals with continuous, in-depth analyses of technological developments, economic trends, and market changes.

Access to the platform is available globally through a one-time, complimentary registration on the official drupa website (www.drupa.com), ensuring that these vital insights are democratised for organisations of all sizes, from agile start-ups to established multinational corporations.

From Global Trends Report to digital content hub

With drupa insights, the concept of the former Global Trends Report is being transformed into an ongoing digital publishing format. Instead of an annual report, the new platform offers regularly updated content that addresses developments in a timely manner and provides structured analysis. At the same time, drupa insights forms part of drupa 2028's strategic repositioning: as a component of the thematic LEARN cluster, the format strengthens the knowledge and analysis segment well ahead of the trade fair.

Strengthening cooperation with PRINTING United Alliance

drupa insights builds on the established collaboration between drupa and the Alliance. **Sabine Geldermann**, Director drupa, Portfolio Print Technologies at Messe Düsseldorf, explains: "Through drupa insights, we are pooling international expertise and creating a reliable foundation for market and future analyses. Our goal is to support companies in strategically navigating industry transformation." **Nathan Safran**, Vice President, Research at Alliance Insights, adds: "We are pleased to collaborate with drupa on this new format, which provides deeper insights into industry developments and delivers practical decision-making guidance."

With drupa insights, drupa strengthens its role as a central hub for knowledge exchange and networking – not only during the trade fair itself, but throughout the entire innovation cycle of the industry. The first content is already available online. Interested parties can register free of charge at: www.drupa.com/insights.

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON RETAINS TOP GLOBAL SPOT FOR UNDERGRADUATE CREATIVE EDUCATION FOR EIGHTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR



University of the Arts London (UAL) has been named the world's leading provider of undergraduate creative education for the eighth consecutive year, securing the number two overall position for Art and Design in the QS World University Rankings 2026.



The Royal College of Art, dedicated exclusively to postgraduate study, continues to hold first position. For eight consecutive years, institutions in London have held both top spots, affirming the city's position as a centre of creative educational excellence with no parallel elsewhere in the world.

This is no coincidence. One in five London jobs is in the creative economy. London's creative force, powered by the many international communities that call the city home, fuels industries both locally within the UK and globally. The UK's creative industries contributed £145.8 billion to the economy in 2024, growing at four times the rate of the wider economy.

UAL's six Colleges reach every part of London, educating 22,000 students with an alumni community of over 270,000. Under **Professor Karen Stanton**, who took up the permanent role of Vice-Chancellor last year, UAL has set out an ambitious strategy for 2032 with widening access to creative education, strengthening global partnerships, and pioneering research into emerging technologies at its heart. Professor Stanton noted the collective effort required to maintain this level of educational excellence. "Behind every ranking are the students who chose to trust us with their creative education and the staff who come to work every day to make that education extraordinary," Stanton said.

"Eight years at the top of the world rankings tells you something important, not just about UAL, but about what happens when a society invests seriously and consistently in creativity. Individual institutions cannot do this alone – we need to rely on a pipeline that makes creative education available to all. To maintain the UK's world-class creative industries, supporting arts education in this country has never been more important. Our graduates go on to power the economy through entrepreneurial start-ups that create more jobs and through using their creative skills to solve problems of the future," Stanton explained.

Looking ahead, the institution is focused on addressing the urgent challenges and technological shifts transforming the global landscape. "Our 2032 strategy is our commitment to go further, widening access so that more people at every stage of life can experience a UAL education and become part of our community, deepening our global partnerships, and ensuring our students are equipped to navigate and shape a world being transformed by technology. The creative industries are one of the fastest-growing parts of our economy. The world needs what our graduates create, and UAL's job is to make sure they are ready," Stanton added.



Continued on page 31 >>

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Print Impact Around the World

DOMINO LAUNCHES EGG PACK PRINTING TRAVERSER FOR HIGH SPEED, MULTI-LANE EGG PACKAGING OPERATIONS



Domino Printing Sciences (Domino), a global expert in advanced variable data printing solutions, has launched an **Egg Pack Printing Traverser (EPPT)** – a dedicated coding solution for high-speed, multi-lane egg grading and packing lines, designed to enhance accuracy and traceability while reducing operating costs.

The EPPT combines Domino's proven Gx-Series thermal Inkjet (TIJ) printers with a robust traverser system engineered for stable and accurate printing across all pack types – including moulded fibre, pre-labelled fibre, and rigid plastic packaging. Offering seamless integration with Moba Omnia and Sanovo GraderPro graders, the EPPT supports continuous and accurate production, operating as a natural extension of existing workflows.



Available with either the Gx150i or Gx350i printers to suit different line requirements, the system uses Domino's cartridge-based TIJ technology, which reduces waste associated with traditional label applications – such as silicone backing paper and labels – and minimises mechanical servicing. This delivers a low-maintenance, cost-effective option to improve both productivity and sustainability.



In production environments, the Gx350i-based traverser has demonstrated high-resolution coding at speeds in excess of 50 packs per minute, matching the throughput of today's most advanced graders, with capacity to support even higher speeds as operations evolve. The EPPT also supports inline code verification, connecting seamlessly to smart vision systems that detect unprinted or defective packs and enable automatic removal before dispatch.



YPIP REBRANDS TO ACCOMMODATE PACKAGING INDUSTRY



Young People in Print (YPIP) has broadened its scope to include the packaging industry, as it has renamed itself **Young People In Print & Packaging (YPIPP)**.

Formed in 2024 by industry leaders to inspire the next generation into the print industry, the action group will now also work to inspire young minds into packaging too.

Young People in Print & Packaging (YPIP) is dedicated to inspiring the next generation by bridging the gap between education and the dynamic worlds of both print and packaging. Its mission is to cultivate a passion for printing and packaging among young minds through engaging events held in schools and universities. It strives to empower students with valuable insights into the multifaceted realms of print, fostering an appreciation for its artistry, innovation, and sustainable practices. By orchestrating impactful events, YPIPP aims to demystify both the printing and packaging sectors, showcasing its diverse career opportunities and cutting-edge technologies. To get involved, visit www.ypip.co.uk for further information.





CARBON BALANCING IN PACKAGING: BEYOND BOOKS AND PUBLISHING



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Carbon Balanced Paper has long been associated with publishing – books, magazines, and print media. This **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** culled from www.carbonbalancedpaperna.com illustrates how the role of paper has evolved, hence the opportunity to reduce its environmental impact.

Today, there are important applications for **Carbon Balanced Paper** in packaging – from folding cartons to e-commerce materials – where sustainability expectations are rising quickly, and procurement decisions are under increasing scrutiny.

PACKAGING IS KEY IN SUSTAINABILITY CONVERSATIONS

Packaging sits at the intersection of climate, materials, and consumer perception. It is visible, measurable, and increasingly tied to corporate sustainability commitments.

At the same time, demand for paper-based packaging continues to grow, driven in part by the shift away from plastics and the rise of e-commerce. According to the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**, global paper and paperboard production has remained strong, supported by packaging demand even as other paper grades decline.

E-commerce is a major driver. The **International Energy Agency** notes that growing online retail activity is increasing demand for packaging materials, particularly corrugated and paper-based formats. This growth creates both an opportunity and a challenge: packaging is increasingly positioned as a lower-impact alternative to plastic, but it still carries a carbon footprint tied to fiber sourcing, manufacturing, and transportation.

“Packaging is not just a cost center or a compliance requirement. It is a visible part of a brand's environmental footprint – and an opportunity to demonstrate progress.”

CLIMATE COMMITMENTS ARE MOVING DOWN TO THE PRODUCT LEVEL

Many brands have made public commitments to reduce emissions, including **Scope 3 emissions** (all indirect greenhouse gases (GHG) that occur in a company's value chain, excluding **Scope 1** (direct) and **Scope 2** (purchased energy) emissions) across their supply chains. For packaging buyers, this is where things become complex. Packaging can be a significant contributor to product-level emissions, yet it is rarely addressed directly beyond general material choices.

Regulators are also raising expectations around environmental claims. Authorities such as the **Competition Bureau Canada** and the **Federal Trade Commission** emphasize that environmental claims must be substantiated, specific, and supported by evidence, not broad or implied.

Continued on page 33 >>



This is changing the conversation from “sustainable packaging” as a concept to measurable environmental performance at the product level.

WHERE CARBON-BALANCED PAPER FITS IN PACKAGING

Carbon Balanced Paper provides a practical way to address the carbon footprint of paper-based packaging without requiring changes to materials, suppliers, or production processes. The model is straightforward:

- The carbon footprint of a packaging project is calculated using recognized methodologies.
- That footprint is then balanced through the protection and restoration of high-value forests via **World Land Trust**.
- The result is a traceable, verified climate contribution tied directly to the packaging being produced.

These are not abstract offsets. Projects supported through World Land Trust focus on the permanent protection of threatened ecosystems, preserving biodiversity while preventing the release of carbon stored in forests. To date, World Land Trust and its partners have helped **protect millions of acres of threatened habitat globally**, supporting both climate and biodiversity outcomes.

A PRACTICAL STEP FOR PACKAGING BUYERS

Sustainability in packaging is often framed as a choice between materials, formats, or suppliers. Those decisions remain important, but they are not always enough on their own.

Carbon balancing your paper-based packaging offers an

additional layer: a way to address the carbon impact of packaging directly, while supporting forest conservation and biodiversity protection. For packaging buyers, this means:

- aligning packaging decisions with corporate climate goals
- adding measurable environmental value to existing materials
- strengthening the credibility of sustainability claims
- contributing to real, long-term conservation outcomes

PACKAGING HAS A ROLE TO PLAY

Packaging is not just a cost center or a compliance requirement. It is a visible part of a brand's environmental footprint – and an opportunity to demonstrate progress. Carbon Balanced Paper extends that opportunity beyond publishing and print into one of the fastest-growing segments of the paper industry. As expectations around transparency, verification, and climate accountability continue to increase, packaging decisions will carry more weight.

For more, visit www.carbonbalancedpaper.com or contact info@carbonbalancedpaper.com.



THE POWER OF EXPERIENTIAL PRINT: HOW TACTILE AND MULTI-SENSORY ELEMENTS ADD VALUE TO PRINTED PRODUCTS



In today's world of visual overload, the challenge for brands is to stand out from the crowd and capture the attention of consumers. In this context, so-called "experiential print" is becoming increasingly important. This **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE**, extracted from **drupa blog/ Essentials of Print**, looks at the role of tactile and multi-sensory elements in print and how textured surfaces, scent and sound effects, and innovative printing techniques can add value to print products

Experiential print refers to the use of tactile and multi-sensory elements in print products to create a more intense and memorable brand experience. These tactile and multi-sensory elements in print, including textured surfaces, scent and sound effects, and innovative printing techniques, can add value to print products.

HAPTIC ELEMENTS: THE IMPORTANCE OF TEXTURED SURFACES

The sense of touch plays a crucial role in the perception of brands and products. The use of textured surfaces can add a tactile dimension to printed products, enhancing the brand experience and leaving a lasting impression on the consumer. Textured coatings, relief printing, and embossing are just a few examples of tactile elements that can add value to printed products by providing a unique and appealing texture.

MULTI-SENSORY EFFECTS: THE POWER OF SCENT AND SOUND EFFECTS

In addition to touch, other senses such as smell and sound can be incorporated into the brand experience. By incorporating scent and sound effects into print products, brands can create an emotional connection with their customers and create a memorable experience. For example, scented print products such as promotional materials or



packaging can provide a sensory experience that positively influences brand perception and increases consumer engagement.

INNOVATIVE PRINTING TECHNIQUES: THE FUTURE OF EXPERIENTIAL PRINTING

The rapid development of printing technologies makes it possible to create increasingly sophisticated and innovative printed products. From thermochromic inks that react to heat to conductive inks that enable interactive features, innovative printing techniques offer a variety of ways to add value to printed products. These technologies

Continued on page 36 >>



BEE Printing Mechanical Company



HEIDELBERG SM102 -4



BINDING MACHINE



HEIDELBERG MOZ



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POLAR 92



HEIDELBERG SM74 -5



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open up new ways to personalise the brand experience and put the customer at the centre.

THE IMPACT ON BRAND EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Incorporating tactile and multi-sensory elements into print products can have a significant impact on brand experience and customer loyalty. By creating unique and engaging print products that appeal to all the senses, brands can create an emotional connection with their customers and build long-term relationships. A positive brand experience not only increases customer loyalty but can also help improve brand perception and strengthen competitiveness in the marketplace.

THE FUTURE OF EXPERIENTIAL PRINTING: TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES

Experiential printing is only at the beginning of its development, and many more innovative approaches and technologies are expected to emerge in the future. With the increasing focus on personalised and emotional brand experiences, experiential printing will play an increasingly important role. Brands that invest in innovative printing techniques and find creative ways to engage their customers' senses will gain a competitive advantage and strengthen their position in the marketplace.

Overall, experiential printing shows how the printing industry is evolving to meet the changing needs and expectations of



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consumers. By integrating tactile and multi-sensory elements, printed products can become a powerful tool for brands to communicate their messages, engage customers, and build long-term relationships.

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This SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE is culled from the **drupa blog** (www.drupa.com) to inspire and help you improve your print purchase decisions on the latest technologies, innovations, and trends in the print and packaging industry.



PRINT & ALLIED EXHIBITIONS FOR 2026

S/N	EXHIBITION	LOCATION	DATE	SHOW LOGO
1	PSI 2026 https://www.psi-messe.com	Messe Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf - Germany	7 – 9 January 2026	
2	FESPA MIDDLE EAST 2026 https://www.fespamiddleeast.com	Dubai Exhibition Centre (Expo City), Dubai - United Arab Emirates	13 – 15 January 2026	
3	PACK EXPO EAST 2026 https://www.packexpoeast.com	Pennsylvania Convention Centre, Philadelphia - Pennsylvania, United States of America	17 – 19 February 2026	
4	SIGN & DIGITAL UK 2026 https://signuk.com	NEC, Birmingham - United Kingdom	22 – 24 February 2026	
5	SIGN & LED CHINA SHENZHEN 2026 https://www.ledchina.com	Shenzhen Convention Centre, Shenzhen, P.R. China	1 – 3 March 2026	
6	PROPAK EAST AFRICA 2026 https://www.propakeastafrica.com	Sarit Expo Centre, Nairobi – Kenya	3 – 5 March 2026	
7	GULF PRINT & PACK 2026 https://www.gulfprintpack.com	Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai - United Arab Emirates	31 March – 2 April 2026	
8	NIGERIA PLASTPRINTPACK 2026 https://www.agrofood-nigeria.com	Landmark Centre, Lagos – Nigeria	24 – 26 March 2026	
9	ISA SIGN EXPO 2026 https://signexpo.org	Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando – Florida, United States of America	8 – 10 April 2026	
10	PROPAK GHANA 2026 https://www.propakghana.com	The Grand Arena, Accra International Conference Centre, Accra – Ghana	21 – 23 April 2026	
11	GLOBAL PRINTING & PACKAGING EXPO AND LABEL & CARTON BOX EXPO 2026 https://globalprintpackexpo.com	Nusantara International Convention Centre (NICE), PIK2, Indonesia	6 – 9 May 2026	
12	INTERPACK 2026 https://www.interpack.com	Dusseldorf Messe, Dusseldorf - Germany	7 – 13 May 2026	
13	FESPA 2026 https://europe.fespa.com/global-print-expo	Fira Barcelona Gran Via, Barcelona - Spain	19 – 22 May 2026	
14	PROPAPER NIGERIA 2026 https://propapernigeria.com	Landmark Centre, Lagos – Nigeria	23 – 25 June 2026	
15	SPE – SURABAYA PRINTING EXPO 2026 https://surabayaprintingexpo.com	Grand City, Surabaya - Indonesia	8 – 11 July 2026	
16	PROPAK WEST AFRICA 2026 https://www.propakwestafrica.com	Landmark Centre, Lagos – Nigeria	8 – 10 September 2026	
17	FESPA/ AFRICA PRINT 2026 https://www.fespafrica.com	Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg - South Africa	8 – 10 September 2026	
18	LOUPE AMERICAS 2026 https://www.labelexpo-americas.com	Donald E. Stephens Convention Centre, Chicago - United States of America	15 – 17 September 2026	
19	LED CHINA SHANGHAI 2026 https://www.ledchina.com	Shanghai New International Expo Centre, Shanghai, P.R. China	15 – 17 September 2026	
20	THE PRINT/ SIGN SHOW UK 2026 https://www.theprintshow.co.uk	NEC, Birmingham - United Kingdom	September 29 – October 1 2026	
21	ALLPRINT EXPO 2026 https://allprint.co.id	JIIEXPO, Kemayoran, Jakarta – Indonesia	7 – 10 October 2026	
22	PACK EXPO INTERNATIONAL 2026 https://www.packexpointernational.com	McCormick Place, Chicago, Illinois - United States of America	18 – 21 October 2026	
23	PROPAPER DUBAI 2026 https://www.propaperdubai.com	Festival Arena, Dubai Festival City, Dubai - United Arab Emirates	20 – 22 October 2026	
24	PRINTINGUNITED 2026 https://www.printingunited.com	Las Vegas International Centre, Vegas, Nevada - United States of America	23 – 25 October 2026	
25	PROPAK CAPE 2026 https://www.propakcape.co.za	Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town – South Africa	27 – 29 October 2026	
26	PAPEREX SOUTH INDIA 2026 https://southindia.paperex.in	Chennai Trade Centre, Nandambakkam Chennai, India	3 – 5 December 2026	

NOTE:

- The above enumerated **EVENTS** are carefully and strategically selected, hence meet ALL these stringent criteria: regional acknowledgement/ recognition, exhibitors' numbers (not less than 100 exhibitors), visitors' numbers (not less than 2,500 attendees), and total numbers of country participation (not less than 10 nations).
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THE PRINTER'S GUIDE TO THE SHORT-RUN LABEL MARKET



The global **label printing market** is a booming segment, expected to reach **\$47 billion** in 2024. Short runs are driving this dynamic growth, fueled by e-commerce and product variation. In this **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** written by **FESPA** Ambassador **Sonja Angerer** and culled from www.fespa.com, discover how digital printing makes market entry feasible for print shops, allowing them to offer customized, sustainable labels by leveraging existing equipment or specialized short-run presses while ensuring regulatory compliance.

Label Printing is expected to continue to develop dynamically in the coming years. This has been predicted by analysts from **Research and Markets** back in **November 2023**. In their **Print Label Global Market Report 2024**, they expect a further increase to roughly **67 billion US dollars** worldwide by **2028**, an annual growth of almost **5%**.



Label printing is therefore keeping pace with the broader packaging market. This also includes printing on corrugated, cardboard, flexible materials such as paper, as well as rigid materials and objects such as bottles, plastic, or metal. For the packaging market, which is currently estimated at around **USD 365 billion**, **Global Market Insights** expects a **CAGR of 5%** until **2032**.

BIG PLAYERS DOMINATE THE MARKET

Today, colour labels are produced using analogue processes such as offset and flexographic printing, digital inkjet, e-ink, and toner printing, as well as hybrid. For hybrid labels, basic parts of the motif are usually printed with analogue technology, while local or seasonal variations are added in digital print.

Packaging for fast-moving consumer goods is produced in millions of copies. The world's largest packaging printers are often located outside the European Union, for example, in the USA, India, and, **Where To Print** | VOL. 18 | NO. 101 | MAR/APR 2026 | ISSN: 2006-7402

increasingly, China.

In contrast, label printing in small quantities is more regional, in production as well as in demand.

Web2Print is playing an increasingly important role. Providers such as **Labelprint 24**, **Labelisten**, or **Etiketten-drucken** offer many different labels in short print runs. But even online print shops with a wider range of products, such as **Wirmachendruck**, have a large selection of labels on rolls or sheets on offer.

Online providers address a very varied target group, ranging from private customers and local associations to cottage industry and smaller companies. As a result, often, print data may not be delivered in professional quality. These online providers try to anticipate and resolve data delivery problems with online editors, where customers may design labels directly in the browser. In the background, the software creates a printable PDF, already optimised for the selected printing press.

SMALL LABELS 1x1

Stickers, whether from a roll or on sheets, are always constructed in the same way (from bottom to top):

- Carrier material (liner)
- Adhesive layer
- Carrier/label material.



In addition, there is usually a protective layer, such as a laminate

Continued on page 39 >>

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SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE: THE PRINTER'S GUIDE



or varnish. The carrier material ensures that the label can be easily removed, using a silicone layer. The adhesive layer is typically made on an acrylic or rubber basis, with the glue available as removable, semi-permanent, and permanent adhesive. In some cases, labels in small quantities may also use cling film as a base.

When it comes to label print material, there is always a choice between paper-based and plastic films. For outdoor use and for a humid environment, films made from PET, PE, and PP are required. If the label is also to be seawater-resistant, PVC remains the first choice. Labelprint, recycled, dyed, metallised, or natural paper is best suited for a dry indoor environment.

Especially for labels in short runs, it is also important to consider other requirements. For example, laminate or varnishing can mean that a label is no longer suitable to be written on or marked with a thermal transfer printer. This can be a major challenge if a best-before date must be applied at a later stage.

ENTER THE LABEL MARKET

Many printers already own the required machinery to enter the label print market, as self-adhesive films can be printed with UV-curable, Latex, Eco Solvent, or water-based inks on any roll-to-roll printer. With a print-and-cut device, for example, from the **Roland DG Tru VIS LG and LM series**, this can even be done in-line. After all, there is not that much of a difference between a sticker and a label.

Machinery designed specifically for label printing in short runs usually works with pre-cut substrates on rolls. For example, the recently introduced **Epson ColorWorks C8000e** prints labels from **2.5 to 10 cm wide** in full colour at up to **300 mm/s** on paper, foils, and plastics.

However, when it comes to label printing, even in small print runs, it is not only about technical equipment. Especially if labels are to be used for food or cosmetics, they must also meet certain requirements. For example, inks must be low-migration and non-toxic. In addition, packaging printing is also facing increased demand for green and sustainable products.

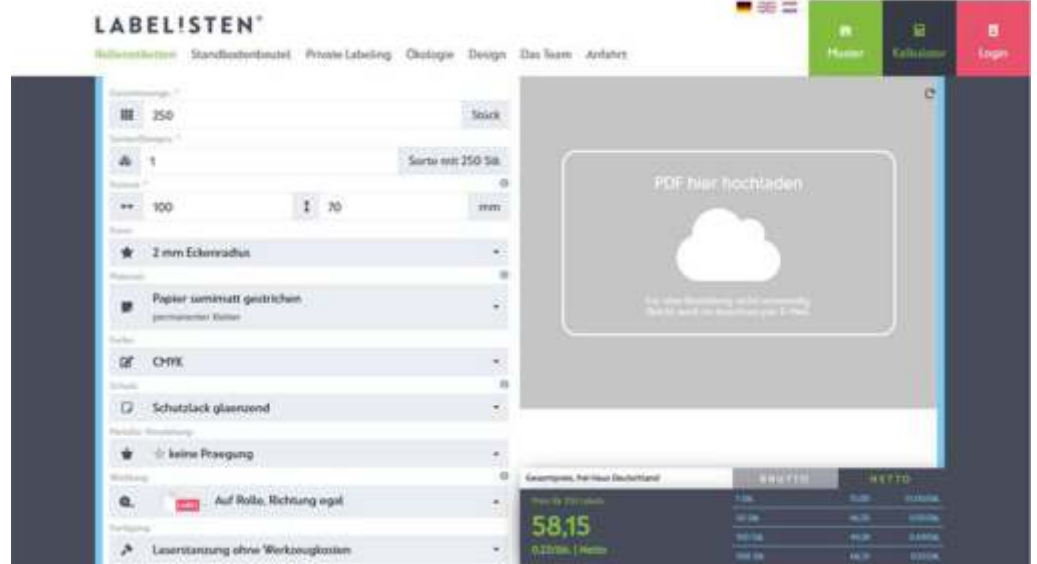
There are plenty of PVC-free films and papers made from renewable raw materials such as grass or bamboo for label printing. But especially for small print runs, the customer base is often very price sensitive.

IS IT WORTH GETTING STARTED WITH LABEL PRINTING IN SHORT RUNS?

Packaging and label printing are among the few segments in the printing industry that are expected to continue to grow in the



© Labels in short runs are also becoming increasingly important for the food industry. Image Credit: S. Angerer



The Franconian online label printer Labelisten offers short-run labels and pouches.

coming years. Smaller household sizes and growing requirements for product safety and labelling ensure that short-run labels will continue to be in demand, also in the next few years.

This results in an exciting market and opportunity for printers. This is especially true if a printer can act as a sustainable supplier for local production companies. Label printing can also be a good way for printers with an existing Web2Print offering to expand their range of products and services in an uncomplicated way and thus expand their revenue.



About the **AUTHOR**

Print expert **Sonja Angerer** of **Rrrabbitproductions** and contributing editor of **blokboek.com** never stops exploring ("Vorne ist da, wo sich keiner auskennt..."). Her specialties include digital printing, media production, computer (Mac & PC), mobile, etc. As **FESPA Ambassador**, she will chair a **Special Panel Session** on the fast-growing market of interior printing during **FESPA 2026** in Barcelona. The session will be held on **11 May** at **3pm**. For more information, and on how to attend the session, visit www.fespa.com



IS THE FUTURE OF PRINT TEMPORARY? REDEFINING INK WITH GROWINK



GrowInk is a revolutionary biological innovation that replaces toxic, permanent synthetic dyes with “living” ink derived from fungi and bacteria. By aligning the ink’s lifespan with disposable products like packaging, it actively facilitates biodegradation. In this **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** written by **Debbie McKeegan** and culled from www.fespa.com, discover how this shift from chemical permanence to natural ephemerality creates a truly circular, regenerative printing supply chain.

We often judge the quality of a printed product by its longevity. Does the colour fade? Will it withstand the rain? For decades, the printing industry has chased permanence, developing chemical formulations designed to last forever. Yet, this pursuit of durability has created a massive environmental paradox: we print permanent ink onto disposable products.

When a single-use coffee cup or a fast-fashion garment is discarded, the material might eventually break down, but the synthetic dyes and microplastics within the ink often remain, leaching into our soil and waterways. This disconnect between the lifecycle of the product and the lifecycle of the ink is a critical design flaw in the manufacturing supply chain.

But what if ink could do more than just provide colour? What if it could actively help the material beneath it return to the earth?

This is the question driving **GrowInk**, a groundbreaking innovation founded by **Peerasin Punxh Hutaphaet** during the MA Material Futures programme at Central Saint Martins. The project explores how fungi and bacteria can be combined with CMYK inkjet technology to create self-

decomposing, regenerative prints. Applications range from posters and packaging to textiles, with the aim of reducing the environmental impact of conventional printing. By exploring an alternative lifecycle for ink, one that involves both application and degradation, GrowInk is challenging our perceptions of value and rewriting the rules of circularity in the printing industry.

THE PROBLEM WITH PERMANENCE

The current standard for industrial ink relies heavily on petrochemicals. From digital textile printing to packaging, the process is extractive and consumptive. We extract resources, process them with harsh chemicals to ensure stability, apply them to materials, and eventually discard them.

Nature, however, operates differently. In the natural world, there is no waste, only feedstock for the next cycle. A fallen leaf provides nutrients for the soil. This concept of symbiosis is largely absent in modern printing.

As discussed in a recent FESPA podcast, the industry faces significant environmental drawbacks. The sheer volume of synthetic dyes entering our ecosystem contributes to pollution and hinders the biodegradability of otherwise compostable



materials. To truly build circularity into the value chain, we cannot simply focus on the substrate (the paper or fabric); we must address the chemistry sitting on top of it.

ENTER GROWINK: WHERE BIOLOGY MEETS DESIGN

GrowInk represents a radical shift from chemical engineering to biological design. The concept was born from a simple observation of waste in London, specifically, the persistence of litter. Perrasin sought to create a solution where the ink itself could degrade plastic and other materials.

The innovation lies in its ingredients. Instead of synthetic polymers, GrowInk utilizes natural pigments derived from:

- Flowers and Fungi: For vibrant reds, blues, and yellows.
- Charcoal and natural sources: For deep blacks.

However, the true breakthrough is not just the source of the colour, but the inclusion of specific bacteria. GrowInk is a living material. The bacterial component within the formulation remains dormant while dry but becomes active

under specific environmental conditions, accelerating the degradation process of the ink and potentially the material it is printed on.

THE COLOUR SPECTRUM OF NATURE

One of the historical challenges with natural dyes has been achieving a full spectrum of colour that rivals synthetic options. GrowInk has successfully developed a primary palette: Red, Blue, Yellow, and Black. This mimics the CMYK standard used in traditional printing, suggesting that bio-based alternatives can eventually scale to meet industrial needs without sacrificing aesthetic variety.

A NEW LIFECYCLE: APPLICATION AND DEGRADATION

To understand the potential of GrowInk, we must look at its lifecycle. Traditional ink has a linear life: it is applied, and it stays. GrowInk introduces a circular lifecycle.

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About the AUTHOR

Debbie McKeegan is the CEO of **TexIntel**. As a multi-disciplinary creative and renowned digital print pioneer, she holds over 25 years of experience within the Textile manufacturing industry. An award-winning textile designer and lifetime manufacturer of printed products for Fashion and Interiors, she has a unique insight that combines creativity with a deep knowledge of traditional manufacturing processes and the essential application of disruptive digital technologies. Her family has been in the printing industry since 1968.

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