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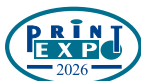
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To Readers

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

THE SANITY SHIFT: WHY MARGINS MATTER MORE THAN MACHINERY

Are we investing for prestige or for productivity? As today's print and allied sectors navigate intense price wars, running a successful enterprise requires a strict focus on substance over shadow. A massive press asset sitting idle due to supply chain delays or power bottlenecks is a financial drain, not an achievement.

In a market redefined by foreign exchange volatility, fierce competition from imports, shifting consumer demands, and crushing energy/diesel costs, chasing the status of 'biggest press in the cluster' is a high-stakes gamble that fast-tracks a print and allied business to bankruptcy. It is time for print investors to look past the iron and focus on the margins. This latest issue explores how successful practitioners can future-proof their print & allied shops. By moving away from the vanity of "doing everything for everyone" and towards forward-thinking businesses building predictable corporate retainers, optimizing energy costs, and dominating specific market niches.

In this edition, we analyze how print and packaging executives should look past traditional "vanity metrics" and shift focus toward capacity utilization, lean workflows, and high-margin niches like short-run packaging and digital on-demand printing. In our business context, vanity is the dangerous habit of prioritizing status symbols, massive machinery, or raw order volume over real profitability, cash flow, and efficiency.

But before these pieces, which we have carefully compiled as **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW, ARTICLES**, and **COVER STORY**, we start with the usual **PRINT IMPACT AROUND NIGERIA** (on page 10) and **PRINT IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD** (from page 12), respectively, to inform you of some of the latest developments that happened within the last two months in the print and allied industries both in Nigeria and around the world. This culminates in

post-event reports of two industry-specific events that took place in the past months.

First of, the newly debuted **ProPaper Nigeria 2026 (June 23 to 25)** that wrapped up with a successful start, proving that Nigeria, nay West Africa, is rapidly shifting from a consumer market into a manufacturing powerhouse. Turn to pages 11, 14, and 15 for the piece titled: **DRIVING WEST AFRICA'S PRINT & PACKAGING REVOLUTION**, then on pages 18, 19, and 20 for **FLEXOEDGE 2026** (held **28 July, 2026**), which highlighted that West Africa is now the premier hub for flexographic innovation and sustainable packaging. Check out **WHERE To Print's** key insights and comprehensive takeaways in the full post-event report aptly captioned: **THE SHIFT IS HERE: WHY WEST AFRICA IS THE NEXT FRONTIER FOR FLEXO AND PACKAGING GROWTH**.

Talking of growth, which is this edition's core objective, we spoke with **Mr. Kaleeswaran Nadar**, the Managing Director/CEO of industry leader **Ankan Graphics Limited**, on a wide range of issues, especially on what it takes to thrive in today's economic landscape. His response, which simplifies complex industry dynamics, forms the caption: **"OUR PHILOSOPHY IS SIMPLE: INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY THAT SOLVES A REAL PRODUCTION PROBLEM TODAY WHILE GIVING THE BUSINESS THE CAPACITY AND FLEXIBILITY TO GROW TOMORROW"** and can be found on pages 16, 17, 21, 40 and 41.



Next, our **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** explores how modern print buyers are shifting their focus from service, price, and quality toward tangible business outcomes. Turn to pages 24 and 25 for **WHAT DO PRINT BUYERS WANT?** And learn from Digital Marketing Strategist **John Bracamontes** as he fundamentally

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FLEX

Frontlit/Glossy/Matt
Backlit, Mesh, Reflective Flex

SAV

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Clear Sav, Vehicle Branding Sav
Reflective Sav, Window Graphics
Photo Glossy Paper & Backlit Film
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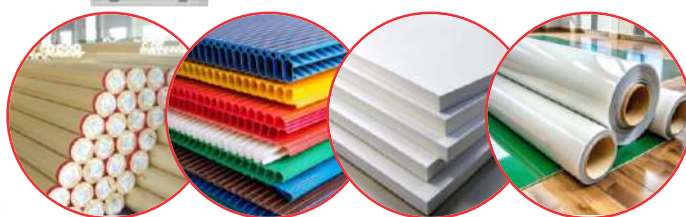
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explores how printers can move past traditional sales pitches, breaking down a shift in buyer mindset and outlining how to align your services and capabilities with your customer's final business goals as the ultimate key to success.

John's associate at **Prynthase**, an artificial intelligence marketing software platform built specifically for commercial print shops and print service providers, **Alyssa Summers**, is the author of the inspiring **COVER STORY** captioned: **WHAT MAKES A PRINTING COMPANY IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLACE?** This piece reveals the truth: low prices might get you through the door, but they rarely buy loyalty. Instead, true market leaders win by becoming irreplaceable. Ready to shift your print business from transactional pricing to unbreakable client partnerships? Turn to pages 26 and 27 to learn how.

Ahead of two premier global trade shows—**PROPAK West Africa 2026 (September 8 to 10)** and **PRINTING United Expo 2026 (September 23 to 25)**—**WHERE To Print** is pleased to deliver exclusive previews of these landmark

events. Pages 30–34 explore how **PROPAK West Africa 2026** in Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria, will help operators navigate changing consumer markets, automation, and green solutions. In the **SPECIAL PREVIEW** titled: **PROPAK WEST AFRICA CONFERENCE TO DELIVER PRACTICAL INSIGHTS FOR WEST AFRICA'S PRODUCTION AND PACKAGING PROFESSIONALS**, discover how the accompanying summit is designed to boost productivity and operational competitiveness.

And from a massive, one-million-square-foot showcase of cutting-edge technology, emerging trends, and live equipment demonstrations, **PRINTING United Expo 2026** in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, is looking decisively beyond traditional ink on paper. Alongside breakthrough production technology and advanced digital finishing techniques, the Expo introduces an expanded, human-centric educational and experiential programme. Aptly titled: **BEYOND THE PRESS: THE HUMAN-CENTRIC REVOLUTION AWAITING AT PRINTING UNITED 2026**, open to page 36 to begin the **SPECIAL PREVIEW** and discover some of these landmark feature programmes expected to shape and transform the future of the industry for years to come.

WHERE TO PRINT BY-LINE

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WHERE To Print magazine. Print publishing. Print research/ statistics. Feasibility report. Print survey. Print management software. Print directory. Print exchange programme.



As we drive industry transformation, take a moment to evaluate your print and allied business because industry transformation requires honest reflection.

Check the pulse of your print and allied business: Is it driven by **vanity** or **sanity**?

Vanity-Driven Business

Focuses on owning the newest press machine.

Competes strictly on being the cheapest in the market.

Chases massive, volatile one-off contracts.

Measures success by total revenue/turnover.

I encourage you to turn your findings into decisive action starting now.

Until the next edition, keep doing good and making a positive difference!

Sanity-Driven Business

Focuses on maximum machine utilization and uptime.

Competes on speed, quality, and specialized niches.

Builds predictable, recurring corporate retainers.

Measures success by monthly cash-flow and profit margin.

Print impact around Nigeria Stories by Precious Ajuonuma & Joju Adekanbi

KAS PRINTS LAUNCHES WEEKLY CASH RAFFLE TO REWARD KP2 PARTNERS



KAS Arts Service Limited (KAS Prints), Nigeria's leading digital and offset printing company, has officially commenced a weekly raffle draw to reward participants of its **KAS Partnership Programme (KP2)**.

The inaugural raffle draw took place on **Friday, July 31, 2026**, at the company's Lagos main office on Oguntolu



Street, Somolu—the recognized hub of the printing business in West Africa. **Joju Adekanbi**, the Publisher and CEO of **WHERE To Print magazine**, was on hand to spearhead the live event.

During the draw, clients selected more than **30 lucky winners** from across all three KAS Prints branch offices in Lagos, including the Oguntolu, Akeju, and Adeniran Ogunsanya locations. Each winner received cash prizes that range from **10,000 to 100,000**. The raffle ends on **Friday, August 28, 2026**, with high

participation expected and potential extensions to other branches.

An investigation by **WHERE To Print** magazine highlights the massive impact of the initiative since its launch on **Workers' Day, May 1, 2021**, in Abuja. Over the last five years, the KAS Partnership Programme has empowered more than **5,000 youth** across Nigeria with vital skills in design, printing, and publishing. Consequently, these KP2 participants have generated over **100 million** in return on investment (ROI).

For over 50 years, KAS Prints has delivered high-quality, timely print solutions to a diverse clientele, positioning itself as the foremost 21st-century printing company in Sub-Saharan Africa. The award-winning company is fully compliant with security printing regulations and is one of the few elite firms accredited by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) as a Cheque Printer and Personalizer. This official authorization to produce

cheques and secure documents firmly underscores KAS Prints' enduring commitment to reliability and integrity.

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PROPAPER NIGERIA 2026 POST-SHOW REPORT



DRIVING WEST AFRICA'S PRINT & PACKAGING REVOLUTION



© ProPaper Nigeria 2026 - Special Guest of Honour, **Mr. Tope Fasua**, Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs, was joined by **Princess 'Layo Bakare-Okeowo**, the Managing Director and CEO of **FAE Limited** and Vice President of the **Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)**, and other dignitaries to declare the 3-day event open.

The debut **ProPaper Nigeria 2026 (June 23 to 25, 2026)** at the Landmark Centre wrapped up with a successful start, proving that Nigeria, nay West Africa, is rapidly shifting from a consumer market into a manufacturing powerhouse. With the regional tissue and hygiene paper sector exploding toward an **\$8.96 billion** valuation, **WHERE To Print** gathers that ProPaper Nigeria 2026 was not just a trade show—it was a glimpse into the future of West African industrial supply chains.

This premiere event was declared open by **Mr. Tope Fasua**, the Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs. He delivered the Federal Government's commendation to **Jeen Joshua**-led **Verifair Business Events**, the organisers, emphasizing the government's support for paper products as durable alternatives to help curb environmental challenges associated with plastics.

Joining Mr. Fasua at the opening was **Princess 'Layo Bakare-**

Okeowo, the Managing Director and CEO of **FAE Limited** and Vice President of the **Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)**. During the opening ceremony, she famously declared paper as "the new gold". Amidst the multimillion-dollar investment potential of paper, she also strongly urged Nigerian entrepreneurs and investors to look beyond traditional sectors and aggressively explore the massive financial and manufacturing opportunities within the local paper production and packaging industries.

Continued on page 14 >>

Print Impact

Around the World

X-RITE PANTONE LAUNCHES EXACT 2 BASIC SPECTROPHOTOMETER



© X-Rite Pantone eXact 2 Basic



X-Rite Pantone, the global authority in colour standards and colour science, announces **eXact 2 Basic**, the newest addition to the eXact 2 family of portable spectrophotometers. Available now, the new device will be showcased at **LOUPE Americas 2026** (September 15-17 in Chicago in **Booth 720**) and **PRINTING United Expo 2026** (September 23-25 in Las Vegas in **Booth C2450**) alongside digital workflow solutions designed to help commercial printers and converters improve efficiency, reduce waste, and deliver consistent colour.



The eXact 2 Basic is an easy-to-use spectrophotometer designed for commercial print production, combining density and L*a*b* colour measurement in a standalone handheld device. It helps press operators move beyond visual inspection and density-only workflows with fast, objective colour verification that supports more accurate production decisions without adding complexity to daily press operations.



At the upcoming events, X-Rite Pantone will demonstrate how the eXact 2 family fits into an integrated colour workflow spanning digital colour standards, ink formulation, press-side measurement, quality management, and production reporting that work together in an integrated workflow. By connecting colour data across production, organizations can improve visibility, standardize processes, and achieve more predictable results.

"Reliable colour starts with accurate measurement, but it doesn't end there," said **Nick Meyer**, Business Unit Director, Print and Packaging at X-Rite Pantone. "We're helping printers and converters connect colour data across the production process so they can work more efficiently, reduce waste, and consistently meet customer expectations."



© eXact2 Basic - Colour Measurement made simple

At the US-based international shows for the print, packaging, and allied industries, X-Rite Pantone will be demonstrating solutions that help standardize colour workflows, improve production efficiency, and maintain print quality, especially in improving colour consistency across labels, flexible packaging, shrink sleeves, pouches, and inline folding cartons. Prime Showcases include MeasureColor Production and Reports, the eXact 2 family, Autura Ink, ColorCert Suite, PantoneLIVE, and iPro 3 colour calibration and profiling solutions.

DURST GROUP TAKES MAJORITY STAKE IN COCO PLATFORM, REINFORCING ITS KYVERIS SOFTWARE AND AI STACK

Global manufacturer of advanced industrial digital printing and production technologies, **Durst Group** has acquired a majority stake in **Triple C Labs GmbH**, the company behind **CoCoCo Platform**. CoCoCo Platform continues to operate as an independent entity under its existing brand, leadership and customer commitments, and remains fully open to

third-party original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), software vendors and print production customers.



© Durst: Triple C Labs GmbH Team during one of Durst events

The transaction is a targeted reinforcement of **Kyveris**, Durst Group's industrial software and AI stack for connected print production. Kyveris provides the physics, color and orchestration intelligence that turns installed presses into data-driven production



© Durst - Christoph Gamber

environments. CoCoCo Platform contributes the horizontal integration layer that completes the picture: a JDF- and JMF-based data fabric that connects presses, prepress systems and shop-floor software across manufacturers into one coherent, AI-ready production graph. Together, Kyveris and CoCoCo Platform close the gap between what a machine does and what a production floor knows. Physics meets flow. Colour meets context. Data becomes decisions.

durst

Data as the primitive, not the application. CoCoCo's core is a typed, event-driven data model with standardized entities. Presses, prepress systems, and shop-floor software agree on what a Job, a Product, or a Resource is, in real time. Everything above that layer, from dashboards to automation to agentic AI, is a downstream consumer of the same live structure. It is a technical decision with a strategic consequence: modern AI systems can reason about a print operation with the same reliability they reason about code or text.

Independence by design, openness by tradition. CoCoCo Platform will remain vendor-neutral and open to the wider print industry. In the tradition of open standards that has shaped this sector, CoCoCo continues to serve third parties, including competing OEMs and software partners. They will benefit indirectly from the accelerated development that majority ownership by Durst Group now makes possible. Faster releases. Broader integrations. Deeper data models. A stronger open ecosystem, not a smaller one.

Christoph Gamber, CEO and Co-Owner of Durst Group, said: "The right answer to complex production landscapes is rarely more machines. It is more clarity about the machines already running. CoCoCo built exactly that: a common data language that presses, prepress systems and shop-floor software can actually share. Dashboards, automation, AI assistants are all downstream questions. Get the data model right, and the rest follows. We are joining forces to accelerate the roadmap. And we are keeping CoCoCo Platform open, because a data fabric that is not open is not a fabric. It is a fence."

PRINTWARE RELEASES NEW INKJET COMMERCIAL MODEL OF IJETCOLOR 1175 PRO+PXG



Printware has announced the launch of the **iJetColor 1175 Pro+PXGm**, the next evolution of the world's best-selling high-speed envelope press and short-run packaging.



Building upon the proven success of the iJetColor 1175 Pro platform, first introduced in 2020, the new 1175 Pro+PXG combines industry-leading envelope production with the flexibility to print and personalize a wide range of packaging applications—all from a single production system. Printware recently acquired Straight Shooter equipment company, which better supports our growing inkjet product line.

With hundreds of successful installations worldwide, the iJetColor 1175 Pro+PXG continues Printware's commitment to delivering dependable, production-ready inkjet solutions that maximize profitability while providing unmatched application flexibility. "Customers are asking us how they can do more with Inkjet, and the Pro + PXG certainly fits that bill." States **Bill Frederick**, Vice President of Sales at Printware. "The ability to add profitable short-run packaging capabilities to a rugged, proven envelope solution with minimal investment enables print operations to realize new revenue streams utilizing an existing transport system."

Designed specifically for commercial print providers looking to expand their capabilities, the iJetColor 1175 Pro + PXG delivers exceptional print quality, productivity, and profitability through its rugged industrial design, high-speed performance, and ultra-reliable vacuum feeding and alignment systems to handle every size of envelopes from coin to oversized padded envelopes including corrugated flats and boxes to paper bags with two automated feeding systems as a combined unit affidavit priced under \$90,000 USD.

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SHS-CAS

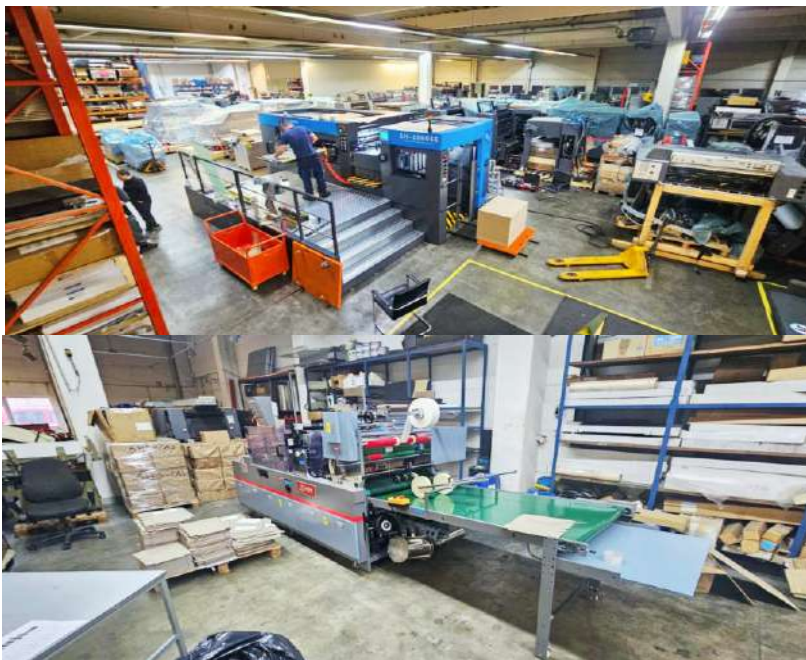
Graphische Maschinen GmbH



Dear Colleagues, we like to offer you these machines subject to prior sale.

Ref.-No.: 9293
 Model: SM 52-4 H+LX
 Manufacturer: Heidelberg
 Year of manufacture: 2000
 Serial No.: 204293
 Imps.(mio.) ca.: 92 Mio.
 Delivery: Installed in our warehouse
 Equipment: Alcolor with MGE cooling, CP2000, Autoplate, Preset, all washers, coating unit, extended delivery X1, IR dryer, Eltex antistatic, Grafix alphantronic 200 powder sprayer

Ref.-No.: 9498
 Model: 304 P HOB
 Manufacturer: Roland
 Year of manufacture: 2000
 Serial No.: 28764 B
 Imps.(mio.): 121 Mio
 Delivery: In stock
 Equipment: Rolandmatic dampening, CPL, RCI, Perfecting 4/0; 2/2, Multi CCI, WEKO T77, IR dryer Eltosch



Other current offers:

Sheet-fed Press | 1-colour Offset | 2-colour Offset
 4-colour offset | 5-colour Offset | 6-colour Offset
 8-colour Offset | 10-colour Offset
 12-colour Offset | 1-colour Letterpress
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 Pre-Press | Cutting Machines | Cutter machine-accessories
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Website: www.shsgm.com

The three-day international trade show served as a major convergence point for local and international industry players to explore a rapidly growing regional market. **WHERE To Print magazine** was on the ground to capture the core shifts redefining our industry and provide a quick breakdown of what went down:

- **Market Backdrop:** The event opened amidst a massive economic surge, with Nigeria's tissue and hygiene paper market projected to reach **\$8.96 billion** according to the organisers.
- **Global Presence:** 100+ top-tier international and local brands showcased innovations.
- **Tech on Display:** Live demos featured state-of-the-art converting machines and sustainable recycling tech.
- **Green Shift:** The core focus remained locked on sustainable, eco-friendly packaging strategies.
- **Official Theme:** The event focused heavily on environmental safety and macro-resilience under the theme: "Pulp, Paper & Packaging: Unfolding Future Strategies for Nigeria's Sustainable Industrial Growth & Global Competitiveness."

The future of West African print and packaging relies on local innovation, smart tech investments, and robust cross-border trade. ProPaper Nigeria 2026 proved that the region is ready to compete globally! **WHERE To Print magazine** presents the following images as a story. Enjoy the read!



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Do
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want a
MENTOR
dedicated
to
help
GROW
your
DREAM?



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“OUR PHILOSOPHY IS SIMPLE: INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY THAT SOLVES A REAL PRODUCTION PROBLEM TODAY WHILE GIVING THE BUSINESS THE CAPACITY AND FLEXIBILITY TO GROW TOMORROW.”



WHICH SPECIFIC PRINTING, PACKAGING, AND CORRUGATION MACHINERY FROM YOUR EXCLUSIVE PARTNERS (SUCH AS HONTEC, AUTOPRINT OR WENZHOU YOUNBOND) ARE YOU HIGHLIGHTING THIS YEAR?

This year, Ankan Graphics LTD is highlighting a broad portfolio of printing, packaging, label, post-press, and corrugation machinery from our exclusive technology partners, with a strong emphasis on solutions that deliver productivity, automation, quality, and a fast return on investment.

From Hontec, we are particularly focusing on advanced narrow-web flexographic technology for labels and flexible packaging, including the FlexiCon range and the new-generation FlexiCon Neo Series. These solutions are designed to reduce changeover time, minimize material waste, and give converters greater flexibility in producing high-quality labels and packaging. Hontec is also bringing its latest technologies to the West African market. At Autoprint, we highlight high-performance post-press solutions, including die-cutting, stripping, hot foiling, coating, and finishing equipment. The portfolio includes machines such as the Dextra 89 HS, Blankmatic 105 RS, and FSDDC 1070 Digital Die Cutter, which are aimed at improving finishing speed, accuracy, automation, and overall production efficiency.

For corrugation and packaging, our portfolio includes Wenzhou Youbond solutions, particularly flute-laminating machinery, alongside corrugation solutions designed to support the growing demand for high-quality carton and box production

Industry leader **Ankan Graphics Limited** is redefining manufacturing efficiency with its curated portfolio of printing, packaging, label, post-press, and corrugation machinery. Collaborating with exclusive global technology partners, Ankan Graphics focuses on a simple but powerful promise: delivering automation, premium quality, and a rapid return on investment. What does it take to thrive in today's economic landscape? Check this out in this exclusive **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW** with Managing Director/CEO **Mr. Kaleeswaran Nadar**, who simplifies complex industry dynamics—touching on standardization, regulatory alignment, and value addition. Read the full interview to also learn how Ankan Graphics is tailoring its solutions specifically for the Nigerian and wider West African markets.



© The legendary Hontec FlexiCon 460 flexography printing machine

across Nigeria and West Africa. We are also showcasing DGM Global folder-gluing and die-cutting technology for folding-carton production, as well as solutions from our other specialist partners covering digital printing, inspection, sheeting, inks, and packaging conversion. Ankan Graphics has established its portfolio around OEMs including Hontec, Youbond, Autoprint, DGM, and other leading manufacturers.

Our focus, however, is not simply to display individual machines. We want our current customers and prospective ones to see how these technologies can work together as a complete production ecosystem—from printing and converting through die-cutting, folding, gluing, inspection, and finishing. Ultimately, the machinery we are highlighting this year has been selected with the realities of the Nigerian and West African markets in mind: lower waste, higher productivity, energy efficiency, reliable automation, ease of operation, and strong after-sales support. Our role at Ankan Graphics is to match each customer with the right technology and then support that investment with installation, training, genuine spare parts, and technical service.

HOW DO YOU TAILOR YOUR TURNKEY SOLUTIONS TO BUSINESSES THAT NEED TO MOVE INTO ECO-FRIENDLY OR COMPOSTABLE PACKAGING?

We do this by first understanding each business's products, packaging requirements, operational processes, and sustainability goals. From there, we recommend the most suitable eco-friendly or compostable packaging materials, formats, and specifications without compromising product protection, presentation, or functionality. Our approach covers the entire transition—from material selection and packaging design to sourcing, production, quality control, and delivery. We also consider factors such as shelf life, durability, branding, regulatory requirements, cost, and end-of-life disposal to ensure the solution is both environmentally responsible and commercially viable. Most importantly, we make the transition as seamless as possible. Rather than asking businesses to manage multiple suppliers and processes themselves, we provide an end-to-end solution that can be customized to their needs and scaled as their business grows.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT YOUR TECHNICAL TEAM PLACES A HEAVY FOCUS ON PREVENTING DOWNTIME. HOW DO YOU MANAGE PREVENTIVE

MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES IN THE NIGERIAN AND WEST AFRICAN MARKETS?

At Ankan Graphics, we take a proactive approach to preventative maintenance because we understand that unexpected equipment downtime can have a direct impact on our customers' production schedules and profitability. We develop maintenance schedules around each machine's operating hours, workload, manufacturer's recommendations, and production demands. Our technical team carries out regular inspections, servicing, cleaning, lubrication, calibration, and timely replacement of wear-and-tear components to identify potential problems before they result in breakdowns.

In the Nigerian and wider West African markets, we also recognize the importance of planning for challenges such as power fluctuations, demanding operating conditions, logistics, and the availability of critical spare parts. We therefore plan for essential components and consumables and, where necessary, maintain access to commonly required spares to reduce response and repair times. We also coordinate maintenance activities with our customers' production schedules, carrying out major servicing during planned shutdowns or periods of lower production wherever possible. This allows us to maintain equipment reliability while minimizing disruption to operations. Our objective at Ankan Graphics LTD is to move beyond reactive repairs and establish a maintenance culture based on prevention, early fault detection, rapid technical response, and long-term equipment reliability. This ultimately helps our customers maximize uptime, extend the working life of their equipment, and maintain consistent production output.

HOW DO YOU GUARANTEE THE AVAILABILITY OF ORIGINAL SPARE PARTS AND SPECIALIZED INKS FOR SPECIFIC PRESS WITHOUT CAUSING PROJECT DELAYS?

At Ankan Graphics LTD, we understand that the



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SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW - ANKAN GRAPHICS LTD

availability of genuine spare parts and the correct inks is critical to keeping our customers' projects and production schedules on track. Our approach is therefore based on planning, genuine OEM sourcing, and maintaining strong relationships with our international technology partners. For critical machinery, we identify the essential wear parts, consumables, and components required for each installation and, where appropriate, recommend that key spares are planned or stocked ahead of time. This allows us to reduce the risk of waiting for parts after a breakdown has already occurred. We source original spare parts directly through our authorized technology partners and manufacturers, ensuring that customers receive components that meet the equipment manufacturer's specifications. Our technical team also helps customers identify the correct part numbers and specifications to avoid delays caused by ordering the wrong components.

For specialized inks, we work with approved ink manufacturers and suppliers to ensure that the ink system is compatible with the specific press, substrate, application, and required print quality. We also plan ink requirements for major projects, particularly where specialized colours, coatings, or formulations are involved. Logistics is another important part of our approach. We monitor lead times, communicate requirements early, and coordinate shipments so that critical parts and consumables arrive before they are needed wherever possible. For urgent requirements, we work with our supply partners to identify the fastest available delivery option. Most importantly, we don't wait for a production problem before thinking about parts and consumables. Our objective is to anticipate requirements, maintain visibility of the supply chain, and have the right materials available at the right time. This gives our customers greater confidence that their machines will remain productive and that projects can be completed without avoidable delays.

FROM PLACING AN ORDER TO

FINAL INSTALLATION AND TEST RUNS ON THE CLIENT'S FACTORY FLOOR, WHAT IS YOUR TYPICAL TURNAROUND TIME?

We do not apply a single fixed turnaround time to every project because the timeline depends on the type and specification of the machine, whether it is a standard or customized configuration, production and shipping schedules, site readiness, and the complexity of installation and commissioning. Typically, once an order is confirmed, we move immediately into production planning, documentation, logistics, and site-preparation coordination. While the machine is being manufactured and shipped, our team works with the client to ensure that the factory floor, electrical requirements, utilities, access, and other installation requirements are ready before the equipment arrives.

For a standard machine that is readily available from the manufacturer, the process can move relatively quickly. For larger or specially configured printing, packaging, or corrugation equipment, the overall lead time can extend to several months because of manufacturing, international shipping, customs clearance, and installation requirements. Once the equipment reaches the client's facility and the site is confirmed ready, our technical team handles installation, commissioning, calibration, operator training, and production test runs. We do not consider the project complete simply because the machine has been delivered; our objective is to ensure that it is properly installed, producing to specification, and that the customer's operators are confident using it.

Our approach is therefore to provide the client with a project-

specific delivery and commissioning schedule from the outset, with clear milestones from order confirmation through shipment, installation, test production, and final handover. This gives the customer visibility throughout the process and helps us identify and resolve potential delays before they affect the project.

WITH THE CURRENT ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL MANUFACTURING TRENDS, WHAT PRINTING AND PACKAGING TECHNOLOGY DO YOU CURRENTLY ADVISE COMPANIES TO INVEST IN?

Our advice is to invest in printing and packaging technology that improves productivity, reduces waste, lowers operating costs, and gives manufacturers greater flexibility rather than simply investing in the most expensive or newest machine. Given the current economic environment in Nigeria and the wider West African market, we are seeing strong value in automation, digitalization, energy-efficient equipment, and integrated finishing and converting solutions. These technologies can help companies reduce dependence on manual processes, improve consistency, shorten production cycles, and make better use of raw materials.

For commercial and industrial printers, we encourage investment in modern digital printing and automated post-press equipment, particularly where customers require shorter runs, fast turnaround, variable data, personalization, or frequent job changes. For packaging manufacturers, flexographic printing, high-speed die-cutting, folder-gluing, laminating, and inspection systems can provide significant productivity benefits as demand for locally produced packaging continues to grow. We also believe that corrugation and carton-converting technology represents an important opportunity. As more products are manufactured, processed, and distributed locally, businesses need reliable local capacity for cartons, boxes, labels, and other forms of packaging. Investing in efficient converting equipment can therefore help manufacturers serve this growing demand while reducing reliance on imported finished packaging.

Another important area is quality control and inspection technology. As brands become more demanding about print consistency, colour accuracy, registration, and packaging defects, automated inspection can help companies detect problems early, reduce waste, and protect their reputation. Ultimately, we don't believe there is a single technology that is right for every company. At Ankan Graphics



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**GRAPHIC
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THE SHIFT IS HERE: WHY WEST AFRICA IS THE NEXT FRONTIER FOR FLEXO AND PACKAGING GROWTH



L-R: An elite lineup of international thought leaders - **Vincent Van Horenbeeck** (Impala Overseas BV / Eco Graphics LTD), **Ge Yujun Jason** (GIP ECO3 Graphics Shenzhen Co., LTD), **Kunle Ogunjobi** (Randomsoft Limited), **Günter Franz** (VIP Systems GmbH), **Luis Ganuza** (Macarbox), **Kant Ravi** and **Malhotra Rahul** (NBG Printographic Machinery PVT LTD).

FLEXOEDGE 2026 recently concluded in Lagos, cementing West Africa as a premier hub for flexographic innovation and sustainable packaging. Co-organized by **Randomsoft Limited** and **VIP Systems GmbH**, the event highlighted a massive regional shift toward automation and eco-friendly manufacturing. This growth is fueled by a surging local consumer market, saturated foreign territories, and an urgent demand for operational excellence from regional manufacturing leaders. Key insights from international OEMs and global experts revealed an industry rapidly accelerating its technical and green capabilities. Explore the comprehensive takeaways in our full post-event report below:

West Africa has officially transitioned from a developing market into the ultimate global hotspot for flexographic and packaging investment. This major revelation emerged from the highly anticipated **FLEXOEDGE 2026** conference (held 28 July, 2026), jointly organized by Lagos-based **Randomsoft Limited**, led by **Kunle Ogunjobi**, in conjunction with Stuttgart-based **VIP Systems GmbH**, led by **Günter Walter Franz**. The high-profile event gathered top-tier global equipment manufacturers, regional converters,

and sustainability leaders, all confirming that the future of the print industry is rapidly being rewritten in the region.

Reflecting on the cutting-edge insights shared by global industry experts, one truth is undeniable: West Africa is no longer just a developing market catching up to the rest of the world. It is the premier global hotspot for flexographic investment, setting a rapid new pace for industrial growth.



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The Catalysts for Unstoppable Growth

A stellar lineup of international speakers analyzed the macroeconomic factors positioning West Africa at the centre of the packaging world. Presentations were delivered by industry heavyweights, including, among several others:

- **Kunle Ogunjobi** (Randomsoft LTD)
- **Ge Yujun Jason** (GIP ECO3 Graphics Shenzhen Co., LTD)

- **Günter Franz** (VIP Systems GmbH)
- **Vincent Van Horenbeeck** (Impala Overseas BV / Eco Graphics LTD)
- **Luis Ganuza** (Macarbox)
- **Kant Ravi** and **Malhotra Rahul** (NBG Printographic Machinery PVT LTD)
- **Emmanuel Mougenot** (Dantex Group), who joined the cohort virtually.



Pioneering Profit with Purpose, Sustainability, and Excellence

The green transition is no longer optional in packaging—it is operational. A high point of the annual event was a specialized panel discussion focused on sustainable, eco-friendly flexo and packaging practices. Guided by the charismatic master of ceremonies, printer and

communications strategist **Babajide Benson**, this critical session brought together inspiring leaders who are actively rewriting the packaging playbook with lean, clean blueprints. These influential voices, in the high-level panel discussion driving the green transition, include:

- **Titilayo Oshodi** (Special Adviser on Climate Change



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MENTORSHIP PARTICIPANTS' BENEFITS

1. Academy - free & highly subsidized print & allied training.
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3. 24/7 access to mentor subject to mentors - subject to availability.
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6. Evening Dinner with Investor/Mentor.
8. Booth Camp/ Boat Cruise exclusivity .

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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.



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SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE - FLEXO EDGE 2026 POST-EVENT REVIEW

and Circular Economy to the Governor of Lagos State, West Africa's largest sub-national economy)

· **Princess Funlayo (Layo) Bakare-Okeowo** (FAE LTD / Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry)

· **Ajai Musaddi** (Sona Group of Industries)

Godson Nkeekelonye (Excite Panacea LTD / Route Market Africa)

Summarily, the panel of experts identified three core pillars driving the region's current industrial transformation:

1. **Global Market Saturation:** Plateauing traditional print markets in Europe and America are forcing global Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to aggressively look for fresh, high-growth territories.
2. **The Demographic Dividend:** A rapidly booming population coupled with an exploding domestic consumer class is fueling unprecedented local demand for high-quality FMCG packaging.
3. **Leapfrogging Legacy Systems with a Shift to Operational Excellence:** Local converters are actively abandoning and dismantling legacy setups and outdated machinery to adopt automated converting systems, smart machinery investments, and eco-friendly manufacturing practices not only for operational excellence but also to rival global standards.

A Connected Industrial Community

Beyond the technical sessions, FLEXOEDGE 2026 proved to be a powerhouse for corporate networking, facilitating critical connections among executive leadership teams from major firms. The venue buzzed with executive energy and high-level networking, facilitating vital connections between global OEMs and the heavyweights of regional flexo and packaging production. High-level delegates attended from **Afkar Printing, FAE Limited, Global Plus Publishing Company, Vista International, Superflux International, KAS Prints, Sona Group of Industries, Print Box Nigeria, Aquafina** (Seven-Up Bottling Company) and the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**.

While the yearly event also witnessed an award presentation to distinguished flexo/ packaging laureates, the overwhelming energy in the room left no room for doubt about the clear consensus among attendees: African printers are fully prepared to claim their space on the global stage. Right here in West Africa, the future of flexography is actively being rewritten. The momentum sparked at FLEXOEDGE 2026 is not a fleeting moment, but the first chapter of an unprecedented, long-term manufacturing boom.



© Some of the picture credit goes to FLEXO EDGE 2026 by Randomsoft LTD.

SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW - ANKAN GRAPHICS LTD



LTD, we assess the customer's production volume, product mix, substrate requirements, labour structure, energy costs, available space, growth plans, and return-on-investment expectations before recommending a machine. Our philosophy is simple: Invest in technology that solves a real production problem today while giving the business the capacity and flexibility to grow tomorrow.

ARE YOUR PACKAGING AND FORMING MACHINES COMPLIANT WITH GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS (LIKE FDA OR CE) AND APPROVED BY NAFDAC FOR LOCAL PRODUCTION?

Yes, we work with reputable international OEMs and specify machinery according to the technical and regulatory requirements of each customer's application. Our portfolio includes established manufacturers such as Autoprint, Hontec, Wenzhou Youbond, DGM Global, and other specialist technology partners. Where a machine is intended for food, pharmaceutical, or other regulated packaging production, we work with the OEM to confirm the relevant CE requirements, electrical and machine-safety standards, materials of construction, and application-specific documentation before installation. Where FDA-related requirements apply, these are normally relevant to the materials, inks, coatings, adhesives, and other components that come into contact with the packaged product—not simply to the printing or converting machine itself.

Regarding NAFDAC, it is important not to describe a packaging machine as being "NAFDAC approved" unless a specific approval has actually been issued for that particular application. NAFDAC requirements generally concern the regulated product and its manufacturing/packaging process. Therefore, we work with the customer to ensure that the proposed machinery, packaging materials, inks, coatings, and production process can meet the applicable Nigerian regulatory requirements. Our role is to provide the appropriate technology and

technical documentation from the OEM, support installation and commissioning, and help the customer establish a production process that meets the relevant standards. For a specific food, pharmaceutical, or other regulated packaging project, we review the application with the client and OEM before the machine is ordered, so that compliance requirements are built into the specification rather than addressed after installation.

In short, our commitment is to internationally source properly specified equipment, supported by the relevant OEM documentation and localized technical support—while recognizing that final regulatory approval depends on the complete production system, materials, product, and intended application.

WHICH OF YOUR FLEXIBLE PACKAGING AND POUCH-MAKING MACHINERY HANDLES BIO-PLASTICS, RECYCLABLE FILMS, OR SUSTAINABLE PAPERS WITHOUT JAMMING OR TEARING?

We can not claim that one machine can automatically run every bio-plastic, recyclable film, or sustainable paper without adjustment. The key is matching the substrate to the machine configuration, converting process, inks, adhesives, and operating parameters. For flexible packaging and label applications, Hontec's narrow-web flexographic presses are among the solutions we would recommend. The latest FlexiCon Neo platform is specifically being positioned for sustainable production, including compatibility with mono-material PE substrates, while supporting LED-UV curing and waste-reduction technologies. For paper-based and corrugated packaging, Youbond laminating

technology is another important part of our portfolio. It is designed for high-precision lamination of printed top sheets to corrugated flutes, making it particularly relevant for businesses moving toward recyclable paper-based packaging. Ankan Graphics also offers complete corrugation solutions through its partner portfolio.

However, avoiding jams, tearing, stretching, or registration problems is not simply a matter of choosing the machine. Sustainable substrates can behave differently from conventional materials in terms of tensile strength, thickness, coefficient of friction, surface treatment, ink adhesion, moisture, and web tension. That is why, before recommending equipment, our technical team looks at the customer's actual substrate and application. We work with the OEM to establish the appropriate web tension, nip pressure, drying or curing requirements, adhesive system, speed, and other machine settings, and we recommend production trials where necessary.

Our objective at Ankan Graphics is therefore to provide a substrate-specific turnkey solution, rather than simply selling a machine and expecting the customer to solve compatibility issues afterwards. With the right machine configuration, consumables, settings, operator training, and technical support, customers can confidently move toward more recyclable and sustainable packaging materials while maintaining production quality and reliability.

DOES YOUR AUTOMATED FILLING AND SEALING LINES OFFER MODIFIED ATMOSPHERE PACKAGING (MAP) OR VACUUM SEALING OPTIONS TO HELP EXTEND FOOD SHELF-LIFE?

Yes. Ankan Graphics supports customers looking to incorporate vacuum sealing and Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP) into automated food-packaging operations, but the exact capability depends on the specific filling, pouch-making, and sealing machine configuration and the product being packaged. For food producers, MAP and vacuum packaging can help extend shelf life by reducing exposure to oxygen and controlling the atmosphere inside the package. However, the correct gas mixture, vacuum level, sealing temperature, dwell time, film structure, and package format all need to be matched to the particular food product.

Our approach at Ankan Graphics LTD is therefore to first understand the customer's product, required shelf life, packaging material, production speed, and hygiene requirements. We then work with the appropriate OEM and technical partners to specify a suitable automated filling, vacuum/MAP, and sealing configuration rather than assuming that one machine will suit every application. Where required, the packaging line can be



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DMS 330W
WEB DIGITAL UV EMBELLISHMENT HOT STAMPING MACHINE



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WHAT DO PRINT BUYERS WANT?



Great service, low pricing, and high quality are no longer differentiators—they are baseline expectations by print buyers. However, modern print buyers are shifting their focus toward tangible business outcomes. In this **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE**, Digital Marketing Strategist John Bracamontes explores how printers can move past traditional sales pitches. Adapted from pryntbase.com, this analysis breaks down the shift in buyer mindset and outlines how aligning your services and capabilities with your customer's final business goals is the ultimate key to success.

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The Question should not only be— What Do Print Buyers Want? But Also, Who Are the Print Buyers of Today and What Do They Want Specifically?

This question, "What do Print Buyers Want?" to some, may feel like it has a simple and obvious answer, while others could see it as more complex. But the reality is that print buyers want outcomes. Yes, they want great service, yes, they want great pricing, and yes, they want great quality, but all of those things are in support of accomplishing something. And that is what Print Buyers actually want. So the answer to the question is that **"Print Buyers Want to Achieve Their Goals"** (Goals and Outcomes). **This leads us to two more very important questions...**

1. Who are the Print Buyers Today?
2. What are the goals and outcomes of the Print Buyer?

In this article, we go deeper into the details on what those are and show how you can better serve and market yourself as a print solution/ service provider (PSP) to these buyers.

WHO ARE THE PRINT BUYERS?

This is an important question to answer, because without knowing who the print buyers are, it's literally impossible to know what they want. Obviously, right? The truth is that the changing landscape of print and the print industry over the last few decades has changed the roles within the industry, which applies to the people who are buying print and those who work in print as well.

Today, when you hear someone talk about a print buyer, it's typically in reference to a specific company or group of companies that purchase print, but other people who have been in the print industry for a long time might remember the days when you would commonly find someone in most organizations who was dedicated to buying print as a function of marketing, sales, and customer communication. Many of those people used to literally have the job title of "Print Buyer".

There were tens of thousands of people with a print buyer job title **30 years ago**, but if we look at the numbers, they have consistently dropped. In **2004**, there were just **under 20,000 people** with a print buyer job title, and in **2024**, there are an **estimated 9,720 people** with the print buyer role. Currently on LinkedIn, you can find **only 371 people** within the United States who have an official Print Buyer title. So the reality is that the print buyer of today isn't necessarily defined by title alone. The responsibility of buying print has been delegated and relegated across a number of different roles, but luckily you will still find them in a number of identifiable categories.

Primary Print Buyer Roles of Today

Listed here are the job titles that are typically in charge of buying print for organizations.

- o **Print Buyer** - We'll still list this one since there are still a decent number of them
- o **CEO / President** - Typically smaller companies
- o **Marketing Director** - Typically smaller companies or small marketing teams
- o **Marketing Manager** - Large, medium & small companies
- o **PR or Communications Manager** - Large & medium-sized companies
- o **Event Director, Event Manager or Event Planner** - Large, medium & small companies
- o **Brand Manager** - Large, medium & small companies
- o **Graphic Designer** - Typically small companies or independent designers
- o **Art Director** - Medium-sized agencies & some large in-house marketing teams
- o **Production Director or Manager** - Large & medium companies and agencies
- o **Sales Manager** - Medium & small-sized companies
- o **Operations Manager** - Medium & small companies
- o **Office Manager** - Typically smaller companies

- o **Administrative Assistant** - Large, medium & small companies
- o **Safety Manager** - Large & medium-sized companies
- o **Non-Commercial Buyers** - Individuals purchasing invitations, stickers, etc.

Not all of these job titles buy print at the same volume or frequency either. Things such as size of company, industry, and each company's target market are all factors as to how much they will buy from you and how often.

What Do They Want?

Of course, everyone who buys print wants... Print. But what is it that they really want? Print is a tool to accomplish something. And that something is what the buyer wants and needs. Within the print industry, we often hear other industry advocates talk about how print service providers (PSP's) need to be offering solutions and to be seen as marketing partners. And while this is great, it still doesn't change the fact that the buyer needs their printed solution to accomplish something. So rather than sell yourself, you should be selling what the print buyer needs the print to accomplish. Focusing on those Goals and Outcomes is the key to giving print buyers what they want.

GOALS & OUTCOMES

Ultimately, print buyers want to achieve a goal or an outcome with the print they are having you create. Agencies, for example, need to satisfy the needs of their clients, while businesses who buy direct from print companies need to satisfy the needs of their customers. Again, we don't want to come off as too rudimentary here, but if we focus broadly on what they are... Goals are the desired outcomes or results that a person, customer, or organization wants to achieve. Goals provide direction, motivation, and clear focus. Here is what Goals actually do and provide...

Clarity of Purpose

Goals help clarify what you want to achieve, giving you a specific target to work towards. Print buyers have individually different goals based on their industry, role, project, and who they are as a person.

Motivation

Having clear goals keeps you motivated and gives you a reason to keep going. For example, some print buyers are on a mission, while others are just trying to keep their job.

Measurement

Goals provide a benchmark for success, allowing you to measure progress over time. Technology has made it easier for Print Buyers to expect some level of measurability.

Focus

They help you concentrate your efforts and resources on important tasks, avoiding distractions.

Accountability

Setting goals creates a sense of responsibility and encourages commitment to achieving them. So why is this important? Because your customer may not actually want something printed; they actually want to get something that they believe the print will provide them. Help achieve a goal or outcome.

Let's look a little more at the goals and outcomes customers would want print to provide. Below we have listed a number of the most common **Goals & Outcomes** that print buyers want to achieve when buying print.

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SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE - THE PRINT BUYERS

Print as a Goal

Now we do still have to admit that every company that wants print from you does, in fact, want print. But you'll also find many Agencies or Graphic Designers wanting a certain level of quality in their print, which is still more print-focused because they care A LOT about colour and quality. Even though the Agencies and Designers' customers care more about their Goals and Outcomes, the Agency and Designer will focus more on Quality in your relationship. There is so much nuance to this; it's hard to make blanket absolute statements, but this one is pretty spot on.

Revenue as a Goal

We're also a firm believer that most businesses and organizations have an end goal of revenue. If you need money to operate, then ultimately money is a goal, and achieving revenue targets allows you to do that. You can sustain or grow with revenue, and in many cases, revenue is a direct goal. So your messaging can center around how direct mail or other printed marketing can help increase revenue for a business or organization. Much of the goals listed below ultimately result in more revenue, but the goal at hand for a company can be a few levels above the revenue mindset, and that's what we are sharing below.

Customers as a Goal & Outcome

Getting more customers is critical for a business or organization to sustain itself and to grow, so of course they would want to bring in new customers or replace customers who leave. Again, including messaging about acquiring new customers can generate more of a focus on that goal instead of the print itself, and sharing how print can do that will put you ahead of the competition.

Members as a Goal & Outcome

Similar to getting more customers is getting more Members. This is a little bit different because some organizations have members who pay directly, while others get funding elsewhere, but in many cases funding is dependent on the member count. Startups, Churches, Non-Profits, Schools, Government-Funded Organizations and other types of companies just need to increase their membership, which requires a different approach to acquire them. You can speak to how you do that using print marketing solutions.

Attendees as a Goal & Outcome

Many companies and organizations hold events, and they need people to show up. This may require attendees to pay, but in many cases there is no payment required; they just want people to come to the event. A different approach and message is required to get people to show up, and in some cases, depending on the type of event, you may need to create extremely innovative strategic approaches to lure in the most apprehensive targets.

Awareness as a Goal & Outcome

A big goal for marketing is awareness, especially for younger companies and those who've never relied heavily on branded identity but are now ready to take their brand to the next level. Obtaining more awareness leads to more of everything. If customers don't know you exist, they'll never do business with you, so it's critical to drive up awareness. Ensuring that your print customers know you can help you with that is very important.

Education as a Goal & Outcome

And many organizations need to ensure they share more detail about what they do, how they do it, and where they differentiate. While some institutions, such as hospitals, need to give explicit direction to patients. But all of this is focused on educating a customer. And that is a very specific goal, very different from increasing revenue or acquiring new customers & members. Making sure your print buyer knows that you can create printed solutions that educate their customer base will allow you to close more print business by focusing on that message with these groups.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS PRINT BUYERS MAKE

As you know, the fact is that all print buyers also want specific operational aspects of the full print experience. We've listed a handful of the most important and most common considerations print buyers make when purchasing.

Price

Price is often one of the most significant considerations for print buyers. Buyers must balance their budgetary constraints with the quality and quantity of print materials required. Competitive pricing is crucial, especially for larger projects where cost savings can significantly impact the overall budget. However, the lowest price isn't always the best option, as buyers often factor in additional elements like reliability and customer service. Hidden costs, such as setup fees or shipping, can also influence a buyer's decision. Ultimately, print buyers aim for the best value, considering both cost and the total return on investment.

Quality

The quality of print materials is non-negotiable for some print buyers, as it directly reflects their brand or project. Factors like colour accuracy, paper type, resolution,



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and finishing options are closely scrutinized to ensure the final product aligns with expectations. High-quality printing helps communicate professionalism and can make a significant impression on end-users or clients. Buyers often request samples or proofs to evaluate the quality before committing to large-scale orders. Any inconsistency or defect can result in reorders or delays, making quality assurance a top priority for print buyers.

Availability

Availability of the needed print types and services is a critical consideration for print buyers. Limited options in paper stock, finishes, or printing capabilities can restrict creative vision and may lead buyers to explore alternative vendors. Buyers need to know that their chosen printer can handle the specifications of their project, whether it's a custom-sized brochure or a specialty finish like embossing or foil stamping. Inconsistent availability or supply chain disruptions can hinder project timelines and erode trust. Print providers who maintain a robust inventory and versatile service offerings are more likely to win and retain business.

Timing

Most print projects are tied to specific deadlines, such as product launches, events, or seasonal campaigns. Print buyers prioritize vendors who can offer fast turnaround times without compromising quality. Delays in production or delivery can have a domino effect, potentially impacting marketing campaigns or customer satisfaction. Buyers often inquire about rush options and whether expedited services come with additional costs. Print providers with a proven track record of meeting deadlines and transparent communication about timelines tend to be more appealing to buyers.

Experience

Overall, experience is a massively important factor for many print buyers as they have personal preferences when it comes to how they want to buy or be treated during the buying process. Outlined are 3 experiential scenarios that print buyers expect and want.

White Glove Experience

For high-value or complex projects, some buyers seek a premium, white-glove service. This involves hands-on support, personalized consultations, and end-to-end management of the print process, ensuring precision and high-quality results.

Low Touch Experience

Conversely, buyers handling routine orders may prefer a low-touch approach, where the process is streamlined and automated. A simple online ordering system with clear instructions and minimal back-and-forth can be ideal for these clients.

Ecommerce Experience

As digital solutions become increasingly popular, print buyers often value ecommerce platforms that simplify purchasing. Features like instant quotes, easy reordering, and live tracking of shipments enhance convenience and efficiency.

We could go on for even longer about this, but you get the point. There are different goals and outcomes that your print buyer and print customers need to achieve, and when you speak directly to those goals and objectives, it will get you more business and generate more substantial customer relationships.

About John BRACAMONTES

John Bracamontes is a Digital Marketing Executive and Strategist who transforms eCommerce and digital performance for companies through the strategic integration of talent and technology. A visionary entrepreneur and people-focused leader, John has successfully built and scaled digital campaigns across both agencies and corporate brands, driving measurable conversion and efficiency.

As the Chief Marketing Officer at **Pryntbase** (an artificial intelligence marketing software platform built specifically for commercial print shops and print service providers), John runs the marketing operations from St. Louis, Missouri, USA. He has spent over a decade developing the strategies that now power the platform — the same playbook he used in his agency days, encoded into software so every print shop in America can run it themselves.

WHAT MAKES A PRINTING COMPANY IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLACE?



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Think winning the print race is all about being the cheapest? Think again. The industry has never been more competitive. Yet, the print service providers (PSPs) leading the pack aren't the ones slashing prices. As a highly competitive industry, growth for print service providers (PSPs) is driven by customer trust and problem-solving, not just low prices. In this edition's **COVER STORY** authored by **Alyssa Summers**, CEO of the digital marketing firm **Pryntbase**, discover why top-tier customers bypass cheap alternatives and explicitly trust premium PSPs to: solve complex operational problems, simplify messy, inefficient workflows, and deliver flawless, consistent results that stand the test of time. This inspiring piece reveals the truth: low prices might get you through the door, but they rarely buy loyalty. Instead, true market leaders win by becoming irreplaceable. Ready to shift your print business from transactional pricing to unbreakable client partnerships? Read on:

The print industry has never been more competitive, but the companies that continue to grow are not always the ones with the lowest prices. They are the ones customers trust to solve problems, simplify workflows, and consistently deliver results. While price may help win an opportunity, it rarely creates lasting loyalty.

The strongest print providers understand that customer retention is built through relationships, expertise, and operational value. They become an extension of their customers' businesses instead of simply fulfilling orders. By combining consultative selling, proactive communication, print workflow automation, and exceptional customer service, these companies create a competitive advantage that competitors struggle to match. The result is stronger print customer loyalty, higher customer lifetime value, and sustainable print business growth.

Price Gets You Considered, Value Makes You Irreplaceable

Competing on price alone creates a race to the bottom. There will almost always be another company willing to charge less. Businesses that focus only on cost often overlook the value that an experienced print partner brings to their daily operations. Customers rarely switch providers because of a small price difference. They leave when trust disappears or when another company demonstrates significantly greater value. The hidden costs of switching include:

- Rebuilding workflows and approval processes.

- Training new contacts on brand standards.
- Risking production delays or inconsistent quality.
- Losing historical order knowledge and project familiarity.

When a print company consistently delivers reliable outcomes, customers begin to see them as an essential partner rather than another vendor. That level of trust strengthens customer retention and increases customer lifetime value because satisfied accounts continue buying over many years instead of requiring constant replacement through new sales.

The Five Traits Every Irreplaceable Print Company Shares

Transactional printers focus on completing orders. Strategic partners focus on helping customers succeed.

1. Deep Industry Expertise

Specialization allows print providers to understand industry regulations, customer expectations, and production challenges before they become problems. That expertise creates confidence that extends well beyond the printed product.

2. Fast and Proactive Communication

Customers appreciate updates before they have to ask. Prompt responses, clear expectations, and transparent communication reduce uncertainty throughout every project.

3. Consistent Quality

Reliability builds trust. Customers want confidence that every order will meet the same standards regardless of size or complexity.

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WHAT MAKES A PRINTING COMPANY IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLACE?

4. Reliable Project Management

Strong project management keeps deadlines on track, coordinates multiple stakeholders, and minimizes customer stress throughout production.



5. Problem Solving Mindset

The best print companies focus on business outcomes instead of simply producing materials. They recommend better solutions, identify efficiencies, and help customers accomplish broader business objectives.

Together, these qualities strengthen print buyer relationships and create meaningful differentiation that extends far beyond pricing.



Technology That Creates Customer Stickiness

Technology is not valuable simply because it improves internal efficiency. Its greatest benefit is creating a better customer experience that makes doing business easier. Modern print technology adoption supports customer retention by removing unnecessary friction from every interaction. Examples include:

- Online ordering portals with branded storefronts.
- Saved order history for faster repeat purchases.
- One-click reorder management.
- Automated proofs and approval workflows.
- Production status updates without manual follow-up.
- CRM systems that track customer activity and preferences.



These tools simplify repeat ordering while giving account managers better visibility into customer behavior. Instead of waiting for customers to reach out, teams can proactively identify reorder opportunities, recommend new products, and anticipate future needs. The easier it becomes for customers to work with a print provider, the less likely they are to consider alternatives. Convenience becomes another powerful driver of print customer loyalty.

Consultative Selling Creates Long-Term Account Growth

The strongest sales professionals do far more than process incoming requests. They act as trusted advisors who help customers achieve measurable business outcomes. Rather than immediately discussing specifications or pricing, consultative selling begins by asking thoughtful questions. Effective conversations often explore:

- Business goals.
- Marketing challenges.
- Operational inefficiencies.
- Growth initiatives.
- Budget priorities.



These discussions naturally uncover opportunities for cross-selling and upselling because recommendations are tied directly to customer objectives. For example, a salesperson might suggest workflow improvements that reduce turnaround times, recommend inventory management programs that lower storage costs, or introduce automation that simplifies recurring orders.

Regular business reviews also help identify future opportunities before competitors do. These meetings allow account managers to discuss upcoming initiatives, evaluate current performance, and recommend improvements based on changing business needs. Expertise creates one of the strongest competitive advantages available because knowledgeable advisors are significantly harder to replace than lower-priced competitors.

Customer Retention Is Built Between Orders, Not During Them

Many print companies disappear from a customer's radar until the next purchase request arrives. Irreplaceable providers maintain meaningful engagement throughout the entire customer relationship. Consistent communication demonstrates commitment while keeping your company top of mind. Simple retention strategies include:

- Scheduled account check-ins.
- Educational content that helps customers improve results.
- Automated reorder reminders.
- Lifecycle marketing campaigns.
- Celebrating customer milestones and company achievements.
- Monitoring customer health to identify at-risk accounts early.



These ongoing interactions reinforce trust while providing additional opportunities to uncover new projects and evolving business needs.

Customers are far more likely to remain loyal when they feel supported throughout the year instead of only during production. Proactive customer communication strengthens relationships, improves satisfaction, and supports continued print account management and account growth.



Your greatest competitive advantage is not your equipment, your pricing, or even your product quality. It is becoming so valuable to your customers' daily operations that replacing you introduces unnecessary risk. Print companies that invest in customer retention strategies, consultative selling, print workflow automation, proactive communication, and exceptional customer experiences position themselves as trusted business partners instead of interchangeable vendors. That approach strengthens print customer loyalty, increases customer lifetime value, and creates sustainable print business growth that competitors find extremely difficult to displace.



About Alyssa SUMMERS

Alyssa Summers is the Chief Executive Officer of Pryntbase, a premier marketing service and solutions provider engineered specifically for full-service print companies. With a deep background in digital strategy and a proven history of agency and industry leadership, she has guided hundreds of print businesses to successfully scale their operations.

Alyssa specializes in helping printers drive visibility, capture high-value leads, and accelerate sales through the practical application of technology and marketing automation. Recognized as a forward-thinking digital marketing thought leader, her deep industry insight and actionable approach empower modern print service providers to thrive and remain competitive in the digital age.

Alyssa leads Pryntbase from the Iowa City office, drawing on years of work with print shops to shape what gets built and how. She's the operator who decides what makes the cut — and what gets cut — based on what actually moves the needle for a print company.

Pryntbase is on a mission to give Printers the knowledge & tools to grow their business online. Find out more at www.pryntbase.com

Print Impact Around the World

"We didn't design the PXG to be a one-size-fits-all feeder," said **Duane Smith**, Director of Manufacturing and Services at Printware. "Every critical adjustment point is accessible, allowing operators to dial in performance for virtually any compatible substrate. It's a rugged, production-built design that has already proven itself in the field, giving customers a dependable platform they can grow with."

Powered by HP Fixed-Imager TIJ 4.0 Technology, the system produces vibrant, full-color output using durable pigment-based inks that are fade-, scratch-, and water-resistant while delivering some of the industry's lowest operating costs and longest-lasting printhead life. The addition of the integrated PXG Feeding System dramatically expands production capabilities beyond envelopes, allowing printers to produce personalized paper bags, small corrugated, folding cartons, and other packaging substrates with quick changeovers and exceptional registration. This added versatility enables print providers to diversify their offerings, increase equipment utilization, and capture new revenue opportunities without investing in multiple production platforms.

With over 500+ successful installations worldwide, the iJetColor 1175 Pro + PXG continues Printware's commitment to delivering dependable, production-ready inkjet solutions that maximize profitability while providing unmatched application flexibility, with easy setup thanks to its new modular design.

MBO AND KOMORI TO SHOWCASE PRINT AND FINISHING SOLUTIONS AT PRINTING UNITED EXPO 2026

MBO
KOMORI Group



MBO America will once again join forces with **Komori America** at **PRINTING United Expo 2026**, taking place **September 23-25, 2026**, in Las Vegas. Visitors are invited to experience the combined strengths of both companies at **Booth N5201**, where MBO America and Komori America will showcase an integrated print and finishing ecosystem designed to help commercial and packaging printers improve productivity, automation, and overall workflow efficiency.

Together, MBO America and Komori America offer a seamless approach to modern print production—from press to finishing—giving printers access to innovative technologies that reduce manual touchpoints, streamline operations, and maximize output. By combining Komori's world-class printing systems with MBO America's advanced finishing solutions, customers can explore complete production workflows built to meet today's evolving manufacturing demands.

**PRINTING UNITED
EXPO**

MBO America represents the renowned German-engineered MBO Group, including H+H, and has built a reputation as a leader in high-performance post-press finishing solutions. With decades of expertise in folding, die cutting, specialty applications, direct mail, pharmaceutical production, and digital finishing, MBO America provides flexible, scalable systems designed to meet the needs of offset, digital, and hybrid print environments.

Komori America complements these capabilities with industry-leading offset and digital printing technologies recognized worldwide for exceptional print quality, fast makeready, automation, and connected workflow solutions. Together, the companies provide printers with a comprehensive production ecosystem that supports greater efficiency, higher quality, and increased

profitability.

Attendees are encouraged to visit **Booth N5201** during **PRINTING United Expo 2026** to meet with experts from both organizations, explore integrated production solutions, and discover how Komori America and MBO America are helping printers prepare for the future of print.

CANON UNVEILS THE VARIOPRESS IV7 AT THINK AHEAD 2026

Canon



Canon U.S.A., Inc., leader in digital imaging solutions, has announced the U.S. unveiling of its next-generation B2+ sheetfed inkjet press, the **varioPRESS iV7**, at the **think Ahead 2026 conference** (July 13-15) in Boca Raton, Florida.

The event marked the first installation and live demonstration of the varioPRESS iV7 in the United States, offering attendees an exclusive look at Canon's latest advancements in high-volume digital production. The unveiling represents the next phase of the platform's global rollout, underscoring the company's continued investment in production inkjet innovation and its commitment to helping print service providers worldwide accelerate the transition from offset to digital.



The varioPRESS iV7 is designed to deliver a powerful combination of productivity, print quality, and operational efficiency for commercial printers, photobook production, direct mail providers, and publishing environments. Operating in the B2+ format segment, it expands Canon's production print portfolio into a critical market category, bridging the gap between smaller-format digital presses and larger production systems, and further strengthening Canon's end-to-end production print offering.

The varioPRESS iV7 has groundbreaking speeds of up to 8,700 19.7" x 27.5" B2 sheets per hour, rivaling that of a half-size offset press. Having the flexibility to handle any size sheet from 13" x 19" up to an available 24.5" x 29.5" custom size option, the varioPRESS iV7 is designed to enable printers to maximize output economics, such as enabling 6-up letter page imposition on a 23" x 29" standard B2+ sheet size. Its combination of inkjet architecture, media versatility, and workflow integration is designed to help print providers increase throughput, expand application capabilities, and optimize production efficiency, demonstrating how offset-class productivity and versatility can be achieved in a digital production environment, while maintaining consistent high image quality across a wide range of applications.

Built on more than a decade of Canon leadership in sheetfed inkjet technology, beginning with the varioPRINT i300, varioPRINT iX3200 and varioPRINT iX1700, the varioPRESS iV7 reflects the continued evolution of Canon's production inkjet platform, combining proven innovation with new levels of productivity and application flexibility. "The U.S. unveiling of the varioPRESS iV7 represents an important milestone in bringing our next-generation inkjet technology closer to our customers," said **Kiyoshi Oka**, Executive Vice President, Marketing Strategy Unit, Canon U.S.A., Inc. "As print providers continue to look for ways to drive efficiency, expand application

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Print Impact Around the World

capabilities, and adapt to changing market dynamics, the varioPRESS iV7 is designed to help them move forward with confidence and unlock new growth opportunities."

EPS LAUNCHES COMMANDCORE 2026.2



ePS has released **CommandCore 2026.2**, a major platform update for packaging manufacturers addressing one of the industry's most pressing operational challenges: experienced estimators, planners, and operators are retiring faster than they're being replaced, taking their knowledge with them. This release encodes that institutional knowledge directly into the platform. Every user, on every shift, has access to the plant's best thinking, regardless of their experience level.

"Packaging manufacturers are facing a real knowledge-transfer challenge," said **Craig Tait**, Chief Product Officer at ePS. "CommandCore 2026.2 helps plants capture the expertise of their best people and make it repeatable across the business, from estimating and planning, to production control, and customer commitments."

Locking in expert knowledge before the skills gap widens

Radius Estimating introduces pre-defined route templates, allowing proven routing logic to be configured once and applied consistently across every estimate. The plant's best-practice knowledge – which work centres, in what sequence, for which product types – is encoded by a senior estimator and automatically reused thereafter. Faster quotes, consistent results, no dependency on who happens to be building the estimate.

Paxis ERP, ePS's affordable solution for label and tag converters within the CommandCore platform, extends AI-powered dynamic translation across its workflows in 2026.2. Global and multilingual teams can now work in their native language without waiting for manual localisation, reducing errors, accelerating adoption, and removing one of the most persistent friction points in multi-country operations. The same release also delivers security enhancements, improved Click Charge management for more accurate job costing, expanded reporting, and additional pricing methods.



Corrugated MES: connected, modern, and platform-ready

With 2026.2, the corrugated MES takes a significant step toward the same modern, browser-based experience that defines the rest of the CommandCore platform. MES Hub gives corrugator planners, supervisors, and plant managers web-based access to orders, lineups, trim analysis, and production KPIs from any device, the same design language, personalisation options, and user experience framework already familiar to users across the platform. For customers, that means faster adoption, lower training overhead, and a clear signal that ePS is continuing to invest in a world-class user experience for the CommandCore platform. Trim Advisor Web builds on that foundation, bringing AI-powered trim intelligence to the corrugator planner. It learns from the plant's own production history to recommend the roll widths and material combinations most likely to yield the best outcome, with confidence ratings and cost transparency built in.

Closing the integration gap between robotics and production control

AC4D Packing Station Advanced integrates directly with robotic palletiser systems, providing the software layer that connects robotic hardware to production control. The system evaluates quality control results and upstream quarantine status, applies configurable routing rules, and instructs the robot on pallet assignment automatically. Transactions are generated in real time. Pallet completion triggers label printing without operator intervention. For plants that have already invested in robotic hardware, this closes the integration gap that has prevented full automation of the palletising process.

Accurate delivery commitments, without touching the live schedule

PrintFlow 4D introduces Order Promising, allowing customer-facing teams to generate a



system-backed delivery commitment in seconds by simulating a prospective order against the live schedule. The existing schedule is untouched, and unconfirmed promises expire automatically. PrintFlow 4D also gains task and print-change grouping, keeping compatible production runs together through optimisation. Fewer changeovers, better press utilisation, and less manual intervention from the scheduler.

Embedded intelligence across sales and operations

2026.2 expands artificial intelligence capabilities within Radius ERP. An Estimate Win Predictor scores the conversion probability of new estimates, so sales teams can focus on the opportunities most worth pursuing. A Customer Churn Predictor flags accounts showing early signs of attrition, giving account managers the chance to intervene before revenue is lost. Both models train on each customer's own data. Pack AI completes the picture with a conversational assistant embedded into Radius screens, delivering answers at the point of decision without leaving the workflow.

Metrics ERP extends its reach across compliance, scrap, and banking

Metrics® ERP significantly expands what the ERP handles natively, reducing reliance on workarounds and third-party tools. A dedicated Scrap Management capability introduces the first purpose-built workflow for managing scrap as a commercial process, with pallet-level inventory control and configurable billing options per separation. The release also expands the regulatory and fiscal compliance engine to stay ahead of evolving tax and invoicing requirements across the markets it serves, and deepens banking integration so that boleto issuance, remittance, and return processing all happen inside the ERP. Customers spend less time outside the system and more time in it.

LANDMARK EU PACKAGING AND WASTE REGULATIONS TAKE EFFECT



@ EU's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)

The new restrictions on acceptable material use and product design introduced with the European Union's **Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)** have begun to apply across Europe and Northern Ireland in line with the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement previously reached with the United Kingdom, effective **12 August, 2026**.

A **European Commission** statement said a range of reforms will be phased in during the next four years in a move to create a consistent circular economy approach across Europe. It aims to curb a reliance on using fossil fuel-derived materials such as plastics in packaging.

An initial focus to come into effect across the EU will be restrictions on the level of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) that can be used within food-contact packaging.

The Commission said the PPWR was committed to preventing exposure to PFAS, or 'forever chemicals', due to their failure to break down in the environment. A raft of research in recent years has looked at the potential for these chemicals to accumulate in ecosystems and organisms, leading to concerns about health problems, which has resulted in calls for political action.

The Commission said: "PFAS have been commonly used in food packaging such as takeaway containers, fast-food wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, bakery paper and pizza boxes to repel water or grease. By limiting the use of PFAS in food-contact packaging, the new rules will help protect human health while reducing the release of these harmful substances into the environment."

Other early plans for the PPWR's implementation include introducing harmonised requirements across the EU for how certain information is provided on packaging about the requirements of extended producer responsibility initiatives. Further reforms will gradually be implemented under the PPWR up to the end of the current decade. Harmonised labelling will be introduced on packaging from 2028 to ensure more efficient recycling and composting across the bloc.

By 2030, additional measures will be introduced concerning direct methods to curb packaging waste by looking at limits on space within packaging and the use of small single-use plastic formats such as sachets by hospitality businesses. Reuse targets will also be implemented across the EU.

The PPWR is expected to encourage the mandatory use of recycled plastics in packaging, while requiring that any packaging used is recyclable. Some of the reforms are planned to be introduced through secondary legislation to limit what the Commission called "unnecessary administrative burden" on the private sector from any changes introduced. This would include undertaking engagement with the private sector, national governments and civil society bodies.

PROPAK WEST AFRICA CONFERENCE TO DELIVER PRACTICAL INSIGHTS FOR WEST AFRICA'S PRODUCTION AND PACKAGING PROFESSIONALS



Alex Gendis
Managing Director, Beta Glass



Segun Ajayi-Kadir
Director General, Manufacturers
Association of Nigeria



Dr. Markus Grumann
Managing Director,
Miho Inspection Systems



Ayanfeoluwa Ibitoye
Regional Director, GirlsWhoPrint Africa



Sylke Jellema
Research Affiliate, Lagos Business School
Sustainability Centre (Pan-Atlantic University)



A'rese Lucia Onaghise
Executive Director, Food &
Beverage Recycling Alliance (FBRA)

West Africa's packaging and print sectors are changing fast. Driven by booming consumer markets, automation, and green solutions, regional manufacturers must boost productivity to survive. Survival now dictates a sharp focus on productivity and operational competitiveness. Beyond acquiring next-generation machinery, print and packaging businesses must adopt practical, proven strategies to optimize day-to-day operations and secure future growth. That is why, in this fast-evolving landscape, making informed investment decisions is critical to packaging and print businesses who face an urgent choice to adapt or get left behind. To help you navigate this shift, **WHERE TO PRINT** magazine brings you an exclusive preview of the forthcoming **PROPAK West Africa 2026**. Adapted from the official **Montgomery Group Africa** press release, this **SPECIAL PREVIEW** highlights how the premier regional exhibition and its upcoming summit provide the exact tools, machinery insights, and operational strategies your business needs to grow.

© PROPAK West Africa - A lineup of industry-leading experts to deliver actionable operational roadmaps.

The packaging industry across West Africa continues to evolve, driven by expanding consumer markets, rising demand for more efficient and sustainable packaging solutions, and advances in automation and digital technologies. As manufacturers respond to these changing market dynamics, improving productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness has become an increasing priority.

In this rapidly changing environment, informed decision-making is more important than ever. Beyond evaluating new equipment and technologies, businesses are seeking practical insights and proven strategies to help optimise operations, address emerging challenges and prepare for future growth.

Providing a platform to address these opportunities and challenges, **PROPAK West Africa** returns to the **Landmark Centre** in Lagos, Nigeria, from **8 to 10 September**, bringing together suppliers, manufacturers and industry professionals from across the packaging, plastics, print, labelling and food processing sectors. The exhibition provides a valuable opportunity to explore the latest machinery, materials and technologies, compare solutions firsthand, and engage directly with technical specialists and industry experts.

PROPAK West Africa Summit

Complementing the exhibition, visitors will also have access to the **PROPAK West Africa Summit**. The conference programme has been developed specifically for production and packaging professionals across the region. Bringing together

decision-makers and technical leads from West African manufacturing sectors, the conference will present a dynamic mix of keynote presentations, expert panels, interactive workshops, and industry case studies. It will also spotlight transformative packaging and processing technologies, market trends, and sustainability practices shaping the region's industrial growth.

The Director General of the **Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)**, **Segun Ajayi-Kadir**, will deliver a welcome address at the Opening Ceremony on the first day of the conference. **Alexander Gendis**, CEO of **Beta Glass**, has been confirmed as a keynote speaker. Both speakers reinforce the event's importance within the region's manufacturing and packaging sectors.



© PROPAK West Africa - PROPAK West Africa is a leading meeting place for West Africa's packaging and manufacturing industries.

A key highlight of the third day will be the industry stakeholder session hosted by the **Recycling Association of Nigeria (RAN)** titled: **'From Market Placement to Material Recovery: Closing the Data Gap in Nigeria's Circular Packaging Value Chain.'** This high-level discussion will convene stakeholders across the packaging ecosystem to address the disconnect between packaging introduced into the market and materials actually recovered within Nigeria's recycling infrastructure.

Other speakers include **Dr. Markus Grumann**, who is the Managing Director at **Miho Inspection Systems**; **Titus Gado**, Manufacturing Director at **Chi Limited**; **Prof. Olugbenga Ogunmoyela**, President at **Consumer Advocacy for Food Safety and Nutrition Initiative (CAFSANI)**; **A'rese Lucia Onaghise**,
 Continued on page 31 >>

Executive Director at **Food & Beverage Recycling Alliance**; and **Saheed Kareem**, who is the Factory Engineering Manager at **Nestle**.

The PROPAK West Africa Summit is free-to-attend, but delegates need to book in advance. The **KPMG Breakfast Session** on the second day is by invitation only.

Leading meeting place for industry

Bringing together international technology providers, regional manufacturers and industry organisations, PROPAK West Africa continues to strengthen its position as a leading meeting place for West Africa's packaging and manufacturing industries. Beyond showcasing the latest innovations in packaging, plastics, print, labelling and food processing, the exhibition provides opportunities for technology transfer, business networking, industry partnerships and knowledge sharing, while its growing collaboration with sustainability and recycling organisations reflects the increasing focus on circular economy initiatives and responsible manufacturing across the region.

"The pace of change within the manufacturing and packaging sectors means businesses need access not only to the latest technologies, but also to the knowledge, partnerships and practical insights that support informed



© PROPAK West Africa - The PROPAK West Africa Summit will include a dynamic mix of keynote presentations, expert panels, and interactive workshops.



© PROPAK West Africa - Mark Anderson, Portfolio Director at Montgomery Group Africa

decision-making," says **Mark Anderson**, Portfolio Director at **Montgomery Group Africa**, organisers of the show. "PROPAK West Africa is designed to connect global and local solution providers with local industry, creating opportunities for businesses to discover new technologies, exchange ideas and build valuable partnerships. By combining a comprehensive exhibition with a practical, industry-focused conference, the show offers visitors the opportunity to discover new technologies, learn from industry experts and build valuable business connections - all in one place."

PROPAK WEST AFRICA 2026 EXHIBITORS' PREVIEW: DISCOVER WHAT TOP EXHIBITORS ARE LAUNCHING IN LAGOS

As **PROPAK West Africa 2026** approaches, global and regional exhibitors are preparing to showcase groundbreaking industrial solutions. From **8-10 September 2026** at the **Landmark Event Centre** in Lagos, Nigeria, attendees will experience the future of automated manufacturing, heavy-duty processing, high-speed printing, and raw materials. Here is an exclusive preview of leading exhibitors and their core focus areas on the exhibition floor made up of:

- **Smart Processing Machinery:** Automated lines for food, beverage, and consumer goods packaging.
- **Plastics & Recycling Technology:** Circular economy innovations and polymer processing equipment.
- **Advanced Printing Solutions:** Coding, marking, and labeling tech especially for regulatory compliance and branding.

Key Offerings from Official Sponsors



GDXL Precise Machinery Co., LTD (Stand 4B04): Offering specialized, high-precision PET blow molds engineered for high-speed beverage and consumer goods production lines.



Neofyton (Stand 1H01): Partnering with brands like ENGEL, PIOVAN, OERLIKON HR FLOW, WINTEC, and FRIGEL among others, Neofyton will be delivering world-leading, automated, and energy-efficient injection molding machines and auxiliary equipment alongside complete system integrations for plastic manufacturing.



SACMI Imola SC (Stand 1B09): Leading the beverage and rigid packaging landscape with advanced compression molding technologies and high-efficiency beverage bottling lines.



UFLEX LTD (Engineering Division) (Stand 3F09): Providing global-standard flexible packaging materials, laminated films, and anti-counterfeiting brand protection solutions.

From Partners



New Lord Nigeria LTD: is one of Nigeria's most reputed providers of customised, scalable, and reliable power quality and power protection solutions.



Beaumont Nigeria (Stand 1F05): is a technical company that provides premium and cost-effective industrial products for air handling, warehousing, chilling, and plastic moulding solutions, along with after-sales maintenance.



Prof. Olugbenga Ogunmoyola
President, Consumer Advocacy for Food Safety
And Nutrition Initiative (CAFSANI)



Nnorom Chidiebere
Chief Operating Officer, Ebess Green



Harold Okonoboh
President, Recyclers
Association of Nigeria (RAN)



Kikelomo Amoreoluwa
Chairman, NIFST Lagos Chapter



Michael Olumeyan
Commercial Director, Adeco Project
Engineering B.V West Africa



Obaloluwa Dairo
Venture and Policy Development Lead, Circular
Economy Innovation Partnership (CEIP)



Titus Gado
Manufacturing Director, Chi Limited



Saheed Kareem
Factory Engineering Manager, Nestle.

© PROPAK West Africa - Top-tier industry experts to help your business optimize today's production and prepare for tomorrow's growth.

Continued on page 32 >>

**SPECIAL FEATURE ON PROPAK WEST AFRICA 2026 DAILY SPONSORS
 EXHIBITING AT PROPAK WEST AFRICA 2026**
**FOTEDAR CHAMPIONS SUSTAINABLE AUTOMATION AT PROPAK WEST
 AFRICA (Stand 2G06)**


Driven by a mission to deliver exceptional stakeholder experiences through technologically advanced and sustainable solutions, **Fotedar Engineering Services**, headquartered in India, is bringing its proven track record to its **Stand 2G06 at PROPAK West Africa 2026** via its regional subsidiary, Lagos-based **Fotedar West Africa**. Following sustained success at **PROPAK East Africa** in Kenya, Managing


CEO, Mr. Vikram Fotedar

Director **Mr. Vikram Fotedar** confirmed to **WHERE To Print magazine** that expanding their exhibition footprint into West Africa reflects a core commitment to bringing global technologies directly to African converters. "Having built strong relationships through PROPAK East Africa, we see similar momentum in the West," Mr. Fotedar noted. "There is rising investment in flexible packaging, corrugation, and label converting, driven by the expansion of the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), food & beverage, and consumer goods sectors. PROPAK West Africa gives us the ideal platform to connect with converters and demonstrate how our solutions help them stay competitive."

Visitors to the Fotedar West Africa **Stand 2G06** can expect a fully integrated flexographic printing and converting ecosystem. Rather than displaying standalone machinery, the exhibit showcases how industry giants work in harmony: UTECO presses, Erhardt+Leimer (E+L) automation, Heliograph Engravers and Plate Making Solutions, and Zhoutai pouching equipment. According to Mr. Fotedar, this unified approach directly addresses localized industry bottlenecks. "West African converters are grappling with rising raw material costs, tighter quality demands from brand owners, frequent job changes, and a shortage of skilled manpower," he explained. "UTEKO's presses cut changeover time and setup waste; E+L's web guiding and inspection systems minimize errors and downtime; Heliograph delivers the highest standards in print form production; and Zhoutai rounds out the line with reliable, high-throughput finishing."



© UTEKO rotogravure press – Next 450



© UTEKO flexo press – OnyxRACE



© ZHOUTAI pouch making equipment

**NIGERIA'S PREMIUM PACKAGING LEADER SHOWCASES LUXURY FINISHES
 AND SECURITY SOLUTIONS (Stand 1A10)**


Looking for premium, secure packaging solutions in Nigeria? Look no further, as **Print Box Nigeria Limited** is showcasing how specialized embellishments can give your mono-cartons a true luxury feel at this year's **PROPAK West Africa**.


Group Managing Director, Mr. Binod Mohapatra

The specialist premium packaging solutions provider is introducing a suite of specialized embellishments designed to give

mono-cartons a luxury feel, from hot foil stamping and embossing to spot UV and soft-touch laminations; Print Box finishes ensure your brand stands out on retail shelves.

At the company's exhibition **Stand 1A10**, visitors can explore premium finishing options including hot and cold foil stamping, embossing, debossing, spot UV, soft-touch lamination, and specialty varnishes. According to Group Managing Director **Mr. Binod Mohapatra**, these premium finishes are engineered to create "luxurious packaging that stands out on retail shelves."

In addition to aesthetics, Mr. Mohapatra highlighted the advanced anti-counterfeiting measures the ISO & FSC-certified company integrates into medical/ pharmaceutical boxes and labels production. In order to protect brands from counterfeiting, the company offers multiple security features, including tamper-evident labels, security printing, micro-text, sequential numbering, QR codes, and holographic elements. This is because the premium packaging specialist believes packaging isn't just about looks—it's also about meeting stringent health, safety, and security requirements. That is why it integrates advanced anti-counterfeiting measures like micro-text, holographic elements, tamper-evident seals, sequential numbering, QR codes, etc to protect pharmaceutical and medical brands. Visit **Stand 1A10** to explore Print Box Nigeria Limited's full range of luxury and secure packaging solutions!



© Print Box Nigeria LTD - Industrial Labels



© Print Box Nigeria LTD - Mono-Cartons

Continued on page 33 >>



© Print Box Nigeria LTD - Printed Inserts



© Print Box Nigeria LTD - Self-Adhesive Labels



© Print Box Nigeria LTD - Shrink Sleeves



© Print Box Nigeria LTD - Specialty Packaging

NILPETER TO SHOWCASE NEXT-GEN FLEXO SOLUTIONS AT PROPAK WEST AFRICA 2026 (Stand 3A17)

Nilpeter, the leader in next-generation flexo technology, will showcase its comprehensive range of high-performance labels and flexible packaging solutions at **Stand 3A17**.

Area Manager **Thomas**



Area Manager, **Mr. Thomas Andersen**, and
Regional Business Manager,
Mr. Manu Muraleekrishnan

Andersen and Regional Business Manager **Manu Muraleekrishnan** will be on-site to directly connect with current and prospective customers looking for opportunities to explore new production milestones for high-value print applications and discuss growth strategies.

Nilpeter presses' core strengths lie in delivering premium print quality across diverse substrates, with presses engineered for high-value applications including self-adhesive labels, shrink sleeves, wrap-around labels, pouches, and tube laminates. And as West Africa's packaging landscape evolves, this year, the spotlight is on the **Nilpeter FB-Line PRO**, which combines advanced automation, top-tier print quality, and production flexibility to help West African converters grow profitably. Additionally, the company will highlight its wider-web flexo solutions featuring water-based and solvent-based hot air drying technologies, designed to maximize production efficiency while meeting modern food packaging standards.

In a nutshell, African converters, printers, and

packaging specialists at Nilpeter's **Stand 3A17** should expect the following key highlights:

- **The West African Spotlight of FB-Line PRO:** A deep dive into the iconic **Nilpeter FB-Line PRO**. This press integrates advanced automation and production flexibility specifically designed and engineered to scale and maximise profitable growth for West African converters.
- **Premium Multi-Substrate Printing/ Versatility:** Proofs of premium print quality across diverse applications including self-adhesive labels, shrink sleeves, wrap-around labels, pouches, and tube laminates.
- **Wider-Web Efficiency for Sustainability & Scale:** Showcasing wider-web flexo solutions built with water-based and solvent-based hot air drying technologies, striking the perfect balance between high production efficiency and modern food packaging compliance.



© Nilpeter's legendary FB-Line PRO flexo press



© FB-Line PRO - Your Starting Line for High Performance



RANDOMSOFT PRESENTS DIFFERENT APPROACH TO LOCAL SUPPORT (3A05)

PROPAK West Africa new entrant, **Randomsoft Limited**, understands that industrial downtime isn't just an inconvenience—it's a direct hit to the business bottom line. That is why **Mr. Olakunle Ogunjobi**-led Randomsoft stands out through a commitment to minimizing costly production downtime. "Our philosophy is simple: every hour of production downtime has a measurable financial cost," **Mr. Ogunjobi** explains. And that is what sets them apart: a relentless focus on keeping your machines moving.

Randomsoft LTD Technical Director,
Mr. Olakunle Ogunjobi

Accordingly, at **Stand 3A05**, West African converters, printers, and packaging professionals will discover how **Randomsoft Limited** bridges the gap between world-class standards and local efficiency. Representing premier global brands—including Dantex Group, VIP Systems, Macarbox, General Inkjet Printing, The Flexo Company, Mark Andy, Tesa, Domino, NBG Printographic Machinery, and Harkom, among others—Randomsoft LTD also stands out through its unique market approach. "With a dedicated local technical support structure in Nigeria, we resolve issues rapidly via remote diagnostics, phone support, and rapid-response on-site engineering. We target critical issues immediately and run preventive maintenance programmes to stop breakdowns before they happen. Ultimately, we don't just repair equipment; we keep our customers producing efficiently, maximizing their current investments while preparing them for future growth through strategic technology upgrades," Ogunjobi highlights while urging African investors within the manufacturing space to stop by **Stand 3A05** to maximize their current investments and plan their next strategic technology upgrades.



© Fueling the shift to sustainable packaging - NBG Printographic's narrow web and wide web flexo printing machine



© Mark Andy flexographic press



© Premium tesa tapes



© Mark Andy digital press

© DANTEX 1000M is not just another processor
— it's a fully automatic letterpress processing system.© Domino digital Hybrid Printing Systems
for labels & packaging

© Macarbox flexo folder gluer



Position your business for growth at **PROPAK West Africa 2026**. This is your chance to connect, negotiate, and secure direct deals with leading OEMs, authorized representatives, and global suppliers. Fast-track your competitive edge by registering for free today at www.propakwestafrica.com.

As Official Media Partners, the **WHERE To Print Magazine Team** will be live on-site

producing the **PROPAK West Africa 2026 DAILY**. Look out for our daily editions for exclusive insights straight from the exhibition floor!

Please note: Stand locations are correct at the time of printing. For the most up-to-date layout and event details, please visit the PROPAK West Africa website at www.propakwestafrica.com.



BEE Printing Mechanical Company



HEIDELBERG SM102 -4



BINDING MACHINE



HEIDELBERG MOZ



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BEYOND THE PRESS: THE HUMAN-CENTRIC REVOLUTION AWAITING AT PRINTING UNITED 2026



© printingunited.com – PRINTING United Expo 2025 Show Floor.

From **September 23–25, 2026**, the **Las Vegas Convention Centre** will host **PRINTING United Expo 2026**—a massive, one-million-square-foot showcase of cutting-edge technology, emerging trends, and live equipment demonstrations. Produced by the **PRINTING United Alliance**, this premier global convergence is set to break industry records with an unprecedented lineup of more than 800 exhibitors. This year's event looks decisively beyond traditional ink on paper. Alongside breakthrough production technology and advanced digital finishing techniques, the Expo introduces an expanded, human-centric educational and experiential programme. Dedicated tracks will focus directly on the industry's most critical assets: workforce development, inclusivity, and physical and mental well-being. Discover some of these landmark feature programmes shaping the future of the industry in this exclusive sneak preview of **PRINTING United Expo 2026**.

PRINTING United Expo 2026 returns to the **Las Vegas Convention Centre** on **September 23–25, 2026**, featuring an expanded, high-impact programme that goes far beyond traditional machinery to spotlight community building, workforce development, mental health, and high-margin finishing technologies.

Characteristically, **PRINTING United Expo 2026** will feature an extensive educational lineup in dedicated areas and zones such as the **PRINTING AI Pavilion** and **G7+ Exchange**, offering **more than 70 expert-led sessions** covering industry data, colour management, sales strategies, wide-format print innovation, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. Focusing on industry trends, automated workflows, market convergence, market trends, pricing/ sales strategies, process control, and high-accuracy colour management, these sessions are designed to help professionals navigate the changing printing landscape. The top recommended educational sessions include, among others:

- **Printing Industry Outlook 2027** – Explores data-driven forecasts for the commercial printing sector. Hosted by **Onamica Dhar** and **Andy Paparozzi** on **Wednesday, September 23**, from **10:00–10:50am**.
- **Crossing Over: Convergence Reshaping Print Markets** – Examines how different segments of the industry are intersecting. Led by **Lisa Cross** and **Nathan Safran** on **Wednesday, September 23**, from **3:00–3:50pm**.
- **The Price Perception Problem: How to Sell Value, Not Discounts** – Focuses on moving past race-to-the-bottom pricing. Taught by **Colin Sinclair McDermott** on **Wednesday, September 23**, from **3:00–3:50pm**.
- **Stretching the Boundaries in Wide-Format Services** – Offers real-world case studies for expanding broad-scale service offerings. Moderated by **Dan Marx** on **Thursday, September 24**, from **11:00–11:50am**.
- **State of the Industry: Wide-Format Printing** – Tracks financial and volume trends in wide-format production. Delivered by **Onamica Dhar** and **Andy Paparozzi** on **Thursday, September 24**, from **2:00–2:50pm**.

And beyond the standard industry-specific training sessions, organizer **PRINTING United Alliance** recently announced major new features, anchored by a full-day **Student Day** and year-round integration for the **Women in Print Alliance**, among other initiatives that also focus heavily on the industry's workforce, inclusivity, physical and mental well-being, and cutting-edge digital finishing techniques. Explore the top features putting global print & allied workers first, curated by **WHERE To Print**:

STUDENT DAY EXPERIENCE TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF PRINT PROFESSIONALS



© Educational sessions at PRINTING United Expo are designed to help professionals navigate the changing printing landscape.

PRINTING United Alliance, in partnership with **The Foundation for Graphic Communication Education** (The FGCE), continues to expand its popular **Student Day** experience at **PRINTING United Expo 2026**, taking place **Thursday, September 24**, at the **Las Vegas Convention Centre**. Designed to introduce students to the limitless career opportunities across the printing industry, this year's programme will feature enhanced career development programming, expanded mentorship opportunities, and greater one-on-one engagement with industry professionals throughout the day's



© printingunited.com – Student Day Group Photograph: some of the participating students and educators with The FGCE and The PRINTINGUnited Alliance Top Executives.

activities.

PRINTING United Alliance curates this exciting event that exposes students to the biggest global players and opportunities in the industry in partnership with The FGCE, which has invested significant scholarship dollars to make the trip for some students and educators possible.



"Student Day has become one of the most meaningful experiences at PRINTING United Expo because it is where the next generation connects with the people, companies, and technologies shaping the future of print," says **Christine Cachuela**, VP Membership Operations, PRINTING United Alliance. "Students gain firsthand exposure to career opportunities, build valuable industry connections, and often take their first steps toward internships and careers, while exhibitors have the opportunity to meet talented future employees."

Charlotte Tueckmantel, Director of Operations, The FGCE, said, "We are excited by the opportunities this year's Student Day agenda provides to engage directly with leaders, technology, and companies at the forefront of the printing industry. Students can expect to make valuable connections they can leverage during their educational and career journey."

Cachuela further highlights that The FGCE's scholarship program makes that impact even greater by helping more students and educators attend the Expo and experience our industry firsthand. "We're incredibly grateful for this continued partnership and The FGCE's investment in helping the future of our workforce attend our global event," she said.

Student Day 2026 Highlights

The 2026 programme introduces new experiences designed to deepen student engagement, including:

- Career development panel discussion and interactive roundtable conversations with industry professionals.
 - Expo All-Stars ambassador-led booth tours with participating exhibitors, giving students personalized guidance and the opportunity to connect directly with industry professionals using provided complimentary business cards.
 - Opportunities to learn about internships, career pathways, and emerging technologies transforming every segment of the printing industry.
 - Immersive visits to experience some of the Expo's premier attractions, including the Apparel Zone, PRINTING AI Pavilion, and Women in Print Alliance Luncheon.
 - Student Day Lounge equipped with fun activities, networking opportunities, and a designated professional headshot area, for students and Expo attendees alike.
- Special show merchandise activation, live demonstrations of the latest iLEARNING+ courses, available free for students and educators, and interview opportunities in the Alliance Booth.

Calling All Expo Exhibitors: Engage with Tomorrow's Talent

Student Day offers exhibitors a unique opportunity to connect directly with the next generation of print professionals. By hosting booth tours, showcasing innovative technologies, and sharing insights into careers within their organizations, participating exhibitors can inspire students while building awareness of the exciting opportunities available across the industry. Reach out to **Christine Cachuela** for more details on how to get involved: ccachuela@printing.org

Special thanks to those exhibitors who have already committed to supporting Student Day by hosting booth tours, demonstrations, and career discussions: Canon USA, Cutwrox USA, Fiery, Konica Minolta, Muller Martini, and Orbus.

Pre-Register for Student Day

Access is complimentary, and educators and student groups are encouraged to register early. Schools from across the country will be in attendance, and space is limited for guided tours and programming. **Complimentary business cards are available only to those registered before September 1.** Register and learn more by visiting: <https://www.printingunited.com/experiences/>

EMPOWERING WOMEN, SHAPING THE FUTURE OF PRINT



© printingunited.com – Lisbeth Lyons Black speaking at 2025 Women in Print Alliance Luncheon

Women in Print Alliance, a division of PRINTING United Alliance, is once again bringing a dynamic lineup of networking, professional development, and community-building experiences to **PRINTING United Expo 2026**. Designed to help women maximize their Expo experience, this year's programming includes pre-show education, exclusive networking events, leadership development opportunities, and dedicated spaces to build

www.wheretoprintmagazine.com



© printingunited.com – Some of the participating students engaged their hands at the Apparel Zone with proofs to show.

meaningful industry connections. Visit

<https://womeninprintalliance.org/expo-events/> for a complete Women in Print Alliance guide to this year's PRINTING United Expo.

"PRINTING United Expo is an incredible experience, especially when you have a community to experience it with," says

Lisbeth Lyons Black, Director, Women in Print Alliance.

"From our Expo 101: Tips & Tricks webinar - designed to help first-time women attendees arrive empowered - to making meaningful connections at our booth on the show floor, and our



annual networking luncheon with its inspiring keynote address, Women in Print Alliance creates opportunities for women to connect, learn, and build relationships that last well beyond Expo."

Kick Off Your Expo Experience with Expo 101

The Women in Print Alliance experience begins before attendees arrive in Las Vegas. Join fellow women in print on **September 10** for "Expo 101: Tips & Tricks for Women in Print," a complimentary webinar designed to help women confidently prepare for PRINTING United Expo 2026. Attendees will hear practical advice from experienced Expo veterans covering everything from navigating the show floor and building an agenda to networking strategies and must-attend Women in Print Alliance events.

Connect at the Women in Print Alliance Member Reception

Women in Print Alliance members are invited to kick off their Expo experience at the **Women in Print Alliance Member Welcome Reception**, taking place on **Wednesday, September 23**, from **5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. PT** at the **Wynn/Encore Resort**. This exclusive gathering is designed to foster meaningful conversations and strengthen professional relationships in a relaxed setting. An RSVP is required, and invitations will be sent to members directly via email.

Gain Fresh Leadership Perspectives at the Annual Networking Luncheon

One of the signature Women in Print Alliance events at PRINTING United Expo – the **Women in Print Alliance Annual Networking Luncheon** – returns on **Thursday, September 24**, from **12 p.m. – 2 p.m. PT**, featuring keynote



© printingunited.com – Joan Moon gave Keynote at 2025 Women in Print Alliance Luncheon

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© printingunited.com – PRINTINGUnited Alliance Membership Booth

speaker **Corrie Lo** on "The Five Overwhelm Culprits." During her presentation, Corrie will share actionable strategies for overcoming the hidden drivers of overwhelm and pragmatic tactics professionals can use to reclaim focus, energy, and effectiveness in both their careers and personal lives. Learn more about how to purchase your tickets here:

<https://womeninprintalliance.org/event/annual-networking-luncheon-2/>

Visit the Women in Print Alliance Booth

Throughout PRINTING United Expo, attendees are encouraged to stop by the Women in Print Alliance Booth N6543 to learn more about the different membership types, discover upcoming events and initiatives, and connect with the growing community of women shaping the future of print. To learn more and register to attend, visit <https://womeninprintalliance.org/expo-events/>

THE EMBELLISHMENT TECHNOLOGY TOUR IS BACK FOR PRINTING UNITED EXPO 2026!

Embellishment Technology Tour, the guided show-floor experience produced by **Taktifol** in strategic collaboration with **PRINTING United Alliance**, has confirmed that its **Digital Production Track** has officially sold out. The tour, which returns to **PRINTING United Expo 2026**, gives pre-registered attendees a curated, expert-led path through the most compelling embellishment technology on the show floor.

New this year, the tour has expanded from a single ten-stop

experience into two full ten-stop tours running side by side: **Digital Production Tour** (North Hall) and, for the first time, a standalone **Wide Format Tour** (Central Hall). Rather than folding wide-format sponsors into the original track, Taktifol built Wide Format out as its own dedicated ten-stop experience, complete with its own guides, its own pre-registered attendees, and its own sponsor lineup.

With more than 800 exhibitors expected on the floor this year, navigating PRINTING United Expo for embellishment-specific solutions can be overwhelming even for experienced buyers. The Embellishment Technology Tour was built to solve that problem: small, focused groups of pre-registered attendees are walked directly to a curated set of exhibitor booths by Taktifol's print embellishment experts, who deliver a custom talk track built specifically for each stop. "The fact that our Digital Production track sold out well ahead of the show tells you everything you need to know about where this industry's attention is right now," said **Kevin Abergel**, Founder and CEO of Taktifol. "Attendees don't want another lap around the show floor. They want a curated, expert-guided path to the technology that will actually move their business forward, and that's exactly what this tour delivers."

"PRINTING United Expo is designed to bring the entire industry together under one roof, and programs like the Embellishment Technology Tour help attendees get more out of that experience," said **Joshua Carruth**, EVP, Expositions, PRINTING United Alliance. "We're glad to collaborate with Taktifol on a program that gives attendees a focused, high-value way to engage with embellishment technology at the Expo."

Digital Production Track (North Hall): All ten sponsor stops on the Digital Production Track are now confirmed. Attendees on this track will be guided through:

- Konica Minolta
- Scodix





- Duplo
- Sharp
- Fujifilm
- Skandacor
- Impress Systems
- Xerox
- Neenah Paper
- Nobelus



Wide Format Track (Central Hall): Open for Sponsorship
New for 2026, Wide Format is now its own dedicated ten-stop tour rather than a secondary track, with up to ten Guided Tour Sponsor positions available. Sponsorship slots on the Wide Format track remain open, with a limited number of Guided Tour Sponsor positions available. Sponsors on this track receive a dedicated stop during all guided tours, a custom-branded tour jersey displayed in the Taktifful booth, inclusion in the official Tour Guide, logo placement on official attendee tour bags, pre-show social coverage, digital wall presence at the Taktifful booth, a complimentary pre-show Taktisphere Live! event, and inclusion in the post-show roundup article distributed across Taktifful's channels.

Each track features five expert-guided tours — two per day, with a final tour on the last day of the show — with 20 to 40 pre-registered attendees per tour. Every stop includes a live demonstration and branded giveaway, and the full experience is professionally photographed and filmed for post-show marketing use by sponsors.

BREAKING THE SILENCE IN VEGAS!



© L-R: She*t for Brains co-founders - Jon Bailey, Jessica DeCola, Dave Rosendahl, and Chris Minn

She*t for Brains is partnering with **PRINTING United Alliance** to bring mental health conversations straight to the **PRINTING United Expo 2026** floor. The industry-focused mental health initiative dedicated to reducing stigma and providing practical support to print professionals says this collaboration marks a major step forward for the print community's commitment to mental health and wellbeing.

"PRINTING United Alliance's inclusion of She*t for Brains at PRINTING

www.wheretoprintmagazine.com

United Expo is a monumental and necessary step for our industry," said **David Rosendahl**, She*t for Brains Co-founder. "By opening space for honest conversation and concrete resources at the industry's flagship event, the Alliance has shown leadership and compassion, and together we'll work to reduce stigma and help those who need support."

The Alliance's decision to include She*t for Brains in its program demonstrates



a clear understanding of the importance of addressing mental health issues and dismantling the stigma that too often keeps people from seeking help. By formally partnering with SFB, PRINTING United Alliance is helping to elevate conversations around mental wellness and ensuring these conversations are a visible, integral part of the industry's largest trade event.

What to expect at the Expo:

- **Physical presence in the Spill the Ink District:** SFB will host an onsite space in the **Spill the Ink District** where attendees can learn about resources, speak with team members, access event materials, and find a welcoming place to connect.
- **Podcast booth engagement:** She*t for Brains will leverage podcast booths to record conversations with industry leaders, mental health experts, and attendees, creating usable content that will extend the reach of these important conversations beyond the show floor.
- **Breakout session:** "Breaking the Silence: How She*t for Brains Tackles the Mental Health Crisis." This dedicated, in-person session will explore the unique stressors facing print professionals, practical intervention strategies, and how employers and peers can create healthier, more supportive workplaces. Speakers will include SFB leaders and invited experts from across the printing community.

"One of our many goals at PRINTING United Expo is to create experiences that matter both on and beyond the show floor," said **Joshua Carruth**, EVP, Expositions, PRINTING United Alliance. "Mental health impacts every company, every team, and every leader in our industry, yet it's rarely discussed openly. We're proud to partner with She*t for Brains to help bring this conversation into the spotlight and provide our community with meaningful resources and support."

She*t for Brains is a not-for-profit mental health and wellbeing initiative primarily focused on the print and graphics industry. It was co-founded by **Jessica DeCola**, **Dave Rosendahl**, **Chris Minn**, and **Jon Bailey** to foster open conversations about workplace stress, resilience, and vulnerability.

Core Focus & Mission

- **Community Support:** Provides a safe, judgment-free space for professionals to share personal and professional challenges.
- **Key Topics:** Focuses on work-life balance, next-generation leadership, burnout, trauma, and managing anxiety.
- **Resources:** Offers online sessions, webinars, and collaborative industry events.

Note: The organization is a peer-support and advocacy platform and does not provide formal medical or licensed psychological diagnoses.

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designed around complementary processes such as product filling, gas flushing, vacuum extraction, heat sealing, coding, inspection, and final quality control. We also consider the compatibility of the packaging film with the sealing and MAP process to ensure reliable seals and minimize leakage or package failure.

Most importantly, MAP or vacuum sealing is only one part of shelf-life management. The final shelf life depends on the product formulation, microbiological controls, temperature management, packaging material, storage conditions, and validated production process. So our focus is on delivering a fit-for-purpose automated packaging solution that gives the food producer reliable sealing performance, production efficiency, and the appropriate conditions for achieving its validated shelf-life objectives.

HOW DOES YOUR MACHINERY ENSURE CONSISTENT, LEAK-PROOF SEALS ON HIGH-SPEED LINES, ESPECIALLY WHEN HANDLING POWDERY OR GREASY FOOD PRODUCTS?

We understand that seal integrity is critical in food packaging, particularly on high-speed lines where powder, oil, grease, or product residue can easily compromise a seal. Our approach is to ensure that the machine configuration, packaging material, sealing system, and operating parameters are matched to the specific product rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all setup. For powdery or greasy products, the machinery can be configured to control product placement and keep the sealing area as clean as possible before the seal is made. Depending on the application, this may include controlled filling, product settling, dust management, optimized pouch formation, and sealing systems designed for the selected film structure.

At the sealing stage, critical parameters such as temperature, pressure, dwell time, sealing-jaw alignment, and line speed are controlled consistently. This helps create uniform seals even as production speeds increase. Where the application requires it, appropriate seal-bar or jaw configurations can also be selected to accommodate the characteristics of the packaging material. We also

place strong emphasis on quality control and preventive maintenance. Worn sealing components, incorrect temperatures, poor alignment, contaminated sealing surfaces, or unstable film tension can all lead to leakage. Regular inspection, calibration, cleaning, and timely replacement of wear parts help maintain consistent sealing performance.

For particularly demanding food products, we recommend conducting production trials using the customer's actual product and packaging film before finalizing the equipment specification. This allows the OEM and our technical team to establish the correct filling and sealing parameters and verify seal integrity at the required production speed. Ultimately, our objective is to give customers a packaging line that delivers repeatable, high-quality seals at production speed, while minimizing leakage, product contamination, material waste, and unplanned downtime.

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE SETUP AND CHANGEOVER TIME ON YOUR DIGITAL AND OFFSET PRESSES WHEN SWITCHING BETWEEN A SHORT-RUN BUSINESS CARD JOB AND A LARGE BROCHURE RUN?

We generally look at setup and changeover time based on the specific press technology and the complexity of the job rather than applying one fixed figure across all machines. For a digital press, moving from a short-run business-card job to a larger brochure job can typically involve a relatively quick changeover—often in the range of a few minutes to around 15 minutes, depending on the press, substrate, finishing requirements, and whether the next job requires a different paper size or media configuration. One of the major advantages of digital production is that there is little or no conventional plate-making and make-ready process, making it particularly suitable for short runs and

frequent job changes.

For a conventional offset press, the changeover is generally longer because it can involve plate changes, washing or changing inks, paper and feeder adjustments, registration,

colour balancing, and proofing. A straightforward job change may take roughly 20–45 minutes, while more complex changes can take longer. The difference becomes particularly important when comparing a short business-card job with a large brochure run. We would normally recommend digital printing for highly variable, short-run work, where minimizing setup time and material waste is important. For a large, repeat brochure run, offset printing can become more economical, particularly when the volume justifies the additional make-ready time.

At Ankan Graphics LTD, our focus is therefore not simply on the fastest changeover figure. We help customers select the right press based on run length, job frequency, colour requirements, substrate, finishing, turnaround expectations, and total cost per job. The objective is to minimize non-productive make-ready time while ensuring that the first saleable sheet meets the required quality standard.

WHAT AUTOMATED SOLUTIONS DO YOU OFFER FOR THE BINDERY FLOOR, SPECIFICALLY REGARDING PERFECT BINDING, SADDLE STITCHING, AND HARDCASE (HARDCOVER) BOOK PRODUCTION?

We are particularly focused on bringing Bindex's automated bindery solutions to printers, publishers, and commercial book producers looking to improve productivity while reducing manual intervention. For perfect binding, Bindex offers automated solutions designed to take printed book blocks through key stages of the binding process with consistent glue application, cover feeding, pressing, and book formation. These systems are particularly suitable for commercial printers and publishers handling medium- to high-volume paperback production, where consistency and fast turnaround are important.

For saddle stitching, our focus is on automated gathering, folding, stitching, and three-knife or trimming processes. These solutions are ideal for brochures, magazines, catalogues, booklets, and other products that require high-speed finishing with consistent page alignment and clean trimming. For hardcase and hardcover book production, Bindex's automation can cover processes such as case making, book block preparation, casing-in, pressing, and related finishing operations. This is particularly relevant for publishers, educational institutions, premium book producers, and businesses producing durable hardcover products.

The major advantage of these solutions is the opportunity to move from labour-intensive, disconnected bindery operations toward a more integrated and automated production workflow. Automation can improve consistency, reduce handling errors, increase output, and reduce dependence on manual labour. At Ankan Graphics LTD, we also look beyond simply supplying the equipment. We work with the customer to assess their production volume, book formats, paper

specifications, binding requirements, available floor space, and expected growth before recommending the appropriate Bindex configuration. Our objective is to help customers build a bindery that can produce higher volumes with consistent quality, shorter turnaround times, less waste, and greater operational efficiency, while providing installation, operator training, technical support, and after-sales service locally.

HOW DO YOUR PUBLISHING PRESSES MINIMIZE PAPER WASTE DURING MAKE-READY (SETUP), AND WHAT AUTOMATED COLOUR-MANAGEMENT TOOLS DO THEY USE?

Minimizing paper waste during make-ready is a key consideration when recommending printing technology, particularly for publishers and commercial printers operating in a cost-sensitive market. Our approach is based on combining automated press setup, precise registration, controlled ink and dampening systems, and digital colour management. Modern presses can store and recall job parameters, automate paper and format settings, and bring the press closer to target conditions before production starts. This reduces the number of sheets required to achieve stable registration, density, and colour.

Automated colour-management tools are also important. Depending on the press configuration, these can include spectrophotometric or densitometric measurement, closed-loop ink control, automatic colour profiling, and presetting of ink zones. The system compares printed output against the target colour values and automatically makes corrections where the press supports closed-loop control. For repeat publishing work, job data can also be stored and recalled, meaning that frequently produced titles or similar formats can be set up much faster and with less trial-and-error. This is particularly valuable when a printer is running multiple short or medium-length jobs.

We also focus on the entire workflow—not just the press. Correct prepress preparation, standardized colour profiles, accurate proofing, suitable paper selection, and operator training all contribute to reducing make-ready waste. Ultimately, our objective at Ankan Graphics LTD is to help customers achieve the correct colour and registration as quickly as possible, so fewer sheets are consumed before the job reaches saleable quality. This translates into lower paper and ink consumption, reduced production costs, and a more sustainable printing operation.

WHICH OF YOUR MACHINERY OFFERS PREMIUM, HIGH-MARGIN FINISHES LIKE DIGITAL SPOT UV, HOT FOIL STAMPING, OR DIE-CUTTING?

One of the key solutions we are highlighting for premium, high-margin packaging finishes is Hontec's inline narrow-web flexographic technology. Hontec's flexo platforms are designed for label and flexible-

packaging production and can be configured with inline value-added finishing processes, depending on the machine specification. These can include varnishing/coating, cold foil, lamination, die-cutting, and other inline embellishment processes, allowing converters to produce finished, high-value packaging in a streamlined workflow. The technology is particularly relevant to premium labels, flexible packaging, premium



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food and beverage packaging, personal-care packaging, pharmaceutical packaging, premium mono cartons, and cigarette cartons, where print quality, registration, finishing, and shelf appeal are critical.

For premium mono cartons and cigarette cartons, the combination of high-quality flexographic printing with inline coating, foiling, and precision die-cutting can help converters achieve sharp graphics, consistent colour reproduction, premium tactile and visual effects, and accurate finishing. These capabilities are especially valuable for brands that require sophisticated packaging with strong shelf presence and consistent production quality. The major advantage of an inline narrow-web



solution is that multiple processes can be combined within one production workflow. Instead of printing and then transferring reels between several separate finishing machines, the converter can potentially print, coat, embellish, laminate, and die-cut inline, depending on the press configuration. This can reduce handling, improve registration between processes, shorten turnaround times, and minimize material waste.

For customers specifically looking for digital spot UV, we would recommend a suitable digital embellishment system as a complementary technology, because spot-UV capability depends on the particular digital finishing platform rather than being a standard feature of every flexographic press. At Ankan Graphics LTD, our focus is therefore on helping packaging converters select the right combination of flexographic printing, inline embellishment, coating, foiling, lamination, and die-cutting to produce premium packaging that commands greater value in the marketplace. In short, Hontec's inline narrow-web flexo technology is particularly well positioned for converters producing premium labels, flexible packaging, mono cartons, and cigarette cartons who want to combine high-quality printing with value-added finishing in an efficient, integrated production line.

AS YOUR MACHINES ARE HIGHLY ADVANCED, DO YOU PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE ON-SITE OPERATOR TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS FOR YOUR CLIENTS' LOCAL STAFF?

Yes, we consider operator training and knowledge transfer an essential part of every machinery installation, particularly because many of the technologies we supply are highly automated and require trained operators to achieve their full potential. Our training begins during installation and commissioning. Our technical team works with the customer's operators and supervisors on the factory floor, covering machine operation, start-up and shutdown procedures, job setup, changeovers, production settings, quality control, troubleshooting, cleaning, and routine preventive maintenance.

For more advanced equipment, we provide practical, hands-on training using the customer's own machine and production environment. This allows operators to learn how to handle the actual substrates, inks, packaging materials, and production requirements they will encounter in day-to-day operations. We also place strong emphasis on safety and preventive maintenance, ensuring that operators understand not only how to run the equipment but also how to identify early warning signs, carry out routine checks, and operate the machine safely.

Where the OEM provides formal training or certification programs, we coordinate with the manufacturer to ensure that the appropriate personnel receive the relevant OEM-backed training and certification. For specialized machinery, additional technical training can also be arranged when required. Our objective is to ensure that customers are

not simply handed a sophisticated machine. They receive a fully commissioned production solution with competent local operators who understand how to run, maintain, and troubleshoot the equipment effectively. This approach helps our clients achieve faster ramp-up after installation, reduce operator errors and downtime, maintain consistent product quality, and get the maximum return from their investment.

ACQUIRING BRAND-NEW PRESSES CAN BE HIGHLY CAPITAL-INTENSIVE, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, FOR A SMALL/MEDIUM-SCALE PRINT & ALLIED BUSINESS. TELL US ABOUT ANKAN GRAPHICS' PRE-OWNED PROGRAM AND WHY PRINTING COMPANIES SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT?

We understand that acquiring brand-new printing and packaging machinery represents a significant investment, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses. However, we do not operate a pre-owned or second-hand machinery program. Our focus is on supplying brand-new equipment from reputable international OEM partners, backed by proper installation, commissioning, training, spare parts, and after-sales technical support. We believe there are important advantages to investing in new technology. Customers receive the latest machine specifications, current automation and energy-efficiency features, full manufacturer support, and equipment configured specifically for their production requirements. It also gives them greater confidence in long-term reliability and access to genuine OEM spare parts and technical expertise.

We also recognize that capital expenditure is a major consideration for SMEs. Rather than compromising on equipment quality by moving to used machinery, we work with customers to identify the right machine configuration, production capacity, and level of automation for their budget and business objectives. Where appropriate, we can also discuss commercially viable financing or payment structures available for the project. Our philosophy is that the right investment should provide value over the entire operating life of the machine—not simply a lower purchase price. By supplying new machinery and supporting it locally with installation, operator training, preventive maintenance, genuine spare parts, and technical service, we aim to help our customers achieve reliable production, lower downtime, consistent quality, and a stronger return on investment. So, our message to printing and packaging companies is clear: Ankan Graphics LTD does not sell pre-owned machinery. We focus on new, proven technology and provide the technical support required to make that investment successful.

ARE THERE SPECIALS, PROMOS, OR DISCOUNTS THAT YOU'RE OFFERING TO YOUR CLIENTS THIS YEAR?

Yes, we are taking a more project-specific and value-driven approach to commercial offers rather than applying a blanket discount across all machinery. Depending on the equipment, project size, and

customer requirements, we may have special pricing, promotional packages, bundled technical support, installation and commissioning arrangements, operator training, or other commercial incentives available on selected machines and projects.

For customers investing in complete printing, packaging, or converting lines, we can also look at the overall project and structure the commercial proposal around the customer's production objectives. This may provide better value than simply reducing the purchase price of an individual machine. We also encourage customers to discuss their requirements with us early, because some of our international OEM partners may have time-limited promotional programmes, special equipment offers, or factory incentives that can be incorporated into qualifying projects.

Our priority, however, is to make sure the customer gets the right technology at the right total cost of ownership. A low initial price is not necessarily the best deal if the machine does not deliver the required productivity, quality, reliability, and after-sales support. So, for 2026, our message is: there are opportunities for special commercial offers on selected projects, and we encourage customers to speak with us directly so we can develop a package around their specific machinery and investment requirements.

WHAT ASSURANCE ARE YOU GIVING YOUR CUSTOMERS THIS 2026 AND BEYOND TO GUARANTEE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THEIR NEEDS ANYTIME, ANY DAY?

Our assurance to every customer in 2026 and beyond is simple: we are committed to being a long-term technology and service partner, not just a machinery supplier. At Ankan Graphics LTD, our responsibility does not end when a machine is delivered and installed. We remain committed to supporting our customers throughout the working life of their equipment through technical assistance, preventive maintenance, genuine OEM spare parts, operator training, troubleshooting, and ongoing after-sales support.

We understand that our customers operate in a demanding business environment where downtime can be costly. That is why we place strong emphasis on responsiveness, proper installation and commissioning, preventive maintenance, and ensuring that our technical team understands the equipment we supply. We also remain closely connected to our international OEM partners, giving us access to their technical expertise, product updates, engineering support, and genuine components when required. As our customers' businesses grow, we can also work with them to identify opportunities for capacity expansion, automation, new applications, and upgrades.

Most importantly, we want our customers to know that when they invest in technology through Ankan Graphics LTD, they are not investing alone. We stand behind the solution and remain available to support them through the challenges and opportunities that come with running a modern printing, packaging, or converting operation. Our commitment for 2026 and beyond is therefore built on reliability, responsiveness, technical competence, genuine support, and long-term partnership. We are here to support our customers—not just when they buy a machine, but whenever they need us to help keep their business moving forward.

THANK YOU, SIR, FOR SPEAKING WITH US

Thank you too for the interview. We sincerely appreciate you taking the time to interview us at Ankan Graphics LTD. This is because we truly appreciate the opportunity to share our insights, experience, technology solutions, and vision for the future of the printing, packaging, and allied industries in Nigeria and across West Africa. We particularly thank **WHERE To Print magazine** for providing this valuable platform to discuss industry trends, innovation, sustainability, automation, and the importance of reliable technology and after-sales support. We look forward to continuing to contribute to the growth and development of the printing and packaging industry in the region because our belief at Ankan Graphics LTD is centred on Technology, Partnership, and Progress.



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