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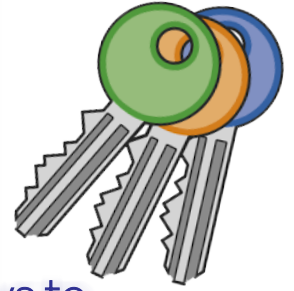


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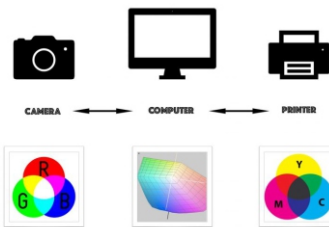
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At the end of the practical Colour management training sessions, participants will be able to realistically perform colour simulation that can be applied across a workflow, allowing them to simulate print before committing. This exercise will not only save time throughout the design process but also cut down on wastage as colours will now be consistent and reliable.



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This practical-oriented training will show how print machinery works, and the role of the maintenance in ensuring proper operation and print profitability. Emphasis will be on Stress is laid on operator's skill development as well as machine diagnosis and troubleshooting for practical expertise in maintenance procedures.

At the end, participants will be able to perform basic maintenance functions such as machinery mounting; balancing; lubrication; bearings; power transmission; shaft alignment; seals; condition monitoring; troubleshooting; safety etc



PRINthead REPAIR

The printhead is a very sensitive, delicate and no doubt costly component of every printer that must be treated with the necessary care especially noting the fact that printhead is subject to wear and tear. This is why this hands-on training will show you recommended, yet practical steps to clean your print head; choosing the right media; how environmental conditions affect printheads; and OEM's endorsed printhead maintenance and repair procedures.

After the training, participants will be able to expertly maintain, repair, and prolong the service life of their printers' printheads. The aim of this skill acquisition is not only to improve operator's knowledge on printheads but most importantly empower them for added skills that would no doubt add value to our industry.



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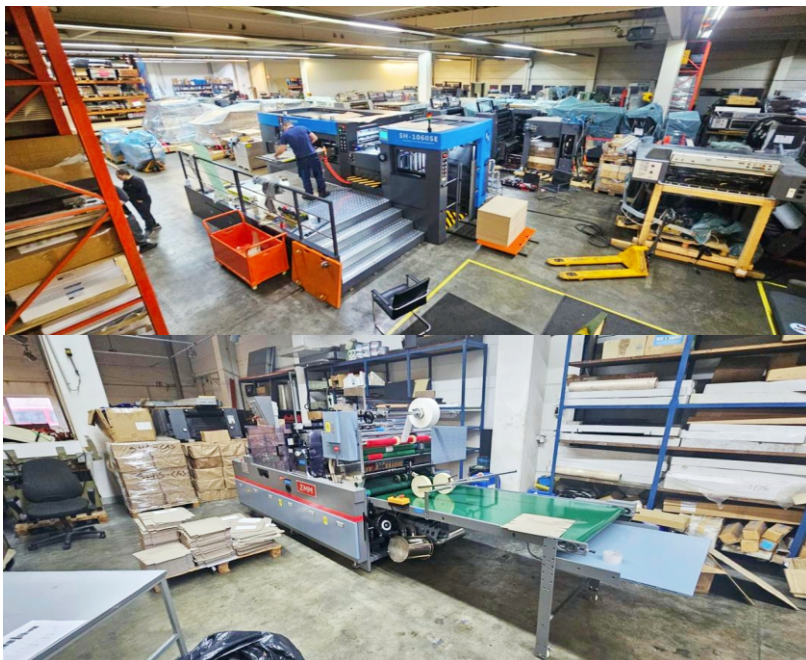
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To Readers

By Joju Adekanbi | jojuadekanbi@yahoo.com | 0803 862 9114

KEEP PRESSING, BUILDING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS, AND CREATING LONG-TERM IMPACT

The printing & allied market in Nigeria is driven by exemplary entrepreneurs whose business successes continue to defang inclement business challenges of our time. And I'm quite elated to have seen many with unwavering dedication and deliberate steps in building, managing and sustaining positive habits that developed into strong foundations albeit structures which now overcome obstacles and provide solutions with positive multiplier effects across our industry value-chain. Two of these successful businesses are costarred in the **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEWS** of this first edition for this 2025 Business Year. Let's come back to them later.

IN THIS 94TH EDITION...

We start off with **PRINT IMPACT AROUND NIGERIA** (from 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. Afterwards, we preview Africa's ultimate packaging & allied industries trade show - **PROPAK Africa 2025** just around the corner. Check out the show preview on pages 14 and 15 in a **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** aptly captioned: **EXPLORE THE FUTURE OF PACKAGING AT PROPAK AFRICA 2025** as we look forward to connecting with stakeholders on the continent especially exhibitors who will be presenting

their game-changing innovations across the purpose-built show floors of **Expo Centre Johannesburg**, South Africa from **11 to 14 March**. One of such exhibitors is **ROTOCON** – specialist in delivering customized turnkey solutions to the label and packaging industries whose groundbreaking installation informs the next **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** titled: **ROTOCON INSTALLS SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST PANTEC RHINO E FLATBED FINISHING SYSTEM AT SA LITHO**. Flip over to pages 16 and 17 to discover more.

Before the two exclusive **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEWS**, check out other **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLES** such as the **Technical Exposé** by **Nessan Cleary** culled from **FESPA.com** on: **THE INCREASING USE OF RESIN INKS IN WIDE FORMAT PRINTING** (on pages 28 and 29) and post-show reports of the two regional trade shows held in January in the Middle East. The first post-show **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** is the second edition of the region's leading event for the global speciality print and signage industries - **FESPA Middle East** which welcomed more than **2,700 professionals** from **80 countries** and the piece on pages 36 and 37 is titled:



FESPA MIDDLE EAST CELEBRATES YEAR-ON-YEAR VISITOR GROWTH FOLLOWING EVENT'S DEBUT IN 2024. The second post-show **SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE** on pages 40 and 41 is the inaugural edition of **Gulf Print & Pack Saudi Arabia**, Middle East's leading

Continued on page 10 >>

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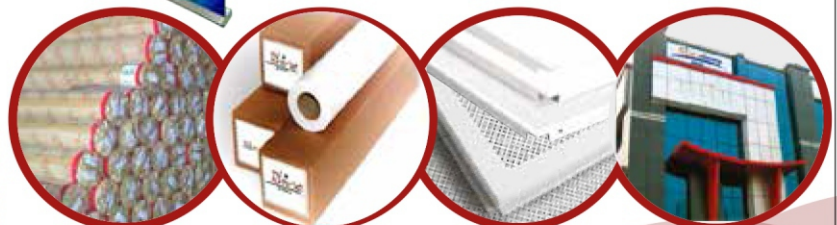
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commercial print and packaging trade show that brought together more than **5,000 visitors** from **54 countries** and its aptly captioned: **STRONG ATTENDANCE AT INAUGURAL GULF PRINT & PACK IN RIYADH HIGHLIGHTS INDUSTRY GROWTH TRAJECTORY.**

Consequently, the strong industry growth trajectory rightly encapsulates the two exclusive **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEWS** conspicuously prepared for you in this first edition of 2025 Business Year. First is an exclusive tête-à-tête with **Marvelous Mike Press Limited** Marketing Manager – **Mr. Peter Oluwadamilare Oladapo** who highlights the firm's edge over contemporaries in the **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW** titled: **THE MARVELOUS MIKE PRESS ADVANTAGE** on pages 20 and 21. Next is an exclusive **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW** with **Ankan Graphics Limited** Director, **Mr. Kaleeswaran Nadar** who

explains why: **ANKAN GRAPHICS LIMITED IS THE TAILORED TURNKEY SOLUTIONS PROVIDER FOR THE PRINTING, PUBLISHING, PACKAGING, AND CORRUGATION INDUSTRIES.**

Flip over to pages 24, 25 and 26 to know why.

On a final note, I believe being responsibly intentional this year in making good, acceptable and perfect choices will help players take advantage of the positive upturn of businesses this year as predicted by **PRINTING United Alliance** Chief Economist - **Andrew D. Paparozzi** whose assurance sums up this edition's **COVER STORY** titled: **2025 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR COMMERCIAL PRINTING.** Open to pages 30, 31 and 32 to know other things you must do to benefit from the expected positive upturn.

And as I urge that we continue to engage in responsible and unwavering commitment to solve societal problems, let's be inspired that what separate

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success from mediocre is not only our act of being visionary or passionate but more importantly, our willingness to take calculated risks of impactful discipline, dedication and being consistent in meeting (and when possible) surpassing markets' needs.

As always, I'm eternally grateful to God for His faithfulness, mercies, and blessings for this New 2025 Business Year. And on behalf of **WHERE To Print magazine Team**, I

wholeheartedly thank you (our loyal and consistent readers, advertisers, PEP clients and partners) for all your support, encouragement and patronage.

Until next edition, please keep pressing; building meaningful relationships; and creating long-term impact as I urge you take care of yourself while continuing your good deeds!

Print impact around Nigeria

Stories by Precious Ajuonuma & Joju Adekanbi

FAE BOSS DONATES LIBRARY, RECREATION CENTER TO HER COMMUNITY



As part of her Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, the Chief Executive Officer at **FAE Limited** - Nigeria's largest envelope manufacturing company - **Mrs. Funlayo Bakare-Okeowo** has built and donated a Community Library

alongside a Recreation Center in Ogba area of Lagos.

Unveiled on Friday 6th of December 2024 by Head of Service, Lagos State – **Mr. Bode Agoro**, the free-to-use, soundproof, and well-equipped library is expected to provide youth in the area the much-needed haven



to read and assimilate thereby becoming leaders of tomorrow. "I am thrilled to be one of the philanthropists in Nigeria making meaningful impact. My Joy is that this would be a centre to get our youth off the streets by letting them cultivate a reading culture, giving them a sense of belonging and the ability to believe in themselves that they can be leaders of tomorrow instead of embracing the *Japa syndrome*", remarked Mrs. Bakare-Okeowo as she also noted that the

Continued on page 11 >>

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Print impact around Nigeria

Stories by Precious Ajuonuma & Joju Adekanbi

community library was envisioned as a hub of enlightenment, where curiosity meets opportunity.



FAE Limited



HP KICKS OFF 2025 CHARTING NEW HORIZONS IN LAGOS



Under the theme: *Charting New Horizons!* **Hewlett-Packard (HP)** kicked off 2025 with an incredible event in Lagos, Nigeria.

According to HP, OPS Category Manager, East and Central Africa – **Mr. Talal Akar**, the gathering was more than just a launch; “It was a powerful reminder of our collective vision, innovation, and drive to

break new ground” he enthused while noting further that; “Exciting times lie ahead as we embrace fresh opportunities, push boundaries, and work together to achieve greater success. Grateful to be part of this journey with such an inspiring team!”



Picture credit © Mr. Talal Akar



Print Impact Around the World

METEOR INKJET SUPPORTS XEROX M SERIES PRINTHEADS

Meteor Inkjet LTD, leading supplier of industrial inkjet printhead driving solutions, further expands its product portfolio with electronics and software to drive **Xerox M Series printheads**.

Able to withstand elevated temperatures, Xerox M Series printheads are ideal for industrial applications such as additive manufacturing, 3D printing and robotic decoration, particularly when high-viscosity fluids are required. Additionally, a stainless-steel faceplate and relatively simple construction make the printhead well-suited for pharmaceutical and food applications.

Building on the success of driving Xerox W Series printheads, Meteor's new HDC-XM solution for the M Series enables OEMs to fully exploit the capabilities of these printheads which are already

widely used for additive manufacturing. Coupled with Meteor software for system control, print job creation and image quality enhancement, OEMs can significantly reduce the time and effort associated with the design and delivery of industrial inkjet systems.



X-RITE, PANTONE, AND SUN CHEMICAL UPDATE PANTONELIVE

Sun Chemical, X-Rite Incorporated and Pantone LLC have announced new **Monobloc Colour Libraries** in the **PantoneLIVE** digital colour ecosystem. These libraries facilitate the accurate communication of Pantone standards in the production of monobloc cans, helping brands and metal packaging manufacturers set achievable expectations in the design, proofing, and printing for gloss or matte varnish on monobloc aerosols, aluminum collapsible tubes, cartridges, and felt pen cases.

Now included in the 'PantoneLIVE Production – Print and Packaging' subscription, the monobloc libraries give the best possible representation of Pantone colours for producing extruded aluminum aerosol cans. The libraries were developed by capturing the closest achievable match to the core Pantone Matching System colours, using applied ink with either gloss or matte varnish onto monobloc cans, bottles, or containers. Leading consumer brands, packaging converters, and canmakers can rely on PantoneLIVE for confidence in selecting colour standards that are achievable in production.



End-to-End Colour Measurement Solutions for Metal Packaging

PantoneLIVE integrates with X-Rite solutions including ColorCert, Color iQC quality control software, Autura Ink Software, Ci64 handheld colour measurement device, and NetProfiler performance platform for a truly connected digital colour workflow. An end-to-end colour management workflow helps brands, packaging printers, and manufacturers streamline colour communication, enhancing design and print efficiency.

MEGNAJET'S OMNIFLO MEETS GROWING DEMAND FOR HIGH VISCOSITY JETTING

Megnajet has launched **OmniFlo**, its latest fluid management system designed to meet the challenges of jetting highly viscous fluids, or those with a high particle loading.

Developed from extensive customer feedback, the OmniFlo's patented non-mechanical vortex chamber makes it ideal for ensuring consistent and reliable fluid conditioning across scanning, single-pass and multi-axis inkjet applications. OmniFlo's reliability, ease of use and precise control enable users to jet a much wider range of fluids than was previously possible. The system's high-quality print and part jetting make it ideal for applications including textiles, labelling, graphics, additive manufacturing, ceramic tile and glass printing industries.



KOENIG & BAUER DURST OPENS VARIJET 106 CUSTOMER CENTER KOENIG & BAUER

A unique opportunity to see and test digital, offset and post-print production on a single site is now a reality with the opening in Radebeul, Germany, of a dedicated hall for the **VariJET 106**, the hybrid press for folding cartons jointly developed by **Durst and Koenig & Bauer**.

Customers and visitors can now bring their own print files and substrates to see for themselves the flexibility, sustainability and cost-competitive opportunities afforded by Koenig & Bauer Durst's VariJET 106 modular, single-pass press, which had its public debut at drupa. The 700 square meter hall is part of the global **Customer Experience Center** at Koenig & Bauer's Sheetfed division headquarters, near Dresden, which is now part of the Paper & Packaging



Sheetfed Systems (P&P) segment.

"The new dedicated hall for the VariJET 106 digital, hybrid press for folding carton markets represents another important step in our evolution," said Daniel Velema, Managing Director, Koenig & Bauer Durst. "The opening means the Customer Experience Center is the one and only place where you can see and test digital, offset and post-print production at a single site. This is where prospects from all over the world can test the VariJET 106 for themselves using their own files and substrates. This ability to advise across print and finishing technologies is driven by our ambition to first and foremost understand and support your business needs and opportunities, and talk about technology second."

The VariJET 106, which runs 5,500 B1 sheets per hour, combines the best of both worlds – digital inkjet and classic offset printing. The VariJET 106 uses water-based inkjet inks (CMYK plus orange, green and violet), primers and coatings to provide the highest print quality at a most competitive cost level, while supporting current and upcoming food safety and sustainability regulation. It leverages on Koenig & Bauer's standard high performance Rapida 106 platform and Durst printhead electronics, inkjet expertise and Durst workflow and RIP technology. This includes Durst Analytics, Smartshop and Workflow.

Koenig & Bauer and Durst first announced they had joined forces and set up an independent joint venture company in 2019. The VariJET 106 is the first product jointly designed and developed by the two companies. Already in production and part of the Koenig & Bauer Durst portfolio are the Delta SPC 130 Series and the CorruJET 170 Series – aimed at corrugated packaging.

PRINT UV 2025 RETURNS WITH EXPANDED AGENDA AND EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNT

The **Print UV 2025 Conference** is set to take place March 10 to 12 at the luxurious Encore by Wynn Las Vegas, promising to be the most dynamic and innovative gathering yet for the UV printing industry.

With the theme "Expanding the Gamut," this year's event will feature groundbreaking advancements in UV printing technology, including expanded color possibilities, AI-powered efficiencies, and the debut of exciting new tracks like Digital UV Embellishments, moderated by Taktful Software.

Print UV 2025 continues its tradition of fostering collaboration and learning by offering attendees access to industry-leading sessions, hands-on workshops, and unparalleled networking opportunities with top UV printers, technology providers, and embellishment experts. Agenda highlights include:

- Mastering 7+ Colour UV Printing for Brand-Perfect



- Results
- Revolutionizing Print with Digital UV Embellishments, hosted by Taktful
- AI and the Future of Printing Operations: Practical Applications for UV
- Networking with Industry Leaders during exclusive sessions, panels, and social events

Attendees will also hear from featured speakers representing industry leaders, including experts from Westrock, Koenig & Bauer, INX International, GEW, IST Metz along with Benford, KURZ, Huber Group, K LAZER and more, who will share insights and strategies to drive innovation and success in the UV printing space. The event will also feature an exhibitor gallery showcasing the latest UV and LED UV printing technologies, inks, coatings, embellishments, and more, with opportunities to connect directly with the industry's top solution providers and innovators.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR PRINTING UNITED ALLIANCE'S 2025 INKJET SUMMIT

PRINTING United Alliance is excited to announce that registration is now open for the **2025 Inkjet Summit**, the industry's premier event for inkjet printing technology hosted by its Printing Impressions and In-plant Impressions brands.



The event is set to take place at the luxurious Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida on April 14 to 16, 2025. This exclusive, invitation-only event brings together senior-level decision-makers and industry leaders across commercial, packaging, publishing, and specialty printing markets to explore the transformative potential of production inkjet technology. Key highlights of the Inkjet Summit include:

- Expert-Led Educational Sessions:** Gain insights from top industry experts on the latest trends, innovations, and business strategies in inkjet technology.
- One-on-One Meetings with Leading Solution Providers:** Tailored discussions with inkjet vendors and manufacturers to help attendees identify solutions that align with their business goals.
- Peer Networking Opportunities:** Connect with like-minded professionals to share experiences, challenges, and best practices.
- Real-World Case Studies:** Discover how industry peers are successfully implementing inkjet technology to drive profitability and growth.

More details can be found at: ijsummit.com

INSOFT AUTOMATION UNVEILS IMP VERSION 14

InSoft Automation has announced the launch of **Imp Version 14**, the latest iteration of its industry-leading cost-based layout planning software. Packed with cutting-edge features, this release redefines efficiency, automation, and workflow optimization for printing and finishing processes.



Imp Version 14 sets a new benchmark in layout

planning by seamlessly integrating automation and advanced algorithms to meet diverse customer needs. From enhanced REST API support to smarter ganging, this release empowers users to achieve higher speed and cost savings. Key highlights of Imp Version 14:

- REST API Integration:** Streamlined automation with ImpConfig and ImpCore REST APIs, along with Open API documentation.
- ImpCmd CLC:** A comprehensive command-line tool, which enables easy integration and parallel processing.
- Advanced Binderies Support:** Enhanced marks and smarter planning algorithms, which ensure precise, automated imposition and finishing for book-of-one, print-on-demand, and short-run jobs.
- Priority-Based Planning:** Optimized ganging algorithms prioritizing delivery schedules with 2X faster performance.
- Block Ganging:** Simplifies cutting workflows by grouping jobs with the same trim size, reducing handling during cutting, and boosting productivity.
- Overrun Controls:** Customizable settings to limit overruns, minimizing waste and maximizing cost efficiency.

XAAR'S INNOVATIVE INKJET TECHNOLOGY ENABLES NEW GENERATION OF EV BATTERY COATINGS

Xaar, a leader in industrial inkjet technology, is driving advancements in electric vehicle (EV) battery manufacturing with improvements in safety, efficiency, and sustainability.

Through its partnerships with **Shifang Intelligent Manufacturing Technology** and **Shenzhen Omijia Intelligent Technology Co., Ltd.**, traditional coating methods are being replaced with Xaar's innovative inkjet technology, powered by its Xaar eX and Nitrox eX printheads.

The electric vehicle market's rapid growth is driving increased demand for battery packs capable of withstanding higher voltages. As a result, effective coatings are essential for providing robust protection against the heat generated during high-voltage



Xaar CEO John Mills with GM, Omijia – Henry Liu



Xaar CEO John Mills with Shifang founder/ CEO – Zack Zhang

charging and preventing wear and tear caused by densely packed battery configurations. Traditional coating methods, such as PET film, have struggled to meet these demands, creating a barrier to improved battery performance.

As the first inkjet company to introduce a printhead specifically designed for the battery sector, Xaar provides advanced technologies - such as its TF Technology for consistent ink recirculation and Sure Flow self-cleaning to deliver reliable performance and simplified maintenance. Xaar's High Laydown Technology also offers significant advantages for ink formulators, providing the flexibility to design high-performance coatings that ensure even, uniform layers that are essential for battery safety and durability.

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Print Impact Around the World

175 YEARS OF HEIDELBERG

Heidelberg Druckmaschinen AG (Heidelberg) is entering its anniversary year 2025 with a growth strategy: "To expand our market position, we are increasingly tapping into growth potential in our core business in packaging and digital printing as well as in the software and lifecycle business," says Jürgen Otto, CEO of



"The highly automated Peak Performance Speedmaster XL 106 with up to 21,000 sheets per hour enables autonomous print production."

Heidelberg. "We will also continue to expand our offering in the growing green technologies market. This includes key areas such as high-precision mechanical engineering, the automotive industry, charging infrastructure and software, and new hydrogen technologies."

March 11, 2025, marks the 175th anniversary of the company's founding. What began over a century and a half ago as a bell foundry in Frankenthal in the Palatinate region of Germany, has since developed into a leading global technology company and total solutions provider for print shops and packaging applications. In total, Heidelberg sees growth potential of more than € 300 million in sales for all strategic initiatives by the 2028/2029 financial year, while at the same time consolidating performance and increasing efficiency. The milestones:

• Packaging market has seen significant growth since 2014

Heidelberg is benefiting from the constantly growing global demand for packaging. The end customer market for packaging has grown by more than 60 percent worldwide over the past ten years. In cooperation with Solenis, Heidelberg is responding to the global trend away from plastic and foil to wards paper-based packaging and will in future offer solutions for printing recyclable packaging, particularly for the food industry. The company already generates more than 50 percent of its turnover in the packaging segment. And the trend is clearly upward.

• Heidelberg seizes opportunities in growing industrial digital printing

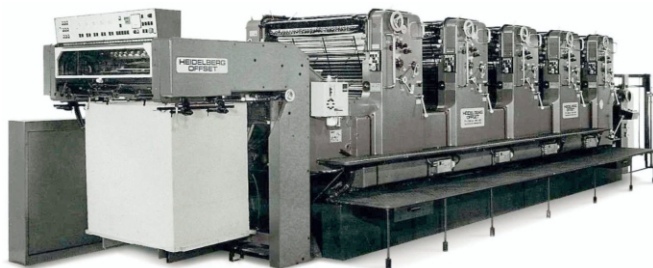
According to market estimates, the global digital printing market accessible to Heidelberg, including service and consumables, will grow from around EUR 5 billion today to EUR 7.5 billion by 2029. Heidelberg has significantly expanded its offering, including through its cooperation with Canon. This will significantly increase sales of digital printing solutions. Incoming orders already confirm this from the next financial year.

• International business with high potential.

Heidelberg sees a lever for more sales growth in its strong international presence in around 170 countries worldwide, with one of the largest global sales and service networks. The company will continue to expand this internationalization, particularly in growth markets such as Asia, the USA and emerging markets. Heidelberg has the best prerequisites for this, particularly in China, thanks to its local production and partnership with MK Masterwork. More than 85 percent of the company's business is already conducted outside Germany.

• Focus on expanding industrial business in the Technology segment

Another focus is on Heidelberg's industrial business to open up new product areas, markets, and industries. To this end, the company has extensive skills, expertise and resources that are currently already being used outside the printing industry, particularly in the fields of high-precision mechanical engineering, the automotive industry, electromobility and hydrogen. The company is also increasingly offering its expertise and installed capacities to other companies in order to efficiently industrialize or manufacture their products.



In 1974, the Heidelberg Speedmaster sheetfed offset series was presented for the first time, with a speed of 11,000 sheets per hour, underpinning the company's leading market position to this day.

Heidelberg has been shaping the printing industry for 175 years with innovations, top quality and maximum reliability. Throughout its history, the company has repeatedly set new standards with pioneering developments such as the "Original Heidelberg Tegel" and the "Speedmaster" model series for sheetfed offset printing. "175 years of Heidelberg Druckmaschinen are a strong testimony to consistency, as well as innovative strength and thus future viability," says Jürgen Otto. "Thanks to its impressive achievements over the past 175 years, the company is looking forward to further growth

in the coming years with its current market position, the expertise of its employees and global customer relationships."

Together with customers, employees and partners, Heidelberg is celebrating its anniversary year with numerous events and activities. In the summer, for example, there will be a week of celebrations at the Wiesloch-Walldorf headquarters in the newly designed demonstration center - the Home of Print - including an anniversary ceremony with guests from all over the world, i.e. customers, suppliers, partners and representatives from politics and society. Family days are planned for employees at individual locations. In addition, there will be an anniversary magazine in which the history of the company will be presented, and the future will be directed.

With around 9,500 employees worldwide, production facilities in several countries and regions, including China and the USA, as well as the densest sales and service network in the industry, Heidelberg is now a true global player and world market leader from Germany. "Our history impressively demonstrates how entrepreneurship, technical expertise and the genuine creative power of our employees can have a lasting impact on a company over such a long period of time and, far beyond that, on an entire industry to this day," Otto continues.

KODAK TO SHOWCASE FASTEST INKJET PRESS AT HUNKELER INNOVATIONDAYS

Kodak will highlight unmatched speed and versatility in inkjet production printing by running live demonstrations of the KODAK PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press, the world's fastest web-fed full-color inkjet press, at **Hunkeler Innovationdays 2025** (February 24 to 27, Lucerne, Switzerland), booth P4 in hall 1. The show will be the PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press's first appearance in Europe.

Dazzling inkjet speed live on the show floor

Kodak will showcase the PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press printing with water-based KODAK EKTACOLOR Inks in a roll-to-roll configuration with an unwinder and a rewinder designed and manufactured by Kodak.



The PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press is the world's fastest inkjet press, capable of printing at speeds of up to 410 mpm (1,345 fpm). Its three print modes — Turbo, Performance and Quality — enable printers to easily fine-tune optimal speed and quality balance for each job. These capabilities make the PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press an excellent solution for migrating larger direct mail, commercial, transactional, and book printing jobs from offset to digital.

During Hunkeler Innovationdays, Kodak will be printing various applications at blazing speeds on the PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press several times a day. Along with scheduled demos, printers can book individual demonstrations of the press through Kodak sales representatives. Visitors to the Kodak booth will also have the opportunity to view a vast collection of print samples illustrating the high-quality output and the variety of applications that can be produced with the KODAK PROSPER ULTRA 520 Press, powered by KODAK ULTRASTREAM Technology, and the new KODAK PROSPER Print Bar, which incorporates KODAK PROSPER Plus Imprinting Systems.

Kodak, in cooperation with partners Horizon International and Hunkeler, will also demonstrate the efficient processing of paper rolls printed on PROSPER Presses into finished printed products. A saddle-stitched catalog will be produced on a Horizon iCE StitchLiner Mark V, and a Hunkeler paper processing line will handle a demanding direct mail application. "We are excited to bring the PROSPER 7000 Turbo Press to Europe for the first time and to raise the bar in terms of speed and production efficiency at Hunkeler Innovationdays. This cutting-edge inkjet press helps printers transition from offset to digital production and profitably serve their customers," commented Jim Continenza, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Kodak. "Our PROSPER Presses, using high-speed continuous inkjet technologies and proprietary KODACHROME and EKTACOLOR Inks and KODAK OPTIMAX Primers, help printers succeed in the 'and' era of print by providing ultra-productive, cost-effective printing of a wide range of applications."

ONPRINTSHOP LAUNCHES V12.0 WITH AI-POWERED W2P CAPABILITIES

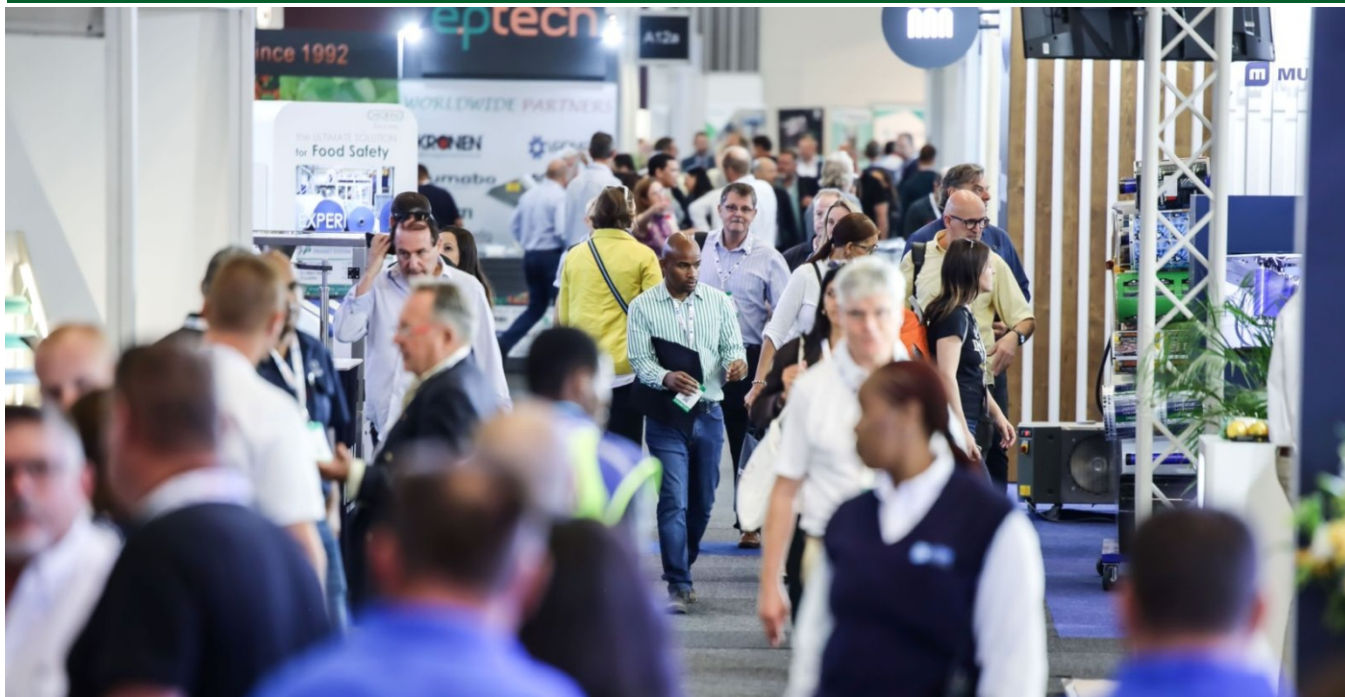
The web to print innovator, **OnPrintShop** is back with yet another powerful upgrade i.e. **version 12.0**, after its initial launch of version 11.2 last year. The all-new-OnPrintShop includes features like AI-based website language translators, image generating tools, and smart text translator in the 'Designer Studio'.

The newly added 'Pattern



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EXPLORE THE FUTURE OF PACKAGING AT PROPAK AFRICA



Just weeks from now, South Africa's premier trade showcase, **PROPAK Africa**, will open its doors, revealing groundbreaking innovations across packaging, printing, plastics, food processing and labelling. **WHERE To Print magazine** in this **SPECIAL FEATURE pre-show ARTICLE** highlights how this triennial event taking place at the **Johannesburg Expo Centre, Nasrec** from **11 to 14 March 2025**, has become a trusted hub for industry professionals striving to stay ahead in an ever-changing market.



The **South African Packaging Industry** is influenced by a range of factors, including competition, urbanisation, evolving consumer preferences, technological advancements, and sustainability concerns. Rising energy and raw material costs have further highlighted the need for energy-efficient, automated production lines for improving quality control, reducing waste, and minimising human error.

Plastic packaging remains central, driven by demand in the food, beverage, and pharmaceutical markets for its durability and cost-effectiveness. However, increasing interest in recyclable and sustainable materials is pushing local suppliers to innovate, balancing industry needs with environmental priorities.

Those attending **PROPAK Africa** can look forward to an unparalleled opportunity

to explore many of these new technologies and materials. From sustainable packaging and recyclability to cutting-edge smart labelling, printing, and advanced processing, attendees will find resources to elevate their operations. With South Africa's leading innovators, suppliers, and thought leaders present, the event is the perfect platform for networking, collaboration, and staying ahead of the latest industry trends.



"PROPAK Africa, together with co-located shows **Pro-Plas Expo**, **The GAPP Print Expo**, **FoodPro Expo**, and **Pro-Label Expo**, will be more than double the size of the 2022 event. It will feature over 500 exhibitors and display thousands of new products, technologies and services," says **Mark Anderson**, Portfolio Director at Specialised Exhibitions, a division of Montgomery Group and organisers of the show.

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"Automation and digitisation will take centre stage at PROPAK Africa, spanning packaging, plastics, printing, and processing. Exhibitors will showcase advanced machinery and materials designed to boost efficiency, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness in production."

Over the four day event, PROPAK Africa will also provide an opportunity for attendees to enhance their industry knowledge by attending complimentary seminars, where industry specialists will share their insights and

expertise. Reflecting the show's themed days, the diverse programme will include topics such as industry innovations and technologies, recyclability and sustainability, and the recognition of local excellence, amongst others.

Complementing the seminars, the **Institute of Packaging South Africa (IPSA)** will host three focused half-day conferences, adding depth and expertise to PROPAK Africa's knowledge-sharing platform.



Visitors can opt-in to the **OneMatch Business Networking Tool** when registering to attend, which enables the scheduling of one-on-one meetings with suppliers they want to connect with at the show. Additionally, the new **WhatsApp Concierge Service** at PROPAK Africa provides on-demand event information and live chat functionality for quick assistance, ensuring a smoother and more efficient visitor experience.

"We're excited about the show and ready to deliver an engaging, value-packed event," concludes Anderson.

PROPAK Africa 2025 is supported by **The Institute of Packaging SA, Packaging SA, Plastics SA, and Printing SA**. For more information and to register to attend, visit: www.propakafrika.co.za

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Do
You
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MENTOR
dedicated
to
help
GROW
your
DREAM?



ROTOCON INSTALLS SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST PANTEC RHINO E FLATBED FINISHING SYSTEM AT SA LITHO

...BEGINS SALE OF VICUT DIGITAL CUTTING AND FINISHING MACHINES



Pascal Aengenvoort (ROTOCON Sales Director), **Roger Meierhofer**, (Pantec Senior Area Sales Manager), **Michael Aengenvoort** (ROTOCON Group CEO), **Dawrian Salles** (SA Litho General Manager) and **Glen Witbooi** (SA Litho National Sales Manager).

Specialist in delivering customised turnkey solutions to the label printing and packaging industries – **ROTOCON** (in conjunction with its partner OEM, **Pantec Schweiz AG**) has installed South Africa's first **Pantec RHINO E flatbed finishing system** at **SA Litho Label Printers**. In this SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE, **WHERE To Print** highlights how the latest installation is poised to redefine local standards in premium label production.

The standout feature of the **Pantec RHINO E flatbed finishing system** is its ability to apply multiple foils and embossing effects in a single pass. Renowned for its innovative embossing and multi-foil capabilities, the RHINO E can reach speeds of up to 18,000 strokes per hour, enabling rapid and efficient production of premium labels while maintaining the precision required for intricate tasks like foil stamping and embossing.

According to **Roger Meierhofer**, Senior Area Sales Manager at Pantec Schweiz AG, the RHINO E's tooling cassette is optimised for frequent changes, a key requirement for short-run production. "Notably, switching tools - whether for simple flat hot foiling or intricate embossing—does not require cutting the foil or substrate, ensuring seamless transitions," he said.

Operating alongside the RHINO E is ROTOCON's **CHROME RDF 340** digital finishing system with a delam/relam unit and turn bar on a moveable rail, two full rotary flexo units (one with cold foil and lamination), a rotary screen unit, Corona Treater, and a full-rotary die cutting station. The CHROME RDF 340 also features an integrated UV Ray curing system with a chill roller to ensure substrate stability, along with Wink's SmartGap Touch - a digitally controlled adjustable anvil system that offers a range of smart functions to streamline the die-



·ROTOCON's CHROME RDF 340 and Pantec's RHINO E flatbed finishing system.

cutting process, making it faster, easier, and more efficient. Both the UV Ray and Wink systems were also supplied by ROTOCON.

"Introducing a machine of this calibre is always a challenge," said **Michael Aengenvoort**, ROTOCON's Group CEO. "From technical integration to operator training, every aspect had to align perfectly with SA Litho's standards. Our role was to ensure that this end-to-end finishing line incorporating the Pantec RHINO E with the CHROME RDF, not only met but exceeded their expectations."

For SA Litho's General Manager, **Dawrian Salles**, the

Continued on page 17 >>

decision to invest in the Pantec RHINO E was strategic. "This was about differentiation," Dawrian explained. "We wanted to elevate our capabilities and quality, especially in the wine and spirits labelling space, which demands intricate designs and impeccable finishing. Competing against multinational label producers requires us to match, if not surpass, their quality. With the RHINO E and CHROME RDF, we now have the tools to do just that."

ROTOCON NOW SELLING VICUT DIGITAL CUTTING AND FINISHING MACHINES IN SOUTH AFRICA

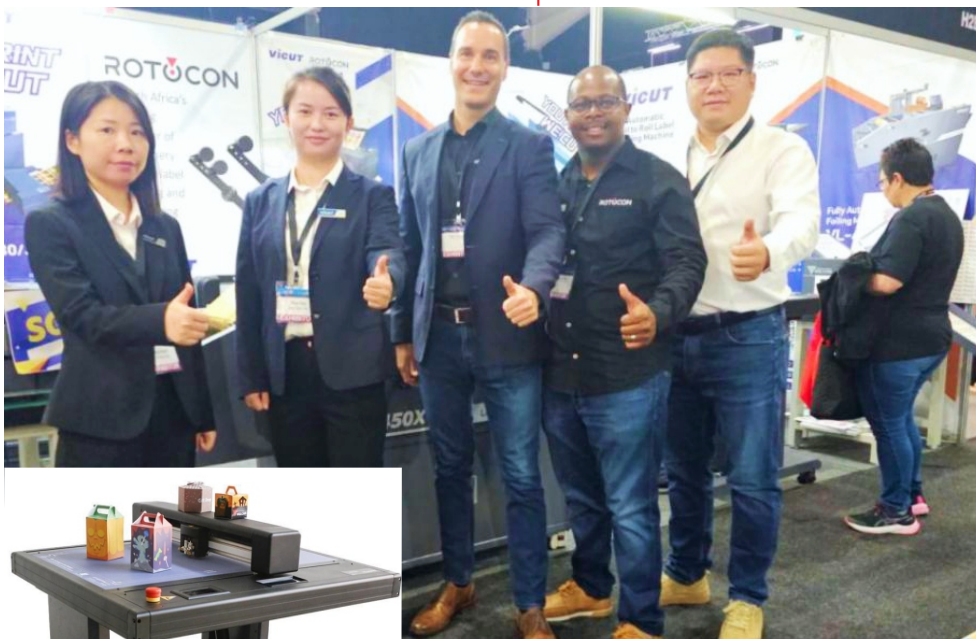
In a related development, ROTOCON has also partnered with Chinese supplier - **VICUT** to bring their digital cutting and finishing machines to the South African market. The collaboration began at **drupa 2024** and was formalised in September with a visit to ROTOCON's Johannesburg facility and a shared stand at **FESPA Africa 2024**.

VICUT's range of machines includes the VL-450X (digital laminating and foiling), the VFC90 (digital flatbed DTF cutter), the FC700/500 (flatbed cutter), the CC330/220 (auto-fed card cutter), and the SC-350 (auto-fed sheet label cutter). Among these, the FC700/500 flatbed cutter offers versatile functionalities to the South African market, enabling the creation of custom packaging by cutting both shape and crease lines with high precision. This makes it ideal for small-run, niche packaging, or personalised box production.

VICUT's machinery is designed for the graphics industry, making it particularly suitable for smaller print shops or businesses with wide-format printers," said **Patrick Aengenvoort**, Sales Director at ROTOCON. "Offline die-cutting for applications such as vinyl printing, short-run business cards, and wedding invitations—along with custom packaging and personalised box production—are just a few possibilities."

"Our collaboration with VICUT is already delivering tangible results," added Aengenvoort. "At FESPA Africa, we successfully demonstrated the versatility of VICUT's technology, selling both a VICUT CC330 auto-fed card cutter and an FC500 flatbed cutter. The overwhelming interest in on-site demonstrations at our Johannesburg facility further reflects the growing demand for innovative and cost-effective cutting and finishing solutions in the South African market."

A range of VICUT post-press cutting solutions will also be demonstrated on ROTOCON's **stands B9, B13, A8, and A14** at **PROPAK Africa 2025**. These include the VL-450X digital laminating and foiling machine, the VFC90 digital flatbed direct transfer film (DTF) cutter, the SC-350 Vulcan sheet-fed label cutter, and the FC-500VC Vulcan flatbed cutting plotter. ROTOCON is proud to be a Gold Sponsor of PROPAK Africa 2025.



•**Olivia Zhang (VICUT), Ella Zhou (VICUT), Patrick Aengenvoort (ROTOCON), Allan Musakwa (ROTOCON), and Jack Zhang (VICUT).**



The VICUT FC500 flatbed cutter

For more information, visit: www.ROTOCON.world



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need an
holistic
GUIDE
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your
**GRAPHIC
CAREER?**



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Print Impact Around the World

Product Type' allows printers to expand into a new product segment, enabling customers to easily personalize large format prints and textile products including wallpaper, bed sheets, gift paper, pillow covers, curtains and more. The revamped design proofing tool in version 12.0 tracks the design changes and streamlines communication with its system-generated emails, reducing errors in the approval workflows.

Printers can now offer advanced finishes like embossing, debossing, foil and spot UV on print products, providing customers the capability to visualize the products in a 3D format for real product preview. Another update that OnPrintShop v12.0 brings is the instant buying features including 'Quick Design' that allows print

buyers to personalize products directly on the product info page, without navigating to the 'Designer Studio'.

Also, the newly added 'Buy Now' button enables customers to purchase ready-to-buy products like photo prints and canvas on the go, thus saving time for customers. With the new upgrade, print business owners can measure the performance of their business productivity via tangible metrics from the 'Production Time Spent' report. Version 12.0 also enables printers to showcase recommended products to customers including trending or highest-selling items, enabling customers to buy more from you.

Along with that, the web to print enabler also launched several other features including 'New File Uploader' that uploads files at 2x to 3x speed for large files, custom forms for effective data collection, and the flexibility to add B2B storefront specific product size and quantity. Version 12.0 also includes modern enhancements like 2 factor authentication (2FA) feature for B2B storefront, better control over coupon and discount management, optimized product description and gallery image uploader screens with easy saving and deletion.

Additionally, the new upgrade allows printers to choose Google Gemini as an alternative to OpenAI and Cloudflare Turnstile Integration as an alternative to Google reCaptcha. From tackling language barriers to optimizing business performance, the new iteration is built by considering the pressing challenges of modern print businesses and with an aim to enhance customer satisfaction levels. With new and improved UX, design and text creation, quick personalization options, easy access to trending products, on-the go purchasing options, the latest iteration is packed with modern features that transform customer experiences.

X-RITE INTRODUCES JUDGE LED LIGHT BOOTH FOR LED COLOUR EVALUATION

X-Rite Incorporated, a global leader in colour science and technology, announces the **Judge LED Light Booth**, designed for precise visual colour evaluation as industries shift from fluorescent to energy-efficient LED lighting.



Building on 60

Judge LED Light Booth | Credit: X-Rite

years of lighting innovation, this new light booth incorporates advanced LED technology to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and helps brands and suppliers transition smoothly to LED-based colour assessments, maintaining quality without operational disruptions.

The global shift to LED lighting, driven by energy efficiency mandates and governmental regulations, presents a new challenge for industries such as textiles, automotive, paint and coatings, plastics, and packaging that depend on colour accuracy. Fluorescent and LED illuminants have distinct spectral power distributions (SPD) that can dramatically impact colour perception. To maintain colour consistency across the supply chain – from design to production to retail – visual evaluation programs must integrate LED standards into their colour workflows.

Fast, Reliable and Consistent Color Assessment

The Judge LED light booth delivers precise and consistent color evaluation with seven distinct light sources that simulate a variety of lighting conditions. The seven light sources can be selected from a wide range of industry-leading standard illuminants, including LED D50, D65, LED-B2 3000K, LED 3500K, LED-B3 4000K, UV, A, CWF LED, TL84 LED, U30 LED, and U35 LED. Key features of the Judge LED light booth include:

- **Instant Warm-Up:** Eliminates waiting time to improve daily efficiency.
- **Stabilized Illuminants:** Ensures colour evaluation consistency by delivering calibrated illuminants that offer fixed intensity levels and stable chromaticity.
- **Directional D65 Daylight:** Facilitates defect inspection and surface evaluation for characteristics like orange peel to ensure superior product quality on complex finishes.
- **Digital Evaluation:** Offers an optional integrated calibrated monitor, allowing for the comparison of physical samples with digital material twins to ensure consistency

between digital prototypes and physical products.

• **Energy Efficient:** Operates quietly, produces minimal heat, consumes less energy, and has longer lasting illuminants than fluorescent light booths.

• **Standards Compliance:** Meets ISO, ASTM, AATCC, and BSI visual assessment requirements.

HP UNVEILS TWO NEW PAGEWIDE INDUSTRIAL PRESSES

HP Inc., the leader in digital inkjet production whose customers have printed over 1 trillion pages, has announced two new presses that will redefine high-volume digital production - **PageWide Web**



HP PageWide T4250 HDR | Credit: HP

Press T4250 HDR and **PageWide Web Press T500 M HD**.

Fueled by the company's continuous innovation in HP Thermal Inkjet Technology, these industrial presses address industry needs for solutions that deliver productivity, quality, and versatility in the direct mail, general commercial, and book publishing segments.

Designed for a wide variety of publishing, direct mail, and commercial print work, the T4250 HDR establishes a new era of high-volume digital print production. Its blazing fast speeds and consistent outstanding print quality allow customers to print more high-volume, high-coverage jobs, growing their business economically and sustainably. The new 42-inch (106 cm) web press prints up to twice the productivity of its predecessor, the market-leading HP PageWide T485 HD, on the most challenging jobs, resulting in a remarkable 20,000 B1 duplex sheets and over 200,000 letter-sized duplex colour pages per hour. At full performance mode press speed, this press delivers a duty cycle of 184 million U.S. letter-size (173M A4) full-colour images per month¹.

Its groundbreaking recirculating technology prints offset-level vibrancy with captivating hues and incredible print consistency suitable for a wide variety of print products. Combined with HP Optimizer, the press maintains high speed and quality on coated and uncoated media with weights ranging from 40 to 350 gsm (30lb text to 130lb cover). This press comes with the established benefits of thermal inkjet technology—8x nozzle redundancy, user replaceable printheads, automated web-wipe cassettes, and on-press color profiling. The revolutionary T4250 HDR delivers productivity, quality, and versatility while keeping environmental sustainability in mind. HP Brilliant B70 Ink has low VOCs and reduces drying time, with up to 50% less energy use than that of the T485 HD.

HP PageWide Web Press T500M HD: A New Paradigm in Mono Trade Book Production

As publishers re-evaluate book production strategies to adapt to supply chain disruptions, rising inventory and shipping costs, and



HP PageWide T500M HD | Credit: HP

expanding sustainability regulations, the HP PageWide Web Press T500M HD offers book manufacturers a purpose-built solution to meet their clients' demands for shorter run lengths, tighter turnaround times, and more frequent high-volume orders. The industry-leading 54-inch press with a proven book production writing system is designed to use standard offset media and impositions, allowing operators to shift seamlessly between offset and digital print lines, reduce paper inventory, and streamline labor resources. The 1000 fpm (305 mxpm) speed rivals offset turnaround times and throughput by producing finished book blocks of variable trim sizes that move directly to the final production stage, saving time, labour, and floor space.

KOENIG & BAUER PARTNERS WITH RIGOROUS TECHNOLOGY

Koenig & Bauer (US) has announced new partnership with **Rigorous Technology**, a Williston, VT robotics and technology company, to provide its unique palletizer robot for the corrugated and folding carton markets to use in conjunction with Koenig & Bauer's popular line of folder gluers. The BOB Palletizer is designed for ease-of-use and flexibility to empower a post press operation.



Koenig & Bauer announces a new partnership with Rigorous Technology, a Williston, Vermont, robotics and technology company, to provide its unique BOB palletizer robot for the corrugated and folding carton markets.

Engineered for optimal speed, service life, and

Continued on page 19 >>

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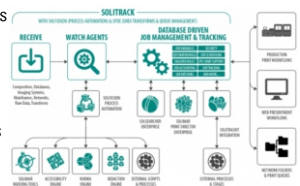
flexibility, the BOB robotic palletizer works with all types of boxes, pallets, layer patterns, and stack patterns with or without an auto packer. Optionally, it can be rolled into place behind a Koenig & Bauer folder gluer, and then operators are able to quickly and easily start a new job within minutes through the intuitive human machine interface (HMI). The BOB robotic palletizer integrates effortlessly, is easy to install, and arrives assembled and factory tested.

SOLIMAR SOLITRACK VERSION 2.6 OFFERS ENHANCED ENTERPRISE WORKFLOW FEATURES



Solimar Systems, Inc., a leading provider of workflow automation solutions, has released **SOLitrack v2.6**, featuring significant enhancements to its enterprise workflow tracking platform. This latest version introduces expanded database support, enhanced job management capabilities, and new API functionalities designed to streamline production workflows.

"SOLitrack 2.6 represents our commitment to delivering robust, enterprise-level workflow solutions that meet the evolving needs of our customers," said Mary Ann Rowan, CXO,



Solimar Systems. "The new features and capabilities enable organizations to achieve greater control and visibility over their production processes."

Key enhancements in SOLitrack 2.6 include:

1. Support for Microsoft SQL Server 2022, ensuring compatibility with the latest database technologies
2. New Piece Level Tracking (PLT) capabilities, allowing the creation of subset jobs and enhanced mail piece tracking
3. Advanced job management features, including customizable mail piece reprint options and flexible page range viewing
4. Expanded API functionality for mail scan data and job management
5. Enhanced JDF device support with new options for Canon, HP Elite, and EQUIOS devices

The update also introduces a new maintenance window feature for scheduling system maintenance during optimal periods and more flexible security configuration for non-administrator service accounts.

ROLAND DGA NOW OFFERS EXTENSION TABLES FOR TRUEVIS LG SERIES



Roland DGA Corporation, a leading provider of wide-format inkjet printers and printer/cutters, has announced that its **TrueVIS LG Series** large-format UV printer/cutter now support an optional **ET Series Extension Table** designed to enable printing on up to B0-size paperboard for packaging prototypes.

Available now through authorized Roland DGA dealers, the ET Series dedicated table units attach easily to the TrueVIS LG-640, LG-540, or LG-300 models and conveniently handle up to B0-size paperboard for prototyping and mock-up production of folding cartons ranging from smaller packages for items such as food, medicine and cosmetics to larger items like liquor bottles, home appliances and toys. The extension tables help streamline the operator's workflow by making it easier and more cost-efficient to perform multiple design iterations when creating folding carton packaging with LG Series devices.

Roland DG's TrueVIS LG Series inkjets are high productivity UV roll-to-roll printer/cutters ideal for customers who need to produce maximum output in a short period of time. They support CMYK, Red, Orange, Gloss, White, and Primer inks that image beautifully and allow for an expanded gamut that optimizes the creative possibilities for users. In addition to printing effectively on a wide variety of materials, these advanced machines make it simple to incorporate eye-catching special effects, including stunning simulated embossing and unique textures, into prints. They are widely used to produce package prototypes, large advertisements, signboards, and interior décor, as well as stickers, labels, and decals.

FSEA OPENS 32ND ANNUAL GOLD LEAF AWARDS COMPETITION FOR SUBMISSIONS

The **Foil & Specialty Effects Association (FSEA)** has opened the **32nd Annual FSEA Gold Leaf Awards Competition**, with entry forms available to print finishers, printers, design groups, brand owners and all others creating



work worth celebrating. The Gold Leaf Awards recognize the best in print decorating and enhancements on greeting cards, folding cartons, book covers, calendars, direct mailers, labels and more.

The FSEA Gold Leaf Awards program has grown as entries are submitted from around the world by printers, finishers and binders that want to compete against the best in the industry with foil, UV coatings, diecuts, folds, embossed images and more. New technologies have fueled growth, too, with expanded award categories in areas such as digital embellishment processes and specialty UV coatings. Entries are judged on design, execution and level of difficulty in more than 30 categories, with a gold, silver and bronze award presented in each. A "Best of Show" award is selected from among all of the Gold Award winners.

"For over 30 years the FSEA Gold Leaf Awards have been celebrating the best of the best in print enhancements," said FSEA Executive Director Jeff Peterson. "This year, we're ready to 'Dive Deep into the World of Embellishments' and recognize the amazing work that is being done to bring attention to embellished printed pieces – whether that's a highly decorated wine label, a foiled carton to draw consumer eyes on the retail shelf or a diecut holiday card that stands out from the crowd."

All winning companies will be announced at **Amplify Print**, to be held June 10 to 12 at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center Rosemont, IL. To submit entries or for complete information on rules, regulations and entry fees, download an entry form from the FSEA website at www.fsea.com

CERM AND ATHENA GRAPHICS REVOLUTIONIZE FLEXO PLATE ORDERING

CERM is proud to announce a new integration with Athena Graphics, marking a major step forward in automating the flexo plate ordering process for label printers. By combining CERM's advanced MIS capabilities with Athena Graphics' expertise in prepress and flexo plate production, this partnership streamlines workflows, reduces manual steps, and ensures precision at every stage.



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MENTORSHIP PARTICIPANTS' BENEFITS

1. Academy - free & highly subsidized print & allied training.
2. Tool - free access to resource Material online.
3. 24/7 access to mentor subject to mentors - subject to availability.
4. Industry events - free entry to industry exhibitions, workshops, seminars etc
5. Participation in Business, Setup, Design etc competition with funding.
6. Evening Dinner with Investor/Mentor.
8. Booth Camp/ Boat Cruise exclusivity .

MENTORS' / INVESTORS' BENEFITS

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



THE MARVELOUS MIKE PRESS ADVANTAGE



Incorporated in 1999 to provide security print, publishing and general offset print, **Marvelous Mike Press Limited** has today evolved into an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) driven company and becomes one of Nigeria's most capitalized presses that easily defang the unfair prejudices and stereotypes that Nigeria Printers do not have capacity and capability to meet extreme demands in the industry. This exclusive tête-à-tête with Marketing Manager – **Mr. Peter Oluwadamilare Oladapo** highlights the firm's edge over contemporaries.



WHAT IS THE MANDATE OF MARVELOUS MIKE PRESS LIMITED?

We have the mandate of providing top-notch print services to individuals, groups, corporate bodies, government and non-governmental institutions. Our goal is to deliver first-class print services to all our highly esteemed clients both in Nigeria and internationally.

IN WHICH AREA OF PRINT SERVICE?

We provide quality printing in the areas of security printing, book publishing, flexible packaging and commercial printing. On security print, we enable brand protection for products and the production of secure documents. In book publishing, we produce up-to-date books for quality education. And our flexo packaging section produces packages to the taste of our clients.

HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS?

We work closely with our clients hence our business is centered around them. Infact, every aspect of our operation is adapted to suit the specific needs of every client. Combining our unrivalled experience in the field with our unique approach towards printing, we have made a name for ourselves in the market. The commitment and dedicated efforts of all our team members to see that our clients get the best for their printing services enable us to go extra mile with each project. We take each client's job personal and with utmost care.



HOW DO YOU DELIVER IN EXTREME SITUATIONS?

We are equipped with the most advanced and modern technologies backed by meticulously trained and highly professional staff to meet the extreme demands in such areas as book publishing, general printing, flexo packaging,

Continued on page 21 >>

and security printing. As noted earlier, our goal is to guarantee the on-time delivery of high-quality printing services, using modern printing technology, effective network across board that is ICT-driven as well as international best practices.

WHAT ABOUT SECURITY?

We have tight-security onsite. There is 24hours CCTV coverage with onsite and offsite video data backup. That is why we are the best when it comes to printing of sensitive and security documents. Our active security personnel are always on patrol in close collaboration with the Nigerian Police Force to provide all-round security of both facility and staff.

ANY DOWNTIME?

Never. Our edge is to always plan ahead with an inventory that is well-quipped with the most advanced printing machines from design to finishing, well stocked warehouses of various paper, card and sticker both in reels and sheets for maximum production of jobs of any capacity. We have 24/7 solar powered electricity apart from different high-capacity generators to ensure no downtime. We are always readily available for any job order.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

It's my pleasure



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About Mr. PETER OLUWADAMILARE OLADAPO

Mr. Oladapo is an experienced and result-driven Certified Marketing Professional (CMP) who also holds Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Relations from Osun State University. With over seven years of extensive experience in the printing industry, he has proven track record of successfully developing and implementing strategic marketing plans to drive business growth.

With Google Analytics Certification, skills and expertise in promoting the company's products and services among international organizations and government agencies, he is currently the Marketing Manager at Marvelous Mike Press Limited - the leading printing company in West Africa.



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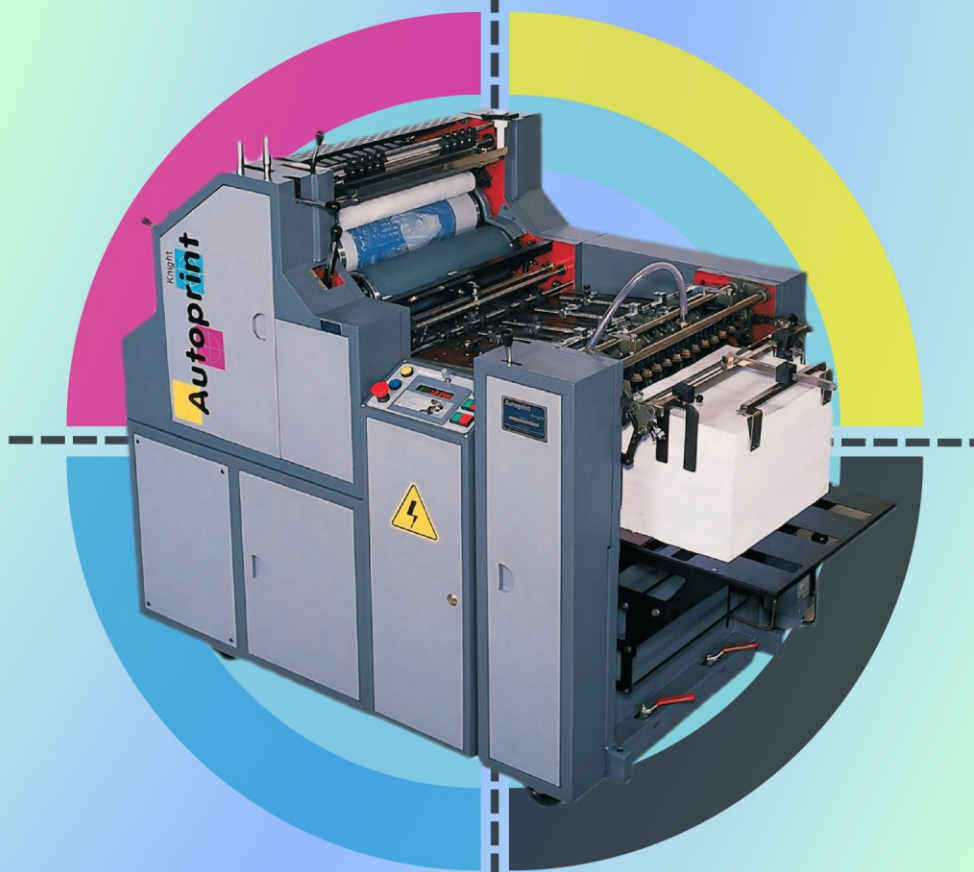
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ANKAN GRAPHICS LIMITED IS THE TAILORED TURNKEY SOLUTIONS PROVIDER FOR THE PRINTING, PUBLISHING, PACKAGING, AND CORRUGATION INDUSTRIES



Over the years, **Ankan Graphics Limited** has been representing world's leading Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) like **Autoprint, BindEx, DGM Global, and CHM Sheeter Machinery**, to mention just a few in the West African subregion. Today, the company has established itself as the preferred Distribution Partner to these leading OEMs across the region in order to fulfil local manufacturing needs. Find out why the company prides itself as the 'tailored turnkey solutions' provider for machineries, spares, chemicals and consumables for printing, packaging, corrugation, and publishing industries in this exclusive **SPECIAL FEATURE INTERVIEW** with the Director, **Mr. Kaleeswaran Nadar**:

2024 BUSINESS LANDSCAPE CONNOTES DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT BUSINESSES; WHAT DOES 2024 BUSINESS YEAR MEAN TO ANKAN GRAPHICS?

Greetings to **WHERE To Print** readers. Thanks for this opportunity to share our experience with you. 2024 Business Year has been wonderful as we have been able to provide quality products on a consistent basis to our Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) customers. Not only that, in 2024, we participated as exhibitor for the first time at the biggest packaging, processing, printing and plastics exhibition in West Africa - **PROPAK West Africa** and we got more new customers. The exhibition was quite energetic as we were able to connect and engage with our current and prospective customers.

“I will enjoin players in the industry to start adopting new and better ideas to improve their businesses for faster turnaround times, better quality output and more profit.”

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU OBSERVE THIS YEAR THAT SUGGESTS IT'S TIME TO REVISIT HOW YOU DEFINE SUCCESS IN YOUR BUSINESS?

With newer enquiries about our product-line especially from new entrepreneurs and existing market leaders, I believe this Year 2025 will be more vibrant and successful. The market is becoming more stable to make concrete plans. Like others have been doing, I will enjoin players in the industry to start adopting new and better ideas to improve their businesses

for faster turnaround times, better quality output and more profit. In a nutshell, they should go for advanced technologies that suit their market needs to ensure sustainable success of their businesses.

WHAT PROGRESS DID ANKAN GRAPHICS MAKE IN 2024?

We were able to represent many leading Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) in the Printing, Publishing, Packaging, and Corrugation Industries within the West African subregion. And this year 2025, we are elated to be signing contract with **DMS Digital** – the postpress specialist as the Exclusive Dealer for West Africa.

“We will be sharing our technical knowledge and support to our customers to increase their productivity through free training and seminars.”

WHAT MAKES ANKAN GRAPHICS DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS?

Our motto is to deliver advanced technologies and machineries within affordable price range and excellent quality to the satisfaction of our customers. As we are the bridge between the customers and the machinery manufacturers, we strongly believe in mutually beneficial relationship between the customer and the supplier. So, we are here to serve our customers on behalf of the machinery manufacturers and vice versa. We always ensure a win-win situation for both parties.

Continued on page 25>>



Team Ankan Graphics LTD at PROPAK West Africa 2024

WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING THIS YEAR FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS?

We will be sharing our technical knowledge and support to our customers to increase their productivity through free training and seminars. We want to help our customers reduce wastages, downtime and machine maintenance costs.

WHAT ARE THE EXTERNAL FACTORS SHAPING CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR NOW THAT WILL DEFINE FUTURE PATRONAGE?

Issues such as environmental sustainability, health and wellness of workers, adoption of new technologies especially in a volatile market are some of the trends shaping customer behaviour. Our partner OEMs have already put these issues into consideration before bringing their cost-effective and value-added state-of-the-art machines into the market. That is why our customers are now investing in these new technologies to ensure the sustainable future of their businesses.



WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE GREATEST (BUT CONTROLLABLE) RISKS PRINT SERVICE PROVIDER FACE IN 2025?

Machine maintenance will be the biggest but controllable challenge. To prevent downtime and increase productivity, print service providers must not only concentrate on this area to reduce stress, downtime and wastages during production, but they should first get the best machine suitable for their production process from suppliers like Ankan Graphics



Limited where they will get the best advice from start to finish with after-sales support from our technical team. We also have original spare parts and consumables to ensure no downtime.

WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE TO MITIGATE RISKS IN 2025 AND BEYOND?

Apart from the ones given earlier, I will also advice players in the industry to invest in new and intelligent machines. Investors should also look for suitable human resource to man these machines and follow laid-down, working practices and procedures on usage of these machines. We are here to give them the right expert opinion.

“The ability to address customers' issues and concerns, then provide them with the right solutions on time will help grow and sustain any business.”

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS EMERGING TRENDS OR MARKET SHIFTS THAT PLAYERS NEED TO ADDRESS OR TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IN 2025?

With new paper mills entering into the Nigerian market, this year will be the right time to invest in new machineries to increase production capacity in order to adequately serve the market. Investing in new machineries will reduce turnaround time during production and ensure the players meet up deadlines faster and better.

HOW DO YOU ENSURE YOUR OFFERINGS DO NOT FALL SHORT OF YOUR CUSTOMERS' EXPECTATIONS?

We listen and note their requirements against their budgets before we provide them with the most suitable and best solutions. Once our customers' requirements are fixed, we contact our partner OEMs to get the proper, affordable and advance machines that suit our customers' needs. All these are done to ensure we provide our customers with the greatest support they deserve. That is why we are the tailored turnkey solutions provider.

WHAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THE NEW YEAR AND WILL MOTIVATE YOU, YOUR TEAM MEMBERS AND YOUR BUSINESS TO SUCCEED?

We are excited with the way new entrepreneurs and existing market leaders are ready to invest in the right solutions for

Continued on page 26 >>



Ankan Graphics Limited Team at PROPAK West Africa 2024

their businesses. This is a great opportunity for us to show them the right, affordable and best turnkey solutions we offer. We are excited to serve our new and existing customers.

WHAT ARE KEY CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP TIPS THAT WILL BE VITAL TO BUSINESS GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY?

The ability to address customers' issues and concerns, then provide them with the right solutions on time will help grow and sustain any business.

MENTION NEW PRODUCT OR SERVICE OFFERINGS THAT WILL DISTINGUISH YOU FROM THE COMPETITION IN THIS NEW YEAR?

As I noted earlier; this year, we will be representing **DMS Digital Technology** on postpress and blanking machines for value added packaging; flexo printing machines for label manufacturing sector; paper folding machines and sheetfed narrow webs for printing and publishing sector. This is a game-changer in the industry and we are excited to kick the ball rolling. I should also mention that many more brand leaders are eager to deliver their quality products through us in the West African subregion. So, watch out!

HOW DO YOU STAY UPDATED ON INDUSTRY TRENDS?

Attending industry-inclined seminars, conferences, and participating in world renowned industry-related exhibitions keep me updated.

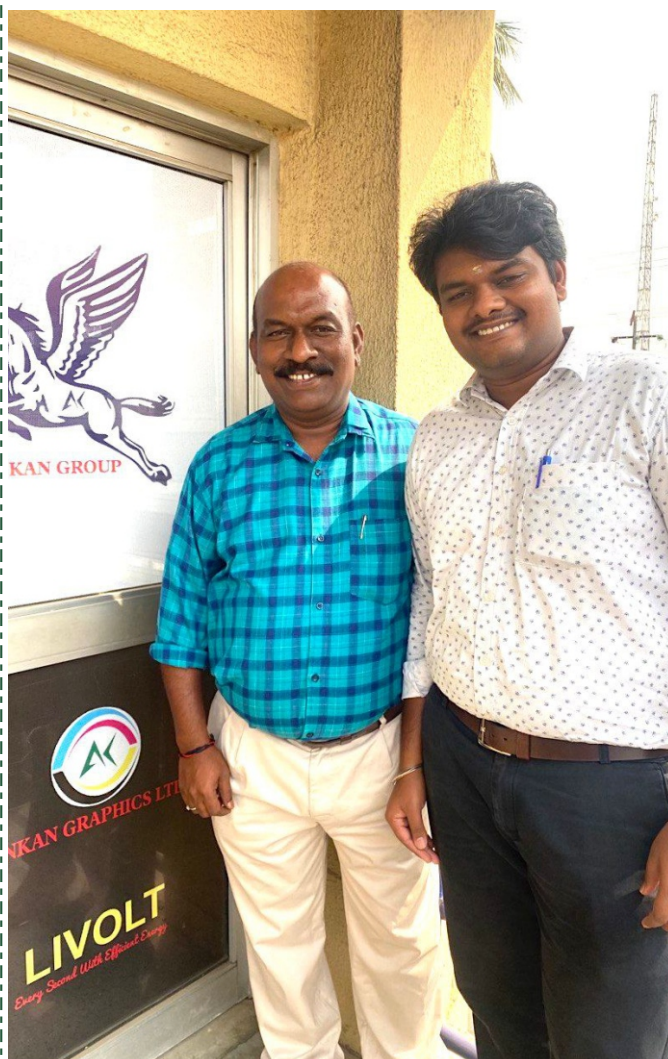
BRIEFLY TELL US ABOUT ANKAN GRAPHICS LIMITED?

Ankan Graphics Limited is the tailored turnkey solutions provider for the Printing, Publishing, Packaging, and Corrugation Industries. With over 33 years of experience in these industries, we work with our customers from the beginning - to make their vision possible and ensure their sustainable progress in their respective field. With our strong technical and after sales service team, we assist our

customers from start to finish as regards their machinery requirements. Not only that, we assist our customers to get the right spares and consumables to ensure smooth operations and profitable adventure in their businesses.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

You're welcome



Director, **Mr. Kaleeswaran Nadar** with Business Development Manager, **Mr. Kumar Bharat**



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THE INCREASING USE OF RESIN INKS IN WIDE FORMAT PRINTING



In this SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE culled from [FESPA.com](https://www.fespa.com), specialist journalist - **Nessan Cleary** discusses how resin inks are becoming more popular in wide format printing and how they can be used on a variety of materials for both interior and exterior signage applications

Inkjet ink can be loosely defined as pigment or colourant particles suspended in a carrier liquid that mainly serves to ensure the ink can be jetted through the tiny nozzles of the printheads to deliver the colourant to the media. For the most part, ink is generally classed according to this carrier liquid. In the early days of wide format inkjet, the dominant ink used a solvent carrier, which quickly gave way to UV-curable inks, partly because of regulatory restrictions on the use of solvent but mostly because of the advantages of UV inks.

However, now we are seeing a new class of **resin ink** starting to become more common. This uses water as its main carrier but there are now several different classes of water-based ink, including many textile inks. Sometimes, this ink is referred to as latex, but the latex name itself comes from HP's marketing team and the terms 'latex' and 'resin' both describe the same type of ink.

The basic idea behind a resin ink is that the pigment is encapsulated in a resin and that this resin melts when heated to bind the pigment to the substrate. As with UV-curable inks, resin ink will work with a wide range of different materials, both porous and non-porous including vinyl, banner, film, canvas, textiles and wallpaper and can be used for both interior and exterior signage applications including vehicle graphics.



•Epson's SureColor R5000 is a 1.6m wide roll-to-roll device that uses resin ink. Credit: Nessan Cleary.

In most cases, the inkset includes a separate optimiser fluid with its own printhead channel. This allows the ink to work with a wide range of media, including both porous and non-porous. The optimiser is dropped onto the same locations that the colour ink drops will be jetted to and

acts as a form of pretreatment that holds the wet ink drops in place on the media to prevent them from spreading before the heater melts the resin to cure the ink drops to the substrate surface.

However, the formulations for this class of ink do vary considerably from one manufacturer to the next, depending on the intellectual property they have access to and the applications they are targeting. So it doesn't necessarily follow that all the various resin inks available have the same degree of capability, with more variation between ink makers than for other types of ink. Some offer better colour gamut, others are better for exterior signage uses and yet others will have lower energy consumption. As always, customers should carefully test any given printer with the exact media they plan on using to assess how suitable that printer is for their business.

Pros and cons

Most wide format vendors will market resin ink as a water-based ink that is more environmentally friendly than other types of ink. There are no volatile organic compounds or other hazards when working with this ink, and there are no barriers to recycling the finished prints. Of course, it should be noted that the overall sustainability depends heavily on the rest of the ink formulation.

However, the real benefit to resin ink is that there's no need for a photo-initiator. In theory, this should allow for a cheaper ink since photo initiators are expensive components. More to the point, the lack of photo initiators make resin inks more preferable to UV inks for food labelling and packaging as the photo initiators carry a risk of migration through the packaging to the food within. So, it is the demand of the packaging industry that is driving the development of this ink as the water based resin inks are seen as a safer alternative that's easier to put through the various certifications required for packaging for items such as food, some cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

Consequently many ink makers are developing their own resin inks, which in turn is driving lower prices and making these inks more attractive to wide format printer vendors. For this reason we're likely to see a lot more wide format printers being introduced with resin inks because many vendors are developing these inks anyway for packaging applications.

The main advantage in terms of wide format graphics is that there is no

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odour associated with them so that the prints can be used in more sensitive environments such as hospitals and schools as well as retail point of sale,

Unfortunately, since resin ink is water-based, it does come with the fundamental disadvantage that the water content must be dried out, meaning that a certain amount of heat has to be used. This in turn can limit the substrate range as some media are quite sensitive to heat. And of course, more heat also leads to higher energy consumption - and therefore cost - for the heating elements. That said, the latest generation of inks use less heat and less energy.

Some vendors, for example, have separated out into an additional protective fluid those additives designed to protect the cured ink from scratches and abrasion. This helps to reduce the amount of liquid that is being laid down with the inks, which in turn reduces the amount of drying needed.

Resin ink in wide format

HP has made the most use of resin or latex ink, with its entire wide format portfolio from entry level through to flatbeds and 3.2m wide industrial printers all using this ink technology. That's largely because HP's inkjet printhead technology revolves around thermal printheads, which are not suitable for UV-curable inks.



HP has gone on to develop latex flatbed printers such as this R2000. Credit: Nessan Cleary.

For now most other vendors have only used resin inks in cheaper roll-fed models, typically only up to 1.6m wide. This is mostly because they want an alternative to solvent printers in case legislation makes solvent ink printers more difficult to sell. However, most vendors admit that the energy needed to cure the ink all but wipes out the environmental advantage of not using solvents in the ink.

However, more vendors will develop resin inks for the packaging and labelling markets. This is partly because it's easier to make an argument for the sustainability of these inks, but mainly because it's easier to gain the necessary certifications for packaging sensitive products such as food and cosmetics. And many of those vendors are already involved in wide format printing and will want to spread their R&D costs.

At the same time, wide format printing has moved on from being purely about printing signage. You will see plenty of packaging applications at FESPA shows as well as examples of industrial printing such as decoration of other products, from household items to children's toys. So, it is inevitable that we will see more resin ink, or latex, printers turning up in the wide format market place.



Discover the latest innovations in inks and wide format printing at **FESPA Global Print Expo 2025**, Europe's leading print and signage exhibition taking place from **6 - 9 May** at **Messe Berlin, Germany**. It will showcase the most innovative products, visionary concepts, and latest developments in the future of print. Register your interest to visit here: <https://www.fespaglobalprintexpo.com/visit/2025-registration>

About NESSAN CLEARY



As an experienced freelance journalist, based in the UK specialising in writing about commercial graphics printing, Nessan Cleary is also a veteran in industrial printing and additive manufacturing.

I'm a freelance journalist, based in the UK. I have worked as a reporter on a local newspaper, the music editor of a listings magazine, and written about the rise of digital photography back in the 90s but my main beat for the last twenty years or so has been covering commercial and industrial printing. I've written articles for many magazines over the years, mostly in the UK, but also as far flung as India and Australia and my work has been translated into other languages from German to Japanese.

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Print Impact Around the World

Seamless and efficient workflow

The integration automates the transfer of verified job data—including approved artwork PDFs and order information—from CERM MIS to Athena Graphics. Job files are compressed and securely transferred via FTP, while real-time status updates using JMF messages, such as "Athena Received" and "Athena Ready," are reflected instantly in CERM MIS. This ensures full visibility and eliminates guesswork for operators.

Precision with QR codes

To bridge the gap between physical and digital processes, each flexo plate from Athena Graphics can be marked with a QR code containing the CERM product ID. Upon delivery, converters can scan the code to confirm receipt, aligning physical plates with digital records and improving accuracy.

A shared commitment to innovation

"Athena Graphics has long been a leader in prepress and flexo plate production," said Sebastiaan Hermans, Marketing Manager at CERM. "This integration reflects our shared commitment to innovation, delivering smarter and more efficient workflows to our customers. It fully underscores CERM's mission to automate production processes and optimize operations for label converters. By reducing errors, streamlining workflows, and enhancing visibility, the CERM-Athena Graphics integration helps label printers achieve new levels of efficiency and reliability." Ignace Cosaert CEO at Athena Graphics agrees and underlines the "importance to offer our customers the most advanced and efficient solutions, and this collaboration with CERM helps us do that and is a perfect example"

IBIS TO UNVEIL SMART LABEL-BINDER AT HUNKELER

IBIS Integrated Bindery Systems will be using Hunkeler Innovation Days (HID) in Lucerne, Switzerland, from 24-27 February 2025 to unveil a unique Smart Label-binder that will set new industry standards in label production.

The new IBIS Smart Label-binder, a variant of IBIS's well-established Smart-binder, has been optimised to produce 'Extended Content' Labels (ECLs). During HID the Smart Label-binder will produce Pharma ECLs using lightweight (45gsm) 'OP medical' printed stock and IBIS's advanced 'ISG' glue-binding technology. The Smart Label-Binder will be running on the SCREEN stand at HID in Hall 2, Stand P7.

The IBIS Smart Label-binder has been developed by IBIS following consultations with major label company manufacturers and includes world-first technology advancements. It will be fed from a Hunkeler roll-unwinder and web-cutter using SCREEN-printed rolls during the four days of the HID show.

John Cracknell, Managing Director of IBIS, said: "With market expectations of a continued sharp growth path for the global pharmaceutical labelling market that is expected to be in excess of £9 billion in 2025 with anticipated year-on-year growth of more than 11%, we are confident that digitally-printed ECLs (extended content labels) will be an increasing future demand.

"As a market-leading integration partner, we can't wait to be at Hunkeler Innovation Days to demonstrate connection, automation and efficiency and reveal more details and unique advances of our new Smart Label-binder. At this HID 2025 we are powering print connections on the SCREEN stand but we are proud of all the printer suppliers we work with globally to provide our



Continued on page 34 >>



2025 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR COMMERCIAL PRINTING



Credit: Getty Images

"Expect business to turn up for the commercial printing industry as 2025 progresses" asserts **PRINTING United Alliance** Chief Economist - **Andrew D. Paparozzi** who also assured that with the support of an American economy benefiting from monetary stimulus, fiscal stimulus, and deregulation, this upturn is likely to be substantial and extended but will not be inclusive. In his analysis of **2024 PRINTING United Alliance State of the Industry Survey (SOI)** adapted as **COVER STORY**, check out what you must do to benefit as participation will be limited to companies that use all the tools available — including artificial intelligence (AI) — to maximize productivity companywide, build robust databases and superior data analytics, and embrace transformative change while not losing sight of timeless business fundamentals.

Preliminary results of the year-end **2024 PRINTING United Alliance State of the Industry Survey (SOI)** show how business has been trending for commercial printers, and what they have planned for the new year. The **94 respondents** who have participated to date are a diverse group, with annual sales ranging from less than **\$1 million** to more than **\$400 million**. Representative of the industry, nearly three-quarters have expanded beyond commercial printing, with **61.3%** adding graphic and sign (wide-format) printing, **30.1%** package printing/converting, **16.1%** promotional product imprinting, and **14%** apparel decoration.

Results varied significantly from company to company but were weak overall through the first three quarters of 2024. For example, sales (all sources) increased **1.7%** on average, growing for **47.2%** but flat for **17.6%** and declining for **35.2%**. Operating cost inflation moderated, but resistance to price increases stiffened: Among all commercial printers surveyed, operating cost inflation outpaced price increases **3.9%** to **2.7%** on average. Real (inflation-adjusted) sales, which measures production by stripping price change out of dollar sales, fell **1%**, and pre-tax profitability, which closely tracks real sales, was flat or declined nearly **69%**.

When asked to comment on their results, an extraordinary **73.8%** of our commercial printing research panel reported that the macro environment (the economy, interest rates, inflation, credit market conditions, etc.) has negatively affected their business this year.

Expect better from the economy in 2025 for two reasons

First, productivity continues to increase as businesses make capital investments, embrace AI, and benefit from an expanding labor force. Rising productivity supports healthy gains in employee compensation, confidence, and spending; boosts profitability by moderating increases in unit labor costs; and lays the foundation for noninflationary, long-term growth that lifts living standards. Little is more important to the economy's long-term health.

Second, monetary stimulus, fiscal stimulus, and deregulation are on the way. No one knows exactly when or how much. After all, it takes time for monetary stimulus to work through the economy, to craft and gain congressional approval for a fiscal stimulus package, and to develop an effective deregulation program. Watch for the economy to accelerate after midyear 2025 and strengthen into 2026. As the economy accelerates, so will commercial printing.

Business Priorities for 2025

But who will participate in the upturn? In the increasingly competitive commercial printing industry, where boundaries between who does what, how, and for whom, are breaking down; it's either prepare for an upturn or be left behind.

For that reason, we asked our research panel about their business priorities for 2025. They have more than **20** in total, ranging from Merger & Acquisition (M&A) to risk management and cybersecurity, reflecting their diverse circumstances and goals.

Continued on page 31 >>



2025 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Figure 1 lists the 10 priorities cited most often. It's hardly surprising that increasing productivity, cited by **82.7%**, tops the list. Margins are under pressure across commercial

printing. Consistently making every process from estimating to invoicing more efficient is essential to fortifying them.

PRIORITY	PERCENT CITING
Productivity	82.7%
Strengthen core services	65.4%
Marketing	61.5%
Execution	59.6%
Focus on business fundamentals	55.8%
Improve the customer experience	50.0%
Employee development	50.0%
Capture higher value-added, more profitable sales	48.1%
Diversify our revenue base	40.4%
Strengthen business intelligence	38.5%

Figure 1

Capital Investment is at the core of productivity plans, with more than **71%** of commercial printers surveyed expecting to purchase equipment, hardware, or software over the next year, and just **13.5%** delaying investments until interest rates decline.

As in recent years, their most desired capital investments include bindery and finishing, so efficiencies gained earlier in the production process are not lost to post-press

bottlenecks; commercial inkjet as a replacement for offset; workflow software and digital infrastructure to smooth workflow and increase production speed; e-commerce to extend automation directly to the client; fulfillment capabilities and print enhancement technologies to increase value added; management intelligence systems to create, access, and analyze robust databases; and wide-format presses to support diversification into graphic and sign production (Figure 2).

INVESTMENT	PERCENT CITING
Bindery/finishing equipment/systems	52.5%
Commercial inkjet	37.5%
Artificial intelligence applications	32.5%
Workflow software	31.3%
Digital infrastructure	30.0%
E-commerce solutions	30.0%
Fulfillment capabilities	26.3%
Management intelligence systems (ERP, CRM, MIS, etc.)	23.8%
Print enhancement technology (digital enhancement, coating, varnishing, foiling, digital cutting & creasing technology, etc.)	23.8%
Wide-format inkjet	22.5%

Figure 2





2025 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR COMMERCIAL PRINTING

AI Applications, cited by nearly one-third, are the new addition to the list of most desired capital investments. As discussed in the **State of the Industry Report 2024: The AI/Big Data Revolution**, AI applications can automate processes we could never automate before, dramatically increasing productivity companywide. Equally important, every hour saved by automating a time-consuming, low-value task is an hour that can be reallocated to activities that create the most value for clients, employees, and the company.

Other **2025 Priorities** include the following:

- **Strengthening core services, focusing on business fundamentals.** It is easy to lose sight of both when change is rapid and disruptive. Commercial printers surveyed plan to “pay closer attention to everything that affects profit,” “bill for things we were giving away,” maintain accurate budgeted hourly cost rates, not allow diversification to become a distraction, and diversify selectively by pursuing opportunities that complement their core services.
- **Marketing.** Brand enhancement by promoting the full range of the company's capabilities and the value created for clients.

- **Execution.** Simply put, doing what they said they are going to do.
- **Improving the customer experience.** Making it easier for customers to do business with them, reducing customer service response times, etc., because “easy, fast, and responsible mean higher prices and profits.”
- **Employee development.** Boost productivity, retention, and recruitment by creating career paths through effective training and education. (Nearly **80%** have increased base compensation this year, by **4.1%** on average, with more than **56%** reporting the increases were necessary to retain and recruit employees.)
- **Capture higher value-added, more profitable sales.** Promoting benefits delivered to clients rather than capabilities alone, “firing bad clients,” and being “selective in whom we will print for.”
- **Diversification.** Selectively adding products, services, and end markets that enhance core business activities.
- **Strengthening business intelligence.** Improving Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), dashboards, customer analysis, and market analysis for a clear, complete, timely picture of what's happening internally and externally and to support superior data-driven decisions companywide.

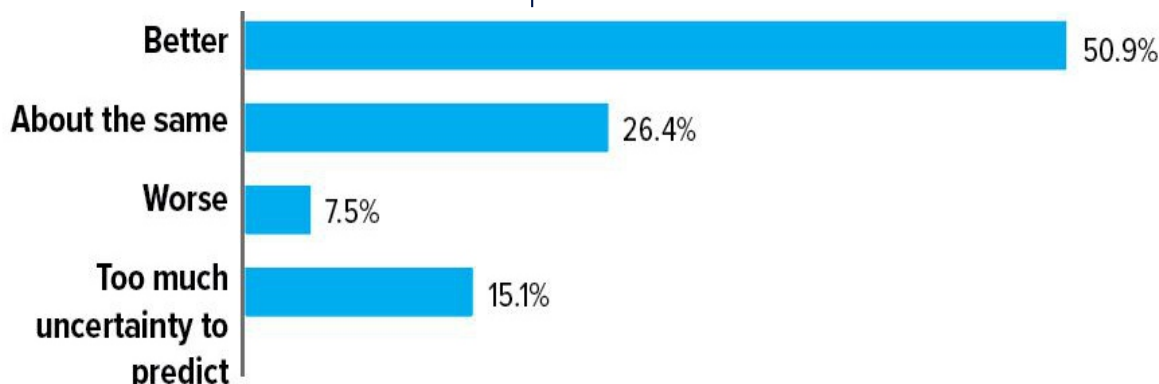


Figure 3

As **Figure 3** shows, **50.9%** of commercial printers surveyed expect business conditions to be more favorable next year than they were this year, significantly greater than the **34.4%** who expect conditions to be the same (**26.9%**) or worse

(**7.5%**). The optimism is justified, as current indicators point to a meaningful, durable upturn ahead. The question every commercial printer should be asking: How are we preparing to participate?

About ANDREW D. PAPAROZZI



Andrew D. Paparozzi joined **PRINTING United Alliance** as Chief Economist in 2018. He analyzes and reports on economic, technological, social and demographic trends that will define the printing industry's future. His most important responsibility, however, is being an observer of the industry by listening to the issues and concerns of company owners, executives and managers. Previously, he worked 31 years at the National Association for Printing Leadership. He has also taught mathematics, statistics and economics at various colleges. Andrew holds a Bachelor's degree in economics from Boston College and a Master's degree in economics — with concentrations in econometrics and public finance — from Columbia University.

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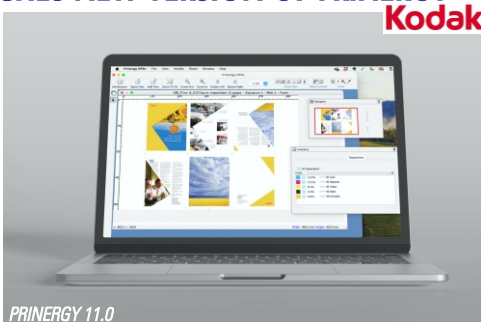
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KODAK LAUNCHES NEW VERSION OF PRINERGY

Kodak has launched the new version 11.0 of KODAK PRINERGY Software. This launch demonstrates Kodak's continued investment in advancing and optimizing the functionality, performance and connectivity of its industry-leading workflow software.



Offering smart automation, the KODAK PRINERGY Platform provides an integrated and future-proof workflow automation solution that consolidates production across digital and analog printing processes. PRINERGY is compatible with virtually all third-party software and equipment and connects with the broadest range of digital presses. Direct connectivity to KODAK PROSPER Presses is a major new feature of PRINERGY version 11.0, which has been designed to provide even more efficient support for both digital and traditional print production. PRINERGY 11.0 features enhancements to Rules-Based Automation (RBA), improved usability for the Virtual Proofing Software Plus (VPS+), seamless import of Harmony calibration curves into KODAK COLORFLOW Software, and many more functional and performance improvements. In addition, the new version offers greater security and usability.

"The release of version 11.0 means PRINERGY is more than ever the key to unlocking efficiency, productivity and profitability for printers in today's digital, analog and hybrid print production," said Jim Barnes, Kodak's Chief IT Implementation Officer. "The KODAK PRINERGY Platform will continue to provide printers with advanced tools, automation and close collaboration options to stay competitive and profitable."

DISCOVER SCREEN PRINT INNOVATIONS AT SPI 2025

The world's leading suppliers of screen technology for industrial markets are set to exhibit at **Screen Print Innovations (SPI)**, the premier industry event on **June 3-5, 2025 at Messe Essen, Germany**. They are gearing up to showcase the latest developments for human-machine interfaces, sensitive surfaces, automotive components, household appliances, medical devices, plastics and glass packaging... Free visitor registration is now open, inviting brands, product owners, and print service providers to experience firsthand the thriving technology.



Sun Chemical will show inks for human-machine interfaces where proven functional inks are complemented by specifically formulated graphic inks, for maximized visual impact and reliability. Grünig and SignTronic will jointly present their modular concept for automated screen production. KIWO's new screen-printable protective films safeguard sensitive surfaces, such as smartwatches



The new PRINT M6 by INO

keyboards, head-up displays and input systems. INO will showcase a new, fully automatic modular machine designed for high-precision printing on sensitive, transparent, and thin foils used in printed electronics, automotive, and medical sectors.

Ink manufacturer - **Proell** will present chemical products and adhesion promoters for in-mold decoration, film insert molding, as well as inks for decoration of metal drums and beer crates. CST will introduce a new machinery series with resolutions above 12,000 dpi and laser power above 48W. Technigraf will show an upgraded version of its combination dryer, featuring both UV and IR radiation in a single unit. Machine manufacturer Thieme will present the fully automatic screen printing system developed specially for foils and sheet metal in the automotive sector, decorative panels, membrane keyboards, white/black goods and printed electronics. Lüscher Technologies will reveal their groundbreaking innovation only at SPI 2025.

Altogether 70 exhibitors and thousands of visitors are expected in the modern facilities of Messe Essen. An adjacent presentation forum of screen technology users will feature keynote speeches. Please visit spi-europe.com for the latest updates and free registration.

More details and registration: spi-europe.com

DR. ANDREAS PLEBKE CONFIRMED AS CHAIRMAN OF THE DRUPA COMMITTEE ...CHARTS COURSE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD-LEADING TRADE FAIR

"It is a special honour for me to continue to actively help shape the development of drupa as chairman of the drupa committee. The world is changing rapidly – both in technical and political terms. Together with the committee we will ensure that drupa constantly develops further to also assert its pole position as a world-leading trade fair for print technologies in future and to orient the industry for the future," explains Dr. Andreas Plebke upon his re-election. His deputy Wolfgang Poppen also stresses: "drupa is the centrepiece of the industry, a



Dr. Andreas Plebke – since 2014 on the board of Koenig & Bauer and CEO since 2021 – Chairman of the drupa committee

place of innovations and technology launches. The coming months will be used intensively to further sharpen the profile of drupa's position in 2028."

Strategic reorientation and new members in the committee

As part of the further development of the world-leading trade fair, the strategic process towards drupa 2028 was already initiated. drupa intensively works on an innovative concept that aims to particularly leverage new target groups in a constantly transforming industry and to promote high-calibre knowledge transfer. Alongside the proven trade fair format innovative formats are being developed with a view to enabling even stronger networking within the industry. Here the focus will increasingly be on brand owners and multipliers. Due to succession planning and personal changes four new members were included in the committee:

- **Merkus Hoffmann**, Executive Senior Vice President, Leonhard Kurz Stiftung & Co. KG & Chairman of the Printing and Paper Association in VDMA e.V.
- **Marcel Martens**, General Manager Industrial Print EMEA Direct, HP Indigo & Pagewide, HP Industrial Printing
- **Thomas Heininger**, CEO, MBO Postpress Solutions GmbH & CEO, Komori International Europe
- **Peter Voigt**, Managing Director, Perfecta Schneidemaschinenwerk GmbH

Technology trends and innovations in focus

A central component of the new strategy is the identification and presentation of relevant technology trends, that determine the future of the print and packaging industry. Topics such as Artificial Intelligence, automation, sustainable printing processes and digital transformation continue to be centre stage in all this. Highly committed and with a clear vision drupa and the committee are preparing the groundwork for the key decisions to be taken for drupa 2028. Because in some twelve months' time the trade fair will kick off its exhibitor registration again, highlighting the innovative power of the industry for all to see.

Providing impulses for the strategic further development of the leading trade fair

The drupa committee was founded on the occasion of the first drupa in 1951 and its members are made up of equal numbers of exhibitors and visitors. Its task is to consult Messe Düsseldorf on the conceptual and sector-relevant further development of the leading trade fair. The personal dialogue with key experts and multipliers on the part of manufacturers and users in this industry is of particular relevance in times of ongoing change in the industry. At present, the committee members represent six industry associations:

- Printing and Paper Technology Association (Fachverband Druck- und Papiertechnik) within VDMA e.V.
- German Printing and Media Industries Federation (Bundesverband Druck und Medien e.V.)
- Paper-Processing Trade Associations (Wirtschaftsverbände Papierverarbeitung)
- Paper Industry (DIE PAPIERINDUSTRIE e.V.)
- German Printing Ink Industry Association (Verband der deutschen Lack- und Druckfarbenindustrie e.V.)
- Flexographic Printing Association (DFTA Flexodruck Fachverband e.V.)

The drupa 2028 committee at a glance:

- Chairman - Andreas Plebke, CEO of Koenig & Bauer AG (VDMA)
- Deputy Chairman - Wolfgang Poppen, Managing Partner, Freiburger Druck GmbH & Co. KG (bvdmd)
- Ralph Dittmann, Managing Director, WKS DRUCKHOLDING GmbH
- Werner Drechsler, Managing Partner, Druckstudio GmbH
- Martin Drews, Managing Director Raw Materials & Circular Economy, in-house counsel, DIE PAPIERINDUSTRIE e.V.
- Thomas Heininger, CEO, MBO Postpress Solutions GmbH & CEO, Komori International Europe
- Markus Hoffmann, Executive Senior Vice President, Leonhard Kurz Stiftung Co. KG & Chairman of the Printing and Paper Technology Association within VDMA e.V.
- Kirsten Hommelhoff, Chief Executive Officer bvdmd e.V. – Bundesverband Druck und Medien e.V.
- Martin Kanert, Chief Executive Officer, VdL – Verband der deutschen Lack- und Druckfarbenindustrie e.V.
- Nicola Kopp-Rostek, Managing Director, DFTA Flexodruck Fachverband e.V.
- Marcel Martens, General Manager Industrial Print EMEA Direct, HP Indigo & Pagewide, HP Industrial Printing
- Falco Paepennüller, Executive Board, Chief Executive Officer, Windmüller & Hölscher KG
- Thomas Pfeiffer, Managing Director, WPV Wirtschaftsverband Papierverarbeitung e.V.
- Thomas Schiemann, Managing Director, Printing and Paper Technology Association within VDMA e.V., VDMA – Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau e.V.
- David Schmedding, Chair Technology & Sales, Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG
- Martin Schorn, Director Technical Customer Service News & Retail (N&R), UPM Communication Papers
- Peter Voigt, General Manager, Perfecta Schneidemaschinenwerk GmbH



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FESPA MIDDLE EAST CELEBRATES YEAR-ON-YEAR VISITOR GROWTH FOLLOWING EVENT'S DEBUT IN 2024



As the second edition of the region's leading event for the global speciality print and signage industries - **FESPA Middle East** welcomed more than **2,700 professionals** from **80 countries**, an **8% rise** over last year, **WHERE To Print magazine** in this SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE extracted from the official post show statement reports how this year's show explored the latest innovation and technology with focus on personalisation, sustainability and future visions, supported by a free, three-day conference programme.

With over **100 exhibiting companies**, an **8% increase** from the 2024 edition, **FESPA Middle East 2025** which took place at the Dubai Exhibition Centre from 20 to 22 January featured more than **200 brands** and over **3,400 visitors** from more than **80 countries**.

This represents an **8% year-on-year increase** in attendees compared to FESPA Middle East's debut event in 2024, setting a new record for the show and demonstrating the strength and demand from the regional and international printing and signage sector which includes print service providers and sign-makers to visual communication specialists and textile-related professionals.



The event, which was officially opened by **His Highness Sheikh Hasher bin Maktoum bin Juma Al Maktoum**, welcomed high-level decision makers from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, India and China, amongst others, where they had the opportunity to witness over **100 exhibiting companies**. According to FESPA, Regional Manager (Middle East & Africa), **Bazil Cassim**: "The overwhelming response to the second edition of FESPA Middle East has underscored the growing demand for events of this calibre for the print and signage

sectors. Throughout the three-day exhibition, we welcomed an exceptional gathering of industry professionals from across the globe, reinforcing FESPA's position as the premier platform for innovation, collaboration, and business growth in the speciality print and signage industries.

"The year-on-year growth in exhibitor participation and visitor numbers highlights the growing influence of FESPA Middle East as a must-attend event for the region. This success underscores our commitment to driving industry advancements, fostering



new opportunities, and delivering a world-class showcase of cutting-edge print and signage technologies."

One of the major trends at this year's exhibition was the increase in direct-to-film (DTF) technology, which involves printing design directly onto a film and then transferring it to a t-shirt or other material. There was also the introduction of additive manufacturing and 3D printing, highlighting the shift to more advanced technology.

Several key launches and regional debuts took place, including the Massivit 3D printer, an industrial system for the automotive, marine and railways, and the Kornit Digital Textile Printers, a single-step direct-to-fabric printing solution. The double side Super Wide format printing was also a show stopper with Yaslan's 5.5m wide UV Printer.

A significant part of the exhibition offering was the well-attended free, three-day conference programme, which included the **FESPA Leadership Exchange (FLEX)**, the sessions addressed topics surrounding business intelligence, new technology, the future vision of the industry in addition to personalisation and sustainability, led by industry heavyweights including Richard Askam, the man behind Coca-Cola's Share a Coke Campaign; Professor George Simonian, Dean at the BADR University; Amit Radia, CEO, Atlas Group; Prasanna Naidu, General Manager, Veesham Printing Press; Gianmauro Vella, PepsiCo; and Kumail Khalfan, CEO, Sign Works.

Other highlights during the exhibition included the highly anticipated **World Wrap Masters Competition**, part of an international series that combines top talent in vehicle wrapping and creative vinyl applications, offering a unique layer of skill and excitement to the show, with 16 competitors battling for the title of **Wrap Master – Middle East**. This year's winner was **Vit Simek** from **Czech Republic**, who will now go on to compete in the final taking place at the **FESPA Global Print Expo** in Berlin in May.

The **Sustainability Spotlight** stand attracted sustainability

champions from government and semi-government entities in the UAE and professionals from the industry. As part of the showcase, the latest products supporting sustainable printing and business practices and a range of informative conference sessions outlining a greener future were highlighted.

Rounding out the show was the Asian Association members of FESPA who gathered during the show as part of the FESPA ASEAN meeting. Association Presidents and members from Australia, Japan, Thailand, Korea, India, Nepal and China were all present to discuss the latest trends in the market.

Exhibitors highlighted the value of the event, particularly when keeping abreast of the latest developments, **Danna Drion**, Marketing Manager, **Mimaki**, said: "If you want to be aware of all the new and most important innovation in digital print and you don't want to miss anything, then you definitely need to go to FESPA Middle East and participate."

This sentiment was echoed by **Mehdi Berrada-Baby**, Managing Director, **Icon Digital**, who said: "Our experience with FESPA has always been fantastic as we participate at many of the FESPA shows around the world. FESPA Middle East 2025 has improved on the inaugural event, and we believe that it will continue to grow. It's the most professional organisation for speciality printing exhibitions."

As a global federation of associations for the digital printing, textile and screen-printing community, FESPA is a non-profit organisation that has reinvested **US\$9 million** into the printing industry worldwide since 2015 through its **Profit for Purpose programme**.

The next edition of **FESPA Middle East** will take place from **13 to 15 January 2026** at **Dubai Exhibition Centre**, Dubai United Arab Emirates.

For more information, please go to www.fespamiddleeast.com

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PRINT & ALLIED EXHIBITIONS FOR 2025

S/N	EXHIBITION	LOCATION	DATE	SHOW LOGO
1	PSI 2025	Messe Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf - Germany	7 – 9 January 2025	
2	GULF PRINT & PACK 2025	Riyadh Front Exhibition Conference Centre (RFECC), Riyadh Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	14 – 16 January 2025	
3	FESPA MIDDLE EAST 2025	Dubai Exhibition Centre (Expo City), Dubai - United Arab Emirates	20 – 22 January 2025	
4	LED CHINA SHENZHEN 2025	Shenzhen Convention Centre, Shenzhen, P.R. China	17 – 19 February 2025	
5	PRINT PACK ALGER 2025	Palais des Expositions d'Alger – SAFEX, Algiers – Algeria	24 – 26 February 2025	
6	SIGN & DIGITAL UK 2025	NEC, Birmingham - United Kingdom	23 – 25 February 2025	
7	PRINTING SOUTH CHINA/ SINO LABEL 2025	China Import and Export Fair Complex, Guangzhou, P.R. China	4 – 6 March 2025	
8	PACK EXPO SOUTH EAST 2025	Georgia World Congress Centre, Atlanta - Georgia, United States of America	10 – 12 March 2025	
9	PROPAK AFRICA 2025	Expo Centre, NASREC Johannesburg - South Africa	11 – 14 March 2025	
10	NIGERIA PLASTPRINTPACK 2025	Landmark Centre, Lagos – Nigeria	25 – 27 March 2025	
11	GRAPHICS CANADA EXPO 2025	International Centre, Toronto - Canada	9 – 11 April 2025	
12	ISA SIGN EXPO 2025	Las Vegas Convention Centre, Las Vegas – Nevada, United States of America	23 – 25 April 2025	
13	FESPA 2025	Messe Berlin, Berlin - Germany	6 – 9 May 2025	
14	PROPAK EAST AFRICA 2025	Sarit Expo Centre, Nairobi – Kenya	20 – 22 May 2025	
15	IPACK-IMA EXPO 2025	Fiera Milano, Italy	27 – 30 May 2025	
16	PROPAK GHANA 2025	The Grand Arena, Accra International Convention Centre, Accra - Ghana	17 – 19 June 2025	
17	SPE – SURABAYA PRINTING EXPO 2025	Grand City, Surabaya - Indonesia	9 – 12 July 2025	
18	FESPA/ AFRICA PRINT 2025	Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg - South Africa	9 – 11 September 2025	
19	PROPAK WEST AFRICA 2025	Landmark Centre, Lagos - Nigeria	9 – 11 September 2025	
20	LABEL EXPO EUROPE 2025	Fira Barcelona Gran Via, Barcelona - Spain	16 – 19 September 2025	
21	LED CHINA SHANGHAI 2025	Shanghai New International Expo Centre, Shanghai, P.R. China	17 – 19 September 2025	
22	PACK PRINT INTERNATIONAL 2025	BITEC, Bangkok - Thailand	17 – 20 September 2025	
23	THE PRINT/ SIGN SHOW UK 2025	NEC, Birmingham - United Kingdom	23 – 25 September 2025	
24	PACK EXPO LAS VEGAS 2025	Las Vegas Convention Centre, Las Vegas, Nevada - United States of America	September 29 – October 1 2025	
25	ALLPRINT EXPO 2025	JIEXPO, Kemayoran, Jakarta – Indonesia	8 – 11 October 2025	
26	K WORLD 2025	Messe Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf – Germany	8 – 15 October 2025	
27	PRINTINGUNITED 2025	Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida - United States of America	22 – 24 October 2025	
28	PAPEREX 2025	Yashobhoomi, Dwarka India International Convention & Expo Centre (IICC), New Delhi - India	3 – 6 December 2025	

NOTE:

- Contact **NUMBERS CMYK LTD**, publishers of **WHERE To Print** magazines (Ghana & Nigeria editions) including **PROPAK East Africa DAILY**, **PROPAK Ghana DAILY**, and **PROPAK West Africa DAILY** for advert/ editorial slots in any of the publication responsibly packaged and distributed free-of-charge to visitors at each of the highlighted shows to improve overall exhibition experience. Visit www.wheretoprintmagazine.com for details on how to get in touch. Also contact **FLOURISH COLOUR VENTURES** (www.flourishcolour.com) to join the professionally packaged and value-driven **PEP Delegation** to any of the international shows.
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STRONG ATTENDANCE AT INAUGURAL GULF PRINT & PACK IN RIYADH HIGHLIGHTS INDUSTRY GROWTH TRAJECTORY



In this SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE culled from the official post event statement, **WHERE To Print magazine** reports how the inaugural edition of **Gulf Print & Pack Saudi Arabia**, Middle East's leading commercial print and packaging trade show, held recently at **Riyadh Front Exhibition Conference Center (RFECC)** marked a significant milestone for the Kingdom's printing and packaging industry, bringing together more than **5,052** visitors from **54** countries.

The exhibition featured over **150 leading exhibitors** and thousands of industry professionals from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, China, Bahrain, Jordan, India, and Germany. **Gulf Print & Pack 2025** in Riyadh provided a tailored platform for the latest advancements in printing and packaging technologies.



From high-speed digital presses and advanced packaging solutions to AI-powered workflow streamlining tools, the event provided a comprehensive overview of the industry's future direction. Major industry players, including **Konica Minolta**, **BOBST**, **Ricoh**, **NDIGITEC**, **Canon**, and **Fujifilm** participated in the event, highlighting their commitment to the Saudi Arabian market and the region's growing print and packaging sector.

"We are overwhelmed by the response to the inaugural edition of Gulf Print & Pack in Saudi Arabia. The attendance and participation from leading industry players is a testament to the potential of, and confidence in, the Saudi Arabian printing and packaging sector. There are encouraging signs

for this platform in the Kingdom for major brands to showcase cutting-edge technologies, foster valuable connections, and drive the industry forward." said **Barry Killengrey**, Event Director, Gulf Print & Pack.



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Ricoh showcased its latest innovations and technology, highlighting how its solutions, including enhanced automation, can help improve business efficiency and reduce total cost of ownership. Ricoh's exhibit featured a range of digital printing systems, including the **Pro 8400** digital mono sheetfed press, **Pro C7500** digital colour sheetfed press, **Pro C9500** digital colour sheetfed press, and **Pro C5300** digital colour sheetfed press, along with the Ricoh Auto Colour Adjuster, cementing its expertise in multiple verticals, including luxury packaging.

Saudi-based **Alkhorayef Printing Solutions**, in collaboration with **MTEX NS**, showcased cutting-edge digital printing and packaging solutions including machines such as **NS MULTI 1300**, **NS MULTI 80**, **NS AQUAFLEX S**. Alkhorayef Printing Solutions brought advanced, sustainable technology directly to Saudi industries, empowering businesses with precision, efficiency, and innovative solutions for flexible and rigid packaging, commercial printing, and labels.

Ahmed Samy Eltantawy, Senior Sales Director, at Alkhorayef, said: "It was an exciting event for us to attend, providing us with a great platform to showcase our latest technologies to serve the regional sector."

Konica Minolta covered three segments of **Digital Production Print** at Gulf Print and Pack 2025 with state-of-the-art **AccurioPress C 14000**, **AccurioPress C 7100** and **AccurioPress C 4080**. Digital Embellishment was covered by **AccurioShine 3600**, Digital Spot UV with inline Single Pass Foiling system for decorative prints.

Fujifilm, a key exhibitor and industry leader, chose Gulf Print & Pack 2025 to launch two new mid-range printers. The company introduced a fifth colour option to their entry-level printer, the **Revoria SC285s**, and unveiled the **EC2100**, a mid-range workhorse printer featuring an entirely new platform and technology, promising significant technical advantages to customers.

Elsewhere **Canon**, the headline sponsor of the event, showcased a suite of cutting-edge digital printing solutions aligned with Saudi Vision 2030. Canon key launches included the **Arizona series** for rigid media, the **Colorado M-series** for high-volume roll-to-roll production, and the **VP 6330 TITAN** for superior book printing.

For further information, visit: www.gulfprintpack.com



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The programme offers the opportunity to hard working leaders and managers to enjoy some time out to relax at the same time as reflect. Participants are taken through global management development activities, company visits, recreational visits and networking activities. The programme is tailored to pressing needs in the print & allied industry with emphasis on:

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Duration?

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Where?

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Fee?

\$7,600 cost include:

- Training fees
- Economy class return ticket
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Eligibility

Owners and Top Managers of Print & Allied Establishments

When?

3 x in a Year 2025*:

- First edition – March 24 to April 13
- Second edition – June 22 to July 13
- Third edition – September 29 to October 19

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RECORDS BROKEN IN 2024!

The doors have closed on another hugely successful Propak West Africa event. From the 10th - 12th September, the 11th edition brought together a record number of visitors, exhibitors and industry stakeholders across the three days in Lagos and provided the platform for the manufacturing sectors it serves to congregate at the leading annual event.

This year saw more than 5,000 attendees visit the Landmark Centre and witness over 250 brands from 174 exhibiting companies. For the first time all four halls at the event centre were filled with the latest technologies available in the global market place for the packaging, printing, processing and plastics industries. Following the success of the event more than 82% of the exhibition centres four halls have already been booked for the 2025 event!

2024 IN NUMBERS



174
EXHIBITORS



5,212
VISITORS

82%

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