issue 10 2026

Print & Packaging Innovation Asia

NEWS | TECHNOLOGY | TRENDS | PEOPLE | SUSTAINABILITY

Who is the new Head of Region Asia Pacific Heidelberg Asia

Nick Trabold

We talk to him

INTERVIEW ON PAGE 14





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ASIAN PACKAGING EXCELLENCE AWARDS:

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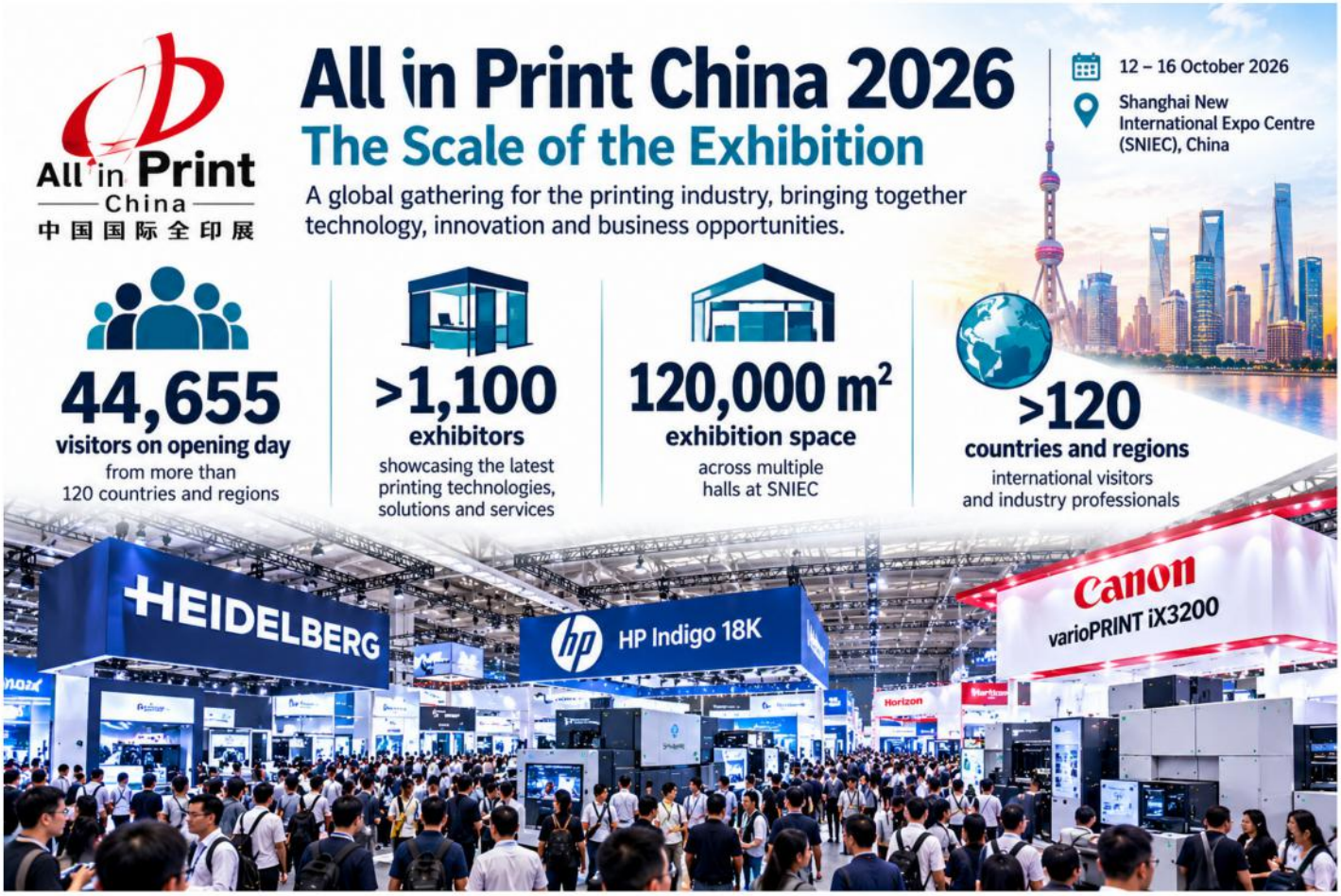
MÜLLER MARTINI

INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

FIVE DAYS IN SHANGHAI

Is the printing industry entering a new era?

By Prof. Dr. William Goh | Shanghai, 11–15 October 2026



ALL IN PRINT CHINA 2026 | Exhibition overview supplied by the author

When I flew from Kuala Lumpur to Shanghai on 11 October, I expected a busy week of technology and conversations. I did not expect the strength of the impression it would leave. After years in printing technology and production management, I have seen offset, computer-to-plate, digital presses and automated workflows reshape our trade. Shanghai suggested that another transition is well under way.

All in Print China opened on 12 October at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre. The organisers reported 44,655 opening-day visitors from more than 120 countries and regions, over 1,100 exhibitors and around 120,000 square metres of exhibition space. The crowds were extraordinary. Visitors surrounded presses, finishing systems and live demonstrations throughout the halls.

But numbers alone do not tell the story. Were companies simply curious, or were they seeking better productivity, more flexible production and less dependence on labour? My conversations and observations suggested genuine interest in new business models. The most important question was not which press was fastest, but how printers could use these technologies profitably.

THE BIG QUESTION: How can printers modernise profitably?

PRINTING & PACKAGING INNOVATION ASIA / SPECIAL REPORT

THE TECHNOLOGY SHIFT

From offset strength to digital opportunity

HEIDELBERG AND CANON | The changing production mix



HEIDELBERG / Offset meets intelligent digital production



CANON / Industrial sheetfed inkjet advances

Heidelberg has long been synonymous with high-quality offset production. Its presses remain central to commercial, publishing and packaging work, and offset continues to make economic sense for many medium- and long-run jobs. What stood out in Shanghai was the company's growing emphasis on digital equipment, connected workflows, automation and intelligent factories.

This is not a story about offset disappearing. Customers increasingly request shorter runs, faster delivery, customised versions and flexible schedules. Digital systems can answer those requirements without conventional make-ready, while offset retains clear advantages when volumes justify it. For printers, the future may be an integrated production mix rather than a choice of one process over another.

Canon's varioPRINT iX3200 provided another indication of the maturity of production inkjet. The sheetfed system is designed for high-volume commercial and publication work, with output of up to 320 A4 images a minute. Canon also highlighted its varioPRESS iV7, extending the range of industrial inkjet options.

These developments are significant not simply because presses are faster. They broaden the applications that printers can produce digitally, including books, variable-content work and shorter-run commercial jobs. But technological capability must never be confused with commercial viability.

Investment decisions depend on real demand, utilisation, ink and maintenance costs, financing, substrate compatibility, staffing and workflow integration. A powerful machine without enough profitable work becomes a burden. That calculation matters especially to Malaysian SMEs, which need to modernise without placing their businesses under unnecessary financial pressure.

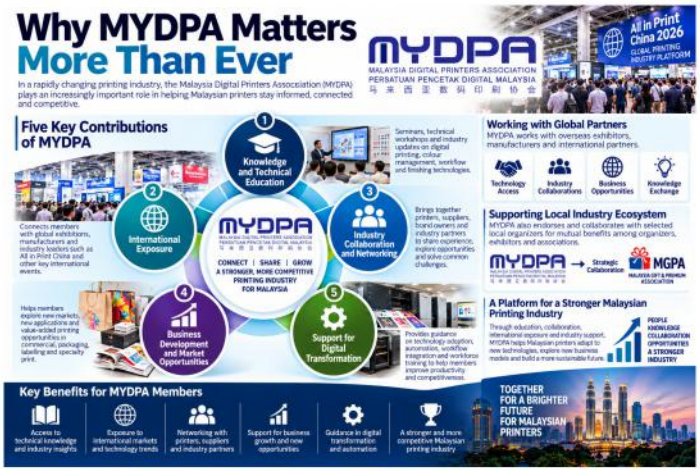
The lesson I took from Shanghai was practical: choose the technology mix that serves your customers and your business, rather than buying equipment solely because it is new.

The future may be an integrated mix—not offset versus digital.

THE MALAYSIA CHALLENGE

Knowledge, collaboration and sound investment

WHY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS MATTER



MYDPA / Knowledge and industry connections



INVESTMENT / A strategic decision, not a race

Shanghai also made me reflect on the Malaysia Digital Printers Association, or MYDPA. Digital printing is no longer confined to short-run cards and flyers. Its applications now include books, labels, packaging, textiles, industrial decoration and specialty work. Colour management, artificial intelligence, variable-data workflows and automated finishing demand skills beyond conventional press operation.

Many smaller companies cannot afford to test every emerging technology. They rely heavily on suppliers for demonstrations and advice. An industry association can complement that guidance through independent knowledge sharing, technical education and cooperation between printers, suppliers, educational institutions and other industry partners.

MYDPA can help companies separate what is technically possible from what is commercially sensible. It can encourage international exposure, training and more informed machinery investments. It can also bring offset and digital specialists closer together.

Not every business needs to own every machine. An offset printer may outsource short personalised jobs to a digital specialist; a digital shop may work with an offset partner on longer runs. These arrangements can create flexibility, broaden services and avoid duplicated capital spending.

Malaysian printers face rising operating costs, limited skilled labour, financing constraints and fierce price competition. That makes disciplined investment essential. Businesses should begin with customers and demand, then examine production volumes, operating costs, employee skills and possible partnerships. Only then should they select equipment.

Industry progress requires more than expensive machinery. Better knowledge, stronger cooperation and careful financial decisions can build a printing sector that is both technologically advanced and commercially sustainable.

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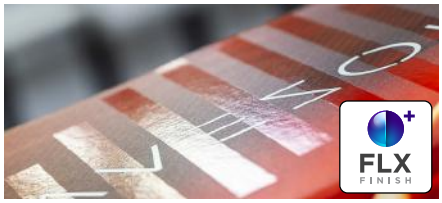
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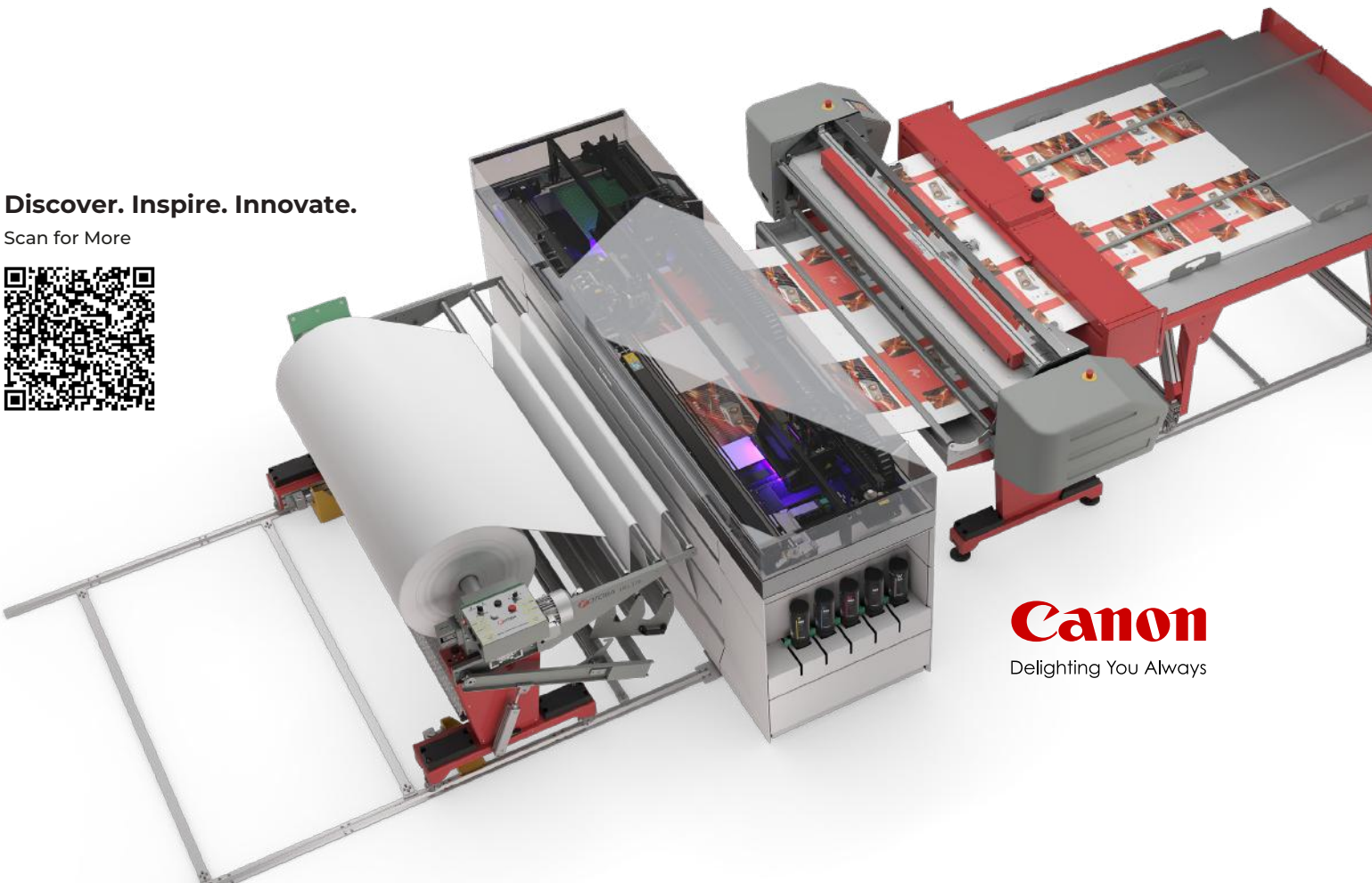


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PRINTING & PACKAGING INNOVATION ASIA / SPECIAL REPORT

EXCELLENCE RECOGNISED

Twenty-five years of Asian Print Awards

PRINTING EXCELLENCE IS MORE THAN MACHINERY



ASIAN PRINT AWARDS / A regional celebration



PRINT QUALITY / People, process and materials

After days among advanced presses and automation systems, the Asian Print Awards dinner at Kerry Hotel Pudong on 15 October offered a welcome change of perspective. The anniversary event brought together around 500 guests from the region's printing industry and celebrated a quarter-century of achievements.

More than 1,800 entries were submitted, and Gold, Silver and Bronze awards recognised outstanding printed products across a broad range of applications. Seeing the winning work reminded me of a principle easily overlooked amid discussions of machinery specifications: printing excellence is created by people as well as technology.

Colour accuracy, substrate choice, registration, process control and finishing all shape the printed result. Skilled prepress staff, press operators, colour specialists, production teams and management must work together. Even the most sophisticated press cannot overcome weak planning or inconsistent processes.

I was honoured to join the award presentations, representing MYDPA, and I sincerely thank Paul Callaghan for inviting me to congratulate recipients on stage. The experience reinforced my respect for the knowledge, dedication and teamwork behind each award-winning entry.

The awards also prompted a question about Malaysia's market. Too often printers compete primarily on price, while customers may not see the difference in materials, workmanship or finishing. Competing only by reducing margins is not a sustainable strategy for everyone.

Regional awards encourage companies to benchmark themselves, learn from international peers and give their employees a source of professional pride. An award may not bring immediate orders, but pursuing excellence can raise standards, strengthen reputations and help printers compete on value rather than price alone.



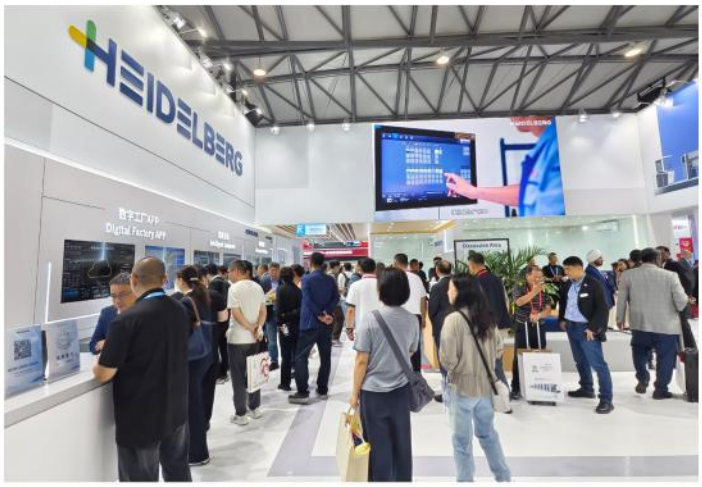
Printing excellence is created by people as well as technology.

WHAT COMES NEXT

Invest in the future, not just a machine



CANON iX3200 at the exhibition



Visitors at the Heidelberg stand

The contrast between All in Print China and the Asian Print Awards was instructive. At the exhibition, manufacturers showed what new equipment can do. At the awards dinner, printers showed what expertise and craftsmanship can achieve. Connecting those two strengths is the challenge for the industry.

Printers have understandable reasons to modernise: changing customer expectations, labour constraints, faster turnaround and competitive pressure. Yet investment made without a clear strategy can worsen financial problems. Before buying, companies must understand the work they want to win, their actual production requirements and the costs of operating new equipment.

My five days in Shanghai left me optimistic about the capabilities of Malaysian printers, but convinced that their future depends on technical education, stronger industry cooperation, sound production management and disciplined investment. Organisations such as MYDPA have a valuable role in helping SMEs navigate these choices.

I thank the organisers of All in Print China, the Asian Print Awards committee, Paul Callaghan, participating companies, sponsors and everyone who contributed to the week. Congratulations again to the award winners.

Shanghai showed me that printing technology continues to advance. The Asian Print Awards reminded me why printing excellence deserves celebrating. Malaysia’s task is to bring both together. We do not necessarily need the most expensive machines; we need the knowledge to choose the right ones, the skills to operate them and the discipline to earn a return.

The future will belong not only to those who print faster, but to those who print better, manage smarter and create greater value.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Prof. Dr. William Goh is Managing Director of Angel Prints Sdn. Bhd. and a professor of printing technology and production management. His work covers manufacturing, technology, sustainability and business leadership.

Print better. Manage smarter. Create greater value.

Asian Print Awards celebrates 25 years of excellence with record entries and a spectacular gala dinner in Shanghai

The Asian Print Awards celebrated its 25th anniversary on 15 October with almost 500 printing industry professionals attending its Gala Awards Dinner at the Kerry Hotel, Shanghai, alongside the record-breaking All in Print China 2026 exhibition..

All in Print China welcomed 180,870 professional visitors from 141 countries and regions, generating 220,820 visits. Overseas buyers represented 22.43% of professional visitors. More than 100 technologies, products and applications made global or China premieres, while preliminary estimates place direct transactions and anticipated follow-up cooperation at nearly RMB 10 billion. The event also attracted 51 international delegations and more than 100 domestic associations and visiting groups.

The Asian Print Awards attracted a record 1,830 entries, assessed by eight independent judges. Evian Gu, General Manager of Messe Düsseldorf (Shanghai) Co., Ltd, opened the awards, highlighting the industry's strength and the successful partnership with All in Print China. Tomi Salo of UPM Communication Papers congratulated winners on behalf of industry suppliers before the presentation of 36 Gold Awards.



Inaugural CTV Awards mark an exciting new chapter

The first CTV Awards, sponsored by the Hong Kong Printers Association and APTEC, received an enthusiastic response. Percy Fung, Chairman of the Hong Kong Printers Association, and Brenda Pang, Executive Director of APTEC, presented five awards. The new category promises to grow as CTV technology develops.

Major sponsor awards recognise exceptional achievement

HEIDELBERG Best in Offset: Kwanginsa Co., Ltd (Korea), presented by Nick Trabol.

KONICA MINOLTA Best in Digital Embellishment: Shanghai Tianou Printing Co., Ltd (China), presented by Yuji Nakata.

FUJIFILM Best in Digital: Okumura Printing Co., Ltd (Japan), presented by Kentaro Imafuku.

CGS ORIS Best Use of Colour: Refine Printing Pte Ltd (Singapore), presented by Bernd Rückert.

KONICA MINOLTA Print Impact Award: Jikji Printing Co., Ltd (Korea), presented by Taeho Kim.





The ceremony also celebrated the first Gold Award winner from Dubai in the competition's 25-year history.

Recognising our sponsors and industry partners

The Asian Print Awards extends sincere appreciation to every sponsor, industry association and partner for their commitment to raising print standards, encouraging innovation and advancing technical excellence throughout the region.

Thailand to host the Asian Print Awards in 2027

The 2027 Gala Awards Dinner will move to Thailand alongside PACK PRINT INTERNATIONAL. With competition expected to be bigger and tougher, printers are encouraged to focus on quality rather than quantity and submit only their finest work.

CLICK HERE TO SEE ALL THE WINNERS AND DINNER PHOTOS

















ASIAN PRINT AWARDS 2026

OFFICIAL RESULTS / GOLD · SILVER · BRONZE

Web Offset - Coated stock 70gsm and above

Gold: C&C Joint Printing (Guangdong) Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Times Printers Pte Ltd – Singapore
Bronze: Manipal Global Print Solutions – India

Offset Labels

Gold: Savinda Graphic Systems Pvt Ltd – Sri Lanka
Silver: Eco Carton Sdn Bhd – Malaysia
Bronze: Huaxin (Foshan) Color Printing Co., Ltd – China

Security Applications

Gold: Shanghai Security Printing Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Wenzhou Haoge Anti-Counterfeit Technology Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Shenzhen Lambda Technology Co.,Ltd – China

Education (any process)

Gold: Beijing Artron Art Printing Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Artron Art Group Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Cosmic Globe Exports – India

Digital Restaurant Menus

Gold: Cyberprint Group Co.,Ltd – Thailand
Silver: Ploy Packaging Plus Co., Ltd – Thailand

Digital Posters

Gold: Pewaris Gemilang Sdn Bhd – Malaysia
Silver: Colorteam Printing Technology Co. Ltd – Taiwan
Bronze: Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd – Thailand

Digital Labels

Gold: QLM Label Makers – Malaysia
Silver: QLM Vietnam – Hoang Ha Label Co., Ltd – Vietnam
Bronze: MCC Label (Manila) Philippines Inc. – Philippines

Web Offset - Light Weight Coated 65gsm

Gold: Sirivatana Interprint Public Company Limited – Thailand
Silver: C&C Joint Printing (Beijing) Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Manipal Global Print Solutions – India

Offset Calendar

Gold: Silver Point The Print House – Dubai
Silver: Beluga Limited – Hong Kong China
Bronze: Sirivatana Interprint Public Company Limited – Thailand

Digital Wedding Invites

Gold: Sampurna Printshop – Indonesia
Silver: D2DESIGN CO., LTD – Vietnam
Bronze: Crystal Kolors – India

Digital Packaging - Soft Carton

Gold: Chanwanich Security Printing Co., Ltd – Thailand
Silver: QLM Vietnam – Hoang Ha Label Co., Ltd – Vietnam
Bronze: Shandong DOC Graphic Digital Printing Co.,Ltd – China

Creative Art Production

Gold: Subaru Graphic – Japan
Silver: Techno Graphic – Malaysia

Special Colours

Gold: Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd – Thailand
Silver: Printcare PLC – Sri Lanka
Bronze: M.I.W Group Company Limited – Thailand

Offset Packaging Products - Rigid Material

Gold: PT Xerography – Indonesia
Silver: Sichuan Yibin Wuliangye Jingmei Printing Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Printcare PLC – Sri Lanka

Environmental (any process)

Gold: Allegro Print Pte Ltd – Singapore

Embellishment

Gold: Leo Paper Group (HK) Ltd – Hong Kong China

Limited Editions & Artwork Reproductions (under 500 print run)

Gold: Beijing Artron Art Printing Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Shenzhen International Color Printing Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Artron Art Group Co., Ltd – China

Company Self Promotion

Gold: Ngai Heng Pte Ltd – Singapore
Silver: Chanwanich Security Printing Co., Ltd – Thailand
Bronze: Leo Paper Group (HK) Ltd – Hong Kong China

Multi-Piece Productions & Campaigns

Gold: KPP Packaging Pte Ltd – Singapore
Silver: Shanxi Jiyin Packaging Printing Technology Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Wongtawan Co., Ltd – Thailand





ASIAN PRINT AWARDS 2026

OFFICIAL RESULTS / GOLD · SILVER · BRONZE

Innovation/Specialty Printing/New technology

Gold: Letra Graphix Pvt Ltd – India
Silver: Wenzhou Haoge Anti-Counterfeit Technology Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd – Thailand

Design and Layout

Gold: QLM Vietnam Hoang Ha Label Co., Ltd – Vietnam
Silver: C&C Joint Printing (Guangdong) Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Leo Paper Group (HK) Ltd – Hong Kong China

Sales Catelog (any process)

Gold: Percetakan Image Vest Sdn Bhd – Malaysia
Silver: Sirivatana Interprint Public Company Limited – Thailand
Bronze: Phongwarin Printing Ltd – Thailand

Digital Printing Magazines

Gold: Bunshodo Printing Co., Ltd – Japan
Silver: MK Printing Bali – Indonesia
Bronze: CyberPrint Group. Co., Ltd – Thailand

Digital Showcards & Point of Sale Material

Gold: BUP Sdn Bhd – Malaysia
Silver: XGraphics – Indonesia
Bronze: Lertsilp San Holding Ltd Part. – Thailand

Digital Embellishment

Gold: PT Bintang Sempurna – Indonesia
Silver: Sri Sivarama Digital Press (Printonica) – India
Bronze: Vive Com Sdn Bhd – Malaysia

Digital Packaging - Rigid Material

Gold: Wide Ocean Printing Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Greenovation Design & Packaging Solutions Company – Myanmar
Bronze: Leo Paper Group (HK) Ltd – Hong Kong China / PT Xerography – Indonesia (joint Bronze recipients)

Digital Book Printing

Gold: Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd – Thailand
Silver: C&C Joint Printing (Guangdong) Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: QLM Vietnam - Hoang Ha Label Co., Ltd – Vietnam

Offset Posters

Gold: Trio Trading Co., Ltd – Thailand
Silver: PrintXcel Packaging (Pvt) Ltd – Sri Lanka
Bronze: S.M.K Printing Co., Ltd – Thailand

Book Printing - 4 or more colours

Gold: RRD Asia – China
Silver: C&C Joint Printing (Guangdong) Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: Artron Art Group Co., Ltd – China

Limited Editions & Artwork Reproductions (under 1000 print run)

Gold: Nanjing Amity Printing Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Times Printers Pte Ltd – Singapore

Book Printing - less than 4 colours

Gold: C&C Joint Printing (Guangdong) Co., Ltd – China
Silver: Beijing Artron Art Printing Co., Ltd – China

Digital Calendars

Gold: Softwave Printing & Packaging (Pvt) Ltd – Sri Lanka
Silver: Dongin Pod Co., Ltd – Korea
Bronze: SAEROME C&P – Korea

Digital Personalised Photo Books

Gold: Chengdu Jiyijian Cultural Communication Co., Ltd – China
Silver: PT Bintang Sempurna – Indonesia
Bronze: Compuprint – India

Offset Packaging Products - Soft Carton

Gold: Printcare PLC – Sri Lanka
Silver: Intermart Printers (Pvt) Ltd – Sri Lanka
Bronze: QLM Vietnam – Hoang Ha Label Co., Ltd – Vietnam

Sheetfed Magazines

Gold: Times Printers Pte Ltd – Singapore
Silver: Silverpoint Press Pvt Ltd – India
Bronze: Rex Printing Company Inc – Philippines

Digital Proofing

Gold: Chanwanich Security Printing Co., Ltd – Thailand
Silver: Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Berhad – Malaysia
Bronze: Sirivatana Interprint Public Company Limited – Thailand

CTV Awards 2026

Gold: Hung Hing – China
Silver: Safe Power Printing & Box Mfg Co., Ltd – China
Bronze: SINSO – China
Recognition: Nine Stars – China
Recognition: Anhui Xinhua Printing Co., Ltd – China





New Leadership, New What's Next for HEIDE

It's not often that Heidelberg Asia Pacific announces a new regional head of operations. In fact, over the past 30 years, only a handful of individuals have been entrusted with leading the region, driving business growth and ensuring Heidelberg remains at the forefront of the minds of those looking to invest in, service or maintain their print and packaging operations at peak performance.

Now, we have the opportunity to speak with Nick Trabold, Head of Region Asia Pacific, Heidelberg Asia Pte Ltd. While certainly no stranger to the region, Trabold now takes on the challenge of steering Heidelberg's business forward in a new era of technological transformation, evolving customer expectations and an increasingly

Please introduce yourself and your industry experience

NT. My name is Nick Trabold, almost 15 years in the industry and as well since then with HEIDELBERG as I started a dual-study program in Germany with the company. Hence, I like to say I'm homegrown as I come from the region of Heidelberg, where the headquarters is based.

Back in the time, there were a few big companies offering this program, including SAP, BASF and some other giants, however, what fascinated me about print was the combination of high tech, with an industry which was tangible and involves all areas: brands, marketers, engineering and logistics.

I believe sometimes, we all, serving and working in this industry must reflect how cool print is as it covers all these areas. That's why I'm proudly say: this was, even in retrospective, and seeing the challenges of our industry and the advancement in the software industry the right move and I am always trying to be an ambassador for this industry with friends, family and the younger generation having a distorted perception about print.

My first touch with Asia was back in 2015, where I stayed in Bangkok for a 3 monthly stint and could see the variety and vibrance of the different markets and cultures. Once I was back in Germany, I started after graduation in Product Management and was leading the launch of what we developed back in 2016 and called "Push to Stop" – the integrated philosophy of automation and software to gain higher productivity.

A statement which left a mark in the industry and gave me the chance to really understand the automation gaps in print shops. With this experience, I came back to Asia and took over the first major leadership role becoming the Managing Director of HEIDELBERG Indonesia. From 2020 to mid of 2023,



Gallus Five

Energy:

ELBERG in Asia Pacific?



Nick Trabold, Head of Region Asia Pacific, Heidelberg Asia Pte Ltd.

despite Covid 19, we massively grew the business in Indonesia. It was an extraordinary time understanding the needs of an emerging market.

A time I won't forget. When I returned 2023 back to the headquarters in Germany, I took over the responsibility for our showroom in Wiesloch. You maybe heard of it as the "Home of Print", that's the transformation we shaped. From a demo room to the largest showroom of the industry with an end-to-end vision for commercial, packaging and label production.

2025 I got also the chance to become Global Head of Service, which was a huge step and brought me even closer to the reality of our market. The best part of that was seeing how strong our global service team is and how they react helping our customers. Since June I have now taken over the responsibility for the Asia Pacific market, which feels like a full circle moment for me. Everything now goes into one responsibility covering this highly diverse region.

Please introduce your company, and what product sectors they look after across the region, along with the equipment you supply to the region

NT. HEIDELBERG is I believe well known to almost everybody in the industry. But we are evolving and in the meantime, we have a setup in our organization which after some time where it perceived as a pure premium supplier is fully back on track with a clear strategy going forward, helping to make customers profitable by using their equipment to the fullest and especially in Asia, we have a strong growth ambition in mind.

We, as HEIDELBERG, serve the industry end to end - from PDF to the final product with a product range largely covering the needs of Commercial, Packaging and Label customers. Of course, the heart of what we do is our range of printing machines, whether it is Offset, Digital or Flexo printing.



Speedmaster CX 104

But we are having as well a strong portfolio for prepress solutions as well as postpress solutions and particular strong when it comes to our range of how we call it "Lifecycle solutions" covering Consumables and application consulting, Service for our equipment but especially proactive Performance Services like consultancy service where we even consider joint performance targets where our software solutions connecting the different dots in a print shop is an inevitable asset in this solution offering.

So in a nutshell and especially here in Asia: "We start with customer applications and business outcomes, not machines and then propose the right solution we foresee to help to fulfill the needs of our customers"

This is my goal where all local organizations in Asia need to be and then we have a clear differentiation and deliver value to our customers which they are willing to pay for.

No one in the industry has this bold, holistic vision of serving customers and in this I must explicitly point out what our organization in Japan is doing. This is in their DNA.

What technology do you have for your customers here across the region 1: Offset 2: Flexo 3: Consumables 4: Finishing/Postpress 5 Pre Press 6: Digital Production 7: Other

NT. We provide a full range of solutions for our customers. That's why I'm saying: my personal message to all my managing directors in the local markets is very clear. We need to be the key partner for our customers in the three segments of Commercial, Packaging and Label print – in each market with its own variables and special features. That's the aspiration I have and therefore we need the right products mixed with the right people and equipped with the right resources.

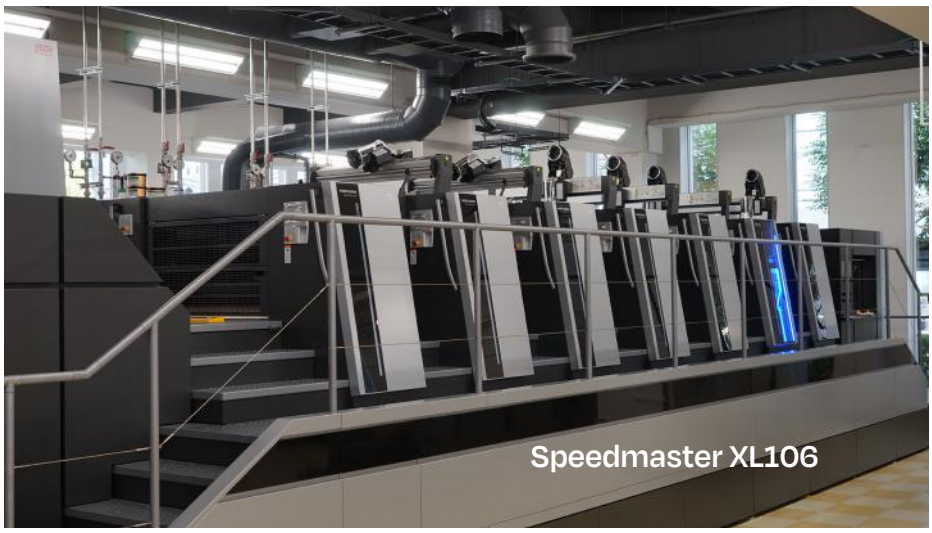
Key partner means for me that we are not a pure machine supplier, but providing a solution. And therefore, in the center of our organization must be application know how. That's what customers demand and at the same time is even harder to find. Only by knowing what customers want to deliver to the market and what is therefore needed, gives us an advantage towards pure machine suppliers talking purely about specs and features.

That's the easy part but making equipment performing to expectations and beyond and herewith making customers profitable is even more important in today's market.

Key partners can't be easily replaced, and this is also the key advantage for HEIDELBERG, as it of course needs to pay off for us as well in the long term to invest in a strong partnership.

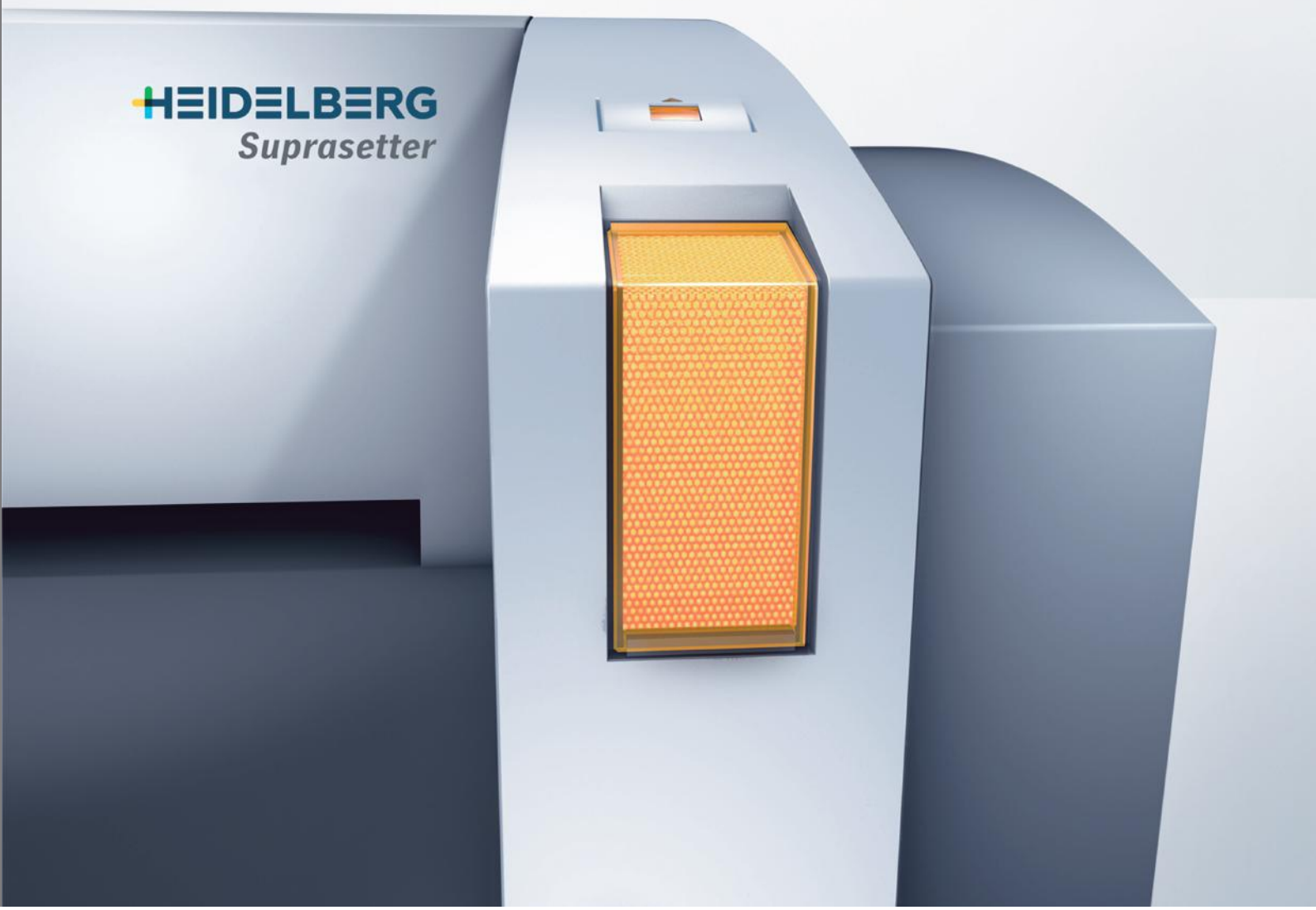
How have your customers changed, what are your mainstream customers like today. What questions do they ask you for your solutions here in Asia Pacific

NT. As said, we cover different segments and it is very dependent on


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Boardmaster

each individual business model. Print itself becomes more a commodity and it becomes difficult to differentiate by quality, hence more questions on specific applications which then the printer becomes specialized in becomes more important. We therefore need to understand the full value chain of multiple applications.

What is your view on the general Printing industry, are you seeing growth in this area.

NT. In packaging printing across Asia Pacific, food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, electronics and tobacco remain the major markets. These industries are key drivers of demand across the region.

In commercial printing, I see growth particularly in book printing and products such as shopping and gift bags, greeting cards and other POS applications for mass markets. Many publishers and brand owners worldwide source these products from Asia Pacific, including markets beyond China.

The picture varies across my nine markets, from mature, highly industrialized Australia to Southeast Asia, India, Japan and Korea, each with its own conditions and growth sectors. India stands out for its strong momentum. What fascinates me most is the continued investment in print—not only by successful, established players, but also through greenfield projects and new entrants. This dynamic is unique within the Asia Pacific region.

What about the area of Digital Production, your views here

NT. Digital production needs to be separated by digitalizing your full production chain and digital print technologies complementing offset and flexographic production. I'm a big fan of looking into the business model of our customers and therefore looking on cost per product, not even cost per sheet, to commonly define the best investment.

We do see still that, for example variable data printing is still a very small share of the market here, but looking into post printing production, digital has many advantages which need to be considered, that's why it is about cost per product, not sheet. I believe digital production is key and here Prinect Touch Free is our vision of a fully touch free production chain from PDF to final product. When we look at Digital print, I believe inkjet will win the race and then it needs calculation what makes more sense.

Offset, flexo, digital sheetfed or digital webfed plus postproduction steps. All technology has its reason for existence, and it will end in most shops in a hybrid environment covering different technologies which need to be managed as efficiently and as color managed as possible. It will not be about print quality itself, this will be irrelevant with advancement in digital print technologies, latest in a few years with some machines already delivering outstanding results for most applications.

Looking into the near future, what plans do you have to keep your products at the forefront and grow the business across the region

NT. In the region we have dedicated region strategies defined for different markets throughout our portfolio. All of them are combined into a single core: Service Excellence. Reactive, proactive, covering our customers' back and making them profitable by selecting us as a key partner in every country.

As said previously, the machines will be output devices, hence we plan to keep our products as productive as possible by delivering proactive exceptional consultancy and service and with higher productivity of our equipment, reducing cost per sheet of our solutions. We have printing presses that deliver consistent performance, day in, day out, with numbers easily exceeding 40-50 Mio sheets per year, some way higher.

Another focus besides strong service, is the strong workflow. Here Prinect Touch Free will be the next game changer, automizing the production chain of print shops. Color management, processes are triggered and AI software will give all needed hints if someone must interact with a machine or a system. That's the future. The grow the business, we will further optimize our complete product range.

What is your opinion of Ai and the industry. Will this affect our businesses looking ahead

NT. The biggest game changer will be on the sales and inquiry side of the business. You may have heard - just now there is a new open-source alternative that replicates parts of the Adobe Cloud, developed by using AI. Everyone will be able to design a print product, box and print providers must be ready to have a quote and defined production process for the product.

Here it will move extremely fast, in production I do see robotics and assistance throughout the process. We will talk to our machines, making operations easier while hardware still will stay tangible and maintenance plus understanding of production processes or having key partners to cover your production efficiency will stay key.

The future of your industry sector you provide your equipment for, if you had a crystal ball where do you see technology in 10 years and longer

NT. When seeing the development in the AI age, ten years is a timeframe which equals 30 years previously, hence I would rather focus on 5-7 years which mostly equals an investment cycle as well. Here, I'm very bullish when it comes to packaging printing. Demand is further growing with the middle class growth in Asia Pacific, supply chains are way more efficient and mass customization will swap over – with first movers in Europe and Americas learning their lessons and the smart, young next gen of Asian entrepreneurs following these trends and developments, adapt those solutions, scale them and make it profitable.

Print and customization will be easily accessible, provided by local print providers producing in efficient hybrid production workflows combining digital and conventional print technologies.

Will your company venture into any other areas of the industry

NT. Surely, we look left and right, but it is always a balance to serve customers to expectations and at the same time diversify the business. Hence, we are always evaluating options where we believe we can add value to the supply chain and our customers.

I think the best way here is further advancements into flexo printing. We have currently a major installation here in my region, Asia Pacific, in the high-volume packaging market with flexo printing. The Boardmaster – not only in liquid packaging but also in general packaging is one of those ventures as we have not been seen as a player in the flexo market as HEIDELBERG for many years, but it's in the meantime in our portfolio and in the center of how we think.

At the end it is about the end customers' applications and here we can add value as HEIDELBERG because we know how professional printers think and what they expect from key partners.


Nick Trabold

Any last words of advice for people reading this interview, what they need to be aware of, look out for or take on board for their business survival. And why choose your company as a business partner for equipment and services

NT. Do things with grit, stay close to your customers and listen. I hope to meet as many of you who are reading this interview as I love to listen and exchange perspectives on our industry. We need to show why to decide for Heidelberg as key partner and our customers must feel the difference, hence I won't give any reasons for HEIDELBERG, just choose wisely with whom to partner.

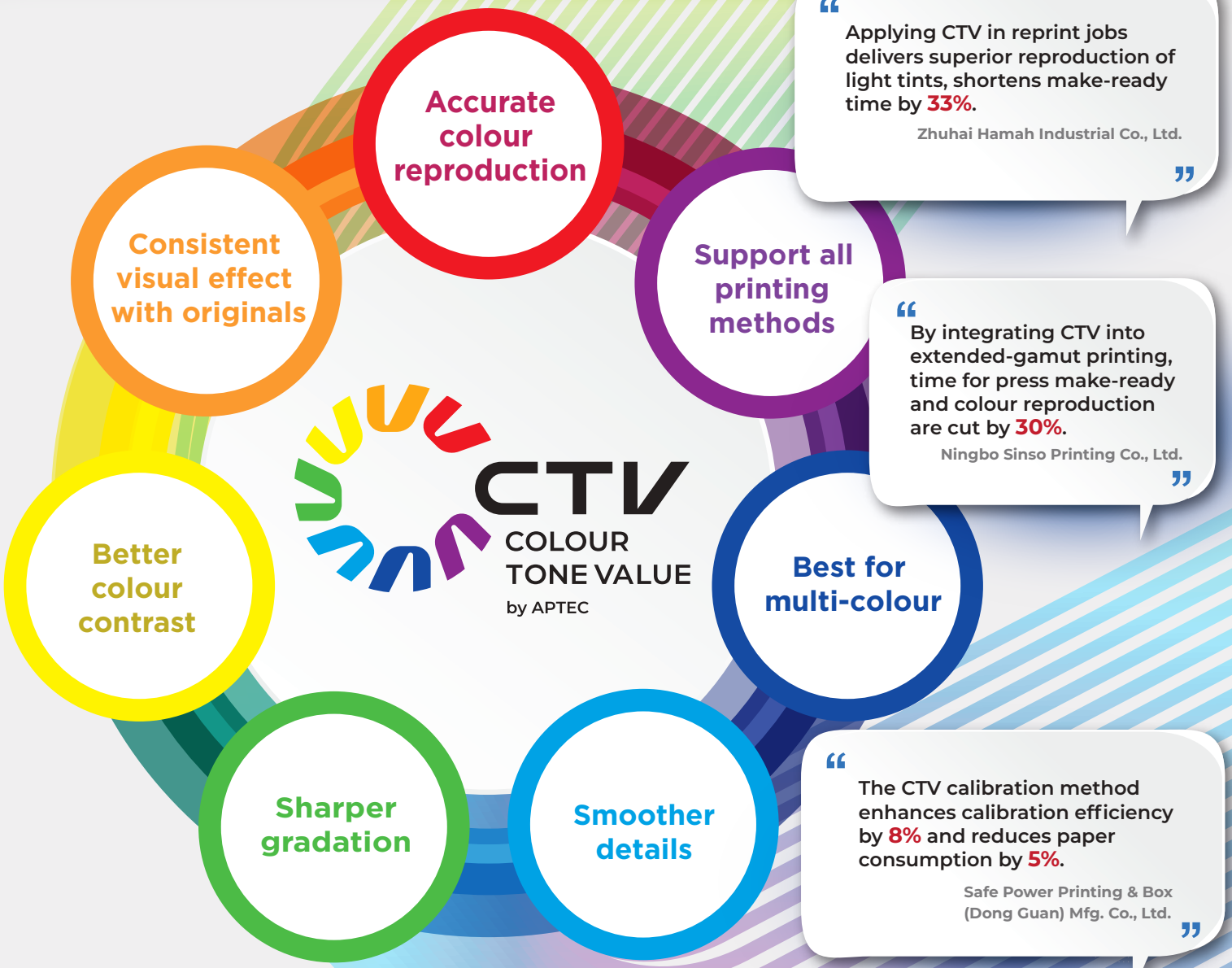
Besides all aspects of AI and new solutions: business success is based on trusted, reliable partners, the right mindset and agility to change and maneuver while listening to your customers. I will always measure myself to listen, then inspire and lastly deliver.

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Gallus announces leadership changes as Dario Urbinati moves to Board Presidency

Gallus Group has announced a series of senior leadership changes as the company enters its next phase of growth and digital transformation, with CEO Dario Urbinati moving to a new role as President of the Board.

Effective 1 November 2026, Dario Urbinati will step down as CEO and join the Board of Directors of Gallus Ferd. Rüesch AG, before assuming the position of President of the Board on 1 January 2027.

Michael Bsirske, currently Chief Financial Officer of Gallus Group and a key member of its leadership team, will take over as interim CEO, providing continuity as the company builds on its recent achievements.

In a further leadership change, Uwe Boerner became Head of Global Sales on 1 October 2026, while retaining responsibility for Key Accounts. He succeeds Thomas Schweizer, who is pursuing a new opportunity outside the company.

The appointments come during a period of significant progress for Gallus, driven by the expansion of its digital printing portfolio, including the Gallus One and Gallus Five, alongside continued growth across its established product range.



Dario Urbinati

The Gallus Experience Center continues to demonstrate new technologies and support closer collaboration with customers, while the company strengthens its presence in growth markets, particularly India.

Under Urbinati's leadership, Gallus has accelerated its digital transformation strategy through its System to Compose approach, designed to provide label converters with greater flexibility, connectivity and production efficiency.

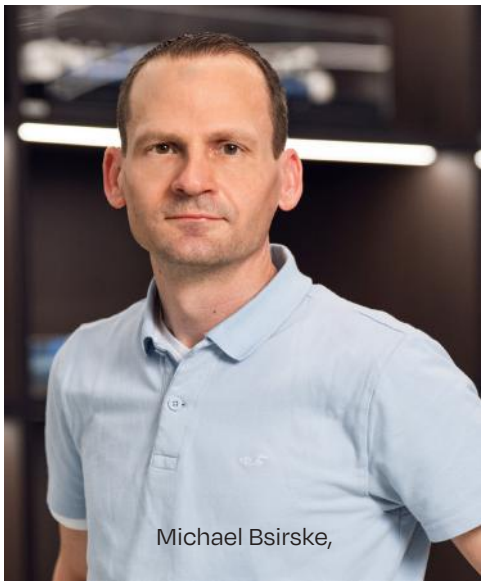
Commenting on his transition, Urbinati said:
"The transformation journey Gallus has undertaken over recent years has been incredibly successful, and I am extremely proud of what the entire team has achieved together."

He added that his new Board position would allow him to remain involved in long-term strategy, innovation and key customer relationships while stepping away from daily operations.

Incoming interim CEO Michael Bsirske brings extensive international management and financial experience gained through senior positions within Gallus, HEIDELBERG and other technology and industrial businesses.

Bsirske said his priority would be maintaining strong customer relationships and delivering solutions that address the evolving needs of label converters.

As the industry moves towards increasingly automated and digitally connected production, Gallus intends to draw on the combined expertise of its organisation and HEIDELBERG to drive innovation and operational efficiency.



Michael Bsirske,

Dr. David Schmedding, Chief Technology & Sales Officer at HEIDELBERG, acknowledged Urbinati's contribution to the company's transformation, expressing confidence in the leadership team's ability to build on its achievements.

Ferdinand Rüesch also praised Urbinati's role in shaping Gallus and welcomed his continued involvement at Board level. He thanked outgoing Head of Global Sales Thomas Schweizer for his contribution to the company.

Gallus confirmed that its long-term strategic direction remains unchanged, with continued emphasis on customer partnerships, technological innovation and the development of flexible, automated and profitable production solutions.

The leadership transition positions Gallus to further expand its digital ecosystem while supporting label converters in an increasingly competitive and technology-driven printing industry.

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g5 Gallus Five

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Glunz & Jensen launches Flex-Pro Elite: the flexo processor built for Pixel+, Quartz, X! Mask & Bellissima

If the imager can create the detail, the processor must reveal it. The Elite series is the first Flex-Pro engineered for advanced screening.



Glunz & Jensen A/S, the world's largest supplier of printing plate processing equipment, today launches Flex-Pro Elite, a new series of solvent plate processors engineered for the fine screening technologies now reshaping flexo print quality. Available in four formats, from the compact 360 Elite to the high-productivity 520 XP Elite, and as Elite variants across the Flex-Line range of fully automatic plate-making lines, the series goes on sale worldwide today.

The uncertified link in the chain

Advanced screening technologies such as Esko Pixel+ and Quartz, Luescher Technologies X!Mask, XSYS Woodpecker, Hamillroad Bellissima and Brilliance place highly controlled microstructures into the plate to optimise ink transfer, sharpen detail and smooth tonal transitions.

Those structures are also the easiest part of the plate to damage. Screening, imaging, exposure and the plate itself are all specified and certified by the screening ecosystems. Solvent washout is not. It is the one uncertified link in the chain, and the step where microstructures are easiest to damage. If the washout is wrong, a plate can pass every upstream check and still lose its finest structures on the way to press.

"When we started the Elite project, we set out to build the world's best processor," says Per Arild, Chief Commercial Officer at Glunz & Jensen. "We succeeded, and customer tests show it. If your CtP can create the detail, your processor should be able to reveal it. That is exactly what Flex-Pro Elite does."

What is new in Elite

Flex-Pro Elite is built on the proven Flex-Pro platform, with hundreds of units running worldwide, and adds the Advanced Screening Suite: a washout

Flex-Pro Elite at a glance

Model	Positioning	Max plate size (W x L)	LAMS + washout brushes	Power
Flex-Pro 360 Elite	Compact premium processing	920 x 1200 mm (36 x 47 in)	2 + 8	8.5 kW
Flex-Pro 420 Elite	Versatile production format	1070 x 1530 mm (42 x 60 in)	2 + 8	8.5 kW
Flex-Pro 520 Elite	Large-format premium quality	1320 x 2032 mm (52 x 80 in)	2 + 8	8.5 kW
Flex-Pro 520 XP Elite	Double the productivity of the other Elite units*	1320 x 2032 mm (52 x 80 in)	2 + 18	10 kW

All models: plate thickness 0.7–7.0 mm, minimum plate 210 x 297 mm, 4 top + 1 back finishing brushes, CE and RoHS compliant. Elite variants are also offered across the entire Flex-Line range of fully automatic lines. *Dependent on plate gauge.

NEW
flexo solution

GLUNZ & JENSEN
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Flex - Pro Elite

Flexography keeps pushing into finer, more complex plate structures — screening like Pixel+, Quartz, X!Mask and Bellissima demand more from plate processing than ever before.

Flex-Pro Elite is Glunz & Jensen's answer: a more thorough, controlled washout that clears the finest non-image areas without leaving residual materialor solvent behind. Built on the proven Flex-Pro platform — elevated to Elite.



Proven at scale

Hundreds of Flex-Pro processors run worldwide, day in and day out

Validated by the toughest users

Tested and approved by major multinational plate producers

Built for what's next

Engineered for Pixel+, Quartz, X!Mask & Bellissima screening

Only a moderate premium over standard Flex-Pro, but Elite ships new-build only, existing units cannot be upgraded.

If the imaging technology can create the detail, the processor must be capable of revealing it.



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and rinse section redesigned for the fine structures of advanced screening rather than only for standard plates. The result is a more thorough, controlled washout that clears the finest non-image areas without leaving residual material or solvent behind.

- A redesigned washout section with 2 LAMS and 8 washout brushes (2 + 18 on the 520 XP Elite); brushes rotate and oscillate, so there is no directional patterning on the plate.

- A 4-brush rinse/wipe system that drives standing solvent off the plate for clean, stable surfaces and repeatable ink transfer.

- Dual fume extraction from the feed table, washout section and exit unit, preventing condensation damage to the plate and keeping solvent vapour out of the work area.

- SilentDrive™ mechanics for lower wear and noise.

- A 10-inch high-definition touch display with remote-control functionality.

- An ergonomic feed table with free-wheeling rollers, so rolled plates feed straight into the processor without heavy lifting or repetitive bending.

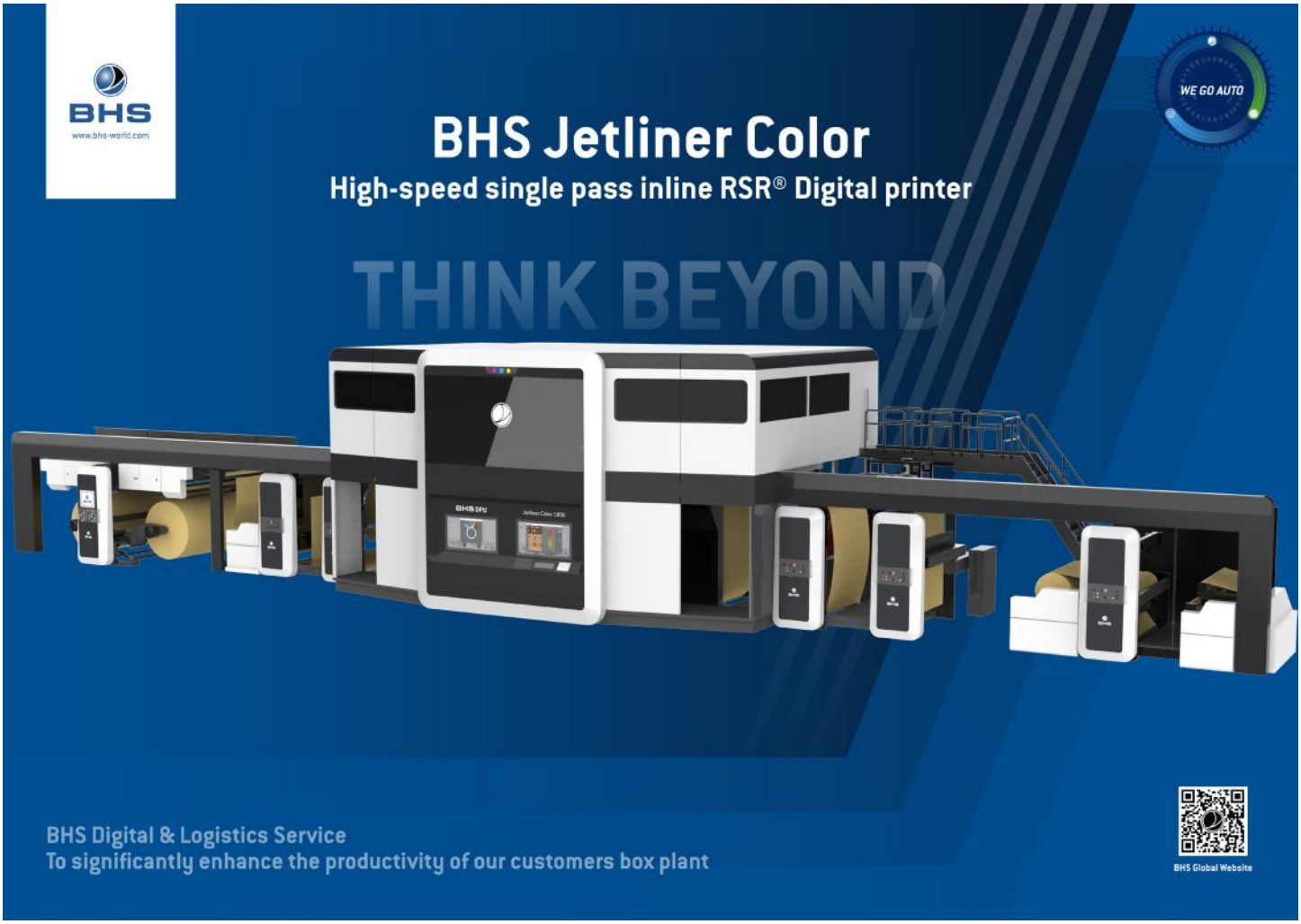
- Batch and incremental processing modes: thick plates are processed 36% faster in batch mode with the same washout quality, while thinner and smaller plates run three in a row in incremental mode.

All four models process plates from 0.7 to 7.0 mm thick. The Flex-Pro 520 XP Elite delivers double the productivity of the other Elite models from a single machine, depending on plate gauge.
Elite is not limited to standalone processors. Glunz & Jensen now offers Elite variants across its entire Flex-Line range of fully automatic plate-making lines, bringing the same Advanced Screening Suite to automated in-line production.

Validated by the toughest users

The Elite series was developed in nine months and thoroughly tested together with premier global flexo service houses. A leading global packaging-graphics group ran extensive production tests on Flex-Pro Elite before launch and approved the results.

Orders are open from today through Glunz & Jensen's sales organisation and factory-trained partner network. Elite processors are manufactured at Glunz & Jensen's factory in Prešov, Slovakia. More information: www.glunz-jensen.com



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Giving Shape to Ideas

Innovation, sustainability and strong industrial roots:

nordmeccanica looks to the future of converting.

Nordmeccanica is the world's leading manufacturer of machinery for coating, lamination , and met-allization. For almost 50 years, the company based in Piacenza - Italy has combined specialized know -how in the packaging sector with continuous research and product innovation.

Nordmeccanica: artificial intelligence and advanced experimentation for the evolution of converting

Nordmeccanica continues its path of technological innovation in the converting and flexible packaging sector through the development of advanced solutions dedicated to the optimization of production processes and the experimentation of new materials and applications.

Among the main development guidelines are aNDRomeda, the artificial intelligence system applied to coating and laminating lines, and the new Innovation Hub, a technological space dedicated to the development and validation of innovative materials and processes.



aNDRomeda: artificial intelligence applied to converting

aNDRomeda represents the evolution of automation systems for coating and laminating, thanks to the integration of machine learning algorithms and predictive analytics capable of optimizing production processes in real time.

The platform makes it possible to transform production data into an advanced operational tool, helping to improve efficiency, process stability, and final product quality.

Among the system's main features:

·continuous optimization of process parameters to ensure consistentperformance;

·reduction of waste through proactive defect prevention;

·predictive maintenance through intelligent equipment monitoring;

·advanced quality control with automatic detection and correction ofanomalies;



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·advanced management of the CWM system for even greater coatinguniformity.

The objective is to support converters with tools capable of increasing production reliability and improving process sustainability, while maintaining high quality standards even in the most complex applications. Nordmeccanica's Innovation Hub: a partner for development

At the Piacenza Headquarters there is a dedicated Innovation Hub: a facility designed to support the development, testing, and validation of new products and processes before the transition to large-scale production.

The Innovation Hub is equipped with advanced coating and laminating equipment, enabling complete trials on new materials, adhesive systems, and sustainable packaging structures. From the study of paper-based substrates, to testing barrier performance for new applications, up to process validation for regulatory compliance purposes, Nordmeccanica's technical team collaborates with Clients and Partners to identify the most effective solutions.

Why it is important:
The transition toward new materials or processes inevitably involves technical risks. The Innovation Hub makes it possible to reduce these risks through rigorous testing and validation in a controlled environment, using the same technology employed in production. This allows to do investments in new equipment or materials on the basis of concrete and verified results.

How it works:
Clients can present their specific requirements to the Innovation Hub. Nordmeccanica's engineers collaborate with technical teams to design the trials, test different variables, and jointly analyze the results. At the end of the process, validated data, optimized parameters, and a clear path toward production are provided.

For companies engaged in the development of new packaging solutions, sustainable alternatives, or performance improvements, the Innovation Hub represents a concrete tool for technical and industrial support.

With aNDRomeda and the new Innovation Hub, Nordmeccanica confirms its strategy focused on concrete innovation, combining advanced digitalization, artificial intelligence, and applied research to support converters in addressing the future challenges of flexible packaging. In an increasingly competitive and sustainability-oriented market, Nordmeccanica provides technologies and expertise capable of accelerating the development of new solutions, improving production efficiency, and ensuring increasingly high quality standards.



Tim Klappe (Regional Sales Manager Asia Pacific) who is based in Bangkok.

Historyb and key facts
Nordmeccanica's story is one of success built on almost five decades of challenges and continuous investment in improvement. From the first machines built in the 1970s to the futuristic Triplex SL One-Shot, the companyhas experienced steady growth, increasing its production capacity and export volumes: from the initial 3,000 m² to the current 35,000 m², and a total of over 4,600 machines installed worldwide.

Today, the company operates across four continents, with facilities in Piacenza, New York, Shanghai, Mumbai, and Buenos Aires, and a network of representatives in 87 countries worldwide.



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Professional manufacturer environmentally friendly Pr

BIC Group, is a professional manufacturer of high-end, environmentally friendly printing inks. Founded in August 2004 in Shenzhen, China, through its original company, Shenzhen Bright Ink and Coating Co., Ltd.— BIC Shenzhen—the Group has grown substantially over the past two decades. We speak with Yuwei Zhang about the company's journey from its beginnings in Shenzhen to becoming a major international player in the printing ink industry—and what's next for the business.

Please introduce yourself and your industry experience

My name is Yuwei Zhang, also known as Wayne, and I am the second-generation leader of BIC Group, a family-owned ink business with a 22-year history.

Before returning to BIC in 2025 to lead the company, I spent 18 years in technology and FinTech, holding tech leader roles at Thomson Reuters, Bloomberg, Meta and ByteDance in Paris, London and Singapore. That experience gave me an international perspective and shaped my approach to management and building teams.

Since joining BIC, my priority has been to deepen my understanding of our products, our manufacturing processes and our customers' needs, learning from the experienced people across our business. In the ink industry, trust is built through consistent quality, reliable performance on press and the ability to solve practical problems for customers.

As a second-generation leader, I feel a strong responsibility to build on what the first generation and our team have established. My focus is on strengthening our capabilities in formulation, manufacturing and quality control, while developing the people who make those capabilities possible.

My ambition is to grow BIC into an internationally trusted ink manufacturer. I believe that growth must be earned through dependable products, responsive technical support and long-term relationships with customers.

Please introduce your company, and what product sectors they look after across the region, along with the products you supply to the region

YZ. After 22 years of development, by August 2026 the Group operates seven companies across Shandong (Dezhou) and Guangdong (Zhongshan) in China, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), Thailand (Bangkok) and the United Arab Emirates (Middle East), supported by one 1,200 m² R&D centre and four manufacturing plants — a total building area of 23,000 m², an annual ink production capacity of 20,000 tonnes and a team of more than 220 people.



# of high-end,
inting/Packaging inks.


Yuwei Zhang, (Wayne)

Product Area	What BIC Supplies
Offset	UV offset inks, delivering high gloss, fast curing and consistent colour for premium label and packaging work on offset presses.
Flexo	UV flexo inks (BIC is China's first professional UV flexo ink manufacturer) and high-end water-based flexo inks, engineered for high-speed flexo printing of labels and packaging.
Consumables	Auxiliary materials that support our ink systems, supplied as part of the one-stop solution together with pressroom usage guidance and technical service.
Finishing	Water-based and UV clear coatings (overprint varnishes) for finishing effects, protection and enhanced aesthetics.
Pre Press	BIC does not manufacture pre-press equipment; we support customers in this area through colour standardisation, colour matching and technical services built on our standards expertise.
Digital Production	UV LED digital inkjet inks in both free-radical and cationic systems for digital label and packaging production.
Gravure	High-end water-based gravure inks for paper packaging printing.
Other	Specialty inks (water-based and UV) plus one-stop technical services for demanding applications such as security and lottery printing and special-effect finishes.

BIC is the first professional manufacturer of UV flexo inks in China, and today our products mainly serve the cigarette packaging, label printing and lottery printing sectors. Around 30% of BIC's total output is exported to more than 40 countries, and the Group has built an internationally recognised ink brand.

Around the world, we look after the packaging and label printing sectors with four product families (11 series): high-end water-based inks (flexo, gravure and clear coatings), UV printing inks (flexo, screen, offset and clear coatings), UV LED digital inks (free-radical and cationic systems), and specialty inks (water-based and UV). Together these form a complete, one-stop ink solution portfolio backed by our comprehensive technical service.

What products do you have for your customers here across the region in Offset, Flexo, Consumables, Finishing, Pre Press, Digital Production, Gravure and Other?

YZ. Answer: The table above maps our product portfolio to the eight product areas listed in the questionnaire:

How have your customers changed, what are your mainstream customers like today. What questions do they ask you for your solutions here in Asia Pacific

YZ. Our customers today are dominated by professional label and packaging printers — cigarette packaging, label and lottery/security printing — ranging from large integrated printing groups to specialised mid-sized converters across Asia Pacific.

We have seen three clear changes in our customers. First, they have become compliance-driven: they ask for inks that meet VOC limits such as GB 38507-2020, the relevant national, industry and group standards. Second, they are efficiency-driven: they run faster presses and expect inks with consistent colour, stable rheology and reliable curing under UV and LED UV systems. Third, they are service-driven: they want a single accountable partner offering one-stop supply, fast local technical support and dependable stock availability.

The questions our customers most often bring to us in Asia Pacific include:

* "Can you guarantee batch-to-batch colour and quality consistency?"
* "Which ink do you recommend for high-speed flexo printing on paper and film substrates?"
* "Will your UV LED inks cure reliably on our press and deliver the adhesion and finish we need?"
* "How can we reduce total printing cost without compromising quality?"
* "Can you support us locally with formulation, colour matching and trouble-shooting?"

What is your view on the general Printing industry, are you seeing growth in this area.

YZ. The printing industry as a whole is a mature market, but it is transforming rather than declining. Traditional commercial printing is flat or contracting, while packaging and label



BIC Group's Quality Control and Testing Laboratory.

printing continue to grow, and security printing remains a stable specialised niche. Growth is concentrated where brands invest — premium packaging, sustainable solutions and digital production. For an ink supplier like BIC, the growth areas are clear: the segments we serve, namely cigarette packaging, labels and lottery printing, have remained resilient and are continually upgrading towards higher-value, fully compliant inks and special-effect finishes. So yes, we do see growth — in the specialised and value-added parts of the industry.

What is your view on the general Packaging industry, are you seeing growth in this area.

YZ. Yes, we are seeing growth in packaging. The packaging industry is structurally supported by e-commerce, fast-moving consumer goods, food delivery and brand premiumisation, and Asia Pacific is one of the fastest-growing packaging regions in the world.

Within packaging, sustainability is the defining trend: brands are shifting towards recyclable, mono-material and fibre-based packaging, which in turn drives demand for water-based inks, LED-UV-curable systems and low-migration formulations. As a supplier focused on environmentally friendly inks, BIC views this as a continued and sustainable growth area for the years ahead.

What about the area of Digital Production, your views here

YZ. Digital production is one of the fastest-growing segments in our industry. Short runs, versioning, personalisation and rapid time-to-market are becoming the norm, and UV LED inkjet has matured into a proven, high-quality production technology for labels and packaging. We believe digital will not replace conventional printing but will increasingly complement it, with many converters running hybrid operations.

That is why BIC has invested in a dedicated UV LED digital ink family covering both free-radical and cationic systems — so that our customers have one reliable ink partner across both conventional and digital production lines.

Looking into the near future, what plans do you have to keep your products at the forefront and maybe grow the business across the region
Answer: Our plans rest on four pillars:
▪ R&D leadership: we will continue investing in our 1,200 m² R&D centre and our 13 invention patents to keep developing products at the frontier of UV, water-based and digital ink technology.

▪ Standards leadership: building on our record of leading and participating in the drafting of more than 30 national, industry and group standards — including QB/T 5603-2021, CY/T 227-2020, T/CAB 0123-2021 and GB 38507-2020 — we will stay ahead of regulation and help shape the direction of the industry.

▪ Regional footprint: we will strengthen our local manufacturing and service presence in Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Thailand) and the Middle East (UAE), giving customers local supply, shorter lead times and on-the-ground technical support.

▪ One-stop solutions: we will expand our four product families (11 series) with new series and applications, so customers can consolidate their ink supply with one accountable partner.

What is your opinion of Ai and the industry. Will this affect our businesses looking ahead

YZ.: AI is already beginning to reshape our industry, and we believe the effect will be profound but positive. In ink manufacturing and printing, we see AI being applied to colour management and formulation development, automated quality inspection, predictive maintenance of presses, and smarter supply-chain and inventory planning. For printers, AI-supported colour matching and quality control will reduce waste, improve consistency and lower costs.

AI will not replace the expertise of chemists, printers and technicians — it will augment it, enabling faster problem-solving and better decisions. Businesses that embrace AI early, including BIC, will gain a clear efficiency

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BIC Group's Ink Grinding and Production Facility

and quality advantage in the years ahead.

The future of your industry sector you provide your products for, if you had a crystal ball where do you see technology in 10 years and longer

YZ. Looking ten years and beyond, we see the following technology directions:

- Sustainability becomes the default: bio-based and renewable raw materials, zero/low-VOC and water-based systems will become mainstream, driven by tightening regulation and brand commitments.

- LED UV curing becomes the standard: energy-efficient LED UV technology will increasingly replace conventional curing, with inks formulated specifically for LED systems.

- Digital and hybrid production grow: digital inkjet will take a much larger share of short and medium runs, integrated with conventional printing lines.

- Smart manufacturing: factories and print shops will become more automated and data-driven, with AI-assisted formulation, inline quality control and predictive maintenance.

- Functional and smart packaging: inks and coatings will do more than decorate — functional effects, security features and interactive elements will create new value for packaging.

BIC's investment in water-based, UV/LED UV and digital technologies positions us well for these long-term shifts.

Will your company venture into any other areas of the industry

YZ. Yes. While inks and coatings remain our core business, we will continue to expand into adjacent areas where our technology and standards expertise create real value.

These include deeper development of digital inks and functional coatings, new applications for our specialty inks such as security printing and special effects, and entry into new geographies and market segments. Our approach is disciplined: we grow where we can leverage our R&D, manufacturing and standards strengths, so every new area is built on the same foundation of quality and compliance.

Any last words of advice for people reading this interview, what they need to be aware of, look out for or take on board for their business survival.

And why choose your company as a business partner for equipment and services

YZ. Our advice comes in four points:

- Treat compliance as a business foundation, not a cost. Regulations and recyclability will only tighten, and compliant suppliers will win the market.

- Invest in sustainability early. It is fast becoming a condition of doing business with leading brands, not an optional extra.

- Build long-term partnerships. Quality consistency and fast technical support matter more than price alone — choose partners who combine technology, reliability and local service.

- Stay open to digitalisation and AI. They will define competitiveness in the next decade, whatever sector you print in.

Why choose BIC: 22 years of specialisation in high-end, environmentally friendly inks; China's first professional UV flexo ink manufacturer; a complete one-stop portfolio across water-based, UV, UV LED digital and specialty inks; 13 invention patents and leadership in drafting more than 30 national, industry and group standards; 30% of output exported to more than 40 countries; and local manufacturing and service across China, Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

We are not just an ink supplier — we are a long-term technical partner for your packaging and label printing success.





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Our Industry Beyond 2027

Navigating Through the Turbulence By Paul Myatt | October 2026



For a converter, a new press is a commitment that has to earn its place for years. Yet the business around that investment can change quickly: ownership, customer demand, technology and the people responsible for support. That is the turbulence I see our industry having to navigate beyond 2027.

Through my work with converters, manufacturers and distribution partners across Asia, I expect competition to intensify and buying decisions to face closer scrutiny. There will be opportunities, but businesses will need a clear understanding of their customers, their production costs and the capabilities they can realistically support. Mergers and acquisitions will be a significant part of this picture.

I expect further consolidation among converters, equipment manufacturers and technology providers. Buyers will look for access to new territories, established customer relationships, specialist applications and technical expertise. For some independent owners, succession planning and the cost of the next investment cycle will make a sale or partnership worth considering.

The pace will depend on valuations, financing and confidence in future earnings. Recent transactions show the range of capabilities involved. CCL completed its acquisition of Sleever International in June 2026, adding shrink sleeve labels, films and application equipment. Hybrid Software's acquisition of Conics brought software development and AI expertise into its portfolio. 1,2 Larger converter groups may standardise equipment and negotiate more centrally. Suppliers will need to demonstrate that they can support multiple sites consistently.

Within acquired businesses, retaining experienced people and maintaining customer service will be critical. Customers should also understand what an ownership change means for spare parts, software support and the future development of their equipment. Chinese manufacturers will appear on more serious buying shortlists. I expect those that deliver repeatable quality, sound application support and dependable local service to gain ground. Established suppliers will face more pressure to explain their premium through demonstrable productivity, reliability and operating costs.

Buyers should assess each supplier individually, with reference visits and meaningful production trials carrying real weight. That scrutiny needs to extend to the full economics of a job. The purchase price is only the starting point. Ink, consumables, labour, waste, maintenance and downtime determine what the investment earns. A useful comparison should use representative customer files, substrates and changeovers, then examine finished output. Forecast returns should also be tested against lower utilisation or a different job mix.

Reality, Reflected.

CGS ORIS FLEX PACK



Proofs that look and feel like production with FLEX PACK.

Digital, flexo and hybrid will continue to develop alongside each other. Run lengths, ink coverage, colour requirements, substrates and finishing will determine the appropriate production route. I expect more converters to use complementary technologies and allocate jobs more carefully. A hybrid system can make sense where its combined capabilities suit the work and its additional capital cost and operational complexity are justified.

Automation will carry more weight in purchasing decisions. FINAT's 2026 industry outlook identifies automation, digital workflows, shorter runs and faster turnaround as connected pressures.

My expectation is that converters will increasingly examine the complete workflow, from order entry and artwork approval through to inspection and dispatch. Removing repeated manual steps can be as valuable as increasing press speed. 3 AI will be judged by the problems it solves. Order processing, scheduling, inspection and fault diagnosis offer useful opportunities, provided the information is accurate and the process is well controlled.

Training will remain essential. Operators and engineers need to understand the equipment, recognise exceptions and know when to intervene. Finishing will receive greater attention because it determines how quickly printed material becomes a deliverable product. Die-cutting, embellishment, inspection and slitting need to keep pace with the press across the actual job mix.

I expect investment in embellishment to remain attractive where it supports applications that customers value. Its contribution to margin must cover the extra processing, materials and production time. Service will become a stronger factor in supplier selection.

A regional presence needs to translate into available engineers, appropriate spare parts, useful training and clear responsibility when something goes wrong. Remote diagnostics can shorten the investigation, while some faults will still require someone at the machine. Both should be covered in the service plan.

Sustainability will need measurable evidence. Material efficiency, energy consumption and waste reduction belong in the production assessment. Recycling compatibility also needs to be considered across the complete pack, including inks, coatings and adhesives, and against the systems available in the destination market. I expect customers to ask more detailed questions and suppliers to provide clearer evidence for their claims.

I also expect more overlap between labels, flexible packaging, folding cartons and corrugated applications as suppliers broaden their portfolios. Entering an adjacent market will still require customer demand, application knowledge and suitable finishing.

A machine capable of producing a new format does not establish a profitable market for it. There will remain room for focused independent businesses. Larger groups can benefit from scale and purchasing power, while smaller converters can compete through specialist knowledge, flexibility and close customer relationships. Independence remains a credible strategy when the business knows where it adds value and invests accordingly.

For businesses planning through 2027 and beyond, I would start with the real production constraints and the customers they intend to serve. Test the economics, develop the people and establish the support arrangements before committing. Those decisions will give converters a stronger basis for navigating change and help manufacturers build relationships that last beyond the next machine sale.

Sources 1. CCL Industries, Closing of Sleever International Acquisition, 1 June 2026.
2. Hybrid Software, jAImes AI from Conics joins its product portfolio, 21 January 2026.
3. FINAT European Label Forum, What's Driving Innovation in the Label Industry, 31 March 2026.





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Navigating Mid-Volume
The Canon ColorStream 7000

For print service providers operating in today's high-demand environments, selecting equipment tailored to mid-range production volumes is critical to maintaining profitability.

Addressing this operational segment, the Canon ColorStream 7000 series brings new web-fed inkjet capabilities designed for standard offset uncoated and inkjet-treated papers. Built on an advanced technology architecture offering long-term serviceability, the series delivers high operational efficiency for transactional printing while opening up new capacity for direct mail and book production.

The new ColorStream 7000 series comprises three models – the ColorStream 7075, ColorStream 7100 and ColorStream 7127, which are available in both mono (1/1) and colour (4/4) configurations. Offering production speeds of up to 127 metres per minute and a monthly duty cycle of up to 56 million A4 impressions, the series enables customers to select the most appropriate configuration for their current requirements, while offering flexibility to scale as needs evolve.

The series is built on Canon's latest web-fed inkjet architecture and features an intuitive user interface to help print service providers operate more efficiently in demanding production environments where continuity is essential. All models feature native 600 dpi printheads and highly pigmented, water-based inks with Canon DigiDot multi-level inkjet technology, delivering smooth tones and rich density that achieve perceived 1200 dpi print quality.

Robust and Reliable Performance

The printheads in the ColorStream 7000 series are equipped with an advanced water-cooled system that surrounds the printhead to regulate its temperature, keeping the viscosity of the ink at an optimal level for continuous supply during high-speed printing. In addition, Canon's pre-fire technology maintains nozzle condition by keeping ink circulating inside the ink chamber when some of the nozzles are not activated during printing.

Furthermore, Canon's professional colour management helps to ensure consistent print and colour reproduction quality throughout print runs and across batches.

The ColorStream 7000 series is optionally supported by PRISMAproduction and PRISMAlytics Dashboard, an easy-to-use, cloud-based management information tool that provides comprehensive data overviews through multiple views of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), trends and timelines, enabling customers to optimise productivity.

PRISMAproduction provides an integrated, scalable, high-performance workflow and production management platform that automates and integrates data input and conversion, prepress and print output. It enables AFP/IPDS workflow and PDF pre-flighting and make-ready, data enrichment and page composition in one flexible print workflow via a single platform, resulting in efficient output handling.

Waste-free print pause, print-in-ramps and inspection mode further



Inkjet Production:
0 Series



allow operators to check and adjust print runs without unnecessary paper loss, enhancing productivity, while inline automation functions, including slow request, enable seamless communication with inline finishing equipment and ensure continuous productivity.

Efficient and Modern Technology Platform

The ColorStream 7000 series has been built on an advanced technology platform that combines the latest press software, preventive maintenance and regular software updates, reducing downtime and improving overall equipment efficiency. A wide range of sensors constantly monitor the press's condition and help to control the entire printing process and to deliver high-quality output results.

The ColorStream 7000 series features a modern, intuitive touchscreen user interface as the operating control panel. The user-friendly WebUI makes it easy to find the desired menus and online support. By analysing historical operational data, the press can recommend the next maintenance schedule to keep it in an optimal status. The proposed maintenance time window is provided, which gives operators the flexibility to arrange the maintenance in line with their production plans.

Featuring the same technical infrastructure as the ColorStream 8000, the new ColorStream 7000 series includes Canon's latest SRA Massive Parallel (MP) controller, delivering improved RIP performance compared to previous models. The SRA MP controller is the powerhouse for processing the print data and transmitting it to the press at high speed. The controller performance can be upgraded and reach an even faster speed by adding more RIPs and other servers. The scalable architecture makes it feasible to upgrade from a lower speed to a higher one and from monochrome printing to CMYK colour printing.

Sustainable Design

The ColorStream 7000 series has been designed with sustainability in mind, offering low power usage in both production and idle modes. The presses feature an efficient contact drying system and an advanced infrastructure design that offers low energy usage. Power consumption is further minimised in the idle mode that supports reliable output on uncoated and inkjet-treated papers, while precise control of paper movement and ink jetting ensures clean, sharp-edged print results with consistent colour reproduction. The ColorStream 7000 series also supports customers seeking to meet Nordic Swan Ecolabel and Blue Angel 195 certification requirements.

Katsuya (Kurt) Tode, Director, Regional Commercial and Industrial Printing, Canon Singapore, said, "Mid-volume print service providers seek partners who can deliver reliable technology, consistent high-quality output with clear total cost-of-ownership advantages.

To fulfil this demand, we introduced the new ColorStream 7000 series that offers reliability and operational simplicity. With the ColorStream 7000 series within the Canon portfolio – the widest in the digital production printing market – we have the solutions, services, expertise and experience to support customer growth to any scale."

For more information, visit us at: https://asia.canon.

From Modular Finishing to Premium Embellishment

For label converters, adding value means balancing premium finishes with efficient production. Shorter runs, more SKUs and changing brand requirements place greater emphasis on reducing setup waste, accelerating changeovers and expanding capabilities as demand grows.

Grafotronic addresses these challenges through modular finishing and converting technology. Founded in 2004, the Swedish-Polish company designs and manufactures its equipment in Warsaw, Poland, supporting label converters worldwide. At the heart of its approach is the 100% MODULAR machine platform introduced in 2015. Rather than fixing a machine's capabilities at the point of purchase, the FUTURE SAFE™ concept allows converters to add functionality as production requirements evolve. This gives businesses greater flexibility when planning investment and entering new markets.

Remote diagnostics and online support complement the modular design, helping customers troubleshoot issues, reduce downtime, and improve productivity. Together, these capabilities underpin Grafotronic's flagship digital finishing platform, the DCL2.

DCL2: Flexible Finishing for Changing Production Needs

Modern label operations face shorter deadlines, higher material costs, and increasingly varied orders. Finishing must keep pace with digital printing while handling frequent job changes efficiently.

The FUTURE SAFE™ DCL2 platform combines modular construction with automated setup, die cutting and rewinding options. Its range includes unwinding, flexographic printing, lamination, cold foil, die cutting and specialty finishing modules, allowing converters to configure equipment around their current applications and expand it as requirements change.

A typical DCL2 configuration includes an unwinder, flexographic printing unit, semi-rotary or full-rotary die cutting, slitting and servo-driven rewinding. Additional modules extend its capabilities into more demanding applications and premium label production.

The portfolio includes THE ONE, a semi-rotary, single-anvil die-cutting module capable of speeds up to 150 m/min, depending on the application and repeat length. The broader objective is to combine productive running speeds with efficient job changes, helping converters improve overall throughput across a varied workload.

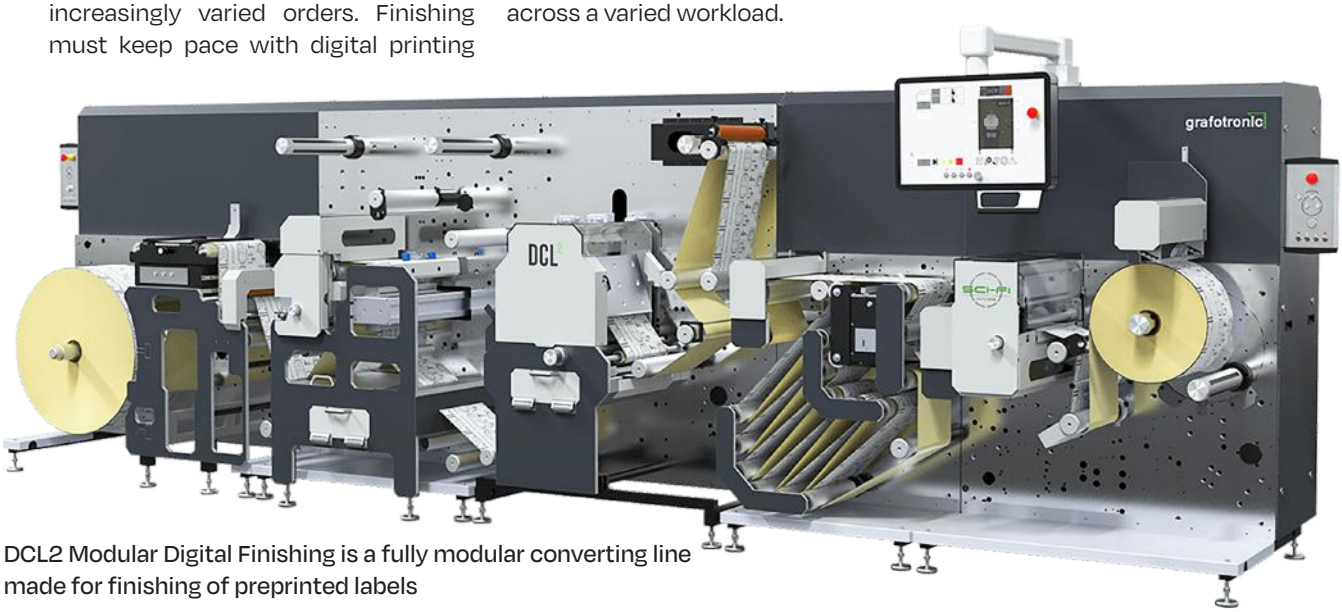
For businesses developing their label offering, this modular approach supports investment in stages. Converters can begin with the functions they need today and add further finishing or embellishment capabilities as customer demand develops.

Automation That Reduces Changeover Work

Production efficiency depends on the time spent between jobs as well as the speed achieved during a run. Grafotronic's Automation 4.0 options address recurring setup tasks, helping operators work more consistently and reducing manual intervention.

SCI-FI KNIVES automates slitting knife positioning, with a stated setup speed of 1.5 seconds per knife. The system supports up to 15 knives across the web and a minimum slitting width of 15 mm, replacing time-consuming manual positioning with an automated routine.

Q-FLEX Automatic Flexible Die Loading enables flexible die changes in approximately 30 seconds. Step-



DCL2 Modular Digital Finishing is a fully modular converting line made for finishing of preprinted labels

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The CF2 HAPTIC provides perfect ability to produce outstanding labels, thanks to the advanced hot stamping and screen-printing modules

by-step guidance through the main operator interface supports consistent mounting and simplifies the changeover process.

AUTOCUT automates web cutting at the end of a roll and the transition to the next roll cycle, supporting non-stop production in the appropriate configuration.

Q-SHAFT Quick-Change Rewind Shafts allow operators to change shaft diameters without tools, reducing adjustment work between jobs.

Together, these features help converters manage frequent changes more efficiently. Their commercial value lies in reducing setup time, supporting repeatability, and making more production time available for saleable output.

HAPTIC: Adding Value Through Embellishment

Premium labels must communicate quality through both appearance and touch. Foiling, embossing, screen printing and textured finishes give brands additional ways to distinguish their products and strengthen shelf presence.

Grafotronic's HAPTIC Series brings these processes into its modular finishing portfolio. It includes flatbed screen printing, hot stamping, and embossing, alongside metallic doming. Applications range from metallic foils and holograms to spot varnishes, tactile textures, and raised decorative effects.

These capabilities are relevant to wine and spirits, food and beverage, cosmetics, and other markets where packaging plays an important role in product positioning. For converters, they create opportunities to offer higher-value labels and broaden the range of work handled in-house.

The modular concept also provides a route to adding embellishment capability to an existing production platform, allowing investment to follow commercial demand.

Zontal: Screen Printing for Visual and Tactile Effects

The Zontal flatbed screen-printing unit combines a remotely controlled, servo-driven printing group with a stepless, low-temperature UV curing system.

It supports specialty varnishes, textures, and tactile finishes, giving converters the ability to build distinctive surfaces alongside other embellishment processes. Used within a modular line, screen printing becomes part of a coordinated production workflow.

Revolver: Precision Hot Stamping and Embossing

The Revolver hot-stamping module uses a revolving foil-feeding system and operates independently of the settings of other units. This flexibility supports a wide range of foiling and embossing applications.

Its 50-tonne stamping pressure is electronically controlled, with individual adjustment at each corner of the counter-pressure plate. An automatic initial pressure setup helps operators establish suitable settings for each job, reducing setup time and material consumption.

Extended dwell time and multi-stroke capability support both foiling and embossing, while single-foil and complex multi-foil designs can be produced in one pass. An optional second foil level adds further flexibility and opportunities to optimize foil usage.

These features help converters manage demanding decorative work while maintaining control over setup, repeatability, and production efficiency.

Metallic Doming: A Further Dimension

Grafotronic's newest addition, a dedicated Metal Doming module works with the Zontal screen-printing unit to create metallic finishes ranging from smooth, flat surfaces to raised, three-dimensional effects.

The process can be applied to coated and uncoated papers as well as plastic films, extending the creative possibilities available to converters and brand owners.

Building Capability Around Demand

For converters across Asia, the commercial challenge is to deliver a wider range of labels while controlling waste, changeover time, and investment.

Grafotronic combines modular finishing, automation and premium embellishment within a platform designed to evolve with the business. Converters can strengthen production efficiency today and add capabilities as new opportunities emerge—supporting both operational performance and higher-value label production.

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Six ways to move from print supplier to brand partner

It's a competitive landscape out there for producers of printing packaging. Standing out from the crowd using the traditional levers of price, quality and service is becoming increasingly difficult, and doesn't necessarily lead to being a long-term partner of choice. It begs the question 'What do brands REALLY want?'

We asked certified MIT Sustainability Professional and packaging innovation expert, **Zhanar Baishakova** to share her insights gained from working across the packaging print value chain. She sets out a framework to meet shifting brand print expectations, from rethinking price to meeting different business outcomes.

With more than 30 years' experience working as an executive in procurement, supplier strategy, operations, material transition and packaging innovation within global consumer goods companies, including Philip Morris International, Zhanar has seen from both sides of the table what goes into print supplier decision-making.

While print quality, price and reliability all matter, suppliers are judged on far more. Here she provides an insider perspective on how printers can move from a supplier that brands buy from to a strategic partner and supplier of choice.

Deliver business outcomes with print

Having worked on both sides of the table, first in packaging development and later in direct materials procurement, I've learned that brand owners aren't simply buying print. They're buying confidence that their packaging will support the business.

Ask a printer what brands buy and the answer is usually the same: outstanding print quality, competitive pricing and reliable delivery.

All three matter, but these don't explain how a supplier becomes a strategic partner while another competes for individual portfolio packages.

Every supplier decision ultimately comes down to one question: Will this supplier help us achieve our business objectives with the lowest possible risk?

That changes the conversation completely.

"It's consistently surprised me how quickly commercial discussions move beyond price... conversations often center on operational performance, responsiveness, quality trends and confidence."

Meet different stakeholder priorities

Suppliers often tailor their message to procurement or packaging development, but one of the biggest misconceptions about brands is that supplier selection is driven by a single decision-maker.

The strongest partnerships are built on understanding the priorities of every function involved in the decision. Packaging supplier selection is a cross-functional decision where every function evaluates suppliers through a different lens.

Procurement focuses on commercial competitiveness, total cost of ownership, supply security and long-term supplier performance.

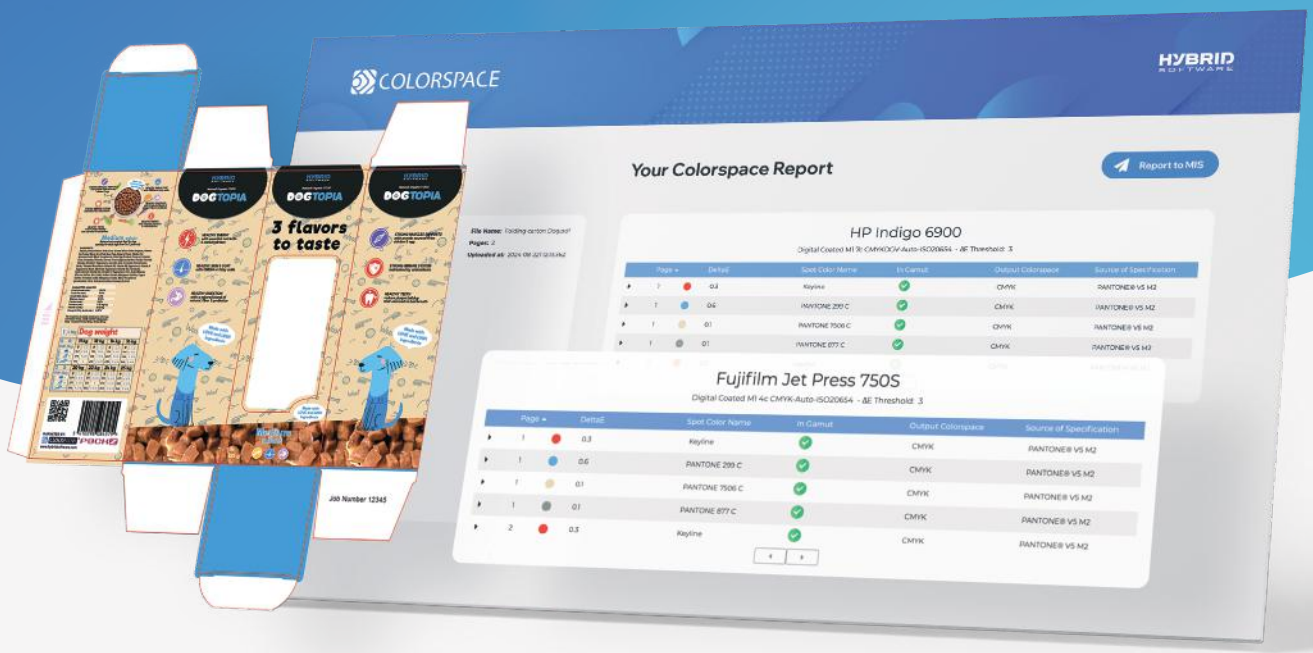
Packaging development evaluates much more than technical capability. The team is responsible for ensuring packaging performs throughout its lifecycle, balancing printability, product protection, recyclability, regulatory compliance, brand consistency and successful commercialization.

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and supplier quality performance. Through quality KPIs, incident statistics and operational performance reviews, they provide critical input into procurement's periodic supplier evaluations, business reviews and future volume allocation decisions.

Different lenses, but shared objectives: reducing uncertainty and increasing the likelihood of a successful product launch.

Deals made on more than price

It's consistently surprised me how quickly commercial discussions move beyond price. During supplier reviews, conversations often center on operational performance, responsiveness, quality trends and confidence a supplier would successfully support the next project. Price will always matter, and procurement has clear cost objectives, but experienced buyers rarely evaluate price in isolation.

They ask whether a supplier improves manufacturing efficiency, reduces waste, shortens qualification time and avoids costly disruptions. Total cost of ownership matters far more than unit cost alone.

The same applies to quality. Excellent print quality is expected and is a license to compete, but not the only reason to win. Suppliers earn a larger share of business by consistently delivering reliable performance over time.

How brands see geography

Over the years, I've noticed that geography is rarely about distance. It's about accessibility, responsiveness and the confidence that someone would be there when the business needed support most.

So, while geographic footprint is often only viewed as a way to reduce transport costs or shorten lead times, proximity creates a much stronger competitive advantage.

Local suppliers can attend packaging line trials, respond quickly to quality incidents, support urgent reprints and maintain regular face-to-face contact with customer teams. That close collaboration provides insights into operational challenges long before they become major issues.

Global capability is still important. Many multinational brands require suppliers who can support multiple manufacturing sites while delivering consistent quality and sharing best practices across regions.

Create future value with innovation

Looking back, the suppliers who stood out weren't necessarily those with the newest equipment. They were the ones who challenged assumptions, proposed alternatives and helped us make better decisions.

The most valuable innovation isn't always a new technology. Sometimes it's helping a customer avoid a problem they didn't know they had.

Today, innovation is becoming one of the strongest differentiators between suppliers. That's not innovation for its own sake – brands look for suppliers that can bring ideas before being asked, evaluate new substrates, simplify material transitions, identify risks early and recommend practical alternatives.

The suppliers who consistently contribute ideas become involved earlier in projects and are more likely to participate in future developments.
Be product launch ready

One pattern that's clearly emerged over the years, is in the suppliers invited into the earliest development discussions. This was rarely because of price: these suppliers had earned the trust to help shape a solution before specifications were finalized.

Customers look for suppliers who contribute during development, understand technical and commercial trade-offs, identify risks early and accelerate qualification.

What brands actually buy

Looking back at global sourcing decisions, I rarely remember price being the deciding factor. Final supplier selection and volume allocation were always made together with regional teams, and they almost always had the final say.

Why? Because they were the people working with suppliers every day. They knew who responded when production stopped, who solved problems without excuses and who could be trusted when the unexpected happened.

As packaging becomes more complex, price, quality and delivery remain essential, but they are no longer enough on their own.

The suppliers who earn the largest share of business combine operational excellence with business understanding. They recognize customer priorities, anticipate risks and help reduce uncertainty throughout the development process. Ultimately, brands don't just buy print; they buy confidence that projects will launch successfully, operations will run reliably, and challenges will be solved before they become problems.

That's what turns a supplier into a partner of first choice.

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Width	Up to 1060 mm x 750 mm (41.7 inch x 29.5 inch)
Colors	CMYK (up to 7 colors optional) + primer + varnish

Dive into a sea of opportunities

Are you a packaging converter seeking a cost-effective way to print short runs of packaging? Capable of printing at killer speeds, the SpeedSet Orca 1060 sheetfed water-based inkjet press is set to make massive waves in the packaging printing market. With its stunning quality and its capability to handle a wide range of media, this cost-effective solution will enable you to dive into a sea of opportunities.

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Full Versatility from Book of One to Series Production

The Diamant PRO Digital is designed for versatility throughout. It adjusts formats dynamically, segment by segment, reduces empty cycles, and handles changeovers within a product family without operator intervention or production stops. Fully sequential, barcode-controlled changeovers across the entire line, combined with the Connex workflow, enable automatic, seamless adjustments to changing jobs.

The intelligent JDF workflow, featuring barcode matching and comprehensive product tracking, ensures reliable processing even for complex job sequences. Optional book block and case rejection systems provide additional process reliability. As a result, the Diamant PRO Digital achieves the highest level of automation currently available for hardcover booklines.

Maximum Product Diversity

Integrated barcode matching, working in conjunction with the individual case feeder and the book block and case rejection systems, ensure that all components work seamlessly together and reliably prevents sequencing errors. An integrated thickness measurement system checks book block thickness, while Connex continuously documents the entire product sequence and automatically corrects minor deviations. Production continues without interruption, significantly increasing output and enabling a wide variety of formats and jobs to be processed in direct succession.

This allows a broad range of products to be manufactured efficiently in Book of One mode. Integrated thickness measurement precisely adjusts product-related axes, such as the splitter side guide, to ensure the highest product quality.

Automation at the Highest Level

The Diamant PRO Digital delivers outstanding automation performance, exceptionally short makeready times, and minimal operator intervention. With a maximum speed of 1,800 cycles per hour, it achieves high throughput in batch production and doubles output in Book of One production compared with the previous model.

The new control system,

with its integrated main visualization interface, job management, and product tracking down to the individual copy, simplifies operation, as does the new touchscreen HMIs at every station. New adjustment drives and an optimized machine design enable format changeovers with minimal downtime, allowing the machine to quickly resume production at full speed.

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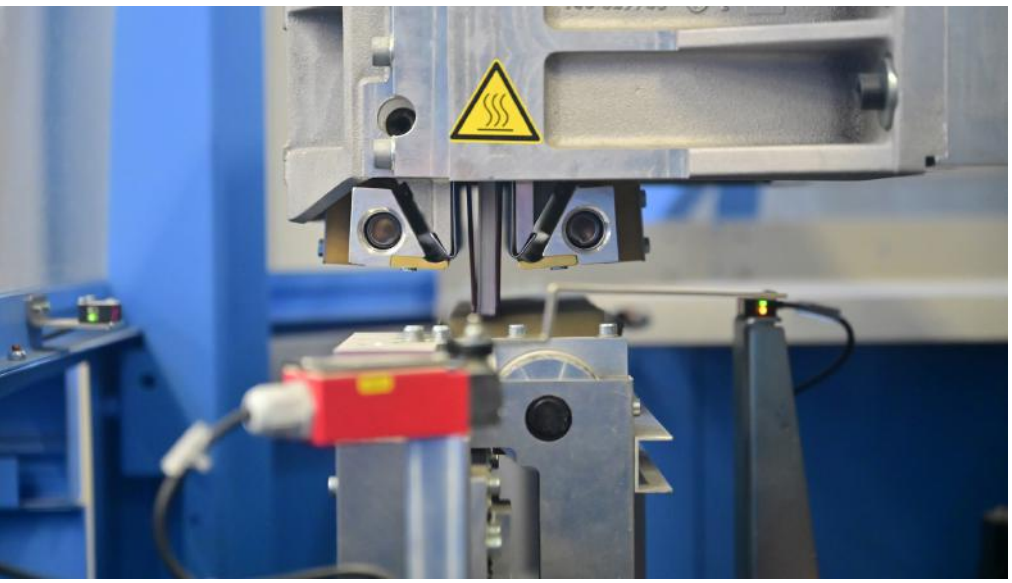
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A split bridge with two short segments enables even faster format adjustments, since smaller segments can be adjusted more quickly.

Digital Features for Maximum Efficiency

The digital features of the Diamant PRO Digital further expands its flexibility. The variable-format Vario headbanding station processes spine lengths from 140 to 360 mm without operator intervention. This is achieved through the use of narrow paper rolls and automatic activation of the individual segments.

Another highlight is the integrated thickness and book block overhang measurement systems, including spine height measurement in the rounding and backing station. These systems enable automatic adjustments during production to optimize settings and product quality.

The individual case feeder is ideally suited to Book of One production and allows multiple formats to be staged simultaneously in the feeder area, so different jobs can be processed without interruption. Production remains seamless, whether handling individual copies or longer runs.

Integrated hot-melt joint gluing, with automatic calculation of application height and glue length as well as motorized nozzle adjustment, completes the digital feature package. Reducing mechanical components such as shafts, gears, and chains also lowers maintenance costs.



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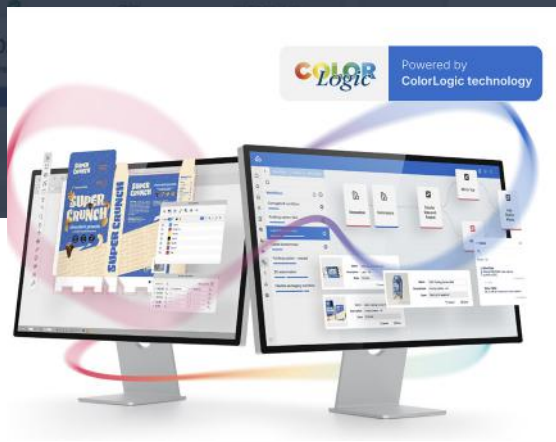
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Hybrid Software Colorspace: Why Color Belongs at the Core of the Business Process

Skills shortages, margin pressure, and rising SKU counts are forcing packaging printers to organize their value chain more efficiently and on a more data-driven basis. A high-quality printed product remains...



Color information must be available throughout the value chain, from customer communication and quotation to prepress, production, and quality assurance.

Hybrid Software Colorspace addresses this need with an open, flexible, and highly integrable product line that makes color management a data-driven foundation for modern packaging production.

Making Decisions Where They Arise

Christopher Graf, Managing Director & VP Color at Hybrid Software, explains:

"Hybrid Software is at the center of prepress automation for packaging printing. With Colorspace, we make color information available where decisions are made. This helps customers make decisions faster, more transparently, and with greater automation."

Digital Printing and Hybrid Production

In hybrid production environments, color decisions must be made early, making prepress essential to production efficiency.

Manuel Schrutt, Head of Packaging EMEA at Fujifilm, explains:

"The Jet Press FP790 is designed for maximum efficiency, which is why we recommend Hybrid Software's workflow. Color management belongs in prepress, not at the press. Colorspace allows critical decisions to be made upfront, avoiding interruptions and enabling profitable integration of digital and conventional production."



Customer Project: Yourpac Invests in Scalable Processes

Hamburg-based Yourpac produces sustainable packaging, including stand-up pouches, sachets, and reels. Through MyCLOUDFLOW, the company has improved production transparency, efficiency, and resource management.

"Maximum transparency and efficient processes are crucial," says Melanie Harms, Sales Manager at Yourpac. "MyCLOUDFLOW helps us manage jobs, improve planning, and produce more efficiently."

Colorspace adds automated color management, making color information and conversions available earlier for consistent, repeatable digital production.

Flexibility in Software Architecture

Victor Asseiceiro, General Manager Color at Hybrid Software, emphasizes flexibility:

"Colorspace's real value lies in its flexibility and integration capabilities. Color information originates throughout production and must be presented appropriately to each stakeholder. Colorspace helps structure this information and improve efficiency across departments."

Guido Van der Schueren, Executive Chairman of Hybrid Software, adds:

"Color management is a strategic component of packaging production. Colorspace provides open ICC color management that improves business efficiency while offering maximum flexibility across digital, conventional, and hybrid environments."

The Colorspace Product Line

Color Optimizer and Color Profiler provide the technical foundation, preparing measurement data and generating ICC, DeviceLink, and SaveInk profiles alongside separation and gamut-mapping strategies for automated production.

PACKZ Colorspace integrates color decisions into PDF artwork workflows. SmartLink Technology dynamically applies color strategies, while softproofing enables early evaluation of color accuracy.

CLOUDFLOW Colorspace incorporates color management into browser-based automated workflows, integrating checks, conversions, reporting, and decision-making. Proofscope adds color-accurate softproofing and approval capabilities.

Conclusion

Hybrid Software Colorspace transforms color management from an isolated technical function into an integrated business process. For packaging producers, this delivers fewer manual interventions, faster decisions, improved production consistency, and greater efficiency across digital, conventional, and hybrid printing operations.

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Fujifilm announces global strategic partnership with ePac Flexible Packaging

Landmark alliance will scale Fujifilm's Jet Press FP790 water-based digital inkjet technology across ePac's global footprint, expanding capacity for brands of all sizes



Fujifilm announces a global strategic alliance with ePac Flexible Packaging, an international leader in digitally driven flexible packaging solutions. At the heart of the new partnership, sits the revolutionary Fujifilm Jet Press FP790, which will enable ePac to set a new benchmark for high-volume digital printing, speed, and cross-market scalability across its global network. The relationship between the two companies underlines Fujifilm's commitment to bringing digital flexible packaging solutions into the mainstream.

Partnership with Fujifilm, and the technology of the Jet Press FP790, will enable ePac to continue to push the upper boundaries of its business model and deliver unmatched value across every stage of a brand's growth. The deployment begins in North America, with a press installation at ePac's new state of the art facility in Phoenix, Arizona, with fleet expansion then planned across ePac's global network in future phases.

"ePac was founded on the belief that digital printing would redefine the global flexible packaging market," said Parag Patel, President of Shared Services at ePac Flexible Packaging. "By continuing to integrate leading-edge assets into our fleet, we are significantly increasing our capacity and capability to handle larger run lengths efficiently.

ePac has always been focused on helping brands grow through professional packaging, and as they scale, their needs evolve. Incorporating this technology gives brand owners of all sizes the continued agility of digital while providing a true end-to-end scaling solution for flexible packaging."

"This alliance brings together two powerhouses dedicated to the digital transformation of global packaging," said Osamu Nakashima, Corporate Vice President of Fujifilm Business Innovation Corp.

"We've put huge emphasis on digital packaging in the latest developments to our portfolio, and our flagship J Press FP790 is engineered specifically to transform flexible packaging manufacturing. ePac's forward-thinking model makes them the ideal global strategic partner to demonstrate its power."

The Jet Press FP790 is purpose-built for high-volume flexible packaging, delivering the highest level of quality graphics, exceptional color consistency, and support for recyclable material structures. It delivers pristine 1200 x 1200 dpi resolution, covering over 90% of the Pantone® colour gamut, while using eco-friendly, food-safe water-based inks.

It will enable ePac to increase throughput while preserving its short-run, on-demand capabilities, which have become critical for modern brands that need to remain nimble to remain competitive in today's market.

In partnership, Fujifilm and ePac are well-positioned to support both emerging and established brands seeking shorter lead times, localised production, and scalable packaging solutions aligned with evolving market demands.



If you expect accurate brand colors, you'll love Multicolor

Spot colors are used particularly frequently in packaging printing. But how do you accurately reproduce spot colors in digital printing? And how can jobs be flexibly exchanged between conventional- and digitalprint? GMG ColorServer Multicolor automatically converts all spot colors into the desired output color space.
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BOBST Connect: Progress, Performance, and Potential

Exploring the BOBST Connect journey so far and its current and future impact on the packaging industry



Several years after its launch in 2022, BOBST Connect has become a central pillar of BOBST's vision for a connected, data-driven packaging industry. Originally designed to provide remote access to machine and performance data, it has evolved into a comprehensive digital ecosystem integrating machines, workflows, quality systems and factory software across entire plants.

But what has been the practical impact for customers, and where is the technology heading?

Introducing a true gamechanger

When BOBST Connect was introduced, it marked a significant shift in how packaging converters could interact with their equipment. For the first time, machine data became accessible through the cloud, from virtually any device or location.

Previously, many factories relied on manually collected production data and complex, individually programmed machine interfaces. BOBST Connect simplified connectivity, providing greater transparency and easier integration with digital systems.

Production managers gained access to live dashboards displaying machine performance, downtime, repeat job comparisons and operating status. This visibility enabled faster, better-informed decisions and more efficient production management.

From connectivity to measurable performance gains

For early adopters, the benefits quickly translated into measurable improvements.

At Stora Enso Packaging in Sweden, implementation across two converting plants resulted in a 4.4% increase in production capacity and a 3.3% improvement in efficiency. Machine availability reached 98.5%, accompanied by reductions in downtime and waste.

"We wanted more knowledge of how our machines are running, to maximize our efforts, and we've also seen decreased machine downtime and reduced waste," said Fredrik Wiell, Maintenance Manager at Stora Enso Packaging.

The company also invested in tailored BOBST training packages and the Maintenance Plus service plan to maintain equipment performance.

Similarly, DS Smith, an International Paper company and long-standing BOBST partner, introduced BOBST Connect across its EMEA facilities, bringing machine data and digital services together on one platform.

"We have used the BOBST Connect platform since its inception," said François Duboin, Technical Excellence Director at DS Smith Packaging EMEA. "Having already seen benefits in terms of performance, we are excited to experience and have access to the wealth of data and the advances in efficiency and productivity that the platform helps us to unlock."

Both examples demonstrate how connectivity can deliver tangible improvements in productivity, machine utilization and operational efficiency.

Benefitting from continuous innovation



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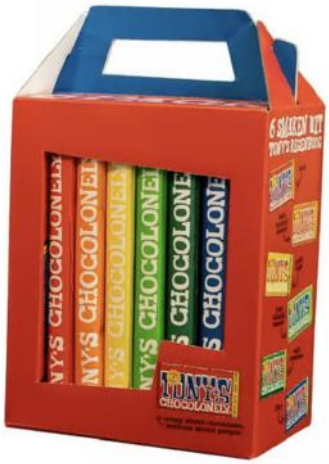
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As BOBST Connect has matured, its capabilities have expanded considerably. Improvements include more detailed downtime analysis, repeat-job performance comparisons and AI-assisted recognition of text fields from PDF designs for automated quality inspection.

Sustainability has also become increasingly important. BOBST Connect Energy Monitoring provides energy consumption information by machine, day and job, helping converters identify opportunities to reduce energy use and improve environmental performance.

Tool management is another major development. Through TooLink, converters can monitor tool performance, identify wear before failures occur and minimize quality defects and unplanned downtime.

Job & Recipe Management further connects production with planning systems. Job information can be transferred automatically from ERP systems into machine recipes, while production performance data flows back after completion, creating a continuous digital information loop.

Integration with the Remote Service Helpline has also improved responsiveness. Many technical issues can now be resolved remotely, reducing downtime and accelerating troubleshooting.

Together, these developments are moving converters away from reactive management towards predictive, data-driven production.

Quality control at your fingertips

Quality assurance has benefited significantly from digital integration.

BOBST's ACCUCHECK inline inspection system examines every individual blank to help ensure that only zero-fault boxes reach customers.

Through ACCUCHECK Recipe Management on BOBST Connect, operators can prepare quality inspection recipes remotely using a PC or tablet. AI-assisted text recognition from order PDFs simplifies preparation, while completed recipes can be transferred directly to production equipment.

"Using the ACCUCHECK Recipe Management function has greatly improved the setup phase on the ACCUCHECK on our EXPERTFOLD 80 line," said Armando Zanini, CEO of Prealpi srl. "The option to prepare the recipe remotely, and in advance, has demonstrated great advantages in terms of both time savings and better product quality."

Digital quality reports provide greater transparency and traceability for every production run, particularly important in pharmaceutical, cosmetics and food packaging, where accuracy and compliance are essential.

Importantly, BOBST Connect is not limited to new machines. The BOBST Connect Data Kit allows older equipment to be connected through standardized interfaces, extending digital visibility across existing production plants.

Overcoming the hurdles

The transition has not been without challenges.

Initially, some converters expressed concerns about cloud security and data protection. BOBST has addressed these through certified cloud infrastructure and technology partnerships, offering security capabilities that can exceed those of traditional local systems.

Another challenge has been cultural. Moving from manual data collection to automated information flows requires changes in established working practices, employee training and management commitment.

Successful implementation therefore depends as much on people and processes as it does on technology.

What does the future hold?

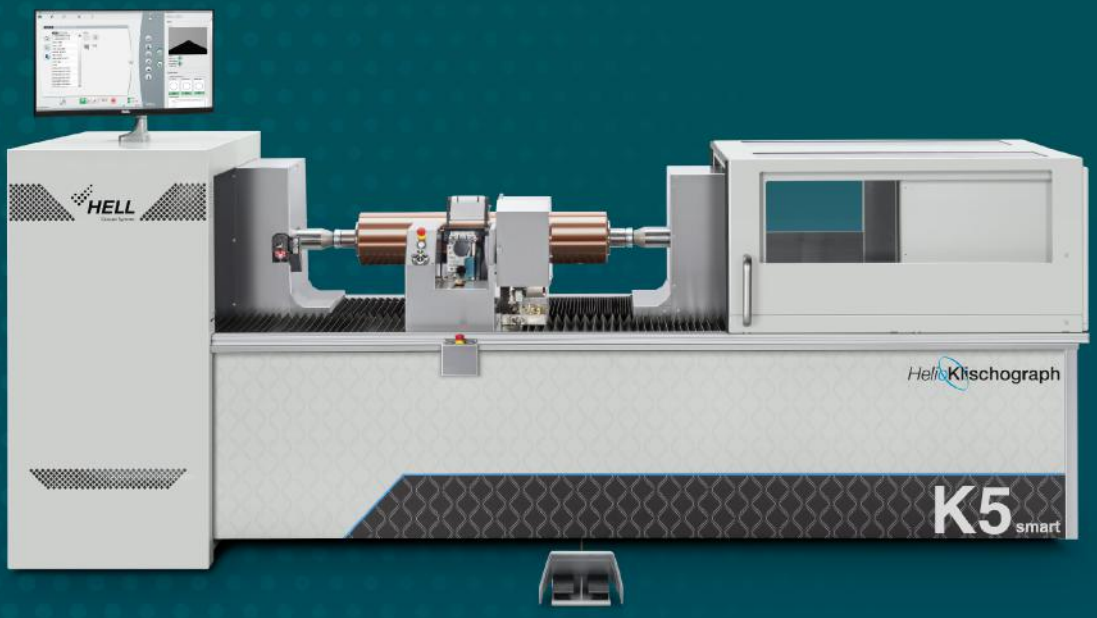
BOBST Connect is increasingly becoming the foundation of end-to-end digital production workflows, delivering measurable improvements in efficiency, sustainability, quality and service responsiveness.

Over the next five years, the emphasis will shift towards fully integrated smart factories, where high-quality production data supports AI-driven optimization, predictive analysis and increasingly autonomous decision-making.

The next stage will extend beyond individual machines to connect the entire packaging value chain, from order creation and production planning through to quality assurance and final delivery.

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Networked print production:

The ecosystem determines which machines are the right ones

Today, buying a printing press means investing in an integrated production system. Brochures and webinars cannot prove real-world performance. Decision-makers want to see equipment operating firsthand and assess how it meets their needs. Suppliers must be where their customers are making those decisions.

The pace of innovation is accelerating across engineering firms, software developers and materials suppliers. Development cycles are shortening, systems are becoming more integrated, and B2B customers are increasingly focused on whether new technology justifies the investment.

Printing and packaging companies no longer purchase individual presses or isolated software modules. They seek complete, automated production systems that integrate seamlessly with existing IT infrastructure and workflows.

Technology suppliers must adapt accordingly. While digital presentations and webinars have become commonplace, buyers making multimillion-dollar investment decisions increasingly want to see equipment performing under real production conditions. Online demonstrations alone are no longer enough.

Physical reality cannot be experienced via a webinar

In many printing plants, a gap remains between management's digitalisation ambitions and production-floor reality. Individual machines may be highly automated but often lack effective connectivity.

The challenge frequently lies in transferring information reliably from management information systems (MIS), through digital front ends (DFE) and prepress, to printing and finishing equipment.

This applies across offset, flexographic, inkjet and toner-based printing technologies. Whether these processes work together efficiently can only be established when the entire production chain operates under realistic conditions.

Printing and packaging also depend on physical and chemical processes. Tonal reproduction on specified papers, ink performance at high web speeds and the behaviour of recyclable substrates cannot be fully assessed through a computer screen.

Shortening the decision-making process

This is why drupa is transforming exhibition stands into practical demonstration environments.





Within the GROW experience zone, suppliers can demonstrate complete production solutions, integrated workflows and AI applications operating under real conditions.

Prospective customers can examine equipment in action, discuss specific requirements with manufacturers and assess performance beyond what technical specifications reveal. This direct experience builds confidence before major investment decisions.

For exhibitors, the opportunity is equally significant. drupa attracts senior decision-makers who might otherwise be difficult to reach.

Visitor statistics from drupa 2024 underline this:

- 78% of visitors have direct responsibility for investment decisions or influence them.
- 57% attend with specific purchasing intentions.
- 80% travel internationally, representing more than 170 countries.

More than 60% hold top management positions.

These are executives responsible for production investments, international operations and long-term supply agreements.

Direct access to the brand-makers

The audience extends beyond traditional printing and packaging companies.

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Increasingly, international brand owners, packaging strategists and creative agencies are influencing the direction of equipment and materials development.

They determine requirements for anti-counterfeiting technologies, sustainable packaging, compliance with the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), and the integration of Digital Product Passports (DPP).

Their influence is reshaping technology development throughout the packaging value chain.

Partner rather than just a supplier

For exhibitors, this creates an important opportunity. According to drupa, 72% of the world's most valuable brands use the exhibition as an industry reference point.

The CREATE cluster provides direct access to brand decision-makers, allowing technology suppliers to better understand emerging requirements and future investment priorities.

Rather than receiving information indirectly through multiple industry channels, exhibitors can hear directly from the companies setting packaging specifications.

This exchange creates opportunities for collaboration between brand owners and specialists in packaging design, printing technologies, speciality inks, functional labels, premium finishes and point-of-sale materials.

Technology suppliers can consequently move beyond selling equipment or consumables and establish themselves as strategic partners, helping brands develop packaging that creates additional value.

Navigating regulatory pressures

Regulatory developments are also reshaping purchasing decisions.

The Digital Product Passport, PPWR, EU Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) are placing greater demands on manufacturers and their suppliers.

Companies investing in new equipment increasingly require more than high-performance machinery. They also need process expertise, sustainability solutions and confidence that their investments can meet evolving regulatory requirements.

The LEARN cluster addresses these challenges through discussions covering standards, circular economy practices, sustainability and emerging technologies such as printed electronics for intelligent packaging.

Exhibitors can demonstrate expertise in areas including INGEDE-compliant de-inking, automated colour measurement and sustainable production management.

By exchanging knowledge with researchers, customers and industry specialists, suppliers can strengthen relationships and establish themselves as trusted technical partners.

The community brings people together

Whether discussions involve equipment purchases in GROW, brand collaborations in CREATE or knowledge sharing in LEARN, successful business relationships ultimately depend on personal interaction and trust.

Through its PLAY concept, drupa encourages both digital and face-to-face engagement, including In-Motion zones, networking activities and evening events.

Informal conversations can lead to OEM partnerships, technology alliances and the development of industry standards.

The exhibition also connects established companies with start-ups, students and emerging industry professionals.

For exhibitors, this provides opportunities to build relationships with future industry leaders while attracting talent in software development, engineering and design.

The combination of technology, innovation and personal engagement reinforces drupa's position as a meeting point for the international printing and packaging community.

Strategic vision

Selecting new production technology has become considerably more complex than comparing machine specifications.

Customers want practical demonstrations, meaningful technical discussions and confidence that proposed solutions will deliver results throughout their working life.

When the global printing and packaging value chain gathers at drupa in Düsseldorf from 9 to 17 May 2028, the exhibition will offer more than machinery demonstrations and commercial negotiations.

It will provide a platform where raw material suppliers, equipment manufacturers, software developers, printers, converters and international brands can establish partnerships and influence future industry standards.

For exhibitors, the opportunity is to demonstrate not only what their technology can achieve today, but also the role they intend to play in shaping the industry's future.





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