

ON TARGET FOR SUSTAINABILITY



What is promotional merchandise doing? **P12**



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

THE BPMA'S INAUGURAL IWD EVENT **P10**



MAKING THE CASE **P28**
MERCHANDISE DEBATES
IN THE COMMONS

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WHAT'S YOUR
SUCCESSION PLAN?



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Social Initiative

3rd PLACE IN
Environmental
Initiative

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WELCOME



It's a packed issue of *Product Media* this month reflecting the activities of the BPMA of late, taking the case for merchandise to a wider audience, and reflecting the sector to others.

The recent involvement in the Debating Group at the House of Commons was particularly noteworthy as it marked the return to face-to-face activity for this esteemed group. The BPMA headed up a team intent on proving what we all know, that merchandise forges the most emotional and long-term relationship with its audience. As always at these events, the

level of debate was high but after much to and fro, the BPMA point of view triumphed.

This issue also includes a report on the industry's first event in support of International Women's Day. In this respect, promotional merchandise has always seemed to be a more diverse sector than others with many senior women entrepreneurs and leaders. We can't be complacent about this and change still needs to come but this event proved a worthy platform for discussing the issues surrounding the diversity debate. Get it in your diary for next year.

The majority of this issue is given over to one of the biggest topics facing us all – sustainability. The question "what did you do?" is one that we will

all have to answer in future, and the report details that when it comes to our industry, we can respond "more than you might think".

Merchandise companies have been wrestling with this for a number of years now and that pondering has turned into action on many fronts, including sourcing, energy use, process reengineering, packaging selection, product design, incentivisation, and more. The battle to be more sustainable will feature a thousand points of light, and we all have a role to play. Again, there's no time for complacency, and thankfully there's no sign of the doers of merchandise resting on their laurels.

Carey Trevill
BPMA CEO

Product Media Magazine is available to the whole promotional merchandise industry.

It is the official magazine of the British Promotional Merchandise Association (BPMA).



British Promotional Merchandise Association

Fetcham Park House, Lower Road,
Fetcham, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 9HD
All phone enquiries: 01372 371183
www.productmediamagazine.co.uk
www.bpma.co.uk

Editorial

editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk

Advertising and Media Pack

advertising@productmediamagazine.co.uk

Circulation

circulation@productmediamagazine.co.uk

Editorial Services

Stuart Derrick

Design and Production

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Kingly partners with social enterprises

Promotional textiles company Kingly has partnered with two social enterprises involved in supported employment, labour rehabilitation and the integration of people with mental or physical challenges.

The company has been working with Low Carb Factory and Labour Therapy Ltd which create a range of products for chain stores or for hospitals and other facilities.

After site visits to the organisations, Kingly decided to provide both enterprises with the opportunity to help with folding its FSC-certified boxes, which help preserve forests and highlight illegal deforestation as well as protecting goods.

Two projects have been carried out with 4,500 boxes folded and Kingly is continuing the collaboration.

Both organisations wanted to communicate that social enterprises are not begging for sponsorships or donations but want to partner with businesses and help them with developing new products or services.

By investing in local production



companies will stop importing cheap products with bad quality, creating a more sustainable supply chain.



Beverley celebrates 20 Years at Pro Ad

Morpeth-based promotional merchandising company Pro Ad has congratulated account manager Beverley Scott on 20 years with the team.



Scott joined the family-owned firm after completing her Business Management and English Literature degree from Keele University in 2002.

Although clients and customers can order via the website, Scott's role allows her to support clients with their plans, campaigns, events, brands and what they wish to achieve, suggesting effective promotional merchandising options.

She said: "No two days are the same, one day I can be working on a big client merger rebrand project with world-wide distribution and the next a small, local jobs fair. I thoroughly enjoy every project and am passionate about getting it right. The business owners Carlo and Loren have very high standards and they have taught me how to deal with challenges and always put the customer first."

Pro Ad celebrated its 40th anniversary this year and was founded by Carlo Nardini.

He said: "It is positivity like Beverley brings to work every day that puts my team ahead of any other. They care and aim to make our service seamless. Pro Ad would not be the company it is today without our wonderful team."



B-Loony becomes an employee owned trust

Promotional balloon company B-Loony has given employees a stake in the company through an employee ownership trust (EOT).

The EOT was launched on 10 February and allows employees a say in its direction and an opportunity to share in its profits.

Directors say the decision safeguards the culture and values of the business for the benefit of loyal and long-serving employees.

The transition marks a new chapter in the company's 45-year history and it is hoped will bring benefits for customers, employees, and the local community in Chesham providing jobs and contributing to the local economy.

In a statement on behalf of directors Andy MacInnes, Mike Cussell and James Clephan, managing director MacInnes said: "Becoming an employee ownership trust is a natural next step for B-Loony. Our

employees have been the backbone of the company for 45 years, many of them long serving, and we believe that giving them a stake in the business will only strengthen our commitment to excellence."

The directors said that little will change in the day-to-day running of the business with the existing senior management team continuing to run the business and maintaining close relationships with customers and suppliers.

The directors bought the business in an MBO in 2001 from founder Geoff Hartley, who is retiring as chairman.

EOTs were introduced in 2014 to encourage employee ownership in the belief that individuals and organisations thrive more when employees have a stake.

More than 1,000 businesses have gone down this route with research showing that EOTs improve performance and help with employee retention.

The Outdoors Company adds B Corp Finisterre to its portfolio

The Outdoors Company has announced a new partnership with Cornish brand Finisterre, bringing sustainable corporate pieces to the B2B market.

Since 2018, Finisterre has been B Corp certified and was the first outdoor clothing company in the UK to achieve this.

The brand's design ethos is to combine functionality and sustainability, and the range will feature sustainably made waterproof and insulated jackets, sweatshirts and tees.

An example is the Nebulas Insulated Jacket containing 100% Repreve recycled insulation, made from ocean-bound plastics, reducing emissions, energy and water consumption in comparison to the production of virgin polyester.

Waterproof jackets, the Rainbird and Stormbird are made from 100% recycled polyester fabric with a PFC free waterproof coating.

In addition to Finisterre, the Outdoors Company has similar partnerships with Berghaus, Columbia, Patagonia, Rab, and The North Face.



Listawood sets sights on European market

Listawood has expanded its European account management team with the appointment of two new team members.

Liliana Kud (top) joins as a French-speaking account executive and Julia Walkowiak (second top) as a German-speaking account executive.

The pair will be handling orders and enquiries for customers from the Polish manufacturing plant set up to cater for an established and growing customer base in Europe.

Listawood CEO Alex Turner, said investment in a strong team and in factories is an important part of the company's European growth strategy.

"Additional investments in team members as well as the implementation of fully automatic colour glazing lines, digital print technology and automatic direct printing machinery continues to strengthen our offer, delivering innovative and affordable drinkware products to our distributors worldwide," he said.



New management team for Pagani

Pagani Pens has reorganised its management team following the departure of co-director and chief sales & marketing officer, Eckhard Sohns.

The current co-director Rossana Porotti will be supported in the future by Alessio Marotta, who will join the management board as a co-director while retaining his existing role of CFO.

Chief commercial officer, Tom de Kleyen will assume overall responsibility for sales and marketing of the writing instruments division, which includes the Prodir and Pigra brands. He will remain managing director of the Prodir subsidiary in the Netherlands. Alongside

his duties as director of sales, Florian Seidenberg will head up Prodir GmbH in Germany together with Rossana Porotti.

Giorgio Pagani, founder and chairman of the board of directors of Pagani Pens said the new management team provided continuity.

"They have a proven knowledge of the industry and have already demonstrated their strong leadership credentials in the various roles they have held at the company. We on the Board of Directors are confident that they will continue to guide Pagani Pens on to the next phase of its development in what remains a very fast-paced environment."

Earthquake aid from Fluid

Fluid Branding's Future group has swung behind the Disasters Emergency Committee's (DEC) work in Turkey and Syria following the devastating series of earthquakes that hit the countries.

Fluid staff donated £268.49 internally to assist survivors and the company match-funded this to double the total donation to £536.98.

Hundreds of buildings have been destroyed, with millions of people in need of urgent shelter, food and medical aid.

DEC charities and their local partners are working with locally-led relief efforts to help survivors.

Money raised went towards key areas of survival with immediate priorities including medical treatment, shelter, heaters and winter kits such as blankets and warm clothes, and food and clean water.

Fluid's contribution will provide emergency shelter for 20 families, or keep 106 people warm.

Industry hits the heights in Manchester

More than 100 members of the promotional merchandise and printwear industry assembled for a social event at the top of one of the UK's tallest buildings.

Representatives from top distributors and suppliers shared an afternoon of good company, food and entertainment at Cloud 23 in the Hilton Deansgate Manchester.

Organised by Promotional Showcase, the event also featured a set from one of the UK's most in-demand comedians, Britain's Got Talent finalist Steve Royle.

Promotional Showcase's Gerry Thomas said: "It's been a pleasure and a privilege for us to bring together so many of the industry's key players in such a dramatic and memorable setting."



Stand out performance

Neil Shave from Collins Debben UK picked up the best stand award at the co-located Big Promotional Trade Show (BPTS) and the Big Wearables Trade Show in Glasgow recently.

Collins Debben was chosen from among 60 exhibitors and received the Crystal Galleries-sponsored award from show organiser Gerry Thomas.

Visitors numbers were up by 36% according to the organiser, with new exhibitors such as Fruit of the Loom, Russell Europe, Result, Regatta, Neutral, NotJust Clothing, Impression Europe, Headwear UK, Oldeani, and USB2U.



Merchandise companies put IWD in the frame

The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products marked International Women's Day (IWD) by getting all their amazing women together for a photo.

Monica Malfa, marketing manager, said: "We're proud to promote diversity, equity, and inclusivity at The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products, not just today but every day."

She added, "our mission is to build a workplace where women thrive. Taking a photo in aid of International Women's Day

was a beautiful way of celebrating women in our team and around the world."

The BPMA held its first IWD event this year. Read the report on page 10.

The IWD event rounded up a springtime of activity from Pen Warehouse and Snap Products which have also recently supported Red Nose Day with fundraising activities that raised more than £200.

It also hosted the Ignite Incentive Group for an open day at its Hampshire headquarters.

Promotional manufacturers get in the coronation spirit

The Leather Business is offering items which are blocked with the Official Royal Crest, to celebrate the forthcoming Coronation of King Charles.

Leather is a quality product that lends itself to the event and the company can offer a range of items suitably branded to celebrate this special occasion, such as a full hide leather coaster with highest

standard blind blocking.

Eat My Logo is also offering the chance to celebrate the event on 6 May 2023 with an entire range including coronation themed artwork designed by customers or the EML in-house marketing team.

In addition, it has a new, bespoke, crown shaped branded biscuit to kick off celebrations with the right tone.



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We select our products and brands with care. Products and brands that last, and that people love to use.

Our collection consists of a wide selection of quality products, premium brands, fully customisable products, and many more sustainable options. Take Kai for instance, our first circular jacket made of 100% recycled nylon.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Kai jacket.



375269

Kai unisex lightweight GRS
recycled circular jacket



LEARN YOUR ESGs

There is a new three letter acronym in town.

Clive Allcott explains what it means



In most conversations that I seem to have at the moment with other suppliers or distributors there is a mention of ESG, which stands for Environmental, Social and Governance. So, what is ESG and why has it become a major topic in a relatively short period of time? Or has it?

By the last comment, I'm wondering if maybe we have all been operating in this way as businesses over the past years, but

just didn't brand or pigeonhole it as ESG.

So, what is it? In short it would be best described as People, Planet and Profit and what you as a business owner or a company do in all these sectors as you operate your daily work. One thing that sets it apart from the credible standards of ISO and the Smeta Audits from Sedex, is that this is more about business culture or tone of how and what you as a company or individual stand for.

The E is focused around the what and how you interact with the environment, what initiatives and focus you have on sustainability, recycling processes, climate risk, and energy efficiency. This is not just at a local level but on a global front and how and why you work with your supply chain.

S is for your social awareness, for those that work with you or have touch points with your business such as the local community and worthwhile causes. Whether it be assisted transportation to help getting to work, gardening clubs or maybe cost price canteens or donut Thursdays



they all show the business cares. It covers topics such as equal opportunities, inclusion and diversity, working conditions, training, health and safety, many of which you probably currently deliver.

Then there is the G in governance, the profits and how and what the owners or stake holders do with them – it's all about business ethics and shareholder democracy. In all honesty if the governance of the profits fail then the E and the S will be difficult to administer.

In summary, ESG creates a better workplace where the Planet and the People come first.

Happy Selling

Clive the clothing and bag guru. PM



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MARKETING BODIES CALL ON SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT TO **THINK AGAIN**

The BPMA has issued its response to the Alcohol Advertising Consultation in Scotland which closed on 9 March

In November, the Scottish Government opened a consultation to seek views on whether to place strict restrictions on alcohol advertising and marketing.

Following the consultation, the Advertising Association, ISBA and the IPA registered a final condemnation and together with advertising bodies and other media organisations, issued a joint statement.

Advertising bodies and media organisations have reacted strongly against the Scottish Government's proposals to severely restrict or remove alcohol advertising and marketing in their responses to the Scottish Government's consultation which closed on 9th March 2023.

The Advertising Association, ISBA and the IPA, which represent their members in Scotland, have taken the unprecedented step of issuing a joint public statement, alongside the Marketing Society Scotland, the British Promotional Merchandise Association, the Cinema Advertising Association and the UK Cinema Association, the Scottish Newspaper Society, and Outsmart.

The statement said: "We stand together and publicly reject the Scottish Government's proposals to introduce swingeing alcohol advertising and marketing bans. Whilst we understand the Government's desire to reduce alcohol consumption harms in Scotland, there is no evidence that advertising bans will achieve that aim. The proposals set out by the Scottish Government will fail to address the problem. Such measures will be harmful to the Scottish economy – including local communities – to Scotland's advertising and creative industries, and to the Scottish media including publishers, broadcasters and cinemas, as well as the outdoor advertising sector. At the end of the day, we are talking about an impact on Scottish businesses, Scottish jobs and Scottish communities for no discernible benefit."

It added: "We call for a fundamental re-think of the proposals with a focus on

targeted and practical policies that will facilitate behaviour change without damaging the Scottish economy and the advertising and creative industries that are important to the entrepreneurial Scotland that the Scottish Government wants to see."

The proposals were announced as part of a public consultation launched late last year seeking to end what the Scottish government described as the country's "deep, longstanding and troubled relationship with alcohol".

According to Office of National Statistics figures, Scotland and Northern Ireland were the UK countries with the highest alcohol-specific death rates in 2021, with 22.4 and 19.3 deaths per 100,000 persons, respectively.

In England and Wales the rates of alcohol-specific deaths, were 13.9 and 15.0 deaths per 100,000 persons, respectively.

There were 1,245 alcohol-specific deaths in Scotland in 2021.

Statistics from the Scottish Health Survey 2021 found that 23% of people in Scotland drink hazardous or harmful levels of alcohol (more than 14 units per week), with 31% of men and 16% of women reporting this level of consumption.

The consultation sought views on changes to how alcohol is advertised, with regulations that could include a ban on sponsorships for sport and live events, and distillery and brewery shops also barred from selling branded merchandise to visitors.

However, the idea has met with plenty of controversy, with many Scots angry and anxious about the effect such a ban would potentially have on Scotland's image abroad.

Critics have also pointed to countries, such as Norway, where tighter control of alcohol distribution and promotion have not been accompanied by a drop



in consumption. They suggest that an approach which leans more towards education and messages of moderation or abstinence might be more fruitful, especially as statistics show that more young people are now teetotal.

The Scottish Government has previously sought to try and tackle the impact of alcohol abuse by introducing the UK's first minimum price for alcohol.

From 2018, the minimum price charged for a unit of alcohol was set at 50p.

Research published in the Lancet suggests it has been associated with about 150 fewer deaths a year.

Researchers from Public Health Scotland (PHS), the University of Glasgow and the University of Queensland, Australia, said there was a "significant" 13.4% reduction in the number of deaths wholly attributable to alcohol consumption compared with an estimate of the deaths that would have occurred had the legislation not been implemented.

There was also a 4.1% reduction in hospitalisations for conditions wholly attributable to alcohol consumption, equivalent to avoiding 411 hospitalisations a year on average. PHS



Celebrating diversity IN THE PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE INDUSTRY

This year the BPMA held its inaugural lunch in support of International Women's Day and looked to 'embrace equity'

International Women's Day (IWD) has long been celebrated and the promotional products industry joined the movement to show its support. This year the BPMA launched its International Women's Day Lunch held on 8th March in London as part of a new series of diversity and inclusion measures for members.

With a theme of embracing equity, the BPMA set out to explore the route to equity and helping attending businesses understand the need to approach the pursuit of equality by starting with equity-based principles. The event was devised by the BPMA's diversity and inclusion group to mark the annual event.

Hosted at 30 Euston Square, members heard from keynote speakers and authors of *Belonging* and *The Glass Wall*; Kathryn Jacob OBE, CEO of Pearl & Dean, and Sue Unerman, chief transformation officer at EssenceMediacomX. Focusing the conversation on the role our businesses play in making our industries diverse, the conversation looked at what everyone can



do to create a more equitable future for the industry.

START THE CONVERSATION

Kathryn and Sue entertained with a talk about some of the challenges they encountered in their own careers; how they discovered where efforts could and should

be concentrated and encouraged attendees to drive their own conversations forward.

Sponsoring the event and getting behind the ideas of equity, Allwag, WCM+A, Willsmer Wagg, Premier Print & Promotions, Simple Sourcing and Red Rocko with further support from WCM+A who provided each delegate with a badge with a motivational saying, tote bags from BagCo, scented

The speakers

Kathryn Jacob OBE

Kathryn is the CEO of cinema advertising company, Pearl&Dean and has extensive media experience across many areas. As well as her role at Pearl&Dean, Kathryn is Chair of Trustees at one of the UK's leading arts venues, HOME in Manchester. She also sits on the Council and Board of the Advertising Association, the Development Board of RADA and last year became President of SAWA, the global trade body for cinema advertising. With interests in diversity and inclusion, she leads the Advertising Association's All-In initiative that works across the advertising sector to drive a representative workforce. Kathryn co-authored the book *The Glass Wall*, focused on the career development of women, with Sue Unerman.



Sue Unerman

Sue is Chief Transformation Officer at Essence MediacomX, and an inspirational, results driven thought leader with a wide range of experience of driving growth, value and continuous improvement through times of change and digital transformation. Her expertise includes solving business challenges through innovation, marketing and media and agile ways of working. Sue has also co-authored *Belonging*, the key to transforming and maintaining diversity, inclusion and equality at work (2022), and *Tell the Truth*, which explains how honesty is your most powerful marketing tool. Sue is a fellow of the IPA and has a regular blog for *Campaign*.



candles from Bio Laboratories, pens from Senator, and T-shirts from Mantis World.

At the lunch, BPMA CEO Carey Trevill also announced members would have an opportunity to take part in the creative industries' All In Census to help provide a better picture of the diverse nature of the industry and its social mobility. Recalling her opening address to members, Trevill explained to *PM* why pushing the diversity agenda was so important.

"Inviting our speakers to this event, they both asked me about the make up of the industry and how we empower the female contingent of our industry. I really couldn't tell them much," she said. "Understanding we have very little information in reality



aside of an anecdotal view, it was important to ensure not only do we embrace more diversity-led events and discussions, but we also need to know more. And not just the split of male/female but also how we view the industry. For example; what we are doing for older talent in the industry. The All In census will also help us compare to others in creative sectors in terms of progress."

CHANGE AT ALL LEVELS

With insights from member panels, the theme of International Women's Day in 2023 was #EmbraceEquity, focusing on the equity we all expect is not a nice-to-have, it's a must-have to ensure we create a fair and equal world. The first panel which included newly announced Board Director Jules Adam (WCM&A), Colette Jeanes (Prominate), Claire Hutchinson (Senator) and Melissa Chevin (Globefish Consulting) covered a wide range of topics from how the industry needs to address itself on the subject of diversity to how we recognise and nurture talent. Delegates also heard from BPMA President Angela Wagstaff, Board Directors Helen Brennan and Melissa

Chevin on their views on diversity in the industry covering education, reasons to have female voices on the Board and why change needs to happen at every level.

While the BPMA was creating an inclusive event, as one guest commented, "It's not the women we need to educate when it comes to International Women's Day, it's the men."

Agreeing wholeheartedly, speaker Kathryn Jacob encouraged more men to take part in these events and join the panels when the big challenges are being discussed. BPMA Chair Haydon Willetts and newly appointed Vice Chair Clive Allcott and Board Director Richard Sullivan also attended the event along with several male business leaders, all focused on supporting the conversation for their colleagues.

PM would like to give a huge shout out to the BPMA's group behind the event; Jules Adam, Carrie Stokes, Colette Jeanes, Claire Hutchinson, and Melissa Chevin. Hailing the successful event and based on demand to repeat the experience, the BPMA is now planning its 2024 International Women's Day and is looking forward to sharing the results of the All In Census later this summer. *PM*

Where

next

for

SUSTAINABILITY?

Merchandise is on a journey to greater sustainability.
Product Media finds out where it is heading

The promotional merchandise industry is embracing sustainability, changing the way it works and the work it makes.

This is why the BPMA took the step of launching the StepForward Pledge at this year's Merchandise World show in Coventry.

The gathering of the industry has long been a place for the sector to network and debate, and to show the world its changing nature. In recent years, this has increasingly been about demonstrating the move from thoughtless giveaway culture to a more considered and considerate approach to how and what merchandise is used, and the type of products that are on offer.

Eco World at Merchandise World has become a platform for the growing number of more sustainable options for end users. This year, even more exhibitors focused on environmentally friendly products, and this looks to be an ongoing trend.

Research by Accenture has shown that consumer concern about sustainability is now firmly embedded and they take a dim view of brands that have a lax approach to their stewardship of the earth and its resources.

More consumers (64%) are concerned about the environment than they are about their own financial situation (54%), their health (40%), or the health of others (47%).

The study looked at shopping habits and sustainability after the pandemic, and found that compared to two years ago, almost a

third were more likely to shop in line with their personal values and ethics.

Another survey, by Deloitte found that as consumers have taken increasing steps to be more sustainable in their own lives, they have also become more socially conscious when purchasing clothing and footwear for example, reducing the number of new items they buy, mending clothes, buying second hand, and choosing brands based on their sustainability and ethical practices.

Increasing consumer interest in sustainability is also being reflected in purchases of everyday household items, with consumers more likely to avoid single-use plastic and to choose brands that have environmentally sustainable and more ethical practices and values.

According to a 2022 Global Sustainability Survey, 56% of UK consumers rank sustainability as a top five value driver.

WHERE NEXT?

Many merchandise professionals will be aware of these shifting sands, and some companies are already taking laudable steps to be more sustainable. However, the journey is long and evolving, and some businesses are in the early stages of change.

This is why the BPMA has launched its StepForward Pledge. Whether you are just starting your journey, or you have been working on your sustainability for a while, members can register and take the first step

forward and support the Pledge.

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) targets are crucial in delivering long-term benefits and business growth and the BPMA StepForward Pledge supports members in managing its risks and opportunities, embedding sustainability within their products, operations and in their communities.

As part of the process, *Product Media* asked BPMA members what they are doing to become more sustainable. And the heartening response seems to be 'quite a lot'.

From the industry feedback we have received from merchandise professionals, there is little doubt that the sector is taking its responsibilities seriously and that the conversation around sustainability has become more mature and meaningful, taking in a more holistic approach to the subject overall.

In the following pages we have tried to outline some of the best practices we have found as well as commentary on how the sector is dealing with the myriad demands of sustainability.

As you should expect from such a sprawling subject and from the large number of players that make up our industry, it cannot claim to be completely exhaustive, but it does give a good flavour of what's happening in our sector.

For a more granular picture you should ask your partners what they are doing to



become more sustainable. The answers may surprise you.

A MATURING CONVERSATION

Manufacturer CHX claims to be the only supplier to have only ever used 100% recycled plastic for more than 20 years.

That position is paying off now as the company is getting a huge amount of interest and demand to know what else it's doing, says CHX sales director Max Rutland.



Once upon a time, its recycled usage would have been enough to get credit for being 'eco', he admits but now the conversation has matured.

In terms of physical and material actions, the company has done a number of things to be even more sustainable. It has installed LED lighting throughout the factory and packaging for orders is now 100% recycled cardboard cartons, biodegradable bags and paper packing tape.

Two new hybrid moulding machines are planned to deliver energy savings and two machines are manufacturing components that were previously sourced from China.

Solar panels with battery storage are to be added to a finished extension, and an old gas central heating system is being replaced

with an all-electric air-conditioning system (run by solar) in conjunction with an air source heat pump.

There's always more to be done, Rutland admits. The company hopes to develop a cradle to cradle lifecycle this year, with the potential to send back products to be recycled.

This comes with its challenges including accreditation for plastic and being audited for net zero.

Along this journey to greater sustainability, it would have been helpful to know how end users want suppliers to be more sustainable, but the journey is worth it, he says.

"We're still learning from the journey but one thing we would share now is to just do it. Being more sustainable is not just a great business driver but in many areas it's already saved us both time and cost."

Sustainability in the loop

We're used to eco-friendly stories about turning one thing into something else – but how about turning bottles into bottles? That's exactly what First Editions is doing with its new Loop bottle.

The source for this new drink bottle is recycled plastic milk bottles. In a closed-loop production facility, the milk bottles are sorted, cleaned, shredded and melted down into pellets.

These are then used to manufacture the Loop. Based on First Editions' popular style Olympic bottle, with a no-slip grip, the Loop helps prevent recyclables ending up in landfill.

The Loop is made in the UK from 100% post-consumer waste. The result is a bottle which is food grade-assured, BPA free and dishwasher safe. It's fully customisable and presented in recyclable packaging. To put the cherry on top, it's produced using renewable energy from First Editions' zero-waste plant.

Mark Alderson, managing director of First Editions, said: "With businesses increasingly demanding trust and traceability from their suppliers, we place sustainability centre stage and offer complete transparency throughout our supply chain."

He added: "Our focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy supply and a 'zero waste' production process is helping us to mitigate our environmental impact and reduce our carbon footprint. Business success should not come at a cost to the planet."

The Loop will launch this summer.



IT'S A DIFFERENTIATOR

In an effort to improve its commitment to sustainability, Everything Seeds has focused on its materials, says sales director Toby Burge.

"We source our materials from local suppliers to reduce our carbon footprint and use biodegradable and plant-based inks wherever possible. However, not all of our products currently contain these inks, and we are constantly exploring new ways to improve our products and reduce our environmental impact."

The company is in the process of becoming a B Corp, which means it is held to rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.

It is committed to reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources and working towards using renewable energy to power its warehouse, as well as looking for ways to improve processes and reduce waste.

Sustainable materials are more expensive than their alternatives but the company believes it is worth it to align its values with its products.

The upside is that a commitment to sustainability has been beneficial to the business.

"We are able to differentiate ourselves in a crowded market and appeal to customers who are looking for products that align



with their values," says Burge, who urges businesses to stay committed to their values.

"It is not always easy or convenient, but it is essential to stay true to what you believe in and to keep pushing yourself to do better."

THINKING SMARTER

Garment producer Snuggle has reduced single use plastics for shipping and recycles and reuses cardboard boxes.

It recently upgraded its direct to garment printers to a platform which carbon offsets manufacturing and shipping. Snuggle also encourages customers to use print on demand which is a more sustainable, environmentally friendly process by only producing what is ordered. This helps to reduce carbon emissions as well as excess stock and waste.

The learning curve is steep admits director Shabbir Maimoon (above left) who says that sustainability adds up to a lot of investment.

"Improving efficiency and working on sustainable options has a cost increase attached to it and getting customers to understand and appreciate how those changes are improving things can sometimes be a challenge," he says.

Pinksheep takes long-term view

Surrey-based merchandise business Pinksheep has a mission to source at least 50% of its merchandise sustainably by 2025.

Key to this and to delivering a sustainable proposition to customers is the business's Ora system which provides sustainable buying choices for customers and allows them to collect eco tokens that can be spent on a variety of environmental and social causes.

The system was developed in-house three years ago and is now on its second version with the third iteration being developed.

Customers gave great feedback on Ora but wanted more, says Phil Law, sales director. "Many sustainable campaigns focus on tree planting, and Ora provides this too but customers wanted to be able to choose a range of outcomes so Ora has also linked with Ecologi and Plastic Bank to let customers choose how they 'spend' the tokens that they accumulate by purchasing sustainable merchandise."

A smart dashboard also lets customers drill down into their purchases to see how sustainable they are being in their merchandise purchases and plan for the future.

All of this is based on Pinksheep's own assessment of how sustainable individual products are using a process that Law describes as thorough.

He adds: "Creating Ora was challenging as it required a significant amount of development work to integrate it into our custom management system. Grading

every product based on nine metrics of sustainability was also time-consuming. We believe that we have gone further than other businesses in our approach, which involves more than just planting trees."

The programme also needed to include the right partners who could back up their sustainability claims for blue chip clients. For instance, Ecologi and Plastic Bank use blockchain.

Ora has given the company a differentiator over its competitors, says Law.

"Our experience has taught us that clients are more educated than we initially thought," he says. "Jumping on the sustainability bandwagon to tick a box without a comprehensive understanding of what sustainability entails will not work. Sustainability is not a quick fix and requires significant investment and effort over many years."

The company also talks the talk in its own processes with sustainable energy use and predominantly electric company cars.

It also took a recycling approach to its move to new offices. Ops director Billy Gubby did most of the renovation of the old print workshop they moved into himself, using recycled materials where possible and installing energy efficient LED lighting.

As well as offices for nearly 20 staff, the business now has its own warehouse space and industrial space for branding and printing.

The company has had a great year coming out of lockdown, says Law. It moved to new offices and has doubled turnover thanks mainly to a focus on international business.

"Post Covid, a number of clients were looking to run international events but found that a lot of suppliers were pulling out of doing it because of Brexit red tape, reliability issues and cost. It's difficult to do but we pursued it and developed a new speciality."





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IT'S ONGOING

This year sees the largest range of eco-friendly products ever in Laltex Group's history with the company making significant changes to its premises and operations.

The purchasing department works closely with suppliers to reduce the amount of overall packaging and single use plastic packaging on every order. New products considered have their eco-credentials challenged, with preference always given to recycled options first, and recyclable options next.

When bringing in a new item or reordering an existing item with recycled material claims, it will now be confirming



this with GRS or RCS certification where possible and all organic goods must be GOTS certified.

Going forward, information relating to sustainability will be added to products and packaging where possible.

In addition, the business has installed 548 solar panels to generate over 203,000 kWh of electricity in their first year, offsetting 48 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually.

A low energy LED lighting upgrade to the warehouse will save 66% energy and 250 tonnes of carbon emissions over 10 years.

A baler is being installed to compress both cardboard and plastic for collection

and recycling.

FOLLOW THE PROCESS

Oldeani takes its social responsibility to being a sustainable business seriously.

"We are always looking at ways to improve sustainability in our products and processes and reduce our impact on the environment", says managing director Malcolm Fritschy. "Consumers are demanding sustainability in products and while this challenges the way we work it is an opportunity for us to improve and make

Juniper brings production home

Andrew Langley, managing director of Juniper Trading explains the steps it has taken to sustainability

"Juniper has been ISO4001 for many years and have during that time always had a sustainability strategy to reduce our impact on the environment through a process of continual improvement. In the past this has resulted in us changing over all our lights in our 22,000sq ft factory to LEDs, introducing daylight panels in the factory to reduce the need for lighting, investments in new more energy efficient compressors and boilers and switching last year to 100% renewable electricity. We also have managed down our waste to landfill to 5% and have an aspiration to get to zero waste to landfill by 2025. We do not use any single use packaging as standard.

Our biggest single initiative though would be the ongoing process over the last 10 years of reshoring production from China and India to the UK. This creates the issue that we will use more UK energy, but on a global level, that is better as we are reducing energy used in the far



east, which will be generated by coal. We have also massively pivoted our products to sustainable materials, discontinuing lines that we felt no longer meet our criteria for sustainability and developing award winning new products.

As a manufacturer we face a big challenge to capture and calculate our carbon footprint. However, that is the goal we have set ourselves and we are about to begin working with a business mentor who is head of sustainability for a large local company and we are recruiting for a post graduate placement during their Masters course from the University of Northampton. The old adage that "you can't manage what you can't measure" is never more important than

here. However, we do not underestimate the task which is far greater than an office based business, especially when you are dealing with the vast number of global raw materials that we buy.

I'd like to invest in a solar scheme but our roof contains asbestos and the costs are huge to re-clad. Even if it were possible I am told that our local electricity infrastructure supplier would be unable to connect us to the grid to receive generated solar electricity due to their own capacity issues in our area.

Sometimes companies that want to invest can't because of forces outside their control. However we will continue to look for ways that we can continuously reduce our carbon footprint."



changes for the better. Companies that can't meet these demands will be squeezed out of the market."

Sourcing is the starting point and Oldeani is ISO accredited so only works with suppliers that can supply compliant products. Design is carefully considered to ensure products are practical and made to last. Many Oldeani products now hold the Global Recycle Standard (GRS).

Where possible materials have been replaced with sustainable options such as moving the production of bags from nylon to RPET, which offers the same qualities and reduces waste in landfill.

Oldeani uses only FSC certified packaging and has replaced bags with cornstarch liners. It is in the process of moving all of its product packaging to kraft boxes which don't require lamination so are simple to recycle while giving a high quality look.

SCOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT

The road to sustainability can be long and hard, especially once businesses start to examine their supply chains.

In 2022, The Outdoors Company began directly measuring the Scope 1 and Scope 2 impact of its business through its own emissions and energy choices. Using a tracker and energy system to measure and report on how many metric tonnes of CO₂ were created by direct impact, it was able to begin exploring various carbon offsetting schemes.

To tackle the upstream Scope 3 impact of the business, it tries to get as much information from its partner brands on what stage each is at, and monitor the impact of promoting and supplying that brand. This helps with transparency for customers about their product's environmental footprint.

Having worked hard on environmentally sustainable products, the company was proud when its Rab Downpour Eco won the BPMA Apparel Product of the Year Award. It is made from 100% recycled materials and Rab offers a lifetime guarantee to keep its products out of landfill.



Bic aims for life-long story

Bic Graphic Europe began its sustainability programme 20 years ago. From the inception of the company the Bic ethos has always been to only use what is necessary to make high-quality, long-lasting products, and over the past two decades the company has taken that concept further with a number of innovations to increase the sustainability of Bic products during manufacture, while in use, and at the end of life.

The Bic Ecolutions range was launched in 2003 with the introduction of the Bic Evolution Ecolutions, a graphite pencil made from recycled yogurt pots and fridges. In the following years Bic has developed additional writing instruments in the Ecolutions range, produced from a range of recycled materials such as scrap car parts, fruit and vegetable trays, and scrap from pharmaceutical waste, or from bio-based alternative materials.

In an effort to make sustainable choices even simpler, Bic Graphic has also reduced the cost of this recycled Ecolutions ballpen range to the same price as the standard versions, so there is no premium for selecting the green option.

The latest addition to the product range is the Super Clip Origin. This twist-action ballpen is made from natural ingredients such as castor oil, sawdust and talc, resulting in a bio-based material composed of natural polymers without petroleum, oil or fossil fuels.

Bic is also focussed on what happens to its products at the end of the usable life, and in 2011 it committed to funding a writing instrument collection programme in partnership with Terracycle. Since then, more than 60 million pens have been recycled, to be turned into picnic benches, planters and other outdoor




products.

The Bic Graphic Europe factory is powered by 100% renewable energy, and the company sets regular goals to improve the societal and/or environmental footprint of Bic products. The group has commitments to reduce the amount of virgin petroleum plastic and to ensure that 100% of consumer packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable.

In 2023 Bic Graphic continues to improve its sustainable offering, by launching a free refill service to extend the life of a number of best-selling pens.

British made merchandise supporting people and planet


We don't simply plant a tree for each order, every single item we make from natural materials or sustainable metals counts to make a much bigger impact.



Your orders for metal badges and merchandise will offset over 1000 tonnes of carbon every year whilst improving people's lives through funding projects providing clean water and fuel efficient cook stoves. Every aluminium / steel badge, coaster & keyring counts.



Your orders for our eco awards and a wide choice of other products made from natural materials, wood and bamboo, will plant over 20,000 trees every year around the world. Our corporate membership of The Woodland Trust helps create, restore and protect UK woodland.



We sell all our aluminium & steel scrap from production and items returned at end of life to offset over 100 tonnes of carbon every year in projects supporting renewable energy.



We simply call all of this “**Sustainable British Manufacturing**”. We have videos, e-flip brochure and full details explaining how it all works and how your orders will make a real difference, with literally every item we make using sustainable materials, on an end user website at: www.sustainablebritishmanufacturing.info

Your product choices can help make a real difference

carbon offsetting schemes. No loss in quality, no additional cost to you, no increased lead times, just environmental benefits from informed decision making.

If the product you buy is made from natural materials it contributes to our tree planting scheme. If the product you buy is made from sustainable metals it contributes to community and renewable energy



At end of useful life we are best placed to efficiently recycle many items and can dismantle many products for component reuse, the most sustainable practice of all. All earnings and savings made from this contribute to our carbon offset and tree planting schemes.



Our unique Ecopack Solutions plastic free packaging, has reduced our use of polybags by over 1.5 million every year. Supplied as standard with no plastic tapes or bubble wrap at all it is easily recycled in any office.



From design to delivery, everything we promote is manufactured, printed and finished at our UK ISO9001 + ISO14001 certified factory in Herefordshire. British made goods are without doubt better for the environment, UK economy & give you peace of mind knowing exactly where something is made.



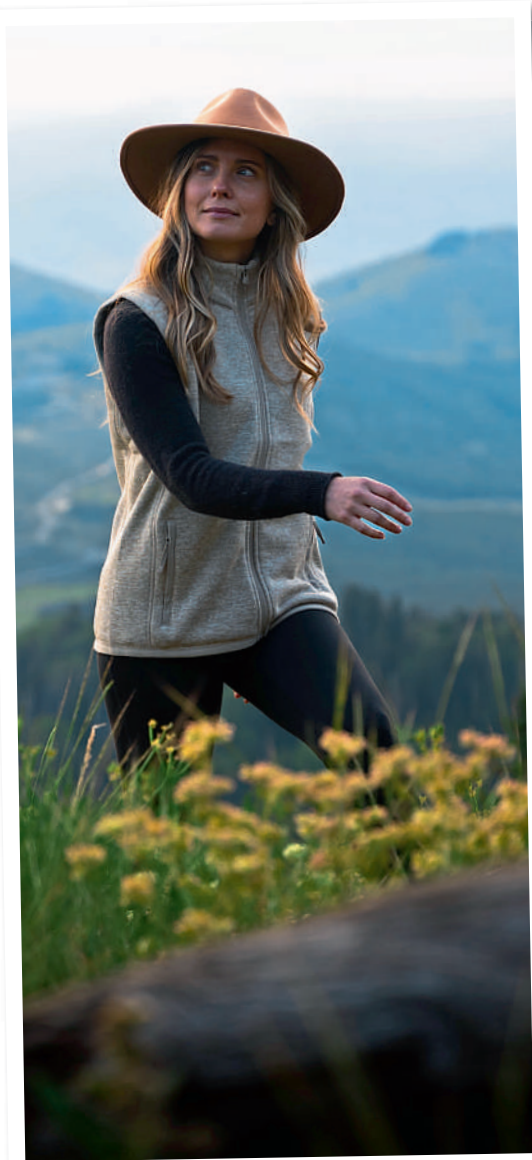
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FUTURE TARGETS

Stormtech is another garment company on a mission to make clothing more sustainable through product design, sourcing, and compliance. The introduction of its Pure Earth range represents another step forward.

A decade in creation, Pure Earth uses content from Recycled Polyester (RPET) and Certified BCI Cotton. By turning discarded plastics into

polyester and committing to sustainably sourced cotton, the company reduces waste and the environmental impact of apparel production.

Pure Earth prioritises animal welfare, sustainable fabric treatments and technologies, and implementing sustainable printing and packaging practices.

In 2023, Stormtech aimed for 60% of all new polyester styles to be sourced from recycled fabrics. It exceeded this target, with 80% of the new Spring 2023 collection being sourced from sustainable materials.

Comment - Sustainability at any price?

We all want a better world, but buyers have to appreciate the value exchange, says Jason O'Connor, sales director, Total Merchandise

We recently conducted some research into what our customers really want from us. Hundreds of people shared their thoughts and it was no surprise that sustainability was a recurring theme, with customers particularly keen that these items be 'budget-friendly' and 'low cost'.

Because of course, as much as there's a growing desire to embrace greener practices, there's the fiscal flip side. Awareness surrounding sustainability has increased but marketing budgets haven't. While many of our core products can accommodate spend of all sizes, there's no denying that their green counterparts come with a price tag.

Customers who aren't yet clued up on sustainability can feel alienated by this, querying why they're being quoted

more for 'better' choices. On the other hand, conversations about lowering unit costs can put you at risk of alienating the supplier, who rightly knows the value of their products. The distributor is stuck in the middle, with the sweet irony being that switching to an eco-specific inventory focus is simply unsustainable right now for a business like ours.

When my partners and I launched Total Merchandise in 2004, sustainability wasn't even a whisper. It's now one of the loudest voices in the room and it's awe-inspiring to see the products and passion that have evolved in this crucial sector of our industry.

At TM, we've worked hard to organically build our eco offering over the years and currently have around 1,000 items that all have genuine green credentials, with this number ever-growing. The popularity is ever-growing, too: in Q1 of 2023, our eco range accounted for just under 30% of our

100 most ordered products.

I believe that a side-by-side existence of our bread-and-butter items and their sustainable equivalents is key to ensuring we don't lose sight of what the still-majority of our customers want from us. I also believe more consumer-focused education across all industries - not just ours - is required on the subject of sustainability.

This expands far past pricing and, for this industry to move forward on the sustainability front, customers need to understand the value that aligning themselves with these products can bring.

We're a living, breathing business, and we'll keep evolving as our customers do. After all, the future's more sustainable if it's realistic.





Future objectives include sourcing mono materials for new designs by Fall 2023, launching the first circular design collection by early 2024, obtaining 100% sustainable cotton for all new styles by 2025, and transitioning the top 10 materials to sustainable alternatives by 2027.

LOGISTICS CENTRALISATION

Victorinox targets both its internal operations and those of our suppliers to apply environmentally friendly production methods.

It has developed recycling facilities for grinding sludge and steel residue that are unique within the industry.

Further, it optimises waste heat in production with heat pumps and heat recovery from its ventilation systems. Thanks to closed-loop cooling systems, its demand for fresh water is limited to emergency cooling. Photovoltaic systems are installed on several company buildings compensating around 500 tons of CO2

every year. Last but not least, product packaging is constantly optimised for size and recyclability.

A new European distribution centre in Switzerland centralises the Victorinox warehouse making transfer transportation redundant, and offering direct access to railway transportation.



Innocent takes the wrap for sustainability

Innocent Drinks first started selling smoothies at a music festival in 1999 and since then the brand has been on a mission to keep people healthy, help out the communities who need it most and make sure our planet becomes healthier too.

As part of this, it gives 10% of profits to charity and has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2025.

It therefore follows that any merchandise has to fit into these laudable brand values, so any campaign message has to be useful and meaningful for customers.

It turned to Brandelity to produce a series of Innocent Smoothie's Beeswax Wraps, as an example of how companies can promote useful and meaningful campaigns that make a difference to the environment. These wraps are designed to replace plastic cling film, which is one of the most common sources of plastic waste. By using beeswax wraps, consumers can reduce their plastic waste and help to protect the environment.

The campaign message behind Innocent Smoothie's Beeswax Wraps is simple but powerful: by making small changes, we can all do our part in stopping cling film from entering our oceans and harming marine life. This message resonates with people who want to make a difference and encourages them to take action in their own lives.

The client said: "New and exciting branded merch. We're thrilled with the results of our latest collaboration with Brandelity. We can't wait to see how our consumers react."

Brandelity has previously supplied other promotional items for Innocent, including notebooks, pens, and flash drives, all of which fit with its sustainability and eco-friendly ethos.



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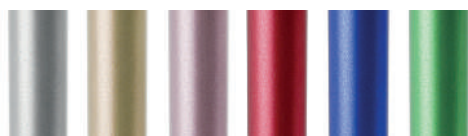
NEW!

BIC® SUPER CLIP

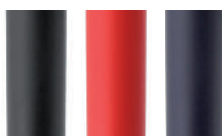
We call it “Super”
and we are not
exaggerating.

Maybe you wonder why we call it “Super”. Or maybe you already know it. But just in case, let us explain: first of all because of its modern style; also because of its big printing area on the clip; and it’s made in Europe with 100% renewable energy and all manufactured and printed in BIC factories for a low impact carbon footprint. Isn’t it Super?

GLACÉ



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Silver

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Imagine the BIC® Super Clip, but even more Super.

Imagine. Ready? Great: imagine the famous BIC® Super Clip made from natural raw materials like wood flour, castor oil and talc powder*. Just imagine, a BIC® Super Clip that contributes to a more sustainable future. Now stop imagining it: you have it here.

ORIGIN BIO
BASED



Castor oil



Wood flour



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ecolutions

*Barrel and Clip 100% bio-based.



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RECYCLED MATERIALS

Keramikos and Thermalmate are introducing increasingly popular Bio and Eco products, which are also fully recyclable. This is in addition to the company's black universal and black sports bottles being manufactured from recycled virgin materials from a factory in the UK.

A little-known fact is that its ceramics are recycled too. Mugs that cannot be saved are crushed for road construction materials, while plastics are turned into carpet underlay.

Its next step this year is to recover and harness the heat generated by the company's kilns and circulate the hot air through the factory and offices during the colder months.

CASTELLI CAPTURES CARBON

Castelli is committed to ensuring it incorporates environmental and sustainability issues into its services and activities. As a manufacturer of paper products, its awareness is towards the respectful use of natural materials and the long-term sustainability of natural resources.



BPMA product winners demonstrate sustainability

The most recent BPMA product awards turned the focus on sustainability in two categories.

Sustainable Product of the Year Platinum winner was CHX's rHIPS.b range of plastic promotional items which are made from a specially developed material that is tested to ISO 15985 and ASTM B5511 certification. Made from recycled plastics, the material is fully biodegradable, and unlike other popular bioplastics it does not require extremely particular conditions to biodegrade. rHIPS.b polymer is broken down by over 600 naturally occurring microbes in home compost, marine, and landfill.

Gold award went to Jute Trading's Cyclo+ Aware Falusi Tote Bag which is part of a closed-loop production system that upcycles pre-consumer textile waste and grants consumers the ability to track the entire journey of their product with Aware tracer technology.

Textile waste is used to create a durable, coloured yarn resulting in one of the most environmentally-friendly textile alternatives used to make the bags.

Silver went to Juniper Trading's Recyco notebooks which are UK made from recycled materials and available as standard lined books, wellness journals, business planners, and with trim options.

There was also an award for the Sustainable Innovation of the Year which went to XD Connects' Impact Aware RPET lightweight rolltop backpack.

This year's Gold winner was Desktop Ideas' Mr BIO Smart (NFC) charge cable.





FSC paper is standard for all bound Castelli diaries, notebooks, and used in the production of all sales literature. It has a paperless order processing system to ensure paper usage is kept to a minimum.

Castelli promotes waste reduction throughout the company and has completed a packaging audit.

It is also started the process to become both B Corp and EcoVadis certified.

The ethical approach has proved advantageous when advertising for new employees, who are motivated, driven and passionate about the environment.

By making an ethical and positive supplier selection Castelli is now involved in the Carbon Capture scheme and, to date, has planted 424,638 trees and helped raise over £1.57m for the Woodland Trust, capturing over 96,000 tons of CO2 through positive purchases of paper.



Product focus – sustainable tech

BabyUSB is taking a big step forward in its quest for sustainable tech, with a new range of power options made from a unique blend of organic hemp, cotton and RPET recycled plastic bottles.

The SustainX range includes power banks, a wireless charger and a charging cable. The 10,000mAh power bank is made from four recycled bottles, its smaller 5,000mAh brother from two and the Qi wireless charger from one and a half bottles.

To add to both their visual and eco appeal, the products are finished with organic hemp and cotton fabric. The same materials also feature in BabyUSB's tablet and laptop pouches.

Kashif Siddiquei, BabyUSB's managing director, said: "There's never been a better time to 'keep it local'. Our dedicated warehousing and branding facility, based in the UK, means we can offer our best sellers with a quick turnaround, even for smaller quantities."

From farm to bag

A cotton bag featuring full transparency from farm to final product is the latest innovation from Jutebag, in a quest to produce a bag providing an unrivalled level of accountability.

The cotton is grown on the Kenyan island of Lamu, procured from small-scale farmers at a premium. Farmers are given the cotton seeds for free and only natural fertilisers are used.

The raw cotton is sent to a ginnery and then to Thika Clothing Mills, which produces the final fabric. This is then sent to the coastal city of Mombasa, where the bags are stitched before being transported by sea to the UK.

Jutebag director Parit Shah was born and brought up in Kenya and personally visited the farms and all the production facilities while planning this initiative.

Each bag comes with a unique QR code that can be scanned to access detailed information about the journey of the cotton from the farm to the final product.

Half of profits from the sales of the bag will help fund a children's education project in the cotton growing area.

Parit said: "The brands buying this bag can feel confident that they are making a sustainable and ethical choice and profits going back to the cotton growing villages will make a positive impact to the farmers and their communities."

Have your Cake...

Edible treats have been a growing sector, and are perfect for thanking staff and customers during recent tough times

Chorley-based Eat My Logo started as a side-line project to a high street celebration cake business owned by Ruth and Andrew Poar, called Cakes by Ruth back in 2014. The initial aim was to supply branded cupcakes to business in the local area alongside the birthday and wedding cakes that the business produced.

It soon became apparent that the business had found a gap in the market and the side-line grew quickly and required bigger premises which led to a couple of moves. It now employs 18 people and is housed in a 10,000 square foot bakery, to serve high levels of demand.

The Eat My Logo team now produces a wide range of logo branded cakes and biscuits, with millions of units being sold each year.

Like nearly all promotional businesses, the pandemic put a severe kink in the growth curve of the Brimman member, says Andy Poar. "As our product range is typically purchased for business events and celebrations, our order book dried up almost overnight. It was a scary moment, but we had no choice but to adapt to what had happened and attack the market," he says.

There were still opportunities out there and the company quickly realised that it could adapt its products to appeal to the postal delivery market.

As a result, it helped thousands of businesses connect with their staff and customers, with the help of tasty treats sent to their home addresses. Eat My Logo developed postable products such as oat bites, donuts and cupcakes, letterbox brownies, and biscuit brew boxes.

The quieter pandemic period also allowed it to focus on creating a new platform, to help distributors generate revenue. It developed a Trade Portal, which offers distributor partners resources including product information, artwork templates, pricing, and marketing.

Poar says he has noticed that businesses are thinking more about how to keep their staff happy since the pandemic.

"When the business began, buyers were mostly giving out products to people at events and conferences. Nowadays with employee engagement topping the list of priorities for many businesses, around 60% of our orders are used by businesses to give to their own people," he says.

"Whether this is for brand anniversaries, team rewards, celebrations or 'just because', it is fantastic to see, because it shows that small gestures can mean a lot," he adds.

Despite the problems created by the pandemic, the business was able to pivot successfully to such an extent that both 2021 and 2022 were record years, and it is on target for more growth in 2023.

Eat My Logo has invested in new machinery to make production as efficient as possible, including depositors, ovens, and flow wrapping machines.

Product development has also been a major focus with dozens of new products to keep the range fresh and exciting. New releases include funky cupcakes, logo chocolates, canvas cakes and more.

Founders Ruth and Andy have also been empowering their team to run the business day to day, putting in place a management team that they hope will enable them to step back from the day to day running of the business within the next few years.

For the future, Eat My Logo aims to provide an even more personal and

proactive service for each and every distributor, as well as making operations more efficient.

"We feel that this is really key, and the distributors who work with us in this way really do see the benefit in terms of enquiries and revenue," says Poar.

As distributors get familiar with how edible products are used, end users can expect to see many more options coming their way in the years ahead, he adds.

"So watch this space for new product launches throughout the year." 





MAKING THE CASE FOR MERCHANDISE

The BPMA landed a win for the promotional merchandise industry in its first in person debate in the palace of Westminster

On 28th March 2023, the BPMA hosted a debate aimed at bringing end users to the table to represent the power of promotional merchandise.

Hosted at the House of Commons, the BPMA represented its first in person debate as part of The Debating Group, to represent the promotional merchandise industry. The debate challenged end user speakers to a head-to-head on the subject of the effective relationship with promotional merchandise.

THE MOTION

The motion "Promotional merchandise is the medium which forges the most effective and long-term emotional relationship with its

audience" was proposed by the BPMA's CEO Carey Trevill, supported by Ollie Gilmore, group planning director at advertising agency, VCCP.

Opposing the motion was led by Tony Spong, lead consultant for Brand Strategy at advertising consultancy, AAR and Alana Ballantyne, planning director, also from VCCP. Chaired by Baroness Amanda Sater, herself a former marketer, the debate provided lively discussion and reportedly the longest question and answer session the debate has ever had.

The BPMA motion argued that effective communication must connect emotionally with the audience. Presenting the belief that promotional merchandise is the medium which can deliver in a long-lasting, effective and impactful way, Trevill and Gilmore presented a multifaceted argument which

helped the listening audience understand the place promotional merchandise holds for consumers. Spong and Ballantyne in response, presented an excellent case to state it was a mix of channels and mediums which all help to deliver effective outcomes.

Tough opponents in the debate, the opposition were quick to unpick the arguments presented and while the vote was close run, questions from the floor which challenged on every aspect from sustainability to relevance to getting in the room at the start of the brief, proved in the end to sway the vote in the BPMA's favour. A pre-debate vote showed a number of the audience had swapped sides to vote in favour of the motion despite the mix of end users and promotional experts, the shift left the BPMA with a resounding success.

For and Against

The debating teams were:



FOR
CAREY TREVILL, CEO, BPMA



FOR
OLLIE GILMORE, GROUP
PLANNING DIRECTOR, VCCP



AGAINST
TONY SPONG, LEAD CONSULTANT
FOR BRAND STRATEGY, AAR



AGAINST
ALANA BALLANTYNE,
PLANNING DIRECTOR, VCCP

Discussion was continued after the debate in one of Westminster's famous politico pubs, The Red Lion and several discussion points will be continued after this debate. The BPMA would like to thank everyone who attended the debate as the support for the industry and new connections made will help raise the profile of merchandise.

MEERKATS, MUSIC AND THOSE RED CAPS

Delving deep into the emotional psyche, the proposing team from the BPMA, pointed to a wide range of effective measures, citing the emotional response merchandise drives when received. Leaving lasting memory and exceptional recall, the proposers used a wide range of examples from Compare the Market's meerkat toys to the fact we drink from a Stella Artois 'chalice' rather than a pint glass. Even Trump's infamous red caps were used to illustrate the role of merchandise in a sense of identity and belonging.

The opposing team leveraged their side of the debate by using examples of channels which happily provide memorable experience and recall without merchandise. Tony Spong used a specific piece of advertising music to illustrate key points on how we associate with brands and marketing. He urged the assembled audience to consider all sides in his closing speech to help shift the debate vote.

Taking a wide range of questions from the floor, attendees challenged the debaters to address key points from sustainability to being part of the conversation earlier in the strategic process. End users from major media outlets pondered the question; why was merchandise not in the mix more often? Answering the questions from the floor, the debaters qualified many different aspects of the questions posed particularly on sustainable options and how best to bring merchandise into the pitch processes earlier. The opposing team encouraged the assembled promo industry representatives to put themselves front and centre with the ideas as the door was wide open.

OPPOSING SIDES AND COLLEAGUES

On the debate team were not only two colleagues from the same agency, VCCP, but also worked together on the same account. This made the debate even more interesting as it showed it was possible to represent a wide range of views from end users. During questions from the floor, a couple of promo industry colleagues used great examples of merchandise activated through VCCP on behalf of their clients which made for a fascinating discussion.

SUSTAINABILITY WAS A HOT TOPIC

Trevill addressed the wide range of sustainable questions raised to state the important role of the industry to advise and assist every end user achieve sustainable goals, citing the vast range of options the whole industry needed to shout about.

Using promotional merchandise in an unashamed way, Carey Trevill's closing words, pointed to the lovely promo gifts she had brought for each member of the debate team. Presented to each before the debate started she said she would forgive them for arguing against the motion as she knew they had fallen for the wonderful sustainable and British made products in their goodie bags. Quoting a BPMA mantra, expect the extraordinary when it comes to promotional merchandise, Trevill urged end users to appreciate the pivotal role merchandise plays in the marketing mix.

Before the debate started, a 'pre-vote' was taken to ascertain the direction of the room and with the vote landing a greater majority, at least 15% of attendees had changed their minds after hearing from the debate. *PM* adds a little further disclosure to say the room was split around 60/40 in favour of the debate purely as so many promo people were in the room.

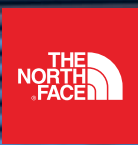
THE DEBATING GROUP

Under formal debating rules, The Debating Group has been debating contentious political issues which surround marketing since the 1970s and while this debate had less political challenge, the representation of industry in this political setting brought the challenges faced by our sector into the spotlight.

The Debating Group boasts trade association members from across the spectrum and includes the Chartered Institute of Marketing, Advertising Association, IPIA, Data & Marketing Association and Market Research Society. The BPMA joined a few years ago and hosted one of the first virtual events in 2020, also winning that debate, helping further the profile of the industry with end user audiences.

Tulip Siddiq MP is the Debating Group's President and is joined by members of the House of Commons and House of Lords to support this important group, driving discussion about creative industries.





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PASSING THE BATON

Succession planning need not be radical, but it pays to know what options are open to you, says Paul Green

As a business owner you have probably spent countless hours writing business plans over the years to help keep your business thriving. As a result, you may have a well-developed business plan in place but have you gone far enough in considering what happens to your business after you retire or if the unexpected should happen?

Few consider succession planning earlier than they need to, whether that be selling the business to a competitor, passing it on to family members or to one or two key employees, or even creating an employee share ownership scheme, depending on the size of the company.

PLANS IN PLACE

Whatever the future holds, it's important to have a clear plan in place so you know your business is in good hands when the time comes.

We know it can be hard to imagine someone else running your business after you've nurtured it and watched it grow, but creating a succession plan helps you look after its future.

Some of the benefits of succession planning include:

- putting the right people in charge
- looking forward to retirement
- preparing for the unexpected
- peace of mind that your business will continue

The promotional merchandise sector has its fair share of businesses that have been around for 20, 30 or even 50 years or more - businesses that have been built on long-term customer and supplier relationships with a culture and identity that reinforces why they have been around for so long.

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Employees who have helped the owner(s) make the business a success story are stakeholders with a vested interest in the future wellbeing having possibly committed a great deal of their own emotional capital to the cause. Few owners may seriously consider having meaningful internal discussions about their plans, even though they are the very ones who really know how the business ticks.

The normal scenario is to offer to seek an


external buyer, someone with the financial means to do a deal. Understandably, such potential buyers may not have the same motivations as those of employees; chief amongst them being to bolt on extra sales to their current business with a view to an eventual sale with the benefit of a combined turnover.

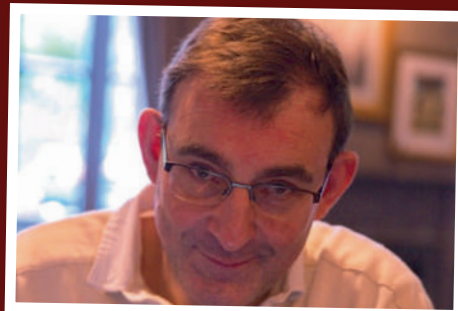
CONSIDER THE STAFF

So why should an owner start the succession planning process by first considering selling to one or more employees?


The key motivation would be to leave a legacy, to allow the business to continue to flourish, maintain its identity, its culture and continued employment for existing staff. If this can be maintained and agreeable sales terms negotiated, then surely this must be the best outcome for all concerned?

Such a transition would allow the existing owner(s) to scale back on their day-to-day commitments during the buyout period, thus allowing the owner(s) to make the transition to retirement less of a cliff edge experience. Fortunately, today there are various avenues available to employees to meet the financial requirements of buying the business and owners should at least give them the opportunity to do so.

Paul Green is managing director of the Galpeg Network which provides back office solutions for promotional merchandise businesses 





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SUSTAINABLY MADE IN BRITAIN

Selecting a product that is manufactured in the UK cuts down on transport and supports the national economy

Opinion may be split about Britain's place in the world post-Brexit, but it has delivered one certainty – more than ever, people want to buy British.

In a recent survey of more than 1,200 consumers and 280 businesses conducted by the membership organisation Make It British, 69% of consumers said they were more likely to buy British products, and indeed were prepared to pay a premium for them.

The reasons behind this response were varied but included the preservation of UK manufacturing, the desire to create new jobs at home and lower their carbon footprint.

One company which has been reaping the rewards of this new enthusiasm for

home-manufactured products is drinkware specialist First Editions, which has seen tremendous investment and growth over the last few decades, largely driven by the company's core values of sustainability and putting UK manufacturing front and centre.

First Editions' products are designed, tested, manufactured and branded in-house in the company's UK-based production facility. This, combined with the company's focus on energy efficiency (from renewable sources) and its 'zero waste' production process, is exactly what so many customers are looking for these days.

First Editions' bottles-for-life are packed with eco credentials, 100% BPA-free and dishwasher safe too. The company stocks more than a million bottles and caps, providing plenty of choice and fast

turnaround.

First Edition also has BPMA Charter Status, with staff TPM accredited. It has achieved both ISO 14001 and 9001, and is a founder member of the British Manufacturing group, Briman.

Managing director Mark Alderson said: "For so many reasons, there's never been a better time to buy British. We're proud of our UK roots and they make a huge difference for many of our customers when they're selecting drinkware."



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SPREAD THE WORD

It's no good having a great sustainability story if you don't tell it to others, says **Melissa Chevin**



As an industry where in the past (if we're honest) 'giveaway' has all too often equated with 'throwaway', it's vital that we take positive steps towards a sustainable future.

An ideal first step in this important journey is to take the BPMA Sustainability Pledge.

Members can sign on to the StepForward Pledge and complete an online assessment which will help them identify steps they can take to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce their impact on the environment.

Statement of intent

Once you've registered your interest, the next step required is to create a sustainability statement. Begin by assessing your existing processes and setting sustainability goals to work towards.

Of course, many other challenges lie ahead – but many opportunities too, not

least in sharing your journey with others by telling its story as part of your internal and external communication strategies.

Internal communication is just as important as external. You should be aiming to create a culture of sustainability within the company. Talk to your employees about your environmental priorities, from recycling and zero waste policies right down to reusable coffee mugs.

Aligned vision

On the external side, it's good to communicate both up and down the chain. This is a great time to talk to your suppliers and ensure their vision aligns with yours.

Above all, tell your customers what you're doing, and why. Social media is a natural channel for much of this, as it thrives on compelling storytelling. These days, customers really want to feel a

connection with the companies they buy from, and a strong brand story can help build that emotional connection.

Tell your story

These stories are also an ideal opportunity to showcase what individual employees are contributing in the push towards greater sustainability, and to celebrate milestones. For example, if you've switched to solar, don't just say it – show it.

Finally, while this is an area which can be a great differentiator for a company's marketing, please beware of over-claiming. Consumers have become much more sensitive to 'greenwashing' over recent years. So, let's ensure our products really 'walk the walk' and make real, positive changes.

For more information on the BPMA StepForward Pledge, go to bpma.co.uk.

Melissa Chevin is BPMA board director and marketing consultant with GF Consulting – mchevin@gf-consult.co.uk 

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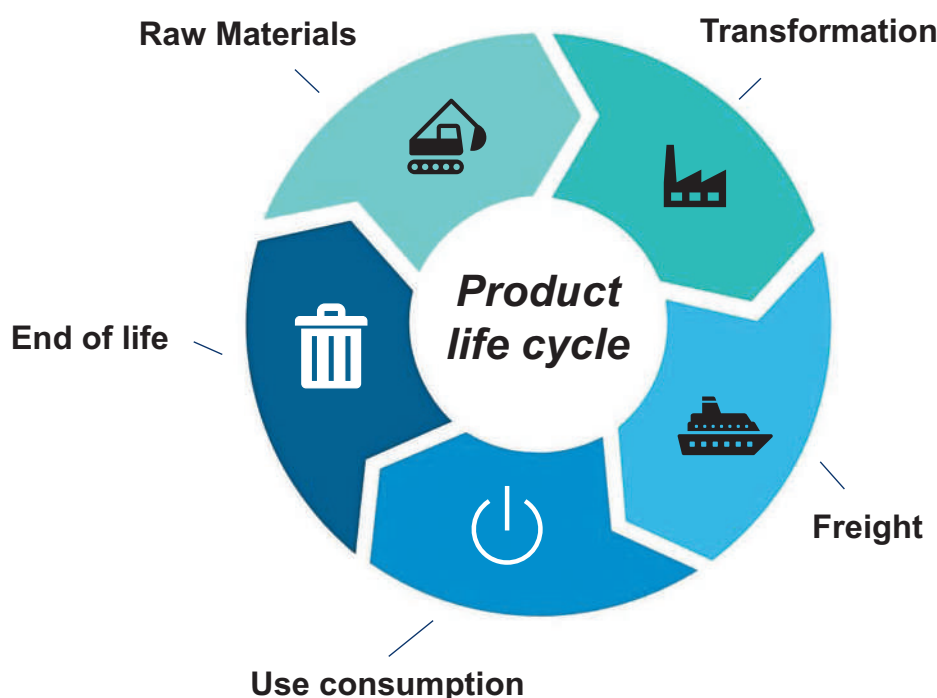
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MINIMISE YOUR FOOTPRINT

Assessing the impact of your products on the planet is a complex and evolving process, says **Matt Pluckrose**



Every aspect of the product's production, shipping, packaging and progress from country of origin to final use is plotted, measured, and a complex data map created.

DATA MAP

This data is compiled by the independent company working with factories and manufacturers, couriers, and raw material suppliers. It considers inputs including distances travelled through the manufacturing supply chain, the amount of electricity used, and all waste produced in production, to get to a data set that is put into a complex spreadsheet creating a footprint expressed in tonnes of CO₂e. Once all data has been logged and examined (for data validity) the end result is the carbon footprint.

COMPENSATION

The next step is controversial with many contrasting opinions from experts and governments. The topic is how to compensate the effects of the product on the planet and how this compensation can be described. Terms such as 'net zero' and 'carbon offset' are currently used, but this may change as opinions change.

Different schemes can 'offset' the CO₂e such as planting trees, contributing money to wind-farms, plastic waste removal from the oceans, water treatment, and wave power. All have different effects to assist the environment and 'give back' for the effect of the products from our industry on the planet.

Our industry is not the worst CO₂ polluter but equally it's not the best and the focus on measurement and action following 'carbon foot printing' will become the norm not the exception as it is now. It's an ever-changing area that it pays to take expert advice in and trust suppliers who do so.

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas

The UK promotional industry leads the way in its focus on products with a sustainable story. The demand over the past 2-3 years has grown at an amazing pace and many suppliers and distributors have completely switched to products that have been altered in some way to try and make them less harmful to the environment, whether through packaging or the product make up.

Many marketers and their companies are turning away from or even banning any items that feature their logo if they have not been redesigned or revamped to reduce their impact. Ecological responsibility is or should become the standard not the exception with prices not at a premium for such goods. One of the key areas for our sector is the importance of understanding and measuring a product's 'footprint' on the environment.

ASSESSING IMPACT

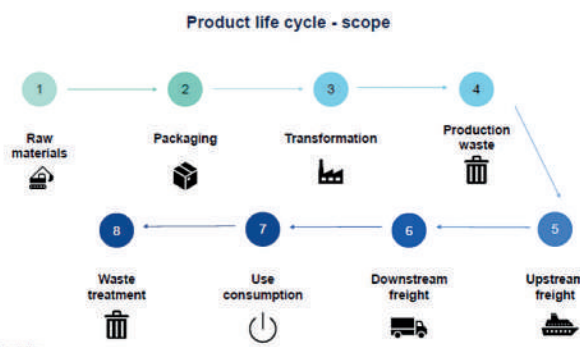
This is called the CO₂e footprint – meaning the CO₂ equivalent – and assesses how its production has contributed to a product's CO₂ emissions.

It is expressed in tonnes of CO₂e, so let's look at some of the factors that make up this

value and what suppliers and distributors can do with this data. Firstly, a product's footprint should be independently verified to be believable and to avoid claims of greenwashing. One such verification is ISO14067 which is what Desktop Ideas uses.

In technical terms, the carbon footprint of a product is the result of a single-criteria life cycle analysis and is expressed in tons of CO₂e per functional unit. This is used to express the impacts of a product over a predetermined lifetime.

The elements that are measured are shown below:



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Goldstar moves beyond pens in Europe

Writing instrument supplier Goldstar has made a strategic move towards unifying its global brand, bringing together two online presences under the single domain of SimplyGoldstar.com.

Previously the company has operated through both GoldstarPens.com and GoldstarEurope.com.

The move signifies a number of changes on the horizon for Goldstar's growing business, said R.J. Hagel, director of global marketing.

"This is an exciting time for our brand and furthering our vision of Simplicity. We are working hard on several projects that support an easier way of doing business and opens the door to developing stronger intercontinental partnerships," he said.

The new web experience allows distributors across North America and Europe to see all of the Goldstar offering across each market.

On the product side of the

business, Hagel said there had been a tremendous response in North America to the addition of drinkware and bags categories in the past couple of years, and it was introducing more than 40 styles of drinkware and bags in Europe this spring and summer.

He added: "Dozens more items including new writing instrument styles are planned for Fall. We're now offering Simplicity in the product categories our partner distributors need most. We want to be thought of for more than just pens and when you think of writing instruments, drinkware or bags, we want you to think — that's SimplyGoldstar.com."

Among other technology updates happening across the company, a new content platform joins the updated website as well as the addition of a new security-enhanced payment portal which Goldstar released in February. More updates are planned later this year.



£1.2m investment puts HD imagery centre stage

Promotional products suppliers The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products are investing £1.2m as part of a commitment to delivering superior printing services and high-quality, innovative products.

The investment in the business and its machinery includes the recently launched UltraHD printing system which was developed in-house over two years and offers unparalleled, high-definition print quality, the companies claim.

Product lines that can feature UltraHD include writing instruments and drinkware, which are available with magazine-quality resolution, edge definition, colour gamut and colour gradation. The technology provides customers with a long-lasting full colour print finish that surpasses traditional printing methods.

The investment will include the



purchase of new machinery, as well as upgrading existing machinery, to improve efficiency and capacity, enabling the company to offer an even wider range of products and services to its distributors, including new personalisation options.

Managing director, Neil Cleere, said: "We are thrilled to be investing in our

business and machinery to enhance our offering to customers. This investment will allow us to continue to deliver high-quality products and services while also expanding our capabilities."

The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products are also committed to sustainability and the environment. Both are constantly researching and implementing changes to reduce their carbon footprint and make their production processes more sustainable.

The investment is a significant step for the company, as it looks to expand its product range and branding methods, as well as streamline its processes.

Other developments in the near future include a brand-new drinkware-specific printing method and faster printing techniques to ensure lead times remain industry-beating.

Sourcing City winners gather in style

Sourcing City assembled the winners of its SC Awards for a special lunch at the spectacular Alex Dilling restaurant, housed in the Café Royal Hotel, London.

Two people from each of the winning companies were invited to enjoy the hospitality and experienced a sumptuous meal, and then drinks at The Glassblower. The conversation was lively and fun as people met old friends and new faces.

The awards were founded in 2007 and are recognised in the industry for showing how well both suppliers and distributors are

regarded by each other, with both sides of the industry voting for the people they most respect and enjoy doing business with.

In the Over £3m Distributor Award Category the winner was again Total Merchandise. Ross Promotional won the £1m to £3m category, and Big Bear took the honours in the Under £1m category.

In the Supplier Categories the first place went to XD Connect winning Major Wholesaler of the Year, and winners of Specialist Supplier of the Year were Pinpoint Badges.



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PAPER OVER

Automated systems can cut down on the paper mountain and make your credit systems more effective, says **Mike Collins**



This month's edition is all about sustainability. At Direct Route AccountAssyst, we pride ourselves on being pioneers within our industry, while also being innovators in service and paperless solutions, for not only our clients but also from the wider standpoint.

Take for example our AccountAssyst portal. Designed with sustainability in mind, the customer portal is completely paper-less and offers a computerised system and process for the incorporation of new customer accounts, online credit checking functions and a brand-new innovation of additional customer personal guarantees... all done electronically of course.

Often clients engage with Direct Route AccountAssyst simply because their manual administration is a little stretched and so they are carrying a raft of 'paper this and paper that' which forms their account opening process.

GOODBYE FORMS

Account Assyst instantly does away with the necessity to carry paper forms.

This means there's no more worrying... is this form completed? Is that form signed? Is that application form legible? No more having to dig out a credit application form to ensure all of the content matches up with a new order and no more laborious re-checking as to whether a customer's credit rating matches the proposed purchase.

Direct Route AccountAssyst works in a completely automated and autonomous way, ensuring that all customer information is stored safely on a secure server that can be quickly accessed and updated at a touch of a client button.

REAL TIME DATA

As information is stored in real time, alerts to changes

in a customer's credit ratings are instantly relayed in one daily email, ensuring that any decisions made on upcoming purchase orders can be made with the correct and true facts of a customer's liquidity to hand.

All users can also consistently check whether the customer could be receiving a larger credit value. If they are worthy of an increase, then consider sending them a 'customer account review form' by email, with a view to extending their credit limit. Your customer will appreciate the vote of confidence and may even provide further larger orders.

However, if the customer is not worthy of an increase in credit, what actions are you taking to protect yourself on these increased orders?

Here is where a Credit Guarantee (Director's Personal Guarantee or PG) can help. A Credit Guarantee provides a little bit more protection and security against a credit risk and allows a further avenue of pursuit should the customer's business encounter a tricky financial time in the future.

CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

The new and improved Direct Route AccountAssyst package can help you with instantly securing Credit Guarantees on the occasions you may need them, an additional feature that we know may well become essential during the next 12 months.


Running a business is an ever-changing scene, customer details can change, owners of a business can change and the limits and accounts that business is worth can change.

What doesn't change is Direct Route AccountAssyst's ability to cope with any new account information that you, our client, requires to keep your businesses on track.

All businesses should have one eye on the future and how we can affect same, not only for ourselves but for others. We

at Account Assyst are confident that we're already on that road and we shall continue to lay the tracks for our clients to follow.

If you are not a BPMA Member it might even be worth you considering joining so that you can access benefit solutions such as ours. Of course, you do not need to be a BPMA Member to utilise the Direct Route AccountAssyst service, it is simply that the BPMA Membership benefit package provides inclusive AccountAssyst units annually, providing a major return of investment to many Members year in year out.

Mike Collins is managing director of Account Assyst 



Local Support Contact Details

Please contact a member of our local support team for advice on any matter related to debt and credit management.

London and South

David Barker
dbarker@directroute.co.uk
07766 545871

Midlands and East Anglia

Ken Brown
kbrown@directroute.co.uk
07795 214426

Wales and North West

Ian Jenkinson
ijenkinson@directroute.co.uk
07860 197476

North East, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Mike Collins
mike@accountassyst.com
07866 427363





BPMA appoints vice chair and co-opts new blood for the Board

The BPMA has announced well respected Board Director, Clive Allcott of Direct Textiles + Bags Europe, has been appointed as Vice Chair to support Chair Haydn Willetts.

In line with Board plans, the BPMA has also co-opted Jules Adam of WCM+A and Richard Sullivan of Navillus to join the Board with immediate effect.

Delighted with the appointments, Willetts said: "Clive has a great track record with the Board, already responsible for our Charter programme on the Board bringing about significant change for Charter members. His appointment as Vice Chair represents the next steps in development for the BPMA. We also welcome new blood in the form of two new talented business owners, Jules Adam and Richard Sullivan, co-opted to the Board to bring fresh skills and vision to our progressive plans."

Announcing the moves at the BPMA's first International Women's Day on 8 March, the news was met with applause from assembled members. Supporting the event, Clive Allcott, Jules Adam and Richard Sullivan were congratulated by attendees.

Jules Adam also took part in a series of panels also featuring fellow Board members BPMA President Angela Wagstaff, Board Directors Helen Brennan and Melissa Chevin during the event.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Jules Adam said: "I am delighted to be joining the BPMA Board at this exciting



and incredibly important time for our industry. I thoroughly enjoyed my first Board meeting and was impressed with the level of dedication and the amazing plans the BPMA Board are putting together for the future."

Richard Sullivan added: "I'm honoured to be invited to join our dynamic BPMA board and very much looking forward to giving something back to the industry that has supported me for over 30 years."

CEO Carey Trevill explained the co-opting would be made official at the AGM this November.

"It's important to bring skills into a board at optimum times and with key

planning for the next two years, this was the perfect timing to bring Jules and Richard on board with their wealth of experience, and with Clive taking up Vice Chair supporting Haydn, we're all set for progress," she said.

The BPMA also recently added to the executive team with the appointment earlier in February of Sarah Connor as Events & Training Manager and Sarah Irwin as Membership Executive, supporting Tom Robey as Membership Director.

The BPMA will hold its AGM in November 2023 and is open to all BPMA members.





BPMA launches sustainability conference for June 2023

The BPMA has now launched its Sustainability Conference as a member only event on 8 June 2023, taking place at the prestigious Crowne Plaza in Marlow. The Conference celebrates the official launch of the BPMA's StepForward Pledge with workshops and speakers aimed at helping every member business on their sustainable journey.

Attendees will be welcomed into a networking breakfast to fuel the day before the conference starts, focusing on the StepForward Pledge and the business case to sign up. Followed by workshops and speakers, attendees can enjoy lunch before reconvening for inspirational speakers on the three ESG goals the BPMA is focussed on – Products, People and Planet.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The Conference is open to all BPMA members and is perfect for anyone interested in learning more about the sustainable future of the industry, for their business, already in a sustainability focused role, business owners, commercial and sales, through to anyone handling day to day business needing a greater knowledge.

DEEP DIVE INTO SUSTAINABILITY AND OUR INDUSTRY

The BPMA has stated speakers are focussed on ESG elements and will cover topics from selling sustainably, to green washing through to building sustainable policies.

Tickets are now available to book and each member ticket includes a welcome breakfast, lunch, all day refreshments on tap and access to the Conference.

Tickets for the event are priced at



SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE 2023

8th June 2023 | Crowne Plaza, Marlow



£100+VAT for members and £95+VAT for Charter members.

Booking for the Conference is now open. Members can use the booking form on the BPMA website to secure their places and select the appropriate ticket type. More details at bpma.co.uk.



Golf Day date announced

The BPMA's annual golf day will be held on the 22 June 2023 at the Nottinghamshire Golf Club.

Following last year's successful event, the sporting day out will once again return offering an opportunity to play a round with industry colleagues old and new.

As well as being a chance for players of every level to have some fun and

network, there will be prizes on offer for a range of activities, including nearest the pins, longest drive and lots more.

It's always great fun so don't delay and book your place today. Bookings are accepted for teams of four and individuals who will be assigned a team for the day.

The day starts with coffee or tea and bacon butties before a morning tee off on the Championship Course for 9 holes.

After lunch, teams take on the Signature Course for 18 holes, before an evening meal with awards.

Hotel accommodation is locally available.

Sponsorship for this event is also open. Please contact Tom Robey for more information on the options available at tom@bpma.co.uk.

More details at bpma.co.uk



BPMA CALENDAR

8 June

Sustainability Conference, Marlow

22 June

BPMA Golf Day, Cotgrave, Nottingham

13 September

Merchandise World, Milton Keynes

29-30 November

B2B Marketing Expo, Excel, London

2024

9-11 January

PSI, Dusseldorf

24-25 January

Merchandise World, Coventry

24 January

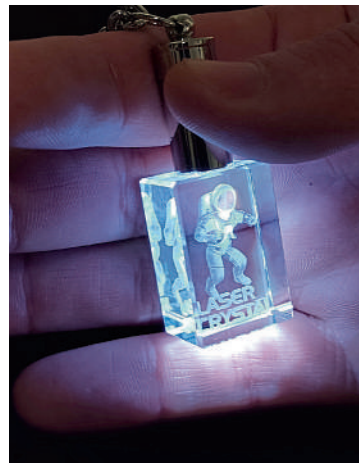
BPMA Annual Awards Dinner, Coventry

7 March

International Women's Day lunch

13 March

Haptica Live, Bonn Nottinghamshire, NG12 3HB



MEETING THE INDUSTRY

Acquainting yourself with a sector is the best way to bring yourself up to speed with its needs, as the BPMA's new membership executive found

The BPMA Membership team has had a busy couple of months visiting members and attending events. Sarah Irwin joined the association in February and her introduction to the sector of promotional merchandise has been ongoing since then. *Product Media* caught up with her latest moves.

HAVE YOU VISITED ANY BPMA MEMBERS YET?

We went to Poole to visit supplier member, Laser Crystal. The primary focus of the visit was to experience engraving of a particular trophy, from the Annual Awards Dinner which was the first BPMA event I attended. It was a fantastic opportunity to see the process from start to finish, engraving Andrew Hill's name on to his Industry Recognition Awards, which he later collected from the BPMA offices.

I was shown how quickly the design team was able to create wording that went on the award. I was then shown the process of engraving the name. It was incredible to witness the speed and precision of the design. We also

had the chance to see some of Laser Crystal's most intricate designs. A favourite of mine would have to be the life size 3D Starbucks drink.

WHERE ELSE HAVE YOU BEEN?

Whilst in Poole, we also took the opportunity to visit one of our newest members, The Funky Peach. Their headquarters was full of life including a ping pong table in the centre of the office. Sales director Dan Griggs showed us the printing and embroidery workshop, including some of the newest machinery which allows the business to print larger quantities of garments in a shorter time frame. The Funky Peach is expanding its already thriving business model to become distributors of promotional merchandise and expand its client offering.

HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO ATTEND BPMA EVENTS?

The first event I attended was Merchandise World at Coventry in January and The BPMA Annual Awards. I'm glad to have had the chance to witness the sector coming together for not only an exhibition but equally a prestigious awards event. Next Annual Awards, I'll be involved in the lead up with the rest of the team.

The BPMA International Women's Day

lunch in March was also a great success. An opportunity to meet many I had been emailing or on the phone to and to truly take part in such an important event. It was such a successful and constructive event that we are adding the lunch to our annual events calendar, so keep an eye on the BPMA Events page.

With meetings and events scheduled up and down the country in the weeks and months to come, I am looking forward to getting out on the road more to meet our members. Let myself or the team know if you require a site visit to cover member benefits and we can schedule this in.

Contact Sarah on sarah.irwin@bpma.co.uk. 



BPMA GOLF DAY 2023

Join the BPMA and fellow industry golfers at the
Annual Golf Day on Thursday 22nd June 2023



Venue: The Nottinghamshire Golf & Country Club, Cotgrave, Nottingham NG12 3HB
For more information about the course visit www.thenottinghamshire.com

Tee off!

- 9:00am: Meet for coffee/ tea and bacon butties
- Morning: 9 hole scramble
- Lunch: Sandwiches and fries
- Afternoon: 18 hole Stableford better ball competition
- Evening meal with awards
- Prizes for winners including nearest the pins, longest drive plus lots more
- Hotel accommodation available locally

➤ Book your place today

Visit bpma.co.uk/events to book in your teams and tickets

£145+vat per person or a team of 4 for £580+vat for BPMA members

Non BPMA members £175+vat per person or a team of 4 for £700+vat



Mike Oxley
CEO of Prominate UK

eppi magazine remains at the forefront of developments and contributes towards international exchange. Learning about the different approaches to our industry directly benefits myself and my business.

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