



## LET'S DO THIS P10

BPMA Sustainability  
Conference points the way



### TAKE A NOTE P16

PENS AND  
STATIONERY  
CHANGE WITH  
THE TIMES



TIME TO SELL? P30  
ASSESSING  
EXIT OPTIONS

CREDIT WHERE  
IT'S DUE P21  
RECOGNISING THE BEST



Your Brand Ambassador



BIC® LIGHTERS

# When the smallest thing says a lot.

## Light up your imagination

Being the number 1 worldwide in branded pocket lighters, means always being open to our customers' needs. Because we know that despite their small size, our lighters are powerful in terms of brand communication. Yes, everything is possible with our print techniques, and your brand message will stand out and become part of people's lives. As everybody has a BIC® at home, everybody will have your brand at home. That's giving light to your brand's life, in an iconic, safe and high-quality way.

Ready?

### PRINT FINISHES

- |    |                 |    |           |    |      |   |             |   |          |    |       |   |                |    |    |    |               |
|----|-----------------|----|-----------|----|------|---|-------------|---|----------|----|-------|---|----------------|----|----|----|---------------|
| SP | SCREEN PRINTING | BR | BRILLIANT | MT | MATT | H | HOLOGRAPHIC | M | METALLIC | SA | SANDY | P | PUFFY PRINTING | UV | UV | PG | PUFFY GLITTER |
|----|-----------------|----|-----------|----|------|---|-------------|---|----------|----|-------|---|----------------|----|----|----|---------------|



Print 360°

Conform  
ISO 9994

Conform  
EN 13869

85%  
Recycled



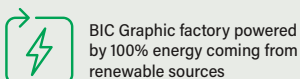
J25  
UP TO 1450

J23  
UP TO 1800



J38  
UP TO 1800

J26  
UP TO 3000



Think BIC  
www.bicgraphic.com





# Contents

## 4 News

Need to know information for the industry

## 9 Ask Clive

Give some thought to apparel packaging

## 10 Sustainability conference report

Next steps discussed at industry summit

## 16 Pens & stationery

Industry takes note of changing needs

## 21 Page Awards

Recognition at the annual gathering

## 24 What can you do?

Practical tips for your sustainability journey

## 26 Technology

Let's all go on a hybrid holiday

## 27 Briman Voice

Why British made is a 'win-win'

## 30 Exit strategy

When is the best time to sell up?

## 31 Finance

Staying on top of the numbers that count

## 32 BPMA news

Update on Association activity

## 34 Roving Robey

The BPMA membership director is back on the road

JULY/AUGUST 2023

## WELCOME



The industry had another important face to face gathering in June when it assembled for the first BPMA Sustainability Conference.

As the last issue, which focused on sustainability, demonstrated, our sector has much to be proud of when it comes to adopting change, embracing innovation, and thinking creatively about how to deal with the biggest challenge that the world is facing.

The BPMA Sustainability Conference was an opportunity to get together, share ideas and learn from each other, as well as some amazing experts

in the field. It's fair to say that a lot of interesting conversations started that day, which we look forward to hearing about and reporting on developments in *Product Media*.

As an industry, the StepForward Pledge, which was outlined at the event, represents an achievable way that we can all move forward on our journeys to be better businesses and leave a legacy that shows us at our best.

Read the report of the event inside on page 10 and don't worry if you missed this one. There is another in the planning which will be even bigger, better and more informative.

Elsewhere in this issue, catch up on the latest developments in the world of stationery and pens. It is actually really

interesting to see how this product segment has gone on its own journey to deliver products that are more in line with the needs of clients. As one of the biggest areas of promotional spend, this is important, and demonstrates how changing our products doesn't have to be at the cost of their desirability or commercial success.

With so much positive stuff happening in our sector, it was also great to be able to share some of it with international guests from other global trade associations (see page 33). This is a global business so maintaining links with colleagues from around the world is always valuable. Long may that continue.

**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](http://www.productmediamagazine.co.uk)  
[www.bpma.co.uk](http://www.bpma.co.uk)

**Editorial**  
[editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk](mailto:editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk)  
**Advertising and Media Pack**  
[advertising@productmediamagazine.co.uk](mailto:advertising@productmediamagazine.co.uk)  
**Circulation**  
[circulation@productmediamagazine.co.uk](mailto:circulation@productmediamagazine.co.uk)  
**Editorial Services**  
Stuart Derrick

**Design and Production**  
ATG Media,  
[www.atg-media.com](http://www.atg-media.com)  
**Printed by**  
Mailing Guy Ltd  
**Photography**  
shutterstock.com,  
Freepik.com

The BPMA has the right to refuse editorial content and advertisements on sight of artwork, particularly where there may be a conflict of interest.

The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the publication or the editor. The publishers cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage, nor can responsibility be accepted for any claims by advertisers, contributors, or other persons and organisations. No material may be reproduced without the written permission of the publishers.

## Wild Thang reveals its new base and approach

Liverpool-based Wild Thang welcomed customers to its new £2m development during its recent 2023 Expo.

More than 200 customers from over 80 different companies attended the event from across the UK and Ireland.

The company's new HQ and manufacturing hub was conceived in 2019 but faced delays and challenges due to the pandemic, so the Expo was even more special.

Customers were treated to breakfast and lunch in the cool kitchen rest area before embarking on a tour of the building and its production facilities.

Visitors saw Wild Thang's branding capabilities in action, including screen printing and embroidery machines, laser engravers, and digital printers.

Fourteen trade supplier tables displayed the latest innovative branded clothing and merchandise.

Managing director Andrew Dwerryhouse and commercial sales director Sarah Howarth gave a detailed and educational presentation updating guests on developments at the business and latest trends in merchandise, including research on the most searched for products, which indicated the growing demand for sustainable products.

Goodie bags for visitors contained many of these sustainable items, providing an insight into all the certifications Wild Thang has put in place over the last two decades.

"It was great to be able to showcase some of the amazing global brands we are working with and then highlight 12



reasons why to trust Wild Thang," said Dwerryhouse. "This gives an in-depth understanding of what makes us world-class."

Wild Thang also shared its new in-depth sustainability pledge, including a commitment to become Net Zero by 2030, which was launched at the Good Small Business Awards.

Upcoming plans include a new website in the coming months as well as a new warehouse over the next year to help sustain growth plans in the coming year.

## Merchandise is back at Cannes

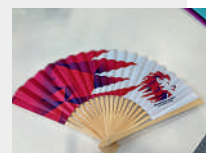
Every year, the Advertising Association takes a trade delegation off to the Cannes Lions festival in the south of France. After discovering last year they wanted to ensure their presence was appropriately branded, the BPMA stepped in with the help of suppliers to provide a range of brilliant merchandise to support the trade mission.

This year was no exception and deciding to stick to items that would represent the Brits in Cannes, the Advertising Association (AA) approached the BPMA again for support. Working with members Bio Laboratories, The Umbrella Company, WCM+A, Mantis World and midocean, the AA was spotted on the Croisette sporting branded recycled umbrellas from The Umbrella Company, and keeping cool with 50ml face spritzes from Bio Laboratories and bamboo fans from midocean. Delegates from the AA trade mission were all wearing their Cannes badges, courtesy of WCM+A.

An important representation at this global advertising event, branded merchandise is a hot topic amongst delegates to see what major brand owners are handing out – TikTok hats and Google sunscreen are highly sought after.

Part of advertising's commitment to the climate crisis is the Ad Net Zero initiative, with 5 actions to help tackle emissions through marketing production – which includes the event industry.

Decked out in T-shirts from Mantis World, the Ad Net Zero team hosted a special event space to talk about the 5 actions the whole marketing community and its supply chain can take on the road to net zero.



## Mantis World provides business feedback for BoE

Mantis World CEO Prama Bhardwaj was part of a group of 12 leaders of fast-growing companies invited to provide insight on the current business environment to the Bank of England.

Co-hosted by London & Partners and the BoE, discussions explored how business conditions are affecting companies to help direct future monetary and financial policy.

Feedback is fed through to the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to set interest rates with businesses consulted for real time input to avoid policy overshoot.

BoE interest rates rose to 5% in June and



many MPC advisors believe further rises are needed.

Most other industries represented were in tech with many start-ups yet to generate revenue. Almost all are experiencing a contraction in demand, reduction in costs, and easing of labour market with many making cuts, and implementing price cuts.

"Our input on helping to control inflation included a proper free trade deal with the EU (12% duty currently on clothing), decoupling the price of renewable energy from the price of gas, incentives for business to 'do more good', and providing affordable housing," said Bhardwaj.





## Stormtech brings eco credentials to B2B market

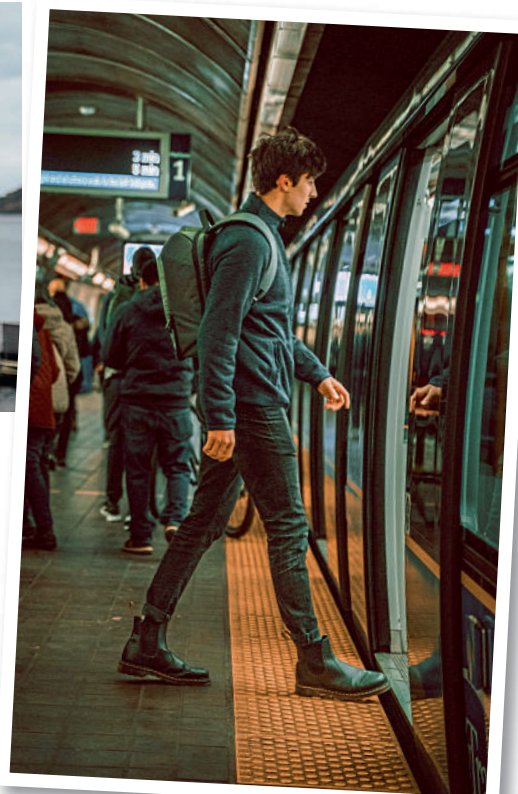
The Outdoors Company has added Canadian performance apparel brand, Stormtech to its portfolio of brands available to the B2B market in the UK and Europe.

A wide range of styles including insulated, softshell and recycled fleece jackets, vests and gilets, rucksacks and duffel bags, are all available for customisation.

Paul Morley-Smith, company director at The Outdoors Company said: "They are a brand with great heritage in the corporate promotional market and through our UK

and Dutch warehouses we are excited to be able to look after both our UK and EU clients with the brand. With their very strong eco credentials and many recycled products to offer, they are not only a great fit for us and our commitment to supplying sustainable products, but also our customers."

The Outdoors Company have similar partnerships with Columbia, Finisterre, Patagonia, Rab, The North Face and other premium outdoor brands.



## AD recruits ahead of ambitious growth plans

Manchester-based distributor AD Branded Solutions has recruited Matt Norton as an account manager.

The company is undertaking a recruitment drive in response to increased levels of customer enquiries and is currently looking for a purchasing/operations role to help further its sustainability and ESG plans, with the aim of becoming a Net Zero company by 2035.

"We are delighted to welcome Matt into the AD fold at a very exciting time as we push on with our ambitious growth plans for 2023 and beyond," said Amo Singh, managing director. "With over 25 years in the promotional products industry, Matt brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the AD team at a time when we are driving forward our sustainability initiatives".

Norton added: "The culture at AD is great. The collaborative environment with team members, customers and suppliers makes the role especially rewarding."



## Return of Pro Ad expo wraps up 40th anniversary

Promotional marketing company Pro Ad timed the return of its merchandising expo to coincide with the end of its 40th anniversary celebrations.

The event was attended by marketing experts from the North East who were able to meet with 30 exhibitors showcasing hundreds of products. There were 450 product enquiries on the day, and 20 direct orders placed within a week of the show.

Visitors were also able to listen to speakers, Melissa Chevin, managing director of Globefish Consulting, and Antonia Brindle of Get Brindled, a marketing agency specialising in brand, PR, social media and crisis management.

Carlo Nardini, founder of Pro Ad welcomed the return of the event, which had to take a break during the pandemic.

"The Promotional Merchandise Expo turned out to be a fabulous day for our visitors who buy and use promotional

products or corporate clothing," he said.

Pro Ad hosted more than 40 new and existing suppliers to a dinner the night before the event.

Visitors received a goodie-bag full of innovative ideas, from wellbeing kits and socks, to Lego display vans, all branded with the Pro Ad logo.

Loren Nardini, commercial director, said suppliers had demonstrated lots of branding techniques to help marketers explore the different ways of personalising brands.

He added: "Our team also focused on the benefits of British and sustainable products. Our speakers focused on sustainable promotions and promoting and protecting a brand during its activation and the feedback to both has been immense. This event was a true landmark for our company and we really wrapped up our 40th year in business celebrations in style."







## Kingly shows the benefits of no waste approach

Promotional textiles supplier Kingly was shortlisted for a Green Company of the Year award, celebrating the achievements, values and contributions of businesses across the

UK, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

The business was shortlisted at the BizX awards for its efforts to minimise the negative impact of the textile and

apparel industry.

Kingly has also recently teamed up with hygiene technology company Polygiene to supply a Munich-based sports club with a branded, more sustainable towel.

The towels feature a Polygiene product that helps keep them fresh and cuts down on the amount of washing they require, reducing the amount of water, energy, and time consumed cleaning textiles, which benefits both customers and the environment.

In a further community outreach initiative, Kingly celebrated International Children's Day with a special event at a kindergarten in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Children were taught about Kingly's upcycling philosophy through the medium of sock puppets which they made and decorated from material supplied from Kingly's production process, demonstrating that nothing goes to waste.



## New role for Floyd at midocean

Jardaine Floyd has joined European wholesaler midocean as account manager for UK and Ireland, bringing previous sales experience and industry knowledge from Senator Pens.

midocean's regional director Haydn Willetts said: "We see the addition of Jardaine to our UK team as a key part of our plan for our continued sales growth for the UK and Irish market. Her knowledge, reputation and experience will enable us to contact and visit many more customers helping to raise our profile, improve visibility for our ever

growing range of products and services."

Willetts praised Floyd's strong fit with midocean in terms of background and personality.

"She has joined us at a key stage in the development of the company. The recently launched new print facility in Poland in 2022 along with the new ownership gives us considerable operational and financial stability. This allows us to continue to offer one of the strongest product collections in the industry from both our European stock holding and Far East made to order

service and with a second to none print service in Europe."

Floyd said the company had a lot to shout about to its UK and Irish customers.

"The print facility in Poland is extremely impressive and the stock holding and range is vast. I am looking forward to working with customers old and new in my new role at midocean."





# Tools to empower your sales



## Discover our Mood Scene Generator

It's our mission to empower you with knowledge, inspiration and digital tools. Saving you valuable time, to focus on selling.

Our digital tools help you to inspire your customers. Take our Mood Scene Generator, for example. In just a few clicks, you can create great mood scenes that will help you sell more products! We are constantly renewing the content, so you can keep on surprising your customers with great images.

**Scan the QR code  
to visit the  
PF Concept Store  
and try it yourself!**





## Wellness initiatives aim to support staff

The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products have opened a wellness room to provide employees with a comfortable and relaxing space to recharge and improve their overall wellbeing.

Located in a quiet place, the room is equipped with comfortable seating, soothing lighting, and a variety of resources, including books and mindfulness activities. It can be used for prayer, meditation, nursing mothers, and as a place to seek help.

Employees can also speak with a qualified mental health first aider, who is available to listen, offer advice, and guide them to any support they may need.

Charlotte New, HR advisor, commented: "This new addition has been well received and contributes to a positive working environment for



everyone. By prioritising the health of our employees, we continue to set the standard for workplace wellness."

The room is the latest demonstration of the company's commitment to the wellbeing of employees.

The companies recently marked Mental Health Awareness Week and took part in the 'On Your Feet Britain' campaign aimed at encouraging people to sit less and move more throughout the day.

Employees were invited to take part in a fitness class led by Advance Performance Lab where various departments engaged in a range of exercises.



## Merchandise show urges green approach

Organisers of The Big Promotional Trade Show have announced the launch of a new show format catering to the growing interest in sustainability in the merchandise sector.

The Green and New Promo Show will focus on the many sustainable and new products released into the promotional merchandise and wearables marketplace this year.

As well as showcasing more sustainable options, the organisers are working with Ecologi to plant a tree for every visitor to the show.

Show lanyards, banners, badges, pens, awards and goody bags will all be sustainable and recyclable, and exhibitors and venues are being challenged to make and match sustainable pledges and options.

The organisers said: "We are not making any greenwashing claims about the shows being totally sustainable, the events are about sustainable products, new products and this is about first steps, many of which we want to introduce across all of our show brands, or indeed have already done so. We want to bring everyone with us on the journey."

The BPMA recently hosted a breakfast event at the Big Promotional Trade Show in Manchester to take its Step Forward sustainability pledge to suppliers and distributors.

Suppliers and distributors were given the chance to learn more about the Association's latest initiative to help the industry improve its sustainability efforts.

- Read the report of the BPMA's Sustainability Conference on p10

## Industry pioneer George Hayward remembered

Sad news has reached *Product Media* of the death of industry pioneer George Hayward who passed away peacefully recently.

George was the founder of Page Partnership, a leading printed and online catalogue, and software solution.

His passing was marked at Page's most recent awards dinner which took on a more commemorative tone this year.

Before dinner, his son Brian Hayward said a few heartfelt sentiments and recollections about George to a standing ovation. These were echoed by LSi distributor Lloyd Simpson, who spoke fondly of George and remarked on how he shall be missed. A champagne toast was raised in George's name.

One of George's contemporaries, Bryan Mathieson, founder of Non-Stop Promotions, said that the idea to create a catalogue for the industry was radical at



the time and helped advance the sector.

"Before that you had to find your own suppliers. The catalogue turned it into a business where anyone could get involved at whatever size they wanted," he said.

Alongside George, Tony Cohen and Keith Willis, Mathieson said the 'Big Four' helped open up the industry.

In later years, they would regularly meet up for golf and reminiscing about the industry and the friends had seen George recently before he passed away.





# PACK IT IN

Consider a more sustainable approach to packaging promotional clothing, says **Clive Allcott**



**E**co-friendly packaging solutions for clothing have gained significant importance in recent years due to the growing awareness of environmental issues. Here are some eco packaging solutions that can be used for clothing:

- 1.** Recycled packaging materials – instead of using traditional packaging materials, consider using packaging made from recycled materials. This can include recycled cardboard boxes, paper, or even biodegradable plastic made from plant-based sources. At DTB, we offer full colour eco digital branding for cardboard and wooden boxes using DTP (direct to paper) technology.
- 2.** Biodegradable polybags – rather than traditional plastic polybags, opt for biodegradable alternatives. These polybags are made from materials that break down naturally over time, reducing their environmental impact. Look for options like compostable polybags made from materials like corn-starch or vegetable-based plastics.

- 3.** Recyclable and reusable mailers – consider mailers that can be easily recycled by customers or reused for future shipments. Look for options made from recycled paper or cardboard, which can be easily disposed of in regular recycling bins.

- 4.** Minimalist packaging – simply use less material overall. Focus on the essential packaging elements, such as a branded label or tag, and avoid excessive wrapping or padding. This reduces waste and saves resources.

- 5.** Water-activated tape – replace traditional plastic tape with the water-activated version, also known as gummed tape. This forms a strong bond when activated with water and can be easily recycled with cardboard.


- 6.** Sustainable labels and tags – look for options made from recycled paper or eco-friendly materials like organic cotton or bamboo. Avoid plastic-based materials or excessive coatings that hinder recyclability.

- 7.** Education and branding – educate customers about the eco-friendly

packaging choices you have made. Include information about the materials used and instructions for proper disposal or recycling. Emphasise your commitment to sustainability in your branding to create awareness and encourage eco-conscious behaviour.

- 8.** Partner with sustainable branding suppliers – collaborate with suppliers who specialise in eco-friendly packaging solutions. They can help you find the most suitable options for your specific needs and guide you through the process of transitioning to sustainable packaging. Remember, the key is to reduce waste, use recyclable or compostable materials, and choose packaging options with the least environmental impact. By implementing eco-friendly packaging solutions, you can contribute to the reduction of plastic waste and promote a more sustainable clothing industry.

**Happy Selling**

**Clive Allcott (The bag and Garment Guru) **

**porto**  
RECYCLED 

## ECO EXPRESS RANGE

IN STOCK NOW! 1-2 WEEK LEAD TIME



The Porto material is rPET, made by recycling old plastic bottles that would normally go to landfill, to then form a new soft, tactile, and flexible material.



pet plastic bottles    ground to chips    melted into yarn    woven to material

### Porto Eco Credentials

- rPET – made from recycled plastic bottles
- GRS certified rPET covers and linings
- Recycled card
- Paper recycled from post-consumer waste
- REACH Compliant
- Vegan friendly
- Stock colours vary. All products MTO in 10 colours

Ideal for deboss, foil blocking or full colour digital branding.

For more information and to download the price list scan here...



 SCAN ME



# Sustainable steps forward for the industry

The merchandise sector gathered to focus on the challenges ahead, hear inspiring advice, and consider its next steps on sustainability



**I**n the picturesque surroundings of Marlow in Buckinghamshire, the BPMA hosted its first Sustainability Conference to celebrate the launch of the StepForward Pledge for its members. Bringing together expert speakers, a conference workshop and collaborative discussions, members have hailed the event as the signal the industry has needed to drive the sustainability agenda forward.

## PLEDGING PROGRESS

With more than 30% of BPMA members now registered to take the StepForward Pledge, the Conference opened by celebrating over 15 different members who were the first who had completed the milestone for the year. Collecting a 'working towards' statement, Board Director Melissa Chevin and the BPMA's Carey Trevill explained what was involved and why every member should get involved.



## SUSTAINABILITY SELLS OUT

Attended by more than 130 delegates, the Conference sold out weeks before and had operated a waiting list for those still looking for a seat. Noting the keen interest, CEO Carey Trevill said: "The demand was high for seats and it just shows the importance we place in our businesses on sustainable best practices."

Revealing findings from an audit at the event which had benchmarked its







Sarah Duncan - author The Sustainable Business Book

members progress on Scope 1, 2 and 3, Trevill went on to say how finding out where the industry ranked itself was driving the BPMA's agenda and approach.

"We asked everyone to get involved in the audit with asked questions about how their businesses were doing on ESG (environmental, social, governance) goals linked to Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, the intent and action. The results were fascinating and showed our intention to take action was rated highly at 86% of those participating against the 'norm' of around 76%," she revealed.

### COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

After a generous networking breakfast, hosted by the twenty sponsors of the event, attendees took part in a deep dive workshop to look at how intention and action could be progressed. Run by speakers Kevin Duncan and Sarah Duncan, authors of *The Sustainable Business Book* and a range of bestselling business books, they presented the benchmark audit.

Citing high scores in intent to act but mixed results in how this intent would be represented in action, Kevin and Sarah engaged the audience in a question and answer session to explore the reaction to the results, and probe why action was necessary and the barriers many business may face.

Bringing this into the core of their session, the workshop saw groups working together to look at ideas and strategies the whole industry could adopt, where the Association could focus attention and efforts together with understanding how stakeholders could be engaged on the ESG journey.



Jonathan Withey - Planet Mark

## First Pledges

The following companies have taken the StepForward Pledge: Premier Print & Promotions, Juniper, Chilli Promotional Products, First Editions, Preseli, Galpeg, BagCo, Bio Laboratories, BDA, Sow Easy, Pinksheep Marketing, The Sourcer.com, Allwag Promotions, Simple Sourcing, Swag Box.



With collaborative ideas and inspiration in abundance, the BPMA was able to take away a range of ideas members could get behind to accelerate the pace of change. Every delegate was presented with a copy of *The Sustainable Business Book* to use in their organisations.

### MARKING TIME

New partners, Planet Mark joined the Conference to talk about the pace of change and the need to act. Speaker Jonathan Withey, Director of Transformation and ESG at Planet Mark, explained the reasons behind the drive for change now, not later and the role our industry has to play.

Discussing the newly formed partnership with the BPMA, Withey explained how certification works and why it matters. Citing important news such as the legalisation about carbon neutral claims were no longer possible and what this would mean for promotional merchandise, the BPMA announced to attendees the range of support and input which would be available from Planet Mark to members on this area and many others.

Picking up a range of interesting and far-reaching questions from members on their role and responsibility, Withey reported back just how impressed and inspired he was about the commitment of the industry to drive positive impacts and transformation. Noting the need for the industry to adopt a credible net zero transition strategy, he also pointed out the significant challenges ahead such as understanding and quantifying the carbon in the products



Bruce Bratley - First Mile

sold, educating and helping customers in choosing the right solutions to do more good while still promoting themselves. The industry also faces forthcoming legislations and policies, and needs to build authentic and transparent plans to focus on the most significant impacts.

Withey reminded attendees of the need to be on top of their marketing messages and to avoid greenwashing. Understanding that even with the best intentions, mistakes could be made so it was important every business took responsibility in this area.

Celebrating the engagement and momentum in the room, he noted the work ahead and how much Planet Mark was looking forward to working with the industry. 🌱



## PURPOSEFUL MERCHANDISE

The afternoon session kicked off with inspiring repurpose company, A Good Thing. Co-founder Richard Benwell explained to delegates the role unwanted and surplus goods can play in changing lives, and importantly avoiding landfill. Setting up A Good Thing several years ago, the company was born out of a distinct need for a local charity which was struggling with outdated laptops and matching with a company who had high spec laptops which had reached the end of their useful life in their business but were a perfect solution for a charity.

Working out that there had to be a great way to match those unwanted goods to a charity who could make use of them, A Good Thing was created. Presenting a range of examples where unused promotional merchandise had gone on to have considerable impacts with charities all over the country, Benwell explained the process was simple and it was free to try for any business.

Before the end of his talk, several members in the room had signed up and the organisation had already received offers of goods. Using the app, businesses simply create a profile and explain what goods are available and are matched with charities who could make use of them. Offering a discount for further use of the app beyond a first try, Benwell found the approach and enthusiasm in the room to indicate the desire to adopt a repurpose policy in the industry. A Good Thing had already made many new friends at the Conference.



## RECYCLING REALITY

Staying on the recycling trail, founder of waste aggregator First Mile's Bruce Bratley delivered a stark view on recycling promotional goods. Speaking in general terms about the typical types of recycling his business sees, he charged the members in the room to take more steps towards helping end users recycle the types of goods produced. Challenged by some attendees on the views shared, companies such as Senator, Bag Co and First Editions discussed the ways in which their companies had already

made huge strides to address the way their goods go back into the loop.

Reflecting on the session, Bratley said: "The climate emergency crisis needs a collective response and it was great to see so many competitors in the same room all working together to find solutions to climate problems. It was also encouraging to learn that a lot of good work has already happened. The BPMA and its members have a huge opportunity to promote the climate in addition to their customer's businesses and I left the conference feeling that this would happen."

## The Sponsors

**EasyPrint**  
WE PRINT IT BETTER

**senator**  
Extraordinary. Since 1920.

the **pen**house  
warehouse

**Snap**  
Pioneers in Digital Printing

**VICTORINOX**

**midocean**

**the bizz badge**

**SOW**  
easy

**CHX**  
PLANET POSITIVE PRODUCTS

**DTB**  
DIRECT TEXTILES + BAGS

**LISTA WOOD**  
PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

**xd connects**

**FIRST**  
EDITIONS  
innovation on tap

**bagco**  
BAGS OF CHOICE

**everything environmental**  
Sustainable promotions, naturally.

**KINGLY**

**B-LOONY**

**JUNIPER**  
TRADING LTD.

**mantis world**

**biolaboratories**  
exploring endless branding possibilities

**wcm+a**  
british branding





Colin McGregor-Patterson, Oasis Project speaks to Richard Benwell, A Good Thing

Looking forward to working with the industry to help progress the next stages, Board Director responsible for Sustainability Melissa Chevin said: "First Mile represent solutions for the industry across the UK and we're consulting with them to see how they can help the industry on its recycling journey."



## HOW THE INDUSTRY CAN HELP END USERS

An interview with Joe Sheppard, UK managing director of global event and experiential agency Elevate provided useful insights into why understanding the measurement and trace on B2B and B2C events was critical. Explaining the work which went into every event, Sheppard outlined the work already taking place in his side of the experiential industry and why it was so important.

"We measure every output, every journey – literally everything we do. It's hard work but getting us to a net zero outcome is not only important for us, it's important for every brand we work with to look at our carbon footprint and impact. Where we can reduce it, we will – even if this means buying differently and less," he said.

Interviewed by Carey Trevill, she asked a series of questions to look at what kind of buying behaviour he was now seeing.

"Less is definitely more... take clients like BMW. For every event, they would buy apparel and tell us to just get rid of it at the end of the event with no idea of where it would go – and that was to landfill mostly. Now, we see a different attitude and approach – better quality, reused frequently and recycled at the end of its useful life," he said.

Asking Joe about how the promotional merchandise industry could help companies like his, he simply stated: "We want and need better options to help us achieve sustainable goals and the information which goes with those goods."

When asked about the balance of profit versus ESG in his business, Sheppard concluded like every company they are there to make money and while the reality of this would always drive decisions, the top down approach meant sustainability drove much of the agenda and it was a company wide commitment.

# How can you show your customers your business is embracing sustainability?





# BPMA EDUCATION PROGRAMME

**Expert industry training**

from £200+VAT



**> Secure your place in July**

Written by the industry for the industry, your courses are online and available 24-7. The recognised standard in the promotional merchandise industry is accessible though BPMA membership only. Secure your course place now.

[bpma.co.uk](http://bpma.co.uk)





Want to be part of a network of pioneering businesses acting on sustainable best practice?




### MEMBERS DRIVING THE INDUSTRY AGENDA

The conference concluded with a panel and session to determine where the BPMA can drive the agenda. This brought together distributor AD Merchandise's commercial director Nick Green, Colette Jeanes, procurement & sustainability director for Prominate in the UK, and co-founder of Project Merchandise, Jeremy Benson, who spoke about their drivers for sustainable success.

Agreeing education in the industry was paramount, the panel discussed a range of approaches and ideas. Themes of transparency and responsibility were central to the views shared and the need to really get to grips with 'end of life' for products in our industry. All agreed every business needed a top-down commitment to really deliver commitment to the process every company has and will need to go through while recognising the path of continuous improvement ahead.

Wrapping up the Conference, the BPMA heard from members of the need for the Association to drive the agenda with full commitment from members which included clear directives on areas such as repurposing, recycling and measuring the impact of the industry.

Promising more to follow in the coming weeks and months, the BPMA has a clear agenda to lead the world in sustainable best practice for promotional merchandise. 

## What they thought

Delegates praised the conference for its content and focus.

*"It was great to see the increasing interest and efforts on sustainability across the whole membership. Insightful speakers....we hope to start making use of Good Thing in future as we are sure many other members will too."*

Steve Wickham, procurement director, **Geiger**

*"The Conference was well worth attending – some big strategic considerations for the industry ahead."*

Anthony Mills, head of marketing, **The Pen Warehouse**

*"A big thank you...I found it so informative and (pardon the pun) a step in the right direction for the industry that is so badly needed."*

Natalie Sharpe, head of marketing & commercial development, **USB2U**

*"Well structured and informative."*

Mark Turner chief operating officer, **Nadel**





# Take note

The buoyant demand for promotional writing instruments and stationery is being serviced by a creative and innovative sector

**L**ike the paperless office, the end of the pen might seem like an inevitability as we embrace ever more digital ways of working.

The reality is of course another matter with the humble writing instrument maintaining a presence on even the most uncluttered desk.

According to research company Skyquest, the global market for writing instruments was worth \$21.7bn in 2021 and will see healthy annual growth of 5.5% until 2030. That's a lot of pens.

In the promotional sector, pens were the second most popular product category noted by Sourcing City's annual survey of the UK and Ireland merchandise sector, behind only bags, and accounting for 10.3% of market share in 2022 – an increase from 8.8% the previous year.

The continuing popularity of writing instruments – and their associated notebooks and stationery, which were the ninth most popular

product in the Sourcing City research – can be put down to a number of factors.

Firstly, utility with 83% of people still using a ballpoint daily according to research by the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI).

Product suppliers have also responded to more general changes in buyer behaviour, not least in areas such as sustainability.

Innovation has also seen product development to cater for new and emerging markets.

## BPMA AWARD WINNERS

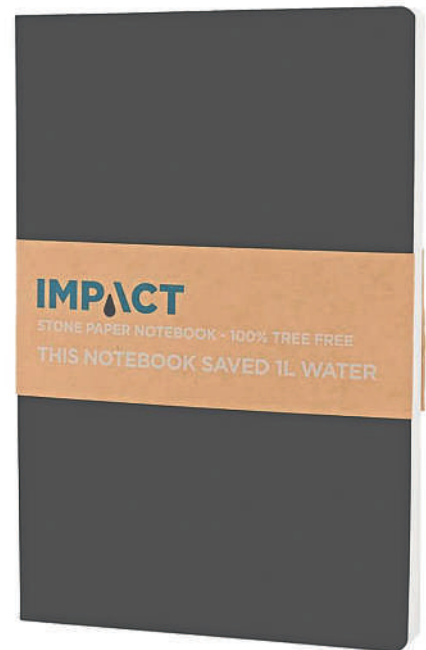
This and more was evident with the BPMA Product Awards this year, with innovative offerings competing to pick up with coveted trophies.

Picking up the Platinum prize, the prestigious Writing Instrument of the Year was named as PF Concept's Karst 5-pack 2B Woodless Graphite Pencils.

The woodless body can be sharpened for crisp line work or made blunt for expressive strokes or subtle shading. This versatility also saves the mess of traditional wood shavings.

Gold prize was picked up by Prodir's DS5 Shell, a pen that is made with 30% recycled used seashells to cut down on plastic usage. The natural material shapes the user's haptic and visual experience of the writing instrument, and is particularly resilient and very long-lasting. At the same time, it is the very embodiment of sustainability as half of the plastic that is used in the pen has itself been recycled or regenerated from internal waste.

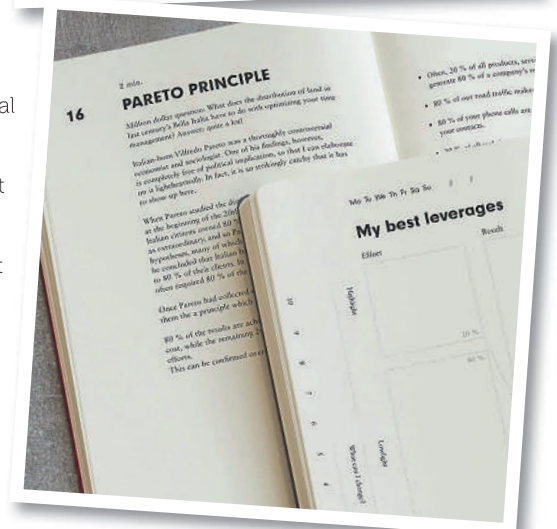
Silver was picked up by Pencom's Eternal Bamboo Pencil with Eraser, an eco-friendly option with a 99% graphite nib that can be used time and time again without wearing down. Supplied with a pre-printed eco message, 'made from bamboo'.



## STATIONERY

BPMA Product Awards were also made for the outstanding Stationery Products of the Year with Platinum going to Juniper's Wellness Journal Notebook which was developed as a tool to catalogue wellness, encouraging emotional wellbeing and a balance between work and homelife.

As well as a personal details page, it features a wellness foreword written by





Karin Blak, self-reflection pages, day planner pages, 16 sides of dot grid pages, and plain pages to record.

The Gold winner was XD Connects' Impact Soft Cover Stone Paper Notebook which is made from tree-free paper. Stone paper consists mainly of mineral powder (80%) bound with (20%) of non-toxic HDPE (a clean plastic).

Premier Impressions' Leuchtturm Change Journal picked up the Silver award.

The journal comprises 24 simple yet effective ways to increase your productivity and improve the way you organise yourself with best practices gleaned from various sources and condensed to the essentials, in order to understand, try out and document.

Taking only a few minutes each day, the methods help you to understand yourself better and organise yourself in an uncomplicated way, including digital detox and habits such as saving or saying 'no'.

## WHAT'S NEW IN WRITING?

According to Amber Houghton, head of Laltex's Pencom division, colour is having an increasing effect on the promotional industry with an increased demand for bespoke colour options.

Where once upon a time, promotional pens would be available in a limited range of standard colours to suit generic brand colours, as company branding has diversified, so too have the colours on offer in the promotional industry.

looking for statement, on-brand pens but don't have the budget or need for bulk orders," said Houghton.

## ECO INNOVATION

With eco-friendly items being at the top of most promo buyer's wish lists, writing instrument suppliers have responded accordingly.

The Super Clip Origin sustainable ballpoint pen from BIC Graphic Europe was made available in May in a new, light colour called 'Sand'. The Super Clip Origin is already available in the 'Natural' colour.

BIC claims the unique thing about the Super Clip Origin ballpoint pens is that they are made from 100% biologically sourced material made from natural polymers without any petroleum or fossil energy – with the exception of the cartridge.

The used ingredients are organic castor oil, sawdust from sustainably managed European forests and talc mined in Europe. In addition, the Super Clip Origin is manufactured and printed in Europe.

Another European supplier, Senator, has long been known for its sustainable product base, and its Nature Plus Bio Ball Pen was Highly Commended in the BPMA Product Awards sustainable product of the year.

Made of bioplastic, it is a genuinely biodegradable ballpen made from renewable

resources, and is fitted with large capacity Magic Flow refill to ensure that the pen has a long life in use.

Senator's Bio range, ensures that the visible parts of its Nature Plus, Skeye Bio and the barrel of its Liberty Bio and Super Hit Bio pens are made from a bioplastic which is based on PLA, derived from renewable and non-finite sugar cane.



## DON'T FORGET METAL

It's not just plastic that is sustainable.

Pencom's Coffee Ball Pen is made from recycled coffee grind waste and Virtuo Allum, made from recycled aluminium cans are other great examples of everyday waste being transformed into a useful promotional product that can be reused time and time again.



Pencom offers several pens that are available in upwards of 15 colours such as best-sellers Koda Colour and Beck Ball Pen, which comes in 20 colours.

The exclusive range by Klio-Eterna offers even more colour variation thanks to the mix and match service offered across all models in the German made pen collection that allows the customer to configure up to five components in up to 14 different colours.

"We've seen an increased demand for on trend colours such as midnight blue and grey. We've also noticed more enquiries for bespoke, Pantone matched pens. To accommodate this, Pencom has expanded the colour range of many of our best-selling lines, introduced a Pantone matching option for many existing pens (larger MOQs apply) and have sourced the brand new Custom Colour Ball Pen that can be produced in any colour from just 1,000 pieces. This is a real win for any company



Your Brand Ambassador

NEW!

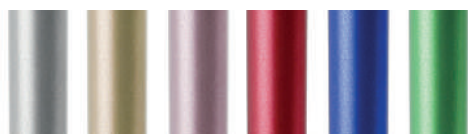
Introducing the  
**BIC® Super Clip**  
range of products.

**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% energy coming from renewable sources and all manufactured and printed in BIC factories for a low impact carbon footprint. Isn't it Super?

GLACÉ



SOFT



ADVANCE



Silver

Refillable



Made  
in Europe



Manufactured and  
printed in BIC factories



BIC Graphic factory powered  
by 100% energy coming from  
renewable sources



NEW  
COLOUR  
SAND

BIC® SUPER CLIP ORIGIN

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

Imagine. Ready? Great: imagine the famous BIC® Super Clip made from natural raw materials like sawdust, 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 BIOBASED



**Biobased  
castor oil**



**Sawdust**  
From sustainably managed  
European forests



**Talc**  
Mined in  
Europe

**ecolutions®**

\*Barrel and Clip 100% bio-based.

**Think BIC**  
[www.bicgraphic.com](http://www.bicgraphic.com)





While RPET, wheat, card and bamboo are some of the more popular materials on offer, the eco credentials of metal pens are often overlooked, but this robust, reusable material can be used for years without ever needing to be replaced. Stainless steel and aluminium are both infinitely recycled so when your pen does come to the end of its life, simply purchase ink refills or recycle to see it start its journey all over again.

## MULTIFUNCTION PENS

You can also get more out of your promotional writing instrument with a

multifunction pen, which have as many as six functions. Pencom's System Tool and Systemo 6in1 pens include a stylus, spirit level, and two types of screwdrivers. There are also a wide range of 2in1 smart stylus pens on offer.

With over 92% of adults in the UK now owning a smartphone, pens with a soft touch stylus have become a staple offering



of the promotional pen range. They're great for smartphones and tablets, but they're also a practical solution in preventing the spread of germs on public touch screens and buttons found on ATM machines and elevators. **PM**

## Still room for paper says Castelli

Since the pandemic, companies have realised the need for some middle ground for the future of work, allowing individuals to balance between home and office life. Castelli believes that once individuals have created their own personal space, they will have everything they need to fulfil a creative day's work.

Despite the overwhelming rapid digital world we now live in, there is still a desire for the physical. Castelli also notes a desire for recycled and reused products, as well as something different combining Italian flair, practicality, and ethically sourced materials.

Ecological impact is a key focus at Castelli which continues to review the sustainable natural products and services it offers as well as its own internal recycling, waste management and energy efficiency. This market need grows year on year and all Castelli products feature FSC certified paper.

By making an ethical 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.

The Appeel notebook uses parts of apples that have traditionally been discarded. The ruled, ivory tinted apple paper within Appeel products is crafted using 100% green hydroelectric energy and derives from apple peel, vegetable fibres and FSC certified sustainable pulp, sourced from sustainable forests,

which are carefully curated to be fully compostable.

Castelli also has a range of complementary pens made from non-toxic plastics and certified high-quality material ensuring they last and reflect care for the environment.

The Icon Pure Recycled pens are made from 100% derived post-consumer products and available in a range of six sophisticated colours.





# RECOGNISING THE BEST

Suppliers and distributors were given their just desserts at the most recent industry awards celebration

**T**he PAGE group hosted its annual conference, exhibition and awards dinner at the Delta Warwick Hotel on 15 June.

During the tabletop exhibition in the afternoon more than 50 suppliers took full advantage, networking with PAGE members. The exhibition had to be brought to an end at 17:30 so that the room could be transformed to the dining room.

## Remembering George

Due to the sad passing of industry icon George Hayward, the awards dinner took on a more commemorative tone this year. Before dinner, his son Brian said a

few heartfelt sentiments and recollections about George to a standing ovation. These thoughts were later echoed by LSi distributor Lloyd Simpson, who spoke fondly of George and remarked on how he shall be missed. A champagne toast was raised in George's name.

All the awards presented at the conference recognise an exemplar level of quality, service, and efficiency from both distributors and suppliers.

## Industry recognition

Scores for supplier service and efficiency are taken from the PAGE members' monthly and annual surveys to determine the winners. The winners of the silver awards were: Preseli, The Umbrella Company and Laltex. The winner for the third year in a row of the Gold Supplier

of the Year Award was WCM+A Ltd.

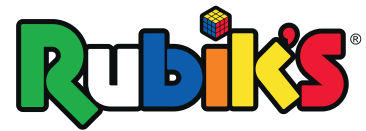
The winners of the distributors silver awards were: BH1, Navillus and Allwag and the winners of the gold awards were: Boosters, Steel City and LSi.

After the awards were given out, guests enjoyed a humorous performance from local comedian Matt Bragg, which brought some light-hearted jest to the evening, followed by the musical talents of The Haze Band who were very well received by all and ended the night on a high.

Networking continued in the bar into the small hours.

The PAGE Group was set up in 1990 and offers membership to an exclusive group of distributors, which is restricted to 40 members. PAGE offers an industry leading printed and online catalogue along with a complete software solution.





# THE ORIGINAL



## THE ORIGINAL RUBIK'S® CUBE:

The very smart gift, from very smart brands, for very smart customers.

Inspiration, samples and references: [www.rubiksgift.com](http://www.rubiksgift.com)



RUBIK'S TM & © 2023 Spin Master Toys UK Limited, used under license. All right reserved



The classic cube is available with one side branded from UK stock in minimums as low as 50 pieces.

Six side branded cubes & the full Rubik's promotional range available made to order.

UK Sales: [www.preseli.biz](http://www.preseli.biz)  
E-mail: [rubiks@preseli.biz](mailto:rubiks@preseli.biz)





# SMITH JOINS ALLWAG TO DIRECT GROWTH

Allwag Promotions is delighted to welcome Graeme Smith to the team as its new commercial director.

**A**s newly appointed commercial director of the Essex-based distributor, he will be responsible for the development of new and existing client relationships, partnerships and growth strategy.

Smith will also oversee a range of strategies to enhance Allwag's existing service offering and future sustainable merchandise and print initiatives, in line with the company vision.

With more than 25 years' experience in the industry, most recently as managing director of the Cyan Group, Smith has extensive knowledge and experience, creative flair and passion for progressing sustainability.

He has a passion for driving standards and drawing on his experience from his time in professional sport has worked alongside some of the world's more prestigious brands in the sporting, healthcare and automotive sectors.

Angela Wagstaff, managing director of Allwag Promotions said: "Graeme has a fantastic reputation within both print and promo

merchandise industries and will be instrumental in driving our vision for the future forward. More importantly, there is a really strong match with our values and culture, which has always been incredibly important to our business. Appointing Graeme to this new role demonstrates our commitment to developing our fabulous team and ambitions for future growth as he becomes an integral part of the business."

Smith added: "I am thrilled to be joining Allwag Promotions. I look forward to collaborating with the talented team to drive strategic growth. I have long admired the Allwag culture and their commitment to the environment, creativity, and customer satisfaction which for me sets them apart. I look forward to sharing my knowledge and experience as well as learning new ways of working to the benefit of our clients."



## Mills brings marketing drive to Snap and TPW

Snap Products and The Pen Warehouse have appointed Anthony Mills as their new marketing manager, leading a team of six and spearheading marketing strategies and initiatives to drive business and brand growth.

Originally from New Zealand, Mills has a wealth of experience in marketing leadership, bringing a strong track record of success in guiding teams and implementing strategies to achieve business objectives.

His background includes senior marketing and commercial roles in corporations such as Heinz, Kellogg's, and Heineken, as well as working with smaller SMEs, both in B2C and B2B sectors.



**EVOXX DUO POLISHED RECYCLED & LIBERTY MATT RECYCLED**

## TWO NEW CLIMATE FRIENDS.

- Plastic pens made from recycled material
- Produced with CO<sub>2</sub> neutral green energy in our climate neutral plant in Germany
- High class durable senator® magic flow refill
- Our refill promise : up to 5 years of writing power, up to 5 km writing length
- Free refill available at [refills.senator.com](https://refills.senator.com)

# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Get started on your sustainability journey with some quick wins. **Jonathan Withey explains how**



**S**ustainability has rapidly changed from a 'nice to have' for organisations to a business imperative.

By 2050, all UK organisations must be net zero carbon, regardless of their size but surveys show that less than one-third currently have net zero strategies in place.

Planet Mark has been working with businesses of all sizes to embrace sustainability, reduce their carbon footprint and unlock the passion of their employees since 2013. In the first half of 2022, Planet Mark members saved 38,708 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Here are some of our tips for organisations just starting out on their sustainability journey:

## You can't manage what you don't measure

Large organisations are required to publicly disclose emissions data for various regulatory schemes and in April this year, the UK Climate-Related Financial Disclosures became mandatory for large organisations. Now, these regulatory impacts are trickling down supply chains to smaller organisations.

Calculating a carbon footprint is a cornerstone of any successful sustainability policy and is the first step to continued reduction in emissions.

A carbon footprint is the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions caused directly, or indirectly, by an individual, business or organisation, item or event, typically expressed as a carbon dioxide

(CO<sub>2</sub>e) equivalent. This helps with comparisons and benchmarking, as well as making the footprint easier to measure, reduce, and communicate.

## Set a science-based target

The Paris Agreement, a binding agreement adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, brings all nations into a common cause – limiting global warming to well-below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C.

Science-based targets are a way for business to demonstrate leadership in their industry, stay at the forefront of social responsibility and demonstrate to stakeholders that the business is serious about climate action.

## Engage your employees

Organising a progressive and effective green team or group of sustainability champions can be one of the most empowering and significant initiatives on your sustainability journey.

If the motivation and passion is there, your sustainability champions team can be a great way to expand your business network, foster inter-departmental collaboration and effect high-level change.

## Embrace quick wins

Some aspects of sustainability take longer to implement, but you can reduce your business' emissions fast

by switching to online meetings, or promoting transport incentives such as the Cycling to Work scheme, for example.

Infrastructure changes across your business can result in significant, but low cost improvements in operational energy, water and waste efficiencies across your business.

## Share your challenges and opportunities

In the lead up to COP26, David Attenborough said that climate action was as much of a "communications challenge" as it was a science or technological one.

Being able to communicate progress with authenticity and confidence can help your business stand out from competitors, with consumers increasingly prepared to spend more on sustainable products and services.

Communicating your sustainability achievements and goals can also help to attract and retain talent.

Honest and transparent communications will resonate with customers and stakeholders. It is ok to disclose if you haven't met your targets if you share why and lessons learnt.

The race against climate change is one we must all win. Communicating your progress is not only helpful internally but it can support and encourage other organisations to get started too.

Planet Mark's free toolkits are designed to help organisations take the first steps in measuring the carbon emissions associated with five key areas: energy, water, waste, procurement and travel. You can download them at [planetmark.com/insights-resources/guides/](https://planetmark.com/insights-resources/guides/)

**Jonathan Withey is director of transformation and ESG at Planet Mark**





# 5 WAYS TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY

Look to the PLANET for a practical guide to getting started on your sustainable journey, **say Kevin Duncan and Sarah Duncan**

**I**t's easy to feel overwhelmed by the scale of the challenge when contemplating what you can do to make your business more sustainable, but there are things that you can do.

Here are five practical things that any business can do over the next few weeks to kickstart their sustainability journey – and why they matter.

## 1. Panic

Confront the issues directly. Start by putting your business under the sustainability spotlight and getting everyone to realise that they need to put the subject at the top of the agenda. Take the PLANET System free ESG self-audit to discover where you are today and what you don't know.

Output: Current status report.

## 2. Learn

Get properly informed. It is important to fill in your gaps in knowledge: what do you need to learn about and understand before you formulate a full plan? First, get a handle on your current carbon emissions – starting simply with your gas, electricity and company car fuel – what is known as Scope 1 & 2.

Now you have a baseline you can start thinking about ways to reduce and switch to renewable sources. Also find out what is really important to your stakeholders by surveying your employees and customers, and look at your industry: who is leading the way and what are they doing?

Output: Scope 1 & 2 emission data, employee survey, customer survey, industry best practices.

## 3. Agree

Decide your strategic direction. Then comes one of the hardest parts: getting everyone to agree. It is essential to have a robust board-level conversation about the issues. It is crucial that a strategic direction is clearly

decided upon, without any room for misunderstanding, and that everyone signs up to it. There should be no artificial harmony in these conversations.

Output: Initial plan of action.

## 4. Navigate

Overcome obstacles. It is important to work out what all the obstacles to progress are. Be realistic and don't forget the S in ESG. Sustainability is not just about environmental issues. Remember employees, customers, community and charity.

Output: List of potential pitfalls and obstacles with possible solutions.


## 5. Enact

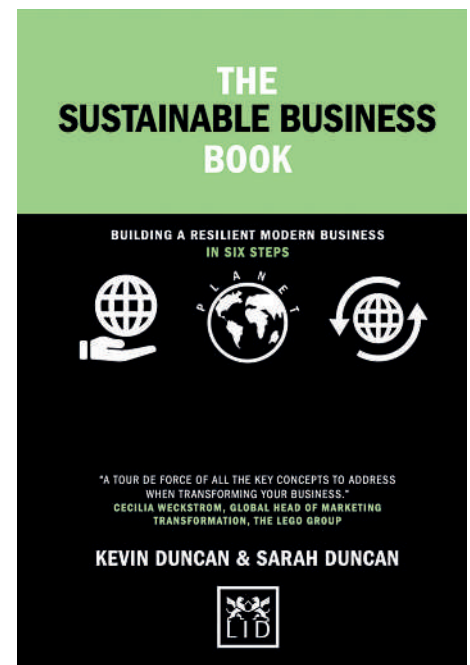
Get stuff done. This is often easier said than done. For a company to truly embed sustainable thinking, it needs to become part of the core or culture of the business, not just a side project. To get started straightaway, identify the maximum return you can generate for the minimum effort, leading to a series of quick wins.

Output: Quick wins to get on with.

The last stage of the PLANET system is Tell. Avoid making public claims about any sustainability issues until you have worked through the five points

above, otherwise you may be falling into the easy trap of greenwashing.

Kevin and Sarah Duncan are authors of *The Sustainable Business Book*. Useful sustainability tools can be found at [sustainablebusinessbook.com](https://sustainablebusinessbook.com) 



BASIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXAMPLE	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL – SCOPE 1+2</b>	
Commit to a net zero (SBT aligned) carbon reduction programme relating to Scope 1+2	
Switch to a green energy supplier in all business operations	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL – SCOPE 3</b>	
Establish a plan to start calculating Scope 3 emissions data	
Establish a written water efficiency policy	
<b>SOCIAL IMPACT – EMPLOYEES</b>	
Conduct a pay equity analysis	
Survey employees to establish their views and concerns regarding environmental and societal issues	
<b>SOCIAL IMPACT – CUSTOMERS</b>	
Carry out competitor research on ESG/sustainability	
Review how environmental and social initiatives and credentials are communicated to customers	
<b>SOCIAL IMPACT – COMMUNITY</b>	
Agree a minimum percentage of profit or revenue to commit to charity on an annual basis	
Establish a programme to support local apprenticeships	
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	
Review organization's mission (vision, values and purpose) and ensure ESG plays a central role	
Include ESG as fixed item at all board or senior leadership meetings	

FIGURE 20 – Basic Improvement Plan



# WHO'S ALL GOING ON A HYBRID HOLIDAY?

Summer's here so it's time to put your feet up... and work. **Matt Pluckrose** examines how technology can aid our changing work practices



**W**ith full-time office work a distant memory for many businesses around the world, the opportunities to combine work with travel have never been so widespread. As a result, we're seeing more and more hybrid and nomadic workers jump on an emerging trend that's being referred to as the 'hybrid holiday'.

In a nutshell, this involves individuals adding a number of remote working days on to their holiday to maximise their time away. In fact, a recent survey from Virgin Media has revealed that almost a third (27%) of hybrid UK workers are planning to work remotely from Europe this year with just over three-quarters (76%) of those individuals considering a hybrid holiday.

## STAY CONNECTED

Like many elements of flexible and remote working, hybrid holidays have their pros and cons. While the blurred lines between work and leisure allow for much more flexibility and, in theory, a better work-life balance, they can also make it increasingly hard to set healthy boundaries and fully unwind – which is vital for keeping engaged, productive and most importantly, happy and healthy. So let's explore this trend and see how our industry can help to equip and promote brand reinforcement on the hybrid holiday.

The essential to any remote working involves staying connected and making sure your communication devices are charged, protected and connected to the world. This provides marketers' with numerous products for branding such as backpacks some with built in solar panels for anywhere charging, Apple AirTags to make sure you don't lose your valuable IT equipment, even built in speakers for taking the beat with you and of course anti-theft features like hidden zips.

## ON A CHARGE

Staying charged is critical and the growth of Fast (PD) large capacity power banks up to and over 20,000 mAh means you can charge your laptop and everything else your family has taken away with them to stay entertained. Coupled with these super power banks are ultra-fast charging cables (using USB-C) which mean a complete recharge of a dead phone battery in less than 30 minutes.

Tech on the move would also of course not be complete without a wireless and Bluetooth mouse, portable laptop stands and even micro foldable second LED screens that simply connect to your laptop or tablet giving more visible space.



## DIAL DOWN THE NOISE

Perhaps one of the key items though is a pair of good quality wireless headphones or earbuds with Active or Environmental noise cancelling built in which helps to enhance those calls despite loud and noisy environments such as the beach or poolside.

There is a wide array of these items now available from low cost to super high end, all of which can be branded making sure your clients' brand stays in view. Many also have sustainable qualities which is now regarded as a 'must' by many companies.

Don't forget hydration to stay mentally sharp during your hybrid holiday. Tech has entered this area too with some smart connected water bottles that remind you to drink and even glow different colours to warn you when you might be getting dehydrated.

## RECYCLED MATERIAL

Sustainability is of course paramount in our sector and the growing trend for recycled materials in our gadgets and tech such as Ocean Bound recycled plastic that helps to stop the endless plastic waste into the ocean will become more popular over the coming months and years. Leaders in this area are also contributing to global charities such as Plastic Bank who with every purchase not only prevent waste entering the ocean but also support local communities that carry out this important work.



One such example is the Ocean Bottle range which is an excellent example of a social cause with commercial venture. Many suppliers are recognising this with others adapting best-selling items like charge cables, power banks and wireless chargers to use this resource of Ocean Bound Plastic, such as the Ocean Octopus.

So the world has changed forever following the pandemic with working practices unlikely to ever be the same. It's so important therefore for our industry to be aware of this and look for opportunities to remind, show and explain how tech items can match the demand for this new way of working.

**Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas **



# TRIPLE CROWN

Three Briman companies are showing why buying British made is a 'win-win'

**B**uying British-made products is no longer a 'heart-over-head' decision – there are lots of solid reasons why buying British is both good for business and good for the planet.

This is the clear message from Briman, the British manufacturing group supported by the BPMA. Briman companies are BPMA accredited and verified members.

A 2021 'Buying British' survey conducted in partnership with One Poll which questioned 1,000 purchasing and procurement decision makers at British companies revealed that buying British remains a priority for British businesses:

- 91% of respondents agreed it was important to buy British-made products
- 82% would pay more for British goods
- 87% of buyers at British companies considered where something was made before purchase
- 54% were more likely to buy a product when seeing a British flag on packaging or marketing materials

Here's how three Briman members have made huge strides with their businesses by focusing on both UK production and sustainability.



## Investing in the future

First Editions is a leading British manufacturer of reusable promotional drinkware and has 'reshored' all but one of its product SKUs to the UK.

The company has invested heavily in sustainable solutions too, including moving to 100% renewable energy. By comparison, major manufacturing bases such as China and India still generate their energy using more than 70% fossil fuels. This has been a vital part of First Editions' focus on its overall product carbon footprint.

To that end, the factory employs a 'closed loop' production process and the company deliberately chooses material grades which have a low environmental impact. In addition, its focus on reusable bottles is good for the environment in all the ways that single use plastic bottles are not. A refillable water bottle has a smaller carbon footprint per use and reduces the single-use plastic burden on landfills and oceans.

First Editions has also invested in energy-efficient machinery, using sustainable packaging with no single-use plastics and all-recycled card for boxes, has increased insulation of all its buildings, upgraded its entire lighting to energy-efficient LEDs and reduced transport miles.

The company's latest sustainable product is the LOOP bottle, made from recycled plastic milk containers. The reusable bottles are made in

the UK from 100% post-consumer waste and are food grade-assured, BPA-free and dishwasher-safe. The LOOP is fully customisable and presented in recyclable packaging.

## A sweet 'step change' moment

The Sweet People originally began trading as Liquid Lens, a company specialising in high quality packaging solutions and utilising the then very popular technique of epoxy dome branding on plastic pots containing sweets and confectionery.

Identifying a shift in the tastes and demands of its customers, the company rebranded as The Sweet People in 2019 and quickly set about reducing the use of plastic containers and epoxy dome branding in favour of printable card boxes made from sustainable organic and recyclable materials.

The move was a

'step change' moment for the business and enabled it to place itself at the forefront of sustainable promotional merchandise in the UK.

The company has continued to make significant improvements in its sustainability profile, including a recent upgrade of its flow-wrapped, paper-based packs for bags of mints, jelly beans, Skittles and chocolate bars.

This has not just been a superficial change, either. In 2019, The Sweet People made a major investment in building its own manufacturing plant in Leighton Buzzard. This has enabled more and



**LANYARD**  
U.K. LANYARD MAKERS LTD.

Branded Full Colour  
**Lanyards**

**UK MADE & ZERO  
AIR MILES**

All available as  
quickly as next day.

No duty, VAT or  
exchange rate  
surprises when  
you buy British!

[www.uklanyardmakers.co.uk](http://www.uklanyardmakers.co.uk)

01483 200768 | [sales@uklanyardmakers.co.uk](mailto:sales@uklanyardmakers.co.uk)





## Briman Voice

more items to be completely manufactured in the UK and the facility is also being offered as an option for other suppliers to bulk ship or manufacture their own goods.

The same philosophy has also been applied to the recent soft launch of a new European-based fulfilment solution. This will benefit customers in both mainland Europe and the Irish Republic with faster, simpler fulfilment and again reduce the carbon footprint associated with shipping these orders from a UK facility.

Away from product, The Sweet People also recently appointed a compliance officer, whose role, along with ensuring adherence to the various food safety and hygiene certificates, will include implementing initiatives to help capture and offset the carbon footprint from the company's operational activities.

### A commitment to the planet

Juniper is another well-established name on the promotional products scene and over the past five years, the company has pivoted its business model in two significant ways.

Firstly, it has replaced many of its offerings with new, sustainable alternatives mainly manufactured from recycled materials.

Secondly, in common with the other two companies featured here, Juniper has steadily increased the proportion of products it manufactures in the UK.



It also took the difficult decision to end screen printing and invested further in digital printing which doesn't generate waste water and uses fewer inks. The print quality is better as well.

Juniper has also removed generic plastic from all of its packaging and will now only use single-use plastic if a client – against advice – absolutely demands it.

Like others, the company has moved over to 100% renewable electricity. It has also reduced waste to landfill down to just 5%, with a target of eliminating this entirely within five years.

Juniper is not complacent. Recognising the need to go even further, the company has begun work on Scope 1 and 2 of its carbon footprint project and is also discontinuing lines where the materials no


longer meet its sustainability standards.

This commitment is also reflected in pricing. The gap in costs between PU and Juniper's award-winning COMO and PORTO rPET products is falling fast and the company is aiming to offer the sustainable materials at identical cost by the end of the year.


### Good for you

This commitment to sustainability and UK production is not only good for the companies involved but also for the businesses buying from them.

Many large businesses and public sector organisations are focusing more and more on a product's sustainability credentials when buying, so choosing UK-produced greener alternatives can help you win new business, as well as improving your company's reputation among staff, customers and the wider public.

In the process, you'll be helping to save precious natural resources, reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill and supporting the UK economy and jobs. Definitely a 'win-win' for everyone involved. 

## Premium Brand Supplier Now Delivering into Europe

 Columbia

 berghaus

THE  
NORTH  
FACE

finisterre

 Rab

 STORMTECH

patagonia

Buff

 FJALL  
RAVEN

theoutdoorscompany.co.uk | sales@theoutdoorscompany.co.uk | 01270 757890

THE  
OUTDOORS  
COMPANY





*StepForward*  
**PLEDGE**

# Take an important step forward to a more sustainable future

Our industry is changing the way we work and the work we make. To support and represent the steps our members are taking on their sustainable journey, every BPMA member can now take the **StepForward Pledge** as part of their membership.

Find out more at  
[bpma.co.uk/StepForward-Pledge](https://bpma.co.uk/StepForward-Pledge)

The StepForward Pledge is open to all BPMA members and is a voluntary programme for all current members. Visit website to see criteria. All new members applying from June 2023 will be required to take the Pledge. All current members will be required to take the Pledge from June 2024.



# WHEN IS IT THE RIGHT TIME TO SELL YOUR BUSINESS?

There are many reasons why a business founder may look to sell, says Paul Green

**A**s a part or sole owner of a business, the thought of selling your 'baby' one day must have crossed your mind on several occasions. This may have arisen for a variety of reasons, some pleasant and some less so.

Various books about starting a business address the importance of knowing when to sell, commonly referred to as an 'exit strategy'. This concept contrasts with the view that selling is an emotional one and that it should be viewed purely on commercial terms.

Private equity companies generally consider acquisitions on a 5-year basis; improve the profitability during the period and then move it on at a substantial profit. Such transactions are usually common with large corporates and less so in the small business sector.

## MOTIVATION TO MOVE

More often than not, the thought of selling is triggered by individual circumstances, whether that be a desire to retire or for less fortunate motivations, such as divorce or shareholder disagreements. Therefore, a sale is as much about 'why' as about 'when'. The best-case scenario is that someone approaches and offers you such a good deal that you find it hard to turn it down and you seek to act quickly to make it happen. Unfortunately, such opportunities are rare and more often than not, it is the seller who has the over-inflated view of the value which prevents the sale from going ahead.

The subject of what your business is worth is worth future discussion.

## NEW CHALLENGES

There may be aspects of the business that you no longer enjoy doing and the challenges you once thrived on no longer excite you. This can be a result of changes in the marketplace where competition has increased and you feel that the business can only grow with others involved who have the necessary skills and resources, such as accreditations and finances, to take the business to the next level. This view is perfectly justifiable but finding the right company to take it to the next level can be a challenge.

## BALANCING ACT

Managing a business and employing people is both time consuming and absorbing and the desire to find a better work/life balance may mean that the only way to reduce the daily stress levels is to sell. This may not need to be the case and serious consideration should be given to such decisions as once the exit route is taken, restrictive covenants as part of the sale agreement, may well make it difficult to re-enter the industry at a later date.

## THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

The choice to sell might be down to a new business opportunity which is considered more exciting, and which needs funding to get it off the ground. Again, a very justifiable reason to sell, but clearly an important decision to get right about the prospects of

the new business. Such decisions can be made out of boredom about the existing business, which could possibly thrive even more with a bit of reorganisation and fresh innovation. As the saying goes, better the business you know than the one that you don't.

There is no doubt that planning the 'exit route' well ahead is important and the best time to do this is when there is no real pressure to actually sell, and this in turn improves your negotiating position. Often the idea of selling sounds better than the actual reality and the financial rewards may not be regarded as sufficient compensation at a later date.

Asking the right questions and having a clear vision of why you are selling can often direct you to when the right time is to sell. After all, why let someone else capitalise on all your hard work if an alternative solution may give you a far better outcome?

**Paul Green is managing director of the Galpeg Network which provides backoffice solutions for promotional merchandise businesses <sup>PM</sup>**





# COUNTING SUCCESS

It pays to keep count of the key numbers that affect your business, says **Mike Collins**



**I**t won't surprise you to know that here at Direct Route/Account Assyst we love numbers.

Every day we're analysing, monitoring and recovering numbers on behalf of our clients, all in the process of ensuring risk is managed, up to maximising the return of their cashflow.

Here's some numbers to point out that now, more than ever it is sensible to have the correct processes and procedures in place to enable you to be a successful business.

## 68%

A recent survey by Barclays stated that just over two-thirds of all SME businesses have experienced a late paying invoice within the last twelve months. This is an increase on 2021, where late payment was recorded at running at around 60%, indicating that the problem of late payment is continuing to get worse.

One way to maximise the return of unpaid invoices is to have an automated chase system in place that takes away the anxiety, stress and pressure of recovering monies.

BPMA members have this ability at their fingertips.

## 1 IN 5

Government studies showed that 20% or one in five of each business insolvency was as a direct result of those companies not being paid their overdue invoices. Putting it simply, 20% of all business closure are simply because they didn't recover their hard-earned monies.

Ensuring that you firstly accurately rate the risk of your new customers and then continue to monitor changes in risk levels, ensures you are aware of any possible insolvency risks.

BPMA members have this ability at their fingertips.

## £21BN

Believe it or not but this eye-watering amount of money is the amount lost or written off through the non-payment of invoices. The majority of this can be brought about through a debtor company closing down prior to payment but in any event, monies of this value would be better served being in the pockets of hard-working businesses.

Having the ability to escalate a non-paying invoice above and beyond the level of other creditors is one way to ensure that your invoice is prioritised over other creditors demanding their money too.

BPMA members have this ability at their fingertips.

## MEMBERS

If you're a BPMA member we can instantly help with organising and processing your account opening and credit control functions. Simply contact us to activate your supported and substantially funded membership benefit package.

If you are not yet a member of the BPMA, don't worry – get in touch with us anyway. We will still be able to help you with whatever credit management needs you have. We're here to support the promotional goods industry generally, so feel free to discuss with us what steps you may need to take in order to avoid becoming just another statistic.

**Mike Collins is managing director of Direct Route/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 Golf Day 2023

Sunshine in June with a single rain shower, the golf gods were smiling again on those industry professionals gathered for the BPMA Golf Day. The Nottinghamshire Golf and Country Club's Signature and Championship courses were for the second year running host to the event, with BPMA Vice-Chair and DTB's commercial director Clive Allcott alongside BPMA's Membership Director Tom Robey hosting industry professional teams.

Open to the industry and always a well-attended day, on 22nd June hosted 36 golfers with a range of handicaps taking part on the 9-hole Championship Course plus The Signature Course for 18 holes. Gathering for a briefing in the venue's conservatory, players collected their golf packs sponsored by Desktop Ideas,



XD Connects and Juniper Products.

Together with an obligatory Beat the Pro competition, a very competitive and enjoyable day was had by all. Concluding with a dinner at the end of the event, Allcott and Robey congratulated all the day's winners with trophies kindly supplied by WCM+A, Crystal Galleries and Laser Crystal.

### WINNERS

- Nearest the Pin 3rd Hole: **Chris Keel (Uncommon)**
- Nearest the Pin 6th Hole: **Billy Hussain (Alvstone)**
- Nearest the Pin 16th Hole: **Graham Leach (Impress Ipswich)**
- Nearest the Pin 17th Hole: **Marc Read (Involution)**
- Longest Drive: **Marc Read (Involution)**
- Winners of the 9-hole BPMA Scramble: **Team Desktop Ideas**



- Runners-Up in the 4-Ball Better Ball: **Team Desktop Ideas**
- Winner in the 4-Ball Better Ball: **Team Alvstone**
- Wooden Spoon: **Elliot Sampson (Heartlands Business Gifts)**
- Individual champion: **Marc Read (Involution)**
- Individual runner up: **Graham Leach (Impress Ipswich)**



## Factory visit is a learning experience for distributors

The BPMA recently organised a highly successful factory visit as part of its Education Programme to Juniper Products in Wellingborough, welcoming attendees from several BPMA distributor companies. The visit offered participants a unique opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills as part of their TPM (Trained in Promotional Merchandise) and CPM (Certified in Promotional Merchandise) courses.

Designed to provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of Juniper's production processes, attendees were awarded course credits for their participation, contributing to their overall course progress. The event featured a diverse agenda, covering key topics such as the history of Juniper Products, materials overview, group tour, artwork and branding methods, and notebook configuration options.

The history of Juniper shed light on the heritage and evolution of a leading UK based promotional merchandise supplier,

providing attendees with insights into the industry's growth and innovation. Learners gained a deeper appreciation for the significance and impact of the company's product ranges on brand visibility and customer engagement.

An overview on materials used served as a valuable learning experience, showcasing the wide array of materials used in the production of Juniper's products. Attendees gained first-hand knowledge of the different materials and their unique characteristics, allowing them to make informed decisions when selecting promotional products for clients.

A highlight was the group tour, where participants had the opportunity to witness Juniper's manufacturing processes first-hand. Guided by Andrew Langley, learners observed the various stages involved in production, from initial design concepts to final product assembly. This immersive experience provided valuable insights into the meticulous attention to detail and quality control measures required to create

high-quality notebooks.

The group also explored the creative aspects of promotional merchandise, delving into different branding techniques and customisation options available.

The BPMA Education Programme Juniper Products factory visit proved to be a resounding success, fostering an engaging and educational environment for participants from BPMA distributor companies. Through a hands-on experience, learners gained practical knowledge and valuable industry insights, equipping them with the tools to excel in their TPM and CPM courses.

Andrew Langley, managing director at Juniper Products and BPMA Board Director, said: "We are delighted with the success of the factory visit and the positive impact it had on our attendees. It was a unique opportunity for learners to expand their knowledge and skills. We look forward to organising more factory visits that contribute to the professional growth of our members."





## International merchandise trade bodies gather

In May, heads of the BPMA, PPAI, APPA and PPPC gathered to discuss collective goals across the globe for promotional merchandise. Hosted at the BPMA's offices at Fetcham Park, CEO Carey Trevill welcomed new head of the APPA in Australia, Mark Kindness, Jonathan Strauss from PPPC in Canada and Dale Denham from PPAI in the US for a two-day meeting to cover a range of topics.

This is the first time all four bodies have come together face to face since 2019 and citing the benefits of working together, plans are already in place to make the meeting an annual event.

The four leaders covered a range of topics central to the promotional merchandise industry including best practice. Looking at the opportunities and the challenges each market faced, the organisations discussed their members and markets, defining where a collaborative approach could benefit. With each organisation taking leads in different areas such as market reports, sustainability and trade events, the learnings from each country were invaluable.



Highlighting areas such as how each market ran initiatives including sustainability and the need for a global standard on how sustainability is approached, the UK was able to set out its progress on the member-only StepForward Pledge. With a commitment from all four trade bodies, each agreed on a set of actions to help promote excellence and standards across their markets.

Celebrating the summit with a dinner at a nearby country hotel, members of the BPMA Board including Chair Haydn Willetts, President Angela Wagstaff, Board Director Richard Sullivan and Membership Director Tom Robey joined their industry colleagues for a lively discussion on key industry topics over supper.

Additional areas such as the approach to research, and standards in data were agreed as key to the overall success of the global industry and with a recent meeting with colleagues in Europe, the summit concluded with many actions to take forward.

## BPMA CALENDAR

**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**

## Latest BPMA new members

The BPMA is delighted to announce its newest members. Don't forget that being part of the BPMA comes with many perks such as the use of the logo to represent your membership status. Unlike many other trade associations, the BPMA is a member-to-member organisation and requires references from other members as part of the process. This means a strong referral base and importantly, exemplary standards are maintained. Together with this rigorous process which also includes BPMA Board approval,

financial checks form an important part of the process. Like many good things in life, BPMA membership is reassuringly hard to secure.

If you're interested in BPMA membership, visit [bpma.co.uk](http://bpma.co.uk) or email [membership@bpma.co.uk](mailto:membership@bpma.co.uk)

**SF Taylor**, Distributor

**Tony's Chocolonely Ltd**, Multi-Channel Supplier

**The Big Promotional Trade Show**, Service Provider

**Clear Branding**, Distributor

**Duncan Stewart Textiles Ltd**,

Multi-Channel Supplier

**Solopress**, Distributor

**The Branded Company**, Distributor

**Activate Branding Limited**,

Distributor

**Cubiquity Limited**, Distributor

**The Funky Peach**, Distributor

**Chilly's Bottles Limited**, Multi-Channel Supplier

**Sow Your Own**, Trade Exclusive Supplier

**IBrolly**, Multi-Channel Supplier

**Snuggle Limited**, Multi-Channel Supplier

**Sourcing Machine**, Service Provider

# THE ROAD TO *inspiration*

Meeting members provides an invaluable insight to the future of our industry, says **Tom Robey**

**A**s an avid traveller of these isles and curious individual, I always seize the opportunity to embark on new adventures and meet BPMA members. My remarkable journey continues and recently led me to meet more amazing UK-based promotional merchandise companies.

In April, I had the pleasure of visiting London-based Mantis World and meeting CEO and founder Prama Bhardwaj and Laura Parrott, brand Ambassador. The company has been a BPMA member since 1997 and has been making waves in sustainable clothing.

collaboratively across industry-wide programmes to measure, manage and improve its impact. It is also a founding signatory for the UNFCCC Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action and committed to net zero by 2050, so it was inspiring to witness the team's dedication first-hand and see the positive changes already made in the fashion industry and within promotional merchandise apparel.

## PLASTIC FANTASTIC

Continuing my journey, I made my way to Great Central Plastics in Daventry to meet Kiron Phillips, head of sales and marketing, and Philip Brown, BPMA members since 2010 specialising in providing innovative plastic solutions. With a Highly Recommended Sustainable Product of the Year product is 2023's Product Awards, whether manufacturing components or custom-designed products, Great Central Plastics excels in delivering bespoke plastic solutions to clients.

Showcasing its extensive capabilities and highlighting commitment to quality and customer satisfaction, we were

particularly impressed by the company's attention to detail and ability to cater to diverse industries, including promotional merchandise, and applications. Great Central Plastics exemplifies excellence in the world of plastic manufacturing.

## MANCHESTER BOUND

In May, the BPMA attended the Manchester Big Promotional Trade Show, serving as a platform for promotional industry professionals, suppliers, and distributors to connect as well as showcasing new products and ranges. From personalised merchandise to cutting-edge promotional strategies, the Manchester Big Promotional Trade Show proved to be a vibrant hub of creativity and innovation.

After a month of member visits with many more booked, I am reminded of the vast potential and limitless opportunities that await us in the business world. Through such encounters and discoveries that we find inspiration, broaden our horizons, and make meaningful connections that propel us forward.

**Tom Robey is the BPMA membership director – [tom@bpma.co.uk](mailto:tom@bpma.co.uk)**



## SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

With a commitment to producing eco-friendly garments, Mantis World has earned a well-deserved reputation for its high-quality organic clothing. A hub of inspiration and information for any corporate client interested in sustainable fashion. From its range of ethically sourced materials to eco-friendly manufacturing processes, Mantis World takes every step to minimise impact on the environment. All Mantis World garment labels include a QR code where users see the impact of the garment, and understand the impact savings in terms of carbon, water, energy and pesticide use.

Mantis World is on a journey of continuous improvement and works







**PRODUCTS AND IDEAS.  
CAMPAIGNS AND CONCEPTS.  
FOR MARKETEERS, BUYERS,  
AGENCIES AND DISTRIBUTORS.**

- // 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- // Exhibitors from all product areas
- // International examples of best practice
- // Lecture programme

**Admission is free of charge.**

Register at:

**[www.haptica.live](http://www.haptica.live)**

**MARCH 13, 2024 BONN, WCCB**

**HAPTICA®**

**THE EXPERIENCE OF HAPTIC ADVERTISING**



# B2B MARKETING EXPO

**29-30**  
**NOVEMBER**  
**2023**  
EXCEL LONDON

INNOVATION &  
INSPIRATION  
FOR MARKETING

EXHIBIT ALONGSIDE THE



**bpma**

british promotional  
merchandise association

**EXCLUSIVE  
DISCOUNT  
FOR BPMA  
MEMBERS**

**QUOTE:**  
**BPMA23**  
FOR £50 OFF

**ENQUIRE ABOUT EXHIBITING TODAY**

[www.b2bmarketingexpo.co.uk](http://www.b2bmarketingexpo.co.uk)