

THE MAIN EVENT

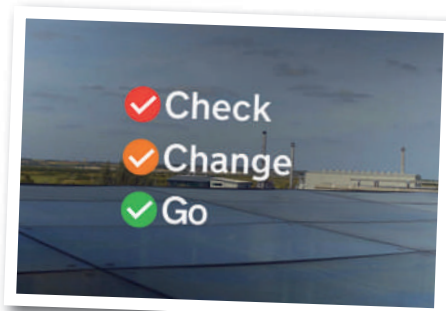


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WELCOME



At the time of writing, myself and the BPMA team are deep in preparations for the first virtual BPMA Conference on 9th September. It's uncharted territory for ourselves and BPMA members; reflecting much of the strange times we find ourselves in.

Many conversations in August have started "at the beginning of lockdown, we thought..." reflecting back on the period where new rules were set and governed our every move. As the weeks and months have progressed, we have adjusted thinking, businesses, jobs, and strategies as we try and second guess what impact

and decisions the next steps may affect.

The behaviours triggered in us as people and businesses at this time will often reflect our own personal attitudes to risk and reward. Asking members to take steps forward with us will be balanced on how our relationship forms part of the longer term reward picture for every business, led by inspirational companies who have balanced these factors since the day they opened their doors.

With an industry and economy facing up to heart-stopping disruption, the resilience shown across these last months demonstrates the grit and determination to not just survive but succeed. Bringing members together for the Conference in September has been devised to inspire, educate and connect – and

walk that uncharted territory with every member, supporting at every step.

This edition of *Product Media* celebrates being back in print since our first edition of the year and delivers more information on the BPMA Conference including what to look out for, news and opinions plus our regular columnists sharing their view of the industry.

We look forward to welcoming BPMA members in September to the Conference and as we leave you to read on, we'd like to thank every member who is taking those steps with us, our sponsors, and our supporters for the event who have come on the same journey.

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).



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JNI recognised for ecommerce first

London-based brand merchandising business, Jack Nadel International (JNI), has scooped up a Gold award in the Best SME category at The UK Business Awards, otherwise known as The Dons.

The company beat off competition from innovative growing businesses due to an emphasis on its ecommerce system, which claims to be the merchandising world's first single platform ecommerce store. Developed in conjunction with tech company, Confablo, the system bring all the varied elements of branded merchandise sourcing together on one interface. Users can organise and monitor their merchandising needs efficiently, making the process of sourcing promotional products simpler, and less costly.

Launched last year, Confablo has delivered a powerful USP by increasing efficiency, customer service and product variety, as well as reducing CO2 emissions, customs fees, and delivery times.



Elizabeth Venz, CEO, JNI (pictured), said: "I am so honoured that JNI has been recognised in such prestigious awards for

our single-platform Confablo initiative, which is a game-changer in our industry. Being recognised for having such an impact in terms of industry efficiency, sustainability and globalisation is a reassuring boost for JNI as we endeavour to continue to provide excellent service to our customers during such challenging times."

JNI is a British brand merchandise business providing global coverage. It provides brands with promotional products, ecommerce webstores, creative solutions, online marketing, event support, and more. The company employs 23 staff in its London HQ as well as offices in Sydney, Hong Kong, Athens and Amsterdam.

The UK Business Awards (UKBA) recognise the organisations, teams and individuals who are achieving great results in business. This year, the award ceremony was held completely online for the first time. The awards day consisted of online entry presentations followed by entertainment and an awards ceremony.

Portal helps Eat My Logo trade customers

Eat My Logo has launched a new distributor trade portal along with new trade branding and a dedicated web address.

The new portal is packed full of information including details on all Eat My Logo products with pricing, branded and blank product images and design templates. A distributor resources section includes product brochures, pricing sheets and email templates as well as information on how distributors can upload the range of edible promotional merchandise to their own websites.

Andrew Poar, Eat My Logo, founder said: "We have used the spare time afforded to us as a result of the COVID-19 situation to build a trade portal that really helps our distributor partners to gain information on and marketing resources for our product range. We also wanted to create a distinct trade brand image, hence a new trade logo, colour scheme and web address. We hope our distributor partners will find the trade portal useful and we will continue to develop it over time."

More details at eatmylogo.trade.



New face at Pro-Ad

Morpeth-based family firm Pro-Ad has welcomed a new member of the team in the shape of new arrival Sasha Grace Nardini, the daughter of Pro-Ad commercial director, Loren Nardini. Baby Sasha came into the world on the 21 May, 2020 a few weeks ahead of her lead time and weighing six pounds.

Loren and Emily Nardini are over the moon with the new addition to the family, and mum and baby are both doing well. The family gave a big thank you to the NHS and RVI maternity ward who were fantastic and helpful throughout the pandemic.

With another third generation Nardini to be joining Pro-Ad, grandfather, and managing director, Carlo is going to allow Sasha to settle into family life before getting her going on her first enquiry. According to the Pro-Ad team, "Big brother Max and Sasha are the cutest Nardinis in Pro-Ad and Sasha is going to be spoilt when she comes to the office – when we're all allowed back into the office."





Contactless screening devices to monitor temperatures

Baby USB has introduced iTherma, a range of contactless fever-screening devices with built-in hand sanitisers, to help companies with staff and visitor monitoring.

Featuring high-precision infrared thermometers, iTherma offers both wall-mounted devices and free-standing kiosks with adjustable heights, making them suitable for both adults and children.

The fast and accurate temperature detection sensor and display is powered by artificial intelligence. Forehead, hand and body temperature readings are both announced and digitally displayed.

Units combine temperature detection and facial recognition, even when the subject is wearing a mask. They can be synchronised with automatic doors to restrict access to certain areas. Custom branding is also available.

The whole experience is contactless and a real-time alarm sounds when an abnormal temperature is detected.

Sow Easy gains Made In Britain accreditation

Seeded promotional products company Sow Easy has recently been accredited as a member of Made in Britain. This was granted in recognition of its hero product, Seedsticks that has been manufactured in the UK for decades.

Sow Easy is proud to now be able to sport the official Made in Britain mark, helping customers to recognise that their purchase is high-quality, British-made, and will benefit the local economy.

Regarding the accreditation, sales and operations director Jamie Gray said: "Though we've seen the benefits of manufacturing in Britain for over 30 years now, this accreditation feels especially timely. Being a UK-based company enabled us to keep meeting client needs in the midst of the pandemic, as we didn't have to rely on overseas product supplies. We couldn't be prouder to manufacture our Seedsticks in the UK, and do our bit to contribute to the British

economy, as well as its vegetation."

Sow Easy has worked with merchandise distributors for more than 30 years.



Lulu helps with TCTC growth plans

The Cotton Textile Company (TCTC) welcomes Iuliana Vinte to the role of sales and marketing manager at the Brentwood business.

Known as Lulu to the team, Vinte hails from Romania and came to the UK in 2013 to study fashion design at the Middlesex University in London. Soon after graduating she started her career in the fashion industry as a designer and product developer, and saw her interests moving towards marketing and business development.

Richard King, co-founder and CEO said: "We are delighted to welcome Lulu to our team, who will be pivotal in driving our online and offline presence and will share the exciting growth of the business with us."

Immediate tasks include relaunching the TCTC website, rebranding one of its core lines of business and working on the launch of new brands and services. The company is a producer of clothing, towels, socks and accessories for many lifestyle and fashion labels, as well as niche corporate businesses. TCTC is now a licensee and plans to launch two own-brand ranges this year.

Vinte added: "It's a great time to join TCTC as I am passionate about fashion

and textiles as well as digital marketing. Their growth plans fit perfectly with my expertise and I am excited to help drive growth and fulfil my need to be challenged at this stage in my career."



Jutebag teams with textile specialists for masks

With the current health precautions in place in the UK, many companies are looking to procure face mask for staff, customers, and clients.

Jutebag has partnered with Swiss textile technology experts to develop a new functional three-layer mask, Maskari, which can be custom branded. The new antimicrobial reusable face mask is being pitched as the safest non-medical mask on the market.

Each layer has a specialist treatment applied. The outer layer is a 100% polyester mesh treated with HeiQ EcoDry so it is sustainable, water-repellent, yet breathable. A middle layer of polyester is

treated with HeiQ Viroblock to provide antimicrobial protection.

The inner layer is made from 100% soft cotton and treated with HeiQ Smart Temp. This treatment and material helps to regulate temperature and moisture to offer the wearer improved comfort.

Maskari is washable at 40C and has been tested to last for at least 30 washes while still retaining its properties.

Jutebag director Shah, said: "We all know that living in the 'new normal' can be challenging at the moment, but we think the reassurance and comfort of our new advanced mask by Maskari can help make life just a little better for everyone."



BSI Kitemark for face coverings

BSI has developed a BSI Kitemark for face coverings to offer independent approval that the face coverings meet a basic level of protection.

While face coverings are not a regulated product and they don't fall under PPE or Medical Device regulations, BSI experts have developed the certification programme to help users know which products to trust at a time when they are required in increasing situations.

As an independent voluntary certification programme, BSI Kitemark certification offers consumers a way to identify products they can trust and gives manufacturers a way to stand out and independently validate that their products meet a minimum requirement in terms of a basic level of protection against the transmission of infected droplets and the manufacture, design and performance of the covering.

Based on the recognised specification of French standards association, AFNOR, only face coverings that have met the necessary requirements are awarded BSI Kitemark certification and can display the BSI Mark of Trust. Products also require ongoing testing to ensure that face coverings continue to meet the necessary requirements.

Dust caps protect water bottles

First Editions has introduced dust caps to protect the mouthpiece of water bottles from dust, dirt and bugs. The ergonomic design fits the company's Olympic and Bio ranges and can be targeted as an accessory for cyclists, walkers and runners.

With the government's anti-obesity strategy encouraging people to take more exercise, and gyms reopening, many people are looking to shed lockdown weight.

Reusable water bottles are a staple for gym users, walkers and office workers needing to stay hydrated. It's important that these bottles should be kept really clean, and First Editions' flippable dust cap protects the water bottle nozzle when not in use.



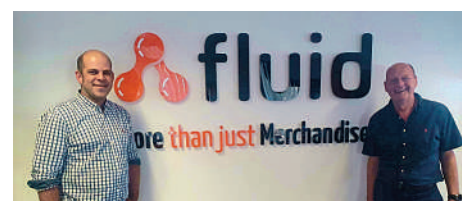
Fluid looks to expand further

Fluid Branding has acquired Epsom-based Everything Corporate and announced it is on the lookout for further deals.

Miles Lovegrove, managing director, Fluid Branding, said: "We're open to further M&A activity as we consolidate and increase our position in the industry. Providing a framework for talent to grow and shine has been extremely successful for everyone involved, and we look forward to having further conversations."

Having built a successful merchandise business over the past 40 years, Everything Corporate owner Martin Seymour said he felt the time was right for change. He will be working day-to-day from Fluid's London office in Camden following the deal on 1 August.

Seymour said the move had been planned for January but was overtaken by the COVID-19 crisis. "Fluid is one of the most innovative and successful promotional merchandise companies in Europe and to be part of this is a really wonderful opportunity. At Everything Corporate we have always been extremely fortunate to work with such fantastic loyal clients and are excited to continue building successful relationships



Fluid's John Walker (left) welcomes Martin Seymour to the business

with them, as part of Fluid Branding."

Lovegrove added: "Everything Corporate was built around a focus on customer service. The majority of clients have been loyal to the company for many years and this ethos is echoed by Fluid. We're a people company, a company with conscience and we're the only branded merchandise company to be a Certified B Corp."

As part of its B Corp status, Fluid has joined more than 700 B Corp certified companies in committing to being net zero by 2030 – 20 years ahead of the 2050 targets set in the Paris Agreement. Fluid has publicly committed to accelerate the reduction of its greenhouse gas emissions to reach a 1.5 degree trajectory leading to net zero by 2030

Pen players take antibacterial approach

Two major manufacturers of writing instruments, BIC and Prodir, have revealed antibacterial ranges.

BIC Graphic Europe has launched a range of antibacterial products under its new trademarked BGuard brand.

The company's best-selling BIC Media Clic, BIC Round Stic and BIC Clic Stic ballpens will all be available in antibacterial versions, including with an optional digital print on the barrel.

The range has been classified as a biocidal product with an antibacterial effect. The antibacterial efficiency is tested in accordance with the ISO 22196 test protocol, with full product protection for the lifetime of the product.

BIC Clic Stic Stylus will also be available in a BGuard version which, in a first of its kind, can help reduce the amount of unnecessary hand-to-surface contact.

Ian Barham, trade marketing manager, said: "We first introduced an antibacterial range many years ago, but after a period of development we're delighted to now be able to improve upon that with the launch of our new BGuard range of antibacterial products."

BIC claims that BGuard doesn't just

inhibit the growth of bacteria, but eliminates 99.9% of bacteria on the barrel, the most exposed part of the pen.

The BGuard range includes the existing BIC proposition of Mix and Match services at no additional cost or lead-time.

Meanwhile, Prodir has revised its portfolio to make all QS and DS models available with antibacterial surface protection based on the Biomaster additive from Addmaster. Biomaster is based on silver ion technology, which it claims inhibits the growth of bacteria with an efficacy of 99.99% for a pen's lifespan. Its effectiveness has also been certified in accordance with ISO 22196 for use in writing instruments.

The new QS50 features 'Thank you' imprinted in the pen's casing in five languages, both in high and bas-relief, along with the antibacterial logo. The standard all-white version is available from just 500 units.

Prodir's Regeneration Pens, the DS3, DS5 and DS8, made from recycled material, also feature

antibacterial protection to combine sustainability and hygiene.

Eckhard Sohns, CMO, Prodir, said: "Good communication addresses people where they are and relies on enduring relevance rather than passing fads. This is what we want to offer our customers: The ability to combine brand messaging with values and topics that matter to people."



Galpeg Network extends support to existing business

Back office solutions specialist Galpeg has launched a brand new service to help existing promotional distributor businesses navigate the 'new normal' of the post-Covid world.

Galpeg launched its Associate programme in 2008 for experienced promotional merchandise professionals looking to build a business and customer base from scratch without experiencing the usual risks associated with a new venture.

The new Galpeg Network aims to offer a similar support framework to existing businesses, providing financial backing, purchasing clout, an expert back office team for both production and finance and a host of business development tools.

Galpeg director Paul Green said that the new offering takes account of how coronavirus would change the way people do business.

"In this changed climate, business owners want to streamline their operations and work smarter, and the Galpeg Network



provides a scalable solution that grows with them," he said. "Small business owners frequently find themselves juggling priorities. One day you're the accountant, sending invoices and chasing payments. The next day, you're processing orders and ensuring dispatch dates are on track."

The new programme prevents companies from being bogged down in paperwork, and avoids excessive fixed overheads of recruiting more administrative or accounting staff. The pay as you go system has no contract and no fixed

monthly fee, so limited manpower does not hold up business growth. Suppliers have praised the Galpeg team.

Matt Pluckrose of Desktop Ideas, said: "The professionalism of the Galpeg back office is a real positive to working with the team. We receive clear purchase orders, clear instructions, and good artwork."

Lawrence Angelow of Advantage Group, added: "Working with distributors in the Galpeg Network, we benefit from sound infrastructure, support, knowledge and financial stability."



MERCHANDISE AT EVENTS: WHAT'S THE GUIDANCE?

The emergence of COVID-19 brought the events industry to a shuddering halt. With mass gatherings impossible and every venue shutting the doors against the risk of transmission, all the adjacent industries were hit hard and fast including the promotional merchandise industry. As large scale events had to cancel or postpone, merchandise linked to these events suddenly found orders paused, cancelled or just not able to deliver.

With the news in July that the events industry had the green light to open venue doors as of 1 October 2020, much of the efforts of reopening has focussed on the safe ways exhibitors and visitors can interact and engage. With many of the measures in place, government-led communications following collaboration with the Association of Event Organisers (AEO), Association of Event Venues (AEV) and Events Supplier and Services Association (ECCA) formed a framework to ensure a safe return to live events.

With guidance to present a standard of 'All Secure' for every event organiser; the emphasis is about assessing the risk for each event relevant to the level of pandemic risk. As the government announced these new measures, the statement around use of merchandise confused many.

The BPMA has been looking at these standards to ensure the promotional merchandise industry can assess the ways in which merchandise can be risk assessed for suitability at events. Understandably, some items have been removed at the entrance to exhibitions such as lanyards

that are reused and printed handouts.


Working with the associations involved, the BPMA commented: "The risk assessments for events and new guidance is extremely thorough but doesn't address all important merchandise for these situations. Our work to input into assessments to involve merchandise will be published to BPMA members and included in future updates to these guidelines."

The basis of the guidelines covers social distancing, cleaning and hygiene, communication and how 'protect and detect' standards are employed. Encouraging more digital measures for pre-event and registration, hand washing and hand sanitiser stations are just some of the standards expected. Encouraged to 'translate' to the relevant areas of business, the guidance has no direct risk assessment for how to distribute physical items. The BPMA encourages a risk-aware approach to merchandise.

It advised: "Think about how you can distribute items safely; how can you remove

hand to hand contact and the types of merchandise that will appeal. Think what will be acceptable to a visitor to collect – a bowl on a stand with items anyone can put their hand into is not going to be allowed or encouraged especially in 'high touch' areas. Consider how product innovation could assist safe distribution."

The guidelines have been split into levels of high risk, medium and low risk controls. Currently advising guidelines for high risk linked to social distancing and potential for high transmission to virus in general circulation, visitor risks are assessed relevant to their onsite experience such as the need for wider aisles to reduce airborne transmission.

To aid its members to understand how merchandise factors into visitor experiences, the BPMA is releasing the first wave of research at its Conference in September which will include consumer reactions to merchandise at events. 

FLYING THE FLAG FOR EVENTS

Leeds-based flag and banner maker Northern Flags, donated more than £2,000 worth of signage, for a #WeMakeEvents march on 11 August 2020.

Organised by people who work within the events industry, marches took place across the country, in cities such as Leeds, Manchester, London, Glasgow and Belfast to draw public attention to the plight of those who work in the events industry and to call for greater financial support from the government.

Northern Flags provided banners and boards for the Leeds event. Iain Clasper-Cotte, managing director, Northern Flags, said: "We have decades worth of experience working with the events industry. Some of those relationships are so well established they have developed from clients into friends. That's why it was so important for us to contribute to our local march."

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WHAT'S YOUR BAG?

Carriers are a flexible product option from garment providers, says **Clive Allcott**



Garment decorators offer many products and branding solutions for the promotional market. One of the most versatile is bags, with many different types or styles covering a variety of situations, from work to school to retail.

In these COVID times the versatility of this product offers many solutions to your clients. With nearly 3,300 impressions per item, bags generate a similar marketing impact to that promotional workhorse, the classic T-shirt.

Based on general data related to promotional items:

- Eight in 10 consumers own between one and 10 promotional products. (Many are bags)
- 53% of these people use a promotional product at least once a week. (Bag for life)
- Six in 10 of them keep promotional products for up



to two years. (Re-usability)

- 31% of consumers own a promotional bag. (Need)

With this information, how do you or your customer maximise the impact of a branded bag, and what products work best?

Drawstring and Tote bag

Often picked up at a trade show or as a giveaway, many of the recipients who received these products remembered the name of the company that gave them the product. Fill up the bag with printed collateral at your next conference/meeting or fill it with more promo products for a social media contest or

giveaway. Most people who received a bag stated that they thought the item was useful.

Jute and Juco life bag

The perfect 'Bag for Life' purchase with reusability, often found in retail outlets around the country. Available in many sizes and colours, it's an inexpensive gift or purchase that is used multiple times.

Laptop and travel bags

There is a wide array of laptop, tablet and travel bags on the market, all of which can be personalised or branded with company logos and messaging.

As a promotional item these bags offer higher perceived value over other items making them the perfect gift or work item.

Mail it

Include a bag with a direct mail piece. Woven or non-woven tote bags provide a low price option which can all be personalised at low minimum order quantities. The inclusion of a promo product to a direct mail campaign can increase the response rate by 50%.

There are many decoration and branding methods available including embroidery, transfer and screen-print as well as bespoke options should you want Pantone matching or specific sizing. Ask your preferred decoration partner and discuss the available options.

Happy Selling

Clive, The Clothing Guru.



Lanyards



Keyrings



Badges



Ties & Scarves



Wristbands



Leisure



Umbrellas



Office



Pencil Cases



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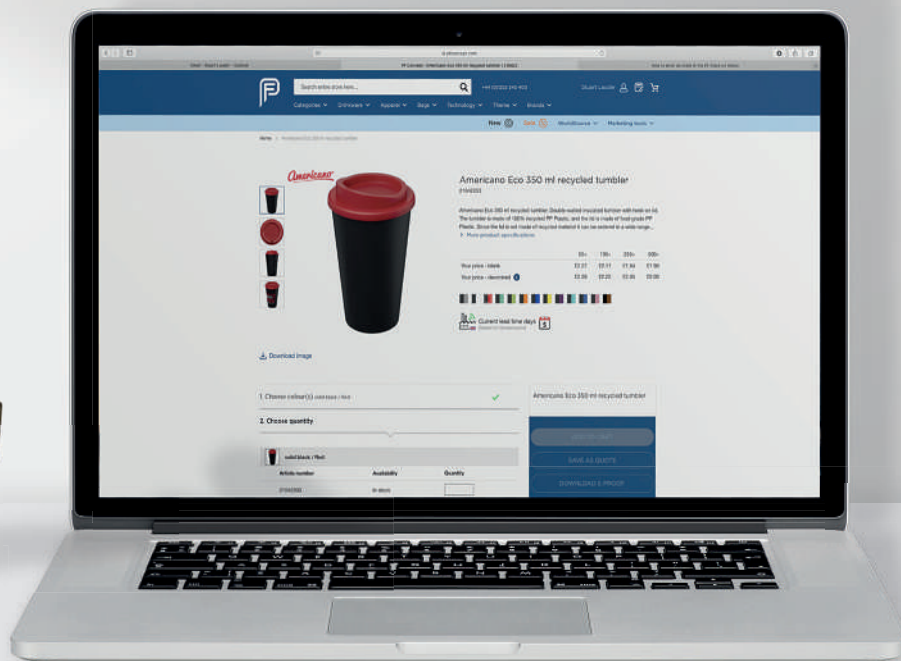
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CHX LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

The Cornish supplier has used lockdown to adapt to a changed market



Like many merchandise businesses, CHX Products faced a dilemma when lockdown kicked in – could it service clients and work safely to protect employees at the same time.

As a small, family owned business, the Cornish company took the decision that by adapting, it could continue to keep working from its Bodmin base. By adopting remote contact with clients, splitting shifts, improving cleaning regimes, and working from home, the company decided that it was possible to keep the business running.

Not business as usual

Andy Knight, owner, CHX Products, said: "Obviously, we initially saw a dramatic drop in our usual business but having a little time on our hands it allowed us to re-evaluate everything we do and look at how we stay relevant in the current situation."

Having taken the stance that it could work safely in its premises, CHX felt it was important to support the customers who wanted to continue to do business. "Actually, staying open has been a great success, we quickly developed a handful of products that are directly in response to the pandemic and our customers that have also stayed open have done some great business with us."

Realising that many businesses would be facing similar issues, CHX introduced a Work from Home range to help brands maintain a presence with those who were no longer in the office. The company also developed several new products to cater for changing requirements.

Responding to trends

With lockdown gardening a growing trend, CHX introduced an eco-plant marker kit made from 100% recycled plastic, which can be fully recycled at recycling centres. The kit has been designed to last by using high quality materials and UV resistant ink which keeps branding looking fresh.

Another addition was the new Hygiene Hook, designed and created by the team in one week due to client demand – it is a British registered design. The keyring, part of a touch free range, is made from 100% recycled plastic and designed to prevent the need to touch high traffic areas.

Such new products have been vital during changing times, said Knight. "Our usual bread and butter products have taken a


bit of a back seat for the time being. The new range of products was greeted with immediate interest and effectively has taken over from our usual core range."

Customers are looking to products that help reduce the risk now encountered in everyday life, he added. CHX has created an Antimicrobial Range with products featuring an antimicrobial additive to the recycled plastic mix.

The long game

"Customers are really loving UK made and eco products that support not only local jobs but also the environment," said Knight. "Both of these trends are going to be important in the coming months and years, and are the core principles of our business."

As recently as January, CHX won the BPMA award for Supplier of the Year up to £2 million, but Knight says the past few months have taught him to stay alert to change. "Don't rest on your laurels and stay in tune with what the world is doing. Keep talking to your customers and stay relevant."

Looking ahead, he admits the next 12 months will be tough and that some businesses will struggle to survive. "As a company we are fairly bullish about our future and to show our commitment, we have made significant investment in the business over the past three months and plan a lot more over the coming six to 12 months." 





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ARE YOU VIRTUALLY READY?

Get the preparation right and you will get the most out of the BPMA virtual conference. Here's how



For many in the merchandise industry, live events are part of doing business. Whether it's conferences, exhibitions, or networking events, face to face meet ups are a great way of maintaining a profile, staying abreast of industry learning, catching up with peers, and doing deals.

That's not possible at the moment, but it doesn't mean that you can't continue to do those things in other ways. The BPMA virtual conference has been devised to allow members to learn from experts, be motivated by thought leaders, and meet exhibitors.

But while many of us know how to work the room at a physical event, a virtual conference presents a different challenge. Here are some tips on making the most of your day.

Do your homework

The event is jam packed with useful content, split into three strands of Recovery, Resilience and Regeneration. Look at the agenda and work out what will be most useful for you to attend. It's worth doing this with your team as you can then identify any particular areas of interest in the agenda and highlight them. If you have a conflict with sessions you are interested in happening at the same time, arrange for a colleague to cover it and share learnings afterwards.

The BPMA is sending out a delegate pack. Have a good look at what's inside before the event.

Prepare for the day

Although you'll be attending virtually, it is worth preparing to get the most from the event. This can include basic comfort factors such as testing your WiFi link in advance and making sure that you have decent speakers or headphones. If there are likely to be distractions in the office or home office, try and find a spot where they will be minimised. Ensure you have a comfortable seat, snacks and drinks. Don't forget a notebook and pen to take notes.

If you have trouble with anything during the day, there is virtual help available, and also during the registration process and when you are using the networking hub.

Ask questions

The speakers on the day are experts in a huge range of fields pertaining to running businesses better. Don't lose the opportunity to put that expertise at your service. Have a think in advance about the business issues that you have and ask them for their advice.

Be active in other ways such as contributing to social media shares and online polls.

Meet exhibitors

The event has an online exhibition where you can arrange to meet top suppliers, who have their own virtual exhibitor style page where they can add sales collateral, external links, videos, and arrange group and 1:1 meetings.

There is a function to arrange meetings between other registered members. You can set up meetings from 9 September until early October on this platform. The

week after the event is prioritised for supplier meetings and presentations.

Share your experiences

After so long working remotely, let others in the industry know how things have been going for you and find out how they have been faring. This is a social industry and we've been deprived of that essential component of late, so make sure that you interact with colleagues old and new, even if it is only to say hello.


Do a team debrief

Whether you are going on your own, or as part of a team, discuss what you learned at the event over your own virtual event or in a socially distanced office meeting. It's often illuminating to hear what others got from a session. They may have different insights to you and have fresh thoughts on how to make use of what they've gleaned in the business.

Improve your network

Link with those people you had useful interactions with. Add them to your LinkedIn network, drop them an email, or arrange a video call. Hopefully, someday soon you'll be in a position to speak to them in person. Until then, stay in contact in other ways.

It's not too late to register

You don't need to arrange travel or accommodation, so you can still get involved before 9 September. Email events@bpma.co.uk to request an invite to register for your pass. 



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MOVING FORWARD AS **AN INDUSTRY**

As the industry gathers for an exciting virtual event to help BPMA members through the coming months, *Product Media* previews what's on offer

The BPMA's first virtual Conference and Networking Event takes place on 9 September. As befits the nature of these times,

things are a bit different for this event. With physical gatherings a challenge, the BPMA is building on the success of its webinar series, which provided the industry with a focus and platform in recent months, where members could receive solid and practical business advice on the issues that have been paramount.

September's conference continues the approach. Opting for a theme of Recovery, Regeneration and Resilience, the BPMA has brought together a range of speakers, workshops, and skills sessions to equip members for the months ahead.

Unleash the extraordinary

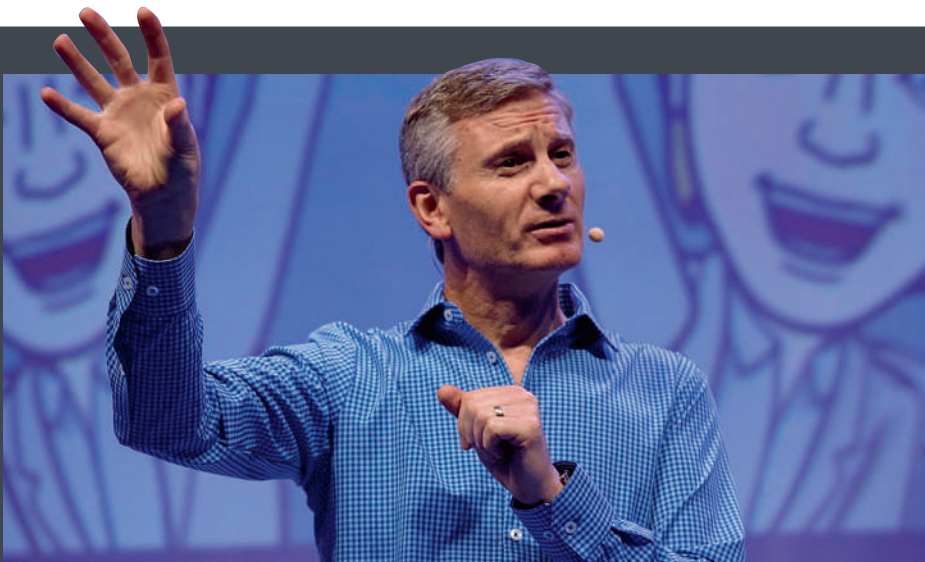
Challenging times call for new ways of thinking. Keynote speaker Adrian Webster will inspire and motivate the BPMA conference

If you're an entrepreneur and know you just have to do something different, taking that next step calls for bravery and inspiration. Those who know the drive needed won't be surprised at the background of the speaker for the BPMA's afternoon session. Starting his career as a policeman, author of acclaimed *Polar Bear Pirates* and co-authored guide *Sort Your Brain Out*,

Adrian Webster captures the attention for the BPMA conference afternoon session.

Adrian may have started life as a Bristol bobby on the beat, but he was unable to contain an entrepreneurial urge and a burning desire to "do something different". He soon found himself setting up a highly innovative dairy business, before successfully diversifying into a wide range of other areas ranging from frozen food to recruitment and property.

Armed with a genuine love and proven talent for selling, Adrian entered the IT industry, where he quickly established himself as one of the UK's top sales professionals. From corporate sales manager of US Robotics, he moved to leading distributor Northamber plc as group sales & training manager, where he led a team of 150 to phenomenal success,



PETER DOCKER
INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED
SPEAKER

Taking control

High flying keynote speaker Peter Docker explains how to put fear in its place and thrive during unpredictable times

Kicking off the conference is Peter Docker, internationally renowned speaker, author, and equipped with a CV that reads like an action adventure. Peter has served as a Royal Air Force senior officer, been a Force Commander during combat flying operations and has seen service across

the globe. His career has encompassed being a professional pilot and leading an aviation training and standards organisation, to teaching postgraduates at the UK's Defence College and flying the British Prime Minister around the world. His career took him into a more commercial world, leading multi-billion

dollar procurement projects. He also served as a crisis manager and former international negotiator for the UK government.

Peter worked with motivational speaker Simon Sinek for more than seven years and was one of the founding 'Igniters' on Simon's team. He used his years of practical experience to co-author *Find Your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team*, with Simon and David Mead.

With a path that took Peter into the world of leadership, he joins us to explore how we react and grow in times of massive uncertainty. Drawing on his experience of leading during crisis, strategic change and life-threatening situations, delegates will be introduced to the skills necessary to lead and thrive during unpredictable times.

Peter knows it's only human to experience fear when faced with difficult circumstances. The fear of the unknown, of change or something lost, or of not knowing what to do. This is particularly the case when it concerns something that is really important to us, such as our



ADRIAN WEBSTER
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

and discovered his ability to inspire others.

Today, Adrian is one of the UK's most sought-after motivational speakers, specialising in delivering inspirational key messages and practical tools in a humorous, down-to-earth style audiences can easily relate to and remember.

Adrian aims to bring to life his straightforward and highly effective philosophies to help BPMA members drive their next strategies forward. Understanding where our industry needs to drive and strive needs compelling ideas and strategy. Adrian's energetic delivery will give every attendee effective tools to take away. Titled Delivering Extraordinary in Challenging Times, this entrepreneurial speaker is set to engage the grey matter and motivate attendees to look at how it is possible to find the extraordinary in us all.

The 3 Rs for business success

Addressing the needs of business during the pandemic with the economic challenges every sector of the UK economy has faced needs skills and tools that make a difference.

Focused on a 'three R's approach of **Recovery, Resilience and Regeneration**, the BPMA has brought together a range of speakers to deliver solid information that can benefit members in the immediate, short and long term. The aim is to deliver useful, actionable, and insightful content business owners and their teams can use to bring better results for their company.



TAKING THE NEXT STEP CALLS FOR BRAVERY AND INSPIRATION

livelihood or the people we care about.

Addressing how fear increases when we don't feel in control of external events or the decisions that others make that affect us, he examines these emotions and how this in turn can drive how we react and, importantly, how we occur to others. Understanding how we tend to tighten control over those things we feel we can control can lead to restriction, rather than empowerment. We see scarcity rather than possibility. Docker will explain to attendees that unless we learn how to put fear back in its place, it can have a long-term impact on trust, innovation, and growth.

During his interactive talk, Peter will take delegates on a journey to explore how we can ensure that fear doesn't take control and undermine how effectively we respond when facing uncertain times. He will show how, when we connect to what's really important to us, we can lead even when we don't know the answer and empower those around us to help figure it out.

Attendees at the conference will be able to enjoy Peter's opening keynote from 09:30 on 9 September. Peter also joins us for a 'coffee break' afterwards. Often cited as the best part of his role, he is looking forward to sharing stories and conversation with BPMA members.

Recovery: Business skills and information

Exploring transition

The first session welcomes Kevin Shakespeare, of the Institute of Export & International Trade (IOE&IT) addressing the subject of Brexit and our transition out of the EU. An energetic speaker, Kevin is on a mission to ensure BPMA member businesses are well-equipped for the changes that will impact every business. In this workshop, Kevin explores some of the main areas of change, advising on how to ensure your business is ready for change.

Kevin is a key member of the Institute's management team with a strong

knowledge of education, trade and finance and international trade, built up over many years in senior management positions. His experience includes delivering year on year sales growth of more than 15%, managing revenue lines totalling more than £50m.

COVID employer challenges

Never has employment advice been more needed or sought, with employers and employees navigating a complex new environment, where rules change frequently. Croner as a law firm will be familiar to many and speaker Amanda Chadwick joins the conference to discuss how employers have responded to COVID challenges.

Her confident and thorough approach ensures every attendee comes away with sound guidance and information to inform business decisions. Amanda is an experienced and well known speaker, who has spent more than 25 years advising tens of thousands of business owners on everyday issues in employment and health and safety



EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES ARE NAVIGATING A COMPLEX NEW ENVIRONMENT



AMANDA CHADWICK
EMPLOYMENT LAW SPECIALIST

law, representing businesses at tribunal, mediating, mentoring, presenting, writing, and blogging.

Amanda's past has involved working in the media, developing KPIs, driving businesses with personally designed incentive programmes, developing training packages, holding motivational conferences, and keeping business owners updated via her webinars and social media.

Amanda is a frequent BPMA speaker and is welcomed back to the conference to support BPMA members via the benefits provided by Croner.

Cash is King

Most BPMA members familiar with AccountAssyst have used services to



IAN JENKINSON
FINANCIAL EXPERT

support their business in these trying times. Understanding cash and credit has never been more important. Financial expert Ian Jenkinson joins the Recovery sessions to talk frankly about payments, understanding credit and more. He will also be available for Q&A after the session.

With many years' experience working with SMEs in commercial credit management and debt recovery, Ian started working with Mike Collins at Direct Route and helped launch AccountAssyst online credit management. He spends most of his time working with trade associations and franchise groups, helping their members avoid or recover overdue invoices and debt.



PETER HILL
BUSINESS PLANNING CONSULTANT

How to have 2020 vision

Understanding the value of your business, your clients and where to target your energy during times of crisis is not just important, it is essential for your future growth plans. Passionate about helping business owners realise their value, Peter Hill of Mark Holt & Co delivers sound practical and actionable advice through this informative session. With take away tools to help you project and plan for growth, the session helps companies understand how to target growth with important customers.

Peter is the author of *Pricing for Profit*, which his experience of helping businesses to develop and implement pricing strategies, and includes many real life case studies and practical workable ideas for any business.

Resilience

A word used often when describing the pace and drive of the industry in recent times. Resilience is also a quality that tests every fibre of your being and like never before we are tested as we face hard decisions and demands. Addressing how the industry will swim rather than sink through these challenges is the subject of the resilience sessions with leadership coaching, plus a unique view on how to maximise this period.

Maximising resilience in uncertainty

Jodie Hill and Dr Sarah Hattam realised that they had a great formula to talk about the practicalities of health and wellbeing in the work place, and their partnership has brought some tough topics to the table.



RESILIENCE IS ABOUT
HOW THE INDUSTRY
WILL SWIM, NOT SINK

Addressing how there is an opportunity to understand how you maximise the resilient side of your response to the crisis, Jodie and Sarah will address attendees at the conference on how to swim and come out the other side.



JODIE HILL
MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE

Jodie Hill originally trained as a barrister and cross-qualified as a solicitor. Following her own mental breakdown in 2017, she set up Thrive Law in 2018 in order to ensure everyone can thrive in the workplace. Thrive is now multi award winning, being recognised for its commitment to diversity, inclusion, and



DR SARAH HATTAM
GP AND WELLBEING CONSULTANT

VICTORIA WALSH
 LEADERSHIP COACH

social mobility. She is an advocate for mental health and started the #OneMind campaign to ensure mental health risk assessments are mandatory in all workplaces. Jodie continues to disrupt the employment law and mental health sector with her thought leadership and strives for social change. She has appeared on BBC Look North, ITV news, BBC Slive, the Guardian, the Times, and the Yorkshire Post.

Dr Sarah Hattam (MBCbB, MRCP, DFSRH) is a practising GP with a specific interest in mental health. She founded the workplace wellbeing consultancy Concilio Health, whose workplace wellbeing programmes help businesses of all sizes to yield a significant return on investment and profitability by strategically investing in the mental and physical wellbeing of their people. As an experienced event speaker, Sarah applies the latest science on sleep, nutrition, mental health, menopause, work and parenting, energy management and other aspects of health and performance to effect change at both individual and organisational levels.

Leadership matters

Victoria Walsh is a certified executive coach and leadership consultant. She has over 20 years of team and business board leadership experience having spent two decades working in the world of marketing before setting up her own coaching and consultancy business in 2015. She is passionate about positive psychology in the workplace.



“ BUSINESSES CAN YIELD A RETURN ON INVESTMENT AND PROFITABILITY BY INVESTING IN MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Victoria will be a familiar voice to BPMA members after she joined CEO Carey Trevill on webinar sessions to look at the early stages of the pandemic and its impact on remote working employees. She will address leadership in times of change and uncertainty, and the traits and behaviours that will support business leaders.

With a toolbox of psychological assessment tools as a BPS registered test user, executive coaching and training methodology, Victoria delivers coaching and training programmes to meet individual and business needs. As well as running her own business Victoria also works at Kingston University as the MBA executive coach and as a business consultant and trainer for the undergraduate Business Readiness programme.



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TONY MORRIS
SALES GURU

Regeneration: seeking opportunity

Addressing the skills to drive business, as well as understanding the barriers will help every company attending the conference. Themes range from building confident sales people to understanding the secrets of procurement, and the BPMA has also brought in BPMA Charter ambassadors Andrew Hill and Clive Allcott to discuss why Charter is the standard that delivers a key point of difference.

Selling remotely in testing times

When Tony Morris first addressed BPMA members in May, his straight talking, action orientated approach captured the attention of members. Faced with a new world of selling, Tony brings the techniques to bridge the virtual gap and help attendees to the conference walk away with tools to drive results.

Tony is an international sales speaker, best-selling author of five books and MD of an international sales training company. He and his team have helped develop more than 30,000 salespeople and he's no stranger in the promotional merchandise world, having worked with several distributors.

On his podcast, Confessions of a serial seller, Tony has interviewed 100 top global sales performers to learn how they gain an unfair advantage over their competitors.

Navigating Procurement

With reports that end-users continue to review and request more and more for pitches and tenders, how do you determine if the opportunity is right for your business and how can you develop relationships when the process is faceless?

Using their insight on the dark arts of procurement, Mike Newman and Steve Baynes of capability and audit business, theSPC take conference goers through



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MIKE MARTIN
DATA EXPERT

the assessment of tenders, how the market is changing and why taking a position on areas like sustainability will be increasingly important.

Mike and Steve boast more than 30 years' experience in the production arena. Mike has worked both client and supplier side, and his corporate experience gives him an expert insight into the procurement mind. Having

worked in the production and procurement arena of the advertising industry, Steve co-founded a marketing agency which was subsequently sold to an international group. Prior to forming theSPC with Mike, he consulted for several large blue-chip brands advising on operational and workflow solutions.

Understanding the Charter difference

Joined by special guests, Andrew Hill and Clive Allcott, this lively discussion centres on the benefits of BPMA Charter membership and the points of difference every business should have to stand out from the crowd.

The detail is in the data

Data is a subject that we still need to deal with in this changed environment. Understanding our obligations and that GDPR still applies has prompted the BPMA to engage Mike Martin of Griffin House Consultants to deliver an insightful and actionable session.

Mike prides himself on his professionalism, energy, ethics, integrity, and ability to balance compliance with commercial reality. He is also on a mission to make data protection 'Sexy' – on his talks you will find an abundance of laughter.

His wealth of experience, passion and enthusiasm for data protection and information governance combined with his teaching and mentoring skills places

him at the heart of the Griffin House Consultancy team.

Mike is a qualified and experienced data professional and in 1990 after leaving the Metropolitan Police where he worked at New Scotland Yard as a civilian, co-founded ADMAR Support Services. Mike was the IT director of ADMAR for 24 years, and was part of many exciting innovations and experienced the fast pace of change first hand. As well as being a data protection consultant and trainer Mike is an NLP Master Practitioner and been a volunteer mentor for Lincoln University, The Prince's Trust, and a member of The Business Professors Network.

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AccountAssyst is used by many BPMA members to help with credit management. What does it offer?

Developed by BPMA benefit provider Direct Route, AccountAssyst is a powerful, easy-to-use online credit management system. Whether you have 10 customers or 10,000, and sign up new customers regularly or rarely, AccountAssyst will benefit your business.

NEW CUSTOMER ACCOUNT OPENING

The automated credit account opening process involves the applicant completing your bespoke logo-bearing credit application form, including your terms and conditions (a free to use set is available). You also receive a credit report on the applicant, are alerted to any Companies House data changes and other late payment information.

This process takes under five minutes. How does this compare with your current account opening processes? With AccountAssyst you know exactly who you're dealing with by forming your contract with the correct legal entity – limited company, partnership, or sole trader. The application process ensures that key data is collected which will help should you experience payment problems further on.

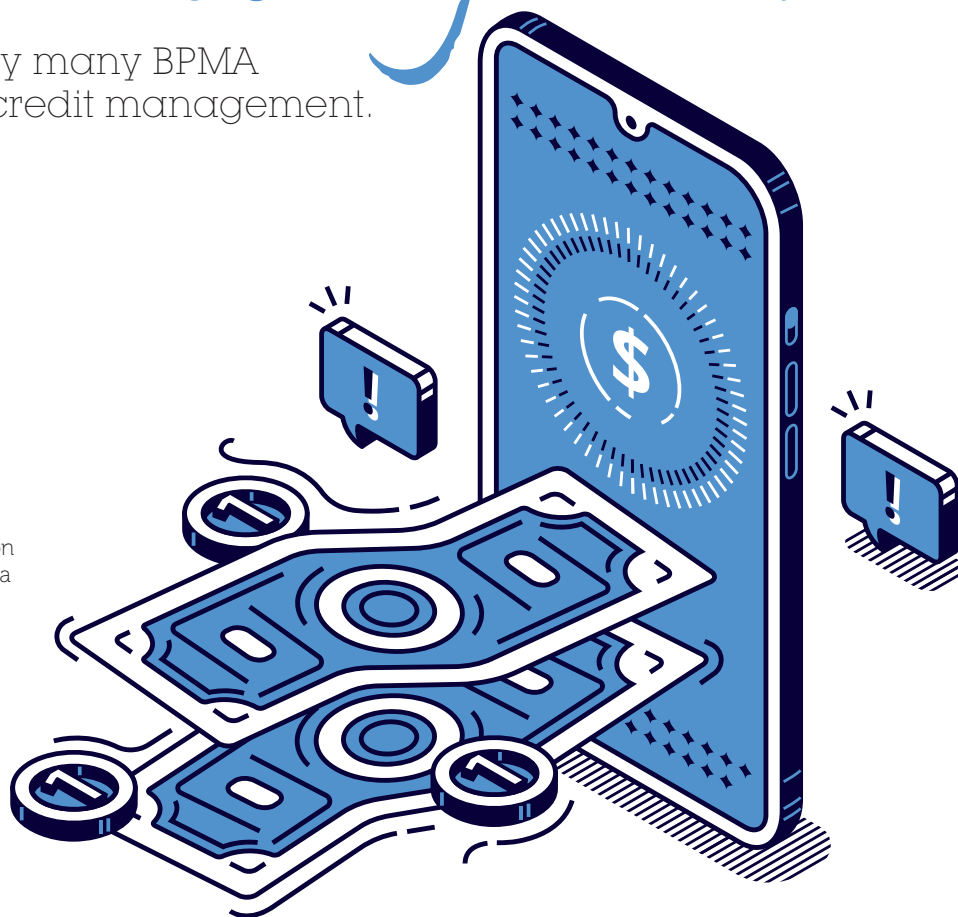
AUTOMATED CUSTOMER ACCOUNT REVIEWS

You can reform trading relationships with existing customers using the up-to-date bespoke credit review form with your latest terms and conditions. You may have established trading relationships with customers on an informal basis and it's time to protect your business – especially in the current climate.

The up-to-date credit reports will enable you to make informed decisions about the levels of credit offered to existing customers. A business usually finds out that a customer is struggling when it's too late. AccountAssyst provides this information much earlier than other credit checking services.

AUTOMATED OVERDUE MONIES CHASE PROCESS

The customised diary prompt system means you pursue overdue monies in a controlled and amicable manner. Email instant reminder letters and you're prompted by diarised



e-mail automation to consider subsequent action. By simply clicking relevant links within the email you withdraw the case if payment has been received or instruct the next stage in the chasing cycle. Because it's simple yet effective, you can delegate the administrative functions of credit control to less experienced staff. And all credit control procedures and copies of demand letters are recorded on the system with a summary of the information always available.


Should legal action become necessary this provides a record for the court demonstrating the steps you have taken to recover monies. This significantly increases your likelihood of success.

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE CREDIT REPORTS

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such as who's in the boardroom, how fast a business is growing and how it measures up against other firms in its sector. All credit reports include an early warning system that alerts you of a critical change to the company being monitored such as a new credit rating, a County Court judgement or new accounts being filed.

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GET READY: UNDERSTANDING THE BREXIT TRANSITION

At the end of 2020, the UK will exit the transition period of Brexit and businesses must be prepared for what comes next

British business is big business and with the pandemic, Brexit transition understandably took a back seat. You'd be forgiven for thinking that not much was going on at government but it's been busy on both sides of the Channel as transition arrangements have been discussed, debated and dissected.

From 1 January 2021, the process of importing and exporting goods will change and it's important to prepare as much as possible now. The government has created a checklist via its site gov.uk/transition encouraging businesses to 'Check, Change, Go'.

The Institute of Export & International Trade is joining the BPMA conference to discuss the impact of transition and the changes we can expect, as it points out that the government has 'hit fifth gear' in preparations for post-transition trade. The government has confirmed customs controls on goods entering Great Britain from the EU in three phases from the start of 2021.

The government has also published a blueprint for mitigating a 'no deal' outcome in the EU trade negotiations, as many firms revealed much of trade and many hauliers are not ready for new customs rules and checks after the current transition period finishes on 31 December 2020.

The main areas we need to be ready for:

1. GET READY FOR CUSTOMS DECLARATIONS

Importers and exporters will need to complete customs declarations next year, regardless of whether the UK strikes a free trade deal with the EU.

To complete declarations, the government has asked businesses to ensure they:

- Have a GB economic Operator Registration and Identification number (EORI number)
- Decide if they will use a customs

- intermediary or
- Have access to the relevant IT systems to complete declarations themselves
- Know the customs value and commodity code for their goods
- Consider simplifications and facilitations such as customs freight simplified procedures (CFSPs), warehousing, inward processing, and transit.

The government continues to provide funding for companies to learn how to complete declarations, the industry is encouraged to check out funding and courses covered by The Institute of Export & International Trade.

2. THREE-PHASE PLAN FOR IMPORTS CONFIRMED

Under this plan, declarations can be deferred (for up to six months) for all imports of standard goods from the EU until July next year. This will be introduced earlier in January for controlled goods (alcohol and tobacco).



3. IMPORT VAT

VAT will be levied on consignments of EU goods exceeding £135 in value following the same rates and structures as are applied for the Rest of the World imports.

VAT-registered importers will be able to use postponed VAT accounting and different rules will apply to consignments valued less than £135.

4. UK GLOBAL TARIFF

Importers will need to pay customs duties as set under the new UK Global Tariff, which was announced in May.

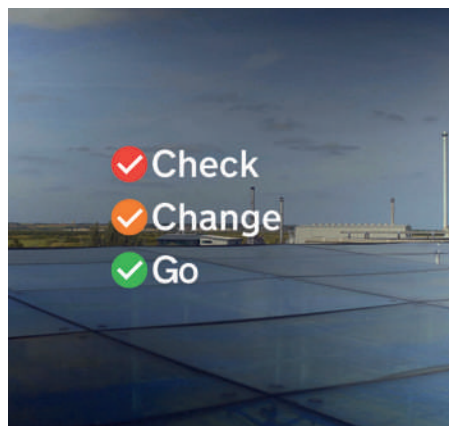
Duty will need to be paid on the basis of the origin, classification and customs value of the imported goods. Duty deferrals options are available, and traders should note that any declarations for EU-to-GB trade which are deferred under the three stage import controls will also result in postponed payment of duty.

Should the UK agree a trade deal with the EU, this deal will determine the tariffs the UK will set for EU goods instead of the UK Global Tariff.

5. EXPORT CHECKS FROM JANUARY

The EU has said it will not replicate the UK's phased plan, so declarations will be needed for exports from 1 January 2021.

Exporters can also use the new 'Check duties and customs procedures for export goods' tool on gov.uk to identify what additional paperwork, tariffs and quotas are applicable. Check duties via the Gov.uk site: gov.uk/check-duties-customs-exporting.





Businesses can also apply to HMRC for an advance ruling on the commodity code that should be used for their goods and the origin of their goods.

6. SAFETY AND SECURITY DECLARATIONS

Safety and security declarations for EU-to-GB standard goods are not required until July 2021. Products of animal origin will require pre-notification of relevant health documentation from April.

Sanitary and phytosanitary checks on animals, plants and their products arriving from the EU will be completed at specified Border Control Posts (BCPs) from July.

7. 'PRE-LODGE' AND 'TEMPORARY STORAGE' MODELS AT PORTS

Border posts receiving goods from the EU will use one of two models:

- The traditional Temporary Storage model, where imported goods can be stored at the frontier for up to 90 days before being declared to customs
- The pre-lodgement model, where a customs declaration will be submitted in advance of boarding on the EU side.

8. GOODS VEHICLE MOVEMENT SERVICES

A new Goods Vehicle Movement Services (GVMS) is being developed for the pre-lodgement model and will be used in Northern Ireland from 1 January and for imports to Great Britain from 1 January for transit movements and thereafter as checks are introduced, with full use in July.

Goods moving between GB, NI and on to the EU will be governed by the Northern Ireland Protocol and so are not subject to the same 'Core Models' as GB-EU trade.

9. NEW 'SMART FREIGHT SERVICE' FOR RO-RO EXPORT

Government is also looking to develop

a new 'Smart Freight Service' (SFS) to support 'Roll-on, Roll off' (Ro-Ro) exports, to ensure goods needing to be transported quickly are not held up by additional checks.

Ro-Ro ferries allow for wheeled cargo carriers – such as trucks and vans – to drive on and off seamlessly and are vital for the quick transportation of perishable goods, including many food items and medicines.

10. PLANS FOR KENT TRAFFIC

The government is working with the Kent Resilience Forum to explore making the use of the SFS enforceable in Kent, where there are concerns over traffic management at the start of next year when the new rules are introduced.

One option the paper says is being considered is fining HGV drivers in Kent who do not use the SFS, or who travel in contravention of advice from the SFS not to travel to the port.

In the next issue of *Product Media*, we'll be reporting more on transition detail. If you're attending the BPMA Conference in September, look out for the Recovery session with Kevin Shakespeare from the Institute of Export & International Trade.

Marketing recovery set for 2021

The UK marketing sector received confirmation of how hard COVID-19 has hit it in the latest Advertising Association/WARC Expenditure Report

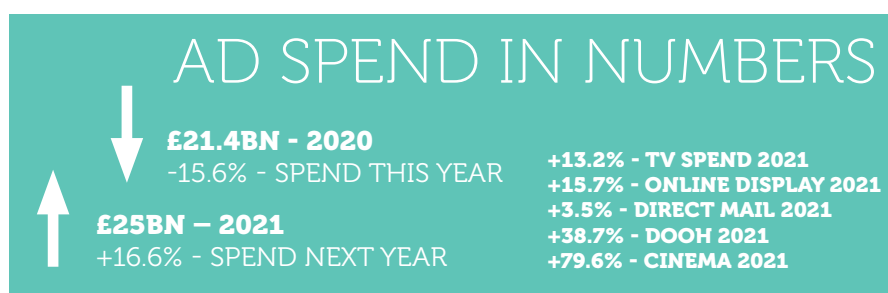
According to the report UK ad spend is predicted to fall 15.6% year-on-year in 2020 to £21.4bn. However, there was more encouraging news for 2021 when the report anticipates that growth will be substantial, rebounding by 16.6% on 2020, to be worth £25bn.

As expected, Q2 of 2020 bore the brunt of the decline, with a 39% fall. This came after a buoyant start to the year with a Q1 rise in ad spend of 2.9% year-on-year to £6.4bn, just as the COVID-19 crisis was beginning to take hold.

The report claims that government actions to stimulate consumer spending, such as the Eat Out to Help Out campaign, have led to a 1.1% improvement in the overall outlook for this year. Original estimates for 2020 were for a larger 16.7% decline in advertising spend.

Mixed fortunes

Different sectors of advertising have been affected disproportionately. Some, like cinema advertising, which was completely stopped as cinemas closed, have been



very hard hit (44.2% decline), while others, such as digital have been less affected. Spending on online display ads is predicted to fall by just 7.9%, with video on demand almost holding level with a 1.2% decrease.

Bounce back in 2021

An improved 2021 will also see different rates of recovery, but all sectors will benefit. Sectors hit hardest this year will be among the best performers next year. Cinema will rise by 79.6% WARC predicts, and digital out of home by 38.7%. The

direct mail sector will see a more modest rise of 3.5%.

The figures reinforce the Advertising Association's call for a tax incentive scheme for advertising and marketing services to stimulate investment.

Carey Trevill, CEO, BPMA, said: 'As we know from the merchandise industry, the marketing sector has been hit hard. The WARC figures, while sobering, do point to light at the end of the tunnel. The BPMA will continue to work hard to ensure that our members receive the help they need to help UK Plc get back on its feet.'

The BPMA voucher campaign is back

BPMA members get more with the latest value-added campaign. Here's what's on offer this year

BPMA distributor members can save more than the cost of their membership when placing orders with participating BPMA supplier members between 9 September and 30 November.

More than 50 BPMA supplier members are participating in this year's campaign allowing BPMA distributor members to save more than £3,000.

How it works

BPMA distributor members will receive one voucher booklet and poster per company. They will need to quote the relevant offer code on purchase orders to participating suppliers. The vouchers can only be redeemed once per company and must be redeemed at point of purchase. They are not redeemable against orders placed prior to 9 September, but vouchers can be used up to 30 November.

If you are a member and would like to see a list of participating suppliers, contact enquiries@bpma.co.uk

If you are not yet a member but are interested? Contact Tom@bpma.co.uk. There is still plenty of time to apply for membership and gain access to these fantastic money saving vouchers.

New partners

2020 sees new suppliers participating alongside longstanding voucher supporting suppliers.

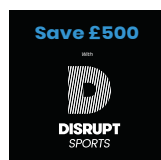
Disrupt Sports

Disrupt Sports is the home of custom branded sports equipment, providing personal, designed equipment, not only for the individual, but to brands, teams, and training areas for larger orders on a wholesale basis - all custom made and designed to order.

Products include:

- Summer sports – surfboards, skateboards
- Winter equipment – snowboards, skis, sledges
- Office games – table tennis tables, beer pong, giant Jenga
- Yoga and fitness equipment
- Bikes
- Balls – footballs, rugby balls, lacrosse

Disrupt Sports, managing director, Chris Bailey, said: "We are delighted to take part in this year's voucher campaign, where we hope our exciting products will offer



an element of difference to your clients to help them stand out from the rest at a time when it is needed most."

Stormtech Europe

Stormtech Performance Apparel is a recognised brand that elevates team experiences and company culture by offering the best in apparel and gear. A resourceful partner for more than 40 years attuned to the needs of customers, Stormtech helps teams achieve new heights.

Recognised brand technologies H2Xtreme, H2Xdry, and Thermal Shell allow users to stay warm in extreme cold temperatures or cool on a warm day. In house decoration is also available.

Products available:

- Technical polo shirts
- Thermal shells, jackets, bodywarmers
- System jackets – 3-in-1s, 5-in-1s
- Waterproof and breathable shells
- Executive bags and backpacks
- Waterproof bags
- Fleece
- Softshell

Rocketbook

Rocketbooks are the original premium endlessly reusable smart notebooks. Take notes as usual and then using the



free companion app scan your notes to the cloud. When the notes have been saved, simply wipe the book clean with a damp cloth and use it again. It is a sustainable and smart solution.

Custom branding offers the Rocketbook Core with blank pages as well as the Rocketbook Fusion which has some pre-set up templates, including calendar and week planner, at the front with blank pages at the back. Books can be custom printed with full colour prints on the cover with lead times from 10 working days.

USB Group

This multi-award-winning promotional merchandise company, specialises in creating high-end merchandise for global blue chip brands and beyond. It takes pride in delivering orders efficiently with high ethical standards.

A technology specialist, USB Group has 100s of products, including USB sticks, power banks, wireless chargers, and mobile accessories. Products are available with eco-friendly materials, PMS matching trim, and full colour print options.

USB Group delivers beautiful, bespoke designs to match a brief, utilising a creative mindset to come up with something unique – all created by the in-house design team. It also creates galleries for brands on request, allowing distributors to sell a vision for branded merchandise.

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BPMA DISTRIBUTOR MEMBERS...

**SAVE MONEY WHEN ORDERING
FROM OVER 50 PARTICIPATING
BPMA SUPPLIERS**

DON'T MISS OUT!
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It's great when members tell me that they **covered their membership fee** in 2019 through the BPMA Voucher Scheme.

Carey Trevill - CEO BPMA



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T's & C's: Limited to one off use against any order over £500+vat or more with each participating company. Only BPMA Suppliers participating in this scheme will accept this offer. Please make reference to the BPMA £50 Voucher Scheme and quote your membership number when confirming your order. The voucher must be used from 9th September 2020 - 30th November 2020. Some products may be exempt from this offer. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

*This voucher must be used from the 9th September 2020 - 30th November 2020



TIME TO COLLECT AND REVIEW

These are not normal times, so take the opportunity to look again at your processes, says **Mike Collins**



Now is the time for BPMA members to review their credit management and ensure overdue invoices and debts are collected promptly.

Here are some simple things you can do to reduce write offs and collect overdue invoices.

1: Don't base credit agreements on credit reports alone

Be wary of credit ratings and reporting limits. Credit reports are based upon the last accounts filed at Companies House. From the first available date, they're

several months out of date.

Undoubtedly credit reports provide good indicators, but no one knows how COVID-19 has damaged individual businesses.

Some elements of credit reporting help such as payment data feeds which are crucial as credit reporting organisations settle into the new norm. They will quickly downgrade the rating on any business once alerted to significant overdue invoices. Act immediately on this information to protect your interests.

Upload every customer to your credit reporting provider's monitoring service for 24/7 information on important changes. Act swiftly towards customers with limits drastically (and suddenly) cut by your reporting agency. Withdraw limits and pursue overdue monies quickly. In the absence of satisfactory payment promises/positive feedback, escalate to Direct Route.

2: Don't automatically grant credit to new customers

New customers are welcome, but why are they coming to you? Are they unhappy with their current promotional goods supplier or is it the other way round? For new customers, a 'tiny steps' policy is advisable for granting credit until a trading pattern and prompt payment evidence is established.

3: Trade Credit Insurance – know the new limits

While the UK government has confirmed guarantees for all currently available trade credit insurance, insurers are nevertheless reducing and pulling limits on customers for future trading. When a customer's trade credit insurance limit has been downgraded is it a sign of serious financial distress? Has the customer been reported as a late payer by another insured party? If you cannot get a limit for a debtor customer escalate to us.

If a new customer wants supply of goods on credit and you cannot get a limit, is it because the insurer has a potential claim in progress from another insured unpaid party? Limits are granted largely based on credit reports which are being significantly downgraded. While 100% of the new credit reporting limit may be supported by your policy, it's not the old pre-pandemic limit.

4: Review your collection process

Have strictly defined stages in your credit control process. For example: on stop at seven days' overdue, with the first gentle nudge reminder sent on day 10. Second reminder on day 17. Final notice and deadline for payment on day 24; phone calls day 24 to 31. At day 31 if no payment or satisfactory response, automatically escalate to Direct Route. For values exceeding a predetermined amount, refer to management for approval prior to escalation.

5: Third-party escalation – collections agency or solicitor legal route?

How can you achieve successful recoveries from customers prioritising their own survival?

Insolvency options, such as administrations are coming to the fore. When this happens procrastinators will not have been paid. BPMA members taking prompt action will already have monies secured.

A good debt collection agency will communicate with financially distressed debtors, achieving compromises within their financial means and palatable to you. Using a zero-cost debt collection agency, such as Direct Route makes sense.

It's difficult to see merit in risking extra fees in solicitor or court costs. There are massive court backlogs on court claim issues and enforcement. Can overrun bailiffs and High Court Enforcement Officers do their jobs given social distancing measures?

Avoid legal if possible. Communicating and negotiating with debtor customers saves time and fees.

For support contact your local Direct Route representative listed left.

Mike Collins is MD of Direct Route

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 East

David Barker
dbarker@directroute.co.uk
07766 545871

South Wales and South West

Ron Dingle
rdingle@directroute.co.uk
07976 675420

Midlands and East Anglia

Ken Brown
kbrown@directroute.co.uk
07795 214426

North Wales and North West

Ian Jenkinson
ijenkinson@directroute.co.uk
07860 197476

East Pennine Lincolnshire & Yorkshire

Shaun Egan
segan@directroute.co.uk
07801 108402

North East, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Mike Collins
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OUR TEAM ARE HERE TO HELP

IS THE TWITCH SWITCH RIGHT FOR YOU?

As established platforms face issues, could a new social media player be the next big thing, asks **Melissa Chevin**



In the world of marketing, where clients are constantly looking for that 'next horizon', the huge potential of social media has become somewhat clouded by the rather mixed recent fortunes of the established platforms.

Facebook has had its privacy controversies, Twitter has faced a boycott over its management of contentious tweets, and TikTok's future has been thrown into doubt thanks to Donald Trump's threat to ban it in the US.

What's next?

All of which begs the question, where is the next big opportunity in social media? Well, it might just be Twitch.

Unless you're a hardcore gamer, the chances are you may never have heard of Twitch. You'll have certainly heard of its parent company, though – a little

low-key operation known as Amazon.

Twitch accounted for 65% of the market share of streamed gaming hours in the first quarter of this year alone. At any given moment, 1.5 million people are tuned in to Twitch, and over the course of a day, it attracts around 17 million visitors.

Sports player

But it's not all about the games. Twitch has recently made clear moves in other vertical markets, notably a sport category to complement Amazon's own live coverage. The Premier League, the UEFA Champions League and Major League Baseball are among those signed up to push content. Music is another growth area on the platform, with everything from singer-songwriters to specialised radio channels.

While Twitch offers conventional marketing opportunities such as pre-roll

ads, it also has further potential through some unique features, including 'raiding' and its 'Bounty Board'.

Brands can use the channel 'raiding' feature to push audiences towards other content they think they will like, opening up opportunities for imaginative and mutually-beneficial hook-ups, not just with other established names, but also with interesting and creative newcomers.

Bounty for brands?

The Bounty Board, meanwhile, offers Twitch influencers the chance to generate income by means of sponsored content or products. Influencers can choose which 'bounties' best suit their audience.

If you're thinking this sounds interesting, let's weigh in with a few caveats, because Twitch is not the most straightforward of propositions and it can be a difficult

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**Cotton Mask
- UMSK104**



**Elastic Polyester
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Neck Warmer UMSK80



**Face Mask Case
- UMSK10**



**Protective Face Mask
Case - UMSK20**



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place to get your marketing right.

Not surprisingly, brands which tend to do best on Twitch are the ones which are the best fits for its predominantly younger audience. Sports, and food and drink companies have all done well there, particularly when partnering with a relevant influencer.

The key point for brands coming on to the platform is not to upset its equilibrium. If a brand partners with an influencer and attempts to get them to do something which jars with the overall tone of the channel, the audience will likely immediately pick up on the lack of authenticity.

Another potential speed bump, especially in persuading clients to give Twitch a try, is the 'gamer audience' stereotype, even though gamers themselves come from all walks of life and the fact that the platform is rapidly opening up to lots of other content.

Something new will always be perceived as a risk. However, the relationships built between streamers and their audiences – who will often watch for hours at a time – makes Twitch a unique and attractive proposition where it's still possible to innovate and find a unique voice.

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



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TIME FOR EXPERTS

A British made agenda from government presents merchandise manufacturers and buyers with a change to back Britain, says **Mark Alderson**

"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."

Wise words from Albert Einstein who knew a thing or two about difficulty within the course of his work. It's also an approach the UK government is pursuing by taking a hard look at our buying, sourcing and purchase decisions in the coming weeks and months as the UK economy looks to regenerate.

Under close watch are the ways in which we source: Where from? How much? What is at stake when procuring from different markets? Is price masking a larger carbon footprint for products being purchased from overseas? As order levels creep back, how are we able to differentiate our offerings and what new areas are companies now looking at even more closely since the pandemic?

British experts

With news that Government is pushing a 'British-made' agenda for companies to source British first, it is important to remember our differentiators which can highlight British manufacture and supply. With an economic message that supports the UK economy, British manufacturing and employment, in a sector facing severe cuts, it is vital not to

overlook one very important factor: expertise.

With a campaign called 'Great', the Department of International Trade is promoting British expertise heavily, both within these shores and beyond Europe. Lobbying by the BPMA has generated a keen interest in the progress of British manufacture in our sector and, with Briman Group, it is working on ways to promote and take part in far reaching campaigns such as this.

Brexit impact

Over the last few years, Briman Group has continually developed its agenda to communicate both the need for and value of British-made goods, and the capability our industry represents. With end-users heavily reliant on the right guidance and advice, at no other time has our industry expertise had the opportunity to drive engagement and build lasting relationships, through solving problems and delivering amazing results.

With the Brexit transition period just around the corner there is every chance for opportunity to overcome the difficulties.

Mark Alderson is the chairman of the Briman Group 



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Fresh space for Mojo Promotions

BPMA patron company, Mojo Promotions has renovated office space is now officially open, after a six-month renovation.

With the original opening due for early April 2020, this was put on hold, as the team took to working remotely in light of coronavirus. It is now open and a limited number of the team are using the Covid secure workspace to collaborate on projects and push forward with the company's future plans.

Managing Director, John Young, said: "It's been a strange year, that's for sure, but it's great to open the new office space and see the team face to face again. Having a space like this to work in really brings the best out of everyone."

The new office space combines advanced technology and industrial furniture, complementing the Grade II listed building's original use as a leather factory. Desk spaces are connected to a high-speed network, while LED lighting and a new heating system provide a power-efficient setup.

Based in the Cultural Quarter of Leicester, Mojo Promotions looks forward to welcoming customers and suppliers when government guidance allows.



TECH'S NEW FOCUS

The world has changed and so has the market for technological merchandise, says **Matt Pluckrose**



The world has changed over the last six months and so has our industry and the focus of many marketers. What used to be the norm now seems unthinkable – crowded commuter trains, busy trade shows, sales presentations face to face, overseas business travel, the list is endless.

This has brought about a marked change in what types of promotional tech items are now in demand. Higher volume/lower cost tech giveaways have perhaps temporarily moved aside for premium reward/incentive gifts, health gadgets, and work from home kits. Some products have even seen a dramatic comeback such as webcams for video meetings.

It seems our sector is now more focused on products which reward behaviour and say "thanks", rather than new business tools which say "hello... how can I do business with you?" The fastest growing product area is personal audio such as wireless headphones, TWS earbuds, Bluetooth speakers and even premium plug in microphones to enhance your voice when on calls. These products are both lifestyle gifts and immensely practical.

PPE sales have of course been dominant



during the lockdown and there are many promo tech products which are becoming popular to help keep us all safe.

These include UVC gadget cleaning boxes, anti-bacterial coated power banks and cables, high end non-contact thermometers, hands-free door openers, activity trackers with temperature alerts, and even Bluetooth wristbands that help maintain social distancing by emitting an alarm if you get too close to another user wearing one.

Another positive trend is that sustainable tech items are growing in demand despite the

economic downturn, unlike the crash of 2008 when premium eco-style products lost favour to lower cost alternatives. We are seeing the demand for useful tech items with an ECO angle increasing rapidly to about one in three enquiries.

For sure, the market and world has changed for good and staying up to date with trends is even more essential than ever to ensure you are ready to assist with your client's future direction and marketing.

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas

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Help with deferred VAT payments was welcomed by businesses, but settlement will be required soon

Over the last few months, the government has provided a range of support measures to help companies manage cashflow, such as giving time to pay their VAT. Between 29 March and 30 June this year, the government allowed every UK VAT registered business to defer payments to 2021. It was hoped this one-time pause button would continue however it was only put in place for one VAT period.

Plan to pay

With the economy slowly starting to come back, many businesses will be re-forecasting and planning cash to cover the next few quarters. With VAT deferment payments expected on 31 March 2021 in full, HMRC has advised businesses to prepare for this payment date.

Advice from HMRC and finance teams has been to look at stage payments, reducing the outstanding balance gradually, spreading the impact on your cash flow. Payments towards any outstanding balance for this period can be made at any time but it's important to note that this doesn't apply to prior or subsequent periods unless you have a Time To Pay (TTP) arrangement in place, allowing you to pay over an extended pre-agreed period of time. It is worth noting that if you have previous TTP arrangements in place from earlier periods, you may be asked for more supporting information.

Keep talking

As the economic crisis has deepened across the UK, the HMRC has been keen to impress on businesses the need to communicate

with them if payments aren't possible. For any business owner, HMRC is not always the friend you call in a crisis for a heart to heart so the thought of highlighting future possible difficulties may not be the call you are keen to have. However, with the directive from government to keep business going and a remit to prevent failures, the feedback appears generally positive for those approaching HMRC for guidance and advice on how to tackle tricky cash situations.

Look to the future

BPMA CEO, Carey Trevill has covered VAT and other critical information in the member webinar series over the last few months. She said: "With so much information coming from government at the start of lockdown, many businesses just needed the clear facts about how to access help and where they could take the strain off cashflow. At the time the VAT initiative came out, the Job Retention Scheme had only just started to pay out, so VAT deferment came as welcome cashflow relief for our members and the wider industry."

As businesses look to move to the next stage of recovery, Trevill advised members not to stick their heads in the sand over VAT.

"As the urgency has subsided and the financial impact has taken hold, we have reminded members of the need to look carefully at these future payments. March 2021 is not that far away. We'd urge any member to start the dialogue with HMRC to understand what support is possible if they are experiencing cash issues. Recognising the hard decisions and trading period ahead, planning is essential."

Tests ahead

Feedback from the industry is that the toughest period for many is yet to come, with loans and some grant money filling gaps for a period of time. This suggests continuing to trade into the new year will be the big test across our industry. With this in mind, cash reserves are essential and the thought of paying outstanding amounts early may not feel sensible or even possible.

HMRC has encouraged communication as soon as possible to avoid penalties and fines. The BPMA, among many others, has put forward a call to extend terms for companies further, however, at the time of going to press this has not been made available. Work with your finance team, accountant or adviser to look at cashflow and projections to see what is possible now.

Time to pay

Self Assessment has also been delayed if you had payments due in July 2020; these are now due on 31 January 2021. If you owe less than £10,000, HMRC has a service that allows you to set up Time to Pay online. The Self Assessment payment helpline is 0300 200 3822.

If you need to speak to HMRC about your VAT or other tax, contact your local VAT office or access the webchat or Coronavirus helpline. The Coronavirus Helpline can be contacted via 0800 024 1222 Monday to Friday 8.00-16.00. More details can be found online: gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/coronavirus-covid-19-helpline PM



New BPMA members

The following companies have joined the BPMA since April 2020. We would like to welcome them to the association and look forward to working with them.

Company Name

Aspect CPM (UK) Ltd

Promotional Solutions (Jersey) Ltd TA Magic Touch

Thehatch.co.uk Ltd

Pierce Printellect

Print4UK

Business Type

Distributor

Distributor

Distributor

Distributor

Distributor

BPMA CALENDAR

2020

9 September
BPMA Virtual Conference

10-11 November
B2B Marketing Expo
ExCeL London

2021

12-14 January
PSI
Dusseldorf, Germany

3-4 March

Merchandise World
Ricoch Arena, Coventry

8 September

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STEP 2
WE PRINT



STEP 3
WE PACK



STEP 4
WE DELIVER

**We look forward
to working with you!**



PAGE CONTINUES TO RECOGNISE THE BEST

This year's awards were a bit different, but the catalogue group ensured that quality has not gone unnoticed

The PAGE group was due to host its annual conference in June 2020. Unfortunately, due to the current pandemic this was not possible.

However, this has not stopped the group from working hard behind the scenes canvassing opinions on its members and suppliers. Scores were calculated, winners notified and awards sent. All the PAGE awards recognise an exemplar level of quality, service, and efficiency. Scores for supplier service and efficiency are taken from the PAGE members' monthly and annual surveys to determine the winners.

Supplier winners

Once the figures had been added up, the winner of the Gold Supplier of the Year Award was, once again, The Pen Warehouse. The winners of the Silver awards were Bizz Badge Company, Laltex Promo, Preseli Ltd and WCM & A Ltd.

Distributor awards

The distributors' awards are split into three categories based on turnover and

scored by the suppliers, recognising their professionalism in the promotional products industry.

In the under £1 million category the winners of the Silver awards were Boosters Ltd, Love to Brand Ltd, and Silk Group Ltd, with BH1 Promotions picking up the Gold award.

In the £1-3 million category the Silver award winners were Sussex Promotions

Ltd, Get Yourself Noticed, and T. King Associates Ltd, with Hambleside Merchandise Ltd winning the Gold award.

Finally, in the over £3 million turnover category the Silver awards went to LSi Ltd and Innerworkings, while the winner of the Gold Award was Allwag Promotions Ltd.

Well done to all award winners and those in the industry who provided the feedback that made them possible.





Create the difference

A club-swinging corkscrew or a communicative coffee mug? Regardless of what makes your product something special – it deserves to be in the spotlight. The Promotional Gift Award has been distinguishing haptic promotional products that stand out from the crowd since 2003. The creativity label that is conferred by an independent jury of experts thus creates that certain difference – in the perception of the target group. The presentation at the HAPTICA® live, on March 17, 2021 in Bonn (Germany) attracts additional attention.

Register your creations for the Promotional Gift Award 2021 now and profit from the favourable early bird rate (180 Euros) up until September 30, 2020!

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